

Inside Texas', Oklahoma's deal to leave Big 12 early

Financial hit behind move won't be as steep as expected, USA TODAY Network learns. **In Sports**

Social media platforms let false claims spread openly

Disinformation about COVID-19, mail-in ballots generally not removed, study says. **In Money**



Reba ready to offer life lessons to performers

Country legend, taking over Blake Shelton's chair on "The Voice," says she doesn't want to focus on technical aspects. **In Life**

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E2

High court could alter interaction on internet

Justices set to take on social media in next term

John Fritze and Jessica Guynn
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – Looking back on it, Philip Cohen takes a measure of pride in the fact that he was blocked by the former president of the United States.

But in that moment in 2017, when Cohen pulled up Donald Trump's feed on what was then known as Twitter and realized what happened, he didn't feel smug or vindicated.

He felt muted. "I was honestly shocked," said Cohen, a sociologist who was blocked after repeatedly posting criticism of Trump's tweets and who responded by suing the former president and claiming that the move violated the First Amendment. Cohen said his snarky posts were like "carrying a sign at a protest – but with a much bigger audience."

Though the Supreme Court dodged Cohen's appeal in 2021, the justices now have another opportunity to decide whether public officials may block Americans on social media. It's one of several cases pending at the high court with potentially enormous consequences for the way Americans interact on the internet.

"These cases, depending on how they're decided, could really reshape speech on the internet."

Ryan Calo
University of Washington law professor

Legal experts say the Supreme Court term that begins next month could also be the most important in decades in determining the extent of the government's power to regulate the online content.

At stake in one set of cases is whether the First Amendment shields social media platforms for their handling of controversial voices and views. The question is critical as Facebook, YouTube and X play an ever growing role in the lives of Americans and democracy. Yet another case questions whether the Biden administration crossed a line when officials pressured the platforms to remove posts dealing with COVID-19 and elections.

The lawsuits are arriving against the backdrop of a raging partisan debate about how social media handles political content and misinformation. If the Supreme Court decides all of the cases, the opinions could have profound implications for social media and politics – with decisions landing in the middle of next year's election.

"One of the most important themes of the term will be the Supreme Court having to deal with the internet and social media more than ever before," said Erwin Chemerinsky, the dean of Berkeley Law.

See **SOCIAL MEDIA**, Page 4A

Scores of volunteers came to the rescue as caver waited sick and bleeding internally, 3,000 feet underground



American researcher Mark Dickey, center, talks to journalists after being pulled from Morca Cave near Anamur, Turkey, on Sept. 12, more than a week after he became seriously ill. SULEYMAN CENK IDAYE/IHA VIA AP

Stuck half-mile inside Earth, he feared death

Chris Kenning USA TODAY

Mark Dickey was more than a half-mile underground when the feeling hit him like a train.

He was dizzy. Nauseated. His insides felt as if they wanted to explode out of him.

He was also more than halfway up the vertical face of a 300-foot circular rock chimney tucked deep inside a cave that he and others were exploring.

Now, he feared, he might pass out, roped high atop the wall.

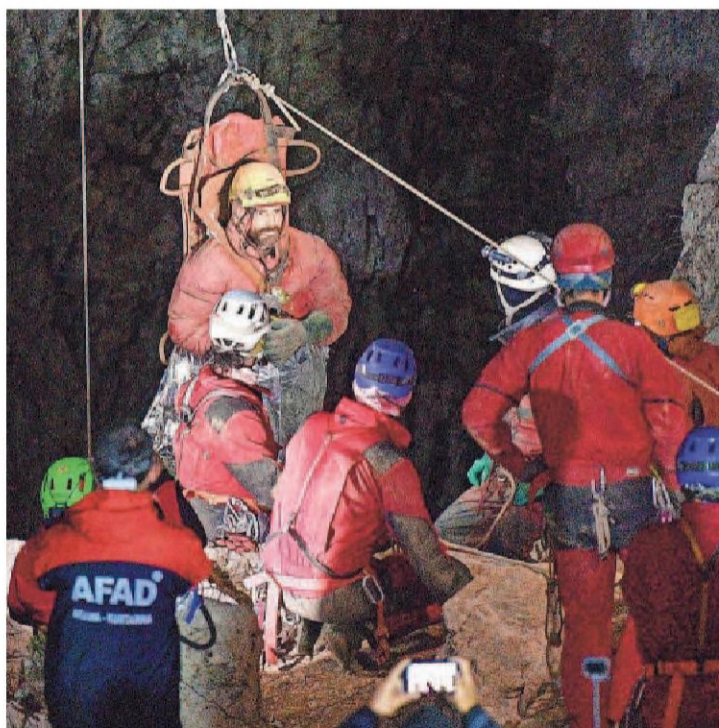
In the damp chill, lit only by headlamps, Dickey called out to fellow caver Jessica Van Ord – who is also his fiance – as she waited for him on a muddy perch about 30 feet up.

"I'm sick," he told her.

It marked the start of a 10-day ordeal for the 41-year-old American caver. He was stuck deep in one of the deepest chasms in the world. His internal bleeding would worsen. His fiance would race 3,000 feet to the surface to save him. He would soon be at the center of a multinational rescue effort that captured global headlines.

But in that first moment, he told USA TODAY, he had no idea what to expect.

Dickey, an experienced caver who had been the



Dickey is brought to the surface from Morca Cave after teams from across Europe had rushed to the area in Turkey's Taurus Mountains to help the 40-year-old experienced caver who became seriously ill 10 days earlier. MERT GOKHAN KOC/AP

See **CAVE RESCUE**, Page 6A



This image off a NASA live feed shows a recovery crew in Utah with a capsule carrying an asteroid sample. AFP PHOTO/NASA VIA GETTY IMAGES

Special delivery: Sample of asteroid parachutes into US

Rocks, dust from Bennu to be analyzed in Houston

Emily DeLetter and James Power
USA TODAY

A NASA spacecraft returned to Earth on Sunday after a yearslong mission to a nearby asteroid.

A capsule containing pieces from the near-Earth asteroid Bennu separated from the spacecraft known as the Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification and Security-Regolith Explorer, or the OSIRIS-REX, and entered Earth's atmosphere.

The capsule parachuted into the Utah Test and Training Range in Utah's

West Desert. Scientists recovered the sample, and the sample will be sent to the Johnson Space Center in Houston.

7-year space mission

The OSIRIS-REX spacecraft was launched Sept. 8, 2016, and traveled to the near-Earth asteroid Bennu, formerly named 1999 RQ36. On Oct. 20, 2020, the spacecraft landed on Bennu, using its robotic arm to collect a sample of rocks and dust from space.

According to NASA, the mission was to help scientists investigate "how planets formed and how life began, as well as improve our understanding of asteroids that could impact Earth."

Still curious about more outer space facts?

In today's Just Curious: Temperature of the sun and the coldest planet. **2A**

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The sun's surface lingers at 10,340 degrees Fahrenheit. -VITAN-/GETTY IMAGES

Olivia Munson USA TODAY

Approximately 4.5 billion years old, the sun – the central and largest object in our solar system – plays a huge role in supporting our planet. ● Of its jobs, the sun provides energy that is vital for life on Earth. This energy comes as a result of its immense heat. But how hot is the sun exactly? ● Here is what you need to know about the sun, including how hot it is and how nuclear fusion works.

How hot is the sun?

The sun has varying temperatures, depending on the layer. The core is the hottest part, reaching 27 million degrees Fahrenheit, according to NASA.

Another blistering temperature comes from the sun's surface, which lingers at 10,340 degrees Fahrenheit. While it's cooler than the core, the surface is still extremely hot, and no human or animal could survive on it.

Even the sun's corona, or outermost layer of its atmosphere, reaches an excruciating temperature. In fact, the corona is hundreds of times hotter than the sun's surface, NASA says.

According to NASA, the corona is heated by tiny explosions called nanoflares. These bursts of heat individually can reach temperatures of up to 18 million degrees.

Nuclear fusion, explained

Nuclear fusion is a reaction that occurs in the sun and other stars and releases energy.

According to NASA, hydrogen molecules in the sun's core collide due to the immense pressure and density. This collision has enough force that it forms a new element, helium. As these molecules merge, energy is released from leftover mass, the Department of Energy says. This energy then builds up and

generates heat. Inside the sun, it brings the core's temperature to 27 million degrees.

If nuclear fusion did not occur in the sun, it would be unable to support the star's mass against the outward pressure, and the sun would collapse, NASA says.

Is lava hotter than the sun?

While lava is intensely hot, it is not hotter than the sun. On average, lava can range between 1,300 to 2,200 degrees Fahrenheit, depending on its location, according to Wonderopolis, a website run by the National Center for Families Learning.

Brrr! Earth's neighbors can be cold

Jacob Livesay USA TODAY

The lowest recorded temperature on Earth is minus 128.6 degrees Fahrenheit, but many other planets are regularly colder than this.

Temperatures on Mars, for example, range from 70 degrees all the way to minus 220, according to the National Weather Service.

Jupiter is even colder, according to the service, with an average temperature around minus 238.

But even with such unimaginably frigid temperatures on its surface, Jupiter is not the coldest planet in our solar system.

What is the coldest planet in our solar system?

The answer depends on how you define coldest.

Uranus boasts the lowest recorded planetary temperature in our solar system: about minus 370 degrees, according to University College London.

Neptune, however, has a mean temperature lower than Uranus', according to NASA.

What is the coldest known planet?

Exoplanet OGLE-2005-BLG-390L b is the coldest known planet, according to NASA, with an average temperature the same as Uranus' record low of minus 370 degrees.

According to NASA, this exoplanet is 21,526 lightyears from Earth, and its discovery was announced in 2005.



Uranus has the coldest recorded planetary temperature in our solar system.

PROVIDED BY NASA/JPL

Pressure is mounting for Menendez to resign

N.J. Democrat facing indictment for corruption

Ken Tran USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., is facing heavy pressure from Democratic and Republican colleagues to resign following a sprawling indictment that alleges the New Jersey Democrat accepted bribes and leveraged his position to engage in corruption.

As the calls for him to resign get louder, Menendez has remained defiant, denying the indictment's allegations and saying in a statement he is "not going anywhere." Menendez's resistance motivated Rep. Andy Kim, D-N.J., to mount a primary challenge against him.

"After calls to resign, Senator Menendez said 'I am not going anywhere.' As a result, I feel compelled to run against him," Kim said in a post on X, formerly Twitter, announcing his Senate bid. "Not something I expected to do, but (New Jersey) deserves better. We cannot jeopardize the Senate or compromise our integrity."

ic House delegation has publicly called on Menendez to step down, including Donald Norcross, Josh Gottheimer, Frank Pallone, Bill Pascrell and Mikie Sherrill.

"These are serious allegations against Senator Menendez and if proven true, there is no room for this kind of conduct in public service," Sherrill said on X.

"I believe the senator deserves his day in court, with a presumption of innocence," Gottheimer said on X. "That said, given the gravity of the allegations, I believe it will be difficult for the senator to carry out his responsibilities. For the good of the state, he should step aside as he focuses on his defense."

Norcross in a statement said that "Although the senator has many accomplishments over his decades in public service, we cannot be distracted."

"For that reason, Senator Menendez should step aside in order to deal with these allegations and so that another can focus fully on the requirements of serving the people of New Jersey in the United States Senate," he added.

On the state level, New Jersey Gov.

Phil Murphy called on Menendez to resign, saying, "The alleged facts are so serious that they compromise the ability of Senator Menendez to effectively represent the people of our state."

And in a rare moment of unity, Menendez's colleagues on the left aren't the only ones urging him to step down. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., said he thinks the New Jersey lawmaker should make the move.

Republican presidential hopeful Chris Christie, a former governor of New Jersey, called the indictment against Menendez "sickening."

"No public official making \$174,000 a year should have nearly \$500,000 in cash stuffed in clothes in his house, not to mention gold bars. He should resign," Christie shared on X.

Prosecutors allege Menendez, along with his wife, Nadine, accepted bribes of cash, gold, mortgage payments and a Mercedes-Benz in exchange for enriching the Egyptian government.

The indictment describes \$480,000 in cash stowed, with some of the money stuffed into jackets embroidered with Menendez's name and the U.S. Senate seal. Investigators also found more than \$100,000 in gold bars in Menendez's home.

After a trip to Egypt in October 2021, according to the indictment, Menendez searched on Google "how much is one kilo of gold worth."

Menendez also is accused of interfering with a New Jersey attorney general's investigation of a relative of a New Jersey businessman, who is a co-defendant in the indictment. The indictment also charges Menendez with trying to influence the federal prosecution of another Garden State businessman, another co-defendant.

According to the indictment, in exchange for Menendez's help, the businessmen provided mortgage payments for Nadine Menendez's home and gifted her a Mercedes-Benz convertible.

Menendez's fellow New Jersey Senate Democrat, Sen. Cory Booker has yet to comment. So far, Sen. John Fetterman, D-Pa., is the only senator to have called for Menendez's resignation.

"Senator Menendez should resign. He's entitled to the presumption of innocence under our system, but he is not entitled to continue to wield influence over national policy, especially given the serious and specific nature of the allegations. I hope he chooses an honorable exit and focuses on his trial," Fetterman said in a statement.

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Extreme heat is killing New York seniors

Climate change adds risk to chronic conditions

Eduardo Cuevas
USA TODAY

NEW YORK — Jewel Floyd doesn't sleep in her bedroom.

The small room facing south is a few degrees warmer than the rest of the older woman's 13th-floor apartment in a concrete senior public housing building in the Bronx. Sunlight seeps through the window most of the day. Floyd, 77, estimated the room stays above 80 degrees most of the time during the summer.

Instead, she's confined to her living room, where her couch faces her bed.

At the window next to an air conditioning unit, she has shelves of plants blocking the view — of two bridges over the East River.

A fan moves stuffy air around in her tasteful, but uncomfortably warm, room.

Floyd, a retired nursing assistant, can't move much because of her first stroke, which caused her to develop vertigo, making it feel like the world spins around her. She had another stroke a year ago, and she has diabetes and high blood pressure.

Those conditions put her at risk in the summer. And people with diabetes, for instance, can just feel hotter — especially if the condition injures their nerves and blood vessels in a way making it harder for them to sweat and cool down, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

When Floyd's apartment floors start to get hot to the touch, she knows to turn on the AC, an old window unit she's owned for two decades.

She constantly flips to the Weather Channel on her television. If it's above 80 degrees, she doesn't go outside. One day this summer, July 26, temperatures hovered in the high 80s throughout the afternoon. New York issued advisories for extreme heat over the next few days that, coupled with humidity, made the temperature feel hotter than 100 degrees.

"It's too hot, period," Floyd said. "And for me, a lot of heat does not help the vertigo, period."

Heat is a silent killer and the most common weather-related death in the United States. As global warming continues to raise temperatures and extend the summer season longer in places such as New York, people who are already more vulnerable because of age or medical conditions face even greater danger.

"It's just going to get hotter, and we're going to have more heat waves," said Kristie Ebi, a professor at the University of Washington's Center for Health and the Global Environment. "We're an aging population and we're going to have more people at risk."

Hundreds of heat-exacerbated deaths annually, NYC report says

In New York City, about 350 people die from hot weather annually, the city Department of Health and Mental Hygiene estimated in its latest heat-related mortality report.

The vast majority are classified as heat-exacerbated deaths, or those caused indirectly by heat aggravating an underlying illness, such as heart disease. A much smaller amount of people die from direct heat stress, an event



Jewel Floyd, 77, suffers from medical conditions and lives only in her living room of her Bronx apartment because of the heat. SETH HARRISON/USA TODAY NETWORK

more common in areas such as Phoenix that have seen temperatures soar beyond 110 degrees for weeks this summer.

In New York City, people older than 60 had the highest rate of heat-stress deaths.

- Among deaths with medical examiner records available, nearly all had at least one chronic health condition.

- They come from neighborhoods that are disproportionately Black or Latino and low-income. Black residents are twice as likely to die from heat stress compared to white people.

- Most of the dead didn't have AC, the report said.

The number of hot days — defined by the daily maximum temperature being at or above 82 degrees — has increased in the past decade, the city health department report noted. "Extreme heat days," defined as temperatures surpassing 95 degrees, have increased more modestly.

The city report said the combined nonextreme hot days above 82, coupled with extreme heat, have contributed to increases in heat-exacerbated deaths.

Despite the record-setting heat of 2023, we may not see a cooler summer for the rest of our lives, said Kristina Dahl, a climate scientist at the Union for Concerned Scientists. Since May 1, 77% of extreme heat alerts in the U.S. from the National Weather Service have had a clear climate signal, the union's index said. Greenhouse gas emissions trap heat that normally radiates out, raising global temperatures.

"As we warm average temperatures, it makes it easier for hot days to reach really hot levels," Dahl said. "We are seeing an increase in the frequency and the severity of extreme heat. And that has consequences for human health and well-being."

Meal service workers on the lookout for heat symptoms

Marco Padillas, a driver for the New York City nonprofit Citymeals on Wheels, doesn't need a GPS weaving in and out of residential streets in the eastern Bronx. He drives a Dodge Ram truck with its bed converted to store meals for elderly, homebound New Yorkers, most of whom are on fixed incomes.

The air conditioning kept the truck's cabin cool on one mid-summer day. Dave Brubeck's jazz played in the back-ground. Padillas wore a long-sleeve blue polo, black slacks and black Yeezys,

which had gum-bottoms that he said made it easier to do the walking necessary. He wore blue gloves for deliveries.

At each stop, Padillas ticked off names with a pencil. Then, he opened the truck's converted back latches. He placed regular, Latin, halal or kosher meals into a plastic bag. Padillas seemed to remember who's dating whom, the codes if someone is home — a dog statue on the windowsill, or how a client tends to sleep while watching daytime television.

Padillas also takes note of the conditions he sees. Much of this is based on training to look for signs of elder abuse, he said.

"We just look for things we didn't notice the day before," Padillas said. "If we're just seeing discomfort, or any signs of discomfort," he said, "we ask questions, talk to them, and interact with them."

During the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Citymeals began providing emergency meals to seniors isolated in lower Manhattan after the World Trade Center towers fell. Citymeals then expanded its emergency operations during Superstorm Sandy, in 2012, and again during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The nonprofit also provides emergency food packages with nonperishable meals. While this used to be distributed solely in winter, the nonprofit recognized changes with weather.

"We're now doing them seasonally because of climate change," Citymeals CEO Beth Shapiro said. "Weather-generated emergencies are happening all the time."

"Our recipients are most at risk for heat-related death," she added.

How heat affects the body

W. Larry Kenney, a professor of physiology and kinesiology at Penn State University, has looked at the effects of heat stress on the body since the Three Mile Island nuclear meltdown in 1979, when workers experienced extremely hot temperatures at the reactor.

Now, he's focused on heat's daily effects. This includes a forthcoming five-year National Institute of Health study on heat stress, conducted on subjects varied in age who participated in ordinary activities, such as sitting or using a treadmill, in chambers that fluctuate in temperature and humidity.

With hot conditions, humans have two responses: rushing blood to the skin

and away from organs, to keep the body's core temperature below a certain level; and sweating, causing evaporation that cools the skin.

Add in hotter temperatures and more humid conditions, and the body's cooling mechanisms come under further stress.

Older people tend to be at greater risk because the body's ability to cool itself slows down. That decrease in function can be worsened by medications or health issues.

"Even healthy aging carries a burden in our ability to regulate our body temperatures in hot environments," Kenney said. "We tend to sweat less. We tend to become more sedentary. And we have a decreased ability to pump blood flow to the skin. So that's even in a fairly active 60- to 80-year-old."

'A balancing act the whole day'

In the public housing where Floyd lived, residents crowded inside a senior center that had AC blasting. Some women sat talking, men played at the pool tables.

As Padillas knocked at Floyd's place, she yelled that she'd be just a minute. When she appeared from behind the door, Padillas reached inside to grab her. Floyd's vertigo causes her to quickly lose balance, so Padillas knows to reach for her before she falls.

"It's like a balancing act the whole day," Floyd explained.

After storing her meals, Padillas briefly chatted with her. She called him "the best friend I've ever had, as far as a man's concerned."

'It could be tens of degrees too late'

A few hours after Padillas made deliveries, a coalition of environmental justice organizations gathered at a Masonic Temple in northern Manhattan. Organized by the New York City nonprofit WE ACT for Environmental Justice, residents gathered to identify immediate effects of extreme heat, and how to help if someone has symptoms of heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

Residents also looked at longer term solutions to codify cooling centers, which a 2022 city Comptroller's report found had limited hours and weren't evenly distributed, particularly in heat-vulnerable neighborhoods. They also considered a citywide master plan for more trees, and setting an indoor maximum temperature.

Advocates have warned of areas that see hotter temperatures due to the "heat island" effect, caused by lack of green-space and land covered by industry, roads and poor housing stock that trap heat. While New York's official recorded temperatures traditionally is recorded at Central Park, areas that experience heat island effect often see temperatures as much as 20 degrees hotter. These areas have higher concentrations of Black, Latino and low-income people.

"Even on just a neighborhood scale, it's likely a lot hotter, but also the indoor temperatures are elevated," said Caleb Smith, WE ACT's resiliency coordinator. "It could be tens of degrees too late for a lot of people."

The USA TODAY Network-Northeast has been investigating the effects this summer of a rapidly heating planet on people who live in urban areas. This is part of the USA TODAY project Perilous Course.

Powerball anonymity shouldn't be luck of the draw

Michigan winner didn't want identity revealed

Doc Louallen
USA TODAY

A Michigan Powerball winner is working to advocate for lottery winners to have the option to remain anonymous. Cristy Davis' identity was used without her consent upon winning a \$70 million Powerball jackpot, so she's fighting to ensure it doesn't happen to others.

According to Michigan state law, individuals who win more than \$10,000 in local and in-state lottery games can claim their winnings without disclosing their names. However, they cannot opt for anonymity if they succeed in multi-state games such as Mega Millions, Powerball, and Lucky for Life.

"We tried to get a lawyer to see if I can (claim) anonymously, and they said no," Davis shared with the Lottery Post. "That was my big thing — I didn't want to

go on TV. I know so many (who've) been through so much in life, and it was either that or no money."

Davis, a resident of Waterford, Michigan, discovered her identity was being used without her consent in local Facebook groups.



Davis

"I've seen in (the) 'Waterford Matters' Facebook group a post: 'This is Cristy Davis, and I'm giving away blah, blah, blah (blatant) ... Send me this info to this phone number.' Comments on (the post) are like, 'They cleaned my bank account out.' Why would you give somebody your bank account information?" she related. "And then I have friends on there (replying), 'That's not her,' saying I'm not on social media, and I changed my name."

Davis contends that it is a prime illustration of why lottery victors should not be mandated to disclose their names. Keeping the identities of large prize winners undisclosed safeguards

not only the winners but also others who may become targets of fraudsters employing deceitful messages to exploit vulnerable individuals, especially the elderly.

"The Lottery people need to know when they expose your name, this is the stuff that happens," she contended. "The Lottery even emailed me, 'Oh, we heard you're out here scamming people.' I said, 'You know, that's what happens when you expose people's names.'"

Davis believes that winning the lottery may have unintended consequences, such as leaving a long-time home, changing a name or phone number, and altering a way of life.

"They definitely should pass the law that allows (lottery winners) to be anonymous because (the Lottery doesn't) realize what they do to people," Davis shared. "(Winning the lottery) is life-changing already. A lot of people do move away, but some people don't. I didn't. That's probably why I felt the way I did the whole time. It's just too good to be real because of everything

that comes after."

Davis' 2020 lottery win

Davis won \$70 million in the Powerball by matching all numbers plus Powerball. She opted for a one-time lump sum payment of about \$36 million after taxes.

She bought her tickets at the Huron Plaza Liquor store on West Huron Street in Pontiac, Michigan.

After buying her lottery tickets, a friend told her that the winning Powerball ticket was purchased at the same location where she had bought hers. She was at her workplace when she took out her ticket to check it, and she couldn't believe what she saw.

"My friend Erica's next to me, and she's like, 'No,'" Davis recalled. "I yelled through the whole shop, and everybody came running. It was literally like a three-second excitement, and then it was like, this was too good to be true. It still hasn't clicked in my brain that it's real."

President received booster, flu shots

White House urges action as infections rise

David Jackson
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – President Joe Biden has received a COVID booster vaccination and wants Americans to do the same, the White House announced Saturday.

Biden also took a flu shot on Friday and “received his vaccination against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) several weeks ago,” according to a letter from presidential physician Kevin C. O’Connor released by the White House.

“As we enter the cold and flu season, the president encourages all Americans to follow his example and to check with their health care provider or pharmacist to assure that they are fully vaccinated,” O’Connor said.

A late-summer uptick in COVID-19 infections, hospitalizations and deaths has some schools, hospitals and other businesses scrambling to keep illness from spreading.

Biden took the shot amid rising skepticism among some Americans of vaccinations, a movement fueled by presidential challenger Robert Kennedy Jr. and Republican presidential candidate Ron DeSantis. Florida health officials this month warned against the new COVID-19 booster, contradicting CDC guidance.

“I will not stand by and let the FDA and CDC use healthy Floridians as guinea pigs for new booster shots that have not been proven to be safe or effective,” DeSantis said earlier this month.



President Joe Biden has received his COVID-19 booster, RSV and flu shots, the presidential physician says.
SAUL LOEB/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Three people killed in argument over sale of a dog

Jeanine Santucci
USA TODAY

Three people, including a toddler, were killed and another was injured in a shooting that broke out over what officials say was the apparent sale of a dog at a Florida apartment complex.

Deputies responded to a report of shots fired just after 10 p.m. Saturday and found two adults and a 3-year-old child killed, and another adult injured, Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office Assistant Chief J.D. Stronko said.

Five people, including the child, had traveled to the apartment complex to meet with someone about the private sale of a dog, though it wasn’t immediately clear whether they were buying or selling a dog, Stronko told reporters at a news conference.

“For reasons that are unknown to us at this time, a dispute ensued in a breezeway between two of the apartment buildings, resulting in four of the five individuals being shot,” he said.

Three of the four adults in that group were in their 20s, he said.

Witnesses said they saw two men fleeing the scene in a car, and there was no more information available about the victims or suspects, Stronko said.

The sheriff’s office didn’t immediately respond to a request for more information Sunday.

F-35 fighter jet often doesn’t live up to its high-tech roots

Aircraft criticized for cost and unreliability

Eduardo Cuevas
USA TODAY

The fighter jet that crashed miles after its pilot ejected over South Carolina has been touted as redefining modern American warfare, but it also comes with a price tag easily more than \$100 million and questions about it even being mission capable.

Last Sunday, a Marine Corps pilot was flying an F-35B Lightning II stealth fighter jet at about 1,000 feet near Charleston International Airport when he ejected and parachuted into a backyard in North Charleston. The plane kept flying for 60 miles, crashing in a field in Indiantown, South Carolina.

What is an F-35 and why is it so expensive?

The F-35, made by Lockheed Martin, uses new technology that can fly stealthily past enemy radar and defense while integrating nearby allied F-35 jet systems to piece real-time maps together that all planes can use. The aircraft can then direct their own missiles – or those from other planes, ships, submarines or ground stations – to targets they’ve identified while airborne.

The Pentagon purchased jets in three styles: F-35A for the Air Force, F-35B for the Marines, and F-35C for the Navy. The F-35B can take off and land vertically, similar to how a heli-

copter takes off and lands.

The F-35 is used by seven partner nations, including Canada, the U.K. and Italy. On Sept. 14, four F-35s landed at a Danish airbase, part of an effort to provide more of the American planes to NATO members. Denmark then sent some of its aging fighter jets, F-16s, to Ukraine as forces there continue their fight against Russia. Other foreign nations, including Israel, Japan and South Korea, have also bought the jets.

During its rollout, the F-35 program experienced delays and high costs, with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) putting it seven years behind schedule and 70% over budget, the Arizona Republic, part of the USA TODAY Network, reported in 2014. The F-35A, for example, had a purchase order of about \$131.9 million apiece, and other F-35s had higher price points.

F-35 becomes US’s most expensive weapons system

The U.S. Department of Defense is projected to spend \$1.7 trillion on nearly 2,500 F-35s, according to a GAO report released Thursday. The program has faced severe maintenance problems, military service depot delays and inadequate equipment costs for the fighter jets. The report made several recommendations, calling for clarity about if the government or contractors should be responsible for maintenance costs.

Beyond those hefty pocketbook issues, the helmet alone for an F-35 cost \$400,000 in 2015, more than four times the amount the Air Force previously paid for the F-16 helmet. The cost for helmets in 2015 was expected to be at

least \$1 billion.

Concerns about the cost of this plane have been aired publicly. Before becoming president, Donald Trump tweeted in 2016 that the F-35 program’s “cost is out of control,” promising he would rein costs in once he took office.

And they’re noisy and rattle nerves

Residents near any airbase with F-35s have long complained about their noise. In 2019, the Vermont Air National Guard base in South Burlington became the first Guard unit to get F-35s. Locals there soon complained about the jets’ environmental impact. A resident of University City, California, told PBS the Marine flights out of Miramar, California, were causing anxiety.

F-35 reliability questioned

As early as a decade ago, the Pentagon suspended test flights for the F-35 fleet because of engine problems. The F-35 has been plagued by subpar mission capable rates since then.

A separate GAO report released Thursday found the jets were mission capable – when an aircraft in a squadron can fly and perform at least one of its tasked missions – just over half the time. The goal should be 85% to 90% mission capable, the report author, Diana Maurer, told NBC.

In response to the report, Lockheed Martin said in a statement, “We stand ready to partner with the government as plans are created for the future of F-35 sustainment ensuring mission readiness and enabling deterrence.”

Social media

Continued from Page 1A

‘Lawful but awful’ social media content?

Topping the list are two cases involving controversial laws in Florida and Texas that would radically limit what content social media companies can police on their platforms. The Supreme Court could decide as early as next week whether to consider them.

Spurred by the decisions by social media to ban Trump after the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol, the laws arose out of long-running perceptions of political favoritism for liberal voices and views by Silicon Valley tech companies. The states say their laws are meant to ensure the platforms provide “equal access to the public.”

“There is a dangerous movement by some social media companies to silence conservative ideas and values,” Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, a Republican, said when he signed the law in 2021. “This is wrong and we will not allow it in Texas.”

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis who is running for the GOP presidential nomination, made similar remarks, saying the law he signed that same year “guaranteed protection against the Silicon Valley elites.” He also said he knew the law would be challenged and that the Supreme Court would ultimately have to decide its constitutionality.

Two trade groups representing the interests of internet companies reject that conservative narrative, arguing the state laws would upend social media and drive away users by flooding platforms with an uncontrollable wave of toxic sludge.

“Normal people do not want to go on websites and just see a ton of lawful but awful content,” said Chris Marchese, who oversees litigation for NetChoice.

Matt Schruers, president of the Computer & Communications Industry Association, framed the potential outcome as “nothing less than a digital service’s ability to decide what content is appropriate for their community and their ability to protect their community from dangerous actors online.”

“The solution to the problem is not to say ‘no viewpoint discrimination,’” Schruers said. “Because sympathizing with the Taliban is a viewpoint. Nazis, that’s a viewpoint. Telling kids that detergent pods are tasty, that’s a viewpoint.”

Not just Trump: Even school boards block critics

The Supreme Court, which itself has no social media presence, will



Donald Trump was accused of violating the First Amendment and sued after blocking a sociologist on Twitter after he had repeatedly posted criticism of Trump’s tweets. CHARLIE NEIBERGALL/AP

decide two cases dealing with whether public officials may block voters from posting criticism on their pages. In one, members of a Southern California school board blocked what they described as “spam,” but what parents said were examples of “engagement.”

In a related case, the city manager of Port Huron, Michigan, blocked residents from his Facebook page, including one who claimed in a post that city leaders were eating at a “pricey” restaurant during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Supreme Court will hear arguments over the blocked users in November.

Taken together, experts say the social media cases could lead to the high court having its biggest impact on the internet since 1997, when a unanimous court struck down an online indecency law and put First Amendment protection for online speech on par with other mediums, such as newspapers and television.

“The term has the potential to be a referendum about the relationship between government and social media,” said Alex Abdo, litigation director at the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University, which represented Cohen and other plaintiffs in their suit against Trump.

“These cases, depending on how they’re decided, could really reshape speech on the internet,” said Ryan Calo, a University of Washington law professor.

Can the White House lean on Facebook to remove a post?

Another case, now pending on the Supreme Court’s emergency docket, deals with just how far government officials may go to lean on social media companies to take down content they believe is inaccurate or dangerous.

The Biden administration filed an appeal last week asking the Supreme

Court to block a lower court ruling that found the White House, health officials and the FBI may have violated the First Amendment rights of people posting about COVID-19 and elections by pressuring tech companies to suppress or remove the posts.

The lawsuit was filed by the Republican attorneys general of Missouri and Louisiana as well as individuals who said their speech was censored. The Supreme Court is likely to decide as soon as this week on the immediate issue: whether to block the lower court’s ruling while the underlying case continues.

“This is really a blockbuster case that kind of comes out of nowhere because people weren’t paying that much attention to this issue,” said Anupam Chander, a visiting scholar at the Institute for Rebooting Social Media at Harvard University. “Suddenly, the communications between the federal government and also state governments and internet platforms are being tested to see whether or not they are coercive.”

A culture war battle that ‘affects us all’

The litigation has thrust the highly charged debate over social media onto the Supreme Court’s docket, but experts say the cases will have ramifications far beyond culture war politics.

City and state officials who use social media to solicit input on policies might get a skewed view if they block some users. As social media increasingly becomes a conduit between elected officials and voters, the regulation of that communication could have unforeseen consequences for democracy.

“This really affects us all,” said Jennifer Safstrom, a professor at Vanderbilt Law School. “It affects the scope, the rigor and the accessibility of conversations on an entire range of issues of public importance.”

Trump backer frustrated when her social media posts are taken down

As a Republican and a Trump supporter, Gayla Baer-Taylor gets frustrated when her social media posts are taken down or she feels her reach is limited. The Indiana marketing professional and host of the podcast “No Left Turns” says she wants platforms to stop censoring people’s political views.

“I am not about suppressing anybody’s First Amendment rights,” Baer-Taylor said.

But the 56-year-old grandmother of nine says social media platforms also have a duty to shield users – especially children – from harmful and dangerous content like terrorism or Nazism.

“I do think there has to be some moderation,” she said, “but I don’t know where we draw that line.”

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Cave rescue

Continued from Page 1A

expedition's rescue leader, had faith in the tight-knit cave rescue community in whose hands his future lay. But he also knew the challenges of such an operation amid the vertical shafts and narrow passages.

As the hours ticked by, he was vomiting more and more blood. With his pulse fading and body weakening, he began fearing the worst.

"I'm probably going to die in here," he recalled thinking.

A passion for caving leads to Turkey's Taurus Mountains

The entrance to the Morca Cave sits at nearly 7,000 feet above sea level in southern Turkey's Taurus Mountains, where water once carved deep caverns into limestone. Reaching it requires an hourslong drive on bumpy, unpaved roads.

It's the third largest cave in Turkey, in a region home to some of the planet's deepest. At 4,186 feet, it plunges almost three times as deep as the deepest part of New Mexico's Carlsbad Caverns.

In August, Dickey and Van Ord, 33, who both live in Croton-on-Hudson, New York, had arrived to join a small group of cavers and researchers.

The Turkish-led expedition was designed to map new sections of the Morca Cave and help scientists study biological features.

It was the second trip to the cave for Dickey and Van Ord, a paramedic. They met years ago in their work in emergency medicine. She grew to share his love for caving.

Dickey began caving in the 1990s, a passion that grew out of his love of rock climbing, mountaineering and whitewater kayaking. Over the years, Dickey explored caves in 20 U.S. states and 10 different countries.

"If you want to explore the world, where are the final frontiers of exploration? You can head to outer space and you can head to the bottom of the ocean," he said. "I can't do either of those. But virtually every time I do any type of deep cave work, I'm going to places no human has ever been before, no human has ever touched. That's pretty cool."

He became an instructor with the National Cave Rescue Commission. He served as an officer in the European Cave Rescue Association. And he founded and leads the nonprofit Caving Academy. Over time, he participated in a handful of U.S. and European cave rescues, he said. Van Ord also trained in cave rescue.

All that meant Dickey, who also works as chief of the New Jersey Initial Response Team, a local group of volunteers specializing in cave and mine rescue, was designated as the rescue coordinator for the Morca expedition if anything went wrong.

On Aug. 26, Van Ord entered the cave with other members, wearing warm jackets, rubber boots and helmets. Members carried ropes, bolts, camping gear and food. Water would be collected and purified in the cave. Dickey followed with another group a few days later, Van Ord said.

In all, they planned to spend about six days underground but brought along food and supplies to last longer just in case.

Inside, the air was heavy with 100% humidity and the temperature was steady but chilly at 39 degrees. Some of the narrow passages and vertical chimneys were dotted with small waterfalls or areas of trickling water.

"It's a cold cave," Dickey said.

Expedition members set up a camp inside the cave, about 3,000 feet below the surface.

Underground, normal cellphones are useless. Because of water's interference with a telephone cable used to communicate with the surface that far in, the deepest working cable ran to about 1,500 feet.

"If something happens, it's one day's worth of travel" to reach the phone line, he said.

Illness hits unexpectedly

On Sept. 1, Dickey felt tired. But he didn't think much of it. After all, he was climbing through a deep cave and sleeping amid the mud, dust and dampness.

"Huh, I'm feeling tired," he later recalled thinking. "On well, that's annoying." He reminded himself to eat a little more protein and maybe an extra multivitamin later.

On Sept. 2, he and Van Ord were together, roughly 30-60 minutes' journey from their camp and more than 400 feet deeper, exploring farther reaches of the cave.

Then they set to climbing upward about 300 feet, through the circular rock chimney that widened as it rose toward a ceiling. Their aim was to install more bolts and ropes that would aid in exploration and mapping. Most of the way up,



Morca Cave is the third largest cave in Turkey, home to some of the deepest caverns on the planet. ANADOLU AGENCY VIA GETTY IMAGES

Jessica Van Ord stands by Mark Dickey who was taken to a hospital in Mersin, Turkey, after his 10-day ordeal. SERKAN AVCI/ANADOLU AGENCY VIA GETTY IMAGES

things took a sudden turn.

"It just hit hard and fast," he said.

Trying to stave off passing out, he clawed his way up toward Van Ord. She could tell he looked ill, which was unusual for him. He quickly blurted out his symptoms.

"If I fell unconscious, she would have something to work with," he said.

Driving his knees into the muddy perch and crumpling forward, Van Ord soon realized Dickey was not getting better. She helped him rappel down three pitches of rope to the cave floor.

"When we got to the bottom again, there were no emotions involved in any of this. It was pure rescue mode. It was pure survival," Dickey said.

"What do you need?" she asked immediately.

"Privacy," he said, stripping off his gear as fast as she could to relieve himself.

What came out was tarry, digested blood. It was his first sign that he was bleeding internally.

"This is bad," he thought.

He was able to make his way an hour's journey through the cave to their underground camp at 3,000 feet. There, sleeping bags could stave off hypothermia, he could lie down and others could care for him. He figured he needed to exit the cave and hoped to rest and climb out himself, perhaps with assistance.

Then he started vomiting blood.

Van Ord left to make the arduous climb for help. When she reached the phone line, she spent two hours making calls to medical professionals, trying to figure out whether the symptoms could be treated. She dialed expedition members and the cave rescue community.

Then she continued climbing to the surface. Close to the entrance, she paused in the peaceful dark for a brief moment, bracing for what was ahead.

By this time, other cavers had left for the surface to bring an updated message. Dickey made it clear he needed not just a doctor, but a full rescue.

He knew that it would be a huge undertaking and probably garner news headlines. But Dickey didn't hesitate or feel guilty.

You can always call it off, he said. But it takes time to perform a rescue. And waiting might mean it's too late. "You don't have egg in something like this," he said.

About six hours later, attended to by two other cavers, he was vomiting increasing amounts of fresh and coagulated blood. Eventually, he stopped being able to move from his tent, instead vomiting in the bucket next to him.

He felt himself getting weaker. His mind grew foggy and eventually, his pulse couldn't be felt. He knew help was on the way. But would it arrive in time?

"It was getting harder and harder to hold on to consciousness. I went from speaking in sentences down to like phrases until I was down to just single

words at a time," he said. "At that point, like I'm, I'm on the edge."

Ágnes Berentés, Hungarian geologist and photographer who stayed with Dickey, said in a message that at one point Dickey lay in his lap, vomiting every 15 minutes.

"In the eternal darkness, every moment seemed like an endless hour," he said.

More than 36 hours after she'd left him, Van Ord said, she returned. She found him in a fetal position, pale, eyes closed and barely speaking.

She had a saline IV that would boost his blood volume to stabilize him.

Still, Dickey said, "I just remember (thinking), 'She's here. I'm going to live.'"

Rather than tears and hugs, the conversation was mostly about his condition, she said.

On Sept. 3, a Hungarian Cave Rescue Service team with a doctor arrived by helicopter at Morca. They trekked inside the cave, eventually reaching Dickey with pints of blood they had to warm over a camp stove.

The risk of perishing had faded. But he still had to get out.

Mark Dickey's rescue presents complex challenges

Outside the cave's entrance, a small but closely connected international community gathered.

"Rescue missions from such deepness are very rare, extremely difficult and need many very experienced cave rescuers," according to a statement from the European Cave Rescue Association, which helped organize the rescue.

Eventually, more than 150 people from seven countries, including Turkey, Hungary and Bulgaria, joined the effort.

Many were volunteers, as much of the caving world is – taking time off of work and using their own personal caving gear, Dickey said.

But extracting him would be complex, requiring moving a stretcher through narrow passages and up vertical walls by ropes and pulleys.

In a large tent filled with maps and rescuers, detailed plans were drawn up to add rope lines, set up new lines of communications and medical stations along the way in case Dickey needed care. Different teams would be responsible for specific sections of the cave.

Rescuers set off small blasts and used chisels and hammers to widen some narrow sections of the cave to make it easier to get his stretcher through, according to a National Geographic report.

On Sept. 9, a week after Dickey fell ill, rescuers began to move him nearly 3,000 feet to the surface. Photographs show him wrapped in a puffy jacket, strapped tight to a stretcher. In some spots, rescuers connected it to ropes hung from ceiling bolts, pulling him up vertical shafts or guiding him through horizontal passages. All the way, he was watched by

medical professionals.

Along the way, he had a relapse of vomiting but had a doctor and medical supplies to treat him. Another time, he got off of the stretcher to make it easier to clear narrow passages, he said.

Van Ord kept watch from the surface, monitoring communications. Despite Van Ord's training, Dickey said family members of those being rescued from caves are commonly excluded from the rescue itself because of their emotional connection.

Finally, after more than two days of arduous work, he reached the surface in the early morning hours of Sept. 12.

Dickey breathed in the fresh air and looked up at the stars in the dark.

More heartening was "the amount of people that were up there waiting, cheering, hoping that I would get there safely," he said.

Along with news media, several people held sleeping mats on which they'd scrawled "Welcome to 0 Meters."

Van Ord was there, too. After days of waiting, she grabbed the stretcher and helped carry it.

They were soon on a helicopter to a hospital in Mersin, Turkey – the cause of his internal bleeding was still unknown.

Will the ordeal deter Dickey from caving?

Last week, the couple traveled to Ankara after Dickey was discharged from the hospital. They attended a U.S. Embassy reception thanking rescuers and juggled multiple media interviews.

Amid the global spotlight, it remained unclear exactly what caused the internal bleeding. Van Ord said a lesion was found but more tests would be performed once it further healed.

Rather than head to their small New York town, Dickey said they made plans to visit cavers in Hungary – longtime friends – who helped rescue him.

He said his ordeal helped highlight that often-volunteer community – such as some of those who rescued a youth soccer team trapped in a cave in northern Thailand in 2018. Many will drop what they're doing and go to a rescue on their own dime.

That's one reason they are supporting a GoFundMe page to help defray costs for his rescuers.

"To think about the level of difficulty and complexity, the disciplines involved in these rescues, cave rescue teams are an amazing bunch of people," he said.

He'll take a temporary break from caving to ensure he's not a medical risk. But he hopes that won't last long.

Dickey has been getting a lot of questions about whether his brush with death will change his plans. Deep in a cave, help is often days away.

"For everyone else, going caving normally, seems odd, seems strange," he said, citing fears of the dark and unknown. "They're like, 'Well, I wouldn't have been going caving in the first place. So wouldn't this change your mind?'"

His answer is unequivocal. And Van Ord agrees.

"That medical issue is unrelated to caving and caves. And once it's healed, I'm going to go back caving," he said. "If anything, I'm more excited to do it."

Together, the couple has tested their ability to handle adversity. So when are they getting married?

They're not focused on that right now, Van Ord said.

OPINION

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Government shutdown is a dumb choice



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Neil Bradley
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

With recent setbacks in negotiations and the deadline quickly approaching, emerging consensus among lawmakers, staff, the Capitol Hill news media and longtime Washington operatives is that the federal government is almost certainly heading for another government shutdown come Sunday, the beginning of the government's fiscal year.

A government shutdown isn't inevitable – it is a choice.

And it is among the dumbest decisions Washington can make.

Since 1995, there have been five government shutdowns, instigated by both Republicans and Democrats on the theory that withholding support for keeping the government open and functioning could somehow provide leverage to force the other party to agree to certain demands.

These demands have included everything from changes to the federal deficit to defunding Obamacare and ratifying Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals to building the border wall.

The five government shutdowns have one thing in common:

They all failed.

How government shutdown fails you, businesses and US economy

If government shutdowns were just another failed legislative tactic that policymakers tried from time to time, no one would care much. But this tactic has real-world negative consequences that hurt the American people, businesses of all sizes and the American economy.

During a shutdown, mortgage and loan applications are delayed because lenders can't access income records or Social Security number verification services. Visas and passports are delayed, hurting both American travelers and the American tourism industry.

The inability to get government permits can slow everything from energy production to commercial fishing – even the export of American-made goods.

During the last government shut-



Federal workers and contractors in Harbor Township, N.J., on Jan. 25, 2019, protest the government shutdown. The federal shutdown lasted for 35 days. EDWARD LEA/AP

down that lasted for 35 days and ended in January 2019, the Small Business Administration was unable to approve loans, creating a massive backlog that led to financial insecurity for hundreds of small business owners.

Major federal contractors servicing critical agencies such as NASA and the Department of the Interior became insolvent and had to fire employees – threatening economic livelihoods and our national security.

What people told the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

And that barely scratches the surface. During the 35 days the government was shuttered, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce heard from people across the country about the hardships the shutdown was creating and how their lives and livelihoods were being upended:

- An 18-room historic family inn in Georgia lost \$1,000 a day when the shutdown blocked tourism to Cumberland Island National Seashore that the hotel relied on to stay in business.

A government shutdown can be more than just a chokepoint for a business' operations; it can be a death knell to their very existence and a blow to the livelihoods that depend on it.

- Up the coast, a fisherman in Massachusetts was unable to get his permit application approved to operate his boat because the government shutdown left the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) out of commission. As a result, the fisherman missed out on a crucial part of the scalloping season and nearly lost his business.

- The chief operating officer of a restaurant based in Washington, D.C., watched all his customers disappear because federal employees were furloughed, also impacting his distributors and his employees when he was forced to cut wages.

The reality is, a government shutdown can be more than just a chokepoint for a business' operations; it can be a death knell to their very existence

and a blow to the livelihoods that depend on it.

To be clear, there are problems that Congress and the Biden administration are long overdue in addressing, including the border crisis and a runaway debt deficit. But history shows that a shutdown won't help solve any of these issues. It is only going to dig the hole deeper.

The good news: Shutting down the government is still a choice.

Let's hope that policymakers defy the emerging conventional wisdom, reject the notion that a shutdown is inevitable – and make the smart choice to keep the government open and American lives and livelihoods intact.

As executive vice president, chief policy officer and head of strategic advocacy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Neil Bradley is responsible for the organization's overall advocacy efforts. In addition to managing policy development for the Chamber, Bradley oversees its government affairs activities, political program and relations with other business organizations.

Haley may be perfect pick to break up rematch



Ingrid Jacques
USA TODAY

In a few days, we'll get a rematch of the Republican presidential hopefuls duking it out on a nationally televised stage.

Well, not all of them.

Just like with the first debate last month, the GOP front-runner doesn't deem Wednesday's event at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute in Southern California worthy of his presence. In fact, former President Donald Trump is acting like he's already the chosen one.

There's no question Trump is still dominating the GOP presidential race so far. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who has long been Trump's main challenger, continues to lose standing in the polls.

Voters want someone else. How about Nikki Haley?

Surveys of voters, though, keep showing that the majority aren't happy with a rematch between Trump and President Joe Biden. In fact, they are put off by it.

Whenever I write about this lack of enthusiasm for a replay of 2020, my inbox is flooded with self-proclaimed moderates and conservatives who agree they want new choices.

I have no idea why that dissatisfaction isn't translating into more support for another Republican. But there's still time.

Anecdotally, among my conservative friends and Republican donors I've spoken with in recent months, Nikki Haley – the former South Carolina governor and U.S. ambassador to the United Nations under Trump – has started to emerge as a candidate of real interest.

Her excellent debate performance in Milwaukee also helped propel her image among voters. Haley's experience and thoughtful answers on abortion, the national debt and foreign policy show she's got the leadership chops – and reasoned temperament – to do the country's top job.

Haley bests Biden in election matchups

While Haley has only seen a modest bump in the national primary polls following the debate, she is rising more quickly in early primary states like Iowa and New Hampshire. That's because, unlike Trump, she's putting in the time and going to the fairs and events that are integral to the process. The more people get to know her, the more they like her.

Tech entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy also saw a bump following the first debate last month because he got a lot of airtime from attacks by others on stage. Even though his performance was largely obnoxious and ill-informed (Haley schooled him on numerous issues), he earned attention – albeit for the wrong reasons.

In Wednesday's debate where six will likely compete, the five other contenders should make a point of engaging less with Ramaswamy and more with one another.

I'd like to see Haley shine. A few polls



Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley campaigns for the Republican presidential primary on Friday in Manchester, N.H.

SCOTT EISEN/GETTY IMAGES

in the past month show she'd hold her own in hypothetical general election matchups against Biden.

One from Harvard/CAPS-Harris shows Biden losing to Trump, Haley and U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, R-S.C.

And then another poll from CNN showed Haley as the *only* Republican with a decisive lead over Biden. In that survey, she bests Biden 49% to 43%.

If Republicans would be smart enough to choose someone with broad appeal like Haley to run against Biden, they could easily win back the White House.

For instance, one of the biggest issues that will be in play in 2024 is abortion. Much like we saw in the midterm elections, voters are motivated to protect abortion rights following the overturning of Roe v. Wade last year.

Republicans must improve their abortion messaging beyond the fact

that they think it's bad.

Haley has a message with bipartisan appeal. As the only female candidate, she's also in the strongest position to speak on this very personal issue. While she is personally "pro-life," she understands that the matter is nuanced and that talking about a national abortion ban is unrealistic and not helpful.

Rather, she has said that the focus should be on access to contraception, encouraging adoption and banning late-term abortion.

"Let's treat this like the ... respectful issue that it is and humanize the situation and stop demonizing the situation," Haley said at the first debate.

'We need a new generational leader'

Haley, 51, has also made age a part of her campaign. She often talks about how Trump at 77 and Biden at 80 are simply too old and disliked. In addition to her relative youth, she brings some refreshing diversity. Haley is the only woman in the GOP race, and she's the daughter of Indian immigrants.

"I think the majority of Americans know we need a new generational leader, that we need to leave the negativity of the past behind us," Haley told CNN's Jake Tapper this month.

Like most conservatives (and unlike liberals), I tend to eschew identity politics. In this case, Haley could be the best option Republicans have to oust Biden.

Bring on the girl power.
Ingrid Jacques is a columnist at USA TODAY. You can contact her at ijacques@usatoday.com or on X, formerly Twitter: @Ingrid_Jacques

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Vessels pass through a lock on the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River in April. ZHENG JIAYU / XINHUA

Province sets its sights firmly on the future

A row of buildings stands in the background as the sun blazes down on neat roads alongside lush lawns and newly planted saplings anchored to the ground by wooden supports.

At first sight this appears to be just another typical newly built office compound that can be seen in many areas of China. But staff members wearing safety vests and helmets, a chimney emitting white smoke and pipelines rising high into the air serve to remind visitors that they have entered a chemical factory.

Located in the Yaojiagang Chemical Industrial Park in Zhijiang, Yichang city, Hubei province, the factory is a production plant for the local company Hubei Sanning Chemical Industry Co.

The factory, which can produce 661,400 short tons of ethylene glycol a year, is supported by smart technologies. Ethylene glycol is used as an antifreeze and in making polyester.

Yang Wenhua, an employee at the company who led the establishment of the smart system, said that with the help of such technologies, the factory has significantly improved the safety and efficiency of production.

The smart system also helps reduce the amount of harmful byproducts formed — making the entire manufacturing process more environmentally friendly, Yang said.

The company is one of 108 operating at the industrial park established in 2008.

Xia Kesong, director of the Zhijiang high-tech zone management committee, which oversees the park, said most companies operating there



Workers operate machinery on the production line at a smart factory in Wuhan, Hubei province.

CHENG MIN / XINHUA

used to focus on manufacturing chemical fertilizers.

Now they have expanded to areas such as new materials and biomedicine, Xia said.

Development of the park serves as a vivid example of how Yichang, a city on the Yangtze River that used to rely heavily on the chemical industry, is upgrading this industry and reducing its impact on the environment.

More than 130 chemical companies located about 1,000 yards from the river have been closed or relocated, while stringent measures have been taken to ensure wastewater is properly treated.

Chen Xiaoqing, assistant general manager of Xingfa Group, a local chemical company, said the factory has closed its wastewater outlets into the Yangtze. That water is now sent to a government-built sewage treatment plant.

Before being accepted by the plant, the wastewater must be treated according to govern-

ment requirements, which Chen said are stringent.

To meet these requirements the company spent a large amount on upgrading its equipment, he said.

This was a "rather painful" process at first, but now the company's "greatest core competency" is the ability to reduce its environmental impact, Chen said.

In addition to working to improve the performance of the chemical industry, authorities in Hubei are striving to advance other traditional industries such as automotive to achieve better growth.

The province is a major automobile manufacturing base. In 2021, about 2.1 million vehicles were produced in the province, accounting for 8% of China's total.

As the new energy vehicle industry gains ever stronger momentum in China, Hubei is looking to turn itself into an innovation hub and manufacturing base for new energy and smart vehicles.

A number of such companies and battery makers are operating in the province, including Xiangyang Tenglong Automobile Co. It began operating in Xiangyang city in northern Hubei in 2017, producing new energy buses and multipurpose vehicles. The company is headquartered in Jiangsu province.

Zhou Shengming, deputy general manager of Tenglong, said the company chose Xiangyang because of the city's welcoming business environment.

The local government is very supportive, and the company enjoys preferential tax and land use policies, he said.

— WANG QINGYUN AND ZHOU LIHUA

Descendants of Stilwell stay true to legacy

President Xi's exchanges with late U.S. general's grandson boost friendship between two nations

One of the most important aspects of the legacy of the late United States Army General Joseph Stilwell — his enduring bond with the Chinese people — continues to resonate strongly within his family and China's top leadership.

The family's engagements with China have spanned nine decades and were recently recognized by Chinese President Xi Jinping as he exchanged letters with John Easterbrook, the late general's grandson.

"What struck me the most in President Xi's letter was his words about General Stilwell being an old friend of the Chinese people, and that his contributions to the friendship between the Chinese people and the American people will always be remembered," Easterbrook said.

This year marks the 140th birth anniversary of Stilwell, who fought side by side with the Chinese while serving as commander of U.S. forces in the China-Burma-India Theater from 1942 to 1944, during the latter part of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-45).

Easterbrook recently wrote a letter to Xi, recalling Stilwell's exchanges with China and the Chinese, and sharing the efforts of Stilwell's descendants to continue that friendship. Xi replied to the letter on Aug. 29.

Easterbrook, 82, a retired army colonel, said he was honored and moved by "President Xi stating that it was gratifying to him that the fifth generation of the Stilwell family is now carrying forward the cause of China-U.S. friendship."

"I was very impressed by President Xi's strong support for people-to-people activities, his knowledge of the commemorative events recently held in Chongqing, and his humanity in noting that the fifth generation of the Stilwell family is being immersed in the Stilwell legacy," he added.

In the letter, Xi said the foundation of China-U.S. relations lies in the people, and the source of strength lies in the friendship

between their peoples.

Easterbrook said: "We will continue to look for ways to engage with the Chinese people and promote friendship, understanding and good will."

"The more we get to know each other, the more we realize that we have much in common with basic wants, needs and dreams. With that understanding, we should be able to build on common objectives to make the world a better place," he added.

Easterbrook first visited China in 1980 and still remembers the "warmth and friendliness" of the Chinese.

"You'd walk down the street and say, 'ni hao' (hello in Chinese) — a big smile, just everybody. It's wonderful," he said.

"As the years went by, we got to know people and they became friends with us, and then we'd go back to see these friends," he said.

Easterbrook said he expected his grandchildren, the fourth generation of Stilwell's descendants, to carry on the family's friendship with China by getting involved in people-to-people activities.

Last month a series of commemorative events were held in Southwest China's Chongqing municipality to mark 140 years since Stilwell's birth on March 19, 1883. The events were attended by Easterbrook's two daughters and their husbands and children — a total of nine people.

"That was their first trip to the country," Easterbrook said, adding that he hoped his grandchildren would experience the warmth of the Chinese people and give some of that warmth back to the Chinese.

Zhou Yong, deputy director of the Chinese Academy of History of Chinese Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, described Stilwell as a man who had a keen interest in Chinese culture and language.

The U.S. general set an example for learning the real picture of China through his collection of cultural relics and Chinese language textbooks, Zhou added.

— LIA ZHU, XU WEI AND TAN YINGZI

Kung fu master's impact packs powerful punch

By the end of this year fans of the movie star and kung fu master Bruce Lee, who died 50 years ago in Hong Kong, will be able to visit a virtual replica of his former mansion in the city.

Virtual reality headsets will enable fans worldwide to get a close look at their idol's home and daily life, including the serene courtyard at the mansion and the cherished Mercedes-Benz Lee owned, which bore the number plate AX6521.

Lee, born on Nov. 27, 1940, is renowned for his martial arts prowess and artistic achievements. He popularized the term kung fu to the extent that it became a Chinese cultural symbol globally.

Born in San Francisco and raised in Hong Kong, he bridged the gap between East and West, learning martial arts while immersing himself in philosophy.

He died from cerebral edema,

or swelling of the brain, on July 20, 1973, at the age of 32.

His spirit continues to resonate with admirers, including Wong Yu-keung, who is in his 50s and has been a Lee fan for about 40 years. Wong is responsible for the virtual revival of Lee's Hong Kong mansion at 41 Cumberland Road, Kowloon Tong, which was demolished in 2019.

Wong said that at primary school he read magazines that featured Lee's kung fu skills. He was immediately drawn to the star and started to imitate him.

As a teenager, Wong repeatedly watched films and television programs that featured Lee. In the 1990s, when Wong was in his 20s, he placed an advertisement in a magazine seeking Lee collectibles, but instead of being offered items he was inundated with replies from people hoping to get their hands on such collectibles.

Sensing this large fan base, the magazine's editor-in-chief established the Bruce Lee Club, which within weeks had hundreds of members. Responsibility for organizing the club was handed to Wong, who became its chairman.

In 2004, when the Avenue of Stars opened in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong, as a new attraction, Wong wrote to its management several times, suggesting that a bronze statue of Lee be built on the site. After this idea was approved, he spent several months persuading friends and celebrities to give donations, and the statue was completed in nine months.

Four years later, when it was announced that Lee's former mansion was to be sold by the owner, a business tycoon, Wong wrote to the Hong Kong government and the owner calling for the property to be preserved.



Fans pay tribute to Bruce Lee at his statue on the Avenue of Stars in Hong Kong. ANDY CHONG / CHINA DAILY

Over the next 11 years Wong hoped stakeholders proposing ideas such as transforming the residence into a Bruce Lee museum. However, in 2019, due to conflicts of interest, collaboration between the owner and the government ended, and the property was demolished.

In 2019 Wong decided to digitally reconstruct the residence to safeguard its legacy indefinitely in the virtual world. After

four years of work he is ready to launch the project in November.

Wong has more than 3,000 items of Lee memorabilia, including videotapes, books, DVDs, clothing, tiles from Lee's former residence, and even slot machines from Japan adorned with Lee's image.

"If I had enough space at home and at the club I would buy more," Wong said.

— OASIS HU

False COVID claim spreads unabated

Study: Social platforms not removing, labeling

Jessica Guynn and Will Carless
USA TODAY

It's a false, but rising, conspiracy theory: As COVID-19 rates climb later this year, the Biden administration will reinstate pandemic restrictions and push mail-in ballots to influence the next election. And some social media platforms are now allowing it to spread openly.

That's the finding of a new study from Advance Democracy, a nonpartisan research agency, which warns that

in spite of a rapidly escalating number of posts about COVID-19 and mail-in ballots, social platforms are generally not removing the claims or labeling them with fact-check warnings.

Though the claims originated in stories that have already been debunked, social platforms flagged or removed almost none of them during a surge in such posts in the last month, according to the study, which was provided exclusively to USA TODAY.

Social media companies have repeatedly said they aggressively police content on their platforms, including posts that violate policies on misinformation or that interfere in elections. But experts say the spreading CO-

VID-19 election claims raise alarm bells for a rising tide of disinformation as a new election season approaches.

Advance Democracy reviewed posts on a range of social media platforms including X, formerly Twitter, Facebook and TikTok in August. There were approximately 32,480 posts about COVID-19 and mail-in ballots on X alone, the highest monthly total since November 2020, according to the study.

Compounding the problem, social media platforms are not moderating the content linking COVID-19 to election fraud, Advance Democracy said. The group said it identified just one social

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The root of the conspiracy theory is an article Infowars published in August claiming COVID-19 restrictions would return this fall. PATRICK SISON/AP FILE



A sign in Lahaina, Hawaii, shortly after the wildfires bluntly seeks space from the tourism industry. JAE C. HONG/AP

Lack of compassion mars return to Maui

Locals say some returning tourists lack discretion at site of wildfire tragedy

Kathleen Wong
USA TODAY

Tyler Tuipulotu was on a flight from Maui to Oahu on Aug. 19, about a week and a half after the deadliest wildfire in recent U.S. history in Hawaii displaced thousands of residents, killed more than 100 and swallowed the historic Lahaina town in flames.

Raised in Lahaina, Tuipulotu was planning to spend the weekend with friends and family who live in Honolulu to decompress from the anguish happening at home.

As the plane took off, Tuipulotu noticed the couple in front of him put their phones up to the window to take videos and photos, and they weren't being discreet about it, he said.

Tuipulotu knew what they were capturing – directly below was Lahaina.

It made him emotional. "It's highly disrespectful," he said. "I'm from Lahaina, and I understand this tragedy has happened, but this is not for photos or entertainment ... or to show your family back home that you were here."

When the plane landed, he asked the couple to delete the photos off their phone – they hesitated at first.

"I said it in the most calm way," he said. "I'm not trying to cause a problem. I'm only asking out of respect for the people who live here. That's what aloha is; we just don't do that."

Tuipulotu is among the Maui locals who have witnessed tourists acting insensitively as the island works to heal



Properties sit in ruins along Honoapiilani Highway in Lahaina on Maui, Hawaii, on Aug. 17. STEPHEN LAM/AP

from such a cataclysm. They feel the Oct. 8 official reopening of West Maui to tourism – almost exactly two months after the fires began to rage – is too soon, and are worried tourists will be prioritized over the community's urgent needs.

Just two weeks before the reopening, Lahaina residents will be allowed to enter the restricted disaster zones with personal protection equipment to identify their property and assess damage – a stark contrast to welcoming in those

on vacation.

'Such a disconnect': Posing for photos by the aftermath

When visitors first evacuated the island and the tourism industry shut down in the immediate aftermath of the fires, many of the local businesses that rely on tourism took a hit. They asked people to return – responsibly,

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CRUISING ALTITUDE

Prepare for possibility of flight getting diverted

Timing unpredictable, airlines will try to rebook

Zach Wichter
USA TODAY

A Delta Air Lines flight from Accra, Ghana, to New York wound up in the Azores, Portugal. A Southwest flight from Fort Myers, Florida, to Pittsburgh went to Baltimore. A LATAM flight from Miami to Santiago, Chile, landed instead in Panama City.

Flying is usually the fastest way to get somewhere. But if something goes wrong during your flight, you could wind up hundreds or even thousands of miles away from where you're trying to go with unnecessary time added to your trip.

Flight diversions are a frustrating reality of air travel, especially at certain times of the year, but they never happen out of spite – it's pretty much always because diverting is the safest thing to do.

Here's everything a traveler needs to know about diversions and some expert tips on handling the situation if it happens to you:

Department of Transportation regulations do not require compensation or other accommodation for diversions.

Why do flights get diverted?

Off the top of my head, I can think of at least two flights I have been on that got diverted. The first was on JetBlue, heading from Cancún, Mexico, to New York. Severe weather in New York closed the airports, and my flight wound up landing in Baltimore. More recently, I was on a puddle jumper in Puerto Rico from Culebra to San Juan, and we had to make an extra stop in Ceiba to pick up a commuting crew member.

According to Ahmed Abdelghany, associate dean for research and a professor of operations management at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, weather is an extremely common reason for diversion, but crew issues, not so much.

"The common reasons are weather and mechanical problems and medical issues – unexpected serious medical issues for passengers or crew," he told me.

Reg Wright, CEO of Gander International Airport Authority, told me that unruly passengers can also lead to flight diversions.

Gander is a large airport in a fairly

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UAW's president tries new approach

Fain takes aim at 'billionaire class'



Brian Howey
Columnist
South Bend Tribune
USA TODAY NETWORK

KOKOMO, Ind. — Buried deep in the wallet of Shawn Fain is a well-worn pay stub of one of his two grandfathers. It's a reminder of where the new United Auto Workers president comes from.

Two of his grandparents were General Motors retirees at Kokomo and one worked at Chrysler starting in 1937. Nine years later in 1946, the UAW's negotiation strategy with the then-Big Three American automakers was to bargain with one, and then use that template for the other two.

Fain is now in the vortex of the American labor movement. He was elected as president of the UAW in March after beginning his career as an electrician at the Chrysler Kokomo Casting Plant. His election was seen as a sea change in the world of automaking.

"He's always been a labor activist. He was always locally popular with rank and file members," said former Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight, who worked for Haynes International and was a union president at the same time as Fain was at Chrysler (now a unit of Stellantis).

But Fain is negotiating in Detroit far differently than his predecessors. The UAW's contracts at the Detroit automakers expired at 11:59 p.m. on Sept. 14. He said on Wednesday that while there has been progress, the four sides are still far apart.

In the year before the Great Recession put Chrysler and GM on the brink of extinction in 2008, "Shawn was anti-ratification due to the agreement implementing tiers and cutting wages for workers in half," the UAW website said. "Many times, at council meetings, he was ostracized for speaking up against the agreements as they didn't serve the best interest of the Membership."

Fain was asked on CNN last week whether a strike at the Detroit automakers could damage the recovering U.S. economy. "In the last decade, they made a quarter of a trillion dollars in profits," Fain said. "It's not that we're going to wreck the economy. We're going to wreck their economy, the one that works for the billionaire class. It doesn't work for the working class."

Fain also isn't reticent about wading into American politics. This comes as the House Republican Study Group formerly headed by U.S. Rep. Jim Banks advocated a shift from Republican advocacy of big business to that of blue-collar workers.

Asked on MSNBC whether he plans to endorse President Joe Biden for re-election, Fain responded, "We'll make that decision when the time is right. Our endorsements are going to be earned, not freely given."

He then pivoted to "the other person we talked about, the other candidate," meaning Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump. In 2020, Trump carried Howard County (home to GM and Stellantis plants in Kokomo) with 65% of the vote, to Biden's 33%, up from 63% in 2016. In Allen County (GM at Fort Wayne), in 2020 it was Trump 55%-43% over Biden. In Lawrence County (GM at Bedford) Trump carried it with 74%. In Grant County (GM at Marion) Trump won with 68%.

"I'll never forget in the '16 race when he spoke about workers in Michigan, union jobs in the Midwest, he said we need to do a rotation in this country," Fain said. "We need to move those jobs to other places that pay less money and those people will be begging for their jobs back. That's not a person I want as my president."

The Wall Street Journal observed on Tuesday: "Unions aren't the force in the U.S. that they used to be. That doesn't mean they can't pack a punch."

In the coming days, we'll find out how hard that punch is.

Brian Howey is a senior writer and columnist for Howey Politics Indiana/State Affairs. Find Howey on Facebook and Twitter @hwypol.

Use map tool to gauge the speed, worth of your internet service



Tech Talk

Your router is years old, but you don't think about it because it just sits there, pumping connection to your devices. Before you upgrade, know this: You need one that's Wi-Fi 6 ready.

Maybe your router and modem are fine until your internet gives out. Don't just unplug it, plug it back in immediately and call it good!

By now, we all know how important it is to have a strong connection for work, school, fun and life. But what happens if you move and realize, "Uh-oh, the internet here stinks"?

Do this before you start packing

Here's a must-do step: Check the internet before you sign that lease or fork over a down payment. There's a decent chance the prices and speed you're used to are vastly different in your (potentially) new neighborhood.

Most major U.S. cities have the same carriers, such as Verizon, AT&T and CenturyLink. But depending on your location, you could get a drastically different internet speed than in another city ... at the same price point.

The Markup created a handy map tool to check the internet speeds in 45 major cities. Here's the lowdown on what they found and how to use the

map yourself.

It's easy to sign up and easy to cancel.

Even if you're not moving

Markup analyzed data from over a million internet plans across 45 U.S. cities from four of the nation's biggest internet providers: EarthLink, CenturyLink, Verizon and AT&T.

They found the worst internet deals popped up disproportionately in the poorest, most diverse and historically redlined neighborhoods in all but two investigated cities. Oof.

The internet's Big Four also use "tier flattening," meaning they charge the same rate for different internet speeds, which can vary drastically.

How to use the map

Eager to take the map for a test drive? Here's how:

- Select a city from the dropdown menu or drag the map to move across the country.
- Use the zoom feature in the top right corner to target a specific dot on the map, or type an exact address into the search bar.
- Click on a dot to pull up all the details of the address, including speeds, internet service providers and demographics.
- Use the filter feature to narrow your search by demographics.

The map gets pretty granular, so you can see how good you can expect your connection to be down to the neighborhood. Love that.

Now, fix your Wi-Fi

If you're staying put or moving somewhere where the connection is solid, you're golden. But that doesn't mean things are perfect.

If you deal with lags and a signal that drops in and out, your router might be hamstringing your connection.

Where you put your router matters too. You want it in a central location, high off the ground. I'm looking at you if yours is stuck on the floor in a closet.

Common appliances such as cordless phones, Bluetooth speakers and even microwave ovens can impact your internet speed. This is particularly true with older routers.

Next, change the channel. Not talking about the TV but your router's frequency. Are you using the 2.4GHz frequency? Get away from this congested channel ASAP. Network Analyzer is a solid app for help finding the most appropriate channel for your connection.

How you change channels depends on the brand and model of your router. Refer to your manual to find it. Network Analyzer is available for iOS and Android.

Next on your to-do list: Look for moochers and banish the kids to a guest network.

Learn about all the latest technology on the Kim Komando Show, the nation's largest weekend radio talk show. Kim takes calls and dispenses advice on today's digital lifestyle, from smartphones and tablets to online privacy and data hacks. For her daily tips, free newsletters and more, visit her website.

False claims

Continued from Page 1B

media post that was flagged by the platforms' fact-checking systems.

In addition, X's policies appear to no longer prohibit false claims of election fraud, the nonprofit research organization said. Despite the platform's owner, Elon Musk, pledging earlier this year that users "will be corrected" for making false claims of stolen elections, that doesn't appear to be happening, the study found.

And X recently removed language from its policies that banned content promoting "false or misleading information intended to undermine public confidence in an election," according to Advance Democracy. An August update to X's policies contains no mention of removing content that questions election integrity.

The resurgence of the COVID-19 restrictions-election fraud conspiracy theory, just as the 2024 presidential election campaign heats up, comes as no surprise to disinformation researchers.

"COVID denialism has proven to be a very powerful uniting force among certain political movements," said Brian Hughes, associate director of the Polarization and Extremism Research and Innovation Lab at American University. "So, it makes sense that, at a time when our political leadership is being selected, these other mobilizing concepts are going to be thrown into the mix as well."

Trump stokes flames of COVID-19 election conspiracy

On Aug. 30, the official 2024 campaign account for former President and GOP front-runner Donald Trump posted a video on X warning that his political opponents are trying to use COVID-19 restrictions and mail-in ballots to rig the election.

The post earned a "Community Note" that provided general information about COVID-19 and safety measures but did not contradict Trump's claims.

At the root of the conspiracy theory, which also circulated on Patriots.win, Gab, Gettr and 4Chan, is an article from Alex Jones. Infowars published in August claiming that COVID-19 restrictions would return this fall.

The article alleged that Transportation Security Administration managers were told on Aug. 15 that they and airport employees would be required to wear face masks by mid-September, that travelers would be required to wear face masks by mid-October and that COVID-19 lockdowns would return by December.

"This new rollout's timing is perfect for the embattled Biden administration to put the country back in a state

of civil emergency and even martial law to further divide and confuse the public and move forward with the greatest election meddling in history," the article read.

Those claims were false, the TSA told USA TODAY. The agency has no new COVID-19 requirements, is not imposing new mask rules, and has not had a meeting on the subject.

Infowars did not respond to a request for comment.

But Trump also pushed the narrative on Truth Social. His campaign did not respond to a request for comment.

Trump continues to falsely claim that election fraud was the cause of his 2020 loss to Joe Biden.

Weaponizing COVID-19 and election meddling conspiracies

The decision to make it easier to vote by mail during the pandemic prompted a wave of election-related conspiracy theories championed by Trump on social media platforms. In the run-up to the election, Trump repeatedly claimed, without evidence, that mail-in ballots would be abused to elect Biden.

After losing the election, Trump, who is under state and federal indictment for knowingly spreading false allegations of voter fraud in an effort to overturn the 2020 election, continued to tout conspiracy theories about mail-in voting.

Analyses by multiple media outlets have debunked any connection between mail-in ballots and voter fraud and uncovered negligible voter fraud.

Despite all the evidence to the contrary, prominent right-wing figures continue to promote Trump's claims. Several referenced the Infowars article or related allegations, according to Advance Democracy.

"The prevalence of this conspiracy theory, which has remained largely unaddressed on social media platforms, suggests that purposeful disinformation from far-right actors will continue to grow as the election draws near," Daniel Jones, president of Advance Democracy, told USA TODAY.

Facebook declined to comment. X did not respond to requests for comment.

TikTok, after inquiries from USA TODAY, took down one video that claimed lockdowns would be implemented to meddle with the election. Two other videos that invoked the idea would remain up, the company said, because they involved people expressing their feelings about lockdowns, and therefore did not violate the platform's misinformation policies.

Far-right actors are spreading COVID-19 conspiracies because they have become such a potent political weapon, disinformation researchers say. What started as an extremist narrative has quickly gained steam.

Megan Squire, deputy director for data analytics at the Southern Poverty

Law Center, said the Advance Democracy findings mirror what she and her team are seeing in their own research.

COVID-19 disinformation claiming the virus will be manipulated to control voting was already an "evergreen" topic of discussion on the far-right, according to Squire. Now these conspiracy theories are increasingly embraced by mainstream conservatives, she said.

"It started on the fringe," Squire said. "Over time, the percentage of folks that are willing to believe that, or repeat some of — it or at least tolerate those ideas — has gotten bigger on the right."

Platforms are easing off political speech moderation, critics say

Contributing to the problem is the increasingly hands-off approach to political speech on social media platforms.

New X owner Musk has gutted the social media platform's content moderation system.

Under Musk, who refers to himself as a "free-speech absolutist," the company has reinstated accounts previously banned for engaging in hate speech and other harmful content such as political disinformation — leading to a marked upsurge in hate speech on the platform. Yet it has also newly banned the accounts of left-wing activists, and of people critical of Musk himself.

Seemingly following X's lead, social media companies are easing off their policing of political falsehoods, which could have a profound impact on the 2024 election, Squire said.

Facebook owner Meta contemplated a ban on all political advertising but shelved the plan after Musk turned X into a free speech free-for-all, the Washington Post reported.

In June, YouTube said it would no longer take down videos making false claims that "widespread fraud, errors or glitches occurred in the 2020 and other past US Presidential elections."

The moderation downshift marks a sharp departure for social media companies, which beefed up teams and policies combating election lies in 2020 to prevent a repeat of 2016 when online influences including Russian-backed "troll farms" tried to sow election-season division.

Risks remain high. Influence campaigns from Russia and China have popped up on social media platforms. Concern is spreading that artificial intelligence will be deployed to mislead voters.

But content moderation is not just politically sensitive, it's also costly and companies are inclined to draw down resources during a period of belt-tightening, Squire said.

Adding to headaches for social media companies, a legal battle over claims that the Biden administration coerced social media platforms into suppressing posts about COVID-19 and elections is headed to the Supreme Court.

TRAVEL

Bring on the chonk, a true bear necessity

Fat Bear Week begins
Oct. 4, cubs on Thursday

Eve Chen
USA TODAY

It's bulking season in bear country. For months, the bears of Katmai National Park and Preserve in Alaska have been packing on pounds, preparing for hibernation and unbeknownst to them, something else – Fat Bear Week.

"Fat Bear Week is always a celebration of the success of the bears," Naomi Boak, a media ranger at Katmai, told USA TODAY. "Not just the big boys, but the sows with cubs, the young teenage bears, the subadults."

Only one, however, can be crowned champion when Fat Bear Week returns next month.

Here's what fans should know about this year's competition:

What is Fat Bear Week at Katmai National Park and Preserve?

Fat Bear Week is a March Madness-style bracket competition that pits some of Katmai's biggest and most beloved bears against each other in the arena of public opinion.

Each day, fans vote for their favorite bear. The bears with the most votes at the end of the day advance to the next round until a champion is named at week's end.

Why do we celebrate Fat Bear Week?

Fat Bear Week began as Fat Bear Tuesday in 2014 and was expanded into Fat Bear Week in 2015.

It's a celebration of the bears' success in bulking up and the unique ecosystem



Fat Bear Week 2022 champion Bear 747 is estimated to weigh nearly 1,400 pounds at peak. PROVIDED BY F. JIMENEZ/NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

that supports them.

"Without the pristine Brooks River ecosystem to support an abundant salmon run, there would be no Fat Bear champions," according to Katmai's press release.

Why are fat bears important?

The bears have to survive off their fat during six months of hibernation, but there are other reasons for piling on the pounds.

Boak explained the biggest, most dominant adult male bears, which are called boars, get their pick of fishing spots and mates. Meanwhile, adult female bears, or sows, need fat to raise cubs or prepare to have them the following year.

"Female bears have delayed implan-

tation, so the eggs that have been fertilized don't implant until the bear is in hibernation and if she is fat enough," Boak said.

She noted that last year's Fat Bear Week runner-up, Bear 901, had her first litter this year.

What kind of bears are in Fat Bear Week?

Fat Bear Week's bears are brown bears.

When is Fat Bear Week 2023?

The main event runs Oct. 4 through Oct. 10, but friendly competition begins next week with Fat Bear Junior.

"That's cubs only," Boak said. "They, percentage-wise, gain the most weight.

Cubs, when they're born, weigh a pound and by the end of their first year can weigh up to 70 pounds and when they're yearlings, they could be 200 pounds at the end of the season."

Fans can vote for their favorite cub on fatbearweek.org on Thursday and Friday. The winner of Fat Bear Junior will go on to compete in Fat Bear Week.

Fat Bear Week's contenders will be unveiled on Oct. 2. That's when you can start filling out your brackets.

Voting for Fat Bear Week begins Oct. 4 and a champ is crowned Oct. 10.

Over 1 million votes were cast in last year's competition.

What happens after Fat Bear Week?

Fans can still watch explore.org bear cam livestreams through October. Each year, 10 million people tune in to see the bears, starting in June.

"They can follow these soap operas over many years and get to know the bears and their personalities," Boak said. "I mean there are some people on the bear cams who can identify the bears far better than we rangers can because they have eight cameras they're watching and we can only be in one place at a time."

She said the bears begin going into hibernation at the end of October and re-emerge in March or April.

What is the controversy with Fat Bear Week?

Last year, spam bots cast thousands of fraudulent votes, but Katmai National Park and Preserve said it easily deciphered which ones were fake and tossed them out.

"We don't want any scandals," Boak said. "Just enjoy it with your friends."

Wichter

Continued from Page 1B

remote part of Newfoundland and is a common diversion point for transatlantic flights that experience trouble. It's especially famous as the setting for the Broadway musical "Come From Away," based on the true story of 38 flights with thousands of passengers and crew that landed there after U.S. airspace closed on Sept. 11, 2001.

According to Wright, about one in 15,000 transatlantic flights these days wind up having to make a pit stop at Gander. In fact, he said, an American Airlines jet made a stop there just hours after we spoke.

How long do diversions last?

Flight diversion timing is extremely unpredictable and is largely based on what led to the rerouting.

"Every situation is different," Abdelghany said. "If this is the end of the day, you might end up sleeping at the airport" if nearby hotel rooms are already booked up.

Diversions for an onboard medical issue can be handled fairly quickly, while a mechanical problem could result in a longer delay – especially if a replacement aircraft is required, or if the crew runs out of duty hours while waiting for the issue to be fixed.

A recent Delta flight from Accra, Ghana, to New York was forced to divert to a small airport in the Azores due to a mechanical issue, and passengers reportedly wound up spending about 12 hours on the ground with little in the way of refreshments while waiting for a new plane and crew to arrive.

Abdelghany said when a flight is forced to divert to an airport that its airline doesn't usually serve, as was the case in Delta's diversion to the Azores, it can be more complicated for the company and frustrating for passengers.

Wright said that Gander, which had its peak popularity before the jet age when prop planes required stops to refuel on trans-oceanic flights, is better equipped than many remote airports to handle diversions.

"The advantage we have in Gander is we have a facility here that we still maintain that was built for aviation as it existed in 1959," he said. "We have the international lounge, which is a sterile space that's not quite Canada. That facility has capacity for upwards of 1,000 people under fire codes, and there's washrooms there."

Wright said passengers tend to appreciate the ability to stretch their legs

during a long diversion.

Will I ever get to my destination?

Yes.

Airlines do not want you to get stranded any more than you want to be stuck somewhere; they always work to get you reaccommodated.

But, Abdelghany said, the carriers can be constrained in how quickly they can provide that accommodation in some cases.

"As passengers you don't know the big picture," he said, pointing out that severe weather could disrupt hundreds of flights, and crews have strict limits on how long they're allowed to work between mandatory rest periods.

Sometimes, passengers choose to make their own arrangements. He said he was once flying to Orlando, Florida, and his plane got diverted to Miami. Rather than wait for the airline to rebook them, he and some fellow passengers just rented a car and drove the final leg.

Am I owed anything?

Department of Transportation regulations do not require compensation or other accommodation for diversions. Weather diversions are typically considered uncontrollable by airlines, though mechanical diversions may fall under the category of controllable delays, in which case the DOT's consumer dashboard outlines the commitments each carrier has made for reaccommodation.

Keep in mind that airlines are unlikely to leave you stranded somewhere, even if their policy doesn't officially cover diversions. Reporters like me would make it a headache for any company that totally abandoned its passengers.

When my family and I were sent to Baltimore on the way home from Cancún, JetBlue chartered buses to get us the rest of the way to New York (about a three-hour ride).

What should I do?

Wright said it's important to remember while diversions are frustrating, they're not the end of the world.

"Take stock, calm down, maybe have a bite to eat. ... Airlines are going to do their very best to get you moving so soon as they humanly can," he said. "There's a bit of novelty in it, so long as everyone is safe and well, you can always put a thumbtack in a part of the world you probably didn't intend to see. ... We all need to cultivate an adventurous spirit sometime."

Tourists

Continued from Page 1B

of course – and support the island.

"Some have the attitude like, we want to support, which is good to have them spend their money and be respectful," said Riley Bond, who has lived in Lahaina since she was two years old and works at a coffee shop on the west side.

Unfortunately, a few negative encounters with tourists have left a bad taste in her mouth.

Just two days after the fires, Bond was driving past an area that had been affected and stopped to mourn when she saw a family of tourists posing for photos right where a new apartment building burned down. She snapped a photo of it and shared it on social media, where it gained traction locally.

"The photo shows a deeper issue in that I was breaking down at the site of the town where everybody lost everything, and people were taking leisurely photos, and there was such a disconnect," Bond said.

She said it felt like a "slap in the face" to see visitors posing for vacation photos, but for her, the site was "all I've ever known, and it's all gone."

Now, the area is covered in boulders and black tarps. A police presence makes sure no one can loiter.

Not every tourist is like this, but it takes just a few bad eggs to ruin it for everyone, said Jordan Ruidas, who grew up in Honokowai in West Maui.

"Just come with compassion and empathy," Ruidas said. "Come knowing it's not going to be the same Lahaina town you've visited before."

"We've shown you folks aloha for decades. It's time for you to come and show us aloha this time around," she added.

Besides volunteering while on Maui, Tuipulotu hopes visitors do "their research on what's going on in the community" so they're "aware of their place" and "cultural surroundings."

Why aren't some locals ready for West Maui to reopen to tourists?

Ruidas said she was "taken aback" when Hawaii Gov. Josh Green announced on Sept. 8 that tourism would reopen in Lahaina in a month.

"It was a lot sooner than what our community members feel is appropriate," she said. She added that those who work in hospitality should return to work if they feel ready but shouldn't feel forced.

"Just come with compassion and empathy. Come knowing it's not going to be the same Lahaina town you've visited before."

Jordan Ruidas

Who grew up in Honokowai in West Maui

On Saturday, Ruidas started a petition asking Green to delay the opening so the community could have more time to recover. It also urges officials to shift their focus from the tourism industry to the dire challenges faced by those affected by the fires: childcare, schooling, housing and mental health.

Ruidas' children are among those who are commuting over two hours to attend school on the other side of the island since theirs no longer exists. Families whose homes burnt down and don't have stable housing are shuffled from one hotel room to another. Many are struggling with the psychological toll of the tragedy.

In 24 hours, the petition garnered over 3,000 signatures. By Wednesday morning, it had more than 5,400.

"There's a lot of frustration from our locals in the town as tourism opens," Tuipulotu agreed. "They don't want to be looked at differently or repeat their stories every time."

In an emailed statement to USA TODAY on Tuesday, the Office of the Governor said: "The decision to reopen West Maui to tourism on October 8 was made after weeks of meetings and conversations with a broad spectrum of stakeholders within the Lahaina community that included hundreds of working-class families and small businesses devastated by the wildfire." The office denies any claims the decision was made behind closed doors with executives at the Ritz-Carlton Kapalua.

Without the slated reopening, 3,000 hotel workers would be laid off, according to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism.

Some people, like Bond, wish for a better safety net during disasters like this, such as unemployment payments for the affected rather than having to go back to work – especially since so many things remain uncertain for West Maui locals.

"The rest of Maui is ready with open arms," Ruidas said. "Us on the west side need a little more time to heal and then we will be ready to welcome you back."

Kathleen Wong is a travel reporter for USA TODAY based in Hawaii. You can reach her at kwong@usatoday.com

50★States

News from across the USA

ALABAMA Tuscaloosa: A student and his parents have filed a lawsuit against a University of Alabama fraternity, saying he suffered a traumatic brain injury while being hazed as a fraternity pledge earlier this year.

ALASKA Anchorage: The state is receiving \$140 million in federal funding from the Indian Health Service to build water and sewer systems in Alaska Native communities, Alaska Public Media reported.

ARIZONA Phoenix: More than 15,000 people in Arizona have registered to join a new political party floating a possible bipartisan “unity ticket” against Joe Biden and Donald Trump. While that’s less than the population of each of the state’s 40 largest cities, it’s still a number big enough to tip the presidential election in a critical swing state. And that is alarming people trying to stop Trump from winning the White House again.

ARKANSAS Bentonville: Northwest Arkansas Community College saw a 7.27% increase in enrollment this fall semester compared to last fall, the largest since 2019, the Arkansas Democrat Gazette reported.

CALIFORNIA Sacramento: Gov. Gavin Newsom has vetoed a bill to require human drivers on board self-driving trucks, a measure that union leaders and truck drivers said would save hundreds of thousands of jobs in the state.

COLORADO Brighton: Elijah McClain’s mother left a courtroom in tears after prosecutors showed video footage of the 23-year-old Black man pinned down by police officers during a fatal 2019 confrontation, which rose to prominence during nationwide protests over racial discrimination and excessive force in policing. Two officers from the Denver suburb of Aurora are on trial for manslaughter and other felony charges. The episode was captured by police body cameras, and prosecutors are leaning heavily on that footage to convince jurors that excessive force contributed to McClain’s death.

CONNECTICUT Bridgeport: Surveillance videos of a woman making multiple early morning trips to stuff papers into an absentee ballot drop box prompted Connecticut election officials to open an investigation into possible fraud in the mayoral primary in Bridgeport, the state’s largest city.

DELAWARE Wilmington: Delaware’s only HBCU remained among the top Historically Black Colleges and Universities ranked by U.S. News and World Report.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Washington: A man who attacked an Associated Press photographer and threw a flagpole and smoke grenade at police officers guarding the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, was sentenced to five years in prison.

FLORIDA Orlando: A privately owned high-speed passenger train service launched Friday between Florida’s two biggest tourist hubs. The Brightline train is a \$5 billion bet by owner Fortress Investment Group that eventually 8 million people annually will take the 3.5-hour, 235-mile trip between Miami and Orlando — about 30 minutes less than the average drive.

GEORGIA Plains: Former President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, on Saturday made a surprise appearance at the Plains Peanut Festival in their Georgia hometown, the Carter Center wrote in a social media post on X, formerly known as Twitter.

HAWAII Honolulu: Two people died and two others were injured in an early morning shooting at a boat harbor, and police were searching for a suspect, authorities said.

IDAHO Boise: J.J. Saldaña, a leader in the state’s Latino community, has died, the Idaho Statesman reported.

ILLINOIS Urbana: A 73-year-old man has pleaded guilty to driving a car into a plant and setting it on fire and trying to set the building on fire earlier this year, prosecutors said.

INDIANA Indianapolis: Republican state Sen. Jack Sandlin, a retired police officer who had represented parts of Indianapolis and its southern suburbs since 2016, has died, his press secretary said. He was 72.

IOWA Ottumwa: An Iowa man who failed to show up for the guilty verdict at his murder trial has been found and taken into custody, state officials announced.

HIGHLIGHT: WISCONSIN



The flamingos spotted Friday marked the first sighting in state history, a Wisconsin Society for Ornithology member said. PAUL A. SMITH/USA TODAY NETWORK

Port Washington: Bird watchers, wildlife photographers and a few beachgoers were treated to the view of five American flamingos Friday at South Beach. The sighting was the first in state history, according to Mark Korducki, a member of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology. The organization is the official keeper of state bird records. After word spread on social media, a crowd of 75 people assembled to take in the unprecedented view. The birds stood quietly just 25 feet off the Lake Michigan shore. Three were adults, identifiable by their pink plumage, and two were juveniles still clad in gray.

KANSAS Topeka: Teacher salaries in Kansas are generally increasing, but the Sunflower State still lags behind many states in the Midwest, according to rankings by the National Education Association. Kansas, on this year’s annual report by the national teacher’s union, was ranked No. 35 for its average salary of \$54,988 across all teachers.

KENTUCKY Frankfort: Sports betting in Kentucky is off to a strong start right out of the gate, attracting more than \$4.5 million in wagering since launching, Gov. Andy Beshear said. And the pace will pick up significantly when mobile wagering launches, he said.

LOUISIANA New Orleans: The board of the University of Louisiana System has named Kathy Johnson as the new president of the University of New Orleans.

MAINE Portland: A bipartisan coalition of U.S. lawmakers has introduced a proposal designed to cut food waste in half by 2030.

MARYLAND Annapolis: Maryland officials highlighted the availability of \$120 million in grants for behavioral and mental health services to help K-12 students over the next year and a half. Senate President Bill Ferguson, a Baltimore Democrat, described the funding as a historic investment that is critical to the state’s 900,000 school children at a time when kids are facing the stresses of the COVID-19 pandemic’s effect on learning and socialization.

MASSACHUSETTS Boston: Gov. Maura Healey signed an executive order that she says will make Massachusetts the first state to ban the purchase of single-use plastic bottles by state agencies. Massachusetts buys about 100,000 of the plastic water bottles each year. The order bars all executive offices and agencies in Massachusetts from purchasing any single-use plastic bottles under 21 fluid ounces except in cases of emergency. Healey, a Democrat, said the executive order takes effect immediately.

MICHIGAN Detroit: The remains of an 18-year-old Army corporal from Detroit who was killed in the Korean War in 1950 have been identified, officials said.

MINNESOTA Minneapolis: Minnesota officials approved plans for the expansion of a solar energy project that a utility says will be one of the largest in the country with the capability of powering more than 150,000 homes.

MISSISSIPPI Jackson: Calling numerous social science and humanities degree programs “indoctrination factories,” Mississippi’s auditor says the state should defund several college majors and invest in subjects that match the state’s workforce needs.

MISSOURI St. Louis: As Congress considers payments to victims of Cold War-era nuclear contamination in the St. Louis region, people who were targeted for secret government testing from that same time period believe they’re due compensation, too.

MONTANA Great Falls: A former Great Falls High School teacher has been charged with six counts of sexual abuse against children after detectives allegedly recovered multiple pornographic images of children between the ages of 5 and 16 from his cell phone.

NEBRASKA Lincoln: A Nebraska mother who pleaded guilty to giving her teenage daughter pills for an abortion and helping to burn and bury the fetus was sentenced to two years in prison.

NEVADA Las Vegas: The fundraising platform GoFundMe said it has refunded money to donors after a poker player admitted to lying about a terminal cancer diagnosis and accepted thousands of dollars in donations so he could play in a World Series of Poker tournament in Las Vegas. GoFundMe said it has also banned Rob Mercer from the platform and removed the poker player’s fundraising campaign from its website.

NEW HAMPSHIRE Portsmouth: With fall looming and chillier nights on the horizon, Operation Blessing and the city have put the finishing touches on converting a temporary emergency shelter into a seasonal warming center for the unhoused. The warming center will be available for people who are experiencing homelessness and will be open when the temperature drops below 25 degrees during the winter.

NEW JERSEY West Milford: Five people were transported to hospitals after an explosion at a New Jersey home, police said.

NEW MEXICO Albuquerque: The city of Albuquerque will be banned under a court order from seizing or destroying property of people who are homeless. A Bernalillo County District Court judge issued a preliminary injunction that Albuquerque will have to follow starting Nov. 1.

NEW YORK Farmingdale: All the high school students who were injured in an upstate New York charter bus crash on the way to a band camp are expected to recover, according to their school superintendent.

NORTH CAROLINA Raleigh: North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper announced Friday he would let the state budget bill that’s now reached his desk become law without his signature, opening the way for Medicaid coverage for 600,000 low-income adults, with some receiving the government health insurance soon.

NORTH DAKOTA Bismarck: The state Legislature’s Budget Section approved funding for two Department of Transportation projects, the Bismarck Tribune reported.

OHIO Columbus: A county judge put a massive Republican-backed overhaul of Ohio’s K-12 education system on hold after issuing a temporary restraining order, blocking its implementation. The order comes just days after seven Ohio State Board of Education members filed a lawsuit against the state of Ohio and Republican Gov. Mike DeWine.

OKLAHOMA Oklahoma City: One person was injured when shots were fired during an argument between two groups of people at the Oklahoma State Fair, sending a crowd of people running for safety, police said.

OREGON Salem: Billions in accounting errors, millions in questioned funds, and weaknesses in internal controls are issues at several state programs, according to a report released by the Oregon Audits Division summarizing two major financial audits conducted by the division every year.

PENNSYLVANIA Harrisburg: Pennsylvania state government will prepare to use artificial intelligence in its operations, Democratic Gov. Josh Shapiro said, as states are increasingly trying to gauge the impact of AI and how to regulate it.

RHODE ISLAND Providence: A federal judge has struck down a lawsuit challenging the state’s new shoreline access law, ruling that the case wasn’t properly before the court.

SOUTH CAROLINA Charleston: Convicted murderer Alex Murdaugh did something he hasn’t done in the two years since his life of privilege and power started to unravel — plead guilty to a crime. Murdaugh admitted in federal court to 22 counts of financial fraud and money laundering.

SOUTH DAKOTA Mitchell: A subsidiary of South Dakota Soybean Processors is ready to take its first steps toward construction of a multi-million dollar seed processing facility. High Plains Processing, LLC., was joined by investors, project partners and state agriculture leaders for a private groundbreaking ceremony at the site of the \$500 million facility south of Mitchell.

TENNESSEE Memphis: A judge set a May trial date for five former Memphis police officers who have pleaded not guilty to federal civil rights charges in the fatal beating of Tyre Nichols after a traffic stop.

TEXAS Austin: A federal judge has ruled that a university in the Texas Panhandle did not violate the constitutional right to free speech when the school’s president canceled a drag show earlier this year.

UTAH Park City: Jailhouse writings by a Utah mother accused of killing her husband, then writing a children’s book about death, have led prosecutors to accuse her of trying to tamper with witnesses, an allegation that her attorneys say is baseless.

VERMONT Burlington: Vermont has a real problem with Lyme disease, with the second highest 3-year average incidence rate for the disease in the United States, according to Vermont Lyme, an organization that researches Lyme infections in the state. To make matters worse, there’s no vaccine for Lyme disease, although one might be on the way. The University of Vermont Medical Center and the Vaccine Testing Center at UVM’s Larner College of Medicine will take part in a worldwide Phase 3 clinical study to investigate the efficacy and safety of an investigational Lyme disease vaccine candidate. The study is sponsored by Pfizer, and is enrolling participants five years old and older.

VIRGINIA Virginia Beach: Two Virginia Beach parents have filed a lawsuit seeking to force their local school system to adopt Republican Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin’s new policies on transgender students, including one that would exclude transgender girls from participating on girls’ sports teams.

WASHINGTON Seattle: A Seattle police officer has been placed on administrative leave after Seattle Police Chief Adrian Diaz said Friday he listened to an audio recording including comments by the officer that led to the filing of a bias/hate complaint.

WEST VIRGINIA Charleston: A federal appeals court is considering cases out of West Virginia and North Carolina that could have significant implications on whether individual states are required to cover health care for transgender people with government-sponsored insurance.

WYOMING Riverton: Wyoming Honor Farm has been accused of violating an inmate’s civil rights, the Casper Star-Tribune reported.

From USA TODAY Network and wire reports

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GETTY IMAGES; DESIGN BY BEN LANDIS/USA TODAY NETWORK

SOLHEIM CUP

Spaniard delivers dream Euro end

Beth Ann Nichols
Golfweek | USA TODAY Network

So much of the 18th Solheim Cup centered around the opposing styles of captains Stacy Lewis and Suzann Pettersen. Lewis, the cerebral accounting and finance major, came to Finca Cortesin with her stats man and her pages of notes and worked on her strategy right up until the last three holes of the final practice round, when she told Megan Khang and Lexi Thompson that they were playing together the next morning.

Suzann Pettersen picked a lineup on Monday and stuck with her gut. While Lewis worked to keep everyone fresh after jumping out to a historic 4-0 start, Pettersen played catch-up by putting out her best every session. If she played five matches in her prime, Pettersen reasoned, no reason they couldn't, too.

In the end, no amount of planning and strategizing could stop destiny.

Walking down the 16th hole, Pettersen turned to her longtime friend Carlota Ciganda and said, "Is this how you wanted it? It's all yours."

The fiery Spaniard, who had just cold shanked a shot on the previous hole, dug deep and told herself that she was going to win it for Pettersen because she loved her and thought that she deserved it.

With the hopes of a nation on her back, Ciganda birdied the 16th and stuffed one inside an already close Nelly Korda on the par-317th to win the match and retain the Cup for Europe. One of the most talented players on tour who has never closed tournaments as well as many expected, Ciganda seized the moment in front of King and country.

"Of course, it comes down to one match," said Pettersen. "I think it's just meant to be, that it came down to Carlota."

Europe, winner of the past two Cups, needed only 14 points to retain. The matches finished in a tie at 14-14 for the first time in Solheim history after Thompson posted a final point for Team USA in the anchor position. The teams came into singles play tied at 8-8 for the fifth time, and the talent had never been more evenly matched.

"I'm just so proud," said Ciganda, who in the aftermath was carried around Finca Cortesin on the shoulders of her teammates. "I'm just so happy. Everyone here is a family."

Pettersen declared in the closing ceremony that nobody in the family would sleep tonight.

Sweden's Caroline Hedwall, the 121st-ranked player in the world who sat out the first three sessions, put

See SOLHEIM, Page 2C

GOODBYE-OUT

Inside Texas, OU's early exit from Big 12: What did it cost the schools?

Steve Berkowitz USA TODAY and Kirk Bohls Austin American-Statesman | USA TODAY NETWORK

The universities of Texas and Oklahoma, two of the most powerful brands in college sports, will leave the Big 12 Conference for the SEC in nine months but will suffer a much lesser financial impact from the move than the \$160 million that was originally expected, the USA TODAY Network has learned. • The Big 12 announced in February that Texas and Oklahoma will forgo \$100 million from the conference under an agreement that is allowing the schools to leave a year earlier than initially required. In response to recent questions from the USA TODAY Network, the conference said more than \$80 million of that is based on money the schools will not get in 2024-25, the year after the move. The rest is attributed to cuts in full revenue shares for 2023-24 that Texas, Oklahoma and the rest of the Big 12's continuing members will be taking to finance payments promised to four schools that joined the conference this summer.

See BIG 12, Page 7C

COLLEGE FOOTBALL WEEK 4 WINNERS AND LOSERS

Impressive 'States': 'Noles, Buckeyes, Nittany Lions

Oregon humbles Colorado

Paul Myerberg USA TODAY

Easing into the Deion Sanders era against TCU, Nebraska and Colorado State goosed Colorado's confidence and helped make the Buffaloes the biggest story in college football, if not all of sports. Yet lost amid the hoopla was a question few seemed to want to ask: Was Colorado actually good?

The Buffaloes are definitely better than they've been, but that's a low bar to clear given how the program has spent years scraping along the bottom of the Power Five. Whether they deserve a spot in the US LBM AFCA Coaches Poll or warrant continued wall-to-wall coverage is up for debate after a revealing result against one of the best teams in the Bowl Subdivision: then-No. 11 Oregon 42, No. 19 Buffaloes 6. It felt much worse than that.

The Ducks showed off the miles and miles of distance still separating Colorado from the top of the

See STATES, Page 2C

US LBM COACHES POLL

US LBM Coaches Poll

School (1sts)	W-L	Pts	LW
1 Georgia (61)	4-0	1592	1
2 Michigan	4-0	1495	2
3 Ohio State (2)	4-0	1414	4
4 Florida State	4-0	1390	3
5 Southern Cal	4-0	1288	5
6 Penn State	4-0	1225	7
7 Washington (1)	4-0	1194	8
8 Oregon	4-0	1071	11
9 Utah	4-0	1010	10
10 Alabama	3-1	930	12
11 LSU	3-1	844	13
12 Notre Dame	4-1	837	9
13 Oklahoma	4-0	784	14
14 North Carolina	4-0	698	17
15 Duke	4-0	605	18
16 Washington St.	4-0	555	24
17 Miami (Fla.)	4-0	485	21
18 Ole Miss	3-1	404	20
19 Oregon State	3-1	305	16
20 Missouri	3-1	293	15
21 Florida	4-0	140	27
22 Kansas	3-1	134	29
23 Kansas State	4-0	120	33
24 Kansas State	3-1	109	26

Expanded US LBM AFCA Coaches Poll, 5C



Colorado quarterback Shedeur Sanders throws a pass while under pressure from Oregon linebacker Blake Purchase. SOOBUM IM/USA TODAY SPORTS



Rams rookie wide receiver Puka Nacua seeks extra yardage against 49ers cornerback Deommodore.

GARY A. VASQUEZ/USA TODAY SPORTS

A Rams star is born in LA

Jarrett Bell
USA TODAY

His name is Puka Nacua, and if you had never heard of the Los Angeles Rams rookie wide receiver until recently, join the crowd. Nacua, a fifth-round pick from BYU, earned the role as fill-in starter while Cooper Kupp (hamstring) idles on injured reserve to nurse. In two games, Nacua has done a rather remarkable impersonation of Kupp, who capped his 2021 triple-crown season by winning Super Bowl 56 MVP honors. Nacua, who leads the NFL with 25 receptions, set an NFL rookie record with 15 catches against the San Francisco 49ers in Week 2.

The book on Nacua (6-foot-2, 205 pounds) before the draft underscored his toughness, and that is showing up on the NFL level with his propensity to break tackles. Of his 266 receiving yards (second to Justin Jefferson), 111 have come on yards after the catch.

"I think he plays with really aggressive hands, too," Rams coach Sean McVay told reporters while preparing for Monday night's Super Bowl rematch at the Cincinnati Bengals. "You can just see through the catch point and then on contact. He's heavy at contact. He's got great contact balance. I think he made a lot of good plays without the ball in his hands as with the ball in his hands. He embodies that toughness."

D-III player is first female non-kicker to play in game

Jordan Mendoza
USA TODAY

Haley Van Voorhis, a safety for the NCAA Division III Shenandoah Hornets, made history Saturday by becoming the first female non-kicker to appear in a college football game.

Van Voorhis came in during the first quarter of Shenandoah's home game against Juniata, registering a quarterback hurry on third down.

The 5-foot-6 junior joined the team in 2021 after she was the first female player at Christchurch High School in Virginia, where she was a 2019 All-State honorable mention. In 2021, Van Voorhis told Fox DC it was her dream to play for Shenandoah and from a young age she always wanted to play football.

"I wouldn't want to play anywhere else," Van Voorhis said. "It's like a spark and a fire that pushes you to want to go harder."

There have been several women who have appeared in a college football game in special-team roles since Liz Heaston became the first in October 1997 for the NAIA Willamette Bearcats. In 2003, New Mexico kicker Kate Hind became the first woman to score in a Division I-A game, and in 2020, Vanderbilt kicker Sarah Fuller became the first woman to play and score in a Power Five football game.

In 2014, Shelby Osborne became the first woman to make a roster as a non-kicker, according to ESPN, for NAIA Campbellsville University, but she didn't appear in any action.

States

Continued from Page 1C

Pac-12 in one of the most extreme week-to-week course corrections of this or any season. The splash of cold water won't derail the attention paid to Sanders and the program, but it sent the Buffaloes out of the Top 25 and portends another humiliating loss Saturday against No. 6 Southern Cal.

To call Oregon the better team doesn't quite do it justice. At halftime, Oregon had 35 points to Colorado's 22 yards. The Buffaloes ended up with 199 yards of offense, all coming in garbage time, and gave up 522 yards on 7.2 yards per play.

Motivated by one factor or another, the Ducks and coach Dan Lanning were angling for a fight from the opening kickoff, only the Buffaloes provided little resistance. Heading off the field after two quarters, he said, "I hope all those people that have been watching every week are watching this week."

Hype had upended the reality of the situation. Colorado is a solid team, which should be enough given the state of affairs when Sanders entered the building. The Buffaloes will get better, likely topping out at six or seven wins during the regular season. Again, that would be a commendable achievement and warrant placing Sanders in the conversation for national coach of the year.

But they are just barely breathing the same air as the best teams in the Pac-12 and FBS. More losses are going to follow, several likely following Saturday's script.

The Buffaloes and Ducks top the winners and losers from a loaded Saturday (rankings heading into Week 4):

Winners

Florida State

No. 3 Florida State's 31-24 overtime win at No. 23 Clemson marks the official changing of the guard in the ACC, ushering in the Seminoles' return to prominence eight years after ceding generation-long ownership of the conference to the Tigers. Given the trajectory of these two rivals — one is skyrocketing and the other plateauing, and you can guess which is which — it's hard to see how and when Clemson regains control. The individual storylines of note coming out of the win include the play of quarterback Jordan Travis, who has to be seen at this point as a major Heisman Trophy contender, and the under-recognized work done by fourth-year coach Mike Norvell. But the biggest takeaway is in the bigger picture: Florida State is simply better than Clemson.

Solheim

Continued from Page 1C

together one of the most inspiring comebacks in Solheim history. Three down with six holes to play, Hedwall made four birdies and a conceded eagle on the final hole to defeat Ally Ewing and give Europe a chance to win three in a row for the first time.

"You know, I never give up, and I showed that today," said Hedwall, one of Pettersen's four captain's picks and her most controversial.

Ireland's Leona Maguire, the 2021 Solheim Cup MVP, put the first point on the board for Europe on Sunday with a decisive 4-and-3 victory over rookie sensation Rose Zhang with six birdies in 15 holes. Maguire, who along with Linn Grant and Emily Pedersen, went all five sessions for Europe, now boasts an overall Solheim record of 7-2-1.

"I just don't give up," Maguire said of what makes her so tough in match play. "I think someone said Jessica Korda tweeted the other day that I was annoying at match play, and that was the goal this week, was to be as annoying as possible."

"Me and Suzann kind of had a running joke this week, do what Suzann would do, and I feel like that's what she would have done today."

Team USA got off to a rousing start on Sunday, winning the first hole in the first three matches. It was a back-and-forth affair all afternoon in front of an electric crowd. Megan Khang went out first and set the tone for Team USA, taking the unflappable Linn Grant to the 18th before winning, 1 up.

Khang, while short in stature, carried a big presence on Lewis' team with her boisterous personality. She was undefeated for the week, posting a 3-0-1 record.

Ohio State

It's a drive that will find a place in highlight montages celebrating the long history of an elite program: No. 4 Ohio State went 65 yards in under 90 seconds and scored on a short touchdown run with one second left on the clock to beat No. 9 Notre Dame 17-14. Along the way, you saw the maturity of young quarterback Kyle McCord, who made several clutch throws and finished with 240 yards without an interception. You saw more strong play from running back TreVeyon Henderson, who eclipsed the 100-yard mark, and strong contributions from the receiver corps without a standout game from Marvin Harrison Jr., who was injured in the second half. Most of all, the Ohio State defense stood up and delivered a championship-caliber performance that speaks to the potential of this year's team when both sides of the ball are working together.

Alabama

This is going to be a pulling-teeth type of season for No. 12 Alabama given the state of the offense, which may have been better in a 24-10 win against No. 16 Ole Miss but remains mystifyingly poor behind new coordinator Tommy Rees. It's clear the Crimson Tide's best method for success moving forward is to turn back the clock and embrace the sort of defense-and-ball-control game plan that has been phased out of the SEC. The defense stepped up against the Rebels, giving up just 301 yards on 4.6 yards per play, while Jalen Milroe completed 17 of 21 throws with a touchdown and one mindbogglingly bad interception in his first game back in the starting lineup. It wasn't pretty, but Alabama got the job done in a crucial SEC West matchup.

Penn State

Maybe No. 7 Penn State's 31-0 throttling of No. 22 Iowa says all you need to know about the state of the Hawkeyes' maligned offense even after last week's 41-point explosion against Western Michigan. The Nittany Lions allowed just 76 yards: 56 through the air on 16 attempts and 20 yards on the ground on 17 carries. While not productive on a per-pass basis, Penn State quarterback Drew Allar had four touchdowns without an interception while the running game did the heavy lifting outside the red zone, going for 215 yards on 57 carries against what has been one of the best defenses in the Power Five. The physicality of this win speaks to the Nittany Lions' flexibility and adaptability to meet the challenge of a specific opponent or specific defense.

Duke and Kansas

More known for their basketball ex-

ploits, the No. 18 Blue Devils and Jayhawks are a combined 8-0 after another two impressive wins. Duke quarterback Riley Leonard continued his hot play with 248 passing yards and one rushing and one passing score in a 41-7 blowout of Connecticut that was just seconds away from being just the program's second shutout since 2014. Kansas drew 184 yards of offense and three passing scores from quarterback Jalon Daniels and kicked off Big 12 play with a 38-27 win against Brigham Young.

Losers

Clemson

It's been an incredible run: seven ACC championships, two national championships, four trips to the national championship game and five trips to the playoff, all since 2015. Clemson remains a top-end program with realistic annual goals of competing for the ACC crown and battling for a playoff berth, but the dynasty is over. Winning in Death Valley makes the Seminoles the new boss of the ACC and the league's strongest contender for a top-four finish, docking the Tigers into the crowded second tier of good-but-not-good-enough teams with no real chance of playing for and winning the national championship. The decline hasn't been sudden; this program has melted over the course of several seasons, making Saturday's passing of the torch back to Florida State feel inevitable.

Notre Dame

Needing just one more stop to land one of the program's biggest regular-season wins in years, Notre Dame might need a few weeks to shake off this narrow loss to the Buckeyes — but won't get that chance with Duke waiting next Saturday. Making that late stand and pulling out the win would've given the Irish incredible room for error the rest of the way against a fairly manageable schedule that only has one other prime contender, USC. Now, making the playoff requires Notre Dame not lose the rest of the way. Very doable, but not easy.

Sanders (Deion and Shedeur)

Shedeur Sanders' Heisman campaign lasted about a week, though it might be rekindled if Colorado pulls off a miracle against USC. He was under pressure constantly against the Ducks and was not helped by the Buffaloes thin receiver corps, finishing with 23 completions in 33 attempts for 159 yards while getting sacked seven times. And for the first time in his major-college coaching career, Deion Sanders will need to respond to a negative result and keep the Buffaloes on an even keel with the Trojans one week away.



Captain Suzann Pettersen and Team Europe celebrate retaining the Solheim Cup thanks to Spanish star Carlota Ciganda. JORGE GUERRERO/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Thompson looked like the U.S. team's biggest liability coming into the week, but her ball-striking looked so good in the practice rounds that Lewis gave her the ultimate vote of confidence by having her hit the event's opening tee shot on the dramatic drivable par-4 first at Finca Cortesin.

On Sunday, Thompson, the U.S. team's most experienced player, was put in the anchor position for the first time and held control of that match against Pedersen for most of the afternoon. She had a 2-up lead standing on the 17th tee when Ciganda sank her short birdie putt to retain the Cup.

When the celebrations finished and the green finally cleared, Thompson tied up her singles victory to amass a 3-1-0 record for the week and look the best she has all season.

Angel Yin, Allisen Corpuz, Cheyenne Knight and Andrea Lee all put together strong performances at crucial times, and Danielle Kang declared that she

played her best golf all year in Spain.

When it was over, Lewis gathered her young team together for an emotional talk in which she emphasized to her mostly reserved band of 12 that they didn't lose. And they only had 12 months to get another chance.

"I just told them how proud I was of them and just the fact that — I don't want to sound like a sore loser," said Lewis, "but it was a tie, and I think that's a lot for this team to build off of, especially coming over here, coming into this environment with five rookies, a very young and inexperienced team. I mean, this week was really, really good for them."

Early in the week, Pettersen benched Ciganda in the opening session, which had to be difficult for a player who had waited a lifetime for this moment.

Pettersen joked that she had to put Ciganda on a leash this past week: "I mean, she would jump off and fly if she could."

In the end, she all but did.

Astros see selves in Orioles: 'It's scary'



Bob Nightengale
Columnist
USA TODAY

HOUSTON — It was as if Hollywood came up with another “Back to the Future” sequel, this time with the Baltimore Orioles pondering what the baseball gods have in mind for the next generation.

OK, well at least the next 10 years. When the Orioles and Houston Astros collided in a three-game series last week at Minute Maid Park, it was as if they were looking at themselves in a mirror.

The Orioles, the laughingstocks of baseball only two years ago, were watching the Astros, knowing the Astros used to be them.

“You look at them,” veteran catcher Martin Maldonado says, “and it’s exactly how we were built. It’s scary.”

The Astros were baseball’s worst team before the Orioles even knew how to spell T-A-N-K. They lost 106, 107 and 111 games in three consecutive seasons from 2011 to 2013, collecting a slew of top picks, and then building a legacy as one of the elite franchises in the game. The Astros have two World Series titles, four pennants and six consecutive American League championship series appearances to prove it.

The Orioles, who have reached the postseason for the first time since 2016, just two years after losing 110 games for the greatest two-year turnaround in baseball history, are the baby Astros, threatening to create their own dynasty for the next decade.

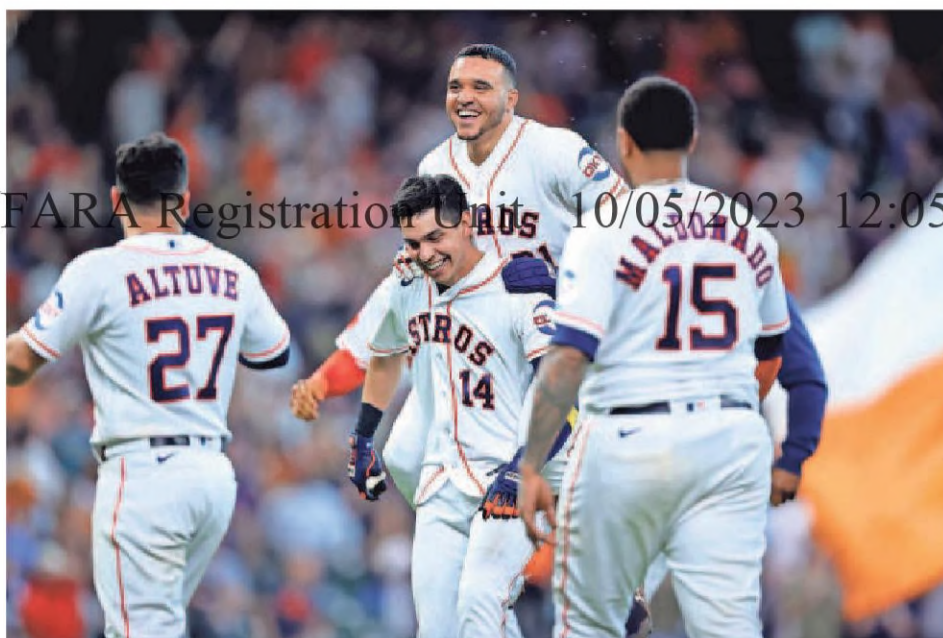
“Their organization is really stacked,” Astros two-time World Series champion Justin Verlander tells USA TODAY Sports. “There are a lot of young guys over there, and you say, ‘Oh (expletive), where did they come from?’ Nobody really expected them to win the division. Everyone was talking about everyone else in that division.

“But you look at them, they got some really young good players, and they hit. Do they ever hit. You play the game right, this game will reward you, and they play the game right.”

The Orioles won two of the three games in the series, and when the two sides waved goodbye, they had a sneaky feeling they’ll be seeing each other again.

Yes, in the ALCS — if not before then. “The way these races is going, we could even be seeing them in the division series,” says Orioles starter Kyle Gibson. “It doesn’t matter. To go where we want to go, you’ve got to beat the best. And they’ve been the best.”

While these may be uncharted wa-



Astros players celebrate a walk-off win against the Orioles last week in Houston.
ERIK WILLIAMS/USA TODAY SPORTS

ters for the Orioles, this is the Astros’ time of year.

This is where they thrive. When these guys get into the postseason, they stay around.

“I don’t know if you’d call it confidence, as much you just know what to expect,” Verlander says. “Playoff baseball is just different baseball. You’re prepared for it. And with the clubhouse culture we’ve created, we’re prepared.”

There are guys like Astros third baseman Alex Bregman who barely know anything else. And he expects to be in the World Series every year he wears a uniform.

You ask him if he expected this glorious run when he broke into the big leagues, and he doesn’t hesitate.

“Well, yeah,” he says, breaking into a laugh. “I did; I really did. I saw the guys in the room. I saw how everyone in here goes about their business. I saw guys not being satisfied and continuing to want to get better each year. Sure, I knew it’s hard to do what we’ve done, but hell, you’ve got to embrace that bull’s-eye.”

The Astros certainly have embraced being that team folks still love to hate, seething over their cheating scandal in 2017, when the reality is there were plenty of teams doing egregious things themselves but didn’t have a whistleblower to inform the baseball world. The Astros insist they didn’t need to bang on any trash cans to win the title that year and have now spent the past five years proving it, winning year after year after year after year.

“The longer this goes on, the appreciation you have,” says Astros reliever Kendall Graveman. “These guys have learned how to be champions. And now, guys are carrying the weight of being a

champion. We’re trying to build a legacy and cement a dynasty.”

The weight of the expectations nearly brought the Astros to their knees this season. They lost All-Star second baseman Jose Altuve for 43 games when he broke his hand during the World Baseball Classic. All-Star outfielder Yordan Alvarez missed 39 games with a strained oblique muscle. Outfielder Michael Brantley has been out for most of the season. Prized starter Luis Garcia had Tommy John surgery in May and veteran starter Lance McCullers has been out all year after flexor tendon surgery.

It’s a testament to future Hall of Fame manager Dusty Baker that they’ve somehow been able to survive, but here they are, telling folks the party doesn’t stop until they’re the ones who turn out the lights.

“It’s been an incredible run,” Astros outfielder Chas McCormick says. “I remember thinking that when I was in the minor leagues, by the time I got up in 2020-21, will the window be closed? Is it going to be over?”

“Well, we get to the World Series my rookie season, win the World Series last year. We go through all of this adversity this year, we got a bull’s-eye on our back, and this is the first time we got our butts kicked like we did this year. But here we are again.”

Certainly, it’s been a trying and frustrating year. The Astros never imagined they’d be struggling to be a .500 team at home. This is the first time since 2016 they have had anything less than a 2½-game lead in the month of September. They’re already setting their rotation up for the playoffs, not fighting for their lives simply to get into the dance.

“There’s been more negativity here

than positivity,” Baker says. “There’s negatives everywhere. There’s negatives in the media. There’s negatives in the stands. There’s some negatives in the office. I mean, you walk around, people are all nervous.

“You’ve got to focus on positives, that’s the only chance you got. Let’s see what kind of character we got.”

The Astros, even after seeing the youthful versions of themselves produce the best record in the AL this year, remain confident. They deeply respect the Orioles but don’t fear them. They still believe they can be the first team since the New York Yankees more than 20 years ago to win back-to-back titles but aren’t making any World Series plans quite yet.

Not with the Orioles still out there, perhaps too young and naive to realize they’re not supposed to make it look so easy.

“What’s impressive is just how many good young players we have,” Gibson says, “and when look at the Astros you think, this team definitely has the ability to do what they’re doing. This is a core of players that will obviously be together for a while, and what’s so impressive is they do all of the little things right.”

“You’d be hard-pressed to think at this point this team wouldn’t be favored to be a postseason team next year, the year after that, and keep doing it over and over like those guys.”

Says Astros closer Ryan Pressly: “They’ve got a really good team. They’ve got a pretty elite bullpen. An elite lineup. A good starting staff. I’ve got a feeling we’re going to be seeing them again. If we see them in the postseason, we’ve got our work cut out for us, but believe me, we’ll be ready.”

Baseball tells us that the torch eventually will be passed.

Altuve, Bregman and Verlander are all free agents in a year. The Astros plan to keep Altuve but may not have the money to keep Bregman too. At some point, the new kids on the block take over.

The question is whether that time is coming sooner than anyone possibly envisioned.

“We know those guys (the Orioles) have a good ballclub,” Bregman says. “They’re definitely one of the best teams in the league for sure. And it looks they will be for a long time.

“Obviously, we would like to have a bigger lead and wish we had played better, but I still feel like we have a great team. I still feel we have a chance to win another World Series. The guys in this room have a track record of executing and winning when it matters.

“This is our time.”
The Orioles can wait.
Can’t they?

‘Booed’ Dolphins swim past Broncos 70-20

Staff and wire reports

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. — Ever hear a home team booed by their home fans after putting up 70 points in a rout?

Well, it happened during the Miami Dolphins’ 70-20 blowout of the Denver Broncos on Sunday at Hard Rock Stadium, with coach Mike McDaniel pulling back rather than making a final push for the NFL record for points in a game.

The Dolphins could have trotted kicker Jason Sanders out to attempt a 45-yard field goal, which would have broken the mark that has stood for 57 years. Washington defeated the New York Giants 72-41 on Nov. 27, 1966.

Instead, McDaniel instructed backup quarterback Mike White to take a knee.

And the boos started — and ended shortly after — as the clock ran out.

Dolphins starting quarterback Tua Tagovailoa threw for 309 yards and four TDs, while running backs Raheem Mostert and De’Von Achane scored four TDs each. Star receiver Tyreek Hill had 157 yards on nine receptions as well as a TD catch from Tagovailoa, who threw one TD to Mostert and had two shovel passes to Achane for scores. Achane finished with 233 total yards, while Mostert had 142 total yards.

— Safid Deen, USA TODAY

Bills 37, Commanders 3

LANDOVER, Md. — Josh Allen was still feeling fresh after the Buffalo Bills rolled to another victory that showed they belong among the NFL’s elite. “I’m good,” Allen said. “Clean.”

A 37-3 rout of Washington was so clean-cut that Allen and his teammates in their all white uniforms barely got



The Dolphins’ Tyreek Hill celebrates his 54-yard TD reception against the Broncos. JIM RASSOL/THE PALM BEACH POST

dirty, despite playing on a muddy field. The defense forced five turnovers. The Bills (2-1) would have had a shutout if not for the Commanders kicking a 51-yard field goal with 46 seconds left.

— Stephen Whyno, Associated Press

Colts 22, Ravens 19

BALTIMORE — Matt Gay capped a terrific day of kicking with a 53-yard field goal in overtime, giving Indianapolis (2-1) the victory over previously undefeated Baltimore. Gay made a record four kicks from beyond 50 yards, including a 53-yarder that tied the score in the final minute of regulation. His chance in overtime didn’t come until after both teams had been stopped on fourth down near midfield. The Ravens swarmed Zack Moss on fourth-and-1 from the Baltimore 46, stopping the Indianapolis running back and taking over the ball with 4:10 remaining. Then the Ravens went for it on fourth-and-3 from the Indy 47. Lamar Jackson threw incomplete as Baltimore called in vain for

a penalty on linebacker E.J. Speed, who appeared to impede receiver Zay Flowers going over the middle.

— Noah Trister, AP

Packers 18, Saints 17

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Jordan Love rallied Green Bay from a 17-point fourth-quarter deficit in his first career home start — a comeback that began after New Orleans lost quarterback Derek Carr to a shoulder injury. The Packers (2-1) scored 18 points in the final 11 minutes to win their 11th consecutive home opener. Carr’s backup, Jameis Winston, drove the Saints (2-1) into scoring position late, but Blake Grupe’s 46-yard field-goal attempt with just over a minute left sailed wide right.

— Steve Megargee, AP

Chargers 28, Vikings 24

MINNEAPOLIS — Justin Herbert passed for 405 yards and three TDs for Los Angeles and the Chargers kept Kirk Cousins and Minnesota out of the end zone twice in the last three minutes to preserve a wild win. Kenneth Murray Jr. made the game-sealing interception in the end zone with 7 seconds left, snagging a ball that deflected off the chest of diving tight end T.J. Hockenson.

— Dave Campbell, AP

Patriots 15, Jets 10

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Mac Jones threw a TD pass, Matt Judon had a late safety and New England extended its winning streak over the New York Jets (1-2) to 15 games. Bill Belichick’s bunch avoided its first 0-3 start since

the coach’s first season in New England in 2000 while continuing the team’s mastery over its AFC East rivals.

— Dennis Waszak Jr., AP

Texans 37, Jaguars 17

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Fullback Andrew Beck fumbled a kickoff and then broke five tackles during an 85-yard return for a TD — one of several special teams gaffes by Jacksonville (1-2) — as Houston gave coach DeMeco Ryans his first victory. Rookie C.J. Stroud threw for 280 yards and two TDs.

— Mark Long, AP

Browns 27, Titans 3

CLEVELAND — Myles Garrett sacked Ryan Tannehill 3½ times and fronted a Cleveland defense that limited Tennessee to 94 yards. Six days after the Browns (2-1) lost star running back Nick Chubb to a season-ending knee injury, Garrett and Cleveland’s defense stepped up with a dominant performance that overwhelmed the Titans (1-2).

— Tom Withers

Lions 20, Falcons 6

DETROIT — Jared Goff threw a tie-breaking 45-yard TD pass to Sam LaPorta early in the second quarter, helping Detroit beat Atlanta. The Lions (2-1) earned a much-needed win after following a hype-fueled victory at Kansas City with a deflating loss at home to Seattle. The Falcons (2-1) failed to protect Desmond Ridder, who was sacked seven times by a team that had one sack in two games.

— Larry Lage, AP

Deion after rout: 'Better get me right now'

Brent Schrottenboer
USA TODAY

EUGENE, Ore. — Colorado head football coach Deion Sanders sat down at his postgame news conference Saturday with his usual sunglasses, jewelry and self-assurance, never once letting up on his trademark confidence despite what happened against Oregon.

His Buffaloes got demolished by the Ducks 42-6. It was his first loss in charge of Colorado (3-1). And it was never even close despite the national Cinderella story his team had become after Colorado finished 1-11 in 2022.

"One thing I can say honestly and candidly: You better get me right now," Sanders said. "This is the worst we're gonna be. You better get me right now."

He called it a "good old-fashioned butt-kicking," and said, "We are all accountable for this. Let's start with me."

He said he was looking at the bigger picture. "I know I have on shades, but I can see the future and it looks good."

Sanders even brushed off comments made before the game by Oregon coach Dan Lanning, who made a stark contrast between his team of "substance" and the Hollywood "flash" of Sanders and Colorado. "The Cinderella story is over, man," Lanning told his players before the game, as shown on ABC. "They're fighting for clicks. We're fighting for wins. There's a difference, right? There's a difference. This game ain't gonna be played in Hollywood. It's gonna be played on the grass."

What did Sanders say about that?

He acknowledged hearing about it.



Colorado's Deion Sanders and Oregon's Dan Lanning meet after the game.

CHRIS PIETSCH/THE EUGENE REGISTER-GUARD

"Yeah, I got messengers," he said. "God bless him, though, man. He's a great coach. He did a great job. God bless him. Take their shots. They won. I don't shoot. They won."

He also said the difference between then-No. 19 Colorado and No. 11 Oregon was "definitely not" a talent gap but confirmed he believed his team is seven or eight good players away from where the Buffaloes need to be.

"I don't say stuff just to say it, for a click, contrary to what somebody say," Sanders said, referring to Lanning. "I keep receipts."

At the same time, he acknowledged that his high-profile personality plays a role in how his team is perceived.

"Teams are trying to beat me," he said. "They're not trying to beat our team. They keep forgetting I'm not playing anymore. I had a great career. ... That's what it really is. I signed up for it, so let's go."

Some might argue that makes it tougher on his players. Sanders disagreed.

"These are grown men," the Pro Football Hall of Famer said. "I'm not out there. If I was out there playing against every coach (Colorado) played against, we would be totally dominant."

How did Colorado get beat so badly?

Oregon quarterback Bo Nix completed 28 of his 33 passes for 276 yards and three touchdowns, leading the way for an Oregon team (4-0) that scored touchdowns on its first three possessions and led 35-0 at halftime.

By contrast, Sanders' son, Shedeur, struggled at quarterback as the Colorado offensive line gave up seven sacks in front of a loud green and yellow crowd of 59,889. Shedeur Sanders finished 23 of 33 passing for 159 yards and one TD — a 6-yard pass that came with 2:51 remaining on a cloudy, mild day at Autzen Stadium.

Colorado ended up surrendering 522 total yards to Oregon and didn't do itself any favors by committing 12 penalties for 106 yards.

"It's not nothing magical or anything they did that was just like, unreal, surreal," Shedeur Sanders said. "It was just we didn't execute our game plan."

The quarterback, Deion's son, also said his team missed star player Travis Hunter "a lot" but that it wasn't the reason they lost. Hunter, a two-way player at receiver and cornerback, didn't participate because he was injured with a lacerated liver last week in an overtime win against Colorado State.

"We played like hot garbage," Deion Sanders said. "That surprised me."

Colorado's hype takes a hit

The defeat deflates much of the hype surrounding both Deion and Shedeur Sanders after the Buffaloes captivated the nation with their play before Saturday. They drew more than 25 million viewers on national TV in their first three games combined. Deion Sanders also was featured last week in a segment on "60 Minutes."

After hearing about all this and then watching his team build a 35-0 lead at halftime, Lanning even seemed to poke another finger in the eye of Colorado when he referenced TV viewership to a reporter for ABC.

"We're not done yet," he said at halftime. "We're not satisfied. I hope all those people that have been watching every week are watching this week."

Deion Sanders still greeted Lanning after the game, hugged Nix and addressed his team's humility.

"People around the country will say this is what they needed to humble themselves," Sanders said. "We wasn't arrogant or whatever. We're confident people. If our confidence offends your insecurity, that's a problem with you, not us. We expect to do well."

And he doesn't think his team "needed" this to learn something about itself.

"That's just like saying when you get in a car wreck or something, 'Oh, he needed that to slow him down,'" Sanders said. "You don't need that. That's just stupid. That's just something that happened, and they got the best of us today. That's just it."

COLLEGE FOOTBALL MISERY INDEX

Message for Lane Kiffin: Troll less, coach more



Dan Wolken
Columnist
USA TODAY

Lane Kiffin has been a college coach for 134 games. When's the last one that left you saying, "Man, that's an incredible win. I don't know how he pulled that one off?"

Here's the answer: At the end of the 2011 season, when Kiffin was coaching Southern Cal, he took a team in the middle of a postseason ban and won at Oregon, which was ranked No. 4 and right in the national championship race.

Putting that aside, could you name Kiffin's next-best win by ranking? It was at the end of the 2020 season when Ole Miss beat No. 8 Indiana in the Outback Bowl. Indiana, folks. Indiana.

The point of this historical exercise is that there's a pretty large sample size now suggesting that Kiffin — who wins a solid 65% of his games — will beat most of the teams he's supposed to beat but basically never delivers the kind of program-changing or credibility-building victory that most coaches need to get even a fraction of the publicity he does.

To be clear, it's hard by definition to beat top-10 teams. It's not something you can expect all the time, especially at a place like Ole Miss that is often mid-



Mississippi coach Lane Kiffin walks off the field after the 24-10 loss to Alabama. BUTCH DILL/USA TODAY SPORTS

dle-of-the-pack in the SEC.

But doing it once in awhile would be nice. And Ole Miss is the most miserable fan base in America this week because he's in his fourth year and it hasn't happened yet.

The Misery Index, you see, is not about identifying the worst teams in the land. It's about digging deep into the psyche of people who live and die with their program and figuring out who hates their entire existence because of a football game in a particular week.

Ole Miss fans often live in this territory because of the school's status as one of those programs that can occasionally

tease greatness only to be smacked back to reality by one of the SEC's blue bloods. You kind of get used to it after awhile. But this time, against arguably the weakest Alabama team of the last decade, Ole Miss fans could have rightfully believed they could win this game.

They didn't come particularly close.

Ole Miss' 24-10 loss was a Nick Saban statement game: Alabama might make a lot of mistakes, and it may not have the most dynamic offense these days. But it's still a lot better at winning football games than Kiffin's team, whose offense was bottled up for most of the game and botched opportunities to make big plays when they were available.

Kiffin, who was Saban's offensive coordinator from 2014 to 2016, might have lost the game at the beginning of the week when he made a comment suggesting he believed cornerbacks coach Travaris Robinson was calling Alabama's defense instead of coordinator Kevin Steele based on film.

Why would he do that? Maybe he simply believed it was true and couldn't help himself from saying it out loud. Maybe he was trying to be provocative and play mind games with an Alabama staff that had its hands full after a couple of bad performances this season. Maybe he was trying to take pressure off his own team by finding a topic that would suck up all the oxygen during game week.

Regardless of the reason, it was a bad idea. Kiffin should know by now you never, ever, give Saban and Alabama a villain. And given his horrendous record in these kinds of games — not just against Alabama but pretty much any good team — maybe it's time to think about trolling less and coaching more.

Also in misery: UCLA

No game is over after one play from scrimmage, but if you are a Bruins fan, you could have turned off the TV on Saturday and comfortably predicted what was going to happen over the next 59-plus minutes against Utah. And none of it was good. The Utes' 14-7 win was about as commanding and comfortable as you will ever see in a game decided by one score, and it was probably destined to be that way as soon as highly touted freshman quarterback Dante Moore threw a pick-six on the first snap. From that moment on, UCLA did not look like a team with much chance to do anything offensively, which isn't supposed to happen when Chip Kelly is your coach. Though the Bruins did finally put together a long drive midway through the fourth quarter to get points on the board, the rest of their possessions added up to 152 yards on 58 plays. UCLA is going to win some games this year, but against any team with a good defense, it's going to be pretty tough to watch.

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FOR THE RECORD

All times ET

MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE East Division

Table with columns W, L, Pct, GB for American League East Division teams.

Central Division

Table with columns W, L, Pct, GB for American League Central Division teams.

West Division

Table with columns W, L, Pct, GB for American League West Division teams.

Saturday's Games

Arizona at N.Y. Yankees, 1:05 p.m. San Diego at San Francisco, 9:45 p.m.

Sunday's Games

Chicago White Sox 3, Boston 2, 6 innings Toronto 9, Tampa Bay 5

Monday's Games

Arizona at N.Y. Yankees, 1:05 p.m. Texas at L.A. Angels, 9:38 p.m.

Tuesday's Games

Cincinnati at Cleveland, 6:10 p.m. Washington at Baltimore, 6:35 p.m.

NATIONAL LEAGUE East Division

Table with columns W, L, Pct, GB for National League East Division teams.

Central Division

Table with columns W, L, Pct, GB for National League Central Division teams.

West Division

Table with columns W, L, Pct, GB for National League West Division teams.

Saturday's Games

Chicago Cubs 6, Colorado 3 Philadelphia 7, N.Y. Mets 5

Sunday's Games

Washington 3, Atlanta 2, 1st game Cincinnati 4, Pittsburgh 2

Monday's Games

Arizona at N.Y. Yankees, 1:05 p.m. San Diego at San Francisco, 9:45 p.m.

Tuesday's Games

L.A. Dodgers at Colorado, 3:10 p.m., 1st game Cincinnati at Cleveland, 6:10 p.m.

Wednesday's Games

Washington at Baltimore, 6:35 p.m. Pittsburgh at Philadelphia, 6:40 p.m.

Thursday's Games

Atlanta at Washington, 7:07 p.m. Arizona at N.Y. Yankees, p.p.d.

Friday's Games

Chicago White Sox 3, Boston 2, 6 innings Toronto 9, Tampa Bay 5

Saturday's Games

Arizona at N.Y. Yankees, 1:05 p.m. Texas at L.A. Angels, 9:38 p.m.

Sunday's Games

Chicago White Sox 3, Boston 2, 6 innings Toronto 9, Tampa Bay 5

Monday's Games

Arizona at N.Y. Yankees, 1:05 p.m. Texas at L.A. Angels, 9:38 p.m.

Tuesday's Games

Cincinnati at Cleveland, 6:10 p.m. Washington at Baltimore, 6:35 p.m.

NATIONAL LEAGUE East Division

Table with columns W, L, Pct, GB for National League East Division teams.

Central Division

Table with columns W, L, Pct, GB for National League Central Division teams.

West Division

Table with columns W, L, Pct, GB for National League West Division teams.

Saturday's Games

Chicago Cubs 6, Colorado 3 Philadelphia 7, N.Y. Mets 5

Sunday's Games

Washington 3, Atlanta 2, 1st game Cincinnati 4, Pittsburgh 2

Arizona at San Francisco, 4:25 p.m.

New England at Dallas, 4:25 p.m. Kansas City at N.Y. Jets, 8:20 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 2

Seattle at N.Y. Giants, 8:15 p.m. Canadian Football League East Division

Table with columns W, L, T, Pts, PF, PA for CFL East Division teams.

West Division

Table with columns W, L, T, Pts, PF, PA for CFL West Division teams.

Friday's Games

Ottawa 36, Saskatchewan 28 British Columbia 37, Edmonton 29

Saturday's Games

Montreal 28, Calgary 11 Toronto 29, Hamilton 14

Friday's Games

Toronto at Winnipeg, 8 p.m. Saskatchewan at British Columbia, 10:30 p.m.

Saturday's Games

Montreal at Ottawa, 4 p.m. Calgary at Hamilton, 7 p.m.

WNBA

Postseason semifinals (Best-of-5; x-if necessary) Connecticut 1, New York 0

Sunday: Connecticut 79, New York 63 Tuesday: Connecticut at New York, 8 p.m.

Friday: New York at Connecticut, 7:30 p.m. x-Oct. 1: New York at Connecticut, TBD

Dallas vs. Las Vegas

Sunday: Dallas at Las Vegas, 10 p.m. Tuesday: Dallas at Las Vegas, 10 p.m.

SOCER

MLS EASTERN CONFERENCE Cincinnati 18, 4, 8, 62, 50, 33

WESTERN CONFERENCE Saint Louis City SC 16, 10, 5, 53, 58, 39

NOTE: Three points for win, one point for tie. Saturday's Games Atlanta 4, CF Montreal 1

Cincinnati 3, Charlotte FC 0 New York 5, D.C. United 3

Los Angeles FC 0, Philadelphia 0, tie Denver at Chicago, 1 p.m.

L.A. Rams at Indianapolis, 1 p.m. Miami at Buffalo, 1 p.m.

Minnesota at Carolina, 1 p.m. Pittsburgh at Houston, 1 p.m.

Tampa Bay at New Orleans, 1 p.m. Washington at Philadelphia, 1 p.m.

Las Vegas at L.A. Chargers, 4:05 p.m.

SUNDAY GOLF

Solheim Cup

Fina Cortesin, Casares, Spain Yardage: 6,903, Par: 72 x-EUROPE 14, UNITED STATES 14

United States 6, Europe 6

Megan Khang, United States, def. Linn Grant, Europe, 1 up. Leona Maguire, Europe, def. Rose Zhang, United States, 4 and 3.

DP World Tour Cazoo Open de France Le Golf National, Guyancourt, France

Purse: \$3.3 million Yardage: 7,247; Par: 71 Final Round

Ryo Hisatsune, Japan (71), \$518,780 Jordan L. Smith, England (369), \$263,968

Sunday's Games New York City FC 3, Toronto FC 0

Wednesday's Games FC Dallas at Philadelphia, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday's Games Philadelphia at Columbus, 7:30 p.m.

English Premier League Man City 6, 0, 0, 16, 3, 18

F1 Japanese Grand Prix Suzuka International Racing Course, Suzuka, Japan

Lap length: 5.00 kilometers (Start position in parentheses)

1. (1) Max Verstappen, Netherlands, Red Bull Racing, 53 laps, 1:30:58.421, 26 points.

2. (3) Lando Norris, Great Britain, McLaren, 53, +19.387 seconds, 18.

3. (2) Oscar Piastri, Australia, McLaren, 53, +36.494, 15.

4. (4) Charles Leclerc, Monaco, Ferrari, 53, +43.998, 12.

5. (7) Lewis Hamilton, Great Britain, Mercedes, 53, +49.376, 10.

6. (6) Carlos Sainz Jr., Spain, Ferrari, 53, +50.221, 8.

7. (8) George Russell, Great Britain, Mercedes, 53, +57.659, 6.

8. (10) Fernando Alonso, Spain, Aston Martin, 53, +1:14.725, 4.

9. (14) Esteban Ocon, France, Alpine, 53, +1:19.878, 2.

10. (12) Pierre Gasly, France, Alpine, 53, +1:23.155, 1.

11. (11) Liam Lawson, New Zealand, AlphaTauri, 52, +1 lap.

12. (9) Yuki Tsunoda, Japan, AlphaTauri, 52, +1 lap.

13. (19) Guanyu Zhou, China, Alfa Romeo Racing, 52, +1 lap.

14. (18) Nico Hulkenberg, Germany, Haas, 52, +1 lap.

15. (15) Kevin Magnussen, Denmark, Haas, 52, did not finish, 26.

16. (20) Logan Sargeant, USA, Williams, did not finish, 22.

17. (21) Valtteri Bottas, Finland, Alfa Romeo Racing, did not finish, 7.

Driver Standings

- 1. Max Verstappen, Netherlands, Red Bull Racing, 400 points.

Manufacturer Standings

- 1. Red Bull Racing 623

AUTO RACING

F1 Japanese Grand Prix Suzuka International Racing Course, Suzuka, Japan

Lap length: 5.00 kilometers (Start position in parentheses)

1. (1) Max Verstappen, Netherlands, Red Bull Racing, 53 laps, 1:30:58.421, 26 points.

2. (3) Lando Norris, Great Britain, McLaren, 53, +19.387 seconds, 18.

3. (2) Oscar Piastri, Australia, McLaren, 53, +36.494, 15.

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15. (15) Kevin Magnussen, Denmark, Haas, 52, did not finish, 26.

16. (20) Logan Sargeant, USA, Williams, did not finish, 22.

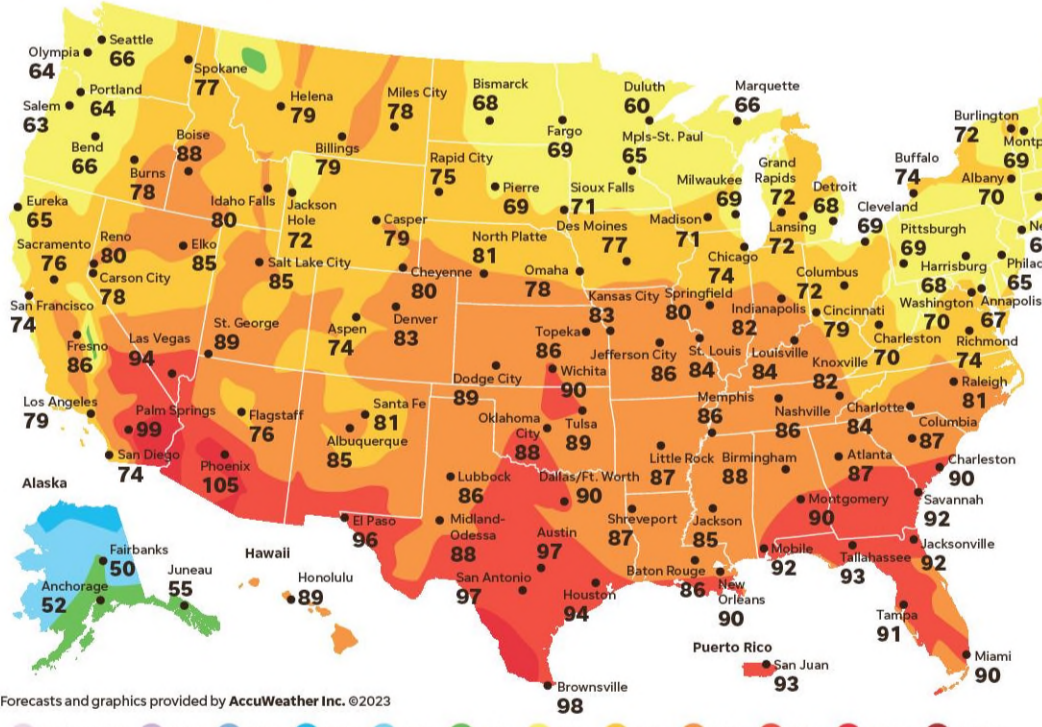
17. (21) Valtteri Bottas, Finland, Alfa Romeo Racing, did not finish, 7.

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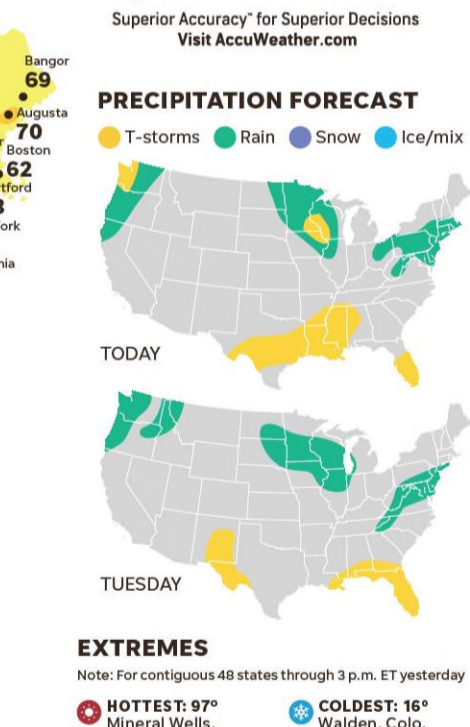
TODAY'S FORECAST

Ophelia will bring locally heavy rainfall from Pennsylvania through southern Vermont and New Hampshire today.

TODAY'S HIGH TEMPERATURES



AccuWeather



TOP TRAVEL CITIES

Table with columns for city, weather icon, and AQI for various travel destinations.

U.S. CITIES

Table with columns for city, today's weather, and temperature for major U.S. cities.

WORLD CITIES

Table with columns for city, today's weather, and temperature for major world cities.

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NCAA's NIL rules face major change

Lawsuit granted class-action status

Steve Berkowitz
USA TODAY

A federal district judge granted class-action status to the portion of an antitrust lawsuit against the NCAA and the top conferences that challenges the association's remaining rules regarding athletes' ability to make money from their names, images and likenesses.

Based on the lawsuit's allegations, an injunction against the NCAA's remaining rules regarding athletes' ability to make money from their NIL could create the possibility of athletes being able to get NIL money from their schools for any reason.

"We're now poised to get the rules stricken that prevent conferences and schools from making NIL payments," said Steve Berman, one of the lead attorneys for the plaintiffs. "That's going to be huge for these athletes."

Lawyers for the plaintiffs in the case also are seeking class-action status for a damages claim that, according to filings by the NCAA, could be worth more than \$1.4 billion. Friday's ruling by U.S. District Judge Claudia Wilken expressly does not address that issue, with Wilken writing that she will resolve that matter in a separate order.

Wilken is the judge who previously oversaw the O'Bannon and Alston cases that resulted in findings of antitrust violations by the NCAA.

If class-action status is granted to all the groups of athletes the plaintiffs are

seeking to have covered under the damages portion of this case, and the plaintiffs then win at trial, antitrust law calls for the monetary award to be tripled.

The ruling was not a surprise. In its written filings in the case, the NCAA had not contested the plaintiffs' request for an injunction that would change the association's rules. And during a hearing Thursday on all class-certification matters, a lead attorney for the NCAA, Rakesh Kilaru, specifically said the association and the conferences were not contesting this issue.

This sets up the case to continue moving forward, even if Wilken refuses to grant class-action status to any of the damages claims. And if the plaintiffs prevail, the impact could be significant.

The plaintiffs' complaint alleges that even in the NCAA's current NIL environ-

ment, which became much less regulated in July 2021, "the NCAA has not suspended enforcement of critical aspects of its NIL restraints, including those restraints prohibiting NCAA institutions from compensating student-athletes for use of their NILs, as well as restraints prohibiting NIL compensation from being contingent upon athletic participation or performance, or enrollment at a particular school.

"All of Defendants' NCAA NIL restraints are unreasonable restraints of trade, are unjustified, and should be enjoined."

The NCAA continues to maintain that NIL payments to athletes cannot be used as a recruiting inducement or as pay for play.

In a statement after the ruling, the NCAA said it expected the order.

Big 12

Continued from Page 1C

Meanwhile, the Big 12 paid Colorado a \$2.5 million signing bonus in late July as it began a new round of expansion, a document obtained from Colorado under an open-records request shows. That expansion will add four schools to the Big 12 next summer, while Texas and Oklahoma get started in the SEC.

Information obtained through open-records requests, interviews and written exchanges with school and conference officials also found:

- While the Big 12's bylaws called for a withholding of two years' worth of their shares of conference revenue, Oklahoma and Texas have had no money withheld by the conference and they won't in 2023-24. The shares – for OU, UT and the eight continuing schools – are being reduced by roughly \$7 million per school compared to what they received in 2022-23 to fund payments of \$18 million apiece for this year to the new members: BYU, Central Florida, Cincinnati and Houston.

- Oklahoma and Texas will be getting no money from the SEC's primary revenue sharing pool in 2024-25, according to the schools' entry agreements. However, they stand to collect millions through football- and men's basketball-specific distributions that already existed under the SEC's bylaws. They could receive additional money through other specially negotiated terms. And they'll get what their agreements describe as "transition" payments funded by ESPN.

"After Texas and Oklahoma made the decision to change conferences, those schools, along with the Big 12 and SEC, chose to accelerate the process and transition a year earlier," ESPN said in statement. "At that time, the media partners were brought in to reach a resolution that would satisfy all parties for the 2024-25 season."

In his second year as Big 12 commissioner, Brett Yormark told the USA TODAY Network he couldn't be more pleased. He said that all parties reached an equitable and amicable decision to part ways and that the Big 12 is now in a position of stability and strength.

"This was a business decision," he said. "Historically the withdrawal from a conference has resulted in a negotiated settlement, and we believe we landed in a good place. Our future is as bright as it's ever been."

Texas, OU settlement left some ADs 'kind of dumbfounded'

Yormark has been a pivotal figure in this latest round of massive realignment that has shifted 17 schools to, or among, the Big 12, Big Ten and ACC. He said reaching a decision with Texas and Oklahoma to depart earlier than their originally planned exit following the 2024-25 academic year was "a win-win for all parties."

Four Pac-12 schools – Southern Cal, UCLA, Washington and Oregon – will join the Big Ten next summer when four more – Colorado, Utah, Arizona and Arizona State – move to the Big 12 and Stanford and California go cross-country to align with the ACC, as will SMU. Only Oregon State and Washington State remain in the Pac-12.

It isn't clear if Arizona, Arizona State and or Utah have received, or are receiving, payments similar to Colorado's.

Utah denied an open-records request from USA TODAY for its agreement with the Big 12, indicating, among other reasons, its document remains in draft form. Arizona and Arizona State haven't responded to records requests for their agreements with the Big 12.

Texas athletic director Chris Del Conte, like Yormark, remarked on the



The Big 12 Championship Trophy on display during Big 12 Media Days.
SARA DIGGINS/AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN

positive outcome of the arrangements among UT, Oklahoma and the Big 12. "Everyone's happy," he said Thursday. "As far as I know, all parties are happy with the outcome."

Oklahoma athletic director Joe Castiglione declined to comment.

Added Yormark, "In the eyes of the public, there's been no better time to be a part of the Big 12. Our footprint will encompass 10 states, four time zones and 90 million people. The narrative around the Big 12 has changed."

However, some within the Big 12 have admitted to confusion about why the league didn't fully enforce its bylaws with Texas and Oklahoma and other aspects of the deal.

The settlement left ADs at some of the continuing Big 12 schools "kind of dumbfounded," Kansas State AD Gene Taylor said. "We fought back as hard as we could," but he said the conference's lawyers advised them, Yormark and the schools' presidents and chancellors that the bylaws were "not as rock-solid as everybody thought and we could be tied up on lawsuits forever."

Despite bylaws, UT and OU receive full shares from Big 12

The bylaws in place in July 2021 stated that any school withdrawing from the conference would owe a buyout amount equal to the sum of conference revenue shares it would otherwise have received during its final two years in the conference. And there was a provision that would allow most of the buyout to occur through the conference withholding revenue that it otherwise would have given to the school.

In addition, the payment of the buyout would not free the school from the Big 12's grant-of-rights agreement. In other words, if a school changed conferences before June 30, 2025, the Big 12 – rather than the new conference – would be entitled to the TV rights fees for the school's home games.

In theory, this meant Texas and Oklahoma faced the prospect of losing two years' worth of money from the Big 12 – and under another provision in the bylaws, any withheld money potentially could have been redistributed to other Big 12 schools while OU and OU finished their time in the conference. In addition, Texas and Oklahoma faced the prospect of having to negotiate to essentially buy back the TV rights to their home games, so they could then transfer those rights to the SEC.

That's not what happened. Texas and Oklahoma received full revenue shares from the Big 12 during a fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, according to the conference's federal tax records. Former Big 12 commissioner Bob Bowlsby, who announced his plans to retire in April 2022, said no withholding of revenue

occurred at that point because OU and UT were "still suggesting they would stay till the end of the (TV) contract (in June 2025). A lot of things were in flux at that time."

Yormark, who became commissioner on Aug. 1, 2022, said at the conclusion of the conference's spring meetings in early June 2023 that Oklahoma and Texas were getting full shares for 2022-23. And in written responses to questions from the USA TODAY Network, the schools and the Big 12 said they will be getting full shares in 2023-24, confirming their departure agreement.

The Big 12 wrote that the \$100 million cited in the February statement is "an estimate based on financial distribution projections. Conference revenue derived from media rights contracts in (2024-25) will not decrease despite the early departures of OU and Texas. By leaving a year early both institutions forgo (fiscal year 2024-25) distributions from the Big 12. The (\$100 million) also includes (the schools') shares of the reduced payouts this (fiscal year) that all 10 continuing members will forgo as a result of expansion."

Texas and Oklahoma also will leave behind a total of at least \$13 million in NCAA basketball tournament money over a six-year span.

Iowa State athletic director Jamie Pollard said had the bylaws been fully enforced on Texas and Oklahoma, "That would have been \$160 million between the two of them. I think we're at 65% of that. ... I don't feel we were shorted or cheated as a conference. I wish (Texas and Oklahoma) were still in the league. But everybody got what they needed to get. ... I would be under the assumption they'd not be paid their shares this year. Someone in the Big 12 office would have to answer that."

ESPN cushions impact

Texas and Oklahoma will begin receiving full shares from the SEC in 2025-26, their "new member" agreements with the conference say.

For 2024-25, the agreements say, they won't get any money from the SEC's primary revenue-sharing pool. But that doesn't mean they will get nothing from their new conference.

The SEC will cover basics like their expenses for participation in certain conference championships and other postseason events. They also will get the conference's standard participation payments if their football and men's basketball teams, respectively, play in a bowl game or the NCAA Tournament.

Potentially more important, in 2024-25, they will get shares equally with the other 14 SEC schools in what their agreements call "new and additional marginal net revenue" that the conference gets from several sources that

seem likely to produce such revenue. One is the College Football Playoff's expansion from four to 12 teams that will occur beginning with the 2024-25 season. The others are "new or amended licensing agreements ... including any and all additional revenue from amended broadcast rights agreements in connection with any modifications to the SEC's football schedule." According to the SEC's responses to questions provided in writing by the USA TODAY Network, a set of such modifications to the SEC's football schedule "includes the Universities of Oklahoma and Texas becoming part of the SEC's schedule."

This money will be coming from ESPN, which is taking over the SEC's featured Saturday afternoon/evening football TV rights package from CBS, beginning in 2024.

And there is more from ESPN.

Each school's agreement with the SEC states: "The Institution has represented to the SEC that ESPN, Inc., or an affiliate of ESPN, Inc., has agreed to make a transition payment to the SEC, over and above all rights fees and other payments otherwise payable to the SEC by ESPN, Inc., and its affiliates, earmarked and designated for distribution to the Institution." The agreements do not say how much this payment will be, and the schools and the SEC declined to comment about the amount.

Meanwhile, Texas and OU are getting other payments from ESPN under contract modifications that will shut down agreements for so-called third-tier rights to events including football and men's basketball but primarily involving sports such as volleyball, women's basketball, softball and baseball, and with OU, wrestling and gymnastics. Those rights will convey to the SEC, and, in turn, to the ESPN-owned SEC Network.

Texas' Longhorn Network was created in 2011 under an agreement with ESPN and the entity now known as IMG College that had been scheduled to run through 2031 and guaranteed Texas a total of nearly \$300 million. Because the guaranteed annual rights fee was set to increase yearly, from 2024-25 through 2030-31, Texas had been set to collect a combined total of nearly \$125 million.

The amendment covering the terms of the network's wind-down includes a payment from ESPN to Texas that is set to be made on or before June 21, 2024 "in exchange for certain institutional rights throughout the 2024/2025 academic year." The amount of the payment was redacted from a document obtained from the university, which declined to comment on the nature of the institutional rights it is providing to ESPN.

OU's agreement with ESPN began with the 2022-23 school year and had been set to guarantee the school \$2 million a year for three years. Similar to the Texas arrangement, the contract between Oklahoma and ESPN has been changed to include ESPN agreeing to make a payment to the university on July 1, 2024 "in exchange for certain institutional rights throughout the 2024/2025 academic year." Also as with Texas' deal, the amount of the payment was redacted from a document obtained from the university, which declined to comment on the nature of the institutional rights it is providing to ESPN.

There is one additional wrinkle to the wrap-up of Oklahoma's agreement with ESPN: The school agreed that, except under specific circumstances, it will not cancel or delay its future two-game, home-and-away football series with Michigan and Nebraska.

The Michigan games are set for September 2025 and 2026, the Nebraska games for 2029 and 2030. The Big Ten and Fox hold the rights to Nebraska's and Michigan's home games. Those OU home games will be part of the SEC's TV inventory for ESPN.



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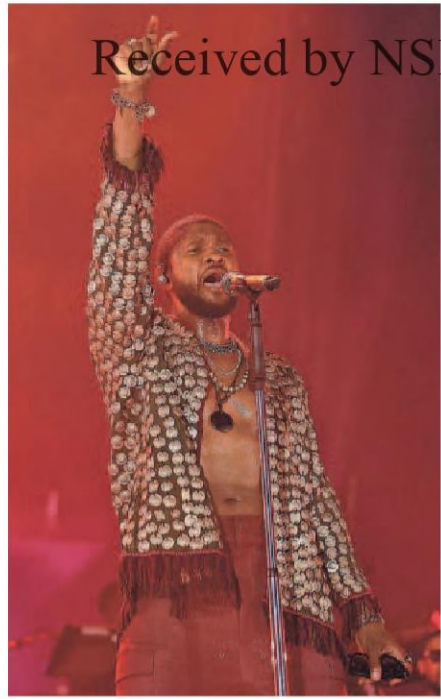
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LIFELINE



JEMAL COUNTNESS/GETTY IMAGES

MAKING WAVES
USHER

Usher is about to be the superstar of the Super Bowl halftime show. "It's an honor of a lifetime to finally check a Super Bowl performance off my bucket list. I can't wait to bring the world a show unlike anything else they've seen from me before," the eight-time Grammy winner said Sunday in a statement. Super Bowl 58 is set for Feb. 11, 2024, at Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas.



IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY
WHO'S CELEBRATING TODAY

Will Smith is 55. Catherine Zeta-Jones is 54. Michael Douglas is 79.

HOROSCOPE | SANCTUARY
More: www.sanctuaryworld.co

Aries (March 21-April 19). Look for the positives in a work situation. Can you see how much you've grown? Celebrate the small wins.

Taurus (April 20-May 20). There are many ways you can express yourself... but what is the most useful? Hone your message when Mercury meets Jupiter.

Gemini (May 21-June 21). Experiencing a personal victory? This celebration may not be loud and out in the open. Count your quiet win.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). Friendships may be on your mind today. Someone you've been meaning to catch up with could deserve a call.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). After making some career moves, you can finally perceive their value. Add it all up. How's your progress so far?

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You're in expansion mode. Practical thinking can help you plan for the future while Mercury aligns with Jupiter.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Work your magic behind-the-scenes. Write out how you want to do things differently.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). People, all the people! Prepare for a social agenda when Mercury meets Jupiter.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Many professional doorways have opened for you. It's time to do many.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Everything may appear right in your world today. A pragmatic optimism pervades while Mercury aligns with Jupiter. Enjoy the vibes.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Feeling ready? You've made up your mind and are preparing to move forward. Go through with the changes.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). The patience you've given a relationship may be wearing thin. Communicate your intentions.

TELEVISION



Reba McEntire takes over a coach's chair after Blake Shelton's departure, on Season 24 of "The Voice." PROVIDED BY TYLER GOLDEN/NBC

Reba is ready to twirl in a judge's chair on 'The Voice'

Kimi Robinson USA TODAY

LOS ANGELES – Reba McEntire is ready to take over Blake Shelton's swivel chair on "The Voice." • The Grammy-winning country legend, 68, joins returning coaches Gwen Stefani, John Legend and Niall Horan on Season 24 of NBC's "The Voice" (returning Monday, 8 EDT/PDT) following Shelton's departure after 23 seasons and nine wins. • "Everybody's getting along great. This bunch: So much fun," McEntire says in an exclusive interview during a recent set visit. "I get to hang out with Gwen without Blake around, so that's fun."

McEntire already is part of "The Voice" family.

She was a battle adviser for Shelton's team in Season 1, returned in Season 8 as a mentor and served as a "Mega Mentor" ahead of last season's Knockouts round.

It was when McEntire was a Mega Mentor that she knew she wanted to have a bigger role in the singing competition series.

"You've got to do it," Shelton told her, she recalls.

"He was cheering me on, and we're both from Oklahoma, so you got that camaraderie going," she says.

Despite her previous mentoring experience, McEntire says becoming a coach has come with a learning curve.

"It's a well-oiled machine and they've been very patient with me,

See **MCENTIRE**, Page 2D



McEntire already has been a member of "The Voice" family, as an adviser, mentor and Mega Mentor. PROVIDED BY TRAE PATTON/NBC

MUSIC NEWS & VIEWS

Take a spin to celebrate One Hit Wonder Day

Melissa Ruggieri
USA TODAY

There is a fine line between a novelty song and a legit hit and a one-hit wonder tiptoes between the two.

There are also misconceptions about what constitutes a one-hit wonder. Just because an artist is primarily known for one song, yet earned follow-up hits that might not have been as successful doesn't make them a one-hit wonder. It just makes them underappreciated. Or misunderstood. Or sad.

So here's to you, A-ha, Psy, The Romantics, Animotion, Eve 6, A Flock of Seagulls, Rick Astley and all the other artists who are unfairly tagged as one and done.

In our minds, the one-hit wonder criteria is simple: The song must be the only one in the artist's catalog to have charted in the Top 40 of the Billboard Hot 100.

To celebrate National One-Hit Wonder Day on Monday, we compiled 25 of the best songs – from the 1970s through the 2000s, in alphabetical order – that fall under that actual banner.

So to those who cashed in and moved on, we salute you.



Sir Mix-A-Lot remains in the public eye to this day, thanks to his indelible 1992 hit "Baby Got Back."

PROVIDED BY SUZI PRATT/WIREIMAGE

Merril Bainbridge, 'Mouth' (1996)

Not the most lyrically challenging song ("When I kiss your mouth, I want to taste it" goes the chorus), the Australian singer took a lengthy ride with the pop piffle. Her debut single bowed in her homeland in 1994 but didn't gain any traction. A rerelease in 1995 landed her at No. 1 on the Australian charts with a U.S. Top 5 breakthrough the following year.

Toni Basil, 'Mickey' (1982)

Originally recorded by the British group Racey, the song was flipped from "Kitty" to "Mickey" under Basil's command. Admirably, the choreographer-briefly-turned-singer managed to turn what is primarily a cheerleading chant into a No. 1 hit.

Big Country, 'In a Big Country' (1983)

Evoking the traditional sounds of their native Scotland – guitars ingeniously engineered to sound like bagpipes – and coupling them with a theme of embracing life, the quartet infiltrated MTV with a unique offering. But it was really the voice of singer Stuart Adamson that gave the song its dreamy verve.

Chumbawamba, 'Tubthumping' (1997)

There is some irony to the fact that a band known as anarchist punks that flitted around the U.K. charts since the mid-'80s ("Revolution," "Enough Is Enough") would land their biggest hit at home and in the U.S. with a

See **WONDER**, Page 2D

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Wonder

Continued from Page 1D

dancey-rock song. Yes, this is the “I get knocked down, but I get up again” one.

Deep Blue Something, ‘Breakfast at Tiffany’s’ (1995)

Though inspired by Roman Holiday, the song secured its title from another Audrey Hepburn movie, the 1961 rom-com that the protagonists in the lyrics “both kinda liked.” The Texas band, founded by brothers Todd and Toby Pipes while in college, scored a worldwide hit with their strummy tune.

Dexys Midnight Runners, ‘Come on Eileen’ (1982)

A No. 1 hit with a ubiquitous video on MTV, the foot-stomper from the British Celtic-folk rockers deployed fiddles, a pub singalong chorus and the lilting vocals of Kevin Rowland to form one of the most unique hits of the ’80s. “Too-ra-loo-rye-ay,” indeed.

Eagle-Eye Cherry, ‘Save Tonight’ (1997)

The son of jazz artist Don Cherry and designer Moki Cherry, as well as the half-brother of Neneh “Buffalo Stance” Cherry, Eagle-Eye hit Top 5 success with his debut single that blended soul, rock and roughly strummed guitars.

Norman Greenbaum, ‘Spirit in the Sky’ (1970)

Though he was responsible for the ’60s-era novelty tune “The Eggplant That Ate Chicago,” the Massachusetts-born singer raised Orthodox Jewish says his anthem with the fuzzy guitar notes was inspired not by Christianity, but by Westerns. The spiritual element came from watching “mean and nasty varmints get shot and they wanted to die with their boots on. So to me, that was spiritual, they wanted to die with their boots on,” Greenbaum said in a 2011 interview.

Hoobastank, ‘The Reason’ (2003)

The power ballad from the California-rooted quartet was indicative of the sound of the era when bands such as Alien Ant Farm and Breaking Benjamin roamed the charts. Theirs was just a whinier approach that nonetheless earned them a 4-million-selling single.

Terry Jacks, ‘Seasons in the Sun’ (1973)

Jacks was more of a constant in his native Canada, but his gently rendered ballad with its standalone riff sold more than 14 million copies worldwide. Told from the standpoint of a dying man – it’s based on a 1961 Belgian song, “Le Moribond” – it’s a heartbreaking litany of goodbyes.

Donna Lewis, ‘I Love You Always Forever’ (1996)

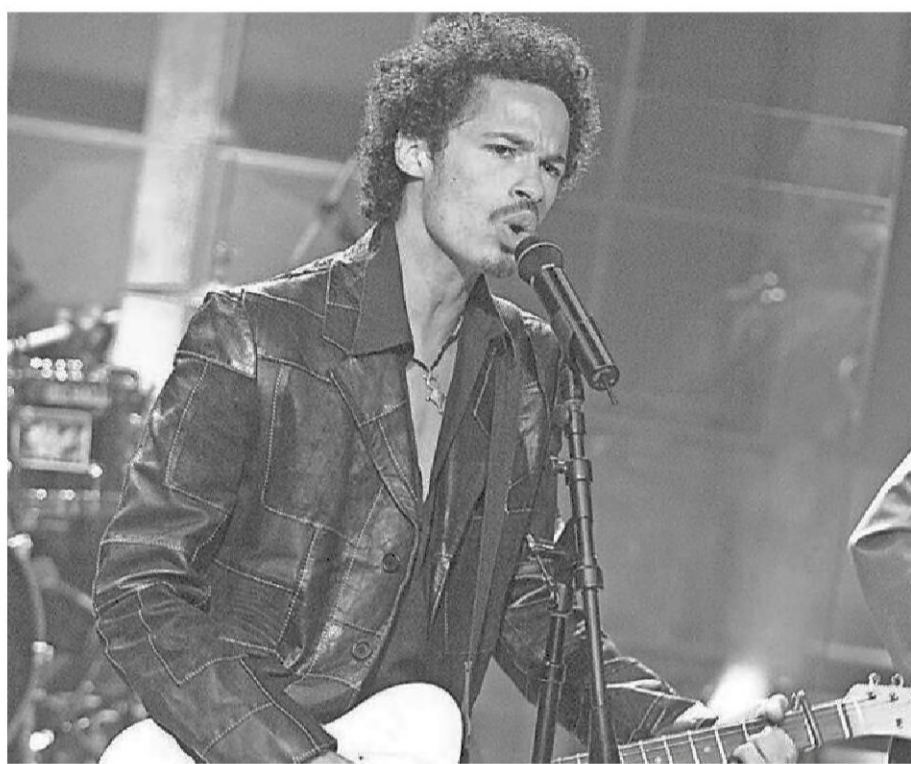
The Welsh singer found a successful groove early on with her debut single, a loping pop song instilled with breathily delivered lyrics about unmitigated love. The pulsing declaration of the chorus – “I love you always forever, near and far closer together,” is inspired by a quote from the novel “Love for Lydia” by English author H.E. Bates.

Len, ‘Steal My Sunshine’ (1999)

Sometimes you hear a song and it just sounds like a one-hit wonder. This – and “Macarena” – is that song. But its bouncy backbeat married to a prominent sample of Andrea True Connection’s 1976 disco classic, “More, More, More” makes it irresistible.



Los Del Rio became a sensation in 1997 with “Macarena.” RODRIGO VARELA / GETTY IMAGES



The son of jazz musician Don Cherry, Eagle-Eye Cherry had a major hit with “Save Tonight.” KEVIN WINTER / GETTY IMAGES

Los Del Rio, ‘Macarena’ (1995)

You know a song has entered the zeitgeist when it comes equipped with its own dance moves. Of course, it was fun at the time. Of course, that rhythm – popular in Cuban and Brazilian music – was gonna get you. But we’re OK never hearing it ever again, especially in a public setting.

M, ‘Pop Muzik’ (1979)

M is primarily British musician Robin Scott, who hit No. 1 in the U.S., Australia and the U.K. with this spongy slice of synth pop that is more about dancing than making sense. U2 resurrected it as a cheeky opening to its wonderfully garish PopMart Tour.

Musical Youth, ‘Pass the Dutchie’ (1982)

The young British-Jamaican group found an ingenious way to earn a Top 10 hit with a reggae-fied ode to lighting up. Even though the song, which combined elements of U Brown’s “Gimme the Music” and Mighty Diamonds’ “Pass the Kouchie” contained lyrics scrubbed of their original meaning, everyone knew what those lads were passing.

New Radicals, ‘You Get What You Give’ (1998)

The duo of Gregg Alexander and former actress Danielle Brisebois represented the alt-rock-power-pop genre popularized in the late ’90s

with this anthemic earworm. The song’s closing patter might feel dated with references to Courtney Love and Marilyn Manson, but allusions to health insurance and cloning endure.

Owl City, ‘Fireflies’ (2009)

The electronica project of Minnesotan Adam Young resulted in this dewy-eyed confection prompted by the musician’s insomnia. Young’s debut, which he recorded primarily in his parents’ basement, sold more than 10 million copies.

Pilot, ‘Magic’ (1974)

It makes sense that this ditty from the Scottish-born band bursts with brightness since band member and co-writer David Paton has said it was inspired by the sunrise on Blackford Hill in Edinburgh. The Top 5 hit for Pilot was covered by Selena Gomez in 2009.

Daniel Powter, ‘Bad Day’ (2005)

It’s hard to hear this hug of universal emotion without picturing Powter, in his era-perfect knit cap, on the cover of the single. The midtempo chugger, which reached No. 1, was Powter’s first and last hit, though he returned to Billboard’s Adult Pop Airplay chart in 2012 with “Cupid.”

Sir Mix-a-Lot, ‘Baby Got Back’ (1992)

Was the Seattle rapper’s spiel about

his body type preferences a genuine ode to women sporting curves or blatant objectification? That’s a debate that probably sounds different today compared with 30 years ago.

Starland Vocal Band, ‘Afternoon Delight’ (1976)

Perhaps one of the most maligned songs in pop history, this folk-meets-ABBA salute to daytime dalliances was in fact inspired by a happy hour menu at a restaurant in Washington, D.C.’s, Georgetown neighborhood that advertised “afternoon delights.” Along with their No. 1 hit, the band scooped up a pair of Grammy Awards in 1977.

Taco, ‘Puttin’ on the Ritz’ (1982)

Of all of the oddities to grace MTV in the ’80s, one of the most indelible sights was Indonesian-Dutch singer Taco gliding around in a tux and tails to Irving Berlin’s 1927 composition. The finger-snapping construction paired nicely with the song’s message of elegance and style.

Tag Team, ‘Whoomp! (There It Is)’ (1993)

It’s goofy and nonsensical, but it’s also undeniable that when this rap pumper from Atlanta’s Cecil “DC the Brain Supreme” Glenn and Steve “Rolln” Gibson blasts through the speakers at a sporting event, wedding, exercise class, or anywhere else people want to move, the effect is magnetic. The duo owes many thanks to Geico for resurrecting the song in a 2021 ad campaign featuring the duo singing “Scoop! (There It Is)” while flinging ice cream.

Tonic, ‘If You Could Only See’ (1997)

The band’s debut album, “Lemon Parade,” achieved platinum status and their third single from the release climbed to No. 11 despite being the poster child for generic alt-rock. Their Top 40 presence disappeared, but the Los Angeles outfit popped up on Billboard’s Adult Pop and Mainstream Rock charts in the ensuing years.

Tracey Ullman, ‘They Don’t Know’ (1983)

The brilliant actress/comedian released two albums in the early ’80s and found reasonable success in her native U.K. But her sweet, chiming version of a song written by Kirsty MacColl in 1979 proved the bulldozer on the U.S. charts. A cameo by a certain cute Beatle in the accompanying video didn’t hurt, either.

McEntire

Continued from Page 1D

which I’m very grateful for,” she says.

McEntire wants to help in any way I possibly can’

Though an inarguably accomplished musician, with more than 30 studio albums and membership in the Country Music Hall of Fame, McEntire isn’t here to nitpick the technical aspects of the contestants’ performances.

Instead, she’ll “support and encourage and help in any way I possibly can,” she says. That means nurturing them as performers by imparting “life lessons you can use in anything you go forward with. While I have their attention, I want

to give them that ... advice from life experiences that they can use,” she says.

“The music and melody (are) technical things that I don’t have. I’m not a perfectionist, so it doesn’t really bother me if it’s a little flat or sharp.”

“If your heart and soul is in it and I felt something, we’ve done our job.”

McEntire’s talent for encouraging young musicians is apparent as she coaches the contestants ahead of Season 23’s Battles. The most common question they ask of her is what to do about nerves.

It starts with wearing comfortable shoes, and a positive mindset and confidence – they should make sure to have fun. But if all else fails, “the crowd loves a boo boo,” she says, telling a story about how a slip-up she made during a concert turned into a fun, impromptu experience with that crowd.



Reba McEntire brings a “Reba’s Tots” cart to “The Voice” Season 24 blind auditions. PROVIDED BY TYLER GOLDEN/NBC

Reba is coming back for ‘The Voice’ Season 25, too

McEntire’s initial hesitation in joining “The Voice” years ago was that she’d discourage talented musicians when they don’t advance in the show. But she now has a different perspective.

“They’re going to win whether they win this competition or not. Being in front of this many people, the exposure that they’re getting: Unfathomable,” she says. “When I got started, there wasn’t anything like this. And you just had to continue singing wherever you could because you never know who’s going to be in the audience.”

McEntire will be back for Season 25 next spring, joining Legend and Chance the Rapper as well as Dan + Shay.

“I mean, who wouldn’t wanna hang out with folks like that?” McEntire says.

USA TODAY CROSSWORD

EDITED Amanda Rafkin BY Matthew Stock

WHAT I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR (REPRISE) (FREESTYLE)

- ACROSS 1 Competing in a no-blinking contest 8 Tall piece of headgear 14 Umbrella seen in "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte" 15 Tropical reptile 16 "You've really ___ yourself this time!" 17 Species of small songbird 18 "What terrible luck" 19 Currently unstoppable "r u serious m" 22 Sounds of books falling off shelves 25 Grandmas 26 Garden tool used before sowing seeds 27 Variant 29 A set of them might hold an audiobook 30 Tirade 31 "ASAP!" 33 Tennis legend Monica 34 "Find the guy in a red-and-white-striped shirt" book 36 Does a pirouette 38 "Ouch, what a diss!" 39 Story 40 Primatologist's animal 41 Silly people 45 Finish up 46 "Noble" horse 48 Drum used in a drumroll 49 A shot from behind the arc is worth three (Abbr.) 50 Jacuzzi 52 Laser tag sound 53 Toxic substances 55 When kindergarteners sleep on mats

Crossword grid with numbers 1-61 and some pre-filled letters.

© Andrews McMeel

- 58 Make it through 59 Kindle or Nook, e.g. 60 Oozed 61 Poseidon and Tangaroa

DOWN

- 1 Parts of watering cans 2 Worked as an educator 3 Jazz saxophonist Blythe 4 "Totally rockin'" 5 Prefix meaning "equal" 6 Off-limits action 7 Actress Close 8 Pageant crowns 9 "Shrek" and others 10 Tavern 11 Crushed ice-and-coconut milk dessert from the Philippines 12 Organism in which clownfish live 13 Circles with bull's-eyes 17 Curtains cover them

- 20 Informative one-page document 23 Member of the Scooby-Doo gang who always has something handy in her purse 24 Fathers of racehorses 28 Neither here ___ there 30 Test-grader's writing tool 32 Website with virtual animals 33 Shredded cabbage side dishes 34 Risk-taking part of one's personality 35 Picnic pest 36 Treeless grasslands 37 Company with a color of the year

Friday's Answer grid with words: OBVI, ARM, NCA, PEEL, SEEP, SOUND, EARL, MANT, WRENS, RUBBER, DUCK, TIE, ATSEA, SOFABED, TRYIT, TITSANO, SPA, TAHOE, ODDS, WATCH, YOUR, TONGUE, ALOO, PRIMO, EPS, MELODY, SEITZE, POLLUTE, ENSUE, WEDDING, DRESS, LIGHT, YODA, AXIS, BASIS, SWAP, GENA, SINAP, ASS, EDGY.

CROSSWORDS ON YOUR PHONE get our crossword app

TXTPERT

Small crossword puzzle with 10 numbered squares.

- Across 1. 762538 5. 9255 6. 233 7. 2528837 9. 2326 10. 9273
- Down 1. 739 2. 235527 3. 82253 4. 653 7. 2699 8. 882

© USA TODAY and Rich Coulter

Today's theme: House and home. Includes a keypad and a grid for decoding clues.

Friday's solution grid for the theme puzzle.

Numbers

More puzzles: puzzles.usatoday.com Want solutions? answers.usatoday.com Feedback: feedback@usatoday.com



SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 (no repeats).

9x9 Sudoku grid with some numbers pre-filled.

9/25

SUDOKU FUSION ON YOUR PHONE puzzles.usatoday.com

© Andrews McMeel

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x2 box contains the numbers 1 through 6 (no repeats).

3x6 grid for a smaller Sudoku puzzle.

DIFFICULTY RATING ★☆☆☆☆

Friday's Answers

Grid of numbers for Friday's answers.

9/22

KENKEN

KenKen grid with cages and target numbers.

©2023 KenKen Puzzle, LLC www.kenken.com

- 1. Each row and column must contain the numbers 1 through 4 (easy) or 1 through 6 (challenging) without repeating.

FRIDAY'S SOLUTION

Solution grid for the KenKen puzzle.

- 2. The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes, called cages, must combine using the given operation (in any order) to produce the target numbers in the top-left corners.
- 3. Freebies: fill in single-box cages with the number in the top-left corner.

KUBOK 16

By Davide Coppo Difficulty: HARD

Kubok 16 grid with circled numbers and a 4x4 solution grid.

Solution to Friday's puzzle

Enter the missing numbers from 1 to 16 without repetitions so that the sum of the four numbers in each row and column is the same as the corresponding circled number.

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Words

WORD ROUNDUP

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

- Find and Circle: Three types of TV programs Three flowing bodies of water Three state capitals Three eight-letter mammals Two four-letter trees starting with P

Friday's answer: PORK FORK CORK CORE BORN MORE PORT / FUCHSIA CRIMSON MAGENTA / RAIN SNOW / FIRST SECOND / MICHIGAN MAINE

Word search grid with a diagonal line and a list of words.

QUICKCROSS

By John Wilmes

9/25

QuickCross puzzle with clues and a grid.

UP & DOWN WORDS

By David L. Hoyt and Russell L. Hoyt

9/25

Up & Down Words puzzle with clues and a grid.

BONUS CROSSWORD

- ACROSS 1 Kansas's capital 7 Fundraiser lottery 13 Greed 15 Ex-soldier 16 Started up again 17 Set apart 18 Support 19 Valuable stone 21 "Star Trek: Deep Space ___" 22 Less risky 25 Tyrannosaurus ___ 26 Go wrong 29 Actor — Nielsen 31 Forefoot 34 — or later 36 Catchall abbr. 37 "Dr. Zhivago" role 38 Most excellent 40 Adjusted 42 Lost 43 Sacred chest in Judaism 45 Antiseptic 46 "For sure!" 47 Game period 49 Heavy-hearted 50 Cushion 52 Vast amount 54 Blessing 56 Like — peas in a pod 57 Nosebag filler 61 Pudding variety 63 Help develop 66 Desert 67 Johnny Depp pirate role 68 Struck 69 Workout clothes
- DOWN 1 Waterproof cover 2 More than 3 El —, Texas 4 Burst forth 5 — Kardashian 6 Virtuoso 7 Matter, in law 8 Make expiation 9 "Odd Couple" role 10 Nanny Fine of TV 11 Tardy 12 Opp. of WSW 14 Moves slowly 15 Energy 20 — Stanley Gardner 23 Toward the sheltered side 24 Fantastic sea creature 25 Lean back 26 Composition 27 Stir up 28 Lassoos

FRIDAY'S SOLUTION

Grid for Friday's solution crossword.

9-25-23 © 2023 UFS, Dist. by Andrews McMeel for UFS

- 30 "Give ___ rest!" 31 Europe's City of Light 32 Place of contest 33 Walked through water 35 New Deal org. 37 Showed the way 39 Directional suffix 41 Old garment 44 "Before you — it!" 48 Desktop pictures 50 Aim 51 Battery terminal 53 — Dame 54 Innocent one 55 Milky stone 56 Get brown at the beach 58 Atmosphere 59 Horse's gait 60 Stitches 61 Bar bill 62 Atlantic catch 64 — and downs 65 Cold and wet

DON'T QUOTE ME

English author Gilbert K. Chesterton offers this thought.

Quote puzzle: Rearrange the words to complete the quote. BUT ENEMIES GOD MAKE NEIGHBOR OUR OUR WE MAKE FRIENDS; WE OUR; MAKES NEXT-DOOR

Friday's Answer: "Shopping is better than sex. If you're not satisfied after shopping you can make an exchange for something you really like." - Adrienne Gusoff

7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution.

- CLUES 1 like a recliner (11) 2 Olympic recognition (5) 3 library visitors (7) 4 paddling a little boat (8) 5 beach souvenirs (9) 6 they have lots of patients (6) 7 a stone's throw away (6)

Word bank for 7 Little Words: FO, COM, AB, REA, ME, LE, DE, SHE, NUR, OE, NEA, SES, RT, RS, ING, RBY, SEA, LLS, CAN, DAL

Friday's Answers: 1. STETHOSCOPE 2. VOLCANOES 3. MOTOR 4. VENTRICLES 5. SELTZER 6. ASHLEY 7. MILE

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Jumble puzzle with a cartoon and scrambled words: DMMEO, LONCOY, UFBTEF.

FRIDAY'S Jumbles: GAMUT SENSE SOCIAL BANNER Answer: Noah Webster took the selling of his dictionaries very seriously and — MEANT BUSINESS

Received by NSD/FARA Registration Unit 10/05/2023 12:05:22 PM

MUSIC NEWS & VIEWS

Gabriel is cerebral and celebratory

Melissa Ruggieri
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — With a tip of his cap and a bow, Peter Gabriel emerged on stage to address the crowd.

He started his chat about time, which “has every single one of us in its claws,” moved on to imagination, which “helps us escape,” and grimly joked about artificial intelligence and the increasing difficulty in “telling the real from the fake.”

This professorial approach would blend with extraordinary multimedia and artsy production, stellar musicianship and the live presentation of nearly every song on his long-awaited “I/O” album — and most of his hits — for three hours (including a 15-minute set break).

Gabriel’s tour, which rolled into Capital One Arena on Wednesday, kicked off in Europe in May before starting a 20-show stateside run last week that lasts through mid-October. It’s a rare outing for the 73-year-old creator, who toured with Sting in 2016 and last hit the road solo more than a decade ago.

‘Sledgehammer’?

Yes, but also lots of new songs

The quiet opening of this scholastic adventure found him sitting, campfire-style, under the massive visage of a moon with “the king of the bottom end,” bassist Tony Levin, renowned for his work in King Crimson as well as his 47-year partnership with Gabriel.

With Gabriel cradling a keyboard on his lap, the pair edged into 1992’s lullaby “Washing of the Water” before the rest of Gabriel’s multicultural band, highlighted by longtimers drummer Manu Katché and guitarist David Rhodes, joined them for “Growing Up” with its lovely layers of string and percussion.

Gabriel, the original lead singer of Genesis who departed the band in 1975 to forge a hugely successful solo career that indulged his interests in world beat and politics, also became an unlikely MTV star along the way.

That guy makes a few appearances on this tour, though the intellectual Gabriel can’t possibly view “Sledgehammer”



Peter Gabriel’s upcoming album, “I/O,” is expected in late 2023; it will be his first original album in more than 21 years. PHOTOS BY THEO WARGO/GETTY IMAGES

mer” and “Big Time” as more than obligatory inclusions in a set so heavily dedicated to songs he’s been perfecting for decades (his last album, “Up,” arrived in 2002). However, he sold both with verve and visuals as captivating as their lauded videos, delighting the crowd that, after hearing much new material, just wanted to get up and dance.

No Kate Bush, but a masterful duet nonetheless

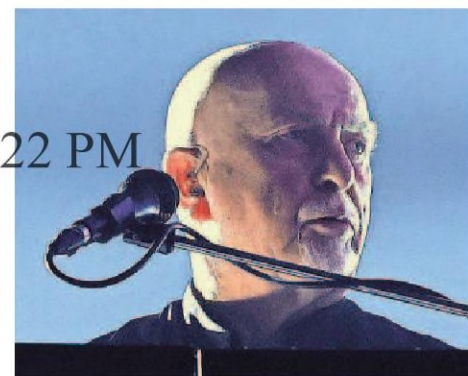
The only quibble with Gabriel’s show — which might have slotted more comfortably in a theater setting except for the massive, spaceship-like lighting panel and other visual accouterments that require arena space — was its jagged pacing.

While Gabriel has released one new

song from “I/O” on the date of the full moon each month since January, most in the audience didn’t seem familiar with the material. The singing guitar riff and chugging beat of “Panopticom” and the brisk title track with its piano backdrop and bursting chorus are invigorating additions to Gabriel’s catalog.

But it took the muscular backbeat, spiky trumpet bleats from Josh Shpak and Gabriel’s deliberate side-hopping on the chorus of 1992’s “Digging in the Dirt” — “this time you’ve gone too far” — to incite the masses.

The beautiful piano-based ballads “Playing for Time” and, later in the set, “And Still,” a dedication to Gabriel’s deceased mother, are artistic requiems but they fit awkwardly in proximity to a crackling rendition of “Sledgehammer” and an ethereal “Red Rain.”



Gabriel performs at Madison Square Garden on Sept. 18, in New York City.

But whether on new material or classics, Gabriel’s voice has retained its distinctive timbre, both dusky and capable of projecting deep hurt or tenderness, the latter of which unfolded during a show highlight.

Mournful bass from Levin opened “Don’t Give Up,” a song still so pretty, so melancholy, so important. The stunning cellist/vocalist Ayanna Witter-Johnson subbed for Kate Bush’s original vocals during the moving duet, as she and Gabriel climbed stairs atop the stage to exchange emotions.

Gabriel says we need a more ‘live and let live’ mentality

Gabriel is a generous maestro, frequently namechecking band members, mentioning the artists whose visuals appeared on screen and during the encore that commenced with his percussive masterpiece of adoration, “In Your Eyes,” saluting his production crew.

He also strove to leave the crowd with some optimism, pairing the new hand-swaying “Live and Let Live” (“That’s what we need a bit more of right now,” he said at the start of the song) with the sunny blast of nostalgia, jaunty guitar and “boom boom boom” heartbeat of his first solo hit, “Solsbury Hill.”

Gabriel has always been unapologetic in his artistic quests and that hasn’t diminished with age. More than 50 years into a career, he’s earned that right.

STREAMING PREVIEW

Kim Kardashian is the saving grace of unholy ‘American Horror Story’

Patrick Ryan
USA TODAY

Well-played, Ryan Murphy. Just when we thought we’d freed ourselves from “American Horror Story,” which has been virtually unwatchable for nearly a decade, the mega-producer lured us back into his gory, gimmicky fold with Season 12 of FX’s anthology series, “Delicate,” starring none other than Kim Kardashian.

The “PAW: Patrol” actress and reality TV personality has a significant role in the latest installment (★☆☆, Wednesdays at 10 EDT/PDT and streaming on Hulu), which centers on a young woman (Emma Roberts) who might be pregnant with Satan’s spawn. But not even Kardashian’s inspired casting can save this dreadful new season, which arrives stillborn with an exhausted riff on “Rosemary’s Baby.”

Shortly after the season premiere picks up, Hollywood starlet Anna Victoria Alcott (Roberts) makes her way to yet another fertility appointment, as she and her husband (Matt Czuchry) struggle to start a family. But of course, things feel dangerously off from the get-go: Anna wakes up with sharp pain after her egg retrieval. (“Nothing worth waiting for is ever easy,” an unbothered nurse assures her.) There’s also a creepy doctor, some shady prescriptions, and a foreboding woman who may or may not be Anna’s stalker.

In other words, nothing that hasn’t already been done in dozens of other horror movies (or for that matter, “The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn — Part 1,” which irrevocably scarred us with its gnarly birth scene). It doesn’t help that Roberts and Czuchry have all the sparks of a campfire during monsoon season, and their one-note performances are further dampened by banal writing.

The few times the premiere episode has a pulse come when Kardashian is on screen. The shapewear mogul has long



Kim Kardashian’s Siobhan is the highlight of “American Horror Story” Season 12. PROVIDED BY ERIC LIEBOWITZ/FX

been called vapid and superficial by her critics. But here, she cleverly leans into that Valley girl persona, playing Anna’s concerned publicist Siobhan. She dryly eviscerates everyone from Hilary Swank to the directors of “Everything Everywhere All at Once,” and makes Waldorf out of word salad. (“You have a peculiar penchant for turning dreams into nightmares,” Siobhan says, in her dual role as Anna’s confidante and walking exposition.)

The ruthless one-liners keep coming when Anna gets a prime late-night booking on “Watch What Happens Live with Andy Cohen,” and Siobhan is forced to comfort her quickly unraveling client. (“Oh honey, don’t cry. Your face cannot get puffy for Andy.”)

Sure, there are some lame jokes about Tom Sandoval and other “Bravo-ebrities.” And yes, Kardashian’s acting skills may be more People’s Choice than Emmy-worthy. But like “American Horror Story” alums Jessica Lange and Lady Gaga before her, she’s the only one so far to deliver on the season’s high-camp potential.

And for that, we thank you, Kim. You’re doing amazing, sweetie.



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NATION & WORLD EXTRA

INSIDE

Former President Carter appears at peanut festival in Georgia. 3NN



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Chester Deanes, left, and Ben Phillips hold a photo of the former Pruitt-Igoe housing development in St. Louis, where they lived growing up, on Sept. 7. The Army sprayed a potential carcinogen from the tops of buildings and from station wagons in the area around Pruitt-Igoe in the 1950s and 1960s as part of secret Cold War-era testing. Deanes and Phillips are leading an effort to get government compensation. JIM SALTER/AP

Another storm brews in Atlantic

Ophelia still posed risk of flooding Sunday

Laura Ungar and Jonathan Mattise
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nearly a day after being downgraded from a tropical storm, Ophelia still threatened parts of the Northeast on Sunday with coastal flooding, life-threatening waves and heavy rain from Washington to New York City, the National Hurricane Center said.

As Ophelia weakened, a new tropical storm named Philippe brewed in the Atlantic.

Even though Ophelia was downgraded Saturday night, meteorologists warned that swells generated by the storm would affect the East Coast for the rest of the weekend, likely causing dangerous surf conditions and rip currents. Ophelia was also expected to drop 1 to 3 inches of additional rain over parts of the Mid-Atlantic and New England. Isolated river flooding was also possible.

Ophelia was south of Washington on Sunday morning and was expected to continue moving northeast before turning east and then weakening more over the next two days, according to the hurricane center. Meanwhile, Philippe was 1,175 miles west of the Cabo Verde Islands, which are off the west coast of Africa. That storm had maximum sustained winds of 50 mph.

The National Weather Service said numerous New Jersey communities reported coastal flooding, including, including Sea Isle City and Brielle. Thousands of people in the state

See STORMS, Page 7NN



A home health aide walks to her client's home Sunday along the flooded Cove Street in Crisfield, Md. Ophelia was expected to continue moving northeast before turning east. CHIP SOMDEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

RADIOACTIVE REDRESS

Victims seek compensation for secretive Cold War-era testing

Jim Salter ASSOCIATED PRESS

ST. LOUIS – Ben Phillips' childhood memories include basketball games with friends, and neighbors gathering in the summer shade at their St. Louis housing complex. He also remembers watching men in hazmat suits scurry on the roofs of high-rise buildings as a dense material poured into the air.

"I remember the mist," Phillips, now 73, said. "I remember what we thought was smoke rising out of the chimneys. Then there were machines on top of the buildings that were spewing this mist."

As Congress considers payments to victims of Cold War-era nuclear contamination in the St. Louis region, people who were targeted for secret government testing from that same time period believe they're due compensation, too.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Army used blowers on top of buildings and in the backs of station

"I remember the mist. I remember what we thought was smoke rising out of the chimneys. Then there were machines on top of the buildings that were spewing this mist."

Ben Phillips
St. Louis

wagons to spray a potential carcinogen into the air surrounding a St. Louis housing project where most residents were Black. The government contends the zinc cadmium sulfide sprayed to simulate what would happen in a biological weapons attack was harmless.

Phillips and Chester Deanes disagree. The men who grew up at the Pruitt-Igoe housing complex are now leading the charge seeking compensation and further health studies that could determine whether the secretive testing contributed to various illnesses or premature deaths that some Pruitt-Igoe residents later suffered.

"We were experimented on," Phillips said. "That was a plan. And it wasn't an accident."

The new push comes as federal lawmakers are weighing compensation for people claiming harm from other government actions – and inactions – during the Cold

See RADIOACTIVE, Page 7NN



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A Ukrainian serviceman hugs his wife and daughter at the railway station in Sloviansk, Donetsk region, on Sept. 12. HANNA ARHIROVA/AP

Train has become a lifeline for Ukrainians

It connects the nation's capital with the front line

Hanna Arhirova
ASSOCIATED PRESS

KRAMATORSK, Ukraine – Among the hundreds of trains crisscrossing Ukraine's elaborate railway network every day, the Kyiv-Kramatorsk train stands apart, shrouded in solemn silence as passengers anticipate their destination.

Every day, around seven in the morning, passengers of this route leave the

relative safety of the capital and head east to front-line areas where battles between Ukrainian forces and Russian troops rage and Russian strikes are frequent with imprecise missiles that slam into residential areas.

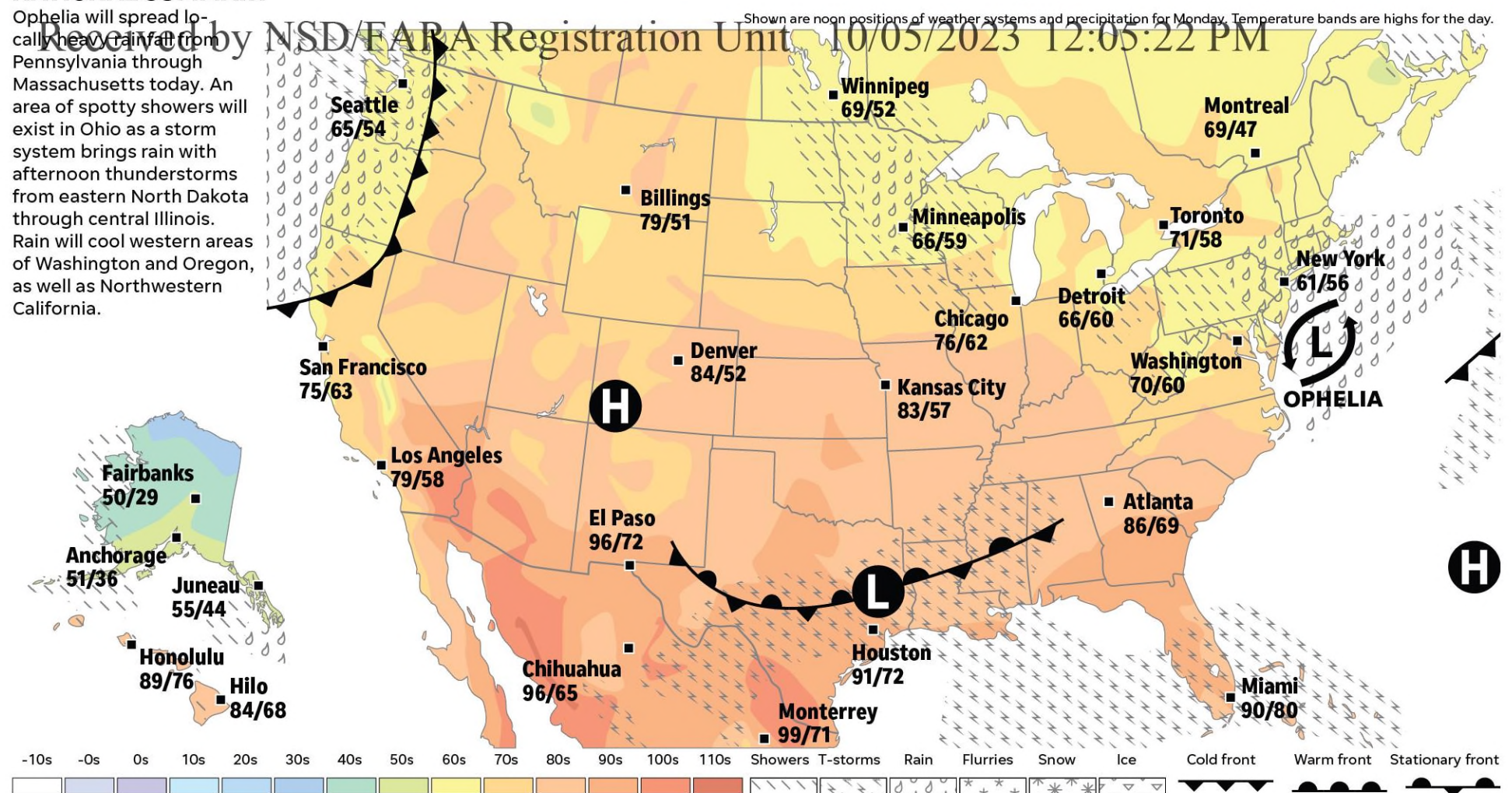
The passengers are a mix of men and women that offer up a slice of Ukrainian society these days. They include soldiers returning to the front after a brief leave, women making the trip to reunite for a few days with husbands and boyfriends serving on the battlefields, and residents returning to check on homes

See LIFELINE, Page 5NN

NATIONAL SUMMARY

Ophelia will spread locally heavy rain from Pennsylvania through Massachusetts today. An area of spotty showers will exist in Ohio as a storm system brings rain with afternoon thunderstorms from eastern North Dakota through central Illinois. Rain will cool western areas of Washington and Oregon, as well as Northwestern California.

In the digital e-edition, you can click anywhere on the US map to get up-to-date forecasts, radar, MinuteCast® and more.



SUNDAY EXTREMES

NATIONAL (for the 48 contiguous states)

High: 107 at Del Rio, TX
Low: 16 at Walden, CO
Precip: 2.96" at Duluth, MN

INTERNATIONAL (excludes Antarctica)

High: 115 at Mina, Saudi Arabia
Low: 7 at Upper Stewiacke, Canada
Precip: 5.50" at Rangpur, Bangladesh

TODAY IN HISTORY

On Sept. 25, 1994, violent thunderstorms in western Pennsylvania produced damaging hail. Little Corners, Pa., was hit by 4-inch diameter hailstones, and golf ball-sized hail accumulated 8 inches at Arthurdale, Pa.

WEATHER TRIVIA™

Q: Who said, some people are weatherwise, some are otherwise?

By Ben Franklin

NATIONAL CITIES MONDAY

City	High/low/W	Air Quality	City	High/low/W	Air Quality	City	High/low/W	Air Quality	City	High/low/W	Air Quality
Aberdeen, SD	69/51/sh	31	Evansville, IN	87/59/pc	70	Levittown, PA	63/57/r	28	Rochester, NY	71/52/c	23
Abilene, TX	92/67/pc	43	Fall River, MA	62/55/r	33	Lincoln, IL	80/60/sh	52	Rockford, IL	74/60/sh	60
Accomac, VA	72/62/c	22	Farmington, NM	82/48/s	48	Louisville, KY	85/62/pc	63	Ruidoso, NM	77/51/s	43
Adrian, MI	66/59/c	30	Fayetteville, NC	86/67/pc	49	Lubbock, TX	87/61/s	40	Salem, OR	65/56/r	47
Akron, OH	71/55/c	26	Fond du Lac, WI	73/62/c	50	Manitowoc, WI	68/60/c	41	Salina, KS	87/55/s	39
Alamogordo, NM	92/60/s	39	Fort Myers, FL	92/76/t	26	Mansfield, OH	69/57/c	24	Salinas, CA	73/56/pc	53
Alexandria, VA	68/60/c	44	Fort Smith, AR	90/62/pc	43	Marshall, NC	79/57/pc	46	Salisbury, MD	71/62/c	23
Alliance, OH	70/55/c	27	Framingham, MA	62/54/r	29	Marshfield, WI	68/57/sh	36	San Angelo, TX	92/66/t	39
Amarillo, TX	85/57/s	46	Freeport, IL	74/59/sh	53	Massillon, OH	73/57/c	34	Sarasota, FL	89/75/t	36
Ames, IA	75/55/c	38	Fremont, OH	69/61/c	25	McLean, VA	67/58/c	35	Savannah, GA	92/69/pc	60
Anderson, SC	85/66/pc	47	Fort Collins, CO	84/49/s	66	Melbourne, FL	89/76/t	32	Sheboygan, WI	70/62/c	46
Appleton, WI	71/58/c	48	Gadsden, AL	84/63/c	65	Memphis, TN	87/67/c	47	Shelby, NC	83/64/pc	51
Asheville, NC	81/60/pc	50	Gainesville, FL	91/70/pc	53	Middletown, NY	59/50/r	25	Sherman, TX	90/63/s	52
Ashland, OH	69/57/c	30	Galesburg, IL	80/57/sh	61	Milford, MA	60/53/r	29	Shreveport, LA	88/70/t	33
Athens, GA	87/65/pc	55	Gastonia, NC	84/65/pc	52	Milwaukee, WI	72/64/c	56	Silver City, NM	89/59/s	41
Augusta, GA	89/63/pc	51	Glen Rose, TX	91/67/pc	50	Monroe, MI	66/60/c	26	Sioux Falls, SD	70/53/sh	21
Austin, TX	95/72/t	28	Gonzales, LA	86/71/t	58	Monroe, LA	83/70/t	28	Somerset, PA	63/52/sh	26
Bartlesville, OK	90/55/s	44	Great Falls, MT	79/57/pc	38	Montgomery, AL	90/69/c	65	Somerville, NJ	63/57/r	23
Battle Creek, MI	71/60/c	42	Green Bay, WI	72/58/c	43	Muncie, IN	78/59/c	35	South Bend, IN	76/59/c	44
Bedford, IN	83/58/pc	46	Greenville, SC	85/64/pc	50	Murfreesboro, TN	85/57/c	56	Spartanburg, SC	85/64/pc	51
Binghamton, NY	65/49/r	19	Hackensack, NJ	60/55/r	37	Naples, FL	91/77/t	22	Springfield, IL	81/59/sh	69
Bluffton, SC	89/71/pc	62	Hagerstown, MD	66/55/c	26	Nashville, TN	86/61/c	55	Springfield, MO	84/58/pc	61
Bremerton, WA	62/53/r	26	Hattiesburg, MS	84/71/t	56	Neptune, NJ	67/60/r	28	St. Augustine, FL	88/73/s	48
Brockton, MA	62/55/r	34	Henderson, KY	86/57/pc	65	New Bedford, MA	62/55/r	34	St. Cloud, MN	66/58/r	20
Brownwood, TX	93/66/pc	43	Hendersonville, NC	81/60/pc	50	New Bern, NC	86/67/pc	40	St. George, UT	89/59/s	44
Burlington, IA	80/58/pc	60	Herkimer, NY	73/49/c	23	New Philadelphia, OH	73/58/c	30	Staunton, VA	70/58/c	27
Burlington, NC	80/61/pc	43	Hillsdale, MI	67/58/c	33	Newark, NJ	72/61/c	35	Stevens Point, WI	69/58/sh	42
Burlington, VT	72/49/c	29	Holland, MI	70/61/c	45	Newton, OH	58/51/r	23	Stockton, CA	80/58/pc	47
Cambridge, OH	71/59/c	28	Hornell, NY	68/51/c	21	New York, NY	61/56/r	48	Stroudsburg, PA	58/51/r	27
Camdenton, MO	84/58/c	59	Houma, LA	89/72/pc	60	Norwich, CT	61/55/r	30	Stuart, FL	90/78/t	34
Canandaigua, NY	72/51/c	25	Howell, MI	66/58/c	30	Ocala, FL	91/72/t	48	Sturgis, MI	71/58/c	38
Canton, OH	72/57/c	32	Hutchinson, KS	90/54/s	43	Oklahoma City, OK	88/61/s	41	Tallahassee, FL	92/72/pc	63
Carlsbad, NM	87/66/pc	44	Hyannis, MA	64/58/r	29	Opelousas, LA	85/69/t	48	Thibodaux, LA	88/71/pc	58
Chambersburg, PA	64/55/sh	25	Indianapolis, IN	82/61/pc	42	Oshkosh, WI	71/61/c	50	Topeka, KS	87/55/pc	44
Cherry Hill, NJ	64/59/r	30	Iowa City, IA	79/59/sh	55	Palm Beach, FL	90/81/t	32	Tuscaloosa, AL	85/69/t	68
Cincinnati, OH	78/59/pc	36	Ithaca, NY	68/49/r	19	Palm Springs, CA	100/73/s	59	Utica, NY	73/49/c	21
Clarksville, TN	87/58/pc	57	Jackson, MS	85/70/t	40	Panama City, FL	89/72/s	61	Ventura, CA	70/55/pc	71
Coldwater, MI	69/58/c	37	Jackson, TN	86/60/c	48	Pekin, IL	81/62/sh	59	Victorville, CA	88/52/c	78
Columbus, OH	71/62/c	29	Jacksonville, FL	92/71/pc	56	Pensacola, FL	89/73/pc	65	Vineland, NJ	66/58/r	25
Corning, NY	67/51/r	22	Jacksonville, NC	85/66/pc	43	Peoria, IL	80/62/sh	61	Visalia, CA	80/53/pc	77
Corpus Christi, TX	97/76/s	25	Kent, OH	70/56/c	29	Petersburg, VA	74/62/c	33	Washington, DC	75/60/c	35
Daytona Beach, FL	90/74/t	42	Kewanee, IL	78/59/sh	51	Phoenix, AZ	105/76/s	67	Watertown, SD	68/54/sh	24
Deming, NM	93/64/s	39	Keyser, WV	68/56/sh	29	Port Huron, MI	69/58/c	22	Wausau, WI	68/57/sh	38
DeRidder, LA	86/70/t	39	Kinston, NC	84/64/pc	38	Portsmouth, NH	66/50/c	39	Waynesboro, PA	65/56/sh	25
Des Moines, IA	77/58/pc	45	Knoxville, TN	83/59/c	49	Poughkeepsie, NY	61/52/r	19	White Plains, NY	60/54/r	24
Detroit, MI	66/60/c	28	Lafayette, IN	83/60/pc	42	Providence, RI	61/55/r	36	Wichita Falls, TX	94/62/s	45
Devils Lake, ND	64/53/sh	30	Lafayette, LA	87/72/t	52	Pueblo, CO	85/50/s	58	Wilmington, DE	64/58/r	25
Dover, NH	66/48/c	32	Lakeland, FL	93/74/t	39	Quincy, MA	62/56/r	34	Wilmington, NC	87/66/pc	46
El Paso, TX	96/72/s	43	Lansing, MI	69/58/c	37	Redding, CA	78/64/r	37	Wisconsin Rapids, WI	69/58/sh	38
Elmira, NY	68/51/r	19	Las Cruces, NM	92/64/s	41	Reno, NV	80/47/pc	67	Wooster, OH	71/56/c	24
Erie, PA	71/56/c	22	Lebanon, PA	65/57/r	25	Ravenna, OH	69/55/c	27	Worcester, MA	58/51/r	27
Eugene, OR	64/52/r	67	Leesburg, FL	91/74/t	43	Richmond, IN	76/57/pc	34	York, PA	65/58/r	29

Air Quality Index: 0-50, Good; 51-100, Moderate; 101-150, Unhealthy for sensitive groups; 151-200, Unhealthy; 201-300, Very unhealthy; 301-500, Hazardous

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

City	Monday High/low/W	Tuesday High/low/W	City	Monday High/low/W	Tuesday High/low/W	City	Monday High/low/W	Tuesday High/low/W
Acapulco	91/76/t	91/75/t	Cape Town	63/53/r	68/48/s	La Paz	65/35/s	69/36/s
Addis Ababa	68/55/sh	70/55/sh	Caracas	93/76/pc	94/75/t	Lagos	86/77/t	87/76/t
Algiers	83/59/s	82/57/s	Casablanca	87/63/s	84/64/pc	Lima	70/64/c	70/62/pc
Amman	91/68/s	92/67/s	Colombo	87/78/t	86/78/t	Lisbon	88/65/s	82/61/c
Amsterdam	68/54/pc	71/57/pc	Copenhagen	65/55/pc	67/59/pc	London	71/56/c	71/52/sh
Ankara	89/55/s	86/54/c	Damascus	98/62/pc	96/59/s	Madrid	85/54/s	84/54/s
Asuncion	105/78/s	101/66/c	Dublin	66/55/pc	63/49/r	Manila	89/79/t	90/78/t
Athens	86/68/s	80/66/s	Geneva	70/45/s	73/49/s	Mexico City	81/53/s	80/52/s
Auckland	65/54/r	62/55/r	Guatemala City	79/64/t	80/64/t	Milan	79/54/s	82/58/s
Baghdad	90/77/pc	88/79/pc	Hanoi	91/78/r	88/76/t	Nairobi	88/74/c	88/74/c
Bangkok	96/80/t	93/78/t	Harare	88/62/s	87/65/c	Montevideo	61/49/pc	57/47/pc
Beijing	76/60/c	79/59/c	Havana	90/73/c	91/71/t	Montreal	69/47/s	66/48/s
Beirut	88/76/s	88/74/s	Helsinki	91/56/c	63/57/c	Moscow	66/47/s	64/45/pc
Belgrade	77/60/pc	80/59/pc	Hong Kong	92/82/t	92/83/s	Nairobi	83/57/pc	84/60/c
Berlin	72/51/s	78/57/s	Jakarta	96/76/pc	95/75/pc	New Delhi	92/77/t	95/77/pc
Bogota	70/46/c	71/45/c	Jerusalem	87/62/s	87/62/s	Panama City	88/76/r	88/76/t
Brussels	71/51/pc	73/55/pc	Johannesburg	77/41/t	68/48/s	Paris	75/53/pc	77/56/pc
Bucharest	86/61/pc	84/59/pc	Kabul	77/55/s	79/55/s	Port-au-Prince	99/76/t	100/77/t
Budapest	79/58/s	82/52/s	Khartoum	101/81/pc	101/81/s	Rio de Janeiro	82/73/pc	82/76/s
Buenos Aires	62/53/pc	59/47/c	Kyiv	81/58/pc	79/55/pc	Riyadh	108/82/s	109/79/s
Cairo	96/74/s	96/74/s	Kingston	94/83/t	94/83/r	Rome	81/58/s	83/61/s
San Jose	85/69/r	84/70/r	San Salvador	88/69/r	88/70/t	Santiago	65/44/s	64/41/s
Sao Paulo	83/66/pc	94/77/pc	Sarajevo	66/55/r	74/48/s	Singapore	90/79/sh	91/80/c
Shanghai	87/72/c	84/72/r	Shenzhen	60/49/c	64/50/c	Stockholm	76/61/s	69/59/pc
Singapore	90/79/sh	91/80/c	Sydney	96/79/s	94/78/s	Taipei	96/79/s	94/78/s
Stockholm	64/49/c	64/50/c	Tegucigalpa	88/65/t	88/67/c	Tehran	84/67/s	83/64/s
Sydney	76/61/s	69/59/pc	Tokyo	80/68/pc	83/71/c	Toronto	71/58/pc	65/55/s
Taipei	96/79/s	94/78/s	Tunis	80/68/pc	81/70/pc	Vancouver	64/56/r	62/52/r
Tegucigalpa	88/65/t	88/67/c	Vancouver	72/54/pc	80/53/s	Vienna	72/54/pc	79/56/s
Tehran	84/67/s	83/64/s	Warsaw	72/56/s	79/56/s	Yerevan	70/52/t	71/52/s
Tokyo	80/68/pc	83/71/c	Zagreb	64/57/c	78/55/pc	Zurich	68/45/s	72/47/s

Denotes possible travel delays Monday

Weather(W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, l-ice.

BOX OFFICE



Received by MSD/FARA Registration Unit 10/05/2023 12:05:22 PM

Dolph Lundgren, left, Randy Couture, Curtis Jackson, Levy Tran and Jacob Scipio appear in a scene from "The Expend4bles." LIONSGATE VIA AP

Usher to perform at Super Bowl

Jonathan Landrum Jr. ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES – Usher has a new confession: The Grammy winner will headline the Apple Music Super Bowl Halftime Show in Las Vegas.

The NFL, Apple Music and Roc Nation announced Sunday that Usher would lead the halftime festivities from Allegiant Stadium on Feb. 11. The music megastar, who has won eight Grammys, said he's looking forward to performing on the NFL's biggest stage.

"It's an honor of a lifetime to finally check a Super Bowl performance off my bucket list," Usher said in a statement. "I can't wait to bring the world a show unlike anything else they've seen from me before."

Usher springboarded into superstardom with "Confessions," which sold more than 10 million units in the U.S. and earned him eight nominations at the 2005 Grammys, winning him three. He lost album of the year to Ray Charles' final album "Genius Loves Company," released two months after the legend died.

"Confessions" ranks among the best-selling music projects of all time and launched No. 1 hits such as "Yeah!" with Ludacris and Lil Jon, "Burn" and "Confessions Part II." His special edition version included the smooth hit "My Boo," a duet with Alicia Keys. Next year will mark the 20th anniversary of the album.

Usher, 44, is currently headlining his "Usher: My Way" residency in Las Vegas, which has drawn sold-out shows and rave reviews. He's also beginning an eight-night block of performances in Paris on Sunday. Usher is expected to wrap up his Las Vegas residency in early December before he makes his Super Bowl halftime appearance a couple months later.

The singer has served as a coach on NBC's "The Voice" and appeared in several films including "Hustlers" and "Light It Up."

Roc Nation founder Jay-Z called Usher the ultimate "artist and showman."

"Ever since his debut at the age of 15, he's been charting his own unique course," he said of Usher, who released his debut self-titled album in 1994. In total, he's released eight studio projects that were filled with hits including "U Got It Bad," "U Remind Me," "You Make Me Wanna," "Nice & Slow" and "Love In This Club" with Jeezy.

"Beyond his flawless singing and exceptional choreography, Usher bares his soul," Jay-Z continued. "His remarkable journey has propelled him to one of the grandest stages in the world. I can't wait to see the magic."

Roc Nation and Emmy-winning producer Jesse Collins will serve as co-executive producers of the halftime show. Hamish Hamilton returns as director. It's the second collaboration between the NFL, Apple Music and Roc Nation.

Last year, a pregnant Rihanna emerged suspended on a platform above the field for a spectacular halftime show – her first solo event in seven years.

"We are so proud of what we were able to accomplish together with the NFL and Roc Nation last year and now with the insanely talented Usher set to take the stage we're looking forward to another incredible Halftime Show from one of the world's all-time greatest performers," said Oliver Schusser, Apple's Vice President of Apple Music, Apple TV+, Sports, and Beats.

Usher will join a list of celebrated musicians who have played during Super Bowl halftime shows including Beyoncé, Madonna, Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg, Coldplay, Kendrick Lamar, Eminem, U2, Lady Gaga, Michael Jackson and Katy Perry.



Usher, 44, is currently headlining his "Usher: My Way" residency in Las Vegas, which has drawn sold-out shows and rave reviews. MATT SAYLES/INVISION/AP

'Expend4bles' opens with epic flop; 'Nun 2' still on top

Jonathan Landrum Jr. ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES – Sylvester Stallone and Jason Statham weren't enough to save "Expend4bles" from a debut box-office flop. The fourth installment suffered the action-packed franchise's worst opening weekend while "The Nun 2" took home the top spot for a third straight week, data firm Comscore reported on Sunday.

The Lionsgate and Millennium's film, also known as "Expendables 4," pulled in a mediocre \$8.3 million for the big-budget project. It starred several popular names, including Stallone, Statham, Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson, Megan Fox and Dolph Lundgren. It's been nearly a decade since the franchise released a film, which opened with \$15.8 million and eventually grossed \$214 million globally.

But times have certainly changed, as the film barely placed second behind "The Nun 2," a horror movie that earned \$8.4 million in its first week. It's been a solid start for that Warner Bros. project – a spinoff from the lucrative "Conjuring" franchise. So far, the Michael Chaves-directed sequel has grossed more than \$69 million.

"It's a star-studded franchise, but horror is a different situation," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. "It just seems no matter what if you're scared in the movie theater a couple times in an hour and a half or two, that's worth the price of

admission." In third, "A Haunting in Venice" earned \$6.3 million. Kenneth Branagh's third Agatha Christie adaptation, following 2017's "Murder on the Orient Express" and 2022's "Death on the Nile," has drawn in over \$25.3 million after two weeks.

"The Equalizer 3," starring Denzel Washington, only dropped to fourth place with \$4.725 million. In four weeks, it has grossed \$81.1 million domestically.

"Barbie," the biggest movie of 2023, is still carrying some momentum from the summer into the fall season. The Greta Gerwig box-office smash ranked in the top five, earning \$3.2 million this week and a domestic total of more than \$630 million after a 10-week period.

Sixth place went to "My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3," with \$3 million, while "It Lives Inside" opened its first week with \$2.6 million. The Sony film "Dumb Money," a dramatization of the GameStop stock frenzy, stayed put in the eighth position for a second week in a row with \$2.5 million.

"Blue Beetle" fell to ninth, with \$1.8 million, and "Oppenheimer" rounded out the top 10 with \$1.6 million. The Christopher Nolan film has garnered \$321 million domestically.

In all, it was another slow output for box office figures as many Hollywood projects are still on hold due to the ongoing Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, and Writers Guild of America strikes.

This weekend grossed the lowest

Estimated ticket sales

Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. "The Nun II," \$8.4 million.
2. "Expend4bles," \$8.3 million.
3. "A Haunting in Venice," \$6.3 million.
4. "The Equalizer 3," \$4.7 million.
5. "Barbie," \$3.2 million.
6. "My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3," \$3 million.
7. "It Lives Inside," 2.6 million.
8. "Dumb Money," \$2.5 million.
9. "Blue Beetle," \$1.8 million.
10. "Oppenheimer," \$1.6 million.

since Dec. 9, 2022, Dergarabedian said. It was also the first time since the weekend of Feb. 10 to not have a movie earn over \$10 million.

But Dergarabedian said a "spectacular October" could be on the way with the much-anticipated "Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour" concert film, "The Exorcist: Believer" and "Saw X."

"Things are going to change next week or the weeks after when Taylor Swift hits the multiplex," he said. "This is the natural ebbs and flow of the box office. That means one thing: We'll be back to normal."

Jimmy Carter makes appearance at peanut fest as 99th birthday nears

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PLAINS, Ga. – Former President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, on Saturday made a surprise appearance at the Plains Peanut Festival in their Georgia hometown, the Carter Center wrote in a social media post on X, formerly known as Twitter.

The former president and his wife are seen in a reposted video riding through the festivities in a Black SUV.



Carter

"Beautiful day for President & Mrs. Carter to enjoy a ride through the Plains Peanut Festival! And just a week before he turns 99," the Carter Center wrote on X after sharing the video taken by a spectator.

The former president is 98 and has been in home hospice care since February. He turns 99 on Oct. 1. The former

first lady has since been diagnosed with dementia. The couple this summer marked their 77th wedding anniversary, extending their record as the nation's longest-married first couple.

"It was amazing considering that he is in hospice care, and he is tough enough to come out here. In my opinion, he is one of the toughest men to serve as president, and he is my favorite," Reed Elliotte, a Corbin, Kentucky resident, told WALB-TV.

Flamingo sightings in Wisconsin a first

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PORT WASHINGTON, Wis. – Five flamingos that showed up in Wisconsin to wade along a Lake Michigan beach attracted a big crowd of onlookers eager to see the unusual visitors venturing far from their usual tropical setting.

The American flamingos spotted Friday in Port Washington, about 25 miles north of Milwaukee, marked the first sighting of the birds in Wisconsin state history, said Mark Korducki, a member of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported.

The birds stood quietly 25 feet off Lake Michigan's western shoreline as waves lapped against their thin legs. Three were adults, identifiable by their pink plumage, and two were juveniles clad in gray.

Jim Edlhuber of Waukesha was among a crowd of about 75 bird enthusiasts drawn to the city's South Beach



Flamingos stand on South Beach in Port Washington, Wis., on Friday. Five of the birds, possibly sent off course by a hurricane, waded at the beach. PAUL A. SMITH/MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

after word spread on social media about the appearance of the flamingos there.

"This is huge. This is unbelievable," said Edlhuber, an avid bird watcher and photographer.

The sighting was unexpected but not a total shock because of recent reports of flamingos in Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio and Pennsylvania, said Ryan Brady, conservation biologist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Wildlife biologists hypothesized that the flamingos were pushed north in late August by the strong winds of Hurricane Idalia, the Journal Sentinel reported.

The typical range of the American flamingo is Florida and other Gulf Coast states as well as the Caribbean and northern South America.

Debbie Gasper of Port Washington made the short trip to the lakefront with her husband, Mark. She said that before Friday the only flamingos she has seen have been on the couple's trips to Aruba.

Gasper said she was going to send photos of the birds to relatives in Georgia who "aren't going to believe it."

IN BRIEF

Canadian autoworkers ratify new labor agreement with Ford

Canadian autoworkers ratified a new labor agreement with Ford Motor Co. on Sunday, averting a threatened strike and potentially setting a precedent that could play out in the United Auto Workers' strike at automaker facilities.

The new agreement raises base hourly pay for production workers by almost 20% over three years, and by more than 25% for trade workers, the Canadian autoworker union Unifor said. It also gives permanent workers a \$10,000 bonus and adds a cost-of-living adjustment, a mechanism that adjusts wages in line with inflation.

Ford described the pact as a 15% wage increase over the three-year life of the agreement. But, according to the union, that figure doesn't include compounding of each annual increase or the initial cost-of-living increase, both of which should increase workers' actual pay.

Kidnapped teen rescued from Southern California motel room

SANTA MARIA, Calif. – Authorities rescued a 17-year-old boy in Southern California after he was kidnapped and held hostage for four days by captors who threatened to harm him if his family did not pay a \$500,000 ransom.

The teen was rescued Friday after law enforcement tracked him and his three kidnapers to a motel in Santa Maria, a city about 140 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles.

The nightmare began Monday morning, when the kidnapers caused a car crash in San Bernardino County, roughly 200 miles from Santa Maria, and abducted the teen when he got out of his vehicle to look at the damage, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office in Los Angeles. A doorbell camera recorded the kidnapping.

The kidnapers called the teen's mother from a Mexican phone number and demanded \$500,000, saying it should be delivered to Nogales, Mexico, federal prosecutors said.

The captors, three men in their 20s, were charged federally with kidnapping and could face life in prison if convicted. They are scheduled to appear in court Monday afternoon.

Hazing lawsuit filed against University of Alabama fraternity

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. – A student and his parents have filed a lawsuit against a University of Alabama fraternity, saying he suffered a traumatic brain injury while being hazed as a fraternity pledge earlier this year.

The lawsuit filed last week accuses Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity and others associated with it of fraud, negligence and assault and battery. The lawsuit was filed by the teen, referred to only as H.B. in the filing because he is a minor; and his parents, who live in Texas.

The lawsuit says H.B. was repeatedly punched, sprayed with a water hose, told to yell a racial slur at a nearby Black student and hit in the head with a basketball. The student left the fraternity house on his own, but later went to a hospital emergency room. The lawsuit says he has a diagnosis of traumatic brain injury and post-concussive syndrome.

"As the direct and proximate result of defendant's negligence, plaintiff suffered severe injuries, some of which are permanent," the lawsuit stated.

Political neophyte new leader of Greece's main opposition party

ATHENS, Greece – A 35-year-old businessman without prior political experience was elected Sunday to lead Greece's main opposition bloc, the left-wing Syriza party.

Stefanos Kasselakis defeated Effie Achtsioglou, a 38-year-old lawmaker and former labor minister, in a runoff contest. Three other candidates had been eliminated in an earlier first round.

Kasselakis had just under 57% of the votes late Sunday with 70% of precincts reporting, while Achtsioglou had just over 43%.

Kasselakis, a resident of Miami, was unknown to the Greek public until he was named a candidate on Syriza's at-large list. At-large candidates can include expatriates. Syriza elected four such lawmakers in the May election and three in June. Kasselakis, in ninth place, had no chance.

Then in late August, Kasselakis released a video of just over four minutes recounting his life and his vision. The video went viral, transforming him into a serious contender for the party leadership. Achtsioglou had been the overwhelming favorite.

From wire reports

Migrants increasingly pack trains in effort to reach US

Halting of routes underscores historic numbers heading north

Megan Janetsky
ASSOCIATED PRESS

IRAPUATO, Mexico – As a train roared in the distance, some 5,000 mostly Venezuelan migrants hoping to make it to the U.S. snapped into action.

Families with young children sleeping on top of cardboard boxes and young men and women tucked away in tents under a nearby bridge scrambled to pack their things. After the train arrived on the outskirts of the central Mexican city of Irapuato, some swung their bodies over its metal trailers with ease, while others tossed up bags and handed up their small children swaddled in winter coats.

"Come up, come up," migrants atop the train urged those below. Others yelled, "God bless Mexico!"

After three days of waiting for the train that many in the group worried would never come, this was their ticket north to Mexico's border with the United States.

Thousands of other migrants were stranded in other parts of the country last week after Mexico's biggest railroad said it halted 60 freight trains. The company, Ferromex, said so many migrants were hitching rides on the trains that it became unsafe to move the trains. The company said it had seen a "half dozen regrettable cases of injuries or deaths" in a span of just days.

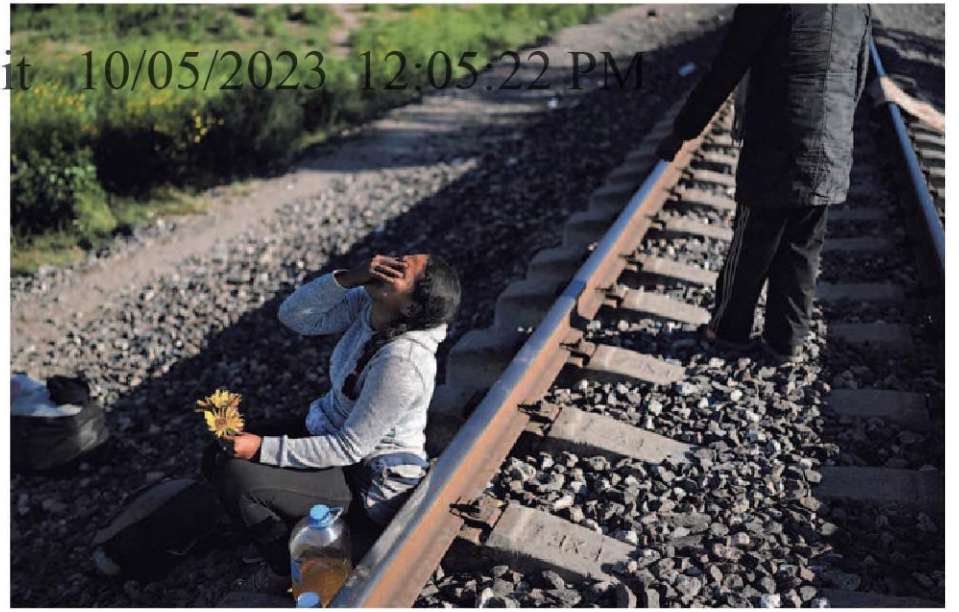
When the train arrived Saturday, "Ferromex" was painted on many of the gondolas. Local police were stationed around the improvised camp where the migrants had been waiting, but when the train stopped for about 30 minutes there was no attempt to stop migrants from climbing aboard.

Despite violence from drug cartels and the dangers that come with riding atop the train cars, such freight trains – known collectively as "The Beast" – have long been used by migrants to travel north.

The closures temporarily cut off one of the most transited migratory routes in the country at a time of surging migration, and left families like Mayela Villegas' in limbo.

Villegas, her partner and their six children had spent three days sleeping on the concrete ground surrounded by masses of other migrants. Before boarding the train, the Venezuelan family said they had packed food for only a few days of train rides and struggled to feed their kids.

"The more days we are here, the less food we have. Thankfully people here have helped us, have given us bread,"



A Venezuelan migrant laughs with her husband as they wait along the rail lines in hopes of boarding a freight train heading north in Huehuetoca, Mexico, on Wednesday. EDUARDO VERDUGO/AP

Villegas said. "We're sleeping here because we don't have anything to pay for a room or hotel."

The halting of the train routes also underscores the historic numbers of people heading north in search of a new life in the United States, and the dilemma it poses for countries across the Americas as they struggle to cope with the sheer quantities of migrants traversing their territories. When several thousand migrants crossed into Eagle Pass, Texas, over a few days the border town declared an emergency.

In August, the U.S. Border Patrol made 181,509 arrests at the Mexican border, up 37% from July but little changed from August 2022 and well below the high of more than 220,000 in December, according to figures released Friday.

It reversed a plunge in the numbers after new asylum restrictions were introduced in May. That comes after years of steadily rising migration levels produced by economic crisis and political and social turmoil in many of the countries people are fleeing.

Once, just dozens of migrants from Central American countries would pass through Irapuato by train each day, said Marta Ponce, a 73-year-old from who has spent more than a decade providing aid to those who travel the tracks running through her town.

Now, that number often reaches the thousands.

"We once thought that 50 or 60 people was massive, now it's normal," Ponce said.

And migrants come from all over. Ponce noted that Venezuelan migrants fleeing economic crisis in their country are in the overwhelming majority, but she's seen people from around the world, including African nations, Russia and Ukraine.

Most travel through the Darien Gap, a dayslong trek across the rugged Colombia-Panama border. The crossing was once so dangerous that few dared to attempt it, but now so many flood through its dense jungles that it's rapidly become a migratory highway similar to the trains winding through Mexico.

Crossings of the Darien Gap have shot up so much they could approach 500,000 people this year alone.

Villegas, whose family spent three days in Irapuato waiting for the train, was among many who saw the Darien Gap as an opportunity. The family was among 7.7 million people to leave Venezuela in recent years, and spent three years in neighboring Colombia.

The family was able to set up a small barbershop business on the fringes of the Colombia's capital, but rising xenophobia and low pay left the family of eight struggling to scrape by.

This summer, when a gang threatened them for not paying extortion money, Villegas and her partner, 32-year-old Yorver Liendo, decided it was time to go to the U.S. For them, the dangers are worth it if it means a change for their children, who ate yogurt out of plastic bottles and snuggled together on the ground.

"It's the country of a thousand opportunities, and at least my kids are still small. They can keep studying, and have a better quality of life," Liendo said.

But it's not just Ferromex that has been overwhelmed by the crush of people. Regional governments have also struggled with what to do.

Colombia, which has taken on the brunt of the exodus from Venezuela, has long called on the international community for aid. Panama and Costa Rica, meanwhile, have tightened migratory restrictions.

Mo. says clinic has failed transgender minors

Counter suit against facility alleges it did not offer proper care

Josh Funk
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Missouri officials struck back at one of the clinics that unsuccessfully challenged new state restrictions on gender affirming care, accusing the clinic in a lawsuit of failing to provide proper care for transgender minors even before the new law took effect.

Missouri's Republican Attorney General Andrew Bailey announced the counter lawsuit against St. Louis-based Southampton Community Healthcare on Sunday, two days after it was filed in court.

The ACLU of Missouri, which represented the clinic in challenging the law that bans minors from beginning puberty blockers and outlaws gender-affirming surgeries, didn't immediately respond Sunday to the new filing. And Bailey announced the counter lawsuit Sunday.

The lawsuit said Southampton's doctors admitted in court during the hearing over the new law that they failed to provide comprehensive mental health evaluations to all their patients. Bailey's office argues that violated Missouri's consumer protection law because the clinic didn't follow the accepted standard of care that was in place long before the new restrictions that called for psychiatric evaluations. "These providers failed Missouri's



Missouri Attorney General Andrew Bailey announced the lawsuit Sunday alleging Southampton Community Healthcare fell short in care for transgender minors even before the new law took effect. DAVID A. LIEB/AP FILE

children when they rejected even a diluted medical standard and subjected them to irreversible procedures. My office is not standing for it," Bailey said.

If Bailey prevails in his lawsuit against Southampton, the clinic could be ordered to pay \$1,000 for each violation and pay restitution to any patients who underwent gender transition procedures without a full mental health assessment.

The new law, which took effect Aug. 28, outlaws puberty blockers, hormones and gender-affirming surgery for minors. Though it allows exceptions for those who were already taking those medications before the law kicked in, the fallout was fast: Both the Washington University Transgender Center at St. Louis Children's Hospital and University of Missouri Health Care in Columbia stopped prescribing puberty blockers and hormones for minors for the purpose of gender transition.

Most transgender adults still have access to health care under the law, but Medicaid won't cover it. Under the law, people who are incarcerated must pay for gender-affirming surgeries out of pocket.

Every major medical organization, including the American Medical Association, has opposed bans on gender-affirming care for minors and supported their access to medical care when treatments are administered appropriately.

Lawsuits have been filed in several states to fight against restrictions that were enacted this year.

The Food and Drug Administration approved puberty blockers 30 years ago to treat children with precocious puberty – a condition that causes sexual development to begin much earlier than usual. Sex hormones – synthetic forms of estrogen and testosterone – were approved decades ago to treat hormone disorders or as birth control pills.

The FDA has not approved the medications specifically to treat gender-questioning youth. But they have been used for many years for that purpose "off label," a common and accepted practice for many medical conditions. Doctors who treat transgender patients say those decades of use are proof the treatments are not experimental.

Critics of providing gender-affirming care to minors have raised concerns about children changing their minds. Yet the evidence suggests detransitioning is not as common as opponents of transgender medical treatment for youth contend, though few studies exist and they have their weaknesses.

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Lawyer says Russia critic transferred to Siberia

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Dasha Litvinova
ASSOCIATED PRESS

TALLINN, Estonia – An imprisoned Russian opposition figure has been transferred to a maximum security prison in Siberia and placed in a tiny “punishment cell,” his lawyer said Sunday.

Vladimir Kara-Murza Jr., 42, earlier this year was convicted of treason for publicly denouncing Russia’s war in Ukraine and sentenced to 25 years in prison as part of the Kremlin’s relentless crackdown on critics. On Thursday, he arrived at IK-6 – a maximum security penal colony in the Siberian city of Omsk, his lawyer Vadim Prokhorov said in a Facebook post Sunday.



Prokhorov said the transfer from a detention center in Moscow, where Kara-Murza was being held pending trial and appeals, took less than three weeks. Russian prison transfers, usually done by train, are notorious for taking a long time, sometimes weeks, during which there’s no access to prisoners, and information about their whereabouts is limited.

Kara-Murza, a journalist and an opposition activist, was jailed in April 2022. The charges against him stemmed from a speech he gave weeks prior to the arrest to the Arizona House of Representatives in which he denounced Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

An associate of opposition leader Boris Nemtsov, who was killed near the Kremlin in 2015, Kara-Murza survived poisonings in 2015 and 2017 that he blamed on the Kremlin. Russian officials have denied responsibility.

Kara-Murza rejected the charges against him and called them punishment for standing up to President Vladimir Putin. He likened the proceedings to the show trials under Soviet dictator Josef Stalin.

Prokhorov said Sunday that upon arrival to the penal colony in Omsk, Kara-Murza was immediately placed in a “punishment cell” – a tiny concrete cell where convicts are held in isolation for violating prison regulations.

Prison authorities have regularly sent imprisoned dissidents to such cells in recent months over alleged minor infractions, a practice that is widely considered designed to put additional pressure on Kremlin critics behind bars.

Prokhorov called the news about Kara-Murza’s extreme confinement “worrying” given his deteriorating health, undermined by the poisonings and solitary confinement he had undergone in pre-trial detention.



Demonstrators parade through the streets during an anti-government protest in central Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, on Sunday. NAREK ALEKSANYAN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Refugees from disputed territory arrive in Armenia

Azerbaijan gained control with military offensive

Avet Demourian
ASSOCIATED PRESS

YEREVAN, Armenia – The first refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh have arrived in Armenia, local officials reported Sunday, after Azerbaijan imposed a 10-month blockade on the breakaway region and conducted a lightning military offensive there, reclaiming full control of the region as a result.

Thousands of people were evacuated from cities and villages affected by the latest fighting and taken to a Russian peacekeepers’ camp in Nagorno-Karabakh. A total of 377 people had arrived in Armenia from the region as of Sunday night, Armenian authorities reported.

Russia’s Defense Ministry reported that its peacekeepers, who were deployed in Nagorno-Karabakh in 2020, helped transport 311 civilians, including 102 children. The conflicting numbers could not be immediately reconciled.

“It was a nightmare. There are no words to describe. The village was heavily shelled. Almost no one is left in the village,” one of the evacuees

told The Associated Press in the Armenian city of Kornidzor. She refused to give her name for security reasons.

Nagorno-Karabakh is located in Azerbaijan and came under the control of ethnic Armenian forces, backed by the Armenian military, in separatist fighting that ended in 1994. During a six-week war in 2020, Azerbaijan took back parts of Nagorno-Karabakh along with territory surrounding the region that Armenian forces had claimed during the earlier conflict.

A Russia-brokered armistice ended the war, and a contingent of about 2,000 Russian peacekeepers was sent to the region to monitor it. Parts of Nagorno-Karabakh that weren’t retaken by Azerbaijan remained under the control of the separatist authorities.

In December, Azerbaijan imposed a blockade of the only road connecting Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia, alleging that the Armenian government was using the road for mineral extraction and illicit weapons shipments to the province’s separatist forces.

Armenia charged that the closure denied basic food and fuel supplies to Nagorno-Karabakh’s approximately 120,000 people. Azerbaijan rejected the accusation, arguing the region could receive supplies through the Azerbaijani city of Aghdam – a solution long resisted by Nagorno-Karabakh authorities, who called it a strategy for Azerbaijan to gain control of the region.

On Tuesday, Azerbaijan launched

heavy artillery fire against ethnic Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh, who conceded to demands to lay down their arms the next day. Nagorno-Karabakh’s final status remains an open question, however, and is at the center of talks between the sides that began Thursday in the Azerbaijani city of Yevlakh.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said in an address to the nation Sunday that his government was working “with international partners to form international mechanisms to ensure the rights and security of the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh, but if these efforts do not produce concrete results, the government will welcome our sisters and brothers of Nagorno-Karabakh in the Republic of Armenia with all the care.”

The events in Nagorno-Karabakh have sparked a days-long wave of protests in Armenia, where demonstrators accused Pashinyan and the Russian peacekeepers of failing to protect the region’s Armenian population.

Hundreds of people gathered again Sunday in the center of Armenia’s capital, Yerevan, to demand Pashinyan’s ouster.

As part of a cease-fire agreement reached last week, the separatist forces in Nagorno-Karabakh started surrendering tanks, air defense systems and other weapons to the Azerbaijani army. As of Sunday, the process of surrendering arms was still underway, the Azerbaijani military said.

Lifeline

Continued from Page 1NN

in the Donetsk region. They are all lost in thought and rarely converse with each other.

Nineteen-year-old Marta Banakh anxiously awaits the train’s next brief stop at one of its nine intermediate stations on the way to Kramatorsk. She disembarks at the station for a quick cigarette break, shifting her weight back and forth from one foot to the other.

Her family doesn’t know she has made this journey from western Ukraine, crossing the entire country, to meet her boyfriend, who has been serving in the infantry since the onset of Russia’s full-fledged invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. He rarely gets a break, and Marta has decided to surprise him with a visit.

“I worry that every day could be his last, and we may never see each other again,” she said wearing her hair down, crowned with a pearl-studded headband.

It’s the only high-speed day train that drives to Kramatorsk.

The city is about 20 miles from the front lines, but it has been suspended by Russian strikes.

And just a few miles away from the city, battles near the Russian-held city of Bakhmut rage for the second year.

The war has become an integral part of the lives of millions of Ukrainians, and the country’s vast railway system has remained operational despite the war.

Night trains that rattle across the country still welcome customers with hot tea and clean sheets in the sleeping compartments.



A woman hugs a Ukrainian serviceman before departure of the train to Kramatorsk at the railway station in Kyiv on Sept. 12. HANNA ARHIROVA/AP

The trains also carry cargo, aid and gear.

The popularity of the Kyiv-Kramatorsk route highlights the reality of war.

Around 126,000 passengers used this route during the summer months this year, according to national railway operator Ukrzaliznytsia. It holds the fourth position for passenger volume among all intercity high-speed trains and maintains one of the highest occupancy rates – 94% – among all Ukrainian trains.

The connection was suspended for six months early in the war. The halt in April last year followed a Russian missile strike on the Kramatorsk railway station, which left 10 people waiting for evacuation. The strike killed 53 people and wounded 135 others in one of the deadliest Russian attacks.

Alla Makieieva, 49, used to regularly travel on this route even before the war. Returning from a business trip to the capital back to Dobropillia, a town not far from Kramatorsk, she reflects on the changes between then and now.

“People have changed, now they seem more somber,” she says. “We’ve already learned to live with these missiles. We’ve become friends,” she joked.

“In Kyiv, the atmosphere is completely different; people smile more often.”

Kyiv is regularly attacked by Russian missiles and drones. But unlike Kramatorsk in the Donetsk region, the capital has powerful air defense protection, which gives residents an illusion of safety.

As the morning light gradually gives way to the midday sun, it fills the spacious train carriages in warm radiance. The train shelves are mostly filled with military backpacks and small bags. Occasionally, a waiter breaks the silence in the aisle, offering coffee, tea, and snacks. Along the way, one can order dishes like bolognese pasta or a cappuccino.

The high-speed train ride from Kyiv to Kramatorsk costs approximately \$14. In nearly seven hours, passengers cover a distance of around 400 miles.

Twenty-six-year-old Oleksandr Kyrylenko sits in the train’s lobby with a coffee in hand, gazing thoughtfully out of the window as the landscapes change rapidly.

It’s his first time heading to the front line, and he admits he didn’t expect to travel to the epicenter of the grinding war with such comfort.

He had been working as a warehouse manager in Poland when Russia invaded Ukraine. “I helped as much as I could,” he said. “Then I decided I needed to go myself.”

“There is no fear. I simply want it to end sooner,” he says of the war, dressed in military attire.

His parents were not thrilled about this idea, but this summer the young man returned to Ukraine and immediately went to the military enlistment office.

“It even feels lighter on my conscience,” he said, adding that this decision came naturally to him. “Human resources are running out. Something needs to be done about it.”

The train arrives at its final destination on time, and the platform quickly fills with people.

Some, wearing military-colored backpacks slung over their shoulders, stride forward swiftly, while others linger on the platform in long-awaited embraces.

Twenty-year-old Sofia Sidorchuk embraces her boyfriend, who has been serving since the beginning of the full-scale invasion. The 20-year-old soldier refrains from disclosing his name for security reasons.

He holds Sofia tightly, as if trying to make up for all the lost time during their longest separation in seven years of the relationship.

“We missed each other,” Sofia explains her decision to come from the northwestern Rivne region to Kramatorsk.

“It’s love,” added her partner, wearing military fatigues.

His commander granted him a few days alone with his beloved to recharge. In five days, he will embark on an assault.

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Glaciologist Andrea Fischer from the Austrian Academy of Sciences climbs the Jamtalferner Glacier on Sept. 6 near Galtuer, Austria. PHOTOS BY MATTHIAS SCHRADER/AP



As Jamtalferner melts, scientists will work to understand how much water will flow from the retreating glacier.



In the last few years, the Austrian glaciers have started losing mass from chunks breaking off onto dry land.



Water drips from a melting chunk of ice on Sept. 6 that originated from Jamtalferner Glacier.

Austria's melting glaciers entering final decades

Matthias Schrader
ASSOCIATED PRESS

JAMTALFERNER GLACIER, Austria – High up on an Alpine ridge beneath a ceiling of ice, water drips from above into a cave formed by the slowly shrinking Jamtalferner glacier.

In just a few years, Jamtalferner will be gone, and in a few decades, so might the rest of Austria's glaciers as human-caused climate change warms up the world.

Andrea Fischer, a glaciologist with the Austrian Academy of Sciences, has witnessed this significant glacier retreat. She and her team measure the ice to understand how climate change affects the glaciers, now and in the future.

In the last few years, the Austrian glaciers have started losing mass from chunks breaking off onto dry land – a process known as dry calving, not seen in past centuries in the region.

“A few years ago we thought that they would last until about the end of this century, but now it looks like at the end of 2050, at the end of the

first half of the century, there'll be no glaciers in Austria anymore,” said Fischer.

Glaciers are masses of ice that form as snow and ice compact over centuries and then flow slowly over land. Their melting is one of the most notable indications of human-caused climate change, with glaciers around the world – from the Rockies to the Alps to the Himalayas – rapidly retreating. Scientists estimate that two-thirds of the world's glaciers will disappear by the end of the century at current climate change trends.

In their twilight years, the glaciers have attracted attention – people hiking into the mountains to see them before it's too late. In Germany, the Schneeferner southern glacier has already lost its glacier status after the scorching 2022 summer, but the large northern glacier is still in tact, although also melting. Situated by Germany's highest peak, it draws tourists and adventure seekers.

As Jamtalferner melts, it will continue to be observed. Scientists need to understand how much water will flow from the retreating glacier,

and monitor safety hazards from previously ice-covered rock and other debris coming loose, Fischer said.

And while it's too late to save Jamtalferner from disappearing – Fischer said even if humans stopped burning fossil fuels immediately the melting is already locked in – there's still a need to limit warming so that the changes to mountain regions are more manageable.

The Alpine ecosystem could survive at 2.7 to 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit of warming above pre-industrial levels, Fischer said, and at lower levels of warming, glaciers could potentially recover and come back.

The long view is important, Fischer said. “I think it's important that we all learn to think longer than our lifetimes, because we have to think about coming generations. Our decisions will affect the coming generations, especially in mountain regions.”

Associated Press climate and environmental coverage receives support from several private foundations. The AP is solely responsible for all content.



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“A few years ago we thought that they would last until about the end of this century,” Fischer said.

Radioactive

Continued from Page 1NN

War.

The Associated Press reported in July that the government and companies responsible for nuclear bomb production and atomic waste storage sites in and near St. Louis were aware of health risks associated with the spraying, but often ignored them. Many believe the nuclear waste was responsible for the deaths of loved ones and ongoing health problems.

The AP report, part of a collaboration with The Missouri Independent and the nonprofit newsroom MuckRock, examined documents obtained by outside researchers through the Freedom of Information Act.

Republican U.S. Sen. Josh Hawley introduced legislation soon after the news reports calling for expansion of an existing compensation program for exposure victims.

The Senate endorsed the amendment. While the House has yet to vote, Democratic President Joe Biden said last month that he was “prepared to help in terms of making sure that those folks are taken care of.”

Former residents of Pruitt-Igoe say they should be taken care of, too.

Phillips and Deanes, 75, are co-founders of PHACTS, which stands for Pruitt-Igoe Historical Accounting, Compensation, and Truth Seeking. Their attorney, Elkin Kistner, said it would be “appropriate and necessary” for Hawley’s proposal to be widened to include former Pruitt-Igoe residents.

The government released documents in 1994 revealing details about the spraying. And St. Louis wasn’t alone in being subjected to secretive Cold War-era testing. Similar spraying occurred at



Dynamite brings down some of the Pruitt-Igoe housing development in April 1972 in St. Louis. Demolition of the 33-building complex had begun two months before. MICHAEL J. BALDRIDGE/ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH VIA AP

nearly three dozen other locations.

There were other types of secret testing. In a 2017 book, St. Louis sociologist Lisa Martino-Taylor cited documents obtained through a FOIA request to detail how pregnant women in several cities were given doses of radioactive iron during prenatal visits to determine how much was absorbed into the blood of the mothers and babies. The government also created radiation fields inside buildings, including a California high school.

The area of the testing in St. Louis was described in Army documents as “a densely populated slum district.” About three-quarters of the residents were

Black.

“We were living in so-called poverty,” Deanes said. “That’s why they did it. They have been experimenting on those living on the edge since I’ve known America. And of course they could get away with it because they didn’t tell anyone.”

Pruitt-Igoe was built in the 1950s with the promise of a new and better life for lower income residents. The project failed and was demolished in the 1970s.

Despite the ultimate demise, Deanes and Phillips said that through their youth, Pruitt-Igoe was a welcoming place. Yet over the years, both men cited countless premature deaths and

unusual illnesses among relatives and friends who once lived at Pruitt-Igoe.

Phillips’ mother died of cancer and a sister suffered from convulsions that puzzled her doctors, he said. Phillips himself lost hearing in one ear due to a benign tumor. Deanes’ brother battled health problems for years and died of heart failure.

Both men wonder if the spraying was responsible.

A government study found that in a worst-case scenario, “repeated exposures to zinc cadmium sulfide could cause kidney and bone toxicity and lung cancer.” Yet the Army contends there is no evidence anyone in St. Louis was harmed.

A spokesperson for the Army said in a statement to the AP that health assessments performed by the Army “concluded that exposure would not pose a health risk,” and follow-up independent studies also found no cause for alarm.

Phillips and Deane believe the previous health studies were half-hearted. In addition to a new health study, they’d like to see soil tested to see if any radioactive material was part of the spraying.

It’s unclear if Hawley’s bill might be expanded. Messages left with his office were not returned.

Democratic U.S. Rep. Cori Bush of St. Louis said in a statement that she and her staff “are currently looking into alternative pathways that the federal government can take to ensure those impacted by the spraying of radioactive compounds and biochemicals in Pruitt-Igoe are also addressed.”

Deanes and Phillips say that in addition to compensation and more detailed studies, they want an apology.

“This shouldn’t go on,” Deanes said. “How are we supposed to be the leader of the free world and this is the way we conduct ourselves with our own citizens?”

Storms

Continued from Page 1NN

remained without power Sunday. NJ.com reported more than 6,000 customers were without electricity Sunday morning, down from a high of 13,000.

Flooding and road closures were also reported in coastal Delaware.

The storm came ashore Saturday near Emerald Isle, North Carolina, with near-hurricane-strength winds of 70 mph, but the winds weakened as the system traveled north, the hurricane center said.

Videos from social media showed significant flooding in the state’s riverfront communities such as New Bern, Belhaven and Washington. A few thousand North Carolina homes and businesses remained without electricity Sunday morning, according to poweroutage.us, which tracks utility reports.

Even before making landfall, Ophelia proved treacherous enough that five people, including three children, had to be rescued Friday night by the Coast Guard. They were aboard a 38-foot catamaran stuck in choppy water and strong winds while anchored off Cape Lookout, North Carolina.

On Saturday, Greenville police posted a video on Facebook of an officer rescuing a small pit bull from floodwaters. Police said the dog was tied to a fence and “just inches from drowning” when an officer responded after someone called authorities. Animal protection authorities opened an investigation.

Elsewhere, a rescue team helped the Beaufort County Sheriff’s Office evacuate 15 people from a campground between the Pamlico River and the Chocowinity Bay, according to Brian Haines, a spokesperson for the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management.

At the southern tip of North Carolina’s Outer Banks, organizers on Sunday were finally able to open the long-running Beaufort Pirate Invasion, a weekend event centered on the 1747 Spanish attack on the town. Winds tore down the big tent for a banquet planned for Saturday, and several other tents were damaged or shredded.

In other developments, high winds forced New York City officials to suspend ferry service to Rockaway. Other ferries were operating on schedule.

The governors of North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland each declared a state of emergency on Friday.

Scientists say climate change could result in hurricanes expanding their reach into mid-latitude regions more often, making storms like this month’s Hurricane Lee more common.

One study simulated tropical cyclone tracks from pre-industrial times, modern times and a future with higher emissions. It found that hurricanes would track closer to the coasts, including around Boston, New York City and Virginia, and would be more likely to form along the Southeast coast.

In some areas where the storm struck



A bicyclist rides along partially flooded Main Street on Sunday following two days of heavy rains in Crisfield, Md. CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES



A vehicle moves through a flooded intersection on Sunday in Crisfield. Maryland’s governor declared a state of emergency on Friday. CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES



Tidal flooding approaches a small church in Maryus, Va., on Sunday. Scientists say climate change could result in hurricanes expanding their reach into mid-latitude regions more often. JOHN L. CLARK/AP

Saturday, the effects were modest.

Aaron Montgomery, 38, said he noticed a leak in the roof of his family’s new home in Williamsburg, Virginia. They were still able to make the hour-long drive for his wife’s birthday to Virginia Beach, where he said the surf and wind were strong but the rain had stopped.

“No leak in a roof is insignificant, so it’s certainly something we have to deal with Monday morning,” he said.

On Saturday, Greenville police posted a video on Facebook of an officer rescuing a small pit bull from floodwaters. Police said the dog was tied to a fence and “just inches from drowning” when an officer responded after someone called authorities.

EXPLAINER

Spain's conservative leader a long shot

Despite election, Feijóo has little support from Parliament members

Joseph Wilson
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BARCELONA, Spain – The leader of Spain's conservatives, Alberto Núñez Feijóo, will have his opportunity to form a new government this week in what has been preordained as a lost cause given his lack of support in Parliament.

Feijóo's Popular Party won the most votes in inconclusive July 23 national elections that left all parties well shy of an absolute majority and with a difficult path to reaching power.

If Feijóo flops in his attempt as expected, then acting Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez would get his shot to stay in the Moncloa Palace if he can round up the support of a motley crew of leftist, regionalist and even separatist parties.

Here is what you need to know about Feijóo's investiture bid that begins with his parliamentary speech on Tuesday.



Alberto Núñez Feijóo, leader of the mainstream conservative Popular Party, waves to supporters outside the party headquarters in Madrid following Spain's general election July 24. MANU FERNANDEZ/AP FILE

The votes

The president of the Popular Party, Spain's traditional center-right force, will have two chances to become the next prime minister of the European Union's fourth-largest economy. But barring a surprise, he will fall short in the vote by fellow lawmakers on both days.

On Wednesday, following 24 hours of parliamentary debate, Feijóo would need to win an outright majority of 176 votes of the 350-seat lower chamber based in Madrid.

If he misses that mark, on Friday the bar would be lowered and the candidate would only need more "Yes" than "No" votes. That scenario would open the possibility of votes to abstain tilting the balance in his favor.

The Popular Party's 137 seats are the most held by any party. But even with the 33 votes of the far-right Vox party, and two more from small, conservative parties from Navarra and the Canary Islands, it is still four votes short.

The elephant

Feijóo's chances appear to hinge on abstentions to the vote, which would come as a surprise.

The two Catalan separatist parties that could play a factor have both ruled out abstaining, given what they consider the Popular Party's belligerent attitude to their separatist movement.

That leaves the conservative Basque PNV party, which has said that any deal that could associate them with Vox, which wants a centralized state and won't condemn 20th-century dictator Francisco Franco, is a non-starter.

"There is an elephant, which is not even in the room; it is in the hall and it is blocking the way for the PNV to enter into any relationship (with Feijóo), and that elephant is Vox," PNV president Andoni Ortuzar told Spanish National Radio.

The difficulties Feijóo faces were made evident in August when the Socialists, despite being the second-largest force in the chamber, were able to win more votes than his Popular Party to elect a Socialist to the speaker's seat.

If Feijóo flops, Sánchez is next

A loss for Feijóo would automatically start a two-month period during which other candidates can step forward to seek Parliament's endorsement to form a new government. If no candidate can pass the test, then the Parliament would be dissolved on Nov. 27 and elections called on Jan. 14.

Sánchez and his allies have already taken it for granted that Feijóo will lose and are working on gathering the support required to repeat their left-wing coalition of Socialists and the left-wing

Sumar party.

The price, however, will be costly. Sánchez would also depend on the backing of the Catalan separatist party Junts, whose leader, Carles Puigdemont, is a fugitive from Spanish law residing in Brussels, where he holds a European Parliament seat.

Puigdemont fled Spain in 2017 after leading a failed independence push for Catalonia. Even though support for separatist parties waned in the July elections while it grew for unionist parties led by the Socialists in Catalonia, Puigdemont now has the power to be kingmaker thanks to Junts' seven seats in the national parliament.

His demand is nothing less than an amnesty for an unspecified number, which could reach a few thousand people, of Catalans who face legal trouble for their roles in the separatist bid six years ago.

An amnesty would be unpopular for many Spaniards, especially since Puigdemont and many of his followers are unrepentant for almost breaking up the country.

While no Socialist has spoken publicly about an amnesty, Sánchez has pardoned high-profile leaders of the movement in the past and appears willing to consider an even bigger act of grace to – as he says – "normalize" politics in northeast Catalonia.

Feijóo's wild card

With talk of a possible amnesty overshadowing his own investiture debate, Feijóo is trying to use the controversy the possible amnesty is generating to boost his scant chances.

On Sunday, 40,000 people, according to the central government, and possibly up to 60,000, according to the Popular Party, joined a protest and rally in Madrid in opposition to a possible amnesty.

The show of force followed repeated calls from party representatives for disaffected Socialists to support Feijóo's investiture to impede Sánchez from striking a deal with the separatists.

The Socialists' maneuvering to keep Sánchez in power, "only has one name," Feijóo told the crowd: "Lack of dignity."

The 62-year-old conservative leader, who spent his entire political career as a quiet regional politician in Spain's rural northwest corner of Galicia, could face critics from inside his own party if he fails to become prime minister.

Considered a moderate, he is already facing pressure from the backers of the more hard-line Isabel Díaz Ayuso, the popular leader of the Madrid region who clashed with Sánchez repeatedly during the COVID-19 pandemic over health restrictions imposed by the central government.

Race highlights rise of German far-right AfD

Emily Schultheis
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BERLIN – The German city of Nordhausen is best known as the location of the former Nazi concentration camp Mittelbau-Dora.

On Sunday, a mayoral election again put the focus on the municipality of 42,000 people over fears that a far-right candidate would win the vote – a prospect the town ultimately seems to have avoided.

Preliminary results Sunday night showed Joerg Prophet, a candidate from the populist far-right Alternative for Germany party, or AfD, losing the race to incumbent mayor Kai Buchmann, who is not affiliated with a political party.

After an initially close race while votes were counted, Buchmann had 54.9% of the vote, compared with 45.1% for Prophet, according to the news agency dpa.

The results were a surprise after Prophet entered the race as the frontrunner: Earlier this month, he won 42.1% of the vote in the first round of the election, far ahead of Buchmann and other candidates.

Despite Prophet's apparent loss, Sunday's election underscored recent gains nationally for the AfD and the increasing influence it has on the political discourse in Germany. It also raised concerns about the normalization of far-right rhetoric in places like Nordhausen, drawing criticism from Holocaust survivors and those who work to combat discrimination.

"The significance of the election in Nordhausen extends far beyond (its) borders," Felix Klein, the German government's antisemitism commissioner, told the Funke Media Group.

The AfD was founded as a euroskeptical party in 2013 and first entered the German Bundestag in 2017. Polling now



Ballots are counted during local election day in the city library of Nordhausen, central Germany, on Sunday. DAVID BREIDERT/PICTURES/AFR VIA GETTY IMAGES

puts it in second place nationally with around 21%, far above the 10.3% it won during the last federal election in 2021.

The party has seen its support grow for a number of reasons. Its politicians have seized on frustration with the German government's climate and energy policies, such as the plan to replace fossil-fuel heating systems with greener alternatives.

The AfD's success, particularly in eastern Germany, has prompted discussions among other parties about whether and how to cooperate with it. Despite a longstanding taboo against collaborating with the far right, the center-right Christian Democrats in Thuringia made headlines when they recently passed new tax legislation with AfD support.

In Thuringia, the state in which Nordhausen is located, the AfD is both especially strong and especially radical. Recent polling puts the party in first place in Thuringia, where most surveys

rhetoric in Germany.

That strategy has proven successful in recent months. In addition to growing its support nationally, the AfD won its first executive-level positions earlier this summer: An AfD candidate was elected county administrator in the eastern city of Sonneberg in June, and in July, the party won its first mayorship in the town of Raguhn-Jessnitz.

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In Thuringia, the state in which Nordhausen is located, the AfD is both especially strong and especially radical. Recent polling puts the party in first place in Thuringia, where most surveys

have its support above 30%.

Bjoern Hoecke, the AfD leader in Thuringia, is the symbolic face of the party's furthest-right faction. Germany's domestic intelligence agency has placed the AfD's Thuringia branch under formal observation.

Hoecke has espoused revisionist views of Germany's Nazi past. In 2018, he referred to the Holocaust memorial in Berlin as a "monument of shame" and called for the country to perform a "180-degree turn" in its memory culture.

As a result, there was a particular significance to the prospect of an AfD mayor in a city like Nordhausen, given the work that has been done there to preserve the Mittelbau-Dora camp as a site of Holocaust survivors and to rebuild trust among Holocaust survivors.

"It's inconceivable that the last survivors of the concentration camps and their families (...) could be welcomed in Nordhausen by a mayor from the ranks of a party whose political program consists of calls for xenophobia, racism, antisemitism, antigypsyism, nationalism and revisionism," an international committee of survivors of Mittelbau-Dora and the nearby Buchenwald concentration camp said in a statement.

With three important state-level elections in Germany's east on the horizon in 2024, including in Thuringia, there is increasing pressure on Germany's other political parties to combat its rise.

Winning posts like mayorships and growing its support nationally helps normalize the AfD in the German political landscape, and puts increasing pressure on parties like the CDU to collaborate with it – which experts argue would only strengthen and legitimize the AfD's far-right positions.

"It's a huge strategic mistake to help the AfD to have political impact," Hillje said.

SPORTS **EXTRA**

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Ciganda comes up big as Europe retains

Beth Ann Nichols

Golfweek
USA TODAY Network

So much of the 18th Solheim Cup centered around the opposing styles of captains Stacy Lewis and Suzann Pettersen. Lewis, the cerebral accounting and finance major, came to Finca Cortesin with her stats man and her pages of notes and worked on her strategy right up until the last three holes of the final practice round, when she told Megan Khang and Lexi Thompson that they were playing together the next morning.

Suzann Pettersen picked a lineup Monday and stuck with her gut. While Lewis worked to keep everyone fresh after jumping out to an historic 4-0 start, Pettersen played catch-up by putting out her best every session. If she played five matches in her prime, Pettersen

reasoned, no reason they couldn't, too.

In the end, no amount of planning and strategizing could stop destiny. Walking down the 16th hole, Pettersen turned to her longtime friend Carlota Ciganda and said, "Is this how you wanted it? It's all yours."

The fiery Spaniard, who had just cold shanked a shot on the previous hole, dug deep and told herself that she was going to win it for Pettersen because she loved her and thought that she deserved it.

With the hopes of a nation on her back, Ciganda birdied the 16th and stuffed one inside an already close Nelly Korda on the par-3 17th to win the match and retain the Cup for Europe.

One of the most talented players on tour who has never closed tournaments

See SOLHEIM, Page 6NS



Europe's Carlota Ciganda is carried by members of her team after retaining the Solheim Cup on Sunday in Finca Cortesin, Spain. BERNAT ARMANGUE/AP

NFL



Steelers quarterback Kenny Pickett carries the ball against the Raiders in the first half on Sunday in Paradise, Nev.

KIRBY LEE/USA TODAY SPORTS

STEELERS HOLD OFF RAIDERS IN VEGAS

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LAS VEGAS – Kenny Pickett passed for 235 yards and two touchdowns in an encouraging performance for Pittsburgh's offense, and the Steelers held off the Las Vegas Raiders for a 23-18 victory on Sunday night. In the first meeting between the franchises in Las Vegas, the Steelers earned their first road win against the Raiders since 1995. Las Vegas trailed 23-7 going into the fourth quarter.

NFL Roundup, Page 2NS

NASCAR CUP SERIES

Byron advances to round of 8 with win at Texas

Stephen Hawkins

ASSOCIATED PRESS

FORT WORTH, Texas — William Byron took the lead for the first time after the final restart with six laps left to win at Texas Motor Speedway on Sunday, advancing to the round of eight in the NASCAR playoffs while giving Hendrick Motorsports its 300th victory.

With Bubba Wallace and Chase Briscoe battling for the lead, Byron was able to get underneath both of them before finishing that first lap and staying there.

"I choked ... I had my worst restart," said Wallace, who after just sneaking into the round of 12 started from the pole and led a career-high 111 laps. "This one is going to sting for a little bit."

The top five finishers were all playoff contenders, with Ross Chastain second, ahead of Wallace, Christopher Bell and Denny Hamlin. Retiring driver Kevin Harvick was sixth and playoff driver Brad Keselowski seventh.

"We've just been kind of steady Eddie through the first three or four races and we haven't shown any flashes, but today I thought we had a good car if we could have just get to the front," Byron said. "At the end there we were really fast."

Byron finished 1.863 seconds ahead of Chastain for his sixth win of the season, the most in the Cup series. He maintained the points lead he had starting the second round.

Hamlin, Chris Buescher, Bell, Martin Truex Jr., Chastain, Keselowski and Kyle Larson round out the top eight of the playoff standings behind Byron. Wallace moved up three spots to ninth, still one below the cutoff line when this three-race round is done, with Tyler Reddick, Ryan Blaney and Kyle Busch behind him.

There are two more races in the round of 12, at Talladega next weekend and then the Roval at Charlotte.

After a previous restart with 20 laps to go in the 267-lap race, when Larson and Wallace hadn't taken fresh tires for the final stretch, they were still side-by-side going into Turn 1. Larson was on the inside when he got loose, went up the track and slammed hard into the wall to end his day, though he didn't make contact with Wallace.

But there was still one more restart,

See NASCAR, Page 7NS

NFL

ROUNDUP

Dolphins score most points since 1966

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ASSOCIATED PRESS

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. – The Miami Dolphins scored the most points in a game by an NFL team since 1966, overwhelming the Denver Broncos 70-20 on Sunday behind rookie De'Von Achane's 203 yards rushing and Tua Tagovailoa's four touchdown passes, including a no-look shovel-pass.

The Dolphins set a franchise record for scoring and finished two points shy of the NFL's regular-season record – set in 1966 by Washington against the Giants. They are the fourth team in NFL history to score at least 70 points in a regular-season or playoff game.

Miami scored touchdowns on eight of nine drives before Mike White replaced Tagovailoa in the fourth quarter. Raheem Mostert had his second straight multiple-touchdown game with three rushing TDs and a TD catch.

Achane caught a 10-yard TD pass from Tagovailoa in the fourth, and Jason Sanders converted the extra point that made it 56-13 and broke Miami's franchise scoring record of 55 set against St. Louis on Nov. 24, 1977.

Tyreek Hill caught a 54-yard touchdown pass on Miami's opening drive. He finished with 157 yards on nine catches.

Russell Wilson started a season 0-3 for the first time in his career as Denver simply could not keep pace. Wilson was 23 of 38 for 306 yards with a touchdown and an interception.

Packers 18, Saints 17

GREEN BAY, Wis. – Jordan Love rallied Green Bay from a 17-point fourth-quarter deficit in his first career home start, a comeback that began after New Orleans lost quarterback Derek Carr to a shoulder injury.

The Packers (2-1) scored 18 points in the final 11 minutes to win their 11th consecutive home opener, the NFL's longest active streak. They took the lead on Love's 8-yard pass to Romeo Doubs in the right corner of the end zone with 2:56 left.

Carr's backup, Jameis Winston, drove the Saints (2-1) into scoring position, but rookie Blake Grupe's 46-yard field-goal attempt with just over a minute left sailed wide right.

New Orleans led 17-0 when Carr left in the third quarter after one of Rashan Gary's career-high three sacks.

Love went 22 of 44 for 259 yards with one touchdown pass, a TD run and an interception. It was his fourth career start but first at home as he takes over for four-time MVP Aaron Rodgers.

Green Bay became the third team in the past 30 years to win after being shut out 17-0 or worse through three quarters.

Steelers 23, Raiders 18

LAS VEGAS – Kenny Pickett passed for 235 yards and two touchdowns in an encouraging performance for Pittsburgh, which held off Las Vegas.

In the first meeting between the franchises in Las Vegas, the Steelers earned their first road win against the Raiders since 1995.

Las Vegas trailed 23-7 going into the fourth quarter. It had a chance to tie the game in the final minutes, but coach Josh McDaniels settled for a short field goal instead of trying to convert a fourth-and-4 at the 8.

Pittsburgh (2-1) struggled offensively in its first two games, but it looked much better against Las Vegas (1-2). Pickett completed 16 of 28 passes, and George Pickens finished with four receptions for 75 yards.

T.J. Watt had another sensational game, recording two of Pittsburgh's four sacks less than a week after returning a fumble for the winning touchdown on Monday night against the Cleveland Browns.

Chris Boswell made three field goals for the Steelers, including one from 57 yards.

The Raiders' Jimmy Garoppolo was 28 of 46 for 244 yards and two touchdowns, both to Davante Adams, who finished with 13 receptions for 172 yards.

Chiefs 41, Bears 10

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Patrick Mahomes threw for 272 yards and three touchdowns, Travis Kelce hauled in one of them to the delight of Taylor Swift, and Kansas City beat Chicago.

Jerick McKinnon had a pair of touchdown catches and Isiah Pacheco and Clyde Edwards-Helaire added touch-



Dolphins running back De'Von Achane (28) scores a touchdown against the Broncos in the second quarter on Sunday. NATHAN RAY SEEBECK/USA TODAY SPORTS

down runs, helping the Super Bowl champion Chiefs (2-1) deal the Bears (0-3) their 13th consecutive loss dating to last season.

Kelce finished with seven catches for 69 yards and the 3-yard score, which made it 41-0 early in the second half. The All-Pro tight end celebrated by revving the engine of an imaginary motorcycle while his guest, Swift, joyfully pounded the glass of her Arrowhead Stadium suite.

Embattled Bears quarterback Justin Fields was 11 of 22 for 99 yards with an interception and a meaningless touchdown in the final minutes. He also led the Bears with 47 yards rushing, a good chunk of that coming on a 17-yard scramble, as the league's 27th-ranked offense finished with just 203 yards.

Colts 22, Ravens 19, OT

BALTIMORE – Matt Gay capped a terrific day of kicking with a 53-yard field goal in overtime and Indianapolis beat Baltimore.

Gay made a record four kicks from beyond 50 yards, including a 53-yarder that tied it in the final minute of regulation. His chance in overtime didn't come until after both teams had been stopped on fourth down near midfield.

On the Ravens' previous OT possession, they went for it on fourth-and-3 from the Indy 47. Lamar Jackson threw incomplete as Baltimore (2-1) called in vain for a penalty on linebacker E.J. Speed, who appeared to impede receiver Zay Flowers going over the middle.

There was no flag, and the Colts (2-1) were able to drive in position for Gay's fifth field goal of the game.

Gardner Minshew, playing in place of injured rookie Anthony Richardson, threw for 227 yards and a touchdown for the Colts.

Jackson ran for 101 yards and two TDs for the Ravens but couldn't take advantage of two opportunities in overtime when Baltimore started with great field position.

Baltimore's Justin Tucker came up short on a 61-yard kick with 1 second left in regulation that could have won it.

Chargers 28, Vikings 24

MINNEAPOLIS – Justin Herbert passed for 405 yards and three touchdowns, and Los Angeles kept Kirk Cousins and Minnesota out of the end zone twice in the last three minutes.

Kenneth Murray Jr. made the game-sealing interception in the end zone with 7 seconds left, snagging a ball that deflected off the chest of diving tight end T.J. Hockenson. On Minnesota's previous possession, Michael Davis knocked down Cousins' fourth-down throw to Justin Jefferson at the goal line.

The Vikings (0-3) gave themselves that final chance by stopping the Chargers (2-2) on their own 11-yard TD 24 inside the 2-minute warning.

Keenan Allen not only set career highs with 205 yards and 18 catches, but the 11th-year standout threw a 49-yard touchdown pass to Mike Williams on a trick play that gave the Chargers a 21-10 lead midway through the third quarter.

Herbert, who went 40 for 47 and set the franchise record with 213 consecutive attempts and counting without an interception, hit Donald Parham Jr. for two first-half touchdowns.

Cousins hit Jefferson for a 52-yard

score that put Minnesota ahead 24-21 with 11:20 left. Herbert connected with Joshua Palmer for a 30-yard TD that put Los Angeles in front to stay.

Cardinals 28, Cowboys 16

GLENDALE, Ariz. – Joshua Dobbs threw for a touchdown, James Conner and Rondale Moore ran for scores and Arizona stunned mistake-prone Dallas.

The Cardinals (1-2) never trailed and went ahead 21-10 on the final play of the first half when Matt Prater made a 62-yard field goal. Arizona scored on all five of its possessions before the break.

Jonathan Gannon got his first win as Arizona's coach as the franchise snapped a six-game home skid that lasted nearly a year.

Dobbs completed 17 of 21 passes for 189 yards and a touchdown. Conner ran for 98 yards.

The Cowboys (2-1) – who were called for 13 penalties that set them back 107 yards – had three solid drives bog down inside the Arizona 10, including one that ended on a fourth-down stop when Dak Prescott threw an incomplete pass.

Prescott completed 25 of 40 passes for 249 yards, a touchdown and an interception. The pick – by Kyzir White in the end zone with three minutes left – sealed the game for Arizona.

Browns 27, Titans 3

CLEVELAND – Myles Garrett sacked Ryan Tannehill 3 1/2 times and fronted a Cleveland defense that limited Tennessee to 94 yards.

Six days after the Browns (2-1) lost star running back Nick Chubb to a season-ending knee injury in Pittsburgh, Garrett and Cleveland's defense stepped up with a dominant performance that overwhelmed the Titans (1-2).

The Browns' offense was solid, too, with Deshaun Watson having his best day since signing with Cleveland. He completed 27 of 33 passes for 289 yards and two touchdowns, and his 43-yarder to Amari Cooper put the Browns up 27-3 in the fourth quarter.

Jerome Ford, who moved into Chubb's starting spot, had two touchdowns – a 19-yard reception from Watson and a 3-yard run.

It was the fewest yards for the Titans since they relocated from Houston in 1997. The previous low was 98 against Jacksonville in 2006.

Texans 37, Jaguars 17

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Fullback Andrew Beck muffed a kickoff, picked up the ball and then broke five tackles during an 85-yard return for a touchdown – one of several special teams gaffes by Jacksonville – and Houston gave coach DeMeco Ryans his first victory.

Rookie C.J. Stroud threw for 280 yards and two touchdowns, including a 68-yarder to Tank Dell that sealed it, and the Texans won their fifth in a row at Jacksonville.

Houston (1-2) has won 16 of the past 19, including 10 of 11, in the series.

The Jaguars (1-2) were flat from the start. Their first five drives ended in a missed field goal, a punt, a blocked field goal, a punt and a fumble.

Trailing 17-0 at halftime, they scored on their first two possessions of the third quarter. But then they botched the

kickoff about as badly as anyone could imagine.

Seahawks 37, Panthers 27

SEATTLE – Kenneth Walker III rushed for 97 yards and two second-half touchdowns, Jason Myers kicked five field goals, and Seattle beat Carolina.

Walker's 36-yard reception midway through the third quarter set up his 1-yard touchdown run after Seattle had settled for field goals every other time it reached Carolina's side of the field.

Walker later restored a two-score lead for Seattle (2-1) when he sprinted untouched on a 7-yard touchdown run with 11:40 remaining.

Myers connected on field goals of 43, 35, 33, 37 and 39 yards.

Geno Smith threw his first interception of the season, but still had a solid day, throwing for 361 yards and a touchdown. DK Metcalf had six catches for 112 yards.

Veteran Andy Dalton started for Carolina in place of No. 1 overall pick Bryce Young, who has an ankle injury. Dalton did his part in keeping the Panthers (0-3) close, throwing for 361 yards and two touchdowns. Adam Thielen had 11 catches for 145 yards.

Bills 37, Commanders 3

LANDOVER, Md. – Josh Allen threw for a touchdown and ran for another, and Buffalo's defense forced five turnovers by overmatched Washington.

The Bills (2-1) won their second in a row after a rough season opener and handed the Commanders (2-1) their first loss.

Allen was 20 of 32 for 218 yards, including a 35-yard TD pass to Gabe Davis. He added a 10-yard scamper into the end zone among his 46 yards rushing. His interception in the third quarter on third-and-20 functioned more like a long punt than his four backbreaking giveaways that contributed to Buffalo's Week 1 loss at the Jets.

The Bills tormented Sam Howell, sacking him nine times and piling up four interceptions – one each by Terrel Bernard, Micah Hyde and Tre'Davious White and A.J. Epenesa. The last was Epenesa's pick-6, which sent Commanders fans to the exits.

Howell lost for the first time as a pro, with many of the offensive line woes that were masked by wins against Arizona and Denver finally costing the Commanders.

Patriots 15, Jets 10

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. – Mac Jones threw a touchdown pass, Matt Judon had a late safety and New England extended its winning streak over New York to 15 games.

Bill Belichick's bunch avoided its first 0-3 start since the coach's first season in New England in 2000 while continuing the team's mastery over its AFC East rival.

Zach Wilson made his second start in place of the injured Aaron Rodgers, but was unable to produce much on a rainy day other than one solid drive in the fourth quarter that got the Jets (1-2) back into the game.

Nick Bawden capped a 13-play, 87-yard drive by the Jets with a 1-yard touchdown run up the middle to make it 13-10 with 5:24 left. Wilson was 7 for 10 on the series. After a defensive stop by New York, Judon brought down Wilson in the end zone to make it 15-10.

Lions 20, Falcons 6

DETROIT – Jared Goff threw a 45-yard touchdown pass to tight end Sam LaPorta early in the second quarter and Detroit beat Atlanta.

The Lions (2-1) earned a much-needed win after following a hype-fueling victory at Kansas City with a deflating loss at home to Seattle.

The Falcons (2-1) failed to protect Desmond Ridder, who was sacked seven times by a team that had only one sack in two games.

Goff was 22 of 33 for 243 yards with a touchdown and an interception. He also had a 3-yard run for a score that gave Detroit a 20-3 lead early in the fourth.

LaPorta, the No. 34 pick overall out of Iowa, scored his first touchdown. He had eight receptions for 84 yards. He has 18 catches, the most by an NFL tight end through three games.

Amon-Ra St. Brown had nine receptions for 102 yards and rookie running back Jahmyr Gibbs ran 17 times for 80 yards.

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NFL

SUMMARIES

Detroit 20, Atlanta 6
Atlanta 3 0 3 0 - 6
Detroit 3 10 0 7 - 20

First Quarter
Det—R.Patterson 17, 7:40
Second Quarter
Atl—FG Koo 48, 11:32
Det—LaPorta 45 pass from Goff (R.Patterson kick), 10:05
Det—FG R.Patterson 24, 1:53

Fourth Quarter
Det—Goff 3 run (R.Patterson kick), 9:50
Atl—FG Koo 24, 4:18

First downs	Atl	Det
	16	18
Total Net Yards	189	358
Rushes-yards	20-44	31-115
Passing	145	243
Punt Returns	3-11	2-13
Kickoff Returns	2-27	0-0
Interceptions Ret.	1-0	0-0
Comp-Att-Int	21-38-0	22-33-1
Sacked-Yards Lost	7-56	0-0
Punts	6-49.17	6-45.67
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	4-24	10-118
Time of Possession	30:50	30:49

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
RUSHING—Atlanta, Robinson 10-33, Allgeier 7-12, Ridder 2-3, Pitts 1-(minus 4), Detroit, Gibbs 17-80, C.Reynolds 4-15, Knight 3-13, St. Brown 1-4, Goff 5-3, Cabinda 1-0. PASSING—Atlanta, Ridder 21-38-0-201, Detroit, Goff 22-33-1-243.

RECEIVING—Atlanta, Pitts 5-41, J.Smith 5-37, Robinson 4-27, D.London 2-31, Allgeier 2-17, Hollins 1-23, Hodge 1-15, Pruitt 1-10, Detroit, St. Brown 9-102, LaPorta 8-84, Raymond 4-55, Gibbs 1-2. MISSED FIELD GOALS—Atlanta, Koo 47.

Buffalo 37, Washington 3
Buffalo 10 6 0 21 - 37
Washington 0 0 0 3 - 3

First Quarter
Buf—FG Bass 36, 9:29
Buf—G.Davis 35 pass from Jos.Allen (Bass kick), :41

Second Quarter
Buf—FG Bass 54, 1:55
Buf—FG Bass 32, :19

Fourth Quarter
Buf—Jos.Allen 10 run (Bass kick), 10:37
Buf—Epenesa 32 interception return (Bass kick), 10:01
Buf—Murray 2 run (Bass kick), 2:15
Was—FG Slye 51, :46

First downs	Buf	Was
	20	15
Total Net Yards	386	230
Rushes-yards	33-186	13-105
Passing	218	125
Punt Returns	2-27	0-0
Kickoff Returns	0-0	2-45
Interceptions Ret.	4-35	1-0
Comp-Att-Int	20-32-1	19-29-4
Sacked-Yards Lost	0-0	9-45
Punts	1-70.0	3-50.0
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	1-1
Penalties-Yards	6-45	2-15
Time of Possession	34:39	25:21

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
RUSHING—Buffalo, Cook 15-98, J.Allen 3-46, Murray 5-15, Harris 5-15, Davis 1-(minus 2), K.Allen 2-(minus 2), Harty 2-(minus 2), Washington, Robinson 10-70, Howell 1-18, Gibson 2-17. PASSING—Buffalo, J.Allen 20-32-1-218, Washington, Howell 19-29-4-170. RECEIVING—Buffalo, Diggs 8-111, Sherfield 2-18, Harty 2-15, Cook 2-14, Kincaid 2-3, Davis 1-35, Knox 1-11, Murray 1-6, Shakir 1-35, Washington, McLaurin 6-41, Turner 4-35, Gibson 3-7, Samuel 2-54, Dotson 2-21, Bates 2-12.

Miami 10, Denver 7
Denver 7 6 0 7 - 20
Miami 14 21 14 21 - 70

First Quarter
Mia—T.Hill 54 pass from Tagovailoa (J.Sanders kick), 13:37
Mia—Achane 8 run (J.Sanders kick), 6:31
Den—Sutton 12 pass from R.Wilson (Lutz kick), 1:12

Second Quarter
Mia—Achane 4 pass from Tagovailoa (J.Sanders kick), 10:16
Den—FG Lutz 31, 6:36
Mia—Mostert 20 run (J.Sanders kick), 1:49
Mia—Mostert 3 run (J.Sanders kick), 1:29
Den—FG Lutz 25, :03

Third Quarter
Mia—Mostert 1 run (J.Sanders kick), 7:48
Mia—Mostert 19 pass from Tagovailoa (J.Sanders kick), :29

Fourth Quarter

Mia—Achane 10 pass from Tagovailoa (J.Sanders kick), 14:55
Mia—Chosen 68 pass from White (J.Sanders kick), 9:05
Den—Mims 89 kickoff return (Lutz kick), 8:58
Mia—Achane 67 run (J.Sanders kick), 8:01

First downs	Den	Mia
	16	30
Total Net Yards	367	735
Rushes-yards	20-69	43-359
Passing	298	376
Punt Returns	0-0	3-30
Kickoff Returns	2-121	0-0
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	1-5
Comp-Att-Int	23-37-1	25-28-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	1-12	0-0
Punts	5-46.8	1-48.0
Fumbles-Lost	2-2	0-0
Penalties-Yards	7-46	6-55
Time of Possession	26:20	33:21

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
RUSHING—Denver, J.Williams 11-42, McLaughlin 5-15, Perine 3-9, Mims 1-3, Miami, Achane 18-212, Mostert 13-82, Brooks 9-66, Ingold 2-0, White 1-(minus 1). PASSING—Denver, Wilson 23-37-1-310, Miami, Tagovailoa 23-26-0-309, White 2-2-0-67. RECEIVING—Denver, Sutton 8-95, Jeudy 5-61, Mims 3-73, J.Williams 2-23, Perine 2-15, Johnson 2-12, Adkins 1-11, Miami, T.Hill 9-157, Mostert 7-60, Achane 4-30, Berrios 2-33, Chosen 1-68, Smythe 1-15, Cracraft 1-13.

Houston 37, Jacksonville 17
Houston 7 10 7 13 - 37
Jacksonville 0 0 10 7 - 17

First Quarter
Hou—Pierce 1 run (Fairbairn kick), 7:35

Second Quarter
Hou—Jordan 4 pass from Stroud (Fairbairn kick), 7:27
Hou—FG Fairbairn 28, :00

Third Quarter
Jac—Bigsby 1 run (McManus kick), 11:17
Jac—FG McManus 33, 4:35
Hou—Beck 90 kickoff return (Fairbairn kick), 4:19

Fourth Quarter
Hou—FG Fairbairn 26, 12:36
Jac—Kirk 26 pass from Lawrence (McManus kick), 10:40
Hou—Dell 68 pass from Stroud (Fairbairn kick), 8:59
Hou—FG Fairbairn 33, 2:10

First downs	Hou	Jac
	15	22
Total Net Yards	366	404
Rushes-yards	26-86	27-116
Passing	280	288
Punt Returns	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns	2-99	3-72
Interceptions Ret.	1-0	0-0
Comp-Att-Int	20-30-0	29-42-1
Sacked-Yards Lost	0-0	0-0
Punts	4-43.25	2-47.0
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	1-1
Penalties-Yards	8-75	6-49
Time of Possession	27:57	32:03

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
RUSHING—Houston, Singletary 9-41, Pierce 14-31, Stroud 3-14, Jacksonville, Etienne 19-88, Lawrence 3-12, Bigsby 2-10, D.Johnson 3-6. PASSING—Houston, Stroud 20-30-0-280, Jacksonville, Lawrence 27-40-1-279, Beathard 2-2-0-9. RECEIVING—Houston, Dell 5-145, Woods 3-34, Pierce 3-28, N.Collins 2-34, Jordan 2-13, Metchie 2-13, Singletary 2-4, Schultz 1-9, Jacksonville, Ingram 7-67, Kirk 4-54, Etienne 4-50, Agnew 4-49, Ridley 3-40, T.Jones 2-11, Strange 2-7, D.Johnson 2-6, Farrell 1-4. MISSED FIELD GOALS—Jacksonville, McManus 51, McManus 48.

Indianapolis 22, Baltimore 19 (OT)
Indianapolis 0 10 3 6 3 - 22
Baltimore 7 0 7 5 0 - 19

First Quarter
Bal—Jackson 8 run (Tucker kick), 6:35

Second Quarter
Ind—Moss 17 pass from Minshew (Gay kick), 6:07
Ind—FG Gay 31, 3:26

Third Quarter
Ind—FG Gay 54, 8:33
Bal—Jackson 10 run (Tucker kick), :13

Fourth Quarter
Ind—FG Gay 53, 11:22
Bal—FG Tucker 50, 7:33
Bal—safety, 2:03
Ind—FG Gay 53, :57

First Overtime
Ind—FG Gay 53, 1:09

First downs	Ind	Bal
	19	20
Total Net Yards	327	364

Rushes-yards	35-139	37-186
Passing	188	178
Punt Returns	2-48	4-45
Kickoff Returns	0-0	1-20
Interceptions Ret.	2-44	0-0
Comp-Att-Int	27-44-6	22-31-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	5-39	4-24
Punts	7-46.43	7-47.0
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	4-2
Penalties-Yards	6-31	1-5
Time of Possession	36:33	32:18

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
RUSHING—Indianapolis, Moss 30-122, Sermon 5-17, Baltimore, Jackson 14-101, Edwards 11-51, Gordon 10-32, Flowers 1-2, Drake 1-0. PASSING—Indianapolis, Minshew 27-44-6-227, Baltimore, Jackson 22-31-0-202. RECEIVING—Indianapolis, Pittman 9-77, Downs 8-57, Pierce 3-43, Moss 2-23, Gronson 2-9, Ogletree 1-11, Sermon 1-4, McKenzie 1-3, Baltimore, Flowers 8-48, Agholor 4-39, Andrews 4-35, Drake 2-31, Gordon 2-23, Likely 1-20, Bateman 1-6. MISSED FIELD GOALS—Baltimore, Tucker 61.

L.A. Chargers 28, Minnesota 24
LA Chargers 7 7 7 7 - 28
Minnesota 0 10 7 7 - 24

First Quarter
LAC—Parham 3 pass from Herbert (Dicker kick), 2:51

Second Quarter
Min—Oliver 4 pass from Cousins (Joseph kick), 7:27
Min—FG Joseph 23, 2:08
LAC—Parham 1 pass from Herbert (Dicker kick), :47

Third Quarter
LAC—M.Williams 49 pass from K.Allen (Dicker kick), 5:53
Min—Osborn 36 pass from Cousins (Joseph kick), 3:01

Fourth Quarter
Min—Jefferson 52 pass from Cousins (Joseph kick), 11:20
LAC—Palmer 30 pass from Herbert (Dicker kick), 8:05

First downs	LAC	Min
	24	29
Total Net Yards	475	475
Rushes-yards	15-30	24-130
Passing	445	345
Punt Returns	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns	0-0	0-0
Interceptions Ret.	1-0	0-0
Comp-Att-Int	41-48-0	32-50-1
Sacked-Yards Lost	1-9	4-22
Punts	3-37.3	3-48.3
Fumbles-Lost	3-1	1-1
Penalties-Yards	12-94	6-45
Time of Possession	26:47	33:13

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
RUSHING—L.A. Chargers, Kelley 11-12, Herbert 2-11, Spiller 2-7, Minnesota, Mattison 20-93, Chandler 3-27, Cousins 1-10. PASSING—L.A. Chargers, Herbert 40-47-0-405, K.Allen 1-1-0-49. RECEIVING—L.A. Chargers, K.Allen 18-215, M.Williams 7-121, Everett 6-30, Palmer 4-66, Johnson 2-10, Parham 2-4, Kelley 1-5, D.Davis 1-3, Minnesota, Hockenson 8-78, Jefferson 7-149, Addison 6-52, Mattison 5-32, Oliver 2-4, Osborn 1-36, Ham 1-7, Powell 1-5, Chandler 1-4. MISSED FIELD GOALS—L.A. Chargers, Dicker 53.

New England 15, N.Y. Jets 10
New Eng. 3 7 3 2 - 15
NY Jets 0 3 0 7 - 10

First Quarter
NE—FG Ryland 48, 10:41

Second Quarter
NE—P.Brown 58 pass from Mac.Jones (Ryland kick), 11:38
NYJ—FG Zuerlein 52, 1:21

Third Quarter
NE—FG Ryland 51, 10:26

Fourth Quarter
NYJ—Bawden 1 run (Zuerlein kick), 5:24
NE—safety, 2:19

First downs	NE	NYJ
	17	12
Total Net Yards	358	171
Rushes-yards	40-157	22-38
Passing	201	133
Punt Returns	4-39	4-39
Kickoff Returns	1-11	2-55
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	0-0
Comp-Att-Int	15-29-0	18-36-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	0-0	3-24
Punts	8-40.25	8-51.25
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	1-0
Penalties-Yards	6-43	3-15

Time of Possession	31:41	28:19
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INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
RUSHING—New England, Elliott 16-80, Stevenson 19-59, Mac.Jones 4-13, Douglas 1-0, Goff 0-0, B.Hall 12-18, Burdick 1-1, Z.Wilson 1-1. PASSING—New England, Mac.Jones 15-29-0-201, N.Y. Jets, Z.Wilson 18-36-0-157. RECEIVING—New England, Bourne 4-46, P.Brown 2-71, Parker 2-19, Henry 2-17, Gesicki 1-18, Douglas 1-15, Elliott 1-7, Smith-Schuster 1-5, Stevenson 1-3, N.Y. Jets, G.Wilson 5-48, Lazard 3-39, Conklin 3-26, Cook 3-11, Cobb 1-12, Bre.Hall 1-9, Uzomah 1-9, Carter 1-3. MISSED FIELD GOALS—New England, Ryland 57, Ryland 48.

Green Bay 18, New Orleans 17
New Or. 7 10 0 0 - 17
Green Bay 0 0 0 18 - 18

First Quarter
NO—Graham 8 pass from Carr (Grupe kick), 6:40

Second Quarter
NO—Shaheed 76 punt return (Grupe kick), 10:30
NO—FG Grupe 25, :06

Fourth Quarter
GB—FG Carlson 38, 11:00
GB—Love 1 run (Toure pass from Love), 6:58
GB—Doubs 8 pass from Love (Carlson kick), 2:56

First downs	NO	GB
	15	21
Total Net Yards	252	340
Rushes-yards	22-77	26-95
Passing	175	245
Punt Returns	1-76	3-4
Kickoff Returns	2-32	1-24
Interceptions Ret.	1-0	0-0
Comp-Att-Int	23-34-0	22-44-1
Sacked-Yards Lost	4-29	1-14
Punts	7-41.86	4-38.25
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	1-0
Penalties-Yards	7-102	11-90
Time of Possession	27:25	32:35

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
RUSHING—New Orleans, Miller 9-34, Jones 8-31, Hill 4-12, Shaheed 1-0. Green Bay, Love 9-39, Dillon 11-33, Nixon 1-11, Em.Wilson 2-6, Taylor 3-6. PASSING—New Orleans, Carr 13-18-0-103, Winston 10-16-0-101. Green Bay, Love 22-44-1-259. RECEIVING—New Orleans, Olave 8-104, Thomas 6-50, Jones 4-21, J.Johnson 2-12, Hill 1-9, Graham 1-8, Miller 1-0. Green Bay, Musgrave 6-49, Doubs 5-73, Wicks 4-45, Reed 3-63, Taylor 3-23, Em.Wilson 1-6. MISSED FIELD GOALS—New Orleans, Grupe 46.

Cleveland 27, Tennessee 3
Tennessee 0 3 0 0 - 3
Cleveland 3 10 7 7 - 27

SOCCER UNITED STATES 2, SOUTH AFRICA 0

Rapinoe gets triumphant send-off



Nancy Armour
Columnist
USA TODAY

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CHICAGO — There are some good-byes that are heavy and sad, the weight of the emotions almost too heavy to bear. Then there are the goodbyes that are joyous, a celebration of what's been rather than regrets over what's about to be lost.

Megan Rapinoe's final game with the U.S. women Sunday was very much the latter. Any tears were far outweighed by the laughter, the jokes and, most of all, the love.

Trinity Rodman, one of "the kids" Rapinoe name-checked Saturday as giving her peace that the USWNT will be just fine, scored the first goal, in the 18th minute.

Emily Sonnett doubled the score off a Rapinoe free kick in the 49th minute, allowing the team to badger Rapinoe into giving her signature "Are you not entertained?" pose one last time.

When Rapinoe left the field in the 54th minute, there was a heartfelt embrace with every one of her teammates, some of whom she's played with for years, others for just a few months. She and Midge Purce, who took her place on the field, exchanged slight bows and a handshake on the sideline and then, just like that, it was over.

There will never be another 'Pinoe but my God what a gift she's been. To the U.S. women, to soccer, to society overall. She's a two-time World Cup champion and Olympic gold medalist, and she won both Golden Ball and Golden Boot honors in 2019. She also was integral in the USWNT's fight for equal pay, and has been a staunch advocate for racial equality and the LGBTQ community.

It's unfathomable to think of the USWNT without Rapinoe. Just as it was once unfathomable to imagine the USWNT without Mia Hamm. And Michelle Akers. And Julie Foudy. And Abby Wambach.

But in sports, just as in life, there's no



United States forward Megan Rapinoe acknowledges fans after the game against South Africa in her last national team appearance on Sunday in Chicago. JON DURR/USA TODAY SPORTS

such thing as immortality. You do your best in the time you're given and hope it's enough to leave an impact, and you enjoy every second of the ride because no two moments are the same.

Rapinoe did that better than most, which is why her sendoff Sunday was so joyous. She gave everything she had to the USWNT, and her imprint will be on it for decades to come.

You needed look no further than Rodman to see that.

"This team has a crazy amount of potential. And just good kids," Rapinoe said Saturday. "I think that's why I have such peace about moving on. I look at

players like Sophia Smith, Naomi (Girma), Trin. The squad is in very, very good hands if those are the ones that are holding it moving forward."

Rodman is just 21 and absurdly talented, but she's still trying to find her way with the USWNT. She had some flashes of brilliance at the World Cup and some not-very-good games. But on Sunday, she played with the enthusiasm and aggression that has always been a trademark of the USWNT.

Alex Morgan served up a perfect cross, chipping the ball over two defenders from near the endline, and Rodman sent it rocketing into the net with a

perfect volley.

The first person to hug her? Rapinoe.

The only thing missing, if you can even say that, from Sunday's 2-0 win over South Africa was Rapinoe scoring, and she came close. A free kick after Sonnett's goal rustled the top of the net, drawing laughter and sheepish grins from the Americans.

Seconds later, Rapinoe was making her way off the field in a U.S. jersey for the last time. What a wonderful ride it's all been.

Follow USA TODAY Sports columnist Nancy Armour on social media @nrarmour.

SOCCER ENGLISH ROUNDUP

Pochettino's Chelsea loses again; Spurs stay unbeaten

Mattias Karen
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON — Mauricio Pochettino listened to the boos ring out at Stamford Bridge after his Chelsea side slumped to another disappointing loss in the Premier League.

Across London, Ange Postecoglou was greeted by a standing ovation from his Tottenham supporters after another impressive performance by Spurs against archrival Arsenal.

The two managers' contrasting starts to the season were underlined Sunday by Chelsea's 1-0 home loss to Aston Villa while Tottenham drew 2-2 at Arsenal's Emirates Stadium.

That was followed by Newcastle equaling its biggest Premier League win with an 8-0 rout of Sheffield United in the late game.

Pochettino, the former Tottenham manager who took over Chelsea in the offseason following a chaotic season that saw the Blues go through three coaches, now has just one win and three losses to show for his first six games in charge. The latest defeat came after Chelsea's Malo Gusto was sent off in the 58th minute and Villa forward Ollie Watkins scored the winner in the 73rd.

Postecoglou, meanwhile, is still unbeaten in the league after passing his biggest test yet in his first north London derby. It was Tottenham's first point at Arsenal since 2019.

Son Heung-min scored both goals for Tottenham, which came from behind twice after an own-goal by Cristian Romero and a penalty by Bukayo Saka. The second equalizer came just 23 seconds after Arsenal had regained the lead, following a defensive error by Tottenham who dawdled on the ball in midfield and gave the ball away.

On a busy Sunday schedule featuring five Premier League games, Liverpool climbed into second place with a 3-1 win over West Ham at Anfield, while Brighton beat Bournemouth 3-1 behind two goals from substitute Kaoru Mitoma.

CHELSEA SHUT OUT AGAIN

Chelsea's attacking woes were on display again despite dominating much



Aston Villa's Ollie Watkins, center, scores his side's opening goal against Chelsea on Sunday in London. ALASTAIR GRANT/AP

of the game until Gusto's sending off. The Blues have scored just five goals in six league games, with only one of those coming from starting striker Nicolas Jackson.

"I am not frustrated, just disappointed," Pochettino said. "We are confident in the way we perform. The only thing we are missing is scoring. If we keep working hard we will change."

Jackson missed his best chance in the first half when he was teed up by a defense-splitting pass from Mykhailo Mudryk, but saw his shot blocked by Villa goalkeeper Emi Martinez.

Gusto was sent off for a challenge on Lucas Digne that was upgraded from a yellow card to a red after a VAR review, and Villa took advantage when the visitors won the ball back high in the Chelsea half to launch a counterattack.

Levi Colwill slid in to block Watkins' initial shot, but the Villa striker reacted quickest to seize on the rebound and lash his second effort past Robert Sanchez from an angle and in off the far post.

SON RESCUES SPURS

Coming to the hostile environment of the Emirates Stadium promised to be a good indicator of whether Postecoglou's attack-minded "Angeball" style of play can work even in big away games.

Son and James Maddison made sure it worked just fine.

Maddison set up Son for both goals, first breaking in from the left and squaring the ball for a first-time finish to level the score at 1-1 shortly before the half-time break.

After Saka restored Arsenal's lead from the spot in the 54th, Maddison responded immediately by robbing Jorginho of the ball and sending Son clear through on goal to beat goalkeeper David Raya with a low finish.

"It's a derby, it's always a tough game. But the performance was fantastic from the lads until the last whistle," Son said. "I think we gave everything so I think the fans can be proud of the game. Obviously we wanted to win, but I think the performance was perfect."

NEWCASTLE RUNS RIOT

The game at Sheffield United began with a poignant tribute before kickoff for Maddy Cusack, the club's women's player who died at the age of 27.

Newcastle went on to earn its biggest away league win ever and equaled an 8-0 victory over Sheffield Wednesday in September 1999 when Bobby Robson was the manager.

The goals came from eight different players, with Sean Longstaff, Dan Burn, Sven Botman, Callum Wilson, Anthony Gordon, Miguel Almiron, Bruno Guimaraes and Alexander Isak all finding the net.

"The big thing for us was that we really wanted to score and we weren't content with three and I want that mentality to run through the team," Newcastle manager Eddie Howe said.

RESURGENT NUNEZ

Darwin Nunez looks to finally have settled in well as Liverpool's No. 9.

Nunez began the season coming off the bench but looks undroppable after netting his fourth goal of the campaign to put Liverpool ahead 2-1 in the second half.

Jurgen Klopp's side has won five successive Premier League games after drawing at Chelsea on the opening weekend, to sit two points behind defending champion Manchester City.

Nunez netted with a 60th-minute volley after Jarrod Bowen's diving header in the first half had canceled out Mohamed Salah's penalty.

Substitute Diogo Jota made sure of the win in the 85th. Liverpool scored at least three goals in their opening three home league games for only the second time in the last 43 years.

FLYING HIGH

Brighton is third after taking its goal tally to a league-best 18.

The Seagulls trailed to Dominic Solanke's first-half goal for Bournemouth but leveled through an own-goal by Milos Kerkez. Mitoma then netted a double after coming on as a substitute to leave Bournemouth still winless.

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SOCCER MLS ROUNDUP

McGuire's equalizer earns Orlando City draw with Miami

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ASSOCIATED PRESS

ORLANDO, Fla. – Rookie Duncan McGuire scored the equalizer in the 66th minute to help Orlando City gain a 1-1 draw with Inter Miami on Sunday night, extending the club's unbeaten streak to 10.

Inter Miami (9-15-5) played without Lionel Messi, who was held out because of muscle fatigue. Messi missed a Sept. 16 match against Atlanta United for the same reason.

Neither team scored until David Ruiz found the net for a second time this season, scoring unassisted in the 52nd minute to give Inter Miami a 1-0 lead.

Orlando City (14-7-9) answered with the equalizer when McGuire scored his ninth goal of the season, unassisted in the 66th minute.

Pedro Galles finished with four saves for Orlando City. Drake Callender stopped five shots for Inter Miami.

Orlando City has scored in 13 straight matches in all competitions, one off the club record set spanning the 2015-16 seasons. The club saw a four-match win streak at home end but it is still 6-0-4 in its last 10.

Inter Miami is 0-2-4 all-time in Orlando. Both losses were by one goal. Inter Miami has gone 9-1-5 in its last 15 matches in all competitions. The club had eight victories in its previous 28 matches.

NYCFC 3, Toronto FC 0

NEW YORK – Andrés Perea scored in the 2nd minute, teenager Julián Fernández netted his first career goal and NYCFC eliminated Toronto FC from playoff contention.

NYCFC (8-10-13) jumps over D.C. United into the ninth and final playoff spot with the regular season winding down. NYCFC has three matches remaining – one less than United.

The season can't end soon enough for Toronto (4-16-10). The club has lost eight straight on the road in all competitions, including six shutout losses in a



Orlando City forward Duncan McGuire reacts after the game against Inter Miami CF on Sunday in Orlando, Fla. CORY KNOWLTON/USA TODAY SPORTS

row, and been outscored 24-1. Toronto has just four draws in its last 19 away matches in all competitions.

Perea took a crossing pass from Santiago Rodríguez in the 2nd minute and scored his first goal of the season for NYCFC.

Perea, who had one goal in eight appearances this season for Philadelphia, is on loan from the Union until the end of the season.

NYCFC took a two-goal lead into halftime after Andres Jasson found the net for a third time this season, unassisted in the fourth minute of stoppage time.

Fernández, a 19-year-old rookie, scored in the 54th minute with an assist from Talles Magno. Fernández, who subbed in to begin the second half, has one start in seven appearances for the club.

Matt Freese totaled four saves to earn the clean sheet in his seventh start of the season for NYCFC. Luka Gavran, 23, made his league debut and saved five shots for Toronto.

WNBA PLAYOFFS ROUNDUP

Bonner, Allen lead Sun over Liberty in Game 1

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK – DeWanna Bonner scored 20 points, Rebecca Allen added 18 and the Connecticut Sun played stellar defense to beat the New York Liberty 78-63 on Sunday in the first game of their best-of-five WNBA semifinals playoff series.

Game 2 is Tuesday night in New York.

Third-seeded Connecticut lost all four games between the teams in the regular season, including getting blown out twice in New York. On Sunday, the Sun turned up their defensive effort, slowing down the second-seeded Liberty and holding them to their lowest point total of the season.

New York led by three at halftime before Connecticut went on a 16-2 run to start the third quarter. The Sun scored the first nine points during the spurt and Natisha Hiedeman hit two 3-pointers. New York got within 53-48, but Allen — who was traded from the Liberty in the offseason to the Sun as part of the Jonquel Jones deal — hit her fourth 3-pointer of the game.

Bonner made a pull-up jumper just before the end of the third quarter to extend Connecticut's lead back to 10. She scored the first five points of the fourth to push it to 70-55 — the team's biggest lead of the game.

New York, which was led by Breanna Stewart's 19 points, couldn't get within single digits the rest of the way.

Stewart had a rough game, going 7 for 25 from the field, including missing all seven of her 3-point attempts. Jones had 14 points and 12 rebounds for New York — the 15th time that she's had a double-double this season but the first time New York has lost in one of those efforts.

The Liberty advanced to the semifinals after sweeping Washington in a hard-fought series, taking the clincher in overtime. Connecticut made it to its fifth straight semifinals by topping Minnesota in three games.

Aces 97, Wings 83

LAS VEGAS — A'ja Wilson scored 34 points, including 14 in the third quarter



Liberty forward Breanna Stewart (30) and Sun forward DeWanna Bonner (24) fight for a loose ball in the fourth quarter. WENDELL CRUZ/USA TODAY SPORTS

as the Las Vegas Aces beat the Dallas Wings in the opening game of the semifinal series.

Wilson, who earlier in the week earned the league's defensive player of the year award, also had eight rebounds and four blocked shots. Kelsey Plum added 25 points for the top-seeded Aces, Jackie Young scored 19 and Chelsea Gray 13. Young also pulled down 10 rebounds.

Satou Sabally led the No. 4 seed Wings with 16 points while Arike Ogunbowale added 12.

The Aces dominated the first half, leading 45-36 on a Plum 3-pointer with 2:39 left. The Wings cut the lead to 49-45 at the half on a Sabally 3-pointer with 23 seconds to go. After a Kalani Brown steal, Ogunbowale missed a 3 at the buzzer that would have cut the lead to one at the half.

Wilson had 18 points and five rebounds in the first half while Plum added 12 points, all coming in the second quarter.

Howard had nine points in the half for the Wings.

The Aces built a six-point lead in the first quarter, but the Wings cut the lead to 20-19 by the end of the quarter.

Solheim

Continued from Page 1NS

as well as many expected, Ciganda seized the moment in front of King and country.

"Of course, it comes down to one match," said Pettersen. "I think it's just meant to be, that it came down to Carlotta."

Europe, winners of the past two Cups, needed only 14 points to retain. The matches finished in a tie at 14-14 for the first time in Solheim history after Lexi Thompson posted a final point for Team USA in the anchor position. The teams came into singles play tied at 8-8 for the fifth time, and the talent had never been more evenly matched.

"I'm just so proud," said Ciganda, who in the aftermath was carried around Finca Cortesin on the shoulders of her teammates. "I'm just so happy. Everyone here is a family."

Pettersen declared in the closing ceremony that nobody in the family would sleep tonight.

Sweden's Caroline Hedwall, the 121st-ranked player in the world who sat out the first three sessions, put together one of the most inspiring comebacks in Solheim history. Three down with six holes to play, Hedwall made four birdies and a conceded eagle on the final hole to defeated Ally Ewing and give Europe a chance to win three in a row for the first time.

"You know, I never give up, and I showed that today," said Hedwall, one of Pettersen's four captain's picks and her most controversial.

Ireland's Leona Maguire, the 2021 Solheim Cup MVP, put the first point on the board for Europe on Sunday with a decisive 1-up victory over U.S. open sensation Rose Zhang with six birdies in 15 holes. Maguire, who along with Linn Grant and Emily Pedersen, went all five sessions for Europe, now boasts an overall Solheim record of 7-2-1.

"I just don't give up," said Maguire of what makes her so tough in match play. "I think someone said Jessica Korda tweeted the other day that I was annoying at match play, and that was the goal this week, was to be as annoying as possible."

"Me and Suzann kind of had a



Team Europe pose with the trophy after retaining the Solheim Cup on Sunday in Finca Cortesin, near Casares, southern Spain, on Sunday. BERNAT ARMANGUE/AP

running joke this week, do what Suzann would do, and I feel like that's what she would have done today."

Team USA got off to a rousing start Sunday, winning the first hole in the first three matches. It was a back-and-forth affair all afternoon in front of an electric crowd. Megan Khang went out first and set the tone for Team USA, taking the unflappable Linn Grant to the 18th before winning, 1 up.

Khang, while short in stature, carried a big presence on Lewis' team with her boisterous personality. She was undefeated for the week, posting a 3-0-1 record.

Thompson looked like the U.S. team's biggest liability coming into the week, but her ball-striking looked so good in the practice rounds that Lewis gave her the ultimate vote of confidence by having her hit the event's opening tee shot

on the dramatic drivable par-4 first at Finca Cortesin.

On Sunday, Thompson, the U.S. team's most experienced player, was put in the anchor position for the first time and held control of that match against Pedersen for most of the afternoon. She had a 2-up lead standing on the 17th tee, when Ciganda sank the short birdie putt to retain the Cup.

When the celebrations finished and the green finally cleared, Thompson tied up her singles victory to amass a 3-1-0 record for the week and look the best she has all season.

Angel Yin, Allisen Corpuz, Cheyenne Knight and Andrea Lee all put together strong performances at crucial times, and Danielle Kang declared that she played her best golf all year in Spain.

When it was over, Lewis gathered her young team together for an emotional

talk in which she emphasized to her mostly reserved band of 12 that they didn't lose. And they only had 12 months to get another chance.

"I just told them how proud I was of them and just the fact that — I don't want to sound like a sore loser," said Lewis, "but it was a tie, and I think that's a lot for the team to build off of, especially coming over here, coming into this environment with five rookies, a very young and inexperienced team. I mean, this week was really, really good for them."

Early in the week, Pettersen benched Ciganda in the opening session, which had to be difficult for a player who had waited a lifetime for this moment. Pettersen joked that she had to put Ciganda on a leash this week: "I mean, she would jump off and fly if she could." In the end, she all but did.

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GOLF ROUNDUP



Bryson DeChambeau poses with the trophy after winning LIV Golf Chicago on Sunday in Sugar Grove, Ill. CHARLES LABERGE/LIV GOLF VIA AP

DeChambeau wins LIV Golf-Chicago

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SUGAR GROVE, Ill. — Bryson DeChambeau shot 6-under 28 on the back nine, closed with one last birdie on his penultimate hole and won LIV Golf-Chicago on Sunday by one shot over Marc Leishman and Anirban Lahiri.

DeChambeau finished with an 8-under 63 at Rich Harvest Farms and a 54-hole total of 13-under 200. He began on the fourth hole under LIV's shotgun start format, made his only bogey on the par-4 ninth and then reeled off four birdies in five holes.

It was the second win of the season on the Saudi-funded tour for DeChambeau, whose Crushers — including Lahiri — won the team competition by three shots. That means DeChambeau takes home \$5.25 million — \$4 million for the individual trophy.

DeChambeau closed with a 12-under 58 to win at The Greenbrier in early August.

Leishman shot 66. Lahiri, who started on the first hole in the final pairing with second-round leader Sebastian Munoz, bogeyed the par-4 18th to fall out of a tie with DeChambeau.

Munoz, who led by three after 36 holes, closed with a 73.

Brooks Koepka, playing his final tournament before the Ryder Cup in Italy, shot 71 to finish at 5 under. Koepka, who won the PGA Championship in May and was picked to the U.S. team by captain Zach Johnson, will be the only LIV player participating in the biennial team competition. There are two events remaining on LIV's 2024 schedule, next month in Saudi Arabia and at Trump National Doral in Florida.

European Tour

SAINT-QUENTIN-EN-YVELINES, France — Japanese golfer Ryo Hisatsune posted a 5-under 66 to win the French Open by two shots from Jeff Winther of Denmark and Jordan Smith of England on Sunday, clinching his first victory on the European tour.

"(I decided to play) more aggressive, like 'Go, go, go,' said the 21-year-old Hisatsune, who made five birdies on the back nine and jumped up four places in his final round at Le Golf National.

Winther's fine round of 65 moved him up 10 spots. But countryman Rasmus Højgaard, last year's runner-up, missed out again after having looked in contention. His 68 left him in fourth, three shots behind Hisatsune.

FORMULA 1

Verstappen wins in Japan, edges closer to series title

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SUZUKA, Japan — Max Verstappen survived a dramatic first lap then coasted to victory at the Japanese Grand Prix on Sunday to move a step closer to securing his third consecutive Formula One championship.

The Red Bull driver, who missed out on the podium a week ago in Singapore, started from pole and held on for his 13th win of the season.

With Verstappen's victory, Red Bull secured the constructors' title, their sixth overall and second in a row. They did it with six races remaining.

"What an unbelievable season we are having," Verstappen said. "You can all be very proud here at the track and back at the factory. You guys built a rocket ship of a car, well done."

McLaren driver Lando Norris was second, 19.4 seconds back of Verstappen, while his teammate Australian rookie Oscar Piastri was third for his first F1 podium.

Verstappen, who also secured a point for the fastest lap, increased his lead over Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez to 177 points. He could wrap up his third consecutive title at the Oct. 6-8 Qatar Grand Prix.

The race got off to a thrilling start with Verstappen, Piastri and Norris going wheel-to-wheel but the Red Bull driver held his lead through the first two turns. Verstappen commented on the excitement at the start.

"Luckily nothing happened," Verstappen said. "It all got quite close but that's racing, that's how it goes at the start. And then of course you had a good battle into Turn 1 and Turn 2, I was lucky there (was) a bit more grip in Turn 2."

It was a disastrous day for Perez, who was given a penalty for hitting Haas driver Kevin Magnussen and retired from the race after serving the penalty. The Mexican driver won in Saudi Arabia in March and Azerbaijan in April but has struggled since.

Verstappen saw his record 10-race winning streak come to end at Marina Bay in Singapore and came to Japan determined to get back on top of the podium. Prior to Sunday's race, he led every session at the fast Suzuka circuit, where he wrapped up last year's championship in a rain-shortened



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen crosses the finish line to win the Japanese Grand Prix at the Suzuka Circuit, on Sunday in Suzuka, central Japan. TOSHIFUMI KITAMURA/POOL VIA AP

race.

Conditions on Sunday were ideal and Verstappen took full advantage.

The safety car came out on the first lap when Alfa Romeo driver Valtteri Bottas made contact with another car resulting in debris on the track. Verstappen was able to quickly retake the lead after his first pit stop and was never seriously challenged.

Ferrari driver Charles Leclerc was fourth followed by Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton.

A battle between the McLaren drivers was ultimately won by Norris. The Briton got ahead of Piastri at the start, dropping behind after the rookie pitted under a virtual safety car then producing enough pace to swap positions.

"The progress we've made is pretty outstanding," said Norris who was also second in Singapore. "We're coming for Red Bull."

It was a memorable result for a Piastri with the 22-year-old driver just signing a contract with McLaren until the end of 2026.

"It's definitely been a pretty special week," Piastri said. "Obviously with the announcement of the extension and then qualifying on the front row and the first podium today it's definitely been a fun week."

NASCAR

Continued from Page 1NS

after five cars got caught up in an accident in the back of the field, including playoff contenders Ryan Blaney and Tyler Reddick, last year's winner at Texas.

That is what set up the 25-year-old Byron in the No. 24 Chevrolet, instead of Larson, getting the milestone victory for Hendrick. It was Byron's 10th career win.

Byron said he wasn't sure he could put into words what it meant to get No. 300, expressing his thanks to "Mr. Hendrick for his investment in me, and telling me at 17 years old that he was going to take me to Cup racing. So just appreciate everything he's done for me. This is awesome."

Denny Hamlin was racing with damage to his right side after being hit by Joe Gibbs Racing teammate Ty Gibbs on pit road in the first stage.

"Once we got the damage, (the car) just wasn't as fast as it was before," Hamlin said. "Still, considering how much damage it had, it was a top-three car. A bunch of carnage happened there in the end, and we avoided it, so we are in a better spot than when we entered."

BUSCH BACKED OUT

Kyle Busch knew something was wrong with his car when trying to get to the end of first stage.

The playoff contender didn't make it that far, with No. 8 Richard Childress Racing Chevrolet getting loose and slamming hard into the outside wall in Turn 1 before coming down to the inside of the track.

"I felt like I had a flat right front (tire), and I was going to come to pit road. I second-guessed it, and said 'I don't think so, man. It's just something's wrong. Something's not right, but it's not a flat,'" Busch said. "And just all on its own, just turned into the bottom of the race track in Turn one and it just swapped ends on me. That's the rear, not the front, not having grip."

Busch had the car in reverse, backing down the entire backstretch, through the third and fourth turns all the way to



William Byron celebrates in Victory Lane after winning the AutoTrader EcoPark Automotive 400 at Texas Motor Speedway on Sunday in Fort Worth, Texas. MICHAEL C. JOHNSON/USA TODAY SPORTS

As it stalled, the 16th-place Byron and reached 10 degrees, making it the hottest test Cup race ever at Texas, which opened in 1997. The track temperature was 140 degrees early in the race.

ODDS AND ENDS

For the first time since Texas opened in 1997, the race wasn't scheduled for 501 miles, and was 100 miles shorter. ... Playoff contenders have won each of the first four playoff races this season, after non-playoff drivers did so in the first four last year. ... The outside temperature

LOOSE WHEELS

Two cars lost rear right wheels in a span of 13 laps early in the race. Austin Dillon's No. 3 Chevrolet when racing full speed near Turn 3 on lap 41, bringing out the first caution soon after the first cycle of green-flag pit stops had mostly been completed.

UP NEXT

The series returns to Talladega Superspeedway, where Busch won double overtime and under caution in April. Blaney and Buescher finished second and third in that race that had 57 lead changes among 21 drivers.

