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COLUMN ONE

## 'Father' of birth control fights on

At 92, the still sly Bill Baird, who won his own battle for women's reproductive rights in the '70s, warns of 'civil war.'

BY JEFFREY FLEISHMAN  
REPORTING FROM  
BUCKS COUNTY, PA.

Bill Baird has been called many things: butcher, murderer, piper of sex, unholy deviant. It's hard to imagine the 92-year-old man on the white couch once evoked so much wrath. But it was a dangerous time when Baird — who was shot at and punched, who lost his family and was jailed — won a 1972 Supreme Court decision that legalized contraception for unmarried women, earning him the nickname the "father" of birth control.

The privacy issues raised in Eisenstadt vs. Baird were cited less than a year later when the court voted to protect a woman's right to abortion in Roe vs. Wade. Baird was elated but prescient about what was to come. He knew the persuasions of preachers and the power of the Bible to provoke America's morality police. He warned a complacent abortion rights movement that the victory was in danger from a well-organized Christian right that would galvanize the Republican Party.

In 1980, he appeared like a party-crashing, secular prophet at a Dallas religious convention where televangelist Jerry Falwell and other right-wing pastors were mobilizing Christian voters and calling for Supreme Court justices to oppose abortion. "This is the first time in the history of this great nation of ours," Baird said at the time, "that any single group has tried to seize control of the U.S. Supreme Court to force a particular religious viewpoint."

And he says it's happening. [See Baird, A10]



SEAN RAINS, who left Bakersfield two years ago and moved to Havilah with his girlfriend and their pit bull, assesses the damage to his shaker table while digging through the rubble of his home days after the Borel fire. Photographs by ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

## Like many gold rush towns, Havilah reaches a fiery end

Recent wildfires have reduced rich California history to ash

BY TONY BRISCOE  
AND ROBERT GAUTHIER

HAVILAH, Calif. — There was gold in these hills.

Hidden in the rugged Sierra Nevada amid sprawling pine forests, Havilah was once a bustling mining town where stamp mills pulverized rock from the region's mines and prospectors panned for precious metals in the late 19th century.

In its heyday, the town's main drag featured saloons, dance halls, inns and gambling houses. Townsfolk witnessed midday gunfights, manhunts for wanted killers and stagecoach robberies, and they wagered gold dust on horse races, according to Los Angeles Times archives.

But for nearly a century, long after the feverish search for gold subsided, Havilah had been considered something of a ghost town, with only about 150 residents. Foundations were all that remained of most of its historic buildings when fire swept through the town July 26.

The fast-moving Borel fire, which has scorched more than 59,000 acres, destroyed some of the [See Havilah, A7]



JANET KUTZNER, a member of the historical society, passes the remains of Havilah's roadside museum days after the Borel fire scorched the town.

## Kuehl inquiry closed without charges

Prosecutors cite lack of evidence of graft by onetime supervisor in a case started by ex-sheriff's team.

BY KERI BLAKINGER

Two years after Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies showed up with guns and battering rams for an early morning raid on Sheila Kuehl's home in Santa Monica, the investigation is officially over — and there will be no criminal charges.

Instead, Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge William Ryan approved an agreement Wednesday in which the California Department of Justice said there was a "lack of evidence of wrongdoing." The department had taken over the politically charged investigation originally launched by then-L.A. County Sheriff Alex Villanueva's controversial public corruption squad.

"The DOJ has conducted a thorough and independent investigation into the allegations that formed the basis of the LASD investigation," state prosecutors wrote. "The DOJ has concluded, based on this independent investigation, that there is insufficient evidence to support the filing of any criminal charges."

The case had centered on more than \$800,000 worth of contracts Metro awarded to Peace Over Violence, a nonprofit run by Patti Giggans — one of Kuehl's friends and Villanueva's critics. The organization had been tasked with running a hotline for reporting sexual harassment on the public transit system, but the agreement to do so came under scrutiny after a whistleblower alleged that Giggans had been unfairly awarded the contract as a quid pro quo for supporting Kuehl, a former Los Angeles County supervisor.

The investigation eventually ballooned into other allegations, including the incendiary claim — [See Investigation, A7]

## With lives at stake, LGBTQ+ people pulling for Harris

Many say a second Trump presidency amid assault on rights poses an existential threat

BY KEVIN RECTOR

SAN FRANCISCO — At a recent celebration of San Francisco's vibrant transgender past, one speaker after another directed the crowd's attention to a worrisome future, casting November's presidential election as a turning point for the LGBTQ+ community and the nation as a whole.

"This election will determine our fate," said Sofia Sabina Ríos Dorantes, deputy director of El/La Para TransLatinas, a local advocacy organization. "It will determine whether we continue to face discrimination and marginalization at [a] disproportionate rate, or whether we can continue walking toward the recognition and respect we deserve."

Last week's third annual kickoff to Transgender Pride Month — the first to be rec-



KAMALA Harris, at a Pride event in Washington in June, has received a letter of endorsement from more than 1,100 LGBTQ+ leaders, organizers and celebrities. LAWRENCE FRENCH Associated Press

ognized at the state level as well — was a chance to celebrate the advances of the transgender community in one of the nation's most enduring havens for LGBTQ+ people, with champagne served beneath the ornate dome of San Francisco City Hall. It was also a show of defiance at a dangerous time for queer folks nationally.

In three months, Americans will choose between Vice President Kamala Harris, who is a Bay Area native and longtime LGBTQ+ ally, and former President Trump, who has a long record of attacking queer rights and has aligned himself with some of the nation's most virulently anti-LGBTQ+ political groups.

In chats with family and on nights out with friends, at gay bars and organizing meetings and on a virtual call of some 20,000 queer people last month, many [See LGBTQ+, A5]

### Girardi's fraud trial begins

Prosecutors say lawyer stole millions from his clients. Defense team points finger at subordinate. CALIFORNIA, B1

### Snoomania sweeps Games

D-O-Double-G evolves from gangsta rapper to America's sweetheart during Paris Olympics. ENTERTAINMENT, E1

### A milestone for House of Mouse

Disney reports profitability in its streaming business for first time, but its theme parks unit lags. BUSINESS, A6

### Weather

Partly sunny. L.A. Basin: 85/63. B6

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## PERSPECTIVES

# Sharpshooter wins silver and Musk's approval

South Korean goes viral for looking cool, but she readily admits to anxiety and flaws.

By Max Kim

SEOUL — A day after Kim Ye-ji won a silver medal in the 10-meter air pistol event at the Paris Olympics, she learned that the internet had decided she was the coolest shooter on the planet.

Driving the sensation was a video of the 31-year-old South Korean casually setting a world record in May while wearing a black cap turned backward, sci-fi-esque shooting glasses and a pink elephant doll tied at her hip. The clip inspired fan art, video montages and a suggestion from Elon Musk on X that she should star in an action movie.

She was a heavy favorite for gold in the 25-meter event, but an error in the qualifying round — she failed to get her shot off in the required three-second window — cost her a trip to the finals.

The Times spoke with Kim over Zoom from Paris about her sudden viral fame and the joys and frustrations of her Olympic debut. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

**How did you first find out you had become famous online?**

I'm not very active on social media. I have only six or so posts on Instagram and I didn't have a Twitter account, so I didn't find out until much later.

We were having a team dinner the day after my 10-meter final and my 25-meter pistol coach said, "Ye-ji, I saw you became a world star." Then someone said Elon Musk had given me a shout-out.

After that, I started to make my way through all the posts and Instagram DMs. I have so many backed up right now because I'm a very slow typer.

**What were some of your favorite reactions?**

There were a lot of messages saying that they learned a lot from me, that my mind-set gave them hope. And then others saying that they were inspired to try shooting because of me.

I was really touched



CHARLES McQUILLAN Getty Images

**KIM YE-JI** competes in the 10-meter air pistol final at the Paris Olympics last week. A video of her setting a world record in May has inspired fan art and a suggestion from Elon Musk that she star in an action movie.

because I was actually very anxious. So I was really encouraged by how many people messaged me to tell me that my interview gave them courage.

**You mean the interview where you laughed off your loss in the 25-meter qualifiers?**

Yes. I said that just because I shot a zero doesn't mean the world will end.

I really do believe that. I wanted to tell people that, whatever sad or demoralizing thing happens today, the sun will rise again tomorrow and all of that other stuff can go into the history books. I truly believe words have power, so I always try to tell myself positive things. It's like brainwashing or hypnotizing myself.

**Can you walk us through that moment where you failed to fire within the three-second window? Is that a common occurrence in the sport? What happened there?**

I've made bigger mistakes earlier in my career. You're supposed to check to make sure your pistol has discharged the empty cartridge after each shot, but I failed to do this correctly a few times when I was still learning the 25-meter event. I once missed three out of five shots because of it.

But this was the biggest mistake I made since joining the national team. I got greedy because I wanted to get the shot off just right. It turned out I'd missed my shot by exactly 0.01 seconds.

After it happened, I was furious with myself.

**The internet has been going crazy over that video of you setting the world record, especially your outfit and "killer aura" at the time. Can you tell us a little bit about your getup?**

The eyepiece is common. Most shooters compete with a blinder on one eye to keep the muscles relaxed.

I'm not sure where the media heard that the elephant doll was a gift from my daughter, but that part isn't true. It was actually a hand towel my coach gave me because our hands get greasy from loading cartridges into our pistols. It's a very practical piece of equipment.

Same with the hat. I wear it to keep my hair out of my face. I wear it forward when the lights are too bright but

otherwise backward because it helps keep my eyepiece in place.

**One of the most striking things about the video was how impassive you looked after breaking a world record.**

I checked the score and I knew I'd broken the world record. But my reaction at the time was more like, "Good. That's done. Now let's get ready for the next one."

**Shooting is a very niche sport, especially in South Korea. How did you get into it?**

I started when I was in sixth grade. Our gym teacher at the time was also the shooting team coach, which I didn't know at first. Then one day he told the class, "Who wants to shoot a gun? Raise your hand." I was curious, so I raised my hand.

Later, at the range, I watched some of the older students practicing. They looked cool, so I told him I'd join the team.

He told me to get permission from my parents, but when I asked them, they were very much against it.

But because I'm a very stubborn person, I refused to eat and cried for three days until they agreed.

From day one, I told myself I had to be the very best.

**Was your aptitude for shooting immediately apparent?**

Yes, I was always told that I had a natural gift for it.

I've always been a very sleepy person, so I'd often take naps between sessions. And then when my coach would wake me up and say, "Go and break that record," I'd wake up and shoot a ridiculously high score.

**What is the most essential quality that makes a good shooter?**

It would be composure and concentration. You have to be able to completely immerse yourself.

**I saw in an interview with**

**one of your coaches that you fired around 300 practice shots each day, compared with the average of 150. I think a lot of people might not be able to grasp what that's like.**

Shooting is a sport where you are focusing on one thing and performing the same action over and over again. Doing that 300 or 400 times a day has an interesting effect on you.

The biggest physical symptom is inflammation in your shoulder from lifting it up so much. But the more significant thing is the mental exhaustion. It's enough to immediately pass out in bed at the end of the day.

I think anyone who's done unskilled labor would be able to relate. It's incredibly taxing mentally, but once you get into a flow and lose yourself, time flies. The fun and beauty of it lies in poring over the tiny details, and the feeling of the pistol recoiling into your hand.

**Musk floated the possibility of you starring in a movie. If a studio or producer were to offer you a cameo as a sharpshooter, maybe in a John Wick-style action flick, would you consider it?**

I haven't given it much serious thought. I've gotten requests to appear on television already, but I don't know. For the most part, I think I need to focus on my primary commitment, which is shooting. And I also feel that people want to see Kim Ye-ji the shooter, not another version of me.

But I'm still thankful to Elon Musk for helping bring shooting into the spotlight.

**You've already said you've got your sights set on the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles.**

This Olympics feels like a turning point in my life. I realized that I still have so much I can improve. That is the single most meaningful takeaway for me this time.

Until now, I thought that I was a perfect shooter with absolutely no weaknesses to work on. And I think that's part of the reason I slipped up in the way that I did.

## Harris' new F-word for Democrats: Fun

Recent laughter and lightheartedness let her party set aside its usual hand-wringing.

LORRAINE ALI  
NEWS AND  
CULTURE CRITIC

Kamala Harris' unbridled laugh. Tim Walz's "these guys are just weird" comment. Making fun of JD Vance and his "childless cat ladies."

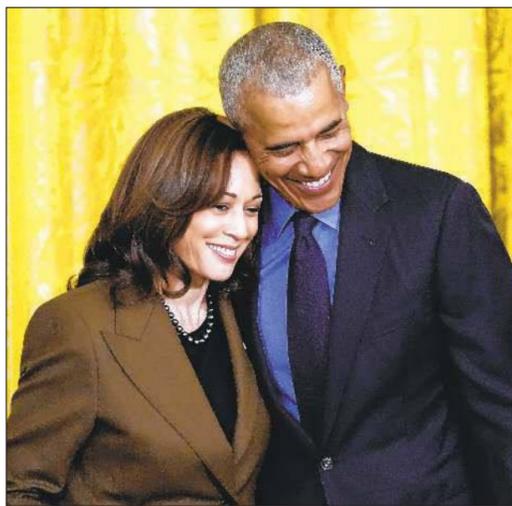
Democrats haven't had this much fun during a campaign season since presidential hopeful Bill Clinton busted out his saxophone on "The Arsenio Hall Show" and performed an ambitious version of "Heartbreak Hotel."

Social media is rife with happy memes of Harris dancing and chatting about coconut trees. Her recently announced vice presidential pick, Minnesota Gov. Walz, is already inspiring reams of big-dad-energy jokes. And all Vance has to do is show up to rouse laughter.

It's a stunning change of pace for the Party of Perpetual Hand-Wringing, a cautious body that usually approaches elections with the seriousness of a bomb squad dismantling an explosive device. One wrong move and — boom! — we're Gilead, the police state in "The Handmaid's Tale." Best to stay cautious and somber.

But Harris' sudden candidacy has interrupted a doom loop that's plagued the left since Al Gore lost to George W. Bush, making Gore the first candidate since 1888 to win the popular vote but lose in the electoral college. Donald Trump did not win the popular vote in 2016 either, yet still made it to the White House. The uphill climb to victory has given Democrats little to smile about, until now.

The buoyancy and, dare we say, joy generated by Har-



CAROLYN KASTER Associated Press

**KAMALA HARRIS**, with former President Obama, has told him they'd "have some fun" campaigning.

ris and Walz's shiny new candidacy feels unprecedented, even when compared with Barack Obama's 2008 juggernaut campaign and its message of hope.

The vice president actually used the F-word — fun — on a call with Barack and Michelle when the Obamas reached out to Harris to announce they were endorsing her for the Democratic nomination following President Biden's decision to step out of the race. Harris beamed during the call, and said that she, her husband, Doug Emhoff, and the Obamas would "have some fun" on the campaign trail. "You're a happy warrior," the former president said of Harris, to which the former first lady added: "And the country needs a happy warrior."

Harris' battle skills are another reason blue states are feeling a little less blue. When she says she'll fight for them, it's believable.

She's put felons behind bars in her role as a prosecutor. As a district attorney, she was celebrated and criticized for a conviction rate in San Francisco that jumped

from 52% to 67%.

And as a senator representing California, she nearly melted Meta founder Mark Zuckerberg with her tough questions about privacy concerns. And last week, former President Trump posted that he was backing out of a scheduled presidential debate hosted by ABC News. He proposed moving it to MAGA-friendly Fox News, which under no circumstances means he's afraid of her.

Walz and his no-nonsense humor present another unique threat to the Republican ticket. The former schoolteacher and football coach's well-timed comments calling the former president and his running mate simply "weird" have shattered the pervasive illusion of Trump as a powerful villain.

When Trump went on a bizarre ramble at the Republican National Convention last month about a fictional serial killer, "the late, great Hannibal Lecter," Walz tweeted: "Say it with me: Weird." And Tuesday, at a rally in Philadelphia where Harris and Walz appeared

together for the first time as running mates, Walz threw some more shade toward his opponent. I "can't wait to debate," he said of GOP vice presidential nominee Vance, adding: "That is, if he's willing to get off the couch and show up."

On "The Drew Barrymore Show," Harris explained her laugh and made clear she had no plans to tone it down. "I have my mother's laugh," she said. "And I grew up around a bunch of women ... who laughed from the belly. They laughed. They would sit around the kitchen ... drinking their coffee, telling big stories with big laughs."

Walz, before he was tapped by Harris as her running mate, observed on "Inside with Jen Psaki" that "Donald Trump tries to mock Vice President Harris for laughing. And I made the point: You never see this guy laugh. You never see him do these normal things."

Scowling one's way to the center of the media churn doesn't seem to be working as well as it once did. Trump's superpower of grabbing all the attention all the time is waning, and he's a losing currency in the attention economy while Harris' worth skyrockets.

This all could change overnight, of course, as elections often do. But we've witnessed something remarkable over the last few weeks: a sense of joy in a time when it seemed out of reach.

MAGA operatives have tried to use Harris' laugh and lightheartedness against her. It's proof she's not fit for the job, they say, but it seems to be that very exuberance that's cut through the noise of an otherwise nasty election year.

"I call her 'Laughing Kamala,'" Trump rally in Michigan a few weeks ago. "Ever watch her laugh? She's crazy. You know, you can tell a lot by a laugh."

Yes we can.

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### Los Angeles Times

A California Times Publication  
Founded Dec. 4, 1881  
Vol. CXLIII No. 249

LOS ANGELES TIMES (ISSN 0458-3035) is published by the Los Angeles Times, 2300 E. Imperial Highway, El Segundo, CA 90245. Periodicals postage is paid at Los Angeles, CA, and additional cities. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the above address. Home Delivery Subscription Rates (all rates include applicable CA sales taxes and apply to most areas)

Print + unlimited digital rates:  
Seven-day \$28/week, \$1,456 annually.  
Thursday-Sunday \$16/week, \$832 annually.  
Thursday & Sunday \$10/week, \$520 annually.  
Saturday & Sunday \$9/week, \$468 annually.  
Sunday \$8.50/week, \$442 annually.  
Monday-Saturday \$18/week, \$936 annually (also includes Sundays, except 3/31, 5/26, 9/1, and 10/13).  
Monday-Friday \$16/week, \$832 annually.

Printed with soy-based ink on recycled newsprint from wood byproducts.



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Los Angeles Times

## THE WORLD

# Hamas' powerful leader in the shadows

The appointment of Yahya Sinwar formalizes a role he assumed on Oct. 7.

BY JOSEPH KRAUSS

Yahya Sinwar's appointment as the top leader of Hamas formalizes a role he assumed in the early hours of Oct. 7, when the surprise attack into Israel that he helped mastermind ushered in the bloodiest chapter of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

He is seen as a hard-liner with closer ties to Hamas' armed wing than his predecessor, Ismail Haniyeh, who was killed in an explosion in Iran's capital last month that was widely blamed on Israel and could spark an all-out regional war.

Sinwar was already seen as having the final word on any cease-fire agreement for Gaza and the release of dozens of Israeli hostages still held by Hamas.

But he is deep in hiding inside Gaza, and mediators say it takes several days to exchange messages with him. That raises questions about how he would manage a sprawling organization with cadres across the Middle East.

Hamas has survived the killing of several top leaders across more than three decades, while maintaining a high degree of internal cohesion — and tapping Sinwar, who tops Israel's most-wanted list, was a show of defiance.

But Hamas has never faced a crisis of this magnitude — and the man who engineered it is now charged with managing the fallout.

Haniyeh was a veteran of Hamas' political wing who had once served as Palestinian Authority prime minister and in more recent years had managed the group's affairs from his base in Qatar.

While Hamas has always



**A MAN** carries an injured child after an Israeli airstrike Tuesday in Deir al Balah, Gaza Strip. The Hamas-Israel war has been going on for 10 months.

championed armed struggle, Haniyeh and other exiled leaders had occasionally struck a more moderate tone, even expressing openness to a possible two-state solution, although still officially refusing to recognize Israel.

Sinwar, by contrast, spent more than two decades in Israeli prisons and told interrogators he had killed 12 suspected Palestinian collaborators, gaining a reputation for brutality among people on both sides of the conflict.

He and Mohammed Deif, the head of Hamas' armed wing who Israel claims to have killed in a recent strike, spent years building up the group's military strength and are believed to have devised the Oct. 7 attack. Militants burst into Israel that day, killing some 1,200 people and abducting around 250.

In recent negotiations, "Haniyeh had played a big role in trying to convince Sinwar to accept a cease-fire proposal with Israel," said Hugh Lovatt, an expert on the Israeli-Palestinian con-

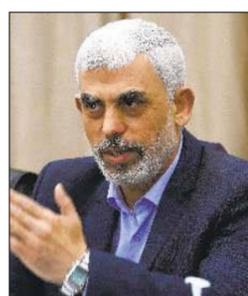
flict at the European Council on Foreign Relations.

Sinwar has stuck to demands for the release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners, the full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza and a lasting cease-fire — even as nearly 40,000 Palestinians have been killed in the Israel-Hamas war, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not differentiate between civilians and combatants in its count.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to continue the war until Hamas is completely destroyed and all the hostages return home.

"The killing of Haniyeh already brought negotiations back to the drawing board," said Lina Khatib, an expert on the conflict at Chatham House, a London-based think tank. "This next chess move by Hamas makes negotiations even trickier."

Sadeq Abu Amer, head of the Palestinian Dialogue Group, a think tank based in Turkey, said that though Sinwar's elevation might ap-



**YAHYA** Sinwar, seen in 2022, is now deep in hiding inside Gaza.

pear to be a "challenge to Israel," it is still possible to make a deal. He added that Sinwar, in his new role, "might take a step that will surprise everyone."

Predicting how Sinwar will lead Hamas is difficult because of the secrecy around him.

Sinwar has not been seen since the start of the war and even before Oct. 7 made only rare public appearances. He is probably in hiding deep inside Hamas' tunnel network and largely cut off from the outside world.

While he can be expected to set overall policy and make the final decision on any cease-fire deal, Hamas' day-to-day operations in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and elsewhere are likely to be managed by its exiled leaders in Qatar, Lebanon, Turkey and Iran.

"There are issues that he can make a decision on and there are issues and matters that his deputies and the rest of the members of the political bureau can do," said Hani al Masri, a veteran Palestinian analyst.

Hamas has a long history of persevering after the killing of its top leaders — including its founder and spiritual leader, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, who was killed in an airstrike in 2004.

But it has never faced a campaign of targeted killings on this scale.

Israel says it has killed scores of Hamas commanders in Gaza, including Deif, whose death Hamas has neither confirmed nor denied. Another top Hamas leader, Saleh Arouri, was killed in an apparent Israeli airstrike in Beirut in January. The string of targeted killings has probably led other Hamas leaders to limit their movements and contacts.

That could eventually degrade the organization, even as it enjoys the support of many — but not most — Palestinians.

"Israel's elimination of senior Hamas leaders who cannot easily be replaced has likely had a qualitative impact on the movement," Lovatt said. "More fundamentally, though, the killing of senior figures such as Arouri and Haniyeh appears to have tipped the movement in a more hard-line direction."

Krauss writes for the Associated Press. AP writers Jack Jeffery in Ramallah, West Bank, and Kareem Chehayeb, Sarah El Deeb and Abby Sewell in Beirut contributed to this report.

# Court in Thailand dissolves party that won vote

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**BANGKOK** — A court in Thailand has ordered the dissolution of the progressive Move Forward Party, which finished first in last year's general election, saying it violated the constitution by proposing an amendment of a law against defaming the country's royal family.

The Constitutional Court said Wednesday it voted unanimously to dissolve the party because its campaign proposal to amend the law amounted to an attempt to overthrow the nation's constitutional monarchy.

The Move Forward Party was unable to form a government after winning the elections because members of the Senate, at that time a conservative military-appointed body, refused to endorse its candidate for prime minister.

The Election Commission had filed a petition against the party after the Constitutional Court ruled in January that it must stop advocating for changes to the law, known as Article 112, which protects the monarchy from criticism with penalties of up to 15 years in jail per offense. Move Forward has contended that it wants to keep the monarchy above politics and not exploited as a political tool.

The court on Wednesday also imposed a 10-year ban on political activity for those who held the party's executive positions while it campaigned for the proposed amendment. Among them are its charismatic former leader, Pita Limjaroenrat, and current chief Chaithawat Tulathon.

Speaking to followers and the media Wednesday evening, Pita said he looks forward to continuing his work as an active citizen. He asked people to vent their frustration at the ballot box in every election from now on.

"I have left my dent in the universe," he said. "And I'll make sure that I pass the baton to the next-generation leaders."

Lawmakers of a dissolved political party who are not banned from politics can keep their seats in parliament if they move to a new party within 60 days.

Pita said party members will carry on "in a new vehicle" to be introduced Friday, although he will not be a part of it. The party declined to announce details of the changeover.

The court's action was one of many that have drawn widespread criticism and are seen as part of a years-long attack on the country's progressive movement by conservative forces trying to keep their grip on power.

Human rights organizations and other advocacy groups expressed concern about the court's ruling.

"The decision is a further illustration that the 2017 constitution, drafted at the behest of coupmakers and approved in a flawed referendum, was designed to curb the popular will rather than facilitate its expression," said Matthew Wheeler, an analyst for the Brussels-based Crisis Group.

Thailand's courts are considered a bulwark of the country's royalist establishment, which has used them to issue rulings to cripple or sink political opponents.

# Putin accuses Ukraine of 'large-scale provocation'

BY SAMYA KULLAB

**KYIV, Ukraine** — Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday described a Ukrainian incursion into the country's southwestern Kursk region as a "large-scale provocation" as his officials asserted that they were fighting off cross-border raids for a second day. Ukrainian officials remained silent about the scope of the operation.

Putin met with his top defense and security officials to discuss what he called the "indiscriminate shelling of civilian buildings, residential houses, ambulances with different types of weapons." He instructed his Cabinet to coordinate assistance to the Kursk region. The fighting is about 320 miles from Moscow.

Army Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov told Putin at the meeting via video link that about 100 Ukrainian soldiers had been killed in the battle and more than 200 wounded, Russian news agencies reported.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said in a statement that the Ukrainian shelling killed at least two people — a paramedic and an ambulance driver — and injured 24.

It was not possible to independently verify the Russian claims. Russian disinformation and propaganda have played a central role in the war, now in its third year.

John F. Kirby, the White House's national security spokesman, declined to comment on the operation and said the Biden administration has reached out to the Ukrainians to better understand what happened.

The head of the Russian region urged residents to donate blood. "In the last 24 hours, our region has been heroically resisting attacks" by Ukrainian fighters, acting Gov. Alexei Smirnov said on Telegram, a messaging app.

Smirnov said authorities had evacuated more than 200 people from areas being shelled, while several thousand others left in their own vehicles.

If confirmed, the cross-border foray would be among Ukraine's largest since Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022, and unprecedented for its deployment of Ukrainian military units.

Kyiv's aim could be to draw Russian reserves to the area, potentially weakening Moscow's offensive operations in several parts of Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region where Russian forces have increased attacks and are advancing gradually toward operationally significant gains.

But it could risk stretching outmanned Ukrainian troops farther along the front line, which is more than 600 miles long.

Even if Russia were to commit reserves to stabilize the new front, given its vast manpower and the relatively



**A HOUSE** hit by shelling in Russia's Kursk region is seen in a photo released Tuesday by authorities.

small number of Ukrainian forces engaged in the operation, it would probably have little long-term impact.

However, the operation could boost Ukrainian morale at a time when Kyiv's forces are facing relentless Russian attacks and are expected to face more in coming weeks.

Several Ukrainian brigades stationed along the border region said they could not comment. Ukraine's Defense Ministry and General Staff said they would not comment.

Russian forces have swiftly repelled previous cross-border incursions, but not before they caused damage and embarrassed authorities.

The Russian Defense Ministry said Tuesday that

up to 300 Ukrainian troops, supported by 11 tanks and more than 20 armored combat vehicles, had crossed into Russia and suffered heavy losses. It said Wednesday that military and border guard troops "continued to destroy Ukrainian military units in the areas alongside the border in the Kursk region."

The ministry said Russian forces backed by artillery and warplanes "didn't allow the enemy to advance deeper into the territory of the Russian Federation."

Open-source monitors have also not been able to verify the claims. The U.S.-based Institute for the Study of War could not verify whether damaged and abandoned armored vehicles shown in geolocated vi-

deo four miles north of the border west of Lyubimovka in the Kursk region were Ukrainian.

The think tank also cast doubt on video shared by Russian military bloggers claiming to show the aftermath of the Ukrainian raids. Most of the damage shown "appears to be the result of routine Ukrainian shelling and does not indicate that there was ground activity in the area," it said in its daily report.

Responsibility for previous incursions into Russia's Belgorod and Bryansk regions has been claimed by two murky groups: the Russian Volunteer Corps and the Freedom of Russia Legion, which are made up of Russian citizens and have fought alongside Ukrainian forces.

Rybar, a Telegram channel run by Mikhail Zvinchuk, a retired Russian Defense Ministry press officer, said Ukrainian troops had seized three settlements in the region and continued to fight their way deeper into it. Another pro-Kremlin military blog, Two Majors, claimed that Ukrainian troops had advanced up to nine miles into the region.

The Kursk region's border with Ukraine is 150 miles long, making it possible for saboteur groups to launch swift incursions and capture some ground before Russia deploys reinforcements.

Kullab writes for the Associated Press.

# Swift's Austria concerts nixed; 2 terror plot suspects arrested

BY TERRY CASTLEMAN

Taylor Swift's concerts in Austria have been canceled after authorities there announced the arrests of two people who are accused of plotting a terrorist attack in Vienna, with one of them focusing on the musician's stadium shows as a possible target.

On Wednesday, show or-

ganizer Barracuda Music announced on its website that Swift's three sold-out shows starting Thursday at Ernst Happel Stadium were being canceled as a precaution.

One of those arrested was a 19-year-old Austrian "with North Macedonian roots" who "lived with his family in Ternitz," south of Vienna, the Austrian newspaper Kronen Zeitung re-

ported. He was arrested "under strong suspicion of terrorism," the paper wrote.

Franz Ruf, public security director at Austria's Interior Ministry, said that authorities were aware of "preparatory actions" for a possible attack "and also that there is a focus ... on the Taylor Swift concerts in Vienna" by the 19-year-old, the Austria Press Agency re-

ported. Ruf said the suspect is an Austrian citizen who had pledged an oath of allegiance to the Islamic State group and is believed to have become radicalized on the internet.

Ruf said that chemical substances were secured and were being evaluated, but he didn't give details.

The other suspect was arrested in Vienna, accord-

ing to the newspaper report. City officials did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

In 2017, a bomb attack at an Ariana Grande concert in Manchester, England, killed 22 people and injured more than 100. A suicide bomber set up a backpack device in Manchester Arena at the end of the concert as thousands of young fans were leaving.

Last week in Southport, England, three children died in a knife attack during a Swift-themed dance class. A 17-year-old boy was arrested; prosecutors did not disclose a motive.

"These were just little kids at a dance class," Swift wrote in a statement on Instagram. "I am at a complete loss for how to ever convey my sympathies to these families."

The Associated Press was used in compiling this report.

## THE NATION

## A year after huge Maui fire, its survivors press on

Lahaina residents, past and present, describe challenging 12 months since devastation.

BY JENNIFER SINCO  
KELLEHER AND  
AUDREY MCAVOY

LAHAINA, Hawaii — They have combed the ashes for mementos, worried about where they would sleep, questioned their faith and tried to find a way to grieve amid the great, unsettling devastation. Residents have faced a year of challenges, practical and emotional, since the deadliest U.S. wildfire in a century decimated the historic town of Lahaina on Maui on Aug. 8, 2023.

To mark the anniversary, the Associated Press interviewed seven survivors its journalists first encountered in the days, weeks or months after the fire, as well as a first responder who helped fight the flames. Among their difficulties, they also have found hope, resilience and determination.

These are some of their experiences over the last year:

### Coping and staying

Even as he hid behind a seawall from the flames, Thomas Leonard knew Lahaina's wildfire was going to give him flashbacks to his service as a U.S. Marine in Vietnam 55 years ago. The exploding cars and propane tanks sounded just like mortars.

"Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom — one car after another," he said.

The nightmares started a few months later. His Veterans Affairs doctor prescribed new sleeping medication.

"Thank God for the VA," Leonard said.

The 75-year-old retired mailman had learned to identify signs of post-traumatic stress disorder at a VA clinic in 2001, which has helped him spot and cope with new triggers. He's also helped fellow fire survivors.

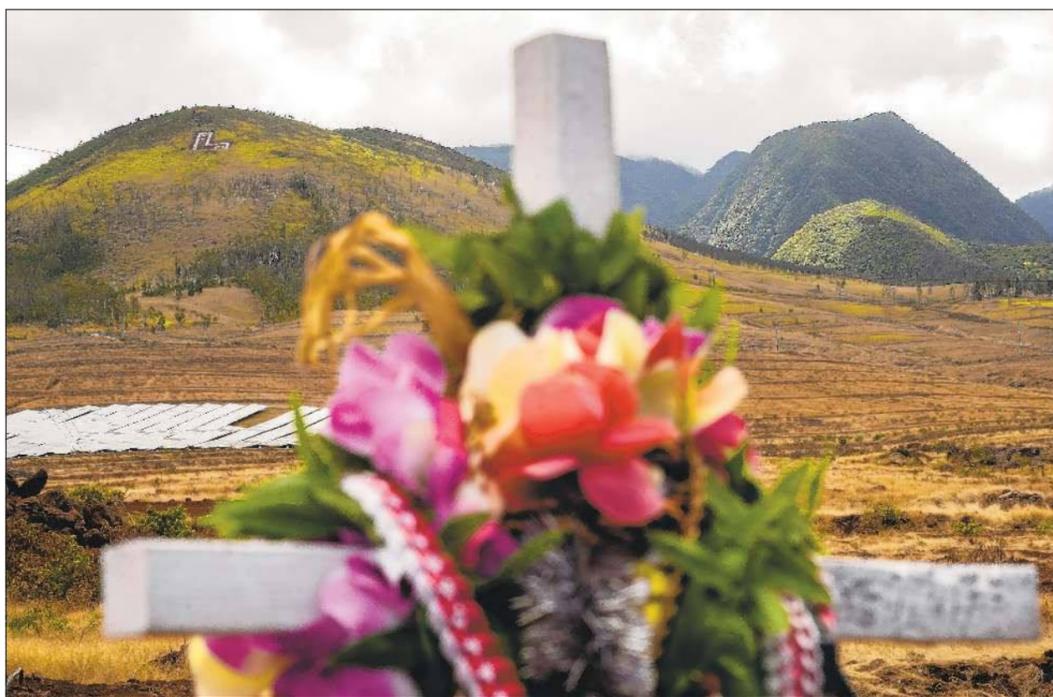
"I've learned to be a really good listener on that with other people, what they're going through," he said.

His condo building is still a pile of ash and rubble. Leonard suspects it might take years to rebuild, but he's determined to see it through. He's been living in hotels and a rented condo.

"We all got to stay together here on Maui," he said. "We're going to survive and it's going to come back."

### Memories of gold

After Elsie Rosales arrived on Maui from the Philippines in 1999, she scrimped on a hotel housekeeper's salary. As she saved up enough to buy a five-bedroom house in Lahaina in 2014, she did allow herself a few luxuries: gold bracelets, delicate hoop earrings — things she could never have afforded if she'd remained in the Philippines.



LINDSEY WASSON Associated Press

THE HAWAIIAN island of Maui is home to a memorial to the more than 100 people killed in the deadliest U.S. wildfire in a century. Many more lost their homes in Lahaina and struggle for housing amid recovery work.

Like her home — her pride, her American dream — the jewelry was a reminder of what's possible in the U.S.

It all was wiped out in the wildfire that destroyed Lahaina. When she finally was allowed back on her property, she searched the debris for anything that survived. All she found was a broken bangle.

She used insurance money to pay off the mortgage on the house. She's now renting a two-bedroom apartment with her husband, their son and their son's girlfriend in Kahului, an hourlong bus ride from Lahaina.

On those long commutes, she reflects on how she amassed her jewelry collection, only for it to vanish.

"When I'm not working, I keep thinking about everything that burned," she said. "Especially my jewelry. Everything that I worked hard for."

### Missing the mana

Ekolu Lindsey always gained mana — spiritual energy — surfing off his Lahaina home. The house had been in his family for five generations.

He's so familiar with the area that he notices when more crabs are around or fish are undersized. He has brought school groups there to teach them about the coral, seaweed and the ocean.

"My reset button is to jump in the water at home," he said.

That has been impossible since the wildfire turned his house to rubble. His property is now clear of debris but has no electricity or other utilities. Reconstruction is far off.

He's living at a friend's place on the island of Oahu, a plane ride away. He couldn't find anything in Lahaina for less than \$4,000 a month.

He returns regularly to Maui to help restore native

forests, a focus of the non-profit his father founded, Maui Cultural Lands. Sadness weighs on him as he drives the winding coastal highway to Lahaina.

State conservation officials won't allow people to enter the ocean from the burn zone. He surfs on Oahu, but it's not the same.

"You get the physical exercise," he said, but not the "rejuvenation of that mana."

### The right track

As Leola Vierra's husband, Mike Vierra, was dying of colon cancer, he spent sleepless nights fretting about where she and their daughter would live when he was gone. The wildfire had reduced their home of more than half a century to hardened pools of melted metal, burned wood and broken glass.

By the time he passed away in April, the answer still wasn't clear.

Leola Vierra and her daughter have moved multiple times since the fire, switching to hotel rooms from vacation rentals whenever a unit's owners returned.

"Everything was so unsettled," she said.

After the fire, the Vierras, married 57 years, couldn't find their beloved cat, Kitty Kai. But in February, they learned Kitty Kai had found her way to Kahului, 30 miles across the West Maui Mountains.

The reunion, while joyful, complicated their housing search. Landlords are less likely to rent to families with pets.

Not until last month did Vierra find some stability, securing a six-month lease while she and her daughter wait to someday rebuild on their own property. Their current place has a yard, a sundeck and an ocean view.

"I have been so depressed ever since my husband passed, and I can feel my

mind and my memory all going downhill," she said. "With this new home, I think I will be able to accept more things now, because it seems like I'm on the right track."

### Cherishing sunsets

As the flames approached, Ai Hironaka and his wife, four children and French bulldog crammed into his Honda Civic and drove off, leaving behind their home and the Japanese Buddhist temple where he was resident minister and caretaker.

Losing those buildings and being uprooted amid the greater devastation has tested him as a Buddhist. How should he behave as a disaster victim? What is the appropriate response when someone gives him donated clothing he doesn't want? If he feels ungrateful, he turns to the teachings of his faith.

"We all have an evil nature, self-centeredness," he said.

After moving three times in the months after the fire, he now lives nearly an hour across the island at another temple, Kahului Hongwanji Mission, serving again as resident minister. He performs much of the same work he did at the Hongwanji Mission in Lahaina: leading ceremonies and counseling members, including fire survivors.

He returns to the site of the Lahaina temple occasionally to check the columbarium where funeral urns that survived the fire are stored. He misses the town, the beach parks, the parents on his son's high school football team.

And he misses being able to watch the sun set from Lahainaluna High School, which overlooks the ocean. When he goes back now, he does not take that view for granted.

"I have to capture that," he said, "because I cannot see this tomorrow."

### Inspired by heroes

Before the fire, Morgan "Bula" Montgomery was a kid who loved playing football and paddling in the ocean. College wasn't on his radar.

But the University of Hawaii offered full-ride scholarships for Lahainaluna High School graduates at any school in its system following the disaster. Montgomery thought, "Why not?"

He plans to leave Maui this fall to study fire science at Hawaii Community College on the Big Island, inspired by the devastation of his community and the firefighters who tried to save it.

"I want to come back to Lahaina and come back to Maui and try to be a firefighter," he said.

Montgomery's family lost its two-bedroom apartment to the fire, but also found opportunity. He and fellow Lahainaluna football captains were invited to the Super Bowl in Las Vegas this year. It was one of the few times he has left Maui.

After living in a hotel, the family secured a rental house about an hour's drive across the island. It's not convenient for his canoe paddling training in Lahaina. But it's the biggest house they've lived in, with five bedrooms for his mom and four siblings.

He's a little nervous about leaving Maui, but grateful for the scholarship.

"An opportunity for school or free tuition is something you've got to take advantage of," Montgomery said.

### 'That's what we do'

Ikaika Blackburn, an 18-year veteran of the Maui Fire Department, talks often with his crew mates about the blaze that consumed Lahaina.

His five-person crew was one of the first on the scene.

There was no time to think, "no time to have these sentimental feelings," as he fought through the night.

He'd spent a lot of time with his grandparents in Lahaina when he was growing up. His wife is from the town. His mother-in-law lost her home.

At daybreak, it set in: "We lost Lahaina."

Blackburn and his crew spent days talking about it, "just releasing it and not holding it all in," he said. Recalling how they rushed from one part of town to the next, trying to find a way to stop the flames.

Firefighters and investigators from outside Maui helped him understand that his crew had done all they could.

Blackburn followed his father's footsteps as a Maui fire captain. Firefighting feels like something he was born to do.

And he continues doing it. This year's busy brushfire season hasn't triggered memories of last August, he said, because nothing compares to that fire.

"We respond to fires all the time," he said. "That's what we do."

### 'Lahaina Strong'

When a wildfire struck in 2018, Jordan Ruidas couldn't sleep. Eager to help families in the 21 homes that burned, she started a Facebook fundraiser titled, "Lahaina Strong," which raised more than \$150,000.

Five years later, Ruidas and Lahaina Strong again emerged as leaders, pushing officials to control tourism and try to find enough housing for residents after the 2023 fire destroyed thousands of buildings.

Ruidas was seven months pregnant when last year's fire destroyed Lahaina. She sometimes missed prenatal checkups. Traveling nurses at community hubs for fire survivors would at least check her blood pressure.

The fire spared her neighborhood, and two months later she gave birth at home to a daughter, Aulia.

"I don't think I've dealt with all the emotions that came with losing Lahaina and being postpartum," Ruidas said. "I feel like I cope by staying busy with work, with Lahaina Strong."

Ruidas brought Aulia along, strapped to her chest, when she helped organize a "fish-in" protest at a popular beach resort to demand that more short-term rental housing be made available for survivors.

She still hasn't been able to bring herself to visit the burn zone.

"My kids will never grow up seeing or knowing the Lahaina that I grew up seeing and knowing," she said. "The Lahaina that we lost was a very special and beautiful place."

Kelleher and McAvoyn wrote for the Associated Press. AP videojournalist Manuel Valdes contributed to this report.

## 4 hotel employees in Milwaukee charged with murder

By TODD RICHMOND

MADISON, Wis. — Prosecutors have charged four Milwaukee hotel employees with felony murder in connection with D'Vontaye Mitchell's death.

Mitchell was Black. The incident in June has drawn comparisons to the murder of George Floyd, a Black man who died in 2020 after a white Minneapolis police officer pressed his knee into his neck for about nine minutes. Floyd's death sparked a national reckoning on race relations and police brutality marked by mass protests around the country.

If convicted, the men in Milwaukee — hotel security guard Todd Erickson, front desk worker Devin Johnson-Carson, bellhop Herbert Williamson and security guard Brandon Turner — could face up to 15 years and nine months in prison.

Reached by telephone Tuesday evening, Erickson referred a request for comment to his attorney, Michael Steinle, who didn't return voicemail or email messages. It was unclear

whether any of the three other employees had attorneys. A telephone listing for Williamson had been disconnected, and the Associated Press could not immediately find contact information for the others.

The Milwaukee County district attorney's office said in a news release that arrest warrants had been issued for all four employees.

According to a criminal complaint, the four men dragged Mitchell out of the Hyatt Hotel on June 30 after he entered a woman's bathroom.

Two women who were in the bathroom told investigators that Mitchell tried to lock the bathroom door. One woman said he refused to let her out; she was eventually able to push past him.

The hotel employees held Mitchell on his stomach for eight or nine minutes. One of the employees told investigators that Mitchell was having trouble breathing and repeatedly pleaded for help, according to the complaint.

An autopsy showed that Mitchell suffered from morbid obesity and had ingested

cocaine and methamphetamine, the complaint said.

Hyatt surveillance video shows Mitchell frantically running into the hotel's lobby and then into the gift shop before entering the bathroom, the complaint said. A few seconds later, a woman emerges, and Turner, who was off duty but was visiting staff at that moment, drags Mitchell into the lobby by his shirt.

The two begin to struggle, and Turner punches Mitchell, knocking him to the floor. He then punches Mitchell six more times and drags him out of the hotel with the help of a bystander. Mitchell gets up and tries to go back inside.

Williamson, Johnson-Carson and Erickson then join the fray. Together with Turner they hold Mitchell down on his stomach before police and emergency responders arrive. The video shows that during that span, Mitchell tries to break free multiple times, and Erickson hits him with a baton before he eventually stops moving, according to the complaint.

The county medical ex-



SAMANTHA MITCHELL

D'VONTAYE MITCHELL, with his sister, center, and cousin, died in a hotel altercation June 30.

aminer determined that Mitchell died of "restraint asphyxia." He may have lived if the employees allowed him to turn onto his side, the medical examiner said, according to the complaint.

Erickson told investigators that Mitchell was very strong and kept resisting them and tried to bite him. But the guard said he never did anything to intentionally hurt or harm Mitchell.

Turner told a detective he heard women screaming

in the bathroom after Mitchell entered it, and he thought Mitchell was on drugs, the complaint said. Johnson-Carson told investigators that Mitchell was not in a "stable sort of mind" and was speaking gibberish, the complaint said.

He said Mitchell displayed "clear signs of extreme distress, including gags, distressed breathing and repeated pleas for help," according to the complaint, which concludes that the employees had to have

known Mitchell was in distress.

Mitchell's relatives and their lawyers have reviewed hotel surveillance video provided by the district attorney's office. A bystander's video caught Mitchell yelling "please" and "I'm sorry" while breathing heavily. Erickson turns to the camera and says: "This is what happens when you go into the ladies' room."

DeAsia Harmon, Mitchell's widow, said the charges were a relief. But she questioned why it took weeks. "These people are on camera taking my husband's life," she said. "They should have been charged the moment they did that."

Aimbridge Hospitality, the company that manages the hotel, has said several employees involved in Mitchell's death have been fired. The company released a statement Tuesday evening saying it will continue to cooperate with prosecutors.

Richmond writes for the Associated Press. AP writer Kathleen Foody in Chicago contributed to this report.

# 'Squad' member Rep. Bush loses Missouri primary

BY JIM SALTER

ST. LOUIS — St. Louis County Prosecuting Atty. Wesley Bell has defeated Rep. Cori Bush in a Democratic primary in St. Louis, marking the second time this year that one of the party's incumbents has been ousted in an expensive contest that reflected deep divisions over the war in Gaza.

Bush, a member of the progressive congressional group known as "the Squad," was seeking a third term in Missouri's 1st Congressional District, which includes St. Louis city and part of St. Louis County. Bell is heavily favored to carry this overwhelmingly Democratic district in November, when his party is aiming to retake control of the U.S. House.

"I am committed to serving the St. Louis region in Congress with integrity, transparency, and dedication," Bell said in a statement. "Together, we will tackle the challenges ahead and build a community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive."

Bush, in a fiery concession speech, said she still has work to do, even if she'll no longer be in Congress.

"At the end of the day, whether I'm a congresswoman or not, I'm still taking care of my people," Bush said.

Bell's campaign received a big boost from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC, whose super PAC, United Democracy Project, spent \$8.5 million to oust Bush. She was targeted after repeated condemnation of Israel's response to the Oct. 7 Hamas attack and her tepid criticism of Hamas.

It was a game plan that worked earlier this year in New York. In June, United Democracy Project spent \$15 million to defeat another staunchly pro-Palestinian member of "the Squad" —



**ST. LOUIS COUNTY** Prosecuting Atty. Wesley Bell records video of supporters as he takes the stage in St. Louis to celebrate his election victory Tuesday night over Rep. Cori Bush in Missouri's Democratic primary.

ROBERT COHEN Associated Press

Rep. Jamaal Bowman. Bowman lost to George Latimer, a pro-Israel centrist, in his Democratic primary.

A statement from United Democracy Project said the wins by Bell and Latimer, along with John McGuire's defeat of Rep. Bob Good in a Republican primary last week in Virginia, "is further proof that being pro-Israel is good policy and good politics on both sides of the aisle. UDP will continue our efforts to support leaders working to strengthen the U.S.-Israel alliance while countering detractors in either political party."

Bush, in her concession speech, said, "We will keep supporting a free Palestine." A crowd member answered

back: "Free, free Palestine."

In October, Bush called the Israeli retaliation in the Gaza Strip an "ethnic cleansing campaign." Soon after the Hamas attack, Bush wrote on social media that Israel's "collective punishment against Palestinians for Hamas's actions is a war crime."

Her comments prompted backlash, even among some supporters in her district. Bell, who had been planning a Senate run against incumbent Republican Josh Hawley, instead opted to challenge Bush. He told the Associated Press last month that Bush's comments about Israel were "wrong and offensive."

Bush responded by not-

ing that the donors behind AIPAC support former President Trump and other Republicans.

"This is only the beginning," Bush told the AP. "Because if they can unseat me, then they're going to continue to come after more Democrats."

Bush and Bell, 49, both honed their leadership skills in Ferguson, Mo., in the unrest that followed Michael Brown's death at the hands of a police officer in 2014. Friday marks the 10th anniversary of Brown's death.

Brown, a Black 18-year-old, was walking with a friend on Aug. 9, 2014, when a white officer, Darren Wilson, confronted them. Wilson said he fired in self-defense

because Brown was so enraged. Some witnesses said Brown, who was unarmed, had his hands up in surrender. Wilson was cleared of wrongdoing and resigned, and Brown's death led to months of protests.

Bush became a protest leader. She was outspoken in her criticism of how police in Ferguson and other parts of the St. Louis region treated Black people. Her activism prompted an unsuccessful run against longtime 1st District Democratic congressman William Lacy Clay in 2018, before she defeated him in 2020. She easily won reelection in 2022.

Bell began hosting conversations about communi-

ty policing after Brown's death. The lawyer, who previously served as a municipal prosecutor and judge, ran successfully for a seat on the Ferguson City Council before defeating seven-term incumbent St. Louis County Prosecuting Atty. Bob McCulloch in the August 2018 Democratic primary.

As prosecutor, Bell reopened an examination into Brown's death. He announced in July 2020 that although the investigation didn't exonerate Wilson, there wasn't enough evidence to charge him.

"My heart breaks" for Brown's parents, Bell said at the time. "I know this is not the result they were looking for and that their pain will continue forever."

Brown's father, Michael Brown Sr., was featured in an ad for Bush.

"He used my family for power," Brown says of Bell in the ad. "And now he's trying to sell out St. Louis."

Bush's campaign focused on what she's accomplished for St. Louis. She said that her efforts have brought \$2 billion to the 1st District and that it was her protest on the steps of the Capitol in 2021 that helped extend the federal eviction moratorium during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, aiding thousands of St. Louis renters.

Bell touted his own progressive credentials. He noted that as a prosecutor he has said he will not prosecute any abortion cases in a state that bans the procedure in most instances. He created diversion programs to point people with mental health and substance abuse problems toward treatment instead of jail. And his office has expanded efforts to examine potential cases of wrongful convictions.

In other elections Tuesday, in Missouri's 3rd District, which stretches from the western outskirts of the St. Louis region through central Missouri, the Republican candidate with Trump's endorsement won. Bob Onder, a physician and also a former state senator, defeated former state Sen. Kurt Schaefer in the GOP primary.

Trump wrote on his social media platform last month that Onder was "an incredible America First Patriot." The former president wrote that Schaefer "is WEAK ON MAGA," adding, "That's all you have to know!"

The 3rd District is heavily Republican, and Onder will be favored against Democrat Bethany Mann, a political newcomer, in November.

Salter writes for the Associated Press. AP writer Summer Ballentine in Columbia, Mo., contributed to this report.

## Woman is guilty in Arizona fake electors case

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHOENIX — A Republican activist who signed a document falsely claiming Donald Trump had won Arizona in 2020 became the first person to be convicted in the state's fake elector case.

Lorraine Pellegrino, a past president of the group Ahwatukee Republican Women, has pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of filing a false document, Arizona attorney general's office spokesperson Richie Taylor said Tuesday, declining to comment further.

Records documenting her guilty plea haven't yet been posted by the court. Still, court records show Pellegrino was sentenced to unsupervised probation. Before the plea, she faced nine felony charges.

Seventeen other people have been charged in the case, including 10 other Republicans who signed a certificate that said they were "duly elected and qualified" electors and claimed Trump had carried Arizona in the election. Joe Biden won Arizona by 10,457 votes on his way to winning the White House.

Joshua Kolsrud, an attorney representing Pellegrino, said in a statement that his client has accepted responsibility for her actions.

"Lorraine Pellegrino's decision to accept a plea to a lesser charge reflects her desire to move forward and put this matter behind her," Kolsrud said.

On Monday, former Trump campaign attorney Jenna Ellis, who worked closely with Trump personal attorney Rudolph W. Giuliani, entered a cooperation agreement with prosecutors who have asked for her charges to be dismissed. The

remaining defendants, including Giuliani and former Trump Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, have pleaded not guilty to conspiracy, fraud and forgery charges.

Pellegrino and 10 other people who had been nominated to be Arizona's Republican electors had met in Phoenix on Dec. 14, 2020, to sign the false document. A one-minute video of the signing ceremony was posted on social media by the Arizona Republican Party at the time. The document was later sent to Congress and the National Archives, where it was ignored.

Prosecutors in Michigan, Nevada, Georgia and Wisconsin also have filed criminal charges related to the fake electors scheme.

Arizona authorities unveiled the felony charges in April.

Overall, charges were brought against 12 Republicans who submitted the document falsely declaring Trump had won Arizona, including five lawyers connected to him and two former Trump aides.

Trump was not charged in the Arizona case but the indictment called him an unindicted co-conspirator.

## Queer rights groups see Trump as a major threat to community

[LGBTQ+, from A1] LGBTQ+ Americans are making it increasingly clear that they view Trump and the broader GOP agenda as an existential threat.

"It is not an exaggeration to say that our lives are on the line," said Honey Mahogany, executive director of the San Francisco Office of Transgender Initiatives. "It's whether or not we can survive — or will be in a position where we are in fear for our lives."

### Candidates' starkly different positions

In advance of the 20,000-strong call hosted by the Human Rights Campaign last month, the group released a letter endorsing Harris from more than 1,100 LGBTQ+ leaders, organizers and celebrities.

The letter praised Harris for her decision as California attorney general to not defend Proposition 8, a state ballot measure that barred same-sex marriages, and for her support for the federal Equality Act, which would prohibit anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination in employment, housing and other areas.

The letter heaped praise on the Biden-Harris administration as "the most pro-LGBTQ+ administration in history," noting its support for anti-discrimination policies and LGBTQ+ healthcare protections in the U.S. and its defense of LGBTQ+ rights globally.

On the call, Mawuli Tug-

benyoh, senior co-chair of the Alice B. Toklas LGBTQ Democratic Club in San Francisco, said Harris has been a queer ally since before her first election as San Francisco district attorney in 2003 and is genuine in her allyship.

"Vice President Harris has always been there for us and fought for our community every step of the way," Tugbenyoh said.

On Tuesday, queer rights groups also hailed Harris' selection of Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz as her running mate. They noted Walz has a record of allyship going back to the 1990s — when as a teacher he served as an advisor to his school's gay-straight alliance — and as governor has signed bills banning so-called conversion therapy and protecting gender-affirming care.

The same organizations have called Trump a major threat to queer families.

Trump appointed anti-LGBTQ+ officials throughout his administration. His Department of Education revoked school protections for transgender students, while his Justice and Health and Human Services departments rescinded anti-discrimination protections for transgender people, including in healthcare settings.

Trump appointed a slate of judges viewed as anti-LGBTQ+ and banned transgender people from serving in the military — a policy President Biden re-

versed. In more recent years, Republicans aligned with Trump have introduced a flood of anti-LGBTQ+ bills at the local, state and federal levels, prompting the Human Rights Campaign to declare a "state of emergency" for queer Americans last year.

Concerns have only increased since Project 2025, a blueprint for a second Trump term produced by a host of former Trump aides, the Heritage Foundation and more than 100 other conservative groups, came into focus. The plan — which Trump has tried to distance himself from despite having close ties to its authors — challenges the existence of transgender people, calls the rainbow flag a "divisive symbol" and demands a "biblically based" definition of marriage and families.

Trump's running mate, Sen. JD Vance of Ohio, who also has close ties to Project 2025 authors, has attacked LGBTQ+ rights and mocked queer people. Vance has opposed protections for same-sex marriage, LGBTQ+ workers and gender-affirming healthcare, called LGBTQ+ activists "groomers" and held up the confirmation of overseas diplomats by questioning their support for LGBTQ+ friendly initiatives.

Trump also has outlined various anti-LGBTQ+ policies in "Agenda 47," his plan for a second term. It says Trump would end all federal programs "that pro-

note the concept of sex and gender transition at any age," withhold Medicaid and Medicare funding from hospitals that provide gender-affirming care to children, ensure "severe consequences" for teachers who acknowledge transgender students' identities and revoke federal funding from their schools.

He concludes a campaign video about the plan with the demonstrably false assertion that the existence of transgender children "was never heard of" until "the radical left invented it just a few years ago."

### 'We're not going back' resonates

Not all LGBTQ+ people support Harris. Stephen Schumacher, a gay 33-year-old political consultant, helps lead the Detroit chapter of Log Cabin Republicans, an organization for conservative LGBTQ+ people. He supports Trump.

Schumacher pointed to the Republican Party taking its long-standing opposition to same-sex marriage out of its platform this year — after Trump ordered the document be slimmed down — as proof the party is coming around on the issue.

Schumacher said Log Cabin events he attended at the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee last month were well received. "I feel like my rights are protected," he said.

Richard Grenell, a gay

Trump loyalist and former acting director of national intelligence in the Trump administration, once called Trump "the most pro-gay president in American history" and this week predicted the GOP nominee will "win 50% of the gay vote."

Grenell, of California, has rallied against transgender youth rights and the Equality Act and been flagged as anti-LGBTQ+ by queer rights groups. On Wednesday he took up a Republican talking point about Walz, saying that Minnesota protections around sexual orientation somehow benefit pedophiles.

Across the country, many queer people find such beliefs flabbergasting — if not repugnant.

Jim Obergefell, the lead plaintiff in the 2015 Supreme Court case that won same-sex couples the right to marry nationally, said it's obvious that LGBTQ+ rights — including the right to marry — are under threat.

"The Republican Party has made clear through statements, through policies, through basically everything they have done, that they do not believe that queer people deserve the same rights, the same respect, the same dignity," Obergefell said.

Rep. Mark Pocan (D-Wis.), who is gay and serves as chair of the Congressional Equality Caucus, said LGBTQ+ people have watched in recent years as Republicans have launched

one attack after another on gender-affirming care, Pride flags, drag queen story hours, queer books and the mere mention of being gay in schools, and know it will only get worse under Trump.

"In the Republican Party, there is a real regression when it comes to equality, and I could see almost anything being pushed forward," Pocan said.

Among those attending the Transgender Pride Month celebration in San Francisco was Democratic state Sen. Scott Wiener, who is gay.

"We know that there are forces in this country — and we're seeing it more broadly now with Project 2025 — [who] have never gotten over the fact that we're no longer in 1950 or 1850 or whatever it is that they want to bring us back to," he said. "They've never gotten over that, and they want all of us to go away."

"Of course," Wiener said, "we're not going anywhere."

Donna Personna, a 77-year-old transgender attendee who has lived in San Francisco since her teens, said Trump and other Republicans pretend people such as her never used to exist because they don't want to acknowledge that the past they wish to see returned was a harsh and unjust place for so many.

By contrast, Harris has made "We're not going back" a campaign slogan, Personna noted. "And I'm with her on that."

## BUSINESS

## Disney's streaming business finally turns a profit

The third-quarter milestone is tempered by softer results for entertainment giant's theme park division.

BY SAMANTHA MASUNAGA

After years of losses totaling billions of dollars, Walt Disney Co.'s overall streaming business has reached profitability for the first time. Third-quarter results, however, were tempered by weakening demand at the company's key parks unit.

The Burbank media and entertainment giant reported Wednesday that its streaming business — which includes Disney+, Hulu and ESPN+ — took in about \$6.4 billion in revenue for its fiscal third quarter, up 15% compared with a year earlier.

The streaming business notched \$47 million in operating income, compared with a loss of \$512 million a year earlier. During the most recent quarter, ESPN+ helped boost Disney's streaming business over the profitability hump, at a time when Disney+ and Hulu saw an operating loss of \$19 million.

The milestone comes one fiscal quarter earlier than Disney executives had anticipated.

"What we've been seeing with streaming is significant success largely driven by the success of our creativity," Chief Executive Bob Iger said during a Wednesday morning call with analysts. "We're bullish about the future of this business."

Achieving profitability in Disney's streaming business has been a top priority for Iger, who earlier this year held off activist investor Nelson



ACHIEVING profitability in Disney's streaming business has been a top priority for CEO Bob Iger, who earlier this year held off activist investor Nelson Peltz in a proxy fight. Above, a Disney+ menu in 2019.

son Peltz in a proxy fight. Among other things, Peltz demanded that Disney show a realistic plan for achieving large margins of profitability in its streaming business. To reach that goal, Iger undertook a wide-ranging cost-cutting effort across the company, which slashed thousands of jobs.

Company executives said product and technology improvements in the streaming services would pay dividends. They mentioned that bundling packages, such as the recent deal Disney reached with Warner Bros. Discovery to offer Disney+, Hulu and Max for one price, has helped reduce subscriber churn, while the company's early efforts to crack down on password sharing have not faced significant backlash.

Overall, the company

generated revenue of \$23.1 billion during the fiscal third quarter, up 4% year over year. Earnings, excluding certain items, were \$1.39 per share, up from \$1.03 a year earlier and higher than analysts' estimates.

But investors weren't convinced. Shares of Disney fell 4.4% to \$85.96. Disney's stock has declined 30% from its recent highs in April.

Wall Street was largely focused on the muted results from the company's experiences division, which includes its amusement parks and cruise line, as well as merchandise.

The division had dominated the company's financial results in recent fiscal quarters, aided in part by pent-up demand for travel since the COVID-19 pandemic began. But for the most recent quarter, the di-

vision reported operating income of \$2.2 billion, down 3% from last year.

Disney said the decrease in operating income was due to softening consumer demand. Disney parks revenue is often seen as a bellwether for the broader economy, as it reflects spending trends and consumer sentiment. U.S. consumers have been beset by inflation, and recent jobs data have renewed fears of a coming recession.

"While investors cheered Disney's progress on the streaming side, the worrisome news about the parks unit sent the stock downward in pre-market trading and is likely to increase pressure on CEO Bob Iger to deliver stronger shareholder returns," Paul Verna, an Emarketer vice president, said in an emailed state-

ment.

Results from the company's U.S.-based parks decreased "modestly," though year-over-year attendance was comparable and per-capita spending was "slightly up," the company said. The parks' attendees have long groused about rising prices for Disney vacations and merchandise as well as the proliferation of add-on charges for line-skipping perks.

The group brought in about \$8.4 billion in revenue in the fiscal third quarter, up 2% year over year.

The company expects to see "flat-ish" revenue for its experiences division in the fourth quarter and for several quarters after that, Hugh Johnston, chief financial officer, said on the Wednesday call. Disney cited the Olympics' effect on

attendance at Disneyland Paris, as well as "cyclical softening" in China, as factors for fourth-quarter results.

And more competition is on the horizon. In Orlando, Fla., Walt Disney World will soon face a new rival in Universal's Epic Universe theme park, set to open next year. It will feature four themed lands, including a "How to Train Your Dragon" area and Super Nintendo World.

The company's studios business, which is on a rebound, contributed to the quarterly results, led by the success of Pixar's "Inside Out 2."

Disney's entertainment division reported revenue of about \$10.6 billion, up 4% year over year. Operating income for the segment totaled \$1.2 billion, up from \$408 million in the previous year. (The interest in "Inside Out 2" also drove viewers to Disney+, as the company said viewers' desire to watch 2015's "Inside Out" helped lead to more than 1.3 million sign-ups for the streaming service. Iger said the company is seeing similar trends with the previous "Deadpool" and "Planet of the Apes" movies.)

Disney's most recent box office hit, Marvel's "Deadpool & Wolverine," was released during the current quarter.

Revenue for Disney's sports business, which includes ESPN, increased 5% to about \$4.5 billion, though the segment saw operating income of \$802 million, down 6%. Domestic ESPN ad revenue rose 17% year over year, but it wasn't enough to offset the \$314-million operating loss from Disney's Star India business, which saw higher programming and production costs due to the timing of the ICC T20 cricket World Cup.

## NASA may ask SpaceX to retrieve astronauts stuck on space station

Pair could catch a ride to Earth on Crew Dragon next year as Boeing struggles with Starliner problems.

BY LAURENCE DARMIENTO

NASA officials conceded Wednesday that the agency might have to rely on SpaceX to return two American astronauts to Earth from the International Space Station due to problems with Boeing's Starliner spacecraft.

Astronauts Suni Williams and Butch Wilmore were launched on June 5 to the orbiting lab in the Starliner's first manned trip to space after years of delays. What was expected to be a roughly one-week mission, however, has turned into an open-ended odyssey with the pair stuck on the station for two months as NASA and Boeing officials investigate malfunctions with Starliner's propulsion system.

The Starliner may still be able to return the astronauts to Earth, but NASA officials said during a news conference that they are developing alternative plans that would have SpaceX's Crew Dragon spacecraft bring them down. If SpaceX



BOEING'S Starliner ferried two astronauts to the space station in June but has been unable to bring them back as officials investigate spacecraft malfunctions.

is needed to transport the astronauts, it is possible the return flight wouldn't occur until February, meaning Wilmore and Williams would have to remain at the space station for six more months.

"Our prime option is to return Butch and Suni on Starliner. However, we have done the requisite planning to make sure we have other options open and so we have been working with SpaceX to ensure they are ready to respond," said Steve Stich,

program manager for NASA's Commercial Crew Program.

The announcement by NASA is a blow to the troubled aerospace company, as Boeing grapples with an investigation into the cause of a door plug blowing out during a 737 Max 9 flight this year — as well as the continuing repercussions from the two crashes of its 737 Max 8 jets several years ago.

Boeing and SpaceX were given multibillion-dollar

contracts in 2014 to develop spacecraft to transport crew and cargo to and from the orbiting space station after the ending of the space shuttle program, which forced NASA to rely on Russia's Soyuz spacecraft to send American astronauts to the station.

Since then, Elon Musk's company has ferried more than half a dozen crews to the station, whereas the current Starliner mission was its first crewed test flight.

Marco Caceres, an aerospace analyst at Teal Group, said the mission has become a debacle for Boeing as it grapples with Starliner's myriad problems.

"They are three, four, five years behind SpaceX with this program. The only reason NASA really has been giving Boeing chance after chance after chance is because it really does want to have backup capability so that it never has to rely on the Russians," he said.

Just last week, Boeing wrote off an additional \$125 million in expenses related to the program after previously booking some \$1.5 billion in cost overruns.

The June mission had been delayed for weeks after a helium leak in Starliner's propulsion system was detected on the launchpad, but NASA gave approval for the launch after determining it did not pose a risk to the astronauts and would not prevent the capsule from reaching the space station.

On the ascent to the station, however, the helium leak worsened, and during docking the thrusters that propel the craft in space malfunctioned. NASA said last month that testing at its White Sands Test Facility in New Mexico found that Teflon seals that control the flow of fuel in a valve were one cause of the malfunction.

On Wednesday, officials provided additional detail, saying the seals had swelled during the ground testing, although a test of Starliner's engines in space on July 11 indicated they were performing to specifications, indicating the Teflon had returned to its original form.

NASA officials have said that Starliner has 10 times more helium than it needs to return Starliner to Earth. The gas is used to pressurize the craft's propulsion system. But Stich said Wednesday that engineers were analyzing the possibility that on a return flight there would be a simultaneous leak of the helium and a malfunctioning of the thrusters.

"The worst case would be some integrated failure," Stich said.

He acknowledged there was disagreement over the safety of returning the astronauts on the Starliner. Last week, Boeing issued a statement that cited all the testing that had been conducted and concluded, "Boeing remains confident in the Starliner spacecraft and its ability to return safely with crew."

A decision on whether to return the astronauts on Starliner is expected in the next few weeks, he said, with NASA Administrator Bill Nelson ultimately responsible for the call.

If the agency decides that it is too risky to return the astronauts aboard Starliner, it would bring them down on the next flight of SpaceX's Crew Dragon capsule. That mission had been scheduled to blast off this month but has been delayed until no earlier than Sept. 24 to give the agency time to make its decision, he said.

Under that scenario, the Crew Dragon would blast off with two crew members and come back with Williams and Wilmore and two other astronauts when it returns sometime in February. The Starliner, meanwhile, would remotely undock and return to Earth without a crew.

The first two test flights of the Starliner in 2019 and 2022 were conducted without a crew. Stich said that returning Starliner this time would require only that the control software be set for an uncrewed mission.

## Warner Bros. Discovery reports a \$9-billion write-down

Amid TV woes, firm posts disappointing 2nd-quarter earnings. Its shares tumble in after-hours trading.

BY MEG JAMES

Warner Bros. Discovery's rough ride continued through its most recent quarter, with the company taking a \$9-billion write-down to reflect the diminishing value of its struggling television channels.

The David Zaslav-led media company posted disappointing second-quarter

earnings Wednesday, sending its shares tumbling 10% in after-hours trading on Wall Street.

The company continues to grapple with cost cuts to rein in its \$38 billion in debt, a legacy of its 2022 takeover of the larger WarnerMedia from AT&T.

The New York company generated revenue of \$9.7 billion, which marked a 6% decline compared with the same quarter a year earlier.

Adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization fell 16% to nearly \$1.8 billion compared with \$2.1 billion in the year-earlier period.

Last year, the company spent less on programming

because of the Writers Guild of America strike.

But the immediate take-away was the company's staggering \$10-billion net loss, which it said included the \$9.1-billion impairment charge from its TV networks division as well as \$2.1 billion in "acquisition-related amortization of intangibles and restructuring expenses."

The company blamed continued softness in advertising revenue coming to its linear television business, which includes CNN, TBS, HGTV, TLC, Animal Planet and the Food Network. It also noted the "uncertainty related to affiliate and sports rights renewals, including the NBA."

The earnings come less than two weeks after Warner Bros. Discovery filed a breach of contract lawsuit against the NBA, asking a judge to prohibit the league from awarding a television contract to Amazon Prime Video.

The suit, which was filed July 26 in New York State Supreme Court, alleges that the NBA breached Turner Broadcasting's current deal by allegedly refusing to honor the cable programmer's rights to match an offer from Amazon for the contract period that begins with the 2025-26 season.

The league bypassed Turner, its broadcast partner since 1989, while striking

deals with Walt Disney Co.'s ESPN, NBCUniversal and Amazon. The NBA is expected to respond to Turner's lawsuit later this month.

The company said it repaid \$1.8 billion in debt during the second quarter. It ended the April-through-June period with \$3.6 billion in cash on hand.

The number of global direct-to-consumer subscribers grew to 103.3 million by the end of the quarter, which was boosted by the second season of HBO's "House of the Dragon." The company said its ongoing European rollout of streaming service Max was successful, with the offering now available in 65 countries and territories.

# Sheriff's corruption case against Kuehl dropped

**[Investigation, from A1]** peated frequently by Villanueva — that county Inspector General Max Huntsman had been involved in tipping off Kuehl before the search of her home, as well as Giggans' home and the nonprofit's offices.

Days after the raids, state Atty. Gen. Rob Bonta's office took the investigation from the Sheriff's Department. For two years, the state quietly investigated the matter while Villanueva fulminated about it at seemingly every opportunity. He referred to Kuehl and Huntsman as "felony suspects" and seized on the case as a way to undermine some of the most vocal critics overseeing his department. On Wednesday, he did not immediately respond to an emailed request for comment.

To Kuehl, who decided to retire in 2022, Wednesday's outcome came as a vindication.

"I think it's a pure victory," she said. "Because there was never anything there, and it was all made up by the sheriff."

The conclusion to the case came weeks after The Times revealed that state prosecutors also recently turned down another high-profile investigation spearheaded by the same public corruption squad. In that case, investigators had accused Huntsman and several others — including a former Times reporter — of a variety of felonies involving supposedly stolen records and leaked documents. Federal and state authorities repeatedly rejected the case, and at one point a legal advisor for the county warned department officials that it was "not legally viable."

That inquiry — along with the Kuehl investigation



**THEN-COUNTY** Supervisor Sheila Kuehl is escorted from her home in Santa Monica during an early morning raid by sheriff's deputies in 2022. On Wednesday, she said of the end of the case: "I think it's a pure victory."

— served as one of Villanueva's chief criticisms of the county watchdog. At one point, he cited it as part of the justification for locking Huntsman out of department databases. At least twice, he asked county officials to remove Huntsman from his job. But now, after years of legal wrangling, Huntsman is finally no longer in the crosshairs of investigations launched by the agency he oversees.

The Sheriff's Department did not immediately comment.

Though the raids took place in the fall of 2022, the supposed corruption that led to them allegedly started years earlier.

Amid persistent complaints about sexual harassment and groping on local buses and subway rides in 2013 and 2014, Metro turned

to Peace Over Violence for help. The Metro spokesman at the time later said he found the organization from an internet search. He cold-called Giggans, and she started informally collaborating with Metro, helping officials come up with an ad strategy and an anti-harassment slogan: "It's Off Limits."

Eventually, Giggans said, her organization would need to get paid if Metro officials wanted more of her help. So in 2015 and 2016, Peace Over Violence received \$105,000 for consulting work, as The Times previously reported.

Though Kuehl was elected to the Board of Supervisors in 2014 and served on the Metro board of directors in that capacity, Metro officials said she had nothing to do with the initial anti-harassment efforts.

The scope of that work grew after three Metro board members — including Kuehl — asked staff to hire an outside group that could offer support to victims as one way of addressing the ongoing problems without relying more on police.

Then Peace Over Violence proposed a 24-hour hotline for \$160,000 a year. The hotline launched in early 2017, and Metro staff extended the contract three more years for an additional \$495,000 — a decision that did not require board approval, meaning Kuehl had no say.

The hotline was overseen by Jennifer Loew, then a Metro employee. But by 2019, as The Times previously reported, Loew was starting to run into trouble at work. She was eventually admonished after an internal investiga-

tion found that she'd been "intimidating" to staff.

A few weeks later, court records show Loew began alleging corruption at Metro — and she focused her claims on the Peace Over Violence contracts, which she said had been awarded in return for \$2,000 Giggans donated to Kuehl's campaign in 2013 and 2014. Metro staff, Loew said, pushed the deals forward to stay in Kuehl's good graces.

First, Loew asked Metro's inspector general to investigate. She also asked the FBI, the Los Angeles Police Department and the L.A. County district attorney's office to take up the case. There was no sign any of them took interest, but in September 2019, the Sheriff's Department sent detectives to investigate Loew's report.

The first search warrants

in the Peace Over Violence inquiry were carried out in February 2021. Investigators targeted the offices of the nonprofit as well as of Metro and the Metro inspector general. Peace Over Violence turned over boxes of records. Metro and its inspector general questioned the investigation's legitimacy and went to court to challenge the warrants.

That fall, the Sheriff's Department took its evidence to local prosecutors and asked them to consider filing charges. Prosecutors refused, saying the evidence didn't prove "beyond a reasonable doubt" that anyone had committed a crime. The Sheriff's Department kept investigating. Though he frequently spoke and posted about the inquiry online, Villanueva said he recused himself from the case, as well as from other cases handled by his public corruption unit.

In the fall of 2022, Superior Court Judge Eleanor Hunter told the Sheriff's Department that if investigators wanted to carry out more searches they needed to narrow the scope of the warrants they were seeking. But the following week, while Hunter was on vacation, Max Fernandez — the lead investigator on the case — took a new batch of warrant requests to a different judge and got approval for the raids.

The statement Fernandez presented to the court to justify the warrants also alleged the Peace Over Violence hotline was a "complete failure" and, despite that, the contract had been extended without a competitive bid or analysis. Outside the courtroom Wednesday, Fernandez declined to comment.

## Borel fire reduces Havilah to ashes

**[Havilah, from A1]** last vestiges of Havilah in just 24 hours, including a replica courthouse that served as a small roadside museum for decades.

Roy Fluhart, whose ancestors had homesteaded in the area around the Great Depression, had tried to preserve the town's rich history. As president of Havilah's historical society, he and his relatives helped curate the courthouse with historic documents and photographs, antique mining tools and other artifacts from the region's past.

"We lost everything," Fluhart said. "The sad part is, the museum was an archive, and it's lost now. Son of a gun. ... We didn't really have time to get anything out."

It wasn't just the town's history that was lost.

Bo Barnett, whose house was destroyed, managed to escape with his dogs and the clothes on his back. Barnett, whose wife died a month ago, expressed remorse that he didn't have time to collect her ashes.

"Fire was raining down upon us," Barnett said, as his eyes welled with tears. "I wasn't sure what I was driving into. My tires were melting on the road. It was horrible."

Gov. Gavin Newsom, who spent much of his childhood in the sparsely populated mining community of Dutch Flat in Placer County, lamented the loss of a fellow gold rush community.

Wearing aviator sunglasses and a ball cap, he toured the wreckage in Havilah last week, walking up to the remnants of the town museum and pulling a novelty Uncle Sam coin bank from the blackened rubble.

"Towns wiped off the map — places, lifestyles, traditions," Newsom said at a news conference. "That's what this is really all about. At the end of the day, it's about people, it's about history, it's about memories."

In recent years, devastating wildfires have obliterated some of California's gold rush towns, erasing the history of one of the most significant eras in 19th century America.

Havilah joins the likes of Paradise and Greenville,



**THE HAVILAH** schoolhouse survived the blaze, perhaps with the help of Sean Rains, who sprayed down the building as flames raced through. His home burned.

small communities that saw influxes of prospectors, followed by a population exodus and, more recently, devastation.

Havilah credits its origin to Asbury Harpending — a Kentuckian who plotted to seize California and its gold to support the Confederacy during the Civil War. In 1864, Harpending, indignant after his conviction for high treason, ventured to present-day Kern County's Clear Creek region. He found deposits of gold and christened the area Havilah, after a gold-rich land in the book of Genesis.

He stayed only two years but made a fortune: \$800,000.

"I was literally chased from absolute poverty into the possession of nearly a million dollars," Harpending wrote in his autobiography. "I discovered a great mining district and founded a thriving town. And if the matter of paternity is ever brought up in court, it will probably be proved to the satisfaction of a jury that I am the father of Kern County."

As gold became harder to find, people deserted Havilah, and its buildings fell into disrepair.

Those who remained attempted to commemorate the community's mining legacy and pioneer heritage. In 1966, for the centennial of Havilah's founding, residents finished building the replica courthouse. They later built a replica of the town's schoolhouse, which doubled as a community center.

Historical markings along Caliente-Bodfish Road indicate buildings that once existed: barbershop, a blacksmith, the Grand Inn and a livery stable. Some

large plaques also pay tribute to historic events such as the last stagecoach robbery in Kern County in 1869, in which a gunman made off with \$1,700 in coins and gold bullion.

Wesley Kutzner, a historical society member and Fluhart's uncle, helped build the replica courthouse alongside his parents and other locals.

Although the historical society couldn't afford fire insurance, Kutzner said he has resolved to clean up the property and rebuild, the same way the community did nearly 60 years ago.

"The plan is to rebuild," Kutzner said. "It's going to be a tough road home, but we'll get it done."

One resident who plans to rebuild is Sean Rains. He left Bakersfield two years ago and moved to Havilah with his girlfriend and their pit bull, seeking the tranquility of the mountains. Rains, a miner and counter-top fabricator, had also been one of the few people holding on to hope of finding buried treasure in Havilah.

In his frontyard, Rains kept a shaker table and other equipment to sift soil for flecks of gold.

It was "nothing to make us rich," he said, but he did find some.

"They say it's everywhere," Rains said. "It's just a matter of whether it's enough to make it worth your while."

Rains was also recruited into the historical society. He read old letters in which a sheriff had remarked that the town's only pastimes were robbing stagecoaches and horse racing.

Another recalled how pioneers hauled their car-

riages over the mountainous terrain by rope.

The historical society had recently installed a water hose at the replica schoolhouse. Because Rains lived nearby, he was asked to help defend the schoolhouse if there was ever a fire.

"I gave them my word," he said.

So once Rains saw fire crest the mountaintop behind his home and swiftly descend into the valley, he rushed next door to start up the schoolhouse's water pump.

He sprayed down the building and extinguished embers under its front porch.

He eventually turned his attention to his own one-story house, dousing it until the trees in his yard caught fire.

He, his girlfriend and their dog sped away in his pickup truck.

"It was licking our heels on the way out of here," Rains recalled. "It was right on top of us. The winds were crazy in that thing, going in all different directions. It was sucking branches right off the trees. The whole mountain was engulfed."

Rains returned to town the next morning, walking along Caliente-Bodfish Road to see what was left of Havilah.

The valley's pines and oaks were charred, and much of the landscape was covered in white ash.

Rains' two-bedroom home was burned to its cobblestone foundation.

Two cars he had been restoring were scorched husks.

His two ATVs were reduced to skeletal frames.

The schoolhouse survived.

## MARKET ROUNDUP

### Wall Street slips but fears are muted; some AI stock darlings drop

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**NEW YORK** — U.S. stocks slumped Wednesday after a morning rally evaporated, but the losses on Wall Street weren't as bad as the manic moves that racked markets worldwide over the last week.

The Standard & Poor's 500 slipped 0.8% after an earlier jump of 1.7% petered out. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 234 points, or 0.6%, while the Nasdaq composite dropped 1%.

Stocks swung lower as Nvidia, one of Wall Street's most influential companies, went from a morning gain of 4.4% and pushing strongly upward on the S&P 500 to a loss of 5.1% that made it the index's heaviest weight. Nvidia and other major tech stocks have been struggling in the last month on worries their prices shot too high amid Wall Street's frenzy around artificial intelligence technology.

A profit report from Super Micro Computer, whose stock more than quadrupled in less than three months to start the year, helped further damp excitement around AI. Even though its revenue soared 143% in the latest quarter, profit for the company that sells server and storage systems used in AI and other computing fell short of analysts' heightened expectations. Its stock tumbled 20.1%.

Still, other signals in the market showed less fear than in prior days when sharp losses cascaded globally. The S&P 500 is coming off a 1% rally that broke a brutal three-day losing streak in which it tumbled a bit more than 6%.

Treasury yields tumbled sharply Monday, when fear in the market was spiking and investors were speculating the Federal Reserve

may even have to call an emergency meeting to cut interest rates quickly. But they've stabilized since then.

The yield on the two-year Treasury was holding steady at 3.99% on Wednesday, where it was late Tuesday.

The expectation on Wall Street is for the Fed to cut its main interest rate at its next scheduled meeting next month by either the traditional quarter of a percentage point or a more severe half of a point.

In the meantime, earnings reports from the biggest U.S. companies continue to roll in, and the growth for those in the S&P 500 index may end up being the best since 2021, according to FactSet.

Walt Disney Co. delivered stronger earnings for the latest quarter than analysts expected, and its streaming business reported a profit for the first time. But its stock nevertheless fell 4.5% after it warned that recent softness it saw at its U.S. theme parks could continue for "the next few quarters."

Airbnb tumbled 13.4% after its profit in the second quarter fell short of analysts' expectations, and it told investors that it saw some signs of slowing demand in the U.S.

Helping to limit the market's losses was Apple, which rose 1.2%. It clawed back some of its losses from earlier in the week after Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway disclosed it had slashed its ownership stake in the iPhone maker.

All told, the S&P 500 fell 40.53 points to 5,199.50. The Dow dropped 234.21 points to 38,763.45, and the Nasdaq composite fell 171.05 points to 16,195.81.

In stock markets abroad, indexes climbed across much of Europe and Asia.

## Major stock indexes

Index	Close	Daily change	Daily % change	YTD % change
Dow industrials	38,763.45	-234.21	-0.60	+2.85
S&P 500	5,199.50	-40.53	-0.77	+9.01
Nasdaq composite	16,195.81	-171.05	-1.05	+7.89
S&P 400	2,873.46	-23.57	-0.81	+3.30
Russell 2000	2,035.11	-29.19	-1.41	+0.40
EuroStoxx 50	4,668.06	+92.84	+2.03	+3.24
Nikkei (Japan)	35,089.62	+414.16	+1.19	+4.86
Hang Seng (Hong Kong)	16,877.86	+230.52	+1.38	-0.99

Associated Press

## OPINION

## EDITORIAL



MYUNG J. CHUN Los Angeles Times

MAYOR KAREN BASS and the Board of Police Commissioners will select a new chief this year.

## L.A.'s next police chief must spot — and stop — crime waves

This requires redirecting officers away from old approaches

CRIME TRENDS IN Los Angeles tend to begin quickly and spin out of control before being eclipsed by the next criminal phenomenon. In recent years the city has been beset by waves of catalytic converter thefts from parked cars, smash-and-grab robberies at high-end stores, shoplifting at big-box and mom-and-pop retail outlets, “burglary tourism” heists allegedly committed by visitors from South America, and stripping of streetlights for copper wire, among other crimes.

The city needs a police department that is nimble enough to rapidly identify and snuff out these trends. It must have sufficient investigative resources, an ear to the ground in the criminal underworld, and a well-established line of communication with other cities and agencies to stop crimes from becoming trends in the first place.

And crucially, it needs a leader with the vision, skill and persuasive power to redirect officers who too often are focused on fighting crime trends with decades-old approaches and by rolling back hard-won reforms — for example misdemeanor status for drug possession and elimination of money bail for most misdemeanor arrests in Los Angeles County.

That's something Mayor Karen Bass and the Board of Police Commissioners should keep top of mind as they move toward selecting a new chief for the Los Angeles Police Department later this year. Chief Dominic Choi is serving in an interim capacity between the departure earlier this year of Chief Michel Moore and the selection and installation of a new chief to a five-year term.

Though others are involved in

vetting applicants, ultimately the choice is the mayor's, and she is appropriately steering the process. Improving and redirecting the police department is her most important job, along with the related priority of reducing homelessness. Bass is well-suited for this task; she has devoted much of her career as an organizer and as an elected official to reforming police.

Any checklist she may have for her new chief will surely include a

plan for addressing a spate of police killings and other uses of force, a perpetual challenge in L.A. as in most large cities. It will include, as it should, an ability to work with mental health professionals and peers on ways to deal with suspects who appear to have psychiatric or substance-use problems. It should include an ability to command respect from, and communicate with, officers and the public.

But it should also include a de-

sire that the next police chief have a plan for quickly responding to crime trends that come at an ever-quickening pace that is more than just agitating to return to failed criminal justice policies.

The LAPD has a mixed record on up-to-date response and sometimes seems stuck in the past. For example, Moore complained repeatedly that eliminating money bail for some crimes results in accused car thieves being arrested,

released and arrested again for the same crime multiple times within days. But the problem was never eliminating money bail. It was a separate issue: unconditionally releasing suspects who have demonstrated a propensity to re-offend. Law enforcement can hold a suspect until arraignment even in the absence of money bail.

LAPD officers have also wrongly complained that the criminal justice reform measure from 2014, Proposition 47, decriminalized shoplifting and drug use, so they have no power to combat those problems. But that's incorrect; the ballot measure did no such thing, and police response, including arrest where appropriate, is still needed.

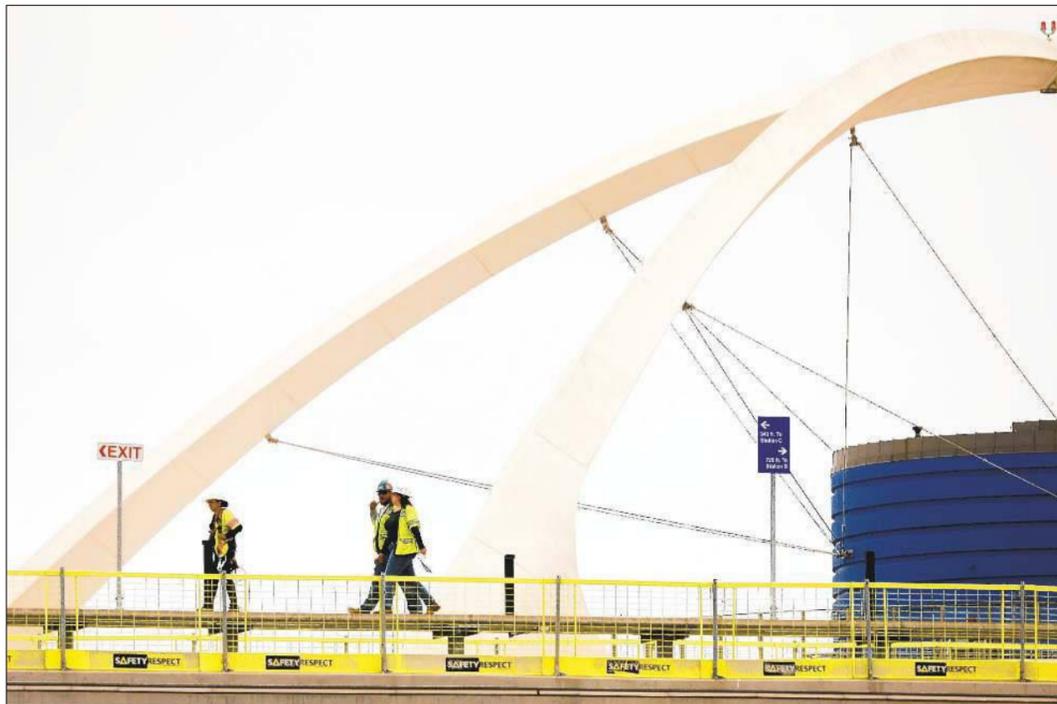
In the case of copper wire theft, the LAPD joined with other city departments to investigate and stop the thieves, with promising results. This shows that the department is fully capable of quick response.

A good chief will steer the department to those kinds of solutions, working with federal and foreign authorities to track and deny entry to burglary tourists, with automakers to secure catalytic converters and with online sellers to stop the fencing of stolen retail goods.

A good chief will remind officers that misdemeanors remain crimes, subject to arrest, and that criminal justice reforms that reduce recidivism or provide non-jail solutions to crime problems enhance, rather than undermine, law enforcement.

Such an approach to public safety requires a strong forward-thinking chief who understands that making police more effective and public safety more collaborative is the best path forward.

## LETTERS



GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

WORKERS WALK on part of the automated people mover under construction at LAX on May 9.

## A transit revolution at LAX

Re “It’s dangerous and exhausting,” letters, Aug. 4

ONE LETTER WRITER'S IDEA of bringing a light-rail train into LAX is a concept decades old.

When Metro's C Line (formerly the Green Line) was constructed, there were many conspiracy theories about why it stopped just short of LAX. At a meeting I attended, Metro representatives said that with the small footprint of LAX, there was not enough room to safely bring larger scale light rail into the airport. So, a yet-to-open automated people mover is being built.

Metro's K Line station just outside the airport will connect to the people mover. Moreover, Metro rail and the people mover will serve bus riders at a consolidated transit station. The current confusing rental car situation will also be consolidated to improve that messy endeavor.

The idea is to reduce LAX vehicle traffic, including ride-share drivers. Nearby communities are burdened with ever increasing LAX gridlock on local streets, and the new Metro rail stations and airport people mover should address that situation.

This reduction in vehicle traffic with switching to transit will also reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which helps everyone.

MATTHEW HETZ, Los Angeles

I agree that getting to and from LAX is a problem and needs tweaking. In the meantime I have a workable solution: Metro's 232 bus.

I take a \$10 cab ride to the bus stop in Long Beach. The ride on the 232 takes a little over an hour, dropping you at Sepulveda and Century boulevards, from where you walk to your terminal.

This works much better than taking the Metro A Line to the C Line and the LAX shuttle. And, at the airport, you are walking with fellow in-the-know travelers such as airline pilots — all for less than \$12. Hooray for the 232 bus — it really does the job!

MARK DUSTRUDE  
Long Beach

### Why ‘weird’ just works

Re “The Democrats' latest label for GOP rivals insults the truly weird,” Opinion, Aug. 4

I appreciate how calling former President Trump and Sen. JD Vance (R-Ohio)

“weird” shifts our paradigm.

After nearly 10 years of Trump, words like “liars” and “authoritarians,” which Eric Schwitzgebel recommends in lieu of weird, have lost their sting. Even “fascist” and “Hitler” don't have much juice anymore and don't really address the moment.

The majority of us live in

a you-and-me world, where diversity and differences are a given. And this is why Trump and Vance — with their us-versus-them anger and name-calling; with their wanting to control our lives and bodies, air and water — seem goofy, not normal, definitely not rational and not constitutional.

They're not good Golden Rule Christians — and frankly, they're weird.

PAMELA KELLY  
Long Beach

### Real benefits of fake grass

Re “A plastic lawn is way worse than a real one,” Opinion, Aug. 5

I was disappointed by Charles Miller's recent op-ed article mischaracterizing synthetic turf's environmental, water-saving and health benefits.

Synthetic turf saves millions of gallons of water annually and unlocks countless hours of play for millions of Americans, crucial points that Miller omits. It has the power to “foster healthy lifestyles and civic pride,” as Mayor Ulises Cabrera of Moreno Valley said of a new soccer turf field.

For his part, Miller accurately states that synthetic turf contains no intentionally added perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS. The Synthetic Turf Council shares concerns about PFAS that is present in water, air, soil and food products, but studies show PFAS levels around synthetic turf fields are often lower than those in grass fields and other environments.

The benefits of synthetic turf are clear and substantial, making it a crucial resource for communities nationwide. Readers deserve to have the full information and context about turf in these discussions.

MELANIE TAYLOR  
Forest Hill, Md.

The writer is president and chief executive of the Synthetic Turf Council.

While the artificial turf industry has convinced some consumers that its product is good for the environment, it has taken pains to hide that product's vulnerability to often permanent damage.

For example, they don't want to tell us how heavy objects can tear that stuff, or how heat from grilling or from cigarettes can melt it, or how household solvents and oil will disfigure it, or how even chewing gum can create a frustrating mess of it. They don't tell us how damaged fake grass can be very difficult and expensive to fix.

These vulnerabilities should be included in any truthful assessment of fake grass impacts, both to institutions and homeowners.

BRIAN ROBERTS  
Covina

::

My husband and I bought our current home in 2008 and, faced with a weed-ridden backyard lawn with stickers that prevented our young grandchildren from playing there, we replaced the lawn with “fake” grass. Twenty-four years later, we are still highly satisfied with the change.

Contrary to Miller's piece, our plastic lawn is not short-lived, nor does it require any maintenance. We rely only on rainwater for cleaning, not on cleansers.

Speaking of rain, our turf allows any water that falls on it to soak into the soil below; it is not impervious.

Three years ago, we replaced our front yard with several raised beds surrounded by artificial turf walkways. Since we removed our old lawn sprinklers, our L.A. Department of Water and Power bills have consistently been in the lowest water-usage level.

MARGARET PARKHURST  
Westchester

### HOW TO WRITE TO US

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Los Angeles Times  
FOUNDED DECEMBER 4, 1881  
A California Times Publication

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## OP-ED



JEFF CHIU Associated Press

## Would this AI bill protect consumers or stall growth?

**C**ALIFORNIA IS A WORLD LEADER in artificial intelligence — which means we're expected to help figure out how to regulate it. The state is considering multiple bills to those ends, none attracting more attention than Senate Bill 1047. The measure, introduced by Sen. Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), would require companies producing the largest AI models to test and modify those models to avoid facilitating serious harm. Is this a necessary step to keep AI responsible, or an overreach? Simon Last, co-founder of an AI-fueled company, and Paul Lekas, a public policy head at the Software & Information Industry Assn., gave their perspectives.

### This regulation will help keep the tech safe without hurting innovation

By Simon Last

AS CO-FOUNDER of an AI-powered company, I've witnessed the breathtaking advancement of artificial intelligence. Every day, I design products that use AI, and it's clear these systems will become more powerful over the next few years. We will see major progress in creativity and productivity, alongside advancements in science and medicine.

However, as AI systems grow more sophisticated, we must reckon with their risks. Without reasonable precautions, AI could cause severe harms on an unprecedented scale — cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, the development of chemical, nuclear or biological weapons, automated crime and more.

California's SB 1047 strikes a balance between protecting public safety from such harms and supporting innovation, focusing on common sense safety requirements for the few companies developing the most powerful AI systems. It includes whistleblower protections for employees who report safety concerns at AI companies, and importantly, the bill is designed to support California's incredible startup ecosystem.

SB 1047 would only affect companies building the next generation of AI systems that cost more than \$100 million to train. Based on industry best practices, the bill mandates safety testing and the mitigation of foreseen risks before the release of these systems, as well as the ability to turn them off in the event of an emergency. In instances where AI causes mass casualties or at least \$500 million in damages, the state attorney general can sue to hold companies liable.

These safety standards would apply to the AI "foundation models" on which startups build specialized products. Through this approach, we can more effectively mitigate risks across the entire industry

without burdening small-scale developers. As a startup founder, I am confidently the bill will not impede our ability to build and grow.

Some critics argue regulation should focus solely on harmful uses of AI rather than the underlying technology. But this view is misguided because it's already illegal to, for example, conduct cyberattacks or use bioweapons. SB 1047 supplies what's missing: a way to prevent harm before it occurs. Product safety testing is standard for many industries, including the manufacturers of cars, airplanes and prescription drugs. The builders of the biggest AI systems should be held to a similar standard.

Others claim the legislation would drive businesses out of the state. That's nonsensical. The supply of talent and capital in California is next to none, and SB 1047 won't change those factors attracting companies to operate here. Also, the bill applies to foundation model developers doing business in California regardless of where they are headquartered.

Tech leaders including Meta's Mark Zuckerberg and OpenAI's Sam Altman have gone to Congress to discuss AI regulation, warn of the technology's potentially catastrophic effects and even ask for regulation. But the expectations for action from Congress are low.

With 32 of the Forbes top 50 AI companies based in California, our state carries much of the responsibility to help the industry flourish. SB 1047 provides a framework for younger companies to thrive alongside larger players while prioritizing public safety. By making smart policy choices now, state lawmakers and Gov. Gavin Newsom could solidify California's position as the global leader in responsible AI progress.

SIMON LAST is co-founder of Notion, based in San Francisco.

### These near-impossible standards would make California lose its edge in AI

By Paul Lekas

**C**ALIFORNIA IS THE cradle of American innovation. Over the years, many information and tech businesses, including ones my association represents, have delivered for Californians by creating new products for consumers, improving public services and powering the economy.

Unfortunately, legislation making its way through the California Legislature is threatening to undermine the brightest innovators and targeting frontier — or highly advanced — AI models.

The bill goes well beyond the stated focus of addressing real concerns about the safety of these models while ensuring that California reaps the benefits of this technology. Rather than targeting foreseeable harms, such as using AI for predictive policing based on biased historical data, or holding accountable those who use AI for nefarious purposes, SB 1047 would ultimately prohibit developers from releasing AI models that can be adapted to address needs of California consumers and businesses.

SB 1047 would do this by in effect forcing those at the forefront of new AI technologies to anticipate and mitigate every possible way that their models might be misused and to prevent that misuse. This is simply not possible, particularly since there are no universally accepted technical standards for measuring and mitigating frontier model risk.

Were SB 1047 to become law, California consumers would lose access to AI tools they find useful. That's like stopping production of a prescription medication because someone took it illegally or overdosed. They would also lose access to AI tools designed to protect Californians from malicious activity enabled by other AI.

To be clear, concerns with SB 1047 do not reflect a belief that AI should proliferate without meaningful

oversight. There is bipartisan consensus that we need guardrails around AI to reduce the risk of misuse and address foreseeable harms to public health and safety, civil rights and other areas. States have led the way in enacting laws to disincentivize the use of AI for ill. Indiana, Minnesota, Texas, Washington and California, for example, have enacted laws to prohibit the creation of deepfakes depicting intimate images of identifiable individuals and to restrict the use of AI in election advertising.

Congress is also considering guardrails to protect elections, privacy, national security and other concerns while maintaining America's technological advantage. Indeed, oversight would be best handled in a coordinated manner at the federal level, as is being pursued through the AI Safety Institute launched at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, without the specter of civil and criminal liability. This approach recognizes that frontier model safety requires massive resources that no state, even California, can muster.

So although it is essential for elected leaders to take steps to protect consumers, SB 1047 goes too far. It would force emerging and established companies to weigh near-impossible standards for compliance against the value of doing business elsewhere.

California could lose its edge in AI innovation. And AI developers outside the U.S. not subject to the same transparency and accountability principles would see their position strengthened, inevitably putting American consumers' privacy and security at risk.

PAUL LEKAS is the head of global public policy and government affairs for the Software & Information Industry Assn. in Washington.

## Kamala Harris is getting away with dodging the press

JONAH GOLDBERG

**T**O THE SURPRISE of just about everyone, Kamala Harris has had a remarkably good two weeks — though whether her selection of Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz as her running mate ends or extends the honeymoon remains to be seen.

Democrats, of course, are pleasantly surprised by Harris' debut. Prior to President Biden's withdrawal from the race, many in the party were exceedingly skeptical that swapping Harris for Biden would improve their chances in November. So far, many of their concerns have proved unwarranted.

No ugly, protracted intraparty civil war for the nomination ensued; Harris essentially secured it within a couple of days of Biden's withdrawal. Her past positions haven't made her radioactive among swing voters. Her very low approval numbers as Biden's vice president have not carried over to her candidacy. The campaign transition was apparently frictionless: Harris basically just hung a new shingle on the same operation. And any concern that she didn't have time to raise money was erased by a fire hose of donations — nearly a third of a bil-

lion dollars in July alone.

It seems it was the Democrats' unpopular, senescent, cantankerous candidate who was holding them back after all. Voters hunger for a change candidate — one role that can't be played by an incumbent who has been in federal office since the heyday of "All in the Family" and "The Waltons."

The chief indication that the Harris team knows what it's doing may be its effort to keep the candidate herself under wraps. Sure, we've seen a lot of her: in ads, scripted rallies and a few brief statements. But she hasn't endured an extended interaction with the press since before the June 27 debate that doomed Biden's candidacy. The last time was on June 24 on MSNBC's "Morning Joe," hardly a challenging venue for a Democrat.

The Harris campaign's decision to avoid sitting down with an aggressive or even particularly curious reporter is not necessarily a sign that it lacks confidence in her (as many critics insist). Even if she were a fantastic off-the-cuff political communicator — which she is not — keeping her on script for a while makes sense. The longer she can be all things to all people — or at least to all persuadable voters — the better off she is. Answering hard questions runs

the risk of disabusing some voters of who they think or hope she is.

Also, going back to Sun Tzu or Napoleon, it's been a truism that when your opponent is flailing, you shouldn't get in the way. This is particularly true in the Trump era: When people's attention is focused on Trump, they don't like what they see. And Biden's withdrawal has provoked an eruption of ad hominem Trumpiness from the former president.

Last week, Trump railed against Harris' identification as a Black woman and then spent a sizable chunk of his rally in Atlanta attacking Brian Kemp, Georgia's deservedly popular Republican governor. Why would Democrats want to distract anyone from that?

Still, it is disturbing that even as Americans and our allies harbor serious concerns about whether the president is up to an increasingly fraught geopolitical and economic moment, his constitutional understudy has done so little to reassure the public.

Less consequential but more outrageous is the press' collective complicity in Harris' strategy. The vice president's campaign has wisely flip-flopped on many of the fatally left-wing positions she took during her ill-fated first presidential campaign —

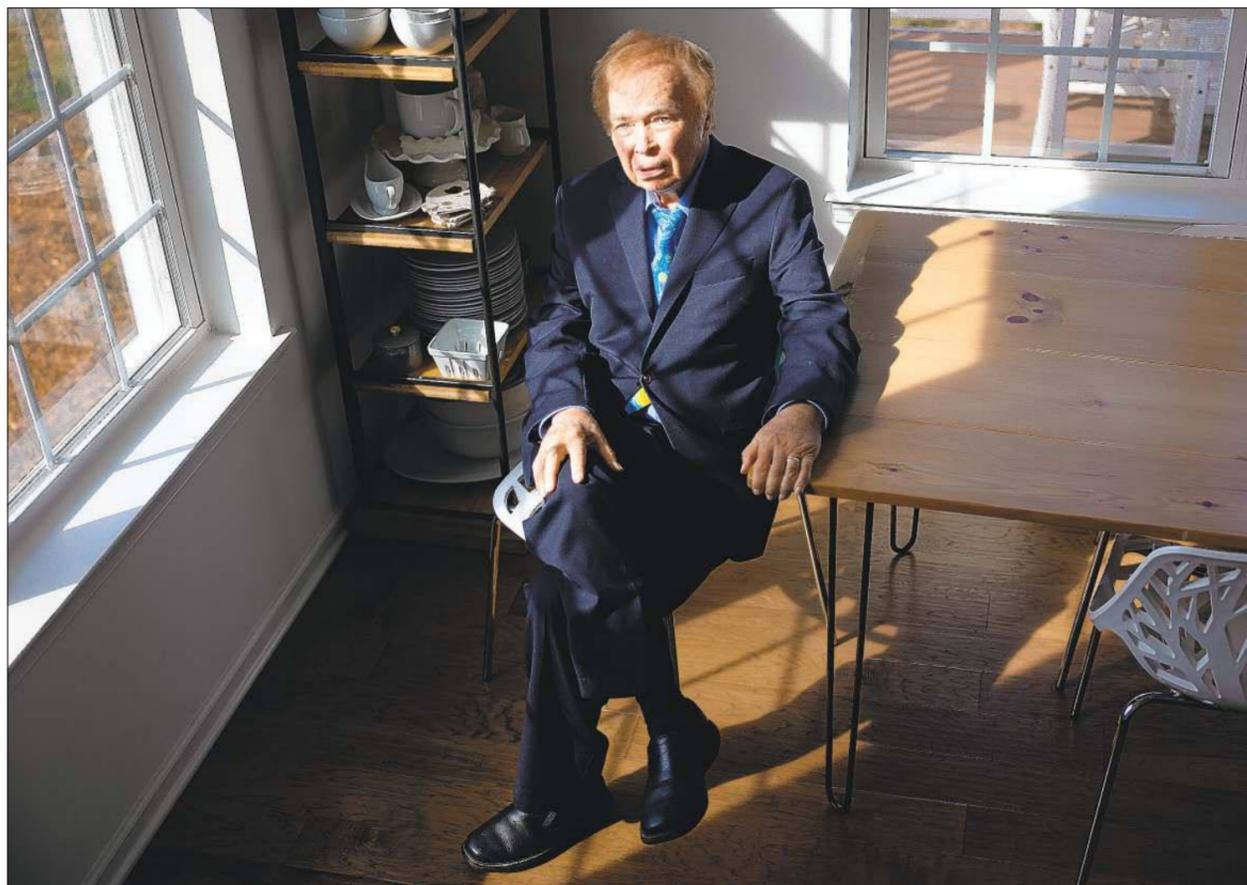
against fracking, in favor of Medicare for all, sympathetic to calls to cut funding to police departments and so on. But the press shouldn't let her get away with it so easily.

If this were a remotely normal time, reporters would be shouting questions like "When will you hold a press conference?" every time Harris steps off Air Force Two. Admittedly, this isn't a normal time. But that doesn't excuse journalists from demanding more transparency of a candidate who sidestepped the primary process.

Willingly enabling a campaign strategy is not the Fourth Estate's proper role, but even if you think it is, protecting Harris from scrutiny could eventually do more harm than good. Hiding the full extent of Biden's decline worked well for a time. But when the reality was revealed, it came as such a shock that he was forced to drop out of the race. Shielding Harris from scrutiny could also have serious consequences when, unprotected by a teleprompter or a pliable press corps, she produces one of her signature word salads.

I don't like the press' sudden love affair with Harris. But even if I did, I would counsel some tough love sooner rather than later.

@JonahDispatch



Photographs by CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

**“NO ONE LISTENED.** Look at today,” says civil rights activist Bill Baird. “We’re going to head into a civil war. They [evangelicals] believe this ‘orange Jesus’ — this Trump — has special powers from God. ... I knew it was coming. I’m still fighting it.”

## His long fight for rights lives on

[Baird, from A1] ing again.

“No one listened. Look at today,” said Baird, sitting in a sunroom in a house in the green hills north of Philadelphia. “We’re going to head into a civil war. They [evangelicals] believe this ‘orange Jesus’ — this Trump — has special powers from God. I saw it developing back then. I knew it was coming. I’m still fighting it. This is the worst Supreme Court I’ve ever seen.”

Baird once frequented national talk shows, commanded handsome speaking fees and had a folk song written about him. These days, he’s an aging activist with scrapbooks, memories and a dog sleeping at his feet, an iconoclast in a suburb of mowed lawns and fine houses, who, unbeknownst to his neighbors, handed out contraceptives to single coeds and poor women in the 1960s and became a consequential figure in ensuring that women had control over their bodies.

Baird’s Supreme Court case “expanded the ability of unmarried women to take care of themselves and that right has expanded to other realms,” said Judy Waxman, former vice president of health and reproductive rights at the National Women’s Law Center. “It is about equal protection. That case is so relevant to this moment in history. I wouldn’t be surprised if it comes up again.”

But Baird was often vilified by some in the women’s movement as an interloper with a flair for bombast and sound bites who wanted to overshadow their cause. Betty Friedan, the author of “The Feminine Mystique,” and a founder of the National Organization for Women, wrongly disparaged him as a CIA agent. Planned Parenthood called his protest style an embarrassment. One feminist labeled him a pervert; another threatened to castrate him.

Baird’s crusade six decades ago for reproductive and abortion rights is at the center of today’s politics. But he sees himself as a misunderstood rebel relegated to a footnote in a history he helped create. “I went to jail for them,” he said, with a bitterness that hovered in the late morning light. “I did things many of them didn’t have the guts to do.”

He regards the battle to protect women’s rights as unfinished business. He tightens with anger when he reflects on the overturning of Roe vs. Wade in 2022 and the fact that Republican senators have refused to make access to contraception a federal right.

“I’m a street guy,” he said. “I’m no fancy Harvard lawyer. But I won Supreme Court cases. I had to take on so many forms to outwit the powers that be.” Back in the day, when someone tried to silence him or stop one of his protests, Baird, who can quote the Bible as accurately as he can the Constitution, would stare them down and say, “I’m gonna own your house.”

Baird was paging through newspaper clippings the other day, reliving a past when he wore sideburns and flared trousers and showed up in front of churches and town halls dragging a wooden cross and a sign that read: “Free women from the cross of religious oppression.” He remembered when Falwell called him “the devil” and when dozens of police officers

appeared in Freehold, N.J., in 1966 to arrest him for handing out contraceptives.

Walking with a cane has slowed him, and at times — bent against the light, sprinklers clicking in the distance — it is clear what the years have taken. A slow lift of the arm, a patch of white whiskers the razor missed beneath the chin. “Can you read this line?” he asked. “My eyes aren’t so good anymore.” But his fervor remains as potent as his desire for respect; he is a man who on a workless morning greets you wearing a blue tie and a boxer’s fading grace.

His wife, Joni, a former preschool teacher, fact-checked his reminiscences and let him know when he repeated himself.

“You told him that yesterday,” she said.

“Yes, but there’s a purpose,” he said.

“Sometimes you forget.”

“That is true,” he said, “and I love you for it.”

He paused.

Baird’s pursuit of reproductive and abortion rights began in the early 1960s when virginity was spoken without irony and things related to sex came in unmarked brown paper bags. In some states, married women younger than 21 could not get contraceptives.

A graduate of Brooklyn College, Baird was hired as clinical director of Emko, which manufactured contraceptive foam. One day in 1963 while in Harlem Hospital, he saw a woman with a coat hanger embedded in her uterus. She was bleeding heavily, and he embraced her before she died. The moment was at once horrifying and revelatory. It became his origin story, repeated so often that it fell into a cadence, but never lost its hold on him.

“No one should die like that,” he said. “I wanted to educate the public. I wanted to prevent unwanted pregnancies that brought unwanted children. I grew up poor. I knew what that was like. It hurt poor women the worst.”

So, Baird became an itinerant voice in an era of civil rights protests and a burgeoning women’s movement.

He turned an old postal truck

into the “Plan Van,” complete with a fake fireplace and chairs, that he drove to poor neighborhoods to educate women on birth control. He started clinics to counsel women and refer them to doctors for abortions that were illegal across much of the country. The Catholic Church despised him. Cops and critics grew accustomed to his publicity stunts, including a poster board displaying a skull and crossbones and his Penthouse magazine headline “Profiles in Courage: Bill Baird.” He was arrested eight times in five states.

He became famous with his 1967 arrest during a talk at Boston University before hundreds of coeds and a campus full of police who were there to uphold a nearly century-old state law against crimes of “chastity, morality and decency.” Baird, who has the timing of an actor and the brazenness of a raven, knew he would violate the statute when he offered contraceptives to women who rushed the stage. He told police it was hypocritical to arrest him given that a nearby department store, which was also ignoring the law, sold and collected taxes on the same contraceptives.

“I lived through that time,” Waxman said. “He was pretty damn brave to get up and give that lecture.”

A judge called him “a menace to the nation” and he was jailed for 36 days. He appealed to the Supreme Court, which two years earlier had ruled in *Griswold vs. Connecticut* — a case brought by Planned Parenthood — that married couples were entitled to contraceptives. There was no such protection for single people. Baird wanted to change that.

In November 1971, his lawyer argued the case before the Supreme Court, and five months later, Baird won in a 6-1 landmark decision that gave all adults access to contraception. Justice William J. Brennan Jr. wrote: “If the right of privacy means anything, it is the right of the individual, married or single, to be free from unwarranted government intrusion into matters so fundamentally affecting a person as the decision whether to bear or beget a child.”

*Eisenstadt vs. Baird* was a victory for women. But it highlighted the animosity between the feminist movement and Baird.

Women’s groups cited the *Griswold* decision much more than Baird’s. A number of feminist leaders criticized him as a nuisance. He believed both sexes should work together for civil and privacy rights, but his brash style, including trying to burst into a women’s meeting he was barred from, unsettled some.

“Female supremacy is as evil,” he said, “as male supremacy.”

In 2000, Friedan said Baird “has been trying to muscle in, exploit, damage, divert, disrupt the women’s movement for 20-odd years.” A Boston Globe columnist wrote: “It’s uncanny. Even if you agree with everything he stands for and give him credit for all the good things he has done, still, there is something maddeningly off-putting about him.”

In the 2023 documentary on Baird, “Yours in Freedom, Bill Baird,” feminist activist Ti-Grace Atkinson said he had a “huge ego that reminded women of the worst things they had to deal with in their lives of men asserting rights over them.”

Joni Baird, who with Baird was co-director of the Pro Choice League, sees it differently: “When I think about the context of history,” she said, “women for centuries, and especially women in the ‘60s, like my own mother, who became this ultra-feminist, had been oppressed. They looked at men as the enemy. Not all women, but a lot of the leaders did. They wanted to be the leader now. They wanted to take the ring. They invalidated Bill, and they continue to. He is a warrior. A lot of women in those days weren’t like that. They felt overwhelmed by him.”

Baird’s childhood was shaped by feelings of unworth. The son of immigrants — a hard-drinking father from Scotland and a reprovving mother from Germany — Baird and his siblings grew up poor in Brooklyn, N.Y. “My mother used to tell me, ‘You’re stupid, you’re ugly.’ Not my brother Robert. He was handsome. Eddie was handsome. But I was ugly. She felt that way about me.”

He was a fast kid — “like a rabbit” — who haunted the railway station, peeling silver linings from Pall Mall cigarette wrappers to sell at the junkyard. Baird took in other people’s laundry, swept a synagogue and turned over trash cans to collect newspapers that he’d sell to recyclers for 75 cents for 100 pounds. His abusive father almost strangled him to death one night with a dog leash. Baird learned to protect himself and became a skilled fistfighter. Much later, he would say that Democrats and the women’s movement lacked the aggression needed to defeat the hardball tactics of the Christian right.

Baird was closest to his older sister Louise, who died of a cerebral embolism, gangrenous appendicitis and pneumonia appendicitis when she was 12 and he was 9. The loss shattered him and his mother, who one day when Baird returned from school was “singing ‘Ave Maria’ in a weird voice” and knitting a blanket for her dead daughter. Baird blamed his family’s poverty for not providing his sister with proper medical care.

“In those days,” he said, “they used to have a cart that drove the coffin around the neighborhood so people could say goodbye. I wept. I was so angry. I said, ‘She’s dead because we don’t have any money. That’s wrong.’ I said that if I ever get out of this poverty, I would do my best to go to college and be-

come something and spend my life helping people.”

Louise and the dying woman at Harlem Hospital were woven into Baird’s activism — victims of poverty and religious piousness at the expense of basic human rights.

His work over the decades cost him much: Emko fired him for handing out free contraceptives. One of his three clinics was torched. Death threats against him forced him to move his first wife, Evelyn, and their children to another state. The couple divorced and he remains estranged from his children. Money has long been a problem. The speaking fees have mostly vanished; every now and then a student researching a paper on abortion calls him. The house he lives in was bought after Harvard University purchased his archives.

Time has spun forward for Bill Baird, but old torments persist. His home in Bucks County — about 40 miles north of Philadelphia — sits in one of the most politically contentious districts in a vital swing state. There have been battles over book bans, gender identity and women’s rights. He is bemused and alarmed that conservative politicians and the Christian right want to invoke the Comstock Act, an 1873 anti-obscenity law, as a way to limit reproductive rights.

The past is a little blurry, but mostly distinct. His mind and words can be as sharp as decades ago when he warned of “religious tyranny” and botched abortions.

In the 1960s, when Baird was known for providing contraceptives, he began receiving letters: “I am a mother. 15 children. 13 living. Age 42,” wrote one woman. “Doctor said I could have five more [children]. I don’t need anymore. I need your help please.” Another implored: “I am 19-years-old and I have three children and my fourth one is due in one month and after it is born I would like to use Emko [contraceptive foam] to keep from getting pregnant again.”

“Women came to me from all over the country,” Baird said. “Sometimes I gave out 2,000 contraceptive foams in a week.”

He added, “I knew I was part of history. Ninety-two years of my life have been spent fighting for civil rights. But it’s a difficult job because you’re so misunderstood. All I want to do is educate people and prevent unwanted pregnancies. I thought I’d get support from the public. Nothing. To this day, I’ve been scorned.”

But the kid from Brooklyn succeeded where many didn’t. He’s still at it. Sitting in the sunroom, a loaf of fresh bread on the counter, Baird, who once delighted in quoting Scripture to right-to-lifers, reached for another file of clippings. His hands were thick, his eyes squinting. But he seemed to have it all memorized; the victories, and the gnawing slights that drew a gentle reprimand from Joni: “One thing about you, Bill, you can’t let go of things. You’ve got to let go, Bill.”

He smiled at the impossibility of it.

He moved his cane to the side and left the file open on the table before him. He is smaller, more stooped, than in his younger days, but the slyness that defeated so many of his enemies remains intact. One can hear in the aged softness of his voice the choir boy he once was; the child who hid in the attic from his father; and the man who was accustomed to jail cells. He has survived beatings, a bullet, prostate cancer, colon cancer, appendicitis and COVID.

“He’s like Rasputin,” Joni said. “You can’t kill him.”



**BAIRD** looks through old photos with his wife, Joni, at their home north of Philadelphia. Bill Baird won a 1972 Supreme Court decision that legalized contraception for unmarried women.

# CALIFORNIA

THURSDAY, AUGUST 8, 2024 :: LATIMES.COM/CALIFORNIA



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

**TOURISTS** take photos in front of the Marilyn Monroe statue, which currently stands on the edge of Downtown Park in Palm Springs.

## Why L.A. felt rattling punch of 5.2 quake

Size, time of night and 'basin effect' notable in Southland's biggest temblor in three years.

By RONG-GONG LIN II

A magnitude 5.2 earthquake, centered about 18 miles southwest of Bakersfield, was felt across a wide swath of Southern California on Tuesday night.

Its size rattled nerves but caused no major damage or injuries. Two minutes after the earthquake hit, a large boulder — the size of an SUV — was reported blocking multiple southbound lanes of Interstate 5, about a mile south of Grapevine Road, the California Highway Patrol said. The boulder was cleared by Wednesday morning.

The earthquake, originally estimated at magnitude 5.3, struck at 9:09 p.m., according to the U.S. Geological Survey. It was followed by dozens of aftershocks of magnitude 2.5 and up, including a magnitude 4.5 earthquake that occurred less than a minute after the first, and a magnitude 4.1 temblor at 9:17 p.m.

The epicenter was in sparsely populated farmland about 14 miles northwest of the unincorporated community of Grapevine in Kern County, 60 miles northwest of Santa Clarita, and about 88 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles.

The area closest to the [See Earthquake, B2]

## Huge Marilyn Monroe statue in Palm Springs will be moved

The 26-foot artwork has drawn the ire of residents and critics but will stay in park

By Terry Castleman

After years of controversy and a protracted legal battle, a fixture of the Palm Springs tourist scene is set to move.

The Forever Marilyn statue, a 26-foot commemoration of Monroe's famous skirt scene from 1955's "The Seven Year Itch," has drawn the ire of locals and visiting critics alike since it returned to Palm Springs in

2021. It currently stands on the edge of Downtown Park, with Monroe's sculpted back facing the Palm Springs Art Museum.

The statue will be resettled in a "location to be determined in the Downtown Park," Palm Springs Mayor Jeffrey Bernstein said in a statement. "The City Council is very pleased to have found a satisfactory solution to this issue, which has divided so many within our community."

The statue will not be moving far: The

park spans only 15 acres, and the statue will be placed within its boundaries.

Trina Turk, a fashion designer, was among those who led the effort to get the statue relocated.

The GoFundMe page administered by Turk, which raised more than \$115,000 to lobby the city to move the statue, expressed cautious optimism about the decision in a recent post.

"There are still [See Statue, B4]

## Thief or victim? Girardi's fraud trial begins

Prosecutors say famed lawyer stole millions from clients. Defense blames subordinate.

By Matt Hamilton

Tom Girardi was on a first-name basis with senators from California to North Carolina.

The governor was on speed dial. And legions of state and local officials lined up for his boozy parties in Beverly Hills, Las Vegas and elsewhere.

Yet in few places did the once-legendary plaintiff's attorney wield as much power as the courtrooms in the heart of Los Angeles, where he swayed juries with his honey-smooth voice and untold judges attributed their appointments to the bench — at least partly — to Girardi's blessing.

On Tuesday, one of those downtown federal courtrooms was the site of the latest low point in Girardi's long descent from legal titan to disgraced and bankrupt ex-attorney as jurors were sworn in and his criminal trial began.

Girardi stands accused of four counts of wire fraud for allegedly looting \$15 million from clients over a decade.

With the 85-year-old sitting quietly in a blue sweater and gray plaid blazer next to his defense team, Assistant U.S. Atty. Scott Paetty said [See Girardi, B5]

### CAPITOL JOURNAL

## Harris shows new courage in choice of ticket mate



CHARLES REX ARBOGAST Associated Press

**KAMALA HARRIS** and newly named running mate Tim Walz, the popular governor of blue Minnesota, campaign in Eau Claire in the swing state of Wisconsin on Wednesday.

She didn't play it safe by picking a battleground-state politician. Naming Tim Walz was savvy.

**GEORGE SKELTON**  
IN SACRAMENTO

Kudos to Vice President Kamala Harris. She didn't do the blatantly political thing and select a popular governor from a key battleground state to be her running mate.

Instead, the Californian picked a popular governor from a blue state she was very likely to carry anyway — a candidate who should have broad appeal in many Middle America purple states.

Her choice of moderate Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz doesn't smack of a typical,



predictable, ultrasafe political move. That alone seems refreshing in this overly polarized election year.

She took a risk. If Harris had selected Pennsylvania's popular Gov. Josh Shapiro, she probably would have locked up a vital battleground state she'll need to win in November.

But Shapiro — like California Gov. Gavin Newsom — already is very active in his support of Biden administration policies and warning voters against the perils of a second Donald Trump presidency. And Shapiro has a very strong local following. So he may help Harris carry Pennsylvania anyway.

At a Pennsylvania campaign rally Tuesday where Harris and Walz appeared together publicly as running mates for the first time, Shapiro promised: "I'm gonna be working my tail off" for the Democratic ticket. We'll see.

Another vice presidential possibility on Harris' [See Skelton, B2]

## A push to unseat Republican in 27th District

Race between George Whitesides and Rep. Mike Garcia is key to GOP's grip on House.

By Hailey Branson-Potts

Early on a Saturday morning at Rawley Duntley Park in Lancaster — the high-desert sun blazing — George Whitesides, a Democrat running for Congress, was encircled by dozens of cheering, noisemaker-blasting volunteers.

"I really want to make sure that even the astronauts out there can hear his name!" Nadia Abrica, an organizing director with the state Democratic Party, shouted, pointing to the sky.

"George! George! George!" "Are you guys feeling fired up?" Whitesides asked the crowd. "Are you feeling ready to go? ... Are we going to change the House of Representatives?"

"Yes!" they screamed.

Whitesides, a former NASA chief of staff under President Obama, is running to unseat Rep. Mike Garcia, the thrice-elected Republican incumbent, in California's hotly contested 27th Congressional District in northern L.A. County. The race will be crucial in determining whether Republicans maintain their narrow majority in the U.S. House.

Democrats, riding the national enthusiasm unleashed by Vice President Kamala Harris' entry into the presidential race, feel [See 27th District, B4]



ZOE CRANFILL Los Angeles Times

**DEMOCRAT** George Whitesides, a former NASA chief of staff, prepares to knock on doors in Lancaster. The 27th Congressional District is a purple battleground.

# Walz brings his genuine normalcy to Harris' ticket

[Skelton, from B1] short list — Sen. Mark Kelly of Arizona — could probably have also wrapped up his battleground state for the Democratic ticket. And Kelly has a great resume: fighter pilot, astronaut, gun control advocate and all-around solid guy.

But Walz is a better, more natural communicator — virtually unexcelled, as he demonstrated to a national TV audience Tuesday.

It was the plainspoken Walz, after all, who popularized what is arguably this election cycle's most effective adjective — a potential game-changer — calling Trump and his running mate, JD Vance, simply “weird.”

“Weird” is easily understandable and, in Trump's case, practically undeniable — as opposed to years of Democrats labeling the former president a “threat to democracy,” an abstract notion that needs too much explanation. “Weird” has much more immediate sting.

Such a wordsmith who doesn't need pollsters and focus groups to tell him what to say is priceless.

Referring to Trump and Vance at the rally, Walz told the cheering arena crowd: “These guys are creepy and, yes, just weird as hell.”

As for Trump's running mate, Walz said — like he really meant it — “I can't wait to debate the guy.”

Harris reportedly was attracted to the balding 60-year-old governor's “authenticity” — presumably his down-home, folksy manner that constantly emits sincerity. A regular dude. And Americans — let's hope — are ready for normality.

Walz helped coach a small high school's football team to a state championship and taught social studies. He spent 24 years in the Army National Guard, rising to the enlisted rank of sergeant major. The Demo-

crat was elected to Congress from a district that historically went Republican. And he spent 12 years in the House working with both sides of the aisle.

“I learned the art of compromise without compromising my values,” he said at the rally.

We need more elected officials who can get things done like that.

He's a crack rifle shot and a hunter — but strongly supports gun control. “In Minnesota, we believe in the 2nd Amendment,” he said. “But we also believe in common-sense gun violence laws.”

Harris also reportedly was impressed with Walz's happy-go-lucky demeanor. He's positive and upbeat — not habitually negative and spewing hate like Trump, and now Vance. Voters may be ripe for humor and smiles.

He thanked Harris for “bringing back the joy” to presidential campaigning.

All of this aside, Harris did seemingly follow an unfortunate pattern from her time as California state attorney general in one regard: By not picking Shapiro, she dodged a confrontation with a major labor group — in this case, public school teachers.

Shapiro supports school vouchers — public money to help students attend private schools — which is anathema to teachers' unions.

But Harris was right on this one: The nation's leading Democrat can't be suspected of favoring so-called school choice — spending tax money on private classrooms.

By passing over Shapiro, Harris also didn't risk alienating pro-Palestinian voters — particularly in battleground Michigan — by teaming with a Jewish running mate who has strongly supported Israel's military campaign in Gaza.

So Harris was a bit risk-averse in her selection of



JULIA NIKHINSON Associated Press

WISCONSIN children welcome Harris and Walz, who's known as a regular guy with bipartisan credentials.

Walz. But that's savvy politics.

In tapping Walz, she also seemed to be making a play for the old white-guy vote — trying to put the species at ease. Inclusion. Smart.

The first Black and Asian American female vice president already has awakened young voters and people of color.

Trump must be nervously squirming.

The GOP nominee immediately called Walz “a dangerously liberal extremist.”

But Walz, with his broad smile, rural roots and common-man demeanor, doesn't look or sound dangerous. He seems to be out of a Norman Rockwell painting. The evidence points to his extreme competence as an officeholder and a campaigner.

As one who has been critical of Harris on previous occasions, I say that this time she deserves congratulations for making an outstanding move.

# Southland shakes, rattles and rolls during 5.2 quake

[Earthquake, from B1] epicenter felt “very strong” shaking as defined by the Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale; that zone includes a section of the California Aqueduct, which transports water from Northern California to Southern California.

By the time shaking was felt in more populated areas, including Bakersfield, Santa Clarita and Ventura, the USGS calculated that only “weak” shaking was felt, which can rock standing cars and cause vibrations in a building similar to the passing of a truck.

Some residents affected by the quake reported an extended period of shaking. One person in Los Feliz felt 45 seconds of movement, with at least three different waves — one weak, followed by a strong one, then again a weak one. In South Pasadena and Whittier, people felt about 20 seconds of shaking, contained in two distinctive waves.

In Pasadena, seismologist Lucy Jones said she felt about three seconds of shaking.

There were no immediate reports of damage. And not everyone felt the earthquake. L.A. County Sheriff's Deputy Jose Gomez said he didn't feel the shaking during his drive into work at the sheriff's Santa Clarita station. No damage was reported there.

The Los Angeles Fire Department said no significant damage was reported within city limits.

The USGS said the quake was felt across the Los Angeles Basin and inland valleys and in Santa Maria, Bakersfield and Fresno.

Many Southern California residents described getting alerts from the USGS' earthquake early warning system, such as through the MyShake app or their Android phones. (The earthquake early warning system is automatically installed on Android phones, but people with Apple iOS phones need to install the MyShake app to get the most timely alerts.)

One person described getting 30 to 45 seconds of

warning before feeling the shaking arrive. Another person, in east Anaheim, reported 30 seconds of warning before shaking arrived.

Jones, a research associate at Caltech, said the duration of shaking can vary so much in the L.A. area because the length of time the earth moves at any given spot can depend on the soil and rocks beneath the location, whether a person is sitting still or moving around, and even whether an individual is on the ground floor or on top of a skyscraper — those on higher floors feel the shaking more strongly.

The reason some people may have felt more than one wave of shaking is that the first aftershock occurred so soon — less than a minute — after the main shock, Jones said.

Geophysics professor Allen Husker, head of the Southern California Seismic Network at Caltech, said it wasn't surprising that so many people in the L.A. area felt significant shaking from a magnitude 5.2 earthquake north of the Grapevine. The tremor occurred at night, when people are resting and more likely to feel shaking from a distant quake than if they were out and about during the day and active.

Another reason many people felt substantial movement is a result of the way shaking is amplified in the Los Angeles Basin. The basin is a 6-mile-deep, bathtub-shaped hole in the underlying bedrock filled with weak sand and gravel eroded from the mountains and forming the flat land where millions of people live. It stretches from Beverly Hills through southeast L.A. County and into northern Orange County.

“The basin effect ... increases the shaking that you would otherwise normally have,” Husker said.

The effect happens when waves from the shaking arrive and hit the walls of the basin, then bounce back at the walls of the basin, Jones said, resulting in an “extended duration.”

A major earthquake on the San Andreas fault would result in perhaps 50 seconds of strong shaking in down-

town L.A. “This earthquake was much, much smaller, of course,” Jones said, “but it was large enough to set up some of these basin effects and get things bouncing around.”

As with all earthquakes, there was a 1 in 20 chance that Tuesday's tremor was a foreshock to a larger earthquake. The risk that a follow-up quake will be larger diminishes over time.

It has been several years since a magnitude 5.2 or greater earthquake hit Southern California, and Tuesday's quake was the strongest to strike the region in three years. A magnitude 5.3 quake occurred in June 2021 just southeast of the Salton Sea in Imperial County, about 160 miles southeast of downtown Los Angeles. And in June 2020, a magnitude 5.5 quake struck the Mojave Desert in the northwestern corner of San Bernardino County, about 120 miles northeast of downtown L.A. and about 14 miles east of Ridgecrest in Kern County.

The earthquake occurred about 12 miles northwest of the epicenter of the magnitude 7.5 Kern County earthquake that struck on July 21, 1952. That earthquake resulted in 12 deaths, and, according to the USGS, old and poorly built masonry buildings suffered damage. Some of those structures collapsed in communities including Tehachapi, Bakersfield and Arvin; heavy damage was reported at Kern County General Hospital.

Shaking from the 1952 earthquake was felt as far away as San Francisco and Las Vegas, and caused non-structural but extensive damage to tall buildings in the Los Angeles area and damage to at least one building in San Diego, according to the USGS.

The 1952 earthquake occurred on the White Wolf fault. Tuesday's earthquake wasn't associated with any previously mapped faults.

Times staff writers Jon Healey, Ian James, Jason Neubert, Sandra McDonald and Raul Roa contributed to this report.

# Irvine police find makeshift living space at onetime Marine hangar

Setup includes disco lights, fog machine and recording studio. Two are arrested.

BY SALVADOR HERNANDEZ

Two people set up a makeshift home at a former Marine Corps hangar in Irvine, police said, decked out with disco lights, a fog machine and what appeared to be a recording studio.

Officers discovered the elaborate, club-like setup

Friday morning after following up on trespassing activity in the vicinity of Great Park, Irvine police said in a Facebook post.

The two people staying in the space had been cited multiple times for trespassing in the building, but on Friday police discovered the intricate setup, with car batteries powering the party equipment.

According to police, the area was furnished with a couch and a television, among other items.

Irvine police also said they found several items in the hangar that appeared to have been stolen from Irvine

residents, including 11 bicycles and several spools of copper wiring.

An illegal M-800 firework, two airsoft rifles and drug paraphernalia were also seized, according to the post.

Joshua Rosario, 29, and Patricia Lynn Ratliff, 53, both from Anaheim, were taken into custody.

Rosario is booked on preexisting warrants for numerous charges, including to Irvine police, including burglary and drug possession.

Ratliff was arrested on suspicion of trespassing and on prior warrants.

Los Angeles Times

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## CITY &amp; STATE

# 'Bubble zones' proposed for L.A. protests

The city and county ordinances would be in effect at abortion clinics and temples.

By REBECCA ELLIS  
AND DAVID ZAHNISER

Protesters would need to give 8 feet of space to people entering abortion clinics, schools or places of worship across swaths of Los Angeles County under two "bubble zone" proposals gaining speed.

Citing rising violence and unruly protests, L.A. County and city officials inched forward Tuesday with the proposals, which would make it a misdemeanor for protesters to intentionally block the entrances of healthcare facilities, schools or religious institutions — or demonstrate within 8 feet of anyone trying to get inside. The protective 8-foot "bubble" would be required within 100 feet of a facility's entrance.

The Board of Supervisors unanimously voted Tuesday to ask county lawyers to draft an ordinance that would apply to unincorporated areas, home to 1 million people.

L.A. City Councilmembers Katy Yaroslavsky and Bob Blumenfeld introduced a nearly identical motion, which is slated to go before the council's public safety committee in the coming weeks.

"Even here in Los Angeles County, we have seen how intimidation is used to prevent community members from entering facilities to receive essential services," Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, who crafted the county's policy, said in a statement.

In June, pro-Palestinian protesters demonstrated outside a temple in Pico Robertson, part of Horvath's district. The protest turned violent, drawing a rebuke from the White House.



**A PRO-PALESTINIAN** demonstrator gets into a car as pro-Israel protesters watch near a temple in L.A. in June. A proposed law would require a protective 8-foot "bubble" within 100 feet of a facility's entrance.

Several Jewish advocacy groups wrote letters in support of Horvath's proposal, saying they believed the law would protect the Jewish community in the face of rising hate crimes and threats against synagogues.

Salam Al-Marayati, president of the Muslim Public Affairs Council, agreed that protesters needed to "respect people's access" to places of worship. But in an interview, he said he has "very little confidence" that police would enforce the law equally and believes it could be weaponized to squash student protests against the war in Gaza.

Under the county proposal, demonstrators would be barred from "engaging in oral protest" within 8 feet of anyone near the entrance of a school.

"People walking on the sidewalk protesting the genocide in Gaza, that should be protected," Al-Marayati said. "We're just not assured that this measure would protect these legitimate peaceful protesters."

Al-Marayati said he found out about the county proposal on Monday. "Nobody ever consulted us on this measure. A community member told us about it, and we found it on the agenda," he said. "No call, no email, no invitation."

The county proposal would also regulate protests at healthcare facilities, notably Planned Parenthood clinics. Sue Dunlap, the head of Planned Parenthood Los Angeles, said she was hopeful that a buffer would tone down unruly protests that she said have spiked since the overturning of Roe

vs. Wade.

"You need to see it to understand what it's like," said Dunlap. "It's crazy — 800 people encircling the building that's the size of a standalone Starbucks."

Several antiabortion demonstrators opposed the county proposal at Tuesday's board meeting and said they have never encountered violence or property damage when protesting. "We're peaceful people," said one man, who has been demonstrating in the county for 25 years.

Jenny Dodson Mistry with the National Institute for Reproductive Health said that bubble zone laws can help keep a clinic's employees and patients safe — as long as they're actively enforced, and protesters and healthcare workers are educated about them.

"You can't see a bubble," she noted.

County officials plan to model their law after a Colorado law that was one of the first in the nation and survived legal challenges from antiabortion activists. It was upheld by the Supreme Court, which ruled that the bubble zone did not violate free speech rights.

The city of L.A. proposal appears to be broader than the county's version. It would bar protesters from blocking "community/public" facilities as well as healthcare, educational and religious institutions.

The proposed city ordinance would also bar protesters at these locations from coming within 8 feet of another person without consent, said Leo Daube, a spokesperson for Yaroslavsky.

## Police shoot father; mother is found dead

In Santa Cruz County, man threatened girl, 3, police say. Woman had been missing.

By RUBEN VIVES

A missing young woman was found dead in the Santa Cruz Mountains last weekend, mere hours after police shot a man who they say was threatening the couple's 3-year-old daughter with a knife.

The saga unfolded Saturday night when a man identified by police as Joshua Gonzalez showed up outside the Watsonville Police Department with his 3-year-old daughter, authorities wrote in a Facebook post.

Gonzalez, authorities said, called the dispatch center and said "he was armed with a knife and was going to hurt" the child.

An officer on patrol came across Gonzalez and ordered him to drop the knife. Authorities allege Gonzalez "ignored his commands and charged at the officer, who, in return, opened fire," according to the Facebook post.

Gonzalez was taken to a nearby hospital, where he was listed as stable. The girl was unharmed and placed in the care of relatives.

A missing person report was issued shortly after police and family members were unable to contact the girl's mother, 25-year-old Lizbeth Arceo Sedano.

The next morning, 10 miles or so north of Watsonville, deputies with the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office were dispatched to the Santa Cruz Mountains after someone discovered a body near Eureka Canyon and Grizzly Flat roads, the office wrote in a Facebook post.

Homicide detectives were sent to the scene and identified the body as Sedano's.

"Her death is being investigated as suspicious," sheriff's officials said, adding that the cause and manner of death will be determined by a medical examiner.

## FBI says San Bernardino property was a cockfight venue

Confidential source reported that hosts profited as much as \$90,000 per month.

By BRITNY MEJIA

Almost every Sunday from the start of the year into the summer, dozens of people gathered at a property on Duffy Street in San Bernardino County, authorities said, frequenting an unlicensed bar and a taco stand.

But the main attraction was gambling on roosters, which federal authorities said were made to fight — sometimes to the death — in an arena while wearing sharp blades known as "gaffs" on their legs.

The last event at the

property on Sunday ended abruptly with the arrests of four Inland Empire residents, who are now charged with involvement in an illicit animal fighting venture.

A nearly yearlong FBI investigation led to the arrests of Isidro Chaparro Sanchez, 59, of Corona; Luis Octavio Angulo, 61, of Rialto; Sergio Jimenez Maldonado, 51, of San Bernardino; and Eva Anilu Pastor Uriostegui, 53, of Moreno Valley, who allegedly organized and ran the cockfighting events in Muscog, according to the U.S. attorney's office.

Each made an initial court appearance in Riverside and were ordered released on bond.

Authorities are still searching for Cirilo Esquivel Alcantar, 56, of San Bernardino, who also is charged with involvement in the

cockfights. Court records do not indicate whether any of those facing charges have retained attorneys.

The FBI had been investigating the cockfighting enterprise since May 2023, C.J. Sanders, a special agent for the bureau, said in an affidavit filed in federal court. Sanders said two confidential sources infiltrated events during cockfighting "season," which typically runs from January to August.

Attendees would pay \$20 to park at a lot less than a mile from the property and be shuttled to the home on Duffy Street, where they would pay another fee to enter the arena where the fights unfolded, according to Sanders.

They were able to place bets on fights and participate in a raffle, with a set of

gaffs offered as the prize.

Authorities allege that Sanchez made the property available for the fights, collected entry fees and made announcements during events; Alcantar made a lot available for attendee parking; Uriostegui collected entry fees and served drinks at the bar; Angulo collected the entry fees from handlers entering their roosters; and Maldonado refereed the fights.

One of the FBI's confidential sources, who is unnamed in the affidavit, reported arriving at the property around 7:20 a.m. on a Sunday in May 2023.

A video recording the source took captured the source took captured the sign "RICOS TACOS ESTILO RANCHO" above it — at the entrance to the arena and a bar inside where attendees

could buy drinks, according to the affidavit.

Handlers were charged \$1,000 to enter four roosters in the fights. They brought the birds into a fighting ring surrounded by chairs with a hard-packed dirt floor enclosed by plywood, according to Sanders.

The confidential source reported hearing that the hosts at the property profited about \$80,000 to \$90,000 per month.

A second confidential source placed a recorded call to a man who said he owns about 100 roosters, which he brought to California from Texas, according to the affidavit.

Another person involved in the cockfights told that source that he and another individual purchased their fighting roosters from Oklahoma and they were

## Coyote is fatally stabbed after entering Simi Valley home and attacking pet

Resident is bitten while defending his Chihuahua. Both are expected to recover.

By ROSANNA XIA

While much of California braced for triple-digit heat waves and devastating wildfires, a coyote decided the time was right to sneak into a Simi Valley home and try to eat a Chihuahua.

On Monday just before noon, according to the Simi Valley Police Department, a resident in the 500 block of Shadow Lane was in the bathroom when he heard a commotion downstairs.

When he reached the kitchen, he was startled to find a coyote had squeezed in through the dog door and was attacking his pet Chihuahua.

What ensued was a discombobulating brawl. The owner tried to scare off the coyote, and when those attempts went south, he armed himself with a kitchen knife and stabbed the animal several times. He

then cornered the coyote in a downstairs bathroom, where he managed to stab it predator a few more times until it was dead.

"He continued to try and ward off the coyote making advances on the Chihuahua — and stabbed the coyote until it was unresponsive," Simi Valley Police Sgt. Bryan Samples said.

"Animal control arrived on scene," Samples added, "and recovered this deceased coyote."

The man was taken to an emergency room for significant bite wounds to his hands and wrists, and a neighbor took the Chihuahua to a local veterinarian.

Both man and pup are expected to recover.

Police noted that coyote attacks aren't common in this part of town, although the neighborhood does back onto Long Canyon Trailhead, which connects to the Woodridge Open Space trail system. This expansive park area is known for sweeping meadows, large oak groves and many scenic views of the Simi Hills and Santa Susana Mountains.

## Peregrine falcon numbers climb at Yosemite

Once-endangered bird is making remarkable comeback thanks to a protection plan.

By NOAH GOLDBERG

The number of peregrine falcons at Yosemite National Park has soared over the last 15 years since the launch of a protection plan for the once-endangered raptors that nest in the park's cliffs and peaks.

The National Park Service announced that the falcon species has made a "remarkable comeback" in Yosemite since the 1970s, when there were zero nesting pairs at the park.

In 2009, the park launched an effort to protect the birds by closing off portions of the cliffs to climbers so that nests would not be disturbed, which could provoke falcons to leave the area and abandon their young offspring.

"Peregrines hunt, soar and nest on and around the park's granite cliffs, domes and spires because of a dedicated effort to protect them," said Alexandria Walker, a biological science technician for the National



LUIS SINCO Los Angeles Times

**A PEREGRINE** falcon at a nature center in San Dimas last year. At Yosemite, the National Park Service documented 17 breeding pairs of the species this year.

Park Service in Yosemite.

Peregrine falcon numbers at Yosemite and across the country plummeted from the 1950s to the 1970s because of DDT poisoning. By 1974, there were only 324 pairs remaining in the United States. A nationwide ban on DDT in 1972 helped peregrines make a comeback.

The falcons were named an endangered species in

1970 but were removed from the federal endangered species list in 1999. They are now a "fully protected" species in California.

The National Park Service studied 43 cliff sites in the park this year — including El Capitan and Glacier Point — and documented 17 breeding pairs along with 25 baby peregrines and 15 nests, the park service said.

The park service noted

that the protection plan has not closed more than 5% of its climbing routes, so the birds are protected and the climbers are largely unaffected.

Wildlife managers keep track of the nests throughout the season and close off routes depending on the family of birds' activity. They also keep helicopters from flying low over the nests.

# Candidates trying to cast themselves as moderates

[27th District, from B1] good about their chances to flip the district.

"You feel the difference — and what really helped is the reenergizing when we found out about Biden dropping out," said Alvarez Marcos, 61, a volunteer for Whitesides. "We're building off that."

But after leaving the pep rally vibe at the park to knock on doors at a nearby apartment complex, Whitesides spoke with middle-of-the-road voters who made one thing abundantly clear: Winning this purple suburban district will not be easy.

"I am *not* a Democrat," said a young woman who was the first to open her door. "Are you for open borders?"

"No, ma'am," Whitesides said, after trying to summarize his message — largely about creating local jobs — in about 90 seconds. "We're trying to create a secure border for our country."

In this presidential election year dominated by hyperpartisan national issues — including immigration — both Whitesides, 50, and Garcia, 48, are trying to cast themselves as a moderate and their opponent as a political hard-liner.

"People are excited to bring positive change to the district, and they're really excited to beat Mike Garcia, who they view as this extreme guy who doesn't connect or fit with the folks in our district," Whitesides told The Times.

Whitesides calls Garcia a pro-Trump sycophant and highlights the congressman's vote against certifying the 2020 presidential election results after the Jan. 6 insurrection, as well as his vote against President Biden's \$1-trillion infrastructure bill.

Whitesides also points to Garcia's antiabortion record. Garcia was among the GOP congressional members who signed an amicus brief urging the Supreme Court to overturn Roe vs. Wade and, in 2021, co-sponsored the Life at Conception Act, which amounts to a nationwide abortion ban with no exceptions. (Garcia later indicated he could support such exceptions for rape, incest or threats to the mother's health — a departure from the bill. He did not sponsor a reintroduced version.)

Garcia's campaign did not respond to requests for comment for this story.

But his backers are trying to paint Whitesides as a far-left mega-donor trying to



ZOE CRANFILL Los Angeles Times

**SEAN HOLST** and wife Megan talk to Democratic candidate George Whitesides while walking their dog Cosmo in Lancaster recently.

use his personal wealth to buy a congressional seat.

As a first-time candidate, Whitesides has no voting record to scrutinize. So, Republicans have zeroed in on his hundreds of thousands of dollars in contributions to progressive candidates and causes.

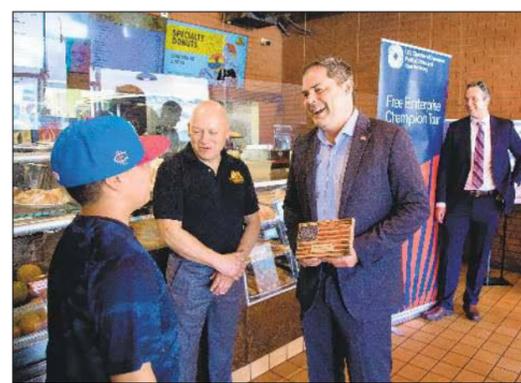
Ben Petersen, a spokesman for the National Republican Congressional Committee, said in a statement that Garcia, a former Navy pilot, "has led a life of service, from flying fighter jets in combat to his mission in Congress of lowering inflation and defending public safety."

"Voters can easily spot the difference with extreme George Whitesides, who backed legislation raising the cost of living and bankrolled radical activists attacking police and dismantling law and order," he added, referencing Whitesides' support of Equality California, an LGBTQ+ rights organization that prominent conservative fundraisers have dubbed a defund-the-police group. (Whitesides has touted his endorsement by Equality California.)



DANIA MAXWELL Los Angeles Times

**REP. Mike Garcia** (R-Santa Clarita) won his seat in a special election and retained it in two subsequent elections. Once staunchly conservative, the 27th Congressional District has become more favorable to Democrats.



MYUNG J. CHUN Los Angeles Times

About an hour's drive north of solidly liberal downtown Los Angeles, the 27th Congressional District stretches from fast-growing Santa Clarita to the Kern County line. It includes the cities of Lancaster and Palmdale, as well as rural desert towns such as Acton and Pearblossom.

With its close proximity to Edwards Air Force Base, the region has deep ties to the military and aerospace industry, as reflected by the name of its recently disbanded Minor League Baseball team, the Lancaster JetHawks.

Once staunchly conservative, the district has become more favorable to Democrats, with the population growing younger and more diverse as L.A. residents moved in for more affordable housing. Redistricting after the 2020 census made CA-27 even bluer by excising conservative Simi Valley.

Just over 41% of registered voters are Democrats, and about 30% are Republicans. More than a fifth are independents, a wild card that makes the district somewhat unpredictable.

The district voted for Biden in 2020. But in the 2022 gubernatorial race, it backed Republican state Sen. Brian Dahle over Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom.

The district has been on the front lines of partisan warfare since Katie Hill, a millennial Democrat, unseated the Republican incumbent in 2018, only to resign less than a year later amid a sex scandal. Garcia won the seat in a special election and retained it in two subsequent elections, thrice defeating the same Democratic challenger, former state Assemblywoman Christy Smith.

In the 2020 general election, Garcia defeated Smith by just 333 votes. He won by 12,732 votes during the subsequent midterm election,

when fewer people cast ballots.

The Cook Political Report, a nonpartisan election handicapper, calls this year's election a toss-up.

"When you've run a company that launches humans into space on a test-flight program, you kinda get used to being involved in high-stakes things," said Whitesides, the former chief executive of Mojave-based Virgin Galactic. "We've got to flip the House so we can protect all these hard-won gains in healthcare and climate and jobs."

"The Republican caucus right now is totally dysfunctional," he added. "I'm trying to bring, like, actually getting stuff done back into focus. Wouldn't that be great? Make the Congress work again."

Lawrence Becker, a political scientist at Cal State Northridge, said it's "going to be a tough election for Garcia."

Most voters "are going to the polls with the presidential election on their minds," he added. Donald Trump is deeply unpopular in California, and having him at the top of the ticket "becomes a bit of a headwind that Mike Garcia has to face."

Still, frustrations over California's high cost of living and gas prices — potent issues for the many residents in this district who make the long commute to L.A. for work — have previously given Garcia an edge. He easily won the three-way primary election in March with 55% of the vote, while Whitesides got 33%.

State GOP Chairwoman Jessica Millan Patterson said the fact that Republicans are able to be so competitive in a district where Democrats have a large registration advantage shows how much voters "are getting sick and tired of what California Democrats have been serving up to them."

Both parties are pouring

money into the race.

The Congressional Leadership Fund, a super PAC that supports Republicans running for the House, is planning an \$18.2-million ad blitz in the L.A. area in the fall, with a focus on the 27th district.

Courtney Parella, a spokeswoman for the super PAC, said Garcia has a unique biography that resonates in his district. As a Navy pilot, he flew in more than 30 combat missions during Operation Iraqi Freedom before spending 11 years as an executive with the defense contractor Raytheon.

"California voters remain fed up with rising crime, chaos at our border and skyrocketing costs — all caused by Democrats' progressive single-party rule," Parella said in a statement. "The House majority runs through California, and CLF is committing significant resources here this fall."

Meanwhile, Whitesides — who loaned his campaign more than \$1 million — is out-raising his opponent. As of June 30, Whitesides' campaign had \$3.9 million in the bank, according to the Federal Election Commission. Garcia's campaign had \$2.2 million on hand.

Whitesides' campaign is seizing on accusations that Garcia hid his sale of up to \$50,000 in Boeing stock in August 2020, just before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, of which he was a member, released a scathing report about the company.

According to the Daily Beast, which first reported the sale, Garcia missed the 45-day deadline to disclose the sale and filed paperwork only after narrowly winning his election that November.

A spokesman for Garcia's campaign told Politico that the congressman had not seen the report before it became public and that his failure to disclose his stock sale was an accident.

After leaving Rawley Duntley Park that late-July Saturday, Whitesides — who has embraced his nerdy-dad vibe — donned a white NASA ball cap and brandished an SPF-50 spray can of sunscreen for his canvass of the apartment complex.

In each brief interaction, he said that, while running Virgin Galactic, he created 700 local jobs and that he was centering his campaign on job creation.

Propped in one apartment window was a license plate that read, EPDMLGY. Whitesides bounded up to the door, saying, "Epidemiology! Come on, that's my voter."

"I'm a moderate Democrat," he said when Nancy Welsh, a 63-year-old pharmaceutical administrative assistant, opened the door. "I worked for NASA, so I'm a big science and facts kind of person."

When Whitesides asked what issues were important to her, she laughed and said: "Don't get me started."

He stopped Megan and Sean Holst, a married couple in their early 30s, as they walked their golden retriever, Cosmo. "I know you from my dad!" said Megan, whose father planted a Whitesides yard sign outside his home on a dirt road in Acton.

She said she supports abortion rights and did not like Garcia's record on the issue. But the couple — she is a clinical lab scientist and he is a programmer — are pretty moderate, she said. Mostly, they care about local issues, such as crime and cost of living. They have lived in the apartment complex for years and hope to someday be able to afford a house.

"It's supposed to be more affordable in the Antelope Valley," she said. "I thought we had a decent income, and it's still — it's hard."

Whitesides handed her his campaign flier. She said she would consider it.

## Obituaries

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**Sander Gelfand**  
November 13, 1930 -  
August 4, 2024

Sander was born in Detroit, Mi. to David and Helen Gelfand. The family moved to California in 1941. He entered the Pasadena school system in the 8th grade. He enjoyed playing the clarinet in the Pasadena College Band. He served 5 years in the US Naval Reserve. Married Shirley Ann Cohen in 1950, together they had 3 children, 2 daughters and 1 son. After graduating Pasadena City College, he attended UCLA to complete the requirements to enter the Dr. of Pharmacy program (PharmD), at USC graduating in 1955.

Sander spent most of his career in hospital pharmacies. He was very active in Jewish life while living in West Covina, serving as President of the temple. Later moving to Huntington Beach and joining Congregation B'nai Tzedek where he had his bar mitzah at the age of 76.

After over 60 years of marriage, Shirley passed away of cancer.

After a while, Sander fell in love with Jean Hill-DuBois, and they married in 2015. Together they shared love and happiness and many travels, enjoying their retirement years. He is survived by his wife, Jean, 3 children, 3 grandchildren, 5 great-grandchildren, 2 great-great children and by 4 step-children.

**Naomi Shirley IMANISHI**

IMANISHI, Naomi Shirley, age 65 passed away on July 26. Beloved sister of Stan Imanishi; also survived by other relatives in Japan.

Funeral services will be held on Saturday, August 10, 5:00 PM at Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, 815 E. 1st St., Los Angeles, California.

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**Los Angeles Times**

## Monroe statue will be relocated in same park

[Statue, from B1] many details to be resolved, and a legally binding agreement to be worked out," the post read. "We will not consider this a done deal until the statue is moved to its new location."

The statue left Palm Springs in 2014 before returning in 2021. "Good news because good riddance," Times art critic Christopher Knight wrote in 2014.

In the debate over the statue's placement in 2021, Palm Springs Art Museum Executive Director Louis Grachos told the council that museum visitors, particularly schoolchildren, would stare at Marilyn's backside and underwear on their way to and from the museum.

The City Council ultimately approved the statue's location for three years

beginning in 2021, despite protests from those in the community and critics such as Knight who said it was sexist. It took up residence in a busy section of downtown Palm Springs near the art museum.

Knight described the return of the statue this way: "An anti-queer slur was lifted high onto a civic pedestal in one of America's least likely places."

The city's decision to move the statue from its current location dissatisfied some in Palm Springs.

On the city's Facebook post announcing the move, the top comments were all from residents and visitors who disagreed with the plan.

One wrote that tourists "love taking photos there."

"It's a shame you caved to the pressure to relocate her," another wrote.

# At Girardi trial, both sides tell of fraud — but by whom?

[Girardi, from B1] Girardi “lied to his clients, stole from them, violated their trust, broke the law.” Those clients had all turned to him in moments of tragedy — a burn victim, a widow whose husband died in a tragic boating incident, a woman injured by a medical device, and another woman harmed in an auto accident — and he won them settlements. The prosecutor said the problem stemmed from how he handled the money. “By lying and stealing millions upon millions of their settlement dollars, the defendant repeatedly chose himself,” Paetty said. “That money did not belong to the defendant,” he said. “It belonged to the victim clients, and it should be promptly paid to the victim clients.” The prosecutor tautly detailed how money belonging to a lawyer’s client must remain safeguarded in a special bank account. “He treated that client trust account like a personal piggy bank,” Paetty said. Two private jets. Jewelry. Country club fees. A mansion in Pasadena and a home in Palm Springs. Paetty said



MYUNG J. CHUN Los Angeles Times

**DISGRACED** attorney Tom Girardi appears at a courthouse in downtown Los Angeles on Tuesday.

that the funds pocketed from clients underwrote an exorbitant lifestyle and that an additional \$20 million from the firm’s bank account went to the entertainment career of his now-estranged wife, Erika Girardi, star of “Real Housewives of Beverly Hills.” But Girardi’s defense team dismissed the prosecutor’s account as a fictional Hollywood plotline that inaccurately cast its client as the villain. Samuel Cross, deputy federal public defender, invited the five women and seven men on the jury to see Girardi as a once-

mighty lawyer whose later years were marred by progressive dementia, disorganization at his law firm, Girardi Keese, and a large-scale theft by the firm’s chief financial officer, Christopher Kamon. In essence, it was Girardi who was being defrauded, Cross asserted. Kamon quietly pocketed more than \$50 million from his boss through a variety of transactions — checks to sham companies, payments to friendly vendors, \$23 million in American Express card charges, the defense attorney said. As a result, Girardi had to

pour \$80 million of his own money into Girardi Keese. “He’s trying to keep this firm afloat,” Cross told jurors. “Why is the firm sinking? Because Chris Kamon is stealing money.” Cross returned repeatedly to the complexity of the law firm’s operations from 2010 to 2020, the period at the center of the case. In that time, more than \$1 billion flowed through Girardi Keese in 300,000 transactions across 175 bank accounts. As the person overseeing the books, Kamon held unique power to gradually siphon off money to pay his girlfriend \$20,000 per month and buy homes in L.A. and, later, the Bahamas. “This boring detail is how Chris Kamon makes the theft happen,” Cross said. Prosecutors have also charged Kamon with wire fraud and separately charged him with engaging in a “side fraud” in which he diverted millions of dollars from the firm. He’s pleaded not guilty in both cases and is scheduled to be tried next year. Both men face another trial in 2025 in Chicago on charges that they stole pay-

outs made by Boeing to families whose loved ones died in an Indonesian plane crash. Prosecutors have long expected Girardi to push blame onto Kamon. In his opening statement, Paetty told jurors that the amount allegedly stolen by Kamon was “a fraction” of the amount Girardi is accused of taking and that, regardless, it was Girardi — not Kamon — who was lying to clients. By way of example, Paetty played jurors a voice-mail from about 2020 in which Girardi tells one of his clients, Josefina Hernandez, that her settlement payment was delayed because of a court order. “I don’t want you upset,” he tells Hernandez in the recording. “I know you are and I don’t blame you.” Paetty told jurors that “there were no more orders that needed to be signed.” “These were lies — his lies — and Josefina Hernandez never saw a penny of her settlement,” he said, promising jurors they would hear other voicemails and view emails and letters that he said further show Girardi’s role in

defrauding clients. “You will be able to see for yourselves how much the defendant knew about his clients’ cases,” Paetty said. Since the collapse of Girardi’s firm in late 2020, his lawyers have asserted he is in the grip of cognitive decline, and that continued Tuesday. Cross said witnesses throughout the trial would testify that Girardi’s personal hygiene had gone by the wayside, that the lawyer made famous by the film “Erin Brockovich” had stopped recognizing people he’d known for years, that he would reread the same emails multiple times and repeat himself in conversation. The mental decline, Cross said, occurred over the decade at issue in the case but accelerated after a 2017 car accident. By 2020, Girardi Keese had devolved into chaos, and even Girardi fell victim to “a bizarre elder abuse scheme” by an unnamed person in which he thought he was working as a secret government attorney, the defense said. “Tom is not just losing a step,” Cross said. “He’s falling off a cliff.”

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### Legal Notices

**SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)**  
Case Number (Numero del Caso): 249908653

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**The name and address of the court is: (El nombre y dirección de la corte es):**  
Third Judicial District Court Salt Lake County  
450 S. State Street  
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

**The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff’s attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es):**  
Todd W. Prall, Esq.  
10080 W. Alta Drive, Suite 200  
Las Vegas, NV 89145  
(702) 385-2500

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**SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)**  
CASE NUMBER (Número del Caso): 24VEC01905

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Mi Rye Cho, Luis Rincos, William Alexander Campos Cruz, and DOES 1-10 Inclusive

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**Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, ([www.lawhelpcalifornia.org](http://www.lawhelpcalifornia.org)), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, ([www.sucorte.ca.gov](http://www.sucorte.ca.gov)) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos extensos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de \$10,000 o más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.**

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(El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es):  
Scott E. Braybrooke (SBN 128369) for VOSS, SILVERMAN & BRAYBROOKE LLP  
4640 Admiralty Way Suite 800  
Marina del Rey, CA 90292  
310-306-0515

**Date:** 04/25/2024

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Published in the Los Angeles Times 8/8, 8/15, 8/22, and 8/29/2024

### Legal Notices

**SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)**  
CASE NUMBER (Número del Caso): 24NCCV0179

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BRYAN KELLY WEATHERMAN, an individual; ANGELICA K. WEATHERMAN, an individual; and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive.

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HECTOR VICENTE GARCIA-AIFAN, an individual

**NOTICE!** You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below. You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center ([www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp)), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court. There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web Site ([www.lawhelpcalifornia.org](http://www.lawhelpcalifornia.org)), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center ([www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp)), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court’s lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

**¡AVISO!** Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación. Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California ([www.sucorte.ca.gov](http://www.sucorte.ca.gov)), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le de un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia.

**Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, ([www.lawhelpcalifornia.org](http://www.lawhelpcalifornia.org)), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, ([www.sucorte.ca.gov](http://www.sucorte.ca.gov)) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos extensos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de \$10,000 o más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.**

**The name and address of the court is: (El nombre y dirección de la corte es):**  
LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT  
150 West Commonwealth  
Alhambra, CA 91801

**The name, address, and telephone number of the plaintiff’s attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is:**  
(El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es):  
Sandra Duritz, Esq., 3675 W. Cheyenne Ave, Suite 100, N Las Vegas, NV 89032. 702-333-1111

**Date:** 03/21/2024

David W. Slayton Executive Officer/  
Clerk of the Court  
(Secretario)  
N. Le Deputy  
(Adjunto)

Published in the Los Angeles Times 8/1, 8/8, 8/15, and 8/22/2024

Love is...  
  
...Mom’s willing helpers.  
TM Reg. U.S. Pat. Off. — all rights reserved ©2024 Minikim Holland B.V.

### JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TNNHI  
ENVTE  
SBDARU  
GRACIL

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### THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Should we get ready?  
I’ve got a battery coming. We’ll start in a few minutes.  
THE 100-METER SPRINT WAS DELAYED DUE TO A TECHNICAL GLITCH AND WOULD BE ---

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Yesterday’s Jumbles: PINCH RURAL MUDDLE PLACID  
Answer: The winners of the Olympic track competitions were all members of the — HUMAN RACE

## PETS

MARKETPLACE  
To advertise your pets. Log on to [placeanad.latimes.com/pets-for-sale](http://placeanad.latimes.com/pets-for-sale)  
Los Angeles Times

### Dogs

**AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD** Miniature Australian Shepherd Puppies. Males and Females available. Blue eyes. Blue Merle and Black Tri color available. Call or text (909) 534-8400

### Dogs

**GOLDEN RETRIEVER** We provide trained golden retriever puppies. Parents are fully health tested. 4804068792  
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Los Angeles Times  
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THE WEATHER

Today in Southern California

**Heat remains tamed:** The combination of an expanding marine layer and an upper-level trough moving westward around the southern periphery of a dome of high pressure centered to the northeast will keep the heat in check again Thursday. There will be enough moisture coming across the area to allow a couple of mainly afternoon showers and thunderstorms in the mountains and deserts each of the next few days.

5-day forecasts

High/low temperatures are average forecasts for entire zone.

	L.A. Basin	Valleys	Beaches	Mountains	Deserts					
<b>Today</b>	85 63 Partly sunny	88 63 Mostly sunny	75 62 Partly sunny	83 56 Partly sunny	111 85 Breezy in the p.m.					
<b>Friday</b>	Partly sunny	86/64	Mostly sunny	94/67	Partly sunny	76/62	Partly sunny	81/54	Very warm	111/88
<b>Saturday</b>	Partly sunny	90/66	Hot	100/65	Mostly cloudy	79/66	A t-storm	78/53	Storm	113/88
<b>Sunday</b>	Mostly sunny	89/68	Mostly sunny	96/67	Mostly sunny	79/65	Stray t-storm	79/50	Very warm	111/85
<b>Monday</b>	Mostly sunny	84/67	Sunny	91/66	Humid	80/63	T-shower	80/51	Breezy	110/83

Air quality



Surf and sea

**POINT CONCEPTION TO MEXICO**  
**Inner waters:** Wind light, becoming west 10 knots. Seas 2-3 feet. Swell mainly from the south 2 feet at 13 seconds.  
**Surf zone:** The risk of strong and dangerous rip currents is moderate at S.D., L.A. and Ventura county beaches and low elsewhere.

County	Height	Period	Direction	Temp
Santa Barbara	1-2'	10 sec	SW	61
Ventura	2-4'	13 sec	S	61
Los Angeles	2-4'	13 sec	S	68
Orange	1-3'	13 sec	S	68
San Diego	2-4'	13 sec	S	67

Tides

L.A. Outer Harbor, in feet.

Day	Time	Height	Time	Height
Today	12:38p	4.5 Hi	6:09a	0.6 Lo
			6:21p	2.0 Lo
Fri.	12:06a	4.4 Hi	6:30a	1.1 Lo
	1:06p	4.5 Hi	7:14p	2.0 Lo

UV index

Minutes to burn for sensitive people  
Las Vegas, 25 Phoenix, 10  
Los Angeles, 10 San Francisco, 25

California cities\*

City	Wed.*		Today		Fri.	
	Hi	Lo	Hi	Lo	Hi	Lo
Anaheim	86	65	84	63	89	65
Avalon/Catalina	82	68	86	66	83	69
Bakersfield	109	77	104	76	103	72
Barstow	111	79	109	80	108	80
Big Bear Lake	83	54	83	56	81	54
Bishop	106	66	103	61	103	63
Burbank	90	65	86	64	89	65
Camarillo	83	64	80	61	81	64
Chino	91	64	89	64	95	69
Chino Hills	96	65	94	63	98	65
Compton	82	66	83	65	85	65
Dana Point	74	65	75	64	75	67
Death Valley	119	95	119	104	117	94
Del Mar	76	66	71	66	74	68
Escondido	87	61	87	62	88	63
Eureka	62	52	63	54	63	54
Fallbrook	83	61	85	60	87	63
Fresno	110	75	106	75	103	75
Fullerton	84	67	84	65	88	67
Hemet	93	63	97	63	98	68
Hesperia	94	67	97	68	98	68
Huntington Beach	76	66	75	65	77	67
Idyllwild	83	69	87	70	91	73
Irvine	85	65	81	64	84	67

Sun and moon

Today's rise/set  
Sun 6:10a/7:47p  
Moon 9:59a/10:04p



Almanac

Wednesday Downtown readings

Temperature	Los Angeles	Fullerton	Ventura*
High/low	86/68	84/68	70/70
Normal high/low	84/65	86/67	75/59
High/low a year ago	89/67	86/66	74/59
Record high/date	99/1884	97/2018	97/1983
Record low/date	54/1894	60/2011	48/1950

Precipitation Los Angeles Fullerton Ventura\*

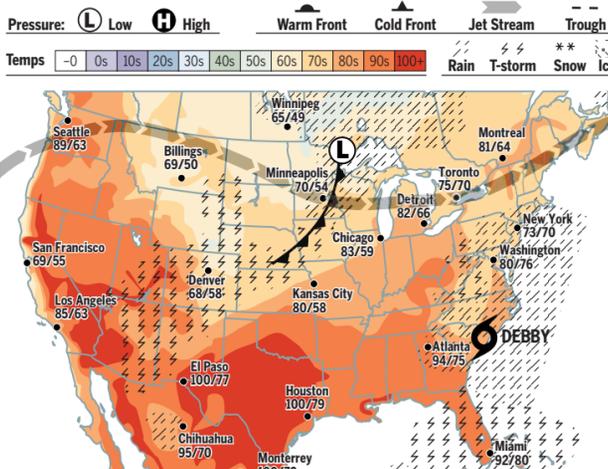
24-hour total (as of 2 p.m.)	Los Angeles	Fullerton	Ventura*
Season total (since Oct. 1)	22.15	16.59	24.79
Last season (Oct. 1 to date)	28.03	21.35	27.06
Season norm (Oct. 1 to date)	14.27	11.82	16.12
Humidity (high/low)	96/56	100/52	90/68

City	Wed.*		Today		Fri.	
	Hi	Lo	Hi	Lo	Hi	Lo
L.A. D'town/USC	84	64	85	63	86	64
L.A. Int'l. Airport	81	65	76	63	75	65
Laguna Beach	73	66	74	65	75	67
Lancaster	101	72	105	75	106	76
Long Beach	80	66	81	65	85	66
Mammoth Lakes	82	48	82	48	85	48
Mission Viejo	86	64	82	63	85	66
Monrovia	91	64	90	64	94	67
Monterey	69	52	67	54	68	53
Mt. Wilson	81	65	72	65	72	66
Needles	106	91	109	90	110	91
Newport Beach	75	67	75	66	77	67
Northridge	92	63	89	63	94	64
Oakland	76	57	70	57	69	57
Oceanside	83	64	82	63	83	66
Ojai	86	58	86	56	90	65
Ontario	94	68	93	66	98	68
Palm Springs	109	84	111	85	111	88
Pasadena	89	64	87	63	90	65
Paso Robles	96	56	101	57	104	59
Redding	107	70	105	69	104	69
Riverside	98	64	95	63	99	67
Sacramento	103	61	96	60	96	60
San Bernardino	101	66	96	67	99	67

City	Wed.*		Today		Fri.	
	Hi	Lo	Hi	Lo	Hi	Lo
San Diego	74	68	76	67	77	68
San Francisco	70	54	69	55	69	55
San Gabriel	90	65	88	64	91	65
San Jose	91	60	84	61	83	61
San Luis Obispo	88	57	83	56	83	59
Santa Ana	80	67	79	65	82	67
Santa Barbara	73	58	70	56	73	59
Santa Clarita	95	60	93	61	99	67
Santa Monica Pier	78	64	75	62	76	62
Santa Rosa	81	61	82	57	87	63
Simi Valley	91	53	84	52	87	53
Tahoe Valley	92	62	88	61	92	63
Temecula	85	51	84	50	84	47
Thousand Oaks	89	63	83	61	86	62
Torrance	81	67	77	65	78	67
UCLA	80	64	79	62	82	67
Van Nuys	90	64	90	65	97	62
Ventura	69	61	70	57	71	60
Whittier Hills	87	65	86	63	90	64
Woodland Hills	91	63	88	62	93	62
Wrightwood	86	69	85	70	84	67
Yorba Linda	88	65	87	63	92	65
Yosemite Valley	95	64	93	63	91	57

Today in North America

**Risks from Debby continue:** As Debby moves northward, flooding rain will expand from western North Carolina through western Virginia. To the east of the path, rain will also cause localized flooding. There will also be isolated tornadoes and winds strong enough for power outages.



U.S. cities

WEDNESDAY'S EXTREMES AS OF 2 P.M. FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES

High 109 in Sweetwater, Texas Low 38 in Amasa, Mich.

City	Wednesday*		Today		City	Wednesday*		Today		
	Hi	Lo	Hi	Lo		Hi	Lo	Hi	Lo	
Albany	76	61	55	78	67	Seattle	81	54	89	63
Albuquerque	98	66	92	68	Tampa	91	84	93	80	
Anchorage	62	58	28	59	Tucson	91	77	95	77	
Aspen	82	52	03	84	Tulsa	96	68	97	70	
Atlanta	96	74	94	75	Washington, D.C.	91	77	80	76	
Austin	103	75	102	75	Wichita	97	66	87	65	
Baltimore	88	73	102	79						
Boise	94	65	96	69						
Boston	69	59	45	71						
Buffalo	78	61	81	72						
Burlington, Vt.	80	57	85	64						
Charleston, S.C.	80	77	48	82						
Charlotte	86	74	06	76						
Chicago	77	67	83	59						
Cincinnati	86	73	02	90						
Cleveland	78	66	78	86						
Columbia, S.C.	85	74	35	80						
Columbus	83	69	11	91						
Dallas/Ft.Worth	103	79	104	81						
Denver	90	66	08	68						
Detroit	79	60	82	66						
El Paso	101	77	100	77						
Eugene	93	50	94	57						
Fort Myers	92	81	06	91						
Hartford	73	61	57	77						
Honolulu	88	76	89	74						
Houston	98	81	100	79						
Indianapolis	80	67	84	65						
Jacksonville, Fla.	90	77	17	97						
Kansas City	83	65	80	58						
Knoxville	92	71	90	72						
Las Vegas	111	90	107	86						
Louisville	88	77	02	90						
Madison	101	54	100	64						
Medford	85	73	91	73						
Memphis	95	81	04	92						
Miami	75	65	80	58						
Milwaukee	76	60	04	70						
Minneapolis	83	74	93	74						
Nashville	97	78	99	78						
New Orleans	80	66	78	73						
New York	80	76	34	83						
Norfolk	102	73	101	71						
Oklahoma City	83	60	74	53						
Omaha	96	82	04	95						
Orlando	82	71	148	78						
Philadelphia	104	82	105	88						
Phoenix	78	68	06	86						
Pittsburgh	91	59	98	66						
Portland, Ore.	68	60	39	73						
Providence	83	75	35	79						
Raleigh/Durham	101	66	99	66						
Reno	87	75	35	82						
Richmond	79	68	85	66						
St. Louis	100	74	97	73						
Salt Lake City										

World

City	Wednesday*		Today		City	Wednesday*		Today	
	Hi	Lo	Hi	Lo		Hi	Lo	Hi	Lo
Acapulco	90	78	89	79	Seattle	81	54	89	63
Amsterdam	75	63	73	66	Tampa	91	84	93	80
Athens	95	77	93	76	Tucson	91	77	95	77
Bangkok	91	74	28	94	Tulsa	96	68	97	70
Barcelona	86	73	88	74	Washington, D.C.	91	77	80	76
Berlin	86	59	12	74	Wichita	97	66	87	65
Brussels	93	77	07	93					
Cairo	102	78	97	79					
Dubai	107	95	107	93					
Dublin	68	55	19	69					



**FRIDAY'S TV SCHEDULE**

Live TV broadcasts unless noted (subject to change). All events stream live on NBCOlympics.com or Peacock with a streaming or cable log-in. Paris 1 Extra and Paris 2 Extra are temporary channels available on most cable and satellite packages. All times Pacific.

**MULTIPLE SPORTS**  
**4:45 a.m.-5:30 a.m.:** Boxing, taekwondo | USA  
**9 a.m.-10:35 a.m.:** Cycling, water polo | Paris Extra 1  
**10:30 a.m.-12:55 p.m.:** Taekwondo, weightlifting | Paris Extra 2  
**8 p.m.-11 p.m.:** "Primetime in Paris": Track and field, beach volleyball, breaking, canoe sprint, diving and more | NBC

**ARTISTIC SWIMMING**  
**12:45 p.m.:** Duet, technical routine (delay) | E!  
**3:30 p.m.:** Duet, technical routine (delay) | NBC

**BASKETBALL**  
**9 a.m.:** Women's semifinal, teams TBD | NBC

**BEACH VOLLEYBALL**  
**Noon:** Women's bronze-medal match, teams TBD | USA  
**1:30 p.m.:** Women's gold-medal match, teams TBD | NBC

**BOXING**  
**12:55 p.m.:** Women's 50kg final; men's 92kg final; women's 66kg final | Paris Extra 2

**BREAKING**  
**7 a.m.:** Women's qualification | E!  
**11 a.m.:** Women's eliminations and finals | E!

**CANOE SPRINT**  
**4:15 a.m.:** Women's canoe double 500-meter final; women's kayak double 500 final; men's canoe single 1,000-meter final; men's kayak double 500 final; men's canoe single 1,000 final | E!  
**3 p.m.:** Women's and men's canoe and kayak finals (replay) | NBC

**CYCLING**  
**5 a.m.:** Men's and women's sprint | Paris Extra 2  
**9:20 a.m.:** Men's sprint finals; women's madison finals | E!  
**10:30 a.m.:** Women's sprint finals and 1/16 repechages | E!

**DIVING**  
**1 a.m.:** Men's 10-meter platform preliminaries | E!  
**4 p.m.:** Men's 10-meter platform preliminaries (replay) | NBC

**FIELD HOCKEY**  
**5 a.m.:** Women's bronze-medal match, Argentina vs. Belgium | Paris Extra 1  
**8 a.m.:** Women's bronze-medal match, Argentina vs. Belgium (delay) | USA  
**6:30 p.m.:** Women's gold-medal match, Netherlands vs. China (delay) | USA

**GOLF**  
**Midnight:** Women, third round | Golf

**HANDBALL**  
**1 p.m.:** Men's semifinal, Slovenia vs. Denmark | Paris Extra 1

**MARATHON SWIMMING**  
**5:15 p.m.:** Men's 10-kilometer open water marathon (delay) | NBC

**MODERN PENTATHLON**  
**4 a.m.:** Men's semifinal | Paris Extra 1 & 2

**RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS**  
**5 a.m.:** Group qualification | USA  
**1 p.m.:** Individual all-around final (delay) | NBC

**SOCCER**  
**6 a.m.:** Men's bronze-medal match, Spain vs. Germany | USA  
**9 a.m.:** Men's gold-medal match, France vs. Spain | USA

**SPORT CLIMBING**  
**3:40 a.m.:** Men's combined final | E!

**TABLE TENNIS**  
**1 a.m.:** Men's team, bronze final | Paris Extra 1  
**7 a.m.:** Men's team, gold final | Paris Extra 2  
**9:50 a.m.:** Men's team, bronze final (delay) | E!  
**1 p.m.:** Men's team, gold final (delay) | USA

**TAEKWONDO**  
**1 a.m.:** Preliminaries: Women's 67kg; men's 80kg | Paris Extra 2

**TRACK AND FIELD**  
**1 a.m.:** Heats and preliminaries: Women's heptathlon long jump; women's 1,600-meter relay; men's 1,600 relay; women's heptathlon javelin throw; men's 800 semifinal; women's 100 hurdles semifinal | USA  
**10:30 a.m.:** 400-meter relay final; women's shot put final; men's 400 relay final; women's 400 final; men's triple jump final; women's heptathlon 800; women's 10,000 final; men's 400 hurdles final | NBC  
**8 p.m.:** "Primetime in Paris": Finals and semifinals | NBC

**VOLLEYBALL**  
**11 a.m.:** Men's bronze-medal match, United States vs. Italy (delay) | USA

**WATER POLO**  
**5:30 a.m.:** Men's semifinal, teams TBD | E!  
**10:35 a.m.:** Men's semifinal, teams TBD | Paris Extra 1

**WEIGHTLIFTING**  
**4:15 a.m.:** Men's 73kg, women's 59kg finals | USA  
**6:30 a.m.:** Men's 89kg final | Paris

**MEDALS TABLE**

**THE LEADERS**

	<b>UNITED STATES</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>G: 27</b>	<b>S: 35</b>	<b>B: 32</b>
	<b>CHINA</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>G: 25</b>	<b>S: 23</b>	<b>B: 17</b>
	<b>FRANCE</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>G: 13</b>	<b>S: 17</b>	<b>B: 21</b>
	<b>BRITAIN</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>G: 12</b>	<b>S: 17</b>	<b>B: 20</b>
	<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>G: 18</b>	<b>S: 12</b>	<b>B: 11</b>

**THE OTHERS**

Country	G	S	B	Tot.
Japan	12	6	13	31
South Korea	12	8	7	27
Italy	9	10	8	27
Netherlands	9	5	6	20
Canada	6	4	9	19
Germany	8	5	5	18
Brazil	2	5	7	14
Spain	2	3	6	11
New Zealand	3	6	1	10
Romania	3	4	1	8
Hungary	3	3	2	8
Sweden	3	3	2	8
Ukraine	3	2	3	8
Ireland	4	0	3	7
Kazakhstan	1	3	3	7
Switzerland	1	2	4	7
Greece	1	1	5	7
Croatia	2	1	3	6
Israel	1	4	1	6
Poland	1	1	4	6
Cuba	2	1	2	5
Belgium	2	0	3	5
Jamaica	1	3	1	5
Thailand	1	2	2	5
Kenya	1	1	3	5
Taiwan	1	0	4	5
North Korea	0	2	3	5
Hong Kong	2	0	2	4
Philippines	2	0	2	4
Georgia	1	2	1	4
South Africa	1	1	2	4
Kyrgyzstan	0	1	3	4
Turkey	0	1	3	4
Azerbaijan	2	1	0	3
Denmark	1	2	0	3
Iran	1	0	2	3
Uzbekistan	1	0	2	3
Armenia	0	2	1	3
Mexico	0	2	1	3
Lithuania	0	1	2	3
India	0	0	3	3
Tajikistan	0	0	3	3
Serbia	2	0	0	2
Chile	1	1	0	2
Ecuador	1	1	0	2
Saint Lucia	1	1	0	2
Uganda	1	1	0	2
Czech Republic	1	0	1	2
Guatemala	1	0	1	2
Norway	1	0	1	2
Ethiopia	0	2	0	2
Kosovo	0	1	1	2
Tunisia	0	1	1	2
Dominican Republic	0	0	2	2
Malaysia	0	0	2	2
Moldova	0	0	2	2
Algeria	1	0	0	1
Argentina	1	0	0	1
Bahrain	1	0	0	1
Dominica	1	0	0	1
Morocco	1	0	0	1
Slovenia	1	0	0	1
Colombia	0	1	0	1
Cyprus	0	1	0	1
Fiji	0	1	0	1
Mongolia	0	1	0	1
Austria	0	0	1	1
Cape Verde	0	0	1	1
Egypt	0	0	1	1
Grenada	0	0	1	1
Indonesia	0	0	1	1
Peru	0	0	1	1
Portugal	0	0	1	1
Slovakia	0	0	1	1
Zambia	0	0	1	1

Extra 1  
**2:45 p.m.:** Women's 71kg finals (delay) | USA

**WRESTLING**  
**5:30 a.m.:** Men's 74kg, 125kg freestyle eliminations; women's 62kg freestyle eliminations | NBC  
**2 p.m.:** Men's 74kg, 125kg freestyle eliminations; women's 62kg freestyle eliminations (delay) | USA

**OLYMPICS ROUNDUP**

# Hall wins gold in 400 meters

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

American Quincy Hall pulled off a dramatic rally, surging from fourth place to win the 400-meter gold medal on Wednesday while favored U.S. teammate Michael Norman struggled. Hall crossed the finish line with a time of 43.40 seconds ahead of Britain's Matthew Hudson Smith (43.44) and Zambia's Muzala Samukonga (43.74). Norman clocked a surprising time of 45.62 and crossed the finish line in eighth place.

"I've got determination," Hall said. "That's what got me to that line. A lot of hurt, a lot of pain."

**U.S. gets 2022 golds**

Worth the wait? Absolutely affirmative for the nine U.S. athletes who received gold medals in Paris 2½ years after their figure skating team event ended at the Beijing Olympics.

The five men and four women attended a special medal ceremony in front of 13,000 jubilant fans at Champions Park in Paris. The scene was a joyful departure from what would have been a medal ceremony in front of a handful of onlookers in an indoor Chinese arena during the 2022 Winter Games damped by COVID-19 protocols.

"That was everything," said U.S. figure skater Alexa Knierim, whose fingernails were painted gold. "It was liberating, it was exciting, it was invigorating, it was loud."

Against the stunning

backdrop of the Eiffel Tower, the gold medals were presented to Knierim, Evan Bates, Nathan Chen, Madison Chock, Zachary Donohue, Brandon Frazier, Madison Hubbell and Vincent Zhou. Seven of eight members of the team from Japan were on hand to receive silver medals.

The medal ceremony did not take place in Beijing because of legal uncertainty following the disqualification of Russian Olympic Committee figure skater Kamila Valieva because of a positive test for the performance-enhancing substance trimetazidine.

— STEVE HENSON

**Beach volleyball**

Miles Partain and Andy Benesh could not stop the slide and the United States is leaving beach volleyball at the Paris Olympics without a medal. Their 21-14, 21-16 defeat to Qatar's Sherif Younousse and Ahmed Tijan made it the first American medal shutout since the sport joined the Summer Games in Atlanta in 1996. They carried American hopes with both the women's teams and the other men's team out of the tournament.

**Indoor volleyball**

Poland will play for a gold medal in men's volleyball, rallying from a 2-1 deficit to beat the United States in the deciding fifth set semifinals. Poland came back from 20-18 in the third and needed two set points to force it to a deciding fifth, sending the largely pro-Poland crowd at

South Paris Arena into a frenzy, with chants of "Pol-ska!" and horns blaring throughout the stadium. Four-time American Olympians Matt Anderson and David Smith were oh-so-close to finally playing for a gold medal.

**Weightlifting**

Hampton Morris, 20, became the first U.S. men's weightlifter to take home a medal of any color at the Games in four decades. Narrowly missing out on a world record that would have gotten him silver, Morris earned bronze and followed Mario Martinez and Guy Carlton from Los Angeles in 1984 as the most recent American men to medal at the Olympics. Li Fabin of China defended his Olympic weightlifting title to take gold in Paris.

**Gymnastics appeal**

The Romanian Olympic Committee says it has appealed Sabrina Maneca-Voinea's score from the floor exercise final after a last-minute inquiry on behalf of American rival Jordan Chiles credited her with 0.1 points and vaulted her into third place, prompting heartbreak and rage from Romania.

Maneca-Voinea was given a 0.1 deduction for stepping out of bounds during her routine, but replays showed she narrowly kept her heel inbounds during the moment in question.

**Freestyle wrestling**

American Sarah Hildebrandt won the 50-kilogram

category, defeating Yusneylis Guzman Lopez of Cuba 3-0 in the championship match to become the fourth U.S. woman to win a gold medal.

Hildebrandt originally was scheduled to fight a different opponent and at one point she thought she might win gold by default before her bout with Guzman Lopez was announced.

Vinesh Phogat of India appeared to reach the finals after three wins Tuesday.

But United World Wrestling, the sport's governing body, disqualified her after she barely missed weight on Wednesday morning.

Measures such as cutting Phogat's hair weren't enough to shed the necessary weight.

**Water polo**

Brian Weinberg made two blocks in a penalty shootout to help the United States beat Australia 11-10 in the quarterfinals of the men's tournament.

Hannes Daube and Alex Bowen each scored two goals in regulation as the U.S. reached the semifinals at the Olympics for the first time since 2008. Daube and Bowen also converted their penalty shots in the tiebreaker.

**Boxing**

Lin Yu-ting of Taiwan advanced to the gold-medal bout in the women's featherweight division, winning her third consecutive bout while dealing with widespread scrutiny regarding misconceptions about her gender.

# Effort pays off for U.S. in pool

[Artistic, from B10] gold, as expected, with Spain finishing third. It helped that the Russians, the champions as a "neutral" team in Tokyo three years ago, were not allowed to compete this year.

Still, the result showed how far the U.S. has come since coach Andrea Fuentes took over a struggling program in 2018.

Fuentes, a three-time Olympian from Spain, brought a freer, more positive leadership approach. As the team moved its training center to UCLA, she mapped out a process she hoped would turn her swimmers into medal contenders by the 2028 Summer Games in Los Angeles.

"Our sport requires years and years of technique," she said during an interview two years ago.

Her schedule got jump-started by that near miss at last year's Pan Am Games. The Americans rebounded to finish third and secure their Olympic spot at February's world championships in Doha, Qatar.

"We've had a crazy two



WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

**U.S. artistic swimmers perform a routine at the Olympics. Coach Andrea Fuentes, hired in 2018, initially hoped the team could compete for a medal in 2028.**

years," veteran swimmer Anita Alvarez said. "The way this team has been able to adapt to all the challenges, all the adversity we've faced, has just made us so strong."

The competition in Paris began with judges docking Alvarez and her teammates for a perceived error in the technical routine Monday night.

The U.S. appealed and, upon further review, got the points back. Tuesday's free routine put the Americans in second place.

This was the first time the Olympics added a third swim devoted to acrobatics. China held a comfortable lead and was all but assured of winning, which left the Americans to compete with Spain, France and Japan for

the two remaining spots on the podium.

Fuentes and her staff created a routine inspired by sorcery, a theme the coach wrote "always captivated me due to the profound mystery and magnetic energy it embodies."

As the team's flyer — the smallest swimmer who gets held above the water or tossed in the air for twists and spins — Audrey Kwon sensed things were going well right away.

"As soon as we finished our first platform lift and we nailed it," she said, "I was like, OK, I have the rest of this and I knew we were set."

Emerging from the pool, the team erupted in screams and hugs when the scoreboard showed the U.S. in

first place with only China left to swim. The Chinese then executed a predictably flawless routine to win by more than 80 points.

"We are extremely happy," swimmer Wang Liuyi said. "We are happy we brought back the gold medal."

The silver was especially meaningful to Alvarez, who pushed herself too hard at the 2022 world championships, passed out and drifted to the bottom of the pool. Fuentes dove in, fully clothed, to help pull her out.

The swimmer's years of hard work, of sticking with the program through tough times, finally paid off.

"Chasing the medal for the first time in 20 years," Alvarez said, "I'm so proud."

# WNBA chemistry shines in quarterfinal win

[Basketball, from B10] D'Tigress was the first African basketball team to make an Olympic quarterfinal.

The Americans won with ruthless offensive efficiency. They dished 31 assists on 34 made field goals. All but one player had at least one assist, led by Alyssa Thomas' six off the bench. Plum, Gray and Diana Taurasi each had four.

"We're 12 of the best players in the world and everyone has to find a way to contribute, and we've always found a way to do that," Taurasi said. "You make the team for a certain reason, but maybe you don't have to use all those tools. That's just what USA Basketball is about."

Although she's the WNBA's all-time leading scorer, Taurasi is most valued on this team for her passing, head coach Cheryl Reeve said. The three-time WNBA champion and 11-time league All-Star has surely lost several steps from the height of her powers, but Phoenix Mercury teammate Brittney Griner said Taurasi is still

"our floor general."

She started the three pool games and averaged 0.7 points and 2.7 assists. Needing a lift on defense entering the knockout stages, Reeve subbed three-time WNBA All-Star Jackie Young into the starting lineup.

The Las Vegas Aces guard finished with 15 points, and Taurasi tallied three, a lone three-pointer on her first shot of the game. But the Chino native was a constant presence in team huddles and in celebrations. When Plum completed another highlight reel play by wrapping a pass around a defender in the lane to find a wide-open Wilson for a layup, Taurasi was the first one off the bench to wrap Plum in a hug.

"She's the epitome of USA basketball," said Plum, who had six points off the bench and is trying to win her second Olympic gold medal after a 3-on-3 basketball title in Tokyo in 2021.

Taurasi is the first U.S. basketball player to appear in six Olympics, but at 42 years old, she is not the old-

est basketball player in the tournament. Australia's Lauren Jackson, 43, retired from professional basketball in 2016 before returning in 2022 with hopes of making her fifth Olympic team. The three-time WNBA most valuable player scored six points in Australia's opening game but did not play in the past two games, including a quarterfinal victory over Serbia on Wednesday.

The Americans will face Jackson's Opals in the semifinals on Friday at 8:30 a.m. PDT.

Taurasi still looks back fondly on her first Olympic experience from 2004 when she was a rookie in the WNBA. She was young, playing in her first Olympics with longtime friend Sue Bird and soaking up a summer in Athens.

LeBron James was also making his Olympic debut that year. The USA basketball stalwarts ran into each other again in London this summer as the men's and women's teams crossed during the pre-Olympic exhibitions.

"We pretty much looked at each other and said, 'What the hell we doing here?'" said James, who is playing in his fourth Olympics, but first since 2012. "But it's a blessing. It's an honor to be able to still compete at this level and represent Team USA, especially at the later stages of our careers."

**Durant sets scoring record at Olympics**

Kevin Durant stands alone in U.S. Olympic basketball scoring history.

Durant is now the career leader in points for the U.S. in Olympic competition, passing Lisa Leslie for the mark during the Americans' quarterfinal game Tuesday.

Durant's basket in the third quarter gave him six points in the game and 489 in his four Olympic appearances. Leslie finished her four Olympic appearances with 488 points and four gold medals.

He finished with 11 points, so the new record is 494 — and counting.



LUCA BRUNO Associated Press

**LUKE PAVILLARD** battles for Australia in their 11-10 quarterfinal loss to the U.S. on Wednesday.

BASEBALL: TUESDAY FLASHBACK

Reliever Graterol likely out for season

[Dodgers, from B10] son run.

But Roberts did not sound optimistic after the game, adding that Michael Grove would be activated to replace Graterol on the roster Wednesday.

"It's heartbreaking," Roberts said.

"Brusdar has been so good for us. He's pitched in a lot of big games, postseason games, and he had a tough road back. He spent a lot of time in Arizona on rehab, and to come back, and the third hitter he faced, to blow out, and it was a pretty big blowout ... I feel terrible for him and for his teammates."

Graterol took the mound to start the sixth with a 1-0 deficit and got Bryce Harper to pop out to third before giving up a single to Alec Bohm.

Honeywell replaced Graterol after the injury and completed a walk to Realmuto before giving up run-scoring hits to Castellanos and Sosa.

The Dodgers cut the deficit to 4-1 in the bottom of the sixth when Teoscar Hernández doubled, took third on Freddie Freeman's groundout and scored on Will Smith's groundout.

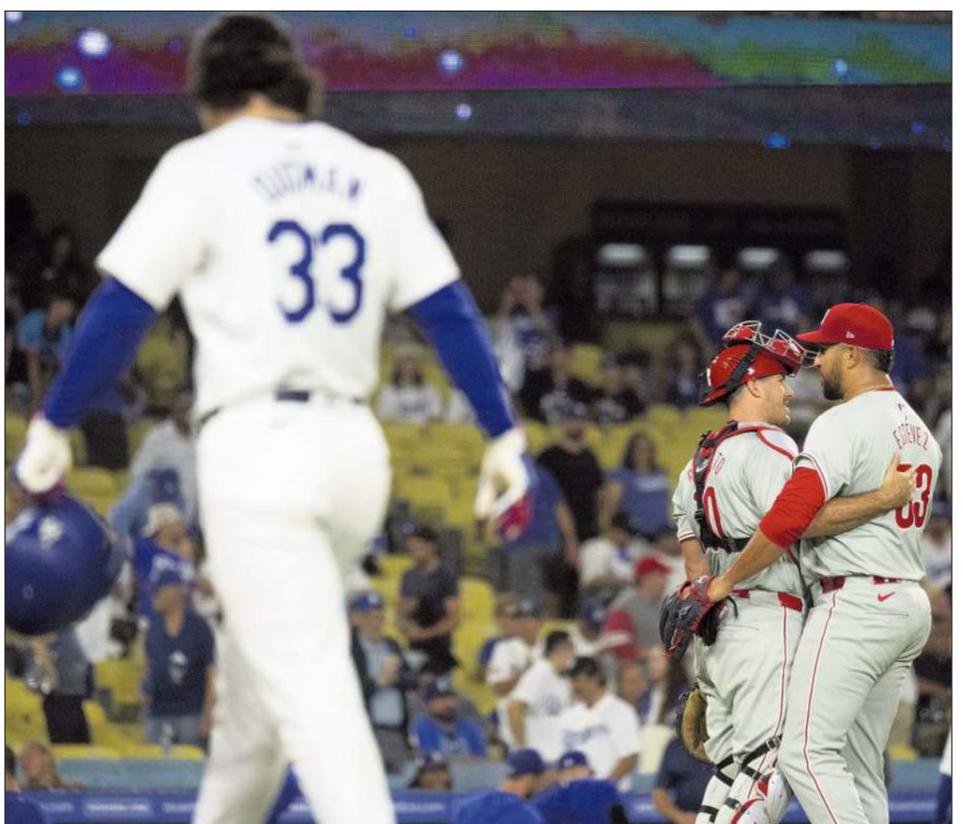
They put two on with one out in the seventh, but Phillies All-Star left-hander Matt Strahm struck out pinch-hitter Austin Barnes and got Shohei Ohtani to fly out to right.

Hernández's 25th homer of the season, a 424-foot shot to center off right-hander Jeff Hoffman in the eighth, pulled the Dodgers to within 4-2, but Sosa and Kyle Schwarber hit back-to-back homers off Honeywell in the ninth for a 6-2 lead.

Carlos Estévez, acquired July 29 from the Angels, threw a scoreless ninth as the National League East-leading Phillies won for only the third time in 12 games.

The Dodgers had their three-game win streak snapped and their NL West lead over San Diego reduced to four games.

Graterol's injury and loss put a damper on a promising start from Kershaw, who rebounded from a brutal July 31 start at San Diego in which he gave up seven runs (three earned) and six hits in 3 1/3 innings



KYUSUNG GONG Associated Press

PHILLIES relief pitcher Carlos Estévez, right, and catcher J.T. Realmuto celebrate the team's win over Dodgers on Tuesday. Despite the loss, starter Clayton Kershaw had a solid outing.

and failed to record a strikeout for the first time in 424 regular-season starts over 17 years.

Kershaw faced the minimum nine batters through three innings Tuesday, yielding only a broken-bat single to Austin Hays, who was thrown out at second to end the third.

Kershaw escaped a first-and-third, one-out jam in the fourth by striking out Bohm with a 74-mph curve in the dirt and getting Realmuto to ground out to third.

He was nicked for a run on Schwarber's RBI single in the fifth but minimized damage by winning a nine-pitch duel with Sosa, who struck out on an 83-mph split-changeup.

Kershaw threw 81 pitches, 55 for strikes, and induced 10 swinging strikes. His four-seam fastball averaged 90.4 mph, and he did a better job of mixing his 86-mph sliders and 73-mph curves.

"There was just a different look coming off that last outing, and you could see it," Roberts said. "I think anyone who was watching the game can see the conviction in the throws. He was going to will himself to have a quality outing, and he did that."

Kershaw said his stuff was "a little bit better tonight, just a little crisper," but the three-time NL Cy Young Award winner was far from satisfied.

"Just made some dumb mis-

takes, a couple of guys got on base on 0-and-2 counts, which shouldn't happen," he said. "Those were frustrating, but overall, I think it's another good step in the right direction."

Short hops

Yoshinobu Yamamoto, out since June 16 because of a rotator cuff strain, threw a 30-pitch bullpen session. The right-hander will travel with the team and throw to hitters in Milwaukee next week, "and hopefully, if that goes well, we'll keep building from there," Roberts said, adding the Dodgers remain "hopeful" that Yamamoto, who went 6-2 with a 2.92 ERA in 14 starts, will return in September.

STANDINGS

Through Tuesday

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Table showing National League standings for West, Central, and East divisions, including teams like Dodgers, San Diego, Arizona, and Milwaukee.

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Table showing American League standings for West, Central, and East divisions, including teams like Seattle, Houston, Texas, and Oakland.

Today's games

Table listing today's games between various MLB teams, including Angels at New York, San Francisco at Washington, and Milwaukee at Atlanta.

ON THIS DATE

1997 - Randy Johnson struck out 19, matching the major league record for left-handers he tied earlier in the season, as the Seattle Mariners defeated the Chicago White Sox 5-0.

2000 - Daren Dreifort of the Dodgers hit two homers and was the winning pitcher in a 7-5 victory over the Chicago Cubs.

Philadelphia 6, Dodgers 2. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

Milwaukee 10, Atlanta 0. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

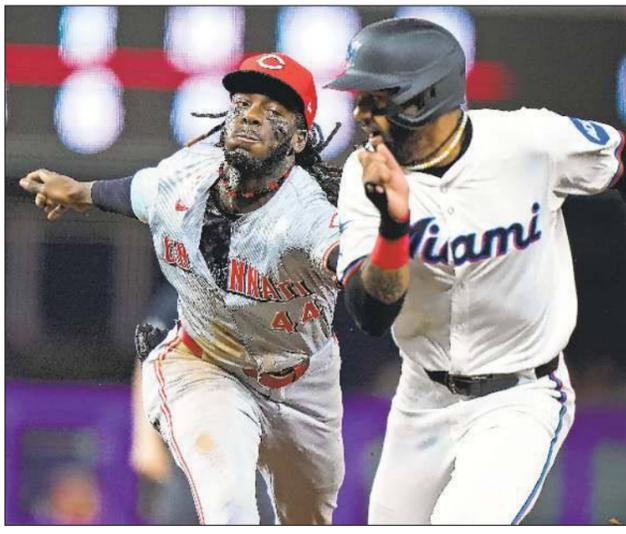
Toronto 5, Baltimore 2. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

Washington 11, San Francisco 5. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

Cincinnati 8, Miami 2. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

Cincinnati 3, St. Louis 1. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

Cincinnati 3, St. Louis 1. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.



WILFREDO LEE Associated Press

TAG, YOU'RE IT

Cincinnati Reds shortstop Elly De La Cruz runs down and tags out the Miami Marlins' Derek Hill after Hill was caught attempting to steal second base during the fourth inning.

Houston 4, Texas 2. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

Chicago Cubs 7, Minnesota 3. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

Colorado 6, N.Y. Mets 3. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

Chicago White Sox 5, Oakland 1. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

Chicago White Sox 5, Oakland 1. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

Chicago White Sox 5, Oakland 1. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

San Diego 6, Pittsburgh 0. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

San Diego 6, Pittsburgh 0. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

St. Louis 4, Tampa Bay 3. Box score showing runs, hits, errors, and individual player statistics for both teams.

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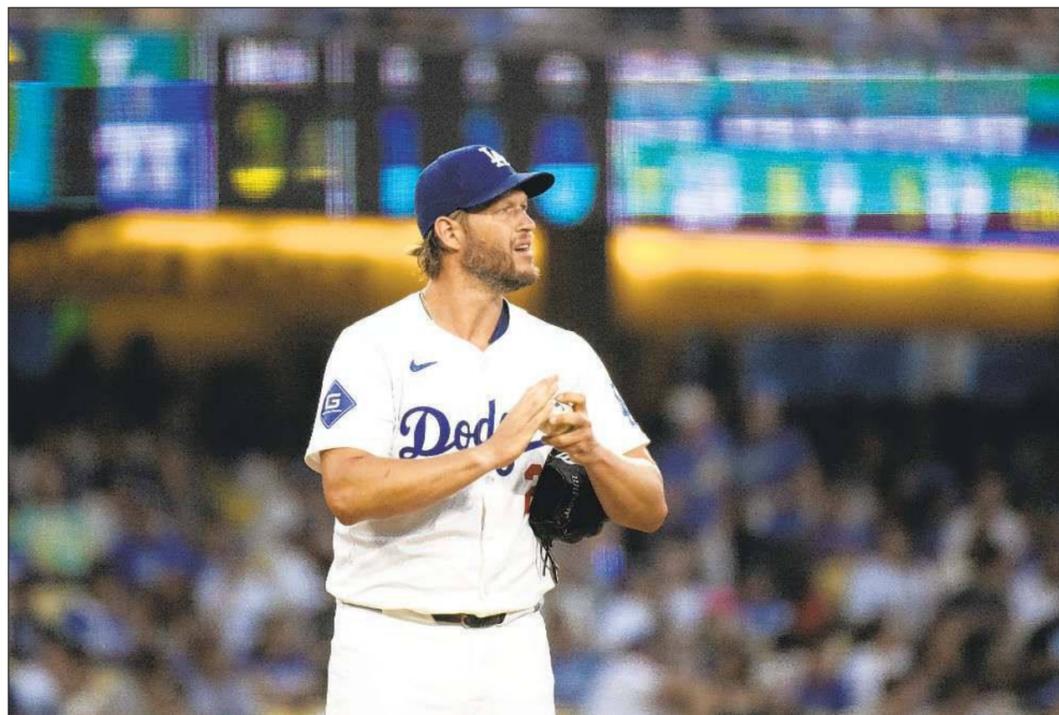
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KYUSUNG GONG Associated Press

**CLAYTON KERSHAW** has made three starts this season and the Dodgers may need to rely on him more.

# With depleted staff, Roberts must again rely on Kershaw

**DYLAN HERNÁNDEZ**

The game was only Clayton Kershaw's third of the season.



Dodgers manager Dave Roberts stressed that point Tuesday night when revisiting his decision to take out Kershaw in the fifth inning of a promising start against the Philadelphia Phillies.

"It's about continuing to build up, so then he has a base and a foundation to keep going," Roberts said. "So, right now, for me, it was an easy one."

The key words: right now.

By the time Kershaw takes his next turn in the rotation, the Dodgers might not have the luxury of removing him at the first sign of trouble. By the time they're in the playoffs, they almost certainly won't be able to manage him as cautiously as they would a rookie.

Even after a billion-dollar offseason and the acquisition of the best pitcher who was moved at the trade deadline, the Dodgers are back to where they usually are at this time of the year.

They're back to depending on Clayton Kershaw.

They might not like the idea of staking their season on a 36-year-old who underwent a major shoulder operation over the winter, but their situation leaves them no other choice. In the

wake of their 6-2 loss to the Phillies in the second game of their three-game series at Dodger Stadium, their lead over the San Diego Padres in the National League West was down to four games.

Their injury-prone rotation has predictably unraveled, and Kershaw might have to pitch effectively for the Dodgers to have a realistic chance of winning the World Series. Tyler Glasnow and Jack Flaherty will lead their staff for the remainder of the regular season and beyond, but whom do they have behind them?

Three starting pitchers will likely be required in the National League Division Series, four in the two series after that.

Yoshinobu Yamamoto has been sidelined for close to two months with a shoulder injury and isn't expected to return until September. Gavin Stone looks as if he's wearing down. Walker Buehler aborted his initial attempt to come back from his latest elbow reconstruction. Bobby Miller isn't even in the major leagues. River Ryan has made only three career starts.

What the Dodgers ask of Kershaw could also be affected by the state of the bullpen. Evan Phillips' loss of form last month has left the Dodgers without a closer. Brusdar Graterol's return from a shoulder injury lasted only eight pitches, as Graterol went down with a severe hamstring strain that is expected to end his season. The shortage of bullpen resources has been magni-

fied by the inability of the starters to pitch deep into games. Dodgers starters have registered a combined 577 $\frac{2}{3}$  innings, fifth fewest in the NL.

In other words, the next time Kershaw is in the kind of jam he was in the fifth inning against the Phillies, Roberts might not have a viable arm to replace him. The manager's only choice might be to have him pitch through it.

Six days after a nightmare start in San Diego in which he lasted only 3 $\frac{2}{3}$  innings and looked finished, Kershaw was a new pitcher on Tuesday.

His fastball remained in the low 90s, but he controlled the pitch better and threw a greater number of curveballs, which helped him limit the NL's top team to one run over 4 $\frac{2}{3}$  innings.

"This guy is the greatest competitor I've ever been around," Roberts said. "He just kind of willed himself to have a quality outing."

The Phillies had runners on the corners with one out in the fourth inning, but Kershaw escaped by striking out Alec Bohm and forcing J.T. Realmuto to ground out. There was more trouble in the fifth inning when Austin Hays doubled and Brandon Marsh was hit by a pitch. Kershaw finished a nine-pitch at-bat by the persistent Edmundo Sosa with a strikeout, only to give up a run-scoring single to Kyle Schwarber that moved the Phillies in front, 1-0.

There were two outs, but the Phillies had runners on the corners. Up next was a

right-handed-hitting All-Star, Trea Turner, who was about to face Kershaw for the third time. Roberts came for Kershaw and replaced him with Joe Kelly, who made Turner line out to center field. The Phillies blew open the game by scoring three runs in the sixth inning.

"You never want to come out of the game, obviously," said Kershaw, who threw 81 pitches.

Kershaw didn't direct any frustration at Roberts, however.

Rather, he blamed himself for his early departure, mentioning the two hitters who reached base after he backed them into 0-2 counts.

"Just made some dumb mistakes," Kershaw said. "I just have to figure out how to maintain my pitch count. Obviously, my pitch count will keep getting higher, but you have to figure out how to get through at least five [innings], six or seven at some point."

Roberts said of how Kershaw was focused on what he could control: "That's the thing I respect."

This mindset explains why Kershaw has a chance to be a difference maker when his pitches aren't as explosive as they used to be. Provided he makes the improvements he wants to make, the Dodgers have an obligation to explore the limits of this version of Kershaw.

They owe it not only to him but to the other players as well. To win, they'll need him.

# Betts will play short and bat second

Dodgers star won't be asked to move again when he returns from hurt hand next week.

By **MIKE DIGIOVANNA**

When Mookie Betts makes his long-awaited return from a left hand fracture in Milwaukee next week, it will be in one position that has become relatively familiar to the eight-time All-Star and another that will be relatively new.

Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said Tuesday that Betts will remain at shortstop, the spot he moved to in early March despite not playing there regularly since high school, ending speculation that the six-time Gold Glove Award-winning right fielder could return to the outfield.

But Roberts said Betts, who made all 72 of his starts this season in the leadoff spot, will bat second so dynamic slugger Shohei Ohtani can remain atop the batting order and the left-handed bats of Ohtani and No. 3 hitter Freddie Freeman can be separated by the right-handed-hitting Betts.

"It's hard to argue [against] Shohei starting off the game in the leadoff spot," Roberts said before Tuesday night's game against the Philadelphia Phillies. "It breaks up Shohei and Freddie, I like the idea of [Ohtani and Betts] potentially getting the most at-bats, and I didn't want to bat

Freddie cleanup. "The other part of it is, I just feel that as great as Mookie is, Shohei really has the chance to change the game from the first pitch."

Betts hit .304 with an .892 on-base-plus-slugging percentage, 10 homers, 16 doubles, 40 RBIs and 50 runs before being struck on the left hand by a 98-mph fastball on June 16.

Ohtani, who hit .314 with a .989 OPS, 19 homers, 18 doubles, 46 RBIs and 53 runs in 69 starts in the second spot, replaced Betts in the leadoff spot, where he hit .292 with a 1.070 OPS, 15 homers, 11 doubles, 35 RBIs and 33 runs in 42 games entering Wednesday night.

Betts made 11 starts in the second spot for the Dodgers in 2020, his first season with the team, but hasn't hit there since and has made only 89 of his 1,310 career starts in the two-hole, 46 of them for the Boston Red Sox in 2019. Betts has a .307 average, .877 OPS, 12 homers and 46 RBIs when he bats second.

Roberts said he has spoken to Betts about the move in the order. Betts, who is scheduled to play in a simulated game Thursday and could make a few minor league rehabilitation starts before being activated for Monday's series opener against the Brewers, reiterated that he is willing to do whatever is best for the team.

"One thing — I want to win," Betts said Monday. "You want to win, that comes first. That's all I care

about. I'm confident in my abilities, confident in myself, that I can go out there in whatever position and do what I need to do to help the team win."

That attitude — combined with Betts' athleticism and flexibility — prompted the Dodgers to move him from right field to second base last winter and from second base to shortstop in spring training.

Betts committed nine errors at shortstop, eight of them on throws, but improved as he gained more experience and rated highly in some advanced metrics, with Fangraphs crediting him with five defensive runs saved.

The slick-fielding Miguel Rojas replaced Betts in mid-June and played superb defense before suffering a right forearm injury July 21. With Rojas expected to return this week and Gavin Lux, one of the team's hottest hitters, more entrenched at second base, Betts seemed open to a return to the outfield.

"I don't know, I mean, I haven't talked to Doc about it," Betts said Monday. "There's a lot of guys that can play shortstop here. If that's not in the cards, that's cool. I can go from there, anywhere else. Just prepare, and where I land is where I land."

With Betts remaining at shortstop and Rojas on the verge of returning, veteran fill-in shortstop Nick Ahmed could be designated for assignment, and recently acquired utility man Amed Ro-

sario and perhaps Rojas could platoon with Lux at second base.

Utility infielder Tommy Edman, acquired from St. Louis last week, could play more outfield when he returns from an ankle injury. Rosario and Kiké Hernández, who has been filling in for injured third baseman Max Muncy, also can play in the outfield, which could put the roster spots of young outfielders James Outman and Andy Pages in jeopardy.

"It's tough, certainly for the players," Roberts said of the impending roster crunch. "As an organization, more talent coming back is always a good thing. But the uncertainty of players that are active ... could they get the tap on the shoulder? That's not a good feeling. So just focus on performing and helping us win a ballgame, that's my message."

"But they're still humans and have emotions. It's certainly a tough spot. It's like the last week of spring training, where guys are trying to see if they made the roster for opening day. You kind of get that vibe a little bit."

## Yankees top Angels

Rookie Luis Gil pitched five scoreless innings of two-hit ball, and the surging New York Yankees beat the Angels 5-2 in the first game of Wednesday's doubleheader.

Angels third baseman Luis Rengifo (wrist inflammation) underwent season-ending surgery.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

## PRO CALENDAR

	THU 8	FRI 9	SAT 10	SUN 11	MON 12
DODGERS		PITT. 7 SNLA	PITT. 6 SNLA	PITT. 1 SNLA	at Milwaukee 5 SNLA
ANGELS	at N.Y. Yankees 4 BSW	at Washington 3:45 BSW	at Washington 3:45 BSW	at Washington 8:30 a.m. Roku	TORONTO 6:30 BSW
SPARKS	NEXT: AUG. 15 VS. NEW YORK, 6, ESPN				
GALAXY	NEXT: AUG. 24 VS. ATLANTA, 7:40, APPLE TV+				
LAFC	NEXT: AUG. 24 AT VANCOUVER, 4:30, APPLE TV+				
ANGEL CITY	NEXT: AUG. 18 VS. FC JUAREZ*, 7				

Shade denotes home game. \*Friendly match

## TODAY ON THE AIR

TIME	EVENT	ON THE AIR
<b>AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL</b>		
2:15 a.m. (Fri.)	AFL, Sydney vs. Collingwood	TV: FS2
<b>BASEBALL</b>		
9 a.m.	Milwaukee at Atlanta	TV: MLB
1 p.m.	San Francisco at Washington	TV: MLB, ESPN+
4 p.m.	Angels at New York Yankees	TV: BSW R: 830
4 p.m.	Baltimore at Toronto	TV: MLB
7 p.m.	Philadelphia at Arizona	TV: MLB
<b>FITNESS SPORTS</b>		
4 p.m.	CrossFit Games	TV: ESPN2
<b>GOLF</b>		
Noon	PGA Tour, Wyndham Championship, first round	TV: Golf, Peacock
Noon	U.S. Women's Amateur, round of 16	TV: Peacock
<b>HORSE RACING</b>		
10 a.m.	Saratoga Live	TV: FS2
Noon	Saratoga Live	TV: BSSC
<b>LACROSSE</b>		
2 p.m.	Athletes Unlimited, Team Moreno vs. Team North	TV: ESPN2
4:30 p.m.	Athletes Unlimited, Team Apuzzo vs. Team Kennedy	TV: BSSC
<b>PRO FOOTBALL: NFL PRESEASON</b>		
4 p.m.	Carolina at New England	TV: NFLN
<b>SOCCER</b>		
6 p.m.	Leagues Cup, UANL vs. Pachuca	TV: FS1, UniMas, TUDN
7:30 p.m.	Leagues Cup, Seattle vs. Galaxy	TV: Apple TV R: Galaxy stream
8 p.m.	Leagues Cup, San José vs. Necaxa	TV: FS1
<b>TENNIS</b>		
8 a.m.	Montreal (ATP), Toronto (WTA), early rounds	TV: Tennis
10 a.m.	Toronto (WTA), early rounds	TV: BSW
<b>YOUTH BASEBALL: LITTLE LEAGUE REGIONALS</b>		
10 a.m.	Midwest Regional, Iowa vs. TBD	TV: ESPN2
Noon	Mid-Atlantic Regional, Maryland vs. Washington D.C.	TV: ESPN
2 p.m.	Mountain Regional, Nevada vs. Colorado	TV: ESPN2
4 p.m.	New England Regional, Maine vs. TBD	TV: ESPN
6 p.m.	Northwest Regional, Idaho vs. TBD	TV: ESPN
<b>YOUTH SOFTBALL: LITTLE LEAGUE WORLD SERIES</b>		
10 a.m.	Rhode Island vs. Winterville, N.C.	TV: ESPN
2 p.m.	Louisiana vs. Ohio	TV: ESPN

■ Olympics TV listings. B7

## THE DAY IN SPORTS

# Harbaugh banned four years by NCAA

### WIRE REPORTS

The NCAA announced a four-year, show-cause order for former Michigan coach **Jim Harbaugh** on Wednesday for impermissible contact with recruits and players during the COVID-19 pandemic, effectively banning him from college athletics until August 2028.

The NCAA said Harbaugh, who left his alma mater to coach the Chargers after last season's national championship, "failed to promote an atmosphere of compliance and violated head coach responsibility obligations."

Harbaugh will face the punishment only if he makes an unexpected return to college football within the next four years.

The recruiting case is unrelated to the NCAA's investigation into impermissible in-person scouting and sign-stealing allegations that roiled Michigan's championship season and resulted in a three-game suspension of Harbaugh by the Big Ten. Multiple infractions cases in such a short time period could prompt the NCAA to treat Michigan as a repeat offender, opening the school up to harsher penalties in the sign-stealing case.

Texas running back **CJ Baxter** injured a knee and will miss next season.

### ETC.

## Nadal pulls out of U.S. Open

**Rafael Nadal** pulled out of the U.S. Open, making it the third Grand Slam tournament he's missed this sea-

son and raising more questions about his future in tennis at age 38. His next event will be the Laver Cup in Berlin from Sept. 20 to 22.

Nadal's place in the tournament will be taken by **Mackie McDonald**, a former UCLA standout.

The New York Jets activated wide receiver **Mike Williams** from the physically-unable-to-perform list after he passed his physical. ... **Duane Thomas**, a running back for Dallas when the Cowboys finally broke through and won a Super Bowl to cap the 1971 season, has died. He was 77.

Baltimore right-hander **Grayson Rodriguez** will be shut down because of a mild strain in his right shoulder and back, but the Orioles are "optimistic" he'll return this season, manager **Brandon Hyde** said. ... Minnesota's **Joe Ryan** exited his start because of triceps tightness. ... **Josh Bell** homered twice, **Eduardo Rodriguez** won his season debut, and Arizona beat Cleveland 5-3 to sweep a doubleheader. ... Houston earned a season series win over Texas with a 6-4 victory, one night after **Framber Valdez** just missed his second career no-hitter, a strike away before a walk and **Corey Seager's** two-run homer in the Astros' 4-2 win. ... The Chicago White Sox lost their 10th straight series, one day after ending their American League record-tying 21-game losing streak. ... NASCAR's Bristol Motor Speedway will host a game between Cincinnati and Atlanta next season, the Associated Press reported.

Utah Jazz star **Lauri Markkanen** received a five-year, \$238-million extension.

# SPORTS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 8, 2024 :: LATIMES.COM/SPORTS

PARIS  OLYMPICS



**TEAM USA** artistic swimmers react to winning a silver medal on Wednesday. "All the adversity we've faced has just made us so strong," one swimmer said. WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

## It's an artistic triumph for U.S.

Swimmers 'could feel the energy' in silver-winning effort that puts their team years ahead of schedule.

BY DAVID WHARTON

SAINT-DENIS, France — It may have been heartbreak, a failure by the slimmest of margins, which made all the difference.

The U.S. team in artistic swimming — what used to be known as synchronized swimming — was trying to make the Olympics for the first time in almost two decades when it missed qualifying by 0.66 points at a competition last year.

"It was a huge disappointment," team member Jacklyn Luu said. "We really used that disappointment to fuel us."

The American women not only earned their spot in Paris a few months later, but they also rode the momentum to an unexpected silver medal in the team competition at the Summer Games.

A strong acrobatic routine clinched the deal at the Aquatics Center on Wednesday night.

"You could feel the energy from each other in the water," Luu said. "It worked so well, each routine, each lift that we did, it was just magical."

A dominant China took the [See Artistic, B7]



**BRITNEY GRINER** controls the ball in the United States' 88-74 win over Nigeria at the Paris Games on Wednesday. D'Tigress was the first African team to make an Olympic quarterfinal. ARIS MESSINIS Associated Press

## It's 59 in row, led by WNBA chemistry

BY THUC NHI NGUYEN

PARIS — Flag football has yet to make its Olympic debut, but the United States showed it has plenty of quarterback options for 2028 on its women's basketball team.

Chemistry between WNBA teammates shone as Kelsey Plum launched a three-quarters court pass to A'ja Wilson and Chelsea Gray equaled the feat with a pass to Jackie Young that had the Bercy Arena announcer shouting "touchdown" during the United States' 88-74 victory over Nigeria in the basketball quarterfinals on Wednesday.

The U.S. march toward an unprecedented eighth straight Olympic gold medal continued with a 59th consecutive Olympic victory to end Nigeria's dream run. [See Basketball, B7]

## Graterol's season lasts 8 pitches in latest blow to staff

Reliever severely injures hamstring on night where Kershaw has a solid outing.

BY MIKE DIGIOVANNA

Most of the Dodgers were showered, dressed and shuffling out of the clubhouse after Tuesday night's 6-2 loss to the Philadelphia Phillies while Brusdar Graterol remained seated at his locker, his uniform pants still on, rubbing tears from his eyes as teammates and coaches stopped by to console him.

Eight pitches into his season debut after spending five months rehabilitating a shoulder injury, Graterol's season likely was over, the burly right-hander suffering a Grade 3 strain (most severe) of his right hamstring

while throwing a sixth-inning fastball to J.T. Realmuto.

Graterol clutched the back of his right leg and kneeled on the mound in pain. The distraught reliever had to be helped off the field. It seemed almost fitting that the Phillies rallied for three runs after his departure, Nick Castellano's RBI single and Edmundo Sosa a two-run single off right-hander Brent Honeywell giving them a 4-0 lead.

"Yeah, that's super sad," said pitcher Clayton Kershaw, who gave up one earned run and five hits in 4 2/3 innings, striking out five and walking none, in his third start back from shoulder surgery.

"There's a lot of stuff that goes into coming back and getting on the field, and unless you've done it, you don't really know. So we all feel for

him. "He loves to pitch, he loves to be out there, he loves to be with us, so if this is a season-ender, it's really hard. But the good thing for him is he's really young, he's got a great arm, and he'll be able to bounce back next year. But it's definitely a tough night."

The hard-throwing Graterol, nicknamed "Bazooka," was one of the team's top set-up men last year, going 4-2 with a 1.20 ERA and seven saves in 68 games, striking out 48 and walking 12 in 67 1/3 innings.

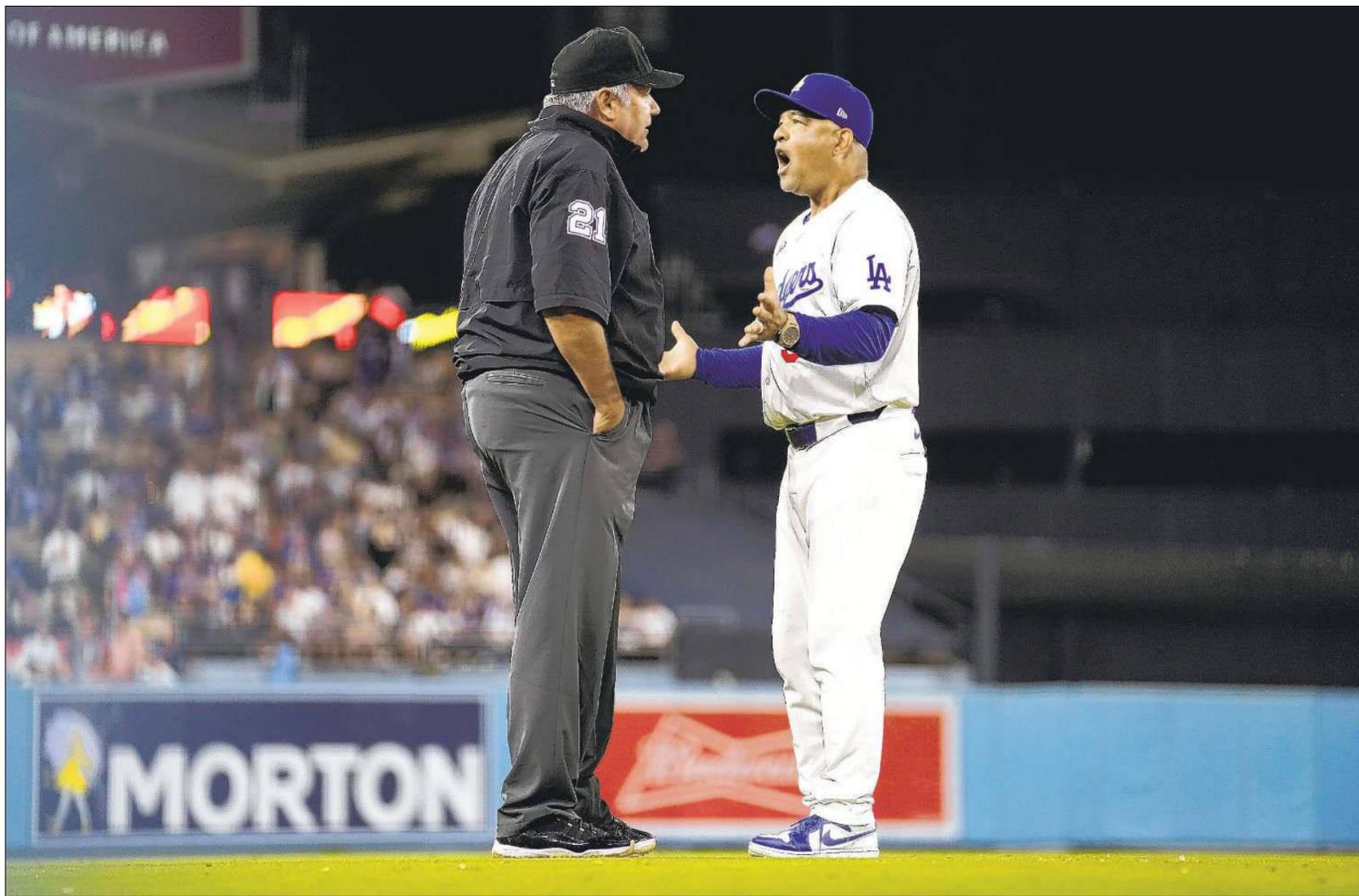
Though he hadn't pitched all season, the Dodgers were hoping the 25-year-old had returned in time to boost a sagging bullpen and give manager Dave Roberts another seasoned playoff arm to summon in a potential postseason. [See Dodgers, B8]



**CATCHER** Will Smith consoles relief pitcher Brusdar Graterol after he injured his hamstring on Tuesday at Dodger Stadium, an injury likely to end his season. HARRY HOW Getty Images

Los Angeles Times  
SPORTS EXTRA

A TIMES E-NEWSPAPER EXCLUSIVE :: THURSDAY, AUGUST 8, 2024



ERIC THAYER Associated Press

**DODGERS MANAGER** Dave Roberts argues with an umpire before being ejected in the sixth, his first time this year, in Los Angeles' 9-4 loss at home to the Phillies.

# Dodgers unravel in the sixth, losing series

BY JACK HARRIS

Wednesday's sixth inning already was heading off the rails before Joe Kelly entered the game.

In what became a five-run disaster for the Dodgers, the right-handed reliever simply made the train wreck complete.

After leading by three runs early in the night and one run entering the sixth inning, the Dodgers came undone by a controversial umpire call, some sloppy high-leverage pitching from Kelly and, ultimately, a back-breaking three-run home run from Kyle Schwarber — the most important of his three home runs in the Philadelphia Phillies' series-clinching 9-4 win at Dodger Stadium.

The whole sixth-inning sequence took only about 15 minutes.

But everything that could go wrong for the Dodgers just about did.

Up 4-3 at the start of the fateful

frame, the Dodgers quickly got in trouble when Alec Bohm laced a leadoff double against left-hander Alex Vesia, putting the tying run on base three pitches into the inning.

Things got worse in the next at-bat when a bunt from Brandon Marsh led to controversy at third base.

As third baseman Kiké Hernández charged Marsh's bunt up the foul line, Bohm and shortstop Miguel Rojas raced toward third base. Rojas got there first, received a throw from Hernández and applied a swift tag for what looked like a key first out.

Immediately, however, third base umpire Hunter Wendelstedt began waving his hands.

Rojas, Wendelstedt determined, had been blocking the base before he received the ball, triggering a defensive interference call.

The only problem: Video replays appeared to show that Rojas was out of the basepath until he reeled the ball in. Where Bohm

probably should have been out, Wendelstedt made a safe call that wasn't subject to a manager's challenge.

Frustration quickly ensued.

First, Wendelstedt got an earful from Rojas, growing animated while telling the Dodgers shortstop to move on from the play. Manager Dave Roberts then came running out of the dugout to continue the argument, eventually getting ejected — for the first time this year — after ignoring Wendelstedt's instructions to return to his seat.

What could have been a one-on, one-out situation instead turned into a dangerous runners-on-the-corners jam.

Kelly entered the game for the next at-bat and got one out on a J.T. Realmuto swinging bunt that scored Bohm from third, tying the score at 4-4.

But then Kelly loaded the bases by walking two of his next three batters (including light-hitting No.

9 hitter Johan Rojas). He threw a wild pitch that gave the Phillies their first lead since the first inning. And to top it off, he hung a two-strike changeup to Schwarber, teeing up the Phillies' hottest hitter for a decisive three-run home run — the highlight of Schwarber's four-for-four, seven-RBI outburst.

Up to that point, the Dodgers seemed positioned for an important series win over the Phillies, taking a commanding 4-1 lead early on against the National League's winningest team.

After Schwarber led the night off with a homer in the top of the first, the Dodgers got RBI singles from Freddie Freeman and Miguel Rojas in the bottom of the frame. Freeman tacked on two more runs with a bloop, two-out single in the second.

Starting pitcher Gavin Stone preserved the 4-1 lead until the fifth inning, when he was chased from the game following a two-run double from Schwarber. Stone now has

a 3.71 earned-run average, and it's 6.91 in his last six starts.

Vesia replaced Stone and stranded Schwarber by getting Bryce Harper to fly out.

For a moment, the Dodgers' lead was intact.

An inning later, though, everything would change — leaving the Dodgers, who have lost seven of their last 11 games and three out of their last four series, with just a three-game lead in the ever-tightening NL West.

## Injury report

Instead of the more severe Grade 3 hamstring strain the Dodgers feared reliever Brusdar Graterol suffered Tuesday night, an MRI on Wednesday revealed only a Grade 1 strain. Roberts said the test gave the Dodgers a "sense of relief and some optimism" their flamethrowing reliever could pitch again this season — though a timeline for Graterol's potential return remains unclear.

# Neto's six-RBI game makes a career night as Angels split a pair

BY LARRY FLEISHER

Zach Neto hit his first grand slam in a six-run second inning against Yankees rookie Will Warren and drove in a career-high six runs as the Angels beat New York 8-2 for a doubleheader split Wednesday night.

In the first game, New York rookie Luis Gil battled command issues but pitched five scoreless innings of two-hit ball in a 5-2 victory. Neto hit a two-run homer in the seventh inning of the opener before having the best game of his career in the nightcap.

Warren was one strike away from escaping the second inning with just a 2-0 deficit, but Neto turned on a full-count sinker and lifted it to the back of the Angels' bullpen in left field to make it 6-0.

Neto's 412-foot drive gave him five homers in his last nine games and was the Angels' fifth grand slam this season.

Neto surpassed his career high of four RBIs set in Saturday's 5-4 win over the New York Mets when the shortstop hit a two-run double in the fourth to give him six RBIs and his team an 8-1 lead.

"I think it was pretty cool to be here and I definitely had a couple of angels out there looking over me," said Neto, whose second series in the majors also was at Yankee Sta-

dium, from April 18 to 20 of 2023.

"I was able to have a pretty good day today."

Neto, a 2022 first-round pick, became the first opposing shortstop with six RBIs at any version of Yankee Stadium. He also joined Alex Rodriguez (2003) as the second opposing shortstop with six RBIs against the Yankees.

"Well he must be a big-time player to do it in Yankee Stadium," Angels manager Ron Washington said. "All the players that may have done it here. Tonight, we needed everything he gave. We won that game 8-2, but at no time were we comfortable."

"I think that's memorable," Neto said.

"Being able to do that, I think it's an honor."

Neto joined Jim Fregosi (1964) and Freddie Patek (1980) as the third Angels shortstop with at least six RBIs in a game. His eight RBIs tied the team record for a doubleheader, also held by Lee Thomas (1961), Bubba Morton (1967) and Ron Jackson (1976).

"He had a really great game tonight, all the way around," Washington said.

Mickey Moniak hit an RBI single and Nolan Schanuel drew a bases-loaded walk before Neto's grand slam.

DJ LeMahieu hit an RBI single and Gleyber Torres had a sacrifice



PAMELA SMITH Associated Press

**ANGELS** shortstop Zach Neto and center fielder Mickey Moniak celebrate after their Game 2 win over the Yankees. Neto drove in a career-high six runs with three hits, including a grand slam.

fly for the Yankees, who lost for the second time in 10 games.

New York had been of a streak of 10 straight games with at least four runs, its longest since September 2019.

Aaron Judge singled in the first inning of the nightcap after reaching base four times in the opener. He had an RBI single and drew his 12th intentional walk of the season in the eighth inning of the first game.

Angels starter Carson Fulmer gave up two runs and seven hits but threw 90 pitches in four innings.

Hunter Strickland (3-1) pitched two innings and needed one pitch to retire Yankees slugger Juan Soto

with two on to end the sixth.

Warren was called up to be New York's 27th man and gave up eight runs on eight hits in 4½ innings in his second start.

He made his big-league debut last week in Philadelphia when Gerrit Cole was a late scratch because of fatigue.

"Just falling behind in the count and a couple of unlucky hits to start it and made a mistake to Neto, paid for it," Warren said.

## Web gem

In the fourth inning of the opener, Neto made an over-the-shoulder catch to rob Oswaldo Cabrera of a hit. Cabrera hit a soft

popup that carried into center field, and Neto completed the off-balance play while falling to the ground.

## Trainer's room

Angels infielder Luis Rengifo (right wrist inflammation) underwent season-ending wrist surgery Tuesday and is expected to be ready for spring training. Third baseman Anthony Rendon did not start the second game after reaching base three times in the opener following a brief injured list stint because of back tightness.

Fleisher writes for the Associated Press.

latimes.com/sports

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Go to our website for takeaways from The Times' staff on your favorite home teams at [latimes.com/sports](https://latimes.com/sports).

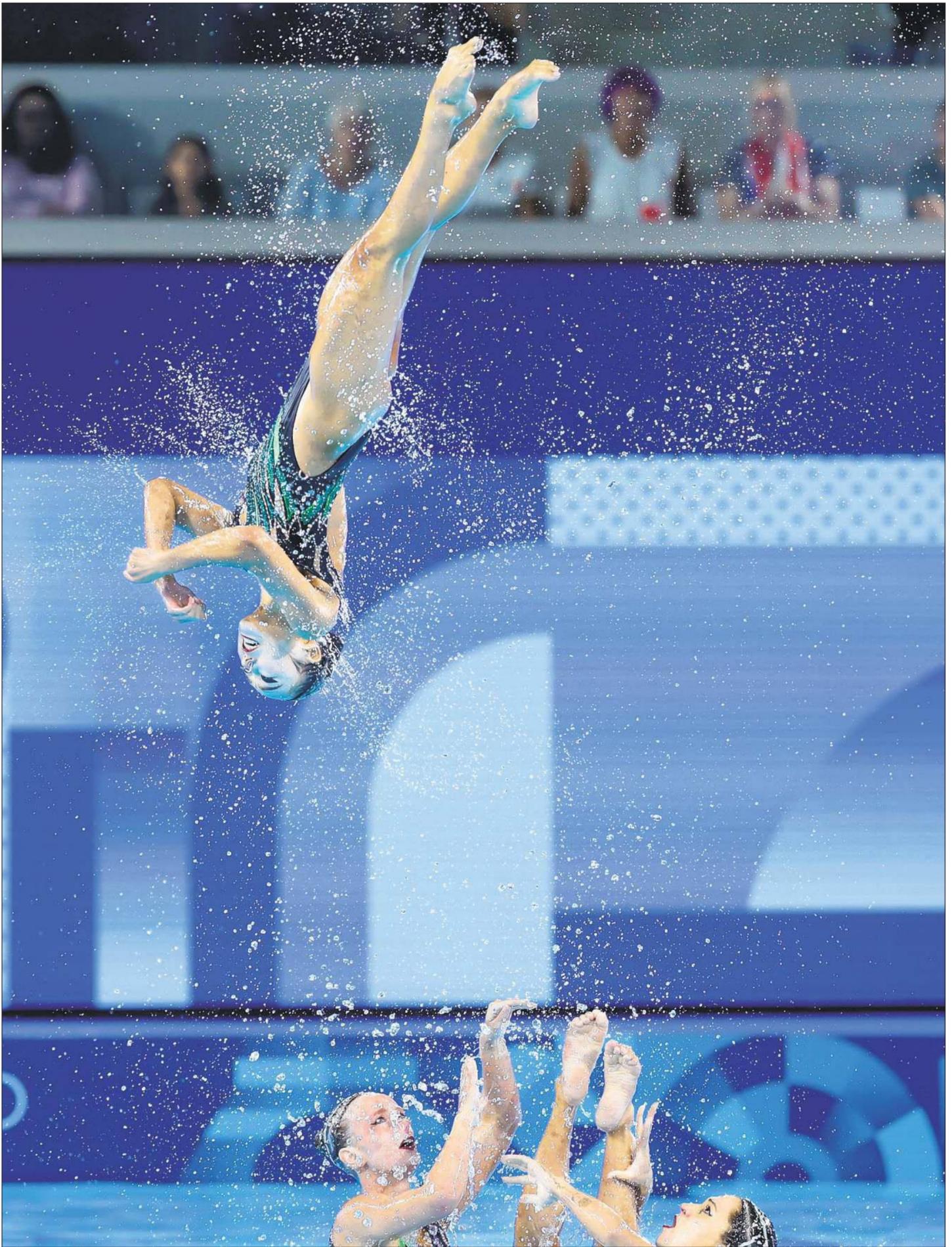


## THE SPORTS REPORT

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Photographs by WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

A **TEAM USA** member sails during an acrobatic routine that won second place in Wednesday's artistic swimming competition at the Paris Games.

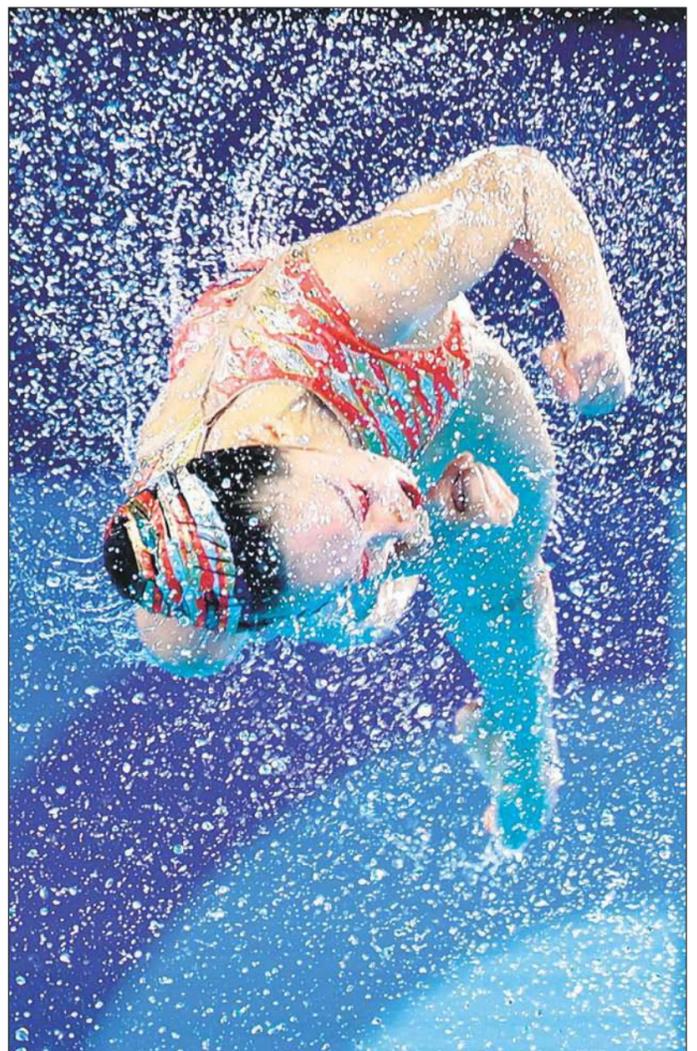
# Synchronicity in the water



**THE SILVER** was the first medal in 20 years for the U.S. artistic swimming team. Above, ballet dancers perform before competition.



**TEAM MEXICO**, above, and others were spared a matchup with the champion Russian team, which was not allowed to compete this year.



**TEAM CHINA WON** the gold, as expected, maintaining a comfortable lead that left the United States and Spain in a battle for second place.

# ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY, AUGUST 8, 2024 :: LATIMES.COM/ENTERTAINMENT



Illustration by ROSS MAY Los Angeles Times; photographs by KIRK MCKOY Los Angeles Times; Getty Images

## Making publishing a women's club

Jacqueline Susann and Jackie Collins are friends in Gill Paul's 'Scandalous Women.'

BY SCARLETT HARRIS

Gill Paul hadn't read "Valley of the Dolls" before deciding on its author, Jacqueline Susann, as one of the subjects for her new novel, "Scandalous Women."

"I was vaguely aware that Jacqueline Susann had quite a difficult backstory, which is something I'm looking for in my work," Paul tells The Times from London, where she lives.

Susann was an actress before turning to writing later in life. She gave birth to her only child, who had severe autism — at a time when little was known about the disorder and even less support was available — and was herself diagnosed with breast cancer. Her drive to excel in publishing and become a bestselling author, which she achieved with "Valley of the Dolls" — credited with inventing the modern book tour — was spurred on by making sure she was

[See Gill Paul, E3]

# CARRYING A TORCH FOR SNOOP DOGG

The onetime gangsta rapper has become America's sweetheart as Snoopmania sweeps the Games. It's been a long evolution.

BY GREG BRAXTON

**M**aking waves in a pool with Olympic swimming legend Michael Phelps. Rolling with LeBron James and the U.S. men's basketball team. Trading dance moves with gymnast Simone Biles and her teammates. Throwing some side eye at the Mona Lisa inside the Louvre.

Snoop la la!!! Biles and U.S. swimmer Katie Ledecky may have been crowned athletic GOATs at the Summer Games, but they're sharing the spotlight with the D-O-Double-G as Snoopmania sweeps through Paris.

Snoop Dogg, who began his career as one of the most prominent gangsta rappers of the West Coast hip-hop scene, has emerged as an MVP of NBC's Olympics coverage this year, helping the network strike gold with record ratings. Since carrying the

torch in the opening ceremony, the lanky, molasses-smooth artist has been an ubiquitous presence, balancing his role as a special correspondent for NBC with leading the cheers at numerous events, including fencing, judo and badminton.

His swagger into Saturday's equestrian competition in head-to-toe elite horseman gear — including a dressage tailcoat — was an instant headline-grabber. His taped segments with top athletes have highlighted the network's prime-time recaps. An Olympic pin depicting him exhaling the multicolored Olympic ring logo in front of the Eiffel Tower — parodying his love of weed — is such a hot item that even he reportedly can't get his hands on one.

"It's all about peace, love, sports and unity," he said in a TikTok video in describing his excitement [See Snoop Dogg, E2]

## What choice of Walz should teach us

MARY McNAMARA

As the daughter of a gun-owning, gun-control-supporting veteran and a progressive social studies teacher whose calm, exasperatingly informed,



"bulls—" calling rebuttal of political speeches predated the recent media trend of "live factchecking" by several decades, I find myself personally thrilled by Kamala Harris' decision to select Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz as her running mate.

Not only do Walz and my father share the same devastating "you can't be serious" sense of humor, it's about damn time K-12 teachers got the respect and political prominence they deserve.

Teachers are the unsung heroes of democracy, and Walz, who taught social studies for nine years at Mankato West High School, is a walking, gone-viral-talking reminder of that.

A reminder this country sorely needs.

Famous people love to praise their favorite educators from podiums, in interviews or while receiving awards. Remember when

[See Walz, E6]

## Facing each other and figuring it all out

The 'House of the Dragon' Season 2 finale had a lot to accomplish.

BY TRACY BROWN

This story includes spoilers for "House of the Dragon" Season 2.

Geeta Vasant Patel spent most of the 10-month shoot for Season 2 of "House of the Dragon" trying to figure out the final shot of the season.

"I kept trying to come up with what the images would be for the end of this episode, and nothing felt right," said Patel, who directed the finale, during a recent video call. "It had to end leaving you with a great punch of emotion. It had to somehow lift



LIAM DANIEL HBO

**RHAENYRA** Targaryen (Emma D'Arcy), left, and Alicent Hightower (Olivia Cooke), friends since childhood, have a conversation in the Season 2 finale.

us even from Episode 7, which was fantastic and so action-oriented that this had to make you feel even more."

The final moments of Sunday's finale, titled "The Queen Who Ever Was," featured a montage that teases the upcoming action in HBO's epic fantasy series — including a couple of new dragons — before concluding with shots of Rhaenyra Targaryen (Emma D'Arcy) alone in her library and her childhood friend Alicent Hightower (Olivia Cooke) along the cliffs gazing toward a setting sun.

Patel, who also served as a co-executive producer for Season 2, said she finally landed on the imagery while sitting on set in the library and remembering what

[See 'Dragon,' E6]



DAVID MOIR Peacock

### Getting game off the court too

In "Mr. Throwback," Stephen Curry, right, with co-star Adam Pally, gives acting a whirl. Review, E2

Comics ..... E4-5  
Puzzles ..... E5

## TV REVIEW

## In 'Mr. Throwback,' NBA star scores as charming actor

Stephen Curry shows his range portraying a version of himself in mockumentary series.

ROBERT LLOYD  
TELEVISION CRITIC

Stephen Curry, the basketball player, is all over television this week — or, to be specific, all over Peacock. There are the Olympic Games, of which you may be aware (and which are being well served by Peacock's a la carte approach), but there is also "Mr. Throwback," a new sitcom premiering Thursday, which is likely somewhat lower on your radar, especially if you aren't Googling "Stephen Curry" this week. I can't swear he hasn't been asked a question about it in Paris by some sports reporter, but he seems like too classy a guy to bring it up himself.

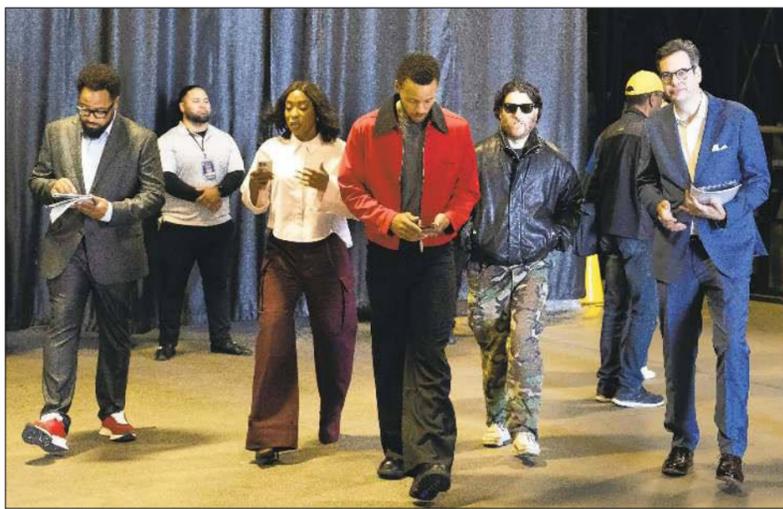
Curry stars as a version of himself, though apart from the currency and cachet he brings to the production, the story could be told as well with an entirely fictional athlete. Still, with all respect to Adam Pally, the series' actual star and a co-creator along with Daniel Libman, David Caspe and Matthew Libman, this would be a harder sell without him. And whether this is a random lark or Curry setting up his post-basketball career, the main takeaway from this six-episode series is that, while he isn't required to do any dramatic heavy lifting, he's a charming, genuine presence and there's a life in pictures waiting if he wants one. Curry wouldn't be the first athlete to make that transition, but possibly the first you'd cast as the lead in a ro-

matic comedy.

As often happens, preview episodes sent to reporters and critics come with a list of "spoilers," which are often quite sensible, and even when not, are easy enough to accommodate. "Mr. Throwback" comes with one that is not at all sensible, given that it is essentially the premise of the series, the event that drives most of what comes after. I will tell you that it has something in common with the 1937 Carole Lombard comedy "Nothing Sacred" and its 1954 Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis remake "Living It Up," and with the 1951 Bob Hope movie "The Lemon Drop Kid." If you take those ingredients, stir in some childhood trauma, sprinkle on some "Curb Your Enthusiasm" prevarication — Steph is the only completely honest major character — and finish it off with a big scoop of sentiment, you might wind up with something along the lines of "Mr. Throwback."

Pally plays Danny, who had great promise as a basketball player when he was a kid, but now runs a sports memorabilia store in Chicago notable for such offerings as a bent golf club "used by Tiger Woods' ... wife when she smashed up his Escalade." For reasons that are not gone into, he owes \$90,000 to the Polish mafia, and, given a day to deliver, hits on the idea of putting a touch on his childhood friend Curry, who happens to be in town for a game.

They haven't seen each other in 25 years. (They were estranged after an ... incident, a scandal, also marked by the producers as a spoiler.) Also present is their old friend Kimberly (Ego Nwodim), who now runs



STEPHEN CURRY, center, leads an entourage of, from left, Diallo Riddle, Ego Nwodim, Adam Pally and Nelson Franklin in the Peacock series "Mr. Throwback."



ADAM PALLY, with Ayden Mayeri, left, and Layla Scalisi, is desperate for a bailout in "Mr. Throwback."

Steph's media company, Curry Up and Wait — one of their projects is a situation comedy "Teen Steph," being written by Phoebe Waller-Bridge — and whose friendship with Danny also ended in middle school.

In approaching Steph, Danny also stumbles into the mockumentary that

frames the series, directed by Lucy (Tien Tran) and bankrolled by Curry, for no reason other than "I do cool stuff all the time," but which ultimately becomes about Danny. As Kimberly will say at the end of the first episode, describing the series she's in, "People do love a redemption story. But you

know what people love even more than a redemption story? A train wreck."

Danny is a shlub, a child-man with a smart ex-wife, Samantha (Ayden Mayeri), and a teenage daughter, Charlie (Layla Scalisi). We are to take him as a good guy deep down, but evidence is slow in coming, notwithstanding Sam saying he is, Charlie's affection for him and his stated love for her, which he also uses as an excuse for bad actions. ("I did it all for Charlie." "I'd do anything for my daughter.") Avoiding the requested (non-) spoiler, I'll just say he plays a trick, you could call it, on Curry, which gets him enough money to summarily lose the Polish mafia plot line from the series. But the nature of Danny's deception, which creates sympathy, also revives his friendship with Curry — though Kimberly is less trusting.

Here are some random

lines I enjoyed. Samantha: "I thought it would be a little weird to date a 58-year-old, but he looks great, and I don't mind an early dinner." Steph, describing a slump: "I low-key started looking into grad school." Samantha, of a bar successfully turned into a gym: "Turns out most people in Chicago work out drunk, and it's the same music." Kimberley: "We weren't going to misgender a beloved class pet." There's a funny bit about Steph being unable to "comprehend failure — literally." Things just slide off that part of his brain, says his "longevity coach," Dr. Josh (Rich Sommer), self-described as "one of the foremost thought leaders in the preventative wellness space for six months now," who has Steph drinking "placentaritas."

"Mr. Throwback" tries on a lot of different stylistic hats, from absurd to sentimental, from low farce to something like straight drama, especially in Danny's scenes with his father, Mitch (Tracy Letts), who was also Steph's childhood coach. Mitch is a man with serious problems, and in certain respects, Letts, the Tony-winning straight actor in the mix, is working in a completely different series.

Pally works hard as Danny, switching between all those stylistic hats. Still, though, we're meant on some level to feel for him — in a way, say, that we are not meant to feel for Larry David's characters — he's so consistently disappointing that one counts the minutes until the series decides it's time for a change. In the final period, it drives hard toward a happy ending — or endings — which you may find contrived, or moving. Or even both.

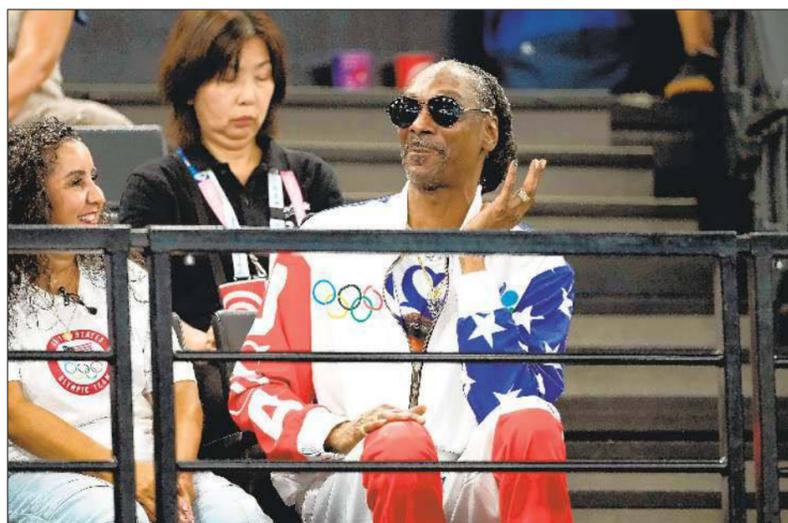
## Carrying a torch for Snoop Dogg at the Paris Games

[Snoop Dogg, from E!] over being at the Games.

While the rapper has long been a familiar fixture in pop culture, whether on the sidelines of major sporting events, in film ("Training Day," "The Garfield Movie") and TV (MTV's "Doggy Fizzle Television"), as a product pitchman (Corona beer, Tostitos), talent show coach ("The Voice"), game show host ("The Joker's Wild"), guest artist ("California Gurls" with Katy Perry) and Martha Stewart bestie, the Snoopla at the Olympics has firmly secured his standing as a crossover superstar with wide demographic appeal.

But seeing him dining in a sophisticated Paris restaurant with Stewart, bantering with U.S. volleyball duo Sara Hughes and Kelly Cheng and grooving with Biles may cause whiplash for longtime Snoop observers, who still remember the hardcore gangsta rapper who once boasted in verse about killing police officers ("187 on an undercover cop"), regularly used his tracks to call women "b—," "hos" and "tricks," and he dabbled in soft-core pornography with his "Snoop Dogg's Buckwild Bus Tour."

His 2004 hit album "R&G (Rhythm & Gangsta): The Masterpiece," which is being



CHARLIE RIEDEL Associated Press

SNOOP DOGG has been an ubiquitous presence at the Summer Olympics, including the recent women's gymnastics competition at Bercy Arena in Paris.

reissued this month to celebrate its 20th anniversary, includes the song "Can U Control Yo Hoe?," which contains the lyric: "You got to put that b— in her place / Even if it's slappin' her in her face / You got to control yo hoe."

That album's smash hit, "Drop It Like It's Hot," features violent imagery laid against an irresistible earworm beat: "If you play me close, you're on a red

beam / Oh you got a gun so you want to pop back? / AK-47 now — stop that / Cement shoes, now I'm on the move / Your family's crying, now you on the news / They can't find you and now they miss you / Must I remind you I'm only here to twist you / Pistol-whip you, dip you then flip you..."

In a Times interview about the album and other projects, Snoop said it "rep-

resents Snoop and what he stands for, musically, physically, mentally and spiritually, where he's been and where he's going."

Which makes his transformation into America's sweetheart at the Paris Olympics all the more fascinating: How did Snoop, born Calvin Broadus, remake himself as a cultural figure palatable to a broadcast network during its most high-stakes telecast?

For one thing, the rapper — who, though never denying or apologizing for his past remarks, has avoided the backlash that has struck the likes of Jo Koy, Andrew Dice Clay and Don Lemon — began the process of softening his edge long before arriving on the banks of the Seine.

Snoop is a longtime youth football coach who once awarded each player on the victorious Rowland Heights Raiders team on which two of his sons played a brand new WREFF bike, and his consistent dedication to youth sports has made him a snug fit for NBC's ultra-positive Olympics brand.

In 2005, he founded the nonprofit Snoop Youth Football League to help inner-city kids. The program has assisted more than 60,000 young people, according to its website.

The entertainer has called his 1996 acquittal on first- and second-degree murder charges in the shooting death of a Los Angeles gang member a major turning point in his life, one that guided his decision to change his image and become a more responsible family and public figure.

"I was one of the most

feared and most hated, tormented and bad-mouthed by politicians and ministers who downplayed me because they didn't know who I was," Snoop told Jemele Hill last year on her "Jemele Hill Is Unbothered" podcast. "They only knew of a perception of me that was given based on my upbringing, my past that I hadn't really gotten rid of because I was signed to a record label that was entertaining my past."

The metamorphosis intensified in 2004, just as he was releasing "R&G," when he took on a dizzying variety of projects, including his first lead dramatic role in "The Tenants," an independent feature co-starring Dylan McDermott, Rose Byrne and Aldis Hodge, in which Snoop plays a tortured novelist.

The career transition has had its bumps over the years, admittedly. "The Tenants" was barely released, and Snoop's warm and fuzzy personality in front of the camera did not always carry over when the lights went off, when he could be moody and difficult. That rawness has occasionally spilled into public view as well.

Snoop sparked a hubbub in 2020 when he lashed out at Gayle King after the "CBS Mornings" co-anchor referred to rape allegations against late Lakers star Kobe Bryant during an interview with former WNBA player Lisa Leslie, a friend of Bryant's, not long after the basketball champion, his young daughter and seven others were killed in a helicopter crash.

"How dare you try to torch my m— homeboy's reputation?" the rapper blasted in a video posted to social media. "Respect the family and back off before we come get you!"

After receiving criticism from Lakers legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and others, Snoop apologized for both the language he used and the disrespectful tone. "Two wrongs don't make no right," he posted. "I should have handled it way different than that, I was raised way better than that."

Still, such missteps have been rare. Instead, Snoop Dogg has generally focused on cultivating interests and relationships to expand his appeal beyond hip-hop fans — most notably his friendship and collaboration with Stewart, the businesswoman and lifestyle icon.

Since meeting in 2015 while they were seated side by side at a Comedy Central roast of singer Justin Bieber,

the two have formed an unlikely partnership across numerous appearances, comedy segments and even a celebrity cooking show, "Martha and Snoop's Potluck Dinner Party."

Pairing with Snoop helped put the fastidious chef and crafter in front of a younger, hipper audience, and the grandmotherly Stewart assisted in making the rapper approachable for a wider range of consumers. Their humorous banter has been featured in Olympics coverage.

Less easy to pinpoint, but no less important, is the fact that Snoop's rise also reflects a cultural sea change for both hip-hop music and weed culture. Once attacked as being dangerous influences on young people, both the gangsta rap and marijuana use that defined Snoop's public persona have been absorbed into the mainstream to the point that they are no longer seen as threatening.

(Flavor Flav, a member of the controversial and politically active rap group Public Enemy, has also been a prominent presence at the Paris Games, and former N.W.A member Ice Cube has made several popular films; many of them, like "Are We There Yet?" and "Barbershop," are family-oriented.)

Snoop's Olympic tour isn't so much a coming-out party for this kinder, gentler iteration, then, as the culmination of a decades-long process. He's even offered a few winks to his past — performing a brief Crip walk during his Olympics torch march and alluding to his "lung power" while in the pool with Phelps — as if to signal that they're nothing to worry about anymore. As one observer tweeted, "My mom called me and told me how much she likes watching Snoop Dogg at the Olympics and I had to remind her that she grounded me for buying his CD once."

All his canny media moves of the last 20 years have allowed him to stay in touch with his gangsta roots while broadening his reach to world sport's biggest stage.

That the strategy has proved so successful may be thanks to the fact that it's not a strategy at all, as Snoop told Hill: "When you see me with Martha Stewart, I'm being 100% Snoop Dogg. When you see me in the hood, I'm being 100% Snoop Dogg. It's the same person. This is how I get out. Me being me is all I know how to do."

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# Music industry group's leader is wary of AI

RIAA is trying to both police and cultivate the technology's potential, chief says.

By August Brown

Last week, a bipartisan group of U.S. senators introduced the NO FAKES Act, designed to protect the voices and visual likenesses of artists and citizens in the AI era. One of the main groups advocating for that bill was the Recording Industry Assn. of America, better known as the RIAA.

The trade group, which represents record labels on policy issues, has been on a legal and legislative tear as advancements in artificial intelligence upend how music is produced, discovered and used.

In June, the RIAA announced a lawsuit against a pair of music AI firms, Suno and Udio, alleging they bulk-harvested copyrights to train their models. "Unlicensed services like Suno and Udio that claim it's 'fair' to copy an artist's life's work and exploit it for their own profit without consent or pay set back the promise of genuinely innovative AI for us all," RIAA chief Mitch Glazier said in a statement in June.

(Suno Chief Executive Mikey Shulman said that the company "is designed to generate completely new outputs, not to memorize and regurgitate preexisting content).

The Times spoke to Glazier about the RIAA's work policing and cultivating AI's potential, the black-box conspiracies around Spotify's algorithm, and how the group's reputation as the bully of the Napster era has changed.

**There's a lot of government and legal interest around music and AI. How would you compare this moment to the advent of file sharing in the '90s and streaming in the 2010s?**

If you add the threat of file sharing and the opportunity of streaming, this is a combination of the two. Like file sharing, it is a major technological shift that will have a huge impact on the music industry. AI has been used as a creative tool. But the abuse of AI could be as big a threat as file sharing was. Companies view it as an opportunity much like when streaming services could provide legal alternatives and fan-friendly platforms. But if it goes unchecked for abuse by regulators and the courts, it could be a giant threat.

**Musicians already rely on AI that fixes drum loops or recommends songs. Is the threat in synthetic music and abusing likenesses?**

Generative AI is really the issue here. And it's



JASON KEMPIN Getty Images

**MITCH GLAZIER**, chief executive of the Recording Industry Assn. of America, holds a copy of the ELVIS Act, a Tennessee law protecting artists' rights to their voices and likenesses, at an event in Nashville in March.

nonconsensual generative AI — when you train your model and don't ask permission. It's when you dilute the marketplace because you can create 10 million songs a day. That unfairly competes with the music of the artists you copied. Synthetic music made from generative AI as a result of training on artists, and the voice and visual likeness issues where you're basically cloning artists to sing something they didn't sing, that's where it hits the hardest.

**What were the particular dangers in Suno's and Udio's models?**

We suspected they had used established artists' music to train their model. They avoided legal consequences by changing it so that you couldn't put in a particular artist's name. They added new subscription services and monetized it very quickly, when we knew that they hadn't gotten consent for the input. The reason why we had to get out in front was because the technology was advancing so quickly and they're not transparent about their input.

**How could you tell what music they were training on?**

The output itself contained clumps that were recognizable. Jason Derulo famously tags his music by singing "Jason Derulo." When the AI output does that, you're like, "I think I know where that came from."

One of the key pieces in this case was a quote from one of the investors in the companies, that basically

said, "I wouldn't have invested in this company if they had followed copyright law, that would be such a restraint." As these services rise and start to mature, by filing this suit, it's a signal to venture capitalists that it might not be so safe to put your money into a service like this if it doesn't get consent for its input.

**The RIAA has advocated for bills like the NO FAKES Act, which echo concerns that actors might see their digital likenesses compromised or signed away. Is this something musicians should worry about too?**

Absolutely. This is one instance where record companies and artists have stood side by side to make sure that voices and visual likenesses can't be used without consent. If someone puts words in your mouth using your own voice, what can that do to your career and your reputation?

We have sent thousands of notices to have platforms take down not just songs like fake Drake and the Weeknd, but countless types of cloning, misinformation and things that are funny but overall damaging. We've had mixed luck with the platforms. That's why we are pushing so hard to protect voice and likeness rights federally, that would apply to all people. If somebody wants to make a replica with your consent, that's fine. But if you don't, you can go after them and get it taken down quickly to limit the damage.

**Tennessee passed the ELVIS Act dealing with this. It's interesting that**

**Nashville was a first mover on this.**

I don't think it's an accident. A lot of country artists spoke up very quickly, because their fans demand authenticity. Not that other genres don't, but I think in country, there's a special appeal. Lainey Wilson testified for the House bill and made a great case for it. Randy Travis testified. Nashville has been front and center in passing legislation and for artists speaking out about this.

Politicians understand their opponents may clone them and make them say the opposite policy position that they actually stand for. That's how you get Marsha Blackburn and Chris Coons standing together on this.

**Many artists are struggling in the current music economy. I can imagine a world where there's pressure from labels to sign those rights away.**

There need to be guardrails. If you sign with a major label, you're not going to have some broad grant of rights forever. Let's say you're a 14-year-old kid and a manager says, "I can get you a label deal, all you have to do is sign here and you sign away the rights to your name, image and likeness forever, including after you're dead for any purpose." Those are practices that need to be addressed. We worked on this legislation with SAG-AFTRA to make sure that there were guardrails.

**I'm not too worried about fake Drake running up the charts. But streaming services might put a thumb**

**on the scale for synthetic music they own. Does that worry you?**

There's definitely going to be a transition. I wonder, what's going to happen to the production music houses licensing their catalogs to AI companies, so that they can generate more music? If you're writing commercial music and getting a cut of whatever the company licenses, what does that mean for you? AI music is cheap. There's no human who has to get paid. Will platforms use their algorithms to point people to AI-generated music, because there's no royalty? I think that's a potential real problem for human artists.

Then there's the dilution issue. Are they going to allow these aggregators to automatically upload 10 million tracks a day that you have to compete with to break an artist? Which ones will the algorithms favor? If people like something, will they automatically produce more of it? Will they label it as such? I think these are big, commercial questions.

At the end of the day, fans are discriminating about having a connection to human artists. At the end of the day, the market is going to serve fans who want authenticity. If we can get the legal rights in place so that artists can protect themselves, I think fans will do the rest.

**There are conspiracy theories about the reasons certain songs have taken off on Spotify. Discovery Mode is a point of contention too. Are there new pressures on artists and labels to give up money in**

**exchange for visibility there, or fears that Spotify has its own agenda about what becomes popular?**

I don't think major label artists would make that trade. But I also don't think it scales, because then it's useless. If everybody gave up royalties in order to have promotion, then it's no longer promotion, because everybody's getting it. It's self-defeating.

But the push for transparency is incredibly important. We don't want to turn into an industry where artists can't get data about themselves to promote themselves, and record labels can't get data about artists to identify audiences. Nobody's going to give away their secret sauce, but the black-box issue is real, and it creates angst and feeds conspiracy theories. It makes people feel that there is a thumb on the scale and that it's not fair.

**Back in the '90s and 2000s, young music fans were aligned with tech firms against labels. Now, you see more fans allied against tech. How have those allegiances changed since you've been at the RIAA?**

Record companies are not gatekeepers anymore. They don't control their own distribution. The control is now with the tech platforms. I think we stand on the same side as fans and artists today, because we have the same interests. The Man has changed, and the tech platforms are now The Man.

**For my entire life, the RIAA was synonymous with suing music fans for downloading songs on Napster. Do you still encounter that sentiment about your work today?**

It's a lot more fun now. The industry has changed, but our mission remains the same. How do we protect against people infringing the content of the artists with whom our record companies work? Now adding to that, how do we protect their name, image and likeness? The rise of streaming and the democratization of the industry has changed the perspective about the enforcement of those rights.

**What conflicts and changes are on the horizon in music and AI?**

How much human contribution does there have to be on something that's partly made by a machine in order for it to be copyrightable? We don't want Suno to say they own all the music generated by its machine. On the other hand, there's the new Randy Travis track, where AI scraped his voice so that he could create art when he can't sing anymore. Is that enough human contribution? I think that's a fascinating piece on the board.

# Fictional friendship drives novel about two real authors

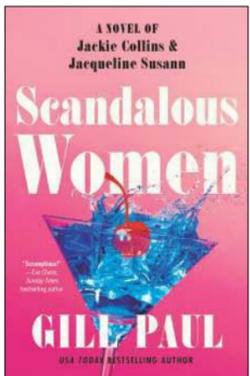
[Gill Paul, from E1] able to provide for her son when her cancer returned. Susann died in 1974 at age 56.

The other titular scandalous woman is another Jacqueline, who preferred to go by Jackie, the prolific pulp fiction author and sister to "Dynasty" actress Joan Collins. The two grew up in a violent home, and Jackie Collins' first husband was an abusive drug addict who died by suicide after the dissolution of their marriage. Collins' 32 novels — all New York Times bestsellers — have sold more than 500 million copies worldwide. Collins died in 2015. She was 77.

Still, for Paul, "It's not just about what they achieve; there's got to be some kind of struggle."

In Paul's historical fiction, which includes books about Jackie Kennedy and Maria Callas (2020's "Jackie and Maria"), the Romanovs ("The Lost Daughter," 2018) and Dorothy Parker ("The Manhattan Girls," 2022), she is "looking for women who have maybe been misjudged by historians. They're not necessarily behind the scenes, but perhaps historians have put them there. They did great things and didn't get the credit for it."

Despite the commercial successes of Susann and Collins, their work has been widely dismissed. "Valley of the Dolls" was panned upon its release in 1966, and



William Morrow & Co.

**GILL PAUL**, above right, drew on her experience working at publishing companies to write her book.



William Morrow & Co.

Collins' output has been derided as beach reads and chick lit.

"They both popularized this idea that books could be entertainment for busy people who don't have time to sit down with really difficult books that you have to dissect the metaphors [of] and figure out the themes," Paul says. "You can just be entertained by a story. You could read 'Valley of the Dolls' or [Collins'] 'The World Is Full of Married Men' on [the subway] and be proud that this was a book that people were talking about."

Paul worked in publishing straight out of college in the 1980s before writing historical fiction in the early 2010s. It "had always been this old boys' network of long lunches, men who sup-

ported their male authors and published literature with a capital L." In the 1960s, with Susann and Collins, "It was all beginning to change and people were starting to realize the value of women's books. Women did read and they didn't necessarily want to read dusty classics by pompous old men."

"I wanted to show what it was like in publishing companies behind the scenes," Paul continues. "To an extent, it was still an era where I had misogynist male bosses. I had male authors who thought it was part of my job description to sleep with them." Let's just say the fireman's pole that Susann's publisher Bernard Geis makes new female hires

slither down to gauge their willingness to put up with on-the-job sexual harassment is not a figment of Paul's editorial license in "Scandalous Women" — out Tuesday. "You couldn't make that up! We mustn't ever backslide."

That's where the character of Nancy White comes in. An ambitious young college graduate who comes to work at Susann's publishing house and quickly notices women's hunger for "gritty books about romances that don't have happy endings — and for glamour, too," writes Paul in Nancy's voice. "Women like stories that transport them out of their everyday lives."

But the aforementioned old boys' club of publishing keeps her in her place, fetching coffee and taking min-

utes for meetings — when she's allowed into them — despite pulling Collins' "The World Is Full of Married Men" from the slush pile and helping make it a success.

Paul could have just as easily crafted Susann and Collins to hate each other, as in her previous novel, last year's "A Beautiful Rival" about competitors Elizabeth Arden and Helena Rubinstein.

Though there's no evidence that the two Jackies ever met, Paul was partly thinking of her own author friendships and the lack of envy and resentment there-in when writing the one that emerges between her subjects. "Just because someone buys one book doesn't mean they won't buy yours as well. In fact, a bestseller creates more readers."



Associated Press; EVAN AGOSTINI Invision / Associated Press

**COMMERCIAL** successful authors Jacqueline Susann in 1958, left, and Jackie Collins in 2013.

The throughline to today is taut, with genres by and marketed to women, particularly romance, gaining popularity on BookTok and thus seeping into the meatspace. Several romance-themed bookshops have sprung up in recent years, and authors such as Emily Henry, Sarah J. Maas and Colleen Hoover owe their dominance on best-seller lists to the path Susann and Collins paved.

"They gave women permission to write about sex," says Paul. "They stood up and took all the flak so that women could go on and write sex scenes."

"It's said that there's a whole generation of girls who got their sex education from Jackie Collins novels," Paul continues. "It's not very realistic," but nor is porn or other mainstream portrayals of sex that show women in subservient roles, she says. "If entertaining, widely read books have sex scenes in which women are equal partners, or more than equal — women are the dominant partners — then that's great. That's redressing the imbalance a little bit."

As for the historical hidden figures Paul will turn her pen to next, she stays mum but says there's no shortage of subjects "who made big achievements in the 20th century who were denied their place in the history books — there's plenty to choose from."

COMICS

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PICKLES By Brian Crane



CRABGRASS By Tauhid Bondia



BABY BLUES By Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



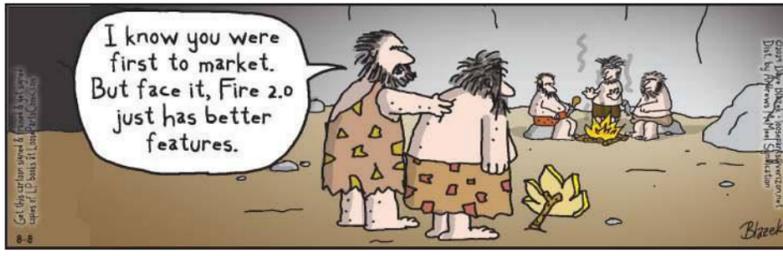
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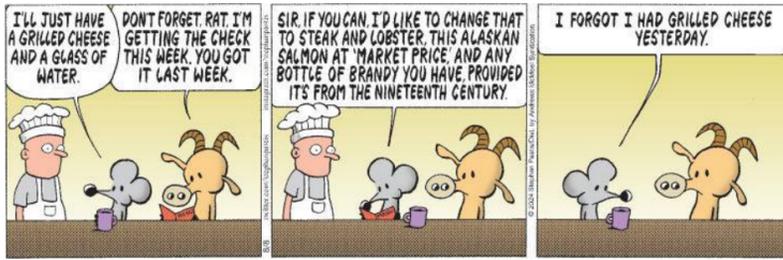
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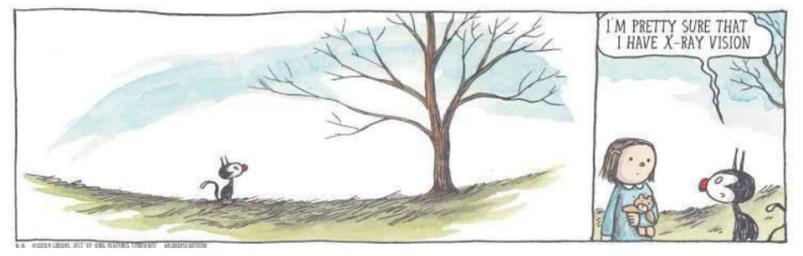
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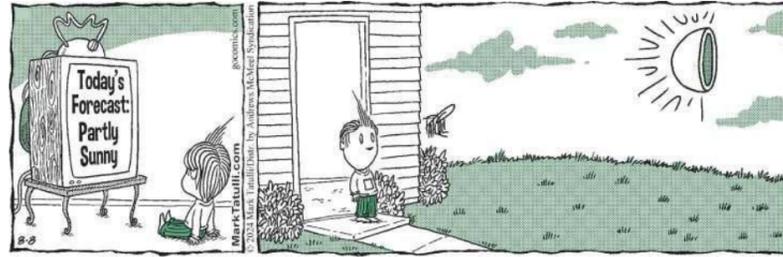
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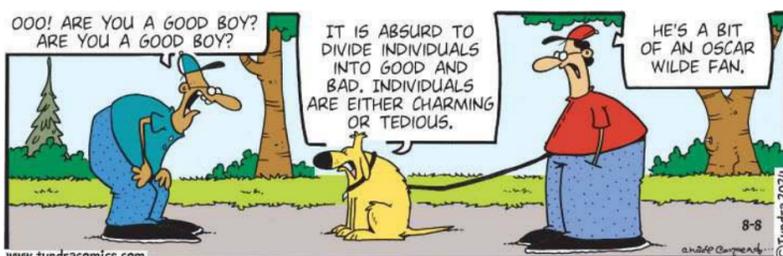
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BETWEEN FRIENDS By Sandra Bell-Lundy



TUNDRA By Chad Carpenter



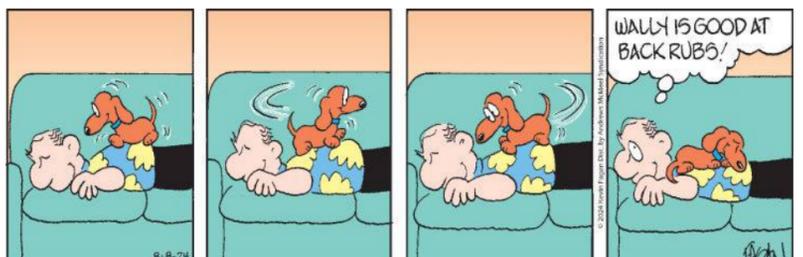
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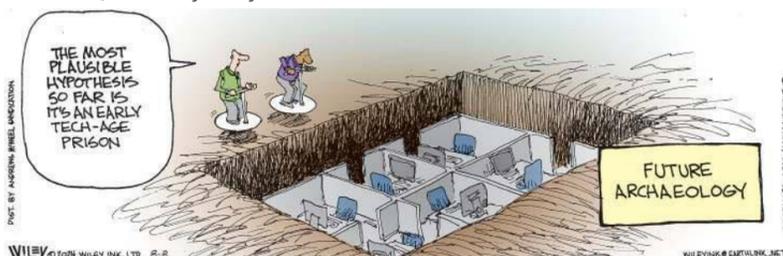
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MUTTS By Patrick McDonnell



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PEANUTS By Charles M. Schulz







THEO WHITEMAN



OLLIE UPTON HBO



THEO WHITEMAN

**ALICENT** Hightower (Olivia Cooke), from left; Daemon Targaryen (Matt Smith) and Rhaenyra Targaryen (Emma D'Arcy); Rhaena Targaryen (Phoebe Campbell).

## Ambitious season finale had a long to-do list

['Dragon,' from E1] showrunner Ryan Condal had previously told her about the conversation between Rhaenyra and Alicent and their relationship.

"Ryan had told me that it's as if Alicent has been carrying this burden her whole life and in that scene with Rhaenyra, she picks up the burden and gives it to [her]," Patel said. "Now Rhaenyra is holding this burden of having to kill millions of people and charge forward with war and Alicent is free. Her burden is the freedom."

As someone who had long dreamed of working on "Game of Thrones," Patel describes landing "House of the Dragon" — "the Olympics of TV filmmaking" — as the "pinnacle of my career so far." "The Queen Who Ever Was" was Patel's third episode on the series, having previously directed Season 1's "The Lord of the Tides," which depicts Viserys' last days, and Season 2's "The Burning Mill." She credits her family — especially her mother, who popped in off-camera during the interview to deliver Patel some chai — for being able to chase her dreams.

Patel, who has a background in human rights work that took her into war zones, started her filmmaking career in documentaries. (She also has directed episodes of shows like "Star Wars: Ahsoka," "P-Valley" and "The Great.") Her past experience in conflict zones has informed how she approaches "House of the Dragon."

"There's so much of what I saw in war, or learned in war, that I applied to my work on the show because the terminology of an eye for an eye, that's not taken lightly," Patel said. "You can see it around the world right now. You can see it in conflict zones that, unfortunately, are still conflict zones after many, many, many decades."

Patel discusses Rhaenyra and Alicent's relationship, Daemon's vision and filming the finale's montages in this conversation, edited for length and clarity.

### Can you walk us through your approach after you got the script for this episode?

When I get a script, I immediately look at three-act structure. I go back to a simple methodology of Aristotle: beginning, middle, end. I also look for a midpoint. I look for some kind of shift in the middle. Also, as someone who's done a few season finales



KEVIN SCANLON

**DIRECTOR** Geeta Vasant Patel says one mission of the "House of the Dragon" Season 2 finale was that "it had to end leaving you with a great punch of emotion."

now, I go back to the very first episode of the season because I feel like we should treat the season like a film. I went back and I read the opening of the first episode, which Ryan Condal wrote, and in there it talks about what I think is the theme of the season. I haven't confirmed it with Ryan, but for me, it's "Duty is sacrifice." We must sacrifice for duty. I took Episode 8 and started trying to build it around that theme.

I knew that everything was building up to Rhaenyra in a room with Alicent saying, "You want this, take action. Sacrifice for what you feel is your duty. You want to do your duty, that is what is going to free you of this burden." Then the next beat, of course, is the montage [that shows] that sacrifice has escaped, with Aegon leaving. That clarity takes a minute when you get a

script, because there's so much going on.

### This is your third episode featuring pivotal Rhaenyra and Alicent moments. How did working on these previous episodes affect how you approached their meeting in the finale? What is the throughline for you?

In [Season 1,] Episode 8, they made a pact. They were vulnerable and said, "I miss you, my friend." Then we see them in [Season 2,] Episode 3, and forget anything that's happened, but that has not gone away, that sense of love and desire. Yet things have happened, an eye for an eye has happened. And when Rhaenyra enters the room asking for Alicent to compromise [and] collaborate, what comes out of that conversation is really no collaboration whatsoever. Because, unfortunately, an eye for an eye wins.

Then we go to [Season

2,] Episode 8, where we need it to be rising action and Ryan [Condal], Sara [Hess] and I were constantly checking both scenes and making sure they felt like they were connected. Now, it's almost as if nothing has happened in between those two scenes. Rhaenyra was essentially slapped in the face by Alicent, in her point of view. When Alicent entered that scene in Episode 8 ... when Rhaenyra sees Alicent, that's all she remembers: "You rejected me." And that is very human. You see the two of them become kids again because that's what we do in front of the people that we are most intimate with. You see Rhaenyra's face spoil and you see her almost spit at Alicent in the way she talks. And you see Alicent biting her nails, which we haven't seen her do in so long. I looked at all of that as almost like a trilogy of scenes

between these two people.

**For me, so much of the show is about these two women and the ebbs and flow of their relationship and how things like their relationships with their respective fathers have affected their dynamic.**

It's the two of them collecting pain. It's a hero's journey in that the pain keeps winning and we're waiting for the love to win. There's moments where the love won, like in Season 1, Episode 8, the love won, but then pain just keeps building. Wherever it comes from — from Daemon, from Dad, from your sons, who you cannot control, who have become monsters. What I love about Episode 8 is that it is truly an exploration of the human condition, the constant battle between pain and love.

**What is it like to get a script that says "and then there's a montage"? I assume a script says more than just that, but can you walk us through that?**

I freaked out. I feel like montages are very dangerous because the longer they are, the more the risk is that they're going to be boring and monotonous. The best montages in cinema have been montages that tell the story and move the story forward. What is great about this montage is that we had a story moment in it, which is Aegon leaves, that does shift the A story of this episode, which is Rhaenyra and Alicent's relationship. You don't want that to get buried in all those [other] pieces. And there was no musical piece — we looked, trust me — that could temp in for that montage. Nothing was long enough. So it was a bit intimidating while you're in edit, we're like, "We can't even find a piece of music that lasts this long, we'll have to take two, three pieces and put them together." But the main thing that we had to attack when we started that montage was Rhaena has this C, D story where she's racing after this dragon, and it's very possible that her story of finding a dragon could overshadow what we're supposed to really point out in that montage. In structuring that montage, I just moved the pieces around to where I felt Rhaena still had that moment but we didn't think it was *the* moment. That was really fun.

**The Rhaena storyline has been so interesting to me because, especially this**

**season, we see just how important dragons are for a Targaryen. It's their birthright. This is something she's wanted her whole life.**

When we got the script originally ... I searched myself for how I related to that moment. For me, there have been so many moments in my life where so many people have said to me, particularly directing, "You can't. This is not something that is in the stars for you. You don't belong here. You are not good enough." There is a moment where you want something so badly and you believe in it that you're willing to die to prove to yourself that it's possible. I feel like this is for all of us running for that miracle. I shared it with our team and said, "What if we framed the tone of this around that?" Let's get the dirt, let's get her feet, let's get her to a point where she's actually running. We were in Wales and Phoebe [Campbell] ran and ran and ran. That's what they had in their her head too. "I am going to die today and I'm OK with that because I want a dragon and I need to know if I can do this." That was fantastic because even the crew, we all were there with [Campbell], it was such a spiritual shoot for us.

**You also had that whole other montage on this episode with Daemon's vision.**

When I got the script, it was like a section of a list of images. Sara and Ryan spoke with me about it and they said that the reason it was a list of images is that they didn't want it to feel linear. Ryan really wanted it to be fragmented, so that it really is this vision that [Daemon] has to put the pieces together [so] even after he leaves it, it's something that simmers in his head. It needed to feel fragmented, and yet it needed to tell Daemon the story that he needed to know in order to change for the first time in his life, with no words — you know, no big deal, no pressure. He had to believe that it's not about him anymore, that he's just a part of this bigger world and there's something he must do, which is put Rhaenyra on the throne. I definitely lost a lot of sleep over that vision because I knew what we needed to achieve. I knew how difficult it would be. I also felt incredibly honored to be able to do this vision knowing, as a "Game of Thrones" fan, what it represented.

## Selection of Walz provides America with a teachable moment

[Walz, from E1] Tom Hanks outed his drama teacher after winning the best actor Oscar for "Philadelphia," spawning the film "In & Out"?

And certainly Hollywood loves a good teacher story — from "Welcome Back, Kotter" to "Abbott Elementary," "Dead Poets Society" to "Precious," the importance of educators is regularly celebrated onscreen with pathos and passion. Indeed, as the small-town teacher/football coach who became advisor to his school's first LGBTQ club, and a former NRA member who became a gun-control advocate after the 2018 Parkland school shooting, Walz himself has a backstory that seems an easy sell in any pitch meeting: "Friday Night Lights" meets "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington."

Still, teachers, particularly those at public schools, remain absurdly underpaid and overwhelmed, their profession honored by a national appreciation day and little else, unless you count a higher burnout rate than any other profession.

Here's hoping Walz will help change that. As he said

in his first campaign rally with Harris in Pennsylvania on Tuesday, while introducing his wife, Gwen, "a 29-year public school educator": "Don't ever underestimate teachers."

Obviously, he brings many other things to the ticket. He is a six-term congressman and a two-term governor who leaped into national prominence in recent weeks with take-downs of former President Donald Trump and GOP vice presidential candidate JD Vance, whom Walz famously referred to as "just weird."

"These are weird people on the other side," Walz said in an interview on MSNBC. "They want to take books away, they want to be in your exam room. That's what it comes down to, and don't get sugarcoating this: These are weird ideas."

Whether clad in a suit or a "Dad hat" and T-shirt, Walz talks to people rather than at them and seems capable of making his case in a way that is both deeply informed and easily understood. His remarks went viral because they eschewed political jargon



STEVE KARNOWSKI Associated Press

**"DON'T EVER** underestimate teachers" is a good first lesson from Kamala Harris' VP pick, Tim Walz.

and explained the situation with the same "come on now" ease that he used to deliver a tutorial on how to change out a burned-out headlight harness on a 2014 Ford Edge.

Which is precisely what the best teachers do.

If there is anyone who can deliver large amounts of complicated information in a way that educates and inspires a large group of disparate, distracted and

fractious individuals, it's a teacher.

Anyone who has stood in front of a classroom of high school students knows there is no tougher constituency, or audience, in the world.

You need someone to stare down bratty antics or blow up misinformation? As Walz has already proved, a good teacher can do it mid-sentence, without blinking, before returning to a lecture

on westward expansion.

The hours of prep, the verbal facility needed to get and keep students' attention, the vision to see both the entire class and the individual student, the patience to handle the inevitable disruptions, the diplomacy involved in many parental interactions, not to mention the increasing responsibility for classroom safety: Is it any wonder that teachers experience twice the amount of stress of the general workforce?

Walz has said he decided to go into politics after he took a group of students to a rally for then-President George W. Bush and they were asked to leave because one of the students had a John Kerry sticker. As origin stories go, it's a great anecdote, but teaching was far from just a stepping stone for Walz. In office, he's continued to champion public education as a key to maintaining a successful democracy.

After Harris announced Walz as her VP pick, he was quickly endorsed by both the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Assn.

"Walz successfully passed legislation providing free school meals to every Minnesota student, ensuring no child will have to learn on an empty stomach," NEA President Becky Pringle said in a statement. "He increased education spending by billions of dollars, raised teacher pay, enacted paid family and medical leave for all families, provided unemployment insurance to hourly school workers, and expanded the collective bargaining rights of Minnesotans."

The media will, no doubt, lean into Walz's experience as a football coach — in 1999 he helped Mankato West win a state championship, and political wonks love a good sports metaphor. But coaching involves harnessing a preexisting love of the sport. Being a teacher means showing up day after day to help a group of people, who often would rather be anywhere else, learn the things they need to know.

Whether it's the danger of banning books and restricting women's right to choose, or how to change a burned-out headlight harness.

**HE WAS**

**THE PERFECT  
PSYCHOPATH**

# *the envelope*

**IN 'RIPLEY,'**

**BUT**

**ANDREW  
SCOTT**

**JUST WANTS  
TO SING**

A SPECIAL  
ISSUE  
OF THE

*Los Angeles Times*

**AUGUST  
8, 2024  
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# What's inside



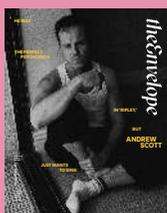
p 14 MATT BERRY



p 12 JOHN WILSON



p 32 'SHŌGUN'



Cover photo by  
Ryan Pfluger  
For The Times

**Correction:**  
In the Aug. 1  
Envelope, a story  
about past  
Emmy winners  
said James Earl  
Jones was an  
EGOT. Jones  
has an Emmy,  
Grammy, Oscar  
and Tony, but his  
Oscar is an  
honorary one.  
An EGOT must  
actually win  
each award.

p 8

## THE CONTENDERS

The Envelope speaks to **Paul W. Downs** (p 10) about how writing, producing and starring in "Hacks" all go hand in hand. Comedian **Janelle James** (p 16) shares why she's apprehensive to do any more dancing scenes on "Abbott Elementary."

## COVER STORY

After having starred in his fair share of dramatic roles, including as the titular villain on "Ripley," **Andrew Scott** is itching to try something more lighthearted. Perhaps a musical or romantic comedy?  
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## THE SPOTLIGHT

**A Deeper Dive** (p 28) looks at how TV's top shows aren't above politics. **Who's Counting** (p 35) breaks down Maya Rudolph's impressive four Emmy nods across three shows and the chances she might return to "SNL" as Kamala Harris.

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## THE INDUSTRY

Tech writer revisits his predictions about the metaverse in **The Wide Shot** (p 38). Remembering the "Game of Thrones" death that wasn't (p 40). Kids on break and "Bridgerton" are driving strong numbers for streaming services (p 42).

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p 30 GOLD STANDARD

# theEnvelope

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SUPPORTING ACTOR  
(COMEDY)



# Abbott Elementary



STREAM ON  
hulu

# BuzzMeter

Our panel of **Emmy experts** share their picks



## ‘THE BEAR’

### Comedy nominees

- “Abbott Elementary”
- “The Bear”
- “Curb Your Enthusiasm”
- “Hacks”
- “Only Murders in the Building”
- “Palm Royale”
- “Reservation Dogs”
- “What We Do in the Shadows”

**IN THE DARK FOREST OF EMMY SEASON, THE PANEL SAYS VOTERS WILL CHOOSE** “The Bear.” The reigning champ is the BuzzMeter consensus pick to repeat, but several panelists have reservations about its category. Kristen Baldwin says, “Next year, guys, submit in the drama category. You know it’s time.” Tracy Brown agrees: “While people may continue to debate whether ‘The Bear’ truly is a comedy, [what’s] not in question is how it will likely sweep in the comedy categories once again.” Those aren’t the only reservations in their hearts: Five of six panelists shout out the “transcendent” and “beloved” “Reservation Dogs.” Trey Mangum sighs, “Ah, if only voters had caught up to ‘Reservation Dogs’ two seasons ago.” Lorraine Ali says “The Bear’s” likely win is “fine if you’re OK with a just-OK drama canceling out a once-in-a-lifetime comedy.”



**GLENN WHIPP**  
Los Angeles Times

“THE BEAR”

As long as Emmy voters pay attention to what’s eligible this season, the fact that reigning comedy series champ “The Bear” spun its wheels a bit in its recently released third season shouldn’t impact the impulse to honor it for its stellar second season, with “Forks” and “Fishes” two of the best episodes of television this decade.



**MATT ROUSH**  
TV Guide

“THE BEAR”

Nothing will stop “The Bear” from winning handily for its second and arguably best season. (The “Fishes” episode alone guarantees it, and will win for writing and directing.) FX’s banner year includes a belated nomination for “Reservation Dogs” in its final season. “Hacks” enjoyed a resurgent run but now is a dark horse.



**TREY MANGUM**  
Shadow and Act

“THE BEAR”

It looks as if “The Bear” will come out on top as it continues to duke it out with “Abbott Elementary” this awards season. “Hacks” is stellar as always but won’t be able to match with these two. Ah, if only voters had caught up to “Reservation Dogs” two seasons ago, but unfortunately, this final season is not its moment.



**LORRAINE ALI**  
Los Angeles Times

(TIE) “THE BEAR” / “RESERVATION DOGS”

Now’s the last chance to award “Reservation Dogs,” one of the decade’s best TV comedies. The defiantly unique series challenged Native American tropes with wicked smart humor. But this comedy award is going to “The Bear” and that’s fine if you’re OK with a just-OK drama canceling out a once-in-a-lifetime comedy.



**KRISTEN BALDWIN**  
Entertainment Weekly

“THE BEAR”

Give “The Bear” all the awards. (But next year, submit it in drama. It’s time.) It’s a bummer that for “Reservation Dogs,” one of the most transcendent comedies of the last decade, its first (and last) nomination here is unlikely to earn a win. (And shame on voters for snubbing the wholly original “I’m a Virgo.”)



**TRACY BROWN**  
Los Angeles Times

“THE BEAR”

There is only one thing I needed the Emmy voters to get right this year and that was for them to finally give “Reservation Dogs” the recognition it deserves. But while people may continue to debate whether “The Bear” truly is a comedy, the one thing that’s not in question is how it will likely sweep in the comedy categories once again.

You can find all our picks at [latimes.com/buzzmeter](https://latimes.com/buzzmeter)

PROUDLY CONGRATULATES OUR 76<sup>TH</sup> EMMY® AWARDS NOMINEES

*Abbott  
Elementary*

**OUTSTANDING COMEDY SERIES**

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IN A COMEDY SERIES

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**OUTSTANDING CASTING**  
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**JANELLE JAMES**  
**SHERYL LEE RALPH**  
OUTSTANDING SUPPORTING ACTRESS  
IN A COMEDY SERIES

**RANDALL EINHORN**  
OUTSTANDING DIRECTING  
FOR A COMEDY SERIES

**OUTSTANDING CONTEMPORARY HAIRSTYLING**

A group of diverse cast members from the TV show Abbott Elementary standing on a rooftop with a city skyline in the background.

*the  
Voice*

**OUTSTANDING REALITY COMPETITION PROGRAM**

**OUTSTANDING PICTURE EDITING**  
FOR A STRUCTURED REALITY  
OR COMPETITION PROGRAM

**OUTSTANDING MAKEUP**  
FOR A VARIETY, NONFICTION  
OR REALITY PROGRAM

**OUTSTANDING LIGHTING DESIGN/LIGHTING DIRECTION**  
FOR A VARIETY SERIES

**OUTSTANDING SOUND MIXING**  
FOR A REALITY PROGRAM

The judges of the TV show The Voice sitting in their signature blue and red chairs on a stage.

**BOB ♥ ABISHOLA**

**OUTSTANDING CINEMATOGRAPHY**  
FOR A MULTI-CAMERA SERIES (HALF-HOUR)

A man and a woman sitting on a bench in a field of red poppies, smiling at each other.

*The* **GOLDEN  
BACHELOR**

**OUTSTANDING CASTING**  
FOR A REALITY PROGRAM

A man in a tan suit sitting on a stool, holding a sword, representing the host of The Golden Bachelor.

*Night  
Court*

**OUTSTANDING CINEMATOGRAPHY**  
FOR A MULTI-CAMERA SERIES (HALF-HOUR)

**OUTSTANDING PICTURE EDITING**  
FOR A MULTI-CAMERA COMEDY SERIES

A woman with blonde hair and an older man with a white beard and glasses, representing the main cast of Night Court.

# *the Contenders*

**Paul W. Downs**  
p 10

**John Wilson**  
p 12

**Matt Berry**  
p 14

**COVER STORY:**  
**Andrew Scott**  
p 20

Photograph by  
**Dania**  
**Maxwell**

**JANELLE  
JAMES**

p.16



# 'Hacks' co-creator dons many hats, but still no Tom Ford suit

In addition to writing, directing and producing, **Paul W. Downs** stars as talent agent Jimmy in a role that was practically tailored for him

Story by  
Daniel  
Vaillancourt

Photograph by  
Jennifer  
McCord  
For The Times

**W**HILE CONCEIVING what would become Max's exquisite comedy "Hacks" with wife Lucia Aniello and longtime collaborator Jen Statsky, Paul W. Downs clearly had his eye on playing talent manager Jimmy, whose clients include both legendary comedian Deborah Vance (Jean Smart) and up-and-coming comedy writer Ava Daniels (Hannah Einbinder).

Subtlety had no place in the room. "The pitch actually said the actor would have brown hair, blue eyes and these teeth — and then I flashed a smile," says the unpretentious Downs, 41, over Zoom from the Los Angeles home he shares with Aniello and their toddler. "In the pilot script, it said, 'Jimmy (Paul W. Downs), in a Tom Ford suit he gets to keep.' So yes, the plan was always for me to do it. I did not get a Tom Ford suit, but otherwise, having the role was pretty great."

Designer ensemble notwithstanding, Downs does don many hats on "Hacks": writer, producer, showrunner, director, actor. He's played many of these roles — sometimes all of them — on other projects as well, including the Scarlett Johansson comedy "Rough Night" and the 20-something female-led comedy "Broad City."

"They go so hand in hand for me that

they feed each other," he says of his various responsibilities, adding that he initially started to write to be able to act. "Coming from a performance background has helped my writing, and obviously, being so inside ['Hacks'] certainly helps me as an actor."

The challenge, he notes, is to never favor his character just because he plays him. "I am the last to pitch for Jimmy and also the first in the edit to say, 'We could cut a couple of Jimmy lines if we need to tighten the scene,'" he says. "But a joy of it is that, when I'm in the writers' room, I can drop into the character and improvise a little bit, and often, that becomes part of the dialogue."

Downs says he is shocked and moved by the "absolute thrill" of being nominated for his acting this year (in addition to nominations for writing and comedy series). Critics, viewers and academy voters are surely less shocked, since Jimmy's part was expanded in Season 3 — organically, Downs is quick to point out.

"With this goal Deborah's had of getting this late-night talk show, her manager would be really integral to that," he says. "It was really more about the story than about us just finding ways for Jimmy to exist in the show."

Fans of the series need no other reason for Jimmy to exist than his working relationship with his clueless but self-assured assistant Kayla, played by Meg Stalter, whom Downs calls "a brilliant scene partner." "That's also encouraged what would've been a natural progression for the character."

Growing up in rural New Jersey as the eldest child of parents with great senses of humor, Downs has long found making people laugh the fuel that feeds his soul. "It's been the thing that's made me feel the most connected to people," he says. "As an eccentric, weird kid, it was the thing that made me feel a little less alone."

Downs studied theater and improv at Duke University, but he calls Upright Citizens Brigade — Chicago's famed improvisational and sketch comedy training ground — his "clown graduate school." It's

where he met Aniello and started doing solo shows, and where the couple began creating digital shorts.

With "Hacks," Downs is at no loss for talented scene partners. Fellow nominee Einbinder, for instance, is now on her third Emmy nomination and so far has never won. "She's so, so good. It is crazy. I can't believe she's someone who hadn't been onscreen before 'Hacks.' And the amount she's grown. But also, the fact that it was there from Day 1," Downs says, who's quick to also mention her decency and dedication.

"I think there are moments on set when I can even see Jean [Smart] recognize how supernaturally talented [Einbinder] is. So — I've thought about this — I think I might be more excited for Hannah than for myself [at the Emmys] because she is so deserving, and she works so hard. She's a stand-up comic. She really cares about comedy. The show is all that much more poignant for her because she is a disciple of comedy with a capital C."

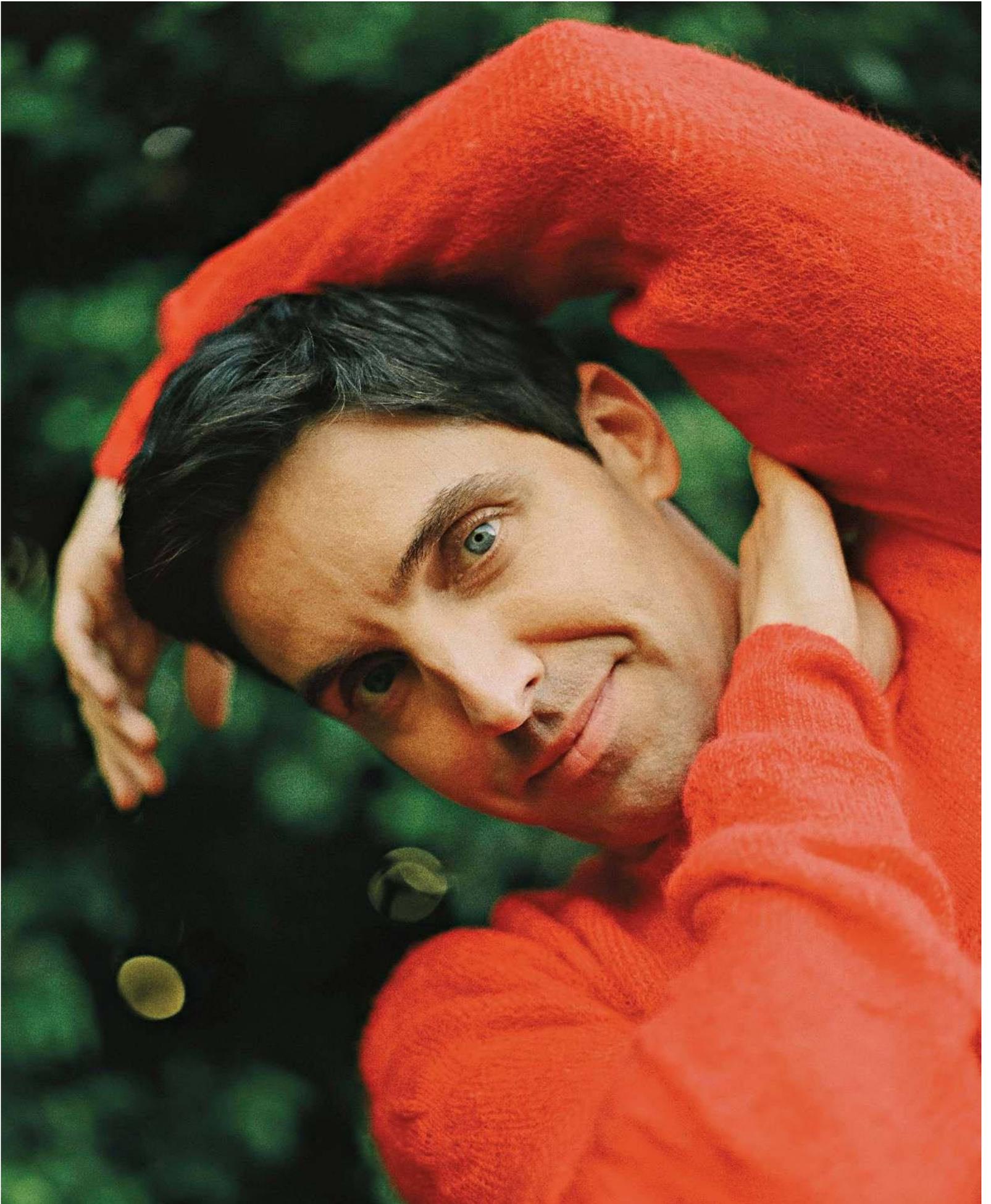
With Downs, Aniello and Statsky now pulling together Season 4 in view of a September shoot, are there any insights he can share? "We pick up very, very shortly after [the end of Season 3], so not a lot of time has passed," he offers. "People enjoyed the drive Deborah had because getting that [late-night show] chair, for a woman — especially a woman of her age — was a herculean task. But what we keep saying as we break Season 4 is that getting the job is actually the easy part. Launching a successful late-night show and keeping it successful is almost impossible. Especially, again, for a woman. So, we have some really great stakes for Season 4, because it is actually her biggest challenge as a character."

"And this time, there is all of the friction between her and Ava. It's very juicy. We get to have a lot of fun with them going head-to-head as they try and make this thing they both care very much about."

Regardless of what happens at the Emmys this year, it's clear Max owes Downs that Tom Ford suit. ❧



↓ Kayla (Meg Stalter) and Jimmy (Paul W. Downs).



# Quirky ‘How to With John Wilson’ has fun without making fun

Practical advice turns into profound lessons on the interview series that features the filmmaker taking on bizarre subjects with empathy and absence of malice

Story by  
Tim Grierson

Photograph by  
Peter Fisher  
For The Times

**I**T DIDN'T SEEM LIKE A difficult question: How would John Wilson describe “How to With John Wilson”? But after a long pause, the 37-year-old filmmaker chuckles sheepishly, defeated. “This continues to be a challenge for me,” he admits over Zoom. “I still don’t know how to pitch this show, even after a decade of making this work.”

Let me give it a try: Over three terrific seasons, “How to” forged its own inimitable path in the nonfiction space, each episode initially promising to provide viewers with practical advice — “How to Make Small Talk,” “How to Split the Check” — before host John Wilson’s investigation into the topic invariably leads him into funny, uncharted new territory. But-tressed by B-roll of odd sights on the streets of New York, ironically juxtaposed with Wilson’s amusingly low-key voice-over, “How to” never mocked the bizarre subjects who entered its orbit — whether UFO eyewitnesses or vacuum-cleaner collectors — instead crafting movingly humane snapshots of proudly peculiar individuals.

Wilson knew this season would be the last, and he wanted to end on a high note. He succeeded, earning Emmy nominations for writing and hosting a nonfiction program. Actually, “How to” had been part of Wilson’s life long before it premiered on HBO in October 2020: In the early 2010s, he began making independent short films

in a similar vein with such titles as “How to Keep Smoking.” As he puts it, “It would take me a year to make 10 minutes’ worth of stuff” — but once HBO greenlighted the series, executive produced by Nathan Fielder (“The Curse”), Wilson learned how to work in a more focused manner.

“Having structure is good, but being accountable to other people is also really important,” he says, exuding the same sweet, anxious demeanor as on “How to.” “You’re barreling toward a lock date, and you can’t overthink things for too long, which is a dilemma I usually have whenever I’m just by myself. That kind of intense, chaotic production ended up creating these weird moments of serendipity, just by the sheer momentum of the process.”

Where Fielder’s groundbreaking “Nathan for You” was sometimes accused of being mean to its average-American subjects, “How to” is almost miraculously evenhanded, letting people like an elderly Arizona resident named Mike, who in the series finale explains why he self-castrated, tell their stories free of ridicule.

“People want to be memorialized,” Wilson suggests when explaining how he gets individuals to open up. “If you’re meeting them on their terms in a comfortable space for them, then they feel like they’re in control, which is why I always like to go to people’s houses or bedrooms.” As for avoiding turning his subjects into objects of scorn, Wilson says, “I don’t want to make anything that I think will upset them.

I have to make the work as if I’m going to see them every day.”

But it’s not just his subjects who are revealed — slowly, “How to” became Wilson’s forum to unearth parts of himself. In one poignant episode, he briefly but tenderly acknowledges a period in which he was “fooling around” with a middle-school male

**“I DON’T USUALLY TALK ABOUT DEEP EMOTIONAL STUFF WITH FRIENDS OR COLLEAGUES — THIS WORK IS A CONTAINER FOR ALL THOSE FEELINGS.”**

John Wilson

friend, which left them feeling confused and ashamed about their sexuality.

“In the third season, I wanted to put as much stuff in there as I could,” Wilson says. “I don’t always talk about deep emotional stuff with friends or colleagues — this work is a container for all those feelings. I just try to make it as if no one else is watching.” Have his friends been surprised by what they’ve learned about him from “How to”? “I don’t usually ask anyone how they feel about it,” he replies. “They might be surprised, and they might talk about it on their own. But I just assume that no one is talking about me anywhere else if I can’t hear it.”

Maybe it’s best that he can’t articulate exactly what “How to’s” ephemeral magic is — what always made the show so special was its freedom to wander, its power stemming from unexpected connections made between the episode topic and profound, accidental epiphanies stumbled upon along the way. For Wilson, it was an opportunity to tackle life, loneliness and the very nature of truth. Maybe. He’s not sure.

“I still haven’t worked through the themes of my own work,” he says with a laugh. “It’s a lifelong project.” ✉



→ John Wilson’s “How to” series evolved from his short films.



# Matt Berry gnaws away at vampire tropes

On FX's 'What We Do in the Shadows,' the actor plays a bloodsucker who's less Transylvania and more suburbia

Story by  
Robert Abele

Photograph by  
Linus Johnson  
For The Times

**E**NGLISH COMIC ACTOR MATT BERRY DESCRIBES THE level of improvisation afforded to him and the cast of FX's hit comedy "What We Do in the Shadows," in which four vampires and a human familiar share a house on suburban Staten Island, as "very generous." That freedom to "go for the most outrageous thing," he says, is one reason why his justly admired performance as vaingloriously pervy 300-year-old bloodsucker Laszlo Cravensworth earned him an Emmy nomination for lead actor in a comedy. It's a first for Berry, who also has won U.S. fans with such imported Britcoms as "The IT Crowd" and "Toast of London," a show he co-created about an arrogant actor. ¶ But before he filmed one episode of "Shadows," one of Berry's ideas was met with serious resistance by creator Jemaine Clement and executive producer Taika Waititi. "I offered at the beginning to do a sort of Eastern European accent, what you always associate with vampires," he recalls, then imitates the pair's reaction — "no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no" — with a deadpan calm that slyly conveys exactly how horrified Clement and Waititi would have been to lose one of the more priceless gifts in present-day comedy: Berry's epically plummy, theatrically swaggering English baritone. "And so I have my own accent," he says, adding, "on the keen enthusiasm from the creators."



↓ Matt Berry as Laszlo, left, and Harvey Guillén as Guillermo on "What We Do in the Shadows."

**I should first clarify for readers that in real life you don't speak like the ghost of every British stage ham converged into one larynx. But it's not that far away, either.**

To me, it doesn't sound anything exceptional, because I've had it all my life. When

I was younger, it made me laugh if I heard someone with a clipped accent be pompous. I'd instantly mimic it. It's rare to hear now. Maybe some members of the royal family, but not your average citizen.

**When you're revving it up, is there anyone in particular you're thinking of?**

An actor called Jon Finch [who] had an incredible delivery. Even when doing everyday things, he sounds like he's doing Shakespeare. And Tom Baker.

**... Who is most well known for playing Doctor Who in the '70s.**

When I was a kid, I thought he was terrifying, the way he sounded. As I've become an actor, I've realized a lot of it was down to the fact that he was trying to remember his lines. He would start every sentence with [affects a deeply throaty sound] "We-e-e-lll ..." and then he'd launch into what-

ever he was doing. That I find really funny. And I find anyone who is not particularly self-aware very amusing.

**Laszlo certainly qualifies. Do those showy Victorian threads help put you into his ancient-and-randy mindset?**

It's also the sets. They're so good, you forget you're in a warehouse in Canada. You really are in this turn-of-the-century mansion full of furniture from the last 700 years. Because they're vampires, they don't get rid of anything. It's so kind of warm and inviting, you want to stay there. Because outside is a warehouse and, you know, three feet of snow.

**Is there a vampire power you'd take?**

It wouldn't be immortality. As you can see from them, it doesn't look fun. And if you suffer from a mental health issue, you've got that forever. But they have no real interest in material things. That's what I like.





They couldn't give a f— about things around them, or technology. That's what I envy about them.

**A very human power you have is musical ability. You've released many albums, and you've been a musician longer than you've been acting. Didn't it play a part in how you were discovered?**

I was playing singer-songwriter-type songs, and for a comedy club above a pub I turned it into a character who was actually a serial killer confessing in his songs what he'd done. I thought it was hilarious. Matt Holness and Richard Ayoade saw me, and they were looking for someone to play a doctor in the TV version of their Edinburgh show, which became "Garth Marengi's Darkplace."

**That spoof of '80s-era horror television, which first ran in the U.K. in**

**2004, became a cult comedy classic.**

I'm so thankful for it every day. I've worked ever since, which is a complete and utter mystery.

**What can we expect from the final season of "Shadows," coming this October?**

There are some clever things with the finale that I hope people will be really into. I'd be into it if I had nothing to do with it. Don't get me wrong — nothing to do with me. The concepts, I think, are interesting, as opposed to watching myself. I must make that clear.

**It's funny how, being so expert at playing grand narcissists, you retreat from the merest hint of self-promotion.**

That's a British thing, I suppose, isn't it? We largely don't like to blast our own horns outwardly. ✉

## QUOTE



**BRIE LARSON,**  
actor  
*'Lessons in Chemistry'*

**What series past or present would you have liked to be in and what would your role have been?**

“

'Twin Peaks.' It's something I always end up returning to. It's so cinematic, it has such a clear vibe, so much mystery, it begs for rewatching. I so appreciate that; it's hard to know what makes something last, and that one really lasts for me. In terms of what role, I would just say, I'm putty in David Lynch's hands, wherever he wants to put me. I could just be someone in the corner, I don't care. Because I don't want to take somebody else's role, and I don't know who to add.

”

# Janelle James has found her groove as kooky Principal Ava on ‘Abbott Elementary’

After three seasons, the stand-up comic is at ease playing the series’ outrageous school administrator. Dancing is a different story.

Story by  
Lisa Rosen

Photograph by  
Dania Maxwell

**A**S SOON AS JANELLE James read for the role of the cheerfully self-absorbed chaos queen that is Principal Ava Coleman on “Abbott Elementary,” she had her down. “I know this chick,” James recalls thinking when she read the script. “This lady is so hilarious. I could see her and her movements. I’ve always been interested in people who want to be famous, so I was excited about that, because that’s very not me.”

That’s not the only way James is unlike her character, a fan favorite. “People always tell me, ‘Oh I want to hang out.’ They say with me but they mean Ava. So when they see me, they’re very excited because they think I’m on the way to a party or something fabulous, and they want to come along. Usually, I’m going to get a doughnut or something boring.”

She laughs often while discussing the role that seems custom-made for her (although she had to audition four times for it) and that brought her a third Emmy nomination for supporting actress in a comedy.

Days after hearing the good news, James hasn’t yet updated her Instagram to reflect the nomination. Ava would have been on that before her last name was read. “Exactly. Make sure to write that down, how different we are.”

One quality they do share is confidence, but James’ was earned through 10 years of doing stand-up. And she had no idea the effect that the role, her largest to date, would have until after shooting her first scene in the pilot, when co-star Sheryl Lee Ralph told her, “You’re the breakout.” “I didn’t even know what that meant,” James says. “I was like, ‘OK,’ and then I went home and googled it.”

Ava is a joke machine, and James lands them all with casual flair. “She is saying

one-liners, she’s doing quips, she’s doing it on the move,” James says. “And then where my skill comes in, not only through stand-up and landing a joke, is to make her still likable. I do that onstage all the time — that’s what stand-ups do: We say something that upsets you, and then the next minute you’re laughing. That’s what I enjoy about it, and that’s what Ava is doing as well.”

Over three seasons, the writers have incorporated more of James into her character. “Whole conversations I’ve had with writers have ended up in the show,” she says. “I’m very into ‘X-Men,’ so I got to be Storm in the show, and I am pretty nerdy and I do have a lot of varied interests, and Ava’s always doing some weird thing. When we went on a field trip to the Field Museum in Season 2, and Ava was scaring the crap out of the kids about aliens, I am very much that person.”

The character also has grown over the years. “Here’s the thing: Ava didn’t have to have an arc, she could continue to just be the joke person,” says James, crediting creator Quinta Brunson and the writers for their fresh approach. “We’re definitely following a sitcom format, but we’re taking these characters places.”

Season 3 finds Ava back from a summer school course that turned her into a

real leader. But she has become so strict, her staff makes her revert to her old self by trapping her in the school auditorium as Juvenile’s “Back That Azz Up” plays. Despite her best efforts, Ava can’t deny the music. And despite appearances, that was the toughest scene James shot all season.

“First, the physical thing: I had to run in, full speed, in heels, about six or seven times, and then dance. As you know for television, you shoot three hours for 30 seconds. I was also sick, my outfit was really tight and our camera crew was there. Even though I love them and we’ve been together this whole time, to be dancing in the spotlight for that long, and also making sure it’s funny — I’m not just dancing; I’m trying to convey the change from studious Ava back to fun-loving Ava. Also how the song affects people, particularly Black women. I knew that would be a big thing for us in general, and making sure that I honor that. I’m also very aware I’m on a family show.”

“A lot of thought went into that little dance. So I’m proud of that.”

This Emmy nomination feels amazing. The first year she was nominated, “I was very much in a stupor, like, ‘What?’ Again, it was my first really big role, and I hadn’t really paid attention to this side of the business before. And then the second year, I was like, ‘Yeah, I’m working hard, thank you so much.’ And then this year, I’m like, ‘Wow! I’m so happy. One, because we’re definitely in the zone now, and I’m relaxed, I’m very confident in the character and what I’m doing, and then also: Meryl Streep?! Carol Burnett?! I am just super honored to be included with icons.”



→ Janelle James leans on her stand-up comedy background to play Ava Coleman on “Abbott Elementary.”





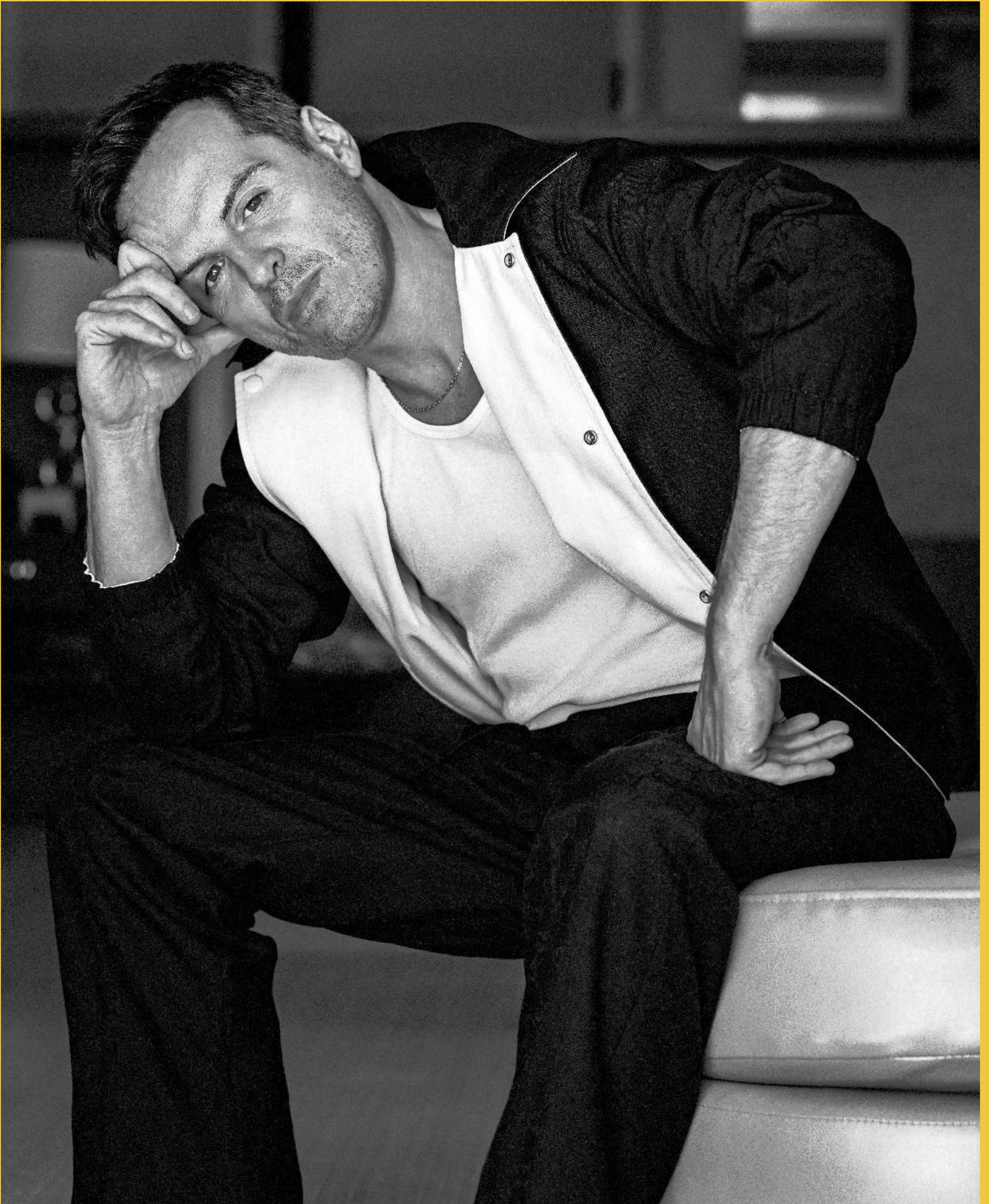
STORY BY  
GLENN WHIPP

**A SONG  
IN HIS HEART  
ANDREW  
SCOTT  
HAS BEEN TAKEN  
FAR TOO  
SERIOUSLY FOR  
FAR TOO  
LONG AS AN  
ACTOR.  
WHERE'S HIS  
MUSICAL?**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
RYAN PFLUGER



**“SO YOU GONNA GO HAVE ANOTHER** beer in this beautiful light? Let’s see what the light looks like.” ¶ Andrew Scott moves over to the window. It’s early evening. Early summer. We’ve been talking for more than an hour at Sunset Studios, where Netflix has set up an Emmys FYC space. To be clear, Scott hasn’t been drinking. Maybe later. He’s going to be participating in a panel for “Ripley,” the streamer’s acclaimed adaptation of Patricia Highsmith’s crime novel “The Talented Mr. Ripley” in which he plays the striving, cunning psychopath of the title. Me? I’m availing myself of the bar that’s already open. ¶ The Dublin-born actor has visited Los Angeles eight times already this year, and while he loves hiking the canyons and swimming in the Pacific, the thing about the city that he finds extraordinary is the quality of light this time of day, the last hour before the sun sets over the ocean or, in the direction we’re looking right now, the Hollywood Hills. ¶ “When you go for a walk when the day is over in L.A., there’s nothing like it,” Scott says. “And I know people don’t walk a lot here and people definitely think I’m ...” He pauses, searching for the right word. “Like, almost *mad*. But I walk a lot here. I like a good walk. You need nature. You just need it.” ¶ There’s one other thing Scott needs right now. Maybe *needs* is a bit strong. But as he made the rounds promoting his Emmy-nominated lead actor turn in “Ripley,” Scott took every opportunity to plead his case that he has been taken far too seriously for far too long as an actor (not that he’s complaining) and what he’d really like to do is — *cue the fanfare* — star in a musical. ¶ “Yeah, I have been,” Scott says, chuckling when I note all the lobbying he’s been doing. “What can I say? When I was a kid, I loved watching musicals on TV and singing. I just think it’s joy. And I feel like I have good access to joy in my life.”



If you saw the video of Scott at one of Taylor Swift's eight London shows in June, wearing a sleeveless black T-shirt and dancing with his "Fleabag" co-star Phoebe Waller-Bridge to "Shake It Off," you know this to be true.

"I'm trying to put that energy out there," Scott says. "You saw it. Why won't anyone else see that?" He stops, laughing uproariously. "But I do love romantic comedy. I really think that a good one is absolutely joyful. And I love laughing and having a good time."

Scott has shown glimpses of that throughout a career that has seen him play a villain gleefully embracing anarchic chaos (Moriarty on "Sherlock"), a boyishly seductive priest whose heart belongs to God ("Fleabag") and a lonely writer beginning a passionate affair with a neighbor just as he's reconnecting with his mom and dad — parents who died in a car crash when he was 11 ("All of Us Strangers"). He has also played Hamlet on the London stage and, last year, all eight characters in a one-man adaptation of Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya."

So if he wants to do a musical, who's to doubt him? Scott just likes to, as he puts it, "change the dynamic," constantly shuttling between moods and media, which probably means he won't be playing Ripley again, even though the series' finale sets up the possibility of further adventures in a most delicious way.

"The ending is beautiful," Scott says. But in a "leave them wanting more" way? "Yeah, that's the thing."

"The reason Ripley is so enduring is that Patricia Highsmith allows you to imagine what it's like to be Tom Ripley, a murderer, rather than inviting you to imagine what it's like to be a victim of Tom Ripley," Scott says. "When you put someone like that as the protagonist rather than the antagonist, that's interesting because that side of us exists. I'm not saying we're all murderers. But it's human to have that darkness within us. And it's not healthy to deny that side of ourselves."

He grins, mischievously: "Or, to put it another way: It's better to pretend to hit someone over the head with an oar than it is to actually do it."

We talk about "All of Us Strangers," how I sat next to writer-director Andrew Haigh at a Telluride Film Festival screening the night after I saw his film and asked, "Is anyone alive at the end of your movie?" Because you can make a case that the film's near-empty apartment building serves as a stand-in for purgatory.

"That's not how I saw it, but I'm always fascinated by the superiority of the audience's interpretation of things," Scott says. "I remember all the suggestions about what the fox motif in 'Fleabag' was







supposed to represent. The Angel of Death? Wow! Really? But I love that a piece of creativity can give birth to so many other forms of creativity.”

Discussing “All of Us Strangers,” a movie that Haigh says is about the ways grief and loss encompass so much of our day-to-day existence, feels raw for both of us at this moment. Scott lost his mother, Nora, in March after a sudden illness; I have a dear friend about to enter hospice. He asks me about my late mother — Scott possesses a curiosity born from

a need to understand things and make sense of them — and how I process grief today, nearly a quarter-century after her passing.

“It’s interesting that we don’t talk about death as a society because we think it’s morbid,” Scott says. “Maybe I’m just interested in it at the moment. I find myself asking about other people’s experiences. Perhaps I wasn’t as curious before because it wasn’t a need before. And I see that now, and I think talking about it increases your compassion.”

“Do you believe in coincidences?” I ask. “Many of your projects, particularly ‘All of Us Strangers,’ but also ‘Hamlet’ and ‘Vanya,’ had you playing characters dealing with grief.”

“It hasn’t escaped me,” Scott says. “When I was making those things, I was experimenting imaginatively with my own life. ‘What would it be like if I suffered great grief?’ ‘What would it be like to lose my parents?’ And now I have lost my mother. Does that make that experience any less authentic? No. In fact, it has helped me.

“One of the great comforts I have is that the last movie my mother saw was [the filmed version of] ‘Vanya’ because I know that she saw me and she knows the depth of my love for her because I channeled it in that role,” Scott continues. “Her last ever voice message to me was her reaction to that play, and it’s incredible to have that.”

Nora’s influence on her son’s life was enormous. She introduced Scott to acting as well as art; drawing and painting have remained passions throughout his life. “She left me a huge fortune, an emotional fortune,” he says. And now she has gone to what he, like Hamlet, calls the “undiscovered country from which no traveler returns.”

What do you imagine that country to be like?

“I’m trying to read a lot about it at the moment, and the idea of faith, the idea of holding onto something,” Scott says, telling me he’s making his way through C.S. Lewis’ “A Grief Observed,” a collection of essays on bereavement, doubt and faith he wrote after the death of his wife, Joy Davidman.

“You know, if you believe in something and it turns out not to be true, then, well, OK. But then if you believe in something and it turns out to be true, then, brilliant. Why not have faith in something? And it has emerged that I do have faith in something. I definitely believe in things that cannot be seen or felt. Do you know what I’m saying?”

Sure, I reply. There’s that verse in the New Testament. “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Scott grew up Catholic. He recites the verse along with me.

“I think it’s so moving to have faith,” Scott says. “Like the idea of love. How do you define it? Like if somebody said, ‘Show me the proof of love.’ Because the person, what, bought you a car? Because you spent 40 years with them? Neither of those things are proof of love. Love is something that you just feel and sense and it’s a spiritual thing. An awful lot of us still have faith in love, even though that can’t be seen. I believe in love. I really do. I have no degree of shame or embarrassment or self-consciousness that I believe, to my core, in the power of love.” ✕



↑ Marge (Dakota Fanning) and Tom (Andrew Scott) get acquainted in “Ripley.”

↑ Andrew Scott as the mysterious Tom Ripley in the Netflix series.

# *theSpotlight*

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Illustration by  
**Prodius**  
For The Times

**A DEEPER DIVE: Television gets political**



p. 28

# Political intrigue dominated TV this year, and not just on the news

Nominated series are fueled by art, strategy and down-and-dirty combat of politics

Story by  
Chris Vognar

Illustration by  
Prodius  
For The Times

**T**HIS ELECTION YEAR HAS been so fraught with outsize storylines that reading the news can feel like reading a thick novel. An assassination attempt on a presidential candidate. A late-game withdrawal by a sitting president, followed by the immediate ascension of his successor. We live, as the old expression wishes (or curses) us, in interesting times.

Not to be outdone, the Emmy season is packed with its own political intrigues, and not just the kind that generally accompany jockeying for awards. As the country prepares to select a new president, it seems fitting that some of the most nominated series are fueled by the art, strategy and down-and-dirty combat of politics. On TV, as in life, it's a full-contact sport that requires subterfuge and constant toggling between public and private identities. In the most extreme cases, as in the most garlanded show of the year, politics are a matter of life and death.

The political gamesmanship in "Shōgun" is so intricate you might need a scorecard, or at least a good recapper, to follow along. Nominated for 26 Emmys, FX's gorgeous drama about power struggles in feudal Japan revolves around Lord Yoshii Toranaga (Emmy nominee and series producer Hiroyuki Sanada), a brilliant warlord seen as a threat by his fellow members on the Council of Regents. Toranaga's rival regents conceive a plot to squeeze him out of the Council and consolidate their power. But Toranaga has an ace in the hole. His name is John Blackthorne (Cosmo Jarvis), an English anjin (or pilot) who has washed ashore in Japan. Blackthorne becomes Toranaga's most valuable pawn in the ensuing game of three-dimensional chess.

The strategizing comes to a quietly operatic climax in Episode 8, "The Abyss of Life." Toranaga has surrendered to his Council enemies and has accepted his fate. Or has he? His loyal cabinet, led by Toda Hiromatsu (Tokuma Nishioka), refuses to believe that their general has given in. Surely, this must be a ruse. Hiromatsu prepares to commit seppuku, or

suicide by disembowelment, if Toranaga does indeed plan to surrender. Will Toranaga let his old friend kill himself in order to perpetuate what might be a carefully constructed stratagem? The scenario plays to the series' greatest strength by wrapping a tense political struggle within purely human drama.

Meanwhile, Netflix's "The Crown," bowing out after six seasons with 18 nominations (and a total of 21 wins since its 2016 premiere), continues its smart dramatic study of competing public and private political image. The theme has been crucial since the series began, with the ascension of Queen Elizabeth II (two-time Emmy winner Claire Foy then; Emmy nominee Imelda Staunton now) to the throne. Season 6 focuses largely on the death of Princess Diana (Emmy nominee Elizabeth Debicki), but it also has its share of less lethal royal politics.

For instance, Prince Charles (Emmy nominee Dominic West) seeks his family's approval of his fiancée, Camilla Parker Bowles (Olivia Williams), even as his retinue encourages him to publicly tarnish his ex-wife, Diana. Future Prime Minister Tony Blair (Bertie Carvel) tries to carve out his own slice of influence with the royals, a dynamic that goes all the way back to Season 1, when aging Prime Minister Winston Churchill (Emmy winner John Lithgow) sought to curry favor with both Elizabeth and her father, King George VI (Jared Harris).

This early Churchill storyline also touched on circumstances that should ring familiar in the U.S. in 2024: an elected leader facing foes who deem him too old to do his job. And it addressed a question that largely defines British politics, and that ran through the entire series: What is the role of an elected official in a society that cares first and foremost about its monarchy?

Finally, and closest to home: fear and loathing in America and in "Fellow Travelers." The Showtime limited series, which picked up acting nominations for Matt Bomer and Jonathan Bailey, covers decades in the lives of its central characters. But its juiciest political battles are

fought in the 1950s, at the height of McCarthyism, an era of brazen opportunism and fear-mongering that still permeates American electoral politics.

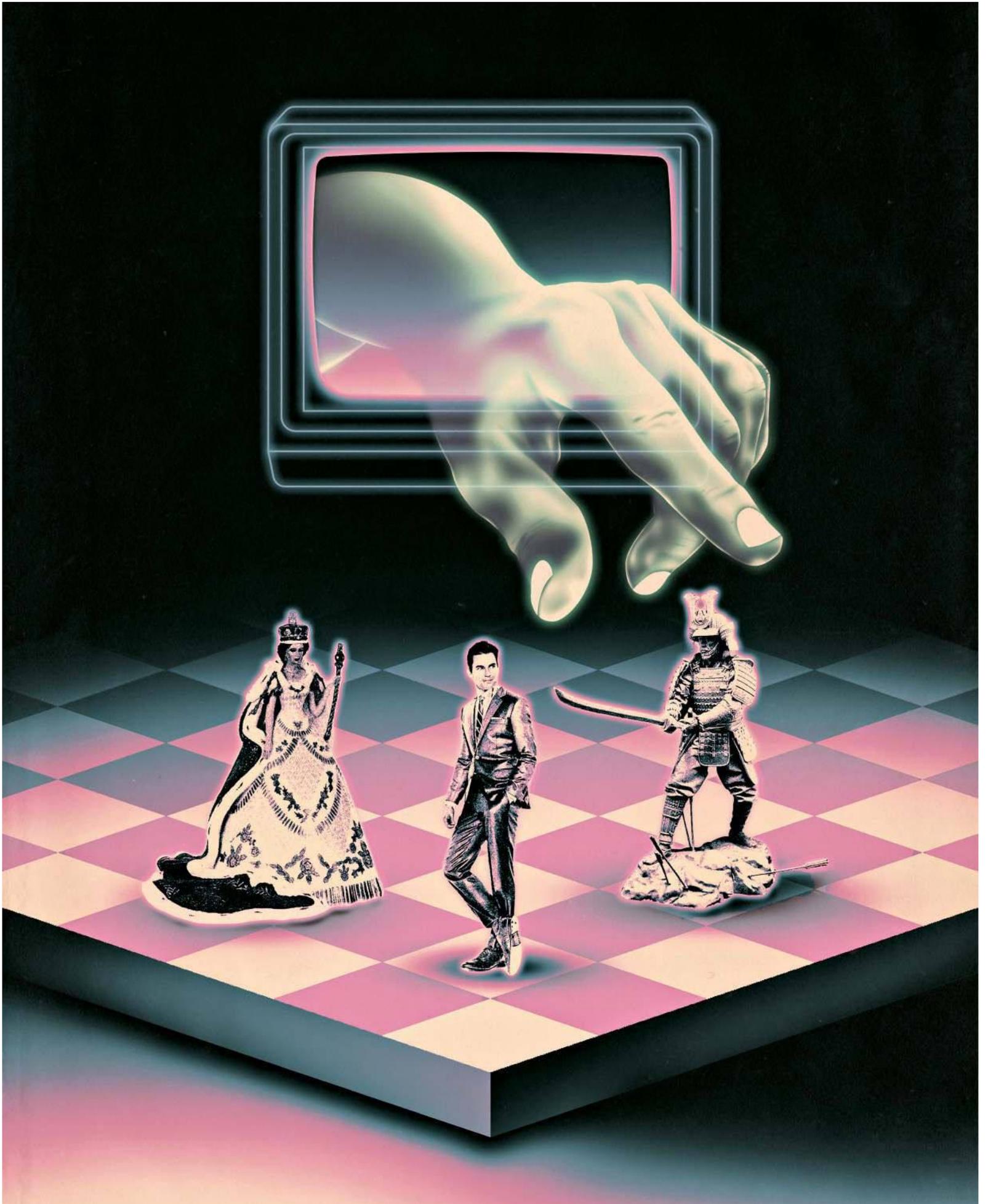
Based on the novel by Thomas Mallon, the eight-episode "Fellow Travelers" sets up shop at the intersection of the political and the personal, and asks if the two can ever really be separated. Hawk (Bomer) is an ambitious State Department employee who helps Tim (Bailey) get a job with his hero, Sen. Joseph McCarthy (Chris Bauer, under heavy prosthetics). They begin a tempestuous affair, marked largely by Hawk's fierce desire to stay in the closet.

Tim, the gay conservative, is a romantic. Hawk, who leans left in his political alliances, is a careerist shark. They both live under a fact of '50s life: To be out means to be cast out of public life. Later, they live under a dark shadow of '80s life: the AIDS epidemic.

The public/private schism drives "Fellow Travelers," which has its own personal connection to the current presidential race in McCarthy's closeted henchman, Roy Cohn (Will Brill), a onetime mentor to Donald Trump who was disbarred in 1986. The series can be seen as a drama about the cost of selling one's soul and whether redemption is possible after the transaction is completed.

Politics isn't pretty in "Fellow Travelers," which means it has a lot in common with the here and now. You enter the arena at your own risk. You might watch between your fingers. On TV, anyway, you have plenty of options. ✉

**ON TV,  
AS IN LIFE,  
POLITICS IS A  
FULL-CONTACT  
SPORT THAT  
REQUIRES  
SUBTERFUGE.**



# 'The Bear' is likely to get a second helping in comedy categories

The series seems poised for a repeat of Season 1 awards haul, but the women of 'Hacks' could have the last laugh

**WATCHING LAST YEAR'S EMMYS** (WHICH, THANKS to the strikes, actually took place this year in January), you would have been able to follow along quite capably if you had simply watched three shows — "Succession," "The Bear" and "Beef." ¶ OK ... you'd have felt really in the know if you had a penchant for limited series about serial killers (Paul Walter Hauser won for "Black Bird" and Niecy Nash-Betts for "Dahmer — Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story") and kept up with Jennifer Coolidge's nutty exploits in "The White Lotus." John Oliver won a couple of Emmys too, as will happen, and Quinta Brunson took comedy lead actress for "Abbott Elementary." ¶ But, mostly, it was "Succession," "The Bear" and "Beef." Rinse and repeat. September's ceremony might sport a bit more variety. You may need to watch, oh, five series to feel in the loop. Two of them are comedies. (Well, they are competing in the comedy categories, at least.) Read on to find out what they are.



Glenn Whipp  
Columnist

## COMEDY SERIES

"Abbott Elementary"  
"The Bear"  
"Curb Your Enthusiasm"  
"Hacks"  
"Only Murders in the Building"  
"Palm Royale"  
"Reservation Dogs"  
"What We Do in the Shadows"

## WINNER "The Bear"

"The Bear" won 10 Emmys for its first season, including comedy series, writing, directing and prizes for actors Jeremy Allen White, Ayo Edebiri and Ebon Moss-Bachrach. Its second season, which premiered in June 2023, was even better, including two of the best episodes of television this decade — "Fishes" and "Forks." Its third season dropped shortly after Emmy nominations voting ended this year and, as the first half of a two-part storyline (the third and upcoming fourth seasons were filmed together), it felt, at times, like the show was spinning its wheels just a bit. That led to an inevitable "The Bear isn't all that" backlash, which won't affect the show's prospects this year at all. It's going to win just about everything.

Illustration by  
Susana Sanchez

## COMEDY ACTRESS

Quinta Brunson, "Abbott Elementary"  
Ayo Edebiri, "The Bear"  
Selena Gomez, "Only Murders in the Building"  
Maya Rudolph, "Loot"  
Jean Smart, "Hacks"  
Kristen Wiig, "Palm Royale"

## WINNER Smart

Smart won this Emmy for the first two seasons of "Hacks." The actors' and writers' strikes, as well as a heart procedure for Smart, delayed the show's third season. But it came back strong with its best edition yet, burrowing into the ever-evolving, complicated relationship between Smart's showbiz legend and Hannah Einbinder's progressive young writing partner. This is the toughest comedy category to predict, as the award could easily go to the deserving Edebiri in a big, Emmy-night "Bear" hug. I'm not quite ready to call it yet (check back in September), but I suspect Smart will win again. She brought new depths of vulnerability to Deborah Vance and has become as much of an icon as her character is.

## COMEDY ACTOR

Matt Berry, "What We Do in the Shadows"  
Larry David, "Curb Your Enthusiasm"  
Steve Martin, "Only Murders in the Building"  
Martin Short, "Only Murders in the Building"  
Jeremy Allen White, "The Bear"  
D'Pharaoh Woon-A-Tai, "Reservation Dogs"

## WINNER White

This category boasts three comedy legends (Short, Martin and David), two first-time nominees (Berry for the fifth season of "What We Do in the Shadows" and Woon-A-Tai for the third and final year of "Reservation Dogs") and White, who won last year and will prevail again for the season that ended with *Army* melting down while locked inside the restaurant's walk-in fridge. "No amount of good is worth how terrible this feels," he says, a vibe that won't ever be used as evidence that "The Bear" belongs in the comedy categories.

## COMEDY SUPPORTING ACTRESS

Carol Burnett, "Palm Royale"  
Liza Colón-Zayas, "The Bear"  
Hannah Einbinder, "Hacks"  
Janelle James, "Abbott Elementary"  
Sheryl Lee Ralph, "Abbott Elementary"  
Meryl Streep, "Only Murders in the Building"



**WINNER Einbinder**

With the third season's focus on the shifting power dynamics in the relationship between Ava and Deborah, "Hacks" gave Einbinder room to play a character growing as confident and ambitious as her mentor. You'd hardly recognize Ava if you went back and watched the first episode. Einbinder is really the co-lead of the series, particularly this year when the show stripped back the screen time of most of the supporting characters. But it's also OK to see Einbinder in this category because

← Top: "The Bear's" Ayo Edebiri, left, Jamie Lee Curtis, Edwin Lee Gibson, Lionel Boyce, Liza Colón-Zayas, Jon Bernthal, Ebon Moss-Bachrach, Metchy Matheson and Jeremy Allen White. Bottom: "Hacks'" Hannah Einbinder, left, Meg Stalter, Paul W. Downs, Jean Smart and Christopher McDonald.

"Hacks" is all about Deborah Vance. Don't you dare try standing in her spotlight.

**COMEDY SUPPORTING ACTOR**

- Lionel Boyce, "The Bear"
- Paul W. Downs, "Hacks"
- Ebon Moss-Bachrach, "The Bear"
- Paul Rudd, "Only Murders in the Building"
- Tyler James Williams, "Abbott Elementary"
- Bowen Yang, "Saturday Night Live"

**WINNER Moss-Bachrach**

"I wear suits now." How did this happen? How did Moss-Bachrach's Richie go from

being "always and forever, the f— worst," as he was described in the series' opening episode, to being a guy who has put aside his anger (except toward Carmy) and aimlessness and embraced purpose and confidence. This transformation happened in the episode "Forks," but Moss-Bachrach had been showing us Richie's tenderness all along, so when everything clicks in at Chef Terry's restaurant, it made us cry with joy. Have you ever been so invested in a television character's success? Go Richie!

**COMEDY GUEST ACTRESS**

- Olivia Colman, "The Bear"
- Jamie Lee Curtis, "The Bear"
- Kaitlin Olson, "Hacks"
- Maya Rudolph, "Saturday Night Live"
- Da'Vine Joy Randolph, "Only Murders in the Building"
- Kristen Wiig, "Saturday Night Live"

**WINNER Curtis**

Lead actress nominees Wiig and Rudolph are reunited again for their terrific work returning to their alma mater. It's Rudolph's 16th nomination and fourth for hosting "SNL." Then there are the two Oscar winners — Colman and Curtis — nominated for "The Bear." Colman was sublime as the soothing chef mentoring Richie in "Forks," while Curtis blew in like a hurricane for the legendary Christmas Eve dinner episode "Fishes." Curtis' portrayal of the alcoholic mother inflicting (and enveloped in) trauma wins going away.

**COMEDY GUEST ACTOR**

- Jon Bernthal, "The Bear"
- Matthew Broderick, "Only Murders in the Building"
- Ryan Gosling, "Saturday Night Live"
- Christopher Lloyd, "Hacks"
- Bob Odenkirk, "The Bear"
- Will Poulter, "The Bear"

**WINNER Bernthal**

Bernthal and Odenkirk, adversaries in "Fishes," are pitted against each other again. (Will they be packing forks in their tuxedo pockets?) Odenkirk was one of several perfectly cast actors in the episode, a force capable of matching Bernthal's intensity and obstinacy. "You're *nothing!*" his Uncle Lee screams at Bernthal's Mikey. Bernthal wins for the anguished close-up response to that baiting, as well as the scene between the brothers. (Side note: No disrespect to Poulter, who made me want to drop everything, travel to Copenhagen and train to be a pastry chef. In fact, I still might.) ☒

# An army of costume designers made sure ‘Shōgun’ cast was dressed to kill

From battle regalia to symbols of noble birth, **Carlos Rosario** and his sprawling team ensured everything worn on the series accurately reflected Japanese culture and history

Story by  
Valli Herman

**S**HOGUN” WAS FIRST A novel, then a hit 1980 miniseries, but the new series from FX Networks is an amplified historical fiction that offers viewers an entertaining education in medieval Japanese society and its elaborate attire.

The production also became a sort of cultural exchange for the crew, including costume designer Carlos Rosario.

“I had never done anything that required designing Japanese clothing of any period,” Rosario said on video conference from France.

The show spans 10 episodes, each an hour long, that gave Rosario plenty of opportunities to depict characters in the proper environment by matching their clothing to their rank, geography, clan loyalty and even their shifting psychological state.

Unlike the 1975 James Clavell novel or miniseries, this “Shōgun” relies less on the point of view of John Blackthorne (Cosmo Jarvis), the English navigator who is blown

ashore in the foreign world of Japan. Instead, it brings the 17th century society vividly to life through a historically accurate spoken and visual language, which includes thousands of costumes for warlords, armies, peasants, courtesans and a bunch of shipwrecked European sailors.

The series and the era are so dense with history that the FX network created an online viewer’s guide and, in a first for any FX series, a podcast. Together they outline the history, chart the geography and describe and illustrate costumes, including how armor was made and how it changed along with warfare styles. A gift for costume geeks, the guide also includes an augmented reality “spatial experience” feature for Apple Vision Pro and mobile phones that can zoom in and rotate the exceptionally detailed armor of two warlords.

The nine-month shoot in Vancouver through 2022 required a costume department of 85 to 125 people who made about 2,300 costumes, rented 1,300 pieces and purchased many modern kimonos that could be altered.

Set in the year 1600, the story documents the end of the Sengoku period, a century of endless civil war before the prosperous Edo period, which has been more commonly represented in popular culture.

The production was an opportunity to present and sometimes correct depictions of the Sengoku era’s costumes, especially for a Western audience. For example, many of the characters wear the predecessor to the kimono, a kosode. Through the centuries, the unisex garment evolved from an underlayer for the upper class to become outerwear, sashed with an obi but featuring smaller sleeves that aided physical activity — helpful for the samurai warriors.

Rosario also learned that a woman’s status is reflected in the number of layers she wears; similarly, men’s full-cut trousers, called hakama, may have different proportions depending on the purpose or occasion.

“This job was particularly complicated in terms of research. It was always different locations, different characters in different ranks,” Rosario said. “We had funerals. We had weddings. And we had so many characters of different social status.”

For three years, the production consulted with Frederik Cryns, a Belgian-born professor at the National Research Center for Japanese Studies in Kyoto. Cryns specializes in the Sengoku period and helped with the language, customs and costumes.

“He was my person to go to from the beginning to the end,” Rosario said. “We studied the paintings of that period, the colors and the patterns. We needed his help to understand the language of the clothing of that period.”

Rosario also staffed his department with experts in Japanese textiles and kimono dressing. The many-layered costumes could take more than an hour to assemble and layer onto a body. Rosario had to learn new efficiencies to tell the story while accommodating filming.

“In the James Clavell novel, he took the liberty of describing the characters the way he envisioned them,” he said. “One of the things that was not accurate in terms of period is that the samurai would never

→ Actor Hiroyuki Sanada as Yoshii Toranaga.

↓ Costume designer Carlos Rosario with his creations.



KURT ISWARIENKO FX; KATIE YU FX



**Spotlight  
Costumes**



→ Mariko's (Anna Sawai) clothes reflect her unhappy mental state. Floral patterns mark Mariko's evolution.

have had a color code. They wore their own armor and their own clothing. In the novel, he created clans and armies, which helps the audience know who is part of which army." Rosario followed suit and used color to identify groups.

Lord Toranaga (Hiroyuki Sanada) leads the brown army, "so I thought about what colors are the next step, the ones more luxurious than brown," Rosario said. Toranaga is swathed in shimmering copper, gold, chocolate and burgundy.

"I also knew that Lord Toranaga was a very powerful, wealthy lord. So I found the most beautiful fabrics. I couldn't find them

in America or Europe. I hired a team in Japan to find Japanese fabric," Rosario said.

Highly detailed silks also were used for courtesans, high-ranking women and in men's ceremonial dress, many with metallic threads that reflect the candlelit interiors. For Blackthorne's peasant-style robes, however, Rosario used humble raw silk and linen handwoven in Vancouver.

For the high-born Mariko (Anna Sawai), a translator in an unhappy marriage, a lack of color mirrors her mental state.

"She's more psychological than everybody else I designed for the show," Rosario said. "She was walking through life

lifeless." He introduces her in a monochromatic, wintry palette. Her patterns evolve to show branches without leaves "to represent that she is without purpose." As she grows emotionally, "I started introducing camellias, which bloom in winter," Rosario said.

The wealthy warlords and samurai show status with intricately feathered robes, embellished fabrics or towering helmets. Their complex armor is laden with fur, horsehair or leather, which was hand-painted to look like scuffed metal but weighed much less.

Adapting 400-year-old attire for modern filmmaking was full of technical challenges, but Rosario said the task "was so much more than just a job."

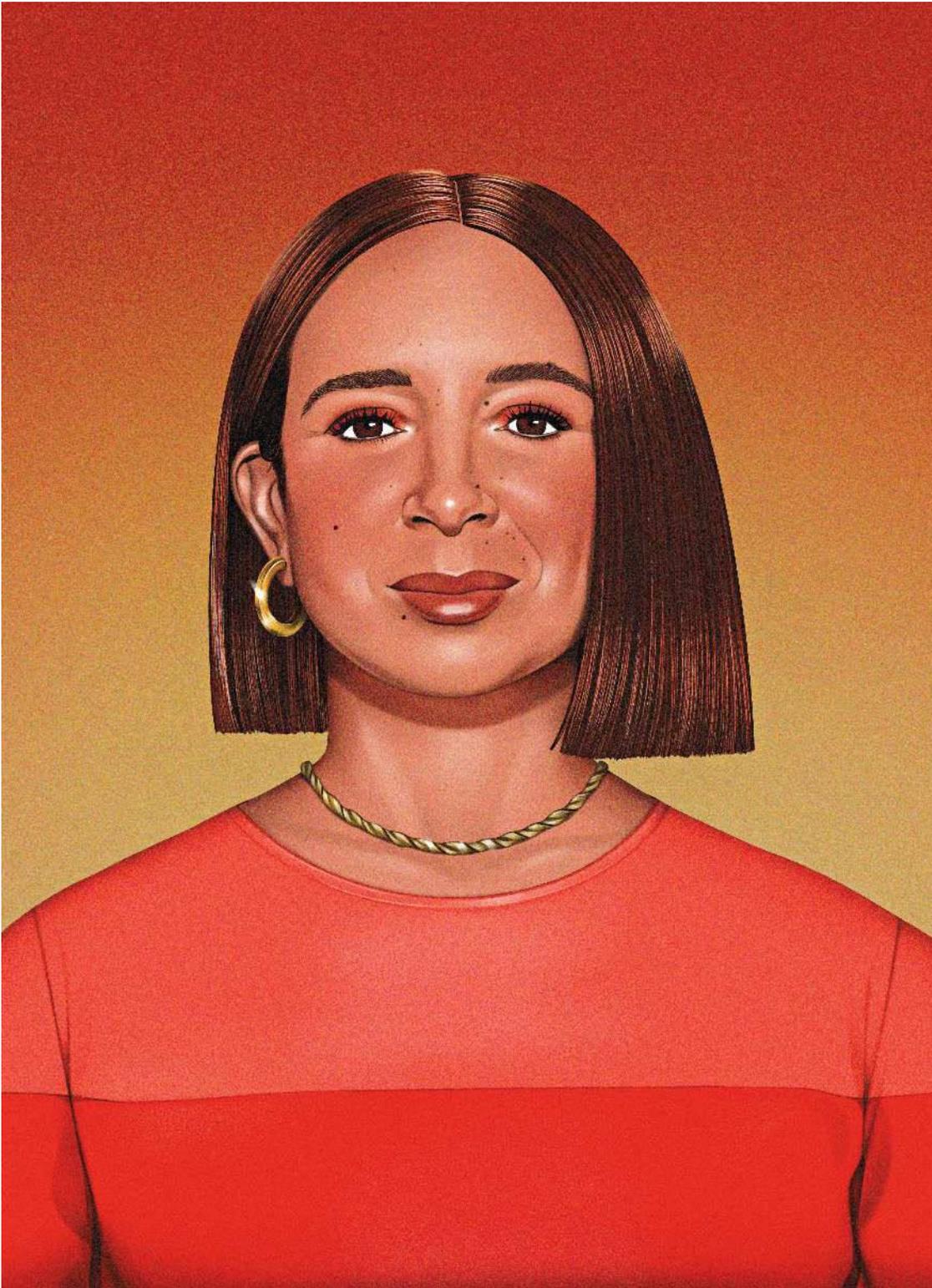
"It was very clear to me that the journey Blackthorne was going through on 'Shōgun' was the one that my entire crew and I were facing. We started the project as foreigners in a culture we didn't know much about but slowly absorbed its richness and complexity, allowing us to create bridges with a Japanese team that was very different from us," he said.

"From an emotional point of view, I put everything that I am and everything that I'd learned in the last 30 years into this project. And I left it with a strong sense of contentment, having achieved something incredibly challenging, but also with gratitude to our show-runners for giving me the opportunity of a lifetime." ❧

KATIE YU FX: FX

↓ Costume sketches for Toranaga, left, and Ishido.





The Spotlight  
Who's Counting

Story by  
Carla Meyer

Illustration by  
Natalia Agatte  
For The Times

## Quadruple contender

**Maya Rudolph** has been an Emmy favorite for some time. This year, she's collected an extraordinary four nominations for three series — Apple TV+'s 'Loot,' NBC's 'Saturday Night Live' and the Netflix animated series 'Big Mouth.' Viewer bonus: More of her as Kamala Harris?

4

Rudolph is up for lead actress for the comedy "Loot," guest actress for hosting "SNL," lyrics for her Mother's Day song on "SNL" and her long-time voice gig on "Big Mouth."

2

She will vie in two races against fellow "SNL" alum and frequent collaborator Kristen Wiig, nominated for leading comedy "Palm Royale" and hosting "SNL."

2020

Rudolph's previous personal best for Emmy nominations in a year was three, for "Big Mouth" and guest starring on both "SNL" and NBC comedy "The Good Place."

16

Rudolph's total Emmy nods.

5

She has won five statuettes so far.

3

of her Emmys came from her "Big Mouth" performance as Connie the Hormone Monstress, in 2020, '21 and '23. She won the other two ...

2

... via "SNL," for playing then-Sen. Kamala Harris (2020) and hosting (2021).

4

Days between seminal announcements last month — of Rudolph's Emmy nominations and Vice President Harris' bid for a different kind of nomination.

1 trillion

(or so) calls on social media for Rudolph to reprise her role as Harris on the ...

50th

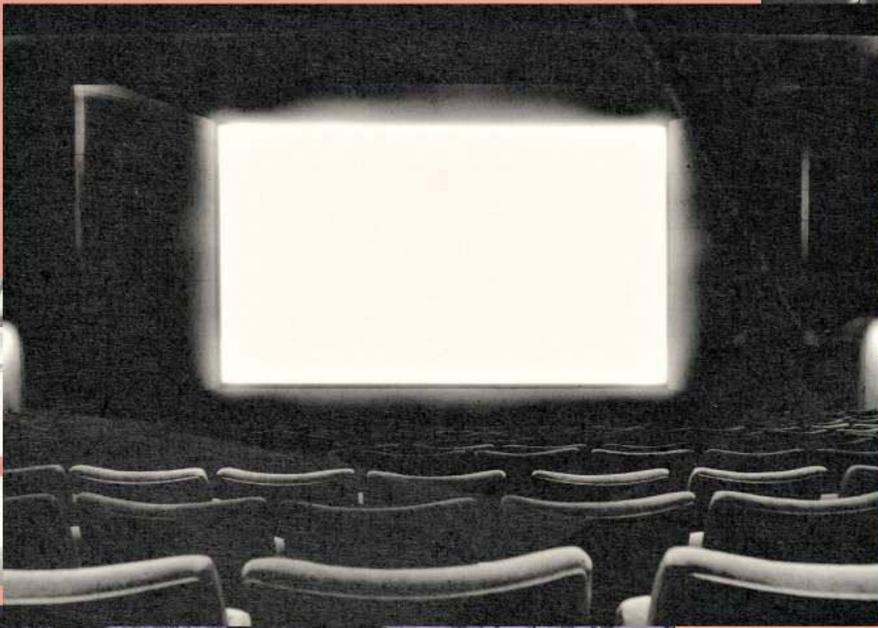
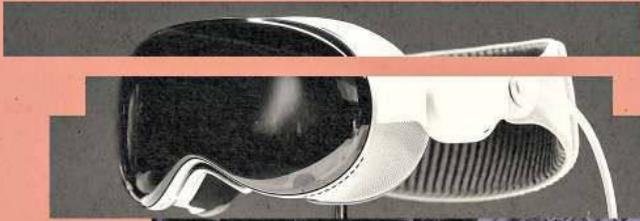
season of "SNL" this fall.

# theIndustry

Inside the  
Episode  
p 40

The Ratings  
Report  
p 42

Illustration  
by Erica  
Bonkowski



**THE WIDE SHOT:  
AI vs. the metaverse**

# The metaverse was supposed to be the next big thing, before reality set in

Author **Matthew Ball** revisits his ideas about the future of a 3D internet after the crypto bubble, Apple's Vision Pro headset and the rise of generative artificial intelligence



Ryan  
Faughnder  
Senior Editor

**REMEMBER THE METAVERSE? IT WAS** just a couple of years ago when it seemed as if every technology, media and entertainment company was scrambling to adapt to a future in which regular people would live parallel digital lives online, walking around as virtual reality avatars in 3D computerized worlds. ¶ That hype hasn't amounted to much so far, perhaps because audiences have watched movies like "Ready Player One" and "The Matrix" and absorbed their dystopian lessons. ¶ And, besides, there was a new shiny object. With the emergence of ChatGPT, big tech moved on to a much more immediate and seemingly concrete futuristic subject: artificial intelligence. Studio heads — from Sony Pictures' Tony Vinciguerra to Paramount's soon-to-be owner David Ellison — are banking on AI models to streamline production and save money. Even Mark Zuckerberg's Meta, the parent company of Facebook, which sunk billions of dollars into its metaverse dream, has, like many others, turned more of its focus to AI. ¶ Suffice to say that much has changed in the two years since author and investor Matthew Ball wrote the book "The Metaverse: And How It Will Revolutionize Everything." Ball, whose essays are highly influen-

tial in the spheres of media and tech, has revised and expanded his opus, even giving it a new subtitle: "Building the Spatial Internet." ¶ When I talked with Ball in July, he certainly hadn't given up on his ideas about the web of the future, even though AI has clearly eaten the metaverse's lunch in terms of tech industry enthusiasm and consumer anxiety. Apple's Vision Pro has made some progress toward growing the market for headsets, despite its \$3,500 price tag and the lingering stigma against wearing a computer on your face. Meanwhile, cryptocurrencies and other blockchain technologies, which feature prominently in plans for the metaverse, have quietly rebounded after a bumpy period, he said. ¶ Ball also has been writing a bit about the state of the theatrical box office, which of course is a favorite subject of mine. ¶ This conversation is edited for length and clarity.

**What are the biggest changes you've seen in the space since you published your original metaverse book a couple of years ago?**

The three most substantial shifts are in head-mounted displays, inclusive of wearable glasses, as well as goggles; blockchains; and then artificial intelligence. Each

of those three categories seems to have experienced decades of development just in the last two and a half years.

**Let's take 'em one by one, starting with headset computers. Apple comes out with its Vision Pro, and suddenly people are talking about VR and AR goggles again. What happened?**

That's a great example. We saw the category's most high-profile and probably most important product launch, bringing massive validation of this as a category from a company with unprecedented experience disrupting stale, stagnant or unsuccessful categories and being able to overcome the stigma. Seeing all of those things come together — Apple's investment, Apple's brand, Apple's retail footprint and their attendant ability to communicate value proposition — is a remarkable case study.

**It does feel like the Apple Vision Pro was a chance to take the technology more mainstream. Did it work?**

Look, I don't believe in citing anecdotes as though they're data, but my followers on Twitter should be as over-indexed to the Vision Pro and head-mounted displays as anyone. I regularly ask those who own one, how many of you used the device within the last 48 hours, and how many of you haven't used it in the last 30 days? And the result usually shows that only about 20% of people have used it within the last 48 hours, and two-thirds haven't touched it in a month. And if you have my followers as an example, who spent \$4,000 on a device and after owning it for five or fewer months haven't touched it for 30 or more days, it's clear that it's missing the mark, at least thus far.

**Is it a content problem that's keeping these devices from reaching the masses? Or is it a technology or hardware problem?**

The consensus answer is that it's three different things. It's the price, it's the form factor and it's the applications or content. And right now, all three of those things are limitations, and they're also intercon-



→ Keanu  
Reeves, left,  
and Hugo  
Weaving in "The  
Matrix's" dysto-  
pian future.

nected. One of the reasons why the device is uncomfortable and heavy is because it's high-powered. It's high-powered so it can run better content experiences. But that also means it's expensive. If you trade off on the power, the price comes down, but the experiences become diminished.

**OK, what about blockchain?**

Blockchain has probably gone through puberty over the last two and a half years. Of course, we've had the combined market value of cryptocurrencies fall from \$3 trillion to \$800 billion and then nearly reclaim its all-time high. And along that path, you had the decline of FTX and many others.

That is to say, we have a much larger sample size and better understanding of the technological limitations, the culture around these products and the extent to which they were often confused with financial speculation and, in some cases, regulatory arbitrage. You'll find that there are many constituents who still believe that crypto is an essential aspect of the future of the internet, but we certainly can better understand the shortfalls.

**Well, this technology also has one of the worst branding problems possible, to the point where the biggest laugh line of the Tom Brady roast was Nikki Glaser making fun of him for pitching crypto.**

I agree that it has a stigma problem. That's certainly true. And NFTs have not really recovered in any way, shape or form. But crypto overall has seen a resurgence. There's greater legal clarity, there's greater institutional adoption and it's back to about 85% of its all-time high, even though we've gone from a zero-interest-rate period to a 45-year high in interest rates.

**Where does AI come into your theory of the future of the internet?**

It is absolutely true that artificial intelligence has taken marginal dollars away from investment into AR, VR and the metaverse. It has changed the narrative around the metaverse hype cycle. I do think that there's not enough appreciation of how intertwined these topics have always been, and the essential ways in which everything that the metaverse requires and all of the technologies around it are fundamentally reliant on AI.

The CEO of Roblox has said he believes that within a few years, it will be possible to speak entire worlds into existence. Disney's ability to create a virtual space even a shred of the size of Disneyland is incredibly cost-prohibitive. If you wanted to actually create something equivalent to Galaxy's Edge in a virtual world, it's actually not clear that that would be cheaper than constructing the actual Galaxy's Edge as it exists today.

Through artificial intelligence, we are



← Olivia Cooke, left, and Tye Sheridan in the gameplay world of "Ready Player One."



← An Ariana Grande avatar in video game "Fortnite." Does gaming replace moviegoing?

actually seeing those costs start to come down extraordinarily, and that's transforming what's possible. At the end of the day, the dream of going to a virtual Disney theme park is not just to walk through the Avengers Campus, it's actually to go there and interact with Iron Man, as played by Robert Downey Jr.

**You recently wrote about the long-term declines in theatrical movie attendance per capita. Do you see the broader adoption of these digital technologies further disrupting traditional entertainment consumption?**

Yeah. As I detail in the piece, there's kind of a misconception as to what has caused the decline in theatrical moviegoing. It's essentially limited to 2- to 24-

year-olds, who are going less than ever.

Among that younger demographic, we often hear the argument that no matter how much you play Roblox or Fortnite or Call of Duty, that doesn't displace going to the movies one more time per year, right?

And yet, we do see that social media platforms, social video platforms such as TikTok and social gaming experiences have substantially displaced typical behaviors, whether it's going to the movies, babysitting or going to the mall with friends. And this is consistent with broader measures that show that we spend more time by ourselves than ever before.

This trend has been going for long enough that it's hard to argue it's going to slow down. The question is, of course, where is the floor? ✉

Story by  
Whitney  
Friedlander

# When a 'Game of Thrones' director lied to Obama

David Nutter says everyone was in the dark about what really happened in the Season 5 finale, even the president



Writers and directors reflect on the making of their Emmy-winning episodes.

DAVID NUTTER CARRIED OUT A LOT OF death sentences in the nine episodes of "Game of Thrones" that he directed. ¶ He helmed Season 3's "The Rains of Castamere," more commonly known as the Red Wedding because it featured the bloody end of beloved characters Robb Stark (Richard Madden) and his mother, Catelyn (Michelle Fairley). He saw Kerry Ingram's Shireen Baratheon, a child, burned at the stake in Season 5's "The Dance of Dragons" and in Season 8, he had Missandei (Nathalie Emmanuel) beheaded as she utters her final word: "dracarys" ("dragonfire" in High Valyrian or "burn it down" in modern English). ¶ But he's also noteworthy for a character he didn't really kill after all: Kit Harington's heart-of-gold Jon Snow. Although Jon seemed to be brought down in a Julius Caesar-like mutiny in Nutter's

Emmy-winning "Mother's Mercy," the HBO drama's Season 5 finale, the next season's premiere taught us that he was only mostly dead. ¶ But Jon's stabbing is just one of many, *many* things that happened in that jam-packed 2015 episode. Other highlights include Cersei's (Lena Headey) literal walk of shame; Arya (Maisie Williams) going blind because she misuses a power; and Sansa (Sophie Turner) and Theon (Alfie Allen), two abused victims of the psychotic Ramsay Bolton (Iwan Rheon), joining forces. ¶ And because this is "Game of Thrones," there were also lots of character deaths. ¶ Before departing for his daughter's wedding earlier this summer, which he promised would be a lot more chill than anything he'd directed, Nutter discussed making what became one of prestige TV's most divisive episodes.

What's the first thing you do when you get an episode with this much happening? Scream. (Laughs)

You know, it was the finale of the season and it was my big chance to show what I got.

There was the shame walk that we had to do when Lena [Headey as Cersei] was six months pregnant. So I had to find an actress who could actually do this walk like her and carry the same gravitas and weight. That was probably the toughest job I've ever had because I had to be a psychiatrist. I talked to all of these actresses who auditioned for the role, and I'd say to them, "You know that you could possibly be trending on the internet all over the world if someone snaps a picture of you on the first day of shooting?"

A lot of women auditioned on tape and did the walk of shame naked. But there was one woman who auditioned on tape and did it in her undergarments. But she had a great head and shoulders, and Lena had a very similar [look]. And she was this great actress named Rebecca Van Cleave. She was from Virginia and lived in London and studied acting. She really wanted to be a good actress, and she was just phenomenal. I'll never forget. There's a side shot where you can't even tell if it's Lena or Rebecca.

That scene also features (a fully clothed) Hannah Waddingham as a religious zealot, yelling "shame" as she guides Cersei through town. She was then an unknown actor, but she'd soon become

HBO

→ "Game of Thrones" actors Nathalie Emmanuel, left, Emilia Clarke and Conleth Hill.

→ Olly (Brenock O'Connor), left, stabs Jon Snow (Kit Harington).

→ Shireen Baratheon (Kerry Ingram) met a bad end.



a breakout star of Apple TV+'s "Ted Lasso." Do you remember casting her?

[Creators] David [Benioff] and Dan [Weiss] cast her. We wanted someone who was overpowering, and her whole presence was overpowering. Her voice was strong.

There's also the big secret of Jon Snow's seeming murder. Did you know when you shot this episode that he would be resurrected in the next season?

I never wanted to read past where I was in the story. Right after the season ended, there was a big political event with Barack Obama, and we were at Chuck Lorre's house. Obama was a huge fan of "Game of Thrones." I took a picture with Barack. He grabbed me and shook my hand, and he put his [other] hand on my shoulder and whispered, "You didn't kill Jon Snow, did you?" I said, "Sir, he's dead. He's deader than dead."

Did not knowing yourself make it easier for you as a director?

Yeah, much easier.

You want to give it the gravitas it needs.

I also wanted to do it kind of quick and not make it a long, drawn-out thing. So I used one camera as he steps through the crowd ... and then the last shot was of Jon Snow [on the ground] with a [camera] up in a crane. I'd done enough gore with the Red Wedding that this needed to be almost peaceful.



The audience had questions about another death in this episode: Stephen Dillane's Stannis Baratheon. The audience sees him wounded after battle, and Brienne of Tarth (Gwendoline Christie) raises her sword over her head as if to strike him down for good. But we

don't actually see the body. How did that shot come about?

That was David and Dan twisting the screws tighter and tighter.

There's also a death that encapsulates the show's ethos of having something kind of good immediately followed by something really bad: Myrcella Baratheon (Nell Tiger Free) dies by poisoning after she tells her uncle, Jaime Lannister (Nikolaj Coster-Waldau), that she knows he's her biological father and that she's cool with it.

This is a love scene between a daughter and a father. You know, "You sacrificed yourself for [this family]. But everything you did is for a purpose." And then the daughter was willing to help her father any way that she could.

Toward the end of the episode, we see Daenerys Targaryen (Emilia Clarke) slowly, and then suddenly, surrounded by Dothraki warriors — members of her late husband's people. But neither she nor the audience is clear if they're happy to see her. How did you accomplish this?

We wanted it to be something where it evolved. She's on top of the hill and she sees a storm coming in a way. It's almost like they enveloped her. It's a hurricane of Dothraki that she's in the middle of.

It was important to play to the stature of her. Like they're almost in awe of her. ☒



# Young people have stopped cramming and started binging

With kids on summer vacation and the return of popular shows such as ‘Bridgerton,’ streaming services have seen a sharp jump, claiming record 40.3% share of TV viewership

Story by  
Stephen  
Battaglio

**S**CHOOL'S OUT AND streaming is in. Streaming platforms accounted for a record 40.3% of all TV usage in June, according to Nielsen data. That's the largest share of the viewing pie for Netflix, YouTube and their ilk since the audience measurement firm began reporting the percentage figures in June 2021.

Streaming viewership rose 6% from May levels, Nielsen said.

The main reason for the increase will come as little surprise to parents. With the school year ending in June across most of the U.S., children and teenagers have more time to watch their favorite shows.

The swell in viewing was much greater among children ages 2 to 11 — up 16% — than for the general population, a reflection of the generational shift in TV habits.

“[Streaming] defines TV for them,” said Bill Hague, executive vice president for Magid, a media consulting firm.

Nielsen cited double-digit leaps month to month for family-focused Disney+ (up 14.8%) as well as Tubi (14.7%), Netflix (11.8%) and Max (11.0%), all with younger viewers accounting for much of the bounce.

Netflix saw the trend continue as its internal data for July 7-13 showed six of its top 10 films in the U.S. were kids- and family-oriented, including “Paw Patrol: The Movie.” The film based on the animated series ranked second behind the return of Eddie Murphy in “Beverly Hills Cop: Axel F.”

According to Nielsen, Netflix's share of TV viewership in June was 8.4%, the most for any paid subscription service, followed by Amazon's Prime Video (3.1%), Hulu (3%), Disney+ (2%), Max (1.4%), Peacock (1.2%) and Paramount+ (1.1%).

The 40.3% share for streaming overall is the highest for any category since cable scored 40.1% in June 2021. With consumers cutting the cord or bypassing pay TV

subscriptions, cable accounted for a mere 27.2% share of viewing in June, down 7% from the same month in 2023. Broadcast claimed 20.5% of TV usage, nearly even with a year earlier.

Streaming also was boosted by the return of popular original series.

Netflix's hit alt-history drama “Bridgerton” scored 9.3 billion viewing minutes, making it the most watched show of the month. Prime Video's new season of its superhero series “The Boys” scored 4 billion minutes, while the HBO “Game of Thrones” prequel series “House of the Dragon” totaled 3.4 billion minutes on Warner Bros. Discovery's Max.

The introduction of new shows in June mirrors the strategy cable once used to eat away at the share of the broadcast networks' audience. Cable would launch original series during the summer after the official broadcast TV season was over

and the biggest scripted hits went into repeats or off the air altogether.

Broadcast networks still see a dip in the summer as popular scripted programs end their runs, but live sports continued to sustain traditional TV in June with telecasts of the NBA Finals and Game 7 of the NHL Stanley Cup Finals — both on ABC — and the U.S. Olympic gymnastic trials on NBC.

Free streaming video also continues to be a compelling proposition for consumers. YouTube and Fox Corp.'s ad-supported Tubi both reached new highs for the services, hitting 9.9% and 2% of viewership, respectively.

While consumers are moving away from traditional TV, much of the content they are streaming on YouTube — which has the largest share of any service — originates on linear networks and local stations.

“We told our TV station clients two years ago that they need to be embracing YouTube,” Hague said. “You have to fish where the fish are.”

One streamer was stagnant in Nielsen's June data: Paramount Global's Pluto, which declined slightly to 0.8% of viewing.

The platform's dependence on linear channels that are watched in real time, the same as traditional television, may be a factor. Tubi offers such channels as well, but a vast majority of its usage on that platform is by consumers watching video-on-demand.

“Tubi honestly feels like a completely free version of Netflix, whereas Pluto is organized by channels,” analyst firm LightShed Partners said in a report on Nielsen's data. “Pluto feels more like the TV guide of the past compared to the algorithm-driven feeds consumers are increasingly accustomed to.” ❌



LIAM DANIEL NETFLIX

→ Luke Newton as Colin Bridgerton and Nicola Coughlan as Penelope Featherington on Netflix's “Bridgerton.”

Comedy  
August 8, 2024

# One Shot

The character arc of Dorothy “Dot” Lyon (Juno Temple) is the captivating anchor in Noah Hawley’s gripping fifth season of “Fargo.” The wife and protective mother finds her tumultuous past resurfacing in the form of a hard-nosed, misogynistic sheriff (Jon Hamm) hunting her down. In the episode “The Useless Hand,” Dot’s burgeoning bravery reaches a dramatic high point. “It’s the first time we show her as a really strong woman,” says cinematographer Daryl Hartwell, who lensed the final two episodes. Fleeing captivity, Dot takes refuge in a well from the gun-toting henchmen chasing her. Streaks of light cross her face, a visual metaphor akin to a trapped animal. Approaching footsteps stir the tension. “This was her tiger-in-a-cage moment, and that slash of light represented that arc to us,” Hartwell explains. “Our director, Thomas Bezucha, was very instrumental in telling us where he wanted the character and how he wanted to see a transition of her being scared to her being empowered.” As the well opens, the bloody hand of a killer named Munch (Sam Spruell) reaches down. She ascends and the two adversaries share a deferential stare before he offers her a firearm, saying, “The tiger is now free.”

Story by  
Daron James



LOS ANGELES TIMES (ISSN 0458-3035) is published by the Los Angeles Times, 2300 E. Imperial Highway, El Segundo, CA 90245. Periodicals postage is paid at Los Angeles, CA, and additional cities. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to this address. | Home Delivery Subscription Rates (all rates include applicable CA sales taxes and apply to most areas) | Print + unlimited digital rates: Seven-day \$28/week, \$1,456 annually. Thursday-Sunday \$16/week, \$832 annually. Thursday & Sunday \$10/week, \$520 annually. Saturday & Sunday \$9/week, \$468 annually. Sunday \$8.50/week, \$442 annually. Monday-Saturday \$18/week, \$936 annually (also includes Sundays, except 2/18, 3/31, 9/1 and 10/13). Monday-Friday \$16/week, \$832 annually. | Pricing for all subscriptions includes the Thanksgiving 11/28/24 issue. | Subscriptions with a Thurs. delivery include 25 special issues of The Envelope via USPS with 2 issues in Jan., 5 in Feb., 2 in May, 4 in June, 3 in Aug., 1 in Oct., 5 in Nov. and 3 in Dec.

Los Angeles Times

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*Clockwise from top left: Hannah Einbinder, Heidi Gardner, Sheryl Lee Ralph, Josh Lucas, JB Smoove, Daniel Ings*