

Grumpy travelers losing their cool this summer

Incidents during flights make headlines, but you don't have to be part of the problem. **In Money**

Taylor Swift's music bonds mothers and daughters

Eighteen years of songs cut across generations, providing an unbreakable connection. **In Life**

First-round QBs make impressive NFL debuts

Bears' Caleb Williams, left, and other rookie quarterbacks among players standing out in first week of preseason action. **In Sports**

USA TODAY

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GREGORY FISHER/USA TODAY SPORTS

Liquid water may be hiding on Mars

Study: Miles-deep cracks hold enough for 'oceans'

Doyle Rice
USA TODAY

Scientists announced Monday that for the first time, they've found evidence of liquid water on Mars – which they say is buried in cracks several miles under the Red Planet's surface.

This is the "best evidence yet" that Mars still has liquid water in addition to frozen water at its poles, according to the University of California, San Diego's Scripps Institute of Oceanography, which led the research.

Before this discovery, "we did not know there was liquid water there," study lead author Vashan Wright told USA TODAY. Finding water on Mars isn't itself a new discovery; the planet's polar regions are full of ice.

But the new research paves the way for future study into Mars' habitability and the search for life somewhere besides Earth. The findings were published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

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Christine Brennan
Columnist
USA TODAY

LA aims to be authentic self for Summer Games in '28

PARIS – So, Los Angeles, how do you top that?

Now that the spectacular 2024 Summer Olympic Games have come to an end, the Olympic world turns its eyes to a very familiar host city for the 2028 Games, America's Olympic city, Los Angeles.

LA will become the third city in the world to host three Olympics when the Summer Games come to Southern California from July 14 to July 30, 2028. The first time was in 1932 and the second was in 1984 when Los Angeles saved the day by hosting when no other city or nation wanted to, turning a huge profit that funneled millions into youth sports in the city and kicking off an era of tremendous Olympic success that has lasted 40 years.

So a city and a region with such a remarkable Olympic resume is hardly daunted by following the majestic visual feast that Paris presented to the world over 17 days.

"Our job is to be the most authentically spectacular Games for LA, not to try and out-Paris Paris in LA," Casey Wasserman, president of the 2028 Los Angeles bid committee, said.

"Paris delivered near-perfect Olympic Games, columnist Nancy Armour writes. **1C**

California from July 14 to July 30, 2028. The first time was in 1932 and the second was in 1984 when Los Angeles saved the day by hosting when no other city or nation wanted to, turning a huge profit that funneled millions into youth sports in the city and kicking off an era of tremendous Olympic success that has lasted 40 years.

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US quietly prepares for bird flu pandemic

Vaccine vials are processed using automated visual inspection technology at the CSL Seqirus vaccine manufacturing facility in Holly Springs, N.C. Millions of doses are being prepared in response to the H5N1 bird flu virus that has been spreading this year in dairy and poultry farms across the United States. PHOTOS BY ALEX BOERNER/FOR USA TODAY

If 'the worst' comes, millions of vaccines ready to go

Eduardo Cuevas and Karen Weintraub USA TODAY

HOLLY SPRINGS, N.C. – A quiet effort to prevent the next global pandemic began rolling off an assembly line this summer behind the gates of an office complex in suburban Raleigh. ● In this sprawling factory, sheltered by thick pine groves, workers at CSL Seqirus are bottling millions of doses of a new vaccine targeting the H5N1 bird flu virus. ● The virus, which first emerged in wild birds around 1997, has been spreading this year among dairy and poultry farms across the United States. ● Thirteen farmworkers have been infected with the virus this year, some suffering eye redness, others a cough. No one became sick enough to require hospitalization, although, in other countries, about half of the people diagnosed with H5N1 over the years have died.

The virus is not being passed from person to person – and that is key to why public health officials aren't hitting the panic button. Because the risk to the general public remains low, the federal government doesn't think it's worth vaccinating anyone against H5N1 yet – even the farmworkers most at risk for getting sick from infected chickens or cows.

But behind the scenes, officials are getting ready at Seqirus' advanced facility in the biomanufacturing hub of Holly Springs.

Already, 4.8 million doses of a potential vaccine are sitting in an undisclosed Seqirus distribution center, ready for delivery if needed.

"An exercise like this gives our partners a chance to exercise that muscle, to make sure that the manufacturing's there," Dawn O'Connell, assistant secretary for preparedness and response for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, told USA TODAY during an exclusive tour of the vaccine factory in late July.

In past disease outbreaks, she said, getting enough

See BIRD FLU, Page 4A



Vials of commercial bird flu vaccines are readied for inspection at the CSL Seqirus facility. The risk to the general public is considered low, but public health officials are monitoring outbreaks in humans.

Mishandled bodies, mixed-up remains bring tighter funeral home regulations

Kevin Hardy
Stataline

The headlines were the stuff of nightmares.

One Colorado funeral home owner let the body of a woman decompose for two years in a hearse parked outside a house he rented while hoarding cremated remains of dozens of others inside.

Last year, authorities discovered nearly 200 improperly stored bodies at another Colorado funeral home after receiving an odor complaint from neighbors. Investigators later learned that the funeral home had sent fake ashes to families that had paid for cremation services.

The incidents, which led to criminal charges, sparked public outrage and traumatized families already coping with grief. They also highlighted the state's lax regulation of the industry.



Disturbing findings at funeral homes in Colorado in recent months sparked public outrage. RICH LEGG/GETTY IMAGES

For 40 years, Colorado had some of the nation's most lenient rules for funeral homes. It was the only state where a professional license wasn't required to be a funeral director.

That changed this year.

"With the grief these families went through, it was like they died again. ... That trust was broken on a sacred thing."

Colorado state Rep. Brianna Titone

Amid nationwide workforce challenges, some states have looked to make it easier to work in funeral homes and crematoriums. But after grisly incidents at some facilities, lawmakers in Colorado, Illinois and Michigan have sought to tighten control over this essential but often overlooked industry.

"It was just: 'We have to do

See FUNERAL HOMES, Page 3A

First day of school varied around nation

For some parents, the earlier the better

Kayla Jimenez
USA TODAY

Melodie Wright's kids were among the first in the country to return to school. Her son started 10th grade and her daughter began second grade in Birmingham, Alabama, the first full week of August, more than six weeks before the official end of summer.

Millions of students across the country, including in Alabama, are loading up backpacks, meeting with teachers and classmates and adjusting to classroom procedures since school kicked off. Elsewhere in the U.S., kids are flocking to beaches on the Pacific and Atlantic coasts, as scorching temperatures hit some areas including Death Valley and Puerto Rico.

Wright feels like it's too early in the year for school. She wishes she had more time to spend with the kids. She would happily wait until after Labor Day when schools in other parts of the country start their calendar years.

Keary Noy, another Alabama parent, sees it differently. For her, the earlier school starts, the better. Noy's son's charter school moved its start date to the beginning of August, but she would have preferred a July start.

The first day of school is, of course, not consistent across the country. Data shows start dates generally correlate to the norms where you live.

Students in Southern states are more likely to start school in early August, according to a 2023 analysis by the Pew Research Center of school calendars. Researchers based their findings on 1,573 public school district calendars from the 2023-24 school year.

Kids at school districts in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania typically have the latest back-to-school days, the Pew analysis shows.

The most common start dates for districts are during the second and third full weeks of August, Pew found.

Most schools near Regana Bracey in New Jersey will open after Labor Day.

Bracey, who belongs to a parent group working on educational reform, recalls being amazed at the great divide in start dates since she was a child visiting family in the South in the late summers, and her cousins would be back in school already.



Fourth-grade teacher Rodney LaFleur teaches his students in their classroom at Nystrom Elementary in Richmond, Calif., on April 21, 2023. BRITTANY HOSEA-SMALL/FOR USA TODAY

"My cousins got out in May and they were always on summer break earlier. And I was envious of that. But on the reverse side, they were going back to school earlier," she said.

Decades later, the variety in what months people consider "summer break" seems normal.

Why do some schools return earlier than others?

A majority of states require schools to offer about 180 days of instruction with some exceptions, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

However, there is less uniformity across the nation when it comes to calendar start dates. At least 15 states have laws specifying when public schools' calendars must start or end. At least another 27 states allow districts to determine when to return from summer vacation, according to an Education Commission of the States 2023 report that compares calendar year policies across

the nation.

Requiring kids to return to classes for some portion of the summer came about in the late 1800s and early 1900s, in a shift from one-room schoolhouses to age-graded classrooms, when schools began seeing lower attendance at urban schools during the summer months, according to the Pew Research Center.

In the past, the school calendar years were tailored toward agricultural patterns or were open year-round.

"In fact, into the early 20th century, rural schools typically operated summer and winter sessions, with children working on farms in spring and fall to help with planting and harvesting," the Pew article explains. "Urban schools, on the other hand, were open nearly year-round, though many children attended sporadically or for just part of the year."

Schools are trying out later start times in parts of the US

Another consideration in some areas

is keeping kids cool in the summer. This is a challenge for schools as regions adjust to hotter temperatures at the start of the school year. Some buildings don't have adequate air conditioning to keep kids cool enough to learn.

In response to a parent survey, the School District of Philadelphia adjusted its calendar a year ago to start after Labor Day during the 2023-2024 school year, making it later than the 2022-23 school year.

But even with the delayed start, Philadelphia schools sent kids home early at the start of the last school year due to hot temperatures.

Other areas will see later start dates this year, including Milwaukee Public Schools which start on Sept. 3. Some schools in the district previously followed an early start calendar year beginning in mid-August, but the district was forced to cancel classes due to the heat in the early days of the school year.

Contributing: Rory Linnane, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Brennan

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Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee, said in an interview here last week. "One of the reasons Paris has been so successful is they've been authentically French in every regard and that's why it works. LA is a different city and so we have to be what you would expect and what you see and what people are used to seeing from big events in LA."

In other words: Hollywood, the beaches, the ocean, the mountains, sunshine, celebrities, the works.

This conversation of "can you top this" has happened once before, with a sublime result for the subsequent Olympics. As soon as the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing ended, talk turned to London in 2012, and it went something like this: Poor London, how could it possibly follow the technical opulence and grandeur of a country like China that could put on the biggest show on earth with no concern for the guardrails of tight budgets, media scrutiny and, well, democracy.

"In the Beijing opening ceremony, there were, whatever, 10,000 people banging drums," Wasserman said. "Then London does a great thing because it was authentically British, it had humor and fun and music and all this stuff and the Queen and Daniel Craig."

"Our job is not to compare but to be the best for LA. I think it's important not to get caught up in that, the same way London frankly didn't get caught up in that."

One big change from Paris to LA will be a return to a stadium for the opening ceremony, which means the athletes of



The 2028 Summer Olympics will take place in Los Angeles. It will become the third city in the world to host three Olympics. ROBERT HANASHIRO/USA TODAY

the world will receive the kind of raucous ovation in 2028 that was just not possible as they cruised the Seine River.

Wasserman praised Paris' incredible opening ceremony. "It was so spectacular," he said. "I give them a ton of credit. ... Beautiful idea."

But it was missing something. "The way I describe it is the one thing it missed was shared experiences," Wasserman said. "So not just for the athletes, for the fans, you have the moment of, oh, Paul McCartney playing in London, everyone shared that moment at the same time, and here when it was coming down the river, you had your experience, but it was a very isolated experience for both the athletes and the fans. If you were on the river you saw

what you saw but that's all you saw."

In that sense, for spectators gathered along the Seine that night, it was like watching a parade. The greatest parade ever, but still a parade.

"The energy that comes from a shared experience - Super Bowl halftime is the ultimate example, Super Bowl halftime being in the venue, everyone experiences it together," he said. "I think that's a really important thing to create that energy and I think it's a really great opportunity for the athletes to feel that energy because it is the first night and that energy and that shared experience is pretty powerful."

Olympic gold medalist Donna de Varona, a member of the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee board of

directors who also was on the LA Olympic bid committee, said it is vital to put the athletes first.

"We will put the athletes center stage," she said in an interview here the other day. "We need to do that. I commend the French for going all out. It was a nice idea to use the Seine but the athletes were separate."

"I'm sure because all these stars came here it was really helpful on social media and it helps elevate the Games, but we still have to remember that the athletes are the stars of the show," she said. "The athletes have to be the centerpiece and that's the challenge of the countries marching in. There's all kinds of ways we can make that happen."

"Here, I think the only disappointment was that the athletes were not center stage in the opening ceremony. In LA, Hollywood will step up, but we don't want Hollywood to overshadow the athletes. The athletes are the stars of the show."

One athlete who was a star of the show here spoke enthusiastically about looking forward to a home game in LA in what would be her fifth Olympic Games. Katie Ledecky, the most decorated U.S. female Olympian ever, in any sport, was one of many athletes who appreciated the boisterous and delightful ovations every French athlete received here, win, lose, or draw.

"Seeing the kind of support that the French athletes are getting here, I think all of the U.S. athletes are thinking about how cool that could be in Los Angeles having the home crowd," she said. "So that would be amazing to be able to compete there."

When one Olympics ends, the promise of the next begins. Paris is done. On to LA.

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Feds link man to effort to ship ton of meth

‘Massive amount’ was destined for Australia

Julia Gomez
USA TODAY

A man in California was arrested and charged on a federal criminal complaint stating he was connected to the attempted shipping of 2,205 pounds of methamphetamine, according to the United States Attorney’s Office.

Jing Tang Li, 32, from El Monte, California, was arrested on Thursday and charged with distribution of and possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine. He is accused of having connections to the shipment that contained over a ton of methamphetamine, which was destined to ship to Australia, according to a news release.

“Dangerous drugs such as methamphetamine devastate our community,” said United States Attorney Martin Es-

trada in a statement. “We see the misery brought by highly addictive drugs on our streets every day. The massive amount of methamphetamine seized in this case shows how brazen drug traffickers have become and why it is imperative that we use our resources to hold these criminals responsible.”

The drugs were sent out by a fake company and shipped in packages that were labeled as furniture, wheel hub testing equipment, a casting machine

and carpets and textiles, according to The Associated Press.

The Department of Justice announced the arrest on Friday, however the attempted exportation of the drugs took place in 2023, the news release stated.

Li could face a 10-year sentence if he is convicted.

Homeland Security Investigations, United States Customs and Border Protection and the Australian Federal Police are investigating the case.

Mars

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Study results suggest that the Martian “midcrust” – 6 to 12 miles below the surface – is composed of igneous rock with thin fractures filled with liquid water.

This is important because “understanding the Martian water cycle is critical for understanding the evolution of the climate, surface and interior,” Wright, an assistant professor at Scripps, said in a statement. “A useful starting point is to identify where water is and how much is there.”

Enough to cover the planet

Scientists say there’s enough water on Mars to fill “oceans” on the planet’s surface.

If the area studied is a representative location, the Martian midcrust could contain a volume of liquid water “exceeding that of hypothesized ancient oceans,” the study said. (Scientists believe that about 3 billion years ago, oceans, lakes and rivers were common on Mars.)

In fact, they estimate that the amount of groundwater now locked up under the Martian surface could cover the entire planet to a depth of about a mile.

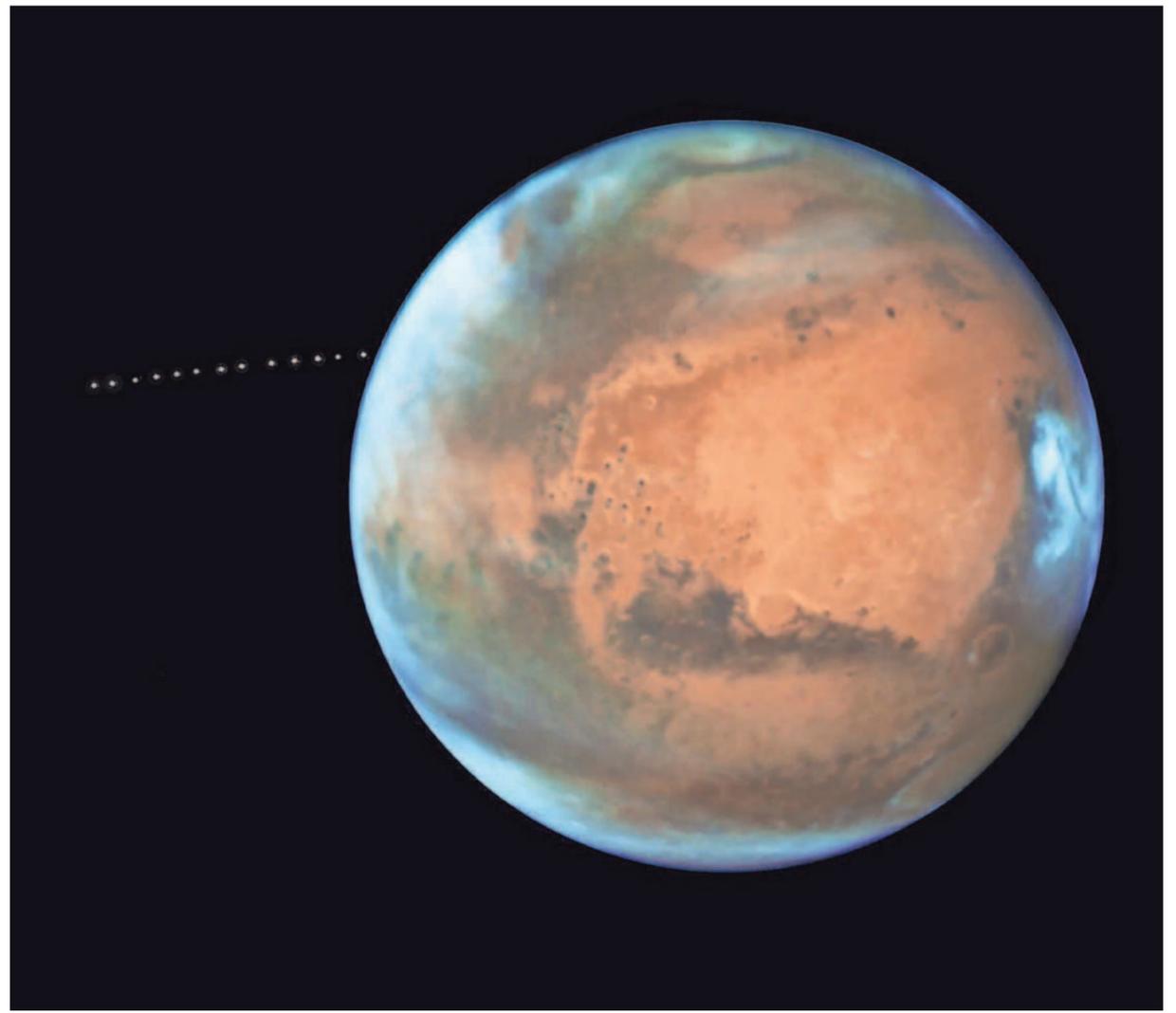
NASA lander looks deep within

Researchers used seismic data from NASA’s InSight lander to probe the interior of Mars.

They used a mathematical model of rock physics and concluded that InSight’s seismic data are best explained by a deep layer of fractured igneous rock saturated with liquid water.

Could the water be used?

Unfortunately, the water wouldn’t be of much use to anyone trying to tap into it to supply a future Mars colony, according to a statement from the University of California, Berkeley,



Using seismic activity to explore the interior of Mars, geophysicists have found evidence of a large underground reservoir of liquid water filling thin fractures in the planet’s crust far below the surface. PROVIDED BY NASA

which added that even on Earth, drilling a hole a half-mile deep is difficult.

“Accessing the water could be challenging,” Wright acknowledged.

Study co-author Michael Manga, a UC Berkeley professor of Earth and planetary science, said jokingly that it could be a challenge for Elon Musk to solve.

What it could mean for life

“Establishing that there is a big reservoir of liquid water provides some window into what the climate was like or could be like,” Manga said in a statement. “And water is necessary for life as we know it.”

He said he believes Mars’

underground reservoirs could be harboring some form of life.

“It’s certainly true on Earth – deep, deep mines host life, the bottom of the ocean hosts life. We haven’t found any evidence for life on Mars, but at least we have identified a place that should, in principle, be able to sustain life.”

Funeral homes

Continued from Page 1A

something. We have to fix this problem,” said Colorado state Rep. Brianna Titone, a Democrat who was among the bipartisan sponsors of a new law tightening funeral home regulation.

People just assume that funeral homes are safe and clean, she said, and that the workers embalming, cremating and burying the dead are doing so with care.

“With the grief these families went through, it was like they died again. And I don’t think a lot of people think about it that way until something like this happens,” Titone said. “That trust was broken on a sacred thing.”

‘We deserve to know’

One Michigan lawmaker is trying to change state regulations to ensure bodies are refrigerated as they await burial or cremation. The effort follows discoveries of unrefrigerated bodies decomposing in a Flint funeral home’s garage and a Detroit funeral home storing more than 50 infant and fetal remains without families’ permission.

“When a loved one dies, we deserve to know that their remains will be treated with the utmost respect,” Democratic state Sen. Kevin Hertel wrote in a local newspaper opinion piece on the legislation he sponsored. “As we grapple with grief and trauma, the last thing we should worry about is that a parent, sibling, spouse or child who has passed is neglected in death.”

Hertel did not respond to requests for comment. His legislation has not advanced.

In Colorado, one law passed in 2022 expands the state’s ability to inspect funeral homes and crematories. Another one passed this year requires funeral

directors, embalmers and cremationists to be licensed by the state – they must obtain certain academic degrees or have enough professional experience or certain industry certifications.

“It’s a huge deal,” said Faith Haug, chair of the mortuary science program at Arapahoe Community College, Colorado’s only accredited program.

Haug, who holds professional licenses in several states, was surprised to learn that none was required when she moved to the state a decade ago.

“When I first moved here, it was a little insulting,” she said, noting that people with extensive education and experience were treated the same under the law as those with none.

Though even Colorado’s funeral industry supported the legislation this year, it did raise concerns about retaining existing workers who haven’t had to obtain professional credentials before.

Beginning in 2027, the law requires that funeral directors complete an accredited educational program, pass a national board exam and have work experience.

But the law does give existing funeral directors several options to obtain provisional licensure, including passing national exams or having 4,000 hours of documented work experience.

“The biggest concern is just workforce disruption,” Haug said. “If you don’t have different paths to licensure, the fear was that the workforce would essentially collapse.”

A tight labor market has pushed some states to expand eligibility for licensed funeral workers. For example, Missouri lawmakers in recent years have sought to expand licensure, which currently requires passing an exam. Proposed legislation would allow workers who have completed an approved apprenticeship to become licensed. A bill passed the state House but did not make it out of the Senate before the end of this session.

“It’s not easy getting people in the profession,” said Chris Farmer, general counsel for the National Funeral Directors Association.

Though he said he understands the urge to regulate in some cases, he said all industries include bad actors: “Even in the most stringent states, somebody’s going to do something bad. You can’t prevent it.”

Recently, state legislatures have been busy passing measures on new practices such as human composting and so-called water cremation.

Farmer noted that funeral directors perform about 2.4 million funerals each year – and the vast majority of them never result in headlines. “Unfortunately, it is a reactive situation,” he said. “Funeral service only gets their attention when something goes wrong.”

That was the case in Illinois.

A local coroner last year uncovered inconsistencies with cremated remains that dated back years. Authorities said at least 80 families around the country received the wrong remains – some of which had to be exhumed from a national cemetery.

“We found that there were families that were impacted from the West Coast to the East Coast and all places in between,” said Illinois state Sen. Doris Turner, a Democrat.

Nightmarish discoveries

Turner sponsored legislation this year that requires funeral directors to use unique identifiers on the body, body bag, or any donated body part or organ of the deceased. She said that chain of custody should prevent future problems with funeral homes mixing up remains.

“For me, this is probably the most important piece of legislation that I have been able to pass during my time in the General Assembly,” she said.

Some families had spread ashes in meaningful places, and one woman told

Turner how she had for months talked to an urn in her home that she thought contained the remains of her mother.

Those families later learned that what they had were the remains of strangers.

“Those are things that you can’t correct,” Turner said.

Sheila Canfield-Jones, who lives about an hour outside Denver, never thought to question the funeral home she found online after her daughter died of a heroin overdose in 2019. The Colorado facility promoted natural funeral services and promised to plant a tree in her daughter’s honor.

Four years later, the FBI notified her that she hadn’t received her daughter’s cremated remains; she had gotten a box of ground-up concrete.

Her daughter’s body was among those left to rot inside the Return to Nature Funeral Home for years.

“You have nightmares,” she said. “You think: ‘What did she look like? What did the room look like?’ There were 190 bodies. There was an infant in there.”

Canfield-Jones said the hellish stories and the testimony of affected families were too much for lawmakers to ignore.

“We pestered the hell out of them,” she said. “So they had to listen.”

Though she believes the legislation was a solid first step in addressing industry problems, she said it will take a long time to rebuild trust. In the meantime, she said, she wouldn’t want to be taken to a Colorado funeral home.

“If I die tomorrow, I’d be in a car going to Kansas,” she said. “Until all this comes down, I don’t know that I could trust anybody. You want to believe there’s good people in this industry that do a good job. And I’m sure there are. But how do you know?”

Staline is part of States Newsroom, a national nonprofit news organization focused on state policy.

Newcomers tried to challenge status quo

Hawaii sees competitive races in primary election

Jeremy Yurow
USA TODAY

While Hawaii's top congressional leaders easily won their Democratic primaries on Saturday, the Aloha State saw its share of competitive races – and surprises – at the local level.

Here are some key takeaways as the state gears up for Election Day in the fall:

Hawaii House Speaker Scott Saiki loses reelection bid

In a stunning upset, Hawaii House Speaker Scott Saiki lost the Democratic primary for the House District 25 seat to Kim Coco Iwamoto, a progressive civil rights attorney and former school board member.

Saiki, who has represented the urban district that includes Ala Moana, Kakaako, and downtown Honolulu since 1994, narrowly won previous primary battles against Iwamoto in 2020 and 2022.

During this year's campaign, Saiki praised the accomplishments of Hawaii's previous legislative session, which included efforts ranging from disaster relief to tax cuts.

Iwamoto, however, attacked Saiki's record on key issues such as condo insurance rates and the minimum wage, arguing that the longtime lawmaker had failed to adequately address the needs of his constituents.

If she wins the general election, Iwamoto will become the first openly transgender official to join the Hawaii House of Representatives.

Veteran politician Clayton Hee defeated in Democratic primary

Former Hawaii State Sen. Clayton Hee, a veteran politician with endorsements from three former governors, lost his bid to represent District 23 to fellow Democrat Ben Shafer.

Hee, who campaigned on addressing issues like farming, sea level rise and cesspools, was defeated by Shafer, a community advocate known for his opposition to the contentious Turtle Bay Resort expansion.

Shafer's strong support from unions, including the Hawaii State Teachers Association, proved crucial in the primary.

Shafer's victory sets up a closely watched general election against

Republican State Sen. Brenton Awa, who ran unopposed in the Republican primary.

The race is expected to be one of the most competitive in Hawaii, as Awa and Shafer vie for control of one of the state's few swing districts.

Ken Inouye, grandson of late Sen. Daniel Inouye, loses primary

State Rep. Trish La Chica has clinched the Democratic nomination for the Hawaii State House's 37th District, beating Ken Inouye, son of the late U.S. Sen. Daniel K. Inouye.



La Chica

La Chia's campaign focused on educational issues, courting students, parents, and educators in Central Oahu.

While Inouye, who is an assistant to the vice chancellor at the University of Hawaii-West Oahu, campaigned on debates such as the cost of living and the future of retirees and the younger generation.

Deceased candidate still ballot eligible, "wins" state house seat

The late Rep. Mark Nakashima won



Nakashima

100% of the vote in the Democratic primary for Hawaii's 1st House District.

Nakashima, who died on July 11, remained on the ballot as the sole candidate, ensuring his victory by default.

According to Hawaii's Office of Elections, Gov. Josh Green will now appoint a replacement from a list of three candidates provided by the Democratic Party.

Big Island mayoral race headed to a runoff

Hawaii Island Mayor Mitch Roth secured roughly 39% of the votes in Saturday's primary but fell short of the 50% needed to win outright, likely setting up a runoff in the Nov. 5 general election.

Psychologist Kimo Alameda, with approximately 28% of the vote, is Roth's closest competitor.

Roth and Alameda will likely face each other in the general election, as the remaining candidates – Breeani Kobayashi, a hotel general manager, and Junior Tupa'i, a pastor and former lieutenant governor candidate – did not pick up enough support to qualify for the runoff.

Bird flu

Continued from Page 1A

vaccine made in time to stop individual infections and slow the spread of disease has been the government's "Achilles' heel."

So here, in the heart of North Carolina's coveted Research Triangle, winding conveyor belts and hanging robotic arms are filling one thumb-sized glass vial at a time to avoid the next global pandemic.

True success would mean at some point the contents of those vials could essentially be flushed down the toilet – because bird flu no longer poses a theoretical threat to human health.

But at a time when the virus seems to be spreading to new farms every week, when America's health care system and treatment of farmworkers means infections are likely going undetected and fall flu season is rapidly approaching, public health officials say there's no such thing as being too careful.

"You want to prepare for the worst case," said Dr. Raj Panjabi, who oversaw pandemic preparedness at the White House from 2021 to 2023 as a special assistant to President Joe Biden. "This gets the engine moving."

On the production line

Through several security doors at the Seqirus facility, scores of workers in white zip-up plastic suits, hairnets and goggles worked along conveyor belts carrying small tubes along a packaging line.

Seqirus' packaging lines are capable of producing 2 million flu vaccine doses every two weeks, said Jonathan Kegerise, vice president of manufacturing and the site head for the facility in Holly Springs. The 4.8 million doses of H5N1 were slotted in between batches of seasonal flu and didn't affect the production of those shots.

Robotic arms filled and capped vials as workers stood watch and prepared machines for the next batch. Along the way, lights flashed as cameras captured images of the vials for quality control. They would undergo additional inspections before they were packed away, ready for shipping if the federal government decided the H5N1 vaccines were needed.

The liquid was mainly divided into 10-dose vials. Seqirus produced an additional 250,000 pre-filled, single-dose syringes for times when opening a 10-dose vial would be wasteful.

The H5N1 vaccine had already been manufactured at the same Seqirus facility and stored at temperatures between 35.6 and 46.4 degrees Fahrenheit. Concentrated doses are made ahead of time as part of the national stockpile.

The vaccine has now been poured into vials allowing public health officials to more easily distribute doses if they are needed.

Making the substance for the doses takes about a month, followed by a day to formulate a batch, another day to fill the vials, and one last day to inspect and package them.

Seqirus is producing all 4.8 million doses under a \$22 million agreement with the federal government, the company said.

Two types of vaccines are being prepared as defenses against the H5N1



CSL Seqirus in Holly Springs, N.C., outside Raleigh, says its facility can produce 2 million flu vaccine doses every two weeks. PHOTOS BY ALEX BOERNER/FOR USA TODAY

virus. In addition to the vaccine being readied at Holly Springs, in July, the government also directed \$176 million to Moderna to develop mRNA influenza vaccines, including for H5N1.

The two vaccines use different technologies – mRNA can be made faster, in case a pandemic is spreading quickly; the more traditional, cell-based vaccine rolling off these assembly lines takes longer to produce.

It makes sense to now complete the cell-based vaccines that are already in the national stockpile, said Dr. Nahid Bhadelia, the founding director of Boston University's Center on Emerging Infectious Diseases. She told USA TODAY an mRNA vaccine could help if the virus changes enough that a new vaccine has to be developed.

Still, Bhadelia, who worked in the Biden administration during COVID-19, worries that Congress hasn't allocated enough money to get ahead of the bird flu virus.

"Nothing can happen without money," she said.

The vaccine we have now

Scientists hope the vaccine being poured into vials here would protect someone against a severe H5N1 infection, but they aren't sure.

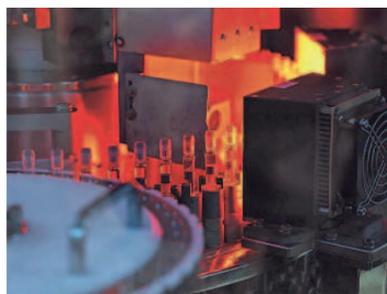
So far it has been tested only in ferrets, the animal typically used by labs to test flu vaccines. Seqirus already manufactures an H5N1 vaccine that FDA has determined is safe and effective. This new bird flu vaccine replaces the H5N1 strain with the circulating virus.

The first human trials for the new vaccine have begun, starting with healthy people to ensure the vaccine triggers the desired effect on the immune system. Those results are expected later this year.

At this point, researchers believe the vaccine coming off this assembly line will be effective, but it's not guaranteed, Bhadelia said.

It's also possible that by the time the virus transforms enough to become truly dangerous to large numbers of people, it will have changed so much that the vaccine that has been prepared here will no longer work, said Dr. Paul Offit, an infectious disease and vaccine expert who directs the Vaccine Education Center at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Even if the vaccine works well, there's the problem of scaling up production and getting it to enough people



Vials of H5N1 vaccines at CSL Seqirus are packed away and prepared for shipping if the federal government decides they are needed. The bird flu virus is not being passed from person to person, so health officials don't believe it's worth vaccinating anyone yet – even the farmworkers exposed to infected chickens or cows.

fast enough.

To work effectively, the vaccine requires two doses to be delivered at least three weeks apart. It's unclear how much protection someone gets after the first dose. In emailed responses, Seqirus wouldn't say when the vaccine doses expire and when they'd have to be replaced.

Delivering them to people will be challenging, too.

With the COVID-19 vaccine, it was more difficult than expected to get the doses from the warehouses to vaccine clinics and into arms. Cold storage, bottle size and other factors posed problems that had to be resolved on the fly.

The National Biodefense Plan, which Panjabi oversaw, was launched in 2022 with the goal of providing enough vaccines for all at-risk populations within four months of a pandemic's start.

If bird flu could be addressed early enough – contained before it spreads beyond farmworkers and their families and not spread among the general public – it would be much easier to make enough vaccine and deliver it to the right people in four months' time.

That's why some public health experts believe farmworkers should be offered vaccines before the virus has a chance to become more dangerous.

Vaccinating farmworkers would not reduce the number of people who become severely infected with bird flu, Bhadelia said, but she thinks they should be offered it as part of a research trial. "It will just potentially help with severe disease and to further our scientific understanding," she said.

Still, Dr. Nirav Shah, principal deputy director for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, doesn't think the time is right to start vaccinating anyone.

H5N1 has not caused serious cases of disease, it is not spreading person-to-person, and its genetics haven't changed substantially since the vaccine was developed against it. Right now, he told reporters in late July, a readily available antiviral is a better tool for anyone infected or exposed than the vaccine would be.

"The H5 vaccine, at this moment in time, is not performing the job that we really need," Shah said.

A different vaccination

Finland made a different decision. In June, Finnish officials began distributing 20,000 doses of a different Seqirus vaccine to people ages 18 and older exposed to animals they believed were susceptible to bird flu, including workers in the country's mink industry.

In late July, fewer than 200 people in Finland had received shots, and the vaccines must be used by mid-September before they expire, said Mia Kontio, chief specialist for the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare's infectious disease control and vaccinations. Many Finns are on vacation in the summer, she added, so August is going to be "very hectic" to quickly immunize people with the two-dose regimen.

The return of wild migratory birds in the fall, potentially carrying the virus, add to the urgency, she said.

"We felt that it's our responsibility to actually do something if we can," Kontio told USA TODAY. "Because the situation might change very quickly."

Where are we now?

In the U.S., federal officials expanded regulations on interstate transportation of livestock in recent months. They've added alerts on products such as unpasteurized milk, and warned that shared equipment can spread the virus among animals.

They have also provided personal protective equipment, such as N95 respirators, goggles and gloves, in states affected by bird flu.

Recently, federal officials launched an effort to vaccinate livestock workers against the seasonal flu. That vaccine doesn't offer any protection against H5N1, which is a different strain of influenza, said Shah, from the CDC.

Getting the seasonal vaccine, however, could prevent someone from simultaneously having both the seasonal flu, which is highly contagious, and H5N1, which can be extremely dangerous. A worst-case scenario would be a virus that combines the two, Shah said.

Flu viruses are known to exchange genes with one another, so such a combination is always possible.

"Viruses are sort of smart," May Chu, a clinical professor of epidemiology at Colorado School of Public Health, told USA TODAY. "Our bodies offer the place where they replicate. And so if you don't let the virus into you, you aren't going to be contributing to the genetic growth of this virus. This is what you want to stop. Because the more people get infected, the more viruses grow, and the more chances of the genetic variant arising of deleterious effect."

Such a combination, she emphasized, would be "bad for us."

Farmers' Almanac forecasts a wet winter

But also a one where some areas are warmer

Mike Snider
USA TODAY

After what was the warmest winter on record, the upcoming winter should be wet and milder for most of the U.S., according to the Farmers' Almanac.

The 208th edition of the Farmers' Almanac, out now, foresees a "Wet Winter Whirlwind," for the upcoming 2024-2025 winter season. "It definitely looks more wet than white in many areas," Farmers' Almanac Editor Sandi Duncan told USA TODAY. "Obviously, depending on where you live, there might be more white than wet, but we're focusing in on the wet winter ahead."

The climate pattern known as La Niña – likely to emerge in the September-November period, the Climate Prediction Center said in a recent forecast – could result in a warmer winter than normal in much of the country, she said.

Average or above normal temperatures are forecast for New England, the Northeast, the Southern Plains, the Southeast and the Atlantic Coast regions.

"The coldest temperatures look like they're going to be over the North Central States into the Great Lakes area," Duncan said.

Most of the nation can expect a wet Thanksgiving holiday, too, "except for way out in the Southwest," she said. And Christmas "looks wet rather than white for most areas."

The end of January gets a red flag for much of the nation due to the potential of "a very active storm track" expected to bring strong and gusty winds, along with heavy precipitation – "copious amounts of snow, rain, sleet, and ice (depending on where you live) could fall," the Almanac says.

The winter chill is expected to "hang on" longer than usual in the North, Northeast and middle of the U.S. "So it looks like it's going to feel like a longer winter, even if it's a little warmer in certain areas that usually get snowier conditions," she said.

Did the Farmers' Almanac get its winter weather prediction right?

Not if you consider the Almanac's overall forecast of a cold 2023-2024 winter because it was the warmest on record. However, the Almanac notes it hit on some of its predictions including heavy show and blizzard conditions from Colorado to the Plains that threatened Christmas holiday travel.

The Almanac's forecast paralleled a weather pattern described by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as "a swatch of cooler-than-average temperatures across the central part of the country in January."

The Farmers' Almanac, which originated in 1818, says its longtime fans claim the publication's weather predictions are accurate approximately 80%-85% of the time. It uses "a top-secret mathematical and astronomical formula, taking sunspot activity, tidal action, the position of the planet, and many other factors into consideration," the Almanac states.

Should you base your plans on the Farmers' Almanac – or the Old Farmer's Almanac, due out later this month? Russ Schumacher, a professor and climatologist at Colorado State University, was skeptical he told the Coloradoan in 2022

"They attract attention and get people talking about it. But a lot of times what they do is use general phrases that are true most any year," he said.

"What does 'glacial and snow-filled' for our area mean? Is that we get a few days of really cold weather and some snow? That happens pretty much every winter," he said.

The Farmers' Almanac still makes for an interesting read. Here's a closer look at its regional winter forecasts (click on a link to go directly to that region's forecast).

Northeast, New York: 'Active time' for storms in late January

Winter in the New England and the Northeast region (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont) will be stormy with above-normal amounts of precipitation and near- to above-normal temperatures, according to the Almanac.

"Obviously, in the mountainous areas, we do see some good opportunities for that winter precipitation to turn white," Duncan said.

An early start to winter is expected with a coastal storm along the Atlantic



A stop sign replaces failed stoplights at an intersection in East Providence, R.I., on Dec. 18, 2023.

KRIS CRAIG/USA TODAY NETWORK

Seaboard in the first week of December bringing mixed precipitation, then very cold temperatures. Much of New England and New York can expect a few inches of snow from a "fast-moving clipper system" in mid-January; the rest of the region gets rains and a wintry mix.

The end of January will be "a very active time," for the region with a big storm dropping six or more inches of snow to Delaware, Maryland and parts of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, "with some lighter amounts in southern New York and New England," Duncan said.

Snow storms are predicted into March with one dropping up to 5 inches in mid-March in upstate New York and central and northern New England.

Midwest, Ohio and Michigan: 'Big freeze' in January

The Great Lakes, Ohio Valley and Midwest region (Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin) can expect periods of wet snow and rain to begin in early November, with "frigidly cold" temperatures through Nov. 11. Rain and wet snow continues to Thanksgiving, with a drier forecast toward the end of the year.

"January looks like when the Big Freeze may be on for that area," Duncan said. With "very, very cold" conditions expected, "If you can plan your trip to the Caribbean, I would go then."

In mid-March, a "rapidly moving storm" is expected to bring two to five inches of wet snow to Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and the lower peninsula of Michigan and a wintry mix to Kentucky.

The first of April is also predicted to bring cold rain, sleet and wet snow to Kentucky, southern Indiana and southern Ohio.

Northwest: Rain and wet snow for Idaho, Oregon and Washington

The Northwest region (Idaho, Oregon and Washington) will get plenty of showers, with wet snow beginning in early November. A stormy December may yield a possible fair, dry and cold Christmas holiday, then a fair January.

But in early February, a major storm is expected to bring heavy snow to the Bitterroot Range in eastern Idaho "with 12 inches possible."

"So I think it's going to be very wet conditions," Duncan said. "It obviously may not be so bad in the other states in that region."

North Central states, Colorado: 'More like winter'

The North Central states (Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming) will get a gusty Halloween and then snow in the Rockies at the start of November. An early November storm is predicted to bring heavy snow and, after it clears very cold temperatures.

After a rainy, snowy Thanksgiving more storms kick off December.

But a "generally fair, dry, very cold" Christmas is forecast; unseasonably cold temperatures are predicted to arrive in late January.

"This is where we are saying winter feels a little bit more like winter, with the coldest temperatures of the season and average snowfall," Duncan said. Expect a lot of snow in February, with some generated by that storm forecast for Idaho.

A mid-February snowstorm predicted in the Plains could dump heaviest in Kansas.

Southeast, Florida: 'Mild and wet' winter

Southeast states (Alabama, Florida,

Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia) overall are expected to be "mild and wet," Duncan said. "But that doesn't mean they will escape Old Man Winter."

A "sharp cold front" in mid-November could bring violent thunderstorms to Tennessee and areas south, followed by a deep freeze.

Conditions return to fair and dry before a wet Thanksgiving. An early December coastal storm could bring rain, winds and "very cold air" plus freezing conditions into Florida. A wet Christmas follows.

"We do see some colder conditions and very cold and bitterly cold conditions ending the month (of January) in the Southeast states," Duncan said.

Cold conditions are predicted to continue into February, with a midmonth storm possibly bringing sleet and wet snow to most of the region.

Texas, South Central: Another winter snowstorm predicted

South Central states (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico) and Texas are forecast to have "mild with near to below normal precipitation," Duncan said.

The region is expected to get plenty of rain and wet snow in December, followed by a mostly fair January.

But the beginning of February will be "very unsettled, with some snow, possibly ... up to 6 inches" in Texas, she said.

A wet Mardi Gras could be upcoming, too, according to the Almanac.

California, Southwest: 'Fair, dry, very chilly' Christmas

Southwest states (Arizona, California, Nevada and Utah) are forecast to have average temperatures and precipitation, a possible break from last winter's atmospheric rivers.

A dry Thanksgiving is followed by rain and snow showers and a "fair, dry, very chilly" Christmas season is forecast.

Heavy snow in the mountains in late January could lead to storms to the east.

With colder conditions also forecast in the Southeast, and Midwest and a major storm in the Northwest at the beginning of February, "the end of January (and) beginning of February, for most of the country, looks like something you just may want to put on the calendar," Duncan said.

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Assault leaves officer ‘fighting for his life’

Protests mark 10 years after Brown’s death

Michael Loria
USA TODAY

A police officer in Ferguson, Missouri, is “fighting for his life” after being assaulted during protests marking the 10th anniversary of the fatal shooting of Michael Brown, the city’s police chief said.

The incident took place Friday night outside the Ferguson Police Department after a demonstration commemorating Brown’s death turned destructive, according to police Chief Troy Doyle. Officer Travis Brown and other officers began attempting to make arrests in response to protestors damaging a fence outside a police station, Doyle said.

A protester charged Officer Brown when he attempted to make an arrest, causing him to fall and hit his head and leaving him with a “severe brain injury,” Doyle added. Protesters hurt two additional officers, leaving one with an ankle injury and another with abrasions.

Authorities said the department has completely reformed since Michael Brown’s killing in 2014 and the assault on officers Friday night was a senseless act of rioting.

“This police department since 2014 has been a punching bag for this community,” Doyle said at a news conference on Saturday. “I don’t know why the officers here, who weren’t even here in 2014, have to continue to suffer through this. It doesn’t make any sense.”

The St. Louis County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office has charged Elijah Gantt, 28, with first-degree assault, resisting arrest, property damage, and two counts of fourth-degree assault. Four others were charged in addition to Gantt, with charges ranging from prop-



Michael Brown Sr. places a rose where his 18-year-old son Michael Brown Jr. was fatally shot by police in 2014. LAWRENCE BRYANT/REUTERS

erty damage, resisting arrest, and third-degree assault.

St. Louis County Prosecuting Attorney Wesley Bell, who also spoke at the news conference, noted the assault was a new low for the community.

“The toughest thing that I’ve had to do is talk and console with the mother who doesn’t know if her child is going to make it,” Bell said.

Police chief on Officer Brown: ‘Inspired to do the right thing’

Officer Brown has served the Ferguson Police Department since Jan. 2, according to Doyle. The police chief said Brown was the kind of officer the com-

munity wanted on the force.

“All police ain’t bad,” Doyle said. “Officer Brown got into this job because he was inspired to do the right thing. He wanted to be a part of the change, he wanted to make an impact in our community, and what happens? He gets assaulted.”

Brown came to the Ferguson department from the nearby St. Louis County Police Department, Doyle said.

He served the St. Louis department from August 2012 to October 2023, according to Sgt. Tracy Panus, a public information officer for the St. Louis agency. Brown worked as a patrol officer and as a tactical operations officer.

“During his time at St. Louis County,

Travis made a positive impact on our community and made many friends throughout the Department,” Panus said.

Don Van, president of the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 15 that oversees the Ferguson area, said Brown remained hospitalized and unconscious.

How has Ferguson changed since 2014?

The protests Friday night were over the police killing of Michael Brown in 2014. Former Ferguson Police Officer Darren Wilson’s killing of the unarmed Black teenager propelled the “Black Lives Matter” outcry into a national movement and, though he was never charged, public outcry over the killing and a federal court order led to a complete overhaul of the department.

The Ferguson demonstration also took place amid renewed outcry for police reform following the killing of Sonya Massey in nearby Springfield, Illinois. The 36-year-old unarmed Black woman was killed in her kitchen by a sheriff’s deputy after calling 911 for help.

Doyle touted his department’s changes, and said: “This is a brand-new department.”

Ferguson police, which had just a handful of Black officers in 2014, is now over 50% Black and 23% female, said Doyle, who is also Black. The department also began using body-worn cameras, mandated implicit bias training, crisis intervention training and even changed its uniforms which some people saw as upsetting reminders of traumatic experiences.

Only 1% of over 30,000 calls for police last year led to the use of force, Doyle said in a post on X, formerly Twitter, touting how the department has changed. Over 90% of officers joined the department after 2014.

Harris leans into dual heritage to energize voters

Candidate wants to appeal to broader groups

Swapna Venugopal Ramaswamy
USA TODAY

During this election year, Nalini Rau had been praying to the Hindu mother Goddess Devi for leaders who look out for everyone.

“For women, for minorities, for everyone,” said Rau, who moved from India in the 1980s and now teaches Indian classical dance in New York.

But even as she volunteered to register new voters, she wasn’t feeling very optimistic about the presidential race until Kamala Harris, whose middle name is Devi, became a candidate.

Vice President Harris, the daughter of an Indian immigrant mother and a Jamaican immigrant father, has leaned into that heritage to help energize voters.

Harris will need to assemble a broad coalition to win in November, including a substantial percentage of independent and unaffiliated white voters in the suburbs of battleground states, said Laura Tamman, an assistant professor of Political Science at New York’s Pace University.

After all, Harris will be facing off against former President Donald Trump, the Republican nominee. Trump received 55% of the white vote in 2020.

“She doesn’t have to win a majority of white voters, but she must come pretty close to President Joe Biden’s success in winning 43% of white voters in 2020,” Tamman said.

Harris is making strategic decisions to appeal to this broad group, including white voters, she said. “You see this in her choice of (Minnesota Gov.) Tim Walz as a running mate, but also in the issues she is focusing on and the places where she is traveling to hold campaign events,” Tamman said.

With reproductive issues on the ballot in many states and abortion driving many women to the polls, Shekar Narasimhan, founder of the AAPI Victory Fund, thinks even more white women will vote this fall than in 2020.

He may be right. More than 164,000 women met on Zoom to build support among white women for Harris’ campaign. There were so many participants that the platform crashed several times, according to published reports. The meeting, featuring singer P!nk and the actor Connie Britton, among others, raised \$8.5 million.

But people of color, and perhaps especially Asian Americans, will also be key, Narasimhan said.

Asian Americans have been the fastest-growing group of eligible voters in the United States over roughly the past two decades. Their number has grown by 15%, or about 2 million eligible voters in just the past four years. That’s faster than the 3% growth rate for all eligible voters during that timeframe, according to Pew Research.

Still, voter registration among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders has been 10% below the national average.

In battleground states such as Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, North Carolina and Pennsylvania, the number of Asian Americans who cast their ballot in 2020 exceeded the presidential margin of victory, according to AAPI Data.

Turning them out this year could put Harris in the White House, Narasimhan said.

For Rau, Hindu symbolism is already on Harris’ side.

Trump’s running mate JD Vance has mocked Harris as a childless cat lady (though she actually has two stepchildren). In many of the stories about Hindu mythology, a Devi vanquishes an egotistical opponent. Often, she’s riding a lion or a tiger – in other words, a big cat, Rau said, chuckling at the parallels.

“It’s tremendous justice that a powerful woman who’s bright, who’s intelligent, who’s together, who’s confident, who knows right from wrong and who is multicultural would be taking him on,” Rau said.

Can she be both Black and Indian?

Although Trump, speaking to a group of Black journalists, recently questioned how Harris could be both Black and Asian, more than 10% of the U.S. population now identifies as multiracial.

MR Rangaswami is a father of two biracial children. He’s an Indian immigrant married to a Greek American. He says he was puzzled by Trump’s comment, which implied that Harris was identifying as Black for votes.

Being biracial is “a major strength,” he said. “You have to navigate two cultures and dual identities. When my children are with their Greek relatives, they relate to that side of it and when they are with my Indian relatives, they feel Indian. They are both. It’s fluid and nuanced.”

In fact, Harris has always embraced both sides of her heritage.

She grew up singing in a Black church choir and joined a Black sorority at her historically Black college, Howard University.

More than 44,000 Black women joined a call in support of Harris the night she announced her candidacy and helped raise more than \$1.5 million.



Vice President Kamala Harris waves to supporters during a presidential campaign rally on July 30 at the Georgia State Convocation Center in Atlanta.

RICHARD BURKHART/USA TODAY NETWORK

A similar virtual call, South Asian Women for Harris, launched by actresses Mindy Kaling and Poorna Jagannathan, both of Indian descent, was attended by 9,000 women and raised \$250,000.

While a California senator and briefly a presidential candidate four years ago, Kaling invited Harris into her kitchen to make dosa, south Indian lentil and rice crepes. Harris talked about growing up eating yogurt rice, “lots of idli,” potato curry and dal – the ultimate South Indian comfort food staples.

When Harris married Doug Emhoff in 2014, she placed a flower garland around his neck and had a mangalutra, a sacred thread worn by Hindu brides, around hers. Both were nods to her Indian heritage. The ceremony, at a courthouse in Santa Barbara, ended with the breaking of a glass, marking his Jewish roots. (Coincidentally, Harris will be the featured keynote speaker and close out the Democratic National Convention in Chicago on Aug. 22, on their 10th wedding anniversary).

The most effective communicators and leaders fully embrace their own life story and connect it to a larger story, in this case, the story of America, said Terry Szuplat, a former Obama speechwriter and the author of “Say It Well,” a forthcoming book on public speaking.

History – including Barack Obama’s two elections – shows that voters want leaders who are proud of who they are, where they come from, and the life experiences that have made them who they are, he said.

In this sense, Harris’ heritage is part of what makes her such a compelling leader to so many Americans.

“Her family’s story embodies America at our best – a unique place in the world that truly welcomes all people

into a diverse, inclusive democracy,” Szuplat said.

The more she shares her inspiring life story, the more people will see her journey as a reflection of their own.

“The kind of deep, emotional connection that leads people to volunteer and donate and knock on doors, which, in a close election, can make all the difference,” he said.

Daigre Thomas, who migrated from Jamaica 20 years, says she felt an instant connection to Harris.

“I know she loves music because she’s always dancing, always smiling,” Thomas said. “Jamaican people are happy people. No matter what we are going through, we probably laugh it off.”

Harris’ intersectionality also appeals to Hermian Charles who moved to the U.S. from Grenada at age 21 to attend Baruch College in New York City.

Seeing the daughter of a fellow Caribbean islander’s meteoric ascent has made her proud.

“I am so excited for the history making possibility of the first female president and that the first woman of color as president could be of Caribbean heritage,” she said.

As a Black mother of a 20-year-old daughter, she said representation was important to her.

“It’s going to make such a huge difference for people of color to have seen first Barack Obama and now have Kamala as president of the United States,” Charles said. “The ancestors are smiling.”

Does party still matter?

A growing number of Asian Americans now identify as independent – 31% compared to 25% in 2020 – according to the 2024 Asian American Voter Survey, conducted in partnership with AAPI Data.

That presents an opportunity for outreach to communities that have typically not been courted, said Narasimhan.

Thomas said she was “undecided” on whether she’d vote this election until Harris was nominated. But now, “I’m ready to vote,” she said.

She believes Harris is well equipped to understand what wealth disparity means and how it can affect a country.

“In Jamaica, we have the poor side and the wealthy side,” she said. “So I think she’s exposed to all of that. We don’t have to explain it to her because she understands.”

Rau, for her part, believes the fact that two Hindu festivals, one dedicated to the goddesses Lakshmi, Saraswati and Durga, called Navaratri, and other, Diwali, falling just before the election is another good sign.

“They both mark the victory of good over evil,” she said.

OPINION

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Vance's Walz insult disrespects all veterans



Marla Bautista
USA TODAY

As a military spouse for nearly two decades, I am offended by Republican vice presidential nominee JD Vance's speech accusing Democratic rival Tim Walz of stolen valor.

Walz's service to our nation – not only as a military service member but also as a teacher, coach and elected leader – deserves our thanks.

Walz, the Democratic vice presidential nominee and the governor of Minnesota, was a decorated officer in the National Guard. He dedicated 24 years of his life to the service of our nation.

But because Walz did not endure a combat deployment, Republicans have mocked his service, calling it stolen valor. Vance's remarks are not only disrespectful to Walz and all who have served but they also have far-reaching consequences for society's perception of military service.

40% of service members do not deploy while in the military

Walz's military career is not a case of stolen valor. While some veterans may refer to Walz as a "slick sleeve" because he did not deploy during a time of war, Walz's military career sans deployment is not uncommon.

Nearly 40% of service members do not deploy while in the military.

Vance's attempt to discredit Walz's service is weak and tasteless at best.

Both vice president hopefuls have served in the military, but their service is not created equal in the eyes of partisan politics.

Vance served in the Marines for four years, with a six-month tour to Iraq as a military journalist.

He, too, has admitted to never having



Vice President Kamala Harris and Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz greet supporters at her presidential campaign rally in Las Vegas on Saturday. RONDA CHURCHILL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

seen combat, but that did not stop him from attacking a fellow veteran.

"This is nothing more than a political attack," retired Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Deonte Cole told me. "Real integrity isn't just about wearing a uniform. It's about embodying the values that come with it. Vance's reckless smears show a deep disconnect from the honor and respect that define true service. He simply doesn't get it. Walz's 24 years of dedicated service are beyond reproach and no amount of political mudslinging will change that."

When a veteran's service is dismissed, it sends a message that their sacrifice was not valuable.

By trying to discredit Walz's military service for political gain, Vance has

turned both men's military service for the United States into a political tool rather than a shared value.

Vance's criticism of Walz was more than a personal attack – it was an assault on the values that uphold the honor and respect for service members.

Thank both Vance and Walz for their military service

Vance is following former President Donald Trump's anti-veteran rhetorical path to garner media attention and gain like-minded followers. That won't work for Vance, who is having a hard time forging his own path in this tumultuous presidential campaign.

Vance had a great opportunity to

bring unity and integrity to the main stage as a veteran, but instead, he chose to use their incredibly impactful shared experience to demean Walz for his lack of combat deployments.

Vance's attack was merely a distraction, and as voters, we must not be distracted; we have to reject attempts to politicize or diminish the sacrifices of those who have served.

Instead, there should be a collective effort to honor and support all veterans, regardless of their political affiliations or public opinions.

Just as people should thank Vance for his military service, he, too, should thank Walz for his.

Marla Bautista is a military fellow columnist at USA TODAY Opinion.

Trump needs to intensify attacks on Harris' policies



Dace Potas
USA TODAY

After a few weeks of back and forth, former President Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris have agreed to at least one debate in September. This will be the first time the two presidential nominees have had the opportunity to go head-to-head in front of American voters.

Debates are the perfect chance for candidates to differentiate themselves from their opponents on policy, but Republicans should not be waiting until then to do so and have missed the opportunity to show Americans that conservative policies are better for the country.

Instead, Trump is still talking about President Joe Biden, and his reelection campaign is slipping behind in the polls because of it.

Harris is vulnerable on policy while she establishes her campaign

Harris is still taking the reins of the failing Biden campaign infrastructure, and her being thrust into the race rather suddenly should have left little opportunity for her to build.

The Democratic presidential nominee has had to walk a careful line of differentiating herself from the failed Biden presidency while not disparaging her own role in the process.

Meanwhile, aside from reversing a few of her past radical stances, Harris' campaign has amounted to calling Trump "weird," which, while true, is not going to carry her campaign very far. It's something even progressives have begun to point out.

While Harris has had a resurgence in the polls under her current pacing, she and her advisers must know that isn't going to last.

Expectations were extremely low when Harris took over the Democratic



Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump arrives for a news conference at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Fla., on Thursday. JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES

presidential campaign last month, and while she has exceeded them, her momentum has little to do with her own efforts and everything to do with Trump and voter dissatisfaction with Biden.

Her own past extreme views on fracking to extract oil and gas from rock, on the border and on policing could all come back to haunt her.

Harris has gotten ahead and walked back some of these stances. But if you are backpedaling, you are ceding ground, and the Trump campaign would be wise to capitalize.

They haven't so far.

While the Trump campaign has made a point of highlighting Harris' past record, forcing her to publicly change certain stances over the past couple of weeks, they aren't doing enough.

Republicans would be wise to hit Harris hard on policy right now.

Instead, Trump is spending time continuing to talk about Biden, as he did for much of his Thursday news conference, rather than the new threat that is right in front of him.

He's focusing on insults more than he is on solutions, which has been a staple of his movement.

His MAGA successor, Republican vice presidential nominee JD Vance, is even more lost at sea. To little surprise, the Ohio senator is taking aim at the news media and Democrats. Vance has his own opportunities to attack his Democratic adversary, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, on his progressive policies.

While more personal attacks, such as those against Walz's stolen valor allegations, are helpful to some degree, hitting the Democratic vice presidential nominee on policy should be a winning battle due to his progressive past.

But it is clear that this Republican ticket is not about policy; it's about the MAGA movement.

Policy, not personal insults

While Biden dug Democrats a deep hole, Americans still need to trust that Trump can run the country, something they clearly did not trust him to do in the 2020 election.

I certainly still don't personally, and one reason why is his lack of commitment to concrete policy proposals.

Winning the policy battle could quell some voter concerns about Trump and may allow Americans to put their personal feelings about the man aside.

I'm certain that Trump has policy in mind, and Thursday's rapid-fire section of his news conference showed he does have concrete stances on certain issues.

However, much of what he has shared preserves action from his previous administration, such as renewing his tax cuts. The GOP needs to hit Democrats harder on their progressive policies and force them to say what they really stand for. The policy fight is one that Trump could win if he only stayed disciplined on that message.

Thursday's news conference only confirmed this: Trump is at his best when clearly discussing what he seeks to accomplish, not rambling on about Biden and the Democrats.

Dace Potas is an opinion columnist for USA TODAY and a graduate of DePaul University with a degree in political science.

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K.C. Ellis
Executive Vice President

MONEYLINE



MIKE LANG/USA TODAY NETWORK

COSTCO IS MAKING CHANGES ALL MEMBERS WILL NOTICE

Next time you head to Costco, make sure you have your plastic or digital membership card – and a matching ID. The members-only warehouse retailer is really starting to crack down on non-members. Costco confirmed in January it had begun testing the scanning of membership cards at the entrance of some locations, as a way to improve member experience in that cards wouldn't need to be scanned at checkout. This full-on deployment of scanners across all locations is also meant to stem the flow of non-members using cards that do not belong to them. Any guests must come with a member who has a membership card with them, the note continued. Customers with inactive memberships will be asked to "stop by the membership counter prior to entering the warehouse to shop."

DISNEY CRUISE LINE IS DOUBLING SIZE OF ITS FLEET

Disney Cruise Line just announced four new ships. No, not the ones you're thinking of. We already knew the Disney Treasure is launching in December, the Disney Adventure and Disney Destiny will set sail next year, and that Disney is partnering with Oriental Land Company, which owns Tokyo Disney Resort, on a new OLC-owned ship inspired by the Disney Wish. Four additional ships were announced Saturday night at D23: The Ultimate Disney Fan Event. The new ships will launch between 2027 and 2031. Together, with the four previously announced ships, they will double the size of Disney Cruise Line's fleet in less than a decade. There are currently five ships in the fleet. Disney Cruise Line is very popular among Disney fans, particularly families. "We know that when guests get on one of our ships, 40, 50% of them are saying the only reason I'm cruising today is because Disney is here, so we've essentially created this space," Disney Experiences Chairman Josh D'Amaro told USA TODAY. "We also know that those guests are having exceptional experiences with us. They rate us very, very highly, and they tend to want to come back."



CHRISTOF STACHE/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

BMW RECALLS MORE THAN 100,000 CARS FOR FIRE RISK

BMW is recalling over 100,000 crossovers and sedans due to increased risk of fire, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). BMW and NHTSA issued the recall earlier this month for certain 2019-20 X5, X7, 2020 3 Series Sedan, X6, 2020-2021 7 Series Sedan, 2020 8 Series Convertible, 8 Series Coupe and 2020 8 Series Gran Coupe vehicles. According to the notice, issues with the starter motor can prevent the car from starting, cause electrical overload and lead to overheating that may catch other engine components on fire. Here's what to know about the BMW recall covering more than 100,000 cars. The recall, reported to NHTSA on Aug. 1, impacts 14 different makes and models. Around 105,588 vehicles are potentially affected by an issue with the starter motor that could cause overheating. Some of the affected vehicles may experience issues starting up due to a failure of the starter motor.



ILLUSTRATION BY DUSTIN ELLIOTT/SPECIAL TO USA TODAY

Why so angry?



On Travel
Christopher Elliott
USA TODAY

Flights that are packed, less storage space have travelers feeling more stressed out than ever

Is it my imagination, or are air travelers getting angrier at each other this summer? ● It is not. Passengers like Leigh Shulman agree. She admitted that she almost lost her cool as she boarded a recent flight. Shulman had just broken her ankle and was hobbling around the airport, one baby step at a time. ● "Other travelers were pushing me around," she said. "They apparently didn't notice the boot."

Shulman felt her blood pressure rising, and it stayed that way for the duration of the journey. "I was pissed off for hours," she said. She blames a combination of poor airport design, indifferent airlines and increasingly selfish passengers.

This is probably the busiest summer for air travel in the U.S. That means planes will be packed to capacity. It's also a contentious summer, with a divisive U.S. election just ahead. Making matters worse: The recent wave of flight cancellations after the CrowdStrike meltdown.

It's a tinderbox just waiting for a spark, according to experts.

Because of all this, travelers

seem more anxious, stressed out and overtired than at any time since the pandemic, said Jeremy Murchland, president of Seven Corners, a travel insurance company.

"To cope with that stress, they're lashing out in inappropriate ways," he said.

Shulman, a writing coach and public speaker, said she resisted the urge to take a swing at one of her fellow passengers, despite being jostled around.

"I took a few deep breaths," she said. "Then I boarded the flight."

It doesn't always end that way.

See **FLYING**, Page 2B

Need some quick cash? Now you can raid 401(k)

Daniel de Visé
USA TODAY

Need \$1,000 to cover an unexpected expense? Starting this year, you may be able to withdraw the money from your 401(k) with relative ease.

New rules make it easier to tap your retirement account for emergency funds. In 2024, you can cash out as much as \$1,000 from a traditional 401(k) or IRA to cover an urgent need. And here's a big change: You get to define what counts as an emergency.

More Americans are raiding retirement accounts for emergency cash. The share of savers making hardship withdrawals from retirement plans has doubled in three years, from 1.7% in 2020 to 3.6% in 2023, according to a Vanguard analysis of its plans.

Traditional tax-sheltered retirement accounts are designed to reward those who save for retirement and penalize those who withdraw the money early. You generally contribute pretax dollars to the account and pay the tax when you take the money out.

Early withdrawal, typically before age 59½, triggers an additional tax equal to 10% of the sum. If you are paying a 15% tax rate and make an early withdrawal, you effectively lose 25% of the money before you spend a dime.

There have long been exceptions to

"There are many households that don't have liquid savings. There are many households that don't have emergency funds. For many households, the 401(k) is their only savings."

Caleb Silver
editor-in-chief of Investopedia

that rule. They include higher education expenses, birth or adoption, a first-time home purchase, and the death or permanent disability of the account owner. In such cases, you can generally withdraw retirement funds and pay only ordinary income tax.

New rules allow IRA withdrawals, you define the emergency

The rules changed this year, courtesy of the 2022 legislation known as Secure 2.0. Now, you can withdraw up to \$1,000 to cover an emergency personal expense, a scenario defined as "meeting unforeseeable or immediate financial needs relating to necessary personal or family emergency expenses."

The new language is pretty broad, covering not just specific categories,

See **EMERGENCY**, Page 2B



Russ Wiles
Columnist
Arizona Republic
USA TODAY NETWORK

Study details factors that can help generate profitable stocks

Most investors know that the stock market has delivered solid results over time, beating returns for bonds and many other popular assets. Less obvious is that most of the long-term gains have been generated by a relative handful of stocks, with the typical company losing money over time.

Those are some of the upshots from a recent study by Dr. Hendrik Bessembinder, a professor in Arizona State University's W.P. Carey School of Business. He tallied the returns of nearly 29,100 stocks, going back nearly a century for some companies, from December 1925 through December 2023. His research uncovered some surprises while affirming that the stock market is still a good place for patient and well-diversified investors to make money.

In tabulating these results, Bessembinder assumed that dividends for each stock were reinvested and that investors pursued a buy-and-hold

See **STOCKS**, Page 2B

Flying

Continued from Page 1B

Angry air traveler incidents are making headlines again

There have been so many incidents of angry air travelers that it's hard to compile a highlight reel. But here goes:

- How about the passenger on a Frontier Airlines flight who refused to comply with the crew's instructions when sitting in an exit row? After a loud confrontation, law enforcement escorted her off the plane.

- Or the couple who recently got into a loud argument on a United Airlines flight from London to Newark. When flight attendants asked them to calm down, they turned belligerent and the male passenger threatened to "mess up the plane." He was arrested and fined \$20,638 after the flight had to be diverted to Bangor, Maine.

- Rapper Sandra "Pepa" Denton said she was escorted off a Southwest Airlines flight after a disagreement over seating.

- Terrell Davis, the NFL Hall of Famer, was led off a United Airlines flight in handcuffs following an exchange with a flight attendant. (United has apologized to Davis and is investigating the incident.)

The statistics also paint a troubling picture. The Federal Aviation Administration reports that in-flight incidents remain elevated, and "recent increases show there remains more work to do," it added. (Overall, unruly passenger incidents appear to be trending downward after the pandemic.)

Why are passengers so angry?

So what's making airline passengers so crabby? It comes down to three things, experts say.

- **Manners have gone out the win-**



People walk from Concourse C into Concourse B at Memphis International Airport on Aug. 5. Fuller flights and less storage space have made flying more stressful. CHRIS DAY/USA TODAY NETWORK

Low: Let's not mince words: People are ruder than ever, and that antisocial behavior is amplified when you're sitting in a pressurized aluminum tube with nowhere to go. Manners are disintegrating across society, not just at the airport. But there's one thing that sustains this unacceptable behavior, according to etiquette expert Rosalinda Oropeza Randall. "There are no consequences," she said. It's true, many incidents go unreported because they're just little temper tantrums.

- **Flying is even more stressful than usual:** Travel is more of a hassle than ever. Fuller flights and less storage space make flying even more stressful than at any time in recent memory. The number of in-flight incidents reported to the Federal Aviation Administration remains elevated when compared to pre-pandemic levels. And the number of high-profile altercations between flight attendants and passengers seems to multiply by the week. No two ways about it – air travel is putting us under a lot of pressure.

- **Junk fees are multiplying:** "A big

factor in consumers losing their tempers is the feeling that they are getting nickel and dimed at every turn," said Beth Walter, who teaches business communication at Carnegie Mellon University's Tepper School of Business. She said extra costs for luggage and seat assignments make passengers upset. "No one likes hidden fees, and if they pop up during trips, they can easily trigger the temper of a stressed-out, exhausted traveler who has been preparing for their summer vacation since last year and is expecting that everything goes according to plan," she added.

What you can do to keep your cool

Look, I'm not gonna lie. The best way to stay calm this summer is to find another way to get there or to just stay home.

Travelers want to have it all – a great trip with zero stress. That's impossible. I travel constantly, and I always experience anxiety in the same places – the security checkpoint, at customs, before

boarding and at the luggage conveyor belt.

Shulman, the passenger with the broken ankle, has the right idea, according to Colleen Newvine, who teaches a stress management workshop.

"Breathe slowly and deeply, exhaling twice as long as you take for your inhale, to help tell your nervous system that you're safe," she said.

What if someone is being rude to you? Don't retaliate, advises etiquette expert Nick Leighton.

That just leads to an escalation – and then you'll be in my next highlight reel. Instead, Leighton said you should assume an etiquette crime isn't being committed intentionally and deliberately. Give your fellow passengers the benefit of the doubt, and you will find a solution.

Finally, remember to pack your manners. That's the advice of Thomas Plante, a psychology professor at Santa Clara University.

"It all comes down to respect and compassion," he told me. "Typically, escalating tensions can be diminished if you show both respect and compassion to the person who is getting upset."

Airlines have to ease the problems

If it seems like I'm blaming passengers for the escalation of anger, let me correct you: I'm not. The U.S. airline industry bears a lot of the responsibility for creating this problem. It can easily defuse this summer bomb.

How? Just give passengers a little more personal space by moving the seats farther apart. Remove the junk fees that irritate travelers. Maybe give flight attendants a little more customer service training instead of combat training.

If airlines started treating us with respect and compassion, maybe we would start behaving with respect and compassion.

Oh, I know. Dream on. But someone had to say it.

Emergency

Continued from Page 1B

but also "any other necessary emergency personal expenses."

Consider the range of expenses that a reasonable person might deem an unforeseeable or immediate emergency: Car repairs. Delinquent utility bills. Urgent dental needs. A roof leak. A parking ticket. Putting dinner on the table.

Congress tailored the law to make such withdrawals simpler and faster, retirement experts say, on the theory that Americans should be able to tap their retirement accounts for an urgent need.

"The ability to draw money out of a 401(k) for any type of financial emergency, it can help make 401(k) plans a little bit more attractive," said Jeff Clark, head of defined contribution research at Vanguard.

It's tempting to think of your 401(k) as an ATM

The downside: It's tempting, under the new rules, to think of your 401(k) as a cash machine.

"Most people aren't saving enough for retirement," said Keith Singer, a certified financial planner in South Florida. "Helping them consume their retirement accounts early because of a hardship will only create a bigger hardship down the

road when they don't have enough retirement assets to support their lifestyle."

Policymakers want to encourage Americans to save for retirement. Social Security covers only some of the expenses retirees face. Pensions are in decline. The more money we sock away in retirement accounts, the theory goes, the more we will thrive in retirement, and the less we will strain government-funded social services.

Tax breaks are supposed to make retirement savings more attractive. Yet, only about half of American households have retirement accounts, according to the federal Survey of Consumer Finances. Savings rates are particularly low among low-income households. Many cash-strapped Americans don't feel they can afford to save, for retirement or anything else.

Therein lies the appeal of the emergency withdrawal. In the theory, it should be easier to convince lower-income Americans to open retirement accounts if they know they can reclaim the funds in a pinch.

"There are many households that don't have liquid savings. There are many households that don't have emergency funds. For many households, the 401(k) is their only savings," said Caleb Silver, editor-in-chief of Investopedia.

One solution to that problem is the Roth IRA. In a traditional retirement account, you pay taxes when you withdraw

the money. With a Roth, you pay taxes upfront. You can generally withdraw the funds without taxes or penalties, as long as you had them invested for five years.

The Roth is a good option for anyone concerned about cash flow, economists say, because the money is there if you urgently need it. State governments favor the Roth in their auto-IRA initiatives, which automatically enroll workers whose employers don't have retirement plans.

Under the new emergency-withdrawal rules, a conventional retirement account behaves a bit more like a Roth: Some of the money, at least, sits within easy reach.

What are the rules for emergency retirement fund withdrawals?

Here are the details:

- You can make one withdrawal per year.

- You can't take out more than \$1,000.

- You can't make an emergency withdrawal that brings your account balance below \$1,000.

- If you have a 401(k), your employer doesn't have to allow emergency withdrawals. Not all do.

To justify the withdrawal to an employer, you need only certify in writing that your situation "satisfies the conditions" for an emergency.

After you make an emergency with-

drawal, you aren't allowed to make another one for three years, unless you either repay the money or make new contributions to cover the balance. If you repay the withdrawn funds, you can avoid paying income tax.

What's a hardship withdrawal?

Before this year, hardship withdrawals from 401(k) plans were allowed, and you could cash out more than \$1,000, but the rules were comparatively strict.

To make a hardship withdrawal, under the older rules, you must demonstrate an "immediate and heavy financial need," such as funeral expenses, damage to your home or an imminent eviction. It's generally up to an employer to determine whether the worker has an "immediate and heavy" need, and you can't pay the money back.

However, hardship withdrawals cover a narrow range of categories. "Let's say your car breaks down. You need to get your car to work. Now, that doesn't qualify for a hardship (withdrawal)," said Michael Shamrell, vice president of thought leadership at Fidelity Investments. "But that's an emergency."

Any time you make an early withdrawal from a retirement account, "you're reducing your balance, and you're effectively minimizing your future returns," Silver said.

"You're effectively robbing your future self," he said.

Stocks

Continued from Page 1B

approach. The latest study builds on some of his earlier research that also revealed the rarity of truly great-performing stocks.

"I was indeed surprised when I first documented that a slight majority of publicly traded U.S. stocks generate negative rather than positive compound returns," he said in an email to The Arizona Republic, part of the USA TODAY Network.

But the negative or mediocre results of most stocks are overshadowed by the high returns from the big winners.

"Slightly more than 4% of the stocks that have been publicly listed in the U.S. since 1926 are responsible for all of the net wealth enhancement to shareholders," Bessembinder added. "That is, long-run wealth enhancement in the public stock market is concentrated in relatively few stocks."

Another surprise was that many stocks don't stay in the public markets all that long.

On average, stocks trade for an average of just 11.6 years, with the median or midpoint tenure even lower at 6.8 years. Of the nearly 29,100 stocks analyzed, only 31 made it through all 98 years, from

December 1925 on. Companies often get delisted from or kicked off stock exchanges owing to poor performance, or they get merged or acquired out of existence.

Best stock results over time

The returns of winning stocks don't vary all that much on an annual basis, but these differences can really add up when compounded over many years.

Bessembinder cited two of the stocks that endured for the entire 98-year study period – Altria Group (formerly called Philip Morris) and Vulcan Materials. On an annual average basis, Altria's return of 16.29% wasn't much above Vulcan's 14.05%. Yet Altria's cumulative compounded return was nearly 6.8 times that of Vulcan. For every dollar that an investor socked into Altria in December 1925, it would have grown to \$2.65 million by the end of last year, compared with a \$1 investment in Vulcan turning into nearly \$393,000.

These results show the powerful impact of compounding and support the adage that what's important is "time in the market" rather than market timing. Incidentally, Altria's 16.29% annual average return was the highest of any company over the 98-year period.

After Altria, the other top-five stocks dating to 1925, according to Bessembinder's

research, were Vulcan Materials, Kansas City Southern, General Dynamics and Boeing.

More recently, the highest annualized compound return for any stock with a track record of at least 20 years was the 33.38% earned by shareholders in artificial intelligence stalwart Nvidia.

Nvidia and other tech stocks, especially those in the Magnificent Seven, have continued their momentum this year. "This tendency for wealth creation to be concentrated in a few stocks has grown even stronger in recent years, Bessembinder said.

What high-octane stocks have in common

The big winners tend to generate a solid return on capital and a sustainable competitive advantage, and have benefited from management teams that have been able to sustain the positive momentum, observed Nicholas Colas, co-founder of DataTrek Research, commenting on Bessembinder's study.

"(This) illustrates why the average public company does not make money for its investors over time," Colas wrote. "Most simply do not have that trifecta of value-creating qualities."

The most successful companies also tend to increase their market share and profits over time while operating in a

growth sector, Colas added, citing technology as a prime example.

Driven by the contribution of the relatively few high-performance companies, the stock market's long-term results have averaged around 10% a year.

A solid strategy

While Bessembinder's latest study didn't discuss indexing, his previous research gives a nod to this investing approach.

Indexing is the concept of holding a mix of stocks in a predetermined and largely unchanging portfolio, such as the 500 companies in the Standard & Poor's 500 index. One advantage of index mutual funds or exchange-traded funds is that because they aren't actively managed, they tend to charge lower shareholder-borne costs.

Also, index fund managers don't actively buy and sell stocks, as difficult as that can be. "Stock picking is very difficult," even for professionals, and that makes index-based investing the only reliable way for most people to generate high returns, Colas wrote.

Nor, clearly, are the big winners easy to spot, except in hindsight. "The only way to be certain of owning the stocks that turn out to be the future big gainers is to own all the stocks" in a broad index fund, Bessembinder said.

ASK HUMAN RESOURCES

How to assume duties from retiring leader



Johnny C. Taylor
Columnist
USA TODAY

Johnny C. Taylor Jr. tackles your human resources questions as part of a series for USA TODAY. Taylor is president and CEO of the Society for Human Resource Management, the world's largest HR professional society and author of "Reset: A Leader's Guide to Work in an Age of Upheaval."

Question: I recently started work in a new department. Just as I was becoming proficient at my job, the lead on my team announced her retirement in nine months. How can I best prepare to assume her duties in the interim? – L

Answer: Your lead's retirement announcement can be a terrific opportunity to develop new skills and demonstrate your ability to take on new tasks and responsibilities. A nine-month period is plenty of time to learn someone else's role. Having this much time is not common. Retiring employees often want to ensure they're leaving the job in good hands, so they're typically cooperative with their replacements to help ensure continuity and smoothness in the transition of their job duties. There are several steps you can take to be prepared to step in:

- **Understand your lead's role:** Spend as much time as possible shadowing her. Observe her daily tasks, decision-making processes, and how she handles different situations. Don't hesitate to ask about the reasoning behind her actions and decisions. This will help you understand the nuances of the role.
- **Expand your knowledge and**

skills: Determine what skills and knowledge are crucial for your lead's role. These might include technical skills, industry knowledge or management techniques. Ensure all processes, procedures and essential information are well-documented. This will be invaluable when you need to refer to it later. Focus on developing any deficient areas identified through training. Gradually start taking on some of your lead's duties. This hands-on experience will help you build confidence and allow your colleague to provide feedback while she's still employed.

- **Continue to build strong relationships:** Work to strengthen your relationships with team members and other departments. Consider asking for feedback from your lead and other colleagues. Use this feedback to improve and adjust your approach as necessary. Your approachability and willingness to collaborate will make the transition smoother for everyone involved and help you gain valuable allies across the organization.

- **Help create a transition plan:** Work with your lead to create a formal transition plan outlining key responsibilities, important deadlines and any training you need to complete. Establish clear milestones to track your progress to ensure you're on track to fully assume her duties when the time comes. Make sure you ask any outstanding questions before her retirement. This includes clarifying expectations and understanding any challenges you might face.

- **Maintain a positive attitude:** Approach this opportunity with positivity. Your desire to succeed is clear from your question, and with preparation and determination, you'll be ready to step into the lead's shoes when the time comes. Demonstrating your commitment and

enthusiasm for the role can help reassure both your lead and your manager that you're ready for the increased responsibility.

Fully assume the role's duties before she leaves so you can experience the nuances of the job firsthand while you still have her support and wisdom. Having her guidance in those few weeks will give you time to uncover any elements of the role you may have missed and provide a safety net as you settle in.

By taking these steps, you can prepare yourself effectively for your lead's retirement and set yourself up for success in your new role. Best of luck to you!

I just had my mid-year review with my manager, who highlighted a few areas I need to work on. I want to improve in these areas by the end of the year. What's the best way to ensure I'm on track without continually demanding my manager's time for constant feedback? – Patrick

First, let me applaud your efforts to be professional and proactive about your recent feedback. If you're not meeting with your manager regularly, you may want to suggest that. Regular meetings keep the lines of communication open while providing an opportunity to ensure your goals and priorities align with your manager's and the organization's.

Start by breaking down the feedback into specific, actionable items. Determine what success looks like for each area. Make your goals SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound). Assess what you need to improve, and consider additional training, courses or shadowing a co-worker.

If you need to improve time management, set a goal to meet all deadlines for the next quarter by using calendar reminders and productivity tools.

Seek a mentor within the organization who excels in the areas you need to improve. Consider external courses, webinars or workshops to aid your development.

Provide a written update to your manager detailing what you've accomplished and what your current focus is. This keeps your manager informed without requiring constant meetings. Create specific milestones to track your progress. Ensure these milestones are spread out enough to allow for meaningful progress, but frequent enough to keep you accountable. After completing a significant task or project, ask for feedback on what went well and where you could improve.

Arrange a follow-up meeting a few weeks after your review to discuss your action plan and seek initial feedback. Use these meetings to discuss what's working, your challenges and how you plan to overcome them. Be open to adjusting your plan in response to your manager's feedback and any new insights you gain.

Regularly reflect on your progress and be honest with yourself about areas that still need improvement. Demonstrate your commitment to professional growth by taking initiative and showing you value and act on feedback.

Creating a structured approach to addressing feedback shows your commitment to professional growth. You can significantly improve in the areas highlighted during your review by developing an action plan, using available resources, maintaining regular communication, and owning your development. This proactive approach helps you grow and demonstrates to your manager your dedication to continuous improvement and willingness to take feedback seriously.

Vacationing with my adult son is now my favorite way to travel

Allison Tibaldi
FamilyVacationist.com

It's hard to believe it has been 30 years since my son was born. My husband and I had spent a year living in Melbourne, Australia, and Alec was only 5 weeks old when we returned home. He was born a month early, weighing only 5 pounds. As we boarded the plane for the long journey back to NYC, I'll never forget the flight attendant's look of disbelief when I told her this tiny creature in my arms was 5 weeks old. "You mean 5 days old?" she asked.

That peanut is now over 6 feet tall and has been traveling his entire life. It's not an understatement to say that travel is a defining feature of our family. In serendipitous fashion, my husband and I met at JFK Airport as students when we were both bumped off a flight bound for Los Angeles. His career as a filmmaker has facilitated far-flung adventures, including living in Rome, Los Angeles and Tuscany, Italy. As I transitioned from a career in early childhood education to travel journalism, my wanderlust only accelerated.

A family tradition that's going strong

Alec now lives in California. I love it when he comes home, but it's complicated. I fall into my role as a slightly bossy mom, and he regresses just a tad as he sleeps in his childhood bedroom, where I've kept a shrine of stuffed animals and class pictures. But when we're traveling, we're both strangers in a strange land and the footing feels more equal.

It has been a decade since we started taking mother-adult son vacations together. Over the years, we've chased waterfalls in Jamaica, gone swimming in the bioluminescent bay in Puerto Rico and taken a guided group tour of the Canadian Rockies. We've even cruised the Caribbean together on a giant ship, but neither of us had ever been on an expedition cruise before. So when I proposed a mother-son expedition cruise to Mexico's Baja California peninsula, he jumped at the chance of a totally new adventure.

An expedition cruise primer

Just what is an expedition cruise? It's a small ship, usually with only around

100 passengers, that presents a deep dive into remote destinations that would be tough, if not impossible, to reach on a larger cruise ship.

There are no go-carts, no tango lessons and no kids' club. An expedition ship offers low-key luxury, but the emphasis is on authentic experiences off the ship. Alec thrives on an energetic pace, and I'm up for an adventure, so we agreed that this type of cruise seemed like a fit for us.

Whale-watching in Baja

We both love any activity that involves water. We booked the Lindblad Expeditions sailing Baja California: Among the Great Whales as it offered plenty of aquatic action including lots of whale watching, snorkeling and kayaking. Our ship, the National Geographic Venture, would take us around Mexico's Baja Peninsula, from the Sea of Cortez to the Pacific Ocean.

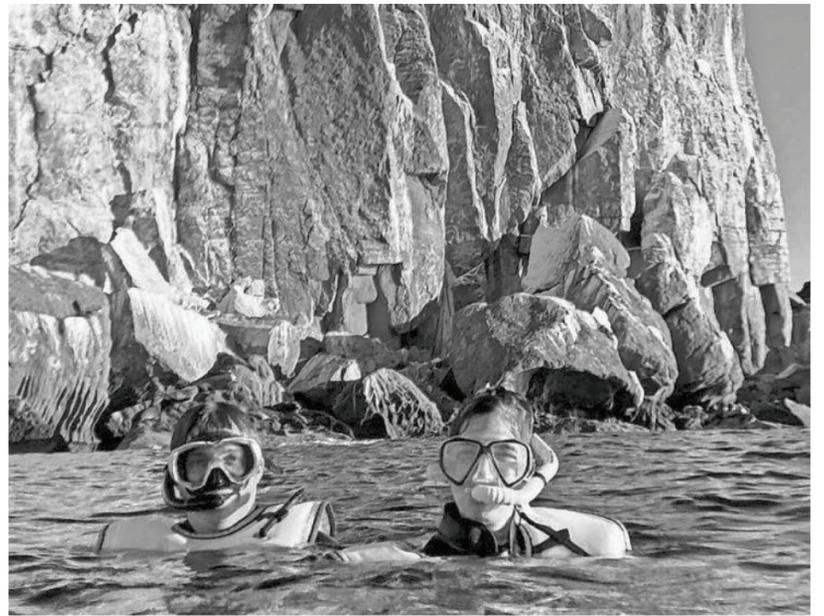
This itinerary is a magnet for whale watchers, and I had heard that February was the best time to spot the gray whales, who travel from their Arctic feeding grounds to breed and raise their calves in Baja's warm, sheltered waters.

Art of the compromise: Balancing togetherness and independence

Alec and I shared a cabin, as expedition cruising is expensive. Although it was spacious by cruise ship standards, privacy was at a minimum. I'm an early riser and Alec is a night owl. To make it work, we both spent time in the ship's lounge when the other was asleep. We also each headed to the lounge for at least an hour each day to give the other some solitary time in our stateroom.

The itinerary gave plenty of room for the right measure of togetherness and individual time. One day, Zodiacs ferried all passengers to Puerto Gato, a remote peninsula in the Sea of Cortez. Once we arrived, we each did our own thing; I kayaked while Alec paddled around the bay on a stand-up paddle board. After our solo adventures, we came back together on a hike and marveled at the striking landscape of red volcanic ash and giant fossilized sand dunes.

Another day, we spent an afternoon in La Paz. Passengers were transported via motor coach. I took the earliest coach so I could explore this pretty seaside town, while Alec chose a later op-



Son Alec and the author go snorkeling in the Sea of Cortez during an expedition cruise. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY ALLISON TIBALDI



Alec and the author on a remote island in Baja California Sur.

tion so he could have time to exercise at the ship's fitness center. We met up in La Paz and enjoyed a folkloric dance performance and dinner at a local restaurant.

How we make it work

I spent years lugging strollers around the world and trying to manage jet lag in people too young to read the numbers on a clock. Traveling with an adult child is not without obstacles, but they tend to spring from autonomy rather than dependence.

As you plan your trip, keeping a few things in mind should make for smoother sailing.

- **Choose your destination wisely:** For instance, Alec enjoys nightlife but he wouldn't want to go to a party town like Ibiza with his mother.

- **Who pays for what should be clear:** I pay for our trips, but I appreciate it when Alec offers me a coffee at the airport or other things that are within his

budget.

- **Plan the trip together:** Key decisions should be made in tandem despite who foots the bill.

- **Boundaries are important:** Avoid simmering resentments by clearly but kindly voicing the things that are important. For instance, being on time is a big deal for me and I've let Alec know that lateness is a no-no.

- **Remember the big picture:** Travel can be stressful. We don't let small challenges and bickering get in the way of the good stuff.

What made it the best trip ever?

I cherish every vacation I've taken with Alec, but sharing adventures on our expedition cruise was particularly special. Swimming with sea lions, snorkeling surrounded by thousands of jackfish, and getting so close to gray whales we could have touched them were all bucket-list experiences we got to share. But the simple shipboard pleasures – watching the sunset, stargazing and listening to Alec's favorite music while we relaxed on deck chairs – are equally imprinted in my heart.

The last time we talked on the phone, Alec told me he'd never forget the thrill of jumping into the blue waters of the Sea of Cortez. He said he misses life aboard the Venture, chatting with fellow passengers and meeting interesting people at dinner each evening. We both embraced the big and small on our expedition cruise, so I guess the apple didn't fall far from the tree. I'm counting the days until our next vacation together.

The views and opinions expressed in this column are the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of USA TODAY.

50★States

News from across the USA

ALABAMA Samantha: The Tuscaloosa County School System has unveiled the system's new K-12 Education Farm facility near Samantha. The farm has a newly planted orchard, sheep, goats, cows, bees and a variety of crops already up and growing, with more activity planned. The farm will also teach forest management and water management, among many other aspects of agriculture beyond the obvious farming and ranching.

ALASKA Anchorage: Alaska Army National Guard members have returned after nine months of deployment in Kuwait, KTUU reported.

ARIZONA Phoenix: Arizona's biggest power companies topped a record for energy demand amid soaring temperatures in Phoenix and coped with it, thanks to investments in excess generating capacity, storage and trading. The late afternoon of Aug. 4 marked the highest electricity demand so far in 2024 around the Phoenix area, with key utilities Arizona Public Service and Salt River Project both reporting peak use. The amount of power demanded by customers at that time surpassed the daily high in 2023 for both companies.

ARKANSAS Little Rock: Arkansas Department of Transportation officials said the state is installing a system that would detect cars going the wrong way on interstate exits and alert drivers and law enforcement, KARK reported.

CALIFORNIA Riverside County: More than 100 neglected creatures, ranging from dogs and horses to birds and "pet cockroaches," have been rescued from a home in Southern California. The property was discovered in the aftermath of the Nixon Fire, which burned more than 5,000 acres in Riverside County beginning on July 29.

COLORADO Denver: The Colorado State Patrol saw a record number of pedestrian fatalities in 2023, according to a CSP news release. According to the state patrol, 153 people were killed in 2023 on foot or on a bicycle, marking an 18% increase over 2022.

CONNECTICUT Woodbridge: Officials said a woman has been charged with animal cruelty after more than 60 animals were found in her home in Woodbridge with little to no care, WFSB reported.

DELAWARE Long Neck: Four additional unmarked burials have been found at a Long Neck construction site after an initial discovery in April, according to the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Washington: Officials said five teenagers have been arrested for a carjacking Friday in Northwest, DC News Now reported.

FLORIDA Tallahassee: In a push that has created First Amendment questions, Florida's state university system is sending requests to schools across the state to flag any course that might contain what it calls "anti-semitic or anti-Israeli bias."

GEORGIA Athens: The Georgia Museum of Art, at the University of Georgia, has received a large donation from the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, a program dedicated to enriching visual arts and art history education. This donation included 22 prints by artist Helen Frankenthaler and a \$25,000 grant to develop a program around the masterpieces.

HAWAII Honolulu: Utility firm Hawaiian Electric raised going concern doubts after disclosing that it did not have a financing plan in place for the \$1.99 billion Maui wildfire settlement it reached earlier this month. The company and its parent Hawaiian Electric Industries said they were working closely with financial advisers to develop a financing plan for their share of the settlement and they could finance it through a mix of debt, common equity, equity-linked securities, or other potential options.

IDAHO Idaho Falls: When farmer Braden Smith drives his Tesla Cybertruck around Idaho Falls, he either gets a "middle finger or the thumbs up." Smith, who is also an online content creator, has gone viral for an unlikely pairing: using the shiny, electric Cybertruck to care for his family-owned 2,000-acre farm full of wheat and potatoes instead of the typical heavy-duty pickup a farmer might typically prefer. His videos on TikTok have amassed millions of views, and he's only had the vehicle since April.

HIGHLIGHT: MICHIGAN



The Detroit Zoo's first baby gorilla ever was born to mother Bandia on Thursday. PROVIDED BY DETROIT ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Detroit: A special miracle occurred at the Detroit Zoo in the early morning hours Thursday: 26-year-old Bandia gave birth to the very first baby gorilla in the zoo's 96-year history. The zoo reports that mom and baby are doing well, along with the 36-year-old father, Mshindi. The new baby joins four gorillas and 12 chimpanzees in the zoo's 4-acre Great Apes of Harambee habitat. The Detroit Zoological Society's mammal and primate teams, along with veterinary staff, have been working for months to prepare Bandia for motherhood and make sure the rest of the troop was ready for the baby's arrival.

ILLINOIS Chicago: A 57-year-old woman died in the baggage claim area of Chicago O'Hare International Airport Thursday, according to the Chicago Police Department. The woman was found "entangled in the conveyor belt system used to move baggage," according to officials.

INDIANA Indianapolis: Indiana is expanding a program for expecting mothers struggling with addiction so that hundreds more can get help, the state announced. The Pregnancy Promise Program provides mental and physical care for low-income residents, especially those in rural communities and parts of Indiana with poor access to care. The additional \$2.7 million federal grant for the program will allow 300 residents to enroll in the next three years, according to state officials.

IOWA Ames: The city of Ames will pay about \$2.6 million to erect a barrier fence to keep animals out of the local airport.

KANSAS Topeka: Kansas could move its budgeting process away from the governor and towards the Legislature, breaking from a process that's been in place for years.

KENTUCKY Louisville: It was a packed three days for Jovita Neli-upsiene, the ambassador of the European Union to the United States, on her first visit to Louisville last week. She spoke Wednesday at the annual legislative summit of the National Conference of State Legislatures, a bipartisan organization serving legislators and staffs of states, commonwealths, and territories.

LOUISIANA Baton Rouge: Louisiana Republican Rep. Garret Graves is making a final, frenetic push before he leaves Congress on his yearslong effort to pass a bill to eliminate the Social Security penalty for government retirees like teachers, police, firefighters and their spouses.

MAINE Sinclair: Officials said one person was hospitalized after an explosion destroyed two homes in Aroostook County, News Center Maine reported.

MARYLAND Frostburg: Frostburg State University is facing major challenges to its budget this fiscal year and over the next several years, mostly because of decreased enrollment, state funding cuts and unfunded mandates. FSU's structural budget deficit for the current and future fiscal years stands at \$7.7 million. As a result, senior administration at the university has had the unpleasant task of making some very difficult and complex decisions to resolve this deficit to ensure Frostburg's financial stability and viability.

MASSACHUSETTS Hyannis: If you recently purchased oysters from Cape Cod, you may want to check that they aren't part of a recall. Earlier this month, the Food and Drug Administration released an advisory to not consume the oysters harvested between July 1 and July 18 from two lease sites in the Lewis Bay area of Cape Cod.

MINNESOTA St. Paul: State officials said an invasive insect called the elm zigzag sawfly was recently found in the state for the first time on the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus, KARE11 reported.

MISSISSIPPI Jackson: The location for the new Capitol Complex Improvement District Municipal Court in Jackson has been changed from a temporary home at the War Memorial Building in downtown Jackson to a new one just around the corner, further delaying the opening of the court.

MISSOURI Springfield: For the second time last week, Missouri's Division of Cannabis Regulation has issued a product recall for marijuana products, this time for a manufacturer in Springfield.

MONTANA Helena: Montana's Republican U.S. Senate candidate Tim Sheehy slightly leads Democratic Sen. Jon Tester in the race and has picked up more undecided voters than the three-term incumbent during the past five months, but the contest is still within the margin of error, according to a new Emerson College Polling/The Hill survey of 1,000 likely voters, The Daily Montanan reported.

NEBRASKA Omaha: Two men from Omaha were killed in a shooting Saturday night at I-29 Speedway near Pacific Junction, Iowa, during a car show and music festival, WOWT6 News reported.

NEVADA Reno: Crews made progress on cleanup efforts in the Hidden Valley neighborhood following a July flood that affected roughly 100 homes and led to a regional park shutting down.

NEW HAMPSHIRE Manchester: A TikTok user created a GoFundMe for a man she says is a 90-year-old disabled Air Force veteran who has been pawning jewelry so he could use the money to take care of his wife suffering from dementia. Jennelle Marie of New Hampshire has raised over \$150,000 for her "elderly friend named Donald."

NEW JERSEY Holmdel: Three high school students have earned worldwide recognition for their invention: a robot that uses AI to read American Sign Language and play corresponding piano keys.

NEW MEXICO Las Cruces: The 2024 Las Cruces Comic Con begins Aug. 17 at the Las Cruces Convention Center. The two-day event features several celebrity appearances, panel discussions and exhibitions.

NEW YORK Utica: The Mohawk Valley Health System is now offering virtual and in-person CALM (Come and Learn More) tours that take people through every part of the hospital they'll encounter as surgical patients.

NORTH CAROLINA Fayetteville: Friends of the Skateparks has partnered with PortCity Reggae Concert & Promotion to create the One People Reggae & Arts Festival on Oct. 12 in Festival Park.

NORTH DAKOTA Bismarck: Organizations serving the state's homeless population are set to receive grants from a state agency worth almost \$1.8 million, the Bismarck Tribune reported.

OHIO Mason: Amusement park Kings Island announced its Soak City Water Park will debut RiverRacers, the first and only dual-racing water coaster in Ohio, in 2025.

OKLAHOMA Oklahoma City: The Oklahoma State Fair, set for Sept. 12-22, has added several new special events and exhibits to its lineup, from German beer and wine tasting to homesteading and bison viewing.

OREGON Eugene: Oregon could soon have a new state-designated scenic bikeway, the 60-mile Aufderheide, which would wind through old-growth forests in southeast Lane County, Oregon Public Broadcasting reported.

PENNSYLVANIA Hanover: What was once the home of Utz potato chips could soon become luxury apartments, according to plans from prolific York developer Jordan Ilyes and recent zoning hearing minutes.

RHODE ISLAND Providence: The Allens Avenue scrapyard that was temporarily shut down by court order after two fires in three months will reopen, with a Superior Court judge ruling the business was taking adequate steps to mitigate possible future fires.

SOUTH CAROLINA Greenville: According to the South Carolina Department of Transportation, workers are developing a plan for structural repairs to the Tugaloo Road bridge over the Middle Tyger River in the northern part of Greenville County.

SOUTH DAKOTA Sioux Falls: The Sioux Falls Police Department is currently investigating an unattended infant death at Millennium Recycling. A department spokesman said police received a call from recycling center staff, who found the infant on site. Police don't know why the infant was at the center or how long it had been there.

TENNESSEE Nashville: Students in Warren County are adapting to a new policy, which prohibits cellphones, AirPods, earbuds and other devices with an internet connection. Devices too large to be locked away in special Yondr-brand pouches are not permitted on campus.

TEXAS El Paso: The highway deck plaza/park proposed to be built over Interstate 10 in downtown El Paso, tied to the planned expansion of the highway, would cost almost \$207 million, a new study estimates.

UTAH Big Water: A popular geologic feature at the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area in Utah has collapsed as of Thursday, according to the National Parks Service. No injuries were reported resulting from the collapse.

VERMONT Burlington: Chittenden County experienced a surge in sales of condos and single-family homes in the first six months of 2024 with 658 sales, the first time in more than five years the number of sales has not declined, according to a report.

VIRGINIA Richmond: Gov. Glenn Youngkin issued an executive order to codify "election security measures" with the aim of protecting "legal voters and accurate counts" ahead of November's presidential election.

WASHINGTON Kitsap County: Shari's Cafe and Pies in Silverdale could be the second of the Oregon-based chain to leave the county within two months, after its property owners were sued for eviction over months of unpaid rent.

WEST VIRGINIA Harpers Ferry: A Jefferson County woman died after a large uprooted tree fell through a home in the Shannondale community as the area was feeling the effects from Tropical Storm Debby, according to West Virginia State Police.

WISCONSIN Neenah: American Legion Post 33 has launched a campaign to raise money for a \$140,000 service flag memorial at Shattuck Park. The project will refurbish and incorporate the armed services monument already located at the park.

WYOMING Cheyenne: The Secretary of State's website has launched a tool to report expenditures and contributions for county and municipal candidates, Wyoming News Now reported.

From USA TODAY Network and wire reports



Bears quarterback Caleb Williams avoids a tackle attempt by the Bills' AJ Epenesa during the first half Saturday at Highmark Stadium. RICH BARNES/GETTY IMAGES

NFL PRESEASON WEEK 1 WINNERS, LOSERS

Rookie QBs sizzle in debuts

Michael Middlehurst-Schwartz USA TODAY

The NFL preseason slate only just began last week, but hyperbole season throughout the league is in full swing. ¶ As teams advance from training camp work to facing actual opponents in exhibitions and joint practices, it's routine for fans to start drawing hasty conclusions. But with most franchises sitting out stars in the early going – and others entirely abstaining from trotting out any starters – there is only so much meaning that can be gleaned from the August setup. Still, it's clear that some teams and young players stood out more than others – for better or worse.

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Falcons quarterback Michael Penix Jr. showed a knack for pushing the ball downfield. NATHAN RAY SEEBECK/USA TODAY SPORTS



The Eiffel Tower Stadium was a stunning backdrop for beach volleyball at the Paris Olympics. ROB SCHUMACHER/USA TODAY SPORTS

Congrats, Paris: You won Olympics



Nancy Armour
Columnist
USA TODAY

PARIS – Merci beaucoup, Paris. When these Summer Games were awarded seven years ago, there was no way the International Olympic Committee officials could have known how badly they would be needed. How desperate

the world would be for an excuse to let loose from the melancholy that lingers from the COVID pandemic. How essential it would be for a respite from the divisiveness that seems to be everywhere.

Paris delivered. And then some, setting a standard that will be near impossible for any future host to top.

For 17 days, what is arguably the world's most beautiful city was also its

See ARMOUR, Page 4C

Sneak peek sees Clark, Wilson on LA 2028 roster

Lindsay Schnell
USA TODAY

PARIS – The American women won their eighth consecutive basketball gold medal Sunday with a 67-66 win over France. It is an unprecedented achievement in Olympic team sports, and a dynasty that doesn't get nearly enough attention across the sports landscape.

Of course, everyone's next question is going to be: Can they keep the streak going in 2028 when the U.S. hosts the Summer Games for the first time since 1996? The pressure will be on in Los Angeles – not that that's anything new for USA Basketball.

Still, it made us wonder: Who's going to be on the 2028 Olympic women's basketball team? Age isn't the deterrent it used to be – you've probably heard that the U.S. women's and men's teams featured a 42- and 39-year-old – so this is a tougher exercise than usual.

Still, it's fun to think about how much more the women's game is going to grow and improve both across the U.S. and internationally. With that in mind, here are the contenders for the 2028 Olympic women's basketball roster:

The 2024 holdovers

A'ja Wilson

She's the best player in the world on both ends of the floor and just now en-



A'ja Wilson, left, and Caitlin Clark faced off in the WNBA All-Star Game. MARK J. REBILAS/USA TODAY SPORTS

tering her prime. Wilson's ability to control every possession both offensively and defensively is a thing of beauty – and it's scary to think how much better she could be in four years, especially as she develops more of a perimeter game.

Breanna Stewart

If Wilson is ranked 1A in the world, Stewart is 1B. This is her and Wilson's program now, and her ability to score on any defender at will continues to separate her from other dynamic athletes in women's basketball.

See PEEK, Page 4C

Preseason

Continued from Page 1C

With that in mind, here are the biggest winners and losers of the NFL's first week of preseason action:

WINNERS

Caleb Williams

Impossibly lofty expectations are a fact of life at this point for Williams, who was compared to Patrick Mahomes and Aaron Rodgers before ever taking an NFL snap. Somehow, the No. 1 pick in this year's still managed to deliver in his debut Saturday for the Chicago Bears, as he showed glimpses of his singular play-making prowess against the Buffalo Bills. Williams' most highlight-worthy play came on a 26-yard dart on the run to tight end Cole Kmet. There were several other notable moments from a day that ended after just two drives. Above all, however, Williams reinforced that the Bears finally have someone behind center who looks capable of elevating an attack rather than weighing it down.

Other first-round rookie QBs

As part of a historic quarterback class that featured six passers being taken in the top 12 picks, Williams was hardly alone in commanding a significant spotlight for his first game. And several of his peers also put together notable outings. Among them:

- **Jayden Daniels:** The No. 2 pick saw just one drive of action, going 2-of-3 for 45 yards before exiting the Washington Commanders contest Saturday against the New York Jets. The reigning Heisman Trophy winner exhibited his big-play flair, however, when he audibled into a deep toss down the right sideline to hit D'Yami Brown for a 42-yard gain. Coach Dan Quinn said afterward he didn't mind his signal-caller going rogue. Best of all: Daniels had limited exposure to injury on a day when the Commanders' top three offensive tackles were all inactive.

- **Michael Penix Jr.:** The most surprising pick of the NFL draft delivered a performance in line with expectations from his college days. With Kirk Cousins sitting out and Penix getting the start for the Atlanta Falcons on Friday against the Miami Dolphins, the Heisman Trophy runner-up showed a knack for pushing the ball downfield – connecting with Chris Blair on a 41-yard gain – while missing out on other looks due to erratic ball placement.

- **J.J. McCarthy:** After Sam Darnold enjoyed a nice opening drive with the Minnesota Vikings, McCarthy strung together the kind of showing Saturday against the Las Vegas Raiders that will leave many wondering when he'll have the reins to the offense handed to him. The No. 10 pick from Michigan launched two deep touchdown tosses and completed 11 of 17 throws for 188 yards, along with an interception.

- **Bo Nix:** Carrying over his play from his Oregon days, the No. 12 overall pick for the Denver Broncos seemed to understand the assignment against the Indianapolis Colts on Sunday. Nix got the ball out quickly and on point to his playmakers, completing 15 of 21 passes for 125 yards and earning praise from Sean Payton for his decisiveness.

Should any of these showings be taken as a likely indicator of a successful season to come? Almost certainly not. But a strong start can build confidence – even if only for fan bases desperate for encouragement.

Austin Booker

After Williams wrapped up his day, a far less-heralded Bears rookie began to turn heads. Booker, a fifth-round pick out of Kansas, racked up 2½ sacks and three quarterback hits. The 6-foot-6, 245-pound defensive end projects as a developmental edge rusher after the Minnesota transfer made just one start in his collegiate career. If Booker can maintain his disruptiveness against a higher level of competition, however, coach Matt Eberflus might be compelled to find opportunities for him on a defense that ranked 31st in sacks last season with 30.

Eagles' secondary options

A spot that was long a significant source of uncertainty for Philadelphia might now be rife with possibility. With veteran James Bradberry moving to safety, the Eagles have a wealth of promising options at cornerback, with several of them standing out Friday against the Ravens. First-round pick Quinyon Mitchell was the easiest to notice, as he had a strong showing both on the outside and in the slot, save for a dropped would-be interception. But Keelee Ringo also fared well with two pass



Rams wide receiver Jordan Whittington, a sixth-round rookie out of Texas shown during practice, notched a team-high 74 yards on six catches Sunday against the Cowboys JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA/USA TODAY SPORTS

breakups. With Mitchell potentially manning the slot and Ringo backing up Darius Slay and Isaiah Rodgers on the outside, new defensive coordinator Vic Fangio could have ample flexibility on the back end.

Jaylen Wright

No one relishes – and utilizes – skill-position speed quite like the Dolphins. It was both fitting and somewhat of a surprise, then, when Mike McDaniel's crew picked up Wright, the former track standout who averaged 7.4 yards per carry in his final season at Tennessee, in the fourth round of April's NFL draft. Touches won't be easy to come by in a backfield that already features burners in Raheem Mostert and De'Von Achane. But Wright made a solid case for work by rushing for 55 yards and a touchdown on 10 carries against the Falcons. Maybe Wright's only mistake: launching the ball into the stands after his score.

Evan Williams

In reconfiguring the Green Bay Packers defense, new coordinator Jeff Hafley has placed aggressiveness and generating takeaways at the center of his scheme. He might have found a major asset in Williams, the fourth-round safety from Oregon who has been lauded throughout training camp for repeatedly finding the ball. That style extended to the field Saturday against the Cleveland Browns, as he forced a fumble and tied for a team high with six tackles. Second-round safety Javon Bullard appears to have the inside track to start at free safety, but Williams might force his way into action in some fashion if he keeps producing big plays.

Jordan Whittington

Throughout Sean McVay's run as coach, the Los Angeles Rams' insistence on sitting his starters for the summer slate has fueled the preseason rise of some off-the-radar players. The latest unlikely standout might be Whittington, the sixth-round rookie receiver out of Texas who notched a team-high 74 yards on six catches Sunday against the Dallas Cowboys. Don't go labeling him the next Puka Nacua or Cooper Kupp as the franchise's next major pass-catching draft steal just yet. But McVay did tell reporters after the game that Whittington is "going to be a factor for us."

Jake Haener

The New Orleans Saints are pitting Haener, the 2023 fourth-round pick out of Fresno State, against rookie Spencer Rattler in the battle to be starting quarterback Derek Carr's backup. While that competition continues, Haener showed resiliency Saturday against the Arizona Cardinals by playing with 32 stitches in his face after having an operation last week related to his rare form of skin cancer. He fared well on the field, too, completing 9 of 13 passes for 107 yards.

Charlie Smyth

The best preseason moments are often ones that can be celebrated independent of their predictive value. On its face, a 37-yard field goal to seal an exhibition win as time expired might not seem worthy of fanfare. But there was something undoubtedly special when Smyth, a former Gaelic football goalkeeper, converted his first-ever field goal attempt at any level of American football. New Orleans blared U2 in the locker room to celebrate the Irish kicker before giving him the game ball. Regardless of what happens in his push against incumbent Blake Grupe, Smyth stands as the latest neat story for the NFL's International Pathway Program.

LOSERS

Kansas City Chiefs

Andy Reid's decision to play his starters for the first quarter of Saturday's tilt with the Jacksonville Jaguars could have regular-season ramifications for the two-time defending champions. Wide receiver Marquise "Hollywood" Brown was hospitalized with a sternoclavicular joint dislocation and will miss "some time," Reid said, throwing into question Brown's status for the season opener in less than a month. Brown was signed by the Chiefs this offseason as part of the effort to retool Patrick Mahomes' receiving corps and rediscover an explosive element that had largely disappeared from the offense. Mahomes can still count on perennial Pro Bowl tight end Travis Kelce and receiver Rashee Rice, while speedy rookie Xavier Worthy could add an electrifying presence once he proves comfortable navigating the leap to the pros. But with a tough slate to start the season – the Chiefs face the Ravens, Bengals and Falcons in the first three weeks – any missed time for Brown could prove costly.

Justin Fields

With Russell Wilson sitting out the Pittsburgh Steelers' preseason opener against the Houston Texans on Thursday, Fields was faced with what might have been his best platform to make a push for the team's starting quarterback job. But two fumbled snap exchanges "negated a lot of good things" from Fields' performance, coach Mike Tomlin told reporters afterward. While Fields' electric potential was evident as he went 5 of 6 for 67 yards, any more mistakes likely will prevent him from catching Wilson, whom Tomlin described as being in the "pole position" of the race for the starting role.

Drake Maye

There's no point in pillorying the No. 3 pick after he played just six snaps in the second series of Thursday's contest against the Carolina Panthers. Still, as the rest of the top rookie signal-callers stood out and other young quarter-

backs received extensive work, the lack of action feels like a missed opportunity for Maye and the Patriots. First-year coach Jerod Mayo has made it known that veteran Jacoby Brissett is the team's starter at the moment, and that dynamic seems unlikely to change for some time. Even if Mayo is taking the long view on Maye's development, why not test the hyperathletic gunslinger's handle of offensive coordinator Alex Van Pelt's attack? It didn't help that classmate Joe Milton III, the raw but rocket-armed sixth-round rookie out of Tennessee, sparked a few big plays on two scoring drives. No reason to draw any conclusions now, but how and when New England ramps up Maye's workload bears watching.

Atlanta Falcons

Defensive depth is already a problem area for Atlanta, which is largely counting on former Day 2 draft picks and mid-level signings to carry the unit in lieu of splashy investments (outside of Pro Bowl safety Jessie Bates III). That issue was exacerbated by the team losing third-round outside linebacker Bralen Trice – who is out for the season after suffering an ACL injury against the Dolphins – and safety DeMarcco Hellams – whose outlook remains to be determined after he left Friday's game with his left leg in an air cast. Neither player was set to be a starter, but this unit can't afford many more hits after failing to add any difference-makers just one year after posting the league's worst pass-rush win rate (31%), according to ESPN.

Jackson Carman

If an offensive lineman is being widely discussed in the preseason, it's probably not for anything positive. Carman, the Cincinnati Bengals offensive tackle, earned the wrong kind of attention Saturday against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, drawing three flags for holding and another for a false start. The 2021 second-round pick out of Clemson hasn't yielded anywhere close to a proper return on the draft capital spent on him, appearing in two games last year after starting six as a rookie. As he continues on a downward trajectory, he looks like a candidate to be a casualty of the roster-cut deadline in two weeks.

Kickoff rule comprehension

Some sloppiness was to be expected as teams work through the kinks of the NFL's newly implemented "dynamic kickoff." But the opening week of play served as a reminder that almost everyone has some studying to do on the fresh play, as penalties were commonplace. The lowlight came when Chiefs returner Mecole Hardman attempted to down a kick in the end zone after it first bounced there and then went into play. The result was a safety for the Jaguars – but not before some confusion from the officials, who originally ruled it as a touchback. Expect some serious consternation if any team makes these kind of blunders in the fall.

Aaron Rai wins first at Wyndham

Adam Schupak

Golfweek | USA TODAY NETWORK

GREENSBORO, N.C. – Aaron Rai was the last man standing in near darkness at Sunday's 36-hole endurance test, winning his first PGA Tour title at the Wyndham Championship thanks to a back-nine blow-up by Max Greyserman.

Rai, a 29-year-old Englishman who last won in 2020 on the DP World Tour, shot a bogey-free 6-under 64 in the final round at Sedgefield Country Club to claim a two-stroke victory.

"Truly a dream come true," said Rai, who signed for a 72-hole aggregate of 18-under 262. "An amazing achievement."

But Greyserman was in the driver seat after holing out his wedge from 91 yards for eagle at the 13th hole to build a seemingly commanding four-stroke lead with five holes to go. Not so fast as it turned out. His tee shot at the 14th hole sailed right and bounced off the cart path and over a fence out of bounds.

"If that doesn't hit the cart path, we're probably in a different situation," Greyserman said. "I'm probably making five at worse."

Instead, he compounded his error with another blunder and his lead vanished in one fell swoop with a ghastly quadruple-bogey 8. Afterward, he still managed to make light of the situation, telling reporters he'd done the same thing once before when he was in contention at a Korn Ferry Tour event and cracking, "I've got to ask people not to put the cart paths on the right side."

Greyserman, a 29-year-old PGA Tour rookie who shot 60 in the second round, regained the lead at 18 under with a two-putt birdie at No. 15. But despite leading the field in putting for the tournament to that point, he took four putts – three of them from 3 feet – at the par-3 16th to make a double bogey and drop back to 16 under. He closed in 69 and finished alone in second.

"I played good enough to run away



Aaron Rai holds the trophy after playing 36 holes Sunday and winning the Wyndham Championship at Sedgefield Country Club. JIM DEDMON/USA TODAY SPORTS

with it," he said. "I'm just going to walk away with more confidence, look at the positive things and learn from the mistakes."

Rai, who opened with two 65s and added a third-round 68, chased Greyserman with four birdies in a row starting at the third to climb to 16 under. He tacked on a birdie at No. 12 and then strung together five pars in a row. He said he was oblivious to Greyserman's highs and lows because he avoided looking at the leaderboards.

"I thought it would be best not to really look at what was going on during the fourth round," Rai said. "I think that was probably a good thing, that helped me just to focus on the golf. I was playing well and I knew that if I finished off well, then you never know what can happen."

On the 18th tee, Billy Horschel, who was playing alongside Rai, approached him and asked if he wanted to know

where he stood. Rai declined and Horschel told him to stay strong. Thirty seconds later, Rai changed his mind and consulted his caddie, who told him everything he needed to know when he advised, "just focus on playing a good hole here."

Rai sank an 8-foot birdie putt at the last to seal the win. Ranked 48th in the world, Rai has been knocking on the door with top-20 finishes in five of his last six starts and three of them top-10s, including a T-2 at the Rocket Mortgage Classic and a T-4 at the Genesis Scottish Open. This season, Rai ranks fourth in strokes gained: total, which measures the per round average of the number of strokes the player was better or worse than the field average on the same course and event, behind only world No. 1 Scottie Scheffler, No. 2 Xander Schauffele and No. 3 Rory McIlroy. Rai credited adding putting coach John Gra-

ham as the difference that finally helped him get over the line and win, though he's always had a knack for getting the ball in the hole. As a teen, he once holed 207 consecutive 10-foot putts in a span of 90 minutes to set a world record.

"I think the previous record was 136," Rai recalled. "I probably wouldn't be able to make 207 in a row now. That was when I was 15."

J.J. Spaun fired a 64, tying Rai for the low score of the final round, and finished T-3 with Japan's Ryo Hisatsune.

Victor Perez, who started the week as the "Bubble Boy" at No. 70 in the FedExCup standings, shot 68 and finished T-33 to hang on to the last spot in the 70-man playoffs, which begin this week in Memphis at the FedEx St. Jude Championship.

It was a marathon Sunday after Tropical Storm Debby dumped more than 6 inches of rain on the course on Thursday, postponing the start of the tournament to Friday. Play was suspended due to darkness the next two days, preventing the 36-hole cut from being made until Sunday morning and forcing the 67 players who advanced to play at least 36 holes.

Amateur Luke Clanton, who finished fifth, played 39 and signed scorecards for three different rounds in one day.

Only Matt Kuchar, who was in the last group and drove left at 18, elected to wait to complete his round on Monday. He returned and parred the hole to finish at 11 under and in a tie for 12th but failed to make the Playoffs for the first time since they debuted in 2007.

It was one final wrinkle in a wild week at the Wyndham Championship that may be remembered more for the man who lost than the one who rode off with the trophy.

"It kind of feels like my own 2006 Phil Mickelson moment," Greyserman said of the left-hander's infamous collapse on the final hole of the 2006 U.S. Open. "So, hopefully that equals good things to come as it did for him."

Victor Perez tied for 33rd Sunday to finish seven points ahead of Davis Riley in the season-long standings.

DAVID JENSEN/GETTY IMAGES



Field complete for FedExCup Playoffs

Victor Perez hangs on to 70th and final spot

Adam Schupak

Golfweek | USA TODAY NETWORK

GREENSBORO, N.C. – The bubble didn't burst for Victor Perez.

He lived on the edge all week at the Wyndham Championship, the final event of the FedExCup regular season with the top 70 in the standings advancing for the FedEx St. Jude Championship.

Perez, a Frenchman in his first season as a PGA Tour member, entered the week as the bubble guy, but when it was all said and done, no player moved in from outside the bubble to qualify. It was just the second time and first since 2013 that there was no volatility at all.

Perez shot 2-under 68 on Sunday, saving a 6-foot par putt at 18 to finish T-33 and finish seven points clear of Davis Riley.

A week ago, Perez shot a final-round 63 in his native country to finish fourth in the Olympics. A week later, he had to play 36 holes on Sunday and then wait to see what Riley, whose only top-10 finish was a win at the Charles Schwab Challenge, and Japan's Ryo Hisatsune would do behind him.

"I think you're always nervous. This was probably a little bit closer to like a chance of winning a tournament because you're trying to really stretch as much as you can, whereas usually you're 25th place, you're just trying to improve but it's not as do or die," Perez said.

He shot 69 in his third round in the morning and explained he didn't know

The last five in and out

- 66. Seamus Power (T-28)
- 67. Nick Dunlap (Missed cut)
- 68. Jhonattan Vegas (T-61)
- 69. Emiliano Grillo (T-59)
- 70. Victor Perez (T-33)
- 71. Davis Riley (T-38)
- 72. Andrew Putnam (Missed cut)
- 73. Kurt Kitayama (Missed cut)
- 74. Luke List (Missed cut)
- 75. Adam Svensson (T-7)

where he stood despite a friend at lunch asking him about it.

"I looked at Joe, my agent, and he had the biggest poker face going and he didn't give me any clue, so I actually didn't know where I was," he said.

Riley, who battled sickness earlier in the week and called the postponement of play on Thursday a blessing in disguise, had good looks at birdie on the final three holes but couldn't get any of the putts to drop.

"I gave myself a chance, I hit some really good shots coming down the stretch, I just couldn't make the putts," said Riley, who shot 70 and finished T-38. "Proud of the way I hung in there on a long day and a week when I was a little under the weather. Having to cap it off with a 36 day took about every ounce of energy I had in me."

Hisatsune was the last player with a chance to burst Perez's bubble. He needed a solo second but made a bogey at the last to shoot 67 and finish a career-best T-3.



Austin Dillon and his son, Ace RC Dillon, place the winner sticker on the No. 3 Bass Pro Shops Chevrolet after the race Sunday. SEAN GARDNER/GETTY IMAGES

NASCAR to take a closer look at Richmond finish

Kelly Crandall

RACER magazine | USA TODAY NETWORK

NASCAR will review all available data concerning the last lap events from Sunday night at Richmond Raceway where Austin Dillon made contact with two drivers en route to victory in the Sprint Cup race.

"Our sport has been a contact sport for a long time," said NASCAR senior vice president of competition Elton Sawyer. "We always hear, 'Where's the line?' and 'Did someone cross the line?' I would say that the last lap was awful close to the line."

"We'll take a look at all the available resources from audio to video, listen to spotters, we'll listen to crew chiefs and drivers, and if anything rises to a level that we feel like we need to penalize, then we'll do that on Tuesday."

Dillon was running second when he drove into turn 3 on the final lap of overtime in the Cook Out 400 and hit the rear bumper of Joey Logano's Ford Mustang. The contact sent Logano into a spin and the outside wall. Logano, who finished 19th, called it a chicken (expletive) move as Dillon came from a couple of car lengths back to make contact.

The chain of events continued when Dillon hooked Denny Hamlin in the right rear of turn 4. Hamlin was to the inside of Dillon – given the opportunity as Dillon washed up the track after the contact with Logano – before his car was shot to the outside wall because of the hook, which cleared Dillon's path to victory.

Logano finished 19th. Hamlin crossed the finish line fifth.

"It happened fast," Sawyer said when asked if NASCAR didn't view anything egregious in real time. "But I would say, if you look at that, in my view that's getting right up really close to crossing the line."

Sawyer felt Sunday night was a great race with positives, such as the option tire Cup Series teams had in their allotment. But as it pertains to the last lap, Sawyer reiterated NASCAR is a contact sport that wants drivers to race hard. The debate during NASCAR's review of what took place at Richmond is how far the drivers can go, and Sawyer also agreed that perhaps what's acceptable in NASCAR today has changed from what was seen throughout its history.

"Our sport is 75 years old – a lot has happened in 75 years," he said. "So, I think we have to learn from the incident tonight and move forward and see if there's something that ... racing in the era that we race in today and the way our young kids are coming up racing at short tracks, we want to make sure that the highest level of racing, which is NASCAR Cup Series, is done at the highest level and it's done with the utmost integrity and sportsmanship and that's what we're about. So, we'll see if we need to adjust accordingly."

Whether that will include a penalty to Dillon, perhaps even taking the win away, is to be determined. "Historically that hasn't been our DNA to take races away, but that's not to say that going forward this wouldn't start to set a precedent," Sawyer said. "We have to look at it."

Latest appeal on Chiles and bronze turned down

Mike Brehm and Tom Schad

USA TODAY

USA Gymnastics said Monday that its effort to restore gymnast Jordan Chiles' bronze medal in the floor exercise has been turned down.

The federation said in a statement to social media that it was informed by the Court of Arbitration for Sport that rules "do not allow for an arbitral award to be reconsidered even when conclusive new evidence is presented."

"We are deeply disappointed by the notification and will continue to pursue every possible avenue and appeal process, including to the Swiss Federal Tribunal, to ensure the just score, placement and medal award for Jordan," USA Gymnastics said.

The news comes a little more than a week after the floor exercise competition itself, where an inquiry by Chiles' coaches first triggered the saga that has played out in the days since.

In the last routine of the floor exercise final, Chiles garnered a score of 13.666, which included a deduction of one-tenth of a point for an improper split leap, known as a tour jete full. That score put her fifth, behind Ana Barbosu and another Romanian gymnast, Sabrina Maneca-Voinea. They both had scores of 13.700.

But then, in a move she later acknowledged was a bit of a Hail Mary, Chiles' coach, Cecile Landi, formally appealed that specific deduction – and the judges agreed. Chiles' score was increased to 13.766, which moved her into third place ahead of the two Romanians, one of whom had already climbed onto the podium with a flag to celebrate.

The Romanian Gymnastics Federation felt the last-minute reversal was unfair, so it took the matter to CAS, claiming that Landi had submitted the scoring appeal – officially known as an inquiry – four seconds past the allotted one minute in which she was permitted



An appeal to get Jordan Chiles' bronze medal restored was turned down by CAS on Monday, USA Gymnastics said.

JACK GRUBER/USA TODAY SPORTS

to do so. (It also filed a separate appeal on behalf of Maneca-Voinea, saying she shouldn't have been penalized for stepping out of bounds.)

It wasn't until Saturday that CAS is-

sued its ruling – a decision that triggered a trickle-down effect through various Olympic organizations and eventually led the International Olympic Committee to announce that Barbosu would get a bronze medal and Chiles would be stripped of hers.

Then, on Sunday, USA Gymnastics announced that it had found new video footage that essentially disproved the Romanian Gymnastics Federation's timeline. The U.S. said it submitted the video to CAS for review as part of its appeal of the Swiss-based court's ruling.

The Romanian Gymnastics Federation, in fact, had requested that CAS decide that Barbosu, Chiles and Maneca-Voinea all receive bronze medals. Instead, it punted that decision to the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG), which has since said all medal decisions are made by the IOC. The IOC then said the medal allocation is dependent upon the order of finish and referred a reporter's questions to the FIG.

Peek

Continued from Page 1C

Napheesa Collier

Collier excels on the block and in the mid-range game but has the shot to step out, giving her a versatility that fits the international game well. Just 27 years old in Paris, she is likely to be a WNBA MVP contender the next few years.

Sabrina Ionescu

The 2024 Olympics are a passing of the baton of sorts for point guards in the USA Basketball system, as Ionescu learns from Chelsea Gray, the best point guard in women's basketball. Ionescu's value will come with her experience, basketball IQ and deep shooting ability (coach Cheryl Reeve would also want everyone to note Ionescu's improvement defensively).

Jackie Young

Young is a terrific two-way player and one of the best defenders in the world. She's also one of the strongest players in the WNBA, which gives her a huge advantage on the floor.

The Olympic rookie locks

Caitlin Clark

Great shooters are always an asset during international competition because of their ability to stretch the floor. Clark's logo 3s will fit in perfectly, and she'll be stronger after four years in the pros, which means she won't get knocked around so much (international ball is famously physical).

Paige Bueckers

Outside of Chelsea Gray, the 2024 Olympic team doesn't really have a true facilitator. This is where the highly efficient Bueckers will shine.

JuJu Watkins

The likely No. 1 pick in the 2027 WNBA draft, Watkins already has one of the best midrange games in women's basketball, regardless of level. That, coupled with her size, will make her transition to the pros and FIBA smoother than most guards.

Our money is on them

Cameron Brink

Brink was supposed to make her Olympic debut in Paris at 3x3, but a torn ACL in late June sidelined her. The best two-way player in the 2024 draft, Brink can score and defend with top forwards already, and she loves physical play. She'll fit right in.

Angel Reese

Reese is a rebounding machine in the WNBA so far, and her play has turned heads. The only catch is that if she never goes overseas in the winter – which she has said she doesn't really want to do – she could face a major adjustment with the physical play, to the point that the selection committee might be hesitant to put her on the roster.

Aliyah Boston

The 2023 Rookie of the Year had a rough start to her sophomore season in the WNBA but it's likely that in four years she is one of the best, and most consistent, forwards in women's basketball.

The question marks

Kelsey Plum

Plum can play point or off guard, score from either position and knows how to play with superstars. She'll be 33 when 2028 rolls around. Her inclusion likely comes down to if she wants to play in another Olympics.



Rhyne Howard played in the 3x3 tournament this year; will she make the move to 5x5 in 2028? ANDREW P. SCOTT/USA TODAY SPORTS

Jewell Loyd

Loyd is one of the best pure scorers in the WNBA, but she didn't get many minutes in Paris and therefore hadn't done much. Her inclusion on the 2028 roster might come down to who's coaching and what type of system they run.

Arikea Ogunbowale

The best one-on-one player in the WNBA, Ogunbowale is a gifted shot maker who has torched Team USA at back-to-back WNBA All-Star games, scoring 26 in 2021 before Tokyo and 34 this summer before Paris. In June she said she took her name out of the 2024 USA Basketball pool months ago because of the "politics" surrounding roster selection, saying it "doesn't have much to do with your game." Does she want back in before LA?

Rhyne Howard

There's an argument that 3x3 is a steppingstone of sorts to 5-on-5; we saw as much with Plum and Young, who won 3x3 gold in Tokyo and then graduated to 5-on-5. Is Howard the next to make that jump?

The wild card

Diana Taurasi

The elder stateswoman of USA Basketball right now, Taurasi will be 46 when the Los Angeles Games tip off in four years. It seems crazy to think she could still be playing ... but LA is her hometown and until this woman actually retires and is sitting in the stands instead of on the bench, don't rule out anything.

Armour

Continued from Page 1C

most joyous. Amazing athletic feats took place with landmarks like the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe and Grand Palais serving as the backdrop. The stands, so eerily silent at both the delayed Summer Games in Tokyo and Beijing Winter Olympics, were once again filled with raucous fans.

In the streets and cafés and Metro stations, people from all over the world mixed and mingled. Hearing your own language, or seeing your flag on someone's cheek, was all it took to start conversations. People who would be separated by icy silence if the topic was politics or social justice issues found common ground in the greatness of Simone Biles and Steph Curry, Leon Marchand and Rebeca Andrade.

And just weeks after an election that magnified the troubling fractures threatening France's ideals of equality and fraternity, its people came together to raise their voices as one in cheers of "Allez!" and choruses of La Marseillaise.

"France is beautiful. And when we're all together and when we unite, it's a wonderful sight," Thierry Henry, the hero of France's illustrious 1998 World Cup team and now coach of its Olympic men's soccer squad, said after Les Bleus fell to Spain in the final.

"People from the get-go wanted to support us," Henry added. "We lost tonight but they kept singing. They kept supporting us."

The Paris Games were not perfect. Nothing that involves humans, with their agendas and egos and greed, ever is.

The grand plan to clean up the Seine did not quite come to fruition, though the triathlon and marathon swimming



The peloton approaches the Louvre museum in the women's cycling road race during the Paris Olympics. ANDREW P. SCOTT/USA TODAY SPORTS

were held in it nonetheless. Homeless people were moved out of the city center. Right-wing vigilantes unleashed their hate on two female boxers, ignoring both facts and decency. The International Olympic Committee punished Jordan Chiles for the wrongdoing of gymnastics officials, stripping her of her floor exercise bronze medal on the final day of the Games.

Still, as far as Olympics go, Paris came as close to perfection as it gets.

"Paris showed us a good time," A'ja Wilson said after the U.S. women won their eighth consecutive Olympic basketball gold medal Sunday night. "The hosts did well."

The decision by organizers to use existing venues and Parisian landmarks as venues was inspired. Fans and athletes alike flocked to beach volleyball, marveling at the sand court at the base of the Eiffel Tower. The park at Place de

la Concorde was a magnet for spectators, both for its views and the multiple sports that took place there.

People who wanted to check the Louvre off their bucket list got the added bonus of seeing the cauldron in the Tuileries Garden, a balloon whose presence was made even more majestic by its rise and descent each day.

One of the goals of Paris organizers was to bring sports to the people, and their success will make future hosts pale by comparison.

Having most of the events in the city, and putting them in close proximity to a train system that was both expansive and dependable, made what is normally a sprawling and cumbersome footprint manageable. Wanted to check out swimming, fencing, skateboarding and gymnastics? All in the same day? No problem! Didn't have tickets? If you kept your eyes peeled as you strolled along

the Seine, you might have happened upon a cycling race.

"Since the beginning, we had one vision with Paris 2024: to organize sports in the city and really combine the emotion of sport with the emotions of our city, our landmarks, and iconic venues," Tony Estanguet, president of Paris 2024, said Saturday.

"That's probably what we are most proud of. It's been a vision since the beginning."

But perhaps the best thing about these Games was the relaxed atmosphere.

Fears about terrorism and overbearing security never came to pass, thankfully. After the tight COVID restrictions in Tokyo and Beijing, athletes were delighted to finally get the entire Olympic experience.

Wilson, Steph Curry, Kevin Durant and Scottie Scheffler were just a few of the athletes who made sure they got to witness Biles' greatness in person. Biles was in the crowd to watch Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone shatter her own world record in the 400-meter hurdles. LeBron James brought his wife and daughter to the women's gold medal game.

And spectators, shut out from the Games since 2018, were just happy to be here. In person. Enjoying the sports and the sights and everything in between.

"There are always things that could be improved, and we have had issues day in and day out to resolve," Estanguet said. "But if someone had told me 10 years ago, five years ago, one year ago, or even on the eve of the opening ceremony that things would go this way, I would have completely said, 'Sign me up.'"

"No regrets," he added. "None at all."

For anyone. Except maybe for future hosts, who now have a near-impossible standard to meet thanks to these magnificent Paris Games.

Diana Taurasi owns golden six-pack

Lindsay Schnell
USA TODAY

PARIS – When Diana Taurasi was announced as a member of the U.S. women's basketball team for the 2024 Paris Olympics, her intentions were clear: She wanted to win one more gold medal than her basketball bestie, Sue Bird, Team USA's longtime point guard.

Sunday evening in Bercy Arena, in the final event of the 2024 Summer Games, Taurasi accomplished that feat when the Americans hung on for a 67-66 win over France to earn an unprecedented eighth consecutive Olympic gold medal.

So, how is it to be able to brag about that to Bird, who was sitting courtside watching the game?

"Yeah, it's the only reason I came. It's funny because we scored the same amount of points today," Taurasi deadpanned after the win, a game in which she did not leave the bench.

In Tokyo three years ago, after Bird and Taurasi had led Team USA to its seventh consecutive gold, Taurasi

caused a stir when she ended her TV interview by quipping, "See you in Paris."

She wasn't possibly serious, was she? It turns out she was.

The 42-year-old Taurasi became the oldest U.S. basketball player to compete in the Olympics when she started the first pool play game on July 29 against Japan.

She wasn't the only seasoned veteran playing hoops for the U.S. this summer, as 39-year-old LeBron James led the men to gold over France on Saturday night. But neither of them took the title of oldest hooper at these, or any, Games. That distinction went to 43-year-old Lauren Jackson, who returned to the Australian Opals after a 12-year absence. Australia beat Belgium on Sunday for bronze.

Though coach Cheryl Reeve didn't put Taurasi in the gold medal game, she was effusive in her praise of the woman widely considered to be the GOAT of the WNBA.

"She's defined USA basketball," Reeve said. "And in her final Olympics, the mark that she's making in terms of



Diana Taurasi has won six gold medals playing for Team USA in the Summer Olympics. KYLE TERADA/USA TODAY SPORTS

leadership, just sharing the knowledge that she has. She's a six-time Olympian who's left her mark every time she's around the team. I don't know that there's a greater competitor in USA basketball (history). Dee is sorta on Mount Rushmore in that way."

Taurasi had an up-and-down Olympics. Though she wasn't scoring much, if at all, she started in all three pool play games that the U.S. played in Lille, a

town on the northern border of France. When the team moved to Paris for the knockout round, she was benched in favor of Jackie Young. Taurasi came off the bench to play 14 minutes in the quarterfinals and just six minutes in the semis.

"I think I'll look back on 20 years of being able to wear the jersey, it's truly an honor," Taurasi said of her USAB career. "I've been lucky to be around some of the best players to ever play – when I was younger, some of my idols; in the middle, with my counterparts; and now to see these young guys go out there and get this gold medal, it's a lot of luck, lot of hard work and here I am."

Asked how this medal compares to her other five, Taurasi joked, "I like the other ones better."

"It always feels good when you beat the home team at home," she said. "There's a little bit of satisfaction there."

So, what does this mean for the 2028 Olympics, which will be held in Taurasi's hometown of Los Angeles?

"I'll be there," she said, "with a beer, on the beach, sitting next to Sue."

Griner cherishes 'special' 2024 gold medal

Nancy Armour
USA TODAY

PARIS – Brittney Griner's eyes began to fill as she heard the first notes of "The Star-Spangled Banner." As she watched the U.S. flag rise, she cried unabashedly.

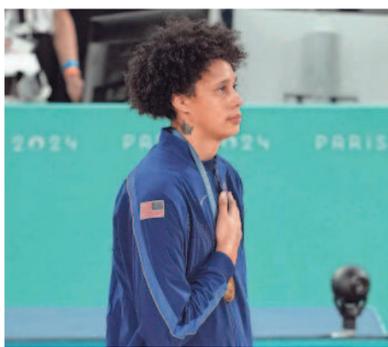
It wasn't long ago she was in a Russian prison, uncertain of when – or if – she'd get back home. Now, as she stood on the top step of the medals podium, the gold medal she helped win for her country heavy around her neck, Griner was overcome with emotion.

By the time the anthem finished, her face was wet with tears. While her teammates huddled together and began cheering for photos, Griner took a second to compose herself, swiping at her face with her hand before she joined them.

"It means so much to me," Griner said, her voice growing thick once again. "I didn't think I'd be here, like I've said before. And then to be here winning gold for my country, representing, when my country fought so hard for me to even be standing here – yeah, this gold is going to hold a special place."

Griner's story is known to most everyone by now. Arrested in February 2022 after two nearly-spent vape cartridges with hash oil were found in her bag, she spent almost 10 months in a Russian prison. Though marijuana in any form is illegal in Russia, Griner was a political pawn.

Arrested just days before Russia's



Brittney Griner shed tears as the national anthem played Sunday after the USA won the women's basketball gold medal. JAMES LANG/USA TODAY SPORTS

unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, she was a propaganda gold mine for Vladimir Putin in his cold war with the United States. A valuable bargaining chip, too.

In her book, Griner details how dehumanizing and demoralizing her imprisonment was. What kept her going was the love of her family, her basketball family included.

Though Griner said when she returned that she planned to play again, re-entry was not easy. Physically or psychologically. Even here in France, her first trip overseas since her December 2022 release, there were flashbacks.

The first train ride to Lille, where the U.S. women played their group stage games, was hard. The last time she'd

been on a train it was to travel between prisons in Russia.

"BG's gone through a lot the last few years," said Diana Taurasi, who is Griner's teammate with the Phoenix Mercury in the WNBA and one of her closest friends. "When you talk about literally where she was (almost) three years ago, it's almost mind boggling that she's been able to get back to this point. It shows a lot of character."

There is something healing for Griner in basketball, though. The affection from her teammates and players from other countries is genuine. After the U.S. women beat Australia in group play, Aussie legend Lauren Jackson sought Griner out in the mixed zone and they exchanged a long hug.

It was the first time the three-time WNBA MVP had seen Griner since her release.

"We did follow it. It was on the news every day; it was horrible," Jackson said. "I feel really honored that I got the opportunity to match up with her again, even for a couple minutes. She's a beautiful human."

There are those who've tried to paint Griner as anything but, suggesting she somehow deserved the fate she got. Or, worse, was ungrateful to her country. Nothing could be further from the truth, as those who actually know her know.

Griner let it be known soon after she returned that she wanted to play for USA Basketball again. She is a mainstay of the national team, having already

won gold medals in Rio de Janeiro and Tokyo, and putting on the uniform again was the best way she knew to express the gratitude she feels for the United States.

She delighted being around her teammates, who relished the joy she had at these Olympics. She's a friendly and fun presence in any locker room, a quality desperately needed on a stage like this and with massive expectations for the U.S. women.

But there is a burden she carries that no one else can understand. After the final whistle, Griner found wife Cherelle. Then, while her teammates were still celebrating, Griner went backstage and found a bathroom, where she let all of the emotions wash over her.

"When you see BG around the team, outward, she's OK. But you know inside, there's a lot going on there," U.S. coach Cheryl Reeve said. "But she always presents her very best version of herself, despite all that she went through."

"And she is thankful to be here. She was so thankful to be here."

U.S. Olympians always talk about the pride they have of representing their country, the privilege of wearing the red, white and blue.

For Griner, though, there is gratitude most of all.

"I always wanted to be here," she said. "My country fought for me to get back. I was able to bring home gold for my country. There's just no greater feeling."

USA's Kennedy Blades wins silver in first Olympics

Gentry Estes

The (Nashville) Tennessean | USA TODAY NETWORK

PARIS – Kennedy Blades felt the initially undesired Olympic medal in her hands, looked at it, tossed it slowly to gauge the weight. Then she looked at it some more.

Silver was growing on her quickly.

"It's still a cool medal," she said.

Blades' surprising Olympic wrestling run ended Sunday with a 3-1 defeat to Japan's Yuka Kagami, last year's world champion, in the gold medal match of the women's 76-kilogram freestyle competition at Champ de Mars Arena near the Eiffel Tower.

The unseeded Blades, a 20-year-old from Chicago in her first Olympics, had won consecutive matches against the tournament's No. 4, No. 5 and No. 1



Blades

seeds to reach the final wrestling match of the Paris Olympics.

Only Kagami, the No. 2 seed, proved too difficult for Blades in what was a close, low-scoring six minutes. With 1:22 remaining, Kagami was awarded two points for a takedown and then held on in the final moments.

"I already knew that I was at this level," Blades said, "but I just showed the world. Obviously, I did want gold, of course. But second-best thing."

After waiting through the Paris Games to compete, Blades emerged in the Olympics' final days as a breakout American star to watch for at the 2028 Games in Los Angeles. A clip spread on social media of her picking up Roma-

nia's Catalina Axente and throwing her during an 11-0 victory in Blades' opening match.

And a wider sporting public has started to learn her story: Blades began wrestling at age 7 and reportedly made history by winning a youth title in Illinois competing against boys. She beat the USA's Adeline Gray, silver medalist in Tokyo, in the Olympic trials to make it to Paris.

After Axente, Blades went on to defeat Milaimy Marin Potrille of Cuba (4-3) and top-seeded Aiperi Medet Kyzy of Kyrgyzstan (8-6).

The Cuban wrestler ended up winning bronze with Colombia's Tatiana Renteria Renteria.

"It was really cool that the two bronze medals were also Latina," Blades said. "So it was three of us on that podium,

and I don't know if that's ever really happened. It was really cool that we were able to represent our heritage."

Blades said she hopes that will help inspire younger Latina athletes and wrestlers.

"Growing up (in sports)," she said, "I didn't really have a role model."

After attending Arizona State University, Blades is set to transfer to the University of Iowa and start fall classes later this month, though she said, "I haven't even seen campus or anything."

As for her new silver medal?

"It's going to her parents."

"Just because I don't trust myself," she said with a laugh, noting that a couple of previous medals she'd won were somewhere in a bag that she hasn't been able to find.

"We're going to keep this one safe."

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Sourcewell, a State of Minnesota local government unit and service cooperative, is requesting proposals for Tax-Exempt Municipal Leasing with Related Services to result in a contracting solution for use by its Participating Entities.
Sourcewell Participating Entities include thousands of governmental, higher education, K-12 education, nonprofit, tribal government, and other public agencies located in the United States and Canada.
A full copy of the Request for Proposals can be found on the Sourcewell Procurement Portal <https://proportal.sourcewell-mn.gov>
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FOR THE RECORD

All times ET

MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE East Division

Table with columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Rows: Baltimore, N.Y. Yankees, Boston, Tampa Bay, Toronto.

Central Division

Table with columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Rows: Cleveland, Minnesota, Kansas City, Detroit, Chicago.

West Division

Table with columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Rows: Houston, Texas, L.A. Angels, Oakland.

NATIONAL LEAGUE East Division

Table with columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Rows: Philadelphia, Atlanta, N.Y. Mets, Washington, Miami.

Central Division

Table with columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Rows: Milwaukee, St. Louis, Chicago, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh.

West Division

Table with columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Rows: L.A. Dodgers, Arizona, San Diego, San Francisco, Colorado.

Sunday's Games

L.A. Angels 6, Washington 4; Houston 10, Boston 2; N.Y. Yankees 8, Texas 7; Oakland 8, Toronto 4; Miami 7, San Diego 6; Tampa Bay 2, Baltimore 1; Cleveland 5, Minnesota 3; Cincinnati 4, Milwaukee 3; Colorado 9, Atlanta 8; Detroit 5, San Francisco 4; Arizona 12, Philadelphia 5; L.A. Dodgers 6, Pittsburgh 5; Seattle 12, N.Y. Mets 1.

Monday's Games

St. Louis at Cincinnati; Chicago Cubs at Cleveland; Houston at Tampa Bay; Texas at Boston; Kansas City at Minnesota; N.Y. Yankees at Chicago White Sox; L.A. Dodgers at Milwaukee; Toronto at L.A. Angels; Colorado at Arizona; Pittsburgh at San Diego; Atlanta at San Francisco.

Tuesday's Games

Washington at Baltimore, 6:35 p.m.; St. Louis at Cincinnati, 6:40 p.m.; Chicago Cubs at Cleveland, 6:40 p.m.; Seattle at Detroit, 6:40 p.m.; Miami at Philadelphia, 6:40 p.m.; Houston at Tampa Bay, 6:50 p.m.; Texas at Boston, 7:10 p.m.; Oakland at N.Y. Mets, 7:10 p.m.; Kansas City at Minnesota, 7:40 p.m.; N.Y. Yankees at Chicago White Sox, 8:10 p.m.; L.A. Dodgers at Milwaukee, 8:10 p.m.; Toronto at L.A. Angels, 9:38 p.m.; Colorado at Arizona, 9:40 p.m.; Pittsburgh at San Diego, 9:40 p.m.; Atlanta at San Francisco, 9:45 p.m.

Wednesday's Games

Kansas City at Minnesota, 1:10 p.m.; Colorado at Arizona, 3:40 p.m.; Pittsburgh at San Diego, 4:10 p.m.; Texas at Boston, 6:10 p.m.; Washington at Baltimore, 6:35 p.m.; St. Louis at Cincinnati, 6:40 p.m.; Chicago Cubs at Cleveland, 6:40 p.m.; Seattle at Detroit, 6:40 p.m.; Miami at Philadelphia, 6:40 p.m.; Houston at Tampa Bay, 6:50 p.m.; Oakland at N.Y. Mets, 7:10 p.m.; N.Y. Yankees at Chicago White Sox, 8:10 p.m.; L.A. Dodgers at Milwaukee, 8:10 p.m.; Toronto at L.A. Angels, 9:38 p.m.; Atlanta at San Francisco, 9:45 p.m.

GOLF

Full FedExCup Playoffs field

Table with columns: Pos., Player, W, L, Pct, GB. Lists top 100 players in the FedExCup playoffs.

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Table with columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Lists Eastern Conference WNBA teams.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Table with columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Lists Western Conference WNBA teams.

Thursday's Games

Phoenix vs. Chicago, 8 p.m.; Washington vs. Minnesota, 8 p.m.; New York vs. Los Angeles, 9 p.m.; Friday's Games: Phoenix vs. Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.; Phoenix vs. Indiana, 7:30 p.m.; Connecticut vs. Dallas, 9:30 p.m.; Saturday's Games: Minnesota vs. Washington, 2 p.m.; New York vs. Los Angeles, 5 p.m.; Chicago vs. Los Angeles, 5 p.m.; Sunday's Games: Connecticut vs. Atlanta, 3 p.m.; Seattle vs. Indiana, 3:30 p.m.; Los Angeles vs. Las Vegas, 6 p.m.; Chicago vs. Phoenix, 9 p.m.

PGA Tour Wyndham Championship Sunday

Greensboro, NC Sedgefield Country Club Purse: \$7.9 million

Yardage: 7,131; Par: 70 Final Round

Table with columns: Player, Score. Lists top golfers in the Wyndham Championship.

Table with columns: Player, W, L, Pct, GB. Lists top 100 players in the FedExCup playoffs.

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Table with columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Lists Eastern Conference WNBA teams.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Table with columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Lists Western Conference WNBA teams.

Thursday's Games

Phoenix vs. Chicago, 8 p.m.; Washington vs. Minnesota, 8 p.m.; New York vs. Los Angeles, 9 p.m.; Friday's Games: Phoenix vs. Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.; Phoenix vs. Indiana, 7:30 p.m.; Connecticut vs. Dallas, 9:30 p.m.; Saturday's Games: Minnesota vs. Washington, 2 p.m.; New York vs. Los Angeles, 5 p.m.; Chicago vs. Los Angeles, 5 p.m.; Sunday's Games: Connecticut vs. Atlanta, 3 p.m.; Seattle vs. Indiana, 3:30 p.m.; Los Angeles vs. Las Vegas, 6 p.m.; Chicago vs. Phoenix, 9 p.m.

SOCCER

English Premier League

Table with columns: Team, GP, W, D, L, GF, GA, Pts. Lists Premier League teams and their stats.

Arsenal vs. Wolverhampton, 10 a.m.; Everton vs. Brighton & Hove Albion, 10 a.m.; Newcastle vs. Southampton, 10 a.m.; Nottingham Forest vs. Bournemouth, 10 a.m.; West Ham vs. Aston Villa, 12:30 p.m.; Sunday's Games: Brentford vs. Crystal Palace, 9 a.m.; Chelsea vs. Manchester City, 11:30 a.m.

AUTO RACING

NASCAR Cup Series Cook Out 400

Richmond Raceway Sunday

(1) Austin Dillon, Richard Childress Racing, 408, 50 points. (2) (1) D. Hamlin, Joe Gibbs Racing, 408, 52. (3) (10) Tyler Reddick, 23XI Racing, 408, 40. (4) (8) Bubba Wallace, 23XI Racing, 408, 42. (5) (22) Ross Chastain, Trackhouse Racing, 408, 32. (6) (5) Chris Bell, Joe Gibbs Racing, 408, 50. (7) (15) Kyle Larson, Hendrick Motorsports, 408, 20. (8) (19) C. Hocevar, Spire Motorsports, 408, 31. (9) (4) Chase Elliott, Hendrick Motorsports, 408, 34. (10) (21) D. Suárez, Trackhouse Racing, 408, 37. (11) (1) Ryan Blaney, Team Penske, 408, 26. (12) Kyle Busch, Richard Childress Racing, 408, 20. (13) (13) William Byron, Hendrick Motorsports, 408, 24. (14) (3) J. Berry, Stewart-Haas Racing, 408, 24. (15) (28) Michael McDowell, Front Row Motorsports, 408, 27. (16) (2) Brad Keselowski, RFK Racing, 408, 21. (17) (23) Todd Gilliland, Front Row Motorsports, 408, 20. (18) (7) Chris Buescher, RFK Racing, 408, 22. (19) (9) Joey Logano, Team Penske, 408, 32. (20) (16) Noah Gragson, Stewart-Haas Racing, 407, 17. (21) (25) Chase Briscoe, Stewart-Haas Racing, 407, 16. (22) (14) Ty Gibbs, Joe Gibbs Racing, 407, 15. (23) (20) Z. Smith, Spire Motorsports, 407, 14. (24) (18) Austin Cindric, Team Penske, 407, 13. (25) (26) Ryan Preece, Stewart-Haas Racing, 407, 12. (26) (30) Ty Dillon, Kaulig Racing, 407, 0. (27) (36) J. Haley, Rick Ware Racing, 406, 10. (28) (17) Alex Bowman, Hendrick Motorsports, 406, 9. (29) (27) Erik Jones, Legacy Motor Club, 406, 8. (30) (32) Daniel Hemric, Kaulig Racing, 406, 7. (31) (25) John H. Nemechek, Legacy Motor Club, 405, 6. (32) (31) Harrison Burton, Wood Brothers Racing, 405, 5. (33) (34) R. Herbst, Rick Ware Racing, 405, 0. (34) (24) C. LaJoie, Spire Motorsports, 404, 3. (35) (37) Parker Retzlaff, Power Source, 402, 0. (36) (33) Ricky Stenhouse Jr., JTG Daugherty Racing, 397, Accident 1. (37) (2) Martin Truex Jr., Joe Gibbs Racing, 250, Engine 9.

NASCAR Cup Series Schedule and winners

Feb. 19 - Daytona 500 (William Byron); Feb. 25 - Ametter Health 400 (Daniel Suárez); March 3 - Pennzoil 400 (presented by Jiffy Lube) (Kyle Larson); March 10 - Shriners Children's 500 (Christopher Bell); March 17 - Food City 500 (Denny Hamlin); March 24 - EchoPark Automotive Grand Prix (William Byron); March 31 - Toyota Owners 400 (Denny Hamlin); April 7 - Cook Out 400 (William Byron); April 14 - Autotrader EchoPark Automotive 400 (Chase Elliott); April 21 - GEICO 500 (Tyler Reddick); April 28 - Würth 400 (Denny Hamlin); May 5 - AdventHealth 400 (Kyle Larson); May 12 - Goodyear 400 (Brad Keselowski); May 26 - Coca-Cola 600 (Christopher Bell); June 2 - Enjoy Illinois 300 (Austin Cindric); June 9 - Toyota Save Mart 350 (Kyle Larson); June 16 - Iowa Corn 350, Powered by Ethanol (Ryan Blaney); June 23 - USA TODAY 301 (Christopher Bell); June 30 - Ally 400 (Joey Logano); July 7 - Grant Park 165 (Alex Bowman); July 14 - The Great American Getaway 400 (presented by VisitPA.com) (Alex Bowman); July 21 - Brickyard 400 (Kyle Larson); July 28 - Cook Out 400 (Austin Dillon); Aug. 18 - Firekeepers Casino 400, Brooklynn Aug. 24 - Coke Zero Sugar 400, Daytona Beach, Fla.; Sept. 1 - Cook Out Southern 500, Darlington, SC.

Sept. 8 - Quaker State 400 Available at Wal-Mart, Hampton, Ga.; Sept. 15 - Go Bowling at The Glen, Watkins Glen International, NY; Sept. 21 - Bass Pro Shops Night Race, Bristol, Tenn.; Sept. 29 - Hollywood Casino 400, Kansas City, Kan.; Oct. 6 - YellaWood 500, Talladega, Ala.; Oct. 13 - Bank of America ROVAL 400, Concord, NC; Oct. 20 - South Point 400, Las Vegas, Nev.; Oct. 27 - Straight Talk Wireless 400, Homestead, Fla.; Nov. 3 - XFINITY 500, Martinsville, Va.; Nov. 10 - NASCAR Cup Series Championship, Avondale, Ariz.

IndyCar Series Schedule and winners

March 10 - Firestone Grand Prix Of St. Petersburg (Patricio O'Ward); April 21 - Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach (Scott Dixon); April 28 - Children's of Alabama Indy Grand Prix (Scott McLaughlin); May 11 - Sorsio Grand Prix (Alex Palou); Nov. 10 - The Indianapolis 500 (Josef Newgard); June 2 - Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix (Scott Dixon); June 9 - XPEL Grand Prix at Road America (Will Power); June 23 - Firestone Grand Prix of Monterey (Alex Palou); July 7 - Honda Indy 200 at Mid-Ohio (Patricio O'Ward); July 14 - Hy-Vee Homefront 250 (Scott McLaughlin); July 21 - Hy-Vee One Step 250 (Will Power); July 28 - Ontario Honda Dealers Indy Toronto (Colton Herta); Aug. 17 - Bommarito Automotive Group 500, Madison, Ill.; Aug. 25 - Grand Prix of Portland, Portland Aug. 30 - Hy-Vee Milwaukee Mile 250 - Race 1, Milwaukee, Wis.; Aug. 31 - Hy-Vee Milwaukee Mile 250 - Race 2, Milwaukee, Wis.; Sept. 15 - Big Machine Music City Grand Prix, Lebanon; Oct. 1 - Alex Palou, 411. 2. Will Power, 362. 3. Scott Dixon, 358. 4. Colton Herta, 354. 5. Patricio O'Ward, 340. 6. Scott McLaughlin, 328. 7. Kyle Kirkwood, 314. 8. Josef Newgard, 266. 9. Alexander Rossi, 265. 10. Santino Ferrucci, 231. 11. Christian Lundgaard, 229. 12. Marcus Ericsson, 222. 13. Felix Rosenqvist, 212. 14. Marcus Armstrong, 203. 15. Rinus VeeKay, 201. 16. Romain Grosjean, 199. 17. Graham Rahal, 197. 18. Linus Lundqvist, 173. 19. Pietro Fittipaldi, 135. 20. Kyffin Simpson, 133. 21. Sting Ray Robb, 121. 22. Christian Rasmussen, 109. 23. Agustín Hugo Canapino, 109. 24. Theo Pourchare, 91. 25. Nolan Siegel, 88. 26. David Malukas, 82. 27. Jack Harvey, 80. 28. Tom Blomqvist, 46. 29. Callum Iott, 39. 30. Toby Sowery, 32. 31. Ed Carpenter, 32. 32. Luca Ghiotto, 27. 33. Helio Castroneves, 26. 34. Conor Daly, 26. 35. Katherine Anne Legge, 24. 36. Kyle Larson, 21. 37. Takuma Sato, 19. 38. Tristan Vautier, 12. 39. Colin Braun, 10. 40. Ryan Hunter-Reay, 6. 41. Hunter McElrea, 6. 42. Marco Andretti, 5.

IndyCar Series points leaders

1. Alex Palou, 411. 2. Will Power, 362. 3. Scott Dixon, 358. 4. Colton Herta, 354. 5. Patricio O'Ward, 340. 6. Scott McLaughlin, 328. 7. Kyle Kirkwood, 314. 8. Josef Newgard, 266. 9. Alexander Rossi, 265. 10. Santino Ferrucci, 231. 11. Christian Lundgaard, 229. 12. Marcus Ericsson, 222. 13. Felix Rosenqvist, 212. 14. Marcus Armstrong, 203. 15. Rinus VeeKay, 201. 16. Romain Grosjean, 199. 17. Graham Rahal, 197. 18. Linus Lundqvist, 173. 19. Pietro Fittipaldi, 135. 20. Kyffin Simpson, 133. 21. Sting Ray Robb, 121. 22. Christian Rasmussen, 109. 23. Agustín Hugo Canapino, 109. 24. Theo Pourchare, 91. 25. Nolan Siegel, 88. 26. David Malukas, 82. 27. Jack Harvey, 80. 28. Tom Blomqvist, 46. 29. Callum Iott, 39. 30. Toby Sowery, 32. 31. Ed Carpenter, 32. 32. Luca Ghiotto, 27. 33. Helio Castroneves, 26. 34. Conor Daly, 26. 35. Katherine Anne Legge, 24. 36. Kyle Larson, 21. 37. Takuma Sato, 19. 38. Tristan Vautier, 12. 39. Colin Braun, 10. 40. Ryan Hunter-Reay, 6. 41. Hunter McElrea, 6. 42. Marco Andretti, 5.

Formula One points leaders

1. Max Verstappen, 277. 2. Lando Norris, 199. 3. Charles Leclerc, 177. 4. Oscar Piastri, 167. 5. Carlos Sainz Jr., 162. 6. Lewis Hamilton, 150. 7. Sergio Pérez, 131. 8. George Russell, 116. 9. Fernando Alonso, 99. 10. Lance Stroll, 74. 11. Nico Hulkenberg, 72. 12. Yuki Tsunoda, 72. 13. Daniel Ricciardo, 72. 14. Oliver Bearman, 6.

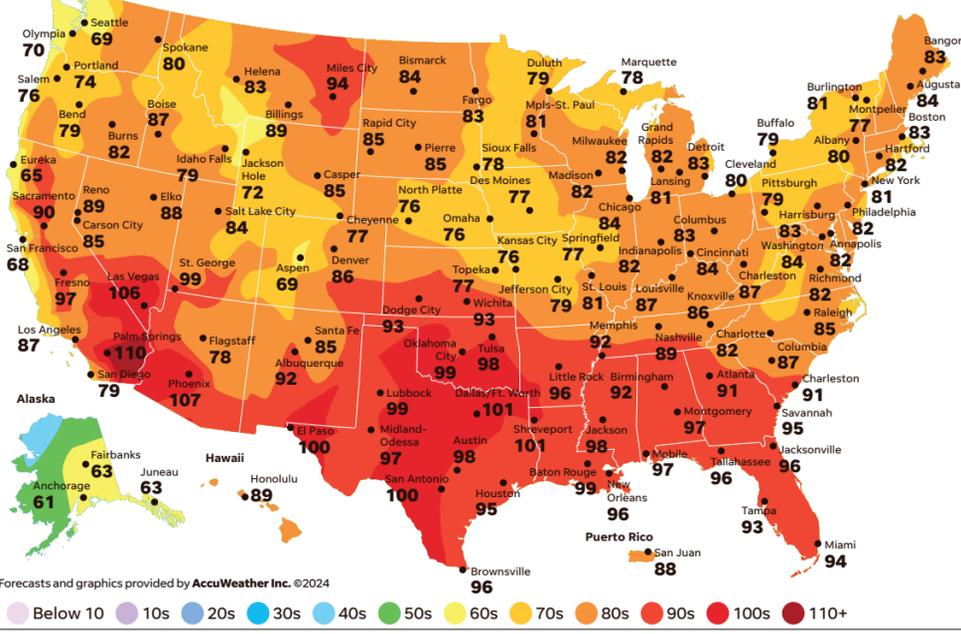
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TODAY'S FORECAST

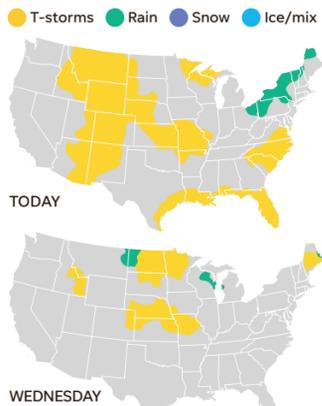
Thunderstorms, some severe, will rumble from Montana to Missouri today. Afternoon thunderstorms in the northern Plains may bring localized damaging wind gusts, hail and flooding downpours. A spotty shower or thunderstorm could occur across the northern Midwest. Elsewhere, afternoon thunderstorms will dot the Southeast and Gulf coasts. Slow-moving downpours in the Carolinas can lead to new or additional flooding. Farther to the north, it will be pleasant, partly sunny and primarily dry across the Northeast. A spotty shower or two may form in northern New England. Meanwhile, the southern Plains and Southeast will be hot and humid. The West will be dry, with a spotty afternoon thunderstorm in the high terrain from Arizona to Montana.

TODAY'S HIGH TEMPERATURES



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PRECIPITATION FORECAST



EXTREMES

HOTTEST: 97° Henderson, Texas. COLDEST: 36° West Yellowstone, Mont.

TOP TRAVEL CITIES Air quality index (AQI)

Table with columns: City, Today, Wed. Lists 20 major cities with their weather and AQI for today and Wednesday.

U.S. CITIES

Table with columns: City, Today, Wed. Lists 50 major U.S. cities with their weather and AQI for today and Wednesday.

TODAY WED

Table with columns: City, Today, Wed. Lists 50 major U.S. cities with their weather and AQI for today and Wednesday.

TODAY WED

Table with columns: City, Today, Wed. Lists 50 major U.S. cities with their weather and AQI for today and Wednesday.

TODAY WED

Table with columns: City, Today, Wed. Lists 50 major U.S. cities with their weather and AQI for today and Wednesday.

WORLD CITIES

Table with columns: City, Today, Wed. Lists 20 major world cities with their weather and AQI for today and Wednesday.

MLB POWER RANKINGS

Rampaging rookie leads Padres' surge



Gabe Lacques
Columnist
USA TODAY

The San Diego Padres may not cool off until they catch the Los Angeles Dodgers. And Jackson Merrill may not stop slugging crucial homers until he runs down Paul Skenes.

The Padres continued their second-half rampage this past week, going 5-1 on a road trip to Pittsburgh and Miami to make it 16 wins in 20 games since the All-Star break. They are within 3 1/2 games of the Dodgers in the National League West and moved up three more spots in USA TODAY Sports' power rankings.

It all wouldn't be possible without Merrill, the rookie who switched from shortstop to center field on opening day and hasn't looked back. Merrill, who turned 21 in April, hit tying home runs in the eighth and ninth innings in consecutive games to fuel comeback wins over the Marlins. He now has five game-tying or go-ahead homers in the eighth inning or later this season, tying Mel Ott and trailing only Frank Robinson for players 21 or younger.

With 3.0 WAR, 17 homers and a .814 OPS, he can certainly challenge Skenes, the Pirates rookie flamethrower who made his debut in May, for top NL rookie honors. Just as the Padres continue rising the charts.

A look at our updated rankings:

1. Baltimore Orioles (+1): Jackson Holliday youngest player to homer in three consecutive games.

2. New York Yankees (+2): Starter Clarke Schmidt, out since May 26, says he'll be back by end of month.

3. Philadelphia Phillies (-): J.T. Realmuto hits his first home run since May.

4. Cleveland Guardians (-3): Nine-game lead on June 25 whittled to 1 1/2 before restoring order in Minnesota.

5. Los Angeles Dodgers (+1): River Ryan, who'd posted a 1.33 ERA in four starts, latest starter to succumb to injury bug.

6. Milwaukee Brewers (-1): Reached a season-high 18 games over .500, bidding for No. 2 seed in NL.



Padres center fielder Jackson Merrill watches his home run against the Marlins on Friday in Miami. RHONA WISE/USA TODAY SPORTS

7. Minnesota Twins (-): Just as they close in on division lead, starter Joe Ryan likely lost for season.

8. San Diego Padres (+3): Lead majors with .265 average – something they've never done, even in the Tony Gwynn era.

9. Kansas City Royals (-): Moving Week: Three games versus Twins to gain

ground in American League Central standings, season series.

10. Arizona Diamondbacks (+2): Unbeaten in last 11 series dating to late June.

11. Houston Astros (+2): Spencer Arrighetti punching out 11.1 batters per nine innings

12. Boston Red Sox (-2): Right-handed relief pitcher Liam Hendriks nearing

a rehab assignment.

13. Atlanta Braves (-6): Pretty big four-game set coming up in San Francisco.

14. Seattle Mariners (-): Managed a 9-8 record during Julio Rodriguez's absence.

15. New York Mets (-): Offense needs to get its groove back in six games against Athletics, Marlins.

16. San Francisco Giants (+3): Blake Snell's no-hitter kick-started a 7-2 rampage.

17. St. Louis Cardinals (-1): Andre Palante has allowed two or fewer earned runs in seven of his 12 starts.

18. Tampa Bay Rays (-1): Zach Eflin came back to the Trop and beat them, but at least they put a skate park in left field.

19. Chicago Cubs (+4): 100 caps or 1,000 hits? Oh, those Swanson dinner-table debates.

20. Pittsburgh Pirates (-2): Paul Skenes merely human in three starts since All-Star break – 3.16 ERA, seven walks in 25 2/3 IP.

21. Texas Rangers (-1): Max Scherzer already on IL, and now concern over Nathan Eovaldi's right side.

22. Cincinnati Reds (-1): Dropped back into rotation, Nick Martinez responds with 12 scoreless innings over two starts.

23. Detroit Tigers (-1): Held to three or fewer runs in 12 of last 18 games.

24. Toronto Blue Jays (+1): Joey Loperfido 4 for his first 32 since trade from Houston.

25. Washington Nationals (-1): MacKenzie Gore has completely lost the strike zone: 23 walks in his last 29 2/3 innings pitched.

26. Los Angeles Angels (-): Jack Kochanowicz gets first major league win in third career start.

27. Oakland Athletics (-): Fiftieth win matches entire total for 2023.

28. Miami Marlins (-): Jake Burger has majors-best 12 home runs since All-Star break.

29. Colorado Rockies (-): Brenton Doyle tops 20-20 mark; is 30-30 season in offing?

30. Chicago White Sox (-): Ex-manager Pedro Grifol will make more (\$1 million) in 2025 than 17 of their 26 currently active players.

Sanders' fight-picking act wearing thin



Mike Freeman
Columnist
USA TODAY

Deion Sanders is again picking unnecessary fights. It seems to be his thing now.

He had some type of problem with a journalist from CBS, though it's not clear why. He went after Pitt football coach Pat Narduzzi. There was a bizarre moment where Sanders argued over the meaning of the word "bolster." He did the same over the word "chemistry."

Then there was this incredibly weird moment when this was asked by someone in attendance:

"This is a non-football-related question. I recently had a medical condition about two months ago, and thank God I had AFLAC ... You're an ambassador for them, a spokesman for them. How important is it for everyone to have AFLAC a part of their life? It's amazing, right?"

Yes. Yes. That actually happened. In the year of our lord 2024.

Sanders also attacked a writer for the Denver Post. It was this dispute, with columnist Sean Keeler, which was the most telling of what is currently happening with Sanders.

"You don't like us, man," Sanders said, after Keeler attempted to ask a question. "Why do you do this to yourself?"

"C'mon," Keeler said.

"Why do you – you always on the attack," Sanders said. "What did we do?"

Sanders then asked him, "What happened to get you like this?"

"That's a good question," Keeler said.

"No, I'm serious, because I want to help, because it's not normal," Sanders said.

"We can talk about that," Keeler said.

Keeler attempted to shift the talk back to football.

"Can I ask you a football question, seriously?" Keeler asked.

"No," Sanders said, before adding to Keeler, basically, see you when I see you.

This presser was insane.

What exactly was happening with Sanders? It was actually a giant tell for something bigger at play. Let me explain.

First, overall, the us-versus-the-world



Deion Sanders, seen at Big 12 Media Days in July, went 4-8 last season in his first year as head coach at Colorado.

CANDICE WARD/USA TODAY SPORTS

stuff no longer works for Sanders. It just doesn't. In fact, he looks weak trying to pull it off. Beating up on the media makes Sanders seem like he's overcompensating for something else. Like he's trying to distract instead of communicate.

Please don't call me a Sanders hater. I'm not. I like him. Sanders has a chance to do big things at Colorado. He's just wrong here. That type of motivation won't work for him now. It could last season because it literally *was* Deion vs. *Everybody*. But not today.

We're in a different stage for Sanders and that program. It's the prove it part now. Sanders has to demonstrate to people what he can do beyond taking cheap shots at the media. I liked the fact that Sanders talked a lot of trash last season, but that act is rapidly getting old.

What I saw in that Sanders presser was concern. I think Sanders knows this

could be an extremely rough season for the Buffaloes. The team started 3-0 last year but finished 1-8 in its final nine games. That's because while the team has two of the more stunning players in all of college football in quarterback She-deur Sanders and wide receiver and cornerback Travis Hunter, there are still huge talent gaps across the roster.

If Sanders has another bad season, the microscope will get far bigger than it is now.

So Sanders is working the refs ahead of that possible outcome by attempting to intimidate the media. If things go bad, he wants to preemptively stop journalists from asking tough questions. He wants reporters and opinion writers to feel it's not worth the trouble. That there will be pain in return if they do.

This is an old-school move that I've seen coaches do numerous times. In fact,

Sanders has done some of this before.

I'm also keenly aware that some people dislike Sanders for reasons that have nothing to do with him as a coach, and you know exactly what I mean when I say that. He's held to different standards and, yes, some of that is because of Sanders himself, but lots of college head coaches over the decades have been wanna-be bullies. He's not the first. Just sometimes treated like it. But none of that applies to this situation.

Some of you will say that this is who Sanders is. That he's just a jerk. Think what you want, but that's not why he's acting this way. What Sanders is doing is much more tactical than simply being jerky.

Will any of this work for Sanders? Absolutely not. If Sanders doesn't win, and soon, more questions will come, and he won't be able to shut them down.

Paris beautifully meshed Olympics with city



Dan Wolken
Columnist
USA TODAY

PARIS — Ange-Jacques Gabriel lived for 83 years, born here during the reign of Louis XIV and departing this Earth with France in the midst of so much economic and social crisis that revolution would only be a handful of years away.

The son and grandson of prominent architects, Gabriel followed them into the family business. He's responsible, in no small part, for why Paris looks the way it does today. Among the projects he designed were one of the famous gardens at the Palace of Versailles, the historic L'École Militaire and the Place de la Concorde, the 19-acre public plaza that sits at the center of the city and punctuates Paris as one of the grandest urban centers in the world.

It is here, at the very spot where Gabriel envisioned a monument to Louix XV, where I have watched skateboarders glide over rails, basketball players make fadeaway jumpers and BMX cyclists fly through the air while the Luxor Obelisk looms over four makeshift sporting venues and the Eiffel Tower sits in the distance.

Gabriel would not have known about the Olympic Games; he died more than 100 years before they debuted in 1896. But I will go home thinking, hoping, that he would have been proud.

Because the city that Gabriel and architects like Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Charles Garnier, Jean Chalgrin and Gustave Eiffel made one of the world's most beautiful has shined in an entirely new light during the Paris Games.

In some ways, it's never looked better. And it has provided a tableau for an Olympics that may be impossible to completely replicate anywhere else in the world.

But it's a template that every Olympic city should strive for.

For decades and decades, hosting an Olympics meant spending billions — most of it public money — on new facilities that are sold to taxpayers as so-called legacy projects. Often, those



A view of the start of the women's 10-kilometer open swim at Grand Palais-Pont Alexandre III. ROB SCHUMACHER/USA TODAY SPORTS

promises are either met with a reality that doesn't match the sales pitch or abandoned completely.

There are too many white elephants that were built in the name of hosting an Olympics.

Paris' approach was different. I had heard all along that instead of building a bunch of arenas on the outskirts of town like you see in most Olympic cities that will eventually be used for other purposes, the plan was to integrate venues for the Games into the existing structure of this sprawling metropolis. To, essentially, use what was already great and renowned about Paris — its architecture and iconic spaces — as the backdrop for the greatest sporting event in the world.

It's been the best part of the Olympics.

The grandeur of it all has been most obvious to TV viewers with beach volleyball, played in a temporary stadium constructed directly under the Eiffel Tower.

It was the iconic frame of these Games, but there has been so much more to marvel at in a city briefly transformed almost beyond recognition.

On the morning of the individual

triathlon, which had been delayed because of water quality issues, I woke up preparing to make fun of France's 1.4 billion euro plan to clean up the Seine after 100 years for this event. There were indeed easy jokes to be found in the idea that some of the world's greatest athletes were swimming in a century's worth of Parisian fecal matter, but that admittedly didn't do justice to the experience.

At 8 that morning, I took a seat in stands that had been constructed on the Pont Alexandre bridge. I looked to my left and saw the dome of Les Invalides, built 350 years ago as a military hospital and now a museum where Napoleon is buried. To my right was the Grand Palais. I've never been more awed by the beauty of a sporting venue.

Inside the Grand Palais, fencing and later taekwondo competitions took place under its glass atrium roof. The park surrounding Les Invalides was transformed into an archery venue. A half-hour away, the Versailles Palace was the background for an equestrian venue that seemed as natural and noble as the sport itself. Even Roland Garros, one of the most famous tennis facilities

in the world, became an electric, 15,000-seat boxing venue during the second week.

Of course, some sports like swimming, gymnastics and the basketball medal rounds were contested in generic arenas in the outlying areas of Paris. But never has an Olympics so seamlessly meshed sports with the architecture, culture and history that French people have been proud of for hundreds of years. At a time when cities are more hesitant to host an Olympics because of how much wasteful spending is often necessary to build infrastructure, Paris showed it can be done without being a multibillion-dollar boondoggle.

It didn't happen entirely free of controversy. There were federal investigations into the awarding of some contracts, the long-term value of cleaning up the Seine may not materialize as politicians had hoped and many Paris citizens grumbled about the world taking over their city for a month. Many of them packed up and left town: I've been to this densely populated metropolitan area of 11 million several times before, and it has never felt this empty and easy to move around.

But after two COVID-tainted Olympics in Asia that had no atmosphere, no fans and little joy, the Games didn't just return to form in Paris — they set a standard that will be incredibly difficult to match. Every stadium was full, bars and restaurants were buzzing well past midnight and nearly every one of these makeshift venues had a French flair that showed the best of this remarkable city to the world.

Of course, there's only one Paris.

Los Angeles has its own energy and mystique, and Brisbane in 2032 will be set against the sandy beaches of Australia's Gold Coast. Hopefully they'll find a way to retain that same feeling of an Olympics truly being part of a world-class city.

But the roots of this visually stunning Olympics were planted hundreds of years ago by visionaries, artists and architects who could have never imagined this modern world. Paris should be praised — and thanked — for bringing their work to life in an entirely different way.

No cars ... 3,000 buses: What to expect at LA 2028

Kim Hjelmgard
USA TODAY

PARIS — The Paris Olympics concluded Sunday. The Paralympics will run Aug. 28 to Sept. 8, then the squash racket, lacrosse stick and cricket ball — all sporting additions to the 2028 Games — will be in Los Angeles' court.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass and LA28 Olympic Games chair Casey Wasserman, in Paris as part of a U.S. presidential delegation to the Olympics that was led by first lady Jill Biden, provided a few details Saturday to reporters about what sports fans — and Angelenos — can expect to see four years from now.

"We don't have an Eiffel Tower. We do have a Hollywood sign," said Wasserman. He said that while the Paris Games have been "authentically French" the 2028 Games will be "authentically Los Angeles."

Wasserman said Los Angeles is "one of three or four great cities around the world that drive culture," including in food, fashion, music and entertainment, and the Games would reflect that.

LA28 organizers provided a glimpse of what that might mean Sunday as part of the flag handoff at the Paris Games' closing ceremony when mega-movie star Tom Cruise abseiled off the roof of Stade de France.

Cruise then jumped onto a motorcycle, fled France's national stadium and reappeared in a video that saw him driving around the streets of Paris, riding the motorcycle onto a plane, then resurfacing in the Hollywood Hills, where he handed off the flag to Olympic mountain biker Kate Courtney.

Eventually, the flag made it to Venice Beach, where Billie Eilish, the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Snoop Dogg — who's been everywhere in Paris as NBCUniversal's correspondent — performed.

It's maybe what you'd expect for an Olympics that will be set in a movie town.

Here are some of the issues that could define the Los Angeles Olympics:

What will LA28 legacy strive for?

Wasserman said most Games "wait until they are over before delivering a legacy." He said the city and International Olympic Committee are already investing \$160 million in a youth sports program to enable any child in LA to



LA Mayor Karen Bass, right, and Casey Wasserman, chair of LA28, looked ahead to the 2028 Summer Games this past weekend. CARLOS PEREZ GALLARDO/REUTERS

participate for \$5. He described it as the "largest single investment in youth sports in the history of America in one city." A ZIP code, he said, will "no longer be a barrier to entry" to youth sports.

Bass said "the vision is to have a Games that lifts up all the city."

LA, Olympics and homelessness

Olympic organizers in Paris have come under fire for forcibly moving asylum seekers, the homeless and other

vulnerable populations out of central Paris to make way for tourists and various Olympic developments. Los Angeles has one of the worst homeless problems in the U.S., with more than 75,000 people experiencing some form of homelessness, according to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority.

Bass said the city has been working with all levels of government and the private sector to address the issue. "We are going to get people housed. That's what we've been doing and what we'll

continue to do," she said. However, Bass also appeared to suggest that homeless people in LA, like in Paris, could be physically moved out of the city.

"Los Angeles County has 88 cities, and across all of the cities, we're working together," she said. "We will get people housed. We will get them off the street."

Keeping LA safe

Wasserman said that in January Los Angeles was granted a "national security exemption designation," meaning the U.S. federal government is "activated and engaged" to help secure and deliver the Games.

He said this exemption was given three years earlier than is typical of such exemptions, giving extra lead time.

He said LA28's "mantra" is that "we need to be the safest place but also the greatest experience as well. We are not going to sacrifice one for the other." He said that the U.S. delegation in Paris has been observing and scrutinizing the security operation, which he described as impressive, as well as previous ones at other Games.

He cited as an example the London Games in 2012, when organizers undertook security dry runs by "enacting" or practicing on large-scale sporting events such as the Wimbledon tennis championships. "We can take a Dodger game on a Thursday night in 2027 and tell people we're going to 'enact' for security today," he said.

Wasserman said that because Los Angeles has a lot of sports stadiums already it can do such enactments with relative ease. "Not every city has the opportunity to do that," he said.

A Games but no cars to get there

The LA28 organizing committee is targeting a no-car Games, a big ambition for a city known for its traffic.

Plans to build rail lines that would crisscross the city were abandoned because of the expense.

"The no-car Games means you will need to take public transportation to get to all of the venues," Bass said Saturday. She said the city is "building up aspects of our public transportation system. But that's not going to be enough. We're going to need over 3,000 buses that we will borrow from all around the country."

LIFELINE



CINDY ORD/GETTY IMAGES

MAKING WAVES COUPLE TOPS BOX OFFICE

Married movie stars Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds are celebrating this weekend's box office: The actors each have a hit movie: Reynolds' Marvel blockbuster "Deadpool & Wolverine," which earned another \$54 million domestically, and Lively's Colleen Hoover book adaptation "It Ends With Us," which opened with \$50 million. That makes them the first married couple with the top two movies since 1990, when Bruce Willis' "Die Hard 2" and Demi Moore's "Ghost" also ranked first and second in the weekend box-office race.



IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY WHO'S CELEBRATING TODAY

Sebastian Stan is 42. Kevin Tighe is 80. John Slattery is 62.

HOROSCOPE | SANCTUARY More: www.sanctuaryworld.com

Aries (March 21-April 19). Navigating a fundamental disagreement? You're right and they're wrong, period. Right?

Taurus (April 20-May 20). Emotionally charged arguments? The moon's clash with Mercury tempts you to pop off. Avoid a low blow!

Gemini (May 21-June 21). Falling into a familiar pattern? Closeness creates a pressure cooker. Arguments erupt.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). Anxiety peaking? Expect interruptions, distractions and annoying scheduling errors today.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). Eating, drinking or shopping with your feelings? You are writing checks your account can't cash!

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Forcing your opinion? You'll throw a tantrum if you don't get your way!

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Scatter-brained? Anxiety tempts you to double down on flawed intuition. Don't do it!

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Are you being realistic? The moon's clash with Mercury discourages you from making impulsive decisions, even if your intentions are good.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Trying to control public opinion? Exercise self-control. Resist the urge to word vomit!

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). If others won't listen to reason, so be it. That's your rationale. Is this judgment fair?

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Unpleasant discoveries? Unearthed intel could affect a friendship. How should you proceed?

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). Communication ditching with a partner? Assume nothing! Ask questions and LISTEN.

MUSIC NEWS & VIEWS



Celebrating Taylor Swift before the first night of the Eras Tour in Milan in July. PROVIDED BY TATUM SEIBERT

Taylor Swift and my daughter

Global superstar's songs are the living soundtrack to our bond

Laura Trujillo USA TODAY

MILAN – On this summer night, a month before my daughter Lucy leaves for college, she and I find ourselves among 65,000 fans in an Italian stadium more accustomed to soccer kits than sequins. • “We’re about to go on a little adventure together, and that adventure is going to span 18 years,” Taylor Swift says from the center of the stage in San Siro Stadium, her silver bodysuit sparkling behind her pink guitar on the first night of her Eras Tour in Milan.

Those 18 years also happen to span Lucy's life. She stands to my left, screaming in the way that tells me she won't have a voice the next day, a look of wonder in her eyes. I have seen this look before when Lucy was 9 and Swift flew above us singing “Shake it Off” during the “1989” tour, when Lucy turned 12 at the “Reputation Tour,” and again last year, when we saw the Eras Tour in our hometown. But I never tire of it. At this moment, in my eye, Lucy is both the little girl and the confident,

mature young woman she has grown into, in a way that happens when you look at your own children and wonder if time even exists.

Lucy turned 18 a few days before the show – and this splurge is part birthday, part graduation, part last big trip before her summers revolve even more so around friends than family. It's a trip squeezed between seemingly endless weekends of parties and sleepovers, along with

See DAUGHTER, Page 2D



Lucy and her friend Rosie at the “Reputation” tour in Columbus, Ohio, in 2018. Lucy turned 12 that night. PROVIDED BY LAURA TRUJILLO

BOOKS NEWS & VIEWS

Newman's newest thriller reads like an epic movie

Theodore Faherty
Special to USA TODAY

Is there a point when you are no longer the flight attendant author? Is it after multiple bestsellers? Or two multimillion-dollar movies based on your books going into production? Maybe after your third book comes out? Is that when you are just known as an author?

T.J. Newman is learning all this in real time. For her, authenticity is important in storytelling. Newman did not seem overly concerned when asked about the labels attached to her in the writing world.

“I think I can only be exactly what I am. That is my past, that is my journey. I am a failed actress-turned bookseller-turned flight attendant-turned published author. That is my past, I am proud of it,” says Newman, whose highly-anticipated thriller of a novel, “Worse Case Scenario” (Little Brown, 336 pp) releases on Tuesday. The book covers a commercial airplane that

crashes into a nuclear plant in a small town in Minnesota. The drama comes from regular people who must fight against a meltdown that could kill or displace millions. Newman details unassuming characters who must rise to the heroic occasions, and make monumental sacrifices.

Newman is in many ways a study of resilience, and even if she would never admit it, may be one of the everyday heroes from which she says she draws for her own stories.

Calling from Los Angeles where she is working on the screenplay for a movie based on her first novel, “Falling” with Universal, and executive producing on a movie based on her second novel, “Drowning: Flight 1421” and starting media promotion for her third novel, Newman is sometimes also just thinking about a vacation.

An overnight success

When Newman's first book “Falling” was released in 2021, legendary author Don Winslow called it “stunning and relentless,” though there was still seemingly as much talk about Newman being a flight attendant as there was the book.

Newman has always loved telling stories. She tried at first to make it on Broadway after graduating from college with a degree in musical theater.

When that didn't work, Newman moved home – to her childhood bedroom at her parents' Phoenix-area house and got a job at an indie bookstore. It was here where she was surrounded by people who loved stories. She then got a job as a flight attendant – a job her mom and sister both held. It was there that she found inspiration for her first book after asking a pilot a “what-if” question.

Her story has been told as a seemingly overnight success – with her writing the first plot details on a Virgin Atlantic napkin on the red-eye flight between LA and New York.

Newman likely finds humor in the “overnight” part of the success story.

She had 41 rejections from publishers before she found an agent who would take on an unknown writer. Yet, after all this, there was a bidding war for that book – and the flight attendant was soon an author with several seven-figure offers before her first book was even published.

In the acknowledgments in her first book, Newman credits her mother for helping her past adversity, saying “I pushed this book from draft to draft because my mom refused to let me settle for anything less than everything I've ever wanted.”

She also profusely thanked her agent Shane Salerno, whom she compared to a “Mr. Miyagi-like mentor.” Newman's nature shines through in her fictional characters, as well as in interviews. When asked about her many perceptions and labels, she

See NEWMAN, Page 2D



Daughter

Continued from Page 1D

stops at Target and Pottery Barn to get her dorm room ready.

It's a time to get away, but also to celebrate an artist who has been a constant in our lives as long as Lucy can remember, one who has connected us in moments when there was only stubborn silence, and one whose words have changed meaning as Lucy has gone from a little girl singing Swift's "Don't Ever Grow Up" to a teenager who connected with "Fifteen" in a way that felt almost biographical. An artist who bonds mothers and daughters both in her music and concerts in a way few singers can.

My Lucy era

Swift's first album came out in October 2006, three months after Lucy was born.

After three boys, Lucy was a bit of a surprise, trailing four years behind her closest brother. I pictured her, like many mothers do, a mini version of me. I named her Analucia, a nod to my Mexican heritage.

Her hair was blond to my brown, her eyes blue to my nearly black. After nine years of learning about trucks and soccer, Lucy would teach me to love tutus and pink, ballet and princesses. And Taylor Swift.

She became a Swiftie at 6, when the "Red" album came out. We shopped for magazines featuring the star – "at the Grammys!" "just like us!" and cut out pictures and covered bulletin boards to decorate her room. We downloaded her music and Lucy made a video of herself singing "You Belong With Me" that remains secure on my iPhone to this day.

My taste back then ran more indie rock, more The National than pop (even though "Folklore" and "Evermore" would later blow my mind.) As a journalist, I had edited our music writer's review of Swift's first headlining arena tour for "Fearless" in May 2009. He compared her to Madonna. As a child of the 1980s who grew up on "Holiday," it felt like blasphemy, but he was the critic. We left it in.

A week later, a gold envelope with a return address that just read "Swift" in cursive arrived at our newspaper office. It was a handwritten thank you note, penned by Swift from an arena in Los Angeles, where she would play that night – thanking my reporter for the thoughtful review.

I liked her manners.

So when Swift brought her "1989" tour to Columbus, Ohio, in 2015, my best friend and I took our daughters and learned lyrics on the drive. And by the time Swift performed "Blank Space," I was a Swiftie, too.

At 9, Lucy belted out the lyrics "handsome as hell" about teen YouTube stars. She memorized songs while roller skating. And she wore the concert T-shirt to school almost every week.

The second time we saw Swift was in 2018. We stood on the field at Ohio State University's massive football stadium for the "Reputation" tour.

Lucy wore glasses and scream-sang through "This is Why We Can't Have Nice Things" from the floor. I waved an oven mitt purchased from Swift's official merchandise with the "1989" album cover art and her autograph.

At 12, Lucy was old enough to roll her eyes.



Lucy and her friend Rosie at Taylor Swift's Eras Tour in Cincinnati in July 2023.

Never listen to "Never Grow Up" on a college visit, unless you want to cry so hard it's difficult to drive.

An icon and a confident woman 18 years in the making

This summer, Lucy is old enough to go to concerts without me.

But there is something different about Swift. Something that cuts across generation, bonding mothers and daughters in a way we've rarely seen.

We live in a time when American parents adore their children. They will not be the latch-key kids we Gen-Xers were. We want to be around them, share the things they love, appreciate them, take part in them, in a way that my Baby Boomer mom didn't. Yes, my mom went to my high school softball games, but she didn't exactly want to go see Madonna's "Like a Virgin" tour with me in high school.

It's not just that moms like Swift's music, but we also see Swift as a role model. She reclaimed her music catalog, stood up for herself against sexual assault, encouraged thousands of people to vote, got us reading poetry again, and became a powerful woman hosting the world's largest music tour all while seemingly staying a kind person.

Along the way, she's creating the kind of community and world we want for our girls – and for us. Feel your feelings, share your emotions, work hard, and have fun. And if it involves a craft – making friendship bracelets and creating elaborate and clever Eras outfits for shows and adding more sparkle to the world, all the better.

There also is a little thing about the cost of the tickets. The tickets to our first show probably cost a few hundred dollars. Tickets to the Eras Tour can sell for thousands. Most teens can't afford them on their own, so moms agree to buying tickets if we can go, too!

On this hot summer night in Italy, where security passes out free water and reflective blankets to keep people from passing out, Lucy is fully in Swift's world.

We both are. The two of us are in our bubble of happiness in Seats 1 and 2 of Row 14, Section D. Lucy is trading friendship bracelets, taking photos for strangers with Swift on stage in the background. Everyone around us is smiling, singing together, holding each other's places in the bathroom line, complimenting their "The Tortured Poet's Department" dresses. There is a



Lucy's first time seeing Swift was the "1989" tour when she was 9. She and her friend Rosie looked in awe through the show in Columbus, Ohio, in 2015.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY LAURA TRUJILLO

sense of unity, camaraderie, friendship unlike anywhere but maybe a women's bar bathroom. For these three hours, the world doesn't exist beyond this place filled with sequins and smiles, where the sun is setting and the smell of Brazilian Crush 62 sits in the humid air.

We sing "Enchanted" as Swift floats across the stage in a new lavender dress. At this age, Lucy's voice, like Swift's, is different. And so is she, with a better understanding of the world and of herself.

She is singing words she now understands. The way someone in love can. The way someone whose heart has been broken can. These are feelings we share, and she is beginning to realize that I am more than just her mom.

She sings along to the "Red" era, only this time with the wisdom of having had boyfriends, including one that she is "never, ever ever getting back together," with. I hear the passion when she sings that Swift lyric, and the laughter that comes along with it. She also sings with the hopefulness of being young.

Music, memories and a connection that can never break

Later in the show, I stand in the aisle, trying to commit this moment to memory: Lucy and the view, Swift on stage, the lights of our synchronized bracelets, the moon above. It is a moment that doesn't fit in the frame of a camera. Lucy's right arm reaches around me, in a way that startles me at first. A touch from my daughter is so rare now, the hugs infrequent, the times she will fall asleep next to me almost nonexistent. After what felt like a lifetime of carrying her on my hip, of her smuggling into my side, asking to be picked up when she was hurt, the absence can feel so large.

I look over and Lucy is crying. Not just happy tears, but more like the kind of cry when I can see her breathing.

The song is "Marjorie," Swift's heartfelt tribute to her grandmother, a song about grief, but also about hope. "I should have asked you questions, should have asked you how to be," Swift sings. "Asked you to write it down for me."

Lucy twists the gold ring she wears on her right ring finger, one that belonged to her grandma, my mother. Twelve years ago, my mom killed herself. Lucy was just 5. My mom was the

one who would play Uno for as many games as my kids asked, who read "Chrysanthemum" over and over, the one who was always there. The two were so close that to this day I learn things about my mom from Lucy's memories.

She leans into me – and I hold onto this feeling.

I have tears now, too.

"I love you, bunny," I say.

She mouths back, "I love you more."

Taylor Swift and saying goodbye to an era

Lucy is singing "Wonderland," one of the acoustic songs Swift played toward the end of the show, mashed with "The 1."

"We found wonderland, you and I got lost in it. We pretended it could last forever," she sings. It's the last summer before she leaves for school and is saying goodbye to friends – and me.

After the show, we will get lost for a moment on the Italian subway on our way back to our Airbnb when I get off at a wrong stop. We are tired. And hungry. And she is frustrated with me.

My phone loses connection and somehow we are standing on an empty street. This is the first big trip since her dad and I divorced almost three years ago. And I am navigating alone, feeling in a way that I must both inspire and protect her.

I follow the trail of sequins back to the subway, and ask questions until we follow the underground maze back to the same train line we were on. We were there all along.

The Taylor Swift roadmap

Back home in Ohio, I check my emails for confirmation that the quilt we ordered for Lucy's dorm room has shipped. I text her an update while she's on vacation with her dad and her friends at the beach. I don't get a response.

I'm listening to TTPD as I write this. It helps.

I send her a photo of a therapy dog on the floor of the Eras Tour.

"My friend is at the Warsaw show and look how cute," I type.

"Awwwwwww," she replies.

In many ways, Swift's songs have been a roadmap for Lucy and me over the years. They have given words – and poetry – to our feelings and allowed us to talk about them in a way once removed from real life. The betrayals and breakups, but also the love and friendship. Swift has been there through the transition to middle school, there to allow Lucy to dissect "The Man" for her brothers, or to feel less alone with the lyrics to "Clean."

There was a very long drive for college visits last fall when we reached a certain point in Tennessee where we were both hungry and tired – and stressed – and there were no helpful words. But playing the complete Taylor Swift playlist as we drove the next few hours meant things were soon OK. (Never listen to "Never Grow Up" on a college visit, unless you want to cry so hard it's difficult to drive.)

And that is the bond. There has always been Taylor. Even if we are fighting, we can send each other Taylor memes or Easter eggs about what Swift might be working on next.

And nights when we are apart, we swoon over secret songs play on the tour – and share clues we've seen on when Rep TV might come out. Immediately, she feels less far away.

Newman

Continued from Page 1D

seemed most proud of her resilience, and says, "I think people can relate to being told 'no,' can relate to rejection, and pursuing a dream and being told you're not good enough. And being that example of someone told no, and finally gets her yes, I'm fine with that label because it shows people if this can happen to me, this could happen to you too."

Drawing inspiration

"Worst Case Scenario" is Newman's first novel that does not take place primarily on an airplane, but rather, it deals with a potential nuclear disaster in a small midwestern town. "Worst Case Scenario" is yet another of Newman's page-turners, keeping me up later than anticipated as I could not set the book down.

Drawing inspiration for this novel again from asking real pilots about their worst fears, Newman delivers another set of captivating characters and blockbuster-like suspense.

Newman seems to be able to see the best in all of us, telling me: "As scary as the stories are that I write, the essence of them, the absolute heart and essence

of my stories, is everyday people in an extraordinary circumstance rising to meet the moment. I deeply believe in the everyday hero in all of us, and that ordinary people only need the opportunity to be the heroes that they actually are."

Newman also says "Worst Case Scenario" has been her hardest book yet to write, and half-jokingly said that she wanted to write a list of "grievances" in place of the typical acknowledgments section.

Part of what made this novel so difficult for Newman to research, beyond the main obstacle covering a more niche subject of nuclear energy, was the fact that Newman found the research to be unnerving.

"I was hesitant to write this book once I started researching it because I realized that the premise of the book is completely plausible, and I wasn't sure I wanted to put myself in that world," she says, and also admitted, "this research scared the hell out of me."

But she said that also invigorated her, as she thought she could harness that fear into what could make a blockbuster.

"I write big summer action movies, except they are books, and Michael Crichton, is essentially my north star," she says. After praising Crichton's versatility, she teleports back over 30 years:

"When I saw 'Jurassic Park' in the theaters in 1993 as a little girl, and can remember standing in the lobby and holding my hand up and watching it shake because I was so terrified, that book and that movie connected something in my mind, if you can bring dinosaurs back, *anything* is possible, it just expanded my creative possibilities."

Newman was also quick to give flowers to her firefighter Jeremy "Cousin Jer" Newman, and her engineer brother-in-law, describing them both as invaluable assets to her research and writing process. It is possible the heroic fictional firefighters Dani or Steve were inspired by these real-life figures, or maybe the clashing and entangled nuclear engineers Joss or Ethan were. Maybe you will see shades of your grandpa in the heroic retired nuclear engineer character of Marion. Maybe the small town coming together displayed in the setting of Waketa, Minnesota, will remind you of a community you grew up in.

What's next for T.J. Newman?

Newman has been in Los Angeles working on "Falling" and writing the screenplay for her second novel. Neither yet have release dates. When asked if she could ever see herself appearing in a movie based on one of her books, as she does have prior acting experience, New-

man relays another humble answer, saying that although she would love to make an appearance, she "knows what it is like to need that job, to need that role, and even just an extra, even just a walk-on position, maybe that's the difference between having health insurance or not for an actor, maybe the difference between giving up on their dream, or keeping on going."

For now, Newman is working on yet another story, as she says she always has a story alive, and something in progress. She is also hoping that her work could inspire more girls to write, saying "If my success can show other women, or little girls, that are like me, and I *know* they are out there, I know I am not the only woman has these stories (big psychological thrillers) to tell, and if my success can encourage women to write the stories that they want to tell, not just the stories that they should tell, or would be allowed to tell, but to write what they want to tell, that would be a huge, huge privilege, and I hope that can happen."

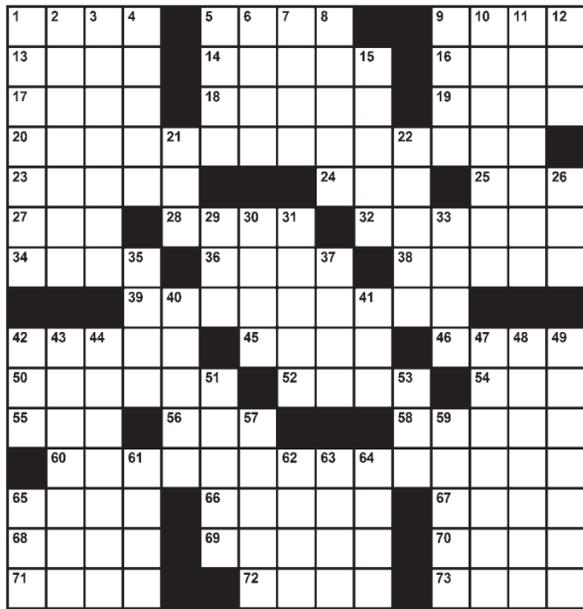
But for now, a break may be in order, as Newman tells me, "But if I am being totally honest, right after this book comes out, there is going to be a vacation somewhere. Three books, one movie, and one script in three years, I am overdue for a good vacation and a breather."

USA TODAY CROSSWORD

EDITED Jared Goudsmit
BY Ryan Mathiason

OUTSIDE HIRE

- ACROSS
1 "Aw, shoot!"
5 Offer for cash
9 Shows such as "Sistas Who Kill," for short
13 Taiwanese laptop brand
14 Concepts
16 Word before "eye" or "genius"
17 ___ butter (skin care item)
18 BIG
19 Lean
20 What an X on a map might lead to
23 A-lister, e.g.
24 Small drink
25 Org. that issues learner's permits
27 St. Charles or Esplanade, in NOLA
28 Large firework sound
32 Job interview document
34 Stylike state
36 ___ and groan
38 Bothered
39 Achievement at an arcade
42 Record company
45 Dishwashing stuff
46 Actress Rooney
50 Tot's garment
52 Alliance formed in 1949
54 Frame of a cartoon
55 Mac alternatives
56 "yes, and?" singer
58 Grande, to fans
59 Award for "Parasite" or "Soul"
60 The Bhagavata Purana, for example
65 Programmer's creation
66 Pattern associated with lumberjills
67 Wat Mahathat's continent
68 Calculation for a country or a rectangle
69 Musical pace
70 Look after
Answers: Call 1-900-988-8300, 99 cents a minute; or, with a credit card, 1-800-320-4280.



© Andrews McMeel

8/13

- 71 "Hey! Over here!"
72 Animal with blubber and whiskers
73 Like provocative art
DOWN
1 Device that films traffic
2 Successfully accomplish, like a goal
3 White pine's green features
4 A- or C+
5 Stop or One Way
6 Make changes to
7 Shakespearean king with three daughters
8 Interstate divisions
9 Colombia's neighbor
10 Not in by the deadline
11 Real predicament
12 Cunning
15 Part of a flight of steps
21 Draw back like the tide
22 Weapon such as a yari
26 Profession that aptly rhymes with "pet"
29 "Srsly?!"
30 ___ and aahs
31 Apt name for a stoneworker
33 Dahlia part
35 "___ keeping her fingers crossed"
37 College athletics org.
40 Epic poem featuring Achilles
41 ___ in (choose to participate)
42 ___ off (sever)
43 Newscasters
44 "Not to mention..."
47 Pinned the blame on
48 Raising, like a child
49 "So soon?"
51 Blow like a volcano
53 Alley-___
57 Bits of land in the sea
59 Kansas or Arkansas
61 Unlike a sty
62 ___ to the rescue (was heroic)
63 TV host Kelly
64 Immunity ___ (valuable "Survivor" item)
65 Beer bottle top
Monday's Answer
SOFT OBS MATCH
THOU ROAM OHARE
AIRBUBBLE LTIMES
YOTAM AUDRE POT
IMP IDIS COOWNER
MIA ROTTS RAE
ANDREBRAUGHER
CUDI OAKS UTES
STINT WEAKE PATE
ENDS GROCER
ERGA APPLEBUTTER
PITA ORAL MAILS
ICON SAMS PTO
CENT HYPE SON
8/12
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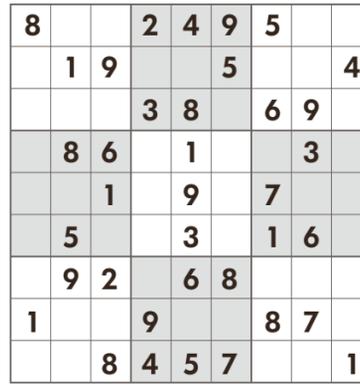
Numbers

More puzzles: puzzles.usatoday.com
Want solutions? answers.usatoday.com
Feedback: feedback@usatoday.com



SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 (no repeats).



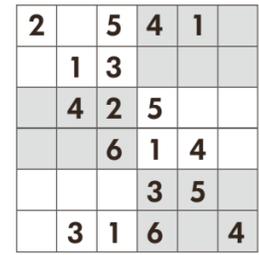
8/13

DIFFICULTY RATING ★★☆☆☆

SUDOKU FUSION
ON YOUR PHONE
puzzles.usatoday.com

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Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x2 box contains the numbers 1 through 6 (no repeats).



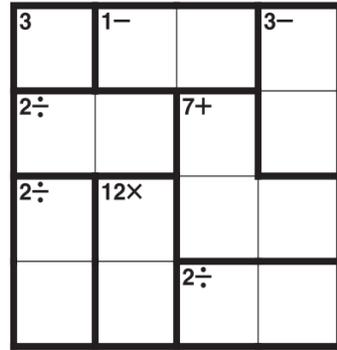
DIFFICULTY RATING ★★☆☆☆

Monday's Answers

Grid of Monday's answers for the Kubok puzzle.

8/12

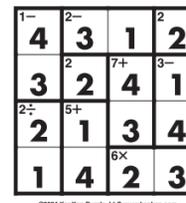
KENKEN



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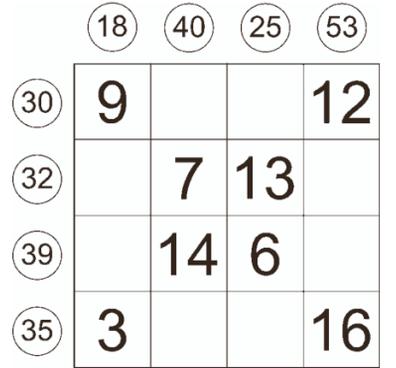
- 1. Each row and column must contain the numbers 1 through 4 (easy) or 1 through 6 (challenging) without repeating.
2. The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes, called cages, must combine using the given operation (in any order) to produce the target numbers in the top-left corners.
3. Freebies: fill in single-box cages with the number in the top-left corner.

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

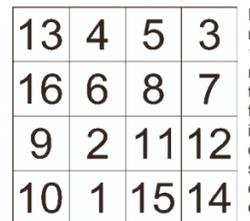


KUBOK 16

By Davide Coppo Difficulty: MEDIUM



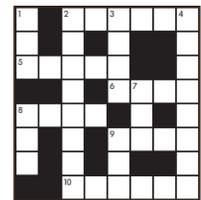
Solution to Monday's puzzle



Enter the missing numbers from 1 to 16 without repetitions so that the sum of the four numbers in each row and column is the same as the corresponding circled number.

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TXTPERT



- Across
2. 326737
5. 47263
6. 3246
8. 7867
9. 7333
10. 226867
Down
1. 724
2. 34286642
3. 6633
4. 73267337
7. 283
8. 729
9. 786

© USA TODAY and Rich Coulter

Today's theme Music



Use the phone keypad to decode the clues. For example: 2 could be A, B or C... and 5/6/7/8 could be LOST



Words

WORD ROUNDUP

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

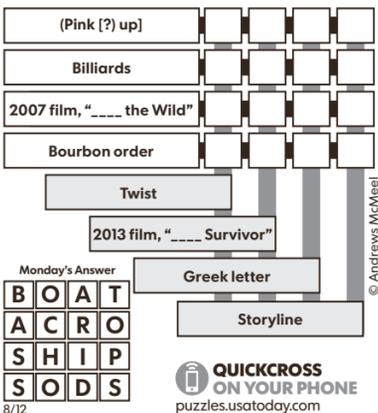
- Find and Circle:
Five parts of the eye
Four royal titles
___ America
Academy Awards: Best ___
United Kingdom currency

Monday's answer: SHOWER POWER TOWER HOUR SOUR / MOUNTAIN RAVINE VALLEY RIDGE HILL / NEVADA OREGON / SUBARU TOYOTA / CREEK BROOK



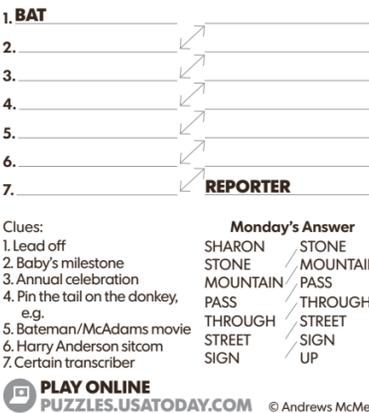
QUICKCROSS

By John Wilmes



UP & DOWN WORDS

By David L. Hoyt and Russell L. Hoyt



BONUS CROSSWORD

- ACROSS
1 "Zounds!"
5 ___ Naples
10 Grassland
13 Ore deposit
14 Insect stage
15 Starr of football
16 Secular
17 Antic
18 Tooth part
19 Launch an assault
21 Ambassador's office
23 Some votes
25 Eagle
26 Fosters
30 Censor
34 Wing
35 Piano part
37 Male vocalist
38 Recipe direction
40 Challenged
42 Plummet
43 Passion
45 Orange variety
47 Beverage for two
48 Persisted
50 Unsure
52 Put into practice
53 Fencing weapon
54 Stroll
58 Foot part
62 Furnish
63 Writer — Verne
66 Helicon
67 Earth goddess
68 Worship as divine
69 "Dukes of Hazzard" deputy
70 Court
71 "Four score and seven — ..."
72 Torn
DOWN
1 "— Enchanted"
2 Zodiac animal
3 Miners' way in
4 Pour
5 Argued
6 Org. for GPs
7 Bark
8 Gothic arch
9 One-time
10 Place in SE Asia
11 Desire personified
12 Bar mem.
15 Labeled
20 — de grace
22 Writer — Harte
24 Car type
26 Twangy
27 Ne plus —
28 SWAT team
29 Actress — Jessica Parker

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED



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DON'T QUOTE ME

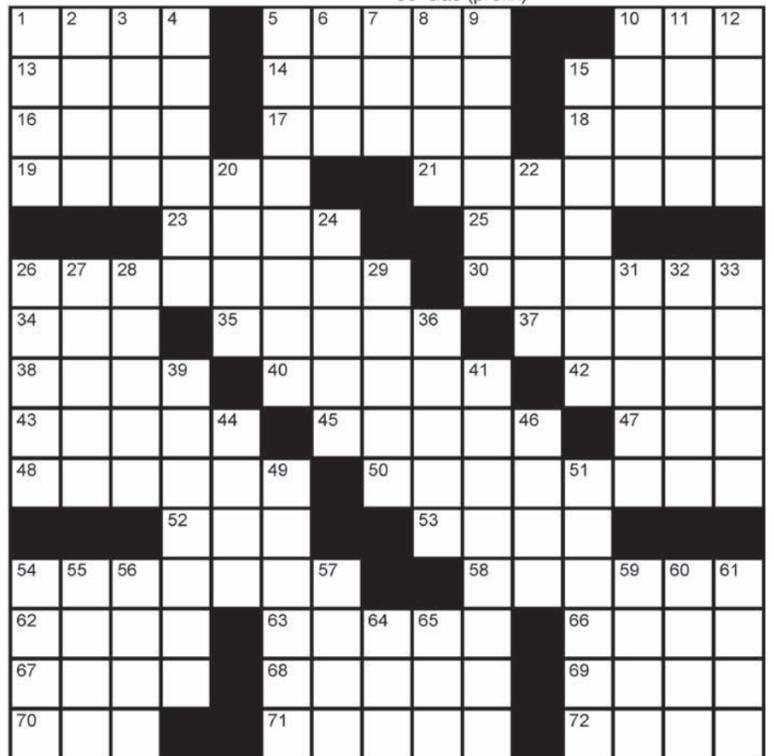
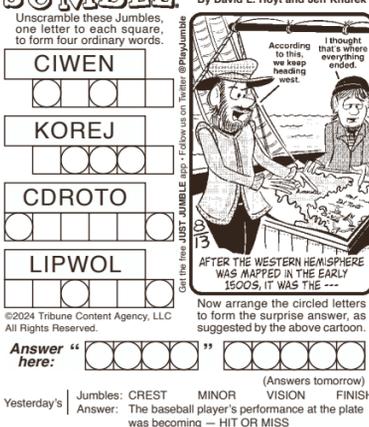
English novelist Jackie Collins talks about her critics.

Rearrange the words to complete the quote.
BOOKS CRITICS NEVER PEOPLE THE THEM
___ BIGGEST ___ OF MY ___ ARE
___ WHO ___ READ ___

7 LITTLE WORDS

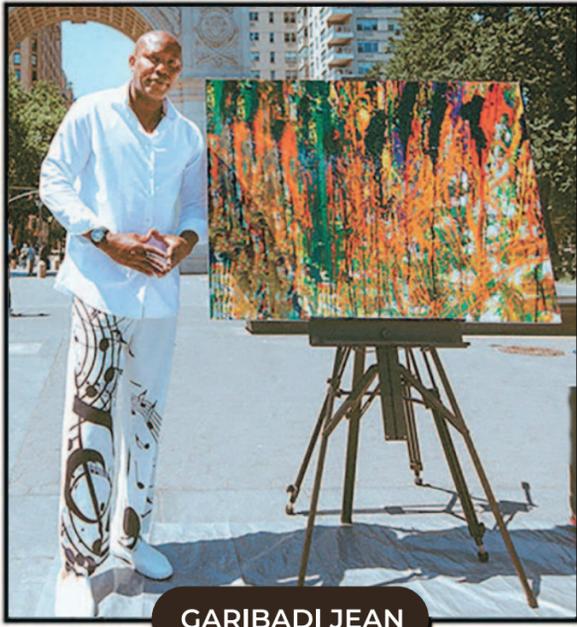


JUMBLE



PAID ADVERTISEMENT

THE ARTISTIC LEGACY OF GARIBALDI JEAN: A TRIBUTE TO BASQUIAT & BEYOND



GARIBADI JEAN

The ever-evolving landscape of contemporary art, few figures stand as tall as Jean-Michel Basquiat, whose groundbreaking works inspire artists worldwide. Among those profoundly influenced by Basquiat's legacy is Garibaldi Jean, a remarkable Haitian abstract artist whose career spans over two decades & encompasses thousands of evocative paintings.

This blog delves into the intertwining legacies of Basquiat Garibaldi Jean, exploring their profound impact on the art world, the vibrant community of Nexus Art Galaxy, Transformative power of abstract art.

Garibaldi Jean's homage to Basquiat in his work "Tribute to Jean Michel to Basquiat" to his literary contribution, "L'art Dans Une Nouvelle Vision Du Monde" (A New World Vision Art), we celebrate the artistic journey that continues to shape & enrich the cultural landscape. Join us as we explore the creative endeavors of Garibaldi Jean & the inspiring platform provided by Nexus Art Galaxy under the visionary leadership of Nathalie Nicolas Jean-Pierre, promising a future brimming with artistic discovery & innovation.

Celebrating Jean-Michel Basquiat: A Timeless Influence

Jean-Michel Basquiat was a contemporary artist who revolutionized the art world in the 20th century. His innovative approach combined naive, figurative, and symbolic techniques with a prismatic effect of bright colors and original shapes. Basquiat's works often depicted life, death, and racial inequalities wrapped in mystery and enigma. His connection to the Dadaism movement further cemented his status as an icon for humanity. Basquiat's influence remains pervasive, inspiring countless artists to explore and push the boundaries of their creativity.

Garibaldi Jean: Master of Abstraction

Garibaldi Jean, a remarkable Haitian artist, has dedicated over two decades to his craft, producing over 6,000 paintings since the 1990s. His work is a testament to the uniqueness of artistic expression, particularly in abstract figurative painting. His artworks Captivated viewers into a world of color, texture, and form, encouraging personal exploration and introspection.

Garibaldi Jean studio, a vibrant mix of paint tubes & brushes, embodies controlled chaos. He begins his process with a rough underpainting, adding layers for depth. Using palette knives his hands, he crafts raw, intimate pieces that merge intention intuition, resulting in emotionally charged masterpieces.

Tribute to Jean Michel Basquiat: A Contemporary Homage

One of Garibaldi Jean's notable works is "Tribute to Jean Michel Basquiat." This painting pays homage to Jean-Michel Basquiat, reflecting iconic artist's influence legacy. The artwork captures Basquiat's spirit through colors dynamic shapes, celebrating his contribution to contemporary art. Garibaldi Jean's tribute underscores the continuing of Jean Michel Basquiat 's themes, such as racial inequalities the human condition, which remain poignant thought-provoking today.

Discovering the Magic: Garibaldi Jean's Arrival in America

Garibaldi Jean's painting entry into the American art scene is a momentous occasion. His abstract & figurative artwork, characterized by stunning colors and intriguing textures, offers an exciting adventure for art enthusiasts. Garibaldi Jean's paintings transcend traditional to museum offerings, inviting everyone explore the world abstraction experience the emotions his art evokes.



TRIBUTE TO JEAN MICHAEL QUIAT

Nexus Art Galaxy: A Hub for Artistic Discourse

Nexus Art Galaxy, led by Nathalie Nicolas Jean-Pierre, is a vibrant hub for creative collaboration and artistic discourse. The gallery celebrates art's transformative power and champions social change through its exhibitions and events. Nexus promotes diversity, supporting artists both locally and globally. With a focus on art-rich content and a diverse cultural community, Nexus Art Galaxy provides a platform for emerging and established artists.

Under Nathalie's leadership, Nexus Art Galaxy fosters an environment where artists can collaborate, share inspiration, and spark original thought. The gallery's dedication to promoting social change and artistic excellence makes it a cornerstone of the global art community.



GBJ LITERATURE WORK

Garibaldi Jean's Literary Contribution: "L'art Dans Une Nouvelle Vision Du Monde"

Statement to Garibaldi Jean's impact extends beyond visual art. His book, "L'art Dans Une Nouvelle Vision Du Monde" (A New World Vision Art), profoundly explores the coalition of arts & spirituality. The book features citations reflecting culture, fostering empathy, provoking thought, & enhancing society's intellectual, spiritual, emotional understanding of the world through art. It is a testament to Jean's multifaceted talent and his commitment to using art for personal and societal transformation.

Arts Of Artists and Creativity Of Nexus Art Galaxy

Artists, the guardians of this timeless language, weave stories with their brushes, mold emotions with clay, and compose symphonies of light and color. Their creative works reflect the spirit of the times, express our aspirations, and ignite social change. Artists challenge societal norms, capture movements, and inspire thought through their creations, fostering a global language that unites us all.

Moreover, art preserves history and cultural heritage. Each piece, from ancient cave drawings to modern digital creations, captures a moment, reflecting that era's ideas, struggles, and triumphs. Museums and galleries, like Nexus Art Galaxy, bridge the past and present, offering spaces for reflection on our shared journey.

Youth Club: Nurturing Future Artists

Nexus Art Galaxy's Youth Club provides young and aspiring artists a platform to explore and develop their talents. This initiative aims to nurture creativity & inspire the next generation of artists. The Youth Club fosters a supportive environment where young artists can thrive and contribute to the art community by offering workshops, mentorship, and exhibition opportunities.

The Impact of Abstract Art

Abstract art, like Garibaldi Jean's, extends beyond mere visual appeal. It engages our minds, encouraging creative and critical thinking. The vibrant colors and dynamic shapes in abstract art can also reduce stress and anxiety, promoting a sense of calm and tranquility. Immersing oneself in a tranquil piece can soothe the heart and mind, providing a serene sanctuary in a chaotic world.

Looking Ahead: A Journey of Artistic Discovery

Garibaldi Jean's arrival on the US art scene promises a vibrant infusion of abstract and figurative expression. Art enthusiasts eagerly anticipate deeper explorations of his unique creative language, engaging conversations, and captivating displays. Under Nathalie Nicolas Jean-Pierre's leadership, Nexus Art Galaxy is poised to foster an environment where artists can collaborate, share inspiration, and spark original thought. With exciting events on the horizon, the future promises a creatively rich impact on the American art scene.

Conclusion

Garibaldi Jean's artistic journey, His tribute to Jean Michael Basquiat to his profound literary contributions, exemplifies the transformative power of art. Through his collaboration with Nexus Art Galaxy and Nathalie Nicolas Jean-Pierre, Jean continues inspiring and engaging audiences worldwide. His work and the vibrant platform Nexus provide ensure that art remains a dynamic and influential force in society. As we look to the future, Garibaldi Jean's artistic legacy and Nexus Art Galaxy's creative endeavors promise to shape and enrich the cultural landscape, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the arts.

NATION & WORLD EXTRA

INSIDE

Putin says incursion is aimed at boosting Kyiv's negotiating position, **6NN**



French President Emmanuel Macron holds an Olympic gold medal Monday as he delivers a speech in Paris. With Sunday's closing ceremony over, Macron must now deal with a self-created political crisis that he had swept under the carpet until the Games were over. BENOIT TESSIER/POOL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

EXPLAINER

Economic issues seeing a rebound

Walz pick a contrast to 'trickle-down' approach

Andrea Shalal and Heather Timmons
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – Vice President Kamala Harris' choice of Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz as running mate in the Nov. 5 presidential election puts progressive economics center stage in the race for the White House.

Walz, a 60-year-old former high school teacher, is a self-proclaimed champion of "progressive values" who, as governor, made school meals free, set goals to cut greenhouse gases, expanded paid leave and protected collective bargaining and overtime.

Conservatives say Harris has revealed her leftist agenda.

What is a progressive anyway?

Progressivism, much like European social democracy, says companies need strong government oversight to prevent them exploiting workers and the environment; that free-market capitalism is not self-correcting; and that some groups need government protection.

"Progressive economics looks at the world and says: markets are incredibly valuable and powerful, but require public intervention to make them work," said Michael Linden, senior fellow at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, a former budget official under President Joe Biden.

It contrasts with the "trickle-down economics" favored by Republicans and some Democrats: the notion that tax breaks and policies that favor corporations and rich individuals will boost spending and job creation, ultimately helping everyone.

Walz urged Democrats to embrace progressive values in a call supporting Harris, seeking to redeem the tag of "socialist," which can have strong negative associations in the U.S. "One person's socialism is another person's neighborliness," he said.

What do critics say?

Critics say government assistance programs and union membership undermine the work ethic, kill innovation and hamper output, ultimately slowing economic growth.

Michael Strain, director of economic policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute, said progressive policies can be inflationary. For instance, he said, government mandates for universal pre-kindergarten care would raise prices for services while not necessarily increasing provision, given labor shortages.

Concerns about a weakening econ-

See **PROGRESSIVE**, Page 5NN

GAMES GIVE WAY TO DEADLOCK

Olympics swept France's political crisis under rug

Michel Rose and Elizabeth Pineau
REUTERS

PARIS – The Paris Olympics delivered a dazzling summertime success that charmed the world and reaffirmed French national pride. But the hangover will be tough.

With Sunday's closing ceremony over, President Emmanuel Macron must now deal with a self-created political crisis that he had swept under the carpet until the Games were over.

Talks over government jobs and budget cuts loom, with voter anger sure to follow.

"Now we have to wake up from this beautiful

dream," said Christine Frant, 64, at the Club France fan zone last weekend. "Such a shame we're going to return to our day-to-day routine, with no government, squabbles in parliament, while here it was all about joy, sharing."

In a political gamble, Macron called a snap legislative election just weeks before the Games were due to begin. Voters delivered a hung parliament.

Choosing a prime minister who can appease Macron's centrist camp, a leftist alliance and the

See **FRANCE**, Page 6NN



Thomas Bach, president of the International Olympic Committee; Emmanuel Macron, president of France; Macron's wife, Brigitte Macron; and Tony Estanguet, president of the Paris Organizing Committee for the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, are seen alongside members of the IOC in the stands on Sunday in Paris. ARTURO HOLMES/GETTY IMAGES

Strikes in Gaza continue as fears of wider war grow

Hamis reacts skeptically to latest cease-fire talks

REUTERS

CAIRO – Israeli forces pressed on with operations near the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis on Monday amid an international push for a deal to halt fighting in Gaza and prevent a slide into a wider regional conflict with Iran and its proxies.

Palestinian medics said Israeli military strikes on Khan Younis on Monday killed at least 18 people and wounded several. Meanwhile more families and displaced persons streamed out of areas threatened by new evacuation orders

telling people to clear the area.

Later an Israeli airstrike killed five people in the Zeitoun suburb of Gaza City, and two others were killed in Rafah, near the border with Egypt, medics said.

As fighting continued, Hamas reacted skeptically to the latest round of Egyptian and Qatari-brokered talks due on Thursday, saying it had seen no sign of movement from the Israeli side.

The group said on Sunday that mediators must force Israel to accept a cease-fire proposal based on ideas from U.S. President Joe Biden, which Hamas had accepted, "instead of pursuing further rounds of negotiations or new proposals

See **MIDEAST**, Page 6NN



Palestinians attend the funeral of members of the Najjar family, killed in an Israeli airstrike, on Monday in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

BASHAR TALEB/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

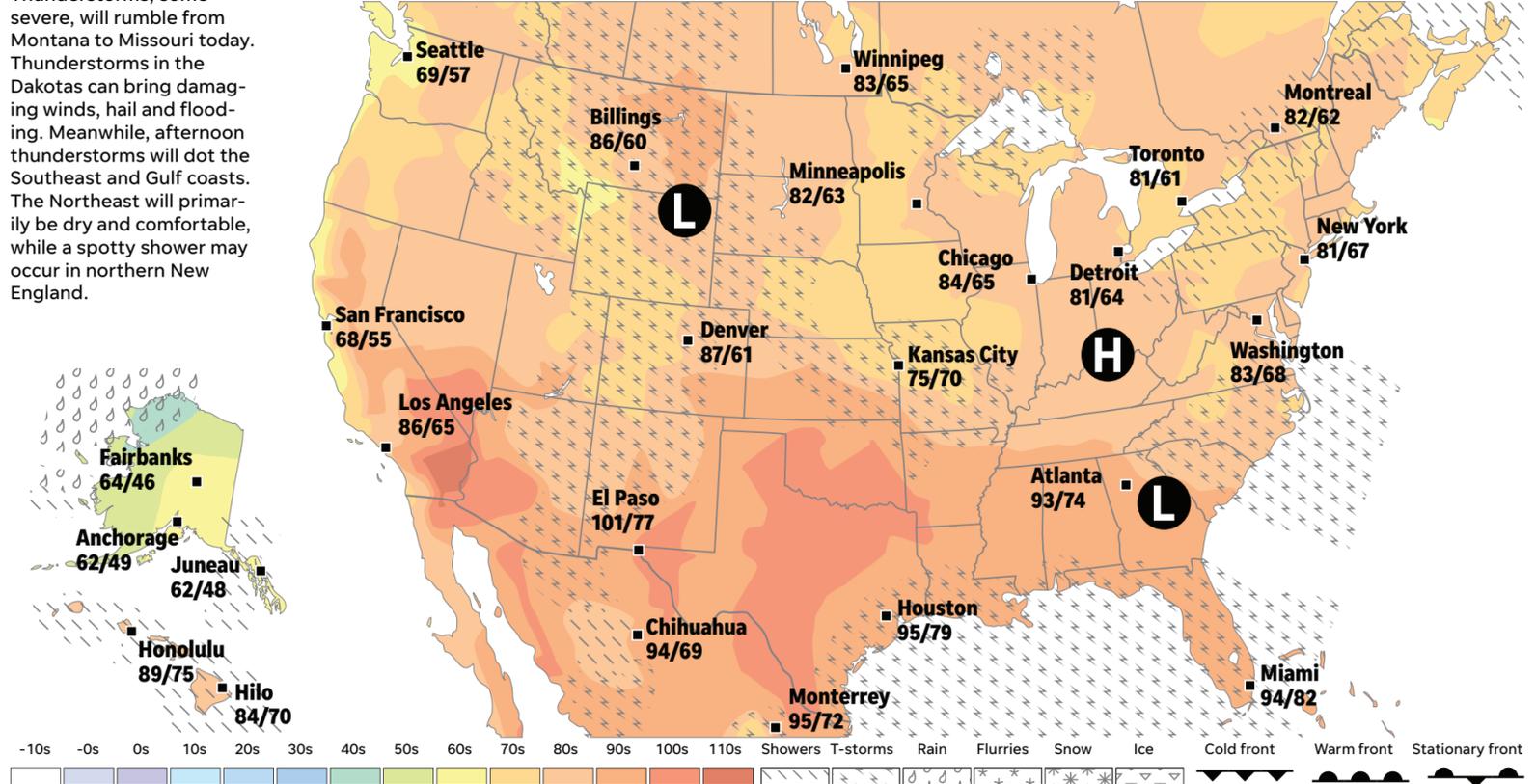


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NATIONAL SUMMARY

Thunderstorms, some severe, will rumble from Montana to Missouri today. Thunderstorms in the Dakotas can bring damaging winds, hail and flooding. Meanwhile, afternoon thunderstorms will dot the Southeast and Gulf coasts. The Northeast will primarily be dry and comfortable, while a spotty shower may occur in northern New England.

In the digital e-edition, you can click anywhere on the US map to get up-to-date forecasts, radar, MinuteCast® and more. Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation for Tuesday. Temperature bands are highs for the day.



MONDAY EXTREMES

NATIONAL (for the 48 contiguous states)
High: 109 at Palm Springs, CA
Low: 36 at Boca Reservoir, CA
Precip: 3.51" at Cameron, MO

INTERNATIONAL (excludes Antarctica)
High: 120 at Basrah, Iraq
Low: 13 at Bird Island, South Sandwich Island
Precip: 5.64" at Ofunato, Japan

TODAY IN HISTORY

Hurricane Connie dumped up to 9.85 inches of rain on eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey on Aug. 13, 1955. Hurricane Diane followed six days later with 10.75 inches of rain. The combined death toll from the hurricanes was 90 people.

WEATHER TRIVIA™

Q: What is the source of fuel for a hurricane?
A: The heat energy contained in the warm ocean waters.

NATIONAL CITIES TUESDAY

City	High/Low/W	Air Quality	City	High/Low/W	Air Quality	City	High/Low/W	Air Quality	City	High/Low/W	Air Quality
Aberdeen, SD	84/66/pc	34	Evansville, IN	82/64/c	47	Levittown, PA	82/63/pc	51	Rochester, NY	79/59/pc	33
Abilene, TX	102/79/s	30	Fall River, MA	82/61/pc	34	Lincoln, IL	79/60/c	44	Rockford, IL	83/60/pc	45
Accomac, VA	79/60/pc	39	Farmington, NM	82/61/t	39	Louisville, KY	86/67/c	52	Ruidoso, NM	83/59/t	29
Adrian, MI	83/59/pc	51	Fayetteville, NC	87/69/t	40	Lubbock, TX	99/75/s	31	Salem, OR	76/54/pc	28
Akron, OH	80/58/pc	58	Fond du Lac, WI	83/60/s	46	Manitowoc, WI	79/62/pc	47	Salina, KS	86/73/t	19
Alamogordo, NM	100/71/s	30	Fort Myers, FL	94/78/s	45	Mansfield, OH	81/57/pc	48	Salinas, CA	71/55/pc	28
Alexandria, VA	84/64/pc	51	Fort Smith, AR	96/76/pc	33	Marshall, NC	82/59/pc	39	Salisbury, MD	83/59/pc	41
Alliance, OH	79/56/pc	50	Framingham, MA	83/61/pc	29	Marshfield, WI	80/59/s	47	San Angelo, TX	102/77/s	33
Amarillo, TX	100/74/s	39	Freeport, IL	83/59/pc	48	Massillon, OH	81/57/pc	57	Sarasota, FL	92/78/t	53
Ames, IA	77/64/c	35	Fremont, OH	82/60/pc	51	McLean, VA	83/63/pc	51	Savannah, GA	94/76/pc	43
Anderson, SC	87/70/t	48	Fort Collins, CO	81/60/t	67	Melbourne, FL	91/78/t	50	Sheboygan, WI	81/62/pc	45
Appleton, WI	82/64/s	42	Gadsden, AL	92/66/pc	40	Memphis, TN	93/76/pc	71	Shelby, NC	80/64/t	47
Asheville, NC	79/64/t	49	Gainesville, FL	94/76/t	47	Middletown, NY	78/56/pc	42	Sherman, TX	100/80/s	33
Ashland, OH	80/56/pc	56	Galesburg, IL	80/59/c	48	Milford, MA	81/60/pc	28	Shreveport, LA	100/78/pc	61
Athens, GA	91/70/s	48	Gastonia, NC	80/66/t	44	Milwaukee, WI	81/66/s	46	Silver City, NM	88/64/t	39
Augusta, GA	92/73/t	59	Glen Rose, TX	100/77/s	33	Monroe, MI	80/61/pc	51	Sioux Falls, SD	77/66/c	28
Austin, TX	99/76/s	44	Gonzales, LA	96/77/t	49	Monroe, LA	101/77/pc	54	Somerset, PA	74/54/pc	52
Bartlesville, OK	94/75/pc	45	Great Falls, MT	85/57/t	68	Montgomery, AL	97/71/s	47	Somerville, NJ	82/61/pc	49
Battle Creek, MI	82/60/pc	44	Green Bay, WI	84/62/s	39	Muncie, IN	82/60/pc	50	South Bend, IN	83/58/pc	48
Bedford, IN	81/61/c	50	Greenville, SC	83/67/t	46	Murfreesboro, TN	87/65/pc	42	Spartanburg, SC	80/67/t	54
Binghamton, NY	73/56/pc	25	Hackensack, NJ	81/65/pc	53	Naples, FL	94/80/pc	38	Springfield, IL	77/62/c	47
Bluffton, SC	91/77/t	41	Hagerstown, MD	81/61/pc	50	Nashville, TN	89/69/c	45	Springfield, MO	82/73/r	26
Bremerton, WA	69/53/c	28	Hattiesburg, MS	100/76/s	42	Neptune, NJ	78/67/pc	51	St. Augustine, FL	91/77/t	52
Brockton, MA	84/60/pc	33	Henderson, KY	81/62/c	50	New Bedford, MA	83/61/pc	29	St. Cloud, MN	80/60/s	34
Brownwood, TX	101/75/s	41	Hendersonville, NC	78/63/t	56	New Bern, NC	87/69/t	49	St. George, UT	99/73/s	51
Burlington, IA	77/62/c	52	Herkimer, NY	79/59/pc	26	New Philadelphia, OH	81/54/pc	50	Staunton, VA	80/54/pc	38
Burlington, NC	80/63/t	39	Hillsdale, MI	81/56/pc	50	Newark, NJ	82/55/sh	50	Stevens Point, WI	82/59/s	46
Burlington, VT	81/61/pc	26	Holland, MI	81/58/pc	43	Newton, NJ	79/57/pc	41	Stockton, CA	92/61/s	38
Cambridge, OH	82/56/c	39	Hornell, NY	76/55/pc	33	New York, NY	81/67/pc	54	Stroudsburg, PA	79/58/pc	40
Camdenton, MO	77/70/r	37	Houma, LA	94/76/t	50	Norwich, CT	81/57/pc	35	Stuart, FL	93/79/t	40
Canandaigua, NY	77/60/pc	34	Howell, MI	81/58/pc	50	Ocala, FL	93/75/t	43	Sturgis, MI	80/57/pc	51
Canton, OH	80/57/pc	52	Hutchinson, KS	91/73/t	26	Oklahoma City, OK	98/76/s	32	Tallahassee, FL	97/76/t	49
Carlsbad, NM	100/73/s	37	Hyannis, MA	78/62/s	27	Opelousas, LA	96/76/t	77	Thibodaux, LA	95/77/t	50
Chambersburg, PA	81/60/pc	50	Indianapolis, IN	82/64/c	52	Oshkosh, WI	82/63/s	43	Topeka, KS	77/71/r	26
Cherry Hill, NJ	82/65/pc	50	Iowa City, IA	80/62/c	48	Palm Beach, FL	92/82/t	37	Tuscaloosa, AL	95/71/s	52
Cincinnati, OH	83/64/pc	50	Ithaca, NY	74/54/pc	27	Palm Springs, CA	110/78/s	26	Utica, NY	77/57/pc	21
Clarksville, TN	87/66/c	42	Jackson, MS	99/75/s	39	Panama City, FL	95/80/t	51	Ventura, CA	70/56/pc	49
Coldwater, MI	80/57/pc	50	Jackson, TN	91/71/pc	41	Pekin, IL	82/63/c	51	Victorville, CA	96/61/s	43
Columbus, OH	83/61/pc	44	Jacksonville, FL	96/76/t	61	Pensacola, FL	95/78/t	49	Vineland, NJ	83/61/pc	49
Corning, NY	78/54/pc	34	Jacksonville, NC	85/69/t	52	Peoria, IL	81/63/c	47	Visalia, CA	96/61/s	52
Corpus Christi, TX	96/80/t	37	Kent, OH	79/55/pc	55	Petersburg, VA	82/60/c	41	Washington, DC	83/68/pc	50
Daytona Beach, FL	93/77/t	47	Kewanee, IL	83/58/c	53	Phoenix, AZ	107/89/pc	50	Watertown, SD	77/64/pc	25
Deming, NM	95/70/pc	40	Keyser, WV	83/58/pc	51	Port Huron, MI	79/56/pc	42	Wausau, WI	81/60/s	46
DeRidder, LA	97/76/pc	36	Kinston, NC	86/67/t	55	Portsmouth, NH	82/62/pc	29	Waynesboro, PA	81/60/pc	50
Des Moines, IA	77/66/c	35	Knoxville, TN	87/64/pc	39	Poughkeepsie, NY	80/57/pc	32	White Plains, NY	79/62/pc	50
Detroit, MI	81/64/pc	56	Lafayette, IN	82/60/c	50	Providence, RI	81/63/pc	27	Wichita Falls, TX	103/79/s	36
Devils Lake, ND	78/65/pc	46	Lafayette, LA	97/79/t	51	Pueblo, CO	90/62/t	53	Wilmington, DE	81/63/pc	44
Dover, NH	81/58/pc	25	Lakeland, FL	94/76/t	57	Quincy, MA	84/64/pc	35	Wilmington, NC	86/71/t	41
El Paso, TX	101/77/s	46	Lansing, MI	81/59/pc	41	Redding, CA	94/62/s	33	Wisconsin Rapids, WI	83/59/s	45
Elmira, NY	78/53/pc	27	Las Cruces, NM	97/70/s	53	Reno, NV	88/56/s	53	Wooster, OH	79/54/pc	47
Erie, PA	77/60/pc	33	Lebanon, PA	80/59/pc	45	Ravenna, OH	79/55/pc	56	Worcester, MA	78/63/pc	30
Eugene, OR	79/52/pc	25	Leesburg, FL	92/77/t	47	Richmond, IN	81/58/pc	51	York, PA	81/61/pc	47

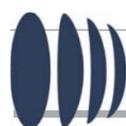
Air Quality Index: 0-50, Good; 51-100, Moderate; 101-150, Unhealthy for sensitive groups; 151-200, Unhealthy; 201-300, Very unhealthy; 301-500, Hazardous

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

City	Tuesday High/Low/W	Wednesday High/Low/W	City	Tuesday High/Low/W	Wednesday High/Low/W	City	Tuesday High/Low/W	Wednesday High/Low/W
Acapulco	88/77/t	87/77/t	Cape Town	60/46/r	56/40/c	La Paz	61/31/s	62/29/s
Addis Ababa	70/56/sh	70/55/sh	Caracas	90/77/sh	92/76/t	Lagos	83/76/sh	83/75/sh
Algiers	91/73/s	90/72/c	Casablanca	86/64/pc	85/66/s	Lima	67/58/s	66/58/pc
Amman	93/73/s	96/73/s	Colombo	86/78/t	85/80/t	Lisbon	80/65/s	80/64/s
Amsterdam	81/63/t	74/62/t	Copenhagen	74/64/pc	78/65/pc	London	78/62/c	73/56/pc
Ankara	93/64/s	97/64/s	Damascus	101/68/s	103/68/s	Madrid	90/67/c	90/61/s
Asuncion	69/48/s	79/57/s	Dublin	70/48/sh	69/61/pc	Manila	91/80/t	91/80/t
Athens	99/77/s	98/79/s	Geneva	92/65/t	85/62/r	Mexico City	77/59/sh	76/57/sh
Auckland	57/42/s	59/45/pc	Guatemala City	77/63/t	78/63/t	Milan	96/72/s	94/70/pc
Baghdad	113/87/pc	114/84/pc	Hanoi	90/78/t	94/80/t	Mombasa	85/71/sh	85/71/sh
Bangkok	96/81/t	96/82/t	Harare	82/50/s	86/54/s	Montevideo	63/42/pc	64/43/c
Beijing	82/71/pc	88/73/t	Havana	90/75/t	90/74/t	Montreal	82/62/pc	82/63/pc
Beirut	90/79/s	89/78/s	Helsinki	72/61/s	72/61/s	Moscow	67/53/sh	70/49/pc
Belgrade	102/73/s	102/76/pc	Hong Kong	87/81/t	88/81/t	Nairobi	77/56/pc	78/58/pc
Berlin	87/64/s	91/68/s	Jakarta	92/74/s	92/75/pc	New Delhi	89/81/t	91/81/t
Bogota	67/47/pc	69/48/pc	Jerusalem	89/71/s	91/71/s	Panama City	87/76/r	88/77/t
Brussels	84/64/t	74/60/pc	Johannesburg	72/49/pc	67/39/s	Paris	86/64/t	80/62/c
Bucharest	99/73/s	96/69/c	Kabul	93/67/s	94/68/s	Port-au-Prince	97/76/t	96/76/t
Budapest	97/68/pc	98/69/s	Khartoum	94/78/t	92/79/t	Rio de Janeiro	68/57/c	74/63/s
Buenos Aires	63/48/s	62/50/pc	Kyiv	74/56/pc	77/60/s	Riyadh	113/87/pc	113/86/pc
Cairo	97/79/s	96/78/s	Kingston	94/81/t	96/81/pc	Rome	92/72/s	92/70/s
San Jose	81/66/t	83/66/t	San Salvador	85/70/t	84/70/t	Santiago	72/48/pc	67/45/c
San Paulo	57/46/pc	72/55/s	Sarajevo	100/59/pc	101/59/s	Sao Paulo	57/46/pc	72/55/s
Shanghai	97/83/pc	95/80/t	Shanghai	97/83/pc	95/80/t	Singapore	90/80/t	88/79/sh
Singapore	90/80/t	88/79/sh	Stockholm	74/56/pc	74/57/pc	Sydney	67/58/r	63/56/r
Stockholm	74/56/pc	74/57/pc	Sydney	67/58/r	63/56/r	Taipei	96/81/t	94/79/t
Sydney	67/58/r	63/56/r	Taipei	96/81/t	94/79/t	Tegucigalpa	81/67/t	86/66/t
Taipei	96/81/t	94/79/t	Tegucigalpa	81/67/t	86/66/t	Tehran	103/81/s	101/81/s
Tegucigalpa	81/67/t	86/66/t	Tehran	103/81/s	101/81/s	Tokyo	95/82/t	92/81/r
Tehran	103/81/s	101/81/s	Tokyo	95/82/t	92/81/r	Toronto	81/61/pc	83/61/s
Tokyo	95/82/t	92/81/r	Toronto	81/61/pc	83/61/s	Tunis	102/79/s	104/79/pc
Toronto	81/61/pc	83/61/s	Tunis	102/79/s	104/79/pc	Vancouver	69/58/c	73/59/pc
Tunis	102/79/s	104/79/pc	Vancouver	69/58/c	73/59/pc	Vancouver	69/58/c	73/59/pc
Vancouver	69/58/c	73/59/pc	Vienna	92/67/c	95/72/pc	Warsaw	77/55/s	82/59/s
Vancouver	69/58/c	73/59/pc	Vienna	92/67/c	95/72/pc	Yerevan	85/65/s	88/64/s
Vienna	92/67/c	95/72/pc	Yerevan	85/65/s	88/64/s	Zagreb	96/66/c	93/67/t
Warsaw	77/55/s	82/59/s	Zagreb	96/66/c	93/67/t	Zurich	89/64/t	85/63/t
Yerevan	85/65/s	88/64/s	Zurich	89/64/t	85/63/t			

Denotes possible travel delays Tuesday

Weather(W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.



MALAWI

The tyranny of doubt

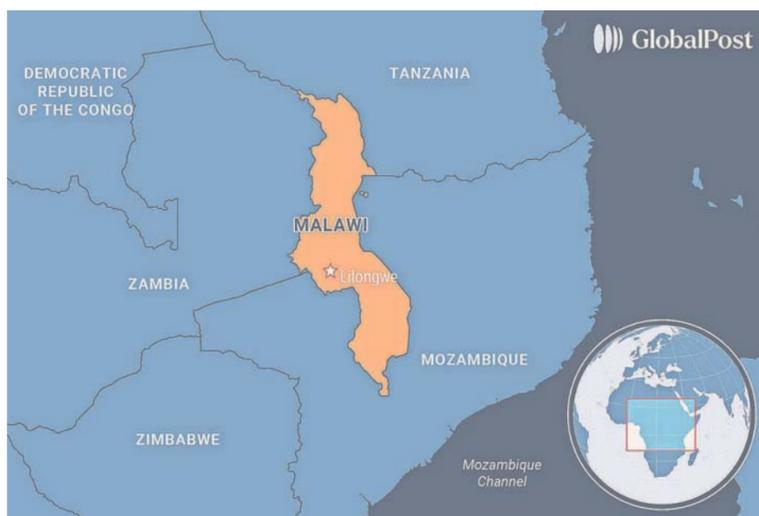
In March last year, Cyclone Freddy ripped through Malawi and southeast Africa, killing 679 people, displacing almost 660,000, and causing property damage totaling over \$500M.

Thirty-nine-year-old mother Gladys Austin was one of those hundreds of thousands who had to flee her home in the southern village of Makwalo after heavy rains destroyed a sandbar on the Ruo River, reported the Guardian. The resulting floods also washed away her livestock, grain, and the rest of her goods. Luckily, she and her family received international aid to rebuild. But many Malawians have not been so lucky.

A year after Austin and her community struggled with flooding, communities in Malawi were dealing with one of the worst droughts in memory due to the meteorological phenomenon, El Niño.

Malawian President Lazarus Chakwera recently declared a state of disaster due to the drought throughout much of the country, reported the Associated Press. He said Malawi needed \$200 million in humanitarian assistance to cope with the problem, or else face potential famine. The drought was already forecast to shave multiple points off of the country's gross domestic product, further constraining growth that would help the country overcome its deep poverty and need for economic development.

The good news, however, is that Malawians have created a "laboratory for low-cost community-led projects" to improve climate resilience, wrote World Politics Review. Farmers, for example, are teaching each other about soil conservation, water management and crop diversification. Others have developed plans for inter-cropping, or growing multiple crops together, composting, organic pest control, and other measures that mitigate the effects of climate change on agriculture.



PERU

Absolution by decree

The Peruvian government enacted a new law over the weekend that would bar the prosecution of crimes against humanity committed before 2002, a move that would benefit a convicted former president and other military officials accused of abuses committed during Peru's internal armed conflict between 1980 and 2000, the Associated Press reported.

Peruvian lawmakers passed the bill last month, prompting criticism from human rights organizations that it would thwart ongoing investigations over the massacres perpetrated during the conflict that killed around 69,000 people, while 21,000 others disappeared.

Observers explained that the legislation would impact around 550 victims and 600 cases, including probes and judicial processes that would be archived or dismissed by statutes of limitations.

One of the key beneficiaries of the law is former President Alberto Fujimori, who governed Peru between 1990 and 2000.

Fujimori was sentenced in 2009 on charges of human rights abuses

The legislation would lead to the archiving of many probes and judicial processes that would be archived or dismissed by statutes of limitations say observers.

over the killing of 25 people, including a child, by army death squads between 1991 and 1992. At the time, the government described the murders as part of an anti-terrorist operation.

The 85-year-old former leader is also facing trial over the killing by soldiers of six farmers in a separate case from 1992.

The bill's passing prompted the Inter-American Court of Human Rights – the highest regional court in this matter – to order Peruvian President Dina Boluarte, congress and the judiciary to annul the draft law because it violates international law.

Despite the court's order, the bill was passed Friday – although it did not receive any comments from Boluarte.

The United Nations criticized the government's move, saying the legislation "contravenes the country's obligations under international law and is a troubling development, amid a broader backlash against human rights and the rule of law in Peru," Agence France-Press added.

DISCOVERIES

Pauses in the conversation

One thing that makes humans human is our fast-paced conversation ability. Now, scientists have found chimpanzees have a similar trait.

A recent study discovered that chimps also took rapid turns to speak – not with words, but with hand gestures – sometimes even interrupting each other.

This could point to "deep evolutionary similarities (with humans) in how face-to-face conversations are structured," Cat Hobaiter from the University of St Andrews told the BBC.

On average, there is a short, 200-millisecond moment of silence between the end of one human's sentence and the beginning of the other's response. That's about the duration of a blink – so short that the second speaker does not even process the last word spoken by the first one.

But there are variations among humans, mainly due to cultural differences. A 2009 study found, for example, that the Japanese have the fastest turn-taking pace with just seven milliseconds, while Danes needed about 450 milliseconds to speak up.

"We still don't know when these human conversational timing patterns evolved and for what reason," said lead researcher Gal Badihi.

However, observing the same behavior among some of our closest cousins paves the way toward finding out.

In their research, Badihi, Hobaiter and their team recorded 8,500 gestures from 250 wild chimps in five East African communities.

"Chimpanzees use gestures in almost every aspect of their life," Badihi told the Guardian, explaining that gestures helped mitigate conflict and foster companionship, with grooming as the hottest topic of conversation.

Wildfire menaces suburbs of Athens

Worst blaze this year amid months of drought

Stelios Misinas and Karolina Tagaris
REUTERS

ATHENS, Greece – Greece's worst wildfire this year spread into the Athens suburbs on Monday, forcing hundreds of people to flee as it torched trees, homes and cars and choked busy roads with smoke and ash.

The government called for help from fellow EU members to tackle the fire that was burning out of control for a second day, fanned by gale force winds that pushed it from the wooded hills north of the city.

Firefighters said flames, threatening apartment blocks, schools and businesses, had reached the deepest into the capital in over two decades. As night fell, the blaze showed no signs of abating.

More than 700 firefighters backed by volunteers, 199 fire engines and 35 waterbombing aircraft have been battling the conflagration that broke out at 3 p.m. on Sunday near the village of Varnavas 20 miles north of Athens.

Greece is expecting assistance from France, Italy, the Czech Republic, Serbia and Turkey with aircraft and firefighters.

"The situation remains extremely difficult," said Vassilis Vathrakogiannis, a fire brigade spokesperson. "There are continuous flare-ups, constantly creating new outbreaks and spreading rapidly, aided by very strong winds."

Summers in Greece have long been marked by wildfires but hotter, drier weather linked to climate change has made blazes more frequent and intense. Wildfires fanned by extreme heat have also raged in parts of Spain and the Balkans.

As the flames closed in on backyards on the outskirts of Athens, some residents in the wooded and hilly Penteli neighborhood stayed put, trying to put out pockets of fire using hoses or tree branches as smoke swirled around them.

"It hurts, we have grown up in the forest, we feel great sadness and anger,"



Greek firefighters enter a field after sawing a fence Monday as they try to extinguish a wildfire near Penteli, Greece. Greece's civil protection authorities ordered the evacuation of several towns in the northeastern suburbs of Athens, threatened by a fire that started the day before and is spreading.

ANGELOS TZORTZINIS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



A firefighting helicopter makes a water drop as a wildfire burns Monday in Penteli, near Athens, Greece.

ALEXANDROS AVRAMIDIS/REUTERS

said 24-year-old resident Marina Kalogerakou, her mouth and nose covered by a red bandanna as she poured a bucket of water on a burning tree stump.

Another resident, Pantelis Kyriazis, crashed his car as he tried to escape the encroaching flames. "I couldn't see, I hit a pine tree and this is what happened,"

he said, gesturing towards his damaged car and nursing a bleeding elbow.

On Monday night police and fire crews went door to door in one neighborhood in Penteli, torches in hand, looking for anyone who might have been left behind.

Columns of smoke rose over the hori-

zon and a burning smell cloaked Athens. The fire reached Vrilissia, around 8 miles from the heart of the capital, albeit with highways separating the suburb from the city center.

In the nearby suburb of Gerakas a wood factory was engulfed by flames.

To the north, at the epicenter of the fire, firefighters and residents took stock of the damage: abandoned homes and vehicles gutted by fire, hillsides blackened, and trees reduced to sticks.

"Thirty years I was building all this," said 81-year-old Vassilis Stroubelis as he stood in the entrance of his damaged home. "Thirty years and bam!"

Residents evacuated

There were no reports so far of deaths. Thirteen people were treated by rescuers and medical staff for smoke inhalation and two firefighters for burns, Vathrakogiannis said.

"The feeling was terrifying. Seeing everything up in smoke ... and to not be able to do anything," Penteli resident Nikos Adamopoulos said.

More than 30 areas were forced to evacuate residents, along with at least three hospitals, and there were power cuts in parts of the wider Athens region. Passenger ferries heading to the port of Rafina northeast of the capital were diverted.

In the community of Rampentosa, north of Athens, 75-year-old Michalis Tsourtis said he fled when he heard flames coming towards him "with a roar."

But others stayed behind, lamenting that they had been left to their own devices.

"Three, four policemen came to tell us to leave. We know that if we leave, no one will defend our house," 71-year-old Sofia Giannopoulou said.

The Mediterranean country this year experienced its warmest winter on record and is on track for its hottest ever summer. Large areas of Greece, including the location of this week's blaze, have seen little or no rain for months.

Greece is on high fire alert at least until Thursday with strong winds and temperatures forecast to reach up to 104 degrees Fahrenheit.

FINANCIAL MARKETS

Indexes mixed ahead of new data

Investors awaiting info on consumer prices

Abigail Summerville

REUTERS

Wall Street stocks closed mixed on Monday as investors braced for a slew of U.S. economic data this week, especially consumer prices, to gauge the outlook for Federal Reserve monetary policy.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell. The benchmark S&P 500 index and tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite Index closed higher.

The Russell 2000 Index, focused on small companies, dropped 0.9%.

“The jumping to a rotation towards small cap companies, like the Russell 2000 and cyclicals in general and financials, was a very popular trade a few weeks ago and that’s really unwound itself,” said James Abate, chief investment officer at Centre Asset Management in New York.

“If you look at the trends in earnings and growth, we don’t have a broadening and expanding economy that will support a broadening out yet of growth and stock price appreciation.”

Investors are awaiting Wednesday’s U.S. consumer price index reading and retailer earnings to assess demand by shoppers.

The CPI data is expected to show headline inflation accelerated 0.2% in July from June, but unchanged at 3% on a year-on-year basis.

Money markets are evenly betting on a 25- or 50-basis-point cut in U.S. interest rates in September, expecting a total easing of 100 bps by the end of 2024, CME’s FedWatch Tool showed.

Figures for July U.S. retail sales on Thursday are likely to show marginal growth, and investors expect that any weakness in the data could reignite fears of a consumer slowdown and a potential recession.

Walmart and Home Depot are due to report earnings later this week.

“Retail earnings are another indication on the health of the consumer particularly in light of the unemployment rate ticking up in the most recent report,” Abate said.

“One thing that could be a significant disappointment to the market is if the CPI number comes out higher than consensus.”

The S&P 500 gained 0.23 points to end at 5,344.39 points, while the Nasdaq Composite rose 35.31 points, or 0.21%, to 16,780.61. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 140.53 points, or 0.36%, to 39,357.01.

Starbucks rose 2.58% on reports that activist investor Starboard Value, which holds a stake in the coffee giant, wants the company to take steps to improve its stock price.

KeyCorp jumped 9.1% after Canada’s Scotiabank bought a minority stake in the U.S. regional lender in an all-stock deal worth \$2.8 billion. Hawaiian Electric dropped 14.45% after the utility firm raised “going concern” doubts.

Declining issues outnumbered advancers by a 1.46-to-1 ratio on the NYSE. On the Nasdaq, declining issues outnumbered advancers by a 1.54-to-1 ratio.

The S&P 500 posted 10 new 52-week highs and seven new lows while the Nasdaq Composite recorded 51 new highs and 179 new lows.

Hedge funds retrench on risk

Portfolio managers keep eye on recession risk

Carolina Mandl

REUTERS

NEW YORK – Portfolio managers at hedge funds have retrenched from some of their riskier positions after a volatile week for markets.

A brutal selloff and recovery in global markets in the past week was triggered by the unwinding of billions of dollars worth of yen-funded trades and worries the U.S. economy was heading to a recession. The CBOE Volatility Index ended at its highest close in nearly four years on Aug. 5.

The market rout has been painful for a number of hedge funds. Global macro quantitative funds posted losses between 1.5% and 2.5% between Aug. 1 and Aug. 5., while hedge funds focused on the technology sector were down between 2.5% and 3.5%, according to hedge fund research firm PivotalPath’s exposure model.

“We did see some degree of deleveraging,” said Edoardo Rulli, chief investment officer at UBS Hedge Fund Solutions, which invests in hedge funds. “Not panicking, but portfolio managers reducing positions.”

An unexpected spike in volatility is likely to suppress risk appetite until investors are more comfortable about global growth prospects, according to Sophia Drossos, economist and strategist at Point72 Asset Management.

“When you have a very long-term trade that starts to unwind very abruptly, it does hurt risk appetite,” she said. “We’ll probably see an environment where investors remain reticent or skittish about taking on too much risk again. It could be a headwind for the rest of the summer.”

Drossos’ views do not necessarily reflect the hedge fund’s positioning, the fund said.

Leverage used by hedge funds to increase the size of trades is at a record high for the last decade, according to data provided by the Office of Financial Research’s Hedge Fund Monitor. Hedge funds registered in the U.S. ended March with \$2.3 trillion in borrowing from prime brokers, up roughly 63% from December 2019 and outpacing their assets’ growth.

There has been an unwinding of various positions in the last week.



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange on Thursday in New York. The recent market rout has been painful for a number of hedge funds.

BRENDAN MCDERMID/REUTERS FILE

Macro concerns

“When you have a very long-term trade that starts to unwind very abruptly, it does hurt risk appetite.”

Sophia Drossos

Economist and strategist at Point72 Asset Management

Commodity-trading advisers, or money managers that follow market trends, registered a “sharp unwind” of long equity positions, short yen and short Japanese and 10-year German bonds starting after the weaker-than-anticipated U.S. job data on Aug. 2, JPMorgan said in a note last week.

A Goldman Sachs’ prime brokerage note to clients also showed on Friday that long/short equity hedge funds have reduced their overall exposure to Japan to 4.8% last week from 5.6% the week before, while cutting overall portfolios’ leverage by almost a percentage point, to 188.2%.

U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission and LSEG data released on Friday showed hedge funds’ position on the Japanese yen shrank to the smallest net short stance since February 2023 in the latest week, indicating investors have also wound down the yen carry trade.

Front of mind now for portfolio managers – and contributing to portfolios’ derisking – is the state of the U.S. economy, as fears of a recession in the world’s largest economy mounted after the U.S. unemployment rate jumped in July.

Rulli said macro hedge funds are also reconsidering some positions even though they made money during the market rout after being long U.S. rates.

“Macro hedge funds still have conviction around the steepening of the yield curve, but they are taking some profits because obviously it’s done very well over the past four weeks, Rulli said.

Odds of the Federal Reserve cutting rates by 25 basis points or 50 basis points at its next meeting in September are close to the same, according to the CME FedWatch tool on Aug. 12.

“If there is a 50/50 chance between the Fed cutting 25 basis points and cutting 50 basis points, that is maximum uncertainty,” said Richard Lightburn, deputy chief investment officer at macro hedge fund MKP Capital Management. He has been considering potential adjustments in the portfolio to reflect the unknown environment.

“That’s telling you something – the market really doesn’t know what’s going to happen, and that means there’s going to be volatility,” he said.

Medium-term inflation expectations ease substantially for US consumers

Households worry about staying current on debts

REUTERS

U.S. consumers’ medium-term inflation expectations eased substantially in July even as their near- and longer-term outlooks for price pressures held steady, although households are increasingly worried about staying current on their debt, a Federal Reserve Bank of New York report showed on Monday.

The median three-year inflation expectation dropped to 2.3% from 2.9% in June to register its lowest reading since the New York Fed launched the monthly Survey of Consumer Expectations in 2013. The one-year and five-year outlooks held steady at 3.0% and 2.8%, respectively.

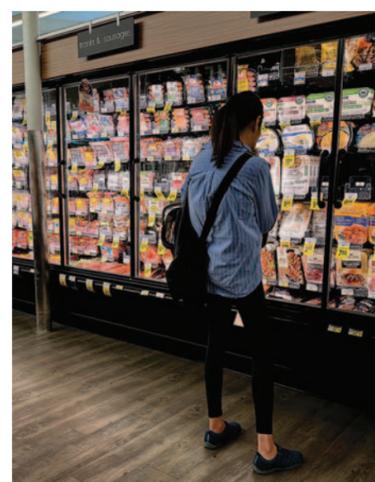
Fed officials – who’ve been battling high inflation for more than two years – track a range of measures of inflation expectations because they worry that if

they begin to drift substantially upward, consumers and businesses will alter their spending behaviors in ways that can make inflation harder to tame.

Recent measures of inflation have shown it returning toward the Fed’s 2% target, and the central bank is now widely expected to cut interest rates next month. The Fed’s policy rate – which was raised rapidly from near zero starting in March 2022 – has been on hold in a range of 5.25%-to-5.50% since July 2023.

Meanwhile, consumers – especially lower-income households – see a greater chance they will miss a debt payment in the year ahead.

The survey showed a 13.3% average probability of missing a minimum debt payment, up 1 point from June and the highest since April 2020 at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic when unemployment briefly skyrocketed. The increase was most pronounced for those with an annual income below \$50,000 and those without a high school degree, the survey said.



A customer shops at a Safeway store on June 11 in San Francisco. Recent measures of inflation have shown it returning toward the Fed’s 2% target, and the central bank is now widely expected to cut interest rates next month. JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

Utilities poised to ride data center demand wave

Seher Dareen and Vallari Srivastava

REUTERS

U.S. electric utilities sounded bullish on demand from data centers powering the artificial intelligence boom after striking several supply deals during the second quarter, reinforcing market expectations of sales growth through the year.

Top utilities, including American Electric Power and NextEra Energy, signed contracts in the recently concluded quarter while others highlighted interest from technology companies.

“We started to get some clarity about data center opportunities and the

numbers are staggering,” said Timothy Winter, portfolio manager at Gabelli Funds. As of March 31, it owned stakes in six utility firms including PG&E Corp, NextEra Energy and AES Corp.

U.S. utilities, since the start of the year, have raised their 2030 guidance of cumulative data center electricity demand by roughly 50%, said Ben Levitt, associate director of power and renewables, S&P Global Commodity Insights.

“The economic development pipeline over the period that we’ve shared through 2028, data centers represent about 25% of that pipeline. As we get out to 2030 and beyond, that 25% grows,” Duke Energy CEO Lynn Good



Good

said on a post-earnings call.

Utilities could see meaningful sales growth and are now well-positioned to meet or exceed long-term growth targets after two years of underperformance, analysts have said.

For the full year, utilities’ earnings are estimated to increase 12.4% versus 10.5% for the overall S&P 500, LSEG data showed.

Over the next couple of quarters, analysts expect utilities to provide updates on capital expenditure plans, as well as base rate cases – a regulatory

process required to increase service charges – to help finance energy infrastructure upgrades.

“We think it’s going to be a pretty active second half of the year for the group, not only from a financing standpoint, but from a core rate based in earnings revision standpoint as well,” said Nicholas Campanella, head of U.S. power and utilities research at Barclays.

Hotter temperatures this summer may also boost bottom lines in the third quarter.

Utilities should outperform other sectors even in case of a recession, but the impact of the U.S. elections remains an uncertainty, analysts said.

IN BRIEF

Earthquake of magnitude 4.4 rattles Los Angeles area

LOS ANGELES – An earthquake of magnitude 4.4 struck the Los Angeles area on Monday, the U.S. Geological Survey said.

The quake hit near the LA neighborhood of Highland Park, northeast of downtown, and was at a depth of 7.5 miles. The shaking was felt throughout the Los Angeles area.

The Los Angeles Fire Department said it went into “Earthquake Mode” and reported that “there are currently no initial reports of structural damage or injuries.”

FBI investigating suspected hack of Trump and Biden campaigns

WASHINGTON – The FBI is investigating suspected hacking attempts by Iran targeting advisers to the Democratic campaign of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, as well as the targeting of an associate of GOP candidate Donald Trump, the Washington Post reported on Monday.

The FBI began the investigation in June, when Biden was still running for president, suspecting Iran was behind the attempts to steal data from two U.S. presidential campaigns, the newspaper said, citing sources.

Investigators have not found evidence that hacking attempts into the Democratic campaign were successful, the Washington Post reported.

Hurricane center: Disturbance is now Tropical Storm Ernesto

A disturbance located 295 miles east-southeast of Antigua has become Tropical Storm Ernesto, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said Monday.

The storm is “expected to bring tropical storm force winds and heavy rains to portions of the Leeward Islands beginning late tonight,” NHC added.

Ex-Cornell student sentenced for making threats against Jews

WASHINGTON – A former Cornell University student who in April pleaded guilty to posting online threats, including of death and violence, against Jewish students on campus, was sentenced Monday to 21 months in prison, the U.S. Justice Department said.

Patrick Dai, 22, was charged late last year for making online threats against Jewish students at the Ivy League school in Ithaca, New York. His 21 months in prison will be followed by three years of supervised release, the Justice Department said in a statement.

US says it hasn't offered Maduro amnesty since Venezuela vote

WASHINGTON – The Biden administration has not made an offer of amnesty to Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro to shield him from criminal prosecution in the United States in exchange for him giving up power since the South American country's July 28 election, the White House said on Monday.

Venezuela's electoral authority has proclaimed Maduro the winner of the election with 51% of the vote, although it has yet to produce the voting tallies.

The Wall Street Journal reported on Sunday that the U.S. in secret talks offered Maduro amnesty to cede power.

Mexico's Sheinbaum taps first woman to lead state power firm

MEXICO CITY – Mexican President-elect Claudia Sheinbaum on Monday named Emilia Esther Calleja to lead state power firm Comision Federal de Electricidad, making her the first woman to hold the post.

Calleja has previously held a number of posts at the firm over the past two decades, she said, speaking alongside Sheinbaum.

Sheinbaum has repeatedly tapped technocrats to her Cabinet, which will take office Oct. 1.

Brazilian environmental workers sign agreement to end strike

RIO DE JANEIRO – A union representing Brazil's federal environment workers said it had signed an agreement with the government to end a strike affecting oil and gas licenses in Latin America's largest economy, according to a press release on Monday.

The union Ascema, which represents workers from federal environmental agencies Ibama and ICMBio, as well as from the environment ministry, said that it intends to maintain a broader work slowdown that began in January, meaning licenses could still be affected.

Reuters

Musk interviews Trump on X after technical problems

Former president returns to platform with string of posts

Richard Cowan and Andy Sullivan
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's interview with billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk finally got underway on Musk's social media platform X on Monday evening, following a lengthy delay caused by technical problems that kept many users from accessing the live stream.

Musk began the event at 8:42 p.m., more than 40 minutes after the scheduled start time. He blamed the difficulties on a distributed denial-of-service attack, a type of cyberattack in which a server or network is flooded with traffic in an attempt to shut it down, though his claim was not confirmed.

More than 1 million people were listening as the conversation started, according to a counter on X.

“Congratulations on breaking every record in the book,” Trump said, an apparent reference to the number of people who tried to tune into their conversation.

Trump sounded at times as if he was speaking with a lisp, many listeners on X pointed out. Some said it made him sound like a cartoon, others suggested it could be due to audio compression issues.

The technical problems recalled a similar event on X in May 2023, when Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis suffered a chaotic start to his bid for the Republican presidential nomination due to glitches on the platform.

The hourlong broadcast lost sound for extended stretches, and thousands of users were either unable to join or were dropped. DeSantis ultimately lost the nomination to Trump.

At the time, Trump mocked DeSantis on his own platform, Truth Social. “My Red Button is bigger, better, stronger, and is working (TRUTH!)” Trump posted, “Yours does not.”

Ahead of Monday's event, Musk had written: “Am going to do some system scaling tests tonight & tomorrow in advance of the conversation.” X did not respond to requests for details or evidence of the alleged cyberattack.

Musk opened the event by asking Trump to describe his attempted assassination on July 13, in which his ear was struck by a bullet.

Musk, the world's richest person, endorsed Trump shortly after the shooting. He backed Democratic President Joe Biden in 2020 but has



Then-President Donald Trump passes Elon Musk before the planned launch of a SpaceX rocket on May 27, 2020, in Cape Canaveral, Fla. On Monday morning, Trump returned to X, the social media site owned by Musk, for the first time in a year. JONATHAN ERNST/REUTERS FILE

tacked rightward since.

Trump back on X

The interview was a fresh opportunity for Trump to seize the limelight at a time when his campaign is facing new headwinds.

His Democratic rival for the Nov. 5 election, Vice President Kamala Harris, has erased Trump's lead in opinion polls and energized Democratic voters with a series of high-energy rallies. Harris' momentum could get another boost from the Democratic National Convention next week in Chicago.

Trump returned to X, formerly known as Twitter, on Monday morning for the first time in a year, posting a video highlighting his claim without evidence that the four criminal prosecutions he faces are politically motivated.

He quickly followed with a half-dozen other posts, reviving an account that served as a main method of communication in previous campaigns and his four years in the White House, including his followers' Jan. 6 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Trump's last X message before Monday was posted in August 2023 appealing for donations and showing a mug shot taken after he was booked at an Atlanta jail in relation to felony charges tied to his attempts to overturn his 2020 election defeat in Georgia.

Trump's access to his account, @realDonaldTrump, was restored a month into Musk's ownership of X after being suspended by the platform's previous owners after the Jan. 6 attack, citing concerns he would incite violence.

Trump frequently posts on his Truth Social platform, which was launched in February 2022, but his posts there reach

a much smaller audience than on X.

The interview on Musk's social media platform allows Trump to reach a different audience than the conservative faithful who attend his rallies and watch his interviews on Fox News.

Some X users also reported seeing advertisements pop up supporting Trump. X and the Trump campaign did not immediately respond to a request for information on whether there had been a pro-Trump ad buy.

Advertisers have fled X since Musk bought it in 2022. X earlier this month sued a global advertising alliance and several major companies, accusing them of unlawfully conspiring to boycott the site and causing it to lose revenue.

Musk backs Trump

Musk, who heads electric car company Tesla, has started an external super PAC spending group to support Trump's campaign. The political action committee is now under investigation in Michigan for possible violations of state laws on gathering voter information.

Trump, a longstanding critic of electric vehicles, shifted gears after Musk's endorsement.

“I'm for electric cars. I have to be, because Elon endorsed me very strongly. So I have no choice,” Trump said at an early August rally.

United Auto Workers President Shawn Fein, campaigning in support of Harris, called Trump a “sellout.”

The Biden administration has worked to popularize electric vehicles through tax breaks and other support as part of its broader goal of reducing carbon emissions blamed for climate change.

Progressive

Continued from Page 1NN

omy, high debt levels and inflation are not limited to Republicans. Both Sen. Joe Manchin, a Democrat who registered as independent this year and represents heavily Republican West Virginia, and Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, who switched from Democrat to independent in 2023, blocked Biden's push to expand child tax credit.

The National Bureau on Economic Research, asked to assess those concerns, found a temporary child tax credit during the pandemic “had no meaningful impact on employment and labor force participation after six months of benefit distribution.”

Recent Supreme Court challenges to reforms enacted by the Federal Trade Commission, including a ban on “non-compete clauses,” show how hard it is to advance progressive policies, said Heidi Shierholz, who runs the left-leaning Economic Policy Institute.

“It feels like it's a heyday for progressive economics in terms of the public discourse, but there are so many obstacles in the path of actually seeing the realization.”

How have Democrats changed?

Progressivism formed the basis of Democratic president Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal of the 1930s before being sidelined from the 1980s. The bank-driven fiscal crisis beginning in 2008 renewed interest, and the idea got a boost when “The Squad” of progressive candidates was elected to Congress in 2018, and again when Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Bernie



Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz speaks during a campaign rally Aug. 9 in Glendale, Ariz. In Minnesota, Walz enacted free meals for all students regardless of income, and paid-for family and medical leave. ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES

Sanders sought the Democratic presidential nomination in 2020.

Biden, traditionally seen as a centrist, surprised many by stacking his economic brain trust with progressive advisers. For much of his career, he had backed pro-corporate policies as a senator from Delaware, a corporate haven.

What will Harris' policies look like?

Harris and Walz are expected to push “pragmatic progressivism,” which Democrats describe as a way to solve local problems faced by families. Harris has yet to present a complete platform but has renewed some of Biden's promises, including battling price gouging, making the expanded child tax credit permanent, and expanding access to child care.

In Minnesota, Walz enacted free meals for all students regardless of income, and paid-for family and medical leave. But unless Democrats take control of Congress, passing any of these ideas into law will be tough.

Harris and industry

Influential industry leaders and wealthy individuals are sure to oppose progressive policies.

Despite going after “corporate greed” and pushing for tougher regulation, Biden and Harris have won support from anti-Trump billionaires such as Reid Hoffman of LinkedIn; Seth Klarman, who runs the Baupost hedge fund; John Pritzker, whose family founded Hyatt hotels; and Barry Diller of Expedia.

However, Reid and Diller have asked Harris to replace FTC head Lina Khan if she wins in November, after Khan attacked corporate monopolies and price-gouging and sought to limit the power of Amazon, arguing they undermine U.S. families and workers.

What does Minnesota show?

Shierholz said Walz had overseen the strongest warehouse worker and refinery worker safety laws in the U.S., improved nursing home standards, and expanded bargaining rights for university employees, among other things. Yet Minnesota ranks only 29th for growth among U.S. states; growth in nonfarm payrolls has been less than 1% since Walz took office in 2019, far below the 5.8% national average.

On the positive side, unemployment during COVID was well below the national peak and incomes have grown 30% since Walz took office through the first quarter of 2024. Inflation also eased notably faster in the state's largest metro area than in the rest of the country, hitting 2.6% in May versus 3.3% nationally.

Walz also signed a substantial tax cut for individuals and companies, contributing to CNBC ranking Minnesota the sixth best state for business.

Putin: Incursion to aid Kyiv in talks

Zelenskyy says cross-border assault a matter of security

Guy Faulconbridge
REUTERS

MOSCOW – President Vladimir Putin said on Monday that Ukraine's biggest attack on Russian territory since the start of the war was aimed at improving Kyiv's negotiating position ahead of possible peace talks and at slowing the advance of Russian forces.

Ukrainian forces rammed through the Russian border last Tuesday and swept across some western parts of Russia's Kursk region, a surprise attack that laid bare the weakness of Russian border defenses in the area.

Putin, in his most detailed public remarks on the incursion to date, said Ukraine "with the help of its Western masters" was trying to improve its position ahead of possible talks.

He questioned what negotiations there could be with an enemy he accused of firing indiscriminately at Russian civilians and nuclear facilities.

"The main task, of course, is for the defense ministry to squeeze out, to knock out the enemy from our territories," Putin said, adding that Russian forces were accelerating their advance along the rest of the 620-mile main front.

"The enemy will certainly receive a worthy response," he said.

He also said he expected further Ukrainian attempts to destabilize Russia's western border.

In his nightly address on Monday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the war was now coming back to Russia after Moscow had taken fighting to other countries.

He said that Ukraine's cross-border assault was a matter of security for Ukraine and that Kyiv had captured areas from where Russia launched strikes.

His top commander, Oleksandr Syr-



In this photograph distributed by Russian state owned agency Sputnik, Russian President Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting to discuss the situation in the Kursk region on Monday outside Moscow. GAVRIIL GRIGOROV/POOL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

skyi, said: "We continue to conduct an offensive operation in the Kursk region. Currently, we control about 386 sq miles of the territory of the Russian Federation."

The acting governor of Kursk, Alexei Smirnov, said Ukraine controlled 28 settlements in the region, and the incursion was about 7.45 miles deep and 24.9 miles wide – an area that would amount to less than half of that cited by Syrskyi.

Crucial juncture

Russian officials say Ukraine is trying to show its Western backers that it can still muster major military operations just as pressure mounts on both Kyiv and Moscow to agree to talk about halting the war.

Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022 in what it termed a special military operation and now controls 18% of Ukrainian territory. Until the surprise attack on Russia, Ukraine had been losing territory to Russian forces despite hundreds of billions of dollars in U.S. and European support aimed at stopping and even reversing the Russian ad-

vance.

One Russian source with knowledge of official thinking said that by attacking Russia, Ukraine was emboldening Russian hardliners who argue that any ceasefire talks were a waste of time and that Russia should push much further into Ukraine.

As the war approaches the two-and-a-half year mark, both Russia and Ukraine have an eye on the U.S. presidential election in November. Kyiv is concerned that U.S. support could weaken if Republican Donald Trump wins.

Trump has said he would end the war, and both Russia and Ukraine are keen to gain the strongest possible bargaining position on the battlefield.

Reuters reported in February that Putin's suggestion of a cease-fire in Ukraine to freeze the war was rejected by the United States.

In June, Putin suggested possible terms including demands that Kyiv drop its NATO ambitions and withdraw all of its troops from four provinces claimed by Moscow.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba, after talks with China, said last

month that Kyiv was prepared for talks on the conflict with Russia provided Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity were fully respected.

Kyiv says it is the victim of an imperial-style land grab by Putin and says it must gain control over all the land it has lost to Russia. The West says it cannot allow Putin to win.

Intense fighting

The Ukrainian incursion is embarrassing for Putin's top military brass, which has repeatedly been criticized inside Russia by nationalists for its prosecution of the war.

Former Ukrainian defense minister Andriy Zagorodnyuk told Reuters that the operation looked to be aimed at distracting Russian forces and its leadership from the eastern fronts.

To counter it, Russia has been forced to mobilize reserves and declare an anti-terrorist lockdown in Kursk and two other regions, Bryansk and Belgorod.

Putin said on Monday that, despite the attack, "our armed forces are moving forward along the entire line of contact."

The Russian defense ministry said later that Russian forces had taken control of the settlement of Lysychne in the Donetsk region of Ukraine. Reuters could not independently verify battlefield claims.

In Russia's Belgorod region, which borders Kursk, thousands of civilians were evacuated from the Krasnaya Yaruga District due to fears of a Ukrainian attack.

Ukrainian forces in Kursk were trying to encircle Sudzha, where Russian natural gas flows into Ukraine, while major battles were under way near Korenevo, about 14 miles from the border, and Martynovka.

Since the Aug. 6 border incursion into Kursk, the Russian ruble has weakened, losing 6% of its value against the U.S. dollar. Russia's Gazprom said it would send nearly 1.4 billion cubic feet of gas to Europe via Ukraine on Monday.

Mideast

Continued from Page 1NN

that would provide cover for the occupation's aggression."

Two sources close to Hamas told Reuters the group was convinced the new call for talks was coordinated beforehand with Israel to deter responses from Iran and Hezbollah to the assassination of the group's chief, Ismail Haniyeh, in Tehran and a top Hezbollah leader in Lebanon.

"It is a mild rejection, you can say. Should Hamas receive a workable plan, an Israeli positive response to the proposal it had accepted, things may change, but so far Hamas believes Netanyahu isn't serious about reaching a deal," said one Palestinian official close to the mediation effort.

Hamas' reaction to the talks came as preparations for a larger scale confrontation grew, with Washington ordering a guided missile submarine to the Middle East and the Abraham Lincoln strike group accelerating its deployment to the region.

US prepared for major attacks

The U.S. has prepared for what could be significant attacks by Iran or its proxies in the Middle East as soon as this week, White House national security spokesperson John Kirby said on Monday.

Kirby said the U.S. had increased its regional force posture and shared Israel's concerns about a possible Iranian-backed attack after Iran and Palestinian Islamist group Hamas accused Israel of carrying out the assassination of a Hamas leader in Tehran last month.

"We share the same concerns and expectations that our Israeli counterparts have with respect to potential timing here. Could be this week," Kirby told reporters.

"We have to be prepared for what could be a significant set of attacks," he said.

Israel has been braced for a major attack since last month when a missile killed 12 youngsters in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights and Israel responded by killing a senior Hezbollah commander in Beirut.

Palestinian gunman fatally shot

A Palestinian opened fire at an Israeli civilian who entered the occupied West Bank city of Qalqilya, wounding him and two Palestinians, before being killed by Israeli troops, the military said



Flames rise after an Israeli strike on a residential building on Sunday in Gaza City, in this screen grab taken from a video. REUTERS TV VIA REUTERS

on Monday.

The Palestinian Health Ministry identified the shooter as an 18-year-old from the area. A photograph from his social media account shows him wearing a military-style uniform and holding an assault rifle and ammunition.

The Islamist group Hamas said the attacker was one of its members.

Violence in the West Bank, already on the rise before the war in Gaza started last fall, has escalated further, with stepped-up Israeli military raids, settler violence and Palestinian street attacks.

Hamas: Hostage killed; 2 injured

One Israeli male hostage was killed by his guard and two female captives were seriously wounded in two separate incidents in Gaza, the spokesperson for Hamas' armed al-Qassam Brigades, Abu Ubaida, said on Monday.

Abu Ubaida blamed the incident on what he described as Israeli "massacres" against Palestinians.

"The enemy government bears full responsibility for these massacres and the resulting reactions that affect the lives of Zionist prisoners," Abu Ubaida said in a statement posted on Telegram.

Starmer warns against escalation

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer held a call with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Monday, asking him to refrain from attacking Israel and saying that war was not in anyone's interest, the prime minister's office said.

Starmer spoke with Pezeshkian as part of de-escalation efforts to ease tensions in the Middle East. Recent killings of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Iran and Hezbollah military commander Fuad Shukr in Beirut have drawn threats of retaliation against Israel.

France

Continued from Page 1NN

far-right National Rally has proven tricky.

After days of political dealmaking that went nowhere after the July 7 vote, Macron declared a political truce for the duration of the Games, giving himself until around mid-August to name a prime minister and let political parties negotiate.

The mysterious sabotage on railway and telecoms targets at the start of the Games seemed like an ominous portent, but after that, the event carried on with no further security scares.

Macron decamped to his presidential retreat on the French Riviera, with a few incursions into Paris, including for a long hug with French judo titan Teddy Riner after he clinched his fourth career gold.

While many in France followed the tribulations of the Lebruns, two ping-pong-playing brothers, or cheered on star swimmer Leon Marchand, politicians have been plotting a way out of the crisis.

Now, Macron will need to make a decision. But he seemed in no rush on Monday.

In an interview with sports daily L'Equipe, he gave no hint of who or when he would name someone but said: "All those who did not believe in the Games were wrong."

"Often, when you switch the TV on or read a newspaper, there is talk of decline. The French have rediscovered they can do great things together," he said, adding he hoped to capitalize on that goodwill to bridge political divisions.

It remains to be seen whether he can draw any political dividend, but his fiercest opponents, far-right leader Marine Le Pen and leftist Jean-Luc Melenchon have at least had to mute their criticism during the Games.

Decision time

So far, Macron has ignored the candidate agreed on by the left-wing alliance, the New Popular Front, which came out on top in the elections but has yet to make overtures to other parties to garner a majority.

Despite efforts to bolster her profile, the chosen candidate, Lucie Castets, remains a political unknown.

"Who is she?" said Zahera Dakkar, 41, after watching the volleyball final at Club France. "I haven't followed politics for two weeks. The Games were an

escape from all that."

Castets' hopes of the left taking Matignon, the prime minister's official residence, appear slim. Macron believes the vote delivered a National Assembly whose "center of gravity is in the center or the center-right," a source close to him said.

"We need a personality capable of talking to the center, the right and the left. From the socially-minded right to the left that care about law and order," said the source, who declined to be named to discuss the president's thinking.

Xavier Bertrand, a former conservative minister under ex-President Jacques Chirac who has had tough words against Macron but has collaborated constructively with his government in his northern region fiefdom, could be compatible, the source said.

Bernard Cazeneuve, a former prime minister under Socialist President Francois Hollande, who was in office at the time of the 2015 Islamist attacks in Paris, could also work, the source said. Neither man's office returned a request for comment.

Budget challenge

Whoever Macron names will face a tough job, with parliamentary approval of the 2025 budget top of the in-tray at a time when France is under pressure from the European Commission and bond markets to reduce its deficit.

"If Macron tries to name a sort of rightist government, he will get no budget," said Eric Coquerel, the leftist head of the finance committee in parliament.

Macron's entourage is keen to use the Games, organized by a centrist president, a Socialist mayor and a conservative regional leader, as an example of what France can do when different sides come together.

His rivals want to make sure the president gets no credit, Sen. Laure Darcos told Reuters.

Even if Macron's domestic fortunes remain bleak, the Games have bolstered his international standing.

Michael Payne, a former IOC marketing chief, said the president is seen from abroad as "the leader who delivered," but he believed Macron had made a strategic mistake by calling the snap election before the Olympics rather than after.

At Club France, where families stood in line to take selfies with the Olympic torch or snapped up fluffy red mascots, it was hard to find anyone who wanted to talk politics.

"Please, no!" said Frant, a French flag around her neck.

SPORTS **EXTRA**

MLB



Mookie Betts returned to the Dodgers' lineup on Monday night against the Brewers at American Family Field in Milwaukee. STACY REVERE/GETTY IMAGES

MOOKIE'S BACK IN A BIG WAY

Mookie Betts went deep in his return from the injured list to lift the visiting Los Angeles Dodgers to a 5-2 victory over the Milwaukee Brewers on Monday. Betts, who hadn't played since June 16 due to a fractured left hand, struck out in his first at-bat, but he put the Dodgers up 2-0 in the third with a two-run homer, his 11th long ball of the season. **ROUNDUP. PAGE 4NS**

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Ohio State tops USA TODAY Sports preseason All-America team

USA TODAY

Every preseason All-America team begins with a debate at quarterback.

Georgia senior Carson Beck gets the nod as the first-team starter in the USA TODAY Sports preseason All-America team after throwing for 3,941 yards and 24 touchdowns in 2023, followed by second-team pick Dillon Gabriel. After starting his career at Central Florida and spending two years at Oklahoma, Gabriel takes over a loaded roster at Oregon as the Ducks step into the Big Ten.

The first and second teams are heavy on players from Ohio State. The Buckeyes lead all Bowl Subdivision teams with seven total selections, including first-team picks in running back Quinshon Judkins, offensive guard Donovan Jackson, cornerback Denzel Burke and safety Caleb Downs.

Four other programs placed at least three players in Georgia (four), Notre Dame (four), Alabama (four) and Oregon (three).

The preseason All-America teams were selected by a 19-person panel drawn from the USA TODAY Sports Network.

First team

OFFENSE

QB: Carson Beck, Georgia (Sr.)

While the Bulldogs fell short of the national championship in Beck's debut, he outperformed former starter Stetson Bennett in most major statistical categories to establish himself as the favorite for the Heisman Trophy and the top spot in next year's NFL draft.

RB: Ollie Gordon II, Oklahoma State (Jr.)

See **TEAM**, Page 3NS



Ohio State running back Quinshon Judkins runs during the team's spring football game at Ohio Stadium.

BARBARA J. PERENIC/COLUMBUS DISPATCH

MLB

Red Sox star Duran suspended for 2 games

Gabe Lacques
USA TODAY

The Boston Red Sox suspended Jarren Duran for two games on Monday after the All-Star outfielder directed a homophobic slur at a fan during Sunday's game at Fenway Park.

Duran, 27, uttered a profanity and homophobic epithet toward a fan seated behind home plate. His response to the heckler was picked up by a field mic and was audible on NESN's broadcast of Boston's 10-2 loss to the Houston Astros. He later apologized in a statement released by the team.

He becomes the most recent player who has been suspended for an on-field slur or inappropriate language. The Red Sox announced that his discipline came "in consultation with Major League Baseball."

In 2022, now-retired infielder Josh Donaldson was suspended for a game for calling White Sox shortstop Tim An-



Boston Red Sox outfielder Jarren Duran apologized for his homophobic slur directed at a fan. JEROME MIRON/USA TODAY SPORTS

person "Jackie." Others have received two-game suspensions by either their team or the league for homophobic slurs; then-Blue Jays outfielder Kevin Pillar, like Duran, was suspended by the

team.

Duran's suspension will begin with Monday night's game against the Texas Rangers and the Red Sox said his salary from the two-game ban will be donated

to PFLAG (Federation of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), an LGBTQ advocacy, education and support group.

Duran was the MVP of the All-Star Game last month after hitting a go-ahead two-run homer. He leads the American League with 36 doubles and the majors with 13 triples, and has produced a career-best .853 OPS this season.

"During (today's) game, I used a truly horrific word when responding to a fan," Duran said in a statement released to Boston media by the club. "I feel awful knowing how many people I offended and disappointed. I apologize to the entire Red Sox organization, but more importantly to the entire LGBTQ community. Our young fans are supposed to be able to look up to me as a role model, but tonight I fell far short of that responsibility. I will use this opportunity to educate myself and my teammates and to grow as a person."

NFL

Jets shoot down Reddick's trade request

Michael Middlehurst-Schwartz
USA TODAY

Haason Reddick wants the New York Jets to trade him. The team made it clear it has no intent to deal the disgruntled pass rusher amid a holdout and push for a long-term contract.

Jets general manager Joe Douglas said in a statement the franchise will not grant Reddick's trade request just four months after the team acquired the two-time Pro Bowl selection from the Philadelphia Eagles.

In exchange for Reddick, the Jets gave up a conditional third-round draft pick in 2026 that can become a second-rounder.

"We have informed Haason that we will not trade him, that he is expected to be here with his teammates, and that he will continue to be fined per the CBA if

he does not report," Douglas said. "Since the trade discussions back in March we have been clear, direct and consistent with our position. Our focus will remain on the guys we have here as we prepare for the regular season."

Reddick, 29, has emerged as one of the NFL's most prolific edge rushers, compiling 27 sacks in the last two years with the Eagles. But he is facing more than \$1 million in fines from the Jets after not reporting to training camp. Reddick is set to earn \$14.25 million in base salary this season.

The Jets were counting on Reddick to play a significant role in pressuring opposing quarterbacks after the team lost Bryce Huff, who led New York with 10 sacks in 2023, to the Eagles in free agency. The team also traded veteran defensive end John Franklin-Myers to the Denver Broncos in late April.



The Jets added Haason Reddick, a two-time Pro Bowl selection, in a trade from the Eagles. BILL STREICHER/USA TODAY SPORTS



Quarterback Aaron Rodgers' return this fall gives the Jets a shot at ending the NFL's longest playoff drought.

JOHN JONES/USA TODAY SPORTS

Rodgers regrets comment about being 'immunized'

Lorenzo Reyes
USA TODAY

New York Jets quarterback Aaron Rodgers said he regrets misleading comments he made during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic about his vaccination status.

In an unauthorized biography titled "Out of the Darkness: The Mystery of Aaron Rodgers" that will be released next week, Rodgers admitted that he regretted his comments made in August 2021, when he was a member of the Green Bay Packers, that he had been "immunized" against the virus. His statement came in response to a question asking if he had been vaccinated, leading to the widespread belief that he had been vaccinated.

Rodgers later tested positive for COVID-19 in November 2021, triggering the NFL's protocols for quarantine and time away from football. Since the protocols were different and more rigorous for unvaccinated players, Rodgers' facing stiffer requirements revealed that he had in fact not been vaccinated.

"If there's one thing I wish could have gone different, it's that, because that's the only thing (critics) could hit me with," Rodgers said in the book, according to ESPN.

After testing positive, Rodgers made one of his regularly scheduled appearances on "The Pat McAfee Show" and attempted to explain his reasoning. He said then that he learned he was allergic to polyethylene glycol, an ingredient in the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines. He also said he had concerns about the Johnson & Johnson vaccines after reports surfaced of adverse reactions and side effects.

"But if I could do it again, I would have said (in August), (expletive) the appeal. I'm just going to tell them I'm allergic to PEG, I'm not getting Johnson & Johnson, I'm not going to be vaxxed," Rodgers said in the book.

In April 2023, the Packers traded Rodgers to the Jets, the team owned by Woody Johnson, an heir to the Johnson & Johnson pharmaceutical who previously served as chairman and CEO of the company.

"I had an immunization card from my holistic doctor, which looked similar," Rodgers said. "I wasn't trying to pawn it off as a vaccine card, but I said, 'Listen, here's my protocol. Here's what you can follow to look this up.' And it was an on-going appeal. So, if I had just said (I was unvaccinated) in the moment, there's no chance that the appeal would have been handled the exact same way."

NOTEBOOK

Jones to holdout WR: 'CeeDee, you're missed'

WIRE REPORTS

The Dallas Cowboys and CeeDee Lamb aren't making much progress on a new contract, but team owner Jerry Jones did have a message Sunday for the All-Pro wide receiver: "CeeDee, you're missed."

Speaking on the pregame show for the Cowboys' preseason opener against the Los Angeles Rams, Jones expounded on his comments last week that the team "doesn't have a sense of urgency" to get Lamb signed to a contract extension.

While acknowledging "the angst that's happening," as Lamb continues to accrue fines for missing training camp, Jones remained firm in his negotiating stance. "But you're not missed out here competing and it doesn't put any pressure any place on us."

Still playing on his rookie deal, the fifth-year veteran is seeking a new contract that would make him one of the NFL's highest-paid wide receivers. Several other wideouts have already signed lucrative deals this offseason — with the Minnesota Vikings' Justin Jefferson topping out on a four-year, \$140 million pact.

Lamb also skipped the team's voluntary offseason program and its mandatory June minicamp. He could face fines of nearly \$1 million, though they can be rescinded at the team's discretion.

Lamb had the best season of his career in 2023, leading the NFL with 135 receptions, while amassing 1,749 receiving yards and 12 touchdowns.

No surgery for Chiefs WR Brown

The shoulder injury that sent Kansas City wide receiver Marquise Brown to the hospital this weekend will not require surgery, Chiefs coach Andy Reid confirmed Monday. Brown, 27, was discharged from a Jacksonville-area hospital Sunday morning after dislocating the sternoclavicular joint in his left shoulder in Saturday's 26-13 preseason loss to the Jaguars.

Brown, who is now back in Kansas City, was hurt on the Chiefs' first offensive play of the game. He made the catch for 11 yards.

Brown signed a one-year, \$7 million deal with Kansas City as a free agent in March. He had 51 catches for 574 yards and four touchdowns in 14 games (all starts) last season for the Arizona Cardinals.

Browns QB Watson to play in preseason finale

Browns quarterback Deshaun Watson plans to play in Cleveland's preseason finale on Aug. 24, in what would be his first game action since Nov. 12, coach Kevin Stefanski said Monday.

Watson suited up and warmed up with teammates but didn't play in the preseason opener last week, a 23-10 loss to the Green Bay Packers.

Stefanski said the "plan" for Watson is to play Aug. 24 against the Seahawks but not play Saturday against the Minnesota Vikings in Cleveland's second preseason game of the summer. But Watson is the No. 1 quarterback in joint



Cowboys holdout CeeDee Lamb is a three-time Pro Bowl wide receiver who earned first-team All Pro honors for the first time in 2023.

NATHAN RAY SEEBECK/USA TODAY SPORTS

practices with the Vikings this week.

"He'll get the vast majority of the reps; again, not playing in the game on Saturday night, so he'll get his work done versus them in a controlled setting," Stefanski said Monday.

Watson is recovering from offseason shoulder surgery and was inactive for 11 games in 2023 due to injuries.

Jaguars S Wingard likely to miss first few games of season

Jacksonville Jaguars safety Andrew Wingard is expected to miss the first few games of the regular season because of a knee injury, coach Doug Pederson said Monday.

Wingard injured his knee in a collision with running back Tank Bigsby on July 30 at training camp.

"I don't want to put (Wingard) in a box or label him," Pederson told reporters. "But you know, it'll definitely be some time. At least the first few games, possibly."

Wingard, 27, is a key player on special teams and made 45 tackles and one interception, forced one fumble and defended two passes in 17 games (two starts) last season. In five seasons in Jacksonville, he has 250 tackles, two sacks, five interceptions, nine passes defended and three forced fumbles in 78 games (26 starts).

The Jacksonville added to their depth at safety with their announcement Sunday that they have signed veteran safety Tashaun Gipson Sr. Gipson reportedly agreed to a one-year deal with the club.

Bills sign QB DiNucci

The Buffalo Bills on Monday signed Ben DiNucci to serve as their third-string quarterback after Shane Buechele injured his neck in Saturday's preseason game against the Chicago Bears.

Buechele went 6-for-10 passing for 53 yards and an interception in Buffalo's 33-6 loss to Chicago. Bills coach Sean McDermott did not reveal the extent of the injury but said Buechele played through it.

Now the 26-year-old will miss an "extended amount of time."

Buechele, who split his collegiate career between Texas and SMU, was a backup quarterback for the Kansas City Chiefs in 2021 and 2022 prior to signing with Buffalo's practice squad in August 2023. He has yet to enter a reg-

ular-season game.

DiNucci, 27, is best known for playing three games and making one start for the Dallas Cowboys in 2020, after Dak Prescott suffered an ankle fracture and dislocation.

DiNucci completed 23 of 43 passes for 219 yards in those three games and hasn't played a regular-season game since. He's since played in the XFL and served as a practice-squad player for the Denver Broncos.

Bengals OT Mims out with strained pec

Bengals rookie right tackle Amarius Mims will miss several weeks with a strained pectoral muscle, Cincinnati coach Zac Taylor confirmed Monday.

The 6-foot-8, 340-pound Mims was selected in the first round (18th overall) of the 2024 NFL Draft out of Georgia.

Taylor said Mims, 21, will not require surgery.

"It's unfortunate he'll miss several weeks, but we expect him to make a full recovery and be ready to roll," Taylor said.

Mims had been taking the majority of the first-team reps in training camp over veteran right tackle Trent Brown, 31.

The Bengals continue the preseason on Saturday at Chicago. They open the regular season at home against the New England Patriots on Sept. 8.

Giants rookie WR Nabers is sore but 'OK'

New York Giants rookie wide receiver Malik Nabers' ankle is sore but does not appear to be broken, head coach Brian Daboll said Monday.

"I'm not going to get into too much of the details. I think he's OK," Daboll said, adding that the first-round pick is day-to-day and will sit out practice Monday.

Nabers, 21, limped off the field with a left ankle injury toward the end of practice on Sunday morning.

"I don't think it's fractured," Daboll added. "He just twisted it up a little bit. It wasn't on contact or anything like that, but again, he's a little sore today."

Nabers was the sixth overall pick in the 2024 NFL Draft out of LSU, where he had 89 catches for 1,569 yards and 14 touchdowns in 13 games last season.

Falcons S Hellams to miss 'significant time'

The Atlanta Falcons are reportedly hosting free agent safety Justin Simmons amid the update that second-year safety Demarco Hellams is going to miss "significant time" with an ankle injury sustained over the weekend.

Falcons head coach Raheem Morris gave the update on Hellams on Monday after he injured his ankle in Friday's 20-13 loss to the Miami Dolphins. Hellams sustained the injury on the second defensive play of the game. Simmons is visiting the club Monday and Tuesday, NFL Network reported.

Hellams, 24, was expected to compete with Richie Grant for a starting position opposite Pro Bowl selection Jessie Bates III.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

5 thoughts after seeing preseason polls



Blake Toppmeyer
SEC Columnist
USA TODAY NETWORK

Coaches think a lot like sportswriters – at least when ranking teams in the preseason.

The same 25 teams are ranked in the preseason US LBM Coaches Poll and AP Top 25 Poll. The ordering of teams is nearly identical, too. The top seven teams are ordered the same way in each: Georgia, Ohio State, Oregon, Texas, Alabama, Ole Miss and Notre Dame.

The rest of the polls are in near lock-step, too. Nine SEC teams are ranked within the top 20 of each poll:

- No. 1 Georgia
- No. 4 Texas
- No. 5 Alabama
- No. 6 Ole Miss
- No. 11 Missouri
- No. 12/13 (coaches/AP) LSU
- No. 15 Tennessee
- No. 16 Oklahoma
- No. 20 Texas A&M

Here are some observations after evaluating these polls:

SEC establishes early lead on Big Ten

The Big Ten joins the SEC in having multiple national championship contenders, but in terms of conference depth, the BIG is more akin to the Big 12 than it is to the SEC.

Six Big Ten teams are ranked. No. 25 Iowa pulls up the rear in each poll. Comparatively, the Big 12 has five ranked teams. The Big Ten flexes its muscle as a “Super Two” conference at the top, though, with four top-10 teams.

The SEC’s depth makes for a thornier path to the playoff for its teams, but it



Kirby Smart's Georgia Bulldogs face Clemson in Atlanta on Aug. 31.

BRETT DAVIS/USA TODAY SPORTS

also increases the conference’s chance of outdueling the Big Ten for the most playoff bids.

Six SEC teams are ranked within the top 13 of each poll. Eight are ranked in the top 16 of each.

The SEC rolls deeper than the BIG.

Key September games materialize involving SEC teams

A handful of games within the season’s first four weeks will shed light on which teams will be playoff contenders and which are pretenders.

Among them (rankings are from coaches’ poll):

- No. 1 Georgia vs. No. 14 Clemson (Atlanta), Aug. 31
- No. 7 Notre Dame at No. 20 Texas A&M, Aug. 31
- No. 12 LSU vs. No. 23 Southern Cal (Las Vegas), Sept. 1
- No. 4 Texas at No. 8 Michigan, Sept. 7
- No. 15 Tennessee at No. 16 Oklahoma, Sept. 21

Memphis, Boise State headline Group of Five playoff race

No Group of Five teams are ranked, but the 12-team playoff format guaran-

tees a spot for one team not in the SEC, Big Ten, ACC or Big 12.

The AAC’s Memphis and Boise State of the Mountain West are frontrunners for that spot. The selection committee will decide which conference champion not from the Power Four is most deserving of a playoff spot.

Boise State’s schedule offers opportunities to stand out. The Broncos will play at No. 3 Oregon, along with games against former Pac-12 members Washington State and Oregon State.

Memphis’ game at Florida State will be key. The Tigers don’t need to beat FSU to make the playoff, but being competitive in that game would showcase of Memphis’ credentials.

How Notre Dame, Big Ten affect Big 12, ACC

No. 10 FSU is the only team from either the ACC or Big 12 ranked inside the top 10. That indicates that each conference has ground to make up to qualify multiple playoff teams.

Here are factors that would work in favor of the ACC and Big 12:

1. Notre Dame fizzles and doesn’t claim a bid.
2. The Big Ten earns no more than three total bids. No. 2 Ohio State, No. 3

Oregon and No. 9 Penn State drew favorable schedules. Michigan finds a tougher path, especially if it loses to Texas in Week 2.

3. The Big 12 or ACC runner-up has only one loss, suffered in the conference championship game.

Combine those three factors, and the ACC or Big 12 probably would qualify multiple teams.

But, if Notre Dame nabs a bid, the Big Ten qualifies four and the ACC and Big 12 runners-up have at least two losses, those leagues might be relegated to one-bid status.

Could the SEC qualify more than five teams? Possibly

Technically, the SEC can qualify up to eight playoff teams. Four spots are earmarked for other conferences. Surely, though, the Big Ten will have multiple qualifiers, and perhaps the ACC and Big 12, too. Notre Dame profiles as an at-large contender.

I’ve consistently maintained that, realistically, five bids might be about the max for the SEC.

But, consider this: All nine of the SEC’s preseason ranked teams could finish with no more than two losses. Yes, that’s mathematically possible – nine ranked teams at 10-2 or better.

While it’s remarkably far-fetched to think this would happen, it’s much more reasonable to think the SEC would finish with, say, six teams with no more than two losses.

What then? Would the SEC seize more than five bids, or would a two-loss SEC team be left out? Strength of schedule would be a factor, and strength of schedule debates usually favor the SEC.

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Team

Continued from Page 1NS

RB: Quinshon Judkins, Ohio State (Jr.)

Gordon (1,732 yards in 2023) will make a run at becoming the third player in program history to crack the 2,000-yard mark. Judkins (1,158 yards and 15 touchdowns) transferred from Mississippi to give Ohio State the best backfield pairing in the country, joining second-team All-America pick TreVeyon Henderson.

WR: Tetairoa McMillian, Arizona (Jr.)

WR: Luther Burden III, Missouri (Jr.)
TE: Colston Loveland, Michigan (Jr.)
McMillian (90 reception for 1,402 yards) is the only returning Power Four receiver to average over 100 receiving yards per game last season. Burden (86 for 1,212) has blossomed into a star and matched his status as one of the top recruits in program history. Loveland (45 for 649) will take on an even more important role for Michigan’s new starting quarterback, whomever that may be.

OT: Will Campbell, LSU (Jr.)

OT: Kelvin Banks Jr., Texas (Jr.)

OG: Tate Ratledge, Georgia (Sr.)

OG: Donovan Jackson, Ohio State (Sr.)

C: Parker Brailsford, Alabama (So.)

Campbell anchors an offensive line that paced the way for the nation’s top scoring offense (45.5 points per game). As Quinn Ewers’ blind-side protector, Banks is one of the most important pieces behind the Longhorns’ quest for the national title. A third-year starter, Ratledge helped Georgia rank first in the SEC last season in sacks allowed per game. Jackson is a two-time All-Big Ten pick who carries a 26-game starting streak into 2024. One of the most promising young players in the country, Brailsford followed new coach Kalen DeBoer from Washington after an all-conference rookie season.

P: Alex Mastromanno, Florida State (Sr.)

K: Graham Nicholson, Alabama (Sr.)
Mastromanno averaged a career-best 45.5 yards per punt in 2023 to become the first Ray Guy Award finalist in program history. Nicholson (27 of 28 on field goals) was the only kicker in the FBS last season to make more than 20 field goals with just one miss.

DEFENSE

DE: James Pearce, Tennessee (Jr.)

DE: Ashton Gillotte, Louisville (Sr.)

DT: Mason Graham, Michigan (Jr.)

DT: Howard Cross III, Notre Dame



Colorado cornerback Travis Hunter (12) intercepts a pass against UCLA in the first half at Rose Bowl.

KIRBY LEE/USA TODAY SPORTS

(Sr.)

Pearce (10 sacks and 14½ tackles for loss) looks like the next great defensive end in Tennessee history. Gillotte (11 sacks) will finish in the top three in school history in career sacks with another all-conference season. With eye-opening explosiveness and athleticism that belies his 320-pound frame, Graham (7½ tackles for loss) is an absurdly disruptive interior lineman. Cross (66 tackles) sets the tone for a defense that could be even better after finishing fifth nationally in yards per game.

LB: Harold Perkins, LSU (Jr.)

LB: Jay Higgins, Iowa (Sr.)

LB: Danny Stutsman, Oklahoma (Sr.)

Perkins has already accumulated 27 tackles for loss through two years and may be only beginning to crack into his loaded skill set. Higgins (171 tackles) is fresh off one of the most productive seasons for a defender in program history. After weighing the NFL draft, Stutsman (16 tackles for loss) opted for another year at OU and gives the Sooners an all-conference difference maker to ease the defense’s transition to the SEC.

CB: Will Johnson, Michigan (Jr.)

CB: Denzel Burke, Ohio State (Jr.)

S: Malaki Starks, Georgia (Jr.)

S: Caleb Downs, Ohio State (So.)

Johnson (four interceptions) may not

leapfrog over Charles Woodson to be viewed as the best cornerback in program history, but he’s building a case for being placed alongside the former Heisman winner as the top defensive backs to come through Ann Arbor. Also in the Big Ten, Burke is a stopper on the outside who routinely draws the Buckeyes’ toughest assignments. Starks (52 tackles and three interceptions) was a day-one starter for the Bulldogs who continues to ratchet up his game. After a superb rookie year, Downs (107 tackles) left for Ohio State as the most impactful transfer of the offseason.

Returner: Zachariah Branch, Southern California (So.)

All-Purpose: Travis Hunter, Colorado (Jr.)

Branch (20.8 yards per punt return and two combined return touchdowns) is a game-changing returner set to take on a bigger role in the Trojans’ passing game. Hunter (721 receiving yards, three interceptions) does it all for the Buffaloes.

Second team

OFFENSE

QB: Dillon Gabriel, Oregon (Sr.)

RB: Omarion Hampton, North Carolina (Jr.)

RB: TreVeyon Henderson, Ohio State (Sr.)

WR: Emeka Egbuka, Ohio State (Sr.)

WR: Tez Johnson, Oregon (Sr.)

TE: Brant Kuithe, Utah (Sr.)

OT: Ajani Cornelius, Oregon (Sr.)

OT: Wyatt Millum, West Virginia (Sr.)

OG: Tyler Booker, Alabama (Jr.)

OG: Clay Webb, Jacksonville State (Sr.)

C: Cooper Mays, Tennessee (Sr.)

P: James Ferguson-Reynolds, Boise State (Jr.)

K: Andrew Borregales, Miami (Sr.)

DEFENSE

DE: Mykel Williams, Georgia (Jr.)

DE: Nic Scourton, Texas A&M (Jr.)

DT: Tyleik Williams, Ohio State (Sr.)

DT: Deone Walker, Kentucky (Jr.)

LB: Deontae Lawson, Alabama (Jr.)

LB: Nick Martin, Oklahoma State (Jr.)

LB: Barrett Carter, Clemson (Sr.)

CB: Benjamin Morrison, Notre Dame (Jr.)

CB: Travis Hunter, Colorado (Jr.)

S: Xavier Watts, Notre Dame (Sr.)

S: Dillon Thieneman, Purdue (So.)

Returner: Jayden Harrison, Notre Dame (Sr.)

All-Purpose: Barion Brown, Kentucky (Jr.)

MLB

MONDAY'S ROUNDUP

Betts helps Dodgers top Brewers

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Mookie Betts went deep in his return from the injured list and Shohei Ohtani took over the National League home run lead to lift the visiting Los Angeles Dodgers to a 5-2 victory over the Milwaukee Brewers on Monday in the opener of a four-game series.

Clayton Kershaw (1-2), in his fourth start since coming off the IL after recovering from offseason surgery on his left shoulder, allowed three hits before departing with two outs and one on in the sixth.

William Contreras greeted reliever Joe Kelly with his 14th homer of the year to pull Milwaukee within 4-2. Kelly then gave up back-to-back singles but escaped the jam by fanning Rhys Hoskins.

White Sox 12, Yankees 2

Gavin Sheets went 4-for-5 with four RBIs, Andrew Vaughn added four hits and Korey Lee and Brooks Baldwin homered to lead the host Chicago White Sox to a rout of the New York Yankees.

The White Sox out-hit the Yankees 18-9 as Chicago interim manager Grady Sizemore earned his first win since assuming the role after the team fired manager Pedro Grifol last Thursday. Chicago collected a season-high 10 extra-base hits en route to its first home win since July 10.

New York stranded 16 runners and finished 2-for-18 with men in scoring position. The Yankees fell a half-game behind the idle Baltimore Orioles for the American League East lead.

Guardians 9, Cubs 8

Josh Naylor chopped a tiebreaking single in the eighth inning and Jhonkensy Noel homered twice as the host Cleveland Guardians cooled off the surging Chicago Cubs.

In a wild affair, Cleveland trailed 3-0 early, then rallied for an 8-3 lead, only to see the Cubs score five runs between the seventh and eighth innings to tie it.

Ian Happ hit a two-run homer in the third off Cleveland starter Ben Lively, who lasted just 3⅓ innings, and Pete Crow-Armstrong went deep against him in the fourth. However, Shota Imanaga allowed seven runs – three earned – and seven hits over five innings as Chicago lost for just the third time in 11 games.

Astros 6, Rays 1

Yainer Diaz's three-run homer to cap a four-run third inning helped the Houston Astros win their sixth straight game, topping the Tampa Bay Rays in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Alex Bregman popped a solo homer, while Yordan Alvarez went 2-for-5 with a double, two runs and an RBI. Jeremy Pena (hit by pitch) and Jose Altuve (run) had two hits apiece as the Astros improved to 6-1 on their nine-game road trip.

Tampa Bay's Taylor Walls went 2-for-3 with a triple, double and a run, but the Rays produced just four hits and lost for the fifth time in the past seven games.

Reds 6, Cardinals 1

Spencer Steer hit two home runs and drove in a career-high five runs and Elly De La Cruz homered and doubled to lead the host Cincinnati Reds to a victory over the St. Louis Cardinals in the opener of a three-game series.

It was the first multi-homer game of Steer's career. Jake Fraley singled, walked and stole two bases and also scored twice for Cincinnati, which won its second straight game.

Paul Goldschmidt doubled and singled for St. Louis, which lost its second game in a row. Sonny Gray (11-7), who struck out five of the first six batters he faced, would up permitting six runs, tying a season-high, on five hits over five innings. He walked two and fanned nine.

Twins 8, Royals 3

Willi Castro hit a three-run homer, Royce Lewis hit a two-run shot, and the Minnesota Twins pulled away for a win over the Kansas City Royals in Minneapolis.

Austin Martin, Matt Wallner and Manuel Margot chipped in one RBI apiece for Minnesota, which won the opener of a three-game series.

Bobby Witt Jr. homered for the Royals. Kyle Isbel and Adam Frazier added



Dodgers DH Shohei Ohtani rounds the bases after hitting a home run against the Brewers in the fifth inning at American Family Field. MICHAEL MCLOONE/USA TODAY SPORTS



White Sox outfielder Gavin Sheets hits an RBI double against the Yankees during the first inning at Guaranteed Rate Field. KAMIL KRZACZYNSKI/USA TODAY SPORTS

one RBI apiece for the Royals, who dropped to 2-6 against the Twins this season.

Red Sox 5, Rangers 4, 10 innings

Rob Refsnyder hit a walk-off single to center field with the bases loaded in the 10th inning as the Boston Red Sox beat the visiting Texas Rangers.

Boston overcame leaving 15 runners on base, striking out 15 times and going just 3-for-13 with runners in scoring position to break a four-game losing skid.

Corey Seager went 2-for-4 with a two-run homer for Texas, which has lost five of its past six games.

Blue Jays 4, Angels 2

Bowden Francis retired 21 of the 22 batters he faced in seven innings and Will Wagner had a sparkling major league debut, leading the Toronto Blue

Jays to a victory over the Los Angeles Angels in Anaheim, Calif.

Outside of allowing a third-inning solo shot by Mickey Moniak, Francis (5-3) was perfect, striking out eight without issuing a walk in an 81-pitch outing.

The Angels finished with just two hits in the game, both solo home runs. Jo Adell hit his team-leading 18th homer of the season in the ninth inning against Toronto closer Chad Green.

Padres 2, Pirates 1

Xander Bogaerts knocked in the go-ahead run in the seventh inning and five San Diego pitchers teamed up for a win as the Padres edged the visiting Pittsburgh Pirates.

Jeremiah Estrada (4-2), the third Padres pitcher, worked out of a two-on, two-out jam in the top of the seventh for the win. Tanner Scott struck out three in

a row after Oneil Cruz's leadoff double in the eighth, and Robert Suarez allowed a run the ninth but still logged his 26th save in 29 chances.

Pirates starter Jake Woodford (0-4) lasted six-plus innings, the longest outing of his 86 major league games, but absorbed a tough-luck loss. The right-hander allowed just three hits and a run with no walks and two strikeouts.

Diamondbacks 5, Rockies 4

Corbin Carroll and Kevin Newman scored on consecutive wild pitches in the seventh inning as the Arizona Diamondbacks rallied from a three-run deficit to beat the Colorado Rockies in Phoenix.

Jake McCarthy had two hits and two RBIs for Arizona, which won its fourth straight and moved a season-high 14 games over .500.

Brendan Rodgers hit a two-run homer for Colorado, which lost for the fourth time in its last six games.

Braves 1, Giants 0, 10 innings

Pinch hitter Travis d'Arnaud drove in the game's only run with a 10th-inning sacrifice fly and the Atlanta Braves pulled out a road win over the San Francisco Giants.

The contest began with a brilliant pitchers' duel featuring left-handers Chris Sale of Atlanta and Blake Snell of San Francisco.

Rafael Iglesias (2-1), who threw a 1-2-3 ninth to force extra innings, retired the Giants in order with a runner at second in the bottom of the 10th to complete the shutout.

With an eighth win in 12 extra-inning games, the Braves moved 2 1/2 games ahead of the Giants in the race for the final National League wild-card spot. San Francisco dropped its second straight game.

Sale and Snell set the tone for the low-scoring affair with double-digit strikeout performances in which neither got a decision. Sale was a mirror image of his old self. He allowed just three hits and no walks in seven scoreless innings this time, once again striking out 12. Meanwhile, 10 days after no-hitting the Cincinnati Reds, Snell held the Braves without a hit for six innings before Marcell Ozuna lined a leadoff double down the left field line in the seventh.

MLB

MONDAY'S BOX SCORES

Arizona 5, Colorado 4
 Colorado.....001 201 000 - 4 9 0
 Arizona.....010 002 20x - 5 8 0

Colorado	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Blackmon dh	4	0	0	0	0	2	.275
Tovar ss	4	0	0	0	0	2	.265
Doyle cf	4	1	1	0	0	1	.251
McMahon 3b	4	0	0	0	0	1	.279
Rodgers 2b	3	1	2	0	1	1	.213
Toglia 1b	4	1	2	0	0	0	.259
Cave rf	4	1	3	0	0	1	.273
Diaz c	4	0	2	2	1	1	.285
Hilliard lf	3	0	0	0	0	3	.204
Totals	34	4	9	4	0	11	

Arizona
 Carroll rf 4 1 1 0 0 2 .219
 Marte 2b 1 0 0 0 0 0 .298
 Newman 2b 3 2 2 0 0 0 .280
 Pederson dh 4 0 1 0 0 1 .286
 Bell lf 4 2 2 1 0 1 .245
 McCarthy lf 4 0 2 2 0 0 .306
 Del Castillo c 3 0 0 0 1 0 .467
 Suarez 3b 3 0 0 0 0 2 .231
 Thomas cf 3 0 0 0 0 0 .191
 Perdomo ss 3 0 1 0 0 0 .284
 Totals 32 5 8 3 1 6

Colorado	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Blacklock	5.2	6	3	3	0	4	96	4.05
Molina L, 1-1, H, 2	1.0	2	2	2	1	1	36	6.70
Kinley BS, 1	1.1	0	0	0	0	1	19	6.19

Arizona
 Pfadt W, 7-6 7 0 8 4 4 0 11 94 3.98
 Thompson H, 22 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 5 2.22
 Martinez S, 3 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 13 1.89

Inherited runners: Molina 1-1, Kinley 2-0.
 WP: Kinley 2. Umpires: HP-Rehak, 1B-Dreckman, 2B-Wegner, 3B-Vondrak. T: 2:24. A: 15,525 (48,405).

Toronto 4, L.A. Angels 2
 Toronto.....004 000 000 - 4 9 0
 LAA.....001 000 001 - 2 2 0

Toronto	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Clement 3b	5	0	1	0	0	0	.270
Varsho cf	4	0	0	0	1	1	.205
Guerrero Jr. dh	4	1	2	0	0	0	.321
Horwitz 1b	5	1	1	0	2	.271	
Kirk c	4	0	1	0	2	.244	
Wagner 2b	4	1	3	1	0	.750	
Jimenez ss	4	1	1	0	2	.224	
Loperfido lf	4	0	0	0	1	.204	
Berroa rf	1	0	0	0	3	.136	
Totals	35	4	9	4	5	8	

L.A. Angels
 Schauer 1b 4 0 0 0 0 0 .246
 Neto ss 4 0 0 0 0 2 .261
 O'Hoppe c 2 0 0 0 0 1 .259
 Thaiss c 2 0 0 0 0 1 .250
 Calhoun dh 3 0 0 0 0 0 .248
 Ward lf 3 0 0 0 0 1 .233
 Rendon 3b 3 0 0 0 0 0 .245
 Drury 2b 2 0 0 0 1 1 .156
 Moniak cf 2 2 1 1 1 0 .228
 a-Pillar ph-cf 1 0 0 0 0 0 .266
 Adell rf 3 1 1 1 0 2 .205
 Totals 29 2 2 2 1 8

a-grounded out for Moniak in 8th.
 2B: Guerrero Jr. (31), Horwitz (11), Wagner (1), HR: Jimenez (1), Moniak (8), Adell (18).
 RBI: Horwitz (21), Wagner (1), Jimenez (2), Moniak (35), Adell (54). CS: Berroa (2).
 Runners left in scoring position: Toronto 4 (Clement, Kirk, Wagner, Jimenez). RISP: Toronto 2 for 12.

Toronto	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Francis W, 5-3	7.0	1	1	1	0	8	81	4.92
Pop H, 8	0.2	0	0	1	0	10	6.25	
Cabrera H, 7	0.1	0	0	0	0	6	3.47	
Green S, 12	1.0	1	1	1	0	15	1.86	

L.A. Angels
 Daniel L, 1-4 5 0 8 4 4 2 5 92 6.23
 Crouse 1.2 1 0 0 2 1 27 3.32
 Moore 1.1 0 0 1 1 15 4.82
 Baumann 1.0 0 0 0 0 13 4.39

Inherited runners: Cabrera 1-1, Moore 2-2.
 Umpires: HP-Ceja, 1B-Gonzalez, 2B-Tichenor, 3B-Blaser. T: 2:19. A: 29,676 (45,517).

San Diego 2, Pittsburgh 1
 Pittsburgh.....000 000 001 - 1 7 1
 San Diego.....000 000 01x - 2 6 0

Pittsburgh	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
McCutchen dh	3	0	1	1	1	0	.235
b-Bae pr	0	0	0	0	0	0	.216
Reynolds lf	5	0	0	0	1	1	.284
Cruz ss	3	0	2	0	1	0	.261
Bart c	3	0	0	0	1	1	.268
Tellez 1b	3	1	0	0	0	0	.250
a-Joe ph-1b	1	0	0	0	0	0	.238
Kiner-Falefa 2b	4	0	1	0	0	0	.256
Hayes 3b	4	0	0	0	0	1	.241
De La Cruz rf	4	1	2	0	1	1	.238
Taylor cf	4	0	0	0	0	1	.204
Totals	34	1	7	1	3	6	

San Diego
 Arraez dh 4 0 0 0 0 0 .303
 Profar lf 3 1 1 0 0 0 .297
 Cronenworth 1b 3 0 1 0 0 1 .248
 Bogaerts 2b 3 0 1 1 0 1 .271
 Solano 3b 3 0 0 0 0 0 .308
 Merrill cf 3 0 0 0 0 2 .289
 Peralta rf 2 0 0 0 0 0 .254
 c-Johnson ph-rf 1 1 1 0 0 0 .200
 Kim ss 3 0 2 0 0 0 .230
 Higashioka c 4 0 0 0 0 1 .228
 Totals 27 2 6 2 0 4

a-struck out for Tellez in 8th. b-ran for McCutchen in 9th. c-singled for Peralta in 8th.
 E: De La Cruz. 2B: Cruz (25), Tellez (14), Profar (22). RBI: McCutchen (39), Bogaerts (24), Higashioka (39). SB: Cruz (12), Kim (22). SF: Higashioka. Runners left in scoring position: Pittsburgh 5 (Reynolds, Cruz, Kiner-Falefa 2, Hayes), San Diego 1 (Arraez). RISP: Pittsburgh 1 for 10, San Diego 1 for 3. GDP: Solano, Higashioka. DP: Pittsburgh 2.

Pittsburgh	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Woodford L, 0-2	6.0	3	1	0	0	2	74	3.07
Nicolas	1.0	1	0	0	1	15	3.00	
Beeks	0.2	1	0	0	0	13	4.39	
Santana	0.2	0	0	0	0	12	4.57	

San Diego
 Musgrove 4.3 2 0 0 1 1 53 5.20
 Hoieing 1.2 1 0 0 1 0 24 2.17
 Estrada W, 4-2 1 0 1 0 0 1 320 3.38
 Scott H, 4 1 0 1 0 0 2 11 1.40
 Suarez S, 26 1 0 2 1 0 0 19 1.71

Woodford pitched to 1 batter in the 7th.
 Inherited runners: Nicolas 1-0, Santana 2-1. HBP: McCutchen. WP: Nicolas, Hoieing. Umpires: HP-Libka, 1B-Drake, 2B-Hoye, 3B-Ramos. T: 2:25. A: 45,393 (40,019).

Atlanta 1, San Francisco 0 (10)
 Atlanta.....000 000 000 - 1 - 1 1
 SF.....000 000 000 0 - 0 3 0

Atlanta	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Soler lf	2	0	0	0	2	1	.245
Riley 3b	4	0	0	0	3	.261	
Ozuna dh	4	0	0	0	1	0	.252
d-Williams pr-dh	0	0	0	0	0	.077	
Olson 1b	4	0	1	0	1	.230	
Acia ss	4	1	0	0	3	.232	
Murphy c	4	0	0	0	1	0	.252
e-White pr-cf	0	0	0	0	0	.263	
Laureano cf	2	0	0	0	1	.261	
a-Kelenic ph-cf	1	0	0	0	1	.234	
f-d-Knaus ph-cf	0	0	0	0	0	.252	
Duvall lf	4	0	0	0	2	.178	
Merrifield 2b	3	0	0	0	1	.205	
Totals	32	1	4	1	3	16	

San Francisco
 Fitzgerald ss 4 0 0 0 0 1 .308
 Canha 1b 4 0 1 0 0 2 .333
 Ramos cf 4 0 0 0 0 3 .280
 Chapman 3b 4 0 0 0 0 3 .247
 Encarnacion lf 3 0 0 0 0 1 .285
 g-Conforto ph-lf 1 0 0 0 0 1 .235
 Yastrzemski rf 4 0 1 0 0 3 .246
 Luciano dh 4 0 1 0 0 1 .289
 Bailey c 4 0 0 0 0 2 .228
 Schmitt 2b 2 0 0 0 0 0 .269
 b-Wade Jr. ph 0 0 0 0 0 0 .282
 c-Wisely pr-2b 0 0 0 0 0 0 .254
 Totals 34 0 3 0 1 7

a-struck out for Laureano in 7th. b-was hit by a pitch for Schmitt in 8th. c-ran for Wade Jr. in 8th. d-ran for Ozuna in 9th. e-ran for Murphy in 10th. f-hit a sacrifice fly for Kelenic in 10th. g-struck out for Encarnacion in 9th.

E: Laureano. 2B: Ozuna (23). RBI: d'Arnaud (38). CS: Merrifield (3). SB: Yastrzemski (3). SF: d'Arnaud. Runners left in scoring position: Atlanta 1 (Kelenic), San Francisco 3 (Encarnacion, Luciano, Bailey). RISP: Atlanta 2 for 5, San Francisco 1 for 8.

Atlanta	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Sale	7.0	3	0	0	0	12	107	2.61
Iglesias W, 2-1	2.0	0	0	0	1	2	1.85	

San Francisco
 Snell 6.1 2 0 0 3 1114 3.91
 Rodriguez 0.2 0 0 0 0 2 9 4.01
 Rogers 1.0 1 0 0 1 1 9 2.93
 Walker 1.0 1 0 0 0 1 15 2.17
 Rogers L, 1-4 1.0 1 1 0 1 16 2.25

Inherited runners: Rodriguez 2-2. HBP: Wade Jr. Umpires: HP-Bucknor, 1B-Riggs, 2B-Beck, 3B-Iassogna. T: 2:35. A: 30,184 (41,331).



Giants pitcher Blake Snell delivers during the first inning against the Braves at Oracle Park. SERGIO ESTRADA/USA TODAY SPORTS

Chicago White Sox 12, N.Y. Yankees 2
 NY.....100 010 000 - 2 9 0
 CWS.....200 210 61x - 12 18 2

N.Y. Yankees	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Verdugo lf	3	1	0	0	2	0	.237
Soto rf	2	0	0	0	3	0	.302
Judge cf	4	0	2	1	1	1	.329
Stanton dh	5	1	0	0	2	.246	
Wells c	4	0	1	0	1	.251	
Torres 2b	4	0	1	0	1	.238	
Chisholm Jr. 3b	3	1	2	0	0	.316	
a-Rice ph-1b	2	0	0	0	0	.195	
Volpe ss	3	0	1	1	2	.251	
LeMahieu 1b-3b	4	0	1	0	1	.199	
Totals	34	2	9	2	11	7	

Chicago
 Lopez ss 4 1 1 1 0 0 .244
 Sosa 3b 5 0 0 0 0 0 .219
 Benintendi lf 5 2 2 1 0 0 .213
 Vaughn dh 5 2 4 0 0 0 .243
 Sheets 1b 5 1 4 4 0 1 .231
 Le-c 4 2 2 1 0 0 .221
 Fletcher cf 5 2 3 1 0 0 .216
 Julks rf 4 1 1 1 0 1 .232
 Baldwin 2b 4 1 1 3 0 1 .213
 Totals 41 12 18 12 2 4

a-fouled out for Chisholm Jr. in 7th.
 E: Toussaint, Fletcher. 2B: Judge (27), Benintendi (14), Vaughn 2 (26), Sheets 3 (23), Fletcher (5). HR: Lee (10), Baldwin (2). RBI: Judge (107), Volpe (46), Lopez (17), Benintendi (41), Sheets 4 (35), Lee (28), Fletcher (9), Julks (9), Baldwin (3).
 SB: Chisholm Jr. (5). Runners left in scoring position: N.Y. Yankees 10 (Judge 2, Stanton 4, Torres 2, Chisholm Jr., LeMahieu), Chicago 2 (Sheets, Julks).
 RISP: N.Y. Yankees 2 for 18, Chicago 10 for 17. GDP: Verdugo, Chisholm Jr.. DP: Chicago 2.

N.Y. Yankees	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
GILL, 12-6	4.0	7	4	4	2	3	98	3.25
Hill	2.1	3	1	1	0	31	4.40	
De Los Santos	1.2	8	7	0	1	48	14.21	

Chicago
 Bush 4.2 6 2 2 2 7 97 5.19
 Toussaint W, 1-2 1.1 1 0 0 1 23 4.50
 Anderson H, 4 1.0 0 0 0 2 12 4.50
 Leone 1.0 2 0 0 1 120 5.79
 Wilson 1.0 0 0 0 2 120 5.56

Toussaint pitched to 1 batter in the 7th.
 Inherited runners: Toussaint 1-1, Anderson 1-1. HBP: Bush (1). WP: Bush. Umpires: HP-Dedmon, 1B-Morales, 2B-Additon, 3B-Clemons. T: 3:00. A: 22,815 (40,615).

Boston 5, Texas 4 (10)
 Boston.....000 010 200 1 - 4 6 0
 Boston.....000 120 000 2 - 5 9 0

Texas	AB	R	H	BI	BB	SO	Avg.
Semen 2b	5	1	1	1	0	0	.241
Seager ss	4	1	2	1	0	.277	
Smith 3b	4	0	0	1	0	.270	
Garcia lf	5	0	1	0	0	.219	
Low 1b	4	0	0	0	0	.260	
Langford lf	4	0	1	0	0	.281	
Heim c	2	1	0	0	1	.229	
Taveras cf	3	1	1	0	1	.226	
Totals	35	4	6	4	9		

Boston
 Hamilton ss 4 1 0 0 1 2 .252
 d-Gasper ph 0 0 0 0 0 1 0
 Yoshida dh 5 0 0 0 1 2 .274
 Refsnyder lf 5 0 2 1 1 2 .300
 Devers 3b 4 1 0 0 1 3 .297
 Wong c-1b 4 1 1 0 1 2 .292
 Abreu rf 2 0 1 0 0 1 .268
 c-Gonzalez ph-rf 2 1 0 1 1 1 .272

Smith 1b 1 0 1 0 1 0 .237
 b-Jansen ph-c 1 0 0 0 1 0 .226
 a-Valdez ph 1 0 1 1 0 0 .224
 Sogard 2b 4 0 2 1 0 2 .281
 Rafaela cf 4 1 1 0 0 0 .263
 Totals 37 5 9 5 9 15

a-doubled for Jansen in 10th. b-walked for Smith in 5th. c-walked for Abreu in 5th. d-walked for Hamilton in 10th.

2B: Valdez (12). HR: Seager (26). RBI: Semien (58), Seager 2 (63), Smith (50), Refsnyder (30), Gonzalez (18), Jansen (22), Valdez (27), Sogard (3). CS: Seager (1). SB: Taveras (13), Hamilton (3).

Rafaela (17). SF: Sogard. Runners left in scoring position: Texas 2 (Smith, Garcia), Boston 6 (Refsnyder 3, Sogard 2, Rafaela). RISP: Texas 2 for 10, Boston 3 for 13.

Texas	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Mahle	4.2	3	2	2	3	7	92	2.79
Chafin	0.0	0	1	1	4	16	3.96	
Festa	1.0	0	0	0	2	14	2.88	
Robertson	1.1	3	0	0	3	35	2.81	
Yates	1.2	0	0	0	1	325	1.04	
Gonzales L, 0-1, BS, 1	0.1	2	2	2	0	10	3.75	
Pennington	0.1	0	0	1	0	11	4.50	

Boston
 Bello 6.0 4 1 1 3 5 95 4.97
 Kelly H, 8 0.2 0 1 1 1 16 2.76
 Horn BS, 2 0.1 1 1 1 0 0 2 6.92
 Martin 1.0 1 0 0 0 2 13 3.07
 Jansen 1.0 1 0 1 0 1 14 2.88
 Winckowski W, 3-1 1.0 1 0 1 0 0 31 3.35

Chafin pitched to 4 batters in the 5th.
 Inherited runners: Chafin 1-0, Festa 3-3, Yates 2-2, Pennington 2-1, Horn 1-0. HBP: Heim, Rafaela. IBB: Chafin 2 (4). WP: Chafin. Umpires: HP-Estabrook, 1B-Bacchus, 2B-Diaz, 3B-Gibson. T: 3:34. A: 35,715 (37,755).

L.A. Dodgers

SCOREBOARD



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All times Eastern

MLB

American League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	70	49	.588	-
N.Y. Yankees	70	50	.583	½
Boston	62	55	.530	7
Tampa Bay	59	59	.500	10½
Toronto	55	64	.462	15

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	70	49	.588	-
Minnesota	66	52	.559	3½
Kansas City	65	54	.546	5
Detroit	56	63	.471	14
Chicago	29	91	.242	41½

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	63	55	.534	-
Seattle	63	56	.529	½
Texas	55	64	.462	8½
L.A. Angels	52	67	.437	11½
Oakland	50	69	.420	13½

National League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	69	49	.585	-
Atlanta	62	56	.525	7
N.Y. Mets	61	57	.517	8
Washington	54	65	.454	15½
Miami	44	75	.370	25½

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	67	51	.568	-
St. Louis	60	59	.504	7½
Chicago	59	61	.492	9
Cincinnati	58	61	.487	9½
Pittsburgh	56	62	.475	11

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Dodgers	70	49	.588	-
Arizona	67	53	.558	3½
San Diego	67	53	.558	3½
San Francisco	61	60	.504	10
Colorado	44	76	.367	26½

Sunday's Scores

L.A. Angels 6, Washington 4
Houston 10, Boston 2
N.Y. Yankees 8, Texas 7
Oakland 8, Toronto 4
Miami 7, San Diego 6
Tampa Bay 2, Baltimore 1
Cleveland 5, Minnesota 3
Cincinnati 4, Milwaukee 3
Colorado 9, Atlanta 8
Detroit 5, San Francisco 4
Arizona 12, Philadelphia 5
L.A. Dodgers 6, Pittsburgh 5
Seattle 12, N.Y. Mets 1

Monday's Scores

Cincinnati 6, St. Louis 1
Seattle 9, Chicago Cubs 8
Houston 6, Tampa Bay 1
Boston 5, Texas 4
Minnesota 8, Kansas City 3
Chicago White Sox 12, N.Y. Yankees 2
L.A. Dodgers 5, Milwaukee 2
Toronto 4, L.A. Angels 2
Arizona 5, Colorado 4
San Diego 2, Pittsburgh 1
Atlanta 1, San Francisco 0

Tuesday's Games

Washington (Irvin 8-10) at Baltimore (Rogers 2-10), 6:35 p.m.
St. Louis (Fedde 8-5) at Cincinnati (Greene 8-4), 6:40 p.m.
Chicago Cubs (Assad 5-3) at Cleveland (TBD), 6:40 p.m.
Seattle (Kirby 8-8) at Detroit (Skubal 13-4), 6:40 p.m.
Miami (Bellozo 1-1) at Philadelphia (Walker 3-3), 6:40 p.m.
Houston (Kikuchi 5-9) at Tampa Bay (Baz 0-1), 6:50 p.m.
Texas (Urena 3-7) at Boston (Crawford 7-9), 7:10 p.m.
Oakland (Stripling 2-11) at N.Y. Mets (Blackburn 5-2), 7:10 p.m.
Kansas City (Lugo 13-6) at Minnesota (TBD), 7:40 p.m.
N.Y. Yankees (Cortes 5-10) at Chicago White Sox (Cannon 2-5), 8:10 p.m.
L.A. Dodgers (Stone 9-5) at Milwaukee (Montas 5-8), 8:10 p.m.
Toronto (Gausman 10-8) at L.A. Angels (Fulmer 0-2), 9:38 p.m.
Colorado (Gomber 3-8) at Arizona (Rodriguez 1-0), 9:40 p.m.
Pittsburgh (Ortiz 5-2) at San Diego (King 9-6), 9:40 p.m.
Atlanta (Morton 6-7) at San Francisco (Harrison 6-5), 9:45 p.m.

MLB Leaders

American League

Batting Average - Witt Jr., Kansas City .347; Judge, New York .328; Kwan, Cleveland .325; Guerrero Jr., Toronto .319; Alvarez, Houston .307; Soto, New York .304; Altuve, Houston .303; Devers, Boston .300; Diaz, Houston .299; Rooker, Oakland .291.
Home Runs - Judge, New York 42; Santander, Baltimore 35; Ramirez, Cleveland 31; Soto, New York 30; Rooker, Oakland 29; Henderson, Baltimore 29; Naylor, Cleveland 26; Raleigh, Seattle 26; Seager, Texas 25; Devers, Boston 25.

RBI - Judge, New York 106; Ramirez, Cleveland 97; Witt Jr., Kansas City 87; Naylor, Cleveland 85; Pasquantino, Kansas City 84; Rooker, Oakland 83; Soto, New York 82; Santander, Baltimore 79; Perez, Kansas City 78; Raleigh, Seattle 76.
Stolen Bases - Caballero, Tampa Bay 32; Hamilton, Boston 29; Duran, Boston 29; Thomas, Cleveland 28; Garcia, Kansas City 28; Chisholm Jr., New York 26; Ramirez, Cleveland 25; Witt Jr., Kansas City 25; Rengifo, Los Angeles 24; Moore, Seattle 21.

Wins - Rodon, New York 13; Lugo, Kansas City 13; Skubal, Detroit 13; Rodriguez, Baltimore 13; Burnes, Baltimore 12; Gil, New York 12; Ober, Minnesota 12; Valdez, Houston 11; Gausman, Toronto 10; Lively, Cleveland 10.
ERA - Skubal, Detroit 2.57; Burnes, Baltimore 2.71; Lugo, Kansas City 2.72; Gilbert, Seattle 2.91; Anderson, Los Angeles 2.99; Houck, Boston 3.02; Blanco, Houston 3.02; Singer, Kansas City 3.03; Kirby, Seattle 3.13; Ragans, Kansas City 3.27.

Strikeouts - Skubal, Detroit 171; Crochet, Tampa Bay 2, Baltimore 1; C. H. Roberts, Cleveland 149; Gilbert, Seattle 149; Castillo, Seattle 148; Ryan, Minnesota 147; Lopez, Minnesota 144; Rodon, New York 143; Brown, Houston 139.
Saves - Clase, Cleveland 35; Holmes, New York 25; Hader, Houston 25; Kimbrel, Baltimore 23; Fairbanks, Tampa Bay 23; Janzen, Boston 21; Yates, Texas 20; Munoz, Seattle 18; McArthur, Kansas City 18; Miller, Oakland 17.

National League

Batting Average - Arreaz, San Diego .306; Ozuna, Atlanta .301; Marte, Arizona .299; L.A. Dodgers .298; Bohm, Philadelphia .297; Profar, San Diego .297; Garcia Jr., Washington .293; Merrill, San Diego .291; Freeman, Los Angeles .289; Reynolds, Pittsburgh .287.
Home Runs - Ozuna, Atlanta 35; Ohtani, Los Angeles 35; Marte, Arizona 30; Schwarber, Philadelphia 27; Harper, Philadelphia 26; Hernandez, Los Angeles 26; Alonso, New York 25; Walker, Arizona 23; Lindor, New York 22; Burger, Miami 22.

RBI - Ozuna, Atlanta 90; Ohtani, Los Angeles 83; Marte, Arizona 81; Adames, Milwaukee 80; Bohm, Philadelphia 80; Hernandez, Los Angeles 79; Schwarber, Philadelphia 74; Harper, Philadelphia 72; Profar, San Diego 72; Freeman, Los Angeles 71.
Stolen Bases - De La Cruz, Cincinnati 59; Turang, Milwaukee 33; Ohtani, Los Angeles 32; Young, Washington 27; Lindor, New York 24; Stott, Philadelphia 23; Crow-Armstrong, Chicago 23; Doyle, Colorado 22; Yelich, Milwaukee 21; Kim, San Diego 21.

Wins - Sale, Atlanta 13; Wheeler, Philadelphia 11; Nola, Philadelphia 11; Cease, San Diego 11; Gray, St. Louis 11; Rea, Milwaukee 10; Suarez, Philadelphia 10; Keller, Pittsburgh 10; Webb, San Francisco 10; Glasnow, Los Angeles 9.
ERA - Sale, Atlanta 2.75; Wheeler, Philadelphia 2.78; Suarez, Philadelphia 2.87; Greene, Cincinnati 2.90; Flaherty, Los Angeles 2.97; Imanaga, Chicago 3.06; Fedde, St. Louis 3.28; Webb, San Francisco 3.32; King, San Diego 3.34; Rea, Milwaukee 3.38.

Strikeouts - Cease, San Diego 181; Glasnow, Los Angeles 168; Sale, Atlanta 165; Wheeler, Philadelphia 156; Peralta, Milwaukee 155; Greene, Cincinnati 154; Gray, St. Louis 153; King, San Diego 151; Flaherty, Los Angeles 150; Nola, Philadelphia 138.
Saves - Helsley, St. Louis 37; Finnegan, Washington 30; Suarez, San Diego 25; Iglesias, Atlanta 24; Diaz, Cincinnati 23; Doval, San Francisco 22; Estevez, Philadelphia 21; Megill, Milwaukee 20; Bednar, Pittsburgh 20; Scott, San Diego 19.

NFL

Preseason Week 2

Thursday's Game

Philadelphia at New England, 7 p.m.

Saturday's Games

Atlanta at Baltimore, noon
Cincinnati at Chicago, 1 p.m.
New York Giants at Houston, 1 p.m.
Detroit at Kansas City, 4 p.m.
Minnesota at Cleveland, 4:25 p.m.
Seattle at Tennessee, 7 p.m.
Buffalo at Pittsburgh, 7 p.m.
Washington at Miami, 7 p.m.
Arizona at Indianapolis, 7 p.m.
New York Jets at Carolina, 7 p.m.
Los Angeles Rams at Los Angeles Chargers, 7:05 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Jacksonville, 7:30 p.m.
Dallas at Las Vegas, 10 p.m.

Sunday's Games

New Orleans at San Francisco, 8 p.m.
Green Bay at Denver, 8 p.m.

WNBA

Eastern Conference

	W	L	Pct	GB
N.Y. Liberty	21	4	.840	-
Connecticut	18	6	.750	2½
Indiana	11	15	.423	10½
Chicago	10	14	.417	10½
Atlanta	7	17	.292	13½
Washington	6	19	.240	15

Western Conference

	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	17	8	.680	-
Seattle	17	8	.680	-
Las Vegas	16	8	.667	½
Phoenix	13	12	.520	4
L.A. Sparks	6	18	.250	10½
Dallas	6	19	.240	11

Thursday's Games

Phoenix at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Washington at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
N.Y. Liberty at L.A. Sparks, 9 p.m.

GOLF

PGA Money Leaders

Through Aug. 12

1. Scottie Scheffler, \$28,148,691.
2. Xander Schauffele, \$15,867,160.
3. Rory McIlroy, \$10,353,190.
4. Wyndham Clark, \$9,912,305.
5. Sahithi Theegala, \$8,154,585.
6. Ludvig Aberg, \$8,149,523.
7. Collin Morikawa, \$8,030,477.
8. Hideki Matsuyama, \$7,637,611.
9. Shane Lowry, \$5,704,520.
10. Patrick Cantlay, \$5,530,854.
11. Sungjae Im, \$5,514,330.
12. Byeong Hun An, \$5,424,103.
13. Chris Kirk, \$5,396,536.
14. Matthew Pavon, \$5,078,046.
15. Tony Finau, \$5,032,356.
16. Brian Harman, \$4,859,305.
17. Akshay Bhatia, \$4,859,905.
18. Robert MacIntyre, \$4,755,384.
19. Russell Henley, \$4,721,969.
20. Christian Beuzidenhout, \$4,651,538.
21. Justin Thomas, \$4,245,561.
22. Tom Hoge, \$4,227,518.
23. Sepp Straka, \$4,213,968.
24. Tom Kim, \$4,077,718.
25. Taylor Pendrith, \$4,059,493.
26. Billy Horschel, \$4,039,033.
27. Sam Burns, \$3,922,497.
28. Cameron Young, \$3,848,566.
29. Adam Hadwin, \$3,836,448.
30. Jason Day, \$3,822,352.
31. Davis Thompson, \$3,802,522.
32. Will Zalatoris, \$3,790,799.
33. Tommy Fleetwood, \$3,704,908.
34. Stephan Jaeger, \$3,669,034.
35. Max Homa, \$3,626,766.
36. Corey Conners, \$3,609,189.
37. Si Woo Kim, \$3,484,683.
38. J.T. Poston, \$3,468,670.
39. Thomas Detry, \$3,415,469.
40. Matt Fitzpatrick, \$3,275,463.
41. Cam Davis, \$3,234,783.

42. Denny McCarthy, \$3,156,124.
43. Keegan Bradley, \$3,155,596.
44. Nick Taylor, \$3,093,045.
45. Jake Knapp, \$3,045,613.
46. Adam Scott, \$2,979,839.
47. Austin Eckroat, \$2,965,435.
48. Alex Noren, \$2,939,210.
49. Justin Rose, \$2,883,183.
50. Mackenzie Hughes, \$2,859,623.
51. Harris English, \$2,782,188.
52. Aaron Rai, \$2,775,515.
53. Jordan Spieth, \$2,691,991.
54. Viktor Hovland, \$2,679,227.
55. Eric Cole, \$2,616,052.
56. Patrick Rodgers, \$2,568,217.
57. Ben Griffin, \$2,494,782.
58. Maverick McNealy, \$2,493,921.
59. Peter Malnati, \$2,476,048.
60. Grayson Murray, \$2,471,532.
61. Taylor Moore, \$2,467,348.
62. Luke List, \$2,444,305.
63. Erik van Rooyen, \$2,405,949.
64. Min Woo Lee, \$2,344,226.
65. Mark Hubbard, \$2,090,030.
66. Brendon Todd, \$2,090,820.
67. Davis Riley, \$2,083,376.
68. Max Greyserman, \$2,072,028.
69. Emiliano Grillo, \$2,071,364.
70. Nick Dunlap, \$1,975,825.
71. Seamus Power, \$1,932,614.
72. Kurt Kitayama, \$1,904,748.
73. Victor Perez, \$1,902,132.
74. Jhonattan Vegas, \$1,876,212.
75. Andrew Putnam, \$1,874,159.
76. Adam Schenk, \$1,807,310.
77. Lee Hodges, \$1,799,907.
78. Lucas Glover, \$1,765,831.
79. Nicolai Hojgaard, \$1,741,996.
80. Ben Kohles, \$1,679,079.
81. Kevin Yu, \$1,612,249.
82. Keith Mitchell, \$1,608,134.

TRANSACTIONS

Monday's Transactions

BASEBALL

Major League Baseball

ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS - P Blake Walston Sent to Minors. P Blake Walston Removed From 15-Day IL Left elbow inflammation. P Blake Walston Recalled From Minors Rehab.
ATLANTA BRAVES - P A.J. Minter Placed on 15-Day IL Left hip inflammation. P Dylan Lee Called Up from Minors.
BOSTON RED SOX - CF Jarren Duran Suspended by Team two games. 2B Jamie Westbrock Designated for Assignment. P James Paxton Placed on 15-Day IL Strained right calf. Mickey Gasper Purchased From Minors. Chase Shugart Purchased From Minors. P Bailey Horn Called Up from Minors. P Bryan Bello Reinstated from Paternity Leave List.
CLEVELAND GUARDIANS - P Anthony Gose Outrighted to Minors.
COLORADO ROCKIES - DH Kris Bryant Placed on 10-Day IL Back strain. LF Jordan Beck Called Up from Minors. P Bradley Blalock Called Up from Minors.
LOS ANGELES DODGERS - SS Mookie Betts Removed From 10-Day IL Fractured left hand. 2B Amed Rosario Designated for Assignment.
MILWAUKEE BREWERS - P Bryan Hudson Removed From 15-Day IL Strained left oblique. P Bryan Hudson Recalled From Minors Rehab. P DL Hall Sent to Minors.
MINNESOTA TWINS - P Matt Bowman Released. P Randy Dobnak Sent to Minors. P Steven Okert Reinstated from Bereavement/Family Medical Emergency List.
PITTSBURGH PIRATES - RF Edward Olivares Outrighted to Minors.
SAN DIEGO PADRES - P Joe Musgrove Removed From 60-Day IL Right elbow inflammation. P Joe Musgrove Recalled From Minors Rehab. P Carl Edwards Jr. Sent to Minors.
SEATTLE MARINERS - CF Victor Robles Signed two-year contract extension.
ST. LOUIS CARDINALS - DH Matt

Carpenter Placed on 10-Day IL Lower back strain. RF Jordan Walker Called Up from Minors.
TORONTO BLUE JAYS - Will Wagner Purchased From Minors.

FOOTBALL

National Football League

ARIZONA CARDINALS - P Nolan Cooney signed to Tampa Bay Buccaneers. LB David Anehi signed to Miami Dolphins.
ATLANTA FALCONS - WR Isaiah Wooden signed to Los Angeles Chargers. RB Robert Burns cut. WR Austin Mack cut. CB William Hooper signed. S Josh Thompson signed.
BALTIMORE RAVENS - G TyKeem Doss acquired from waivers to Pittsburgh Steelers.
CAROLINA PANTHERS - WR Deven Thompkins Placed on IR undisclosed.
CHICAGO BEARS - RB Demetric Felton acquired from waivers to Indianapolis Colts.
CLEVELAND BROWNS - RB John Kelly Jr. cut. C Rex Sunahara cut. LB Marcus Haynes cut. S Vincent Gray cut. S Chase Williams signed. CB Faion Hicks signed. LB Brandon Bouyer-Randle signed. C Nick Harris traded w/ pick for 2026 sixth-round draft pick.
DENVER BRONCOS - LB Wyatt Ray signed to Miami Dolphins. LB Alec Mock cut. CB Kaleb Hayes acquired from waivers.
DETROIT LIONS - LB Ty Summers signed. QB Jake Fromm signed. G Ike Boettger cut. WR Antoine Green cut. T Connor Galvin Placed on IR torn MCL.
HOUSTON TEXANS - S Josh Thompson signed to Atlanta Falcons. WR Jadon Janke cut. DE Pheldarius Payne signed.
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS - RB Trent Pennix cut. RB Demetric Felton acquired from waivers.
JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS - LB Ty Summers signed to Detroit Lions. RB Lorenzo Lingard signed to New York Giants.
LOS ANGELES CHARGERS - WR Isaiah Wooden signed. WR Praise Olatoko cut. QB Casey Bauman cut.
LOS ANGELES RAMS - LB Anthony Hines III signed to New York Jets.
MIAMI DOLPHINS - G Connor Williams signed/unrestricted free agent to Seattle Seahawks. WR Robbie Chosen signed/unrestricted free agent to San Francisco 49ers One-year contract (through 2024). LB Wyatt Ray signed. LB David Anehi signed. LB Cam Brown Placed on IR undisclosed. LB Grayson Murphy Placed on IR right knee.
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS - CB William Hooper signed to Atlanta Falcons. DE John Morgan III cut. RB Deshaun Fenwick signed.
NEW ORLEANS SAINTS - WR Shaquan Davis signed. WR Marquez Callaway cut.
NEW YORK GIANTS - CB Kaleb Hayes acquired from waivers to Denver Broncos. RB Lorenzo Lingard signed.
NEW YORK JETS - CB Myles Jones cut. LB Anthony Hines III signed. LB Jimmy Cario Placed on IR knee.
PHILADELPHIA EAGLES - WR Shaquan Davis signed to New Orleans Saints.
PITTSBURGH STEELERS - G TyKeem Doss acquired from waivers. LB Tyler Murray cut. CB Kalon Barnes cut.
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS - WR Frank Darby cut. WR Robbie Chosen signed/unrestricted free agent One-year contract (through 2024).
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS - C Nick Harris traded to Cleveland Browns w/ pick for 2026 sixth-round draft pick. G Connor Williams signed/unrestricted free agent.
TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS - QB Zack Annexstad cut. P Nolan Cooney signed.
WASHINGTON COMMANDERS - QB Jake Fromm signed to Detroit Lions. LB Brandon Bouyer-Randle signed to Cleveland Browns.

OLYMPICS

Latest appeal on Chiles and bronze turned down

Mike Brehm and Tom Schad

USA TODAY

USA Gymnastics said Monday that its effort to restore gymnast Jordan Chiles' bronze medal in the floor exercise has been turned down.

The federation said in a statement to social media that it was informed by the Court of Arbitration for Sport that rules "do not allow for an arbitral award to be reconsidered even when conclusive new evidence is presented."

"We are deeply disappointed by the notification and will continue to pursue every possible avenue and appeal process, including to the Swiss Federal Tribunal, to ensure the just score, placement and medal award for Jordan," USA Gymnastics said.

The news comes a little more than a week after the floor exercise competition itself, where an inquiry by Chiles' coaches first triggered the saga that has played out in the days since.

In the last routine of the floor exercise final, Chiles garnered a score of 13.666, which included a deduction of one-tenth of a point for an improper split leap, known as a tour jete full. That score put her fifth, behind Ana Barbosu and another Romanian gymnast, Sabrina Maneca-Voinea. They both had scores of 13.700.

But then, in a move she later acknowledged was a bit of a Hail Mary, Chiles' coach, Cecile Landi, formally appealed that specific deduction - and the judges agreed. Chiles' score was increased to 13.766, which moved her into third place ahead of the two Romanians, one of whom had already climbed onto the podium with a flag to celebrate.

The Romanian Gymnastics Federation felt the last-minute reversal was unfair, so it took the matter to CAS, claiming that Landi had submitted the scoring appeal - officially known as an inquiry - four seconds past the allotted one minute in which she was permitted to do so. (It also filed a separate appeal on behalf of Maneca-Voinea, saying she shouldn't have been penalized for stepping out of bounds.)



Jordan Chiles of the United States poses with her gold and bronze medals during the Paris Olympics.

KYLE TERADA/USA TODAY SPORTS

It wasn't until Saturday that CAS issued its ruling - a decision that triggered a trickle-down effect through various Olympic organizations and eventually led the International Olympic Committee to announce that Barbosu would get a bronze medal and Chiles would be stripped of hers.

Then, on Sunday, USA Gymnastics announced that it had found new video footage that essentially disproved the Romanian Gymnastics Federation's timeline. The U.S. said it submitted the video to CAS for review as part of its appeal of the Swiss-based court's ruling.

The Romanian Gymnastics Federation, in fact, had requested that CAS decide that Barbosu, Chiles and Maneca-Voinea all receive bronze medals. Instead, it punted that decision to the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG), which has since said all medal decisions are made by the IOC. The IOC then said the medal allocation is dependent upon the order of finish and referred a reporter's questions to the FIG.

TENNIS ROUNDUP

Pegula repeats title with win in Toronto

FIELD LEVEL MEDIA

Jessica Pegula successfully defended her National Bank Open title, defeating Amanda Anisimova 6-3, 2-6, 6-1 in an all-American championship final on Monday in Toronto.

Pegula, ranked No. 6 in the world and seeded third, won in Montreal in 2023 as the tournament alternates annually between the two Canadian cities. The location didn't matter as the 30-year-old won in one hour and 27 minutes.

In winning her third career WTA 1000-level title and sixth overall, Pegula became the first woman to capture consecutive singles crowns at the National Bank Open since Martina Hingis in 1999-2000. The most recent player to reach two consecutive finals was Simona Halep in 2015-16.

Pegula, now 3-0 all-time versus the unseeded Anisimova, is a career 17-2 in main-draw matches at this event. The two losses came in the semifinals in 2021 and 2022, and she also fell in a qualifying match in 2013.

She started and finished strong, with Anisimova, ranked No. 132 in the world, making it a battle by taking the second set.

Pegula took 16 of 17 service points - including all 12 of her first-service points - in the opening set. She registered 16 of the first 19 points in the final set.

Overall, Pegula had more aces (6-2), won 79.1 percent (34 of 43) of her first-serve points and 44 percent (22 of 50) of first-return points.

Anisimova, 22, recorded more double faults (9-4) in her WTA 1000-level final. She was seeking third WTA title and first since early 2022. The native of Freehold, N.J., missed a large part of the 2023 season while focusing on her mental health.

She had defeated four straight