

2025 was the year of Josh O'Connor

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County advertises communications director position



Jennifer Learn-Andes
County Notebook

Luzerne County is seeking applicants for a new communications director position advertised at $65,000 to $70,000 annually, according to an online posting.

County Manager Romilda Crocamo had included the position in the 2026 budget approved by a council majority.

The position was budgeted at $70,000, and the administration anticipates 87% of the salary would be covered by a state grant and reimbursements from departments primarily or solely funded by outside sources, including human service departments, Crocamo's budget submission had said.

Crocamo had said she enjoys communicating and publicly representing the county on various issues, but "cannot do it all to the level that is really required" due to her other responsibilities.

The job posting is in the human resources department career opportunities section at luzernecounty.org, with applications due Jan. 13.

The communications director will report to the new Infrastructure, Community and Economic Development division head and work in conjunction with the county manager, the posting said.

Minimum qualifications include: a bachelor's degree in journalism, communication, public relations or a related field, with a master's degree preferred, and experience in media and/or media relations, writing and editing content for all media forms, developing and implementing strategic communication plans, and managing a communications and/or public relations office.

Division head

Applications are due Tuesday for the new Infrastructure, Community, and Economic Development Division head position.

Funding for the division head was included in the 2026 budget at Crocamo's request.

The new division will coordinate discussion among local government, businesses, community organizations, residents, and other stakeholders so the county is "working together toward a common goal" of

See COUNTY | 2A

Celebrating 35 years

Bob Ames retiring from Allied Services after nearly 4 decades



Submitted Photo

Shown from left are: Marshelle Gaspar, nonprofit liaison, East region, SourceAmerica; Bob Ames, vice president, community services and real estate, Allied Services; Bill Conaboy, Esq., president and CEO, Allied Services Integrated Health System.

SourceAmerica representative Marshelle Gaspar recently presented a ceremonial flag to Bob Ames at a reception in recognition of and celebration of his upcoming retirement from Allied Services after more than 35 years of empowering and enriching the lives of adults with disabilities.

Bill Conaboy, president and CEO of Allied Services, first introduced Ames at the reception to many colleagues and thanked him for his leadership and loyalty to the organization and for the accomplishments he achieved on behalf of adults with disabilities, across four decades.

In her presentation, Gaspar thanked Ames for his advocacy for and commitment to employment opportunities for adults with physical, intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as explaining the flag was made by adults with disabilities through one of the SourceAmerica partners in California.

— Staff Report



AP Photo

Government supporters burn a U.S. flag in Caracas, Venezuela, Saturday after U.S. President Donald Trump announced that U.S. forces had captured Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife.

Rubio says US won't govern Venezuela

Changes to be pushed through oil blockade

By Regina Garcia Cano, Matthew Lee, Will Weissert and Eric Tucker
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Marco Rubio suggested Sunday that the United States would not govern Venezuela day-to-day other than enforcing an existing "oil quarantine" on the country, a turnaround after President Donald Trump announced a day earlier that the U.S. would be running Venezuela following its ouster of leader Nicolás Maduro.

Rubio's statements on TV talk shows seemed designed to temper concerns that the assertive action to achieve regime change in Venezuela might lead the U.S. into another prolonged foreign intervention or failed attempt at nation-building. They stood in contrast to Trump's broad but vague claims that the U.S. would at least temporarily "run"

See RUBIO | 2A

More inside
US intervention could test Trump's ability to hold GOP together.
Page 2A
How cocaine, corruption led to indictment of Maduro.
Page 15A

Issue 2026-005

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A NEWS
Local: 3A
Opinion: 7A
Weather: 20A

OBITUARIES
Manik, Olga
5A

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VENEZUELA

Action could test Trump's ability to hold GOP together

By Steven Sloan
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's military intervention in Venezuela will pose a fresh test of his ability to hold together a restive Republican coalition during a challenging election year that could be defined by domestic concerns like health care and affordability.

While most Republicans lined up behind the president in the immediate aftermath of the stunning U.S. mission to capture Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro and bring him to New York to face criminal charges, there were signs of unease across the spectrum within the party. In particular, Trump's comments about the U.S. positioning itself to "run" Venezuela have raised concerns that he is abandoning the "America First" philosophy that has long distinguished him from more traditional Republicans and helped fuel his political rise.

"This is the same Washington playbook that we are so sick and tired of that doesn't serve the American people, but actually serves the big corporations, the banks and the oil executives," said Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia, a former Trump ally who is resigning on Monday, in an interview with NBC's "Meet the Press" on Sunday.

Those concerns were shared by some who are not associated with the party's far-right flank.

Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania, a moderate who is one of the most vulnerable Republicans in the November midterms, said in a statement that "the only country that the United States of America should be 'running' is the United States of America."

Those comments reflect the sensitive dynamics between Trump and his fellow Republicans at the outset of an election year in which their party risks losing control of Congress. While the president's dominance remains undisputed, the ironclad grip that he has held over the party has faced unusual challenges in recent months. Blocs of Republicans have banded together to pressure Trump to release the Jeffrey Epstein files. Others have been vocal in encouraging Trump to take concerns about affordability more seriously.



AP Photo

President Donald Trump listens to a question during a news conference at Mar-a-Lago Saturday in Palm Beach, Fla., as Secretary of State Marco Rubio watches.

Trump's aggressive vision of US dominance

Few issues are as central to Trump's political brand as ensuring that the U.S. does not get entangled in seemingly endless foreign conflicts at the expense of domestic goals. During a 2016 Republican presidential debate, for instance, he described the war in Iraq as a "big, fat mistake."

But on Saturday, Trump said he was "not afraid of boots on the ground" in Venezuela if that was deemed necessary, and he framed his actions as prioritizing the safety and security of Americans. He articulated an aggressive vision of U.S. dominance in the Western Hemisphere, and he told reporters it was important to "surround ourselves with good neighbors."

However, much like the Iraq War, a president's early confidence after a dramatic military action can sometimes meet more sobering realities that drain domestic political support.

In Venezuela, U.S. troops could be placed in harm's way again as Trump warns that more military operations may be in the works. An ongoing conflict could worsen the hemisphere's refugee crisis, something the White House has tried to tamp down with stricter border controls. In addition, there are questions about how much

See ACTION | 5A

Rubio

From page 1A

the oil-rich nation, comments that suggested some sort of governing structure under which Caracas would be controlled by Washington.

Rubio offered a more nuanced take, saying the U.S. would continue to enforce an oil quarantine that was already in place on sanctioned tankers before Maduro was removed from power early Saturday and use that leverage as a means to press policy changes in Venezuela.

"And so that's the sort of control the president is pointing to when he says that," Rubio said on CBS' "Face the Nation." "We continue with that quarantine, and we expect to see that there will be changes, not just in the way the oil industry is run for the benefit of the people, but also so that they stop the drug trafficking."

The blockade on sanctioned oil tankers — some of which have been seized by the U.S. — "remains in place, and that's a tremendous amount of leverage that will continue to be in place until we see changes that not just further the national interest of the United States, which is number one, but also that lead to a better future for the people of Venezuela," he added.

Leaders in Venezuela have so far pushed back, at least publicly, calling on the Trump administration to release Maduro.

Even before the operation that nabbed Maduro, experts were already questioning the legality of aspects of the administration's pressure campaign on Venezuela, including the deadly bombing of boats accused of trafficking drugs that some scholars said stretched the boundaries of international law.

Trump repeated vow US would 'run' Venezuela

Trump's vow to "run" Venezuela, repeated more than half a dozen times at a news conference in Florida on Saturday, sparked concerns among some Democrats. It also drew unease from parts of his own Republican coalition, including an "America First" base that is opposed to foreign interventions, and from observers who recalled past nation-building efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Rubio dismissed such criticism, saying Trump's intent had been misunderstood.

"The whole foreign policy apparatus thinks everything is Libya, everything is Iraq, everything is Afghanistan," Rubio said. "This is not the Middle East. And our mission here is very different. This is the Western Hemisphere."

Rubio also suggested the U.S. would give Maduro's subordinates now in charge time to govern, saying, "We're going to judge everything by what they do." And though he did not rule out boots on the ground in Venezuela, Rubio said the U.S, which has built up its presence in the region, was already capable of stopping drug boats and sanctioned tankers.

A day earlier, Trump told reporters, "We're going to run the country until such time as we can do a safe, proper and judicious transition." He later pointed to his national security team with him, including Rubio and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, and said it would be done for a period of time by "the people that are standing right behind me. We're gonna be running it, we're gonna be bringing it back."

The White House declined to comment beyond what Trump said Saturday.

Maduro's arrival

Maduro landed late Saturday afternoon at a small airport in New York City's northern suburbs following the middle-of-the-night operation that extracted him and his wife, Cilia Flores, from their home in a military base in the capital city of Caracas — an act Maduro's government called "imperialist." The couple faces U.S. charges of participating in a narco-terrorism conspiracy.

The dramatic seizure of the Maduros capped an intensive Trump administration pressure campaign on Venezuela's autocratic leader and months of secret planning, resulting in the most assertive American action to achieve regime change since the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Legal experts raised questions about the lawfulness of the operation, which was done without congressional approval.

Venezuela's vice president, Delcy Rodriguez, demanded that the U.S. free Maduro and called him the country's rightful leader as her nation's high court named her interim president. So did the country's defense minister, Vladimir Padrino López, who said Sunday that the country's armed forces "categorically reject the cowardly kidnapping" and will "maintain internal order and peace."

Maduro is due to make his first appearance Monday in Manhattan's federal court.

Maduro and other Venezuelan officials were indicted in 2020 on narco-terrorism conspiracy charges, and the Justice Department released a new indictment Saturday of Maduro and his wife that painted his administration as a "corrupt, illegitimate government" fueled by a drug-trafficking operation that flooded the U.S with cocaine. The U.S. government does not recognize Maduro as the country's leader.



San Francisco Chronicle via AP

Protestors hold a banner stating 'Trump Must Go Now' as they gather outside the UN Plaza during a demonstration against the U.S. bombing of Venezuela and seizure of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro in San Francisco on Saturday.

The Trump administration spent months building up American forces in the region and carrying out attacks on boats in the Caribbean Sea and eastern Pacific Ocean for allegedly ferrying drugs.

Quiet falls in Venezuela after US operation

Venezuela's government kept operating as usual over the weekend as ministers remained in their posts.

The capital was unusually quiet Sunday with few vehicles moving around and convenience stores, gas stations and other businesses closed.

Maduro's son, lawmaker Nicolás Ernesto Guerra, has not appeared in public since the attack. On Saturday he posted on Instagram a government statement repudiating the capture of his father and stepmother.

The country's incoming National Assembly is set to be sworn in at the legislative palace in Caracas. The unicameral assembly will remain under control of the ruling party.

Under Venezuelan law, Rodríguez would take over from Maduro. Rodriguez, however, stressed during a Saturday appearance on state television that she did not plan to assume power, before Venezuela's high court ordered that she assume the interim role. Trump told The Atlantic in an interview Sunday that Rodríguez could "pay a very big price" if she doesn't do what he thinks is right for Venezuela.

That contrasted with the Republican president's comments about Rodríguez on Saturday when he said Rubio had spoken with her and she was willing to do what the U.S. thinks is needed to improve the standard of living in Venezuela.

Trump told the New York Post in an interview Saturday that the U.S. wouldn't need to station troops in Venezuela if she "does what we want."

Garcia Cano reported from Caracas, Venezuela. Associated Press writers Jorge Rueda in Caracas, Venezuela; Lisa Mascaro, Michelle L. Price, Seung Min Kim and Alanna Durkin Richer in Washington; Farnoush Amiri in New York; Larry Neumeister in South Amboy, New Jersey, and Nicole Winfield in Rome contributed to this report.

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County

From page 1A

attracting businesses that will enhance the quality of life, Crocamo has said.

The position is advertised at an annual salary range of $90,000 to $98,000, according to the posting at luzernecounty.org.

Board openings

The county publicly posted a list last week of all vacant board seats and the citizen applicants on the eligibility list for possible appointment.

Applicants must complete a public interview to be placed on the eligibility list.

The list is posted in the council's authorities, boards and commissions section at luzernecounty.org along with applications.

Several boards have more applicants than openings. Among those boards and the citizens on the eligibility list:

• Luzerne County Community College Board of Trustees (3 openings): Arthur Breese, Bernard Graham, Joseph Jones, Brian McBride, Anthony Seiwell, and Patrick Wills.

• County Convention Center Authority, which oversees the Mohegan Arena in Wilkes-Barre Township (2 openings): Vincent Argenio, William Barrett, Joseph Jones, Scott Letcher, and Michelle Reilly.

• County Transportation Authority (2 openings): Joseph Jones, Scott Letcher, Gary Polakoski, and Joseph Zeller.

• Northeastern Pennsylvania Health and Higher Education Authority (1 opening): Lauren Edmonds, Susan Elczyna, Nancy Romanyshyn, and Debra Yanuzzi.

Reach Jennifer Learn-Andes at 570-991-6388 or on Twitter @TLJenLearnAndes.

WILKES-BARRE

Council to hold first meetings of 2026

By Margaret Roarty
mroarty@timesleader.com



Margaret Roarty | Times Leader

Wilkes-Barre City Hall at 40 E. Market St.

WILKES-BARRE — Wilkes-Barre City Council will hold its annual reorganizational meeting at 5 p.m. Monday in the city council chambers on the fourth floor of City Hall.

The meeting will be the first formal gathering of the council for the new year. Its purpose is to select a chairperson and vice chairperson for 2026.

Those chosen for the positions will take the oath of office during the meeting.

Last year, Councilmember Tony Brooks served as chairperson, with Councilmember Jessican McClay as vice chair.

On Monday, the council will also establish the holiday schedule and the upcoming meeting dates for the council.

According to the agenda, if approved, city council work and regular sessions for 2026 will take place at 6 p.m. in the city council chambers on the fourth floor of City Hall.

Work sessions will take place on Tuesdays, while regular voting sessions will take place on Thursdays.

Combined meetings begin at 5:30 p.m., with a work session immediately followed by the regular voting session.

Tuesday work session

The first work session of 2026 will take place at 6 p.m. Tuesday.

The agenda includes the discussion of a resolution to award a fuel supply and other related services contract to Petroleum Service Company (PSC) for three years, beginning in 2026.

PSC was the only company to submit a bid, the agenda said.

A second resolution would allow city officials to execute a professional services agreement with King's College related to the implementation of the Comprehensive Community Health Needs assessment (CHNA).

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Public Health Accreditation Board defines a community needs assessment as "a comprehensive picture of a community's current health status, factors contributing to higher health risks or poorer health outcomes, and community resources available to improve health. Community health assessments are comprised of data and information from multiple sources, which describe the community's demographics; health status; morbidity and mortality; socioeconomic characteristics; quality of life; community resources; behavioral factors; the environment (including the built environment); and other social and structural determinants of health status."

The cost of the program will not exceed $30,000, according to the agenda, and will be funded by a Public Health Improvement Grant.

Several reappointments and one appointment to the Industrial Development Authority are also on the agenda.

Council will discuss the reappointment of Larry Newman, Michael Horvath, and Carl Nessing. If approved, their terms would expire on Dec. 31, 2029.

Council will also discuss the appointment of Ronald Slusser to replace Patricia Unvarsky, whose term has expired.

LOOK BACK

WB mayor ordered investigation of street lamps in 1883

By Ed Lewis
elewis@timesleader.com

Wilkes-Barre policeman William T. Rhoads had an interesting assignment while walking the beat around Public Square and the first block of North Main Street the week of Jan. 4, 1883.

Rhoads was tasked with inspecting each oil street lamp, as there were complaints the lamps were not illuminating sufficiently at night.

City councilman George H. Parrish, who was the city's chairman on the roads and light sub-committee, had received complaints that the oil lamps that were installed and maintained by Philadelphia-based Pennsylvania Globe Gas Light Company were not functioning properly.

Parrish reported to the city council that he believed the oil was being deliberately diluted by the gaslight company.

Wood fires were first used adjacent to the Luzerne County Courthouse on Public Square in the 1820s whenever court sessions went into the night. Permanent street lamps on posts were erected around the Public Square courthouse in the 1840s.

With the industrialization of the Wyoming Valley and railroads being placed through Wilkes-Barre in the early 1860s, there was a need for more street lamps in the downtown area.

City council adopted a motion in June 1873 to have one street lamp at each intersection between South Street and North Street, and one lamp between intersections or 500 feet apart, according to a story in the Luzerne Union newspaper on June 18, 1873.

Five years later, in 1878, the city council entered a contract with the Pennsylvania Globe Gas Light Company to install and maintain 200 cast-iron coal oil lamps at a cost of $19 for each lamp per year, the Daily Record of the Times reported on Sept. 3, 1878.

The contract with the gaslight company was renewed in February 1880.

"We will place our improved fixture on all street lamps, light, clean, repair and extinguish, and furnish you coal oil equal in brilliancy to the best coal gas," the Daily Record of the Times reported Feb. 25, 1880.

Parrish, the city councilman, began receiving complaints in December 1882 that the street lamps maintained by the gas light company were faltering and had urged city Mayor Thomas Broderick to investigate.

"The mayor, hearing that the lamps were not attended to in accordance with the contract, detailed Officer Rhoads to examine every lamp in the city. He was provided with a machine to test the candle power," the Sunday News newspaper reported on Jan. 7, 1883.



File

An illustration of Wilkes-Barre policeman William T. Rhoads climbing a street lamp post at Public Square and North Main Street on Jan. 4, 1883, published in the Sunday News newspaper on Jan. 7, 1883.

At a lamp at Public Square and North Main Street, Rhoads climbed the lamp post and noticed the flame was unsteady.

"It was burning, but so weak that the officer thought it wanted a fresh dose of coal oil, or castor oil, to boom it up. Nearly every lamp in the city

See STREET | 4A



Bill O'Boyle

Beyond the Byline

Help others; feel good about yourself

With the holidays over, we can now concentrate on football.

The college football playoffs are down to four teams — Miami versus Ole Miss (Jan. 8) in the Fiesta Bowl and Indiana versus Oregon (Jan. 9) in the Peach Bowl. The winners will meet for the National Championship on July 19 in Hard Rock Stadium in Miami.

And, of course, the NFL playoffs will get underway on Jan. 10, with Super Bowl LX on Feb. 8, in Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, California.

OK, enough about that. I'm not ready to stop writing about the need for those who can help to do just that — help those in need, help your community, do what you can — as my dear friend George Toma would say, "and then some."

I'm kind of stuck on one thing — why are some people so against helping people in need? Why do they oppose giving a hand up to people who need some help? Why don't these people who can help choose not to?

If you haven't noticed, the demand for help continues to increase. More and more people find themselves in situations that they never thought they would be in. Yes, some are to blame for their situations, but no matter the reason, the need is there. They are human beings and so are we.

The old saying talks about how "they" would feel if it were "them" that needed help. Would they not hope that there would be a caring community available for them?

The holidays are filled with joy in many homes and families, but there are many others where joy never walks through their door. This got me thinking, which can be dangerous sometimes. But when I do, I turn to my own special brand of poetry.

And it just so happens that I wrote one about this topic. I dedicate it to those who enjoyed their holidays, got a lot of presents, and put on a few pounds.

Here it is:

It's called "Wouldn't You Wanna?"

•

Wouldn't you wanna
Hug your mom and dad?
Wouldn't you wanna
Return to those days
•
Wouldn't you wanna
Find a home for all
Those cats and dogs
And for the homeless we see?
•
Wouldn't you wanna
Have that special person
In your life
To be there — just be there?
•
Wouldn't you wanna
Remove all superficiality
Self-servingness and greed
And live in a peaceful world?
•
Wouldn't you wanna
Be all you can be
And be happy being it
Just like everybody else?
•
Wouldn't you wanna
See presents under
Everybody's tree
And smiles on all those faces?
•
Wouldn't you wanna
Live in a small town
Know your neighbors
And feel safe all the time?
•
Wouldn't you wanna
Live in a perfect world
Where imperfect people
Still genuinely care?
•
Wouldn't you wanna
To not have to want
To have peace of mind
With love all around?
•
Wouldn't you wanna
Feel good about yourself
By helping others
To experience Peace on Earth
And goodwill to all.
•

I lived in those glorious days of new bicycles, baseball gloves, games, toys and, yes, even some new clothes. Each Christmas present was wonderfully wrapped, but I disregarded the effort that went into the presentation of those gifts as I feverishly tore into them to see what was inside.

Whatever was inside, it was mine — all mine. Oh, thank you, Santa. I knew I was a good boy.

I have also seen some situations that have left an indelible mark on my heart. I remember going to a home in Hanover Township one year around Christmas time for Make-A-Wish. It was a single mom with a couple of kids — good kids, nice kids.

We were there to interview the mom about her son, who was a Make-A-Wish kid, which means, in addition to everything else, this little boy was facing a life-threatening illness.

While my co-Wish volunteer talked to the mom, it was my job to talk to the child. The protocol was to take the child away from his parent(s) to ask the child what his/her wish was — what he or she really wanted.

This kid, who was about 5 years old, looked at me and, without hesitation, told me he wanted his mom and his sister to have a Merry Christmas.

See HELP | 4A

Police: Man stabbed brother with kitchen knife

Suspect fled, but was caught

Staff Report

A man was arrested Sunday after police said he broke into his brother's apartment in Duryea and assaulted him with a kitchen knife before stealing his truck.

The man, who was not publicly identified, faces multiple charges, including: aggravated assault, simple assault, recklessly endangering another person, criminal trespass, burglary, terroristic threats, criminal mischief, theft by unlawful taking of a motor vehicle, unauthorized use of a motor vehicle, possession of a prohibited offensive weapon, and reckless and careless driving, according to police.

The victim received immediate care from officers and EMS on scene and was transported to the hospital for treatment. Their condition is unknown at this time.

Police initially responded to the 200 block of Main Street at around 10:42 a.m. for reports of an assault involving a 25-year-old man.

The man forced entry into his brother's apartment using a baseball bat to smash a side window, then made entry into the apartment and assaulted the victim with a large kitchen knife, causing multiple injuries, police said.

The man then fled the scene in the victim's truck after stealing the keys.

After the victim was transported by EMS from the scene, officers began to clear the scene when the man was spotted driving by in the stolen vehicle.

Officers from Duryea, Hughestown, and Avoca Police Departments attempted to stop the vehicle, but the man failed to yield, committing numerous traffic violations and endangering other motorists, according to police.

Officers stopped the vehicle on Route 315, where police said the man was taken into custody without further incident.

Upon arrest, police said the man was found with the suspected knife, blood-stained clothing, and a baseball bat matching the one used in the forced entry was also recovered from the vehicle.

According to investigators, details will be released as the investigation continues.

Bear Creek Village to swear in first new mayor in over 30 years

Staff Report

Bear Creek Village Borough will hold its biennial reorganization meeting at 7 p.m. Monday at the Bear Creek Association Clubhouse.

Newly elected mayor Michael Harostock will be sworn in at 6:30 p.m. by Magisterial Judge Michael Dotzel, along with Sarah Haas Block as the new judge of elections, Elizabeth Freeman as inspector of elections, and council members George Albert and Britt Trumbauer.

Harostock replaces Walter Mitchell, who, after 32 years as mayor, chose not to run for re-election.

Albert and Trumbauer join sitting council members Paul Updike, Guy Rothery, and Joe Farrell.

Additionally, Debbie Tindell will replace Merry Maxwell as treasurer and Thomas Hamel was re-elected controller.

According to the agenda, the meeting will also include the nomination and election of the council president and the council vice president.

The newly elected president will then assign leadership roles on the planning/zoning, roads, finance, community development, and public safety committees.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

PHRC to host 'No Hate in Our State' town hall

By Bill O'Boyle
boboyle@timesleader.com

`The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) will host a virtual "No Hate in Our State" Town Hall from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Monday focused on addressing antisemitism through a multi-faceted, community-centered lens.

The event will be held via Zoom and is open to the public.

As incidents of antisemitism continue to rise nationally and within local communities, this town hall will bring together policy leaders, educators, and community advocates to engage in open dialogue, share lived experiences, and identify strategies to confront hate, promote understanding, and strengthen solidarity across communities.

"Hate thrives in silence and division," said Chad Dion Lassiter, MSW, PHRC Executive Director. "Through our 'No Hate in Our State' town halls, PHRC seeks to break through that paralysis of silence and reaffirms its commitment to naming injustice, educating the public, and standing in solidarity with communities targeted by bias and discrimination. Addressing antisemitism is essential to protecting civil rights for all."

The panel will feature:

- Alana Burman, director of Policy, Intergovernmental Affairs, & Mediation, PHRC
- Adriel Resh, director of Jewish Life and Culture, York JCC
- Rachel Singer, director of Jewish Life, Franklin & Marshall College
- Deb Smith, External Program & Arts coordinator, Hanover YMCA

The discussion will be moderated by Hector Luis Torres-Diaz, Civil Rights Outreach coordinator, at PHRC.

"Antisemitism is not an isolated issue, it is a civil and human rights concern that impacts the safety, dignity, and belonging of individuals and communities across Pennsylvania," said Alana Burman, PHRC Director of Policy, Intergovernmental Affairs, & Mediation. "This town hall creates space for honest conversation, education, and collaborative problem-solving, which are essential to addressing hate in all its forms."

PHRC leaders emphasized the importance of proactive community engagement and education in preventing discrimination and bias.

"Outreach and dialogue are critical tools in our civil rights work," said Sheryl Meck, PHRC Civil Rights Outreach Director. "By convening different voices from different faith, education, and community organizations, we can better understand the roots of antisemitism and work collectively toward solutions grounded in respect and equity."

About the PHRC

The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission enforces state laws that prohibit discrimination and promote equal opportunity for all people.

The PHRC investigates complaints of discrimination in employment, housing, education, and public accommodations.

Anyone who has experienced discrimination is urged to file a complaint by calling 717-787-4410.

Information and resources are available on the PHRC website.



File Photo

The Pennsylvania State Capitol building in Harrisburg on July 26, 2023.

AG: National 'Operation Robocall Roundup' continues

Attorney General Dave Sunday recently announced the commencement of phase two of the national "Operation Robocall Roundup" initiative — with the expansion focused on four major voice phone providers allowing illegal calls to Pennsylvanians.

Attorney General Sunday is part of the bipartisan Anti-Robocall Multistate Litigation Task Force, which is now directing providers Inteliquent, Bandwidth, Lumen, and Peerless to crack down on illegal robocalls across their networks.

"Robocalls are more than just a nuisance — they can be dangerous lures to obtain Pennsylvanians' personal information and access to their identity and finances," Sunday said. "I am pleased with the work we have done so far to cut down on robocalls from reaching Pennsylvanians' phones, but there is much more work to be done and the profiting providers must step up and be part of the solution."

In August, AG Sunday sent warning letters to 37 smaller voice providers that were allowing suspected illegal robocalls. This next phase targets companies with far larger footprints in the U.S. phone and voice ecosystem. In some cases, the larger providers are allowing millions of robocalls to reach consumers.

After letters were sent in August, the Anti-Robocall Litigation Task Force saw these rapid, measurable changes from providers:

- 13 companies were removed from the Federal Communications Commission's Robocall Mitigation Database, meaning no voice providers in the United States may accept their call traffic.
- 19 companies stopped appearing in any traceback results, indicating that these companies stopped allowing suspected illegal robocalls on their voice networks.
- At least four providers terminated contracts with high-risk customer accounts that were identified as transmitting illegal voice traffic.

In 2022, 51 Attorneys General joined forces to create the Anti-Robocall Litigation Task Force, which is led by North Caroline Attorney General Jeff Jackson, Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita, and Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost.

The Task Force investigates and takes legal action against companies responsible for significant volumes of illegal and fraudulent robocall traffic that is routed into and across voice networks in the United States.

VFW service officer available to assist veterans

State Sen. Lisa Baker, R-Lehman Township, invites veterans to schedule an appointment to meet with a VFW service officer at her Dallas and Nanticoke office locations.

Baker encourages veterans of all ages and from all service eras to utilize the Pennsylvania Veterans of Foreign Wars Service Officer Network to receive free information and assistance for government benefits.

See ROUNDUP | 5A

Street

From page 3A

was found to be suffering with the same complaint as this one," the Sunday News reported.

Upon hearing Rhoads' report on the illumination of downtown street lamps, the city council withheld 20% from the contract with the gas light company, the Wilkes-Barre Record newspaper reported on Jan. 17, 1883.

Almost immediately, with the installation of underground gas pipes and electric power cables into the downtown area, other utility companies submitted bids to install street lamps.

Wilkes-Barre Gas Company erected 230 gas street lamps and the Wilkes-Barre Electric Company erected 180 electric lamps in the downtown area in 1883, the Record newspaper reported.

Help

From page 3A

When I recovered from hearing that and the realization of what was going on, evidenced by the fact that there was no Christmas tree in the house, I asked the boy what he meant.

He told me he wanted Santa Claus to bring them a Christmas tree and lots of presents. Note that the little boy never asked for anything for himself, other than wishing for a Merry Christmas for his mom and sister.

I'll never forget that kid.

The family did, as the little boy requested, have a very Merry Christmas.

That little boy — at 5 years old — knew what it was to be kind to others and to make them happy. He knew he had the opportunity to make his mom and sister have a Merry Christmas.

That little boy felt good by helping others.

He is the example we all should emulate.

Reach Bill O'Boyle at 570-991-6118 or on Twitter @TLBillOBoyle.

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Popular South Korean movie star dies at 74

By Hyung-Jin Kim
The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — Ahn Sung-ki, one of South Korean cinema's biggest stars whose prolific 60-year career and positive, gentle public image earned him the nickname "The Nation's Actor," died on Monday. He was 74.

The death of Ahn, who had been fighting blood cancer for years, was announced by his agency, the Artist Company, and the Seoul-based Soonchunhyang University Hospital.

Born to a filmmaker in the southeastern city of Daegu in 1952, Ahn made his debut as a child actor in the movie "The Twilight Train" in 1957. He subsequently appeared in about 70 movies as a child actor before he left the film industry to live an ordinary life.

In 1970, Ahn entered Seoul's Hankuk University of Foreign Studies as a Vietnamese major. Ahn said he graduated with top honors but failed to land jobs at big companies, who likely saw his Vietnamese major largely useless after a communist victory in the Vietnam War in 1975.

After spending a few years unemployed, Ahn returned to the film industry in 1977 believing he could still excel in acting. In 1980, he rose to fame for his lead role in Lee Jang-ho's "Good, Windy Days," a hit coming-of-age movie about the struggle of working-class men from rural areas during the country's rapid rise. Ahn won the best new actor award in the prestigious Grand Bell Awards, the Korean version of the Academy Awards.

He later starred in a series of highly successful and critically acclaimed movies, sweeping best actor awards and becoming arguably the country's most popular actor in much of the 1980-90s.

Some of his memorable roles included a Buddhist monk in 1981's "Mandara," a beggar in 1984's "Whale Hunting," a Vietnam War veteran-turned-novelist in 1992's "White Badge," a corrupt police officer in 1993's "Two Cops," a murderer in 1999's "No Where To Hide," a special forces trainer in 2003's "Silmido" and a devoted celebrity manager in 2006's "Radio Star."

Ahn had collected more than 20 trophies in major movie awards in South Korea, including winning the Grand Bell Awards for best actor five times, an achievement no other South Korean actors have matched yet.

Ahn built up an image as a humble, trustworthy and family-oriented celebrity who avoided major scandals and maintained a quiet, stable personal life. Past public surveys chose Ahn as South Korea's most beloved actor and deserving of the nickname "The Nation's Actor."



AP File Photo

South Korean actor Ahn Sung-ki attends an event as part of the 11th Pusan International Film Festival in Busan, South Korea, on Oct. 13, 2006.



AP File Photo

South Korean actor Ahn Sung-ki smiles for a photo on the red carpet at the 56th Daejong Film Awards ceremony in Seoul, South Korea, on June 3, 2020.

In interviews with local media, Ahn couldn't choose what his favorite movie was, but said that his role as a dedicated, hardworking manger for a washed-up rock singer played by Park Jung-hoon resembled himself in real life the most.

Action

From page 2A

cooperation the U.S. will receive from officials still in Venezuela or how easily the country's oil reserves could be tapped to fulfill Trump's goal of extracting more energy with Maduro out of the picture.

Trump's comments this weekend about revitalizing the oil industry in Venezuela are in line with some of the earliest critiques he made of the handling of the Iraq War. During a 2013 speech before the Conservative Political Action Conference, Trump said the U.S. should "take" oil from Iraq and "pay ourselves back."

Frustration with the handling of the Iraq War contributed to major gains for Democrats in the 2006 election and helped create the conditions for Barack Obama to be elected to the presidency two years later. Given the baggage surrounding those wars, Trump allies insist that the actions this weekend in Venezuela are different.

"Venezuela looks nothing like Libya," Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on "Meet the Press. "It looks nothing like Iraq. It looks nothing like Afghanistan. It looks nothing like the Middle East other than the Iranian agents that are running through there plotting against America, okay?"

Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Tom Cotton argued that the 1989 ouster of Manuel Noriega in Panama is a better comparison.

"That was a successful operation," Cotton said on CNN's "State of the Union." "I believe, in the long run, this will be too."

Still, amid some of the pushback about the U.S. taking expansive responsibility for managing Venezuela, Rubio suggested a more limited role. He said that Washington would not handle day-to-day governance of the South American country other than enforcing an existing "oil quarantine" on Venezuela.

Not much GOP opposition to the strikes

It is not clear that any forceful, organized opposition to Trump's Venezuela policy is emerging within the GOP. Instead, many lawmakers appear to be giving the Republican administration some room and, at most, offer some warnings.

Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, who faces a potentially challenging reelection campaign this year, called Maduro a "narco-terrorist and international drug trafficker" who should stand trial even, as she said "Congress should have been informed about the operation earlier and needs to be involved as this situation evolves."

Even Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky, who often criticizes military interventions, did not specifically oppose Trump's actions. He wrote on social media that "time will tell if regime change in Venezuela is successful without significant monetary or human cost."

Many Democrats denounced Trump's actions in Venezuela and the Democratic National Committee quickly sought to raise money by blasting "another unconstitutional war from Trump."

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez, D-N.Y., rejected the administration's argument that it was combating drug crimes, saying on X that the White House is instead focused on "oil and regime change" while seeking to "to distract from Epstein + skyrocketing healthcare costs." Former Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said the strike was part of an "old and obvious pattern" where an "unpopular president — failing on the economy and losing his grip on power at home — decides to launch a war for regime change abroad."

Roundup

From page 4A

This assistance may include VA health care, compensation, pension, education, and dependent benefits. Surviving spouses can also use these service officers at no charge to learn about their eligibility for VA benefits.

"Veterans are the heart and soul of America, and we appreciate their many sacrifices to make this nation a beacon of freedom and hope," Baker said. "During challenging economic times, many veterans continue to need our assistance. I encourage any veteran or spouse with questions regarding benefits to schedule a time to meet with a Service Officer."

On Friday, the VFW service officer will be available for scheduled appointments at Baker's office, 22 Dallas Shopping Center, Memorial Highway, Dallas.

Appointments with a service officer are available at no charge on the second Friday of every month.

All veterans, not just VFW members, can request appointments between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. To schedule an appointment at this location, call 570-675-3931.

A VFW Service Officer will be available to help veterans at Baker's Nanticoke Office on Wednesday, Jan. 21.

Appointments with a service officer are available at no charge on the third Wednesday of every month.

On Wednesday, Jan. 21, the VFW service officer will be available for scheduled appointments at Baker's office, 50 N. Walnut St., Suite 105, Nanticoke.

All veterans, not just VFW members, can request appointments between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. To schedule an appointment at this location, call 570-740-2432.

Patriotic Pennsylvania voices to open Farm Show

Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding recently announced the performers who will sing the National Anthem daily and at special events during the 2026 Farm Show.

Finalist 14-year-old Carly Green from Tamaqua, Schuylkill County, will sing live during the Opening Ceremony to kick off the 110th PA Farm Show at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 10, 2026.

A panel of judges selected 25 finalists from among 85 qualified entries.

A contest winner will sing in the GIANT Expo Hall of the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex and Expo Center at 8 a.m. each day of the 2026 Pennsylvania Farm Show, from Jan. 10-17.

Reach Bill O'Boyle at 570-991-6118 or on Twitter @TLBillOBoyle.

MANIK

Funeral Mass for Mrs. Olga Lynn (Torres) Manik will be held at 9:30 a.m. Thursday in Ss. Peter and Paul Parish, 13 Hudson Road, Plains Township. Friends may call 8:45 a.m. to service time. Condolences and full details may be shared and found at www.JohnV-MorrisFuneralHome.com.

COMING FUNERALS

EDWARDS — Thomas: Celebration of life, 9 to 10:30 a.m. Saturday, LCBC Church, Hazle Township. Visitation, 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, Harman Funeral Homes & Crematory Inc. (East), Drums.

EDWARDS — Gary: Funeral, 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, Louis V. Ciuccio Funeral Home, 145 Moosic Road, Old Forge. Mass: 10 a.m., Nativity of Our Lord Parish, 127 Stephenson St., Duryea. Visitation, 5 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, funeral home.

FALCK — Joanne: Mass, 10 a.m. Saturday, Our Lady of Hope Church, Wilkes-Barre. Visitation, 9:30 a.m. to service time.

KORDEK — Joseph: Mass, 11 a.m. Thursday, Our Lady of Hope Parish, Wilkes-Barre. Visitation, 5 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, George A. Strish Inc. Funeral Home, Ashley.

KOREY — Samuel: Mass, 10 a.m. Wednesday, St. Anthony and St. George Maronite Church, Wilkes-Barre.

KOVACH — Mass, 10 a.m. Saturday, Exaltation of the Holy Cross Church, Hanover Township. Viewing, 8:30 a.m. to service time.

MANCINI — Ann Marie: Viewing, 5 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Howell-Lussi Funeral Home Inc., West Pittston. Blessing service, 10 a.m. Wednesday, funeral home.

MASSARO — Edythe: Funeral, 10:15 a.m. Wednesday, Thomas P. Kearney Funeral Home Inc., Old Forge. Mass, 11 a.m. Mass, Ss. Anthony and Rocco Parish, Dunmore. Visitation, 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.

MONKO — Edward: Mass, 10 a.m. Saturday, St. Nicholas-St. Mary Parish, Wilkes-Barre. Visitation, 9 a.m. to service time.

OCHMAN — Paul Sr.: Viewing, 4 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Wroblewski Funeral Home Inc., Forty Fort. Mass, 10 a.m. Thursday, St. Ignatius Loyola Church, Kingston.

PECAITIS — Peter: Blessing service and rite of committal, 10 a.m. Wednesday, Holy Trinity Cemetery Chapel, Sheatown. Visitation, 9:30 a.m. to service time.

POTASH — David: Funeral, 11 a.m. Monday, Rosenberg Funeral Chapel, Wilkes-Barre.

SOKOLOVICH — Marie: Viewing, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Thursday, Corcoran Funeral Home, Plains Township. Funeral, 11 a.m., Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Wilkes-Barre.

TOMPKINS — Frances: Mass, 10 a.m. Monday, Nativity of Our Lord Parish in Holy Rosary Church, Duryea.

OBITUARY POLICY

- The Times Leader publishes limited obituaries for free.
- Paid obituaries may include full history and photo.
- Please send obituaries as a word document or regular email and photos in jpg format.
- Obituaries for children age 12 or younger are free of charge.
- Private parties must include funeral home, cremation place, or death certificate information.
- Send information to **obits@timesleader.com** or fax to **570-300-1886.**
- An obituary clerk will confirm receipt to sender via email or phone.
- If you don't receive a confirmation, please call **570-991-6119.**
- **Deadline:** 7:30 p.m. for next day publication.



LUZERNE COUNTY PROPERTY TRANSFERS



The following real estate transactions were recorded in the Luzerne County Office of the Recorder of Deeds from Dec. 1 to Dec. 5:

• Thomas Vercusky to Maria I. Peralta, $45,000, West Hazleton Borough.

• Thomas M. Vercusky to Joselyn Jasmin Lalaleo Brito and Wilson Manobanda Andagana, $124,000, Hazleton City.

• Thomas M. Vercusky to Jimmy Ramirez Duran, $129,000, West Hazleton Borough.

• Bear Asset Management LLC to Canal Depot LLC, $377,500, White Haven Borough.

• Robert Hoch and Linda Hoch to Kaitlynn Durange, $114,600, Hollenback Township.

• Thomas R. Bosak and Deanna L. Bosak to Stephen Francis Cerra, $305,000, Ross Township.

• Collin Shandra and Alicia Chopyak to Sherill Kwiatkowski, $149,999, Duryea Borough.

• Jason A. Boone and Carolyn J. Boone to Jose Manuel Calderon Fernandez, $220,000, 985 Chestnut St., Freeland Borough.

• Alison M. Nowak, et al., to Kenia Kelaney Debora, $189,000, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Anne C. Baran to David Antonucci, $125,000, Freeland Borough.

• Michael G. Havey and Kellie C. Havey to Mariny Garcia Urena and Charlies Valdez Puello, $245,000, Hanover Township.

• Amanda R. Kolesar Hoon (executor) and Michael David Kolesar (estate) to Nathan D. Hazeltine and Morgan L. Hazeltine, $342,000, Kingston Township.

• Donald A. Debias to Evergreen Raceway Realty LLC, $85,000, Butler Township.

• Juan Jose Lopez and Rafael Lopez Avilez to Juana Iris Lopez Cruz, $200,000, 835 Walnut St., Freeland Borough.

• Pamela E. Tarapchak, et a., to Gina Yocum and Michael K. Yanick, $299,900, Hazle Township.

• Gerald Raymond Russin (executor), et al., to Robert C. Friedman, $299,900, 202 N. Pioneer Ave., Dallas Township.

• James Grabowski to James McDonough and Raven Sky Reva, $120,000, Newport Township.

• William R. Parise Jr. to Rachel Ann Bernardyn, $165,000, 530 Yanac St., Hazle Township.

• W & F Properties LLC to Victor C. Santana, $230,000, Warrior Run Borough.

• Ruth L. Mierzwa to Ben Lee Miller and Johni Harriet Miller, $113,500, Nanticoke City.

• Miguel A. Agosto and Aracelis Agosto to Main Mazal LLC, $135,000, West Pittston Borough.

• COB Global LLC to BRG Company LLC, $319,000, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Brian P. Benyo to Diem Quynh Thi Tran and Alexander Tran Ho, $120,000, Hazle Township.

• Matthew Buglehall and Kimberly Buglehall to Sean Bryk and Jean Ann Bryk, $85,000, Bear Creek Township.

• Christopher S. Vincelli and Meredith A. Vincelli to Mark J. Alles and Lorraine S. Alles, $1, Harveys Lake Borough.

• Mark J. Alles and Lorraine S. Alles to Christopher S. Vincelli and Merdith A. Vincelli, $300,000, Harveys Lake Borough.

• Alexander L. Mark (executor) and Alexander J. Lulis (estate) to Jaclyn M. Gadomski, $100,000, Plymouth Township.

• William D. Haas and Jeanie E. Haas to Evermore Equine LLC, $700,000, Bear Creek Village Borough.

• Pasquale C. Gesualdi to Kristy M. Cimilluca, $115,000, 687 Dennis Lane, Plymouth Borough.

• Marian B. Merrick to Jerry Edward Bruck and Robin Adrienne Bruck, $445,000, Butler Township.

• Victoria Lynn Jenkins and Victoria Lynn Jenkins Holmgren to Colleen Michele Cook, $187,000, 88 N. Goodwin Ave., Kingston Borough.

• Robert J. Yatison Jr. and Terri S. Yatison to Kevin K. Lewis and Karry Richardson, $390,000, Dorrance Township.

• Richard A. Melvin and Diane Felli Melvin to Shlomo Tzvi Laskar and Moshe Brackman, $243,000, West Pittston Borough.

• Linda Kashnicki to Melissa Banos, $190,000, Edwardsville Borough.

• CG Customs LLC to Joseph Ozark and Sandy Ozark, $313,501, West Pittston Borough.

• Kristy Cimilluca to Kyle J. Flynn, $150,000, 107 White Oak Drive, Plymouth Township.

• Maria Recupero English (per agent), et al., to Cartus Financial Corp., $330,000, 310 Susquehanna Ave., West Pittston Borough.

• Cartus Financial Corp. to Shane Paisley and Janelle Paisley, $330,000, 310 Susquehanna Ave., West Pittston Borough.

• Ronald R. Sartno and Sasha Maria Gomez, $228,000, Hazleton City.

• Hazleton Development of PA LLC to Well Born Home Buyers LLC, $61,000, Hazleton City.

• Sand Springs Development Corp. to Matthew Siggelow and Amy Siggelow, $520,313, 359 Long Run Road, Butler Township.

• John J. Singer Jr. and Deborah C. Singer to Deal House Capital Fund II LLC, $25,000, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Anthony Jones and Susan E. Jones to Melanio Eugenio Medina Dotel and Marcelina Nivar Montano, $200,000, Forty Fort Borough.

• Luzerne County Tax Claim Bureau, et al., to Eagle Rock Resort Co., $3,500, Hazle Township.

• Luzerne County Tax Claim Bureau and Joseph Rizzi (per tax claim) to Jesse Miers, $3,500, Harveys Lake Borough.

• Frederick Ebbecke (per tax claim) and Luzerne County Tax Claim Bureau to Wayne Nelson Miers, $1,181.63, Harveys Lake Borough.

• Luzerne County Tax Claim Bureau, et al., to Jesse Miers, $2,000, Laflin Borough.

• Frederick Ebbecke (per tax claim) and Luzerne County Tax Claim Bureau to Wayne Nelson Miers, $3,000, Harveys Lake Borough.

• Luzerne County Tax Claim Bureau and Eugenia Bevan (per tax claim) to Wayne Nelson Miers, $1,587.48, 283 Cameron St., Plymouth Borough.

• Christopher J. McLaughlin (per tax claim) and Luzerne County Tax Claim Bureau to Juan Sebastian Lizarazo Molano, $1,197.67, Harveys Lake Borough.

• Luzerne County Tax Claim Bureau, et al., to Jose U. Rodriguez, $4,500, Foster Township.

• Steven R. Tattersall (per tax claim), et al., to Joseph Niznik and Kathleen Niznik, $4,500, Hunlock Township.

• Lance Jon Gleco (per tax claim) and Luzerne County Tax Claim Bureau to Colin Colbourne, $1,196.95, 47 Grant St., Shickshinny Borough.

• Andrew J. Toborowski and Jean E. Toborowski to Francisco Tavarez Medina and Cenia Brewer, $315,000, Hazleton City.

• Benjamin V. Beuhring and Mary Elizabeth Beuhring to Francisco V. Gonzalez Vasquez, $258,000, 701 Foster St., Freeland Borough.

• Alan W. Brown, et al., to Susan Heathcoat and Charles E. Heathcoat Jr., $28,000, Sugarloaf Township.

• Peter Wesley Owings (trustee), et al., to Constance A. Weiss, $200,000, Dennison Township.

• Dawn Musso (executrix), et al., to Dale Quatrocci, $175,000, Foster Township.

• Scott Kevin Mersincavage (administrator), et al., Cruz Roofing Solutions LLC, $50,000, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Lauretta M. Maranki and Lauretta M. O'Hara to Benjamin V. Beuhring and Mary E. Beuhring, $390,000, Conyngham Borough.

• Angela A. Dale and Michael Dale to Jasani Moran, $85,000, Pittston Township.

• Ricardo Caraballo and Miriam Caraballo to Angel A. Bernechea Contreras, $190,000, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Salvador Sanchez Montiel and Susana Lopez Meneses to Jose Luis Montes Martienez and Juana Lopez Flores Montes, $200,000, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Doron Aspitz (trustee), et al., to Jose Daniel Ortiz and Manuel I. Ortiz, $6,500, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Works Words Wonders LLC to Bruce Fine Construction Inc., $120,000, Dallas Township.

• Marlene Brojakowski and Marlene Hermanofski to Wiplynne Properties LLC, $106,835, Hanover Township.

• American Red Crescent Services LLC to Greenpeak Estates LLC, $900,000, Plains Township.

• Muneca Kovacsi to Leonardo Miguel Moronta Burgos, $460,000, Sugarloaf Township.

• Salvatore Deluca and Valeria C. Sartor to Judy M. Pazgan, et al., $75,000, Newport Township.

• U.S. Bank Trustee (trustee), et al., to R&E Investments LLC, $133,500, 5035 Church Road, Nuangola Borough.

• Mitchel Schappert and Laura Schappert to Oley Real Estate Co. LLC, $70,000, Lake Township.

• Joseph J. Pilwallis (executor) and Joseph A. Pilwallis (estate) to Ruth Ellen Rodriguez, $241,000, 14-16 E. Stanton St., Plains Township.

• HSBC Bank USA (trustee), et al., to Fernando Santos, $40,000, 609 Main Road, Hunlock Township.

• Maria Yissel Pena Genao to Caggia Realty Corp., $50,000, Hazleton City.

• Real Estate Magnate III LLC to Katelyn Rose Morgan, $172,500, West Wyoming Borough.

• George F. Remensnyder and Joann M. Remensnyder to Salem Township, $499,000, Salem Township.

• Walter Shermanski to Thomas Zapotocky, $150,000, 1322 Washington St., Wilkes-Barre City.

• Angelina Gist to Luivi A. Mercedes Camacho, $175,000, Plains Township.

• Robert V. Fraley and Margaret Ann Fraley to Sunrise Cabin LLC, $400,000, Bear Creek Township.

• Uriel Espinoza to Jenny Gabriela Medina Gualpa, $7,500, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Clarence H. Houston Jr. (trustee), et al., to Mark Dotzel and Mary Lou Dotzel, $166,400, Slocum Township.

• William J. Foley Jr. to South Irving Ave LLC, $115,000, 356 Phillips St., Hanover Township.

• Robert H. Fisher and Donna M. Fisher to Kyle John Petrick, $210,000, Foster Township.

• Cherie Soprano to Jose Gutierrez and Mary Ann Gutierrez, $115,000, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Tracy L. Karchner to Amanda Marie Skuba and Nicholas K. Skuba, $520,000, Butler Township.

• Paco Nunez (per agent), et al., to Casa Contracting Management LLC, $145,000, Sugarloaf Township.

• Juan Gonzalez Ramos to Wilton A. Pena Cruz, $284,000, 106-108 Fern St., Foster Township.

• NEPA Cash Offer LLC to Robert Junior Cuesto Rodriguez and Denia Altagracia Puntiel De Cuesto, $235,000, 71 Second Ave., Kingston Borough.

See PROPERTY | 11A

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Jim Monk
Service Manager, Monk HVAC

THEIR VIEW

Reduce health risks of shoveling snow

The Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, Pa.

With snow falling again this past week, it's worth taking a few moments to review the health risks of shoveling snow, and some ways to reduce those risks.

The American Heart Association warned this past winter that the exertion that comes with shoveling snow can increase the risk of a heart attack or other cardiac crisis.

Dr. Keith Churchwell, AHA volunteer president and Yale School of Medicine professor, called the strain of heavy snow-shoveling combined with the danger of exertion in cold weather "a perfect storm for a heart-related event," according to an AHA release.

It's an issue that has led to tragedy recently in this region. In 2022, an East Conemaugh woman collapsed while shoveling snow and clearing off her car, and died at the hospital of a stress-induced cardiac event, Cambria County Coroner Jeff Lees said at the time.

Churchwell noted that shoveling snow can affect the heart in several ways:

- Shoveling snow mostly involves arm work, which is more demanding on the heart than leg work.
- Someone straining to lift a shovelful of snow often holds his or her breath, which causes increases in heart rate and blood pressure.
- Cold air causes blood vessels to constrict, which raises blood pressure and simultaneously constricts the coronary arteries.

"The movements of snow shoveling are very taxing and demanding on your body and can cause significant increases in your heart rate and blood pressure," Churchwell said in the AHA release.

"Combined with the fact that the exposure to cold air can constrict blood vessels throughout the body, you're asking your heart to do a lot more work in conditions that are already diminishing the heart's ability to function at its best."

The danger is particularly present for "people who already have cardiovascular risks like a sedentary lifestyle or obesity, being a current or former smoker, having diabetes, high cholesterol or high blood pressure, as well as people who have had a heart attack or stroke," according to the AHA.

Churchwell gave several tips in the AHA release to reduce the risk from snow-shoveling:

- Anyone with known or suspected heart disease, or factors for it, should get someone else to remove their snow.
- Start shoveling snow gradually and pace yourself.
- Cover your mouth and nose, and wear layered clothing, a hat and gloves.
- Ideally, push or sweep the snow rather than lifting or throwing it, since that action involves a little less exertion.
- Be particularly careful when the wind is blowing, since wind will make it feel colder and increase the effects of the cold on your body.
- If possible, use a snowblower instead of shoveling.

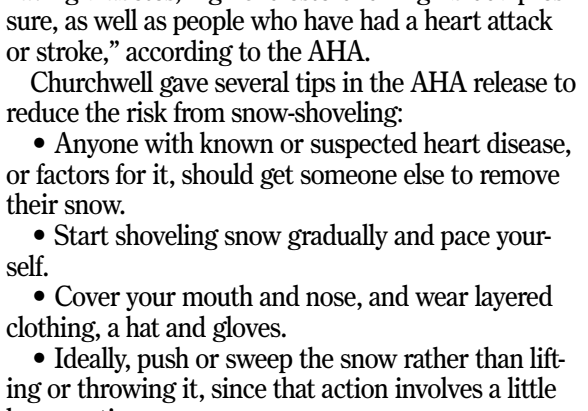
The AHA added that everyone ought to learn the common signs of a heart attack or stroke.

The organization said: "If you experience chest pain or pressure, light-headedness or heart palpitations or irregular heart rhythms, stop the activity immediately.

"Call 911 if symptoms don't subside shortly after you stop shoveling or snowblowing.

"If you see someone collapse while shoveling snow, call for help and start hands-only CPR if they are unresponsive with no pulse."

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Tony Callaio | For Times Leader

After a snowstorm in November 2025, there was plenty of snow to shovel in Wyoming Valley near Exeter.



THEIR VIEW

Justice in the age of algorithms means guardrails for AI

By Jesse Rothman
The Fulcrum



Artificial intelligence is already impacting the criminal justice system, and its importance is increasing rapidly. From automated report writing to facial recognition technology, AI tools are already shaping decisions that affect liberty, safety, and trust. The question is not whether these technologies will be used, but how—and under what rules.

The Council on Criminal Justice (CCJ) Task Force on Artificial Intelligence, in late October, released a framework designed to answer that question. The panel, which includes technologists, police executives, civil rights advocates, community leaders, and formerly incarcerated people, is urging policymakers to adopt five guiding principles to ensure AI is deployed safely, ethically, and effectively.

The principles are straightforward, but critically important:

Safe and reliable: Systems must be tested, monitored, and managed to prevent errors that could jeopardize liberty or safety.

Confidential and secure: AI must protect sensitive personal data, preserve privacy, and operate transparently.

Effective and helpful: Tools should only be adopted when they demonstrably improve outcomes or efficiency.

Fair and just: Bias must be identified and mitigated, with systems designed to promote fairness.

Democratic and accountable: Decision-making must remain transparent and under meaningful human and democratic control.

Nathan Hecht, former chief justice of the Texas Supreme Court and chair of the Task Force, put it plainly: "AI has the power to make the justice system more efficient, fair, and effective, but also to cause significant harm if misused."

That tension is at the heart of the debate. AI can reduce human error, improve resource allocation, and enable more data-driven decisions. But without guardrails, it can just as easily calcify suboptimal practices, threaten due process, and erode democratic accountability. The very scale and complexity of these systems make errors harder to detect, and small mistakes can have lasting consequences for individuals and communities.

The Task Force reminds us that tradeoffs are inherent in criminal justice. Yet certain principles—due process, human dignity, equal protection—are non-negotiable. No efficiency gain can justify sacrificing them.

"These principles provide a framework for making deliberate, transparent decisions that balance competing interests in ways that strengthen public safety, protect individual rights, and build confidence in the integrity of the justice system."

The group, supported by RAND researchers and funded by a coalition of foundations, plans to release further reports in the coming year on standards and best practices for AI in criminal justice. Our work is not just technical. We are tasked with engaging with the core questions of democracy: How do we protect individual rights and communal well-being simultaneously? What kind of procedures deserve respect and trust? What can we collectively agree is fair? It asks us to decide what kind of justice system we want in an age of algorithms.

AI is not simply a tool; it is a force that can reshape power, accountability, and trust. If deployed wisely, it can strengthen justice. If misused, it can undermine it. The CCJ framework is a reminder that technology must serve people, and that in criminal justice, principles must always come before convenience.

As artificial intelligence accelerates across every corner of society, the criminal justice system cannot afford to lag behind. Without a clear and proven oversight framework, the risks of injustice, error, and erosion of constitutional rights will grow alongside the technology itself. Policymakers must act now to ensure that AI serves justice and safety simultaneously before the pace of innovation outstrips the guardrails of democracy.

Jesse Rothman is director of the Council on Criminal Justice Task Force on Artificial Intelligence.

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Letters to the editor must include the letter writer's name, address and daytime phone number for verification. Letters should be no more than 250 words.

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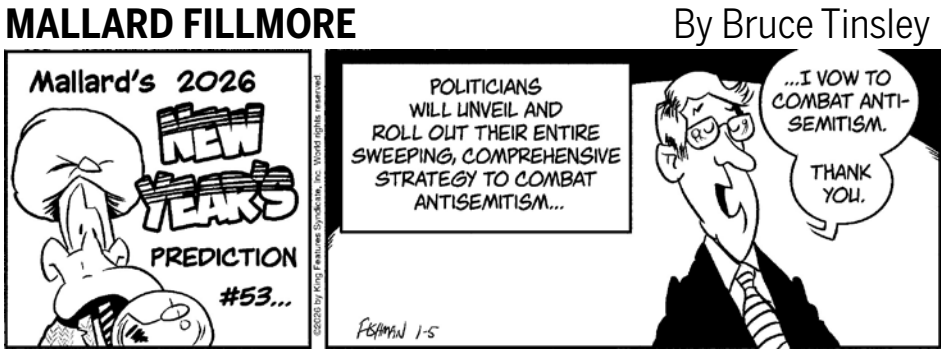
DOONESBURY: CLASSIC '80s

By Garry Trudeau



MALLARD FILLMORE

By Bruce Tinsley



A ban on aid

Aid groups grapple with what stoppage will mean for their work in Gaza

By Sam Mednick and Julia Frankel
The Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — Israel's decision to revoke the licenses of more than three dozen humanitarian organizations this week has aid groups scrambling to grapple with what this means for their operations in Gaza and their ability to help tens of thousands of struggling Palestinians.

The 37 groups represent some of the most prominent of the more than 100 independent nongovernmental organizations working in Gaza, alongside United Nations agencies. Those banned include Doctors Without Borders, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam and Medical Aid for Palestinians.

The groups do everything from providing tents and water to supporting clinics and medical facilities. The overall impact, however, remains unclear.

The most immediate impact of the license revocation is that Israel will no longer allow the groups to bring supplies into the Gaza Strip or send international staffers into the territory. Israel says all suspended groups have to halt their operations by March 1.

Some groups have already been barred from bringing in aid. The Norwegian Refugee Council, for example, said it has not been allowed to bring in supplies in 10 months, leaving it distributing tents and aid brought in by other groups.

Israel says the banned groups make up only a small part of aid operations in Gaza.

But aid officials say they fulfill crucial specific functions. In a joint statement Tuesday, the U.N. and leading NGOs said the organizations that are still licensed by Israel "are nowhere near the number required just to meet immediate and basic needs" in Gaza.

The ban further strains aid operations even as Gaza's over 2 million Palestinians still face a humanitarian crisis more than 12 weeks into a ceasefire. The U.N. says that although famine has been staved off, more than a quarter of families still eat only one meal a day and food prices remain out of reach for many; more than 1 million people need better tents as winter storms lash the territory.



AP Photo

A makeshift tent camp for displaced Palestinians stretches across Nuseirat, central Gaza Strip, on Friday, Jan. 2.

Why were their licenses revoked?

Earlier this year, Israel introduced strict new registration requirements for aid agencies working in Gaza. Most notably, it required groups to provide the names and personal details of local and international staff and said it would ban groups for a long list of criticisms of Israel.

The registration process is overseen by Israel's Ministry for Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism, led by a far-right member of the ruling Likud party.

See AID | 10A



AP Photo

Palestinians walk past destroyed buildings in the northern Gaza Strip on Friday.

Hundreds march to honor victims of fire that killed 40

By John Leicester and Jamey Keaten
The Associated Press



AP Photo

Firefighters cry as they attend a memorial march in Crans-Montana, Swiss Alps, Switzerland, Sunday after a devastating fire in Le Constellation bar left dead and injured during the New Year's celebrations.

CRANS-MONTANA, Switzerland — Hundreds marched in silence Sunday to honor the victims of the New Year's Eve fire at a bar in the Swiss Alpine resort of Crans-Montana, which left 40 dead and many severely injured.

Somber mourners, many with reddened eyes, filed silently out of the chapel to organ music after the hour-long Mass at the Chapelle Saint-Christophe in Crans-Montana. Some exchanged hugs before marching up a hill to Le Constellation bar.

Many hundreds of people walked in the dense snaking procession in the bright sunlight past shuttered stores. Up on the mountain overlooking the town, snow machines sent plumes of white flakes into the air.

At the top of the street, in front of Le Constellation — which is still largely shielded from view by white screens — the swelling crowd stood in near total silence, some weeping.

Then they broke out into sustained applause for the rescue teams and police who rushed to the scene of horror, their hands in gloves and mittens against the cold. Mourners and well-wishers deposited bouquets at a makeshift memorial piled with flowers, cuddly toys and other tributes. Some firefighters wiped their eyes too.

'They went there to party'

"Through this tragic event, I believe we must all remember that we are all brothers and sisters in humanity," Véronique Barras, a local resident who knows grieving families, said. "It's important to support each other, to hug each other, and to move forward towards light."

Cathy Premer said her daughter was out celebrating her 17th birthday on New Year's Eve when she called in the early hours of the morning to say she was stuck because Le Constellation was cordoned off.

"For the young — but even for adults — it's hard to understand things that seem inexplicable," she said. "They went there to party, it's a destination for Dec. 31, it's very festive, there were people of many nationalities ... and it all turned into a tragedy."

In the crowd, Paola Ponti Greppi, an 80-year-old Italian who has a house in Crans-Montana, called for safety checks in bars. "We need more safety in these places because it's not the only place like this. Why didn't the town do the proper checks? For me that's terrible."

A Mass for the victims

During the Mass, the Rev. Gilles Cavin spoke of the "terrible uncertainty" for families unsure if their loved ones are among the dead or still alive among the injured.

"There are no words

See FIRE | 10A

IN SUMMARY

Rain continues in California

CORTE MADERA, Calif. — Crews cleared mud from key California highways as forecasters warned that more thunderstorms were on the way after downpours and high tides caused flooding, prompting road closures and rescues of people trapped in cars. Northern counties remained under a flood watch, with up to three inches of rain possible through Monday night in areas that have been drenched off and on since around Christmas. To the south near the San Francisco Bay Area, waters were slowly receding after roadways were flooded during heavy rain that coincided with record-breaking "King Tides." While the tides were waning, lingering thunderstorms on Sunday could cause additional problems throughout low-lying areas.

Officers on Jan. 6 say their struggles linger

WASHINGTON — Five years after the Capitol riot, some of the police officers who fought off the rioters that day say they're still struggling with what happened. And that's especially the case since Donald Trump was elected to a second term last year and pardoned about 1,500 people who'd been convicted for their actions at the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Several police officers who fought the rioters said in Associated Press interviews that the hardest thing to deal with has been that many people are playing down the violence from that day, or they're ignoring it or claiming it didn't happen. That's despite a massive collection of video and photographic evidence documenting the violence.

Gunmen kill at least 30 villagers in Nigeria

MINNA, Nigeria — Gunmen have killed at least 30 villagers and abducted several others in northern Nigeria's Niger state, according to police. The attack occurred Saturday evening when the gunmen stormed Kasuwan-Daji village, opening fire on residents and burning down the local market and houses. Some residents report the death toll could be higher, with people still missing as of Sunday. They also claim security forces have not yet arrived, despite police statements. Such attacks are common in Nigeria, where rogue gangs often target remote communities. The attackers reportedly came from a forest reserve, a known hideout for armed gangs.

— Associated Press



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UNIVERSAL PICTURES

By Charles Apple | THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

The Andrews Sisters recorded "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" on Jan. 2, 1941 — 85 years ago. Featured in the Abbott and Costello movie "Buck Privates," the performance would become one of the most memorable songs of the Second World War.

'HE MAKES THE COMPANY JUMP WHEN HE PLAYS REVEILLE'

Comedians Bud Abbott and Lou Costello made a successful film debut in the 1940 musical "One Night in the Tropics." Executives at Universal Pictures decided that, for their next picture, they'd find a way to use a popular routine from Abbott and Costello's stage act in which they try — in their typically inept way — to learn how to march in formation.

The film would be about the newly launched peacetime draft. Popular singing trio the Andrews Sisters were cast in the film and Don Raye and Hughie Prince — who earlier had composed the hits "Rhumboogie" and "Beat Me Daddy, Eight to the Bar" for the sisters — were hired to compose music.

Among the material Raye and Prince came up with was a song about a Chicago trumpet player who is drafted and then begins playing boogie-woogie versions of "Reveille" and "Taps," much to the enjoyment of other soldiers.

The intent was for Costello to sing the song, which they originally called "Boogie Woogie Bugler." But as work progressed on the film, producers shifted gears and had Raye and Prince rework the number for the Andrews Sisters to perform wearing Army WAC outfits. Raye and Prince then wrote a fun novelty song, "When Private Brown Becomes a Captain," for Costello.

The Andrews Sisters performed "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" for the film and then recorded the song again in a music studio on Jan. 2, 1941, to release as a 78 RPM single.

"Buck Privates" was released in theaters on Jan. 31, 1941. "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" peaked that spring at No. 6 on Billboard magazine's pop singles chart. It would later be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Original Song but would lose to "The Last Time I Saw Paris" from the musical "Lady Be Good."



DECCA RECORDS



In 1943, both Billboard magazine and Stars & Stripes launched efforts to find the bugler on whom Raye and Prince based the song. The publications reported the real "Bugle Boy of Company B" was Clarence Zylman of Muskegon, Michigan, who had been a trumpeter in a swing band, was drafted and then began ignoring regulations by adding boogie-woogie frills to his morning musical wake-up call.

However, this couldn't have been the case: Zylman didn't enlist in the Army until June 1942 — nearly a year and a half after the movie and the song debuted.

While "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" had peaked at No. 6 on the music charts of the day, it would become one of the best-remembered songs of its time. Bette Midler would remake the song on her 1972 album "The Divine Miss M," produced by Barry Manilow. Midler's version would peak at No. 8 in the Billboard Hot 100 but would land at No. 1 on Billboard's Easy Listening chart.

THE ANDREWS SISTERS

LaVerne
BORN: July 6, 1911

The eldest Andrews sister sang alto – the lowest range for women. As a teenager, she played piano for other singers. She was, most likely, the only Andrews sister who could read music.

She loved fashion and fine clothes. She usually colored her dark hair red. She typically mediated family disputes.

LaVerne died of cancer in 1967 at age 55.

Patty
BORN: Feb. 16, 1918

The youngest Andrews sister was considered by most observers to be the most talented. Not only did she sing lead in the trio, she was also a gifted comedian and dancer.

She continued to perform in stage shows, clubs and on cruise ships into the 21st century but gave few public interviews.

Patty died of natural causes in 2013 at age 94.

Maxene
BORN: Jan. 3, 1916

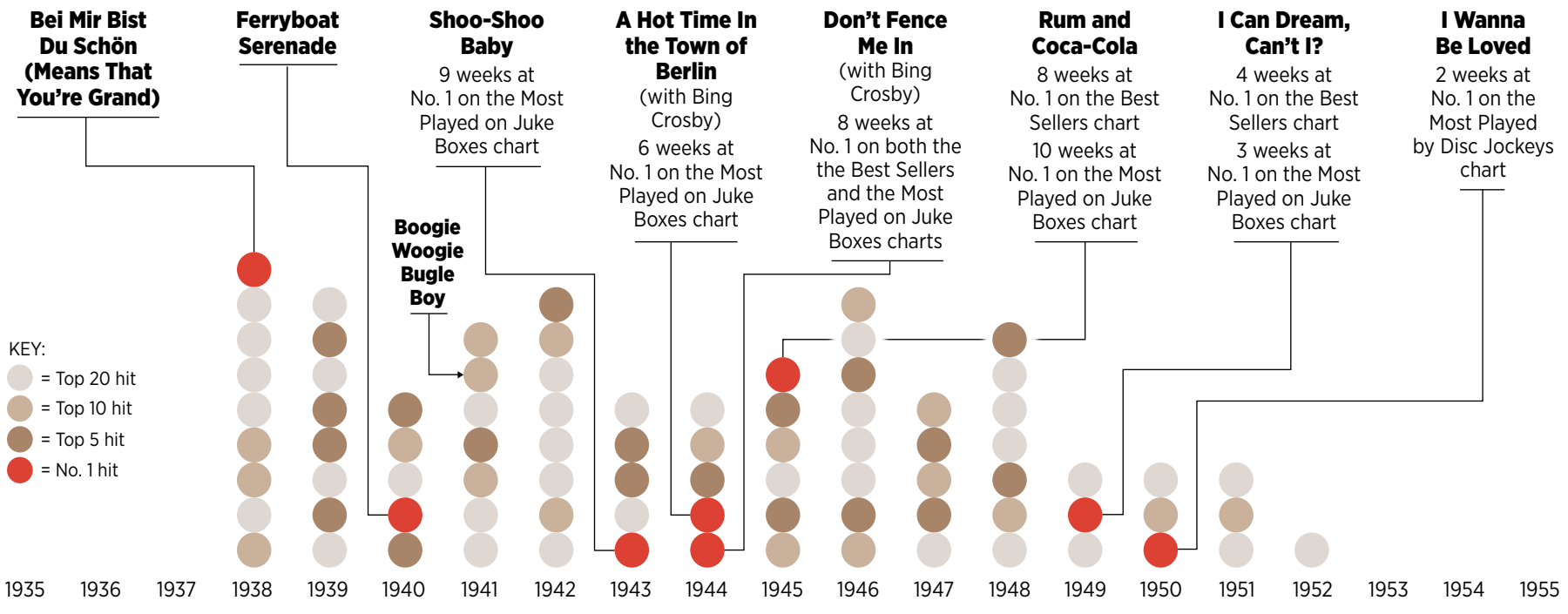
The middle Andrews sister sang soprano. She married Lou Levy, the trio's manager, in 1941 but kept it secret from the public for nearly two years.

After the sisters' breakup in 1968, she performed solo in cabarets and nightclubs. She and Patty stopped talking to each other in the 1970s.

Maxene died of a heart attack in 1995 at age 79.

THE ANDREWS SISTERS' TOP-20 HIT SONGS

The Andrews Sisters sold nearly 100 million records over their career. That includes eight No. 1 hit singles — although "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" was not one of those.



Sources: Internet Movie Database, SongFacts, the Great American Songbook Foundation, MusicTales, FamousDaily.com, Playback.fm, Discography of American Historical Recordings of the UC Santa Barbara Library, the Vocal Group Hall of Fame, Discogs.com

Fire

From page 8A

strong enough to express the dismay, anguish, and anger of those who are affected in their lives today. And yet, we are here, gathered because silence alone is not enough," he said.

In the crowded pews, a grieving woman listened intently, her hands clasped tightly and sometimes clasping rosary beads, as speakers delivered readings in German, French and Italian.

Forty people died and 119 were injured in the blaze that broke out around 1:30 a.m. on Thursday at Le Constellation bar. Police have said many of the victims were in their teens to mid-20s.

By Sunday evening, Swiss authorities had identified all of the 40 fatalities.

A grieving mother

One of the victims was 16-year-old Arthur Brodard, whose mother had been frantically searching for him.

"Our Arthur has now left to party in paradise," a visibly shaken Laetitia Brodard said in a Facebook story posted on Saturday night, speaking to a camera. "We can start our mourning, knowing that he is in peace and in the light."

Brodard's frenzied search for her son reflected the desperation of families of the young people disappeared during the fire, who did not know whether their loved ones were dead or in the hospital.

Swiss authorities said the process of identifying victims was particularly hard because of the advanced degree of the burns, requiring the use of DNA samples. Brodard also had given her DNA sample to help in the identification process.

In her Facebook post, she thanked those who "testified their compassion, their love" and to those who shared information as she anxiously searched and waited for news of her son. Other parents and siblings are still waiting in anguish.

Bar managers face a criminal investigation

Swiss authorities have opened a criminal investigation of the bar managers.

The two are suspected of involuntary homicide, involuntary bodily harm and involuntarily causing a fire, the Valais region's chief prosecutor, Beatrice Pilloud, told reporters Saturday. The announcement of the investigation did not name the managers.

Regional police said Sunday there were no legal grounds so far that would require the managers to be held pending the legal process. They have not been deemed to be a flight risk.

Investigators have said they believe festive sparkling candles atop Champagne bottles ignited the fire when they came too close to the ceiling of the crowded bar.

Authorities are looking into whether sound-dampening material on the ceiling conformed with regulations and whether the candles were permitted for use in the bar. The investigation also centers on other safety measures



AP Photo

People walk during a memorial procession in Crans-Montana, Swiss Alps, Switzerland, Sunday after a devastating fire in Le Constellation bar left dead and injured during the New Year's celebrations.

on the premises, including fire extinguishers and escape routes, and whether previous work at the site was up to code.

"Initial witness accounts cited a fire that spread quickly, generating a lot of smoke and a huge wave of heat," the police statement Sunday said. "Everything happened very fast."

Swiss President Guy Parmelin announced a national day of mourning for the victims on Jan. 9.

France's Health Minister Stéphanie Rist said 17 patients have received care in France, out of a total of 35 transferred from Switzerland to five European countries. Other patients were planned to be transferred to Germany, Italy and Belgium.

Aid

From page 8A

Israel says the rules aim to prevent Hamas and other militants from infiltrating the groups, something it has said was happening throughout the 2-year-old war. The U.N., which leads the massive aid program in Gaza, and independent groups deny the allegations and Israeli claims of major diversion of aid supplies by Hamas.

Aid organizations say they did not comply, in part, because they feared that handing over staff information could endanger them. More than 500 aid workers have been killed in Gaza during the war, according to the United Nations.

Israel denies targeting aid workers. But the group say Israel has been vague about how it would use the data.

The groups also said Israel was vague about how it would use the data.

"Demanding staff lists as a condition for access to territory is an outrageous overreach," Doctors Without Borders, known by its French acronym MSF, said Friday. It said Israeli officials had refused its attempts to find alternatives.

A December report on MSF issued by an Israeli government team recommended rejection of the group's license. It pointed primarily to statements by the group criticizing Israel, including referring to its campaign in Gaza as genocide and calling its monthslong ban on food entering the territory earlier this year as "a starvation tactic." It said the statements violated neutrality and constituted "delegitimization of Israel."

The report also repeated claims that an MSF employee killed in by an Israeli airstrike in 2024 was an operative with the Islamic Jihad militant group. That, it said, suggested MSF "maintains connections with a terrorist group."

MSF on Friday denied the allegations, saying it would "never knowingly employ anyone involved in military activities." It said that its statements cited by Israel simply described the destruction its teams witnessed in Gaza.

"The fault lies with those committing these atrocities, not with those who speak of them," it said.

Aid groups have a week from Dec. 31 to appeal the process.

Medical services could see biggest impact

Independent NGOs play a major role in propping up Gaza's health sector, devastated by two years of Israeli bombardment and restrictions on supplies.

MSF said Israel's decision would have a catastrophic impact on its work in Gaza, where it provides funding and international staff for six hospitals as well as running two field hospitals and eight primary health centers, clinics and medical points. It also runs two of Gaza's five stabilization centers helping children with severe malnutrition.

Its teams treated 100,000 trauma cases, performed surgeries on 10,000 patients and handled a third of Gaza's births, the group says. It has 60 international staffers in the West Bank and Gaza and more than 1,200 local staff — most medical professionals.

Since the ceasefire began in early October, MSF has brought in about 7% of the



AP Photo

A Palestinian woman carries a container of water in Nuseirat, central Gaza Strip, on Friday.

2,239 tons of medical supplies that Israel has allowed into Gaza, according to a U.N. tracking dashboard. That makes it the largest provider of medical supplies after U.N. agencies and the Red Cross, according to the dashboard.

Medecins du Monde, another group whose license is being halted, runs another four primary health clinics.

Overburdened Palestinian staff

Aid groups say the most immediate impact will likely be the inability to send international staff into Gaza.

Foreign staff provide key technical expertise and emotional support for their Palestinian colleagues.

"Having international presence in Gaza is a morale booster for our staff who are already feeling isolated," said Shaina Low, communications adviser for the Norwegian Refugee Council, which is one of the main NGOs providing shelter supplies and fresh water to displaced people.

NRC has roughly 30 international staff who rotate in and out of Gaza working alongside some 70 Palestinians.

While any operations by the 37 groups in the West Bank will likely remain open, those with offices in east Jerusalem, which Israel considers its territory, might have to close.

Halt on supplies

Many of the 37 groups already had been blocked from bringing supplies into Gaza since March, said Bushra Khalidi, Oxfam's policy lead for Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories.

What changes with the formal license revocation is "that these practices are now formalized, giving Israel full impunity to restrict operations and shut out organizations it disagrees with," she said.

Some of the groups have turned to buying supplies within Gaza rather than bringing them in, but that is slower and more expensive, she said. Other groups dug into reserve stocks, pared down distribution and had to work with broken or heavily repaired equipment because they couldn't bring in new ones.

Amed Khan, an American humanitarian philanthropist who has been privately donating medicine and emergency nutrition for children to Gaza, said the impact extends beyond the aid groups.

He relies on NGOs to receive and distribute the supplies, but the fewer groups that Israel approves, the harder it is to find one.

"It's death by bureaucracy," he said.

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Property

From page 6A

• 175 Old River Road LLC to RPI PA LLC, $501,320, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Sandra S. Piccone (per attorney in fact) and Robert A. Piccone (attorney in fact) to 149 James LLC, $425,000, Kingston Borough.

• Alexander E. Saba and Andrea L. Saba to Evan A. Jenkins and Rianna L. Ambosie, $295,000, Wright Township.

• NEPA Cash Offer LLC to Real Estate Magnate II LLC, $63,000, 395 N. Pennsylvania Ave., Wilkes-Barre City.

• Michelle T. Jagodzinski Rador, et al., to JP Halliday Enterprise LLC, $150,000, Nanticoke City.

• Brian K. Rose to Eagle Rock Resort Co., $10, Hazle Township.

• David M. Ford and Christine M. Ford to Eagle Rock Resort Co., $10, Hazle Township.

• Dominick C. Nanni III to Eagle Rock Resort Co., $10, Hazle Township.

• Ernest E. Keepfer Jr. and Patricia Keepfer to Eagle Rock Resort Co., $10, Hazle Township.

• Wilbert Elliott and Genevieve Elliott to Jasmin Abreu and Branden Abreu, $260,000, 170 Edge Rock Drive, Butler Township.

• One Mahal Group LLC to Elizabeth Shafer and Jonathan Shafer, $255,000, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Rosemarie E. Abela and August Abela to Eagle Rock Resort Co., $10, Hazle Township.

• Carlos E. Colado (administrator), et al., to Anthony R. Pimentel De Los Santos, $82,000, 572 Wilbur Court, Hazleton City.

• Robert Sobeck and Jenifer Dolan to Michael Mirzayev, $560,000, 171 Mountain Road, Sugarloaf Township.

• Tracy Bartlow to Deal House Capital Fund II LLC, $220,000, Dallas Township.

• LCHIP Holdings LLC to David Margary, $228,700, 109-111 Lagrange St., Pittston City.

• Ivelise Del La Rosa to Stephanie Macosky, $175,000, Pringle Borough.

• Louise A. Kostic to Michael Fuchick and Maria Carrelli, $238,800, Hazle Township.

• 11th Street Properties LLC to Belford Estates LLC, $195,000, Plymouth Borough.

• Eagle Rock Resort Co. to Rosiephine Abellera and Ritche John Abellera, $10, Hazle Township.

• Eagle Rock Resort Co. to Christopher Rojas Lagrimas and Editha D. Dacaymat, $10, Hazle Township.

• Eagle Rock Resort Co. to Cathryn Manguilin Pecson, $10, Black Creek Township.

• Eagle Rock Resort Co. to Michelle L. Augustine and Albert Augustine, $10, Hazle Township.

• Mecka LLC to 113 E. Broad St. LLC, $560,000, West Hazleton Borough.

• Sandra Smith (executrix) and Carol A. Smith (estate) to Patricia Ann Lenahan, $175,000, Plymouth Borough.

• Citizens Bank to 110 Mclean LLC, $80,000, Kingston Township.

• Gerald Gozlan, et al., to William O. Strickland, $24,500, 66 Vacation Drive, Foster Township.

• Esthanli J. Duval to JK General Investments LLC, $1, 60 Mill St., Wilkes-Barre City.

• Daniel Bove and Jenna Bove to Donald Bayzick and Linda Bayzick, $260,000, Sugarloaf Township.

• Christopher Avhiokhode to Ainhoa LLC, $155,000, 7 Sturdevant St., Wilkes-Barre City.

• Angel Reyes to Monica Cenaida Maliza Charco, $90,000, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Imperial Solutions LLC to William Nest Egg LLC, $58,000, 41 E. Shawnee Ave., Plymouth Borough.

• Kathryn M. Wilk and William D. Wilk to Walter S. Santos, et al., $190,000, 231 S. Main St., Hanover Township.

• Richard Titus to Joshua Gartley and Shelby Burgess, $400,000, Dallas Township.

• Larry A. Willis and Lise M. Willis to Cindy Espinoza, $175,000, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Planet Home Lending LLC to 3 Children LLC, $104,880, 429 E. Ridge St., Nanticoke City.

• Joseph M. Pollock, et al., to Alexander Romero, $385,000, Hanover Township.

• Family Service Association of Northeastern Pennsylvania to Jacqueline Aguilar and Michael Rosado, $232,900, Larksville Borough.

• Laritza Santana to Rocio Lugo-Guevara and Juan David Guevara Baquero, $240,000, 338-340 Washington St., Freeland Borough.

• Northwest Bank to D&N Capital Investments LLC, $151,130, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Alen Ducic to Joseph Shimko, $150,000, Newport Township.

• Nino Seturi to Giacomo F. Pazzaglia and Elizabeth A. Charney, $250,000, 101 Mill St., Pittston City.

• AR Investments LLC to Nino Tcholikidze and Kato Iosifovna Cholikidze, $230,000, Dallas Township.

• Patrick Genetti, et al., to PPL Electric Utilities Corp., $28,500, Hazle Township.

• Elizabeth Rodriguez to Elizabeth Rodriguez and Luis E. Matos, $1, 1213 Birkbeck St., Freeland Borough.

• Warren F. Kaine and Janet F. Kaine to Robert Steininger, $255,000, Penn Lake Park Borough.

• Nicole Bostock Felix to Andrew J. Connors and Brianna M. Connors, $375,000, Kingston Township.

• Anthony J. Fox and Teresa M. Fox to Kody Parsons, $35,000, Hunlock Township.

• Pedro Betancourt Colon and Pedro Bentancourt Colon to Zackary Capitano, $143,500, Dupont Borough.

• JG Realty PA LLC to 64 E. Union St., $1,840,000, Wilkes-Barre City.

• Kelly Ziegenfus Brown and Robert Brown to ElitePropertyMG LLC, $105,000, Luzerne Borough.

• David J. Basalyga and Cristin A. Basalyga to William Randall Roush and Jillian Marie Roush, $560,000, Fairview Township.

• Jeremy Fremin and Amy Fremin to Daniel Carnecki, $216,300, Swoyersville Borough.

• Ronald Berger and Celestia A. Berger to Jesse Terray and Larissa Terray, $145,000, Nescopeck Borough.

• Thomas M. Vercusky to to Leslie Naomy Guzman, $39,000, 519 W. Maple St., Hazleton City.

• Thomas M. Vercusky to Amada Dulce Rodriguez, $183,000, Hazle Township.

• Thomas M. Vercusky to Yinaury Marie Espinal Prado, $65,000, West Hazleton Borough.

• G&B Realty LLC to Dalvin Yoherlin Diaz Perez and Ellin M. Matos Pinales, $69,000, 516 Stockton Mountain Road, Hazle Township.

• Anthony Bonomo to Daisy Sanchez, $10,000, Hazleton City.

• Nathan Preschutti to Robb McClay and Kelly Andrea Bronson, $235,000, Forty Fort Borough.

• 12 St Properties LLC to Coral Nolasco, $245,000, Pittston City.

• Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate Inc. to Pfnonwovens LLC, $10, 400 Stoney Creek Road, Hazle Township.

• Sand Springs Development Corp. to John M. Chudzinski and Lois W. Chudzinski Revocable Trust Agreement, $517,216, 337 Long Road Road, Butler Township.

• Deysis A. Baez Torres to Reyna Franciso Martinez, $250,000, Hazleton City.

• Paul S. Reese and Anne Marie Reese to J-L Used Auto Parts Inc., $150,000, Larksville Borough.

• HSFA LP to Regina Sharon Peterson, $359,900, Duryea Borough.

• Genaro Rodriguez to Casimiro Pauta Guaman and Maria P. Chimborazo Guaman, $130,000, Plymouth Borough.

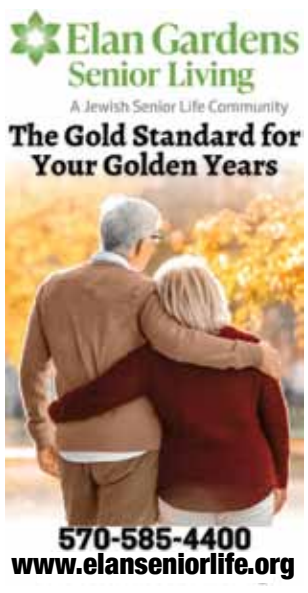
• James C. Zardus and Bonnie Zardus to Gairon L. Segura Sibaja, $180,000, Hanover Township.

• Penny J. O'Donnell to Mary Claire Materna and Philip Walsh, $232,000, Ross Township.

• Keith York to James C. Zardus and Bonnie Zardus, $143,000, Foster Township.

• Rainy Boyle to Jonathan Zabala, $149,900, Pittston City.

• Barbara Ann Smith (estate) and Michael Smith (administrator) to Deal House Capital Fund II LLC, $117,500, Wilkes-Barre City.



















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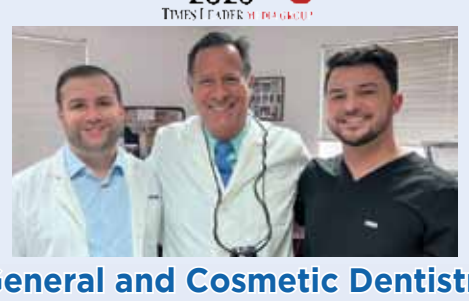
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What to watch for in the economy in 2026

By Christopher Rugaber
Asssociated Press

WASHINGTON — The economy in 2025 was filled with contradictions, as growth was healthy while hiring slowed, inflation stayed elevated and unemployment rose.

Last year's odd outcomes raise a host of questions for the upcoming year: Will a growing economy eventually boost the sluggish job market? Or are last year's weak job gains a sign of a stumbling economy that could get worse?

There is another uncomfortable possibility: The economy could keep growing without much hiring, as technology — particularly artificial intelligence — enables more companies to step up their production of goods and services without adding more workers, leading to a "jobless expansion."

Adding to the complications, the six-week government shutdown last fall disrupted the collection and publication of economic data, leaving policymakers at the Federal Reserve with a cloudier view of the economy that will only slowly clear up this year.

"2026 begins at a time when it is hard to say how 2025 ended," Stephen Stanley, chief economist at Santander, an investment bank, said in a note to clients.

Sharp inequality has also meant that wealthier U.S. households account for a rising share of spending, so that even healthy growth figures mask underlying weaknesses among lower-income families — what many economists refer to as the "K-shaped" economy.

Still, Stanley, like many economists, is somewhat optimistic: He expects that hiring will pick up on the back of stronger growth fueled by large tax refunds early this year, a result of President Donald Trump's tax cut legislation. Companies may also step up hiring because they face much less uncertainty this year from tariffs.

This year "could turn out to be a better year," said Federal Reserve governor Christopher Waller last month. "Now whether that pulls the labor market along with it, I certainly hope it does."

Here are five charts that illustrate the economy in 2025, and where it may be headed.



AP File Photo

Growth accelerated after weak start

Surveys suggest Americans have a gloomy outlook on the economy, but that hasn't kept many of them from spending at a healthy clip. Solid consumer spending — likely fueled mostly by higher-income Americans — boosted growth to a 4.3% annual pace in the July-September quarter, a much better than expected showing and the biggest increase in two years.

The healthy gain followed two quarters where Trump's tariffs distorted the economy. A surge in imports in the first three months of the year caused the economy to shrink as businesses sought to bring in products from overseas ahead of the duties.

Growth likely continued in the final three months of the year, but the government shutdown almost certainly weighed on output, reducing growth by one percentage point, economists forecast.

Hiring stayed weak, unemployment rose

Even as the economy picked up, hiring did not — in fact job gains weakened after Trump's announcement of sweeping tariffs in early April, which he dubbed "Liberation Day."

The economy even shed jobs in June, August, and October. The unemployment rate, meanwhile, rose from 4% in January to 4.6% in November, highest in four years. December's figures will be released Jan. 9.

There were several reasons hiring likely slowed: The uncertainty around tariffs, which Trump imposed, then in some cases lowered or removed, or delayed, led many companies to put hiring on hold. Still, layoffs remain low, in what has been a "low-hire, low-fire" job market.

At the same time, the ongoing adoption of artificial intelligence may have led many firms to hold off on adding workers, as they sort out what the new technology can do for them.

"AI, AI, AI, AI — that is all I have heard since this summer," Waller said last month, referring to comments he has heard from business executives explaining why they are reluctant to add jobs.

Still, there are signs of improvement: Employers cut 105,000 jobs in October, but that was mostly because of a large drop in federal government jobs stemming from the Trump administration's purge of government workers, which didn't formally take effect until that month.

Excluding government, businesses added an average of 75,000 jobs a month in the three months ended in November, a significant increase from just 13,000 in the three months ending in August.

However, most of the hiring this year has been heavily concentrated in just a few sectors — health care, restaurants and hotels, and government (outside of October). Most large private industries have shed jobs.

Inflation remained stubbornly high

Even though inflation fell sharply in 2023 and 2024 from a four-decade high, there was little improvement last year. Annual inflation, according to the Federal Reserve's preferred measure, actually ticked higher to 2.8% in September — the latest data available — from 2.7% in December 2024.

Elevated costs became a potent political issue in races as diverse as governors' contests in Virginia and New Jersey and New York City's mayoral race. All were won by Democrats as Trump found himself grappling with issues of "affordability," which he referred to as a "hoax."

Inflation cooled in November, according to the more widely-followed consumer price index, though economists said the figures were distorted by the government shutdown. Prices were mostly collected in the second half of November, after the shutdown ended, when holiday discounts were more likely to be in effect.

Some economists worry inflation will worsen in early 2026, as companies implement annual price changes and pass through more tariff costs. But most expect inflation will continue to slowly cool in 2026 and move closer to the Fed's 2% target.

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How cocaine, corruption led to indictment of Maduro

By Alanna Durkin Richer and Larry Neumeister
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — A newly unsealed U.S. Justice Department indictmen t accuses captured Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro of running a "corrupt, illegitimate government" fueled by an extensive drug-trafficking operation that flooded the U.S. with thousands of tons of cocaine.

The arrest of Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, in a stunning military operation early Saturday in Venezuela sets the stage for a major test for U.S. prosecutors as they seek to secure a conviction in a Manhattan courtroom against the longtime leader of the oil-rich South American nation.

Attorney General Pam Bondi said in a post on X that Maduro and Flores "will soon face the full wrath of American justice on American soil in American courts."

Here's a look at the accusations against Maduro and the charges he faces:

Maduro faces drugs and weapons charges

Maduro is charged alongside his wife, his son and three others. Maduro is indicted on four counts: narco-terrorism conspiracy, cocaine importation conspiracy, possession of machine guns and destructive devices and conspiracy to possess machine guns and destructive devices.

Maduro is facing the same charges as in an earlier indictment brought against him in Manhattan federal court in 2020, during the first Trump presidency. The new indictment unsealed Saturday, which adds charges against Flores, was filed under seal in the Southern District of New York just before Christmas.

It was not immediately clear when Maduro and Flores would make their first appearance at the courthouse in Manhattan. A video posted Saturday night on social media by a White House account showed Maduro, smiling, as he was escorted through a U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration office in New York by two federal agents grasping his arms. He was expected to be detained while awaiting trial at a federal jail in Brooklyn.

Maduro allowed 'cocaine-fueled corruption to flourish'

The indictment accuses Maduro of partnering with "some of the most violent and prolific drug traffickers and narco-terrorists in the world" to allow for the shipment of thousands of tons of cocaine into the U.S.

Authorities allege powerful and violent drug-trafficking organizations, such as the Sinaloa Cartel and Tren de Aragua gang, worked directly with the Venezuelan government and then sent profits to high-ranking officials who helped and protected them in exchange.

But a U.S. intelligence assessment published in April, which drew on input from the 18 agencies that comprise the intelligence community, found no coordination between Tren de Aragua and the Venezuelan government.

Maduro allowed "cocaine-fueled corruption to flourish for his own benefit, for the benefit of members of his ruling regime, and for the benefit of his family members," the indictment alleges.

U.S. authorities allege that Maduro and his family "provided law enforcement cover and logistical support" to cartels moving drugs throughout the region, resulting in as much as 250 tons of cocaine trafficked through Venezuela annually by 2020, according to the indictment.

Drugs were moved on go-fast vessels, fishing boats and container ships or on planes from clandestine airstrips, the indictment says.

"This cycle of narcotics-based corruption lines the pockets of Venezuelan officials and their families while also benefiting violent narco-terrorists who operate with impunity on Venezuelan soil and who help produce, protect, and transport tons of cocaine to the United States," the indictment says.

Successive U.S. administrations have warned about Venezuela's role as a transit point for cocaine and a haven for criminal gangs, terrorist groups and drug-smuggling leftist rebels from neighboring Colombia. While reliable data is hard to ascertain, the vast majority of cocaine departs South America from Colombia and Ecuador, making its way northward through the eastern Pacific Ocean, not the Caribbean.

Allegations of bribes, orders of kidnappings, murders

The U.S. accuses Maduro and his wife of ordering kidnappings, beatings and murders "against those who owed them drug money or otherwise undermined their drug trafficking operation." That includes the killing of a local drug boss in Caracas, according to the indictment.

Maduro's wife is also accused of accepting hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes in 2007 to arrange a meeting between "a large-scale drug trafficker" and the director of Venezuela's National Anti-Drug Office. In a corrupt deal, the drug trafficker then agreed to pay a monthly bribe to the director of the anti-drug office as well as about $100,000 for each cocaine-carrying flight "to ensure the flight's safe passage." Some of that money then went to Maduro's wife, the indictment says.

Nephews of Maduro's wife were heard during recorded meetings with confidential U.S. government sources in 2015 agreeing to send "multi-hundred-kilogram cocaine shipments" from Maduro's "presidential hanger" at a Venezuelan airport. The nephews during the recorded meetings explained "that they were at 'war' with the United States," the indictment alleges. They were both sentenced in 2017 to 18 years in prison for conspiring to send tons of cocaine into the U.S. before being released in 2022 as part of a prisoner swap in exchange for seven imprisoned Americans.

Operation to capture Maduro a 'law enforcement function'

During a news conference, Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Dan Caine, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, cast the military raid that captured Maduro and his wife as an action carried out on behalf of the Department of Justice. Caine said the operation was made "at the request of the Justice Department."

Rubio, as he responded to a question about whether Congress had been notified, said the U.S. raid to get the couple was "basically a law enforcement function," adding that it was an instance in which the "Department of War supported the Department of Justice." He called Maduro "a fugitive of American justice with a $50 million reward" over his head.



AP Photo

Members of the media gather outside the Metropolitan Detention Center where captured Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro is being held Saturday in New York.



AP File Photo

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro raises up his closed fists during a news conference at Miraflores presidential palace in Caracas, Venezuela, July 31, 2024, three days after his disputed reelection.

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AP Photo

Marco Calo, left, a geophysicist at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), take a break on the slopes of the Popocatepetl volcano in Mexico on Dec. 5, 2025.

What's inside Mexico's Popocatépetl?

Scientists obtain first 3D images of the whole volcano

By María Verza
The Associated Press

POPOCATÉPETL VOLCANO, Mexico — In the predawn darkness, a team of scientists climbs the slope of Mexico's Popocatépetl volcano, one of the world's most active and whose eruption could affect millions of people. Its mission: figure out what is happening under the crater.

For five years, the group from Mexico's National Autonomous University has climbed the volcano with kilos of equipment, risked data loss due to bad weather or a volcanic explosion and used artificial intelligence to analyze the seismic data. Now, the team has created the first three-dimensional image of the whole 17,883-foot volcano's interior, which tells them where the magma accumulates and will help them better understand its activity, and, eventually, help authorities better react to eruptions.

Marco Calò, professor in the UNAM's Geophysics Institute's vulcanology department and the project leader, invited The Associated Press to accompany the team on its most recent expedition, the last before its research on the volcano will be published.

Movement underground

Inside an active volcano, everything is moving: the rocks, magma, gas and aquifers. It all generates seismic signals.

Most of the world's volcanoes that pose a risk to humans already have detailed maps of their interiors, but not Popocatépetl, despite the fact that some 25 million people live within a 62-mile radius and houses, schools, hospitals and five airports could be affected by an eruption.

Other scientists took some early images 15 years ago, but they showed contradictory results and did not have sufficient resolution to see "how the volcanic edifice was being built," and above all, where the magma gathered, Calò said.

His team increased the number of seismographs from the 12 provided by Mexico's National Disaster Prevention Center to 22 to cover the entire perimeter of the volcano. Even though just three can alert to an emergency, many more are needed to understand what is behind those emergencies.

The devices measure vibrations in the ground 100 times per second and generate data that Karina Bernal, 33, a doctoral student and researcher on the project, processed by using artificial intelligence to adapt algorithms developed for other volcanoes.

"I taught the machine about the different types of tremors there are in El Popo" and with that they were able to catalog the different kinds of seismic signals, she said.

Little by little the scientists began to infer what kinds of material were where, in what state, at what temperature and at

See VOLCANO | 18A

Experts say it's time to slow it down

Why ordering takeout or calling the dog walker might lead to a happier relationship

By Tracee M. Herbaugh
The Associated Press

It turns out, love may benefit from a little less labor.

Couples who spend money on time-saving services — like getting takeout, hiring a housecleaner or calling a dog walker — report greater relationship satisfaction, especially during stressful periods, says Ashley Whillans, a behavioral scientist and professor at Harvard Business School.

Whillans studies the "tradeoffs people make between time and money."

"When you spend money to save time — hiring an accountant, a babysitter, a cleaner — you feel more control over your life," she said. "That sense of autonomy boosts well-being."

Not everyone can afford to outsource bigger household chores. But Whillans says even a little bit can help. She advises couples to take a "time audit" — examining how they spend their hours and what small changes could reclaim even a few moments.

"People underestimate how much these choices matter," she said. "It's not about luxury — it's about freeing up time to connect."

Whillans' team tracked busy, dual-income couples — partners working full-time who often report feeling time-starved — and found consistent patterns. In one six-week diary study, couples who made "time-saving purchases" on a given day were happier and more satisfied with their relationships.

Use that saved time for connecting

Simply outsourcing chores isn't a magic fix, however.

"It's about being intentional with the time you get back — using it to spend quality time together, to reconnect," Whillans said.

"Think of that half hour not as an opportunity to send more emails, but as a chance to spend time with your partner."

Targol Hasankhani, a Chicago-based marriage and family therapist, stressed that while outsourcing domestic labor can ease daily stress, it doesn't replace communication. Juggling careers and kids takes a toll on families, and housework is often freighted with resentments over who is doing it.

See EXPERTS | 17A

Paying tribute to beloved 'super tusker'

By Nicholas Komu and Rodney Muhumuza
The Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya — Kenyans are mourning the death of a beloved "super tusker" elephant whose long life in the wild came to symbolize the country's increasingly successful efforts to protect the mammals from ivory poachers.

The bull elephant who died on Saturday was named Craig. He lived in Amboseli National Park, a protected area in southern Kenya that is a favorite of safari tourists, the Kenya Wildlife Service said in a statement.

"Craig, the legendary super tusker famed for its immense, ground-sweeping tusks and calm, dignified presence, passed on at the age of 54," the statement said.

The Amboseli Trust for Elephants said Craig had died of natural causes. The conservation group said it was grateful to everyone who worked to help the animal "live out his life naturally."

Local broadcaster NTV aired a segment on the death of Craig, saying of the elephant that it was a rare creature as "one of the last remaining elephants identified as super tuskers in Africa."



Kenya Wildlife Service via AP

Craig, the iconic elephant with super tusks, died from natural causes Saturday in Amboseli National Park, Kenya.



Kenya Wildlife Service via AP

Craig, the iconic elephant with super tusks, died from natural causes Saturday in Amboseli National Park, Kenya.

The term describes a bull elephant with tusks that weigh over 45 kilograms each. Tusks that size are so long that they scrape the ground as the elephant walks, according to the Tsavo Trust, a nonprofit conservation group in Kenya. Females that grow long tusks are called iconic cows, the group says.

In Amboseli National Park, a protected area whose vegetation ranges from savannah woodland to open grasslands near the Tanzania border, Craig stood out as an attraction to tourists and a notable creature to conservationists working to protect elephants from poachers and other threats.

The elephant was said to be calm, "often pausing patiently as visitors photographed and filmed him," the statement by Kenya Wildlife Service said.

In 2021, Craig was adopted by beer maker East African Breweries through its popular Tusker brand, reflecting his prominence but also underscoring collaboration between conservation groups and others in Kenya.

Kenya's national parks and reserves are home to a variety of wildlife species and attract millions of visitors annually, making the country a tourism hotspot.

The elephant population has grown from 36,280 in 2021 to 42,072 in 2025, the latest official figures show.

In the Mwea National Reserve, a protected area east of the Kenyan capital of Nairobi, the elephant population grew spectacularly, overwhelming the ecosystem and requiring the relocation of about 100 elephants in 2024.

The African savanna elephant is the largest land animal. Adult males weigh about six tons. Craig "fathered a number of calves, ensuring that his powerful bloodline and gentle character live on across generations," the wildlife service said.

Experts

From page 16A

"If conflict around chores is rooted in something deeper — like inequity or not feeling heard — hiring a cleaner won't solve that," she said.

Couples must dig deeper to address problems with many layers.

"It opens up time and space, but couples still have to know how to show up for each other in that space," Hasankhani said.

Casey Mulligan Walsh, 71, a former speech pathologist and author in upstate New York, said the best part about hiring a housecleaner once a week was that it freed up time for her and her husband to spend together.

"My favorite day of the week was coming home to a clean house," she said. "We'd go get coffee together instead of arguing about who should vacuum."

A Valentine's Day gift that stuck

Getting started on delegating household tasks isn't easy for some couples, Whillans said. Besides the cost, "it takes time to find someone and coordinate — but the long-term payoff is real."

And making such decisions together can deepen trust and a sense of teamwork.

For one Colorado couple, outsourcing started as an act of love.

"When I started dating, my now-husband noticed how hard I was working — at my job, at home and as a single mom," said Melissa Jones, a 45-year-old teacher in Pueblo.

His Valentine's Day gift? A deep housecleaning.

"It was truly amazing," Jones said. "After that, I kept it up on my own for years. When my husband and I moved in together, we decided to continue."

"We're able to make memories with each other, our kids and our families instead of spending weekends scrubbing floors," she said.

Dinnertime can be a stress point

In Miami, Elizabeth Willard, 59, runs The Pickled Beet, a culinary service preparing customized meals.

"Most of the people I cook for are trying to invest in their health but don't have the time," she said, noting that families often juggle mixed dietary needs. "Sometimes the husband's a carnivore and the wife's vegetarian, one child's celiac. They're exhausted trying to make everyone happy."

Her clients, often families with children and two working parents, are "not fighting over what's for dinner. It's one less daily decision."

Whether ordering a pizza, paying a teenager to mow the lawn, or calling a car service to save 20 minutes, the outcome can be the same: Buying back time can buy peace.



AP File Photo

A couple stands on a jetty as the sun rises over the Atlantic Ocean in Bal Harbour, Fla., on Sept. 19, 2020.

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Volcano

From page 16A

what depth. Later they were able to map it.

The result is far more complex than the drawings of volcanoes most saw in school, with a main vent connecting a chamber of magma with the surface.

This first three-dimensional cross-sectional image goes 11 miles below the crater and shows what appear to be various pools of magma at different depths, with rock or other material between them and more numerous toward the southeast of the crater.



AP Photo

Karina Rodriguez, left, a master's student, and Marco Calo, center, a geophysicist at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), collect information from a monitoring station on the slopes of the Popocatepetl volcano in Mexico on Dec. 5, 2025.



AP Photo

Marco Calo, a geophysicist at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), rests near the campsite on the slopes of the Popocatepetl volcano, Mexico, on Dec. 4, 2025.

A 'majestic' giant

Popocatépetl emerged in the crater of other volcanoes in its current form more than 20,000 years ago and has been active since 1994, spewing plumes of smoke, gas and ash more or less daily. The activity periodically forms a dome over the main vent, which eventually collapses, causing an eruption. The last was in 2023.

Calò, a 46-year-old Sicilian, speaks passionately about El Popo, as Mexicans call the volcano, rattling off trivia.

He explains that its height can change because of eruptions and recounts how Popocatépetl, in the first century, had its own "little Pompeii" when a village on its flanks, Tetimpa, was buried in ash. In the early 20th century, it was human actions — using dynamite to extract sulfur from the crater — that provoked an eruption. And even though El Popo emanates more greenhouse gases than almost any other volcano, its emissions are still a small fraction of what humans generate in nearby Mexico City.

For years Calò studied volcanic activity from his computer, but trying to "understand how something works without touching it" spurred a feeling of disappointment, he said.

That changed with Popocatépetl, a volcano he describes as "majestic."

To touch a volcano

After hours of walking up the volcano's flank, Calò's team sets up camp in a pine grove at about 12,500 feet of elevation, an apparent safe spot from pyroclastic explosions, since the trees have managed to grow to significant height.

A short distance higher on the mountain, the trees and scrub give way to ash and sediment.

They must cross a lahar, a mixture of rock and ash that during the rainy season becomes a dangerous mudflow carrying away everything in its path. Now, the dry clearing provides a spectacular view: to the east the Pico de Orizaba — Mexico's tallest volcano and mountain and the dormant volcano La Malinche; to the north, Iztaccíhuatl, an inactive volcanic peak known as "the sleeping woman."

Popocatépetl's sounds seem to multiply at night with the echoes. An explosion like a rocket might sound like it's coming from one direction, but a puff of smoke from the crater belies the real source.

Karina Rodríguez, a 26-year-old master's student on the team, said you can also hear small tremors in the earth or even ash falling like rain when the volcano is more active. On dark nights, the rim of the crater glows orange.

A natural laboratory

Having direct knowledge of the volcano provides a much more objective sense of the limits of their analysis, Calò said.

"We have a natural laboratory here," he said. It's "very important to be able to understand and give residents detailed, trustworthy information about what is happening inside the volcano."

At 13,780 feet, their backpacks full of computers, equipment to analyze gases, batteries and water begin to weigh more and their pace slows.

Ash, dark and warm, dominates the landscape here.

At a seismographic station, the team digs up the equipment and celebrates that it's still working. They download its data and rebury it.

A "volcanic bomb," a rock a yard and a half in diameter and weighing tons, marks the way and gives an idea of what the start of an eruption can mean. That is why the top area of the volcano is restricted, though not everyone pays heed. In 2022, a person died after being hit by a rock about 300 yards from the crater.

A bottle of tequila near a rocky hollow, known as El Popo's belly button, hints at some of the traditions surrounding the volcano, including an annual pilgrimage to what some consider a point of connection to the underworld.

The drive to keep climbing

Digging up one of the last seismic stations, Calò's face falls. The last registered data are from months earlier. The battery died. Sometimes rats chew the machines' wires or an explosion causes more serious damage.

The project has yielded some certainties and if repeated will allow the analysis of changes that eventually will help authorities make better decisions when eruptions occur.

But Calò says that, as always happens with science, it has also generated new questions that they will have to try to address, like why the tremors are more frequent on the southeast side — where there is more accumulated magma — and what implications that could have.

This was the last expedition before their years of work to map the volcano's interior is published. Watching the volcano's interior move in 3D on a computer screen makes all of the effort worthwhile.

"It's what drives you to start another project and keep climbing," Rodríguez, the master's student, said.

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Marjorie Taylor Greene made waves in the GOP

Her constituents don't agree on whether it was worth it



AP File Photo

Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., speaks during a hearing of the House Committee on Homeland Security on Capitol Hill in Washington on Dec. 11, 2025.

By Bill Barrow and Emilie Megnien
The Associated Press

DALTON, Ga. — President Donald Trump says Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene is a traitor. But for Jackie Harling, who chairs the local Republican Party in Greene's northwestern corner of Georgia, she's still "mama bear."

"Every thought that we had in our minds, she seemed to be very good at verbalizing," Harling said.

Saying things that no one else would say may be Greene's most durable legacy as she steps down on Monday, resigning halfway through her third term in Congress. First, it was her embrace of conspiracy theories and incendiary rhetoric, turning her into a national symbol of a political culture without guardrails. Then it was her willingness to criticize Trump, a schism that made her position in Washington untenable.

In interviews in Greene's district, constituents described her over and over as a "fighter." For Republicans like Harling, that was enough.

"We got a lot of satisfaction," Harling said. "She was our voice."

It was less satisfying for an independent like Heath Patterson, who struggled to think of ways that Greene's fame and notoriety made a difference for her district during her time in the U.S. Capitol.

"I don't know of anything that she did do here except, certainly, got her voice heard. But where did we, how did we benefit from that?" he said. "I don't think we did."

From MAGA warrior to exile

Greene began clashing with Trump last year, criticizing his focus on foreign policy and his reluctance to release documents involving the Jeffrey Epstein case. The president eventually had enough, saying he would support a primary challenge against her. Greene announced a week later that she would resign.

She has kept up the criticism since then, including over Trump's decision to strike Venezuela this weekend.

"This is the same Washington playbook that we are so sick and tired of that doesn't serve the American people, but actually serves the big corporations, the banks and the oil executives," she told NBC's "Meet the Press" on Sunday.

The split was surprising because, until that point, Greene's trajectory had mirrored Trump's own rise to power. She didn't become politically involved until his presidential campaign in 2016 and first ran for Congress in 2020. Greene considered trying to represent Georgia's 6th Congressional District, which includes the Atlanta suburbs, before relocating to the 14th District, where the Republican incumbent was retiring.

She remained loyal to Trump after he lost to Democrat Joe Biden, promoting Trump's falsehoods about a stolen election. When Trump ran again in 2024, she toured the country with him and spoke at his rallies while wearing a red "Make America Great Again" hat.

Her Georgia district is one of the most Republican-leaning in the state, although it wasn't always that way. The region once backed Democrats like Zell Miller, a governor and U.S. senator who spearheaded Georgia's lottery program that still bankrolls college scholarships and early childhood education programs.

But residents have felt left behind by years of change, said Jan Pourquoi, a Belgian native who emigrated in 1987, became a U.S. citizen and later won local office in Whitfield County.

His county's population has grown by roughly by 32% since 1990, which pales in comparison with statewide growth of 74%. As the U.S. becomes more urban, secular, and diverse, Pourquoi said residents believe they're "culturally oppressed."

"They see themselves as great Americans, proud Americans, Christian Americans, and that doesn't fit the American model anymore as they see it," said Pourquoi, who said he left the Republican Party because of Trump. Greene exemplified the political backlash, which he summarized as "stick it to them — any possible way you can."

Georgia leaders, like those in many other states, have spent years drawing congressional districts to pack like-minded voters together. That means in red areas, whoever wins the Republican primary is virtually guaranteed to come out on top in the general election, incentivizing candidates like Greene with more hard-line views.

The political landscape means former Republicans suc as Pourquoi or independents like Patterson say they have no shot at helping a centrist win.

"I'm kind of square in the middle," said Patterson, adding that it sometimes feels like he's "the only one around here who's that way."

Republicans plan their path forward

Whitfield County Republicans gathered at a local restaurant last month for their annual Christmas party, where seasonal decor and a visit from Santa Claus were intermingled with the red, white and blue regalia and a smattering of MAGA paraphernalia.

There was still deep affection for Greene and plenty of talk about the cultural issues she championed.

"I think it's just the fact that she was unwavering in 'America First,'" said Gavin Swafford, who worked on Greene's initial campaign.

Swafford called her "an accountability representative" because of her clashes with Republican leaders.

Lisa Adams, a party volunteer, called Greene "our stand-up person."

"Look at her stance on transgenderism. That's a big one," she said. "Abortion. That's a big one."

None of Greene's inconsistencies — real or perceived — were a problem, they said.

For example, Greene has praised the Korean-owned solar panel factories in the district even after voting against Biden-era policies intended to boost production. She broke with Republicans, Trump included, and sided with Democrats who wanted to extend premium subsidies for Affordable Care Act health insurance customers.

None of the Republicans at the Christmas party expressed any interest in taking sides between Trump and Greene.

"I think it's inevitable when you have two firebrands that are both stubborn," Swafford said.

Asked whether the district missed having a more traditional lawmaker, the kind who might cut bipartisan deals and bring as much federal money as possible back home, Swafford was unconcerned.

"The biggest thing that Marjorie contributed wasn't even in legislation," he said.

Still, there was also a sense among some that Greene, for all her bare-knuckle politics, could have gone further.

Star Black, a Republican who is running to replace Greene, was already planning a primary challenge before she announced her resignation.

"You had a great representative who was a fighter. Well, you know what? I want to take it one step further," Black said.

"Not only do you need a fighter," Black said, "you need someone who is going to listen. You need someone who is going to represent you."

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NEPA WEATHER

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TODAY'S FORECAST

We have a couple shots at wet weather this week, but it isn't all going to be snow. A weak disturbance will bring a few more snow showers on Monday. There will be little to no accumulation. Highs will be in the low 30s.



Valerie Smock
Meteorologist
WBRE/WYOU

After several days with below-average temperatures, we start to see a warming trend by the middle of the week. Tuesday will be mostly cloudy with an afternoon rain shower. Highs will be near 40. Wednesday may have a lingering shower early in the day but otherwise be mostly cloudy. Highs will get into the mid 40s.

Thursday looks quiet with clouds and some sun. Highs will reach the mid 40s. Friday and Saturday will become unsettled once again. It will be mainly cloudy with rain showers both days. Highs on Friday will reach the upper 40s and get near 50 on Saturday. More sun returns Sunday, but colder air returns too. Highs will be in the upper 30s.

SEVEN-DAY FORECAST

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
34 / 28	44 / 38	43 / 32	46 / 36	47 / 41	51 / 31	39 / 23
Intermittent snow and flurries	A touch of afternoon rain	Low clouds	Partly sunny	Showers possible	Rain and drizzle	Sun, then clouds; colder

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	7:29 a.m.
Sunset today	4:49 p.m.
Moonrise today	7:37 p.m.
Moonset today	9:22 a.m.

Last	New	First	Full
Jan 10	Jan 18	Jan 25	Feb 1

WEATHER HISTORY

When rain falls and freezes on cold objects, it is called freezing rain. Freezing rain on Jan. 5, 1983, tied up morning traffic from North Carolina to eastern Pennsylvania.

ALMANAC

Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport through 3 p.m. Sunday

TEMPERATURES

High	27
Low	17
Normal high	36
Normal Low	22
Record high	67 (1950)
Record low	-9 (1981)

PRECIPITATION

24-hour total	0.01″
Month to date	0.10″
Normal m-t-d	0.34″
Year to date	0.10″
Normal y-t-d	0.34″

HEATING DEGREE DAYS

Degree days are an indicator of energy needs. The more the total degree days, the more energy is necessary to heat.

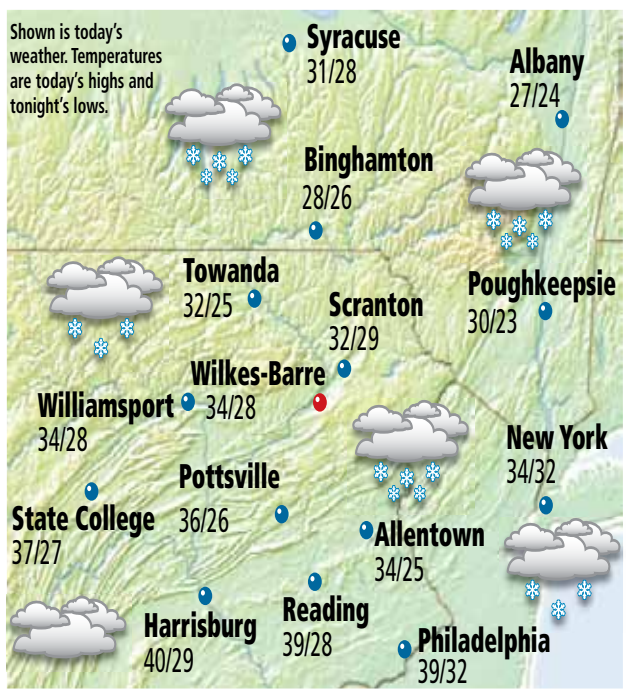
Sunday	43
Month to date	176
Season to date	2507
Last season to date	2141
Normal season to date	2275

RIVER LEVELS

In feet as of 7 a.m. Sunday.

Susquehanna	Stage	Chg	Fld Stg
Wilkes-Barre	9.37	+4.27	22
Towanda	2.35	-0.49	16
Lehigh			
Bethlehem	1.63	-0.02	16
Delaware			
Port Jervis	2.96	-0.44	18

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather, Inc.** ©2026



NEW YORK CITY

High: 34. **Low:** 32. Mostly cloudy today with a couple of flurries in the afternoon. Cloudy tonight. Mostly cloudy tomorrow. Wednesday: a shower possible.

PHILADELPHIA

High: 39. **Low:** 32. Mostly cloudy today. Mainly cloudy tonight. Mostly cloudy tomorrow. Wednesday: mostly cloudy and breezy. Thursday: mostly sunny.

POCONOS

Highs: 23 to 29. **Lows:** 20 to 26. Intermittent snow and flurries today, accumulating a coating to an inch. Cloudy tonight.

FINGER LAKES

Highs: 28 to 34. **Lows:** 25 to 31. Snow at times today, accumulating 1-2 inches. Mainly cloudy tonight. Occasional rain and drizzle tomorrow.

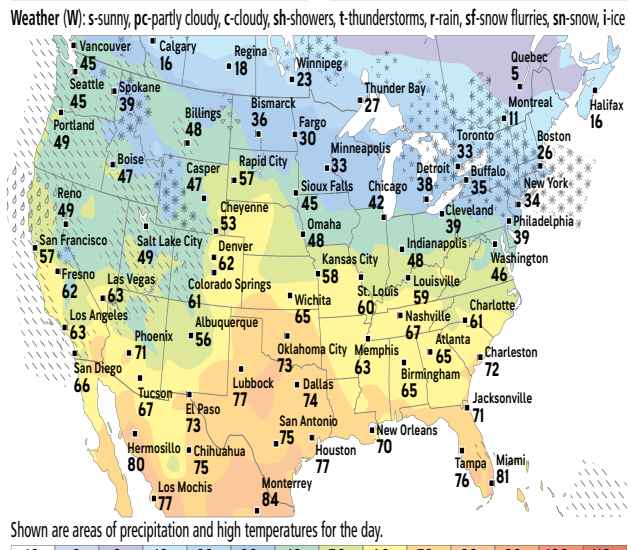
JERSEY SHORE

Highs: 39 to 45. **Lows:** 31 to 37. Mostly cloudy today. Cloudy tonight. Sun and areas of high clouds tomorrow. Wednesday: rather cloudy. Thursday: brilliant sunshine.

NATIONAL WEATHER

	Today Hi/Lo/W	Tuesday Hi/Lo/W
Atlanta	65/49/s	66/57/pc
Baltimore	43/33/c	49/40/pc
Billings	48/32/c	47/36/c
Boston	26/24/sn	35/33/c
Buffalo	35/30/sn	41/35/r
Charlotte	61/43/pc	65/52/pc
Chicago	42/35/pc	43/33/sh
Cleveland	39/33/c	46/36/r
Dallas	74/55/pc	76/51/s
Denver	62/35/pc	56/34/s
Detroit	38/30/c	39/34/i
Honolulu	79/71/sh	79/71/sh
Houston	77/63/s	82/64/pc
Indianapolis	48/39/pc	54/37/c
Las Vegas	63/45/pc	58/42/pc
Milwaukee	39/34/pc	39/32/r
Nashville	67/49/s	66/45/c
New Orleans	70/61/s	78/61/s
Norfolk	52/43/pc	63/53/pc
Oklahoma City	73/44/pc	69/44/pc
Orlando	77/56/s	79/57/s
Phoenix	71/53/pc	69/52/c
Pittsburgh	45/34/c	49/40/r
Portland, ME	19/16/pc	28/25/c
Portland, OR	49/37/sh	47/39/r
Sacramento	57/45/r	61/45/c
St. Louis	60/47/s	61/38/c
San Francisco	57/49/r	59/50/c
Seattle	45/39/sh	44/38/r
Washington, DC	46/37/c	53/44/pc

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice



Shown are areas of precipitation and high temperatures for the day.

-10s	-0s	0s	10s	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	70s	80s	90s	100s	110s

Showers T-storms Rain Flurries Snow Ice

Summary: Snow will spread from New York into much of New England today. Rain will continue in Northern California but will come to an end in the Pacific Northwest. Outside of the Rockies will be largely dry.

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QB BECHT LEADS IOWA STATE GROUP TRANSFERRING TO PENN STATE • PAGE 3B

Sports Monday



IN MEMORY

Joseph J. Soprano Jr.

Times Leader executive editor

Penn State graduate 1988

contact us >> sports@timesleader.com

Steelers win a classic

RAVENS MISS FIELD GOAL ON FINAL PLAY TO DECIDE AFC NORTH

PAGE 4B

EAGLES WILL HOST NINERS IN PLAYOFFS, MISS NO. 2 SEED WITH LOSS TO WASHINGTON

PAGE 5B

Steelers wide receiver Calvin Austin put his man on the ground with a stop-and-go move in the final minute of the fourth quarter and raced wide open for a 26-yard touchdown that gave Pittsburgh a 26-24 win over the Ravens on Sunday. Baltimore had a shot at a game-winning field goal on the final play, but rookie Tyler Loop missed wide right from 44 yards out, giving the Steelers the AFC North title and ending the Ravens' season. Pittsburgh will host Houston on Monday night in a Wild Card game. (Justin Berl | AP photo)

PENGUINS POST BIG RALLY, WIN 5TH STRAIGHT ON CROSBY'S OT GOAL • PAGE 9B

Okamoto, Jays finalize $60 million, 4-year contract

The Associated Press

TORONTO — Infielder Kazuma Okamoto and the Toronto Blue Jays finalized their $60 million, four-year contract Sunday.

Okamoto will get a $5 million signing bonus, a $7 million salary this year and $16 million in each of the following three seasons.

To open a roster spot, Toronto designated right-hander Paxton Schultz for assignment.

A six-time All-Star, Okamoto has a .277 average with 248 homers and 717 RBIs in 11 Japanese big league seasons, leading the Central League in home runs in 2020, 2021 and 2023. He homered off Colorado's Kyle Freeland to help Japan beat the U.S. 3-2 in the 2023 World Baseball Classic final.

Okamoto, a 29-year-old third baseman and first baseman, hit .327 with 15 homers and 49 RBIs in 69 games last year for the Central League's Yomiuri Giants.

He injured his left elbow while trying to catch a throw at first base on May 6 when he collided with the Hanshin Tigers' Takumu Nakano, an injury that sidelined Okamoto until Aug. 16.

With five-time All-Star Vladimir Guerrero Jr. at first, Okamoto presumably would play mostly at third. Addison Barger had 67 starts there last year, Ernie Clement 66, Will Wagner 22, Isiah Kiner-Falefa six and Buddy Kennedy one.

Barger also plays right field, and the addition of Okamoto could mean Andrés Giménez would move from second to shortstop if free agent Bo Bichette doesn't re-sign. Clement and Davis Scheider could share time at second.

Under MLB's posting agreement with Nippon Professional Baseball, the Blue Jays owe the Giants a posting fee of $10,875,000.

After coming within two outs of their first World Series title since 1993, the Blue Jays have made significant additions to the roster. Toronto signed right-hander Dylan Cease to a $210 million, seven-year contract, agreed to a $30 million, three-year contract with right-hander Cody Ponce and reached a $37 million, three-year deal with reliever Tyler Rogers.

YANKEES

NEW YORK — Infielder Paul DeJong and the New York Yankees have agreed to a minor league contract, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press, a deal that includes a $1 million salary if he's added to the 40-man roster.

The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity Sunday because the agreement, first reported by the New York Post, had not been announced.

If added to the 40-man roster, DeJong could earn up to $400,000 in performance bonuses based on plate appearances.

An All-Star in 2019, the 32-year-old DeJong hit .228 with six homers and 23 RBIs in 57 games last year with Washington. He broke his nose on April 15 when hit by a 92.7 mph fastball from Pittsburgh's Mitch Keller, had surgery April 28 and did not play for the Nationals again until July 2.

DeJong has a .229 average with 146 homers and 423 RBIs in nine major league seasons with St. Louis (2017-23), Toronto (2023), San Francisco (2023), the Chicago White Sox (2024), Kansas City (2024) and the Nationals.

ROYALS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Kansas City Royals manager Matt Quatraro has agreed to a three-year contract extension though 2029.

His deal includes a team option for 2030, the Royals said Sunday.

Quatraro replaced Mike Matheny after the 2022 season and has led the Royals to a 224-262 record in three years.

Kansas City improved from 56-106 during Quatraro's first season to 86-76 in 2024, and the Royals then went 82-80 last year for their first consecutive winning seasons since 2013-15.

Quatraro finished second to Cleveland's Stephen Vogt in 2024 AL Manager of the Year voting.

LOCAL SCHEDULE

MONDAY
H.S. GIRLS BASKETBALL
(7:15 p.m. unless noted)
Berwick at Wyoming Valley West
Hazleton Area at Crestwood
Holy Redeemer at Hanover Area
Nanticoke Area at MMI Prep, 6 p.m.
Pittston Area at Wilkes-Barre Area
Wyoming Area at Lake-Lehman
Wyoming Seminary at Tunkhannock
H.S. BOYS AND GIRLS SWIMMING
Berwick at Wilkes-Barre Area, 4:30 p.m.

TUESDAY
H.S. BOYS BASKETBALL
(7:15 p.m.)
Crestwood at Hazleton Area
Hanover Area at Holy Redeemer
Lake-Lehman at Wyoming Area
MMI Prep at Berwick
Tunkhannock at Wyoming Seminary
Wilkes-Barre Area at Pittston Area
Wyoming Valley West at Nanticoke Area
H.S. GIRLS BASKETBALL
Dallas at Lake-Lehman, 7 p.m.
H.S. BOYS AND GIRLS SWIMMING
Wyoming Seminary at Wyoming Area, 4 p.m.
Dallas at Wyoming Valley West, 4:30 p.m.
Pittston Area at Lake-Lehman, 4:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY
H.S. WRESTLING
(7 p.m.)
Wyoming Area at Berwick
Hanover Area at Dallas
Lake-Lehman at Tunkhannock
Nanticoke Area at Crestwood
Hazleton Area at Pittston Area
Wilkes-Barre Area at Wyoming Valley West
H.S. BOYS AND GIRLS SWIMMING
Nanticoke Area at Holy Redeemer, 4:30 p.m.
Hazleton Area at Tunkhannock, 4:30 p.m.

THURSDAY
H.S. GIRLS BASKETBALL
(7:15 p.m.)
Berwick at Crestwood
Hanover Area at Wyoming Area
Hazleton Area at Dallas
Lake-Lehman at Nanticoke Area
MMI Prep at Tunkhannock
Wilkes-Barre Area at Wyoming Valley West
Wyoming Seminary at Holy Redeemer

FRIDAY
AHL
Penguins at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
H.S. BOYS BASKETBALL
(7:15 p.m.)
Berwick at Lake-Lehman
Crestwood at Nanticoke Area
Dallas at Hazleton Area
Holy Redeemer at Wyoming Seminary
Tunkhannock at MMI Prep
Wyoming Area at Hanover Area
Wyoming Valley West at Wilkes-Barre Area
H.S. BOYS AND GIRLS SWIMMING
Wyoming Valley West at Holy Redeemer, 4:30 p.m.
Wilkes-Barre Area at Tunkhannock, 4:30 p.m.

SATURDAY
AHL
Penguins at Charlotte, 6 p.m.
H.S. BOYS BASKETBALL
MMI Prep at Lourdes Regional, 2:30 p.m.
H.S. GIRLS BASKETBALL
Crestwood at East Stroudsburg North, 1:30 p.m.
Elk Lake at Tunkhannock, 1:15 p.m.
Hazleton Area at Coatesville, 1:30 p.m.
MMI Prep at Columbia-Montour Vo-Tech, 3 p.m.
Notre Dame East Stroudsburg at Hanover Area, 1:15 p.m.
Susquehanna at Wyoming Seminary, 2:30 p.m.
H.S. WRESTLING
Crestwood at Big Red Duals, Souderton HS
Lake-Lehman, Pittston Area at Richard "Chooch" Chulada Duals, Honesdale HS
H.S. BOYS AND GIRLS SWIMMING
Ernie Shartle Diving Invitational, Tunkhannock HS

SPORTS ON TV

MONDAY
COLLEGE BASKETBALL (MEN)
6:30 p.m.
FS1 — Nebraska at Ohio State
7 p.m.
CBSSN — William & Mary at Charleston Southern
PEACOCK — Oregon at Rutgers
8:30 p.m.
FS1 — Southern Cal at Michigan St.
COLLEGE BASKETBALL (WOMEN)
6:30 p.m.
BTN — Minnesota at Michigan
8:30 p.m.
BTN — Iowa at Northwestern
COLLEGE FOOTBALL
7:30 p.m.
ESPN — FCS Championship: Illinois St. vs. Montana St., Nashville, Tenn.
IIHF HOCKEY (BOYS)
4:30 p.m.
NHLN — 2026 IIHF World Junior Hockey Championship: TBD, Bronze-Medal Game, Saint Paul, Minn.
8:30 p.m.
NHLN — 2026 IIHF World Junior Hockey Championship: TBD, Gold-Medal Game, Saint Paul, Minn.
NBA
7 p.m.
PEACOCK — New York at Detroit
8:30 p.m.
PEACOCK — Denver at Philadelphia
10 p.m.
PEACOCK — Golden State at L.A. Clippers
SPEED SKATING
5 p.m.
USA — ISU: 2026 U.S. Winter Olympic Trials, Milwaukee
TENNIS
6:30 p.m.
TENNIS — United Cup - Day 5 Group Stage; Brisbane-ATP/WTA, Auckland-WTA & Hong Kong-ATP Early Rounds
6 a.m. (Tuesday)
TENNIS — United Cup - Day 5 Group Stage; Brisbane-ATP/WTA, Auckland-WTA & Hong Kong-ATP Early Rounds
UNRIVALED BASKETBALL
1:30 p.m.
TRUTV — Mist vs. Hive, Miami
2:45 p.m.
TRUTV — Vinyl vs. Laces, Miami
8 p.m.
TNT, TRUTV — Lunar Owls vs. Rose, Miami
TRUTV — Lunar Owls vs. Rose, Miami
9:15 p.m.
TNT, TRUTV — Phantom vs. Breeze, Miami

NFL

NFL Playoff Glance
Wild-card Playoffs
Saturday, Jan. 10
L.A Rams at Carolina, 4:30 p.m. (FOX)
Green Bay at Chicago, 8:00 p.m. (AMAZON PRIME VIDEO)
Sunday, Jan. 11
Buffalo at Jacksonville, 1:00 p.m. (CBS)
San Francisco at Philadelphia, 4:30 p.m. (FOX)
L.A Chargers at New England, 8:00 p.m. (NBC/Peacock)
Monday, Jan. 12
Houston at Pittsburgh, 8:00 p.m. (ESPN/ABC)
Divisional Playoffs
Saturday, Jan. 17 and Sunday, Jan. 18
AFC lowest remaining seed at Denver, TBD
NFC lowest remaining seed at Seattle, TBD
AFC two remaining seeds at higher seed, TBD
NFC two remaining seeds at higher seed, TBD
Conference Championships
Sunday, Jan. 25
AFC
AFC lowest remaining seed at AFC highest remaining seed
NFC
NFC lowest remaining seed at NFC highest remaining seed
Super Bowl LIX
Sunday, Feb. 8
At Santa Clara, Calif.
Conference Championships winners, 6:30 p.m. (NBC/Peacock)

LATEST LINE

College Football
Thursday
Fiesta Bowl

FAVORITE	OPEN	TODAY	O/U	UNDERDOG
Miami (FL)	3	3½	(52)	Ole Miss

Friday
Peach Bowl

FAVORITE	OPEN	TODAY	O/U	UNDERDOG
Indiana	4	4½	(46½)	Oregon

NBA
Monday

FAVORITE	LINE	O/U	UNDERDOG
New York	2½	(234½)	at DETROIT
at TORONTO	3½	(235½)	Atlanta
at BOSTON	10½	(235½)	Chicago
at HOUSTON	7½	(224½)	Phoenix
at OKLAHOMA CITY	15½	(232½)	Charlotte
at PHILADELPHIA	11½	(229)	Denver
at PORTLAND	6½	(245½)	Utah
at LA CLIPPERS	1	(224½)	Golden State

COLLEGE BASKETBALL
Monday

FAVORITE	LINE	UNDERDOG
at CORNELL	2½	Columbia
at OHIO STATE	2½	Nebraska
Alabama State	2½	at UAPB
at CHARLESTON (SC)	2½	William & Mary
Yale	8½	at BROWN
Milwaukee	2½	at GREEN BAY
Lamar	1½	at SE LOUISIANA
Oregon	6½	at RUTGERS
at PRINCETON	2½	Pennsylvania
at SOUTHERN	7½	Prairie View A&M
at HARVARD	6½	Dartmouth
at GRAMBLING	6½	Texas Southern
at UT RIO GRANDE VALLEY	1½	Incarnate Word
at MCNEESE	10½	SFA
at NICHOLLS STATE	8½	Northwestern State
Texas A&M-CC	2½	at HOUSTON CHRISTIAN
at NEW ORLEANS	7½	East Texas A&M
Alabama A&M	10½	at MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE
at MICHIGAN STATE	10½	USC

NHL
Monday

FAVORITE	LINE	UNDERDOG	LINE
at WASHINGTON	-149	Anaheim	+124
at N.Y RANGERS	-125	Utah	+105
at OTTAWA	-154	Detroit	+128
at CALGARY	-161	Seattle	+135
at LOS ANGELES	-114	Minnesota	-106

For the latest odds, go to BetMGM Sportsbook

NBA

NBA Glance
EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	23	12	.657	—
Boston	22	12	.647	½
Toronto	21	15	.583	2½
Philadelphia	19	14	.576	3
Brooklyn	11	22	.333	11

Southeast Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Orlando	20	16	.556	—
Miami	20	16	.556	—
Atlanta	17	20	.459	3½
Charlotte	12	23	.343	7½
Washington	9	25	.265	10

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Detroit	26	9	.743	—
Cleveland	20	17	.541	7
Chicago	17	18	.486	9
Milwaukee	16	20	.444	10½
Indiana	6	30	.167	20½

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Southwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	25	10	.714	—
Houston	21	11	.656	2½
Memphis	15	20	.429	10
Dallas	13	23	.361	12½
New Orleans	8	29	.216	18

Northwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Oklahoma City	30	6	.833	—
Denver	23	12	.657	6½
Minnesota	23	13	.639	7
Portland	16	20	.444	14
Utah	12	22	.353	17

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Lakers	22	11	.667	—
Phoenix	21	14	.600	2
Golden State	19	17	.528	4½
L.A. Clippers	12	22	.353	10½
Sacramento	8	28	.222	15½

Saturday's Games
Minnesota 125, Miami 115
Toronto 134, Atlanta 117
Philadelphia 130, New York 119
Charlotte 112, Chicago 99
Portland 115, San Antonio 110
Dallas 110, Houston 104
Boston 146, L.A. Clippers 115
Golden State 123, Utah 114
Sunday's Games
Detroit 114, Cleveland 110
Orlando 135, Indiana 127
Brooklyn 127, Denver 115
Miami 125, New Orleans 106
Minnesota 141, Washington 115
Phoenix 108, Oklahoma City 105
Milwaukee 115, Sacramento 98
L.A. Lakers 120, Memphis 114
Monday's Games
New York at Detroit, 7 p.m.
Atlanta at Toronto, 7:30 p.m.
Chicago at Boston, 7:30 p.m.
Charlotte at Oklahoma City, 8 p.m.
Phoenix at Houston, 8 p.m.
Denver at Philadelphia, 8:30 p.m.
Golden State at L.A. Clippers, 10 p.m.
Utah at Portland, 10 p.m.
Tuesday's Games
Cleveland at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Orlando at Washington, 7 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at New Orleans, 8 p.m.
Miami at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
San Antonio at Memphis, 8 p.m.
Dallas at Sacramento, 11 p.m.
Wednesday's Games
Chicago at Detroit, 7 p.m.
Denver at Boston, 7 p.m.
Toronto at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Washington at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at New York, 7:30 p.m.
New Orleans at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Orlando at Brooklyn, 7:30 p.m.
Phoenix at Memphis, 8 p.m.
Utah at Oklahoma City, 8 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at San Antonio, 9:30 p.m.
Houston at Portland, 10 p.m.
Milwaukee at Golden State, 10 p.m.

NHL

NHL Glance
EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Tampa Bay	41	25	13	3	53	142	110
Montreal	42	23	13	6	52	141	141
Detroit	43	24	15	4	52	131	138
Florida	41	22	16	3	47	129	130
Buffalo	40	21	15	4	46	125	126
Boston	42	22	18	2	46	133	136
Ottawa	40	20	15	5	45	133	129
Toronto	41	19	15	7	45	137	138

Metropolitan Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Carolina	42	25	14	3	53	141	128
N.Y. Islanders	42	23	15	4	50	120	120
Philadelphia	40	21	12	7	49	124	116
Pittsburgh	41	20	12	9	49	135	131
Washington	42	21	15	6	48	135	121
New Jersey	42	22	18	2	46	114	124
N.Y. Rangers	43	20	18	5	45	114	117
Columbus	41	18	16	7	43	127	137

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Central Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Colorado	41	31	3	7	69	165	93
Dallas	42	25	9	8	58	146	117
Minnesota	43	25	10	8	58	138	115
Nashville	41	19	18	4	42	118	136
St. Louis	43	17	18	8	42	107	146
Utah	42	19	20	3	41	127	122
Chicago	42	17	18	7	41	118	134
Winnipeg	40	15	21	4	34	115	126

Pacific Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Vegas	40	17	11	12	46	124	126
Edmonton	42	20	16	6	46	139	143
Anaheim	41	21	17	3	45	139	146
Seattle	39	18	14	7	43	103	115
Los Angeles	40	17	14	9	43	107	111
San Jose	41	20	18	3	43	127	146
Calgary	41	18	19	4	40	111	121
Vancouver	41	16	20	5	37	117	143

NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.
Saturday's Games
Pittsburgh 4, Detroit 1
New Jersey 4, Utah 1
Columbus 5, Buffalo 1
Philadelphia 5, Edmonton 2
St. Louis 2, Montreal 0
Tampa Bay 7, San Jose 3
Ottawa 4, Winnipeg 2
Colorado 5, Carolina 3
N.Y. Islanders 4, Toronto 3, OT
Chicago 3, Washington 2, SO
Nashville 4, Calgary 3
Los Angeles 5, Minnesota 4, SO
Boston 3, Vancouver 2, OT
Sunday's Games
Montreal 4, Dallas 3, OT
Pittsburgh 5, Columbus 4, OT
Florida 2, Colorado 1
Chicago 3, Vegas 2, OT
Carolina 3, New Jersey 1
Monday's Games
Anaheim at Washington, 7 p.m.
Utah at N.Y. Rangers, 7 p.m.
Detroit at Ottawa, 7:30 p.m.
Seattle at Calgary, 9:30 p.m.
Minnesota at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.
Tuesday's Games
Anaheim at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Colorado at Tampa Bay, 7 p.m.
Dallas at Carolina, 7 p.m.
Vancouver at Buffalo, 7 p.m.
Florida at Toronto, 7:30 p.m.
New Jersey at N.Y. Islanders, 7:30 p.m.
Vegas at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.
Nashville at Edmonton, 9 p.m.
Boston at Seattle, 10 p.m.
Columbus at San Jose, 10 p.m.
Wednesday's Games
Dallas at Washington, 7 p.m.
Calgary at Montreal, 7:30 p.m.
Ottawa at Utah, 9:30 p.m.
St. Louis at Chicago, 9:30 p.m.
San Jose at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.

AHL

AHL Glance
EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	GP	W	L	OL	SL	Pts	GF	GA
Providence	30	23	6	1	0	47	100	61
Penguins	34	22	9	1	2	47	109	87
Lehigh Valley	33	18	11	2	2	40	95	90
Charlotte	30	18	10	2	0	38	91	83
Hershey	31	16	14	1	0	33	87	89
Springfield	31	12	13	4	2	30	83	104
Bridgeport	31	12	16	2	1	27	92	106
Hartford	31	11	15	4	1	27	81	101

North Division

	GP	W	L	OL	SL	Pts	GF	GA
Laval	33	21	11	0	1	43	110	87
Syracuse	32	18	11	2	1	39	109	84
Toronto	34	18	14	1	1	38	102	113
Rochester	31	16	11	3	1	36	105	99
Cleveland	30	14	11	4	1	33	77	81
Belleville	35	13	17	5	0	31	111	126
Utica	30	8	16	4	2	22	68	100

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Central Division

	GP	W	L	OL	SL	Pts	GF	GA
Grand Rapids	31	28	1	1	1	58	121	54
Chicago	30	14	8	4	4	36	86	85
Manitoba	30	16	12	2	0	34	80	85
Milwaukee	31	14	14	2	1	31	88	90
Texas	32	13	15	3	1	30	85	103
Rockford	34	13	18	2	1	29	96	113
Iowa	33	10	21	1	1	22	66	104

Pacific Division

	GP	W	L	OL	SL	Pts	GF	GA
Colorado	30	21	7	1	1	44	100	69
Ontario	32	20	10	1	1	42	106	87
San Jose	32	18	11	1	2	39	100	103
Calgary	36	15	13	7	1	38	99	122
Bakersfield	31	16	10	5	0	37	111	108
Coachella Val.	31	16	11	4	0	36	108	107
San Diego	30	14	9	6	1	35	92	78
Henderson	30	15	11	3	1	34	98	90
Tucson	31	14	12	5	0	33	101	100
Abbotsford	32	9	17	3	3	24	66	114

Saturday's Games
Toronto 6, Rochester 4
Hartford 4, Bridgeport 1
Cleveland 6, Charlotte 3
Hershey 5, Rockford 4
Lehigh Valley 3, Belleville 1
Syracuse 6, Penguins 0
Utica 4, Laval 3
Grand Rapids 4, Chicago 1
Texas 4, Milwaukee 3
Colorado 5, Henderson 2
Ontario 3, Coachella Valley 2
Bakersfield 2, San Jose 1
Sunday's Games
Hershey 5, Rockford 2
Tucson 4, Calgary 0
Providence 3, Springfield 1
Lehigh Valley 6, Toronto 1
Ontario 3, Iowa 0
Texas 4, Milwaukee 1
Henderson 4, Colorado 3
Monday's Games
Charlotte at Cleveland, 7 p.m.
Tuesday's Games
Manitoba at Rockford, ppd
Bakersfield at Abbotsford, 10 p.m.
Wednesday's Games
Cleveland at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Rochester at Syracuse, 7 p.m.
Springfield at Utica, 7 p.m.
Texas at Grand Rapids, 7 p.m.
Henderson at Coachella Valley, 9:30 p.m.
Bakersfield at Abbotsford, 10 p.m.
Iowa at Ontario, 10 p.m.
San Jose vs. San Diego at Valley View Casino Center, 10 p.m.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Bowl Glance
Dec. 13
Celebration Bowl
Atlanta
SC State 40, Prairie View A&M 38, 4 OT
LA Bowl
Inglewood, Calif.
Washington 38, Boise State 10
Dec. 16
Salute to Veterans Bowl
Montgomery, Ala.
Jacksonville State 17, Troy 13
Dec. 17
Cure Bowl
Orlando, Fla.
Old Dominion 24, South Florida 10
68 Ventures Bowl
Mobile, Ala.
Delaware 20, Louisiana-Lafayette 13
Dec. 18
Xbox Bowl
Frisco, Texas
Arkansas State 34, Missouri State 28
Dec. 19
Myrtle Beach Bowl
Conway, S.C.
Western Michigan 41, Kennesaw State 6
Gasparilla Bowl
Tampa, Fla.
NC State 31, Memphis 7
College Football Playoff
First Round
No. 11 Alabama 34, No. 8 Oklahoma 24
Dec. 20
College Football Playoff
First Round
No. 10 Miami (Fla.) 10, No. 7 Texas A&M 3
No. 6 Mississippi 41, No. 17 Tulane 10
No. 5 Oregon 51, No. 19 James Madison 34
Dec. 22
Famous Idaho Potato Bowl
Boise, Idaho
Washington St. 34, Utah St. 21
Dec. 23
Boca Raton Bowl
Boca Raton, Fla.
Louisville 27, Toledo 22
New Orleans Bowl
Western Kentucky 27, Southern Miss. 16
Frisco Bowl
Frisco, Texas
Ohio 17, UNLV 10
Dec. 24
Hawai'i Bowl
Honolulu
Hawaii 35, Cal 31
Dec. 26
GameAbove Sports Bowl
Detroit, Mich.
Northwestern 34, Cent. Michigan 7
Rate Bowl
Phoenix
Minnesota 20, New Mexico 17, OT
First Responder Bowl
Dallas, Texas
UTSA 57, FIU 20
Dec. 27
Military Bowl
Annapolis, Md.
East Carolina 23, Pitt 17
Pinstripe Bowl
Bronx, N.Y.
Penn St. 22, Clemson 10
Fenway Bowl
Boston
Army 41, UConn 16
Pop-Tarts Bowl
Orlando, Fla.
No. 12 BYU 25, No. 24 Georgia Tech 21
Arizona Bowl
Tucson, Ariz.
Fresno St. 18, Miami (OH) 3
New Mexico Bowl
Albuquerque
No. 23 North Texas 49, San Diego St. 47
Gator Bowl
Jacksonville, Fla.
No. 20 Virginia 13, No. 25 Missouri 7
Texas Bowl
Houston
Houston 38, LSU 35
Dec. 29
Birmingham Bowl
Birmingham, Ala.
Georgia Southern 29, Appalachian St. 10
Dec. 30
Independence Bowl
Shreveport, La.
Louisiana Tech 23, Coastal Carolina 14
Music City Bowl
Nashville, Tenn.
Illinois 30, Tennessee 28
Alamo Bowl
San Antonio
TCU 30, No. 16 Southern Cal 27, OT
Dec. 31
ReliaQuest Bowl
Tampa, Fla.
No. 23 Iowa 34, No. 13 Vanderbilt 27
Sun Bowl
El Paso, Texas
Duke 42, Arizona St. 39
Citrus Bowl
Orlando, Fla.
No. 14 Texas 41, No. 18 Michigan 27
Las Vegas Bowl
No. 15 Utah 44, Nebraska 22
College Football Playoff
Quarterfinal
Cotton Bowl, Arlington, Texas
No. 10 Miami 24, No. 3 Ohio St. 14
Jan. 1
College Football Playoff
Quarterfinal
Orange Bowl, Miami Gardens, Fla.
No. 5 Oregon 23, No. 4 Texas Tech 0
Rose Bowl, Pasadena, Calif.
Indiana 38, No. 9 Alabama 3
Sugar Bowl, New Orleans
Mississippi 39, Georgia 34
Jan. 2
Armed Forces Bowl
Fort Worth, Texas
Texas St. 41, Rice 10
Liberty Bowl
Memphis, Tenn.
No. 22 Navy 35 Cincinnati 13
Duke's Mayo Bowl
Charlotte, N.C.
Wake Forest 43, Mississippi St. 29
Holiday Bowl
San Diego, Calif.
SMU 24, No. 21 Arizona 19
Jan. 8
College Football Playoff
Semifinal
Fiesta Bowl, Glendale, Ariz.
No. 6 Mississippi vs. No. 10 Miami, 7:30 p.m. (ESPN)
Jan. 9
College Football Playoff
Semifinal
Peach Bowl, Atlanta
No. 1 Indiana vs. No. 5 Oregon, 7:30 p.m. (ESPN)
Jan. 19
College Football Playoff
National Championship
Miami Gardens, Fla.
Semifinal winners, 7:30 p.m. (ESPN)

TRANSACTIONS

BASEBALL
Major League Baseball
American League
KANSAS CITY ROYALS — Agreed to terms with manager Matt Quatraro on a contract extension and with SS Michael Braswell III on a minor league contract.
TORONTO BLUE JAYS — Agreed to terms with INF Kazuma Okamoto on a four-year contract (US $60,000,000). Designated RHP Paxton Schultz for assignment.
FOOTBALL
National Football League
ATLANTA FALCONS — Fired Head Coach Raheem Morris and General Manager Terry Fontenot.
HOCKEY
National Hockey League
CALGARY FLAMES — Suspended F John Beecher for one game.
DALLAS STARS — Sent D Luke Krys to Texas (AHL).
DETROIT RED WINGS — Recalled F John Leonard from Grand Rapids (AHL).
FLORIDA PANTHERS — Recalled D Tobias Björnfot from Charlotte (AHL).
SAN JOSE SHARKS — Signed F Alexander Wennberg to a three-year contract extension.
WINNIPEG JETS — Suspended D Logan Stanley for one game.
SOCCER
Major League Soccer
D.C. UNITED — Signed F Gabriel Segal to a two-year contract.

Becht, Iowa State group pledge to join Penn State

By Derek Levarse
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Charlie Neibergall | AP file photo

After starting for the last three seasons at Iowa State, quarterback Rocco Becht will play his final year at Penn State this fall, following coach Matt Campbell to Happy Valley.

After three seasons starting and 26 wins together, Rocco Becht wasn't about to end his partnership with Matt Campbell.

Nearly a month after Campbell left Iowa State to become Penn State's coach, his quarterback followed him to Happy Valley.

Becht announced Sunday he committed to play for the Nittany Lions, slotting in as their starting quarterback for his senior season in 2026.

And he won't be alone. More than a dozen other former Cyclones also announced Sunday they will be transferring to Penn State to play for their former coach.

"Penn State is getting a winner, someone who is competitive and wants to win every game," Becht told ESPN of his decision. "Whatever my stats may be, all I want to do is win. Whatever I have to do for the team."

Indeed, no quarterback in the country will enter next season with more wins than Becht. He helped Iowa State reach a program-record 11 wins in 2024, reaching the Big 12 championship and falling just short of reaching the College Football Playoff. He threw for 3,505 yards and 25 touchdowns while adding eight more scores and 318 yards on the ground.

Becht's numbers slipped last season as the Cyclones went 8-4 (2,584 yards, 16 TDs passing), but he played the second half of the season with injuries to both shoulders. His left, non-throwing shoulder required surgery to repair a torn labrum while he played through a sprained AC joint in his right.

He redshirted in 2022 and then started the next three seasons in Ames, throwing for 9,274 yards with 64 touchdowns to 27 interceptions while adding 499 yards and 19 scores on the ground.

Becht was far from the only impact player to pledge to Penn State this weekend, but he is the most notable because the Lions lost their entire scholarship quarterback room from 2025 in the wake of the firing of coach James Franklin.

Drew Allar is headed to the NFL while Ethan Grunkemeyer, Jaxon Smolik and Bekkem Kritza have all entered the transfer portal.

Grunkemeyer — who started the final seven games this past season after Allar suffered an ankle injury — won the final four, including the Pinstripe Bowl against Clemson. His decision to enter the portal signaled that Becht would be coming to Penn State, and he publicly said goodbye on Sunday night.

"I am extremely grateful for the past two years, and it has truly been a blessing to spend that time at Penn State," Grunkemeyer wrote on social media. "I will forever cherish the relationships and connections I made during my time there.

"I want to thank everyone who helped push me to be the best I can be, both on and off the field. Thank you, Nittany Nation, for the incredible support and for two years I will always be grateful for."

Campbell has recovered by securing transfers from Becht and former four-star recruit Alex Manske on Sunday. Manske redshirted behind Becht last year and will be in line to serve as his backup in 2026 before having three years of eligibility in a bid to be the starter himself.

Filling out the room next season will be a pair of true freshmen in Kase Evans and Peyton Falzone. Evans initially signed with Iowa State in December before asking for his release when Campbell left. He plans to sign with Penn State during the traditional signing window in February. Nazareth standout Falzone was one of two recruits along with Malvern Prep edge rusher Jackson Ford to sign with the Lions in December, days before Campbell was hired.

With the quarterback situation stabilized, Campbell and his new staff have also been able to address other holes in the roster. The Lions will need to replace more than 50 players between the draft and the portal, and a significant number will come from Iowa State, as a large contingent made a weekend trip to State College to check the place out before announcing their commitments.

As of Sunday night, 15 former Cyclones have publicly said they will transfer to Penn State.

Joining Becht and Manske are running back Carson Hansen; wide receivers Brett Eskildsen and Karon Brookins; tight ends Ben Brahmer and Gabe Burkle; offensive linemen Trevor Buhr, Kuol Kuol and Will Tompkins; defensive lineman Alijah Carnell; linebackers Caleb Bacon, Cael Brezina and Kooper Ebel; and safety Marcus Neal.

The most distinguished player out of that group is likely Brahmer, who was an All-Big 12 selection in 2025, hauling in 37 passes for 446 yards and six touchdowns. The On3 Industry Transfer Portal Rankings, which factors in player ratings from multiple services, listed Brahmer as the top tight end available in the portal.

At 6-foot-6, Brahmer was a key red zone target for the Cyclones. Set for his senior season at Penn State, he figures to split reps with returning tight end Andrew Rappleyea, who emerged as the Lions' best tight end down the stretch. New offensive coordinator Taylor Mouser, who also came over from Iowa State and coaches the tight ends directly, frequently makes use of sets with multiple tight ends.

Burkle will help replace the depth lost by Khalil Dinkins heading to the NFL and the transfers of Luke Reynolds, Matt Henderson and Andrew Olesh. Brian Kortovich will return after redshirting last year, as will Finn Furmanek, a special teams fixture.

Another All-Big 12 selection will challenge for the lead running back spot as Hansen arrives for his senior season. Hansen led Iowa State with 950 yards rushing and six touchdowns in 2025 and found the end zone 15 total times in 2024.

He and Quinton Martin are currently the top candidates to lead the running backs with record-setters Kaytron Allen and Nick Singleton headed to the NFL and impending transfers for Cam Wallace and Corey Smith.

Wide receiver is once again a major position of need for the Lions with all three senior starters from this past season out of eligibility. The speedy Eskildsen is a start to the overhaul after leading the Cyclones with 526 receiving yards last season. Brookins, who checks in at 6-foot-5, redshirted last year at Iowa State.

More Iowa State receivers are also in the mix as top target Chase Sowell posted on social media that he was also at Penn State this weekend for a visit with the rest of the former Cyclones.

Koby Howard is one of the few wideouts who has announced he will return from last year's roster. He was joined on Sunday by another young prospect in Tyseer Denmark, who will also challenge for a starting spot in 2026.

The Lions need plenty of bodies on the offensive line with Anthony Donkoh the lone starter who will be back from last season. Of the three newcomers, Buhr is the only one with experience, starting 12 games at left guard at Iowa State. Kuol and Tompkins both redshirted in 2025.

Penn State's most notable news at the position came late Sunday night when Malachi Goodman, the Lions' top-rated recruit a year ago, announced he would stay with the program. Goodman may not be in line to start as a redshirt freshman in 2026, but he'll get a chance to make his case with major turnover at the position.

On defense, the Lions added three linebackers from Iowa State, a development that was made all the more important by the departure of leading tackler Amare Campbell on Sunday.

Campbell was a key addition from the portal a year ago, coming over from North Carolina after spring ball. He ended up starting the entire season in the middle and made some big plays despite being a bit undersized for the position.

In announcing his decision to enter the transfer portal, Amare Campbell made clear that money was the primary factor.

"Unfortunately, once again, I find myself in a situation where I can't allow myself to be undervalued," he wrote on social media. "I have to do what's best for my family, my future and myself."

Penn State prioritized keeping top linebacker Tony Rojas, who many expected to transfer himself before announcing this past week that he would return for his senior season. Still, Rojas will be coming off of season-ending knee surgery, as will another returning member of the linebacker corps, Alex Tatsch.

So it's little surprise that the Lions quickly secured commitments from all three of Bacon, Brezina and Ebel.

Ebel recored 77 tackles (8.0 for loss) with a sack last season, starting all 12 games for the Cyclones and will be a senior in 2026. Bacon returned from an injury that cost him all of 2024 to start in 2025, recording 58 tackles (9.5 for loss) and three sacks. Brezina closed last season as a starter following an injury ahead of him and played all three linebacker spots at times.

Penn State's biggest hole right now may be at defensive tackle with Zane Durant and Alonzo Ford going pro and Xavier Gilliam and Owen Wafle set to transfer.

Adding Carnell — who checks in at 6-foot-5, 290 pounds — is a start, though he arrives with limited experience after his first two seasons in Ames.

Last but not least is Neal, who immediately becomes a favorite to start at safety. An All-Big 12 selection in 2025, Neal has a reputation as a hard-hitter who had 77 tackles and two interceptions with three pass break-ups. With Zakee Wheatley turning pro and the impending transfers of King Mack and Antoine Belgrave-Shorter, Penn State's top options at safety look to be Neal and Dejuan Lane, who started and played well in the Pinstripe Bowl.

Penn State is far from done in overhauling the roster as a total of 40 players from the 2025 squad have entered the portal. The newest names on Sunday were Campbell, cornerback Kenny Woseley and defensive tackle Kaleb Artis.

No. 1 Hoosiers land successor to Mendoza from portal

By Michael Marot
AP Sports Writer

As No. 1 Indiana prepares for Friday night's College Football Playoff semifinal against No. 5 Oregon, coach Curt Cignetti is already reloading.

On Sunday, the undefeated Hoosiers acquired two key players in the transfer portal, landing former TCU quarterback Josh Hoover, according to a person with knowledge of the commitment. The person requested anonymity because official announcements have not yet been made. Former Michigan State receiver Nick Marsh also is headed to Indiana, his mother, Yolanda Wilson, confirmed to The Associated Press on Sunday.

Marsh considered transferring last year but said he turned down more money from other schools to stay with the Spartans.

Hoover could be the successor for Heisman Trophy winner Fernando Mendoza even though Mendoza's younger brother, Alberto, could stay at Indiana. But Hoover brings a dimension that has worked well for Cignetti in his first two seasons in Bloomington — a proven, multiyear starter.

Indiana went with Kurtis Rourke, a Mid-American Conference Player of the Year with Ohio, in 2024 then got Mendoza, a two-year starter at California, this season.

Hoover is 19-12 in 2 1/2 seasons as the Horned Frogs starter and has completed 65.2% of his 1,183 attempts for 9,629 yards and has 71 TD passes and 33 interceptions. In 2025, the Texan was 272 of 413 for 3,472 yards with 29 TDs and 13 interceptions.

He also has eight TD runs in his career.

But the other part of Sunday's haul was equally impressive. Marsh had 100 receptions for 1,311 yards and nine TD receptions in his two seasons with the Spartans and broke school records for a freshman with 41 catches and 649 yards in 2024.

The 6-foot-3, 203-pound Marsh is expected to replace Elijah Sarratt, who caught the winning TD passes at Iowa and in Indiana's first matchup against Oregon.

Multiple news outlets also reported former Boston College running back Turbo Richard also was heading to Indiana.

Richard had 145 carries for 749 yards and nine TDs in 11 games last season after only logging 55 carries in 2024. The Hoosiers also are losing their top two rushers — Roman Hemby and Kaelon Black.

The Hoosiers (14-0) and Ducks (13-1) meet Friday night in the Peach Bowl in Atlanta with the winner advancing to the Jan. 19 national championship game.

BADGERS, BUFFALOES ADD

Quarterback Colton Joseph is heading to Wisconsin after throwing for more than 2,500 yards and eclipsing 1,000 yards rushing at Old Dominion this season.

Joseph announced his decision Sunday with an X post that included the message, "On Wisconsin."

It was a big weekend for Colorado coach Deion Sanders, too.

The Buffaloes received several commitments from an array of players including San Jose State receiver Danny Scudero, who was named to The Associated Press All-America second team. Scudero's intention to join the Buffaloes was confirmed by a person familiar with the situation who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because Colorado hasn't announced its new arrivals.

Colorado also had pledges from receiver Kam Perry of Miami (Ohio), along with defensive linemen Lamont Lester Jr. and Yamil Talib, the nephew of longtime NFL cornerback Aqib Talib. In addition, running back Damian Henderson II is set to join Colorado.

Joseph completed 59.7% of his passes this season for 2,624 yards with 21 touchdowns and 10 interceptions for Old Dominion, which went 10-3. He also rushed for 1,007 yards and 13 touchdowns on 158 carries.

He didn't play in Old Dominion's 24-10 Cure Bowl victory over South Florida after deciding to enter the transfer portal.

Wisconsin has gone to the transfer portal for quarterbacks every year since coach Luke Fickell arrived, though injuries have limited their production.

Tanner Mordecai came over from SMU in 2023 but missed 3 1/2 games with a broken hand that season. Tyler Van Dyke arrived from Miami the following year but tore his anterior cruciate ligament in the third game of the season. Former Mississippi State quarterback Braedyn Locke started when Mordecai and Van Dyke were injured.

Billy Edwards Jr. transferred from Maryland and opened the 2025 season as Wisconsin's starter, but he sprained his knee in the second quarter of the Badgers' season-opening victory over Miami (Ohio).

Edwards returned to start Wisconsin's Sept. 20 loss to Maryland but got hurt again and didn't play the rest of the season.

San Diego State transfer Danny O'Neil, Southern Illinois transfer Hunter Simmons and freshman Carter Smith each started multiple games after Edwards' injury.



Gene J. Puskar | AP photo

Ravens kicker Tyler Loop (33) reacts after missing a 44-yard field goal on the final play of Sunday night's game in Pittsburgh. The kick would have won the game and the AFC North title for Baltimore. Instead, the Ravens' season ended and the rival Steelers are headed to the playoffs.

Steelers win AFC North as Ravens miss winning field goal on final play

By Will Graves
AP Sports Writer

PITTSBURGH — The way Aaron Rodgers looks at it, part of his job is to be a "magnetic force."

This is, after all, why the Pittsburgh Steelers signed the four-time NFL MVP to a one-year deal last summer. And why Rodgers opted to return for a 21st season after two miserable years with the New York Jets, eager to prove he could still sling it. Still deliver. Still win.

Turns out, there's some life in Rodgers' right arm yet.

And in his team's season, too.

The 42-year-old Rodgers threw for a season-high 294 yards, the last 26 coming on a go-ahead touchdown pass to Calvin Austin III with 55 seconds left, and the Steelers claimed their first AFC North title in five years with a 26-24 victory that wasn't assured until Baltimore's Tyler Loop missed a 44-yard field goal as time expired.

Pittsburgh (10-7) will host Houston (12-5) in the opening round of the playoffs on Monday, Jan. 12, hoping to end a postseason victory drought that stretches back nearly a decade.

"The belief level in the locker room after a win like this is exponentially greater," Rodgers said.

Considering the way Pittsburgh kept bouncing back against Lamar Jackson and the Ravens, maybe it should be.

Even with Rodgers' late heroics, Baltimore (8-9) was poised to swing the lead back its way one last time when Jackson connected with Isaiah Likely for a 28-yard gain that put the Ravens within Loop's range.

The rookie's kick never had a chance, sailing well to the right of the goalposts as the Steelers poured onto the field in somewhat jubilant disbelief.

"I'm not going to ask questions," longtime Pittsburgh defensive tackle Cam Heyward said. "The good Lord made a good decision tonight. I am thankful, and we keep moving on."

Loop, who had made 30 of 33 field goals this season before his final kick, placed the blame squarely on his 24-year-old shoulders.

"Just mishit the ball," Loop said while being flanked by holder Jordan Stout and long snapper Nick Moore. "We call it hitting it thin."

A perhaps fitting way for a Ravens season that began with Super Bowl expectations but never seemed to quite get right to end.

Jackson, dealing with a painful back contusion, passed for 238 yards and three scores, including a pair to Zay Flowers in the fourth quarter. Each of Flowers' TDs — from 50 and 64 yards — put Baltimore in front.

It just wasn't enough. And now a long and potentially turbulent offseason awaits.

"I'm definitely stunned," said Jackson, who declined to speculate on his future. "I thought we had it in the bag, man. ... I don't know what else we can do."

The Steelers trailed by 10 early, and a repeat of the bludgeoning they took at the hands of Baltimore in the first round of the playoffs last season seemed in the offing.

The defense, pushed around repeatedly by Derrick Henry since he joined the Ravens last season, finally pushed back, and the offense — playing without suspended wide receiver DK Metcalf — slowly found its footing.

Henry ran for 126 yards for the Ravens and became the ninth player in NFL history to reach 13,000 career yards rushing, but was held mostly in check during a second half that morphed into an improbable shootout.

Jackson's first touchdown pass to Flowers was a thing of beauty. The two-time MVP ducked out of the reach of two would-be tacklers before floating a pass to a streaking Flowers to put the Ravens up 17-13.

Steelers running back Kenny Gainwell sprinted in from 2 yards out with 3:49 remaining to put Pittsburgh back in front. The Ravens, looking to become the first team since the creation of the AFC North in 2003 to win the division three consecutive years, needed all of three plays to reclaim the lead when Jackson lofted a pass to a wide-open Flowers for a 64-yard score.

Yet on the Pittsburgh sideline, there wasn't much panic. Steelers linebacker T.J. Watt, who had an interception in his return from a three-game absence while recovering from surgery to repair a collapsed lung, saw that there was still over 2 minutes to play. Plenty of time for someone with 36 game-winning drives on his resume.

"(I thought), 'This is the best dude in the NFL for this moment,'" Watt said.

A 37th game-winning drive followed.

Rodgers deftly guided the Steelers 65 yards in six plays, the last a rainbow down the left sideline to Austin, who was alone after a Ravens defender fell.

"Being the old guy having a lot of gray in your beard, they expect that (kind of play)," Rodgers said. "And it's nice to deliver in moments like that."

Boswell then missed his first extra point of the season after 40 straight makes, opening the door for the Ravens. Baltimore appeared poised to end its longtime rival's season for the second time in 12 months before Loop's kick started right and stayed there.

The miss pushed Steelers coach Mike Tomlin's regular-season victory total to 193, tying him with Hall of Famer Chuck Noll for the franchise record.

Yet moments after the 40th meeting between Tomlin and Ravens coach John Harbaugh — only Hall of Famers George Halas and Curly Lambeau faced each other more — all the longest tenured coach in major North American professional sports could do was admire his team's fight.

Asked about the punches the Steelers have absorbed this season, Tomlin responded by saying simply, "We've thrown a lot too."

A chance to unleash a few more awaits.



Gene J. Puskar | AP photo

Aaron Rodgers (8) threw 47 passes despite missing top receiver DK Metcalf and connected with Calvin Austin with 55 seconds left for the winning score.



Matt Durisko | AP photo

Ravens tight end Isaiah Likely made an acrobatic 28-yard catch on fourth-and-7 to move Baltimore into field goal range in the final seconds.

UP NEXT

Ravens: Plenty of time to figure out how to break through next season while Jackson, who turns 29 this week, remains in his prime.

Steelers: Prepare to host the Texans with a chance to end the franchise's longest playoff win drought since Franco Harris' Immaculate Reception more than 50 years ago.

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Chris Szagola | AP photo

Eagles quarterback Tanner McKee (16) looks to pass while under pressure from Commanders defensive tackle Daron Payne (94) during the second half on Sunday. McKee got the start with coach Nick Sirianni electing to rest Jalen Hurts and several other key players rather than go all out for a chance at the No. 2 seed. McKee threw for 241 yards with a touchdown and an interception.

Eagles' backup plan backfires with loss to Commanders, costs them No. 2 seed

By Dan Gelston
AP Sports Writer

PHILADELPHIA — Nick Sirianni understood the risks associated with his decision to rest Jalen Hurts, Saquon Barkley and most of the Eagles' key starters with the No. 2 seed in the NFC at stake.

His backup plan backfired in the moment, and the Super Bowl champions will start their postseason defense of the title as the 3 seed.

With Hurts and Barkley on the bench and the Eagles' second-stringers failing to meet the moment, the Washington Commanders got fourth-quarter passing and rushing touchdowns from Josh Johnson and beat Philadelphia 24-17 on Sunday.

"I knew this was an outcome, that these things could happen," said Sirianni, who has coached the Eagles to two of the last three Super Bowls. "One thing I could guarantee was giving them rest. I couldn't guarantee them anything else. Being healthy and going into the playoffs healthy is a big deal for us."

The NFC East champion Eagles (11-6) will open the playoffs at home next weekend against San Francisco.

The final outcome of Sirianni's call won't be determined until the Eagles' postseason run is over. Perhaps a physical and mental break — essentially a bye week for the core starters — was what the Eagles needed to gear up for a Super Bowl run.

"I know there will be debate on that," Sirianni said.

Good call.

The Eagles needed help to earn the No. 2 seed. They had to beat the Commanders and Detroit needed to win at Chicago. Sure enough, the Lions beat the Bears 19-16 to add another gut punch to the Eagles' loss.

With Jayden Daniels shut down and Marcus Mariota dealing with a leg injury, the Commanders (5-12) started Johnson, their 39-year-old third-stringer.

Johnson rallied the Commanders from a 17-10 hole with a 2-yard touchdown pass to John Bates and then scored on a 1-yard run with 2:32 left.



Chris Szagola | AP photo

Commanders tight end John Bates (87) celebrates his touchdown with teammates during the second half that tied the game at 17-17. Washington would ultimately win it on a 1-yard touchdown run with 2:32 left.

With Hurts, Barkley, wide receiver A.J. Brown and tight end Dallas Goedert sitting out, Philadelphia couldn't rally late.

Eagles defensive end Brandon Graham, who came out of retirement in midseason to chase another Super Bowl, defended Sirianni's decision.

"It's valuable because you get an extra week to get your body together, especially if you've been dealing with some stuff," Graham said.

"Now it don't matter. We've got to try and go win every game. First one at home, take care of business and on to the next."

The Eagles had to watch and root — for the Lions, too — like everyone else.

Eagles fans cheered when each Detroit score against Chicago was shown on the videoboard. Sirianni said during the week he also would be scoreboard-watching, though he kept the cheering to his team's own plays, such as Tanner McKee's 15-yard TD pass to Grant Calcaterra for a 7-0 lead in the second quarter.

The Commanders, also playing backups in a forgettable season a year after they faced the Eagles in the NFC championship game, refused to roll over and twisted the stomachs of Eagles fans into knots — and got them ready to light up talk radio this week.

"I didn't really think too much about the negatives of it," Sirianni said.

McKee had been impressive in limited action as Hurts' backup over the last two seasons but did little to improve his stock in the finale.

He was 21 of 40 for 241 yards with an interception and was sacked on the final drive to end the Eagles' shot at the 2 seed and the possibility of two home playoff games that would come with it.

Jake Moody sent Washington into halftime with a 10-7 lead on a 56-yard field goal.

The Eagles pounced on a fumble in the third quarter and Tank Bigbsy, the sure-handed backup to Barkley, scored for a 14-10 lead. Jake Elliott kicked a 39-yarder for a 17-10 lead.

The Eagles' chances were upended when Kelee Ringo — yes, a backup — was flagged for pass interference to set up Johnson's go-ahead rushing TD.

"I know to the rest of the world, this might not mean nothing," Johnson said.

In Philly, the game sure meant something — and the hand-wringing will only continue.

1,000 YARDS FOR SMITH

Smith was one of the Eagles regulars who earned snaps, and he topped 1,000 yards receiving for the third time in his career.

Smith entered the game 44 yards shy and exceeded 1,000 yards before the end of the first quarter. He had three catches for 52 yards — including a 27-yarder on his final reception that gave him a team-high 1,008 yards.

Smith was immediately pulled from the game.

"We were safe with him as far as what kind of routes we were running and what he was doing," Sirianni said.

Brown didn't need to play because he already had 1,003 yards.

INJURIES

Eagles: Calcaterra left with an ankle/knee injury. Offensive lineman Brandon Toth was evaluated for a concussion.

UP NEXT

The Commanders are set to have a top-10 pick in the NFL draft.

The Eagles could play two road games — including a divisional-round game at Chicago — if they want to return to the Super Bowl. The Eagles were 3 1/2-point favorites to beat the 49ers, according to BetMGM Sportsbook.

Ailing Giants owner gets game ball after win over Dallas

By Stephen Whyno
AP Sports Writer

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — New York Giants owner John Mara got a season-ending gift from his team three months into his cancer treatment.

Mara got a game ball in an emotional locker room scene after the Giants beat the rival Dallas Cowboys 34-17 on Sunday to finish their lost season on a two-game winning streak.

"He mentioned he's jogging to his treatments now because of this," said tight end Daniel Bellinger, who had a 29-yard touchdown catch. "He's got to be the toughest guy in the locker room, regardless of what everybody else is going through. He's resilient as a guy, and we respect him as our leader, our owner."

Beating Dallas and other results around the NFL took the Giants (4-13) out of the running for a top-two pick and clinched No. 1 for Las Vegas, a week after routing the Raiders to end a nine-game skid. Shuffling back in the draft order had some fans rooting for New York to lose, but two more TD passes by rookie quarterback Jaxson Dart showed why there's so much organizational optimism about the future, no matter who is coaching.

"Jaxson Dart's going to be here — he'll be here for a long time," veteran receiver Darius Slayton said. "He's talented. He's young. I think any coach that would come here would be wise to invest in him and try to bring him along because he has all the potential in the world.

Dart has said he cares more about winning than draft position and played like it in his 12th professional start. He was 22 of 32 for 231 yards with his 14th and 15th career touchdown passes, to Bellinger and Tyrone Tracy.



Adam Hunger | AP photo

Giants quarterback Jaxson Dart closed out his rookie season with 231 yards and two touchdowns to beat the Cowboys on Sunday.



Adam Hunger | AP photo

Giants running back Devin Singletary (26) celebrates his fourth-quarter touchdown that helped seal Sunday's win.

While the Giants were shorthanded because of injuries and illnesses, they treated this like any other game with their starters going the distance. Dallas (7-9-1) took it more like an exhibition game, including Dak Prescott exiting after halftime.

Prescott completed seven of 11 passes for 70 yards and lost a fumble off a botched snap before being replaced at quarterback by Joe Milton to begin the third quarter.

"The destination is not the end goal," said Prescott, who finished the season with 4,552 yards passing, the second most of his decade-long career behind only 4,902 in 2019. "It's one of the first seasons where I can't directly correlate my play to the wins or loses. That makes it frustrating."

Jaydon Blue and Phil Mafah each rushed for their first NFL touchdowns for the Cowboys, who lost to the Giants for the first time since the 2020 season finale on Jan. 3, 2021. They had won nine consecutive meetings and Prescott had won 14 in a row as the starter, and this loss again came with embattled defensive coordinator Matt Eberflus' unit allowing 30-plus points.

"You've got to get off the field on third down," coach Brian Schottenheimer said. "Unfortunately, we didn't do that, plus we gave up some explosives in the run game. The last couple of weeks have been better, but those are big momentum plays where you have a chance to get the ball back to the offense."

HEATED RIVALRY

After the Dart-to-Tracy TD connection early in the third quarter, tempers flared between lineman on both sides. New York guard Greg Van Roten held on to Sam Williams' facemask, and Dallas' Donovan Ezeiruaku followed suit and then some as flags flew.

Ezeiruaku ripped Van Roten's helmet off and was ejected. The Giants made the ensuing 2-point conversion, giving kicker Ben Sauls a breather during a game in which he made all four of his field goal attempts.

INJURIES

Cowboys: S Markquese Bell was ruled out before halftime with a concussion. ... S Alijah Clark was a late scratch for personal reasons.

Giants: LB Darius Muasau left with an ankle injury in the third quarter. ... CB Rico Payton was evaluated for a concussion.

UP NEXT

Cowboys: Schottenheimer is expected to return for a second season, though Eberflus and other assistants could be gone.

Giants: A coaching search is in the offing, with the question of whether general manager Joe Schoen will oversee it.

Bills rout Jets in potential final game at Highmark Stadium

By John Wawrow
AP Sports Writer

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — With the outcome well in hand, Bills coach Sean McDermott took a moment to look back and take in the spectacle of a still-packed stadium and fans in full-throated vigor singing along to "Mr. Brightside."

The scene Sunday and the 35-8 win over the New York Jets was the type of sendoff McDermott envisioned in what could very well have been the Bills' final game at their 53-year-old Highmark Stadium.

"Come on, where else does that happen in the NFL, right? That type of togetherness. That type of fellowship, community, love of their team and of each other," McDermott said. "And I'll never forget it. Special moment."

He wasn't the only one.

With the game over, backup offensive tackle Alec Anderson jumped into the crowd to take pictures. Cornerback Tre'Davious White lingered in the end zone, just outside the tunnel, as fans sang to "Iris," the song by the hometown Goo Goo Dolls.

"It's only in Buffalo you get that," White said. "That's why this place is so special, and that's why people want to come here. ... It's a lot of things to remember about the stadium. But I hold it dear to my heart."

The Bills won with mostly backups. After taking the first snap, Josh Allen headed to the sideline and spent the rest of the game watching backup Mitch Trubisky throw four touchdown passes, including two to Gabe Davis. Ty Johnson had a TD run and a scoring catch.



Adrian Kraus | AP photo

Bills wide receiver Keon Coleman (0) is lifted up by guard O'Cyrus Torrence after Coleman caught a 2-point conversion against the Jets in the second half.

Tight end Dawson Knox earned $200,000 in bonuses for reaching 400 yards receiving and scoring for the fourth time this year on a 17-yard TD catch.

Buffalo's defense, meanwhile, manhandled an injury-depleted and backup-filled Jets offense that was blanked through 3 1/2 quarters and finished with 122 yards offense and nine first downs.

The win, coupled with the Los Angeles Chargers' loss at Denver, led to Buffalo moving up one spot in clinching the No. 6 seed. The Bills will travel to play the AFC South champion Jacksonville Jaguars in the wild-card round next Sunday.

It didn't take McDermott long to begin looking ahead to the playoffs.

"I'm already there," McDermott said. "That's where my head is already right now, is ready to put in the work to get ourselves ready to go to play our best football."

It'll be the third playoff meeting between the teams, with Jacksonville winning both. The Jaguars defeated Buffalo 30-27 in what stood as Bills Hall of Fame quarterback Jim Kelly's final game in 1996.

More recently, the Jaguars beat Buffalo 10-3 in 2017 in the Bills' first playoff appearance after ending a 17-year postseason drought.

It was the latest blowout loss for the Jets (3-14), who closed their first season under coach Aaron Glenn by losing five straight — a stretch in which they were outscored by a combined 188-54.

"The only thing I can think about is moving on to next year. I let the players down. I let the organization down, and that burns me, It really does," Glenn said. "But here's what I do know: I know the reason why I came here, and I am not gonna waver."

Several players blamed themselves.

"This has definitely been the worst season I've been a part of as a team. Key word, a 'part.' I got my hands in it," fourth-year defensive end Jermaine Johnson said. "My hands are bloody. Everybody's hands are bloody in this."

The Jets became the NFL's first team to lose by 23 or more in five consecutive games in one season.

For Buffalo, the outing turned into an afternoon-long celebration. The Bills move across the street to their new $2.1 billion facility next season.

Fans showed up early and most stayed through the end to celebrate a stadium that has been the Bills' home since opening in 1973.

The team honored its past with Kelly and fellow Hall of Famers Thurman Thomas and Andre Reed addressing the crowd.

Even 100-year-old Hall of Fame coach Marv Levy delivered his familiar line of, "Where would you rather be than right here, right now," in a video message broadcast on the scoreboard during half time.

By then, the outcome was essentially sealed with Buffalo leading 21-0 in a half the Jets were limited to four first downs and 63 yards offense.

Trubisky finished 22 of 29 for 259 yards.

"It was a fun night, just trying to stay focused on giving (the fans) a good show," he said. "We just really wanted to perform well one last time in the stadium for them. And that was super special."

Allen, nursing a sore right foot, took the first snap to extend his starting streak to 135 (including playoffs) — the NFL's longest active run among quarterbacks.

Buffalo's James Cook who entered as the NFL's rushing leader finished with 15 yards to up his total to 1,564. The only player capable of catching Cook is Baltimore's Derrick Henry, who has 1,469 yards rushing, entering the Ravens game against Pittsburgh.

The loss secured New York the No. 2 pick in the draft.

Undrafted rookie Brady Cook, making his fourth straight start, went 11 of 22 for 60 yards and a 2-yard touchdown pass to fullback Andrew Beck with 7:33 remaining.

The Jets became the NFL's first team to finish a season without a defensive interception. And New York finished with just four takeaways, breaking the NFL-low record of seven set by San Francisco in 2018.

Broncos earn top seed; Panthers take NFC South

The Associated Press



David Zalubowski | AP photo

Quarterback Bo Nix had a rough day on Sunday, but the Broncos did enough to beat a shorthanded Chargers team to sit atop the AFC and claim a first-round bye.

DENVER — Ja'Quan McMillian goofed up the play in practice, got an earful from Denver defensive coordinator Vance Joseph and then made good when given another chance Sunday when it mattered most.

The Denver Broncos secured the AFC's top playoff seed with a 19-3 win over the Los Angeles Chargers' bevy of backups, a victory fueled by McMillian's 45-yard interception return for a touchdown.

"We actually ran that play in practice against that same exact (formation) and I messed it up, so we had to redo it. And VJ gave me the coaching point on it," McMillian recounted. "Then it so happened they we ran the exact same play. I was coming down on the ball to make a tackle, it was a tip, he dropped it, got a pick and just ran it in for the touchdown."

Los Angeles had two turnovers and had two drives end with a turnover on downs, as Denver stopped the Chargers on 11 of their 12 drives.

Wil Lutz was 4-for-4 on field goals and the Broncos (14-3) tied their franchise record for most victories in a season and earned their first No. 1 playoff seed since 2015, which they parlayed into a third Super Bowl title.

"And now the season truly starts, right?" Denver cornerback Riley Moss said. "You win or you go home, and so the stakes are high and we're going to be ready to roll in two weeks."

That's when they host their first playoff game in a decade, which could be against these same Chargers (11-6) if L.A. beats the Patriots (14-3) at New England in the wild-card round next weekend.

"Yeah, New England. Focus on New England," Chargers coach Jim Harbaugh said. "That's where our focus will be."

Broncos quarterback Bo Nix had one of his worst games of the season, throwing for just 38 yards in the first half and 141 overall, but he tied Russell Wilson's record of 24 wins in his first two NFL seasons by helping Denver grind out yet another tough win.

"We've been fortunate this year to play a lot of close games and we've won a lot of close games," Nix said. "It hasn't been the pretty ones that you want, the flashy, big-time wins, the ones you get to go there and rest a little bit in the fourth. But ... it's put us in a position to see what winning football is like."

With no chance to win the division, the Chargers treated this game much like a bye week as they prepared to hit the road for the playoffs in the wild-card round. Harbaugh sat several of his starters, most notably quarterback Justin Herbert, safety Derwin James and OLB Tuli Tuipulotu.

QB Trey Lance made his sixth career start and first with the Bolts. His fourth pass went off the hands of KeAndre Lambert-Smith and into the arms of McMillian, who raced down the Broncos' sideline for a 45-yard touchdown and a 10-0 first-quarter lead. Lambert-Smith later left the game with a hamstring injury.

After five fruitless drives, Cameron Dicker's 30-yard field goal with 3 seconds left in the second quarter pulled the Chargers to 10-3 at halftime.

The Broncos had four sacks, none bigger than Nik Bonitto's strip-sack at the Los Angeles 20-yard line early in the fourth quarter. Denver finished the season with a franchise-record and NFL-best 68 sacks, four shy of the 1984 Chicago Bears' NFL-record.

The Broncos again earned no style points, not that it mattered.

"A win is a win," Courtland Sutton said after catching just one pass for 5 yards. "I don't care if it's 3-2. It doesn't have to be exciting. At the end of the day you have to have more points than the other team and you get the dub. I know all the fantasy people and all the gamblers they probably get upset with us ...

"Our defense was incredible. Wil will probably ice his leg later today because we wore him out. But man, a win is a win and it was exciting to share that moment with this team," Sutton added. "There's a lot of guys on this team who have seen some darker days ... so to be able to come away with this victory was a lot of fun."

FALCONS 19, SAINTS 17

ATLANTA — Dee Alford's red-zone interception stopped a potential go-ahead drive by New Orleans, and Atlanta beat the Saints to give the NFC South title to the Carolina Panthers.

By closing the season with four consecutive wins, the Falcons (8-9) finished in a three-way tie with Carolina and Tampa Bay for first place in the NFC South. The Panthers won the tiebreaker with the best record within the division.

The Falcons completed a season sweep of the Saints (6-11), who had their four-game winning streak end.

Tampa Bay stayed alive with a 16-14 home win over Carolina on Saturday. The Buccaneers needed a win or tie by the Saints on Sunday to win the division. The Panthers made the playoffs for the first time since 2017 and won the division for the first time in a decade.

Trailing 16-10, the Saints drove from their 25 to the Atlanta 20 before Alford returned his interception of Tyler Shough's pass intended for Dante Pettis 59 yards to the Saints 27 with 3:14 remaining. The play set up Zane Gonzalez's fourth field goal, a 38-yarder, to extend Atlanta's lead to nine points.

Shough answered with a 16-yard touchdown pass to Ronnie Bell with 1:11 remaining, but Atlanta's Kyle Pitts recovered an onside kick.

JAGUARS 41, TITANS 7

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Trevor Lawrence threw three touchdown passes, breaking the franchise's single-season record for total scores, and Jacksonville won the AFC South and earned a home playoff game with a win over Tennessee.

It was most lopsided outcome in series history.

The Jaguars (13-4) clinched their third division title in nine years, swept the Titans (3-14) for the third time in four seasons and topped a dozen wins for just the second time in the team's 31-year history.

Jacksonville, though, will have to wait several hours to learn its postseason seeding and opponent. The Jaguars could land the AFC's No. 1 seed but more likely will end up as the third and host Buffalo or the Los Angeles Chargers next week.

No one should want to play the Jaguars, who have won eight in a row and nine of 10 since their bye. And Lawrence has been the hottest quarterback in the league during the streak.

He completed 22 of 30 passes for 255 yards against Tennessee, with TDs to Brenton Strange, Parker Washington and Quintin Morris. After a lackluster opening possession, Lawrence picked apart the Titans' depleted secondary and watched most of the fourth quarter from the sideline.

VIKINGS 16, PACKERS 3

MINNEAPOLIS — J.J. McCarthy had a productive first half before he was injured again, fullback C.J. Ham rushed for a short touchdown, and Minnesota finished a frustrating season by beating a resting Green Bay.

Green Bay (9-7-1) was locked into the No. 7 seed in the NFC playoffs and had nothing to play for.

McCarthy, who went 14 for 23 for 182 yards passing, pulled himself out after his first throw of the third quarter so the athletic training staff could examine his right hand and did not return. Backup Max Brosmer took it from there, helping Justin Jefferson reach the 100-yard mark for the first time in 12 games as the Vikings (9-8) coasted to their fifth consecutive victory.

Jefferson had already secured his sixth straight 1,000-yard season, only the third receiver in NFL history to accomplish that feat.

With Jordan Love safely watching on the sideline and Malik Willis recovering from injuries, the Packers gave Clayton Tune his second career start at quarterback and netted minus-7 passing yards. Dallas Turner had two of Minnesota's four sacks that racked up 41 lost yards for Green Bay.

BROWNS 20, BENGALS 18

CINCINNATI — Myles Garrett set the NFL's single-season record with his 23rd sack and Shedeur Sanders led a late scoring drive that was capped by Andre Szmyt's 49-yard field goal as time expired to help Cleveland rally for a victory over Cincinnati in the season finale.

Garrett sacked Joe Burrow with 4:09 remaining in the fourth quarter for the record-setting sack, surpassing the 22 1/2 by Michael Strahan and T.J. Watt. Burrow was in the shotgun formation on first-and-10 at the Browns 45-yard line.

After Ja'Marr Chase's 4-yard touchdown catch gave the Bengals (6-11) an 18-17 advantage with 1:29 remaining, Sanders directed a 10-play, 40-yard drive to give the Browns (5-12) two straight victories for the first time in two years.

Sanders was 3 of 6 passing for 33 yards on the final drive, including an 11-yard completion to Jerry Jeudy with 31 seconds left to get the Browns in Szmyt's range. Dylan Sampson had two carries for 7 yards to get it closer for Szmyt.

TEXANS 38, COLTS 30

HOUSTON — C.J. Stroud accounted for two touchdowns and Ka'imi Fairbairn made a go-ahead field goal with 12 seconds left to lift Houston to a win over Indianapolis that extended its winning streak to nine games.

The victory gives the Texans (12-5) the No. 5 seed in the AFC playoffs.

Defensive tackle Tommy Togiai scooped up a fumble on the final play and returned it 17 yards for a touchdown to pad the lead.

The Texans clinched a third straight postseason berth last week and they had a chance to win the AFC South with a victory and a Jacksonville loss. But with the Jaguars up big over the Titans at halftime, coach DeMeco Ryans opted to rest quarterback Stroud, defensive stars Will Anderson Jr., Danielle Hunter, Derek Stingley and several other starters after the break.

The Colts led 30-29 after a field goal with about 2 1/2 minutes to go before Fairbairn's 43-yard kick put the Texans on top 32-30 and gave him a career-high six field goals in the game.

Rookie Riley Leonard had 270 yards passing with two TDs and he ran for another score. But he also lost a fumble and threw an interception in his first NFL start after the 44-year-old Philip Rivers started the past three games for the Colts after coming out of retirement.

PATRIOTS 38, DOLPHINS 10

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Rhamondre Stevenson ran for two touchdowns and caught another from MVP contender Drake Maye, and New England completed their remarkable turnaround season with a win over Miami.

Stevenson rushed seven times for 131 yards as New England posted its first sweep of the Dolphins since the 2016 season. TreVeyon Henderson added touchdown runs of 2 and 5 yards.

The Patriots finished 14-3, their most victories since they won the Super Bowl to cap the 2016 season. The AFC East champions will be No. 2 seed in the playoffs and host the seventh-seeded Los Angeles Chargers in the wild-card round next weekend. Denver prevented New England from earning the AFC's top seed by beating the Chargers 19-3 on Sunday.

RAIDERS 14, CHIEFS 12

LAS VEGAS — Daniel Carlson made a career-long 60-yard field goal with eight seconds left to give Las Vegas a victory over Kansas City and end the Raiders' 10-game losing streak.

Carlson and Kansas City's Harrison Butker each made four field goals, with Butker hitting a 41-yarder with 1:01 left to give the Chiefs a short-lived 12-11 lead.

This was the first victory for the Raiders (3-14) over the Chiefs (6-11) at Allegiant Stadium. The Chiefs, who had won all five previous meetings in Las Vegas, lost their sixth straight game and eighth in 10.

RAMS 37, CARDINALS 20

INGLEWOOD, Calif. — Matthew Stafford passed for 259 yards and threw two of his four touchdown passes to Colby Parkinson, and the Los Angeles Rams secured the No. 5 seed in the NFC playoffs with a victory over Arizona.

Tyler Higbee returned from injury with five receptions for 91 yards and a key fourth-quarter TD for the Rams (12-5), who will visit the NFC South champion Carolina Panthers (8-9) in the wild-card round.

Puka Nacua made a one-handed TD grab among his 10 catches for 76 yards for the Rams, who snapped their first two-game skid of the season. Stafford passed Dan Marino for seventh place on the NFL's career TD passes list while finishing his MVP-caliber season leading the NFL with 4,707 yards passing and 46 TDs — the second most in league history by a quarterback at least 37 years old.

LIONS 19, BEARS 16

CHICAGO — Jared Goff led five scoring drives, Jake Bates kicked a 42-yard field goal as time expired and Detroit regrouped to beat the NFC North champion Chicago after blowing a 16-point lead in the fourth quarter.

The Bears (11-6) stumbled into the playoffs with back-to-back losses, though they secured the No. 2 seed in the NFC with Washington beating Philadelphia. Chicago will host Green Bay in a wild-card game next week and would have home-field advantage in the divisional round if it beats the Packers.

Caleb Williams set the franchise's single-season passing record and threw two fourth-quarter touchdown passes as the Bears wiped out a 16-0 deficit.

Falcons fire coach Morris, GM Fontenot after finale

By Charles Odum
AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA — The Atlanta Falcons fired coach Raheem Morris and general manager Terry Fontenot on Sunday night, announcing the moves hours after the team completed its second straight 8-9 finish under Morris and eighth consecutive losing season.

Morris said after Sunday's 19-17 win over the New Orleans Saints that he expected to return for a third season. Instead, his 16-18 record was not enough for him to keep his job after the year began with optimism that the Falcons would reach the playoffs for the first time since 2017.

"I have great personal affinity for both Raheem and Terry and appreciate their hard work and dedication to the Falcons, but I believe we need new leadership in these roles moving forward," owner Arthur Blank said in a statement. "The decision to move away from people who represent the organization so well and have a shared commitment to the values that are important to the organization is not an easy one, but the results on the field have not met our expectations or those of our fans and leadership. I wish Raheem and Terry the absolute best in their future pursuits."

The Falcons finished with four straight wins and in a three-way tie for first place in the NFC South, but the streak came after the team had been eliminated from playoff contention. Carolina won the division because it had a better record in divisional games.

Blank attended Morris' postgame news conference and gave the second-year coach a hug following the session. The owner showed no emotion when Morris was asked if he expected to return.

"You know, my expectation is always to be back, right?" Morris said before looking at Blank and adding, "I'm going to coach this football team as long as he allows it."

When asked if he had discussed his job status with Blank, Morris said, "You can't worry about those things. The boss is sitting right there. All those things — this is a business, what we do. I know it's fun for you guys to talk about it, but those decisions will always be made at a proper time. Those decisions will always be made, utilize whatever is best for the Atlanta Falcons."

Blank was scheduled to speak at a news conference Thursday.

Fontenot was named general manager before the 2021 season. The team was 36-48 during his tenure, but the Falcons got solid production from his 2025 draft class. First-round picks James Peace Jr. and Jalon Walker led NFL rookies in sacks and third-round pick Xavier Watts led all rookies with five interceptions.

Walker said Sunday that Morris did "a great job of keeping the culture here strong. I commend him. All of our trials and tribulations this season, we've found a way, we've made a way."

WEEK 18 AT A GLANCE

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	AFC	NFC	Div
y-New England	14	3	0	.824	490	320	6-3-0	8-0-0	9-3-0	5-0-0	5-1-0
x-Buffalo	12	5	0	.706	481	365	7-2-0	5-3-0	9-3-0	3-2-0	4-2-0
e-Miami	7	10	0	.412	347	424	5-4-0	2-6-0	3-9-0	4-1-0	3-3-0
e-N.Y. Jets	3	14	0	.176	300	503	2-7-0	1-7-0	2-10-0	1-4-0	0-6-0

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	AFC	NFC	Div
y-Jacksonville	13	4	0	.765	474	336	7-2-0	6-2-0	10-2-0	3-2-0	5-1-0
x-Houston	12	5	0	.706	404	295	7-2-0	5-3-0	10-2-0	2-3-0	5-1-0
e-Indianapolis	8	9	0	.471	466	412	6-3-0	2-6-0	6-6-0	2-3-0	2-4-0
e-Tennessee	3	14	0	.176	284	478	1-8-0	2-6-0	2-10-0	1-4-0	0-6-0

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	AFC	NFC	Div
y-Pittsburgh	10	7	0	.588	397	387	6-3-0	4-4-0	8-4-0	2-3-0	4-2-0
e-Baltimore	8	9	0	.471	424	398	3-6-0	5-3-0	5-7-0	3-2-0	3-3-0
e-Cincinnati	6	11	0	.353	414	492	3-6-0	3-5-0	5-7-0	1-4-0	3-3-0
e-Cleveland	5	12	0	.294	279	379	3-6-0	2-6-0	4-8-0	1-4-0	2-4-0

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	AFC	NFC	Div
*-Denver	14	3	0	.824	401	311	8-1-0	6-2-0	9-3-0	5-0-0	5-1-0
x-L.A. Chargers	11	6	0	.647	368	340	6-3-0	5-3-0	8-4-0	3-2-0	5-1-0
e-Kansas City	6	11	0	.353	362	328	5-4-0	1-7-0	3-9-0	3-2-0	1-5-0
e-Las Vegas	3	14	0	.176	241	432	2-7-0	1-7-0	3-9-0	0-5-0	1-5-0

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	AFC	NFC	Div
y-Philadelphia	11	6	0	.647	379	325	5-3-0	6-3-0	3-2-0	8-4-0	3-3-0
e-Dallas	7	9	1	.441	471	511	4-3-1	3-6-0	3-2-0	4-7-1	4-2-0
e-Washington	5	12	0	.294	356	451	2-6-0	3-6-0	2-3-0	3-9-0	3-3-0
e-N.Y. Giants	4	13	0	.235	381	439	3-5-0	1-8-0	2-3-0	2-10-0	2-4-0

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	AFC	NFC	Div
y-Carolina	8	9	0	.471	311	380	5-3-0	3-6-0	2-3-0	6-6-0	3-3-0
e-Tampa Bay	8	9	0	.471	380	411	4-4-0	4-5-0	2-3-0	6-6-0	3-3-0
e-Atlanta	8	9	0	.471	353	401	4-4-0	4-5-0	1-4-0	7-5-0	3-3-0
e-New Orleans	6	11	0	.353	306	383	3-5-0	3-6-0	2-3-0	4-8-0	3-3-0

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	AFC	NFC	Div
y-Chicago	11	6	0	.647	441	415	6-2-0	5-4-0	4-1-0	7-5-0	2-4-0
x-Green Bay	9	7	1	.559	391	360	5-3-0	4-4-1	2-3-0	7-4-1	4-2-0
e-Minnesota	9	8	0	.529	344	333	4-4-0	5-4-0	2-3-0	7-5-0	4-2-0
e-Detroit	9	8	0	.529	481	413	5-3-0	4-5-0	3-2-0	6-6-0	2-4-0

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	AFC	NFC	Div
*-Seattle	14	3	0	.824	483	292	6-2-0	8-1-0	5-0-0	9-3-0	4-2-0
x-L.A. Rams	12	5	0	.706	518	346	7-1-0	5-4-0	5-0-0	7-5-0	4-2-0
x-San Francisco	12	5	0	.706	437	371	5-3-0	7-2-0	3-2-0	9-3-0	4-2-0
e-Arizona	3	14	0	.176	355	488	1-7-0	2-7-0	0-5-0	3-9-0	0-6-0

e-Eliminated from playoffs; x-clinched playoff spot; y-clinched division; *-clinched home-field advantage

WEEK 18 SCHEDULE

Saturday's Games

Tampa Bay 16, Carolina 14
Seattle 13, San Francisco 3

Sunday's Games

Atlanta 19, New Orleans 17
Cleveland 20, Cincinnati 18
Houston 38, Indianapolis 30
Jacksonville 41, Tennessee 7
Minnesota 16, Green Bay 3
N.Y. Giants 34, Dallas 17
Buffalo 35, N.Y. Jets 8
Denver 19, L.A. Chargers 3
Detroit 19, Chicago 16
L.A. Rams 37, Arizona 20
Las Vegas 14, Kansas City 12
New England 38, Miami 10
Washington 24, Philadelphia 17
Pittsburgh 26, Baltimore 24

WILD CARD WEEKEND

Saturday's Games

L.A. Rams at Carolina, 4:30 p.m.
Green Bay at Chicago, 8 p.m.

Sunday's Games

Buffalo at Jacksonville, 1 p.m.
San Francisco at Philadelphia, 4:30 p.m.
L.A. Chargers at New England, 8 p.m.

Monday's Game

Houston at Pittsburgh, 8 p.m.

SUNDAY'S GAMES

Pittsburgh 26, Baltimore 24

Baltimore	**7**	**3**	**0**	**14 — 24**
Pittsburgh	**0**	**3**	**10**	**13 — 26**

First Quarter

Bal—Walker 38 pass from L.Jackson (Loop kick), 10:54.

Second Quarter

Bal—FG Loop 40, 13:33.
Pit—FG Boswell 57, 8:52.

Third Quarter

Pit—Co.Heyward 1 run (Boswell kick), 8:23.
Pit—FG Boswell 25, 4:28.

Fourth Quarter

Bal—Z.Flowers 50 pass from L.Jackson (Loop kick), 8:42.
Pit—Gainwell 2 run (Boswell kick), 3:49.
Bal—Z.Flowers 64 pass from L.Jackson (Loop kick), 2:20.
Pit—Austin 26 pass from Rodgers (kick blocked), :55.

	Bal	Pit
First downs	12	24
Total Net Yards	359	390
Rushes-yards	27-137	24-100
Passing	222	290
Punt Returns	0-0	2-11
Kickoff Returns	5-130	3-91
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	1-0
Comp-Att-Int	11-18-1	31-47-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	3-16	2-4
Punts	4-47.75	3-39.667
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	0-0
Penalties-Yards	9-78	5-45
Time of Possession	25:49	34:11

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—Baltimore, Henry 20-126, L.Jackson 4-9, Mitchell 2-2, Ali 1-0. Pittsburgh, Warren 14-66, Rodgers 1-20, Gainwell 5-10, Smith 1-2, Co.Heyward 3-2.

PASSING—Baltimore, L.Jackson 11-18-1-238. Pittsburgh, Rodgers 31-47-0-294.

RECEIVING—Baltimore, Flowers 4-138, Walker 2-46, Likely 2-32, Andrews 2-14, Ricard 1-8. Pittsburgh, Gainwell 8-64, Valdes-Scantling 5-34, Warren 5-33, Austin 3-55, Freiermuth 3-51, Thielen 3-43, Miller 2-9, Co.Heyward 1-3, Smith 1-2.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—Baltimore, Loop 44.

Washington 24, Philadelphia 17

Washington	**0**	**10**	**0**	**14 — 24**
Philadelphia	**0**	**7**	**10**	**0 — 17**

Second Quarter

Phi—Calcaterra 15 pass from McKee (Elliott kick), 13:37.
Was—Rodriguez 1 run (Moody kick), 9:03.
Was—FG Moody 56, :00.

Third Quarter

Phi—Bigsby 2 run (Elliott kick), 6:27.
Phi—FG Elliott 39, :30.

Fourth Quarter

Was—Bates 2 pass from J.Johnson (Moody kick), 9:35.
Was—J.Johnson 1 run (Moody kick), 2:32.
A—69,879.

	Was	Phi
First downs	25	18
Total Net Yards	274	307
Rushes-yards	41-143	19-80
Passing	131	227
Punt Returns	1-1	2-20
Kickoff Returns	1-22	2-55
Interceptions Ret.	1-28	1-0
Comp-Att-Int	14-22-1	21-40-1
Sacked-Yards Lost	0-0	3-14
Punts	3-53.0	3-38.333
Fumbles-Lost	3-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	4-19	9-123
Time of Possession	34:09	25:51

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—Washington, Rodriguez 16-65, J.Johnson 9-45, Croskey-Merritt 13-29, McNichols 1-3, Samuel 2-1. Philadelphia, Bigsby 16-75, McKee 2-3, Shipley 1-2.

PASSING—Washington, J.Johnson 14-22-1-131. Philadelphia, McKee 21-40-1-241.

RECEIVING—Washington, McLaurin 4-57, Samuel 2-20, Bates 2-13, Burks 2-12, Sinnott 2-3, Rodriguez 1-18, McNichols 1-8. Philadelphia, Granson 4-30, D.Smith 3-52, Dotson 3-40, Cooper 3-33, Calcaterra 2-21, Covey 2-20, Shipley 2-11, Bigsby 1-31, Dillon 1-3.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—Washington, Moody 24.

N.Y. Giants 34, Dallas 17

Dallas	**10**	**0**	**0**	**7 — 17**
N.Y. Giants	**6**	**10**	**8**	**10 — 34**

First Quarter

NYG—FG Sauls 45, 9:15.
Dal—FG Aubrey 22, 5:21.
NYG—FG Sauls 35, 1:17.
Dal—Blue 14 run (Aubrey kick), :28.

Second Quarter

NYG—FG Sauls 23, 9:45.
NYG—Bellinger 29 pass from Dart (Sauls kick), :20.

Third Quarter

NYG—Tracy 13 pass from Dart (Slayton pass from Singletary), 9:48.

Fourth Quarter

Dal—Mafah 1 run (Aubrey kick), 14:57.
NYG—FG Sauls 30, 9:23.
NYG—Singletary 6 run (Sauls kick), 5:47.
A—74,395.

	Dal	NYG
First downs	18	25
Total Net Yards	286	380
Rushes-yards	30-143	32-161
Passing	143	219
Punt Returns	0-0	2-31
Kickoff Returns	7-215	2-64
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	1-7
Comp-Att-Int	14-24-1	22-33-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	0-0	4-11
Punts	2-57.0	2-42.0
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	2-1
Penalties-Yards	9-94	7-63
Time of Possession	26:53	33:07

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—Dallas, Blue 16-64, Milton 4-43, Mafah 5-18, Luepke 2-12, Turpin 1-7, Prescott 2-(minus 1). N.Y. Giants, Tracy 18-103, Dart 5-32, Singletary 9-26.

PASSING—Dallas, Milton 7-13-1-73, Prescott 7-11-0-70. N.Y. Giants, Dart 22-32-0-230, Olszewski 0-1-0-0.

RECEIVING—Dallas, Flournoy 5-68, Spann-Ford 2-30, Mafah 2-11, Schoonmaker 1-12, Pickens 1-9, Ferguson 1-5, Lamb 1-4, Luepke 1-4. N.Y. Giants, Olszewski 8-102, Tracy 8-56, Slayton 4-34, Bellinger 2-38.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—Dallas, Aubrey 57.

Buffalo 35, N.Y. Jets 8

N.Y. Jets	**0**	**0**	**0**	**8 — 8**
Buffalo	**7**	**14**	**8**	**6 — 35**

First Quarter

Buf—Knox 17 pass from Trubisky (Prater kick), 8:17.

Second Quarter

Buf—Ty.Johnson 6 run (Prater kick), 11:43.
Buf—R.Davis 2 pass from Trubisky (Prater kick), 4:56.

Third Quarter

Buf—G.Davis 2 pass from Trubisky (Coleman pass from Trubisky), 7:46.

Fourth Quarter

Buf—Ty.Johnson 6 pass from Trubisky (pass failed), 12:05.
Buf—Ty.Johnson 6 pass from Trubisky (pass failed), 12:05.
NYJ—Beck 2 pass from B.Cook (Woods pass from B.Cook), 7:33.
A—70,944.

	NYJ	Buf
First downs	9	30
Total Net Yards	122	470
Rushes-yards	23-69	43-211
Passing	53	259
Punt Returns	0-0	1-2
Kickoff Returns	5-142	1-22
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	0-0
Comp-Att-Int	11-22-0	22-29-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	1-7	0-0
Punts	5-42.2	0-0.0
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	0-0
Penalties-Yards	4-27	3-28
Time of Possession	21:40	38:20

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—N.Y. Jets, Herbert 12-42, Nwangwu 7-18, Cook 3-7, A.Smith 1-2. Buffalo, R.Davis 21-151, Ty.Johnson 13-36, Cook 2-15, Trubisky 5-5, Gilliam 2-4.

PASSING—N.Y. Jets, Cook 11-22-0-60. Buffalo, Trubisky 22-29-0-259.

RECEIVING—N.Y. Jets, I.Williams 5-24, Metchie 3-20, Skinner 1-10, Herbert 1-4, Beck 1-2. Buffalo, G.Davis 5-41, Kincaid 3-48, Latu 3-31, Coleman 2-49, Knox 2-24, R.Davis 2-23, Ty.Johnson 2-20, Gilliam 1-22, Palmer 1-1, Hawes 1-0.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—None.

Minnesota 16, Green Bay 3

Green Bay	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3 — 3**
Minnesota	**3**	**10**	**0**	**3 — 16**

First Quarter

Min—FG Reichard 43, 10:27.

Second Quarter

Min—FG Reichard 25, 3:02.
Min—Ham 1 run (Reichard kick), :23.

Fourth Quarter

Min—FG Reichard 37, 4:09.
GB—FG McManus 24, :00.
A—66,606.

	GB	Min
First downs	12	23
Total Net Yards	121	363
Rushes-yards	35-128	31-137
Passing	-7	226
Punt Returns	0-0	2-5
Kickoff Returns	3-80	1-29
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	0-0
Comp-Att-Int	6-11-0	21-31-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	4-41	2-13
Punts	8-53.875	4-49.0
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	1-1
Penalties-Yards	4-47	2-20
Time of Possession	26:30	33:30

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—Green Bay, C.Brooks 13-61, Wilson 18-44, Tune 4-23. Minnesota, Mason 14-94, Chandler 10-23, Scott 3-9, McCarthy 2-7, Jefferson 1-3, Ham 1-1.

PASSING—Green Bay, Tune 6-11-0-34. Minnesota, McCarthy 14-23-0-182, Brosmer 7-8-0-57.

RECEIVING—Green Bay, Keeney-James 2-15, Golden 1-8, Whyle 1-4, Wilson 1-4, Dabney 1-3. Minnesota, Jefferson 8-101, Nailor 3-49, Chandler 3-11, Oliver 2-29, Sims 1-18, Yurosek 1-9, Addison 1-8, Scott 1-8, Ham 1-6.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—None.

Jacksonville 41, Tennessee 7

Tennessee	**7**	**0**	**0**	**0 — 7**
Jacksonville	**7**	**24**	**3**	**7 — 41**

First Quarter

Ten—C.Ward 7 run (Slye kick), 10:09.
Jac—Washington 23 pass from Lawrence (C.Little kick), 6:02.

Second Quarter

Jac—Strange 7 pass from Lawrence (C.Little kick), 11:47.
Jac—An.Johnson 58 interception return (C.Little kick), 8:07.
Jac—Morris 5 pass from Lawrence (C.Little kick), 1:56.
Jac—FG C.Little 67, :00.

Third Quarter

Jac—FG C.Little 52, 1:03.

Fourth Quarter

Jac—Tuten 5 run (C.Little kick), 7:28.
A—66,015.

	Ten	Jac
First downs	10	24
Total Net Yards	194	319
Rushes-yards	19-77	24-64
Passing	117	255
Punt Returns	1-9	2-6
Kickoff Returns	1-20	2-52
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	1-58
Comp-Att-Int	20-33-1	24-32-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	1-7	2-16
Punts	5-48.6	3-46.0
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	1-0
Penalties-Yards	6-67	3-20
Time of Possession	26:57	33:03

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—Tennessee, Pollard 14-48, Spears 3-18, C.Ward 2-11. Jacksonville, Etienne 14-32, Tuten 5-23, Lawrence 2-11, Mullens 3-(minus 2).

PASSING—Tennessee, Allen 17-30-1-72, C.Ward 3-3-0-52. Jacksonville, Lawrence 22-30-0-255, Mullens 2-2-0-16.

RECEIVING—Tennessee, Spears 7-9, Ayomanor 3-50, Dike 3-27, Pollard 3-17, Okonkwo 2-2, Martin-Robinson 1-14, Proche 1-5. Jacksonville, Strange 6-52, Washington 5-87, Meyers 5-44, B.Thomas 3-49, Mundt 1-16, D.Brown 1-8, Etienne 1-6, Morris 1-5, Patrick 1-4.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—Tennessee, Slye 52.

Cleveland 20, Cincinnati 18

Cleveland	**7**	**7**	**3**	**3 — 20**
Cincinnati	**6**	**6**	**0**	**6 — 18**

First Quarter

Cin—C.Brown 4 pass from Burrow (kick blocked), 7:59.
Cle—Bush 97 interception return (Szmyt kick), :56.

Second Quarter

Cle—Webb 47 fumble return (Szmyt kick), 14:06.
Cin—Higgins 13 pass from Burrow (kick failed), :29.

Third Quarter

Cle—FG Szmyt 27, 8:00.

Fourth Quarter

Cin—Chase 4 pass from Burrow (pass failed), 1:29.
Cle—FG Szmyt 49, :00.
A—62,230.

	Cle	Cin
First downs	11	24
Total Net Yards	200	364
Rushes-yards	24-118	25-142
Passing	82	222
Punt Returns	2-6	3-13
Kickoff Returns	3-73	4-99
Interceptions Ret.	1-97	0-0
Comp-Att-Int	27-42-1	20-33-1
Sacked-Yards Lost	3-20	1-7
Punts	5-40.6	4-57.25
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	6-40	5-42
Time of Possession	31:19	28:41

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—New Orleans, Estime 21-63, Shough 3-34, Hull 2-11. Atlanta, B.Robinson 15-33, Allgeier 7-16, Cousins 3-0.

PASSING—New Orleans, Shough 23-35-1-259. Atlanta, Cousins 18-32-1-180.

RECEIVING—New Orleans, Pettis 5-60, Estime 5-43, Austin 4-37, Johnson 3-61, Hill 3-32, Bell 2-23, Toure 1-3. Atlanta, Pitts 6-58, D.London 4-78, Mooney 3-20, B.Robinson 3-10, Sills 1-11, Allgeier 1-3.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—New Orleans, Smyth 56.

Houston 38, Indianapolis 30

Indianapolis	**10**	**7**	**10**	**3 — 30**
Houston	**6**	**17**	**3**	**12 — 38**

First Quarter

Hou—FG Fairbairn 51, 12:05.
Ind—Pierce 66 pass from Leonard (Grupe kick), 10:36.
Hou—FG Fairbairn 48, 6:36.
Ind—FG Grupe 50, :34.

Second Quarter

Hou—Higgins 11 pass from Stroud (Fairbairn kick), 9:34.
Hou—Stroud 2 run (Fairbairn kick), 8:32.
Ind—Pierce 8 pass from Leonard (Grupe kick), 1:25.
Hou—FG Fairbairn 29, :00.

Third Quarter

Ind—Leonard 1 run (Grupe kick), 13:05.
Hou—FG Fairbairn 43, 6:53.
Ind—FG Grupe 39, 1:42.

Fourth Quarter

Hou—FG Fairbairn 44, 11:15.
Ind—FG Grupe 22, 2:39.
Hou—FG Fairbairn 43, :12.
Hou—Togiai 17 fumble return, :00.
A—71,133.

	Ind	Hou
First downs	19	22
Total Net Yards	354	339
Rushes-yards	28-76	32-134
Passing	278	205
Punt Returns	1-13	1-6
Kickoff Returns	4-112	6-175
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	1-0
Comp-Att-Int	22-35-1	17-32-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	1-8	0-0
Punts	2-45.0	3-40.333
Fumbles-Lost	2-2	0-0
Penalties-Yards	7-81	7-77
Time of Possession	31:45	28:15

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—Indianapolis, Giddens 8-30, Taylor 14-26, Leonard 3-21, Goodson 1-3, Abdullah 1-1, Downs 1-(minus 5). Houston, Brooks 13-63, Marks 10-48, Mills 1-12, Stroud 2-5, Ogunbowale 1-3, J.Jordan 5-3.

PASSING—Indianapolis, Leonard 21-34-1-270, Sanchez 1-1-0-16. Houston, Stroud 14-23-0-169, Mills 3-9-0-36.

RECEIVING—Indianapolis, Warren 5-26, Pierce 4-132, Downs 4-61, Alie-Cox 3-22, Abdullah 2-24, Taylor 2-13, Pittman 2-11. Houston, Hutchinson 5-84, Schultz 4-73, Higgins 2-23, Marks 2-0, Noel 1-13, Stover 1-9, Ogunbowale 1-6, Kirk 1-(minus 3).

MISSED FIELD GOALS—None.

Detroit 19, Chicago 16

Detroit	**3**	**10**	**3**	**3 — 19**
Chicago	**0**	**0**	**0**	**16 — 16**

First Quarter

Det—FG J.Bates 34, 8:35.

Second Quarter

Det—FG J.Bates 30, 11:28.
Det—Gibbs 15 pass from Goff (J.Bates kick), 4:40.

Third Quarter

Det—FG J.Bates 25, 2:11.

Fourth Quarter

Chi—Walker 25 pass from Ca.Williams (Monangai run), 14:16.
Chi—Loveland 1 pass from Ca.Williams (Kmet pass from Ca.Williams), 5:25.
Det—FG J.Bates 42, :00.
A—57,036.

	Det	Chi
First downs	26	16
Total Net Yards	433	270
Rushes-yards	27-122	18-65
Passing	311	205
Punt Returns	3-33	1-15
Kickoff Returns	2-40	4-106
Interceptions Ret.	1-0	1-21
Comp-Att-Int	27-42-1	20-33-1
Sacked-Yards Lost	3-20	1-7
Punts	2-51.5	4-45.25
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	6-35	4-25
Time of Possession	35:45	24:15

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—Detroit, Gibbs 19-80, Montgomery 8-42. Chicago, Swift 10-40, Monangai 6-14, Burden 1-10, Ca.Williams 1-1.

PASSING—Detroit, Goff 27-42-1-331. Chicago, Ca.Williams 20-33-1-212.

RECEIVING—Detroit, St. Brown 11-139, J.Williams 6-74, Raymond 3-52, Gibbs 3-33, Firkser 2-2, TeSlaa 1-18, Montgomery 1-13. Chicago, Loveland 10-91, Burden 3-35, Walker 2-36, Kmet 2-16, Monangai 1-15, Moore 1-11, Swift 1-8.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—Detroit, J.Bates 53.

New England 38, Miami 10

Miami	**0**	**10**	**0**	**0 — 10**
New England	**14**	**3**	**14**	**7 — 38**

First Quarter

NE—T.Henderson 5 run (Borregales kick), 13:14.
NE—Stevenson 2 run (Borregales kick), :55.

Second Quarter

Mia—M.Washington 2 pass from Ewers (Patterson kick), 10:14.
Mia—FG Patterson 52, :28.
NE—FG Borregales 59, :00.

Third Quarter

NE—Stevenson 15 pass from Maye (Borregales kick), 7:30.
NE—Stevenson 35 run (Borregales kick), 2:18.

Fourth Quarter

NE—T.Henderson 2 run (Borregales kick), 12:39.
A—64,628.

	Mia	NE
First downs	13	22
Total Net Yards	180	457
Rushes-yards	25-63	34-243
Passing	117	214
Punt Returns	1-2	0-0
Kickoff Returns	2-54	2-51
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	1-0
Comp-Att-Int	16-25-1	17-22-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	4-20	0-0
Punts	6-40.833	3-51.667
Fumbles-Lost	2-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	7-52	4-52
Time of Possession	29:11	30:49

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—Miami, Wright 13-23, M.Washington 2-22, Ewers 1-9, Gordon 9-9. New England, Stevenson 7-131, Henderson 13-53, Maye 5-41, Johnson 5-13, K.Williams 1-5, Dobbs 3-0.

PASSING—Miami, Ewers 16-23-1-137, Z.Wilson 0-2-0-0. New England, Maye 14-18-0-191, Dobbs 3-4-0-23.

RECEIVING—Miami, Wease 3-44, Dulcich 3-31, M.Washington 3-6, T.Washington 2-26, Wright 2-17, J.Hill 1-8, Ingold 1-3, Gordon 1-2. New England, Henry 5-56, Diggs 3-43, Douglas 2-29, Boutte 2-24, Stevenson 2-22, Chism 1-35, Hooper 1-5, Westover 1-0.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—New England, Borregales 38.

L.A. Rams 37, Arizona 20

Arizona	**3**	**3**	**14**	**0 — 20**
L.A. Rams	**3**	**13**	**7**	**14 — 37**

First Quarter

LAR—FG Mevis 34, 11:07.
Ari—FG Ryland 45, 3:26.

Second Quarter

LAR—FG Mevis 42, 11:45.
Ari—FG Ryland 56, 9:35.
LAR—Nacua 2 pass from Stafford (Mevis kick), 1:22.
LAR—FG Mevis 40, :00.

Third Quarter

Ari—Mi.Wilson 43 pass from Brissett (Ryland kick), 10:38.
Ari—Deguara 7 pass from Brissett (Ryland kick), 3:51.
LAR—Parkinson 21 pass from Stafford (Mevis kick), :42.

Fourth Quarter

LAR—Higbee 22 pass from Stafford (Mevis kick), 10:39.
LAR—Parkinson 1 pass from Stafford (Mevis kick), 4:15.
A—72,004.

	Ari	LAR
First downs	17	25
Total Net Yards	317	395
Rushes-yards	15-79	31-143
Passing	238	252
Punt Returns	2-27	1-9
Kickoff Returns	3-49	5-134
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	1-0
Comp-Att-Int	23-32-1	25-40-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	6-33	1-7
Punts	2-54.5	2-58.5
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	6-45	4-20
Time of Possession	27:49	32:11

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—Arizona, Demercado 2-29, Brissett 3-19, M.Carter 7-18, Kiner 3-13. L.A. Rams, K.Williams 12-60, Corum 13-59, Nacua 2-24, Stafford 1-3, Garoppolo 3-(minus 3).

PASSING—Arizona, Brissett 22-31-1-243, Haack 1-1-0-28. L.A. Rams, Stafford 25-40-0-259.

RECEIVING—Arizona, McBride 7-65, Mi.Wilson 5-99, Higgins 3-28, M.Carter 3-21, Deguara 2-15, Kiner 2-15, Demercado 1-28. L.A. Rams, Nacua 10-76, Higbee 5-91, Parkinson 4-36, K.Williams 3-21, Atwell 1-19, Corum 1-10, Smith 1-6.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—None.

Las Vegas 14, Kansas City 12

Kansas City	**3**	**0**	**3**	**6 — 12**
Las Vegas	**0**	**6**	**0**	**8 — 14**

First Quarter

KC—FG Butker 36, 4:58.

Second Quarter

Las—FG Carlson 32, 7:20.
Las—FG Carlson 23, 1:52.

Third Quarter

KC—FG Butker 40, 4:11.

Fourth Quarter

Las—FG Carlson 55, 13:16.
Las—safety, 4:36.
KC—FG Butker 47, 3:33.
KC—FG Butker 41, 1:01.
Las—FG Carlson 60, :08.
A—61,780.

	KC	Las
First downs	10	12
Total Net Yards	168	204
Rushes-yards	23-84	32-118
Passing	84	86
Punt Returns	4-13	5-25
Kickoff Returns	0-0	6-165
Interceptions Ret.	1-1	0-0

Crosby completes Penguins' rally with OT winner

The Associated Press



Ryan Sun | AP file photo

Penguins captain Sidney Crosby (second from right) set up Rickard Rakell (67) for the tying goal with 12 seconds left in regulation before coming off the bench to score the winner in overtime on Sunday in Columbus.

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Sidney Crosby set up Ricard Rakell's tying goal with 13.7 seconds left in regulation, then scored at 2:22 of overtime to give the Pittsburgh Penguins a 5-4 comeback victory over the Columbus Blue Jackets on Sunday.

The Penguins overcame a three-goal deficit to win their fifth straight game overall and third in a row in the road. Ville Koivunen, Noel Acciari and Tommy Novak also scored, and Ben Kindel had two assists. Arturs Silovs made 25 saves.

After being outshot 12–9 in the first period, Pittsburgh outshot Columbus 34–13 over the final two periods and overtime.

Kirill Marchenko and Zach Werenski each had a goal and an assist for Columbus, and Dmitri Voronkov and Mason Marchment also scored as the Blue Jackets raced to a 4-1 lead. Denton Mateychuk added two assists, and Jet Greaves stopped 43 shots. Werenski made it 4–1 47 seconds into the second with a shot through traffic.

Acciari cut it to 4-2 with 3:09 left in the second, and Novak made it a one-goal game on a power play at 3:28 of the third. Rakell tied it with Silovs off for an extra attacker.

BLACKHAWKS 3, GOLDEN KNIGHTS 2

CHICAGO — Tyler Bertuzzi scored at 1:18 of overtime for his second hat trick of the season and fifth in the NHL to give Chicago a victory over Vegas.

Arvid Soderblom made 13 saves to help Chicago win its third straight game and fourth in six games. The Blackhawks extended Vegas' losing streak to six.

Ilya Mikheyv set up the winner with a pinpoint pass, and Bertuzzi directed it in past goalie Akira Schmid. Bertuzzi's second goal, from the right crease with 8:24 left tied it at 2, and Vegas, which dominated early, could muster only two shots the rest of the way.

Mark Stone and Brandon Saad scored for Vegas. Stone had his fourth goal in four games to give Vegas a 2-1 lead 42 seconds into the second period.

CANADIENS 4, STARS 3

DALLAS — Defenseman Lane Hutson scored with 1:20 left in overtime and Montreal beat Dallas.

It was the 13th career goal and first in OT for Hutson, last season's Calder Trophy winner with six goals and 60 assists.

Brendan Gallagher, Oliver Kapanen and Juraj Slafkovsky also scored for the Canadiens, who went 4-1-2 playing seven consecutive road games, the last five following the NHL's Christmas break. They split a back-to-back after losing 2-0 at St. Louis on Saturday.

Samuel Montembeault made 24 saves to record his second straight win since being recalled from the minors.

Wyatt Johnston had two goals and Quebec native Mavrik Bourque also scored for the Stars, who have lost five straight games for the first time this season (0-2-3). Jake Oettinger stopped 25 shots and has lost three straight starts (0-1-2) for the second time this season.

Montembeault, eighth in last season's Vezina Trophy balloting, has allowed five goals in two games after being sent to the AHL in mid-December for a conditioning assignment. Montreal's Phillip Danault had two assists, including on Hutson's winner.

The Canadiens are 7-2 in overtime this season, the Stars 1-5.

PANTHERS 2, AVALANCHE 1

SUNRISE, Fla. — Sam Bennett and Aaron Ekblad scored unassisted goals, Daniil Tarasov made 27 saves and Florida snapped Colorado's second 10-game winning streak of the season by topping the Avalanche.

Colorado fell to 31-3-7, its 69 points still the second-most in NHL history through 41 games and the most in nearly a century. Boston had 73 points through 41 games in 1929-30. The NHL added regular-season overtime along the way and changed the points structure in 1999-2000 to add a point for losses past regulation.

But the Panthers never trailed Sunday. Bennett scored 6:27 into the game, and Ekblad made it 2-1 with 1:48 left in the second period.

Artturi Lehkonen scored midway through the second period for Colorado, which lost captain Gabriel Landeskog early in that period with what the team said was an upper-body injury.

HURRICANES 3, DEVILS 1

NEWARK, N.J. — Taylor Hall had a goal and an assist against his former team, rookie Brandon Bussi stopped 28 shots and Carolina beat the New Jersey.

Nikolaj Ehlers and Logan Stankoven also scored as first-place Carolina snapped a three-game losing streak. The 27-year-old Bussi, claimed off waivers from Florida on Oct. 5, improved to 14-2-1 on the season.

Dawson Mercer scored for the Devils, who snapped a two-game win streak. Jake Allen finished with 26 saves.

Hall tapped the puck off New Jersey defenseman Luke Hughes' stick and past Allen to give the Hurricanes a 2-1 lead at 7:47 of the second period. It was his eighth goal of the season. Stankoven added an insurance goal with 7:44 remaining in the third off a pass from Hall in the right corner.

Cunningham lifts Pistons over Cavs to end 9-game skid

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Cade Cunningham scored 27 points, Daniss Jenkins added 25 — 21 in the second quarter alone — and the Detroit Pistons held on down the stretch for a rare road win at Cleveland, beating the Cavaliers 114-110 on Sunday.

Despite playing without two starters, the Eastern Conference-leading Pistons snapped a nine-game losing streak at Rocket Arena and beat the Cavaliers for just the second time in 15 games.

Donovan Mitchell scored 30 — 23 after halftime — to pace Cleveland, which trailed by 13 with less than five minutes to go before cutting Detroit's lead to 108-106 on Darius Garland's basket with 1:16 left.

However, Pistons forward Ausar Thompson scored on a tip-in with 17.2 seconds remaining, and Jenkins made four free throws in the final 5.7 seconds to put the Cavs away.

Cunningham went 11 for 11 from the line and the Pistons made all 21 free-throw attempts.

Cleveland's Darius Garland scored 16 but went 0 for 7 on 3-pointers. Evan Mobley and Sam Merrill added 15 points apiece for the Cavs, who saw their winning streak stopped at three.

MAGIC 135, PACERS 127

ORLANDO, Fla. — Desmond Bane scored 31 points, Paolo Banchero added 28 points and 12 rebounds and Orlando handed Indiana its 12th straight loss.

Anthony Black had 27 points and 10 assists for the Magic, who beat the Pacers for the second time in five days.

Pascal Siakam led Indiana with 34 points. Aaron Nesmith had 25 points and eight assists and Andrew Nembard added 20 points and 11 assists for the Pacers, who shot 55.2 % after coming into the game with the NBA's poorest field-goal percentage (43.8%). Orlando shot 56% overall and made 15 of 32 3-pointers (46.9%).

Seven months after playing in the NBA Finals, the injury-depleted Pacers tied a 43-year-old franchise record with their 12th straight loss. Two of their last three losses were against the Magic, including a 112-110 decision on Dec. 31 at Indianapolis.

Bane scored nine points during a 17-0 run that wiped out an early 12-point Pacers lead.

Siakam kept Indiana in the game with a 20-point third quarter and the Pacers took a one-point lead on a couple of free throws by Nembhard with 7:29 left in the game. Bane answered with a layup, fed Banchero for a 3-pointer and the Magic held on.

NETS 127, NUGGETS 115

NEW YORK — Michael Porter Jr. had 27 points, 11 rebounds and five assists in his first game against his former team, and Brooklyn beat Denver to snap a three-game losing streak.

The Nuggets got Aaron Gordon and Christian Braun back from lengthy injury absences and a huge game from Jamal Murray, but fell to 1-2 since Nikola Jokic was lost for perhaps a month with a hyperextended left knee.

Murray finished with 27 points, a career-high 16 assists and six rebounds. Gordon had 20 points off the bench after missing 19 games with a strained right hamstring, while Braun started and scored four points after he sat out 23 games with a sprained left ankle.

Noah Clowney added 22 points for the Nets, while Cam Thomas and Day'Ron Sharpe each had 17. Sharpe started at center with Nic Claxton out for personal reasons.

Porter played six seasons for the Nuggets after being taken with the No. 14 pick in the 2018 draft and was a starter on their 2023 NBA championship team. He was traded to Brooklyn in the offseason for Cam Johnson and came in averaging a career-high 25.8 points.

TIMBERWOLVES 141, WIZARDS 115

WASHINGTON — Anthony Edwards scored 35 points, Julius Randle added 22, and Minnesota completed a season sweep of Washington.

Rudy Gobert had 18 points and 14 rebounds for his 15th double-double of the season for Minnesota, which outscored Washington 76-48 in the paint. The Timberwolves went 3-1 on their road trip and won on consecutive days for the third time this season.

CJ McCollum had 20 points to lead Washington, which at 9-25 has the second-worst record in the Eastern Conference. The Wizards had won four of five.

Minnesota had its third 140-plus-point game of the season, while the Wizards allowed 140-plus for the fourth time.

The Timberwolves did not trail after the first five minutes behind Edwards' strong start. The guard had 16 points in the first quarter — his most in the opening period this season — as Minnesota built a 38-28 lead.

Washington had nine turnovers in the first half and forced just one. Minnesota scored 12 points off turnovers en route to a 73-58 halftime lead and had a 26-13 scoring edge off turnovers for the game.

HEAT 125, PELICANS 106

MIAMI — Norman Powell made a career high nine 3-pointers in a 34-point performance as Miami beat New Orleans, extending the Pelicans' losing skid to seven.

Powell shot 11 of 15 from the field and 9 of 12 from behind the arc. Nikola Jovic finished with 19 points and Kel'el Ware had 16 points and 12 rebounds for the Heat, who rebounded from a 10-point home loss to Minnesota on Saturday that snapped a four-game winning streak. Miami's Pelle Larsson had 16 points and six assists.

Ahead by one early in the third quarter, the Heat broke it open with a 21-2 run. Powell hit three 3-pointers during the surge. Bam Adebayo's 3-pointer with 4:14 remaining in the period ended the spurt and put Miami ahead 91-71.

Trey Murphy III returned from a one-game absence because of back spasms and scored 27 points, while Jeremiah Fears added 21 for the Pelicans. After scoring 12 in the first half, New Orleans star Zion Williamson was held scoreless in the second.

SUNS 108, THUNDER 105

PHOENIX — Devin Booker hit the go-ahead 3-pointer with 0.7 seconds remaining, Jordan Goodwin scored 26 points with a career-high eight 3-pointers and Phoenix beat Oklahoma City. Booker took the late inbounds pass and drilled the long 3-pointer over Alex Caruso, shaking a season-long slump from long range. Ajay Mitchell missed a corner 3 at the buzzer that would have tied it.

Oklahoma City's four-game winning streak was snapped and the team fell to 30-6, which is still the best record in the NBA. Shai Gilgeous-Alexander led the Thunder with 25 points while Jalen Williams had 23.

The Suns — who trailed by 18 in the second quarter — won despite coughing up a late four-point lead.

Suns guard Dillon Brooks made a tough 3-pointer over Gilgeous-Alexander with 36 seconds left to give the Suns a 105-101 advantage. Chet Holmgren hit a turnaround jumper to cut it to 105-103 with 26 seconds remaining.

Brooks had a turnover on the ensuing possession and Williams made a step-back jumper to tie it at 105 with 8.2 seconds left. But Booker's big shot erased the late problems. He finished with 24 points. Brooks scored 22. Goodwin made 9 of 16 shots off the bench, including 8 of 13 from behind the arc.

LAKERS 120, GRIZZLIES 114

LOS ANGELES — Luka Doncic scored 36 points with nine rebounds and eight assists, LeBron James added 26 points with 10 assists and Los Angeles rallied for a victory over Memphis.

Jake LaRavia also scored 26 points against his former team and Deandre Ayton had 15 points as the Lakers earned their second home victory over the Grizzlies in three days. The consecutive victories came after Los Angeles lost four of its previous five contests.

Jaylen Wells scored 23 points for Memphis and rookie Cedric Coward scored 16 points with nine rebounds, all in the first half, but did not play after halftime because of an ankle injury.

Jaren Jackson Jr. scored 14 points and Jock Landale had 13 points with 10 rebounds for the Grizzlies, who lost their fourth consecutive game.

Memphis guard Ja Morant (calf) was out for 15th time over the past 21 games.

BUCKS 115, KINGS 98

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Giannis Antetokounmpo had 37 points and 11 rebounds as Milwaukee sailed to a victory over Sacramento.

Antetokounmpo made 13 of 17 shots from the field and 11 of 13 at the free-throw line in 31 minutes as the Bucks won for the fifth time in their last seven games. Kevin Porter Jr. added 25 points and 10 assists, while Myles Turner scored 15 points.

Russell Westbrook had 21 points and Zach LaVine had 20 for the Kings, who have lost five games in a row.

South Carolina tops Florida for 18th straight win

The Associated Press



Morgan Hurd | AP photo

South Carolina guard Ayla McDowell, forward Maryam Dauda and Florida center Gift Ezekiel go for a rebound during the first half on Sunday.

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — Raven Johnson had 17 points and Joyce Edwards scored seven of her 11 points in the fourth quarter as No. 3 South Carolina held on to win its 18th straight game over Florida 74-63 on Sunday.

The Gamecocks (15-1, 2-0 Southeastern Conference) played a second consecutive game without injured second-leading scorer Ta'Niya Latson and her absence showed throughout against Florida (12-5, 0-2).

South Carolina had a season-high 21 turnovers, shot less than 35% and were only up 53-48 with nine minutes left before Edwards finally got going. The team's top scorer this season had made only one of five shots to that point, but hit baskets on three of the next six possessions as the Gamecocks opened a 66-56 lead. Tessa Johnson added a 3-pointer in that stretch.

Edwards finished with 10 rebounds for her third double-double this season. Madina Okot, a Mississippi State transfer, had 11 points and 17 rebounds for her 11th double-double South Carolina. Tessa Johnson scored 15 points and had three of the Gamecocks' five 3-pointers.

Liv McGill had 18 points and seven rebounds for Florida.

Latson, the Florida State transfer, led the.country in scoring a season ago and has averaged 16.9 points for the Gamecocks. Latson sprained her left ankle early in a win over Providence and missed Thursday's win over Alabama to kick off SEC play.

The Gamecocks looked sloppy without Latson for much of the first half. They led 21-12 before Florida took off on a 15-3 run and led 27-24 with less than five minutes before the break.

No. 2 TEXAS 67, No. 15 MISSISSIPPI 64

AUSTIN, Texas — Jordan Lee scored 17 points, including a clutch layup and free throw late in the game, helping Texas hold off a big rally by Mississippi for the win.

Texas (17-0, 2-0 Southeastern Conference) led by 19 early in the third quarter and by 15 at the end of the period. But Cotie McMahon scored 12 of her 19 points in the fourth quarter for Mississippi (14-3, 1-1), and Latasha Lattimore had eight of her 17 in the final period, giving the Rebels a chance.

Unfortunately for Ole Miss McMahon missed two free throws with 4.3 seconds left. Rori Harmon then missed a pair from the line for Texas with one second remaining, and McMahon's long 3-point shot bounced off the rim as the game ended.

The Longhorns are off to their best start since 1985-86, when they were NCAA champions, finishing 34-0. Texas has won 35 straight home games. The Longhorns are 5-0 this season against teams ranked in the Associated Press top 15 at the time of the games.

No. 12 VANDERBILT 65, No. 5 LSU 61

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Mikayla Blakes scored 32 points and freshman Aubrey Galvan hit a 3-pointer with 2:05 left that put Vanderbilt ahead for good in a win over LSU.

The victory gave coach Shea Ralph her first win over a Top 5 program.

Vanderbilt (15-0, 2-0 Southeastern Conference) also remains one of four undefeated teams in the nation. The Commodores won their 10th straight at Memorial Gym and continued the second-best in program history with only the 1992-93 Final Four team better with a 17-0 start.

This was the first game between Top 15 teams at Memorial since the 2006-07 season, and the final quarter was a doozy with LSU taking a 49-42 lead. Vanderbilt answered back with eight straight for a thrilling finish.

Galvan, who finished with 14 points, knocked down her go-ahead 3, and Blakes added back-to-back layups for a 7-0 spurt. After Blakes split free throws with 9 seconds left, LSU missed three shots before the buzzer.

No. 7 MARYLAND 82, INDIANA 67

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Oluchi Okananwa scored a career-high 34 points, and Maryland rebounded from its first loss of the season, beating Indiana.

The Terrapins (15-1, 3-1 Big Ten) forced 16 turnovers in the first half while allowing only 17 field goal attempts — and just six in the second quarter. Indiana (11-5, 0-4) shot 65% in the half but still trailed 39-32 thanks to all of those giveaways and Maryland's control of the boards.

The Terps scored the first 12 points of the second half, pushed their lead as high as 21 in the third quarter and then cruised from there.

No. 8 OKLAHOMA 95, MISSISSIPPI STATE 47

NORMAN, Okla. — Aaliyah Chavez scored 17 points and Zya Vann added 16 and 11 rebounds to help Oklahoma rout cold-shooting Mississippi State.

Raegan Beers chipped in 15 points and 11 rebounds for the Sooners (14-1, 2-0 Southeastern Conference), who had a 64-37 rebound advantage. Six players scored in double figures for the Sooners, who have won 13 straight, the second-longest streak in program history behind a 20-game run by the 2008-09 Final Four team.

Kharyssa Richardson scored 13 points off the bench for Mississippi State (14-2, 1-1), which lost for the first time since Nov. 20. The Bulldogs made 14 of 70 shots (20%) and one of 25 shots from behind the 3-point line (4%).

Oklahoma set a program record for lowest shooting percentage by a conference opponent. The previous mark was 20.7% by Texas Tech of the Big 12 Conference in 2014.

No. 22 BAYLOR 72, No. 10 IOWA STATE 70

AMES, Iowa — Taliah Scott hit the winning shot with 2.9 seconds left and scored all 21 of her points in the second half, leading Baylor past previously unbeaten Iowa State.

Baylor (13-3, 2-1 Big 12) let the clock run down after Iowa State (14-1, 2-1) had tied it on Jada Williams' 3-pointer. Scott got a screen from Kiersten Johnson to give her a wide-open look from the left elbow. Time ran out on Iowa State when a pass to Audi Crooks in the post was knocked away.

Darianna Littlepage-Buggs had 12 of her 13 points in the first quarter and matched her career high with 20 rebounds for Baylor. Yuting Deng came off the bench to score 12 points and Jana Van Gytenbeek had 11 points.

Crooks had 26 points but was limited to four in the second half and fell short of a sixth straight game with at least 30 points.

Crooks had her way in the first half but Baylor packed the lane in the second half to limit her touches, and she attempted only two shots in the fourth quarter.

No. 11 KENTUCKY 74, MISSOURI 52

LEXINGTON, Ky. — Clara Strack had 19 points and 10 rebounds, Tonie Morgan added 18 points and 14 assists and Kentucky rolled to an eighth straight victory, beating Missouri.

Strack made 7 of 18 shots with three 3-pointers for the Wildcats (15-1, 2-0 Southeastern Conference). Morgan sank 7 of 11 shots — 2 of 3 from distance. It was the eighth double-double this season for Strack and the fourth for Morgan.

Jordan Obi added 10 points on 5-for-8 shooting as Kentucky shot 44% from the floor and made 11 of 32 from 3-poiint range (34..4%).

Grace Slaughter had 15 points and seven rebounds to pace the Tigers (12-5, 0-2). Jordana Reisma had 10 points and Chloe Sotell grabbed 12 rebounds but didn't score.

No. 13 LOUISVILLE 85, VIRGINIA TECH 60

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Laura Ziegler scored 18 points and grabbed nine rebounds as Louisville remained unbeaten in ACC play with a victory over Virginia Tech.

Louisville shot 47% from the field and made 11 of 19 3-pointers, opening a double-digit lead by halftime and steadily extending it the rest of the way.

Imari Berry added 13 points off the bench for Louisville (14-3, 4-0 ACC), which placed three players in double figures and finished with a 41-34 rebounding edge.

Virginia Tech opened the fourth quarter with a brief push, scoring on three straight possessions to cut the margin to 70-49. The stretch included layups by Samyha Suffren and Carys Baker, but Louisville answered quickly. A three-point play by Skylar Jones and a pull-up jumper from Berry pushed the lead back above 25.

The Cardinals continued to capitalize on turnovers and second-chance opportunities, pushing the margin past 30 on a 3-pointer by Grace Mbugua with 2:12 remaining.

Baker led Virginia Tech (11-5, 1-3) with 16 points and nine rebounds. Suffren added 14 points, seven rebounds and five assists off the bench.

STANFORD 77, No. 16 NORTH CAROLINA 71, OT

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — Courtney Ogden scored 21 points, Chloe Clardy scored four key points in overtime, and Stanford defeated North Carolina.

Stanford led 23-21 midway through the second quarter and did not regain the lead until the second of two free throws by Chloe Clardy made it 67-66 with about four minutes left in overtime.

North Carolina tied it at 69 but a layup by Clardy gave Stanford the lead for good. The lead was six points after Talana Lepolo made two free throws with 25 seconds left and she made two more for the 77-71 lead with 18 seconds to go.

The four free throws were Lepolo's only points of the game. She had seven assists.

Lara Somfai scored 13 points, Clardy 12 and Alexandra Eschmeyer 10 for Stanford (13-3, 2-1 ACC).

Nyla Harris led North Carolina (13-4, 2-2) with 18 points. Ciera Toomey added 16 and Elina Aarnisalo 12.

North Carolina made 3 of 11 shots in the fourth quarter and 1 of 5 in overtime. The Tar Heels shot 45% for the game.

DUKE 82, No. 18 NOTRE DAME 68

DURHAM, N.C. — Taina Mair scored 23 points, Toby Fournier added 20, and Duke defeated Notre Dame, extending the Blue Devils' winning streak to six games.

Mair's season-high output was her most in two seasons. She made 7 of 12 shots overall, 4 of 4 3-pointers and all five of her free throws. She also had six rebounds and six assists. Fournier added seven rebounds and five assists.

Fueled by a 13-0 run, Duke's 26-17 first quarter put Notre Dame in catch-up mode and the Fighting Irish trailed by at least nine points for the remainder of the half.

Hannah Hidalgo's 3-pointer to open the third quarter got Notre Dame within 43-37. It was the only time over the final three quarters that Duke led by less than nine points. The Blue Devils responded with an 8-0 run and built a 17-point lead midway through the third quarter. They led 59-48 at the end of the period.

Mair scored nine points in the fourth quarter and the unranked Blue Devils (9-6, 4-0 ACC) led by as many as 16 points in the final minute.

No. 19 OHIO STATE 71, RUTGERS 49

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Jaloni Cambridge finished with 18 points, Chance Gray scored 17 and Ohio State pulled away in the second half to beat Rutgers.

Cambridge made 7 of 18 shots with a 3-pointer and 3 of 4 free throws for the Buckeyes (13-2, 3-1 Big Ten Conference). Gray sank 7 of 15 shots — 1 of 6 from beyond the arc — and both her foul shots.

Elsa Lemmilä pitched in with 10 points and 11 rebounds to help Ohio State outscore the Scarlet Knights (8-7, 0-4) by 17 in the second half. It was the sophomore's first double-double of the season and the second of her career.

Faith Blackstone had 15 points to lead Rutgers and Imani Lester scored 14.

No. 20 NEBRASKA 78, PURDUE 62

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. — Britt Prince hit four 3-pointers and finished with 17 points, Amiah Hargrove and Eliza Maupin each scored 13 points, and Nebraska beat Purdue.

Callin Hake made three 3s and finished with 11 points for the Cornhuskers. Nebraska (13-2, 2-2 Big Ten) had lost back-to-back games — 74-66 to No. 17 USC and 86-76 at No. 14 Iowa — after a 12-game win streak to open the season.

Tara Daye had 12 points, six rebounds, six assists and two steals for Purdue (8-7, 0-4). Kiki Smith and Kendall Puryear scored 10 points apiece. The Boilermakers have lost three in a row overall and seven straight against Nebraska.

Prince made two 3-pointers and Logan Nissley added another in an 11-3 spurt that made it 16-9 midway through the first quarter and the Cornhuskers led the rest of the way.

Maupin scored six consecutive points in an 12-3 run that pushed the lead to 13 points late in the second quarter before Hargrove made two free throws that gave Nebraska a 43-32 advantage at halftime.

No. 22 BAYLOR 72, No. 10 IOWA STATE 70

AMES, Iowa — Taliah Scott hit the winning shot with 2.9 seconds left and scored all 21 of her points in the second half, leading Baylor past previously unbeaten Iowa State.

Baylor (13-3, 2-1 Big 12) let the clock run down after Iowa State (14-1, 2-1) had tied it on Jada Williams' 3-pointer. Scott got a screen from Kiersten Johnson to give her a wide-open look from the left elbow. Time ran out on Iowa State

when a pass to Audi Crooks in the post was knocked away.

Darianna Littlepage-Buggs had 12 of her 13 points in the first quarter and matched her career high with 20 rebounds for Baylor. Yuting Deng came off the bench to score 12 points and Jana Van Gytenbeek had 11 points.

Crooks had 26 points but was limited to four in the second half and fell short of a sixth straight game with at least 30 points.

No. 23 TENNESSEE 73, AUBURN 56

AUBURN, Ala. — Talaysia Cooper scored 18 points, Janiah Barker had 17 points, eight rebounds and three blocks, and Tennessee beat Auburn.

Cooper made 7 of 12 from the field, and Barker was 6-for-10 shooting and 5 of 6 from the free-throw line for Tennessee (10-3, 2-0 SEC).

Khady Leye scored 14 points on 7 of 14 shooting for Auburn (11-5, 0-2). The rest of the Tigers combined to shoot 29% (15 of 51) from the field.

Tennessee made 7 of 14 from the field, 5 of 7 from 3-point range, and limited the Tigers to 16% (3 of 19) shooting in the first quarter to take a 22-9 lead into the second.

Mia Pauldo, Mya Pauldo and Cooper each hit a 3-pointer before Barker made two free throws to cap an 11-2 run to close the first, and the Lady Vols scored 12 of the final 16 second-quarter points to make it 41-26 at halftime. Barker scored the first eight points in a 12-1 spurt over the final 3:34 of the third quarter.

No. 24 MICHIGAN STATE 81, ILLINOIS 75

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Kennedy Blair had 19 points, Rashunda Jones and Grace VanSlooten each scored 15 and Michigan State ended Illinois' 11-game win streak with a victory.

Blair made 4 of 10 shots and 11 of 12 free throws for the Spartans (14-1, 3-1 Big Ten Conference), who have won six in a row. She added nine rebounds and seven assists. VanSlooten hit 7 of 15 shots and grabbed nine rebounds. Jones sank both of her 3-point attempts and all five of her free throws. Emma Shumate hit three 3-pointers and scored 11 off the bench.

Berry Wallace and reserve Maddie Webber scored 22 apiece to lead the Fighting Illini (13-2, 3-1). Gretchen Dolan scored 12 but missed 12 of 16 shots. Destiny Jackson had 10 rebounds and six assists to go with six points.

MEN'S TOP 25

No. 4 UCONN 73, MARQUETTE 57

STORRS, Conn. — Solo Ball scored 11 of his 17 points in the second half and Tarris Reed Jr. finished with 13 points and nine rebounds as UConn rolled to a win over visiting Marquette to extend its winning streak to 10 games. Silas Demary Jr. had 14 points for UConn (14-1, 4-0 Big East).

Nigel James had 13 points and Chase Ross added 11 points for Marquette (5-10, 0-4), which opened conference play with four consecutive losses for the first time since dropping its first five Conference USA contests during the 1998-99 season.

No. 7 GONZAGA 82, LOYOLA MARYMOUNT 47

SPOKANE, Wash. — Graham Ike scored 16 points as Gonzaga overcame early shooting trouble to beat Loyola Marymount for its ninth consecutive victory.

Mario Saint-Supery added 13 points and Jalen Warley 12 points for Gonzaga (16-1, 4-0 West Coast Conference), which was coming off an 80-72 overtime win over Seattle on Friday night, and had a slow start against the Lions.

Rodney Brown scored 11 points to lead Loyola Marymount (10-7, 1-3), which defeated Gonzaga in Spokane during the 2022-23 season.

Entertainment Monday

contact us >> ae@timesleader.com

Times Leader | Monday, January 5, 2026 • Section C

From 'The Mastermind' to 'Wake Up Dead Man,' 2025 was the year of Josh O'Connor



In Frame
Margaret Roarty

New year, new me.

Except not really, because I'm heading into 2026 with an obsession I started the year before: Josh O'Connor.

If you don't know anything about this guy, you should. As far as Hollywood's concerned, he's the next big thing.

An incredibly versatile actor and a real chameleon, O'Connor is the kind of actor I gravitate to the most: someone who can seamlessly transition from character to character, embodying them in the most subtle and nuanced of ways, that he makes you forget he's acting at all.

And I suppose that's the mark of a truly great performer, at least in my opinion. It never feels like he's wearing a costume. He's just existing. With that kind of onscreen presence, you can fully immerse yourself in the story unfolding before you. You can truly believe in the world he inhabits.

O'Connor began his career in 2012 but it was 2017's "God's Own Country" that really put him on the map. For his performance, he was nominated for a slew of awards, including a 2018 Rising Star BAFTA. He won a bunch too, including Best Actor at the 2017 British Independent Film Awards.

Mainstream audiences will surely recognize him from "The Crown," Netflix's critically acclaimed TV series about the life and reign of Queen Elizabeth II. O'Connor played her son, Prince Charles, in the third and fourth season, for which he won an Emmy and Golden Globe award for Best Leading Actor.

I haven't seen him in "The Crown." I watched the first couple of seasons, but the show just wasn't a favorite of mine, although I do think it was well crafted.

So, my first real exposure to him didn't come until I saw Luca Guadagnino's "Challengers."

Here's the thing: I don't like that movie. When it was first released, I wrote a review for it, but I honestly don't think I was able to fully articulate why it doesn't work for me.

However, Josh O'Connor is brilliant in "Challengers." Watching him onscreen in the movie theater, I literally turned into the leaning forward in your chair meme, totally mesmerized by his characterization of the cocky, yet insecure tennis player Patrick Zweig.

I next saw him in Alice Rohrwacher's "La Chimera," which I was totally blown away by. In the film, O'Connor plays Arthur, a British archaeologist-turned-grave robber with an uncanny ability to discover the locations of Etruscan tombs, who returns to the small town off the west coat of Italy after being imprisoned for selling off stolen artifacts.

"La Chimera" is all about our relationship with the things we've lost, whether it's artifacts from the past or people, like Arthur's ex-girlfriend Beniamina, who has been missing for some time.

What struck about this film after seeing O'Connor in "Challengers" was how different he was without outwardly transforming much at all because it makes a great argument for looking beyond this misconception a lot of people have about acting — that you have to go through some grand physical transformation in order to play different characters.

O'Connor's nuanced approach to character building is further exemplified in "Wake Up Dead Man" the third installment in Rian Johnson's Knives Out series, where O'Connor plays a boxer turned Catholic priest who finds himself at the center of a murder investigation when the Monsignor Jefferson Wicks (Josh Brolin) of his new parish dies under truly bizarre circumstances.



Mubi via AP

This image released by Mubi shows Josh O'Connor in a scene from 'The Mastermind.'



IMDB

Challengers is an American romantic sports drama that details the story of a nuanced tennis love triangle.

As Johnson has explained, O'Connor's character is an important one, because the entire story hinges on him. Much like Ana de Armas in "Knives Out" and Janelle Monáe in "Glass Onion," O'Connor is tasked with bringing to life someone inherently likable. Someone the audience will root for from the moment they appear on screen.

In "Wake Up Dead Man" O'Connor achieves that feat. He's funny, down to earth and deeply vulnerable. I'm not a religious person, but if I was, I'd for sure want him to be my priest.

On the other hand, O'Connor can pull off the complete opposite kind of character — an arrogant, lazy, apolitical loser, who devises the worst planned out heist I've ever seen in my life in Kelly Reichardt's cheekily titled "The Mastermind."

O'Connor plays James 'J.B.' Mooney who, 1970, attempts to rob a local Massachusetts art museum, instead of getting just, you know... getting a job.

A film that subverts the genre conventions of heist movies and tackles the transitional period between the free loving 1960s and the more tumultuous 1970s in America, "The Mastermind" requires a lot of O'Connor.

J.B. is not really a villain, but certainly not a hero. He exists in this liminal space between individual freedom and collective action.

But the thing that struck me the most was that no matter how ridiculous his choices were, I still liked him. O'Connor makes me like him, despite everything he does.

And that's true all of O'Connor's roles and why I'm so excited to see where his career goes from here. No matter what he's doing, what person he's existing as, I want to watch him. And I connect with him in some way.

As an actor, he's an open door, inviting us to walk through him, to exist in his world for just a little while. It's that vulnerability that sets him apart from so many others and why I can't wait to see what he does in 2026.



Netflix via AP

This image released by Netflix shows Josh O'Connor, left, and Daniel Craig in a scene from 'Wake Up Dead Man: A Knives Out Mystery.'



Mubi via AP

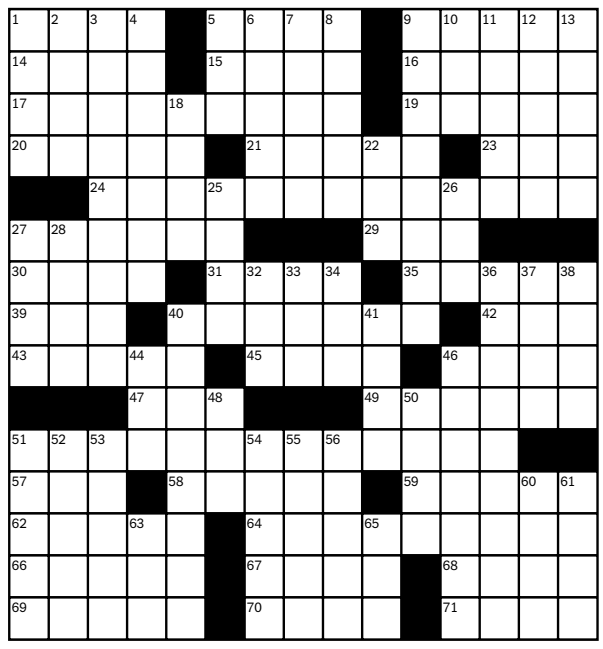
This image released by Mubi shows Josh O'Connor in a scene from 'The History of Sound.'

In Frame is a weekly arts and entertainment column focusing on everything from pop culture and new movie releases to the local arts and culture found right here in NEPA. News reporter Margaret Roarty contributes to this column.

The New York Times Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz

No. 1201



PUZZLE BY HANNAH BINNEY

ACROSS

1 Office announcement
5 Jump
9 Repairs a hole
14 Ingredient in some smoothie bowls
15 Plus
16 To no ___ (without success)
17 "Remedy" for a riled-up person
19 Dashboard instrument
20 CR-V or Civic
21 George who played Sulu on "Star Trek"
23 Headstone letters
24 Penalty for bank fraud
27 Read thoroughly
29 Rowing implement
30 "Madam, I'm ___"
31 Emu relative
35 Locks up
39 Lower, as the lights
40 Hip person, in old slang
42 Genre for Cardi B or LL Cool J
43 Curry of the N.B.A., informally
45 Boat tie-up location
46 Tortilla ingredient
47 Enjoy a banquet
49 Goes over by hand, as a drawing
51 Antithesis
57 "I've solved it!"
58 Creator of Asteroids and Pong
59 "You should come foraging with me, because I'm a ___" (bad pun)
62 Assigned stars, say
64 Cause of some wintry weather ... or a hint to 17-, 24-, 40- and 51-Across
66 Woman who bests Sherlock in "A Scandal in Bohemia"
67 Largest joint in the body
68 Some airport listings, for short
69 Sends an eggplant emoji, say
70 Feudal underling
71 Fresh and glowing, in skin-care terminology

DOWN

1 ___ 1 (speed of sound)
2 Result of yelling into a cave
3 Supercomputer precursor
4 Container on a ship from the Mideast
5 Napkin's spot
6 Best of the best
7 Narnian talking lion
8 Classic music style beloved by Weird Al Yankovic
9 Performance in which a lady might be sawed in half
10 Actress Noblezada of "Hadestown"
11 Third-smallest country in the world (eight square miles)
12 "Dinner is served!"
13 Caught some Z's
18 Country where sticky rice is a staple
22 Prefix with friendly
25 Zilch
26 British singer Rita
27 Adds unnecessary words to
28 Computer menu heading next to "File"
32 Preceder of skip and jump
33 Ex-QB Manning
34 Absolutely nail
36 Bit of musical flair
37 Effortlessness
38 Establishments offering facials
40 Game in which sound effects are banned
41 Counterpart to sciences
44 Split-___ soup
46 Grew up
48 Young 'un
50 Bit of musical flair
51 "Les Misérables" setting
52 Midway Airport alternative
53 Hospital glove material
54 Wolf groups
55 Disposed (to)
56 Edmonton hockey player
60 Chew, like a dog on a bone
61 Teensy
63 Tolkien tree creature
65 "For sure"

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

T	R	A	V	E	L	G	U	I	D	E		I	B	M
R	E	T	I	N	A	L	S	C	A	N		M	A	Y
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'Malcolm in the Middle' explores mid-life with a Hulu reboot

By Meg James
Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — For "Malcolm in the Middle" fans and the Walt Disney Co., 151 episodes weren't enough.

The beloved sitcom, which ran seven seasons on Fox in the early aughts, is returning for a four-episode arc on Hulu April 10. The reunion brings back such viewer favorites as Bryan Cranston as Hal, Frankie Muniz as Malcolm, Jane Kaczmarek as Lois, and a couple of Malcolm's TV siblings.

The limited series — "Malcolm in the Middle: Life's Still Unfair" — is set nearly 20 years after the original went off the air. Muniz's character, Malcolm, is beckoned back to his dysfunctional family to help celebrate Hal and Lois' 40th wedding anniversary.

Disney teased the trailer recently.

Disney acquired the rights to 20th Century Fox studio programs after buying much of Rupert Murdoch's entertainment assets in 2019. The deal gave Disney such blockbusters as "The Simpsons" and "Avatar." Recently, the Burbank entertainment giant has dipped into the Fox vault to mine the trend of comfort food TV for millennials, boomers and Gen Z. Executives have watched nostalgic programming take off on streaming services, including Disney+ and Hulu.

The return of "Malcolm in the Middle" should draw viewers who have followed Cranston's career even before his standout performance in AMC's crime drama, "Breaking Bad." Muniz also has remained popular in pop culture; he's also a race car driver affiliated with Ford.

A recent study from National Research Group found that about 60% of all TV consumed is library content.

The NRG study found that, among Gen Z, 40% of respondents said they gravitated to older shows because they are comforting and nostalgic. Disney's own research has shown that a quarter of the shows young people list as their favorites were produced before 2010.

Disney's ABC is also bringing back the quirky hospital sitcom, "Scrubs," on Feb. 25. That comedy, set in the fictional Sacred Heart Hospital, will reprise the bromance between Zach Braff and Donald Faison's characters, which the pair have recreated recently in T-Mobile TV commercials.

The show, which ran from October 2001 to March 2010, was also produced by 20th Television along with Bill Lawrence's Doozer Productions.

Sarah Chalke will return, and John C. McGinley will guest star. The show will run on ABC, and a day later on Disney's Hulu.

Most of the original "Malcolm" cast returns for the limited series except notably Erik Per Sullivan, who played Dewey. He's no longer an actor so the part now is played by Caleb Ellsworth-Clark.

In the show, Malcolm has a daughter, played by Keeley Karsten, and a girlfriend, played by Kiana Madeira.

The Wilkerson's classic mid-century house in Studio City, which served as an exterior for the show, reportedly was renovated years ago.

The original series ran on Fox from January 2000 to May 2006. Those episodes stream on Hulu.

Los Angeles Times' former television critic, Howard Rosenberg, in 2000 called "Malcolm in the Middle" the "smartest, sharpest-written, most original comedy of the season."

The reboot is produced by Disney Television Studios and New Regency. Linwood Boomer, who created the original series, also returned as writer and executive producer. Ken Kwapis directs the four episodes and also serves as an executive producer.

Beyond reviving the shows, Disney has also collaborated with advertisers to make throwback commercials to run in classic films on its streaming platforms and TV networks.

Staff writer Stephen Battaglio contributed to this report.

SUNDAY'S ANSWERS

JUMBLE®

Answer:

VELVET HAIRDO INFAMY
ABACUS FINALE GLITZY

The geologist saved the piece of sandstone from the ancient lakebed for its —

"SEDIMENTAL" VALUE



CONTACT US

Mary Therese Biebel,
A&E Reporter
570-991-6109
mbiebel@timesleader.com

COMMUNITY NEWS

Birthdays for children 16 and younger and announcements for weddings, anniversaries and engagements are published for free. All content is subject to editing for style and to fit space allotted in the Times Leader on any given day. All other community news submissions are subject to the editorial discretion of Times Leader staff, and the publishing date of any submission cannot be guaranteed.

For birthdays, include phone number, name, age and birthday, names and ages of siblings, parents, grandparents and towns of residents. For weddings, anniversaries and engagements, provide the names and hometowns of the individuals in the couple, the names and hometowns of the couple's parents, and some details about the ceremony; i.e., location, officiant, date to be wed.

Submissions can be emailed to ae@timesleader.com or sent to: Times Leader, 90 E. Market St., Wilkes-Barre, PA, 18701. Photos are not returned unless requested. Time-sensitive material should be received no later than two weeks prior to the event.

WHAT'S UP, NEPA?

GREATER WILKES-BARRE

Teen Movie Night, Wednesday, Jan. 7 at 5:30 p.m. Join us in the Reading Room of the Osterhout Free Library, 71 South Franklin St., Wilkes-Barre to see the beloved '80s fantasy adventure "The Never-erending Story." All ages welcome, rated PG. Snacks and drinks provided. Bring friends, settle in with popcorn, and prepare for flying luckdragons and heroic quests ... and, yes, the movie does eventually end.

Big Band Society Dinner Dance, Jan. 9 at East Mountain Holiday Inn, 600 Wildflower Drive, Wilkes-Barre. Doors open at 5:30, dinner is at 6 and dancing is 7 to 10 p.m., to the music of DJ Kristina, $40 members and $45 non-members. There is a choice of beef tips, chicken Marsala or tilapia stuffed with seafood. For more info call Mary Ann at 570-298-2616 or contact bigbandsocietynepa@gmail.com/.

Eagle Watch expeditions, leaving from Nescopeck State Park, 1139 Honey Hole Road, Drums, for all-day excursions to eagle hotspots in northeastern Pennsylvania. Jan. 29 for "Women in the Wilds," and Feb. 3 and Feb. 5 for senior citizens. Space is limited and registration is required. For more info and to register, see events.dcnr.pa.gov/. If you need an accommodation in order to participate, call 272-808-6189.

WYOMING VALLEY

Wyoming Valley Chapter of The Embroiderers' Guild of America public stitch-in, 10 a.m. to noon, Wednesday, Jan. 7 at the Barnes & Noble Bookstore in the Arena Hub Plaza in Wilkes-Barre Twp. The public is invited to bring something to stitch along or to stop by and see what the group is doing.

KINGSTON/ WEST SIDE

COCU Grief Share is meeting on Wednesdays from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Church of Christ Uniting, 190 S. Sprague Ave., Kingston. It is a program that uses conversation and video presentations to help those grieving the loss of a loved one. Call Phyllis for more info at 570-690-1342.

TUNKHANNOCK

All Creatures Great and Small – Sneak Preview, 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 4, Dietrich Theater, 60 East Tioga St., Tunkhannock, presented by WVIA, admission free. Donations of pet food or pet supplies are encouraged. Special guests will be Meg Phillips from the Griffin Pond Animal Shelter and one of her canine friends. Reservations can be made at wvia.org/events, the Dietrich's ticket booth or by calling 570-836-1022 x2.

40th anniversary screening of 'Labyrinth,' starring David Bowie. The Dietrich Theater in downtown Tunkhannock will show the film on its big screen at 7 p.m. Jan. 8, and at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. Jan. 11. Admission is $8.50. Directed by Jim Henson, 'Labyrinth' tells the story of a 16-year-old girl, played by Jennifer Connelly, who is given 13 hours to solve a labyrinth and rescue her baby brother from the Goblin King. Tickets are available at the ticket booth or by calling 570-836-1022 ext. 3.

Winter Fest 2026 Preview Day, 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. Feb. 12. Do you want to get a better idea of what the Dietrich's Winter Fest 2026 movies are about? See the trailers that hooked us and made us choose them. Join us for this pre-event for Winter Fest 2026 and screen all 21 movie trailers of the films featured in this festival. Admission is free and concessions are discounted. For more information, please call the Dietrich at 570-836-1022 ext. 3.

MOUNTAIN TOP

Mountain Top Social Club will resume meetings Feb. 10 and Feb. 24 at the American Legion, 1550 Henry Drive, Mountain Top. For club information, call Carol, vice-president, 570-868-5990. For trip information, call Dolores, trip coordinator, 1-732-690-9609. Membership to the club has been temporarily closed, please check back for further information.

BACK MOUNTAIN

Bingo Night at Northmoreland Volunteer Fire Co., 1618 Demunds Road, Centermoreland, 6:30 p.m. Jan. 5 and Jan. 19. No reservation is needed for Monday Night Bingo. Doors open at 5:30 p.m.

A new Grief Share support group will begin at Cross Creek Community Church, 370 Carverton Road, Trucksville, 570-696-0399, on Jan. 14 and will meet every Wednesday, 1 to 3 p.m., through April 1. The support group is free and open to the public. Please register online at griefshare.org/findagroup.

See WHAT'S UP | 5C

JUMBLE®

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

OJEYN

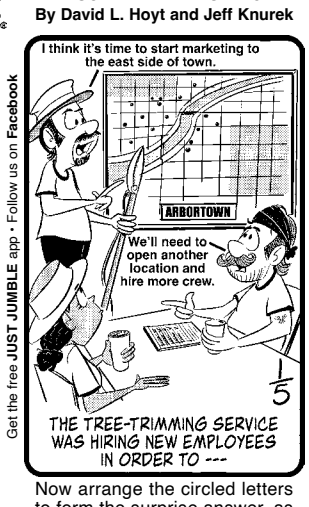
MUHTB

CBAEHL

RZAADH

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Facebook

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here:

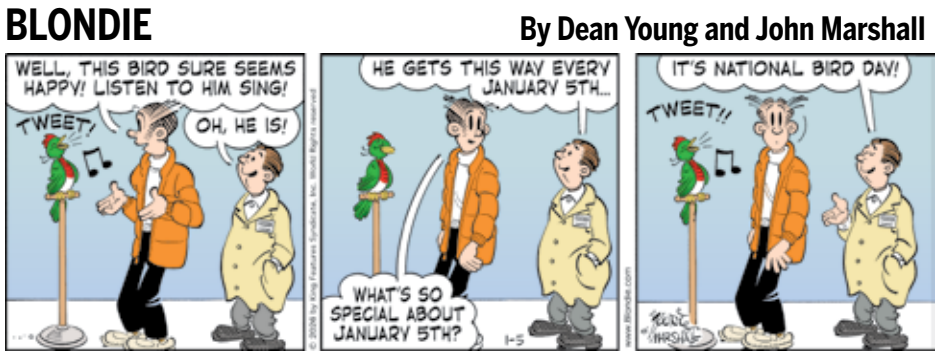
(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: FRONT STUNT TAVERN DECEIT
Answer: The oceanographers studied the flow of the ocean to keep up with — CURRENT EVENTS

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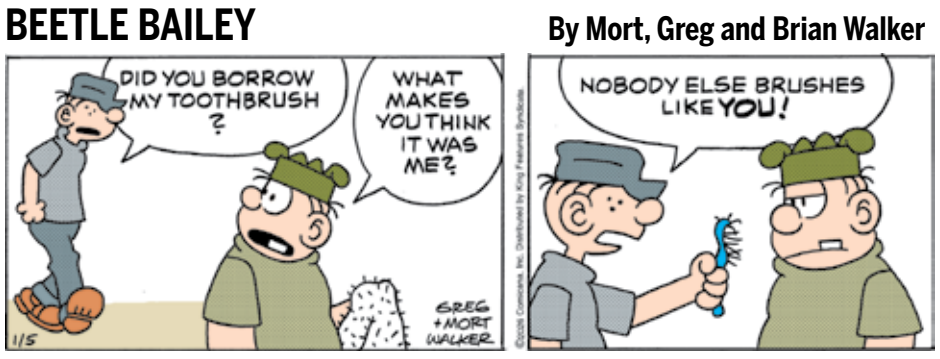
BLONDIE

By Dean Young and John Marshall



BEETLE BAILEY

By Mort, Greg and Brian Walker



MACANUDO

By Liniers



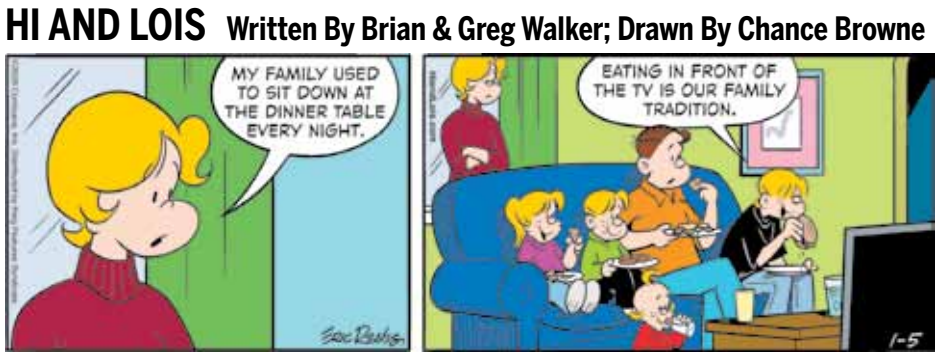
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

By Chris Browne



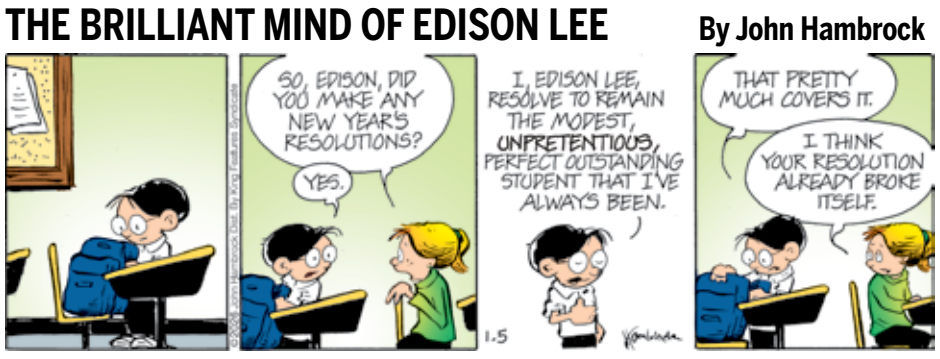
HI AND LOIS

Written By Brian & Greg Walker; Drawn By Chance Browne



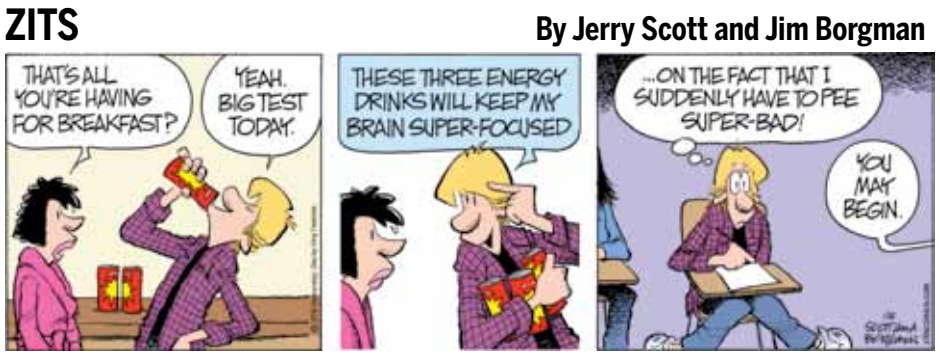
THE BRILLIANT MIND OF EDISON LEE

By John Hambrock



ZITS

By Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman



RHYMES WITH ORANGE

By Hilary Price



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

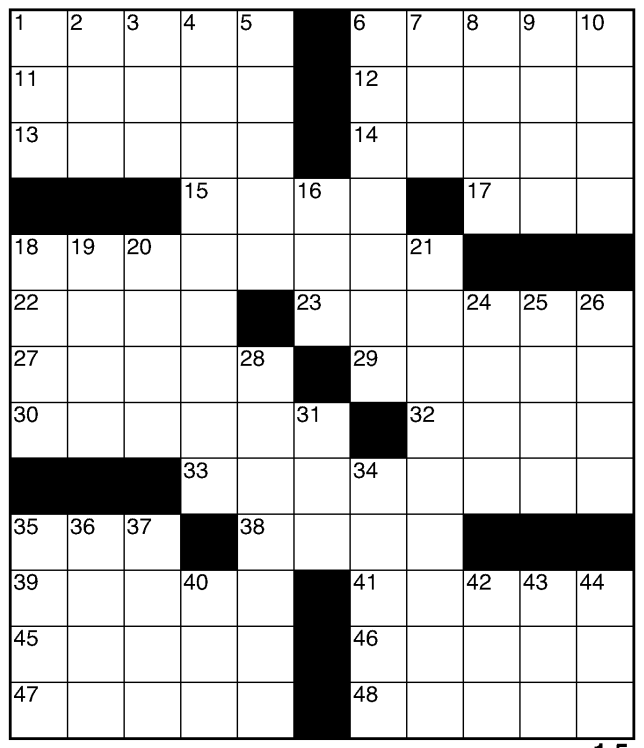
1 Pie part
6 Inflexible
11 Robust quality
12 San Diego player
13 Radio studio sign
14 Cove
15 Brightly colored
17 Seventh Greek letter
18 Pills in experimental studies
22 Lounge about
23 Limber
27 Pueblo pots
29 Floor worker
30 Place for a seaweed wrap
32 Close by
33 Motorcycle attachments
35 Obtained
38 Prone to prying
39 Spicy Mexican marinade
41 Throw away
45 Letter flourish
46 Suspect's claim
47 Geometry class challenge
48 Saudi Arabia neighbor

DOWN

1 Pigeon sound
2 Director Howard
3 Thurman of "Kill Bill"
4 Health club offering
5 First odd prime
6 Car skid
7 Light brown
8 Not active
9 Worry
10 Greek cheese
16 Dict. label on an old word
18 Proceed slowly
19 Song by the Kinks
20 Friend
21 Washer phase
24 Entreaty
25 Shakespearean king
26 Screws up
28 "Maude" or "Frasier"
31 Hubbub
34 School paper
35 Surprised sound
36 German river
37 Matador's foe
40 Life story, for short
42 Crater part
43 Penny prez
44 Sewing aid

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

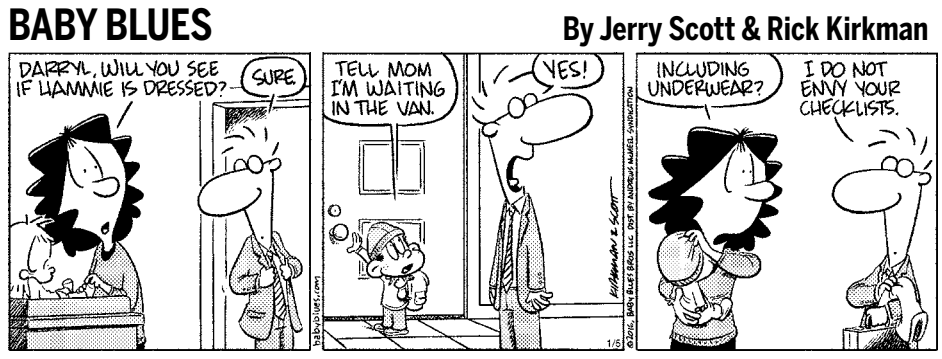
Saturday's answer



1-5

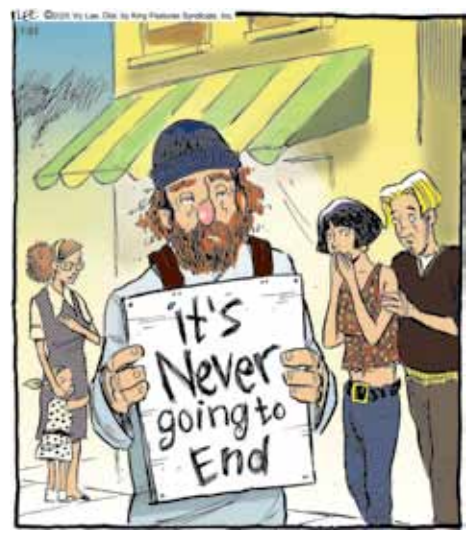
BABY BLUES

By Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



PARDON MY PLANET

By Vic Lee



CONCEPTIS SUDOKU

by Dave Green

King Classic Sudoku

8	1						3	5
3	9		6	8	1		7	2
		7	2			1		
	7	3	5				6	
	2		7	3				8
1					6		5	7
			3		9			6
	8		1			5	9	
	3	9		4		7	2	

Difficulty: ★ 1/5

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Today's Solution

Difficulty: ★ 1/5

6	3	9	8	4	5	7	2	1
7	8	4	1	6	2	5	9	3
2	5	1	3	7	9	8	4	6
1	4	8	9	2	6	3	5	7
5	2	6	7	3	4	9	1	8
9	7	3	5	1	8	2	6	4
4	6	7	2	5	3	1	8	9
3	9	5	6	8	1	4	7	2
8	1	2	4	9	7	6	3	5

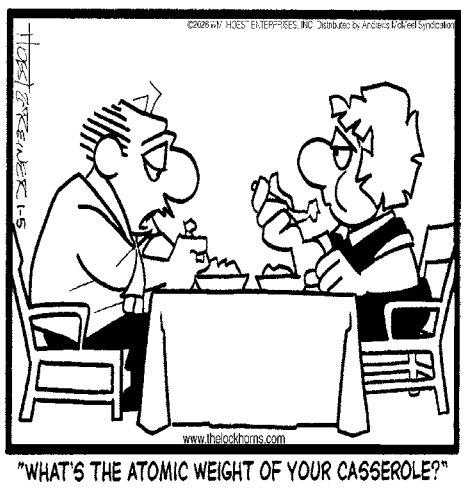
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Hank Ketcham's DENNIS THE MENACE



THE LOCKHORNS

By Bunny Hoest & John Reiner



THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil and Jeff Keane





Having A Yard Sale?

Call your classified department to schedule your ad today!

Not my friends' first choice



Dear Annie
Annie Lane

Dear Annie: I am embarrassed to admit this at my age, but I feel like the kid left out at recess. I am in my late 40s, married with kids, a steady job and a calendar that looks full from the outside. But inside I feel lonely.

I have plenty of "friendly" people in my life. We chat at school pickup, at work, in the neighborhood, and everyone says, "We should get together soon." Yet somehow those plans never happen unless I am the one organizing, texting, reminding and following up. If I stop being the planner, everything goes quiet.

On social media I see group trips, girls' nights and birthday dinners that I am not included in, even with people I thought I was close to. I tell myself to grow up and stop caring, but it still stings. I start to wonder what is wrong with me that I am always on the edge of things instead of really in them.

How do I stop feeling like the backup friend and either find real connection or make peace with the way things are? — Always Almost Included

Dear Almost Included: First, stop treating yourself like the understudy in your own life. You're not the "backup friend."

What you're seeing is less judgment toward you and more a reflection of other people's habits, comfort zones and sometimes plain old thoughtlessness. It stings, but it's not a verdict on your worth.

Keep inviting when you genuinely want to, but stop chasing. Put your energy into the people who show up, not just the ones who post. Try joining a class, book club or volunteer group where the structure makes it easier to deepen friendships.

The right people will not need constant reminders that you exist. They will be glad you do.

Dear Annie: My name is Claire, and I feel embarrassed even writing this because it sounds so small compared to what other people deal with. But it's eating at me.

My best friend, Jenna, and I have been close since our 20s. We used to text all day, swap stories about our kids, and take turns showing up for each other when life got messy. Lately, though, I feel like I'm the only one reaching out. If I don't text first, I won't hear from her for weeks. When I do, she answers with a quick "Crazy busy!" and then posts photos with other friends that same night.

I finally asked if I'd done something wrong. She laughed and said, "No, you're fine," like I was being dramatic. I don't want to beg for attention, but I also don't want to quietly lose someone who mattered to me.

How do you handle a friendship that's fading when the other person insists everything is fine? — Missing Jenna

Dear Missing Jenna: You're not dramatic. You're noticing a change, and changes hurt, even when no one did anything "wrong."

Start by matching her effort, not to punish her but to protect your peace. Stop auditioning for a role you already earned. Reach out occasionally with something warm and specific, like "Miss you. Want a quick coffee this week?" Then let her answer with her actions.

Also, don't confuse social media with a seating chart. A photo is not a verdict. If Jenna is drifting, make room for other friendships without slamming the door. The people who value you will make time, not excuses.

"Out of Bounds: Estrangement, Boundaries and the Search for Forgiveness" is out now! Annie Lane's third anthology is for anyone who has lived with anger, estrangement or the deep ache of being wronged — because forgiveness isn't for them. It's for you. Visit http://www.creatorspublishing.com for more information. Follow Annie Lane on Instagram at @dearannieofficial. Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

HOROSCOPE

Moon Alert: There are no restrictions to shopping or important decisions today. The Moon is in LEO.

Happy Birthday for Monday, Jan. 5, 2026: You are innovative and fascinated by the unknown. You're empathetic and self-disciplined. This year your creativity, zest and desire for life are at a pinnacle! It's time to nurture the happiness and beauty you have within you. Let your guard down and loosen up a bit. Old friends might reappear.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Today you have a strong sense of everything being right with the world. You need to be yourself and to feel who you really are. When talking to others, you'll project yourself with more emotion and passion. Meanwhile, romance is simmering on the back burner. Tonight: Be playful.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ Today you're happy to relax at home if you can pull this off, because you need to take refuge from the busyness of the world around you. You want to enjoy a pleasant, relaxing time at home, preferably with your favorite snacks and comfort food. (You're good at this.) Tonight: Relax.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ When talking to others today, or perhaps casting a glance about your daily world, you will be subjective. Everything will be from your POV today. Even your participation in different conversations will take place at a gut level. In particular, you have a strong urge to have a meaningful conversation with someone. Tonight: Discussions.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★ Today the Moon is in your Money House, which makes you identify with your possessions. This is why you will feel happiest if you can be surrounded by familiar objects, especially objects that have meaning for you from your past. You'll be ready to defend your values in a discussion with someone. Tonight: Check your money.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Today the Moon is in your sign, which happens for two and a half days every month. When this occurs, it heightens your emotions and makes you feel a greater need to relate to loved ones. However, it can also slightly improve your good luck. Oh yes, today the universe owes you a

See HOROSCOPE | 5C

WORD SLEUTH • STEAM ENGINES

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

Saturday's unlisted clue: PEANUT

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
Monday's unlisted clue hint: ROTATING FUNNEL CLOUD

Adler, Big Boy, Flying Scotsman, Green Arrow, Horsa, John Bull, Lion, Mallard, Mohawk, Niagara, Papyrus, Puffing Billy, Rocket, Royal Scot, Tom Thumb

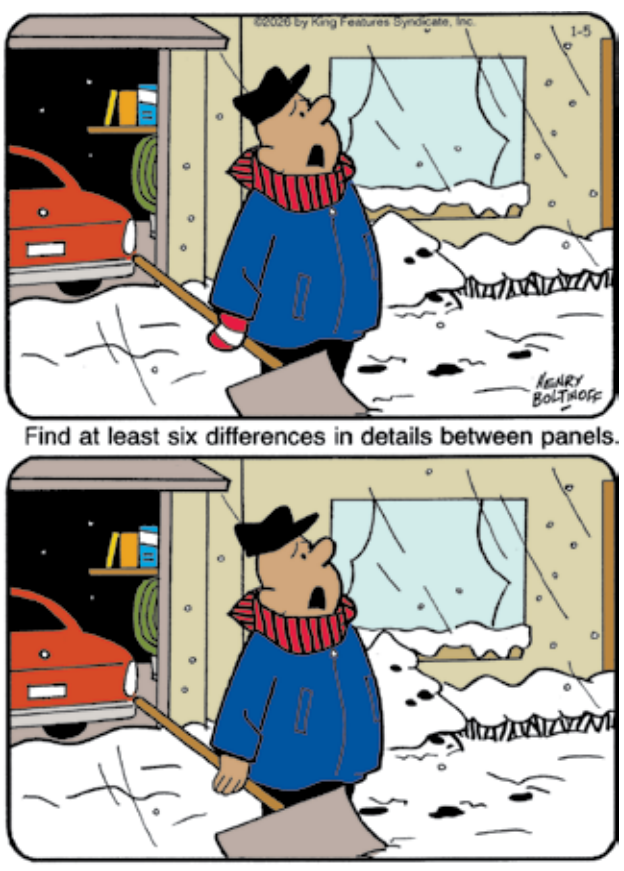
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1-5 CRYPTOQUIP

TXAB N TZFEC ENSA M VZZJPAO PZ XAEG YA PNCQ FG TNPX M VOZZY, N YNLXP PMSA YQ JTAAGNBL GNEEJ.

Saturday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU WERE PLANNING TO FOUND A SKYDIVING SCHOOL, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT EVERYONE WILL DROP OUT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals W



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Shovel is wider. 2. Pocket is higher. 3. Tire is moved. 4. Cap is moved. 5. Tree is taller. 6. Mitten is missing.

MONDAY EVENING — JANUARY 5, 2026

LOCAL	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30
WNEP 16	News (N)	World News	Newswatch	Inside Ed.	Will Trent (TV14)		Will Trent (TV14)		Will Trent (TV14)	
WNEP2 16.2	3's Comp.	3's Company	B. Miller	B. Miller	One Day	One Day	Jeffersons	Jeffersons	News (N)	Sanford
WYOU 22	28/22 News	CBS-News	28/22 News	ET (N)	DMV	DMV	DMV	DMV	NCIS: Origins (TV14)	
WBRE 28	News (N)	NBC News	Wheel (N)	Jeopardy!	St. Denis (N)	Stumble	The Wall (N) (TVPG)		Brilliant Minds (N) (TV14)	
WYLN 35	History	EARLY EDIT	The Daily Flash		Let's Talk	Warrior	Wine H	Kitchen	WYLN LATE	History
WSWB 38	Family Feud	Family Feud	Family Feud	Family Feud	Penn & Teller (TVPG)		Penn & Teller (TVPG)		National Desk (L) (N)	
METV 38.2	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	A. Griffith	A. Griffith	Raymond	Raymond	Hogan Hero	Hogan Hero
WVIA 44	PBS News Hour (N)		VIA Short	Reconnect	Antiques (N) (TVG)		Antiques Roadshow (TVG)		American Masters (TV14)	
WQMY 53	TMZ (N)	Extra (N)	America	Basketball Hazleton Area at Crestwood (L) (N)				Law-SVU "Slaves" (TV14)		Law-SVU
WOLF 56	Last Man	Mod Fam	Big Bang	Big Bang	Name-Tune (N) (TVPG)		Name That Tune (TVPG)		News First at Ten (L) (N)	
WQPX 64	Chicago P.D. (TV14)		Chicago "This City" (TV14)		Chicago P.D. (TV14)		Chicago "Sacrifice" (TV14)		Chicago P.D. (TV14)	
KYW 3	News (N)	CBS-News	Inside Ed.	ET (N)	DMV	DMV	DMV	DMV	NCIS: Origins (TV14)	
WWOR 9	Family Feud	Family Feud	Family Feud	Family Feud	The News on MY 9 (N)		Law & Order: SVU (TV14)		Family Feud	Family Feud
WPXI 11	Channel 11	NBC News	Wheel (N)	Jeopardy!	St. Denis (N)	Stumble	The Wall (N) (TVPG)		Brilliant Minds (N) (TV14)	
WPHL 17	Goldbergs	Big Bang	Big Bang	Mod Fam	Penn & Teller (TVPG)		Penn & Teller (TVPG)		Action News at 10 (N)	

CABLE	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30
A&E	Live PD: Great. (TV14)		Live PD: Great. (TV14)		Live PD: Great. (TV14)		Live PD: Great. (N) (TV14)		Live PD: Great. (N) (TV14)	
AMC	(5:00) ★★★ White House Down ('13) (TVPG)				★★★★ Unstoppable ('10) Denzel Washington. (TVG)				★ Lethal Weapon 3	
BBCA	Movie	★★ Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance ('11) (TVG)				★★★ Underworld ('03) Kate Beckinsale. (TVPG)				
BRAVO	Below Deck (TV14)		Below Deck (TV14)		Below Deck Mediterranean (TV14)			Vanderpump Rules (TV14)		Below Deck
CNBC	Mad Money (N) (TVPG)		Shark Tank (TVPG)		Shark Tank (TVPG)		Shark Tank (TVPG)		Shark Tank (TVPG)	
CNN	Jake Tapper (L) (N)		E. B. OutFront (L) (N)		Cooper 360 (L) (N) (TVPG)		The Source With (L) (N)		CNN NewsNight (L) (N)	
COMC	The Office	The Office	The Office	:35 Office	:10 Office	:45 Office	(:20) The Office (TV14)		:55 Office	The Office
CTV	EWTN News	Living	Daily Mass	(:50) Shawn's	Journey (N) (TVG)		EWTN News	Rosary (N)	Joyful Hour (TVG)	
DISC	Contraband: Seized (TV14)		Contraband: Seized (TV14)		Contraband: Seized (TV14)		Contraband: Seized (TV14)		Contraband: Seized (TV14)	
DISN	Bluey	Big City	:05 ZOMBIES	ZOMBIES	Kiff	Kiff	Kiff	Ladybug	Vampirina	Vampirina
E!	★★★★ Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban ('04) Daniel Radcliffe. (TVG)						★★★★ Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire ('05) (TVG)			
ESPN	SportsCenter		Countdown	College Football FCS Division I Championship: Illinois State vs. Montana State (L) (N)						SportCtr (N)
ESPN2	Pardon (N)	Inside	AKC Agility Dogs Invitational				NFL Live		E60	
FNC	Special Report (L) (N)		The Ingraham Angle (L) (N)		Jesse Watters (L) (N)		Hannity (L) (N)		Gutfeld! (N)	
FOOD	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Baking Championship: Next Gen "The Tryouts" (P) (N)				Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby
FREE	Movie	★★★★ Raya and the Last Dragon ('21) Kelly Marie Tran. (TVG)					(:55) ★★★★ Brave ('12) Kelly Macdonald. (TVG)			
FS1	Hoops (N)	College Basketball Nebraska at Ohio State (L) (N)			College Basketball USC at Michigan State (L) (N)				Hoops (N)	
FX	(4:00) ★ Iron Man (TVG)		★★ Iron Man 2 ('10) Robert Downey Jr.. (TVG)				★★★★ Iron Man 3 ('13) (TVG)			
FXM	Movie	(:50) ★★ Insidious: The Red Door ('23) Patrick Wilson. (TV14)					(:05) ★★ Insidious: The Red Door ('23) (TV14)			
HALL	★ Love on the Sidelines ('16) Emily Kinney. (TVG)				★ Snowcoming ('19) Trevor Donovan. (TVG)				Golden Girls	Golden Girls
HGTV	Love It or List It (TVPG)		Love It or List It (TVPG)		Don't Hate Your (N) (TVG)		Fixer to Fabulous (TVG)		House	House
HIST	Ancient Aliens: Origins "Alien Time Travelers"				Ancient Aliens (TVPG)		Ancient Aliens: Origins "Extraterrestrial Lairs" (SF) (N)			
LIFE	NCIS (TV14)		NCIS (TV14)		NCIS "Toxic" (TVPG)		NCIS "Legend" (TV14)		(:05) NCIS "Legend" (TV14)	
MTV	Big Bang	Big Bang	Ridiculous	Ridiculous	Ridiculous	Ridiculous	Ridiculous	Ridiculous	Ridiculous	Ridiculous
NBCSP	Birds (N)	Birds Huddle	College Basketball Pennsylvania at Princeton (L) (N)				Birds Huddle	Eagles Postgame Live		
NGEO	Lost Treasures (TVPG)		Lost Treasures (TVPG)		Lost Treasures (TVPG)		Lost Treasures (TVPG)		Lost Treasures (TVPG)	
NICK	Wylde Pak	SpongeBob	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Big Bang	Big Bang
OVA	(4:30) Midsomer (TVPG)		Murdoch Mysteries (TVPG)		Murdoch Mysteries (TV14)		Murdoch Mysteries (TVPG)		Murdoch Mysteries (TVPG)	
PARMT	★★★★ Mission: Impossible -- Ghost Protocol ('11) Tom Cruise. (TVPG)						(:55) ★★★★ The Departed ('06) (TVPG)			
SYFY	(5:30) ★★★★ M3GAN ('22) (TVPG)			★★★★ The Truman Show ('98) Jim Carrey. (TVG)					★★ Real Steel (TVG)	
TBS	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang
TCM	★★ It Happened at the World's Fair ('63) (TVG)				★★★★ Three Coins in the Fountain ('54) (TVG)				★ Robin & the Seven Hoods	
TLC	90 Day: Other (TV14)		90 Day: Other (TVPG)		90 Day "Adios" (N) (TV14)		90 Day Diaries (N) (TV14)		90 Day: Other (N) (TV14)	
TNT	(5:00) ★★ Meg 2: The Trench (TVG)			Unrivaled	Unrivaled Basketball		(:15) Unrivaled Basketball			Unrivaled
TOON	Burgers	Burgers	Burgers	Burgers	Burgers	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy
TRAV	Mysteries of the Unknown (TVPG)				Mysteries of the Unknown (N) (TVPG)				Mysteries- Unk. (TVPG)	
TVL	A. Griffith	A. Griffith	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond
USA	(5:00) U.S. Olympic Trials Speed Skating (L) (N)				Law-SVU "Harm" (TV14)		Law-SVU "Fight" (TV14)		Law & Order: SVU (TV14)	
VH1	Love "Claim Game" (TV14)		Love & Hip Hop (TV14)		Basketball Wives		Basketball Wives		Basketball Wives	
WE	Law "Refuge" (TV14)		Law "Gunshow" (TV14)		Law "Killerz" (TV14)		Law & Order "DNR" (TV14)		Law "Merger" (TV14)	
YOUTOO	Dick	Dick Tracy	Daily Flash		World Chase Tag		Disaster Strike Force		The Dark Zone	

PREMIUM	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30
HBO	(5:30) ★★★★ Kingdom of the Planet of the Apes (TVG)				Industry	(:50) Industry (TVMA)		(:40) Industry (TVMA)		★★★★ It
HBO2	(5:30) ★★★★ Ne Zha 2 ('25) Lü Yanting. (TVG)				(:55) ★★★★ Superman ('25) David Corenswet. (TVG)				(:05) ★ The Batman (TVPG)	
MAX	(5:10) ★★★ Man of Steel ('13) (TVG)			★★★★ Inception ('10) Leonardo DiCaprio. (TVG)					★ American Ultra (TVPG)	
MMAX	★★★★ A Ghost Story ('17) (TVG)			(:35) ★ Getaway ('13) (TVG)			(:05) ★★★★ Public Enemies ('09) Johnny Depp. (TVPG)			
SHOW	(:55) ★★★ The Mexican ('01) Brad Pitt. (TVPG)				★ Guns Up ('25) Kevin James. (TV14)			(:35) ★★★ Fight or Flight ('24)		
STARZ	(5:20) ★★★ Click (TVG)		(:10) ★★★ White Chicks ('04) Shawn Wayans. (TVG)				Power IV (TVMA)		Spartacus: Ashur (TVMA)	

Those who can donate should



Hints from Heloise
Heloise

Dear Heloise: I have enjoyed your (and your mother's) column for decades and currently read it in the Colorado Springs Gazette. I was recently upset by the person who recommended not giving to charities because the money all went to administration costs. This is simply not true.

There are thousands of charities in the United States, and many depend on volunteers only. However, there are scammers, and it is easy to check out a charity at CharityNavigator.org. They study each charity's work and their financial statements, and they rate them according to their impact and efficiency with contributions.

At this critical time in our country when so many people are finding themselves without paychecks or public assistance programs, it is especially important for those who can give to support others. I have met many people who at some time in their lives needed help to support themselves or their children, and with this help, they were able to become self-supporting contributors to our society.

It's not just the wise thing to do; it's the right thing to do. — M. Arnold, via email

SEND A GREAT HINT TO:
Heloise@Heloise.com

QUICK MENU

Dear Heloise: Several years ago, my husband and I made a list of dinners that I normally prepare, such as spaghetti, pot roast, tacos, etc. Then whenever we are stuck on what we want for dinner, we look at the list and pick one that matches the ingredients we have on hand. We've added to this list as we think of something we forgot or if I find a new favorite meal. I read you in the San Gabriel Valley Tribune. — Joan A., in West Covina, California

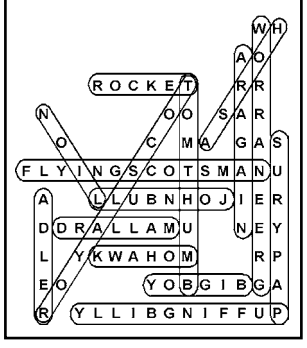
CLEANING A COMFORTER

Dear Heloise: I have read both your mother's and your hints for many years and thank you for all of your wonderful hints. Many of these hints saved me time and money!

Now I have a hint to share: If you like to wash a comforter and duvet at home rather than taking it to a dry cleaners, you can place it in a dryer for

See HINTS | 5C

Today's Answers
STEAM ENGINES





Searchlight Pictures via AP

This image released by Searchlight Pictures shows Amanda Seyfried, center, in a scene from 'The Testament of Ann Lee.'

MOVIE REVIEW

In 'Testament of Ann Lee,' a blazing Amanda Seyfried can make you believe anything

By Jocelyn Noveck
AP National Writer



Searchlight Pictures via AP

This image released by Searchlight Pictures shows Amanda Seyfried in a scene from 'The Testament of Ann Lee.'



Searchlight Pictures via AP

This image released by Searchlight Pictures shows Amanda Seyfried, center, in a scene from 'The Testament of Ann Lee.'

Filmmakers Mona Fastvold and Brady Corbet are clearly fascinated by ambition. They're fascinated, too, by dreamers — difficult dreamers, brilliant but demanding people who have plans they must fulfill no matter the personal cost.

They're also interested in dreamers who cross the ocean to America with these difficult, lofty plans. And, finally, they find singular actors to play these roles.

You could say the couple, artistic and life partners, is on a roll. They together made "The Brutalist" last year,directed by Corbet and co-written with Fastvold, which won Adrien Brody an Oscar. And now, with Fastvold directing, we have "The Testament of Ann Lee" — a stirring and, yes, difficult movie that features a blazing Amanda Seyfried as the Shaker leader. It's a performance that will knock your 18th-century socks off.

There are, of course, key differences. For one thing, unlike fictional architect Lázló Tóth in "The Brutalist," Ann Lee was a real person — a woman whose life story hasn't been widely told (as the filmmakers have pointed out, people are more likely to remember the Shakers for their furniture design.) And she was a deeply spiritual figure: a woman who from childhood had visions of God, rejected the urgings of the flesh as sinful, and was revered by followers who called her Mother and saw her as a female reincarnation of Jesus Christ.

Oh, yes, one other thing: "The Testament of Ann Lee" is a musical. An 18th-century religious musical — with both the agony (lots of agony) and ecstasy of Lee's life channeled into song-and-dance numbers based on a dozen or so traditional hymns.

Yes, it's a lot. It's lots and lots. The film is absolutely not for everyone.

But Fastvold has undeniably created something we've never quite seen before; speaking of visions, her singular artistic vision fills every frame. And Seyfried is a marvel, in yet another role that stretches this fiercely talented actor in ways we might not have predicted.

Fastvold, shooting on 70mm film as in "The Brutalist," and cowriter Corbet divide Lee's life into chapters. The first details her upbringing as a poor, illiterate child in Manchester, England. We're told it was no coincidence that a "miraculous" woman would be born on Feb. 29. The year is 1736. Ann, daughter of a blacksmith, has heavenly visions as a child. (She's also disgusted by the sight of her parents having sex.)

As a young woman, to escape the mill where her family works, Ann works as a nurse. Yearning for spiritual purpose, she attends a religious meeting and encounters a female preacher, something altogether new. The early Shakers — called the "Shaking Quakers of Manchester" — engage in an intense form of confession; the term "shaker" refers to their ecstatic gestures in worship, as if to shake off sin.

It's tough to imagine what the film would be like without Seyfried's grounding presence. She can be both spiritual and earthly, and when she breaks into song and dance, in numbers choreographed by Celia Rowlson-Hall to music by Daniel Blumberg (an Oscar winner for his "Brutalist" score), it feels organic and unforced.

Ann marries a locksmith, with whom she births four babies. All die by age 1. It's almost too painful to watch, especially when her husband must tear away the last one from her grieving arms.

Devastated, she throws herself into worship. During a stint in jail for her heretical beliefs, she fasts, has visions and comes to believe she and her husband have been punished by God for having sexual intercourse. She will henceforth practice and preach celibacy.

The second chapter involves Ann leading a harrowing journey across the Atlantic to establish a base in the New World. (Fastvold found a fully operational 18th-century ship, with hand-stitched sails, in Sweden.) The worshippers almost don't survive the trip.

But they arrive in New York City, somehow, two years before the American Revolution. The final act details the yearslong efforts to find a home where the Shaker community can live safely and grow — hardly a given.

Eventually the community settles upstate, where they learn to build furniture for revenue. Ann's brother William (Lewis Pullman, excellent) sets out to find followers. The community has strict rules: celibacy, no marriage, gender equality, a pursuit of utopian perfection.

But their beliefs put them in danger. A chilling final sequence has a violent mob of townspeople setting fire to a house where the group is recruiting members.

At their peak, there were thousands of Shakers. Now there are exactly three (celibacy limited the community's ability to grow.) It's not unreasonable to ask: Why put so much energy and attention and craftsmanship into telling this particular story?

Well, one answer is pretty simple: they had Seyfried. The actor spent a year before shooting simply working on her 18th-century Manchester accent. She sings, she dances. And she gives one of the rawest renderings of childbirth, and child loss, that you'll see on-screen.

No matter how you feel about the history here, it's a visceral performance that simply demands to be seen.

"The Testament of Ann Lee," a Searchlight Pictures release, has been rated R by the Motion Picture Association "for sexual content, graphic nudity, violence and bloody images." Running time: 137 minutes. Three stars out of four.

What's up

From page 2C

Roast Beef Dinner at Northmoreland Volunteer Fire Co., 1618 Demunds Road, Centermoreland, next to Centermoreland Store, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Jan. 28, eat in or take out. Dinner includes roast beef, real mashed potatoes and gravy, vegetable and dessert. February dinner will be Feb. 28.

LACKAWANNA COUNTY

St. John's Russian Orthodox Church, 706 Hill St. Mayfield, Liturgy of St. Basil the Great at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 6; with great complines and litiya and matins at 7 p.m. On Wednesday, Jan. 7, at 8:45 a.m., Nativity of Our Lord celebration of the hours, followed by Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom at 9 a.m. On Thursday, Jan. 8, the Synaxix of the Holy Theotokos, Divine Liturgy at 9:30 a.m., followed by open house in the church center. On Friday, Jan. 9, the feast of St. Stephen, 8 a.m. with Divine Liturgy. Carolers will visit homes of parishioners on Jan. 8, by request only. Call the church at 570-876-0730.

Trinity Lutheran Church Fun for Seniors Group, from Trinity Lutheran Church, 205 West Grove, Clarks Summit. The church continues to sponsor a weekly Fun For Seniors Exercise for Balance and Strength class with Mindy, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. each Wednesday. For more info, contact office@trinitylutherancs.com

REUNIONS

Pittston Area High School class of 1981 is planning a 45th anniversary reunion for June 6 at Colarusso's La Palazzo on Birney Avenue in Moosic, and the committee is trying to get in touch with classmates. If you have contact information for yourself or any other classmate, please contact Kelly Gowran Steiner at 480-414-5671 or kellysteineraz@gmail.com/. For more information, see the Pittston class of 1981 Facebook page.

Hints

From page 4C

1 hour, then finish drying it by placing a clean sheet over a clothesline or fence and placing the comforter over the sheet.

This allows fresh air to circulate through the comforter, and it usually dries rather fluffy without a chemical scent to it. It works well for me, and perhaps it will work for some of your other readers. — Connie S., in Clawson, Michigan

CATEGORIZING CONTACTS

Dear Heloise: When you're entering a person or company's name, address and phone number in the Notes section of your contacts, add a category for the contact name. For example: "Plumbing — John Smith." Many times, we come across names or companies in our phone contact list, and we forget who they are. This way, if you need a plumber, you can just search for the category "plumbing" in your contacts, and your phone will display John Smith and his company's name.

It's also helpful to enter dates so that you know when John Smith last cleaned out your drain or whatever the situation was. The Notes section in your cellphone contacts can be very helpful for endless reasons, like names and birthdates of a friend's grandchildren, the hours and days that a certain business or restaurant is open, etc. — LEO G., in Kenosha, Wisconsin

Horoscope

From page 4C

favor! Tonight: You're in charge.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ This is a playful, fun-loving time for you! Social outings, sports events and fun activities with kids plus romantic tete-a-tetes are tops on your menu. However, today you might want to withdraw from the busyness of the world around you and keep your feelings secret. (It's OK to hide.) Tonight: Enjoy privacy.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Friendships are important to you today, which is why you might feel more protective or supportive than usual to someone. This is also why contact with others, as well as interactions with groups, will be meaningful today. Share your hopes for the future with someone. Tonight: A warm connection with someone.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ Today members of the public might know personal details about your private life for some reason. Think about this in case you have to do some damage control. Or perhaps you'll have a public argument or do a little hissing in an elevator. Tonight: You're noticed.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ This day begins with exciting energy. You're eager to explore your world. You want to learn new things, meet new people and be inspired by new ideas. Travel or anything that breaks your routine will be stimulating for you. Do something different! Tonight: Explore!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ Today your emotional experiences will be more intense. You might feel possessive about property, especially something shared or very old and familiar. ("My precious!") You want greater control of your life through the things you own. Tonight: Check your finances.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Today the Moon is opposite your sign, which means you have to go more than halfway when dealing with others. It's not a big deal, but it might reduce conflicts. Guard against knee-jerk reactions. Your one-to-one relationships will be important. Tonight: Cooperate with others.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ This is a positive day full of upbeat energy. You might have to put the interests of someone else before your own today and perform a service for them. By no means does this mean you're being a martyr; you're just being helpful. Tonight: Get organized.

BORN TODAY

Actor Bradley Cooper (1975), actress Diane Keaton (1946) actor Robert Duvall (1931)

MOVIE REVIEW

In Jim Jarmusch's starry 'Father Mother Sister Brother,' families struggle to connect

By Lindsey Bahr
AP Film Writer



Mubi via AP

This image released by Mubi shows Adam Driver, left, and Mayim Bialik in a scene from 'Father Mother Sister Brother.'



Mubi via AP

This image released by Mubi shows Tom Waits in a scene from 'Father Mother Sister Brother.'

Jim Jarmusch invites audiences into three family gatherings of adult children in his gentle tryptic "Father Mother Sister Brother."

Don't worry, you won't be resentful you're not part of any of them, not even the one where Tom Waits plays Adam Driver's dad. To be fair, all the groupings are pretty cool on paper. In the first chapter, siblings Jeff (Driver) and Emily (Mayim Bialik) drive together to visit their father (Waits) for the first time in a while. In the second, a mother (Charlotte Rampling) awaits her grown daughters Tim (Cate Blanchett) and Lilith (Vicky Krieps) for their annual tea. And in the third, all that's left of Skye (Indya Moore) and Billy's (Luka Sabbat) parents are things.

But these are awkward and strained hangouts, none connected to one another literally, and all in different parts of the world. Yet there are little threads throughout — Rolex watches, toasting with water, red clothing, and the idiom "bob's your uncle," for instance. And then there's the more cosmically haunting realization that familiarity and closeness are not always in the cards when it comes to family. In "Father Mother Sister Brother," everyone would rather be anywhere but where they are. Same same, but different, you know?

The film opens with "Father," and siblings Jeff and Emily reluctantly doing a kind of wellness check on theirs. They're both very buttoned up and formal, both in appearance (blazers, sweaters, combed hair) and demeanor. Waits, as their father, is very much the opposite — one might imagine that he doesn't even own a blazer, or a comb for that matter. His home is as rumpled as his zip up hoodie sweatshirt and he is a little bumbling himself, rattling off all the drugs he's not taking (anymore). The chasm between him and his children is vast and growing. Besides the death of their mother, it doesn't even seem like there was even some inciting incident that might explain some level of estrangement — they're just very, very different. And the father might not be as helpless and destitute as he's presenting to his children. After they leave, he tidies the place up and calls a friend to go out to a nice dinner.

Blame it on the age of the people who get to make the movies, but the parents are often the afterthoughts, the supporting characters in the children's stories. Jarmusch slyly inverts this in the "Father" segment, which perfectly tees up expectations for his next entry, "Mother," in which Rampling is on the phone, presumably with a therapist, mentally preparing for her daughters to arrive. They all live around Dublin, but rarely see one another, making this tea a bit of a dreaded ritual. Blanchett's Tim, a quintessential first born, is very stressed about being late. Krieps' Lilith, meanwhile, is all about posturing — bragging about material things and accomplishments that she doesn't have the receipts for and knows on some level no one believes anyway. These women aren't connecting either.

In the final segment, the parents are gone. They've died and left behind only mementos in a Parisian apartment that's three months overdue on rent. This is both a puzzle and a mess that their children now have to clean up and make sense of. "Father Mother Sister Brother" is in some ways deeply cynical about family bonds and the possibility of ever really knowing ones' parents. It's devoid of warm, fuzzy sentiment and trite revelations, just the crushing idea that no matter what bloodlines might exist, we're all fundamentally strangers.

Ultimately, it's an interesting experiment of a film, and perhaps even more interesting that it won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival earlier this year over the likes of "No Other Choice,""The Voice of Hind Rajab," "The Testament of Ann Lee" and "Bugonia." And yet there's something comforting about the fact that Jarmusch is still doing his thing, exactly how he wants to, and that so many great actors are lining up to be part of it. He's a singular voice in a landscape that's always in danger of flattening. Just don't go in expecting a warm holiday hug of a movie.

"Father Mother Sister Brother," is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for language. Running time: 110 minutes. Three stars out of four.

Matthew and Gunnar Nelson return to tell all in 'What Happened to Your Hair?'

By Peter Larsen
The Orange County Register

ANAHEIM, Calif. — When Matthew and Gunnar Nelson released their debut album "After the Rain" in 1990, it was a massive hit.

The record sold more than 2 million copies and launched a 300-show tour. The first single, "(Can't Live Without Your) Love and Affection," hit No.1 on the charts; the title track was released next, climbing to No. 6.

But ask people what they remember about Nelson today and plenty will give the same answer: The hair. Those long, blonde, lustrous locks cascading down around their faces on the album cover art.

"I always say we look like hot Swedish chicks, you know," says Matthew Nelson, 58, and the elder of the identical twins by 15 minutes.

They can laugh now about hair jokes and how Nelson was seen, but at the time, the criticism stung.

"We did that. We chose that," Matthew says of how he and Gunnar presented themselves and their music at the start. "We knew we had to die on that hill, and to a certain degree we did. We won and lost with it, and it was great. I walk back nothing.

"But we always said, 'Love us or hate us, you're going to know who we are,'" he says. "And that was the problem. Love us or hate us, people still don't know who we are. So that's why we wrote the book."

"What Happened to Your Hair? How We Played Loud ... Loved Proud ... And Never Back Down ... Together," the new memoir from the Brothers Nelson, has just been published.

It's a sprawling story of Matthew and Gunnar's lives in and out of rock and roll, with all the highs and lows. With chapters written by whichever twin had the clearest memory of a moment or event, the book captures what sounds like their actual voices; the brothers parted ways with a prospective ghostwriter when they decided their personalities weren't coming through.

"It's been a common question: Why write a book now?" Gunnar Nelson says on a recent video call with his brother from the Nashville area, where both now live. "I think what it comes down to is this book is really about telling our story, rather than having other people tell it for us and spin it the way it's always seemed to have been spun.

"Even though they marketed us like a boy band, we wrote everything ourselves. We produced everything ourselves. We designed our own image. We were responsible for the whole creative side of the trip.

"And after the fact, it was a lot easier for people to kind of relegate us to a particular part in music history because we actually test what their definition or presupposition would be of the two of us."

Family ties

It's important to know the roots of Matthew and Gunnar Nelson. Their musician and TV star father, Rick Nelson, was himself born into an entertainment powerhouse family. His parents, Ozzie and Harriet Nelson, created the TV series "The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet," which starred Rick, who became a teen music idol thanks to the show, and his brother David Nelson.

Their mother, Kristin Nelson, was the actress-turned-painter daughter of Heisman Trophy winner Tom Harmon and actress Elyse Knox. Her siblings included Mark Harmon, a football star like his father and an actor like his mother, and actress Kelly Harmon. And the twins' sister, Tracy Nelson, also became an actress.

You'd be forgiven if those two paragraphs make you think Matthew and Gunnar are nepo babies. But you'd be wrong, they say, and write in the book.

"This is kind of correcting the misconception that Matt and I were just nepo babies who had trust funds, and had it handed to us and didn't work for it," Gunnar says. "Music is something that we've wanted to do from our first conscious memories on the planet.

"It wasn't a hobby, and we didn't have a ton of family money to fall back on," he says, noting that his parents' marriage was expensive, and their divorce even more so. "We had to work really, really, really hard. You just put your nose to the grindstone, and you get on stage every night and do your thing.

"And you think all that stuff's going to work out in the end. But we realized in our dad's case, it really didn't."

Rick Nelson tried hard to break free of the teen star image that 14 years of "The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet" created. When fans and the music industry turned away from him, he wrote the classic song "Garden Party" about how it felt to be identified as something you no longer are.

"Even though in the beginning of his career he didn't write his own songs, he still chose all the songs," Gunnar says. "He still put that group together with [guitarist] James Burton and made a really amazing sound. And he never really got any of the credit for that. Throughout his life, I think he was unfairly discounted."

In some aspects, the book seeks to set the record straight about their father, too, the brothers say.

"Our dad never wrote an autobiography," Gunnar says of Rick Nelson, who died in a 1985 plane crash when they were 18. "And what a story he must have had to tell."

Blitzkrieg boppin'

When Gunnar Nelson turned 6, his dad took him to a Studio City pawnshop and bought him an inexpensive drum kit he'd been craving. Matthew got a bass for their birthday, and the Nelson rhythm section was born.

By the time they were 12, Gunnar and Matthew were playing in the power pop trio Strange Agent, performing at clubs such as Madam Wong's in Chinatown and Santa Monica, the Central on the Sunset Strip, and FM Station in North Hollywood.

Nelson was considered to be a hair metal band in the late '80s, but the brothers say they were suburban punk rockers before anything else.

"Nobody would believe it, but we really identified with that whole culture because we had our own prison," Matthew says. "Trapped in a gilded cage, you know. We were living in Brentwood in the crappiest house in the neighborhood. It was a nice neighborhood. Marilyn [Monroe] died down the street. Our mother had convinced Grandpa Tom to buy a house for her so we could get in a decent school district.

"But quite frankly, we grew up with the poor kids in the rich neighborhood," he says, later describing how he and Gunnar got after-school jobs at places like a Häagen-Dazs ice cream shop and a Licorice Pizza record store to earn spending money. "For us, that whole suburban angst thing, we identified with all of that a lot."

See HAIR | 7C

Hair

From page 6C

When Strange Agent played a show at the Nelsons' high school when the twins were 14, the set list included Black Flag's "Gimmie Gimmie Gimmie" and the Ramones' "Beat on the Brat" and "Blitzkrieg Bop."

A few years later, when Nelson was shooting its video for "More Than Ever" at the Olympic Auditorium in downtown Los Angeles, they looked out at an arena packed with fans — and saw Joey Ramone had somehow shown up.

"These are freaking heroes," Gunnar says of the Ramones. "We're just a couple of kids from Burbank who happened to have a dynasty behind us. But honestly, we just loved music, and we love the people who made it. We're fanboys of music first and foremost.

"I'm sitting there, and Joey Ramone shows up to the show without telling anybody," he continues. "He just appears in the audience. You can't miss him, he's 9 feet tall. He was just the most well-spoken guy. We were actually really influenced by those guys.

"People don't know that, but Nelson's music, just like the Ramones, there are no minor keys in anything," Gunnar says.

"We're more like heavy folkies with a little bit of punk DNA in there," Matthew says. "It was fun once when I did an acoustic show in Hollywood, and I look up and about 6 feet away from me, it's Lux Interior and Poison Ivy [of the Cramps] there to see me.

"[Lux] came up, and he had a full gold grill, like everything in his mouth was gold," he says. "He was so sweet, and he handed me this album and said, 'I just want to tell you, I loved your father. I dedicated this album to him when we made it, when he passed away.

"It was right there," Matthew says of the dedication on the Cramps' 1988 album "A Date With Elvis." [The Cramps covered Ricky Nelson's "Lonesome Town" on their earlier "Gravest Hits" EP.]

In the book, they also recount meeting Dave Grohl and Pat Smear after a Foo Fighters' show in 2020, and Smear telling them he and his bandmates in the Germs had wanted to sneak out of the Hong Kong Cafe, where they were about to play, to catch the Strange Agent teens at Madame Wong's one night.

"People didn't know that the sun-kissed Malibu Beach twins with the assless chaps and the long hair actually grew up in the seminal L.A. punk scene sharing stages with all those guys," Gunnar says.

"And we just love them, man," Matthew says.

Henry and Matthew

The death of their father when they were 18 delivers one of the heaviest emotional moments in the book. Both Matthew and Gunnar write their own chapters about how they heard the news, the trauma of grieving, and the lost year that followed.

But the low moments are balanced by many laugh-out-loud encounters they've experienced. Like the time Matthew went to see Black Flag singer Henry Rollins perform a spoken-word show at the Roxy in West Hollywood. In the middle of a piece about the music scene, Matthew was in the audience as Rollins said, "I mean, Nelson ... what IS that [bleep]?"

Matthew and Gunnar are glass-half-full guys. Positivity runs through the conversation and the book. So Matthew went backstage to meet Rollins; he pointed out that Rollins was judging the Nelson brothers without really knowing them in the same way others surely judged him for his tattoos, muscles and performance style.

They struck up a friendship. Rollins wrote and recorded a spoken-word piece planned for Nelson's "Imaginator" concept album, though it was pulled after Rollins' record label refused to grant permission for its use.

"From not knowing I was in the audience and crapping on my band in front of me, to me going up to meet him and turning it around into something that became a cool collaboration and a friendship," Matthew says. "I can say this: Henry was one of the reasons why I kept coming back to the book thing with Gunnar.

"Sometimes you can find a common ally and a similarity with people you wouldn't think is possible, you know?

Mom and Pop

The memoir ends with a chapter titled "What If Pop Hadn't Died?" in which Gunnar wonders how his life might have turned out had Rick Nelson lived, and how he'd have felt if that meant he and Matthew had never reached stardom with Nelson.

The penultimate chapter, "A Letter to Mom," sees both Gunnar with Matthew writing to their late mother, Kristin. Throughout the memoir, they describe her as neglectful at best, abusive at worst.

How hard was it to write about your mother, we ask.

"'Mother, do you think they'll like this song,'" Matthew sings, quoting a line from the Pink Floyd song "Mother." "Go ahead, Gunnar."

"Yeah, you know, a couple of dudes with mommy issues. I know, it's such a cliche," Gunnar says. "Our mother and father had one of the worst divorces in Hollywood history. It was like six straight years ... And our mom really didn't like us very much. We reminded her too much of our father. That was just a fact.

"The way I put it most politely is that our mother was simply born without the mothering gene," he says. "Our mother was living proof that God put us into the world together as twins for a reason.

"We loved her the best we could. We didn't judge her. The funny thing is, and we said this in the foreword of the book, our mother probably wouldn't be very happy with some of the things we wrote in this book. But she should be, because we had a lot more that we could have written."

Full Nelson

In the recent finale of the second season of HBO Max's "Peacemaker" series, director James Gunn cast Nelson to play themselves in a pivotal scene between Christopher "Peacemaker" Smith (John Cena), who loves '80s and '90s hard rock bands, and Emilia Harcourt (Jennifer Holland).

"It happened completely organically," Gunnar says. "James Gunn has always been known as a real music guy. And there was a song we had recorded about 15 years ago on a record of ours called 'Lightning Strikes Twice' called "To Get Back to You.'

"Apparently, James Gunn was working out one day and reading the trades, and he saw a blurb about [that record] and was just curious," he says. "So he went up on iTunes and listened to it and loved it. Especially that one particular song.

"He kind of mind-banked it for the right opportunity, and it took a couple of years. Then he sent his production crew down to scope one of our shows to make sure that we still looked and sounded OK. We passed the audition, which was great, and the next thing you know, we're in Savannah for two days, and we're filming with James Gunn."

Nelson plays the song on a paddleboat as Peacemaker and Harcourt have a moment. Gunn titled the episode "Full Nelson" and in addition to filming the band for the show, blended show and performance footage into a music video for the song."

It was a delightful surprise, Matthew adds.

"It ended up in Rolling Stone because it's kind of like, 'James Gunn and Nelson?'" he says. "You know, 'Henry Rollins and Nelson?' It's always kind of being the addendum on a sentence like that is the exact reason why we wrote the book."

Postscript

As 2026 arrives, the brothers plan to be out promoting the book. In January, they've got an event at Licorice Pizza in Studio City to talk about the book and play a few songs.

They plan to tour again, and they've been asked by Frontiers, the Italian label that released "Lightning Strikes Twice," to record another fully electric Nelson album.

They've been signed to do a podcast called Licorice Pizza — the guys are friends with Kerry Brown, who bought the rights to the long-dormant brand — where they'll talk with musicians about their stories from the road.

And they'll do the duo shows, playing acoustic guitars to accompany their harmony vocals and telling stories between songs, they've grown to love in recent years.

"Gunnar and I really find ourselves truly in our power with two brothers and two guitars," Matthew says. "I think in a world of AI and fake, it takes [courage] to do that. You can't hide."

And, finally, we're happy to report that while it's shorter these days, their hair is objectively still fabulous.

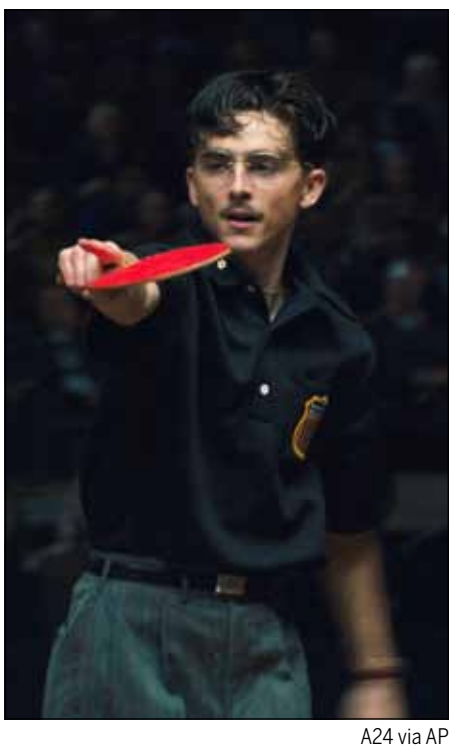


A24 via AP

This image released by A24 shows Timothée Chalamet in a scene from 'Marty Supreme.'

Is Timothée Chalamet as good at pingpong as his character in 'Marty Supreme'?

By Steve Henson
Los Angeles Times



A24 via AP

This image released by A24 shows Timothée Chalamet in a scene from 'Marty Supreme.'

LOS ANGELES — First clue that someone is serious about pingpong: They call it table tennis.

Second clue: They bring their own paddle.

Timothée Chalamet dropped a third clue on movie sets all over the globe. To prepare for his role in the delightfully frenetic "Marty Supreme," the two-time Oscar nominee traveled for years with a table in tow, training and presumably enjoying the sport at the center of the current holiday season hit.

Director Josh Safdie enlisted the husband-and-wife table-tennis teaching tandem of Diego Schaaf and Wei Wang — a former U.S. Olympian — to elevate Chalamet's game as well as serve as technical advisers on set.

But Chalamet was already playing nearly well enough to emulate a world champion on screen. He'd taken lessons and done his homework — setting up a table in the living room of his New York apartment and playing throughout the pandemic.

"Everything I was working on, it was this secret," Chalamet told the Hollywood Reporter. "I had a table in London while I was making 'Wonka.' On 'Dune: Part Two,' I had a table in Budapest [and] Jordan. I had a table in Abu Dhabi. I had a table at the Cannes Film Festival for 'The French Dispatch.'"

It seems implausible that Chalamet was immersed in table tennis while also learning to sing and play guitar for the role of Bob Dylan in "A Complete Unknown."

"If anyone thinks this is cap, as the kids say — if anyone thinks this is made up — this is all documented, and it'll be put out," he said. "These were the two spoiled projects where I got years to work on them. This is the truth. I was working on both these things concurrently."

Wherever Chalamet found the time, Schaaf was impressed by the result.

"He was singularly dedicated to getting this to be the same quality as the rest of the movie," Schaaf told the Hollywood Reporter.

Eschewing a stunt double for the table tennis scenes was a point of pride for Chalamet. The only concession to modern moviemaking was that several of the longer sequences during games were choreographed without a ball, which was added later via computer-generated imagery (CGI).

"We realized it had to be scripted to be able to film it," Schaaf told the Washington Post. "And because it was scripted, we had to practice it first with a real ball. He had to understand the physical layout of the point: Where does he have to go? When does he have to go there? When you later on do [visual effects] and put the ball in there, it's critical that the player goes to the right place."

Schaaf said about 60 points were scripted.

"We needed a lot of rehearsal, and I was amazed," he said. "Timothée wound up getting a better feel for it than most professional players because professional players take the cue from the ball. You take the ball away, they all were like 'What is the timing?'

"Of course, they have a good sense of timing and then they learned it quickly. But Timothée was right there on top of it."

The on-screen rival of Chalamet's character, Marty Mauser, is Koto Endo, portrayed by real-life Japanese table tennis champion Koto Kawaguchi. Their dynamic approximated the real-life rivalry between 1950s U.S. champion Marty Reisman and Japan's Hiroji Satoh.

In her review of "Marty Supreme," Times film critic Amy Nicholson noted that well-struck pingpong balls travel up to 70 mph.

"Set in 1952 New York, this deranged caper races after a money-grubbing table tennis hustler (he prefers 'professional athlete') who argues like he plays, swatting away protests and annoying his adversaries to exhaustion," she wrote.

Nicholson offers that Reisman would be pleased by the movie, "which time-travels audiences back seven decades to when American table tennis players were certain bright days were ahead.

"As an athlete, Chalamet seems to have *lost* muscle for the role. Yet as funny as it is to see a guy this scrawny carry himself like Hercules, he leaps and strikes with conviction."

Nothing gives an actor — or an athlete — self-assurance like practice, repetitions and rehearsals. Chalamet's paddle performance is proof.



AP File Photo

Bad Bunny performs during the iHeartRadio Music Awards, on Monday, March 17, 2025, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

Bad Bunny's 'Debí Tirar Más Fotos' could make Grammy history

By Maria Sherman
AP Music Writer

NEW YORK — The Puerto Rican superstar Bad Bunny has redefined what it means to be a global giant — and he may once again make history at the 2026 Grammy Awards.

The artist born Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio is up for six awards at the Feb. 1 show, becoming the first Spanish-language artist to be nominated for album, song and record of the year simultaneously. His critically acclaimed album, "Debí Tirar Más Fotos," is only the second Spanish-language record to be nominated for album of the year. The first? Well, that also belonged to Bad Bunny, 2022's "Un Verano Sin Ti."

Win or lose, experts say Bad Bunny's Grammy nominations mark a symbolic moment for Latinos. Just a week later, after all, he'll headline the Super Bowl halftime show.

Historic nominations reflect the cultural zeitgeist

Vanessa Díaz, associate professor of Chicano and Latino studies at Loyola Marymount University and co-author of "P FKN R: How Bad Bunny Became the Global Voice of Puerto Rican Resistance," says Bad Bunny's nods extend beyond his own art and serve as a "very welcome recognition of Latin music that is growing."

"Music from the Spanish-speaking Caribbean has been shaping global music tastes since the 19th century," adds Albert Laguna, associate professor of ethnicity, race and migration and American studies at Yale. "Bad Bunny is another link in a much longer chain of the popularity of Caribbean music on a global stage."

Much of this music — particularly Latin trap and reggaetón, the genres Bad Bunny got his start in and continues to use in his new work — has been historically criminalized in Puerto Rico, not unlike hip-hop in the United States. Reggaetón in particular, Díaz points out, "comes from the most marginalized communities in Puerto Rico. And so, the fact that Bad Bunny is receiving nominations in three main categories, and this is an artist who came up with trap ... is the most groundbreaking thing about the entire situation."

Petra Rivera-Rideau, associate professor of American studies at Wellesley College and co-author of "P FKN R," says that element is particularly noteworthy because institutions often ignore marginalized genres — including at the Latin Grammys, a sister award show to the Grammys.

A victory in the major categories could have "profound, symbolic meaning," she says. But with a caveat: "I'm interested to see if this is going to open doors for other people." After all, Bad Bunny himself isn't immune to the Recording Academy's institutional biases: He already has three career Grammys, but all have been in música urbana categories — despite the fact that he is the most streamed artist on the planet.

Local-to-global appeal that meets the political moment

Across "Debí Tirar Más Fotos," Bad Bunny and his producers weave traditional Puerto Rican folkloric styles into a hyper-contemporary context. Latin trap and reggaetón aren't abandoned but fused with música jíbara, salsa, bomba, plena and even aguinaldo, a kind of Christmas music, in "Pitorro de Coco." While Bad Bunny's previous albums also fused different genres — including bossa nova, mambo, rock, merengue and more — this album's melange was more homegrown.

Laguna sees "Debí Tirar Más Fotos" as a direct challenge to the prevailing "formula for global pop stardom," which he describes as an artist making it locally, gaining traction and then "watering down" their sound into something commercial and palatable for a global audience.

"Bad Bunny went in the opposite direction. It's his most Puerto Rican album ever," says Laguna. He hopes it will communicate to other artists that they, too, can look to their ancestry and history for artmaking.

"There's so much amazing Latin music that has been overlooked and that's part of what is so beautiful about this moment," says Díaz. "And that's why it feels like a win for all Latinos."

The timing of the album's release and recognition, too, feels consequential. "The U.S. has a history of othering Latinos, othering the Spanish language. ... We're in a moment where that feels extremely acute," she continues. "For a community that is being targeted on such a deep level, it is a little bit of light, a little bit of faith that we can still carve out our place here."

Latinos and the Spanish-speaking community in the U.S. have grown increasingly wary amid growing anti-immigrant sentiment and raids, as President Donald Trump's immigration policies and executive actions have vastly expanded who is eligible for deportation and routine hearings have turned into deportation traps for migrants.

In an interview with i-D Magazine earlier this year, Bad Bunny mentioned that concerns around the mass deportations of Latinos factored into his decision not to tour in the continental U.S. (Hundreds of people have been detained in Puerto Rico itself since large-scale arrests began in late January.)

"The content of the lyrics — which are so steeped in the history of Puerto Rico, political histories, tourism and gentrification — there's so much rich political and historical content," Díaz adds. "This album is historic even without a Grammy win."

But if Bad Bunny does win, Díaz says, it will be "akin to Halle Berry being the first Black woman to win an Oscar. That was a watershed moment. Or Rita Moreno being the first Latina to win."

Beyond that, Laguna says the politics of the album are not exclusive to Puerto Rican or even Latino identity — "the lyrics on this album align with global struggles," he says. Take, for example, "Lo que le pasó a Hawaii" ("What happened to Hawaii"), a rallying cry for cultural autonomy in an era of neocolonialization.

The album's multigenerational appeal

Rivera-Rideau says one of the reasons "Debí Tirar Más Fotos" has resonated is not just the political implications of using folkloric music in addition to música urbana, but its sound. The traditional genres are "a lot more digestible" to listeners who embrace the antiquated taboos surrounding Latin trap and scoff at reggaetón's sexuality. As a result, the combination of sounds makes for an album that is "popular across generations," she says.

But it only works because it is "musically really interesting. If it was just traditional music, and that's only what people cared about, it wouldn't have done as well as it did," she explains. "Musically, it is super innovative and makes accessible a lot of these older genres that people in Puerto Rico listen to, but he's been able to globalize these very local genres in a way that no one else has."

That intergenerational appeal was a feature of Bad Bunny's landmark Puerto Rican residency, with the age and global diversity of its audience.

"A lot of people feel like this is a tense moment, it's a difficult moment. And here's someone giving us a sonic language in which to narrate this complex present," Laguna says. "There's pleasure, in political critique, that the music makes possible in a beautiful way. And I think that's very much welcomed."

The 68th Grammy Awards will be held Feb. 1, 2026, at Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles. The show will air on CBS and stream on Paramount+. For more coverage, visit https://apnews.com/hub/grammy-awards.

Broadway director Alex Timbers achieves a rare feat with 4 shows running simultaneously

By Mark Kennedy
AP Entertainment Writer



Emilio Madrid via AP

Alex Timbers, center, sits with left to right; Robert Petkoff and Bahiyah Hibah 'Moulin Rouge! The Musical,' Julia Grondin, Khori Michelle Petinaud and Larkin Reilly 'Just in Time,' Justin Collette and Isabella Esler 'Beetlejuice,' and Gracie Lawrence and Clyde Lawrence 'All Out: Comedy About Ambition' at the at The Nederlander Theatre in New York, Dec. 19, 2025.

NEW YORK — Fifteen years ago, rising theater director Alex Timbers achieved a remarkable feat: Still only in his early 30s, he had two shows running simultaneously on Broadway. As 2026 dawns, Timbers has now eclipsed that mark — he has four.

Timbers' latest, "All Out: Comedy About Ambition," joins his currently running hits "Beetlejuice," "Just in Time" and "Moulin Rouge! The Musical," the 2020 best musical winner that also earned him a best directing Tony Award.

"If I step back and think about what unites the shows, it's probably they're all trying to be joy-forward experiences and shows where the audience is acknowledged," says Timbers, now 47.

Previous directors to enjoy four simultaneous Broadway productions include Joe Mantello in 2016, Casey Nicholaw also in 2016 and Susan Stroman in 2001. Trevor Nunn did it twice, in 1988 and 1995. (Timbers' quadruple ends Saturday when "Beetlejuice" ends its run).

Breaking walls

Timbers' work often combines highbrow and lowbrow, sincerity and subversion. His four current Broadway works span a jukebox musical, a wacky movie adaptation, a spare and starry staged reading and a memory play-meets-biomusical.

One of Timbers' hallmarks is immediately breaking through the pretend wall between the actors and the audience, as when the ghoul Beetlejuice appears at the top of his show and comments, "A ballad already! And such a bold departure from the original source material."

"They're all sort of shows that involve almost direct address from the jump," Timbers says, "where there's a sort of an embrace of being there live. There is no sort of fourth wall."

Timbers had a breakout season in 2010 when two of his shows made it to Broadway: "The Pee-wee Herman Show" and "Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson," which he wrote and directed. In the first, he juggled the late Paul Reubens, visual jokes and 20 puppets. The other was an emo-driven rock musical about the seventh U.S. president, who strutted about in tight pants and eyeliner.

Timbers went on to work on the adaptation of "Rocky" for the stage, the stripped-down Peter Pan story "Peter and the Starcatcher" and with Talking Heads frontman David Byrne on his "America Utopia." For "Here Lies Love," the immersive disco tale of Philippine ex-first lady Imelda Marcos, he literally broke the fourth wall by letting the audience dance with the stars.

"I think that there's something sort of more raucous, more anarchic, that a certain audience wants. Something that's visceral and joyful," Timbers says. "Where pop and high art meet, I think that's where a lot of the audiences want to live as well."

Not one genre

Timbers — currently at work on a "The Princess Bride" musical — suspects the audiences of Broadway's future are looking for the same kind of shows he looks for: out-of-the-box, slightly dangerous things that maximize the skills of the star and deliver joy.

"I think that younger audiences and audiences that don't traditionally go to theater aren't necessarily looking for shows that sit specifically in one genre. I think they're looking for things that maximize entertainment and emotion and connection," he says.

Timbers, a student of Broadway history, looks backward to the future, inspired by the long-running "Ziegfeld Follies" from the first half of the 20th century or "Hellzapoppin," a hugely popular musical revue in the 1930s that had comedy, music, clowns, audience participation and adult-themed content and dancing, capturing the zeitgeist by constantly changing with the times.

"It was all these different variety elements that felt in a way very populist, but also very sophisticated, like the coolest date night on Broadway," he says. "I want to chase what 'Hellzapoppin' was trying to do 90 years ago and what it did for audiences."

MOVIE REVIEW

'The Plague' dives into a sink-or-swim water polo camp

By Jake Coyle
AP Film Writer



Independent Film Compnay via AP

This image released by IFC shows a scene from 'The Plague.'

The undercurrents of adolescent cruelty churn queasily in Charlie Polinger's stylish first feature, "The Plague."

The title of Polinger's film might bring to mind Stephen King or recent global history, but "The Plague" is set entirely around the clear, chlorinated pools and shadowy hallways of a water polo camp, circa 2003. There, 12-year-old Ben (Everett Blunck), a scrawny and sensitive kid, arrives for the second session. That's a key detail: Is there any greater horror than joining a summer camp where the friend groups are already established?

But there is really only one group: a lewd and boisterous lot led by a smirking, cocksure kid named Jake (Kayo Martin). And there is one outcast: Eli (Kenny Rasmussen), the kind of 12-year-old who's obviously smart but whose awkward, introverted manner and fondness for things such as magic tricks and "Les Miserables" inevitably make him an outsider. He also is covered in acne and has rashes across his back. Jake and the rest all say he has the plague. "No cure for him," Jake tells Ben.

These are the troubled coming-of-age waters that "The Plague" swims in. From the start, it's clear that Polinger, who also wrote the film, has a keen eye for both darkly gleaming surfaces and for the roiling torments that lurk below. "The Plague" is by no means charting new ground when it comes to adolescent torments; this is a movie working with very recognizable preteen types. But Polinger's talent for crafting ominous, murky atmospheres and perceptive adolescent dynamics make "The Plague" an auspicious debut feature.

While coming-of-age tales have played out before on baseball diamonds and football gridirons, the deep pools of water polo are a more novel setting. From the start, Polinger's camera, working with cinematographer Steven Breckon in 35 mm, drifts eerily toward the quiet frenzy underwater: the kicking legs and agitated bubbles. Their entry to adulthood is a sink-or-swim, with nothing to stand on.

When their coach (Joel Edgerton, also a producer) asks what water polo is, he calls on Ben, who offers: "Working together as one big family, or whatever." But far from collective, the world of "The Plague" is primal and survivalist. The coach is kind but ineffectual. Parents are distant and out of reach. This is "Lord of the Flies" in the pool.

That connection is most clear one night when the boys sneak out to some abandoned building, make a bonfire, smash a bunch of stuff and watch as Eli — who usually isn't even allowed in their presence — dances by spinning wildly around. Ben is more sensitive than Jake and his pals, and he looks concerned for Eli as soon as he arrives. But he's also more anxious about his own, tenuous-at-best place in the group, and he uses this moment to crash into Eli, knock him down and then make a show of cleaning off any "plague" residue on his arm.

In "The Plague," ostracism is as permanent and irremediable as any pandemic infection. As big-screen bullies go, Jake is a classic one, terrifically played with smarmy malice by Martin. Jake isn't taller or stronger than the rest, but he has a maturely manipulative feel for weak points. He doesn't so much unleash putdowns as he repeats back an awkward answer and lets his victim twist in the wind. Psychologically, he towers over the rest.

It's clear enough that "The Plague" is building toward some eruption of violence. Eli even looks a little like a young Vincent D'Onofrio in "Full Metal Jacket." Pain in the "The Plague," though, manifests itself inwardly. The most tragic thing in it is that even Eli seems to think "the plague" is real, that there really is something wrong with him. After briefly befriending him, Ben develops pimples and rashes of his own. Does he want to convince the others that there's no such thing as "the plague," or does he just want them to know he doesn't have it?

Polinger's film isn't a comfortable watch and it's not meant to be. It gets under the skin. That it's drawn partially from its director's own memories is surely one source of its potency. Yet because it's a movie about childhood that's clearly not for kids, one can shake off "The Plague," grateful to have left adolescence behind. This is a movie that makes you all the more thankful for adulthood, just as it renews your sympathy for those still wading such daunting waters.

"The Plague," an Independent Film Company release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for language, sexual material, self-harm/bloody images, and some drug and alcohol use — all involving children. Running time: 93 minutes. Three stars out of four.



Disney via AP

This image released by Disney shows Jodie Turner-Smith, center, in a scene from 'Tron: Ares.'

What to Stream: Kid Laroi, 'The Pitt,' and 'Tron: Ares'

By The Associated Press

Returns to "The Pitt," the Grid and music of Kid Laroi are some of the new television, films and music headed to a device near you.

The first week of January brings a pair of sophomore efforts: Laroi's album "Before I Forget" and the second season of the Emmy-winning hospital drama "The Pitt." This week's streaming offerings, as selected by The Associated Press' entertainment journalists, also include the return of "The Night Manager" after nearly a decade.

New movies to stream from Jan. 5-11

— Audiences can reenter the Grid when "Tron: Ares" hits Disney+ on Wednesday. The franchise's third film stars Jared Leto, Greta Lee and Jodie Turner-Smith and features a return of Jeff Bridges. The 1982 original starred Bridges as a hacker who's transported into a dangerous digital world and kicked off the cult franchise with then-state-of-the-art computer graphics and special effects. AP critic Mark Kennedy praised Leto and Lee's performances and said despite being a movie that "bites off too much," it was worth a watch. A bonus for music fans? The film's Nine Inch Nails soundtrack with some throwbacks to the original film's score.

— AP film team



AP File Photo

The Kid LAROI performs during the 2025 iHeartRadio Jingle Ball on Friday, Dec. 5, 2025, at Intuit Dome in Inglewood, Calif.

New music to stream from Jan. 5-11

— Grammy-nominated artist the Kid Laroi — a direct inheritor of Justin Bieber's glossy R&B-informed pop — will release his sophomore album, "Before I Forget," on Friday. Judging by the previously released singles, listeners can expect slow-burn breakup reflections ("A Perfect World") and high-hat heavy tracks with lovelorn lyrics ("A Cold Play"). It's frictionless listening to start the new year.

— AP Music Writer Maria Sherman

New series to stream from Jan. 5-11

— In what counts as a quick turnaround these days in the world of prestige TV, "The Pitt" returns for its second season, and second day in the life of a frenetic Pittsburgh emergency room run by Noah Wyle's beleaguered and beloved Dr. Robby. The first episode of Season 2 premieres Thursday on HBO Max at 9 p.m. Eastern. Expectations will be a lot higher this time. In the 10 months since Season 1 ended, "The Pitt" won the best drama Emmy along with four others, including best actor for Wyle and supporting actress for Katherine LaNasa, who will be returning despite her character vowing to quit after taking a punch. Ten months have also passed in the world of the show, which will again follow a single ER shift, this time on a July Fourth weekend.

Wyle

— After a much, much longer absence, "The Night Manager" will return for a second season. It's been nearly a decade since Tom Hiddleston's hotel worker-turned-spy stalked a dirty arms dealer on the show based on a novel by John le Carré. It was meant to be a limited series for the BBC and AMC, but its creators are now bringing it back with a new and original story. This time, its airing on Prime Video in the U.S., beginning with a three-episode drop on Sunday.

— AP Entertainment Writer Andrew Dalton

BTS announces March comeback date, putting an end to a nearly four-year hiatus

By Maria Sherman
AP Music Writer

NEW YORK — They're going to light up 2026 like dynamite: K-pop group BTS' comeback has an official date.

According to a note shared to social media by the entertainment company BigHit Music, the mega popular group will return on March 20.

That's after a nearly four-year hiatus, as all seven members of BTS — RM, Jin, Jimin, V, Suga, Jung Kook and j-hope — completed South Korea's mandatory military service.

"March 20th comeback confirmed," BigHit Music wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

Rapper Suga was the last group member to be released — from his duties as a social service agent, an alternative to serving in the military that he reportedly chose due to a shoulder injury. That was in June 2025.



AP File Photo

Korean pop band BTS appears at the 2019 Variety's Hitmakers Brunch in West Hollywood, Calif., on Dec. 7, 2019.

The six others, RM, V, Jimin, Jung Kook, Jin and j-hope, served in the army.

BTS tiered their enlistments, giving ample time for its members to focus on solo projects while the group was on a break.

Last summer, the group teased a world tour and announced that a new album would be released in the spring of 2026. At the time, they said they would begin working on the project in July 2025.

"Since it will be a group album, it will reflect each member's thoughts and ideas," they said in a statement. "We're approaching the album with the same mindset we had when we first started."

The 2026 album will mark their first since 2022's anthology, "Proof," their 2021 Japanese compilation album "BTS, the Best," and their last studio album, "Be," released in 2020.

MOVIE REVIEW

The Korean satire 'No Other Choice' is a masterful thriller from Park Chan-wook

By Jake Coyle
AP Film Writer

Leaves and bodies fall in "No Other Choice," Park Chan-wook's masterfully devilish satire with a chilling autumnal wind blowing through it.

"Come on, fall," urges You Man-su (Lee Byung-hun) as he grills an eel for dinner for his family in the opening moments of Park's film. He's eager for the season to start but unprepared for the amount of cyclical collapse — familial, economic, even existential — that Park has in store.

Man-su pronounces the very thing no movie protagonist ever should: "I've got it all." He lives with his wife, Miri (Son Ye-jin), and two children (Kim Woo Seung, Choi So Yul) in a handsome modernist house in the woods, with two golden retrievers. But almost as soon as he says that, Man-su's fortunes turn. After 25 years at a paper mill, Man-su is laid off, as are many others, with little fanfare or apology. Desperation begins to set in. He's forced to sell the home he loves so dearly, including the attached greenhouse where he tends to plants and bonsai trees. They even have to, horror of horrors, cancel Netflix.

Another movie might have sunk with Man-su into bankruptcy and midlife struggle, following his quest to find a new line of work and restart his life. This is not that movie. Man-su, considering his prospects, decides he needs to better his odds of new employment. After posting a fake job listing and comparing all the incoming resumes, he decides he's about the fifth best option for any new paper mill managerial jobs. He decides to kill the ones with better credentials.

The concept, a Grade-A barnburner of a movie idea, is not new. "No Other Choice," South Korea's Oscar submission, is based on Donald Westlake's 1997 crime novel "The Ax," which Costa-Gavras also made into a film in 2005. But Park, the filmmaker of such diabolical movies as "Oldboy," "The Handmaiden" and "Decision to Leave," is exquisitely suited to the material. This is a director capable of conjuring menacing brutality with nothing but a hallway and hammer.

And in "No Other Choice," he remains at the peak of his powers, archly and elegantly spinning a yarn about a murderous rampage that accumulates wider and wider reverberations. "Hitchcockian" is a term that often, understandably, finds Park. He is, like Hitch, a seemingly polite and erudite man with a latently dark imagination. But for more than two decades, Park has cut his own bloody, unyieldingly meticulous path in movies that are rarely predictable, very funny and sneakily revelatory.

Much of the delight of "No Other Choice," which Park co-wrote with Lee Kyoung-mi, Don McKellar and Jahye Lee, isn't just seeing how Man-su's scheme goes but how Park frames it. He is probably the preeminent filmmaker of putting wild, outrageous happenings into cleverly formal, eminently stylish imagery. As Man-su bumbles from target to target, each potential murder is a window into another family reckoning with unemployment. The way Man-su spies on them (or worse) adds delicious layers of satire. Relish, especially, the way Park uses reflections and trees.

How "No Other Choice" puts capitalism in the crosshairs, with a handsome house in the center, will no doubt bring to mind another Korean satire: Bong Joon Ho's "Parasite." Park had been wanting to make his film for almost two decades. Either way, the two movies would make one hell of a destabilizing double feature.

If "Parasite" was the feat of an ensemble, "No Other Choice" belongs to Lee. His Man-su is no killer at heart, and his attempts to become one are as comical as they are Dostoyevskian. The tone is so farcical that the gruesomeness of some of Man-su's acts come slyly. How many movies have we seen about a parent driven, heroically, to extremes to defend their family? Man-su's circumstance is frightfully understandable. "Our family is in a war," he says. To keep them happy — in particular Miri — Man-su thinks whatever it takes is necessary.

But what makes "No Other Choice" brilliant is how it shows that perceived predicament as a ubiquitous mistake of modern life. I won't spoil the incredible final minutes of Park's film, but they expand the notion of necessary termination — of a job, of a life — to automation, AI and beyond. The leaves falling in "No Other Choice" aren't coming back in the spring.

"No Other Choice," a Neon release is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for violence, language and some sexual content. In Korean with English subtitles. Running time: 139 minutes. Four stars out of four.



Neon via AP

This image released by Neon shows Lee Byung-hun in a scene from 'No Other Choice.'

PRINTABLE PUZZLES

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The New York Times Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz

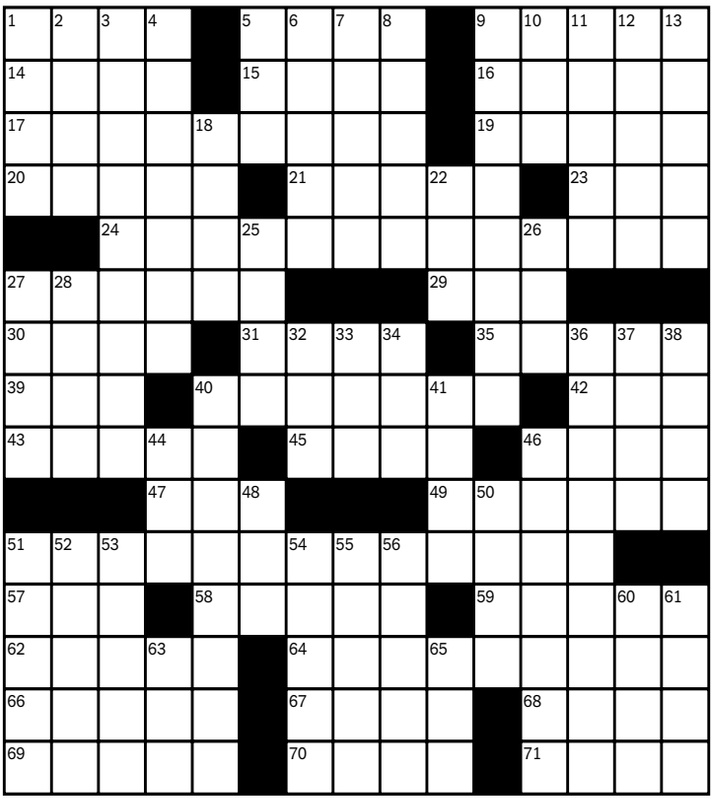
No. 1201

ACROSS

1 Office announcement
5 Jump
9 Repairs a hole
14 Ingredient in some smoothie bowls
15 Plus
16 To no ___ (without success)
17 "Remedy" for a riled-up person
19 Dashboard instrument
20 CR-V or Civic
21 George who played Sulu on "Star Trek"
23 Headstone letters
24 Penalty for bank fraud
27 Read thoroughly
29 Rowing implement
30 "Madam, I'm ___"
31 Emu relative
35 Locks up
39 Lower, as the lights
40 Hip person, in old slang
42 Genre for Cardi B or LL Cool J
43 Curry of the N.B.A., informally
45 Boat tie-up location
46 Tortilla ingredient
47 Enjoy a banquet
49 Goes over by hand, as a drawing
51 Antithesis
57 "I've solved it!"
58 Creator of Asteroids and Pong
59 "You should come foraging with me, because I'm a ___" (bad pun)
62 Assigned stars, say
64 Cause of some wintry weather ... or a hint to 17-, 24-, 40- and 51-Across
66 Woman who bests Sherlock in "A Scandal in Bohemia"
67 Largest joint in the body
68 Some airport listings, for short
69 Sends an eggplant emoji, say
70 Feudal underling
71 Fresh and glowing, in skin-care terminology

DOWN

1 ___ 1 (speed of sound)
2 Result of yelling into a cave
3 Supercomputer precursor
4 Container on a ship from the Mideast
5 Napkin's spot
6 Best of the best
7 Narnian talking lion
8 Classic music style beloved by Weird Al Yankovic
9 Performance in which a lady might be sawed in half
10 Actress Noblezada of "Hadestown"
11 Third-smallest country in the world (eight square miles)
12 "Dinner is served!"
13 Caught some Z's
18 Country where sticky rice is a staple
22 Prefix with friendly
25 Zilch
26 British singer Rita
27 Adds unnecessary words to
28 Computer menu heading next to "File"
32 Preceder of skip and jump
33 Ex-QB Manning
34 Absolutely nail
36 Bit of musical flair
37 Effortlessness
38 Establishments offering facials
40 Game in which sound effects are banned
41 Counterpart to sciences
44 Split-___ soup
46 Grew up
48 Young 'un
50 Bit of musical flair
51 "Les Misérables" setting
52 Midway Airport alternative
53 Hospital glove material
54 Wolf groups
55 Disposed (to)
56 Edmonton hockey player
60 Chew, like a dog on a bone
61 Teensy
63 Tolkien tree creature
65 "For sure"



PUZZLE BY HANNAH BINNEY

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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

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PRINTABLE PUZZLES

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

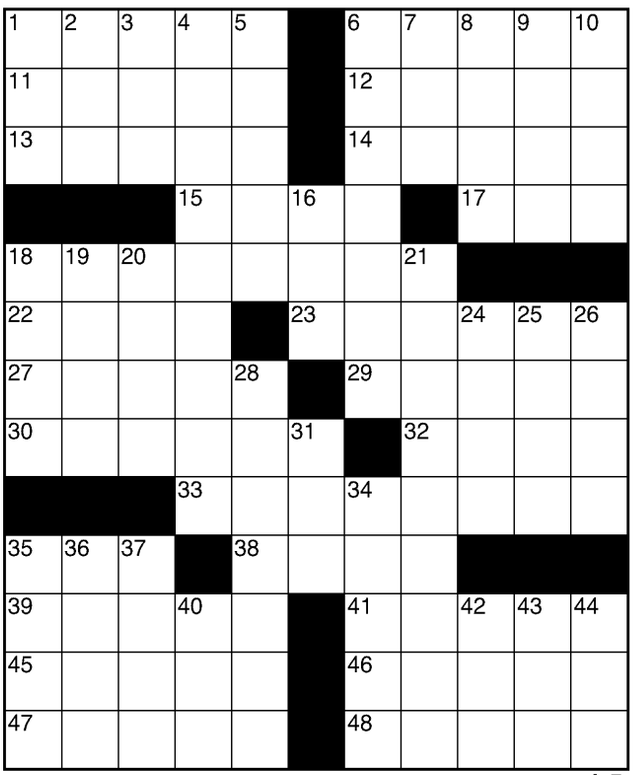
1 Pie part
6 Inflexible
11 Robust quality
12 San Diego player
13 Radio studio sign
14 Cove
15 Brightly colored
17 Seventh Greek letter
18 Pills in experimental studies
22 Lounge about
23 Limber
27 Pueblo pots
29 Floor worker
30 Place for a seaweed wrap
32 Close by
33 Motorcycle attachments
35 Obtained
38 Prone to prying
39 Spicy Mexican marinade
41 Throw away
45 Letter flourish
46 Suspect's claim
47 Geometry class challenge
48 Saudi Arabia neighbor

DOWN

1 Pigeon sound
2 Director Howard
3 Thurman of "Kill Bill"
4 Health club offering
5 First odd prime
6 Car skid
7 Light brown
8 Not active
9 Worry
10 Greek cheese
16 Dict. label on an old word
18 Proceed slowly
19 Song by the Kinks
20 Friend
21 Washer phase
24 Entreaty
25 Shakespearean king
26 Screws up
28 "Maude" or "Frasier"
31 Hubbub
34 School paper
35 Surprised sound
36 German river
37 Matador's foe
40 Life story, for short
42 Crater part
43 Penny prez
44 Sewing aid

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

Saturday's answer



1-5

ACROSS

1 Bread spread
4 Nullifies
9 Chow down
12 Assoc.
13 Fund
14 Previously
15 "La La Land" actress
17 Old Olds
18 Airport screening org.
19 Move fast
21 Shrewd
24 "Alternatively," in texts
25 ISP giant
26 Like Abner
28 Malia's sibling
31 "Arrivederci —"
33 Gut-punch reaction
35 Ocho —, Jamaica
36 Indian tea region
38 Chart format
40 Republicans
41 Advanced math
43 Research aids
45 Tennis great Williams
47 Highland hat
48 St. crosser
49 From that point on
54 Author Harper
55 Soprano Fleming
56 Bit of physics
57 Blaster's need
58 Plum relatives
59 "Adios!"

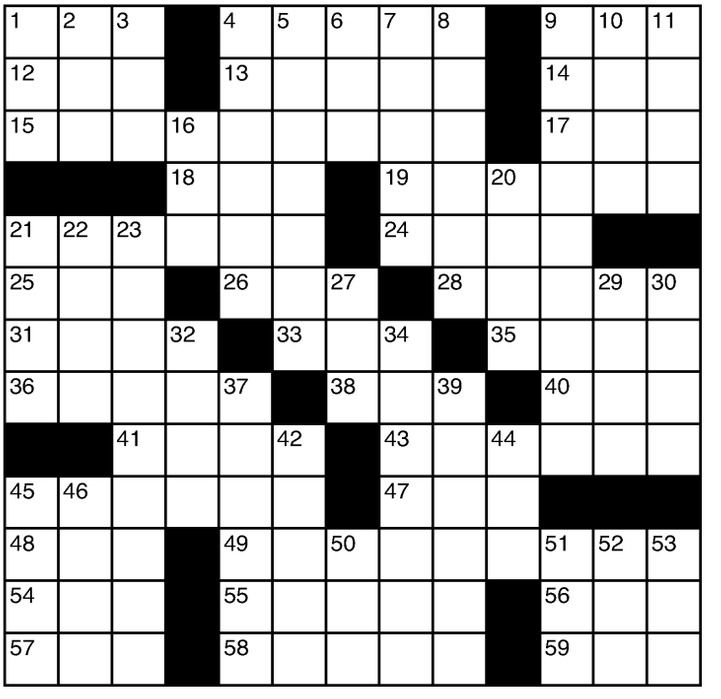
DOWN

1 Average guy
2 Pitcher's pride
3 "Ben-Hur" studio
4 Yacht or schooner
5 Toronto's province
6 Wedding words
7 "Tiny Bubbles" singer
8 Workout wear
9 Capricorn, for one
10 Baseball's Tommie
11 Animated figure
16 Off-roader (Abbr.)
20 Fly like an eagle
21 Irene of "Fame"
22 Bathrooms, to Brits
23 Nightmarish address
27 Prune
29 Owl call
30 Nile vipers
32 Swiss river
34 Greek orchard planting
37 Gold diggers?
39 Deletes
42 Judge's prop
44 Arles buddy
45 Bagel variety
46 Tied
50 Rock's Brian
51 Pen tip
52 Coquettish
53 Away from WSW

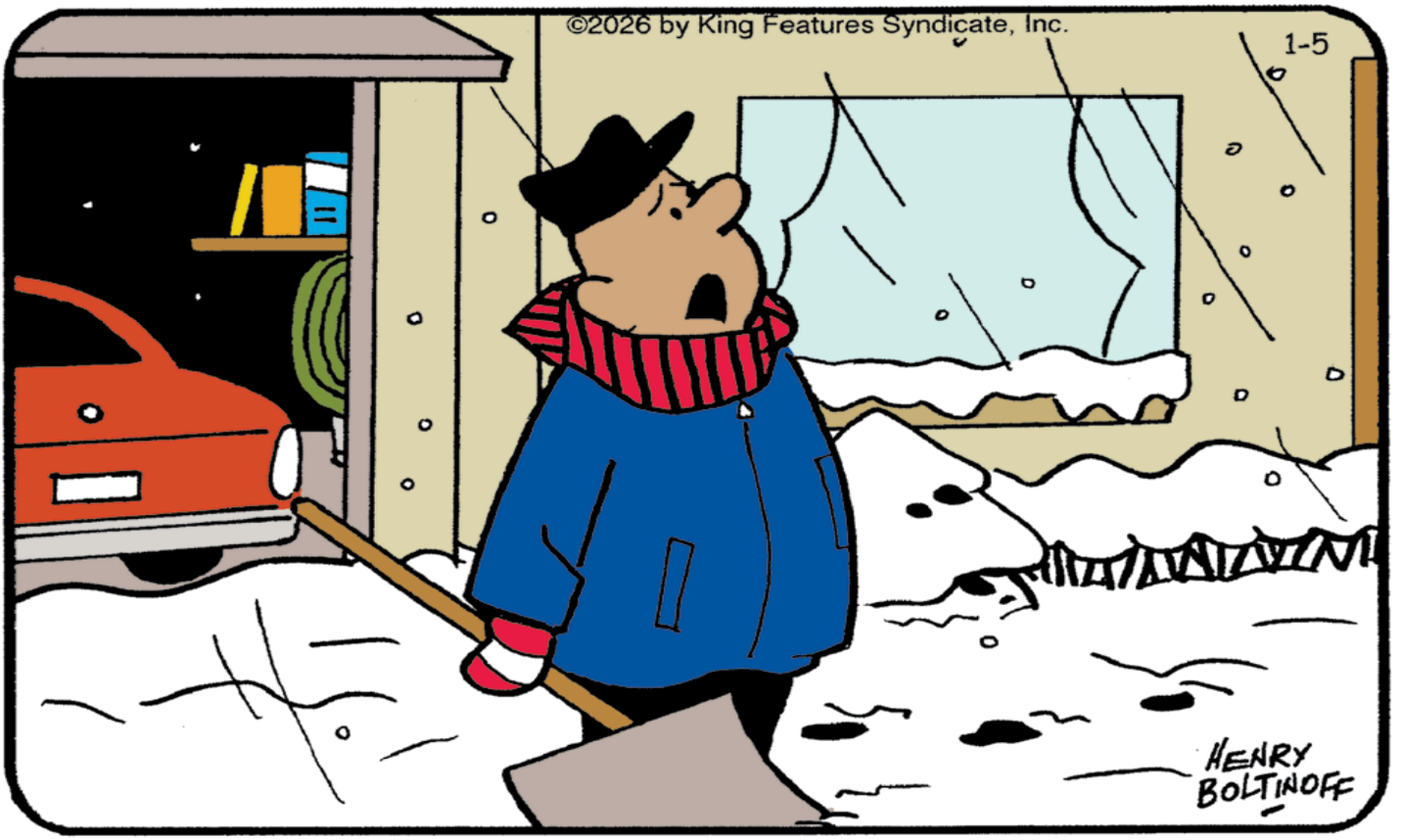
Solution time: 21 mins.

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

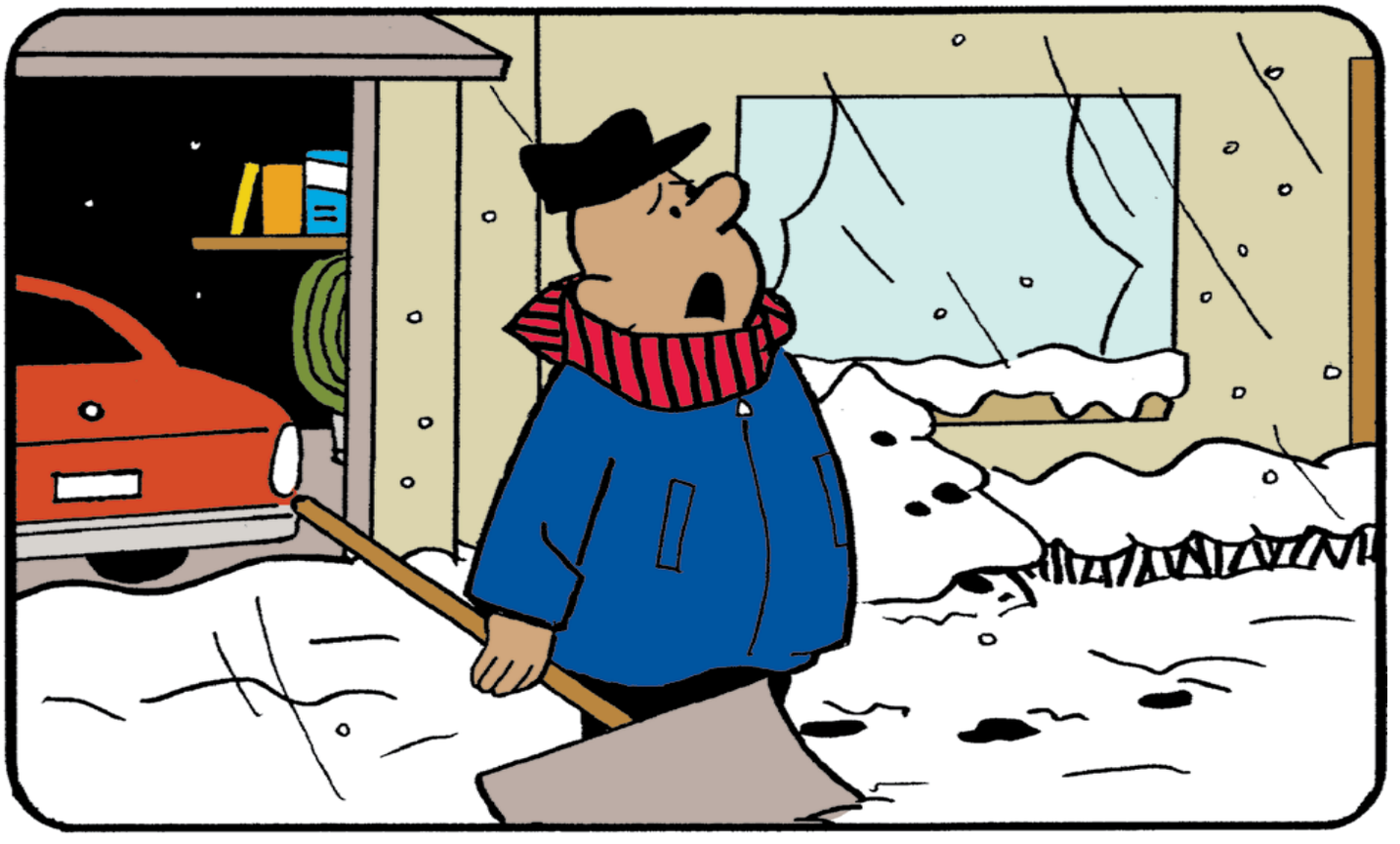
Saturday's answer 1-5



PRINTABLE PUZZLES



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Shovel is wider. 2. Pocket is higher. 3. Tire is moved. 4. Cap is moved. 5. Tree is taller. 6. Mitten is missing.

PRINTABLE PUZZLES

WORD SLEUTH • STEAM ENGINES

F E C A X V T R P N L J H W H

F D B Y X V T R P O M K A O I

G E D B R O C K E T Z X R R W

U N T O R N A D O O T S A R R

Q O O N L J I C G M A F G A S

F L Y I N G S C O T S M A N U

D A C A L L U B N H O J I E R

Y D D R A L L A M U X W N E Y

V L T Y K W A H O M S R P R P

O E O N L K J Y O B G I B G A

I R G Y L L I B G N I F F U P

Saturday's unlisted clue: PEANUT

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
Monday's unlisted clue hint: ROTATING FUNNEL CLOUD

Adler	Horsa	Mohawk	Rocket
Big Boy	John Bull	Niagara	Royal Scot
Flying Scotsman	Lion	Papyrus	Tom Thumb
Green Arrow	Mallard	Puffing Billy	

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King Classic Sudoku

8	1						3	5
3	9		6	8	1		7	2
		7	2			1		
	7	3	5				6	
	2		7	3				8
1					6		5	7
			3		9			6
	8		1			5	9	
	3	9		4		7	2	

Difficulty: ★

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1-5 CRYPTOQUIP

T X A B N T Z F E C E N S A M

V Z Z J P A O P Z X A E G Y A P N C Q F G

T N P X M V O Z Z Y , N Y N L X P

P M S A Y Q J T A A G N B L G N E E J .

Saturday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU WERE PLANNING TO FOUND A SKYDIVING SCHOOL, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT EVERYONE WILL DROP OUT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals W

JUMBLE®

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

OJEYN

MUHTB

CBAEHL

RZAADH



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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

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Answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: FRONT STUNT TAVERN DECEIT
Answer: The oceanographers studied the flow of the ocean to keep up with — CURRENT EVENTS

PRINTABLE PUZZLES

8	1	2	4	9	7	6	3	5
3	9	5	6	8	1	4	7	2
4	6	7	2	5	3	1	8	9
9	7	3	5	1	8	2	6	4
5	2	6	7	3	4	9	1	8
1	4	8	9	2	6	3	5	7
2	5	1	3	7	9	8	4	6
7	8	4	1	6	2	5	9	3
6	3	9	8	4	5	7	2	1

Difficulty: ★ 1/5

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FOR RELEASE MONDAY, JAN. 5, 2026

SUPER QUIZ

Take this Super Quiz to a Ph.D. Score 1 point for each correct answer on the Freshman Level, 2 points on the Graduate Level and 3 points on the Ph.D. Level.

Subject: WORDS STARTING WITH 2 VOWELS
(e.g., Where the sun rises. Answer: East.)

FRESHMAN LEVEL
1. Your father's sister.
Answer_____
2. What we breathe.
Answer_____
3. Not in.
Answer_____

GRADUATE LEVEL
4. An order of classical Greek architecture.
Answer_____
5. The main artery from the heart.
Answer_____
6. A narrow passage between rows of seats.
Answer_____

PH.D. LEVEL
7. An African animal that feeds on termites and ants.
Answer_____
8. Strange, mysterious and frightening.
Answer_____
9. He unwittingly killed his father and married his mother.
Answer_____

ANSWERS: 1. Aunt. 2. Air. 3. Out. 4. Ionic. 5. Aorta. 6. Aisle. 7. Aardvark. 8. Eerie. 9. Oedipus.

SCORING:
18 points — congratulations, doctor; 15 to 17 points — honors graduate; 10 to 14 points — you're plenty smart, but no grind; 4 to 9 points — you really should hit the books harder; 1 point to 3 points — enroll in remedial courses immediately; 0 points — who reads the questions to you?

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STEAM ENGINES

