TIMES LEADER

118 YEARS STRONG

Monday, February 23, 2026 | BREAKING NEWS AT TIMESLEADER.COM | Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania • $1.50

County adds 24 new workers in January

Luzerne County government added 24 new employees in January, while four prior workers were rehired, according to the latest monthly personnel report.

Ten of the new workers are prison correctional officers hired at $19.05 per hour to fill vacancies that have accrued, the report said: Brandon Adams, Justin Dolman, Keith Gilligan, Joy Henry, Ashley Lyons, Eric Masters, Lindsey Place, Jonathan Rivera, Christopher Rodriguez, and Alec Todd.

The other new employees, their positions and hourly compensation, the report said, are: Molly Banks, court judicial assistant, $24.78; Stacy DeAngelis, 911 PSAP supervisor, $25.64; Liam Frederick, Treasurer's Office clerk 3, $15; Irakli Gjergji, court law clerk, $43.34; Laura Hatem, Children, Youth and Families (CYF) caseworker 1, $20.91; Bradley Keeler, Budget and Finance senior accountant, $26.37; Karissa Kross, solicitor executive secretary, $20.51; Kathleen Lockman, Area Agency on Aging senior center director 2, $21.39; Edward Macrae, District Attorney's Office gun violence reduction agent, $35.90; Lauren Moritz, Controller's Office internal auditor, $20.51; Ann Pedana, courts executive secretary, $31.08; Theresa Porter, Aging Agency case aide 2, $17.16; Mikayla Sofchak, DA's Office clerk 2, $15.53; and Madison Wickkiser, Magisterial District Court clerk 5, $17.61.



Jennifer Learn-Andes
County Notebook

The four rehired workers, their positions, and hourly compensation are: Tyler Gates, assistant public defender, $36.69; Sara Kolmansperger, Magisterial District Court clerk 5, $17.61; Landon Leshko, part-time assistant district attorney, $42.45; and Caitlyn Tallarico, court law clerk, $43.34.

Departures

Ten workers resigned in January, the report said. They are: Amanda Adams, DA's Office administrative assistant; Jamie Greech, court administrative trial specialist; Jessica Hart-Shover, Veteran Affairs administrative assistant; Stephen Hughes, sheriff deputy; Nicole Litostansky, court executive secretary; Hope Littzi, CYF clerk typist; Erik Miller, court law clerk; Amy Newhart and Veranda Brown Stritzinger, CYF caseworker 2s; and Yancleys Nunez Santos, CYF caseworker 1.

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Is Pa. missing out on millions?

False claims laws in other states prove to be beneficial

By Charlotte Keith
For Spotlight PA

HARRISBURG — For more than two decades, state lawmakers from both parties have pushed for a new law to crack down on fraudulent government spending and encourage whistleblowers to come forward.

Each time, powerful health care and business interests stunted those efforts, arguing the legislation would lead to a deluge of frivolous lawsuits and put struggling rural hospitals out of business.

Supporters hope the proposal finally makes it across the finish line this year.

Last summer, a bill that would give the state a new way to target fraud passed the state House with broad bipartisan support, but it has not advanced in the state Senate. Democratic Gov. Josh Shapiro highlighted the issue in his budget address earlier this month, saying the law would allow Pennsylvania to "collect additional damages and recoup more state dollars that would otherwise be lost to fraud."

"Let's finally get it done," he said.

The proposed law would mirror the federal False Claims Act, which allows whistleblowers to file lawsuits on the government's behalf and receive a share of the money that's recovered in damages and penalties, or paid out as a settlement. Federal prosecutors say the law is one of their most powerful tools against fraud.

In the most recent fiscal year, false claims cases recovered more than $6.8 billion in settlements and judgments, federal figures

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About Spotlight PA
Spotlight PA is an independent, nonpartisan, and nonprofit newsroom producing investigative and public-service journalism that holds power to account and drives positive change in Pennsylvania.



Commonwealth Media Services
Gov. Josh Shapiro unveils his 2026 budget address in the Pennsylvania Capitol.



Margaret Roarty | Times Leader
Xavier Holdridge, 5, of New York, shows off his best superhero moves at NEPA Comic Con Sunday.

Area pop culture fans attend NEPA Comic Con

By Margaret Roarty
mroarty@timesleader.com

DICKSON CITY — Fans of everything from Star Wars to Scooby-Doo gathered at the Moon Ballroom in Dickson City on Sunday for the final day of NEPA Comic Con.

Vendors sold homemade crafts, Pokémon cards, comics, and more, while cosplayers of all ages dressed up as their favorite characters from across movies, TV, and video games.

Eric Kropiewnicki, convention organizer and owner of Moon Tavern, said attendance was a little slower on Sunday because of the impending snowstorm, but plenty of people still came out to have fun.

"We had presale tickets up until we opened the doors at noon," he said. "So, we're doing well."

"Star Wars" was the focus of the convention, now in its third year, and featured special guests Susanna Malak, who played a Jawa in "The Mandalorian" and "The Book of Boba Fett," as well as Christine Galey, known for several roles in "Star Wars" including "Skeleton Crew," "The Mandalorian" and inside R2-D2 in "The Book of Boba Fett," as the first women to play the role.



Margaret Roarty | Times Leader
Voice actor Trevor Devall talks with an attendee at Sunday's NEPA Comic Con.

Other guests included voice actor Trevor Devall, who has performed in hundreds of animated productions, including movies, TV shows, and video games, and comic book inker, creator, and animator Jeff Brennan, who worked on "Courage and Cowardly Dog" and created the independent comic book character "Cyber girl L.E.E.T.A."

Additionally, groups like the costuming fan club The Rebel Legion, Garrison Carida, part of the 501st Legion, the world's premiere

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JOIN THE CONVERSATION

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OBITUARIES
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If you need a personal injury lawyer
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Missing

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show, mostly from lawsuits involving alleged health care fraud. More than three-quarters of the money came from cases initiated by whistleblowers.

At least 29 states — including California, Florida, New York, and Texas — have passed their own versions of the law. Pennsylvania is the largest state without one. (Philadelphia and Allegheny County also have false claims laws.)

One reason states pass their own laws: a financial incentive from the federal government.

Many false claims cases involve allegations of fraud in Medicaid, which is funded jointly by states and the federal government. The financial proceeds from these lawsuits are also shared. States that have their own false claims laws can receive an extra 10% from the federal share.

Without its own law, Pennsylvania is leaving that money on the table and passing up another avenue to fight fraud, said state Sen. Lindsey Williams, D-Allegheny, who has introduced legislation to create a state false claims act.

"There is money that is being wasted, and we have an opportunity to do the best job we can to get that recovered," she said, adding, "It's way past time."

Medicaid math

The federal False Claims Act is a product of the U.S. Civil War.

President Abraham Lincoln signed it into law in 1863 to fight back against contractors who sold the Union Army feeble and even blind horses, gunpowder bulked out with sawdust, and ships with rotting wood concealed beneath a fresh coat of paint.

In 1986, the law was amended to allow whistleblowers to sue on the government's behalf and receive a portion of the proceeds. Since then, lawsuits initiated by whistleblowers have accounted for the lion's share of cases filed and money recovered.

Some states limit their false claims laws to Medicaid cases, but the proposed legislation in Pennsylvania would cover a wider range of state spending.

Here's how the proposed law would work: If an employee of a state contractor believes the company is billing for work that hasn't been performed, they could file a lawsuit on the commonwealth's behalf.

The suit would initially be filed under seal, giving the state attorney general at least 60 days to investigate further. The Office of Attorney General would have the option to pursue the case; otherwise, the plaintiff could proceed on their own. If the company were found liable, it would have to pay three times Pennsylvania's actual losses, as well as a civil penalty — although most cases would likely end in voluntary settlements.

If the case involved alleged Medicaid fraud, Pennsylvania would split the proceeds with the federal government. As long as Pennsylvania's law met federal standards, the commonwealth would receive an additional 10% from the federal government's share.

The whistleblower could receive anywhere from 10% to 30% of any settlement or damages, depending on a judge's determination of how significant the information they provided was to the case. The law would also give whistleblowers additional protection from retaliation.

Whistleblowers often face immense personal risk in reporting wrongdoing. Advocates say that offering them a financial incentive to come forward is crucial because tips from insiders are the most effective way of uncovering fraud.

A 2024 survey by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners reviewed almost 2,000 reported cases of fraud and concluded that 43% were brought to light by a tip from a whistleblower — by far the most common method.

Opponents of a state false claims law say it would encourage opportunistic "bounty hunters" to bring lawsuits that most companies would likely settle to avoid the onerous financial penalties, regardless of the merits of the underlying allegations.

"It becomes lawsuit abuse masquerading as fighting abuse," said Curt Schroder, executive director of the Pennsylvania Coalition for Civil Justice Reform, which represents businesses and industry groups opposed to the bill.

The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania says a state false claims act could force medical providers to cut back their services, warning that "rural hospitals may be just one frivolous lawsuit away from closure."

The state association representing certified public accountants also opposes the bill because it would allow cases to be filed over state and local tax issues. This could lead to lawsuits over differences of opinion on unclear tax rules, the organization argues.

The bill that passed the state House last year includes a provision that would require a plaintiff to pay the defendant's legal fees if their case was unsuccessful and a judge found the lawsuit was "frivolous, clearly vexatious or brought primarily for purposes of harassment."

Still, state House Minority Leader Rep. Jesse Topper (R., Bedford), who voted against the bill, said during the floor debate that it does not do enough to ensure lawsuits are not filed over minor mistakes. He said he supported the concept, but "we need to ensure businesses and hospitals are also sustainable."

Missing millions

One point of contention is how much money Pennsylvania could expect to bring in by passing its own false claims law.

A legislative analysis of the bill that passed the state House in 2025 did not attempt to put a figure on this. It is estimated that enforcing the law would cost roughly $1.4 million in the first two years, because the state attorney general's office would need to hire more than 20 additional staff.

Opponents argue that with its own law, Pennsylvania could actually bring in less money – even with the 10% federal bonus. That's because the commonwealth would have to pay the whistleblower's share from its portion of the proceeds. Under the status quo, Pennsylvania keeps all of that money. (In a seemingly incompatible scenario, they also warn that a new law would prompt a surge of lawsuits.)

Supporters agree that Pennsylvania would collect less on a case-by-case basis, but contend this would be more than outweighed by an increase in the number of cases filed.

"We are talking about tens of millions more dollars being received that aren't even being pursued," said Eric Weitz, president of the Pennsylvania Association for Justice, which represents trial lawyers.

"Would you rather have to pay 30% to get another 20, 50, 100 million dollars per year or just not have it at all?"

Other states have brought in millions of dollars after passing false claims laws, a 2019 report by the state House Government Oversight Committee found. Between 2015 and 2018, according to the report, Texas recovered almost $4 million; Florida, more than $6 million; and Massachusetts, almost $22 million.

There was "ample evidence," the report concluded, that Pennsylvania should follow in its footsteps.

25 years of trying

The effort to create a state False Claims Act in Pennsylvania goes back years.

In 1999 and 2001, false claims bills passed the state House unanimously but stalled in the upper chamber. Similar measures were introduced in almost every legislative session between 2005 and 2025, but did not progress.

"We could never get a compromise done," said state Rep. Bryan Cutler, R-Lancaster, who previously served as majority leader and speaker. Cutler voted in favor of the bill the House passed last summer, but said at the time it needed "stronger guardrails."

The idea seemed to gather momentum in 2019, after a statewide grand jury found "systemic issues" that left Medicaid in Pennsylvania vulnerable to fraud.

Shapiro, then state attorney general, joined with a group of mostly Republican lawmakers to propose reforms, including yet another attempt at passing a state false claims act.

Not having such a law, Shapiro said at the time, had a "significant and negative ramification" for taxpayers. He called the proposed legislation "a good, commonsense idea with bipartisan support that deserves the attention of both chambers."

That effort was unsuccessful, but a false claims bill introduced by Rep. Frank Burns, D-Cambria, eventually passed the state House with broad bipartisan support last summer.

The state Senate has

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County

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Transfers

Seven employees changed positions through the internal merit hiring process, the report said.

These workers, their new positions and hourly compensation: Mark Keyes, detective, $35.90; Brittany Sarosky, courts executive secretary, $31.08; Carly Snyder, CYF caseworker 2, $23.33; Cheryl Sobeski-Reedy, court law clerk, $43.34; Sean Patton and Marie Richardson, corrections officers, $19.05; and Aria Wight, court administrative trial specialist, $20.88.

Nanticoke/West Nanticoke Bridge

County Council is set to vote Tuesday on a formal agreement with Modjeski and Masters Inc. to perform design and engineering for the county-owned Nanticoke/West Nanticoke Bridge over the Susquehanna River.

County Manager Romilda Crocamo closed the bridge in March 2025 after engineers performing an inspection found further deterioration and section loss of primary, load-carrying components. The alternate route is the Route 29/South Cross Valley Expressway crossing, officially called the John S. Fine Bridge.

Totaling 2,072 feet, the bridge connects Nanticoke and the West Nanticoke section of Plymouth Township. The crossing was constructed in 1914 and last rehabilitated in 1987.

County Council selected Modjeski and Masters Inc. as the engineer in August 2025.

In addition to $10 million in federal funding allocated through the state for this project, the county has access to a $55 million casino gambling fund established for county infrastructure. Because federal funding is involved, the engineer must first develop three options for the bridge, officials said.

The contract with Modjeski and Masters would be capped at $1 million. A copy of the proposed agreement is posted in the agenda packet at luzernecounty.org.

Tuesday's meeting starts at 6 p.m. in the county courthouse on River Street in Wilkes-Barre. Instructions for the remote attendance option will be posted in council's online public meetings section at luzernecounty.org.

Purchasing, new division

Council will hold a public hearing on a proposed purchasing policy update at 5:45 p.m. before voting on the matter at the 6 p.m. meeting.

Another public hearing is set for 5:50 p.m. to seek comment on a proposed new economic development division, which is also scheduled for a council decision during the voting meeting.

Council won't be voting on a proposed immigration resolution that prompted significant public comment earlier this month. Council Chairman Jimmy Sabatino said he checked with his colleagues, and there was "no appetite to put this particular resolution on the agenda for a vote."

Public comment

Council is also set to vote Tuesday on a policy change for emailed public comments.

Instead of publicly reading each email during meetings, the proposed change would require council to publicly announce the names of the senders and post copies of the emails to the online agenda.

The change was prompted by an influx of emailed comments — some similar templates recommended by advocacy groups online.

Citizens will still have an opportunity to voice public comments in person and through the remote platform during meetings.

Introduced by Councilman Chris Belles, the proposal said it "preserves the reasonable opportunity for residents or taxpayers of Luzerne County to participate in County Council meetings and recognizes that reading all written correspondence is unreasonable and not required or provided by the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act."

State of the county

Crocamo will present the required annual state of the county address to council in the work session following Tuesday's voting meeting.

County zoning

The county GIS, Planning and Zoning Department scheduled a public forum from 5 to 7 p.m. on March 5 in the county courthouse for residents to learn more about a draft county zoning ordinance amendment that would regulate data centers.

Department representatives and county attorneys will be on hand to provide information and answer questions.

If approved, the ordinance will take effect in 20 municipalities that rely on county zoning instead of handling it on their own: the boroughs of Avoca, Courtdale, Dupont, Duryea, Hughestown, Jeddo, Laflin, New Columbus, Pringle, Warrior Run, West Wyoming, and Yatesville, and the townships of Conyngham, Fairmount, Hunlock, Huntington, Lake, Newport, Ross, and Union.

"The growing need for this ordinance is evident in the amount of data center proposals that are appearing across the county," Dan Reese, county GIS, Planning and Zoning director, said in the announcement. "We want to hear from residents about the county's plan to regulate the centers and make sure their concerns are addressed."

The draft is under review by the county administration and county Planning Commission. County Council approval is necessary for the amendment to take effect. A copy of the draft is posted in the GIS, Planning and Zoning section at luzernecounty.org.

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

TIMES LEADER
(USPS 499710) • Publishes 365 Days a Year
90 E. Market St., Wilkes-Barre, PA, 18701
Periodical postage paid at Wilkes-Barre, PA
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
Times Leader, 90 E. Market St., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701

Office Hours: Mon.-Fri. 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. Closed Sat. & Sun.
Main Number: 570.829.7100
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A meaningful Lenten suggestion



Bill O'Boyle

Beyond the Byline



Aimee Dilger | Times Leader file photo

The Rev. Thomas Looney speaks at the Chapel of Christ the King church at King's College in 2019.

WILKES-BARRE — For Catholics, Lent is a time for reflection and adjustment.

As always, I attended Ash Wednesday services at the magnificent King's College chapel, where we received our blessing — proven with a large cross applied to our foreheads.

A few years ago, we were given Lenten fortune cookies with "suggestions" on what we should abstain from for the next 40 days.

A young woman in front of me opened hers, and her shoulders dropped. I heard her say, "Oh, I can't do that." Her friend asked her what she got, and the young woman replied, "Alcohol." Her friend agreed that this would be difficult, if not impossible.

The disappointment on her face was obvious. She was struggling with a decision to either be a good Catholic and accept the suggestion that she abstain from alcohol, or toss it back in the basket to preserve her right to party on for the next 40 days and beyond.

But this process always gets me thinking. This Lenten fortune cookie idea fascinated me, so I asked the King's College Campus Ministry Department to share what some of the other "suggestions" were in that basket.

The list included abstaining from temptation, gossip, procrastination, worry, anxiety, impatience, speaking ill of others, and, of course, those other two evils — desserts and alcohol.

Back in my childhood days, Lenten fasts were a very big deal. We had to fast on something, and we had better keep to them, or else. And we did it without complaint. We knew it was something we had to do for 40 days, and we did it.

We are a few days into Lent 2026, and I am determined to make it through the 40 days of my fast. But I have chosen a different approach — rather than fasting on something, I decided to do something I feel we all need to do — spread kindness.

By abstaining from things we enjoy, we deprive ourselves of chocolate, sweets, pizza, soda, or alcohol. Then, when Easter arrives, we realize we really haven't grown spiritually since the beginning of Lent.

Abstaining from those aforementioned things, even chocolate, can prove to be meaningful, but is that what Lent is really all about? The Dynamic Catholic website says, "Lent is about doing something bold — to become a better husband or wife, father or mother, son or daughter, friend, neighbor, etc."

Giving up desserts or alcohol is a good start, but that's all it is.

So for Lent 2026, I have decided to pause and remember what Lent signifies. I will take more time to reflect and pray — to be thankful, grateful, and to be kind.

Soon we will be enjoying the fun that Easter brings — the candy, kielbasa, colored eggs, cole slaw, and jelly beans. But never forget the true meaning — digest that as well, and continue to make your life and the lives of all you meet on your daily path, better.

By being kind, for example.

Life adjustments are not just fun; they can enrich your life and improve your approach to all sorts of challenges.

You can vacation in fun places, set aside play time and fun time each day, love your pet and emulate their unconditional love, and love and protect your children.

And you can work hard to do your very best — and always be kind, respectful, and compassionate to your fellow human beings.

And don't text and drive or drink and drive. Volunteer to help those in need. Donate your time and/or money when possible.

And smile a lot — be the best you possibly can be.

Follow that old adage — treat others the way you would want to be treated. Appreciate friendship. Cherish family. Embrace life. Always dance like nobody is watching.

A wise person once said, "It costs nothing to be a decent human being."

And this may shock you, but there's more to friendship than social media — much more than a "like" or a "thumbs up." More than a "Happy Birthday" born out of a reminder on your "timeline."

There really is so much more.

See LENTEN | 4A

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Officials highlight new protections for older adults

By Bill O'Boyle
boboyle@timesleader.com

Pennsylvania Department of Aging Secretary Jason Kavulich this week touted how regional teams created under the Shapiro Administration and backed by the U.S. Department of Justice will help keep older Pennsylvanians safe and protected from abuse.

These regional coalitions are called Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) and are designed specifically to address complex older adult protective services cases in their respective counties and regions. Secretary Kavulich visited with leaders from the Berks, Lancaster, and Lehigh County Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to see how their teams are benefiting from individualized, tailored support from outside experts and the Department.

"We are doing groundbreaking collaborative work at the state level to ensure the protection of older adults at the community level," Kavulich said. "One of our Administration's priorities is to continuously advance and modernize our practices while supporting the AAAs, District Attorney's Offices, and our community partners to ensure older adults are cared for and safe in their chosen community. We are deploying national-level expertise and proven practical approaches to help AAAs and community partners build teams that are person-centered and able to move quickly to get the right resources for the victim."

MDTs are community-based groups that support the Department's commitment to protecting older Pennsylvanians from abuse by bringing together professionals from various fields, like social services, criminal and civil justice, mental health, medicine, finance, and public health, to improve collaboration and outcomes for protective services cases.

Under the leadership of Kavulich, the Department has been working to bring this collaborative approach, which is supported by the U.S. Department of Justice and utilized by several other states, including New York and California, to Pennsylvania.



Submitted photo

Secretary Jason Kavulich, PA Department of Aging, highlights the Berks, Lancaster, and Lehigh County Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), the first local aging agencies to develop new, regional teams designed to protect older adults from abuse, in Mohnton, on Feb. 17. Lisa Rachmuth, Program Administrator, Weill Cornell Medicine, is at left.

Gov. Josh Shapiro's proposed 2026-27 budget calls for more than $6 million in additional investments in Department of Aging services, including continuing to provide more transparency and accountability of the AAA network with the Comprehensive Agency Performance Evaluation, or CAPE.

Since taking office in 2023, Shapiro has invested more than $20 million to help older Pennsylvanians stay safe, healthy, and engaged in their communities and to continue building community supports so all Pennsylvanians can keep thriving as they age.

The Department works with a network of 52 AAAs covering Pennsylvania's 67 counties to deliver services to older adults that help them stay healthy, live safely, and thrive in their homes of choice as they age.

Applications open for PSP Law and Leadership Academy

The Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) this week announced that it is now accepting applications for its 2026 Law and Leadership Academy.

The free, 15-week program (May-August)

See ROUNDUP | 4A

Coroner, police investigate WB scene

By Brian Orbin and Colby Hughes
28/22 News

WILKES-BARRE — Officials investigated a death Saturday night in Wilkes-Barre.

The Luzerne County Coroner responded to a scene in Wilkes-Barre with police after a reported incident Saturday afternoon.

In South Wilkes-Barre, Thayer Street was blocked off Saturday night.

Pennsylvania State Police say the Wilkes-Barre City Police Department is leading an investigation into the incident.

A drone was observed in use, and police were seen searching the nearby woods. Detectives were also seen on the scene investigating.

One man who was visiting his mother says he witnessed a body being taken into the coroner's vehicle.

"It's been a little unsettling that there's a dead body approximately a hundred feet away from where everyone lives, and not knowing how or why it happened," Jason Carr, a witness, told 28/22 News.

LCTA to operate on snow routes on Monday

Staff Report

The Luzerne County Transportation Authority will operate on snow routes on Monday due to inclement weather.

When LCTA fixed-route buses are on snow routes, LCTA CONNECTS microtransit service will operate on roads at the driver's discretion. Pick-ups and drop-offs can be completed since there are no fixed routes; drivers can use alternate roads provided it is safe to do so.

If fixed-route service is suspended or discontinued, microtransit service will also be suspended or discontinued.

Shared ride paratransit service will operate on roads at the driver's discretion. Clients may be called to verify pick-ups to avoid no-shows and unnecessary travel.

If fixed-route service is suspended or discontinued, shared ride paratransit service will also be suspended or discontinued.

Visit lctabus.com/schedules/snow-routes for information.



Elizabeth Baumeister | Times Leader file photo

A Luzerne County Transportation Authority (LCTA) bus is parked outside Walmart in Pittston Township on Dec. 7, 2025.

Roundup

From page 3A

is for individuals 18 years or older who have graduated from high school or earned their GED and are interested in pursuing a career in law enforcement.

Participants meet twice a week, with occasional Saturday sessions, and experience what it's like to train as a cadet. They undergo educational and physical fitness training similar to that provided in real-life police academies, including running, swimming, and marching, within a structured paramilitary environment.

The curriculum includes instruction on traffic, criminal investigations, and other police resources. Cadets will also learn time and stress management, self-discipline, teamwork, and other critical skills necessary to be a successful law enforcement officer.

Those interested can find more information about the program and apply to one of the following locations at the Law and Leadership page on PSP's website: Wilkes-Barre, Hershey, State College, Philadelphia, Greensburg, and Erie.

The application period is open until April 3.

The Law and Leadership Academy is one of the many programs the department offers that reflect the Shapiro Administration's work to support the State Police and encourage more individuals to pursue careers as state troopers.

Over the past three years, the Shapiro administration has provided funding for over 1,000 state troopers.

Board of Higher Education adopts historic strategic plan

The Pennsylvania State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) this week voted unanimously to adopt a strategic plan for higher education — Pennsylvania's first in more than two decades — designed to support and align the higher education sector, increase affordability and degree attainment, and strengthen the economic well-being of Pennsylvania communities.

"Two years ago, we initiated the first significant reforms to Pennsylvania's higher education system in nearly three decades by creating the State Board of Higher Education," Shapiro said. "Since then, the Board has worked diligently to create a comprehensive, strategic plan for higher education across our Commonwealth. This strategic plan — developed with extensive input from the higher ed sector — reflects exactly the kind of bold, commonsense vision we need to drive systemic, impactful, and lasting change to make higher education in Pennsylvania more affordable and accessible, rooted in competitiveness and workforce development."

Driving a prosperous Pennsylvania: A statewide agenda for higher education was developed through an extensive public engagement process



File photo

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

that elicited feedback from more than 1,300 Pennsylvanians. Building on the strengths of Pennsylvania's colleges and universities, the plan calls for coordination to align resources, policies, and efforts to address the pressing needs of the higher education sector. The plan is based on the premise that affordable, world-class post-secondary education fuels Pennsylvania's economy and provides affordable pathways to good-paying, family-sustaining careers.

The plan is anchored in six goals that include increasing post-secondary attainment, creating affordable pathways to post-secondary credentials, supporting the economic and workforce development needs of the Commonwealth, ensuring accountability and the efficient, effective use of state funds, and strengthening the fiscal health and stability of the sector.

Here's what institutions are saying about SBHE's strategic plan:

Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA): "As fellow education stakeholders who value our system of post-secondary and higher education, PSEA remains committed to lifting up the voices of members across the state."

Chester County Economic Development Council: "Put simply, the prosperity of Pennsylvania depends in large part on our ability to provide the skills and talents we need to fuel our economy. Driving a Prosperous Pennsylvania charts a path to ensuring our colleges, technical schools, universities, and all forms of higher education have the resources, support, and coordination to meet these challenges."

Lehigh Carbon Community College Board of Trustees: "For too long, Pennsylvania's higher education sector has operated without a shared, clearly articulated vision to guide how institutions collectively meet the needs of the Commonwealth. For the first time in recent memory, the plan clearly and intentionally affirms the essential role of higher education in meeting Pennsylvania's workforce needs — both statewide and regionally."

Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE): "We commend the SBHE for engaging stakeholders throughout the planning process and look forward to continuing this work with all partners to ensure higher education remains a powerful driver of opportunity, workforce readiness, and economic growth in Pennsylvania."

Created in 2024, the State Board of Higher Education provides leadership, capacity and support to higher education, industry, and the public sector to achieve critical economic development, workforce, and educational benefits for the Commonwealth.

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Lenten

From page 3A

More than a smile and an obligatory hello.

More than a call asking for a favor.

More than an expectation of understanding.

More, just so much more.

More than pretending to care.

More than a belated apology.

More than emojis of birthday cakes, balloons, and praying hands.

Much, much more.

Friendship should be valued, prioritized, genuine, and sincere.

Friendship should be laughing, and crying, and being there — and caring.

Come on, be a real pal, a genuine buddy — do the unexpected and always do what true friends do.

Friends are forever, I'm told, so don't be superficial.

I often take a ride through my old neighborhood. I find it gives me a renewed spirit. It reminds me of where I came from — where I learned everything important.

Where I learned the importance of caring, compassion, and kindness.

But it's not just what you learned that matters — it's how you've applied those lessons.

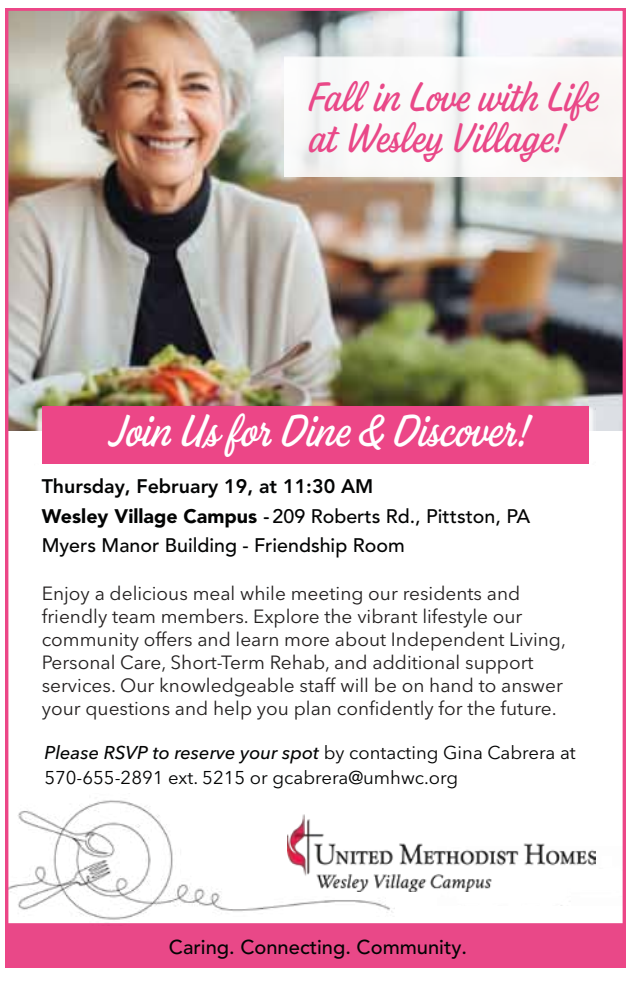
Knowing how to be is not nearly as important as being.

Deep inside, we all know right from wrong — yet we stray.

We know how important it is to be good — to be kind.

Just do it — for 40 days and beyond.

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





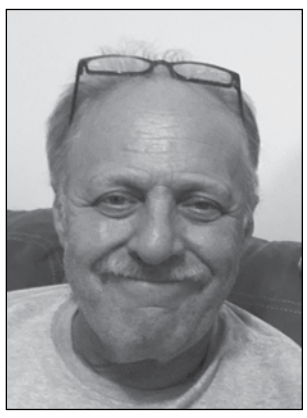


JOHN J. PURVIN JR.

John J. Purvin Jr., 65, of the Newport Center section of Newport Township, passed away unexpectedly Friday, Feb. 20, 2026, and was pronounced deceased at the emergency room in Geisinger South Wilkes-Barre.

Born Nov. 29, 1960, he was the son of Loretta Davis Purvin of Newport Center and the late John J. Purvin Sr.

Following graduation from John S. Fine High School in Nanticoke, he began a long career as a mechanic alongside his father at the family business, Apex Used Auto Parts in West Nanticoke.



John dedicated his life to his work and built his reputation through years of hands-on experience and mechanical skill. He also worked many years for other companies as a diesel mechanic, earning respect for his knowledge, problem-solving ability, and strong work ethic.

John had a stubborn streak and a sharp sense of sarcasm, but he was always quick with a joke. He had a lifelong love of cars and an even greater passion for motorcycles. Whether under the hood or talking engines, he was most at home around machinery and the rumble of a well-tuned motor.

In addition to his father, he was preceded in death by his grandparents and other beloved family members.

Surviving, in addition to his mother, Loretta, are his children, Jessica Purvin, Nanticoke; and John J. Purvin III, Sellersville; a grandson, Evan; a brother, Michael Purvin, Lancaster; and a sister, Debra Purvin (Mark Thomas), Drums.

A viewing and visitation hours will be held from 4 to 7 p.m. Thursday at Dinelli Family Funeral Home, 170 E. Broad St., Nanticoke.

A private graveside service and committal rite will be held in Nanticoke Cemetery.

To leave a message of condolence or expression of sympathy, visit the funeral home website at www.dinellifuneralhome.com.

OBITUARY POLICY

- The Times Leader publishes limited obituaries for free.
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- 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.

COMING FUNERALS

BLIGHT — Thomas Jr.: Service, 6 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Betz-Jastremski Funeral Home Ltd., 568 Bennett St., Luzerne.

FALCONE — Dennis: Visitation, 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Mamary-Durkin Funeral & Cremation Services, 59 Parrish St., Wilkes-Barre.

GUZENSKI — Joseph: Funeral, 11 a.m. Tuesday, Yanaitis Funeral Home Inc., 55 Stark St., Plains Township. Visitation, 10 a.m. to service time.

HUGHES — Ann: Mass, 11 a.m. Thursday, St. Therese's Church, 64 Davis St., Shavertown. Calling hours, 10 a.m. to service time.

JONES — Dolores: Funeral, 9:15 a.m. Tuesday, Baloga Funeral Home Inc., 1201 Main St., Pittston (Port Griffith). Mass, 10 a.m., Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 215 Lackawanna Ave., Dupont. Visitation, 5 to 8 p.m. Monday, funeral home.

KOENIG — Janet: Mass, 9:30 a.m. Saturday, St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, 35 William St., Pittston. Visitation, 8:30 a.m. to service time.

MARLEY — Dorothy: Funeral, 11 a.m. Saturday, Oak Lawn Cemetery, Wilkes-Barre.

ORNOSKI — Tracy: Mass, 10:30 a.m. Monday, St. Nicholas Church, 226 S. Washington St., Wilkes-Barre. Calling hours, 9:30 a.m. to service time.

PHILLIPS — Janet: Mass, 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, Ss. Peter & Paul Church, 13 Hudson Road, Plains. Visitation, 8:30 a.m. to service time.

ZACHARIAS — Harry Jr.: Funeral, 11 a.m. Monday, Nulton Kopcza Funeral Home, 5749 SR 309 Beaumont, Monroe Twp.

Comic

From page 1A

"Star Wars" costuming organization, and the charity-based costume group Keystone Spire also attended the event.

"It's family-friendly. The kids are able to come out; they can dress up," Kropiewnicki said. "The whole [cosplay] community supports each other. It's pretty wild."

Lindsay Zrudlo, of Avoca, attended the convention on Sunday with her fiancé Eric and two children.

Dressing up at events like this has become a family tradition for them. On Sunday, Zrudlo cosplayed as Velma from "Scooby-Doo" while Eric was the Ghost of Captain Cutler, one of the show's villains.

"I like incorporating a little bit of SFX makeup and getting to show off my creativity," she said. "And the kids have a lot of fun cosplaying as well. We get to turn into someone else for the day and have fun."

Her kids also enjoyed browsing the vendor stands.

"They bought some Pokémon cards and different things," said Zrudlo.

Voice actor Trevor Devall was actually happy with the smaller crowd on Sunday.

"I think the weather is keeping some people away a little bit, but it gives me an opportunity to talk more meaningfully with the people," he said.

For Devall, those conversations are his favorite part of attending conventions.

"In the voice world, we work alone so much. We don't often get a chance to work with other people or see other people, so "it's always a reminder, when we do these things, and encounter the fans, that, you know, a lot of the time, we make a big difference to these people's lives," he said. "I've so many times, so many times, 'Oh, you were the voice of my childhood.'"



Margaret Roarty | Times Leader

'Star Wars' cosplayers attend NEPA Comic Coon n Sunday.



Margaret Roarty | Times Leader

Cosplayers take the stage Sunday for NEPA Comic Con's annual cosplay runway show.



Margaret Roarty | Times Leader

Lindsay Zrudlo, left, and her fiancé Eric Vosburg, left, cosplaying Velma and The Ghost of Captain Cutler from 'Scooby-Doo.'



Margaret Roarty | Times Leader

Vendors at NEPA Comic Con sell comic books, stickers, Funko Pops, and other merchandise.



Margaret Roarty | Times Leader

Richard Cator, of Scranton, dressed as a valt-dweller from the video game 'Fallout,' checks the Pip-Boy on his wrist.

Missing

From page 1A

not advanced the bill, although it could be folded into this year's budget negotiations.

Shapiro's likely opponent in the gubernatorial race, Republican state Treasurer Stacy Garrity, previously told Spotlight PA she supports the idea.

A spokesperson for state Senate Majority Leader Joe Pittman, R-Indiana, did not respond to questions from Spotlight PA about whether he supports the bill.

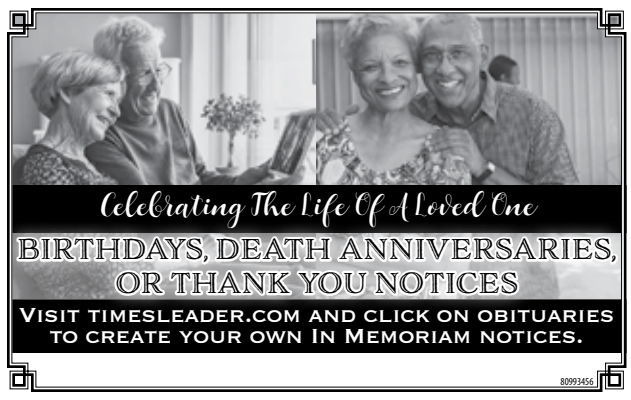
A spokesperson for state Attorney General Dave Sunday said his office had no "public commentary" on the measure.

State Sen. Kristin Phillips-Hill, R-York, a cosponsor of her chamber's version of the bill, called the legislation "a logical step" toward protecting taxpayer dollars.

"My hope is that we're going to have a really serious conversation about how to do this."

Spotlight PA reporter Stephen Caruso contributed to this story.

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Officials: ICE centers could overwhelm services

By Amanda Fries
For Spotlight PA

About this story
This story was produced by the Berks County bureau of Spotlight PA, an independent, nonpartisan newsroom. Sign up for Good Day, Berks, a daily dose of essential local stories at spotlightpa.org/newsletters/gooddayberks.



Margo Reed | For Spotlight PA

A view of homes from the Upper Bern Township building near Shartlesville on Feb. 9.

UPPER BERN — Not enough clean water. Hundreds of thousands of gallons of sewage are dumped into systems designed to handle much less. More calls for already overwhelmed EMS departments.

Pennsylvania leaders, municipal officials, and first responders say communities will be overwhelmed by the federal government's plans to turn vacant warehouses in Berks and Schuylkill Counties into massive ICE detention centers and processing facilities.

A recently released memo from the Department of Homeland Security says it selected sites based on engineering reviews and found a warehouse-to-detention center conversion would have "no detrimental effect."

But state officials and Upper Bern Township leaders — who were blindsided by the Feb. 2 purchase and are still largely operating in the dark — are pointing to facts about capacity and raising serious concerns about how these plans would play out.

Commonwealth leaders in emergency management, environmental protection, health, and labor cosigned a Feb. 12 letter to Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem asking that the department not "impose such intolerable burdens on residents of Schuylkill and Berks counties."

"If reporting about DHS's plans is accurate, the facilities will violate the legal requirements applicable to public drinking water, sewage, and water pollution," the state officials wrote.

They continued: "The stress each facility will place on local infrastructure will, among other things, jeopardize Pennsylvanians' access to safe water, deplete resources and infrastructure needed for emergencies, and overextend already strained emergency response personnel."

The federal government has provided few specifics on the impacts ICE's plans could have on these rural communities. A meeting among federal, state, and local officials has yet to materialize.

Upper Bern Township's Board of Supervisors, who have spoken publicly through solicitor Andrew Hoffman, said in a prepared statement on Feb. 12 that ICE's plans at the vacant warehouse would "more than double" Upper Bern's population.

Its wastewater treatment plant could be overwhelmed by a 1,500-bed facility, and supervisors wonder what extracting "potable water from wells for those 1,500 or more people" could do to the water supply.

Here's what we know about the potential impact on the community:

Sewage

When the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) signed off on the plan to build the Hamburg Logistics Center several years ago, documents show the agency approved the warehouse to produce 8,000 gallons of sewage daily.

If it's used as an ICE processing center and holds up to 1,500 people, that number would skyrocket to more than 100,00 gallons per day, officials said in their letter to Noem.

Upper Bern's "maximum monthly flow from serving its current customers is 131,000 gallons per day," they continued. And its treatment plant is designed to only treat up to 155,000 gallons daily.

Upper Bern renewed its wastewater permit with DEP in January 2024, indicating that the township was not modifying or adding onto the system. The average monthly flow reported during that renewal was 78,000 gallons per day.

Township sewer engineer John Roche said no one has submitted a formal request to change the use or increase sewer capacity at the warehouse.

"If the use changes, we'd have to look at that on an individual basis," Roche told Spotlight PA after a supervisor's meeting on Feb. 12. "We haven't had any new requests yet."

Neither Roche nor Upper Bern's solicitor was available for comment for this story.

The former Big Lots warehouse in Schuylkill County, which ICE wants to turn into a detention center for 7,500 people, has a system approved to discharge even less than the one in Upper Bern — no more than 6,000 gallons per day, according to the letter. The system is also connected to the treatment facility by a 2-inch diameter pipe, which state officials told Noem isn't suitable for a detention center.

Drinking water

Neither warehouse was designed to provide the amount of potable water that would be needed to run these detention centers, state officials warn, and finding alternatives would be all but impossible.

Upper Bern officials said the township has no public water system. Homes and businesses rely on wells for potable water.

In the letter to Noem, state officials wrote that the vacant warehouse is designed to draw water from an on-site water well. DEP previously approved the construction of such a system, "because it could provide treated water for use by a limited number of employees engaged in warehouse activities based on three anticipated separate shifts in a 24-hour period."

However, the agency hasn't approved the operation of the system. What's more, it's not designed to provide drinking water 24 hours a day for some 1,500 people, they wrote.

During an April 2025 inspection, DEP officials also found several deficiencies that suggest the drinking water system "was not constructed in accordance with the approved designs."

The Tremont Township warehouse is even more strained, the letter said. While it is serviced by the Schuylkill County Municipal Authority's public water system, that system already struggles to provide adequate services to the community.

State officials estimate a 7,500-bed facility would need up to 800,000 gallons of safe water per day, which is nearly all of the available 1 million gallons stored for the Tremont area. The plant is permitted to treat only 330,000 gallons daily by the Susquehanna River Basin Commission.

That not only threatens access to safe drinking water, but could also "lead to calamity in the event of an emergency," state department heads warned. For example, the same water supply is used for fighting fires, and the current systems may not have the supply or the water pressure needed to extinguish a blaze.

Emergency services

Communities across Pennsylvania are already experiencing an EMS crisis. Adding high-density facilities to the rural communities of Upper Bern and Tremont Townships — populations 1,600 and 300, respectively — will exacerbate those problems, local first responders told Spotlight PA.

Ambulance companies statewide have folded or adjusted coverage areas to stay solvent, increasing response times. In recent years, Berks County municipalities have implemented EMS taxes or struck agreements with ambulance companies to help pay for services, but they remain underfunded.

Hamburg EMS has served Upper Bern Township for years, Chief Leslie Herring told Spotlight PA. While there are still many unknowns, she said first responders worry about how the ICE processing facility would impact their call volumes and response times.

"We're just concerned because it's not only going to affect us, it's going to affect every other neighboring squad in the county," Herring said. "We're worried about what it's going to do to all the surrounding municipalities and boroughs."

Berks County officials declined to discuss the impact on emergency services. Emergency Services Director Brian Gottschall referred a Spotlight PA reporter to county spokesperson Jonathan Heintzman. Heintzman later declined to comment after consulting with the county commissioners and solicitor.

Scott Krater, director of Schuylkill County's 911 center, is responsible

See ICE | 8A

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THEIR VIEW

A 3% rule for budget deficits would be a good start

The Editors
Bloomberg Opinion

All but unnoticed last month, a bipartisan group of legislators introduced a resolution calling for Congress to keep budget deficits at no more than 3% of gross domestic product. Though not enough by itself to solve America's fiscal problems, the proposal is a rare step in the right direction. It deserves strong support.

On plausible assumptions, such a constraint would hold public debt constant at its current level of around 100% of GDP. A new report by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office projects deficits of about twice that size over the next 10 years, sufficient to keep the debt burden on an accelerating upward trajectory — reaching 120% of GDP by 2036 and 175% by 2056. The need to get off this road to disaster should be uncontroversial.

In principle, the White House agrees that stabilizing and then reducing the debt is desirable, and Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has previously proposed a 3% budget deficit as a way to do so. The problem is that current policy on taxes and public spending — contrary to the administration's forecasts — will almost certainly fall short.

The White House Council of Economic Advisers is expecting economic growth of 4% a year through 2028 plus dramatically lower deficits over the next 10 years. This would indeed start to get debt under control. Problem is, the growth prediction is double the consensus estimate of roughly 2%, and the deficit forecast is based on a combination of wishful thinking and accounting maneuvers that treat recent tax cuts and spending increases as temporary (which, in practice, they won't be).

Granted, tariffs are on track to raise a lot of additional revenue — on the order of $250 billion a year (if the Supreme Court allows the duties imposed under emergency powers or the administration resorts to other legal devices instead). But the tariffs will also slow growth, while tax and spending changes in the recent One Big Beautiful Bill Act more than cancel out their benefits. If alarm over this dire outlook should cause long-term interest rates to rise, the growing debt will cost more to service, and those already bleak projections will prove much too cheerful.

Plain common sense demands a mix of higher taxes and lower spending to get projected deficits down — preferably by enough to reduce the debt, not merely stabilize it. There's no lack of feasible options: gradually raise the retirement age for pension benefits, change the taxation of assets transferred at death, tighten limits on itemized tax deductions and so on.

The broader the scope of such reforms, the less painful they'll be. That's why, if Congress cares about fiscal discipline, it should also break its habit of targeting tax and spending changes at narrow constituencies for political purposes. This mind-set — meddling now, budget control later — is how the country wound up here.

Once upon a time, a budget deficit of 3% of GDP — with the economy at or close to full employment and growing well — would've been regarded as excessive, and 6% as simply insane. But Washington has grown comfortable with such irresponsibility. It's good that this resolution has attracted initial support from both Republicans and Democrats, but they're too few and the idea is still a long way from becoming reality. Better to act on it now, before it's too late.

The Editorial Board publishes the views of the editors across a range of national and global affairs.

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THEIR VIEW

Major League Baseball's expanding paywall



Jason Altmire
InsideSources.com

Consumer fees are everywhere. They're even taxing baseball fans.

There is a clear disconnect between the seemingly daily reports of positive economic numbers in Washington and on Wall Street and the economic uncertainty reported in surveys of Americans.

From a purely statistical perspective, consumers should be popping champagne. The stock market continues to break records, sending retirement accounts soaring, as economic growth is expected to reach nearly 4 percent this year. Rental prices are dropping in most of the country. And Truflation, a financial data platform that provides inflation analysis, shows that real-time inflation is now just over 1 percent, a significant decline.

That's all great news. Yet, Americans don't seem to believe the hype. Consumer confidence in the economy just hit its worst level in 12 years, lower even than during the pandemic.

Why do consumers feel squeezed when the economic data seems so strong?

The answer is simple: The user taxes and fees consumers see everywhere they turn.

Look no further than the new deal Major League Baseball made with ESPN for out-of-town games, effective Feb. 10.

To watch your team play on the road, you will now have to pay twice: $30 a month for a subscription to ESPN Unlimited and a separate fee for MLB.TV access. The nation's pastime is hidden behind a double paywall.

Unfortunately, such consumer fees have become par for the course.

Want to watch any new show on a streaming service? Pay a fee. Want to sit on the aisle of an airplane? Pay a fee. Need cash from an ATM? Pay a fee. Want to go to a concert? Ticketmaster adds "convenience fees" that can cost as much as the actual ticket. Your phone bill advertises at $50 a month but ends up costing $75 after taxes, fees and surcharges.

While some of these charges are nothing more than corporations hiding costs, others are the direct result of misguided government action.

Take, for example, the fees many Americans now pay to keep their bank accounts open. These add-ons came about thanks to large retailers' D.C. dealmaking.

In 2010, they lobbied Congress to pass a law, now colloquially known as the Durbin Amendment, which capped the fees they pay to merchants every time we swipe our debit cards in their stores. Supporters said at the time that, because this law would save retailers money, they would lower their store prices in return.

However, a growing body of research, including a recent analysis from Robert J. Shapiro of the Progressive Policy Institute, shows that most large retailers pocketed the savings rather than passing them along to consumers. Why? Because banks had to keep our debit cards running, they had no choice but to raise fees to make up the difference.

It doesn't really matter whether these added costs come from corporate boardrooms or acts of Congress. The result for consumers is always the same: higher monthly bills and greater income inequality.

The ESPN–MLB deal is the latest reminder that strong, topline numbers don't mean much if the cost of everyday life keeps rising. Until policymakers start judging economic success by what families actually pay — not by what the broader economic data suggest — consumers will keep getting fleeced.

Jason Altmire, a Democrat, is a former member of Congress from Pennsylvania. He wrote this for InsideSources.com.

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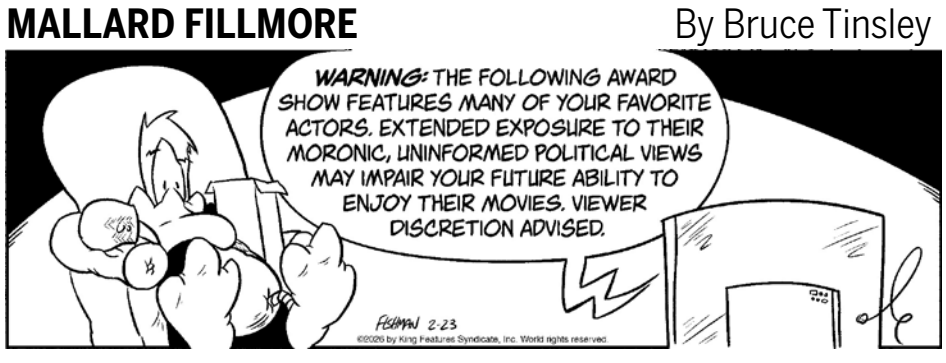
DOONESBURY: CLASSIC '80s

By Garry Trudeau



MALLARD FILLMORE

By Bruce Tinsley



ICE

From page 6A

for dispatching EMS, police, and fire personnel throughout the county, and noted the challenges these sectors already have. He said attracting 911 call operators is difficult.

Schuylkill County already has three prisons — run by the county, state, and federal governments — but none house the number of people anticipated for the empty warehouse. The county prison typically incarcerates fewer than 300 people, and both the federal and state prisons have about 1,200 inmates each.

"Those normal challenges that we have here would obviously be the same, or maybe more taxing on the telecommunicators that are working currently with the increase in call volume," Krater told Spotlight PA.

Western Berks Ambulance Association provides mutual aid for Upper Bern Township and is the second in line to respond to emergencies, CEO Anthony Tucci said.

Tucci reached out to other EMS companies and DHS to learn more and better prepare, but said he hasn't heard back. He estimates an ICE facility could add an additional 60 to 70 EMS calls a month.

"I think it's going to be a huge impact on our community," Tucci said.

Fire departments operate on a similar system of mutual aid and could also experience an increase in emergency calls,state leaders wrote in their letter to Noem.

While Tremont is serviced by five fire departments, Upper Bern is protected by just one: Shartlesville Fire Company, which is staffed by volunteers. It's unclear how many calls the department averages monthly. Calls and emails to the fire company were not returned.

DHS has also failed to engage with area hospitals that would serve the ICE facilities, the Pennsylvania agency leaders said in their letter, which they called disconcerting. Hospitals need to plan for disasters, such as a fire at these buildings, that would cause an influx in patients.

"Area hospitals may not have the capacity to prepare for these emergency events without support, and the lack of communication from federal officials raises serious concerns," the state leaders wrote.

Reading Hospital and Penn State Health St. Joseph in Berks County did not immediately respond to Spotlight PA's questions, nor did St. Luke's Hospital or Lehigh Valley Hospital in Schuylkill County.

The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania, which represents more than 235 providers across the state, was unable to say whether DHS has contacted local hospitals.

"Hospitals continuously update their plans — especially when there is a major change in the community — to ensure they are prepared to respond to emergencies and address their communities' needs," the association said in an emailed response to Spotlight PA questions. "Strong collaboration with local leaders, state and federal agencies, and other stakeholders is an important part of this process."



Margo Reed | For Spotlight PA

A view from Upper Bern Township building near Shartlesville on Feb. 9.

Public safety

Neighbors have questioned how the proposed processing center would affect public safety.

Chelsey and Zach Kramer, who live in a mobile home community across the road from the warehouse, came to Upper Bern Township's Board of Supervisors meeting on Feb. 12 to oppose ICE's purchase of the warehouse.

They said they are worried about guns and security presence at the site, road closures, and not being able to access their home.

"Are we going to have to be showing ID to get home? Are they going to be blocking off our roads?" Chelsey Kramer told Spotlight PA.

The Kramers said they also worry about how a detention facility could impact recreational and family-friendly spaces near their home.

"When they were looking at these facilities, who at DHS looked at the campground and the mobile home community and the game lands and public trails and everything, and the community park right here, and said: 'Let's put one right there,'" Zach Kramer said. "The campground is going to go under for one, because who's going to want to go vacationing near a detention facility? I know most of my neighbors are upset about this."

The Berks County township doesn't have its own police department, and State Police are responsible for coverage. Cars already back up at the major thoroughfares near Mountain Road during shift changes at nearby warehouses, local first responders told Spotlight PA.

Some speakers during the Feb. 12 meeting said they are worried about protesters and "agitators" coming to the area, and ensuring that people can exercise their rights to protest.

State Police "remain committed to providing the best law enforcement coverage with the utmost professionalism," agency spokesperson Ethan Brownback told Spotlight PA in a statement, adding that their dedication to the area "remains unchanged."

Property taxes

The $87.4 million sale of the Upper Bern warehouse to the federal government takes the sprawling property — located near the Appalachian Trail — off the tax rolls.

Since the warehouse was built and placed on the market, the property has remained vacant while generating about $199,620 annually in county property taxes, $31,229 in township taxes, and $597,110 for the Hamburg Area School District.

The township did not respond to Spotlight PA's questions about how that revenue loss would affect the community's annual budget.

"They're losing $600,000 a year on school property taxes, and that's important," county Commissioner Dante Santoni Jr. said during a Feb. 11 town hall. "The most important thing is what it does to our communities, and we've seen what it's done around this country. It tears us apart, it pits people against each other, and creates chaos."

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Further Review

IMAGE OF AN ERA

By Charles Apple
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

In March 1936, U.S. Resettlement Administration photographer Dorothea Lange made this portrait of a migrant crop picker in Nipomo, California. She and her children were barely getting by after the double whammy of the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression and then migrating west from Oklahoma.

The photo, titled "Migrant Mother," became an icon — not just of its era but of documentary visual journalism. It would be first published in the San Francisco News on March 11, 1936 — 90 years ago.

ONE OF THE MOST ICONIC PHOTOS IN U.S. HISTORY

Photojournalist Dorothea Lange was working for the federal government's Resettlement Administration, documenting the conditions struggling farmworkers were dealing with in March 1936.

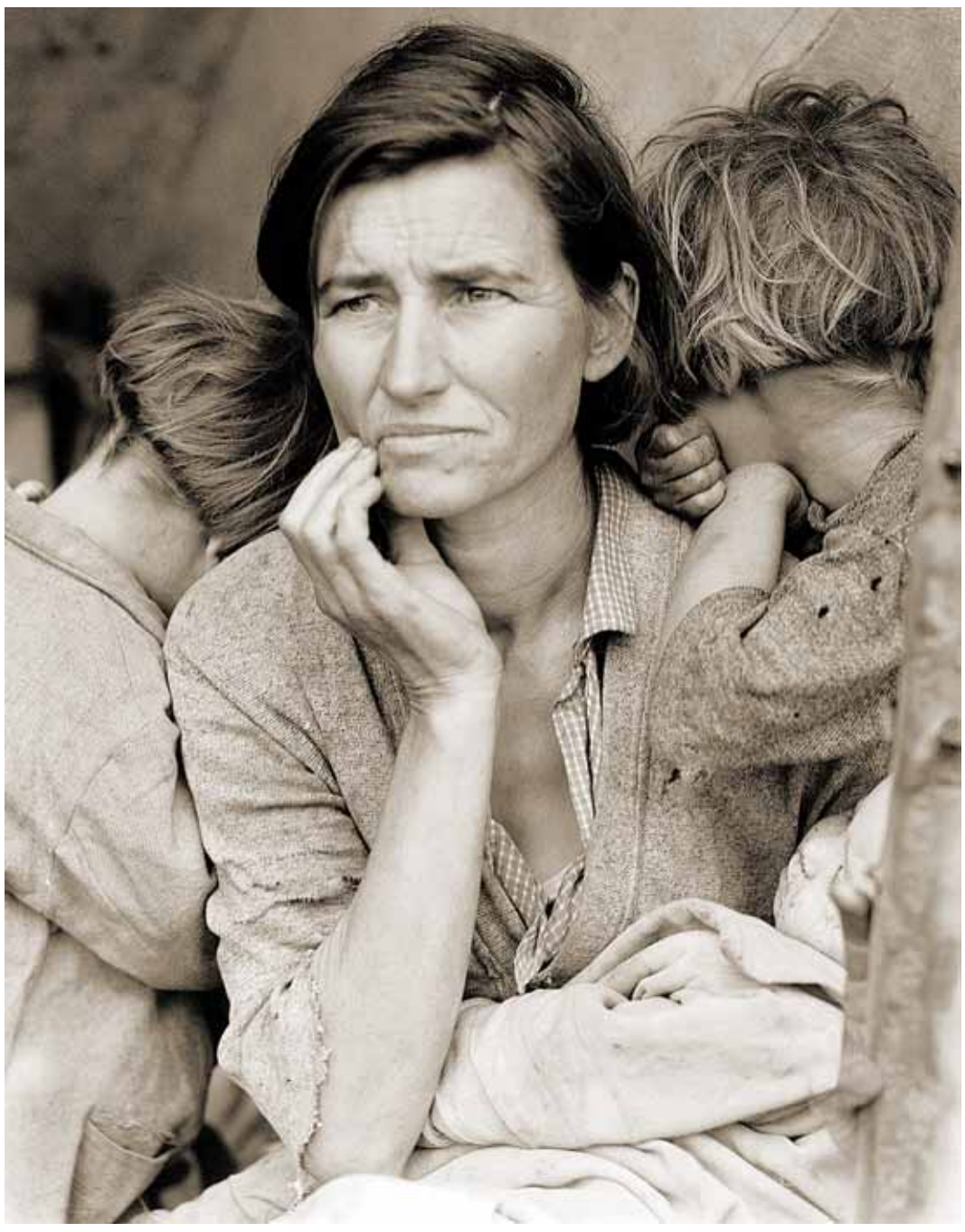
A series of dust storms had struck the American Great Plains, demolishing farms and putting farmworkers and sharecroppers out of business. Many of them would head west to California. John Steinbeck would write about these migrant workers in "The Grapes of Wrath" in 1939.

But even in California, migrant farmworkers continued to experience hard times. In Nipomo, California, 175 miles north of Los Angeles, bad weather had destroyed the local pea crop. That's where Lange found an idle picker sitting in a makeshift tent, surrounded by her seven children.

Lange quoted the woman as saying, "We just existed. We survived. Let's put it that way."

"I did not ask her name or her history," Lange said. "She told me her age, that she was 32. She said that (she and her children) had been living on frozen vegetables from the surrounding fields and birds that the children had killed. She had just sold the tires from her car to buy food."

Lange made six photos of the woman. She holds a baby while her other children cower around her and she casts an empty gaze into the distance.



The San Francisco News published two photos of the series on March 10, 1936. It then published the one shown here — which became known as "Migrant Mother" — the next day.

Since Lange was working on a government payroll, the work she shot that day was in the public domain — meaning other outlets could publish it at will. The photo, reproduced time and time again, is still used today to represent Depression-era hardships experienced by Americans.

In 1978, a reporter for the Modesto Bee tracked down the woman in the famous photo: Florence Owens Thompson. She said Lange had promised her she would stay anonymous, to spare her children embarrassment.

She had been born in 1903 as a full Cherokee in Oklahoma, and, at age 17, had married and moved to California for farm work. In 1931 — when she was 28 and pregnant with her sixth child — her husband died of tuberculosis.

After that, she had worked odd jobs to feed her kids. In 1945, she found work in a hospital and tended bar at night. This was despite having one of the most famous faces in the country.

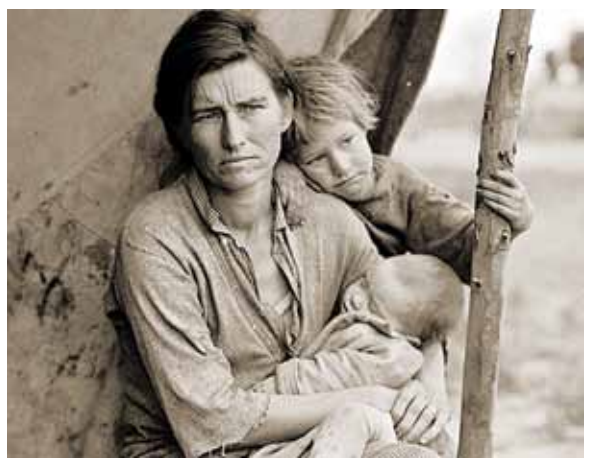
Thompson died in 1983 at age 80.



Lange began her session by shooting two photos from farther away. At left is Thompson's 12-year-old daughter who doesn't appear in many of the other pictures.



Lange moved in closer for her last four shots. In two of them, Thompson is nursing her infant. One big take-away from this photo: Kids haven't changed much since 1936, have they?



This one is much better. This photo and the one at far left were published on page 3 of the San Francisco News on March 10, 1936. "Migrant Mother" was published the next day.

GIVING A THUMBS-UP





The version of "Migrant Mother" most of us have seen is the one at the top of this page. However, that is a retouched version.

In 1939, Lange decided she was bothered by the mother's thumb in the extreme lower right of the original 1936 photo, just below her baby's face.

The thumb is slightly blurred because it was too close to the lens to be in focus. Lange had her assistant remove the thumb on the negative — Photoshop, of course, wouldn't be available for another half-century.

It wasn't even the first time the photo had been doctored. The New York Times removed the thumb when it ran "Migrant Mother" in July 1936.

A MASTER DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHER

Lange was working for one of the many New Deal agencies that was created after Franklin Delano Roosevelt took office: the Resettlement Administration. That agency would later be folded into the Farm Security Administration.

Lange and other photographers were hired to document the plight of American farmworkers. The agency collected nearly 80,000 photographs between 1935 and 1944.

In fact, this was why Thompson had agreed to be photographed in the first place: Lange explained the photos would see wide use and would help educate the public about what was happening to them.

Lange had been born in Hoboken, New Jersey, in 1895. She had contracted polio at age 7 that left her with a permanent limp. Five years later, her father abandoned the family. Her mother was left to raise Lange and her younger brother on Manhattan's Lower East Side.



Dorothea Lange working atop her automobile in 1936.

She studied photography at Columbia University and later moved to San Francisco, where she worked in a camera shop and then opened a portrait studio. She turned to documentary work during the Great Depression.

Not only was "Migrant Mother" published in newspapers nationwide, it was featured in an art show at the Museum of Modern Art in December 1940. MoMA says, "It's possible, even likely, that 'Migrant Mother' has been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art more often than any other photograph in the Museum's collection."

Lange went on to photograph Japanese internment camps during World War II, she taught photography at the San Francisco Art Institute and she co-founded a photography magazine called Aperture.

Lange died of esophageal cancer in October 1965. She was 70.

Sources: "Dorothea Lange: Migrant Mother" by Sarah Hermanson Meister, the Museum of Modern Art, Library of Congress, the Smithsonian's American History Museum, the New York Times, NPR'S "American Masters," NPR's "Antiques Roadshow," History.com

ALL PHOTOS FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Is anyone listening to Never Trump Republicans?

By Steve Peoples
The Associated Press

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. — Over and over, the Republicans and former Republicans who gathered just outside Washington this weekend warned that President Donald Trump and his allies in Congress are tearing at the very fabric of American democracy.

A former congressman described the president's party as an "authoritarian-embracing cult." A prominent conservative writer said Trumpism is an "existential threat." And a retired Army general, his voice shaking with emotion, cited post-Nazi Germany as a roadmap for the nation's post-Trump recovery.

It's unclear how many people are listening.

The main convention hall at the sixth annual Principles First summit on Saturday and Sunday was half empty. About 750 chairs were set up in a room that could have fit thousands, and many were unfilled. Not a single current Republican elected official participated in the two-day program.

This is what remains of the Grand Old Party's Never Trump movement, a coalition of Republicans, former Republicans and independents who banded together as Trump consolidated power. They largely remain political exiles — not quite at home among Democrats yet disgusted by how the president has abandoned Republicans' longstanding commitments to free trade and limited government.

John McDowell, 69, who was a lifelong Republican before Trump's emergence, acknowledged that the diminished group had virtually "zero" political clout within his former party.

"It's just a fact. We're losing good people," said McDowell, a former Capitol Hill staffer and county Republican official from San Carlos, California. "The party is becoming more and more MAGA-fied."

White House spokesperson Abigail Jackson dismissed all the criticism from what she called "a bunch of deranged has-been politicians."

"The only people who will pay attention to this event are the journalists who are forced to cover it," she said.

Virtually everyone who gathered at the hotel in National Harbor, Maryland, said they are



AP file photo

Former Republican presidential candidate and former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie speaks during a gathering June 6, 2023, in Manchester, N.H.

rooting for Democratic victories in this fall's midterm elections. One of the only Democrats there was Conor Lamb, a former congressman from Pennsylvania who lost his party's primary to John Fetterman four years ago.

Despite dire concerns, there was a slight sense of optimism among the half-empty convention hall and quiet hotel hallways.

Several people cheered last week's Supreme Court decision to strike down Trump's tariffs, the economic tool he has wielded without congressional approval in his attempt to force friends and foes around the globe to bend to his will. Trump insisted he would implement a new round of tariffs despite the ruling.

Former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, a former Trump adviser, highlighted recent AP-NORC polling showing that 1 in 4 Republicans nationwide do not approve of Trump's job performance.

"It's like any show that's on TV for a long time — the ratings start to go down. And the ratings are going down," Christie said. "I am willing to bet you that by next February, this room is going to be twice the size of what it is now. After the midterms, you watch."

Ex-MAGA diehard Rich Logis, wearing a red "I left MAGA hat," hopes to see "an electoral revolt against MAGA" in the midterms.

"I think there's a shift in our country right now," he said. "It happens slowly."

Logis was promoting support groups for friends and family of Trump loyalists at a table outside the convention hall. Nearby, someone was selling books about how to escape cults.

At the podium, former Republican Rep. Joe Walsh implored Trump's critics not to downplay the seriousness of the threat the president poses to the nation.

"He's everything our founders feared. Say it. Believe it," Walsh said. He said his former party is "an authoritarian-embracing cult" and "a threat to everything I love."

Retired Gen. Mark Hertling, who once commanded the U.S. Army's European forces, said he's "haunted" by allies who ask him "whether American institutions ever can be trusted again."

"Our nation's institutions have been shaken. Our alliances have been strained. Our credibility has been damaged. And our nation's values have been cast aside," Hertling said. He suggested the U.S. should look to the reconstruction of Germany after the defeat of Nazism if it hoped to restore the damage caused by Trump and his allies.

The nation's recovery, he said as his voiced cracked, would be something people have to earn over many years.

Bill Kristol, who worked in previous Republican administrations and helped found the Weekly Standard magazine, described Trump and his Republican supporters in Congress as "an existential threat" to the nation. But he was also optimistic about the upcoming midterm elections.

Kristol said Democrats are "almost certain to win the House," "could possibly win the Senate," and have "a good chance to win the presidency" in 2028.

Brittany Martinez, executive director of the host organization Principles First, also tried to cast an optimistic tone, even after describing the many reasons why she couldn't bear to continue her career as a Republican staffer on Capitol Hill.

"I hope that Republicans continue to wake up," she said. "I do think that those folks exist. And I hope that they exist in greater numbers."



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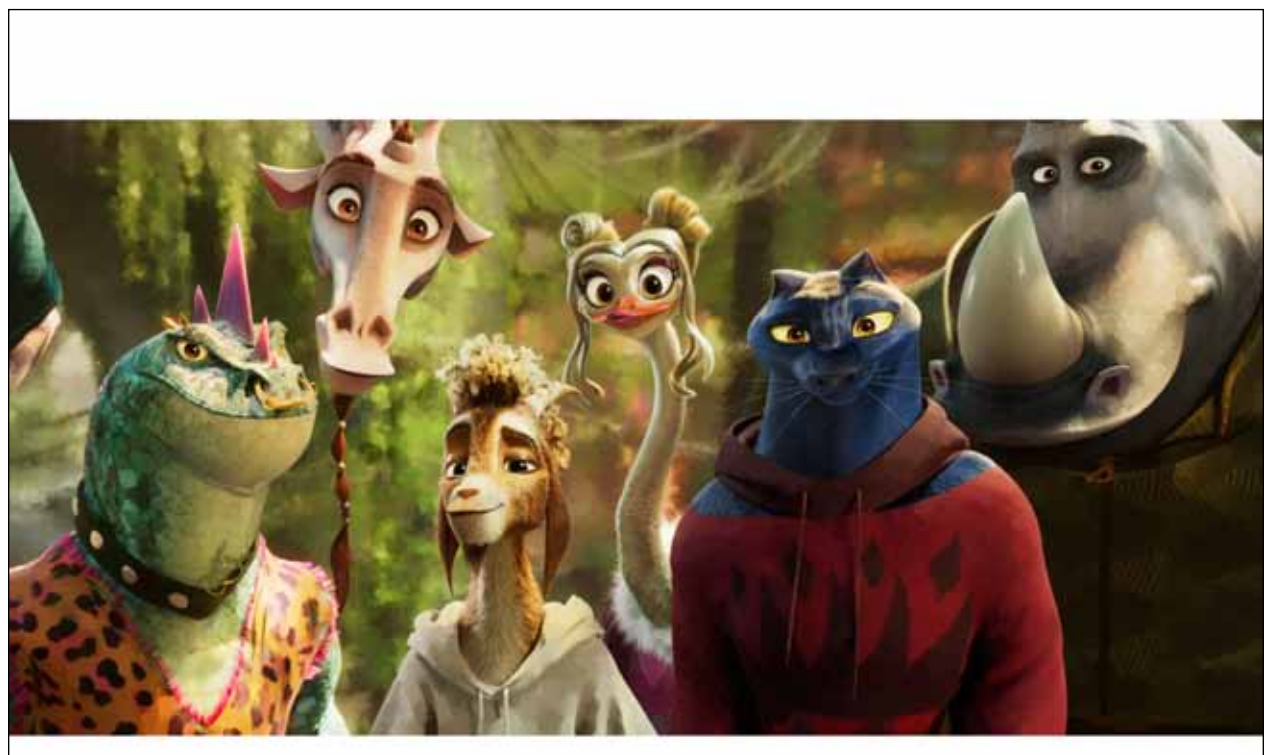
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‘GOAT’ edges ‘Wuthering Heights’ at box office



Warner Bros. Pictures via AP

Margot Robbie in a scene from ‘Wuthering Heights.’



Columbia Pictures and Sony Picture Animation via AP

From left, Modo, voiced by Nick Kroll, Lenny, voiced by Stephen Curry, Will, voiced by Caleb McLaughlin, Olivia, voiced by Nicola Coughlan, Jett, voiced by Gabrielle Union, and Archie, voiced by David Harbour, in a scene from the animated film ‘GOAT.’

By Lindsey Bahr
The Associated Press

More inside
Emerald Fennell’s ‘Wuthering Heights’ is maddening. **Page 1C**

It was a battle of the holdovers at the North American box office this weekend, with the family friendly film “GOAT” edging out the R-rated “Wuthering Heights.”

Sony Pictures Animation’s “GOAT” took in $17 million, while Warner Bros.’ “Wuthering Heights” earned $14.2 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. Both films are in their second weekend.

Overall, it was a quiet weekend at movie theaters around the country, with new offerings all opening under $10 million. Those results applied to the faith-based sequel “I Can Only Imagine 2,” the Glen Powell black comedy “How to Make a Killing” and the horror film “Psycho Killer,” which currently has a 0% rating on Rotten Tomatoes. One bright spot in theaters was Baz Luhrmann’s immersive documentary “EPiC: Elvis Presley in Concert,” which earned $3.3 million from only 325 locations in its limited IMAX release. That film expands to nationwide distribution on Feb. 27.

“These somewhat slower weekends can be a land of opportunity,” said Paul Dergarabedian, the head of marketplace trends for Comscore.

“GOAT” dropped a slim 38% in its second weekend in theaters, which the studio attributed to positive word-of-mouth. The Stephen Curry-produced movie, about a small goat with big sports dreams (voiced by “Stranger Things’” Caleb McLaughlin) has made over $58.3 million. Globally, its running total is at $102.3 million.

“Wuthering Heights” meanwhile fell 57% from its opening last weekend, bringing its domestic total to $60 million. Internationally it added another $26.3 million, pushing its global total to $151.7 million against an $80 million production budget. The movie’s top international market continues to be the U.K., where it has made $22.5 million alone.

Third place for the weekend went to Lionsgate and Kingdom Story’s “I Can Only Imagine 2,” a follow-up to the 2018 Dennis Quaid movie that made $86 million against a $7 million budget. The sequel opened with $8 million, a far cry from the first film’s $17 million launch, though that was in line with expectations. It did score a rare A+ CinemaScore.

Amazon and MGM’s “Crime 101” fell 59% in its second weekend, bringing in $5.8 million to take fourth place. The Chris Hemsworth and Mark Ruffalo heist thriller has now made $24.7 million against a reported $90 million budget. “Send Help” rounded out the top five with $4.5 million.

“How to Make a Killing” landed in sixth place with $3.6 million. A24 released the StudioCanal movie in 1,600 North American theaters. The film, loosely inspired by “Kind Hearts and Coronets,” stars Powell as a man who, in a quest to acquire a $28 billion inheritance, decides to kill off his family members. Directed by John Patton Ford (“Emily the Criminal”), “How to Make a Killing” was not well-received by critics: it’s sitting at a “rotten” 47% on Rotten Tomatoes.



Invision via AP

Stephen Curry arrives at the premiere of ‘GOAT’ Feb. 6 at AMC Century City 15 in Los Angeles.

“Psycho Killer,” released by 20th Century Studios, fared much worse and opened outside of the top 10. The horror-thriller written by Andrew Kevin Walker (“Seven”) and directed by Gavin Polone (a notable television and film producer in his directorial debut) tanked in its first weekend in theaters with $1.6 million in ticket sales from 1,110 theaters. Audiences were not any happier with it than critics; According to PostTrak, only 31% of ticket buyers would “definitely recommend” it.

The year’s box office is running about 5% ahead of last year and Dergarabedian expects things will start to pick up when “Scream 7” opens next weekend.

“It’s been a kind of rollercoaster ride at the box office,” he said.

Top 10 movies by domestic box office

With final domestic figures being released Monday, this list factors in the estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore:

1. “GOAT,” $17 million.
2. “Wuthering Heights,” $14.2 million.
3. “I Can Only Imagine 2,” $8 million.
4. “Crime 101,” $5.8 million.
5. “Send Help,” $4.5 million.
6. “How to Make a Killing,” $3.6 million.
7. “EPiC: Elvis Presley in Concert,” $3.3 million.
8. “Solo Mio,” $2.6 million.
9. “Zootopia 2,” $2.3 million.
10. “Avatar: Fire and Ash,” $1.8 million.

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A historic milestone

After 4 years of war by Russia in Ukraine, peace is still elusive

The Associated Press

When Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine surpassed 1,418 days last month, it officially exceeded a historic milestone — the same span of time it took Moscow to defeat Nazi Germany in World War II.

And unlike the Red Army that pushed all the way to Berlin eight decades ago in what it called the Great Patriotic War, Russia's 4-year-old, all-out invasion of its neighbor is still struggling to fully capture Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland.

After Moscow failed to seize the capital of Kyiv and install a puppet government in February 2022, the conflict turned into trench warfare with tremendous cost. By some estimates, nearly 2 million soldiers are dead, wounded, or missing on both sides in Europe's most devastating conflict since World War II.

Russia has occupied about 20% of Ukrainian territory since illegally annexing Crimea in 2014, but its gains after the Feb. 24, 2022, invasion have been slow. NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte this month likened Moscow's advance to "the

See MILESTONE | 16A



AP file photo

Ukrainian servicemen load an artillery shell before firing at Russian positions on the front line in the Kharkiv region of Ukraine on Wednesday.

IN SUMMARY

Next US-Iran nuclear talks are Thursday

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Oman says the next round of talks between the United States and Iran will be on Thursday in Geneva. Oman previously hosted the indirect talks on the Islamic Republic's nuclear program and facilitated the latest round in Geneva last week. There was no immediate White House comment. Confirmation of the talks came shortly after Iran's top diplomat told CBS that he expected to meet U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff on Thursday. The Trump administration has been pushing for concessions from its longtime adversary and has built up the largest U.S. military presence in the Middle East in decades. Meanwhile, there are new protests in Iran.

DHS suspends Global Entry

DALLAS — The Department of Homeland Security says the Global Entry program shuts down for as long as the partial government shutdown continues. On Sunday, the agency says staffing limits are forcing case-by-case changes at airports. The shutdown starts after a funding fight over the Department of Homeland Security. Democrats also push for changes to immigration operations tied to President Trump's deportation campaign. Travel gets squeezed as a winter storm hits the East Coast from Sunday into Monday. Many Monday flights out of big Northeast airports get canceled. Global Entry speeds customs for approved travelers and also includes TSA PreCheck, which DHS now keeps running.

Mexican army kills leader of powerful cartel

MEXICO CITY — The Mexican army says it has killed the powerful leader of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel in a military operation. On Sunday, troops targeted Nemesio Rubén Oseguera Cervantes, known as "El Mencho," in the western state of Jalisco. The operation set off hours of roadblocks and burning vehicles in Jalisco and other states. Officials say cartels often use these tactics to slow down or block military moves. The U.S. State Department has offered a reward of up to 15 million dollars for information leading to El Mencho's arrest. In February, the Trump administration designated the cartel as a foreign terrorist organization.

US: Comments on Israel, Middle East taken out of context

TEL AVIV, Israel — There is fresh outrage over U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee's remarks in an interview that Israel could "take it all" when asked about biblical claims to the Middle East land. A U.S. Embassy spokesperson on Sunday said his comments were taken out of context and that U.S. policies on Israel have not changed. Huckabee, in the interview, also said Israel is not trying to seize neighboring lands. A growing group of Arab and Muslim nations is calling his remarks "dangerous and inflammatory."

"One Battle After Another" wins 6 prizes

LONDON — Politically charged action thriller "One Battle After Another" has won six prizes, including best picture, at Britain's BAFTA film awards. Vampire saga "Sinners" and gothic horror story "Frankenstein" each won three prizes. Paul Thomas Anderson was named best director for "One Battle After Another." Jessie Buckley won the best actress prize for "Hamnet," while Robert Aaramayo took the best actor prize for the British indie film "I Swear," beating stars including Leonardo DiCaprio and Timothée Chalamet. The British awards offer clues about who may win at the Academy Awards in Hollywood next month.

— *Associated Press*

Armed man killed after entering Mar-a-Lago

By Michelle L. Price and Allen G. Breed
The Associated Press



AP photo

A Palm Beach County Sheriff vehicle blocks traffic near Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Fla., on Sunday.

WASHINGTON — An armed man drove into the secure perimeter of Mar-a-Lago, President Donald Trump's resort in Palm Beach, Florida, before being shot and killed early Sunday morning, according to a spokesman for the U.S. Secret Service. Trump was not there but was at the White House in Washington.

The man, who was in his early 20s and from North Carolina, had a gas can and a shotgun, according to Anthony Guglielmi, the spokesman. He said a box for the weapon was discovered in the man's vehicle after the incident, which took place around 1:30 a.m.

Investigators identified the man killed as 21-year-old Austin Tucker Martin, according to a person familiar with the matter. The person was not authorized to publicly discuss details of the investigation and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Trump has faced threats to his life before, including two assassination attempts during the 2024 campaign.

Motive still under investigation

The man entered the north gate of the property as another vehicle was exiting and was confronted by two Secret Service agents and a Palm Beach County sheriff's deputy, according to Palm Beach County Sheriff Ric Bradshaw.

"He was ordered to drop those two pieces of equipment that he had with him. At which time he put down the gas can, raised the shotgun to a shooting position," Bradshaw said at a brief press conference. The two agents and the deputy "fired their weapons to neutralize the threat."

The Moore County Sheriff's Department in North Carolina said a relative of Martin's reported him missing early Sunday morning. Investigators believe he picked up the shotgun on his way south.

Investigators are working to compile a psychological profile, and a motive is still under investigation. Asked whether the man was known to law enforcement, Bradshaw said "not right now."

The FBI asked residents who live near Mar-a-Lago to check any security cameras they may have for footage that could help investigators.

In a post on X, FBI Director Kash Patel said the bureau would be "dedicating all necessary resources" to the investigation.

Although the president often spends weekends at his resort, he and first lady Melania Trump were at the White House when the breach at Mar-a-Lago occurred.

See ARMED | 17A

EU says US must honor trade deal

The Associated Press

BRUSSELS — The European Union's executive arm requested "full clarity" from the United States and asked its trade partner to fulfill its commitments after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down some of President Donald Trump's most sweeping tariffs.

Trump has lashed out at the court decision and said Saturday that he wants a global tariff of 15%, up from the 10% he announced a day earlier.

The European Commission said the current situation is not conducive to delivering "fair, balanced, and mutually beneficial" trans-Atlantic trade and investment, as agreed to by both sides and spelled out in the EU-U.S. Joint Statement of August 2025.

American and EU officials sealed a trade deal last year that imposes a 15% import tax on 70% of European goods exported to the United States. The European Commission handles trade for the 27 EU member countries.

A top EU lawmaker said on Sunday he will propose to the European Parliament negotiating team to put the ratifying process of the deal on pause.

"Pure tariff chaos on the part of the U.S. administration," Bernd Lange, the chair of Parliament's international trade committee, wrote on social media. "No one can make sense of it anymore — only open questions and growing uncertainty for the EU and other U.S. trading partners."



AP file photo

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen addresses the media at the end of an EU summit at Alden Biesen Castle in Bilzen-Hoeselt, Belgium, on Feb. 12.

The value of EU-U.S. trade in goods and services amounted to 1.7 trillion euros ($2 trillion) in 2024, or an average of 4.6 billion euros a day, according to the EU statistics agency Eurostat.

"A deal is a deal," the European Commission said. "As the United States' largest trading partner, the EU expects the U.S. to honor its commitments set out in the Joint Statement — just as the EU stands by its commitments. EU products must continue to benefit from the most competitive treatment, with no

See TRADE | 15A

Trade

From page 14A

increases in tariffs beyond the clear and all-inclusive ceiling previously agreed."

Jamieson Greer, Trump's top trade negotiator, said in a CBS News interview Sunday morning that the U.S. plans to stand by its trade deals and expects its partners to do the same.

He said he talked to his European counterpart this weekend and hasn't heard anyone tell him the deal is off.

"The deals were not premised on whether or not the emergency tariff litigation would rise or fall," Greer said. "I haven't heard anyone yet come to me and say the deal's off. They want to see how this plays out."

Europe's biggest exports to the U.S. are pharmaceuticals, cars, aircraft, chemicals, medical instruments, and wine and spirits. Among the biggest U.S. exports to the bloc are professional and scientific services like payment systems and cloud infrastructure, oil and gas, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, aerospace products, and cars.

"When applied unpredictably, tariffs are inherently disruptive, undermining confidence and stability across global markets and creating further uncertainty across international supply chains," the commission added.

As primarily a trading bloc, the EU has a powerful tool at its disposal to retaliate — the bloc's Anti-Coercion Instrument. It includes a raft of measures for blocking or restricting trade and investment from countries found to be putting undue pressure on EU member nations or corporations. The measures could include curtailing the export and import of goods and services, barring countries or companies from EU public tenders, or limiting foreign direct investment. In its most severe form, it would essentially close off access to the EU's 450-million customer market and inflict billions of dollars of losses on U.S. companies and the American economy.



AP file photo

President Donald Trump speaks before he signs a presidential memorandum imposing tariffs and investment restrictions on China in the Diplomatic Reception Room of the White House in Washington on March 22, 2018.

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Milestone

From page 14A

speed of a garden snail."

Russian troops have moved only about 30 miles into the Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine in the past two years in a grinding battle for control of a few strongholds.

Despite the slow pace and high cost, President Vladimir Putin has maintained his maximalist demands in U.S.-mediated peace talks, saying Kyiv must pull its forces from the four Ukrainian regions that Moscow illegally annexed but never fully captured. He has repeatedly brandished his nuclear arsenal to prevent the West from boosting military support for Kyiv.

A war of attrition

Initially involving quick movements of large numbers of troops and tanks in Russia's opening blitz and Ukraine's counteroffensive in fall 2022, the fighting morphed into bloody positional warfare along the 750-mile front line.

The Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies estimated Russian military casualties at 1.2 million, including 325,000 killed. It put Ukrainian troop casualties at up to 600,000, including up to 140,000 killed.

"Russia has suffered the highest casualty rate of any major power in any war since World War II, and its military has performed poorly, with historically slow rates of advance and little new territory to show for its efforts over the last two years," it said, noting Russian troops were advancing an average of 76 ½ yards a day in two years to capture the transport hub of Pokrovsk.

For the first time in military history, drones are playing a decisive role, making it effectively impossible for either side to covertly mass significant numbers of troops.

Since early in the conflict, Ukraine has relied on drones to offset Moscow's edge in firepower and stem its advances, but Russia has drastically expanded drone operations and introduced longer-range optical fiber-tethered drones to avoid electronic jamming. They widened the kill zone to about 30 miles from the front, leaving the terrain tangled in strands of filament.

The mixture of high-tech drones and World War I-style trench fighting has seen small groups of infantry — often just two or three soldiers — try to infiltrate enemy positions into towns flattened by Russian heavy artillery and glide bombs. Ferrying supplies and evacuating the wounded is a major challenge as drones target supply routes.



AP file photo

Ukrainian soldiers fire at Russian positions on the front line in the Kharkiv region of Ukraine on Wednesday.

Long-range attacks

Ukrainian officials described this winter as the most challenging of the war. Russia exponentially increased its strikes on the country's energy system, causing blackouts in Kyiv, where power supplies to many were cut to a few hours a day amid bitter cold.

Russia has also increasingly targeted power lines, aiming to halt energy transfers and split Ukraine's power grid into isolated islands, increasing pressure on the grid.

Ukraine retaliated with long-range drone attacks on oil refineries and other energy facilities deep inside Russia, aiming to drain Moscow's export revenues.

Its drones and missiles sank several Russian warships in the Black Sea, forcing Moscow to redeploy its fleet from Russia-occupied Crimea to Novorossiysk. And in an audacious attack code-named "Spiderweb," Ukraine used drones from trucks to hit several air bases hosting long-range bombers across Russia in June, a humiliating blow to the Kremlin.

US pressure, conflicting demands

U.S. President Donald Trump, who once promised to end the war in a day, has pushed to end the fighting, but mediation efforts have run into sharply conflicting demands.

Putin wants Ukraine to pull its troops from the part of the Donetsk region it still controls, abandon its bid to join NATO, curb its military, and grant official status to the Russian language, among other demands Ukraine has rejected.

Russia left the door open to Kyiv's prospective European Union membership, but it firmly ruled out any European peacekeepers deployed to Ukraine as part of a settlement.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy wants a ceasefire along the existing line of contact, but Putin rules out a truce, demanding a comprehensive peace agreement.

"The territorial issue is important to the Kremlin, but the war has a more ambitious goal: to create a Ukraine that would be entirely within Russia's sphere of influence and not perceived by Moscow as 'anti-Russia,'" observed Tatiana Stanovaya of

See MILESTONE | 18A

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Armed

From page 14A



AP photo

The U.S. Secret Service announced Sunday that an armed man was shot and killed after entering the secure perimeter of Mar-a-Lago, President Donald Trump's resort in Palm Beach, Fla., on Sunday.



AP photo

A vehicle blocks access to a property in Cameron, N.C., on Sunday.

Martin was described as quiet, averse to guns

On Sunday afternoon, vehicles blocked the entrance to a property listed in public records as an address for Martin at the end of a private road in Cameron, North Carolina.

Braeden Fields, Martin's cousin, reacted with disbelief. He described Martin as quiet, afraid of guns and from a family of avid Trump supporters.

"He's a good kid," Fields, 19, said. He said they grew up together. "I wouldn't believe he would do something like this. It's mind-blowing," Fields said.

He said Martin worked at a local golf course and would send money from each paycheck to charity.

"He wouldn't even hurt an ant. He doesn't even know how to use a gun," Fields said.

He said his cousin didn't discuss politics.

"We are big Trump supporters, all of us. Everybody," Fields said, but his cousin was "real quiet, never really talked about anything."

Two assassination attempts

Sunday's incursion at Mar-a-Lago took place a few miles from Trump's West Palm Beach club where a man tried to assassinate him while he played golf during the 2024 campaign.

A Secret Service agent spotted that man, Ryan Routh, aiming a rifle through the shrubbery before Trump came into view. Officials said Routh aimed his rifle at the agent, who opened fire and caused Routh to drop his weapon.

Routh was found guilty last year and sentenced this month to life in prison.

Trump also survived an assassination attempt at a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania. That gunman fired eight shots before being killed by a Secret Service counter sniper. One rally attendee was killed by the gunman.

White House brings in shutdown politics

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said in a post on X that "the United States Secret Service acted quickly and decisively to neutralize a crazy person, armed with a gun and a gas canister, who intruded President Trump's home."

Leavitt used her post to blame Democratic lawmakers in Congress for the partial government shutdown affecting the Homeland Security Department, which began Feb. 14 after Democrats demanded changes to the president's deportation campaign.

The Secret Service is among the agencies where the vast majority of employees are continuing their work but missing a paycheck.

"Federal law enforcement are working 24/7 to keep our country safe and protect all Americans," Leavitt said. "It's shameful and reckless that Democrats have chosen to shut down their Department."

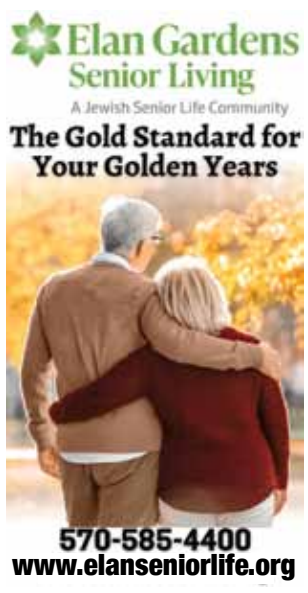
The White House referred all questions to the Secret Service and FBI. Both Trump and his wife posted statements on social media after the incident, but they were unrelated to the shooting.

Recent acts of politically motivated violence

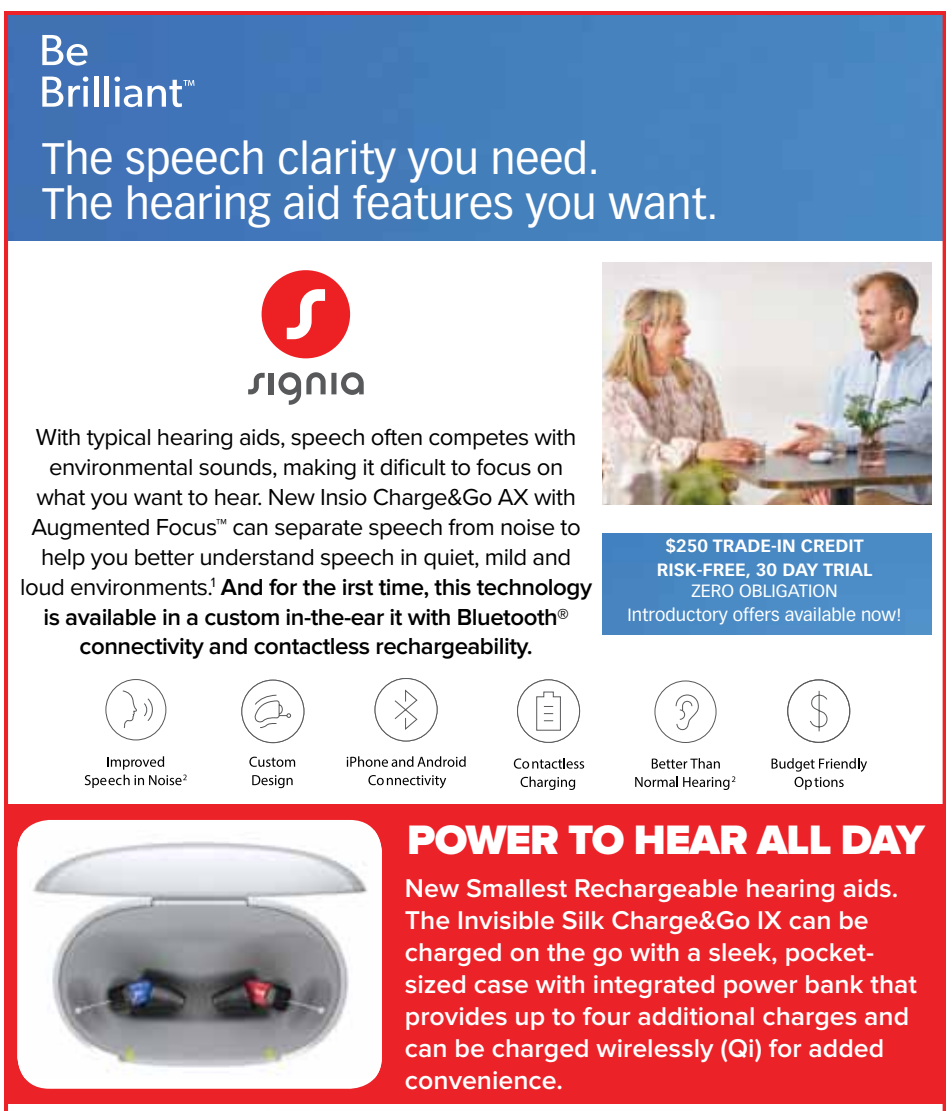
In the past year, there was the assassination of conservative activist Charlie Kirk; the assassination of the Democratic leader in the Minnesota state House and her husband and the shooting of another lawmaker and his wife; and an arson attack at the official residence of Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro.

Five days ago, a Georgia man armed with a shotgun was arrested as he sprinted toward the west side of the U.S. Capitol.











Milestone

From page 16A

Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center.

Ukraine and its allies accuse Putin of dragging out talks while he seizes more territory. The Kremlin accuses Kyiv and its European supporters of trying to undermine a tentative agreement reached by Trump and Putin at their Alaska summit.

While sticking to their positions, Putin and Zelenskyy have praised U.S. mediation and tried to curry favor with Trump.

After a disastrous White House meeting a year ago, Zelenskyy has adopted a more practical negotiating stance, emphasizing Ukraine's goodwill.

After Trump called for a presidential election in Ukraine, Zelenskyy signaled readiness for it even though it's banned under martial law. The election could be coupled with a referendum on a peace deal, he said, but insisted the vote was only possible once a ceasefire is established and Ukraine gets security guarantees from the U.S. and other allies.

Elusive settlement

Zelenskyy said the White House has set a June deadline for the war's end and will likely pressure both sides to meet it. But even as Trump appears eager for a peace deal before the U.S. midterm elections, challenges remain.

With Putin insisting on Ukraine's pullback from Donetsk and Zelenskyy ruling it out, a quick deal appears unlikely. Zelenskyy also expressed skepticism about a compromise U.S. proposal to turn the eastern region into a free economic zone.

The Kremlin expects its attacks eventually will force Kyiv to accept Moscow's terms. Ukraine hopes it can hold on until Trump loses patience and increases sanctions on Russia, forcing Putin to halt his aggression. But Trump often appears to be losing patience with Zelenskyy instead.

The war and Western sanctions have increasingly strained Russia's economy. Growth has slowed to a near halt due to persistent inflation and labor shortages. The latest U.S. sanctions on Russian oil exports have added to the strain.

But even with the economic challenges, Russia's defense plants have increased weapons output ,and its government has shielded key social groups like soldiers and industrial workers from hardship.

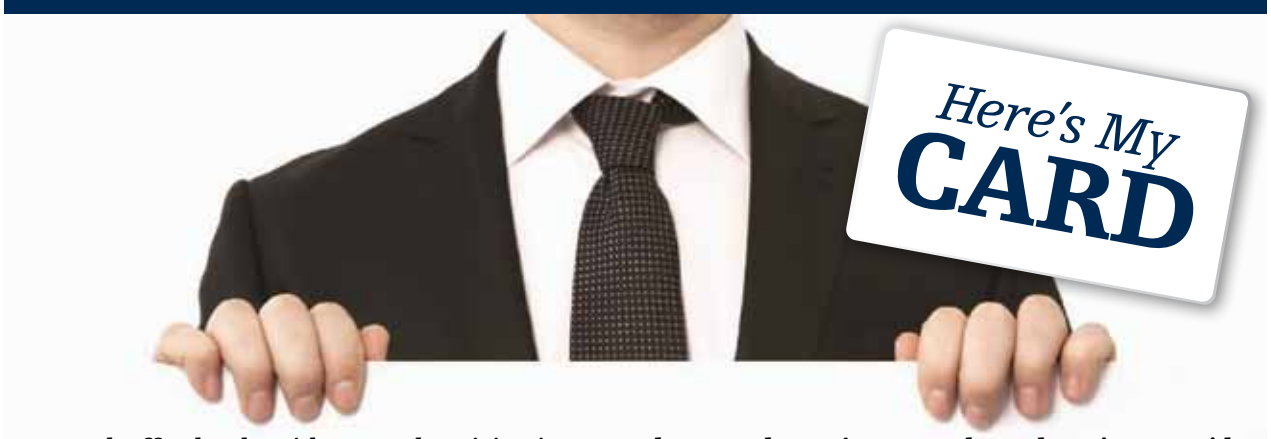
"Its economy is poorer, less efficient, and less promising than it might otherwise have been," wrote Richard Connolly of the Royal United Services Institute. "But it remains capable of sustaining the war. Its elites are more dependent on the regime, not less. Its political system is insulated from the transmission of economic discontent into pressure for regime change."



AP file photo

President Donald Trump, right, and Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy shake hands at the start of a joint news conference following a meeting at Trump's Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Fla., on Dec. 28, 2025.

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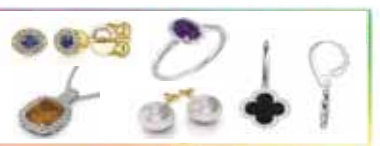
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How exercise builds a stronger heart

The benefits of physical activity are well-documented. Adults may be reminded of the short- and long-term benefits of exercise when visiting their physicians for annual well visits or to treat an illness. Though exercise is often viewed as a means to losing weight, it's equally important for people of all ages to recognize the many other ways physical activity benefits the body, including its role in heart health.

The World Health Organization reports that cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) are the leading causes of death across the globe. A host of variables can lead to a CVD diagnosis, and a sedentary lifestyle is among them. By including exercise in their daily routines, individuals can build a stronger heart that benefits their bodies in myriad ways.

Exercise, the heart and lung function

The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute notes that regular moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activity strengthens the heart muscle. A stronger heart is more capable of pumping blood to the lungs, which the NHLBI notes ensures a stronger blood flow to the muscles.

Exercise and blood oxygen levels

Exercise helps to increase oxygen levels in the blood by improving the ability of the heart to pump blood not only to the lungs, but throughout the body. That's a notable benefit, as the Cleveland Clinic notes hypoxia, a condition marked by low blood oxygen levels, can lead to adverse health conditions, such as damage to individual organ systems, including the brain.

Exercise and coronary heart disease

Coronary heart disease is a condition marked by the buildup of plaque in the coronary arteries, which the NHLBI notes supply the heart muscle with oxygen-rich blood. Moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity has been linked to a lower risk for coronary heart disease because it can help people lower their blood pressure; reduce a type of fat in the blood known as triglycerides; increase "good" cholesterol levels; help the body manage its blood sugar and insulin levels; and reduce levels of C-reactive protein (CRP), which is a sign of inflammation associated with a higher risk of heart disease.

These are just a handful of the ways that exercise can help individuals build a stronger heart. Individuals who have already been diagnosed with heart disease and have lived a largely sedentary lifestyle are urged to speak with their physicians about safe ways to incorporate exercise into their daily routines. Vigorous aerobic activity may not be safe for people who have heart disease, so anyone in that situation should not simply begin exercising on their own.

A healthy heart is a building block of a long life. More information about exercise and heart health can be found at nhlbi.nih.gov.

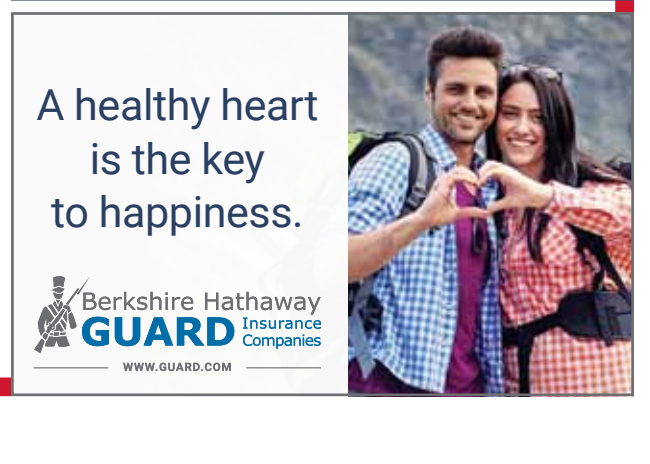


Did you know?

Heart disease and cancer are two of the leading causes of death around the world, and there may be a link between these two diseases. Certain lifestyle habits may increase the risk for both cancer and heart disease, say the experts at Hackensack Meridian Health. In addition, some research has shown that heart disease, a history of heart attack or a diagnosis of heart failure leads to an increased risk for developing cancer. A 2019 study published in the European Journal of Heart Failure indicated "emerging evidence supports that cancer incidence is increased in patients with cardiovascular disease and heart failure." Patients with heart failure commonly die from cancer as well. Circulating factors related to heart failure promote tumor growth, which could explain the link between heart disease and cancer. Another surprising bit of information is that cancer can occur in the heart, though such instances are very rare. According to the Mayo Clinic, cancer that begins in the heart is most often sarcoma, which originates in the soft tissues of the body.







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TODAY'S FORECAST

Be prepared for snowy roads on Monday morning, especially most south and east where the snow can linger through the early afternoon. Winds will be gusty, especially in the highest elevations. Snow will taper off for everybody by sunset. Valley Cities and Central PA are expected to see 3-6". Poconos and areas most southeast will see 6-12", with some areas locally receiving over a foot. Winter Storm and Blizzard Warnings are in effect until this afternoon and evening. Daytime highs for Monday will be into the lower and middle 30s.

For Tuesday, we will see a mix of sun and clouds, but it will be colder with highs in the lower and middle 20s. Another clipper brings some light snow Tuesday night into Wednesday. Minor snow accumulations are possible.

Thursday and Friday will be seasonal with the chance of another system to bring more rain and snow. We will continue to monitor this system. Highs for both days are expected to be in the upper 30s to near 40. Next weekend looks warmer with some sunshine. Highs for the weekend will be in the middle 40s.

Matthew Howard
Meteorologist
WBRE/WYOU

SEVEN-DAY FORECAST

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
34 / 15	28 / 23	41 / 21	37 / 32	39 / 18	48 / 27	36 / 15
Windy; a bit of morning snow	Cloudy, breezy and cold	A little snow	Remaining cloudy	Areas of low clouds	Mostly sunny	Colder with low clouds

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	6:47 a.m.
Sunset today	5:47 p.m.
Moonrise today	9:38 a.m.
Moonset today	12:06 a.m.

First	Full	Last	New
Feb 24	Mar 3	Mar 11	Mar 18

WEATHER HISTORY

A blizzard on Feb. 23, 1936, in Donner Pass, Calif., trapped more than 750 motorists; seven died.

ALMANAC

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

TEMPERATURES

High	37
Low	32
Normal high	41
Normal Low	23
Record high	62 (1997)
Record low	-1 (1963)

PRECIPITATION

24-hour total	0.03"
Month to date	0.50"
Normal m-t-d	1.58"
Year to date	2.55"
Normal y-t-d	4.17"

HEATING DEGREE DAYS

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

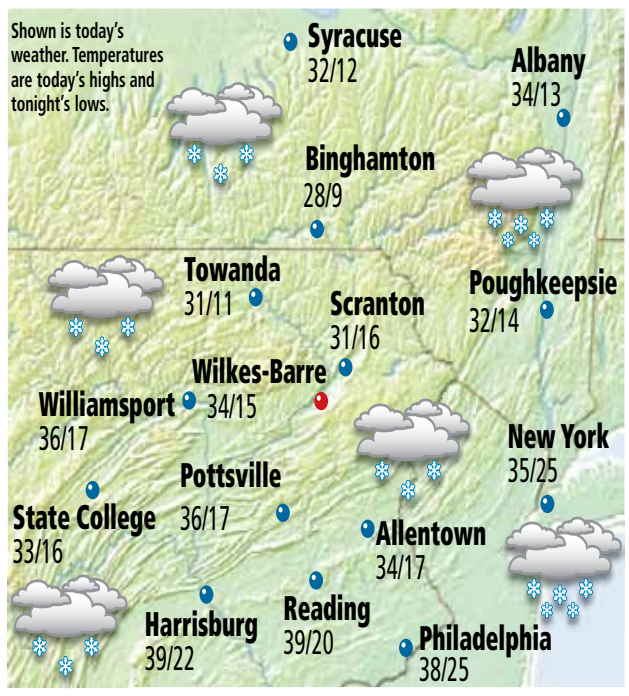
Sunday	30
Month to date	871
Season to date	4477
Last season to date	4130
Normal season to date	4059

RIVER LEVELS

In feet as of 7 a.m. Sunday.

Susquehanna	Stage	Chg	Fld Stg
Wilkes-Barre	9.85	+5.75	22
Towanda	5.16	+1.34	16
Lehigh			
Bethlehem	2.55	+0.37	16
Delaware			
Port Jervis	3.25	-0.03	18

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



NEW YORK CITY

Highs: 35. **Lows:** 25. Very windy today; snow and flurries, accumulating 1-2 inches; storm total snowfall 10-14 inches. Becoming clear tonight.

PHILADELPHIA

High: 38. **Low:** 25. Windy today; intermittent snow and flurries, accumulating a coating to an inch; storm total 10-14 inches. Turning out clear tonight.

POCONOS

Highs: 24 to 30. **Lows:** 7 to 13. Very windy today. Dangerous travel in the morning; improving travel conditions in the afternoon. Strong winds tonight.

FINGER LAKES

Highs: 29 to 35. **Lows:** 9 to 15. Today: cloudy, windy and colder with a bit of snow with little or no accumulation. Intermittent snow and flurries tonight.

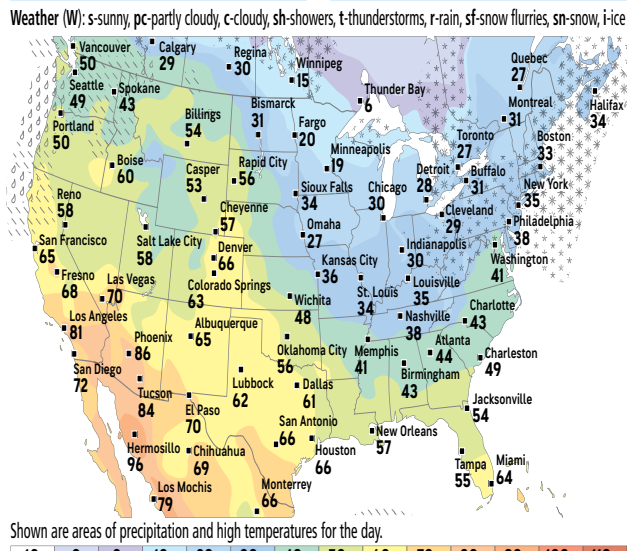
JERSEY SHORE

Highs: 35 to 41. **Lows:** 20 to 26. Very windy today; snow and flurries at times, accumulating up to an inch; storm total 12-18 inches. Windy tonight. Partly sunny tomorrow.

NATIONAL WEATHER

	Today Hi/Lo/W	Tuesday Hi/Lo/W
Atlanta	44/25/pc	55/41/s
Baltimore	40/22/sf	37/29/pc
Billings	54/36/pc	46/38/c
Boston	33/24/sn	33/12/s
Buffalo	31/10/sn	21/19/sn
Charlotte	43/24/pc	49/40/pc
Chicago	30/22/pc	41/25/c
Cleveland	29/17/sf	34/30/sn
Dallas	61/43/s	75/58/s
Denver	66/42/pc	69/41/pc
Detroit	28/14/c	33/27/sn
Honolulu	77/65/sh	77/66/sh
Houston	66/42/s	70/62/pc
Indianapolis	30/18/pc	39/30/c
Las Vegas	70/48/pc	74/54/s
Milwaukee	28/21/pc	37/23/sn
Nashville	38/23/pc	52/45/pc
New Orleans	57/39/s	62/52/pc
Norfolk	42/29/pc	44/35/pc
Oklahoma City	56/37/pc	71/44/s
Orlando	58/36/s	62/38/s
Phoenix	86/57/s	86/60/s
Pittsburgh	32/17/sf	33/29/c
Portland, ME	27/20/sn	33/4/pc
Portland, OR	50/42/r	50/39/c
Sacramento	68/54/c	61/55/r
St. Louis	34/25/s	55/37/pc
San Francisco	65/55/pc	63/56/r
Seattle	49/40/r	47/37/c
Washington, DC	41/26/sf	40/32/pc

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



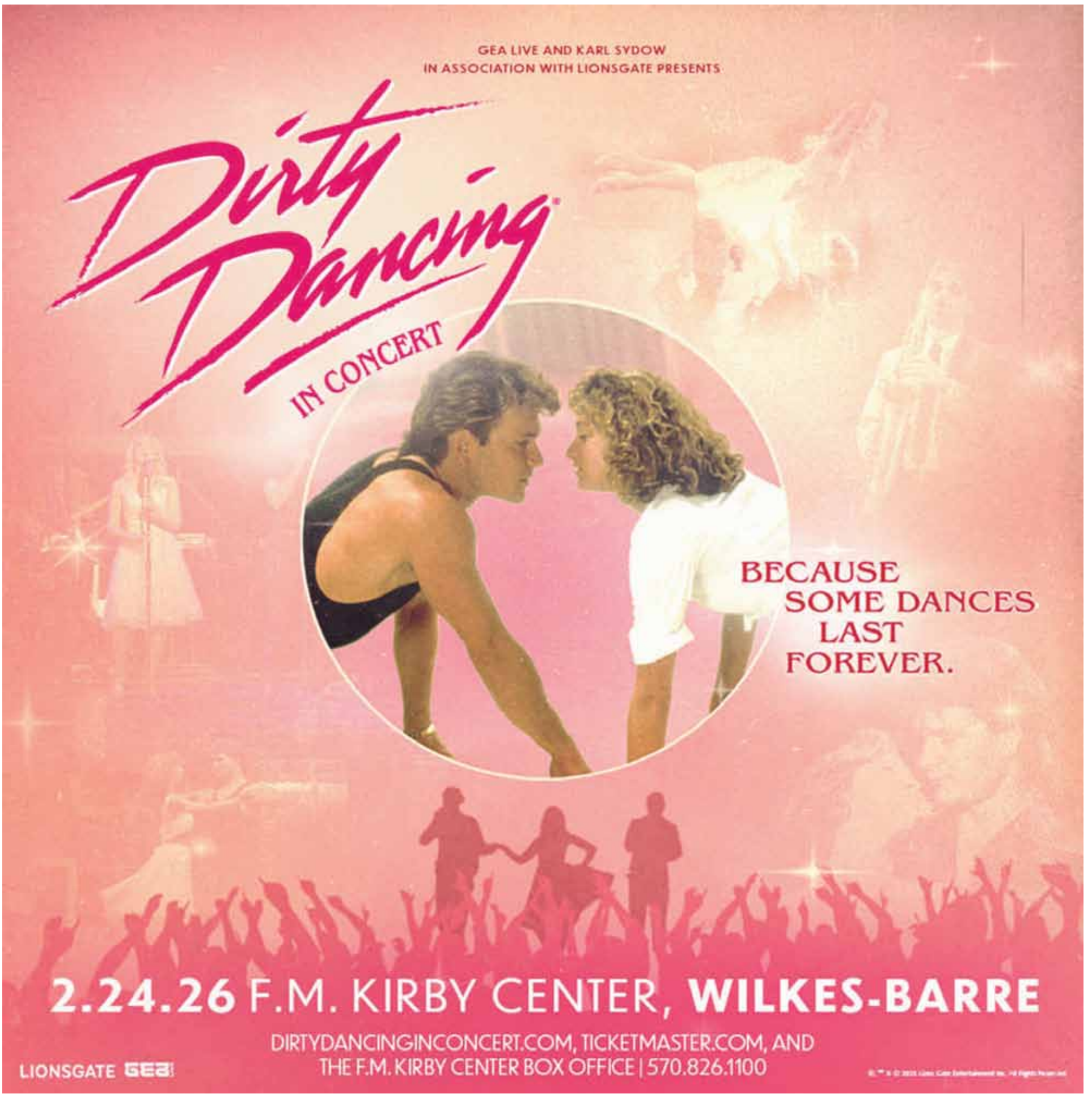
Shown are areas of precipitation and high temperatures for the day.

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

Showers T-storms Rain Flurries Snow Ice

Summary: As a storm moves away from coast today, snow will continue to fall from Pennsylvania to Maine. Rain will become heavy in the afternoon across the Pacific Northwest. It will be dry and cool elsewhere.

AccuWeather | Go to AccuWeather.com



WBS PENGUINS EARN WEEKEND SWEEP OF BRIDGEPORT • PAGE 3B

Sports Monday

contact us >> sports@timesleader.com



IN MEMORY

Joseph J. Soprano Jr.

Times Leader executive editor

Penn State graduate 1988

Golden goal for USA

JACK HUGHES SCORES IN OT TO DEFEAT CANADA FOR US MEN'S 1ST GOLD SINCE 'MIRACLE ON ICE'

PAGE 4B

United States' Jack Hughes celebrates after scoring the gold-medal clinching goal in overtime on Sunday as the Americans beat Canada 2-1 in the finale of the Milan Cortina Olympics. Hughes and the Americans won gold for the first time since 1980. (Hassan Ammar | AP photo)

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- Don't crank the thermostat! Raising the temperature too high won't heat your home faster. Increase in small increments.
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Jim Monk
Service Manager, Monk HVAC



HARNESS RACING

POCONO DOWNS
AT
MOHEGAN
PENNSYLVANIA
Saturday's entries
Post time: 1 p.m.

First 10000CL $8,000 Pace
1. Thrasher (Ma Herschberger) 5-1
2. Heart on My Sleeve (A Napolitano) 15-1
3. Ben Rockin (Ma Kakaley) 12-1
4. Rose Run Zeke (Ty Buter) 3-1
5. Franco (Si Allard) 4-1
6. It'sgoodtobedakig (Ri Warren) 6-1
7. Mr Dunnigans (Ge Napolitano Jr) 5-2
8. I'm A Big Shot (Br Boyd) 10-1

Second NW4PM $15,500 Pace
1. Bettor's Desire (Ma Kakaley) 4-1
2. Shining Moment (Ty Buter) 10-1
3. Sweet Parlay (Co Kelly) 12-1
4. Charlies Wish (Br Boyd) 5-1
5. Drinkswiththecaptn (M Hrschbrgr) 15-1
6. Captain Fear (Ge Napolitano Jr) 3-1
7. Sonofabusinessman (Ri Warren) 6-1
8. War No More (An Napolitano) 5-2

Third 12500CL $9,500 Trot
1. Stevie Ray (Ji Pantaleano) 8-1
2. Vali Hanover (Ma Kakaley) 3-1
3. Erin (Ty Buter) 7-2
4. Chiplosive (Br Boyd) 4-1
5. Grizz Wyllie (Ge Napolitano Jr) 5-1
6. The American Eagle (A Napolitano) 9-2
7. Trout Master (Ri Warren) 12-1
8. Boom Boom Bay (Ja Kennedy) 10-1

Fourth NW3500L5 $8,500 Pace
1. Avenger Force (Ma Kakaley) 4-1
2. Red Righthand Man N (Ty Buter) 3-1
3. Magnifico Hanover (Ge Napolitano) 5-2
4. Aces or Bettor (Br Boyd) 5-1
5. No Tresspassing (An Napolitano) 10-1
6. Hes Rockin Ralphie (Mi Terpolilli) 15-1
7. Woodmere Dealer (M Herschberger) 6-1
8. Nob Hill Flash (Si Allard) 12-1

Fifth M10000CLHC $9,500 Pace
1. Pull Me Through (Ri Warren) 12-1
2. Vendetta Blue Chip (Si Allard) 4-1
3. Run Baby (Ji Pantaleono) 15-1
4. Way Too Sweet (Ty Buter) 5-2
5. Better in Heels (Ma Kakaley) 10-1
6. Miss You Joann (An Napolitano) 6-1
7. Graceful Gala (Ja Kennedy) 3-1
8. Chickaboo (Ge Napolitano Jr) 5-1

Sixth 15000CL $11,000 Pace
1. Final Cheeserecipe (Ty Buter) 4-1
2. Boiler Maker (Br Irvine) 5-1
3. Shadow Cat (Si Allard) 3-1
4. Reassurance (Ge Napolitano Jr) 12-1
5. Blowin Smoke (Br Boyd) 5-2
6. Hill Of A Wish (Ja Kennedy) 10-1
7. Captain Conan (Ma Kakaley) 6-1
8. I Fear Nothing (Ma Herschberger) 15-1

Seventh NW3900L5 $8,500 Trot
1. Carrera Hanover (Ty Buter) 4-1
2. Conrad Dipoggio It (Ro Harmon) 9-2
3. Fabulous Freddie (Ji Pantaleano) 7-2
4. River Of Denile (Ri Warren) 3-1
5. Give Me A Yankee (Si Allard) 10-1
6. Gatsby (St Reisenweaver) 8-1
7. Miss Principle (An Napolitano) 5-1
8. Midnight Dreams (Bo Crivokapich) 12-1

Eighth 12500CL $9,500 Pace
1. Skyway Ballistic (Br Boyd) 10-1
2. Neyreit (An Napolitano) 4-1
3. Hoosier Celebrity (M Herschberger) 8-1
4. Advance Men (Si Allard) 3-1
5. Jojo's Place (Ma Kakaley) 7-2
6. Granite (Ge Napolitano Jr) 12-1
7. Bluebird Time (Ty Buter) 9-2
8. Double Up N (Ri Warren) 5-1

Ninth 7500CL $7,000 Pace
1. Texas Miki (Ja Kennedy) 12-1
2. Shore Of Himself (Ma Kakaley) 4-1
3. Tron (Ma Herschberger) 7-2
4. Fromashestoashes N (A Napolitno) 3-1
5. Good Investment (Ge Napolitano) 10-1
6. Speak Your Mind (Br Boyd) 9-2
7. Bambino Joe (Ri Warren) 5-1
8. Watch U R Back (Si Allard) 8-1

Tenth W4-6PM FM $17,500 Pace
1. Nila Maree N (Si Allard) 5-2
2. Odds on Aces Full (An Napolitano) 6-1
3. Time To Strike (Ma Kakaley) 4-1
4. Manhattan Project (Ty Buter) 5-1
5. Ms Frances Assisi (Ge Napolitano) 10-1
6. Perfidious Crown (An Borjas) 3-1
7. Spirit of Pearl A (Br Boyd) 15-1
8. Mikki Sixx (Co Kelly) 12-1

Eleventh NW6500L5 $11,000 Trot
1. Father Stosh (Ja Kennedy) 15-1
2. Sapphirerainstar (Si Allard) 5-2
3. Smokeitsteady (Ty Buter) 4-1
4. Dart Guy (An Napolitano) 12-1
5. Lucky Weekend (Ma Herschberger) 5-1
6. Tom Swifty (Br Boyd) 3-1
7. Robbie Pev (Ge Napolitano Jr) 6-1
8. Doc Nixon (Ri Warren) 10-1

Twelfth M NW3500L5 $8,500 Pace
1. The Future Is Here (M Herschbergr) 5-1
2. P L Portia (Ri Warren) 8-1
3. Pembroke Ali (Br Boyd) 9-2
4. Catie Faye Hanover (G Napolitano) 10-1
5. Cannery Row (An Napolitano) 3-1
6. Oakwoodjusasnob Ir (Ty Buter) 4-1
7. Split Pot (Si Allard) 12-1
8. We Meet Again (Ma Kakaley) 7-2

LOCAL SCHEDULE

MONDAY
H.S. BOYS BASKETBALL
District 2/4 Class 6A Semifinals
Hazleton Area at Wilkes-Barre Area, 7 p.m.
Delaware Valley at Williamsport, 6 p.m.

TUESDAY
H.S. BOYS BASKETBALL
District 2 Class 4A Third-Place
Valley View at Wyoming Area, 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY
No events scheduled

THURSDAY
H.S. BOYS BASKETBALL
District 2 Class 3A Championship
Dunmore vs. Riverside, 8 p.m. at Mohegan Arena
H.S. GIRLS BASKETBALL
District 2 Class 4A Championship
Valley View vs. Scranton Prep, 6 p.m. at Mohegan Arena

FRIDAY
AHL
Penguins at Cleveland, 7 p.m.
H.S. BOYS BASKETBALL
District 2 Class 5A Championship
Crestwood vs. Abington Heights, 8 p.m. at Mohegan Arena
H.S. GIRLS BASKETBALL
District 2 Class 2A Championship
Wyoming Seminary vs. Mountain View, 4 p.m. at Mohegan Arena
District 2 Class 6A Championship
Hazleton Area vs. Scranton, 6 p.m. at Mohegan Arena
H.S. BOYS AND GIRLS SWIMMING
(at Wilkes-Barre CYC)
District 2 Class 2A Championships
Six events, 5 p.m.
District 2 Class 3A Championships
Six events, 11 a.m.
H.S. WRESTLING
PIAA Class 2A Northeast Regionals
time TBA, at Williamsport HS
PIAA Class 3A Northwest Regionals
time TBA, at Bethlehem Liberty HS

SATURDAY
AHL
Penguins at Cleveland, 4 p.m.
H.S. BOYS BASKETBALL
District 2 Class 2A Championship
Susquehanna vs. Old Forge, 2 p.m. at Mohegan Arena
District 2 Class 4A Championship
Dallas vs. Scranton Prep, 4 p.m. at Mohegan Arena
District 2/4 Class 6A Championship
Hazleton Area/Wilkes-Barre Area winner vs. Delaware Valley/Williamsport winner, 8 p.m. at Mohegan Arena
H.S. GIRLS BASKETBALL
District 2 Class 3A Championship
Holy Redeemer vs. Dunmore, noon at Mohegan Arena
District 2 Class 5A Championship
Crestwood vs. North Pocono, 6 p.m. at Mohegan Arena
H.S. BOYS AND GIRLS SWIMMING
(at Wilkes-Barre Area HS)
District 2 Class 2A Championships
Five events, 5 p.m.
District 2 Class 3A Championships
Five events, 11 a.m.
H.S. WRESTLING
PIAA Class 2A Northeast Regionals
time TBA, at Williamsport HS
PIAA Class 3A Northwest Regionals
time TBA, at Bethlehem Liberty HS
PIAA Girls Central Regionals
time TBA, at Milton HS

SPORTS ON TV

MONDAY
COLLEGE BASKETBALL (MEN)
7 p.m.
CBSSN — Nicholls State at Lamar
ESPN — Louisville at North Carolina
9 p.m.
ESPN — Houston at Kansas
COLLEGE BASKETBALL (WOMEN)
7 p.m.
ESPN2 — Kansas State at Baylor
7:30 p.m.
SECN — Georgia at Auburn
GOLF
5 p.m.
ESPN — TGL: Atlanta Drive GC vs. Boston Common Golf
9 p.m.
ESPN2 — TGL: Los Angeles Golf Club vs. Atlanta Drive GC
MLB
1 p.m.
SNP — Spring Training: N.Y. Yankees vs. Pittsburgh, Bradenton, Fla.
MLBN — Spring Training: Miami vs. St. Louis, Jupiter, Fla.
3 p.m.
MLBN — Spring Training: Milwaukee vs. San Diego, Peoria, Ariz.
NBA
7 p.m.
PEACOCK — San Antonio at Detroit
9:30 p.m.
PEACOCK — Utah at Houston
SOCCER (MEN)
1:45 p.m.
FS2 — Saudi Pro League: Al Ettifaq at Al Qadsiah
3 p.m.
USA — English Premier League: Manchester United at Everton FC
3:50 p.m.
FS2 — CONCACAF U-20 Championship Qualifier Group Stage: Puerto Rico vs. St. Kitts & Nevis, Group B, Willemstad, Curaçao
6:50 p.m.
FS2 — CONCACAF U-20 Championship Qualifier Group Stage: Jamaica vs. Bonaire, Group B, Willemstad, Curaçao
TENNIS
5 a.m.
TENNIS CHANNEL — Dubai-ATP Early Rounds
6 a.m.
TENNIS CHANNEL — Dubai-ATP Early Rounds
10 a.m.
TENNIS CHANNEL — Acapulco-ATP, Dubai-ATP, Austin-WTA, Santiago-ATP & Merida-WTA Early Rounds
5 a.m. (Tuesday)
TENNIS CHANNEL — Dubai-ATP Early Rounds
6 a.m. (Tuesday)
TENNIS CHANNEL — Dubai-ATP Early Rounds
UNRIVALED BASKETBALL
7:30 p.m.
TNT, TRUTV — Lunar Owls vs. Vinyl, Miami
8:45 p.m.
TNT, TRUTV — Mist vs. Breeze, Miami

LATEST LINE

NBA
Monday

FAVORITE	LINE	O/U	UNDERDOG
at DETROIT	OFF	(OFF)	San Antonio
at MEMPHIS	OFF	(OFF)	Sacramento
at HOUSTON	OFF	(OFF)	Utah

COLLEGE BASKETBALL
Monday

FAVORITE	LINE	UNDERDOG
Texas A&M-CC	2½	at SE LOUISIANA
Louisville	2½	at NORTH CAROLINA
at LAMAR	4½	Nicholls State
at SFA	13½	New Orleans
at MCNEESE	10½	UT Rio Grande Valley
at EAST TEXAS A&M	2½	Houston Christian
at NORTHWESTERN STATE	2½	Incarnate Word
at GRAMBLING	17	Mississippi Valley State
Houston	1½	at KANSAS

For the latest odds, go to BetMGM Sportsbook

OLYMPICS

2026 WINTER OLYMPICS
FINAL MEDAL COUNT

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
Norway	18	12	11	41
United States	12	12	9	33
Italy	10	6	14	30
Germany	8	10	8	26
Japan	5	7	12	24
France	8	9	6	23
Switzerland	6	9	8	23
Canada	5	7	9	21
Netherlands	10	7	3	20
Sweden	8	6	4	18
Austria	5	8	5	18
China	5	4	6	15
South Korea	3	4	3	10
Australia	3	2	1	6
Finland	0	1	5	6
Great Britain	3	1	1	5
Czechia	2	2	1	5
Slovenia	2	1	1	4
Poland	0	3	1	4
Spain	1	0	2	3
New Zealand	0	2	1	3
Latvia	0	1	1	2
Bulgaria	0	0	2	2
Kazakhstan	1	0	0	1
Brazil	1	0	0	1
Georgia	0	1	0	1
Estonia	0	1	0	1
Denmark	0	1	0	1
Belgium	0	0	1	1

SUNDAY'S MEDAL RESULTS
FREESTYLE SKIING
WOMEN'S FREESKI HALFPIPE
Eileen Gu, China - gold
Fanghui LI, China - silver
Zoe Atkin, Great Britain - bronze
BOBSLEIGH
4-MAN HEAT 4
Johannes Lochner, Thorsten Margis, Jorn Wenzel, and Georg Fleischhauer, Germany - gold
Francesco Friedrich, Matthias Sommer, Alexander Schuller, and Felix Straub, Germany - silver
Michael Vogt, Andreas Haas, Amadou David Ndiaye, and Mario Aeberhard, Switzerland - bronze
CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING
WOMEN'S 50KM MASS START CLASSIC
Ebba Andersson, Sweden - gold
Heidi Weng, Norway - silver
Nadja Kaelin, Switzerland - bronze
CURLING
WOMEN'S GOLD MEDAL GAME
Anna Hasselborg, Sara McManus, Agnes Knochenhauer, Sofia Scharback, and Johanna Heldin, Sweden - gold
Alina Paetz, Silvana Tirinzoni, Carole Howald, Selina Witschonke, and Stefanie Berset, Switzerland - silver
ICE HOCKEY
MEN'S GOLD MEDAL GAME
United States - gold
Canada - silver

NBA

NBA Glance
EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	36	19	.655	—
New York	36	21	.632	1
Toronto	33	23	.589	3½
Philadelphia	30	26	.536	6½
Brooklyn	15	40	.273	21
Southeast Division	**W**	**L**	**Pct**	**GB**
Miami	31	27	.534	—
Orlando	29	26	.527	½
Atlanta	27	31	.466	4
Charlotte	26	31	.456	4½
Washington	16	39	.291	13½
Central Division	**W**	**L**	**Pct**	**GB**
Detroit	42	13	.764	—
Cleveland	36	22	.621	7½
Milwaukee	24	30	.444	17½
Chicago	24	33	.421	19
Indiana	15	42	.263	28

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	40	16	.714	—
Houston	34	21	.618	5½
Memphis	21	34	.382	18½
Dallas	19	36	.345	20½
New Orleans	16	42	.276	25
Northwest Division	**W**	**L**	**Pct**	**GB**
Oklahoma City	44	14	.759	—
Denver	36	21	.632	7½
Minnesota	35	22	.614	8½
Portland	27	30	.474	16½
Utah	18	39	.316	25½
Pacific Division	**W**	**L**	**Pct**	**GB**
L.A. Lakers	34	21	.618	—
Phoenix	33	24	.579	2
Golden State	29	27	.518	5½
L.A. Clippers	27	29	.482	7½
Sacramento	12	46	.207	23½

Monday's Games
San Antonio at Detroit, 7 p.m.
Sacramento at Memphis, 8 p.m.
Utah at Houston, 9:30 p.m.
Tuesday's Games
Philadelphia at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Dallas at Brooklyn, 7:30 p.m.
New York at Cleveland, 7:30 p.m.
Oklahoma City at Toronto, 7:30 p.m.
Washington at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Charlotte at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Golden State at New Orleans, 8 p.m.
Miami at Milwaukee, 8 p.m.
Boston at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Minnesota at Portland, 10 p.m.
Orlando at L.A. Lakers, 10:30 p.m.
Wednesday's Games
Golden State at Memphis, 7:30 p.m.
Oklahoma City at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
San Antonio at Toronto, 7:30 p.m.
Cleveland at Milwaukee, 8 p.m.
Sacramento at Houston, 8 p.m.
Boston at Denver, 10 p.m.

NHL

NHL Glance
EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Tampa Bay	55	37	14	4	78	199	140
Montreal	57	32	17	8	72	199	187
Detroit	58	33	19	6	72	174	175
Buffalo	57	32	19	6	70	195	176
Boston	57	32	20	5	69	195	182
Ottawa	57	28	22	7	63	191	184
Toronto	57	27	21	9	63	188	194
Florida	57	29	25	3	61	174	191
Metropolitan Division	**GP**	**W**	**L**	**OT**	**Pts**	**GF**	**GA**
Carolina	57	36	15	6	78	197	163
Pittsburgh	56	29	15	12	70	192	169
N.Y. Islanders	58	32	21	5	69	169	162
Columbus	56	29	20	7	65	179	177
Washington	59	29	23	7	65	189	177
Philadelphia	56	25	20	11	61	167	180
New Jersey	57	28	27	2	58	146	175
N.Y. Rangers	57	22	29	6	50	151	180

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Colorado	55	37	9	9	83	212	138
Minnesota	58	34	14	10	78	196	169
Dallas	57	34	14	9	77	193	160
Utah	57	30	23	4	64	183	157
Nashville	57	26	24	7	59	169	198
Chicago	57	22	26	9	53	154	185
Winnipeg	56	22	26	8	52	160	175
St. Louis	57	20	28	9	49	147	203
Pacific Division	**GP**	**W**	**L**	**OT**	**Pts**	**GF**	**GA**
Vegas	57	27	16	14	68	191	179
Edmonton	58	28	22	8	64	198	194
Seattle	56	27	20	9	63	162	165
Anaheim	56	30	23	3	63	185	195
Los Angeles	56	23	19	14	60	146	161
San Jose	55	27	24	4	58	171	193
Calgary	56	23	27	6	52	142	169
Vancouver	57	18	33	6	42	149	210

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.
Sunday's Games
No games scheduled
Monday's Games
No games scheduled
Tuesday's Games
No games scheduled

AHL

AHL Glance
EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	GP	W	L	OL	SL	Pts	GF	GA
Providence	49	38	10	1	0	77	161	100
Penguins	53	35	13	3	2	75	179	138
Charlotte	49	29	17	3	0	61	165	135
Hershey	50	22	20	6	2	52	139	156
Lehigh Valley	49	23	22	2	2	50	140	155
Bridgeport	51	21	23	3	4	49	153	158
Springfield	51	20	25	4	2	46	138	184
Hartford	50	19	25	4	2	44	128	170
North Division	**GP**	**W**	**L**	**OL**	**SL**	**Pts**	**GF**	**GA**
Laval	53	33	15	2	3	71	170	137
Syracuse	51	30	17	3	1	64	166	128
Cleveland	50	27	16	6	1	61	148	149
Rochester	49	24	17	5	3	56	155	144
Toronto	50	24	18	4	4	56	154	164
Belleville	54	21	25	8	0	50	168	196
Utica	49	16	24	5	4	41	118	155

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division	GP	W	L	OL	SL	Pts	GF	GA
Grand Rapids	50	40	7	2	1	83	174	96
Chicago	48	26	11	6	5	63	153	144
Texas	50	24	22	3	1	52	144	156
Manitoba	46	23	18	4	1	51	120	129
Milwaukee	48	20	22	3	3	46	136	147
Rockford	50	18	28	2	2	40	138	169
Iowa	49	15	29	4	1	35	115	160
Pacific Division	**GP**	**W**	**L**	**OL**	**SL**	**Pts**	**GF**	**GA**
Ontario	51	33	16	1	1	68	171	141
Colorado	48	30	12	3	3	66	156	115
Bakersfield	50	27	15	8	0	62	173	157
San Jose	47	28	15	2	2	60	160	146
Coachella Val.	50	27	18	5	0	59	170	154
San Diego	48	23	15	6	4	56	145	140
Tucson	48	22	18	8	0	52	153	159
Henderson	47	21	18	6	2	50	152	153
Calgary	51	19	20	10	2	50	140	185
Abbotsford	53	18	29	3	3	42	120	182

Saturday's Games
Iowa 3, Manitoba 2
Charlotte 4, Syracuse 3
Laval 2, Utica 1
Springfield 3, Providence 2
Penguins 4, Bridgeport 3
Cleveland 3, Toronto 2
Grand Rapids 4, Milwaukee 3
Lehigh Valley 6, Hershey 4
Hartford 4, Belleville 0
Chicago 5, Texas 4
San Diego 5, Rockford 4
Calgary 4, San Jose 3
Henderson 4, Abbotsford 3
Ontario 4, Tucson 2
Colorado 6, Coachella Valley 3
Sunday's Games
Iowa 5, Manitoba 1
Utica 3, Laval 1
Penguins 4, Bridgeport 0
Hartford 5, Providence 2
San Diego at Rockford late
Ontario at Tucson, late
Monday's Games
No games scheduled
Tuesday's Games
Milwaukee at Iowa, 8 p.m.
San Jose at Calgary, 9 p.m.
Bakersfield at Colorado, 9:05 p.m.

MLB

Spring Training Glance
AMERICAN LEAGUE

	W	L	Pct
Boston	3	0	1.000
Chicago	3	0	1.000
Cleveland	3	0	1.000
Kansas City	2	1	.667
Minnesota	2	1	.667
Texas	2	1	.667
Baltimore	1	1	.500
Seattle	1	1	.500
Toronto	1	1	.500
New York	1	2	.333
Athletics	0	2	.000
Detroit	0	1	.000
Houston	0	2	.000
Los Angeles	0	1	.000
Tampa Bay	0	2	.000

NATIONAL LEAGUE

	W	L	Pct
Pittsburgh	3	0	1.000
Washington	3	0	1.000
Los Angeles	2	0	1.000
San Francisco	2	0	1.000
Arizona	1	1	.500
Atlanta	1	1	.500
Miami	1	1	.500
New York	1	1	.500
St. Louis	1	1	.500
Colorado	1	2	.333
San Diego	1	2	.333
Chicago	0	3	.000
Cincinnati	0	1	.000
Milwaukee	0	3	.000
Philadelphia	0	2	.000

Saturday's Games
Atlanta 5, Tampa Bay 1
Pittsburgh 8, Baltimore 2
Boston 7, Minnesota 2
Washington (ss) 2, Houston 1
N.Y. Yankees 20, Detroit 3
Washington (ss) 6, St. Louis 2
Toronto 3, Philadelphia 0
Miami 2, N.Y. Mets 1
Cleveland (ss) 4, Cincinnati 2
Texas 3, Chicago Cubs 2
San Diego 10, Kansas City 3
Chicago White Sox 11, Athletics 2
San Francisco 10, Seattle 5
Cleveland (ss) 9, Milwaukee 6
L.A. Dodgers 15, L.A. Angels 2
Colorado 11, Arizona 6
Sunday's Games
St. Louis 6, Houston 5
Minnesota 8, Atlanta 1
N.Y. Mets 6, N.Y. Yankees 4
Boston 11, Toronto 10
Baltimore 4, Detroit 4
Pittsburgh (ss) 7, Tampa Bay 4
Pittsburgh (ss) 4, Philadelphia 3
Washington 16, Miami 8
Chicago White Sox 4, Milwaukee (ss) 2
Cleveland 5, Athletics 0
Texas 7, Colorado 5
San Francisco 4, Chicago Cubs 2
Kansas City 2, Milwaukee (ss) 1
L.A. Dodgers 4, San Diego 1
Monday's Games
Baltimore vs Atlanta at Sarasota, Fla., 1:05 p.m.
Detroit vs Minnesota at Lakeland, Fla., 1:05 p.m.
Pittsburgh vs N.Y. Yankees at Bradenton, Fla., 1:05 p.m.
Tampa Bay vs Boston at Port Charlotte, Fla., 1:05 p.m.
St. Louis vs Miami at Jupiter, Fla., 1:05 p.m.
Toronto vs N.Y. Mets at Dunedin, Fla., 1:07 p.m.
Cleveland vs Arizona at Goodyear, Ariz., 3:05 p.m.
Kansas City vs Chicago Cubs at Surprise, Ariz., 3:05 p.m.
L.A. Dodgers vs Seattle at Phoenix, 3:05 p.m.
San Francisco vs Athletics at Scottsdale, Ariz., 3:05 p.m.
Colorado vs Chicago White Sox at Scottsdale, Ariz., 3:10 p.m.
L.A. Angels vs Texas at Tempe, Ariz., 3:10 p.m.
San Diego vs Milwaukee at Peoria, Ariz., 3:10 p.m.
Washington vs Philadelphia at West Palm Beach, Fla., 6:05 p.m.
Tuesday's Games
Atlanta vs Detroit at North Port, Fla., 1:05 p.m.
Boston vs Pittsburgh at Fort Myers, Fla., 1:05 p.m.
Minnesota (ss) vs Baltimore at Fort Myers, Fla., 1:05 p.m.
Tampa Bay vs Minnesota (ss) at Port Charlotte, Fla., 1:05 p.m.
Toronto vs N.Y. Yankees at Dunedin, Fla., 1:07 p.m.
N.Y. Mets vs Houston at Port St Lucie, Fla., 1:10 p.m.
Miami vs Philadelphia at Jupiter, Fla., 1:10 p.m.
Athletics vs Milwaukee at Mesa, Ariz., 3:05 p.m.
Cincinnati vs Kansas City at Goodyear, Ariz., 3:05 p.m.
L.A. Dodgers vs Cleveland at Phoenix, 3:05 p.m.
Texas vs Arizona at Surprise, Ariz., 3:05 p.m.
Chicago Cubs vs San Diego at Mesa, Ariz., 3:05 p.m.
Colorado vs L.A. Angels (ss) at Scottsdale, Ariz., 3:10 p.m.
L.A. Angels (ss) vs San Francisco at Tempe, Ariz., 3:10 p.m.
Seattle vs Chicago White Sox at Peoria, Ariz., 3:10 p.m.
Washington vs St. Louis at West Palm Beach, Fla., 6:05 p.m.

NCAA BASKETBALL

NCAA Men's Basketball Top 25
How They Fared This Week
No. 1 Michigan (25-2) beat No. 7 Purdue 91-80; lost to No. 3 Duke 68-63.
No. 2 Houston (23-4) lost to No. 6 Iowa State 70-67; lost to No. 4 Arizona 73-66.
No. 3 Duke (25-2) beat Syracuse 101-64; beat No. 1 Michigan 68-63.
No. 4 Arizona (25-2) beat No. 23 BYU 75-68; beat No. 2 Houston 73-66.
No. 5 UConn (25-3) lost to Creighton 91-84; beat Villanova 73-63.
No. 6 Iowa State (23-4) beat No. 2 Houston 70-67; lost to No. 23 BYU 79-69.
No. 7 Purdue (22-5) lost to No. 1 Michigan 91-80; beat Indiana 93-64.
No. 8 Kansas (20-7) beat Oklahoma State 81-69; lost to Cincinnati 84-68.
No. 9 Nebraska (23-4) lost to Iowa 57-52; beat Penn State 87-64.
No. 10 Illinois (22-6) beat USC 101-65; lost to UCLA 95-94, OT.
No. 11 Gonzaga (27-2) beat San Francisco 80-59; beat Pacific 71-62.
No. 12 Florida (21-6) beat South Carolina 76-62; beat Ole Miss 94-75.
No. 13 Texas Tech (20-7) lost to Arizona State 72-67; beat Kansas State 100-72.
No. 14 Virginia (24-3) beat Georgia Tech 94-68; beat Miami (FL) 86-83.
No. 15 Michigan State (22-5) beat UCLA 82-59; beat Ohio State 66-60.
No. 16 North Carolina (21-6) lost to NC State 82-58; beat Syracuse 77-64.
No. 17 St. John's (22-5) beat Marquette 76-70; beat Creighton 81-52.
No. 18 Saint Louis (25-2) lost to Rhode Island 81-76; beat VCU 88-75.
No. 19 Vanderbilt (21-6) lost to Missouri 81-80; lost to Tennessee 69-65.
No. 20 Arkansas (20-7) lost to No. 25 Alabama 117-115, 2OT; beat Missouri 94-86.
No. 21 Louisville (20-7) lost to SMU 95-85; beat Georgia Tech 87-70.
No. 22 Miami (OH) (27-0) beat UMass 86-77; beat Bowling Green 91-77.
No. 23 BYU (20-7) lost to No. 4 Arizona 75-68; beat No. 6 Iowa State 79-69.
No. 24 Wisconsin (19-8) lost to Ohio State 86-69; beat Iowa 84-71.
No. 25 Alabama (20-7) beat No. 20 Arkansas 117-115, 2OT; beat LSU 90-83.

NCAA Women's Basketball Top 25
How They Fared This Week
No. 1 UConn (29-0) beat Villanova 83-69; beat Providence 81-38.
No. 2 UCLA (26-1) beat Washington 82-67.
No. 3 South Carolina (27-2) beat No. 25 Alabama 76-57; beat No. 17 Ole Miss 85-48.
No. 4 Texas (26-3) beat Arkansas 93-62; beat Mississippi State 92-42.
No. 5 Vanderbilt (25-3) beat No. 16 Kentucky 81-79.
No. 6 Michigan (22-5) lost to No. 13 Iowa 62-44.
No. 7 LSU (24-4) beat No. 17 Ole Miss 78-70; beat Missouri 108-55.
No. 8 Louisville (24-5) lost to Virginia 74-72.
No. 9 Duke (20-7) beat North Carolina State 83-65; lost to Clemson 53-51.
No. 10 Ohio State (23-5) lost to No. 23 Minnesota 74-61; beat USC 88-83.
No. 11 Oklahoma (21-6) beat No. 24 Georgia 71-67; beat No. 21 Tennessee 100-93.
No. 12 TCU (25-4) beat Houston 72-50; beat Iowa State 80-73.
No. 13 Iowa (22-5) beat Nebraska 80-67; beat Purdue 83-74; beat No. 6 Michigan 62-44.
No. 14 Maryland (22-6) beat Purdue 99-66.
No. 15 Baylor (23-6) lost to No. 20 Texas Tech 87-56; beat Arizona 74-60.
No. 16 Kentucky (20-8) lost to No. 5 Vanderbilt 81-79.
No. 17 Ole Miss (21-8) beat No. 21 Tennessee 94-81; lost to No. 7 LSU 78-70; lost to No. 3 South Carolina 85-48.
No. 18 Michigan State (21-6) beat Northwestern 104-68.
No. 19 West Virginia (22-6) beat Oklahoma State 72-40.
No. 20 Texas Tech (24-5) beat No. 15 Baylor 87-56; lost to Colorado 75-68.
No. 21 Tennessee (16-10) lost to No. 17 Ole Miss 94-81; lost to Texas A&M 82-74; lost to No. 11 Oklahoma 100-93.
No. 22 North Carolina (23-6) beat Virginia Tech 66-63, OT; beat Pittsburgh 78-50.
No. 23 Minnesota (21-6) beat No. 10 Ohio State 74-61.
No. 24 Georgia (20-7) lost to No. 11 Oklahoma 71-67.
No. 25 Alabama (21-7) lost to No. 3 South Carolina 76-57; beat Florida 76-71.

GOLF

The Genesis Invitational
Sunday's Final Round
Riviera Country Club,
Purse: $20 million
Yardage: 7,383; Par: 71

Jacob Bridgeman (700), $4,000,000
66-64-64-72—266 -18
Kurt Kitayama (375), $1,800,000
71-64-68-64—267 -17
Rory McIlroy (375), $1,800,000
66-65-69-67—267 -17
Adam Scott (325), $1,000,000
70-63-72-63—268 -16
Aldrich Potgieter (300), $840,000
68-68-65-68—269 -15
Jake Knapp (275), $760,000
73-65-67-66—271 -13
Tommy Fleetwood (176), $603,200
69-66-70-67—272 -12
Ryan Fox (176), $603,200
67-69-69-67—272 -12
Collin Morikawa (176), $603,200
68-69-70-65—272 -12
Xander Schauffele (176), $603,200
68-65-70-69—272 -12
Cameron Young (176), $603,200
72-68-66-66—272 -12
Min Woo Lee (105), $41,500
69-65-74-65—273 -11
Alex Noren (105), $415,000
74-66-67-66—273 -11
Scottie Scheffler (105), $415,000
74-68-66-65—273 -11
Jordan Spieth (105), $41,500
70-67-70-66—273 -11
Akshay Bhatia (69), $319,000
68-71-67-68—274 -10
Pierceson Coody (69), $319,000
68-71-68-67—274 -10
Marco Penge (69), $319,000
66-64-74-70—274 -10
Sam Stevens (69), $319,000
74-68-67-65—274 -10
Ludvig Aberg (53), $259,500
72-68-69-66—275 -9
Robert MacIntyre (53), $259,500
73-69-66-67—275 -9
Harris English (47), $224,500
73-68-70-65—276 -8
Sahith Theegala (47), $224,500
71-70-68-67—276 -8
Matt Fitzpatrick (41), $178,250
69-66-72-70—277 -7
Max Greyserman (41), $178,250
68-66-70-73—277 -7
Shane Lowry (41), $178,250
73-68-69-67—277 -7
Matthew McCarty (41), $178,250
70-69-69-69—277 -7
Tony Finau (32), $136,500
72-69-68-69—278 -6
Rickie Fowler (32), $136,500
72-68-72-66—278 -6
Ryan Gerard (32), $136,500
72-70-69-67—278 -6
Hideki Matsuyama (32), $136,500
69-72-69-68—278 -6
Aaron Rai (32), $136,500
66-70-66-76—278 -6
Nick Taylor (32), $136,500
72-68-70-68—278 -6
Si Woo Kim (25), $109,000
68-72-70-69—279 -5
Tom Kim (25), $109,000
71-70-67-71—279 -5
Patrick Rodgers (25), $109,000
71-69-70-69—279 -5
Patrick Cantlay (22), $92,250
72-70-65-73—280 -4
Corey Conners (22), $92,250
71-69-70-70—280 -4
Max Homa (22), $92,250
70-66-73-71—280 -4
Sami Valimaki (22), $92,250
71-70-71-68—280 -4
Wyndham Clark (19), $78,000
67-68-72-74—281 -3
Ben Griffin (19), $78,000
73-68-71-69—281 -3
Viktor Hovland (19), $78,000
69-73-70-69—281 -3
Jhonattan Vegas (17), $70,000
69-68-74-71—282 -2
Ryo Hisatsune (16), $64,000
70-72-72-69—283 -1
Taylor Pendrith (16), $64,000
69-70-73-71—283 -1
Denny McCarthy (15), $57,000
72-70-71-71—284 E
Andrew Novak (15), $57,000
70-71-74-69—284 E
Matti Schmid (14), $54,000
71-71-74-70—286 +2
Brian Harman (13), $51,500
72-70-76-71—289 +5
Sepp Straka (13), $51,500
70-68-80-71—289 +5

WBS Penguins blank Bridgeport to sweep weekend

Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins

The Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins defeated the Bridgeport Islanders 4-0 in the second game of their home-and-home set on Sunday afternoon at Total Mortgage Arena.

Fewer than 24 hours after outlasting Bridgeport in Northeast PA, Wilkes-Barre/Scranton (35-13-3-2) took a decisive victory amidst a swelling snow squall outside. Four different Penguins found twine in front of a 25-save shutout by Sergei Murashov.

The first period ended in a 0-0 deadlock, but Tanner Howe broke through for the Penguins early in the second period. After a backhand try by Atley Calvert was blocked, the puck ricocheted to Howe, who settled it for a spin-around shot that beat Henrik Tikkanen at 4:26 of the middle frame.

Penguins captain and Connecticut native Phil Kemp blasted a scorching slap shot behind Tikkanen at 16:31 of the second period, increasing his team's lead to two.

Murashov stepped up late in the middle frame, making a stellar, left-pad save on a backdoor deflection by C.J. Smith to keep Wilkes-Barre/Scranton's 2-0 lead intact.

A five-minute major power play in the third period opened the door for the Penguins to put the game to bed, and that's exactly what they did. First, Ville Koivunen lobbed a sparkling backhand saucer pass ahead for Gabe Klassen, who wired in a man-advantage marker at 7:15 of the third. One minute later, Aidan McDonough banged home a tic-tac-toe setup for another power-play goal.

Murashov made an extra save in the dying moments of regulation, putting an exclamation point on his third shutout of the season. Tikkanen logged 25 saves in defeat.

Wilkes-Barre/Scranton's next game is Friday when the team travels to take on Cleveland. Game time between the Penguins and Monsters is slated for 7 p.m. at Rocket Arena.

Bridgeman holds on at Riviera for 1st PGA title

By Doug Ferguson
AP Golf Writer

LOS ANGELES — Jacob Bridgeman heard cheers all day long for everyone but himself Sunday at Riviera until the final ovation. He made a nervy par putt on the 18th hole for a 1-over 72 and a most narrow victory in the Genesis Invitational for his first PGA Tour title.

Bridgeman started with a six-shot lead. He expanded it to seven shots with 12 holes remaining. And it still came down to one clutch swing from the 18th fairway that settled 20 feet below the hole, and a 3-foot par putt with his shadow over the hole.

But he calmly knocked it in for a one-shot victory over Rory McIlroy and Kurt Kitayama, who both had a strong finishing kick to make Bridgeman sweat a lot more than he wanted.

"This is way, way better than I've ever dreamt it," Bridgeman said.

Not since Adam Scott in 2005 has a player competed at Riviera for the first time and left with the trophy.

Bridgeman, a 26-year-old from Clemson, played well enough last year to reach the Tour Championship and has been steadily on the rise.

He broke through in a signature event against a strong field, winning $4 million and having host Tiger Woods waiting to congratulate him atop the steps overlooking the 18th green.

Bridgeman finished at 18-under 266 and didn't make a birdie over the final 15 holes. He heard constant cheers for McIlroy, one of golf's most popular figures who was never a threat until he holed a bunker shot for birdie on the 12th and finished birdie-birdie for a 67.

More cheers rang out across Riviera — Max Greyserman with a hole-in-one on the 14th, Tommy Fleetwood jarring one for eagle from the fairway on the 15th, and Kitayama stuffing his tee shot on the par-3 16th and then barely clearing the bunker to set up a two-putt birdie on the par-5 17th.

Bridgeman, after a marvelous approach to 12 feet for birdie on the third hole that received only a smattering of applause from the LA crowd, didn't play poorly. He hit a strong chip on the fourth that led to bogey. The rest of the way was a steady diet of 20-foot birdie chances.

But he found the bunker on the 16th and had to make a 5-foot bogey putt to stay in the lead. His birdie chances on the 17th and 18th were woefully short on greens where short putts can be scary.

The last par putt brought a mixture of joy and relief.

"I thought it was going to be a lot easier," Bridgeman said. "It was honestly easy until I got to 16 and then it got really hard. I made it as hard as I could have made it."

Scott, who received a sponsor exemption, ran off five birdies on the back nine and closed with a 63 to finish fourth, two shots behind.

Scottie Scheffler, who had to make a 7-foot par putt on Friday to make the cut, had a 66-65 weekend and wound up tied for 12th, his worst finish since he tied for 20th at The Players Championship nearly a year ago. He ended his streak of 18 consecutive top 10s.

Bridgeman already is in the Masters from having reached the Tour Championship last year. He became the first player this year to be ranked outside the top 50 (No. 52) and win on the PGA Tour. The victory propels him inside the top 25.

He won not only at a storied course like Riviera but with McIlroy, the Masters champion, alongside and getting most of the attention until falling off the pace until his big finish. So many putts burned the edge, and then the last one dropped from 30 feet.

For a second, it looked like it might give McIlroy extra holes in a playoff when Bridgeman left his first putt short. But just like he has all week, Bridgeman never looked uncomfortable. Turns out he felt that way.

"I couldn't even feel my hands on the last couple greens," Bridgeman said. "I just hit the putt hoping it would get somewhere near the hole, and both of them I left a mile short. But I'm glad it's done now."



Kyle Phillips | AP photo

Thunder guard Cason Wallace, left, goes up for a bucket behind Cavaliers center Evan Mobley during the second half on Sunday.

Thunder hit 21 threes to stop Cavs

The Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Isaiah Joe scored 22 points and Cason Wallace added 20 points and 10 assists to help the shorthanded Oklahoma City Thunder beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 121-113 on Sunday.

Chet Holmgren had 17 points, 15 rebounds and three blocks for Oklahoma City (44-14), which made 21 of 41 3-point attempts (51.2%), including six by Joe, and converted 17 turnovers into 31 points.

The Thunder played without injured starters Shai Gilgeous-Alexander (abdominal strain) and Jalen Williams (strained right hamstring). and key contributors Ajay Mitchell (abdominal strain) and Alex Caruso (sprained left ankle).

Donovan Mitchell, James Harden and Sam Merrill each had 20 points for Cleveland (36-22), which lost for the first time in eight games. The Cavaliers, who made 13 of 39 3-pointers (33.3%), fell behind early but couldn't complete the comeback against the hot-shooting Thunder.

Oklahoma City turned to the long ball early and built a 28-5 lead on the strength of five 3-pointers, including three by Joe. Oklahoma City made 14 of 22 (63.6%) from beyond the arc before halftime, but by then Cleveland had cut the lead to 64-55 on a jumper by Mitchell to beat the buzzer.

The Cavaliers got eight quick points from Merrill in the third quarter, and took a 69-68 lead — their first of the game — on a short jumper Jared Allen. Back-to-back 3-pointers by Jared McCain and Joe gave the Thunder an 82-75 advantage. But Cleveland scored 11 of the next 14 points, and got a 3-pointer by Jaylon Tyson to tie the score 86-all.

Oklahoma City got consecutive 3s from Lu Dort, Kenrich Williams and Wallace to build a 102-95 lead in the fourth. Back-to-back jumpers by Isaiah Hartenstein, who had 10 points in the quarter, gave the Thunder a 106-98 lead they never relinquished.

RAPTORS 122, BUCKS 94

MILWAUKEE — Immanuel Quickley scored 32 points and Toronto snapped Milwaukee's three-game win streak.

Toronto's Brandon Ingram had 22 points, and Sandro Mamukelashvili added 19. Quickley was 5 of 11 on 3-point attempts and had nine assists and three rebounds.

Ryan Rollins and Kevin Porter Jr. led the Bucks with 21 points each. Cam Thomas scored 15 off the bench.Milwaukee lost for just the second time in its last eight games.

Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo missed his 11th straight game since straining his right calf on Jan. 23. The Bucks are 15-15 with Antetokounmpo and 9-16 without him this season.

After being listed as questionable with a right calf strain on the Bucks' injury report, Myles Turner scored 14 points on 6-of-11 shooting in his first game since Feb. 12.

Toronto's Scottie Barnes missed his first game since Jan. 9 for personal reasons after he was excused from practice the few days leading up to the game for the same reason.

After trailing 60-51 at halftime, the Bucks cut their deficit to 62-59 with an 8-0 run midway through the third quarter. The Raptors responded by scoring 10 points in a row to extend their lead to double-digits.

The Raptors led by as many as 20 points in the third before entering the final frame with a 92-73 advantage. Toronto's largest advantage of the game came in the final minutes as Trayce Jackson-Davis put his team ahead 120-89 with a dunk.

HAWKS 115, NETS 104

ATLANTA — Jalen Johnson had 26 points and 12 rebounds and Atlanta rallied from an 11-point fourth-quarter deficit to hand Brooklyn a fourth straight loss.

CJ McCollum added 16 points and eight rebounds in his first start since joining the Hawks as part of a trade that sent Trae Young to the Wizards. Jock Landale had 17 points in 16 minutes off the bench, knocking down all three of his 3-point shots. Onyeka Okongwu threw down a thunderous slam over Nic Claxton in the third quarter and finished with 13 points, 11 rebounds and two blocks.

Michael Porter Jr. led the Nets with 18 points, seven rebounds and six assists.

Claxton returned after missing three games with ankle and hip injuries to finish with 15 points, eight rebounds and five assists.

The Hawks had lost three of their last four home games.

Atlanta trailed 102-91 with 8:01 to play, but closed the game on a 24-2 run as the Nets missed 11 of their final 12 field-goal attempts. They were 0-for-10 from 3-point range in the closing minutes. Johnson had 12 points during the decisive run.

Zaccaharie Risacher, the No. 1 overall pick in the 2024 NBA Draft, came off the bench for just the second time in his career for the Hawks and finished with seven points.

WARRIORS 128, NUGGETS 117

SAN FRANCISCO — Brandin Podziemski scored 12 of his 18 points in the final five minutes of the fourth quarter and Golden State beat Denver.

Podziemski shot 7 of 16 and added 15 rebounds and nine assists. Al Hoford hit six 3-pointers and finished with 22 points and seven assists as the Warriors ended a two-game losing streak despite being without Stephen Curry (knee), Kristaps Porzingis (sick) and Jimmy Butler (torn right ACL). Draymond Green (back) was also a late scratch.

Moses Moody had 23 points and seven rebounds for the Warriors. DeAnthony Melton added 20 points.

Nikola Jokic had 25 points, 20 rebounds and 12 assists for Denver. It's Jokic's fifth triple-double in seven games, 19th of the season and the 183rd of his career.

Jamal Murray scored 21 points for the Nuggets, who had won three of five.

Christian Braun scored 18 and Bruce Brown added 12.

Coming off a 54-point win over Portland on Friday, Denver never led in the first half. The Nuggets made a run in the second half before Golden State closed the game on a 19-8 run.

Podziemski led the Warriors with a pair of 3s and a put-back during the run. Horford added his sixth 3-pointer and had the Chase Center crowd rocking.

Horford got the Warriors going early with a pair of 3-pointers and 11 points in the first quarter.

Golden State extended its lead to 76-67 in the second despite Jokic being one assist shy of his triple-double before halftime.



Luca Bruno | AP photo

The United States celebrates after a sudden-death overtime goal by Jack Hughes (86) against Canada during the men's gold medal game at the Olympics on Sunday in Milan.

Hughes' OT goal lifts US past Canada for 1st men's hockey gold since 1980

By Stephen Whyno
AP Hockey Writer



Carolyn Kaster | AP photo

United States goalie Connor Hellebuyck (37) turned in a performance for the ages, coming up with 41 saves, including this point-blank stop on Canada defenseman Devon Toews to keep the game tied in the third period.

MILAN — The United States is on top of the hockey world for the first time in nearly a half-century. No miracle needed.

Jack Hughes scored less than 2 minutes into overtime and the U.S. beat Canada 2-1 in the gold medal final at the Milan Cortina Olympics on Sunday, earning the nation's third men's title at the Games and its first since the "Miracle on Ice" in 1980 — 46 years to the day of the upset over the mighty Soviet Union, too.

Unlike that ragtag group of college kids that pulled off one of the biggest shockers in sports history in Lake Placid, the Americans in Milan were a machine that rode goaltender Connor Hellebuyck and a roster full of NHL players through the tournament unbeaten.

Still, they were underdogs again against the stacked Canadians and came out on top — again.

"This is all about our country right now," said Hughes, who lost at least one and maybe two of his front teeth taking a high stick during the game. "I love the U.S.A. I love my teammates. It's unbelievable. The USA Hockey brotherhood is so strong."

Early in the three-on-three overtime, Zach Werenski took the puck away from Nathan MacKinnon and passed it to Hughes, who was wide open streaking to the net. Hughes fired a shot past Jordan Binnington 1:41 in to send players into a wild celebration as the rival Canadians watched from the bench.

Asked his favorite moment during his Olympic debut, captain Auston Matthews quipped, "I think when Jack scored. ... I'll definitely remember Jack's goal."

There was a note of sadness amid all the joy as Werenski and Matthew Tkachuk carried a Johnny Gaudreau No. 13 jersey around the ice in tribute to the beloved player who was killed along with his brother in 2024.

Gaudreau's parents, Guy and Jay, his widow, Meredith, and their oldest children were in attendance. It was Johnny Jr.'s second birthday and he was brought on the ice with older sister Noa for the team photo.

"We just wanted to show the Gaudreau family our support," Brady Tkachuk said of the player known as "Johnny Hockey." "He was so near and dear to a lot of us, and we miss him dearly. We did it for him."

Hellebuyck was extraordinary, stopping 41 of the 42 shots he faced as Canada tilted the ice toward him over the final two periods. He made the save of the tournament by getting his stick on the puck on a shot from Devon Toews in the third period, then minutes later denied Macklin Celebrini on a breakaway — something he also did to Connor McDavid earlier.

"He was our best player by a mile," winger Matt Boldy said. "He's an absolute stud. He wants to be in those moments. He wants to make the saves. And he did just that, so he was definitely our MVP."

It was a glorious weekend for Team USA, with the women's hockey team also defeating Canada in overtime to win gold. For the men, it was only fitting the Americans needed to go through Canada, their northern neighbor that beat them at the 4 Nations Face-Off a year ago and has won every international competition over the past 16 years that featured the world's best players.

Not anymore.

Winning a fast-paced, riveting game that was full of big hits and plenty of post-whistle altercations, the U.S. got a goal from Boldy 6 minutes in and led until Cale Makar tied it late in the second period. Hellebuyck and the penalty kill was a perfect 17 for 17 at the Olympics.

"I can't even believe this," Hughes said. "I mean it's such an unbelievable game, USA-Canada. Such a good game. There's so many great players. We're a great team. That's exactly how we wanted it to go. We're underdogs to Canada, (but we) beat them. It could have gone either way."

Hughes paid a painful price when he took the high stick and wound up face down on the ice. The teeth were out, but the celebration wasn't far away.

"More people are going to be looking at his medal than his teeth," Boldy said.

The U.S. finally came through after generations of churning out talent from the grassroots level like a production line. All but two of the 25 players on the team went through USA Hockey's National Team Development Program.

That group of 23 includes captain Auston Matthews, the top line of Brady and Matthew Tkachuk and Jack Eichel, and the second set of brothers, Jack and Quinn Hughes. Much of the team played together either at the program, under-18s, the world junior championship or some combination of them.

The U.S. winning silenced criticism of general manager Bill Guerin and his management group choosing a roster full of experienced veteran players to fill specific roles and leaving four of the top 10 American goal-scorers in the NHL this season at home. The players they brought got the job done.

"There are whisky drinkers and milk drinkers and we got a lot of whisky drinkers on this team," coach Mike Sullivan said. "One of the things that Billy Guerin and I talked about from the very beginning was trying to build a team in the true sense of the word, so we looked at a deep group of American talent and these decisions were very difficult. They weren't easy. You look at how this group is constructed, there was a thought process that we had players that could play in all situations."

Some decisions were no-doubters, like Sullivan giving the net to Hellebuyck, who stopped 131 of the 137 shots he faced throughout the tournament and was at his best against Canada.

"He was our backbone — today even more so than the rest of the tournament," forward Vincent Trocheck said. "He saved our lives there a couple times in the third. He was unbelievable."

Canada, back-to-back Olympic champions in 2010 and '14 and winners of three of the first five, fell short while playing without injured captain Sidney Crosby. The 38-year-old two-time gold medalist and three-time Stanley Cup champion left the quarterfinal game against Czechia and sat out the semifinal game against Finland.

"It was a tough decision," Crosby said. "Obviously, in your head you always want to be out there and find very way possible. But not at the expense of what needs to be done. And them watching how we played today, the guys played incredible."

McDavid, who wore the "C" in Crosby's absence, suffered another devastating defeat on the doorstep of a title. He and the Edmonton Oilers have lost to Matthew Tkachuk and the Florida Panthers in the Stanley Cup Final each of the past two years.

Hellebuyck, Hughes join Craig, Eruzione as US legends

The Associated Press



Luca Bruno | AP photo

United States goalie Connor Hellebuyck allowed just four goals over three elimination games at the Olympics to lead his team to gold.

MILAN — Go ahead and put the names Jack Hughes and Connor Hellebuyck right in the same revered place that Mike Eruzione and Jim Craig have occupied since their " Miracle On Ice " triumph in 1980.

It had been 46 years since the United States won the men's hockey gold medal at an Olympics. This time, the country can thank Hughes, he of the lost teeth and the winning goal less than 2 minutes into overtime Sunday, for a 2-1 victory over Canada at the Milan Cortina Games, and Hellebuyck, he of the 41 saves, many of them spectacular.

They will be remembered — and always associated with this win.

"As a kid, when you're growing up and you're watching the Olympics, you kind of remember moments. I'm sure this is going to be a moment that younger kids are talking about: 'You see Jack scoring the OT winner?' " American forward Brock Nelson said. "I'm sure that's a moment that kids are probably going to try to recreate and try to envision themselves in that spot later on in life."

That's precisely the reason that when U.S. defenseman Charlie McAvoy was trying to find the right words to praise Hellebuyck, this is what he went with: "He channeled his Jimmy Craig tonight."

Nelson's uncle was a member of that 1980 championship team at the Lake Placid Games, and was present Sunday. Nelson's grandfather was on the only other U.S. men's hockey team to claim gold, at Squaw Valley in 1960. That means this 2026 victory is the first for the country in this sport outside the United States.

Way back when, the stars — the players most strongly associated with the most recent men's hockey title at a Winter Games until Sunday — were Eruzione, he of the winning goal against the heavily favored Soviet Union along the way to the gold, and Craig, the star goalie who famously looked into the crowd for his father after that game.

Eruzione, who was at the arena Sunday, and Craig were part of a collection of amateurs who stunned the world.

The big difference this time, of course, is that Hughes and Hellebuyck are professional players, certified stars of the NHL, which brought its players back to the Olympics for the first time since 2014. So there is less to be shocked by with Sunday's outcome.

What those four have in common are the gold medals they'll own forever.

Hughes, a center for the New Jersey Devils, deposited his winner past Jordan Binnington off the rush, with an assist from Zach Werenski, during the 3-on-3 OT.

"In this tournament, he showed he's one of the best players in the world — clearly," said Quinn Hughes, the older brother and teammate of the newest American star.

The siblings — Jack is 24; Quinn is 26 — were consistently among the best U.S. players at these Olympics.

This comes after Jack was criticized for his performance a year ago at the 4 Nations Face-Off, which Canada won. And his goal Sunday is the best thing to happen to him on the ice after a rough stretch over the past 11 months. He had shoulder surgery that ended his 2024-25 NHL season, then missed five weeks earlier this season after slicing his right thumb open at a team dinner.

"Last couple years," Jack said, "a lot of things have happened to me."

Not surprisingly, his brother offered a strong endorsement, including praising Jack for handling it well when he was placed on U.S. coach Mike Sullivan's fourth line.

"He takes a lot of (gruff). No one loves the game more than him," Quinn said. "He's got so much passion. He's a gamer. He made it happen."

Canada dominated the action Sunday, outshooting the U.S. 42-28. But Matt Boldy put the Americans ahead after just 6 minutes, and Hellebuyck managed to make that be enough to get to the extra period, despite giving up a tying goal to Cale Makar.

Over and over, Hellebuyck was in the right place at the right time, his reflexes good enough to make just about every stop he needed to. And when he wasn't, he had a bit of help from the Canadians, including when Nathan MacKinnon was alone near the goal but put his shot off the side netting.



Luca Bruno | AP photo

Jack Hughes took a high stick to the mouth that cost him some teeth prior to scoring the golden goal in overtime.

Or when Connor McDavid had a 1-on-1 breakaway earlier, but appeared to wait too long and didn't get a good attempt off.

Hellebuyck, who plays for the Winnipeg Jets, is certainly no slouch: He's won MVP honors in the NHL.

But he has heard the negativity about not coming up big enough in the playoffs. And Hellebuyck was struggling this season. He had arthroscopic knee surgery in November, a week after Hughes' operation, and returned three weeks later.

"Those critics — they can keep writing, but they don't understand goaltending. They definitely don't understand my game. ... These are the moments that prove it," he said. "I came into this game, probably one of the biggest of my career, and I really wasn't that nervous. The second I woke up this morning, I felt I was doing everything right. ... It kind of translated."

THE WINNING GOAL

The work by Hughes to create the golden goal started long before he shot the puck into the net.

After McDavid was unable to finish his scoring chance early in the three-on-three overtime, Hughes collected the puck behind his own net at the other end of the rink, and Werenski knew he had something bubbling.

"Kind of a weird play," Werenski said. "They had a chance, so usually when that happens in three-on-three, you can kind of take advantage of that and go the other way."

Hughes had a little give and go with Werenski. Canada's Cale Makar, a two-time Norris Trophy winner as the NHL's best defenseman, had a chance to break it up early and couldn't poke the puck away.

"I was kind of in a tough spot there," Makar said. "I saw the puck bounce, and unfortunately it's either you back it up and live to fight another day or try and make a play on it. But if you don't get the puck, you've got to get the man and unfortunately I didn't get both. Just couldn't get back."

Hughes followed Werenski up the ice. Werenski went right at Nathan MacKinnon, banking the puck off the 2023-24 NHL MVP.

"It happened quick," Werenski said. "I really didn't see much. It was kind of a broken play. I know we had three guys up in the rush. I think it hit off MacKinnon's skate and came back to me."

But Werenski also knew Hughes was coming and turned around.

"I kind of just saw a white jersey on the far ice and just tried to throw it over there as quick as I could," Werenski said. "I got it to the right guy. He's been hot all tournament."

Hughes just needed to make sure he didn't miss the net, something Canada did a lot in regulation. He instead fired it past Binnington, who had been solid throughout the tournament and again in the gold medal game.

"Overtime, anything can happen," Hughes said. "Who's going to make the first mistake? Just a good play by Larks and Z getting up the ice. Obviously, Z found me."

Hughes' goal came four days after Megan Keller also scored in OT to win gold for the U.S. on the women's side. This is the first time the U.S. has won men's and women's hockey titles at the Olympics.

Captain Auston Matthews enjoyed a lot about the tournament, but there's one top highlight that stands out.

"When Jack scored," Matthews said. "That that moment's going to stick with me for a very, very long time."

THOSE TEETH

Hughes was spittin' chiclets after taking a stick to the mouth from Sam Bennett in the third period.

"I looked on the ice and saw my teeth," said Hughes, who had one knocked out in an NHL game a few years ago, too. "I was like, 'Here we go again.' "

Well, that's a mouthful to say.

Teammates figured that Jack Hughes will be just fine without some of his chompers. There was not exactly a whole lot of sympathy going on around among the 2026 Olympic champs.

After all, it is a well-known and frequent occurrence for hockey players to lose a tooth — or teeth — in their often-violent sport.

"Who cares at this point, to be honest?" said Matt Boldy, who scored the other U.S. goal on Binnington, just 6 minutes after the game began. "I think more people are looking at his medal than his teeth. I'm sure he'll be OK."

That's certainly something to chew on.

Children of late US star Gaudreau join celebration

The Associated Press



Petr David Josek | AP photo

United States' Dylan Larkin (21) holds Johnny, the son of the late Johnny Gaudreau, while holding up his father's jersey after winning the gold medal.

MILAN — Johnny Gaudreau's No. 13 jersey was hanging in the U.S. locker room throughout the Olympics, and Dylan Larkin and Matthew Tkachuk carried it around the ice after the U.S. beat Canada in overtime to win the country's first gold medal at the Games since 1980.

Then, the tribute to the late player known as "Johnny Hockey" went even further.

The oldest two of Johnny and Meredith Gaudreau's three children were in attendance, along with their grandparents, Guy and Jane, and they got to be part of the celebration. Larkin and Werenski brought 3-year-old Noa and 2-year-old Johnny Jr. on the ice for the team photo, which also had Gaudreau's jersey in it. To a man, players said he should have been with them.

"It meant everything," said Werenski, who assisted on Jack Hughes' golden goal in overtime. "This is something John would have been at. And to see his family here supporting us and seeing his kids, bringing them on the ice, we talked about playing for him, making him proud and I think we did that. Super special to see them and to have kids on the ice, he was a huge part of USA Hockey."

Johnny and his brother, Matthew, died in August 2024 when they were struck by an SUV while riding bicycles near their hometown in New Jersey on the eve of their sister Katie's wedding.

"He's with us here in spirit for the whole tournament," captain Auston Matthews said. "To have his jersey out there in the team photo and have his kids come out and be with us, we're obviously thinking of him."

An elite player a decade into his NHL career and the all-time U.S. leading scorer in international play, Johnny Gaudreau was on track to be in Milan. Guy Gaudreau said USA Hockey told the family that their oldest son was on the projected roster.

"He obviously would have been on this team — and been a huge part of it," forward J.T. Miller said. "A guy I grew up with and against and knew pretty well. It's more than hockey, at that point. ... He deserved better, and he had a big part in how things went down today."

Larkin, who was also clsoe to Gaudreau, dedicated what is just the third U.S. men's hockey gold in history to Gaudreau and former USA Hockey executive Jim Johannson, who died unexpectedly just before the 2018 Olympics.

"This is for the guys who wore this jersey before us," Larkin said. "All those people should be here. Johnny especially, Matty his brother. To get it done today, it's just an unbelievable feeling."

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No 'Miracle' needed for US to reclaim hockey gold



AP file photo

The famous United States 'Miracle on Ice' team from the 1980 Olympics now has more company. The Americans won gold in men's hockey on Sunday for the first time since that legendary upset of the Soviet Union in Lake Placid, joining the 1960 and 1980 squads.



Hassan Ammar | AP photo

United States players celebrate after scoring in overtime to beat Canada on Sunday.

By Stephen Whyno and Tim Reynolds
AP Sports Writers

MILAN — Dave Christian got emotional throughout the Winter Olympics watching nephew Brock Nelson play for the U.S., just like he did during the magical run in 1980.

Then it got even better: He got to congratulate Nelson after he became a gold medalist, just like him.

"Fun to share this with him," Nelson said after the U.S. beat Canada in overtime 46 years to the day of Christian and his teammates pulling off the "Miracle on Ice" by defeating the heavily favored Soviet Union on the way to gold in Lake Placid in upstate New York.

Christian and Mike Eruzione, the captain of the 1980 team, were in attendance at Milano Santagiulia Arena to witness just the third U.S. men's hockey gold medal in history. Eruzione had been around the team before, including a dinner at the 4 Nations Face-Off a year ago in Montreal, and has been willing to dole out advice whenever current players ask.

He just doesn't want their accomplishment to be overshadowed too much by looking back nearly a half-century to what Eruzione and Co. did.

"I'm happy for them," Eruzione told The Associated Press by phone. "It's got nothing to do with me or the 1980 Olympic team. I think my teammates and I are just proud at what these guys did and congratulations to them. They're part of the family. They joined the gold medal club."

It's a different time than 1980, and the game is viewed very differently in the U.S. Back then, on Feb. 22, 1980, the U.S. win over the Soviets was aired on tape-delay. This win, on Feb. 22, 2026, was aired live, though the broadcast started at 8 a.m. Eastern on a Sunday.

Doesn't matter. America was awake for it. Many bars and restaurants around the country were jammed, including in Lake Placid. America wanted to see 1980 happen again — and while this was no miracle, the drama delivered.

"I think every single person in that game can be proud," said Jack Hughes, who scored the winning goal like Eruzione did. "Just a great game between USA and Canada."

Milan is obviously also a different setting than Lake Placid, but U.S. players stayed in the athletes' village in Italy — unlike Canada, which moved to a hotel — and soaked up the full experience of the NHL being in the Olympics for the first time since 2014.

"We just really embraced the full Olympic aspect of it," captain Auston Matthews said. "From the village to everything, we just had a blast for two weeks. To come out with a gold medal it's obviously an incredible feeling but I'll definitely remember the whole two weeks."

That 1980 team was famously made up of players largely from Minnesota and Boston. This team showed how much the game has grown in the U.S.

This team had plenty of players with Massachusetts and Minnesota ties, sure, but there were players from Missouri, New York, Ohio, Connecticut, Alaska, Colorado, Montana and more.

"Auston Matthews is from Arizona," Eruzione said. "That wouldn't have happened in '80."

He's certain the 1980 team sparked growth within the game in the U.S. He's just as certain that the two golds in Milan — "the ladies, too," Eruzione said — will get even more kids to say they want to play hockey.

"Dating back to 1980, it's been a long time," center Jack Eichel said. "I know the 1980 team did and what that meant for generations that came after in USA Hockey. We wrote our own story here. It's a really proud moment for every guy in that room, every person that's a part of the team."

Canada handling heartbreak after finale

The Associated Press

MILAN — Canada's Olympic run in Italy ended with a 2-1 overtime loss to the United States in the men's hockey final on Sunday.

Jack Hughes scored 1:41 into overtime, left alone in the slot during 3-on-3 play as Canada scrambled after surrendering an odd-man break seconds earlier. Matt Boldy also scored for the Americans, while Cale Makar had Canada's only goal.

"It's really disappointing, especially with the group we had," Canada's 19-year-old forward Macklin Celebrini said. "The whole time, we believed in ourselves. We had lots of chances, I had lots of chances, I missed. You get put in those situations, you have to capitalize on your opportunities, and I didn't.

"We went through a lot. We're all going to remember this time, but unfortunately, it's going to be more motivational than celebration."

The gold is the United States' first in Olympic men's hockey since the 1980 Lake Placid Games.

Canada played the final without captain Sidney Crosby, sidelined by a lower-body injury sustained when his right leg bent awkwardly in the quarterfinal win over Czechia.

He also missed the 3-2 semifinal victory over Finland.

"It was a tough decision," Crosby said. "Obviously in your head, you always want to be out there and find every way possible. But not at the expense of what needs to be done. And then watching how we played today, the guys played incredible."

Showdown began building months ago

By Stephen Whyno
AP Hockey Writer

MILAN — When organizers designed the 4 Nations Face-Off to be played in February 2025, NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman said the intent was for it to serve as an appetizer for hockey at the Olympics.

What it turned out to be, beyond a smashing success that put the sport firmly in the limelight, was a blueprint for the U.S. and Canada to build their rosters. The tournament was the first in international play to feature the best in the world in nearly a decade. The lessons learned informed what USA Hockey and Hockey Canada did over the past year.

It worked, especially for the U.S., which beat Canada 2-1 in an overtime thriller Sunday to win Olympic gold and silence the critics who were unhappy about the decision to leave four of the top 10 American scorers in the league — Jason Robertson, Lane Hutson, Cole Caufield and Alex DeBrincat — home.

U.S. general manager Bill Guerin and his group opted to bring back forwards like Vincent Trocheck and J.T. Miller, who could kill penalties and defend. The U.S. wanted players who could do specific jobs and also be versatile to move around the lineup, with coach Mike Sullivan making changes along the way.

"One of the things that Billy Guerin and I talked about from the very beginning was trying to build a team in the true sense of the word, so we looked at a deep group of American talent and these decisions were very difficult," Sullivan said. "They weren't easy. You look at how this group is constructed, there was a thought process that we had players that could play in all situations."



Petr David Josek | AP photo

United States players celebrate after defeating Canada in overtime on Sunday. Team USA general manager Bill Guerin raised some eyebrows when he left some high-scoring players off his roster, but the group he assembled ultimately brought home gold.

Guerin insisted the U.S. "didn't build our team just to play Canada."

"We built the best team possible," Guerin said. "We feel that we built the best team possible. We did that with us in mind. We're worried about us, not anybody else."

Canada brought six new players who were not at 4 Nations, and injuries to Brayden Point and Anthony Cirelli cleared the way for Sam Bennett and Seth Jarvis. One of the newcomers is 19-year-old Macklin Celebrini, who has turned heads since he was an NHL rookie in the fall of 2024.

"I didn't even know I was on the radar or even in the conversation," Celebrini said. "When (GM Doug Armstrong) brought that to my attention, it was a little bit of a push and excitement — just a little bit more of something that I can look forward to and work to."

Celebrini was one of Canada's best players with 10 points heading into the gold medal game, behind only tournament leader and teammate Connor McDavid.

"He's got a lot of skill and a lot of confidence," winger Mitch Marner said. "He's not afraid of the big moments."

Another new addition, Nick Suzuki, scored the tying goal when Canada trailed with less than four minutes left in the quarterfinals. Tom Wilson started on right wing with Celebrini, and McDavid has brought size and physicality — and even fisticuffs — to the Olympics.

Canada changed out two goaltenders, picking Logan Thompson and Darcy Kuemper this time, but coach Jon Cooper always had Jordan Binnington written in as the starter. Cooper made up his mind immediately after Binnington backstopped Canada to the win at 4 Nations, and the 32-year-old netminder's play over his first four starts validated that decision.

"You don't have to be a scout to see what he did in the Stanley Cup (Final), what he did in the 4 Nations, and there's a massive belief," Armstrong said, referring to Binnington and the St. Louis Blues winning the NHL championship in 2019. "When players see that time and time again, that's just a foundation that they know that, 'OK, when push comes to shove, we have faith in this guy,' and I think that's where they are with Binner."

The U.S. relied primarily on Connor Hellebuyck, who starred at the 4 Nations and is the reigning NHL MVP and Vezina Trophy winner as the league's best goalie. He had perhaps the game of his life vs. Canada in the final, stopping 41 of the 42 shots he faced to give Jack Hughes the chance to join him as American heroes by scoring the golden goal in overtime.

"If it weren't for him today, that game would have looked a lot different," Miller said. "He was amazing."

Gu in tears after defending title, grandmother's death

The Associated Press



Lindsey Wasson | AP photo

Gold medalist Eileen Gu of China reacts to winning the women's freestyle skiing halfpipe final at the Olympics on Sunday.

LIVIGNO, Italy — By taking chances, Eileen Gu is building a sport. She's winning medals. Yet on a sunny Sunday at the Olympics where she defended her title on the halfpipe, maybe the best prize of all was knowing her grandma would be proud.

That's why her tears flowed freely. Not long after the victory gave her a record-breaking third Olympic gold medal in freeskiing, Gu learned her grandmother, Guozhen Feng, had died.

"She was a steam ship," Gu said. "This woman commanded life, and she grabbed it by the reins, and she made it into what she wanted it to be."

It's the way Gu, the 22-year-old — born in America but competing for her mother's homeland of China — likes to approach skiing, school, life and everything she touches.

"She inspired me so much," Gu said. "The last time I saw her before I came to the Olympics, she was very sick, so I knew that this was a possibility. I didn't probably say that I was going to win, but I did promise her that I was going to be brave. She's been brave."

Gu knows she has naysayers and knows what to say to them

Gu has had to exhibit a certain amount of bravery, too, over her young life.

There's bravery on the mountain, where she puts her health (and her life) on the line with every jump. Then, there's the will of steel she needs to deal with her world off the slopes.

Barely a day has passed at either of her two Olympics when Gu doesn't get asked about the country she competes for almost as often as her freeskiing.

Not a day passes, either, where she doesn't lean into the same message she's been delivering for years: "If people disagree with me, if they have other skill sets, which I'm sure they do, then I encourage them to direct it elsewhere," she said. "To make the world better in their own way."

At her post-victory news conference, the well-spoken Stanford student handled all the questions — about geopolitics, her brain power, the future of skiing — head-on, but always bringing the conversation back to the reason she has captivated an audience in a sport that doesn't always do that.

"The difficulty of competing in three events, making finals in three events," she said. "I had to compete six times. I kind of liken it to a marathon, with the pace of a 100-meter dash. ... I took a big risk in trusting myself, and I'm glad that I did."

By trusting, and winning, Gu has become the most decorated freeskier in the short history of the sport at the Olympics.

Beyond the medals, she is growing the sport. She cited a Chinese government study saying more than 300 million people in China have tried snow sports for the first time since she captured her three medals there at the last Olympics.

"There are girls in China whose lives are going to be touched by the beautiful and wonderful power of sport," Gu said. "That, in and of itself, is absolutely measured impact that I think I had always wanted."

A life after skiing focused on 'global beneficial impact'

Asked what her life after skiing might entail, Gu stayed with the broad theme of "global beneficial impact" but said her pillars right now remain skiing, sports and fashion. She'll be at a fashion show in Milan this week.

Things could change down the road.

"I think it's more assessing your individual skill set and trying to say, 'OK, what is the way that I can as a person do the most good in the world?'" Gu said. "Right now, I'm young. I'm energetic."

Competitors catching up?

She'll need it.

The example she has set for skiing has made this a better sport. Four years ago, when Gu closed out those Olympics with a gold on the halfpipe, there was a tinge of resignation among the other skiers. "A machine," Canada's runner-up Cassie Sharpe said back then. And American Carly Margulies agreed that Gu was skiing at "a level that's pretty unattainable for a lot of us."

Now, there's a sense they're catching up. Britain's bronze medalist Zoe Atkin actually jumped higher out of the halfpipe than Gu. China's Li Fanghui finished second and had she tried six tricks instead of five, who knows what might have happened?

"She's a great skier, and she raises the level for everyone else," said Canada's Amy Fraser, who finished fourth and is the lone skier to beat Gu over the past four years. "But she's not unbeatable."

In a way, that's exactly what Gu wants.

"If I went to a middle school and beat everybody at freestyle, it's not exciting for anybody, right?" she explained.

Once her news conference was over, she exited out a side door, then climbed a grandstand for a few more pictures, a few more hugs.

Her grandma didn't see this victory. But Gu couldn't have done it without her.

"That's why I keep referring to this theme of betting on myself and being brave and taking risks," Gu said. "It actually goes back to that promise I made my grandma. I'm really happy that I was able to uphold that and hopefully do her proud."

Sweden's curling moms give kids gold medals to play with

The Associated Press



Misper Apawu | AP photo

Sweden's Anna Hasselborg, Sara McManus, Sofia Scharback and Agnes Knochenhauer celebrate after defeating Switzerland to win the women's curling gold medal on Sunday.

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy — Sweden curling skip Anna Hasselborg related how her daughter told her before the Olympics that "it's so boring when you don't have a medal."

So when Hasselborg marched over to her two kids with a glistening gold around her neck on the final day of the Milan Cortina Games, there was nothing to complain about — just a new toy to play with.

"I think they will also remember this week," Hasselborg said. "They understood there was something big happening. ... I'm so proud to be able to show them that anything is possible."

After upsetting top-ranked Canada in the semifinals, Hasselborg's team defeated Silvana Tirinzoni's Switzerland 6-5 to win the women's competition Sunday.

Hasselborg's 12th-ranked team celebrated by jumping up and down on the ice, with a Swedish flag draped over their shoulders.

Three members of Sweden's team became pregnant after taking bronze at the 2022 Beijing Games.

"Becoming a mother, it's not always easy to find that balance in motivation and that you want to have the fighting spirit because becoming a mom is so much more important than everything else," Hasselborg said. "But we found it at the right time."

Sweden has now won a women's curling medal at six straight Olympics — stretching back to the last time the Games were held in Italy: Turin in 2006 — and four women's golds.

Overall, it was Sweden's sixth Olympic gold and 13th medal overall in Olympic curling — trailing only Canada (seven golds and 14 medals) in both categories.

Canada beat the United States for bronze on Saturday.

Sweden also won the mixed doubles in Cortina, with Isabella and Rasmus Wranå, the country's first-ever team of siblings at the Winter Olympics, taking gold.

In the men's competition, Canada's controversial team swept aside cheating allegations to beat Britain for gold.

The other members of Sweden's team were Sara McManus, Agnes Knochenhauer and Sofia Scharback.

Knochenhauer knocked out four Swiss red stones in the 10th end to set up Hasselborg's decisive hammer shot.

"It is a game-winning shot, for sure, and it's a team shot," Knochenhauer said. "I feel like a revenge from the last Olympics when I had a similar shot but I didn't make it. ... I really wanted to like really go for it. So I'm very proud of that.

"There's a big tradition of great Swedish curlers," Knochenhauer said after earning her fourth Olympic medal. "When we were younger we could believe that it's possible even from a smaller country like Sweden."

At 46, Tirinzoni was the oldest woman in the competition. She added Olympic silver to her four world championship golds.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

Ebba Andersson pulled away from the pack to win the 50-kilometer mass start cross-country ski race Sunday that served as redemption for her disastrous crash that cost Sweden a gold medal in the team relay at the Milan Cortina Olympics.

Norway's Heidi Weng, who was in the foursome that seized the gold from Sweden in the relay, won silver and Switzerland's Nadja Kaelin got the bronze.

"I've dreamed about this day for a long time now and it's almost unbelievable that everything went as planned," the 28-year-old Andersson said. "Even though I had believed in myself it's something else when it works out in reality."

U.S. star Jessie Diggins was in a group of five that sprinted for the bronze, but she couldn't keep up with her rivals on the final climb and collapsed in the snow after crossing in fifth place in the final Olympic race of her career.

"It was just a really gritty race," Diggins said. "Literally every muscle in my body started cramping with three laps to go. So, I can confidently say I could not possibly have tried harder or gotten more out of my body."

Diggins was in the lead group with Andersson, Weng and Austria's Teresa Stadlober for the first lap, but then fell off the pace after taking a spill when she changed skis after the second lap. She was in a group of chasers that fought for third.

The 34-year-old Diggins will retire later this year as the most decorated U.S. cross-country skier — with a team gold from 2018 Pyeongchang Games, an individual silver and bronze from Beijing 2022 and a bronze medal in Italy in the 10-kilometer interval freestyle race.

Andersson's medal was the fifth cross-country gold for Sweden, which won every women's cross-country ski event here except for the 4 x 7.5-kilometer relay. In addition to the team silver, Andersson also won a pair of individual silvers in the skiathlon and the 10-kilometer interval start.

Both those races were won by Sweden's Frida Karlsson, who was sick and did not race in the final cross-country event of the Olympics. Teammate Jonna Sundling, who placed second in the women's sprint and won the team sprint for Sweden together with Maja Dahlqvist, was also out with a cold, Swedish ski federation spokeswoman Ulrika Sterner told The Associated Press.

Karlsson and Sundling were teamed up with Andersson in the Swedish team that won silver in the relay.

BOBSLED

Johannes Lochner went out on top, and Germany capped another dazzling Olympic display with another dominant bobsled show at the Milan Cortina Games.

Lochner — who announced his retirement months ago — capped his career with his second gold medal of these Olympics, winning the four-man event over two-time defending Olympic champion Francesco Friedrich by 0.57 seconds on Sunday in the final sliding event of these Games.

"It's just such a dream. ... It's indescribable," Lochner said. "A moment for eternity. A perfect finish, the most perfect finish ever."

But it wasn't a German sweep: Switzerland got the bronze, with Michael Vogt overtaking Germany's Adam Ammour in the fourth and final run to secure that third-place spot. Ammour settled for fourth.

Lochner's four-run time was 3 minutes, 37.57 seconds. Friedrich — Germany's all-time leader in just about every category imaginable — finished in 3:38.14, Vogt in 3:38.64 and Ammour in 3:38.68.

"A year and a half ago, Hansi asked me to come in his sled and we made a plan," said pusher Thorsten Margis, who won four Olympic golds with Friedrich and now has a fifth with Lochner. "It's quite cool if such a plan works out, and it's pretty amazing to beat the most successful bobsleigh pilot in the world."

Lochner has made his future plans known. Friedrich isn't saying if he's retiring — yet.

"Normally I have to get one more gold," Friedrich said. "So, we will see."

Kris Horn had the top U.S. sled, finishing 11th with Caleb Furnell, Hunter Powell and Carsten Vissering in his sled. Frank Del Duca was 12th for the U.S., with Boone Niederhofer, Bryan Sosoo and Josh Williamson in his sled.

"I'm trying to find the words to explain it," Del Duca said. "We are medal contenders, so to not have a medal hurts. But to be able to walk away from the competition, knowing that we gave maximum effort and maximum preparation, and then be able to see our family in the stands and feel the love from them, feel the support from each other ... as hard as it is to walk away empty-handed, we have very full hearts with the support that we have."

Twin cauldrons extinguished in official end to Games

By Colleen Barry
The Associated Press

VERONA, Italy — The Milan Cortina Olympics ended Sunday as the twin flames in co-host cities Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo were extinguished during a closing ceremony inside the ancient Verona Arena, roughly mid-distance between the far-flung mountain, valley and city venues that made these the most spread-out Winter Games ever.

In declaring the 2026 Games over, International Olympic Committee President Kirsty Coventry told local organizers that they "delivered a new kind of winter games and you set a new, very high standard for the future."

The next Winter Games will be held in neighboring France, which received the Olympic flag in the official handover earlier in the ceremony. Following the same spread-out model, the 2030 Winter Games will stage events in the Alps and Nice, on the Mediterranean Sea, while speedskating will be held either in Italy or the Netherlands.

A total of 116 medal events were held in eight Olympic sports across 16 disciplines, including the debut of ski mountaineering this year, over the course of 17 days of competition. With the final events wrapping up just hours before the ceremony, the 50-kilometer mass start men's and women's cross country medals were awarded by Coventry inside the Arena.

Host Italy won its highest Winter Olympic tally ever with 30 medals — 10 gold, six silver and 14 bronze, crushing the previous record of 20 set at the Lillehammer Olympics in 1994.

"Your outstanding performance united Italians everywhere and played a fundamental role in the success of the games," Giovanni Malagò, the president of the Milan Cortina Foundation told the Italian athletes sitting behind him wearing headbands emblazoned with "Italia."



Natacha Pisarenko | AP photo

President of the Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur Region Renaud Muselier, right, and President of the Auvergne-Rhone-Alpes Region Fabrice Pannekoucke wave the Olympic flag during the closing ceremony of the Winter Olympics on Sunday in Verona, Italy.



Bernat Armangue | AP photo

Artists perform during the closing ceremony of the 2026 Winter Olympics.

The closing ceremony paid tribute to Italian dance and music — from lyric opera to Italian pop of the 20th century to the DJ beat of Gabry Ponte, who got the 1,500 athletes on their feet and dancing while color confetti exploded on stage. Italian Achille Lauro delivered the last word with the song "Incoscienti Giovani," or reckless young people, just before athletes who so aptly harnessed their youthful energy for these Games filed out.

The 2½-hour ceremony opened with a whimsical tribute to Italian lyric opera, with the stage director rousing not only the closing ceremony cast, including Achille Lauro, but also long-dormant opera characters tucked away in crates within the amphitheater's tunnels.

On stage, Madama Butterfly in a bright pink and green costume and Aida in golden tiers were unpacked from mirrored crates while 17th century musicians played the joyous "Libiamo ne' lieti calici" from La Traviata, a nod to the Arena's long history as the venue for a summer opera festival.

The opera characters, led by the jester Rigoletto, spilled out into the piazza outside, mixing with the bemused athletes who were flag-bearers for their countries, some ofwhom pulled out their phones to film.

In a later sequence, internationally acclaimed ballet dancer Roberto Bolle made his first-ever aerial performance inside a blazing ring meant to represent the sun. He was lowered to the stage that mimicked the Venetian lagoon, replete with gondolas, where he danced to a haunting song by Italian singer Joan Thiele.

In a key moment, the Olympic flame encased in a Venetian glass vessel was carried into the Arena by Italian gold medalists from the 1994 Lillehammer Games.

The Olympic rings illuminated in white appeared high on the stone stairs behind the stage, flanked by national flags, when one raised the flame in the center of the stage.

This was the first Olympics for Coventry, a two-time Olympic champion in swimming, who watched much of the ceremony alongside Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni.

Some 12,000 spectators joined the athletes and officials for the closing ceremony, which was much more intimate affair than the opening ceremony starring Mariah Carey and Andrea Bocelli inside Milan's San Siro soccer stadium, attended by more than 60,000 people.

The Milan Cortina Games spanned an area of 22,000 square kilometers (8,500 square miles), from ice sports in Milan to biathlon in Anterselva on the Austrian border, snowboarding and men's downhill in Valtellina on the Swiss border, cross-country skiing in the Val di Fiemme north of Verona and women's downhill, curling and sliding sports in co-host Cortina d'Ampezzo.

The closing ceremony concluded with the Olympic flames extinguished at the unprecedented two caldrons in Milan and Cortina, viewed in Verona via video link. A light show substituted fireworks, which are not allowed in Verona, to protect animals from being disturbed.

The Milan Cortina Paralympics' opening ceremony will also take place in the Verona Arena, on March 6, and the Games will run until March 15.

NBC's big bet pays off with audience up 94% from Beijing

By Joe Reedy
AP Sports Writer

Many wondered four years ago if NBC's 2014 decision to secure U.S. media rights to the Olympics through 2032 for $7.75 billion was a bad business deal.

With NBC having its most-watched Winter Games in 12 years, those concerns appear to have quieted.

According to Nielsen and Adobe Analytics, NBC averaged 24 million viewers across its prime afternoon coverage (2-5 p.m. EST) and Primetime in Milan (8-11 p.m. EST and PST) through Friday. That is a 94% improvement over the 2022 Beijing Games.

This is the second straight Olympics where viewers have returned in large numbers. The 2024 Paris Summer Games were up 82% from 2021 in Tokyo.

Complete numbers from the 17 days — including the United States' 2-1 overtime victory over Canada in men's hockey Sunday morning — are expected to be released on Monday.

"I think that the Paris Games deserve a lot of the credit for rejuvenating that interest and enthusiasm, and some of that momentum continued through to Milan," NBC Sports President Rick Cordella said from Milan.



David J. Phillip | AP photo

The Olympics closed things out on Sunday with the highlight of the United States defeating Canada in overtime for the gold medal in men's hockey.

Molly Solomon, NBC's president and executive producer for the Olympics, and her team also deserve credit for changing the network's coverage approach after Beijing.

Instead of waiting until prime time to showcase key sports, those events were shown live via streaming along with NBC's network and cable channels. The primetime show was reimagined to highlight key events with more interviews and analysis to supplement what viewers might have seen live earlier in the day.

"How do we best make sure that we are continuing to tell the story (of athletes) after they leave the venues? I do think that one of the improvements we made from our Paris coverage was to follow the athletes to their after-parties and reunions with their friends and families," said Solomon, who is overseeing coverage from NBC Sports' headquarters in Stamford, Connecticut.

"When Alex Ferreira won (the gold medal in men's halfpipe), we went to the bar where he was celebrating. There was a Team USA celebration for Mikaela Shiffrin, where we were there for the toast, and she talked about not being able to help Breezy Johnson get on the platform.

"These athletes trusted us to have our cameras there, and I do think it made for even richer storytelling and taking the audience there."

NBC adopted a format used for years in other countries while also listening to viewers who demanded change. NBC had streamed all Olympic sports since the 2012 London Games, but took a big leap when NBC Universal launched Peacock in 2020.

Through Friday, 14.8 billion minutes of the Milan Games had been streamed in the U.S., more than doubling the total for all prior Winter Games combined (6.9 billion).

Viewer gains can also be credited to the U.S. team's performance, which underperformed in Tokyo and Beijing. Those games were played in hermetically sealed environments with mostly empty venues due to COVID-19.

Thursday's win by the U.S. in women's hockey over Canada in overtime and Alysa Liu's gold medal in figure skating averaged 26.7 million across NBC, USA Network, Peacock, and NBCUniversal's other digital platforms.

USA Network and Peacock averaged 5.3 million viewers for the gold-medal hockey game, making it the most-watched women's hockey game on record. It peaked at 7.7 million in overtime when Megan Keller scored the game-winner.

"It was truly a golden hour. We popped between control rooms, and you just never know what's going to happen," Solomon said. "The energy in our control rooms on site, we couldn't believe the confluence of drama and excitement, but that really is what the Olympics is about. It's unpredictable, thrilling, and it just coincided in the golden 64 minutes."

NBC is poised to continue the momentum for the next two games. The 2028 Summer Games in Los Angeles will have wall-to-wall live coverage throughout the day, while the 2030 Winter Games in the French Alps will see NBC return to the coverage formula that worked in Paris and Milan.

The 2032 Summer Games in Brisbane, Australia, will have challenges because most events will take place overnight in the U.S., but the 2034 Winter Games in Salt Lake City will again provide another live Olympics.

NBC has the rights to the Olympics through 2036. It agreed to the 2034 and '36 Games last year for $3 billion.

"Paris begets Milan, and Milan will beget LA. I think the Olympics are just unique in many respects," Cordella said. "The U.S.-Swiss curling match, there are hundreds of thousands of people online streaming. They're seeking it out and watching these matchups of these athletes; they probably didn't know about them before the Olympics began. It's compelling TV, and that's kind of what the Olympics does."

No. 5 Vanderbilt survives No. 16 Kentucky on late stop

The Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Mikayla Blakes scored 35 points and Justine Pissott came up with a big defensive play late to help No. 5 Vanderbilt edge 16th-ranked Kentucky 81-79 on Sunday.

Trailing by one, Kentucky's Clara Strack had the ball with 4 seconds left and made a move to the basket from the wing when Pissott deflected it out of Strack's hand. Blakes gained possession and then was fouled with less than a second left. She hit the first of two free throws and then the Wildcats couldn't get off a shot.

Aubrey Galvan, who finished with 20 points, hit the go-ahead jumper with 7.9 seconds left to lift Vanderbilt (25-3, 11-3 SEC). Pissott finished with eight points, including two 3-pointers in the fourth quarter. One of those 3's tied the game with 2:21 left.

The victory ties Vanderbilt with No 4 Texas for second place in the SEC with two games left in regular-season play.

Strack led the Wildcats (20-8, 7-7) in scoring, finishing with 17 points and seven rebounds. Amelia Hassett added 15 points, hitting five 3-pointers.



George Walker IV | AP photo

Vanderbilt guard Aubrey Galvan (3) goes for a steal against Kentucky center Clara Strack (13) during the first half of Sunday's top-25 matchup in Nashville.

No. 1 UCONN 81, PROVIDENCE 38

STORRS, Conn. — Azzi Fudd had 13 points and four steals in her final regular-season game at Gampel Pavilion as top-ranked UConn tied a program record by forcing 39 turnovers in a victory over Providence, extending the Huskies' winning streak to 45 games.

KK Arnold finished with eight points, eight assists, and a season-high seven steals. Sarah Strong had 13 points in 13 minutes for the Huskies (29-0, 18-0 Big East), who have won 56 consecutive conference regular season games.

UConn had a season-high 26 steals, the seventh time this season that UConn had at least 20 steals.

Princess Moody led Providence 14-15 (7-11) with 11 points.

No. 3 SOUTH CAROLINA 85, No. 17 OLE MISS 48

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Joyce Edwards scored 21 points, Madina Okot had 17 and South Carolina clinched a share of the SEC regular-season championship with a victory over Mississippi.

The Gamecocks (27-2, 13-1 SEC) can earn their fifth straight crown outright by beating either Missouri or Kentucky in the season's final week. The victory, their 21st straight over the Rebels (21-8, 8-6), guarantees South Carolina the top seed in next month's SEC Tournament in Greenville.

The Gamecocks hadn't lost to Ole Miss since February 2009 and, with ESPN GameDay at the arena and four-time WNBA MVP A'ja Wilson on hand, made sure they handled the Rebels.

No. 4 TEXAS 92, MISSISSIPPI STATE 42

AUSTIN, Texas — Madison Booker scored 23 points, Jordan Lee added 17 and Texas routed Mississippi State.

Texas (26-3, 11-3 SEC) has won 41 straight home games, the longest such streak in the country.

Both Booker and Lee were accurate from the field. Booker hit 8 of 12, including 3-for-3 from beyond the arc. Lee shot 6 of 10, including a season-best five 3-pointers in eight tries.

The Longhorns hit 11 of 22 3-pointers, setting a season high for the second straight game. They made 10 of 28 during a 93-62 win at Arkansas on Thursday.

Aaliyah Crump scored 12 points for Texas and Ashton Judd added 11. Breya Cunningham grabbed 12 rebounds and Rori Harmon had 11 assists.

Favour Nwaedozi scored nine points to lead Mississippi State (18-10, 5-9).

No. 13 IOWA 62, No. 6 MICHIGAN 44

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Ava Heiden had 24 points and 10 rebounds to help Iowa beat Michigan.

Hannah Stuelke added 11 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists for the Hawkeyes (22-5, 13-3 Big Ten), who held the Wolverines (22-5, 13-3) to their lowest point total of the season and moved into a second-place tie in the Big Ten with Michigan heading into the final week of the regular season.

Michigan came in ranked fifth nationally in scoring offense at 86.6 points per game, but shot just 30.5% from the field for the game and committed 24 turnovers.

Heiden, who ranks fourth in the nation in field-goal percentage at 64.4%, was 11 of 17 from the field. Iowa led for the final 28 minutes, making shots to answer any run by the Wolverines.

Michigan got within 39-35 with 15 seconds left in the third quarter on a 3-pointer by Syla Swords, but Iowa's Kylie Feuerbach banked in a 3-pointer before the buzzer sounded.

Then, in the fourth quarter, after the Wolverines got to within 46-40 with 6½ minutes to play, Iowa went on a 12-2 run, with Heiden scoring eight points.

No. 7 LSU 108, MISSOURI 55

BATON ROUGE, La. — MiLaysia Fulwiley had 22 points, 11 rebounds and two steals, and LSU routed reeling Missouri.

ZaKiyah Johnson had 17 points and 14 rebounds, and Flau'jae Johnson added 16 points for LSU (24-4, 10-4 SEC), which led throughout the final three periods and by as many as 57 points. The 53-point win matched the school record for largest win in the SEC. Mikaylah Williams had 12 points and 10 rebounds for LSU, which outshot Missouri, 47% to 24% and outrebounded Mizzou 72-25. The rebounds were the most in school history.

LSU, which improved to 12-2 at home, took the lead for good when Williams' free throws made it 11-9 in the latter half of the first quarter.

VIRGINIA 74, No. 8 LOUISVILLE 72

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Romi Levy made a clutch 3-pointer with 13 seconds remaining and grabbed Louisville's missed 3 at the buzzer as Virginia held off the Cardinals.

Imari Berry made 1 of 2 free throws with 31.4 seconds left to put Louisville up 72-71. Virginia (19-8, 11-5 Atlantic Coast Conference) ran time off before Levy spotted up for a 3 on the right side for her second basket in the final 2:08 to give the Cavaliers their fourth win in five games. Levy finished with 15 points, hitting three 3-pointers.

Reyna Scott missed a layup with 4 seconds left but Louisville (24-5, 14-2) retained possession. Berry had a good look from the right corner as time expired but was short, halting Louisville's winning streak at three and dropping the Cardinals further behind first-place No. 9 Duke in the ACC.

Kymora Johnson had 16 points including two late 3s, Paris Clark had 14 points and Tabitha Amanze had 11 rebounds and 9 points.

CLEMSON 53, No. 9 DUKE 51

CLEMSON, S.C. — Hannah Kohn hit a 3-pointer from the top of the key with 3.1 seconds left for her only points of the game as Clemson upset Duke to snap the Blue Devils' 17-game win streak.

Demeara Hinds finished with 13 points and Taylor Johnson-Matthews and Mia Moore each added 11 for the Tigers (19-9, 10-6 ACC), who added a huge resume-building victory before the NCAA Tournament.

Toby Fournier had 18 points and seven rebounds for Duke (20-7, 15-1 ACC) which lost its first conference game of the season. Fournier, an ACC player of the year candidate, was held in check for most of the second half after scoring 14 before the break.

The Blue Devils appeared in control entering the fourth quarter, but Clemson stepped up its defense.

The Tigers took the lead at 44-43 with 3:24 left when Moore drove the lane and drew a foul for a 3-point play. Johnson-Matthews then drilled a 3 to give the Tigers their biggest lead of the game at 4.

Duke would battle back though and Riley Nelson hit a corner 3 to give the Blue Devils the lead with 9.3 seconds left.

But Kohn, who had missed her previous four shots of the game, got free and hit the 3 as Clemson made four of its final five shots from the field.

The Blue Devils were unable to get a final shot off after an inbounds pass was knocked away.

No. 10 OHIO STATE 88, USC 83

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Jaloni Cambridge scored 33 points, including 16 in the fourth quarter, and Ohio State used a 15-0 run to rally for a victory over USC.

It was Cambridge's fifth 30-point game this season. The sophomore was 12 of 21 from the field and 8 of 9 from the line as the Buckeyes (23-5, 11-4) snapped a two-game losing streak.

Cambridge also had three steals and forced USC to commit a season-high 25 turnovers as the Trojans (17-10, 9-7 Big Ten) had their six-game winning streak come to a close.

USC's Jazzy Davidson scored a season-high 32 points, including six 3-pointers, before fouling out with 1.1 second left. The freshman also had six rebounds and four assists.

Ohio State's Chance Gray had 16 points and Kennedy Cambridge scored 14 points and four steals before fouling out with 4:06 remaining.

Kennedy Smith had 18 points and Dayana Mendes 13 for the Trojans.

No. 11 OKLAHOMA 100, No. 21 TENNESSEE 93

NORMAN, Okla. — Raegan Beers, who averages a double-double, had 18 points and 18 rebounds in Oklahoma's foul-filled win over Tennessee.

Sahara Williams had 22 points and Aaliyah Chavez scored 19 points for the Sooners (21-6, 9-5 SEC). Payton Verhulst scored 17 points and Zya Vann added 15 as Oklahoma's starters all scored in double figures and totaled 93 points.

There were 53 fouls and 79 free-throw attempts. Oklahoma made 36 of 46 free throws and Tennessee made 23 of 33. Oklahoma made more free throws than baskets (30).

Tennessee's Jaida Civil opened the fourth quarter with a 3-pointer that cut Oklahoma's lead to 71-67. A few minutes later the Lady Vols were within three points before Oklahoma tacked on four free throws at the beginning of an 8-2 run.

A layup by Williams gave Oklahoma an 86-77 lead with 4:14 remaining. The Sooners attempted only two more shots the rest of the game and they scored their last 14 points on free throws.

Talaysia Cooper scored 22 points, Civil 21 and Nya Robertson 18 for Tennessee (16-10, 8-6).

No. 12 TCU 80, IOWA STATE 73

FORT WORTH, Texas — Olivia Miles scored 15 of her 26 points in the final 5:21 and finished with her fifth triple-double this season, rallying TCU to a victory over Iowa State and extending the Horned Frogs' winning streak at home to 41.

TCU trailed 66-53 with 7:35 remaining before Miles took over to ensure the Horned Frogs (25-4, 13-3) tied Texas for the longest current home streak, while staying atop the Big 12 Conference with their fourth straight win.

Miles, who played at Notre Dame from 2020-2025, scored six straight points to ignite a 16-4 run capped by Taylor Bigby's 3-pointer and TCU trailed 70-69 with 2:54 left.

Miles extended the run with a go-ahead jumper, two free throws and another jumper over the next two minutes for a five-point lead. She made 3 of 4 foul shots in the final 48 seconds as TCU outscored Iowa State 31-15 in the final quarter.

Miles missed 12 of her first 14 shots before making 6 of 7 in the fourth. She added 10 rebounds and 10 assists. Martz Suarez posted a double-double with 19 points and 10 rebounds, while Clara Silva scored 11.

Audi Crooks had 22 points, six rebounds and four assists before fouling out for the Cyclones (21-7, 9-7). Jada Williams scored 15 on 6-for-23 shooting, adding 11 assists. Addy Brown chipped in with 11 points and seven rebounds.

No. 14 MARYLAND 99, PURDUE 66

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Oluchi Okananwa scored 26 points, leading six in double figures, and Maryland won its fifth straight game, defeating Purdue.

Addi Mack scored 14 points and Saylor Poffenbarger and Mir McLean added 11 each for Maryland (22-6, 10-6 Big Ten). Off the bench, Kyndal Walker scored a career-high 18 points and fellow freshman Rainey Welson added 11.

Kiki Smith scored 19 points and Nya Smith had 18 for Purdue (12-15, 4-12).

No. 22 NORTH CAROLINA 78, PITT 50

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — Nyla Brooks scored 18 points, Laila Hull added 17 off the bench, and North Carolina routed Pitt.

North Carolina (23-6, 12-4 ACC) has reached 12 conference wins in back-to-back seasons for the first time since 2004-05 and 2005-06.

The Tar Heels missed their first six shots and trailed 11-4 midway through the first quarter. An 8-2 run helped North Carolina close the gap and Pitt took a 14-12 lead into the second quarter.

No. 25 ALABAMA 76, FLORIDA 71

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — Jessica Timmons scored a career-high 34 points, Ta'Mia Scott added 21, and Alabama rallied in the fourth quarter to defeat Florida to snap a three-game losing streak.

Alabama (21-7, 7-7) led by six points at halftime and the lead was 54-46 after Timmons hit a 3-pointer late in the third quarter. Liv McGill then scored seven points in Florida's 12-0 run that gave the Gators a 58-54 lead heading to the fourth quarter.

Florida's lead reached 60-54 before Scott scored five points and Timmons had seven, eventually drawing Alabama even at 66 with seven minutes remaining.

Florida's last lead was 68-66 with five minutes left before Timmons had a 3-pointer and a three-point play to finish an 8-0 run for a 74-68 lead with 1:24 remaining. She added two free throws in the final minute, giving her Alabama's last eight points.

MEN'S TOP 25

No. 15 MICHIGAN STATE 66, OHIO STATE 60

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Carson Cooper scored a career-high 20 points and grabbed 11 rebounds to lead Michigan State to a win over Ohio State.

Jeremy Fears added 11 points and eight assists for the Spartans (22-5, 12-4 Big Ten), who have won three of four, moving into a third-place tie in the Big Ten with No. 9 Nebraska and No. 7 Purdue.

The Buckeyes (17-10, 9-7) fell to 0-9 against Quadrant 1 teams, a statistic that may hurt their chances of earning an NCAA Tournament bid next month.

Ohio State had an opportunity to earn an impressive win, playing without the ill Devin Royal and injured John Mobley and missing the 29 points per game that they average.

Bruce Thornton tried to make up for it, scoring 32 points, but didn't get much help from a teammate other than Christoph Tilly, who scored 10 points and missed only one shot.

No. 24 WISCONSIN 84, IOWA 71

MADISON, Wis. — Nick Boyd scored 27 points and Nolan Winter added 18 as Wisconsin pulled away late for a victory over Iowa.

Bennett Stirtz's layup trimmed Iowa's deficit to 68-65, but Austin Rapp hit a pair of 3-pointers to fuel a 10-point Wisconsin run. Boyd's layup put the Badgers ahead 78-65 with just under four minutes remaining.

John Blackwell hit four free throws after a deadball technical foul to extend the lead to 82-69 with 1:02 left.

Rapp scored 14 points and Blackwell had 13 for Wisconsin (19-8, 11-5 Big Ten), which bounced back from an 86-69 loss at Ohio State.

Stirtz had 23 points for Iowa (19-8, 9-7), which was coming off a 57-52 win at home over No. 9 Nebraska. Alvaro Folgueiras and Tate Sage scored 11 apiece.

DCED invests nearly $5M for sporting events across Pa.

Staff Report



Photo courtesy of PFBC

Waterways Conservation Officer Dustan Luzier holds a trophy golden Rainbow Trout prior to stocking at Opossum Lake, Cumberland County.



Photo courtesy of PFBC

PFBC Executive Director Tim Schaeffer carries a net full of Rainbow and golden Rainbow Trout at Opossum Lake, Cumberland County.

Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Secretary Rick Siger this week announced a nearly $5 million investment in 15 sporting events across Pennsylvania through DCED's Sports Marketing and Tourism Program.

These grants are helping attract more visitors to Pennsylvania and supporting major events like the 2026 Major League Baseball All Star Game and 2026 FIFA World Cup, both in Philadelphia, and the 2026 PGA Championship in Newtown Square.

The grants also support other exciting and impactful events like the 2026 State Games of America in State College, the 2026 USCAA Small College Baseball and Softball World Series in Dubois, and 2026 Banana Ball World Tour, hosted by the Lehigh Valley Iron Pigs in Allentown.

The Sports Marketing and Tourism Program was created to attract high-quality, amateur, and professional sporting and e-sports events to Pennsylvania. The program capitalizes on the influx of tourism that comes with hosting a major national or international event, which can increase sales for both large and small businesses in the surrounding area and in turn boost the regional economy.

"This year, Pennsylvania is hosting a wide variety of exciting sporting events all across the state — events that will bring millions of visitors, generate significant economic impact, and support jobs and businesses across the Commonwealth," Siger said. "We're ready to welcome fans from around the globe and ensure their experience keeps them coming back again and again. From top-tier sports and major events to award-winning restaurants, world-class outdoor recreation, and the historic sites that tell America's story, Pennsylvania offers visitors more ways to explore, spend, and stay longer. That's what makes us the Great American Getaway, and we look forward to showcasing everything our Commonwealth has to offer."

In 2024, Pennsylvania's tourism industry generated $83.9 billion in economic impact, supported 514,261 jobs, contributed $5 billion in state and local taxes, and welcomed 201.6 million visitors.

The Shapiro Administration has prioritized positioning Pennsylvania as a premier national destination for visitors. We've had significant investments in tourism marketing, supporting:

- The rebranding of Pennsylvania's tourism brand Great American Getaway
- $50 million to ensure Pennsylvania is ready to welcome millions for major 2026 events including for America250 events, FIFA World Cup matches, March Madness, the MLB All-Star Game, the PGA Championship, and the 2026 NFL Draft in Pittsburgh.
- Strengthened Pennsylvania's position as a sports tourism destination through a $5 million investment to support major athletic events that drive significant visitor spending and boosting hotel occupancy in host communities.

Gov. Josh Shapiro's approach treats tourism not as a seasonal industry, but as a long-term economic development strategy, one that creates opportunity in urban, suburban, and rural communities alike while showcasing Pennsylvania as a premier place to visit, live, and do business.

Pine Creek Rail Trail selected as Pa. 2026 Trail of the Year

The Pine Creek Rail Trail, a 62-mile scenic journey through the Appalachian Mountains in Lycoming and Tioga counties, has been named Pennsylvania's 2026 Trail of the Year by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR).

"We are proud to name the Pine Creek Rail Trail as Pennsylvania's 2026 Trail of the Year and to honor the rich history, culture, and recreational opportunities that make this trail a destination for visitors from around the world," said DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn. "This designation will raise awareness about the wealth of outdoor experiences in the Pennsylvania Wilds — including the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon and the recently improved visitor center at Leonard Harrison State Park — while strengthening support for local businesses and generating lasting economic, environmental, and social benefits for the region."

The Pine Creek Rail Trail (PCRT) traces a historic corridor first used by the Iroquois Nation and later developed as a railroad in the late 19th century. After rail service ended in 1988, the corridor was transformed into a 62-mile non-motorized trail completed between 1995 and 2007, stretching from Jersey Shore to Wellsboro Junction.

Today, the nationally recognized trail attracts more than 44,000 users annually and generates more than $5 million in local economic impact. It serves as a major recreational and tourism asset within the Pennsylvania Wilds, Route 6 Heritage Corridor, and the Lumber Heritage Region.



Submitted Photo

The Pine Creek Rail Trail, a 62-mile scenic journey through the Appalachian Mountains in Lycoming and Tioga counties, has been named Pennsylvania's 2026 Trail of the Year by DCNR.

PFBC begins annual trout stocking operations ahead of spring season

If you love trout fishing, there was a sure sign of spring this week, as annual trout stocking operations got underway ahead of Pennsylvania's spring trout season.

Opossum Lake in Cumberland County received the first stocking of the year, which included cutting a hole into the ice with a chainsaw.

This year, the Fish and Boat Commission, with the help of volunteers, will stock 3.2 million trout into 684 streams and 130 lakes. Trout stocking occurs in all 67 counties.

The most common species being stocked is Rainbow Trout, but anglers will also have the chance to catch Brown Trout, Brook Trout, and golden Rainbow Trout.

All waters managed as Stocked Trout Waters are now closed until 8 a.m. on the Opening Day of Trout Season on Saturday, April 4, with the exception of Mentored Youth Trout Day on Saturday, March 28th.

For the 2026 trout stocking schedule, regulations, and more information on trout fishing, visit Fishandboat.com.

From Tim Schaeffer, PFBC Executive Director:

"Here we are, right? You can't believe the day is here already. Our staff has been working all year long to produce 3.2 million trout that we'll stock statewide across the Commonwealth. That will be complemented with another million trout from our network of cooperative nurseries. The fish are beautiful and they're ready to go in the water.

"So, really, this is a preview of coming attractions, if you will. Opening day of trout season is April 4, statewide. We open trout season a week early for kids and their adult mentors on March 28, but the fish have got to get in the water, and that's what we're starting to do today.

"We have wonderful wild trout streams all across the Commonwealth, particularly in the northern tier, but we would not have trout fishing here in Cumberland County in a lot of the streams that we do, and certainly here in Opossum Lake, without our hatchery system. Our state fish hatcheries produce trout that average over 11 inches long, and a lot are a lot bigger than that. Most of the trout that we stock are Rainbow Trout. They do really well in the waters, they do really well in the hatcheries. We also stock Brown Trout, some Brook Trout, and then the golden Rainbows."

"So, between now and opening day, our Stocked Trout Waters will be closed to fishing."

Entertainment Monday

contact us >> ae@timesleader.com

Times Leader

Monday, February 23, 2026 • Section C

Emerald Fennell's 'Wuthering Heights' is maddening

It's also her best film yet



In Frame
Margaret Roarty

Emerald Fennell's "Wuthering Heights" takes place in a kind of fever dream version of the moors of 1700s West Yorkshire, the rugged, violent, and beautiful terrain that is so central to Emily Brontë's wild tale of revenge, unconsummated love, and generational trauma.

In the hands of cinematographer Linus Sandgren, there's an ample amount of fog, along with breathtaking cliffside views of the vast, remote moors. But aside from that, Fennell's anachronistic and interpretive version of the English classic might as well take place in space — that's how far removed it is from much connection to the racial, gender, and economic inequalities of the time that dominate Brontë's work.

But Fennell wouldn't be so maddening as a filmmaker if dismissing her were that easy. Because, against all odds, there are moments in "Wuthering Heights" when she captures the essence of the novel in a way few other adaptations have been able to.

Her vision, one of maximalism and delirious, aesthetic excess, is limited, though, and it shows how restrained she is, unwilling to reach the depths of depravity that so characterized the novel.

But to be fair, she did warn us.

In a promotional interview for the film, Fennell said it was impossible to adapt a novel as dense and complicated as Emily Brontë's.

"I can't say I'm making Wuthering Heights. It's not possible. What I can say is I'm making a version of it," she said.

Whether or not you believe that's true, what is true is that most onscreen adaptations of "Wuthering Heights," save for a TV movie in 1998 and a miniseries in 2009, agree with her, as they completely disregard the novel's framing device and its second half.

Fennell is no different, choosing to focus all her attention on Catherine and Heathcliff's doomed relationship. She also cuts out Catherine's drunken, gambling addicted brother Hindley and merges his character with that of her father. Isabella and Joseph are vastly changed as characters as well, although they perfectly suit the story Fennell is trying to tell.

Filmed on 35mm VistaVision, Fennell's "Wuthering Heights" opens in 1771 with a public hanging that everyone, including a young Catherine Earnshaw (Charlotte Mellington), accompanied by her paid companion Nelly Dean (Vy Nguyen), takes sick pleasure in.

This grotesque display of wanton desire and amusement captures the very real obsession early modern England had with death.

However, it sets a feverish tone that is doused rather quickly, and Fennell, for the rest of the movie, seems to forget the themes it introduces.

Upon returning to their remote home on the moors, Catherine finds her father (Martin Clunes) has taken in an unnamed orphaned boy (Owen Cooper) whom he rescued from Liverpool. Mr. Earnshaw refers to him as Catherine's pet, and she accepts her gift gleefully, even taking it upon herself to give him a name: Heathcliff.

Over the years, Catherine and Heathcliff develop a strong bond, with Heathcliff often shielding Catherine from her father's abuse. Their relationship becomes a sore spot for Nelly, the illegitimate daughter of a lord, who feels sidelined.

Despite their intense obsession with one another, there's no denying that Catherine and Heathcliff's union would be impossible, for he has no fortune, and she would need to secure a husband with one to keep a roof over her head.

Things change when wealthy Edgar Linton (Shazard Latif) and his ward Isabella (Alison Oliver) move into the neighboring estate, Thrushcross Grange. Latif brings a much-needed gentleness and humanity to the film, while Oliver is delightfully unhinged as a sheltered young woman desperate for affection.

When Catherine eventually accepts a marriage proposal from Edgar, Heathcliff leaves Wuthering Heights, brokenhearted.

Production designer Suzie Davies creates an Alice in Wonderland-like world at Thrushcross Grange, with lush gardens and comically large strawberries. It's a dizzying delight that is ultimately hollow. Its emptiness is juxtaposed with the unruly moors and the cold blackness of Wuthering Heights. Everything there is jagged and difficult, much like Heathcliff and Catherine themselves.

Years later, Catherine is struggling in her safe, yet dull marriage with Edgar. Celebrated costume designer Jacqueline Durran expresses Catherine's unhappiness through increasingly elaborate, cartoonish dresses and heavy, suffocating jewels.

When Heathcliff returns to the moors as a wealthy man, it is not long before everyone gets sucked into their ill-fated reunion, including Nelly, played as an adult by Hong Chau, who has grown increasingly resentful of Catherine.



Warner Bros. Pictures via AP

Jacob Elordi and Margot Robbie in a scene from 'Wuthering Heights.'

From the moment Fennell announced her version of "Wuthering Heights," people had opinions. Very strong ones. Based on her previous work, it's hard not to see why.

From her directorial debut in 2020 with "Promising Young Woman" to her sophomore outing, "Saltburn," Fennell has had a track record of making films that are gorgeous, provocative, but ultimately incomprehensible.

My girl can compose the heck out of a shot — there's no denying that. Conceptually, Fennell is a fantastic director. It's her writing where she falls short.

Her previous scripts are shallow, lack narrative cohesion, and are often confusing thematically. It's like she's not trying to say anything other, "Ooh, that'll look cool," or "Ooh, that'll shock 'em."

Which is why "Wuthering Heights" might be her strongest film yet. Because it is based on a novel — no matter how loosely it might be — Fennell has a solid foundation to work from that mostly keeps her on track.

Fennell's choice of casting Jacob Elordi, who recently became a first-time Oscar nominee for his role as The Creature in Guillermo de Toro's "Frankenstein," as the adult Heathcliff was met with much ire, and her characterization of him will likely draw more.

In the novel, Heathcliff's racial ambiguity is key to understanding how and why people mistreat him so badly. He is othered by Nelly and Hindley and even Catherine at times, simply because he looks different than everyone else. From the time he is a child, everyone regards him as a monster, which is ultimately why he decides to become one.

Fennell maintains a degree of Heathcliff's abuse, but it is nowhere near what occurs in the novel. Catherine's father mistreats them both equally for the most part, and Heathcliff often puts himself in the middle of it to protect Catherine. It endears you to him — which is Fennell's goal — and Cooper's performance as the young Heathcliff is certainly a highlight.



Warner Bros. Pictures via AP

Margot Robbie, left, and Jacob Elordi in a scene from 'Wuthering Heights.'



Margaret Roarty | Times Leader

In Frame columnist Margaret Roarty stands in front of a 'Wuthering Heights' poster.

But Fennell's preoccupation with Heathcliff as a more traditional, romantic hero strips him of much of his Byronic nature that is so compelling in the novel.

Her desire for him to be seen as swoon-worthy is obvious from the marketing, as the main poster is an homage to "Gone With the Wind," with Elordi taking the place of the dashing, anti-hero Rhett Butler, played by Clark Gable.

Despite him being called a brute multiple times, Fennell never lets Heathcliff do anything bad enough to make us feel uncomfortable with wanting him. She's not half as transgressive as she'd like to believe.

Fennell and Margot Robbie, who is also a producer on the film, do right by Catherine, though, even if Robbie is a little too old for the role.

In some of the other "Wuthering Heights" adaptations, Catherine is often defanged when she grows up, especially in Andrea Arnold's 2011 version. With Fennell, Catherine maintains her wild, frustrating nature.

She's spiteful, jealous, and possessive. This is showcased really well in a scene where Catherine humiliates Isabella in front of Heathcliff, taunting her for having a crush on him. There is a very similar scene in the book that I always loved, because it perfectly captures how cruel Catherine can be.

Robbie shines the most in scenes following her marriage to Edgar. She's less convincing as a younger Catherine, though. Her brattiness borders on cringe when it's clearly an adult woman trying to emulate the childishness of a teenager.

Another thing Fennell gets right is Nelly, who is a sort of quasi-villain in the novel. In Brontë's tale, it's Nelly's perspective we see much of the action take place.

The only things we know about Catherine and Heathcliff come from Nelly. More than once, she is instrumental in the miscommunication between them and plays an active role in Heathcliff's mistreatment, although she always tries to justify her actions as good and right.

Fennell takes a role that is often flattened and ignored in the film adaptations and maintains her depth and complexity, and Chau is marvelous in it.

Thanks to its many adaptations, there is likely a "Wuthering Heights" for everyone. Although Fennell's version often shies away from the deeper, more complex themes of Brontë's, it succeeds in bringing other, more forgotten aspects of the novel to the forefront.

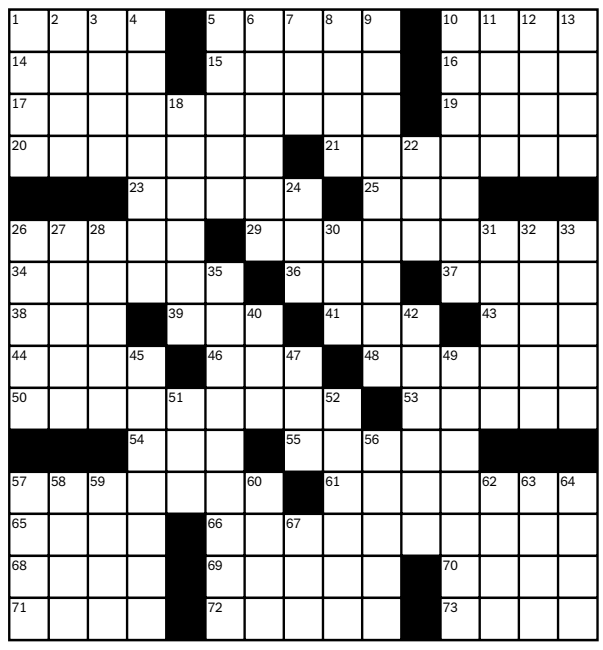
"Wuthering Heights" is a cinematic splendor best seen on the biggest screen you can find.

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. 0119



PUZZLE BY PETER GORMAN

ACROSS

1 Package under a Christmas tree
5 Old-fashioned butter maker
10 Branded cotton swab
14 Minnesota congresswoman Ilhan
15 In on, as a trend
16 Big coffee containers
17 1972 song by Elton John
19 Luxury auto whose logo is four overlapping rings
20 In progress
21 :), ;), :D and others
23 Formal "you," in Spanish
25 Comedian Wong
26 Projects, as a shadow
29 1985 song by John Cougar Mellencamp
34 Comes to light
36 X minus III, in old Rome
37 Cosmonaut Gagarin
38 Held the reins
39 Spot for a massage
41 R&B singer whose album "SOS" spent 100+ weeks in the Billboard top 10
43 Element used in bronze
44 Sporting blade
46 Draft pick?
48 Firstborn
50 1987 song by Billy Joel and Ray Charles
53 Midsection measurement
54 Apt rhyme for "shriek"
55 Martial arts studios
57 Disheveled
61 Caribbean island with a liqueur named for it
65 Gently persuade
66 Capital of Arkansas ... or a description of 17-, 29- and 50-Across?
68 In ___ land (daydreaming)
69 "I wish I could ___ that!"
70 A second helping, say
71 "Excuse me ..."
72 Things shifted on a bicycle or in a car
73 Winter coaster

DOWN

1 ___ Jail (space on a Monopoly board)
2 "Sign me up!"
3 Vampire's tooth
4 Auditions
5 "U-S-A! U-S-A! ...," e.g.
6 Movable joints on a door
7 ___ code (what most product packages have)
8 Google Maps options: Abbr.
9 Bring into the mainstream
10 Counterpart of quantity
11 Factual
12 Where the N.F.L.'s Colts play, informally
13 Letters before omegas
18 Insults
22 Springfield is its capital: Abbr.
24 Org. with notoriously long lines
26 Biblical spy for Moses
27 South American flatbread
28 Lesser-played part of a 45
30 ChatGPT and Google Gemini, for two
31 Word before space or Mongolia
32 Spot to find a pulse
33 Final inning, typically
35 Device for starting an engine
40 In the style of
42 Former vice president who won a Nobel Peace Prize
45 Test taken at the 24-Down
47 Finale
49 Wins over with charm
51 Jewel
52 Pete who directed "Up," "Inside Out" and "Soul"
56 Novelist Verne
57 The N.C.A.A.'s Bruins
58 Biblical ark builder
59 Dark leafy green
60 Fork prong
62 Chilly
63 Surveyor's measure
64 Gave a thumbs-up
67 Airport screening grp.

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

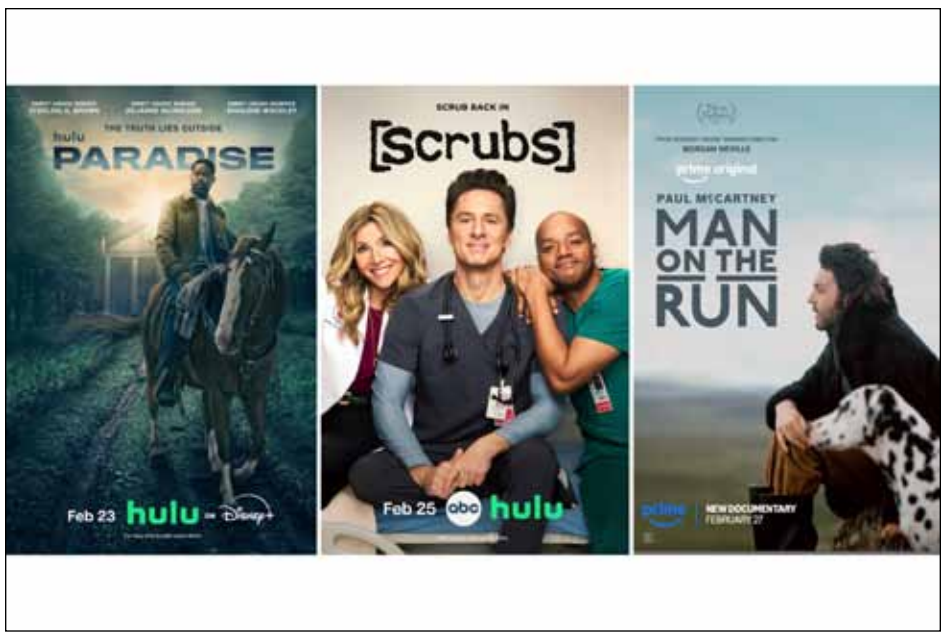
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Online subscriptions: Today's puzzle and more than 7,000 past puzzles, nytimes.com/crosswords ($39.95 a year).

Read about and comment on each puzzle: nytimes.com/wordplay.

What to Stream: Blackpink and Bruno, Paul McCartney doc, 'Survivor' at 50 and Resident Evil Requiem

By The Associated Press



Hulu/Hulu/Prime via AP

This combination of images show promotional art for the series "Paradise," from left, the comedy series "Scrubs," and the documentary "Paul McCartney: Man on the Run."

Both the K-pop girl group Blackpink and the funky pop star Bruno Mars returning with new music and a documentary about Paul McCartney after the Beatles are some of the new television, films, music and games headed to a device near you.

Also among the streaming offerings worth your time this week, as selected by The Associated Press' entertainment journalists: "Paradise" starring Sterling K. Brown returns for its second season, the freshly rebranded Actors Awards will be handed out live and there are bloodthirsty zombies to fight in Resident Evil Requiem.

New movies to stream from Feb. 23-March 1

— Andrew Stanton has directed some very memorable Pixar movies ("WALL-E," "Finding Nemo"), but his live-action track record is more checkered. Following 2012's poorly received "John Carter," Stanton is back with "In the Blink of an Eye," a film that brings together a handful of interconnected stories that explore the history of the world. Kate McKinnon, Rashida Jones and Daveed Diggs co-star. After a rocky reception at the Sundance Film Festival last month, "In the Blink of an Eye" debuts Friday, Feb. 27 on Hulu.

— The Actor Awards, formerly the SAG Awards will be handed out March 1 in a Netflix-livestreamed ceremony. Dished out by SAG-AFTRA, the actors guild, the awards are one of the most closely watched Oscar predictors. This year, Paul Thomas Anderson's "One Battle After Another" comes in the lead nominee.

— AP Film Writer Jake Coyle

New music to stream from Feb. 23-March 1

— For the Paul McCartney superfan comes a new documentary series from director Morgan Neville, who also helmed "Won't You Be My Neighbor" and "Piece by Piece." Not on the Beatles, but what came after. "Paul McCartney: Man on the Run," which hits Amazon Prime Video

See STREAM | 5C

SUNDAY'S ANSWERS

JUMBLE®

Answer:

STUDIO OBJECT JIGGLE
ATTEST SKIMPY IMPALA

When the two antique clocks were reunited after 80 years, it was —

JUST LIKE OLD TIMES

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

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A&E Reporter
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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

Lenten food sales at St. Leo's Church Hall, 33 Manhattan St., Ashley. A 40-year tradition continues with the Holy Name Society selling halusky, pierogi, Manhattan clam chowder, mushroom soup, tuna hoagies, potato pancakes and weekly specials 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Fridays in Lent, from Feb. 20 through March 27. Order ahead by Wednesday of each week at 570-266-8835 or email lenten.food.sales@gmail.com

Bear Creek Township Volunteer Hose Company Fish and Shrimp Fry, 5 to 7 p.m. on each Friday of Lent, Feb. 20 through April 2, at the Bear Creek Township Volunteer Hose House, 3500 Bear Creek Boulevard, Bear Creek Twp. Cost is $12 and includes a choice of fish, shrimp, or both, along with a generous portion of fries. Dessert will be available at an additional cost. Fire Company merchandise will be available for purchase. Sparky "the fire dog" will make surprise visits throughout the fish fry, and the Easter Bunny will be there on April 2.

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, 401 E. Main St., Miners Mills, Wilkes-Barre, Potato Pancake Sale, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 20. No pre-orders. This week's special is clam chowder, available by bowl or a quart.

Wilkes-Barre Rolling Mill Hill/Iron Triangle Residents' Association will meet at 7 p.m. Feb. 25 at Heritage Point Apartments Community Building, 151 Dana Street. Councilman Tony Brooks has requested that representatives of Pennsylvania American Water Company attend and address residents' concerns regarding water company projects. Manager of External Affairs Alana Roberts, as well as the senior manager of field operations and other department heads, will attend. Handicap parking is available. All are welcome.

Wyoming Valley Chapter of The Embroiderers' Guild public stitch-in, 10 a.m. to noon Feb. 28, Barnes & Noble Bookstore in the Arena Hub Plaza in Wilkes-Barre Township. The public is invited to bring something to stitch along, or to stop by and see what we are doing.

Purim in Candy Land, a community Purim celebration, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 1 at the Friedman JCC, 613 SJ Strauss Lane, Kingston, with a Midrasha presentation, Shelach Manot making, Hamantaschen making, singing with Cantor, costume contest, pizza and candy, a bounce house, bingo, Karaoke and fun for all ages. Costumes are encouraged. For more info, call 570-824-4646.

Sts. Peter and Paul Night at the Races, doors open at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, March 14, at the church's Bernadine Hall, 13 Hudson Road, Plains. Post time is 7 p.m. Admission is $10, which includes food and refreshments. You must be 21 years or older to enter. Tickets may be purchased in advance by calling Sts. Peter and Paul Church at 570-825-6663.

Shawnee Time Travelers annual spaghetti dinner, 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, March 22, at Happy Pizza, 40 West Main Street, Plymouth. The dinner and show will benefit both the Plymouth Historical Society and the Shawnee Cemetery. Members will portray Betsy Ross, Native American Polly Cooper, Benedict Arnold, and a history of colonial currency, among other topics. Cost is $15. Contact Heather at (570) 417-9562 for reservations.

Fine Arts Fiesta 70th anniversary gala, 70 Trips Around the Square, 6 to 9 p.m. Saturday, May 9, at Westmoreland Club, 59 South Franklin St., Wilkes-Barre, $170 per person, with entertainment by Eddie Day and TNT. Ticket information will be coming soon at fineartsfiesta.org/.

KINGSTON/ WEST SIDE

Senior Citizens Friendship Club of St. Mary's in Plymouth recently hosted a Valentine's Day party, choosing Carolann Toporcer and Jim Alu as Queen and King. Candy Yeager was the raffle winner at the last meeting. The club will meet from 1 to 4 p.m. Monday, Feb. 23, at the Holy Child Formation Center, at the corner of Eno and Willow streets, Plymouth. New members are always welcome. Any questions, call Jim at 570-301-88677.

Kingston Historical Society will meet at 7 p.m. Feb. 26 at the Kingston Municipal Building, 500 Wyoming Ave., Kingston. Guest speaker, Dr. Sara Cornell, will present the topic "sewn in America." The public is welcome. Membership is $10 yearly, and applications are available at the meeting or on our Facebook page. Come join us and learn the history that helped shape and build our present-day.

See WHAT'S UP | 5C

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.

TUFEL

SIBCA

TRHOYW

SIVAHL



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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

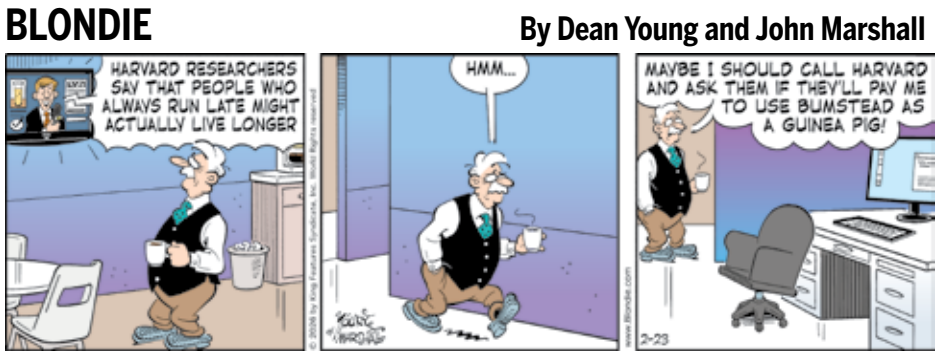
Print the answer here: " " (Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: SWAMP GOING QUIRKY GLANCE
Answer: The best way for the electricians to install so many outlets was to keep — PLUGGING AWAY

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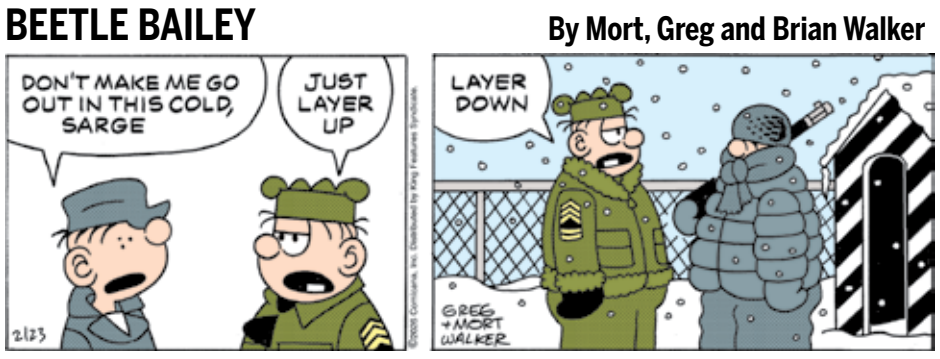
BLONDIE

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



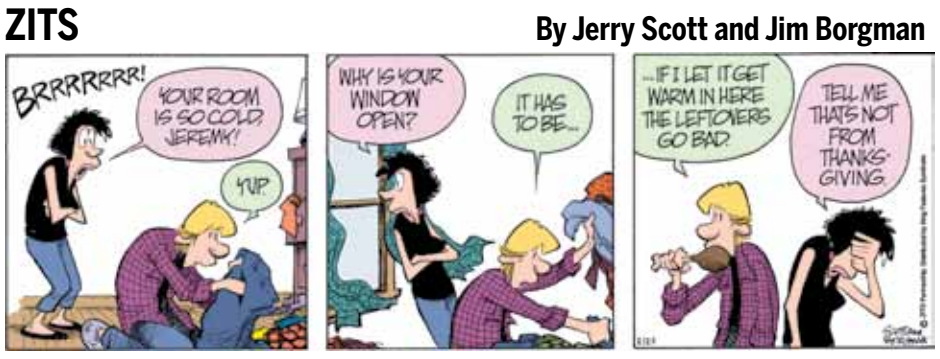
THE BRILLIANT MIND OF EDISON LEE

By John Hambrock



ZITS

By Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman



RHYMES WITH ORANGE

By Hilary Price



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

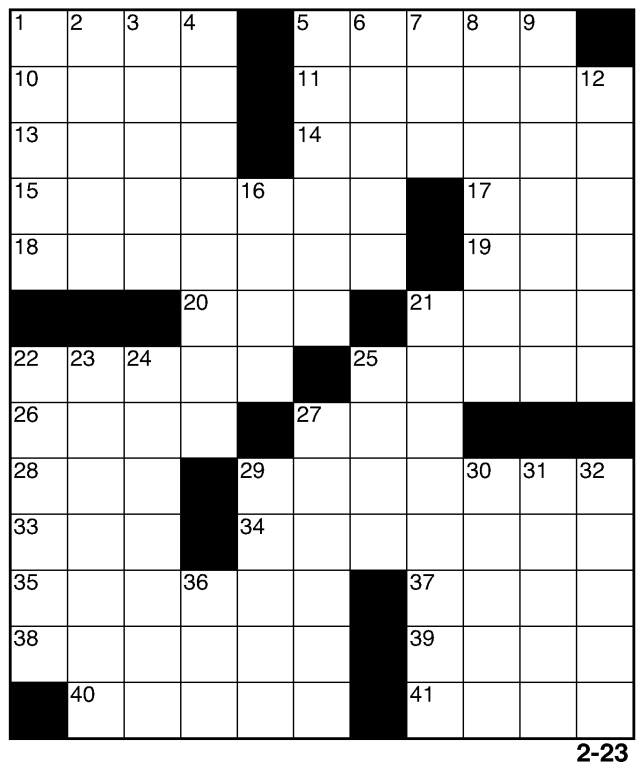
1 Impudent talk
5 Come into conflict
10 Horse hoof sound
11 Daryl of "Splash"
13 Taj Mahal city
14 News recap
15 Is important
17 Sch. support group
18 Mariners' home
19 For each
20 Hosp. parts
21 Impudent
22 Church topper
25 URL separator
26 Scots' caps
27 Relaxing resort
28 Western Indian
29 Terrier type
33 One — time
34 Rags
35 "The Bathers" painter
37 Son of Seth
38 Batting feat
39 Thinker Descartes
40 Undoes a dele
41 River of Hades

DOWN

1 Swindles
2 Pond growth
3 In a way, informally
4 Flecks
5 Boorish fellows
6 Minor mistake
7 Plus
8 Stir-fry veggie
9 Milliners
12 Warm spot
16 To be, in France
21 Serving aids
22 William and Mary's house
23 Spiels
24 Parent's warning
25 Dalmatian feature
27 Frightens
29 High-stepping aid
30 Basic belief
31 Bitter humor
32 English county
36 Unclose, to poets

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

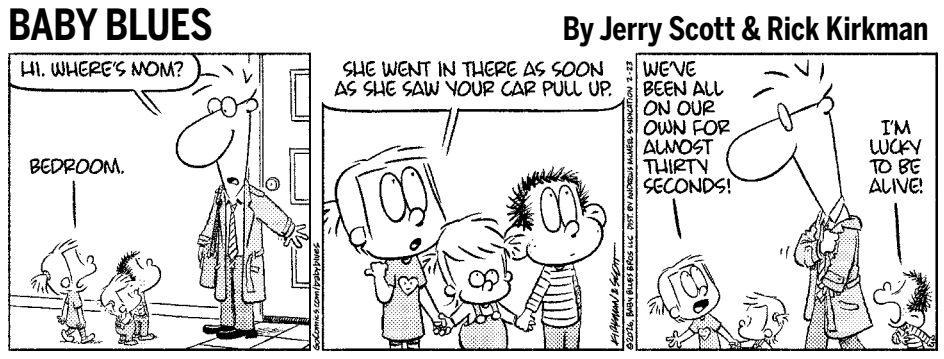
Saturday's answer



2-23

BABY BLUES

By Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



PARDON MY PLANET

By Vic Lee



CONCEPTIS SUDOKU

by Dave Green

King Classic Sudoku

4	8	1	7	3	9		2	
9		6					7	
	2		6		5			
6	4	8		7		5		
5	1				6	4		
			4	5			6	2
2	6		9				8	3
8	3		2			1	5	
	9				3	2		

Difficulty: ★ 2/23

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Today's Solution

Difficulty: ★ 2/23

1	9	7	5	8	3	2	4	6
8	3	4	2	6	7	1	5	9
2	6	5	9	1	4	7	8	3
3	7	9	4	5	1	8	6	2
5	1	2	8	9	6	4	3	7
6	4	8	3	7	2	5	9	1
7	2	3	6	4	5	9	1	8
9	5	6	1	2	8	3	7	4
4	8	1	7	3	9	6	2	5

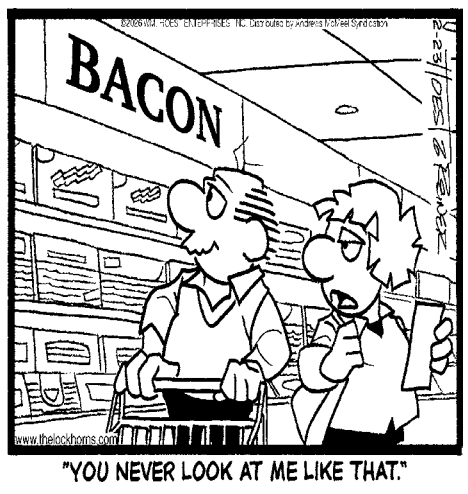
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Hank Ketcham's DENNIS THE MENACE



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!

I never feel like I'm doing enough



Dear Annie
Annie Lane

Dear Annie: Lately, it feels like I am failing at everything, even though I am constantly running. I work full time, try to be present for my family and friends, and still keep up with all the texts, emails and group chats. I'm the one people come to for help and advice, yet my own life feels like it's held together with coffee and to-do lists on crumpled sticky notes.

No matter how much I do, there is always something I've dropped. I've forgotten close friends' birthdays, missed my mom's call three days in a row and RSVP'd "maybe" to so many invitations that people have stopped asking. The laundry piles up, the dishes sit in the sink, and I'm answering work emails at my kid's practice while pretending to watch.

When I finally sit down at night to watch a show or scroll my phone, I feel guilty for resting. If I say no to an invitation, I worry I'm a bad friend. If I stay late at work, I feel like a bad partner and parent. If I leave on time, I feel like a bad employee. I go to bed exhausted and still feel like I did not do enough.

Everyone around me seems just as busy, but they all act as if they're handling it better than I am. I miss feeling joyful and present instead of rushed, scattered and behind at everything.

How do I set boundaries and give myself a break without disappointing everyone around me, including myself? — Running on Empty

Dear Running: You are not failing at doing anything. You are trying to do the jobs of three people in one tired body. There is no wonder you are so exhausted.

Right now, your "job" description looks something like this: perfect employee, perfect partner, perfect parent, perfect friend, plus part-time mind reader and cruise director. That is not a recipe for a balanced, happy life. That is a recipe for severe burnout. The first boundary you need to set is with your own expectations. No one can do everything and do it well all at once, so you can't expect yourself to be any different.

Start changing your mindset with small and specific tasks. Choose your real priorities for this season of life — maybe your health, your kids and one or two key relationships. Let late replies, dusty shelves and optional invitations slide without a guilt trip. A simple "I wish I could, but I'm maxed out right now" is a complete sentence and a valid reason.

And please remember that rest is not something you earn by doing enough. It is a basic requirement, like food and air. Not only do you deserve it — you need it.

"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: Avoid shopping (except for food and gas) and important decisions from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. EST today (2 p.m. to 7 p.m. PST). After that, the Moon in TAURUS moves into GEMINI.

Happy Birthday for Monday, Feb. 23, 2026:

You are practical, determined and tenacious. You have analytical abilities and can project confidence. Lucky you! This year you will reap the benefits of your hard work. Expect power and leadership. It's a year for major decisions and accomplishments. You will receive awards or kudos and acknowledgements from others.

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)

★★★ Keep an eye on your money and possessions today because something unexpected could impact them. You might lose money; you might find money. Protect what you own against loss, theft or damage. Pay attention to your moneymaking ideas. They might be worthwhile! Tonight: Lively conversations.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ This is an erratic day because the Moon is in your sign lined up with wild, wacky Uranus, making today impulsive and wonderfully spontaneous. Be careful; you might do something to offend or threaten an authority figure. Think before you speak. Tonight: Check your money and possessions.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Steer clear of controversial subjects. They might lead to arguments today. Nevertheless, you're keen to explore new ideas on new subjects and see new places in order to learn new things. Ever curious, you love the fascination of new knowledge. Tonight: You win!

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ It's a busy day! A friend or a member of a group might surprise you by saying or doing something you least expect. Or perhaps you'll meet someone new who is unusual and interesting. Steer clear of disputes about inheritances, shared property and shared expenses. (You don't need the angst.) Tonight: Enjoy privacy.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★ Tread carefully when dealing with authority figures today — bosses, parents, teachers, VIPs and the police -- because something unexpected might catch you off guard. Someone might do or say something you didn't anticipate. "Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition!" Tonight: Be friendly.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Travel plans might change today. They might be delayed or cancelled, or perhaps you suddenly have to travel when you didn't expect to do so. Likewise, school schedules also might change. Stay on top of details regarding medicine, the law and publishing. Tonight: You're noticed.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ An unexpected dispute with your kids might occur today, especially about money or financial support. Or a surprise might occur in the arts or anything to

See HOROSCOPE | 5C

WORD SLEUTH • SURNAMES OF AMERICANS SURVIVING THE TITANIC

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

Saturday's unlisted clue: COFFEE

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
Monday's unlisted clue hint: UNSINKABLE MOLLY —

Bishop, Brereton Cassebeer Chaffee, Dodge, Douglas Flegenheim Flynn, Hogeboom, Kenyon Kimball Rothschild, Ryerson, Silvey Tucker

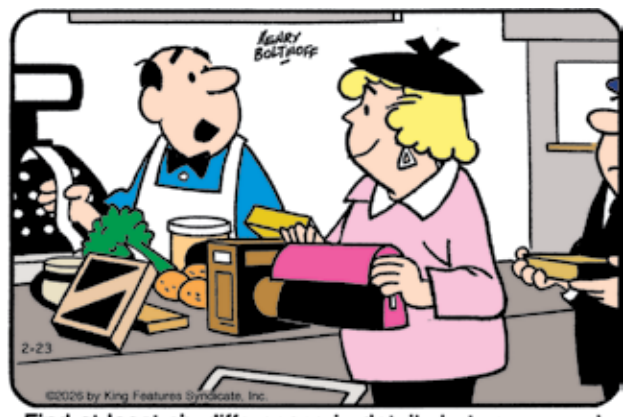
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2-23 CRYPTOQUIP

U O J B U T R H Z E C T G H C M E U J E U M O K H C H K L N H V C H T L H M L I T M H I T P P G P T Q H C O U N O M L E C Q: "B O U V E Z K O T R E U K M."

Saturday's Cryptoquip: BOOK ABOUT SOME PLANT FOOD THAT MAKES GARDEN DIRT HIGHLY FERTILE: "CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOIL."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals N



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Cart handle is moved. 2. Front of box is different. 3. Woman's hair is different. 4. Collar is different. 5. Box is missing. 6. Mouth is different.

MONDAY EVENING — FEBRUARY 23, 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.	American Idol (N) (TVPG)				The Rookie (N) (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)	Neighbor (N)	DMV (N)	FBI "Confetti" (N) (TV14)		CIA (N) (TV14)	
WBRE 28	News (N)	NBC News	Wheel (N)	Jeopardy!	The Fall	The Fall (N)	The Voice "The Blind Auditions Premiere" (N) (TVPG)			
WYLN 35	History	EARLY EDIT	The Daily Flash		Let's Talk	Warrior	Wine	Kitchen	WYLN LATE	History
WSWB 38	Family Feud	Family Feud	FamFeud (N)	FamFeud (N)	Wild Cards (N) (TV14)		Sullivan's Crossing (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)		Conversations		Antiques (N) (TVG)		Antiques Roadshow (TVG)		Independ. (N) (TVPG)	
WQMY 53	TMZ (N)	Extra (N)	Dateline (TV14)		Law & Order: SVU (TV14)		Law & Order: SVU (TV14)		Dateline (TVPG)	
WOLF 56	Last Man	Mod Fam	Big Bang	Big Bang	Extracted (N) (TV14)		Memory (N) (TV14)		News First at Ten (L) (N)	
WQPX 64	Blue Bloods (TV14)		Chicago "Closer" (TV14)		Chicago "Adrift" (TV14)		Chicago P.D. (TV14)		Chicago P.D. (TV14)	
KYW 3	News (N)	CBS-News	Inside Ed.	ET (N)	Neighbor (N)	DMV (N)	FBI "Confetti" (N) (TV14)		CIA (N) (TV14)	
WWOR 9	Family Feud	Family Feud	FamFeud (N)	FamFeud (N)	The News on MY 9 (N)		Law & Order: SVU (TV14)		Family Feud	Family Feud
WPXI 11	Channel 11	NBC News	Wheel (N)	Jeopardy!	The Fall	The Fall (N)	The Voice "The Blind Auditions Premiere" (N) (TVPG)			
WPHL 17	Goldbergs	Big Bang	Big Bang	Mod Fam	Wild Cards (N) (TV14)		Sullivan's Crossing (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) ★★ Man on Fire ('04) (TVPG)				★★★ John Wick: Chapter 4 ('23) Keanu Reeves. (TVPG)					
BBCA	(5:00) ★★★ A League of Their Own ('92) (TVG)				★★★ Moneyball ('11) Brad Pitt. (TVG)					
BRAVO	Below Deck (TV14)		Below Deck Down (TV14)		Below Deck Down Under (N) (TV14)			Summer House (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: Olam (TVG)		At Home With (N) (TVG)		EWTN News	Rosary (N)	World Over Live (TVG)	
DISC	120 Hours Be (TV14)		120 Hours Be (TV14)		Contraband (N) (TV14)		120 Hours Be (N) (TV14)		Contraband: Seized (TV14)	
DISN	Bluey/ Bluey	(:45) Descendants/Zombies (TVG)			New York-Heroez (TVY7)		(:10) Place	:35 Vampirina	Kiff	Kiff
E!	(5:30) ★★★ My Cousin Vinny ('92) Joe Pesci. (TVG)				★★★ My Cousin Vinny ('92) Joe Pesci. (TVG)					Movie
ESPN	(5:00) TGL Golf		College Basketball Louisville at North Carolina (L) (N)				College Basketball Houston at Kansas (L) (N)			
ESPN2	SportsCenter		Wm. Basketball Kansas State at Baylor (L) (N)				TGL Golf Los Angeles Golf Club vs. Atlanta Drive GC (N)			
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 "Hat Tricks"		Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby
FREE	(5:20) ★★ National Treasure ('04) Nicolas Cage. (TVG)					(:25) ★★ National Treasure: Book of Secrets ('07) (TVG)				
FS1	World Base 2009 (N)		World Base 2013 (N)		World Base 2023 (N)		LIV to Win	LIV to Win	Behind the Broadcast (N)	
FX	(5:00) Guardians of the Galaxy (TVG)		★★★ Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2 ('17) Chris Pratt. (TVG)							Movie
FXM	5:10 The Pope's Exorcist		(:20) ★★ Poltergeist ('15) Sam Rockwell. (TVPG)				(:15) ★★ Thanksgiving ('23) Patrick Dempsey. (TV14)			
HALL	★★ In My Dreams ('14) Katharine McPhee. (TVPG)				Marry Go Round ('22) Amanda Schull. (TVG)				Golden Girls	Golden Girls
HGTV	Hunters	Hunters	Hunters	Hunters	Fixer to Fabulous (TVG)		Fixer to Fabulous (TVG)		Hunters	Hunters
HIST	History's-Mysteries (TVPG)		History's-Mysteries (TVPG)		History's-Mysteries (TVPG)		Mysteries (N) (TVPG)		(:05) History's "Tyrants" (N)	
LIFE	NCIS "Secrets" (TV14)		NCIS "Psych Out" (TVPG)		NCIS (TVPG)		NCIS "The Tell" (TVPG)		(:05) NCIS (TVPG)	
MTV	Big Bang	Big Bang	Ridiculous	Ridiculous	Ridiculous	Ridiculous	Ridiculous	Ridiculous	Ridiculous	Ridiculous
NBCSP	Birds (N)	Inside	The Baker League Story		Hank Gathers-Philly		Birds Huddle	Unfiltered		
NGEO	Lost Treasures (TVPG)		Lost Treasures (TVPG)		Lost Treasures (TVPG)		Lost Treasures (TVPG)		Lost Treasures (TVPG)	
NICK	SpongeBob	SpongeBob	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Big Bang	:40 Big Bang
OVA	(4:30) Midsomer (TVPG)		Murdoch Mysteries (TVPG)		Murdoch Mysteries (TVPG)		Murdoch Mysteries (TVPG)		Murdoch Mysteries (TVPG)	
PARMT	★★★ Role Models ('08) Seann William Scott. (TVPG)				(:15) ★★ The Intern ('15) Robert De Niro. (TVG)					
SYFY	4:00 Harry Potter & the Half-Blood Prince		★★★ Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1 ('10) Daniel Radcliffe. (TVG)							Movie
TBS	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang
TCM	(5:15) ★★★ South Pacific ('58) Mitzi Gaynor. (TVG)				★★★ Lassie Come Home ('43) (TVG)			(:45) Come Back, Little Sheba (TVG)		
TLC	90 Day: Single Life (TV14)		90 Day: Single Life (TV14)		90 Day (N) (TVMA)		Unexpected (N) (TV14)		90 Day (N) (TV14)	
TNT	4:30 Aquaman & the Lost...		Unrivaled	Unrivaled Basketball		(:45) Unrivaled Basketball			Unrivaled	Movie
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 (TVPG)				Mysteries- Unk. (TVPG)	
TVL	A. Griffith	A. Griffith	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond
USA	Law & Order: SVU (TV14)		Law-SVU "Plastic" (TV14)		Law-SVU "Part 33" (TV14)		Law & Order: SVU (TV14)		Law & Order: SVU (TV14)	
VH1	My Wife	My Wife	My Wife	My Wife	★★★ Ali ('01) Will Smith. (TVG)					
WE	Criminal Minds (TV14)		Criminal "The Pact" (TV14)		Criminal Minds (TV14)		Criminal Minds (TV14)		Criminal Minds (TV14)	
YOUTOO	Adventur	Adventur	Daily Flash		World Chase Tag		Bareknuckle Fighting		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	Movie	(:45) Last Week To. (TVMA)		:25 A Knight	Industry (TVMA)		(:05) ★★★ The Shape of Water ('17) (TVPG)			
HBO2	A Knight	(:35) Industry (TVMA)		(:40) ★★ Dead of Winter (P) (TV14)			(:20) Industry (TVMA)			:25 A Knight
MAX	★★ A Cure for Wellness ('16) Dane DeHaan. (TVPG)					(:25) Murder on the Orient Express			(:20) ★★ Trap ('24) (TVG)	
MMAX	(:20) ★★ The Wolfman ('10) Anthony Hopkins. (TVPG)				★★ The Great Wall ('16) (TVG)			(:45) ★★★ Inception ('10) (TVG)		
SHOW	(5:15) ★★★ Silence ('16) Andrew Garfield. (TVPG)				Barron's Cove ('24) Garrett Hedlund.				School Spirits (N) (TVMA)	
STARZ	(5:30) Never Die Alone		Nowhere		(:50) ★ The Strangers: Chapter 2 ('25) (TV14)			BMF Docu	Nowhere	(:50) 1992

Using 'proper' American English



Hints from Heloise
Heloise

Dear Heloise: What has happened to proper grammar usage and the proper pronunciation of American English? "Gonna" and "wanna" have replaced "going to" and "want to." People use "different than" instead of "different from." Words such as February, mischievous, veteran and temperature are constantly mispronounced by TV journalists, weather reporters and politicians.

Unfortunately, we are judged by our vocabulary when we speak, which makes people form instant impressions about our education, social class and intelligence. Many thanks for all your wonderful hints. — Lori H., in California

Lori, I don't know if proper grammar is still taught in school. It disturbs me, too, when I hear someone say "I'd have went" rather than "I'd have gone." People have lost promotions and jobs because of improper English.

As one CEO of a very large corporation once told me, "Our employees represent this company, and we could never hire someone who uses terrible English. We want polished individuals who put their best foot forward." — Heloise

SEND A GREAT HINT TO:
Heloise@Heloise.com

PAPER REPLACEMENT

Dear Heloise: I no longer receive a printed version of my local newspaper, The Oregonian. I miss not having old newspapers to use for tasks like wrapping garbage, preventing a mess when painting or doing other projects, filling a package, and wrapping items like glassware, dishes and such when moving. I would like to know what people are using instead of newspapers. — Joy V., in Milwaukie, Oregon

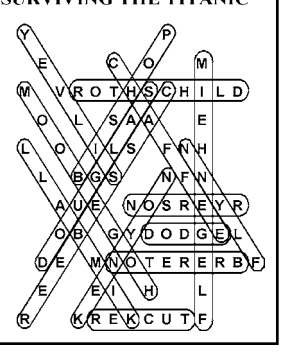
Joy, I use bubble wrap or paper from a package that was sent to me. I've also used muslin and old towels. When I get packing material, I save it in a cardboard box, then reuse it when I need to send a package. — Heloise

APPLE TOPPING FOR SALADS

Dear Heloise: Recently, while eating out, I discovered that small bits of apples are a great topping

See HINTS | 5C

Today's Answers
SURNAMES OF AMERICANS SURVIVING THE TITANIC



Stream

From page 2C

on Friday, Feb. 27, chronicles the music man's life in the 1970s — Wings and then some. It's an intimate portrait worth spending time with.

— Also on Friday, Feb. 27: The return of Bruno Mars! "The Romantic" is Mars' fourth full-length project and first solo album since 2016's hit-making "24K Magic." (That's of course excluding his mega-popular collaborative project with Anderson .Paak, Silk Sonic, and their 2021 release "An Evening with Silk Sonic.") Retro-pop is the name of the game and Mars remains one of the great, spirited nostalgists. That's evident from the jump: "I Just Might" is feel-good disco-pop-soul; it's clear Mars is making his return just when the world wants him most.

— All four members of K-pop girl group Blackpink have found incredible success as soloists, with ubiquitous pop hits like "APT." and starring roles on "The White Lotus" among them. But now is the time for a comeback. On Friday, Jisoo, Jennie, Rosé and Lisa will release "Deadline," their latest EP. Details surrounding the five-track release have been scant but the bilingual "Jump" is bouncy europop that flirts with hardstyle, the ideal soundtrack to a Las Vegas day club. Clearly, they just want their listeners to have fun.

— AP Music Writer Maria Sherman

New series to stream from Feb. 23-March 1

— Season 2 of "Paradise" starring Sterling K. Brown returns to Hulu on Monday. Brown plays Xavier, a Secret Service agent assigned to protect the President of the United States, played by James Marsden. In Season 1, we learned that Marsden's character and a small number of privileged people escaped to an underground bunker just as an apocalypse was about to destroy everything. Xavier and his kids also made it to safety, but his wife got left behind. In Season 2, he sets out to find her. Shailene Woodley joins the cast and Julianne Nicholson and Marsden return.

— The 50th, yes 50th, season of "Survivor" streams live on Paramount+ on Wednesday as it airs on CBS. Make sure to have your whole night free though because the first episode is three hours long. Season 50 features all returning "Survivor" contestants including "The White Lotus" creator, Mike White.

— Sixteen years after it aired its series finale, Zach Braff's "Scrubs," has been resuscitated. The irreverent hospital begins streaming on Hulu on Thursday, with a returning cast Donald Faison, Sarah Chalke and Judy Reyes.

— Kevin Costner and Morgan Freeman first worked together on the film "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves." They've got a new collab as executive producers of a new Civil War series for Prime Video called "The Gray House." Mary Louise Parker stars alongside Ben Vereen, Robert Knepper ("Prison Break") and Paul Anderson of "Peaky Blinders." All 8-episodes drop Thursday.

— A washed-up Broadway actor (played by Kevin Kline) returns to his hometown and ends up directing a local production of "Our Town" in the new series "American Classic." He also butts heads with his former girlfriend-turned-mayor played by Laura Linney. MGM+ kicks off the series by releasing the first two episodes on Sunday, April 1.

— Alicia Rancilio



Atlantic Records via AP

This image released by Atlantic Records shows "The Romantic" by Bruno Mars.

New video games to play from Feb. 23-March 1

— It's been 30 years since Capcom introduced us to the world of Resident Evil, where a bioweapon has turned all sorts of creatures into bloodthirsty zombies. With the ninth main entry in the franchise, Resident Evil Requiem, the monsters show no sign of slowing down. The new protagonist is Grace Ashcroft, an FBI analyst who has only a few weapons and is just trying to get out alive. Fortunately, Leon Kennedy — who has been around since RE2 — is also on the case, and he has a much more versatile arsenal. The developers hope to appeal to fans of pure survival horror as well as gamers who love more explosive action. The nightmare resumes Friday, Feb. 27, on PlayStation 5, Xbox X/S, Switch 2 and PC.

— Lou Kesten

Horoscope

From page 4C

do with sports. Don't let a partner, spouse or close friend put you down or make you feel diminished. You're doing the best you can. Tonight: Explore and learn.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ This is a busy, playful day even though friction at home might occur, especially with partners and spouses. Give yourself extra time so you have wiggle room to deal with the unexpected. You want to enjoy this day, not be frustrated. Stay chill. Tonight: Check your finances.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ Pay attention to everything you say and do today because this is a mildly accident-prone day. Obviously, an accident doesn't have to happen; however, if you're distracted by something, that nanosecond could make you vulnerable. Be alert. (The world needs more lerts.) Tonight: Be attentive and listen.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Disputes about money or shared expenses for a social occasion, a vacation or something to do with the education and support of your kids might arise today. Don't overreact. Take time to do your homework so that your response is sensible and practical. Short trips and conversations will appeal to you today. Tonight: Work.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Your home routine might be interrupted today. Small appliances could break down, or a little breakage could occur. Someone unexpected might knock at your door. Get dressed so that you're ready for anything. Avoid arguments, because they will drain you unnecessarily. Keep the peace. Tonight: Relax.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ You're definitely strong, gracious and charming with the Sun, Mercury and fair Venus in your sign. Admittedly, Mercury is about to go retrograde this week, making you forget things, misplace items and run a bit late. Transportation delays are also likely. Avoid arguments today. Keep smiling. Tonight: Cocoon at home.

BORN TODAY

Actress Dakota Fanning (1994), actress Emily Blunt (1983), actress Kelly Macdonald (1976)



Hints

From page 4C

on a green salad, in addition to grated carrots, avocado, tomato, broccoli and sliced olives. I can't believe that I missed out on this treat for all of my life, and I feel as if I should share this with your readers. I follow your informative column in the Daily Freeman in Kingston, New York. — Carl M., via email

FUNERAL TO-DOS

Dear Heloise: I have lived in several different cities during my lifetime, and I recently found out, weeks after the fact, that my close friend had died. The surviving family members apparently did not know who to contact or how to contact them. I would have loved to send condolences (and I will do so now) or maybe even attend the funeral, but I had no knowledge that my friend had died.

I have created a file on my computer that details what to do when I die and have sent it to my children. I've included specifics for my funeral and final resting place, but it also includes a list of friends in different cities who should be contacted, as well as their phone numbers.

I know that during a time of grief, my children will not know who to call (other than the obvious) or their phone numbers. I am healthy now, but I also know that if I were to get seriously sick, I would not think of this. We all die, so why not prepare for it at any age? — Ann P., in Florence, South Carolina

What's up

From page 2C

Good Shepherd Polish National Catholic Church, 269 E Main St., Plymouth, will be taking orders for potato cheese pierogi for March 1 and March 15, with pickup times 3 to 6 p.m. Please call to order, 570-690-5411.

St. David's Day Tea, 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 3, at Dr. Edwards Memorial Congregational Church, Main Street, Edwardsville, with a Te Bach in honor of the patron saint of Wales. Entertainment for the evening will be the Changing Habits music ensemble from Trucksville. Gifts will be awarded to the oldest man and the oldest woman in attendance. Homemade breads, Welsh cookies and lemon curd will be served along with jellies and cheese. Tickets will be available at the door.

Wyoming United Methodist Church ham and cabbage dinner, takeout only, complete with roll, mashed potatoes, vegetables, applesauce, and dessert. Pickup is 4 to 6 p.m. Saturday, March 14. Cost is $15. For tickets, call (570) 693-2821. The church is located at 376 Wyoming Avenue in Wyoming, next to the Wyoming Library.

Lenten Slovak Hymn Sing and Slovak Stations of the Cross, sponsored by Slovak Heritage Society of Northeastern Pennsylvania, 2 p.m. Sunday, March 15, at St. Ignatius Loyola Church, 339 North Maple Ave., Kingston. Congregational singing of Lenten hymns, followed by Stations of the Cross in Slovak, led by members of the society. Service concludes with benediction, followed by refreshments and fellowship. The public is invited. There is no admission charge. For further info, call Anna at 570-510-1655.

Kingston Historical Society is accepting applications for "Hometown Hero" banners. The cost is $225. Forms are available on the society's Facebook page under files, or contact 570-430-4458 or 570-328-0528

GREATER PITTSTON

Holy Name Society of St. John the Evangelist Parish, 35 William Street in Pittston, will be selling potato pancakes (3 for $5) and your choice of red pizza or white pizza with broccoli ($15/tray) on the Fridays of Lent and Good Friday (Feb. 20 through April 3). Pizza will be take-and-heat. You may call the parish office at 570-654-0053 to place your orders, which are due the day before you wish to pick up your food. Pickup will be on Fridays from 3:30 to 6 p.m. in the Pastoral Center Auditorium (entrance on Church Street).

All You Can Eat soup and salad supper, 4:30 to 6:30, March 7 at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church, Mt. Zion Road, Harding, with a variety of soups, salads and breads, beverages and desserts. Cost is $10 for an adult meal and $5 for a children's meal.

St. Patrick's Day Party at Dupont VFW Post 4909, on Saturday, March 14, with entertainment by Fabulous 45's. Doors open at 4:30 p.m., dinner served at 6 p.m., music from 7 to 10 p.m. Cash bar from 4:30 to 10 p.m. Admission is $30 per person. Call Bob Lopata at 570-472-1152 for reservations.

OLD FORGE

Ham Bingo at St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church Hall, 320 Vine St., Old Forge, 1 p.m. March 22, with theme baskets, door prizes, a bake sale and bingo specials throughout the afternoon. Kitchen opens at 11 a.m. with a variety of refreshments available. Admission is $5.

MOUNTAIN TOP

Mountain Top Social Club meeting 1:30 p.m. Feb. 24 at the American Legion, 1550 Henry Drive, Mountain Top, PA. The parking and entrance are at the rear of the building. For more club information, call Ady Burner, President, at 347-397-8356, and for trip information, call Delores Kelly Zajac at 732-690-9609.

Mountain Top Historical Society's first meeting of the year will be 6 p.m. Feb. 23 at the Ice House Pub, Nuangola Road, Rice Township. A new slate of 2026 officers, including our newly formed trustee committee, will be seated. As always, you don't have to be a member to attend the meetings.

GREATER NANTICOKE

Wyoming Valley Contra Dance, 2 to 5 p.m. March 1 in the St. Faustina Parish Center, 520 Hanover St., Nanticoke, with Diane Hartzell as caller and Bruce Young with Celtic Nations as the band. Admission is pay what you wish. Beginners welcome. No experience needed.

Newport Township women's activity group will hold spring bingo on Sunday, March 15, in the upstairs hall at the Glen Lyon American Legion. The doors will open at 12, and the games will begin at 1 p.m. There will be a raffle table. Bake sale and homemade food available; $20 for an all-day play package.

BACK MOUNTAIN

Catholic Choral Society annual Lenten Concert, 3 p.m. Sunday, March 1, Shavertown United Methodist Church, 163 North Pioneer Avenue, Shavertown, PA. In addition to the Choral Society, the concert will feature selections by the parish choir of Shavertown Methodist Church, directed by Nancy Evans. Ann Manganello is the music director of the Catholic Choral Society, and Linda Houck is the accompanist. The concerts are open to the public free of charge. There will be a goodwill offering

Gate of Heaven Church will host World Day of Prayer at 1 p.m. Friday, March 6, in the church on Machell Avenue in Dallas. This year's program has been written by the women of Nigeria, built on the theme "I will give you rest: come." Refreshments will follow in the parish center. The church and Parish Center are handicapped-accessible through the entrances toward the rear of the church on either side. Christian women of various denominations from the Back Mountain are invited. If any woman would like to have a speaking part in the program, please contact Louise Roberts at 570-675-4237 or iamabooker@yahoo.com. We will need your contact info to arrange a practice session in late February.

Welsh Cookie Sale at Trucksville United Methodist Church. Orders can be picked up from noon to 3 p.m. on March 7 in the fellowship hall, 40 Knob Hill Road, Trucksville. Cost is $7 per dozen. Pre-orders are required and will be accepted through Thursday, March 4. Please email Amy35mm@yahoo.com or call/text Amy Sadvary at 570-855-9988 to place your order.

LACKAWANNA COUNTY

"The Spitfire Grill," presented by University of Scranton Players, will present "The Spitfire Grill," a play about a woman, recently released from prison, who seeks a fresh start in Wisconsin. Shows run Feb. 27 to March 8, with curtain time 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays in the Royal Theater in the McDade Center for the Literary and Performing Arts on The University of Scranton campus.

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, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. each Wednesday. For more info, contact office@trinitylutherancs.com.

REUNIONS

Coughlin High School, Class of '59 will meet 2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 26, at Adelina's Restaurant in Genetti's Best Western, 77 East Market St., Wilkes-Barre, for their monthly get-together. All classmates, spouses and members of Coughlin High School classes of 1958 and 1960 are welcome. Call Fran at 570-261-4121 if you plan to attend.

The 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 attempting to contact classmates. If you have contact information for yourself or any other classmate, please get in touch with Kelly Gowran Steiner at 480-414-5671 or kellysteineraz@gmail.com/. For more information, see the Pittston class of 1981 Facebook page.

James M. Coughlin High School Class of 1966 will celebrate its 60th reunion from 1 to 6 p.m. Aug. 15 at American Grill, 1320 Wyoming Ave., Exeter. Please respond with any interest, questions or plans to attend to Marie Dorrance Hartz at 570-574-5744 or mariehartz@me.com. or to Joe Christopher at 570 706-1499 or thevoyager826@gmail.com. Or post to our Facebook page - Coughlin66.



FURTHER REVIEW

LADY GAGA'S 'FREEDOM RECORD'

By Charles Apple | THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

"It's very literal," Lady Gaga told Billboard magazine when a reporter asked her about her single, "Born This Way."

"I said, 'I want to write my freedom record. I want to write my this-is-who-the-****-I-am anthem,' but I *don't* want it to be hidden in poetic wizardry and metaphors. I want it to be an attack, an assault on the issue because I think, especially in today's music, everything gets kind of washy sometimes and the message gets hidden in the lyrical play."

Her "Born This Way" single began six weeks at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 on Feb. 26, 2011 — 15 years ago.

THE BIRTH OF 'BORN THIS WAY'

Lady Gaga was born in Manhattan, New York, in March 1986 as Stefani Germanotta. She began taking piano lessons at age 4 and, as a teenager, was playing open mic nights at local clubs. She began using the name Lady Gaga — inspired by the 1984 Queen hit "Radio Ga Ga" — in 2006.

Her first album in 2008, "The Fame," featured her unique mix of synth-pop, electropop and dance pop, and adding to that elements of heavy metal and disco. "The Fame" spent 193 weeks at No. 1 on Billboard's Dance/Electronic Albums chart and was nominated for five Grammy Awards.



The artwork for the "Born This Way" single featured Gaga wearing heavy makeup and with air-blown hair.

While on tour supporting "The Fame," Gaga spent a lot of time with her supporting band and her backup dancers — some of whom were gay or lesbian. She decided she wanted to write an anthem that advocated self-empowerment for the LGBT community and for racial minorities. She was also inspired by a 1977 disco track by Carl Bean, "I Was Born This Way," in which the singer proudly proclaims his homosexuality.

"Harkening back to the early '90s, when Madonna, En Vogue, Whitney Houston and TLC were making very empowering music for women and the gay community and all kind of disenfranchised communities," Gaga told Billboard magazine. "The lyrics and the melodies were very poignant and very gospel and very spiritual and I said, 'That's the kind of record I need to make.' That's the record that's going to shake up the industry.

"It's not about the track. It's not about the production," she said. "It's about the song. Anyone could sing 'Born This Way.' It could've been anyone."

Working with producer and songwriter Fernando Garibay and a mixtape specialist, DJ White Shadow, Gaga said she wrote "Born This Way" in about 10 minutes. "It is a completely magical message song," she told Vogue. "And after I wrote it, the gates just opened, and the songs kept coming. It was like an immaculate conception."

"She made it," said DJ White Shadow. "She came up with the idea, she wrote it. She is a genius. We recorded it around the world, on the road, in whatever was available."

Lady Gaga debuted her new track at the 2011 Grammy Awards. She was carried onto the stage by latex-wearing models. She then "hatched" from an egg and performed her song. "Born This Way" was "visually and thematically and lyrically about birthing a new race," she explained. "Birthing a race within the race of already existing cultures of humanity — that bears no prejudice and no judgment."



The "Born This Way" album cover portrayed Gaga transformed into a motorcycle. Critics considered it "a cheap Photoshop job."

Her album "The Fame Monster" — featuring reissues of her 2008 debut album — won a Grammy for Best Pop Vocal Album later that night.

In her acceptance speech, Gaga said she was thinking of Whitney Houston when she wrote "Born This Way" and imagined Houston singing it, "because I wasn't secure enough in myself to imagine I was a superstar," she said.

Criticism of the track was perhaps inevitable. Radio stations in Malaysia, for example, bleeped Lady Gaga's lyrics about "gay, straight or bi, lesbian, transgendered." LGBT people can be arrested, jailed and beaten in that country.

And some noted the strong similarities between "Born This Way" and Madonna's 1989 hit, "Express Yourself" — in both their subject matter and their respective chord progression. Lady Gaga pushed back on the composition, pointing out: "It's the same one that's been in disco music for the last 50 years."

And as for subject matter, Gaga told Jay Leno: "The good news is that I got an email from her people and her, sending me their love and complete support on behalf of the single and if the queen says it shall be, then it shall be."

LADY GAGA'S SINGLES CHART HISTORY

RELEASED		PEAK ON THE BILLBOARD HOT 100 SINGLES CHART
April 8, 2008	**Just Dance**	3 weeks at No. 1 ➢ #1
Sept. 23, 2008	**Poker Face**	1 week at No. 1 ➢ #1
March 23, 2009	**Love Game**	#5
April 14, 2009	**Chillin'** (Wade featuring Lady Gaga)	#99
July 6, 2009	**Paparazzi**	#6
Sept. 22, 2009	**Video Phone** (Beyoncé featuring Lady Gaga)	#65
Oct. 19, 2009	**Bad Romance**	#2
Nov. 18, 2009	**Speechless**	#94
Jan. 26, 2010	**Telephone** (Featuring Beyoncé)	#3
April 20, 2010	**Alejandro**	#5
Feb. 11, 2011	**Born This Way**	6 weeks at No. 1 ➢ #1
April 15, 2011	**Judas**	#10
May 9, 2011	**The Edge of Glory**	#3
May 16, 2011	**Hair**	#12
May 17, 2011	**Marry the Night**	#29
Aug. 23, 2011	**You and I**	#6
Aug. 12, 2013	**Applause**	#4
Oct. 21, 2013	**Do What U Want** (Featuring R. Kelly)	#13
Oct. 27, 2013	**Venus**	#32
Nov. 4, 2013	**Dope**	#8
March 22, 2014	**G.U.Y.**	#76
Sept. 18, 2015	**Till It Happens to You**	#95
Sept. 9, 2016	**Perfect Illusion**	#15
Oct. 18, 2016	**A-Yo**	#66
Oct. 29, 2016	**Million Reasons**	#4
April 16, 2017	**The Cure**	#39
Sept. 27, 2018	**Shallow** (With Bradley Cooper)	1 week at No. 1 ➢ #1
Oct. 5, 2018	**Is That Alright?**	#63
Jan. 4, 2019	**Always Remember Us This Way**	#41
May 27, 2019	**I'll Never Love Again**	#36
Feb. 28, 2020	**Stupid Love**	#5
May 22, 2020	**Rain on Me** (With Arianda Grande)	1 week at No. 1 ➢ #1
May 28, 2020	**Sour Candy** (With Black Pink)	#33
May 3, 2022	**Hold My Hand**	#49
Dec. 2, 2022	**Bloody Mary**	#41
Aug. 16, 2024	**Die With a Smile** (With Bruno Mars)	5 weeks at No. 1 ➢ #1
Oct. 25, 2024	**Disease**	#27
Feb. 3, 2025	**Abracadabra**	#13
Sept. 3, 2025	**The Dead Dance**	#40

Sources: SongFacts, the Recording Academy, Billboard, NPR's "All Things Considered," Vogue, uDiscoverMusic.com, Discogs.com, ThePinkNews.com

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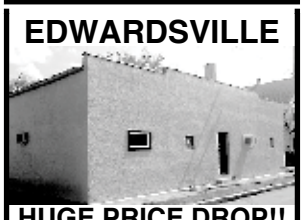
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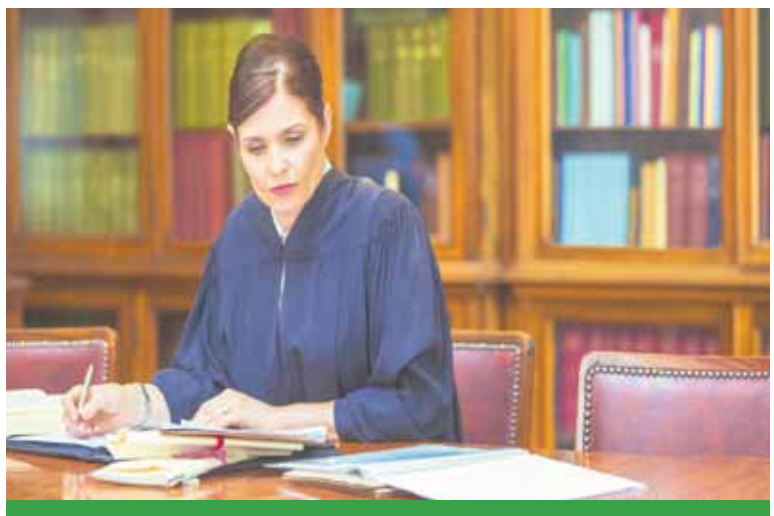
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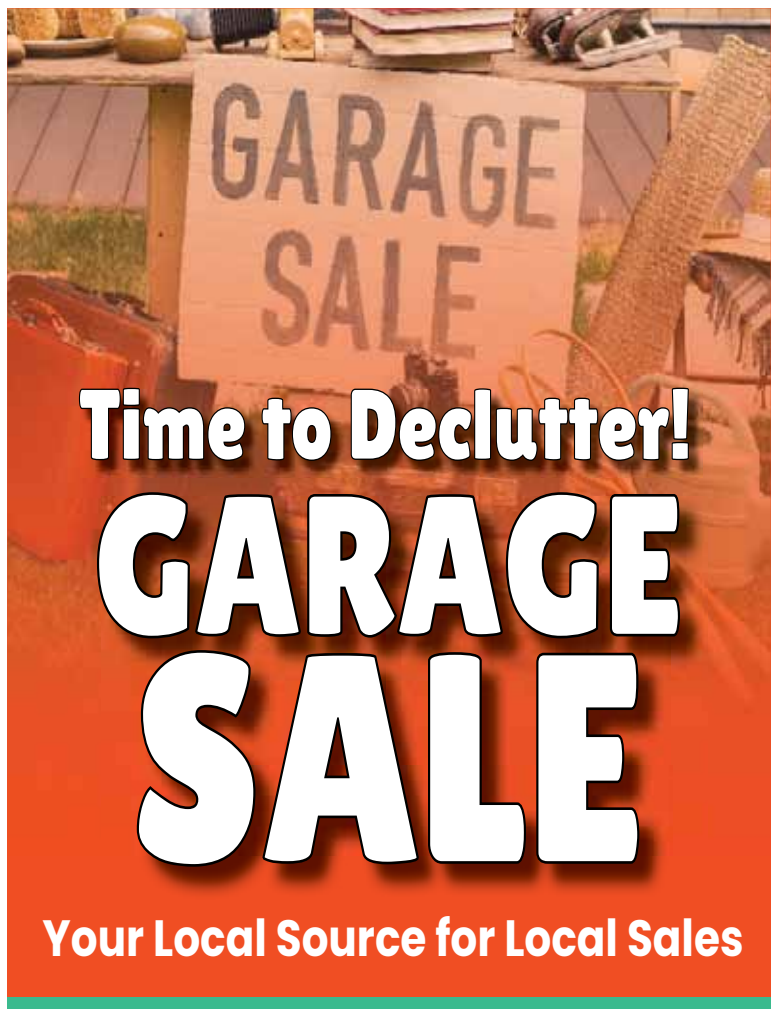
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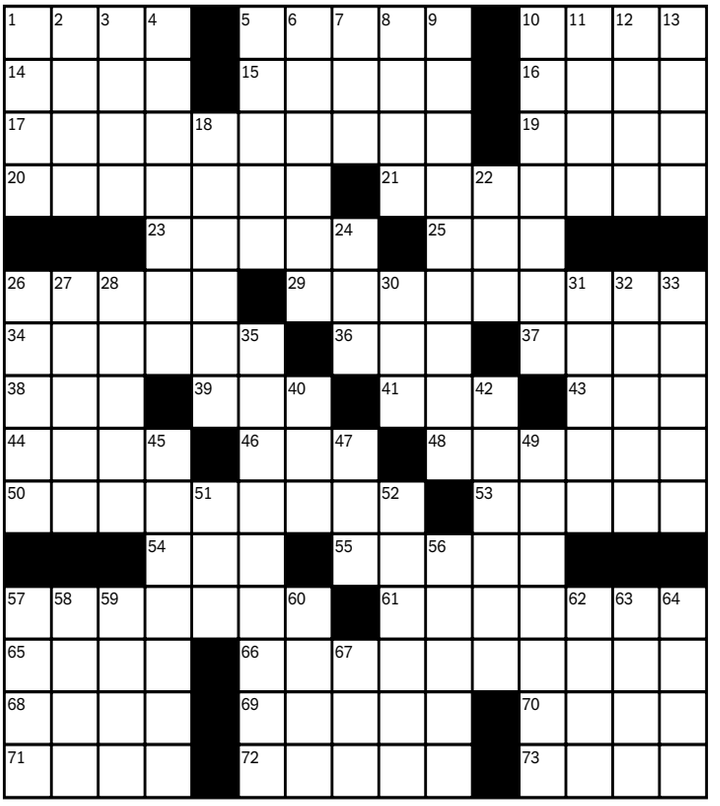
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ACROSS

1 Package under a Christmas tree
5 Old-fashioned butter maker
10 Branded cotton swab
14 Minnesota congresswoman Ilhan
15 In on, as a trend
16 Big coffee containers
17 1972 song by Elton John
19 Luxury auto whose logo is four overlapping rings
20 In progress
21 :), ;), :D and others
23 Formal "you," in Spanish
25 Comedian Wong
26 Projects, as a shadow
29 1985 song by John Cougar Mellencamp
34 Comes to light
36 X minus III, in old Rome
37 Cosmonaut Gagarin
38 Held the reins
39 Spot for a massage
41 R&B singer whose album "SOS" spent 100+ weeks in the Billboard top 10
43 Element used in bronze
44 Sporting blade
46 Draft pick?
48 Firstborn
50 1987 song by Billy Joel and Ray Charles
53 Midsection measurement
54 Apt rhyme for "shriek"
55 Martial arts studios
57 Disheveled
61 Caribbean island with a liqueur named for it
65 Gently persuade
66 Capital of Arkansas ... or a description of 17-, 29- and 50-Across?
68 In ___ land (daydreaming)
69 "I wish I could ___ that!"
70 A second helping, say
71 "Excuse me ..."
72 Things shifted on a bicycle or in a car
73 Winter coaster

DOWN

1 ___ Jail (space on a Monopoly board)
2 "Sign me up!"
3 Vampire's tooth
4 Auditions
5 "U-S-A! U-S-A! ...," e.g.
6 Movable joints on a door
7 ___ code (what most product packages have)
8 Google Maps options: Abbr.
9 Bring into the mainstream
10 Counterpart of quantity
11 Factual
12 Where the N.F.L.'s Colts play, informally
13 Letters before omegas
18 Insults
22 Springfield is its capital: Abbr.
24 Org. with notoriously long lines
26 Biblical spy for Moses
27 South American flatbread
28 Lesser-played part of a 45
30 ChatGPT and Google Gemini, for two
31 Word before space or Mongolia
32 Spot to find a pulse
33 Final inning, typically
35 Device for starting an engine
40 In the style of
42 Former vice president who won a Nobel Peace Prize
45 Test taken at the 24-Down
47 Finale
49 Wins over with charm
51 Jewel
52 Pete who directed "Up," "Inside Out" and "Soul"
56 Novelist Verne
57 The N.C.A.A.'s Bruins
58 Biblical ark builder
59 Dark leafy green
60 Fork prong
62 Chilly
63 Surveyor's measure
64 Gave a thumbs-up
67 Airport screening grp.



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ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

F	A	C	E	P	A	L	M	S	■	D	A	I	S	Y
B	R	A	N	D	N	A	M	E	■	E	L	O	P	E
O	U	T	O	F	T	I	M	E	■	L	E	N	I	N
M	B	A	S	■	O	D	D	■	M	I	X	I	N	S
B	A	N	■	K	N	I	C	K	K	N	A	C	K	■
■	■	■	R	A	I	N	C	O	A	T	■	B	I	D
■	C	A	I	R	O	■	C	O	Y	■	C	O	C	A
F	O	I	S	T	■	M	L	K	■	L	A	N	K	Y
B	A	S	K	■	S	A	X	■	M	O	L	D	S	■
I	L	L	■	F	A	U	X	N	A	I	F	■	■	■
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I	N	E	R	T	■	S	I	D	E	W	A	L	K	S
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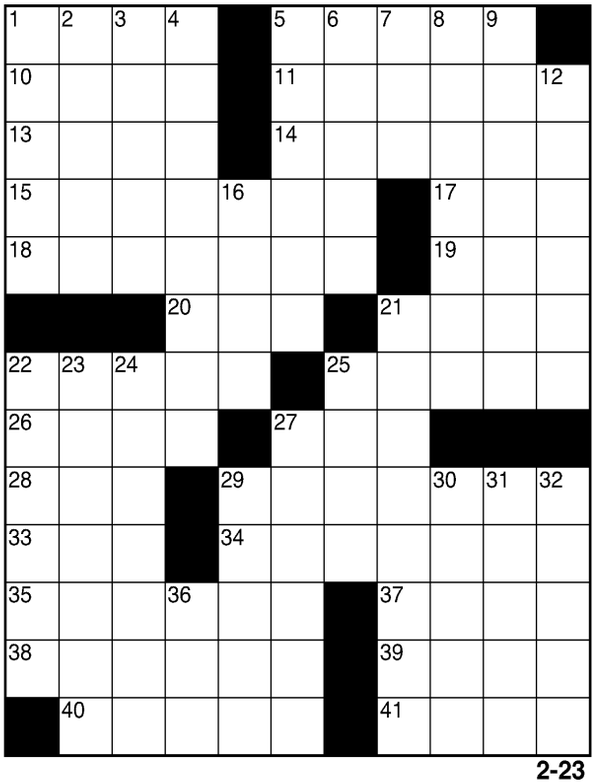
1 Impudent talk
5 Come into conflict
10 Horse hoof sound
11 Daryl of "Splash"
13 Taj Mahal city
14 News recap
15 Is important
17 Sch. support group
18 Mariners' home
19 For each
20 Hosp. parts
21 Impudent
22 Church topper
25 URL separator
26 Scots' caps
27 Relaxing resort
28 Western Indian
29 Terrier type
33 One — time
34 Rags
35 "The Bathers" painter
37 Son of Seth
38 Batting feat
39 Thinker Descartes
40 Undoes a dele
41 River of Hades

DOWN

1 Swindles
2 Pond growth
3 In a way, informally
4 Flecks
5 Boorish fellows
6 Minor mistake
7 Plus
8 Stir-fry veggie
9 Milliners
12 Warm spot
16 To be, in France
21 Serving aids
22 William and Mary's house
23 Spiels
24 Parent's warning
25 Dalmatian feature
27 Frightens
29 High-stepping aid
30 Basic belief
31 Bitter humor
32 English county
36 Unclose, to poets

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

Saturday's answer



2-23

ACROSS

1 Denomination
5 "Hail!"
8 Dorm alternative
12 Regular at The Met
14 Move, in Realtor lingo
15 Industrious
16 "E Pluribus —"
17 "Ben-Hur" author Wallace
18 Figures of speech
20 Church chimers
23 Sports figure?
24 "Bearded" bloom
25 Signs up
28 Conk out
29 Leg joints
30 Owned
32 Calmed
34 Infatuated
35 Endure
36 Hawkeye
37 Sesame paste
40 Invoice fig.
41 Marriage vows
42 Bone-connecting tissue
47 Egyptian river
48 Schooled
49 Crumb carriers
50 Narc's org.
51 Morning droplets

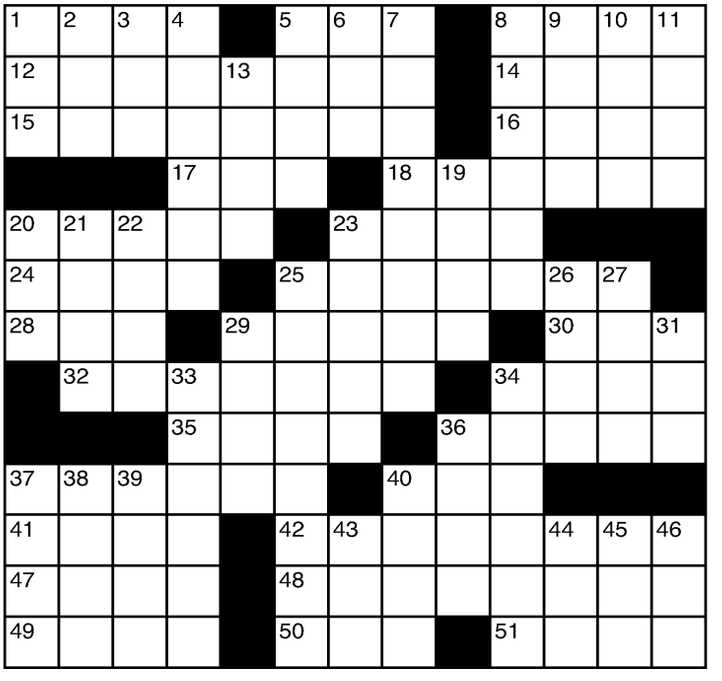
DOWN

1 Lawn material
2 Prefix with gram or center
3 Cartoon frame
4 Flutist's warbles
5 Not many
6 Moving day rental
7 Deserving
8 Apples and oranges
9 Nevada city
10 Grad
11 Male turkeys
13 Ice and Bronze
19 Talking point?
20 Auction action
21 "ER" actor La Salle
22 Stead
23 Villain's look
25 Required
26 Spring meltdown
27 Long tale
29 Acute
31 Dapper fellow
33 Florida birds
34 Became irate
36 Computer debut of 1998
37 Actress Fey
38 Tennis score
39 Lester of NBC News
40 Water, in Mexico
43 Chemical suffix
44 Montreal summer
45 Fresh
46 QBs' quests

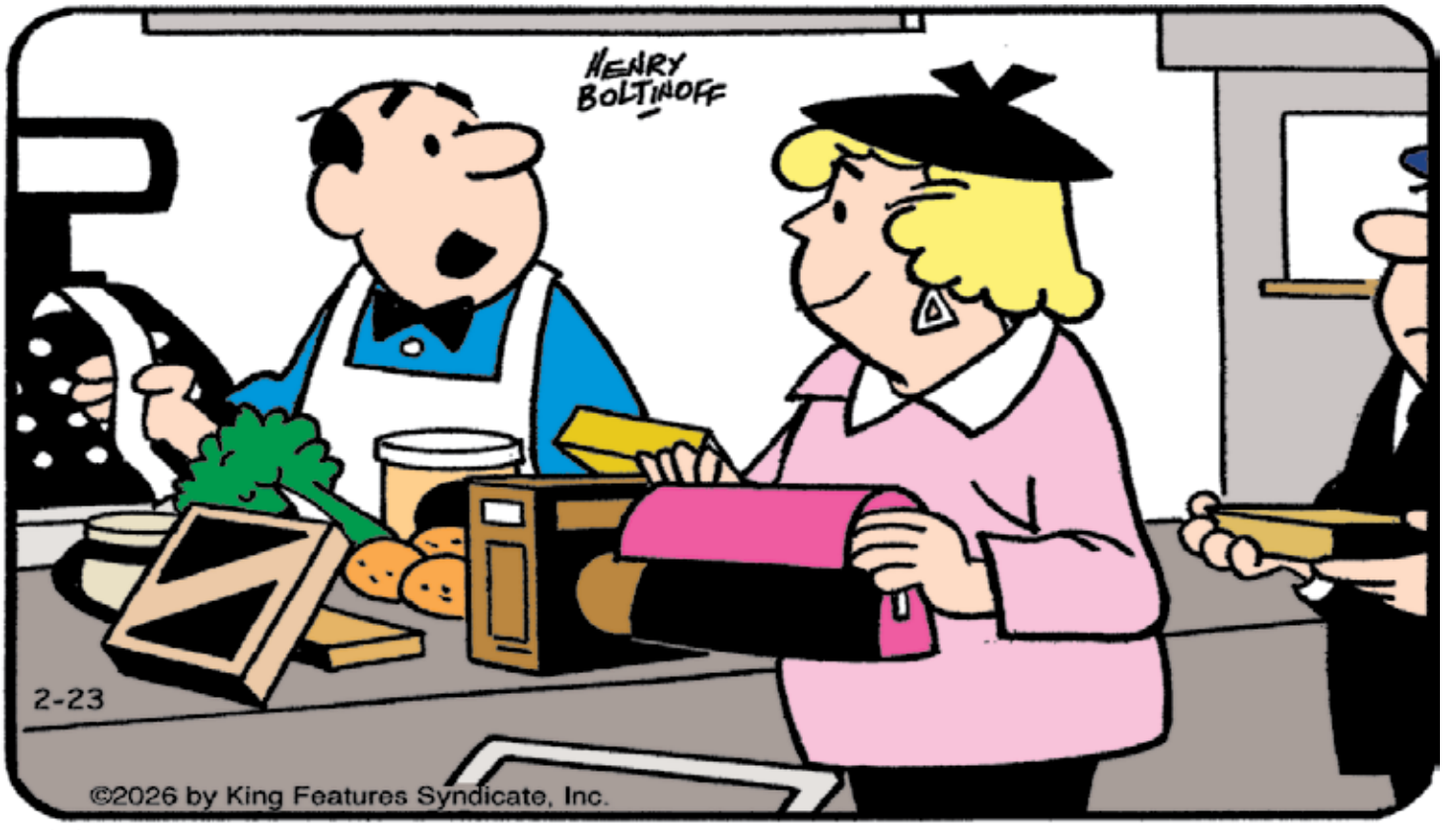
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L	I	O	N	■	O	M	A	N	■	D	A	N
M	C	C	C	■	M	E	L	■	W	E	N	T
■	■	■	A	M	P	■	I	D	A	■	■	■
G	A	S	K	E	T	■	A	R	F	A	R	F
B	R	I	E	S	■	■	O	F	U	S	E	■
S	A	L	M	A	N	■	F	O	L	K	S	Y
■	■	■	I	S	E	■	A	P	E	■	■	■
L	Y	N	X	■	S	A	L	■	I	V	E	S
O	O	O	■	I	T	A	L	■	R	I	D	S
A	K	A	■	N	E	R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

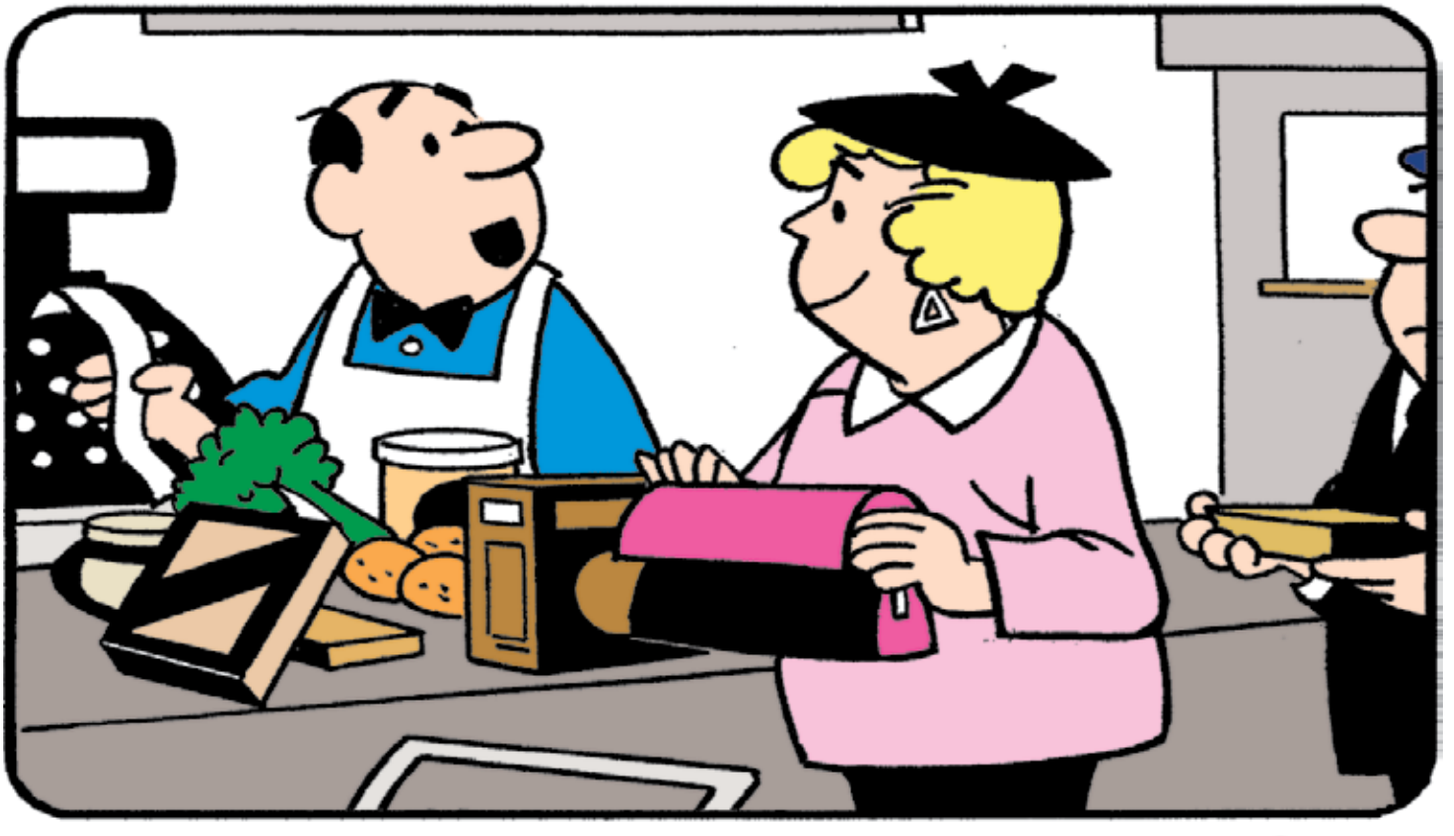
Saturday's answer **2-23**



PRINTABLE PUZZLES



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Cart handle is moved. 2. Front of box is different. 3. Woman's hair is different. 4. Collar is different. 5. Box is missing. 6. Mouth is different.

PRINTABLE PUZZLES

WORD SLEUTH

SURNAMES OF AMERICANS SURVIVING THE TITANIC

T Y Q N K I F C Z P W U R P M

J H E E C B C Z O X U M S Q N

L M J V R O T H S C H I L D G

E C O O L Z S A A X V E T R P

N L W O L I L S J F N H H E C

A N L Y B G S W V N F N T R P

N L K A U E I N O S R E Y R G

E C B O B Z G Y D O D G E L X

W U D E S M N O T E R E R B F

R P E O M E I L H J I L G E D

B R A Y K R E K C U T F X W U

Saturday's unlisted clue: COFFEE

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
Monday's unlisted clue hint: UNSINKABLE MOLLY —

Bishop	Dodge	Hogeboom	Ryerson
Brereton	Douglas	Kenyon	Silvey
Cassebeer	Flegenheim	Kimball	Tucker
Chaffee	Flynn	Rothschild	

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King Classic Sudoku

4	8	1	7	3	9		2	
9		6					7	
	2		6		5			
6	4	8		7		5		
5	1				6	4		
			4	5			6	2
2	6		9				8	3
8	3		2			1	5	
	9				3	2		

Difficulty: ★ 2/23

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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.

TUFEL

SIBCA

TRHOYW

SIVAHL



Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Facebook

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print the answer here: " " (Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: SWAMP GOING QUIRKY GLANCE
Answer: The best way for the electricians to install so many outlets was to keep — PLUGGING AWAY

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2-23 CRYPTOQUIP

U O J B U T R H Z E C T G H C M E U J E U M O K H C H K L N H V C H T L H M L I T M H I T P P G P T Q H C O U N O M L E C Q: "B O U V E Z K O T R E U K M."

Saturday's Cryptoquip: BOOK ABOUT SOME PLANT FOOD THAT MAKES GARDEN DIRT HIGHLY FERTILE: "CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOIL."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals N

PRINTABLE PUZZLES

FROM NORTH AMERICA SYNDICATE INC., 300 W. 57th STREET, 41st FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10019

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FOR RELEASE MONDAY, FEB. 23, 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: THE PLANETS
(e.g., Which of the planets is the largest? Answer: Jupiter.)

FRESHMAN LEVEL
1. Which planet is closest in mass and size to Earth?
Answer_____
2. Which is the biggest of the four planets closest to the sun?
Answer_____
3. This planet circles the sun in 88 days.
Answer_____

GRADUATE LEVEL
4. After the moon it is the second brightest natural object in the night sky.
Answer_____
5. Which planet has a "Great Red Spot"?
Answer_____
6. Which planet is nicknamed the "Red Planet"?
Answer_____

PH.D. LEVEL
7. Which two planets have no moons?
Answer_____
8. Name the farthest planet from Earth discovered by the unaided human eye.
Answer_____
9. William Herschel discovered this planet with his homemade telescope.
Answer_____

ANSWERS: 1. Venus. 2. Earth. 3. Mercury. 4. Venus. 5. Jupiter. 6. Mars. 7. Mercury and Venus. 8. Saturn. 9. Uranus.

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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North America Syndicate Inc.

4	8	1	7	3	9	6	2	5
9	5	6	1	2	8	3	7	4
7	2	3	6	4	5	9	1	8
6	4	8	3	7	2	5	9	1
5	1	2	8	9	6	4	3	7
3	7	9	4	5	1	8	6	2
2	6	5	9	1	4	7	8	3
8	3	4	2	6	7	1	5	9
1	9	7	5	8	3	2	4	6

Difficulty: ★ 2/23

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SURNAMES OF AMERICANS SURVIVING THE TITANIC

