



## Justices reject bid to reverse election

Brief order in Texas suit deals fatal legal blow to Trump's last-ditch gambit

BY ROBERT BARNES

The Supreme Court on Friday dismissed a long-shot bid by President Trump and the state of Texas to overturn the results in four states won by Democrat Joe Biden, blocking the president's legal path to reverse his reelection loss.

The court's unsigned order was short, and it denied Texas's request to sue Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin over how they conducted their elections. Texas has not shown it has a legal interest "in the manner in which another state conducts its elections," the order said. It dismissed all pending motions about the case.

Justices Samuel A. Alito Jr. and Clarence Thomas said they did not think the court had the authority to simply reject a state's filing, a position they have taken in past cases. But they said they would not have granted Texas the remedy it

sought, which was to disallow the electors from those four states.

Legal experts from the beginning had derided Texas's unprecedented action as implausible, and the court's rejection was fast and emphatic — the order came just hours after briefing was completed. The justices seemed to have bypassed a lengthy explanation in favor of a unified outcome.

Taking into account an earlier request from Republicans in Pennsylvania, it means that in two cases to reach the court — where conservatives hold a 6-to-3 majority — no justice has expressed support for the drastic idea of

throwing out election results.

Trump, who has appointed three of the court's nine members, has long viewed the Supreme Court as something of an ace in the hole, and on Friday, he called for the justices to display "courage" and rescue him in post-election litigation.

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**Powell's 'expert' unmasked**

Key figure in fraud claims didn't work in military intelligence. **A6**

**Regional backing**

Four House Republicans from Va. and Md. supported the lawsuit. **B1**

## FDA approves Pfizer vaccine, first in U.S.

2.9 MILLION DOSES READY FOR COMING WEEK

Historic feat gives rare moment of hope as virus rages

BY LAURIE MCGINLEY AND CAROLYN Y. JOHNSON

The Food and Drug Administration on Friday gave emergency use authorization to the nation's first coronavirus vaccine, launching what scientists hope will be a critical counteroffensive against a pathogen that has killed more than 290,000 Americans, shredded the nation's social and political fabric and devastated the economy.

The historic authorization of the vaccine from Pfizer and BioNTech for people age 16 and older, just 336 days after the genetic blueprint of a novel coronavirus was shared online by Chinese scientists, sets in motion a highly choreographed and complex dis-

tribution process aimed at speeding vaccines throughout the United States to curb the pandemic.

The FDA action came after White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows on Friday told FDA commissioner Stephen Hahn to be prepared to submit his resignation if the agency did not clear the vaccine by day's end, according to people familiar with the situation who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss what happened.

Meadows's threat followed months of efforts by FDA scientists. SEE VACCINE ON A14

**Biden's tall order**

Vaccine politics, skewed by Trump, complicate unified response. **A15**

## A moment to mourn



ERANGA JAYAWARDENA/ASSOCIATED PRESS

A Sri Lankan family grieves as cemetery workers in Colombo carry the body of a loved one who died of covid-19 to cremation. Sri Lanka has had more than 31,000 cases of the virus and about 150 deaths. In the United States, the nation set a record for covid-19 deaths Thursday for the second day in a row, with Friday's count only a bit lower.

## Defense bill passes with veto-proof majorities

Senate vote sets up fight with president, who has vowed to block measure

BY KAROUN DEMIRJIAN

The Senate passed a \$741 billion defense authorization bill Friday with a veto-proof majority, defying President Trump's repeated threats to scuttle legislation that covers funding for most aspects of the military, from overseas operations to pay raises for troops.

The 84-to-13 vote, and a similarly lopsided result in the House earlier this week, leaves the president with a pivotal dilemma in the final weeks of his administration: accept defeat now and sign, or go down fighting in a veto battle with Congress that he is certain to lose.

Trump will be contemplating

his decision as he and his most loyal supporters enter the final stage of their effort to reverse the outcome of the presidential election, which electors are expected to certify Monday and Congress must formalize early next month. How the president handles the defense bill may influence how Republicans respond to his continued railing against the election results.

Trump has been offering shifting veto threats against the defense bill for months, first promising to reject it over a dispute about renaming military bases that commemorate Confederate leaders, and later over unrelated liability protections for technology companies.

Republican lawmakers and lobbyists have been working for months to get Trump to back

SEE DEFENSE ON A8

**Ownership disclosure**

Congress bans anonymous shell companies in spending bill. **A8**

## Hong Kong publisher charged under harsh new law

Jimmy Lai, backer of pro-democracy drive, could face life term for alleged 'collusion' with foreign country

BY THEODORA YU, SHIBANI MAHTANI AND EVA DOU

HONG KONG — Jimmy Lai, a media tycoon and longtime backer of Hong Kong's struggle for democracy, could face life in prison after he was charged Friday with "collusion with a foreign country" under Beijing's new national security law.

Also this week in Beijing, authorities leveled another apparent blow against Western media outlets with the detention of a Bloomberg News employee held on suspicion of endangering national security.

And earlier this year, Beijing effectively expelled American journalists from The Washington Post, New York Times and Wall Street Journal in retaliation for the Trump administration's new restrictions on Chinese state media.

Lai, who was arrested by investigators in August, is the fourth and highest-profile person to be



KIN CHEUNG/ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Jimmy Lai, seen Dec. 3 after a hearing, was charged under China's national security law, which seeks to end dissent in Hong Kong.**

charged under the security law, which seeks to eradicate dissent in Hong Kong by curtailing constitutional rights, including free speech. He has been in detention for a week for allegedly flouting

terms of his office lease, and turned 72 in jail on Tuesday.

The billionaire, who founded the Apple Daily newspaper in support of Hong Kong's democracy movement, has become a

prime target of the Chinese Communist Party's efforts to silence its critics, some of whom fled abroad as its crackdown on Hong Kong intensified this year. Lai was previously arrested in February, then in April and again in August, the last occasion under the security law that took effect in late June.

The case against Lai heightened an environment of fear in the former British colony, whose increasingly tight control by China has become a point of contention in Beijing's disputes with the West.

"As a well-known public figure in Hong Kong, Lai's arrest sends a shock to many Hong Kongers," said Ma Ngok, a political scientist at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. "Under present tensions between the U.S. and China, Lai's arrest will also become an international case."

In August, police officers from a newly established national security unit of the Hong Kong

SEE LAI ON A13

## IN SUNDAY'S POST



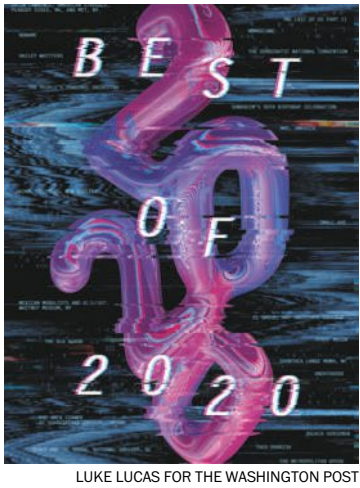
ILLUSTRATION BY JESSICA DURRANT

**<< In Memoriam Issue**

Our culture resists talking about death. So it's fallen to the bereaved to demand attention for covid's human toll — and begin to heal our collective trauma. **Magazine**

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LUKE LUCAS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

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Washington Post critics share the brightest spots in this dark year with their top-10 lists for movies, theater, classical music, pop music, television, video games and museums. **Arts & Style**

**\$115**

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A D.C. family saw potential in a top-to-bottom renovation of a Chevy Chase "ugly duckling."

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The VA secretary questioned the credibility of an aide who reported a sexual assault, a report found. **A4**

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POLITICS & THE NATION

Chinese national detained in \$2.2 million global turtle smuggling scheme

The U.S.-to-Asia ring moved endangered turtles for up to \$20,000

BY CLARE FIESELER

A Chinese national is in federal custody in New Jersey after investigators said he financed an international smuggling ring that shipped more than 1,500 endangered turtles from the United States to China, valued at more than \$2.2 million.

The turtles, many of which were bound with duct tape, stuffed into socks and shipped in mislabeled packages, were sold for as much as \$20,000 each on the Asian pet black market, authorities said.

Kang Juntao, 24, of Hangzhou City, China, was extradited from Malaysia and arrived in the United States on Thursday, where he appeared virtually in U.S. District Court in Newark on charges of money laundering. He is being held without bail pending arraignment.

Prosecutors say Kang ran the smuggling ring from China and had never set foot in the United States before landing at JFK International Airport in New York on Thursday, escorted by federal officials.

His court-appointed lawyer, Linda Foster of the U.S. Federal Public Defender's Office, declined to comment on the case. The consulate at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States did not immediately reply to requests for comment.

Between June 2017 and December 2018, Kang arranged for intermediaries to ship turtles taken from American wetlands to associates in Hong Kong and China, according to the complaint filed in federal court. He paid for the turtles through PayPal and U.S. banks, including one in New Jersey, according to prosecutors. The turtles were then sold to wealthy collectors in Asia for thousands of dollars each, depending on coloring, sex and age. A single North American female box turtle deemed "colorful" in Hong Kong's



LINDA DAVIDSON/THE WASHINGTON POST

Kang Juntao of China faces charges related to his smuggling ring of turtles out of United States wetlands. His operation sold five types of endangered turtles, including the eastern box turtle, above, Florida box turtle, Gulf Coast box turtle, spotted turtle and wood turtle.

black market pet trade fetches up to \$20,000, prosecutors said.

Kang's operation sold five types of turtles, according to investigators: the eastern box turtle, Florida box turtle, Gulf Coast box turtle, spotted turtle and wood turtle. All five are considered endangered and are protected under an international treaty signed by more than 180 countries, including the United States, Malaysia and China.

"This extradition is a landmark win because [Kang] is not just the poacher or the shipper. He's the guy pulling the strings in China," said Ryan Connors, a trial attorney in the environmental crimes section of the U.S. Justice Department.

From China, Kang recruited and paid people in the United

States through online platforms to move turtles and money across the Lower 48 states. Court documents show Kang used PayPal, a digital monetary platform that transfers money between individuals and across currencies. He used Facebook messenger to recruit at least six "middle men" in five states who were "typically college students from China seeking to make extra money on the side," court documents said.

One of those students, Haixi Sheng, pleaded guilty to smuggling native turtles under Kang's guidance while enrolled at Pennsylvania State University. He is in federal prison.

Kang's extradition marks the culmination of a multiyear international investigation that traced

the path of turtles from American marshes to Asian markets and included undercover work by agents of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The work was made more complex because the United States and China do not have an extradition agreement, officials said.

"This was our lunar landing," said Connors, referring to what it took to intercept Kang outside of China's jurisdiction. "We cleared a lot of hurdles early. We coordinated extensively with police departments and even airlines."

U.S. authorities surveilled Kang to track his vacation plans to travel from China to Indonesia and then Malaysia, where an American extradition request had already been processed, Connors said. In

January 2019, the Royal Malaysian Police, assisted by U.S. federal agents, intercepted Kang at Kuala Lumpur International Airport, where he had landed with his girlfriend for a vacation. After nearly two years in Malaysian custody, Kang was flown to the United States.

"The difficulty we have is that a lot of these illegal wildlife shipments are going to people in China and Hong Kong. And we don't have direct extradition treaties with those places," said assistant U.S. Attorney Winston Holliday, who is not involved in the Kang case but has prosecuted domestic poachers of protected turtles from America's wetlands. "The top criminals can be out of reach sometimes," said Holliday, "so we

do what we can on U.S. soil."

Once in custody in Malaysia, Kang told investigators that his turtle business had helped him pay for medical school and the beach-hopping vacation through Southeast Asia, which is how authorities were able to intercept him.

Kang first came to the attention of authorities several years ago when a herpetologist tipped off a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service special agent. The agent, Ryan Bessey, posed undercover as a middleman, buying and shipping endangered turtles at Kang's direction. Between June 2017 and December 2018, Bessey shipped more than 300 turtles, most from a supplier in North Carolina, to Asia on behalf of Kang, according to Bessey's affidavit.

In return, Kang sent Bessey 40 payments totaling about \$80,000 over two years, including a "bonus" for a job well done, investigators said.

A federal grand jury indicted Kang in February 2019 on several money laundering charges. He faces up to 20 years in prison. "If he was facing just a wildlife trafficking charge, it's a five-year felony," Connors said. "But money laundering is a powerful charge. We thought the evidence fit the charge."

Trafficking in endangered species is difficult to prosecute. According to the United Nations' annual report on wildlife crime, the growth of legal and illegal online pet sales has allowed traffickers to better connect with new buyers and accomplices all over the world. Cross-border cooperation is critical to bringing down organized crime that hurts wildlife, the report said.

The Kang case marks progress in the U.S. government's larger fight against global wildlife crimes. "There are all sorts of environmental crimes that are perpetrated using social media," said Meredith Gore, a conservation scientist at the University of Maryland who studies wildlife trafficking. "I'll also say that law enforcement authorities use social media . . . to prevent and respond to this kind of stuff as well."

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DIGEST



NICHOLAS KAMM/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

A worker carries a Christmas tree on the grounds of Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Northwest Washington on Friday as customers browse the stock two weeks before Christmas.

2020 CENSUS

Government ordered to produce documents

A federal judge has given the Trump administration until Monday to produce documents related to the timing and processing of the 2020 Census. U.S. District Judge Lucy H. Koh of the Northern District of California said in her ruling late Thursday night that what the Justice Department has so far produced in a lawsuit about the timing of the survey has been "inadequate" and rife with duplications.

On Thursday, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform subpoenaed Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross over his failure to deliver the information that it had requested.

A Commerce Department representative suggested on Friday that the subpoena was a "political play," adding that the department had provided more than 5,500 documents to the committee and Congress this year and "intends to continue producing responsive documents to the Committee on a rolling basis."

The administration is pushing

the U.S. Census Bureau to produce state population totals and tallies of undocumented immigrants so it can try to exclude them from the population apportionment for House seat before Trump leaves office Jan. 20.

— Tara Bahrapour

WISCONSIN

National Guard jets grounded after crash

A Wisconsin Air National Guard unit has been grounded while the fatal crash of an F-16 jet is investigated, and authorities on Friday identified the pilot who died as a decorated combat veteran who had flown in three tours of duty.

The Madison-based 115th Fighter Wing said Air Force Capt. Durwood "Hawk" Jones, 37, from Albuquerque, died in Tuesday's crash in a national forest in Michigan's Upper Peninsula during a training mission.

The military said Jones joined the Air National Guard in 2011 and had deployed to Japan in 2015, Korea in 2017 and to Afghanistan in 2019. He is survived by his wife and two children.

The Wisconsin State Journal reported Friday that 115th Fighter Wing Commander Col. Bart Van Roo said it could take a month to determine what happened.

Van Roo said the unit will be grounded until leaders determine that flying can safely be resumed.

The plane was assigned to the 115th Fighter Wing at Truax Field Air National Guard Base in Madison. It went down in Hiawatha National Forest, about 250 miles northeast of the base. The crash site is in Delta County, on the shore of Lake Michigan.

— Associated Press

**Navy searching for sailor feared overboard off California:** Search crews combed the ocean off Southern California on Friday for a sailor who may have gone overboard from the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt. The search started Thursday morning after a lookout spotted what appeared to be a person in the water, a statement from the San Diego-based 3rd Fleet said. One sailor was unaccounted for during a command-wide muster, the statement said. The U.S. Coast Guard and Navy aircraft and ships were participating.

— Associated Press

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# VA leaders questioned aide’s assault report, probe finds

BY LISA REIN

Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie and his senior leaders openly questioned the credibility of a House aide who reported a sexual assault at the agency’s flagship hospital in the District, denigrating her and ascribing political motives to her claim, a report released Thursday found.

The tone Wilkie set with his senior staff and reporters influenced the investigation into the veteran’s claim — and led to the agency’s failure to improve an often-hostile environment for women at the D.C. Medical Center, Inspector General Michael Missal found.

And instead of focusing on the hospital contractor who veteran Andrea Goldstein told authorities “bumped his entire body against mine and told me I looked like I needed a smile and a good time,” VA’s senior leaders did the opposite, investigators found, and embarked on a campaign to discredit Goldstein. The contractor did not have credentials to enter the hospital and had been the subject of a previous sexual harassment complaint from a VA employee.

The inspector general did not substantiate that Wilkie formally investigated Goldstein’s past by improperly accessing her electronic health and military records or asked others to do so. But the secretary’s attempt to denigrate her was clear, the report said.

“The tone set by Secretary Wilkie was at minimum unprofessional and at worst provided the basis for VA leaders’ attempts to undermine the veteran’s credibility,” the report said.

The 68-page report caps a saga that has embroiled Wilkie, Goldstein and Rep. Mark Takano (D-Calif.), chairman of the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee, in a standoff since the fall of 2019. That’s when Goldstein, the committee’s senior policy adviser on female veterans, reported that a man groped and propositioned her as she waited in line to buy a snack in the hospital’s main lobby.

Goldstein’s complaint highlighted a major struggle for the veterans agency as it tries to serve the health needs of women, the fastest-growing veteran population. Female veterans regularly report sexual harassment and assault at VA clinics and hospitals.

The report said VA’s response to Goldstein’s complaint hurt the agency’s mission.

“Using denigrating remarks and questioning the credibility of a veteran who reported being sexually assaulted, and then failing to fully explore the facts, is . . . contrary to the ongoing missions of improving VA and of serving the veteran community with respect,” wrote James Mitchell, deputy inspector general for special reviews.

Wilkie, in a scathing response to the report, wrote, “After nearly a year of investigation, interviews with 65 people and analysis of



JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST

**In a report released Thursday, Inspector General Michael Missal found that Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie, center, openly questioned the credibility of veteran Andrea Goldstein, affecting a department investigation into a sexual assault she reported in 2019.**

nearly 1.5 million documents, VA’s inspector general cannot substantiate that I sought to investigate or asked others to investigate the Veteran. That’s because these allegations are false. What’s more, the IG could not identify a single instance in which any VA employee violated any rule, regulation or policy.”

Wilkie described conversations about the Goldstein case as “confidential internal deliberations among VA staff” and said they should have not have been a part of Missal’s inquiry. The inspector general “established a strawman in which any discussion or scrutiny of public and high-profile allegations against the department, or a general desire to know the truth are somehow improper,” Wilkie wrote.

Missal’s office answered, “Secretary Wilkie’s comments on this report do not respond substantively to its findings. Instead they mischaracterize key facts and fail to acknowledge the deficiencies in VA’s response to the veteran’s complaint. Notably, his comments do not seek to correct or supplement the findings.”

Takano accused Wilkie of betraying the public’s trust and called on him and his senior staff to resign.

“When the most senior leadership of VA are derelict in their duty, refuse to take immediate action to correct glaring deficiencies, and are themselves complicit in attempts to discredit and cast doubt on the facts,” the chairman said in a statement, “they betray

the public trust and as a result disqualify themselves from all future public service.”

He called the report “emblematic of the well-documented issue of sexual harassment and assault that has festered in our military and polluted the culture at VA.”

Goldstein said in a statement that many female veterans told her the incident and its handling had “permanently severed” their trust in VA.

“The millions of women and men who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence in the military recognized Secretary Wilkie’s actions as horrifyingly familiar: refuse to take or enforce accountability, blame, shame and make the victim the problem,” Goldstein said. “In this shocking abuse of power, Secretary Wilkie publicly re-victimized the very people that the agency that he leads is supposed to serve.”

Wilkie also drew rebukes from top Republicans in Congress who oversee the agency.

The report shows “not only a disappointing response from VA leadership [to a reported assault in a VA facility], but also a failure by those leaders to fulfill their duty in responding to an important [inspector general] inquiry,” Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee Chairman Jerry Moran (Kan.) said in a statement. Rep. Phil Roe (Tenn.), the House VA committee’s top Republican, and Rep. Mike Bost (Ill.), its incoming ranking member, issued similar statements.

After Goldstein reported she

was assaulted, Wilkie quickly asked Missal’s office to investigate. In January, federal authorities declined to file charges in the sexual assault case. But Wilkie, who had tangled with Takano for months on policy issues and the committee’s oversight of his agency, immediately took a personal interest in the case, investigators found.

Missal’s investigation was hindered, the report says, by the refusal of Wilkie, acting deputy secretary Pamela Powers and his two top press officials, James Hutton and Curt Cashour, to cooperate with requests for follow-up interviews.

Within hours of receiving word about Goldstein’s Sept. 20 complaint, “senior VA officials began communicating about whether the veteran had previously complained about verbal abuse from a VA provider at another facility,” the report said. Wilkie speculated in an email that Takano was “laying the grounds for a spectacle.” VA leaders’ suspicions centered on Goldstein’s work on sexual assault issues for the committee and on initial reports of a lack of eyewitnesses.

“This initial skepticism matured into repeated, apparently unsupported assertions or vague conjectures that the veteran did ‘something like this’ before, which similarly contributed to VA personnel actions focusing on the veteran and her credibility,” the report said.

In interviews with investigators, Wilkie denied investigating

Goldstein, questioning her credibility or knowing whether she had made prior assault complaints in the military.

But investigators found that Wilkie told his staff that Goldstein had made similar complaints of sexual assault in the Navy. Goldstein has denied making multiple complaints about sexual misconduct

Eight senior agency officials described discussions in Wilkie’s presence “that involved the veteran’s purported history of filing complaints, whether specific to prior sexual assault allegations or similar issues during her military service,” the report found. Six of the witnesses in sworn testimony attributed the remarks to Wilkie himself. “The inference was that the complaints were unfounded,” the report said.

Cashour pitched a story to a journalist that would impugn Goldstein’s character, telling the reporter, “You may want to look into — see — if she’s done this sort of thing in the past,” according to the report.

Multiple witnesses testified to investigators that Wilkie told them Rep. Dan Crenshaw (R-Tex.) had given him damaging information that Goldstein filed frivolous complaints when they served in the same Navy command. That contradicts the congressman’s prior statement that he never spoke with the secretary about Goldstein.

A spokesman for Crenshaw did not respond to a request for comment.

## Biden narrows search for attorney general

Sen. Doug Jones, former Justice Dept. deputy Sally Yates at top of list

BY DEVLIN BARRETT, MATT ZAPOTOSKY AND MATT VISER

President-elect Joe Biden’s search for the next attorney general is increasingly focused on Sen. Doug Jones (D-Ala.) and former deputy attorney general Sally Q. Yates, according to people familiar with the discussions, who said that appeals court judge Merrick B. Garland remains a serious contender.

Jones, who lost his reelection bid in November, is the favorite at this stage, but Biden and his inner circle continue to debate the nomination, these people said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to describe internal discussions.

It is increasingly unlikely, these people said, that former Massachusetts governor Deval Patrick will be selected to become the nation’s top law enforcement official. People familiar with the discussions said in recent days that the discussions of the three other candidates have increasingly shifted toward the likelihood of confirmation in the Senate, which is currently controlled by Republicans. On that question, Jones is viewed as having an edge over Yates, according to the people familiar with the discussions.

With Jones’s stock on the rise, some civil rights leaders have pri-

vately expressed some reservations to members of Biden’s inner circle in recent days about whether his record on criminal justice reform and civil rights is sufficient. As a U.S. attorney in Alabama in the Clinton administration, Jones famously prosecuted members of the Ku Klux Klan who bombed a Black church in Birmingham in 1963, killing four girls. The case had been stymied by then-FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, but was resuscitated in 1971 and then again in 1993 at the urging of civil rights leaders.

House Majority Whip James E. Clyburn (D-S.C.) recently cited that case in praising Jones to the website Cheddar.

“Decades they walked around free after bombing that church and killing those four Black girls. [Jones] prosecuted them and got them convicted,” Clyburn said. “You don’t have to be Black to do right by Black people.”

But — publicly and privately in conversations with those close to Biden — some civil rights leaders have suggested the case does not, by itself, demonstrate the kind of proven track record on civil rights and criminal justice reform they would like to see in an attorney general.

“I would never look at one case for anyone to determine the full measure of their record on civil rights or criminal justice reform,” said Sherrilyn Ifill, president and director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. “I think if you’re looking at the full measure of their record, it’s legitimate to ask how broad that record is in the matters that are of most interest to activists



ELIJAH NOUVELAGE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**Sen. Doug Jones (D-Ala.), who lost his reelection bid in November, appears to be the favorite for the nomination. He is viewed as having an edge over Sally Yates on the likelihood of Senate confirmation.**

and communities of color around the country.”

As a senator, Jones sponsored voting rights legislation and co-sponsored the bipartisan criminal justice reform First Step Act. He also successfully passed legislation calling for the release of records about unsolved criminal civil rights cases, and he struck a deal to permanently renew annual federal funding for historically Black colleges and universities.

Some civil rights leaders have privately expressed concern that Jones voted to proceed on a Republican police reform bill, led by Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.), that Democrats and the civil rights community saw as too weak. Jones was only one of two Senate Democrats to break with his party, along with

Joe Manchin III (W.Va.). Jones’s vote, though, was only procedural. He told WBUR radio at the time that he would not vote to pass it “as is” but wanted to bring the bill to the floor for debate, where “the American people would have seen the flaws” in it.

A spokeswoman for Jones declined to comment.

Several civil rights leaders have publicly expressed a preference for a Black attorney general. Marc Morial, president and CEO of the National Urban League, said that in addition to scrutinizing the attorney general pick, he was focused on the entire slate of senior officials that Biden will pick to run the Justice Department.

“I’ve made that point privately, repeatedly, that the attorney gen-

eral is crucial, but the team is crucial,” he said.

To that end, people familiar with the discussions said the incoming administration has increasingly focused in recent days on finding Black candidates to nominate for other Justice Department jobs, as it appears likely that Biden’s attorney general pick will be White.

Ifill has publicly expressed support for Yates, and other civil rights leaders have seemed to give her a tacit endorsement — noting that familiarity with the inner workings of the Justice Department was an important criterion to them. That would not seem to apply to Jones or the other person still under consideration, Garland, as both of their experience in

The report describes “an unusual level of engagement by VA senior officials in an ongoing criminal investigation,” as VA police who met with Wilkie and his team told investigators. This “created pressure on VA police and focused their attention on the veteran herself.”

VA senior officials traveled to the medical center to view any available video footage of the incident, although the surveillance cameras in the area were not working. A VA police officer recalled that a visiting VA official suggested that Goldstein may have “made a complaint similar to this before.”

The police ran a background check on her and circulated the results — which multiple VA police officers considered unusual. This occurred two days before a background check was run on the contractor accused of sexual assault by the veteran.

Less than a week after Goldstein reported being sexually assaulted, Wilkie made a surprise visit to the D.C. medical center himself, the report said. He and Powers met with the medical director. They discussed the case in detail.

Wilkie read the written statement provided to VA police by Goldstein, detailing her account of the incident. The medical center director told investigators that after Wilkie finished reading the statement, “he commented that the veteran’s statement was ‘similar to other complaints she’s made other places,’ or words to that effect.”

The Washington Post reported Wednesday that the inspector general’s office told federal prosecutors this fall of possible criminal conduct by Wilkie stemming from the investigation. The Justice Department has not pursued a case against Wilkie.

Missal’s office did not make a formal criminal referral to seek a prosecution. The discussions centered on whether the inspector general was authorized to compel testimony from a senior official who had stopped cooperating in the investigation into Wilkie’s conduct, a person familiar with the matter, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive law enforcement matter, said.

When federal authorities decide not to move forward with criminal charges, inspectors general can compel people under investigation to fully cooperate if they notify them that a case is not subject to prosecution, according to inspector general guidelines. That effectively grants them immunity for statements that may implicate them.

Prosecutors told the inspector general’s office they did not think there was enough evidence presented to bring charges, according to two federal officials with direct knowledge of the case, who also spoke on the condition of anonymity.

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the Justice Department was from long ago.

Yates has more-recent and extensive history on civil rights and criminal justice reform. As the Justice Department’s No. 2 official at the end of the Obama administration, she ordered the shutdown of private prisons under the department’s control, pushed for ending the use of solitary confinement and helped implement sentencing reform.

Yates, though, also has detractors, and her confirmation could be a bruising fight. Senate Republicans have scrutinized Yates and others’ supervision of the FBI’s probe of President Trump’s 2016 campaign — recently calling her to testify publicly about the matter — and Trump has attacked her as having “zero credibility.”

A new issue emerged this week that could complicate the confirmation process for whichever candidate Biden chooses — the disclosure of a two-year investigation of the incoming president’s son, Hunter Biden, into whether he paid taxes on China-related business dealings. Already, some Republicans are calling for a special prosecutor to be appointed to handle the investigation.

Robert Mintz, a former federal prosecutor now in private practice, called the Hunter Biden case “the first big test” of President-elect Biden’s pledge to reestablish the independence of the Department of Justice.” Mintz said the next attorney general will face “the daunting task of how to manage a highly politically charged investigation of an immediate member of the president’s family while attempting to maintain the appearance of autonomy and lack of political influence in the decision-making.”

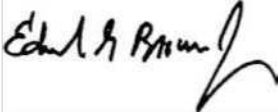
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# Focus is on former NEA president as Biden seeks an education secretary

BY LAURA MECKLER  
AND VALERIE STRAUSS

At least a dozen names have been batted around as possible secretaries of education for President-elect Joe Biden, with no clear choice emerging. But one woman in particular is the subject of intense lobbying, both pro and con.

Lily Eskelsen García, who stepped down as president of the National Education Association in September, has been endorsed by groups including the influential Congressional Hispanic Caucus, which notes that she would be the first Latina to serve in the position.

But García also is facing attacks from advocates for children with disabilities as well as from supporters of education reform policies that were popular in the Obama administration but have fallen out of favor in the Democratic Party.

The jockeying comes as the Biden transition team works to settle on an education nominee who will satisfy teachers and their unions while not alienating Democrats in the reform camp.

“The challenge for the Biden administration will be to appoint a secretary who is supportive of teachers and their unions but not opposed to innovation and change,” said Pedro Noguera, the dean of the Rossier School of Education at the University of Southern California.

While public attention is fixed on García, several people familiar with the transition discussions say that she is not a front-runner and that there is no consensus internally about who should get the nod.

Several people said Biden would like to choose a woman of color, as he works to assemble a diverse Cabinet. And Biden, a union supporter, told teachers unions during the campaign that he would choose someone who has been an educator, raising expectations of K-12 teachers that he would choose from their ranks.

An announcement is expected before Christmas.

Jill Biden, the president-elect’s wife, is thought to be involved in the conversations over the education nominee, though it is not known how strongly she is weigh-

ing in. She is a former community college professor and a member of the NEA.

Biden’s team had initially leaned toward nominating Linda Darling-Hammond, who is running his education transition team, two people familiar with the process said. She is the first Black woman to serve as president of the California State Board of Education and is an expert in educational equity — a Biden priority — and teacher quality.

She was believed to be acceptable to all of the party’s factions, and has K-12 classroom experience. But early on, she took herself out of consideration, forcing the transition team to scramble.

Soon after the election, Biden campaign officials singled out two teachers union officials as possible nominees — García and Randi Weingarten, the president of the American Federation of Teachers. Weingarten has been lower key about the matter, which may explain why there is more attention on García.

García has spoken with Republican senators, aiming to show she could be confirmed in a Senate that may remain under

Republican control, two people familiar with the matter said.

She also has been endorsed by several Latino organizations, including the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, a coalition of more than 40 civil rights and public policy groups. And in at least one television appearance, she seemed to go out of her way to signal to the Biden team that she would be a team player. Asked on MSNBC about the impact of remote learning on children, she began her reply with, “You know I just have to congratulate America on the new president that is coming in.”

But García also is coming under fierce attack. An anti-union group called the Center for Union Facts took out a full-page ad this week in the Wall Street Journal opposing her potential nomination, calling García “a staunch opponent of school reform.”

She’s also being publicly opposed by disability activists, who say that under her leadership, the NEA took positions damaging to children with disabilities on issues such as standardized testing, and on the restraint and seclusion of children. A letter

sent Thursday to the Biden team by nine disability organizations said they have “series concerns” about her potential nomination.

In response to these critics, Eskelsen García asked a Florida mother to send transition officials a letter testifying to her sensitivity when her son was battling the state over whether he had to take a standardized test while he was dying in a hospital. The mother, Andrea Rediske, a professor at Valencia College in Florida, responded by sending a supportive letter to the Biden team.

“To me, Lily embodies the soul of an educator,” Rediske wrote.

The Biden team also has looked at several school district superintendents, especially women of color, two people familiar with the process said. Women thought to be in that group include Sonja Santelises of Baltimore and Janice Jackson of Chicago. Another is Denise Juneau of Seattle, but her chances may have evaporated after she came under fire from the local NAACP chapter.

Another person talked about: Rep. Jahana Hayes (D-Conn.), a

former teacher of the year. But with only a slim Democratic majority in the House, the Biden team is hesitant to draw from their ranks. If Hayes were chosen, her seat would be filled by special election.

Without a clear choice, the Biden team has looked at people from higher education, people familiar with the matter said. That includes Leslie Fenwick, a former dean of education at Howard University who once taught in an urban school district, three people familiar with the process said.

Other people thought to be under consideration include Michael L. Lomax, the president and chief executive of the United Negro College Fund since 2004, and Eloy Ortiz Oakley, the chancellor of California Community Colleges, the largest public higher education system in the country. One of Biden’s proposals is to make community college free for all.

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# Powell’s ‘Spyder’ never worked in military intelligence

BY EMMA BROWN,  
AARON C. DAVIS  
AND ALICE CRITES

The witness is code-named “Spyder.” Or sometimes “Spider.” His identity is so closely guarded that lawyer Sidney Powell has sought to keep it even from opposing counsel. And his account of vulnerability to international sabotage is a key part of Powell’s failing multistate effort to invalidate President-elect Joe Biden’s victory.

Powell describes Spyder in court filings as a former “Military Intelligence expert,” and his testimony is offered to support one of her central claims. In a declaration filed in four states, Spyder alleges that publicly available data about server traffic shows that voting systems in the United States were “certainly compromised by rogue actors, such as Iran and China.”

Spyder, it turns out, is Joshua Merritt, a 43-year-old information technology consultant in the Dallas area. Merritt confirmed his role as Powell’s secret witness in phone interviews this week with The Washington Post.

Records show that Merritt is an Army veteran and that he enrolled in a training program at the 305th Military Intelligence Battalion, the unit he cites in his declaration. But he never completed the entry-level training course, according to Meredith Mingleddorf, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence, which includes the battalion.

“He kept washing out of courses,” said Mingleddorf, citing his education records. “He’s not an intelligence analyst.”

In an interview, Merritt maintained that he graduated from the intelligence training program. But even by his own account, he was only a trainee with the 305th, at Fort Huachuca in Arizona, and for just seven months more than 15 years ago.

His separation papers, which he provided to The Post, make no mention of intelligence training. They show that he spent the bulk of his decade in the Army as a wheeled vehicle mechanic. He deployed to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, where he said he worked in security and route clearance. He held the rank of specialist when he was honorably discharged in 2013, having received several commendations.

Merritt acknowledged that the declaration’s description of his work as an “electronic intelligence analyst under 305th Military Intelligence” is misleading. He said it should have made clear that his time in the 305th was as a student, not as a working intelligence expert.

He blamed “clerks” for Powell’s legal team, who he said wrote the sentence. Merritt said he had not read it carefully before he signed his name swearing it was true.

“That was one thing I was trying to backtrack on,” he said on Thursday. “My original paperwork that I sent in didn’t say that.”

On Friday afternoon, as his name increasingly circulated on social media, Merritt said he had decided to remove himself from the legal effort altogether. He said he plans to close his business and relocate with his family.

Asked about Merritt’s limited experience in military intelligence, Powell said in a text to The Post: “I cannot confirm that Joshua Merritt is even Spider. Strongly encourage you not to print.”

Of her description of him as a



Attorney Sidney Powell speaks at a news conference in Alpharetta, Ga., on Dec. 2. She continues to fight the election results in court.

military intelligence expert, she said, “If we made a mistake, we will correct it.”

Federal judges have in the past week rejected all four of the complaints Powell has filed seeking to overturn the presidential election — lawsuits popularly known as the “kraken” suits, after a mythical sea creature she has harnessed as a sort of mascot — ruling either that the challenges should have been filed in state courts or were meritless.

In Michigan, attorneys for the state argued that Powell’s complaint was based on “fantastical conspiracy theories” that belong in the “fact-free outer reaches of the Internet.” A federal judge ruled this week that the allegation that votes were changed for Biden relied on an “amalgamation of theories, conjecture, and speculation.”

A federal judge in Arizona similarly tossed out a case Wednesday that relied in part on an affidavit from Merritt, writing that allegations “that find favor in the public sphere of gossip and innuendo cannot be a substitute for earnest pleadings and procedure in federal court” and “most certainly cannot be the basis for upending Arizona’s 2020 General Election.”

Powell is appealing all four of those losses.

Merritt told The Post that, because judges are dismissing the cases without giving the Powell team a chance to fully present evidence, “we’re just going to supply the evidence through other directions,” including to lawmakers and members of the intelligence community. He said Russell Ramsland, a former colleague and fellow witness for Powell, had asked him to brief Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-Tex.), a leading proponent of fanciful claims about the 2020 election.

Gohmert did not respond to a request for comment.

The 305th Military Intelligence Battalion at Fort Huachuca has taken on a special significance among supporters of Powell’s lawsuits. Some popular conspiracy theories contend that the unit — rather than Merritt, a



Joshua Merritt — “Spyder” — said he helped investigate suspected fraud in the 2018 loss of Rep. Pete Sessions (R-Tex.), above.

former member who was discharged years ago — has determined that China and Iran manipulated the U.S. vote. In late November, Thomas McInerney, a retired lieutenant general in the Air Force and a proponent of election fraud claims, said that President Trump and Powell have “got the 305th Military Intelligence Battalion working with them” and that “the Kraken is the 305th Military Intelligence Battalion.”

The battalion is an entry-level training unit. It has not had an operational mission since World War II. Mingleddorf said soldiers there “do not collect, analyze or provide intelligence in any way.”

Army records provided by Merritt show that he enlisted in 2003. He first aimed to be a medic, but did not graduate from a training program at Fort Sam Houston in Texas, according to records in the Army Training Requirements and Resource System, Mingleddorf said. He was “recycled,” or allowed to repeat the training course — but again did not graduate, she said, citing the records.

In 2004, Merritt transferred to the 305th Military Intelligence Battalion, the records show. He had a spot reserved in an electronic intercept analyst course with the 305th, but records show he did not meet the prerequisites and was dropped from the program, Mingleddorf said.

his separation papers. His commendations included the Combat Action Badge, which is authorized for soldiers who are “present and actively engaging or being engaged by the enemy, and performing satisfactorily in accordance with prescribed rules of engagement.”

Merritt told The Post he left the military because he had reached a “retention control point” and was unlikely to be promoted. Under Army rules, soldiers are only permitted to serve a certain number of years at a particular rank.

Merritt said cybersecurity was a hobby when he was in the Army, and it became a profession once he was out. He said he is neither a Republican nor a Democrat but a “Constitutionalist” who is just trying to do his part to ensure fair elections in the United States. “Right now, you’re looking at two political parties that — all they care about is power, they don’t care about people,” he said. “I swore my life to my Constitution, and that’s what I keep it at.”

He used his GI Bill funds to study network security administration at ITT Tech in Arlington, Tex. He said he earned an associate degree from the school, part of a nationwide chain of for-profit colleges that shut down in 2016.

He went on to intern and work in several positions related to cybersecurity, he said. In 2017, he joined a small Dallas-area firm called Allied Special Operations Group, where Ramsland says he is part of the management team.

Merritt said it was there that he began to work on election security and came to believe the system was rife with vulnerabilities. Soon, he said, he was a frequent guest in right-wing videos, appearing under the pseudonym “Jekyll,” in shadow and with his voice disguised as he warned that the U.S. election system was vulnerable to being corrupted on a massive scale.

In 2018, he said, he helped investigate what he described as suspected fraud in races affecting five candidates, including former Kentucky governor Matt Bevin (R) and former Texas congress-

man Pete Sessions (R). Merritt said he found many elections-related companies plagued by vulnerabilities.

Bevin did not respond to a request for comment.

In a phone interview, Sessions described Merritt as a “top, top computer forensic expert.”

After Sessions spent two decades in Congress, his 2018 loss to Democrat Colin Allred, a former professional football player, was viewed by some on election-conspiracy sites as implausible. Merritt said he worked behind the scenes, conducting election-fraud analysis. Sessions would not disclose Merritt’s precise work or whether he was paid, but said of Merritt: “He may have been involved in certain elements of that. It is true there were people who were aware of those things.”

Sessions won a comeback victory in November and will return to Congress next year. He said he was unswayed by the Army’s disclosure that Merritt had never completed electronic intelligence training.

“Get the best computer expert you know, have him call and query Josh. Josh will run circles around that person,” Sessions said.

No charges were brought in connection with these allegations, Merritt said.

Merritt formed his own firm, Cyberotyx, in 2019. He said the company — which consists of himself and a handful of contractors — specializes in building “cyberinfrastructure” such as making websites and setting up servers. It also does 3-D printing.

Merritt said he became involved in the Powell litigation through Ramsland. Ramsland has also submitted affidavits as part of Powell’s lawsuits, including one that drew attention for mistakenly using voting data from Minnesota to allege evidence of voter fraud in Michigan.

Merritt said he provides information to Powell’s legal team through intermediaries he knows only by username. He said he is not being paid for his work on the case.

Ramsland did not respond to messages left at his home or on a cellphone registered in his name.

Merritt said he had sought to stay anonymous because he feared for the safety of his family if his name became known. Someone came up with his pseudonym based on the spider-like shape of the diagrams in his declaration, he said.

His name slipped into the court record, though little noticed, on Nov. 25. The Powell team filed a carefully redacted declaration from its secret witness, but a bookmark in the file uploaded to the court’s computer system was visible: “Declaration of JOSHUA MERRITT.”

“One jackwagon forgot to clear out the data. I was really pissed,” Merritt said. “The guy was like, ‘I’m sorry,’ and I was like, ‘Well, you know, that and a bag of chips will still leave me hungry.’”

On Wednesday night, after a Reuters reporter tweeted about that flub and drew widespread attention to his name, Merritt was bracing for what might come.

“This is not the 15 minutes I wanted,” he said.

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Aaron Schaffer, Aaron Blake, Dan Lamothe and Dalton Bennett contributed.

# High court dismisses Tex. effort to overturn Biden’s win

COURT FROM AI

After Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died in September, Trump said that filling the seat was essential because of the possibility of litigation that might end in a tie. Justice Amy Coney Barrett was confirmed in a party-line vote by the Republican-controlled Senate to replace Ginsburg.

In a case earlier this week, the court, in a one-sentence order, turned down a plea from Republican congressional candidates to overturn the results in Pennsylvania. Barrett took part in the case, but neither she nor fellow Trump appointees Neil M. Gorsuch or Brett M. Kavanaugh noted any objection.

Trump did not immediately comment on the court’s action, either on Twitter or at a holiday party Friday night at the White House. The crowd was told he was not coming downstairs, according to one attendee.

Trump has refused to acknowledge defeat, instead embarking on a noisy campaign to discredit the election. He has made unproved allegations of corruption and electoral rigging in states he lost. And he has made unsubstantiated assertions of illegal voting; votes being switched by computer software; and rampant fraud.

None have come close to being proved, and Attorney General William P. Barr said U.S. attorneys and FBI agents running down specific complaints and information “have not seen fraud on a scale that could have effected a different outcome in the election.”

Legal efforts by Trump and his allies filed in states he lost have been stunningly unsuccessful — one minor win compared with more than 50 losses in state and federal courts at both the trial and appellate levels.

In one case that reached the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 3rd Circuit, the rejection was delivered by a judge Trump had nominated.

“Free, fair elections are the lifeblood of our democracy. Charges of unfairness are serious,” wrote Judge Stephanos Bibas. “But calling an election unfair does not make it so. Charges require specific allegations and then proof.”

Lawsuits continue around the country, and Trump’s personal lawyer Rudolph W. Giuliani said on Newsmax, “We’re not finished, believe me.” But the Texas case was the one upon which the president and his allies had pinned their hopes, and time is almost up.

The election results have been



STEFANI REYNOLDS/GETTY IMAGES

**Flag-waving Trump supporters rally in front of the Supreme Court building in Washington on Friday. The court rejected a lawsuit filed by the Texas attorney general and joined by multiple other Republican attorneys general and more than 100 House Republicans seeking to invalidate Joe Biden’s election victory in four battleground states.**

certified in each state, and the electoral college is to meet Monday. Biden has 306 electoral votes, exactly the number Trump had when he was elected in 2016. But while Trump lost the popular vote then, Biden has an advantage of more than 7 million votes.

Texas, led by Attorney General Ken Paxton (R), a Trump partisan, tried to maneuver around the lower-court losses by filing directly with the Supreme Court. States suing other states are allowed to ask the court to take up such cases, although the court sometimes does not grant permission.

Paxton said, “It is unfortunate that the Supreme Court decided not to take this case and determine the constitutionality of these four states’ failure to follow feder-

al and state election law.”

Texas alleged that actions by state officials in Pennsylvania, Georgia, Michigan and Wisconsin violated the Constitution and diluted the impact of Texas votes.

Its major complaint was that state officials and courts in those states had changed election procedures to make it easier to vote by mail or other methods. It said those changes violated the Constitution’s direction that “the legislature” of each state set voting procedures.

It asked the justices to block those states from casting their combined 62 electoral votes for Biden and order the state legislatures, all Republican-controlled, to appoint new electors or none at all. That would require the court

to set aside the results in those states, which Biden won by a combined 300,000 votes.

Trump asked to intervene in the suit, and 17 attorneys general from states where Trump won joined in — even though some had voting procedures altered by state officials or courts in those states. A majority of House Republicans urged the Supreme Court to take the case.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) said the Supreme Court was right to dismiss the “extreme, unlawful and undemocratic GOP lawsuit” and that the 126 congressional Republicans who endorsed it “brought dishonor to the House.”

The targeted states responded in blistering briefs, with Pennsyl-

vania Attorney General Josh Shapiro calling the Texas suit a “seditious abuse of the judicial process.”

Wisconsin Attorney General Joshua L. Kaul (D) said that agreeing to the Texas request would thrust the Supreme Court into the political sphere in a way never imagined.

“If Texas’s theory of injury were accepted, it would be too easy to reframe virtually any election or voting rights dispute as implicating injuries to a state and thereby invoke this court’s original jurisdiction,” he wrote.

“New York or California could sue Texas or Alabama in this court over their felon-disenfranchisement policies. Garden-variety election disputes would soon

come to the court in droves,” he wrote.

The states said Texas’s claims were hypocritical and cynical. Although Texas said in a filing that it “does not ask this court to reelect President Trump,” the suit does not ask the court to discount the votes in any state Trump won where state officials and courts had altered voting procedures because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Among those states are Texas itself, where the governor made changes.

The case is *Texas v. Pennsylvania*.

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Josh Dawsey contributed to this report.

## Losses mounting for Tex. attorney general

BY ARELIS R. HERNÁNDEZ AND MARIA SACCHETTI

SAN ANTONIO — The Texas attorney general who tried to orchestrate President Trump’s last stand spent most of his career under indictment for state securities fraud, but his closeness to the president had buffed that tarnish. Trump listens to Ken Paxton. He called so often the White House once caught him in the shower. And the state attorney general had the digits to call him back.

Paxton’s star seemed ascendant as he positioned himself as one of Trump’s biggest allies, willing to fight legal battles on sanctuary cities, the Affordable Care Act and now the outcome of the presidential election. But the shadows over Texas’s folksy attorney general have been growing longer. Trump has lost the election. Paxton’s last-gasp effort to overturn the outcome via the U.S. Supreme Court has failed. His top deputies recently reported him to the FBI for alleged crimes such as bribery. And the Associated Press has reported that he cheated on his wife, Angela Paxton, who is a Republican state senator in Texas.

Paxton, a tea party darling known as a shrewd politician, did not respond to requests for comment, but he appeared cheerful Thursday as he spoke to a conservative commentator on YouTube before heading into the Oval Office to talk about his petition seeking to dismiss the election results.

“It’s our last chance, and it may be our last chance forever,” Paxton said in an interview with conservative commentator Steven Crowder. “Because if this gets set this way, I mean, we may never have elections again that we can count on.”

After he spoke, the Austin American-Statesman reported that FBI agents served at least one subpoena at his office 1,500 miles away. The FBI declined to comment.

In a news release, Paxton had alleged that the battleground

states of Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan and Georgia — where President-elect Joe Biden’s victories had swung the election — “exploited the COVID-19 pandemic to justify ignoring federal and state election laws and unlawfully enacting last-minute changes, thus skewing the results of the 2020 General Election.”

Among the claims: Republicans were blocked from challenging ballots, poll workers cheered when observers were ejected, and equipment was missing, stolen or left unattended. Trump’s lawsuits in those states already had failed. The Supreme Court ruled Friday that it would not hear arguments.

Democrats and some Republicans had condemned Paxton’s lawsuit — one he began alone before other GOP-led states and dozens of members of Congress agreed to join him — saying it was endangering democracy. Rep. Chip Roy (R), who was Paxton’s top lieutenant before resigning in 2016, has called on him to resign. Paxton’s move frayed the often-cordial relationship among attorneys general, usually serious-minded lawyers doing the people’s work: Republicans and Democrats have joined forces against Big Tobacco, banking and in antitrust probes into Google. Paxton, the top prosecutor in one of the largest U.S. states, was among 48 attorneys general joining in the antitrust lawsuit against Facebook.

But critics view Paxton as Trump’s “gun for hire,” said Sean Rankin, executive director of the Democratic Attorneys General Association. Paxton has fought to end the Affordable Care Act, which provides health care to low-income families, and he went to court to block El Paso County from imposing a lockdown as the coronavirus engulfed it. He also fought to stop the expansion of mail-in voting.

“He’s politically expedient,” Rankin said. “The lawsuits he files, the decisions he makes, how he runs this office — it’s not based upon being the people’s lawyer. . . . They’re no longer doing the



TONY GUTIERREZ/ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton waits at Love Field in Dallas on June 28. He has positioned himself as one of the president’s biggest allies, but his efforts to overturn the election have failed.**

people’s will. They’re doing the will of extreme elements in the Republican Party.”

Paxton, 57, spent much of his childhood in California — his father was in the Air Force — and went to college in Texas and then law school at the University of Virginia. He later returned to Texas, north of Dallas, and won election in a deeply conservative, affluent, mostly White area, first to the state House of Representatives and then the Senate.

In 2014, he won the first of his two terms as state attorney general, calling himself “a conservative, stalwart leader with a deep passion and respect for our U.S. Constitution.”

“He is known for his principled and uncompromising devotion to America’s founding values,” his campaign website says.

Months after taking office in 2015, a county grand jury indicted Paxton on criminal charges of acting as an unregistered investment adviser and securities fraud. As a member of the Texas House, he had voted for the bill that made such activities felonies; he has pleaded not guilty.

Details emerged in a federal civil case brought against him by the U.S. Securities and Exchange

Commission. He allegedly raised \$840,000 from friends, business associates, clients and investors for a computer hardware company that claimed to have invented a “revolutionary new server,” without telling investors that he was being compensated for promoting the stock, according to federal court records.

Paxton pitched it as “a great company,” though he had not investigated it, court records said. In one late-night phone call, he persuaded one skeptic to change their mind and pitch in \$150,000.

U.S. District Judge Amos L. Mazzant III in Texas dismissed the case in 2017 because he said Paxton had no legal obligation to make the disclosures. “The question before the Court is not whether Paxton should have disclosed his compensation arrangement but whether Paxton had a legal duty under federal securities law to disclose,” wrote Mazzant, an appointee of President Barack Obama.

Paxton has cast the allegations against him as a witch hunt motivated by more moderate factions of the state Republican Party. He has been backed by ultraconservative, wealthy donors as well as U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Tex.).

State prosecutors noted Paxton did not contest a 2014 civil fine of \$1,000 and a reprimand from the Texas State Securities Board.

“We’ve alleged that it was knowing and intentional. It wasn’t an accident,” said special prosecutor Kent Schaffer.

Paxton’s defense attorney Philip Hilder was blunt: “Paxton is innocent of these allegations.”

The alleged offenses took place when Paxton was a state representative, years before he would become attorney general.

Now, as the state’s top prosecutor, Paxton has assembled a stellar team of respected litigators and investigators and has taken aim at what they see as the excesses of the executive branch in Washington. Buoyed by a powerful political action committee, Empower Texans, Paxton went after election fraud, Planned Parenthood and voting rights.

Trump’s election elevated his status even more. Paxton talked to the president and visited often, at least once a month.

“I’ve been around him a lot,” Paxton said in mid-February on a Texas podcast called “Y’all-itics,” a riff on the Texas drawl. “I’m unexpectedly surprised at my access and how much I’ve been able

to work with him and, if I have issues, how many times I’ve convinced him to side with us sometimes in opposition to some of his own White House counsel.”

But in Texas, his reputation struggled. He won reelection by just three percentage points in 2018.

Then members of his prized legal team signed a letter saying they had reported Paxton to the authorities for potential crimes such as “improper influence, abuse of office and bribery.” They alleged that Paxton abused his office and cut deals on behalf of a political donor, Austin real estate developer Nate Paul, who did not respond to questions from The Washington Post. The AP reported that Paul had hired, on Paxton’s recommendation, a former state Senate aide with whom Paxton had had an affair.

Several of the letter-signers then filed a whistleblower lawsuit alleging that Paxton retaliated against them, badmouthing them and firing most of his critics. The lawsuit alleges that Paul had bad business deals, bankruptcies and was under FBI investigation, and Paxton sought to help him, interfering with public-records requests and a lawsuit.

The lawsuit called Paxton’s alleged behavior “increasingly reckless, bold, and apparent” and said the staff was “increasingly concerned that Paxton was becoming ‘less rational in his decision-making.’”

Paxton has flatly denied his former legal team’s allegations and said they were “rogue” employees.

During a podcast at an Austin dive bar in February, Paxton said he thought Trump would win the election. His name had been mentioned as a possibility for U.S. attorney general, but he brushed that aside, saying “you just never know what’s going to happen.”

“Almost every politician I know thinks they’re going to be here forever,” he said on “Y’all-itics.” “And the reality is most of them leave before they think they’re going to because of financial issues, or they get beat, or they have health issues or personal issues, whatever they are.”

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Sacchetti reported from Washington.

# Trump hasn’t repeated — or reversed — his veto threats

DEFENSE FROM A1

down from his pledges to block the legislation’s progress, arguing that the military operations and other programs the bill authorizes are too important to jeopardize.

Only 47 Republicans heeded Trump’s calls to vote down the defense bill this week: seven senators and 40 members of the House, which passed the bill Tuesday by a vote of 335 to 78. The president has not publicly repeated his promise since lawmakers approved the legislation.

But he also has not rescinded his numerous veto threats, leaving Congress in a holding pattern as lawmakers wait to see what the tempestuous president will do.

Once Congress formally delivers the bill to the White House, Trump has 10 days — excluding Sundays — to decide whether he will sign or veto the legislation. If he does neither, and Congress is still in session, the bill automatically becomes law.

If the president runs out the clock, the final decision could come on or around Christmas, making the defense bill the latest reason lawmakers may have to work through the holidays. Congressional leaders have already been considering keeping the legislature in session to force a resolution to the months-long negotiations over another coronavirus relief package as the country heads into the worst throes of the pandemic.

The president’s veto threats have been hanging over the bipartisan defense bill since the summer, when each chamber voted on separate versions of the legislation that were later reconciled through negotiations.

At first, Trump focused his ire on provisions requiring the Pentagon to change the names of installations commemorating Confederate leaders within a



JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST

**President Trump’s complaints about the defense authorization bill have shifted over several months. First he threatened a veto because the bill would require the renaming of military bases that honor Confederates; then he said it should repeal protections for tech companies.**

limited time frame, insisting they be stripped out even as his allies pleaded with him not to hold up the defense bill for a matter that, they argued to him, would put him on the wrong side of history.

In recent weeks, Trump shifted his attention, demanding that

the bill include a repeal of Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, an unrelated law that shields technology companies from legal liability for content posted by third-party users on their websites.

The president’s fixation on Section 230 reflects the White

House’s war with Facebook, Google and Twitter over allegations that they are biased against conservatives — claims that the three tech giants deny.

Lawmakers ignored both of Trump’s demands in the final bill, which contains many other rebukes of his tenure as com-

mander in chief.

The defense bill would restrict the president’s emergency authority to redirect military construction funds, setting a limit of \$100 million per year for domestic projects — a retort to Trump’s moves to repurpose billions in such funds for his border wall

## Pelosi accuses GOP of ‘subverting’ Constitution

More lawmakers backed failed attempt to undo Biden’s win in high court

BY MIKE DeBONIS  
AND JOHN WAGNER

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi accused House Republicans of “subverting the Constitution” in a scathing broadside Friday issued after the top Republican leader and the brother of Vice President Pence joined 124 other GOP members in supporting a bid to effectively reverse the results of the presidential election in the Supreme Court.

Pelosi (D-Calif.) wrote in a letter to Democratic colleagues that Republicans are “engaged in election subversion that imperils our democracy” and called the GOP-backed lawsuit “an act of flailing GOP desperation.”

Late Friday, the Supreme Court rejected the long-shot Texas bid to overturn Democrat Joe Biden’s win.

The letter is a rhetorical escalation for Pelosi, who had largely dismissed Republican efforts to undo the results of the Nov. 3 presidential election as a pointless sideshow. It also comes as the questioning of the election outcome approaches the

Capitol itself: On Jan. 6, lawmakers will meet to formally count the electoral college votes and ratify the results.

“As members of Congress, we take a solemn oath to support and defend the Constitution,” Pelosi wrote. “Republicans are subverting the Constitution by their reckless and fruitless assault on our democracy which threatens to seriously erode public trust in our most sacred democratic institutions, and to set back our progress on the urgent challenges ahead.”

The decision by House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.), Rep. Greg Pence (R-Ind.) and the other Republicans to publicly support the Texas lawsuit to invalidate millions of votes in four states underscores the deep institutional backing that President Trump enjoys from GOP officeholders in his quest to overturn the election based on unfounded claims of rampant voter fraud.

While some Republican members of Congress have pushed back on Trump, the broad support for the House brief — 126 of the 196-member GOP House conference — suggests that Biden will take office in January with a significant minority of the 535-member House and Senate openly questioning his legitimacy.

The lawsuit filed by attorneys general in Texas and more than a



AL DRAGO/BLOOMBERG NEWS

**House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) backs President Trump’s court efforts during a news conference Thursday.**

dozen other states asked the court to dismiss results in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin and Georgia — swing states Trump won in 2016 and Biden carried in 2020 — an effort Trump championed.

Pennsylvania, in its response filed with the court, called it a “seditious abuse of the judicial process” and called on the justices to “send a clear and unmistakable signal that such abuse must never be replicated.”

The House Republicans’ filing claimed that because “the unconstitutional irregularities involved in the 2020 presidential election cast doubt upon its outcome and the integrity of the American system of elections,” the Supreme Court must step in, after the fact, to declare voting arrangements in

those five states unconstitutional and disallow millions of ballots.

The court’s unsigned order Friday was short: “Texas has not demonstrated a judicially cognizable interest in the manner in which another state conducts its elections. All other pending motions are dismissed as moot.”

The names of McCarthy and Rep. Pence were added to a prior list of 106 who signed onto an amicus brief Thursday. The organizer of the brief, Rep. Mike Johnson (R-La.), said the additional names had been left off Thursday because of a “clerical error.”

In fact, some of the lawmakers simply joined after the fact. McCarthy spokeswoman Michele Exner said the GOP leader decided to join the filing after speaking to Johnson

Thursday night. She also pointed to comments he made at a Thursday news conference expressing support for Trump’s court efforts.

“The president has the right for every legal challenge to be heard,” he said. “He has the right to go to the Supreme Court with it.”

Biden won the election with 306 electoral college votes to Trump’s 232, and he leads the national popular vote by more than 7 million. There has been no evidence of widespread fraud in the election, and last week Attorney General William P. Barr said the Justice Department has found no evidence of widespread fraud that would overturn Biden’s victory.

The growing support among the GOP for the radical effort to undo Biden’s win has alarmed and infuriated Democrats, who are accusing Trump’s congressional devotees of eroding the foundations of American democracy.

One Democrat, Rep. Bill Pascrell Jr. of New Jersey, went so far Friday as to call on Pelosi to refuse to seat any member who signed the filing backing the Texas suit.

“Stated simply, men and women who would act to tear the United States government apart cannot serve as members of the Congress,” he wrote in a letter to Pelosi, calling the lawsuits challenging the election attacks on “the text and spirit of the Constitution, which each Member swears to support and defend.”

Presidential electors in each state are set to cast votes Monday, thus making Biden’s victory official. But Congress has the subsequent ministerial duty of accepting those votes — and entertain-

project.

The bill would also curb the administration’s ability to reduce troop levels in Germany, South Korea and Afghanistan without making significant justifications to Congress. While the provisions will pose a longer-term constraint on President-elect Joe Biden, they are a direct answer to Trump’s past efforts to withdraw U.S. forces from various theaters, over the objections of leaders in his own party.

But those provisions upset Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), who staged a procedural protest of the Senate bill this week to make the point that the president ought to have the right “to end a war, not just to start wars.”

Paul’s protest initially stirred alarm, as senators worried that the delay on the defense bill would have a domino effect and waylay a necessary vote on a one-week deal to temporarily replenish the federal budget, which was otherwise set to expire Friday at midnight. But Paul relented late Friday morning, saying he had no intention of causing a government shut-down. Congress passed the budget bill, and Trump signed it late Friday.

Trump and his advisers have also objected to the limitations on troop reductions, listing those earlier this week as one of several reasons the president would reject the bill. It is not clear if their silence since the bill passed is an indication that the president will abandon his protest and sign the measure.

The defense bill has been ultimately signed into law for each of the past 59 years, a streak that no longer appears to be in jeopardy after this week’s votes. But if the president vetoes the legislation, it is likely to still make history as the first time in those years that the defense bill became law via a veto override.

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ing any challenges to their legitimacy — at a Jan. 6 joint session with Vice President Pence presiding.

GOP lawmakers’ broad buy-in to Trump’s effort to overturn the election all but guarantees an effort to once again cast doubt on Biden’s victory despite the gaping lack of evidence and the string of court rebukes that has greeted every effort to question the result.

McCarthy on Thursday laughed when he was asked if he planned to challenge the electoral college tally in January but did not give a firm answer to the question. Others, including members of a fervently pro-Trump House Freedom Caucus, have made clear they will seek to lodge such a challenge.

Under federal law, however, they will need to win support from at least one senator to force a more extended debate on whether any state’s electors ought to be questioned. No Republican senator has yet said they will do so, although several have not ruled it out.

Even if a senator were to join a House member to sustain a challenge, it is unlikely the challenge would succeed in a vote of the Democratic House and a narrowly divided Senate, where several Republicans have been sharply critical of the unprecedented effort to overturn a presidential election.

“I don’t think that’s a good idea,” Sen. John Cornyn (R-Tex.) said this week.

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Felicia Sonmez contributed to this report.

## As part of defense-spending bill, Congress bans anonymous shell companies

BY JEANNE WHALEN

A groundbreaking measure to end the creation of anonymous shell companies in the United States cleared Congress on Friday as the Senate joined the House in passing a defense-spending bill with a veto-proof margin.

The Corporate Transparency Act, which was tacked onto the defense bill, would require corporations and limited liability companies established in the United States to disclose their real owners to the Treasury Department, making it harder for criminals to anonymously launder money or evade taxes. The rule applies to future and existing entities alike.

The measure passed the Senate with an 84-to-13 vote as part of the National Defense Authorization Act, which cleared the House earlier this week. Trump pledged to veto the defense bill — one of few laws that passes every year — because it doesn’t include his demand to repeal liability protections for social media companies. Trump also opposes a clause that

orders military bases named for Confederate leaders to be renamed.

The ban on anonymous shell companies was years in the making, as supporters slowly built a coalition of Democrats, Republicans, law-enforcement officials and even business groups that originally opposed the idea, such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

“We are on the verge of celebrating the most significant anti-money-laundering victory in a generation due in large part to the widespread and growing support for reform,” said Clark Gascoigne, senior policy adviser at the FACT Coalition, an alliance of anti-corruption groups that helped push for the legislation.

Nearly 2 million corporations and limited liability companies are registered each year in the United States, at the state level. Few states today require companies to disclose their true owners, with Delaware and a few others turning the registration of anonymous companies into big business.

That’s one reason the U.K.-based Tax Justice Network has named the United States the globe’s second most financially secretive jurisdiction, behind the Cayman Islands and ahead of Switzerland.

Delaware Secretary of State Jeffrey Bullock last year endorsed the Corporate Transparency Act, calling it a “fair, bipartisan compromise” that would make it the federal government’s responsibility to collect the ownership data, which he said was better than a “piecemeal” state-by-state approach.

Tolerance of anonymous shell companies has long helped drug- and human-traffickers, organized crime groups and foreign kleptocrats launder their ill-gotten gains through the U.S. financial system, supporters of the legislation say. It took Michael Cohen, President Trump’s former lawyer, only a few days to set up and use an anonymous Delaware LLC to pay hush money to Stormy Daniels, in violation of campaign finance laws.

Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney

(D-N.Y.), who introduced the legislation to the House in 2009, and continued resubmitting it each year, said U.S. shell companies have helped corrupt foreign leaders and criminals anonymously buy luxury real estate in her district, which includes Manhattan.

“If you drive through my district at night you will find a lot of apartment buildings with absolutely no lights on,” Maloney said during a news conference this week to mark the House passage. “They were purchased purely to hide money and act as a bank account.”

The new law requires anyone registering a new company to disclose the name, address and date of birth of the real owners, and an identification number for each owner, such as a driver’s license or passport number.

Anyone willfully providing false information, including lawyers helping with corporate-registration paperwork, will be liable for fines of up to \$10,000 and prison terms of up to two years.

The Treasury Department’s Fi-

nancial Crimes Enforcement Network will collect the data and provide ownership details to law-enforcement agencies and banks upon request.

The legislation has limitations. The general public won’t have access to the ownership data, a disappointment to anti-corruption campaigners, who say public scrutiny would help combat criminal activity.

Bullock, the Delaware secretary of state, said these limits on access to the data were one reason the state supported the legislation.

In some cases, allied nations will be able to request ownership details to aid their own investigations, said Gary Kalman, director of the U.S. office of Transparency International, a big backer of the legislation.

In another transparency setback, the law also exempts some entities from the disclosure requirements, including domestic investment funds that are advised and operated by a registered investment adviser. Gascoigne said that exemption was the result of lobbying by the private-equity and

hedge-fund sectors.

The database is likely to help prosecutors nationwide build cases against criminal groups, said Frank Russo, director of government and legislative affairs at the National District Attorneys Association.

The banking industry became an important supporter of the legislation in recent years, after realizing it would help banks identify the real owners of all accounts, as required under Obama-era regulation.

The legislation will give banks access to the Treasury ownership database to verify information on new customers requesting accounts.

Other developed nations are also cracking down on anonymous shell companies, responding to fears about terrorist financing, and public outrage about corruption and tax evasion. The European Union instructed all member countries to create public databases by 2020 that disclose companies’ true owners. Britain mandated the same in 2016.

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# A doctor who puts the patient at the center of medicine now puts the nation there.

**America, meet Dr. Rochelle Walensky, new director of the CDC.**

Dr. Walensky, Chief of Infectious Diseases at Massachusetts General Hospital, took the Hippocratic Oath at the height of the HIV/AIDS crisis and dedicated her career to fighting infectious diseases. Now she takes an oath to protect the nation's health at the height of COVID-19. Her patients and colleagues at Mass General Brigham—where the brightest minds, leading-edge research and the most advanced procedures and innovation are focused on changing our world—congratulate her.



# THE WORLD

## U.S. recognition of Morocco’s claim is a portent of tension

In the Western Sahara, solo support bucks U.N. resolution on residents

BY SUDARSAN RAGHAVAN

CAIRO — President Trump’s decision to recognize Morocco’s claims over the disputed Western Sahara threatens to fire up existing tensions in the region and deprive hundreds of thousands of the territory’s inhabitants of their right to self-determination.

It also, once again, pits the United States against most of the world.

In exchange for Morocco’s agreement to begin normalizing ties with Israel, the United States on Thursday became the first and only major power to recognize Moroccan sovereignty over the Western Sahara region — an act that Morocco has sought for years.

For the Moroccans, U.S. recognition is a key first step in persuading other major powers, including the European Union, Russia and China, to do the same, analysts said.

“What this does is it adds a major world power in support of Morocco’s claims, which is something that Morocco has lacked until now,” said Samia Errazzouki, a former Moroccan journalist and current doctoral candidate who closely tracks the Western Sahara issue. “That is something that Morocco will likely use in future diplomatic engagements with other countries.”

But getting more nations to recognize Morocco’s claims means going against U.N. resolutions that give the Western Sahara’s indigenous Sahrawi people and the Polisario Front, the pro-independence rebel movement fighting on their behalf, claims to the region. Today, 38 nations, mostly in Africa and Latin America, recognize or maintain diplomatic ties with the Sahrawi Democratic Arab Republic, which became a member of the African Union in 1984.

“This will have no effect whatsoever on the legal nature of our question,” said Sidi Omar, the Polisario Front’s U.N. representative, referring to the U.S. recognition. “The United Nations doesn’t recognize Morocco’s sovereignty.”

The U.S. decision comes amid rising tensions between Moroccan security forces and the Polisario Front, which is backed by neighboring Algeria. Last month, the rebels ended a 29-year-old cease-fire and declared a state of war after they accused Morocco of launching military operations in a buffer zone in the Western Sahara. Morocco said it acted because the rebels were allegedly stopping people and goods, and harassing U.N. peacekeeping



FADEL SENNA/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

A pickup truck passes by a hilltop manned by Moroccan soldiers on a road between Morocco and Mauritania at Guerguerat, in the Western Sahara, on Nov. 23

troops, which the United Nations later denied.

On Thursday, the animosity spilled into social media, with Omar, the Polisario envoy, declaring in a blistering tweet that Trump’s recognition “shows that Morocco’s regime is willing to sell its soul to maintain its illegal occupation of parts of Western Sahara.”

In a statement, the rebels declared the agreement “a blatant violation of the United Nations charter and the resolutions of international legitimacy.” The move, the group added, “obstructs efforts by the international community to find a solution to the conflict.”

The Western Sahara region, a former Spanish colony, was annexed by Morocco in 1975. That touched off a 16-year conflict between the rebels and the Moroccan government that lasted until the United Nations brokered a truce in 1991. Morocco now controls roughly three-quarters of the Western Sahara, a stretch of territory in the country’s southwest, while the Polisario and Sahrawi Republic oversee



DEBBIE HILL/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

The U.S. recognition was in exchange for Morocco’s move to normalize relations with Israel. Above, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and King Mohammed VI of Morocco.

the rest. The United Nations recognizes the entire area as a “non-self-governing territory.”

More than 100,000 people have fled the conflict and repression in the Western Sahara and now live in desolate conditions as

refugees in the Algerian desert. Many have placed their hopes on the promise of a referendum on independence, which the United Nations is mandated to oversee but has yet to take place. Their future is now more uncertain

than ever.

With the United States wielding veto power in the U.N. Security Council, the prospects for a referendum are even more diminished. And if more governments follow the U.S. stance, international recognition of an independent Sahrawi nation will be elusive.

“It puts the nail in the coffin in terms of any possible referendum,” said Errazzouki. “Without a referendum, it’s going to have an impact on what future steps the Polisario Front and the refugees will take. And as we have seen in the past few months, war is not off the table.”

Tensions could spill across borders. Algeria, the rebels’ main benefactor, has its own internal problems to deal with, including an economic crisis, political and social unrest and a president who has been hospitalized for covid-19 since late October. But the country could intervene if the Polisario Front is actively targeted.

“Morocco, emboldened by what is clearly a U.S. endorsement, will feel free to pursue its war effort against the Polisario

Front, which may appeal for the intervention of Algeria, its main foreign backer,” said Hamish Kinnear, a North Africa analyst at Verisk Maplecroft, a political risk consultancy, in an emailed analysis.

Kinnear added that U.S. recognition “is unlikely to lead to an overnight change in the position of major countries,” noting that even close allies of Morocco, such as France, agree with the United Nations on the status of the Western Sahara.

“Whatever other countries choose to do, that will be their own business,” said Omar, adding: “We will continue our struggle until we achieve our freedom.”

The Polisario Front, he said, remains hopeful that the incoming administration of President-elect Joe Biden will reverse the “decision taken by Donald Trump, which is in violation of basic norms of international law.” But Kinnear and other analysts said such a move is unlikely because it would probably torpedo Morocco’s normalization with Israel.

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### DIGEST

#### ALBANIA

##### 3rd day of unrest over police curfew killing

New street clashes between demonstrators and police erupted in Albania’s capital Friday, the third day of violent protests over a man’s fatal shooting by police enforcing a coronavirus-linked curfew.

Defying a ban on public gatherings ordered because of the pandemic, hundreds of people gathered in front of the main government building in Tirana and threw stones, flares and firecrackers at police. Officers responded with tear gas and water cannons.

The protests, which have triggered political tension between the socialist government and the main opposition party, follow the death of Klodian Rasha in Tirana during curfew hours early Tuesday. Police say he ignored officers’ calls to stop, and ran away.

Prime Minister Edi Rama has apologized for what he called the “inexplicable and completely unreasonable” shooting, and his interior minister resigned Thursday.

— Associated Press

#### UKRAINE

##### ICC prosecutor to seek probe of eastern war

The prosecutor of the International Criminal Court said Friday that she would seek permission to open a formal investigation into whether war crimes and crimes against

humanity were committed during the Ukraine conflict.

Fatou Bensouda, whose office has been examining possible atrocities in the conflict in eastern Ukraine at the invitation of Kyiv since 2014, said she had “reasonable basis to believe that

a broad range of conduct constituting war crimes and crimes against humanity have been committed” during the conflict.

Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014, and fighting broke out in eastern Ukraine the

following month between pro-Russian rebels and Ukrainian government forces.

Judges must agree before Bensouda, whose term ends in June, can open a formal investigation.

— Reuters

#### MYANMAR

##### Rohingya woman files claim in family death

A Rohingya woman is seeking \$2 million in compensation for the death of her husband, who

was killed by soldiers during a 2017 military crackdown in western Myanmar, lawyers said.

The nonprofit Legal Action Worldwide (LAW) and law firm McDermott Will & Emery said they filed a complaint Thursday with Myanmar’s human rights commission on behalf of Setara Begum, 23, whose husband, Shoket Ullah, was killed at Inn Din village in Rakhine state.

Her claim is the first related to the Rohingya known to have been filed through Myanmar’s rights commission, LAW said.

Shoket Ullah, 35, was among 10 men and boys killed by soldiers and villagers and buried in a shallow grave in September 2017, a Reuters investigation found. The military said it sentenced the soldiers to 10 years with hard labor, but they were released after less than a year.

Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, who documented the killings, spent over 16 months in jail after being convicted of obtaining state secrets. They were released in an amnesty in May 2019.

— Reuters

**Venezuela reports thwarting refinery attack:** Venezuela’s oil minister said security forces thwarted an attack on a key refinery as the nation with vast oil reserves struggles to meet its domestic gasoline demands. Two Venezuelans were arrested and investigators confiscated explosives the two planned to use in an attack on El Palito refinery, said Petroleum Minister Tareck El Aissami, adding that the men said they were taking orders from Colombian officials.

— From news services



NATACHA PISARENKO/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Abortion rights activists watch on a big screen outside the National Congress in Buenos Aires as lawmakers in Argentina’s lower house approve a bill that would legalize elective abortions to the 14th week of pregnancy. The bill now moves to the Senate.

TRANSFER OF POWER

THE BIDEN AGENDA VENEZUELA

With Maduro firmly in power, U.S. has limited options to foster change

BY KAREN DEYOUNG

In an October campaign pitch to Venezuelan American voters in Miami, presidential candidate Joe Biden called President Nicolás Maduro “a dictator, plain and simple,” vowed to continue U.S. sanctions against him, and said he would increase humanitarian spending for Venezuelans enduring “enormous suffering.”

It wasn't enough to swing the Florida vote in his favor. After President Trump called Biden a “socialist” and said the Democrats would turn the United States into another Venezuela, Venezuelan and Cuban American votes helped Trump win the state.

But even though Trump has imposed “maximum pressure” sanctions on Maduro's Venezuela, recognized opposition leader Juan Guaidó as the country's legitimate leader, and hinted at various times that he would negotiate with Maduro or would use the U.S. military to oust him, his policies have accomplished little.

Maduro remains firmly in power, backed by Cuba, Iran, Russia and his own country's military forces. The sanctions — along with years of domestic corruption and mismanagement — have helped destroy Venezuela's once-rich economy. Venezuela has become a primary nexus for illegal narcotics flowing to the United States.

In the meantime, millions have fled the country. Those left behind live in a virtual police state where the level of violence is the highest in the hemisphere, and the level of access to sufficient food and health care is among the lowest.

The Biden administration will be limited in what it can do to change the situation in Venezuela anytime soon. Advisers

have said that Biden does not plan to lift sanctions or U.S. indictments against Maduro and a long list of his cronies and officials.

Instead, he wants to increase pressure on Maduro by broadening the circle of countries seeking change in Venezuela. Trump has criticized European governments for insufficiently cracking down on Maduro; Biden hopes to enlist them in a more coordinated effort to support the opposition. He has said he will increase the United States' profile in Latin America overall.

Biden aides have said he will not recognize the results of a Dec. 6 legislative election — arranged by Maduro to install his own lawmakers and replace Guaidó, whose claim to be “interim” president has been based on his position as elected head of the opposition-controlled Legislative Assembly.

Even before the election, Maduro had replaced the heads of several opposition factions by fiat, and Caracas is rife with rumors of senior opposition figures who have sold out to the regime.

Guaidó and his allies boycotted the vote, which they say was rigged, and called on Venezuelans to do the same. They have said they will remain in office after their terms expire on Jan. 5.

But nearly two years since Guaidó was first recognized by the United States and dozens of other countries in Latin America, his popularity has waned, as Maduro remained in power. The opposition has become so fractured that Guaidó's days as its leader may be limited no matter what Maduro does, and it is not clear whether any one figure has the breadth of support to replace him.

One of Biden's main priorities



CAROLINA CABRAL/GETTY IMAGES

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, speaking at Miraflores Government Palace in Caracas on March 12, announces restrictions on travel and mass gatherings to try to stem the coronavirus.

The Biden Agenda: Foreign policy

President-elect Joe Biden is preparing to reverse Trump administration policies with an ambitious Day One to-do list. The Washington Post will be examining Biden's approach to health care, climate change, economic policy and social justice in coming weeks. Past: Immigration.

Read more about his foreign policy agenda online now at: [wapo.st/biden-foreignpolicy](https://wapo.st/biden-foreignpolicy)

will be to try to unify the opposition — an uphill task that has frustrated the Trump administration — to better position it to confront Maduro and re-energize its appeal to weary and disillusioned Venezuelans. It is they who should be negotiating Maduro's exit, Biden aides have said, not the United States.

Opposition leaders have said they hear the message, and are compiling a new agenda and

structure that will pare back their presence overseas — where Guaidó has opened embassies and appointed representatives — and increase it in their own country. Among the challenges facing Biden is whether to release more money to the opposition from Venezuelan government assets frozen in this country.

Biden has pledged to increase assistance to neighboring countries in Latin America that are

hosting Venezuelan refugees, and to improve the situation of those in the United States. Although Trump has offered rhetorical support, he has refused to allow them the temporary protected status that would regularize their presence in this country and remove the threat of deportation.

Biden's plan to improve U.S. relations with Cuba, reversing Trump's own reversal of the Obama administration's opening

to Havana, could also leverage increased cooperation over Venezuela.

But neither Cuba, nor Russia or Iran, is considered as likely to release its Venezuelan foothold on the South American continent. In that regard, the situation may worsen before it improves, as Iranian ships and Russian planes carrying supplies to Venezuela continue to challenge U.S. sanctions.

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The Washington Post | LIVE

Coming Up This Week



MON. DEC. 14 AT 9:00 A.M.

**A Conversation with Benjamin L. Ginsberg**  
Republican Election Lawyer



MON. DEC. 14 AT 11:00 A.M.

**Race in America: Criminal Justice Reform**  
**Alberto Gonzales**, President George W. Bush’s Attorney General  
**Loretta E. Lynch**, President Barack Obama’s Attorney General



MON. DEC. 14 AT 2:00 P.M.

**The Future Reset: Closing the Racial Wealth Gap**  
**Priscilla Almodovar**, CEO, Enterprise Community Partners  
**John Hope Bryant**, Chairman & CEO, Operation HOPE  
**Rebecca Dixon**, Executive Director, National Employment Law Project  
**Eddie S. Glaude Jr.**, African American Studies Department Chair, Princeton University

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TUES. DEC. 15 AT 12:15 P.M.

**The Future of Work**  
**Stewart Butterfield**, Co-Founder & CEO, Slack  
**Aaron Levie**, Co-Founder & CEO, Box

PRESENTING SPONSOR DELL Technologies



TUES. DEC. 15 AT 1:30 P.M.

**The Path Forward: Combating COVID-19**  
**David Ricks**, Chairman & CEO, Eli Lilly



WED. DEC. 16 AT 4:00 P.M.

**“THE STAND”: Conversation on the New Limited Event Series**  
**Jovan Adepo**, Actor  
**Benjamin Cavell**, Showrunner & Executive Producer

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CBS ALL ACCESS



THURS. DEC. 17 AT 9:00 A.M.

**First Look**  
**Jonathan Capehart**, Opinions Writer  
**E.J. Dionne**, Opinions Columnist  
**Megan McArdle**, Contributing Columnist

To watch recent interviews including the following guests and more, visit [WashingtonPostLive.com](https://www.washingtonpostlive.com)



**Rep. Sharice Davids**  
(D-Kan.)  
**Rep. Deb Haaland**  
(D-N.M.)



**Larry Kudlow**  
White House Chief  
Economic Adviser  
Director of the National  
Economic Council



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# Mexico fast-tracks law that could limit anti-drug relations with U.S.

BY MARY BETH SHERIDAN

MEXICO CITY — Outraged by the arrest in California of a former defense minister, the Mexican government is championing a law that is likely to throttle cooperation with U.S. anti-drug agents and the FBI, setting up a potential crisis in relations as President-elect Joe Biden prepares to assume office.

The legislation has taken the U.S. government by surprise. It was introduced shortly after American authorities tried to defuse tensions with Mexico by dropping drug-trafficking charges against Gen. Salvador Cienfuegos — a highly unusual move.

But the bill is a sign of the fury detonated in Mexico by the detention of Cienfuegos in Los Angeles in October. The legislation was proposed by the office of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, whose party holds a majority in Congress. It sailed through the Senate on Wednesday night and is expected to clear the lower house soon.

The measure would require that Mexican federal, state and local officials get permission from a security panel to talk with “foreign agents” such as those working for the FBI or Drug Enforcement Administration. The Mexican officials would be required to provide a written report about such meetings to the Foreign and Public Security ministries. A representative of the Foreign Ministry would have to sit in on the sessions.

“It will dramatically change the way Mexican law enforcement and U.S. law enforcement cooperate,” said Ana María Salazar, a Mexico City-based security analyst who worked in drug enforcement under the Clinton administration “The extreme requirements will probably paralyze the relationship.”

The measure could affect a wide range of investigations — involving drug-trafficking, money-laundering, kidnapping and other crimes.

U.S. agents are unlikely to share sensitive information un-

der such conditions because it could easily fall into the hands of corrupt officials if distributed widely, former officials say. “That would compromise agents, informants and investigations,” said Mike Vigil, a former chief of international operations for the DEA.

U.S. Attorney General William P. Barr said in a statement that the Justice Department was “troubled” by the legislation, which he said would complicate bilateral cooperation. “The passage of this legislation can only benefit the violent transnational criminal organizations and other criminals that we are jointly fighting,” he said.

Another department official said the measure could have a dramatic impact on bilateral relations. “The immediate effect is a freeze” on sharing information, said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to give interviews.

Drug cooperation is particularly important because Mexico is

the main source of heroin and methamphetamines in the United States, as well as a major gateway for cocaine and fentanyl.

Roberto Velasco, the senior official handling U.S. affairs at the Foreign Ministry, said diplomats had met with officials from the State and Justice departments to explain details of the bill. “It is in our shared interest to continue working together on law enforcement,” he said in a statement.

Cienfuegos served as defense minister from 2012 to 2018, under President Enrique Peña Nieto. He was charged in October in U.S. federal court with helping the H-2 drug cartel, based in northwestern Mexico, to ship heroin, cocaine and methamphetamines to the United States. He pleaded not guilty. Many Mexicans said they believed him; Cienfuegos was not widely perceived as corrupt and had worked on anti-drug efforts with U.S. officials.

The detention was seen in Mexico as a slap at the military —

which is highly regarded and has become a central player in López Obrador’s security and infrastructure plans. Mexico responded to the arrest by threatening to curtail security cooperation with the United States. The Trump administration dropped the charges citing “foreign policy considerations” and sent Cienfuegos home. But that wasn’t the end of the story.

Mexican officials have portrayed the law as necessary to guarantee their sovereignty. “I think there’s a national awakening” after the Cienfuegos case, said Ricardo Monreal, a ruling-party lawmaker who guided the legislation through the Senate. “We want a harmonious relationship with the United States, but not one of subordination.”

He said the language in the legislation was originally harsher. “It was moderated because the president wants a good relationship” with Washington, he said.

Foreign Ministry officials noted that many parts of the legislation, such as providing only limit-

ed diplomatic immunity for foreign agents, are copied from bilateral agreements reached years ago. But the legislation adds new provisions. And it is part of the national security law, which allows criminal charges — even treason — against violators, noted Jorge Lara, a former senior Mexican justice official.

“This will result in many people preferring not to take the risk” of meeting with U.S. agents, he said. “This will generate a kind of paranoia.”

The law was introduced during a political vacuum in the United States, with the Trump administration on the brink of leaving office and a Biden team not yet confirmed. Mexican diplomats insist López Obrador wants a good relationship with the incoming U.S. leader. But Lara said the Mexican government could be using the measure to gain leverage with Biden.

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Matt Zapotosky in Washington contributed to this report.

# E.U. leaders reach deals on climate and economic relief plan

BY MICHAEL BIRNBAUM AND QUENTIN ARIÈS

European leaders gathered in Brussels this week ready to clash on fundamental issues, from democracy to climate change. But they ended a two-day summit on Friday with a string of significant deals, including a plan to give unprecedented money-raising authority to the European Union to help economies struggling through the pandemic.

Although the specter of a disorderly British break from the E.U. on Dec. 31 loomed over the meeting, the prime ministers and presidents spent little time on it. Instead, they fought over a host of other issues — and, ultimately, struck some bargains. Along with a \$2.2 trillion spending plan that includes an emergency pandemic fund, leaders committed to sharply reducing greenhouse gas emissions within the next decade.

It was a diplomatic triumph for German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who intends to retire next year after a 15-year stint as Europe’s most powerful leader. With Germany holding the rotating presidency of the European Council, Merkel chaired the proceedings and brokered the compromise agreements — though critics said too much was given away in the spirit of a deal.

That the leaders met in person in the middle of a raging pandemic, despite the health concerns, was a measure of the stakes. Videoconferencing is ill-suited for give-and-take negotiations. Two leaders had to skip the summit: Croatia’s is ill with covid-19. Estonia’s is self-quarantining after being exposed.

One thing that wasn’t so hard to agree on: Everyone wants good relations with the United States. According to the official declara-

tion after the meeting, the E.U. “looks forward to working together with the United States, in particular to reinforce the global response to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, tackle climate change, enhance the economic recovery, cooperate on digital and technological matters, strengthen mutual trade, address trade disputes, reform the WTO, and promote multilateralism as well as peace and security.”

If only the goals were as simple as listing them.

**Money and democratic norms**

The summit had the potential to be a bitter showdown, with Hungary and Poland threatening to veto the emergency pandemic fund as long as it made receiving the money conditional on respecting democratic principles.

The leaders of Hungary and Poland have weakened the independence of their judiciaries and media and sidelined their political opponents, all the while using generous E.U. subsidies to hand out contracts to their allies.

Their European neighbors have grown increasingly frustrated with the situation — and successfully demanded at a marathon summit in July that if they were going to further integrate and hand new money-raising powers to Brussels, more strings needed to be attached.

But the E.U. operates by consensus when dealing with its toughest questions, so Hungary and Poland had the power to put the brakes on the deal, at a financial cost to themselves and everyone else.

Failure to unlock the spending would have been deeply damaging politically — a sign that Europe’s problems with democracy were spreading into the basic functioning of the bloc. But countries including the Netherlands



FRANCISCO SECO/POOL/EPA-EFE/SHUTTERSTOCK

German Chancellor Angela Merkel leaves an E.U. summit in Brussels on Friday. During two days of talks, leaders clashed on fundamental issues including respect for democratic principles but agreed on a \$2.2 trillion spending plan to help the bloc’s struggling economies.

and Denmark wanted to maintain a hard line.

Ultimately, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban and Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki lifted their veto after the other leaders agreed to issue a statement that there would be limits on how the new rules about democratic norms would be applied. Leaders also agreed to delay when the rules go into effect. But they did not change the legal text that underpins the sanctions.

Both sides painted it as a victory.

“We adopted the recovery plan,” said French President Emmanuel Macron, “without conceding on the rule of law.”

Democracy advocates in Hungary said they worried the delay would give Orban the ability to further consolidate power and take over institutions before 2022

elections.

**A more ambitious climate goal**

Leaders also agreed to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions 55 percent by 2030 compared with 1990 baselines — a more dramatic cut than their previous target of 40 percent. Green advocates said tightening the limits was necessary if Europe is to meet its target of net-zero emissions by 2050.

The discussion was fraught. Leaders haggled through the night, reaching a deal only at 7 a.m. in Brussels. But, in the end, everyone got a little bit.

The 55 percent target remains ambitious even if it is less than the 60 percent originally sought, green advocates say. The target will be measured for the bloc as a whole, meaning that poorer and heavier-emitting Central Euro-

pean countries may have extra slack as their richer neighbors to the west go green more quickly. And the leaders expanded the range of activities that can count toward emission reductions to include carbon-consuming forests and other land use, a shift that may result in watering down the efforts.

“On climate, it’s good that it’s (at least!) -55%,” wrote Bas Eickhout, the co-leader of the Green Party delegation in the European Parliament, on Twitter. “But it’s a net target, which means land-use (with big uncertainties & fight on how to count).”

**Punishing Turkey**

European leaders have also been divided over how to handle an increasingly assertive Ankara, whose naval ships have clashed with European ones in the Medi-

terranean and which is engaged in gas exploration in Mediterranean waters claimed by Greece and Cyprus.

Greece, Cyprus and France have led a push for wide-ranging sanctions on Turkey. Other European countries, including Germany, have sought to avoid a confrontation, in part because they depend on Turkey to hold back migrants and refugees from entering Europe.

In the end, leaders punted a bit on Turkey sanctions, directing E.U. foreign policy chief Josep Borrell to study the issue and agreeing on a more limited range of measures directed at individual Turkish officials involved in the drilling.

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Birnbaum reported from Riga, Latvia, and Ariès reported from Brussels.

# Hong Kong publisher charged as China cracks down on news media

LAI FROM A1

police swept across the city in an hours-long operation, arresting 10 people including Lai, his sons and executives at Next Digital, his media company. The arrests were accompanied by a raid on the newsroom of Apple Daily — which is published by Next Digital — where nearly 200 officers rifled through papers, shut journalists out of their workplace and carted off boxes of evidence.

Lai’s case will be heard in court on Saturday.

Carrie Lam, Hong Kong’s chief executive, told the U.N. Human Rights Council this year that the security law — which criminalizes vaguely worded offenses such as secession and foreign collusion — would not be retroactive.

Police said Friday that Lai has been charged with “collusion with a foreign country or with external elements to endanger national security” but did not provide details of his alleged crime.

Chinese state media has branded Lai, who became a leading critic of the Communist Party after the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, a traitor and an enemy of the state.

The businessman, who has long-standing relationships on

Capitol Hill, has lobbied Washington for support in preserving Hong Kong’s autonomy and relative freedoms compared with the Chinese mainland.

This week, Jake Sullivan, the national security adviser to President-elect Joe Biden, tweeted that he is “deeply concerned about the continuing arrests and imprisonment of pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong.” The State Department also imposed sanctions on 14 Chinese officials for Beijing’s “unrelenting assault” against Hong Kong’s democratic processes, adding to measures against other top officials, including Lam and the head of Beijing’s liaison office in the city.

Lai has been unable to travel since his passport was confiscated early this year, according to Mark Simon, his confidant and former business aide. But Lai has continued to give interviews in support of Western sanctions against Chinese and Hong Kong officials.

Three others have been charged under the security law, including Tony Chung, a 19-year-old activist who founded a student group that called for Hong Kong’s independence. Chung was found guilty Friday on separate charges of desecrating China’s na-



ANTHONY WALLACE/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

Jimmy Lai, founder of the pro-democracy Apple Daily paper, is seen in June, the month Beijing’s national security law took effect. His backers say the charges against him are entirely political.

*“As a well-known public figure in Hong Kong, Lai’s arrest sends a shock to many Hong Kongers.”*

Ma Ngok, political scientist at the Chinese University of Hong Kong

tional flag and unlawful assembly. He has been in jail since October, after he was apprehended by several men while attempting to seek refuge at the U.S. Consulate in Hong Kong.

Tong Ying-kit, 24, was accused of riding his motorcycle into a group of police officers while carrying a flag with the slogan “Liberate Hong Kong; revolution of our times,” synonymous with the anti-government protests that erupted in June last year.

The Hong Kong government says that slogan is now illegal. Tong pleaded not guilty to charges of inciting secession, which also carry a potential life sentence. Adam Ma, also charged under the national security law, has been accused of chanting pro-independence slogans.

Lai’s associates say the charges against him are entirely political. Under the national security law, Hong Kong suspects can be taken for trial to mainland China, where the legal system is opaque and open to abuse.

Bloomberg News said Friday that its detained staff member, Haze Fan, was taken away by plainclothes security officers from her Beijing apartment about 11:30 a.m. Monday.

Details of the investigation

were not immediately available. It comes after months of deteriorating conditions for Western media organizations in China, with a number of American and Australian journalists effectively expelled over the past year. Chinese nationals employed by Western media outlets have been warned by authorities in recent months to watch their step.

“We are very concerned for her, and have been actively speaking to Chinese authorities to better understand the situation. We are continuing to do everything we can to support her while we seek more information,” a Bloomberg News spokesperson was quoted as saying in one of the news agency’s articles.

Fan, a Chinese national, has worked for Bloomberg News in Beijing since 2017, with prior stints at CNBC, Al Jazeera, CBS News and Thomson Reuters, according to her LinkedIn profile.

For Bloomberg News, she worked on China business news topics, traditionally considered less risky for Chinese nationals than political news.

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THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

After months of preparation, cargo carriers are poised to deliver vaccine

BY LORI ARATANI

They’ve spent months preparing, investing millions in new systems, running test flights, meeting with government officials on logistics — and now cargo carriers and commercial airlines are poised to begin delivering the first doses of the coronavirus vaccine to communities across the country.

According to officials at Operation Warp Speed, shipments of the vaccine developed by Pfizer and German biotech firm BioNTech are expected to begin within 24 hours after the Food and Drug Administration gives emergency authorization for its use. The FDA authorized the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine Friday night.

“Once the vaccines are vetted and approved, we will again rely on the transportation sector, as we have throughout this year, to complete what has been one of the biggest logistics challenges in recent history,” Sen. Deb Fischer (R-Neb.) said Thursday at a Senate hearing where executives from FedEx and United Parcel Service, the two companies expected to

handle the bulk of vaccine deliveries, detailed their plans.

Added Rachel Levine, Pennsylvania’s health secretary and the president of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, “Distributing the covid-19 vaccine along with administrating it is a herculean effort, one that our nation has never experienced.”

The endeavor comes as the United States grapples with a surge of coronavirus infections. More than 100,000 people have been hospitalized, and the death toll from covid-19 is expected to soon surpass 300,000.

The vaccines will be shipped in custom containers that can be tracked throughout their journey. Special command centers have been set up by FedEx and UPS to monitor the vaccines as they travel, executives said. And the shipments will have their own escorts.

The vaccines are being dispatched at the busiest time of the year for carriers. But executives from FedEx and UPS assured lawmakers that the vaccine will take priority.

“This is who we are and what

we do,” Richard W. Smith, regional president of the Americas and executive vice president at FedEx Express, told the Senate panel. “Once approved, this will be a top priority for the FedEx Express network.”

Smith said the company, which delivers about 17 million packages a day, was planning for a record holiday shipping season even before it was tasked with delivering the vaccine and has hired an additional 70,000 people, some of whom could stay on to help as holiday deliveries taper off and vaccine deliveries ramp up.

The company’s fleet includes more than 670 planes and 180,000 ground vehicles, and can deliver to every Zip code. During the H1N1 outbreak in 2009, FedEx transported more than 80 million doses of that vaccine.

UPS, which typically delivers 25 million packages a day, a number that has increased to 34 million ahead of the holiday season, has added 100,000 temporary employees, said Wes Wheeler, the company’s president of global health care.

Cargo carriers say they are ac-

customed to working with sensitive pharmaceuticals that require special handling.

“This is just an extension of what we do on a regular basis,” said Steve Alterman, president of the Cargo Airline Association. “The major challenge is not going to be the distribution but getting it into people’s arms.”

Still, Alterman cautioned that there may be bumps in the road as the industry gears up to deliver millions of doses.

It is not just the vaccine that carriers must focus on. The Pfizer vaccine will be shipped separately from the supplies — such as syringes, needles, face shields and alcohol wipes — needed to administer it.

Levine, the Pennsylvania health secretary, noted in her testimony that in test runs of Operation Warp Speed’s distribution system, at least one “significant” issue arose in a quarter of the mock shipments. In some instances the “vaccines” arrived but not the supplies to administer them, she said.

“Vaccine that arrives without the ancillary supplies required to administer it will delay the vacci-

nation of key prioritized populations,” Levine noted.

Wheeler, of UPS, said the company’s goal is to ensure that the supplies arrive a day ahead of the vaccine. That also will enable the company to verify that the delivery address is correct.

Officials at the Transportation Department also have spent months preparing to ensure that the vaccine can be distributed quickly.

“The Department has laid the groundwork for the safe transportation of the COVID-19 vaccine and is proud to support this historic endeavor,” Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao said in a statement.

In October, the department established a special team at the Federal Aviation Administration to support the distribution of coronavirus vaccines. The FAA COVID-19 Vaccine Air Transport Team also is providing support to Operation Warp Speed.

Since the Pfizer vaccine must be kept at a temperature of minus-94, the FAA has worked with carriers to provide guidance on safely transporting large quantities of

dry ice in air cargo, Transportation Department officials said.

The agency also has put measures in place to ensure that air traffic control centers will be staffed to provide around-the-clock service to keep critical shipments moving and to ensure that flights carrying vaccines are prioritized.

FAA officials said the agency will handle flights carrying vaccines the same way it handled flights containing personal protective equipment in the spring. Airlines will provide lists of flights ferrying vaccines to the FAA’s command center, which will alert air traffic facilities that these are “priority” flights.

While passenger airlines including United, American and Delta have done trial shipments to test their ability to move the vaccine quickly under the necessary conditions, FedEx and UPS are expected to handle distribution in the United States.

American Airlines began conducting test flights between Miami and South America in mid-November.

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FDA signs off on emergency authorization for Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine

VACCINE FROM AP

tists to try to ward off President Trump’s importuning on the vaccine and keep the review process apolitical and transparent in hopes of boosting public confidence in the shots. The FDA already had planned to clear the vaccine Saturday morning, and accelerating the authorization to Friday night was not expected to change the delivery timeline of the first shots.

The nation set a record for covid-19 deaths Thursday for the second day in a row, surpassing 3,300. The death tally for Friday was 2,950, only slightly lower, bringing the U.S. death toll to nearly 295,000.

Federal officials have said distribution of the first 2.9 million doses of the highly effective vaccine would begin within 24 hours of an authorization. Meanwhile, an advisory committee for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which has recommended that health-care workers and nursing home residents be the first recipients, was expected to bless the vaccine on Saturday, paving the way for inoculations to begin early next week.

The vaccine achievement creates a paradigm for vaccine development, proving that fast and flexible technologies paired with a single-minded focus by pharmaceutical companies and government can accomplish in 11 months what typically takes years. And it marks a rare triumph for the Trump administration, which in many other areas — such as ensuring adequate testing supplies and providing consistent guidance on whether to wear masks — has failed to produce a coherent and sustained response to the crisis.

“It’s an all-capital-letters, followed by several exclamation points,” accomplishment, said Howard Markel, a medical historian at the University of Michigan who predicted that the scientists who were responsible will be lionized for ending the pandemic.

Daniel Carpenter, a political scientist at Harvard University, said it was unprecedented to go from the discovery of a disease to the development of a vaccine in 11 months. The shortest timeline previously was for the mumps vaccine, which took four years. Most vaccines are produced for ailments that have been around for a long time, after years of research often marked by failures and disappointments. In the case of AIDS, there still is no vaccine, nearly four decades after HIV was identified.

Pfizer and its Germany-based partner, BioNTech, harnessed a fast, flexible genetic technology that had been in development for decades but never deployed in an approved medical product. It was used to build a vaccine that surpassed all expectations by being 95 percent effective at preventing disease in a clinical trial with tens of thousands of participants. The vaccine has already been approved in Britain, Canada, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Meanwhile, the FDA, working closely with the companies, conducted an accelerated review that compressed into three weeks the typical months-long scrutiny of safety, effectiveness and data on manufacturing quality.

Operation Warp Speed, the administration’s effort to accelerate the development and distribution of coronavirus vaccines and treat-



BRYAN WOOLSTON/REUTERS

**LEFT: A sign directs health-care workers to a rehearsal for the administration of the Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus vaccine in Indianapolis. RIGHT: Katie Ramirez watches her mother, Claudia Campos, swab the mouth of her daughter Hailey at a testing site in Los Angeles.**



JAE C. HONG/ASSOCIATED PRESS

ments, has spent billions of dollars on a portfolio of vaccines, with Pfizer-BioNTech’s being the first to cross the finish line. Unlike the other companies, Pfizer and BioNTech did not take government money for research and development, but they did receive a \$1.95 billion contract for 100 million doses, about 25 million of which will be delivered this year.

“To get there has required a host of innovations. . . . Any one of those would have been cause for considerable amazement,” said Francis S. Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health. “But when you put them together, it’s a path so revolutionary it would be hard to imagine somebody contemplating it five years ago.”

But while the vaccine enterprise has been impressive, its credibility has been repeatedly threatened by Trump, who for months pressured the FDA to authorize a vaccine before Election Day and, when that did not happen, bitterly accused the agency and Pfizer of deliberately orchestrating delays to harm his reelection prospects. On Friday, he continued his criticism on Twitter, calling the agency “a big, old, slow turtle,” adding, “Get the dam vaccines out NOW.”

The White House maneuvers seemed designed to ensure Trump gets credit just as the vaccine crosses the finish line. But experts said his behavior risked undermining public confidence — not because it would force a vaccine through prematurely but because it could create the appearance that politics, not science, drove the decision.

“There was no plausible way the FDA would not authorize this vaccine . . . but this makes it appear [their decision] is politically motivated,” said Dorit Reiss, a professor of law who writes about vaccine policy at the University of California Hastings College of the Law. “Making it appear there was political pressure will undermine trust.”

Hahn, in a statement Friday, dismissed reports that his job was threatened. “This is an untrue representation of the phone call with the Chief of Staff,” he said. “The FDA was encouraged to continue working expeditiously on Pfizer-BioNTech’s EUA request. FDA is committed to issuing this authorization quickly, as we noted in our statement this morning.”

The White House said in an email that “we don’t comment on private conversations, but the Chief regularly requests updates on progress toward a vaccine.”

The political machinations are in sharp contrast to the impres-

sive scientific achievement of producing a vaccine in record time. The Pfizer-BioNTech product, and the one right on its heels, from biotechnology company Moderna, use a snippet of genetic material encapsulated in a fat bubble to instruct cells to build the spiky proteins that dot the coronavirus. These shots will be the first time the genetic technology has been used in people outside clinical trials.

The government’s big bet on the promising method, which allowed for much faster vaccine development, was controversial but is paying off: Moderna’s shot is expected to be authorized shortly after a review by the FDA’s outside advisers scheduled for Thursday. The biotech companies behind the vaccines, Moderna and BioNTech, have never made a commercial product but ballooned into pharmaceutical heavyweights, with Moderna valued at \$60 billion and BioNTech at \$30 billion.

“I feel focused, and I feel also that this is a huge task,” said Ugur Sahin, chief executive of BioNTech.

While a potential lifesaver for those who receive it, the new coronavirus vaccine is not likely to have a dramatic impact on the immediate course of the pandemic. The supply of vaccines will initially fall far short of the 300 million doses some officials had hoped for last spring, when Operation Warp Speed was created.

In addition, formidable challenges lay ahead involving the massive scale-up of manufacturing and a complicated distribution plan overseen by cash-strapped states. On scientific questions, experts still do not know how long the vaccine’s protection lasts.

While the CDC’s Advisory Com-

mittee on Immunization Practices has recommended that health-care workers and nursing home residents be first in line for the vaccine, states ultimately will have the final say on which groups get priority. Much of the general population — including younger people who do not have underlying health conditions or jobs that put them at risk — are unlikely to be offered the vaccine before late spring or early summer. And if a significant proportion of Americans spurn the shot, efforts to banish the coronavirus or turn it into a low-level threat could be made much more difficult.

Still, the unquestionably good news on the Pfizer shot arrives as other vaccines also have moved forward: AstraZeneca and the University of Oxford published results in a peer-reviewed journal, China’s Sinopharm announced positive results, and Russia has reported promising data on a vaccine. But even multiple successful vaccines may not prove enough to reach all the world’s people.

“The entire world is seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, and for most of the world, they are still in a very, very long tunnel, and that’s the problem,” said Richard Hatchett, chief executive of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, a nonprofit group that funds vaccine development. “The reason we’ve developed the vaccine is to end the pandemic, and you don’t end the pandemic until you. . . protect the most vulnerable people, who are globally distributed.”

The FDA’s action came the day after an agency advisory committee found that the benefits of the Pfizer vaccine exceeded the known risks and recommended that an emergency use authorization be granted for people 16 and older. The agency directed Pfizer to keep a close eye on possible

allergic reactions after British health authorities reported two recipients had severe allergic responses after being vaccinated Tuesday.

The vaccine is not recommended for anyone with a known history of a severe allergic reaction to any ingredient, and the patient information sheet warns there is “a remote chance” of an allergic reaction.

FDA emergency authorizations are temporary approvals used to accelerate the availability of medical products during a public health emergency. They require less data than regular approvals and can be issued based on a lower standard. In the case of a vaccine, however, the FDA has said it would use rigorous criteria because millions of healthy people are expected to receive it.

The first 2.9 million shots are expected to be shipped to more than 600 sites — mostly large health-care systems — from Pfizer’s freezer farm in Kalamazoo, Mich., in special coolers packed with 50 pounds of dry ice. The vaccines must be kept at sub-Arctic temperatures, by refreshing the coolers or by storing doses in an ultra-low-temperature freezer.

The government is holding back another 2.9 million doses for the second shot, to be administered 21 days later, and reserving 500,000 doses in case some are lost or spoiled. Officials say it will take time for nursing homes to coordinate with the pharmacy chains responsible for administering shots at those sites. CVS Health plans to administer the first shots of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine in nursing homes Dec. 21, according to spokesman T.J. Crawford.

Government officials project that Moderna and Pfizer will be able to deliver 40 million doses of vaccine this year, enough for 20 million people to receive the full regimen. The pace of vaccination is projected to increase in the first months of next year as manufacturing capacity increases and as other vaccines potentially come online. Data on the effectiveness of a one-shot vaccine from Johnson & Johnson is expected in early January.

But long-term questions about the supply remain. The United States has secured only 300 million shots — enough for 150 million people — from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna and needs hundreds of millions of additional doses to cover the populace. The country has secured additional doses from other vaccine makers, but it is still uncertain whether those vaccines will be successful.

FDA scientists, in their review of the Pfizer data, confirmed the vaccine was safe and highly effective at preventing illness after two shots spaced three weeks apart. They identified a promising signal that the vaccine appeared to provide a level of protection even after a single shot, meaning that vaccinations could begin to have an impact sooner than many had expected.

In its effort to clear the first coronavirus vaccine, the FDA has faced daunting technical and political challenges.

For months, the agency has tried to balance pressures to expedite the vaccine with the need to keep standards high, to reassure the public that a vaccine produced in record time would be safe and effective.

Adding to the sensitivity was the agency’s effort to bolster its own credibility. Its image was tarnished when earlier in the year it authorized hydroxychloroquine, a malaria medicine that Trump repeatedly touted as a covid-19 treatment, then revoked that authorization when subsequent data showed it could be harmful.

In August, Hahn overstated the benefits of another treatment, convalescent plasma, during a briefing with Trump. Stung by criticism from the scientific community, Hahn apologized and began speaking out about the importance of agency career scientists’ making independent decisions.

Peter Marks, director of the agency’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, which oversees vaccines, said during a recent American Medical Association webinar that the FDA helped expedite the clinical trial process by eliminating “dead spaces” that typically occur between phases of investigation by vaccine makers.

To ensure that companies understood the FDA’s expectations, the agency took the unusual step of issuing guidelines in June that specified any vaccine should be at least 50 percent effective compared with a placebo, or saltwater shot. A few months later, after it became clear the agency would employ an emergency use authorization to clear the vaccine, the FDA spelled out detailed standards and called for the manufacturers to produce two months of safety data on half of the trial participants.

That safety requirement meant any vaccine would be delayed until after Election Day, infuriating Trump, who tweeted angrily about the FDA and Pfizer. White House ire intensified when Britain authorized the vaccine first, on Dec. 2.

On the AMA webinar, Marks acknowledged that the agency had paid a price for its careful scrutiny. “Unfortunately, there is a cost to being this careful. Another regulatory agency made the vaccine available before we did,” he said. “That’s because we are really taking care to make sure when people get this vaccine, we will have really vetted it for safety.”

Harvard’s Carpenter said being careful will pay off in the long run with greater acceptance of the vaccine, boosting public health. “You need to think about the confidence effects,” he said.

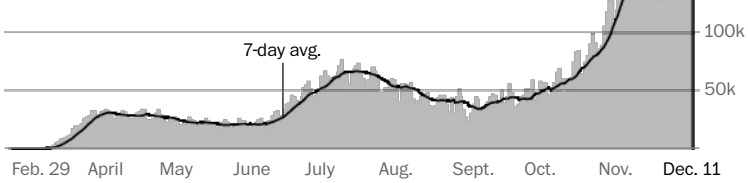
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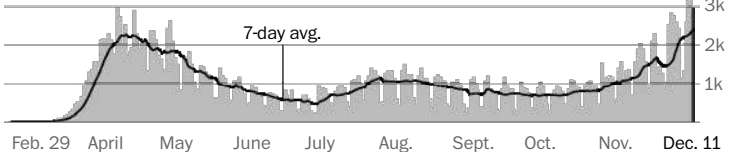
New coronavirus cases and deaths in the U.S., by day

As of 8 p.m. Friday

**CASES**  
Total **15,888,833**



**DEATHS**  
Total **294,760**



THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

For Biden, a tall order: Convincing skeptical Americans to trust a vaccine

BY CHRISTOPHER ROWLAND

Cold, hard science powered the race that produced the first coronavirus vaccine, which was given emergency use clearance Friday evening after the Food and Drug Administration said earlier in the day it would “rapidly work toward” the authorization. The challenge next moves to more-fraught terrain — getting impatient Americans to understand that, while a vaccine is here, most will have to wait.

Hospital systems are experiencing a surge of covid-19 this month, and it will almost certainly take several months or longer in 2021 before people can resume their pre-pandemic lives. Indeed, now is the time to be more careful than ever.

President Trump’s erratic, unrealistic and untruthful leadership during the U.S. pandemic response left the country poorly prepared for the concerted fight needed to vanquish the coronavirus and made it vulnerable to a winter spike in cases and deaths, according to experts on pandemic leadership and mass psychology.

And with no sign that Trump is changing his approach from the White House, the challenge of uniting the nation against the coronavirus will fall to President-elect Joe Biden, who is pledging to enlist the public to quell the pandemic with an appeal based on science.

Biden will have a tricky task, observers say. He must counsel patience and continued mask-wearing, since most Americans will not have access to a vaccine until late spring or summer. The current vaccine timetable prioritizes health-care workers and the elderly residents of long-term care facilities, then essential workers.

At the same time, he will need to embark on a comprehensive education campaign to convince people that it is in their — and their neighbors’ — best interest to get vaccinated.

Most estimates say 60 to 70 percent of the population will need to have coronavirus antibodies in their system, through vaccination or by getting the virus, to achieve herd immunity and vanquish it.

But getting 70 percent of Americans to agree on anything is difficult under normal circumstances, and especially in a time of intense



DEMETRIUS FREEMAN/THE WASHINGTON POST

**President-elect Joe Biden walks to the lectern at the Queen theater in Wilmington, Del., on Wednesday. Although President Trump sidelined the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, health-care advocates expect Biden to restore its traditional education mission.**

polarization and proliferation of baseless conspiracy theories.

“Until we reach herd immunity, which will be sometime next summer, we need to continue wearing masks and distancing,” said Jay Van Bavel, a psychology professor and director of the Social Identity and Morality Lab at New York University who has studied leadership messaging, political affiliation and public reactions during the pandemic.

The slow buildup of vaccine stockpiles through the first half of 2021 will give leaders more time to mount that persuasion campaign for those showing early reluctance, he added.

“We need to start selling people on the wisdom of taking the vaccine now, because polls show that a huge proportion of the population is hesitant to get vaccinated,” Van Bavel said. Gallup’s most recent polling in November found that 37 percent of Americans would not agree to get a coronavi-

rus vaccine, an improvement from the 50 percent who would not agree in September.

Overcoming that hesitancy will require a broad-based education campaign from federal, state and local governments, featuring corporate and religious leaders, celebrities, sports stars and influencers, experts say. They will be up against an explosion of disinformation.

“Unfortunately, we have done a very good job of creating distorted and misleading narratives around this pandemic, and I still know individuals who say, ‘It’s just the bad flu, it’s a hoax,’” said Matthew W. Seeger, a professor and dean at Wayne State University in Detroit and co-author of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention manual on pandemic leadership and communication.

“We now have these wildly competing narratives, and we need to do a much better job of telling the truth about covid-19,” he said.

Trump sidelined the CDC and prevented it from disseminating crucial information about the spread of the coronavirus. Seeger said health-care advocates expect Biden to restore the CDC’s traditional public education mission.

“Traditionally the CDC would engage a variety of public health partners in messaging around these issues,” he said. “They would engage faith leaders, community leaders and people who are credible within communities.”

Just reciting statistics about vaccine effectiveness and safety will not sway people, Seeger added. Personal narratives and storytelling from trusted community members will strike a deeper chord.

“Saying that their neighbor is on a ventilator, those emotional stories may be a more effective way of communicating this than the medical facts,” Seeger said.

Biden introduced his health-care team Tuesday with a pledge

to level with the American people. He has repeatedly told voters to prepare for a “dark winter,” making clear that he does not intend to sugarcoat the months-long battle ahead.

“I know we’ve all had a lot of sleepless nights this year, so many of you staring at the ceiling late at night, worrying if you’re going to be okay,” he said. “All I can tell you is the truth. Things may well get worse before they get better.”

There are clear signs the incoming administration is concerned about societal divisions handicapping mobilization efforts. Vivek H. Murthy, a physician and Biden’s nominee for surgeon general, remarked on the level of division in the nation after his introduction by the president-elect.

“The best policies — and the best vaccines and treatments — will not heal our nation unless we overcome the fear, anxiety, anger and distrust so many Americans are feeling right now,” Murthy

said.

Van Bavel and colleagues have found that people in Republican counties, during the coronavirus crisis, have participated in spatial distancing at lower rates while more frequently visiting nonessential businesses. Conservatives also tended to underestimate their risk of catching the virus, according to Van Bavel’s research.

There is concern the divide will spill into vaccination acceptance. Gallup polling from November showed 50 percent of Republicans were willing to get vaccinated, compared with 75 percent of Democrats.

“One of the major problems is the polarized reaction to the risks of the pandemic, which has been led by President Trump but amplified by right-wing media,” Van Bavel said. “This could create a perfect storm for the continuation of the pandemic in Republican parts of the country well after Democratic regions have it under control.”

The current coronavirus surge, which has struck a number of Republican-leaning states that were spared in the beginning of the pandemic, could help convince greater numbers of people to accept the vaccine.

People also tend to rally around blood drives, food donations and volunteer work in the wake of hurricanes and earthquakes, altruism that could be tapped for a common coronavirus response, Seeger said.

Biden could appeal to citizens’ sense of patriotism to get vaccinated and wear masks, a bid to unify people against a common enemy. And bipartisanship also could go a long way, advocates said. Republican leaders — including Trump, who is getting credit for spurring vaccine development — may throw their weight behind vaccination drives once the vaccine becomes more widely available.

“You really want to appeal to people’s sense that what they are doing, it’s not for them — it’s for other people: ‘Take this because its going to protect people in long-term care facilities and protect people with autoimmune disorders,’” said Peter Harms, a management professor at the University of Alabama who studies leadership. “Like in war, it’s an act of patriotism, and we need everyone to get on board with it.”

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AstraZeneca, Russia’s Sputnik V lab to share data in the hunt for advances

BY ROBYN DIXON AND RICK NOACK

MOSCOW — The developers of Russia’s Sputnik V vaccine will share science with pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca to explore possible advances against the coronavirus, both sides said Friday, in the first major collaboration of labs that were in the frenzied vaccine hunt.

It also is a further sign of the unprecedented pace of vaccine research. Efforts are already underway for improvements and second-generation formulas, even before the widespread distribution of the first crop of vaccines from labs in the United States, Europe, China and elsewhere.

The research is aimed at testing new vaccine formulas using cold viruses, said a statement by the Anglo-Swedish AstraZeneca, which could work in tandem with Russia’s Gamaleya National Center of Epidemiology and Microbiology, whose Sputnik V uses two injections based on vectors of the common-cold virus, or adenovirus.

The AstraZeneca vaccine, created with the University of Oxford, uses a cold virus that typically infects chimpanzees. That teaches the human immune system to block the novel coronavirus.

AstraZeneca “will soon begin exploring within Russia to understand whether two adenovirus-based vaccines can be successfully combined,” the company said.

Russia said AstraZeneca had agreed to explore using a Sputnik V “component” as part of efforts to create an improved vaccine.

For Russia — which trumpeted the partnership in tweets from a Sputnik V account — the deal offers a chance to further promote its flagship vaccine, which is still in Phase 3 trials but became available for health-care workers and others this week in Russia. Initial interest at Moscow clinics for the shots, however, appeared limited as many Russians remained wary of the vaccine.

The potential collaboration also sets up contrasts as wealthy countries snap up the early supplies of the promising vaccines



KIRILL KUDRYAVTSEV/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

**Russia’s Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine is displayed at a Moscow clinic this month. The vaccine is still in Phase 3 trials but was made available for health-care workers and others in Russia this week. Russian officials said Thursday that Sputnik V’s efficacy is 96.5 percent.**

from U.S.-based Moderna and Pfizer, which worked with Germany’s BioNTech. The AstraZeneca Oxford vaccine, which is still awaiting regulatory approval, has been promoted by the company as a “vaccine for the world,” with an eye to affordability and global reach.

Russia says it has orders for 1.2 billion doses from more than 40 countries in Asia, Latin America, Africa, Central Asia, India and other regions.

The British government also recently announced that it would begin testing combinations of two technologies, pairing one dose of a viral-vector vaccine like the one from AstraZeneca with a messenger RNA vaccine, the technology used in the Pfizer-BioNTech and

Moderna vaccines.

AstraZeneca said in a statement that such combinations “could help unlock synergies in protection and improve vaccine accessibility and could provide an additional approach to help overcome this deadly virus.”

The news comes as setbacks were announced Friday for two Western vaccines, one developed by France’s Sanofi and Britain’s GlaxoSmithKline and the other by Australia’s University of Queensland.

Russian officials said Thursday that Sputnik V’s efficacy is 96.5 percent, compared with 70 percent for the AstraZeneca Oxford vaccine.

The British medical journal the Lancet on Tuesday published a

peer-reviewed paper on the AstraZeneca vaccine, but questions lingered about how well it worked in people over 55 and about results showing better outcomes with an initial half-dose. Full scientific data on Sputnik V has not been released, but Russia has promised to provide access to all data to any country interested in the vaccine.

“We offered @AstraZeneca to use one of our vectors so they can also have two vectors in their vaccine. AZ confirmed,” the developers of Sputnik V tweeted Friday.

“The new chapter of vaccine cooperation has started today,” another tweet announced. “We made an offer and AstraZeneca accepted it. It all happened here on Twitter!”

Russia’s decision to register and

roll out the vaccine before Phase 3 trials were completed was criticized as reckless by some Western scientists. But Russian officials have grown increasingly hostile and defensive at what they see as Western attacks designed to discredit Russia’s vaccine for commercial reasons.

Igor Konashenkov, a Russian military spokesman, on Friday attacked what he called a foreign-funded “information sabotage” effort against Sputnik V from inside and outside Russia.

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Thursday that the United States and its allies were trying to exploit the pandemic, creating a global vaccine race.

Russia had called for global cooperation to defeat the threat, he

said, “but unfortunately, a number of countries, primarily the Americans and their allies, are trying to use this situation in their geopolitical interests, putting their selfish interests above those of all humanity.”

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Friday denounced unspecified “dirty tricks . . . to discredit our vaccine” and told journalists that “there should not be any rivalry on the vaccine market.”

Sputnik V’s developers on Friday also offered to share the Russian vaccine with France’s Sanofi and Britain’s GlaxoSmithKline to boost their vaccine’s efficacy.

Sanofi and GSK announced Friday that their vaccine would be delayed until the end of next year after their trial found a low immune response in older adults.

“Sputnik V is willing to share its technology with Sanofi and GSK to help in developing their next vaccine,” the Russian Direct Investment Fund, backer of Sputnik V, tweeted. “A partnership of different producers is the way of the future.”

Polling in Russia shows that many Russians remain skeptical about being vaccinated, with anti-vaccine conspiracy theories circulating online, and that some Russians are convinced the coronavirus does not exist. Any collaboration with a major Western drug company could boost Russian government efforts to encourage Russians to get vaccinated.

Clinical trials of a second Russian vaccine, developed by the Vector Center, began Friday.

The global price of the Sputnik V vaccine has been set at about \$20 for two shots. Russian developers say the vaccine can be stored at about 18 degrees, making it easier to store and transport than the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, which must be kept at ultracold temperatures. The AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine, however, can be stored long term at ordinary refrigerator temperatures.

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THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Officials hone messages to get people to line up for shots

MESSAGING FROM A1

this politically charged moment, they also face the formidable task of introducing a new product to people who distrust science and are receiving competing narratives from anti-vaccination campaigns, which were seeding doubt about coronavirus shots before they were even developed.

“The old approach to public health communications was to come to a least common denominator and repeat, repeat, repeat,” said Christopher Graves, founder of the Ogilvy Center for Behavioral Science at Ogilvy Consulting, who has been leading workshops on the behavioral science of health communications with a focus on vaccine hesitancy for the World Health Organization and UNICEF in addition to a major vaccine maker. “When it comes to vaccine hesitancy, it is more like personalized medicine,” he said, “more customized to specific worldviews and cultural filters.”

A safe, effective and widely deployed vaccine remains the best hope of conquering the virus, which continues to ravage the world. In the United States, where non-pharmaceutical interventions such as masks and social distancing have faced widespread resistance, more than 15 million people have been infected and more than 294,000 have died.

The Food and Drug Administration on Friday gave emergency use authorization to the vaccine made by pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech. Officials have said distribution would begin within 24 hours of authorization.

But although vaccine development has been an astounding success, far less money and attention have been focused on getting people vaccinated, particularly after the initial immunization of health-care workers.

“It’s all about putting the ‘public’ back in ‘public health,’” said John Brownstein, chief innovation officer at Boston Children’s Hospital, who runs Vaccine Finder, an online service that helps people locate providers of flu shots and other immunizations. “You want to build engagement. If people feel they are forced, you start getting resistance.”

Some public service announcements have been released on YouTube as well as on radio, and federal health officials plan to roll out a more extensive campaign to win confidence. But the hurdles are considerable. Gallup found that willingness to take a vaccine decreased from 61 percent in August to 50 percent in September before rising to 58 percent in late October and early November.

Anecdotal reports suggest that people’s worries could be even more profound. Brownstein, who tracked online response to a TV appearance, said he was “blown away” by the number of people expressing concern that the vaccines have been rushed into production and may therefore be unsafe, despite the expert scrutiny they have been under.

“We need to be doing everything we can to build an Operation Warp Speed for vaccine communication,” he said. “The communication needs to match everything else.”

The signs of reluctance came early, said Sean O’Leary, a specialist in vaccine-preventable diseases at Children’s Hospital Colorado, who said his colleagues began creating focus groups after childhood vaccination rates dropped off in March, hitting minority communities hard. They did so with an eye to the arrival of a coronavirus vaccine.

“We have specifically enlisted physicians and medical leaders of color to work with those communities, to have a trusted person in a health-care role,” he said.

News that coronavirus vaccines appeared close to receiving emergency authorization prompted prominent gestures of support: Former presidents from both political parties have promised to be vaccinated on camera, much in the way that Elvis Presley bared his upper arm in 1956 to receive a polio shot.

But numerous local health departments say that overcoming fears and building engagement depend on understanding many more intimate neighborhood networks and providing people with role models they may spot on the street, rather than just on TV.

“They are people where someone will say, ‘I know this guy. I’ve seen them on the block,’” said James Garrow, communications director for the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. “They may have 20,000 followers on Instagram. And they’ll be different in West Philly versus North Philly.”

Rupali Limaye, associate direc-



DORAL CHENOWETH/ASSOCIATED PRESS



ASHLEY LANDIS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

tor for the Institute for Vaccine Safety at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, who has worked alongside the Baltimore City Health Department as it partnered with pastors and musical artists, looks ahead to leveraging the experience of doctors as they describe their own vaccinations, side effects and all.

“To me, that is being transparent,” Limaye said.

A particular challenge with the coronavirus vaccine is not only targeting communities with appropriate messages but recognizing that, unlike with a measles or flu shot, the messages will have to shift in coming months.

“It’s going to be changing in terms of the vaccine landscape, in terms of the actual science and vaccines and how the public is responding,” said Mallory Ellingson, whose research at the Yale School of Medicine focuses on improving vaccine communication.

All that is complicated by anti-vaccination groups that saw the potential to seed distrust before a vaccine even existed.

Although public health has traditionally relied heavily on the voice of authority — with experts such as Anthony S. Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, making their case — vaccine opponents use ordinary citizens to tell personal tales, falsely asserting that vaccines damaged family members and creating what researchers call an “asymmetry of passion.”

“They are doing a better job of

putting out this content than pro-vaccine people,” said Renee DiResta, research manager at the Stanford Internet Observatory, who tracks malign narratives across social networks and assists policymakers in their response.

Some have portrayed the pandemic as an engineered plot to mass-vaccinate the planet, she said. Others view the outbreak as an opportunity to depict the coronavirus shots as “a rushed job that would show how risky and poorly tested vaccines are,” she said.

Public health officials are fighting back by emphasizing trustworthy messengers and transparency.

Tabia Henry Akintobi is the principal investigator in Georgia for a federally funded outreach program to ethnic and racial minority communities that have been disproportionately affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

Georgia is one of 11 states to share in a \$12 million National Institutes of Health CEAL grant that Akintobi has been using to partner with community leaders, initially to encourage people to participate in clinical trials and now to focus on delivering vaccines.

A key lesson has been the need to identify and educate community messengers, but the timeline is suddenly very short.

“The time it takes to get people ready is being met with a hurry-up,” Akintobi said. “It’s almost like two opposing forces.”

Robert A. Bednarczyk, a vaccine expert at Emory University’s Rollins School of Public Health, who collaborates with Akintobi,

said community leaders are not the only ones in need of education about the vaccine.

“We spend a lot of time training medical students on the science behind vaccines,” he said. “We don’t spend a lot of time teaching them how to communicate effectively about this.”

The pandemic is forcing a new focus on the power of relatability that goes beyond the virus, he said, and the importance of advising people without patronizing them.

The need for cultural sensitivity can show up in tone and word choice, said Jessica Atwell, an assistant scientist in the department of international health at the Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Atwell, who is working with the Navajo Nation in Arizona, discovered during prior research on maternal health that Centers for Disease Control and Prevention directives had to be retooled to resonate with Native Americans.

Messages asking “Are YOU pregnant?” came across as criticism of an individual pregnancy, said Atwell, who found that Navajo women preferred more general messages such as “Every mother needs to . . .”

Such linguistic shifts can make an enormous difference, said Graves, the behavioral science expert at Ogilvy. So can using terms that reflect, rather than challenge, a person’s core beliefs and identity.

“If I were talking to somebody who is very communitarian and egalitarian, I would talk about protecting the vulnerable,”

Graves said. “If I am talking to their opposites, I am talking about protecting jobs and the economy.”

Underlying these goals is a conundrum that bedevils public health. Its triumphs, including eradicating diseases such as smallpox and removing pollution from drinking water, are taken for granted.

“When something is nonexistent, it’s hard to convey the value of what made it nonexistent,” Graves said.

Vaccines in particular have been their own worst enemy, eliminating the fear of diseases that made people clamor to be protected from them. It’s not clear whether fear of the coronavirus, which for many people is a mild or even asymptomatic illness, will encourage enough of them to get vaccinated to reach herd immunity.

“Everybody has an incentive to free-ride,” said Erez Yoeli, a research scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who specializes in motivating people to do good for others.

Hardcore vaccine opponents probably aren’t worth focusing on, said Katherine Milkman, a professor of operations, information and decisions at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School, as they probably account for less than 2 percent of the population, although their reach through social media is more extensive.

Milkman, who co-directs the Behavior Change for Good Initiative, said strategies should be targeted instead at those who are

**TOP: A flashing sign in Athens, Ohio, reports the number of active covid-19 cases in the community. LEFT: A customer walks by a sign about the coronavirus vaccine at a Walgreens in Long Beach, Calif. ● For an investigation on the spread of the coronavirus, visit wapo.st/VirusSpread.**

persuadable — first to get them to agree to being vaccinated and then to roll up their sleeves.

She advocates “I got my vaccine” stickers to increase peer pressure. She is also expecting the results later this month of a major study with Walmart that tested text messages to see which ones led people to get flu shots. The findings should help in designing coronavirus messaging.

But whatever emerges from that study, Milkman said, some key approaches should be adopted now.

“It’s critical that we reassure people about the convenience of getting the vaccine,” she said. “Hassle factors like lines, paperwork and commuting time should ideally be minimized.”

The nonprofit Ad Council, which has been putting out mask-up and keep-a-distance messages for months, has turned its attention to a \$50 million vaccine campaign that will use multiple platforms to try to convince Americans that shots are safe. It will focus on vaccine hesitancy and reaching communities of color that have been hit hard.

“We’re conducting extensive research to ensure that we have the right message and the right messenger for our key audiences, with a plan to have our first assets in market in early 2021,” Lisa Sherman, the Ad Council’s president, wrote in an email.

These initiatives are happening against a shifting political and social landscape that threatens to continue to erode confidence in public health measures in general and a vaccine in particular. Conservative state legislatures have sought to limit governors’ ability to impose public health restrictions, with successes in Michigan and Wisconsin. And the recent 5-to-4 Supreme Court ruling siding with religious groups in a dispute with New York Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo (D) over the state’s limits on the number of people who may attend services left Limaye concerned that it pitted public health against clergy members — the very local leaders the Baltimore City Health Department has been seeking to engage as reliable messengers.

“How do we continue to work with religious leaders on our side?” she asked. “We need them.”

Ellingson, of Yale, lamented that in the race to make vaccines, messaging has taken a back seat.

“It needs to be something that happened six months ago,” she said. “We can’t change that.”

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# ECONOMY & BUSINESS

▲ **DOW 30,046.37**  
UP 47.11, 0.2%

▼ **NASDAQ 12,377.87**  
DOWN 27.94, 0.2%

▼ **S&P 500 3,663.46**  
DOWN 4.64, 0.1%

▲ **GOLD \$1,843.60**  
UP \$6.20, 0.3%

▼ **CRUDE OIL \$46.57**  
DOWN \$0.21, 0.4%

▼ **10-YEAR TREASURY YIELD 0.89%**  
DOWN 1.5%

**CURRENCIES**  
\$1=104.02 YEN, 0.83 EUROS

BY ELIZABETH DWOSKIN

Facebook has spent years integrating Instagram and WhatsApp: weaving their ad systems, user profiles, databases and other technology with Facebook. What to the public appear as distinct products are one giant social network on the back end.

Today, those technical and strategic decisions — part of chief executive Mark Zuckerberg’s vision of seamless communication across platforms — add enormous complexity to the possibility of breaking up Facebook’s conglomerate of apps, as antitrust lawsuits from 48 U.S. states and territories and the Federal Trade Commission aim to do.

But the technical blending of apps was also a source of major clashes within the company, said six people familiar with the matter who spoke on the condition of anonymity to freely describe sensitive internal matters, and was a way to help control Facebook’s costly acquisitions of companies with independent-minded founders. Officials accuse Facebook of being an illegal monopoly that has hampered innovation and engaged in anti-competitive behavior.

“Instagram is no longer viable outside of Facebook infrastructure. They spent six years moving things over,” said Dmitry Borodaenko, a former Facebook engineer who worked on Instagram infrastructure. “They just can’t undo it with a click of a button. It would take years.” Borodaenko said he believes that the companies should be broken up.

Spinning off WhatsApp, which is far less intertwined with Facebook, would be more like a six-month technical project, said two people familiar with the company’s systems who requested anonymity to speak freely. Another person knowledgeable about WhatsApp who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe sensitive legal matters pointed out that the service handles 1 billion calls and 1 billion messages each day — all running on Facebook’s infrastructure. Unwinding that while preserving reliability could also take years, this person said.

Facebook merged its technology with WhatsApp and Instagram not only in the name of efficiency, sharing engineering resources and maximizing growth. It was also a way to collect even more data about users and generate more advertising dollars — though some of Facebook’s integration plans were stymied several years ago when the European Union began investigating the WhatsApp acquisition.

Zuckerberg’s long-standing vision has been to make text messaging between platforms as simple as communicating with someone who uses a different email provider, according to interviews

## Regulators want to break up Facebook. That’s a technical nightmare, insiders say.

The company has tightly integrated its acquisitions, including their technologies and user data



JEFF CHIU/ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Demonstrators last month outside the San Francisco home of Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg accuse the company of spreading disinformation. The social media giant is now facing antitrust lawsuits from states and the federal government.**

and people who work with him.

Facebook declined to comment. The company said Wednesday that the Federal Trade Commission’s actions would hurt innovation and that the acquisitions had been reviewed by regulators at the time, including the FTC. The company also pointed out that its investments and acquisitions have helped billions of people access useful technologies.

If Facebook were to be broken up, it would be an incredibly rare step and would probably take many years and long legal battles. The last time the government broke up a monopoly was in the early 1980s, when it forced AT&T to spin off the regional telecommunications network known as the Bells. In 2000, a judge decreed that Microsoft, which had already been found to be an illegal monopoly, should be split into two halves. But Microsoft was never broken up because later courts reversed the decision.

Facebook’s greatest asset is the data it has on billions of people.

There has never been a major breakup of a company trading in data.

In 2019, Zuckerberg announced a major strategic push to get Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp to talk to one another, touting a concept known as “interoperability.”

Since then, the company has embarked on an extensive technical project to allow Facebook users to message someone directly on WhatsApp or Instagram, without having to open a separate app. The company believes this will make communication easier and encourage people to spend more time on its services.

In September, Facebook launched a pilot integration between Facebook Messenger, its homegrown messaging platform, and Instagram.

The project to integrate WhatsApp will take years, people familiar with the effort said. That is because WhatsApp is end-to-end encrypted — meaning it has different privacy and security standards than Facebook’s Messenger

— and because WhatsApp collects people’s phone numbers and does not require usernames. While Facebook knows, in some cases, which WhatsApp numbers connect to Facebook profiles, it is working on building a system that would enable a person with just a phone number on WhatsApp to talk to a Facebook user who has not provided a number.

Long before Zuckerberg announced his interoperability push, Facebook was hard at work on merging Instagram and WhatsApp with its core social network. The goal was growth and engagement, or getting people to spend more time on the company’s services.

Instagram’s growth was supercharged by its integration with Facebook, which happened almost immediately after Facebook bought the company for \$1 billion in 2012. The “Instagram,” as it was known internally, according to a person familiar with the effort, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe it, transformed the fast-growing

photo-sharing app. It helped bring new users to Instagram, boosting its audience to more than 1 billion people from 30 million at the time of the acquisition.

Before Facebook purchased Instagram, the start-up stored user data on cloud servers owned by Amazon and other companies, according to two of the people. As soon as Facebook bought the company, it offloaded Instagram’s user data onto Facebook’s custom servers.

Facebook also integrated the back-end technology so it could add its own features to Instagram, such as photo tagging. It further united the networks by enabling users to post Instagram Stories to their Facebook news feeds. It now allows cross-posting in the other direction too, from Facebook to Instagram.

Today, the underlying technology between Instagram and Facebook is identical, the people said. It sits in the same servers and databases and shares the same spam filters, and people who use both platforms have a single ad-

vertising profile. For example, if an Instagram user clicks on a makeup ad within Instagram, Facebook will tell advertisers to market beauty products to the same user when they are on Facebook. These unified advertising profiles have allowed the company to collect even more data about people’s behavior and gain a more complete picture of their habits, fueling its advertising engine.

These integrations have hardly gone smoothly. They prompted so many conflicts that they pushed Instagram’s founders to suddenly quit the company in 2018, according to various reports. According to the FTC complaint, Zuckerberg worried that Instagram’s growing popularity was cannibalizing Facebook, and his move to merge the two products was an attempt to gain more control over Instagram’s direction.

WhatsApp has had a different trajectory than Instagram because its founders were able to keep a more distinct identity for the messaging service, in part because of its focus on encryption and privacy. Unlike Instagram, WhatsApp was not a social network — even if it had some attributes of one. The fact that it was popular in markets outside Facebook’s core base in North America and Europe made it less competitive.

Government scrutiny has also played a role. When the E.U. examined Facebook’s \$19 billion WhatsApp acquisition in 2014, Facebook told antitrust regulators that it would not merge their data. Two years later, Facebook announced it would do just that.

The announcement led the E.U. to relaunch an investigation of the merger, ultimately giving Facebook a minor fine of \$122 million in 2017 for providing misleading information during the vetting of the merger.

WhatsApp engineers stopped a plan to combine WhatsApp user profiles with Facebook profiles, in what was internally dubbed the “EU Pause,” according to one of the people. Today, these profiles are still not combined into one database.

But the effort to do so is underway, according to the people, a sign that Facebook will not be daunted by a government lawsuit that its lawyers estimate could take a decade to fight. And WhatsApp runs on Facebook servers and infrastructure and uses tools, such as an anti-spam filter, built by Facebook.

“Folks figured out how to break AT&T apart, which had a far more complicated physical network,” said Barry Lynn, an antitrust scholar and director of the Open Markets Institute. He calls Facebook’s claims about integration “spin.”

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### DIGEST

#### INSURANCE

##### MetLife unit to be sold to Farmers

MetLife is selling its home and auto insurance business to Farmers Group for \$3.94 billion, the insurers said Friday.

The deal is part of a 10-year strategic partnership in which Farmers, which is owned by Switzerland’s Zurich Insurance Group, will get access to MetLife’s network of agents and take over its property and casualty policies.

Farmers will also be able to sell personal insurance products through MetLife’s group benefits platforms. MetLife says that access will allow Farmers to reach 3,800 employers and about 37 million eligible employees.

Analysts expect more consolidation in the insurance sector, which has seen significant losses because of the coronavirus outbreak.

Last month, RSA Insurance, one of Britain’s oldest insurance companies, agreed to a takeover by Canada’s Intact Financial and Denmark’s Tryg in a cash deal that valued it at about \$9.4 billion.

Even before the pandemic, companies were seeking acquisitions to cut costs. Late last year, New York Life acquired the group life and disability coverage business of the insurer Cigna for more than \$6 billion.

MetLife and Farmers are hoping to close the deal in the

second quarter of 2021. MetLife expects to be divested of its property and casualty business in the first quarter of 2021.

Farmers was founded in 1928 in Los Angeles and acquired by Zurich in 1998.

— *Associated Press*

#### ENTERTAINMENT

##### Live-events industry saw big losses in 2020

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, the concert trade publication Pollstar puts the total lost revenue for the live-events industry in 2020 at more than \$30 billion.

Pollstar on Friday released its year-end report, explaining that the live-events industry should have hit a record-setting \$12.2 billion this year, but instead it incurred \$9.7 billion in losses. The company added that the projected \$30 billion figure includes “unreported events, ancillary revenue, including sponsorships, ticketing, concessions, merch, transportation, restaurants, hotels, and other economic activity tied to the live events.” Those losses accounted for more than \$8 billion.

In March hundreds of artists announced that their current or upcoming tours would be postponed or canceled because of the pandemic. While a few performers have played drive-in concerts and others have held digital events, the majority of artists have not played live in 2020.



ED JONES/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

**Shoppers and delivery workers walk past a row of stalls at Seoul’s Namdaemun Market, the largest traditional market in South Korea. The vendors are closed because of a coronavirus cluster.**

With just a few months on the road, Elton John’s “Farewell Yellow Brick Road Tour” led the year’s Top 100 Worldwide Tours list with \$87.1 million grossed between Nov. 30 and March 7. John’s tour ranked No. 2 last year with \$212 million grossed.

Celine Dion came in second this year with \$71.2 million, followed by Trans-Siberian Orchestra (\$58.2 million), U2

(\$52.1 million) and Queen + Adam Lambert (\$44.6 million). Post Malone, the Eagles, the Jonas Brothers, Dead & Company and Andrea Bocelli rounded out the top 10.

“It’s been an extraordinarily difficult year for the events industry, which has been disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus. As painful as it is to chronicle the adversity and

loss our industry and many of our colleagues faced, we understand it is a critical undertaking toward facilitating our recovery, which is thankfully on the horizon,” Ray Waddell, president of Oak View Group’s media and conferences division, which oversees Pollstar and VenuesNow, said in a statement Friday.

“With vaccines, better testing,

new safety and sanitization protocols, smart ticketing and other innovations, the live industry will be ramping up in the coming months, and we’re sure that at this time next year we’ll have a very different story to tell.”

— *Associated Press*

#### ALSO IN BUSINESS

**Oracle said it has moved its headquarters** to Austin from its home state of California to give employees more flexibility on where they do their jobs. The move from Redwood City, Calif., “means that many of our employees can choose their office location as well as continue to work from home part time or all of the time,” Oracle said Friday in a regulatory filing. The company will continue “to support” its other U.S. office locations in Santa Monica, Calif., Seattle, Denver, Orlando and Burlington, Mass., according to the filing.

**Value Line on Friday reported** a fiscal second-quarter profit of \$5.1 million. The New York-based company said it had a profit of 53 cents per share. The investment research provider posted revenue of \$10.2 million in the period. Value Line shares have increased 9 percent since the beginning of the year. In the final minutes of trading Friday, shares hit \$31.57, a climb of 19 percent in the past 12 months.

— *From news services*

# Robot dog firm Boston Dynamics is getting a new owner: Hyundai

BY DALVIN BROWN

A South Korean automaker is taking over Boston Dynamics, the robotics company best known for concocting viral stunt videos featuring quirky animatrons.

The Japanese conglomerate SoftBank will cede control of Boston Dynamics to Hyundai, the automobile company that owns Kia Motors and Genesis, in a deal valued at \$1.1 billion, the car company announced Friday. Under the agreement, Hyundai will gain an 80 percent stake in the robotics firm while one of Softbank's affiliates will hold the other 20 percent.

Hyundai's controlling stake is meant to enhance its plan for autonomous vehicles and "smart factories," the auto company said. Hyundai said it was interested in Boston Dynamics because the automation company "possesses multiple key technologies for high-performance robots equipped with perception, navigation and intelligence."

"This transaction will unite capabilities of Hyundai Motor Group and Boston Dynamics to spearhead innovation in future mobility," Hyundai executive Euisun Chung said in a statement. "We will also contribute to the society by enhancing its safety, security, public health amid global trends of aging society and digital transformation."

Hyundai also said it benefits from Boston Dynamics' location. The robotics firm has offices in Boston and Silicon Valley, and both regions are known as hubs for robotics innovations. The move also aligns with Hyundai's existing robot division, which creates wearable limbs and walking supports for people who have difficulty getting around.

The deal is expected to close by

*The move aligns with the car company's existing robot division.*

June.

Boston Dynamics is widely recognized for pioneering the field of agile robots that are inspired by animals. The legged robots are built to remain balanced as they maneuver through rocky trails, up and down staircases or through narrow passages. Several videos of the company's robotic dog Spot, cat Cheetah and humanoid Atlas have gone viral, stoking admiration — and terror — across the Internet.

The latest clip on the company's YouTube channel highlights its animallike robots scaling

hills, standing upright, playing sports and navigating industrial settings. Its most popular stunt video, with more than 67,000 views, shows one of the company's boxy yellow robots extending its neck to twist a door handle and open the door. It held the door open for another robot dog to get through.

Boston Dynamics has switched hands a few times since its inception in the 1990s.

Google's parent company Alphabet picked it up for an undisclosed amount in 2013 but shed the company four years later after it didn't fit well with its broader business. Namely, Boston Dynamics didn't have a mass-market product as Google ramped up its smart home division with products such as its Fiber Internet service and Nest speakers.

Boston Dynamics launched its first commercial offering, a configurable robot dog for businesses, in June. It's meant to augment difficult or dangerous human work, according to the company.

SoftBank took over the engineering firm in 2017 in a bid to create "the next technology revolution," it said at the time.

As part of the deal with Alphabet, SoftBank also absorbed the Japanese robotics company Schaft.

*dalvin.brown@washpost.com*



KIM KYUNG-HOON/REUTERS

**A boy watches a Boston Dynamics robot during a demonstration in Tokyo in September. The company was owned previously by Alphabet, followed by SoftBank. Now, Hyundai will take an 80 percent stake, and a SoftBank affiliate will hold a 20 percent stake.**

ANALYSIS

## Lawmakers vote in ways that juice their stock portfolios, research shows

### Members of Congress have faced renewed calls for stricter rules

BY CHRISTOPHER INGRAHAM

A series of well-timed stock trades early in the pandemic brought Justice Department scrutiny on at least five U.S. senators this year over potential insider trading, including Georgia Republicans Kelly Loeffler and David Perdue. Though the inquiries were dropped, both lawmakers have taken heat on the issue as their respective campaigns head into a January runoff election that will determine partisan control of the Senate.

The trades prompted renewed calls for stricter regulation of congressional stock ownership, with proposals ranging from a ban on trading stock while in office to an outright prohibition on stock

ownership for elected officials.

New research from political scientists Jordan Carr Peterson and Christian Grose underscores why tighter regulations might be necessary. They found that members of Congress who own stock tend to vote in ways that benefit their portfolios and that these decisions can't be explained away by other factors, such as ideology or constituent interests.

Lawmakers' decision-making on issues such as financial regulation or economic intervention is "significantly associated with the legislators' ownership interests in the very companies subject to regulation, intervention, and potential rescue," according to a paper written by Peterson and Grose and published in the journal Legislative Studies Quarterly in August. Like any other investor, they "maximize their wealth and the size of their asset portfolios."

Peterson and Grose reached their conclusions after combing through U.S. House members' stock holdings, as described in

mandatory financial disclosures, and comparing their votes on four bills with "immediate and direct impacts" on the stock market:

- The Financial Services Modernization Act of 1999, which allowed "the functional components of investment banks, commercial banks, and insurance companies to operate as a single institution," as Peterson and Grose describe it.

- The Commodity Futures Modernization Act of 2000, which loosened regulations governing complex financial transactions such as credit default swaps and, in the view of many experts, helped pave the way for the financial crisis of 2007 and 2008.

- The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, which created the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) to allow the Treasury Department to purchase assets from failing banks to prevent a collapse of the financial sector.

- The Auto Industry Financing and Restructuring Act of 2008,

which bailed out U.S. automakers Ford, General Motors and Chrysler.

All four measures "represent significant deregulatory or interventionist actions by Congress in the nation's economy in the contemporary era," Peterson and Grose wrote. They had direct effects on the stock market broadly and in a number of cases on the stock prices of specific companies.

Next, they examined whether there was a relationship between lawmakers' stock holdings and their votes on these measures. They controlled for factors that could influence those decisions, such as party, ideology, net worth, income and unemployment in their home district, and political contributions from the affected industries.

Peterson and Grose found parallels between lawmakers' stock holdings and their votes, even after controlling for potential confounding factors. Lawmakers with large stakes in financial companies directly affected by the Fi-

nanacial Services Modernization Act, for instance, were about 1.1 percentage points more likely to support that bill than those with no stock in those companies.

In 2008, lawmakers with considerable holdings in financial companies were about five percentage points more likely to support the creation of TARP than those without similar stakes. And lawmakers with automotive stocks were roughly eight percentage points more likely to vote for the bailout than those without.

These findings cut across party lines. Most of the votes examined attracted broad bipartisan support. "Legislators' financial self-interest, and in particular the amount of their personal investments in the industries subject to regulation, oversight, and intervention, play a larger role than district characteristics and play a role that is relatively large even when compared to the impact of legislator party," Peterson and Grose wrote.

This behavior, it's worth noting,

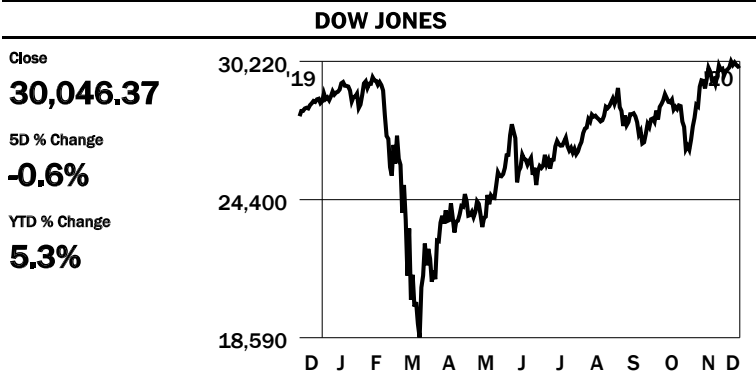
is perfectly legal. While the 2012 Stock Act prohibits members of Congress from insider trading, there is nothing to prevent them from casting votes that increase the value of their assets based on public information. "Further," Peterson and Grose wrote, "it is not prohibited by law for members of Congress who are exposed to the stock market generally to allow this exposure to influence their policy decisions."

As with any study of this nature, the authors caution that the associations they describe are not necessarily causal: It may be the case that legislators who support things such as deregulation and bailouts are naturally inclined to hold more stock in companies potentially affected by those policies.

But regardless of whether stock holdings drive policy or vice versa, the end result is the same: Lawmakers are empowered to let their personal financial interests influence policy decisions affecting millions of Americans.

*christopher.ingraham@washpost.com*

Monitor your investments at [washingtonpost.com/markets](https://www.washingtonpost.com/markets)

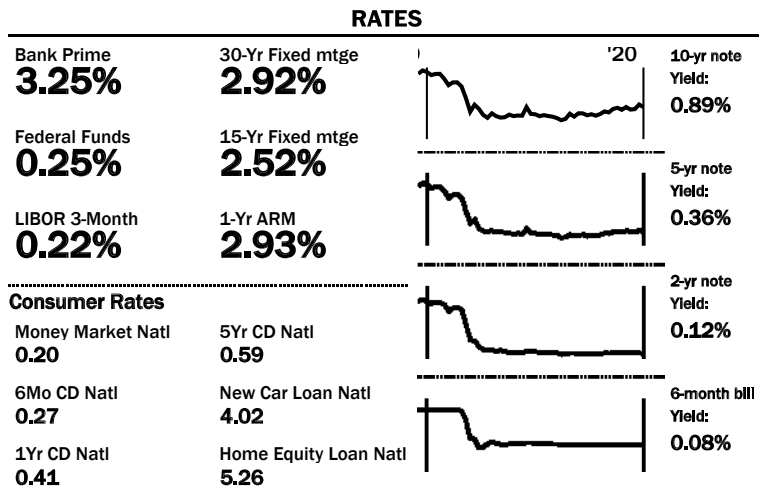
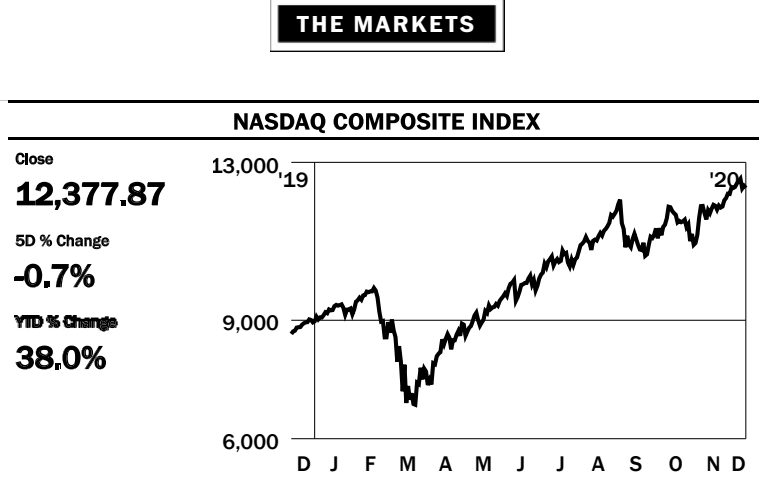
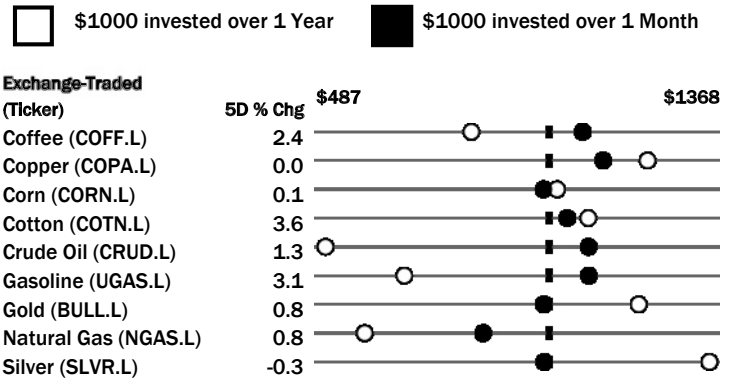


Dow Jones 30 Industrials

Company	Close	5D % Chg	Chg % YTD	Company	Close	5D % Chg	Chg % YTD
3M Co	174.02	0.9	-1.4	J&J	152.95	1.8	4.9
AmerExpCo	120.23	-3.8	-3.4	JPMorgan	119.56	-2.3	-14.2
Amgen Inc	227.40	-0.8	-5.7	McDonald's	207.76	-1.4	5.1
Apple Inc	122.41	0.1	66.7	Merck & Co	82.96	1.2	-8.8
Boeing	230.33	-1.0	-29.3	Microsoft	213.26	-0.5	35.2
Caterpillr	179.29	-1.6	21.4	NIKE Inc	137.41	0.2	35.6
Chevron	92.45	-0.9	-23.3	Prcter & GmbI	136.51	-0.7	9.3
Cisco Sys	44.32	-0.1	-7.6	salsfrc.cm	222.42	-1.5	36.8
Coca-Cola	53.35	-0.9	-3.6	Travelers Cos I	134.95	-0.9	-1.5
Dow Inc	54.00	-1.9	-1.3	UntdHlthGr	337.07	-3.7	14.7
Gldman Schs	239.99	0.2	4.4	Verzn Comm	60.35	-1.9	-1.7
Hnywll Int	214.63	0.9	21.3	Visa Inc	206.24	-3.0	9.8
Home Depot	264.55	0.2	21.1	Walgreens	41.53	-4.3	-29.6
IBM	124.27	-2.3	-7.3	Walmart	147.00	-1.3	23.7
Intel Corp	49.73	-4.3	-16.9	Walt Disney	175.72	14.0	21.5

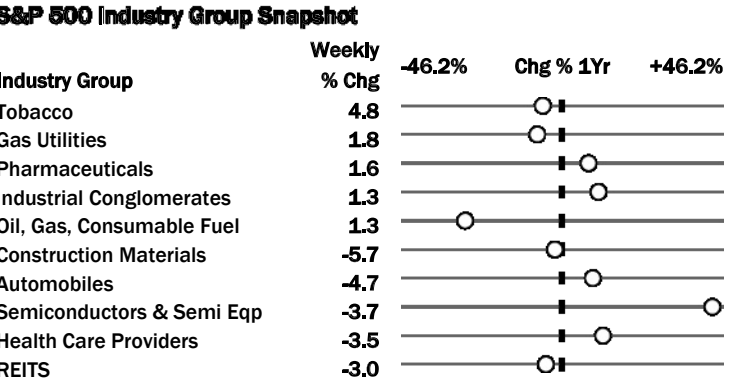
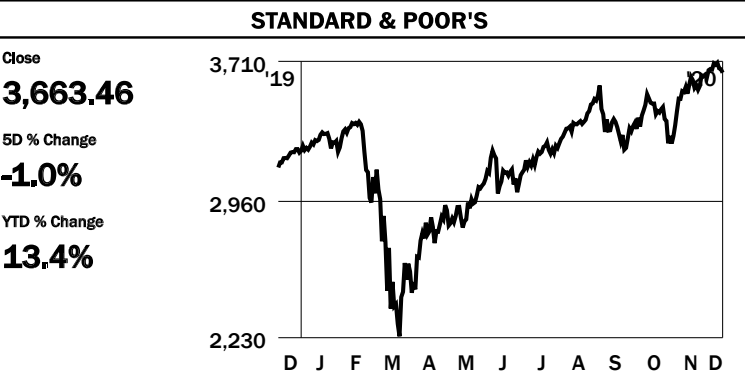
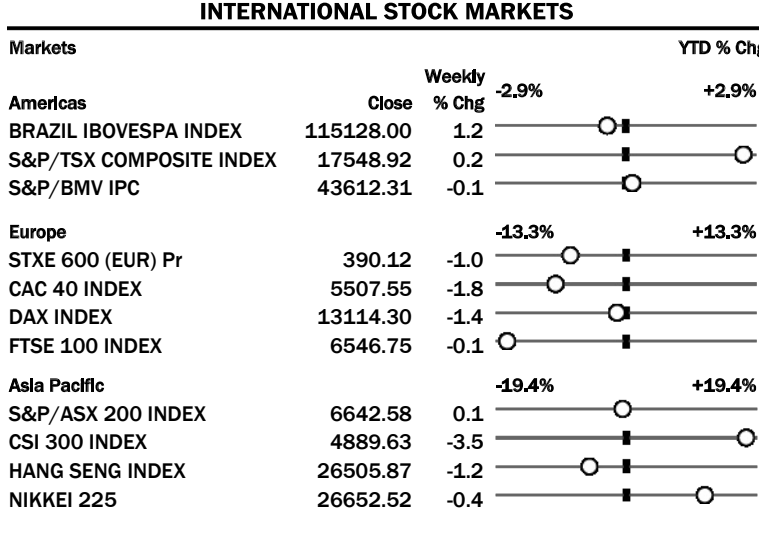
**COMMODITIES**

Futures	Close	5D % Chg	Futures	Close	5D % Chg
Copper	3.53	0.1	Silver	24.09	-0.7
Crude Oil	46.57	0.7	Sugar	14.43	-0.1
Gold	1843.60	0.2	Soybean	11.66	0.3
Natural Gas	2.59	0.6	Wheat	6.15	6.8
Orange Juice	1.16	-6.4	Corn	4.24	0.7



**Currency Exchange**

EU €	Japan ¥	Britain £	Brazil R\$	Canada \$	Mexico \$
<b>0.83</b>	<b>104.02</b>	<b>0.76</b>	<b>5.06</b>	<b>1.28</b>	<b>20.15</b>



**Gainers and Losers from the S&P 1500 Index**

Company	Close	5D % Chg	Company	Close	5D % Chg
MTS Systems Corp	58.21	51.6	GameStop Corp	13.31	-21.2
8x8 Inc	31.38	50.4	Conn's Inc	11.02	-20.7
Liquidity Services	14.64	46.8	Rayonier Adv Matrl	6.64	-20.1
Laredo Petroleum Inc	21.79	37.9	Designer Brands Inc	7.16	-18.0
Cardtronics PLC	36.09	37.2	Ready Capital Corp	11.60	-16.0
SM Energy Co	6.67	37.0	StoneX Group Inc	54.22	-15.5
Nabors Industries	73.69	20.0	United Natural Foods	15.58	-15.0
Cytokinetics Inc	20.34	18.8	Cooper-Standard Inc	35.23	-14.3
Tenet Healthcare	41.04	18.7	Cutera Inc	21.50	-13.3
John Wiley & Sons	43.46	18.1	AllianceDataSystems	72.67	-13.1
Cantel Medical Corp	74.46	17.9	Ichor Holdings Ltd	32.09	-12.9
TechTarget Inc	60.17	16.5	MicroStrategy Inc	285.92	-12.8
Raven Industries Inc	33.03	16.1	Photronics Inc	11.25	-12.7
SEACOR Holdings Inc	41.79	15.2	H&R Block Inc	15.91	-12.5
Dycorn Industries Inc	78.43	14.6	National Beverage	84.40	-12.4
Buckle Inc/The	32.41	14.5	Vera Bradley Inc	7.25	-12.3
Fulgent Genetics Inc	49.87	14.5	DiversifiedHlthTrst	4.19	-12.2
US Silica Inc	6.60	14.2	Triumph Group Inc	14.06	-11.8
Donnelley Fin Sol	19.60	14.0	Oxford Industries	55.11	-11.6
Walt Disney Co/The	175.72	14.0	BJ's Restaurants Inc	32.66	-11.6

Data and graphics by: **Bloomberg**

Note: Bank prime is from 10 major banks. Federal Funds rate is the market rate, which can vary from the federal target rate. LIBOR is the London Interbank Offered Rate. Consumer rates are from Bankrate. All figures as of 4:30 p.m. New York time.

# FREE FOR ALL

## Say no to LSD

I must take exception to Allen Benson's Dec. 5 Free for All letter about Delaware, "Home state of these others, too."

This part of the state is never, never, never referred to as Lower Slower Delaware. The correct term is Slower Lower Delaware. Big difference.

**Tom Egly, Lewes, Del.**

## Dodge the DMV

I was startled to read that the Phillips Collection plans to mark its 100th anniversary partly with "a juried invitation show for artists in the DMV" ["At 100, the Phillips Collection is as relevant as ever," Arts & Style, Nov. 29]. "Odd," I thought, "I never knew the Department of Motor Vehicles was an artists' venue."

Later, I read Tim Carman's "A journey this writer doesn't want to share" [Style, Dec. 1], in which he wrote of "chasing around the DMV for my meals." This was getting weirder and weirder. Suspecting that something must be amiss, I did a Google search of "DMV." About halfway down a list of 20 or so spelled-out, mostly obscure terms, I spotted "DC, Maryland, Virginia."

This isn't the first time I've been stopped short by unfamiliar acronyms appearing out of nowhere in The Post. Spelling out or defining such usages at first appearance would be greatly appreciated by your more unhip readers. The world has grown perplexing enough without The Post adding to the confusion.

**Gary Norton, Charlottesville**

## Flaunting 'recherché'

A frenemy colleague with an Ivy League degree once ridiculed my misuse of "flaunt" ("to display ostentatiously") in place of "flout" ("to treat with contemptuous disregard"), and I remain alert to the error. So, it is with humility that I note that The Post fell into the trap in the Nov. 29 news article "Tapping shift in populism, GOP labels Biden elitist": "While flouting his wealth, Trump . . ."

It occurred to me momentarily that this might be a highly *recherché* usage to reflect President Trump's patronizing his economically challenged supporters by calling them "the super-elite." But that would be too clever by half for a straight-news outlet. Thanks for brightening my morning.

**Janine D. Harris, Alexandria**

## The good kind of nativism

I was shocked to read Adrian Higgins's Dec. 3 Gardening column, "Conifers revive the sleeping garden, but remember: Less is more" [Local Living], about deodar cedar. That someone would recommend planting an exotic tree in their home garden in this point of time of ecological crisis is beyond belief. How does it relate to native insects, to native birds, to the local ecosystem? Also Japanese red pine, Norway spruce, China fir, Himalayan pine, Japanese umbrella pine! Are there no native trees worth growing?

**David H. Pardoe, Ellicott City**

## Hometown hero

The Nov. 28 obituary for legendary football player Jake Scott, "Super Bowl MVP in '72 Dolphins' perfect season," omitted that he lived in the Washington area for some time as a teenager.

He played high school football at Washington-Liberty in Arlington and graduated from that school, then known as Washington-Lee, in the early 1960s.

**Randy Julian, Alexandria**

## Next time, we'll be more explicit

Regarding the Nov. 27 Metro headline "Parents warn of graphic imagery":

What do The Post's editors think "graphic" means? All imagery is graphic.

**Jack G. Aubert, Falls Church**

## Next time, we'll be less explicit

Most weeks, I look forward to finding the differences in Second Glance. The photo images themselves are typically not the main focus as I search for 12 subtle or obvious changes. However, in the Nov. 22 edition, it was somewhat bewildering to have to study a man's private bathroom space. A pretty shabby one at that!

Surely The Post could come up with something more attractive: I'd offer my bathroom setting, but I respect my privacy too much.

At a time when we're looking for anything to relieve our pandemic and post-election stress, this was not helpful. I now feel utterly depressed after seeing that dirty sink and the old toothbrushes on that hideous shelving! The real question I have is who in Takoma Park wanted to submit such a photograph in the first place? Is there some secret message I should be finding?

**Caroline G. Nicholl, Alexandria**

## Check out youth books

As a middle school librarian who's been reading a lot of everything since March, I was excited to check out the best books of the year in the Nov. 22 Arts & Style section to see which of my favorites had made the lists. But I was very disappointed when I reached the page of children's books to see that, unlike every other section, the middle-grade fiction, nonfiction and picture books were all bunched together — and were the only books without accompanying covers. But at least they made the cut: No young adult books were included at all! There were some great young adult books this year, and it's a shame that youth books were shortchanged.

**Kirsten Wall, Arlington**

✉ Letters can be sent to [letters@washpost.com](mailto:letters@washpost.com). Submissions must be exclusive to The Post and should include the writer's address and day and evening telephone numbers.



NICHOLAS KAMM/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

**Jennifer Psaki, President-elect Joe Biden's incoming press secretary, in Washington on March 10, 2014.**

## Not to be trifled with

Kathleen Parker's Dec. 2 Wednesday Opinion column, "The Biden press team honeymoon won't last," seemed sexist. She used phrases such as "The women are understandably excited to step into these new, important roles, as almost all of them have testified via Twitter," as if men wouldn't do the same. She ended her column by writing, "It will be fun while it lasts, but the novelty of the all-women communications team was a trifle

concocted for attention." I think we should give more credence to the women who are part of the team than calling them a novelty.

They are all professionals with years of experience and deserve and have earned the posts they have been given, as do all the women so far appointed by President-elect Joe Biden. They are not novelties.

**Peter D. Rosenstein, Washington**

## She couldn't bear the invasion of privacy

I have always enjoyed coverage of the lives of our National Zoo's pandas. But when I read the Dec. 5 Metro article "National Zoo's panda cub takes first wobbly steps," I was dismayed that the reporter blamed Mei Xiang, mother of the zoo's newest baby panda, for her delay in reporting her baby's first steps to the public. I think Mei Xiang showed admirable maternal instincts when she protected her newborn from the prying paparazzi. I am a mother and a nurse midwife. My career has been devoted to protecting mothers and babies. I would have done the same thing as Mei Xiang.

**Mary Ellen Stanton, McLean**

## What to do with the money you've squirreled away

Are squirrels for sale in D.C.?

The caption for the Nov. 29 "Out My Window" was hilarious. "Washington is home to six species of squirrels, including the Eastern gray squirrel, which also comes in black."

**Elizabeth Parker Anderson, Arlington**



NIKKI KAHN/THE WASHINGTON POST

**A black squirrel in Silver Spring on May 12, 2005.**



BILL ALLEN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Coach Aldo "Buff" Donelli talks with Pittsburgh Steelers during a game in 1941.**

## The White and Gold

I read with interest the Dec. 3 KidsPost article focusing on the difficulties faced by the Pittsburgh Steelers in finding enough players to field a team during World War II, "Virus disrupts NFL today, but war hobbled more teams in 1940s." The accompanying photograph, however, left me with a question that was not addressed in the article: Was the

problem that no Black men wanted to play professional football at that time, or were the Black applicants simply unable to "run around the field twice"?

If I, a 65-year-old White woman, was bothered by this question, I'm guessing it may also have occurred to Black children reading the article.

**Stephanie Rubin, Silver Spring**

## Front-page-worthy

I continue to be surprised that the two graphs showing "New coronavirus cases and deaths in the U.S., by day" — which were a daily front-page feature back in April and May — have been relegated to the inside pages of the news section.

Coronavirus cases are now five to six times the daily number of cases back in April and May. Deaths are somewhat lower, but not by much; there were 2,506 deaths on Dec. 1.

If those statistics don't merit front-page news, I'm afraid The Post and I must disagree about the definition of the word "newsworthy."

**Don DeArmon, Frederick**

## The recession we need

Two recent front-page headlines were prime examples of the often discussed tendency of the press to see President Trump as the prime mover of our times and to give his words and actions overarching agency and significance: "Trump re-lets, lets transition proceed" [Nov. 24] and "Trump grants pardon to Flynn" [Nov. 26].

The Nov. 26 front-page lead article might possibly have been the below-the-fold "Biden calls for shared sacrifice to conquer virus," which is surely the theme we will be living through in the coming months, stated by the leader who will be directing the efforts.

I think it's time for us to get over our reflexive fascination with Trump and allow him to recede to his true importance.

**Spencer Hines, Germantown**

## A slightly smaller 'landslide'

Several recent articles and op-eds in The Post, including the Nov. 29 Fact Checker column, "In just 10 minutes, Trump manages a dozen fairy tales about a stolen election," stated that in 2016, Donald Trump defeated Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton 306 to 232 in the electoral college. That should have been the tally, but according to the Federal Election Commission, the actual Trump-Clinton count was 304 to 227 because of "faithless electors" on both sides.

**Paul Strassman, Marriottsville**



JONATHAN NEWTON/THE WASHINGTON POST

**The burial service for U.S. Army Lt. Col. Don Faith Jr., a Medal of Honor recipient killed in the Korean War in 1950, on April 17, 2013, in Arlington.**

## Give thanks to more than a few

In his Nov. 26 op-ed, "Give thanks to the Chosin Few," George F. Will wrote about Marines at Chosin. He should have written about troops at Chosin because there was also an Army unit there under the command of Lt. Col. Don Faith Jr. They were on the east side of the reservoir (the Marines were on the west) and are credited with keeping the Chinese forces at bay long enough to allow the Marines to secure a perimeter and eventually escape.

Task Force Faith was eventually annihilated, and Faith received a Medal of Honor posthumously. The Marines deserve their recognition for the fight they

put up, and it is a fairly well-known story. Sadly, the Army's role is rarely mentioned. I was aware of it because of a book I read and because my father was in an Army unit on the other side of the mountains to the west, also involved in fighting to stay alive. I was born just a few months prior. My father knew about Faith's sacrifice in part because he knew Faith's father. Ironically, the elder Faith and my dad served in China together before the Second World War.

All those men who fought in the brutal cold that winter deserve recognition.

**Vance Holliday, Tucson**

# The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

EDITORIALS

## An unjustifiable sticking point

Mr. McConnell should not insist on lawsuit protections at the expense of economic relief.

THE RESURGENCE of the coronavirus, with all the death, suffering and stress on the hospital system it entails, threatens to swamp whatever public health benefits were achieved by the comprehensive shut-down of the U.S. economy in April and May. Compounding the situation is a looming reversal of the significant economic gains the country has achieved since midsummer. Signs that the comeback is faltering include, most recently, Thursday's Labor Department report that 853,000 people filed for new unemployment benefits, up 137,000 from the week before. And even though Congress has the power to bolster the economy — and prevent pointless hardship — Republicans and Democrats remain deadlocked on the new package all of them claim to want.

This has to end. It wouldn't be a congressional legislative session if there weren't plenty of unreasonable demands and partisan advantage-seeking on both sides, but at the moment the least justifi-

able sticking point is Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's (R-Ky.) insistence on protecting businesses and universities from covid-19-related tort lawsuits. We say this from a position of openness toward his idea on the merits. As we have previously noted, it is far from inherently unreasonable to shield hard-pressed business from lawsuits that try to make them liable to workers or customers for harm done by a virus whose connection to any particular company policy or action would be hard to prove. But the urgency of such protection is rapidly diminishing in the light of new developments — first, the deteriorating economy, and second, evidence that existing legal obstacles have so far reined in plaintiffs' lawyers. Legal database Lex Machina reports 234 virus-related cases filed against companies as of Nov. 30.

Also relevant: Vaccines are becoming available, meaning that the country may be looking at an end to uncontrolled spread by late 2021. Certainly, liability protection should not be put on a par with

a far more direct form of help to the economy — federal aid to state and local governments. Yet Mr. McConnell did just that when, faced with the inability of a bipartisan Senate group to compromise on liability protection, he offered to pass a bill without it, if Democrats would agree to take out state and local aid, too.

There is, perhaps, still time for senators to reach the optimal outcome, a compromise on liability that fits into a bipartisan bill alongside robust state and local aid. The overriding imperative, however, is: Something is far better than nothing. Among economists, both Republican-leaning and Democratic, who have considered the essential ingredients of a new aid package, few if any put liability protection at the top of the list; almost all, however, do include state and local aid, beefed-up unemployment benefits, health-care funding and nutrition assistance. Congress must legislate accordingly. If it does not, Mr. McConnell will deserve a heavy share of the responsibility.

## Punishing diverse states

The Supreme Court considers the president's latest attempt to skew the census.

NOTHING ABOUT the Trump administration's latest census case, which the Supreme Court heard last week, looks good. President Trump is once again trying to manipulate the numbers in order to rob states such as California of seats in Congress. This time, the president's scheme is based on a bizarre reading of the Constitution and federal law. And even if the court allowed Trump officials to try to pull it off, acting solicitor general Jeffrey B. Wall admitted that it is unclear they would succeed in skewing the political map.

Against all historical practice, Mr. Trump wants to exclude undocumented immigrants from the census numbers used to apportion House seats among the states. A July study from the Pew Research Center concluded that doing so would deprive several diverse states of congressional seats, while rewarding Whiter ones. Justice Stephen G. Breyer also raised the possibility that the skewed apportionment numbers might affect how federal money is distributed.

This would be plainly illegal. The Constitution commands that House seats be apportioned according to "the whole number of persons in each state." Federal law stipulates that the Census Bureau must give the president a "tabulation of total population by States," and the president must report to Congress "the whole number of persons in each State" and "the number of Representatives to which each State would be entitled." The Trump administration argues that the law only requires inhabitants to be counted — not, say, an undocumented immigrant who crossed the border the day before the census began its count. Aside from defying all past practice, Justice Amy Coney Barrett pointed out that many undocumented immigrants have strong ties to their communities stretching back decades, and it would be nonsensical to claim they had no settled residence in the United States.

Yet most of the court's discussion revolved around the possibility that the Trump administration might fail to up-end the map even if it were allowed to try. Mr. Wall informed the court that the



The Supreme Court in Washington in November.

Census Bureau did not know how many undocumented immigrants it could identify in census response records — and, therefore, how many people it could subtract from the census's top-line numbers. It already appears likely the bureau will miss its Dec. 31 deadline to report its figures to the president, and Mr. Wall could only speculate that some of the numbers might be available in the weeks following the deadline.

In fact, Mr. Wall argued that it was so unclear that any state would ultimately be harmed that the court should punt the case, vacate a lower-court ruling enjoining the president, and force the objectors to file a new lawsuit if Mr. Trump's attempts to warp the census pan out. The

court does not often act to prevent speculative injury.

If the court does not stop Mr. Trump now, the country must hope that the Census Bureau fails to produce numbers before Mr. Trump leaves office. A difference of a few thousand people in the count in one state or another could be all that is required to affect congressional apportionment. If Mr. Trump gets his chance to skew the political map, the justices will have to consider the merits of the case as quickly as possible.

If and when the court gets to the merits, the message must be strong and unequivocal: Mr. Trump's efforts to skew the count for political advantage contradict the law's clear demands.

## Dreams restored

Three years after the administration's attack, 'dreamers' are granted a new foothold.

THREE YEARS after the Trump administration launched its assault on "dreamers," undocumented migrants brought here as children by their parents, a federal court has ordered the protections originally granted to them by the Obama administration restored to their original form. And not for the first time.

In July, a different federal court, following a recent Supreme Court ruling along the same lines, told the administration to begin accepting new applications for the Obama-era program that shields dreamers from deportation. Despite that order, despite the Supreme Court ruling, and despite broad bipartisan support for dreamers and extending their protections and work permits, the administration ducked, dodged and publicly complained about the Supreme Court. The ruling "usurps the clear authority of the Executive Branch," whined acting homeland security secretary Chad Wolf, who holds no law degree and whose own appointment to his current job violated federal law, according to the Government Accountability Office and a federal court.

Even in its waning weeks in power,

with no political advantage to be gained, the Republican crusade continues against a cohort of young people raised in this country and American in every way but for their legal status. A group of GOP state attorneys general has challenged the program's constitutionality in a Texas court, where a hearing is scheduled later this month.

Roughly 650,000 young people are covered by the program, known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and an estimated 300,000 more are eligible and awaiting a chance to apply. It was that chance that the administration removed in 2017, when it began its campaign to end DACA. Officials were unable immediately to rescind the program's benefits from those who already enjoyed them, which included two-year, renewable work permits, while the fight continued in the courts. But right after the Supreme Court, in June, blocked the administration's attempt to deep-six DACA, Mr. Wolf set about eviscerating it, barring all new applications and slashing renewal work permits to one year from two.

Last week, Judge Nicholas G. Garaufis of U.S. District Court in Brooklyn called a

halt to the nonsense. He ordered the Department of Homeland Security and other agencies to begin accepting new DACA applications, including from some 55,000 teenagers who were frozen out of the program for the past three years but have since turned 15, the age of eligibility.

One can only guess what toxic brew of animus, cruelty and ideological fervor impels the fight against DACA at this stage. President-elect Joe Biden has made clear he will restore the program. And more than three-quarters of Americans say dreamers should remain in the United States with legal status, including nearly 70 percent of Republicans, according to a poll this summer.

Armed with that knowledge, Mr. Biden should do more than restore the status quo ante. Dreamers deserve a permanent resolution, and that means legislation to codify their legal status or citizenship in this country. It is absurd to persist in legal battles whose implicit endgame is the marginalization and eventual expulsion of roughly 1 million migrants, mostly in their 20s and 30s, who lack a permanent foothold here by no fault of their own. End the insanity, now.

## Renaming Wilson High

Regarding the Oct. 26 letter "A principal of principle":

As a 1962 graduate of D.C.'s Woodrow Wilson High School, I have no objection to renaming it in honor of Edna Jackson. I was not fortunate to have Jackson for any of my classes, but from the wonderful accolades she received in our 50th-reunion souvenir book, she must have been a truly outstanding teacher.

There was another African American role model at Wilson in that period. I knew him as Capt. Andrew E. Weeks, and in addition to having classroom duties, he oversaw the Junior ROTC program at Wilson. Weeks was a member of the D.C. National Guard, and his commission was in the Military Police Corps. As our JROTC instructor, he coached the Wilson rifle team (there was a rifle range in the basement where we practiced); instructed us in military map reading (at which we competed against cadets from other D.C. schools); taught us the fundamentals of drill and ceremonies (resulting in our having a competent color guard for the baccalaureate service in the Washington National Cathedral), etc.

After my graduation from Wilson, and much influenced by Weeks, I went off to a military college and received my own Army commission upon graduation. As I noted in my entry in our 50th-reunion booklet, Weeks had a profound influence on me. He was a living role model for how an Army officer should look, comport himself and demonstrate professional competence within his assigned branch of service.

By the time he retired, I believe he was Lt. Col. Weeks, and I think he might have been the commanding officer of the Military Police component of the D.C. National Guard. For their specific interface with students, I suggest that the school's name be changed to "Jackson-Weeks High School."

**John Walters, Leonardtown**

**Regarding Courtland Milloy's Wednesday Metro column,** "New school name should honor star D.C. educator":

I am an alumna of Woodrow Wilson High School, Class of 1968. Vincent Reed was the best thing that ever happened to that school. He was a prince among men. Everyone loved him and respected him and did as he advised — hippies (my group), jocks, wonks, everyone! The boys about to start a fight would separate respectfully just on sight of him. He listened to everybody, too. In those days, the student body was still almost entirely White. Mr. Reed was the most respected person by all, in any capacity.

Anyone who was there when he was remembers him well still. He was an authentic hero of the times, which were unsettled, to say the least!

**Robynne Williams, Silver Spring**

## Low-income and left out

Sens. Mark R. Warner (D-Va.) and Susan Collins (R-Maine) said in their Dec. 8 op-ed, "We can't afford inaction on the covid-19 compromise package," that their compromise "would help Americans at least get through the next four months." With due respect to their bipartisan efforts, that was dead wrong.

Very little in the coronavirus relief package would help low-income Americans make it through even one month. What's needed most is rent relief and money to cover food and utility bills. Yet no direct payments to low-income individuals similar to the checks issued under the Cares Act in the spring are to be found. The bipartisan proposal mainly would benefit interests with access to Congress: businesses (via cheap or free money, plus a liability shield), nonprofits/associations/churches, state governments, and professional classes including doctors, lawyers and accountants.

The D.C. government's decision to send \$1,200 checks to people among the hardest hit sets a good example for states and the federal government. Congressional leaders, many perched in the nation's wealthiest strata, need to understand that about half of the U.S. workforce earns low wages or is out of a job. Viewed from the bottom up, the United States is becoming a much more impoverished nation.

**Karl Polzer, Falls Church**  
*The writer is founder of the Center on Capital & Social Equity.*

## The media and the message

I agree with Margaret Sullivan's Dec. 7 Style column, "How Biden can protect the press post-Trump," that President-elect Joe Biden should prioritize freedom of the press. I hope he will make it a hallmark of his administration, of the U.S. government and of democracy.

However, his doing so ought not leave the media off the hook: The media need to

play as prominent a role in righting the freedom-of-the-press ship as the president. Every journalist and organization employing journalists should acknowledge falsehood for what it is and give it short shrift, thereby replacing falsehood with truth; and recognize President Trump for what he is about to hereafter be — one of 328 million citizens — and not allowing him or any other citizen to hijack the media to promote lies and hatred.

Journalism should, as a profession, establish fair and objective standards and procedures for censuring journalists and media for purveying egregious falsehoods and patterns of lying. Every profession "polices" itself to some extent. External enforcement becomes challenging in our democracy given freedom of the press. It is all the more important for journalism to do an exceptional job of protecting itself and American democracy from journalistic malpractice.

Dozens of journalists calling out the same lies hundreds of times a day gives lift to the lies. Journalism as a profession calling — the academy, active journalists and media organizations — needs to be able to advise the public of what media it can trust and those that are not worthy of our trust.

**Irv Katz, Falls Church**

## Trees to the rescue

The Nov. 29 editorial "The climate change president" missed one vital opportunity for President-elect Joe Biden to launch bipartisan climate action: tapping America's forests to deliver natural climate solutions. Throughout the 116th Congress, even during the tense election season, unexpected bipartisan coalitions have come together to build on the 15 percent of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions already captured in our forests annually. This includes legislation to more rapidly replant national forests after wildfires and other disasters, expanding incentives for private forest owners to sequester more carbon dioxide and planting trees to naturally cool our cities — saving lives, energy and greenhouse gas emissions in one fell swoop.

Forest-climate solutions are popular because they bring many ecological co-benefits, such as protection for our drinking water, and generate as many as 40 green jobs per \$1 million invested. Mr. Biden can build a bridge to climate consensus out of wood.

**Jad Daley, Washington**  
*The writer is president and chief executive of American Forests.*

## A better plan for student debt

The Dec. 4 editorial "Regressive relief" highlighted the waste and unfairness that would result under the Schumer-Warren proposal to cancel individual student loan debts up to \$50,000 regardless of borrower income. If that proposal were enacted, would any future student borrower not think about the possibility of such mega-prizes being offered again, when nationwide outstanding debt again reaches a politically meaningful level? And would that not be an incentive for borrowers to take on unnecessary debt? And not to take their repayment obligations very seriously?

The editorial also noted that the current federal student loan program's income-contingent repayment option provides a fair and sensible means of dealing with high levels of student debt. Like the "forbearance" authority now being used by the Trump administration as a means of coronavirus economic relief, income-contingent repayment was made possible by the not-long-ago creation of direct federal student loans. The incoming Biden administration should expand upon and improve the hard-won student loan reforms accomplished under Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama and not create a wasteful and regressive student loan cancellation program.

Improving higher education opportunity and reducing the need for borrowing could be accomplished by significantly expanding the well-targeted Pell Grant and Work-Study programs — at a small fraction of the estimated \$250 billion to \$300 billion cost of the Schumer-Warren proposal.

**Robert Davidson, Falls Church**  
*The writer is a former director of postsecondary analysis at the U.S. Department of Education.*

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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COLBERT I. KING

# The young lives being lost in D.C. should matter to us

Blame me for overreacting and focusing this column time and again on an issue that, based upon the perfunctory attention it gets from city leaders and the civic community, is treated as something minor: violence, particularly among our youths.

I beg your pardon for making it sound like a really serious problem, but I can't help myself. Too many of this city's youths are on the receiving end of violence — or are causing bodily harm to others — often to the point of death. To pretend otherwise, and suggest that our greatest problems are too many cars on the streets, too little clean air and inattention to motor scooters and bikes, is absurd.

Yes, the community was shocked almost two weeks ago by the story of 15-month-old Carmelo Duncan being shot to death in Southeast D.C. while strapped in a car seat next to his 8-year-old brother.

But you might have missed the item in The Post's Dec. 8 Metro section about a 15-year-old boy who was arrested and charged with first-degree murder after a man was found shot in a Southeast neighborhood.

You also might not have read a Dec. 9 item about a 14-year-old Washington youth charged Tuesday with first-degree murder in the fatal shooting of a 52-year-old man July 6. At the time of his arrest, the youth was under the supervision of the D.C. Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services in connection with a fatal shooting two days before.

You probably don't recall that shortly after midnight on Jan. 17, an 11-year-old and a 15-year-old were shot. Police said the shooting didn't appear to be random.

Remember the news about a 16-year-old getting charged June 22 with four murders in a gang-related spree that had also injured five others in April and May? No? Well, police said he had been released from custody for an unknown offense March 29 and had cut off an ankle monitor before the violence.

Yes, there was a load of publicity about the Fourth of July community cookout where an 11-year-old boy was struck by a bullet in the head and died. Four men, ages 18, 20, 22 and 25, have been arrested and charged with murder in the shooting.

But did you know that on the heels of the Independence Day killing, on Aug. 4, seven people were shot in separate incidents in Northeast and Northwest D.C.? In the Northeast incident, an 18-year-old was found dead and a 17-year-old was wounded.

Or that six days later, on Aug. 10, there was a double shooting in Northwest that left a 17-year-old dead and another person injured?

The Aug. 21 afternoon shooting of a boy walking to the store with his mother made some news. He was 5 years old.

But most of these incidents get little media coverage — just little snippets about youth violence.

You wouldn't know there was so much youth-involved violence if you followed only the D.C. Council's or Mayor Muriel Bowser's press releases.

My columns over the years have received the same response from the "leaders" who are empowered to do something to help youths most at risk.

I comb through the litany of columns and cringe. "D.C. is closing our 2019 with 163 homicides. When will the violence end?" I wrote last Dec. 27. That was then.

Now, with less than three weeks to go before New Year's Eve, the District has racked up 192 homicides.

I know from reader feedback that some of you are sick and tired of my writing about this stuff. When I turn to the subject, one reader reflexively writes that I'm making too much of today's violence — that conditions were much worse during the crack epidemic of the '90s.

I remember those days. Black lives were lost then. Black lives are being lost now. One is too many.

This week, I encountered a meditation asking us to seek divine help to "focus on the great worth of each other."

Children who are killing and getting killed have great worth. We can't, for both their sake and our city's future, let them waste it.

I have grandchildren as old as some of the shooters and their victims. My seven grandchildren weren't born smarter, more talented or more endowed with the capacity to distinguish right and wrong than the youths I've been writing about.

Those children — yes, that's what most are — through no fault of their own, are not growing up where they can feel safe and secure, and get the close attention, acceptance, guidance, discipline and love — yes, love — that my seven grandkids receive.

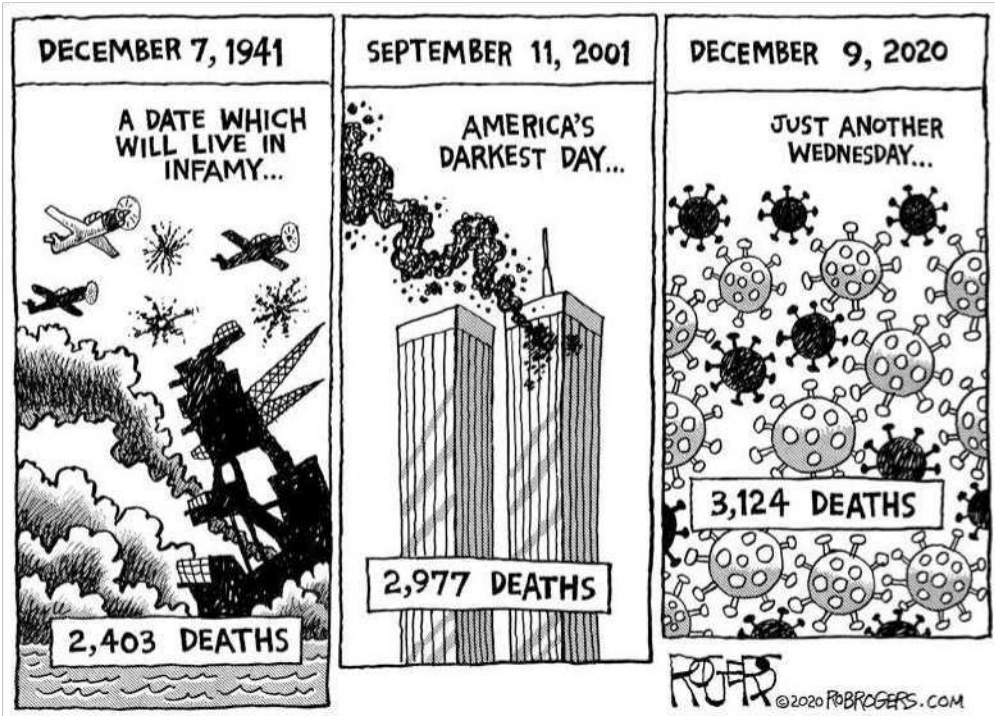
That's just not fair. We, as a city, need to reclaim, not reject, them. To get into their lives, and in a good way, even if it means elbowing our way in. They aren't statistics.

Most are Black. They are ours. Even if some of our high and mighty city leaders believe otherwise.

Those young Black lives matter. That's why I write.

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# Biden can end the mass incarceration of immigrants

BY MADHURI GREWAL

The administration of President-elect Joe Biden must do more than reverse the cruel immigration policies of the Trump administration. While the Trump administration's policies have been particularly egregious, they are just the latest manifestation of a system that is fundamentally flawed. It is not enough to just turn back the clock on the past four years.

It is time to put an end to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention machine.

Over the past several decades, immigration detention — in essence, incarcerating those awaiting a determination of their immigration status or potential deportation — has become our nation's newest system of mass incarceration for Black and Brown people. Rather than perpetuating this costly and cruel system, the Biden administration can immediately take action to curtail it — without any new laws from Congress, with the goal of phasing out mass detention.

Specifically, the new administration should immediately close all family detention centers. It should terminate existing contracts with private prisons and local and state jails by the end of the year, beginning with those that have an egregious history of abuse. It should also refrain from entering into new ones.

During the first 100 days, the new administration's budget proposal can signal changed priorities, including an immediate reduction of *at least* 75 percent in the detention budget of ICE.

The Biden administration should eliminate bond for those otherwise eligible for release, and operate under a presumption of liberty, not detention. Under current law, ICE could immediately release tens of thousands of people from custody, but it routinely ignores its own internal standards to deny liberty to immigrants. The administration should simultaneously work with Congress to eliminate any circumstances in which detention is mandatory.

Incarceration of immigrants used to be the exception, not the rule. Under the law, we aren't supposed to incarcerate people to punish them for lacking immigration status — that is a *civil* matter — or to deter others from coming to the United States. But that's precisely what we now do, and on a massive scale. Decades of racist "tough on crime" policies, new detention policies seeking to punish and discourage people from coming to the United States, and the expansion of the detention infrastructure in the aftermath of 9/11 have pushed us in this unwise, expensive and inhumane direction.

The numbers are staggering. In just over six decades, the United States has completely upended its 1954 goal of ending the use of detention in "all but a few cases." The detention of immigrants on any given day has gone from just under 6,800 in 1994, to nearly 34,000 in 2013, to an all-time high of more than 52,000 in 2019. In short, in just 25 years, the average daily population of immigrant detainees has increased more than sevenfold. We have all but normalized a system that abuses and traumatizes immigrants as a matter of practice.

Although other agencies detain immigrants, ICE is responsible for the vast majority of detentions and holds people the longest — for months or even years. The cruelty of its vast network — more than 200 sites nationwide — is by design: Detain people in the middle of nowhere, without lawyers and with no support network nearby. Pressure the people who are still fighting their cases into giving up their legal claims. Deport people covertly, and repeat.

ICE detention is a critical piece of our country's mass deportation conveyor belt, propping up a system that tolerates racist practices, harms families and children, and denies basic due process and human rights to hundreds of thousands of people each year — costing taxpayers more than \$3 billion this past fiscal year alone. Detained individuals have suffered severe pain and medical neglect culminating in sometimes months-long hunger strikes, deaths, amputations and suicides. Recently, numerous women bravely came forward to report invasive and unnecessary surgeries, including hysterectomies, while in ICE detention.

Those caught up in this system include pregnant women and families — some with babies and toddlers. Many are longtime lawful residents with deep ties to our community; some are ripped from their children's arms by armed ICE officers or arrested on church grounds. ICE has even detained U.S. citizens.

This year, covid-19 has laid bare the ultimate costs of immigration detention. ICE has refused to provide even basics like masks or soap, denied testing to keep infection numbers artificially low, recklessly transferred people between facilities with coronavirus outbreaks, and failed to provide urgent medical care. ICE's neglect during a pandemic is killing people and spreading the virus.

In part because of litigation and advocacy, ICE detention levels declined significantly this year, demonstrating that people are needlessly detained. These lower levels of detention, coupled with a presumption of release, enable a new administration to make urgently needed changes.

These recommendations are the minimum of what the Biden administration must do. But implementing them would move us toward a reimagined system — without the systemic trauma and cruelty stemming from immigrant detention — that embodies our nation's values of fairness, justice and human rights.

The writer is the federal immigration policy counsel at the ACLU.

ALEXANDRA PETRI

# Republicans' tacit nods to Biden's win are everywhere if you look hard enough

"David Perdue appears to tacitly acknowledge Biden's victory in video call with Republican group"

"Trump attacks Fox as Republicans tacitly acknowledge Biden win"

"Farah resigns as White House communications director in tacit nod to Trump's loss"

— Recent headlines in The Post and the Guardian

Look, it would be bad if, hypothetically, only 27 congressional Republicans were willing to state that they could tell for sure who had won the election, and that it was Joe Biden. That would be frustrating and alarming! But fortunately, we do not live in that world. Although only 27 Republicans in Congress have said they are positive about the election in literal, out-loud words we can hear, saying the words out loud or emitting a statement to that effect are only two of the ways you can show what you think.

For everything else, there are Tacit Acknowledgments! Sure, no one has said anything, but they didn't have to! You can also stare off into the middle

distance in a certain way as you dodge reporters, or tweet something full of Easter eggs for devoted fans. There are so many other subtle cues that show that actually, our system is not under strain and the results of the election are being acknowledged from sea to shining sea.

You just have to believe in them enough, and then you will start seeing them everywhere! For instance:

Rep. Mo Brooks (R-Ala.) said that "this is the worst election theft in the history of the United States." This is not unsettling, but rather a tacit admission of confidence in the results. "Worst election theft in the history of the United States" here means "poorest attempt to thief an election that has ever happened; most disappointing failure to steal the election possible."

Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) referred to Biden as the president-elect, but then her staff said she misspoke, which was a tacit acknowledgment that we're only doing tacit acknowledgments.

Kellyanne Conway has sold a book about her time in the Trump administration, which implies that there will be an end to it.

When Sen. Mike Braun (R-Ind.) said of voter fraud

that "when you just say that there's nothing there, you're going to have half the country uncertain about what just happened," he blinked several times rapidly in succession! This could spell "Y" in Morse code, which would be an affirmative answer to the question "Do you accept the results of the election, Y/N?"

Rep. Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.), when asked whether he'd support Biden as president, replied, "No, never!" But in the classic Gilbert & Sullivan song "I Am the Captain of the Pinafore," "No, never," means "Hardly ever!," which means, "Yes, definitely!" Clearly an allusion!

Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) simply declined The Post's request for comment on whether he acknowledged that Biden was the winner; he didn't decline to say that Biden was the winner, he just declined to say *anything at all*. That's positive, especially when you think of the many terrible things Tom Cotton has not declined to say!

Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Tex.) beseeched the Supreme Court to hear a challenge to the Pennsylvania results, saying, "Ordinarily, the U.S. Supreme Court would stay out of election disputes, especially

concerning state law. But these are not ordinary times." Probably this was because he hoped the Supreme Court would hear the case and say it was bad.

The attorneys general of 17 other states are supporting the Texas attorney general's lawsuit trying to stop certification of the election results of several states Donald Trump did not win. This sounds as if they're trying to overturn the election, but it also *presupposes* that the current election results would not result in another term for Trump!

Vice President Pence has declined to call Vice President-elect Kamala D. Harris to congratulate her only because of his religious commitment never to congratulate a woman to whom he is not married, not because he doesn't accept the results. He did not react to a crowd shouting, "Stop the steal!" because he was busy thinking silently about how wrong they were.

And Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) said, "The future will take care of itself." Describing the future in non-apocalyptic terms is certainly a tacit acknowledgment that Trump will not be president.

Twitter: @petridishes

# Hezbollah member gets five life sentences in 2005 assassination of Hariri

**BY SARAH DADOUCH**

BEIRUT — A special tribunal set up to prosecute those responsible for the 2005 assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq al-Hariri sentenced a Hezbollah member to five life sentences Friday, nearly four months after it found him guilty.

Salim Jamil Ayyash was one of four men charged with belonging to a cell that carried out the attack, which left the former prime minister and business ty-

coon dead, along with 21 others. In August, the United Nations-mandated Special Tribunal for Lebanon concluded its 11-year investigation, finding Ayyash guilty on all charges of involvement.

The bomb that targeted Hariri's motorcade on Valentine's Day in 2005 left behind unrest in the region. The Iranian-backed militant group Hezbollah, which today controls the Lebanese government, was the main suspect in the attack. Immediately following the assassination, suspicions also

landed on neighboring Syria, a Hezbollah ally.

Shortly after the assassination and under international pressure, Syria's military, which occupied Lebanon for nearly three decades, withdrew from the country. Hariri, who had high connections and support in France and Saudi Arabia, was an outspoken critic of Syria's influence and had been openly trying to end its dominion.

Ayyash was tried in absentia, as were three alleged accomplices who were acquitted on grounds of

insufficient evidence connecting them to the assassination. None of them have been located nor have any signs of life been established.

Ayyash received a life sentence Friday for each of five charges: conspiring to commit an act of terrorism; criminal association; committing acts of terrorism; intentional homicide with premeditation; and attempted intentional homicide with premeditation.

Although the tribunal had failed in August to determine who

had ordered Hariri's death, Judge Janet Nosworthy said Friday that Ayyash "had a central role in the attack."

A new international arrest warrant was issued for Ayyash, which will be transmitted to Lebanon and the Netherlands, where the tribunal is based. The prosecutor was authorized to ask Interpol to issue and circulate writ notices, requesting that law enforcement agencies locate Ayyash and provisionally arrest him.

"Mr. Ayyash is a fugitive from

justice," said Australian presiding Judge David Re. "The attack was intended to spread terror in Lebanon, and indeed did," he said, reading out the court's decision. "The trial chamber is satisfied it should impose the maximum sentence for each of the five crimes of a life sentence to be served concurrently."

No Syrians were charged, even though Syrian officials came under suspicion following the assassination.

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Wind: S 7-14 mph

**RELIGION**  
President-elect Joe Biden is poised to make his mark on American Catholicism. **B2**



**VIRGINIA**  
Fairfax County has begun the process of getting rid of Confederate names on streets and other sites. **B3**



**THE DISTRICT**  
A firefighter is charged with fatally shooting a man this month in Northwest Washington. **B4**

## Amid protests, D.C. police face perception they've chosen sides

BY MARISSA J. LANG  
AND PETER HERMANN

The tension and violence at last month's "Million MAGA March" has cast a long shadow, with ideologically opposed groups facing off again Saturday in the nation's capital as police try to walk a line somewhere in between.

D.C. protesters who have spent months calling for criminal justice reform say they were outnumbered and violently attacked by Proud Boys and other far-right agitators while police stood by on Nov. 14. At least three suffered knife wounds.

### Trump ralliers to return after clashes between opposing sides last month

Republican members of Congress, meanwhile, accused the District's liberal leadership of allowing D.C. protesters to harass and set fire to the property of Trump supporters.

As these two dissonant sides meet again, police in the role of peacekeepers will be forced to contend with the growing percep-

tion that officers have chosen sides.

District officials say police did their best to minimize harm in a delicate and difficult situation. But officers' behavior at the November rally — posing for photos with supporters of President Trump, standing back as demonstrators in Make America Great Again garb vandalized Black Lives Matter signs, standing back as arguments escalated to physical conflict — has prompted many to question the role personal politics play in policing.

When Trump's most fervent supporters gather Saturday, urg-

ing him to continue his fight to overturn the results of the election he lost, D.C. activists will not be waiting along Pennsylvania Avenue to meet them.

Instead, protesters will gather in Black Lives Matter Plaza, ready to defend what they see as theirs: the fence on which signs and memorials have been hung, the pavement that bears the slogan "Black lives matter," the very city itself and the people who live there.

Officials expect a smaller crowd than the thousands who converged days after Democrat Joe Biden was declared the victor of a bitterly fought presidential race.

But the threat of an unpredictable and potentially violent day looms.

Police have said they stood back as Trump's supporters destroyed signs because authorities do not believe it is illegal to tear them down and officers thought stepping in might exacerbate tensions. Roger A. Mitchell Jr., the city's interim deputy mayor for public safety and justice, conceded in an interview that the optics were poor.

"I can absolutely see how people would see it as taking sides," he said. "I'm not supportive of any law enforcement officer taking

SEE POLICE ON B2

## Region aims to combat surge

### MORE COVID CASES, MORE RESTRICTIONS

Pr. George's halts indoor dining; libraries to close

BY JULIE ZAUZMER  
AND ANTONIO OLIVO

The Washington region ended a week that included new restrictions meant to confront the surging coronavirus pandemic with additional closures and cancellations.

In Prince George's County, where officials on Thursday halted indoor dining and ordered new caps on crowds in retail businesses and casinos, the library system said Friday it too would shut down. The National Museum of the U.S. Army is temporarily closing, while NFL games at FedEx Field will be without spectators the rest of the season.

The greater Washington region added to its growing list of restrictions and closures this week — days that also coincided with the largest number of coronavirus infections since the start of

SEE REGION ON B3

### New cases in region

Through 5 p.m. Friday, 6,270 new coronavirus cases were reported in the District, Maryland and Virginia, bringing the total number of cases to 527,266.

D.C.	MD.	VA.
<b>+259</b>	<b>+2,616</b>	<b>+3,395</b>
24,357	228,471	274,438

### Coronavirus-related deaths

As of 5 p.m. Friday:

D.C.	MD.*	VA.
<b>+1</b>	<b>+52</b>	<b>+35</b>
709	5,064	4,370

\* Includes probable covid-19 deaths

## Metro disputes some audit findings

Agency: 2 managers did not create 'toxic' culture but changes are needed

BY JUSTIN GEORGE

Metro on Friday disputed claims made in a scathing audit of its Rail Operations Control Center, saying its own outside review could not corroborate specific accusations against senior managers while not denying the need to improve workplace culture.

The transit agency released its review Friday, nearly three months after the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission released a 50-page audit that labeled Metro's control center a "toxic workplace" where employees were racially and sexually harassed, safety protocols went ignored and morale was so low that the center remained perpetually and dangerously understaffed.

The audit from the safety commission, an independent agency created by Congress two years ago to oversee Metrorail safety after a litany of problems, had wide-ranging effects. It drew rebukes from congressional members in Mary-

SEE METRO ON B4



PAULA OSPINA FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

## Md.'s Santa Claus with a cause

It's an odd sight to see Santa Claus out on the streets jogging for exercise. After all, part of his iconic look is his plentiful midsection.

But Stephen Schreurs, who has resembled the jolly old man since he was in his 30s, can be found on the roads of Olney, Md., most days trotting while wearing red or purple shorts and a matching hat as he prepares for yet another marathon dressed as Santa.

"I've embraced the role," said Schreurs, 72, who has almost 50 long-distance races under his wide leather belt.

He's known in Maryland as the marathon-running Claus with a cause. Through his races,

'Santa Steve' has entertained neighborhood children for decades. Even in a pandemic, the marathon-running Saint Nick is making outdoor calls and Zoom visits — all while raising money for charitable causes.

BY CATHY FREE

Schreurs raises funds for charitable causes that he promotes on his Facebook page, such as Make-A-Wish and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Before the coronavirus pandemic, as the beloved neighborhood Santa, he would visit homes, pose for photos with kids and listen to what they wanted for Christmas. Sometimes he read stories to the kids. Last year, kids lined up at a friend's barn in Olney to hand him their Christmas lists.

This year, Schreurs's velvet sack is packed and his boots are shined, but when he goes on

SEE SANTA ON B6

A group of children listen to Stephen Schreurs, known in Olney, Md., as "Santa Steve," answer their questions about the North Pole. This holiday season, Santa Steve is making outdoor visits to families and Zoom calls. "Even with covid, it's important to me to put a smile on a child's face," he said.

## Area lawmakers supported Tex. suit

4 House Republicans from Va., Md. backed failed bid to reject votes

BY MEAGAN FLYNN

Four Republican congressmen in the greater Washington region signed onto the amicus brief backing Texas's failed lawsuit over the presidential election, which sought to invalidate election results in four battleground states.

The Supreme Court rejected the case on Friday evening, writing in a short statement that "Texas has not demonstrated a judicially cognizable interest in the manner in

SEE LAWSUIT ON B3



TASOS KATOPODIS/GETTY IMAGES

Rep. Andy Harris of Maryland is one of four Republican congressmen from the greater Washington region who supported a lawsuit from Texas challenging the election results in four states.

## Md. releases settlement in Purple Line disputes

Firms would be paid \$100 million by Dec. 31 in \$250 million pact

BY KATHERINE SHAVER

Maryland will pay the companies managing the Purple Line's construction \$100 million by Dec. 31 to settle contract disputes that caused most major work on the transit project to stop this fall, according to details of a \$250 million agreement released Friday.

The part of the settlement

made public did not say when the state will pay the remaining \$150 million to salvage the project's 36-year public-private partnership.

It also did not provide a time frame for when the private concessionaire must replace its construction contractor, which would allow work to resume in earnest. No date was provided for when the 16-mile line interconnecting Montgomery and Prince George's counties will begin carrying passengers.

The Maryland Department of Transportation declined to elaborate on the details of the agreement, which became public

SEE PURPLE LINE ON B4

RELIGION

Biden is set to leave his mark on American Catholicism

BY MICHELLE BOORSTEIN

Bishops have already created a working group to deal with the “difficult” situation of his presidency. Priests from Maryland to Fort Worth have preached that the president-elect isn’t even really a Catholic. But to many millions of Catholics who voted for him, Joe Biden and his focus on healing are a compassionate, Pope Francis-like model of their faith.

Catholics’ views on Biden seem to serve as a proxy for what kinds of Catholicism they think most urgently needs to be advanced. Should it be more focused on qualities like engagement and empathy or on purifying doctrine? Is it as interested in Catholic teachings on poverty, refugees and the environment as those on sexuality and reproduction, or should it continue to place abortion law above all?

Despite these divisions, Biden is poised to make his mark on American Catholicism. For the next four years, the country will see its president go to Mass every Sunday, take out a rosary at times of contemplation, and quote his favorite childhood nuns and Catholic poets. And it will watch him try to navigate polarizing issues of special interest to his church that John F. Kennedy never had to take a position on — abortion, LGBTQ rights and climate change among them.

“It’s potentially a game-changer in American politics,” said Kathleen Sprows Cummings, head of the Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism at the University of Notre Dame. When Biden has spoken in detail about his faith, he has emphasized the values of welcome and decency, and that the worst sin is the abuse of power. With those images in the White House, Cummings said, “there is a potential to expand our national conversation about faith in public life beyond the abortion question. When you look at the whole picture you see someone who is a person of faith in a way [President] Trump is clearly not. Trump focuses on this world and on himself.”

Trump drew praise from conservative religious leaders in particular for his emphasis on protecting their religious liberties and exemptions. But even many supporters worry that Trump’s badly transactional relationship

with religion and profane behavior at a time when the country is secularizing has been seriously harmful to the credibility of faith groups. The churchgoing, Bible-quoting Biden — who struggles publicly with his church’s doctrine — offers a contrast that people like Cummings find more deep and genuine.

But others worry about Biden as a Catholic role model.

“Most people] don’t pay attention to bishops but they do to the U.S. president. And when the president is almost diametrically opposed to the most basic human right — that creates problems across the board,” Jayd Henricks, former executive director of government relations at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said of Biden’s policies to protect abortion access. “How [the bishops] address this is tricky, but if they don’t, then President Biden can redefine the perception of what it is to be a Catholic in good standing.”

To be sure, as the United States becomes increasingly secular, the impact of a public official’s faith in 2021 America is complex and more diffuse than in past generations. Biden is also not the first Catholic president, and follows Catholic speakers of the House, Supreme Court justices, and celebrities like Stephen Colbert and Lady Gaga.

Indeed, the conditions and discussion around Biden’s election show how much has changed in the country since Kennedy ran in 1960. He famously had to appear before 600 clergy members — many Southern Baptist — and, in an effort to win their approval, had to explain his belief in an America “where no public official either requests or accepts instructions on public policy from the pope,” and “in an America where the separation of church and state is absolute.” In 2020, Biden had perhaps the most extensive faith-outreach operation of any Democratic presidential candidate ever.

Kennedy enjoyed rock star-like support among Catholics, winning 80 percent of their vote; Biden won Catholics by a narrow majority. While in the decades after 1960, Catholics of all political persuasions kept a photo of Kennedy on the wall, next to one of the pope, in 2020 nearly 2.4 million people have watched the Rev. Ed Meeks preach on YouTube



SALWAN GEORGES/THE WASHINGTON POST

**President-elect Joe Biden leaves St. Ann, a Catholic church in Wilmington, Del., last month. Biden, a devout Catholic, is taking office at a time when the nation has grown more secular.**

an anti-Biden sermon called “Staring Into the Abyss.” Meeks, of Christ the King parish in Towson, is among at least a dozen U.S. priests who made news this fall with sermons challenging Biden’s Catholicism and saying his support of pandemic stay-at-home orders and same-sex marriage are threatening to the American way of life.

But Catholic clergy, like U.S. Catholics, have varying views on Biden. Division among the U.S. bishops over how to react to Biden’s election apparently led to two shifting statements by U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops President José Gomez of Los Angeles.

On Nov. 7, he issued a statement congratulating Biden and recognizing him as only the second Catholic president in a country that’s one-fifth Catholic. “Catholics have a special duty to be peacemakers, to promote fraternity and mutual trust,” Gomez said. Then, 10 days later, after hearing concern from some of the Conference’s other leaders, Gomez wrote a new statement, announcing a working group to deal with the “difficult and complex” situation of a Catholic president promoting policies including abortion access and broad

civil protections for LGBTQ people.

Biden’s faith commitments should lead to positive policies from the church’s perspective, Gomez wrote, on topics including fighting the impacts of racism, supporting migrants and opposing the death penalty. But Biden’s other views, including on the “preeminent priority” of abortion, are especially problematic coming from a Catholic, Gomez wrote, in part because “it creates confusion.”

Biden is also likely to face off against his church in the courts, where he will also be up against a solidly conservative — and majority Catholic — Supreme Court eager to protect the religious freedom of traditional faith groups when it comes to things like not hiring or offering health-care coverage to openly LGBTQ employees and their families. Biden has said he supports the Equality Act, a sweeping bill that would update the Civil Rights Act to ban discrimination against LGBTQ people. The church opposes the act, as well as the decision of the city of Philadelphia to end a foster care contract with Catholic Charities rather than allow it to exclude same-gender couples. A decision in that key case, which was heard

Nov. 4, is pending.

For now, Biden’s transition team and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops are warily circling one another, knowing the Trump-to-Biden policy change will be dramatic. Both groups declined to comment for this story about the church-White House dynamic they are expecting, or for which they are preparing.

One apparent land mine for Biden was removed late last month when Wilton Gregory, D.C.’s archbishop and a newly minted cardinal, said he would not deny Biden Communion. That is in keeping with Gregory’s predecessors and their approach to the Catholic politicians in D.C., including a then-Vice President Biden. Biden then went to church at spots including St. Matthew’s Cathedral downtown, Dahlgren Chapel at Georgetown University and Holy Trinity parish in Georgetown, a Catholic familiar with his worship routines said.

Biden is not the first politician to be caught up in the Communion wars. Sen. Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.) in 2018 was barred by Diocese of Springfield Bishop Thomas Paprocki from receiving Communion in Springfield after Durbin voted against a bill that would have outlawed abortions

after 20 weeks of pregnancy. In 2004, 16 U.S. bishops made public statements that they would do the same to then-presidential candidate John F. Kerry, also a supporter of abortion access. That trend spurred the founding of the group Catholic Democrats, which tracked bishops’ comments from 2004 until 2013, when Pope Francis took office. In that period, about half of U.S. Catholic bishops had made statements to the effect that “you can’t be a good Catholic and vote Democrat,” said Steve Krueger, who heads the group.

Francis has since changed Catholic culture, Krueger and others said, by emphasizing a wide range of things addressed in Catholic teaching, in particular the plight of refugees, human loneliness in the Internet age and the moral urgency of climate change.

Those who embrace Francis’s philosophy hope Biden’s focus on healing and unity will allow for a spirit of compromise. There’s some evidence to suggest it might. Biden was among the Democratic leaders during the Obama administration who pushed for more compromise on touchy issues, including how wide religious exemptions can be from the Affordable Care Act, specifically from mandatory coverage of contraception or abortion. Some Catholic Democrats who are antiabortion or moderate on the issue wonder if, as president, Biden will offer conservative concessions.

Regardless, even supporters of Biden say he’ll have to be more frank about how he balances his strong personal Catholic faith and his advocacy for some liberal policies of which his church disapproves if he wants to keep together the coalition of Americans who are attracted to his spiritually framed message of empathy and unity.

“A lot will depend on how he portrays that conflict,” Stephen Schneek, an adviser to Biden on Catholic outreach, said of the president-elect’s disconnect with the church’s positions on things like gay rights and abortion access. “He has to do it in a much more comprehensive way. He’ll have to have a way of talking about that. Those things have significance and can move people’s hearts.”

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Area’s activists question impartiality of D.C. police

POLICE FROM B1

sides. . . . Their job is to be neutral and be there to protect whoever is there, whatever their political affiliation is.”

Pro-Trump rallies this weekend are expected to draw thousands of his most ardent supporters to the nation’s capital.

Events are scheduled to begin about 9 a.m. Saturday with a prayer rally at the Capitol. Other pro-Trump demonstrations will convene about noon near the Washington Monument and in Freedom Plaza. Demonstrators are again planning to march to the Supreme Court, where speakers will address the crowd from the marble steps. Among those invited to speak is Trump’s recently pardoned former national security adviser, Michael Flynn, who twice pleaded guilty to lying about his contacts with Russia’s ambassador during special counsel Robert S. Mueller III’s probe of 2016 election interference.

A National Park Service permit issued Friday indicates organizers of the March for Trump, likely the largest of the rallies, expect about 15,000 attendees. Another “Million MAGA March” rally will convene at the National Sylvan Theater on the Mall, with about 500 people expected, according to a separate Park Service permit.

The Proud Boys — a malechauvinist organization the FBI has deemed an extremist group with ties to white nationalism — plans to return to D.C. this weekend. Counterprotesters say at least three D.C. activists were stabbed in violent clashes with men wearing the Proud Boys’ signature gold-and-black uniform last month.

These incidents, along with more than six months of tense encounters with police, have convinced many D.C. protesters that police will not protect them, so they have been preparing to protect themselves.

Rotating shifts of anti-Trump demonstrators plan to patrol Black Lives Matter Plaza through

the weekend, looking for attempts to tear down signs or vandalize protest murals. Dance protests and live music are scheduled alongside anti-Trump and antifascism rallies.

But D.C. police shut down the plaza early Friday, effectively evicting anti-Trump demonstrators and uprooting an ongoing peace vigil. D.C. activists noted on social media that the street slated to host their protest was closed on the same day the Park Service issued permits allowing Trump supporters to gather.

Dustin Sternbeck, a police spokesman, said police closed streets in the area of Black Lives Matter Plaza “to ensure public safety is maintained.” The police department did not respond to concerns from activists about their demonstration space being blocked.

Activists have warned about the anti-Trump protesters being a possible target of violence Saturday and offered alternatives to showing up in person, including donating cash and supplies to protesters and lobbying the city to enforce its mask mandate. Street medics, who volunteer at rallies to care for injured demonstrators, have for weeks been recruiting reinforcements.

Congressional Republicans, meanwhile, have accused the District’s Democratic leadership of allowing Trump’s supporters to be bloodied in scuffles last month with counterprotesters over Trump flags and MAGA hats, which anti-Trump protesters later burned.

The group behind the March for Trump has deemed Black Lives Matter Plaza a “no-go zone” and discouraged supporters from venturing far from its rally point along Pennsylvania Avenue.

At a briefing with D.C. Council members this week, interim city administrator Kevin Donahue said he hopes protesters “get out of town as fast as possible.”

Last month’s rally brought two discordant views of America onto a crash course in the nation’s capi-



HANNAH MCKAY/REUTERS

**A woman confronts D.C. police on Nov. 14. The city’s police chief has said the goal is “to prevent violence . . . without choosing sides.”**

tal, with Trump supporters insisting without evidence the election had been stolen. They waved flags and chanted profanity-laden slogans from Freedom Plaza to the steps of the Supreme Court, where a small crowd of counterprotesters waited, wearing all black and using bicycles and homemade shields to create a barricade.

Violence between the two groups later broke out five blocks east of the White House. The groups charged each other as they approached the same intersection, brawling for several minutes before police cleared the area.

In the melee, a D.C. fire official said, a man in his 20s was stabbed in the back and taken to a hospital with serious injuries. Street fights continued into the night.

“Anytime there is violence in this city, that’s not a win,” Mitchell said.

Nearly two dozen people were arrested during the November rally, including several on gun charges, according to D.C. police, who said four officers also were injured.

D.C. activists said at least two additional counterprotesters were assaulted, including one who was wearing body armor and said his vest stopped a blade from penetrating his skin. Another received four stitches to close a knife wound in the arm, protesters said. The demonstrators did not file police reports, and officers did not make arrests.

Dub, a 25-year-old street medic who declined to give a full name,

out of fear of being targeted by the Proud Boys, said a woman came to medics seeking treatment for a cut on her neck after she said she was caught in a Proud Boys attack.

“I’m worried about the next one,” Dub said of Saturday’s protests. “I don’t want to see my people get harmed again.”

D.C. Police Chief Peter Newsham said last month that officers followed every big group of roving demonstrators and tried to intercede before factions collided. He said there were people on both sides determined to fight.

“The police department was put directly into the middle of it,” Newsham said, adding that the main goal of police is “to prevent violence . . . without choosing sides.”

But police actions during the demonstrations led many protesters to assume officers had done just that.

Trump supporters waving flags bearing a thin blue line, a pro-police symbol that critics have long claimed also stands for white supremacy and opposition to the Black Lives Matter movement, cheered officers as they passed. Several lined up for photos with officers, who smiled and flashed thumbs-up gestures for the camera.

“This is a volatile time,” Mitchell said. “I’m hearing more and more politicalization of policing, and our law enforcement is in the middle. We want them to act accordingly to maintain the civil rights of our community, and when they don’t, they need to be

held accountable. When there is a perception that there is a side being taken, then our job is to mitigate that perception.”

Outside of the Supreme Court, where thousands of Trump supporters faced off last month with a small crowd of black-clad counterprotesters, Proud Boys members tried to leap over metal barricades assembled to separate the groups. They were pushed back by police as the crowd chanted an expletive at counterprotesters. Moments later, officers in riot gear arrived and stood with shields up, facing the anti-Trump demonstrators.

As more officers with crowd-control munitions converged, counterprotesters glanced up from peeling clementines and drinking water on the curb of Maryland Avenue NE.

“This is disgusting,” said Jen Nick, 28, a Navy veteran who stood on the front line with a contingent of veterans donning “Vets for BLM” T-shirts. Looking at the row of officers, she said it seemed police were doing little to protect D.C. counterprotesters from the largely out-of-town crowd.

The administration of D.C. Mayor Muriel E. Bowser (D) declined to allow Newsham or other police officials to be interviewed for this report. Newsham is soon leaving the department to become police chief in Prince William County, Va.

Chuck Wexler, executive director of the Police Executive Research Forum, which advises law enforcement agencies on best practices, said it is not enough for officers at protests to have good intentions — they also need to be aware of the optics of their actions.

“We are living in an age where reality matters, but so does appearance,” Wexler said. “It’s hard when some group is trying to react favorably to the police. But I think police chiefs are aware that the appearance of fairness is as important as the reality.”

While many of the confrontations that happened last month did not culminate in violence, activists said being confronted by dozens of barefaced Trump supporters in the midst of a national surge of coronavirus cases made them feel unsafe.

Dozens of D.C. police officers have tested positive for the coronavirus in the weeks since the

November rally. As of Thursday, 74 remained in quarantine. Police have declined to draw a direct link between demonstrations and the spike in infections among officers.

Harry’s Bar, a pub in the Hotel Harrington that has become known as a meeting point for Trump supporters and Proud Boys, was slapped with a fine for violating the mayor’s order mandating mask use and banning large crowds — the bar’s second offense since October.

D.C. protesters have encouraged residents to call in reports of violations at businesses that hosted Trump supporters last month.

The Capital Hilton said it received “a handful of calls” asking it to reject reservations from out-of-town visitors attending Saturday’s pro-Trump rallies. A spokeswoman wrote in an email that hotel staffers “do not adopt or endorse the views of any guest.”

D.C. police said officers will not be enforcing mask rules this weekend or issuing fines to those who flout the mandate or social distancing guidelines.

D.C. Council members and their staffs have received hundreds of messages from constituents ahead of Saturday’s rallies, urging the city to do more to enforce coronavirus restrictions. Chairman Phil Mendelson (D) encouraged residents concerned about the spread of germs at the demonstrations to “protect themselves from the dangers of this potential superspreader event by staying away from it.”

“Regardless of one’s views about the ideology of the rally, we have to be careful to respect the First Amendment right to demonstrate,” Mendelson said in an emailed statement.

Organizers with Women for America First, the pro-Trump group behind the rally at Freedom Plaza that also led the only permitted march on Nov. 14, sought to distance themselves from the violence that erupted.

“We hope everyone is peaceful and respects the right of all Americans to peacefully protest and have their voices heard,” said group spokesman Chris Barron.

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Julie Zauzmer contributed to this report.

# More than 100 House Republicans backed suit

LAWSUIT FROM B1

which another state conducts its elections. All other pending motions are dismissed as moot.”

Before that, Reps. Ben Cline, H. Morgan Griffith and Rob Wittman of Virginia and Rep. Andy Harris (Md.) had joined more than 100 House Republicans to support the case.

Griffith said in a statement Friday morning that his name was “inadvertently” left off the amicus brief in the rush to file the document on Thursday. It was added on Friday.

“I support this effort on behalf of counting legal votes under the rules set by the Constitution,” said Griffith, who called the legal argument in the case “persuasive.”

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton (R) sued Pennsylvania, Georgia, Michigan and Wisconsin in a last-ditch attempt to throw out election results in those states before a Monday deadline.

He argued that voting laws were unlawfully changed before the election and asked the Supreme Court to allow the Republican-led legislatures in each state to review the results and, if necessary, appoint new presidential electors — potentially disenfranchising millions of voters.

Outgoing Rep. Denver Riggleman (Va.) was the only congressional Republican in the increasingly blue greater Washington region who did not sign the brief.

He has been outspoken about Trump’s refusal to accept reality and has criticized colleagues for perpetuating Trump’s denial of President-elect Joe Biden’s victory.

A spokesman for his successor, Rep.-elect Bob Good (R), who ousted Riggleman in a GOP convention, said Good would have signed the brief if he were in Congress and “stands fully behind President Trump.”

Harris declined to comment on why he supported the lawsuit. Aides to Wittman did not respond to requests for comment, while a spokesman for Cline pointed to a Facebook statement the congressman posted Thursday.

“I will vigorously defend the right of every American, including the President, to have their day in court,” Cline wrote after signing



TOM WILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL/ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Among the House Republicans who backed the suit are, from right, Reps. Andy Harris (Md.), Ben Cline (Va.) and Scott Perry (Pa.).**

the brief. “Just as Al Gore and George W. Bush sought redress from the Supreme Court in December of 2000, President Trump should be able to do so today.”

Josh Blackman, a constitutional law professor at the South Texas College of Law Houston, called the premise of the lawsuit “outlandish.”

“A lot of the things Paxton is complaining about have been known for months — the precise methods of voting available in each state. And he waited until the election results were settled,” Blackman said. He said it’s notable that Texas sued only swing states that Biden won, even though other states Trump won had similarly changed voting methods to make voting safer during the pandemic.

“So it’s pretty obvious that this is designed to just flip votes in states that Trump lost,” Blackman said, “and this is not done in some kind of uniform concern for the law.”

Lawyers for the states Paxton sued noted in their own legal filings that his claims have already been rejected by lower courts, part of a string of legal defeats for the president and his supporters since the election.

With the exception of Riggleman, the Republican congressmen in the Washington region also did not acknowledge Biden as the president-elect in the days after the election. Nor have more than 200 other congressional Republicans. The Washington Post surveyed last week. Wittman did say in a Dec. 8 Facebook post that “a Biden Administration would mean a Cabinet filled with nothing but radical left-wing ideologues,” but it is unclear whether he accepts the results of the election.

Harris, Griffith and Cline were also among the 39 House Republicans to sign a Dec. 1 letter urging Attorney General William P. Barr to continue investigating poten-

tial fraud or irregularities in the election — just as Barr announced that he had found no evidence of fraud that would have affected the outcome of the vote.

On Nov. 19, Harris referenced the potential existence of “illegal large-scale voter fraud” while explaining his support for Trump’s legal challenges more broadly. He did not provide evidence.

“The democratic process includes making certain that issues involving illegal large-scale voter fraud, like counting ballots in secret, are resolved — which unfortunately will have to involve the courts,” he wrote in a statement to The Washington Post. “Until then, I would hope every American wants to be sure that the integrity of our voting system has not been compromised.”

Wittman has previously posted on Facebook: “The President has filed lawsuits that need to be heard. It is a fundamental principle of this nation that the Courts hear and decide any disputes between opposing parties. Until the courts have heard the cases, and until the recounts have been concluded, I believe the President has every right to exercise this authority.”

On Thursday evening, Democrats lambasted Republican colleagues who signed onto the amicus brief.

“Placating one man’s ego as he undermines our nation’s commitment to what has set us apart for centuries — free and fair elections that honor the will of the people — is dangerous and a dereliction of your duty,” Rep. Abigail Spanberger (D-Va.) wrote on Facebook, directly addressing her colleagues. “He lost the election. You know it. He knows it. . . . May you feel more responsible to the American people than you feel afraid of one man and his Twitter account.”

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Robert McCartney contributed to this report.

## VIRGINIA

# Renaming process begins in Fairfax

BY ANTONIO OLIVO

Fairfax County has begun the process of getting rid of Confederate names on streets, parks and other sites, part of a broader reckoning over Virginia’s Civil War legacy amid calls for greater racial and social equity in the state.

On Tuesday, the county Board of Supervisors agreed to start public discussions around a renaming process featuring 157 locations that, in many cases, would require county residents and businesses to change their mailing addresses.

Among them are two of the county’s largest thoroughfares: Lee Highway, named for Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, and Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, named for Lee and Gen. Stonewall Jackson.

The dialogue over what to call those highways, and a host of parks and recreation centers that also honor Confederate leaders, can serve to bring greater awareness about Fairfax’s role in the Civil War and the role African Americans have played in the county, Supervisor Walter L. Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill) said during a Tuesday board committee meeting about the effort.

“It’s a community discussion that is going to be more long-lasting and meaningful than the actual final change,” said Alcorn, who along with Supervisor Dalia A. Palchik (D-Providence) co-sponsored a motion in June to

launch the renaming process.

“We’re definitely moving down this path, not to in any way erase history, but to bring it alive,” Alcorn said. “And, where appropriate, to think about where we do want to glorify something or someone [who is] not a Confederate leader.”

Dozens of Confederate monuments in Virginia have been taken down this year, an effort made possible by a new state law giving local jurisdictions authority over the fate of war monuments and memorials, and accelerated by the protests over the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis police custody.

Last month, Fairfax officials removed a stone obelisk outside the county courthouse that marked the site where the first Confederate soldier was killed in a land battle and a pair of accompanying Dahlgren howitzers. The board agreed to donate the obelisk to a local historical society and to send the howitzers to the Manassas National Battlefield Park. A state marker commemorating the battle was sent to the state Department of Historic Resources.

Meanwhile, schools and highways named after Confederate leaders have also been renamed across the state.

Over the past two years, Arlington and Prince William counties, as well as Alexandria, have all turned Jefferson Davis Highway, the roadway once honoring the president of the Confederacy,

into Richmond Highway.

This week, an advisory panel in Arlington also voted to rename the county’s portion of Lee Highway after Mildred and Richard Loving, the couple who successfully challenged Virginia’s ban on interracial marriage.

Fairfax would also rely heavily on community input in dealing with street names and other public property, while commercial property owners and developers would have to sign off on renaming shopping centers and neighborhood subdivisions that honor Confederate leaders.

Several county supervisors said a high priority will be to find new names for Lee Highway and Lee Jackson Memorial Highway in the county.

Palchik said it would make sense to coordinate with Arlington officials on what to call Lee Highway for the sake of consistency.

Supervisor Rodney L. Lusk’s Lee District was not mentioned in a county history commission’s list of sites to be considered for renaming.

But Lusk, the board’s sole African American member, said he will spearhead an effort to separate his district from the legacy of one of the Confederacy’s most prominent leaders.

“We will have to have a community conversation about this name and this district,” Lusk (D) said.

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# New restrictions follow spike in cases

REGION FROM B1

the pandemic. The seven-day average of new cases across Virginia, Maryland and D.C. stood Friday at 6,887, down slightly from Thursday’s record high.

In Prince George’s, library staff members who had been working in buildings to check out books to customers via curbside pickup service will work at home from Dec. 21 to Jan. 12, the library system announced.

“The public health conditions right now require that we adjust operations to keep staff and customers safe during the surge,” the county said in a statement.

Patrons can still check out e-books and audiobooks virtually, but cannot check out or return printed books or other physical materials.

The Prince George’s County library system, like others in the region, has offered curbside pickup but has not allowed patrons into buildings during the pandemic. D.C. is an exception: Many of its library branches have been open for limited book pickups and computer use since the summer, although librarians have expressed concern about their safety.

Infections have risen sharply across the region throughout the fall and as temperatures have turned colder.

As of Friday, the steepest weekly caseload rise was in Virginia, where 60 percent more infections were reported than the week before. The state’s average new daily case rate per 100,000 residents

hit an all-time high of 46, with Maryland recording the same rate of spread. The District’s rate per 100,000 residents was 39 on Friday.

Virginia reported 3,395 new daily cases and 35 deaths from the virus Friday. Maryland reported 2,616 cases and 52 deaths, and D.C. reported 259 cases and one death.

The region’s leaders have responded to the surge in infections by introducing new restrictions throughout the week. Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam (D) announced a nighttime curfew Thursday. D.C. Mayor Muriel E. Bowser (D) banned high school

sports and recreational contact sports Monday.

Some Maryland jurisdictions announced bans on indoor dining and lower caps at retail establishments in a week that included a joint call with leaders of the state’s eight most populous localities.

In Virginia, Army officials announced Friday that a coronavirus outbreak at the National Museum of the U.S. Army at Fort Belvoir will force it to temporarily close the facility, starting Monday.

In a statement, the Army said “a small number” of museum employees recently have tested positive. The museum sees as many as 560 visitors daily, officials said.

The museum will remain open Saturday and Sunday, with precautions that include timed entry tickets to reduce capacity.

A museum guard, who spoke on the condition of anonymity out of concern for his job security, said he is one of four guards who have tested positive since late November. His symptoms, including a fever and chills, have begun to subside.

“I’m in constant contact with the public,” said the guard.

The Washington Football Team also joined the parade of cancellations Friday, announcing that after discussing the safety of allowing fans in the stadium with the Prince George’s County Health Department, the team decided to play its remaining two home games in front of empty seats.

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## LOTTERIES

Results from Dec. 11

### DISTRICT

Day/DC-3:	7-6-9
DC-4:	5-5-1-9
DC-5:	2-8-4-5-9
Night/DC-3 (Thu.):	8-0-8
DC-3 (Fri.):	6-0-5
DC-4 (Thu.):	6-0-7-1
DC-4 (Fri.):	0-8-0-2
DC-5 (Thu.):	3-9-1-0-1
DC-5 (Fri.):	4-5-1-6-5

### MARYLAND

Day/Pick 3:	4-0-5
Pick 4:	5-2-8-0
Night/Pick 3 (Thu.):	2-7-5
Pick 3 (Fri.):	3-3-2
Pick 4 (Thu.):	6-8-4-2
Pick 4 (Fri.):	2-8-1-7
Multi-Match (Thu.):	14-17-21-31-33-41
Match 5 (Thu.):	10-11-16-18-29 *35
Match 5 (Fri.):	8-13-31-34-37 *16
5 Card Cash:	10C-8S-KH-4C-JC

### VIRGINIA

Day/Pick-3:	8-1-0
Pick-4:	0-7-3-1
Night/Pick-3 (Thu.):	0-9-7
Pick-3 (Fri.):	2-7-1
Pick-4 (Thu.):	9-3-5-7
Pick-4 (Fri.):	2-6-9-1
Cash-5 (Thu.):	9-26-37-40-41
Cash-5 (Fri.):	5-25-27-31-32

### MULTI-STATE GAMES

Mega Millions:	19-31-37-55-67 **25
Megaplier:	4x
Cash 4 Life:	25-34-36-49-57 †1
Lucky for Life:	1-5-10-11-31 †15

\*Bonus Ball      \*\*Mega Ball  
† Cash Ball      ‡ Lucky Ball

For late drawings and other results, check [washingtonpost.com/local/lottery](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/lottery)

## LOCAL DIGEST

### MARYLAND

## Pr. George’s school board chair to leave

The chairman of the Prince George’s County Board of Education will step down in early January, he announced Thursday.

Alvin Thornton, who has led the board that oversees Maryland’s second-largest school system for two years, submitted his resignation in a Dec. 6 letter to County Executive Angela D. Alsobrooks (D), who appointed him in 2018. He announced it at a school board meeting Thursday night.

Thornton said he was honored to have served and outlined goals achieved during his tenure, including a project to build six schools using a public-private partnership and improved relations between the board and the community.

He did not detail reasons for his departure.

A retired Howard University professor, Thornton is widely known for his work leading a state commission on education funding. He also served on the Prince George’s school board in the 1990s and was chairman for three one-year terms.

— Donna St. George

### VIRGINIA

## Felon sentenced for having guns at protest

A man previously convicted of a felony was sentenced to 4½ years in prison for having weapons and ammunition during a demonstration in Richmond, federal officials said.

Matthew Lee Frezza, 37, of Chesterfield had a homemade assault rifle, a handgun, a ballistic vest and eight magazines when the truck he was riding in was stopped by Richmond police on June 12 after leaving the Robert E. Lee monument, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia G. Zachary Terwilliger said Thursday in a news release.

The Richmond Times-Dispatch reported that prosecutors said Frezza rode in a caravan to the monument to pick up members of a group who had infiltrated protesters and were trying to gather intelligence.

According to the news release, Frezza was one of three passengers in one of three trucks. Police said all three had firearms, including assault rifles. Frezza’s homemade assault rifle had no serial number and contained a loaded, high-capacity magazine, prosecutors said. Frezza, who according to the Times-Dispatch had 25 prior convictions, is not allowed to possess guns.

— Associated Press

## THE REGION

# Mother Nature gives out the gift of gorgeous weather

BY MARTIN WEIL

Gifts loom large in December, and on Friday, Washington received one, the meteorological gift of a bright 60-degree day in the middle of a month often known for darkness and cold.

In Washington, the mercury rose to 61 degrees, 13 above the norm for the day. At Dulles International Airport, it was

even warmer, with a high of 62, which was 15 above the norm.

At a time when the traditional temperature trend is decidedly downward, the 11th day of December confounded expectations. It turned out to be the warmest of the month.

With only 10 days to go to our shortest, darkest day, and with frigid January but three weeks off, it might have seemed un-

grateful to ask more of Friday or insist on blue skies and sunshine.

Yet, considerable quantities of both became our lot.

To shut one’s eyes and sense the sun on our faces was to be transported back in time to April or March. Both recorded average monthly highs only a couple of degrees above what we had Friday.

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# Metro does not deny need for improvement

METRO FROM B1

land and Virginia, prompted Metro to restructure leadership of the ROCC and led to the reassignment of a senior vice president after the audit accused her of coaching employees to ignore safety protocols and interview requests from auditors.

While Metro's new report aimed to clear two supervisors, the safety commission said Metro's investigation backed the findings of the original audit and further underscores serious ROCC workplace issues.

"We appreciate the full corroboration of our audit report's findings by [Metro's] memorandum," safety commission chief executive David Mayer said in a statement. "The [safety commission] stands by our thoroughly investigated and deeply researched Rail Operations Control Center audit report."

Metro hired an outside law firm to investigate claims against Senior Vice President of Rail Services Lisa Woodruff, and its probe extended to other claims the audit made against current or former supervisors.

In a statement, Metro said its outside investigation did not substantiate the most serious allegations of a toxic culture at the

ROCC, or claims of racial discrimination, sexual harassment and retaliation by senior managers. But the report does not deny that harassment and unprofessional behavior occurred within the ROCC or that managers were involved.

Still, the pushback from Metro underlines tension between the two entities. The creation of the safety commission grew out of the Jan. 12, 2015, electrical malfunction of a Metro train outside the L'Enfant Plaza Metro station that generated a mass of smoke that engulfed a stalled train, sickening scores of passengers and killing one rider. It drew attention to Metro's poor safety record and lack of adequate supervision.

The Federal Transit Administration took direct safety oversight of Metro in 2015 until federal transportation officials and Congress created the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission in 2018.

Since then, the safety commission has ordered Metro to come up with corrective plans for more than 70 safety issues or violations. The commission has repeatedly said ROCC managers resisted the commission's orders for reform, and the Sept. 8 audit was a culmination of safety violations and workplace issues that the commission said Metro has left unad-

ressed for years.

It also said Woodruff "told controllers not to talk to the [safety commission], to resist required corrective actions, and to paint a rosy picture of the ROCC for an internal Metrorail transformation team."

A day after the safety commission audit was released, Metro re-assigned Woodruff to temporarily serve as a technical adviser. The transit agency hired San Francisco-based law firm Littler Mendelson to look into the assertions against Woodruff and Deltrin Harris, the former director of the ROCC, whom the audit accused of encouraging employees to shirk safety protocols.

After three months, the law firm came back to Metro with a report saying it couldn't confirm the claims the audit had made against Woodruff and Harris, who has since been reassigned.

"This report exonerates Lisa Woodruff and Deltrin Harris of the charges contained in the [safety commission] report and repeated in dozens of media accounts," Metro General Manager Paul J. Wiedefeld said Friday. "While this bell cannot be unrung, the record must be set straight to restore the good names of transit professionals whose reputations were unfairly tarnished."

The new 12-page report's goals were to investigate whether the ROCC has fostered a toxic culture, Woodruff's orders and comments to employees, any incidents of harassment or threats, unwanted

physical contact, and "significant" turnover among controllers.

"Based upon the interviews, documents and other information, [the law firm] did not substantiate that Ms. Woodruff and/or Mr. Harris engaged in harassing conduct . . . or otherwise threatening conduct targeted at ROCC controllers," the report said. "Moreover, Littler did not substantiate that Ms. Woodruff and Mr. Harris were responsible for the [safety commission's] perceived 'deep-seated toxic workplace culture' in the ROCC."

However, Metro's report did say employees reported "observing conduct that a person could perceive as sexual harassment." It also said workers heard "racial and homophobic comments" at the ROCC, including some made by managers.

"Disrespectful and unprofessional conduct is commonplace in the ROCC," the report said. ". . . We did not substantiate that senior management created and/or condoned a hostile work environment based on race, sex, or any other protected category. It is apparent, however, that a culture of disrespect and unprofessional behavior exists in the ROCC."

First-line managers, the report said, use profanities at controllers and often suspend workers for mistakes, adding that "the ROCC is demanding and can be daunting," although this is not the fault of the supervisors — but "the nature of the work."

The safety commission said it

stood by its report.

"We remain focused not on placing blame, but on ensuring that Metrorail makes the necessary changes to its safety practices and procedures to make the system safer for customers, workers and first responders," commission chairman Chris Hart said.

Metro said it has committed to overhauling the ROCC's training and safety procedures to improve professionalism, help workers cope with the stress of monitoring the massive rail transit system and improve recruitment and retention.

The law firm's report and Metro did not dispute the bulk of 21 safety issues or violations the safety commission audit had raised.

A Metro spokesman said Woodruff will continue to serve Metro in a senior-level capacity but will not return to her former post because the transit agency has restructured the ROCC. In a shake-up after the audit, Metro removed the ROCC from chief operating officer Joe Leader's purview and turned supervision over to Andrew Off, a vice president and former assistant general manager who had been in charge of construction projects. Off is now vice president of the ROCC and Strategic Transformation.

In October, Metro hired Edward Donaldson, a 30-year veteran at the Federal Aviation Administration and the FAA's former system operations security director, as ROCC director, replacing Harris and an interim director.

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# Md. proposes \$100 million by Dec. 31 to settle Purple Line disputes

PURPLE LINE FROM B1

as part of the state's Board of Public Works agenda for Dec. 16. At least two members of the board — composed of Gov. Larry Hogan (R), Comptroller Peter Franchot (D) and Treasurer Nancy K. Kopp (D) — must approve the agreement, as required for changes to major state contracts.

Their approval is expected because a settlement prevents the state from having to procure another highly complex financial partnership, which experts say would take more than a year. Moreover, it precludes a potentially lengthy and costly legal battle by resolving the state's and companies' lawsuits against each other.

Allowing the partnership to implode, experts say, also would damage MDOT's reputation with the private sector just as the state pursues a similar arrangement to add \$10 billion worth of toll lanes to the Capital Beltway and Interstate 270. The Purple Line's partnership was one of the first for a U.S. transit project to rely on private financing.

Hogan spokesman Michael Ricci said the agreement is a good deal, compared with the \$800 million the companies originally sought in delay-related cost overruns.

"The governor looks forward to taking this next step toward completing the Purple Line," Ricci said. "These were tough negotiations, but we were able to save taxpayers \$550 million from the original claims."

Franchot spokeswoman Susan O'Brien said she couldn't say how the comptroller planned to vote but said, "The settlement is



SARAH L. VOISIN/THE WASHINGTON POST

**A construction site for the Purple Line in downtown Silver Spring on Oct. 5. The project was initially expected to open in March 2022, but contract disputes have delayed it considerably.**

an important step forward to getting this critical project done."

Kopp said she would like to see more details, but what she's seen so far "looks very good."

"It's a lot of money," Kopp said. "But it's a lot less than what the companies were suing for. . . . We do very much want to go forward with the Purple Line, and this seems to be the right first step."

How much more the state will have to pay to complete the rail line remains unknown until the concessionaire, known as Purple Line Transit Partners (PLTP),

awards a new construction contract.

A key question will be how much another contractor will charge to assume the risk of completing work started by other companies.

MDOT officials said in November that the state will try to reduce cost risks by finishing the design, obtaining permits and completing utility relocations.

It's also unclear how many of the previous cost escalations, such as those related to the design of a CSX crash wall and problems with state environ-

mental approvals, remain.

"We won't know the full cost until a new construction partner is brought in and gets back to work," said Del. Marc A. Korman (D-Montgomery), a member of the House Appropriations Committee.

PLTP spokesman John Underland declined to comment on the agreement or potential future costs.

The Purple Line initially was scheduled to open in March 2022, but the original contractor said it won't begin carrying passengers until late 2024 because

of the delays.

In the public posting, MDOT said the board's approval of the \$250 million deal would "substantially" reduce further delays in the rail line's completion.

MDOT said the \$250 million would come from the state's transportation trust fund but did not say which other projects or services might be delayed or scrapped due to the additional Purple Line payment.

Most major construction stopped after PLTP's contractor quit over the cost disputes in mid-September, leaving a string of dormant construction sites across the Washington suburbs. The state has since taken over some subcontracts to allow work to continue, but most won't resume until the concessionaire hires a new contractor.

Local officials have said MDOT has estimated it will take up to nine months for PLTP to get another contractor on board. However, it can then take weeks or months to mobilize workers, materials and specialized equipment from across the country for such a large, complex project.

Under the agreement, Texas-based Fluor will exit the partnership, state officials said previously. That leaves infrastructure investors Meridian and Star America as the remaining members of PLTP. Fluor also was the lead company in the construction joint venture.

Under the partnership, now valued at \$5.84 billion including the settlement, PLTP will build the line, help finance its construction, and then operate and maintain it for 30 years.

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## THE DISTRICT

# D.C. firefighter charged with murder in shooting

BY PETER HERMANN  
AND KEITH L. ALEXANDER

A D.C. firefighter has been charged with fatally shooting a man in early December in Northwest Washington, three months after he was freed from detention to await trial in a separate case involving illegal firearms.

Members of the Capital Area Regional Fugitive Task Force arrested Mohamed Goodwin, 32, on Thursday night on a warrant charging him with second-degree murder while armed. On Friday, a Superior Court judge ordered him jailed awaiting trial.

The D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department said in a statement that Goodwin has been on leave since his September arrest on weapons charges. He joined the fire department in 2016.

Police said the fatal shooting occurred about 8 p.m. on Dec. 3 in the 700 block of Morton Street NW, near Georgia Avenue in the Park View neighborhood, adjacent to Columbia Heights. The victim was identified as Devonte Wilson, 25, of Northwest.

Authorities said officers had responded to a report of a vehicular crash when they found Wilson, who was in the driver's seat of a red 2020 Dodge Journey that had struck several parked vehi-

cles, wounded with a gunshot to his neck. He died at a hospital Dec. 4.

Police said in an arrest affidavit filed in D.C. Superior Court that Goodwin, Wilson and other men were in the Dodge and had gone to Morton Street to gamble.

A person who was in the vehicle told police that Wilson and Goodwin began making derogatory comments to each other, according to the affidavit. That witness told police that after Wilson made one particular comment, he heard a gun being racked from the back seat, and he and others jumped from the car.

That man told police he then heard a shot, followed by a crash. Another witness, a bystander, told police he saw someone shooting at the vehicle from the street.

During a Friday hearing on the murder charge, Goodwin's lawyer, Lee Smith III, argued that there was no evidence that Wilson was shot from inside the car and that it was possible the victim was shot by someone outside the vehicle, not by his client.

Wilson's relatives could not be reached Friday.

Goodwin's arrest Sept. 4 came after police were called to the 3300 block of Brothers Place SE in Congress Heights for reports of gunshots in a rear alley.

Police said they saw Goodwin

with a gun in his hand. They said he initially refused demands to drop the weapon, and after he complied, he reached into his waist and pulled out a second gun and "turned around to face the officers." He then dropped that firearm as well, police said in an affidavit.

Police arrested him and said they found 15 shell casings in the alley.

Goodwin was charged with possession of unregistered firearms, unlawful discharge of a firearm and assault on a police officer.

At his initial appearance in D.C. Superior Court on Sept. 5, Associate Superior Court Judge James A. Crowell IV ordered Goodwin released pending trial, over the objections of the U.S. attorney's office, which argued for detention. Crowell set a court date for Feb. 5.

Court records show Goodwin had no prior criminal record and was employed by the District. The judge forbade him from possessing firearms and ammunition, and imposed an 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. curfew.

Police Chief Peter Newsham, who has long criticized what he says is lenient treatment for people arrested on illegal firearms charges, offered condolences to Wilson's friends and family.

The chief, who is leaving the department next month, said that "if the District does not get serious about gun offenders, I am afraid Devonte's life will not be the last unnecessarily lost on our streets to gun violence."

Crowell declined through a court spokeswoman to comment, citing the code of judicial conduct prohibiting judges from discussing pending cases.

In court Friday, Smith argued that Goodwin was not a danger and should be placed on GPS monitoring while he lived with his mother. The defense attorney said Goodwin's mother had contacted police during their search and told them her son had checked himself into MedStar Georgetown University Hospital for mental health problems.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Spence said evidence indicates a single gunshot came from the back seat of the vehicle. He argued that Goodwin presented a danger if released.

Superior Court Judge Sean Staples ordered Goodwin held at the D.C. jail until his next hearing, Dec. 30. Smith then asked the judge to have his client sent to St. Elizabeths Hospital, the city's psychiatric medical facility. That request was denied.

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## CORRECTION

• The Dec. 11 obituary of baseball player Dick Allen incorrectly stated that his highest batting average was .317 in 1966. He hit .318 in 1964.



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**CLARENCE A. THOMAS**  
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**Saturday,  
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**Thursday,  
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11 a.m. ~ 3 p.m.**

**Friday,  
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11 a.m. ~ 3 p.m.**



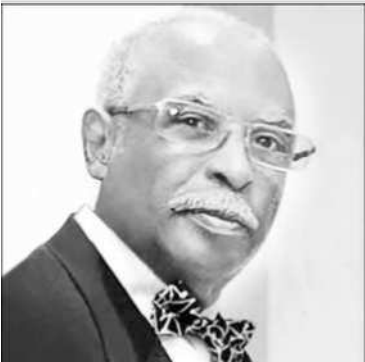
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## DEATH NOTICE

## BANKSTON HOOKER



**ARTHUR WILLIAM BANKSTON HOOKER**  
On Wednesday, December 2, 2020, Arthur William Bankston-Hooker of Leisure World of Maryland, Silver Spring, Maryland entered into eternal life. He was long time resident of Dayton, Ohio, until his marriage in 2011. Devoted and Loving husband of Maxine Hooker. Father of Arthur Hooker, Jr. (Marquet) and Armando Love; two stepsons, Jerone Hodges (Kristine) and Aaron Hodges; one stepdaughter, Aisha Robinson (Keene); two adopted sons, Earl White and Tyrone Olverson; 11 grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and uncle, Joe Bankston (Peggy); three brother-in-laws, one sister-in-law, all of the Dayton, Ohio and Washington-Metropolitan Area, host of nieces, nephews, cousins, relatives and friends. Services will be private. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be sent to: Leisure World Lions Club, at 15111 Glade Drive, Apt. 2-E, Silver Spring, MD 20906.

Online condolences may be expressed at:  
[www.pumphreyfuneralhome.com](http://www.pumphreyfuneralhome.com)

## GILLICE



## SONDRA JUPIN GILLICE

**April 15, 1936 – November 19, 2020**  
Sondra J. Gillice passed away in Arlington, Virginia on November 19, 2020. Sondra was a proud wife, dedicated mother and grandmother, a fiercely loyal friend, and a leader in her professional and social circles. Born in Centuria, Illinois in 1936, to Laura Rose Jupin, an educator, and Earl Cranston Jupin, an investor and columnist for the town newspaper, Sondra graduated from high school in 1954 with a determination to have a professional career. Sondra completed her bachelor's degree studies at Lindenwood University in three years, and later earned an MBA degree from Loyola College. In 1959, she married James ("Jim") T. Gillice, to whom she was married for 18 years, and, in 1964, had her only child, Thomas A. Gillice. Sondra's diligence and business acumen led her to break through the corporate world's glass ceiling in the 1970s and 80s. She served as a human resources manager and executive in the financial, energy, and hospitality industries, including as Vice President of Human Resources at Guest Services, Inc. Ever a pioneer in the corporate world, Sondra advocated for the upward mobility of professional women into upper levels of management, and in 1980, gave a speech for the National Policy Institute entitled "Women & Work: Removing the Barriers in the 1980s." That same year, Sondra married Gardner R. Brown (USN CDR (Ret.)), a marriage of 38 years until Gardner's passing in April 2018. Sondra and Gardner shared a passion for home renovation and design, which they practiced on their properties in Edgartown, Massachusetts and Orange, Virginia. In 1998, she and Gardner formed their energy consulting business, RusSon, Inc. Sondra served as president of the local chapters of Soroptimist International, American Association of University Women, Capital Speakers Club, the Art Guild of Washington DC and several other organizations. Her wonderful parties, gracious hosting and generous friendship will be missed by many. She is survived by her son, Thomas and daughter-in-law, Michelle, and her grandchildren, James and Cole Gillice. Interment will be at Arlington National Cemetery on a date to be announced in 2021. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Lindenwood University's scholarship fund at <https://www.lindenwood.edu/alumni/support/giving-opportunities/scholarships>.

## DEATH NOTICE

## JACOBSON



## EILEEN MARION JACOBSON

Eileen Marion Jacobson passed away peacefully on November 12, 2020, at Walter Reed Medical Center after being hospitalized following a long illness. She was 90.

She was born in New York City and grew up in Woodmere, Long Island, and the City. Her father was a businessman and her mother was a homemaker. She graduated with a degree in radio and TV from the University of Miami, finishing first in her class. There, she met her future husband, Raymond Jacobson, who was then a law student. They dated for two years, and after she pinned his Army 2nd Lieutenant's bars on him, he left for two years service during the Korean War. Following his discharge, they moved to Washington, where they were married in 1955.

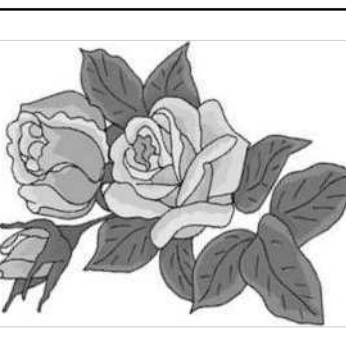
In Washington, she worked in the communications office of the Democratic National Committee, at an advertising agency, and in the promotion department of the Washington Post. She was the first woman to regularly attend the newspaper's daily meetings, led by editors J.R. Wiggins and Alfred Friendly. There, she gained information for advance promotions of articles by Post writers.

When Raymond was promoted to General at the Pentagon, Eileen once again pinned him with his star. But Raymond said that if he was going to be wearing a gold star, then she should wear a specially designed necklace with a gold star and a diamond to recognize her support for his years of military service. She wore it for most of the rest of her life.

Eileen had always been artistic and would travel widely to obtain beads and other pieces made of glass to create one-of-a-kind necklaces that were sold in high-end boutiques, including at the Corning Glass Museum in Corning, NY.

She is survived by her husband of 65 years, their son Louis A. Jacobson; their daughter-in-law Elisabeth Layton, and their grandchildren Cynthia and Zachary. During her long illness, she was comforted by the loving care of Lurene Whyte and Ruby Salgro. The funeral was privately held with immediate family.

[www.sagelbloomfield.com](http://www.sagelbloomfield.com)



When the need arises, let families find you in the Funeral Services Directory.

To be seen in the Funeral Services Directory, please call paid Death Notices at 202-334-4122.

The Washington Post

## DEATH NOTICE

## DEATH NOTICE

## LINDNER



## THADDEUS ALPHONSE LINDNER

Thaddeus Alphonse Lindner passed quietly at home on December 7, 2020, in the loving presence of his wife of 68 years, Mary Jean.

Born June 10, 1926, Tad moved from his hometown of Syracuse, NY to Washington, DC, following his service in the U.S. Army in occupied Japan in 1947.

A first generation Polish-American, he earned his B.A. from George Washington University, funded by the GI bill and through engaging in multiple part-time jobs. GWU of the 1950's proved to be a place where Tad grew socially, becoming student government president; athletically, playing for the golf team all four years; academically, earning the respect and support of those professors; and romantically, where he met the love of his life and future bride, Mary Jean Wellford. He always remembered the important role GW played in his early success and exhibited as much by naming his company after the GW "Colonials", later establishing scholarships and making other major contributions to his alma mater, and serving as one of the university's founding trustees. His service on the board stretched over 20 years, and was later honored by a dear friend in the creation of a Professorship of Business Ethics at GW, in his name and that of his late partner, Serge Gambal.

After securing a loan (\$90) which was supplemented by his Mary Jean's CIA salary, Tad and his fraternity brother/business partner Gambal started what was to become one of the largest parking services company in the Washington, DC area, Colonial Parking, Inc. As President and CEO of Colonial Parking, he led the company while concurrently serving in numerous civic and community leadership roles. During this time and later, he and Mary Jean also contributed time, talent and

## DEATH NOTICE

## McLAIN

## DEATH NOTICE

## McLAIN

## CLIFFORD E. McLAIN

(Age 89)  
Of Fairfax Station, VA passed away on December 6, 2020. Private services will be held at National Memorial Park. For full obituary, please go to

[www.nationalfh-mp.com](http://www.nationalfh-mp.com)

## NEIDECKER

## CHARLES LEROY NEIDECKER "Buddy"

Passed away on Sunday, December 6, 2020, of natural causes. He is survived by his daughter, Nancy Floyd, son, Wayne Neidecker, grandchildren, Brian, Amy, Brett, Charly, Cody, and great-granddaughter, Lily. Charles' wife, Dorothy died in 2009, after 59 years of marriage. He was also preceded in death by his son Gary. Charles was a man of faith and will be missed dearly by all who knew him. A private service will be held for the family. Please join us in celebrating Charles' life by making a donation to or volunteering with University Baptist Church Food Pantry, as this was near and dear to his heart. To do this please visit their website at [wearubc.org](http://wearubc.org) or call 301-422-1430.

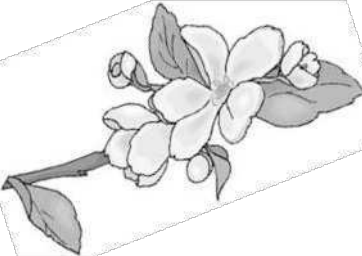


## DEATH NOTICE

## PORTER

## BEVERLY PORTER

On Friday, December 11, 2020, BEVERLY PORTER, of Silver Spring, MD. Beloved wife of the late Allan J. Porter. Devoted mother of Marlene (Dennis) Blair, Jay (Patty) and Nadene (Porter, Arlene) Danzig and sister-in-law of the late Naomi Danzig. Loving grandmother of Megan Blair, Alyson (Steve Eberhardt) Blair and Katie, Natalie and Owen Porter. Graveside funeral services will be private. Shiva will be held via Zoom. Please contact the family for information. Memorial contributions may be made to the American Diabetes Association, [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org). Arrangements entrusted to TORCHINSKY HEBREW FUNERAL HOME, 202-541-1001.



## DEATH NOTICE

## RAWSON

## NORMAN E. RAWSON (Age 85)

Of Rockville, Maryland, passed away peacefully on December 8, 2020. He was the beloved husband of Nancy Rawson (nee Dennis); a cherished father to Cynthia Rawson and the late Julie Zabrukky; grandfather to Nicole and Sean Zabrukky and William and Clare Stylingster; and great grandfather to Aliza Zabrukky and Peyton Knox. Services will be private. Interment will be at Parkholm Cemetery in La Grange, Illinois. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in his memory to Genesis Presbyterian Church. For a full obituary see

[www.pumphreyfuneralhome.com](http://www.pumphreyfuneralhome.com)

## DEATH NOTICE

## SPEED



## AMY LOUISE DIGIOSIA SPEED

Born on October 7, 1962, Amy Louise (Digiosia) Speed passed away peacefully on December 8, 2020, while surrounded by family. She is survived by her devoted husband, David Speed; her precious child, Daniel; and two loving sisters, Lori Digiosia (m. Greg Holt) and Krista Bernier (m. Art), and was preceded in death by her adoring parents, Victor and Bonnie Digiosia, and her dear sister, Lisa Harju (m. Kenny). She is also survived by her nieces and nephews Brady, Alexis, Evan, Austin, Greg and Mareth, all of whom she loved and cared for like her own children.

A native of Virginia since 1 year old, Amy grew up in Fairfax County, Virginia. Amy was the Valedictorian of the class of 1980 at West Springfield High School in Springfield, Virginia, where she was also elected to the Homecoming Court by her fellow classmates. Amy was selected to be a WSHS cheerleader all four years, serving as Captain of the Varsity squad. Amy was supremely bright as shown as early as age 2 when she was recorded reading the Washington Post. Yet, she was modest and humble. Amy never talked down or made anyone feel lesser than. Her valued and celebrated all people, firmly believing that everyone was gifted in their own way.

Amy was an avid reader, often consuming two or three books in a week. Sometimes referred to as a "bookworm" in her youth, one of her books wound up on the street when it was thrown out of the car by a friend who wanted to encourage her to take her nose out of the book when they were spending time together!

Amy nurtured and maintained lifelong friendships with her grade school friends. They loved, laughed and cried together for the last 50 years, spending precious time together by FaceTime and in-person up to the last day of her life.

Amy graduated from Duke University in Durham, NC, with honors. She was a member of Delta Delta Delta Sorority and forged special bonds with the friends she made at Duke. She tirelessly rooted for the Blue Devils in their bids to win NCAA basketball tournaments.

In her 20 years as a writer / editor for the Internal Revenue Service, Amy won multiple performance awards. She was instrumental in adding the Missing Children's pictures to multiple IRS publications and forms, bringing awareness to the plight of many endangered children and providing better opportunities to find and rescue children in dire straits.

While working at the IRS in Washington, DC, Amy befriended Haskell, a homeless man

## DEATH NOTICE

## STOPAK

## ANITA STOPAK

Anita Stopak, of Silver Spring, MD passed away on Thursday, December 10, 2020, the age of 84. Beloved wife of Charles Stopak, devoted mother of Robin and David Stopak; cherished grandmother of Matt Freedman (Emily), Jamie Speiden (Garrett), Hanna, Bryan and Daniel Stopak; loving aunt of Susan (Chris) Alvigna and her children, Rachel, Charlotte and Brendan; caring sister, Rhoda Baron. Services will be held privately. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude's Children's Hospital. Services entrusted to Sagel Bloomfield Funeral Care.

[www.sagelbloomfield.com](http://www.sagelbloomfield.com)

## DEATH NOTICE

## LITTLE



## WILLIAM LITTLE, JR. (Age 92)

Of District Heights MD, peacefully transitioned from earth into the beyond on the morning of December 2, 2020. His celebration of life will take place on Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at Gethsemane United Methodist Church, 910 Addison Rd. S., Capitol Heights, MD 20743. The wake will be held at 10 a.m., followed by the service (limited seating) at 11 a.m. Streaming available from the Gethsemane UMC Facebook page.

He leaves to cherish his memory his loving wife Ellen Washington Little; his beautiful daughter Brenetta Jackson; three handsome grandsons Raimon Jackson (Brenetta), Everett Harrington Jr. (Denise), Rashad Adams (Terrence); and a host of extended family.

## RUST



## CATHERINE J. RUST

## "Katie" (A. 99)

Catherine Johansen Rust died on December 11, 2020 at Sunrise Senior Living in Alexandria, VA. Mrs. Rust, who lived in Washington, DC, and Christmas Cove, ME, was 99. She had a heart ailment.

A native Washingtonian, Mrs. Rust was a graduate of Georgetown Visitation Convent and Georgetown Visitation Convent Junior College, class of 1942. During World War II, she served as a nurse's aide and later as a blood-donor aide for the American Red Cross.

A member of the Junior League, Mrs. Rust was active in voluntary work, serving as president, Alumnae Association of Georgetown Visitation Convent Junior College; president, Women's Board of Columbia Hospital for Women; and board member, Columbia Hospital for Women. Mrs. Rust was devoted to her husband of 61 years, Harry Lee Rust II, who died in 2004, and their five sons, Harry of Alexandria, VA, John of Portland, ME, William of East Ost, MA, Robert of Williamsburg, VA, and Richard of Freeport, ME. Mrs. Rust's survivors include eight grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

A funeral service will be held at a date to be determined once the covid-19 pandemic has been contained.

## KIRSCHNER



## RICHARD KIRSCHNER "Rick"

A leading member of the labor union bar in Philadelphia for 60 years, Richard "Rick" Kirschner, 83, died on November 30, 2020 at George Washington University Hospital in Washington, DC. Born on April 3, 1932 in Philadelphia to public school teachers Rebekah Muller Kirschner and Walter Kirschner, Rick attended Central High, earned a B.A. from Penn State (1954), an LL.B. from the University of Pennsylvania (1957), and a Master's in Law and Public Policy from American University in Washington, DC (2002). He continued his education into his 70's, receiving a teaching certification from American University in 2011 and completing training as a docent for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2016.

His political and moral views were shaped by the era of Joseph McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). His parents taught English and History at Roxborough High and had friends who were blacklisted and lost their jobs as a result of HUAC investigations supposedly aimed at identifying Communist threats to the United States. His parents too were investigated as Communist sympathizers.

During his career Rick represented both private and public employee labor unions, first as an associate with the Philadelphia firm of Lou Wilderman, then with Wilderman, Markowitz and Kirschner, and Kirschner, Walters, and Willig. He left Philadelphia in 1982 to found the law firm Kirschner, Weinberg & Dempsey in Washington, DC. That firm represented the national office of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), which became the largest union in the AFL-CIO. In 1990, Rick dissolved that law firm and established a new firm, Kirschner & Gartrell, P.C., with his wife, M. Kay Gartrell (J.D. Yale 1967), whom he married in 1978 when she was a partner in the Philadelphia firm of Goodman & Ewing. The new firm renewed Kirschner's relationship with AFSCME Council 13 in Pennsylvania, then led by native Philadelphiaan Edward Keller. He represented Council 13 and its related health and welfare funds until his death.

Rick worked with AFSCME from its inception in Pennsylvania. He was the primary draftsman of the Public Employees Relations Act of 1970, which established for the first time the right of public employees in Pennsylvania to organize. He later drafted the original Declaration of Trust which established the largest union-management jointly administered health and welfare funds in the nation, the Pennsylvania Employees Benefit Trust Fund (PEBTF). Managed by equal numbers of Union Trustees and Management Trustees (selected by the Governor) the PEBTF today provides health benefits to some 70,000 state employees and their dependents, covering more than 200,000 lives.



## DEATH NOTICE

## CLIFFORD



## TIMOTHY E. CLIFFORD

Retired managing director of WPP Finsbury and former newspaper journalist in New York City, Boston and Washington, DC, died Friday, December 4, 2020 after a courageous four year fight with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). Tim Clifford, generally called just "Clifford" by family and friends, lived a high-energy life fired by a fierce and impatient intelligence. He relentlessly pursued wisdom and experience through reading, travel and friendship, and was convinced that the world would be a much better place if we all just listened to him.

He first thought to find the key to a more perfect universe through the study of history. Clifford obtained bachelor and masters degrees in history with honors from Yale University; proceeded to New College at Oxford as the American Keasbey Scholar to earn a graduate degree in modern European history; and landed back at Princeton University for more graduate studies.

But the joys of academia ultimately could not compete with the bright lights of big cities, and so Clifford embarked for Boston and the start of his career as a journalist at The Herald. In 1986, news to be its Washington Bureau chief. He ran the bureau and wrote political analysis during the administration of President Bill Clinton, another voracious reader with whom Clifford swapped reading lists on U.S. and global history. As bureau chief, he managed the expectations of his

newspaper colleagues and was a firm believer in the gift of education. One of his best wishes was to have a scholarship created in his name for academically promising students in need of financial assistance. Tax-deductible contributions in his honor can be made to Oxford University, <https://www.oxford.ac.uk/donate>. Select "New College" from the pull-down menu and in the Further Information box, type in "Timothy Clifford Scholarship."

## DEATH NOTICE

## McLAIN

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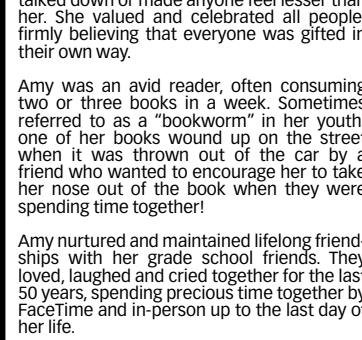
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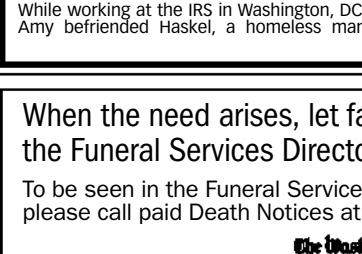


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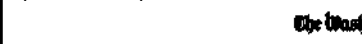


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The Washington Post

# THE WEATHER

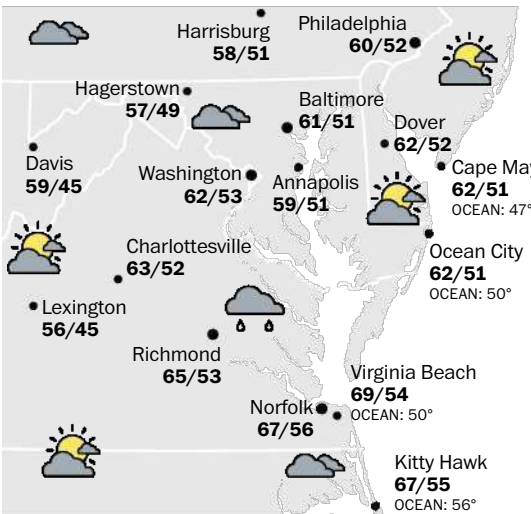
WASHINGTONPOST.COM/WEATHER • TWITTER: @CAPITALWEATHER • FACEBOOK.COM/CAPITALWEATHER

## Another beautiful day



We might be dealing with some patchy fog in the morning. If so, it will dissipate rather quickly after sunrise. Under mostly sunny skies, highs will mainly be above 60. Winds will be from the south around 5 to 10 mph. Tonight, lows are in the upper 40s to low 50s.

## REGION



- Pollen: Low**

  - Grass: Low
  - Trees: Low
  - Weeds: Low
  - Mold: Low
- Air Quality: Moderate**

Dominant cause: Particulates
- UV: Low**

2 out of 11+

**Blue Ridge:** Today, mostly cloudy. High 50–54. Wind southwest 7–14 mph. Tonight, mostly cloudy. Low 38–42. Wind west 7–14 mph. Sunday, partly sunny. High 47–51. Wind west 8–16 mph. Monday, mostly cloudy, morning snow. High 37–43. Wind north 4–8 mph.

**Atlantic beaches:** Today, cloudy, morning rain and fog. High 60–67. Wind south 7–14 mph. Tonight, mostly cloudy. Low 51–56. Wind south 7–14 mph. Sunday, mostly cloudy. High 57–66. Wind west 6–12 mph. Monday, rain. High 46–53. Wind north 7–14 mph.

**Waterways:** *Upper Potomac River:* Today, mostly cloudy. Wind south 5–10 knots. Waves around a foot. Visibility unrestricted. • *Lower Potomac and Chesapeake Bay:* Today, mostly cloudy. Wind south 7–14 knots. Waves around a foot on the lower Potomac and 1–2 feet on the Chesapeake. • *River Stages:* The stage at Little Falls will be around 3.80 feet today, falling to 3.70 Sunday. Flood stage at Little Falls is 10 feet.

Today's tides (High tides in <b>Bold</b> )				
<b>Washington</b>	12:17 a.m.	<b>5:27 a.m.</b>	12:16 p.m.	<b>5:47 p.m.</b>
<b>Annapolis</b>	<b>2:12 a.m.</b>	8:34 a.m.	<b>3:26 p.m.</b>	9:45 p.m.
<b>Ocean City</b>	<b>4:59 a.m.</b>	11:27 a.m.	<b>5:18 p.m.</b>	11:28 p.m.
<b>Norfolk</b>	12:33 a.m.	<b>7:04 a.m.</b>	1:26 p.m.	<b>7:26 p.m.</b>
<b>Point Lookout</b>	4:23 a.m.	<b>11:14 a.m.</b>	6:11 p.m.	<b>11:05 p.m.</b>

## TODAY

Mainly cloudy and mild



62° 53°

FEELS\*: 60°  
CHNCE PRECIP: 20%  
WIND: S 7–14 mph  
HUMIDITY: Moderate

## SUNDAY

Decreasing clouds



62° 42°

FEELS: 60°  
P: 20%  
W: WNW 7–14 mph  
H: Moderate

## MONDAY

Colder, rain at times



47° 32°

FEELS: 44°  
P: 60%  
W: N 6–12 mph  
H: High

## TUESDAY

Sun, patchy clouds



44° 35°

FEELS: 41°  
P: 0%  
W: N 6–12 mph  
H: Moderate

## WEDNESDAY

Rain, perhaps snow



42° 31°

FEELS: 24°  
P: 80%  
W: WNW 7–14 mph  
H: High

## THURSDAY

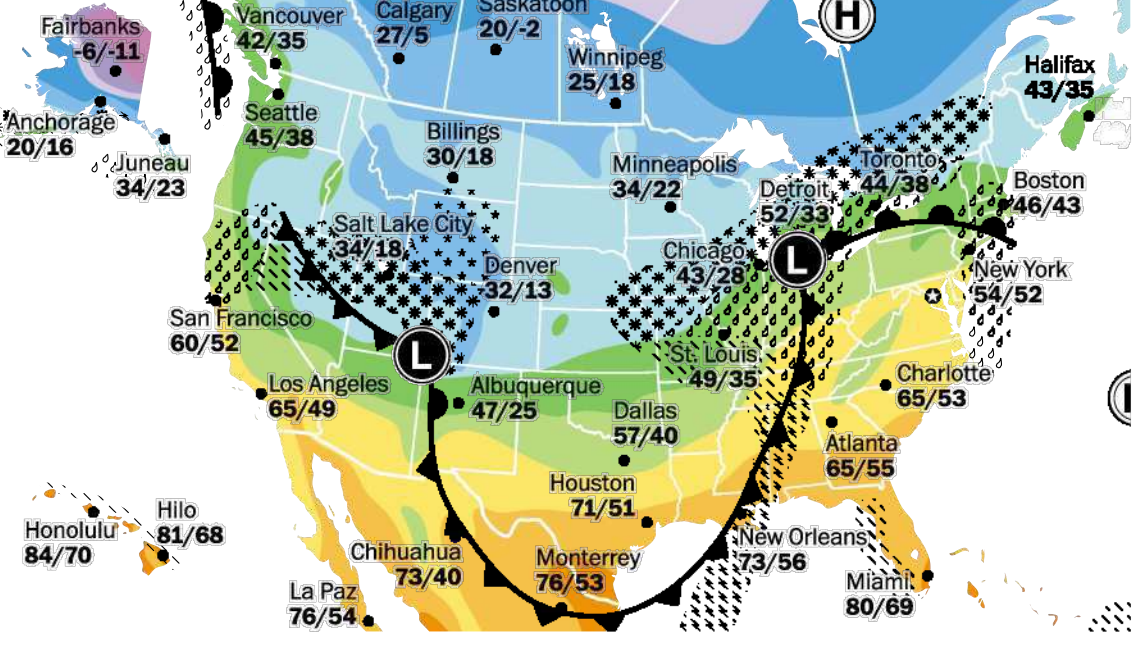
Partly sunny



44° 33°

FEELS: 39°  
P: 20%  
W: WNW 7–14 mph  
H: Moderate

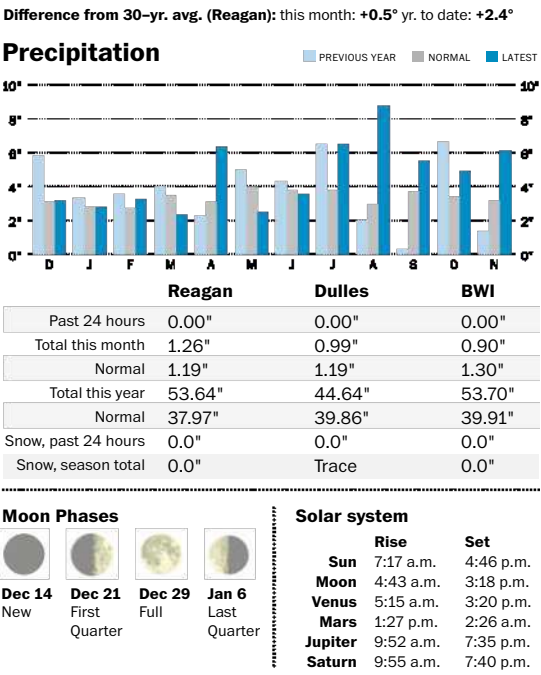
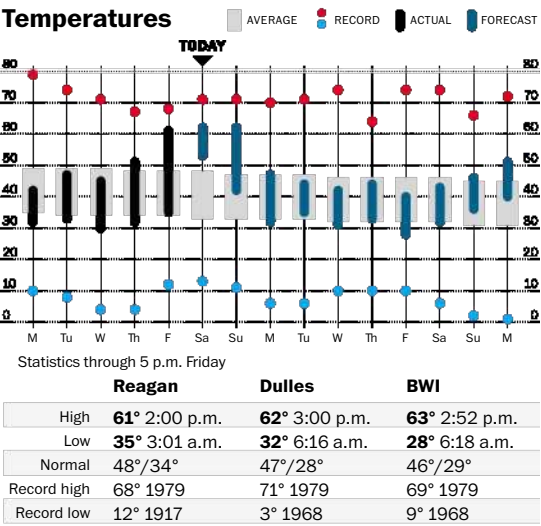
## NATION



NATIONAL	Today	Tomorrow	Des Moines	35/19/sn	32/17/s	Oklahoma City	47/32/c	38/18/sn
Albany, NY	40/38/c	48/32/c	Detroit	52/33/r	37/27/c	Omaha	35/16/c	36/16/s
Albuquerque	47/25/c	42/21/s	El Paso	64/40/s	55/25/c	Orlando	76/61/c	79/61/c
Anchorage	20/16/c	27/21/c	Fairbanks, AK	-6/-11/c	3/-7/c	Philadelphia	60/52/c	60/40/c
Atlanta	65/55/sh	66/51/c	Fargo, ND	31/15/c	33/6/sn	Phoenix	67/47/s	66/44/s
Austin	70/47/s	71/36/c	Hartford, CT	45/41/sh	58/33/c	Pittsburgh	55/43/sh	45/32/c
Baltimore	61/51/c	61/40/c	Honolulu	84/70/c	84/71/c	Portland, ME	40/35/r	45/33/c
Billings, MT	30/18/sn	31/22/c	Houston	71/51/c	68/42/r	Portland, OR	44/39/c	45/41/r
Birmingham	66/45/t	61/43/c	Indianapolis	56/33/r	41/25/c	Providence, RI	50/47/r	58/35/c
Bismarck, ND	31/18/c	29/5/c	Jackson, MS	69/41/c	64/40/r	Raleigh, NC	67/53/c	68/48/c
Boise	38/26/c	38/27/c	Jacksonville, FL	73/56/c	76/58/c	Reno, NV	46/31/sh	55/30/r
Boston	46/43/r	55/36/c	Kansas City, MO	39/26/sn	41/22/c	Richmond	65/53/c	67/43/c
Buffalo	50/42/r	44/30/sf	Las Vegas	57/35/c	52/34/c	Sacramento	56/46/c	58/41/r
Burlington, VT	40/38/r	48/31/r	Little Rock	55/33/c	47/30/r	St. Louis	49/35/r	44/28/c
Charlotte, SC	51/57/c	73/58/c	Los Angeles	65/49/c	70/48/s	St. Thomas, VI	84/75/sh	84/75/c
Charlotte, WV	60/46/r	47/37/c	Louisville	61/41/r	47/36/c	Salt Lake City	34/18/sf	37/26/c
Charlotte	65/53/c	69/47/c	Memphis	58/37/c	51/37/r	San Diego	64/48/r	71/48/s
Cheyenne, WY	27/12/sf	34/19/s	Miami	80/69/c	82/67/c	San Francisco	60/52/c	60/47/r
Chicago	43/28/r	34/25/c	Milwaukee	39/28/sn	34/23/c	San Juan, PR	84/74/sh	84/74/c
Cincinnati	57/39/r	43/32/c	Minneapolis	34/22/c	32/18/s	Seattle	45/38/c	47/41/r
Cleveland	54/38/r	39/29/c	Nashville	67/38/r	53/37/c	Spokane, WA	31/24/c	35/29/sf
Dallas	57/40/s	48/32/sh	New Orleans	73/56/t	69/48/r	Syracuse	47/44/c	48/32/c
Denver	32/13/sn	39/21/s	New York City	54/52/r	57/40/c	Tampa	76/64/sh	78/64/c
			Norfolk	67/56/c	66/47/c	Wichita	40/29/c	40/19/sn

WORLD	Today	Tomorrow	Hong Kong	73/67/c	73/64/c	Rio de Janeiro	83/75/sh	86/77/t
Addis Ababa	75/45/c	75/43/c	Islamabad	57/42/sh	60/41/c	Riyadh	67/49/s	70/50/s
Amsterdam	47/43/r	46/42/c	Istanbul	60/51/c	60/54/c	Rome	54/40/sh	55/39/c
Athens	63/54/sh	61/54/r	Jerusalem	63/53/c	68/59/c	San Salvador	86/66/s	85/66/s
Auckland	68/58/c	68/57/c	Johannesburg	80/58/t	81/59/t	Santiago	86/53/c	89/56/s
Baghdad	67/46/c	69/49/c	Kabul	47/17/s	41/14/s	Sarajevo	43/34/c	41/35/c
Bangkok	92/79/c	91/79/t	Kingston, Jam.	86/75/c	87/76/c	Seoul	43/28/s	39/14/sn
Beijing	42/19/c	31/9/c	Kolkata	79/62/c	81/63/c	Shanghai	54/41/c	54/37/c
Berlin	39/32/c	39/35/c	Lagos	87/76/t	87/76/c	Singapore	86/76/t	86/77/c
Bogota	69/45/sh	68/44/c	Lima	74/66/c	75/67/c	Stockholm	40/35/sh	37/33/c
Brussels	48/38/r	45/43/c	Lisbon	64/58/c	62/56/sh	Sydney	73/59/c	76/64/c
Buenos Aires	85/65/s	74/62/c	London	48/36/c	52/49/r	Taipei City	69/62/c	72/61/c
Cairo	77/64/c	84/64/s	Madrid	57/39/c	54/43/c	Tehran	45/31/c	46/34/c
Caracas	82/69/sh	82/69/t	Manila	86/76/t	86/77/c	Tokyo	58/48/c	58/51/c
Copenhagen	41/39/c	41/38/c	Mexico City	75/50/c	77/49/s	Toronto	44/38/r	40/29/c
Dakar	83/74/c	81/73/c	Montreal	35/33/sn	40/27/sh	Vienna	38/33/c	41/32/c
Edinburgh	44/36/c	54/45/s	Moscow	23/16/s	25/23/sf	Warsaw	38/34/c	37/31/c
Edinburg	46/35/s	47/44/r	Mumbai	89/74/c	88/74/sh			
Frankfurt	44/39/c	46/36/c	Nairobi	79/59/c	79/56/c			
Geneva	42/37/r	44/34/c	New Delhi	74/50/c	73/44/c			
Ham, Bermuda	71/68/c	73/68/c	Oslo	31/30/sf	32/30/c			
Helsinki	36/26/sh	28/24/c	Ottawa	33/31/l	39/25/s			
Ho Chi Minh City	88/75/t	89/75/t	Paris	51/37/sh	47/45/c			
			Prague	37/32/c	41/33/c			

## OFFICIAL RECORD



# Neighborhood Santa gives back, while spreading holiday cheer

SANTA FROM B1

his dozens of appointed Santa rounds in Olney on the weekends, he's doing outdoor visits and traveling in his bright red Toyota 4Runner.

This is a first for “Santa Steve” (as Olney kids and parents know him), but he's hopeful that he can still keep the magic alive. He's also doing Zoom visits.

“I'll just do the best I can,” Schreurs said. “Even with covid, it's important to me to put a smile on a child's face.”

“Since becoming Santa,” he said, “I've learned you have to adapt and live in the now.”

Schreurs is a retired chemical and nuclear engineer who teaches art every summer at Fiber College in Searsport, Maine. But he came upon his calling in life naturally, he said, when kids began pointing at him and exclaiming, “Santa!” four decades ago.

Never mind that Schreurs used to have red hair and a full beard to match. He could see that becoming Santa was inevitable, he said. His wife saw it, too.

“He has had a full beard since well before I met him,” said Susan Schreurs, 72. She married Santa Steve almost 50 years ago.

“As we got older, or at least, more adult-looking, children would occasionally ask if he was Santa,” she said. “Now it happens all the time, with or without the red hat.”

Her husband will oblige if somebody wants a photo, said Susan Schreurs, who at times will moonlight as Mrs. Claus.

“Sometimes it's an injured vet or someone who has a disability,” she said. “People let down their guard with Santa.”

Stephen Schreurs got his proper red velvet suit in the 1990s. It was after one Christmas season when he became popular with kids at his church while wearing a cheap Santa costume, Susan Schreurs said. That's when she



PAULA OSPINA FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**Children listen during a drive-by visit from Stephen “Santa Steve” Schreurs in Olney, Md., on Dec. 5. Schreurs gives kids a special Santa coin to make a wish for themselves or someone in need.**

decided it was time to sew him one.

“She did a great job — I'm still wearing it today,” her husband noted. Thanks to his daily running routine, it still fits.

Although his beard has turned white, his hair is still red — the perfect mixture for Christmas, he said. But even when he doesn't tuck his red locks under his velvet cap, kids still recognize him as Old Saint Nick, say those who know him.

“He has such an amazing persona that you really believe he's Santa,” said Tsili Wolf, who lives in the same cul-de-sac as the Schreurs. “You can be having the worst day in the world, and as soon as you start talking to Santa Steve, it all melts away.”

Although Wolf's family is Jewish, she regularly invited Stephen Schreurs to visit her two girls at

their home every holiday season — a practice that continues to this day, even though her daughters are much older.

Wolf has seen Schreurs in action year after year, not only with her kids but also with hundreds who have lined up to see him at community events in Olney. She nominated her bearded neighbor for a Greater Olney Civic Association award in 2018.

When Schreurs won, “practically the whole town turned out to honor him,” she said. “He's honestly loved by everyone, young and old alike.”

Schreurs is a graduate of the Charles W. Howard Santa Claus School in Midland, Mich., but much of what he has learned has come from interacting with kids.

He remembers the time he went to a mall and a girl with a walker approached him with her

mother.

“She said, ‘Mom, I don't want to use my walker to say hello to Santa,’” Schreurs recalled. “She was in this beautiful dress and she walked over to me without her walker and gave me a big hug. Tears were running down her mother's face. What a wonderful moment.”

There was also the time he allowed a blind girl with several health problems to touch his beard at Disney World, then later learned that her family was visiting the theme park to fulfill her last wish. Another meaningful moment occurred when an autistic girl sat next to him and “honked” his nose — the first time she'd ever interacted with a stranger, her mother told him at the time.

“That's what it's all about — that's why I've embraced the role,”

he said.

But since 2008, there has also been a more personal reason.

“That's when I learned as Santa Claus that it's time to say ‘yes,’” Schreurs said. “Because you may not have an opportunity to do that next week or next year.”

One of Schreurs's two sons, Bryan, was killed in a car accident that year. The year before, Bryan had taken a fun road trip with Schreurs and his grandfather. And a few years before that, Bryan had taken a coast-to-coast motorcycle trip with his dad.

“We put our feet in the Atlantic Ocean, drove to the Pacific Ocean and did the same thing, then drove back to the Atlantic and put our feet in again,” Schreurs said. “It took a month, but thank goodness we did it.”

Both of his boys never thought twice about having Santa as their father, he said. And now his two grandchildren are doing the same.

“They learned they had to share me at the playground,” Schreurs said. “In time, it got so they could point out a child who they thought might need cheering up.”

To help kids feel more comfortable, he always carries special Santa coins in his pocket, designed by him every year. Schreurs tells children to either make a wish for themselves or somebody in need after he hands out his coins, then asks them to tuck the coins away for safekeeping.

“I have them made in lots of 5,000,” Schreurs said. “One of the things I learned early on is that it took a lot of courage for a child to come up and ask me if I was Santa. I wanted to give them a gift for being brave. Something more than a candy cane.”

Sometimes he gets a shy smile in return.

“Even during a pandemic — especially during a pandemic — it brings it all home,” Schreurs said. metro@washpost.com

## VIRGINIA

# Police shoot, kill 79-year-old man

BY CLARENCE WILLIAMS AND DANA HEDGPETH

A 79-year-old man was fatally shot by Prince William County police Thursday night in the Dumfries area, police officials said.

Kurtis Kay Frevert, 79, of Dumfries was shot around 7:15 p.m. in the 3600 block of Secret Grove Court when officers responded to a call from a woman who said her husband was suicidal, police said.

The woman told police that her husband “was making concerning statements and armed with a handgun,” police said in a statement.

When officers arrived at the home, the husband had left and was walking around with a handgun, officials said. Officers, along with a helicopter from Fairfax County police, searched the area.

He was found in a nearby wooded area and was walking back to the home, police said.

The police statement said officers “encountered the husband near the front door of the residence, still armed with the handgun.” During that time, “five officers discharged their department-issued firearms at the man who was struck an unknown number of times,” the statement said.

Police said that the incident lasted an hour and that they do not know whether Frevert fired his gun. He was taken to a hospital, where he later died.

No officers were injured, authorities said.

Officials said the officers who were involved are being put on routine paid leave. Criminal and administrative investigations are underway.

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### Subscriber Exclusives

Cast Your Eyes on This: Free Virtual Screening of the Movie *Greenland* at 7:00 p.m. ET on December 15

A family fights for survival as a planet-k

Filmmakers respond to the agony of 2020 by relaying poignant stories



WILL ROBSON SCOTT/AMAZON PRIME

## Black cinema in sharp focus



Ann Hornaday

From a literal plague that took the lives of a disproportionate number of people of color to the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Aubury and, most recently, Casey Goodson, 2020 has threatened to become the Year of Black Death. When “Black Panther” star Chadwick Boseman died of colon cancer in August, it felt like an especially cruel blow — one that shattered not just the life of a brilliant young artist but the dreams of a community for whom he symbolized Blackness at its most historically regal and cosmically aspirational. But while anguish and outrage mounted, something else was happening on our screens. When the theaters closed and American audiences encountered endless streaming choices, what they found were films that, in

a variety of ways and through disparate forms, presented Black stories as quintessentially American and, ultimately, universal. It’s not hyperbole to say that the most important movie of the year wasn’t a blockbuster or indie sleeper hit but the 10-minute video that teenager Darnella Frazier made of Floyd’s death, an improvised documentary that became a chilling chronicle of one man’s desperation and another’s impunity. The video ignited waves of protests and demonstrations across the country, offering hope that a multiracial coalition might finally reach critical mass around issues of anti-Black racism and criminal justice reform. But it also presented a reminder of White Americans’ troubling relationship to Black trauma, from its deeply private and distressing content to the

SEE HORNADAY ON C2

Sheyi Cole, left, and Khali Best star in “Alex Wheatle,” the fourth installment in filmmaker Steve McQueen’s five-film anthology. It’s among the films released this year that are distinctive in their intense subjectivity.

## In the GOP, whispered ‘concerns’ over Trump

BY SARAH ELLISON

During his decades on the congressional beat, John Bresnahan has spent countless hours listening to the private concerns of his congressional sources. Democrats expressed private concerns about Bill Clinton’s indiscretions with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. Republicans confessed private concerns about George W. Bush’s handling of the Iraq War. Democrats shared private concerns about Barack Obama’s aloofness to the back-room negotiations where Congress gets its real work done. But then came Donald Trump. And, boy, did *his* party’s lawmakers ever have concerns. And those concerns? The most private *ever*. Bresnahan, the senior political congressional reporter for Politico, had no trouble getting Republicans to open their hearts to him about Trump leaning on the Ukrainian president to investigate Joe Biden, or his “both sides” equivocating about the white nationalist march in Charlottesville, or some of the troubling findings in the Mueller report and revelations in John Bolton’s book — but almost always on an off-the-record, no-name, no-fingerprints basis.

Every Hill reporter has spent the entire Trump presidency trying to get people on the record about Trump,” Bresnahan said. “I’ve spent the past five years trying to get people to put their names to their sentiments.” It’s a culture of anonymity, shot through by fear, that has posed a quandary for political journalists of this era — especially in these particularly fraught closing hours of the Trump administration, when the president has lobbed baseless allegations of election fraud and pursued extralegal means in an unprecedented attempt to overturn the voting results and seize another term in office.

Few Republicans have stood up to defend the process under which Joe Biden was elected — except, of course, *privately*. But should journalists even be dignifying these off-the-record sentiments — some condemning Trump’s actions, others promising it will all blow over — by putting them in print? Bresnahan says he has a rule not to quote someone anonymously and on the record in the same piece. And he has avoided whenever possible allowing unnamed lawmakers into his stories.

“If a Republican official isn’t willing to say openly that Trump’s legal battles are as destructive as they are hopeless, it’s hard to discern the news value in quoting them anonymously,” said Bill Grueskin, a professor at Columbia University School of Journalism.

SEE TRUMP ON C4

### TV REVIEW

## ‘Couples Therapy’ is back to zoom in on our issues

BY HANK STUEVER

At a time when most of us could probably use a session or two (or more), the nation’s mental health counselors are similarly overwhelmed by the facts of pandemic life and the ongoing bad vibes of social unrest in 2020. This becomes abundantly clear in Showtime’s quietly compelling “Couples Therapy: The Covid Special,” as the show’s expertly empathetic clinical psychologist and marriage counselor, Orna Guralnik, struggles to virtually tend to her clients as they experience heightened stress and discord under conditions that resemble house arrest. None of the crisis points seen in this one-hour program will strike viewers as particularly novel; they are iterations of the problems all couples are having and constantly complaining about — or, as Guralnik puts it as she juggles parenting, chores and Zoom sessions, it’s like “having the same dream day after day. . . . All conversations sound the same.” As such, “Couples

Therapy” may not sound like anyone’s idea of entertainment at the moment. And yet, this one-hour episode (airing Sunday) is a welcome attempt to salvage and perhaps savor what was clearly the show’s intended second season, which will have to wait until 2021. “Couples Therapy” premiered in 2019 and became the peak-TV equivalent of a sleeper hit, a fascinating and addictive opportunity to watch couples hash out their issues in their homes and also in Guralnik’s office (a set constructed to look like her office, that is, providing the show’s cameras a way to intimately capture every inflection and nuance from behind two-way mirrors — an emotional bonanza for psychotherapy voyeurs). The show is respectful and open; at times it can be unsettling and hit too close to home, but the rawness is also its main attraction. As “The Covid Special” begins, in February 2020, Guralnik welcomes new patients as well as some who were with her in the

SEE TV REVIEW ON C3

### MUSIC REVIEW

## Swift can’t quit while she’s ahead

BY CHRIS RICHARDS

So here’s another Taylor Swift album. Funny, right? Near the end of a catastrophic pandemic year, as our days continue to fuse into limbo-shaped weeks, there’s some real cosmic comedy in spontaneously releasing twin blockbusters within the space of five months. Too bad Swift doesn’t really do humor. As a songwriter, her sincerity is congenial, and she seems to be sending us this cozy new bundle of songs — 15 of them, titled “Evermore” — not as a dizzying meta-comment on cultural mindshare, but as a simple gesture of generosity and goodwill. It all ends up feeling like a hug that lasts too long. Just as she promised when announcing this music’s existence on Thursday morning, Swift’s “Evermore” is the aesthetic sequel to “Folklore,” an album released after a 16-hour heads-up in late July to resounding acclaim. Neato, boffo. The best thing about “Folklore,” however, was that it sounded surprising, too — its clean, quiet spaciousness giving Swift’s modest voice



BETH GARRABRANT

Taylor Swift’s “Evermore” is her second album of the pandemic.

the opportunity to glow warmer and brighter than the bells and whistles that had been clanging and trilling in her songs since 2012’s “Red.” On “Evermore,” the cleanest shot to the heart comes during “Marjorie,” an ode to Swift’s late maternal grandmother, Marjorie Finlay. “What died didn’t stay dead,” Swift sings over Kleenex-soft tufts of piano and plucked strings. “You’re alive, you’re alive in my head.” Any time Swift sings about family, listen closely because that’s when her songwriting reaches its most undeniable state of grace. As a superstar tasked with creating relatable pop songs, she knows that everyone has a bloodline to grieve. Intimacy becomes empathy. The cruel twist here is that Swift’s greatest songs will always remind you how not-as-great the others are — and while “Marjorie” appears deep enough in the tracklist to nearly wipe your mind clean of the dozen songs that came before it, there’s no forgetting the lyrical weakness that befools this album, including, “I come back stronger than a

SEE MUSIC REVIEW ON C4

ANN HORNADAY

# Indelible portrayals of resilience and joy

HORNADAY FROM C1

fact that it's Frazier who has to bear such excruciating witness. Once, photographs of lynchings were widely shared for the incitement and entertainment of White consumers. They were the popular culture of their day, just as "The Birth of a Nation" trafficked in the denigration and violation of Black bodies that, along with outright erasure, served as one of the founding aesthetic building blocks of Western cinema.

Now, images of similarly grotesque acts go viral not on postcards or in ornate movie palaces, but on social media; not for titillation, their circulators insist, but as a call for solidarity and social change. Still, even when they're received in that spirit, it's possible to wonder why anyone needed to be shown such humiliation and viciousness to do something about a problem that's anything but new. As Angela Bassett says in "Between the World and Me," quoting Ta-Nehisi Coates in HBO's recent adaptation of his book: "In America, it is traditional to destroy the Black body."

It felt as if we were being constantly reminded of that dismal and enduring truth throughout 2020. Which makes it all the more gratifying that amid so much agony and destruction, very different — and equally accurate — truths were emerging on our home screens.

From such carefully observed coming-of-age dramas as "Premature" and "Miss Juneteenth" to the wildly stylized high school thriller "Selah and the Spades" and the comedy "The Forty-Year-Old Version," we saw African American protagonists — most of them women — grapple with romance, self-worth, intergenerational conflict and their own emerging power. Interestingly, those themes also threaded through one of the year's biggest hits — "The Old

Guard," in which KiKi Layne gave as good as she got playing a mythic immortal soldier opposite Charlize Theron. And the same could be said of "Small Axe," Steve McQueen's five-film anthology for Amazon Prime in which he captures the dualities of pain and beauty, grief and healing, trauma and tenderness within the context of London's West Indian community in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

"Alex Wheatle," the fourth film in the series that arrives Friday on Amazon Prime, chronicles the life of the young-adult author who endured savage treatment at the hands of early caretakers and the English police. As McQueen's admirers know, the filmmaker has never shied away from representing Black suffering, as evidenced in his Oscar-winning drama "12 Years a Slave" and in the "Small Axe" films, which often depict graphic, merciless violence.

McQueen's visual grammar often entails staging a violent sequence with blunt, brutal verisimilitude, then lingering on the aftermath in queasy silence. His cinematic language is so unflinching that some viewers have instinctively turned away or accused him of exploitation.

Admittedly, McQueen's implacable gaze presents some provocative questions when it comes to spectatorship: For Black viewers, such forthright depictions might be too painful and personal to contemplate, or they may simply stray too far from traditional notions of beauty, pleasure and entertainment.

For White audiences, the calculation is far more freighted. Even those viewers who don't reflexively resist McQueen's most confrontational images may instead find themselves identifying with the Black character being harmed rather than taking a moment to reflect on how they relate to the ones doing the harm. Or they might watch and dutifully shake their heads about how awful racism is, congratulate



VERTICAL ENTERTAINMENT

themselves for recognizing that fact and retreat into a self-protective bubble of perpetual concern — a form of empty sanctimony aptly called "Oh dear"-ism by the experimental documentary maker Adam Curtis.

What makes McQueen's work distinctive — what allows it to go beyond mere spectacle — is its intense subjectivity, a quality shared by a bracing number of films that emerged in 2020. The mundane details of life in small-town Texas that give Channing Godfrey Peoples's "Miss Juneteenth" its poetry are of a piece with the real-world backstory that director Gina Prince-Bythewood insisted on for Layne's supernatural heroine in "The Old Guard." And that bone-deep understanding is just as palpable across a range of styles and sensibilities, from experimental portraits like Merawi Gerima's "Residue" to straight-ahead theatrical adaptations like "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" and the upcoming "One Night in Miami."



JEONG PARK/NETFLIX

**"Miss Juneteenth," top, and "The 40-Year-Old Version" are among the films with Black protagonists who grapple with romance, self-worth, intergenerational conflict and their own emerging power.**

These works have accrued into what feels like a collective invitation, not just to watch Black bodies as they fight and love, fail and persevere, conquer the space-time continuum and navigate everyday earthly existence — but to get *inside* those stories, making room for

genuine empathy, comprehension and, just maybe, transformation.

That intimacy has been infiltrating Hollywood for the past decade, in work by McQueen and Prince-Bythewood, as well as Ava DuVernay, Barry Jenkins, Dee

Rees and Ryan Coogler. In the hands of such newcomers as Gerima, Peoples, Tayarisha Poe ("Selah and the Spades"), Radha Blank ("The Forty-Year-Old Version") and Zora Howard ("Premature"), it was all the more potent this year for having been beamed directly into our homes, where the distance of the towering 30-foot screen gave way to a less mediated, more human-scale encounter.

In our most private moments, the anger and shame conjured by viral images of dehumanization were overlaid with images that reflected resilience, self-sufficiency and raw, spontaneous joy. The resulting palimpsest reflects the contradictions and possibilities of American cinema in the 21st century. For most of its history, film has been one of the most lethal tools in normalizing and fetishizing Black Death. With a new generation of filmmakers seizing the means of production, it's might finally becoming a tool for restoring Black Life.

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## Plights as different as house vs. home



Carolyn Hax

Adapted from an online discussion.

**Dear Carolyn:**

I recently began painful and exhausting fertility treatments, with no guarantee they'll actually work. An old friend, a mom of three, coincidentally began studying for her Realtor's license on the same day I began injections.

She now sends regular emails about how excited she is that we're "in this life journey together." More than once, if I mention I'm stressed or worried, she responds that she knows exactly how that feels, because if she doesn't pass her exam, her dream will be crushed. Today's text: a photo of her textbook next to a Starbucks latte, with, "Thinking of you as we both pursue our dreams."

I'm trying to be patient with the idea that she sees her study sessions as equivalent to my shooting myself up with

hormones, undergoing extensive lab tests and determining my familial future. But I'm frankly irritated. Not only does my friend's success depend entirely on her own hard work, but her worst-case scenario is that . . . she fails an exam and has to take it again.

I'm super-emotional about everything right now, but am I crazy? This is weird, right? What should I say that doesn't belittle her, but also makes this stop?

— *Not the Same Thing!*

**Not the Same Thing!:** Using whatever means available to do this safely: Have the in-person, "I know you mean well, but . . ." conversation. Say you're really rooting for her, of course — but if you don't spell out that you're uncomfortable with this "journey" coupling, and why, then you're going to start avoiding this friend or dump a latte on her, both of which are more aggressive acts than just telling her how you feel.

Sorry you're having a tough time.

**To: "Same Thing":** I'm also currently doing IVF, and got a three-year graduate degree in 22 months, and there is zero comparison. Most people are so [bleeping] clueless about IVF and don't treat it like the complex medical situation it is. A New York Times article discussed research showing the IVF stress level is comparable to that of cancer patients. Hopefully your friend isn't so obtuse that she'd do this with a cancer patient; most think you should be positive because it's baby related. Another needle in my butt isn't some magical moment.

— *Stressed*

**Re: IVF:** I'm so angry at this I could spit. No, the stress levels are NOT equivalent. You don't die of not having a baby.

— *Online Commenter 1*

**Online Commenter 1:** Many responded this way; I direct you all to reread the comment, which referred to a *news item* (here, [bit.ly/IVFStress1](#) or here, [bit.ly/IVFStress2](#)) about



NICK GALIFIANAKIS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

research (here, [bit.ly/IVFStress3](#)) comparing stress levels. Please let's resist some temptations to take offense.

**Re: IVF:** The point is that stress levels are COMPARABLE. Just as the stress levels from a wedding and a funeral are similar for these life-changing events, although weddings are usually joyous and funerals not

so much. My partner has been treated for major cancers — it's really challenging to look at life ending sooner rather than later. That doesn't mean women undergoing IVF don't experience huge stress levels, too — just different. And those wacky hormones really magnify everything. It isn't a competition.


— *Online Commenter 2*

**Online Commenter 2:** Amen, thanks.

Write to Carolyn Hax at [tellme@washpost.com](mailto:tellme@washpost.com). Get her column delivered to your inbox each morning at [wapo.st/haxpost](http://wapo.st/haxpost).

☛ Join the discussion live at noon Fridays at [live.washingtonpost.com](http://live.washingtonpost.com)

the **GUIDE** to the Lively Arts

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# TELEVISION

## TV HIGHLIGHTS



WILLIAM GRAY/SHOWTIME

**Desus & Mero: The Obama Interview** (Showtime at 11:05 on Sunday)  
Desus and Mero interview former president Barack Obama during his promotional tour of his new book, “A Promised Land.”

**Saturday Night Live**  
(NBC at 11:30) Hosted by Timothée Chalamet. Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band perform.

**MOVIES**  
**The Bee Gees: How Can You Mend a Broken Heart** (HBO at 8)  
This documentary chronicles the triumphs and hurdles of brothers Barry, Maurice and Robin Gibb, the iconic trio who found early fame in the 1960s as the Bee Gees.

**SUNDAY LISTINGS**  
**Fox News Sunday** (Fox at 9 a.m.)  
Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.).

**White House Chronicle** (WETA at 9 a.m.)  
Llewellyn King and guests Linda Marban, chief executive of Capricor Therapeutics, and Andres Carvallo, professor of innovation at Texas State University, discuss digital innovation and medicine in the covid-19 pandemic.

**Sunday Morning Futures With Maria Bartiromo** (Fox News at 10 a.m.)  
Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.), Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, Rep. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio), former national security adviser Michael Flynn, Sen. David Perdue (R-Ga.).

**This Is America & the World** (WETA at 10 a.m.)  
Tony Green survived covid-19, but the virus changed his family forever.

**Meet the Press** (NBC at 10:30 a.m.)  
Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.).

**The Simpsons** (Fox at 8)  
A cable channel films a Christmas movie in Springfield, and Principal Skinner falls in love.

**The Outpost** (CW at 9)  
Janzo, Talon and Zed attempt an assassination.

**SPECIALS**  
**The Walking Dead Holiday Special** (AMC Plus)  
Current and past cast members talk about the holiday season and look back on a decade of the franchise series via video chat.

**Tom Petty: Won’t Back Down** (Reelz at 8)  
Looking back at the life and legacy of Tom Petty through intimate interviews and never-before-seen footage.

**Couples Therapy: The Covid Special** (Showtime at 8)  
Couples therapist Orna Guralnik moves her therapy online as she and her clients come to grips with the realities of the covid-19 shutdown.

— Nina Zafar

More at [washingtonpost.com/entertainment/tv](https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/tv)

BROADCAST CHANNELS										
12/12/20	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
4.1 WRC (NBC)	Rivera	1st Look	• Ellen’s Game of Games		• The Wall		• Saturday Night Live		News	• SNL
4.2 WRC (IND)	Emergency!		Columbo				Columbo			
5.1 WTTG (Fox)	• Football	• Update	• Pre-Match	• 2020 MLS Cup: Sounders at Crew				Fox 5 News at 10		• Cosmos
7.1 WJLA (ABC)	• Football	• College Football: USC at UCLA (Live)							News	Ravens
9.1 WUSA (CBS)	Paid Program	Relief!	Rudolph, the Reindeer	Frosty	Frosty		(10:01) • 48 Hours		9 News	(11:35) • NCIS
14.1 WFDC (UNI)	Teletón USA (Live)					Teletón	Teletón USA (Live)			
20.1 WDCA (MNTV)	Fox 5 News On the Plus		• Family Feud	• Family Feud	Mod Fam	Mod Fam	Mod Fam	Mod Fam	Creek	Creek
22.1 WMPT (PBS)	Marian Anderson		Rick Steves European Christmas					Bee Gees: One Night Only		Food
26.1 WETA (PBS)	Fascism in Europe		Movie: GI Jews: Jewish Americans in World War II (2017)			Johnny Cash: A Night to Remember			Stevie Nicks	
32.1 WHUT (PBS)	Fever: The Music of Miss Peggy Lee			Johnny Cash Prison Concert		Josh Groban: An Evening of Harmony			Abba Forever	
50.1 WDCW (CW)	Wash Huddle	Hok All	Friends	Friends	Friends	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	• The World’s	• The World’s
66.1 WPXW (ION)	Movie: Beaus of Holly (2020)				Movie: Christmas Together (2020)			A Christmas Princess (2019)		

CABLE CHANNELS										
A&E	Movie: Back to the Future ★★★ (1985)					Movie: Back to the Future Part II ★★★ (1989)				
AMC	Movie: Elf ★★★ (2003)				Movie: Elf ★★★ (2003)			Movie: Jack Frost ★★		
Animal Planet	Pit Bulls and Parolees		Pit Bulls and Parolees		Dr. Jeff: RMV		Dr. Jeff: Rocky		The Secret Life of the Zoo	
BET	(6:00) Hip Hop Holiday		Movie: The Christmas Lottery (2020)					(10:25) Movie: A Christmas Surprise (2020)		
Bravo	Diary of Mad	(7:40) Movie: Last Holiday ★★ (2006)				(9:45) Movie: Last Holiday ★★ (2006)				
Cartoon Network	Movie: Paddington ★★★ (2014)				Burgers		Amer. Dad	Amer. Dad	Rick, Morty	Family Guy
CNN	Situation Room		Situation Room		Situation Room		President in Waiting			
Comedy Central	(6:30) Movie: Step Brothers ★★ (2008)				Movie: Vacation ★★ (2015)					
Discovery	Dirty Jobs		Dirty Jobs		Dirty Jobs			Dirty Jobs		Dirty Jobs
Disney	Disney Channel's Epic		Big City	Big City	Big City	Big City	Big City	Big City	Bunk'd	Bunk'd
E!	Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell	SBTB Hawaii	SBTB Hawaii	SBTB Hawaii	SBTB Hawaii
ESPN	College Football: LSU at Florida (Live)						Boxing: Shakur Stevenson vs. Toka Kahn Clary (Live)			
ESPN2	Football Scoreboard		UFC 256: Figueiredo vs. Moreno - Prelims (Live)			College Football: San Diego State at BYU (Live)				
Food Network	Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives		Diners, Drive		Diners, Drive		Diners, Drive	Diners, Drive	Diners, Drive	Diners, Drive
Fox News	Life, Liberty & Levin		Watters' World		Justice With Jeanine		The Greg Gutfeld Show		Watters' World	
Freeform	(6:50) Movie: Toy Story 2 ★★★★★ (1999)				(8:55) Movie: Toy Story 3 ★★★★★ (2010)					Toy Story
FX	The Secret Life of Pets		Movie: Dr. Seuss' The Grinch ★★ (2018)				Movie: Dr. Seuss' The Grinch ★★ (2018)			
Hallmark	(6:00) Christmas She Wrote		Movie: Love, Lights, Hanukkah! (2020)				Movie: Check Inn to Christmas (2019)			
Hallmark M&M	Time for Us to Come Home		Movie: Deliver by Christmas (2020)				Movie: A Glenbrooke Christmas (2020)			
HBO	(5:55) Movie: Rock of Ages		The Bee Gees: How Can You Mend a Broken Heart (2020)				(9:50) Movie: Battleship ★★ (2012)			
HGTV	Home Town		Escape to the Chateau		Love It or List It		Love It or List It		Love It or List It	
History	History's Greatest Mysteries				History's Greatest Mysteries				History's Greatest Mysteries	
Lifetime	(6:00) Christmas Ever After		Movie: The Christmas Setup (2020)				(10:05) Movie: Poinsettias for Christmas (2018)			
MASN	(6:00) Trackside Live!		McGee's Pro Football Plus		Touchdown	Fight Sports	Martial Arts	Ballgame	Orioles Classics	
MSNBC	American Voices		Week-Joshua Johnson		Week-Joshua Johnson		Voices-Alicia Menendez		Week-Joshua Johnson	
MTV	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.
Nat'l Geographic	Drugs, Inc.: The Fix		Drugs, Inc.: The Fix		Drugs, Inc.: The Fix		Drugs, Inc.: The Fix		Drugs, Inc.: The Fix	
NBC SportsNet WA	Trackside Live! (Live)		Football	Rivera	Football	Football	Football	Ravens	Football	Rivera
Nickelodeon	Loud House	Loud House	Danger		Hustle		Sheldon	Sheldon	Astronauts	Movie: Star Trek Beyond ★★ ★ (2016)
PARMT	Twilight		(7:27) Movie: The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 ★★ (2012)				Movie: The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 ★★			
Syfy	Movie: Avengers: Age of Ultron ★★ ★ (2015)						Movie: Toys of Terror (2020)			
TBS	Jingle	Movie: Wonder ★★ ★ (2017)					Big Bang	Big Bang	Full Frontal	Shrek
TCM	Man-Came to Dinner		Movie: A Matter of Life and Death ★★ ★ (1946)				Movie: Enchantment ★★ ★ (1948)			
TLC	I Love a Mama's Boy		I Love a Mama's Boy		I Love a Mama's Boy		I Love a Mama's Boy		I Love a Mama's Boy	
TNT	(5:30) Movie: 27 Dresses		Movie: Beauty and the Beast ★★ ★ (2017)				Movie: Ocean's 8 ★★ (2018)			
Travel	Most Terrifying Places		Most Terrifying Places		Most Terrifying		Destination Fear		Destination Fear	
TruTV	Inside Jokes	Inside Jokes	Videos	Videos	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers	Inside Jokes	Inside Jokes
TV Land	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men
TV One	Good Times	Good Times	Good Times	Sanford	Sanford	Sanford	Sanford	Sanford	Sanford	Sanford
USA Network	Chicago P.D.		Chicago P.D.		Chicago P.D.		(10:02) Chicago P.D.		Mod Fam	Mod Fam
VH1	(6:30) Movie: Rush Hour ★★ ★ (1998)				Movie: Rush Hour 2 ★★ (2001)			(11:15) Movie: Rush Hour 3		
WNC8	Paid Program	Govt. Matters	(8:01) 20/20		News		WJLA News	WJLA News	Town Hall	
WGN	Blue Bloods		NewsNation (Live)		NewsNation (Live)		NewsNation (Live)		NewsNation	

LEGEND: Bold indicates new or live programs • High Definition Movie Ratings (from TMS) ★★★ Excellent ★★ Good ★★ Fair ★ Poor No stars: not rated

LA TIMES CROSSWORD

By Jeffrey Wechsler

ACROSS

1 Victorian constraint on women?

7 Certain lookout’s concern

15 Gamer’s guise

16 Home terrarium area, perhaps

17 Create

18 Crunchy low-calorie snack

19 Like yesterday’s news, relatively

21 XXXII, quintupled

22 “ Can Cook”: PBS show

23 In-on-the-joke indicator

24 Get emotional, with “up”

26 Centers of attention

27 Spots at the prom?

28 Traces

29 Plural used for people but not animals

30 Wine list clarification

31 Ancient portico

32 Break-even situation

33 First name in Canadian whisky

34 Lose energy

38 B-bravo link

39 Recedes

43 Word in some European country names

44 English subject

46 Russian veto

47 “No time to lose!”

48 David’s “Frasier” role

49 “The younger rises when the old doth \_\_\_”: “King Lear”

50 Poor start?

51 Cash source

52 Longtime beverage sponsor for the New York Mets

DOWN

1 Hardly a nice guy

2 Not neat

3 Northern Italian city near the Adriatic

4 Kind of a shock?

5 Minimal effort

6 \_\_ coat

7 Pre-1991 atlas initials

8 Irascible

9 Symbol since the War of 1812

10 Top

11 Bespectacled “Snow White” figure

12 Company that trademarked Silly Putty

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12/12/20

54 Solo travels?

57 “Darn it!”

59 Awkward

60 Hurtle

61 Corridors, e.g.

62 Academically stylish

13 Nickname for antiaircraft guns

14 Like the area along a German river

20 “Child’s play!”

23 Method

25 Facing charges

26 Select group?

33 Hard to forget, as a melody

34 Catch fire dramatically

35 Layered entrée

36 Closely related things

37 Econ. indicator

39 Assure compliance with

40 Where some picnicking takes place

41 After the event

42 Letters on a Cardinal’s cap

45 Go along with

51 Verdi creation

53 Eats

55 Prof’s helpers

56 Part of CBS: Abbr.

58 Farm enclosure

FRIDAY’S LA TIMES SOLUTION

K E G S E M I R L A W S

I L I A N A M E G L A C E

W A F F L E C O N B A I R N

I N T E A R S O U T S T A Y

B I O H I S K A M A

L A G E R S U R E C A N

I N O T L I N F O N D U E

S O L T E S T T U B H R S

A N D E A N E E L B O G S

E A S T E R N T E P E E

R A N T I L S S E E

B I G H E L P I T E R A T E

I S L E S A B S E N T E E S

S H O R T S A N E A R A T

A B E D O D O R P O S E

SHOWTIME PHOTOS

**Orna Guralnik works with Lara and Trey on “Couples Therapy: The Covid Special.” They’ve been a couple since they were kids, but now that they’re cooped up during the pandemic, the romance is gone.**

## On ‘Couples Therapy,’ he’s so remote

### TV REVIEW FROM C1

first season — including Lauren, a transgender woman, and her partner, who recently came out as nonbinary and now goes by Sam; Sam had to close down a thriving wedding photography business because of the coronavirus spread and is drained of hope. There’s also DeSean and Elaine, who’ve moved to Florida and are at odds over texts that DeSean sent to another woman. (Gone, but certainly not forgotten, are Annie and her passive-aggressive husband, Mau, whose toxic demands around intimacy are worth a re-watch of Season 1.)

“The Covid Special” follows Guralnik as she tries to master the art of practicing helpful therapy with all the joys and interruptions of modern technology. New clients James and Michelle’s problems (“Her voice is grating . . . like nails on a chalkboard,” he says) have grown only worse now that they’re both trapped in an apartment with a 3-year-old son. Lara and Trey, who both work in theater (she’s an actress, he’s a director), have been together since they were teenagers, but they never have sex anymore. (She’s on the road a lot; he’s had affairs.) Now unemployed and confined to their apartment, Trey has discovered that having Lara at home this much more is not what he wanted; she’s decided his current lack of employment lessens her attraction to him.

It’s a wonder — and a professional attribute — that Guralnik never blurts out all the things that we the viewers might be loudly telling the screen. If

**Elaine and DeSean, another couple Guralnik works with, are at odds over texts that DeSean sent to another woman.**

nothing else, “Couples Therapy” is a fine example of what true, hourly-rate listening ought to look like. Even through technical glitches and delayed disconnect, Guralnik always knows when to interject, when to stay on a subject and probe further, and when to let a dispute between her clients run a useful course.

Summer arrives and complicates Guralnik’s work even further. In the uprisings after the killing of George Floyd, her Black clients, especially DeSean, grow weary of explaining their feelings to others, including Guralnik, who was born in the United States but raised in Israel.

Already accustomed to meeting frequently and talking about her caseload with her White clinical adviser, Guralnik instead seeks out the wisdom of a Black therapist, Kirkland Vaughans, to help her figure out how best to listen to the raw, emotional pains

she’s encountering around race. What to say? What to ask? And what *not* to?

Looking around her world, she notices that everyone seems to be just barely holding on: “There’s an ongoing attempt to blame the person in front of you, when in fact, there are deep and profound and disturbing issues that are rattling us all.” Returning to her office/set to start welcoming in-person visits, the show ends on that same note we all end on anymore — the shrug and the hope to get back to how things used to be. “Couples Therapy” is much better when the couch in question is a neutral and therapeutic space, rather than the well-worn, upholstered lump where we’ve spent the past 10 months slowly losing our grip.

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**Couples Therapy: The Covid Special** (one hour) airs Sunday at 8 p.m. on Showtime.

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500x3x5

# Republicans who speak out about Trump — in private

TRUMP FROM CI

Bresnahan soon became accustomed to the dance he and other reporters would have to do in trying to get a comment from lawmakers about the latest Trump stunt. It usually kicked off with an elected official pleading ignorance.

“We’d go up to everyone asking about something he just said, and they’d say they didn’t see it,” he recalled. “So we’d print out the tweets. We’d read them the tweets.”

Often, lawmakers would simply shrug. But sometimes they’d express privately what they really thought.

Bresnahan understands why they didn’t go public. There’s never been a president who has been willing to publicly go after his enemies the way Trump has, he said.

“Look at the people who have stood up to Trump — they’ve gotten hammered down. And Trump knows that.”

Which has led to a certain genre of Washington political story, built upon a chorus of ghostly voices. Google “privately concerned” and “Trump,” and you’ll see.

In June 2017, the Associated Press noted that some Republicans on Capitol Hill were “privately concerned” about their new president’s firing of FBI Director James B. Comey and other mounting scandals while publicly sticking with him. In July 2019, unnamed GOP senators privately expressed doubts to the New York Times about Trump’s pick for director of national intelligence, Rep. John Ratcliffe (R-Tex.). In the fall of 2019, lawmakers weren’t just privately concerned that Trump had pressured Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to announce an investigation into Biden, some were also “privately stunned” that the White House had shown such poor strategic judgment in releasing a transcript of the phone call that made clear that he had done so, The Washington Post reported.

Over the past month, these kinds of conversations — and stories — have become more challenging, as lawmakers seem eager to signal to journalists that they don’t support anything like a coup, yet remain fearful of publicly puncturing Trump’s fantasy of reclaiming the White House or alienating his most rabid fans. A recent survey by The Washington Post of every Republican member of Congress found only 27 would affirmatively acknowledge Biden as the president-elect.

And yet . . . on Nov. 8, a day after all mainstream media outlets called the election for Biden and Trump still failed to concede, the New York Times reported that “privately, the president’s advisers, several of whom have quietly been candid with Mr. Trump that the chances of success in any challenge to the election outcome were not high, had concluded they had little option other than to allow the president to keep fighting until he was ready to bow to the reality of his loss.”

That same day, The Post reported that some of the president’s advisers, including Republican National Committee Chair Ronna McDaniel, “are publicly



SAUL LOEB/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

Many Republican lawmakers have long shared their doubts about President Trump with journalists, but not for the record.

fighting on behalf of the president but have acknowledged to others privately that the battle cannot go on for too long.”

The following day, The Washington Post reported on Republican lawmakers’ public support for Trump’s election challenges, but quoted a senior Republican official anonymously who admitted that no one believed it would work: “What is the downside for humoring him for this little bit of time? No one seriously thinks the results will change.”

Politico reported that “most Senate Republicans have refused to publicly acknowledge that Biden will become the next president, even though they admit that’s going to happen in private.”

Journalists defend transmitting these anonymous sentiments because they provide a deeper insight into the minds of lawmakers than their terse, scripted statements. Lawmakers, meanwhile, might see these statements as a way to both reassure the public and impress their sensible levelheadedness upon the press corps.

But many media and political scholars see harm in the practice — particularly now.

Anonymous sourcing is a standard that has been allowed to flourish in Beltway journalism circles that most local journalists would never be allowed to get away with, said David Boardman, the former executive editor of the Seattle Times.

“The result of that has been a whisper culture in which politicians and bureaucrats have been allowed to publicly cover their own rear ends while privately stabbing others in the back,” said Boardman, now the dean of the Klein College of Media and Communication at Temple University. “Now, we are reaping the rotten fruit of that practice.”

Even non-journalists from the opposing party seem willing to grant anonymity privileges: “For the stay-in-office-at-all-cost representatives and senators, fear is the motivator,” wrote Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) in a February op-ed in the New York Times explaining his Republican colleagues’ silence on Trump’s impeachable behavior.

How did he know? “In private, many of my colleagues agree that the president is reckless and unfit. They admit his lies. And they acknowledge what he did was wrong.”

Ron Klain, whom Biden has tapped as his White House chief of staff, told MSNBC’s Lawrence O’Donnell last month that some Republican senators had privately been in contact with Biden. But “I’m not naming names because we read out calls when we read out the calls, when both sides agree to read out the calls,” Klain said.

And so the Washington split screen continues — lawmakers publicly fulminating against so-called election fraud and privately anticipating the dawning Biden era.

“It is not new for politicians to represent a different off-the-record view of their opinions toward the president than the one they profess publicly,” said Brendan Nyhan, a political scientist at Dartmouth. “But it matters more when elites are failing to speak out about violations to the norms of our democratic system.”

Mark Becker is not a journalist. He’s an auto-industry finance manager in Green Bay, Wis., and the former chair of the Brown County GOP who made a name for himself locally as a devout anti-Trump Republican. He recently wrote a blistering story for the Bulwark about a conversation he had a week after the election was called for Biden with Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.), a high-profile Trump supporter, during which Becker came to realize that “Senator Johnson knows that Joe Biden won a free and fair election.”

Becker wrote that Johnson explained to him that he publicly echoed Trump’s election-fraud claims not because he believed them but because Trump motivated voter turnout in Wisconsin.

“It did not seem to occur to Senator Johnson,” Becker wrote in a parenthetical, “that President Trump motivated massive, greater turnout in opposition to him than he did in support.”

The most interesting thing to Becker about the response he received to the

article? All the elected Republican officials who reached out to him privately to say “thank you for doing that,” he told The Post. Becker has reached back out to them to ask where they land on speaking out. He’s gotten mostly radio silence.

On the Sunday before Thanksgiving, Washington’s fortress of anonymity imploded — at least temporarily.

Veteran investigative journalist Carl Bernstein tweeted a list of 21 Republican senators who he said have “repeatedly expressed extreme contempt for Trump and his fitness to be POTUS.”

Some of the names were predictable, such as Mitt Romney, a frequent critic of Trump. But others, such as Charles E. Grassley, Rob Portman and Rick Scott, who have publicly supported Trump, rushed to distance themselves from Bernstein’s allegation, though none explicitly denied it.

How did Bernstein know what these senators have said about Trump? He insisted that he was not “violating any pledges of journalistic confidentiality in this reporting,” and that he had learned of these names because these senators had expressed these sentiments “in convos w/ colleagues, staff members, lobbyists, W. House aides.”

Bernstein repeated the names in a CNN appearance but has otherwise declined to elaborate on his reporting or the significance of it.

“What was said on the air and in the tweet speaks for itself,” he told The Post. “And I say that with confidence.”

In many ways, it was a major scoop — but one that many viewers were unwilling to applaud. Perhaps these were truly the high-powered names behind all those “private concerns” stories. But they would rather hear it from the senators themselves.

“The appearance of impropriety that is happening in the Republican Party is disgraceful. And Carl Bernstein saying 21 people are speaking [about Trump] privately?” noted Sunny Hostin, a host of ABC’s “The View,” where the revelation was hotly debated. “Privately” means nothing.”

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# Unlike the GOP, Swift puts anything on the record

MUSIC REVIEW FROM CI

’90s trend,” and “My eyes leak acid rain on the pillow where you used to lay your head,” and “We were like the mall before the Internet.”

How are we supposed to square those lines with Swift’s rep as the songwriting giant of her generation? That last one about comparing a dying romance to a dead shopping mall appears on “Coney Island,” an unbalanced duet with Matt Berninger of adult rock band the National. Maybe Swift thinks that collaborating with “interesting” people gives her permission to write bad lyrics? It would be fun to look for a perverse joke in here, but we’ve covered that already.

On a related note, some housekeeping: Let’s stop referring to Swift’s 2020 output as “indie.” The word itself verges on meaninglessness these days, but many have superimposed it over “Folklore” and “Evermore,” mainly due to Swift’s recent collaborations with artists whose music-biz positions we should be honest about. Justin Vernon of Bon Iver is a two-time Grammy winner and the Peter Gabriel of his time. The National is one of the biggest contemporary rock bands going. Isn’t calling their music “indie” just a way of make-believing your tastes aren’t typical?

Swift’s music might be typical by design, but she is not. As this pandemic continues to decimate the livelihoods of countless independent musicians, Swift has sold more albums inside this calendar year than anyone else on Earth. It might be fun to hear her play the underdog in her songs, but don’t let the flannel get pulled over your eyes: She is one of the biggest beneficiaries of a music industry system that could not care less about the well-being of “indie” musicians right now. “Evermore” provides an opportunity to think about the roles we play in that system — as listeners, as users, as customers, as fans, as human beings.

Now who needs a hug?

chris.richards@washpost.com



REPUBLIC RECORDS

The cover of Taylor Swift’s newly released album, “Evermore.”

MOVIE DIRECTORY

MD

AMC Columbia 14

10300 Little Patuxent Parkway

Die Hard (R) 4:20

The Croods: A New Age (PG)

2:15-4:45-7:15

Elf (PG) 12:30

Wonder Woman (PG-13)

12:30-6:30

Tenet (PG-13) 12:25-6:45

Let Him Go (R) 3:45

The Last Vermeer (R) 3:50

All My Life (PG-13) 1:50-4:40-7:20

Freaky (R) 1:20-4:20-7:10

Half Brothers (PG-13) 1:45-4:25-7:05

Mario Puzo's The Godfather, CODA: The Death of Michael Corleone (R) 3:00

The Croods: A New Age (PG) 1:15-3:45-6:15

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon 20th Anniversary 7:00

TIMECRAFTERS: The Treasure of Pirate's Cove 7:00

Wonder Woman: The IMAX 2D Experience (PG-13) 1:00-4:00-7:30

AMC Loews

St. Charles Town Ctr. 9

11115 Mall Circle

Elf (PG) 2:30

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: 3:00-4:15-5:30-7:00-8:15

MD

True to the Game 2 (R) 3:00-5:00-8:30

Honest Thief (PG-13) CC: 6:15

Come Play (PG-13) CC: 8:45

Freaky (R) CC: 2:15-5:45-7:45

Half Brothers (PG-13) CC: 3:30-5:15-8:00

Cinemark Egyptian 24 and XD

7000 Arundel Mills Circle

Die Hard (R) 9:10

The War with Grandpa (PG)

12:50-6:45

Tenet (PG-13) 1:00-4:45-8:30

Honest Thief (PG-13) 3:50-9:20

True to the Game 2 (R) 1:10-6:35

Come Play (PG-13) 3:35-9:30

Ma Rainey's Black Bottom (R) 7:00-9:45

All My Life (PG-13) 12:40-3:20-6:10-9:15

Freaky (R) 3:00-6:30-9:35

Half Brothers (PG-13) 2:35-5:55-8:55

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon 20th Anniversary 7:15

TIMECRAFTERS: The Treasure of Pirate's Cove 7:00

The Midnight Sky (PG-13) 2:15-5:45-9:00

Mario Puzo's The Godfather, CODA: The Death of Michael Corleone (R) 12:45-4:30-8:25

MD

Private Watch Party 12:30-12:45-1:05-1:20-1:40-1:55-2:15-2:30-2:45-3:00-4:00-4:15-4:35-4:50-5:10-5:25-5:45-6:00-7:30-7:45-8:05-8:20-8:40-8:55-9:15-9:30-10:00

The Croods: A New Age (PG)

12:30-2:30-3:25-5:15-6:20-8:00

Ma Rainey's Black Bottom (R) 1:15-4:05

The Prom (PG-13) 1:45-8:15

The Christmas Chronicles: Part Two (PG) 5:10

The Midnight Sky (PG-13) XD: 12:35-3:55-7:15

The Croods: A New Age (PG) XD: 1:20-4:10-7:05-9:55-2:30-5:15-8:00-1:20-4:10-7:05-9:55

Hoyt's West Nursery

Cinema 14

1591 West Nursery Road

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: 2:10-4:00-6:40

The War with Grandpa (PG) CC: 2:00-4:00-6:50

Tenet (PG-13) CC: 2:40-4:40-6:40

The Last Vermeer (R) CC: 2:50-4:20

Honest Thief (PG-13) CC: 5:00-7:20

Let Him Go (R) CC: 2:30-4:10-7:00

All My Life (PG-13) CC: 2:00-4:30

Freaky (R) CC: 3:00-7:10

Half Brothers (PG-13) CC: 2:20-4:50-7:30

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: 5:30

VA

AMC Courthouse Plaza 8

2150 Clarendon Blvd.

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: 3:30-6:00

Tenet (PG-13) CC: 3:45-7:15

The Last Vermeer (R) CC: 3:00

Honest Thief (PG-13) CC: 4:30-7:00

All My Life (PG-13) CC: 5:15-7:45

Half Brothers (PG-13) CC: 4:00-6:30

Mario Puzo's The Godfather, CODA: The Death of Michael Corleone (R) CC: 6:15

AMC Hoffman Center 22

206 Swamp Fox Rd.

Die Hard (R) 8:10

Elf (PG) 1:15-4:10

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: 3:15-6:15-9:00

Dr. Seuss' The Grinch (PG) CC: 2:40

The War with Grandpa (PG) CC: 1:20

Wonder Woman (PG-13) CC: 7:15-9:30

Tenet (PG-13) CC: 1:00-4:30-8:15

The New Mutants (PG-13) 1:20-6:50

Tenet (PG-13) CC: 2:10-7:10

The Last Vermeer (R) CC: 5:50

Honest Thief (PG-13) CC: 8:40

Let Him Go (R) CC: 3:25-9:20

Let Him Go (R) CC: 1:10-8:45

True to the Game 2 (R) 1:00-3:50-5:30-6:45-8:35-9:30

VA

Come Play (PG-13) CC: 1:00-4:15-6:00

All My Life (PG-13) CC: 1:00-3:30-6:30-9:15

Freaky (R) CC: 2:30-5:40-8:50

Half Brothers (PG-13) CC: 1:10-3:50-6:45-9:25

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: 1:00-2:45-4:00-5:45-7:00

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon 20th Anniversary 7:00

TIMECRAFTERS: The Treasure of Pirate's Cove 7:00

Mario Puzo's The Godfather, CODA: The Death of Michael Corleone (R) 3:20

Wonder Woman: The IMAX 2D Experience (PG-13) 1:00-4:45-8:30

AMC Potomac Mills 18

2700 Potomac Mills Circle

Die Hard (R) 8:10

Elf (PG) 4:10

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: 1:00-3:40-6:20-9:00

The War with Grandpa (PG) CC: 4:50

The New Mutants (PG-13) 1:20-6:50

Tenet (PG-13) CC: 2:10-7:10

The Last Vermeer (R) CC: 5:50

Honest Thief (PG-13) CC: 8:40

Let Him Go (R) CC: 7:40

Come Play (PG-13) CC: 2:40-5:20-8:20

Freaky (R) CC: 7:20

VA

Half Brothers (PG-13) CC: 1:40-4:20-7:00

Mario Puzo's The Godfather, CODA: The Death of Michael Corleone (R) 1:05

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: 1:55-2:50-4:35-5:30-7:15

Wonder Woman: The IMAX 2D Experience (PG-13) CC: 1:00-4:25-7:50

Elf (PG) 1:00

Wonder Woman (PG-13) 8:50

AMC Shirlington 7

2772 South Randolph St.

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: 4:15-5:30-6:45

The Last Vermeer (R) CC: 4:45-8:00

All My Life (PG-13) CC: 4:30-7:15

AMC Tysons Corner 16

7850e Tysons Corner Center

Die Hard (R) CC: 12:55-9:25

Elf (PG) 12:50

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: 2:10-4:50-7:25-10:00

Tenet (PG-13) CC: 1:10-4:45-8:25

The Last Vermeer (R) CC: 4:05

Honest Thief (PG-13) CC: 1:35

Vanguard (PG-13) 12:55-6:50

Come Play (PG-13) CC: 9:50

Let Him Go (R) CC: 3:50-9:45

All My Life (PG-13) CC: 1:20-4:15-6:55-9:35

Freaky (R) CC: 1:05-3:55-6:40-9:30

Half Brothers (PG-13) CC: 1:50-4:35-7:15-9:55

VA

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon 20th Anniversary 7:00

Mario Puzo's The Godfather, CODA: The Death of Michael Corleone (R) 7:55

TIMECRAFTERS: The Treasure of Pirate's Cove 7:00

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: 1:15-3:55

Wonder Woman: The IMAX 2D Experience (PG-13) CC: 1:00-4:25-7:50

The Croods: A New Age (PG) 3:05-5:45-8:40

AMC Worldgate 9

13025 Worldgate Drive

Die Hard (R) CC: 1:40-4:30-7:35

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: 1:50-2:30-4:10-5:10-6:40-7:40

Tenet (PG-13) CC: 1:45-7:00

The Empty Man (R) CC: 7:10

The Last Vermeer (R) CC: 4:15

Half Brothers (PG-13) CC: 2:10-4:40-7:20

Alamo Drafthouse Cinema - One Loudoun

20575 East Hampton Plaza

A Christmas Story (PG) 12:05-3:35

National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation (PG-13) 5:45

Tenet (PG-13) 12:55-4:00

Batman Returns (1992) (PG-13) 7:45

Wonder Woman (PG-13) 12:10-6:00

Elf (PG) 2:50-5:00

VA

Archenemy 8:25

Gremlins (1984) (PG) 2:00

The Polar Express (G) 11:15AM

Die Hard (R) 7:35

The Croods: A New Age (PG)

11:55-12:40-3:20-4:30-5:30-8:10

Angelika Film Center Mosaic

2911 District Ave.

Die Hard (R) 7:30

The Polar Express (G) 11:30AM

Dr. Seuss' The Grinch (PG)

10:00-11:00

The Croods: A New Age (PG) CC: (I) 10:30-12:15-2:45

Wonder Woman (PG-13)

12:30-7:00

The Last Vermeer (R) CC: 8:30

ON-GAKU: Our Sound 12:45-2:10-6:15-8:20

Ma Rainey's Black Bottom (R) CC: (I) 3:45-6:15-8:40

All My Life (PG-13) CC: (I) 3:15-5:45-8:15

Half Brothers (PG-13) CC: (I) 12:25-7:45

The Midnight Sky (PG-13) CC: 12:00-2:45-5:45-8:45

CMX Cinemas Village 14

1600 Village Market Boulevard

The Croods: A New Age (PG) 1:40-2:40-4:25-5:20-6:20-7:00-8:00

The War with Grandpa (PG)

2:10-4:45-7:40

Tenet (PG-13) 4:20-7:10

Honest Thief (PG-13) 2:20-4:50-7:30

VA

Let Him Go (R) 1:45-4:40-7:35

All My Life (PG-13) 2:50-5:30-8:10

Freaky (R) 2:30-5:10-7:55

Half Brothers (PG-13) 1:50-4:30-7:50

Cinemark

Fairfax Corner and XD

11900 Palace Way

Tenet (PG-13) 2:25

All My Life (PG-13) 2:20-4:55-7:25

Freaky (R) 1:35-4:15

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon 20th Anniversary 7:15

TIMECRAFTERS: The Treasure of Pirate's Cove 7:00

The Midnight Sky (PG-13) 1:45-4:45-7:55

Mario Puzo's The Godfather, CODA: The Death of Michael Corleone (R) 6:00

Private Watch Party 12:30-12:45-1:05-1:20-1:40-2:15-4:00-4:15-4:35-4:50-5:10-7:30-7:45-8:05-8:20-8:40

The Croods: A New Age (PG)

1:55-4:40-7:10-12:40-3:25-6:15-8:45

Half Brothers (PG-13) 1:50-4:30-7:20

The Midnight Sky (PG-13) XD: 12:35-3:35-6:35

University Mall Theatre

10659 Braddock Road

The War with Grandpa (PG) CC, DVS: 12:15-2:30-4:45-7:15

Let Him Go (R) CC, DVS: 7:00-9:20

Die Hard (R) 1:00-4:00-9:10

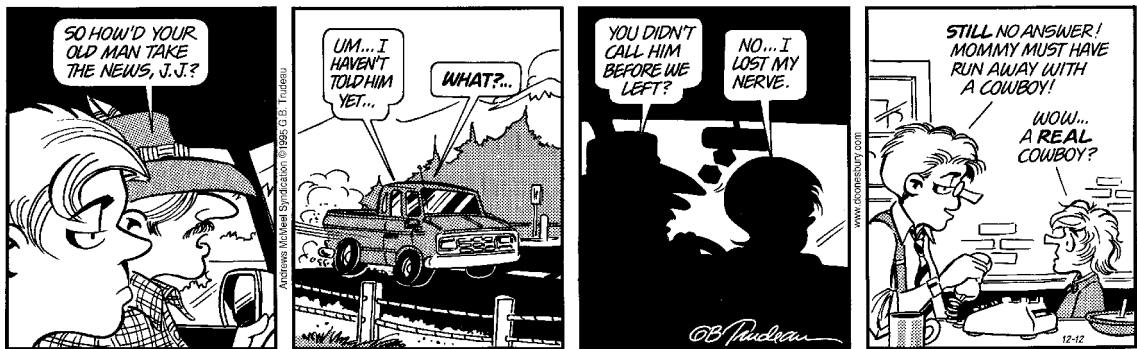
“A leafy enclave”

Discover great area neighborhoods in “Where We Live,” Saturdays in Real Estate.

The Washington Post

\$0136.5x3.75

CLASSIC DOONESBURY



PICKLES



BRIDGE

N-S VULNERABLE

<b>NORTH</b>			
♠	A 6 4 2		
♥	10 4 2		
♦	A J 5		
♣	J 9 8		
		<b>EAST</b>	
♠	K Q J 9 8 5	♠	10
♥	Q 7	♥	9 8 6 5
♦	Q 4	♦	K 10 9 8 7 6 3
♣	K 3 2	♣	5
		<b>SOUTH (D)</b>	
♠	7 3		
♥	A K J 3		
♦	2		
♣	A Q 10 7 6 4		

**The bidding:**

<b>SOUTH</b>	<b>WEST</b>	<b>NORTH</b>	<b>EAST</b>
1 ♠	1 ♠	1 NT	2 ♦
2 ♥	2 ♠	3 ♣	Pass
5 ♣	All Pass		

Opening lead — ♣ K

You don't need a photographic memory to play bridge — and some people who have one are apt to leave their lens cap on any way — but when you have a guess, to count out the defenders' distribution may help.

At today's five clubs, South grabbed dummy's ace of spades and let the nine of trumps ride. West won and cashed a spade. East threw a diamond, and West shifted to the queen of diamonds.

Declarer took dummy's ace, drew trumps with the jack and eight, and led a heart to his jack. Down he went when West had the queen.

South should make his game. After he takes the ace of diamonds, he ruffs a diamond, leads a trump to dummy and ruffs the last diamond with the ace. West discards a spade.

South then has a complete count: West had six spades, two diamonds and three trumps, hence two hearts. To lead a trump to dummy and finesse with the jack of hearts won't help even if East has the queen. East will still get a heart trick. South must take the A-K, hoping West has Q-x.

**DAILY QUESTION**

You hold:

♠ 7 3 ♥ A K J 3

♦ 2 ♣ A Q 10 7 6 4

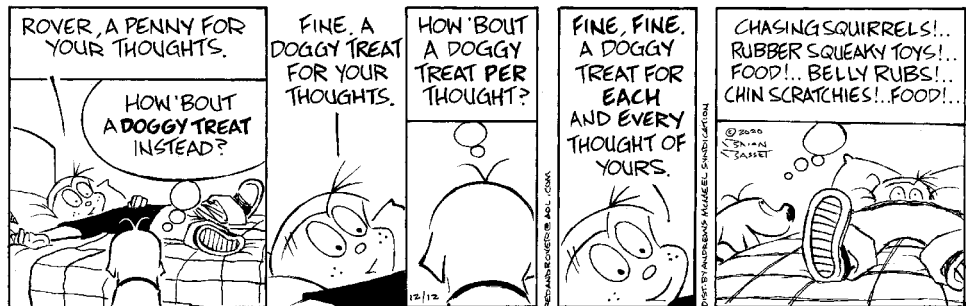
The dealer, at your right, opens one diamond. You overcall two clubs, the next player bids two diamonds and two passes follow. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** To pass might be right. Partner might have length in spades and diamonds and no tolerance for either of your suits. Still, to let the opponents play in comfort at the two level when they've found a fit is a losing approach. Be an optimist and bid two hearts.

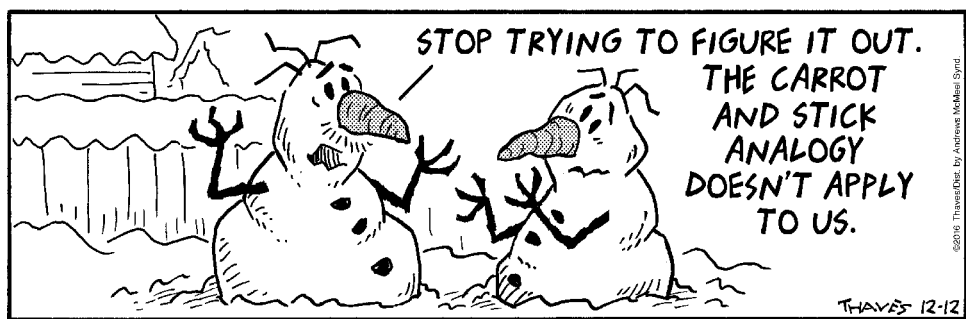
— Frank Stewart

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RED AND ROVER



FRANK AND ERNEST



CLASSIC PEANUTS



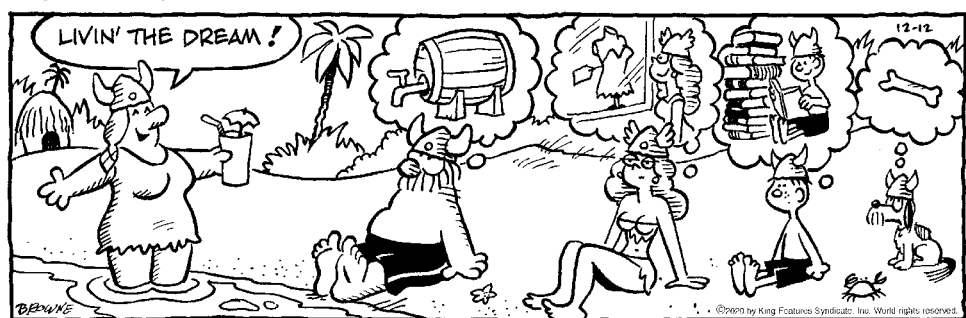
RHYMES WITH ORANGE



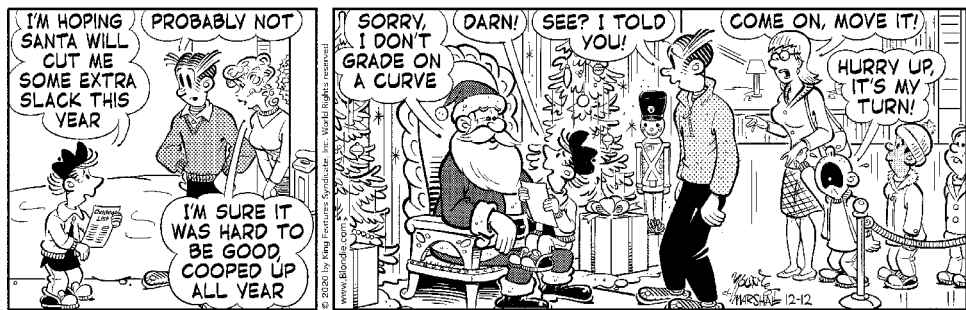
LIO



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



BLONDIE



SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

			7	9	3			8
		6		8				
	8							7
3		8				4		1
		9	1	7				
2		8		4				9
6								2
			6		3			
9		4	7	2				

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

○	2		3					
5								

**SCRABBLE G R A M S**

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PAR SCORE 155-165  
BEST SCORE 233

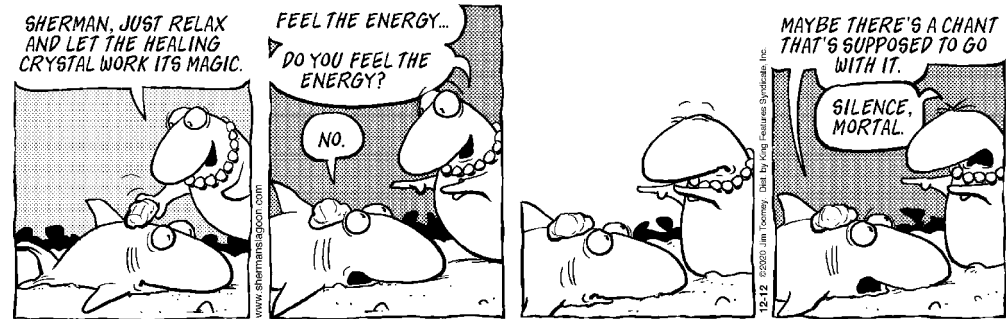
FOUR RACK TOTAL  
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

**DIRECTIONS:** Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. Finally, 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All the words are in the Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, 5th Edition. **SOLUTION TOMORROW**

For more information on tournaments and clubs, email NASPA-North America SCRABBLE Players Association info@scrabbleplayers.org. Visit our website www.scrabbleplayers.org. For puzzle inquiries contact scrgams@gmail.com

12-12

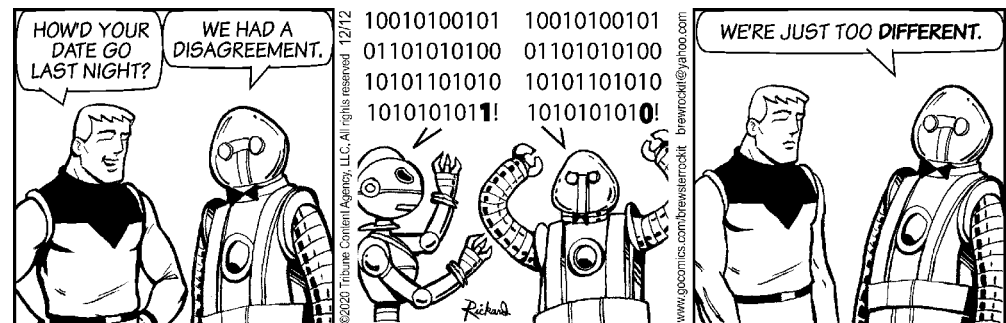
SHERMAN'S LAGOON




CURTIS



BREWSTER ROCKIT: SPACE GUY!



MUTTS



WELL, MOOCH.

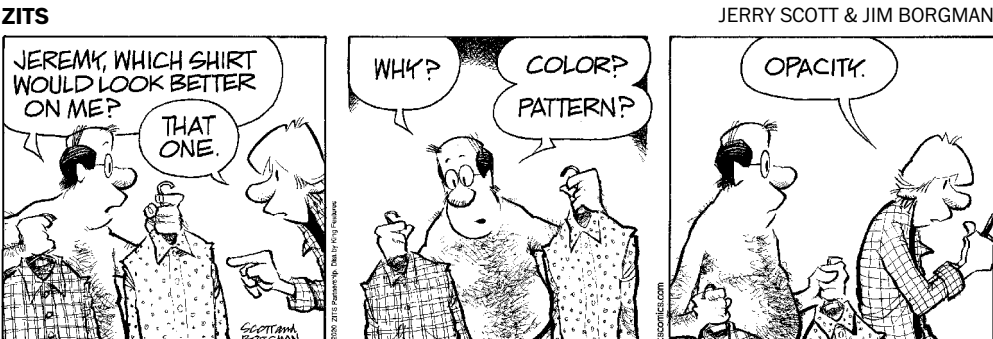
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

I THINK...

YOU NEED TO SEE DR. PIMPLE POPPER.

PATRICK McDONNELL

ZITS



JEREMY, WHICH SHIRT WOULD LOOK BETTER ON ME?

THAT ONE.

WHY?

COLOR? PATTERN?

OPACITY.

JERRY SCOTT & JIM BORGMAN

HOROSCOPE

BIRTHDAY | DECEMBER 12



Expansive, self-possessed and physically expressive, you reach a lot of people in 2021. Your distinct voice is really how you succeed so exceptionally. If single, you are the object of admiration and loyal devotion, and you find your mate easily this year. If attached, you can expect great happiness to be accompanied by a change regarding the tender passions. Be good friends as well as lovers. Taurus does not budge.

DILBERT



CAN I GET YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE ARTICLE I EMAILED TO YOU?

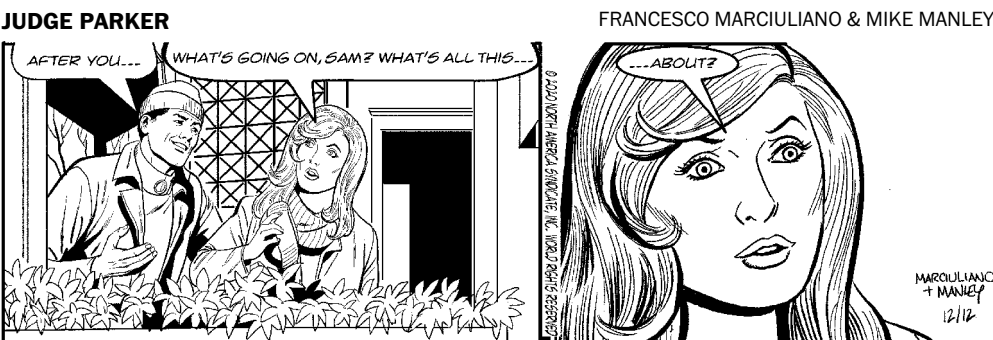
OKAY. MY THOUGHTS ARE THAT I DON'T WANT TO WASTE MY TIME READING ANY ARTICLES YOU SEND TO ME.

CAN YOU DIVE A BIT DEEPER?

OKAY. I ALSO DON'T LIKE TALKING TO YOU.

SCOTT ADAMS

JUDGE PARKER



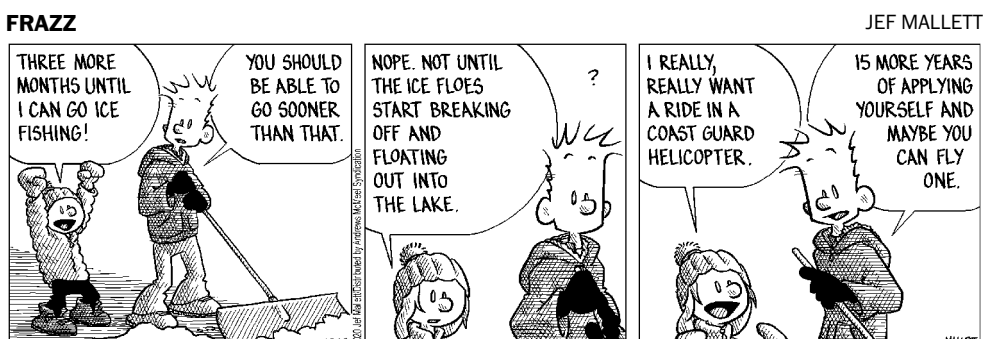
AFTER YOU...

WHAT'S GOING ON, SAM? WHAT'S ALL THIS...

...ABOUT?

FRANCESCO MARCIULIANO & MIKE MANLEY

FRAZZ



THREE MORE MONTHS UNTIL I CAN GO ICE FISHING!

YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO GO SOONER THAN THAT.

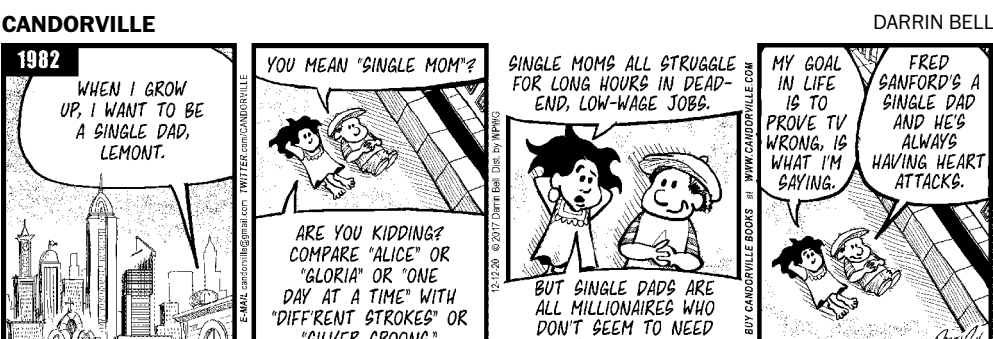
NOPE. NOT UNTIL THE ICE FLOES START BREAKING OFF AND FLOATING OUT INTO THE LAKE.

I REALLY, REALLY WANT A RIDE IN A COAST GUARD HELICOPTER.

15 MORE YEARS OF APPLYING YOURSELF AND MAYBE YOU CAN FLY ONE.

JEFF MALLET

CANDORVILLE



1982

WHEN I GROW UP, I WANT TO BE A SINGLE DAD, LEMONT.

YOU MEAN "SINGLE MOM"?

ARE YOU KIDDING? COMPARE "ALICE" OR "GLORIA" OR "ONE DAY AT A TIME" WITH "DIFFERENT STROKES" OR "SILVER SPOONS."

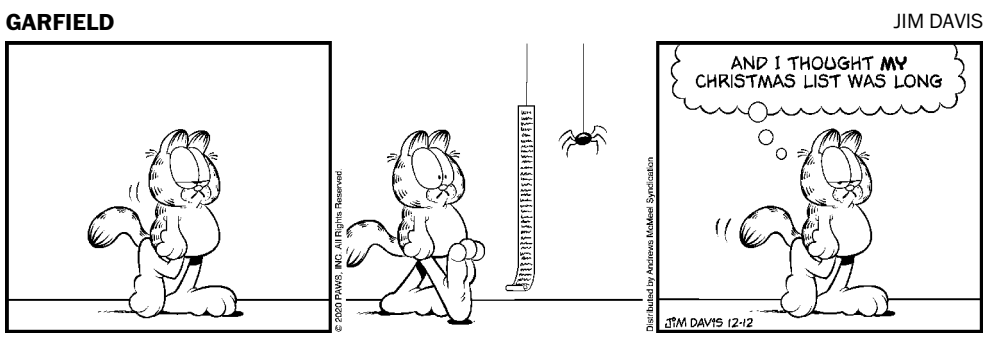
SINGLE MOMS ALL STRUGGLE FOR LONG HOURS IN DEAD-END, LOW-WAGE JOBS.

MY GOAL IN LIFE IS TO PROVE TV WRONG. IS WHAT I'M SAYING.

FRED SANFORD'S A SINGLE DAD AND HE'S ALWAYS HAVING HEART ATTACKS.

DARRIN BELL

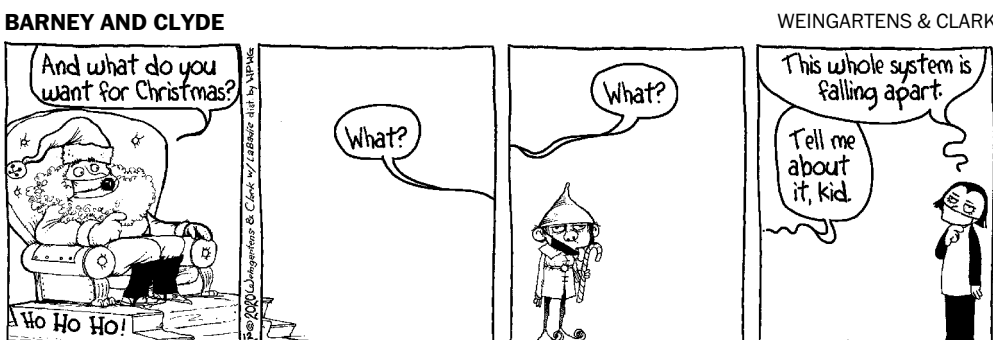
GARFIELD



AND I THOUGHT MY CHRISTMAS LIST WAS LONG

JIM DAVIS

BARNEY AND CLYDE



And what do you want for Christmas?

What?

What?

This whole system is falling apart.

Tell me about it, kid.

WEINGARTENS & CLARK

DUSTIN



WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I'M CHECKING THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS. WHEN ONE STOPS WORKING, THEY ALL STOP WORKING.

GOOD THING OUR FAMILY'S NOT THAT WAY.

I HEARD THAT!

STEVE KELLEY & JEFF PARKER

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN



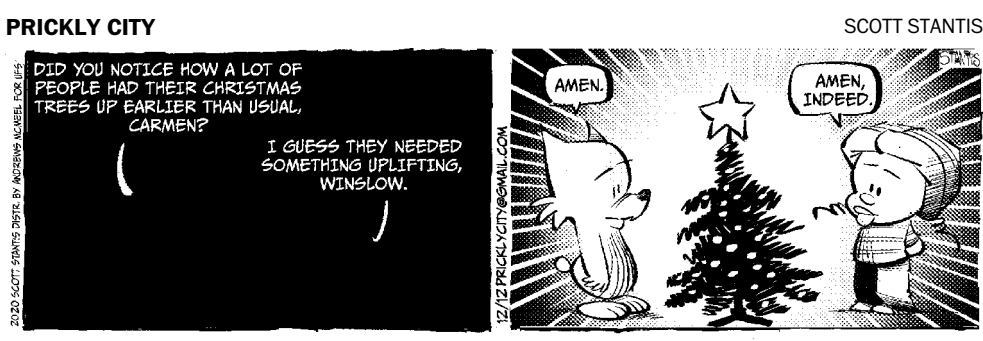
THIS WHOLE SITUATION DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE!

ELI HAS STARR, AKA EGGHEAD, IN CHARGE OF THE BUGLE?

'COURSE, NOW THAT I THINK OF IT - IT NEVER MADE MUCH SENSE FOR JAMESON TO BE IN CHARGE OF A BIG METROPOLITAN PAILY, EITHER?

STAN LEE & ALEX SAVIUK

PRICKLY CITY



DID YOU NOTICE HOW A LOT OF PEOPLE HAD THEIR CHRISTMAS TREES UP EARLIER THAN USUAL, CARMEN?

I GUESS THEY NEEDED SOMETHING UPLIFTING, WINSLOW.

AMEN.

AMEN, INDEED.

SCOTT STANTIS

LOOSE PARTS



Be there in a second, honey. Just checking to see how to new dog is getting along with the old one.

DAVE BLAZEAK

ARIES

(MARCH 21-APRIL 19).

An existing relationship moves to a new level. If you're single and seeking, a charming and unusual new friend wins your heart. If you focus your attention on creativity, today marks a time of building admiration and recognition.

TAURUS

(APRIL 20-MAY 20).

Others have a different viewpoint regarding love. Communicate. You will prevail if you respect the perspectives of those you are intimate with. There is much exploring and probing in progress.

GEMINI

(MAY 21-JUNE 20).

Bask in the healing rays of full spectrum light to recharge your body and soul. Be aware of how the quality of light in your home or workplace is affecting you. You'll be amazed at how proper lighting can enhance your well-being.

CANCER

(JUNE 21-JULY 22).

Today can bring a delightful series of new contacts. Accept invitations to meet friends. Allow the one you admire to make choices and express individuality if you want to succeed in love.

LEO

(JULY 23-AUG. 22).

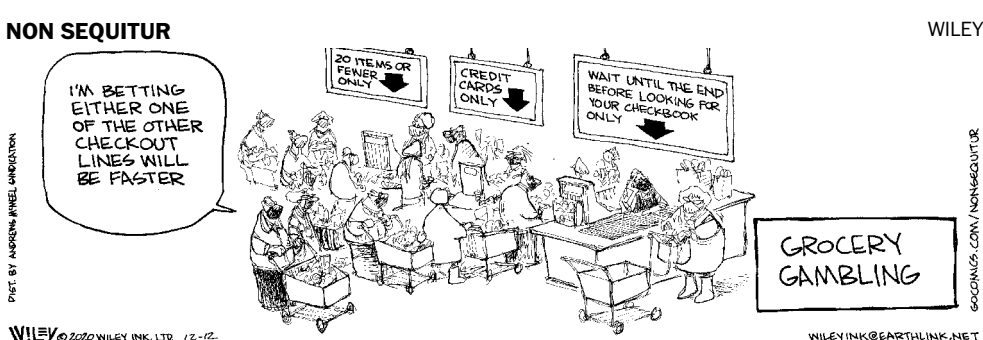
A flurry of invitations, love tokens and other pleasures will make this cold, dark day a day of happiness. You will be enthused and motivated. Many worthwhile projects are in progress. Today concludes on a very upbeat note.

VIRGO

(AUG. 23-SEPT. 22).

A neighbor could issue an interesting invitation. Commuter-length journeys are important. Current events will be of great interest. Subscribe to magazines and newspapers. Confusion is replaced with clarity. Stay aware of your budget.

NON SEQUITUR



I'M BETTING EITHER ONE OF THE OTHER CHECKOUT LINES WILL BE FASTER

20 ITEMS OR FEWER ONLY

CREDIT CARDS ONLY

WAIT UNTIL THE END BEFORE LOOKING FOR YOUR CHECKOUT ONLY

GROCERY GAMBLING

WILEY

BABY BLUES



CAN WE GO SEE THE MALL SANTA TODAY?

I'M SORRY, BUDDY.

THERE WON'T BE A MALL SANTA THIS YEAR BECAUSE OF THE VIRUS.

THEN WHO DO I LIE TO ABOUT HOW GOOD I'VE BEEN?

RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT

LIBRA

(SEPT. 23-OCT. 22).

Making plans is easier now. A combination of mutable aspects will tempt you to overextend. There is a promise of abundance, yet you might yearn for more and not fully appreciate the bird in the hand.

SCORPIO

(OCT. 23-NOV. 21).

Subtle and mysterious, the Scorpion smiles at its popular association with passion and the afterlife because there is so much more beneath the surface. Today is definitely one of those days when there is much more.

SAGITTARIUS

(NOV. 22-DEC. 21).

Today activates your inner life and your dreams. Time spent alone will be treasured. A creative project could begin to take form while you're enjoying a solitary walk. Extra travel is probable.

CAPRICORN

(DEC. 22-JAN. 19).

Extra recognition is coming your way. Demonstrate your capabilities in situations which promise to facilitate advancement. Leisure travel will be beneficial, perhaps putting you in touch with a promising financial opportunity.

AQUARIUS

(JAN. 20-FEB. 18).

Others are emotional and sensitive today. Be kind and offer sympathy. Your professional aspirations bring a special sense of fulfillment. A visit to a luxurious health spa would be rejuvenating.

PISCES

(FEB. 19-MARCH 20).

Doorways of opportunity will open today. Be ready to make changes. Old barriers will dissolve, and you can prepare a climate of ease and wish fulfillment. It's almost as if Aladdin's magic lamp is handed to you.

— Madalyn Aslan

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BIG NATE



WHY ARE YOU TRYING SO HARD TO INVENT A MEMORABLE SAYING?

BECAUSE I WANT TO BE REMEMBERED!

WHEN I LEAVE THIS WORLD, DEE DEE, I DON'T WANT PEOPLE TO FORGET I EVER EXISTED!

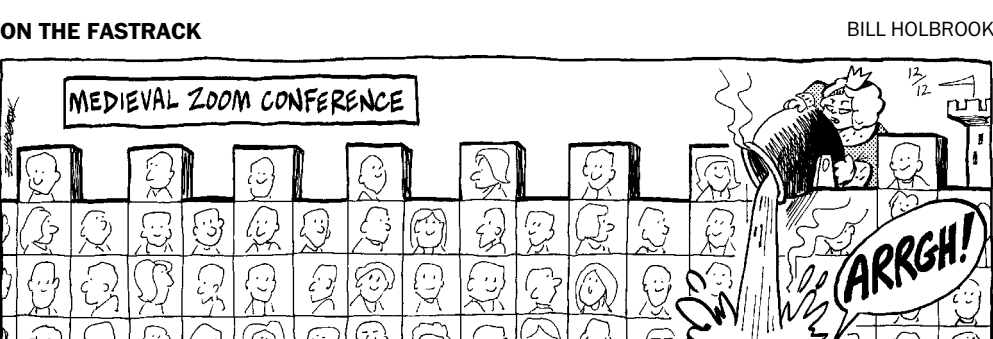
WILL NATE WRIGHT PLEASE REPORT TO THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE. NATE WRIGHT TO THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE.

NOW!

I DON'T THINK THAT'LL BE A PROBLEM.

LINCOLN PEIRCE

ON THE FASTTRACK



MEDIEVAL ZOOM CONFERENCE

ARRGH!

BILL HOLBROOK

BEETLE BAILEY



YOU NEED TO PAY ME BACK THE MONEY YOU BORROWED

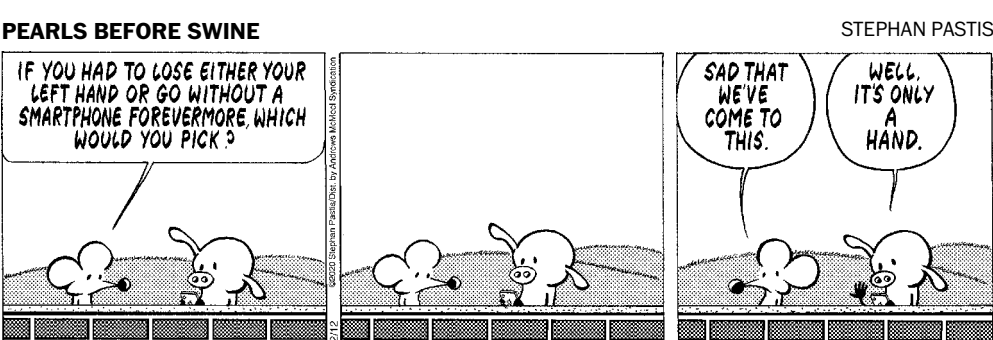
I CAN'T DO THAT

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

TO SEE IF I CAN GET SARGE TO TWIST YOUR ARM

MORT, BRIAN & GREG WALKER

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



IF YOU HAD TO LOSE EITHER YOUR LEFT HAND OR GO WITHOUT A SMARTPHONE FOREVERMORE, WHICH WOULD YOU PICK?

SAD THAT WE'VE COME TO THIS.

WELL, IT'S ONLY A HAND.

STEPHAN PASTIS

PREVIOUS SUDOKU SOLUTION

1	4	3	9	8	5	7	6	2
6	9	7	3	2	1	8	4	5
5	2	8	4	7	6	9	3	1
4	7	9	5	6	8	1	2	3
8	3	6	1	9	2	5	7	4
2	1	5	7	3	4	6	8	9
9	5	2	6	4	7	3	1	8
3	6	4	8	1	9	2	5	7
7	8	1	2	5	3	4	9	6

PREVIOUS SCRABBLEGRAMS SOLUTION

F	I	R	E	M	S	A	N
D	I	S	C	O	I	D	
G	A	N	T	I	N	A	
H	A	I	R	P	S	I	N

RACK 1 = 62

RACK 2 = 72

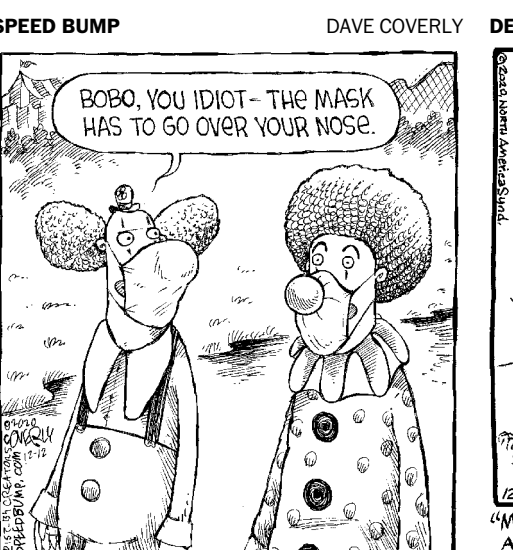
RACK 3 = 65

RACK 4 = 62

PAR SCORE 200-210

TOTAL 261

SPEED BUMP



BOBO, YOU IDIOT - THE MASK HAS TO GO OVER YOUR NOSE.

DAVE COVERLY

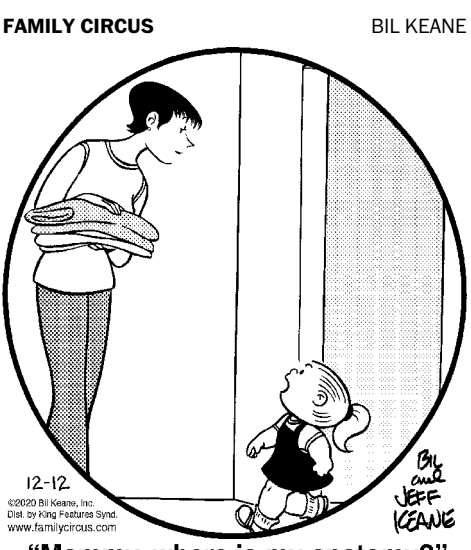
DENNIS THE MENACE



"MARGARET SAYS BOYS ARE MADE OF SNAKES AND SNAILS AND PUPPY DOG TAILS... WOW! WE'RE EVEN COOLER THAN WE THOUGHT!"

H. KETCHAM

FAMILY CIRCUS



"Mommy, where is my anatomy?"

BIL KEANE

REPLY ALL LITE



Sitting inside with you is first on my bucket list, Mom.

DONNA A. LEWIS

GOLFJapan's Hinako Shibuno shoots a 4-under 67 to take a three-shot lead at the U.S. Women's Open in Houston. **D2**

PRO FOOTBALLManish Mehta, a divisive New York tabloid reporter accused of bullying, loses his place on the Jets beat. **D6**

HIGH SCHOOLSThree of the area's biggest private leagues announce that they are scuttling plans for winter athletics. **D7**

# Wizards feeding off energy of Westbrook

Beal says new teammate brings focus and persona that resonate with team

BY AVA WALLACE

The Washington Wizards haven't settled on a starting line-up yet, and because of NBA health protocols, they haven't even practiced with their entire roster on the court. But one week into group workouts, they do have a buzzword: energy.

It starts with their newest member — Russell Westbrook.

"He brings a definite focus and a persona about himself that resonates with the rest of the team, you know, in a good manner," guard Bradley Beal said Friday in a virtual post-practice media session. "You have no choice but to feed off his energy. . . . The energy's been through the roof. Coach probably has to stop us sometimes because we're going too hard."

Perhaps there's little else to glom on to just one week into a training camp, which is closed to the media because of the coronavirus. This preseason features a host of new faces, but every coach or player made available to reporters over Zoom has mentioned the intense energy coursing throughout Washington's practice facility in Southeast.

Most attribute it to the famously meticulous Westbrook, whose reputation for playing hard preceded him to D.C. The nine-time all-star came into his 12th training

SEE WIZARDS ON **D5**

**Preseason: Wizards at Nets**  
Tomorrow, 6 p.m., NBCSN, NBA TV

# Hoyas start fast, fade late in loss to Wildcats

VILLANOVA 76, GEORGETOWN 63

Collapse foils upset bid for second time in week

BY KAREEM COPELAND

For the second time this week, Georgetown was poised to upset a ranked opponent, taking a double-digit lead into the second half against No. 9 Villanova on Friday night. And for the second time this week, the Hoyas couldn't answer when their opponent found a higher gear, falling to the Wildcats, 76-63, at fanless McDonough Arena.

Georgetown led by 18 in the first half and took a 13-point lead into intermission. But 20 minutes of elite play wasn't enough as Villanova outscored the Hoyas 43-17 in the second half to pull away in the Big East opener for both teams.

"Tonight, we self-destructed in the second half," Hoyas Coach Patrick Ewing said. "We were right there; it was a one-point game. Then we started worrying about who's shooting, who's taking bad shots and stuff instead of just continuing to play."

"We took bad shots. In the first half we had three turnovers. We had nine in the second half. We were doing a good job of getting the ball inside to [Qudus Wahab], and he missed some easy shots in the second half that he was making in the first half. All of those things played a role, and then

SEE HOYAS ON **D2**

**St. John's at Georgetown**  
Tomorrow, 7:30 p.m., Fox Sports 1



MIKE LAWRIE/GETTY IMAGES

# Old foes, old turf, new wrinkle

Unusual setting won't lessen the grandeur of Army-Navy



John Feinstein

The 121st Army-Navy game will be played Saturday afternoon, but it won't look or feel the way Army-Navy is supposed to look or feel. The coronavirus strikes again.

Still, Army and Navy *will* play. They won't play in Philadelphia, where 89 of the 120 previous games have taken place and the original location of this year's game. There won't be the normal crowd of 70,000 in attendance, with traffic jams four hours before kickoff so fans can get into the stadium to watch the Corps of Cadets and the Brigade of Midshipmen march onto the field.

Instead, the game will be played at Michie Stadium, on post at West Point in New York, arguably the most scenic football stadium in the country but a place that has hosted Army-Navy just once — in 1943, during World War II.

There will be about 9,000 spectators in the stadium — including about 4,300 from the Corps of Cadets and 4,300 from the Brigade of Midshipmen. Each school will be allowed about 200 VIPs, who will watch from glassed-in luxury boxes after going through rapid-result coronavirus testing that morning at the Thayer Hotel, which sits just inside the gate named for Sylvanus Thayer, known as the father of the academy.

The two athletic directors — Army's Mike Buddie and Navy's Chet Gladchuck — began discussing the possibility of moving the game in June, when it became apparent that the pandemic was going to have

SEE FEINSTEIN ON **D4**

COLLEGE FOOTBALL  
SATURDAY:  
GAMES TO WATCH

**Nationally**

**9 Georgia at 25 Missouri**  
Noon, SEC Network

**17 N. Carolina at 10 Miami**  
3:30 p.m., ABC

**15 USC at UCLA**  
7:30 p.m., ABC

**Locally**

**Rutgers at Maryland**  
Noon, Big Ten Network

**Navy at Army**  
3 p.m., CBS

**Virginia at Virginia Tech**  
8 p.m., ACC Network

**Inside**

A strange season ends in a familiar place for Virginia and Virginia Tech. **D3**

**Michie Stadium at West Point in New York will host the Army-Navy game Saturday for the first time since 1943.**

Mids bring back No. 68 to honor former lineman

BY KAREEM COPELAND

Billy Honaker knew No. 68 would be worn again one day. The Navy football team wouldn't keep it out of circulation forever, and there was a feeling Honaker just couldn't shake: He might be the one to wear it.

The last time No. 68 was worn in Navy's blue and gold for a regular season game was nearly a year ago, at Philadelphia's Lincoln Financial Field. That's when David Forney sprinted out of the tunnel first, carrying the Stars and Stripes as he led the Midshipmen onto the field against rival Army. The senior typically was one of the last players to leave the locker room; his position out front before his final regular season game was prompted by a vote of the four team captains. The humble 6-foot-3, 305-pound offensive lineman didn't even alert his father about the honor.

Two months later, Forney was found dead in his Bancroft Hall dorm room after a sudden cardiac arrest.

"Losing Dave was probably the hardest moment of my life and something that's really affected me and other guys on the offensive line and the team as a whole," Honaker said. ". . . I was just kind of weighing what that number meant to us and his family. I figured the first time this number should be worn on the field is Army-Navy and by someone who knew who he was and who loved him. Really the only thing for me now is to just play in a way that honors him and who he was as a football player."

Forney's Feb. 20 death sent shock waves through the program. He had played in 39 consecutive games and

SEE NAVY ON **D4**

# Terps' Funk feels numb to 2020 chaos after a career played in pain

BY EMILY GIAMBALVO

But it's now mid-December, and Funk has played only three games. Maryland canceled two matchups after a coronavirus outbreak in the program, then Funk missed another. Maryland prepared to play last weekend at Michigan, but the Wolverines became yet another program forced to cancel because of the virus. So Funk spent the past four weekends at his home in Damascus, watching college football from the couch — usually Army, where his younger brother plays, or the team scheduled to face Maryland the following week.

"A lot of this stuff, in terms of how bad things can get," Funk said, "it's not even comparable to some of the stuff that I've been through."

Funk's college career has been defined by having football taken away for reasons outside his control, but this feels different from each of the past two years when

SEE FUNK ON **D3**

GOLF ROUNDUP

# Shibuno all smiles after firing 67 to take three-shot lead at U.S. Women’s Open

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hinako Shibuno can do without the “Cinderella” nickname, just not the smile. That was bright as ever Friday as the Japanese star posted a 4-under-par 67 and opened a three-shot lead going into the weekend of the U.S. Women’s Open.

Shibuno’s lone mistake on a damp, soft day at Champions Golf Club in Houston was a three-putt bogey on the par-3 16th at the Jackrabbit course. Her objective was to avoid dropping more shots by being overly aggressive. She wound up with a 10-foot birdie putt to restore her lead over Arizona State sophomore Linn Grant

of Sweden.

Shibuno rose to sudden fame in the summer of 2019 when she won the Women’s British Open at Woburn, the first major for the 22-year-old and her first time playing outside Japan. She was called the “Smiling Cinderella,” a reference to her surprise performance and an engaging smile.

“No pressure whatsoever,” Shibuno said. “I’m playing a major in the United States, unlike when I was at the British Open, where I feel like I am starting from scratch.”

She looked the part of a major champion at the U.S. Women’s Open, where the forecast of rain and strong wind never quite ma-

terialized. The rain was light and occasional. The wind was little more than a rumor.

Grant made her U.S. Women’s Open debut two years ago as an 18-year-old at Shoal Creek and was tied for fourth going into the weekend until closing with rounds of 78-81.

She had a 69 at Jackrabbit and will be in the final group Saturday. They will be joined by another amateur, Texas senior Kaitlyn Papp, who had a 68 at Cypress Creek and was four shots behind.

The USGA used two courses for the first time because the pandemic forced the Women’s Open to be postponed six months to December with limited daylight.

The final two rounds will be at Cypress Creek, the course that previously hosted a Ryder Cup and the PGA Tour’s U.S. Open and Tour Championship.

Six amateurs made the cut, which was at 3-over 145.

Shibuno was at 7-under 135, and only 12 players were within five shots of the lead.

Amy Olson, the 18-hole leader, had to birdie her final hole for a 72. She was in the group with Papp and Megan Khang (69) at 3-under 139.

The group five shots behind included former Women’s Open champion Ariya Jutanugarn and her sister, Moriya, Champions Golf Club member Stacy Lewis

and Cristie Kerr, who dislocated a couple of ribs in a golf cart accident a week ago and wasn’t even sure she could play until the Open began.

“I’ve definitely missed shots I would normally not miss because I’m in pain,” Kerr said, “but it’s actually kind of a nice mental place to be. I’m not happy how I got here, but maybe it’s meant to teach me a lesson.”

•**PGA TOUR:** Kevin Na and Sean O’Hair teamed to shoot a 16-under 56 in the scramble format to take a one-shot lead after the first-round of the QBE Shootout in Naples, Fla., an unofficial tour event. They eagled the par-5 sixth and 17th.

Ryan Palmer and Harold Varner III were second. They birdied 13 of the first 14 holes — only missing on the par-3 fifth — and added birdies on the final two holes.

•**EUROPEAN TOUR:** Race to Dubai leader Patrick Reed shot an 8-under 64 to take a two-stroke lead after the second round of the European Tour’s season-ending World Tour Championship in Dubai.

Reed, looking to become the first American to win what was formally known as the Order of Merit title, made nine birdies to take the lead at 10 under at Jumeirah Golf Estates.

Englishman Matt Fitzpatrick is two strokes behind.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

## Mountaineers fight back after trailing at halftime

WEST VIRGINIA 62, NORTH TEXAS 50

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The uncertainty of playing amid a pandemic is weighing on West Virginia, to the point that the 11th-ranked Mountaineers trailed at halftime to unheralded North Texas in Morgantown, W.Va., and Coach Bob Huggins had to, well, motivate his team.

The Mountaineers responded, rallying with 18 straight points to open the second half, and fought off a late run by North Texas to win their home opener, 62-50, on Friday.

Sean McNeil scored 15 points to lead the Mountaineers (5-1).

“We woke them up. It’s been a long few weeks,” Huggins said. “It’s so hard. We’re playing; we’re not playing. We’re playing this team; now we’re not.”

Taz Sherman added 13 points and Derek Culver had 10 points — all in the second half — and 10 rebounds for the Mountaineers. Culver scored seven points during the decisive run.

“I would say the second half after me getting yelled at by Hugs, yes, it woke me up a little bit,” Culver said.

Javion Hamlet scored 15 points and Thomas Bell had 12 for North Texas (1-3).

West Virginia shot an abysmal 9 for 35 (26 percent), including 1 for 8 from three-point range, in

the first half and trailed 29-21 at the break. North Texas shot 59 percent in the opening half.

But in the second half, it was the Mean Green that couldn’t score, shooting 6 for 33 (18 percent), including 2 for 15 on three-point attempts. North Texas had a late surge to get within five points but got no closer.

“We just kind of slowed them down,” Huggins said.

•**IOWA 105, IOWA STATE 77:** Luka Garza missed just once shot and scored more than 30 points for the third time in five games this season as the third-ranked Hawkeyes improved to 5-0 with a runaway win over the rival Cyclones (1-2) in Iowa City.

Garza finished 13 for 14 from the field, including 6 for 7 from three-point range, for 34 points in just 17 minutes of action. Iowa has scored at least 90 points in every game this season.

Joe Wieskamp added 16 points and four rebounds for Iowa.

Javan Johnson led Iowa State with 20 points.

•**KANSAS 95, OMAHA 50:** Ochai Agbaji scored 18 points, and the fifth-ranked Jayhawks beat Omaha in Kansas’s final tuneup before it begins Big 12 play.

Mitch Lightfoot had a career-best 14 points, David McCormack had 11 points and 11 rebounds and Tyon Grant-Foster added 13 points to help the Jayhawks (6-1) cruise to their 12th consecutive win at Allen Fieldhouse.



KATHY BATTEN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

West Virginia forward Derek Culver had 10 points against North Texas, including seven during an 18-0 run to open the second half.

Wanjang Tut scored 14 points for the Mavericks (2-5).

•**CREIGHTON 98, NEBRASKA 74:** In Omaha, Marcus Zegarowski scored 22 points, Denzel Mahoney had 20 and the No. 8 Bluejays used a big run in the second half to pull away and beat the Cornhuskers.

Creighton (4-1) wasn’t sharp early but went on a 30-7 surge after halftime to bounce back from a one-point loss at Kansas.

Creighton has won eight of

nine against the Cornhuskers (3-3), and the Bluejays have won 13 straight regular season home games against their in-state rival since they lost in Omaha in 1995.

•**DELAWARE 68, GEORGE WASHINGTON 65:** James Bishop and Jamison Battle had 14 points each, but the Colonials fell to 1-4 with a loss to the Blue Hens (2-1) in Newark.

Dylan Painter had 14 points and 12 rebounds to lift Delaware.

**Richmond women pause**

The Richmond women’s basketball team is pausing all activities after its latest coronavirus testing results and the requisite contact tracing.

The school said it will not play its next two scheduled games, against St. Francis on Sunday and at Norfolk State on Thursday.

•**LOUISVILLE:** The ACC said Sunday’s women’s basketball game between No. 2 Louisville

and North Carolina was postponed because of positive coronavirus tests, quarantining and contact tracing within the Cardinals program.

•**MICHIGAN:** Wolverines forward Austin Davis is out indefinitely with a right foot injury.

The school said Davis has a plantar fascia injury from a non-contact movement in Michigan’s win over Toledo on Wednesday. Davis is averaging six points and 3.6 rebounds a game.

# Second-half collapse prevents Georgetown from knocking off No. 9 Villanova

HOYAS FROM DI

they got hot.”

Jamorko Pickett paced Georgetown with 16 points and 10 rebounds. Wahab had 12 points and five rebounds. Jahvon Blair, who entered as Georgetown’s leading scorer, had just 11 points, shooting 1 for 5 from behind the arc.

Collin Gillespie and Caleb Daniels led the Wildcats with 18 points apiece, and Cole Swider chipped in 10.

The Hoyas (2-3, 0-1) opened with their best 20 minutes of basketball of the season, taking a 46-33 lead into halftime. Not only did they keep the turnovers to a minimum, but they shot 58.1 percent from the field, including 50 percent from behind the arc, and held a 21-15 rebounding edge over the first 20 minutes.

Pickett carried the load early, scoring 10 points as the Hoyas jumped out to a 17-7 lead. A 16-3 run spearheaded by six quick points from freshman Dante Har-

ris, a career high in just a half, put Georgetown up 35-19. The Wildcats also didn’t have an answer for Wahab as he posted all of his points in the first half.

“We had good looks in the first half, just didn’t make them,” Villanova Coach Jay Wright said. “Defensively we were a step behind everything they did. Offensively, they were just a step ahead of us. They were a little bit more prepared for us, and maybe we’re a little bit more predictable. We did not execute what we wanted

to do defensively, and they really sliced us in the first half.”

That changed in the second half. Villanova opened with a 20-4 stretch that included a 15-0 run highlighted by six points from Daniels that gave the Wildcats a 53-50 lead. The Hoyas produced one final push as Blair made a pair of tough jumpers to help Georgetown regain the lead at 61-60 with 5:54 remaining.

The Hoyas would score only two more points the rest of the way as Daniels, Swider and

Gillespie got hot. The Wildcats were 8 for 17 from behind the arc in the second half.

The Hoyas shot just 26.7 percent in the second half and were 1 for 11 from three-point range.

“Rome wasn’t built in a day,” Ewing said. “We’re still building. We’re still learning each other. We’re still trying to grow. We’re going to make mistakes. We can’t panic. We just have to keep on building and keep on working.”

“This is our first game in the Big East against a quality team.

We had our opportunities to get the win, but once again we made too many mistakes, and we have to cut those out.”

The Hoyas were without freshman forward Kobe Clark, who suffered an ankle sprain in the 80-48 win over Coppin State on Tuesday.

Georgetown will play its sixth straight home game to open the season Sunday, tipping off against Big East foe St. John’s at 7:30 p.m.

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DIGEST

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

### Swinney: Ohio State shouldn’t be in playoff

A week before his team’s rematch with Notre Dame in the ACC championship game, Clemson Coach Dabo Swinney said he would pick a two-loss Tigers team to play in the College Football Playoff and that he might select Texas A&M or Florida to join Clemson over a six-win Ohio State team.

“We feel like we’re definitely one of the best four teams in the country, and there’s nothing that’s going to happen in that game next week for Clemson or Notre Dame that’s going to change that,” he said on “The Rich Eisen Show,” later adding, “If I was on a committee, it would be hard for me to leave out a 10-1 Texas A&M or a 11-win Florida team over a team that’s played six games.”

The Buckeyes are fourth in the College Football Playoff rankings, though they might have been in jeopardy of falling out of playoff discussion had the Big Ten not decided Wednesday to drop its six-game requirement for inclusion in the Dec. 19 conference championship game.

No. 5 Texas A&M is 7-1, and No. 6 Florida is 8-1.

— *Glynn A. Hill*

**D.J. Taylor** returned the opening kickoff 100 yards for a touchdown and Arizona State (1-2) scored twice in the opening 56 seconds in a 70-7 rout of rival Arizona (0-5) in Tucson. . . .

Pittsburgh removed itself from bowl consideration after finishing the regular season 6-5. The school became the second ACC team to opt out of the postseason, joining Boston College. . . .

Utah State canceled Saturday’s game against Colorado State amid concerns voiced about religious discrimination during the search for a new football coach. In a statement, Aggies players said they were opting out because of alleged comments Utah State President **Noelle Cockett** made about the religious and cultural background of interim coach **Frank Maile**.

**BASEBALL**

The Milwaukee Brewers acquired minor league left-handed pitcher **Leo Crawford** to complete the trade that sent former all-star reliever **Corey Knebel** to the Los Angeles Dodgers. . . .

The Texas Rangers re-signed right-hander **Jimmy Herget** to a major league contract and designated outfielder **Scott Heineman** for assignment. . . .

TELEVISION AND RADIO  
NBA PRESEASON

7 p.m. **Toronto at Charlotte** » NBA TV  
9:30 p.m. **Phoenix at Utah** » NBA TV

COLLEGE FOOTBALL, SEE PAGE D4  
MEN’S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

11 a.m. **Florida at Florida State** » ESPN  
Noon **Mississippi State vs. Dayton** » ESPN  
Noon **Notre Dame at Kentucky** » WUSA (Ch. 9), WJZ (Ch. 13)  
Noon **Wofford vs. South Florida** » ESPN  
Noon **Florida Gulf Coast at Miami** » MASN  
12:30 p.m. **Cincinnati at Tennessee** » SEC Network Alternate  
1 p.m. **Syracuse at Boston College** » ESPN  
2 p.m. **North Carolina Central at North Carolina** » MASN  
3 p.m. **Mississippi State vs. Dayton** » ESPN  
3 p.m. **Evansville at Saint Louis** » NBC Sports Network  
4 p.m. **Gardner-Webb at Pittsburgh** » MASN  
5 p.m. **Memphis vs. Auburn** » ESPN  
5 p.m. **Florida A&M at Oklahoma** » MASN2  
5 p.m. **Old Dominion at VCU** » NBC Sports Network  
5 p.m. **UNC Wilmington at Mississippi** » SEC Network Alternate  
5 p.m. **Memphis vs. Auburn** » ESPN  
6 p.m. **UTEP at Arizona** » Pac-12 Network  
7:30 p.m. **Indiana State at Purdue** » Big Ten Network

Businessman **Alan Horwitz**, the winning bidder on over \$1 million worth of memorabilia from a recent auction of **Johnny Bench**’s personal collection, is returning the items to the Hall of Fame catcher, with whom he has been friends since 1967.

**SOCCER**

FIFA will send an emergency management team to run soccer in Haiti, saying it believed **Yves Jean-Bart**, the top official it banned for life for sexually abusing players, is still running the sport and intimidating witnesses. . . .

PSV Eindhoven midfielder **Richy Ledezma**, a 20-year-old U.S. international, tore the ACL in his right knee and won’t play again this season. . . .

Leeds’s weakness at set pieces haunted it at home as West Ham came from behind to win, 2-1, in the English Premier League. . . .

Saint-Etienne had its third straight draw in the French league in a scoreless match at home against Angers. . . .

Italian club Sassuolo held on for more than 40 minutes with 10 men to beat visiting Benevento, 1-0, in Serie A. . . .

**Shon Weissman**’s first goals

8 p.m. **Oregon at Washington** » Pac-12 Network  
8 p.m. **Illinois at Missouri** » ESPN  
8 p.m. **Central Arkansas at Arkansas** » SEC Network Alternate

SOCCER

9 a.m. **Italian Serie A: Spezia at Crotone** » ESPN  
10:15 a.m. **Spanish La Liga: Sevilla at Getafe** » beIN Sports  
12:30 p.m. **Spanish La Liga: Alavés at Huesca** » beIN Sports  
12:30 p.m. **English Premier League: Manchester City at Manchester United** » WRC (Ch. 4), WBAL (Ch. 11)  
3 p.m. **Spanish La Liga: Atlético Madrid at Real Madrid** » beIN Sports  
8:30 p.m. **MLS Cup: Seattle at Columbus** » WTTG (Ch. 5), WBFF (Ch. 45)

AUTO RACING

5 a.m. **Formula One: Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, practice** » ESPN  
8 a.m. **Formula One: Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, qualifying** » ESPN2

GOLF

11 a.m. **U.S. Women’s Open, third round** » Golf Channel  
1 p.m. **PGA Tour: QBE Shootout, second round** » Golf Channel  
2:30 p.m. **U.S. Women’s Open, third round** » WRC (Ch. 4), WBAL (Ch. 11)  
1:30 a.m. **European Tour: Tour Championship, final round** » Golf Channel (Sunday)

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

8 p.m. **UFC 256: Prelims** » ESPN2

BOXING

10 p.m. **Shakur Stevenson vs. Toka Kahn Clary (junior lightweights)** » ESPN

MEN’S COLLEGE HOCKEY

7 p.m. **Ohio State at Notre Dame** » NBC Sports Network

for Real Valladolid made a difference as they came from behind to beat Osasuna, 3-2, at home in the Spanish league. . . .

**Wout Weghorst** scored twice as Wolfsburg came from a goal down to beat Eintracht Frankfurt, 2-1, in Germany’s Bundesliga. . . .

Atlanta was awarded a berth in next year’s Concacaf Champions League by the U.S. Soccer Federation’s board of directors.

**AUTO RACING**

**Valtteri Bottas** produced the fastest time in the second practice for the Formula One season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix in United Arab Emirates. . . .

NASCAR’s throwback weekend celebration at Darlington (S.C.) Raceway is moving from Labor Day weekend to Mother’s Day.

— *From news services and staff reports*

ANALYSIS

# The Nationals are still looking for help in the deepened corner outfield market

BY JESSE DOUGHERTY

The Washington Nationals were bound to this corner outfield class once, in late September, Juan Soto was playing right field instead of left. And even before then, it was pretty clear the Nationals would decline Adam Eaton's contract option for 2021, leaving them with a hole in right field — or left, if Soto moves — that could be used to improve the middle of their order. It was just a matter of who would fill it.

The initial possibilities were George Springer, Michael Brantley or Marcell Ozuna if Washington was willing to spend. Then the non-tender deadline passed and the pool deepened. Kyle Schwarber, Adam Duvall and Eddie Rosario became free

agents Dec. 2. There are now players to fit most budgets, even after another option, David Dahl, agreed to a one-year deal worth around \$3 million with the Texas Rangers, as ESPN reported Friday.

The Nationals, in turn, are looking to tap into this market for power to put behind Soto and Trea Turner. They are certainly interested in Schwarber, a former Chicago Cubs outfielder, according to two people with knowledge of their plans. He was non-tendered by the Cubs after a down 2020 — he had a career-low .701 on-base-plus-slugging percentage — and was projected to make close to \$9 million in his final year of arbitration eligibility. But his pop is evident and hints at the

sort of bat Washington seeks.

Put aside Springer, Brantley and Ozuna for a moment. They were the initial group of free agent outfielders, and their potential value to teams is well documented. The louder questions come with Schwarber, Duvall and Rosario.

Each of their free agencies is a direct product of a gloomy off-season. Schwarber and Duvall were particularly hurt by uncertainty about whether the National League will use the designated hitter in 2021.

Without knowing whether they will have the DH, the Cubs and Atlanta Braves, Duvall's former team, found it prudent to let the pair test the market rather than commit to paying them for one year.

None of these three players are plus defenders. Schwarber and Rosario could be viewed as deficient in the field. But they make up for it on offense, and that's what the Nationals need.

There has been a gaping void in their lineup since Anthony Rendon left in December 2019. Last season, a short and sideways one because of the coronavirus pandemic, that void was not filled by a mix of Starlin Castro (who broke his wrist in August), Ryan Zimmerman (who spent a lot of time dealing with sore hamstrings). Schwarber is the most reliable fix of this latter group. As it goes, he also promis-

es to be the most expensive.

Rosario, 29, is a more durable and proven power hitter who consistently produces. Duvall, 32, finished tied for third in the NL with 16 homers in 2020. But his career on-base percentage is a meager .293. Rosario's is not wildly better at .310.

Schwarber, though not one to hit for average, blasts the ball out of the park and, putting last year aside, gets on base more than his non-tendered peers. With 2,108 plate appearances at 27 years old, he is both experienced and young.

Schwarber, who bats left-handed, averaged just over 31 home runs per season between 2017 and 2019. And, as a bonus, he knows Nationals Manager Dave Martinez from

their years sharing a clubhouse and dugout in Chicago.

This is not to say Schwarber is a flawless fix. He's far from it. He strikes out a lot. Recent reports have indicated the universal DH may not arrive until 2022. If that's the case, Schwarber would hurt any NL team in the outfield next season.

The Nationals recently parted with Eaton, one of baseball's worst statistical outfielders across the past few years. In theory, they would like to upgrade in that area instead of adding more of the same.

But that wish could be knocked aside if they see a clear, cost-effective path to lifting their offense. The list of ways to do that has only grown.

*jesse.dougherty@washpost.com*

# An odd season ends in familiar place as Cavs, Hokies prepare for showdown

BY GENE WANG

In a college football season that has been anything but routine, Virginia and Virginia Tech find themselves in their customary slot for a showdown that remains each program's most contentious regardless of outside circumstances.

The traditional regular season finale for the Commonwealth Cup initially was scheduled to be the opener for both schools Sept. 19 until a coronavirus outbreak in the Hokies' locker room led to a postponement. Virginia Tech paused football activities, and the ACC not long after announced the new date of Dec. 12.

"Yeah, it's actually more normal than not normal," Cavaliers Coach Bronco Mendenhall said Monday during his weekly Zoom call with the media. "And it doesn't mean the game isn't more important. It doesn't mean the game doesn't have significant value. But the preparation models, they're designed to maximize performance every single week so there is more routine."

The Cavaliers (5-4, 4-4 ACC) won last year's meeting, 39-30, in Charlottesville, storming the field after ending Virginia Tech's 15-game winning streak in the series.

Last season's outcome became all but official late in the fourth quarter when Virginia defensive end Mandy Alonso sacked quar-

terback Hendon Hooker deep in Virginia Tech territory, dislodging the ball into the end zone. Defensive tackle Eli Hanback recovered with 1:01 to play for a touchdown that produced the final score.

Virginia Tech tight end James Mitchell this week recalled with disgust navigating through the celebration on the field at Scott Stadium to get back to the locker room. The junior's teammates also mentioned that scene as extra incentive heading into Saturday night.

"Probably exactly that," Virginia Tech defensive tackle Jarrod Hewitt said about which memory stands out the most. "Just them storming the field, and they're our rival. You've got to give them credit though. They played hard. They played harder than we did last year. They wanted to win more than we did last year."

"When you look at the statistics of the game, it was pretty [evenly] matched as far as yards, turnovers, that kind of thing. But it ultimately came down to they had more energy that day, and they wanted to win more, and that's been something that's been eating at us for the last whole year."

Hewitt, a redshirt senior, has been among the more consistent performers this season on first-year coordinator Justin Hamilton's defense, which weathered significant absences because of



MATT GENTRY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Defensive end Mandy Alonso and Virginia Tech have won four straight and are looking to upend Virginia Tech for the second year in a row.**

virus-related complications, injuries, opt-outs and an off-the-field legal issue leading to an indefinite suspension.

Virginia Tech (4-6, 4-5) ranks second to last in the ACC in total

defense, surrendering 460 yards per game behind a secondary that played without both starting cornerbacks and its top two backups early this season. The dearth of available players on the back end

compelled the Hokies to guard against the deep ball rather than stack the line of scrimmage to stop the run.

The Hokies also have pushed through instability at quarterback. In last weekend's 45-10 loss to Clemson, Virginia Tech used three quarterbacks, with third-stringer Knox Kadum finishing the game after Hooker and back-up Braxton Burmeister departed in the third quarter.

Hooker, according to Coach Justin Fuente, left because of discomfort with the chilly conditions, and Burmeister, a transfer from Oregon, absorbed a sack that forced him from the game. Both are in line to play against Virginia, Fuente indicated this week.

"When I called Bronco and we canceled or moved back the first game, like we just shared a moment of, 'Can you imagine making it until mid-December doing this?'" said Fuente, who has been the subject of criticism on social media from a restless fan base amid a four-game losing streak. "It seemed like it was a year away."

Virginia has been on an opposite trajectory, having won four in a row to move above .500 for the first time since September. Beating their instate rival would ensure the Cavaliers a third consecutive winning season for the first time since 2003 to 2005.

The most significant component in the upswing, according to

Mendenhall, has been the health of quarterback Brennan Armstrong. The redshirt sophomore missed one game while in the concussion protocol and has directed Virginia to four victories since he rejoined the starting lineup, including three in which it scored at least 43 points.

Armstrong has accounted for 13 touchdowns over the past four games and will be making his first start in the Commonwealth Cup. The left-hander also is one of four captains helping to ensure the team continues to follow safety protocols during the pandemic.

Virginia is one of the few schools in the ACC not to have been significantly impacted by the virus. No starters have missed a game because of a positive test, and each of the Cavaliers' conference games that had to be rescheduled was the result of an outbreak in the opponent's locker room.

"I think it's business as usual, but the win last year definitely pushed the program, pushed the culture, I would say, in a linear, positive direction," Virginia safety Joey Blount said. "It kind of just sets the tone for what Coach Mendenhall preaches. It's not if but when, and last year was the start of a trend that we're working toward, and we want to make it a yearly thing, you know, beat Tech."

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# Funk didn't allow multiple injuries or pandemic to derail him

FUNK FROM DI

Funk tore his ACL. When rehabbing his injured knee ligament, Funk watched his teammates continue on without him, but if he wanted to sprint onto the team bus, he physically couldn't. This time when he watches from afar, Funk feels fine. He wants to play. But the virus has dashed Maryland's hope for anything that resembles a complete campaign.

With the limited opportunities, Funk has shown flashes of the running back he can be when healthy. He says his knee feels great. His brother Josh, who runs a fitness-focused physical therapy company, said Funk is stronger and faster than before. Funk erupted for a 221-yard outing against Minnesota, more rushing yards than he had previously recorded during an entire collegiate season. Afterward, Funk called his older brother from the field, and the two shared an emotional moment. The game validated the running back's past two years of work.

Funk has played well this season, with Coach Michael Locksley considering him an every-down back who can run, block and catch passes. Funk will be honored with the other seniors before Saturday's home game against Rutgers. Then Maryland will play a cross-division matchup next weekend and potentially a bowl. Funk has a maximum of three games left — and possibly another year if he decides to use the eligibility relief granted by the NCAA.

Despite his injury-free status, this will be the third straight season that Funk hasn't played four consecutive weekends. But he still has time to tout his ability as Maryland's No. 1 back and lead the Terps to a winning record for the first time since 2014.

"He's one of the few guys that you see today that just does everything right," said linebacker Chance Campbell, one of Funk's close friends. "He had a lot of things not go his way. . . . It's easy to root for him."

Throughout his Maryland career, Funk waited behind a bundle of talented running backs — Trey Edmunds (now on the Steelers'



BARRY REEGER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Maryland running back Jake Funk had three major injuries over the course of 15 months, but in his return this season, he has excelled.**

injured reserve list), Ty Johnson (on the Jets' active roster), Anthony McFarland Jr. (on the Steelers' active roster) and Javon Leake (on Washington's practice squad). As Funk inched toward more playing time in 2018, he broke his hand during an early season practice and needed surgery. Funk returned in November, primarily with a role on special teams, and tore his ACL against Ohio State. Before that season, Funk hadn't skipped a game in years. He never had a setback during high school, never missed a practice.

Funk asked the staff not to publicize his knee injury, so his torn ACL went largely unnoticed until the spring. Funk takes an objective approach to his recovery process, only wanting to know what's

next on the path to a return. "All that other stuff would have been distractions," said Funk's dad, Jim, describing his son as a private person.

"We always talk about him being on a rail," Funk's dad said. "He's on that rail, and you can hit him and you can knock him around while he's on that rail, but very rarely does he ever get knocked off of it."

In 2019, McFarland and Leake still topped the depth chart, but Funk began the year with strong performances in the first two games. Then his season halted — and the long recovery process began again — when Funk partially tore his ACL against Temple. This time, Funk needed a second surgery to clean out an infection in his

knee. He lost about 25 pounds and was on intravenous antibiotics for a month.

Funk worked back to full strength while his team played its first season under Locksley and continued his rehab during the pandemic. When players couldn't be on campus, Funk worked with his brother and regularly lifted weights with a few friends in a neighbor's barn.

"There are very, very, very few people that really understand what the last two to 2½ years have been like for me," Funk said before this season's opener, when he started for the first time in his career.

Funk describes the feeling as numbness. He has become numb to pain, to nervousness, to being fazed by the tumult of the 2020

schedule. "I've gone through so much to where it's like, 'All right, what's next?'" he said.

This week, what's next is Rutgers, senior day and the opportunity to win a third conference game. However short this season has become for Funk, he proved he belongs on this stage. Funk dreamed of playing big-time college football, but initially only schools outside the major conferences recruited him.

Wisconsin offered Funk a scholarship to play linebacker. Funk planned to commit if he didn't pick up a scholarship from Stanford during a camp. Before the flight home from California, Funk said, Wisconsin pulled the scholarship because a few other linebackers committed in quick suc-

cession. He started his senior season uncommitted and unsure where he would end up.

When Locksley took over as Maryland's interim coach during the 2015 season, he immediately extended an offer. Funk's assessment as a two-star recruit is now featured on his Twitter header photo, but he broke records at Damascus High. As a senior, he rushed for 2,866 yards and scored 57 touchdowns, a single-season state record. Locksley believed in Funk. He says Funk "embodies the DNA of the DMV." Locksley trusted that a player who succeeded to that extent on the local high school football scene could also thrive in major college football. The two eventually reunited after Locksley's return to Maryland as the head coach, with Funk now one of the team's few seniors.

"One of my all-time favorite players," Locksley said last season. "And I know you're not supposed to pick your children and say he's my favorite child, but Jake is one of those guys that is hard not to really love and love hard."

Funk wants to be remembered as "somebody who didn't care what anybody said about them and just believed in himself." He feels fulfilled with how he has led the young group. His success prompts teammates to ooze genuine joy. Funk had three major injuries over the course of 15 months, but in his return this season, he has excelled.

"You wonder if I had a full season under my belt, what could have been," Funk said. "But you've got to be able to just play with what you've got."

This season's shortened slate will factor into whether he returns for next year, but Funk says he will make the decision after the Terps' final game. It would be his sixth year at school. Perhaps he will want to move on regardless. Funk could bid farewell to college football with only an abbreviated stint as Maryland's top running back, but in that time, he has — and still can — generate those sparks of success, each one a reminder of the persistence that preceded the breakthrough.

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# COLLEGE FOOTBALL

JOHN FEINSTEIN

## Army-Navy won't lose its magic in rare setting

FEINSTEIN FROM D1

a major impact on the college football season.

“We had two goals that were absolute,” Buddie said. “The first was to *play* the game. If we could each play only one game all season, we had to find a way to play Army-Navy. The second was to make sure that the Brigade and the Corps could be at the game.”

It was the second goal that brought about the venue change. As the season moved along, it became increasingly apparent that local protocols would make it difficult to allow very many people into the stadium. Officials in Philadelphia let Buddie and Gladchuck know in October they were virtually certain the game would have to be played in an empty or near-empty Lincoln Financial Field.

The question then became, where to play?

In the end, the only answer was Michie Stadium.

Any other venue, including Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis, would be subject to local covid-19 protocols. Michie Stadium is located on an Army post and, as a result, is a U.S. government installation, not subject to local protocols. Navy’s stadium, on the other hand, is located about a mile from Gate 8 of the Yard. It sits on land that is part of the state of Maryland and therefore *is* subject to local protocols. In fact, after being allowed to attend several home games this fall, the Brigade was not allowed in for Navy’s final home game last week against Tulsa.

“The fact that it was supposed



MIKE LAWRIE/GETTY IMAGES

About 9,000 spectators are expected to attend Saturday’s Army-Navy game, relocated to Army’s Michie Stadium because of the pandemic.

to be our home game probably made it easier to make the decision for both Chet and me,” Buddie said. “But even if it had been Navy’s home game, there still wouldn’t have been any other choice. It just might have made it a little harder for us to get to that conclusion.”

“Home game” in Army-Navy lingo means that side wears home uniforms, occupies the larger locker room at whichever NFL stadium the game is played and marches on the field first — nothing that directly affects the playing of the game. The number of tickets are split evenly for both teams, and the roars alternate from one side of the stadium to the other.

This year will be no different. The Corps of Cadets will sit on the home team side of the stadium; the Brigade opposite.

For every Army VIP added to the list of invitees, Navy added one of its own.

“The only advantage that we’ll have is that our players won’t have to travel,” Buddie said. “But it won’t be that different for the Navy players than it is in a normal year.”

Buddie and Gladchuck discussed whether to allow players’ families into the stadium — something they clearly wanted to do if at all possible. In the end, they decided against it for two reasons. “Because our players are so far-flung, many families would have to travel by plane to get to the game,” Buddie said. “That was a concern.”

The other was more basic. Michie Stadium is winterized after Thanksgiving, meaning the plumbing in the upper deck is shut down. “I’m sure the family

members wouldn’t have minded going down three levels to go the bathroom,” Buddie said. “But they’d have to interact with the students when they got there.”

Once the decision was made Oct. 23 to move the game to West Point, logistics had to be pieced together: a hotel for the Navy team; testing for everyone coming on post; alerting the Secret Service, which always plans for the president (or this year potentially the president-elect) to come to the game — and figuring out how to tell those who couldn’t come why they couldn’t.

The more than 4,000 members of the brigade will travel by bus from Annapolis to West Point “super early” Saturday morning, according to the Navy Public Affairs Office.

Their destination will make this game stand out after more

than 75 years of neutral fields. For security reasons, the Army-Navy games were played on home fields in 1942 and 1943: Navy’s Thompson Stadium, which *was* on the Yard, hosted the first year, Michie Stadium the next.

The thought of playing on either home field vanished after World War II because the game was too big — and the moneymaking potential too great. It has been played since then in Philadelphia (most years), the Meadowlands, Baltimore, Pasadena, Calif., and D.C. — if you count Prince George’s County as D.C.

In 1999, Sports Illustrated picked Michie Stadium as the third-greatest sports venue in the world — behind only Yankee Stadium and Augusta National Golf Club. I would rank Michie ahead of both those places. It is

fantastically scenic, with both Lusk Reservoir and the Hudson River visible from the home side of the stadium and soaring trees dominating the view behind the north end. Most importantly, there is the quality of people who play their home games there.

That will be the case again Saturday — for both teams. The game should be competitive. During a 14-season stretch from 2002 to 2015, Navy (under coaches Paul Johnson and Ken Niumatalolo) so dominated the series that the game lost some of its luster; it was frequently well in hand before the fourth quarter started. That began to change in 2014, when Army hired Jeff Monken — a former assistant under Johnson at both Navy and Georgia Tech — and he turned the program around.

After losing close games in 2014 and 2015, Army finally broke the streak in 2016 and then won again the next two years. In doing so, the Black Knights won back-to-back Commander-in-Chief’s Trophies for the first time. Navy won, 31-7, last year to reclaim both the CIC and, as Niumatalolo put it, “our dominance.”

In this strange fall, the Mids are 3-6 and have struggled to find an effective quarterback, with last year’s starter, Malcolm Perry, now playing for the Miami Dolphins. Niumatalolo has tried everyone this side of Roger Staubach to replace him. Army also has used a multitude of quarterbacks — six in all — but that has mostly been because of injuries. The Black Knights, who had nine of the 12 games on their original schedule wiped out by the coronavirus, are 7-2 but have not played nearly as challenging a slate as Navy.

All the Army-Navy traditions are expected to be in place Saturday: the march-ons, the parachutists, the flyovers and, of course, the playing of the alma maters at game’s end.

It won’t feel the same. It won’t be the same. But it will be Army-Navy. And there’s still nothing else in sports quite like it.

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For more by John Feinstein, visit washingtonpost.com/feinstein.

### TODAY’S TV GAMES

#### EARLY SHIFT

Noon	<b>No. 1 Alabama at Arkansas</b> » ESPN
Noon	<b>No. 9 Georgia at No. 25 Missouri</b> » SEC Network
Noon	<b>Illinois at No. 14 Northwestern</b> » ESPN2
Noon	<b>Utah at No. 21 Colorado</b> » Fox
Noon	<b>Rutgers at Maryland</b> » Big Ten Network
Noon	<b>Minnesota at Nebraska</b> » Fox Sports 1
Noon	<b>Michigan State at Penn State</b> » ABC
Noon	<b>Wake Forest at Louisville</b> » ACC Network

**Utah-Colorado** was set to be played Friday night, but the teams agreed to move the game to the next morning to fill a hole in Fox’s lineup. The Buffaloes are shooting for an undefeated (five-game) regular season and at least a share of the Pac-12 South Division title with undefeated Southern Cal, which faces UCLA later Saturday. If the Buffaloes and the Trojans win, USC will have the tiebreaker because it will have played one more conference game than Colorado. (The scheduled game between the teams Nov. 28 was canceled because of coronavirus issues, so there’s no head-to-head tiebreaker.) The South Division winner may have no idea whom it will play in next week’s Pac-12 championship game; North Division leader Washington had to cancel its game Saturday with Oregon because of the Huskies’ virus concerns, and Washington Coach Jimmy Lake said if that game was called off, he doubted his team would be ready for the championship game.

#### SWING SHIFT

2:30	<b>Akron at Buffalo</b> » CBS Sports Network
3	<b>Navy at Army</b> » CBS
3:30	<b>No. 17 North Carolina at No. 10 Miami</b> » ABC
3:30	<b>Wisconsin at No. 16 Iowa</b> » Fox Sports 1
3:30	<b>No. 22 Oklahoma State at Baylor</b> » ESPN
3:30	<b>Houston at Memphis</b> » ESPN2
4	<b>Tennessee at Vanderbilt</b> » SEC Network
4	<b>Duke at Florida State</b> » ACC Network
4	<b>California at Washington State</b> » Fox

When he was at Texas, Mack Brown fired defensive coordinator Manny Diaz two games into the 2013 season after the Longhorns gave up a program-record 550 rushing yards in a loss to BYU. But both coaches said all the right things last year before **North Carolina (coached by Brown)** and **Miami (coached by Diaz)** met. “Manny is a professional, and he’s really good. We’ve moved way beyond that,” Brown said. When asked what he had learned from Brown, Diaz said, “The way you engage with people around your program that I thought [Brown] had a great knack for and some of the things on the inside that are more trade secrets you don’t really talk about.” Last year’s game, won by the Tar Heels, was just the second of the season for both teams. The Orange Bowl might be on the line during this year’s matchup.

#### NIGHT SHIFT

6	<b>Boise State at Wyoming</b> » CBS Sports Network
7	<b>LSU at No. 6 Florida</b> » ESPN
7	<b>Louisiana Tech at TCU</b> » Fox Sports 1
7:30	<b>No. 15 Southern Cal at UCLA</b> » ABC
7:30	<b>Auburn at Mississippi State</b> » SEC Network
8	<b>Virginia at Virginia Tech</b> » ACC Network
10	<b>San Diego State at No. 18 BYU</b> » ESPN2
10:30	<b>Stanford at Oregon State</b> » ESPN
10:30	<b>Fresno State at New Mexico</b> » Fox Sports 2

It took 29 games over two-plus seasons, but Chip Kelly finally has a winning record at UCLA. The **Bruins are 3-2 entering their Victory Bell game against USC**, and like Kelly’s best Oregon teams, they’re starting to wear down opponents late. UCLA has outscored its opponents 36-9 in the fourth quarter, one year after getting outscored 115-57. Kelly’s best Ducks team, the one that made the BCS championship game after the 2010 regular season, outscored opponents 123-27 in the fourth. The Bruins’ defense is averaging 3.6 sacks, which ranks eighth nationally, and will look to slow Trojans quarterback Kedon Slovis, who leads the country in completions per game (29.8) and the conference in completion percentage (72.1) and passing yards per game (314.3). In last year’s win over the Bruins, he threw for a school-record 515 yards and four touchdowns.

— Matt Bonesteel



JONATHAN NEWTON/THE WASHINGTON POST

David Forney led the Midshipmen onto the field before last year’s Army-Navy game. The guard died in February of sudden cardiac arrest.

## Fellow Mids lineman will wear Forney’s No. 68 today

NAVY FROM D1

was preparing for a shot at the NFL. He helped power the nation’s No. 1 running game last season as Malcolm Perry set the Football Bowl Subdivision record for rushing yards by a quarterback. The Midshipmen finished ranked 20th and tied a school record with 11 wins.

Forney had no medical issues, no warning signs before he was found unresponsive while working on a paper and peeling an orange at his desk.

“The struggle is real, you know what I mean?” said Forney’s father, Rick. “You can’t prepare for something like this. . . . I guess when it’s your time, it’s your time. Maybe one day when we meet with David again, we’ll find out what happened. We’re utterly devastated, to say the least.

“I can’t tell you how many letters my wife and I got from parents of Midshipmen that we didn’t know before. Some of them were freshmen that spent a brief amount of time with Dave. They were crushed by it because Dave went out of his way to be friendly with everybody. . . . Dave was a good friend, a good teammate, and he looked out for people, especially his brothers.”

The process of bringing back No. 68 started with a text message from Honaker, now a senior, to TJ Salu and Kendel Wright. They were Forney’s teammates and best friends, and Honaker wanted to run his idea past them. He had some concern that it was too soon, but they were on board. Honaker then reached out to Forney’s brother, Chris. Then he spoke to Rick Forney, who was both surprised and touched.

The Forneys had gotten to know Navy’s offensive linemen over the years. Rick, an Annapolis native who had started talking to David about playing at Navy when he was in middle school, thought Honaker was calling just to chat. Instead, he had a more serious question.

“I’d never say no to Billy for anything,” Rick said.

This 121st meeting between Army (7-2) and Navy (3-6) will be unlike any other, played during the height of a global pandemic and on an academy campus for the first time since 1943. Lincoln Financial Field could not accommodate the Corps of Cadets and the Brigade of Midshipmen because of coronavirus safety restrictions, so Army, the designated home team, will host the game in West Point, N.Y. Both teams

have dealt with schedule chaos this fall as programs across the country pieced together a patchwork season. Navy had a four-week break between games because of outbreaks, postponements and cancellations.

But that was far from the most difficult part of Navy’s year, as Coach Ken Niumatalolo has pointed out. Offensive coordinator Ivin Jasper called Forney “a big, gentle teddy bear” who always had a way of making tough situations better. He remembered a game in which Ashley Ingram, Navy’s running game coordinator and offensive line coach, was berating the blockers for poor play before Forney stepped in.

“David being David said, ‘Coach, you know the way you’re acting ain’t helping the situation at all,’” Jasper recalled. “. . . That’s just the way [Forney] was. He found a way to make things enjoyable. Even though it was a very tense moment, he found a way to stick a little bit of humility in there, little bit of comedy in there.”

Rick Forney plans to watch Saturday’s game with family, and he expects to get a bit emotional before it kicks off. The pageantry will be in full effect, and then Honaker will sprint onto the field,

ready to play left guard — Forney’s old position — while sporting No. 68.

“Probably going to draw a tear to my eye and make me cry for the first 10 minutes of the ballgame,” Rick said.

A lasting image of Forney was secured moments after last year’s Army game, Navy’s first win in the series since 2015 and the only one of his career. A wide, toothy, open-mouthed smile is etched across his face as he’s surrounded by teammates and the Brigade of Midshipmen, celebrating the victory. The 22-year-old’s hair is a brown swath of a sweaty mess, and his gold No. 68 stands out on a field of blue, stained with 60 minutes of mud and grime from the biggest game of his college career.

“He was like a big brother to me,” Honaker said. “The heart-break isn’t from him not playing football anymore or anything like that. It’s the fact that we lost a friend — somebody who we won’t get to visit later on in life and see his family, those kind of things.

“Probably the most painful thing about losing him is we lost out on years and years of having a great friend. That’s the hardest thing about it.”

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PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

# Divisive Jets reporter accused of bullying is taken off beat

BY BEN STRAUSS

In the summer, Charles McDonald, an NFL writer for the New York Daily News, got a call from the newspaper's sports editor. The paper needed him to fill in on the New York Jets beat while the Daily News sorted out a credentialing issue for its longtime Jets beat writer, Manish Mehta.

The request, McDonald said, came with one explicit instruction: Do whatever Mehta asked.

Mehta had spent a decade breaking stories and writing fire-brand columns for the Daily News. That he wouldn't have access to the team was strange, McDonald thought, but he did as instructed.

He relayed observations from practice, he said, only to see them published under Mehta's byline. Mehta demanded that McDonald hold his phone up to Zoom news conferences and tweeted quotes in real time. And he wanted McDonald, 26, to ask ridiculous questions over Zoom, such as whether the Jets had not signed a player because Mehta reported they were considering it.

After a team public relations staffer complained, McDonald said, he stopped holding his phone up to Zoom sessions. When McDonald didn't attend a news conference with the Jets' owner and Mehta began calling and texting about his whereabouts, McDonald blocked Mehta's number, he said.

McDonald finally got fed up and quit the Daily News last month. On his way out, he tweeted that Mehta's credential had been revoked, sending their saga spilling into public. It looked, for a moment, like a window into an only-in-New York tug of war over access between a cutting tabloid and a struggling team.

But McDonald, who has since taken a new job covering the NFL for USA Today, also spoke to human resources, he said. And his viral tweets pushed former Daily News employees and former Jets beat writers to contact higher-ups at the paper, touching off a wider inquiry into Mehta's treatment of colleagues and competitors on the beat, according to a person familiar with the probe.

On Thursday, the Daily News announced that Mehta had been removed from the beat. Tribune Publishing Company, which owns the Daily News, told The Washington Post that Mehta is no longer an employee of the Daily News. Daily News sports editor Kyle Wagner and editor in chief Robert York declined to comment. The Jets did, too.

Mehta said in a statement that he has "behaved professionally and ethically throughout my career. I've respected my peers and colleagues, though I've had disagreements with some of them in the past, as is common in a competitive environment. I'm looking forward to the opportunities ahead."

Presented with specific complaints about his behavior and



LYNNE SLADKY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Former Jets coach Rex Ryan, right, said of beat writer Manish Mehta, center, "He was aggressive. . . . By God, he wanted to get the story."

coverage, he denied or dismissed all of them, including McDonald's claim that he used his reporting and mistreated him.

Mehta's departure and the circumstances surrounding it raise questions about where the line is between sharp-elbowed reporter and locker-room bully and about who should police the behavior of a reporter who breaks big stories but pushes boundaries and the people he interacts with to their limits.

"It wasn't a normal work situation," McDonald said. "I mean, it was insane."

Scoops and slams

Mehta arrived at the Daily News in 2010 from the Newark Star-Ledger. In New York's competitive media market, tabloids such as the New York Post and the Daily News go toe-to-toe for the juiciest scoops, and Mehta made an impact.

He wrote a splashy back-page cover story in January 2012 about anonymous Jets teammates criticizing quarterback Mark Sanchez's work ethic. That fall, Mehta delivered a bombshell with anonymous Jets players ripping quarterback Tim Tebow.

"There was a fear in the organization that he would get stuff they didn't want out," a national NFL writer said. "If you look at a lot of the big Jets stories over the last decade, he broke a lot of them."

According to colleagues from that time, Mehta was a perfect fit for new editor Colin Myler, a Brit who previously worked for News Corp. and had distinctly tabloid sensibilities.

"Manish became the fair-haired boy," a person who worked there said. "He could do no wrong."

Even some Jets employees viewed Mehta with begrudging admiration. "He was aggressive," Rex Ryan, who coached the Jets from 2009 to 2014, said in an interview. "I thought this dude wanted to win. By God, he wanted to get the story."

But there were rumblings about his reporting methods. Jets offensive lineman Matt Slauson was quoted by name in the Tebow story, but Slauson told The Washington Post this week that his interview with Mehta happened months before the story came out and that he was complimenting Tebow's athleticism when he spoke to Mehta. Slauson believed Mehta used his quotes selectively to portray Tebow as a quarterback who was nothing but an athlete.

"It was sloppy reporting, and I had to pay for it and get up in front of the team to explain it," Slauson said. Mehta said he talked to Slauson a few weeks before the story ran and quoted Slauson accurately.

Other players complained to the Jets, too, convinced Mehta would be critical of them if they didn't cooperate with him. In 2016, kicker Nick Folk told the Jets that Mehta threatened Folk's wife with bad coverage of him if she didn't apologize for criticizing Mehta on Twitter, according to people familiar with the incident. Julianne Folk declined to comment; Mehta said he never threatened bad coverage.

The Jets complained to the Dai-

ly News after the Folk incident. In an interview, Eric Barrow, then the Daily News sports editor, said he spoke to Mehta but did not discipline him. Before training camp last year, the Jets expressed interest in limiting Mehta's access by restricting him from conducting one-on-one interviews. But after conversations involving the Daily News, the Jets, the Pro Football Writers of America and the NFL, the team backed off, said Bob Glauber, a Newsday columnist and the president of the PFWA.

Mehta's relationship with the team deteriorated. He accused Coach Adam Gase of operating a burner account to defend himself on Twitter, only to have Internet sleuths argue that Mehta himself could be behind it.

After the season, the Jets turned to a law firm, Foley & Lardner LLP, for help. The firm compiled a dossier, according to two people who have seen it, that called out reporting the Jets said crossed the line from aggressive to inappropriate, including allegations that Mehta approached the 11-year-old son of Jets General Manager Joe Douglas at a baseball game and later threatened Douglas with bad coverage if he didn't grant an interview.

The Jets delivered the dossier to the paper in the summer. NFL policy says teams can't bar accredited media's access "for what is perceived as 'unfair coverage' or any similar reason." But the Jets said it was about his behavior, not his negative stories. After talking to Mehta and Jets officials, the PFWA, which advocates for re-

porters' access, did not fight the Jets' decision.

The paper did. In a written response, it defended Mehta's reporting, according to a person who read it. His encounter with Douglas's son was innocuous, the paper said, and in pushing for an interview he had simply put forth a recognizable journalism proposition: Talk to me, or I will have to write what I have.

Mehta defended his reporting tactics, too. His stories did what many big-city columnists' stories have done over the decades, grinding axes and nursing grudges. And the Jets, some at the paper believed, were trying to muzzle critical coverage.

"If he were not writing negative things," one Jets reporter said, "I find it hard to believe the Jets would have gone after his credential."

Investigating the journalist

The paper and team were still battling over Mehta's access when McDonald started tweeting, transforming a fight about coverage into a referendum on Mehta's treatment of his fellow reporters.

Daily News editors would not discuss their investigation. But in interviews, current and former Jets reporters described incidents involving Mehta that were reported to higher-ups.

In 2011, Jenny Vrentas, then the Jets reporter for the Star-Ledger, was conducting a one-on-one interview. In a locker room on a crowded beat, one-on-ones are sacred for journalists, arranged with the team ahead of time or directly with players. As she saw

Mehta lurking nearby, she asked Mehta not to encroach.

Afterward, in a hallway outside the media room, Mehta screamed at her, according to multiple people who were there, cursing repeatedly: "F--- you! F--- you! F--- you!" The tirade lasted several minutes, these people said, and two other writers had to calm Mehta down.

"While this incident happened nearly 10 years ago, it's still a clear, and unpleasant, memory," Vrentas wrote in an email. Her editor raised the issue with the Daily News that offseason, she confirmed, but it's unclear whether the paper took action. The Daily News sports editor from that time, Teri Thompson, declined to comment. Mehta denied interfering with or cursing at Vrentas.

Kimberley Martin, who was Newsday's Jets beat writer from 2012 to 2017, said Mehta constantly sent her abrasive messages, often questioning her reporting or demanding credit for obviously available information. She also reported Mehta's conduct to her Newsday editor.

Mehta defended asking for credit on stories. But the messages stuck with Martin.

"Early on, I was uncomfortable around him," she told The Post in a text message. "And I brought it to the attention of my sports editor, who in turn brought it to the attention of The Daily News. Where it went from there, who knows? Clearly nowhere."

She added: "A lot of people enabled this guy. And a lot of people shrugged off questionable behavior."

Even inside the Daily News, some staffers thought Mehta should have been disciplined in 2014, after he berated a young colleague at the Jets' facility for writing a story Mehta had planned to write, according to people familiar with the incident. The reporter, Seth Walder, declined to comment; Mehta called the encounter an isolated incident.

The paper could not afford to risk losing Mehta, the former staffers said. The Daily News was sold in 2017 for just \$1 and endured massive layoffs the next year. Mehta's big columns could generate nearly 100,000 page views, far more interest than most anything else the sports staff did.

"It was crucial for us," one former sports staffer said.

But McDonald's tweets triggered an outpouring of concern from current and former staffers that the Daily News couldn't ignore.

Mehta's last byline in the Daily News was Nov. 29. On Sunday, the Jets fell to 0-12 after allowing a long touchdown pass in the game's waning seconds. On Monday, they fired their defensive coordinator. On Tuesday, the Daily News ran a big Jets spread under the byline "Daily News Sports Desk." On Thursday, Mehta was gone.

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NFL NOTES

## After he practices in full, Giants' Jones may return

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York Giants quarterback Daniel Jones is listed as questionable for the game against the Arizona Cardinals on Sunday.

Jones was a full participant in practice Friday for the first time since his hamstring injury against the Cincinnati Bengals on Nov. 29. The 23-year-old quarterback was limited during practice Wednesday and Thursday.

Backup Colt McCoy started last weekend in the Giants' 17-12 win over the Seattle Seahawks. McCoy completed 13 of 22 passes for 105 yards and one touchdown with one interception.

Inside linebacker Blake Martinez, cornerback Darney Holmes and tackle Matt Peart also are questionable for New York.

•**CARDINALS:** Arizona expects to have its top wide receivers available against New York. Veteran Larry Fitzgerald was activated from the covid-19 reserve list Wednesday, and all-pro DeAndre Hopkins (neck/back) is listed as questionable.

Coach Kliff Kingsbury said Hopkins was battling "lingering soreness" but should be "ready to roll" against the Giants.

Also questionable are linebacker Isaiah Simmons, kicker Zane Gonzalez, running back Kenyan Drake, linebacker DeVondre Campbell and right tackle Kelvin

Beachum. Safety Jalen Thompson and cornerback Johnathan Joseph are out.

•**STEELERS:** Pittsburgh is running out of healthy inside linebackers.

The team placed veteran Vince Williams on the covid-19 reserve list, meaning he won't be available when the Steelers visit the surging Buffalo Bills on Sunday night. And Robert Spillane also is out after injuring his left knee Monday against the Washington Football Team.

Pittsburgh did receive a bit of good news when center Maurkice Pouncey was activated from the covid-19 reserve list.

•**RAIDERS:** Running back Josh Jacobs, right tackle Trent Brown and safety Johnathan Abram are questionable for Sunday's key showdown with the Indianapolis Colts.

Coach Jon Gruden said the three practiced and he will have a better gauge on their status when he sees how they feel Saturday.

•**LIONS:** Detroit interviewed three internal candidates for its general manager vacancy.

The team announced on Twitter that Kyle O'Brien, Lance Newmark and Rob Lohman interviewed for the job. O'Brien is the team's vice president of player personnel, Newmark is director of player personnel, and Lohman is director of pro scouting.



AARON DOSTER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Giants quarterback Daniel Jones was limited at practice midweek but had no restrictions Friday.

The Lions fired GM Bob Quinn late last month along with coach Matt Patricia.

•**FALCONS:** Wide receiver Julio Jones will miss his fourth game of the season because of a lingering hamstring injury.

The team ruled out Jones for Sunday's game at the Los Angeles Chargers after he was held out of practice all week.

•**TITANS:** Tennessee will be without starting cornerbacks Breon Borders and Adoree Jackson against the Jacksonville Jaguars on Sunday.

Borders didn't practice all week because of an injured hip,

and Jackson was limited in practice all week as he works his way back from a knee injury.

•**PACKERS:** Tight end Jace Sternberger was ruled out for Sunday's game against the Detroit Lions because of a concussion.

Sternberger was injured last weekend during Green Bay's victory over the Philadelphia Eagles.

•**JETS:** Winless New York will be shorthanded Sunday at the Seattle Seahawks.

Linebacker Jordan Jenkins, wide receiver Denzel Mims, right guard Greg Van Roten and safeties Ashtyn Davis and Bennett Jackson were all ruled out by

Coach Adam Gase. Leading receiver Jamison Crowder, running back Frank Gore and offensive lineman Pat Elflein are listed as questionable.

•**COWBOYS:** Dallas placed Cameron Erving on injured reserve with a sprained knee, ending the tackle's season because it's his second stint on IR.

Erving, who missed five games early after he injured a knee in the opener, went out again on the first Dallas drive in a loss to Washington on Thanksgiving.

•**TEXANS:** Houston placed running back David Johnson on the covid-19 reserve list.

## Washington won't allow fans for rest of season

BY NICKI JHABVALA

The Washington Football Team announced Friday that it will not allow fans to attend games at FedEx Field for the rest of 2020 because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"We will miss the unbridled passion of our fan base at FedEx Field as we take on the Seattle Seahawks on Dec. 20 and the Carolina Panthers on Dec. 27, but we must remain diligent in protecting our staff, players, fans and the community as the region continues its fight against COVID-19," the team said in a statement.

Washington prohibited fans at the start of the season, but as the infection rate held steady in Maryland, it allowed approximately 3,000 to attend its Week 9 game against the New York Giants. It has not allowed fans to attend any games since.

The team's latest announcement coincides with a wave of tighter restrictions across the region; some Maryland jurisdictions, including Prince George's County, have shut down indoor dining, and Virginia has imposed a statewide curfew.

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# Three private school leagues scuttle plans for winter sports

BY MICHAEL ERRIGO

Three of the Washington area's largest private school athletic conferences announced Friday that they will not hold a winter sports season in January.

The Independent School League and the Mid-Atlantic Athletic Conference released similar statements saying they will not provide league-sanctioned com-

petition at all this winter, while the Interstate Athletic Conference said it will not begin league competition in January and will "reassess conditions in the new year."

This leaves the door open to member schools to participate in some kind of outside competition. The potential for fall and spring sports will be reevaluated by the ISL and the MAC in February.

"The pandemic has created a

need for flexibility for all schools both academically and athletically," the MAC statement reads. "It is our hope that this decision will provide that flexibility for schools under these very difficult circumstances."

The three leagues comprise 20 private institutions across D.C., Maryland and Virginia. They took a unified approach to athletics in late July, when the conferences issued statements saying they would adopt a condensed, second-semester athletics calendar that would begin in January. But implied in that proposal was a wait-and-see caveat dependent upon the area's battle against the coronavirus.

## SCOREBOARD

### PRO FOOTBALL

#### NFL

NFC										
EAST	W	L	T	PCT.	PF	PA				
N.Y. Giants	5	0	0	.417	231	265				
Washington	5	7	0	.417	264	300				
Philadelphia	3	8	1	.292	253	307				
Dallas	3	9	0	.250	268	393				

AFC										
SOUTH	W	L	T	PCT.	PF	PA				
N.Y. Orleans	10	2	0	.833	347	241				
Tampa Bay	7	5	0	.583	344	280				
Atlanta	4	8	0	.333	311	302				
Carolina	4	8	0	.333	280	300				

AFC										
NORTH	W	L	T	PCT.	PF	PA				
Green Bay	9	3	0	.750	375	299				
Minnesota	6	6	0	.500	319	329				
Chicago	5	7	0	.417	246	284				
Detroit	5	7	0	.417	286	358				

AFC										
WEST	W	L	T	PCT.	PF	PA				
L.A. Rams	9	4	0	.692	325	246				
Seattle	8	4	0	.667	353	321				
Arizona	6	6	0	.500	332	286				
San Francisco	5	7	0	.417	285	298				

AFC										
EAST	W	L	T	PCT.	PF	PA				
Buffalo	9	3	0	.750	353	306				
Tennessee	8	4	0	.667	303	212				
New England	6	7	0	.462	277	279				
N.Y. Jets	0	12	0	.000	180	353				

AFC										
SOUTH	W	L	T	PCT.	PF	PA				
Indianapolis	8	4	0	.667	328	273				
Tennessee	8	4	0	.667	359	321				
Houston	4	8	0	.333	288	323				
Jacksonville	1	11	0	.083	251	352				

AFC										
NORTH	W	L	T	PCT.	PF	PA				
Pittsburgh	11	1	0	.917	334	211				
Cleveland	9	3	0	.750	306	221				
Baltimore	5	5	0	.500	316	321				
Cincinnati	2	9	1	.208	237	308				

AFC										
WEST	W	L	T	PCT.	PF	PA				
y-Kansas City	11	1	0	.917	370	254				
Las Vegas	7	7	0	.500	323	347				
Denver	8	0	0	1.000	333	225				
L.A. Chargers	3	9	0	.250	277	345				

y-Clinched playoff spot

#### WEEK 14 THURSDAY'S RESULT

at L.A. Rams 24, New England 3

#### SUNDAY'S GAMES

Washington vs. San Francisco (-3), 4:25 (in Glendale, Ariz.)  
Arizona (-1½) at N.Y. Giants, 1  
Dallas (-3½) at Cincinnati, 1  
Denver at Carolina (-3), 1  
Houston (-1) at Chicago, 1  
Kansas City (-7½) at Miami, 1  
Minnesota at Tampa Bay (-6½), 1  
Tennessee (-9) at Jacksonville, 1  
Indianapolis (-2½) at Las Vegas, 4:05  
N.Y. Jets at Seattle (-13½), 4:05  
Atlanta (-2½) at L.A. Chargers, 4:25  
Green Bay (-9) at Detroit, 4:25  
New Orleans (-7) at Philadelphia, 4:25  
Pittsburgh at Buffalo (-1½), 8:20

#### MONDAY'S GAME

Baltimore (-2½) at Cleveland, 8:15

#### WEEK 15 THURSDAY'S GAME

L.A. Chargers at Las Vegas (-3½), 8:20

#### SATURDAY, DEC. 19

Buffalo (-5) at Denver, 4:30

Carolina at Green Bay (-7½), 8:15

#### SUNDAY, DEC. 20

Seattle (-3½) at Washington, 1

Jacksonville at Baltimore (-11), 1

Chicago at Minnesota (-6), 1

Detroit at Tennessee (-8), 1

Houston at Indianapolis (-6½), 1

New England at Miami (-2½), 1

San Francisco (-3½) at Dallas, 1

Tampa Bay (-2½) at Atlanta, 1

N.Y. Jets at Las Vegas (-13½), 4:05

Philadelphia at Arizona (-6½), 4:05

Kansas City (-3) at New Orleans, 4:25

Cleveland (-3½) at N.Y. Giants, 8:20

#### MONDAY, DEC. 21

Pittsburgh (-11½) at Cincinnati, 8:15

### SOCCER

#### MLS playoffs

#### PLAY-IN ROUND

#### EASTERN CONFERENCE

#### FRIDAY, NOV. 20

at New England 3, Montreal 1

at Nashville SC 3, Inter Miami CF 0

#### FIRST ROUND

#### EASTERN CONFERENCE

#### SATURDAY, NOV. 21

at Orlando City 1, New York City FC 1 (Orlando City advances in shootout, 6-5)

at Columbus 3, New York 2

#### TUESDAY, NOV. 24

Nashville 1, at Toronto 0 (OT)

New England 2, at Philadelphia 0

#### WESTERN CONFERENCE

#### SUNDAY, NOV. 22

at Sporting KC 3, San Jose 3 (Sporting advances in shootout, 3-0)

at Columbus 3, Colorado 0

at Portland 3, Dallas 3 (FC Dallas advances in shootout, 8-7)

#### TUESDAY, NOV. 24

at Seattle 3, Los Angeles FC 1

#### CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS

#### EASTERN CONFERENCE

#### SUNDAY, NOV. 29

New England 3, at Orlando City 1

at Columbus 2, Nashville 0

#### WESTERN CONFERENCE

#### TUESDAY, DEC. 1

at Seattle 1, Dallas 0

#### WEDNESDAY, DEC. 2

Minnesota United 3, at Sporting KC 0

#### CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

#### EASTERN CONFERENCE

#### SUNDAY'S RESULT

at Columbus 1, New England 0

#### WESTERN CONFERENCE

#### MONDAY'S RESULT

Southampton 2, at Brighton 1

#### FRIDAY'S RESULT

West Ham 2, at Leeds 1

#### SATURDAY'S MATCHES

Aston Villa at Wolverhampton, 7:30 a.m.

West Brom at Newcastle, 10 a.m.

Man City at Man United, 12:30

Chelsea at Everton, 3 p.m.

#### SUNDAY'S MATCHES

Sheffied United at Southampton, 7 a.m.

Tottenham at Crystal Palace, 9:15 a.m.

Liverpool at Fulham, 11:30 a.m.

Burnley at Arsenal, 2:15

Brighton at Leicester, 2:15

### COLLEGE FOOTBALL

#### THURSDAY'S RESULTS

##### SOUTH

at Southern Mississippi 45, Florida Atlantic 31

Pittsburgh 34, at Georgia Tech 20

##### FRIDAY'S RESULTS

##### SOUTH

Western Carolina at North Carolina, ppd. (virus)

##### SOUTHWEST

at North Texas 45, UTEP 43

##### WEST

Arizona State 70, at Arizona 7

Nevada at San Jose State, Late

##### SATURDAY'S GAMES

##### EAST

Rutgers (-2½) at Maryland (-2,2), noon

Oklahoma (-7,2) at West Virginia (-5,4), ccd. (virus)

Louisville (-3,7) at Boston College (-6½), ppd. (virus)

Akron (-1,4) at Buffalo (-4,0), 2:30

Navy (-3,6) at Army (-7,2), 3

Michigan State (-2,4) at Penn State (-2,5), 3:30

##### SOUTH

Wake Forest (-4,3) at Louisville (-3,7), noon

Texas A&M (-7,1) at Tennessee (-2,6), ppd. (virus)

Coastal Carolina (-10,4) at Troy (-5,3), 3

Houston (-3,2) at Memphis (-6,3), 3:30

North Carolina (-7,3) at Miami (-8,1), 3:30

Duke (-2,8) at Florida State (-2,6), 4

Tennessee (-2,6) at Vanderbilt (-0,8), 4

Appalachian State (-7,3) at Georgia Southern (-7,4), 6

LSU (-3,5) at Florida (-8,1), 7

Auburn (-5,4) at Mississippi State (-2,6), 7:30

Virginia (-5,4) at Virginia Tech (-4,6), 8

##### MIDWEST

Georgia (-6,2) at Missouri (-5,3), noon

Northwestern Illinois (-0,5) at Eastern Michigan (-1,4), noon

Michigan (-2,4) at Ohio State (-5,0), ccd. (virus)

Minnesota (-2,4) at Nebraska (-2,4), noon

Ohio (-2,1) at Kent State (-2,1), ccd. (virus)

Illinois (-2,4) at Northwestern (-5,1), noon

Western Michigan (-4,1) at Ball State (-4,1), noon

Vanderbilt (-0,8) at Missouri (-5,3), ppd. (virus)

Central Michigan (-2,3) at Toledo (-3,2), 3

Wisconsin (-2,2) at Iowa (-5,2), 3:30

Purdue (-2,4) at Indiana (-6,1), ccd. (virus)

Texas (-6,3) at Kansas (-0,9), ccd. (virus)

##### SOUTHWEST

Alabama (-9,0) at Arkansas (-3,6), noon

UAB (-4,3) at Rice (-2,2), 1

Cincinnati (-8,0) at Tulsa (-6,1), ccd. (virus)

Louisiana-Monroe (-10,0) at Arkansas State (-4,7), ccd. (virus)

Oklahoma State (-6,3) at Baylor (-2,6), 7

Louisiana Tech (-5,3) at TCU (-5,4), 7

Mississippi (-4,4) at Texas A&M (-7,1), ppd. (virus)

##### WEST

Utah (-1,2) at Colorado (-4,0), noon



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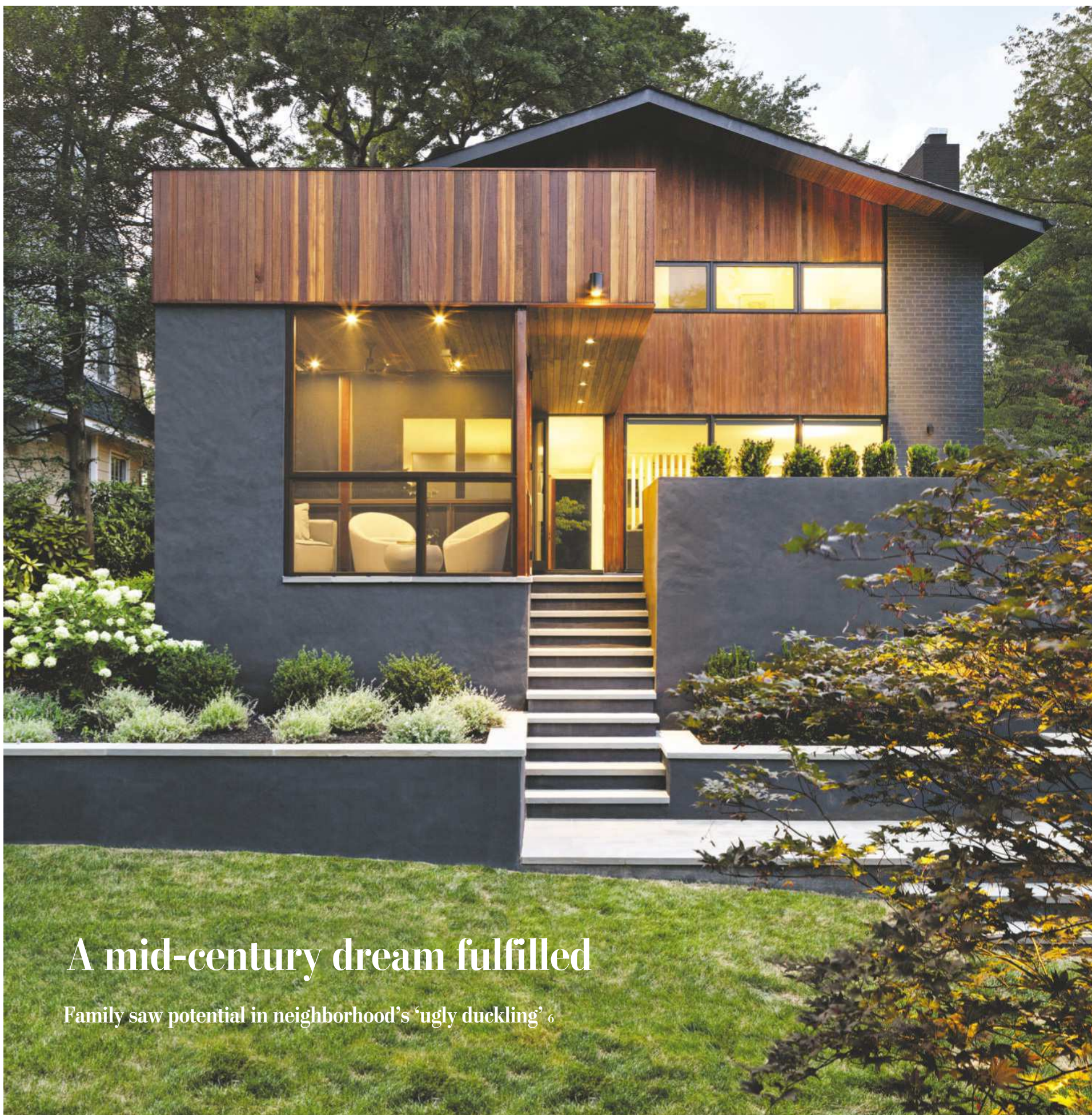
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# REAL ESTATE



JENNIFER HUGHES PHOTOGRAPHY

## A mid-century dream fulfilled

Family saw potential in neighborhood's 'ugly duckling' 6

### WHERE WE LIVE: LINCOLN PARK

History, affordability and open space have drawn residents to this Montgomery County enclave. 2

### HOUSE OF THE WEEK

Victorian in D.C.'s Logan Circle for \$3.38 million. 4

### BUYING NEW

Jessup, Md., properties starting at \$570K. 5

## 2.71%

Loan rates stay steady. 10

# Where We Live Lincoln Park in Rockville

## Tradition, growth in a historic enclave

Diverse and affordable community has roots in a Union veteran's vision

BY SUSAN STRAIGHT

The Lincoln Park neighborhood of Rockville has a long history, dating to 1891.

According to the city of Rockville and the Montgomery County Historic Preservation, that was the year when Union veteran William Wallace Welsh started selling quarter-acre lots to aspiring Black homeowners for \$80 each. Welsh ran the neighborhood's general store for more than 40 years, often employing Lincoln Park residents.

With few other options for homeownership at that time, Black citizens could embark on their own American Dream in Lincoln Park. Many of them were formerly enslaved, and for most, it was their first house.

There is still at least one resident who is descended from original owners, according to Lincoln Park Civic Association President Alexandra Dace Denito. (That resident, who asked that her name not be used, declined to comment for this article). In addition to the longtime residents, there are also newcomers who are making Lincoln Park their home.

"Lincoln Park is home. It's a historic African American neighborhood but it is more mixed than the rest of Rockville," she added. "As a Creole, it was important to me to raise my children in a place that looked like the place I grew up in [Reunion Island, in the Indian Ocean off East Africa]. We bought our home in 2007. What I like about the neighborhood, once we chose it, we did not regret it: the people, longtime residents greeted my family with open arms. So, I am giving back by volunteering in the civic association."

Denito, who has a PhD in molecular endocrinology, first came to Rockville in the late 1990s for a job at the National Institutes of Health, but found "a home, a family and much more," she said. She bought a three-level townhouse that was constructed in 2007.

As vice president and now president of the civic association,



PHOTOS BY BONNIE JO MOUNT/THE WASHINGTON POST

**FROM TOP:** A house in Lincoln Park, where housing styles vary. A walkway in Memory Walk Park, one of many parks in the area. Pamela Hawkins-Coles, 55, plants flowers in front of an apartment building. She said she was born in the neighborhood and lived in the house in the background when she was a child. "I love my neighborhood," she said. "It's peaceful and quiet."

Denito has worked on such neighborhood issues as school bus transportation, sidewalk repairs and the Lincoln Park Historic District Plan, which, she said, aims "to save and preserve what we can, while promoting economic development and opportunities around our neighborhood."

**Architectural styles:** Resi-

dents continue to take pride in Lincoln Park's history, even as the neighborhood has evolved over the years, with a friendly vibe, historic architecture and plenty of green spaces.

Katie Ostrowski, her partner, Jackson Wilde, and their three dogs moved to Lincoln Park in January of this year. They are renting a Cape Cod built in the late 1920s. The community has a variety of housing styles, from two- and three-story garden-style apartment buildings to luxury townhouses, to single-family homes on large lots. Home styles include Cape Cod, rambler, contemporary, farmhouse and more.

Ostrowski said she and Wilde have found the neighborhood to be welcoming. "Our favorite feature of Lincoln Park is the people," she said.

Ostrowski, a real estate agent with the Rockville Real Estate Exchange, said that her experience of living in the neighborhood has been affected by social distancing, but hasn't diminished her experience. "Though covid has put a bit of a damper on in-person activities, we've gotten to know our neighbors via over-the-fence chats and friendly waves from the porch," she said.

Another selling point is the neighborhood's relatively reasonable prices. "It's a fairly affordable area to live when considering Rockville as a whole," said Ostrowski. "The size of our lot is substantial, especially compared to other neighborhoods in Rockville. Having such a large, fenced-in yard makes it a wonderful place to play fetch with our dogs and hone our gardening skills."

There's also plenty of green space in the neighborhood. The 6.7-acre Isreal Park has tennis courts, basketball courts, a baseball/softball diamond, playground equipment, picnic tables and more. It's adjacent to the Lincoln Park Community Center, one of the hubs of the neighborhood.

Built in 1970, the 12,500-square-foot Lincoln Park Community Center hosts community meetings, gatherings, special events and more. The community plans to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the center with an event in the Peerless Rockville/Glenview Mansion Speaker Series (currently online because of the coronavirus pandemic). Organizers plan to share the history of the center's development, and residents have been asked to share their memories of its role in their lives.

**Living there:** The neighborhood is bordered by Ashley Avenue to the north, North Horners Lane to the east, Lincoln Avenue to the south and North Stonestreet Avenue to the west, according to the city.



Source: Maps4News/HERE  
MEGHAN KELLY FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

There are three homes (detached and townhouse) for sale in the Lincoln Park/Legacy at Lincoln Park neighborhood. They range from a detached rambler with five bedrooms and three bathrooms for \$460,000 to a newly renovated three-bedroom, two-bathroom detached home listed for \$409,900, Ostrowski said.

In the past 12 months, 13 single-family homes and townhouses have sold, ranging from a lot with rehabilitation potential for \$240,000 to a Colonial with seven bedrooms and five bathrooms for \$725,000. The average price of homes sold last year was approximately \$401,000.

**Schools:** Beall and College Gardens Elementary, Julius West Middle and Richard Montgomery High.

**Transit:** For commuting, the Rockville Metro station is in easy walking distance — a half-mile or less — from the southern half of the neighborhood. Even from the northernmost street, it's just a mile to the Metro and to the still-growing Rockville Town Center and its many businesses and restaurants. Many errands can be done on foot.

The Rockville MARC/Amtrak Station and the Rockville Metro station on the Red Line Metrorail, also served by several bus routes, are less than a half-mile from the south end of the neighborhood. Ride On buses run through or around the neighborhood. Hungerford Drive (Rockville Pike) is just west of the neighborhood, Interstate 270 is 1½ miles to the west and Veirs Mill Road is about a mile to the south. The Rockville Civic Center is about a mile east of Lincoln Park.

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# Fit for a chef

**Today's residential kitchens make cooking comfortable and efficient—and create a central gathering space that homeowners can enjoy.**

By WP BrandStudio

The majority of kitchen designer Georgia Economakis's clients say that the kitchen is the most important room in their home. Regardless of their culinary prowess, she said, they want kitchens that allow them to socialize, entertain and cook in one seamless environment that facilitates free movement and interaction.

One of the best ways to achieve that kind of environment is through a chef-inspired kitchen, which combines restaurant-quality features that allow for top-notch cooking with the practical design elements of a central gathering space.

"Chef-inspired kitchens are super functional, as well as comfortable, so you enjoy the time you're spending there," said chef and restaurateur Spike Mendelsohn, who designs kitchens for properties made by Van Metre Homes.

No two chef-inspired kitchens are the same, but almost all of them have high-end appliances, such as premium quality refrigerators that ensure food stays fresh; gas ranges that give home chefs maximum control over cooking temperatures; and double-stacked ovens that are higher "so you're not constantly bending over to look at what's going on," Mendelsohn said.

Chef-inspired pantries are changing the game, as well. They're usually walk-in spaces that give home cooks a second area to store food, marinate a cut of meat, chop vegetables and prepare the first few courses of a meal. It's a concept inspired by commercial kitchen layouts, which have a "prep area" where food is cooked and an "execution area" for adding finishing touches, Mendelsohn said.

The layout of a chef-inspired kitchen is designed to ensure efficiency and ease of movement through the space, as well. Economakis consults her clients before starting a project to learn how many



people live in their home and how they plan to use the kitchen. This helps her understand what items need to be most accessible and how much traffic the kitchen is likely to get and coordinate the room accordingly.

And while a full-fledged chef-inspired kitchen is nice to have, many homeowners don't need every single state-of-the-art feature available. To give homeowners the cooking space they really want, kitchen designers and brands like Van Metre Homes can add and subtract features where it makes sense.

"You can [mix and match] pieces of the chef-inspired kitchen and come up with something unique," said Glenn Forester, Vice President of Marketing at Van Metre Homes.

Chef-inspired kitchens have been around for a while but have recently become more popular

to accommodate Americans' growing interest in making food at home. And with people staying home more in recent months, they're buying more groceries and cooking more frequently for themselves—a behavior pattern some experts think will continue even after restaurants become accessible again.

Still, chef-inspired kitchens are a good fit for people whose culinary habits haven't changed recently, because they're about more than preparing meals. High-end kitchens can dramatically improve a home's property value, Economakis said, and homeowners often recoup money they've put into their kitchens (and then some). An investment in stainless-steel appliances, for instance, has an average return of 141%.

Beyond enhancing property value, chef-inspired kitchens can improve the quality of time people are spending at home. These days, families are staying an average of over 13 years in a single home, so they should be able to savor that time as much as possible.

After all, Economakis said, "the kitchen is the heart of the home."

Learn more at  
[vanmetrehomes.com/spikedkitchens](https://vanmetrehomes.com/spikedkitchens)

Van Metre

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# House of the Week

## A Victorian-style D.C. house that's still a house

BY MICHELE LERNER

Large Victorian-style houses in D.C. are frequently converted to condominiums rather than restored and renovated as single-family homes.

But when Tarique Jawed, principal of Lot Squared Development, purchased the single-family house at 1826 12th St. NW in the Logan Circle area, he couldn't bring himself to follow through on his plan to create two condos in the space.

"We love to build beautiful things, and sometimes it's not economically the smartest decision," Jawed says. "We probably had 20 different design options for the space, but we took a gamble on this to design a luxurious single-family home."

Built in 1906, the house — at 12th and T streets NW and listed at \$3.38 million — has a distinctive turret that required special restoration.

"Some of the brick was failing around the turret, and there was some water damage inside from deferred maintenance," says Charles Warren, a principal and co-founder of Teass\Warren Architects, which designed the house's new interior. "We worked with the Historic Preservation Review Board to follow their guidelines when we put in new windows, repointed the bricks and took off an old addition from the back of the house."

The renovated interior's modern features were chosen to complement original elements of the house.

"We wanted the interior to have a clean and modern layout yet also have a traditional feel with the elegant proportional windows, kind of a 'soft modern' approach," Warren says. "For instance, the staircase is a little more ornate than in some contemporary homes, but not overly so."

The staircase is in the middle of the house, behind the front door, and Warren says the design team wanted it to be a "core element, which gave us the opportunity to do something interesting and sculptural and then radiate the spaces out from the core."

Warren and Jawed worked with interior designer Evelyn Pierce, owner of the Evelyn Pierce Design Studio, and consulted with real estate agents Nancy Taylor Bubes and Matt Ackland throughout the renovation. Pierce designed an aesthetically pleasing oval-shaped balustrade for the stairs. The house has four levels, including the basement,



PHOTOS BY LAURA METZLER PHOTOGRAPHY

**ABOVE:** The living room in the Victorian-style house at 12th and T streets NW in D.C. **BELOW:** Built in 1906, it features a turret, among other period touches. A plan to turn it into two condos was rejected in favor of its renovation as a single-family home.



and the developers added an elevator to help future owners age in place.

Among the choices that Jawed says were a little risky is the layout of the kitchen, a modern space that's clearly defined rather than completely open to the living areas. The kitchen also has an accordion-style glass door that can be fully opened to the outdoors.

"We installed white oak cabinets to match the white oak floor

and meticulously designed the kitchen for entertaining," Jawed says. "For instance, one of the cabinet doors can be pushed back so it becomes a bar, and the wine column [refrigerator] includes a freezer, so you have a second ice-maker."

The living room and dining area are in the front of the house to take advantage of the rounded turret rooms, Warren says, with the kitchen in the back. The living room fireplace is set into a floor-

to-ceiling marble wall flanked by built-in bookcases, a modern evocation of a traditional library, Warren says.

"We also decided to make one entire floor the master suite, so it has four closets and three windows in the bathroom," he says.

On all levels, the house has ceilings that are at least nine feet high, but the basement doesn't get as much natural light as the three levels above it. That was a factor in the decision to renovate the 4,200-square-foot house as a single residence instead of a pair of condos.

"We set up the basement with an open TV room that has a wet bar, extra storage and a guest room with a full bath, plus we connected it to the rest of the house with the elevator so it's more functional," says Jawed.

The redesign of the house added a roof deck, a smaller deck, a side yard and a secured, paved parking space that can be used for outdoor entertaining.

"All the exterior features of the house, including the doors and windows and the roof deck, had to be approved by the Historic Preservation Review Board,"

**1826 12TH ST. NW, WASHINGTON**  
**\$3.38 million**

**Features:** The four-level single-family house has four bedrooms, six bathrooms, an elevator, a fireplace, a roof terrace and a secured parking area that can be used as outdoor living space.

**Approximate square-footage:**  
4,200

**Lot size:** 0.03 acre

**Listing agents:** Matt Ackland and Nancy Taylor Bubes, Washington Fine Properties

Jawed says. "The roof deck couldn't be visible from the street, so that required us to make it a little smaller than planned."

Warren says that, while exploring the house, he climbed to the roof and instantly knew that he wanted to create additional outdoor space there, despite the need to carve a connection to the interior.

"That was one of the bigger challenges of this project, but it was worth it to get these amazing city views," says Warren.

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# 78-house community takes root in Jessup

BY SCOTT SOWERS

Home buyers looking for a community of new houses with classic styling might want to check out Magnolia Creek in Anne Arundel County. Beazer Homes is just getting started on a community of 78 single-family houses in Jessup.

The development's location is a major draw, according to Chance Hall, vice president for sales at Beazer. "Whether the buyers work locally, in Baltimore or Washington, D.C.," Hall said, "they have easy travel commutes and are located in a quiet, secluded enclave of homes that is minutes from shopping, dining and recreational life."

Magnolia Creek offers two-story houses ranging from 2,248 to 4,629 square feet. The design options begin with six house plans, or styles, with three to six bedrooms and three to five bathrooms. Base prices range from \$569,990 to \$651,990. All the houses come standard with unfinished basements and two-car garages. Finished basements and three-car garages are options.

Beazer gives buyers a choice of facades and other exterior features.

"For each plan, buyers will have three unique exterior options," Hall said. "The community was designed with both traditional and Arts and Crafts architectural styles. . . . Design details between each exterior vary, from porch sizes to window styles and even garage doors."

He added: "Each exterior was thoughtfully designed to maintain continuity throughout the community, while allowing buyers to make choices that reflect their sense of style."

Beazer also allows buyers to make changes to the interior layout for no additional cost. "Buyers can choose room-specific layouts to create their ideal living space," Hall said. "Some buyers prefer a kitchen that welcomes entertaining around a spacious island, while others prefer an eat-in kitchen with space for a dining table."

Options available at additional cost include more bedrooms and bathrooms.

Hall said the McKinley, one of the six

## MAGNOLIA CREEK

2305 Terrapin Crossing, Jessup, Md.

A total of 78 two-story, single-family houses are planned. Four are under construction, and 12 are sold or under contract. Base prices range from \$569,990 for a 2,248-square-foot house to \$651,990 for a 3,505-square-foot house.

**Builder:** Beazer Homes

**Features:** Granite countertops, 42-inch maple cabinets and stainless-steel appliances are standard in the kitchens. Mudrooms are equipped with benches. Standard flooring is laminate. A two-car garage is standard; a three-car garage is an option. An unfinished basement is standard; a finished basement is an option.

**Bedrooms/Bathrooms:** 3 to 6 / 3 to 5

**Square-footage:** 2,248 to 4,629

**Contact:** For more information or to arrange a tour, call Jillian Crissafulli at 410-656-2084.



PHOTOS BY BENJAMIN C TANKERSLEY FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**ABOVE:** The great room in a model home at Magnolia Creek in Jessup, where Beazer Homes plans to build a community of 78 single-family houses. **BELOW:** The basement rec room in the model home. The finished basement is an optional upgrade.

house plans, is emerging as a popular choice. Although the McKinley is a two-story house, it offers single-level living, with the primary bedroom suite on the first floor, along with the laundry facilities, the kitchen, the dining room, the great room and a mud room.

Hall said Beazer pays attention to energy-efficiency and information technol-

ogy. Its houses come with Energy Star-rated appliances, and they are wired for Internet connectivity at no additional cost.

**Nearby:** Arundel Mills mall and the Maryland Live casino are about 10 minutes away by car. The community is also within 20 minutes of Fort Meade and the National Security Agency.

**Schools:** Cedar Knoll Elementary, Boll-

man Bridge Elementary, MacArthur Middle, Meade Middle and Meade Senior High

**Transit:** The community is near Baltimore-Washington Parkway (Route 295) and Routes 1 and 32 (which connects to Interstate 95). The MARC commuter rail service's Camden Line, which runs between Baltimore and D.C., has a stop in Jessup.

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## COVER STORY

# A neglected property undergoes a modern revival

A collaboration among architects and designers results in a renaissance of an ‘overgrown disaster’

BY SCOTT SOWERS

Scott Satin, his wife Marilyn Kitzes and son Gabriel, 15, already had a comfortable traditional residence in the Chevy Chase neighborhood in Northwest Washington, where they had lived in for 11 years. But the homeowners were interested in something more modern. ¶ Kitzes, a 52-year-old freelance copywriter, was visiting friends nearby and expressing frustration about finding a mid-century home without having to leave the neighborhood. “A friend of mine said, ‘Have you seen the one across the alley?’” says Kitzes. ¶ A walk across the alley revealed an “overgrown disaster,” says Satin, 53, who studied architecture before taking a career turn into pharmaceutical research. Still, he saw potential hiding in the house beyond the foliage. ¶ “I had never seen it before. The problem with all the colonial-style homes is they are a bunch of little boxes inside,” he says. “This was something we could blow wide open. It wasn’t designed by an architect and was different than every other house on the block.”

SEE HOME ON T8





PHOTOS BY JENNIFER HUGHES PHOTOGRAPHY

**Scott Satin and his wife, Marilyn Kitzes, renovated this Chevy Chase home that was built in 1962. The outdoor amenities, left, include a patio and a screened-in porch. The living area, top right, is open to the kitchen and offers views and access to the backyard. The kitchen, above, makes use of clean, simple lines. The cabinets are finished in a two-tone mix of gray base models and walnut veneered uppers.**

# A forgotten house is resurrected as a mid-century modern gem

HOME FROM T6

The 2,340-square-foot, 1962 vintage home was custom built by a Greek engineer who died leaving no family. He left the home to friends who had been watching over it for the four years since he passed away. Kitzes and Satin entered the picture in 2015 and began an investigation.

"It was not on the market," says Kitzes. "It was being overseen by the executor of the will. I knocked on a few doors to see who was in charge of the house. I got a woman's number, I told her who we were and asked if she would let us in and take a look."

The walk-through was disconcerting. The 4½-bedroom, 4½-bath house had never been cleaned out after the original owner died. "It was filled completely, top to bottom with personal effects," says Kitzes. "Everything from china, college diplomas, family photos, passports, unused medications, it was wild."

Undeterred, the family made the executor an as-is offer of \$645,000 in April 2015, which was accepted. "She wasn't holding the house until we sold ours and we didn't ask her. We jumped on it," says Kitzes. "We were paying the mortgage on two houses for a long time."

Although the new purchase was livable aside from the contents, the family set sail for a total renovation. Satin teamed up with architect David Thompson, principal at Assembled+, based in Los Angeles. The two men knew each other from architecture school and Satin helped Thompson launch the firm before changing careers. A 72-hour, coffee-fueled design charrette — an intense period of design or planning activity — in Chevy Chase resulted in a 3-D model of what the new house would become. But the homeowners needed somebody local to provide construction drawings and run the job.

The couple interviewed four other architects before a referral from a friend led them to VW Fowlkes, a principal at the husband-and-wife-run Fowlkes Studio based near Dupont Circle in D.C.

Fowlkes, 47, was not put off by the prospect of a three-way design collaboration and was intrigued by a house that didn't quite fit with its surroundings. "I often tell clients there are three types of houses in D.C. and this is not one of them," he says. "This house had been considered a neighborhood ugly duckling."

A respectable clean-out was



SCOTT SATIN

**The 1962 house, pictured before the renovation, had never been cleaned out after the original owner died. But Scott Satin and Marilyn Kitzes saw potential. The design team added some curb appeal by installing a clerestory window and a new door bordered by more glass.**

arranged via sales to furniture dealers and charity giveaways. The new owners kept a piece of sculpture and a buffet. Fowlkes scored the dining room table that now serves as an architectural conference area in his office. Everything else went without the need of a dumpster.

Over the next 18 months, the interior was gutted to the joists that separated the two floors of the building. The original staircase was removed and a new one was built in the middle of the house. The first level was reconfigured to hold a dining room, kitchen, great room, powder room and a small office.

The basement got a bedroom, full bath, TV room, laundry room and storage. An attached but unused one-car garage became a home gym. There's a guest bedroom upstairs, and what could be a second bedroom serves as an office. One bedroom and bath were eliminated with the captured space plowed into a master suite.

After a year and a half of design and construction, the new home was livable but not exactly finished.

"We had one working bathroom," says Kitzes. "It was still a construction site for six more months. Then we had to take an

emotional and financial break. We waited almost a year, before we did the landscaping."

The landscaping also included a screened-in back porch, a patio and a second-level deck that attaches to the master bedroom via a skybridge. Phase 2 started in September 2017 and was completed in March 2019.

From the street the home appears church-like with a centrally pitched roof. The design team opened up what used to be two small windows and two odd-shaped openings framed with wood by installing a clerestory window and a new door bordered by more glass. The red brick exterior was dyed charcoal, which caused one of the neighbors to remark about a "getting-used-to" period of acceptance.

The central stairway provides privacy by restricting views straight through the house. To the left there's a charming powder room with an accent wall covered by tile made from wine corks. Beyond that is a compact home office.

To the right of the entrance lies the dining room, complete with a Saarinen-influenced tulip table and the scavenged mid-century buffet. Floor-to-ceiling windows were carved into the space to bring in natural light. The dining

room is separated from the kitchen by a line of cabinets that don't extend to the wall, providing another opportunity to add more light. The cabinets also hide ductwork.

The kitchen is a subtle study of clean, simple lines. Flooring on the first floor is white oak finished in a natural matte shade. The cabinets were locally sourced from Ferris Custom Cabinetry in Northeast Washington and are finished in a two-tone mix of gray base models and walnut veneered uppers.

"We didn't want to have things too matchy-matchy," says Fowlkes. "We wanted to celebrate the fact that they were carried in — like furniture."

The countertops and island top are manufactured quartz. All the appliances are Thermador and the backsplash is brick tile that reads as solid white brick.

In keeping with all things modern, the floor plan between the kitchen and the great room is open. There's also easy access to the outdoor entertaining spaces and more oversized windows looking out to the sculptured backyard. The backyard was opened up as the design team slid in a stairway that connects the patio and screened porch with the greenery below.

Upstairs, the master suite is configured on the rear wall of the house. The master bedroom features an accent wall covered with grass-cloth wallpaper from the Phillip Jeffries collection.

A large walk-in closet appears on the way to the master bath where Kitzes had a wish come true in the form of a Badeloft soaking tub. "I hadn't had a proper bathtub in years," she says.

There's a separate powder room, an oversized shower, a dual custom vanity, also produced by Ferris and an off-white, manufactured quartz top.

The homeowners declined to put a price on the renovation cost, but Satin did offer some insight on where they are — big picture. "Real estate agents around here are telling us we are significantly ahead," he says. "We didn't end up underwater."

Satin sweated getting the windows right and his favorite part of the house is the upper deck that connects to the master suite.

For Kitzes, it's all about location. "It's having this house in this neighborhood, a modern house in an old-fashioned neighborhood. The house was always odd from the beginning. It was an oddball house that we improved."

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# Post's Real Estate section, several freelancers win 5 honors

BY V. DION HAYNES

The Washington Post's Real Estate section and several of its freelance writers won five awards of excellence in a national journalism competition.

For the second year in a row, The Post won a second-place award for best real estate section in the National Association of Real Estate Editors' (NAREE) journalism contest. The awards were announced Wednesday night on the first day of the organization's two-day virtual conference.

The Real Estate section was awarded for a May 1, 2019, special section, edited by Kathy Orton, focusing on selling a home.

Here's what the judges, a panel from Northwestern University's Medill journalism school, said: "The service stories in The Post's real estate section — devoted solely to selling a house in this issue — are first rate. In fact, reading them could save readers tens of thousands of dollars. This section offered tips about what not to do when selling a home and a charticle on which home improvements to spring for and which ones to skip. (Hint: spring for the new garage door.) The Post section



**The Washington Post won a second-place award for best real estate section in a National Association of Real Estate Editors' journalism contest. The Post was commended for coverage on how to sell a house, interior design and the decline of Black homeownership.**

exemplifies the best in giving readers practical advice."

Freelancer Michele Lerner was recognized for two stories: a second-place award in the best interior design story category and an honorable mention in the best architecture story category.

Lerner's second-place story, headlined "To add warmth to a home, bring more of the great outdoors indoors," focuses on a new design trend.

"In this richly reported piece, Lerner shows the reader why people want to bring more stone and

wood into their homes," the judges said. "She finds a perfect couple to illustrate the theme of her story. They lie by a nature trail, so they wanted to add natural stone to the shower. Lerner also tucks in service, noting that it's good to be wary of wood in damp places like bathrooms and that it's good to think about the heavier weight and higher expense of stone."

Her honorable mention story, "Making the case for cottage neighborhoods," highlighted a small-home community.

"Rather than downsize dramatically, from a 3,500-square-foot house to a condo, the couple in the lede move into a community of 10 new, 1,490-square-foot homes in suburban Washington, D.C.," the judges said. "For her in-depth look at the 'pocket neighborhood' concept, Lerner interviews residents, architects and developers about the benefits and the hurdles (including zoning ordinances). In this thoroughly reported story, she clearly explains this alternative to traditional houses and traditional condos."

Freelance writer Troy McMullen won second place in the individual award for newspapers category for "The 'heartbreaking' decrease in Black homeownership."

"This is a thorough and thoughtful story based on data showing that Black homeownership in the U.S. had declined (in 2017) to levels not seen since the passage of the Fair Housing Act," the judges said. "McMullen finds a Black couple that is impacted and explains in clearly written prose how a rollback of government policies is partly to blame."

Freelance writer Sara Clemence won a third-place award in the best international story category for "What to know before buying that dream vacation home in another country."

"This is a thoroughly reported reader-service story that benefits from Clemence's easy writing style and real people examples," the judges said. "Who knew that some countries require a 30 percent down payment on a property, or that a major renovation in Mexico could come as cheap as a few thousand dollars? Clemence explores the pros and cons while consulting legal and tax experts along the way."

Since 2013, The Post's Real Estate section, staff members and freelancers have won 44 awards from NAREE, including best real estate section in 2014.

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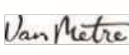
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# Rates level off one week after sinking to record low

BY KATHY ORTON

A week after mortgage rates swooned to a historic low for the 14th time this year, they paused to catch their breath.

According to the latest data released Thursday by Freddie Mac, the 30-year fixed-rate average was unchanged at 2.71 percent with an average 0.7 point. (Points are fees paid to a lender equal to 1 percent of the loan amount and are in addition to the interest rate.) It was 3.73 percent a year ago.

Freddie Mac, the federally chartered mortgage investor, aggregates rates from around 80 lenders across the country to come up with weekly national average mortgage rates. It uses rates for high-quality borrowers with strong credit scores and large down payments. These rates are not available to every borrower.

Because the survey is based on home purchase mortgages, rates for refinances may be different. This is especially true since the price adjustment for refinance transactions went into effect earlier this month. The adjustment is 0.5 percent of the loan amount (e.g., it is \$1,500 on a \$300,000 loan) and applies to all Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac refinances.

The 15-year fixed-rate average also held steady at 2.26 percent with an average 0.6 point. It was 3.19 percent a year ago. The five-year adjustable rate average slid to 2.79 percent with an average 0.3 point. It was 2.86 percent a week ago and 3.36 percent a year ago.

“Mortgage rates remain at record lows, resisting their typical correlation to Treasury yields, which have recently been moving higher,” Sam Khater, Freddie Mac’s chief economist, said in a statement. “Mortgage spreads — the difference between mortgage rates and the 10-year Treasury rate — are declining from their elevated levels earlier this year. Although today’s mortgage spread is about 1.8 percent and still has some room to move down if the 10-year Treasury continues to rise, it’s encouraging to see that the spread is almost back to normal levels.”

The Federal Reserve will meet next week for the final time this year. The central bank is not expected to do anything with its benchmark rate, but many observers will be looking to see what the Fed does with regard to its purchase of mortgage-backed securities.

For the past several months, the central bank has been buying



J. LAWLER DUGGAN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

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mortgage-backed securities — or MBS as they are often known — which are bundles of mortgages sold on a secondary market. When a borrower takes out a loan such as a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage, a lender often bundles that loan with other loans into an MBS and then sells it to investors. The Fed’s unlimited MBS buying has been pushing prices up and driving down rates.

“We don’t see any sign that the Fed’s practice will end anytime soon, so we expect rates to remain low during the first half of the year,” said Brian Koss, executive vice president of Mortgage Network. “If the Fed stays on course, rates will stay relatively the same. If they back off their volume of MBS purchases, it will send rates up quickly. Just how much they will rise depends on the demand that will fill the Fed’s vacuum.”

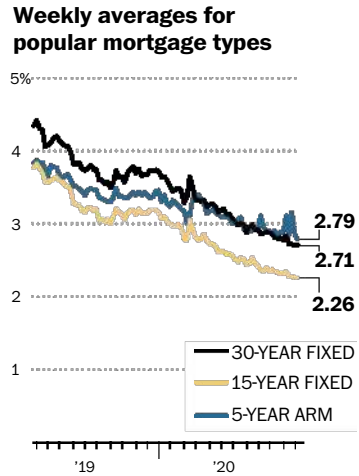
However, Koss doubts rates will move much lower.

“Interest rates have bounced along the bottom for many months, so it’s difficult to see how they can fall even further,” he said. “There is always a chance they will, but at current rates, there has already been significant purchase and refinance activity.”

Bankrate.com, which puts out

a weekly mortgage rate trend index, found nearly half the experts it surveyed predict rates will remain about the same in the coming week.

“Another week of steady as she goes for mortgage rates,” said Gordon Miller, owner of Miller Lending Group in Cary, N.C. “Despite an uptick in Treasury yields, there has been little to no impact felt by the markets, so it continues to appear as if low rates are here for an extended period of time.”



Source: Freddie Mac  
THE WASHINGTON POST

Meanwhile, mortgages applications fell off last week. According to the latest data from the Mortgage Bankers Association, the market composite index — a measure of total loan application volume — decreased 1.2 percent from a week earlier. The purchase index went down 5 percent from the previous week but was 22 percent higher than a year ago. The refinance index rose 2 percent and was 89 percent higher than a year ago. The refinance share of mortgage activity accounted for 72 percent of applications.

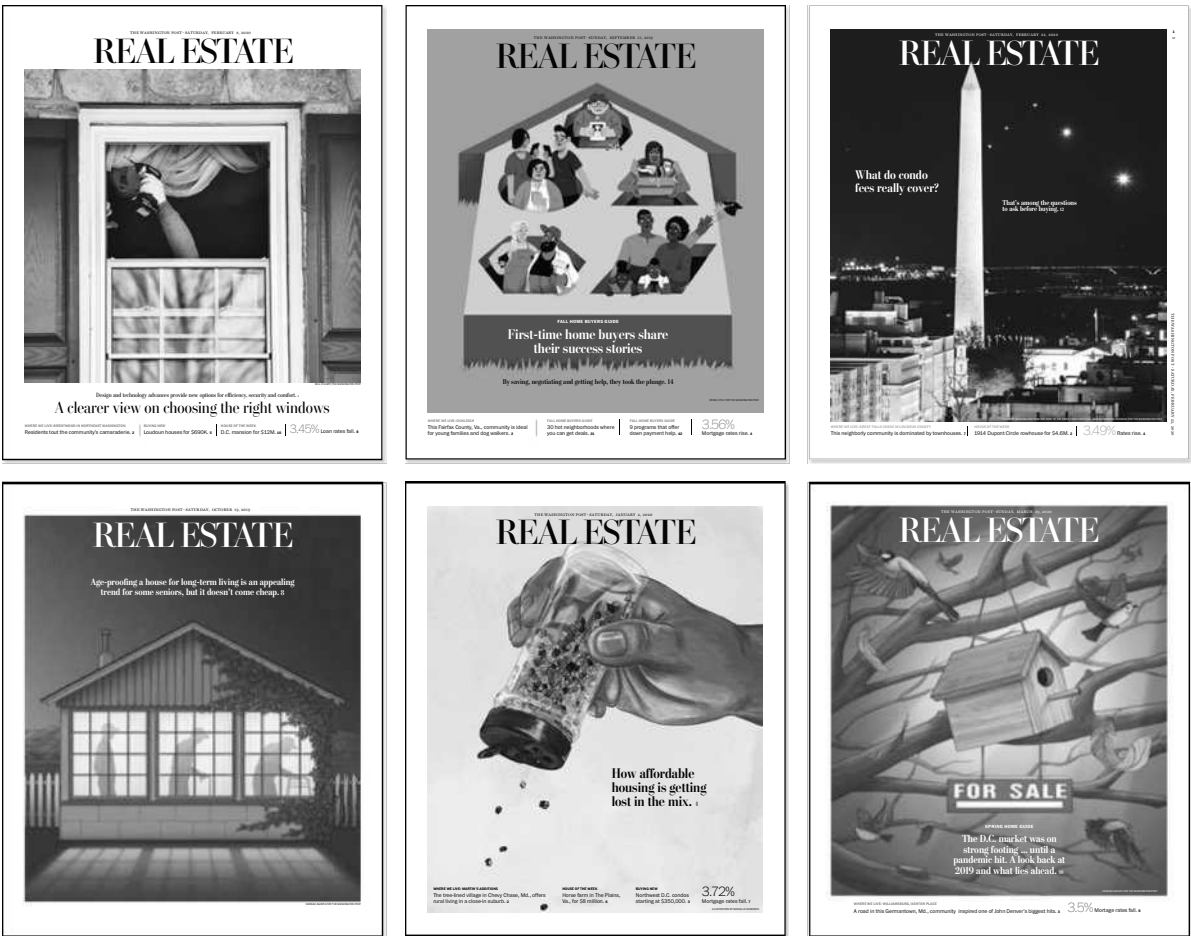
“The mortgage market continues to be lifted by strong demand from homeowners looking to lower their monthly payments and home buyers seeking more space,” said Bob Broeksmit, MBA president and CEO. “Mortgage activity was mixed the first week of December, with an increase in refinances and a decline in purchase applications. Record-low mortgage rates below 3 percent should continue to support strong application activity to close out the year. Borrowers looking to take advantage of these low rates should consider doing so now, as we anticipate that they will slowly rise above 3 percent in 2021.”

The MBA also released its mortgage credit availability index (MCAI) that showed credit availability increased in November. The MCAI rose 0.7 percent to 122.2 last month. An increase in the MCAI indicates lending standards are loosening, while a decrease signals they are tightening.

“Mortgage credit availability increased slightly in November to its highest level since July, as the job market improved, and the housing sector continued to show strong borrower demand,” Joel Kan, an MBA economist, said in a statement. “There was an increase in credit availability for jumbo loans, as well as loan products with low credit scores, higher [loan-to-value ratios] and adjustable-rate features. Home purchase and refinance activity have remained strong in recent months, and the increased credit supply should help qualified borrowers still looking to capitalize on record-low mortgage rates. However, credit availability is still more than 30 percent below pre-pandemic levels and close to the restricted standards seen in 2014. This has especially impacted government borrowers and first-time buyers.”

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# Market Intelligence



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# **The Real Estate section is taking a holiday break**

There will be no print Real Estate section on Saturday, December 19 and December 26.

**Coming Saturday, January 2**

**What to expect in the 2021 housing market**

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