



**PENS BEAT FLYERS, 3-2**  
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# Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

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Andrew Rush/Post-Gazette

From left, Lauren Finoli, manager of clinical pharmacy services at Allegheny Health Network, and Maggie Kronz, pharmacy resident at Allegheny Health Network, pack up doses of Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5 to 11 at the pharmacy at Allegheny General Hospital on the North Side on Thursday. The state Department of Health is projecting that more than 400,000 doses of COVID vaccine for children will be available by the end of this week.

## City will host '22 global energy meeting

By Anya Litvak  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Energy ministers from around the world will gather in Pittsburgh next year to forge a path on clean energy, U.S. Department of Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm announced from the global climate summit in Glasgow.

Then she threw her hands in the air and let out a "woo!" The audience responded in kind.

"Coming from the industrial Midwest, it really makes me happy when communities like Pittsburgh get a great round of applause," she said. "Obviously, it's one of the best success stories for how clean energy creates jobs, how technology creates jobs and how a community can turn it around."

The narrative of Pittsburgh

SEE **ENERGY**, PAGE A-2

## U.S. issues vaccine mandates

New requirement has Jan. 4 deadline for workers at companies with more than 100 employees

By David Koenig  
Associated Press

Tens of millions of Americans who work at companies with 100 or more employees will need to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by Jan. 4 or get tested for the virus weekly under government rules issued Thursday.

The new requirements are the Biden administration's boldest move yet to persuade reluctant Americans to finally get a vaccine that has been widely available for

months — or face financial consequences. If successful, administration officials believe it will go a long way toward ending a pandemic that has killed more than 750,000 Americans.

First previewed by President Joe Biden in September, the requirements will apply to about 84 million workers at medium and large businesses, although it is not clear how many of those employees are unvaccinated.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations

### INSIDE

- Britain is first to approve Merck antiviral pill to treat COVID-19. **A-6**
- 5,162 additional cases break 3 weeks of declining rates, **Local, B-1**

will force the companies to require that unvaccinated workers test negative for COVID-19 at least once a week and wear a mask while in the workplace.

OSHA left open the possibility of

expanding the requirement to smaller businesses. It asked for public comment on whether employees with fewer than 100 employees could handle vaccination or testing programs.

Tougher rules will apply to another 17 million people working in nursing homes, hospitals and other facilities that receive money from Medicare and Medicaid. Those workers will not have an option for testing — they will need to

SEE **MANDATE**, PAGE A-6

## Attorney will seek Doyle's seat

Irwin third to enter race in 18th District

By Julian Routh  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Pittsburgh attorney Steve Irwin, a self-described pragmatist focused on "pocketbook issues," jumped into the race for outgoing U.S. Rep. Mike Doyle's seat in Congress on Thursday.



Steve Irwin

Mr. Irwin, a partner at Downtown-based firm Leech Tishman who headed the Pennsylvania Securities Commission under Gov. Ed Rendell, said he's running for the 18th District because he wants to help families and seniors, grow the middle class and help Allegheny County continue to be a leader in tech jobs.

"We need to expand

SEE **IRWIN**, PAGE A-3

## COVID-19 issues in NFL haven't touched Steelers

By Brian Batko  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

As Aaron Rodgers reignited a new cycle of COVID-19 controversy in the NFL, the Steelers simply continued to go about their business at team headquarters on the South Side.

All has been quiet on the COVID front for the Steelers this season, and they hope it's not just the eye of the storm.

"That's just a testament to us that we're holding up our end," veteran cornerback Cam Sutton said after practice Thursday. "Guys are taking care of their bodies. ... With the big picture [in mind], guys aren't selfish or putting themselves in bad situations."

### Inside

- Steelers will test Chicago's rookie quarterback, **Sports, D-1**

The Steelers are the only team that hasn't had a player on the reserve/COVID-19 list this season. Even with the NFL touting a vaccination rate above 94% across all players, several organizations have been impacted by the league's virus protocols.

Mr. Rodgers in Green Bay is just the latest, although he's certainly a unique case considering his preseason declaration that he had been "immunized." That was in response to a question directly

SEE **STEELERS**, PAGE A-6

## GATHERING FOR DIWALI



Associated Press

Traders perform rituals during Chopada Pujan, a mass prayer ceremony dedicated to the worship of account books, on the occasion of Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, at the Swaminarayan Gurukul in Ahmedabad, India, on Thursday. Diwali symbolizes new beginnings and the triumph of good over evil and light over darkness.

### Weather

Mostly sunny.  
Daytime high, 47;  
tonight's low, 27.

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Steph Chambers/Post-Gazette

Pittsburgh attorney Steve Irwin says he is running for Congress because he wants to help families and seniors, grow the middle class and help Allegheny County continue to be a leader in tech jobs.

## Attorney Steve Irwin to run for Doyle's 18th District seat

**IRWIN**, FROM A-1

opportunities for people to get ahead in life, make a decent living and raise a family with economic security," Mr. Irwin said in a statement. "In Congress, I'll fight for good jobs with livable wages, paid family leave, new infrastructure investments, workplace safety, stronger unions, protections for retirees, affordable health care and lower prescription drug costs."

The 62-year-old, once a legislative assistant and floor monitor for late U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter, called this a "generational opportunity" to address the region's deep challenges, deeming himself a progressive who can get things done in Washington.

Asked what it means to be progressive in his mind, he said it's not about taking a position and being immovable; it's about making progress and looking out for those who need help, including the middle class.

"The middle class today is

facing challenges that they never faced before in trying to educate their kids, take care of themselves and their health, making sure they have clean air to breathe, making sure they have access to the things they need in order to live a decent and satisfying life," Mr. Irwin said. "We need to do more for these working families."

The entrance of Mr. Irwin, a Squirrel Hill resident, brings the tally of seat-seekers to three. They are vying to represent a district that spans Pittsburgh, its southern suburbs and the Mon Valley. Mr. Doyle, currently the longest serving member of Congress in Pennsylvania, will retire at the end of this term.

In his statement, Mr. Irwin acknowledged that Democrats will have "plenty of good choices" in this 2022 primary.

State Rep. Summer Lee, one of Harrisburg's leading progressive voices since 2018, announced her candidacy

last month on a pledge to support the Green New Deal, Medicare for All and labor unions.

Jerry Dickinson, a University of Pittsburgh law professor, human rights activist and lawyer who lives in Swissvale, has been running since before Mr. Doyle's retirement announcement, arguing that the safety of the seat for Democrats should allow the officeholder to be bold and fight for progressive change.

Mr. Irwin said he wants to continue the work of Mr. Doyle and that President Joe Biden "has the right ideas." He expressed a willingness to work across the aisle in D.C., blaming divisions on former President Donald Trump's influence in the Republican Party.

"I think there are Republicans there who — when he's out of the picture — won't have the fear to do the right thing," Mr. Irwin said. "I know they want to do the right thing."

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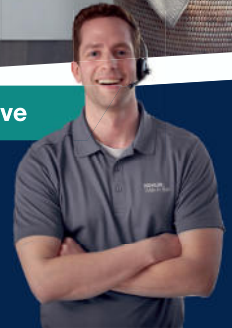
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## National

## Nation/World briefs

## FBI to weigh prosecuting 37 passengers

Compiled from news services

The Federal Aviation Administration announced Thursday that it has referred the cases of more than three dozen unruly passengers to the FBI for potential criminal prosecution in hopes of curbing a sharp uptick in people acting violently on planes this year.

"Let this serve both as a warning and a deterrent: If you disrupt a flight, you risk not just fines from the FAA but federal criminal prosecution as well," FAA Administrator Stephen Dickson said Thursday in a news release.

In August, the FAA and the Justice Department began developing an information-sharing protocol to refer the most serious cases to the FBI for further review and faster prosecution, the agencies said in a joint statement.

The step comes as U.S. airlines grapple with an increase in disruptive or violent incidents on board flights — many involving hostile passengers protesting mask mandates as travel goes back to pre-pandemic levels.

## Rioter who scoffed at jail time sentenced

A real estate agent from suburban Dallas who flaunted her participation in the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol on social media and later bragged she wasn't going to jail because she is white, has blond hair and a good job was sentenced on Thursday to two months behind bars.

While some rioters sentenced for the same misdemeanor conviction have received only probation or home confinement, prosecutors sought incarceration for Jennifer Leigh Ryan, of Frisco, Texas, saying she has shown a lack of remorse for her actions when the pro-Trump mob attacked the Capitol building and delayed Congress' certification of Joe Biden's Electoral College victory.

They also said Ryan's belief that she's shielded from punishment shows she doesn't grasp the seriousness of her crime.

Though Ryan said she was sorry for her actions, U.S. District Judge Christopher Cooper questioned whether she is remorseful and has respect for the law.

"Your actions since Jan. 6 make me doubt some of those things," the judge said.

## Early hominid fossil found in South Africa

The fossil remains of an early hominid child have been discovered in a cave in South Africa by a team of international and South African researchers.

The team announced the discovery of a partial skull and teeth of a Homo naledi child who died almost 250,000 years ago when it was approximately 4 to 6 years old. The remains were found in a remote part of the cave that suggests the body had been placed there on purpose, in what could be a kind of grave, said the announcement Thursday.

The placement "adds mystery as to how these many remains came to be in these remote, dark spaces of the Rising Star Cave system," said Professor Guy Berger of the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, who led the team and made the announcement.

Homo naledi is a species of archaic human found in the Rising Star Cave, Cradle of Humankind, 30 miles northwest of Johannesburg. Homo naledi dates to the Middle Pleistocene era 335,000-236,000 years ago. The initial discovery, first publicly announced in 2015, comprises 1,550 specimens, representing 737 different elements, and at least 15 different individuals.



Getty Images

Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash, speaks Thursday as House Democrats work on infrastructure and spending bills on Capitol Hill. Democratic moderates and progressives continue to negotiate on President Joe Biden's Build Back Better social spending bill.

## Biden's big bill on brink of House votes

Speaker Pelosi's strategy is to pass the most robust bill possible in her chamber

By Lisa Mascaro and Mary Clare Jalonick  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Democrats in the House appear on the verge of securing President Joe Biden's now-\$1.85 trillion-and-growing domestic policy package alongside a companion \$1 trillion infrastructure bill in what would be a dramatic political accomplishment — if they can push it to passage.

The House scrapped votes late Thursday but will be back at it early Friday, and White House officials worked the phones to lock in support for the president's signature proposal. After months of negotiations, House passage of the big bill would be a crucial step, sending to the Senate Mr. Biden's ambitious effort to expand health care, child care and other social services for countless Americans and deliver the nation's biggest investment yet to fight climate change.

Alongside the slimmer roads-bridges-and

broadband package, it adds up to Mr. Biden's answer to his campaign promise to rebuild the country from the COVID-19 crisis and confront a changing economy.

But they're not there yet. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was working furiously Thursday and kept the House late to shore up the votes.

The party has been here before, another politically messy day like many before that are being blamed for the Democrats' dismal showing in this week's elections.

On and off Capitol Hill, party leaders declared it's time for Congress to deliver on Mr. Biden's agenda.

"We're going to pass both bills," Ms. Pelosi insisted at a midday news briefing.

Her strategy now seems focused on passing the most robust bill possible in her chamber and then leaving the Senate to adjust or strip out the portions its members won't agree to.

Half the size of Mr. Biden's initial \$3.5 trillion package, the now sprawling 2,135-page

bill has won over most of the progressive Democratic lawmakers, even though the bill is smaller than they wanted. But the chamber's more centrist and fiscally conservative Democrats continued to mount objections.

Overall the package remains more far-reaching than any other in decades. Republicans are fully opposed to Mr. Biden's bill, which is called the "Build Back Better Act" after the president's 2020 campaign slogan.

The big package would provide large numbers of Americans with assistance to pay for health care, raising children and caring for elderly people at home.

There would be lower prescription drug costs, limiting the price of insulin to \$35 a dose, and Medicare for the first time would be able to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies for prices of some other drugs, a long-sought Democratic priority.

Medicare would have a new hearing aid benefit for older Americans, and those

with Medicare Part D would see their out-of-pocket prescription drug costs capped at \$2,000.

The package would provide some \$555 billion in tax breaks encouraging cleaner energy and electric vehicles, the nation's largest commitment to tackling climate change.

With a flurry of late adjustments, the Democrats added key provisions in recent days — adding back a new paid family leave program, work permits for immigrants and changes to state and local tax deductions.

Much of package's cost would be covered with higher taxes on wealthier Americans, those earning more than \$400,000 a year, and a 5% surtax would be added on those making over \$10 million annually.

As night fell, Democratic leaders struggled to resolve a catalogue of remaining issues as lawmakers balanced the promise of Mr. Biden's sweeping vision with the realities of their home-district politics.

## Trump finance probe widens

2nd grand jury seated in N.Y.

By Shayna Jacobs, David A. Fahrenthold and Jonathan O'Connell

The Washington Post

NEW YORK — The Manhattan district attorney has convened a second long-term grand jury to hear evidence about the Trump Organization's financial practices and potentially to vote on criminal charges, according to people with knowledge of the matter.

An earlier grand jury — convened this spring in Manhattan — returned felony indictments against two Trump companies and Mr. Trump's longtime chief financial officer Allen Weisselberg, charging them with tax evasion. It is unclear whether that grand jury is still hearing evidence about the Trump Organization.

The new grand jury is assigned to meet three days a week over six months, people familiar with the matter said. It met Thursday in Manhattan's Surrogate's Court because the criminal court buildings are jammed with a rush of post-pandemic trials.

One person familiar with the matter said the second grand jury was expected to examine how former President Donald Trump's company valued its assets. The people familiar spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe private legal proceedings.

That appears to be a separate issue from the one described in indictments from the first grand jury, which has dealt with allegations that Mr. Weisselberg and other Trump executives evaded taxes on their pay by systematically hiding some of their compensation from the IRS. Both Mr. Weisselberg and the two companies have pleaded not guilty.

The second grand jury's term indicates that it could outlast District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr., who leaves office at year's end — and extend into the term of his successor, Alvin Bragg.

Mr. Vance declined to comment Thursday. Mr. Bragg previously declined to talk about the Trump case while campaigning.

The seating of the new grand jury does not signal that any other Trump entities or executives will be charged.

The former president has not been charged with any crime. On Thursday, neither Mr. Trump's company nor his post-presidential office responded to requests for comment. Ron Fischetti and Phyllis Maglieri, two of Mr. Trump's personal lawyers, declined to comment.

In the past, Mr. Trump and his family have criticized Mr. Vance's investigation — and a separate civil inquiry into his business by New York Attorney General Letitia James — as motivated by politics and not the law.

Both Mr. Vance and Ms. James have previously said they were examining allegations that the Trump Organization misled banks, insurance firms or tax authorities by manipulating the value of its assets to get favorable loan rates or to lower her taxes.

## Trump-Russia dossier analyst arrested

## Accused of lying to FBI about sources

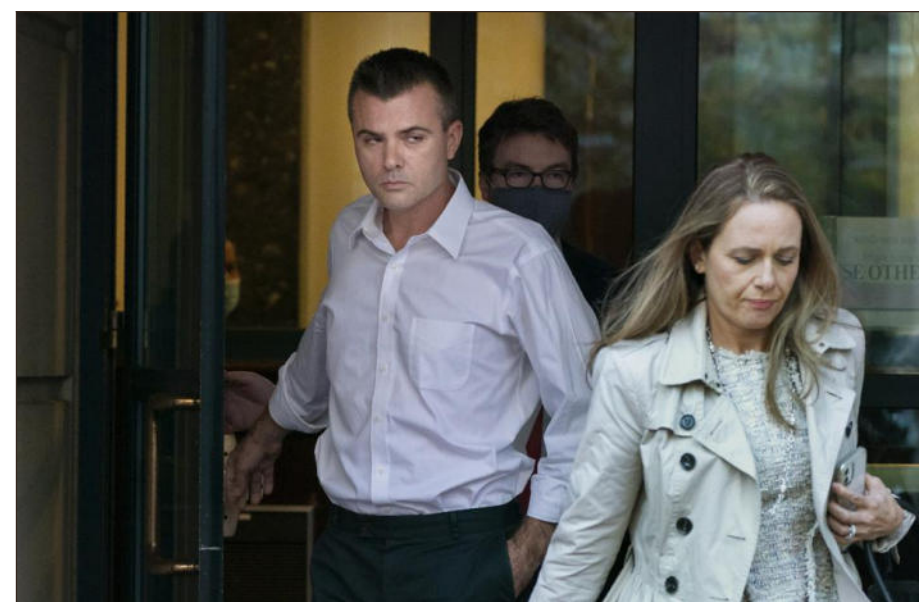
By Eric Tucker  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Russian analyst who contributed to a dossier of Democratic-funded research into ties between Russia and Donald Trump was arrested Thursday on charges of lying to the FBI about his sources of information.

The case against Igor Danchenko is part of special counsel John Durham's ongoing investigation into the origins of the FBI's probe into whether Mr. Trump's 2016 campaign and Russia had conspired to tip the outcome of that year's presidential campaign.

The indictment, the third criminal case brought by Mr. Durham and the second in a two-month span, is likely to boost complaints from Trump allies that well-connected Democrats worked behind the scenes to advance suspicions about Mr. Trump and Russia that contributed to the FBI's election-year investigation.

The case does not undercut investigators' findings that the Kremlin aided the Trump campaign — conclusions that were not based on



Manuel Balce Ceneta/Associated Press

Igor Danchenko leaves Albert V. Bryan United States Courthouse in Alexandria, Va., on Thursday. Mr. Danchenko, a Russian analyst who was a primary source for a 2016 dossier of allegations against Donald Trump, was arrested on charges that he repeatedly lied to the FBI about where and how he got his information, officials said Thursday.

the dossier, which was barely mentioned in special counsel Robert Mueller's report.

But the indictment does endorse a longstanding concern about the Russia probe: that opposition research the FBI relied on as it surveilled a Trump campaign adviser was marred by unsupported, uncorroborated claims.

The five-count in-

dictment accuses Mr. Danchenko of making multiple false statements to the FBI when interviewed in 2017 about his role in collecting information for Christopher Steele, a former British spy whose research into ties between the Trump campaign and Russia was financed by Democrats.

Mr. Danchenko, a U.S.-based Russian who'd

specialized in Russian and Eurasian matters as an analyst at Brookings Institution, was a significant source for Mr. Steele's dossier.

That dossier, the target of intense derision from Mr. Trump, was ultimately provided to the FBI and used by federal authorities as they applied for and received surveillance warrants targeting former Trump campaign aide Carter Page.



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## COVID-19 Pandemic

# U.S. issues COVID mandates

**MANDATE, FROM A-1**

Those workers will not have an option for testing — they will need to be vaccinated.

Workers will be able to ask for exemptions on medical or religious grounds.

The requirements will not apply to people who work at home or outdoors.

Mr. Biden framed the issue as a simple choice between getting more people vaccinated or prolonging the pandemic.

“While I would have much preferred that requirements not become necessary, too many people remain unvaccinated for us to get out of this pandemic for good,” he said Thursday in a statement.

Mr. Biden said his encouragement for businesses to impose mandates and his previous requirements for the military and federal contractors have helped reduce the number of unvaccinated Americans over 12 from 100 million in late July to about 60 million now. Those measures, he said, have not led to mass firings or worker shortages, adding that vaccines have been required before to fight other diseases.

OSHA said companies that fail to comply with the regulations could face penalties of nearly \$14,000 per violation.

The agency will face enforcement challenges. Even counting help from states, OSHA has only 1,850 inspectors to oversee 130 million workers at 8 million workplaces. An administration official said the agency will respond to whistleblower complaints and make limited spot checks.

The release of the rules followed weeks of regulatory review and meetings with business groups, labor unions and others.

OSHA drafted the rules under emergency authority meant to protect workers from an imminent health hazard. The agency estimated that the vaccine mandate will save more than 6,500 worker lives and prevent more than 250,000 hospitalizations over the next six months.

The rules set up potential legal battles along partisan lines between states and the federal government. Several states and Republican governors threatened to sue, contending that the adminis-

tration lacks the power to make such sweeping mandates under emergency authority.

OSHA’s parent agency, the Labor Department, says it is on sound legal footing. The department’s top legal official, Seema Nanda, said OSHA rules preempt conflicting state laws or orders, including those that bar employers from requiring vaccinations, testing or face masks.

Senate Republicans immediately launched a petition to force a vote to overturn the vaccine mandate.

The rules will require workers to receive either two doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine by Jan. 4 or be tested weekly. Employees testing positive must be removed from the workplace.

Companies won’t be required to provide or pay for tests for unvaccinated workers, but they must give paid time off for employees to get the shots and sick leave to recover from side effects that prevent them from working. Requirements for masks and paid time off for shots take effect Dec. 5.

Employers covered by the requirements must verify their workers’ vaccination status by checking documents such as CDC vaccination cards, records from doctors or pharmacies, or even an employee’s own signed declaration.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services issued a separate rule requiring vaccination for workers in 76,000 health facilities and home health care providers that get funding from the government health programs. A senior administration official said several large private health care organizations imposed their own mandates and achieved high vaccination rates — 96% or higher — without widespread resignations.

A previously announced requirement for federal contractors to make sure workers are vaccinated was scheduled to take effect Dec. 8, but the administration delayed that measure until Jan. 4 to match the requirements on other large employers. Already, more than a dozen states have sued to block the mandate on contractors.

The National Retail Federation suggested the new rules are not needed because the rolling average number of new daily cases in the U.S. has fallen by more than half since September.

“Nevertheless, the Biden administration has chosen to declare an ‘emergency’ and impose burdensome new requirements on retailers during the crucial holiday shopping season,” said David



Regulators in Britain granted approval to the experimental drug molnupiravir from U.S. pharmaceutical giant Merck.

## Britain first to OK pill for COVID-19

By Rebecca Robbins, Aina J. Khan and Megan Specia  
The New York Times

LONDON — Britain became the first country on Thursday to authorize the use of an antiviral pill for COVID-19, an easy-to-use treatment that could help tame the pandemic.

The drug, known as molnupiravir and sold by the pharmaceutical company Merck, was shown in a clinical trial to reduce by half the risk of hospitalization and death in high-risk COVID-19 patients who were treated early in their infections. Dispensed from a pharmacy and taken at home, the drug is expected to reach more people than treatments like monoclonal antibodies, which are typically administered intravenously at a hospital or clinic.

Britain, which has already ordered enough supplies of the pill for 480,000 people, is one of a growing

list of wealthy countries that have raced to lock up supplies of the drug. Merck said last week it has reached deals to sell the pills to the governments of the United States, Australia, South Korea, New Zealand, Serbia and Singapore.

The drug is expected to be available in the United States as soon as December, after a panel of experts meets at the end of this month to make a recommendation to the Food and Drug Administration about whether it should be authorized for high-risk COVID-19 patients. The United States has ordered enough of the drug for 1.7 million patients, at a cost of about \$700 per person.

Britain’s regulator, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, recommended giving the drug to people as soon as possible after a positive test and within five days of the onset of symptoms. The full course of treatment is 40 pills over five days.

## Steelers avoid COVID woes of NFL

**STEELERS, FROM A-1**

asking him if he had been vaccinated, which wasn’t required but was highly incentivized by the NFL.

Now, Mr. Rodgers has tested positive for the virus and won’t play Sunday for the Packers at Kansas City. It has brought to light just how much of a headache the pandemic still can be, even one year after the four major professional sports leagues navigated a most unusual 2020.

“Some of the vaccinated in my family, I think, have had it. It’s just — you can’t live in a bubble,” Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger said Wednesday. “I felt like we lived in a bubble last year, and it’s like, ‘Listen, we can’t keep doing that.’”

“Now, I’m not going to go to a big, crowded place and just see what happens. I’m not going to take that chance. But no, I just try to live a normal life. And I don’t do much, anyway. I’m kind of home all the time.”

Throughout last season, before the vaccine was available, Mr. Roethlisberger spoke of taking extra precautions to avoid infection. That meant holing up at his house and even home-schooling his three children.

Back in July, when the Steelers convened for training camp, Mr. Roethlisberger noted that getting the vaccine was up to each individual player, and that he would respect everyone’s personal choice. He added that he wasn’t even sure who on the team was not vaccinated and thus subject to stricter protocols.

But that’s essentially what Mr. Rodgers said, too, and few suspected that he

was in that category himself. It didn’t matter for the first eight weeks of the season, but at this point he’s putting his franchise and the league in a difficult situation, at least in the public eye.

“That’s a great question for Aaron,” Packers coach Matt LaFleur said when asked why his starting quarterback referred to himself as “immunized” before the season.

Green Bay’s No. 1 receiver, Davante Adams, also missed last week’s game and remained on the COVID-19 list until Thursday afternoon, along with third-string quarterback Kurt Benkert and defensive coordinator Joe Barry. But as Mr. LaFleur pointed out, his team is far from the only one dealing with these obstacles.

The Steelers’ next opponent, the Chicago Bears, didn’t have head coach Matt Nagy last week against San Francisco. Mr. Nagy is vaccinated but announced last Monday he tested positive, and he was not cleared in time for Sunday. Arizona Cardinals coach Kliff Kingsbury missed a game in October, as well, and cost them their play-caller in a Week 6 win against the Cleveland Browns.

New York Giants running back Saquon Barkley was placed on the list Wednesday, same day as Mr. Rodgers, after reportedly testing positive — although he could still play Sunday because of his vaccination status. That’s what makes the Rodgers situation different and more scrutinized; he’ll be forced to miss a game because of the policy for unvaccinated players to isolate for at least 10 days.

It’s all very reminiscent of last year, when the Steelers had one COVID-19 scare with their own quarterback, but Mr. Roethlisberger made it back in time after only being deemed a close contact. Of course, they also had games missed by the likes of James Conner, Maurice Pouncey, Vince Williams, Vance McDonald and — in the playoffs — Joe Haden, all of whom tested positive. Other players missed time because they had close contact with someone infected.

In 2021, some combination of luck and preparation has been on their side. Going back to minicamp in June, the Steelers were believed to be among the league’s most vaccinated teams.

This offseason, some might have scoffed when coach Mike Tomlin expressed that his message to his players about the vaccine was that it can give them all a “winning edge.” Now it’s looking as if the Steelers — who are believed to be among the league’s most vaccinated teams, close to 100% — are seeing the benefits of that.

“Obviously, COVID’s still a thing, so you don’t want to take out that factor of how that affects people in certain circumstances,” Mr. Sutton said. “But you can say it’s kind of a competitive advantage. As a team, as an organization, we all come into each and every year with one mindset, to win a Super Bowl. You need everybody a part of that to be able to do those things.”

Brian Batko: [bbatko@post-gazette.com](mailto:bbatko@post-gazette.com) and Twitter @BrianBatko.

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National



LM Otero/Associated Press

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott shows off his signature after signing Senate Bill 1, also known as the election integrity bill, into law in Tyler, Texas, on Sept. 7.

# Biden administration sues Texas over voting law

By Paul J. Weber  
Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — The Biden administration on Thursday sued Texas over new voting rules that outlasted a summer of dramatic protests by Democrats, who face fading hopes of overhauling the nation's election laws in response to a wave of new restrictions in Republican-led states.

The lawsuit does not go after the entirety of a sweeping measure signed in September by Republican Gov. Greg Abbott in Texas, which already has some of the nation's toughest voting rules. Instead, the challenge filed in a San Antonio federal court targets provisions surrounding mail-in voting requirements and voter assistance, which the Justice Department argues violate federal civil rights protections.

It now puts two of the Texas GOP's biggest conservative

victories this year in court against the federal government, as the Justice Department is simultaneously trying to stop a new Texas law that has banned most abortions since September.

"Laws that impair eligible citizens' access to the ballot box have no place in our democracy," Kristen Clarke, the assistant attorney general for the Justice Department's civil rights division, said in a statement. "Texas Senate Bill 1's restrictions on voter assistance at the polls and on which absentee ballots cast by eligible voters can be accepted by election officials are unlawful and indefensible."

Georgia's new voting laws also drew a lawsuit this summer from the Biden administration, which is under pressure from the Democratic base to take greater action on voting rights, a top priority for the party ahead of the 2022 midterm elections.

Time is running out and Senate Republicans have repeatedly blocked federal legislation to change election laws, including another attempt Wednesday.

"Our democracy depends on the right of eligible voters to cast a ballot and to have that ballot counted," Attorney General Merrick Garland said. "The Justice Department will continue to use all the authorities at its disposal to protect this fundamental pillar of our society."

Mr. Abbott and other Texas Republicans say the changes provide safeguards against voter fraud, which is rare.

"Biden is coming after Texas for SB1, our recently enacted election integrity law," Republican Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton tweeted. "It's a great and a much-needed bill. Ensuring Texas has safe, secure, and transparent elections is a top priority of mine. I will see you in court, Biden!"

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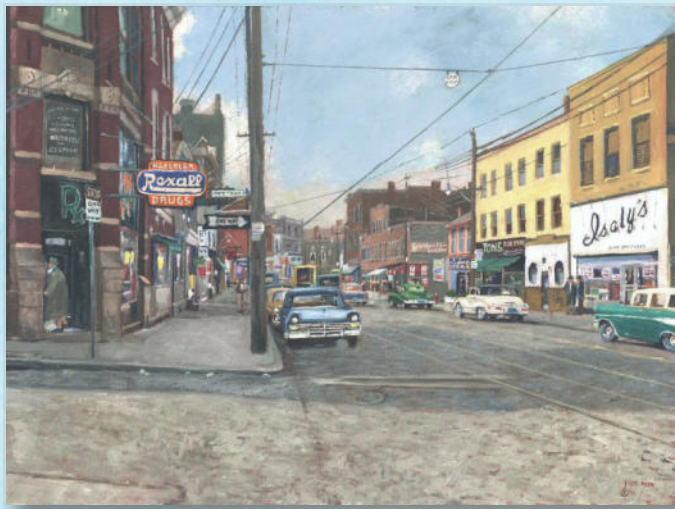


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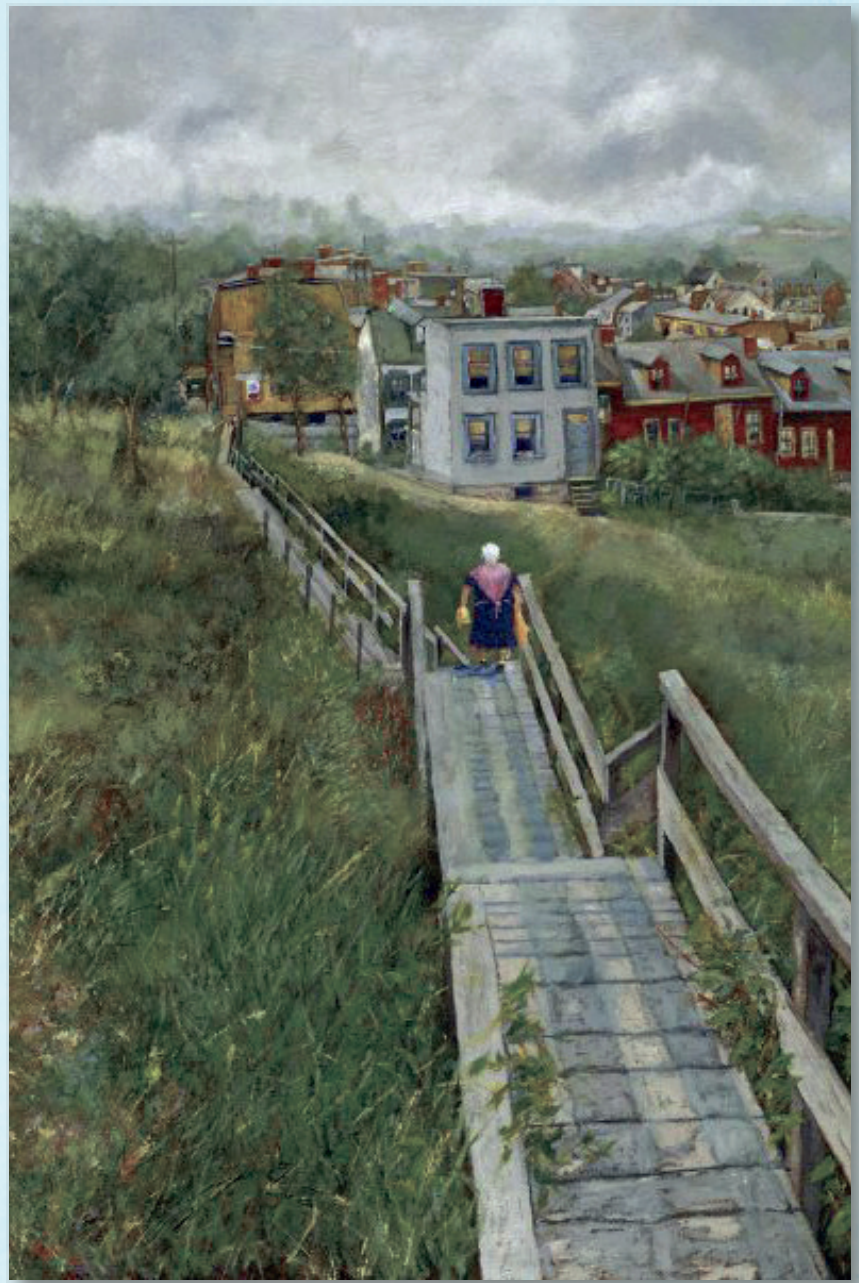


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Nation



Ellie Rushing/The Philadelphia Inquirer via AP

Republican Edward Durr spent little money during his campaign — around \$2,300 — and defeated New Jersey’s longtime state Senate president, Democrat Steve Sweeney, in a politically competitive district.

# GOP newcomer in N.J. tops longtime lawmaker

By Mike Catalini  
Associated Press

TRENTON, N.J. — New Jersey’s longtime state Senate president, Democrat Steve Sweeney, lost re-election, falling to a Republican newcomer who spent little money and underscoring Democratic woes in the Biden era.

Edward Durr, a furniture company truck driver and first-time officeholder, defeated Mr. Sweeney in New Jersey’s 3rd Legislative District, according to results tallied Thursday.

Mr. Sweeney’s defeat was unexpected, and has cast the fate of state government into uncertainty.

“It is stunning and shocking and I cannot figure it out,” said Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg said in an interview.

His loss unfolded in a politically competitive suburban Philadelphia district whose counties split their votes between Democrats and Republicans in the presidential elections in 2016 and again in 2020.

It also coincided with boosted GOP turnout even in an off-year election that saw Republicans make gains across the state. Mr. Durr’s victory Thursday netted about 3% more votes than Mr. Sweeney did in 2017 in unofficial returns.

Mr. Sweeney’s attention was also focused on tight Senate races elsewhere in the state.

“I don’t really think it was Steve Sweeney,” said incoming Republican Senate Leader Steve Oroho. “I think it had to do with the message coming from people who were just annoyed at all the executive orders and all the mandates and being sick and tired of being told what they can and can’t do.”

The loss says more about the headwinds Democrats are facing after losing the governor’s race in Virginia and winning a narrow victory in New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy’s race against Republican Jack Ciattarelli, experts said.

“This was a protest vote



Seth Wenig/Associated Press

Steve Sweeney lost to a furniture company truck driver in a race that left Democrats reeling.

against the Biden administration and Murphy,” said Montclair State University political science professor Brigid Harrison. “Steve was in many ways just how people voiced their dissatisfaction and anger with the larger political structure.”

Mr. Sweeney said in a statement Thursday he was waiting for more votes to come in before acknowledging the loss.

“While I am currently trailing in the race, we want to make sure every vote is counted. Our voters deserve that, and we will wait for the final results,” he said.

Mr. Sweeney has served as Senate president since 2010 and was responsible for shepherding Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy’s progressive agenda through the Legislature, including a phased-in \$15 an hour minimum wage, paid sick leave and recreational marijuana legalization.

He is also known for his high-profile reversal on opposition to gay marriage. Mr. Sweeney said in 2011 that he made the “biggest mistake of my legislative career” when he voted against marriage equality.

Though Mr. Sweeney was a fellow Democrat, he fought Mr. Murphy at the start of his administration over raising income taxes on the wealthy and worked closely with Republican Chris Christie during his eight-year term in office ending in 2018.

A deal he worked out with

Mr. Christie to overhaul public worker pension put Mr. Sweeney at odds with public sector unions, who would go on to become key supporters of Mr. Murphy.

Mr. Sweeney’s loss was cheered by progressive Democrats from southern New Jersey, who saw him as a product of transactional, machine politics.

“Today is glorious,” said Sue Altman, director of New Jersey Working Families, in a tweet. Altman is a longtime critic of Mr. Sweeney’s and saw him as focused on trying to maintain control of the Democratic party, particularly in southern New Jersey.

His allies say he was open-minded and eventually delivered for the left.

“I think he was a remarkable senator and Senate president, and as I have often reminded my progressive friends that we never could have gotten all those bills on Gov. Murphy’s desk for him to sign without the cooperation of the Senate president,” Mr. Weinberg said.

Mr. Sweeney had faced electoral opposition before. In 2017, his feud with the state’s biggest teacher’s union over retirement benefits among other issues led to a battle in which the New Jersey Education Association spent millions to try to defeat Mr. Sweeney. The union’s effort failed.

But this year, Mr. Durr defeated him, spending just \$2,300.

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## National

## Race dominates Arbery trial

Opening statements to start on Friday

By Russ Bynum  
Associated Press

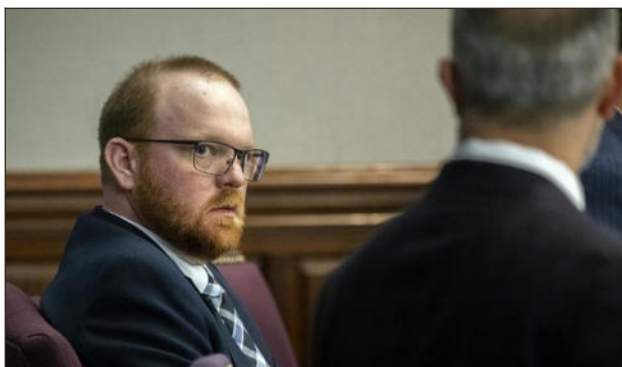
BRUNSWICK, Ga. — The trial hasn't even started and yet issues of race are dominating the case in which three white men are charged with murder for chasing and killing Ahmaud Arbery.

The 25-year-old Black man's slaying has become part of the broader reckoning on racial injustice in the U.S. legal system. Greg and Travis McMichael, a father and son, and their neighbor William "Roddie" Bryan weren't charged for more than two months until a cellphone video of the

And Arbery's family and their supporters had their faith rattled after 2½ weeks of jury selection ended Wednesday with the judge agreeing to seat a panel of 11 whites and one Black man.

"It's probably clearer than before that race is going to be at the forefront of this case and will probably even play a big role in jury deliberations" at the end of the trial, said Page Pate, a Georgia criminal defense attorney who isn't involved in the case.

Superior Court Judge Timothy Walmsley plans to have the jury sworn in Friday to hear opening statements from lawyers on



Stephen B. Morton/Associated Press  
Travis McMichael listens to one of his attorneys during a motion hearing in the Glynn County Courthouse on Thursday in Brunswick, Ga.

seat 15 total panelists: a main jury of 12 plus three alternates.

The total number

when the judge dismissed a juror from the main panel, a white woman, citing medical reasons. The race of the alternate juror who replaced her was not known. The judge has not given the races of the alternate jurors, and they weren't asked their race in court during jury selection.

The judge had said he agreed with prosecutors that the exclusion of other Black potential jurors appeared to be "intentional discrimination." He also said Georgia law limited his authority to intervene after defense attorneys stated nonracial reasons for cutting those jurors.

The judge said the group of 48 used to narrow down the final jury had included 12 potential jurors who were Black. Prosecutors were allowed to strike a dozen people from the jury pool and defense lawyers got to cut 24, for virtually any reason save for one exception. The U.S. Supreme Court has held it's unconstitutional to exclude potential jurors based solely on race or ethnicity.

"It's outrageous that Black jurors were intentionally excluded to create such an imbalanced jury," Ben Crump, an attorney for Arbery's father, Marcus Arbery Sr., said in a statement Thursday.

Black potential jurors seemed to face greater scrutiny than whites as they were questioned by lawyers during jury selection, and the resulting jury likely favors the defense, said Mr. Pate, who practices in Atlanta and Brunswick.

"I'm not saying it's intentionally discriminatory, or if it was just the dynamic of this case, but it was a lot harder to get on this jury if you were Black than if you were white," Mr. Pate said.

Many expressed strong opinions about Arbery's killing and their beliefs that race played a role. Some knew Arbery or other members of his family. Defense attorneys cited those reasons for striking Black people from the jury pool.

The McMichaels armed themselves and pursued Arbery after spotting him running in their neighborhood. Mr. Bryan joined the chase and took cellphone video of Travis McMichael shooting Arbery three times with a shotgun.

## Witness: Shooting victim lunged for Rittenhouse's rifle

By Amy Forliti,  
Tammy Webber  
and Michael Tarm  
Associated Press

KENOSHA, Wis. — The first man shot by Kyle Rittenhouse on the streets of Kenosha was "hyperaggressive" that night, threatened to kill Mr. Rittenhouse and someone with him, and later lunged for Mr. Rittenhouse's rifle just before the 17-year-old fired, witnesses testified Thursday.

The testimony at Mr. Rittenhouse's murder trial came from two witnesses who had been called to the stand by the prosecution but gave accounts often more favorable to the defense in the politically polarizing case.

Mr. Rittenhouse, now 18, is charged with shooting three men, two of them fatally, in the summer of 2020. The aspiring police officer had gone to Kenosha with an AR-style semi-automatic rifle and a medical kit in what he said was an effort to safeguard property from violent protests that broke out over the police shooting of a Black man.

Before testimony resumed Thursday, the judge dismissed a juror who had made a joke to a court security officer about the police shooting of Jacob Blake, the Black man whose wounding triggered the Kenosha protests. The juror, a retired man, declined to repeat the joke for the judge.

"It is clear that the appearance of bias is present and it would seriously undermine the outcome of the case," Circuit Judge Bruce Schroeder said.

Richie McGinniss, who was recording events on a cellphone that night for the right-wing website The Daily Caller, testified that Joseph Rosenbaum, the first man shot that night, was killed after chasing down Mr. Rittenhouse and lunging for the gun.

"I think it was very clear to me that he was reaching specifically for the weapon," Mr. McGinniss said.

Ryan Balch, a former Amy infantryman who carried an AR-style semi-automatic rifle that night and walked around patrolling the streets with Mr. Rittenhouse, testified that Rosenbaum was "hyperaggressive and acting out in a violent manner," including trying to set fires and throwing rocks.

Mr. Balch said that he got between Rosenbaum and another man while Rosenbaum was trying to start a fire, and Rosenbaum got angry, shouting, "If I catch any of you guys alone tonight I'm going to [expletive] kill you!"

Mr. Balch said that Mr. Rittenhouse was within earshot and that he believed the threat was aimed at both of them.

Prosecutors have portrayed Mr. Rittenhouse as the instigator of the bloodshed, while his lawyer has argued that he acted in self-defense, suggesting among other things that Mr. Rittenhouse had reason to fear his weapon would be taken away and used against him.

The killing of Rosenbaum, 36, has emerged as one of the most crucial and most disputed moments of the night. It is one of the few moments not clearly captured on video.

In an attempt to undo some of the damage done by his own witness, prosecutor Thomas Binger said Mr. McGinniss' testimony about what Rosenbaum was intending to do was "complete guesswork."

"Isn't it?" he asked. "Well," Mr. McGinniss replied, "he said, '[Expletive] you.' And then he reached for the weapon."

But Mr. McGinniss also appeared to boost the prosecution's case when he said he had a sense that something bad could happen that night because of all the guns in the area.

The prosecutor also elicited testimony from Mr. McGinniss and Mr. Balch that affirmed Rosenbaum was not armed that night and did not actually hurt anyone that night.

In his testimony, Mr. McGinniss said that as Rosenbaum lunged, Mr. Rittenhouse "kind of dodged around" with his weapon and then leveled the gun and fired.

Mr. Binger repeatedly tried to get Mr. McGinniss to say Rosenbaum was not "lunging" but "falling" when he was shot, as Mr. McGinniss said in a media interview days after the shooting.

But Mr. McGinniss said: "He was lunging, falling. I would use those as synonymous terms in this situation because basically, you know, he threw his momentum towards the weapon."

As prosecutors played footage of Rosenbaum lying fatally wounded in a car lot, Mr. McGinniss struggled to keep his composure on the stand, rapidly inhaling and exhaling, then averting his eyes from a video monitor. The prosecutor apologized for playing it, saying he had to.

Across the room, Mr. Rittenhouse appeared to look away from his desktop monitor and cast his eyes downward as the video showed Rosenbaum bleeding from the head, groaning loudly.

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International

# Ethiopia's war with Tigray forces intensifies

By Cara Anna  
Associated Press

Cease-fire call ignored; many detained

NAIROBI, Kenya — Ethiopia's government marked a year of war by lashing out Thursday in response to international alarm about hate speech, comparing the rival Tigray forces to "a rat that strays far from its hole" and saying the country is close to "burying the evil forces."

The statement from the government communication service, posted on social media and confirmed by a government spokesman, came amid urgent new efforts to calm the escalating war as a U.S. special envoy arrived and the president of neighboring Kenya and others called for an immediate cease-fire.

State Department spokesman Ned Price told reporters that "we are speaking as starkly as we can" in urging U.S. citizens to leave the country.

The war that has killed thousands of people and displaced millions since November 2020 threatens to engulf Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa. Tigray forces seized key cities in recent days and linked up with another armed group, leading the government of Africa's second-most populous country to declare a national state of emergency with sweeping detention powers.

U.S. special envoy Jeffrey Feltman, who this week insisted that "there are many, many ways to initiate discreet talks" toward peace, met Thursday with Ethiopia's deputy prime minister and ministers of defense and finance, and his visit continues Friday.

Efforts to engage Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, on peace talks have failed. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he spoke with Mr. Abiy on Wednesday "to offer my

good offices to create the conditions for a dialogue so the fighting stops."

The U.N. Security Council scheduled an open meeting followed by closed consultations Friday afternoon on the escalating violence in Ethiopia at the request of Ireland, Kenya, Niger, Tunisia and St. Vincent & The Grenadines.

Council members are considering a press statement calling for an immediate cessation of the expanding and intensifying military clashes, an end to hate speech, and unrestricted access to tackle the world's worst hunger crisis in a decade in the Tigray region, according to a draft obtained by The Associated Press.

But last week a congressional aide told The Associated Press "there have been talks of talks with officials, but when it gets to the Abiy level and the senior (Tigray forces) level, the demands are wide, and Abiy doesn't want to talk."

Instead, the prime minister has urged citizens to rise up and "bury" the Tigray forces who long dominated the national government before he came to power. On Wednesday, Facebook said it had removed a post by Mr. Abiy with that language, saying it violated policies against inciting violence.

The government statement on Thursday took aim not only at Facebook, accusing it of showing its "true colors," but also at media, humanitarian groups and others allegedly "working hand in hand with the enemy in propagating its false narrative."

But Ethiopia's government aimed its harshest language at the Tigray forces. "TPLF and its puppets are being encircled by our

forces. As the saying goes, 'a rat that strays far from its hole is nearer to death,'" the statement said, referring to the Tigray People's Liberation Front.

Kenya increased security along its borders amid fears of a wave of Ethiopians fleeing as one of the world's worst humanitarian crises spreads.

Tigray forces spokesman Getachew Reda claimed they had "joined hands" with another armed group, the Oromo Liberation Army, to seize the city of Kemishe, which is even closer to the capital. A security source confirmed that the two armed groups had linked up to control Kemishe and said Tigray forces were pushing east as well as south toward the capital.

All sides in the war have committed abuses, a joint U.N. human rights investigation said Wednesday, while millions of people in the government-blockaded Tigray region are no longer receiving humanitarian aid. The U.N. says no aid has entered Tigray since Ethiopian military airstrikes resumed there Oct. 18, and 80% of essential medication is no longer available.

The Tigray forces say they are pressuring the government to end the blockade, but the spreading insecurity as they push south through the neighboring Amhara region has hampered aid delivery to hundreds of thousands of hungry people.

One lawyer, speaking on condition of anonymity, estimated that thousands have been detained this week, citing conversations with "many people from the four corners of the city." He said Tigrayan lawyers like him were powerless to help because of their ethnicity.



Associated Press  
People sit on steps next to a sculpture in the shape of Amharic words reading "Addis Ababa" on Thursday in the Piazza old town area of the capital Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

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# Abusive hockey chant a failure of authority

Last month, a man was arrested on a train outside Philadelphia in the rape of a fellow passenger. The crime lasted several minutes and occurred in plain sight. While the Delaware County district attorney has insisted that we should not judge the witnesses because the assault might have appeared ambiguous to distracted bystanders and passersby, the fact remains that no one, except a shocked transit employee, even bothered to dial 911.

This episode came to mind when we heard about the disgusting event that took place at a high school hockey game in Kittanning last week. The entire student section for Armstrong High, the home team, engaged in prolonged, obscene and degrading chants targeting the young woman who plays goalie for Mars Area High School. The girl played through tears. The adults — parents, security guards, coaches, officials — did nothing.

The first and most obvious comparison to make is that in both cases, a woman's suffering was invisible to bystanders. For all the progress of #MeToo, our society seems to have permanent blinders that filter out women's pain from our vision, and from our caring.

Further, though obviously to very different degrees, both acts were a kind of dehumanization. Every rape, of course, is dehumanizing; this is why rape is a capital crime in many countries and was in several states until a 1977 Supreme Court decision struck down capital rape statutes. A rapist treats his (or her) victim as an object from which to derive satisfaction, completely devoid of human dignity. In so doing, the rapist, in a sense, voids his own humanity.

Now, of course not every chant at a sporting event is dehumanizing. But to harass a player precisely because she is a woman, using vulgar and gender-specific terms of abuse, for the sole purpose of hurting her and deriving enjoyment from doing so? Yes, that's dehumanizing.

There are some mitigating factors here. The Armstrong students are children, first of all. And they acted as a group, so a mob mentality surely set in.

But the biggest mitigating factor of all is exactly that which makes the episode all the more revolting: No one with authority — the legal authority of a security guard, the athletic authority of a coach or official, or, most of all, the moral authority of a parent — did anything to stop it. In failing to do so, they communicated that the students' actions were tolerable.

The Philadelphia train riders might have been paralyzed by shock or fear, but what excuse do the adults at the hockey game have? What did they have to be afraid of? What would it have cost them to confront the students — for the good of their victim, and for their own good, as well?

Forgive us for being a bit traditional, but it's really quite simple: Authorities need to be real authorities, not nonjudgmental advisers or timid onlookers. And parents have to be real parents, not meek "friends" to their children. Responsibility is passed down from those who have it to those who need to learn it.

When these basic duties aren't seen through, all forms of mutual responsibility suffer, and soon everything falls apart. And, as usual, it's women who bear the worst of the consequences.

# Info on Afghan mess must be declassified

Even as the Biden administration tries to close the book on U.S. misadventures in Afghanistan, it still has yet to open the books on embarrassing information that could expose how badly the 20-year stabilization effort was mismanaged.

Classified information was made available to the special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction as he prepared his most recent report on waste, fraud and abuse in the war and rebuilding effort.

But the American public and some members of Congress still aren't allowed to see it. President Joe Biden must honor pledges for full transparency and declassify this information immediately.

Although Mr. Biden presided over a disastrous, rushed withdrawal in August, the vast bulk of the war occurred under his three predecessors. Each committed blunders that deserve a full public airing to avoid repeating their mistakes in the future.

Special Inspector General John Sopko has monitored these failings since 2012, and anyone who has bothered to read his office's 53 quarterly reports would probably agree with his assessment that the collapse of the Afghan security forces and rapid Taliban takeover was predictable.

"We really need to get information declassified. There is a lot of information that was classified or withheld from the American people over the years, particularly since 2015, to protect the Afghan government from embarrassment," Mr. Sopko told National Public Radio recently.

Since the Taliban is now in power,

there's no one left in Afghanistan's government to be embarrassed if this information were released. It's not clear why the information was classified to begin with; public embarrassment isn't one of the standards by which the U.S. government labels national security information secret.

"A recent series of requests by the State Department to remove from public view wholesale parts of [the special inspector general's] reports is a cautionary tale of why oversight agencies need to question an all-too-common impulse to remove information from congressional and public view with little to no basis in fact or law," Mr. Sopko's latest report states.

Aside from the massive expenditures to support the U.S. military's presence since 2001, U.S. taxpayers funded \$145 billion trying to rebuild Afghanistan, train its security forces and strengthen its civilian government institutions, economy and civil society, Mr. Sopko says in the 53rd quarterly report to Congress.

The Taliban takeover wiped out virtually everything the United States spent two decades trying to build.

"These are sobering facts, and we owe all who served in Afghanistan — as well as the American taxpayer — an accurate accounting of why the 20-year U.S. mission in Afghanistan ended so abruptly, with so little to show for it," the report states.

For the federal government, Congress and taxpayers to learn from this experience, they need to have access to information arbitrarily kept from public view by an overly protective State Department.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

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Paul Waldman

# The real lesson Democrats should take from this election

One of the most pervasive biases among the political media is the bias toward dramatization, interpreting every event as startling, extraordinary and signaling a reshaped political landscape.

That is how many are interpreting the results of Tuesday's elections, especially Glenn Youngkin's win in the Virginia gubernatorial race. The truth is more mundane — but its implications for how Democrats should think about their future are no less profound.

Let's begin with the context in which these elections took place. First and most important, there's a Democrat in the White House. It is impossible to overstate how that one simple fact puts Democrats in a position to lose and lose big, not just in this election but in next year's midterms as well.

Here's what happens when a president gets elected: He tries to do a bunch of things, some of them work out and some of them don't, but nobody's life is really transformed, at least in the short term. Meanwhile, the opposition party's voters are utterly enraged by the mere fact that someone they hate is now running the country.

So at the first opportunity (and probably the second and the third), those opposition voters rush to the polls, while voters from the president's party are not nearly so motivated.

Now add in the fact that we're still in a pandemic, the delta variant has slowed the recovery, supply chain problems are producing inflation and President Joe Biden's approval ratings are in the low 40s.

Given all that, it would have been absolutely stunning if Democrats hadn't gotten their clocks cleaned in these elections, just as Republicans did in 2017 after Donald Trump's election and Democrats did in 2009 after Barack Obama's election.

But here's the reality for 2022: Only something truly earthshaking will prevent the almost inevitable outcome of Democrats losing the House and probably the Senate as well.

There were only two times in recent decades that the president's party didn't suffer significant losses in the midterms. The first was 1998, a year dominated by the Republican impeachment of Bill Clinton, which led to its own backlash against Republicans. Approval of the GOP plunged to depths only matched when they shut down the govern-



Associated Press

Does Glenn Youngkin's victory in the Virginia gubernatorial race reflect a changing political landscape, or was it a matter of voters lashing out against the party in power?

ment five years later.

The second was 2002. Amid the aftermath of Sept. 11 the atmosphere of fear and panic reigned; President George W. Bush's approval ratings were in the 60s, and Republicans successfully argued that Democrats were terrorist-loving traitors who wanted Americans to die.

Could something that momentous happen in the next 12 months to turn the situation in Democrats' favor, either defusing Republican anger or elevating Democratic anger to the point where more Democrats turn out than Republicans? It's always possible.

But ordinary good news — the passage of important bills, the fading of the pandemic, a strong economic rebound — probably won't be enough. All that would produce a situation in which Democratic voters say, "Things are going pretty well," and Republican voters say, "I am enraged!" if only because a Democrat is still president and Democrats still control Congress.

So when Democrats are told that they must pass the Build Back Better bill or some other piece of legislation to have any chance of holding the House and Senate, it isn't exactly right. If they don't pass worthwhile bills they'll certainly lose, since their own supporters will see them as weak and ineffectual. But even if they do pass the bills, it won't be enough.

So they have to widen their view beyond 2022. Accept that they have one more year to leg-

islate, and ask: What can we accomplish in that time? How many people can we help? How much can we improve the basic conditions in which Americans lead their lives? How much progress can we make on our agenda, not because we think there will be short-term political dividends but because it's the reason we got into politics in the first place. Or at least it should have been.

It's not that there will be no political ramifications to what they do and don't accomplish now. But many of them will take years to play out. For example, passing the Affordable Care Act only exacerbated the struggles they had in the 2010 midterms, since it became a focus of Republican anger and mobilization. But eventually it became a political advantage; eight years later, voters punished Republicans for trying to repeal it.

More importantly, imperfect though it was, the ACA helped enormous numbers of people. It eliminated the nightmare of being denied health coverage because of pre-existing conditions and gave millions of Americans insurance for the first time. It was an extraordinary achievement.

So Democrats should ask themselves: What can we do now that we'll proudly tell our grandchildren about years from now? If we really only have a year to make a difference, what are we going to do with that year?

Paul Waldman is a columnist for *The Washington Post*.

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## Perspectives

Steve Chapman

# How the Texas abortion law endangers gun rights

If you attend an abortion-rights rally, you are not likely to see anyone wearing a Second Amendment T-shirt. Visit a gun range, and trust me, none of the pickup trucks will have Planned Parenthood decals. But the Texas abortion ban has some very different Americans joining in a chorus of, “Don’t tread on me.”

The law prohibits any abortion after fetal cardiac activity is detected — as early as five weeks into a pregnancy. It makes no exceptions for women impregnated by rape or incest. It is intended to make the great majority of abortions unobtainable.

The effort might sound like a fool’s errand. For nearly half a century, the Supreme Court has recognized a woman’s right to abortion at any time before her fetus is capable of surviving outside the womb, about 24 weeks.

But the Texas Legislature came up with a plan to make an unconstitutional law exempt from constitutional challenge.

The key to it is that unlike most laws, this one may not be enforced by state or local officials. That task is delegated for any mope on the street, who may sue any provider violating the ban and collect a minimum of \$10,000,

plus attorneys’ fees.

Lawsuits may also be filed against those who “aid and abet” an abortion — say, a friend who drives a woman to an appointment.

By removing itself from policing the law, the state figured, it would leave no one for providers to sue to block enforcement. So far, the strategy has worked. Clinics stopped offering most abortions, and courts have allowed the law to remain in force. For the moment, at least, a constitutionally guaranteed right is in the equivalent of a medically induced coma.

On Monday, the Supreme Court heard arguments over the law, supported by the usual friend-of-the-court briefs from groups that support or oppose abortion rights. But one of the most illuminating briefs came from a group that is resolutely noncommittal on reproductive issues.

The Firearms Policy Coalition is exclusively concerned with upholding the Second Amendment as it interprets it. The organization believes the rights of gun owners are just as much at risk from the Texas law as the rights of abortion providers and patients.

If this law is allowed to stand, letting Texas infringe the right to abortion, another state could adopt the same scheme for a different purpose: to deny the individual right to keep and bear arms.

The Supreme Court vindicated that freedom in the 2008 case of *Heller v. the District of Columbia*, striking down a ban on handguns in the nation’s capital. But the FPC brief warns that using the Texas abortion model, New York or California would be free “to declare that the ownership or sale of a handgun is illegal, notwithstanding *Heller*, and set up a bounty system with the same unbalanced procedures and penalties adopted by Texas in this case.”

Anyone buying or selling a pistol or an AR-15 could be forced to hand over \$10,000 — for doing something that the Constitution is supposed to protect. Gun-shy states also could up the ante. They could offer judgments of \$100,000 or \$1 million, making lawsuits far more enticing and far more intimidating.

The Texas bounty system has not produced a torrent of lawsuits, because clinics have been deterred from violating the law. Enforcement hasn’t been neces-

sary; the mere threat is enough. For several weeks, the reproductive freedom enjoyed by other American women has been a cruel fiction for those in Texas.

Second Amendment supporters should worry that the next target will be on their backs. What gun shop would risk financial catastrophe to make a \$500 sale? Gun owners would have to fear not only buying the forbidden firearms (if they could find a seller), but even letting others know of weapons they already own. A nosy neighbor or town gossip could reap a big windfall.

By deviously sabotaging one right, the Texas law creates a serious danger to any number of others. It also undermines the rule of law by rewarding people who trample on the freedom of their fellow citizens.

Representing the Justice Department, Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar told the Supreme Court Monday, “In the history of the United States, no state has done what Texas has done here.” If this gambit succeeds, it won’t stop in Texas, and it won’t stop with abortion.

*Steve Chapman is a columnist for Creators Syndicate.*

Dr. Mary Ganguli

# Masking still makes sense for vaccinated individuals

I recently attended a performance by the comedian Bill Maher at the Benedum Center for the Performing Arts. Mr. Maher was in good form. He began by noting how good it felt to be out and about again, with other people, enjoying something together. We could all relate to that sentiment.

He then made fun of the audience for wearing masks despite being vaccinated — and has continued to do so on his HBO show. Thanks to the clear thinking of Cultural District leadership, a vaccination card, a photo ID and a mask were all requirements for attending shows at the Benedum.

Now, Mr. Maher is not the only influential person to question why vaccinated people are still wearing masks. We protected ourselves with masks till we could get vaccinated, but doesn’t vaccination give us immunity? If so, why still mask up? If not, why did we bother getting vaccinated?

We all know there’s just too much information out there: some of it changing over time, some of it well-intended but misguided and some of it deliberate misinformation. It can be confusing and overwhelming. As a medical doctor and professor of epidemiology at the University of Pittsburgh, I’d like to try to cut through that confusion.

First of all, a few weeks after we are fully vaccinated, we have good immunity: That is, we have high levels of antibodies circulating in our blood that are ready to pounce on any COVID-19-causing virus that dares to enter our bloodstream. These antibody levels wane after a while, which is why booster shots are now being recommended.

But remember: The antibodies are in our blood, circulating inside our bodies. They are not on the surfaces of our mouths and noses that are exposed to outside air.

Therefore, even though I am fully vaccinated, if I don’t wear a mask, the inside of my nose and mouth can be landing surfaces for viruses released by someone else who is not wearing a mask.

On the bright side, these viruses probably won’t make me sick because if they enter my bloodstream my antibodies will make short work of them. This isn’t a certainty, as breakthrough cases do occur, but it is very likely.

But on the other hand, the viruses can stay in my nose and mouth and multiply there, without entering my bloodstream. When I exhale while breathing (or laughing at a comedian’s jokes) I can breathe out viruses that find their way into the noses and mouths of other people who are not masked. Those people can then get infected, especially if they have not been vaccinated because they are not yet eligible, or have chosen not to be vaccinated, or have some pre-existing risk factor that lowers their immunity.

In the auditorium at Mr. Maher’s show, audience members were sitting close enough to one another for unmasked individuals to transmit viruses while talking and laughing.

Over the course of the pandemic, the wearing of masks has taken on new meanings and significance. For some, not wearing masks has become a symbol of political ideology, or religious faith, or of rugged individualism.

But there’s nothing ideological about masks: Surgeons and other operating room staff have always worn them to avoid breathing germs into the bodies of patients undergoing surgery; workers in certain manufacturing sectors have always worn them to avoid breathing moisture onto delicate hardware; and in some highly polluted cities, people were already wearing masks outdoors to avoid breathing polluted air.

Masks are a simple and inexpensive physical barrier against the transmission of tiny droplets and particles into and out of our mouths and noses. That is all they are.

I have discovered some additional benefits to mask-wearing over the past year. In winter, while walking outside, a mask kept my lips from chapping. In the spring, a mask saved me from inhaling pollen outdoors. In my kitchen, a mask kept my eyes from watering while chopping onions.

I am sympathetic to Mr. Maher, throwing himself into a live performance on stage and missing the energy he used to feel from audiences whose smiles were not hidden, and whose laughs were not muffled, by masks. But he and other high-profile individuals who mock mask-wearing are further delaying the day we can take off our masks for good.

Let’s all work together to bring that day closer.

*Mary Ganguli, M.D., MPH, is professor of psychiatry, neurology and epidemiology at the University of Pittsburgh. She lives in Point Breeze.*

Andreas Kluth

# Climate change will kill national sovereignty as we know it

As we collectively hurtle into the era of climate change, international relations as we’ve known them for almost four centuries will change beyond recognition. This shift is probably inevitable and possibly even necessary. But it will also cause new conflicts and therefore war and suffering.

Since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, diplomats have — in peacetime and war alike — for the most part subscribed to the principle of national sovereignty. This is the idea, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, that foreign countries have no right “to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state.”

The concept was born, along with the entire system of modern states, in the physical and psychological rubble of the Thirty Years War. Starting in 1618, the European powers intervened in one another’s territories almost willy-nilly.

Round after round of war left about one in three central Europeans dead. It was in that continental graveyard that statesmen (they were all men) stipulated that it was best if every state henceforth minded only its own business.

Nobody at the Peace of Westphalia was deluded enough to think that this realist notion would end war as such. After all, by acknowledging sovereignty, the system accepted that countries pursue their national interests, which tend to clash. But at least the new consensus offered the chance of preventing another indiscriminate bloodletting.

Even then, the principle of sovereignty was never absolute or uncontroversial. For a long time, the best idealist counterargument was humanitarian — that countries have not just the right but the duty to intervene in other states if, say, those are committing atrocities such as genocide.

Now, however, there’s an even more powerful case against sovereignty, put forth by thinkers such as Stewart Patrick at the Council on Foreign Relations. It’s that in a world where all countries collectively face the planetary emergency of global warming, sovereignty is simply no longer a tenable concept.

That insight has probably also dawned on many delegates to COP26, the United Nations climate summit in Glasgow. What’s at stake in those negotiations is not any country’s “na-



Nelson Almeida/AFP via Getty Images

A fire in the Amazon rainforest rages near Itaituba, Brazil, in 2019. Brazil’s management of the Amazon rainforest sparked a spat between that nation’s leader and the president of France two years ago.

tional” interest as such, except insofar as it’s part of the collective interest of our species in preserving the global commons: the atmosphere and biosphere.

And although aviation regulators might disagree, the borders around our territorial jurisdictions just don’t extend up into the air.

A carbon dioxide molecule emitted in China, the U.S. or India will waft who-knows-where and accelerate climate change everywhere. It will flood cities in Germany, burn forests in Australia, starve people in Africa and submerge islands in the Pacific. All the world’s people, therefore, have a legitimate interest in the greenhouse gases emitted in any given jurisdiction.

An early and tragicomic demonstration of this shift in international relations was the dust-up in 2019 between Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro and his French counterpart, Emmanuel Macron. Mr. Bolsonaro, a populist firebrand, was at that time allowing fires to burn wide swathes of the Amazon rainforest. It happens to be the world’s primary “lung” or “carbon sink,” pulling greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere and storing them in trees. Except now the Amazon was belching carbon back into the air.

Speaking for many, the French president accused his Brazilian counterpart of abetting “ecocide.” Sounds like the new genocide, doesn’t it? Mr. Bolsonaro shot back that Mr. Macron was a neocolonialist and followed up with a sexist jibe aimed at Mr. Macron’s wife.

The underlying issue was sovereignty: Is a rainforest located in Brazil the business of Brazil or of the world? Would, in a hypothetical future scenario, an alliance led by France be within its rights to declare war on Brazil to prevent ecocide and thereby humanity’s suicide? (Fortunately, 100 countries including Brazil this week pledged instead to cooperate in phasing out deforestation.)

This opens a new line of thinking about world affairs. Policymakers are already steeped in analyses of the new types of conflict that global warming will cause within and between countries. Those include wars over access to freshwater, the disappearance of arable land or mass migrations.

But the creeping obsolescence of Westphalian sovereignty as the operating system of international relations would cause even more upheaval. And this looks inevitable. Some powers or alliances will in the future contemplate military interventions

in other states to end what they will define as ecocide. Others may even go to war if they believe rival countries are taking unilateral measures against climate change that threaten their own interests.

America’s National Intelligence Council, for example, has thought about what would happen if some country were to spray huge quantities of aerosols into the stratosphere.

Such geoengineering might reflect sunlight and cool the planet, as ash does after a big volcanic eruption. But it could also change weather patterns and rob other countries of their livelihood. Who in this scenario would be sovereign over what?

The time to think about the demise of sovereignty is now. Maybe we’ll need an ecological equivalent to what the World Trade Organization is to commerce: A new international body that makes the conundrum explicit and attempts to maintain order.

Even then, the world is likely to become more unstable and dangerous, not only ecologically but also geopolitically. We all dread environmental Armageddon. But we don’t want another Thirty Years War either.

*Andreas Kluth is a columnist for Bloomer Opinion.*

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Perfect Power Wash's team of professional technicians have the experience, training, and equipment to provide the best results possible for your property, guaranteed.

## Protect Your Concrete From Structural Damage Caused by Destructive Freeze-Thaw Cycles with Perfect Power Wash

by David Koroczynsky

When you are considering home maintenance options and priorities, your concrete surfaces likely never cross your mind. Once concrete is laid and settled, it can become an afterthought because it appears to be strong enough to withstand your lifetime and beyond. However, while concrete is inherently strong, it requires proper care to prevent deterioration. The fast



Mike Palubiak, Founder, Perfect Power Wash

approaching winter weather will bring freeze-thaw cycles that occur within your concrete and cause cracking, chipping, and additional damage that result in costly repairs. Fortunately for you and your concrete, Perfect Power Wash's team of professionals has a process designed to clean and protect your concrete in the safest possible manner. Over 20+ years in business, Perfect Power Wash has serviced more than 100,000 satisfied customers using their proven processes and industry-leading equipment.

### HARD TIMES FOR CONCRETE

Concrete acts like a sponge; the pores on the surface take in moisture that seeps beneath the surface. When moisture is absorbed into concrete and freezes, it can expand the concrete by up to 9%. When this happens, the water will spread out in the concrete with nowhere to go. The expansion occurring inside the concrete will eventually lead to cracking, chipping, and pitting after enough of these freeze-thaw cycles. You can expect for these freeze-thaw cycles to begin in late October and continue through early spring.

Though concrete deterioration can be largely attributed to winter conditions, it is not safe from the other three seasons. Algae, mold, and mildew are prevalent on most of your home's surfaces once spring is in bloom. Due to all the moisture caused by spring rain showers, concrete can become a comfortable breeding ground for mold and mildew. Additionally, algae blooms cause airborne algae to spread to residential surfaces such as siding, roof shingles, and concrete, just to name a few.

In short, the seasons, as well as daily wear-and-tear caused by vehicle traffic, can lay waste to your concrete if you do not maintain it on a regular basis. When concrete cracks and those cracks expand over time, the surface can be too far gone to have it leveled and would need replaced—and this process is extremely expensive. For example, the average driveway is around 1,200 square feet. If this concrete needed replaced, it would cost upwards of \$7,200. Washing and sealing your concrete costs pennies on the dollar in comparison, but time is running out to chose this route for your property. Perfect Power Wash's Concrete Wash and Seal uses safe pressure to flush out the pores of your concrete before applying a premium, proprietary sealer to protect your concrete from within.

### PERFECTING PROTECTION

Mike Palubiak, founder of Perfect Power Wash, has spent the past two-plus decades perfecting this process. "We've helped beautify and maintain tens of thousands of driveways and concrete patios over the past 20+ years," said Palubiak. "Our process is, well, perfect."

First, we apply a cleanser to the concrete surface to help loosen all the dirt and other contaminants that sit on the surface and reside in the pores. We follow that up with our high-pressure surface

cleaner that works with the cleanser to eradicate dirt and grime.

Next, we thoroughly rinse the surface with fresh water.

Last—and this is the most important part—we apply a premium, siloxane-silane sealer to prevent cracking, chipping, and pitting."

Their proprietary siloxane-silane sealer has only improved over the past few years and is now the strongest available on the market.



"We're constantly improving the mix with our cleansers and sealer to make sure we're using the absolute best products for our customers," said Palubiak. "I've spent years refining and perfecting our sealer—it's one of many things that sets us apart in this industry."

### CALL THE PROS

When it comes to protecting your concrete from freeze-thaw cycles or beautifying your property, it is always best to trust the pros. Perfect Power Wash's professional technicians are expertly trained to provide perfect results for your concrete, siding, roof, and more. In fact, Perfect Power Wash guarantees to deliver the best results for your property using their safe and effective processes or your money back.

Hurry! Time is running out to have your concrete protected from winter weather. The team at Perfect Power Wash is standing by to answer your questions and schedule your service. Call 412.438.8932 today to save 20% on all services and feel what it's like to love your home again.

### Perfect Power Wash Advantages

**Quick & Easy Scheduling:** Take care of everything in one short phone call. Receive a free quote, get all your questions answered, and schedule your service.

**Professional Operation:** From professional technicians to trucks outfitted with best-in-class equipment, Perfect Power Wash ensures every aspect of their operation is top-notch.

**Convenient Communication:** From receiving an estimate to the completion of your service, all communication can be handled directly over the phone.

**Safe & Effective Results:** A washing process that uses safe pressure and biodegradable cleansers eliminates algae, mold, mildew, and other living organisms.

**Satisfaction Guarantee:** Perfect Power Wash guarantees to deliver the best results possible for your property using their safe and effective processes, or your money back.



Perfect Power Wash makes maintaining your home painless from scheduling to completion. Their power washing experts will provide a free quote, answer all questions, and schedule your service in minutes right over the phone. Just call 412.438.8932 and PPW handles the rest.

## Limited Time Remaining to Save 20% on Your Perfect Power Wash

### 20% OFF HOUSE WASH

Safe pressure and biodegradable cleansers are used to remove the algae, mold, and mildew from your home's siding, leaving it clean and devoid of surface contaminants.

### 20% OFF ROOF TREATMENT

An extremely low-pressure treatment of algaecide is applied to remove black streaks and neutralize moss and lichens at their roots. Their Perfect Roof Treatment comes with a one-year warranty.

### 20% OFF CONCRETE WASH AND SEAL

Safe pressure is used to clean the surface and flush the pores of the concrete. Then, a premium siloxane sealer is applied, penetrating the pores of the concrete, and strengthening from within, helping prevent cracking, chipping, and pitting caused by winter's freeze-thaw cycles.

### 20% OFF DECK WASH

Their process uses biodegradable cleansers and safe pressure to effectively rid your deck of surface contaminants to make it barefoot friendly.

The professionals at Perfect Power Wash are available 7 days a week to answer any questions and schedule your services. Call them today at 412.438.8932 to save 20% on your entire order and protect your home from Mother Nature's winter plans.



Perfect Power Wash utilizes a soft washing process to safely and effectively eliminate algae, mold, mildew, lichens, and other contaminants from the exterior of your home.

## Winter is coming, and PennDOT still needs some help

By Ed Blazina  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

With area residents waking up to the first frost of the season this week, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation already is in full winter operation mode with employees scheduled around the clock.

But the agency is still looking for additional snow plow drivers and diesel mechanics to fill its ranks.

At a news conference at its Bridgeville maintenance facility Thursday, Lori Musto, assistant district executive for maintenance for Allegheny, Beaver and Lawrence counties, said the agency has drivers doing test runs on their one- to three-hour snow removal routes so they are familiar with them.

Mechanics also have the agency's 126 vehicles — 66 in Allegheny County — ready for deployment. Another 19 are available from private contractors if they are needed to care for the 6,000 lane miles of state roads in the three counties.

"Our crews are thinking about winter all year long, so we're ready to go," Ms. Musto said.

The agency also is fully stocked for salt in Beaver and Lawrence counties and receiving about 700 tons a day as it pushes to reach its 24,000-ton capacity in Allegheny County. Ms. Musto said she hasn't had any difficulty filling salt orders, but she has heard some municipalities have had problems.

Crews also are making brine used for pre-treating roads so that salt works better.

The biggest difficulty, despite a strong push in recent weeks, is filling all of the driving jobs. Allegheny County has 134 permanent positions and 51 seasonal jobs driving snow plows, but 12 positions are open right now.

The agency is holding an open house from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday at its Aspinwall maintenance facility, 61 Fox Chapel Road, to accept applications for jobs as drivers and mechanics. Drivers who have their CDL license can take an immediate road test and receive a job offer on the spot pending a background check.

The agency also has a limited number of openings for those who want to be trained to qualify for a truck driving license.

Ms. Musto pointed out that about 80% of the agency's trucks have automatic transmissions so drivers don't have to know how to drive a stick shift.

Drivers in Allegheny County start at \$19.72 an hour and \$17.48 an hour in Beaver and Lawrence counties.

Ms. Musto said she is "very confident" the district is well enough staffed today to handle a winter storm, despite the openings. "We've been at this complement before many times and we've always been able to handle it," she said. "We can always bring in the private contractors if we need them."

The agency also can shift drivers around the state to meet emergencies, she said.



Matt Freed/Post-Gazette

Connor Rendulic, 8, of Forest Hills, gets a Band-Aid on Thursday after receiving a Pfizer vaccine at Environmental Charter School through Pathways in Regent Square.

## 5,162 additional cases break 3 weeks of declining rates

By Eugene Tauber  
The Morning Call

The Pennsylvania Department of Health reported 5,162 additional coronavirus cases on Thursday. The seven-day moving average of newly reported cases was 3,913 cases per day, up slightly from a week ago, and down 16.8% over the past 30 days.

The tiny uptick in the seven-day rate breaks a streak of more than three weeks of declining rates. It is unclear whether the higher numbers reported Thursday were affected by the technical difficulties that prevented the release of numbers

earlier in the week.

To date, there have been 1.58 million infections statewide.

Thursday's report included 72 additional deaths. The seven-day moving average of deaths per day is 70.1, compared with 68.1 a week ago, an increase of 3% in the past seven days. There have been 31,783 total deaths.

The Allegheny County Health Department reported 465 new COVID-19 cases and 16 additional deaths.

Five people who died were in the 50-64 age group and 11 were 65 or older.

The countywide death toll stands at 2,341.

There were 2,571 people

hospitalized as of midday Thursday compared with 2,613 on Wednesday. Of those, 606 were in intensive care, and 366 were on ventilators.

Statewide hospitalizations have decreased 4.2% over the past week, and are down 5% in the past 30 days.

There have been 8,940 total hospitalizations and 134,146 total coronavirus cases in Allegheny County since the pandemic started.

The latest figures from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show there are 7.78 million fully vaccinated

SEE **VIRUS**, PAGE B-2

## Activist Nique Craft dies at age 36

Vocal participant in high-profile protests

By Mick Stinelli  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Nique Craft, a prominent activist involved in Pittsburgh's 2020 racial justice demonstrations, has died at age 36.

The cause of death is still under investigation by the Allegheny County medical examiner's office, although a police spokesperson said no foul play is suspected.

Craft was a Black, nonbinary activist who was a frequent and vocal participant in local protests that spawned in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd.

They were involved in actions outside Mayor Bill Peduto's house, where Craft and other protesters spoke to Mr. Peduto and denounced the arrest of a local activist before the dialogue broke down and police used pepper spray on protesters after they moved to Mellon Park.

One of Craft's most visible moments of 2020 was also among their most controversial: a viral video that showed them drinking from a patron's beer outside a restaurant as a group of protesters confronted diners.

The video, shared in September 2020, attracted local attention before becoming a national lightning rod after it was retweeted by then-President Donald Trump amid his re-election campaign. He called Craft and other involved protesters "thugs" and "disgraceful."

In an interview at the time, Craft defended the actions and told the Post-Gazette that they felt the confrontation was instigated by a restaurant patron who was criticizing the protesters.

"Even though people saw that whole thing, they still saw me as an aggressor," Craft said.

The incident led to multiple

SEE **CRAFT**, PAGE B-3



Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

**NEW RESOURCE** Ben Brown, CEO of the Mon Valley Alliance Foundation, speaks Thursday during a reception announcing the Mon Valley Business Resource Center in Monongahela, Washington County. The new BRC is located in the former Community Branch bank building.

## Bus driver also died in Butler County wreck

### Students start fundraiser for girl killed in bus crash

By Kellen Stepler  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

An online fundraiser has been started to help with funeral expenses for a 14-year-old girl who died in a school bus crash on Interstate 79 in Butler County Tuesday as state police continue to investigate.

The GoFundMe was created Wednesday by the classmates of Brylee Walker, who was the student killed in the crash.

The bus driver, Lindsay Thompkins, 31, also died in the crash.

As of 6 p.m. Thursday, the fundraiser had over \$15,000.

Brylee was a student at Lincoln Arts Performing Charter School in Midland, Beaver County. The school posted on its website, saying, in part, "Our heartfelt thoughts and prayers go out to the two families who have lost their loved ones in this terrible tragedy."

According to the school's statement, additional grief counselors and support staff are at the school to help students.

"We ask for patience and prayers as we come together as a community," the statement read.

According to state police in Butler, the wreck occurred about 4:30 p.m. Tuesday when a tractor

trailer and a school bus were traveling in the northbound lanes of I-79 in Worth Township.

The school bus was approaching the tractor trailer from behind, and struck the rear of the truck.

Butler County Deputy Coroner John Hanovick said that Mr. Thompkins and Brylee were killed on impact. Police said that Brylee was sitting directly behind Mr. Thompkins, in the front of the bus.

Police said that there were 13 students on the bus, two of whom were flown from the scene to UPMC Children's Hospital and UPMC Presbyterian for treatment. They both are in stable condition, police said.

Two additional students were taken by ambulance to UPMC Children's Hospital for minor injuries. They have since been treated and released, police said.

The other passengers were examined by EMS personnel on scene and were released to their parents, police said.

The truck driver was identified as Karandeep Singh. He was not injured.

Police said the investigation is continuing.

Kellen Stepler: [kstepler@post-gazette.com](mailto:kstepler@post-gazette.com).

## Elizabeth train enthusiast who sabotaged railroad signal equipment gets probation

By Torsten Ove  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

An Elizabeth man who used bolt cutters to damage railroad signal equipment in Braddock and McKeesport four years ago avoided federal prison on Thursday when a judge gave him probation instead and ordered him to pay for the damage.

U.S. District Judge Donetta Ambrose granted a defense motion for leniency and gave William Curry

Brown three years of probation.

Brown, 28, pleaded guilty last year to two counts of terroristic attacks and violence against a railroad. He was originally charged with Brandon Peck, of Glassport, a childhood friend, in 2018, but the U.S. attorney's office dismissed the case against Mr. Peck.

On Nov. 1, 2017, Brown unscrewed four railroad signal antennas from a CSX rail site near Braddock and cut the railroad signal cables with bolt cutters. At another

location in McKeesport, he used bolt cutters to sever signal wires attached to the CSX tracks. The damage he caused came to \$1,425.

In sentencing papers, Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher Cook said Brown's actions didn't cause harm to anyone but could have caused a disaster, since the signals weren't working.

"While it is certainly fortunate for all parties that there was no loss

SEE **TRAIN**, PAGE B-2

**Daily COVID-19 cases, deaths, vaccinations**

Positive COVID-19 cases and deaths and number of people vaccinated reported for southwestern Pennsylvania counties, as of Nov. 4:

COUNTY	CASES		DEATHS		VACCINATED	
	TOTAL	NEW	TOTAL	NEW	PARTIAL	FULL
Allegheny	134,146	465	2,341	16	78,161	738,219
Armstrong	9,022	38	206	1	2,856	34,292
Beaver	22,817	107	481	0	8,413	79,214
Butler	25,560	101	514	3	8,335	104,425
Fayette	18,226	68	419	2	6,288	62,459
Greene	5,057	46	57	0	1,548	14,818
Washington	26,220	140	401	1	11,535	113,279
Westmoreland	45,819	151	913	3	17,327	178,981

Sources: Allegheny County and Pa. departments of health Post-Gazette

**Coronavirus cases climb after dropping for 3 weeks**

**VIRUS**, FROM B-1

people in Pennsylvania, accounting for 60.7% of the population. An additional 2.3 million people are in need of their follow-up shot. In total, 17.81 million shots have been put into the arms of 10.07 million people, or 78.7% of the state's residents. The state Department of Health is projecting that more than 400,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine for children, ages 5-11, will be available by the end of this week, acting Health Secretary Alison Beam said Thursday. "It is exciting to see parents lining up to get their children vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus that caused this pandemic," Ms.

Beam said at a news conference in Scranton. "Here in Scranton and across the state kids are already getting vaccinated less than 48 hours after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's approval." Close to 60,000 school-aged children have tested positive for COVID-19 since the start of the school year, though the number of new cases among school-aged children has been falling over the last month, state data shows. Nineteen people between the ages of 10 and 19 have died from COVID-19, according to the Department of Health's data.

Capitolwire.com contributed.

**WEST**

**Suspect indicted in mail carrier slaying**

A federal grand jury on Wednesday handed up an indictment against Eric Korts in the slaying of a mail carrier in Collier last month. Mr. Korts, 53, of the West End, had been charged by complaint after the Oct. 7 killing of Louis Vignone. Federal prosecutors have a month to indict someone after a complaint is filed. Mr. Korts is charged with one count each of murder of a U.S. employee

and of firing a gun during a crime of violence. U.S. postal inspectors said Mr. Korts shot Mr. Vignone as he sat in his mail truck. Mr. Korts said he did it because he thought Mr. Vignone and his family had poisoned him and his family with cyanide when they were neighbors. After the shooting, Mr. Korts went to the Carnegie police station, said he'd shot someone and wanted to turn himself in, inspectors said. Mr. Korts is in U.S. custody and will be arraigned in U.S. District Court on Wednesday.

**Death penalty sought for 2 in Donora slaying**

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The Washington County District Attorney's office will seek the death penalty against two men accused of killing the co-owner of a Donora convenience store in February, according to the DA's office. Nicholas Tarpley, 28, died after he was shot multiple times inside Anna Lee's Convenience Store on Allen Avenue on Feb. 24.

Authorities have charged Sidney McLean, 32, and Devell Christian, 32, with Mr. Tarpley's death. Mr. McLean and Mr. Christian have both been charged with criminal homicide and other crimes. On Oct. 29, court records indicate that the district attorney's office filed a notice of aggravating circumstances with the county's Court of Common Pleas. Proving aggravating circumstances would be necessary in a

death penalty case. In the notice, District Attorney Jason M. Walsh says Mr. McLean and Mr. Christian killed Mr. Tarpley while committing a separate felony and that both suspects "knowingly created a grave risk of death to another person in addition to the victim of the offense." Investigators claim that Mr. Tarpley was helping a customer and that his back was turned when he was

shot six times. In 2015, Gov. Tom Wolf imposed a moratorium on executions in Pennsylvania. Even before the moratorium, the state at that point hadn't carried out an execution in nearly 15 years. Its last execution was in July 1999, when the death sentence was carried out against Gary Heidnik, who tortured and murdered women in the basement of his Philadelphia home.



Gene J. Puskar/Associated Press

**STANDING TALL** The Homestead Stacks, a remnant of the world's largest steel mill, stand among the fall foliage Wednesday in Homestead.

**Woman gets federal prison in 2 fraud schemes**

By Torsten Ove  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

A former Westmoreland County woman with a history of fraud is headed to federal prison for stealing from two ex-employers in separate scams.

U.S. District Judge Joy Flowers Conti last week imposed a term of 30 months on Jennifer Lynne Clark, also known as Jennifer Gill, 42, formerly of Mount Pleasant, who had pleaded guilty in two cases to mail fraud, wire fraud and aggravated identity theft.

Between 2015 and 2018, Clark ripped off Elite Oil and Wright Traffic Control, both in Beaver County.

Prosecutors said while at Elite Oil, she processed multiple credit card transactions using her company credit card through two unauthorized Square, Inc., accounts she created for company vendors. Between August 2015 and October 2016, she stole \$142,636, some of which she used to buy a car for herself.

After she left Elite Oil she went to Wright Traffic, where she served as office manager in 2017.

An applicant for a job was accepted for employment but decided not to take the job. Clark kept the applicant on the books as a ghost employee and collected the employee's payroll checks, forged a signature and deposited the checks into her own bank account, said Assistant U.S. Attorney Greg Melucci. That scheme netted her \$25,920 until she got caught.

Mr. Melucci said Clark, who was most recently living in Florida, has prior convictions for credit card fraud, forgery and access device fraud in Pennsylvania and Florida. While on bond, she defrauded using unauthorized credit cards in Florida and went to jail, he said.

Clark's public defender, Sarah Levin, said Clark grew up with an absentee father in the military and a mother who shoplifted.

Ms. Levin said Clark also suffers from mental health problems.

"Ms. Clark made the serious decision to defraud two former employers," she wrote. "She is remorseful, and she fully accepts responsibility for her actions. Her mental illness does not excuse her actions..."

In addition to the 30 months, she'll serve three years of probation.

**Railroad saboteur given probation**

**TRAIN**, FROM B-1

of life or further destruction in this case, the United States nevertheless submits that the reckless nature of the defendant's conduct must be taken into account by this Court," he said. "The defendant's crimes are very serious,

and they warrant a serious punishment." Mr. Cook said Brown has a "troubling" history of similar crimes. He had previously admitted that he influenced minors to damage water valves and cause a flood at the Mount Vernon apartment complex in Elizabeth.

He was also convicted of using a road flare to start a brush fire, after which he ordered a juvenile to accept the blame or he would stab him in the face, Mr. Cook said.

Brown has other convictions for harassing a former girlfriend and for disorderly conduct in which he argued with a mother and child while holding a knife, Mr. Cook said.

After his arrest in the railroad case in 2017, Mr. Cook said, Brown was involved in yet another in-

cident while out on bond in which he pointed a rifle at juveniles playing basketball.

"It is clear from the defendant's criminal history that light penalties have not deterred the defendant from engaging in childish, criminal behavior," Mr. Cook said. "There is also a disturbing pattern of property destruction, harassment, and an attempt to blame others for his crimes."

He asked for prison time.

But Brown's public defender, Sarah Levin, said he suffers from mental disabilities and was in special education classes as a child with Mr. Peck. Brown and Peck are fascinated by trains, she said, and Brown grew up in a family that loves trains, playing with train models and taking trips on railroads.

Ms. Levin said Mr. Peck had an interest in derailed trains and showed Brown videos of train crashes.

"Acting alone and then together with Peck, [Brown] removed and damaged antennae and signals of the CSX railroad," Ms. Levin said. "He understands these choices were wrong and dangerous, and he accepts responsibility for his actions."

She pointed out that Mr. Peck suffers from disabilities as well and that his case was dismissed. She asked that Brown, a father who works at a West Mifflin auto shop, be allowed to serve probation instead of prison.

Judge Ambrose agreed. In addition to the probation term, she ordered Brown to pay the damage amount in restitution to CSX.

**Seminar Dates:**  
11/3 North Hills  
11/9 South Hills

**NAVIGATING ELDERCARE**  
 Where Will I Live When I Get Older?

- Wednesday, Nov. 3rd from 6:30-8 PM at Pine Community Center
- Tuesday, Nov. 9th from 6:30-8 PM at St. Thomas More

**FREE IN-PERSON SEMINAR HOSTED BY**

**FORT PITT**  
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Fort Pitt Capital Group, LLC is an SEC registered investment advisor. For additional information, see the firm's Form ADV Part 1 and 2A on file with the SEC at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). Registration with the SEC does not imply any particular level of skill or training.

Thursday, Nov. 4x, 2021

**PENNSYLVANIA LOTTERY**

For prize amounts and more information, go to: [post-gazette.com/lottery](http://post-gazette.com/lottery)

**Thursday's Cash 5**  
6-16-18-26-29

**Thursday's Cash 4 Life**  
7-37-47-53-55 CB: 3

**Thursday's Match 6**  
10-18-19-28-48-49

**Thursday's Treasure Hunt**  
13-15-16-26-30

**Thursday's Pick 5**  
2-7-8-4-4 (day);  
7-2-3-5-1 (night)

**Thursday's Pick 4**  
4-6-6-6 (day); 6-7-1-0 (night)

**Thursday's Pick 3**  
5-3-5 (day); 7-6-7 (night)

**Thursday's Pick 2**  
8-5 (day); 7-1 (night)

**Wild ball**  
2 (day); 2 (night)

Tonight's **CASH 5** is worth an estimated \$200,000.  
 Tonight's **TREASURE HUNT** is worth an estimated \$12,000.  
 Tonight's **MEGA MILLIONS** is worth an estimated \$36 million.  
 Tonight's **MATCH 6** is worth an estimated \$860,000.  
 Tomorrow's **POWERBALL** is worth an estimated \$146 million.

**Man pleads guilty in connection with shooting death of man, 90**

By Kellen Stepler  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

A man pleaded guilty Thursday to robbing and killing a 90-year-old man in Pittsburgh's Greenfield neighborhood in 2019, the Allegheny County District Attorney's office said. Anthony Miller, 29, of White Oak, pleaded guilty in front of Judge Beth Lazzara to third degree murder, robbery, receiving stolen property, carrying a firearm without a license and theft by unlawful taking in connection with Samuel Rende's death in 2019. According to the affidavit,

Mr. Rende was shot in Greenfield in December 2019 at the intersection of Hazelwood Avenue and Bray Street in front of Calvary Cemetery while sitting in his car. Mr. Rende later died at UPMC Presbyterian as a result of a gunshot to the head.

Police at the time said in an affidavit that upon speaking to detectives, Mr. Miller admitted to shooting Mr. Rende with a gun he had stolen earlier that week. Mr. Miller also told detectives that he stole a ring and a watch from Mr. Rende, according to the affidavit.

Judge Lazzara set sentencing for Feb. 2.



# Activist Nique Craft dies at age 36

CRAFT, FROM B-1

charges against Craft and other participants in the protest. Their attorney, Paul Jubas, said he thought Craft's actions that day were less notable than the attention that came from them.

"It goes back to the underlying magnetism that Nique had," he said. "Nique was the type of revolutionary that the president of the United States was complaining about."

They also participated in a number of different demonstrations last year, including one raising criticism of a Downtown LGBTQ bar's dress code, which again led to criminal charges against Craft and other protesters who were accused of threatening bar employees.

Craft was also active in promoting intersectional social justice before the Black Lives Matter movement surged in 2020.

A 2019 Post-Gazette article quotes them — identified in the piece as Nique C — speaking at a jail oversight board hearing and advocating for better treatment of transgender inmates at the Allegheny County Jail.



Alexandra Wimley/Post-Gazette

Nique Craft was a Black, nonbinary activist who was a frequent and vocal participant in local protests that developed in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd. In the photo, Craft leads protesters in chants during a "Civil Saturdays" protest in September 2020 in Downtown.

Mr. Jubas said he and Craft also had a personal connection, and described Craft as having an "extraordinarily powerful personality and presence" while

remaining complicated and human.

"Nique was one of the more unique people I've ever come across, and just absolutely

magnetic," he said.

Mick Stinelli: [mstinelli@post-gazette.com](mailto:mstinelli@post-gazette.com); 412-263-1869; and on Twitter: @MickStinelli

## LATEST DEATHS

The Post-Gazette's comprehensive report of recent deaths includes three types of obituaries. News obituaries, prepared by our staff, are published at the discretion of our editors. Classified obituaries are paid death notices prepared by funeral home directors. To place a classified obituary, call 412-263-1371. To suggest a news obituary, call 412-263-1601. Funeral home directors may also call 412-263-1601 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. to note a death for which there is no classified obituary. Those names will be listed under other deaths.

## CLASSIFIED OBITUARIES

**BRISTOR**, Sara Anne Larkin, Gaithersburg, Md.  
**BROWN**, Dorothy A. Fielding, Pleasant Hills  
**CLEMENTE**, Coronacion "Duda," Brookline  
**DIETRICH**, Bruce K., Churchill  
**DOMAN**, Virginia, Charlotte, N.C., formerly Valencia  
**FRIDIA**, Jessie James Jr., Bellwood  
**GENTILE**, Robert J., Ross  
**HIRSCH**, Joseph A., Scott  
**KALABOKES**, Evangelia "Angie"  
**KRESS**, Robert M., "Bob," North Fayette  
**LaBROSSE**, Marjorie G., Whitehall  
**LEVINE**, Ethel Leibovitz "Etty"  
**MISKIEWICZ**, Rosemarie A., Crafton  
**REILLY**, Eileen, Scott  
**ROSENBERG**, Marge, Harmony, formerly Murrysville  
**RUEFLE**, Kathleen Theresa Noone  
**SMITH**, Langston V. Jr. "Beans" "Smitty," Penn Hills  
**STEELE**, Barb, Beechview and Portersville  
**TOMARO**, Thomas, Henrys Bend, formerly Kilbuck  
**TUCKER**, Charles B. Sr.  
**WALSH**, Theresa R. DeSanto, Brookline, formerly West Grove

### SARA ANNE (LARKIN) BRISTOR



Sara Anne Bristol, 58, of Gaithersburg, Maryland, passed away on October 30, 2021, from brain cancer.

A visitation will be held at **DEVOL FUNERAL HOME**, 10 East Deer Park Drive, Gaithersburg, MD on Thursday, November 11 from 2-4 pm. The funeral service and burial will be held at 10:00 am on Friday, November 12 at the Germantown Baptist Church, 17640 Riffle Ford Rd., Germantown, MD 20874. A social gathering will be held in the church hall following burial.

Sara was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on December 12, 1962. She graduated from Edgewood High School and continued on to receive Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and Master of Public Health degrees from the University of Pittsburgh as well as a Master of Arts in Teaching from Johns Hopkins University. Following her graduation from the University of Pittsburgh, Sara moved to Maryland for a survey statistician position with the National Center for Health Statistics. After devoting all of her energy to raising four boys, Sara found her true workplace calling as an English teacher. She taught middle school English for 12 years at the Church of the Redeemer Christian School where Sara taught her own children alongside many other treasured students. After earning her Master's Degree in teaching, Sara accepted employment with Montgomery County Public Schools and found a home as an English Composition Assistant at Clarksburg High School for the past seven years. Sara also taught writing classes and state teacher certification preparatory courses for Montgomery County employees, touching and enriching the lives of many adult learners. As a lifelong learner, in 2019, Sara earned certification as a Wilson Reading System practitioner. While Sara loved teaching writing, she found new enthusiasm in developing and implementing plans to address reading challenges faced by students with dyslexia and other cognitive challenges. Sara enjoyed cycling, swimming, Pilates, and lengthy walks in the large park near her home, often with friends and her puppy, Tucker.

Sara is survived by her husband, Joel, sons, Charles, Benjamin, Zachary (Abigail), Nathan, grandson, Jude, siblings, Peter Larkin (Donna), David Larkin (Suzanne), Jennie Larkin (John Relf), and other extended family and friends.

Sara was preceded in death by her parents, John Henry Larkin, III and Anne Remington Larkin.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial donations be made to support brain cancer research at the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center (<https://secure.jhu.edu/form/kimmel>). Please sign the guestbook at: [www.DevolFuneralHome.com](http://www.DevolFuneralHome.com)

Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](mailto:post-gazette.com/gb)

### CORONACION "DUDA" CLEMENTE



Of Brookline, formerly of Maryland and the Philippines, on Tuesday, November 2, 2021. Beloved mother of Teresa (Bob "Bibbers") Smith, Cris Clemente and Jojo (Michael) Monahan and the late Vill Clemente; grandmother of R.J. (Holly), Brendan and Katie; great-grandmother of Noah Robert. Family and friends will be received at the **FRANK F. DeBOR FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION SERVICES, INC.**, 1065 Brookline Blvd., (412-561-0380) Saturday only, 4-7 pm. Blessing Service at 5:30 pm. Our mother was a strong, independent person who immigrated to the United States and raised four children on her own. She had a quiet strength that is hard to believe. [www.deborfuneralhome.com](http://www.deborfuneralhome.com)  
Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](mailto:post-gazette.com/gb)

### BRUCE K. DIETRICH



Of Churchill, age 80, passed away peacefully at home surrounded by family on Wednesday, November 3, 2021. Beloved husband of 56 years of Teodora "Nene" C. Dietrich. Loving father of Donald Dietrich (Sally) of Trenton, MI, and Leah Olson-Perry (Ed Perry) of Midland, MI. Proud grandfather of Jordan, Hunter, Nathan, Kelsey, Ben, Matthew, and Thomas. Brother of Geof Dietrich (Diane) of Salamanca, NY. Also survived by numerous cousins, nieces, nephews, and a large extended family. Preceded in death by his sisters, Karen "Kiz" Johnston and Ann Hickey, and his grandson, Nick. Bruce joined the Peace Corps in 1963 where he met and fell in love with Nene in the Philippines. They enjoyed a lifetime of travel which began with their honeymoon hitchhiking across Asia and Europe for two months. In their later years they traveled back to the Philippines on several medical missions. He instilled his love of travel in his grandchildren by taking each one on a graduation trip to countries including Italy, France, and England. As humble as he was, Bruce was highly educated. He obtained a bachelors degree in chemistry from Allegheny College, a PhD in physical chemistry from the University of Wisconsin, post-doctorate from Brookhaven National Lab in Long Island, and a masters degree in chemical engineering from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Bruce was a strong supporter of fine arts and enjoyed the theater and symphony. He loved trying new restaurants as well as Nene's exceptional home-cooked food. Friends will be received at **WOLFE MEMORIAL, LLC**, 3604 Greensburg Pike, Pittsburgh PA 15221, on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until the time of the memorial service at 11:00 a.m., with his cousin, Rev. David Keller officiating. Gifts in Bruce's memory may be given to the Philippine-American Medical Society of Western Pennsylvania, 1500 Cochran Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15243, or the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, 600 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222, [www.pittsburghsymphony.org](http://www.pittsburghsymphony.org)  
Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](mailto:post-gazette.com/gb)

### VIRGINIA DOMAN



Age 92, of Charlotte, North Carolina, formerly of Valencia, passed away peacefully on Saturday, October 30, 2021, surrounded by her family. She is reunited with her loving husband, Jack.  
She was the daughter of Donald and Marguerite (Uptegraff) Shoemaker of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and sister to Lib, Don, Nan, Walter, Jim, Dick, Sr. Mary Aloysius (Margie), Dorothy, Kitty, Helen, and Gretchen.  
She is survived by her children, Cecilia (Jim Beason) Doman, Marguerite Doman, Jack (Linda) Doman, Kathleen Doman, Anne Gamber, Barbara (Matt) Morgan and Joe (Anne) Doman; loving grandmother to Karen, Tina, Tien (Chris), Nick (Sparkle), Atticus (Joan), Jeff (Mollie), Mary (Brendan), Jed (Naomi), Beth (James), Lily (Luke), Elias, Kate and Colette; also 11 great-grandchildren, Journey, Aria, Petros, Mariah, Matheos, Bria, Charlie, Chance, Isaiah, Vivian, and Gloria. She was also a special aunt to many nieces and nephews.  
She enjoyed spending holidays with her family and was known for her creativity and the construction of her Christmas village that spanned a room. Devoted to her family, faith, and friends, she is deeply loved and will be greatly missed.  
Widowed at age 39 with seven children, she built a career in bookkeeping at Price Waterhouse, Randolph Conway Service, Asheboro, NC. Although tested with many trials, she remained a steadfast and faithful servant and prayer warrior. She was a parishioner, Girl Scout leader and organist at Holy Sepulcher Parish, Butler, PA and later of St. Ann's Catholic Church, Charlotte, NC, where she was a volunteer.  
Friends will be received at the **MCDONALD-AEBERLI FUNERAL HOME, INC.**, 238 Crowe Ave., Mars, PA on Saturday, November 6, 2021, from 2-4 and 6-8 p.m. A Blessing Service will follow at 8:00 p.m. at the funeral home. Burial will be in Our Lady of Hope Cemetery, Tarentum, PA.  
A Memorial Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Thanksgiving weekend at St. Ann's Catholic Church, Charlotte, Time and date later.  
In lieu of flowers, a donation in her name may be made to Catholic Relief Services at <https://support.crs.org/donate>.  
Directions and condolences are available at: [www.mcdonald-aeberli.com](http://www.mcdonald-aeberli.com)  
Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](mailto:post-gazette.com/gb)

### DOROTHY A. (FIELDING) BROWN



Dorothy A. Brown, age 83, of Pleasant Hills, Pennsylvania, died on Tuesday, November 2, 2021. She was born on February 16, 1938, in Harrisville, Butler County, Pennsylvania, Dorothy Ann Fielding, one of three children of Frank Edward and Mary Elizabeth (Anderson) Fielding. Dorothy, who loved gardening and sports, had a passion for being a caregiver, caring for family and friends alike.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband of 62 years, Regis Frederick Brown, their daughter, Anita Marie (Brown) Doyle, their son, Robert Frederick Brown and her brother and his wife, George and Ella Jane Fielding. Dorothy is survived by two children, Beth Ann (Thomas) Carroll of Pleasant Hills and Ryan W. (Marissa) Brown of Canonsburg, Pennsylvania; four grandchildren, Marie (Christopher) Curran, Joseph (Brittany) Carroll, Daniel Carroll and Julianna; her brother, Bill (the late Ruth) Fielding of Heath, Ohio and many nieces and nephews. Friends will be received in the **STEPHEN D. SLATER FUNERAL HOME**, 1701 Route 51, Jefferson Hills, Pennsylvania 15025 (412 - 384 - 0350) [www.stephendslater.com](http://www.stephendslater.com) on Sunday, November 7, 2021, from 2 - 5:30 PM. There will be a prayer in the funeral home at 9 AM on Monday, November 8, 2021, followed by a 10 AM Mass of Christian Burial in Triumph of the Holy Cross Parish, St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic Church, Grove Place, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15236. Following the Mass, she will be buried with her husband and children in Jefferson Memorial Park Cemetery. Her family would like to thank and extend sincere appreciation for the great care given to her by the staff at ProMedica Senior Care (HCR - ManorCare - Whitehall) and Heartland Hospice.  
Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](mailto:post-gazette.com/gb)

### JESSIE JAMES FRIDIA, JR.

April 28, 1964 - Nov. 3, 2021



Jessie James Fridia, Jr., 57, of Bellwood, PA passed away at his residence, Wednesday following an extended illness.

He was born in Pittsburgh, PA the son of Jessie James Fridia, Sr. and Phyllis (Dixon) Fridia. Jessie married Tonya Hansard in Altoona on June 17, 2016.  
Jessie is survived by his loving wife; and his father, Jessie James Fridia, Sr. of St. Matthews, SC and his mother, Phyllis (Dixon) Fridia of Pittsburgh, PA; three sisters, Mounearl Patterson, Darcelle Fridia and Marcelle McKinney all of Pittsburgh, PA; son, Tyrone Fridia of Suitland, MD and daughter, Taylor; son, J'Juan Fridia of Washington, D.C. and children, Abigail and Zaniyah; a daughter, Tjuana Fridia of Houston, TX; stepson, Charles Haralson of Bellwood, PA and children, Sakeria, Dominic and Eliana; stepson, Jonathan Triplin of Altoona, PA and children, Jalen, Amari and Trae; foster daughter, Jeanna Mentzer of Altoona, PA and sons, Alex, Jeremiah and Joshua; sisters-in-law, Inetta Hansard and Sarah Nixon; brothers-in-law, Henry, Randy, and Vincent Hansard and Bradley Cleveland; and a host of cousins, nieces and nephews.

He was a graduate of Peabody High School in Pittsburgh, PA. Jessie was employed with Grannas Brothers as a road crew laborer.

Jessie enjoyed fishing, boating, tinkering on cars and ultimately loved spending time with his family.

Friends will be received from 12:00 noon-2:00 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 7, 2021, at **THE STEVENS MORTUARY, INC.**, 1421 8th Ave., Altoona, PA 16602 where a funeral service will immediately follow at 2:00 p.m. in the Stevens Memorial Chapel officiated by Jessie's brother-in-law, Rev. Henry Hansard. Interment will be held at Blair Memorial Park at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, please direct contributions to a charity of your choice in Jessie's memory.

Condolences may be made at [www.stevensfamilyfuneralhomes.com](http://www.stevensfamilyfuneralhomes.com) or Stevens Family Funeral Homes Facebook.

Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](mailto:post-gazette.com/gb)

### ROBERT J. GENTILE



Age 74, of Ross Township, on Thursday, November 4, 2021. Son of the late Thomas and Ethel (Wedlock) Gentile. Beloved husband for 55 years of Christina Lynda (Lehman) Gentile; father of Michelle (Richard) Cardinali and Robert J. A. Gentile, Jr.; loving grandfather of Ava, Alexa, and James; brother of Thomas Gentile, Arlene Preisendefer, Sam Gentile, and the late Ronald Gentile. Robert was a member of the Ross Twp. Fire/Police as well as the Berkeley Hills Fire Company. Family and friends are welcome to the visitation on Sunday, November 7, 2021, from 2-6 p.m. at **SHELLHAAS FUNERAL HOME, INC.**, 388 Center Avenue, West View, PA 15229, where a service will also be held Monday, November 8, 2021, at 11 a.m. In lieu of flowers, family suggests donations to Berkeley Hills Fire Company, 235 Siebert Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15237. Please offer condolences at [www.shellhaasfh.com](http://www.shellhaasfh.com)  
Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](mailto:post-gazette.com/gb)

### JOSEPH A. HIRSCH



Age 78, of Scott Township, on Tuesday, November 2, 2021. Beloved husband of Carol (Mosblack) Hirsch; devoted father of Angela Smith, Cindy Sieck, Patricia Davies, Candace Johnson and the late Joseph Paul Hirsch, USAF; loving grandfather of Nathan, Rachael, Jessica, Mary, Michael, and John Smith; Jorie and Galen Sieck; A.J. Arnett, Ren, Daniel, and Carolyn Davies; Kifer Johnson; and the late Jason Smith; brother of Margaret Baldwin, Elizabeth Feth, Susan Hirsch, the late Phillip, Donald and Robert Hirsch; also survived by nieces and nephews. Joe was a realtor with Keller Williams Realty over 20 years and formerly served as a paramedic with Freedom House, the first ambulance service in the US, assisting Dr. Peter Saifar, the Father of CPR. Joe was also very active in his church, serving Prime Time Adult Day Care, the Chancel Choir, and Hearts and Paws Pet Ministry, which he founded. Friends were welcomed at **LAUGHLIN CREMATION & FUNERAL TRIBUTES**, 222 Washington Road, Mt. Lebanon on Thursday afternoon, November 4, from 1:00 until 3:00 only. A Memorial Service will be held in Christ United Methodist Church, 44 Highland Road, Bethel Park, PA 15102 on Friday morning, November 5, at 11 o'clock. Memorial contributions may be made to Hearts and Paws Ministry, Christ United Methodist Church, 44 Highland Road, Bethel Park, PA 15102.  
[www.laughlinfuneralhome.com](http://www.laughlinfuneralhome.com)  
Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](mailto:post-gazette.com/gb)



**MARKET PULSE**

**DOW JONES**  
36,124.23 (-33.35)

**S&P 500**  
4,680.06 (+19.49)

**NASDAQ**  
15,940.31 (+128.72)

**GOLD**  
\$1,792.90 (-\$0.60)

**PLATINUM**  
\$1,031.12 (+\$2.30)

**SILVER**  
\$23.86 (-\$0.06)

## EPA plan would target methane releases from existing wells

By Laura Legere  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The Biden administration is advancing new rules for oil and gas wells and pipelines that are designed to improve safety and cut down on releases of methane, a potent greenhouse gas.

For the first time, rules proposed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Tuesday would apply to hundreds of thousands of existing oil and gas sites as well as strengthening current standards for equipment at new sites as they are built.

The proposal's target — methane — traps 86 times as much heat in the atmosphere as carbon dioxide over 20 years. Because it is both powerful and short-lived, the gas is a primary focus of international efforts to address climate change rapidly in the short term.

About a third of methane emissions in the U.S. come from the oil and gas industry. The changes proposed by the EPA would reduce methane emissions from regulated well sites and equipment by 74% in 2030 compared with 2005 levels, the agency estimated.

Also on Tuesday, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration issued a final rule that expands federal safety oversight to all gas gathering pipelines, including large, high-pressure lines running through rural areas.

The rule will require pipeline operators to report safety information for more than 425,000 additional miles of gathering lines nationwide and will apply federal pipeline safety regulations to a smaller subset of those lines.

The agency cited the explosion of the Revolution pipeline in Center, Beaver County, in September 2018 as one of several incidents nationwide that caused deaths, destroyed property or released bursts of climate-warming methane from high-pressure lines previously exempt from federal safety oversight.

More than 1,000 metric tons of methane gas are emitted, on average, with each pipeline rupture, the agency said.

Pennsylvania is already pursuing a rule to curb methane emissions from existing oil and gas sites, but it doesn't target the greenhouse gas directly and, like the EPA proposal, it wouldn't require routine leak monitoring at most of the state's older wells.

The federal proposal intends to exempt well sites that release less than 3 tons of methane per year from ongoing monitoring, but would require those wells' owners to perform an initial survey to look for leaks and make repairs.

EPA is asking for comments for a supplemental proposal it plans to issue next year on whether low-flowing wells with leak-prone equipment should be required to conduct regular

SEE **METHANE**, PAGE B-6



Christian Snyder/Post-Gazette

A developer will again request a court's permission to raze the shuttered Froggy's building in Downtown.

## BACK AT THE BAR

Developer again turns to court in bid to raze old Froggy's nightspot, 2 other Market Street buildings

By Mark Belko  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Twice denied permission by the city, a developer is again turning to the courts in a bid to tear down three Downtown buildings, including the former Froggy's restaurant, as part of a plan to raze a fourth.

Troiani Group has filed an application for immediate emergency relief with the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court to raze a vacant six-story structure at 209 First Ave. that it claims is in "imminent danger of catastrophic collapse."

But in order to do so safely, the developer maintains it first must demolish three adjacent buildings at 100-102 and 104-106 Market Street, including the former Froggy's nightspot.

The application marks the latest twist in Troiani's two-year battle to demolish the properties to clear the land for a major office, retail and residential redevelopment.

The request for emergency relief comes about two months after Allegheny County Common Pleas Court Senior Judge Joseph James reversed a decision by a city board of appeals that denied Troiani's request to knock down the Market Street properties first.

Judge James, in his Sept. 7 order, cleared the way for Troiani to start the demolitions. The city then filed an 11th-hour appeal of the order to Commonwealth Court on Oct. 6.

It represents the second time in the past year that the issue has ended up before the appellate court.

In July, the court vacated earlier rulings by Judge James and the city board of appeals in the Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections that rejected Troiani's requests to tear down the Market Street buildings.

At the time, Commonwealth Court concluded that the appeals board appeared to disregard "strong critical evidence" — a

standard set in a previous court case — that the developer had presented in favor of demolition.

Back before the court with its application for immediate emergency relief, Troiani argued that the city's "defiance" of the earlier ruling and the Common Pleas Court order in September put lives and property at risk.

"With its July 1, 2021 decision, this court recognized the need for expedited resolution of this public safety issue. The city has, to date, offered only recalcitrance and baseless delays, refusing to allow the demolition to commence," the developer wrote in its application.

In his Sept. 7 ruling, Judge James stated that Troiani had presented three expert witnesses, including two structural engineers, who gave detailed testimony to support their opinions that "the controlled demolition of the Market Street structures was necessary."

SEE **RAZE**, PAGE B-6

## Wesco flexes its global muscles

Firm unaffected by supply chain woes

By Anya Litvak  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

It's good to be a big kahuna in the supply chain and Wesco International Inc. has been flexing its muscles all the way to the bank, the company's leaders said on Thursday.

Supply chain issues — perhaps the most unlikely phrase to have been memed — are being ubiquitously blamed for shortages and delays of products across industries.

Managing the supply chain is literally Wesco's job.

The Station Square-based distributor of industrial, construction and electrical products, told analysts on Thursday that it has seen no material impacts on its operations from the disruptions reported by other companies for two reasons.

The first is that it's big. While the world of industrial and electrical distributors is still fairly fragmented and no single company has the majority of the market share, Wesco was already a large player before it doubled in size with last year's acquisition of Anixter International. This gave the company access to more suppliers and more customers.

Wesco's chairman, president and CEO, John Engel, said on Thursday that he is spending a lot more of his time talking to executives at Wesco's suppliers, for most of whom his company is either the biggest customer or in the top three.

"We're ensuring we get our proper share ... given the size of the relationship and the allocation coming off their manufacturing lines," he said.

In other words, if your business is more important to a manufacturer desperately trying to keep pace with ballooning demand for its products, you're likely to get the first shipments.

"You can kind of throw your

SEE **WESCO**, PAGE B-6

## Self-driving startup Aurora hits the stock market

By Lauren Rosenblatt  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

On its first day of public trading, shares of self-driving startup Aurora Innovation Inc. ended the day down 3% to close at \$9.60.

The autonomous vehicle company, based in the Strip District, went public Thursday through a merger with special purpose acquisition company Reinvent Technology Partners Y.

"This is a thrilling moment, it's such an exciting milestone for Aurora, for our partners, for our customers, our investors and the entire industry," Aurora CEO Chris Urmson said Thursday morning while standing next to co-founders Sterling Anderson and Drew

Bagnell as they waited to ring the bell to signal Aurora's official listing on the Nasdaq.

"We're working to launch an incredible product in trucking, we're building an incredible follow-on product for passenger vehicles, and we'll continue to build a long line of products," Mr. Urmson added.

"And like others who build technologies that fundamentally improve society while also creating immense value for their shareholders, we are fortunate to work on a problem and to build a company where economic and social benefits are deeply aligned."

Aurora announced in July it

SEE **AURORA**, PAGE B-6



Courtesy of Aurora Innovation

Sterling Anderson, Chris Urmson and Drew Bagnell are the three founders of Aurora Innovation, a company that creates software for self-driving cars.

### Business briefs

#### Papa John's sales soar behind delivery, takeout

Papa John's International Inc. jumped the most since the early days of the pandemic after the pizza chain's results showed demand for delivery and takeout food continues to grow. Comparable sales in North America, the company's largest market, rose 6.9% in the third quarter. Papa John's is maintaining the momentum from earlier in the pandemic, when Americans increasingly sought takeout and delivery-friendly fare. Now, the chain is



Papa John's International Inc.'s sales in North America rose 6.9% in the third quarter.

benefiting from the return of entertainment and sports — occasions in which people might order several pizzas.

#### Howmet Aerospace sees income drop in quarter

Pittsburgh-based Howmet Aerospace said net income for the third quarter fell 25% from a year ago to \$27 million, or 6 cents per share, vs. \$36 million, or 8 cents, in the same quarter last year. The most recent quarter included a special charge of \$93 million related to debt tender and other financing costs. Revenue for the period rose 13% to \$1.28 billion driven by an upturn in commercial transportation, aerospace and industrial gas turbine markets. "The leading indicators for air travel remain encouraging, particularly for domestic travel. We expect revenue growth to continue in the

fourth quarter 2021, and carry into 2022 and beyond," said John Plant, CEO of the engineered products and forgings company.

#### American Girl Dolls, Risk, sand in Toy Hall of Fame

American Girl dolls and the strategy board game Risk were inducted into the National Toy Hall of Fame in recognition of their influence on the toy industry. Sand, which the group called perhaps the most universal and oldest toy in the world, was also inducted. Also in the running this year were Battleship, The Settlers of Catan, Mahjong and billiards, as well as Cabbage Patch Kids, Masters of the Universe,

Fisher-Price Corn Popper, the toy fire engine and the pinata.

#### U.S. trade deficit hits record of \$80.9 billion

The U.S. trade deficit hit an all-time high of \$80.9 billion in September as American exports fell sharply while imports, even with supply chain problems at American ports, continue to climb. The September deficit topped the previous record of \$73.2 billion set in June, the Commerce Department reported. The deficit is the gap between what the United States exports to the rest of the world and

SEE **BRIEFS**, PAGE B-6

# EPA proposes rules on methane releases

**METHANE,** FROM B-5

monitoring.

Pennsylvania's draft rule does not require leak detection surveys at low-producing wells, including nearly all of the state's 70,000 producing conventional wells. The long-awaited final version of the state rule is expected to be released "very soon," said Jamar Thrasher, press secretary for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Pennsylvania must submit the final rule to EPA no later than June 2022.

It's not possible at this point to determine whether the proposed federal rules would apply to the same wells that will be covered by Pennsylvania's proposal, but there are likely to be some differences, Mr. Thrasher said.

In a statement on the EPA proposal, Marcellus Shale Coalition President David Callahan said, "Pennsylvania's modern natural gas operators have a longstanding commitment to advancing best-in-class environmental performance, which has resulted in the lowest methane intensity of producing basins and has made Appalachia one of the world's most environmentally responsible producing regions."

Several of the state's shale operators are already aiming to surpass what EPA's rules would require, with companies like Downtown-based EQT Corp. and Texas-based



Haley Nelson/Post-Gazette

The EQT well pad in Amwell Township, photographed in 2017 during its construction, has 21 gas wells. The Biden administration is advancing new rules for oil and gas wells and pipelines that are designed to improve safety and cut down on releases of methane.

Southwestern Energy Co. adopting advanced technologies such as continuous monitoring sensors at well sites to catch leaks.

Those companies are already ahead of EPA's new plan to phase out natural gas-driven pneumatic devices that release methane by design. Polluting versions of the controllers are common and account for nearly 30% of all methane emissions from oil and natural gas systems, EPA said.

Environmental and public health groups are focused

on pushing state and federal regulators to require regular monitoring for leaks at low-producing wells.

The Environmental Defense Fund said marginal wells account for 80% of active oil and gas sites in the country and they have disproportionately high emissions for the amount of fuel they produce for sale.

Russell Zerbo, an advocate with the Philadelphia-based Clean Air Council, said the federal rule "really begins the process of monitoring emissions from in-

dividual wells." Pennsylvania does not currently collect emissions data on conventional wells, and emissions data it collects from other oil and gas sources is mainly based on formulas.

Whether the federal rule covers more oil and gas sites than Pennsylvania is currently proposing will depend on that monitoring and the scope of the final rule, he said, which EPA plans to issue before the end of 2022.

*Laura Legere: llegere@post-gazette.com.*

# Wesco weathers global supply chain problems

**WESCO,** FROM B-5

weight around and you kind of usually get [what you need]," said Christopher Ciolino, a Bloomberg Intelligence analyst.

That leads to Wesco's second strategy for fighting off the supply chain blues: bulking up its inventory over the past six months.

The company said it purposely increased inventory levels to accommodate the same economic recovery that is causing supply chain shortages in the first place.

"We're not completely immune from supply chain challenges," Mr. Engel noted on Thursday.

Sales could have been up to 2% higher during the quarter without those complications, he said.

The problem, however disruptive it is today, is temporary, he said.

"The supply chains are going to get rebuilt," Mr. Engel said. "It's not 'if,' it's just 'when' and 'at what rate of speed.'"

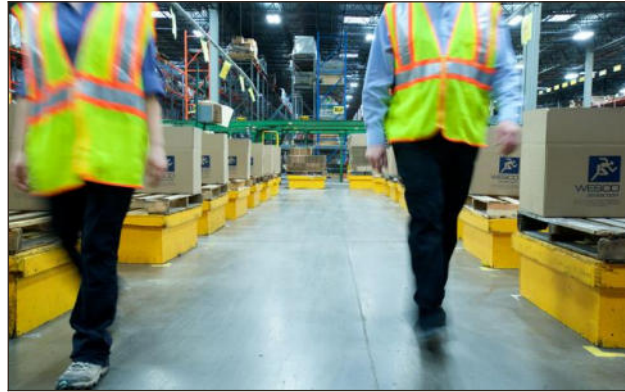
At a Morgan Stanley virtual conference in September, Mr. Engel predicted that supply chain issues will persist into next year.

"The amount of disruption it was causing in the global supply chain is significant," he said, referring to the pandemic and the economic recovery.

Some of Wesco's customers, spooked by the experience of the past months, have asked the company to bring parts of their supply chains back to North America.

"I think this is something that the pandemic has put a spotlight on — the fragility of global supply chains," he said.

Other customers have



Wesco International

Wesco has about 800 facilities in more than 50 countries, where it stores products ranging from telecom equipment to safety vests.

asked Wesco to help them get products that the company has never sourced before, "because they see us as having the ability to use our newfound supply chain muscle and our global supplier relationships to go and find materials that they're having trouble with."

Wesco is likely to get bigger still.

Acquisitions are in the company's DNA. It has made 50 of them since it spun off

from Westinghouse in 1994, Mr. Engel reminded investors on Thursday, most of them small.

"As we speak, we have several [non-disclosure agreements] that have been signed with potential targets," he said.

An acquisition isn't an event for the company, Mr. Engel said. "It's a process."

*Anya Litvak: alitvak@post-gazette.com*

# Aurora begins public trading

**AURORA,** FROM B-5

planned to go public through a merger with a special purpose acquisition company, or SPAC, a type of company that raises capital through an initial public offering for the purpose of acquiring or merging with an existing company.

Aurora merged with Reinvent Technology Partners Y, a SPAC that was founded with the intent to develop a partnership with a tech business to "innovate and achieve entrepreneurship at scale."

It already had a foothold in the tech space — its founders include Reid Hoffman, who founded LinkedIn, co-founded PayPal and was one of the earliest investors in Facebook, as well as Mark Pincus, who founded the social game developer Zynga.

The merger closed Wednesday and the company started trading Thursday.

It is trading on the Nasdaq under the ticker symbol AUR.

*Lauren Rosenblatt: lrosenblatt@post-gazette.com, 412-263-1565.*

## Business briefs

**BRIEFS,** FROM B-5

the imports it purchases from foreign nations. Part of the weakness reflected a 15.5% drop in petroleum exports related to drilling rig and refinery shutdowns during Hurricane Ida.

### Mortgage rates to continue their climb

Mortgage rates fell for the first time in a month, but their upward march is expected to continue. According to data released Thursday by Freddie Mac, the 30-year fixed-rate average fell to 3.09% with an average 0.7 point. (A point is a fee paid to

a lender equal to 1% of the loan amount. It is in addition to the interest rate.) It was 3.14% a week ago and 2.78% a year ago.

### Unemployment claims drop to pandemic low

The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits fell to a fresh pandemic low last week, another sign the job market is healing after last year's coronavirus recession. Jobless claims dropped by 14,000 to 269,000. Since topping 900,000 in early January, the weekly applications have fallen more or less steadily ever since and are gradually moving toward prepandemic levels of around 220,000 a week.

### Ford develops plan to cut debt costs in half

Ford is aiming to cut its borrowing costs by more than half as it repurchases \$5 billion in junk-rated debt and seeks to set a path to return to an investment-grade credit rating. The automaker said it's initiating a \$5 billion cash tender offer to repurchase a significant chunk of the \$8 billion in junk bonds it issued to bolster its balance sheet as it shut down factories at the onset of the pandemic in April 2020. As auto sales collapsed, Ford issued what it calls "COVID bonds" a month after its debt was cut to non-investment grade by S&P Global Ratings.

*From staff and wire reports*

Supplies are so scarce that Pa.'s and N.J.'s electric grid operator is worried

# Coal is making a comeback

**By Andrew Maykuth**  
*The Philadelphia Inquirer*

Coal, a pariah fuel for climate activists, has made a quiet comeback this year in the post-lockdown economic resurgence. Coal stockpiles at power plants are getting so low that the regional electric grid operator, PJM Interconnection, has taken steps to prevent a system collapse this winter similar to Texas earlier this year.

PJM, based near Valley Forge, Pa., this month imposed new rules on power plants in 13 states and the District of Columbia to make sure electricity generators do not run short of fuel during a cold snap. The rules could force some coal generators to curtail operations to build up emergency reserves, increasing power prices already on the rise.

Demand for coal has jumped in response to rising natural gas prices, even though coal emits more greenhouse gases per kilowatt hour generated than rival fuels. Coal-fired power plants have struggled to replenish stockpiles because the energy sector is facing the same kind of supply chain challenges that have slowed deliveries of many goods and commodities.

"Our top priority at PJM is ensuring a reliable electric grid," said Michael Bryson, PJM's senior vice president of operations. "We are especially concerned about coal supply chain issues and inventory levels heading into the winter."

The resurgence of coal power, even amid a worldwide push to promote clean energy and decarbonize electricity production, demonstrates that fossil fuels still remain very much in the energy mix, coal advocates say.

Policymakers need to recognize coal as "part of an all-the-above energy strategy for the foreseeable future because the coal fleet supports grid reliability and resilience, helps keep electricity prices affordable, provides fuel security, and serves as an insurance policy when other electricity sources are not available or are too expensive," said Michelle Bloodworth, CEO of America's Power, a trade group for the coal industry.

But climate activists say coal generation is merely the short-term beneficiary of rising natural gas prices, which have elevated coal's place in the hierarchy of fuel choices facing grid operators, which select generators based largely on price. Now is the time to accelerate the adoption of renewable energy, they say.

"My sense is, this is a blip," said Joseph Otis Minott, executive director of the Clean Air Council. "In the long run, the writing is on the wall for coal plants."

Indeed, coal's share of the nation's power-generation mix has fallen steadily in the last 10 years, from 44% in 2011 to 20% last year, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Coal's role was diminished by natural gas after production of inexpensive fracked gas soared in the last decade. Though natural gas is also a fossil fuel

whose production and combustion emit greenhouse gases, it was relatively easy for power generators to get permits to build new efficient gas-fired power plants because they emit far fewer toxic emissions than coal plants. Nationwide, electricity generated from natural gas increased from 23% in 2011 to 39% last year.

Coal has also lost share to renewable energy, primarily wind and solar, which have increased from 4% to 12% of the U.S. electricity generation mix in 2020, and are continuing to grow at a fast clip. Of 230 gigawatts of proposed new power generation awaiting approval to connect to the grid, 90% of it is renewable energy, said Jeffrey Shields, a PJM spokesman.

But with rising energy prices this year, coal power has become more competitive in the short term. Federal energy officials estimate that coal power plants will generate about 170 billion kilowatt hours more electricity this year, a 22% increase from 2020. Coal's share of the nation's power mix is expected to increase from 20% last year to 24% this year.

Coal stockpiles, which in October stood at 86 million tons, are down 35% from a year ago, when 133 million tons were available going into winter, according to the Energy Information Administration. Current inventories are 18% below the lowest level in the past five years, and are projected to get as low as 61 million tons a year from now.

Coal producers including Pennsylvania's Consol Energy Inc., whose share prices have soared this year, telegraphed the growing demand months ago to investors.

"Inventories are, I would say, near critical levels for many of the domestic utilities that we do serve," Robert Braithwaite, vice president of marketing for Consol, told analysts in a conference call in August.

Coal-fired power plants are running more frequently at a time when they normally would be stockpiling fuel for the winter, said Mr. Bryson of PJM.

Replenishing stockpiles is more complicated than calling a broker and ordering a barge delivery. In the current topsy-turvy economy, energy markets are encountering the same supply-chain disruptions that have upended manufactured goods ranging from furniture to new vehicles. The energy industry is dealing with shortages of transportation and labor, including truck drivers, railroad personnel, and coal miners.

American producers of coal, natural gas, oil, and propane are also facing increased demand for energy overseas, particularly in China and India. China's still-expanding coal fleet of 1,080 gigawatts is as large as the entire U.S. electricity generation capacity combined, including gas, nuclear, renewables, and coal. China's coal-power capacity is five times bigger than America's coal fleet.

There is still plenty of coal in the ground. But coal producers say they are not incentivized by policy makers to invest in reliability.

# Developer Troiani again turns to court in effort to raze buildings

**RAZE,** FROM B-5

The board of appeals, in its July 26 decision rejecting the demolitions, "did not cite any evidence to contradict those conclusions," he found.

"Therefore, Troiani established with strong critical evidence that the proposed demolition plan provides the only safe manner in which to demolish the First Avenue structure," he concluded.

The developer referenced Judge James' conclusion in its application for

emergency relief, adding that given the board of appeals' "failure to address this court's concerns, as reflected in the lower court's decision, the city's appeal is entirely without merit."

Molly Onufer, spokeswoman for Mayor Bill Peduto, said the city doesn't comment on litigation nor legal matters.

In the petition, Troiani stated that it began working with the city after Judge James' Sept. 7 ruling to try to get moving on the demolitions.

But the city Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections, it claimed, requested additional information and sought to impose additional conditions related to the effort.

And while Troiani has complied "with each and every additional requirement that the city has imposed ... the city continues to ignore the facts and law and has refused to grant the final permits that would allow for the necessary demolition," the application stated.

Commonwealth Court has ordered the city to file an answer to Troiani's application for immediate emergency relief by 4 p.m. Monday.

Although the board of appeals has rejected Troiani's attempts to tear down the Market Street properties, the city has condemned them as unsafe and ordered corrective action — one possibility being demolition, although that would require planning commission approval.

The commission last year

denied Troiani's bid to raze the buildings. The developer still has an appeal pending before Commonwealth Court on that case.

Troiani wants to remove the Market Street structures and the one on First Avenue to clear the site for a proposed 30-story development that would feature 200,000 square feet of office space, 151 residences, two floors of retail, and 300 parking spaces.

*Mark Belko: mbelko@post-gazette.com.*



Post-Gazette

The PPG Place Christmas Tree during Pittsburgh's annual Light Up Night celebration in Downtown in 2019.

## Moved to Saturday, event will feature more fireworks, more music and a giant pickle

By Scott Mervis  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

**A**mong the reasons to venture Downtown for the 60th anniversary Highmark Light Up Night will be a little soul, a little Beatlemania and a big pickle.

The Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership released the details Thursday for the annual event, which this year will switch from Friday to Saturday,

taking place Nov. 20.

Light Up Night will feature New York-based band the American Authors headlining the BNY Mellon Stage at the Allegheny Overlook on Fort Duquesne Boulevard, along with local indie-rockers Donora and a hometown return for soul band Lyndsey Smith & Steeltown Horns.

The Highmark Main Stage at Penn Avenue and Stanwix Street will showcase a Mr. Smalls All-Star Beatles Tribute, featuring more than 15 local musi-

cians performing Beatles classics. Also on that stage will be hometown favorites Joe Grushecky and the Houserockers and blues belter Miss Freddy.

The EQT Jazzmasters Stage will have The Daniel May Trio with Dwayne Dolphin and George Heid III, with special guest vocalists Anita Levels and Maria Becoates-Bey, playing jazz holiday favorites and the music of Fred Rogers.

SEE **LIGHT UP**, PAGE C-2

## 'The Electrical Life' offers twitchy portrait of artist

By Ann Hornaday  
The Washington Post

Benedict Cumberbatch delivers a twitchy, high-strung portrayal of the protagonist in "The Electrical Life of Louis Wain," a film about the artist who popularized kitschy cat pictures in late-Victorian London.

Suffused with an occasionally awkward combination of whimsy and sadness, Will Sharpe's movie not only seeks to tell the story of how Wain happened to create a pop culture fad that would last into meme-times, but wants to get the audience inside his head. If "The Electrical Life of Louis Wain" begins to sag under its ambitions and

the sheer over-muchness of Wain's aesthetic and imagination, it's still a diverting biography of an artist otherwise lost to history.

In late 1880s England, Wain is making a living as an illustrator and living at home with his mother and five sisters when the household is joined by a governess named Emily Richardson (Claire Foy). Soon, the diffident Louis realizes that in the similarly neuro-atypical Emily, he has met his match. Despite the fact that she's "positively geriatric" by the standards of the time (as the film's narrator, Olivia Colman, helpfully explains), the two are married, their bliss only heightened by their adoption of a waterlogged black



Jaap Buitendijk/Amazon Studios

Benedict Cumberbatch in "The Electrical Life of Louis Wain."

-and-white kitten they name Peter.

This is where the sadness comes in, a melancholy and sense of inconsolable loss that Wain compulsively

channels through the creation of cat

drawings — realistic, then anthropomorphic and finally surreal, and his mental health begins to decline.

### MOVIE REVIEW

#### 'THE ELECTRICAL LIFE OF LOUIS WAIN'

★½

**Rating:** PG-13 for some mature thematic elements and strong language.

**Starring:** Benedict Cumberbatch, Claire Foy, Andrea Riseborough, Toby Jones.

**Streaming:** Friday on Amazon

His humanlike cats prove to be hits with the wider public, who gobble up his illustrations by way of greeting cards, newspaper comics and children's books. He's clearly a man ahead of his time, not only anticipating YouTube and LOLcats, but evincing an interest in electricity that goes from practical to metaphysical.

SEE **WAIN**, PAGE C-2

## Kelly Frey is out at WTAE-TV

By Joshua Axelrod  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Wednesday became a surprise end of an era for one of Pittsburgh's longest-tenured television news anchors.

WTAE-TV announced Wednesday that Kelly Frey, a weekday morning anchor who has been with Channel 4 since 2000, is leaving the station. She will be off the air effective immediately, according to WTAE creative services director Tracy Oliver.

"After consideration and discussion over her next contract, Kelly Frey is leaving WTAE Channel 4," the station said in an emailed statement. "Kelly has been an impor-



WTAE-TV

Longtime WTAE-TV anchor Kelly Frey is leaving Channel 4 effective immediately over an apparent contract dispute.

tant part of our family and success over the last 21 years. We wish Kelly and her family all the best."

Frey did not respond to a Post-Gazette request for comment on

SEE **FREY**, PAGE C-2

## Dad bod, FTW, amirite are now in dictionary

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (AP) — Dad bod, amirite, TBH and FTW are now dictionary-appropriate.

Merriam-Webster has added 455 new words to its venerable dictionary, including a number of abbreviations and slang terms that have become ubiquitous on social media.

"Just as the language never stops evolving, the dictionary never stops expanding," the nearly 200-year-old Springfield, Mass.-based company said on its website. "New terms and new uses for existing terms are the constant in a living language."

The dictionary company said the quick and informal nature of messaging, texting and tweeting, which has only increased during the pandemic, has "contributed to a vocabulary newly rich in efficient and abbreviated expression."

Among them: "TBH," an abbreviation for "to be honest" and "FTW," short for "for the win."



Jenny Kane/Associated Press

Merriam-Webster has added hundreds of new words to its dictionary.

Merriam-Webster explains that FTW is used "especially to express approval or support. In social media, FTW is often used to acknowledge a clever or funny response to a question or meme." "Amirite" is a quick way to

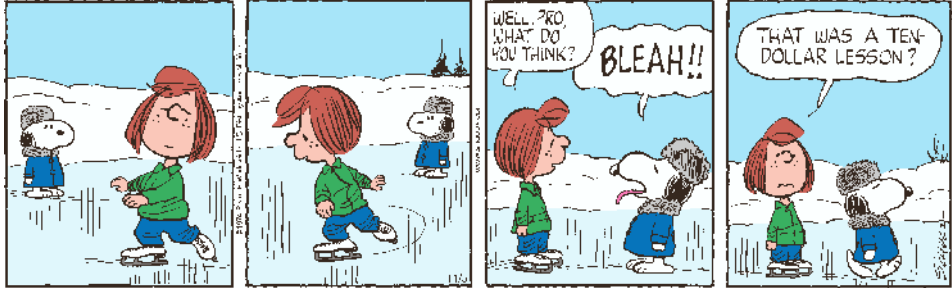
write "am I right?" as in, "English spelling is consistently inconsistent, amirite?"

The coronavirus pandemic also looms large in the collection of

SEE **DADBOD**, PAGE C-2

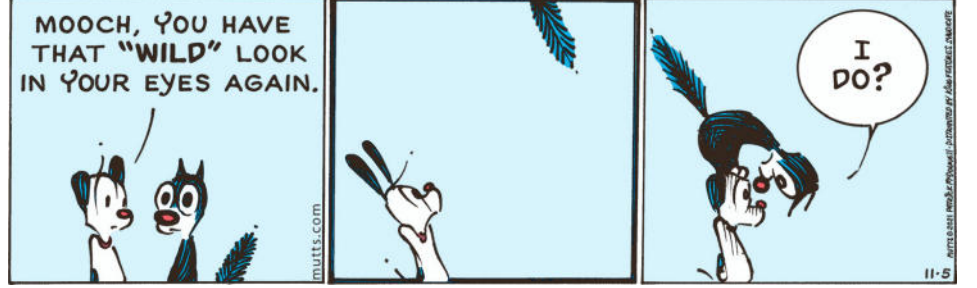


**Peanuts**



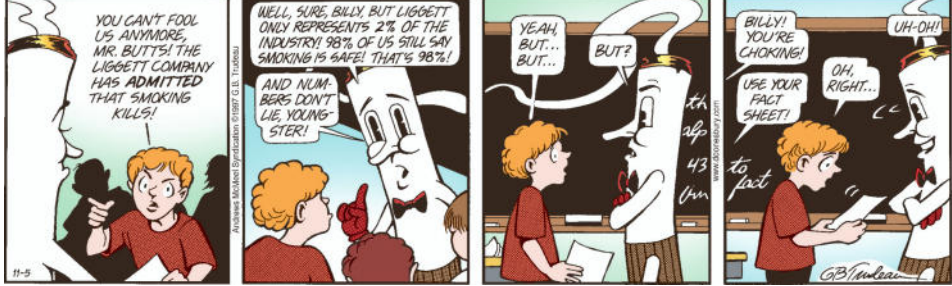
By Charles Schulz

**Mutts**



By Patrick McDonnell

**Doonesbury**



By Garry Trudeau

**Zits**



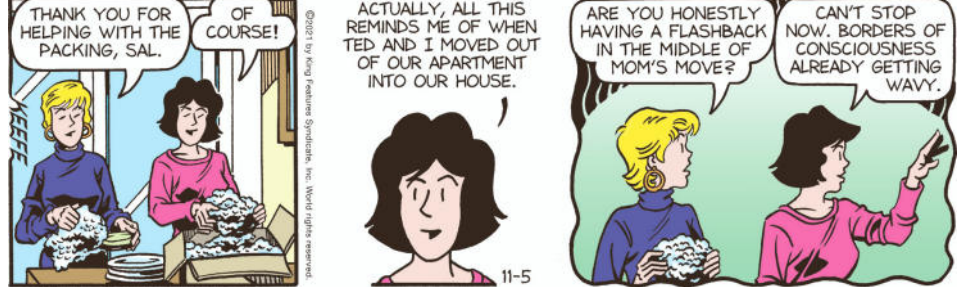
By Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman

**Baby Blues**



By Jerry Scott and Rick Kirkman

**Sally Forth**



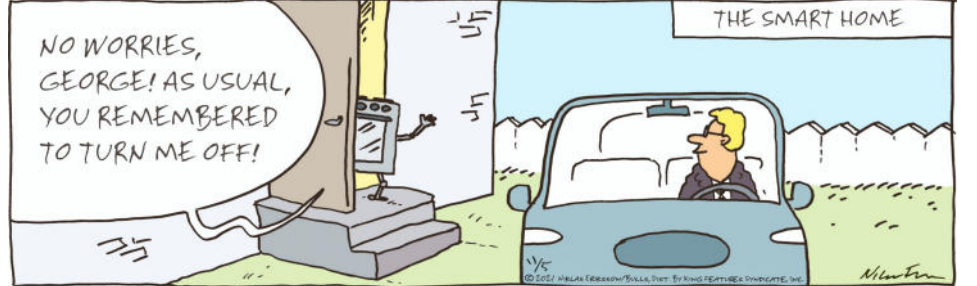
By Francesco Marciuliano & Jim Keefe

**Blondie**



By Dean Young and John Marshall

**Carpe Diem**



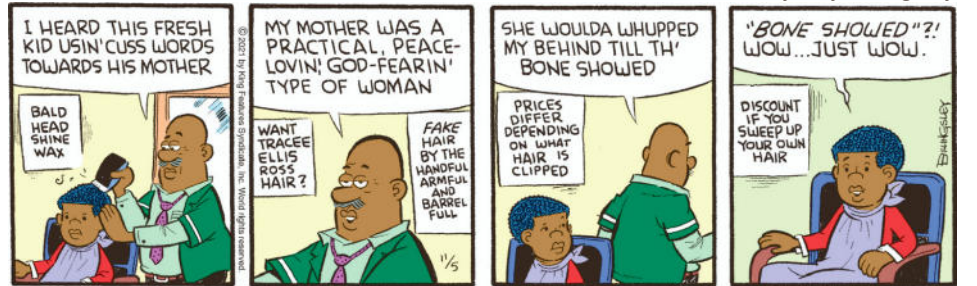
By Niklas Eriksson

**Beetle Bailey**



By Mort Walker

**Curtis**



By Ray Billingsley

**Dustin**



By Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker

**Pickles**



By Brian Crane

**Garfield**



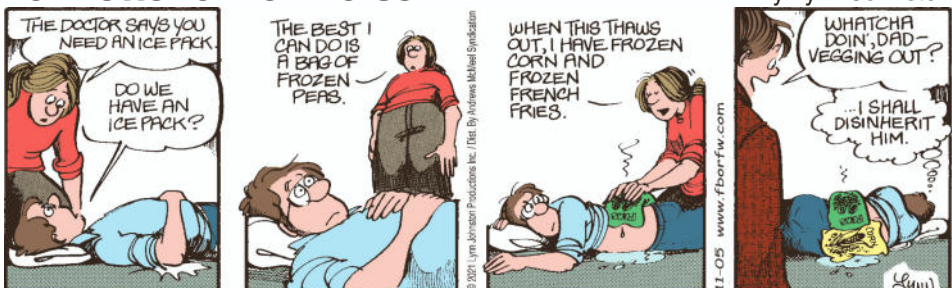
By Jim Davis

**Born Loser**



By Art and Chip Sansom

**For Better or For Worse**



By Lynn Johnston

**Hagar the Horrible**



By Chris Browne

**Rhymes With Orange**



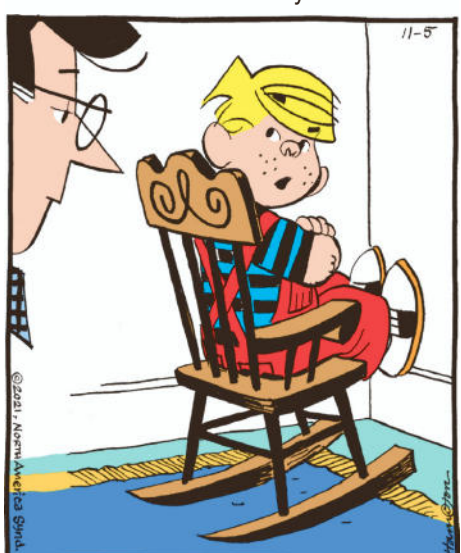
By Hilary Price

**Dilbert**



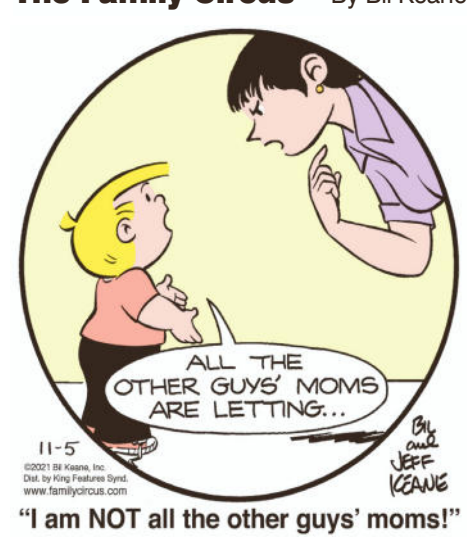
By Scott Adams

**Dennis the Menace**



By Hank Ketcham

**The Family Circus**



By Bil Keane

**Bizarro**



By Wayne and Piraro

**Non Sequitur**



By Wiley Miller

"I TOLD MOM THAT HOT DOG BROKE HER VASE ...BUT I FORGOT HE WAS AT THE VET."

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# Friday PUZZLES, HOROSCOPE AND BRIDGE

### Cryptoquip

AM YHKE ZKKYA YHM WLE OH  
YLQ JLNKMK-RYKPOHW WQYLJ  
IY WOPM LR GMKJ. GM'R  
IGM CMROWHZIMC GOHIMQ.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: K equals L

Solution for previous Cryptoquip: What trousers should a mechanic wear to help a stalled vehicle get moving again? Car-go pants.

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words, and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error. © 2021 by Kings Features Syndicate Inc.

### Ken Ken

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Directions: Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 through 6 without repeating. The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes, called cages, must combine using the given operation (in any order) to produce the target numbers in the top-left corners. Freebies: Fill in single-box cages with the number in the top-left corner.

#### Previous solution

### Jumble

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

PRUUS  
FAYTF  
TUNORA  
OJDANI  
THE " " " " " " " " " " " " " "

Previous Jumble solution below Quick Crossword



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

### Sudoku

DAVE GREEN

Complete the grid so that every row, column, and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/05

### Horoscope

GEORGIA NICOLS

Friday, November 5, 2021

The following astrological forecasts should be read for entertainment value only. These predictions have no reliable basis in scientific fact.

- with others. Trust your creative, original ideas! Tonight: Cooperate.
CANCER (June 21-July 22) ☆☆☆☆ This is a productive day for those who work in the arts and the entertainment world, because today you can think outside the box. You have original, imaginative ideas! Enjoy playful times with kids. Accept all invitations to party. Tonight: Get organized.
LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) ☆☆☆☆ Today's planetary energy makes you focus on home and family. You will enjoy family interactions and doing home repairs. Meanwhile, something is creating chaos and increased activity where you live, which means you have to work harder to stay organized. Tonight: Socialize!
VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) ☆☆☆☆ This is a busy, active day. Enjoy meeting new faces and seeing new places. Take a short trip. Although ideas bubble to the surface of your mind, refrain from making important decisions during the Moon Alert. Enjoy your day! Tonight: Talk to someone. Home and family.
LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) ☆☆☆☆ You have a strong focus on money, cash flow and earnings today. However, during the Moon Alert today avoid shopping for anything other than food and gas. A Moon Alert is also a poor time for making important decisions. Tonight: Learn, study and talk.
SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) ☆☆☆☆ Today the Sun, the Moon, Mercury and Mars are all in Scorpio! It's the end of

- the week, and it's all about you! Do be aware that there is a Moon Alert taking place in your sign. Tonight: Check your assets.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) ☆☆☆☆ You can attract money to you today. You also might spend money buying beautiful things for yourself and for loved ones. If you do shop, refrain from buying anything except food and gas from noon to 9 p.m. EDT. Tonight: You win!
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) ☆☆☆☆ This is great day to schmooze with others! You will enjoy interactions with classes, groups and organizations. Although your communications with others will be upbeat, because most of this day is a Moon Alert, postpone important decisions until tomorrow. Tonight: Enjoy solitude.
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) ☆☆☆☆ A handful of planets at the top of your chart means you're making a strong impression on bosses, parents and the police. However, be aware of the restrictions of today's Moon Alert. Go after what you want, but refrain from making important decisions during the Moon Alert. Tonight: Talk to a friend.
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) ☆☆☆☆ The energy today is the perfect way to finish your week. You're eager to explore something fresh and new, which is why you want to travel and have adventure. You want to learn new things and be stimulated by your surroundings. All these things are possible. Tonight: You are admired.

### Contract Bridge

STEVE BECKER

- Assume you are the dealer. What would you bid with each of the following hands?
1. ♠ 10 ♥ A8542 ♦ AKQJ6 ♣ 74
2. ♠ K8 ♥ 1094 ♦ KQ862 ♣ AKJ
3. ♠ 5 ♥ AQ1083 ♦ AJ8762 ♣ 5
4. ♠ KJ7 ♥ KQ8 ♦ A109 ♣ KQ86
\* \* \*
1. One heart. It would clearly be wrong to open one diamond simply because it is the stronger suit. Since the majority of hands end up in a suit contract, every effort should be made to represent suit length correctly so that the partnership will wind up in the suit in which it holds the most cards.
The most efficient way of attaining this goal when holding two five-card suits is to bid the higher-ranking suit first — regardless of strength — with

- the intention of subsequently bidding the lower-ranking suit twice. This will give partner a choice of suits at the same level. If you were to bid diamonds first, followed by hearts, the same would not be true.
2. One notrump. It is far better to open with one notrump than one diamond. The notrump bid has the huge advantage of immediately describing a balanced hand with 15 to 17 points and stoppers in at least three suits, not to mention the incidental advantage of making it more difficult for the opposition to enter the bidding.
A diamond opening is likely to create later bidding problems. For example, if partner responded with one heart or one spade, you'd be faced with a problem that has no satisfactory solution.
3. One heart. This hand represents an exception to the rule laid out in the first problem. Since it barely qualifies as an opening bid, an effort should be made to keep the bidding as low as possible. This can best

- be accomplished by starting with one heart. Then, if partner makes the expected response of one spade or one notrump, you can comfortably bid two diamonds, permitting the contract to be played at that level in either red suit.
Observe that if you start with one diamond and get a one-spade or one-notrump response, your hand is not nearly good enough to "reverse" into two hearts, which would show at least 17 points.
4. One club. This looks very much like a one-notrump bid, but you can't make that bid with 18 points.
It may seem harmless to exceed the normal limit by only a point, but one mustn't forget that partner's responses are geared to a 15- to 17-point spread. A game or slam could easily be missed if the point-count range became elastic at the whim of the opener. The extra values above an opening one-notrump bid can be shown by jumping to two notrump at your next turn.

### Joseph Crossword

- ACROSS
1 Succeed
6 Tooth points
11 Get up
12 Like bar beer
13 Goes under
14 Lane of film
15 Gear part
16 Uno plus due
18 Draw
19 Hoppy brew
20 Nourished
21 German conjunction
22 Get excited
24 Egyptian goddess
25 Shirt parts
27 Tampa Bay team
29 Parent's answer to "Why?"
32 Ulna's place
33 Univ. or acad.
34 Spoil

T O T E D G R A Z E
A U R A E R O G E T
U T U R N A L O N E
P A C I L L D A B
A T R E S T E R I E
T W I S T O F L I M E
T A M S S I L V E R
I R E L A X E D S
J A P A N U T I C A
A P H I D R O M A N
W E I L L E N E M Y

- 35 Arrest
36 Crew need
37 Frank holder
38 Bush's successor
40 Make amends
42 Form 1040 user
43 Back biter
44 Extreme diets
45 Impudent
8 Possessions that scream
9 Grilled
10 Tears along
17 Copy
23 WBA wins
24 Nest egg acct.
26 Spiritual retreats
27 Fled
28 Sinai setting
30 Spa rooms
31 Stubborn
33 Flies high
39 Ran into
41 - degree
DOWN
1 Item replaced after filling up
2 Meadowlark's cousin
3 Belly dancers use them
4 Inquire
5 Soothing
6 Like some messages
7 Cycle starter

### The New York Times Crossword

No. 1001

- ACROSS
1 Barrel of fun?
4 Like Marcia, among the "Brady Bunch" daughters
10 No longer following
14 Diminutive suffix in Spanish
15 Cry at sea
16 Jay-Z's " the Next One"
17 Fictional home with a secret basement
19 " : Hawaii" (TV spinoff)
20 Whom Sarah had in her early 90s
21 Super group
23 Part of FWIW
25 Part of Q.E.D.
26 Pacific evergreen with orange-red bark
30 \_\_\_ Lynch, first African American woman to serve as U.S. attorney general
34 Put away
35 Range of consideration, metaphorically
37 Activity with a rake
39 Good name for a wrestler?
40 Badger
41 Some corporate holdings, for short?
43 Open \_\_\_
44 Hydration locations
46 Some formal promises
48 Open \_\_\_
49 Its products often come with Allen keys
51 Where uniforms are worn with sweaters?
53 Environmentally friendly way to travel
56 Soviet fighter jets
57 Locale below 17-Across, as suggested by three images in this puzzle's grid

ADMIN DULCE ABE
LOAMY ASSOC SAIP
TWITTERBUZZ TIS
ANNO DIS YESIDO
ASAPIN HUMDRUM
ARTSET PAPAS
IRATE KART UPDO
DOG RINGPOP LAX
AWED MOES ORATE
ORALS BUENAS
LOWROLL HARLEM
ANIMAL AIL ARIE
LIZ SOUND MIXING
ACE TUTEE VIDEO
WEN STEWS SNEIRT

- DOWN
1 This will never fly
2 Headwinds can push them back, in brief
3 His "La Maja Desnuda" was never publicly shown in his lifetime
4 Members of a certain college
5 Flight
6 It's self-replicating
7 First name of the poet whose "candle burns at both ends"
8 Past the approval stage, in construction slang
9 They don't put up with any bull
10 Enduring
11 Years back
12 Not remain completely asleep
13 Caber \_\_\_ (Scottish athletic event)
18 Depilatory brand
22 Snitch (on)
24 Hitch or glitch
26 Econ subfield
27 Sunlit spaces
28 Like the loser's locker room after a stunning upset
29 Driver around a lot?
31 An eagle is the most common one in the U.S.
32 Its players never want to be at the top
33 Foolery
36 Written designs that are also readable when flipped or rotated
38 Cry to a baby
42 Jaime \_\_\_ a.k.a. the Bionic Woman
45 Some hospital supplies
47 College dept.
50 Made a move
52 Inits. that often precede "+"
53 "Now!"
54 "This can't be happening ..."
55 Org. with a list of Supreme Court cases on its website
58 Old pro
60 "Star Wars" staple, for short
61 Fool

Thursday's Jumble: Excel, Clone, Mishap, Unsure. Getting presents was great, but what she loved most was everyone's — Presence.



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## NewsSlide

The image displays three mobile devices showing the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette app interface. The top device shows the NewsSlide view with a large, vertical article layout and a navigation bar on the right with categories like NEWS, NATION & WORLD, SPORTS, ENTERTAINMENT, BUSINESS, and UNION. The middle device shows the e-Delivery view, which mimics the print newspaper's layout with multiple columns of text and images. The bottom device shows another NewsSlide view with a different article.

e-Delivery



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## Pirates rebuild will not include McCutchen

### Team banking on youth movement

By Jason Mackey  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Andrew McCutchen's Pirates career is filled with sparkling statistics and individual accolades, but the biggest thing he did here was help take a bad team and make it good, spearheading a playoff push that — for three years anyway — gave people hope.

It was a script made for Hollywood; however, don't bank on sequel.

Although the Phillies declined McCutchen's 2022 club option Wednesday, essentially paying him \$3 million to become a free agent while they overhaul their outfield, a Pirates reunion does not appear to be on the table.

According to sources, the Pirates' interest in bringing the 35-year-old McCutchen back remains somewhere between tepid and non-existent, although it would be foolish for either side to close the door on what would surely be a fun-filled storyline.

The easier way to say it: There are significant impediments.

From the team's perspective, signing McCutchen doesn't fit the current business model, which favors homegrown talent, letting those players come up through the minor leagues together and supplementing in to-be-determined areas once they're ready. That time has

SEE **CUTCH**, PAGE D-7



**Joe Starkey**

## McCutchen is no fit for these Pirates

I'm all in on the Pirates' tank job. It's the best way to build a winner.

Look across town for proof of that. The Penguins pulled off two of the greatest tank jobs in sports history, netting Sidney Crosby and Mario Lemieux. The two World Series teams this year also were products of "massive rebuilds" not that long ago.

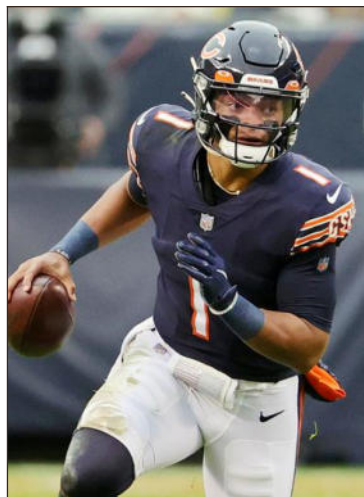
Intentionally hitting bottom has its upside. But that doesn't mean I'd recommend a 35-year-old outfielder sign up in mid-plunge.

That idea became a talking point Wednesday, after the Philadelphia Phillies declined their option on Andrew McCutchen for 2022.

"Far from done," McCutchen tweeted, prompting Pirates fans everywhere to beg him to return.

It was McCutchen, more than anyone, who led this franchise out of the

SEE **STARKEY**, PAGE D-7



Justin Fields is 2-4 in his first season with Chicago.

## Chicago's Fields coming off of his best game

# Steelers will test rookie QB

By Ray Fittipaldo  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The 2021 NFL rookie quarterback class was hyped as one of the best in recent history. Five quarterbacks were selected in the first round, all among the top 15 picks. The first three players taken in the draft were quarterbacks — No. 1 overall pick Trevor Lawrence went to the Jaguars followed by Zach Wilson to the Jets and Trey Lance to the 49ers.

Justin Fields, who visits Heinz Field for "Monday Night Football" against the Steelers, was the No. 11 overall pick of the Bears and Mac

Jones was selected at No. 15 by the Patriots.

Together, they are a combined 8-20 as starters and none of them has a winning record. Fields is 2-4 and will go up against a Steelers defense that feasts on rookie signal-callers.

Since taking over as Steelers head coach in 2007, Mike Tomlin is 24-4 against rookie quarterbacks. Not even Bill Belichick can boast of a record that impressive against rookie quarterbacks.

The only rookies to beat the Steelers during Tomlin's tenure are Troy Smith (2007),

SEE **ROOKIE**, PAGE D-2



### Next

**Game:** Steelers (4-3) vs. Chicago Bears (3-5), Heinz Field.

**When:** 8:15 p.m. Monday.  
**TV:** ESPN & WTAE.

PENGUINS 3, FLYERS 2

# Penguins get some relief



Matt Freed/Post-Gazette

Evan Rodrigues, left, and Kasper Kapanen, right, congratulate Kris Letang Thursday night after Letang scored the winning goal in overtime to beat the Philadelphia Flyers, 3-2, at PPG Paints Arena.

## Claim OT win hours after coach has positive test

By Matt Vensel  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Given their luck in the first month of the season, of course it came to this.

Already, the Penguins have had to play on through myriad maladies. Sidney Crosby and Evgeni Malkin were unavailable when the puck dropped on the regular season Oct. 12. About 30% of the players on their roster have had positive COVID-19 tests. And in total a dozen players now have been sidelined for one reason or another.

The Penguins managed to get through their tough October schedule with a 3-3-2 record. The two-time Cup winner behind the bench had a lot to do with it.

But now they will be without coach Mike Sullivan for at least the next week.

Just three hours before Thursday's 3-2 win against the Philadelphia Flyers, which was decided when Kris Letang scored on a wrap-around in overtime, the Penguins announced that Sullivan was out after he was confirmed positive for the virus.

Penguins players were commuting to the arena when they got the news.

Assistant Todd Reirden coached the team Thursday at PPG Paints Arena — and could potentially do it for a few more games given that Sullivan is symptomatic.

"Obviously, I'm really hoping that Mike is feeling better and continues to improve

SEE **GAME**, PAGE D-6

# Armstrong won't reveal discipline levied in hockey scandal

By Mike White  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Armstrong High School isn't saying exactly what disciplinary action has been taken against students who directed chants of a vulgar and sexual nature toward a female goaltender on the

Mars hockey team in a game last week.

But the ban on students in grades 9-12 attending Armstrong hockey games for the rest of the season has been extended to grades 7-12.

Also, the Armstrong High School administration

has put demands on the Armstrong hockey association concerning security at future games. High school hockey is not a school-sponsored sport in Western Pennsylvania, but a club sport run by parents and boosters at each school.

Kirk Lorigan, Armstrong

High School principal, led an investigation into the chants from the student section Oct. 28 at Belmont Sports Complex in Kittanning. One of the chants was sexually explicit. He said Thursday night that the investigation is still ongoing, but "appropriate school

discipline has been used."

He wouldn't say whether that discipline included suspending students from school. The Armstrong school board held its regularly scheduled meeting Thursday night and part of

SEE **HOCKEY**, PAGE D-5

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## Pro Football

Browns teammates say they don't know status of unhappy receiver

# Beckham excused from practice again

By Tom Withers  
The Associated Press

BEREA, Ohio — Odell Beckham Jr. remains lined up outside — way outside.

The polarizing wide receiver was excused from practice for the second day in a row Thursday as the Cleveland Browns figure out their next move with him, a person familiar with the situation told The Associated Press on Thursday.

The team hasn't reached a conclusion yet on what to do with Beckham, according to the person who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation.

Beckham has likely played his last game in Cleveland, his exit hastened by his father sharing a video on social media criticizing quarterback Baker Mayfield for not throwing the ball to the three-time Pro Bowler.

Beckham's silence on the matter underscores his divide with the Browns.

And while the team's front office works toward a solution, some players expressed a willingness to bring Beckham back.

"Hopefully we can get him back if that's possible," said safety John Johnson III. "I feel like the majority of this locker room would love to have him in this building. Flat out."

"I guess the leaders in this building feel like we can do it without him. Some guys might have a different opinion. So moving forward, hopefully we can get him back somehow. But if not, we've got to keep it going. We've got a big game coming up, another division game, that's what my mindset is, just get ready for this week."

Browns left guard Joel Bitonio, one of the team's most respected players and leaders, said there is confusion over



"I guess the leaders in this building feel like we can do it without him."

John Johnson III,  
on Odell Beckham Jr., pictured

Beckham's status.

"Yeah, it's hard because we don't know what the situation is," he said. "We think he's a great player when he's on the field, but we don't know what the situation is. We don't know what's really going on."

"We probably know as much as you guys know from outside the building. But if he wants to come back and be part of the team, I'm sure we'd welcome him with open arms."

Cleveland could waive Beckham if it doesn't see a reconciliation, which seems like a long shot at this point.

Beckham turns 29 Friday.

He's making \$15.75 million this season, and the Browns would have to pay him more than half of that if he was waived and not claimed by another team.

Beckham is under contract for two more seasons, but doesn't have any guaranteed money on his contract after this year.

Amid a major distraction, the Browns (4-4), who have fallen into last place in the AFC North Division, visit the Cincinnati Bengals (5-3) Sunday and can't afford many more losses if they hope to make the playoffs.

Browns coach Kevin

Stefanski doesn't speak to reporters on Thursday, but his coordinators were all available and said he's handling the circumstances with aplomb.

"Kevin has done a nice job as a leader of the coaching staff and of our football team," said special teams coordinator Mike Priefer. "The guys in the locker room, we have a bunch of professional football players who really know what their job is and what the task at hand for the Cleveland Browns this week against the Cincinnati Bengals, a very, very good football team on the road."

"That is where our concern is."

One of Beckham's closest friends, Browns wide receiver Jarvis Landry, normally speaks with reporters on Thursday but did not hold a session.

Beckham's stormy tenure in Cleveland appears to be

coming to an end after a disruptive few days.

On Tuesday, Odell Beckham Sr. shared an 11-minute video highlighting plays in which his son was open and Mayfield either missed him or ignored him completely.

The Browns told Beckham not to report to practice Wednesday and afterward Mayfield said he had not spoken to his teammate. Mayfield said he was caught off guard by the personal attack, which came a few hours before the NFL trade deadline.

"I've had conversations with his dad before, man to man, face to face," Mayfield said. "I was pretty surprised by the video and the intentions and the feelings behind it. I'd be lying if I said otherwise. But hurt? Nah, I'm good. I'll be all right."

Mayfield is caught in the middle of a potentially divisive situation with players pickingsides.

### NFL notebook

## QB Herbert ready to go after injury

### Sliding Chargers face the Eagles in critical matchup

The Associated Press

Los Angeles Chargers quarterback Justin Herbert was a full participant in practice Thursday after being limited Wednesday due to a right hand injury.

Herbert banged his throwing hand on the helmet of a New England Patriots player in the final drive in Sunday's 27-24 loss.

He goes into this Sunday's game at Philadelphia fourth in the AFC with 16 touchdown passes, but the Chargers have dropped their past two games.

Cornerbacks Michael Davis (hamstring) and Asante Samuel Jr. (concussion) did not practice as well as safety Alohi Gilman (ankle). That could cause some juggling in the secondary with Tevaughn Campbell possibly getting the start.

"We're still figuring out through this week who's going to be able to go and who's not. But the guys that we have had in practices, we've asked them to be ready to step up at any time," defensive coordinator Renaldo Hill said.

"It just adds a little more urgency to our group that they need to be ready to roll. If they are out there, we don't expect anything different."

### Cardinals

Quarterback Kyler Murray didn't practice for a second day because of an injured ankle, casting doubt on his status for the team's upcoming game Sunday against the San Francisco 49ers. Murray hurt his left ankle on the final drive of



Associated Press

Expect Dak Prescott to be out of street clothes Sunday and back in uniform.

Arizona's 24-21 loss to the Green Bay Packers last Thursday, which was the team's first loss of the season. "Just taking it one day at a time," Murray said. Cardinals coach Kliff Kingsbury said Murray could play on Sunday even if hasn't practiced up until that point.

### Cowboys

Dak Prescott is expected to return after missing a game with a right calf strain, and Sunday he'll face a Denver pass rush making its first appearance since the three-time All-Pro Von Miller was traded to the Los Angeles Rams for draft picks. "Be better. That's my expectation going into everything," Prescott said. "I think I've had two good days of practice and continue to get better, put the final stamps on the game plan and go out there and be better than I was a couple of weeks ago against the Patriots."

### Giants

A second day of numerous false positive COVID-19 tests prompted the Giants to push Thursday's meetings virtual and to temporarily drop the use of the rapid Mesa test administered by BioReference Laboratories. Dr. Allen Sills, the NFL's chief medical officer, said the league believes a "lab irregularity" was responsible for 12 potential false positives Tuesday and "a good amount" more on Thursday, coach Joe Judge said.

### Packers

With Aaron Rodgers out at least Sunday against the Kansas City Chiefs, Green Bay signed veteran Blake Bortles to the practice squad. Jordan Love will make his first NFL start.

### Thursday's game

Carson Wentz had another good game, going 22 of 30 for three touchdowns, and Jonathan Taylor carried the ball 19 times for 172 yards and two touchdowns as the host Indianapolis Colts (3-5) defeated the New York Jets (2-5), 45-30.

The Jets lost new starting quarterback Mike White to an injured right forearm in the first half. White went out after New York's second offensive series. White went into the medical tent after throwing a touchdown pass to tie the score at 7-7.

Josh Johnson, who once played for the Colts, replaced White. Johnson was 27 of 41 for 317 yards and three touchdowns in a comeback effort.



Associated Press

**FLIPPIN' GOOD** Indianapolis' Nyheim Hines celebrates after scoring a touchdown in the first half of the Colts Thursday night game against the Jets in Indianapolis.

## Confusion a key against rookie QBs

### ROOKIE, FROM D-1

Brandon Weeden (2012), Carson Wentz (2016) and Dak Prescott (2016). Since losing to Wentz and Prescott in a seven-week span five years ago, the Steelers have ripped off six consecutive wins against rookies, including victories over Joe Burrow and Jake Luton last season.

The key for the Steelers over the years has been stopping the running game and creating situations where they can unveil coverage schemes and blitzes inexperienced players have never seen.

The Steelers were great at doing that last season. They forced Luton into four interceptions in a 27-3 win in Jacksonville, and they limited Burrow to 213 passing yards in a 36-10 blowout win at Heinz Field in their only meeting against him in 2020.

The mission on Monday night is to put Fields in similar straits.

"We'll do our best to keep him from running the ball and then putting him in situations he's not used to," defensive coordinator Keith Butler said. "We're going to try to make him a little uncomfortable if we can."

Fields has taken some lumps in his first season. In his first start against the Browns, he completed just six passes and finished with a 41.2 quarterback rating. The Bears had 47 yards on 42 offensive plays, the second-fewest yards in a game this century.

Fields, who threw 67 touchdowns and only nine interceptions during his Ohio State career, also

### The Class of 2021

Statistics for the five quarterbacks selected in the first round of this year's NFL draft:

Quarterback	Team	Yards	Pct.	TDs	INTs	W-L
Trevor Lawrence	Jaguars	1,703	59.6	8	9	1-7
Zach Wilson	Jets	1,168	56.5	4	9	1-5
Trey Lance	49ers	354	52.1	3	1	0-1
Justin Fields	Bears	991	59.5	3	7	2-4
Mac Jones	Patriots	1,996	68.1	9	6	4-4

Associated Press

Mac Jones has as many wins as the other four first-rounders combined.

threw three interceptions in a 38-3 loss to the Buccaneers two weeks ago, but he comes to Heinz Field on the heels of his best game.

In a 33-22 loss to the 49ers, Fields completed 70% of his passes and ran 10 times for 103 yards, including a 22-yard run that made the highlight shows.

"He's growing," Steelers defensive end Cam Heyward said. "Every week you see more and more. He's getting more comfortable. He never

gives up on a play.

"Mobile quarterbacks stress the defense. He can beat you with his arms and legs, so we're going to have our work cut out for us."

The Bears don't use Fields in the same manner the Ravens use Lamar Jackson, whom the Steelers see twice a year in the AFC North Division. While the Ravens use designed runs for Jackson, most of the running yards Fields gets come from scrambles. Against the 49ers

last week, Butler said there were only two designed runs. The 22-yard touchdown came off a broken passing play.

The Steelers have defended Jackson better than most teams, and they've kept the mobile quarterbacks they've faced this season in check, too. Josh Allen of the Bills was held to 44 yards on nine carries and Baker Mayfield last week had one carry for 5 yards.

Hitting quarterbacks when they carry out fakes on read options and punishing them with hard hits when they scramble are some of the reasons the Steelers have defended running quarterbacks well in recent years.

"We hit him," Butler said of facing Mayfield last week. "We're going to keep doing stuff. We want the threat of that hit all the time. Those guys understand, if they're going to run the ball, they're a running back. I hope the referee understands that, too."

Forcing Fields to pass is the much more desired option. He has three touchdown passes and seven interceptions this season while the Bears are by far the NFL's worst passing team. They average 127 yards per game through the air, a full 200 yards shy of the Buccaneers, who lead the league in passing.

Fields also has been sacked a league-high 26 times and has fumbled eight times.

Ray Fittipaldo: rfitti@post-gazette.com and Twitter @rayfitti.



## College Football

## Cutcliffe's Duke days may be numbered

Blue Devils have lost 9 consecutive ACC games; bowl eligibility unlikely

By Johnny McGonigal  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Are there any concerns about your job security for 2022?

Duke head coach David Cutcliffe, who has led the Blue Devils for 14 seasons but is mired in a nine-game ACC losing streak, shook his head.

"I don't think about job security. How could I do that and do justice to the players that I'm coaching right now?" the 67-year-old told local reporters. "... I'm not upset that you ask the question. That's a normal and natural question to ask. But why would I even consider focusing on that when I have a job to do?"

Cutcliffe does have a job to do. It's to prepare the Blue Devils to host Pitt, a three-touchdown favorite and a front-runner to win the ACC Coastal division. Duke is nowhere near conference contention right now, sitting at 3-5 overall and 0-4 in the ACC. And the thing is, it doesn't look like things are going to get better.

Duke is a projected underdog down the home stretch. ESPN's Football Power Index gives the Blue Devils less than a 20% chance to beat Pitt (5.8%), Virginia Tech (10.5%), Louisville (18.9%) or Miami (11%). With wins coming against North Carolina A&T, Kansas and Northwestern — and conference losses by a combined 162-41 — bowl eligibility isn't really on the table.

If Duke doesn't get to six wins, it would be Cutcliffe's third consecutive season without postseason play. The Blue Devils finished 2-9 in 2020 and 5-7 in 2019.

That 10-21 combined record (and counting) since the team's 2018 Independence Bowl appearance has many



wondering if this will be Cutcliffe's last year in charge.

Cutcliffe and Duke parting ways midseason doesn't seem likely. You never know with the coaching carousel after seeing Gary Patterson's two-decade run at TCU end last week. But Cutcliffe has done such an improbable job at an afterthought program like Duke football that, if this is his last year at the helm, he ought to go out with dignity.

Cutcliffe — a quarterback guru known for mentoring Peyton and Eli Manning at Tennessee and Ole Miss, respectively — came to Duke in 2008. The program hadn't reached a bowl game in 13 years. Heck, the Blue Devils appeared in only two bowls and had five winning seasons from 1972 to 2007.

It required a bit of time. But in his fifth season, Cutcliffe took Duke to its first postseason appearance since 1994. A year later, the Blue Devils went 10-4, won the Coastal and lost narrowly to Johnny Manziel's Texas A&M in the 2013 Chick-Fil-A Bowl. Duke won nine and eight games the next two years before a couple more winning seasons in 2017 and 2018, guided by eventual first-round pick Daniel Jones.

Cutcliffe's 77-93 overall record at Duke is, on the surface, nothing to write home about. But when you look deeper, the well-respected coach won at a program that hadn't experienced that kind of success since the 1960s.

There's a chance Saturday is the final meeting between Cutcliffe and Pat Narduzzi. And there's an even better chance the Blue Devils lose

again.

But regardless of what happens this weekend — and in the weekends that follow — Cutcliffe's legacy at Duke is cemented.

#### Numbers game

1998: The last time Clemson has not reached bowl eligibility. The underwhelming Tigers (5-3 overall, 4-2 ACC) will get there eventually. Next week, they have a 99.5% chance to beat the doormat that is UConn. But this Saturday should be trickier at Louisville, a 4-4 team that took both Wake Forest and Virginia down to the wire.

#### Keep an eye on

Josh Downs: North Carolina hasn't lived up to preseason expectations. But the Tar Heels are averaging 36.5 points per game, thanks in large part to their star wide receiver. Downs enters this week's slate ranked third nationally in receptions (70) and fourth in receiving yards (979). He also has eight touchdown catches, behind only Pitt's Jordan Addison (10) and Virginia's Dontayvion Wicks (nine) in the ACC. Downs could have a day in what should be a track meet against Wake Forest.

#### Game of the week

No. 10 Wake Forest at North Carolina (noon, ABC): The Demon Deacons are having a dream season, reaching 8-0 for the first time in school history. But this game against Sam Howell and the Tar Heels starts a difficult stretch for Dave Clawson's team. Next weekend, Wake Forest hosts N.C. State before traveling to Clemson. If Sam Hartman and the high-flying Demon Deacons (43.4 points per game) are going to push for College Football Playoff consideration, they're going to have to earn it.

Johnny McGonigal: jmcgonigal@post-gazette.com



Chris Seward/Associated Press

David Cutcliffe is 77-93 in 14 seasons at Duke.

## Contenders for Big Ten title begin to emerge from pack

By Craig Meyer  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette



If the release of the initial College Football Playoff rankings Tuesday night did anything — besides gin up endless hours of debate over which teams were placed where — it signaled that the end of the 2021 college football season is quickly approaching.

As that finish line comes into focus so, too, do conference races like the one in the Big Ten Conference. What began, at least theoretically, as a 14-team competition now is down to a select few.

Last Saturday was the most decisive day yet in helping shape and winnow the group of teams vying for a spot in the conference championship. Michigan State overcame a 16-point third-quarter deficit to defeat rival Michigan, 37-33, in a meeting of top-10 teams while Ohio State pulled away from Penn State in a 33-24 victory.

What was a jumbled group a few weeks ago has started to see some separation. With their wins last week, the Buckeyes and Spartans maintained their standing as the only Big Ten teams with undefeated conference records with less than a month remaining in the regular season. Beyond them, though, are a handful of teams with feasible hopes to make it to Indianapolis and, if they win there, a New Year's Six bowl game.

Let's take a look at those resumes.

#### No. 6 Ohio State

(7-1, 5-0 Big Ten)  
CFP ranking: 5  
Chance of winning conference (according to ESPN's Football Power Index): 65.1%

The Buckeyes remain the favorite, even as their schedule gets significantly harder in the final weeks of the season. The four-time defending conference champion has

won its first four Big Ten games by an average of 36 points and boasts one of the most fearsome offenses in the country, a unit that's averaging 47.3 points per game.

#### No. 5 Michigan State

(8-0, 5-0 Big Ten)  
CFP ranking: 3  
Chance of winning conference: 9.2%

In the eyes of the CFP committee, the Spartans have the Big Ten's most impressive body of work thus far and are the only team from the conference that would be in the four-team CFP field if the season ended today. For all of running back Kenneth Walker III's heroics, which included 197 rushing yards and five touchdowns against Michigan, FPI only gives his team a 14.2% chance of winning at Ohio State in a hotly anticipated Nov. 20 matchup.

#### No. 9 Michigan

(7-1, 4-1 Big Ten)  
CFP ranking: 7  
Chance of winning conference: 8.3%

Debilitating as the loss to Michigan State was, particularly since it dropped coach Jim Harbaugh's record against his team's two biggest rivals (Ohio State and Michigan State) to 3-9, the Wolverines are still in the hunt. A Nov. 13 game at Penn State, which FPI gives them a 57.4% chance of winning, is ostensibly the only thing standing between them and an undefeated record heading into their season finale at home against Ohio State.

#### Minnesota

(6-2, 4-1 Big Ten)  
CFP ranking: 20  
Chance of winning conference: 6.8%

Can a team that lost as a 31-point home favorite against

Bowling Green go on to win one of the sport's best conferences? Technically, yes. The Golden Gophers have won four straight games to emerge as the favorite in the much weaker Big Ten West. Two of their final four games come against teams ranked by the CFP committee — at No. 22 Iowa and a season finale at home against No. 21 Wisconsin.

In addition to that quartet, there are three Big Ten teams with two conference losses — Wisconsin, Iowa and Purdue. FPI gives only Wisconsin better than a 4% chance of winning the league.

#### Numbers game

1: The number of turnovers Iowa has forced in its past two games, losses against Purdue and Wisconsin in which it was outscored by a combined margin of 51-14. In their first six games, all of them wins, the Hawkeys forced 20 turnovers, including 14 in three Big Ten games.

#### Keep an eye on

David Ojabo: Though it came in a losing effort, the Michigan linebacker had two sacks and a forced fumble in the Wolverines' game at Michigan State. The junior has six sacks in his team's past four games and seven for the season, ranking him 12th among all Football Bowl Subdivision players.

#### Game of the week

No. 5 Michigan State at Purdue: Coming off their big win against Michigan, the Spartans will look to avoid a letdown on the road against a Boilermakers program that has an FBS-record 16 all-time wins against top-five teams while unranked itself, a figure that includes a 24-7 win against then-No. 2 Iowa this season.

Craig Meyer: cmeyer@post-gazette.com and Twitter@CraigMeyerPG.

## Playoff committee chief touts expansion

From wire dispatches

The administrators in charge of the College Football Playoff plan to meet again Dec. 1 to continue expansion talks, which need to reach a consensus by the end of the year if a new postseason format is to be implemented for the 2024 season.

"There is a consensus that expansion of CFP would be good for college football," executive director Bill Hancock said Thursday after two days of meetings with the CFP management committee. "It's just a matter of how."

The crucial detail facing the management committee

#### Notebook

is how big should the expansion from the four-team format be?

"There are some people who prefer eight, and some people prefer 12, and I think everybody understands the alternative is four," Hancock said.

#### Georgia

Athens, Ga., police are investigating an allegation of rape against linebacker Adam Anderson, who leads the No. 1-ranked Bulldogs in sacks. He is suspended from the team while the investigation continues.

#### Tennessee

Tennessee will not self-impose a postseason bowl ban after wrapping up its investigation into the recruiting issues that led to the firing of coach Jeremy Pruitt in January.

#### Washington State

Attorneys for former coach Nick Rolovich sent a letter to the university appealing his firing for refusing to get the coronavirus vaccine.

#### Akron

The Zips fired coach Tom Arth, two days after they fell to 2-7. Arth was 3-24 since taking over in 2019.

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