

Staff shortages a main concern for ICUs. **A3.**

Lakers have new leader. B1.



WILLMAR, MINN.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2021

WCTRIB.COM

Students connect with ag employers

Ridgewater career fair offers interaction, on-the-spot interviews



By Mark Wasson
West Central Tribune

WILLMAR — Ridgewater College held its annual career fair Friday for agricultural jobs throughout the Midwest.

The event is designed to provide one of the first steps for students and employers to connect, allowing high school and college students to network and submit applications to the more than 50 companies present.

Kellie Wilts, a second-year agricultural student at Ridgewater in Willmar, said she already had two interviews by 10 a.m.

Wilts works as one of eight Ridgewater agricultural department ambassadors who

give tours to potential students as well as help with events such as the career fair.

“Obviously, as a college, we’re looking to recruit potential students but we also want to give high-schoolers the opportunity to look at what’s out there,” she said. “College isn’t the answer for everybody, and if we show them different careers, especially in (agriculture) because that’s what we’re promoting, we can hopefully get more involved for the next generation.”

About 130 students attended this year’s event, according to Tammy Howe, agricultural department coordinator for Ridgewater College. Students were able to interact with businesses at booths in the college’s

gymnasium, attend company presentations and participate in on-the-spot interviews.

“It’s a really great event for students to be able to network and to be able to collaborate with these different companies,” Howe said. “We have big names that are present here, and we have some really nice local companies. Really, it’s just all in the name of agriculture and promoting that great industry.”

Ziegler CAT, one of the companies at the event and which is headquartered in Bloomington, is looking to hire skilled technicians as well as multiple other positions, including for entry-level jobs.

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Mark Wasson / West Central Tribune
Ridgewater College held its annual agricultural career fair Friday in Willmar. The fair is designed to connect high school and college students with area employers, and features both presentations and on-the-spot interviews for open positions.

CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE



Tom Cherveney / West Central Tribune
Montevideo veterinarian Kathy Toft is at the reins Saturday of the horse-drawn wagon that provided rides on the grounds of Historic Chippewa City in Montevideo. The Chippewa County Historical Society hosted its 41st Christmas in the Village with the theme “A Simpler Time.”

Board OKs 1.5% tax hike for 2022

Change unanimously approved by Kandiyohi County commissioners

By Shelby Lindrud
West Central Tribune

WILLMAR — Despite the need to hire new staff in several departments, Kandiyohi County only had to raise the 2022 tax levy 1.5% over the 2021 levy. The levy was set at \$35,335,704, up from the \$34,813,214 approved for 2021.

“I am pleased we’ve been able to keep it at 1.5%,” said Commissioner Rollie Nissen. “That has always been my goal, to hold it down.”

The Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved both the tax levy and 2022 budget Thursday evening, following the annual Truth-in-Taxation public hearing.

“That is the third lowest levy increase in the last 10 years,” said County Administrator Larry Kleindl.

The approved, balanced budget is \$78,842,600. Approximately \$41 million will be funded with the county’s income outside of property taxes, including fees and \$921,000 from reserves. The levy makes up the difference.

There are some major funding increases in specific departments, such as the county attorney, sheriff, community corrections and family services. The extra funding is to pay for new staff to help the departments meet increased service needs, brought on by the pandemic and the ongoing negative impacts of substance abuse. With all of that, as well as a 2% cost-of-living increase for most county employees, Kleindl feels the county was able to put together a good and financially responsible budget.

“I would say you have done a very good job putting this together, making it work,” Kleindl said.

The creation of the annual budget begins in May and includes various meetings with department heads. When putting the budget together,

TAX: Page A2

Patients demand unproven COVID-19 treatments

Hospitals who refuse face lockdowns, political pressure

By Matt Volz
Kaiser Health News (TNS)

HELENA, Mont. — One Montana hospital went into lockdown and called police after a woman threatened violence because her relative was denied her request to be treated with ivermectin.

Officials of another Montana hospital accused public officials of threatening and harassing their health care workers for refusing to treat a politically connected COVID-19 patient with that antiparasitic drug or hydroxychloroquine, another drug unauthorized by the Food and Drug Administration to treat COVID.

And in neighboring Idaho, a medical resident said police had to be called to a hospital after a COVID patient’s relative verbally abused her and threatened physical violence because she would not prescribe ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine, “drugs that are



George Frey / AFP via Getty Images / TNS
A pharmacy tech counts out pills of hydroxychloroquine May 20, 2020, at Rock Canyon Pharmacy in Provo, Utah.

not beneficial in the treatment of COVID-19,” she wrote.

These three conflicts, which occurred from September to November, underline the pressure on health care workers to provide unauthorized COVID treatments, particularly in parts of the country where vaccination rates are low, government skepticism is high, and conservative leaders have championed the treat-

ments. “You’re going to have this from time to time, but it’s not the norm,” said Rich Rasmussen, president and CEO of the Montana Hospital Association. “The vast majority of patients are completely compliant and have good, robust conversations with their medical care team. But you’re going to have these outliers.”

Even before the pandem-

ic, the health care and social assistance industry — which includes residential care facilities and child day care, among other services — led all U.S. industries in nonfatal workplace violence, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. COVID has made the problem worse, leading to hospital security upgrades, staff training and calls for increased federal regulation.

Ivermectin and other unauthorized COVID treatments have become a major source of dispute in recent months. Lawsuits over hospitals’ refusals to provide ivermectin to patients have been filed in Texas, Florida, Illinois and elsewhere. The ivermectin harassment extends beyond U.S. borders to providers and public health officials worldwide, in such countries as Australia, Brazil and the United Kingdom. Even so, reports of threats of violence and harassment like those recently seen in the Northern Rocky Mountains region have been relatively rare.

COVID-19: Page A2

St. Paul sets record with 35th homicide of the year

St. Paul Pioneer Press

ST. PAUL — The stabbing of a man Thursday night was the 35th homicide of the year in St. Paul, marking the most killings on record for the city.

Police arrested Brian Harry Kjellberg, 50, who was booked into the Ramsey County jail on suspicion of murder on Thursday night. St. Paul police announced the arrest Friday.

Just before 8 p.m. Thursday, police responded to a 911 call reporting an assault in the 1700 block of East Seventh Street on the

city's East Side. There they found a man in his 20s who had been stabbed.

Paramedics transported the man to Regions Hospital where he later died.

Investigators don't believe the incident in the Eastview neighborhood was random and said there wasn't an immediate threat to the public.

The stabbing marked the 35th homicide of the year in St. Paul, breaking the previous record of 34 in 1992 and 2020.

"This is a sad night for our city," said Sgt. Natalie Davis, a police spokeswoman. "Every person killed this year left behind loved ones. Their deaths left scars on our community and it's hard on our officers, who take these deaths personally."

Minneapolis' homicide count is inching toward a new record. A fatal shooting on Wednesday marked the city's 91st homicide of the year, according to the Minneapolis Police Department. The record was set in 1995 at 97.

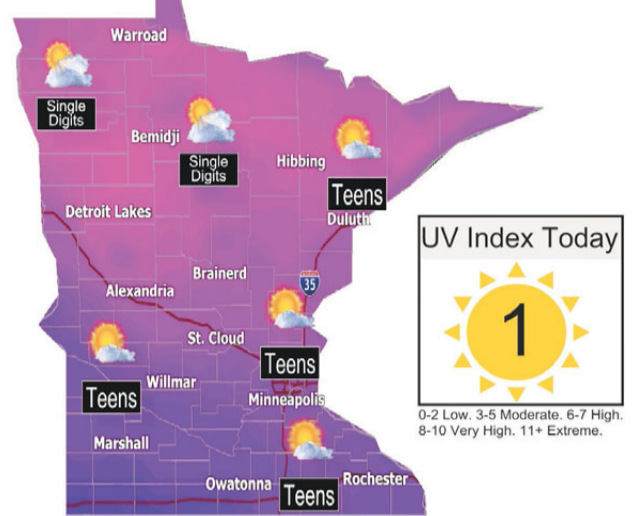


Jared Piepenburg, Jesse Ritka, Chief Meteorologist John Wheeler, Lydia Blume, Robert Poynter

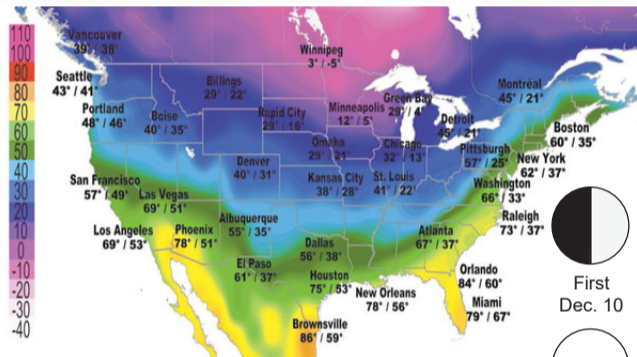
StormTRACKER WILLMAR FORECAST

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
10/2 Mostly Sunny/Wind Wind: NW 24 mph	23/11 Mostly Cloudy Wind: SE 7 mph	26/24 Cloudy Wind: SE 13 mph	39/25 AM Clouds/PM Sun Wind: W 13 mph
Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
32/17 Snow Showers Wind: NE 8 mph	29/21 Partly Cloudy Wind: W 10 mph	40/26 Partly Cloudy Wind: SW 11 mph	39/27 Mostly Sunny Wind: S 8 mph

*Average wind speed for each day



Regional Weather	Today	Hi	Lo	Tomorrow	Hi	Lo
Bemidji, MN	16	1	-6	17	0	17
Duluth, MN	16	1	-6	18	6	18
Eau Claire, WI	18	3	21	14	14	14
Fargo, ND	2	-4	17	2	2	2
International Falls, MN	1	-8	12	-6	-6	-6
Marshall, MN	14	7	26	12	5	22
Minneapolis, MN	12	5	22	18	8	23
Rochester, MN	18	8	23	18	11	34
St. Cloud, MN	7	0	20	9	0	20

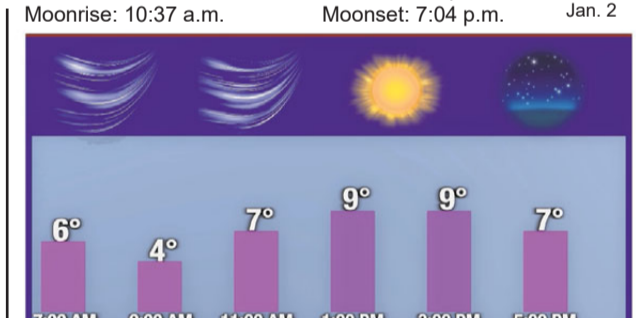


StormTRACKER Forecast

Very cold today and windy with highs in the single digits.

Almanac Through 6 pm Sunday	High	Low
Temperature	37°	28°
Avg. Wind Direction Sunday	SE	
Peak Wind Speed Sunday	29 mph	

Sunrise: 7:44 a.m. Moonrise: 10:37 a.m. Sunset: 4:38 p.m. Moonset: 7:04 p.m.



TODAY'S INFO

What's happening? Do you know of something that might make a good story or photograph for the newspaper? We really appreciate hearing ideas from readers. Just give us a call at 320-235-1150, or stop in our office at 2208 Trott Ave. S.W., Willmar.

Corrections If you have a question about accuracy of information in a news story, please call the news department at 320-235-1150 or email news@wctrib.com. If any corrections are necessary, they will be published on this page.

Lottery results Winning numbers drawn Saturday and Sunday are: Powerball: 10-40-45-56-67 Powerball: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$278 million Saturday Daily 3: 9-7-5 Sunday Daily 3: 9-2-9 Saturday Northstar Cash: 15-20-23-24-25 Sunday Northstar Cash: 1-2-4-15-26 Lucky for Life: 7-14-18-19-41 Lucky Ball: 7 For more information, go to mnlottery.com.

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FAIR

From Page A1

"Technicians are pretty hard to get; there's a lot of competition and there's not so many of them,"

said Dave Ose, branch manager for Ziegler CAT in Willmar. "But Ziegler hires for everything — accounting, and marketing and sales and parts service — not just one little thing." Ose, who started out

as a mechanic 27 years ago at Ziegler CAT and is now a technician, said it's been harder to hire people with a lot of experience, so the company has been branching out to events like Ridgewater's to recruit.

Ose said that he was surprised when he learned the company had a recruiter 20 years ago.

"Now they have like five or six full-time recruiters and they're busier than heck trying to recruit crew," he said.

TAX

From Page A1

Kleindl said, staff look at three things — places to cut, ways to raise additional revenue and how to pay for additions. The board gives preliminary approval of the proposed tax levy in September.

Kleindl and his staff also look further into the future, to start planning for major projects or purchases. For example, in the next two to three years, the heat pumps at both the Law Enforcement Center and Health and Human Services Building will need to be addressed. Also hap-

pening next year are the completion of the roofing projects at various buildings and the installation of the new windows at the county courthouse. Following that, Kleindl believes the county won't have to worry about major facility projects for the foreseeable future.

"The infrastructure you have now in place will set this county up for multiple years," Kleindl said.

This practice of planning for the future is something the commissioners greatly appreciate, as it reduces the amount of expensive surprises.

"I like the way Larry and staff look out ahead into the future, to

see what costs come up and deal with it," Nissen said.

Another budget aspect the board is already thinking about is the renegotiation of county employee contracts in the next few years. Other counties have seen the costs of those contracts go up, according to Commissioner Roger Imdieke, and the Kandiyohi County commissioners are trying to prepare for that. They want to continue being fiscally responsible with taxpayers' money but also retain county staff.

"When we do face that, I think we will do a good job. With inflation, it could be different next year," said Commissioner Corky Berg.

COVID-19

From Page A1

Ivermectin is approved to treat parasites in animals, and low doses of the drug are approved to treat worms, head lice and certain skin conditions in humans. But the FDA has not authorized the drug to treat COVID. The agency says that clinical trials are ongoing but that the current data do not show it is an effective COVID treatment and taking higher-than-approved levels can lead to overdose.

Likewise, hydroxychloroquine can cause serious health problems and the drug does not help speed recovery or decrease the chance of dying of COVID, according to the FDA.

In Missoula, Montana, the Community Medical Center was placed on lockdown and police were called on Nov. 17 after a woman reportedly threatened violence over how her relative was being treated, according to a Police Department statement. Nobody was arrested.

"The family member was upset the patient was not treated with ivermectin," Lt. Eddie McLean said Tuesday.

Hospital spokesperson Megan Condra confirmed on Wednesday that the patient's relative demanded ivermectin, but she said the patient was not there for COVID, though she declined to disclose the patient's medical issue. The main entrance of the hospital was locked to control who entered the building, Condra added, but the hospital's formal lockdown procedures were not implemented.

The scare was reminiscent of one that happened in Idaho in September. Dr. Ashley Carvalho, who is completing her medical residency training in Boise, wrote in an op-ed in the Idaho Capital Sun that she was verbally abused and threatened with both physical violence and a lawsuit by a patient's relative after

she refused to prescribe ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine.

"My patient was struggling to breathe, but the family refused to allow me to provide care," Carvalho wrote. "A call to the police was the only solution."

An 82-year-old woman who was active in Montana Republican politics was admitted to St. Peter's Health, the hospital in Helena, with COVID in October. According to a November report by a special counsel appointed by state lawmakers, a family friend contacted Chief Deputy Attorney General Kris Hansen, a former Republican state senator, with multiple complaints: Hospital officials had not delivered a power-of-attorney document left by relatives for the patient to sign, she was denied her preferred medical treatment, she was cut off from her family, and the family worried hospital officials might prevent her from leaving. The patient later died.

That complaint led to the involvement of Republican Attorney General Austin Knudsen, who texted a lobbyist for the Montana Hospital Association who is also on St. Peter's board of directors. An image of the exchange was included in the report.

"I'm about to send law enforcement in and file unlawful restraint charges," Knudsen wrote to Mark Taylor, who responded that he would make inquiries. "This has been going on since yesterday and I was hoping the hospital would do the right thing. But my patience is wearing thin," the attorney general added.

A Montana Highway Patrol trooper was sent to the hospital to take the statement of the patient's family members. Hansen also participated in a conference call with multiple health care providers in which she talked about the "legal ramifications" of withholding documents and the patient's pre-

ferred treatment, which included ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine.

Public Service Commissioner Jennifer Fielder, a former Republican state senator, left a three-minute voicemail on a hospital line saying the patient's friends in the Senate would not be too happy to learn of the care St. Peter's was providing, according to the special counsel's report.

Fielder and the patient's daughter also cited a "right to try" law that Montana legislators passed in 2015 that allows terminally ill patients to seek experimental treatments. But a legal analysis written for the Montana Medical Association says that while the law does not require a provider to prescribe a particular medication if a patient demands it, it could give a provider legal immunity if the provider decides to prescribe the treatment, according to the Montana State News Bureau.

The report did not offer any conclusions or allegations of wrongdoing.

Hospital officials said before and after the report's release that their health care providers were threatened and harassed when they refused to administer certain treatments for COVID.

"We stand by our assertion that the involvement of public officials in clinical care is inappropriate; that individuals leveraged their official positions in an attempt to influence clinical care; and that some of the exchanges that took place were threatening or harassing," spokesperson Katie Gallagher said in a statement. "Further, we reviewed all medical and legal records related to this patient's care and verified that our teams provided care in accordance with clinical best practice, hospital policy and patient rights," Gallagher added.

The attorney general's office did not respond to a request for comment but told the Montana



Wearing protective gear nurses Paul Johnson and Jen Reed pull on gloves before caring for COVID-19 patients in one of St. Luke's intensive care units on Wednesday.

Photos by Steve Kuchera / Duluth News Tribune

Staff shortages are main concern at Duluth ICU

By Laura Butterbrodt
Duluth News Tribune

DULUTH — A few weeks ago at St. Luke's intensive care unit in Duluth, it was nearly impossible to find an available bed for a patient. While patient volumes have decreased slightly since then, there is still a critical shortage at the hospital: staff.

Since the coronavirus pandemic began, St. Luke's ICU nurse Heather Swanson described witnessing a "mass exodus" of nurses and other staff.

"An open bed does not mean that it's a staffed bed, and there's a big difference between the two," Swanson said. "You can stay at home and be in bed, but having the skilled person to take care of you is what it's about."

Brittney Kurhajetz, interim critical care manager at the St. Luke's ICU, said the main reasons for the shortage are early retirements, staff leaving the field due to burnout and nurses choosing to work as travel nurses instead. Travel nurses are typically paid high rates because the contract process is extremely competitive, and many small health care organizations can't compete with larger organizations that can afford to pay higher wages.

St. Luke's ICU nurse Jordan Baird said while burnout levels depend on the individual experience, nearly every staff member has been working overtime to help fill the gaps in staff. Nurses in the ICU need to have a rounded set of skills and experience, so it's harder to find qualified staff to fill vacancies. Baird said he hasn't worked a regular week without overtime since sometime this summer.

"Most of our nurses here are working in hours way beyond what a normal FT (full time) would be," Baird said. "A lot of us are working 50-, 60-, 70-hour weeks at times and that's because we look out for one another. We can't create nurses that can work here out of thin air, so we stay and become an extra and we do everything we can."

And the shortages aren't just in nurses. Marla Halvorson, St. Luke's human resources director, said in October



St. Luke's Interim Critical Care Manager Brittney Kurhajetz, left, listens as staff nurse and educator Heather Swanson talks on Wednesday about nursing during a pandemic. "The people that are dying (from COVID-19) in ICUs are unvaccinated," Swanson said. "And that's just the pure, simple facts."

that there were several hundred open positions across the health care system, including nurses, nurse assistants, technicians, clerical support, hospitality services and office employees.

"We are looking for staff in almost every corner of the organization," Halvorson said. "There are a lot of opportunities here. Health care has been through a lot in the last year and a half, but this is also a very rewarding field."

Kurhajetz said she feels lucky to work with the team at St. Luke's, where staff are willing to work above and beyond to fill the gaps left by shortages in order to help patients. Several departments, including surgical units, have been combined in order to consolidate available staff.

"It's a small enough hospital that people know each other," Kurhajetz said. "You're really trying to help one another out all the time."

Swanson said she doesn't believe the shortages were worsened by St. Luke's employee COVID-19 vaccination mandate because most staff members either were willing to be vaccinated or received an exemption. In October, St. Luke's reported a total of 27 employees resigned because of the mandate, which was less than 1% of the health care system's total staff.

Baird said one of the biggest struggles of the most recent COVID surge in hospitalizations is that other emergent condi-

tions, including strokes, injuries, surgeries and other patients needing intensive care do not stop. If at any time there was a vacancy at St. Luke's, the health care system was receiving patients from other Northland hospitals, the Twin Cities and other areas in Greater Minnesota. In addition, patients from the Dakotas, Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula have also been treated in Duluth.

"I think it's hard to tell people that aren't doing it every day exactly what it's like," Baird said. "We're starting to see a decline in ICU patients. Two or three weeks ago that was not the case. We were overflowing again. It's hard to describe to somebody what it's like."

As of Wednesday, there were 21 COVID patients hospitalized at St. Luke's, four of whom were in the ICU and one who was on a ventilator. The ICU, which is spread across two floors, has 25 beds.

Swanson said the vast majority of COVID patients with critical or deadly symptoms are unvaccinated.

"I think anybody can look at any research and see that the people that are dying in ICUs are unvaccinated, and that's just the pure, simple facts," she said. "So people should get vaccinated for themselves, their families and their community members. And I think this environment has made me feel really strongly about that."

RECORDS

Arrests

SPICER — A 42-year-old man was arrested for driving while impaired late Saturday night near the intersection of Lakeview Drive and Beach Street.

As of Sunday afternoon, the man was listed as in custody in the Kandiyohi County Jail on charges related to the incident.

WILLMAR — A 41-year-old man was arrested Friday night for domestic abuse on the 500 block of Lakeland Drive Southeast.

As of Sunday afternoon, the man was listed as in custody in the Kandiyohi County Jail on domestic assault charges.

WILLMAR — A 43-year-old man was arrested Friday night on the 1500 block of Becker Avenue Southeast.

According to the report, the man was reportedly going through cars and acting suspicious in the area.

As of Sunday afternoon, he was listed as in

custody in the Kandiyohi County Jail on drug and driving charges.

ST. CLOUD — The Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office picked up a 21-year-old woman Friday afternoon from the Stearns County Courthouse for a local warrant.

As of Sunday afternoon, the woman is in custody in the Kandiyohi County Jail awaiting a felony assault charge.

WILLMAR — A Wisconsin fugitive was arrested Friday night on the 2000 block of First Street South.

As of Sunday afternoon, the 21-year-old man was listed as in custody in the Kandiyohi County Jail for a warrant out of Pierce County, Wisconsin.

Crash

RAYMOND — A single-vehicle rollover crash was reported Sunday morning near the intersection of Highway 23 and 105th Street Southwest.

No injuries were reported.

SERVICES LISTING

Betty Bohlsen, 93, of Clara City, died Dec. 1. Service 1 p.m. Dec. 8 at Bethany Reformed Church, Clara City. Tri-County Funeral Home, Prinsburg.

Jacqueline Bomstad, 60, of Atwater, died Nov. 22. Service 2 p.m. Dec. 11 at Atwater United Methodist Church, rural Spicer. Harvey Anderson Funeral Home, Atwater Funeral Home.

Judy Nelson, 67, of Kandiyohi, died Dec. 1. Service 11 a.m. Dec. 7 at Harrison Presbyterian Church, rural Spicer. Harvey Anderson Funeral Home, Willmar.

Thomas Rau, 81, of Olivia, died Nov. 28. Service 10:30 a.m. Dec. 6 at St. Aloysius Catholic Church, Olivia. Dirks-Blem Funeral

Service, Olivia.

David Ryks, 64, of Cokato, died Nov. 16. Service 10 a.m. Dec. 10 at Zion Irving Lutheran Church, Hawick.

Robert Serbus, 72, of Sauk Centre, formerly of Belgrade, died Nov. 26. Service 11 a.m. Dec. 7 at St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church, Belgrade. Johnson Funeral Home, Belgrade.

Mary Spartz, 90, of Watkins, formerly of Spicer and New London, died Nov. 30. Service 10:30 a.m. Dec. 6 at Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church, Spicer. Williams Dingmann Family Funeral Home, Eden Valley.

This funeral services listing is presented as a public service by the West Central Tribune.

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TODAY'S ALMANAC

Today is the 340th day of 2021 and the 76th day of autumn.

TODAY'S HISTORY: In 1492, Christopher Columbus became the first European to set foot on the island of Hispaniola, now the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

In 1790, the U.S. Congress moved from New York City to Philadelphia.

In 1877, the first edition of The Washington Post was published.

In 1957, two months after the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, the United States attempted to launch its first satellite, but the Vanguard rocket exploded on the launch pad.

TODAY'S MOON: Between new moon (Dec. 4) and first quarter moon (Dec. 10).

MINNESOTA OPINION

Maintain 'status quo' with high school sports officiating

A case in Minnesota had the potential to create a change in high school sports that would have reverberated across athletics, reducing the ability of game officials to do their job and possibly even someday overturning game outcomes. It started when Sam Backer, of Chatfield, Minnesota, was flagged for his second unsportsmanlike conduct in a semifinal playoff game against Barnesville late last month. It meant Backer — Chatfield High's star quarterback — would not be allowed to play in the next game.

According to state rules, a second unsportsmanlike penalty in one game means the player is disqualified from that game, as well as the next.

The next game? The state championship at U.S. Bank Stadium in downtown Minneapolis.

Backer's family took the case to court, hoping a judge would allow him to play. The Minnesota State High School League responded, arguing the court should deny the request for a temporary restraining order as the lawsuit "seeks to have the judiciary rewrite MSHSL bylaws to require the MSHSL to allow students, parents, and/or coaches to challenge, in court, the on-the-field discretionary decisions of contest officials." The MSHSL also said there is no "constitutionally protected property or liberty interest in participating" in an extracurricular competition.

On Nov. 26, hours before kickoff, U.S. District Judge Ann D. Montgomery ruled the suspension should stand. "S.B.'s ejection and one-game suspension still allows him to remain on the football team, engage in school activities, and participate in all interscholastic athletics except the next scheduled game in the tournament series," Montgomery determined. "Even if S.B. could show a constitutionally protected property interest, he was afforded adequate process based on the demands of the situation."

Montgomery said granting a restraining order and allowing Backer to play "would change, rather than preserve, the status quo." Count us among those who prefer the status quo. Overturning the decision would invite more athletes, families, coaches and others to take in-game decisions to the courts, eroding the ability of referees to properly and adequately officiate games. In Minnesota, officials must pass an exam before they are certified. Referees who wish to work in the postseason must attend regular clinics, according to the MSHSL website.

Yes, they will make an occasional mistake because they are — even though they receive pay for their work — amateurs. It's no coincidence that they are officiating games in which the athletes are amateurs, too. High school officials and coaches already have plenty on their plates as they try to maneuver the minefield that prep sports has become. Referees are hard to come by; they don't need the fear of the courts interfering with their work, too.

We do feel for Backer, an athlete who by appearances was caught up in an emotional moment on the field as a defending player appeared to hold onto his leg after a tackle. Rules, however, are rules. The lawsuit claimed the suspension was denying Backer the right to an education. We disagree. This headline-grabbing suspension can be an education for all athletes, reminding them of the importance of sportsmanship and also that a referee's decision — however controversial — must be considered final and sacred.

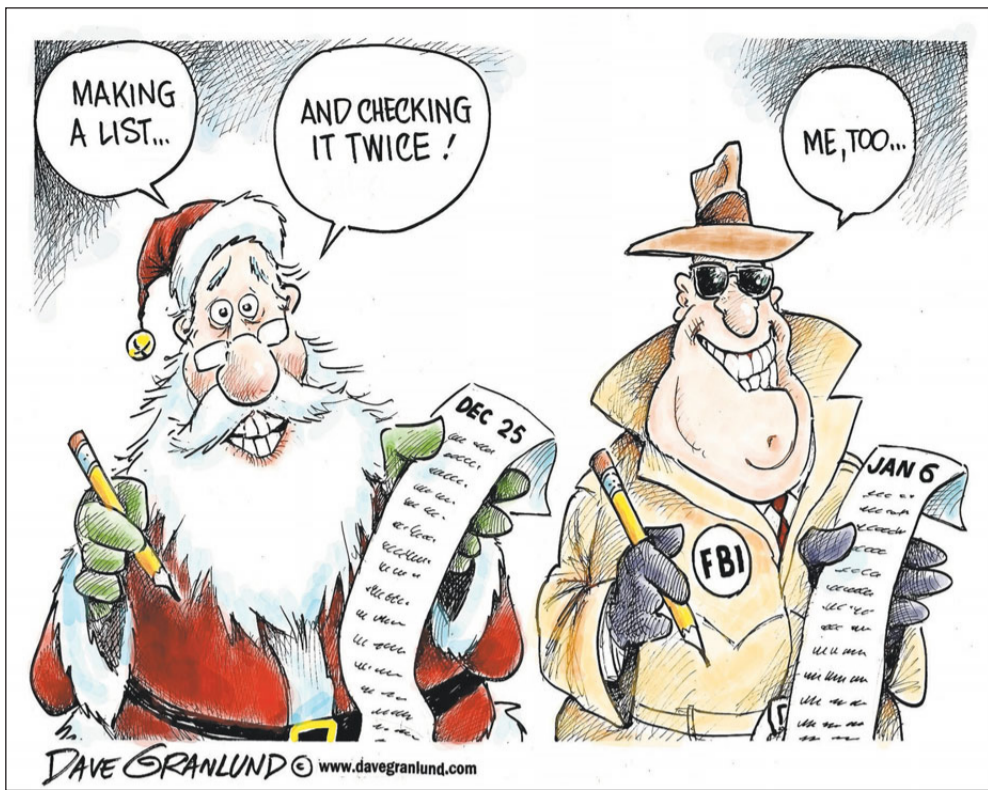
This other view is the opinion of the editorial board of our sister publication, the Grand Forks Herald.

READER OPINION SUBMISSIONS

We welcome letters to the editor on topics of public interest. Your letter should be clear and concise. Letters exceeding 350 words will not be considered.

Letters may be edited for grammar, clarity, length and style.

Submit letters preferably by email to letters@wctrib.com, by fax to 320-235-6769 or mail us at Letters the Editor, West Central Tribune, P.O. Box 839, Willmar, MN 56201.0839.



For all alive during Pearl Harbor, we sacrificed

By George Skelton
Los Angeles Times (TNS)
Sacramento, Calif.

There are 1.6 million Californians today who were alive when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor 80 years ago, pushing America into World War II.

Probably half were old enough to remember that dreadful day — "Dec. 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy," as President Franklin D. Roosevelt eloquently called it.

I was 4, playing with my little brother at the bottom of a slope behind our hilltop house in Santa Barbara when Mom rushed down, very intense. Kneeling at face level, she lectured: "Remember this day. It's Dec. 7. Dec. 7. It's historic. America has been attacked. ... We're at war." And she kept repeating it.

That's the only reason I remember the actual day that Pearl Harbor was sneakily bombed.

I remember other things about the war.

Not long after the Pearl Harbor attack, on the evening of Feb. 23, 1942, a Japanese submarine surfaced just north of Santa Barbara and shelled the Ellwood oil field where my dad was working on a crew. No one was hurt. But dad was ticked.

"They gave us pitchforks and told us to go stand on the beach and defend it," I remember him griping to worried Mom when he finally arrived home after sunup. "What was I supposed to do with a pitchfork?"

That scared practically everybody along the coast. The enemy could be on our beaches any day. There were blackouts enforced by neighborhood "wardens" every time an enemy air raid was suspected, which was often.

Mom was scolded by a warden for using a flashlight while feeding my newborn sister. She angrily invited him in to feed the baby.

We soon moved to Ojai and my parents bought a small orange ranch for \$9,000. That's what good property cost when only 7.5 million people lived in California.

The War Department seized the swanky Ojai Valley Country Club to train battalions of Army infantry. Rifle-carting troops frequently marched by our ranch to a mountainside firing range. My brother and I handed out freshly picked oranges. Some soldiers happily took them. Others acted as if they'd never seen an orange.

My generation is the last that will have any personal recollection of the war that made America a superpower and California a nation-state.

"World War II internationalized California. We became the Gibraltar of the Pacific," the late California historian Kevin Starr once told me.

For a large majority of us, the war years were the most momentous of our lives.

Practically everyone knew a family that had lost a father, brother or son in combat. A first-grade friend's dad was killed. A teacher's husband was wounded.

The son of my parents' close friends came home a heroic Marine lieutenant, found out his wife had been having an affair and killed himself. His two kids — my age — were raised by their grandparents.

Gov. Gavin Newsom, commemorating the recent Veterans Day, talked about one of his grandfathers who was taken

prisoner in the Philippines, survived captivity, returned home after the war and killed himself.

"His story ... is a story that can be told over and over again," the governor told reporters.

America lost 407,316 killed in the war, including 17,022 Californians.

You think there's a supply line crimp today? During World War II, only 139 new cars were built. Instead, auto plants built bombers, tanks and jeeps. Practically anything a civilian might want to buy was rationed: gas, tires, butter, sugar, bacon, nylon. ... Manufacturers stopped producing radios, refrigerators, vacuum cleaners and washing machines.

One attribute the war years always will be remembered for is the national unity they inspired. Everyone pulled together and sacrificed, committed to a common goal: victory over Hitler and Tojo. "Polarization" wasn't in the vocabulary.

But the unity produced something shameful: the quick rounding up and confining in isolated internment camps of 110,000 Japanese Americans along the coast, most of them U.S. citizens. The U.S. government feared they might be enemy collaborators.

California Atty. Gen. Earl Warren, running for governor, led the wrongful imprisonments. Years later he apologized, writing in his memoir that "it was not in keeping with our American concept of freedom and the rights of citizens."

U.S. Rep. Doris Matsui was born in an Arizona internment camp — Poston, near Parker.

"There was a sense of hurt and disappointment by my parents, but without them losing the sense that they belonged here, and this was a great country," Matsui told me. "A lot of Japanese Americans felt that way. I didn't feel a sense of bitterness."

Coincidentally, a lifelong close friend of mine was living in Parker when Matsui was born because his father was working at the Poston camp as an inspector of camouflage netting made by the internees. His job was to make sure the camouflage didn't contain signals for enemy aircraft.

In 1945, that friend — Ron Johnson, retired chairman of Fresno State's theater arts department — moved with his family to Hemet. And his most profound memory of World War II was when Roosevelt died.

"I was walking home from school and it was so quiet you could hear a pin drop," he said. "But everyone had a radio on. If I saw anyone, they were crying. It was very sad."

Another friend, retired teacher Jean Ryan of Morro Bay, remembers walking with her mother in Big Basin Redwoods State Park near Santa Cruz one day and hearing sirens.

"I thought it was a fire," she says. "Mom said it was the end of the war. I told her, 'Goody. Daddy can come home now.'" He was in the Merchant Marine, hauling supplies to troops.

If she were here today, my mom would say, "Appreciate what you've got and stop bellyaching."

Political columnist George Skelton has covered government and politics for nearly 60 years and for The Los Angeles Times since 1974. ©2021 Los Angeles Times. Distributed by Tribune News Services.

Who knew what to trust?

Americans over 65 and those with underlying risk factors are not supposed to travel. Luckily, I have no plans to travel this week. Because I traveled last week. Who knew?



SUSAN ESTRICH

No one. No one and nothing. That is who knows what. About the variant. "What is President Joe Biden saying?"

I asked one of my news-following friends.

He yawned. Biden's saying that we should be concerned. But not panic.

I know I'm not following the news — or, at least, presidential news — the way I did when former President Donald Trump was making it.

These days, the news I'm following is what's happening to my shopping cart if I forget to check out on Amazon Fresh and almost all the prices go up. And then there was that piece of meat. I literally leaned over to tell the cashier that she must have pressed the wrong button. A piece of meat for over \$100.

A hundred dollars to fill the tank.

A hundred dollars for the holiday roast.

A hundred dollars for a single bag of groceries.

Former President Jimmy Carter got creamed when, back when inflation was roaring in the 1970s, he blamed the country for suffering from "malaise." The country blamed him in 1980.

Biden isn't blaming the country, but he isn't taking the blame either.

Pandemic. Inflation. High prices. Shortages. That's what we had in the bad old 1970s. It was leadership we didn't want.

Now it feels like no leadership at all. I know, Congress is passing bills. Legislators are giving each other the thumbs-up; the government is still open.

One of the worst lessons we learned from COVID-19 is to trust almost no one, including, at times, both the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The recognition that all different kinds of politics have figured in to what we think of as "science" makes figuring out who to trust as hard as figuring out what's really going on.

What are we supposed to know, and who is going to tell us? What are we supposed to do, and who can we trust to follow?

There is still another year until the next electoral reckoning.

There is still time to put partisanship aside, at least the ugliest kind, and see if it's possible to come together at all as a country, figure out just what we are up against and face it together.

With a president who, on matters of health and science, might even speak for all of us.

And an administration we can trust to give us the best advice they can, being clear about what's driving it, honest about what they know and don't know.

Too much to hope for? Probably.

And would we know it — the "truth," such as it is — if we heard it? Probably not. Travel safe. Or don't. Damned if I know.

Susan Estrich can be reached at sestrich@wctrib.com.



Photos by Eric Morken / Alexandria Echo Press

First-year Minnewaska head coach Hunter Salathe encourages his team after a defensive stop against Redwood Valley during the Lakers' season opener on Saturday.

Lions stun Vikings for first win of season

By Chris Tomasson
St. Paul Pioneer Press

DETROIT — This time the Minnesota Vikings didn't escape.

The Vikings lost to lowly Detroit 29-27 on Sunday at Ford Field on Jared Goff's 11-yard touchdown pass to Amon-Ra St. Brown on fourth-and-2 on the final play. It was the first win of the season for the Lions, who raised their record to 1-10-1.

"We're sick right now," said Vikings wide receiver Justin Jefferson. "We don't want to lose, especially to games like this."

The Vikings (5-7) have flirted with danger plenty this season, including defeating the Lions 19-17 on Oct. 10 at U.S. Bank Stadium on a 54-yard field goal by Greg Joseph on the final play.

The Lions had lost three times this season on last-second field goals and five times overall in one-possession games. But on Sunday they finally got a last-ditch win of their own.

"I was proud of our guys," said Detroit coach Dan Campbell. "They fought. They've continued to fight all year and it paid dividends today and we found a way to win."

The Lions marched 75 yards in 1:50 for the dramatic win in which Goff took the snap with 4 seconds left and hit St. Brown just across the goal line when he was tightly covered by Vikings cornerback Cameron Dantzler. Before that, they looked primed to blow another game.

Detroit led 20-6 at halftime before the Vikings stormed back to take a 27-23 lead with 1:50 left in the game on a 3-yard touchdown pass from Kirk Cousins to Jefferson. Jefferson, with fellow top receiver Adam Thielen having been lost for the game in the first quarter with a sprained ankle, had 11 catches for a career-high 182 yards.

But the Lions weren't done. Despite having no timeouts, Goff completed 9 of 14 passes on the final drive for 75 yards. For the game, he completed 25 of 41 passes for 296 yards with three touchdowns and an interception.

"We were just too soft on them," Vikings safety Harrison Smith said of the last drive. "Let them get out of bounds a couple times."

With the loss, the Vikings' playoff hopes took a serious hit. With five games left, Minnesota is in the No. 9 spot in the NFC playoff race, and seven teams will make it.

"Obviously, our backs are to the wall, but they've been back against the wall for a while," said Vikings coach Mike Zimmer.

VIKINGS: Page B2

New leader for Lakers

Hunter Salathe excited to lead Minnewaska boys basketball

By Eric Morken
Alexandria Echo Press

Glenwood

Minnewaska's Hunter Salathe did not ease into things for his head coaching debut with the Lakers.

Salathe took over the Minnewaska boys basketball program during the offseason after longtime head coach Phil Johnsrud retired. Up first on the schedule was a Redwood Valley team that returns the majority of its pieces from a 14-7 team.

The Cardinals have a roster made up entirely of 14 seniors. That includes 6-foot, 8-inch senior center Carson Woodford and good guards around him. That eventually wore down Minnewaska in the second half as the Cardinals extended a 32-25 halftime lead to 20 points in an eventual 68-50 win.

"We watched the game film from last year and they scored 97 points against us. I was thinking, 'Crap,'" Salathe said with a smile. "That's a team that's going to shoot the ball. They're really good at drive and kick, and they got a big guy who's a lot bigger than our biggest guy. We



Minnewaska sophomore guard Jack Majerus gets free for a layup against Redwood Valley on Saturday.

just told our guys, 'We got to play team defense. We got to scramble.' They're going to hit some shots, but if we work hard, we're going to be in it."

The Lakers stuck close through about 25 minutes of game time before the Cardinals pulled away. Woodford will play

collegiately at the University of Jamestown, and he had 17 points.

BASKETBALL: Page B3

Gophers to go West for bowl game

Minnesota will play in Guaranteed Rate Bowl vs. West Virginia

By Andy Greder
St. Paul Pioneer Press

The Minnesota Gophers are headed to the Valley of the Sun. Minnesota accepted an invitation Sunday to play in the Guaranteed Rate Bowl on Tuesday, Dec. 28 at Chase Field in Phoenix. The Gophers (8-4, 6-3 Big Ten) will play West Virginia (6-6, 4-5 Big 12) in a game set to kickoff at 9:15 p.m. and air on ESPN.

"We are very honored to be in the Guaranteed Rate Bowl out there in Phoenix," Gophers coach P.J. Fleck said in a news conference Sunday night. "... I know our alumni, our team, our families, our staff, our fans will have an

absolute blast in the Phoenix area and the state of Arizona. We are very excited. Tremendous opponent."

This is the first matchup between the two programs, but they had a common opponent in 2021. West Virginia lost 30-23 to Maryland in the season opener on Sept. 4, while Minnesota beat the Terrapins 34-16 on Oct. 23.

"We got a chance to watch them here and there because of the crossover with Maryland," Fleck said. "... They play a very unique defense and present a lot of challenges and play incredibly hard. We've got our work cut out for us. We have to come up with the best

game plan, organize our staff properly, and do what we can be able to do."

Mountaineers coach Neal Brown was complimentary of Minnesota, in particular its top-25 defense and veteran offensive line that paved the way for five 100-yard rushers this season.

The Gophers were passed over within the Big Ten for better-known bowls and Southeastern Conference opponents; Penn State (7-5, 4-5) goes to the Outback Bowl to play Arkansas; Purdue (8-4, 6-3) heads to the Music City Bowl and will face Tennessee.

GOPHERS: Page B2



Harrison Barden / USA Today Sports

Minnesota Gophers quarterback Tanner Morgan (2) and teammates celebrate after Minnesota Gophers running back Ky Thomas scores a touchdown Nov. 27 against the Wisconsin Badgers at Huntington Bank Stadium in Minneapolis.

COLLEGE SPORTS

Warriors cruise to home victory

Tyson Dyer's 23 help Ridgewater beat Vermilion, 91-71

By Tom Elliott and Joe Brown
West Central Tribune

WILLMAR — The Ridgewater men's basketball team improved to 6-2 with a 91-71 victory over Vermilion Community College on Saturday.

Tyson Dyer had a big game for the Warriors. The 6-foot-2 freshman guard from Adelaide, Australia, had 23 points. Dyson is averaging 8.1 points and 5.1 rebounds per game in eight contests.

Cartier Bickley had 11 points and DJ Brown and Menelik Garrick each had 10 for Ridgewater, which led 52-34 at halftime.

Bickley is a 6-4 sophomore from Akron, Ohio. Brown is a 6-1 freshman from Pensacola, Florida. Garrick is a 6-6 freshman from Palm Bay, Fla.

Elijah Eide, De'Vonta Roberts, Ronald Ducros and La'Ron Truehill all had 10 points each for Vermilion.

Ridgewater hits the road this weekend. They play at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Itasca Community College in Grand Rapids, then face Northland Community & Technical College at 3 p.m. Saturday in East Grand Forks.

Ridgewater 91, Vermilion 71

Vermilion (0-8) 34 37 — 71
Ridgewater (6-2) 52 39 — 91
VERMILION - Scoring: Elijah Eide 10, Mason Bennett 7, Teris Consonery 5, De'Vonta Roberts 10, Kengi Bryant 6, Ronald Ducros 10, La'Ron Truehill 10, Tyrese Rogers 8, AJ Taylor 1, Justin Howard 4 ... 3-point shots: Eide 1, Bennett 1, Consonery 1, Truehill 1, Rogers 1 ... Rebound leader: Eide 6, Consonery 6, Roberts 6 ... Assist leader: Consonery 3, Taylor 3 ... Steal leader: Eide 5 ... Block leader: None
RIDGEWATER - Scoring: Tyson Dyer 23, Andrew Sherman 4, DJ Brown 10, Cartier Bickley 11, Menelik Garrick 10, Brandon Hernandez 8, Zach Johnson 6, Deron Lacy 8, Quinton Jollymore 2, Peyton Nelson 3, Daniel Hasseni 4, Ryan Schwinghammer 2 ... 3-point shots: Dyer 1, Bickley 1, Hernandez 2, Johnson 2, Lacy 2, Nelson 1 ... Rebound leader: Bickley 8, Dyer 7 ... Assist leader: Lacy 5 ... Steal leader: Dyer 2, Lacy 2 ... Block leader: None

College Wrestling

Ridgewater 30, SJU 23

Ridgewater clinched a victory over the St. John's University with a pin by Rick Jones at 285 pounds at Collegeville.

The Warriors led 24-0 before the Johnnies closed it to 24-23 at a pin by Levi Henry over Johan Rodvik at 197.

Jones, a freshman from Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg, then beat Allen by fall in 1 minute, 53 seconds.

The Warriors next scheduled competition is the Ridgewater Open at 10 a.m. Saturday in Willmar.

125: Matthew Miller, R, won by forfeit
133: Tristan Ilang, R, won by forfeit
141: Sawyer Varpness, R, won by forfeit
149: Lane Lemke, R, won by forfeit
157: Logan Thorsten, SJU, dec Wilhelm Yasser, 4-2 (3 OT)
165: Julian Mares, SJU, tech fall Fischer Drury, 15-0
174: Wareke Gillette, SJU, won by forfeit
184: Ben Gilbertson, SJU, dec Maxwell Whitney, 6-3
197: Levi Henry, SJU, pinned Johan Rodvik, 4:08
285: Rick Jones, R, pinned Thomas Allen, 1:53

Gophers men's basketball team improves to 7-0 start

Minnesota passes another road test, beats Mississippi State

By Andy Greder
St. Paul Pioneer Press

The Minnesota Gophers men's basketball team is moving further away from being a surprise and closer to setting a standard.

For the second time in six days, Minnesota won a close game on the road against a high-major opponent.

The Gophers improved to 7-0 with a 81-76 win over Mississippi State (6-2) on Sunday at Humphrey Coliseum in Starkville, Miss. The victory over a Southeastern Conference foe came less than a week after the U edged Pittsburgh 54-53 in the Big Ten/ACC Challenge on Tuesday.

Payton Willis hit a clutch 3-pointer to break a 76-76 tie with 17 seconds left. On the other end, the U point guard

grabbed a defensive rebound, was fouled and hit two free throws with 10 seconds left to ice the game. Willis finished with 24 points, and wing Jamison Battle had 20.

By taking care of the ball, mixing in different defensive schemes, overcoming the absence of a key reserve and relying on their two best players, the Gophers enter Big Ten play this week with a high level of confidence.

The already thin Gophers were without sixth man Sean Sutherlin, a guard sidelined with a knee injury and is listed as game-to-game, according to the U. Sutherlin is fourth on the team in scoring with a 9.2-point average, but the one-two punch of Willis and Battle carried Minnesota on Sunday.

The Gophers mixed in zone defenses in the second half to fluster the Bulldogs, then 6-foot-3 guard Iverson Molinar became a force in the second half. He had a

career-high 26 points, including 18 in the second half, for Mississippi State.

Minnesota had only one turnover in the first half and four in the game against a Bulldog team picked to finish eighth in the SEC.

"When you value the ball and you take good shots and we shot (49 percent) from the floor, over 40 from 3, all that stuff goes into winning," head coach Ben Johnson said postgame on KTLK-AM. "You are not beating this team unless we have our A game and our guys knew that. This is a really well-coached team. I think they are going to have a chance to be in the NCAA tournament. For us, we had to come with laser focus for all 40 minutes and not have any flaws and we were able to do that."

Minnesota made 12 3-pointers, the first time the U had double-digit threes since Jan. 30, 2021 against Purdue. To start the second half, Battle

hit three triples and Willis one to re-extend the lead to 60-46.

The Gophers started hot with a 14-0 run across the first four minutes, but the Bulldogs had two runs (7-0 and 9-0) to trim the lead to 23-20 with six minutes left.

Willis paced the Gophers with 12 points and five assists in the first half, while Luke Loewe contributed 11 points after his game-winner against Pittsburgh on Tuesday.

The Gophers now host Michigan State (7-2) at Williams Arena at 8 p.m. Wednesday.

"We've felt like we've played two league games already as far as our mentality and as far as the type of game," Johnson said on the radio. "Physical, hard-nosed, inside-out, good players, now it's just to refocus. We are going to enjoy this (win) for sure. We just got to refocus and think about how we got to get better this week."

Twins legends Tony Oliva and Jim Kaat elected to Hall of Fame

By Betsy Helfand
St. Paul Pioneer Press

ST. PAUL — Tony Oliva had been waiting for this moment for more than four decades. Waiting, wondering, hoping. Jim Kaat had stopped wondering, instead opting to believe the call would ever come.

But on Sunday afternoon, both received a life-changing phone call, one letting them know they had been elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame and would be enshrined next summer.

The two Minnesota Twins legends earned admission into Cooperstown via the Golden Days Era ballot. Both received 12 votes from the 16-person committee, good for the requisite 75%. The last time the pair had their candidacy voted on in 2014, Oliva fell one vote short and Kaat two.

"I was wondering if the phone call would come today or not, because I have a lot of people here in the house and I don't want to disappoint them one more time," Oliva said. "I've been waiting for this moment for 45 years. ... I never dreamed that something like this would happen to me, to be able to be in the Hall of Fame."

Oliva, 83, was a three-time batting champion. During his 15-year playing career, he was an eight-time all-star. Oliva, a right fielder, was the American League Rookie of the Year in 1964, leading the league in hitting in his first two seasons. He finished his career as a .304 hitter.

After his playing career, he went on to coach for the Twins, serving on the staffs of the 1987 and 1991 World Series winning teams. He currently remains an ambassador for the organization and an analyst on the Twins' Spanish



Minnesota Twins Hall of Famer Tony Oliva signs autographs in January 2020 at Jaycox Implement in Worthington, Minnesota.

radio broadcasts.

The call finally came in around 4:40 p.m., Oliva said, after a long last 10-15 minutes spent waiting for the phone to ring. His former teammate Kaat, in contrast, put his headphones in and turned on football and golf throughout the day, anything he could to keep his mind off thinking about his Hall of Fame fate.

"It's the most uncomfortable, pressurized day you can imagine," Kaat said.

But after going through the process multiple times, Kaat had said earlier in the week leading into the vote that he would be more surprised if he got the call welcoming him to Cooperstown than if he didn't.

"I'm very humbled and grateful. I really didn't think this day would ever come," he said. "It comes as more of a gift to me."

Kaat, 83, won 283

games over the course of a 25-year playing career. He is the Twins' all-time leader in wins (189), games started (422) and innings pitched (2959 1/3).

He was a three-time all-star and a 16-time Gold Glove winner, finishing his career with a 3.45 earned-run average. He then embarked on a long career as a broadcaster — which continues to this day — that has won him seven Emmy Awards.

While Kaat pitched for a number of teams during his career, he spent a majority of his career with the Twins — first the Washington Senators — and he confirmed on Sunday that he will be entering the Hall of Fame as a Twin.

The two become the fifth and sixth Twins to be elected to the Hall of Fame, joining a club that includes Harmon Killebrew, Rod Carew, Kirby Puckett and Bert Bly-

leven. Carew was originally supposed to be part of the 16-person voting committee but was replaced this week by Blyleven. The committee was made up of Hall of Famers, executives and veteran media members and historians.

Oliva and Kaat will be inducted on July 24, 2022, alongside Gil Hodges and Minnie Miñoso — who were on the Golden Days Era ballot; two players — Buck O'Neil, Bud Fowler, who played in Stillwater in the Northwestern League in 1884, — who were on the Early Baseball Era ballot and any players who make it from the writers' ballot.

"Sometimes, I wondered, because I'd been waiting for a long time, if it was ever going to happen," Oliva said. "It's something that happened today, and I don't have the right words to express ... the way that I'm feeling."

JUNIOR HOCKEY

Kunka tough in net for WarHawks

Goalie makes 29 saves in 5-0 win at New Ulm

By Tom Elliott and Joe Brown
West Central Tribune

NEW ULM — Will Kunka made 29 saves to earn the shutout in goal for the Willmar WarHawks in a 5-0 NA3HL victory over the New Ulm Steel on Saturday night.

Kunka is a 19-year-old from Moorhead. It was his first shutout of the season and improved his goals-against average to 3.95 and his save percentage to .891. He has a 4-2 record.

After a scoreless first period, Jeremiah Konkol notched his 14th goal of the season on the power play at 17:56.

The WarHawks then got goals from Gunnar Sibley, Anthony Foster, Ben Luedtke and Elbridge DeKraai in the third period to put the game away before 154 fans at the New Ulm Civic Center.

For Sibley, it was his first goal of the season. A 19-year-old forward from Monticello, he also had three assists in 18 games for Willmar.

The WarHawks are host to the Wausau Cyclones on Friday and Saturday at the Willmar Civic Center Arena. Gametime is 7:10 p.m. both nights. Wausau has a 9-11-0-1 record in the NA3HL's Central Division, which is currently led by the Rochester Grizzlies, who are 22-1-1.

Willmar is 11-10-1 and trailing West Division leader Granite City. The Lumberjacks are 21-1. Mason City is second at 16-6-1 followed by Willmar (11-10-1), Alexandria (10-11), New Ulm (7-17) and the Minnesota Loons (2-22).

Willmar 5, New Ulm 0

Willmar (11-10-1) 0 1 4 — 5
New Ulm (7-17-0) 0 0 0 — 0
FIRST PERIOD — No goals. PENALTIES: (1) W: Marcus Mack (roughing-minor, 2 min), 6:11 ... (2) NU: Keegan Kemper (roughing-minor, 2 min), 6:11.
SECOND PERIOD — (1) W: Jeremiah Konkol 14 (Mack 10, Tate Hammit 14), 17:56 PP. PENALTIES: (3) NU: Tyler Tompkins (holding-minor, 2 min), 8:30 ... (4) W: Teddy Kluesner (roughing-minor, 2 min), 12:30 ... (5) NU: Lahoussine Salama (roughing-minor, 2 min), 12:30 ... (6) NU: Zachary Maret (slashing-minor, 2 min), 17:34.
THIRD PERIOD — (2) W: Gunnar Sibley 1 (Tyler Misialek 5, Frank Guimont 2), 6:34 ... (3) W: Anthony Foster 6 (Braden Fairbanks 6, Jeremiah Konkol 14), 7:35 ... (4) W: Ben Luedtke 9 (Sibley 3), 11:17 SH ... (5) W: Elbridge DeKraai 7 (Guimont 3, Collin Kerchoff 16), 14:13. PENALTIES: (7) W: Kluesner (cross checking-minor, 2 min), 9:57.
GOALIE SAVES/SHOTS — Willmar: Will Kunka 29/29 ... New Ulm: Nolan Lacosse 47/52.

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A 'CHANGED' MAN

Jerry Kill a head coach again, and Minnesota will see him soon

Minneapolis
Rebecca Kill was at the wheel, husband Jerry was in the passenger's seat, and they were driving from New Jersey to their home in Illinois lake country a few days before Christmas in 2017. Jerry had resigned after one season as Rutgers offensive coordinator. Once again, he had a challenging season with his epilepsy, this time triggered to some degree when he was run over on the sideline in the second game of the season. There was no sadness in his voice during a lengthy cell phone conversation that day. He had flown to Illinois a couple of days earlier to meet the Kill's new grandchild, Emery Ann, and he was excited to see the baby again as a reward at the end of the long drive. Emery Ann will turn 4 this month and Friday, again on a cell call, Kill said: "She's a beautiful little girl and she loves her 'Pa Pa,' I can tell you that."

Then, Kill paused and said: "She's a little confused, though. Emery said to me, 'Why are you an Aggie, Pa Pa? You're a Horned Frog.'" Jerry Kill has been a variety of items since he stopped being a Minnesota Gopher on Oct. 28, 2015: a Wildcat, a Scarlet Knight, a Saluki, a Hokie and, most recently, a Horned Frog. And now, there's a segment of the college football world aiming the same question at Kill as did his granddaughter:

"I didn't think I would ever be back, for sure not as a head coach," Kill said. "The seizures had my memory messed up, everything messed up. I was so sick. I had nothing left in the gas tank."

Pause. "That cost me a lot of things, but I wasn't going to cheat Minnesota. I left \$8 million on the table, and the person I blame for that is myself."

"The doctors told me I had to change, that I had to try to stop controlling everything. I tried, but I failed. Offense, defense, recruiting, talking to donors. I couldn't stay out of it. I brought it on myself."

Pause. "I've never been the same since I left Minnesota."

That sentence was left for interpretation.



Head coach Mike Gundy of the Oklahoma State Cowboys talks with interim head coach Jerry Kill of the Texas Christian University Horned Frogs before their game at Boone Pickens Stadium on Nov. 13 in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Why are you an Aggie? "There's not going to be many coaches my age (60) and with the epilepsy situation to get hired as a head coach," Kill said. "It's not like I was wanted all over the country. One school wanted me: New Mexico State."

"That's because the athletic director, Mario Moccia, believes in me, and the history for building up programs." He paused and said, "We have a long way to go here," stretching that "long" with extra vowels.

That day in 2015, when Kill ended his tenure with the Gophers in its fifth season, it was announced as a retirement, not a resignation.

"I didn't think I would

From here, Kill was suggesting he always had been ascending as a head football coach, from Webb City (Mo.) High School, through four college stops and finally the Big Ten.

And then it was over, and what he was left with was only his coaching addiction. That was Kill's most memorable quote from our conversation in 2017: "Football is an addiction, and I'm an addict."

He was a volunteer assistant to Bill Snyder at Kansas State in 2016, Rutgers OC in 2017, an assistant at Virginia Tech in 2019 and offensive analyst for his friend Gary Patterson at Texas Christian starting in 2020.

In between, Kill spent 18 months (2018-19)

as athletic director at Southern Illinois, where Moccia had previously served as AD.

"I hated that job," Kill said. "I'm not an administrator. I'm a coach."

Patterson was fired with four games left in TCU's 2021 season. Kill became the interim, and the Frogs upset Baylor in the first game. They went 2-2 in those four games.

That had nothing to do with Kill's hiring at New Mexico State. Doug Martin's attempt to bring competitiveness to a team playing as an independent in the mountains of New Mexico was ending. Moccia's preferred candidate was Kill.

"I wouldn't have taken the job if we weren't

getting in a conference," Kill said. "We're going into Conference USA in the fall of 2023, which will give us a chance with scheduling."

In Kill's other head coaching stops, he brought a crew of faithful assistants with him — Tracy Claeys, Matt Limegrover, etc.

"The assistants still will be mostly coaches from my 'tree' ... just different coaches," Kill said. "That starts with Tim Beck, my assistant head coach. We go back 30 years to the Pittsburg, Kansas Gorillas."

Much ado will be made about New Mexico State's second game of the 2022 season: at Minnesota on Sept. 1. A decade ago, in 2011, Kill's first Gophers home game was an upset loss to the Aggies.

"That's the day I had a seizure on the sideline," Kill said. "That was not a good Saturday."

What used to be an on-campus crowd that included dozens of fans with "Jerrysota" T-shirts figures to greet Kill rudely next September, based on some criticism aimed at Gophers coach P.J. Fleck a couple of years ago on a national radio interview.

"I'm done with all that stuff," Kill said. "I have my team to worry about."

The Aggies are coming off 2-10 and the 2022 schedule includes "money" games at Minnesota, Wisconsin and Missouri. Really, Coach? You needed this?

"I'm healthy, I'm eating right, I've lost 25 pounds," Kill said. "And this time I'm not going to try to control everything. I've changed."

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COMMENTARY

Salary floor could break baseball's labor stalemate

By Bill Madden
 New York Daily News

New York
 You may have heard:

The business of baseball is closed down indefinitely, with the owners' lockout of the players in the wake of the stalled negotiations over a new labor agreement. It's another self-inflicted wound for the game struggling to maintain its fan appeal, and for the players, it's especially bad optics to now being insistent on blowing up the system that was created by their "Moses," Marvin Miller, after just reaping a \$1.7 billion haul of free-agent contracts.

This is nuts, folks, if only because there's an easy solution to the core issue of this dispute — clubs not spending enough of their revenue on players — on which both sides actually agree. The deal is right there in front of them, but it can't begin to get negotiated until Tony Clark, Bruce Meyer and Scott Boras on the players' side get off this demand of lowering free-agent eligibility from six years to five and salary arbitration from three years to two. Those are non-starters for the owners, and to be perfectly frank, they have nothing to do with tanking and owners pocketing their revenue

sharing instead of investing it on payroll, the very issues the players rightly want to address.

Before we get into the essence of the deal, it is worth reviewing how Miller, now finally a Hall of Famer, came up with the concept of what was actually limited free agency in 1976. After arbitrator Peter Seitz ruled against the owners and determined players could become free agents upon the termination of their contracts, it was necessary to quickly create a mechanism for implementing free agency. At the time, Oakland A's maverick owner Charlie Finley proposed making all the players free agents every year.

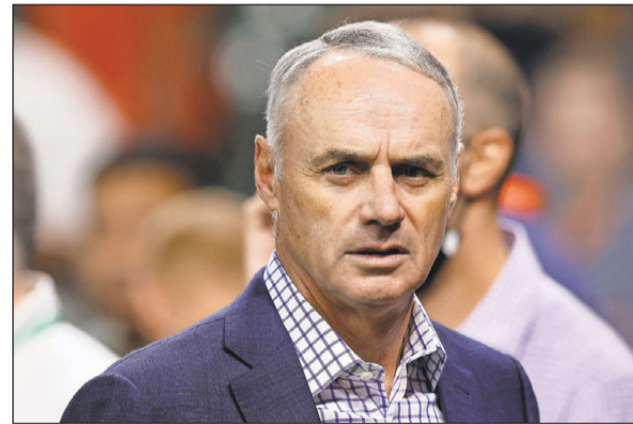
As Miller recounted in his 1991 autobiography "A Whole Different Ballgame":

"It suddenly dawned on me, as a terrifying possibility, the owners might suddenly wake up and realize that yearly free agency was the best possible thing for them; that is, if all players became free agents at the end of the year the market would be flooded and the salaries would be held down. It wouldn't be a matter of teams bidding against each other for one player as of players competing

against each other. ... Initially management proposed a 10-year service requirement for free agency and gradually inched down to seven. The owners wanted as few players as possible to become free agents and I wasn't entirely opposed to this. But what would be likely to produce the optimum mix of supply and demand? I proposed four years but my feeling was that five years would be better and that if the choice came down to four or six years I would choose the latter."

It's a system that, for 45 years, has worked extremely well for both sides. Free-agent players have experienced ample competition for their services while the clubs have had at least six prime seasons of their homegrown players. But because of the clubs' manipulation of service time in recent years — holding players back in the minor leagues — a lot of them are near 30 or older by the time they've accrued their six years. In their last proposal before the lockout, the owners sought to address that as well without lowering the six years eligibility, by offering free agency to players reaching the age of 29.5.

That would be part of the deal that's right here to be made.



Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred looks on prior to Game 1 of the World Series between the Atlanta Braves and the Houston Astros at Minute Maid Park on Oct. 26 in Houston.

On the core tanking issue:

At the same time the owners would raise the competitive balance payroll threshold from the present \$210 million to, say, \$230-240 million with substantially increased tax penalties for payrolls over \$250 million, a payroll floor of \$90-\$100 million would also be established. At the end of last season, there were 13 clubs with payrolls of less than \$100 million, 10 under \$90 million, most of them revenue sharing recipients. Those clubs receiving revenue sharing that do not comply with the floor would lose the difference in revenue sharing, which would then be distributed to the other revenue

recipient clubs as a "bonus" for meeting the floor.

Those clubs which do not receive revenue sharing and are not in compliance with the floor, would be penalized with the loss of international spending money and/or draft picks. Besides providing a sufficient detriment to teams tanking, this would also put an end to teams receiving revenue sharing but still deliberately keeping their payrolls low. (Example: The Tampa Bay Rays had a \$76 million payroll in 2021 but took in almost the same amount in revenue sharing.)

By implementing this system, there would be no need to create a lottery for the amateur

draft. In addition, free-agent compensation would be tweaked with clubs signing free agents who had been given qualified offers by their previous clubs would no longer be penalized with loss of draft picks. Clubs losing free agents, however, would still get supplementary-round draft pick compensation.

Addressing the arbitration issue is even easier. For one thing, how many players with two years of service time are we really talking about? Twenty? Thirty? Certainly not much more and certainly not worth shutting down the game over. A simple solution is to create a few more "Super Twos" by whatever formula the two sides can agree on.

We should only hope it doesn't take three months and into spring training for the two sides to realize there's an easy deal to be made here. Once they do maybe they can figure out a way to squeeze another \$7 million a year out of an \$11 billion industry to bring the 609 former players who got screwed out of the 1980 pension deal up to the same \$10,000 a year stipend MLB awarded former Negro League players in 1997.

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GAME OF THE WEEK

BRADY, GRONKOWSKI FUEL BUCCS PAST FALCONS

Field Level Media Tom Brady threw for 368 yards and four touchdowns Sunday, two of them to tight end Rob Gronkowski, as the visiting Tampa Bay Buccaneers posted a 30-17 win over the Atlanta Falcons on Sunday.

Brady completed 38 of 51 attempts as Tampa Bay improved to 9-3 and moved one step closer to clinching the NFC South. The Falcons (5-7) missed on a chance to put pressure on Washington, which entered the day holding the NFC's last playoff spot at 5-6.

Brady and Gronkowski hooked up on an 11-yard scoring strike with 29 seconds left in the third quarter for a 10-point lead. But it was Chris Godwin who carried most of the load for the Bucs' receiving corps, catching 15 passes for 143 yards.

Matt Ryan completed 30 of 41 passes for 297 yards for Atlanta, including finding

Russell Gage 11 times for 131 yards.

Each team scored on its first possession, taking different paths to the end zone. Tampa Bay threw on all 13 plays of the game's first drive. Brady completed 11 for 75 yards, finding Leonard Fournette for 3 yards and a score at the 9:53 mark.

Atlanta needed just 3:13 to respond, thanks to a 40-yard run by Cordarrelle Patterson that put it deep in Bucs territory. Mike Davis thundered 17 yards off right tackle for the touchdown.

Brady hit tight end Cameron Brate for a 3-yard scoring strike with 4:24 left in the first quarter for a 13-7 lead.

Tampa Bay's defense prevented the Falcons from taking the lead in the second quarter with a goal-line stand. Atlanta had to settle for a 21-yard field goal by Younghoe Koo with 8:43 left.

Brady connected with Gronkowski on a short



Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady passes against the Atlanta Falcons in the second half Sunday at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta.

pass over the middle that the tight end turned into a 27-yard touchdown with 4:54

remaining to make it 20-10. The Falcons stole momentum just before

halftime when Brady tossed a stunning interception on a screen pass that Marlon

Davison returned 3 yards for a score that closed their deficit to 20-17.

SCOREBOARD

FOOTBALL

Table with NFL Professional American Football Conference results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

Table with National Football Conference results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

Table with Week 13 Thursday's Games results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

Table with Sunday's Games results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

Table with Monday's Games results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

Table with Sunday's results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

Table with Detroit 29, Minnesota 27 results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

Table with Pittsburgh 20, Baltimore 19 results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

Table with Dallas at Washington 12, p.m. results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

Table with Jacksonville at Tennessee 12, p.m. results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

Table with Seattle at Houston 12, p.m. results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

Table with Las Vegas at Kansas City 12, p.m. results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

Table with New Orleans at N.Y. Jets 12, p.m. results. Columns: Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

TEAM STATISTICS

Table with team statistics for Tampa Bay Buccaneers vs Atlanta Falcons. Columns: Team, First Downs, Total Net Yards, Rushes-Yds, Passing, Sacked-Yds Lost, Comp-Att-Int, Punt Returns, Kickoff Returns, Interceptions Ret., Penalties-Yards, Fumbles-Lost, Time of Possession.

Table with team statistics for Indianapolis Colts vs Houston Texans. Columns: Team, First Downs, Total Net Yards, Rushes-Yds, Passing, Sacked-Yds Lost, Comp-Att-Int, Punt Returns, Kickoff Returns, Interceptions Ret., Penalties-Yards, Fumbles-Lost, Time of Possession.

Table with team statistics for Philadelphia Eagles vs New York Jets. Columns: Team, First Downs, Total Net Yards, Rushes-Yds, Passing, Sacked-Yds Lost, Comp-Att-Int, Punt Returns, Kickoff Returns, Interceptions Ret., Penalties-Yards, Fumbles-Lost, Time of Possession.

Table with team statistics for Miami Dolphins vs New York Giants. Columns: Team, First Downs, Total Net Yards, Rushes-Yds, Passing, Sacked-Yds Lost, Comp-Att-Int, Punt Returns, Kickoff Returns, Interceptions Ret., Penalties-Yards, Fumbles-Lost, Time of Possession.

Table with team statistics for Detroit Lions vs Minnesota Vikings. Columns: Team, First Downs, Total Net Yards, Rushes-Yds, Passing, Sacked-Yds Lost, Comp-Att-Int, Punt Returns, Kickoff Returns, Interceptions Ret., Penalties-Yards, Fumbles-Lost, Time of Possession.

Table with team statistics for Pittsburgh Steelers vs Baltimore Ravens. Columns: Team, First Downs, Total Net Yards, Rushes-Yds, Passing, Sacked-Yds Lost, Comp-Att-Int, Punt Returns, Kickoff Returns, Interceptions Ret., Penalties-Yards, Fumbles-Lost, Time of Possession.

MISSED FIELD GOALS

Table with missed field goals for Tampa Bay Buccaneers vs Atlanta Falcons. Columns: Team, Player, Distance, Result.

Table with missed field goals for Indianapolis Colts vs Houston Texans. Columns: Team, Player, Distance, Result.

Table with missed field goals for Philadelphia Eagles vs New York Jets. Columns: Team, Player, Distance, Result.

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Table with missed field goals for Detroit Lions vs Minnesota Vikings. Columns: Team, Player, Distance, Result.

Table with missed field goals for Pittsburgh Steelers vs Baltimore Ravens. Columns: Team, Player, Distance, Result.

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

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Table with individual statistics for Pittsburgh Steelers vs Baltimore Ravens. Columns: Player, Team, Position, Stats.



Philip G. Pavely / USA Today Sports

Pittsburgh Steelers safety Terrell Edmunds (34) and linebacker Devin Bush (55) celebrate after Baltimore Ravens tight end Mark Andrews (89) dropped a two-point conversion pass in the final minute Sunday. The Steelers won 20-19 at Heinz Field in Pittsburgh.

Steelers 20, Ravens 19

Ben Roethlisberger and Diontae Johnson connected on the go-ahead touchdown with 1:48 remaining, and Pittsburgh stopped Baltimore on a potential game-winning two-point conversion in the final seconds to cap a thrilling home win.

Pittsburgh (6-5-1), which was coming off an ugly 0-2-1 stretch that included a tie against the lowly Detroit Lions and a blowout loss to the Cincinnati Bengals, trailed by one with 6½ minutes left.

The Steelers converted two third downs — one via a penalty — before Roethlisberger and Johnson hooked up on another third-down conversion for a 5-yard touchdown. Pittsburgh added a two-point conversion pass to take a 20-13 lead.

The ensuing kickoff went out of bounds, giving Baltimore good field position. The Ravens converted a third-and-14 on their way down the field, and Lamar Jackson found Sammy Watkins for a 6-yard score to bring the visitors within a point with 12 seconds to go.

On the two-point conversion, tight end Mark Andrews got his left hand on Jackson's pass and likely would have scored easily, but he couldn't haul it in.

Jackson passed for 253 yards with a touchdown and an interception and ran for a team-high 55 yards for Baltimore (8-4).

Chargers 41, Bengals 22

Justin Herbert threw all three of his touchdown passes in the first half and the visiting Los Angeles Chargers survived a late scare to earn the victory over Cincinnati.

Keenan Allen caught two TD passes from Herbert in the first quarter alone as the Chargers (7-5) rebounded from a road defeat at Denver last week. Herbert was 26 of 35 for 317 yards with an interception.

Joe Burrow was 24 of 40 for 300 yards with one TD and two interceptions for Cincinnati (7-5), while playing with a swollen right pinky finger. Mixon had 54 yards rushing on 19 carries with a TD, finishing the end zone in his ninth consecutive game.

Colts 31, Texans 0

Jonathan Taylor posted his seventh 100-yard rushing game this season and matched the franchise record for single-season rushing touchdowns, lifting the visiting Indianapolis Colts to a 31-0 victory over the Houston Tex-

ans on Sunday.

The Colts' previous road shutout was a 6-0 win over the New England Patriots on Dec. 6, 1992.

Taylor had 32 attempts for 143 yards plus scoring runs of 1 and 3 yards, bumping his season total to 16 rushing touchdowns and matching the number Hall of Famer Lenny Moore produced in 1964. The Colts (7-6) remained unbeaten when Taylor runs for at least 100 yards.

Miami 20, Giants 9

Tua Tagovailoa passed for 244 yards and two touchdowns, leading host Miami to its fifth straight win.

Rookie Jaelan Phillips had two of the three sacks by the Dolphins (6-7), who held an opponent without a touchdown for the second time in five weeks. Miami has also held five straight opponents under 20 points.

Tagovailoa completed 30-of-41 passes with no interceptions. Dolphins rookie receiver Jaylen Waddle had nine catches for 90 yards before leaving the game early in the fourth quarter due to leg cramps.

Eagles 33, Jets 18

Gardner Minshew II threw for 242 yards and two touchdowns in his first start for Philadelphia and Jake Elliott kicked four field goals as the visiting Eagles defeated the New York Jets.

Miles Sanders rushed for 120 yards on 24 carries for the Eagles (6-7), while tight end Dallas Goedert had six receptions for 105 yards and two touchdowns.

Minshew, who was 20-for-25 with no interceptions, was traded to the Eagles by Jacksonville in late August to make way for rookie Trevor Lawrence. He played in place of Jalen Hurts, who sprained his ankle last week.

Zach Wilson finished 23 of 38 for 226 yards with two touchdowns and one interception for the Jets (3-9) in his second game back after missing four games because of a knee injury.

Cardinals 33, Bears 22

Kyler Murray passed for two touchdowns and ran for two more in his return from injury and the defense snagged four interceptions as visiting Arizona defeated Chicago for its third win in four games.

Arizona (10-2) remained atop the NFC while clinching its first double-digit victory season since 2015 and just the fifth such campaign since the franchise relocated from St. Louis following the 1987



Joe Nicholson / USA Today Sports

Seattle Seahawks running back Adrian Peterson (21) returns to the sideline with wide receiver Freddie Swain (18) after rushing for a touchdown against the San Francisco 49ers on Sunday. It was Peterson's 126th career touchdown, tying Jim Brown for 10th on the NFL's all-time list.



Los Angeles Chargers tight end Jared Cook makes the catch in front of Cincinnati Bengals safety Vonn Bell on Sunday. Joseph Maiorana / USA Today Sports

season.

The Cardinals scored 23 points on four Andy Dalton interceptions, beginning each possession inside the Bears' 30.

Rams 37, Jaguars 7

Matthew Stafford completed 26 of 38 passes for 295 yards and three touchdowns and Los Angeles cruised to the win over visiting Jacksonville.

Cooper Kupp had eight catches for 129 yards and a touchdown for Los Angeles (8-4), which snapped a three-game losing streak. Sony Michel had 24 carries for 121 yards and a touchdown to lead the Rams on the ground.

Trevor Lawrence completed

16 of 28 passes for 145 yards for Jacksonville (2-10).

Washington 17, Raiders 15

Brian Johnson kicked a 48-second field goal with 37 seconds left and the Washington Football Team escaped with a road victory over Las Vegas, winning their fourth game in a row.

Washington (6-6) led most of the game but needed a final scoring drive to pull off its third road win of the season. The Raiders never reached Washington territory on their last chance.

Taylor Heinicke was 23-for-30 passing for 196 yards with

two touchdowns and an interception for Washington.

Las Vegas quarterback Derek Carr threw for 249 yards by completing 28 of 38 passes.

Seahawks 30, 49ers 23

Russell Wilson completed 30 of 37 passes for 231 yards and two touchdowns and Seattle made a goal-line stand in the final minute to snap a three-game losing streak with the victory against visiting San Francisco.

Adrian Peterson scored on a 1-yard run in his debut for the Seahawks (4-8). It was his 126th career touchdown, tying Jim Brown for 10th on the NFL's all-time list.

— Field Level Media

Alabama Crimson Tide running back Trey Sanders runs the ball against Georgia Bulldogs linebacker Nakobe Dean during the SEC championship game at Mercedes-Benz Stadium on Saturday. Alabama won 41-24.

Gary Cosby Jr. / USA Today Sports



Bama vs. Bearcats and Wolverines vs. Bulldogs

Alabama gets No. 1 seed in college football playoffs

Field Level Media
Alabama is the No. 1 seed in the College Football Playoff and will face No. 4 Cincinnati, while No. 2 Michigan and No. 3 Georgia will square off on the road to the national championship.

The defending champion Crimson Tide and the Bearcats — the first-ever Group of Five team to qualify for the playoff — will meet in the Cotton Bowl at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, on New Year's Eve. The Wolverines will face the Bulldogs in the Orange Bowl at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Fla., that same night.

The winners will meet Jan. 10 in the College Football Playoff championship game at Lucas Oil

Stadium in Indianapolis. The College Football Playoff committee ranked Notre Dame (11-1) as No. 5, followed by No. 6 Ohio State (10-2).

Gary Barta, the CFP committee selection chair, said Alabama's win in the SEC title game and a strong in-season resume led to the Crimson Tide earning the No. 1 seed. "At the end of the day, the complete victory over Georgia, the committee came out of there with a strong consensus that Alabama was No. 1 and Michigan was No. 2," he said.

Alabama won the Southeastern Conference title on Saturday with a 41-24 victory over previous No. 1 Georgia. Both teams finished the season with a 12-1 record. The Crimson Tide's only loss was a 41-38 decision at Texas A&M on Oct. 9.

With its 42-3 drubbing of No. 13 Iowa on Saturday, Michigan won its first Big Ten title since 2004 and finished 12-1. A 37-33 loss at Michigan State on Oct. 30 kept the Wolverines from a perfect season.

Cincinnati did achieve perfection, running its record to 13-0 with a 35-20 defeat of No. 21 Houston in the American Athletic Conference championship game on Saturday.

Alabama is making its sixth appearance in the eight-year history of the CFP. This is the second appearance for Georgia.

On Jan. 8, 2018, Georgia had a 20-7 lead in the third quarter against Alabama, but freshman quarterback Tua Tagovailoa replaced starter Jalen Hurts and led the Crimson Tide to a 26-23 overtime win.

Wild lean hard on 'security blanket' line

Eriksson Ek, Foligno and Greenway pace Minnesota

By Dane Mizutani
St. Paul Pioneer Press

ST. PAUL — Give Minnesota Wild coach Dean Evason credit for trying something new to start this season.

He clearly felt Joel Eriksson Ek deserved a chance to play No. 1 center, so when the Wild dropped the puck for the Oct. 15 season opener against the Anaheim Ducks, Eriksson Ek was on the ice between dynamic wingers Kirill Kaprizov and Mats Zuccarello.

But Evason knew there was a chance he would reunite Eriksson Ek with hulking wingers Jordan Greenway and Marcus Foligno at some point. He consistently refers to that line as a "security blanket" for the Wild based on how dominant it was for much of last season.

"We were having some success at the start so it didn't happen as quickly as it should've or could've or whatever," Evason said. "We knew it was in our back pocket, right? That's nice for us as a coaching staff that we could experiment with some stuff."

In the end, Evason chose to reunite the Eriksson Ek with Greenway and Foligno

last month, and with the way they have been playing as of late, it's hard to imagine he separates them anytime soon.

To say that line was dominant in Saturday's win over the Toronto Maple Leafs would be putting it lightly. It started with Greenway laying a big hit on Maple Leafs star Auston Matthews.

"We knew we were going to have to shut down their top line, and obviously he's a big part of it," Greenway said of Matthews. "I thought that was an opportunity to frustrate him specifically. Just to show them that we were coming and we weren't backing down. I think that's what started things."

Indeed. Moments after Greenway upended Matthews with his big hit, Foligno dropped the gloves with Maple Leafs winger Wayne Simmonds. Not surprisingly, Eriksson Ek was right in the thick of things as well.

While that physical sequence helped set the tone, the Greenway-Eriksson Ek-Foligno line made an impact in a variety of ways. Whether it was controlling the pace of play in the offensive zone, or shutting things down in the defensive zone, that trio played a big role in the win.

"I wish they never got tired," Evason said. "They were doing the right things in all areas of the game. They were leading our group by what they were doing. Just showing that leadership quality. It's a great game by them, basically every night."

That's something the Greenway-Eriksson Ek-Foligno line takes a lot of pride in providing night in and night out.

"We know what we have to do to help this team win games," Eriksson Ek said. "Just trying to get sticks in there and be a hard line to play against. I think (in Saturday's win) we clicked while on the forecheck and getting pucks back."

There's no doubt that they elevate each other in a way no other players on the team can. Just look at how much more effective Greenway has been since reuniting with his linemates.

"They play similar yet they are different," Evason said. "It's hard to explain. They all look kind of the same. But they have some elements that are a little different. We know what they are. We experimented earlier this season with some other stuff. But I don't know. It'd be really hard to move them around at this point."

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Happy Birthday: Look over your options, and consider who you want to spend time with before making long-term plans. Being honest with yourself and others will make it easier for you to develop good relationships and satisfy your needs. A change will help you turn a negative into a positive. Don't be shy; say what's on your mind. Your numbers are 9, 15, 21, 26, 33, 35, 46.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Think for yourself. Don't let others intervene. Look at what you can do, and put your energy where it counts. Stick to your budget, and call on those you know you can depend on; the results will please you. Avoid emotional meddling. ★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You will thrive on change, but before you jump into something that looks exciting, check how feasible it is to adjust. An opportunity is good only if you are willing to put in the time and effort required to make it successful. ★★★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Make yourself clear. Leave nothing to chance or in the hands of someone incompetent. Take responsibility, and see matters through to the end. Don't give in to temptation or anyone trying to lead you astray. Do your own thing. ★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Set high standards. Use your imagination, and you'll develop innovative ideas that will help you reach your goal. Refuse to let anyone talk you into spending more than necessary. Maintain consistency and integrity. A partnership looks enticing. ★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't let anger take over when achieving your goal is the priority. Set your plans in motion, and don't stop until you are satisfied with the results. A financial or contractual opportunity looks promising. Keep the peace, and you will excel. ★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Participate in events that will help you get ahead. Pursuing educational opportunities, attending networking functions and interacting with someone who can help you expand your mind or update your skills will pay off. Be a good listener and an honest and loyal friend. ★★★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Make changes to the way you handle your finances to ensure you maintain a comfortable lifestyle. A unique approach to work will help you gain respect and recognition. Share your thoughts and opinions with someone who can help you make a difference. ★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Keep close tabs on your spending. Efficiency and moderation will ward off uncertainty. Personal improvement will help you maintain balance and encourage better relationships with those you love. A novel approach to life will keep you entertained. Romance is favored. ★★★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Be brave and face any problems you encounter head-on. How you respond to others will determine the outcome of a situation that is holding you back. Be upfront regarding your plans, and you'll feel better about the future. ★★

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Embrace what life has to offer, and do whatever you can to make the world a better place. Take responsibility and set a high standard. Keep life simple, and be a kind and loyal friend. Reach out and make a difference. ★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Consider the consequence of your actions, then assess how to proceed. Nothing is too great a challenge if you think matters through and draw on sound advice from experts. Salvage what's good, and discard what's dragging you down. ★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Lend a helping hand, and make a difference to someone you love. Stick to the truth, and it will help clear up uncertainty and confusion. A change in the way you handle money matters will help resolve a debt. ★★★★★

Birthdays: You are lively, persistent and elusive. You are changeable and nonchalant.

Eugenia Last may be reached at 1-900-451-5571 or www.eugenialast.com.

Mom makes unsettling discovery

Dr. Wallace: I accidentally found a small, empty whiskey bottle in my 15-year-old son's backpack. I was shocked when I pulled it out! What do I do now? Should I confront him or just throw it away and pretend that this never happened?



ROBERT WALLACE 'Tween 12 and 20

He's basically a very good kid and he has not been in any trouble before. It makes me wonder whether this bottle was his or if he ever even drank from it. I'm also wondering if he might have just found it somewhere along the way during his walk home from school.

I'm torn between confronting him and the alternative of saying nothing and just hoping this will all go away. — Worried Mother

Worried Mother: Yes, talk to your son as soon as possible about this. Simply tell him what you discovered and make no condescending remarks

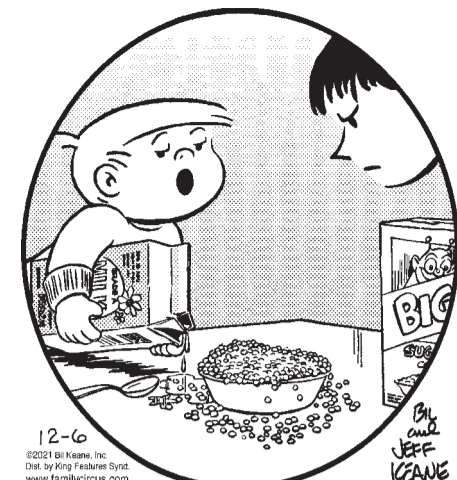
about it at all. It's important to keep the tone of your voice in check as well at this first juncture. Just tell him you are curious as to where he got it and why it was inside his backpack.

Remember that he may have a plausible answer, which is certainly possible. However, if you notice that he's being deceptive or if he admits to drinking from it, then you should of course immediately intervene to set up both punishment and guidelines for future behavior.

If your son indeed has been drinking at such a young age, something is likely amiss in some department of his life. Try talking to him about this topic first rather than simply continually harping over the alcohol. Remember that if you need further support, counselors and resources are more readily available in today's world than ever before, and if needed, you and your son will benefit from them if they are appropriately utilized.

Dr. Wallace may be reached at rwallace@thegreatestgift.com.

FAMILY CIRCUS | BY BIL KEANE



"I didn't spill the cereal — the milk did it!"

LOCKHORNS | BY BUNNY HOEST & JOHN REINER



"I HEAR HE'S ALREADY NAMED HIS SUCCESSOR... HE CALLS HIM 'JUNIOR.'"

Homewrecking co-worker

Dear Annie: My husband of 19 years had an office gathering at our home in mid-August. He has been at his job for 18 years and switched departments four years ago. I had never met any of the current team members due to my work schedule.



ANNIE LANE Dear Annie

One of his teammates, when introduced to me, grunted when she met me. My heart sank. As I worked my way around the room getting to know each one on an individual

basis, I reminded this lady that I had waited on her at my part-time job. She told me she was aware of the encounter because my husband told her that I had sold her cigarettes. However, I had asked my husband before the party if he had said anything, and he said no. So he lied to me.

After the party, I went through his phone, computer and phone bills. I discovered lots of private contact at all hours of the day and night. In my mind, they basically were having an affair.

The messages were pet names such as "baby boo," "sugar britches" and "good morning, sunshine." Worse yet, they told each other they loved each other.

We are in therapy now, trying to

repair the damage my husband has caused.

When confronting the lady who tried to come between us, she stated that she wanted nothing to do with the drama in our house. I asked her why she was calling my husband by terms of endearment.

My husband's friend used to date this lady. I did reach out to him and discovered that she has a long history of drinking and rehab. It's so sad that women chase married men like it's a game and a goal to wreck marriages.

I would like your thoughts. — Brokenhearted in South Dakota

Dear Brokenhearted: My thoughts are with you. I am so sorry that your husband lied to you about his relationship with another woman. But instead of blaming her, why not channel all that anger and frustration into your couples therapy sessions?

He was the one who was married, not her. It takes two to tango, and blaming her for chasing after your husband is not the answer. The real answer is to get to the root of the problem in your relationship, to understand why he wanted to stray in the first place. Or to understand that your husband is a cheating scoundrel — and move on.

While it is easier to blame a person you barely know who is trying to ruin your marriage, the person you really know is your husband. Save your blame for him and see how, and if, you can repair your marriage.

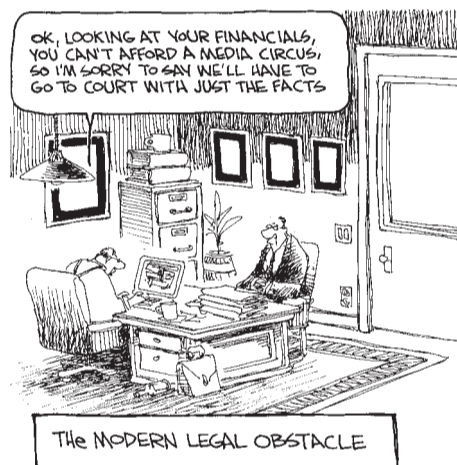
Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

MARMADUKE | BY BRAD ANDERSON



"Marmaduke wants to know if you're always watching dogs, too."

NON SEQUITUR | BY WILLEY MILLER



The MODERN LEGAL OBSTACLE

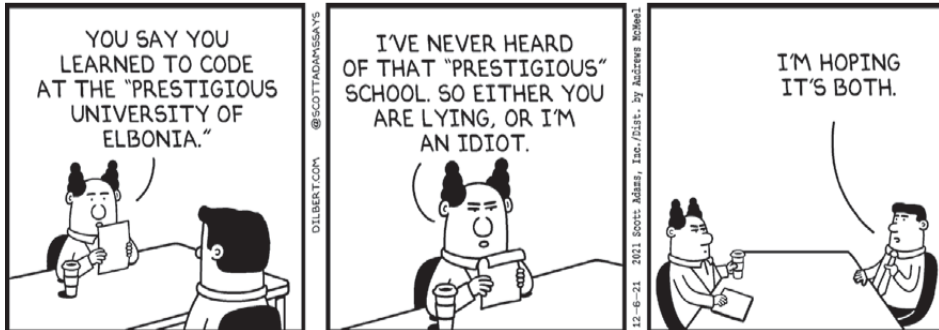
HI AND LOIS | BY BRIAN AND GREG WALKER AND CHANCE BROWNE



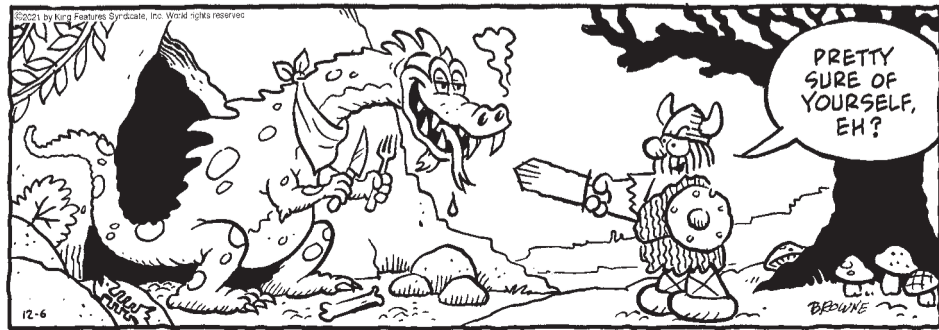
GARFIELD | BY JIM DAVIS



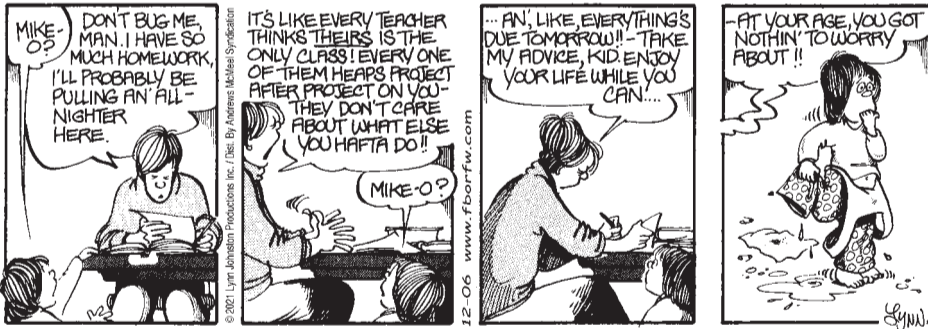
DILBERT | BY SCOTT ADAMS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE | BY CHRIS BROWNE



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | BY LYNN JOHNSTON



ZITS | BY JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN

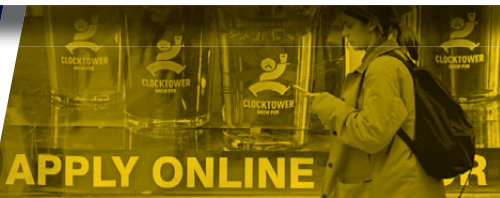
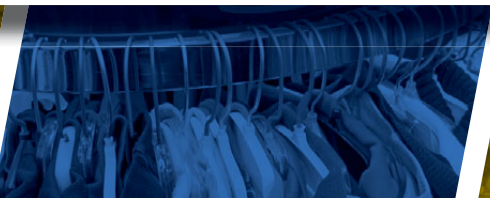
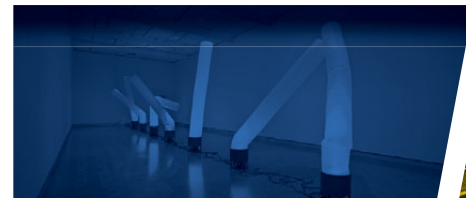


BEETLE BAILEY | BY MORT WALKER



MARY WORTH | BY KAREN MOY AND JOE GIELLA





Minneapolis artist translates science into light and color, **Page 3**

How to switch up your holiday gift-giving this year, **Page 4**

How to cash in on your old clothes, **Page 4**

Canada also facing labor shortage, **Page 2**

MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2021 | NATION PLUS - A FORUM COMMUNICATIONS EXTRA

A 'LEGACY OF DECENCY'

Bob Dole, war hero, longtime U.S. senator, presidential candidate, dies at 98

By Will Dunham
Reuters

Washington

Bob Dole, who overcame grievous World War Two combat wounds to become a pre-eminent figure in U.S. politics as a longtime Republican senator from Kansas and his party's unsuccessful 1996 presidential nominee, died on Sunday. He was 98.

Dole, known for a wit that ranged from self-deprecating to caustic, died in his sleep, the Elizabeth Dole Foundation said. Dole announced in February that he had been diagnosed with advanced lung cancer and would begin treatment.

"America has lost one of its heroes; our family has lost its rock," Dole's family said in a statement. "He embodied the integrity, humor, compassion and unbounded work ethic of the wide open plains of his youth. He was a powerful voice for pragmatic conservatism."

Dole sought the presidency three times and was the Republican Party's



Former Senator Bob Dole stands up and salutes the casket of the late former President George H.W. Bush as he lies in state at the U.S. Capitol, Dec. 4, 2018, in Washington, D.C. Dole died Sunday at age 98.

nominee in 1996 but lost to Democratic incumbent Bill Clinton. Dole was his party's vice presidential nominee in 1976 on a ticket headed by incumbent President Gerald Ford but they lost to Democrat Jimmy Carter and his running mate Walter Mondale.

Dole, known for referring to himself in the third person, made a classic American journey from the poverty of the Great Depression of the 1930s, through World War Two battlefields to the corridors of power with a stoic Midwestern dignity.

He represented Kansas in Congress for 35 years:

1961 to 1969 in the House of Representatives and 1969 to 1996 in the Senate. Dole helped shepherd Republican President Ronald Reagan's legislative agenda as Senate majority leader in the 1980s and spearheaded important legislation of his own.

Dole, who lost the use of his right arm from a war wound, was an advocate for the disabled and worked to shore up the finances of the Social Security retirement program. Dole was instrumental in passage of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, public accommodations and

transportation.

He also was a key figure behind building a memorial honoring Americans who served in World War Two on Washington's National Mall, now a popular tourist stop.

President Joe Biden fondly recalled his visit to Dole in February at the Watergate complex in Washington where he lived.

"We picked up right where we left off, as though it were only yesterday that we were sharing a laugh in the Senate dining room or debating the great issues of the day, often against each other, on the Senate floor," Biden said in a statement. "Bob was a man to be admired by Americans."

He had an unerring sense of integrity and honor. May God bless him, and may our nation draw upon his legacy of decency, dignity, good humor, and patriotism for all time."

Former President Donald Trump called Dole "an American war hero." In a statement, Trump added, "The Republican Party was made stronger by his service."

U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi ordered the flags at the U.S. Capitol to be flown at half-staff in tribute to Dole.

McClatchy Washington Bureau contributed to this report via Tribune Content Agency.

Omicron found in nearly one-third of U.S. states

By Matt Spetalnick and Susan Heavey
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The Omicron variant of the coronavirus has spread to about one-third of U.S. states, but the Delta version remains the majority of COVID-19 infections as cases rise nationwide, U.S. health officials said on Sunday.

Though the emergence of the new variant has caused alarm worldwide, Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious disease official, told CNN "thus far it does not look like there's a great degree of severity to it" but he added that it was too early to draw definitive conclusions and more study is needed.

Fauci, U.S. President Joe Biden's chief medical adviser, said he also hoped the United States would lift its ban on travelers from southern African countries in a "reasonable period of time." The South African government has complained it is being punished - instead of applauded - for discovering the new variant and quickly informing international health officials.

Fauci, in an interview on CNN's "State of the Union," praised South Africa for its transparency and said the U.S. travel ban was imposed at a time "when we were really in the dark" and needed time to study the variant.

At least 16 U.S. states

have reported Omicron cases: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin, according to a Reuters tally.

Many of the cases were among fully vaccinated individuals with mild symptoms, although the booster shot status of some patients was not reported.

Despite several dozen Omicron cases, the Delta variant still accounts for 99.9% of new COVID cases in the United States, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky told ABC News in an interview.

"We are everyday hearing about more and more probable cases so that number is likely to rise," she said.

The United States over the last seven days has averaged 119,000 new cases a day and lost nearly 1,300 lives to COVID each day, according to a Reuters tally <https://tmsnr.rs/3xY0dI4>.

Louisiana currently has one Omicron case from an individual who traveled within the United States, its health department said on Sunday.

On Saturday, it said a Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings Ltd cruise ship set to dock in New Orleans with more than 3,000 passengers found 10 cases of COVID-19 on board.

Omar confident House will act against Boebert

Minnesota representative hoping for 'decisive action' for anti-Muslim comments

Reuters

WASHINGTON — U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., said on Sunday that she is confident House Speaker Nancy Pelosi will take "decisive action" in coming days against Republican congresswoman Lauren Boebert, R-Colo., for remarks about Omar that have been decried as Islamophobic.

Boebert described Omar, a Muslim who was born in Somalia, as a member of a "jihad squad" at an event in her home state of Colorado last month and said it was safe to ride with her in a Capitol elevator if she was not wearing a backpack.

A first-term lawmaker who has vowed to defy Washington's gun laws, Boebert apologized for the comments. But a phone call between the two women ended in rancor with Boebert showing no sign of remorse. Democrats later called for the House to strip Boebert of her committee assignments for what they called anti-Muslim bigotry.

"I have had a conversation with the speaker, and I'm very confident that she will take decisive action next week," Omar told CNN's "State of the Union" program.

"When I first got to Congress, I was worried that I



Evelyn Hockstein / Reuters

U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., speaks to a reporter as she leaves the House floor Thursday at the United States Capitol.

wasn't going to be allowed to be sworn in because there was a ban on the hijab. She promised me that she would take care of it. She fulfilled that promise. She's made another promise to me that she will take care of this. And I believe her."

There was no immediate comment from Pelosi or Boebert.

House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy defended Boebert last week, saying she had apologized publicly and personally to Omar.

Omar did not say what action Pelosi might take.

"We're considering what action ought to be taken," House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, the chamber's No. 2 Democrat, told reporters last

week. Hoyer suggested the Republican caucus sanction Boebert on its own to "cleanse itself" of such "toxic" behavior."

The Democratic-controlled House censured Republican Representative Paul Gosar last month for an anime video that depicted him killing progressive congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and swinging a Biden. It also stripped Republican Marjorie Taylor Greene of her committee assignments earlier this year for past remarks supporting violence against Democrats.

Boebert, Gosar and Greene are all hard-line conservatives and outspoken allies of former President Donald Trump.

Perdue to challenge Georgia governor

Former senator expected to formally announce candidacy Monday

Reuters
 WASHINGTON — Former U.S. Senator David Perdue plans to challenge Georgia Governor Brian Kemp in next year's election, media reported on Sunday, opening a new Republican Party rift in a battleground state that handed Democrats their current U.S. Senate majority.

Perdue intends to make his announcement in a video on Monday and file his campaign paperwork at the same time, Politico and The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported, citing unnamed sources briefed on his plans.

Neither Perdue nor the Georgia Republican Party were immediately available to comment.

The reports said Perdue, a wealthy businessman, was recruited to run for governor by former President Donald Trump, after Kemp refused to help block November 2020

election results in the state that contributed to Democrat Joe Biden winning the presidency.

Voting rights activist Stacey Abrams announced on Wednesday that she would run for the Democratic Party's gubernatorial nomination in Georgia, her second bid for the office.

Trump's false claims about widespread election fraud have been blamed for dividing Georgia Republicans ahead of a pair of U.S. Senate run-off elections last January, in which Perdue was defeated by Democratic Senator Jon Ossoff. Former Republican Senator Kelly Loeffler also lost to Democrat Raphael Warnock in the run-offs.

Responding to the Sunday media reports, a Kemp campaign spokesman blasted Perdue as "the man who lost Republicans the United States Senate."

"Gov. Kemp has a proven

track record of fighting the radical left to put hardworking Georgians first," Kemp spokesman Cody Hall said in a statement.

Abrams, 47, a former member of the Georgia House of Representatives, lawyer, entrepreneur and romance novelist, became a national Democratic figurehead after losing a hard-fought governor's race to Kemp in 2018 by just 55,000 votes.

Since that defeat, which many Democrats blamed on voter suppression, Abrams has built a national reputation as a voting rights advocate. She was credited by many Democrats with boosting the party's turnout in 2020, when President Joe Biden became the first Democrat to carry the state in a presidential election in nearly three decades.

Kemp reacted to Abrams' announcement by saying she would have shut down the state over COVID-19 and allowed



Curtis Compton / Atlanta Journal-Constitution / TNS
 Then-Sen. David Perdue, R-Ga., arrives for former Vice President Mike Pence's Defend the Majority Rally on Dec. 10, 2020, in Augusta, Georgia.

"woke politics" to be part of school lessons.

"I'm in the fight against Stacey Abrams, the failed Biden

agenda, and their woke allies to keep Georgia the best place to live, work, and raise a family," Kemp said on Twitter.

Canada faces labor woes

Employers have to accommodate the unvaccinated

By Julie Gordon and Steve Scherer
 Reuters

OTTAWA — Canada's tight labor market is forcing many companies to offer regular COVID-19 testing over vaccine mandates, while others are reversing previously announced inoculation requirements even as Omicron variant cases rise.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government adopted one of the strictest inoculation policies in the world for civil servants and has already put more than 1,000 workers on unpaid leave, with thousands more at risk.

Airlines, police forces, school boards and even Canada's Big Five banks have also pledged strict mandatory vaccine policies. But following through has proven less straightforward, especially as employers grapple with staffing shortages and workers demand exemptions.

Job vacancies in Canada have doubled so far this year, official data shows, and vaccine mandates can make filling those jobs harder, potentially putting upward pressure on wages. That could fuel inflation, already running at a near two-decade high.

"It's already difficult to find staff, let alone putting in a vaccine mandate. You'd cut out potentially another 20%" of potential workers, said Dan Kelly, chief executive of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

There are pitfalls to employing the unvaccinated. Companies run a higher risk of COVID-19 outbreaks and many vaccinated employees are uncomfortable working with those who have not had the job, said industry groups and marketing experts.



Reuters file photo
 A sign advertising available jobs at the Clocktower Brew Pub hangs in a window in Ottawa, Ontario, in 2017.

At Luda Foods, a Montreal-based soup and sauce maker, president Robert Eiser said he has 14 open jobs, no vaccine mandate and no plans to restrict new hires to the vaccinated.

"I don't know that I want to reduce the (labor) pool, which is already quite low," said Eiser. "We need to attract people to meet the demand. If we don't, our competitors will."

Data released on Friday underpinned Canada's tight labor market, with a hefty 153,700 jobs added in November. It also showed a growing mismatch between available workers and unfilled jobs. And job postings are far above pre-pandemic levels.

Walking back

The province of Quebec backtracked on a vaccine mandate for healthcare

workers last month, saying they could not afford to lose thousands of unvaccinated staff. Ontario, which was also eyeing a mandate, said it would not go ahead.

Toronto-Dominion Bank and Bank of Montreal have both softened their vaccine policy to allow regular testing for workers who missed their Oct. 31 inoculation deadline.

In Canada, 86% of adults are fully inoculated, though that drops under 80% among 18-40 year olds. At least 15 cases of the new Omicron variant in Canada have been reported in the past week.

John Cappelli, vice president of onsite managed services in Canada for global recruitment firm Adecco, said half of his clients are mandating vaccines with the other half allowing regular testing for the unvaccinated.

But he expects the Omicron variant will prompt more workplaces to get strict on vaccination, even as they grapple with the tightest job market he's seen in his 25-year career.

"We are now starting to see our first workplace (COVID-19) cases in five months," he said.

The number of Canadian job postings on search website Indeed mentioning vaccine requirements has quadrupled since August.

In the hard-hit manufacturing sector, where 77% of firms say their top concern is attracting and retaining workers, vaccine mandates are more rare.

Dennis Darby, CEO of Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, said most of Canada's factories have operated safely throughout the pandemic.

Gambian opposition rejects the election

3 candidates cite delay as President Barrow closes in on the victory

By Bate Felix and Pap Saine
 Reuters

BANJUL, Gambia — Three opposition candidates have rejected the partial results of Gambia's election that show President Adama Barrow heading for a resounding victory, citing an unusual delay in tallying the votes.

Barrow had won about 54% of votes from 50 of 53 constituencies, leaving the West African nation of 2.5 million people on the verge of a result that was expected to draw a line under a difficult political past.

Saturday's vote was the first in 27 years without disgraced former President Yahya Jammeh, who lives in exile in Equatorial Guinea after refusing to accept defeat to Barrow in 2016.

Jammeh, whose 22-year rule was characterized by killings and torture of political opponents, had tried to persuade supporters to vote for an opposition coalition in telephoned speeches that were relayed to campaign rallies.

Official results suggested he had failed to dent Barrow's following, and representatives from all opposition parties signed off on the tally sheets already read to the election commission on Sunday.

But late on Sunday Barrow's nearest rival, veteran politician Ousainou Darboe, and two other candidates, Mama Kandeh and Essa Mbye Faal, said they would not accept the results.

"We are concerned that there has been an inordinate delay in the announcement of results," their statement said. "A number of issues have been raised by our party agents and representatives at the polling stations."

The election was seen as a test of Gambia's democratic progress and its ability to leave the Jammeh era behind.

Barrow's first term was marked by the coronavirus pandemic, which damaged an economy that relies heavily on tourism, as well as exports of peanuts and fish.

Banjul was calm on Sunday night, albeit with a heavy police presence, especially at the election commission headquarters, where water cannons had been set up.

BRIEFS

Tipster who helped lead police to the Crumbleys qualifies for large reward

DETROIT — The tipster who responded to the U.S. Marshals Service WANTED posters offering a \$10,000 reward for help in finding and apprehending James and Jennifer Crumbley will qualify for reward money, the Detroit Free Press learned Sunday.

"My understanding, and I was talking to the sheriff and a couple of other people about that investigation, and it looks like that tip — that caller will be eli-

gible for the reward," Detroit Police Chief James White told the Free Press.

Federal law enforcement issued WANTED posters late Friday. White did not know whether the tipster will receive \$10,000 or as much as \$20,000 — since the tip resulted in the apprehension and arrest of both parents of the suspect in the mass shootings Nov. 30 at Oxford High School.

A multi-agency police response swarmed a century-old former auto plant in Detroit early Saturday, finding them hiding and making arrests.

The two were arraigned by video on involuntary manslaughter charges later that day.

French right picks Parisian woman to take on Macron

France's Republicans nominated their first woman presidential candidate in a primary that sharpened the focus of the challenge facing Emmanuel Macron in next year's election.

Valerie Pécresse won the final round of the conservative's ballot on Saturday after 61% of members backed her.

Eric Ciotti, a lawmaker from southern France often compared with far-right rival Eric Zemmour, took 39%.

By selecting the Paris region leader over Ciotti, the party of General Charles de Gaulle, Jacques Chirac and Nicolas Sarkozy opted against joining the crowded battle for the extremist vote and instead chose a candidate who can compete with Macron for moderate voters.

Pécresse, 54, is waging that she can reinvigorate the party that was set to reclaim the presidency in 2017 until her predecessor,

Francois Fillon, was undermined by a corruption scandal that opened the door to Macron.

An adviser to Macron's government said recently that Pécresse could pose a serious threat to his re-election. The president declined to comment on the ballot during an official visit to Saudi Arabia.

Pécresse said Saturday she would save public services including hospitals, schools and the legal system, defend social justice, reassert the value of work, raise France's global standing and reform Europe.

Minneapolis artist Aaron Dysart translates science into light and color

By Alicia Eler
Star Tribune

Minneapolis

Aron Dysart is great at art and bad at science, but he loves them both. It's as if one can't exist without the other.

"To me, science is great. I love it. I am a science geek," he said. "I am a crappy scientist because I get fascinated and go on tangents and I am not a precise person. That's not what interests me."

Scientists gather data and distill it into meaningful results. Dysart takes other people's scientific data and transforms it into colors, lights and other optics that people can experience together. But you wouldn't necessarily know that from just looking at his artwork.

Born in Minnetonka and based now in Minneapolis, Dysart has lived in the Twin Cities for most of his life, aside from his college years, when he studied religion and philosophy at the University of Montana in Missoula before returning home and attending grad school at the University of Minnesota.

Currently he is the City Artist of St. Paul, and his work has been seen around town, projected on places both familiar and surprising. Chances are you've come across it — from a collection of glowing rocks that respond to temperature in front of the St. Paul YMCA, to a projection on the decommissioned St. Anthony Lock and Dam, where he created

an immersive light experience based on data from handwritten logbooks kept by lockmasters over the past 50 years.

Now he moves his art back indoors for "Passage," an exhibition at the Minneapolis Institute of Art. The show is simple yet scientifically complex, and contains only two pieces.

For "Latitude," he had seven nylon "tube dancers" — the ones often found on the street, used to sell cellphones or used cars — custom-made, and changed the shade of the colors as they flickered and floated around. Each tube is linked to eddy flux towers gathering atmospheric data across the globe, hence the piece's name.

"They don't just measure the amount of carbon dioxide present in the air, they measure the direction of which it is moving," said Dysart. "So scientists can figure out if the land is releasing more CO2 or sequestering it."

Jack Becker, former executive director of Forecast Public Art, has known Dysart since 2009, when the artist received a grant to build a boat out of 600 pounds of soap and row it in the Mississippi River in an effort to metaphorically "clean it up."

"He's very much about the experience of bringing people together," said Becker. "He creates a communal experience, or a social experience — especially his use of disco balls and trees,



Aaron Dysart / TNS

"Latitude" by Aaron Dysart.

stuff like that, which kind of reminds me of the Surrealists, like [Marcel] Duchamp putting a bicycle wheel on a stool. It forces you to think about these juxtapositions."

Data vs. color
Dysart seems to have two worlds going on in his art — one connected to nature, the other to data visualization.

In his recent project "Byproduct," the façade of the Fulton Brewery's taproom was covered in colors that shifted as they were generated from a huge mirror ball. The colors embodied data from a sustainable wastewater project.

He worked on the project with Paige Novak, a professor in the U of M's Department of Civil, Environmental and Geo-Engineering whom he met at a conference. She was excited by the idea of reaching more people with the data by transforming it into art, light and color.

But Dysart also liked how the project brought people together. "People drink beer because of its carbon

dioxide and alcohol byproducts, which are just the yeast cell living its life," he said.

Dysart "is clearly inspired by data and information that others might find totally boring and uninteresting," said Becker, "and he is using it to animate or enliven or bring attention to something that is otherwise invisible."

As people sipped beer at Fulton, they were immersed in a stream of color driven by data. Sometimes the lights went dark, depending on whether the bioreactors went down — a variability of real science.

It was a secretly powerful experience that the drinkers weren't even aware of, unless they read the wall label explaining it.

"I am interested in the spectacle and the visual power of what's happening to create something lovely, and then as you read and dive deeper and deeper it has these kind of layers — it's not just a pretty spectacle," said Dysart.



Crystal Liepa / Provided photo / TNS

Artist Aaron Dysart.

"It is based on this real science, and the experiments happening are about people trying

to be better members of the community."

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Which is better for the environment, hand-washing dishes or dishwashers?

E/The Environmental Magazine

Dear EarthTalk: My husband thinks it's better for the planet to hand-wash dishes in the sink, but it seems to me using the dishwasher is more eco-friendly. Can you settle this debate for us?

— Chris B., Bowie, Maryland

Hands down, the dishwasher is the way to go, not only from the standpoint of water waste and energy use, but also to preserve your own sanity. Who needs to be scrubbing, rinsing and drying dishes all day when an efficient machine can do the work? Modern dishwashers use much less water and energy than their forebearers, so you can clean up after your meals and snacks quickly and without guilt just by filling up the dishwasher and hitting the "start" button.

It's not surprising that many of us still think hand-washing is better, given that the dishwashers of yesteryear used 10-15 gallons of water per cycle. But dishwashers sold today in the



Dreamstime / TNS

Running a full load of dishes in the dishwasher is much greener when it comes to energy and water usage than hand-washing the same amount of dishes.

United States can only use a maximum of five gallons per cycle per the mandate of the U.S. Department of Energy. And to qualify for one of the federal government's EnergySTAR labels identifying especially efficient appliances, dishwashers must max out their water use at 3.5 gallons per cycle.

Meanwhile, handwashing the same number of dishes, pots

and pans as you can fit in the dishwasher typically "consumes" some 27 gallons of water, according to a study by researchers at Germany's University of Bonn. (They also found that some people can hand-wash a load of dishes with as little as 8.7 gallons of water, while others use as many as 116 gallons!)

"The average kitchen faucet has a flow rate of 2.2 gallons per minute,

meaning that you'd only have two minutes to wash an entire dishwasher's worth of dishes to match a dishwasher's water efficiency," reports Savannah Sher on BobVila.com. "It would be nearly impossible to use less than five gallons of water to hand-wash a full load of dishes."

And if you're going to use the dishwasher anyway, save yourself

even more hot water by skipping the sink pre-rinse and just loading those dirty dishes right into the bottom rack.

"Scrape big chunks of leftover food into the trash, but pre-rinsing isn't necessary with modern dishwashers because they have sensors that adjust the wash cycle based on how dirty the dishes are," says Consumer Reports' Perry Santanachote. In fact, unnecessary pre-rinsing can waste about 6,000 gallons of water per household per year.

These efficiency gains only apply to running your dishwasher when it's full. Rather than running the dishwasher with a half-load, wait until it fills up before hitting start. (Some units have a "rinse and hold" feature that pre-rinses what's in there so it's easier to clean when it does fill up later.) Of course, some items — cutting boards, silver flatware, cast-iron cookware, nonstick pans — will still require hand-washing, but you can always try to minimize your use of them accordingly.

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NEWS QUIZ

Tribune News Service

1. Which defendant was found guilty of malice murder in the Ahmaud Arbery trial?

- A. Greg McMichael
- B. William "Roddie" Bryan
- C. Travis McMichael
- D. All of the above

2. Where was the omicron variant of COVID-19 first reported?

- A. India
- B. Israel
- C. Sweden
- D. South Africa

3. How many barrels of oil will be released from the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve to curb rising gas prices?

- A. 25 million
- B. 50 million
- C. 75 million
- D. 100 million

4. Who received the most Grammy nominations this year?

- A. Olivia Rodrigo
- B. Justin Bieber
- C. Jon Batiste
- D. H.E.R.

5. What is Merriam-Webster's Word of the Year?

- A. Vaccine
- B. Woke
- C. Insurrection
- D. Meta

ANSWERS

- 1. C
- 2. D
- 3. B
- 4. C
- 5. A

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How to switch up your holiday gift-giving this year

By Laura Yuen
Star Tribune

Minneapolis

Christmas shopping for my young boys typically starts weeks in advance with me acquiring small toys and books from Costco, then thoughtfully ordering a couple of bigger presents they've circled in catalogs. I start storing these gifts in a secret cache in my basement, much like a squirrel with her acorns. There is a method to my gathering.

Then on Christmas Eve my husband, suddenly stirred by the holiday spirit, heads to Target to buy supersized Nerf guns, building sets or whatever strikes his inner child. It is a thing of immense privilege to say we end up with too much.

The next morning our gremlin-children tear into their presents, shredding wrapping paper into confetti. Squeals ensue, but the high is short-lived. When the dust settles, it looks like our living room has vomited.

This season I'm trying something a mom friend of mine has done for years. It's called Want, Need, Wear, Read. There will be just four gifts, and these categories — something they want, something they need, something to wear and something to read — are intended to make sure that both the giving and taking retain some measure of mindfulness.

As we barrel into yet our second COVID Christmas and Hanukkah, many are rethinking presents. And that's not just because of the Great Supply Chain Scare of 2021 and its potential to wreak havoc. Although, if you're like Allie Hawley March of Oakdale, Minnesota, it's certainly lit a fire under you. She's already done with her shopping.

"We made sure Santa letters were sent by Halloween, and all the kids' presents are already in the building. Not messing around this year," she told me.

The pandemic may have altered our approach to gift-giving in other ways. If you have lost a job, or even quit as part of the Great Resignation, maybe a smaller budget necessitates less spending. Or an



Shari L. Gross / Minneapolis Star Tribune / TNS

Rose McGee, founder of Sweet Potato Comfort Pie, gently slides a tray of four of at least 92 decorated pies into the oven at Breck School in Golden Valley, Minnesota.

overwhelming sense of gratitude has you wanting to lift up those less fortunate around you.

For some inspiration, here's how some are taking on new holiday habits:

Laura Bumbala of Lakeville, Minnesota said now that her two boys, ages 5 and 7, have gotten their first set of COVID-19 shots and will be fully vaccinated by early December, the family is ready to get out of the house. That's why they're prioritizing experiences over presents.

When relatives ask what to buy her family for Christmas, she directs them to a registry on Elfster.com. They can buy gift cards for community education classes — that can go toward summer camps and ninja-warrior training — or help fund Way Cool Cooking School lessons or a membership to the zoo.

"We don't need more stuff," said Bumbala, who works as a designer for a clothing line. "I'm lucky enough to provide our children with things on the regular. I want to be able to provide them with memories — creating their core memories."

Baking activist Rose McGee has been known to dish up slices of her sweet potato pie to comfort the grieving and spread hope and healing, especially in the wake of fatal police shootings of Black Americans. While sharing these desserts, communities have come together to share stories and engage in difficult conversations.

While the Golden

Valley, Minnesota resident continues to bake, she's also giving people lessons that will last them a lifetime.

"This year I'm teaching people how to do it themselves more," said McGee, who founded the nonprofit Sweet Potato Comfort Pie. "My recipe makes two. I tell people to make two pies — but make one with the intention of sharing it with someone else."

Searching for joyfulness is particularly important this year to McGee. She lost a stepson and a childhood friend to COVID-19, and a brother passed away this summer from a drug overdose.

"Gratitude is my intentionality around this holiday, as it was last year, because so many of my relatives and friends have died," she said. "There's so much people are going through, in terms of pain and healing."

She says time is one of the best gifts you can give, even if it's a brief FaceTime call. And don't forget to make time for yourself, McGee says, because how can you bring joy to someone else's life if you're not joyful yourself?

Some shoppers say it's easy to live by your values while stuffing those stockings.

Leslie Redmond, founder of the social justice campaign "Don't Complain, Activate," lights up when she talks about supporting local BIPOC-owned businesses by shopping at Bread: A Unique Pop-Up Market. Another of her go-to presents is a gift card to Sammy's Avenue Eatery

in north Minneapolis.

While shopping at Target, Redmond also has been randomly giving people gift cards to the store, reminded of her own childhood reared by a single mom. And she signed up to be paired with some families and youth through the nonprofit Rebound Inc., meaning she'll buy them gifts they've expressed a need or desire for.

"I have been in the holiday spirit," she says. "Especially with everything going on, I've always believed in random acts of kindness to restore people's faith in humanity."

Jon Bohlinger, who has three young kids, remembers feeling "very worried" after seeing news images of shipping containers stacking up on the West Coast. What did Bohlinger do?

"I'm a spreadsheet nerd," they said. "My wife and I started thinking ahead to the holidays, and we got going with a spreadsheet early this season. We opened a Google Doc, we set a budget, and listed it all out."

For extended family, Bohlinger's wife, Anna, assembled care packages featuring Minnesota-made goodies and sustenance: wild rice from Red Lake Nation Foods, Pearson's Salted Nut Rolls, Ames Farm honey, and hot sauce from The Salsa Collaborative. Starting early has given the couple more time to support local businesses, and they are just about done with shopping.

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Dreamstime / TNS

Black people in Sacramento County were 4.1 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than white people in 2018.

Legal cannabis is mostly white, consider backing these Black California businesses

Brianna Taylor

The Sacramento Bee

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Nationwide, Black people were 3.6 times more likely than white people to be arrested for marijuana possession in 2018, despite similar usage rates, according to a 2020 American Civil Liberties Union report.

At the same time, the U.S. cannabis industry was and still is exploding with only 10% of cannabis business owners identifying as Latino or African American.

So not only are people of color more likely to get in trouble for having weed, those criminal convictions could mean they are being shut out of a \$61 billion industry.

While overall marijuana arrests have decreased at the national level since 2010, cannabis arrests make up 43% of all drug arrests — which is more than any other drug — and the majority of the arrests are for possession, according to the American Civil Liberties Union.

According to the report, police often target people based on their perceived race rather than reasonable suspicion of criminal activity. As a result, people of color and particularly young people of color, often face implications of minor offenses like marijuana possession.

And while California is among the states with the lowest racial disparities — partly because it's a decriminalized state — Sacramento ranks one of the highest counties for racial disparities in marijuana arrests.

Black people in Sacramento County were 4.1 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than white people in 2018.

And this is all while California accounts for

almost a third of annual U.S. retail cannabis sales with minority owners having a significant impact on the overall percentage within the industry, according to MJ Biz Daily, a cannabis business information network.

So with Christmas time usually seeing a 15% to 20% week-over-week growth and the festive holiday generating \$427 million in cannabis sales last year, according to the Green Market Report — there's money to be made.

With that being said, here are five Black-owned California-based cannabis businesses to help start your holiday gift search.

OAKLAND EXTRACTS
Oakland Extracts offer edibles, badders and sugar and diamonds.

VIOLA BRANDS
Established in 2011 by NBA veteran Al Harrington, Viola's Brands is experienced in growing premium flowers, extracts and strains.

SF ROOTS
SF Roots is a cannabis brand born in San Francisco dedicated to preserving the quality standards and culture of the industry. The Black-owned business offers whole flowers, pre-rolls, concentrates and tinctures.

BALL FAMILY FARMS
Ball family Farms flowers are hand-crafted from raw and organic nutrients produced in-house.

PUT COLOR BACK INTO CANNABIS
With a mission to bring awareness to the BIPOC community within the cannabis industry, Put Color Back into Cannabis offers marijuana-inspired merchandise including pins, T-shirts and tote bags.

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How to cash in on your old clothes

Ellen Warren
Tribune News Service

Dear Answer Angel

Ellen: I am in a bit of dilemma. I need to sell off many pairs of shoes. A few that I never wore. Bottom line, I don't want to sell and have them returned because of fit. I don't want to sell on eBay because I want a set price and I no longer have PayPal. Another problem is many of the shoes are of narrow width, which is an endangered species. Few stores carry narrows in either limited stock or brands.

Any suggestions?

— Judy A.

Dear Judy: I hear a lot of complaints from readers that they can't find narrow width shoes, so yours might be in high demand depending on style and condition — and the opposite of a problem you need to worry about. A few chain stores — Buffalo Exchange (buffaloexchange.com) and Clothes Mentor

(clothesmentor.com), among others — will pay you cash on the spot for your clothes, shoes and accessories. Or find a consignment shop in your area that will sell your shoes for you. But be warned that they often take a 40-60% commission.

As for eBay, if you stipulate "no returns" in your eBay listing, the eBay rules are: "If they ordered the wrong item or changed their mind, then you aren't required to accept the return." The rules also say if the buyer wants to return the item because it is "damaged, faulty or didn't match your listing description then you need to accept the return." As for price, you're not required to sell to a buyer who bids lower than what you're asking. Renewing your PayPal account is easy, so no sweat there.

Dear Answer Angel Ellen: What do you or your readers recommend for dark under-eyes? There are so many

products out there and I don't know if any of them work, but I'm tired of my dark, baggy eyes. Help!

— Claire M.

Dear Claire: This is a tough one, made tougher by the pandemic. I'm not impressed by the creams, lotions, gels, serums and other products sold — often at huge prices — to reduce bags and dark circles. At best, my experience is they make minimal, short-term improvement.

Makeup is your friend on this one. If it is any comfort, your problem is common, and if you doubt that, just go to YouTube and see the many, many videos on how to hide dark, baggy under-eyes, which have been viewed by millions of fellow sufferers. Crucial to concealing with whatever cosmetics you choose is artful blending so you don't wind up replacing the dark areas with paler makeup that screams concealer.

Watch a few of those

how-to videos, then — if you're comfortable shopping in person at this stage of the pandemic — head to a department store. You'll find a dizzying number of cosmetic brands and trained makeup artists to tell you how to use them. It's a process to figure out what works for your coloring, but ask for advice on what shade(s) to choose. While COVID-19 curtails hands-on personal mini-makeover demonstrations of the past, you can still seek advice and free samples to try at home, no purchase necessary.

Reader Rant From Carol M.: "I love your Answer Angel column and look forward every week to questions and great tips for women. Why, oh why, then are the men taking over your column? I'd love for them to have their own advice guru and leave Ellen to us women." From Ellen: Awww. Thanks for caring, Carol. I don't get a lot of questions from



Dreamstime / TNS

Consignment stores are one option for selling unwanted shoes and other clothing items.

guys, so when they do ask me for help I figure they really need it. I'll still be here for my women readers and, as a sweet little boy I know reminds me, "Sharing is caring," let's let the fellas in once in a while.

Angelic Readers Kim M writes: "I used to feel the same way your readers feel about the skimpy foam pads that are so difficult to fit back in the bra's insertion slots, until I discovered... a whole new world. Putting them back in is so EASY with the

rolling trick (there's a video on YouTube.com). The magic is rolling them up (well I'd say like a joint or cigarette but...) and sticking them in the slot. It will unroll in the pocket and you can adjust as needed. Voila! Changed my entire life!! Hope this helps someone!"

(Send your questions and rants - on style, shopping, fashion, makeup and beauty - to answerangelellen@gmail.com.)

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