

LONG STORY: RETURN A POSSIBILITY

Bears guard Kyle Long's return from injured reserve is a possibility for Sunday, according to coach Matt Nagy. Long practiced "pretty much" in full this week as he readies to come back from right foot and ankle injuries.
Chicago Sports



BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



ABEL URIBE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Will "dazzLe" Loafman, right, of Oak Park, plays with his team, eUnited, in a "Counter-Strike: Global Offensive" tournament in Chicago in November. He said professional esports are a demanding field and that he needed his parents' help to rise in the industry.

He's young, ambitious ... and an esports wizard

BY JOHN KEILMAN
Chicago Tribune

Will Loafman earns his living playing a video game. The 23-year-old Oak Park man, better known as dazzLe, specializes in "Counter-Strike: Global Offensive," a first-person shooter with an intense professional scene.

DazzLe was the only local player to compete in November in the Intel Extreme Masters tournament in Chicago, one of the biggest events on the CS:GO calendar. Most of the world's top teams were there, and dazzLe's fledgling squad, eUnited, was hoping to make some noise.

Oak Park resident Will Loafman, aka dazzLe, persuaded his parents to let him drop out of college and play video games for a living

But long before he made it to that rarefied stage, dazzLe achieved what might have been his most impressive victory: He persuaded his parents to support his career choice.

"It was a constant battle: 'Get off the game; no, I don't want to get off,'" he recalled. "Before I got my first contract, I won a decent amount of money from a couple of tournaments. Then I showed (my parents) some of the huge tournaments, where

guys are playing in massive arenas and teams can win \$250,000 or more. They were like, 'Oh, wow.'

"Then they saw me at one or two tournaments. Once they connected the two, they said: 'Let's do this.'"

As professional esports move further into the mainstream, a few pioneers are earning global fame and massive fortunes. Ninja, a "Fortnite" savant who lives in the Chicago suburbs,

graces magazine covers and stars in TV commercials. Nadeshot, a gamer and YouTube star who grew up in Palos Hills, owns an esports organization valued at \$90 million.

Most pros, though, are like dazzLe: Young, ambitious and obsessed, fighting their way up a ladder that's still being built. Veteran esports journalist Duncan Shields estimated there are 300 professional CS:GO competitors worldwide, earning between \$1,000 and \$25,000 per month, not counting prize money.

Turn to **Games**, Page 4

Threats and blame but no sign of a deal

Shutdown awaits
Dems' move into
House majority

BY ZEKE MILLER,
JILL COLVIN
AND LISA MASCARO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The partial government shutdown will almost certainly be handed off to a divided government to solve in the new year, as President Donald Trump sought to raise the stakes Friday and both parties traded blame in the weeklong impasse.

Agreement eludes Washington in the waning days of the Republican monopoly on power, and that sets up the first big confrontation between Trump and newly empowered Democrats. Trump is sticking with his demand for money to build a wall along the southern border, and Democrats, who take control of the House on Jan. 3, are refusing to give him what he wants.

Trump worked to escalate the showdown Friday, reissuing threats to close the U.S.-Mexico border to pressure Congress to fund the wall and to shut off aid to three Central American countries from which many migrants have fled.

"We will be forced to close the Southern Border entirely if the Obstructionist Democrats do not give us the money to finish the Wall & also change the ridiculous immigration laws that our Country is saddled with," he wrote in one of a series of tweets.

The president also signaled he was in no rush to seek a resolution, welcoming the fight as he heads toward his own bid for re-election in 2020. He tweeted Thursday evening that Democrats may

Turn to **Shutdown**, Page 4

ELECTION 2019

Chico targets gun trafficking

If elected Chicago's mayor, Gery Chico said, he would consider suing neighboring states in hopes of curbing illegal gun trafficking into the city. He also would fire Chicago's police superintendent.
Chicagoland, Page 3

EPA seeking narrower rules for pollutants

The Environmental Protection Agency on Friday proposed a major change in the way the federal government calculates the costs and benefits of dangerous air pollutants, arguing that authorities should exclude some of the public health benefits stemming from new rules.
Nation & World, Page 5



BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Sears announces closure of 80 more stores nationwide

Sears announced Friday it will close 80 more stores, including two in Illinois, as it approached a deadline that could determine whether the bankrupt retailer lands a lifeline to save its business. Hoffman Estates-based Sears Holdings Corp. said it notified workers at the closing Sears and Kmart, including Sears stores in Fairview Heights and Cherry Valley, on Thursday. The latest round of 80 more stores will close in March. **Business**, Page 9

Playoff opponents, but teammates in research

Notre Dame, Clemson academics work to solve mysteries of the universe

BY PATRICK M. O'CONNELL
Chicago Tribune

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — When Notre Dame tangles with Clemson on Saturday in the first of two College Football Playoff semifinal games, Yue Wang could cheer from either sideline.

An associate professor of mechanical engineering at Clemson University, Wang completed her postdoctoral research at the University of Notre Dame, forging a connection with many on campus in South Bend. She met her husband, who worked at the Hesburgh Library at Notre Dame, during a return trip to northern Indiana to visit friends and colleagues.

Wang and her husband, Yang Wu, now a librarian at Clemson, are among a handful of academics

■ **No. 3 Notre Dame vs. No. 2 Clemson:** College Football Playoff semifinal (Cotton Bowl), 3 p.m. Saturday, ESPN.

■ **Chicago Sports:** Five ways Notre Dame can upset Clemson.

who have connections to both schools. While the Fighting Irish and the Tigers will be foes on the field this weekend, in classrooms and laboratories, friendships and collaborations among academics is the norm.

"I still have that Fighting Irish spirit," Wang said, even though she admitted she will be rooting for her current employer this weekend.

Away from the limelight of nationally televised and much-hyped football or basketball games, universities across the country — and the world — work together on a bevy of research

Turn to **Teammates**, Page 2



Tom Skilling's forecast High 33 Low 20

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ILLINOIS		INDIANA	
Dec. 28		Dec. 28	
Mega Millions	09 10 25 37 38 / 21	Daily 3 midday	335 / 3
Mega Millions jackpot: \$370M		Daily 4 midday	6514 / 3
Pick 3 midday	525 / 8	Daily 3 evening	064 / 8
Pick 4 midday	6097 / 4	Daily 4 evening	3815 / 8
Lucky Day Lotto midday		Cash 5	05 37 39 42 44
	01 25 29 44 45	MICHIGAN	
Pick 3 evening	602 / 8	Dec. 28	
Pick 4 evening	0771 / 7	Daily 3 midday	697
Lucky Day Lotto evening		Daily 4 midday	3947
	20 24 26 29 45	Daily 3 evening	888
		Daily 4 evening	4164
Dec. 29 Lotto: \$4.75M		Fantasy 5	02 04 06 17 20
Dec. 29 Powerball: \$40M		Keno	03 11 12 15 23 24
			26 39 41 43 46 48 50 53
			57 58 60 63 65 68 78 80
WISCONSIN		More winning numbers at	
Dec. 28		chicagotribune.com/lottery	
Pick 3	794		
Pick 4	5383		
Badger 5	10 13 17 21 30		
SuperCash	01 03 06 18 35 38		

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MARGARET HOLT, standards editor

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INSIDE

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"Texas-size" tire mascot sculptures of the Notre Dame leprechaun and the Clemson Tiger are on display at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas. Notre Dame and Clemson will meet Saturday in the Cotton Bowl, a College Football Playoff semifinal.

They have different rooting interests, but academics are on the same team

Teammates, from Page 1

projects. Like the partnerships between Notre Dame and Clemson, researchers at different universities join forces for a variety of reasons, professors said, because of a common line of inquiry or study, for complementary skills and often for monetary reasons. Research often requires funding from the federal government and sometimes from big companies, and pooling together human brainpower and school resources to apply for grants or create detailed proposals is how studies are completed and published.

One of the most prominent examples of the link between the Indiana and South Carolina universities involves research of how planets form. Sean Brittain, the chair of the physics and astronomy department at Clemson, earned his doctorate at Notre Dame, where he worked closely with professor Terrence Rettig using high resolution infrared spectroscopy to study the gas in planet-forming disks around young stars. The goal is to examine how the gas evolves in order to gain a better understanding of how planets form. The pair has co-authored dozens of academic papers and studies together. In another example of unity, sociologists Miao Li (Clemson) and Sarah Mustillo (Notre Dame) work together on research that looks at the generational effects of mental health and parenting behaviors.

"In reality, we work in huge teams," said Brittain,

"I think both the schools are very strong, and I hope that there will be a good game. And I hope the Tigers can win."

— Yue Wang, an associate professor of mechanical engineering at Clemson University who completed her postdoctoral research at the University of Notre Dame

who is on sabbatical at the National Optical Astronomy Observatory in Tucson, Ariz., where he is continuing the research on planet-forming disks in the universe. "Each of us have our own roles to play. ... It really is a team sport and the expertise is spread all over the globe."

Brittain, who has worked at Clemson since 2006, said his family will be divided on game day. His allegiance remains with Notre Dame, where he loved the game-day tailgating and Notre Dame Stadium experience. His children, who have grown up in South Carolina, will be rooting for the Tigers.

"I became, over the years, a big fan," Brittain said about his time spent on doctoral studies at Notre Dame. "It was great fun. It's kind of like your first love."

Unlike Brittain, Wang was only in South Bend for a year. While at Notre Dame, she worked with electrical engineering professor Panos Antsaklis on the interactions between humans and robots, designing programming that builds trust between the two and helps advanced manufacturing become more efficient without eliminating the need for workers. She is

continuing that research at Clemson, an interest that began when she toured BMW and Boeing facilities in South Carolina and realized there was a need for more collaboration between robots and humans.

"I'm trying to get the robot to better understand and learn how the human is thinking and feeling and then how to better respond," Wang said.

Wang and Antsaklis worked together in 2011 and 2012 on a project funded by the National Science Foundation on "cyberphysical systems," essentially ways that robots and humans work together. Antsaklis, whose expertise is in control systems such as the programming for automatic piloting and autonomous vehicles, worked with Wang to design the methodology to help design safer systems. The goal is to make the robots "behave" in a certain way that will make sense to humans and make the process safer, such as giving a part to a person or taking a part away once the human has completed work too intricate for the robot.

Antsaklis, who has worked at Notre Dame for 38 years, frequently attends football games on campus and will be cheering for the

Irish against Clemson. But he worries that intercollegiate sports often overshadow the work being done in classrooms and labs.

"I'm a fan but not a big fan," Antsaklis said during an interview at his office in Cushing Hall, where some of the scenes from the movie "Rudy" were filmed. "I think college football became too big for what it is. That's not just at Notre Dame. Everyone is involved in that."

This week, Wang and her husband were scheduled to move into a house near the South Carolina school that is decorated inside and out with tigers, Clemson's mascot, and has a room painted orange, the teams' main color. Wang was once named the "professor of the game" and honored on the field during a 2016 Clemson contest.

"I think both the schools are very strong, and I hope that there will be a good game," Wang said. "And I hope the Tigers can win."

What may start as an academic partnership can often blossom into much more. Even though Rettig and Brittain have not published research together in several years, they still speak regularly on the phone and see each other often at conferences and when Brittain makes it back to South Bend, often for an autumn football game.

"The connection starts as scientific," Rettig said, "and often turns into just plain friendships."

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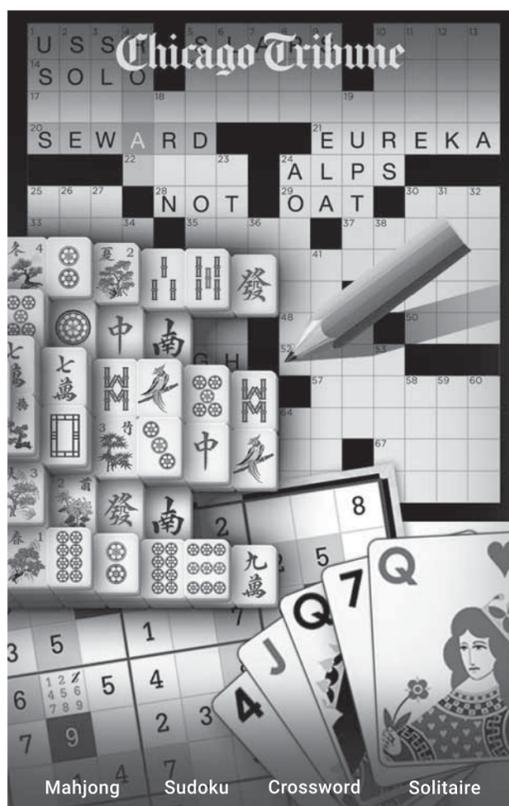
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Chicago Tribune CHICAGOLAND

Wheaton children's gym sued after boy, 7, dies following fall from zip line

BY ROBERT MCCOPPIN
Chicago Tribune

A lawsuit has been filed on behalf of a 7-year-old boy who died after he was injured while zip lining at a Wheaton children's gymnasium.

The suit against My Gym children's fitness center accuses the business of failing to protect Brady Doherty. The Glen Ellyn boy was attending a friend's birthday party when his fatal injury occurred Sept. 30.

Brady was not given a harness or a helmet and, when a spotter assigned by My Gym failed to follow Brady, he was vaulted into an unpadded steel support pole and fell to the floor, striking his head on the unpadded cement floor, according to a statement by the law firm Corboy & Demetrio,

which represents Brady's family.

Brady died Oct. 2 as a result of massive skull and brain injuries from the fall, according to the law firm.

The lawsuit asserts that My Gym failed to properly supervise Brady and that it failed to properly install and provide safety devices that would have prevented Brady's injuries and death.

"The Doherty family is worried about similar unsafe zip line attractions throughout the country and hope this case prompts My Gym to remove its zip line from all locations," said Michael Demetrio, who represents Brady's estate.

The gym, which is targeted toward toddlers and young children, closed for a week after the accident but has since reopened.

The location's owner, Lisa Miroballi, earlier expressed her

"deepest condolences" to the family.

She wrote in a statement that the accident occurred on an attraction called Space Flight, "an activity that has been enjoyed by millions of children around the world over the past 35 years," but said that piece of equipment would no longer be available.

My Gym Inc. issued the following statement Friday afternoon: "Our hearts go out to the family over this tragic loss. The Space Flight (zip line) has been closed in all our locations since this incident. The safety of our families and their children is our highest priority."

The company declined further comment in light of the ongoing litigation.

Online videos of zip lines at other My Gym locations generally

show children hanging by their hands from handlebars just a foot or two off the ground, but with workers ready to grab them and padding on all surfaces.

Andrew Stevens, an attorney for the family, said the zip line on which Brady was injured was several feet off the ground and ran the length of the gym, with children hanging only by their hands, so when Brady hit the end, he was flung into the steel pole. Stevens called it a "death trap."

"By all accounts, Brady was an incredible, loving, happy young boy," he said. "The family is heartbroken and devastated. It's been life-altering."

By filing suit, Stevens said, Brady's parents, Colleen and Dan, hope to prevent further tragedies. "The Dohertys hope to alert moms and dads across the country



FAMILY PHOTO

Brady Doherty, of Glen Ellyn, was fatally injured Sept. 30 while zip lining at a Wheaton children's gym during a birthday party.

about the danger of these zip lines," he said. "They worry every single day that what happened to Brady is going to happen to another child."

My Gym centers also are located in Chicago, River Forest, Skokie, Buffalo Grove and Aurora, according to the company website.

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Man, 72, killed in hit-and-run

A Niles man died Thursday night after he was struck by a vehicle while crossing a street in the village, according to a news release issued by the Niles Police Department.

Police are investigating the crash as a hit-and-run case and are seeking information about a white vehicle that was involved.

The release indicated that the man, identified by the Cook County medical examiner's office as Michael Potwora, 72, was crossing Greenwood Avenue at Betty Terrace at 6:24 p.m. Thursday.

Police said that some vehicles had stopped to avoid him, but as he continued to cross the intersection, he was struck by a white pickup truck or sports utility vehicle. According to police, the white vehicle then was hit by a second vehicle.

Police said the second vehicle remained in the area, but the driver of the white vehicle took off north on Greenwood Avenue. According to police, Potwora was pronounced dead at 7:09 p.m. at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge.

— Pioneer Press

Man run over in carjacking

A man was run over Thursday while trying to stop a carjacker who jumped into his car as he was about to place his child inside, according to Chicago police.

The 35-year-old man had pulled up in the 200 block of West Eugenie Street in the Old Town Triangle neighborhood around 10 p.m. so his wife and child could get in, police said.

But a man jumped into the front seat and tried driving away. The father tried to pull the carjacker out of the car but slipped, and he was run over by the fleeing thief, police said.

The man was taken to Northwestern Memorial Hospital, where his condition was stabilized.

Police later found the car abandoned. No one was in custody.

— Anna Spoorer



ERIN HOOLEY/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Chicago mayoral candidate Gery Chico released his safety proposal that includes enforcing the city's proposed police consent decree.

Chico would consider suing states over gun law enforcement

Also says if elected Chicago mayor, he'd fire police superintendent

BY GREGORY PRATT
Chicago Tribune

If elected Chicago's mayor, Gery Chico said he'd consider suing neighboring states in hopes of curbing illegal gun trafficking into the city.

A Chico administration first would try working with Indiana and Wisconsin to more strictly enforce existing firearm laws before taking the matter to the courts, he said.

"It's a potential. I hope it doesn't come to that," Chico said. "I hope it's something we can sit down and work out. Right now they're not enforcing a lot of their own laws. These guns are just flowing over the border."

Chico this week released his citywide safety proposal that includes firing Chicago police Superintendent Eddie Johnson, enforcing the city's proposed police consent decree and pushing for it to become law.

Among other crime-fighting efforts, Chico said he'd work toward boosting the public's relationship with police, hiring or promoting more detectives and improving training.

He said he's especially critical of the department's low homicide clearance rate.

Chicago police have fallen below national averages and other big cities when it comes to clearing shootings and homicides, the Tribune has reported. Last year, the city's rate of clearing homicides, including those that happened in previous years, was 35 percent compared with 60 percent nationally, the Tribune

has reported.

"I just don't see that we are getting on top of this issue, and I think we need a new leader," Chico said.

He also reiterated his call for a Mayor's Office of Violence Prevention and Reduction, which includes a Cabinet-level public safety director.

Fellow mayoral candidates Bill Daley, a former U.S. Commerce secretary, and former federal prosecutor Lori Lightfoot have offered similar proposals regarding the creation of a high-ranking position responsible for addressing violent crime. Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle also has called for Johnson's firing.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel's most recent budget already created a Mayor's Office of Violence Prevention with a nearly \$4.5 million budget and 14 employees.

In addition to beefing up police manpower, Chico said he wants to spend \$50 million on anti-crime programs that do community work, including READI Chicago and Chicago CRED, noting that the city can't simply police its way to a lower crime rate.

"We want to save lives by changing lives," Chico said.

In a news release Friday, Daley bemoaned the city's crime statistics and said he'd push to hire more police sergeants to increase clearance rates, increase mandatory annual training and upgrade technology.

Daley also said he'd want to invest \$50 million in violence prevention programs.

"The crime in Chicago is a national disgrace," Daley said in a news release. "No more excuses."

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Warrant issued in cabbie's death; police say suspect in China

BY MADELINE BUCKLEY
Chicago Tribune

An arrest warrant for murder has been issued for a man in connection with the death of a cabdriver who died after being kicked in the head during a traffic altercation, court records show.

Anis Tunkegar, 64, died on Sept. 4, two days after he was kicked in the head following an argument with another driver on the Near West Side.

The driver who allegedly kicked Tunkegar was taken into custody

after the incident but was released two days later without charges. Some time after his release, he went to China, according to Chicago police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi.

Cook County Circuit Judge Edward Maloney on Wednesday found probable cause to detain the other driver and issued a warrant for the arrest of Lu Fangqi on a murder charge.

Tunkegar's family, though, fears it may be too late and that the man may have successfully found refuge in China.

"I don't believe we will ever see him face trial for what he did," said Anis Tunkegar's son, Omar.

Anis Tunkegar had been driving his cab in the first block of North Jefferson Street in the West Loop Gate neighborhood on the Near West Side when he got out of the cab and spoke to a driver stopped behind him, video surveillance released by a family attorney shows.

The other driver kicked Tunkegar in the head, the video shows, causing him to fall to the ground.

China does not have an extradition treaty with the United States, but Guglielmi said the police are working with the U.S. State Department and Chinese authorities to bring the suspect back to stand trial.

The Cook County state's attorney's office did not respond to a request for comment from the Tribune, but State's Attorney Kim Foxx told WTTW in a Dec. 20 interview that her office was still seeking context about the video before making a charging decision.

"We have a video that tells part

of the story," Foxx said. "Are there witnesses, are there others who can add context before or after what we saw? And that's the process that we're in now."

But Omar Tunkegar believes the office's actions allowed the suspect to escape to a jurisdiction where extradition is unlikely.

"It's so depressing to know the people in charge of meting out justice for victim's families was not helping my family in any way these past months," he said.

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Drop out of college, play video games for a living

Games, from Page 1

“Getting (a slot on a team) can be tricky in as much as teams aren’t just looking for talent but proven talent, who can perform and won’t fall apart as soon as they get into competitive play,” he said.

In an interview before the Chicago tournament, dazZLe, whose tidy haircut, black glasses and subtle nose ring give him the look of a hip accountant, said holding on to a place isn’t easy, either.

“If you’re playing bad individually, it’s stressful,” he said. “It’s your job. You’re spending all of your time (doing it), you’re completely dedicated to it. You have to stay on top of your game. It’s a cutthroat business, for sure.”

Single-minded focus

DazZLe started gaming as a young child, claiming the family Nintendo 64 when his two older brothers weren’t playing. He had a single-minded personality, fixing his attention almost completely on his hobbies — skateboarding and baseball were other consuming interests — but when he settled on video games, his parents were less than pleased.

They were alarmed at the bloody violence of the shooting games he favored. They were annoyed by his tendency to blow off his schoolwork, chores and social life to chain himself to his computer. His father, a physician, thought his son showed signs of gaming addiction, and more than once considered shipping him off to Outward Bound.

“We really started to worry,” Dr. Mark Loafman recalled. “(We thought) this is not a future. He won’t have a future.”

DazZLe graduated from Oak Park River Forest High School in 2014 and took a year off before heading to Illinois State University. He remained an indifferent student, and at his father’s



ABEL URIBE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Will “dazZLe” Loafman is watched by coach Jared Hartman while playing with eUnited in the “Counter-Strike: Global Offensive” tournament in November. Loafman dropped out of college to pursue gaming as a full-time career.

insistence, agreed to get a part-time job.

First, though, he played in a weekend “CS:GO” tournament and won a rare “skin” — a cosmetic weapon modification that can serve as virtual currency. Another player paid him more than \$1,000 for it, as much as dazZLe would have earned in a semester of minimum wage work.

Just like that, his father understood what was possible in gaming.

“I was like, ‘OK. Point taken,’” he said.

When his freshman year ended in 2016, dazZLe dropped out of school and pushed to become a full-time pro. He played with a series of amateur and semipro teams, honing his skills and forging the connections that are vital for esports success.

“It’s really political,” he said. “Once you get toward that semipro level, you need to start being friends with

everyone, keep grinding, getting your name out. Eventually, when you get on that semipro team and start playing well, either your team will get picked up or you will.”

High ceiling

DazZLe got his break this year, when eUnited, a Los Angeles-based esports organization, acquired his entire team. Owner Adam Stein said his group regularly scouts for new talent, and in dazZLe, he saw a player with the potential to go far.

“I would characterize him as aggressive,” Stein said. “High ceiling. Somebody you can regularly count on to make the right play, demonstrate strong awareness of what his competitors are doing in a particular game and consistently produce results.”

The members of eUnited, which include two other

Americans and two Canadians, live in four different cities. They meet up at tournaments, but otherwise practice via the Internet for up to nine hours a day.

DazZLe set up his gear in the former wood shop of his parents’ house. His girlfriend, Taylor Milder, a video game streamer who lives with the family, said she’s used to the long hours demanded by his occupation.

“I look at it as his day job,” she said. “It’d be the same if he was working in an office. It’s just different hours in the day, but he can’t really do anything. He’s essentially not home because he’s working.”

The “CS:GO” scene is similar to professional tennis, where major tournaments are surrounded by events of varying prestige. Intel Extreme Masters Chicago wasn’t a major but it was in the next tier, and was one of the largest esports

competitions the city has hosted.

The finals would be held in front of 5,000 fans at the Wintrust Arena. To get there, teams had to survive several days of qualifiers, and eUnited, ranked 35th in the world, was a decided underdog.

Tough competition

Its opening opponent was Natus Vincere, or Na’Vi, a Ukrainian squad. Na’Vi, ranked second, was the Duke Blue Devils to eUnited’s Austin Peay, but just like the NCAA basketball tournament, “CS:GO” Cinderellas sometimes shock the world.

The object of “CS:GO” is to use guile and firepower to kill your opponents before they kill you, and eUnited got out to a fast start, winning nine of the first 10 rounds in the best of 30 match.

Na’Vi mounted a comeback but eUnited absorbed it with ease, its players a millisecond faster on their controls, a touch savvy with their strategy. After 45 minutes, eUnited won a first-round stunner, 16-6.

“We expected Na’Vi to be the team making the smashing; in fact, eUnited turned it completely around,” one of the announcers said. “That was such a good performance ... and from that, they give themselves a chance at making quite a run at this tournament.”

But the victory turned out to be eUnited’s high point. It went on to lose to European esports powerhouse Fnatic, and was then beaten by the Canadian squad Luminosity.

The second loss meant eUnited was out of the tournament with only \$5,000 in prize money to divvy up. Top-ranked Astralis, a Danish team, claimed the \$100,000 grand prize, pushing its 2018 winnings to more than \$2 million.

“Losing to another (North American) team is always hard and we thought we could have gone deeper into the tournament,” eUnited coach Jared Hartman said. “We haven’t had as much time with this roster as we wanted prior to this event, so we’re still happy with how we did.”

He said dazZLe had performed well, particularly in the first round upset. DazZLe himself said the tournament was a painful learning experience — a high followed by regrets over what might have been.

But there was no time to gripe: eUnited reassembled a week later for a tournament in Atlanta (they went 1-2). They’re now spending their holiday break practicing before the competitions resume.

“It doesn’t end,” dazZLe said. “But that’s good: There’s always something to play, ways to make money, opportunities to compete.”

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Shutdown, from Page 1

be able to block him now, “but we have the issue, Border Security, 2020!”

Incoming acting chief of staff Mick Mulvaney said Trump had canceled his plans to travel to Florida to celebrate New Year’s at his private Mar-a-Lago club.

The shutdown is forcing hundreds of thousands of federal workers and contractors to stay home or work without pay, and many are experiencing mounting stress from the impasse. It also is beginning to pinch citizens who count on public services. Gates are closed at some national parks, the government won’t issue new federal flood insurance policies, new farm loans will be put on hold beginning next week, and in New York, the chief judge of Manhattan federal courts suspended work on civil cases involving U.S. government lawyers, including several civil lawsuits in which Trump himself is a defendant.

The Smithsonian Institution also announced that museums and galleries popular with visitors and locals in the nation’s capital will close starting midweek if the partial shutdown drags on.

The Environmental Protection Agency will keep disaster-response teams and other essential workers on the job as it becomes the latest agency to start furloughing employees in the government shutdown. Spokeswoman Molly Block says the EPA will implement its shutdown plan at midnight Friday. That will mean furloughing many of its roughly 14,000 workers.

With another holiday weekend coming and nearly all lawmakers away from the Capitol there is little expectation of a quick fix.

“We are far apart,” White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders told CBS on Friday, claiming of Democrats, “They’ve left the table all together.”

Mulvaney said Democrats are no longer negotiating with the administration

over an earlier offer to accept less than the \$5 billion Trump wants for the wall. Democrats said the White House offered \$2.5 billion for border security, but that Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer told Vice President Mike Pence it wasn’t acceptable.

“There’s not a single Democrat talking to the president ... about this deal,” Mulvaney said Friday.

Speaking on Fox News and later to reporters, he tried to drive a wedge between Democrats, pinning the blame on House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi.

“My gut was that (Schumer) was really interested in doing a deal and coming to some sort of compromise. But the more we’re hearing this week is that it’s Nancy Pelosi who’s preventing that from happening,” he said, alleging that if Pelosi “cuts a deal with the president of any sort before her election on January 3rd she’s at risk of losing her speakership, so we’re in this for the long haul.”

Pelosi has all but locked up the support she needs to win the gavel on Jan. 3 and there is also no sign of daylight between her and Schumer in the negotiations over government funding.

Mulvaney added of the shutdown: “We do expect this to go on for a while.”

Democrats brushed off the White House’s attempt to cast blame.

“For the White House to try and blame anyone but the president for this shutdown doesn’t pass the laugh test,” said Justin Goodman, a spokesman for Schumer.

Pelosi has vowed to pass legislation to reopen the nine shuttered departments and dozens of agencies as soon as she takes the gavel, which is expected when the new Congress convenes.

But movement beyond that may be difficult without a compromise because the Senate will remain in Republican hands and Trump’s signature will be needed to turn any bill into law.

Chicago Tribune

NATION & WORLD

EPA seeks narrower pollutant rules

Plan revisits 2011 mercury emission limit on coal plants

By BRADY DENNIS AND JULIET EILPERIN
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Environmental Protection Agency on Friday proposed a major change in the way the federal government calculates the costs and benefits of dangerous air pollutants, arguing that authorities should exclude some of the public health benefits stemming from new rules.

The proposal, which revisits a 2011 rule limiting mercury emissions from coal plants, argues the EPA lacked justification to curb the neurotoxin in the first place because many benefits stemmed from the overall drop in air pollution that would occur once power companies adopted new technologies. The EPA is not reversing the Obama-era standards — with which the industry has already complied — the agency wants to alter the underlying calculations to set a precedent for future public health rules.

The proposal represents a balancing act, of sorts. In keeping in place the Obama-era standards on mercury emissions, Trump officials are acknowledging the billions of dollars companies have already spent in upgrades to comply. But at the same time, the administration is advancing a broader effort to narrow what the government counts as benefits when crafting air rules.

If adopted, the change would prevent regulators



J. DAVID AKE/AP

A coal-fired power plant in Glenrock, Wyo. The Trump administration is targeting an Obama-era rule that targeted toxic pollution as too broad when calculating its benefits.

from calculating positive health effects — known as “co-benefits” — that come from reducing pollutants other than those being targeted. The shift could have implications for public health protections across the federal government, experts said.

“EPA has managed to walk a very fine line,” said Jeffrey Holmstead, a partner at the firm Bracewell who represents several utilities and who headed the agency’s air and radiation office under President George W. Bush.

While many power companies “actually lobbied the

administration to leave” the rule in place, Holmstead said, “the Trump folks couldn’t bring themselves to defend” the previous administration’s conclusion that the rule was “appropriate and necessary.”

Under President Barack Obama, the EPA estimated it would cost utilities \$9.6 billion a year to comply with the new standards, while limiting mercury would translate into merely \$6 million in public health benefits. But the EPA estimated at the time that other factors, such as reductions in soot and nitrogen oxide that would accompany cuts

to mercury pollution, would save between \$37 billion to \$90 billion in annual health costs and lost workdays by preventing as many as 11,000 premature deaths and 4,700 heart attacks.

The latest EPA analysis argues that it was inappropriate to factor in such co-benefits.

“I just think it’s a little fuzzy math when you say, ‘Reduce mercury and we have all these other benefits over here,’ as the shiny object,” EPA acting administrator Andrew Wheeler said in an interview with The Washington Post this fall. As a result, the agency

now estimates that the costs of complying with the rule far outweigh its direct benefits of \$4 million to \$6 million annually. In a statement, the agency said it was “providing regulatory certainty by transparently and accurately taking account of both costs and benefits” of the mercury rule.

That rationale came under fire swiftly on Friday, suggesting that the rule could face a court challenge if it is finalized.

“There is no legitimate justification for this action,” Harold Wimmer, chief executive of the American Lung Association, said in a

statement, adding that the regulation had been effective not just in limiting mercury, but also emissions of carcinogens such as arsenic, chromium and nickel, as well as toxic acid gases that form particle pollution, which causes asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death. “EPA’s proposal to undermine the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards is one of its most dangerous efforts yet.”

Celia Chen, director of the Dartmouth Toxic Metals Superfund Research Program, said that now is not the time for federal regulators to make it tougher to tighten standards on emissions of mercury.

“As the scientific understanding of mercury continues to advance, we should not limit ourselves in the ongoing fight against this dangerous pollutant,” Chen said in a statement. “Regulators need the tools to strengthen mercury controls in the future if needed. Any true assessment of the benefits to the environment and public health that we have seen with controls on mercury pollution indicate that they are worth billions of dollars, not the mere millions that have been underestimated.”

Mercury has been shown to cause an array of potential health problems, including certain neurological disorders, cardiovascular harm, endocrine disruption and weakened immune systems. Children exposed to mercury while in the womb can suffer serious cognitive impairment.

Coal-fired power plants rank as the nation’s single biggest emitter of mercury.

NEWS BRIEFING

Staff and news services

N.C. Republican won’t be seated in House amid vote fraud probe

WASHINGTON — Incoming House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer said Friday that Democrats next week will not seat a North Carolina Republican amid allegations of election fraud in the state’s 9th Congressional District.

“Given the now well-documented election fraud that took place in NC-09, Democrats would object to any attempt by (Mark) Harris to be seated on January 3,” Hoyer said

in a statement. “In this instance, the integrity of our democratic process outweighs concerns about the seat being vacant at the start of the new Congress.”

The statement came after North Carolina dissolved its elections board Friday without certifying the results of the election.

Investigators are looking into whether an operative hired by Harris illegally collected or discarded absentee ballots.

Hackers accessed data of over 500K students in San Diego

Hackers hit the San Diego Unified School District’s computer system and obtained access to a file that had detailed personal data on more than 500,000 students going back a decade, authorities said.

The school system, in a security report on its website, said it is alerting those who may have had personal data viewed or stolen. The data potentially include Social Security

numbers, health and discipline information, addresses and phone numbers, it said.

School police “have identified a subject of the investigation” but did not reveal details on who it was or how many people were involved, the security report said.

The breach is believed to have started in January and did not end until it was discovered in October.

Seoul: Personal info stolen on 997 N. Korean defectors

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea said Friday it’s responding to a hacking attack that stole the names and addresses of nearly 1,000 North Korean defectors who resettled in the South.

A regional office of the Hana resettlement center said it has been notifying affected defectors after discovering last week that one of its computers had been breached sometime around November.

South Korea’s Unification Ministry said the names, home addresses and birthdays of 997 defectors living in the country’s southeast region were stolen.

Police are investigating the hacking attack but have yet to identify the source.

About 30,000 North Koreans have fled to South Korea, mostly traveling via China, since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.



ALBERTO SAIZ/AP

Flour power: Revelers fling flour, eggs and firecrackers Friday in Ibi, Spain, in a festival that dates to Roman times. Every year, residents divide into two groups: the “floured,” who try to take control for a day, and the opposition, which aims to restore order.

Suspect in California officer’s shooting death is captured

SAN FRANCISCO — A suspected drunk driver accused of fatally shooting the California police officer who pulled him over was captured Friday as he tried to flee back to Mexico, where he lived before illegally crossing into the U.S., authorities said.

The sheriff whose agency was leading the investigation blamed California’s sanctuary law for preventing local authorities from reporting Perez Arriaga to federal immigration officials for previous arrests. If the suspect had been deported, he said, Cpl. Ronil Singh of the tiny

Newman Police Department would still be alive.

“We can’t ignore the fact that this could have been preventable,” Stanislaus County Sheriff Adam Christianson said, asking why the state was “providing sanctuary for criminals (and) gang members. It’s a conversation we need to have.”

Gustavo Perez Arriaga was arrested near Bakersfield, about 200 miles southeast of the scene of the shooting. He crossed the border in Arizona several years ago and had worked a variety of jobs as a laborer, including at several

dairies. He also had two prior arrests for driving while intoxicated, Christianson said.

The 33-year-old Mexico native had gang affiliations and multiple Facebook pages with different names, the sheriff said.

Singh, also 33, was an immigrant too, arriving legally from his native Fiji to fulfill his dream of becoming a police officer, authorities said.

He had a newborn son and joined the 12-officer Newman police force in 2011.

The arrest followed a statewide manhunt.

Water rescues in South; heavy snow in Midwest

A powerful winter storm that brought blizzard warnings Friday across the Upper Midwest was blamed for at least three fatal crashes while flash flooding from rains in the South swept away cars and forced dozens of water rescues.

In northern New Eng-

land, a mix of snow, sleet, freezing rain and rain added up to make for dangerous driving Friday.

Much of the Dakotas and part of Minnesota were under a blizzard warning after many areas got a foot of snow or more. Two people were killed in vehicle accidents in Minnesota

and one in North Dakota.

Another storm dumped up to 12 inches of rain in Louisiana and Mississippi, sweeping away cars and forcing some residents to have to be rescued from their homes before the rains moved into Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina on Friday.

Nation’s oldest World War II vet dies in Texas at 112

AUSTIN, Texas — Richard Overton, the nation’s oldest World War II veteran who was also believed to be the oldest living man in the U.S., died Thursday in Texas, a family member said. He was 112.

The Army veteran had been hospitalized with pneumonia but was released on Christmas Eve, said Shirley Overton, whose husband was Richard Overton’s cousin and his longtime caretaker.

He died Thursday evening at a rehab facility in Austin, she said.

Richard Overton was in his 30s when he volunteered for the Army and was at Pearl Harbor just after the Japanese attack in 1941. He once said that one secret to his long life was smoking cigars and drinking whiskey.

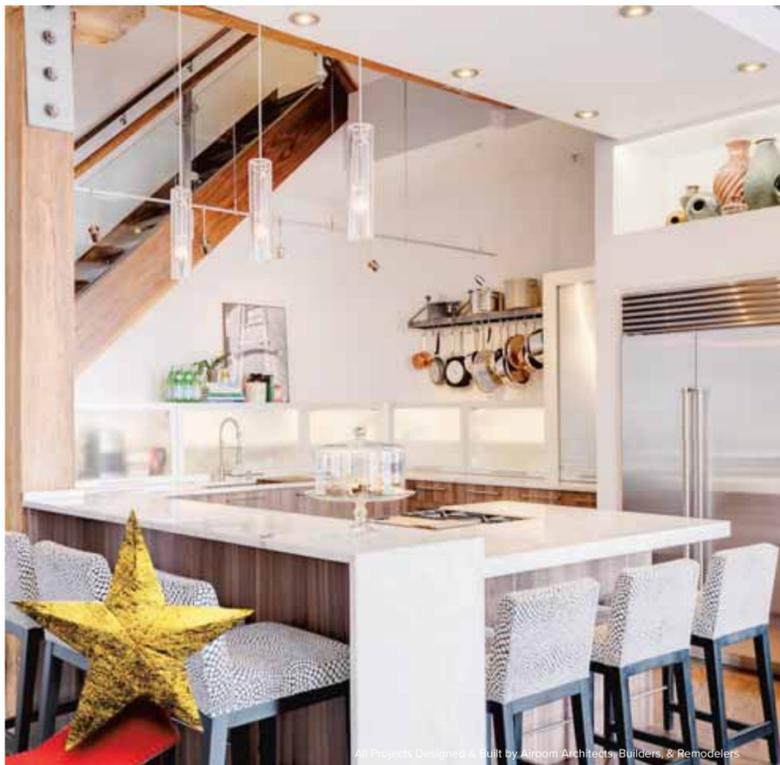
Overton was born in 1906 near Austin and served in the all-black 1887th Engineer Aviation Battalion.

Canada-China feud:

Canada’s government said Friday that teacher Sarah McIver, who was detained earlier this month in China over a problem with her work permit, has been released and returned home. Her detention followed the arrests of two other Canadians on allegations they harmed China’s national security.

In Egypt: A roadside bomb hit a tourist bus Friday in an area near the Giza Pyramids, killing two Vietnamese tourists and wounding 12 others, Egypt’s Interior Ministry said in a statement.

The bus was traveling in the Marioutiyah area when the crude bomb, concealed by a wall, went off, the statement said.



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Syria claims it has entered key Kurdish-held town

But denials by U.S. and Turkey hint at growing confusion

By SARAH EL DEEB
Associated Press

BEIRUT — Syria's military said Friday it had entered the key Kurdish-held town of Manbij in an apparent deal with the Kurds, who are looking for new allies and protection against a threatened Turkish offensive as U.S. troops prepare to leave Syria.

Turkey and American troops patrolling the town denied there was any change of forces in the contested area, contradicting the Syrians and highlighting the potential for chaos in the wake of last week's surprise pronouncement by the United States that it was withdrawing its troops.

Since the U.S. announcement, forces have been building up around Manbij and further east, ushering in new alliances and raising the chances for friction. The Kurds' invitation to Syrian troops shows they'd rather let Syria's Russian- and Iranian-backed government fill the void left by the Americans, than face the prospect of being overwhelmed by their top rival Turkey.

Meanwhile, a flurry of meetings is expected in the coming days as all sides of the conflict scramble to find ways to replace the departing U.S. troops.

They include one Saturday in Moscow, where Russia will host top Turkish officials in a possible sign that the two sides could be working on a deal to avert a Turkish offensive into Syria. Russian officials have said they expect Syrian government troops to replace the U.S. troops when they withdraw.

Turkey considers the U.S.-backed Kurdish People's Protection Units, which controls nearly 30



HUSSEIN MALLA/AP

Members of the Kurdish internal security forces patrol at a market, in the Kurdish-held town of Manbij, north Syria, in March. Friday, Syria's military said it had entered Manbij.

percent of Syria, a terrorist group linked to an insurgency within its own borders. Kurdish-controlled Manbij has been at the center of rising tension between the U.S. and Turkey.

There were conflicting reports Friday on the location of the Syrian troops, who said they had moved into Manbij and raised the Syrian flag in the town. The Kurdish militia said it has invited the Syrian government to take control of Manbij to protect it against "a Turkish invasion."

But a Kurdish official said the government deployment has so far been limited to the front line with Turkey-backed fighters, based north and west Manbij. And U.S. officials in Washington said Syrian regime forces and some Russian forces had moved a bit closer to the city and were largely south or southwest of the city. The officials spoke anonymously because they were not authorized to discuss the troop movements publicly.

The U.S.-led coalition said the announcement that government troops had entered the town was "incorrect," and called "on everyone to respect the integrity of Manbij and the safety of its citizens."

Russia and Iran, meanwhile, welcomed the Syrian announcement.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called it a "positive step" that could help stabilize the area. Iran hailed it as a "major step toward establishing the government's authority" over all of Syria. Russia has signaled it expects the Syrian government to deploy where U.S. forces leave.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the Syrian government move was "a psychological act," and the situation in Manbij was uncertain. He spoke as Turkey-allied forces in Syria said they were fortifying their front-line positions ahead of the possible military offensive.

But Erdogan also noted that his country's goal is to oust the Kurdish militia from along his country's borders. "If terror organizations leave, then there is no work left for us anyway," Erdogan told reporters.

In Washington, Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham, who broke with President Donald Trump on his decision to withdraw U.S. troops from Syria, tweeted that reports about the Kurds aligning with Assad were a "major disaster in the making."

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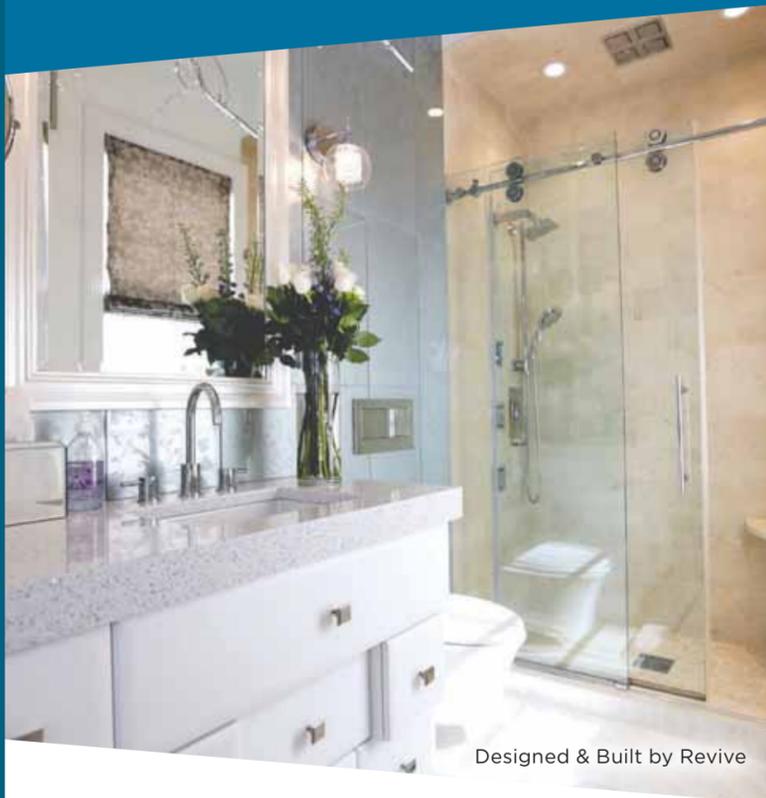
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Congo leader warns of Ebola election 'disaster'

Protests erupt in response, health workers halt efforts

BY SALEH MWANAMILONGO AND AL-HADJI KUDRA MALIRO
Associated Press

KINSHASA, Congo — Congo's leader is blaming a deadly Ebola virus outbreak for the last-minute decision to bar an estimated 1 million voters from Sunday's long-delayed presidential election, claiming it would be a "disaster" if someone infects hundreds of people.

Protests exploded again Friday in response as health workers suspended efforts and warned that new cases could sharply rise.

In an interview with The Associated Press, President Joseph Kabila contradicted his own health officials and experts with the World Health Organization who have said precautions were taken in collaboration with electoral authorities so people could vote.

Those include tons of hand sanitizer — Ebola is spread via infected bodily fluids — and the screening of all voters entering polling stations.

Without mentioning the election, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus warned late Friday that "prolonged insecurity" in Congo could erase recent gains made in containing the second-deadliest Ebola outbreak in history. Work has reached a "critical point," he said.

Kabila on Thursday evening claimed that the hemorrhagic fever could spread as people use voting machines, tapping on a touchscreen to select candidates. A polling station could have 500 to 600 voters and "this assumes that a lot of people will be contaminated," he said.

Health officials have said people would sanitize their hands before and after vot-



AL-HADJI KUDRA MALIRO/AP

Congolese police move to quell protests Friday in the Eastern Congolese town of Beni, as they demonstrate against the plan to postpone election in the town until March 2019.

ing. Until this week, the Ebola outbreak declared on Aug. 1 had been a challenge but not a barrier to the election. Voting is now delayed in the cities of Beni and Butembo — but not in other communities with Ebola cases — until March, long after the inauguration of Kabila's successor in January.

Residents had supported Kabila in past elections but sentiment has turned in recent years amid persistent insecurity.

This latest delay in an election meant to occur in late 2016 has angered both residents and the opposition, which accuses the government of trying to ensure that Kabila's preferred successor wins.

Many Congolese believe Kabila will wield power behind the scenes and protect his assets in a country with vast mineral wealth.

Protests broke out in Beni again on Friday, with hundreds of people demanding to vote on Sunday with the rest of the country. Police used live ammunition and tear gas to disperse the marchers who barricaded streets.

Some protesters carried crosses displaying "RIP Kabila" and saying his pre-

ferred successor, Emmanuel Ramazani Shadary, "will never be our president." Beni's civil society urged residents to turn out en masse on Sunday. Others protested in Butembo and Goma city.

"We don't fear Ebola," one marcher, Claude Vianney, told the AP. "I know that if you wash your hands, the Ebola virus will be killed."

He added: "We are furious, as you can see. Why does Kabila keep mocking us?"

On Thursday, some protesters attacked an Ebola response center and sent 21 patients fleeing. Many later returned, but the vandalism was the latest setback in efforts to contain the outbreak.

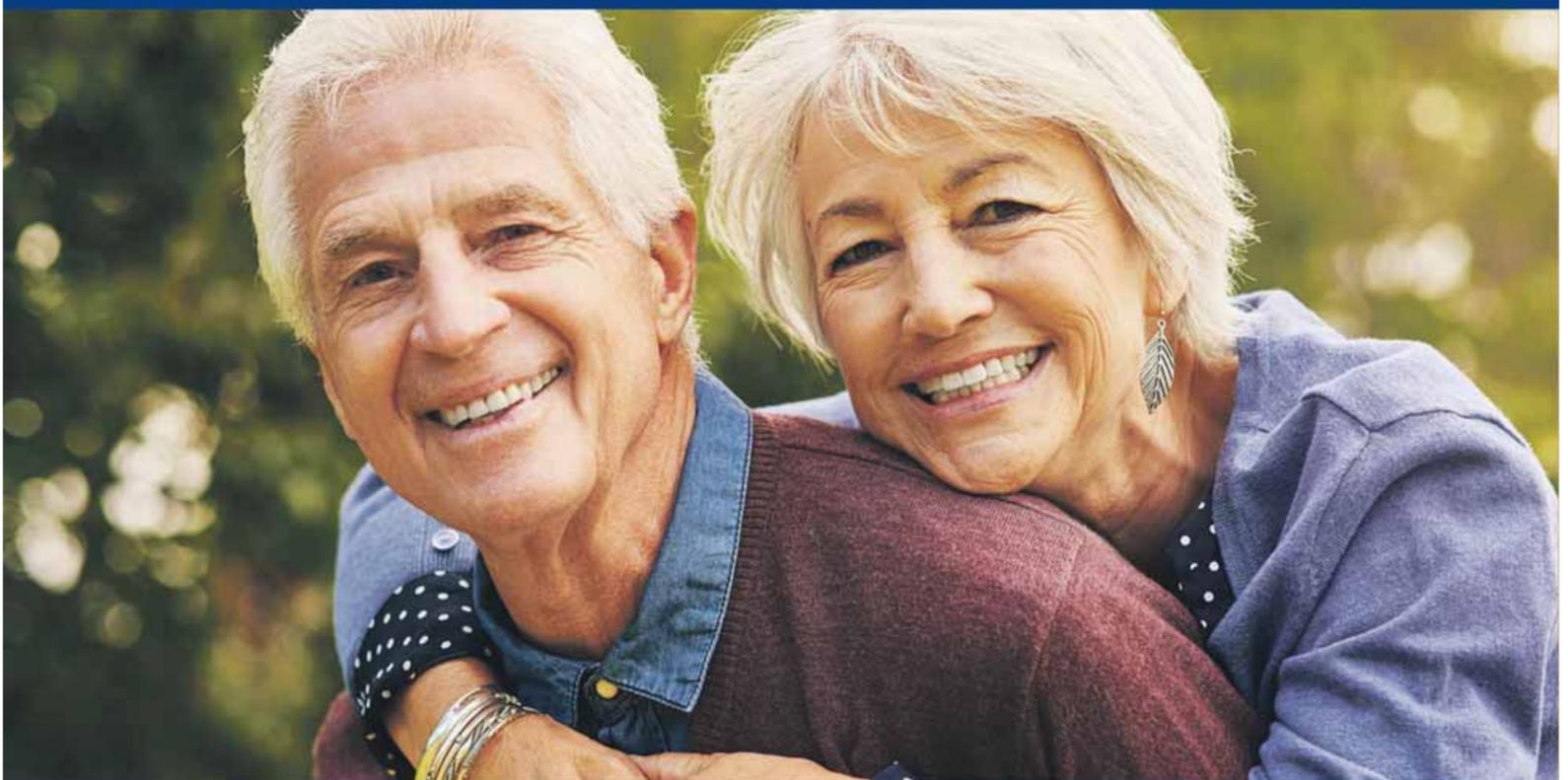
Nearly 600 cases have been reported, with more than 350 confirmed deaths.

The uproar over the voting delay has "badly disturbed" Ebola response work in Beni and Butembo, Congo's health ministry said.

Health teams barely deployed on Thursday, and no Ebola vaccinations could be carried out.

The Oxfam aid group said it was forced to suspend Ebola response work.

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Chicago Tribune BUSINESS

Wells Fargo to pay \$57M over scandal, other issues

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Wells Fargo will pay \$575 million in a settlement with attorneys general from all 50 states and the District of Columbia that are investigating fake accounts opened without the knowledge of customers and a string of other dodgy practices.

Under the agreement announced Friday, the bank will also create teams to review and respond to customer complaints about its banking and sales practices.

The bank has been under a cloud since 2015 when it acknowledged that employees had opened millions of fake bank accounts for customers in order to meet sales goals. It has also said that it sold auto insurance and other financial products to customers who didn't need them.

Wells Fargo has already been ordered to pay more than \$1.2 billion in penalties and faced stricter regulations.

"This agreement underscores our serious commitment to making things right in regard to past issues as we work to build a better bank," said CEO Tim Sloan.

Tim Sloan apologized for the phony accounts and other practices during a congressional hearing in 2017, but the company remained under pressure from the weight of all the scandals. The company has announced plans to lay off up to 10 percent of its workforce over the next three years.

Illinois will receive more than \$10.8 million of the settlement, according to the office of state Attorney General Lisa Madigan.

California, the bank's home state, will get more than a quarter of the settlement funds because of the number of Wells Fargo customers residing there.



JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY

Gap Inc. shares dropped close to 15% a day after the company reported first quarter earnings short of expectations.

Gap to close 3 area stores, boost brand

BY ALLY MAROTTI
Chicago Tribune

The Gap plans to close three Chicago-area stores next month amid disappointing performance from the clothing brand.

The stores at Fox Valley Mall in Aurora, Town Square Wheaton and Hawthorn Mall in Vernon Hills are set to close Jan. 28, according to Gap. The Gap flagship store on Fifth Avenue in New York City is also expected to close early next year.

The move comes in the midst of an effort by Gap's parent company, Gap Inc., to create more profitability with the brand.

Gap's business is healthy and growing online, and the outlets are profitable, Arthur Peck, president, CEO and director of Gap Inc., said during the company's earnings call last month. But Gap's 775 stores globally are underperforming.

It is not yet clear how many of those stores Gap will be closing, but Peck said during the call that he plans "to exit those that do not fit the future vision quickly. I'm going to move thoughtfully but aggressively."

"These stores are a drag on the health and a drag on the performance of the brand," Peck said.

The closings follow a tumultuous year for The Gap. The brand's former president and CEO, Jeff Kirwan, left the company earlier this year in part because of the disappointing profit growth. The company named a new Gap president in June.

Gap Inc. also operates Banana Republic, Old Navy and Athleta.

Lauren Zumbach contributed.

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Sears to close 80 more stores

BY LAUREN ZUMBACH
Chicago Tribune

Sears announced Friday that it will close 80 more stores, including two in Illinois, as it approached a deadline that could determine whether the bankrupt retailer lands a lifeline to save its business or is forced to begin shutting down.

Hoffman Estates-based Sears Holdings Corp. said it notified workers at the closing Sears and Kmart, including Sears stores in Fairview Heights and Cherry Valley, on Thursday.

Sears already had announced plans to shutter 182 stores after seeking Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in October. The latest round of 80 more stores will close in March and liquidation sales are expected to begin in two weeks, Sears said Friday.

News of the closures came hours ahead of a deadline for parties interested in acquiring the retailer's assets to submit bids, according to a timeline approved by the Bankruptcy Court.

Earlier this month, the hedge fund run by Sears Chairman Edward Lampert said it would offer about \$4.6 billion for many of the retailer's remaining assets, including about 500 Sears and Kmart stores and its well-known Kenmore and DieHard brands.

That proposal would keep Sears in business and preserve "tens of thousands of jobs," Lampert's hedge fund said in a letter to Sears' investment banker earlier this month.

But when the deadline passed Friday, it was not clear whether ESL or any other party had made a formal bid.

Sears could choose to extend the deadline it set to give potential bidders more time to finalize plans or secure financing. But without a bid, it could be forced to liquidate.

ESL, Sears and its restructuring adviser could not immediately be reached for comment after the bid deadline passed. Sears and its restructuring adviser declined to comment earlier Friday.

It's unusual to see ESL's bid come down to the wire, since Lampert "knows the business better than anyone," said Craig Barbarosh, a partner at law firm Katten Muchin Rosenman in California who is not involved with the Sears case.

Sears told the court it has seen interest from multiple parties, including some who would liquidate the company, according to a CNN report.

Even if ESL does submit a formal offer to buy the business with the intent of keeping it in operation, it doesn't guarantee Sears would escape liquidation.

The court will choose the bid that recovers as much of the money Sears owes its lenders and vendors as possible, whether that means shutting the business down immediately or giving Sears more runway to restructure, Barbarosh said.

If it's a close call, judges tend to lean to bids that would keep the business going because that preserves jobs, said Barbarosh. ESL said it expected to employ 50,000 at the 500 stores it proposed acquiring, out of 68,000 employees Sears said it had at the time of its bankruptcy filing.

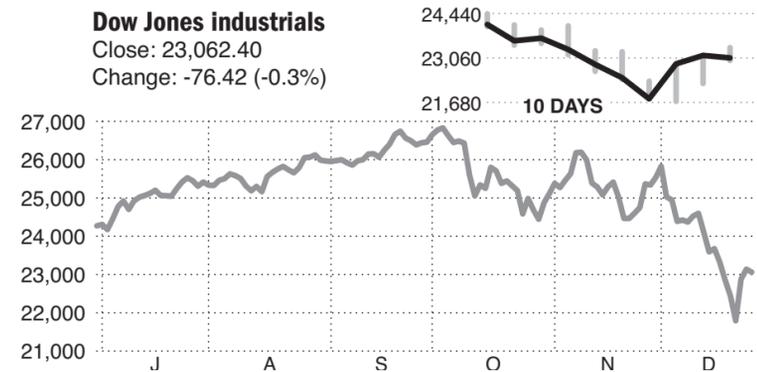
A bid that would keep Sears in business also gives lenders who aren't first in line to be repaid a shot at retrieving a larger portion of what they're owed.

"But if lenders can make an argument that there will be greater returns (from shutting down quickly), I would not be surprised if they liquidate," Barbarosh said.

At the time of its bankruptcy filing, Sears said it had 687 stores and 68,000 employees, 32,000 of whom are full-time.

MARKET ROUNDUP

Dow High: 23,381.88 Low: 22,981.33 Previous: 23,138.82



Nasdaq +5.03 (+0.08%)

Close 6,584.52
High 6,684.18
Low 6,529.22
Previous 6,579.49

S&P 500 -3.09 (-.12%)

Close 2,485.74
High 2,520.27
Low 2,472.89
Previous 2,488.83

Russell 2000 +6.10 (+.46%)

Close 1,337.92
High 1,356.23
Low 1,326.44
Previous 1,331.82

10-yr T-note -.01 to 2.73%

Gold futures +2.50 to \$1,279.90

Yen -.33 to 110.41/\$

Euro +.0006 to .8740/\$

Crude Oil +.72 to \$45.33

Major market growth and decline

5-day % change			30-day % change			1-year % change		
DOW	NASD	S&P	DOW	NASD	S&P	DOW	NASD	S&P
+2.75	+3.97	+2.86	-9.70	-10.18	-9.94	-6.70	-4.62	-7.03

FUTURES							
COMMODITY	AMOUNT-PRICE	MO.	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	SETTLE	CHG.
WHEAT (CBOT)	5,000 bu minimum- cents per bushel	Mar 19	511.75	514	509.50	511.50	+1
CORN (CBOT)	5,000 bu minimum- cents per bushel	Mar 19	374.50	377.50	374.50	375.50	+1
SOYBEANS (CBOT)	5,000 bu minimum- cents per bushel	Jan 19	870.50	886.25	870	882.75	+13.75
SOYBEAN OIL (CBOT)	60,000 lbs- cents per lb	Jan 19	27.34	27.52	27.31	27.52	+21
SOYBEAN MEAL (CBOT)	100 tons- dollars per ton	Mar 19	304.50	310.90	304.00	308.90	+5.00
LIGHT SWEET CRUDE (NYMX)	1,000 bbl.- dollars per bbl.	Feb 19	45.44	46.20	44.42	45.33	+72
NATURAL GAS (NYMX)	10,000 mm btu's, \$ per mm btu	Feb 19	3.507	3.527	3.278	3.303	-.243
NY HARBOR GAS BLEND (NYMX)	42,000 gallons- dollars per gallon	Jan 19	1.3243	1.3425	1.2960	1.3262	+0.022

Source: The Associated Press

LOCAL STOCKS

Stocks listed may change due to daily fluctuations in market capitalization.

Exchange key: N=NYSE, O=NASDAQ

STOCK	XCHG.	CLOSE	CHG.	STOCK	XCHG.	CLOSE	CHG.
Abbott Labs	N	71.09	+46	Equity Lifestyle Prop	N	96.36	-03
AbbVie Inc	N	91.12	+1.21	Equity Residential	N	66.24	+18
Allstate Corp	N	82.02	+23	Exelon Corp	N	44.74	-04
Aptargroup Inc	N	92.70	+33	First Indl RT	N	28.35	+09
Arch Dan Mid	N	40.78	-18	Fortune Brds Hm&Sec	N	37.62	-28
Baxter Intl	N	65.21	-35	Gallagher AJ	N	72.52	+23
Boeing Co	N	316.38	-76	Grainger WW	N	281.47	-46
Brunswick Corp	N	46.15	+29	GrubHub Inc	N	75.99	+74
CBOE Global Markets	N	96.21	+59	Hill-Rom Hldgs	N	86.69	+27
CDK Global Inc	O	47.29	+37	IDEX Corp	N	124.16	-127
CDW Corp	O	79.75	+29	ITW	N	124.72	-22
CF Industries	N	42.37	-87	Ingredion Inc	N	91.07	-06
CME Group	O	186.11	+1.79	Jones Lang LaSalle	N	128.98	-70
CNA Financial	N	44.09	+03	Kemper Corp	N	65.67	-61
Caterpillar Inc	N	125.61	-1.06	Kraft Heinz Co	O	43.57	-19
ConAgra Brands Inc	N	21.18	-04	LKQ Corporation	O	23.96	-13
Deere Co	N	145.28	-68	Littelfuse Inc	O	168.03	-75
Discover Fin Svcs	N	58.31	-56	MB Financial	O	39.32	+03
Dover Corp	N	69.80	-31	McDonalds Corp	N	175.56	-15
Equity Commonwlth	N	29.79	-06	Middleby Corp	O	101.43	+1.10

MOST ACTIVE STOCKS

STOCK	CLOSE	CHG.
Gen Electric	7.51	+0.24
Bank of America	24.39	+0.02
Weatherford Intl Ltd	.40	+0.08
AT&T Inc	28.46	+31
Ford Motor	7.81	-04
Chesapeake Energy	2.15	-06
Oracle Corp	44.82	-15
Barrick Gold	13.12	-59
Nokia Corp	5.81	+18
Rite Aid Corp	.69	+04
Pfizer Inc	42.96	+11
Wells Fargo & Co	45.78	+25
Citigroup	51.83	+06
Aphria Inc	6.26	+69
Transocean Ltd	7.01	+30
Twitter Inc	28.43	-25
Freeport McMoran	10.47	-20
Exxon Mobil Corp	68.17	-77
Snap Inc A	5.71	+36
Square Inc	55.87	-28
JPMorgan Chase & Co	96.83	-21
EnCana Corp	5.82	+01
Sthwstn Energy	3.53	-15
Kinder Morgan Inc	15.29	-22

LARGEST COMPANIES

STOCK	CLOSE	CHG.
Alibaba Group Hldg	139.09	+6.84
Alphabet Inc C	1037.08	-6.80
Alphabet Inc A	1046.68	-6.22
Amazon.com Inc	1478.02	+16.38
Apple Inc	156.23	+08
Bank of America	24.39	+02
Berkshire Hath B	202.08	+1.96
Exxon Mobil Corp	68.17	-77
Facebook Inc	133.20	-1.32
JPMorgan Chase	96.83	-21
Johnson & Johnson	127.27	-14
Microsoft Corp	100.39	-79
Pfizer Inc	42.96	+11
Royal Dutch Shell B	59.48	+60
Royal Dutch Shell A	58.11	+31
Unitedhealth Group	246.24	+27
Verizon America	55.27	+12
Visa Inc	130.94	+07
WalMart Strs	92.13	+5.04

LARGEST MUTUAL FUNDS

FUND	NAV	CHG	1-YR IN \$ %RTN
American Funds AMCPA m	27.66	+01	-03
American Funds AMRCBA m	24.78	+03	-3.4
American Funds CptWldGrncA	m24.54	+19	-10.9
American Funds CptWldGrncA	m56.05	+30	-7.4
American Funds FdmtInvsvA m	51.95	+05	-7.6
American Funds GrfAmrcA m	42.45	+01	-4.1
American Funds IncAmrcA m	20.53	+05	-5.6
American Funds InvCAMrcA m	33.74	+04	-7.3
American Funds NwPrspctvA m	37.40	+13	-6.8
American Funds WAMtInvsvA m	40.79	+01	-4.0
DFA IntlCorEqIn	11.63	+09	-18.0
Dodge & Cox Inc	13.24	+03	-4.4
Dodge & Cox IntlStk	36.87	+49	-18.0
Dodge & Cox Stk	171.48	+49	-8.3
DoubleLine TlRetBdl	10.44	+03	+3.8
Fidelity 500InxPrm x	86.36	+20	-5.7
Fidelity Contrafund	10.91	-01	-3.6
Fidelity ContrafundK	10.91	-01	-3.6
Fidelity TlMktDxInxPrm x	69.97	-08	-6.6
Fidelity USBDInxPrm	11.26	+04	-1.1
Franklin Templeton Inca1 m	2.13	...	-5.7
Metropolitan West TlRetBdl	10.37	+01	...
PIMCO IncInstl	11.78	...	+5
PIMCO TlRetIn	9.92	+03	-7
Schwab SP500Idx x	37.98	-09	-5.7
T. Rowe Price BCGF	95.19	-08	+5
T. Rowe Price GrStk	56.58	-06	-2.5
Vanguard 500IdxAdmrl	229.46	-25	-5.7
Vanguard DivGrIn	24.24	-04	-1.0
Vanguard EqInAdmrl	65.92	-02	-6.7
Vanguard GrdAdmrl	68.48	-05	-4.7
Vanguard HCAmrl	79.41	+12	-1.5
Vanguard InTrnGdAdm	9.37	+03	-6
Vanguard InTrTEAdmrl	13.91	...	+1.4
Vanguard InsdInxIn	225.61	-24	-5.7
Vanguard InsdInxPlus	225.62	-25	-5.7
Vanguard InStMInPls	53.62	-01	-6.5
Vanguard MdCpIdxAdmrl	169.50	-37	-10.6
Vanguard PrmCpAdmrl	119.86	+07	-3.3
Vanguard STInvmGrdAdmrl	10.44	+02	+9
Vanguard SmCpIdxAdmrl	62.63	+11	-10.7
Vanguard TrgtRtr2020Inv x	28.50	-1.35	-4.8
Vanguard TrgtRtr2025Inv x	16.93	-49	-5.7
Vanguard TrgtRtr2030Inv x	30.66	-76	-6.5
Vanguard TrgtRtr2035Inv x	18.71	-46	-7.3
Vanguard TlBMDxAdmrl	10.43	+03	-1.1
Vanguard TlBMDxIn	10.43	+03	-1.1
Vanguard TlBMDxAdmrl	21.69	+02	+3.0
Vanguard TlBMDxIn	32.54	+02	+3.0
Vanguard TlBMDxMv	10.85	+01	+3.0
Vanguard TlInSdxAdmrl	25.26	+16	-1.7
Vanguard TlInSdxIn	101.01	+6.3	-14.7
Vanguard TlInSdxInPlus	101.03	+6.3	-14.7
Vanguard TlInSdxIn	15.10	+09	-14.8
Vanguard TlSMIdxAdmrl	61.55	-02	-6.5
Vanguard TlSMIdxIn	61.57	-01	-6.5
Vanguard WlntnAdmrl	63.73	+09	-4.1
Vanguard WlslncAdmrl	58.95	+15	-2.9
Vanguard WndslHAdmrl	54.81	-04	-9.5

TREASURY YIELDS

DURATION	CLOSE	PREV.
3-month disc	2.33	2.35
6-month disc	2.41	2.42
2-year	2.52	2.54
10-year	2.73	2.74
30-year	3.04	3.03

SPOT METALS

	CLOSE	PRE
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EDITORIALS

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

Syria pullout a mistake

After all of the critical talk before and after President Donald Trump's decision to remove all U.S. forces from Syria, what could have caused this real estate developer to think that he knows more than those that do? Was it Turkey's order for a Patriot Missile Defense System, or just a decision that pleases good old Vladimir Putin?

A former NATO commander said "pulling troops out of Syria is a big mistake. Big winners are Iran, Russia and then Assad. Wrong move." Then again, how could we question the decisions of a self-proclaimed successful real estate developer who only went bankrupt six times? How could he possibly be wrong?

— Roger W. Quagliano, Fort Myers, Fla.

The Illinois exodus

The Tribune's Dec 20, editorial, "How bad does the 'Illinois Exodus' have to get?" on the state's population exodus hits the nail on the head — uncontrolled taxation, overt corruption and buying of political allies by large corporations. Let's not forget the total disregard of quality of life in Illinois, with chemical and industrial toxins as well as the O'Hare aircraft noise and air pollution issues caused by expanded runways and disruptive flight patterns.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel was smart enough to figure out that people in Chicago, and not large corporations, vote. The rest of our elected officials need to figure that out as well. Illinois' financial health is not sustainable by political contributions alone.

— Stephen Lushniak, Chicago

Putin's toxic nature

I've just been reading the history of the Chechen people. What a sad and startling story. But it has lessons for today.

The biggest lesson is that Vladimir Putin is a monster. He was elected head of the Russian government because of his violent crackdown on the Chechen "terrorists" who, Putin said, killed almost 300 Russians in a series of apartment building bombings in 1999. But there is significant evidence that the bombings were actually perpetrated by the FSB, successor to the old KGB.

So, there is evidence that Putin manufactured a crackdown on Chechnya, which made him popular enough to replace Boris Yeltsin as the head of the Russian government. Whereupon Putin proceeded to dismantle democratic reforms Yeltsin had instituted, and turned Russia into the totalitarian state it is today.

And our president wants to be friends with this man?

Putin is the most dangerous enemy America has ever had, as current events have clearly demonstrated. He wants to destroy us. He is well on his way to succeeding. And our current president is too ignorant, or naïve, or compromised to oppose it. Wake up America. The barbarian is at the gate.

— David Workman, Naperville

Illinois' financial quagmire

The Tribune has published many editorials and op-ed articles about Illinois' financial dire straits and pension issues. Guess what? It's obvious no one in political power is reading or listening (or comprehending?).

The narcissist mentality of getting elected into office at any expense has overshadowed any thought of proposed or real reform. The previous and now current tax-and-spend mentality is alive and well, while no reform is even considered. And, if it is, it is struck down by court ruling. Raise taxes here, look for "alternative sources of revenue" there. I love that term — "alternative sources of revenue," meaning already ridiculously high taxes are not enough to quell out-of-control spending.

I am a classic definition of a middle class worker, and I simply cannot afford to continue to sit around and watch these irresponsible politicians consistently squander my hard-earned money that I pay in ridiculous escalating taxes and fees year after year.

I am so tired of paying for other people's retirements when I cannot afford to save for my own while living here. At the first chance I get, it will be so long, Illinois, and I am actively looking.

— Eric Carr, Palatine

Treat the flag properly

I happened to look up recently at the flags flying at half-staff on top of the City Hall building. I was immediately angered by the fact that the flag had an enormous hole in it, and also appeared to be tattered.

This is an insult not only to the police officers killed in the line of duty, for whom the flags were flying at half-staff, but also to veterans. It is also an insult to the people of Chicago and the entire country. According to flag etiquette, a damaged flag should never be flown. If it even touches the ground, it needs to be destroyed.

If City Hall can't afford to replace this flag, someone can simply call a local VFW chapter and it would be happy to replace it. The damaged flag should be given to the same chapter for proper disposal. It should be burned in the proper manner. I don't trust City Hall — the flag would probably end up in a dumpster.

— Mark Hildebrand, Chicago



ROBERT F. BUKATY/AP

Loving the national parks to death

If America's national parks had a theme song, it might be "You Always Hurt the One You Love." These natural treasures are suffering, not from indifference or inattention, but from more visitors than ever before.

Last year the number reached nearly 331 million — 57 million more than in 2013. Yellowstone had 4 million visitors, a 40 percent increase since 2008. At Acadia in Maine, the increase has been 60 percent.

Who can blame the crowds? Writer Wallace Stegner called America's national parks "the best idea we ever had," and Ken Burns' 2009 PBS documentary series fueled interest. But huge crowds can make them hard to enjoy, or even to get into.

"Our own species is having the greatest impact on the park, and the quality of the experience is becoming a casualty," former Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk told the Bozeman Daily Chronicle. "We're exceeding the carrying capacity, and because of it, damage is being caused to park resources."

Last summer at Acadia, the National Park Service reports, the road to the Cadillac Mountain summit had to

be closed 49 times "due to gridlock congestion and public safety concerns." At Glacier in Montana, fist-fights over scarce parking spaces are not unheard of. Bison sometimes back up traffic for miles in Yellowstone.

Then there is the unavoidable problem of, um, human waste. Yellowstone workers had to pump out 250,000 gallons of the stuff last year, 19 percent more than the year before. In the Custer Gallatin National Forest, which consists of more than 3 million acres in Montana and South Dakota, 200 toilets have to be emptied frequently, at a cost so far this year of \$80,000.

No one wants to close the gates on the parks. But something needs to be done to keep the crush of humanity from ruining what all those people come to see. Now-departing Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke was onto a good idea when he proposed to raise the daily vehicle admission fee at the most popular parks from \$25 or \$30 to \$70. But public outrage forced him to settle for charging \$35.

The higher price would have reduced the number of visitors without posing a big financial obstacle to families that spend hundreds or thou-

sands of dollars on flights, hotels and meals for their national park vacations. It would have made a big contribution to reducing the ever-growing \$12 billion maintenance backlog in the park system. And it would have left most national parks free, as before.

There are other ways to keep the numbers under control. Muir Woods in California has banned parking on the road leading to the entrance, cut parking spaces by 70 percent and required motorists to buy parking spots before they arrive. The Chronicle reported that Zion, Arches and Acadia may start requiring reservations for admission.

What won't work is to keep doing things as they've been done in the past. Like any precious national resource, our necklace of national parks has to be managed to preserve its value for Americans of today and for centuries to come. Protecting the parks clearly requires hard choices and more resources.

"Too much of a good thing can be wonderful," said Mae West. But she never had to service a wilderness outhouse.

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

Numerous studies have shown that the benefits of statins far outweigh the risks, especially for people at high risk of heart disease. But they have been targeted online by a disparate group that includes paranoid zealots, people selling alternative therapies and those who just want clicks. Innumerable web pages and social media posts exaggerate rare risks and drum up unfounded claims, from asserting that statins cause cancer to suggesting that low cholesterol is actually bad for health. Even stories simply weighing the risks versus benefits of statins, a 2016 study found, were associated with patients' stopping the cholesterol-lowering drugs — which is associated with a spike in heart attacks.

False medical information can also lead to patients' experiencing greater side effects through the "nocebo effect." Sometimes patients benefit from an intervention simply because they believe they will — that's the placebo effect. The nocebo effect is the opposite: Patients can experience adverse effects solely because they anticipate them. This is very true of statins. In blinded trials, patients who get statins are no more likely to report feeling muscle aches than patients who get a placebo. Yet, in clinical practice, according to one study, almost a fifth of patients taking statins report side effects, leading many to discontinue the drugs.

Haider Warraich, The New York Times

In the long term, by far the biggest problem for the American economy is the inability of the federal government to live within its means. Fiscal 2018 was a year of abundant economic prosperity, yet the annual deficit was \$779 billion, 18.9 percent of total spending, a level not seen since the depth of the 2008-9 recession and its early aftermath. The national debt is now at World War II levels as a percent of GDP, over 100 percent, having been as low as 34 percent in 1979.

Even a country as rich as the U.S. cannot indefinitely sustain this level of overspending during peace and prosperity. Yet there is little or no interest in Washington to do anything about it because politicians — always in the re-election business — tend to think in the short term.

Congress, dominated by local interests, controls the budgeting process, as it has since the early 1970s, when serious overspending began. The president, the only person in Washington elected by the nation as a whole (along with the powerless vice president), is largely sidelined. It will take a president with rare political skills and armed with a powerful electoral mandate to change that.

American prosperity is at risk, even in the midst of this economic boom.

John Steele Gordon, Commentary

EDITORIAL CARTOON



MIKE LUCKOVICH/ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION

Julia Roberts is very picky

(And she doesn't really care what you think)

BY AMY KAUFMAN
 Los Angeles Times

"Every year," Julia Roberts says, shaking her head. "Every year it's: 'And now she's back.'"

Listen, she gets it. She doesn't act at as frequent a pace as some of her peers, like Nicole Kidman, who of late has appeared in at least three major projects a year. Roberts admires that kind of work ethic, she says, though it perplexes her "how people can juggle that much work" when she just doesn't "have that capacity."

So while it may seem like this winter signals a new era for Roberts — starring in both the acclaimed Amazon series "Homecoming" and "Ben Is Back," an indie drug-addiction drama being released at the height of awards season — this is kind of business as usual for her. Over the last decade, she's continued to work steadily, always turning up in at least one movie a year, and sometimes two. Other than 2010's "Eat, Pray, Love," though, she has largely strayed from playing the kind of charismatic romantic heroines that made her one of the biggest movie stars in the world.

The majority of her recent performances have been dramatic turns in smaller-scaled films, and many have been supporting roles. Some of that, she says, has to do with being 51.

"I think with age comes complexity and the opportunity to portray different people," she explains. "Everybody in their life is going to experience heart-break or unrequited love or chasing a boy or a girl. Everybody is going to be somebody in 'My Best Friend's Wedding' at some point in their life. I think there is less of that kind of commonality in some of the parts I play now."

That's certainly the case with her part in Sam Esma'il's "Homecoming," for which she earned a Golden Globe nomination (her ninth Globes nomination, but the first for TV). The psychological thriller, which Amazon released Nov. 2, follows a caseworker tasked with helping soldiers ease back into civilian life at a government-sponsored facility. Her performance has been lauded for its quiet subtlety, employing a totally different skill set than the one she uses for another well-reviewed turn in "Ben Is Back." In the film, Roberts plays a mother dealing with the fallout of her son's

unexpected return home from drug rehab on Christmas.

It's pouring rain outside and Roberts has just made a mad dash from the lobby of the Sunset Marquis to the West Hollywood hotel's restaurant. As she took off her dripping metallic raincoat, she fretted that the weather might cause mudslides near her home in Malibu, Calif. She and her family had only days before returned to their home following the wildfires that ravaged the beach city.

"We were spared, thankfully," she says. "But a lot of my very good friends were not, and a lot of my community was not, so it's a very strange time."

She's been spending a lot of that time on the phone with her girlfriends who lost their homes, urging them to feel comfortable sharing their feelings about the loss. "They all have great attitudes about it, but I've been saying, on the day you wake up and realize: 'Oh my God, my favorite sweater is gone,' call me. Because I'll be there for you for that conversation. There's room for all of that."

Home has always been central for Roberts, who has a reputation for being selective about work because she does not like to spend time away from her husband, cinematographer Danny Moder, and their children, 14-year-old twins Hazel and Phinnaeus and Henry, 11.

"I do like to be with my family, and I feel like my kids are young and there'll be a time when it's not as feasible for all five of us to be together as much as we are now," she says. "But it also has to do with the fact that the kind of work that I do will follow me around forever — each choice will follow me around forever. So I want to be able to really stand by each little cement stone I put down. Of all that I have been able to accomplish, I feel super proud of that. I don't go, 'Oh, that was a bad patch.' Because I do put a lot of consideration into the jobs that I take."

This is why Peter Hedges, who wrote and directed "Ben Is Back," feared it would be difficult to attract the actress's interest in his movie. He started envisioning her in the role after watching "Wonder," the 2017 drama in which she played the mother to a boy with facial differences. "But then I thought, 'Of



MICHAEL NAGLE/FOR THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

Julia Roberts stars in the Amazon series "Homecoming" and the film "Ben Is Back."

course, I'm never gonna get her for the film, because she's very selective about what she does' and I knew enough about her to know that she doesn't like to be away from her kids during the school year — so it just wasn't ever gonna happen," the filmmaker recalls over the telephone.

Nonetheless, Hedges decided to take a swing, sending Roberts his screenplay along with a letter that said something like: "I've tried to write interesting mothers all of my career, but this is my favorite mother I've ever written. I feel like you could be both ferocious in this part and fragile, and if you'd do the film, we'd have the best chance of it reaching the most people."

To his surprise, Roberts responded, and within days, he flew to California to meet the actress. Then, on Sept. 11, at 8:30 a.m. — he has the time committed to memory — she sent him

a text message telling him she was officially in.

Roberts prides herself on being particular in her decision-making.

"I'm a person who's very specific," she says. "I'm not going to say 'yes' and get talked into a 'no.' With my kids, I believe that tells them you are a person of conviction and that you have given consideration to your question. It's important that they know if they ask me a question, that my answer is my true answer, not an answer you can wear out in 20 minutes. I think it makes you feel safe."

Her avocado toast and chicken apple sausage then arrive at the table, but there's an unexpected side of potatoes on the plate.

"Um, can I get a little side plate? I just want to get rid of this situation," she immediately requests.

"I think I'm clear," she continues. "I don't think I'm stubborn. It's not that I can't change my mind if

someone says, 'But have you considered —' and they present something meaningful to me. But I am a person who is considerate. I don't just go, 'Oh, yeah!'"

Roberts does, however, seem effective at talking others into things. On "Ben Is Back," the actress felt strongly that Lucas Hedges — the director's son and an Oscar nominee for "Manchester by the Sea" — should play her drug-addicted son in the movie. But the younger Hedges had long ago determined he never wanted to make a movie with his dad. Nonetheless, Roberts began sending the filmmaker photos of herself with her ginger-headed son, whose hair resembled Lucas'.

"Look how good I am with young men with red hair! They like me!" the director says she kidded. "It was very charming, and I eventually shared that with Lucas, who was excited that she would want to

work with him."

"It was really flattering for me," Lucas admits in a separate call. "It meant a lot that she wanted me to do it, and in any way compared me to her child. It felt like a big invitation from her."

Hedges believes that it's partly Roberts' age that has allowed her to evolve in such a way, becoming less careful and more fearless.

"There are people who start to pull away and shrink with age, who curate an idea of themselves because they want the world to see them in a certain way," he says. "She hasn't done that. The kind of work she's doing now is hard to do when you're young, because you're still figuring out who you are. Phase one was leading up to 'Erin Brockovich.' Phase 2 was 'Erin Brockovich' to now. And Phase 3? We need to buckle our seat belts, because the places she's gonna go — she's got a lot left to show us."

'18 box-office surge can thank hits like 'Black Panther'

BY RYAN FAUGHNDER
 Los Angeles Times

Deepening anxiety in Hollywood that the ascendancy of Netflix would keep people from going to the movies this year appears to have been overblown.

Major hits, including Marvel Studios' "Black Panther," Universal Pictures' "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom" and 20th Century Fox's "Deadpool 2," drove ticket sales in the U.S. and Canada to a record-breaking \$11.8 billion this year, according to preliminary projections from data firm Comscore. That would represent growth of 6 percent from a year ago and beat the previous record of \$11.4 billion in ticket sales

set in 2016.

The surge is welcome news for studios and multiplexes, coming after a steep downturn in attendance in 2017 that stoked fears that buzzworthy programming on streaming and cable TV had sapped the movie industry of its cultural clout. Multiplexes have been buffeted by long-term declines in theater admissions coupled with the incursion of big-spending technology companies such as Netflix, Apple and Amazon, making it harder for movies to grab the audience's attention in an increasingly fragmented market.

But this year presented a different narrative as a better mix of movies and a string of surprise hits kept



DISNEY

Marvel Studios' "Black Panther," with Chadwick Boseman, boosted overall ticket sales in the U.S. and Canada.

cinemas humming. Studios found fresh ways to expand or revive their biggest franchises, and largely avoided pricey, ill-advised flops of years past. Rising ticket prices also helped. Attendance jumped a projected 4 percent to nearly 1.3 billion tickets sold, but did not set a record.

"There's an argument that's been built up that consumers don't want to see movies in theaters," said Barton Crockett, a media

and entertainment analyst at B. Riley FBR. "But that's not where the consumer is. The consumer wants to see movies, and when you give them movies they want to see, they come out in droves."

Crowd-pleaser strategy again paid off for Burbank-based Walt Disney Co., which released the three highest-grossing films of the year — "Black Panther," "Avengers: Infinity War," and Pixar's "Incredibles 2."

"Black Panther," the first global superhero blockbuster to feature a mostly black cast and an African American director, smashed all expectations by grossing \$700 million in the U.S. and Canada, making it the top movie of 2018.

Walt Disney Studios Chairman Alan Horn, in an interview in his Burbank office, said the results are a sign that people will still go to the theaters to see quality movies, despite competition from newer home entertainment outlets. Disney, which focuses almost entirely on "tent pole" films designed for the big screen, said it passed \$3 billion in domestic grosses for the year on Sunday, exceeding its own industry record set in 2016.

Cinephiles and critics for years have rolled their eyes at Hollywood's dependence on sequels, reboots and remakes. However, audiences this year rewarded studios for finding new ways to bring back well-known characters.

Universal Pictures' "The Grinch," produced by "Minions" computer animation studio Illumination Entertainment, grossed more than \$250 million in domestic ticket sales. "A Star Is Born" soared for Warner Bros., despite being the fourth version of the title, largely because of the critical praise lavished on Lady Gaga's performance as a rising singer.

The year is poised to finish in solid fashion, with Warner Bros.' "Aquaman" winning the pre-Christmas box office by grossing \$67 million Friday through Sunday. Disney's "Mary Poppins Returns" launched in second place, with a lower-than-expected \$22 million during the three-day weekend.

Theaters still face major challenges, such as the long-term declines in domestic attendance, which is still down significantly from its most recent peak of 1.6 billion in 2002.

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'The Masked Singer' shrouded in mystery

BY LUAINÉ LEE
Tribune News Service

It's hard to imagine a celebrity who's eager to perform anonymously. But that's exactly what's happening when Fox unveils its new show, "The Masked Singer," on Jan. 2.

Garbed in outlandish costumes that obscure their identity, famous stars compete on the stage with others equally anonymous, while a panel and the audience tries to blow their cover.

The show, which is a big hit in Asia, pits 12 "singers" against each other — two performing opposite each other in segments. One singer will be eliminated each week and will, at last, reveal their identity. The contenders aren't all singers, either. According to Nick Cannon, who hosts the show, rivals represent 65 Grammy nominations, 16 Emmy Award nominations, 16 multi-Platinum Awards, four Super Bowl titles and four stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The studio panelists include Jenny McCarthy, Robin Thicke, Ken Jeong and Nicole Scherzinger, who oversee the performances and try to guess who the secret singer is. McCarthy says the talent behind the elaborate costumes could be executing a routine they've never done before. "They could be an actress that we never knew had a singing voice," she says.

"So that's what was so fun in trying to figure out who they were, because a lot of them looked like they'd been doing this for their whole lives, and we found out this was the first time they've done it on stage."

Jeong, who starred in his own sitcom, "Dr. Ken" on



Ken Jeong, left, Nicole Scherzinger, Nick Cannon, Jenny McCarthy and Robin Thicke on "The Masked Singer."

ABC, says he wanted to participate because the Asian version is his mother's go-to show. "I'm Korean, and this is my mother's favorite show in Korea. No joke," he says. "So when Fox invited me to be a part of this show, it was as simple as that. My mom was like, 'You HAVE to do this show.' And she showed me all these YouTube clips. It's like billions of views on these YouTube clips. And I was like, 'I'm in.'"

The entire production is shrouded in super secrecy. Even the families of the participants don't know they're one of the masked singers. "No one knows who any of these people are," says Cannon. "So even when they drive onto the lot, it's, like, secret service is taking them into this cave."

Cannon, who's hosted shows like "America's Got Talent," insists, "I don't host anything unless I'm thoroughly enjoying it. So when I saw the tapes, I said, 'That looks like a good time. It looks so much fun.' I get to wear my crazy shoes and outfits and don't seem out of place," he says.

"It's not just a singing competition. It is a mystery show. It has a game element. It's extremely hilarious. It's the true essence of what variety is. And any-

thing you have ever seen me do in my career, I like to be able to implement everything I do as a multi-faceted entertainer."

The costumes are so intricately designed that there's no chance of identifying the person behind the mask until the unveiling. And each entertainer gets to pick their costume, says Izzie Pick Ibarra, the show's executive producer and one of the creators of "Dancing with the Stars."

While they are amazingly deceiving, the costumes are also difficult to manage, says Ibarra.

"Some of them had very limited vision with the mask on. And your peripheral vision basically disappears. So trying to then perform on stage with lights shining, wearing a mask and an incredibly kind of heavy costume, it took some skill to do that." Elaborate measures have been taken to protect the identity of the entrants. No one knew, says Ibarra, not even the crew.

McCarthy agrees. "I went around pressing cameramen and everyone, being so nosy, going, 'Do you know?' 'Do you know?' And no one knew. I mean, the secrecy made it that much more fun, even for us, to try to figure out"

Note to readers: Due to holiday-related deadline changes at Publishers Weekly, the best-sellers list will not appear today.



ASK AMY

By AMY DICKINSON

askamy@amydickinson.com Twitter @askingamy

Mom worries about friends' burnout

Dear Amy: My husband and I have been married for almost five years. We have two great kids. My husband has had some mental health problems, and life has been very difficult over the last year. I have a wonderful support system, with three friends in particular — all married with kids of their own. They have rallied around us during a turbulent time.

Last month, I went back to work part time. All three girlfriends have offered free child care in their home to help us out.

The kids stay primarily with one person, "Anna," most days. "Rose" and "Charlotte" pick up the slack when Anna is unavailable or if I'm able to pick up an extra shift.

All of these wonderful friends have stated how happy they are to help us. All of our kids are close in age, and they get along well and entertain each other.

My question is this: What signs should I be watching for regarding burnout? I've been on the giving end, where I helped out a single mom with child care when she could not afford anything. I ended up burning out. Is there anything I can do to prevent this from happening to my girlfriends?

I know keeping communication open is important, but I also know that people on the giving end can feel guilty because their friend is going through such a tough time. I worry they won't say anything until it's too late. Any advice?
— *Finding My Way*

Dear Finding: I appreciate your dilemma and

your insight into the shifting dynamic of providing regular "free" child care. This sort of big-hearted effort can lead to burnout.

You need to be transparent when communicating with these friends. Make sure they all understand they can be completely honest with you.

The most obvious solution would be for you to compensate "Anna" by offering to reciprocate. Can you take care of her children part of the time? If she knew that you would take care of her kids every Friday evening or Saturday morning (possibly in her home), she could go out, do errands, exercise or simply clear her head.

You should also look for free or low-cost play groups for all of these young kids. Anna and you could get a break by enrolling them in a weekly cooperative play group.

I'm a big fan of Head Start, which offers quality early learning in a safe environment. Pre-enroll your children for next year.

Dear Amy: This year at the company Christmas party we all received envelopes, which we were told to open after we left the restaurant. These envelopes generally hold our Christmas bonus, which is usually pretty substantial.

After leaving the restaurant, I opened my envelope and saw that it held half of what I usually get. Being that we weren't allowed to open our envelopes at the restaurant, I'm assuming it is supposed to be a secret of how much money every person got. But I'm still left with the question "Did I only get this amount, or did everybody?" I know it's not proper to ask. I feel like

my boss doesn't like me anymore. How should I deal with this?

— *Receptionist with a Deficit*

Dear Receptionist: The reason your boss handled this in this particular way is because of course they don't want you to talk about your bonus. But guess what? Your boss is not "the boss" of you. You get to ask questions and be as nosy as you want, outside of work. Ask around. Find out whatever you can.

Depending on what you learn, you should set up a meeting with your boss and say, "I'm concerned that my bonus was half the amount of last year's. This is awkward for me, but can you explain it?"

Dear Amy: My spouse was just like the guy described by "Nose-Plugged Wife." He almost never brushed his teeth! I did everything you suggested; I even asked his parents for help. His mother told me, "Nobody tells him what to do!"

It became an ongoing battle, and I realized that this was just one example of his being controlling, stubborn and childish. Then it crystallized: I looked at the entire marriage. I could see other areas where this attitude came through. I divorced him.

Now I am with a cleaner, caring and all-around great guy. I have never been happier.
— *Liberated*

Dear Liberated: Hooray!

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Adam Savage eager to meet challenge of 'MythBusters Jr.'

BY RICK BENTLEY
Tribune News Service

It all came down to the name.

Special effects designer, educator and TV personality Adam Savage — who for 15 seasons starred with Jamie Hyneman on the cable series "MythBusters" — had stayed away from all of the talk about rebooting the reality series because he was enjoying his time off. He only became intrigued when he was pitched the idea of doing "MythBusters Jr."

He liked the idea of dealing with "juniors."

"I just turned 51 and my kids left the house. I have an empty nest and all of that is part of realizing that it's

time for me to start passing on everything to the next generation. Everything I know needs to move out into the world," Savage says. "It's not a show about teaching these guys how to do stuff. It's not a kids show. These are the new 'MythBusters' and I'm their camp counselor and their adviser and sometimes their test subject."

"But the moment I heard that phrase, 'MythBusters Jr.,' I saw all that. I realized how much potential there is in it. I've always thought of 'MythBusters' as an aspirational show, specifically aspirational as in the terms of, 'Wow, I wish I could be there doing that, what those folks are doing,' and that's the show that we're making.



STHANLEE B. MIRADOR/SIPA

Adam Savage plays down the generational difference of the new "MythBusters," whose participants are under 16.

You're going to watch them blowing up stuff just as big as we did."

The potential of sharing his knowledge while working with brilliant young minds was enough of a lure that Savage returns to television as host and executive producer of "MythBusters Jr." For the 10-episode series, Savage has teamed-

builder and robotics whiz; Elijah Horland, 12, a self-taught electronics maker and programmer; Cannon Huey-You, 12, a college sophomore studying astrophysics at Texas Christian University; Jesse Lawless, 15, a builder of custom hot rods; Rachel Pizzolato, 14, a three-time New Orleans Science Fair champion; and Allie Weber, 13, a maker, builder and inventor.

All of the junior MythBusters have in common a passion for science that started early in their life.

"When I was first born, my dad had this car shop, and he used to always build custom cars," Lawless says. "I learned a lot of skills from him and I started building a lot of stuff and I started learning welding and different things. I actually made a little mini-chopper."

Pizzolato's interest in science began when she was 4. That's when she started building houses and making jewelry. She adds that all of the MythBusters

started by taking things apart and building something new out of the parts.

Despite the new faces, the series will not stray far from the original "MythBusters." What will be different is that the new series will be informed by the curiosity and the intelligence of the youngsters. Savage plays down the generational difference between the shows; just as in his years with Hyneman, he sees the young MythBusters as his colleagues. The biggest change is that the myths being tested have to be completed in a week, and that puts limits on how big they can go.

"We're filming this on a set that is a working shop," Savage says. "It's a full wood shop, metal shop, with all the same tools that Jamie and I had access to. We also, in addition to that, have a full maker space with CNC routers, plasma cutters, laser cutters, 3D printers, and these guys are using every bit of it."

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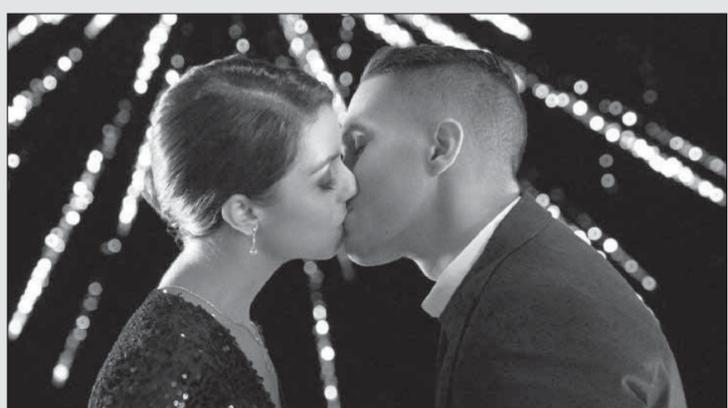
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WATCH THIS: SATURDAY



Adelaide Kane and Carlos PenaVega

"A Midnight Kiss" (7 p.m., Hallmark): Mia Pearson (Adelaide Kane) and her brother, Jake (Jason Cermak), run a party planning business together, and a heavy-hitting "webpreneur" just hired them for their biggest gig yet. Unfortunately, at the worst possible time, Jake is sidelined by an accident, so he tags in David Campos (Carlos PenaVega), an old college pal, to help Mia coordinate the bash.

"Goodyear Cotton Bowl Classic" (3 p.m., 2:30 a.m., ESPN): The No. 2 Clemson Tigers and running back Travis Etienne take on No. 3 Notre Dame, as college football's final four begins with the Cotton Bowl Classic in Arlington, Texas. This the first of two semifinal games today in the College Football Playoff. The second game features the top-ranked Alabama Crimson Tide against the No. 4 Oklahoma Sooners in the Orange Bowl in Miami.

"Mickey's 90th Spectacular" (7 p.m., ABC): Who's the leader of the club that's made for you and me? Generations of Walt Disney fans know the answer, and how to spell it. Disney spared no expense to celebrate the 90th birthday of the company's first animated superstar: Mickey Mouse, who made his big-screen debut in the 1928 short "Steamboat Willie." Among the celebrities joining this lavish two-hour special are Kristen Bell, Josh Groban, Meghan Trainor and Sofia Carson.

"Life of the Party" (7 p.m., 2:35 a.m., HBO): Much against the wishes of her daughter, Maddie (Molly Gordon), recently divorced mom Deanna Miles (Melissa McCarthy) goes back to college to finish work on her degree at the same Atlanta university Maddie is attending in this good-natured comedy, which McCarthy also co-wrote with her husband and director, Ben Falcone. The strong ensemble also includes Gillian Jacobs, Maya Rudolph, Julie Bowen and Stephen Root.

"Alice Through the Looking Glass" (9:15 p.m., TNT): This 2016 sequel to the 2010 hit "Alice in Wonderland" was dedicated to the memory of Alan Rickman, a member of this film's voice cast who died four months before it was released. Linda Woolverton's somewhat convoluted script finds Alice (Mia Wasikowska) stumbling upon a magic mirror that provides her an entrance back into Wonderland, where things are no more sane than when she left it.

"Patient Zero" (9:55 p.m., 5:08 a.m., Starz): "Doctor Who" and "The Crown" star Matt Smith tackles a dramatically different change of pace in this 2018 action horror movie set in an apocalyptic future in which a zombie virus is decimating mankind. Smith's character, Morgan, somehow survives his infected bite, which moreover leaves him with an ability to communicate with the undead creatures around him. With other survivors, Morgan embarks on a search for a cure.

Hey, TV lovers: Looking for detailed show listings? TV Weekly is an ideal companion. To subscribe, go to www.tvweekly.com or call 1-877-580-4159

SATURDAY EVENING, DEC. 29

		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	
BROADCAST	CBS	2	God Friended Me: "Pilot." ©	48 Hours (N) ©		48 Hours (N) ©		News (N) ▶	
	NBC	5	Dateline NBC ©			Saturday Night Live (N) ©		NBC 5 News at 10pm (N)	
	ABC	7	Mickey's 90th Spectacular ©			The Alec Baldwin Show (N) ©		Eyewitness News (N) ▶	
	WGN	9	Witness (R,'85) *** Harrison Ford. Hunted detective moves in with Amish widow and her son. ©			WGN Weekend News at Nine (N) (Live) ©		Man of the People (N)	
	Antenna	9.2	Morning McHale	Knows Best	Jack Benny	Burns/Allen	Jeannie	Bewitched	
	This TV	9.3	The Saint ©	The Saint ©		The Saint ©		The Saint ▶	
	PBS	11	Doc Martin -- Seven Grumpy Seasons (N) ©	Father Brown: "The Dance of Death." (N) ©			Maigret: "Night at the Crossroads." ©		
	The U	26.1	King of Hill	King of Hill	Family Guy	Family Guy	Amer. Dad	Amer. Dad	
	MeTV	26.3	Mysterious Island of Beautiful Women (NR,'79) *				Lost in Space ©	B. Rogers ▶	
	H&I	26.4	Hunter: "Bogota's Million."	Hunter: "Death Signs."			Hunter: "Boomerang."	Hill Street ▶	
	Bounce	26.5	*(5) The Five Heartbeats	Kingdom Come (PG,'01) **	LL Cool J.			Cleaner ▶	
	FOX	32	9-1-1: "Haunted." ©	The Resident: "The Germ." ©			Fox 32 News	Bears Unleashed	
	Ion	38	Law & Order: SVU	Law & Order: SVU			Law & Order: SVU	Law-SVU ▶	
	Telem	44	Walking With Dinosaurs	The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (*12) ** ©				Noticiero	
	CW	50	AHL Hockey: Rockford IceHogs at Chicago Wolves. (N) (Live)					Dateline ▶	
	UniMas	60	Machine Gun Preacher **	Ticker (R,'01) * Tom Sizemore, Dennis Hopper.				Robin ▶	
	WJYS	62	Paid Prog.	Moses	Bishop	Paid Prog.	Paid Prog.	Paid Prog.	Paid Prog.
	Univ	66	Premio Lo nuestro 2018						Noticias ▶
CABLE	AE		Live PD: Rewind (N) ©	Live PD: "Live PD -- 11.11.17." © *					
	AMC		*(6:30) Road House (R,'89) ** Patrick Swayze. ©			The Walking Dead ©		Walk:Dead ▶	
	ANIM		Pit Bulls and Parolees	Pit Bulls and Parolees		Pit Bulls and Parolees		Pit Bulls ▶	
	BBCA		Doctor Who ©	(8:05) Doctor Who ©		(9:10) Doctor Who ©		Dr. Who ▶	
	BET		(7:05) Obsessed (PG-13,'09) * Idris Elba, Beyoncé Knowles.				(9:25) Training Day (R) ▶		
	BIGTEN		College Hockey: Ferris State at Minnesota. (N) (Live) ©			The BIG		The BIG	
	BRAVO		*(8:14) A Madea Christmas (PG-13,'13) * Tyler Perry. ©						
	CLTV		News at 7	News (N)	News at 8	News (N)	Chic.Best	Weekend	
	CNBC		Undercover Boss ©	Undercover Boss ©			Undercover Boss ©	Under. B. ▶	
	CNN		CNN Newsroom (N) ©	The Nineties: "The One About TV." ©				Nineties ▶	
	COM		South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park ▶	
	DISC		Moonshiners	Border Live ©				Moonshine ▶	
	DISN		Raven	Raven	Raven	Raven	Coop	Coop	
	E!		Sex-City	Sex-City	Sex-City	Sex-City	Sex-City	Sex-City	
	ESPN		Capital One Orange Bowl: Oklahoma vs Alabama. (N) (Live) ▶						
	ESPN2		Capital One Orange Bowl (N) (Live) © *						
	FNC		Watters' World (N) ©	Justice With Jeanine (N)			Greg Gutfeld (N)		Watters ▶
	FOOD		Kids Baking	Kids Baking			Kids Baking		Baking ▶
	FREE		*(Beauty and the Beast (G) (8:15) Tangled (PG,'10) *** Voices of Mandy Moore. © (SAP)						
	FX		21 Jump Street (R,'12) *** Jonah Hill, Channing Tatum. ©				22 Jump Street ('14) *** ▶		
	HALL		A Midnight Kiss (NR,'18) Adelaide Kane. ©				Winterfest	Shoe Addict's ▶	
	HGTV		Love It or List It ©	Love It or List It ©			Log Cabin	Log Cabin	
	HIST		American Pickers	(8:02) American Pickers			(9:05) American Pickers	Pickers ▶	
	HLN		Forensic	Forensic	Forensic	Forensic	Forensic	Forensic	
	IFC		I, Robot (PG-13,'04) ** Will Smith, Bridget Moynahan. ©				Day-Tomorrow ▶		
	LIFE		Killer Vacation (NR,'18) Alexa Havins. ©				(9:03) Seduced by My Neighbor (R) ▶		
	MSNBC		All In With Chris Hayes	Rachel Maddow Show			The Last Word		
	MTV		Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	
	NBCSCH		Football	Pregame (N) NHL Hockey: Chicago Blackhawks at Colorado Avalanche. (N) (Live)					
	NICK		Henry	Henry	SpongeBob	SpongeBob	Friends ©	Friends ©	
	OVATION		*(6) The Game (R,'97) *** Michael Douglas. ©				The Da Vinci Code (PG-13,'06) *** ▶		
	OWN		Ready to Love ©	Ready to Love ©			Ready to Love (N)	Ready ▶	
OXY		Snapped: "Notorious: Aileen Wuornos." ©				Snapped: "Notorious: Ted Bundy." © ▶			
PARMT		*(5:32) Dumb & Dumber	The Waterboy (PG-13,'98) * Adam Sandler. ©				Wedding ▶		
SYFY		*(6:55) 2 Fast 2 Furious (PG-13,'03) ** Paul Walker.				Fast and Furious-Drift ▶			
TBS		Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Full Frontal		
TCM		The Young in Heart (NR,'38) *** Janet Gaynor. ©				Keeper of the Flame (NR,'42) *** ▶			
TLC		Say Yes to the Dress ©	Say Yes to the Dress ©			Say Yes to the Dress ©	Say Yes ▶		
TLN		Exalted	Pacific Garden Mission	In Grace		Humanitarian	Pure Pas		
TNT		The Jungle Book (PG,'16) *** Neel Sethi. ©				Alice Through the Looking Glass *** ▶			
TOON		Gumball	Gumball	Boruto	Boruto	Boruto	Boruto		
TRAV		Ghost Adventures ©	Ghost Adventures (N) ©			Ghost Adventures ©	Ghost ▶		
TVL		Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men		
USA		NCIS ©	(7:54) NCIS: "Fallout." ©			(8:55) NCIS ©	Mod Fam		
VH1		The Goonies (PG,'85) *** Sean Astin, Josh Rrolin. ©				Beetlejuice ('88) *** © ▶			
WE		Criminal Minds ©	Criminal Minds ©			Criminal Minds: "Lo-Fi." ©	Criminal ▶		
WGN America		Blue Bloods ©	Blue Bloods ©			Blue Bloods ©	Blue Blood ▶		
PREMIUM	HBO		Life of the Party (PG-13,'18) **	High Main.		High Main.	(9:45) The Hangover ▶		
	HBO2		(7:06) Game of Thrones	(8:15) Traffik (R,'18) * Paula Patton. ©			Rampage ▶		
	MAX		Die Hard 2 (R,'90) *** Bruce Willis. ©			(9:05) John Wick: Chapter 2 (R) *** ▶			
	SHO		When Harry Met Sally... (R,'89) ****	(8:35) A Bad Moms Christmas (R,'17) ** ©					
	STARZ		(7:04) American Gods	(7:57) American Gods			(8:50) American Gods	Patient ▶	
STZNC		*(6:43) The Producers (PG-13,'05) ** Nathan Lane.				Black Sails: "XII." ©	Fantastic ▶		

CHEWING

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G-Suggested for GENERAL audiences
 PG-Parental Guidance Suggested some material may not be suitable for children
 PG-13 Parents Strongly Cautioned Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13
 R-Restricted Persons under 17 not admitted unless accompanied by parent or adult guardian
 NC-17 No children under 17 admitted

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Horoscopes



Today's birthday (Dec. 29): Friendship and teamwork flourish this year. Play your piece with heart and focus. Discover spontaneous romance. Step into new leadership this winter, before resolving changes with shared money. Romance and partnership grows next summer, inspiring valuable self-reflection.

Aries (March 21-April 19): Today is an 8. Discover a structural problem with a collaboration. Keep your agreements with your partner. Show up on time. Handle immediate urgencies, and postpone the rest.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): 7. A formidable barrier blocks the path with your physical efforts. Slow the action to avoid accidents. You can see what wasn't working.

Gemini (May 21-June 20): 7. Chaos could disrupt your romantic plans. Confusion reigns. Collaborate with someone who sees your blind spot. Take care of practical priorities together.

Cancer (June 21-July 22): 5. Discover a domestic mess. Stay cool despite distractions, chaos or misunderstandings. Clean, clear clutter and make repairs. Act quickly to avoid greater expense.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): 6. You may learn more than you wanted to know. Work could interfere with play. Keep or change your agreements to adapt. Gather information.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): 7. Things may not go as planned financially. Don't rush into anything. Review budgets before committing. Navigate a confusing situation.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): 7. You can't do everything by yourself. Proceed with caution or risk breakage. Go for clarity. Avoid harsh words. Old assumptions get challenged. Use your good sense.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): 5. Find a quiet place to avoid overstimulation. Hide out, if necessary. Inhibit your natural generosity. Don't believe everything you hear.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): 7. Adapt to changes with a group project. Listen to opinions outside your own bubble. Get expert feedback. Support your team.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): 6. A professional project faces structural breakdowns. Postpone less urgent tasks. Make no assumptions. Don't lose precious time on false hope. Keep your temper. Show leadership.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): 6. Follow the path before you. Take it slowly to avoid misunderstandings or getting lost. Don't get burned on a scam or gimmick. Costs can vary widely.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): 5. Resist the temptation to overspend. Contribute for shared benefit. Get advice from a trusted elder. You're in the eye of a storm.

— Nancy Black, Tribune Content Agency

The Argyle Sweater By Scott Hilburn



Bliss By Harry Bliss



Bridge

Both vulnerable, South deals

North
 ♠ 10 9 3
 ♥ 10 9 5
 ♦ K 9 5 3
 ♣ A Q 10

West
 ♠ AK 8 5
 ♥ J 8
 ♦ A Q J 4
 ♣ K 7 6

East
 ♠ Q 4 2
 ♥ Q 3
 ♦ 10 8 6 2
 ♣ 8 4 3 2

South
 ♠ J 7 6
 ♥ AK 7 6 4 2
 ♦ 7
 ♣ J 9 5

What would you bid with the East hand after partner doubled for a second time? Some credited East with great imagination when he chose to pass at a Scandinavian tournament some years ago. In truth, he was desperate, and at bridge, desperation is often the mother of imagination.

East couldn't imagine getting a plus score if he bid something, so he passed and prayed that something good would happen.

Something good did happen, as West, the true hero of this deal showed great imagination and great judgment in the defense. East played an encouraging spade on partner's ace at trick one. West judged that partner wasn't trying to show a doubleton spade, so he under led his king of spades to East's queen at trick two. East returned a spade to the king and West had another chance to shine.

West reasoned that East would likely have bid a five-card suit, if he had one, so he cashed his ace of diamonds before continuing with a fourth spade. He knew this was giving South a ruff-sluff, but it was the key play to defeat the contract. East ruffed with his queen of hearts and West's jack of trumps was now the setting trick. It helps to have a skillful partner when you make a decision out of desperation. East was grateful to have one.

— Bob Jones
 tcaeditors@tribpub.com

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Dilbert By Scott Adams



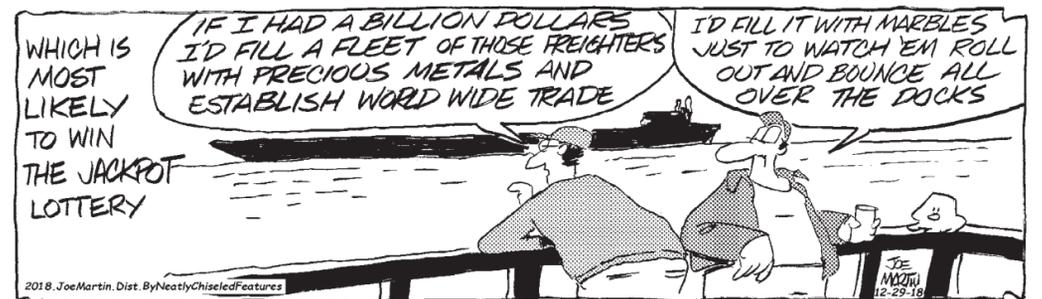
Baby Blues By Rick Kirkman and Jerry Scott



Zits By Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman



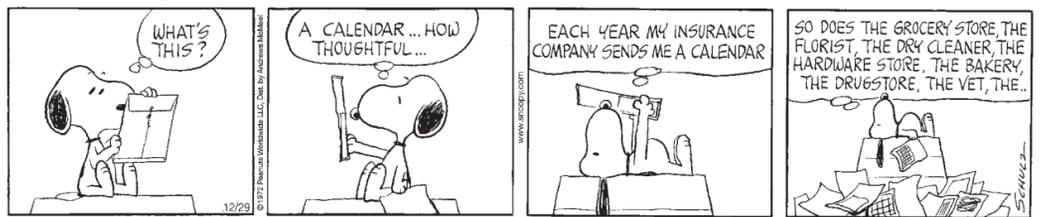
Mr. Boffo By Joe Martin



Frazz By Jef Mallett



Classic Peanuts By Charles Schulz



Pickles By Brian Crane



Dick Tracy By Joe Staton and Mike Curtis



Animal Crackers By Mike Osburn



Prickly City By Scott Stantis

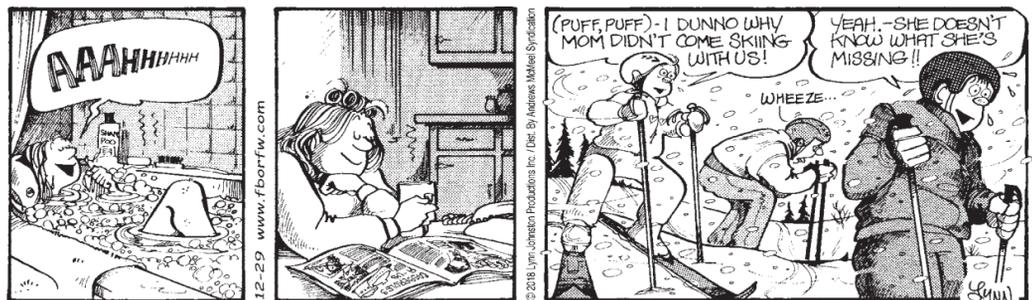


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Dustin By Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



For Better or for Worse By Lynn Johnston



Blondie By Dean Young and John Marshall



Hägar the Horrible By Chris Browne



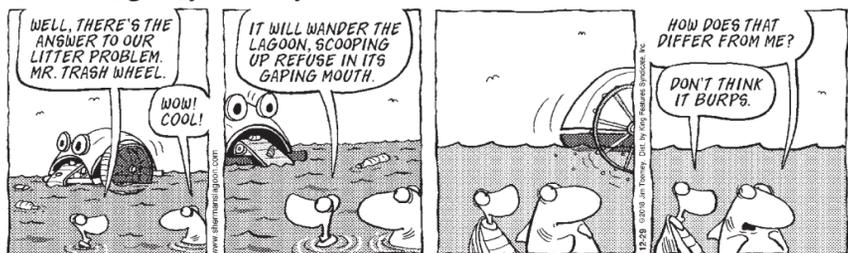
Mutts By Patrick McDonnell



WuMo By Mikael Wulff and Anders Morgenthaler



Sherman's Lagoon By Jim Toomey



Brewster Rockit: Space Guy! By Tim Rickard



Broom-Hilda By Russell Myers



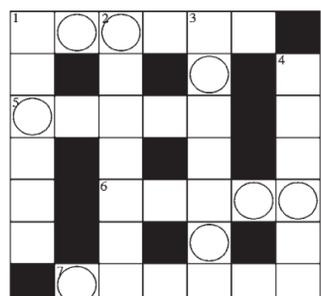
Trivia Bits

In which English city would you find the Ashmolean Museum?

- A) Cambridge
- B) London
- C) Manchester
- D) Oxford

Friday's answer: Eudryptes chrysolophus is commonly known as the macaroni penguin.

Jumble Crossword



- ACROSS**
- CLUE ANSWER
1. Overpowered, destroyed TERUDO
 5. East STACO
 6. Sharp CUEAT
 7. ___ unit ANLRTE
- DOWN**
- CLUE ANSWER
1. Bottle KCTORE
 2. Oblivious AWRENUA
 3. Confide, authorize UTTSNRE
 4. Make known VLAREE

12-29-18

DOUBLE BONUS

The circled letters can be unscrambled to form two different BONUS answers.

CLUE: Read between the lines

CLUE: Kitchen

I would love to hear from you... You can e-mail me at: DLHoyt@aol.com

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Sudoku 1 2 3 4

12/29

		2	3					
1			8		9			6
2		8		9		4		
	9	7					8	
3								2
	1					3	5	
		9		5		8		4
8		4		3				5
			9					

8	4	9	2	1	7	3	5	6
7	1	6	9	5	3	4	8	2
5	2	3	8	6	4	7	9	1
2	9	7	6	4	1	5	3	8
1	3	8	5	7	9	6	2	4
6	5	4	3	8	2	1	7	9
3	8	1	7	2	6	9	4	5
4	7	5	1	9	8	2	6	3
9	6	2	4	3	5	8	1	7

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box in bold borders contains every digit 1 to 9.

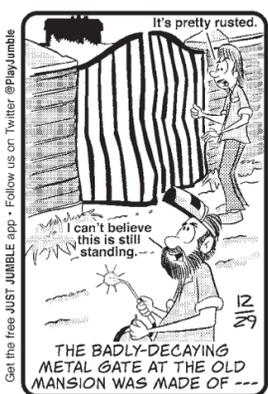
Friday's solutions

By The Mephem Group © 2018. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC. All rights reserved.

Jumble

Unscramble the four Jumbles, one letter per square, to form four words. Then arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by this cartoon.

- LECRI
- VERNA
- TTETAS
- LODDEO



Answer here



Friday's answers

Jumbles: VIXEN DIMLY FERVOR GYRATE
Answer: When they installed windmills on the farm, they created an — ENERGY FIELD

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek. © 2018 Tribune Content Agency, LLC. All rights reserved.

Crossword

12/29

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20					21						22			
23					24					25				
27														
32														
36	37	38	39								40	41	42	43
44														
47														
50														
56														
59														
62														

- Across**
- 1 Actor Omar with three NAACP Image Awards
 - 5 007's watch, in the later films
 - 10 Sent to, too
 - 14 Independent African country since 1960
 - 15 Santa-tracking acronym
 - 16 Jennifer of "Pride and Prejudice" (1995)
 - 17 Line erasers?
 - 20 It carries a charge
 - 21 Stable attendant
 - 22 Half an ouchie?
 - 23 Despicable
 - 25 Genre with ad images
 - 27 Stores with a blue-and-yellow logo
 - 28 NYC subway line
 - 31 "The Divine Comedy" division
 - 32 Necklines?
 - 35 Tablet since 2013
- Down**
- 36 Title line after "Gray skies are gonna clear up"
 - 44 Actress Aimée
 - 45 Sites with masked workers, briefly
 - 46 Timeworn
 - 47 Delivered a screed
 - 49 "Man is condemned to be free" philosopher
 - 50 Thou follower, often
 - 51 Butler's classic line
 - 55 Its first letter often means "more than one"
 - 56 Echoic phrase from a WWI marching song
 - 59 Smallville name
 - 60 Gay opening?
 - 61 Chrysler Building architect William Van
 - 62 Pointed at, perhaps
 - 63 "That's unfortunate"
 - 64 Ford contemporary

Friday's solution

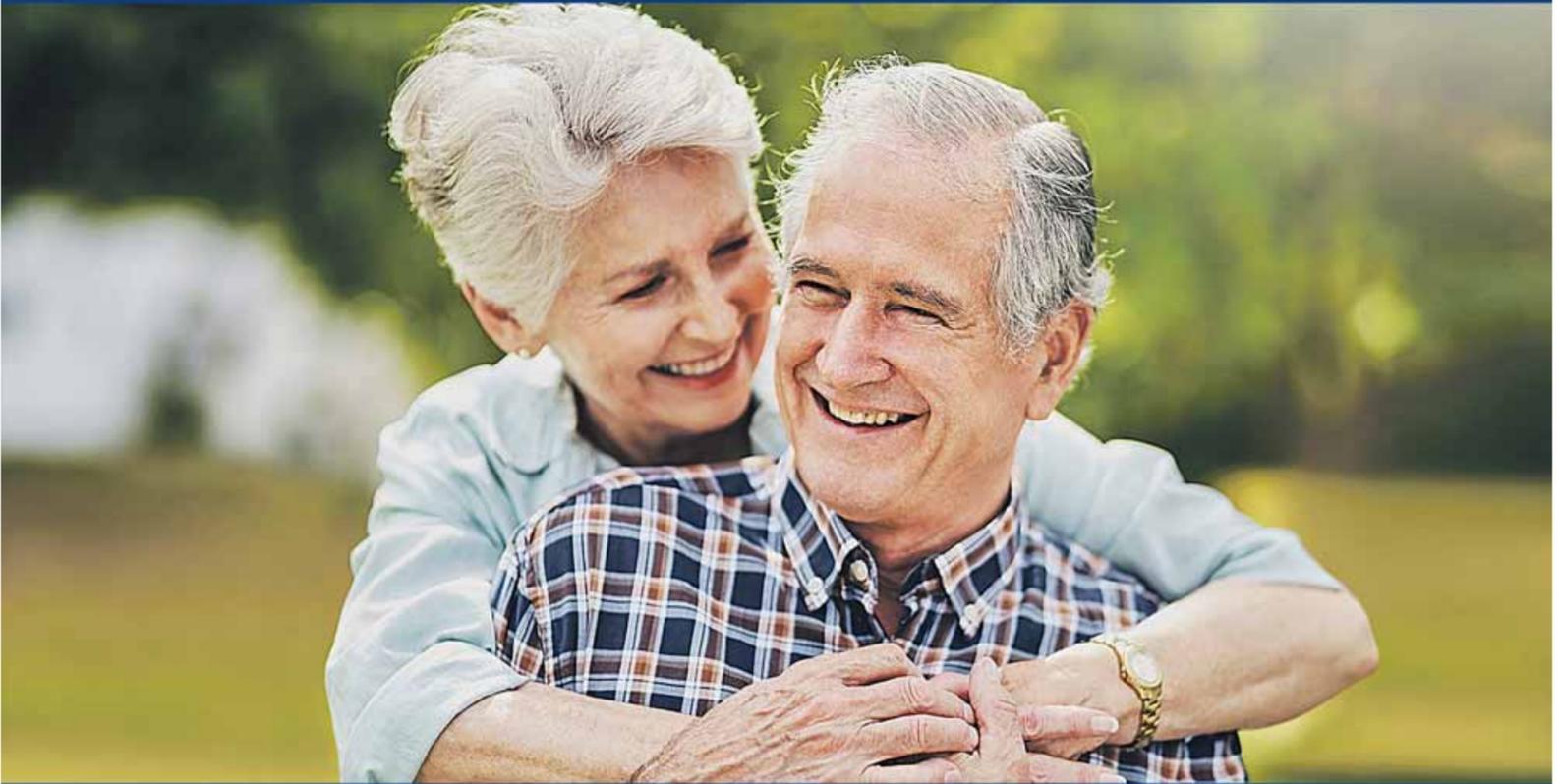
C	U	L	P	A	B	O	F	F	S	G	P								
U	H	A	U	L	R	A	R	E	P	O	D	A							
B	U	L	L	M	A	R	K	E	T	A	D	D	S						
S	H	A	L	O	M	F	R	A	W	L	N	E	T						
A	S	P	I	R	E														
S	L	E	E	P															
N	O	T	A	H	O	P	E	L	T	S	U	L							
A	C	T	R	E	S	S													
P	I	E	T	A	S														
V	A	U	L	T															
H	E	S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

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— Class Schedule —

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9:30 AM | Wendy Schiller / Brown University
10:35 AM | Undergraduate Teaching Award



POLITICS

Part II - Looking Forward: The Changing Face of Politics

10:50 AM | Sam Potolicchio / Georgetown University
11:55 AM | "America's Best Professors," Princeton Review



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12:10 PM | Orin Grossman / Fairfield University
1:15 PM | Distinguished Teacher Award



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Chicago Tribune CHICAGO SPORTS

Chicago's best sports section, as judged by the Associated Press Sports Editors

BEARS

Long's return real possibility

Veteran guard could be ready to play in Bears' regular-season finale

By COLLEEN KANE
Chicago Tribune

Bears guard Kyle Long can block out all of the media and fan noise as the Bears gear up to play the Vikings on Sunday in Minneapolis with an eye on moving up to the NFC's No. 2 playoff seed.

But there's one inquiring person he can't ignore: Eagles defensive end Chris Long, whose play-



GAME 16
Bears at Vikings
3:25 p.m. Sun., FOX-32
■ Refer to Sunday storylines goes hereyy hereyy. **Page 3**

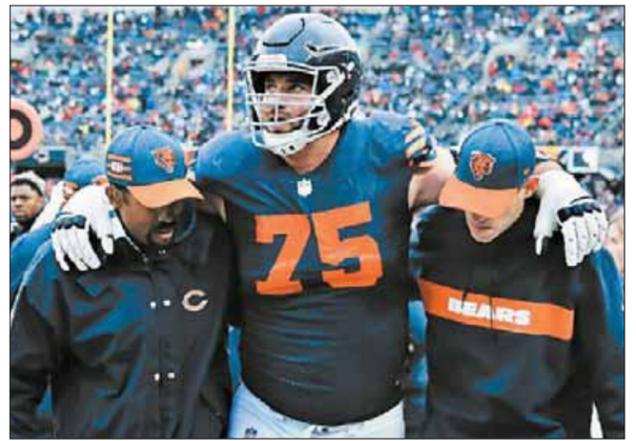
off future depends on a Bears victory Sunday. If the Bears win, the Eagles could secure a playoff berth by beating the Redskins.

"You've still got to call your brother," Long said. "And he's like, 'What are you guys doing this week? What's the game plan? Yada, yada, yada.' We're focused on us right now, and obviously

best of luck to them against the 'Skins, and we'll see what happens after this week."

Bears coach Matt Nagy and defensive coordinator Vic Fangio, both of whom are from Pennsylvania, said they've also received messages from friends who are Eagles fans, but neither has told pals much. They're more worried about trying to secure a victory in the regular-season finale, just in case the 49ers upset the Rams to open a path to a first-round playoff bye.

Turn to **Bears**, Page 4



CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Bears guard Kyle Long hasn't played since suffering right foot and ankle injuries during a Week 8 victory against the Jets on Oct. 28.



Do it by the book

Despite being double-digit underdogs, Notre Dame certainly has the ability to knock off Clemson

DALLAS — There was a telling moment Friday in the coaches' news conference when a reporter asked Notre Dame's Brian Kelly and Clemson's Dabo Swinney: What do you admire most about the guy sitting next to you?

Kelly went first, praising Swinney for his motivational skills, consistency and understanding of "the smallest of details."

Swinney went for chuckles, saying: "For me it's his golf swing. He has the sweetest golf swing."

Swinney went on to laud Kelly for his longevity and for tutoring players who are "disciplined, accountable ... smart and intelligent."

But the golf line is what people will remember.

Will Kelly remember it?

Perhaps. But it's safe to assume Kelly would rather be likened to Lou Holtz, not Ben Hogan, as he polishes off a plan to upset the Tigers on Saturday in the first College Football Playoff semifinal.

Here are five ways Notre Dame can get it done:



TEDDY GREENSTEIN
On college football

1 Play up the "Rocky" theme:

Notre Dame, as you've heard from every actual and wannabe alumnus in your office, is 12-0. The Irish beat Michigan without Ian Book or Dexter Williams. They smashed then-No. 7 Stanford by three touchdowns. They pounded Syracuse in a game many pundits dubbed an upset special. This is a really good team with a defense that ranks seventh nationally in yards-per-play allowed (4.5).

And yet the Irish are double-digit underdogs to Clemson.

The Tigers do look awesome, but they haven't beaten a top-15 team.

"If I was in that Notre Dame locker room I would feel completely disrespected," said Jesse Palmer, the ABC/ESPN analyst who played quarterback at Florida. "Notre Dame is 12-0, ranked third in the country with offensive playmakers, no obvious weaknesses and the national coach of the year in Brian Kelly. The 13 points (now 12½) to me is just crazy. I absolutely believe Notre Dame can win this game."

Turn to **Greenstein**, Page 2



JIM YOUNG/AP (BOOK) LM OTERO/AP (COACHES)

Notre Dame quarterback Ian Book, top, will be looking to release the ball quickly against Clemson's vaunted defense in a battle between respected coaches Brian Kelly, left, of Notre Dame and Clemson's Dabo Swinney.

COTTON BOWL

Arlington, Texas
#2 Clemson (13-0) vs. #3 Notre Dame (12-0)
3 p.m. Saturday, ESPN

ORANGE BOWL

Miami Gardens, Fla.
#1 Alabama (13-0) vs. #4 Oklahoma (12-1)
7 p.m. Saturday, ESPN
■ Alabama faces Oklahoma in a battle of the nation's two highest-scoring offenses. **Page 2**



NICK WASS/AP

Lauri Markkanen, who had 14 points and 14 rebounds, faces pressure from the Wizards' defense during the first half on Friday night.

BULLS 101, WIZARDS 92

Bulls' young core taking baby steps

LaVine, Markkanen, Dunn thrive in 2nd half of 1st start together

By K.C. JOHNSON
Chicago Tribune

WASHINGTON — It's a work in progress.

That's what the Bulls say about their rebuild. And that's what they say about the chemistry needed among Zach LaVine, Kris Dunn and Lauri Markkanen, the acquisitions from the rebuild and Jimmy Butler trade.

Consider their 101-92 victory over the Wizards on Friday night

UP NEXT
Bulls at Raptors
5 p.m. Sunday, NBCSCH

symbolic then.

In their first start together this season because of various injuries, the trio — and the Bulls — endured a dreadful first half in which LaVine took just three shots and the Bulls scored only 40 points from an offense that looked stuck in mud.

By night's end, Markkanen posted his third double-double of the season, Dunn flirted with his first and LaVine scored 24 points in his 30-minute restriction in his

second game back from a left ankle injury. More important, the Bulls played with more pace, cut with purpose and shared the ball crisply.

"We're trying to figure out our spots and when to attack and be aggressive," LaVine said. "There's one ball out there. We're all very talented scorers. You're going to have to sacrifice things here and there. But we're learning how to win."

Add Wendell Carter Jr.'s first double-double since Dec. 4 and it was a night of progress for a team not in position to judge victories.

Turn to **Bulls**, Page 6

COLLEGE FOOTBALL



BRYNN ANDERSON/AP

Heisman Trophy winner Kyler Murray leads No. 4 Oklahoma into its Orange Bowl matchup against No. 1 Alabama on Saturday in a College Football Playoff semifinal.

ORANGE BOWL ALABAMA VS. OKLAHOMA

Offensive firepower on display

Nation's two-highest scoring offenses set to square off led by Murray, Tagovailoa

BY TIM REYNOLDS

Associated Press

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. — Nick Saban knows Alabama cannot win every game.

The Crimson Tide merely come close.

This is the fifth year of the College Football Playoff and the fifth Alabama appearance in the four-team tournament to decide the national champion. The latest quest for another title, which would be the school's third in four years, resumes Saturday when the top-ranked Crimson Tide (13-0) take on fourth-ranked Oklahoma (12-1) in a semifinal at the Orange Bowl.

"It's a good problem to have," said Oklahoma quarterback Kyler Murray, the Heisman Trophy winner. "They win a lot. We win a lot. I've heard a lot of people say 'Beat Alabama' just because they don't like Alabama or whatever. But I'm not really too much into that."

The game is a matchup between the two highest-scoring offenses in the country, with Oklahoma slightly outpacing Alabama. It's also a matchup of arguably the two best players in the country — Murray and Alabama quarterback Tua Tagovailoa were first and second in the Heisman

voting.

At stake is a berth in the CFP title game Jan. 7 against either Clemson or Notre Dame. And Alabama has four players who will be appearing in their seventh CFP game — which is absurd, especially considering there have been only 12 games in the event since it was put into place in 2014.

"We know we can't be perfect," Saban said. "But we're certainly trying to work every day to close the gap on how good can we be, and are we reaching our full potential in how we improve and work every day?"

The edge for the Crimson Tide — on paper, anyway — is on defense. Alabama comes into this game ranked fourth nationally in points allowed per game while Oklahoma is 96th.

"We've prepared well," said Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley, the 35-year-old offensive mastermind. "Confident in the way our team has approached this entire month. We've had a great week here so far. Can't wait for Saturday night."

For a couple of storied programs, Alabama and Oklahoma haven't faced off very often. The Sooners lead the all-time series 3-1-1, and three of those matchups have been in bowl games — starting with the Orange Bowl on Jan. 1, 1963, a 17-0 Alabama victory.

Irish certainly have ability to beat Clemson

Greenstein, from Page 1

2 Protect Book: Clemson leads the nation in pressure rate, harassing quarterbacks on 45 percent of their dropbacks. The Tigers are third in sacks per game at 3.54 to Northern Illinois and Penn State.

Book is elusive, though. After he shredded Syracuse, Orange coach Dino Babers called him "really slippery, like an eel."

Kelly was upfront about his team's plan to keep Book upright: "The ball is coming out quick, folks. These are not going to be five- and seven-step drops."

Clemson defensive coordinator Brent Venables loves to dial up blitzes, with Palmer saying: "He sends linebackers, he sends safeties, he sends everybody."

Notre Dame will try to counter by changing Book's "launch point," as Kelly called it — moving Book around and outside the pocket.

3 Rattle Trevor Lawrence: He was the No. 1 recruit in his class and he's likely a future No. 1 pick in the NFL draft.

But Clemson's freshman quarterback is still young and relatively inexperienced.

Notre Dame has to get to him, like Penn State did to Ohio State's Dwayne Haskins. (The result that night was a 56.4 percent completion rate.)

Julian Okwara led the nation with 35 quarterback pressures on third and fourth downs, according to Pro Football Focus. And tackle Jerry Tillery's 44 quarterback pressures rank third nationally at his position.

"I know Trevor Lawrence hasn't looked like a true freshman," Palmer said.

"The moment has never seemed too big for him. But this is the best defense he has faced."

4 Use the South Carolina blueprint: Clemson had to work for its 12th win, a 56-35 thumping of South Carolina.

The Gamecocks gained 600 yards — 510 through the air. Clemson's safeties are viewed as the team's weak link, and the Irish have big (6-foot-4) and big-time receivers in Miles Boykin and Chase Claypool, who can win one-on-one battles.

Notre Dame can't be one-dimensional, though. With 340-pound lane-clogger Dexter Lawrence suspended for the game, the Irish have to take advantage with zone and counter-run plays.

Williams said that before crucial short-yardage plays, he will hold his thumb and index finger an inch apart — signaling to his lineman that that's all the room he needs: "I tell them to give me a crease and I'm gone."

5 The team, the team, the team: Clemson is viewed as having more overall talent, which helps explain the giant point spread. (It might not actually be true considering that in Pro Football Focus' analysis of the CFP teams, Notre Dame had 15 top-50 players to Clemson's 11 — 10 without Lawrence.)

Either way, Notre Dame thrives on playing team ball. One unit helps another and the backups motivate the starters. It's an intangible that gives Notre Dame belief. The Irish need to ride that.

Kelly and special teams coordinator Brian Polian are huge Bruce Springsteen fans. Both saw his Broadway show, and Polian picked out a favorite line: "One and one equals three."

Springsteen: "When life feels fullest, one and one equals three. It's the essential equation of love, art, rock 'n' roll and rock 'n' roll bands. It's the reason the universe will never be fully comprehensible."

Polian: "Our sum is greater than the sum of our parts. That is our motto on special teams. I saw the show and fell in love with the message, and coach (Kelly) teases me about it. But that's who we are."

The pick: This is not the Manti Te'o team that Alabama slaughtered. These are glory days for the Irish, who will shock Clemson 34-31.

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PAUL SANCYA/AP

Notre Dame defensive lineman Jerry Tillery has 44 quarterback pressures this season.



GRANT HALVERSON/GETTY-APP

Clemson wide receiver Tee Higgins celebrates one of his 10 touchdown receptions this season, after scoring against Pitt.

COTTON BOWL PLAYERS TO WATCH

Plenty of stars

BY LAMOND POPE, JOEL BOYD | Chicago Tribune

If you've been following college football all season, you're with Julian Love and Christian Wilkins, Dexter Williams and Trevor Lawrence. For those just catching up in time for third-ranked Notre Dame's College Football Playoff semifinal against No. 2 Clemson on Saturday in the Cotton Bowl, here's 10 players on each team you ought to know.

Notre Dame

Ian Book, QB: Book began the season as the backup to Brandon Wimbush. Coach Brian Kelly elevated him to the starting role Sept. 22 at Wake Forest as a way to spark the offense. It worked. Notre Dame has scored at least 31 points in six of Book's eight starts. Accuracy is the redshirt sophomore's biggest strength. He is fourth nationally, completing 70.4 percent of his passes. Book also has 2,468 passing yards, 19 touchdowns and six interceptions.

Miles Boykin, WR: Boykin made a remarkable one-handed catch for the winning touchdown in last season's Citrus Bowl victory against LSU, and he has continued to elevate his game this season. At 6-foot-4, the Providence graduate is a matchup nightmare. He leads Notre Dame with 803 receiving yards and eight touchdown receptions.

Te'von Coney, LB: Coney has more than 100 tackles for the second consecutive season. After leading the Irish with 116 tackles last year, he decided to return for his senior season and is leading the way again with 107 tackles, including nine for a loss. A third-team AP All-America selection, Coney has made double-figure tackles in five games.

Alohi Gilman, S: After playing his freshman season at Navy in 2016, Gilman transferred to Notre Dame because of a rule change that service academy athletes had to serve their military duty first before going pro. Notre Dame has benefited from his decision in leadership and stability at safety. Gilman is second on the team with 76 tackles.

Julian Love, CB: The Nazareth graduate holds Notre Dame's career record with 38 pass breakups, including a team-leading 15 this season. The junior also had an interception and a fumble return for a touchdown against Virginia Tech on the way to becoming a consensus first-team All-American and Thorpe Award finalist. He's fifth on the team with 61 tackles.

Sam Mustipher, C: The captain has started 36 consecutive games. He has allowed one sack, two quarterback hits and seven quarterback hurries in 883 snaps in 2018. Mustipher's leadership on the line took on even more importance after the Irish lost guard Alex Bars, a fellow captain, to a season-ending knee injury Sept. 29.

Julian Okwara, DE: Okwara has made a living in the opponent's backfield. He leads the Irish with 11½ tackles for a loss and 21 quarterback hurries and is second on the team with seven sacks. Okwara's older brother, Romeo, played for the Irish and is currently with the Lions.

Jerry Tillery, DT: Tillery contemplated entering the NFL draft after last season. He decided to return and has anchored the defensive line, earning second-team AP All-America honors. He has a team-leading eight sacks, four coming against Stanford. Some mock drafts project Tillery as a late first-round pick.

Drue Tranquill, LB: The two-time captain overcame ACL tears in 2014 and 2015 to become a fixture for the defense. He is third on the team with 76 tackles, including nine for a loss, and is a big reason the Irish are 10th nationally in scoring defense, allowing just 17.3 points per game.

Dexter Williams, RB: Williams missed the first four games, reportedly for disciplinary reasons. He scored a 45-yard touchdown on his first carry of the season Sept. 29 against Stanford and hasn't slowed down. Williams leads Notre Dame with 921 rushing yards and 12 rushing touchdowns.

Clemson

The defensive line: Any conversation about the Tigers has to start with their four potential first-round draft picks on the defensive front — although tackle **Dexter Lawrence** was suspended for the game after failing an NCAA drug test for a performance-enhancing substance. A 350-pound space eater, Lawrence was the nation's No. 2 recruit in the Class of 2016. The other three turned down NFL riches a year ago to return for another run. All-America tackle **Christian Wilkins** is the heart and soul of the Clemson defense, a high-motor player who's also a master's degree candidate and winner of the William V. Campbell Trophy, known as the "Academic Heisman." The ends are All-American **Clelin Ferrell**, who's tied for eighth in the country with 10½ sacks, and **Austin Bryant**, whose numbers dipped slightly this year after an All-America junior season.

Trevor Lawrence, QB: Another heralded member of Clemson's 2018 recruiting class, Lawrence didn't have to wait long. After he shared time with incumbent starter Kelly Bryant for the first four games, coach Dabo Swinney named the freshman the starter on the Monday after a four-touchdown performance against Georgia Tech. The nation's consensus No. 1 recruit in 2018 has completed 65 percent of his passes with 24 touchdowns and only four interceptions — just two in his nine starts.

Travis Etienne, RB: The ACC player of the year and one of the fastest players in the country, Etienne is 10th in the country in rushing yards per game (112.5), fifth in yards per carry (8.3) and tied for second in touchdowns (22). He finished seventh in Heisman Trophy voting and came up huge in the Tigers' 27-23 win over Syracuse, one of only two scares they've had all season.

Hunter Renfrow, WR: If you've watched the College Football Playoff the last three years, Renfrow needs no introduction. The fifth-year senior has 31 catches for 320 yards with five touchdowns in five career playoff games. Renfrow has 43 catches this season for 472 yards, though only one touchdown.

Mitch Hyatt, OT: Like Renfrow, Hyatt is entering his fourth consecutive CFP. The consensus first-team All-American stepped in as the starting left tackle in the first game of his freshman season and hasn't moved, making 55 career starts and setting a Clemson record with 3,624 snaps. Hyatt isn't the only member of his family to win a national title at Clemson; his uncle Dan Benish was an All-ACC defensive tackle on the 1981 team.

Tee Higgins, WR: The nation's No. 2 wide receiver recruit in the Class of 2017, Higgins emerged this season as the Tigers' big-play threat opposite Renfrow's steady possession game. He leads the team with 52 catches, 802 receiving yards and 10 touchdown receptions.

Tre Lamar, LB: A massive (6-4, 255) middle linebacker, Lamar was one of five finalists for the Butkus Award after totaling 74 tackles (5½ for a loss), three sacks and an interception. He's a key cog in a rushing defense that allows an FBS-low 2.4 yards per carry and 92.9 yards per game, third in the country.

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BEARS



TIMOTHY A. CLARY/GETTY

Current Bears linebacker Danny Trevathan helped the Broncos win Super Bowl 50 against the Panthers in February 2016.

BEARS STORYLINES

Playoffs in mind

Several Bears players have postseason experience elsewhere

BY DAN WIEDERER
Chicago Tribune

For the third consecutive year, the Bears will finish the regular season in Minneapolis. Only this time, there's playoff football behind it.

The Bears will host a postseason game and could earn the NFC's No. 2 seed and a first-round bye if they beat the Vikings and the Rams lose to the 49ers. With kickoff approaching, here's the inside slant on two notable storylines.

The playoffs are coming! The playoffs are coming!

Regardless of what happens Sunday, the Bears will be hosting a playoff game in January. Yes, it's long overdue. As has been well-documented, the Bears haven't played in the postseason in eight years — since that maddening 21-14 loss to the Packers in the 2010 NFC championship game.

Of the 53 players on the Bears roster for that game, only four are still playing in the NFL: Greg Olsen, Julius Peppers, Robbie Gould and Corey Graham.

While it might be easy to assume such a long postseason drought would result in a significant disadvantage, it's worth noting 10 players on the current roster have been to the playoffs.

Linebacker Danny Trevathan is one, getting to the postseason after the 2012, 2013 and 2015 seasons. Trevathan was hurt during the 2014 playoffs. But the next year, his final season in Denver, he helped the Broncos beat the Steelers and Patriots in the AFC playoffs. Then he had a team-high eight tackles and recovered two fumbles in Super Bowl 50 as the Broncos downed the Panthers 24-10.

Earlier this month, Trevathan's eyes lit up when talking about the exhilaration of playoff football.

"It's a little faster, to be honest," Trevathan said. "You have to be on your P's and Q's. You can't make those mistakes. Sometimes there's no bouncing back. Times when you messed up during the season? You can't make those errors twice or teams are going to see that and pounce on you."

Defensive end Akiem Hicks can agree with those sentiments. Hicks went to the playoffs with the Saints in 2013 and the Patriots two years later. He fondly remembers his first taste of the postseason, when the Saints slipped past the Eagles 26-24 in the wild-card round in Philadelphia.

"It was a night game. It was cold," Hicks said. "But I remember how together our guys were and the type of energy that was in the room. It was unlike anything I ever felt on the field."

Like Trevathan, knowing that a return to the playoffs is promised for these Bears, Hicks can barely control his eagerness.

"There's nothing like it," he said. "It's hard to put words on it. It's that win-or-go-home mentality, so the pressure is up. The excitement is up. Every. Single. Play."

"All year long, you talk about: 'OK, we've got to win this game. We've got to win this game. We've got to win this game.' Then you get to the playoffs and you can see that you have an opportunity that (most) of the rest of the NFL doesn't get. So you start saying to

yourself: 'Man, look at this opportunity. I better take full advantage of it.' And that's every single guy."

Tight end Trey Burton, of course, threw the fourth-down "Philly Special" touchdown pass to Nick Foles in February that helped propel the Eagles past the Patriots 41-33 in Super Bowl LII. That capped a four-week run during which Burton and the Eagles also defeated the Falcons and Vikings.

"Playoff football is hard to really describe," Burton said. "Every possession, every play, everything is so magnified on such a greater scale. Inches. That's something we've learned this season from Week 1, realizing what it takes to win. In the playoffs, everything gets magnified. And all eyes will be on us."

Cornerback Prince Amukamara, like Trevathan and Burton, owns a Super Bowl ring.

He won his with the Giants as a rookie after the 2011 season and still tells teammates of the urgency he felt playing in those four postseason games. The small margin for error. The heightened intensity on every play.

Amukamara will never forget the Giants upsetting the 15-1 Packers at Lambeau Field, ending Aaron Rodgers' bid for a Super Bowl repeat. A first-half Hail Mary from Eli Manning to Hakeem Nicks jump-started it.

"Ridiculous," Amukamara said.

The veteran cornerback recalls watching last season's playoffs and feeling a certain emptiness.

"You miss it," he said. "It's knowing that everyone is watching those games. And the playoffs are where a lot of guys make names for themselves. Now this year? We're glad to be in that seat."

Already, Bears players with playoff experience are brainstorming the best ways to describe their experiences for teammates.

Said Hicks: "Our guys will have a chance to share their wisdom, of being in that spot before. I believe that can really help to level a room out. For the people who haven't been there, they can look to a guy and hear his experience with it. And maybe that gives them a certain amount of calm for approaching that situation."

The calm is necessary. But so, too, is the excitement for getting back into the fray.

"I'm ready to get back out there," Trevathan said. "It's been too long. I'm ready to finally stay here in January and get this back to being Chicago football. Cold. Snow. I don't care. I'm ready. If I have to get frost all up in my little beard, then fine. Whatever it takes."

History lessons

It has been seven years since the Bears last won in Minneapolis. Lovie Smith was coach and Josh McCown started at quarterback. It was a 17-13 victory in a meaningless New Year's Day game best remembered — in Chicago, anyway — for the ugly knee injury Brian Urlacher suffered while trying to break up a fourth-quarter pass in the end zone.

(Vikings fans fondly remember Jared Allen's pursuit of the NFL's single-season sack record; Allen dominated left tackle J'Marcus Webb that day and mauled McCown 3½ times, finishing a half-sack shy of Michael Strahan's record of 22½.)

Sure, the Bears won that afternoon. But there was hardly a celebration after finish-

ing the season 8-8. The Bears had entered Thanksgiving week at 7-3, established as potential Super Bowl contenders. But in the late stages of their fifth straight win in Week 11, Jay Cutler broke his thumb trying to make a tackle after an interception, and the Bears went into a five-game tailspin.

The victory in the finale meant little. And in their past six trips to the Twin Cities, the Bears have experienced nightmare after nightmare. Here's a snapshot summary of the losing streak.

Dec. 9, 2012 | Vikings 21, Bears 14: League MVP Adrian Peterson busted off a 51-yard run on the first play and ran for 104 yards in the first quarter. The Vikings never trailed and sealed the win when rookie Harrison Smith returned a Jay Cutler interception 56 yards for a touchdown in the third quarter. Both teams finished the season 10-6, but the Vikings earned the sixth playoff seed by virtue of a tiebreaker.

Dec. 1, 2013 | Vikings 23, Bears 20 (OT): In a wild, back-and-forth game in the Bears' final visit to the Metrodome, the most mystifying moment came when Marc Trestman chose to attempt a 47-yard field goal on second down on the Bears' second possession in overtime. Gould pushed the kick wide right. The Bears lost soon after, delivering a significant blow to their playoff hopes.

Dec. 28, 2014 | Vikings 13, Bears 9: This was hardly the most humiliating loss in that embarrassing season. But it was the last defeat, a boring staring contest between two struggling teams battling the cold at TCF Bank Stadium. It was also the last full day as Bears employees for Trestman and general manager Phil Emery. Both were launched the next morning.

Dec. 20, 2015 | Vikings 38, Bears 17: Teddy Bridgewater carved up the Bears defense all day, leading the Vikings to scores on six of their nine possessions. Bridgewater completed 17 of 20 passes for 231 yards with four touchdowns. He also ran for a 12-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter.

Jan. 1, 2017 | Vikings 38, Bears 10: The Bears' first visit to U.S. Bank Stadium was one to forget, an error-filled whimper that completed an 0-8 road season. The Vikings defense destroyed Matt Barkley's hope-filled balloon. Barkley, the Bears' third starting quarterback of the season, had shown flashes of promise during a six-start stretch to close the year. But a week after throwing five interceptions against the Redskins, he threw two picks inside the red zone and lost a fumble that defensive end Everson Griffen returned 20 yards for a touchdown. This is what 3-13 looks like.

Dec. 31, 2017 | Vikings 23, Bears 10: Loss No. 34 in three seasons for John Fox left the Bears alone in last place in the NFC North for the fourth consecutive season. Fox was testy in his postgame news conference, fully realizing his time as Bears coach was about to end. GM Ryan Pace fired him the next morning.

This year's Bears have been masterful at breaking long droughts. Now comes a chance to turn the organization's recent Minneapolis misery into some late-December cheer.

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WEEK 17 PICKS

Leaning toward the Titans

BY RICH CAMPBELL, DAN WIEDERER
Chicago Tribune

Tribune writers Rich Campbell and Dan Wiederer are picking against the spread and each other this season. They're tied entering the final week. Who will emerge triumphant from this epic battle? Will either man finish in the black? (10 points for a win, minus-10 for a loss)
Season scoreboard: Campbell minus-10, Wiederer minus-10

Game of the week

Colts (minus 3½) at Titans
Campbell (9-6-1): Titans. I'm wobbly on this. Titans quarterback Marcus Mariota probably will play through neck and foot injuries. He's listed as questionable after being limited in practice Thursday and Friday. Making matters worse, the Titans are without star defensive lineman Jurrell Casey. Oh, and Colts quarterback Andrew Luck is 10-0 in his career against the Titans. But the Titans are getting points at home in a win-and-in game. That's enough for me.
Wiederer (6-9-1): Titans. With all due respect to Luck and Colts coach Frank Reich, something about that extra half-point is very appealing to me. I'm not sure I've figured this season's Titans out yet. But maybe they can throw me a bone on the way out the door.

Lock of the week

Campbell (7-9): Raiders (plus 14) at Chiefs. The Chiefs will win, but they're not the same team without Kareem Hunt. I wouldn't be surprised if the Raiders have a hangover on a short week after their emotionally charged Black Hole farewell, but I think they'll get through the back door.
Wiederer (9-7): Rams (minus 10) vs. 49ers. Because I'm already the season winner in this category, how much does this pick really matter? In a momentum-builder for the playoffs, the Rams will lock up the NFC's No. 2 seed by turning on a scoring spree against a banged-up 49ers team.

Upset of the week

Campbell (8-8): Broncos (+230) vs. Chargers. Broncos coach Vance Joseph should be in save-my-butt mode. Maybe a win over the Chargers wouldn't be enough, but the Broncos did beat the Chargers on the road and the Steelers at home in back-to-back weeks in November.
Wiederer (6-10): Dolphins (+205) vs. Bills. Just too much value here. In what has been an altogether goofy season for the Dolphins, an 8-8 finish seems about right.

Just for fun

Campbell (6-9-1): Rams (minus 10) vs. 49ers. The 49ers offense is so depleted after losing running back Matt Breida and receivers Marquise Goodwin and Dante Pettis against the Bears on Sunday. A motivated Rams team will take care of business.
Wiederer (7-8-1): Panthers (plus 7½) at Saints. The Panthers hung with the Saints two weeks ago in a low-scoring affair. And I'm leaning on them hanging around just enough again in a meaningless finale.

Stay away

Campbell (8-8): Giants (minus 5½) vs. Cowboys. The Cowboys are locked into the No. 4 seed. They've given the typical lip service about preparing as though it's a normal game, but let's be real.
Wiederer (9-7): Raiders (plus 14) at Chiefs. Would you believe these teams have identical 3-3 records since mid-November? Is it possible the punchline Raiders are just starting to get hot?

Close to home

Bears (plus 5½) at Vikings
Campbell (8-7): Vikings. Matt Nagy is a smart guy. Next week's game — quite possibly against the Vikings — is the important one. He has said the right things about playing to earn that No. 2 seed, but it's not entirely within his control. At some point, the Rams will grasp it, and Nagy will adjust smartly. The Bears' best plays will stay in the playbook for another week.
Wiederer (5-10): Vikings. Mike Zimmer's group has been darn good at home with an all-time record of 18-6 at U.S. Bank Stadium, including the playoffs. The Vikings defense is particularly nasty at home and could get after Mitch Trubisky early and often.

Close to home, total

Bears-Vikings over/under 40½
Campbell (7-7-1): Under. The Vikings defense has allowed 19 points per game at home this season and only 14.3 in their last three games at U.S. Bank Stadium. If the Bears don't score but their defense plays as usual until Vic Fungio calls off the dogs, the total should remain low.
Wiederer (11-3-1): Over. Because I'm already the season winner in this category, how much does this pick really matter? Anyway, with so many odd dynamics in play, I'm envisioning a wild second half in this game. Enough to get this total closer to 50 than 40.

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NFL

NFL NOTES

Titans' Mariota may miss must-win season finale

News services

Quarterback Marcus Mariota officially is questionable for the Titans' high-stakes regular-season finale against the Colts.

Mariota was limited Friday for a second straight day at practice after a stinger late in the first half of last week's 25-16 victory over the Redskins affected his throwing arm.

If Mariota can't play, backup Blaine Gabbert would start his third game this season for the Titans (9-6), who host the Colts (9-6) on Sunday night with the winner clinching at worst an AFC wild card.

Coach Mike Vrabel said Mariota's workout "was about the same" as it was Thursday.

Vrabel said the team "limited" the QB's workout and that the Titans will "just keep seeing where it goes and find out who gives us the best chance, and how he feels. We want to make sure he can go out there and do his job at a high level."

The Titans ruled Brian Orakpo out for a third straight game after the linebacker was limited again Friday with an injured elbow.

Brown questionable: All-Pro receiver Antonio Brown is uncertain to play in the Steelers' biggest game of the season.

Brown was listed as questionable to play in the team's must-win, regular-season finale at home against the Bengals on Sunday. He missed all three practices this week with a knee injury, and coach Mike Tomlin said the team sent Brown for further evaluation Friday.

Tomlin said Brown first began experiencing knee discomfort following the team's loss to the Saints last weekend. He caught 14 passes for 185 yards and two touchdowns in the loss.

"I gave him a (veteran's day off) Wednesday like I give to a lot of guys," Tomlin said. "(He) got in here (Thursday) and didn't feel comfortable enough to do it. We sent him for tests (Friday). We'll get the results of those tests and have more information."

Tomlin didn't rule Brown out of Sunday's game.

"Obviously, he's a veteran player," Tomlin said. "If it gets better, there's not a lot of physical repetition needed to perform. We'll see where all of that goes."

The Steelers need a win against the Bengals and help from the Browns to continue their season.

Extension for Enunwa: The Jets and receiver Quincy Enunwa reached agreement on a four-year extension worth up to \$36 million with \$20 million guaranteed, according to reports.

Enunwa, 26, slowed by injuries this season, appeared in just 11 games after missing all of last season with a neck injury. He still was second on the team this year with 38 catches.

Extra points: RB Todd Gurley will not play in the Rams' regular-season finale against the 49ers. Gurley has been dealing with inflammation and soreness in his left knee since a Week 15 matchup against the Eagles. He didn't play last weekend against the Cardinals. ... Bills DT Kyle Williams announced he will retire after Sunday's game against the Dolphins. Williams, 35, has spent his entire 13-year career with the team.

Long's return to action real possibility

Bears, from Page 1

The Bears' chances against the Vikings are more difficult considering safety Eddie Jackson (ankle), wide receiver Allen Robinson (ribs) and outside linebacker Aaron Lynch (elbow) were listed Friday as doubtful to play. None practiced this week.

However, Long's return from injured reserve is a possibility, Nagy said. Long practiced "pretty much" in full all three days this week as he readies to come back from right foot and ankle injuries. Nagy wouldn't confirm Long will be activated but said when he does return his playing time will depend on how he feels.

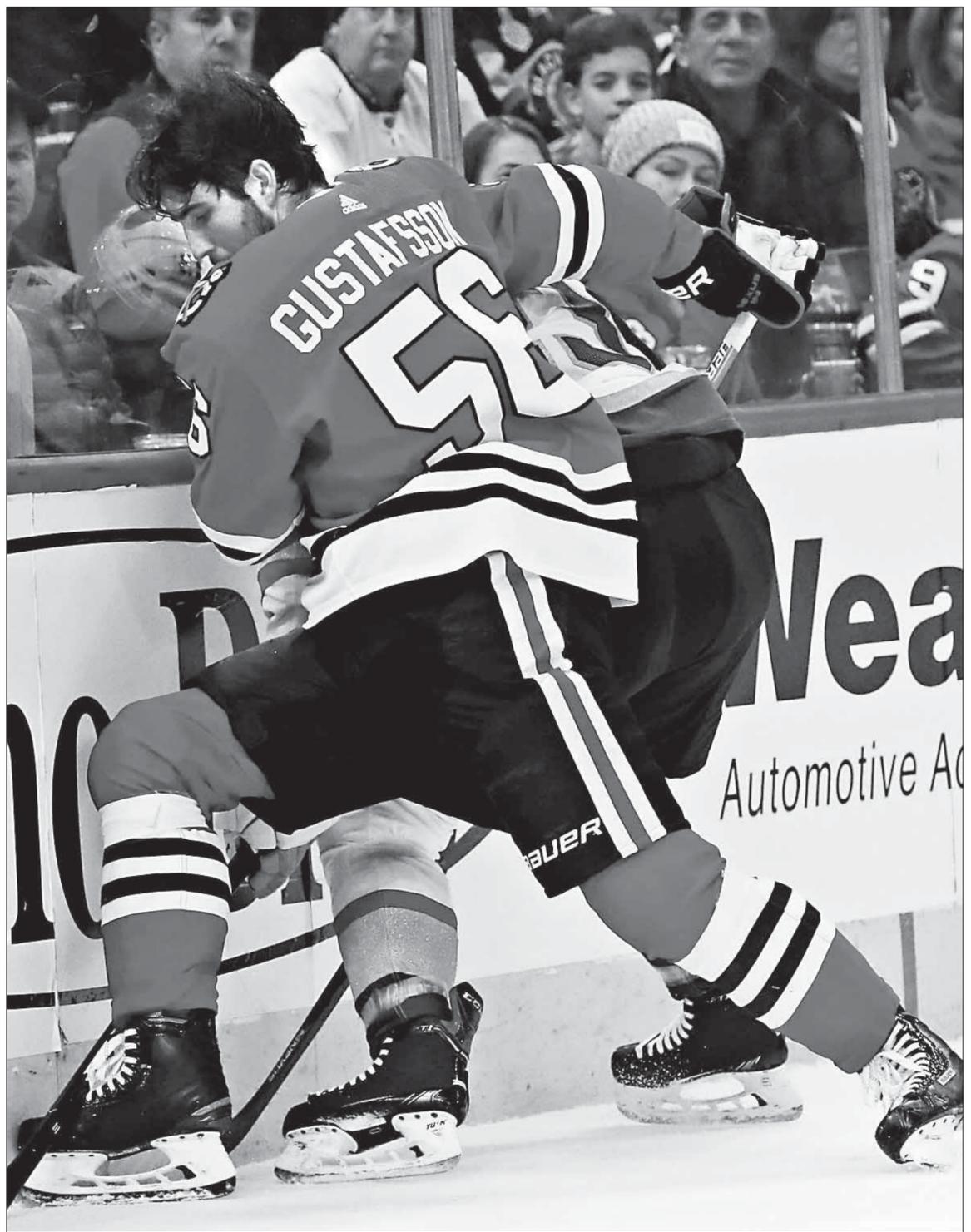
"I feel pretty good with him playing most of the game, but we've just got to see if that's where we're at and if it is a pitch count," Nagy said. "A lot of that honestly is going to be more so when you're in the game. How's he feeling? If he's feeling good, keep him going. If he's not ... let's just get him out."

If Long returns Sunday, it would give him in-game preparation for the Bears' main event in January.

"It's an exciting time, getting ready for another meaningful game with New Year's coming up," Long said. "Usually you're starting to figure out which pipes you're going to shut off in your house and which ones you have to leave on and which ones you have to check on throughout the winter. But now we're going to be here for a while. Get settled in. Playoffs are coming."

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BLACKHAWKS



NUCCIO DINUZZO/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Erik Gustafsson, battling the Golden Knights' Daniel Carr during a game last month, leads Blackhawks defensemen with 20 points.

Potential is there

Gustafsson's offense on rise, but his defense still needs improvement

BY JIMMY GREENFIELD
Chicago Tribune

The word is out about Erik Gustafsson and there's no turning back, at least not as far as Blackhawks coach Jeremy Colliton is concerned.

Gustafsson's ceiling is so high that even after he contributed two beautiful assists Thursday in a 5-2 victory over the Wild, Colliton kind of shrugged.

"That's a normal level for him offensively," Colliton said. "I think he can do even more."

Gustafsson's offensive ability never has been questioned, which is why the Hawks so desperately want him — and need him — to improve his defensive game.

"We push him because we know he can do it," Colliton said. "At times he does do it, as far as his gap and being aggressive to get pucks back and being physical at times and even better around his own net. He can do it."

"It's not a question of ability. It's a

UP NEXT
Blackhawks at Avalanche
8 p.m. Saturday, NBCSCH

question of committing to it. So it's an easy decision to try to hold him accountable because he can give us so much."

Gustafsson leads Hawks defensemen with 20 points, and his eight goals are tied for fourth among NHL blue liners. So the offense is there. The defense need to catch up.

"(Defense has been) a little slow but it's coming there," Gustafsson said. "Man-on-man is a little new for me but ... it feels good right now (and) hopefully keeps going."

Patrick Kane has developed special chemistry with several defensemen over the years, including Duncan Keith, Brent Seabrook and Brian Campbell.

Add Gustafsson to that list.

"He's always been a guy as a forward you love to play with," Kane said. "Because he's going to make flat passes. He's going to put you in a position to be able to create something or get some open space. He's so deceptive with his shot and even when he can fake a shot and make a pass. It's pretty fun to play with a guy like that."

Kane and Gustafsson hooked up on a pair of goals Thursday against the Wild that perfectly illustrated the connection they have developed.

On the first goal, Gustafsson faked a shot and whipped a cross-ice pass through the slot, where a waiting Kane grabbed and scored for a 1-0 lead.

The second came on a power play. Gustafsson froze the defense with a quick fake shot before sending a pass to Kane for a one-timer from 20 feet out.

"Ever since he's been up there on the point on the power play he's been moving really well, he's mobile up there," Kane said. "He can walk the (blue) line, he can make passes. He can get his shot through. He's been scoring a lot for us. He's had a great season so far."

There's a good reason Gustafsson has assisted on five of Kane's 20 goals.

"He's open all the time," Gustafsson said. "He screams for the puck too. ... He wants the puck and I'm always trying to give it to him."

"Hopefully he can give it back to me a couple times too."

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BLACKHAWKS NOTES

Colliton praised as communicator

BY JIMMY GREENFIELD
Chicago Tribune

Jeremy Colliton's former players have praised the Blackhawks coach repeatedly for his outstanding communication skills, which is one of the attributes general manager Stan Bowman pointed out when he hired Colliton.

Whenever there's uncertainty, Colliton doesn't let his players leave the rink without telling them where they stand. He operated that way in Sweden and with Rockford, but it's taking time to establish that with Hawks.

"It's just because every group is different," Colliton said. "Every player is different. And that's part of what my learning curve is: learning the group, learning of them individually."

"But the new guys, just getting to know each other in a short time, that's the adjustment."

Winter (Classic) fest: Millennium Park will host a three-day festival in conjunction with Tuesday's Winter Classic game between the Hawks and Bruins at Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend, Ind.

The free event will take place from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday-Monday at Pritzker



JOHN J. KIM/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The Blackhawks are 8-14-3 under coach Jeremy Colliton, including wins in four of their last five games.

Pavilion and feature autograph sessions with former Hawks and Bruins, hockey interactive activities, live music and viewings of the Stanley Cup.

No time frame for Crawford: Colliton said Friday that he texted Corey Crawford but hasn't spoken with him since the goalie suffered a concussion Dec. 16 against the Sharks. Colliton doesn't plan to check in with him to see if Crawford is closer to returning.

"That's part of what my experience going through this," said Colliton, whose playing career ended because of a series of concussions.

"There is no time frame. You get better when you get better, and putting pressure on me asking him every day how he's feeling, that serves no purpose. When he feels better, I'll know. And then we'll proceed accordingly."

One-timers: The Hawks activated Marcus Kruger (concussion) on Friday and returned forward Jacob Nilsson to Rockford. Nilsson didn't register a point while averaging 7 minutes, 52 seconds of ice time in two games with the Hawks. ... Brent Seabrook sat out practice Friday with an illness but traveled with the team to Denver for Saturday night's game against the Avalanche.

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SCOREBOARD

CALENDAR

TEAM	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
		@MIN 3:25 FOX-32, AM-780					
		@TOR 7 NBCSCH, AM-670			ORL 7 WGN-9, AM-670		IND 7 WGN-9, AM-670
		@COL 8 NBCSCH, AM-720		BOS Noon NBC-5, AM-720		@NYI 6:30 NBCSCH, AM-720	

SATURDAY ON TV/RADIO

NBA	WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL	COLLEGE FOOTBALL
6 p.m. Rockets at Pelicans NBA TV		
9 p.m. Warriors at Trail Blazers NBA TV		
9 p.m. Men's College Basketball		
11 a.m. Coppin State at Notre Dame WMVP-AM 1000		
11 a.m. High Point at Ohio State BTN		
11 a.m. Davidson at North Carolina ESPN2		
11 a.m. BYU at Mississippi State ESPN2		
11 a.m. Howard at Georgetown FS1		
1 p.m. Xavier at DePaul FS1, WYLL-AM 1160		
1 p.m. NIU at Michigan State BTN		
1 p.m. Kentucky at Louisville ESPN2		
1 p.m. St. Bonaventure at Syracuse ESPN2		
2 p.m. Florida Atlantic at Illinois WSCR-AM 670		
2:30 p.m. Georgia Southern at Dayton NBCSN		
3 p.m. Butler at Florida ESPN2		
3:30 p.m. Belmont at Purdue FS1		
4:30 p.m. Wisconsin at Western Kentucky CBSSN		
5 p.m. Radford at Maryland ESPN2		
6:30 p.m. Oregon at Boise State CBSSN		
7 p.m. Bryant at Iowa ESPN2		
7 p.m. Women's College Basketball		
7 p.m. Butler at Villanova FS2		
7 p.m. College Football		
11 a.m. Belk Bowl: South Carolina vs. Virginia ABC-7		
11 a.m. Peach Bowl: Florida vs. Michigan ESPN		
Noon Arizona Bowl: Arkansas State vs. Nevada CBSSN		
3 p.m. Playoff semifinal: Notre Dame vs. Clemson ESPN, WMVP-AM 1000		
7 p.m. Playoff semifinal: Oklahoma vs. Alabama ESPN		
NHL		
8 p.m. Blackhawks at Avalanche NBCSCH, WGN-AM 720		
AHL		
7 p.m. IceHogs at Wolves WPWR-50		
COLLEGE HOCKEY		
7 p.m. Ferris State at Minnesota BTN		
PREMIER LEAGUE SOCCER		
8:55 a.m. Tottenham Hotspur vs. Wolverhampton NBCSN		
11:30 a.m. Liverpool vs. Arsenal NBC-5		
5:55 a.m. Crystal Palace vs. Chelsea NBCSN (Sun.)		
TENNIS		
8 p.m. Hopman Cup Tennis Channel		
4 a.m. Hopman Cup Tennis Channel (Sun.)		
5 a.m. Hopman Cup Tennis Channel (Sun.)		

WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL
7 p.m. Butler at Villanova FS2

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

COLLEGE FOOTBALL
11 a.m. Belk Bowl: South Carolina vs. Virginia ABC-7
11 a.m. Peach Bowl: Florida vs. Michigan ESPN
Noon Arizona Bowl: Arkansas State vs. Nevada CBSSN
3 p.m. Playoff semifinal: Notre Dame vs. Clemson ESPN, WMVP-AM 1000
7 p.m. Playoff semifinal: Oklahoma vs. Alabama ESPN

NHL

NHL
8 p.m. Blackhawks at Avalanche NBCSCH, WGN-AM 720

AHL

AHL
7 p.m. IceHogs at Wolves WPWR-50

COLLEGE HOCKEY

COLLEGE HOCKEY
7 p.m. Ferris State at Minnesota BTN

PREMIER LEAGUE SOCCER

PREMIER LEAGUE SOCCER
8:55 a.m. Tottenham Hotspur vs. Wolverhampton NBCSN
11:30 a.m. Liverpool vs. Arsenal NBC-5
5:55 a.m. Crystal Palace vs. Chelsea NBCSN (Sun.)

TENNIS

TENNIS
8 p.m. Hopman Cup Tennis Channel
4 a.m. Hopman Cup Tennis Channel (Sun.)
5 a.m. Hopman Cup Tennis Channel (Sun.)

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

COLLEGE FOOTBALL
2018-19 DIV. I BOWL GLANCE
DATE BOWL SITE TEAMS TM

FRI Music City Nashville Auburn 63, Purdue 14	
FRI Camping World Orlando Syracuse 34, W. Virginia 18	
FRI Alamo San Antonio Iowa St (8-4) vs. Wash. St (10-2) late	
SAT Peach Atlanta Florida (9-3) vs. Michigan (10-2)	
SAT Belk Charlotte, N.C. Carolina (7-5) vs. Virginia (7-5) 11*	
SAT Arizona Tucson, Ariz. Ark. St (8-4) vs. Nevada (7-5) 12:15	
SAT Cotton Arlington, Tex. Notre Dame (12-0) vs. Clemson (13-0) 3	
SAT Orange Miami Gar., Fla. Oklahoma (12) vs. Alabama (13-0) 7	
D31 Military Annapolis, Md. Cincinnati (10-2) vs. Va. Tech (6-6) 11*	
D31 Sun El Paso, Tex. Stanford (8-4) vs. Pittsburgh (7-6) 1	
D31 Redbox Santa Clara, Calif. Michigan St (7-5) vs. Oregon (8-4) 2	
D31 Liberty Memphis, Tenn. Missouri (8-4) vs. Oklahoma St (6-6) 2:45	
D31 Holiday San Diego Northwestern (8-5) vs. Utah (9-4) 6	
D31 Gator Jacksonville, Fla. NC St (9-3) vs. Texas A&M (8-4) 6:30	
J1 Outback Tampa, Fla. Mississippi St (8-4) vs. Iowa (8-4) 11*	
J1 Citrus Orlando Kentucky (9-3) vs. Penn St (9-3) noon	
J1 Fiesta Glendale, Ariz. LSU (9-3) vs. UCF (12-0) noon	
J1 Rose Pasadena, Calif. Wash. (10-3) vs. Ohio St (12-1) 4	
J1 Sugar New Orleans Texas (9-4) vs. Georgia (11-2) 7:45	
D7 CFP Final Santa Clara, Calif. Cotton vs. Orange winners 7	

OTHER BOWLS

OTHER BOWLS
J19 Shrine St. Petersburg, Fla. East vs. West 2
J19 Colgate Pasadena, Calif. American vs. National 3
D26 Senior Mobile, Ala. North vs. South 1:30

DATE BOWL SITE RESULT

D15 Celebration Atlanta NC A&T 24, Alcorn St 22
D15 Cure Orlando Tulane 41, La.-Lafayette 24
D15 New Mexico Albuquerque Utah State 52, N. Texas 13
D15 Las Vegas Vegas Fresno St 31, Arizona St. 20
D15 Camellia Montgomery, Ala. Ga. Southern 23, E. Michigan 21
D15 New Orleans New Orleans Appalachian State 45, MTSU 13
D18 Boca Raton Boca Raton, Fla. UAB 37, N. Illinois 13
D18 Frisco Frisco, Texas Ohio 27, San Diego State 0
D20 Gasparilla St. Petersburg, Fla. Marshall 38, USF 20
D22 Birmingham Birmingham, Ala. Wake Forest 37, Memphis 34
D22 Armed Forces Fort Worth, Tex Army 70, Hawaii 12
D22 Dollar General Mobile, Ala. Troy 42, Buffalo 32
D22 Hawaii Honolulu La Tech 31, Hawaii 14
D26 SERVPRO Dallas Boston Col. vs. Boise State, ccd.
D26 Quick Lane Detroit Minnesota 34, Ga. Tech 10
D26 Cheez-IT Phoenix TCU 10, California 7 (OT)
D27 Independence Shreveport, La. Duke 56, Temple 27
D27 Pinstripe Bronx, N.Y. Wisconsin 35, Miami 3
D27 Texas Houston Baylor 45, Vanderbilt 38

FCS CHAMPIONSHIP

FCS CHAMPIONSHIP
Saturday, Jan. 5 at Toyota Stadium; Frisco, Texas
North Dakota State (14-0) vs. Eastern Washington (12-2), 11 a.m.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

HOW AP MEN'S TOP 25 FARED
1. Duke (11-1) did not play. Next: vs. Clemson, Saturday, Jan. 5.
2. Michigan (12-0) did not play. Next: vs. Binghamton, Sunday.
3. Tennessee (10-1) did not play. Next: vs. Tennessee Tech, Saturday.
4. Virginia (11-0) did not play. Next: vs. Rutgers, Saturday.
5. Kansas (10-1) did not play. Next: vs. Eastern Michigan, Saturday.
6. Nevada (12-0) did not play. Next: at Utah, Saturday.
7. Gonzaga (12-2) beat N. Alabama 96-51. Next: vs. Cal State Bakersfield, Monday.
8. Michigan State (11-1) did not play. Next: vs. Princeton, Saturday.
9. Florida State (11-1) did not play. Next: vs. Winthrop, Tuesday.
10. Virginia Tech (11-1) beat Md.-Eastern Shore 85-40. Next: vs. Notre Dame, Tuesday.
11. Texas Tech (11-1) beat Texas Rio Grande Vall. 71-46. Next: at W. Virginia, Wed.
12. Auburn (10-2) did not play. Next: vs. North Florida, Saturday.
13. Ohio State (11-1) did not play. Next: vs. High Point, Saturday.
14. North Carolina (8-3) did not play. Next: vs. Davidson, Saturday.
15. Wisconsin (10-2) did not play. Next: at Western Kentucky, Saturday.
16. Kentucky (9-2) did not play. Next: at Louisville, Saturday.
17. Arizona State (9-2) did not play. Next: at Arizona, Sunday.
18. Marquette (11-2) beat Southern University 84-41. Next: at St. John's, Tuesday.
19. Mississippi State (11-1) did not play. Next: vs. BYU, Saturday.
20. N.C. State (12-1) beat Loyola (Md.) 97-64. Next: at Miami, Thursday.
21. Buffalo (11-1) did not play. Next: at Canisius, Saturday.
22. Houston (12-0) did not play. Next: vs. NJIT, Saturday.
23. Indiana (11-2) did not play. Next: vs. Illinois, Thursday.
24. Iowa (10-2) did not play. Next: vs. Bryant, Saturday.
25. Oklahoma (11-1) did not play. Next: at No. 5 Kansas, Wednesday.

HOW AP WOMEN'S TOP 25 FARED

1. UConn (11-0) did not play. Next: at No. 7 Baylor, Thursday.
2. Notre Dame (11-1) did not play. Next: vs. Coppin State, Saturday.
3. Louisville (12-0) did not play. Next: vs. North Carolina, Thursday.
4. Maryland (12-0) beat Penn State 77-61. Next: vs. Rutgers, Monday.
5. Oregon (11-1) did not play. Next: vs. Washington, Friday.
6. Stanford (9-1) did not play. Next: vs. Cal State Northridge, Saturday.
7. Baylor (8-1) did not play. Next: vs. Texas-Rio Grande Valley, Monday.
8. Mississippi State (11-1) did not play. Next: vs. Louisiana-Lafayette, Sunday.
9. N.C. State (12-0) did not play. Next: vs. Davidson, Sunday.
10. Tennessee (10-1) beat Murray State 98-75. Next: vs. Belmont, Sunday.
11. Oregon State (9-2) did not play. Next: vs. Cal State Bakersfield, Saturday.
12. Minnesota (12-0) beat Wisconsin 74-56. Next: at Michigan, Monday.
13. Texas (9-2) did not play. Next: vs. Northwestern State, Saturday.
14. California (9-1) did not play. Next: vs. Harvard, Sunday.
15. Syracuse (11-2) did not play. Next: at Clemson, Thursday.
16. Iowa (9-2) did not play. Next: at No. 21 Michigan State, Saturday.
17. Arizona State (9-2) did not play. Next: at Arizona, Sunday.
18. Kentucky (12-1) did not play. Next: vs. Sacred Heart, Saturday.
19. DePaul (9-3) did not play. Next: vs. Creighton, Saturday.
20. Gonzaga (11-1) did not play. Next: at Loyola Marymount, Saturday.
21. Michigan State (10-1) did not play. Next: vs. No. 16 Iowa, Sunday.
22. Marquette (9-3) did not play. Next: vs. Providence, Saturday.
23. Texas A&M (10-2) did not play. Next: vs. Texas-Rio Grande Valley, Saturday.
24. Miami (12-2) beat Florida A&M 103-54. Next: vs. Central Michigan, Sunday.
25. South Carolina (7-4) did not play. Next: vs. Furman, Sunday.

FRIDAY'S RESULTS

FRIDAY'S RESULTS	WOMEN
MIDWEST	BROADWAY
Detroit 78, Youngstown St. 66	Detroit 89, Chicago St. 59
Chicago 78, Kenosawaw St. 57	Chicago 75, Cleveland 62
Kent St. 70, Albany (NY) 68	Denver 95, Nebraska-Omaha 68
Nebraska-Omaha 91, Denver 84	Denver Bay 76, Milwaukee 62
N. Dakota St. 41, S. Dakota, ppd.	N. Dakota St. 70, Purdue Fort Wayne 54
N. Dakota at Purd. 40, Wayne, ppd.	N. Kentucky 67, Ill.-Chicago 49
Oakland 89, Cleveland St. 77	Nebraska 70, Michigan 56
S. Dakota St. 100, W. Illinois 58	Purdue 60, Ohio St. 42
EAST	S. Dakota St. 93, W. Illinois 84
Hofstra 91, Delaware 46	Wright St. 78, IUPUI 75
Northeastern 93, Drexel 83	Yale 58, Saint Louis 52
SOUTH	Youngstown St. 85, Detroit 59
E. Carolina 77, NC A&T 57	EAST
Georgia Tech 87, Kennesawaw St. 57	Delaware 48, Saint Joseph's 39
LSU 81, Louisiana-Monroe 69	Hartford 54, CCSU 52
N. Kentucky 92, IUPUI 77	Harvard 80, Rhode Island 47
Towson 77, Elon 60	Maryland 77, Penn St. 61
Virginia Tech 85, Md.-E. Shore 40	Rutgers 45, Northwestern 41
William & Mary 75, James Madison 74	SOUTH
SOUTHWEST	Charlotte 73, Bethune-Cookman 69
Arkansas 76, Austin Peay 65	Duke 83, East Carolina 66
Texas Tech 76, Texas-Arlington 56	Georgia 83, Presbyterian 59
WEST	Erie 132, Lakeland
Air Force 72, UC Riverside 60	Long Island 126, Wisconsin 120
Utah St. 84, E. Oregon 57	Santa Cruz 97, Iowa 77
	Salt Lake City 91, Austin 84
	Stockton 118, Agua Caliente 95

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE												
ATLANTIC	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	GF	GA	HOME	AWAY	DIV		
Tampa Bay	38	29	7	2	60	160	111	16-4-0	13-3-2	10-2-0		
Toronto	38	26	10	2	54	144	105	12-5-1	14-5-1	6-4-2		
Buffalo	38	21	12	5	47	117	109	12-4-2	9-8-3	7-4-2		
Montreal	38	20	13	5	45	120	112	10-7-2	10-6-3	4-4-4		
Boston	38	20	14	4	44	107	101	13-5-0	7-9-4	9-6-1		
Florida	36	15	15	6	36	118	130	7-6-4	8-9-2	7-3-3		
Detroit	39	15	18	6	36	111	131	8-9-3	7-9-3	4-7-3		
Ottawa	37	15	18	4	34	118	144	11-6-3	4-12-1	6-8-2		
METRO.	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	GF	GA	HOME	AWAY	DIV		
Washington	36	23	10	3	49	132	104	12-5-2	11-5-1	8-3-1		
Columbus	38	22	13	3	47	123	116	10-8-2	12-5-1	8-4-1		
Pittsburgh	37	19	12	6	44	124	112	11-7-2	8-5-4	6-5-1		
N.Y. Islanders	35	18	13	4	40	101	98	8-5-3	10-8-1	10-3-1		
N.Y. Rangers	36	15	14	7	37	105	119	11-4-5	4-10-2	2-4-3		
Carolina	36	15	16	5	35	91	106	9-7-4	6-9-1	3-5-2		
Philadelphia	36	15	16	5	35	109	131	7-8-2	8-8-3	4-4-1		
New Jersey	36	13	16	7	33	107	127	9-4-4	4-12-3	4-6-1		

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	GF	GA	HOME	AWAY	DIV
Winnipeg	37	24	11	2	50	129	105	13-5-2	11-6-0	7-4-0
Nashville	38	22	14	2	46	111	97	14-6-0	8-8-2	6-4-0
Colorado	38	19	13	6	44	130	117	8-5-3	11-8-3	4-4-2
Dallas	39	18	16	3	41	101	102	11-5-1	8-11-2	3-4-1
Minnesota	36	17	16	3	37	105	104	10-6-3	7-10-0	6-4-1
St. Louis	35	16	14	6	34	100	115	9-9-2	6-7-2	5-6-3
Chicago	40	14	20	6	34	116	147	8-8-4	6-12-2	8-4-2
PACIFIC	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	GF	GA	HOME	AWAY	DIV
Calgary	38	23	12	3	49	131	104	11-4-3	12-8-0	6-5-0
San Jose	39	20	12	7	47	128	117	12-4-4	8-8-3	6-2-3
Vegas	40	21	15	4	46	119	113	1		

BULLS NOTES

Hutchison taking advantage of chance

By K.C. JOHNSON | Chicago Tribune

WASHINGTON — One player's closed door is another's open opportunity.

And so it is for Bulls rookie Chandler Hutchison, who has taken the minutes provided when coach Jim Boylen removed Jabari Parker from the rotation.

"I've loved the way he has played," Boylen said of Hutchison. "And I've loved even more the way he has practiced."

Hutchison hasn't made much of a statistical impact. In the six games since Parker stopped playing, Hutchison has averaged 2.7 points and 2.2 rebounds. He finished with five points, two rebounds and one assist in 15 minutes Friday in the Bulls' 101-92 victory against the Wizards.

Boylen uses a different metric to measure Hutchison's value.

"He really handles in-game failure well, which for young players is hard," Boylen said. "He bounces back quickly. He takes coaching very well. He moves onto the next play as well as anybody I've seen. He's an intelligent kid. He's versatile. It's hard for a rookie to play two positions, and he has handled that well."

"He has to continue to get stronger, increase his physicality and develop his skill level. He works and cares, so the future is bright."

Hutchison enters games now as Lauri Markkanen's backup at power forward. He then logs minutes at small forward.

"It's been an adjustment. It has helped me overall," Hutchison said of learning two positions. "I always want to be playing

better, no matter what I'm doing out there. I'm trying to find the niche of helping this team defensively and running the floor to use my athleticism."

"I just try to stay level with everything. Understand there's going to be a growth process. Coaches are going to put expectations on me whether I'm a rookie or not because they see where they want me to be in the future."

Slump stuff: Even as his franchise-record streak of 43 straight games with at least one 3-pointer was nearing its end, Justin Holiday's shooting accuracy suffered. He was 6-for-32 in the final three games of the streak.

Since it ended Dec. 21 against the Magic, Holiday has connected on just 11 of 36 shots over the last four games. That includes 5-for-21 from 3-point range. He scored 10 points Friday on 2-for-6 shooting (2-for-5 on 3s).

"Of course if I make a 3, that helps with everything I do in my job," Holiday said. "But I can't dwell on it too much."

Holiday has been getting up extra shots and said his focus is on defending as well.

Layups: Wizards coach Scott Brooks said All-Star guard John Wall needs to see a specialist because of a bone spur in his left heel. There's no timetable set for his return. ... Ryan Arcidiacono came off the bench for the first time since Nov. 7.

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NICK WASS/AP

The Bulls' Zach LaVine, who scored 24 points, drives past the Wizards' Jeff Green (32).

Bulls' core trio starts for 1st time together all year

Bulls, from Page 1

So the Bulls don't care that John Wall, Otto Porter Jr. and Markieff Morris all sat with injuries for the Wizards.

Markkanen finished with 14 points and 14 rebounds. Dunn added 13 points and eight assists. And Carter posted 17 points, 13 rebounds and three blocks as all five starters, plus reserve Robin Lopez, scored in double figures.

"There definitely was a lot more room. Just the fact they're all great offensive players, not a lot of people were able to help off them," Carter said of playing off LaVine, Dunn and Markkanen. "I'm taking open shots. I'm not hesitating. That's when I miss most of the time is when I hesitate. They found me in my good spots, hit me in the pocket and drop-offs a lot. I just found ways to finish."

So did the Bulls, who rode Lopez — yes, Lopez — for a stretch in the fourth quarter. He scored six of his 10 points in a 3-minute stretch and has reached double figures in three of his last four games.

"RoLo can score pretty much on any big. He's a down-low presence," LaVine said. "Coach calls him a meat grinder. He's got the ol' '80s terminology."

The slow-it-down style that produced Lopez's jump hooks contrasted to the start of the second half. On the first possession, Boylen put Dunn in the corner and gave

LaVine the ball up top. It didn't lead to a basket because LaVine got tied up on his drive and the Bulls lost the ensuing jump ball. But it got LaVine going.

"We come in at halftime and Zach has three shots," Boylen said. "He didn't panic. He wasn't flustered. And the game turned for him. It's hard to stop three guys."

LaVine scored 11 points in 7:37 after that play call to open the second half.

"It got me going," LaVine said. "I was feeling the game out. I know I can turn it on. The second half, I got more aggressive."

LaVine and Dunn each took 12 shots. Markkanen attempted 15. Players and coaches always say the game tells you when to shoot. These numbers will fluctuate.

"At any time, we can all get hot and be the No. 1 option," LaVine said. "You have to understand that as a player. It's basketball. You have to recognize the hot man and keep riding it. We're going to learn to play with each other."

For one night, it looked pretty good. "I'm excited," Carter said. "Zach is still dealing with his ankle. 'KD' (Dunn) is still having knee problems. Even Bobby (Portis) when he gets back and the energy he brings. Once everybody gets completely healthy, I think we're going to be a very, very good young team."

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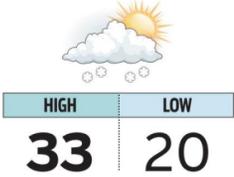
chicagoweathercenter.com | BY TOM SKILLING AND WGN9



SATURDAY, DEC. 29 NORMAL HIGH: 32° NORMAL LOW: 18° RECORD HIGH: 63° (1984) RECORD LOW: -15° (1880)

Clouds recede as cold air moves into the area

LOCAL FORECAST

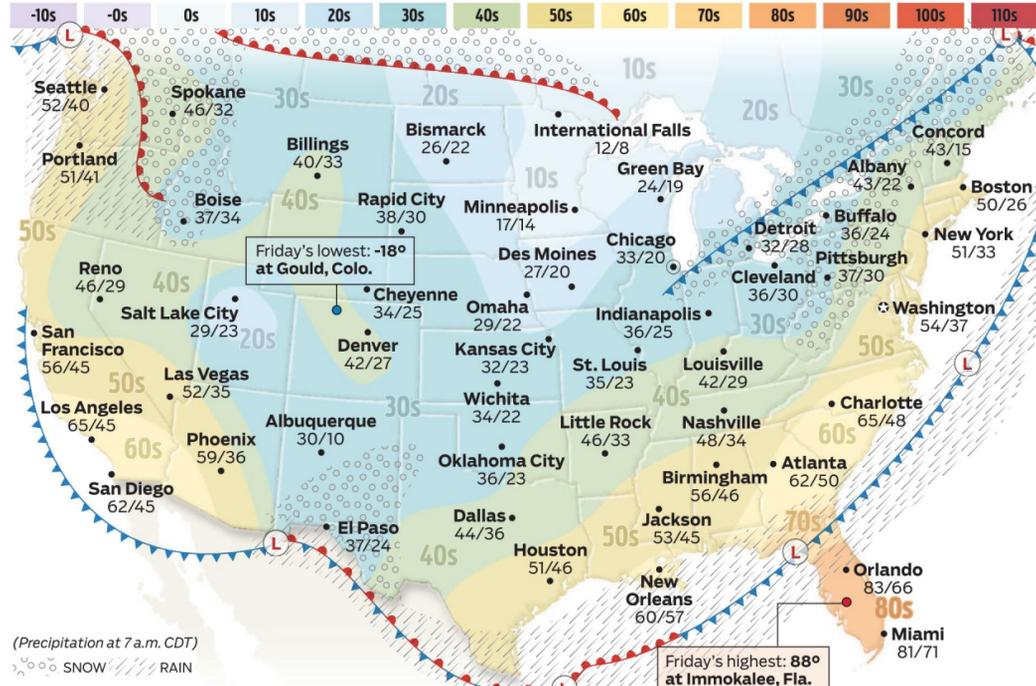


■ As low pressure moves into New England and cold Canadian-source high pressure builds into our area, remnant cloudiness and a few snow flurries will persist over our area Saturday.

■ Mostly cloudy, colder and much less windy. A few flurries possible.

■ Clearing skies overnight and colder with lows in the upper teens well away from the city and lower 20s close to the Lake. Light northwest winds shift southwest later in the day and continue overnight.

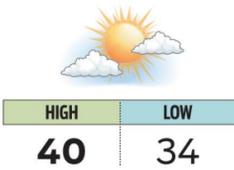
NATIONAL FORECAST



As colder Canadian-source high pressure pushes into the Chicago area, cloudiness and a few flurries will gradually recede off to the east during the day Saturday. With the high pressure overhead, skies will clear Saturday night. On Sunday as it moves off to the east, southwest winds will bring slightly warmer temperatures into our area, with highs topping out at around 40 degrees.

The pattern changes quickly Sunday night as low pressure moves north out of the western Gulf of Mexico. Rain will spread over our area Monday as the low pressure swings east up the Ohio River Valley. Much colder air will sweep into Chicago New Year's Day; strong northerly winds gusting in excess of 30 mph will carry cloudiness and snow flurries as well as restricting daytime temperatures to the 20s.

SUNDAY, DEC. 30



Mostly sunny. Highs in upper 30s to lower 40s, some 8-10 degrees above normal for this date. Increasing and lowering clouds at night with a chance of rain toward morning. SW winds shift southeast at night.



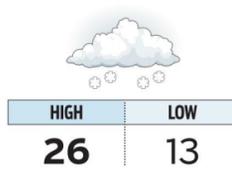
MONDAY, DEC. 31



New Year's Eve. Cloudy with rain likely. Highs in the upper 30s to lower 40s. Cloudy, windy and colder with a chance of flurries overnight. Southeast winds shift to the northwest gusting over 30 mph later at night.



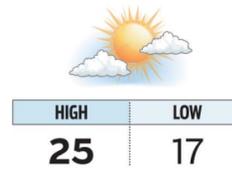
TUESDAY, JAN. 1



New Year's Day. Mostly cloudy. NW winds, cold. Snow showers. Lake-effect snow possible in NW Indiana. Falling temps. Clearing skies, diminishing winds, very cold overnight with lows near 10 degrees.



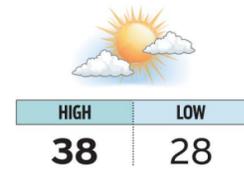
WEDNESDAY, JAN. 2



Sunny but cold - high temperatures struggle to reach the middle 20s. Partly cloudy overnight with lows in the teens. Westerly winds.



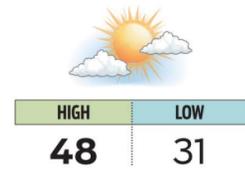
THURSDAY, JAN. 3



Partly cloudy and not quite as cold with highs in the upper 30s to around 40 degrees. Mostly clear skies at night. Westerly winds.



FRIDAY, JAN. 4



Mostly sunny and warmer. Highs in the upper 40s to lower 50s. Partly cloudy overnight. West to north-west winds.



ASK TOM

Dear Tom,
On June 24, 1918, my mother witnessed a devastating tornado in Green City, Mo., and had vivid memories of lightning flashes inside the house as she ran to the cellar. What did she see?

Maribeth Sauer, Lombard

Dear Maribeth,
While we can't be certain, it's possible your mother witnessed ball lightning. Sightings are well-documented and it is usually described as an orange or reddish sphere of light up to about 3 feet in diameter, lasting just a few seconds and often accompanied by a loud noise. Though it usually occurs in the vicinity of a recent lightning strike, little information is actually known about the cause of ball lightning. Recent laboratory recreations have given credence to the theory that it is electrical in composition and origin, but there is no universally accepted theory for its cause.

Write to: ASK TOM
2501 W. Bradley Place
Chicago, IL 60618
asktomwhy@wgnv.com

WGN-TV meteorologists Steve Kahn, Richard Koehneman, Paul Merzlock and Paul Dailey, plus Bill Snyder, contribute to this page.

Hear Tom Skilling's weather updates weekdays 3 to 6 p.m. on WGN-AM 720 Chicago.



New Year's Eve rain to punctuate city's already wet 2018



CHICAGO'S IN THE FINAL DAYS OF 4TH WETTEST YEAR

Near a foot above normal
Normal to date: 48.30"
36.71"

Three of four of Chicago's wettest years* have occurred since 2008

2008	50.86"
2011	49.83"
1983	49.35"
2018	48.30"

SOURCES: Frank Wachowski, National Weather Service archives *Since 1871

THE MOST RECENT LOWER 48 WINTER STORM

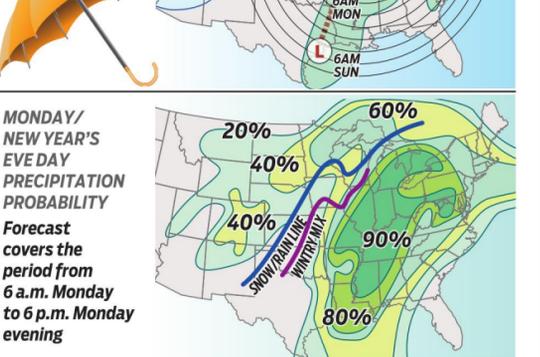
Finland, Minn.	24.0"
McGregor, Minn.	19.2"
Payne, Minn.	14.0"
Pine River, Minn.	14.0"
Lennox, Minn.	13.0"
Brainerd, Minn.	12.3"
Basset, Neb.	12.0"
Santee, Neb.	12.0"
Milbank, S.D.	11.5"
Anamoose, N.D.	11.9"

Heavier rainfalls

Clara, Miss.	11.50"
Columbia, Miss.	11.25"
Laurel, Miss.	11.20"
Hattiesburg, Miss.	8.02"
Franklinton, La.	7.02"
Black Hawk, La.	5.52"

NOON MONDAY PRECIPITATION SNAPSHOT

Projected storm track



TOM SKILLING AND JENNIFER M. KOHNKE/WGN-TV

CHICAGO DIGEST

FRIDAY TEMPERATURES

LOCATION	HI	LO	LOCATION	HI	LO
Aurora	52	30	Midway	54	31
Gary	55	32	O'Hare	53	30
Kankakee	51	31	Romeoville	53	29
Lakefront	53	31	Valparaiso	56	32
Lansing	51	31	Waukegan	53	32

CHICAGO PRECIPITATION

PERIOD	2018	NORMAL
Fri. (through 6 p.m.)	0.06"	0.06"
December to date	2.39"	2.07"
Year to date	48.30"	36.71"

CHICAGO SNOWFALL

PERIOD	O'HARE	MIDWAY
Fri. (through 4 p.m.)	Trace	Trace
Season to date	13.0"	9.4"
Normal to date	8.6"	9.0"

LAKE MICHIGAN CONDITIONS

SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Wind NW/W 10-15 kts.	SW 15-25 kts.
Waves Dorsing to 2-4 feet	2-4 feet
Fri. shore/crib water temps	38°/34°

U.S. SNOW COVER

DEC. 28	2018	2017
Area covered by snow	38.5%	45.0%
Average snow depth	2.6"	2.9"

TRACKING THE COLD

SINCE OCT. 15	O'HARE	MIDWAY
Sub-32° highs	4 days	5 days
Subzero lows	0 days	0 days

CHICAGO AIR QUALITY

Friday's reading	Good
Saturday's forecast	Good
Critical pollutant	Particles

SATURDAY RISE/SET TIMES

Sun	7:17 a.m.	4:28 p.m.
Moon	6:00 a.m.	12:11 p.m.



SATURDAY PLANET WATCH

PLANET	RISE	SET
Mercury	6:01 a.m.	3:13 p.m.
Venus	3:28 a.m.	1:46 p.m.
Mars	11:13 p.m.	11:12 p.m.
Jupiter	5:17 a.m.	2:38 p.m.
Saturn	7:30 a.m.	4:42 p.m.
BEST VIEWING TIME		
Mercury	Not visible	
Venus	5:45 a.m.	21° SE
Mars	5:15 p.m.	47.5° S
Jupiter	6:00 a.m.	6.5° SE
Saturn	Not visible	

SOURCE: Dan Joyce, Triton College

SHOWSTOPPING NEWS

From one of the most influential theater critics in America.

Chicago's own Chris Jones, covering theater news and reviews from Chicago to Broadway:

chicagotribune.com/theaterloop

Chicago Tribune
the Theater Loop
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— eNEWSPAPER BONUS COVERAGE —



RICHARD SHIRO/AP

Clemson defensive coordinator Brent Venables gets pulled back by an assistant during a game earlier this season.

Toughest job in college football: Defensive coordinator

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

DALLAS — Clemson defensive coordinator Brent Venables began his coaching career at Kansas State in the mid-1990s, trying to come up with ways to stop Nebraska's power option. The Cornhuskers were predictable, but often darn near unstoppable.

So as far as Venables is concerned, coaching defenses has always been challenging. Over 25 years in the business, the challenges have only increased as offenses have become more varied and creative and most every rules tweak has made it harder to play defense. Touchdowns and yards have never been more plentiful. FBS records for yards per play, touchdowns per game and points per game set last season are again being challenged in 2018.

"I love the challenge," said Venables, who has had a top-20 defense each of the last five years at Clemson. "Doesn't mean I always like the result, but I love the challenge."

As offenses hum along, defensive coordinator has become the toughest job in college football, often the targets for frustrated fans whose teams just can't seem to get a stop. No. 4 Oklahoma reached the College Football Playoff, where the Sooners will face No. 1 Alabama on Saturday in the Orange Bowl, after replacing its defensive coordinator halfway through the season.

And when schools are looking for their next head coach, they have been far more likely in recent years to hire the up-coming offensive guru than a guy with a defensive background. On the bright side for defensive coordinators, the pay is great. This season nine of the 10 highest paid assistant coaches in college football were on the defensive side, along with 16 of the 21 assistants who made more than \$1 million in salary, according to USA Today's salary database.

Venables is No. 2 on that list at \$2.2 million, behind LSU's Dave Aranda (\$2.5 million). Venables and No. 2 Clemson face No. 3 Notre Dame in the Cotton Bowl in Saturday's first CFP semifinal. The Fighting Irish are on their third d-coordinator in three years in Clark Lea. In 2016, Notre Dame coach Brian Kelly fired defensive



NICK LISI/AP

Clark Lea, now the Notre Dame defensive coordinator, celebrates while a LBs coach with Syracuse in 2013.

coordinator Brian VanGorder during a 4-8 season. Kelly hired Mike Elko away from Wake Forest in 2017 and Elko did such a good job turning around the Irish defense that Texas A&M gave him a three-year contract worth more than \$1.8 million annually.

Kelly promoted 37-year-old Clark Lea to replace Elko and the Fighting Irish defense took another step forward this season, ranking eighth nationally in yards per play allowed (4.53)

While Venables coaches like a sugared-up 10-year-old who can barely stay off the field during the games, Lea is professional in his demeanor and approach.

"We joke a lot they we definitely chose the wrong side (of the ball) to do it," Lea said Wednesday. "It's a lot more fun to be an offensive coach these days. The challenges inherit in defending modern offense require some ability to process and think and be creative. And I think that's a fun part of what we do. It's a game of strategy."

But, Lea added: "It's not about being schematically cuter than the team you're playing. It's about getting your players in positions where they're confident and they're playing with great fundamentals and they're playing really fast and they're covering spaces.

Defense is still about your guy getting off a block and making a tackle and you can't deviate from that. Even as it becomes basketball on grass."

Venables could have been a head coach by now but he can afford with be picky, with a great salary and a boss in Dabo Swinney who has built Clemson into Alabama's biggest challenger for college football supremacy. But for most defensive coordinators, getting a chance to run a program has been difficult.

Over the last two years there have been 42 coaches hired in FBS and 34 have had offensive backgrounds, a fact pointed out re-

"We joke a lot they we definitely chose the wrong side (of the ball) to do it. It's a lot more fun to be an offensive coach these days."

—Notre Dame defensive coordinator Clark Lea

cently by Football Scoop. Working for Alabama coach Nick Saban seems to help. The Tide is also on its third defensive coordinator in three years as Tosh Lupoi was promoted after last season to replace Jeremy Pruitt, who is now Tennessee's head coach. Pruitt got the job when Kirby Smart left to lead Georgia in 2016.

Oklahoma defensive coordinator Ruffin McNeill spent years coaching defense for Mike Leach at Texas Tech before becoming a head coach at his alma mater, East Carolina. After being fired at ECU, coach Lincoln Riley brought McNeill to Oklahoma in 2017 to be defensive line coach. Riley turned to the 60-year-old McNeill in October to try the Sooners' defense after Mike Stoops was fired.

Oklahoma ranks 101st nationally in yards per play allowed (6.03).

Especially in the wide-open and wild Big 12, a defensive coordinator needs drown out the criticism and not get too down about those gaudy scores.

"As a play-caller or a defensive coach, you've got to make sure you keep things in perspective and respect it and know there's a good chance they can put some points on the board," McNeill said. "But you can't caught up into worrying about it too much. The defensive thought process has to be get the ball back to your offense. Break serve. Of course, as a defensive guy all his life, 38 years of coaching, you'd like to have a zero. But at the same time you've got to be ready to evolve and know the quarterbacks are really developed. You have to be ready to not accept it, but deal with it, and move on to the next play."

AP sports writer Tim Reynolds in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., contributed.

eNEWSPAPER BONUS COVERAGE



MICHAEL CONROY/AP FILE 2002

Pat Summerall, left, and John Madden in the FOX broadcast booth before the 2002 NFC divisional playoff in St. Louis.

How Fox changed the game in 25 years covering the NFL

BY JOE REEDY
Associated Press

Terry Bradshaw thought his career as a football analyst was over in 1993 when CBS lost the NFL rights to Fox. But instead of going back to cattle ranching, he has had a front-row seat to the biggest sports broadcasting start-up of the past quarter-century.

"It seems like an eternity. We all have occasionally talked about where we started. We've had all of these innovations that has transformed broadcasting on television," Bradshaw said.

It was Bradshaw who helped usher in Fox's coverage of the NFL in 1994 riding a horse around Los Angeles before arriving at the Fox set in Hollywood. That entrance helped set the tone that still drives the network's coverage and has included eight Super Bowls.

"Terry is what Fox attitude is all about," said Joe Buck, who has gone from one of the announcers for regional games to the voice of Fox's major properties. "They played that during the preseason seminar this year and I got choked up. It was a beautiful TV moment."

David Hill, who built Fox Sports and came up with many of its innovations, still considers Bradshaw his most important hire.

"He is the core of what Fox Sports is — he's funny, self-deprecating, but gets the job done," Hill said.

That core was put in motion 25 years ago this month when Fox won the rights to broadcast NFL games for \$1.6 billion over four years. Besides its personalities, the network has given us the scoreboard, audio that brings viewers closer to the game, the one-hour pregame show, and a big production feel for sporting events.

The fact that Hill was able to build a sports division from scratch in eight months remains incredible considering most networks now take two to three years to build.

"It was so intense that it stays with you. Thinking back, though, we never had a chance to second guess anything because every day was important," he said.

Many of the announcers and production personnel that started with Fox in 1994 are still there as the network is in its 25th season of broadcasting the NFL. Bart Simpson is still going strong on Sunday nights, but Fox has become a grown-up network.

"We've grown from the rebellious new kid on the block and are now looked at as a responsible producer of major sports. We're



Troy Aikman, right, and Joe Buck working before a game earlier this season between the Giants and the Eagles in East Rutherford, N.J.

FRANK FRANKLIN II/AP FILE 2018

now the establishment," said Richie Zrontz, the lead producer for Fox's top NFL game as well as coordinating producer for the network's NASCAR coverage.

The NFL's decision to go with Fox continues to reverberate on a number of levels, not only with football but in the way sports rights costs are perceived among network executives. Among the things we have learned:

Football is entertainment

Fox's credo of "same game, new attitude" really applied to Hill. The affable Australian, who had built sports networks in England and Australia, was tasked with building Fox Sports in eight months.

Hill offered a fresh set of eyes when it came to evaluating pro football on television, and the first opinion he had is there wasn't enough fun or entertainment on Sunday broadcasts.

Hill's vision of Fox's philosophy took root with the pregame show. Not only was it an hour, but it was done in Los Angeles instead of New York. He had a simple formula for his pregame crew: a host, former offensive player, former defensive player and coach.

"David understood that he wanted the viewer entertained. We cover the news but we tend to do things a little more jovial," Bradshaw said.

Hill, who now runs his own production company after leaving Fox in 2015, liked Howie Long after seeing one of his interviews, but wasn't sold after an audition. It was so vanilla that Hill told Long to come back the next day with a different attitude. Long was more relaxed in the second audition and was hired.

Bradshaw and Long have been the backbone of Fox's pregame show despite their diverse personalities.

"Terry and I couldn't be more different, but we have caught lightning in a bottle. It just works," Long said.

Hill also suggested having a comedian do predictions and having a weather report as a segment. The Los Angeles setting also gave the show a different vibe, which is what he wanted all along.

"All the cameramen for the pregame had worked on sitcoms during the week. They all wanted to work on football," he said. "The camaraderie of everyone flowed throughout the entire unit."

The pregame show was a hit from the beginning and also showed that viewers had an appetite to consume as much football content as possible.

"I remember opening weekend when I got home I had a couple college buddies that were raving about the pregame show and how great and fun it was with everyone," said Troy Aikman, who was Cowboys quarterback in 1994

before joining the network seven years later. "It was refreshing, new and unique, and that set the tone for the network."

Elevating the game

The hiring of Pat Summerall and John Madden as the top broadcast team gave Fox instant credibility, but the network also helped launch the network football careers of Joe Buck, Thom Brennaman, Kenny Albert and Kevin Harlan.

"I was sitting in the room during a seminar and looking at Summerall, Madden, Dick Stockton and Matt Millen while listening to David Hill talk, and I couldn't believe I was in the same room," Buck said. "I had been around my dad (Hall of Fame broadcaster Jack Buck) and knew what the standard was and how it had been done, and now I was hearing how different things were going to be. It was intimidating and exciting."

Production-wise, Fox ushered in the era of the constant time and scoreboard along with audio that brought viewers closer to the action. The scoreboard may look like a simple graphic, but at the time it was a technical marvel. Instead of having a camera fixated on a clock, a black box was embedded in each scoreboard so that the time and other data could be transmitted to Los Angeles and production trucks at the stadium.

"There was a guy named Richard Flanigan who had to go to each stadium with a ladder and screwdriver and put the black box in each scoreboard. But he had to build a black box for each scoreboard because they were all different," said Eric Shanks, a broadcast associate in 1994 and now Fox Sports' executive producer and CEO. "The attitude from David was the bigger, the louder, the better. We were doing things with graphics and sound effects that only used to exist in big production movies."

The NFL arms race

When the NFL entered television negotiations in 1993, many predicted it would be lucky to get near the \$3.6 billion received from ABC, CBS, NBC, TNT and ESPN for four years in 1990.

Fox's bid of \$1.58 billion, along with increases from ABC, NBC, TNT and ESPN, increased the rights fees to \$4.4 billion — and longtime NFL broadcast partner CBS lost the NFL rights to Fox.

The contracts also ended up benefiting the players. The salary cap started in 1994 and many predicted with decreased rights fees it would be \$32 million per team. However, the surprise influx of cash pushed it to \$34 million.

The NFL received roughly \$5.525 billion this season for television rights, including \$1.760 billion from Fox for Sunday and Thursday games. The salary cap for this season is \$177.2 million per team.

Wins and losses

Most networks lose money on sports rights deals, but you rarely hear executives discuss that because the loss of the NFL can be catastrophic to the bottom line. CBS experienced that in 1993 when it lost the NFL games to Fox and NBC learned those lessons four years later when CBS outbid it for rights to the AFC.

Not only does it decimate sports divisions, but it impacts promotion of prime-time programming. "Four years later the negative impact was so severe that CBS went to the NFL and said, 'Name your price and we'll pay whatever to get a package,'" said Neal Pilson, the former president of CBS Sports who now runs his own sports television consulting company. "We lost affiliates, ratings, the male audience and a lot of sports sponsorships. But when CBS got the NFL back (in 1997), everything picked up again."

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REVIEW: 2019 CHEVY SILVERADO 1500



Silverado 1500 is a great truck

By Liz Kim, New York Daily News

Whether you're hauling a cement mixer, a three-horse trailer, or a sparkling new speedboat, you won't find a more useful tool than a pickup truck.

Full-size trucks are the best-selling vehicles in America, partly because of the many Americans who work hard at jobs that require sweat and muscle rather than pixels and taps, and partly because Americans love to play hard. Or at least look like they do.

Right now, there are plenty of terrific choices when it comes to big pickup trucks. The best models come from the traditional Big Three American companies, such as the popular Ford F-150 and redesigned Ram 1500, with Japanese companies trailing the leaders with the Nissan Titan and Toyota Tundra.

Truck drivers are a notoriously loyal lot. They tend to choose a brand and stick with it, despite the lure of newfangled aluminum this and hybrid that.

Chevrolet is counting on people who love the bowtie-brand to ensure the all-new 2019 Silverado 1500's success, while angling to appear to those who may have not considered a Chevy before. To see if the new Silverado is worthy, I spent a week wheeling a Nightsky BlueLT Trail Boss Crew Cab around the suburbs and across the mountains of Southern California.

The test truck came with a standard bed configuration and a \$57,090 sticker price (including the \$1,495 destination charge). It was loaded up with extras, with Convenience Package, Convenience Package II, Leather Package, Safety Package, Bed Protection Package, and Advanced Trailering Package option boxes checked.

Plus the test truck came with handy off-road assist steps — unless you're actually planning to go off-roading. Then, they limit the LT Trail Boss's breakout angle.

Design: 8.0 rating

When it comes to road presence and conveying a sense of strength, nothing beats sheer size. The 2019 Chevrolet Silverado is taller and bigger than last year's version, increasing its physical dimensions by almost every measure. It's lighter than the previous Silverado, though, thanks to the use of mixed metals through the body and the substructure.

The Silverado's massive grille and headlamps have more layers than a multi-level marketing scheme (expect to be asked to purchase some leggings, or protein powder, or vitamins) but I thought it conveyed a sense of purpose. Lines that follow the truck across its flanks hold interest, while the Chevrolet name is emblazoned in big, capital letters across the tailgate.

Inside, my test vehicle looked utilitarian with its black-on-black color scheme. This usually makes cabins look smaller, but no color can mask the enormity of this cavern when you open the door.

I wish I could say that this \$57,000 vehicle's interior looked and felt like a \$57,000 vehicle, but no, it did not. Hard, brittle plastics were evident all around the cabin. You can call this approach practical; I'll call it builder grade. There were no assemblage issues, though, and gaps between panels were kept to a minimum.

Comfort: 9.0 rating

I'm always grateful when tall trucks arrive equipped with side step rails. I always need a little help climbing in, and these, along with the windshield pillar-mounted handles, helped enormously. Off-road enthusiasts will scoff at the added equipment, though, because they can get hung up pretty easily.

Once inside, it's easy to find a good driver's position, thanks to the 10-way power adjustable seat. Heated front seats always come in handy, as does the heated steering wheel.

The front passenger's seat, however, came with manual adjustments, one of many reasons I'm skeptical of the test truck's price tag. You lift a bar to scoot the seat fore and aft, and use a lever to adjust the seatback angle. Want to sit up higher? Tough, because there is no way to adjust the seat's height. Then again, you're so far off the ground that it's not really noticeable.

In the back, your rear passengers might find themselves sliding around a bit when you go around a corner, as the seats are plain and flat. But you can't argue with all of that shoulder, leg and headroom, so you won't be hearing much in terms of complaints.

Controls: 9.0 rating

In a world gone mad with novelty transmissions, it's refreshing to see the Silverado's old-school lever mounted to the steering column. Running through the PRNDL with each of its satisfying clunks is how God intended automatic shifting to be.

Chevy does use some buttons for shifting, but they're tasked with selecting 4-wheel-drive transfer case settings. You can pick 2-wheel drive, Automatic, 4-Hi, and 4-Lo. This design makes it simpler to prepare the truck for the road conditions that lie ahead.

Chevrolet knows that people who drive trucks are often wearing gloves, so most of the controls can be operated without removing them. There is a touchscreen display, of course, but volume and tuning knobs help to make using it easier. The climate controls are similarly simple and intuitive.

Utility: 10.0 rating

Big trucks can carry big things. Chevy tries to lighten the load, so to speak, by making it easier to haul big and heavy items. The lightweight, aluminum, power-down tailgate is really useful, and some trim levels even have a power up function.

Chevy also boasts that its cargo box holds more stuff by volume than its primary competitors, and that its Durabed design with a roll-formed steel floor is less likely to be damaged by your cargo. There's also a 120-volt power outlet in the bed for additional lighting or other devices, and each of the tie-down hooks is rated to handle 500 pounds of force.

In the cabin, you'll find plenty of storage bins and cupholders in which to place your belongings. The center console is huge, and the dual-tiered glove compartment is useful. There are rear in-seatback storage compartments, but they don't hold much. You'll still make good use of the rear under seat storage, and the bottom rear seat cushion flips up to maximize in-cab cargo space.

Technology: 8.5 rating

You'd expect a vehicle in this price range to come with a navigation system, but you'd be mistaken. With the new Chevrolet Infotainment 3 system, an embedded navigation system is reserved for top trim levels only.

Good thing Chevy equips the Silverado with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, which runs navigation through your smartphone. Everyone will approve of the 4G LTE Wi-fi hotspot, as well as the numerous charging ports and device inputs sprinkled throughout the cabin. The test truck also had a decent-sounding Bose premium audio system.

In terms of the user experience, the infotainment system was fairly intuitive, with big knobs for power/volume and tuning. Unfortunately, Silverado buyers get a limited one-month trial to all OnStar services, which is barely long enough to recognize them as useful enough to pay for a subscription.

Power and performance: 7.0 rating

Brawny, deep-welled power from Chevy's latest 5.3-liter V8 propelled my test truck. Making 355 horsepower at 5,600 rpm and 383 lb.-ft. of torque at 4,100 rpm, it's rated to tow up to 9,500 lbs. when the LT Trail Boss is equipped like my test vehicle. Other engines for the 2019 Silverado 1500 include a 285-hp 4.3-liter V6, a 420-hp 6.2-liter V8, and a torque-rich turbocharged 2.7-liter 4-cylinder. A diesel offering is also in the works.

While the numbers for the 5.3-liter V8 seem impressive, if you hold them up to the Silverado's two primary competitors, they fall a little short. Unless you really want bragging rights, though, this engine supplies plenty of oomph for carrying around all of your equipment in a delightfully speedy manner.

A new 8-speed automatic delivers the power to the wheels. It did a commendable job of shifting, although some harsh driveline lash was noted in my early-production test truck.

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Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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- ACROSS**
- 1 Prison knife
 - 5 Poultry shop purchase
 - 10 Curved beam overhead
 - 14 Tim Daly's sis
 - 15 One more time
 - 16 Yarn
 - 17 High point
 - 18 Careless
 - 20 Gun the engine
 - 21 Humerus or ulna
 - 22 Despised
 - 23 Bumbling
 - 25 Current calendar pg.
 - 26 ___ public; signature certifier
 - 28 Blazer
 - 31 Modify
 - 32 Grouch
 - 34 Solemn promise
 - 36 BBQ favorites
 - 37 Dull noises
 - 38 Mister in Munich
 - 39 Actor Brynner
 - 40 Self-confidence
 - 41 Sicker than before
 - 42 Highway divider
 - 44 Deep narrow valley
 - 45 Cerise or scarlet
 - 46 Tough tissue
- DOWN**
- 1 Celebrity
 - 2 Excessive publicity
 - 3 Sure to happen
 - 4 Irritate
 - 5 Awning
 - 6 Representative
 - 7 Summon with a beeper
 - 8 Wesson product
 - 9 180 degrees from SSW
 - 10 Assault
 - 11 Huck Finn's float
 - 12 Classic board game
 - 13 ___ a grudge; remained bitter
 - 19 Cash alternative
 - 21 Lahr or Parks

- Solutions**
- 24 Short rests
- 25 Quayle & Rather
- 26 ___ a soul; nobody
- 27 Loathing
- 28 Green gem
- 29 In all places
- 30 Human trunk
- 32 Facial feature
- 33 Moscow's nation: abbr.
- 35 Songbird
- 37 Warty amphibian
- 38 Sharpen
- 40 Portion
- 41 Magician's rod
- 43 Motorist
- 44 Ash fragment
- 46 Begin a badminton game
- 47 Apple computers
- 48 Border on
- 49 Mongolian desert
- 50 Metal employee
- 52 Singles
- 53 Fellows
- 55 Fry from the flock
- 56 Ancient
- 57 "Dr. Zhivago" production co.

