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Harvey Weinstein's rape conviction is overturned by New York's top court

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and
 DAVE COLLINS
 Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York's highest court on Thursday overturned Harvey Weinstein's 2020 rape conviction, reversing a landmark ruling of the #MeToo era. The court found the trial judge unfairly allowed testimony against the ex-movie mogul based on allegations that weren't part of the case.

Weinstein, 72, will remain in prison because he was convicted in Los Angeles in 2022 of another rape. But the New York ruling reopens a painful chapter in America's reckoning with sexual misconduct by powerful figures — an era that began in 2017 with a flood of allegations against Weinstein.

While Thursday's ruling was a blow to #MeToo advocates, they noted it was based on legal technicalities and not an exoneration of Weinstein's behavior, saying the original trial irrevocably moved the cultural needle on attitudes about sexual assault.



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Former film producer Harvey Weinstein appears in court in Los Angeles, Oct. 4 2022.

Associated Press
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Harvey Weinstein's rape conviction is overturned by New York's top court

Continued from Front

The Manhattan district attorney's office said it intends to retry Weinstein, and at least one of his accusers said through her lawyer that she would testify again.

The state Court of Appeals overturned Weinstein's 23-year sentence in a 4-3 decision, saying "the trial court erroneously admitted testimony of uncharged, alleged prior sexual acts" and permitted questions about Weinstein's "bad behavior" if he had testified. It called this "highly prejudicial" and "an abuse of judicial discretion."

In a stinging dissent, Judge Madeline Singas wrote that the Court of Appeals was continuing a "disturbing trend of overturning juries' guilty verdicts in cases involving sexual violence." She said the ruling came at "the expense and safety of women."

In another dissent, Judge Anthony Cannataro wrote that the decision was "endangering decades of progress in this incredibly complex and nuanced area of law" regarding sex crimes after centuries of "deeply patriarchal and misogynistic legal tradition." The reversal of Weinstein's conviction is the second major #MeToo setback in the last two years. The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal of a Pennsylvania court decision to throw out Bill Cosby's sexual assault conviction.

Weinstein has been in a New York prison since his conviction for forcibly performing oral sex on a TV and film production assistant in 2006, and rape in the third degree for an attack on an aspiring actress in 2013. He was acquitted on the most serious charges



Arthur Aidala, center, an attorney for Harvey Weinstein, speaks during a news conference outside Manhattan Criminal Court, Thursday, April 25, 2024, in New York.

Associated Press

— two counts of predatory sexual assault and first-degree rape.

He was sentenced to 16 years in prison in the Los Angeles case.

Weinstein's lawyers expect Thursday's court ruling to have a major impact on the appeal of his Los Angeles rape conviction. Their arguments are due May 20. Jennifer Bonjean, a Weinstein attorney, said the California prosecution also relied on evidence of uncharged conduct alleged against him.

"A jury was told in California that he was convicted in another state for rape," Bonjean said. "Turns out he shouldn't have been convicted and it wasn't a fair conviction. ... It interfered with his presumption of innocence in a significant way in California."

Weinstein lawyer Arthur Aidala called the Court of Appeals ruling "a tremendous victory for every criminal defendant in the state of New York."

Attorney Douglas H. Wigdor, who has represented eight Harvey Weinstein accusers including two witnesses at the New York criminal trial, called the ruling "a major step back" and contrary to routine rul-

ings by judges allowing evidence of uncharged acts to help jurors understand the intent or patterns of a defendant's criminal behavior.

Debra Katz, a prominent civil rights and #MeToo attorney who represented several Weinstein accusers, said her clients are "feeling gutted" by the ruling, but that she believed — and was telling them — that their testimony had changed the world.

"People continue to come forward, people continue to support other victims who've reported sexual assault and violence, and I truly believe there's no going back from that," Katz said. She predicted Weinstein will be convicted at a retrial, and said accusers like her client Dawn Dunning feel great comfort knowing Weinstein will remain behind bars.

Dunning, a former actor who served as a supporting witness at the New York Weinstein trial, said in remarks to The Associated Press conveyed through Katz that she was "shocked" by the ruling and dealing with a range of emotions, including asking herself, "Was it all for naught?"

"It took two years of my life," Dunning said. "I had to live through it every day. But would I do it again? Yes."

She said that in confronting Weinstein, she had faced her worst fear and realized he had no power over her. Weinstein's conviction in 2020 was heralded by activists and advocates as a milestone achievement, but dissected just as quickly by his lawyers and, later, the Court of Appeals when it heard arguments on the matter in February.

Allegations against Weinstein, the once powerful and feared studio boss behind such Oscar winners as "Pulp Fiction" and "Shakespeare in Love," ushered in the #MeToo movement.

Dozens of women came forward to accuse Weinstein, including famous actresses such as Ashley Judd and Uma Thurman. His New York trial drew intense publicity, with protesters chanting "rapist" outside the courthouse.

"This is what it's like to be a woman in America, living with male entitlement to our bodies," Judd said Thursday.

Weinstein, incarcerated at the Mohawk Correctional Facility, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) northwest of Albany, maintains his innocence. He contends any sexual activity was consensual. His lawyers argued on appeal that the trial overseen by Judge James Burke was unfair because three women whose claims of unwanted sexual encounters with Weinstein were not part of the charges were allowed to testify. Burke's term expired at the end of 2022, and he is no longer a judge.

They also appealed the trial judge's ruling that prosecutors could confront Wein-

stein over his long history of brutish behavior, including allegations of punching his movie producer brother at a business meeting, snapping at waiters, hiding a woman's clothes and threatening to cut off a colleague's genitals with gardening shears.

As a result, Weinstein, who wanted to testify, did not take the stand, Aidala said. The appeals court labeled the allegations "appalling, shameful, repulsive conduct" but warned that "destroying a defendant's character under the guise of prosecutorial need" did not justify some trial evidence and testimony.

In a majority opinion written by Judge Jenny Rivera, the Court of Appeals said defendants have a right to be held accountable "only for the crime charged and, thus, allegations of prior bad acts may not be admitted against them for the sole purpose of establishing their propensity for criminality." The Court of Appeals agreed last year to take Weinstein's case after an intermediate appeals court upheld his conviction. Prior to their ruling, judges on the lower appellate court at oral arguments had raised doubts about Burke's conduct. One observed that Burke had let prosecutors pile on with "incredibly prejudicial testimony" from additional witnesses.

At a news conference, Aidala predicted that the lasting effect of the reversal would be that more defendants will testify at their trials, including Weinstein, who "will be able to tell his side of the story."

He said that when he spoke to Weinstein Thursday, his client told him: "I've been here for years in prison for something I didn't do. You got to fix this." □

Wild horses to remain in North Dakota's Theodore Roosevelt National Park, lawmaker says

By JACK DURA
Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Wild horses will stay in North Dakota's Theodore Roosevelt National Park amid fears from advocates that park officials would remove the beloved animals from the rugged badlands landscape, a key lawmaker said Thursday.

Republican U.S. Sen. John Hoeven said he has secured a commitment from the National Park Service to maintain wild horses in the park, though the number remains to be determined. Roughly 200 horses now roam the park.

Hoeven said the Park Service will abandon its proposed removal of the horses under an environmental review process begun in 2022 and will continue to operate under an existing 1978 environmental assessment that calls for a reduction in their numbers.

"They've committed to me that we will have a thoughtful and inclusive discussion on how many horses they keep in the park," Hoeven



Wild horses stand in a group along a hiking trail in Theodore Roosevelt National Park on Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023, near Medora, N.D.

told The Associated Press. There is no timeline on that, he said.

In a statement, the park said its decision to terminate the review "was made after careful consideration of the information and

public comment received during the (environmental assessment) process." In a text message, park officials acknowledged an email seeking comment but didn't immediately provide one.

Park visitors, much to their delight, often encounter the horses while driving or hiking in the rolling, colorful badlands where a young, future President Theodore Roosevelt hunted and engaged in cattle ranching in

the 1880s in what was then Dakota Territory.

"People love horses," Hoeven said. "And where do you go to see wild horses? I mean, it's not like an easy thing to do, and most people don't have horses, and they love the idea of wild horses. They see it as part of our heritage in America."

Earlier Thursday, Hoeven's office said in a statement the decision "will allow for a healthy herd of wild horses to be maintained at the park, managed in a way to support genetic diversity among the herd and preserve the park's natural resources."

The horses roam the park's South Unit near the Western tourist town of Medora. In 2022, park officials began the process of crafting a "livestock plan" for the horses as well as about nine longhorn cattle in the park's North Unit near Watford City. Park officials have said that process aligned with policies to remove non-native species when they pose a potential risk to resources. □

Associated Press

FTC sends \$5.6 million in refunds to Ring customers as part of video privacy settlement

By W. GRANTHAM-PHILIPS
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Federal Trade Commission is sending more than \$5.6 million in refunds to consumers as part of a settlement with Amazon-owned Ring, which was charged with failing to protect private video footage from outside access.

In a 2023 complaint, the FTC accused the doorbell camera and home security provider of allowing its employees and contractors to access customers' private videos.

Ring allegedly used such footage to train algorithms without consent, among other purposes.

Ring was also charged with failing to implement key security protections, which enabled hackers to take

control of customers' accounts, cameras and videos. This led to "egregious violations of users' privacy," the FTC noted.

The resulting settlement required Ring to delete content that was found to be unlawfully obtained, establish stronger security protections and pay a hefty fine. The FTC says that it's now using much of that money to refund eligible Ring customers.

According to a Tuesday notice, the FTC is sending 117,044 PayPal payments to impacted consumers who had certain types of Ring devices including indoor cameras during the timeframes that the regulators allege unauthorized access took place.

Eligible customers will need to redeem these payments

within 30 days, according to the FTC which added that consumers can contact this case's refund administrator, Rust Consulting, or visit the FTC's FAQ page on refunds for more information about the process. In a statement sent to The Associated Press, Ring said that bad actors took emails and passwords that were "stolen from other companies to unlawfully log into Ring accounts of certain customers" who used the same credentials on multiple sites back in 2019 adding that the company promptly addressed this by notifying those it discovered to be "exposed in a third-party, non-Ring incident" and taking action to protect impacted accounts. Ring did not immediately



A person pushes the doorbell on his Ring doorbell camera, July 16, 2019, at his home in Wolcott, Conn.

Associated Press

address the FTC's allegations of employees and contractors unlawfully accessing footage.

Earlier this year, the California-based company separately announced that it

would stop allowing police departments to request doorbell camera footage from users, marking an end to a feature that had drawn criticism from privacy advocates. □

U.S. to pull troops from Chad and Niger as the African nations question its counterterrorism role

By **TARA COPP**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States will pull the majority of its troops from Chad and Niger as it works to restore key agreements governing what role there might be there for the American military and its counterterrorism operations, the Pentagon said Thursday.

Both African countries have been integral to the U.S. military's efforts to counter violent extremist organizations across the Sahel region, but Niger's ruling junta ended an agreement last month that allows U.S. troops to operate in the West African country. In recent days, neighboring Chad also has questioned whether an existing agreement covered the U.S. troops operating there.

The U.S. will relocate most of the approximately 100 forces it has deployed in Chad for now, Pentagon press secretary Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder said Thursday at a press briefing.

"As talks continue with



A U.S. and Niger flag are raised side by side at the base camp for air forces and other personnel supporting the construction of Niger Air Base 201 in Agadez, Niger, April 16, 2018.

Associated Press

Chadian officials, U.S. AFRICOM is currently planning to reposition some U.S. military forces from Chad, some portions of which were already scheduled to depart. This is a temporary

step as part of the ongoing review of our security cooperation, which will resume after Chad's May 6th presidential election," Ryder said.

In Niger, the majority of

the 1,000 U.S. personnel assigned there also are expected to depart, Ryder said.

U.S. and Nigerien officials were expected to meet Thursday in Niger's capital,

Niamey, "to initiate discussions on an orderly and responsible withdrawal of U.S. forces," the State Department said in a statement late Wednesday. Follow-up meetings between senior Pentagon and Niger officials are expected next week "to coordinate the withdrawal process in a transparent manner and with mutual respect," Ryder said.

Called status-of-forces agreements, these deals allow the U.S. to conduct critical counterterrorism operations within both countries' borders and have supported military partner training. The reversals have prompted concern that U.S. influence in Africa is losing ground to overtures from Russia and China.

Relations have frayed between Niger and Western countries since mutinous soldiers ousted the country's democratically elected president in July. Niger's junta has since told French forces to leave and turned instead to Russia for security. □

Gay actor's speech back on at Pennsylvania school after cancellation over his 'lifestyle'

By **BRUCE SHIPKOWSKI**
Associated Press

A gay actor's speech that was canceled over his "lifestyle" is back on at a Pennsylvania school after resi-

dents spoke out.

The Cumberland Valley School District's board voted 5-4 Wednesday night to allow children's book author Maulik Pancholy, who

is gay, to speak against bullying during a May 22 assembly at Mountain View Middle School. The board voted after hearing from residents, including more than a dozen students.

The board on April 15 unanimously canceled Pancholy's talk after a board member cited concerns about what he described as the actor's activism and "lifestyle." Some board members also noted the district enacted a policy about not hosting overtly political events after it was criticized for hosting a Donald Trump rally during his 2016 presidential campaign. Some community members said the cancellation was ill-advised and sent a hurtful message, especially to the LGBTQ+

community, and Superintendent Mark Blanchard and other district leaders sent a letter to the board, faculty and staff asserting that Pancholy's speech should have been allowed. The education officials said they were not given "a real opportunity" by the board to answer questions or provide guidance about the event, which they said was aimed at reinforcing the importance of treating all people equally.

Pancholy, 48, is an award-winning actor, including for his roles on the television shows "30 Rock" and "Weeds," and as the voice of Baljeet in the Disney animated series, "Phineas & Ferb." He also has written children's books and in 2014 was named by then-

President Barack Obama to serve on the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, where he co-founded a campaign to combat AAPI bullying.

Pancholy's appearance was scheduled by the school's leadership team, which each year selects an author to present a "unique educational experience for students," according to the district. At the April 15 meeting, school board members said they did not know what Pancholy would talk about, but one member said he didn't "want to run the risk" of what it might entail. "If you research this individual, he labels himself as an activist," Bud Shaffner said, according to Pennlive. □



Actor Maulik Pancholy attends the premiere of "Trishna" during the 2012 Tribeca Film Festival on Friday, April 27, 2012 in New York.

Associated Press

Ariel Henry resigns as prime minister of Haiti, paving the way for a new government to take power

By DANICA COTO

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti

(AP) — Ariel Henry resigned Thursday as prime minister of Haiti, leaving the way clear for a new government to be formed in the Caribbean country, which has been wracked by gang violence that killed or injured more than 2,500 people from January to March. Henry presented his resignation in a letter signed in Los Angeles, dated April 24, and released on Thursday by his office on the same day that a council tasked with choosing a new prime minister and Cabinet for Haiti was sworn in.

Henry's remaining Cabinet meanwhile chose Economy and Finance Minister Michel Patrick Boisvert as the interim prime minister. It was not immediately clear when the transitional council would select its own interim prime minister.

Addressing a crowded and sweaty room in the prime minister's office, Boisvert said that Haiti's crisis had gone on too long and that the country now found itself at a crossroads. The members of the transitional council stood behind him, as well as the country's top police and military officials. "After two long months of



Michel Patrick Boisvert, who was named interim prime minister by the cabinet of outgoing Prime Minister Ariel Henry, toasts during the swearing-in ceremony of the transitional council tasked with selecting Haiti's new prime minister and cabinet, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Thursday, April 25, 2024. Boisvert was previously the economy and finance minister.

debate ... a solution has been found," Boisvert said. "Today is an important day in the life of our dear republic."

He called the transitional council a "Haitian solution" and directing his remarks toward them, Boisvert wished them success, adding "I believe the determination is there."

After the speeches, the soft clink of glasses echoed

in the room as attendees served champagne flutes toasted with a somber "To Haiti."

The council was installed more than a month after Caribbean leaders announced its creation following an emergency meeting to tackle Haiti's spiraling crisis. Henry had pledged to resign once the council is installed.

The nine-member council,

of which seven have voting powers, is also expected to help set the agenda of a new Cabinet. It will also appoint a provisional electoral commission, a requirement before elections can take place, and establish a national security council. The council's non-renewable mandate expires Feb. 7, 2026, at which date a new president is scheduled to be sworn in.

Associated Press

Smith Augustin, a voting member of the council, said that it was unclear if the council would decide to keep Boisvert on as interim prime minister or choose another. He said it would be discussed in the coming days. "The crisis is unsustainable," he said. Regine Abraham, a nonvoting member of the council, recalled the July 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, explaining that "that violence had a devastating impact." Abraham said that gangs now controlled most of Port-au-Prince, tens of thousands of Haitians have been displaced by violence and more than 900 schools in the capital have been forced to close.

"The population of Port-au-Prince has literally been taken hostage," she said.

Gangs launched coordinated attacks that began on Feb. 29 in the capital, Port-au-Prince, and surrounding areas. They burned police stations and hospitals, opened fire on the main international airport that has remained closed since early March and stormed Haiti's two biggest prisons, releasing more than 4,000 inmates. Gangs also have severed access to Haiti's biggest port. □

A U.S. citizen facing drug charges in Russia appears in court. His case was adjourned until mid-May

MOSCOW (AP) — A U.S. citizen arrested on drug charges in Moscow amid soaring Russia-U.S. tensions appeared in court on Thursday and had his case adjourned until mid-May.

Robert Woodland Romanov is facing charges of trafficking large amounts of illegal drugs as part of an organized group — a criminal offense punishable by up to 20 years in prison. He was remanded into custody in January, and the trial began in the Ostankino District Court in late March.

"Our position is that there is, I may say, no evidence

of drug sales in the materials on the case," his lawyer Stanislav Kshevitskii told reporters.

The court set his next hearing date to May 14.

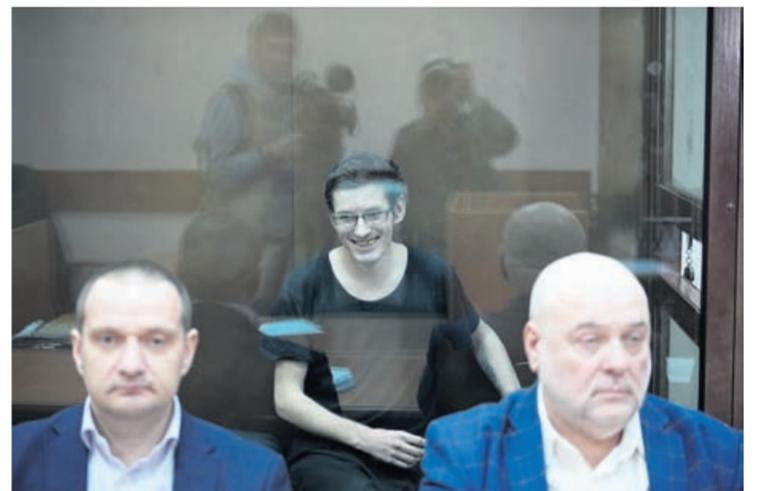
In January, the U.S. State Department said it was aware of reports of the recent detention of a U.S. citizen and noted that it "has no greater priority than the safety and security of U.S. citizens overseas," but refrained from further comment, citing privacy considerations. The U.S. Embassy in Moscow issued a similar statement at the time.

Russian media noted that

the name of the accused matches that of a U.S. citizen interviewed by the popular daily Komsomolskaya Pravda in 2020.

In the interview, the man said that he was born in the Perm region in the Ural Mountains in 1991 and was adopted by an American couple when he was 2. He said that he traveled to Russia to find his Russian mother and eventually met her on a television show in Moscow.

The man told Komsomolskaya Pravda that he liked living in Russia and decided to move there. □



U.S. citizen Robert Woodland Romanov sits in a glass cage behind his lawyers Stanislav Kshevitskii, left, and Alexei Miroshnichenko, prior to a court session on drug-related charges in Moscow, Russia, on Thursday, April 25, 2024

Associated Press

Congo questions Apple over knowledge of conflict minerals in its supply chain

By **GERALD IMRAY**
Associated Press

CAPE TOWN, South Africa

(AP) — Congo 's government is questioning Apple about the tech company's knowledge of "blood minerals" from a conflict zone in the African country that could be smuggled into its supply chains and is demanding answers within three weeks.

A group of international lawyers representing Congo said Thursday that they sent letters to Apple's CEO Tim Cook and its French subsidiary this week, raising concerns about human rights violations involving the minerals extracted from mines in the country's troubled east that might end up being used in the company's products.

They included a list of questions challenging Apple to show how it monitors its supply chains in a region where more than 100 armed rebel groups operate, some of whom have been accused of carrying out mass killings of civilians.

Writing to Cook, the lawyers said "it has become



A Congolese miner sifts through ground rocks to separate out the cassiterite, the main ore that's processed into tin, in the town of Nyabibwe, eastern Congo, Aug. 16, 2012.

Associated Press

clear to us that year after year, Apple has sold technology made with minerals sourced from a region whose population is being devastated by grave violations of human rights."

"The iPhones, Mac computers and accessories that Apple sells to its custom-

ers around the world rely on supply chains that are too opaque, and that are tainted by the blood of the Congolese people," the lawyers said.

Eastern Congo is one of the most mineral-rich regions in the world but is also the site of a huge humanitar-

ian disaster, with the armed groups fighting for years for control of the mines and the valuable minerals in them, and millions of people displaced and affected by the worsening violence. The situation has deteriorated badly in the last few months.

Apple, which has a market value of around \$2.6 trillion, has denied using minerals from mines and regions where human rights violations take place, saying it conducts business ethically and "responsibly" sources minerals in Congo and neighboring countries.

The minerals it buys don't finance war or armed groups, it says. The lawyers for the Congo government said "those claims do not appear to be based on concrete, verifiable evidence."

The Congo government said it has suspicions that some of the tin, tungsten, tantalum and gold known as the 3TG critical minerals that Apple sources from suppliers is smuggled out of Congo to neighboring Rwanda and then infiltrated into the global supply chain. The 3TG minerals are key components in electronics.

In response to a request for comment, Apple pointed to a section from a company filing on conflict minerals. □

EU military officer says a frigate has destroyed a drone launched from Yemen's Houthi-held areas

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — A top European Union military officer said that a frigate that's part of an EU mission

in the Red Sea to protect merchant shipping destroyed a drone launched from an area in Yemen

controlled by Houthi rebels on Thursday morning.

Austrian Gen. Robert Brieger, who is chair of the EU's military committee, said that it would be crucial for the bloc to "conserve resources" over the long haul because the threat posed by Houthi attacks "will not disappear" due to its connection to the Israel-Hamas war. "The task given to the military is simply to protect merchant ships and to show the public that the European Union is not willing to accept a terrorist organization will interrupt the freedom of movement at sea," Brieger said.

Brieger said that he's asking EU members to provide the necessary resources to the EU mission dubbed Aspides

Greek for "shields."

He said that it's the first time that the EU has launched a naval operation in a hostile environment that's twice the size of the 27-nation bloc, calling it a "litmus test" that the bloc will pass successfully.

The commander of an EU naval mission in the Red Sea, Greek Rear Adm. Vasilios Gryparis, wants to significantly increase its size to better defend against possible attacks by Houthi rebels based in Yemen. Nineteen of the 27 EU nations are involved in the mission, but only four frigates are patrolling an area twice the size of the bloc.

The EU mission was established in February to defend civilian vessels and doesn't

take part in any military strikes. The southern part of the Red Sea is deemed a high-risk zone.

Iran-backed Houthi rebels, which control much of Yemen's north and west, launched a campaign of drone and missile attacks on shipping in the Red Sea in November. They have also fired missiles toward Israel, although those have largely fallen short or been intercepted. The attacks have hit maritime trade to Egypt and Europe, with only around half the usual number of ships moving through the area. It's added up to two weeks of transit time for vessels that want to avoid the Suez Canal, hiking transport costs and shipping insurance. □



General Robert Brieger, chairman of the EU's Military Committee talks to the media during a press conference after a meeting with the Cyprus national guard chief Georgios Tsitsikostas at the Defense Ministry in capital Nicosia, Cyprus, on Thursday, April 25, 2024.

Associated Press



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Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost: Aruban fruits and vegetables

Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mangoes hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.

Mispel

This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sandpaper like texture when immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year-round.

Kenepa



Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

Druif

There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which

is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

Shimarucu

Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimarucu. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on



the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarucus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

Tamarind



A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

When it comes to veggies the island certainly offers a home-grown selection. They taste delicious and have their specific talents to boost your immune system. Start the day with a 'batida' (smoothie) enriched with a local veggie touch or select your restaurant that offers local vegetable dishes to get the real pure taste of it.

Comcomber chiquito

This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Comcomber chiquito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year-round.

Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra belongs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year-round.

Bonch'i Cunucu

A long, small bean, boiled for a side dish or snack. Long beans have a chewy, crunchy texture—more so than snap beans—and a flavor reminiscent of the dry navy bean or asparagus. Besides stir-fry, soups and salads, the long bean is a good choice for stewing, braising (to remain chewy and firm), sautéing, shallow frying, and deep frying. With cooking, the long bean's bean flavor intensifies. Long beans are low in calories, about 45 calories per cup, and rich in vitamin A and also contain vitamin C and potassium. Season: year-round.

Pampuna

In the endless summer of Caribbean living we only have to concern ourselves with a wet season and a dry season. Still we do indulge heavily in the pleasures of pumpkin and enjoy Caribbean pumpkin recipes year round. A popular dish in Aruban restaurants is Sopa Di Pampuna, don't miss it. This dish is made of pumpkin soup, and parsley. Pumpkins are rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as xanthin, lutein and carotenes and also contain vitamins. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. Pumpkins are used to make desserts, breads and soups. □

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Aruba Tourism Authority honors loyal visitors at Renaissance Ocean Suites!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing distinguished Visitors of Aruba. These Ambassadors were respectively honored with a certificate acknowledging their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:
Distinguished Visitors
Mr. Thomas Mattle & Mrs. Laurie Mattle from the United States.

Ms. Marouska Heyliger representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Renaissance Ocean Suites bestowed the honor certification to the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.



Top reasons for returning to Aruba, provided by the honorees were:

- Aruba's great weather.
- Aruba's wonderful food options.
- Aruba's activities.
- Aruba makes us feel safe.

- Aruba's beaches.
- On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honoree for his continued visits to the "One Happy Island". ☐

On April 27th, "Ban Caya!" will take place in San Nicolas In celebration of King's Day



BARIO UNICO is a project under CEDE ARUBA that focuses on how to reactivate and sustain Neighborhood Centers and neighborhood development in Aruba. To help achieve the goals of motivating the community to return to Neighborhood Centers, fostering unity, and promoting health and well-

being in the neighborhood, CEDE ARUBA joined forces with IBISA in 2023.

Recognizing the need to provide information, CEDE ARUBA and IBISA initiated the "BAN CAYA" project in 2023. Noord was the first district chosen, followed by Paradera/Piedra Plat. Two successful BAN CAYA

events yielded positive results for the neighborhood in general and the Neighborhood Centers.

Seeing this positive development, CEDE ARUBA and IBISA agreed to continue BAN CAYA in 2024 with 4 more editions. The first edition will take place in San Nicolas on Saturday,



April 27th. Pastor Hendrikstraat from the small roundabout near Filomena College to St. Paulus School will be closed off to host this event. BAN CAYA 2024 in San Nicolas will be presented by the Brazil Neighborhood Center and the Lago Heights Neighborhood Center. There will be a total of 46 activity and information points along the entire route, including covered areas at the YMCA and in the Joe Laveist Stadium. BAN CAYA San Nicolas will offer a wide variety of entertainment, including sports, social, cultural, artistic, and culinary sections. For children, there will be a kids' corner, health information booths, family games, and

opportunities to purchase delicious food and drinks. Activities will run from 4 pm to 8 pm. All shows will feature talents from San Nicolas. Bands from San Nicolas will also contribute to the atmosphere, with Groove Masters and "ATANIRO and Band" closing the BAN CAYA KING'S Edition. Filomena College has made its grounds available for parking.

Upon arrival, you can request an information folder about the various activities, and announcements will be made throughout the afternoon about ongoing events. The entire island of Aruba and guests are invited to celebrate King's Day at Ban Caya in San Nicolas! ☐

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Food culture in Aruba



(Oranjestad) - Like many other cultures, an important aspect of the Aruban cultural identity is our connection to food and food traditions. The local food traditions consist of a melting pot of different cultural and religious eating habits and dishes.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

The routine of breakfast, lunch and dinner on the island is one that does not completely follow a European or American routine, despite the major influences from these parts of the world on our culture and way of living. When it comes to the three important meals of the day, most of the Aruban population follows a Latin-American influenced routine.

Breakfast

Breakfast in Aruba is quite simple: a cup of coffee or tea, some bread, and sometimes an egg. Some-



times, due to the need of a quick "to-go" breakfast, you may also find many snack trucks and cafes that sell sandwiches, pastechis (meat pie), arepas and empanadas early in the morning.

Main Meal

The main meal is typically eaten in most households around noon or in the afternoon. This can consist of meat, fish, and chicken—stewed or fried—with funchi (polenta) or rice with stewed vegetables. Often, fried or boiled plantain or pan bati (Aruban pancake) is included. Stews are a staple in Aruban cuisine and can be largely influenced by Latin-American and Latin/Afro-Caribbean Stews. Some of the more unique stews and soups from the ABC Islands* include sopi di bonchi cora (red kidney bean soup with pig tail), sopi mondongo (tripe soup), carni stoba (beef stew), comcomber stoba (West Indian gherkin stew) and much more.

Dinner Time

Dinner time can vary significantly from household to household. Unlike the U.S. or in Europe, dinner time typically does not consist of a whole (warm) meal. Instead,



the evening "meal" can typically consist of something lighter, like a sandwich, though it is not uncommon to see leftovers from the main meal reheated and eaten again. Tea and coffee are often also served with the evening snack.

(Religious) Holidays

Christmas is probably the biggest global holiday, and every culture has its own spin on what their Christmas cuisine entails. In Aruba, our Christmas cuisine is again largely based on Latin-American influences, most notably from Venezuela. Ayacas and the famous pan di ham* are two crucial holiday dishes, along with stuffed turkey, roasted glazed ham topped with pineapples, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken) and potato salad, among other items. Traditional drinks include ponche crema (Aruban eggnog), chuculati pinda (hot chocolate with peanut butter), and homemade fruit punch. Desserts include, bolo di pistachio (pistachio cake), bolo di cashupete (cashew cake), quesillo (flan), bolo



preto (dark fruit cake), drigidek (gingerbread), pan boyo (bread cake) and more.

Snacks and tasty delights

Besides meals and dishes that are eaten on the dinner table, Aruba also has a food tradition that includes snacks and other tasty delights that you may easily find around the island. These include, Saco*, basket, pastechi, kroket, deditos, Johnny cake and more. These snacks are usually sold at local snack trucks and cafes, often located on the side of the road. In the area of Tanki Leendert and Tanki flip, for example, there are many of these trucks parked on the side of the road and often open until late at night—offering tasty and filling snacks post night-life fun. □

*ABC Islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao

*Pan di ham: Derived from the Venezuelan Pan de Jamon (rolled up bread with ham, raisins and olives)

*Saco: Saco literally means "bag". Saco contains fried potatoes, plantains, chicken (and ribs) and a Johnny cake, served in a paper bag.

Source: Voeding, voedingsgewoonten en gerechten op Aruba (Nutrition, Food Traditions and Dishes on Aruba) by Biblioteca Nacional Aruba

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Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals

(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.



Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable. Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face a fine that they have to pay before leaving. This is surely not a pleasant experience for the tourist. This also leads to a

negative reaction which can put our tourism in a negative light. Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies. We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours! □

Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back or still enjoying your vacation?... we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

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Did you know about... Basic driving rules on Aruba (part 2)

(Oranjestad)—In Yesterday's issue, we've provided some basic rules when driving on the four-lane highways and roundabouts on the island. Today, we want to offer you more tips and tricks when it comes to driving on the roads and highways of Aruba.

Speed limit in certain areas

As mentioned in yesterday's issue, the legal minimum and maximum speed limit on the island is 50 and 80 km/h respectively. However, there are some areas where it is mandated to drive up to a certain speed. This is always indicated by a circular traffic sign with red border and the number 50 on it. Signs like these are always paired

by a similar sign with the number crossed out further down the road. This means that the mandate for this speed is now over; you may increase your velocity. Red borders on traffic sign—whether it's a circle or triangle—usually signal a warning, prohibition or preference.

Besides the "50" sign, you may also

encounter a traffic sign that says "bebouwde kom". These can be found in San Nicolas and Oranjestad. Bebouwde kom signs are rectangular and blue, and essentially tell you that you are in a heavily inhabited area. The maximum speed limit in a bebouwde kom is 50 km/h. Just like the previous pair, bebouwde kom signs are also paired with a similar sign crossed out.

Priority signs

On the main roads of Aruba (not the highways), you may see a yellow, squared sign with a white border. This sign tells you that on this road, you have priority and all other traffic should yield to you. This sign can be seen in Savaneta for example. So, if you are driving on the main road in Savaneta going to San Nicolas, you are driving on a single long road, and other cars that want to get on this main road or cross it, either from an intersection or from a dirt road, must all wait until traffic on the main road is clear. In other words, you do not have to stop for them. This sign too has a counter part that indicates that your priority is over.

Another priority sign you may encounter is a triangle sign with a red border and something that looks like a cross. You'll see this sign in an intersection. The general rule of thumb for crossing an intersection that do not contain traffic lights, roundabouts, sign or arrows on the road, is to always yield for traffic on your right. However, if you encounter this sign on your side of the intersection, you have priority over the other cars, even the one on your right.

However, be careful not to confuse this sign with a similar up-side down triangle, also found on intersections. This sign is a prohibition sign, telling you that you have to stop and give other cars priority. Of course you also have a "stop" sign that mean the same thing. The stop sign is generally used for tricky intersections with minimal view of opposite incoming traffic.

These are some of the basic rules that you would have to know if you decide to drive on the island. These are of course other traffic signs, and we recommend you visit aruba-travelguide.com for an extensive overview of all traffic signs used on Aruba. □

Picture credits: aruba-travelguide.com



bebouwde kom



end bebouwde kom



end priority



end speed limit



intersection priority



priority



speed limit



stop sign



triangle stop sign

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 43 "Rolling in the Deep"

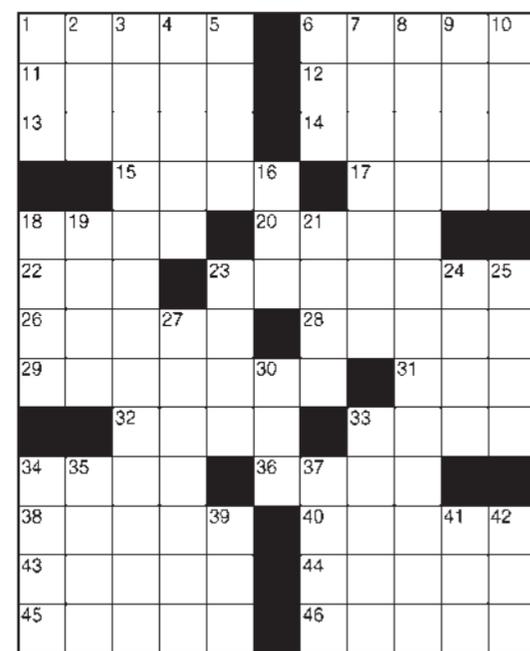
- 1 Not flimsy
- 6 Molten rock
- 11 Battery end
- 12 Mexican farewell
- 13 Gothic architecture feature
- 14 Pool hall stuff
- 15 Pollux's mother
- 17 Cuts off
- 18 God with a hammer
- 20 Cruise stop
- 22 Drill target
- 23 Hates
- 26 Carl's wife in "Up"
- 28 Perfect
- 29 Guile
- 31 Status —
- 32 One of a bear family
- 33 Fetching
- 34 Salon sound
- 36 Half a sextet
- 38 North African capital
- 40 Verdi pieces

DOWN

- 1 Slump
- 2 "Not — dare!"
- 3 Tall trees
- 4 Lazy sort
- 5 Title paper
- 6 Buddy
- 7 Stuck
- 8 Tall trees
- 9 Blue cheese feature
- 10 Sets the price at
- 16 Clumsy one
- 18 Foot features
- 19 Rise
- 21 Elevator pioneer
- 23 Like an abyss
- 24 Lacking slack
- 25 Tart fruit
- 27 Heaped up
- 30 Popped down
- 33 Date qualifier
- 34 Rough guess
- 35 Au naturel
- 37 Foolhardy
- 39 Ready to go
- 41 Trickery
- 42 Spot



Yesterday's answer



4-26

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-26

CRYPTOQUOTE

DXN OPM GJI JXBJICG UVPTK
CP GJDG XO APT NXCC XG.
APT QXVV JXG D VPOGA
N P T E G D X E . — N D P M X
W M P R I M Z

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: DEMOCRACY IS THE RECURRENT SUSPICION THAT MORE THAN HALF OF THE PEOPLE ARE RIGHT MORE THAN HALF THE TIME. — E.B. WHITE

Cruise ship Schedule: Apr 22 - Apr 30 2024

TUE	30	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS	08.00	20.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00	22.00	C	1
		CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	I	1

Cruise ship Schedule: May 01 - May 22 2024

TUE	07	CARNIVAL MAGIC	09.00	22.00	C	1
TUE	14	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS	08.00	21.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00	22.00	C	1
WED	15	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	09.00	21.00	C	1
TUE	21	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	C	1
WED	22	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION	08.00	22.00	C	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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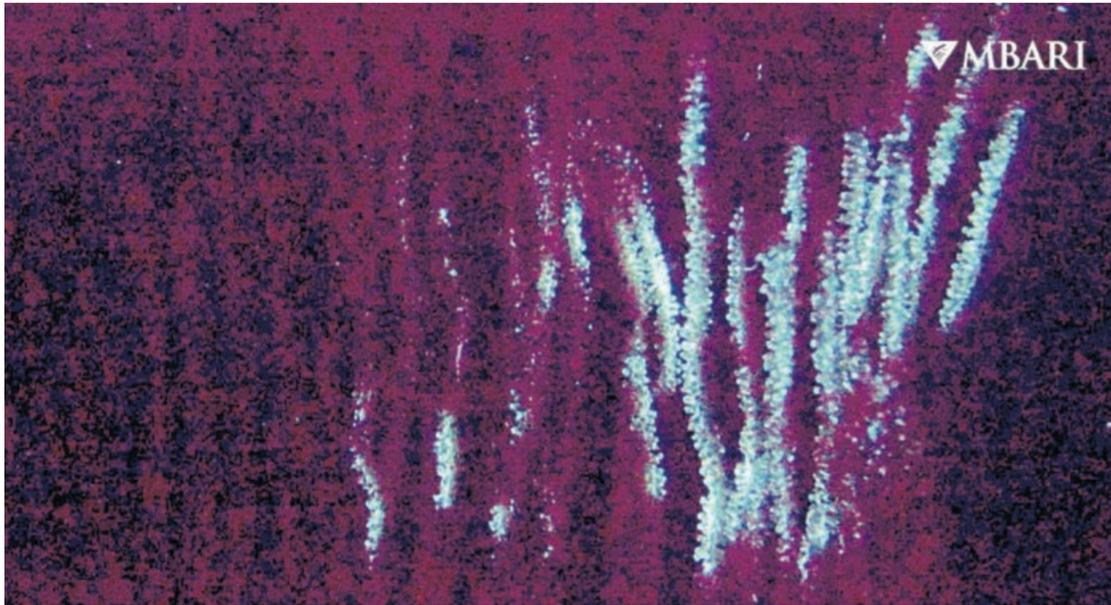
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The first glow-in-the-dark animals may have been ancient corals deep in the ocean



This image from video provided by the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute in April 2024 shows bioluminescence in the shaggy bamboo coral *Isidella tentaculum* filmed in the ocean by a remotely operated vehicle.

Associated Press

By **CHRISTINA LARSON**
AP Science Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) — Many animals can glow in the dark. Fireflies famously blink on summer evenings. But most animals that light up are found in the depths of the ocean.

In a new study, scientists report that deep-sea corals that lived 540 million years ago may have been the first animals to glow, far earlier than previously thought.

"Light signaling is one of the earliest forms of communication that we know of it's very important in deep waters," said Andrea Quattrini, a co-author of the study published Tuesday in the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*. Today, marine creatures that glimmer include some fish, squid, octopuses, jellyfish, even sharks all the result of chemical reactions. Some use light to startle predators, "like a burglar alarm," and others use it to lure prey, as anglerfish do, said Quattrini, who is curator of corals at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

Still other animals use light as a beacon to find mates. Many deep-sea soft coral species light up briefly when bumped or when stroked with a paintbrush. That's what scientists used, attached to a remote-

controlled underwater rover, to identify and study luminous species, said Steven Hadcock, a study co-author and marine biologist at the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute.

Soft coral may look like waving reeds, skeleton fingers or stalks of bamboo and glow pink, orange, white, blue and purple under the researchers' spotlight, he said.

"For some species, the whole body glows for others, only parts of their branches will glow," said Danielle DeLeo, a study co-author and evolutionary marine biologist at the Smithsonian.

For corals, scientists aren't

sure if this luminous reaction is meant to attract or repel other organisms, or perhaps both. But its frequency suggests that it serves a crucial function in many coral species, she said. But how long have some coral species had the ability to glow?

To answer this question, the researchers used genetic data from 185 species of luminous coral to construct a detailed evolutionary tree. They found that the common ancestor of all soft corals today lived 540 million years ago and very likely could glow or bioluminescence.

That date is around 270 million years before the previ-

ously earliest known example: a glowing prehistoric shrimp. It also places the origin of light production to around the time of the Cambrian explosion, when life on Earth evolved and diversified rapidly giving rise to many major animal groups that exist today. "If an animal had a novel trait that made it really special and helped it survive, its descendants were more likely to endure and pass it down," said Stuart Sandin, a marine biologist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, who was not involved in the study. □

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What do weight loss drugs mean for a diet industry built on eating less and exercising more?

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Ever since college, Brad Jobling struggled with his weight, fluctuating between a low of 155 pounds when he was in his 30s to as high as 220. He spent a decade tracking calories on WeightWatchers, but the pounds he dropped always crept back onto his 5-foot-5-inch frame.

A little over a year ago, the 58-year-old Manhattan resident went on a new weight loss drug called Wegovy. He's lost 30 pounds, and has started eating healthier food and exercising — the habits behind many commercial diet plans and decades of conventional wisdom on sustainable weight loss.

Yet Jobling's experience also has altered his perspective on dieting. He now sees obesity as a disease that requires medical intervention, not just behavioral changes. In fact, he thinks he will need to stay on a drug like Wegovy for the rest of his life even though it has taken some of the joy out of eating.

"I don't see how you can maintain (the weight) without medication," Jobling said. "Obviously, it's all about self-control. But I think it's less of a struggle to really maintain healthy eating when you got that assistance."

Like the lives of the people taking them, recent injected drugs like Wegovy and its predecessor, the diabetes medication Ozempic, are reshaping the U.S. health and fitness industries. They have proven successful in eliminating unwanted pounds more quickly and easily than consuming fewer and burning more calories alone. Such is their disruptive power that even established diet companies like WeightWatchers and brands like Lean Cuisine are getting makeovers.

Although celebrities like Oprah Winfrey have spoken publicly of the drugs as revolutionary, some health



Slim Fast weight loss products are seen at a Kroger supermarket, Friday, April 12, 2024, in Marietta, Ga.

Associated Press

experts worry that businesses without any expertise will start dispensing the prescription medications along with bad advice and unproven therapies.

A DEMAND TOO BIG TO IGNORE

At least 3 million prescriptions for the class of medications known as GLP-1 agonists were issued each month in the U.S. during the 12 months that ended in March, according to data from health technology company IQVIA. They include semaglutide, the drug in Ozempic and Wegovy, and tirzepatide, the drug in Mounjaro and Zepbound. Morgan Stanley research analysts have estimated that 24 million people, or 7% of the U.S. population, will be using GLP-1 drugs by 2035.

The world's leading diet programs have taken note of such statistics and incorporated the popular drugs into their existing subscription plans.

WeightWatchers, which was founded in 1963, last year acquired telehealth provider Sequence, enabling members to get prescriptions for weight loss drugs. WeightWatchers is sticking with its focus on behavior change as the cornerstone of weight reduction but launched

virtual clinics that provide customized exercise and nutrition plans, as well as prescription care, for individuals who want to lose 20% of their body weight on average.

"The weight loss space will be led by the acknowledgement that weight loss is a matter of health care," WeightWatchers CEO Sima Sistani told analysts earlier this year. "This is a paradigm shift because weight loss has been and, unfortunately, often still is viewed as a vanity issue."

The Mayo Clinic, which first offered a weight management plan in book form in 1949, has published an updated version of the long-time bestseller, titled "The Mayo Clinic Diet: Weight-Loss Medications Edition." The Mayo Clinic Diet program also has expanded to include access to weight loss drugs and advice on managing any side effects, according to Digital Wellness CEO Scott Penn, whose company developed an online platform for the original program.

The new drugs have made being very overweight "feel more medical as a condition," he said.

GYMS AND DIET FOOD COMPANIES LOOK TO MUSCLE IN

Luxury athletic club opera-

tor Life Time launched a membership program last year that offers comprehensive medical testing, personalized training and a host of alternative therapies like cryotherapy. Members of the Miora program also can get Ozempic and other weight loss drugs through the medical staff of a clinic that opened in Minneapolis last year. Jeff Zwiefel, executive director of Life Time Miora, called the new drugs a "game changer" for the fitness industry.

"We have an opportunity and an obligation and a responsibility to help people achieve results in conjunction with medical providers and make sure that that's the way to go," he said.

Fitness chains are banking on the idea people on the drugs will lose enough weight to overcome any self-consciousness or physical limits that kept them from exercising. The gym franchise Equinox started a new personal training program in January for prescription-holders who want to preserve or build muscle mass as they shed unwanted pounds.

The world of drug-assisted weight loss also is altering the ambitions of food companies. Sales of SlimFast, a line of meal replace-

ment shakes and snacks sold at supermarkets, have dropped as people turn to weight loss drugs and retailers cut shelf space for diet products, the brand's parent company, Glanbia, told investors in February. Since the drugs suppress the appetites of people taking them, Glanbia and other companies are marketing their products as a source of adequate nutrients for people taking GLP-1s. Swiss multinational Nestle SA thinks it can benefit from the drugs' popularity and is expanding its Lean Cuisine frozen meals and OPTIFAST protein shakes.

"Diets are cool again," Nestle SA CEO Ulf Mark Schneider told analysts in February. "It's something that people used to do quietly on the side, uncertain about their outcomes."

PROMISING RESULTS AND A WEALTH OF UNKNOWNNS

Research has shown that about a third of people lose 5% or more of their body weight with diet and exercise alone, according to Dr. Louis Aronne, director of the Comprehensive Weight Control Center at Weill Cornell Medical school. In comparison, the medicine in the diabetes drug Mounjaro helped people with obesity or who are overweight lose at least a quarter of their weight when combined with restricted calories and exercise, a new study showed.

But some experts worry about businesses marketing the drugs or serving as fitness coaches for patients on the medications. Dr. Cian Wade, a health care consultant for the global strategy and management firm Kearney, said he's concerned about a proliferation of clinics that don't have as much experience with obesity and related health conditions. "There's a potential worry that for some patients, (the clinics) will not have the right expertise at hand to be able to appropriately manage the side effects, nutrition-related issues," he said. □

Minnesota's Naz Reid wins NBA's Sixth Man of the Year award, edging Malik Monk in close vote

By **BRIAN MAHONEY**
AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Naz Reid was having a productive season as a reserve when the Minnesota Timberwolves needed him in the starting lineup while playing without All-Star Karl-Anthony Towns.

Reid was excellent in that role, too, helping the Timberwolves to the second-best season in franchise history.

Reid was rewarded with the NBA's Sixth Man of the Year on Wednesday, edging Sacramento's Malik Monk in a close vote to become the third undrafted player to win the award for the league's best reserve.

Reid averaged career highs of 13.5 points and 5.2 rebounds in 81 games. The forward-center came off the bench 67 times, getting a feel for the game in the early minutes before getting his chance to impact it.

"I kind of joke around with my teammates a little bit, but it's kind of a saying where I feel like we have



Minnesota Timberwolves center Naz Reid (11) works around Atlanta Hawks forward Mouhamed Gueye during the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game Friday, April 12, 2024, in Minneapolis.

to keep the momentum going, anyway," Reid said in an interview on TNT after the award was announced. "Either we got to have the mentality to come back in the game, or to push the lead forward." The 6-foot-9 Reid helped the Timberwolves do that

plenty of times en route to a 56-26 record to earn the No. 3 seed in the Western Conference. They have a 2-0 lead over the Phoenix Suns in their first-round series. Towns was hurt in March and missed the next 18 games. Yet the Wolves hardly slowed down, going

10-3 from March 16 to April 10 while Reid started 12 of the 13 games. He averaged 17.1 points on 45.4% shooting during that span. Reid got 45 first-place votes to 43 for Monk from a panel of 99 reporters and broadcasters who cover the league. Both players had

39 second-place votes and 10 third-place votes, giving Reid a total of 352 points to Monk's 342.

Milwaukee's Bobby Portis Jr. finished third. Norman Powell of the Clippers was fourth and Atlanta's Bogdan Bogdanovic rounded out the top five.

Reid was undrafted out of LSU in 2019, originally joining the Timberwolves with a two-way contract that summer. The fan favorite played his way into a multi-year contract extension last summer, then rewarded the Wolves this season with 843 points off the bench, second-most in franchise history.

He twice reached 30 points and had 20 or more 14 times, both career bests, and said the award was special for the fans who have supported him since the beginning of his career. "They've seen me work from Day 1. Since the moment I got here I changed my body, I changed my mentality, I changed the direction I wanted to go in life," Reid said. □

Associated Press

Not every WNBA draft pick will make her team's roster. Here's why

By **The Associated Press**

The WNBA draft is over, and superstars like No. 1 pick Caitlin Clark are heading toward surefire pro careers. Not all 36 selections from his year's draft will have such assurances. The league has 144 coveted roster spots among 12 teams, and other options for pro careers in women's basketball either in the U.S. or overseas are scarce.

It's a sharp contrast from men's prospects who don't make NBA rosters. They have more opportunities, including more overseas opportunities and playing in the G League.

The NBA also has 30 teams with 15 players allowed on the regular season roster, so there are more spots available.

Why don't all WNBA draft picks make team rosters? There's a simple reason

why being among those 36 draft picks doesn't ensure a roster spot: most of the spots will be taken by returning players.

Only 19 of the 2023 picks played at least one game in the WNBA last season. Since 2018, 142 of 216 draft picks (65.7%) have played in a WNBA game at some point in their career.

The high mark was 28 of the 36 draftees in 2019. Players have tried to carve out a WNBA chance by playing professionally overseas, but those jobs are also at a premium. Brittney Griner's nine-month incarceration in Moscow along with the war in Ukraine have led to the elimination of dozens of potential jobs in Russia.

Will the top college stars make it in the WNBA?

Clark, the former Iowa player and the NCAA's career

leading scorer, was picked first overall by the Indiana Fever, and she'll certainly get a chance. The same is likely true for Stanford's Cameron Brink (No. 2, Los Angeles) and national champion South Carolina star Kamilla Cardoso (No. 3, Chicago).

Last year, only seven of 12 second-round picks and three of 12 third-round picks saw any regular-season action. That suggests nothing is guaranteed for NCAA Tournament standouts like UConn's Nika Mühl (drafted No. 14, Seattle Storm) and Iowa's Kate Martin (No. 18, Las Vegas Aces).

Why does it matter? Of course, it's disappointing for players who come so close to fulfilling their WNBA dreams but get squeezed out because of numbers. It also can be a big deal for fans who no longer get to

see a favorite college player on the court.

"You can be a great college player and not make a WNBA roster," ESPN WNBA analyst LaChina Robinson said last year. "You're not only competing with play-

ers that are currently on the roster, but also a ton of women's basketball players overseas that have been honing their skills and waiting for opportunity to break into the WNBA." □



South Carolina's Kamilla Cardoso, left, poses for a photo with WNBA commissioner Cathy Engelbert after being selected third overall by the Chicago Sky during the first round of the WNBA basketball draft, Monday, April 15, 2024, in New York.

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USA Track & Field expands its maternity policy to give athletes more time to work their way back

By **PAT GRAHAM**
AP Sports Writer

U.S. Olympic hurdler Christina Clemons sent numerous emails to those in the track community raising concerns over a gap in health care insurance coverage for new mothers who still wanted to compete. Those baby steps turned into big strides as USA Track & Field unveiled a program Thursday that expands an existing maternity support system to give athletes more time to work their way back. It's one less hurdle for women in the sport who want to start a family in the middle of their careers. For Clemons, it's a way to help carry the baton and follow in the footsteps of Allyson Felix and others who have been advocating for equality for mothers on and off the track. "There is a huge lack of support in sports in general



Christina Clemons, of the United States, and Helena Jiranova, of the Czech Republic, compete in a women's 60 meters hurdles heat during the World Athletics Indoor Championships at the Emirates Arena in Glasgow, Scotland, Sunday, March 3, 2024.
Associated Press

when it comes to mothers, which is crazy to me," said the 33-year-old Clemons, who gave birth to her son, Kylo, on Feb. 4, 2023, and is trying to make the U.S. team for the Paris Games this summer. "This program (by USATF) really is filling a gap and coming in and saving the day. You don't

feel so pressured to perform at a time when no matter what you do, you really can't not a year after pregnancy." Under the current system, a Team USA athlete can gain assistance through the Elite Athlete Health Insurance set up by the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Commit-

tee. It provides insurance for one year after the end of a pregnancy, with the caveat that an athlete still expects to compete. There's also an athlete stipend. USATF's new plan increases the time frame to give an athlete more of an opportunity to recover and more chances to requalify for their funding, which is based on results and rankings through a tiered system that need to be achieved by a certain date. To qualify for tier status, an athlete must meet certain criteria such as being a medalist or finalist in the most recent major meet (Olympics or world championships) or finish in the top 15 in the world rankings. There are other levels, too, based on performance. This season, USATF's expanded policy includes six athletes, with funding part

of the organization's overall budget. It reimburses for COBRA health care premiums, along with providing additional support through the USATF's high-performance programs. "For us, it's a pretty simple fix — and an important fix," said Renee Chube Washington, the chief operating officer for USATF. "It's stressful being a new mom or dad. ... If we can help ease a little bit of that stress, we can and we will." For so long, women in track and field encountered the same sort of message — get pregnant and face barriers. Through the actions over the years of some of the sport's top runners like Felix, Kara Goucher and Alycia Montano, more light is being cast on the subject. They successfully lobbied for more protections over endorsement-contract terms. □