

U.S. opioid lawsuits on verge of settlements with 4 companies

By GEOFF MULVIHILL
Associated Press

The yearslong effort by state and local governments in the U.S. to force the pharmaceutical industry to help pay to fix a nationwide opioid addiction and overdose crisis took a major step forward Tuesday when lawyers for local governments announced they were on the verge of a \$26 billion settlement with the nation's three biggest drug distribution companies and the drugmaker Johnson & Johnson.

Under the deal, Johnson & Johnson would not produce any opioids for at least a decade. And AmerisourceBergen, Cardinal Health and McKesson share prescribing information under a new system intended to stop the avalanches of pills that arrived in some regions about a decade ago.

Lawyers for local governments said full details could be shared within days. That would not be the end of the deal though; each state would have 30 days to decide whether to join. And local governments will have five months after that to decide. If governments don't opt in, the settlement total would go down.

"This is a nationwide crisis and it could have been and should have been addressed perhaps by other branches of government," Paul Geller, one of the lead lawyers representing local governments across the U.S., said in a conference call with reporters Tuesday. "But this really is an example of the use of litigation for fixing a national problem."



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This Aug. 29, 2018, file photo shows an arrangement of Oxycodone pills in New York.

Associated Press

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U.S. opioid lawsuits on verge of settlements with 4 companies

Continued from Front

If approved, the settlement will likely be the biggest of many settlements to opioid litigation. While it means billions for lawyers who worked the cases, it is expected to bring more than \$23 billion to abatement and mitigation efforts to help get treatment for people who are addicted along with other programs to address the crisis. The money would come in 18 annual payments, with the biggest amounts in the next several years.

The deal echoes one the companies have been pushing, sometimes in public, for two years.

Johnson & Johnson reiterated in a statement that it's prepared to contribute up to \$5 billion to the national settlement.

"There continues to be progress toward finalizing this agreement and we remain committed to providing certainty for involved parties and critical assistance for families and communities in need," the company said. "The settlement is not an admission of liability or wrongdoing, and the Company will continue to defend against any litigation that the final agreement does not resolve."

But Cardinal Health declined to comment early Tuesday, and the other distribution companies did not respond to requests for comment.

An Associated Press tally finds there have been at least \$40 billion in completed or proposed settlements, penalties and fines between governments and the toll of opioids since 2007, not including one between the federal government and OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma in which most of the \$8.3 billion



Nassau County Executive Laura Curran, right, speaks at a news conference to discuss a settlement in an opioid trial, Tuesday, July 20, 2021, in Central Islip, N.Y.

would be waived. Purdue is trying to reach a deal through bankruptcy court that could be worth \$10 billion over time; a hearing on that plan is scheduled for August.

Other deals are possible. While a growing number of companies in the industry have struck deals, some manufacturers have not — and no pharmacy companies have struck nationwide settlements.

But the total amount in the settlements is far below estimates of the financial costs of the epidemic. The Society of Actuaries found that the cost of the crisis in the U.S. was \$630 billion from 2015 through 2018, with most of the costs borne by the private sector. And the White House Council of Economic Advisers, when considering the economic impact of people who fatally overdosed, put the one-year cost at about \$500 billion nationally.

Unlike with the tobacco settlements reached in the 1990s, governments have

agreed to spend money they bring in from opioid-related settlements to deal with the opioid crisis.

In a joint statement, the attorneys general for Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Tennessee said the settlement talks with the four companies are "potentially nearing their completion," and that, "we look forward to bringing much-needed dollars home to our states to help people recover from opioid addiction and to fundamentally change the opioid manufacturing and distributing industries so this never happens again."

But they still have choices ahead on exactly how they do it.

"Is it a nice chunk of change?" asked Ryan Hampton, who is in recovery from an opioid addiction and is a Las Vegas-based advocate for policy to address the overdose crisis. "Sure it is. Will it go to

where it needs to go? The jury's still out on that."

Even before the settlement plan was unveiled Tuesday, a group of public health advocates and experts began calling for any settlement money to be spent to address the opioid crisis.

"It's money that can do a lot of good if it's used well," said Joshua Sharfstein, a vice dean at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, who is spearheading the effort. "It's really important to use it well to save lives because it's coming at the peak of the overdose epidemic."

Private lawyers on the Plaintiffs' Executive Committee representing local governments in opioid lawsuits across the country announced some details of the settlement Tuesday even before it was completed. The decision to do so was partly because the state of New York reached a settlement Tuesday with the three big distribution companies amid a trial playing out in a state court

on Long Island.

New York's deal, worth more than \$1 billion, represents the share of the national deal it will receive from distributors if the national deal is finalized. New York also reached a similar deal last month with Johnson & Johnson worth \$230 million.

"Today, we're holding them accountable delivering more than \$1 billion more into New York communities ravaged by opioids for treatment, recovery, and prevention efforts," New York Attorney General Letitia James said in a statement Tuesday.

The trial is expected to continue, but the settlement leaves only three drug manufacturers as defendants.

Other manufacturers, regional distribution companies and pharmacies will remain in the New York and other cases for now. Closing arguments in a West Virginia trial against the distributors are expected to proceed as scheduled next week. The attorney general there, Patrick Morrisey, said the state would probably not agree to the terms.

The state and local governments say distribution companies did not have proper controls to flag or halt shipments to pharmacies that received oversized shares of powerful and addictive prescription painkillers. The companies have maintained they were filling orders of legal drugs placed by doctors — so they should not shoulder blame for the nation's addiction and overdose crisis. An Associated Press analysis of federal distribution data found that enough prescription opioids were shipped in 2012 for every person in the U.S. to have a 20-day supply. □

Big infrastructure bill in peril; GOP threatens filibuster

By **LISA MASCARO**
and **KEVIN FREKING**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

The bipartisan infrastructure deal senators brokered with President Joe Biden is hanging precariously ahead of a crucial Wednesday test vote as senators struggle over how to pay for nearly \$1 trillion in public works spending.

Tensions were rising Tuesday as Republicans prepared to mount a filibuster over what they see as a rushed and misguided process. With Biden preparing to hit the road to rally support for his big infrastructure ideas — including some \$3.5 trillion in a follow up bill — restless Democrats say it's time to at least start debate on this first phase of his proposals.

"It is not a fish or cut bait moment," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., describing the procedural vote as just a first step to "get the ball rolling" as bipartisan talks progress.

Six months after Biden took office, his signature "Build Back Better" campaign promise is at a key moment that will test the presidency and his hopes for a new era of bipartisan cooperation in Washington.

White House aides and the bipartisan group of senators have huddled privately since Sunday trying to wrap up the deal, which would be a first phase of an eventual \$4 trillion-plus package of domestic outlays — not just for roads and bridges, but foundations of everyday life including child care, family tax breaks, education and an expansion of Medicare for seniors.

Biden calls it a "blue-collar blueprint for building an American economy back." He asserted Tuesday that Americans are overwhelmingly in support of his plan and "that's the part that a lot of our friends on the other team kind of miss."

The other team begs to differ.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell and some outside groups decry what



The U.S. Capitol is seen in Washington, Tuesday, July 20, 2021.
Associated Press

they call Biden's "spending spree," and McConnell has said big spending is "the last thing American families need."

A core group of Republicans are interested in pursuing a more modest package of traditional highway and public works projects, about \$600 billion in new funds, and say they just need more time to negotiate with the White House. Biden has been in touch with both Democrats and Republicans for several days, and his outreach will continue "until he has both pieces of legislation on his desk to sign them into law," White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said Tuesday. While Biden proposes paying for his proposals with a tax hike on corporations and wealthy Americans who earn more than \$400,000 a year, the bipartisan group has been working almost around the clock to figure out a compromise way to pay for its package, having dashed ideas for boosting the gas tax drivers pay at the pump or strengthening the Internal Revenue Service to go after tax scofflaws.

Instead, senators in the bipartisan group are considering rolling back a Trump-era rule on pharmaceutical rebates that could bring in some \$170 billion to be used for infrastructure. Ten Republicans would be needed in the evenly split Senate to join all 50 Democrats in reaching the 60-vote threshold required to advance the bill past a filibuster to formal consideration.

Republicans are reluctant to open debate as the bipartisan bill remains a work in progress.

At a private lunch meeting Tuesday, McConnell and others urged Republican senators to vote no, ac-

cording to a person granted anonymity to discuss the session.

"We're not going to vote to proceed to a bill that doesn't exist yet," Sen. Roy Blunt of Missouri said afterward.

Some senators want to delay the vote to Monday. "We're making progress, but we need more time," said Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, one of the members of the bipartisan group.

By setting the vote now, Schumer is trying to nudge negotiations along, a strategy both parties have used before. If it fails Wednesday he can set another vote to proceed to the bill later.

Many Republicans are wary of moving ahead with the first, relatively slim package, fearing it will pave the

way for the broader \$3.5 trillion effort Democrats are preparing to pass on their own under special budget rules that only require 51 votes. Vice President Kamala Harris can break a tie. Meanwhile, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has been working to keep restless Democrats in her chamber in line, as rank-and-file lawmakers grow impatient with the sluggish Senate pace. Liberal Democrats, in particular, are eager to make gains on Biden's priorities — with or without Republicans.

"Time's a wasting, I want to get this work done," Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash., the chairwoman of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, told reporters Tuesday. □

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Trump inaugural committee head accused of being UAE agent

By **BRIAN MELLEY** and **LARRY NEUMEISTER**

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The chair of former President Donald Trump's 2017 inaugural committee was arrested Tuesday on charges alleging he conspired to influence Trump's foreign policy positions to benefit the United Arab Emirates and commit crimes striking at what prosecutors described as "the very heart of our democracy."

Tom Barrack, 74, of Santa Monica, California, was among three men charged in federal court in Brooklyn, New York, with conspiring to act as an unregistered foreign agent as they tried to influence foreign policy while Trump was running in 2016 and later while he was president.

Besides conspiracy, Barrack was charged with obstruction of justice and making multiple false statements during a June 2019 interview with federal agents. Also charged in a seven-count indictment were Matthew Grimes, 27, of Aspen, Colorado, and Rashid al Malik, 43, of the United Arab Emirates.

"The defendants repeatedly capitalized on Barrack's friendships and access to a candidate who was eventually elected President, high-ranking campaign and government officials,



This photo from Thursday Jan. 19, 2017, shows Inaugural Committee chairman Tom Barrack speaks at a pre-Inaugural "Make America Great Again! Welcome Celebration" at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington.

and the American media to advance the policy goals of a foreign government without disclosing their true allegiances," Acting Assistant Attorney General Mark Lesko said in a release.

Prosecutors said Barrack not only agreed to promote UAE foreign policy interests through his unique access and influence, but also provided UAE government officials with sensitive information about developments within the Trump administration including how senior U.S. officials felt about the Qatari blockade conducted by the UAE and other Middle Eastern coun-

tries.

"Worse, in his communications with Al Malik, the defendant framed his efforts to obtain an official position within the Administration as one that would enable him to further advance the interests of the UAE, rather than the interests of the United States," prosecutors wrote in a letter seeking his detention.

Authorities said Barrack served as an informal adviser to Trump's campaign from April 2016 to November 2016 and chair of the Presidential Inaugural Committee from November 2016 to January 2017. Beginning in January 2017,

he informally advised senior U.S. government officials on Middle East foreign policy, they added.

Authorities cited several specific instances when Barrack or others allegedly sought to influence U.S. policies, noting that, in May 2016, Barrack inserted language praising the UAE into a campaign speech Trump delivered about U.S. energy policy and emailed an advance draft of the speech to be delivered to senior UAE officials.

"Similarly, throughout 2016 and 2017, the defendants sought and received direction and feedback, including talking points, from

senior UAE officials in connection with national press appearances Barrack used to promote the interests of the UAE," authorities said in a statement.

They said that after one appearance in which Barrack repeatedly praised the United Arab Emirates, Barrack emailed al Malik, saying: "I nailed it. . . for the home team," referring to the UAE.

Phone and email messages sent to the UAE Embassy in Washington were not immediately returned.

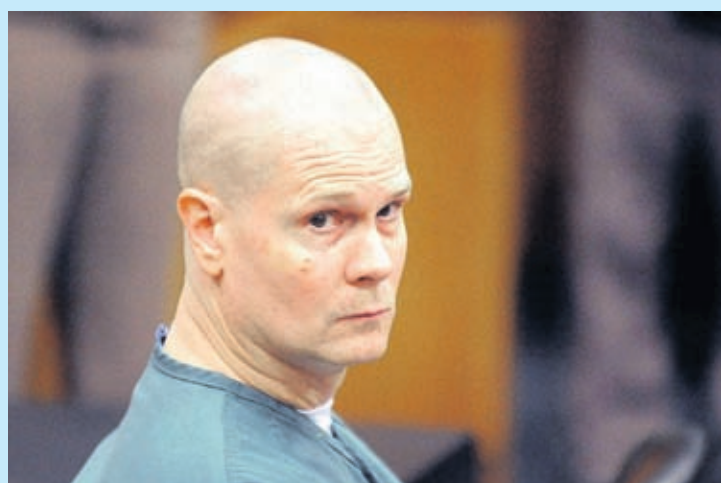
Barrack will plead not guilty, according to a spokesperson.

"Mr. Barrack has made himself voluntarily available to investigators from the outset," the spokesperson said.

Grimes also was arrested Tuesday in Southern California. A message seeking comment was sent to his attorney.

Bill Coffield, an attorney for al Malik who was not in custody Tuesday said his client had cooperated extensively with the office of special counsel Robert Mueller and that there was "nothing new here." He said that al Malik had simply tried to foster a good relationship between the country where he was born "and the country in which he lives and works, both of which he loves." □

Associated Press



In a Sept. 4, 2015 file photo, Richard Wershe Jr. sits in a courtroom at Frank Murphy Hall of Justice in Detroit.

Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — A Detroit-area man whose decades in prison for drug dealing and work as an informant inspired the movie "White Boy Rick" filed a lawsuit

Tuesday seeking \$100 million, claiming he was coerced into assisting police while just a helpless teenager.

Richard Wershe Jr., 52,

'White Boy Rick' movie's inspiration sues police for \$100M

served roughly 30 years in prison in Michigan before his release in 2017, followed by a few more years in a Florida prison for an unrelated crime.

Wershe's lawsuit in federal court in Detroit alleges that his troubles in the 1980s were related to the pressures of pleasing local police and federal agents who used him as an informant, repeatedly sent him into drug dens and abandoned him when he got in legal trouble.

"The justice system hasn't been fair to me over the

last 33 years," Wershe said. "This needed to be done. The truth absolutely needed to be told. ... Everything that we say will be backed up by documents and FBI agents."

Wershe's life was the basis of the 2018 film "White Boy Rick," starring Matthew McConaughey and Richie Merritt. The title referred to Wershe's nickname in his younger days, a nickname he dislikes.

His attorney, Nabih Ayad, acknowledged that Detroit and others named in the lawsuit will likely argue

that Wershe's constitutional claims are too old to bring to court.

"This is a unique case. ... Our Constitution, our justice system, and God-given right to all humanity calls on this court to finally bring justice to a man whose life has been taken from him at the tender age of 14 all the way up to 51 years of age," the lawsuit states.

Detroit police spokesman Rudy Harper declined to comment, saying the department hasn't seen the lawsuit. □

Climate envoy says US, China must end world's 'suicide pact'

By **DANICA KIRKA**

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — U.S. climate envoy John Kerry called on China to join America in urgently cutting greenhouse gas emissions and described the international alliances that rebuilt Europe after World War II as a model for fighting against climate change.

Kerry challenged global leaders to accelerate the actions needed to curb rising temperatures and pull the world back from the edge of the abyss. "Allies, partners, competitors and even adversaries" must work together, he said during a speech at London's Kew Gardens, a UNESCO World Heritage site where scientists are working to protect plants from global warming.

"The climate crisis is the test of our own times, and while it may be unfolding in slow motion, to some, this test is as acute and as existential as any previous one," Kerry said. "Time is running out." Kerry described the next decade as decisive, saying countries around the world must speed up efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions if they are to meet their commitment to



U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry delivers a policy speech in the Nash Conservatory at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in west, London, on a hot sunny day, Tuesday, July 20, 2021

limit temperature increases to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial levels.

While many countries have pledged to eliminate net carbon emissions by 2050, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says emissions must be cut by at least 40% by the end of the decade to keep temperatures in check. Organizers of the next United Nations climate summit

are calling the November event in Glasgow, Scotland "the world's last best chance to get runaway climate change under control."

The primary goal of the meeting, known as COP26, is for countries to set "ambitious" targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

To meet these targets, countries need to phase out the use of coal, reduce

deforestation, accelerate the shift to electric vehicles and encourage investment in renewable energy, according to the conference organizers. China, the United States and India are the world's biggest emitters of greenhouse gases, meaning efforts to control climate change are likely to fail unless all three lead the way in slashing emissions. Kerry referred to the often tense relationship between

the U.S. and China but said the future depended on their cooperation. Both countries also need to raise their ambitions, he said.

"It is not a mystery that China and the U.S. have many differences. But on climate, cooperation is the only way to break free from the world's current mutual suicide pact," he said. "President Biden and President Xi have both stated unequivocally that each will cooperate on climate despite other consequential differences. America needs China to succeed in slashing emissions. China needs America to do the same."

China's output of climate-wrecking pollution surged in the last decade as its economy boomed, especially as it kept operating, building and financing new, dirty-burning coal-fired power plants.

The Rhodium Group analysis firm reported in May that China as of 2019 was pumping out more than 27% of all climate-damaging emissions globally. That's more than the United States, which stood at 11%, and more than the rest of the developed world combined, Rhodium said. □

Associated Press

France probes use of NSO spyware; Macron a possible target

PARIS (AP) — The cell-phones of French President Emmanuel Macron and 15 members of the French government may have been among potential targets in 2019 of surveillance by spyware made by the Israel-based NSO Group, according to a newspaper report Tuesday.

The report by Le Monde follows an announcement by the Paris prosecutor's office that it is investigating the suspected widespread use of NSO's Pegasus spyware to target journalists, human rights activists and politicians in multiple countries.

Le Monde is part of a global media consortium that identified the targets from a leaked list of more than 50,000 cellphone numbers obtained by the Paris-

based journalism nonprofit Forbidden Stories and the human rights group Amnesty International and shared with 16 news organizations which began publishing their findings on Sunday.

That same day, Amnesty released a forensic analysis of the alleged targeting that showed Amazon Web Services was hosting NSO infrastructure. In response, Amazon said it shut down NSO accounts that were "confirmed to be supporting the reported hacking activity." Amazon said they had violated its terms of use.

Another U.S. company identified by Amnesty as hosting NSO servers was DigitalOcean. When contacted by The Associated Press, DigitalOcean nei-

ther confirmed nor denied whether it had identified or cut off such servers.

"All of the infrastructure outlined in the Amnesty report is no longer on DigitalOcean," it said Tuesday without elaborating in an emailed statement.

Le Monde said the phone numbers for Macron and the then-government members were among thousands allegedly selected by NSO clients for potential surveillance. In this case, the client was an unidentified Moroccan security service, according to Le Monde.

Consortium members said they were able to link more than 1,000 numbers on the list with individuals, including more than 600 politicians and government officials and 189 journalists.



In this Monday, July 20, 2020 file photo, French President Emmanuel Macron speaks on his mobile phone during a round table meeting at an EU summit in Brussels.

Associated Press

Among the numbers were those of journalists and politicians in France. The largest share were in Mexico and the Middle East, where Saudi Arabia is reported to be among NSO clients.

Also on the list were phone numbers in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Morocco and Rwanda, as well as ones for several Arab royal family members, heads of state and prime ministers, the consortium reported. □

Haiti arrests 3 cops, awaits new chief, while mourning Moïse

By DÁNICA COTO

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— Haitians held official ceremonies Tuesday to honor assassinated President Jovenel Moïse while preparing to install a new interim leader and arresting at least three police officers implicated in the killing. Designated Prime Minister Ariel Henry was to be sworn in to replace interim Prime Minister Claude Joseph, who assumed leadership of Haiti with the backing of police and the military after the July 7 attack at Moïse's private home. A crowd of international dignitaries and Haitian officials clad in somber suits sat under the shade of pink and white bougainvillea to commemorate Moïse in the yard of the Nation Pantheon Museum in Port-au-Prince.

A large portrait of the slain president hung behind Joseph as he spoke to mourners. "The president is dead because of his political and social convictions," he said. Joseph accused oligarchs and criminals of assassinating the president's character and then the president himself. He called on everyone to seize the moment as an opportunity to find a



Haiti's designated Prime Minister Ariel Henry, center, and interim Prime Minister Claude Joseph, right, pose for a group photo with other authorities in front of a portrait of late Haitian President Jovenel Moïse at the National Pantheon Museum during a memorial service in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Tuesday, July 20, 2021.

common purpose and durable, viable solutions. Moïse was shot multiple times and his wife was seriously wounded, and while officials have arrested at least 26 people in the case, it remains unclear who ultimately was behind the attack. Police Chief Léon Charles announced four more formal arrests on Tuesday at least three of them police officers, whose ranks

he did not release. "There was infiltration in the police," he said. Authorities earlier said they had detained and isolated but not formally arrested several high-ranking police officials as they tried to determine why the attackers were able to reach the president without any of his guards being injured. Henry, a neurosurgeon and former cabinet minister,

was scheduled to be sworn in on Tuesday afternoon after promising to form a provisional consensus government to lead Haiti until elections are held. "We will need this unity to overcome the many challenges that beset us," Henry said. "Some have observed the latest events with amazement, others wonder with reason about the management of the country."

Associated Press

Henry said he has met with various unidentified actors as well as civil society and the private sector. "I intend to continue and deepen these discussions, because it is the only way to bring the Haitian family together," he said.

The government released the names of Henry's Cabinet, with the ministers of justice, economy, finance, agriculture and others keeping their positions. Haiti Elections Minister Mathias Pierre told The Associated Press on Monday that Joseph would step down and cede the position to Henry, who was chosen for the post by Moïse shortly before he was killed but had not been sworn in. The change in leadership comes after a group of key international diplomats called on Henry to create a "consensual and inclusive government" in a statement issued Saturday that made no reference to Joseph. The Core Group is composed of ambassadors from Germany, Brazil, Canada, Spain, the U.S., France and the European Union as well as representatives from the United Nations and the Organization of American States. □

Israeli PM vows to 'act aggressively' over Ben & Jerry's ban

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett told the head of Unilever on Tuesday that Israel will "act aggressively" against Ben & Jerry's over the subsidiary's decision to stop selling its ice cream in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and contested east Jerusalem.

British consumer goods conglomerate Unilever acquired the Vermont-based ice cream company in 2000. Ben & Jerry's said in a statement on Monday that it had informed its longstanding licensee responsible for manufacturing and distributing the ice cream in Israel that it will not renew the license agreement when it expires at the end of 2022. Bennett's office said in a

statement that he spoke with Unilever CEO Alan Jope about what he called Ben & Jerry's "clearly anti-Israel step," adding that the move would have "serious consequences, legal and otherwise, and that it will act aggressively against all boycott actions directed against its citi-

zens." The announcement was one of the highest-profile company rebukes of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, territories Israel captured in the 1967 Mideast war. Most of the international community considers these settlements illegal under

international law and an impediment to peace with the Palestinians.

Approximately 700,000 Israelis now live in settlements, around 500,000 in the occupied West Bank and 200,000 in east Jerusalem.

Israel considers the entirety of Jerusalem its capital, while the Palestinians seek it as capital of a future state.

Ben & Jerry's said in its announcement that the sale of its ice cream in territories sought by the Palestinians for an independent state was "inconsistent with our values."

Israel's Foreign Ministry criticized the decision on Monday as "a surrender to ongoing and aggressive pressure from extreme an-

ti-Israel groups" and said the company was cooperating with "economic terrorism."


Avi Zinger, CEO of Ben & Jerry's Israel licensee, told public broadcaster Kan on Tuesday that the parent company had long pressured him to cease distribution in the Israeli occupied territories, but he refused because it would violate Israeli law.

He called Ben & Jerry's decision to not extend its license "the biggest accomplishment" of the BDS movement that advocates boycotts, divestment and sanctions of Israeli institutions and businesses in what it says is a nonviolent campaign against Israeli abuses against Palestinians. □




Israelis visit the Ben & Jerry's ice-cream factory in the Be'er Tuvia Industrial area, Tuesday, July 20, 2021.

Associated Press



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Cooperation agreement signed with Customs and Border Protection of the United States

ORANJESTAD - Recently the Minister of Justice mr. Andin Bikker signed a Letter of Intent with the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) of the United States.

The letter of intent contains three dimensions:

Minister of Justice mr. Andin Bikker and the US Customs and Border Protection signed letter of intent. The first dimension is the automated control and management system of the Aruba border that consists of Radex, online ED-Card, and soon the ESTA for Aruba. The systems will be connected to the Automated Targeting System of the United States. (<https://www.dhs.gov/publication/automated-targeting-system-ats-update>). The Automated Targeting System is an automated system that compares travelers, cargo, and transfer information, using data from law en-

forcement entities. They also do 'risk-based scenarios and assessments'. These will provide the local entities like Immigration Aruba, KPA, Customs, VDA, NCTVI, and DIMAS access to useful information in protecting the borders. For example, once they activate the ESTA for Aruba, the Immigration Department and the DIMAS will have access to use the database of the United States to operate the ESTA of Aruba. Customs will have more access to cargo and shipping information destined for Aruba. One of the two parts of the agreement of principle is the use of 'biometrics' based on Article 22a of the Law of Admission and Expulsion (LTU). Biometrics helps in the tourist admission screening process, providing the authorities access to digital photos and fingerprints. It gives the authorities more valuable

tools in the screening process to determine if a visitor will be admitted or not in Aruba. The efficiency in the screening process will get the visitors quicker out of the airport so that they can check-in at their hotel sooner and enjoy the beach immediately.

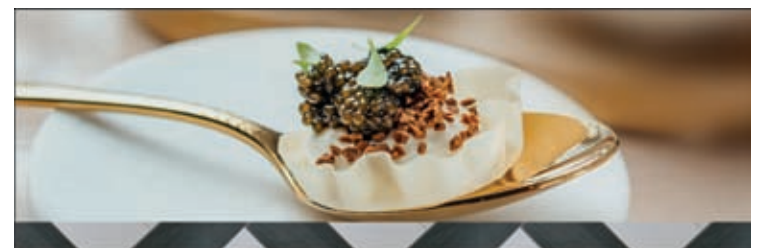
Finally, the letter of intent will grant Aruba more assistance in the validation process of official documents, like detecting counterfeit passports, etc. According to the Minister of Justice, the signing of this letter of intent with the United States marks a milestone since the United States is the main tourist market of Aruba. The Minister proposed and achieved a few changes in the LTU (AB 2018 no. 70) and the Admission decision (AB 2020 no. 94), to have a broader and modern legal base that meets all the international requirements



and to be able to use modern technology in the screening at the border.

The primary goal is to have better screening and safety in addition to efficiency and speed for tourists to go through the control process as soon as possible,

and to have the visitors on the beach as soon as possible after landing in Aruba. Other agreements of cooperation will follow according to the Minister, based on the mutual interest to guarantee the safety of the travelers of both countries. □



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Loyal visitors honored as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba



EAGLE BEACH — Recently, Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The Goodwill Ambassador certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation and to say 'Masha Danki', to the guests who visit Aruba 20 years and more consecutively.

The honorees were **Mr. Thomas & Mrs. Ann Petrelli** from New York!

This couple stated that they love the island very much, especially for its year-round sunny weather, nice sandy beaches and picturesque sunsets, its cleanliness, and Aruba's warm and friendly people whom have become like family to them.

Richardson together with the representatives of the Divi Phoenix presented the certificate to the honorees, handed over some presents and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home. □



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*Kids 12 and under half price. Taxes not included



Holiday Inn Resort Aruba: Because love never ends

PALM BEACH — Holiday Inn Resort Aruba showers you with love to celebrate the most important event of your life: your wedding. Whether it is a small, intimate happening between the two of you, a gathering with your closest friends and family or a larger group, the resort has it covered. There is one woman who will guide you through it all, from the start to the end. She assures you that everything is arranged for up to the tiniest details, just the way you imagined it. Let us introduce to you Shulaika Isenia, Holiday Inn's wedding specialist. "I am here to make it happen!"

Her calm appearance and skilled way ease every nervous bride-to-be or worried future groom. Shulaika works thorough in a subtle and open minded way. "It is very important to listen close to my client's wishes. To observe and know all the details, that is where it all starts with. My task is to translate the client's wishes into reality to full satisfaction." Her job is to make things easy, take away the stress and she is great at that.

From A to Z

The process begins with contacting the Holiday Inn Resort Aruba where you will be con-

nected to Shulaika. The Holiday Inn Resort Aruba is flexible and details can be adjusted to your personal taste. "Picture yourself and your loved one on the turquoise blue ocean side where it feels as if the beach is all yours. Our resort has this great advantage to be able to offer our wedding guests their 'own corner' where they have the full bar area for themselves, located right on the wide beach." Holiday Inn Aruba Resorts stands out with their personal approach and upscale service and their Food & Beverage is known all over the island for its consistent quality, quite important on the day of your life. "After the night the resort has their wedding suite made up for you and this means awakening in the romance of the Caribbean sun next morning with the ocean and white-sanded beach stretching in front of you while you enjoy your breakfast."

Three romantic wedding packages offer you amazing possibilities where you can be each other's sunshine under Aruba's beautiful blue skies and turquoise waters, witnessing your "I do's" in a very intimate ceremony (package My Sunshine) or make your special day unique with a group of 20



loved ones, to share the event where you promise to love and stay with each other forever and always with your inner circle (package Promises). If you would like to take it up a notch then tie the knot where love transcends all barriers and all limits, let Holiday Inn Aruba Resort be the one to make this act of overflowing love happen in one of a kind way (package Love Unlimited). Important to mention is that Shulaika and her team are flexible and arrangements can be adjusted to fulfill your exact wishes. All arrangements by the Holiday Inn Aruba Resort include marriage on the stunning beach with the services of a non-denominational minister, including a wedding certificate as a keepsake. Feel queen and king under the arch of squared bamboo or a circular arch with choice of drapery color and crystals, depending on your choice of package. The signing

table, bridal bouquet, matching groom's boutonniere are all part of the life happening and a live musician, photographer and/or videographer are options to consider.

Don't worry, be happy

Put your faith in the hands of Shulaika and her team to organize your vow renewal, engagement or wedding, she will gain your trust in an instant. The island of Aruba and the Holiday Inn Aruba Resort will make you feel secure as all Covid-19 protocol is in place here and your safety is our priority. Discover Aruba, live your dream event at the Holiday Inn Aruba Resort. We promise you: the resort and the island will make sure you will remember this a lifetime!

For more information:

Contact Shulaika Isenia at +297 586 3600 or send an email to shulaika.isenia@ihg.com.



BINGO IS BACK! WATCH FOR RETURN OF MONDAY MADNESS



**WILDER
Wednesday**

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**\$1,000 in
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Earn 25 points and swipe at any kiosk to play.
Win \$20 to \$100 in Free Slot Play.
Play up to five times each Wednesday.

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Salon & Spa Services, Souvenirs and more.

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Play Responsibly. Visit www.gamblersanonymous.org if you or someone you know has a gambling problem.



Look fabulous and radiant with Aruba Happy Lashes

Noord – Discover Aruba Happy Lashes, a highly recommended and new concept on the island. The ideal place for the perfect beauty esthetic work offers manicures, pedicures, Brazilian tan, massages, sporty outfits, perfect eyelashes and so much more. Run by only professionals you are guaranteed of the best service for your money.

Aruba Happy Lashes gives you the opportunity to look spectacular during your vacation on the island of Aruba by offering you a perfect natural Brazilian Tan. Prepare your body with a tan that will make you the talk



of the town. This Brazilian technique is developed with an advanced formula to exfoliate and condition the skin to ensure an even, natural-looking tan, this is an innovative way to get your glow on. With the use of a special adhesive tape, we will make a very tiny special bikini that will give you the most perfect natural tan lines. In comparison of a regular bikini, the adhesive bikini is hand taped with perfection on your body and won't move like a regular bikini which will create the perfect straight tan lines. This is a great way to get yourself the most perfect tan that you would like to take with you as a reminder of a wonderful vacation. One session only will already give you a great result as Aruba Perfect Tan are the pioneers on the island in Brazilian Perfect Tanning. And best of it, it lasts up to three months!

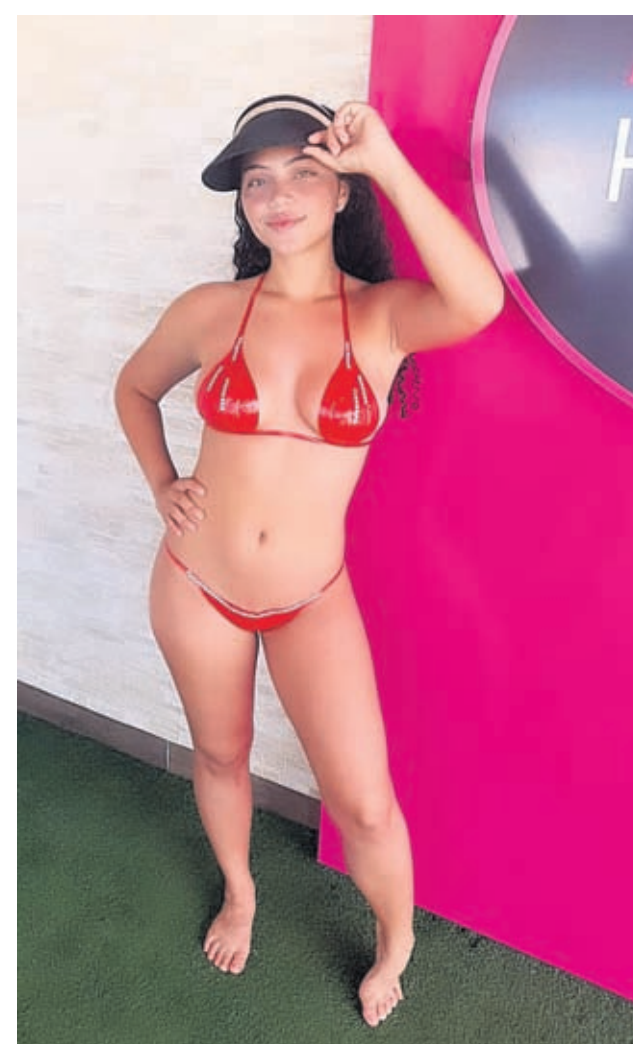
Services

Plan your perfect escape for you and your girls to celebrate a birthday, bachelorette parties or just a girls only outing and receive a 10% discount on your Perfect Tan package. The package consists of a delicious Welcome Cocktail, a melanin activator juice, a relaxing foot massage, a gourmet wash to bleach all body hair and a refreshing bowl of fresh fruits. Hang out with the girls by the pool under the hot tropical sun with a nice cocktail, waiting service and great music to make the experience even more authentic.


Aruba Happy Lashes is also specialized in the most amazing lashes services. With a great menu of lashes services you can choose from Classic lashes, Russian volume lashes, Glamorous lashes, Gorgeous lashes, Diva lashes, Extravagant mink lashes, silk lashes, Lash lifting and so much more. But also a re-touch of your already existing lashes is possible at great prices.

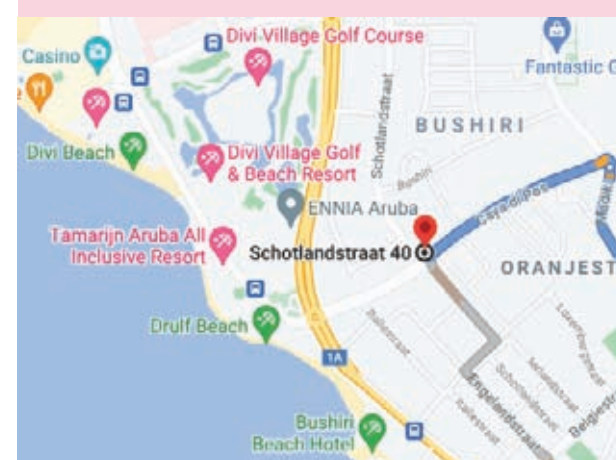
While on the premises, take a look at the fabulous, colorful and comfortable sportswear. From sports to everyday outfits in a variety of styles but above all very comfortable sportswear. Perfect for daily wear as well, for its comfort, fashion and practicality.

Aruba Happy Lashes and Aruba Perfect Tan is located at Bushiri 6V in downtown Oran-



jestad and is open daily from 10am – 6pm. For an appointment, please call (+297) 738.8889 or send an email at arubahappylashes@gmail.com

For more information find them on Facebook and Instagram, Aruba Happy Lashes. 



Today's Happening

A selection of where to go while in Aruba



Thursday 22

Visit Aruba's Donkey Sanctuary

- Aruba has a safe haven for the donkey's where each donkey is given a name and receives food and water, shelter, quality medical care and lots of love. We highly encourage you to plan a visit to the Sanctuary and see for yourself what so many others have discovered, that there's more to a donkey than what you think you knew.
- From 9 AM – 4 PM
- Bringamosa 2Z, Santa Cruz
- Facebook: Donkey Sanctuary Aruba

Friday 23

Happy Hour all day at Water's Edge restaurant

- How does the perfect day look like while on vacation? With happy hour all day off course! Water's Edge restaurant give you 3 happy hours a day with specials on premium brands. From 12-1- 4-6 and 9-10. Enjoy the spectacular ocean view while enjoying breakfast, lunch or dinner. Guitarist Ricky Thomas will delight you with lovely music to your ears.
- Open from 8 AM – 11 PM
- Located at Costa Linda Beach Resort
- Facebook: Water's Edge Restaurant & Bar



Saturday 24

Shop at Artistic Boutique

- Looking for a unique giftware to take home? Artistic Boutique has it for you. This boutique has been around for over 50 years. Find the perfect jewelry in stainless steel, silver and gold. Porcelain and antique souvenirs and beautiful handmade embroidered table cloths and runners. They are the exclusive agents for NAO by LLADRO & Aruba Lucky Stone.
- Open from 10 AM- 5 PM
- Located in the parkinglot between to Royal Plaza & Windcreek Casino
- Facebook: Artistic Boutique Aruba



Sunday 25

Balashi Gold Mill & Spanish Lagoon Hike & Kayak

- Combine history and adventure at this amazing hike and Kayak tour presented by The Shack Aruba. Take a hike at Balashi Gold Mill followed by crossing Aruba's oldest bridge, The Balashi Bridge, which was built in 1929 and afterwards hop on the Kayak and hit off to the reefs. Learn about Aruba's history and ecological system and enjoy our amazing nature. Tour will end at Aruba Nautical Club at 12 PM. Tour includes: tour guide, kayak, refreshment, fruit & transportation back to the Balashi Gold Mill. Feel free to bring your snorkeling gear.
- Meeting point: 7:30 AM at the Balashi Gold Mill
- For reservations contact +297- 560-7733
- Facebook: The Shack Aruba



Monday 26

Hands of Gold Massage & Beauty on wheels

- After a very busy week all you need now is to pamper yourself with a relaxing massage or a skin care & body treatment at the comfort of your own room. Marilou of Hands of Gold Massage is ready to give you that much needed treatment you deserve. Discover the secret of relaxation.
- Available daily from 9 AM- 7 PM
- For reservations call/Whatsapp Marilou at +297-733-5034
- Instagram page: handsofgoldmassage&beauty



Tuesday 27

Aruba Artist Gallery at Paseo Herencia Mall

- Art lovers, we've got you covered. Take a trip to Paseo Herencia Mall and enjoy the creativity, inspiration and the love for Art spread all around. Visit the Aruba Art Gallery where artists now have the ability to showcase their art pieces in this Artist Community Gallery, accessible to both locals and tourists. It's a new way to reconnect with other artists and community.
- Open daily from 5 PM – 10 PM
- Located at Paseo Herencia Mall. Entrance next to Starbucks & Maggy's
- Facebook: Aruba Artist Gallery

Wednesday 28

Chef's Garden by Papillon

- A true once-in-a-lifetime experience. The stage: an Aruban cunucu house creating a magical ambiance. The play: The Chef's Garden; a 6-course culinary voyage and French-Asian gastronomic ecstasy by Dutch top chef Martijn Liebrechts on Wednesdays. You will leave this culinary Garden of Eden in an enchanted state creating a memory that will last a lifetime. Be sure to reserve this opportunity before others do. This production is presented to you by Papillon Restaurant.
- Starts at 7 PM, every Wednesday
- In-home dining setting in the heart of Aruba
- Facebook: The Secret Garden Aruba



Nordstrom pivots as shopper habits change during pandemic

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
AP Retail Writer

Like many of its peers, venerable department store chain Nordstrom is having a tough time keeping pace with customer demand for new clothes because of supply issues.

That will be an even bigger challenge heading into the full swing of its anniversary sale, a tradition since the 1960s. Last year, customers stayed away because there was no reason to buy dressy clothes during a pandemic. But Nordstrom is framing this year's event as an opportunity for shoppers to reinvent themselves as they come out of their homes. Amid product delays, the retailer says it developed a back-order feature on its website for customers who want to take advantage of the sale but find the item not in stock.

Jamie Nordstrom, president of Nordstrom stores and great-grandson of company founder John W. Nordstrom, recently spoke with The Associated Press at its Manhattan store to share some thoughts about changing shopper habits, shipping delays and why the Seattle-based Nordstrom plans to pack up masks soon. The interview has been edited for clarity



President of Stores Jamie Nordstrom is interviewed at the Nordstrom NYC Flagship store, in New York, Wednesday, July 14, 2021.

Associated Press

and length.

Q. What kind of delays in merchandise shipments are you seeing?

A. Anywhere from a couple of days to a month. And you don't really always know exactly what's causing it. Is it the port in Asia? Is it the port at Long Beach where ships anchored out there can't get offloaded. We're retailers. We're focused on serving customers. We've got a great team that's focused on the inbound supply chain. And whether it's

a few days or a couple of weeks, we're ready to roll with the punches on that.

Q. Anything left of the COVID-19 safety measures?

A. In most cities and markets we do business in, we are able to do the full make-over in our beauty departments and in our spas. That was probably one of the last things that we're able to unlock. But we want customers to know and it's been this way for quite a while now that when they come to Nordstrom store,

they're getting the full experience. It's not a watered-down COVID version of Nordstrom.

Q. What's the customer traffic like?

A. It has been very different across the regions. It started in the South South Florida, Texas over the last several months. It's the states that dropped the restrictions first is where traffic started to build. And then as you moved North and West, as states dropped restrictions, we saw that traffic come

back pretty quickly. And so we're encouraged by the path that we're on and the pace that customers are coming back in.

Q. What makes the anniversary sale extra important this year?

A. More than anything, it's a wardrobe refresh. People have discovered comfort. They don't want to sacrifice style. There's a big demand out there for people to really go through their closets and kind of reinvent how they want to look over the next couple of seasons.

Q. Which trends from the pandemic will remain and how are you reacting?

A. So casual, athleisure, denim. We are scrambling to get after what the new suit is. It may not be the same suit that it was. It's a sport coat and it's a pair of jeans. It's an interesting time to try and react to very quickly changing customer needs.

Q. What's not coming back?

A. Maybe masks. We've been selling a lot of masks the last year and a half. We're not selling a whole lot right now, which is a good thing. And so I think maybe we'll pack those masks away, and hopefully we'll never have to bring them out again. □

Robinhood sees valuation of up to \$35 billion as public co.

By MICHELLE CHAPMAN
AP Business Writer

Robinhood, the online brokerage that found itself embroiled in this year's meme stock phenomenon, will go public next week seeking a market valuation of up to \$35 billion.

The company said in a regulatory filing Monday that it hopes to price 55 million shares in its initial public offering in a range of \$38 to \$42 per share. It could raise about \$2.3 billion if the shares are sold at the high end of the range.

Robinhood is offering about 52.4 million shares. The company's founders Baiju Bhatt and Vladimir Tenev, and Chief Financial Officer Jason Warnick,

are offering about 2.6 million shares. The company won't receive any proceeds from shares sold by its officers and founders.

The underwriters have an option to buy 5.5 million shares to cover any over-allotments.

Robinhood's IPO will give investors a chance to own a big slice of a fast-growing company that has rocked the traditionally staid brokerage business. The company expects to offer up to \$770 million worth of its shares to its customers via its platform. The estimate is based on an offering price of \$40 per share, the company said in the filing.

Meanwhile, the venture capital unit of business soft-

ware company Salesforce.com has indicated an interest in buying up to \$150 million in shares of Robinhood at the IPO price, Robinhood said.

Since its launch in 2014, Robinhood's popularity has forced rivals to get rid of commissions and to offer apps that make trading easy and maybe even fun. The company based in Menlo Park, California, said in its filing that it had 17.7 million monthly active users as of March and more than half of its customers are first-time investors.

Many of those first-time investors have started trading on Robinhood due to the popularity of meme stocks like GameStop. The

trading frenzy that followed forced Robinhood to limit some trades because of the massive volume and it drew some government scrutiny.

Robinhood said in the filing that it expects that its revenue for the April-June quarter totaled up to \$574

million, or a more than twofold increase from \$244 million a year earlier. Even so, the company projects it slid to loss in the quarter ranging from \$487 million and \$537 million. Robinhood posted a profit of \$58 million in the same quarter last year. □



This Dec. 17, 2020, photo shows the logo for the Robinhood app on a smartphone in New York.

Associated Press

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 44 Takes the

1 Staff wheel
symbol 45 Easy run

5 Crotchety
folks

11 Turner
of
Hollywood

12 Lighten

13 Kitchen
fixture

14 ATM bill

15 Hole
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16 Vaccine
deliveries

17 Film
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19 Soaking
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22 So far

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26 San Juan
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28 Center

30 Stable
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31 Blunder

32 Exemplary

34 Zest
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35 Chemist's
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42 Type of
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44 Takes the
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45 Easy run

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Yesterday's answer

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7-21

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.

7-21

CRYPTOQUOTE

S B I G E N W F T J V Z E E A .

V P F S B E J I G B E F E P E S

S N V Q I W N I V F E P W D V U V L I .

J S . V R L R J S T P I

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: HE'S MY FRIEND WHO SPEAKS WELL OF ME BEHIND MY BACK. —THOMAS FULLER



Blue Origin's New Shepard rocket launches carrying passengers Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon and space tourism company Blue Origin, his brother Mark Bezos, Oliver Daemen and Wally Funk, from its spaceport near Van Horn, Texas, Tuesday, July 20, 2021.

Associated Press

Jeff Bezos blasts into space on own rocket: 'Best day ever!'

By MARCIA DUNN

AP Aerospace Writer

VAN HORN, Texas (AP) — Jeff Bezos blasted into space Tuesday on his rocket company's first flight with people on board, becoming the second billionaire in just over a week to ride his own spacecraft.

The Amazon founder was accompanied by a hand-picked group: his brother, an 18-year-old from the Netherlands and an 82-year-old aviation pioneer from Texas — the youngest and oldest to ever fly in space.

"Best day ever!" Bezos said when the capsule touched down on the desert floor in remote West Texas after the 10-minute flight.

Named after America's first astronaut, Blue Origin's New Shepard rocket soared on the 52nd anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing, a date chosen by Bezos for its historical significance. He held fast to it, even as Virgin Galactic's Richard Branson pushed up his own flight from New Mexico in the race for space tourist dollars and beat him to space by nine days.

Unlike Branson's piloted rocket plane, Bezos' capsule was completely automated and required no official staff on board for the up-and-down flight.

Blue Origin reached an altitude of about 66 miles (106 kilometers), more than 10 miles (16 kilometers) higher than Branson's July 11 ride. The 60-foot (18-meter) booster accelerated to Mach 3 or three times the speed of sound to get the capsule high enough, before separating and landing upright.

During their several minutes of weightlessness, video from inside the capsule showed the four floating, doing somersaults, tossing Skittles candies and throwing balls. Cheering, whooping and exclamations of

"wow" could be heard. The capsule landed under parachutes, with Bezos and his guests briefly experiencing nearly six times the force of gravity, or 6 G's, on the way back.

Led by Bezos, they climbed out of the capsule after touchdown with wide grins, embracing parents, partners and children, then popped open bottles of sparkling wine, spraying one another.

"My expectations were high and they were dramatically exceeded," Bezos said later.

Their flight lasted 10 minutes and 10 seconds — five minutes shy of Alan Shepard's Freedom 7 flight in 1961. Shepard's daughters, Laura and Julie, were introduced at a press conference a few hours later.

Sharing Bezos' dream-come-true adventure was Wally Funk, from the Dallas area, one of 13 female pilots who went through the same tests as NASA's all-male astronaut corps in the early 1960s but never made it into space.

"I've been waiting a long time to finally get it up there," Funk said after the flight.

"I want to go again fast," she added.

Joining them on the ultimate joyride was the company's first paying customer, Oliver Daemen, a last-minute fill-in for the mystery winner of a \$28 million auction who opted for a later flight. The Dutch teen's father took part in the auction, and agreed on a lower undisclosed price last week when Blue Origin offered his son the vacated seat.

Among the items brought on the flight: A pair of aviator Amelia Earhart's goggles and a piece of fabric from the original Wright Flyer. "I got goose bumps," said Angel Herrera of El Paso, who watched the launch from inside Van Horn High School, about 25 miles (40 kilometers) away. □

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214402



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San Nicolas:
San Lucas Tel. 584 5119

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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
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Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
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Red Cross	582 2219

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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
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American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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Chance the Rapper to bring secret concert to the big screen

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr.
AP Entertainment Writer
LOS ANGELES (AP) —

When Chance the Rapper filmed a secret concert four years ago, he intended to make a movie for the big screen but ended up shelving the project after not knowing how to edit all the footage. But while hunkered down in his home during the pandemic, the Grammy winner took the opportunity to educate himself about the craft of filmmaking. Chance hosted and performed in several virtual concerts including "Chi-Town Christmas" which he wrote and directed giving him enough confidence to revisit the idea of making his own film.

"I had a lot of editing notes and ideas, but I didn't know how to edit," he recalled. "But during the pandemic, I started doing virtual concerts and actually directing them myself. I picked up all these skills that filmmakers have one of them was figuring how to edit and work with editors. I needed that." Now, Chance's filmmaker aspirations are coming into fruition with his concert film "Magnificent Coloring World," which premieres



Chance the Rapper performs on stage at the Pre-Grammy Gala And Salute To Industry Icons on Jan. 25, 2020, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Associated Press

Aug. 13 in select AMC Theatres. The concert was filmed in his hometown of Chicago during his Magnificent Coloring World Tour in 2017, shortly after winning three Grammys through his 2016 independent project "Coloring Book," which won best rap album. The project became the first streaming-only album to win the award. He also

took home the best new artist trophy and best rap performance for his song "No Problem" featuring 2 Chainz and Lil Wayne. The concert film will celebrate the five-year anniversary of "Coloring Book." Chance could have gone the streaming service route, but he elected to pitch his concert film idea to AMC Theatres a few months ago

with hopes of immersing moviegoers into his full concert experience. "There's just something different about going to see something in theaters, instead of watching it in your bed or whatever," he said. "I always knew that I wanted this to be experienced in a group and on a huge screen with crazy surround sound." Chance led

the film's editing process and self-distributed the film through his House of Kicks umbrella, which reimagines music, film and virtual experiences.

His partnership with the theater chain marks the first time a music artist has independently distributed a film through AMC.

"The appreciation for Chance's dazzling creation is a genuine demonstration of the power and emotional connection audiences have with Chance, and how they feel while watching his work on the big screens of AMC," said Adam Aron, CEO and president of AMC Entertainment said. "This is a reminder of the uncharted programming possibilities at AMC, and we are thrilled to blaze this path with Chance The Rapper and his team."

"Magnificent Coloring World" features a variety of stages designed by Chance and was filmed on a soundstage within three and a half weeks. The rapper said he wanted to tell a unique story with each frame with the help of director Jake Schreier, who directed the 2015 film "Paper Towns." □

Lady Gaga, Tony Bennett reunite; Killers, Dan + Shay albums

By The Associated Press

A look at what's happening the world of music as artists announce their touring plans and concert venues plan their reopenings after being shuttered by

the pandemic.

GAGA FOR BENNETT

Two music superstars will share the stage this summer when Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga team up for two nights at New York's



In this combination photo, Tony Bennett, left, arrives at the 61st annual Grammy Awards on Feb. 10, 2019, in Los Angeles and Lady Gaga arrives at the Vanity Fair Oscar Party on Feb. 24, 2019, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Associated Press

Radio City Music Hall.

"One Last Time: An Evening with Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga" will open on Aug. 3, which is Bennett's 95th birthday. A second performance is set for Aug. 5.

Lady Gaga and Bennett collaborated on the song "The Lady Is a Tramp" for Bennett's 2011 "Duets II" album and their collaborative album "Cheek to Cheek" debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard Album charts and earned them a Grammy for "Best Traditional Pop Vocal."

Earlier this year, Bennett's family revealed that the 19-time Grammy-winner was diagnosed with dementia in 2016. Promoters say the August concerts will be Bennett's last New York performances of his

career.

GOOD THINGS WITH DAN + SHAY

The duo Dan + Shay have a new album coming out this summer and they've added a huge party to celebrate it.

A concert at The Great Lawn in Centennial Park in Nashville, Tennessee, will coincide with the release of their fourth album, "Good Things." Pre-sales for the event begin Monday and all tickets go on sale Friday.

The album's first single "10,000 Hours" featuring Justin Bieber was released in late 2019 and spent 21 weeks at No. 1 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart.

The duo plan to tour again this fall for a 30-date trek, beginning Sept. 9 in Green-

ville, South Carolina, and ending Dec. 7 in Boston. The tour includes stops at Madison Square Garden and the Staples Center in Los Angeles.

NO KILLING TIME

Despite releasing an album last year, The Killers are preparing another one next month.

"Pressure Machine" their band's seventh studio album is available Aug. 13. Promotional material calls it "The Killers' most restrained and resonant album yet."

The album was co-produced by the band, Shawn Everett, and Jonathan Rado, all of whom worked together on The Killers' album "Imploding the Mirage," released last year. □

With another major, Morikawa charting new path

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

Bobby Jones and Jack Nicklaus. Tiger Woods and Jordan Spieth.

Add another name with whom Collin Morikawa is now linked by his remarkable run through the majors in a span of 343 days. This one is a little out of left field, but it speaks to how much Morikawa has achieved in his short time on the PGA Tour.

He will be the first player since Andy North in 1985 to make his debut in the Ryder Cup having already won two majors.

It was different back then, of course. Tour players had to serve an apprenticeship before they could even become PGA of America members and be eligible. North won the U.S. Open twice before playing in his first Ryder Cup.

"I think it was three years before you could start getting Ryder Cup points," North said Tuesday. "And then you had to go through a three-day school. We had to take a rules test. That's why a lot of players didn't play in as many Ryder Cups as you would think."

Nicklaus, for example, had already won seven majors when he played his first Ry-



United States' Collin Morikawa holds up the claret jug trophy as he poses for photographers on the 18th green after winning the British Open Golf Championship at Royal St George's golf course Sandwich, England, Sunday, July 18, 2021.

Associated Press

der Cup.

"He is special," North said, turning his thoughts back to Morikawa. "I was around him quite a bit at the PGA Championship because no one was there. He was the most mature, ready player that I've seen in long, long time." There were a lot of obscure records that came along with that silver claret jug he won at Royal St. George's. Not since Jones

has a player won two professional majors in eight starts or fewer. Nicklaus, Woods, Spieth and Rory McIlroy are all on the list of having two majors before turning 25.

Nicklaus won two of those when trailing after 54 holes, just like Morikawa.

The numbers are equally impressive: A closing 64 to win the PGA Championship at Harding Park last August,

a 66 on the final day to win the British Open on Sunday. He played his last 23 holes of the PGA and his last 31 holes at the Open without a bogey.

And he took his own place in the record book as the first man to win two majors in his first time playing them. His calm, his polish, his poise would suggest Morikawa is never in a hurry. His record indicates otherwise. And his

wisdom was evident Saturday night when he was asked about playing in the final group at a major for the first time.

"I've never been in the position all the other previous times," he replied.

Everything is new. And then he makes everything seem old hat.

Morikawa still thinks back to the dinner he had with Justin Thomas on the eve of his pro debut in June 2019. Thomas assured him that while every path is different some short, some longer talent is never denied. Morikawa won in his sixth start. Winning two majors in two years elevates Morikawa to among the elite in golf, and he'll face even more attention and scrutiny next week at the Olympics, and at Whistling Straits for his first Ryder Cup.

If there are lessons to be learned — he has proven to be adept at that — it's to reset the goals. That's what he feels he failed to do when he won the PGA Championship last year.

"I'm not going to throw everything into the trash and just say, 'OK, we're a completely different person.' But goals have to change," Morikawa said. "I didn't do that last year." □

Joshua defending heavyweight titles vs Usyk in September

LONDON (AP) — Anthony Joshua will defend his WBA, IBF and WBO heavyweight titles against former undisputed world cruiserweight champion Oleksandr Usyk at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium on Sept. 25.

The fight pits two 2012 London Olympic gold medalists against each other: Joshua topped the podium in the super-heavyweight division and Usyk reigned supreme in the heavyweight bracket.

"We are two Olympic gold medalists who have fought our way to the top and never avoided challenges," Joshua said in a statement on Tuesday. "The stadium is exceptional, the atmosphere will be electric, I'm honored to be

the first person to fight in such an awe inspiring venue. I am ready to handle business."

The mandatory WBO title

fight fills a vacancy after Joshua's all-British blockbuster against Tyson Fury in Saudi Arabia in August was scuppered when a

United States arbitrator ordered the WBC champion to take on Deontay Wilder again. That contest is in October.

Renowned for his nimble footwork, exemplary hand speed and head movement, Usyk collected all four major world belts at cruiserweight and has won all 18 of his professional contests, 13 of them inside the distance.

Having had just two fights in boxing's blue riband division since stepping up, there remains lingering questions about the Ukrainian's punch resistance and his ability to trouble the top heavyweights with his power. Usyk is also 34, three years older than Joshua.

Usyk's most recent bout was a points decision win over Joshua's compatriot, Derek Chisora, last October.

Joshua (24-1, 22 KO) was scheduled to fight Kubrat Pulev at Spurs' home stadium in June last year but the coronavirus pandemic led to the contest being switched to Wembley Arena in December, when the Briton retained his titles with a ninth-round knockout victory.

There were 1,000 fans granted access to that fight, the last time Joshua was in action, but his Matchroom promoter is gearing up to welcome 60,000 spectators at the 62,850-capacity outdoor stadium. □



In this Saturday, Dec. 12, 2020 file photo, World Heavyweight boxing champion Britain's Anthony Joshua celebrates after beating challenger Bulgaria's Kubrat Pulev to win their Heavyweight title fight at Wembley Arena in London.

Associated Press

Tom Brady, champion Buccaneers visit Biden at White House

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**

AP Sports Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Tom Brady embraced his inner comedian to deliver jokes at old friend Donald Trump's expense Tuesday when he and the Super Bowl-winning Tampa Bay Buccaneers visited President Joe Biden at the White House, the first visit by the reigning NFL champions since 2017.

The seven-time Super Bowl champion who once was gifted a "Make America Great Again" hat from Trump that he displayed in his locker at Gillette Stadium compared those backing Trump's false assertion that he won the 2020 election to people who couldn't believe the underdog Buccaneers beat the Kansas City Chiefs.

"Not a lot of people think that we could have won, and in fact I think about 40% of the people still don't think we won," Brady said. "You understand that, Mr. President?"

"I understand that," Biden responded.

Brady also played off Trump's derisive "Sleepy Joe" nickname for Biden when talking about a time he forgot what down it was. "I lost track of one down in 21 years of playing, and they started calling me 'Sleepy Tom,'" Brady said with a grin. "Why would they do that to me?"

It was Brady's first visit since 2005 with the New England Patriots when George W. Bush was in office. Brady has won the Super Bowl during four different administrations but skipped visits by the Patriots in 2015 with



President Joe Biden, surrounded by members of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, poses for a photo holding a jersey during a ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House, in Washington, Tuesday, July 20, 2021, where Biden honored the Super Bowl Champion Tampa Bay Buccaneers for their Super Bowl LV victory.

Associated Press

Barack Obama and 2017 with Trump. The Patriots as a team chose not to attend after winning in 2019. Brady was front and center this time, one of 42 Bucs players accompanying Biden, coach Bruce Arians and owner Bryan Glazer to the ceremony, which included more than just his jokes. There was some pointed political commentary from Arians and a push from the president for players to get vaccinated against the coronavirus if they hadn't already.

Arians quickly shifted from extolling his Buccaneers' guiding principles of "trust, loyalty, and respect" that focused the team on "one team, one cause" to taking an indirect dig at Republican lawmakers on Capitol Hill who have opposed el-

ements of the president's agenda. Biden was presented with the traditional gift of a No. 46 jersey — which Glazer said was appropriate since Tampa Bay is heading into its 46th season as a franchise. With the sun beating down in the late morning, Biden told players to take their suit jackets off following a group picture, but those in attendance next to the Lombardi Trophy didn't mind. "I know the guys really, really enjoyed it, even with the heat," said Arians, who's eager for the Buccaneers to get their Super Bowl rings Thursday and move on to next season with training camp opening next week. "I just told them it's another work day. We got to get a workout in today, so standing in the

sun's a good one."

Before baking in the sun, players Donovan Smith and Bradley Pinion from the team's social justice committee met with Vice President Kamala Harris to talk about voting rights, a subject the Buccaneers have prioritized.

"It feels like it gives us validity or the weight of some of the stuff that we were doing in Tampa, especially around voting and getting people to vote," offensive lineman Ali Marpet said after the ceremony. "As an organization we're really trying to be leaders in (that area), and that was a big point of emphasis for her." Talking about how nearly 200,000 vaccine doses were given out at Raymond James Stadium — the Buccaneers' home

and where they won the Super Bowl — Biden turned to dozens of players behind him and said: "If you don't have a shot, get one, OK? Get one, get one, get one. You're saving lives, helping us get back to our lives and our loved ones."

Biden also lauded NFL efforts to promote COVID-19 vaccinations.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki did not directly answer when asked if the Buccaneers provided information on which team attendees were vaccinated. Over half of their traveling party of players coached and staff has been fully vaccinated, and while 10 NFL teams as of Friday had reached the 85% threshold it's unclear if Tampa Bay was one of them.

Biden in his prepared remarks singled out receiver Chris Godwin, like himself Pennsylvania-born and Delaware-raised, who he spoke with before the Super Bowl.

"I wasn't expecting it, so it definitely took me by surprise," Godwin said afterward. "He gave me a call the day before the Super Bowl, and I was shocked then. We chatted, had a five-, 10-minute talk, talked about Delaware a little bit and he wished me good luck. That was an honor for me. Then he was kind enough to send me a letter afterwards congratulating me on the win and congratulating the team."

As the oldest person to become president, Biden compared himself to Brady being the oldest quarterback and Arians the oldest coach to win it all. □

NCAA hit hard by pandemic, spent \$68 million on legal fees

By **RALPH D. RUSSO**

AP College Sports Writer

The NCAA spent nearly \$68 million on legal services during the 2019-20 fiscal year even as it lost hundreds of millions in revenue in the pandemic, according to tax documents released Monday.

Revenue was down more than 50% over the previous year, from more than \$1.1 billion to just over \$520 million, mostly because the lucrative college basketball tournaments were canceled as the coronavirus hit the U.S. hard

early in 2020. The media rights loss for the men's tourney alone was \$702 million, the NCAA said.

Championship revenue was down \$162 million due to the cancellation of winter and spring title events, though the NCAA said the blow was offset to some extent since expenses for those dropped by \$119 million.

Saying it "continues to defend its mission and core values," the NCAA also listed its legal expenses for 2019-20 at \$67.7 million, more than double the \$33 million the previous year "due

to an accrual of \$34.8 million related to the Alston case."

Last month, the Supreme Court ruled against the NCAA in that case, upholding a lower court's ruling in an antitrust case. The 9-0 decision means the NCAA cannot cap compensation schools provide to athletes for educational benefits.

The 990 tax form, which the NCAA is required to file as a tax exempt organization, also showed President Mark Emmert's compensation for the fiscal year at over \$2.8 million. □