

## COVID-19 MILESTONE

U.S. deaths from COVID hit 1 million, less than 2 1/2 years in

Kyree Kayoshi, his dog Kumi, and Miranda De Llano use circles marked for social distancing to help battle the COVID-19 virus as they relax at the Pearl Brewery, March 3, 2021, in San Antonio.

Associated Press  
Page 2



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# U.S. deaths from COVID hit 1 million, less than 2 1/2 years in

From Front

By **CARLA K. JOHNSON**  
AP Medical Writer

The U.S. death toll from COVID-19 hit 1 million on Monday, a once-unimaginable figure that only hints at the multitudes of loved ones and friends staggered by grief and frustration.

The confirmed number of dead is equivalent to a 9/11 attack every day for 336 days. It is roughly equal to how many Americans died in the Civil War and World War II combined. It's as if Boston and Pittsburgh were wiped out.

"It is hard to imagine a million people plucked from this earth," said Jennifer Nuzzo, who leads a new pandemic center at the Brown University School of Public Health in Providence, Rhode Island. "It's still happening and we are letting it happen."

Some of those left behind say they cannot return to normal. They replay their loved ones' voicemail messages. Or watch old videos to see them dance. When other people say they are done with the virus, they bristle with anger or ache in silence. "Normal. I hate that word," said Julie Wallace, 55, of Elyria, Ohio, who lost her husband to COVID-19 in 2020. "All of us never get to go back to normal."

Three out of every four deaths were people 65 and older. More men died than women. White people made up most of the deaths overall. But Black, Hispanic and Native American people have been roughly twice as likely to die from COVID-19 as their white counterparts.

Most deaths happened in urban areas, but rural places — where opposition to masks and vaccinations tends to run high — paid a heavy price at times.

The death toll less than 2 1/2 years into the outbreak is based on death certificate data compiled by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics. But the real number of lives lost to COVID-19, either



Transporter Jo Navarro, right, prepares to move a body of a COVID-19 victim to a morgue at Providence Holy Cross Medical Center in Los Angeles, Dec. 14, 2021.

Associated Press

directly or indirectly, as a result the disruption of the health care system in the world's richest country, is believed to be far higher.

The U.S. has the highest reported COVID-19 death toll of any country, though health experts have long suspected that the real number of deaths in places such as India, Brazil and Russia is higher than the official figures.

The milestone comes more than three months after the U.S. reached 900,000 dead. The pace has slowed since a harrowing winter surge fueled by the omicron variant. The U.S. is averaging about 300 COVID-19 deaths per day, compared with a peak of about 3,400 a day in January 2021. New cases are on the rise again, climbing more than 60% in the past two weeks to an average of about 86,000 a day — still well below the all-time high of over 800,000, reached when the omicron variant was raging during the winter.

The largest bell at Washington National Cathedral in the nation's capital tolled 1,000 times a week

ago, once for every 1,000 deaths. President Joe Biden on Thursday ordered flags lowered to half-staff and called each life "an irreplaceable loss."

"As a nation, we must not grow numb to such sorrow," he said in a statement. "To heal, we must remember."

More than half the deaths occurred since vaccines became available in December of 2020. Two-thirds of Americans are fully vaccinated, and nearly half of them have had at least one booster dose. But demand for the vaccine has plummeted, and the campaign to put shots in arms has been plagued by misinformation, distrust and political polarization.

Unvaccinated people have a 10 times greater risk of dying of COVID-19 than the fully vaccinated, according to the CDC.

"To me, that is what is just so particularly heartbreaking," Nuzzo said. Vaccines are safe and greatly reduce the likelihood of severe illness, she said. They "largely take the possibility of death off the table."

Angelina Proia, 36, of New

York, lost her father to COVID-19 in April 2020. She runs a support group for grieving families on Facebook and has seen it divided over vaccinations. She has booted people from the group for spreading misinformation.

"I don't want to hear conspiracy theories. I don't want to hear anti-science," said Proia, who wishes her father could have been vaccinated.

Sara Atkins, 42, of Wyncnewood, Pennsylvania, channels her grief into fighting for global vaccination and better access to health care to honor her father, Andy Rotman-Zaid, who died of COVID-19 in December 2020.

"My father gave me marching orders to end it and make sure it doesn't happen again," Atkins said of the pandemic. "He told me, 'Politicize the hell out of my death if I die of this.'" Julie Wallace and her husband, Lewis Dunlap, had cellphone numbers one digit apart. She continues paying to keep his number. She calls it just to hear his voice. "It's just so important

to hear that sometimes," she said. "It gives you a little bit of reassurance while also tearing your heart out." Some have offered solace in poetry. In Philadelphia, poet and social worker Tra-peta Mayson, created a 24-hour poetry hotline called Healing Verse. Traffic to the Academy of American Poets' poets.org website rose during the pandemic.

Brian Sonia-Wallace, poet laureate of West Hollywood, California, has traveled the country writing poems for hire. He imagines a memorial of a million poems, written by people who don't normally write poetry. They would talk to those who are grieving and listen for points of connection.

"What we need as a nation is empathy," said Tanya Alves, 35, of Weston, Florida, who lost her 24-year-old sister to COVID-19 in October. "Over two years into the pandemic, with all the cases and lives lost, we should be more compassionate and respectful when talking about COVID. Thousands of families changed forever. This virus is not just a cold." □



## Buttigieg sends \$5B to cities for safety as road deaths soar



Vice President Kamala Harris, right, next to Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, speaks during a plenary session of the US-ASEAN Summit, Friday, May 13, 2022, at the State Department in Washington.

Associated Press

By HOPE YEN

Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — With upcoming data showing traffic deaths soaring, the Biden administration is steering \$5 billion in federal aid to cities and localities to address the growing crisis by slowing down cars, carving out bike paths and wider sidewalks and nudging commuters to public transit.

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg on Monday announced the availability of money over five years under his department's new Safe Streets & Roads for All program.

The aim will be to provide a direct infusion of federal cash to communities that pledge to promote safety for the multiple users of a roadway, particularly pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as motorists.

Federal data being released this week by the Transportation Department is expected to show another big jump in U.S. traffic deaths through 2021,

reflecting continued risky driving that began with the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020. Fatalities among pedestrians and cyclists have been rising faster than those within vehicles.

Deaths also are disproportionately higher among nonwhite, lower-income people, who are more likely to take public transit and travel by foot or bike, as well as those in tribal and rural areas, where speeding can be common and seat belt use less frequent. "We face a national crisis of fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways, and these tragedies are preventable — so as a nation we must work urgently and collaboratively to save lives," Buttigieg said. He said the money "will help communities large and small take action to protect all Americans on our roads."

"We have become far too accustomed to the loss of life and serious injuries happening on our roadways," he said.

Previewing the upcoming data, Steven Cliff, the acting head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, told an event last week the final figures would show "alarming" increases for the full year of 2021.

Roadway deaths represent about 95% of all U.S. transportation deaths, at more than 38,000 in 2020. In 2021, data released so far has already shown U.S. traffic fatalities rising to 31,720 through the third quarter, the highest nine-month period since 2006. Before 2020, the number of U.S. traffic deaths had fallen for three straight years.

Cliff said a big chunk of fatalities have been occurring for motorists who do not buckle up and often during short car trips "down the street."

The department's effort is part of a new national strategy, launched in January, to stem record increases in road fatalities with a "safe system" approach that promotes better road

design, lower speed limits and tougher car safety regulations. About \$5 million to \$6 million for the grants is included in President Joe Biden's infrastructure law. Still, much of the federal roadmap relies on cooperation from cities and states, and it could take months if not years to fully implement with discernible results — too late to soothe 2022 midterm voters unsettled by this and other pandemic-related ills, such as rising crime.

The latest U.S. guidance Monday invites cities and localities to sketch out safety plans in their applications for the federal grants, which are to be awarded late this year.

It cites examples of good projects as those that promise to transform a high-crash roadway, such as by adding rumble strips to slow cars or installing speed cameras, which the department says could provide more equitable enforcement than police traffic stops; flashing bea-

cons for pedestrian crosswalks; new "safe routes" via sidewalks or other protected pathways to school or public transit in underserved communities; and other "quick build" roadway changes designed with community input.

Buttigieg was traveling to Germany on Monday for the International Transport Forum to discuss the best approaches to achieve a U.N. goal of halving the world's traffic deaths by 2030. Around 1.25 million people are killed worldwide on the road each year. The U.S. has been mostly an outlier in seeing traffic deaths climb during the pandemic even with fewer cars on the road, due in part to higher U.S. rates of speeding and not wearing seatbelts.

Michael Kelley, policy director for roadway safety advocacy group BikeWalk-KC in Kansas City, Missouri, says he has been advocating for biking and walking routes because his two young daughters love to explore outside but can't do so safely since their neighborhood lacks sidewalks and sits near a highway.

Kelley, who is Black, said communities can become vibrant and more connected by fostering walkable neighborhoods that allow the elderly who may not readily drive, such as his parents, to "age in place" near a younger generation, like his daughters, who increasingly "don't want or need to drive" a car if there are other safe and affordable transportation options available.

"Everyone deserves to be able to walk, to bike, to take transit, and for that to be the safe and easy choice," Kelley said.

Buttigieg stressed the urgency.

"I'm convinced that we can use this moment, this urgent and troubling moment, as a pivot point," he said. "We are out to fund whatever is going to go most directly toward reducing crashes and saving lives so we can change the trajectory of road safety in this decade." □



# Judge: California's women on boards law is unconstitutional

By **BRIAN MELLEY**

**Associated Press**

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — A Los Angeles judge has ruled that California's landmark law requiring women on corporate boards is unconstitutional.

Superior Court Judge Maureen Duffy-Lewis said the law that would have required boards have up to three female directors by this year violated the right to equal treatment. The ruling was dated Friday.

The conservative legal group Judicial Watch had challenged the law, claiming it was illegal to use taxpayer funds to enforce a law that violates the equal protection clause of the California Constitution by mandating a gender-based quota.

The law was on shaky ground from the get-go with a legislative analysis saying it could be difficult to defend and then-Gov. Jerry Brown saying he was signing it despite the potential for it to be overturned by a court. Brown said he signed the bill to send a message during the #MeToo era.

In the three years it has been on the books, it's been credited with improving the standing of women



**Betsy Berkhemer-Credaire, CEO of 50/50 Women on Boards, is seen in the Tom Bradley Conference Room at City Club LA in downtown Los Angeles on Sept. 3, 2021.**

**Associated Press**

in corporate boardrooms. The state defended the law as constitutional saying it was necessary to reverse a culture of discrimination that favored men and was put in place only after other measures failed. The state also said the law didn't create a quota because boards could add seats for female directors without stripping men of their positions.

Although the law carried potential hefty penalties for failing to file an annual

report or comply with the law, a chief in the secretary of state's office acknowledged during the trial that it was toothless.

No fines have ever been levied and there was no intention to do so, Betsy Bogart testified. Further, a letter that surfaced during trial from former Secretary of State Alex Padilla warned Brown weeks before he signed the law that it was probably unenforceable.

"Any attempt by the secretary of state to collect

or enforce the fine would likely exceed its authority," Padilla wrote.

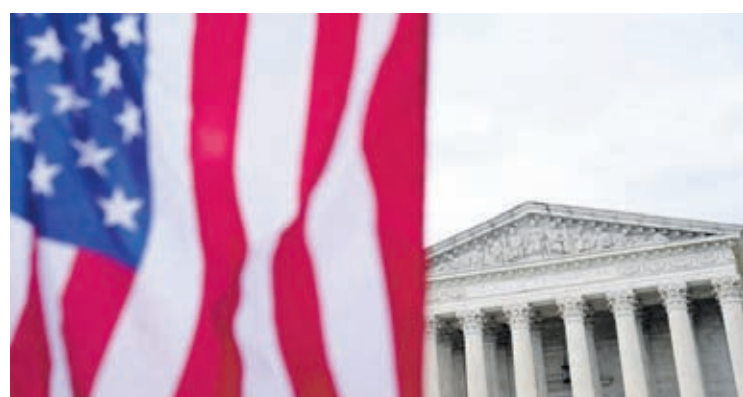
The law required publicly held companies headquartered in California to have one member who identifies as a woman on their boards of directors by the end of 2019. By January 2022, boards with five directors were required to have two women and boards with six or more members were required to have three women.

The Women on Boards

law, also known by its bill number, SB826, called for penalties ranging from \$100,000 fines for failing to report board compositions to the California secretary of state's office to \$300,000 for multiple failures to have the required number of women board members. Fewer than half the nearly 650 applicable corporations in the state reported last year that they had complied. More than half didn't file the required disclosure statement, according to the most recent report.

Supporters of the law hailed it for achieving more gains for women. Other states followed California's lead. Washington state passed a similar measure last year, and lawmakers in Massachusetts, New Jersey and Hawaii proposed similar bills. Illinois requires publicly traded companies to report the makeup of their boards.

Deputy Attorney General Ashante Norton said alternatives to a law mandating seats for women had been tried in California to no avail. In 2013, for example, the Legislature passed a resolution to get companies to add women to their boards, but few did. □



**An American flag waves in front of the Supreme Court building, Nov. 2, 2020, on Capitol Hill in Washington.**

**Associated Press**

By **MARK SHERMAN**

**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — A sharply divided Supreme Court on Monday ruled that federal courts are powerless to review immigration officials' decisions in some deportation cases, even when they have made what a dissenting justice called "egregious factual mistakes."

The court ruled 5-4 against Georgia resident Pankaj-kumar Patel, who checked a box indicating he was a U.S. citizen when renewing his Georgia driver's license in 2008.

An immigration judge, who is a Justice Department employee, concluded Patel intended to misrepresent his status for the purpose of getting his license,

## Justices limit federal court review of some deportations

even though Georgia law entitled a noncitizen in Patel's situation to a license to drive. Patel and his wife, Jyotsnaben, concede they entered the U.S. illegally roughly 30 years ago since leaving their native India. In 2007, Patel applied for a "green card," legal permanent residency status, with the support of his employer. The Patels have three children. One is a U.S. citizen and the other two are green-card holders who are married to Americans. But Patel's quest for legal status foundered on the license application, and the immigration judge's decision that Patel had intentionally misrepresented his

citizenship status. The judge ordered Patel and his wife deported.

Justice Amy Coney Barrett wrote for five conservative justices that federal courts can't review such decisions under immigration law. The U.S. attorney general can grant protection from deportation, but people must first be eligible and the result of the immigration judge's decision was that Patel was ineligible.

"Federal courts have a very limited role to play in this process," Barrett wrote concluding that immigration law "precludes judicial review of factual findings that underlie a denial of relief." Justice Neil Gorsuch

joined with the court's three liberal justices in dissent. "As a result, no court may correct even the agency's most egregious factual mistakes about an individual's statutory eligibility for relief," Gorsuch wrote, noting the agency itself sided with Patel at the Supreme Court.

While the high-court case dealt with deportation, Gorsuch wrote that the decision could foreclose court review when immigration officials make errors of fact in other contexts, "the student hoping to remain in the country, the foreigner who marries a U. S. citizen, the skilled worker sponsored by her employer." □



# Once-neutral Sweden seeks NATO membership; Turkey objects

By KARL RITTER

Associated Press

**STOCKHOLM (AP)** — Sweden on Monday decided to join neighboring Finland in seeking NATO membership, ending more than two centuries of military nonalignment in a historic shift prompted by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The move drew strong objections from Turkey's leader, who declared the two nations should not be allowed to join NATO because they have been too lax in taking action against Kurdish militants.

Countries can only join NATO if all current members agree.

Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson warned that the Nordic country would be in a "vulnerable position" during the application period and urged her fellow citizens to brace themselves for the Russian response.

"Russia has said that that it will take countermeasures if we join NATO," she said. "We cannot rule out that Sweden will be exposed to, for instance, disinformation and attempts to intimidate and divide us."

Sweden's move came a day after the country's governing Social Democratic party endorsed a plan for Sweden to join the trans-Atlantic alliance and Finland's government announced that it would seek to join NATO.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday



Sweden's Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson, right, and the Moderate Party's leader Ulf Kristersson give a news conference in Stockholm, Sweden, Monday, May 16, 2022.

Associated Press

ratcheted up his objection to Sweden and Finland joining NATO, accusing the countries of failing to take a "clear" stance against Kurdish militants and other groups that his country considers to as terrorists, and of imposing military sanctions on Turkey.

"Neither country has an open, clear stance against terrorist organizations," Erdogan said. "During this process, we cannot say 'yes' to those who impose sanctions on Turkey, on joining NATO, which is a security organization."

Swedish Defense Minister Peter Hultqvist told public broadcaster SVT that a Swedish delegation would be sent to Ankara to discuss the issue.

Moscow has repeatedly warned Finland, which

shares a 1,340-kilometer (830-mile) border with Russia, and Sweden of repercussions should they pursue NATO membership. But Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday seemed to downplay the significance of their move.

Speaking to a Russian-led military alliance of six ex-Soviet states, Putin said Moscow "does not have a problem" with Sweden or Finland applying for NATO membership, but that "the expansion of military infrastructure onto this territory will, of course, give rise to our reaction in response."

Andersson, who leads the center-left Social Democrats, said Sweden would hand in its NATO application jointly with Finland. Flanked by opposition leader Ulf Kristersson, An-

dersson said her government also was preparing a bill that would allow Sweden to receive military assistance from other nations in case of an attack.

"The Russian leadership thought they could bully Ukraine and deny them and other countries self-determination," Kristersson said. "They thought they could scare Sweden and Finland and drive a wedge between us and our neighbors and allies. They were wrong." Once a regional military power, Sweden has avoided military alliances since the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Like Finland it remained neutral throughout the Cold War, but formed closer relations with NATO after the 1991 Soviet collapse. They no longer see themselves as neutral

after joining the European Union in 1995, but have remained nonaligned militarily until now.

After being firmly against NATO membership for decades, public opinion in both countries shifted following Russia's Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine, with record levels of support for joining the alliance. The Swedish and Finnish governments swiftly initiated discussions across political parties about NATO membership and reached out to the U.S., Britain, Germany and other NATO countries for their support.

On Sunday, Andersson's party reversed their long-standing position that Sweden must remain nonaligned, giving NATO membership overwhelming support in Parliament. Only the small Left and Green parties objected when the issue was discussed by lawmakers on Monday.

Left Party leader Nooshi Dadgostar, whose calls for a referendum on the matter were dismissed by the government, said joining NATO would raise tensions in the Baltic Sea region.

"It does not help Ukraine," she said.

Andersson said Sweden would make clear that it doesn't want nuclear weapons or permanent NATO bases on its soil — similar conditions as neighboring Norway and Denmark insisted on when the alliance was formed after World War II. □

# Coast Guard ends search after rescuing 38 near Puerto Rico

**SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)**

— The U.S. Coast Guard announced Monday that it suspended the search for potential survivors of a capsized boat near Puerto Rico after finding 11 bodies and rescuing 38 migrants from a vessel that had carried an estimated 60 to 75 passengers.

Crews searched the waters north of uninhabited Desecheo Island, which lies west of Puerto Rico, for four days.

All 11 victims were Haitian

women and 36 of the 38 survivors were Haitians. The remaining two were from the Dominican Republic, officials said.

"Our most heartfelt condolences to the families, friends and loved ones of those who did not survive or remain missing," said Capt. Gregory Magee, commander of the San Juan Coast Guard sector. "These crews have done their utmost to ensure that if there were any more survivors, that they would have

had the best chance to be rescued."

Rescue efforts began on Thursday after a U.S. Customs and Border Protection helicopter spotted the capsized boat while on patrol.

Authorities have reported a big increase in recent months in the number of Haitian migrants fleeing their country, which is struggling with a spike in brutal gang violence, political instability and a crumbling economy. □



This photo released by the Seventh U.S. Coast Guard District shows people standing on a capsized boat, left, as some of its passengers are pulled up on to a rescue boat, top, in the open waters northwest of Puerto Rico, Thursday, May 12, 2022.

Associated Press



# Iraqi merchants struggle on amid series of strong sandstorms

By **SAMYA KULLAB**

**Associated Press**

**BAGHDAD (AP)** — The thick layer of dust blanketing the sky did not deter Muhammed Ghalib from walking to work in Baghdad's main commercial district on Monday, as the latest in an unrelenting series of intense sandstorms swept Iraq.

The dust coated his eyelashes a shade of orange. He arrived at 4 a.m., the height of the storm, and sat outside his stall by the street to sell household goods in the capital's Shorja market. "Life goes on," he said.

Ghalib was among the merchants in the capital who did not heed public warnings Monday to stay indoors because of poor weather conditions, lamenting financial losses and hardship amid ongoing economic woes. The Health Ministry said there were at least 1,700 cases of severe respiratory complaints in Baghdad on Monday because of the storm. There have been at least eight sandstorms in Iraq since April, according to officials. They have landed thousands of Iraqis in hospitals with severe breathing difficulties and at least one person died, according to



**A street vendor waits for customers during a sandstorm in Baghdad, Iraq, Monday, May 16, 2022. Associated Press**

Iraq's Health Ministry, which declared a state of emergency.

Monday's sandstorm killed two people in neighboring Syria's eastern province of Deir el-Zour along the border with Iraq, according to official news agency SANA. The agency said hundreds of people were taken to hospitals after suffering breathing problems, adding that the dead were a father and his son in Deir el-Zour.

Sham FM radio reported that a young man suffocated

in the village of Al-Harijia north of Deir el-Zour.

Dust storms are a seasonal occurrence in Iraq but their frequency this year has alarmed experts who blame drought, rapid desertification and climate change.

On Monday, Baghdad Gov. Mohammed Jaber al-Atta suspended working hours in the province, with all departments excluding the Health Ministry temporarily closed. The provinces of Wasit, Diwaniyah and Babil also declared Mon-

day a public holiday owing to the severity of the dust storm.

In the last major sandstorm on May 5, one person died in Iraq and 5,000 people were admitted to hospitals, the Health Ministry said. Ministry spokesman Saif al-Badr said Monday that Iraq's medical facilities were on alert.

Flights were suspended at Baghdad, Najaf and Sulaimaniyah airports due to low visibility.

Climate activists have blamed inaction by the

Iraqi government and poor water management policies for the increase in sandstorms. The phenomenon is expected to become more frequent amid record-low rainfall and rising summer temperatures. Abu Dalal, a cashier at a restaurant in the Karada neighborhood of Baghdad, blamed the government for not prioritizing green spaces around the capital to capture the seasonal dust waves.

Essa Fayadh, a senior Environment Ministry official, said the government struggles to address desertification across vast swathes of agricultural land due to declining water reserves, which are down 50% from last year. The Iraqi government has blamed dam projects in Turkey and Iran for limiting river flows into Iraq.

"We had to prioritize food security with the resources we have," he said.

In the capital, Iraqis are learning to adapt under a sepia sky. Many on the street wore surgical masks. "We have no choice," Ghalib said, beating the dust from the dish cloths hanging outside his stall. A few minutes later, he does it again. □

# New Zealand to help pay for cleaner cars to reduce emissions

By **NICK PERRY**

**Associated Press**

**WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)** — New Zealand's government said Monday it will help pay for lower-income

families to scrap their old gas guzzlers and replace them with cleaner hybrid or electric cars as part of a sweeping plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The government said it plans to spend 569 million New Zealand dollars (\$357 million) on the trial program as part of a larger plan that includes subsidies for businesses to reduce emissions, a switch to an entirely green bus fleet by 2035 and curbside food-waste collection for most homes by the end of the decade.

"This is a landmark day in our transition to a low emissions future," Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said in a statement. "We've all seen the recent reports on sea level rise and its impact right here in New Zealand. We cannot leave the issue of climate change until it's too late to fix."

The plan represents a step toward the pledges the

nation made under the 2016 Paris Agreement on climate change and New Zealand's stated goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Ardern, who was scheduled to launch the plan but cancelled after testing positive for COVID-19 late last week, said every community and sector had a role to play and that reducing reliance on fossil fuels would help shield households from volatile price hikes.

The plan also sets a target of reducing total car travel by 20% over the next 13 years by offering better transportation options in cities as well as improved options for cyclists and walkers. The programs will be paid for from a 4.5 bil-

lion New Zealand dollar (\$2.8 billion) climate emergency response fund. Officials said that over time, money collected from polluters would pay for the programs rather than taxes from households.

But the plan remained short on some details, including for the gas guzzler replacement plan which the government said would be finalized over the coming months.

And some critics said it continued to give an easy ride to the nation's huge agriculture industry, which creates about half of the nation's total greenhouse gas emissions but is also vital to the economy as the nation's biggest export earner. □



**Electric vehicle charging station and car share parking are seen in Auckland, New Zealand, on Aug. 12, 2021. Associated Press**



# Ransomware gang threatens to overthrow Costa Rica government

By JAVIER CORDOBA

Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (AP)

— A ransomware gang that infiltrated some Costa Rican government computer systems has upped its threat, saying its goal is now to overthrow the government.

Perhaps seizing on the fact that President Rodrigo Chaves had only been in office for a week, the Russian-speaking Conti gang tried to increase the pressure to pay a ransom by raising its demand to \$20 million.

Chaves suggested Monday in a news conference that the attack was coming from inside as well as outside Costa Rica.

"We are at war and that's not an exaggeration," Chaves said. He said officials were battling a national terrorist group that had collaborators inside Costa Rica.

Chaves also said the impact was broader than previously known, with 27 government institutions, including municipalities and state-run utilities, affected. He blamed his predecessor Carlos Alvarado for not investing in cybersecurity and for not more aggressively dealing with the at-



Costa Rica's former finance minister Rodrigo Chaves speaks to supporters at his headquarters in San Jose, Costa Rica, after winning a presidential runoff election, Sunday, April 3, 2022.

Associated Press

tacks in the waning days of his government.

Despite Conti's threat, experts see regime change as a highly unlikely — or even the real goal.

"We haven't seen anything even close to this before and it's quite a unique situation," said Brett Callow, a ransomware analyst at Emsisoft. "The threat to overthrow the government is simply them making noise and not to be taken too seriously, I wouldn't say.

"However, the threat that they could cause more disruption than they already have is potentially real and that there is no way of knowing how many other government departments they may have compromised but not yet encrypted."

Conti attacked Costa Rica in April, accessing multiple critical systems in the Finance Ministry, including customs and tax collection. Other government systems

were also affected and a month later not all are fully functioning.

Chaves declared a state of emergency over the attack as soon as he was sworn in last week. The U.S. State Department offered a \$10 million reward for information leading to the identification or location of Conti leaders.

Conti responded by writing, "We are determined to overthrow the government by means of a cyber

attack, we have already shown you all the strength and power, you have introduced an emergency."

The gang also said it was raising the ransom demand to \$20 million. It called on Costa Ricans to pressure their government to pay.

The attack has encrypted government data and the gang said Saturday that if the ransom wasn't paid in one week, it would delete the decryption keys.

The U.S. State Department statement last week said the Conti group had been responsible for hundreds of ransomware incidents during the past two years.

"The FBI estimates that as of January 2022, there had been over 1,000 victims of attacks associated with Conti ransomware with victim payouts exceeding \$150,000,000, making the Conti Ransomware variant the costliest strain of ransomware ever documented," the statement said.

While the attack is adding unwanted stress to Chaves' early days in office, it's unlikely there was anything but a monetary motivation for the gang.

"I believe this is simply a for-profit cyber attack," Callow, the analyst said. "Nothing more." □

## Former Australian envoy says Australia's lost Pacific trust

By ROD MCGUIRK

Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)

— A former Australian envoy to the Solomon Islands has accused Australia's government of losing the trust of South Pacific island countries and of ushering in greater Chinese influence. Retired career diplomat Trevor Sofield told a security summit on Monday he found it "inconceivable" that the Solomon government did not trust Australia enough to consult when a bilateral security pact with Beijing was first considered. "That would not have happened a few years ago," said Sofield, who was Australian high commissioner to the Solomon Islands from 1982

to 1985. Australia and its allies including the United States fear the pact will result in a Chinese naval presence less than 2,000 kilometers (1,200 miles) from the northeast Australian coast.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison argues that he is better able than opposition leader Anthony Albanese to take on the security threats posed by China and to strengthen relations with Washington, Australia's most important defense partner. Sofield, who was manhandled by security staff when he attempted to speak to Morrison at a campaign event last week, said Australia had "lost its way" in the Pacific as Chi-

na scaled up its influence in the region.

"We had a vision," he said. "It was underpinned by the fact that if we could assist these governments reach economic security through trade and aid then they would certainly be able to manage their own affairs."

"But we've lost that vision and we've lost that trust that we developed over time," Sofield added.

Albanese's center-left Labor Party has condemned the Sino-Solomon pact as Australia's worst foreign policy failure in the Pacific since World War II.

Morrison argues the blame lies with China for interfering in the Pacific.

Morrison boasts that a



Former Australian High Commissioner to Solomon Islands Trevor Sofield gestures after he is stopped from speaking to Prime Minister Scott Morrison near Elizabeth Town, Australia, May 12, 2022.

Associated Press

partnership with the United States and Britain announced in September that will supply Australia with a fleet of submarines powered by U.S. nuclear technology was as major achievement to boost Australia's security.

The so-called AUKUS agreement has become a political battleground since an Australian newspaper reported on Saturday that the United States had set bipartisan support as a prerequisite for any agreement going ahead. □



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## Over a decade in business, Aruba Living Today: Offering the so much needed human touch



**NOORD —** We are in 2022. It's been a wild ride with Covid-19 and we all are aiming for a change of routine. We simply want to "live" life again. "It is time for living your dream," as the quote says at Aruba Living Today's office. "We are ten plus years in business, and I am proud to say that all our clients stuck with us. We are no part of a big company, we keep it small, personal,

and real. Because you are not a number, no sales target either and certainly your name is not commission. Our responsibility is to make your dream come true," says owner Randolph Arends.

### Tempting times

Did Covid-19 teach us anything? Weren't we telling each other during the lockdown that we would pay

more attention to each other? Wasn't the message that health and happiness is so much more valuable than hitting targets and implement to-do tasks? The pandemic prevents us from connecting physically. Tight hugs and shaking hands firmly are no longer a natural thing. We live in a world of face masks hides smiles, and hands are sanitized after each touch. This is not who we are. We are in search for connection.

### From human to human

If you have decided to buy a house or rent one for vacation in Aruba and you are looking for that match, the question now is how to click with a person that offers a personal touch? One who pays genuine attention and has sincere interest in what you want? This different approach to real estate is what sets Aruba Living Today apart, and the reason Randolph calls himself a property mediator instead of a real estate broker. "The personal touch is essential to me. I am stepping aside of the image that real estate brokers are only in for the commission. This image does not fit me at all, I am in for my passion, and I can only do this from the heart."

### One stop shopping point

Services offered by Aruba Living Today are House and Land Sales, Rentals, Investments, Property Management, Vacation Rental, Mortgages, Insurances, Maintenance, Assist in Arrangements for Notary and Utilities, Guiding Bureaucracy Process and Assisting in Import of Furniture. Randolph and his business partner Berend Prenger are a fantastic,



experienced duo, each of them specialists in the field. Berend is also a certified appraiser within the Dutch Kingdom meaning he does your appraisal report that is accepted by all banks and he delivers within three days. "This definitely speeds up the process of buying," Prenger adds.

### You are welcome to meet in person

Aruba Living Today houses in an authentic Aruban house, welcoming you in a warm ambiance that emphasizes the philosophy of connecting. Candles, Buddha ornaments and a homey setting form the décor for you to sit and talk about your dream house or investment. "My goal was to do real estate in a different way when I established this company June 1st 2009. Not from the perspective of only selling, but to look for the perfect match between dream house and client. My philosophy is: it will only work when all involved are happy and connected by that personal touch."

Aruba Living Today caters for both local and foreign market divided into 40 % local buyers and 60 % foreign buyers. "Our customers come from Holland, Belgium, Norway, Germany, UK, Russia, Latin America, United States and Cana-

da. We are widely covered and thus provable good with different cultures, also we speak four languages." Besides that, Aruba Living Today is open to every budget, they have listings for all category buyers. As a member of the Aruban Real Estate Association, they are listed also on the website [www.arubalisting.com](http://www.arubalisting.com) within a group of 20 of the most advanced realtors on the island. Aruba Living Today is featured on House Hunters, social media, Aruba Living Today and of course in Aruba Today's newspaper. □

### Aruba Living Today

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Fax +297 587 9985  
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## Local athlete Elliott Loonstra PLY faces a new challenge in Europe



**ORANJESTAD - A new challenge for our Paralympic athlete Elliott Loonstra PLY who traveled to Manchester, Great Britain to compete in the prestigious 2022 European Para Taekwon-**

**do Open Championship, which will be his first participation in Europe.**

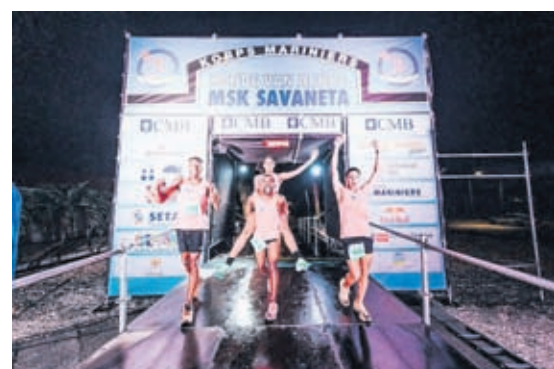
The main objective is the acquiring of more experience and obtaining points

to continue within the top 10 in the world. Currently Loonstra is 8th in the world and 1st in the Pan American region. Improving his position in the world ranking will lead to direct qualification for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

We wish Elliott (Lefty) Loonstra PLY and his international coach Luciano Mazzeo the greatest success. A big thank you goes to the people of Aruba and the Loonstra family for their unconditional support. □



## 30th 'Ronde van Aruba' is going to start



**ORANJESTAD - On the evening of the 20th of May 2022 the 30th edition of the 'Ronde van Aruba' is going to start.**

The running event, organized by the Marine Barracks in Savaneta, already exists since 1971. Two members of the Marines challenged themselves once, to run the island on a solo race. Since that moment this idea has grown to an annual event. The running course is 72 kilometers long, and largely follows the coastline of the island and is one of the toughest and longest running courses of the Caribbean Region. The governor of Aruba, His Excellency Alfonso Boekhoudt, will give the starting shot.

This year it is expected that approximately 800 participants will register at the starting line. The 72 km long route can be run individually, as a duo, or with a relay team (es-

tafette 4-person team). This year a record amount of people have registered to run the race individually. This is a total amount of 20 men and women. The other participants will start between 20.00 and 00.00 hrs. on Friday evening. Each minute a new team or duo will start.

During the Corona period the "Ronde of Aruba" did take place in an adapted form. This year it has been considered to go back step by step to the 'Ronde of Aruba' as most of the people were acquainted to. Spectators are, as usual, more than welcome along the route to encourage and cheer on the runners. In addition, music will be played at all eight exchange stations for the public and participants. □



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For Directions



# The Central Bureau of Statistics presents the most important findings for the Foreign Trade of the 1st quarter 2022

Oranjestad - The total import, in terms of weight, registered an increase of 60.6% in the first quarter of 2022 (158.9 mln. kg) compared to the same period in 2021 (99.0 mln. kg), while, in terms of value, the total import increased by 42.2%, from Afl. 397.7 mln. to Afl. 565.5 mln. Import to the free circulation area of Aruba\* (weight)

Import to the free circulation area of Aruba, in terms of weight, registered an increase of 60.9% in the first quarter of 2022 (156.7 mln. kg), compared to the same period in 2021 (97.4 mln. kg). During this period, eighteen (18) of the twenty-one (21) sections registered increases in terms of weight in import to the free circulation area of Aruba. The largest increases are observed for the sections "Mineral products" (52.3 mln. kg), "Food products" (2.1 mln. kg), and "Works of stone, gypsum, cement, asbestos" (1.3 mln. kg).

The largest decreases are observed for the sections "Vegetable products" (-0.4 mln. kg) and "Fats and oils" (-0.1 mln. kg).

Import to the free circulation area of Aruba\* (value) Import to the free circulation area of Aruba, in terms of value, registered an increase of 40.5% in the first quarter of 2022 (Afl. 535.8 mln.) compared to the same period in 2021 (Afl. 381.3 mln.). During this period, all twenty-one (21) sections registered increases in terms of value in import to the free circulation area of Aruba.

The largest increases are observed for the sections "Machinery & electrotechnical equipment (new & renewed)" (Afl. 21.8 mln.), "Mineral products" (Afl. 18.4 mln.) and "Food products" (Afl. 14.6 mln.).

## Import to the free Zone of Aruba

Import to the free Zone of Aruba, in terms of weight,

Table 1 Import by quarter, 2021-2022

in mln. kg	Qtr. 2021				2021	Qtr. 2022				2022	1st Quarter 2021 - 2022	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th		1st	2nd	3rd	4th		% change	in mln.
To Aruba by Sea	96.8	163.1	112.4	158.2	530.5	156.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	156.0	61.2	59.2
To Aruba by Air	0.6	0.6	1.0	0.8	3.1	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	13.1	0.1
To Aruba	97.4	163.7	113.4	159.0	533.5	156.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	156.7	60.9	59.3
To the Free Zone	1.6	2.0	2.6	2.2	8.4	2.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.3	43.8	0.7
Total Import	99.0	165.7	116.0	161.2	541.9	158.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	158.9	60.6	60.0
By Large companies	20.1	21.2	25.6	23.8	90.6	22.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	22.5	12.1	2.4
By Other companies	77.3	142.6	87.8	135.2	442.9	134.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	134.1	73.5	56.8
To Aruba	97.4	163.7	113.4	159.0	533.5	156.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	156.7	60.9	59.3

in mln. Afl.	Qtr. 2021				2021	Qtr. 2022				2022	1st Quarter 2021 - 2022	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th		1st	2nd	3rd	4th		% change	in mln.
To Aruba by Sea	312.6	369.2	457.5	477.6	1,617.0	436.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	436.5	39.6	123.9
To Aruba by Air	68.7	91.7	90.8	113.5	364.7	99.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	99.2	44.5	30.5
To Aruba	381.3	460.9	548.3	591.1	1,981.7	535.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	535.8	40.5	154.4
To the Free Zone	16.4	25.8	37.2	30.7	110.1	29.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	29.7	81.5	13.3
Total Import	397.7	486.7	585.5	621.9	2,091.7	565.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	565.5	42.2	167.8
By Large companies	39.7	39.3	43.6	46.5	169.1	59.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	59.0	48.5	19.3
By Other companies	341.6	421.6	504.7	544.6	1,812.6	476.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	476.8	39.6	135.2
To Aruba	381.3	460.9	548.3	591.1	1,981.7	535.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	535.8	40.5	154.4

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics Aruba

registered an increase of 43.8% in the first quarter of 2022 (2.3 mln. kg) compared to the same period in 2022 (1.6 mln. kg), while, in terms of value, it increased by 81.5% from Afl. 16.4 mln. to Afl. 29.7 mln.

The abovementioned Import (to the free calculation area of Aruba) is the result of Import by Sea and

Import by Air, which had the following developments:

1. Import to the free circulation area of Aruba\* by Sea Import by Sea to the free circulation area of Aruba, in terms of weight, registered an increase of 61.2% in the first quarter of 2022 (156.0 mln. kg) compared to the same period in 2021 (96.8 mln. kg), while, in terms of value, the import by Sea increased by 39.6% from Afl. 312.6 mln. to Afl.

436.5 mln.

2. Import to the free circulation area of Aruba\* by Air Import by Air to the free circulation area of Aruba, in terms of weight, increased by 13.1% from 0.6 mln. kg in the first quarter of 2021 to 0.7 mln. kg in the first quarter of 2022, while, in terms of value, the import by Air increased by 44.5% from Afl. 68.7 mln. to Afl. 99.2 mln. Import to the free circulation area of Aruba\* by Large companies\*\*

Import by "Large companies", in terms of weight, increased by 12.1% from 20.1 mln. kg in the first quarter of 2021 to 22.5 mln. kg in the first quarter of 2022, while, in terms of value, it increased by 48.5% from Afl. 39.7 mln. to Afl. 59.0 mln.

\* Free circulation area of Aruba: all goods entering or leaving the economic territory of Aruba, excluding the Free Zone \*\* Large

companies refers to the following companies: Valero, Arugas, Web, Elmar and Setar

The total export, in terms of weight, registered an increase of 47.9% in the first quarter of 2022 (7.2 mln. kg) compared to the same period of 2021 (4.9 mln. kg), while, in terms of value, the total export increased by 79.3% from Afl. 21.6 mln. to Afl. 38.7 mln.

## Export from the free circulation area of Aruba\* (weight)

Export from the free circulation area of Aruba, in terms of weight, registered an increase of 34.1% in the first quarter of 2022 (5.2 mln. kg) compared to the same period in 2021 (3.9 mln. kg). Nine (9) of the twenty-one (21) sections, registered increases in terms of weight in the export from the free

circulation area of Aruba. The largest increases are observed for the sections "Works of stone, gypsum, cement, asbestos" (0.8 mln. kg), "Base metals and derived works" (0.7 mln.kg), "Transport equipment" (0.1 kg) and "Food products" (0.1 kg).

The largest decreases are observed for the sections "Machinery & electrotechnical equipment (new & renewed)" (-0.1 mln. kg), "Artificial plastic elements" (-0.1 mln. kg) and "Works of art, collectors pieces and antiques" (-0.1 mln. kg).

## Export from the free circulation area of Aruba\* (value)

Export from the free circulation area of Aruba, in terms of value, registered an increase of 14.3% in the first quarter of 2022 (Afl. 13.5 mln.) compared to the same period in 2021 (Afl. 11.8 mln.). Twelve (12) of the twenty-one (21) sections, registered increases in terms of value in the export from the free circulation area of Aruba. The largest increases are observed for the sections "Transport equipment" (Afl. 1.6 mln.), "Optical instruments, apparatus and equipment" (Afl. 1.0 mln.) and "Base metals and derived works" (Afl. 0.7 mln.).

The largest decreases are observed for the sections "Miscellaneous manufactured articles" (Afl. -0.9 mln.), "Real pearls (natural) and other precious stones" (Afl. -0.7 mln.) and "Chemical products" (Afl. -0.4 mln.).

## Export from the free Zone of Aruba

Export from the free Zone of Aruba, in terms of weight, registered an increase of 102.2% in the first quarter of 2022 (2.0 mln. kg) compared to the same period in 2021 (1.0 mln. kg), while, in terms of value, it increased by 158.1% from Afl. 9.7 mln. to Afl. 25.2 mln.

Total Import by quarter, 2018-2022



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## Liz Weston: Dealing with death? There's an app for that

By LIZ WESTON of NerdWallet

Before the pandemic, entrepreneurs Liz Eddy and Alyssa Ruderman had trouble getting venture capitalists to invest in their end-of-life planning app Lantern. Potential business partners were skeptical as well.

"We would hear, 'Oh, this is really a niche issue,' which I think is pretty hilarious," Eddy says. "Death is quite literally the only thing on the planet that affects every single person."

The past two years have highlighted the importance of such preparation, even for younger people. Abigail Henson, a 31-year-old college professor in Phoenix, says she started using Lantern about 18 months ago to plan her funeral, tell her executor where to find her passwords and explain what she wanted to be done with her social media accounts.

"I'm a planner, and I have control issues, so the idea of being able to have a say in what happens following my passing was appealing," Henson says.

Planning for death and navigating life after a loss can be difficult, complex and sometimes expensive. However, several apps — including Lantern, Cake, Empathy and Everplans, among others — promise to help.

### HOW DEATH-PLANNING APPS WORK

Death-planning apps typically have free tools for consumers, and most have additional, premium services available for a fee.

For example, Empathy's free offerings include checklists, articles and collaboration tools for family members dealing with a death. Those who pay a subscription fee of \$8.99 a month or \$64.99 per year can access a document vault and automated tools to close accounts.

Subscribers also get around-the-clock access to "care specialists" who can answer questions and help users search for specialized advisers, such as attorneys or tax pros.

Everplans, a document-storage site and app, offers a free trial followed by an annual \$75 subscription fee.

Lantern's free offerings include basic preplanning tools, an after-loss checklist, document storage and collaboration tools. A one-time \$149 fee provides access to more resources and the ability to create additional plans.

Cake's free features include end-of-life planning, online memorials, a post-loss checklist and document storage. A \$96 annual subscription buys unlimited storage, a legal online will and one-on-one consultations with the app's support team, says Suelin Chen, Cake's co-founder.

Some apps partner with employers, insurers, banks and other companies that provide the app's features to employees or customers as a benefit. The apps also may earn referral fees for connecting users with service providers. Lantern has a "Funeralocity" tool to search for funeral homes, for instance, and Cake partners with Eterneva, which turns cremated remains into diamonds.

### PLAN AT YOUR OWN PACE

Henson says she chose Lantern because she wanted a digital solution that allowed her to complete preplanning tasks at her own pace and share them online with trusted people. That felt more manageable than tackling estate planning all at once and storing the documents in a locked filing cabinet, which is what her mother has done, Henson says.

"It can be really overwhelming to think about it in one sitting, but the idea that every once in a while you can pop in and add more is helpful," Henson says.

People shouldn't rely on apps to do all their estate planning, says certified financial planner and physician Carolyn McClanahan of Jacksonville, Florida. Wills and trusts, for example, are tricky to draft and best done by experienced attorneys, she says.

But McClanahan likes apps that help with tasks such as funeral instructions, advanced care directives, pet care plans and obituary drafts.

"Anything that can get people to start thinking about planning for end of life is good," McClanahan says.

### THINKING ABOUT YOUR LEGACY

Planning for your death can be a tremendous gift to the people you leave behind, sparing them confusion and stress. But dealing with death's aftermath can still be a heavy load, made even more complicated by grief.

Families often spend thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours on post-death tasks, says Ron Gura, Empathy's co-founder and CEO. Those chores can include arranging the funeral, probating the estate, closing accounts, canceling services and dealing with various government agencies, including Social Security and the IRS. Apps allow people to answer a few questions and get personalized advice. "We can show you only the things that you need to do right now and also tell you what can wait," Gura says.

Death-planning apps primarily focus on practicalities, such as completing tasks and uploading important documents. But many also en-



courage users to think about their legacies.

Everplans, for example, has a worksheet to help people create an ethical will, a document that communicates their values, life lessons and most important experiences. Everplans also has templates and guidance for writing letters and creating videos with a legacy message.

Cake's Chen says people often ask her if running a death-planning app is depressing. Quite the opposite, she says. Thinking about what we value and how we want to be remembered is an essential part, not just of the death-planning process, but of life, Chen says.

"It really gets at the core of what makes life meaningful," she says. "I am reminded every single day to make the most of the time that I have." □



# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 40 Caesar's language
  - 1 "The Lion King" hero
  - 6 Diamond birds
  - covers
  - 11 Musical chord
  - 12 Love, to Luigi
  - 13 Long Island resort town
  - 15 Lawyer: Abbr.
  - 16 Ram's mate
  - 17 Verb for you
  - 18 Craves
  - 20 Luggage ID
  - 21 Nap site
  - 22 Greek cheese
  - 23 Fathers
  - 26 Bike part
  - 27 Racing's Grand —
  - 28 Sheep call
  - 29 Roulette bet
  - 30 Fast fish
  - 34 Gorilla or gibbon
  - 35 Oscar winner
  - 36 Badminton need
  - 37 Area of central London
- DOWN**
- 1 Place
  - 2 Steam-ing
  - 3 View
  - 4 Slugger's need
  - 5 Sticks
  - 6 Domes-ticates
  - 7 Band blaster
  - 8 Took turns
  - 9 In fair shares
  - 10 West African nation
  - 14 Really impressed
  - 19 Alpine goat
  - 22 Accom-plishment
  - 23 Stretches out
  - 24 Words of emphasis
  - 25 Reaches by bike
  - 26 Kitchen waste
  - 28 Island east of Java
  - 30 Denoun-ces
  - 31 Door sign
  - 32 Baseball's Pee Wee
  - 33 Scatter
  - 38 Pointer
  - 39 Brief time

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

Yesterday's answer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11					12				
13					14				
15				16				17	
18			19					20	
			21				22		
23	24	25			26				
27					28				
29				30			31	32	33
34				35			36		
37			38				39		
40						41			
42						43			

5-17

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three I'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.

5-17

CRYPTOQUOTE

S Z O F K S Z Q I A M F Q Z S M A

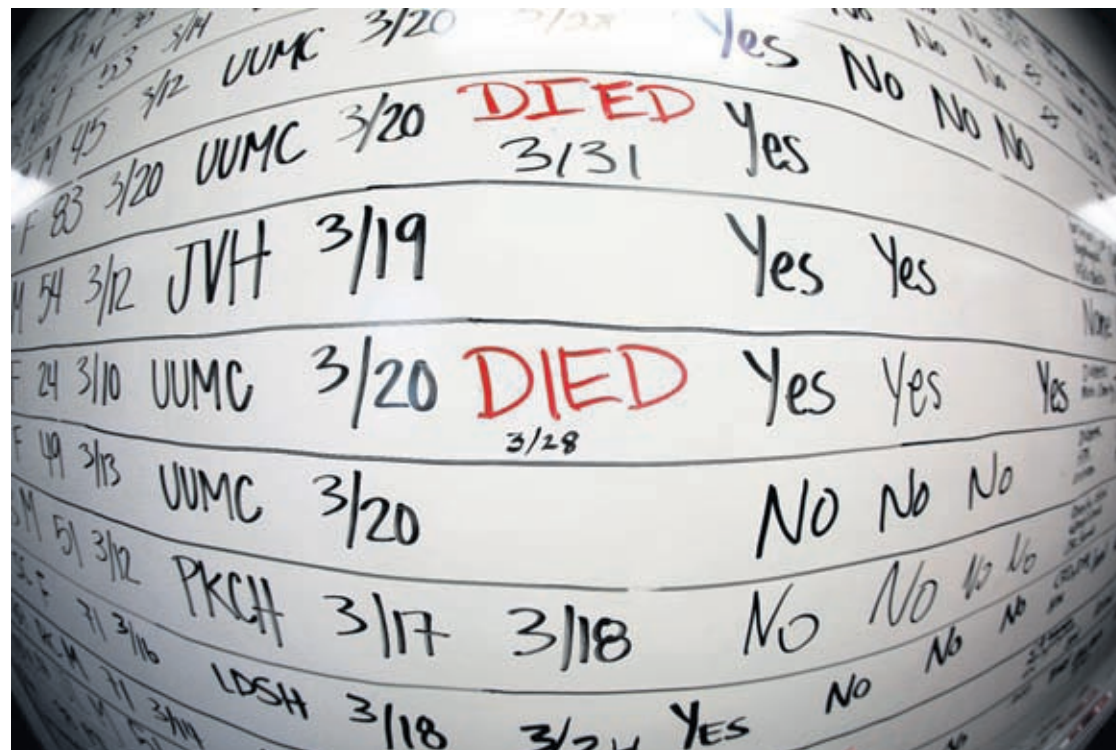
J M U F J K D T J M F W K I S

W U D Y C F Q A M F X U Q I T

— V K Q Z I L D V U D Q U F

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: IT'S TOO BAD I'M NOT AS WONDERFUL A PERSON AS PEOPLE SAY I AM. BECAUSE THE WORLD COULD USE A FEW PEOPLE LIKE THAT. — ALAN ALDA

## Death certificates reveal that US hit grim COVID milestone



This May 13, 2020 photo made with a fisheye lens shows a list of the confirmed COVID-19 cases in Salt Lake County early in the coronavirus pandemic at the Salt Lake County Health Department, in Salt Lake City.

Associated Press

By MIKE STOBBE

AP Medical Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — When the U.S. hit 1 million COVID-19 deaths on Monday, the news was driven by a government tally derived from death certificates.

But that's not the only tally. And you may be wondering, where do these numbers come from? A look behind the data:

### DEATH CERTIFICATES

Deaths certificates have long been considered the most comprehensive record of deaths and their causes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention systematically collects information from all 50 states to track fatalities from all causes, including cancer, drug overdoses and now COVID-19.

But early in the pandemic, officials recognized the COVID-19 data was sluggish and incomplete.

Testing was often unavailable. In some places — especially rural ones — coroners or medical examiners did not have the staff to ask about coronavirus symptoms when people died at home. Even when information was available, overworked doctors could be slow to do the death certificate paperwork.

**DEATHS FROM CASE RE-**

### PORTS

With information on death certificates slow to arrive, experts and news organizations began looking to other real-time sources of deaths. They turned to state health department tallies derived from preliminary reports that were mainly of people diagnosed with COVID-19 who went to a hospital and died. Such data was more timely than death certificates, which can take weeks to fill out and process.

Johns Hopkins University became a leader in searching state health department websites and rapidly analyzing and posting those numbers.

### OTHER COUNTS

Other organizations have their own counts, including NBC News, which two weeks ago reported that the U.S. had surpassed 1 million COVID-19 deaths, but did not explain in its story how it arrived at that figure. Last week, federal officials issued statements about the nation hitting 1 million deaths, even though the U.S. government's own data had yet to show it. Based on lags in the reporting of death certificate information, officials concluded it was likely the milestone had passed and

that it was appropriate to remark on it.

### HOW THE TALLIES HAVE CHANGED

As the pandemic dragged on, many states cut back on posting case and death numbers — some to just once a week.

"We've lost a lot of immediacy in our reporting," Emily Pond, a Johns Hopkins research data analyst, said in an email.

At the same time, the numbers based on death certificates rose faster. One reason: Investigators have been going back and adding several thousand deaths in which COVID-19 was not named initially but was identified later after autopsies or other medical investigations, said Robert Anderson, who oversees death data for the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics.

Most of those deaths happened early in the pandemic, when COVID-19 was still new and underdiagnosed. Anderson said many were relabeled last year, largely in response to a Federal Emergency Management Agency program that began providing funeral assistance for families who could produce a death certificate attributing a death to COVID-19. □



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215428



Helen, a 30-year-old white rhino, wears a fitness device on her right front leg as she grazes at Walt Disney World's Animal Kingdom theme park, Monday, May 16, 2022, in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.  
Associated Press

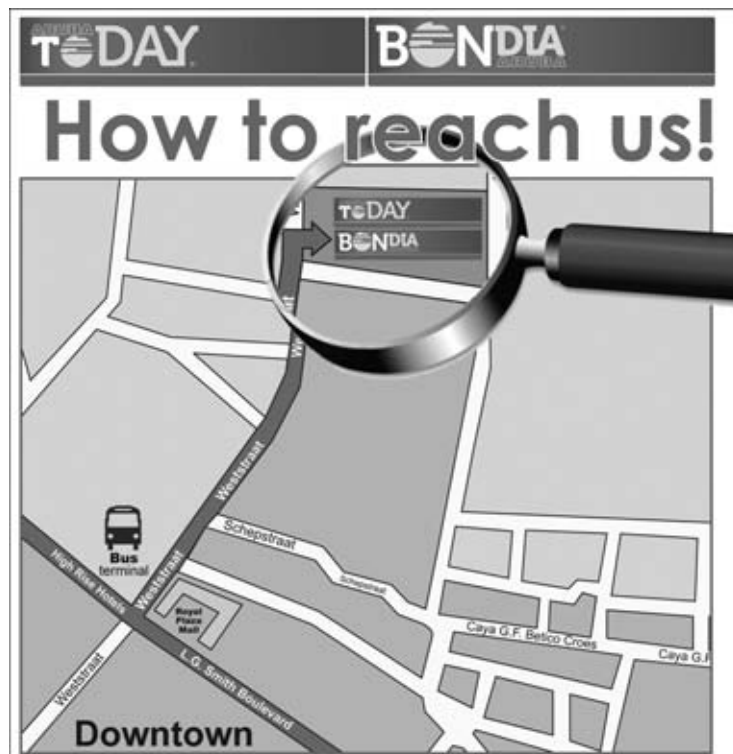
## Step-by-step: Disney rhino gets fitted with fitness tracker

**ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)** — Someone new is joining the ranks of fitness enthusiasts who monitor the number of steps they take each day with Fitbits and other fitness tracking devices. Only Helen isn't human: She's a 30-year-old white rhino at Walt Disney World. Helen went out onto the savanna at the Kilimanjaro Safaris attraction at Animal Kingdom on Monday wearing a fitness device all-day. □



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## Review: 'Team America' plumbs enduring impact of 4 generals

By **DOUGLASS K. DANIEL**  
**Associated Press**

Insightful and informative, military historian Robert L. O'Connell's latest book carries a title that might evoke in today's readers a group of superheroes bent on saving the free world — in this case four Army generals transforming the United States into a global peacekeeper.

O'Connell prefers to cast them as a military "murderers' row," a 1920s baseball analogy for formidable talent that his subjects would undoubtedly have appreciated. But these four men — George S. Patton, Douglas MacArthur, George C. Marshall and Dwight D. Eisenhower — had powers far beyond mere bat-wielding mortals in Yankee pinstripes.

There was Patton's battlefield audaciousness, MacArthur's ego and luck, Marshall's organizational genius, and Eisenhower's persuasive personality — even back then everybody liked Ike. They also shared the ability to think strategically, not to mention the traits of diligence, intel-

ligence and ambition, all while the world teetered under the threat of totalitarianism.

America at the turn of the 20th century sets the quartet's origin stories. Eisenhower was a Kansas boy of modest means who saw the U.S. Military Academy as "free college." Patton was a rich kid who started at the Virginia Military Institute, then landed a coveted spot at West Point. Marshall graduated from VMI, then personally lobbied President William McKinley for a commission. The biggest challenge faced MacArthur: living up to the reputation of his father, a Civil War hero. Amazingly, he exceeded every expectation in grand style, growing from momma's boy to golden boy.

Most interesting is how their paths converged as they slipped into the orbits of the leaders of their formative period. For example, the commander of American forces during World War I, Gen. John J. "Black Jack" Pershing, was at different points the mentor to Marshall, the suitor to Patton's

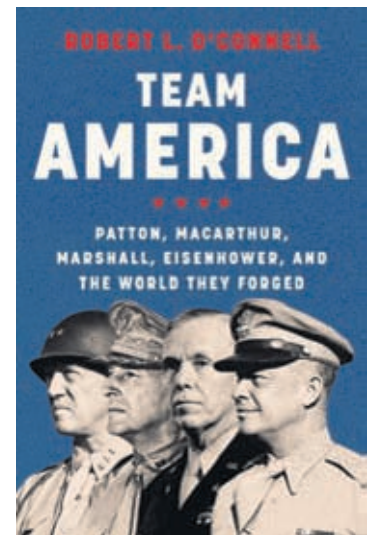
sister, and later a rival for MacArthur's first wife.

The Great War was a launching pad for America's prominence and O'Connell's subjects. While the youngest, Eisenhower, was left stateside training fresh recruits, Marshall distinguished himself "over there" with his talent for logistics. Nearly killed in battle, Patton realized tanks would replace cavalry. The foursome's standout of the Western Front was MacArthur, winner of seven Silver Stars.

O'Connell details the incessant networking necessary to advance in a demobilizing Army, and the ruminating of lessons learned from the first truly "industrial war." As weapons became more lethal and delivery systems expanded by land, sea and air, the meat grinder in the trenches morphed into a war of movement by the late 1930s. O'Connell shows how Team America came to understand the implications of "total war" as participants in World War I, prophets during peacetime, then the top practitioners in World War II.

The climax of "Team America" cannot help but be the action-packed, oft-told tales of that leadership — in the councils of state and the terrors of battle — and the significance of each general's impact. However, their phenomenal exertions, skill and teamwork with the Allies were eventually dwarfed by technology's march to a bomb so destructive that it ended one world war and rendered future global conflicts unthinkable.

Less exciting but more intriguing is the postwar era for O'Connell's team. His subjects came to embody the contradictions that litter history. Patton, nearly deranged by his addiction to battle, mercifully died after a traffic accident in occupied Germany. Marshall, who shepherded the Manhattan Project, won the Nobel Peace Prize for his plan that rebuilt Europe. MacArthur, the unquestioned ruler of occupied Japan, delivered democracy to his defeated foes. Eisenhower became the two-term president who cautioned America of the



This cover image released by Harper shows "Team America: Patton, MacArthur, Marshall, Eisenhower and the World They Forged" by Robert L. O'Connell.

**Associated Press**

"military-industrial complex" he helped to create. "Team America" combines compelling biographies of our heroes as they reach the heights of military, then civilian, leadership during five pivotal decades. O'Connell also explains why industrial warfare grew into a juggernaut, and how they managed to control it to achieve an uncertain peace that still holds. □



This image released by FOX shows Michael Chiklis as Dr. Scott Corbett in a scene from the new crime anthology series "Accused."

**Associated Press**

By **DAVID BAUDER and LYNN ELBER**

**AP Entertainment Writers**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Something was missing Monday

when Fox announced its plans for the fall television season — a schedule.

Fox Entertainment CEO Charles Collier said that

## Fox tries something new by holding release of fall schedule

the network was trying a "new approach" and giving equal weight to its Tubi streaming service by not outlining where its shows will air in the fall.

Presenting a new schedule to advertisers in May has long been a tradition for television networks, revealing what new shows are coming, what old shows are departing and when they will air during the week and year.

Yet while fixed schedules remain, they are in many ways becoming obsolete for viewers, who are becoming accustomed to deciding themselves when they want to watch or stream programs.

Asked about that on Monday, Collier did not say that was part of Fox's reasoning. By not announcing a schedule Monday, the

kickoff to the week where broadcast networks unveil their plans in flashy New York presentations, Fox has the flexibility to adjust its schedule depending upon what its competitors do.

The change might also reflect the fact that Fox has not yet nailed down agreements with producers of the dramas "911" and "The Resident," two programs the network expects will be on its fall schedule.

"We're in good faith negotiations," Collier said. "We feel good about it."

Among the plans it did announce on Monday, Fox is expanding the empire of celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay. His "MasterChef" keeps rolling along, and Fox announced that Ramsey's series "Next Level Chef" will get the coveted time slot after the Super Bowl next

February, which exposes a program to millions of new viewers.

Fox will also debut the competition show, "Gordon Ramsay's Food Stars" next season.

Fox will also go country with "Monarch," described as a "Texas-sized, multi-generational musical drama about America's first family of country music." Actress Susan Sarandon and musician Trace Adkins are headliners.

Actor Jamie Foxx will be behind the camera for the missing persons drama "Alert." The network will also debut a crime anthology series "Accused" that begins with someone on trial and the audience learns through flashbacks what they've been accused of. When will the new shows air? Stay tuned. □



## Vision of Hamlin, Jordan comes into focus with win at Kansas

By DAVE SKRETTA

AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Kan. (AP) —

Michael Jordan and Denny Hamlin founded 23XI Racing with a vision that extended far beyond the race track.

The Hall of Fame basketball player and the three-time Daytona 500 champion looked around the sport a couple of years ago and realized that it needed to get younger and much more inclusive. It needed to expand its talent pool in the race shop along with the fanbase in the stands if it wanted to resume its once-rapid growth.

All of which is a whole lot easier to accomplish after days like Sunday.

With the No. 45 car from their two-car stable decked out in Jordan Brand-themed graphics, Kurt Busch squeezed past Kyle Larson with eight laps to go to win a thriller at Kansas Speedway. Busch gave 23XI a second Cup Series triumph after Bubba Wallace won last year at Talladega, when the team was still a single-car endeavor, and it came in a ride with the Jumpman logo on the hood and about as much cross-over appeal as Jordan could hope for.

"Yeah, that's a lot of the reason we started this race team is Michael felt like NASCAR was a platform that didn't maybe always



Kurt Busch celebrates in victory lane after winning a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Kansas Speedway in Kansas City, Kan., Sunday, May 15, 2022.

Associated Press

understand his brand. He thought this was a good way to branch out the Jordan Brand," said Hamlin, who finished fourth behind Larson and Kyle Busch in Sunday's race.

"Obviously, they sat on the sidelines for the first year of this team," Hamlin said, "and I mentioned that in the media. They said, 'We just want to see how it goes and see how the NASCAR fans welcome us.'"

It's been pretty good so far. Hamlin even acknowledged that if the No. 45 car in the Jordan Brand livery isn't the top-selling diecast collectible when it comes out, "I'll be scratching my

head. I'm pretty certain it will be."

Busch's victory at Kansas was timely on two very different fronts.

The first was within the world of NASCAR, where the 23XI teams had been scuffling lately. Busch had two top-five finishes early in the season, and Wallace was second at the season-opening Daytona 500. But neither had finished in the top 15 in the last four races, which meant a rather unexpected trip to victory lane just in time to rep Jordan Brand.

The second was that 23XI's triumph came just a day after a racially motivated shooting in a Buffalo super-

market, which once more underscored the deep racial divisions that still exist in the country today.

"It's sad," Hamlin said Sunday. "You just kind of think of the families and friends. You just pray for them."

Then, you do what Jordan and Hamlin have done: You try to change things for the better. In their case, building out a diverse and inclusive racing program. Wallace remains the only fulltime Black driver at the top level of NASCAR.

"I'm looking at potential hires right now that we've got on the board — there's England, Brazil and Israel, the next three hires," Hamlin

said. "We're trying to make a very diverse team. Certainly it's important to give opportunities to those that never thought racing was a job, a place that they could have a job opportunity."

"I think you have seen diversity on pit road; a lot of these college guys are college D-1 athletes," Hamlin added. "But what about marketing? What about mechanics? I'm on the NASCAR Diversity Council, and we talk all the time about how can we change this sport. It starts from the ground roots."

It was a vision that Jordan and Hamlin shared with Busch when they purchased StarCom Racing's charter, expanded their effort to a two-car team and tried to get the former Cup Series champion to drive for them.

"There's things that an owner has to go through that are really heavy, and Denny has chosen this ownership role, and he has done it with integrity and class and ambition and motivation," Busch said. "He called me a year and-a-half ago, two years, and said, 'Hey, I've got a plan.' I was like, 'If it all works out, I'll be part of it.' But wow, just learning some of the things, being close to him as a friend, but also as a racer, and now he is my boss, there's a lot that goes into ownership. □

## Finland tops U.S., Canada defeats Slovakia at hockey worlds

TAMPERE, Finland (AP) —

Sakari Manninen scored and added two assists for host Finland to beat the United States 4-1 and keep a perfect record at the ice hockey world championship on Monday.

After Mikael Granlund gave Finland a 1-0 lead on a power play in the opening period, Austin Watson was given a major penalty early in the middle period for a high hit on Teemu Hartikainen.

Valtteri Filppula and Manninen used the following

five-minute power play to increase the lead to 3-0 and Mikko Lehtonen added the fourth later in the frame.

Alex Galchenyuk scored the consolation goal for the Americans in the third period.

Finland goaltender Jussi Olkinuora stopped 29 shots, 15 of them in the final period.

Finland leads Group B in Tampere with nine points from three games. The U.S. has five points in third.

Pierre-Luc Dubois scored

twice to spark defending champion Canada to 5-1 over Slovakia for a third straight victory.

After the teams entered the middle period at 1-1, Dubois scored the eventual winner on a power play and added one more to double the advantage for his fourth goal of the tournament.

Adam Lowry, Morgan Geekie and Cole Sillinger, celebrating his 19th birthday, also netted for Canada to top Group A in Helsinki with nine points from



Morgan Geekie of Canada scores his side's 5th goal during the group A Hockey World Championship match between Slovakia and Canada in Helsinki, Finland, Monday May 16, 2022.

Associated Press

three games. Slovakia has three points.

Canada goaltender Logan Thompson made 34 saves as they outshot Slovakia 44-35.

In another Group A game, Germany defeated France 3-2 for a second win, while Latvia beat Norway 3-2 to record its first win in Group B. □



# Tiring Giannis, Bucks fall short in NBA title repeat bid

By **JIMMY GOLEN**  
AP Sports Writer

Giannis Antetokounmpo powered his way to the rim, trying to keep the Milwaukee Bucks' title defense alive. Again and again, the ball just wouldn't drop. Layups, putbacks — shots that are usually automatic for the two-time MVP and reigning NBA champion — bounced fruitlessly away. And the Bucks kept dropping further behind.

"I'd rather miss a bunch of shots and keep playing, keep coming and keep being aggressive ... than go into passive mode," the Bucks star said after the Celtics won Game 7 of the Eastern Conference semifinals 109-81 on Sunday to end Milwaukee's hopes of back-to-back titles.

"I can live with that. I can live with giving everything for the game," Antetokounmpo said. "Shots that I usually make weren't going in. But that's basketball. That's sports. ... You've just got to live with it."

One year after leading Milwaukee to the NBA title and being voted finals MVP, Antetokounmpo and the Bucks wilted in the final quarter of their final game. The Greek Freak scored 25 points with 20 rebounds and nine assists in all, but he shot 10 for 26 in the game, missing six of seven shots in



Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo, right, disagrees with a call during the second half of Game 7 of an NBA basketball Eastern Conference semifinals playoff series against the Boston Celtics, Sunday, May 15, 2022, in Boston.

the fourth quarter -- four of them from inside of 6 feet. Asked if his legs were heavy after playing a season-high 43 minutes, 9 seconds — including all of the second half until the game was out of reach — Antetokounmpo said: "Legs heavy. Body heavy. Mind heavy. Everything was heavy."

"I was just trying to be aggressive," he added. "At the end of the day, it's Game 7 and I'm not going to hold the ball and not look at the rim."

Antetokounmpo still had a

series for the record books, recording a triple-double in Game 1 and missing one in the finale by a single assist. He scored 40 or more points three times, and had 20 rebounds twice.

Over the seven games, he averaged 29.6 points, 14.7 rebounds and 7.1 assists. He is the first player in NBA history to record 200 points, 100 rebounds and 50 assists in a playoff series.

"The way Giannis evolved throughout this series, the way Giannis played against a very good de-

fensive team, against a lot of good individual defenders, was like another one of those growth moments, growth opportunities," Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said. "I thought he was phenomenal. His scoring, his attacking, his playmaking, his unselfishness," he said. "I was beyond impressed."

After winning his first NBA title — and the Bucks' first since Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (then still Lew Alcindor) led them to the championship in 1971 — Antetok-

ounmpo averaged 29.9 points, 11.6 rebounds and 5.8 assists this season. He was second in scoring, sixth in rebounds and third in the MVP voting while leading Milwaukee to 51 wins and a No. 3 seed in the Eastern Conference.

The defending champions eliminated the Bulls in five games and opened a 3-2 lead in the second round. But the Celtics ran away with Game 6 in Milwaukee, and did it again in the clincher.

Without No. 2 scorer Khris Middleton, who missed the series with sprained left knee ligaments, Budenholzer relied heavily on his star. Antetokounmpo played 21 of 24 minutes in the first half, all of the third quarter and only came out in the fourth for garbage time.

It was his fourth straight game playing more than 40 minutes.

"We definitely played those guys out for as long and as much as we could. Maybe that had some small impact on it," Budenholzer said.

"Some nights the ball, you just can't get it in the basket. ... It would have been great if we'd make a few more, whether it's layups or open 3's and things like that, or shots that were in and out, but that's the sport." □



Cleveland Browns new quarterback Deshaun Watson speaks during a news conference at the NFL football team's training facility, Friday, March 25, 2022, in Berea, Ohio.

Associated Press

By **TOM WITHERS**  
AP Sports Writer

**CLEVELAND (AP)** — NFL officials will meet this week with Cleveland Browns quarterback Deshaun Watson as the league continues to investigate whether he violated its personal

conduct policy, a person familiar with the plans told The Associated Press on Monday.

Watson, who is facing 22 civil lawsuits from massage therapists accusing him of sexual misconduct, is scheduled to speak with

## AP source: Browns QB Watson to meet with NFL reps in Texas

the league's representatives in Texas, said the person who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation.

Watson is facing potential discipline by the league, which is independently investigating his actions while he was with the Houston Texans. Commissioner Roger Goodell said as recently as April 28 at the NFL draft that there was no timeframe on any possible ruling on Watson.

Reporter Josina Anderson was first to report the planned meeting on Twitter.

"We have no update and will decline comment on that tweet," league spokesman Brian McCarthy said in an email to the AP. "There's no timetable as the review is active and ongoing."

Watson's attorney, Rusty Hardin, told the AP he will leave it to the NFL to discuss its schedule of interviews, but he assumes that "Watson will be interviewed at great length soon."

The meeting with league officials is a significant development for Watson, who signed a fully guaranteed \$230 million contract in March with the Browns after initially turning down a

trade to Cleveland.

The Browns, who sent three first-round draft picks and six total selections to the Texans for Watson, are eager to find out if they'll be without him for any portion of this season after making such a major investment in the three-time Pro Bowler.

In March, two Texas grand juries declined to indict Watson on criminal complaints from 10 women. He has denied all wrongdoing and said during a news conference with the Browns in April that he "never assaulted or disrespected or harassed any woman in my life." □