



Drought over? Spring outlook finds relief -- and flood risk



Floodwaters surround homes and vehicles in the community of Pajaro in Monterey County, Calif., on March 13, 2023.

Associated Press

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Important Notice

The Aruba Today Newspaper announces that in honor of Aruba's National Flag and Anthem Day, we will not be in circulation Saturday, March 18th. We will be back on newsstands everywhere bright and early to serve our readers and advertisers first thing in the morning, Monday, March 20th. There will be fun, exciting, cultural and educational events and activities all across the island Friday in celebration of Aruba's National Flag and Anthem Day, so get out there and enjoy Aruba's pride! Pabien Aruba, from the Aruba Today – the ONLY English Newspaper on Aruba!

Let's celebrate the 47th anniversary of our Anthem and Flag



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Senators take first step in repealing Iraq War authorization

By **MARY CLARE JALONICK**
and **ELLEN KNICKMEYER**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate took a first step Thursday toward repealing two measures that give open-ended approval for military action in Iraq, pushing to end that authority as the United States marks the 20th anniversary of the Iraq War.

Senators voted 68-27 to move forward on legislation that would repeal the 2002 measure that greenlighted that March 2003 invasion of Iraq and a 1991

measure that sanctioned the U.S.-led Gulf War to expel Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's forces from Kuwait. Nineteen Republicans joined Democrats in supporting the measure.

The bipartisan effort comes at a time when lawmakers of both parties are seeking to reclaim congressional powers over U.S. military strikes and deployments, arguing that the war authorizations are no longer necessary and subject to misuse if they are left on the books. President Joe Biden has backed the push, and

the White House issued a statement Thursday in support.

"Repeal of these authorizations would have no impact on current U.S. military operations and would support this administration's commitment to a strong and comprehensive relationship with our Iraqi partners," the White House said. It's unclear whether leaders in the Republican-controlled House would bring the bill up for a vote. Forty-nine House Republicans supported the legislation when then-majority Demo-



President George W. Bush announces he has reached an agreement with House leaders on a resolution giving him authority to oust Saddam Hussein, in the Rose Garden, Oct 2, 2002. Bush is joined by, from left to right front row, Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert, R-Ill, Bush, Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., and House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt, D-Mo.

Associated Press



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crats held a vote two years ago, but current House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., opposed it. Senate Republicans are also split on the legislation. While the 19 GOP senators voted for it, opponents argue that the repeal could project weakness to U.S. enemies. They have pointed out that President Donald Trump's administration cited the 2002 Iraq war resolution as part of its legal justification for a 2020 U.S. drone strike that killed Iranian Gen. Qassim Soleimani.

The October 2002 votes to give President George W. Bush broad authority for the invasion — coming just a month before the mid-term elections that year — became a defining moment for many members of Congress as the country debated whether a mili-

tary strike was warranted. The U.S. was already at war then in Afghanistan, the country that hosted the al-Qaida plotters responsible for the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, something Iraq played no part in.

Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin, a Democrat who was in the Senate at the time and voted against the resolution, said on the floor before Thursday's vote that "I look back on it, as I'm sure others do, as one of the most important votes that I ever cast."

"The repeal of this authorization of use the use of military force does not mean the United States has become a pacifist nation," Durbin said. "It means that the United States is going to be a constitutional nation and the premise of our Founding Fathers will be respected."

Drought over? Spring outlook finds relief -- and flood risk

From Front

By S. MONTOYA BRYAN

Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)

— Record snowfall and rain have helped to loosen drought's grip on parts of the western U.S. as national forecasters and climate experts warned Thursday that some areas should expect more flooding as the snow begins to melt.

The winter precipitation wiped out exceptional and extreme drought in California for the first time since 2020, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported Thursday in a seasonal, nationwide outlook that came as parts of the state are under water. In neighboring Nevada, flood warnings were in effect and rushing water prompted some evacuations overnight in one of Arizona's tourist towns.

Elsewhere, NOAA's forecast warned of elevated flood risks from heavy snowpack



Two palms trees are backdropped by snow-covered mountains in Hesperia, Calif., March 1, 2023.

Associated Press

this spring in the upper Midwest along the Mississippi River from Minnesota south to Missouri. Despite the receding drought, experts cautioned that the relief may be only a blip as the long-term effects persist from what has been a stubborn dry streak.

Groundwater and reservoir storage levels — which take much longer to bounce back — remain at historic lows. It could be more than

a year before the extra moisture has an effect on the shoreline at Lake Mead that straddles Arizona and Nevada. And it's unlikely that water managers will have enough wiggle room to wind back the clock on proposals for limiting water use. That's because water release and retention operations for the massive reservoir and its upstream sibling — Lake Powell on the Utah-Arizona border — already

are set for the year. The reservoirs are used to manage Colorado River water deliveries to 40 million people in seven U.S. states and Mexico. Lake Powell could gain 35 feet (11 meters) as snow melts and makes its way into tributaries and rivers over the next three months. How much it rises will depend on soil moisture levels, future precipitation, temperatures and evaporation losses.

Paul Miller, a hydrologist with the National Weather Service's Colorado Basin River Forecast Center, said that sounds like a lot of water for one of the nation's largest reservoirs, but it still will be only one-third full.

"It's definitely moving in the right direction, but we're far from filling the reservoirs in the Colorado River system and we're far from being at a comfortable point from a water supply perspective," Miller said during Thursday's NOAA briefing.

Federal forecasters out-

lined other predictions for temperature, precipitation and drought over the next three months, saying the spring wet season is expected to improve drought conditions across parts of the northern and central Plains and Florida could see dryness disappear there by the end of June.

Overall, the West has been more dry than wet for more than 20 years, and many areas will still feel the consequences. The northern Rockies and parts of Washington state will likely see drought expand over the spring, while areas of extreme to exceptional drought are likely to persist across parts of the southern High Plains.

An emergency declaration in Oregon warns of higher risks for water shortages and wildfires in the central part of the state, and pockets of central Utah, southeastern Colorado and eastern New Mexico are still dealing with extreme drought. □

Alaska volcanoes now pose lower threat, after quakes slow

By MARK THIESSEN

Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)

— Diminished earthquake activity led authorities Thursday to reduce the warning levels at two volcanoes on an uninhabited island in Alaska's Aleutian chain because of the decreased potential for eruptions. The Alaska Volcano Observatory lowered the warning level to "Advisory"

status from "Watch" for both Tanaga and Takawangha volcanoes on remote Tanaga Island, located about 1,250 miles (2,012 kilometers) southwest of Anchorage.

A swarm of earthquakes between March 9 and 11 signaled the increased chance of eruptions. However, since then, the rate and magnitude of quakes have decreased.

Several quakes per minute continue to be recorded under Tanaga Island, and the largest recorded in the last day was a magnitude 3.1 between the two volcanoes, separated by about 5 miles (8 kilometers). During the peak, the quakes had magnitudes up to 4.0. No other signs of unrest have been detected, a statement from the observatory said.

Tanaga is the middle of three volcanoes on the island, with Takawangha located to the east.

A third volcano on the island, Sajaka, is about 2 miles (3 kilometers) to the west of Tanaga, and was not showing any sign of activity.

Since the island has no residents or structures, there was little chance of damage from the thick, viscous lava flows in an eruption. However, an ash cloud could pose threats to aircraft, potentially disrupting air travel between North

America and Asia, and health problems for communities farther away.

The nearest community, Adak, is about 65 miles (104 kilometers) to the east, on a separate island.

The last known eruption for Tanaga was in 1914. It erupted twice in the late

1700s and again in 1829.

The observatory has said there are no known eruptions of Takawangha or Sajaka.

However, field work has indicated that eruptions may have occurred from those volcanoes and misattributed to Tanaga. □



This photo provided by the Alaska Volcano Observatory/U.S. Geological Survey shows the Tanaga Volcano near Adak, Alaska, on May 23, 2021.

Associated Press

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Military moves to cut suicides, but defers action on guns

By **TARA COPP and LOLITA C. BALDOR**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin ordered a number of improvements in access to mental health care on Thursday to reduce suicides in the military, but held off on endorsing more controversial recommendations to restrict gun and ammunition purchases by young troops, sending them to another panel for study.

An independent committee in late February recommended that the Defense Department implement a series of gun safety measures, including waiting periods for the purchase of firearms and ammunition by service members on military property and raising the minimum age for service members to buy guns and ammunition to 25.

In a memo released Thursday, Austin called for the establishment of a suicide prevention working group to "assess the advisability and feasibility" of recommendations made by the initial study committee which would include



Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, speaks during a briefing with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Gen. Mark Milley at the Pentagon in Washington, Wednesday, March 15, 2023.

Associated Press

the gun measures. He also asked for cost estimates and a description of any "barriers" to implementing other changes, and set a deadline of June 2 for that report. At no point did he specifically refer to the gun proposals or mention gun safety. His orders reflect increasing concerns about suicides in the military, de-

spite more than a decade of programs and other efforts to prevent them and spur greater intervention by commanders, friends and family members. But his omission of any gun safety and control measures underscores the likelihood that they would face staunch resistance, particularly in Congress, where

such legislation has struggled in recent years.

The more immediate changes address broader access to care.

To more quickly provide help for troops who may be struggling, Austin directed the Pentagon to hire more behavioral health specialists and implement a scheduling system for ap-

pointments where patients receive multiple health care visits weekly when they first seek care.

He also ordered military primary care health clinics to screen for unhealthy levels of alcohol use, make unhealthy alcohol use treatment easier to receive and make sure that mental health care is available through service members' primary care as well.

"The mental health support available for our teammates must be comprehensive and easy to access," Austin said in the memo.

Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder, the Pentagon press secretary, told reporters in a briefing Thursday that Austin's orders involved areas where the department already has the authority to take immediate steps.

"While we recognize that suicide has no single cause, and that no single preventative action, treatment or cure will eliminate suicide altogether, we will exhaust every effort to promote the wellness, health and morale of our total force," Ryder said. □

NTSB: Wing parts from air ambulance fell far from wreckage

By **RIO YAMAT**

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — A new federal report says parts of the right wing on a medical transport plane that crashed last month in rural Nevada, killing all five people aboard, fell far from the main wreckage site.

The National Transportation Safety Board's preliminary findings released Wednesday could support the agency's initial theory that the aircraft had broken apart before hitting the ground. NTSB is expected to release its final report with a probable cause within two years.

The agency says parts of the plane's right wing were located as far as three-quarters of a mile (1.1 kilometers) from where the

single-engine Pilatus PC12 crashed in Stagecoach, Nevada, a rural community of about 2,500 residents outside of Reno.

Authorities have said the Care Flight piloted by Scott

Walton, 46, was headed from Reno to Salt Lake City when it crashed around 9:15 p.m. on Feb. 24 amid a winter storm. Care Flight is a service of REMSA Health, and its aviation vendor is

Guardian Flight.

Guardian Flight said in a statement Wednesday it was reviewing the report and assessing ways to strengthen its safety protocols. "The safety and well-being of our patients and crew is our utmost priority and we will continue to make significant investments to bolster our commitment," the company said.

The other victims also included 69-year-old patient Mark Rand and his 66-year-old spouse Terri Rand, as well as two medical crew members, Edward Pricola, 32, and Ryan Watson, 27.

Walton contacted air traffic control minutes before the crash to report that the plane was climbing past 15,400 feet (4,694 meters),

according to the report. But no further radio transmissions came in from the pilot, the report states.

Just minutes later, the plane began to fall dropping about 8,000 feet (2,440 meters) in 30 seconds before the aircraft's navigation tracking system went dark, according to the report.

Dan Rose, an aviation attorney retained by relatives of the Rands, told The Associated Press that they hope NTSB will investigate Guardian Flight's decision to fly instead of waiting for the winter storm to pass.

Rose also said Mark Rand's condition wasn't life-threatening at the time.

"I know the family would want the NTSB to look carefully at the two issues," Rose said Wednesday. □



In this image provided by The National Transportation Safety Board, NTSB investigators document the wreckage of a Pilatus PC-12 airplane, a medical air transport flight operated by Guardian Flight, Feb. 26, 2023, in Dayton, Nev.

Associated Press

Poland to be 1st NATO member to give Ukraine fighter jets

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Poland's president said Thursday that his country plans to give Ukraine around a dozen MiG-29 fighter jets, which would make it the first NATO member to fulfill the Ukrainian government's increasingly urgent requests for warplanes.

President Andrzej Duda said Poland would hand over four of the Soviet-made warplanes "within the next few days" and that the rest needed servicing and would be supplied later. The Polish word he used to describe the total number can mean between 11 and 19.

"They are in the last years of their functioning, but

they are in good working condition," Duda said of the aircraft.

He did not say whether other countries would follow suit, although Slovakia has said it would send its own disused MiGs to Ukraine. Poland also was the first NATO nation to provide Ukraine with German-made Leopard 2 tanks.

On Wednesday, Polish government spokesman Piotr Mueller said some other countries also had pledged MiGs to Kyiv, but did not name them. Both Poland and Slovakia had indicated they were ready to hand over their planes, but only as part of a wider international coalition doing the same. □



Poland's President Andrzej Duda, right, welcomes Czech Republic's President Petr Pavel as they meet at the Presidential Palace in Warsaw, Poland, Thursday, March 16, 2023.

Associated Press

In Rome, church and state agree to Pantheon entrance fee

ROME (AP) — Tourists in Rome checking out the Pantheon, Italy's most-visited cultural site, will soon be charged a 5-euro (\$5.28) entrance fee under an agreement signed Thursday by Italian culture and church officials.

Culture Minister Gennaro Sangiuliano said the move was a matter of "good sense." The introduction of an entrance fee comes five years after a previous government shelved plans to start charging visitors 2 euros.

Proceeds will be split, with the culture ministry receiving 70% and the Rome diocese 30%, officials said.

The monumental domed structure, originally an ancient Roman temple, last year attracted 60,803 visitors, topping the Colosseum's 38,360. The Pantheon was transformed into a church in 609, called the Basilica of St. Mary and the Martyrs, and Mass is regularly celebrated there.

Under the new plan, visitors under 25 years of age will be charged 2 euros. Entrance will be free to Rome residents, minors, people attending Mass and personnel of the basilica, among others. □



Tourists queue to visit Rome's Pantheon in Rome, Thursday, March 16, 2023.

Associated Press



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Honduras ditching Taiwan raises larger geopolitical concerns

By **MEGAN JANETSKY** and **MARLON GONZÁLEZ**
Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Honduras' decision to cut diplomatic ties with Taiwan in favor of China is yet another sign of growing Chinese influence in Latin America. For decades the Asian superpower funneled billions of dollars into investment and infrastructure projects across the region. Now, as geopolitical tensions simmer between China and the Biden administration, that spending has paid off. Honduras' decision was the second foreign policy coup in a week for China, which brokered an agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia to reestablish diplomatic relations last week. Now, Taiwan will be recognized by only 13 countries. But some of the few remaining in Latin America, like Paraguay and Guatemala, promised Wednesday to keep their support for Taiwan. Honduras' minister of foreign relations, Enrique Reina, told The Associated Press on Wednesday that Hondurans "are grateful" for their past relationship with Taiwan, but that their economic links to China ultimately pushed their government to cut diplomatic



Free Party presidential candidate Xiomara Castro acknowledges her supporters after general elections, in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, Nov. 28, 2021.

Associated Press

ties. "These are political decisions. The world has been moving in this direction," Reina said. "It is a complex decision, we understand, but Honduras' foreign policy should seek to benefit the people. We believe that this step will benefit the country." The Central American nation follows the steps of El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic in turning their backs on Taiwan.

Honduras' announcement on Tuesday was a blow to the Biden administration, which has rather fruitlessly tried to persuade countries in the region to stick with Taiwan. Taiwan, a U.S. ally, has pushed for sovereignty at the same time that Chinese President Xi Jinping has insisted the island is firmly under its control. In that sense, Tuesday's announcement also exemplifies the American government is "losing its grasp on" Latin America, said

David Castrillon-Kerrigan, research-professor on China-related issues at Colombia's Externado University. "For countries, like Honduras, not recognizing the government in Beijing meant missing opportunities," Castrillon-Kerrigan. The United States "is definitely losing influence on every front, especially the economic front, but also diplomatically, politically and culturally." It's left the island with a dwindling number of allies. Reina told

AP that the Biden administration "must understand and respect" Honduras' needs and decisions. But some, like Paraguay and Guatemala, remained steadfast in their support for Taiwan. Guatemalan officials reiterated the government's "recognition of Taiwan as an independent nation that shares democratic values." Over the past two decades, China has slowly carved out a space for itself in Latin America by pouring money into the region, investing in major infrastructure, energy and space projects. Between 2005 and 2020, the Chinese have invested more than \$130 billion in Latin America, according to the United States Institute of Peace. Trade between China and the region has also shot up, expected to reach more than \$700 billion by 2035. That investment has translated to rising power for China and a growing number of allies. In Honduras, that has come in the form of construction of a hydroelectric dam project in central Honduras built by the Chinese company SINOHYDRO with about \$300 million in Chinese government financing. □

Thai police to get mental health checks after fatal standoff

BANGKOK (AP) — Police in Thailand will be subject to random checks of

their physical and mental health, officials said Thursday, after a 27-hour stand-

off in which a senior officer holed up and fired a gun into the air until he was subdued by fellow officers. Police Lt. Col. Kitikarn Sangbun died in a hospital Wednesday night of multiple gunshot wounds sustained during the standoff at his home on the fringes of the capital Bangkok, said police Col. Rangsan Sornsing, superintendent of the police station in the Sai Mai neighborhood where the standoff took place. Kitikarn had been suffering from mental health issues and stress in his work and personal life, police said, without elaborating. Thai media reported that the police Inspector Gen-

eral's Office has ordered random health checks be carried out on officers nationwide to help avoid similar situations. Members of the public are also encouraged to report cases where they are concerned about officers' mental health. Kitikarn had holed himself up in his home Tuesday when fellow officers came to take him for psychiatric treatment, said deputy national police chief Gen. Torsak Sukvimol and other officials. He fired into the air and in the direction of police who arrived at the scene. Police evacuated and cordoned off the surrounding area as they tried several methods to appre-

hend him. In addition to initially using tear gas and stun guns in an effort to evacuate him, a junior officer sang for Kitikarn in an attempt to calm him down, intermittently asking him to turn himself in. But as the confrontation escalated, shots were exchanged between Kitikarn and the officers besieging him. Video of the end of the confrontation released by the police showed Kitikarn, clad in shorts and a T-shirt and clutching a carving knife in his left hand, smashing through a second-story window and leaping down into a small, cluttered backyard. □



A group of armed commando police leave from the home of a senior police officer in Bangkok, Thailand, Wednesday, March 15, 2023.

Associated Press



Bureau of City Inspector gives homeowner 24 hours to reopen pathway to the public beach

As it was publicized in our sister-paper Bon Dia Aruba on March 11th, there were concerns from social media users in regards to a 'private property' sign put in front of a pathway toward a public beach in Savaneta. The owner of the house had placed the sign to ward off the public from the beach behind their home, with the idea of claiming this as their own territory.

It is important to remark that all beaches on Aruba are public by law. This law is called the 'Landsverordening openbare wateren en stranden' (National ordinance for public waters and beaches).

"This is a part of the beach stretching along the coasts of Savaneta, where especially the elderly like to swim. To our surprise, several people from the neigh-

borhood have found this private property sign on the premise. This is unacceptable," a social media user stated when he shared a picture of the sign in front of the beach.

According to him, this concerns the beach right near what was then the Brisas del Mar Restaurant. As mentioned already, the law stipulates that all beaches on Aruba are public. It specifically states that "in this ordinance and the dispositions based on this, it is understood that public water is water that is accessible for all, limited or not, in virtue of public rights norms."

The user's post about this situation received a wave of comments from the community, who all expressed their frustration and disapproval. This type of situa-

tion has already happened repeatedly all across the island.

On Wednesday, the Bureau of City Inspector informed through a press release that on March 9th, there was a complain where a neighbor in Savaneta called to inform that there are piles of trash along the street and that the pathway towards the beach had been closed off with tree branches.

They then deployed a team on the site to speak with the homeowner. "The inspectors explained that the homeowner was not allowed to close off the pathway, because this is and will stay open to the public. They had given the owner 24 hours to remove all trash around the premise and to open the pathway.

When the BCI checked in on the house, they noticed that the owner had indeed cleaned the premise and that the sign was removed. Additionally, they have noticed that other homeowners along the coast have also put up fences blocking the beach, so they will be

contacting them immediately to remove these."

No matter how close to the beach you reside, no homeowner, hotel or accommodation is allowed to privatize and/or block any part of Aruba's beaches or water. □



Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Marriott Surf Club Aruba

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently recognized the recognized Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. Presenting the Ambassadors with the Goodwill certification as a token of appreciation. The honoring certification program is granted to ambassadors, to recognize, the loyalty, friendships, and visits to Aruba. For consecutively choosing Aruba as their preferred vacation destination each year.

The Honoring certification program has three levels, which are divided according to the quantity of consecutive years visiting the island.

Honoring Levels:

- Distinguished Ambassadors: 10> years
- Goodwill Ambassadors: 20> years
- Emerald Ambassadors: 35> years

Honorees were:

Goodwill Ambassadors 20> years:

Charles & Kathie Andrieu resident of New Jersey, United States (have been coming



to Aruba for 20 years consecutively).

Perry & Sue Mulligan resident of Ontario, Canada (have been coming to Aruba for 33 years consecutively).

Don & Mary Alhart resident of New York, United States (has been coming to Aruba for 20 years consecutively).

Ms. Olga Ruiz representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and members of the Marriott Surf Club Aruba bestowed the certification of the Ambassadors. The honorees were presented with the Goodwill Certification, and with memorable gifts of Aruba.

On behalf of the Government of Aruba, we would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to family Andrieu, Mulligan, and Alhart for making Aruba their preferred vacation destination for so many years. We are so thankful to have had you as our visitors after all these years! Aruba is unquestionably your home away from home!

Top 5 reason for returning to Aruba, provided by the honorees were:

Mr. Charles & Mrs. Kathie Andrieu reasons:

1. Friendly people
2. The weather is great
3. The beaches
4. Restaurants
5. Entertainment

Mr. Perry & Mrs. Sue Mulligan reasons:

1. The Aruban People
2. Beach
3. Water
4. Wind
5. Food

Mr. Don & Mrs. Mary Alhart reasons:

1. Honeymooned in Aruba in 1970
2. Weather is ideal
3. We feel very safe in Aruba
4. Restaurants are incredible
5. Made wonderful friendships



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Let's celebrate the 47th anniversary of our Anthem and Flag

ORANJESTAD - The Commission for National Days Celebrations CCDN is preparing multiple activities in connection with the 47th anniversary of our National Anthem and Flag Day.

This year's theme is "Unity is the power of our beloved rock".

Cultural Manifestation

On March 17, a cultural manifestation will be held at the Plaza Libertador Betico Croes starting at 6:00 pm. This event includes a fair that sells food, sweets, and local crafts.

Academy Musical Harp and Cuatro, directed by Edgard Kelkboom, will perform. At 8:00 pm, the official program will start with a speech by the Minister of Culture, followed by a cultural dance, song, and poetry show and a music presentation by Chris Kross. The group Musical Time will be the last act for the evening.

Protocol ceremony

On March 18, 2023, National Anthem and Flag Day, the community is invited to be present at the Protocol event on the

Plaza Libertador Betico Croes, where Prime Minister Evelyn Wever-Croes will give a speech, followed by an aubade. The morning starts at 8:30 am with a choir consisting of Colegio Laura Wernet Paskel school pupils, Colegio San Jose and Maria School and reinforced by Coro Tutti Frutti and accompanied by the Caribbean Combo Musical School Rufo Wever.

Parade uniformed groups

After the protocol event, a parade will follow by the uniformed groups and includes scouts, uniformed civil servants, sports clubs, and cultural clubs to close the National Anthem and Flag Celebration event on the Plaza Libertador Betico Croes.

Video "What do we like most about Aruba?"

The CCDN has also prepared a "What do we like most about Aruba" contest to start a movement, where all prep schools and primary schools can create a video and submit it. The video should be no longer than 30 seconds and display what they like most about Aruba. Together with the teachers, the children

can record a video on a cell phone with a beautiful message about what they like most about Aruba. The most creative video with the best message will win a prize for the entire class.

The Minister of Culture and the CCDN want to thank all entities and individuals helping National Anthem and Flag Day celebrations. They include Government Departments, KPA, DOW, and IBISA. A special thanks go to SETAR NV, Utilities Aruba NV, WEB Aruba NV and



NV Elmar Aruba, and UN-OCA, for their contribution to the Anthem and Flag Day Celebrations. □

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Aruba Today is delighted to share to its readers a new segment called "Beauty and the Beach", where we take a minute to honor our guests who have decided to spend their vacation on our beautiful and warm island.

In this edition, we'd like to give a shout out to **Annette and Robert from Kentucky, USA**, who are regular visitors and who say they love the safety, Eagle Beach and the people on the island. Aruba is always proud to host all families and guests. We at Aruba Today encourage any visitor of the island to send in their pictures and/or messages; who knows? You might get on the cover!



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Today Is Going To Be A Good Day

Here's why: Aruba Today collected some things to do **BEYOND** the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white

stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

Nature Calls

The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can

drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whiptail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center. For more information, visit the website www.arubanationalpark.org

The Lighthouse

No, you would not think of this as a hidden gem. The California Lighthouse is actually one of the most known highlights in Aruba and many repeated guests most probably took the ride uphill already. But, there is a significant change to this tower. Since September 2016 you can climb the top. In 2015 Stichting Monumentenfonds started the restoration of the California Lighthouse. The project finished in September 2016 and the Lighthouse is now open for visitors to enjoy the beautiful view from the top. The construction of the California Lighthouse started in 1915. The name 'California' came from a vessel of the West India Company and Pacific Steamship Co. called 'California' that shipwrecked in the area in 1891. Therefore they came up with the idea of building



a lighthouse that could indicate the island's eastern tip to ships with its light. www.arubalighthouse.com will give you more information.

Kayak in the Mangroves

Mangel Halto at Savaneta is definitely a place not to miss out on. The beautiful beach with the natural mangroves is simply a beauty, but if you are into a more active way to enjoy the nature: take a kayak.

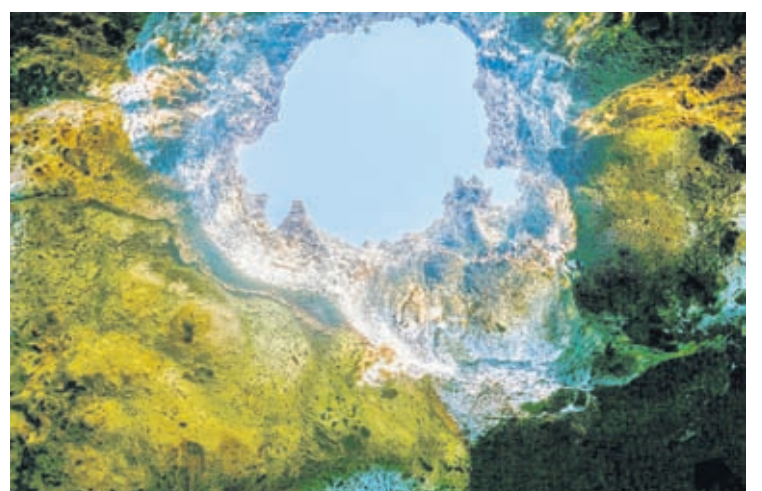
While you are doing some workout -as it might get a little windy and rough-, you will see the island from a different perspective. You can even make a stop to do some snorkeling at the reef. Its fun, it's healthy and for sure something else. There are several companies that offer kayak tours, we had good experience with The Shack Kayak Tours Aruba, find them on Facebook.



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History of fishing in Aruba

ORANJESTAD — Fishing has been a family tradition for ages in Aruba. Our ancestors used to fish for a living. Even though nowadays you don't see them often we still have some passionate fishermen on the island that go out every day in search for fish to feed their families and serve our local market. One of these fisherman is Gregory Wernet.

creatures such as turtles, octopus squids, conch and many type of crustaceans have formed a means of subsistence for the native Aruban inhabitants. Especially along the west coast of the island where the fishing grounds are settlements of fishermen. Until the arrival of the oil-industry Aruban fishermen could supply Aruba's wants.

The so-called Continental Bank between Aruba and the opposite coast reaches a depth of about 650 feet. The sea is very rich in fish here. Since the time of the indigenous native people fish and other sea

As a source of income, however, fishing did not amount too much. In the beginning of the 1900's approximately 160 people earn their living in this branch of this industry. Rancho, which stands for



a shed, nowadays east Oranjestad, was the head quarter and remains the fishermen's settlement. Savaneta, Noord, Santa Cruz all had their fishermen's villages. At a rough estimate there were about a hundred small fishing boats during that time.

The Arubans were mainly engaged in coastal fishing, using rowing-boats or small sailing-boats, and lines or dragnets and canisters in shallow water. When fishing with deep-sea lines just over the bottom of the sea the boat is kept in place by means of a piece of rock serving as an anchor. The two most important species of fish by far caught in this manner are the pargo or red snappers and a variety of groupers like the mero, jeanpao and the wowo di boyo.

Cruising off the coast the Aruban fisherman patiently waits for a fish willing to snap at the bait on the drag-line, in nets and traps. Veritable giants are sometimes caught. Barracudas weigh from 9 to 44 pounds and measure from 3 to almost 7 feet. The king-fish has a weight from 22 to 44 pounds; the moclat may tip the scales at 155, whilst garfish, having a length of nine feet, weigh over 132 pounds.

Most fish caught is used for their own consumption, to feed their families and some are being sold in the

market to local restaurants. Fisherman Gregory Wernet is a well-known fisherman from Santa Cruz. His father taught him fishing when he was a small child. Gregory has two sons, Jordan and Jordanny, which he taught fishing too, when they were only 3 years old and he takes them fishing with him. Fishing has been a family tradition for quite a long time and even his grandson Willvion of 7 years old is following his grandfather steps. This is the sixth generation of fishermen in their family.

They go deep sea fishing. There they catch red snapper, grouper and amberjack. They usually fish for 15 hours a day, but now due to the covid-19 measurements they go fishing from 5 in the morning until 8 o'clock at night or even sometimes from 8 at night till 5 in the morning. The day before they prepare all their fishing tools such as the Lines,

lures, spears, and load their boat with fishing reels, batteries, fill the gasoline tank, lights and some food and beverages. For bait he uses sardines, squid and the small fish known in Aruba as piskechi. The have two boats they use for fishing. 'Virgen del Valle' which is parked at the pier by the Seaport and 'Padrot' which they have at home. The fish they catch they take home to their families and they also sell it to their clients. Gregory is proud to be a fisherman. It is a honest and humble job but with it he is able to feed his family even during hard times. It is a very dangerous job and you have to spend many hours on the sea, waiting patiently and risking your life while fighting a big fish and big waves but the adrenaline it brings with it but also just sitting there listening to the sound of the waves and enjoying the marvelous view that nature has to offer is all worth it.

Source: Etnia Nativa



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

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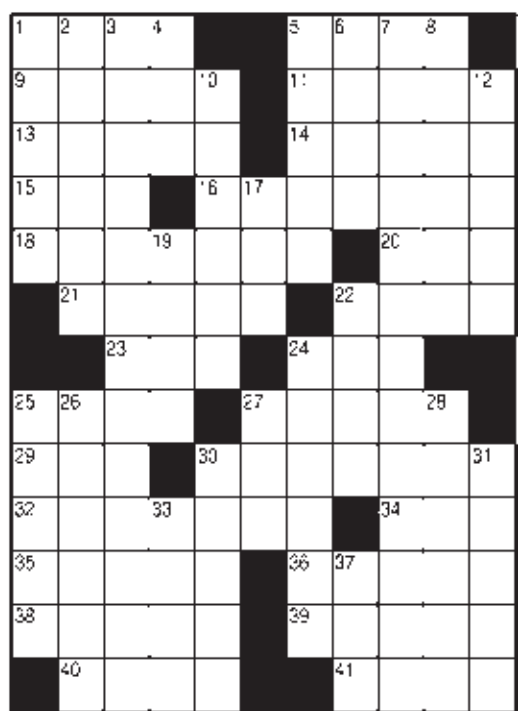
35 Down-

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read



Yesterday's answer



3-17

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

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

3-17 **CRYPTOQUOTE**

VXA ANPM INLJDUK FD ZDXOA

XTR ANPM ZDXMU FD BSQZU.

VXA QNNR BPLJ IPMKPD ANP

DXLZ VNMTSTQ XTR TSQZU.

— SMSKZ FBDKKSTQ

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: THE BOND WITH A TRUE DOG IS AS LASTING AS THE TIES OF THIS EARTH WILL EVER BE. — KONRAD LORENZ

When does travel brand loyalty make sense?

By SAM KEMMIS
of NerdWallet

Travel brand loyalty is nothing new. Ever since Texas International Airlines and American Airlines created the first frequent-flyer programs in the late 1970s and early 1980s, travelers have been racking up miles, seeking elite status and pouring their airfare dollars into brands that offer the most perks.

Yet sticking with a single airline, hotel or rental car program comes with built-in limitations. It means narrowing one's comparison shopping, for one thing, which can effectively increase prices. A person who's loyal to, say, Delta Air Lines might pay \$100 more for a flight on Delta in order to earn miles and status. Is that trade-off worth it?

"It has to be a really good deal for me to fly with another airline," says Joanne Herd, travel advisor at Girasole Travel, a luxury travel booking service, who has been loyal to American Airlines for years.

She recently took a business-class flight with Singapore Airlines because it cost thousands of dollars less than those available on an American Airlines partner.

"I almost regretted it because I barely made the status I wanted," she says. Navigating these trade-offs is particularly fraught for semi-frequent travelers, who may not travel enough to earn high-level elite status perks, but still want to earn and use miles. Collecting a few hundred points from a smattering of loyalty programs might



A Delta airplane takes off from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport in Atlanta, Tuesday, Nov. 22, 2022

Associated Press

be more trouble than it's worth, yet sticking with one program can limit travel options.

Here's how to decide whether going monogamous with a travel brand makes sense.

BIG PAYOFFS FOR BIG SPENDERS

Travel brands like United Airlines and Marriott maintain their loyalty programs for a simple reason: They want to attract big spenders, particularly business travelers. To this end, loyalty programs will lavish benefits on travelers in proportion to how frequently they travel (and how much they spend).

This might sound simple, but it affects the value of these programs for ultra-frequent travelers relative to leisure travelers. For example, a traveler with the lowest-level Hilton status will get about \$2 back in value for every \$100 they spend, according to a NerdWallet analysis, while someone with the highest-level status will get about \$49 in value for every \$100 they spend. This is an enormous gulf,

and highlights how the juice might not be worth the squeeze for low-level status. Katy Nastro, a travel expert at flight deals website Going, emphasized the same goes for airline elite status, which disproportionately rewards high rollers.

"It takes a lot of short flights to even reach the lowest rung of the ladder," Nastro said in an email. "So you may be foregoing cheaper and quite possibly better flights for the potential of a reward in the future."

Because the perks are so valuable for very frequent travelers, it almost always makes sense for them to maintain some travel loyalty, even at the cost of convenience.

OTHER TRADE-OFFS TO CONSIDER

While limiting one's loyalty to a single travel brand can offer benefits for frequent travelers, it also has hidden drawbacks. Claire Sturza, who writes about travel on her blog Tales of a Backpacker, began traveling full-time seven years ago. Yet despite her bonafide frequent traveler status, she mostly avoids loyalty programs and the elite status rat race.

"I want something different when I travel; that's why I travel," she says. "I would rather stay at a small guest house. I know money is going back into the community where I am, rather than a giant global corporation." □

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24/7

Researchers document 55 more white sharks in Cape Cod waters

By **MARK PRATT**
Associated Press

The scientific nonprofit that tracks the white shark population in Cape Cod waters identified 55 sharks never before documented in the area during its most recent research season, but experts say that's no reason for tourists who flock to the vacation hotspot every summer to be afraid of going in the water.

The Atlantic White Shark Conservancy has now has documented more than 600 of the apex predators since it began monitoring the population in 2014, staff scientist Megan Winton said Wednesday. Many of the sharks return to the area year after year to feed on the abundant seals that call Cape Cod home. Scientists during last year's research trips from mid-June until early November documented the return of 63 sharks that had previously been spotted in the area, the nonprofit announced this month.

Don't worry. Identifying more sharks does not mean there are more of them out there and does not mean a greater risk to the public. "It's not necessarily indicative of there being more sharks off of Cape Cod," Winton said. "What we've seen the last couple years in terms of activity and sightings has been par for



This undated photo provided by Atlantic White Shark Conservancy shows Great White Shark Turbo.

Associated Press

the course of what we've been seeing for the past several years."

The fear that people have about white sharks because of the 1975 movie "Jaws" about a massive great white terrorizing a New England resort town and two shark attacks off Cape Cod in 2018, one of them fatal, is largely misplaced, Winton said.

"It's important for people to keep in mind that white sharks are not the monsters they are portrayed to be in the media," she said. "They're not lurking off our beaches. Humans are not on the menu."

Cape Cod is the only known white shark aggregation site in the northwest Atlantic, and because they tend to stick close to shore as they hunt for seals, the area has become a goldmine of information for

researchers, she said.

The Atlantic White Shark Conservancy scientists, in collaboration with other researchers, have been able to find out more about the sharks' lifecycle, growth rates, the risks they face in the open ocean, and travel patterns as they swim thousands of miles up and down the eastern coast of the U.S. and Canada. □

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ST P
Violence Against Women

UFC 286: Usman prepares to redeem himself against Edwards

By **STEVE DOUGLAS**
AP Sports Writer

It was a crosshead kick that ended Kamaru Usman's long reign as champion and made Leon Edwards a UFC star.

Edwards certainly will never forget it.

And he believes Usman might never get over it.

"He's what now, 35, 36 years old?" Edwards said of his storied welterweight rival. "Coming off a knockout and fighting the same guy who's just knocked him out. Let's see how he comes back."

We're about to find out.

The two are meeting again Saturday — for the third time, and more than seven years after their first fight — as the headliners at UFC 286 at the O2 Arena in London. It's a homecoming for Edwards, the champion.

It's a shot at redemption for Usman, in the rare position as the challenger.

Dropped by a kick to the head and neck in the fifth round in Salt Lake City in August, Usman — otherwise known as the "Nigerian Nightmare" — saw his run of 15 straight victories come to an end. One more win would have tied an all-time UFC record for a guy



Nigerian UFC fighter Kamaru Usman, left, fights with UFC fighter Leon Edwards, of Jamaica, during their welterweight championship bout at UFC 278, in Salt Lake City, Aug. 20, 2022.

Associated Press

seen at the time as the No. 1 pound-for-pound fighter in the world.

The big question now, seven months later, is what has he got? It's one that Edwards is asking out loud.

"What does he change?" the Jamaican-born Brit said in an interview with BT Sport, which is broadcasting the fight in Britain. "The way he fought me last is the way he fights."

"I can't see him in the space of five, six months

now being a totally different fighter. I just can't see it happening."

Usman is aware his ability to recover from a first loss in nine years is being questioned by Edwards.

His response? "It's warranted when you speak about ordinary things and ordinary people," Usman said this week in London. "When something like that — that trauma — happens, most people are going to be disturbed about

it. But that's when you're speaking about ordinary people."

"Leon Edwards and I both know that I am not ordinary. I'm extraordinary."

Indeed, underestimating Usman is a dangerous game. Especially since he beat Edwards in the first fight of this trilogy in 2015 and was controlling the second — in UFC 278 — before the unexpected knockout blow from his rival, who became Britain's second UFC

champion and extended a winning run that stretches to May 2016.

That's some strong pedigree on show Saturday, wrapping up a card that includes a fight between Justin Gaethje and Rafael Fiziev in the lightweight category.

It promises to be an emotional night for Edwards, who will be fighting almost three years to the day since a contest against Tyron Woodley in the same venue had to be called off amid the onset on the coronavirus pandemic.

Now he returns as a champion, hungry for only his second bout in nearly two years and believing Usman won't be able to deal with a first fight in someone else's back yard.

"This is my hometown show," Edwards said. "I've never lost in the U.K. I use the crowd as energy. I just can't see how he goes out there and defeats me."

Unsurprisingly, Usman feels differently.

"Yes of course I could have waited and said let's do it in Vegas or something like that but it was the perfect opportunity to come here," he said. "It just adds to the story." □



Puerto Rico pitcher Edwin Diaz (39) is helped by team pitching coach Ricky Bones and medical staff after a World Baseball Classic game against the Dominican Republic, Wednesday, March 15, 2023, in Miami.

Associated Press

PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. (AP) — New York Mets closer Edwin Díaz has a torn patellar tendon and is expected to miss the entire season after hurting his right knee while

celebrating a victory in the World Baseball Classic. Mets general manager Billy Eppler said Díaz would undergo surgery Thursday. Without going into specif-

Mets' Díaz expected to miss season with torn patellar tendon

ics, Eppler said a general timeline for recovery from this type of injury is about eight months.

"There are instances where athletes have come back earlier, more around the six-month mark," Eppler told reporters. "But those are a little bit more of the exception than the rule."

Díaz, who turns 29 next week, retired the side in order in the ninth inning of a 5-2 victory over the Dominican Republic on Wednesday night that sent Puerto Rico to the World Baseball Classic quarterfinals. As Díaz and his teammates jumped together in the infield, the right-hander collapsed and reached for his right leg. He was taken off the field in a wheelchair.

"Edwin Díaz is a great human being and a fierce competitor," Mets owner Steve Cohen tweeted. "All of us at the Mets are shaken but determined to sustain our quest for a great season. We wish Edwin a speedy recovery." Eppler said he spoke to Díaz several times and noted the right-hander was in "great spirits."

"He's a resilient human being," Eppler said. "That's why he the closer he is. The dude doesn't get rattled." The Mets signed Díaz to a five-year, \$102 million contract — the largest ever for a closer — after he produced a spectacular 2022 season. All player contracts are covered by insurance through the WBC that

spans the length of time the player is out with an injury suffered during the tournament.

Díaz went 3-1 with a 1.31 ERA and 32 saves in 35 opportunities while striking out 118 batters in 62 innings last season. He made his second All-Star appearance and finished ninth in the Cy Young Award voting.

The Mets do have some relievers on their roster with closer experience as they attempt to replace Díaz.

David Robertson has 157 career saves, including 20 last season when he pitched for the Chicago Cubs and Philadelphia Phillies. Adam Ottavino has 33 career saves. Brooks Raley had six saves for the Tampa Bay Rays last season. □

MLB asks umpires for heightened sticky substance checks

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Baseball is heightening in-game inspections by umpires for banned grip aides, concerned that use of foreign substances by pitchers increased again as time passed from a crackdown begun in June 2021.

"Unfortunately, spin rates began to rise again during the 2022 season and we received reports of continued use of foreign substances on the field," MLB senior vice president of on-field operations Michael Hill wrote Thursday in a memo.

"Umpires have been instructed to increase the frequency and scope of foreign substance checks this year, including randomized checks of fingers (including removal of rings worn on either hand of pitchers), hands, hats, gloves, belts/waistlines, and pants," Hill said.

"Pitchers may be subject to checks before or after innings in which they pitch, and managers may make inspection requests of a pitcher or position player either before or after an at-bat."

Hill sent the memo to owners, CEOs, team presidents, general managers, field managers and all major and minor league players. The memo was first reported by ESPN.

"Umpires also will be focused on suspicious behavior by players that suggests the potential use of foreign substances," Hill wrote. "For example, if an umpire observes a pitcher attempting to wipe off his hands prior to an inspection, the player may be subject to immediate ejection for violating the rules by attempting to conceal a foreign substance."



Boston Red Sox starting pitcher Chris Sale throws in the first inning of a spring training baseball game against the Minnesota Twins in Fort Myers, Fla., Saturday, March 11, 2023.

Associated Press

Word of the crackdown emerged from an owners meeting on June 3, 2021, and heightened checks started that June 21. Four-seam fastballs averaged 2,319 revolutions per minute through that June 2, then dropped to 2,251 for the rest of the season before rising to 2,276 last year, according to Statcast data. Average velocity of four-seam fastballs increased from 93.7 mph in 2021 to 93.9 mph last year. Only two pitchers have been suspended for foreign substances since the checks started. Seattle's Héctor Santiago was penalized that June 28 and Arizona's Caleb Smith that Aug. 24, both for 10 games. "A player who possesses or applies foreign substances in violation of the playing rules is subject to immediate ejection from the game and will be suspended automatically," Hill wrote. "If a player other than the pitcher is found to have applied a foreign substance to the baseball (e.g., the catcher applies a foreign substance to the baseball before throwing it back to the pitcher), both the position player and pitcher will be ejected; however, position players will not be ejected for having a foreign substance on their glove or uniform unless

the umpire determines that the player was applying the substance to the ball in order to aid the pitcher." MLB threatened to be harsher with repeat offenders.

"Players who are found to have used a foreign substance following a prior

suspension for violating the rule will be subject to more severe, progressive discipline for each subsequent violation," Hill said.

Hill threatened "severe discipline" for club employees who assist players in using banned grip aides.

"Clubs will be held ac-

countable for any foreign substances discovered in any club area (e.g., clubhouse, tunnel, dugout, bullpen, etc.)," he wrote. "Each club must inform its clubhouse managers and clubhouse attendants that they are obligated to report to the general manager any foreign substances that are discovered in the clubhouse or other areas of the stadium. Please note that the pitcher's bag and bullpen bag have been a frequent source identified by the Gameday Compliance Monitors ("GCMs") as carrying foreign substances."

In an effort to create more uniform ball conditions, MLB made humidors mandatory for ball storage starting last season. Balls must be kept in them for at least 14 days, and Hill said the temperature must be set at 70 degrees Fahrenheit (21 degrees Celsius) with 57% humidity, except for 65% at mile-high Coors Field.

Procedures for removing balls for humidors and rubbing them with mud was standardized last June. □



Happy **ARUBA** NATIONAL DAY

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DOUBLE DOWN
SPORTS BAR & GRILL

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Eagle Aruba RESORT

@eaglearuba

Weekly SPECIALS

<p>WAS \$4.79</p> <p>\$4.17</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Potato Yellow Yukon 5LBS</p>	<p>WAS \$33.49</p> <p>\$21.71</p> <p>Per KG</p>  <p>Mexican Rib Eye Bone Less</p>	<p>WAS \$7.14</p> <p>\$6.05</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Asparagus STD</p>	<p>WAS \$9.81</p> <p>\$7.42</p> <p>Per KG</p>  <p>Chicken Gyros</p>
<p>WAS \$9.81</p> <p>\$6.28</p> <p>Per KG</p>  <p>Chorizo Sausage</p>	<p>WAS \$3.25</p> <p>\$3.25</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Komkommer</p>	<p>WAS \$7.14</p> <p>\$5.14</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Panamei Seafood Mix 16oz</p>	<p>WAS \$7.99</p> <p>\$6.85</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Kraft Real Mayo Original 30oz</p>
<p>WAS \$15.35</p> <p>\$13.14</p> <p>Per KG</p>  <p>Do It Spicy Cheese</p>	<p>WAS \$2.11</p> <p>\$1.82</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>EE Ketchup 24oz</p>	<p>WAS \$2.30</p> <p>\$1.99</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Spar Nr.1 Voorgekookte Rijst 1000 GR</p>	<p>WAS \$2.59</p> <p>\$1.99</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Gwoon Sultana Rozijnen 375GR</p>
<p>WAS \$6.93</p> <p>\$5.71</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Nabisco Oreo Double Stuf Chocolate Sandwich Cookies</p>	<p>WAS \$5.83</p> <p>\$4.57</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Sunny D Tangy Original 128oz</p>	<p>WAS \$8.54</p> <p>\$6.85</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>INTL Delight Assort Flavor Creamer 32oz</p>	<p>WAS \$5.34</p> <p>\$4.28</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Gillette Series Sensitive Shave Gel 7oz</p>
<p>WAS \$5.54</p> <p>\$3.99</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Iglo Visschnitzels 4st</p>	<p>WAS \$1.31</p> <p>\$1.14</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Gwoon Vochtig Toilet papier 70st</p>	<p>WAS \$1.87</p> <p>\$1.59</p> <p>100 GR</p>  <p>Queso Blanco Duro</p>	<p>WAS \$2.45</p> <p>\$1.99</p> <p>100 GR</p>  <p>Hickory Smoked Honey Turkey</p>

DAIRY/FROZEN

HBC/GM

DELI/BAKERY

SUPER
Do it Center.

VALID FROM
17 MAR - 23 MAR 2023
and while supplies last

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