

Shelley Moquin:
"Aruba to me is the most relaxing vacation spot on earth!"

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Monuments in Oranjestad



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U.S. will stop tracking the costs of extreme weather fueled by climate change

By **ALEXA ST. JOHN**
Associated Press

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will no longer track the cost of climate change-fueled weather disasters, including floods, heat waves, wildfires and more. It is the latest example of changes to the agency and the Trump administration limiting federal government resources on climate change.

NOAA falls under the U.S. Department of Commerce and is tasked with daily weather forecasts, severe storm warnings and climate monitoring. It is also parent to the National Weather Service.

The agency said its National Centers for Environmental Information would no longer update its Billion-dollar Weather and Climate Disasters database beyond 2024, and that its information going as far back as 1980 would be archived. For decades, it has tracked hundreds of major events across the country, including destructive hurricanes, hail storms, droughts and freezes that have totaled trillions of dollars in damage.

The database uniquely



Melted metal and burned out cars sit destroyed in a driveway of a home burned by the wildfire that spread through the Pacific Palisades neighborhood of Los Angeles on Friday, Jan. 17, 2025.

Associated Press

pulls information from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's assistance data, insurance organizations, state agencies and more to estimate overall losses from individual disasters.

NOAA Communications Director Kim Doster said in a statement that the change was "in alignment with evolving priorities, statutory mandates, and staffing changes."

Scientists say these weather events are becoming increasingly more frequent, costly and severe with climate change. Experts have attributed the growing intensity of recent debilitating heat, Hurricane Milton, the Southern California wildfires and blasts of cold to climate change.

Assessing the impact of weather events fueled by the planet's warming is key as insurance premiums

hike, particularly in communities more prone to flooding, storms and fires. Climate change has wrought havoc on the insurance industry, and homeowners are at risk of skyrocketing rates.

One limitation is that the dataset estimated only the nation's most costly weather events.

The information is generally seen as standardized and unduplicable, given the

agency's access to non-public data, and other private databases would be more limited in scope and likely not shared as widespread for proprietary reasons. Other datasets, however, also track death estimates from these disasters. Jeff Masters, a meteorologist for Yale Climate Connections, pointed to substitutes from insurance brokers and the international disaster database as alternative sources of information.

Still, "The NOAA database is the gold standard we use to evaluate the costs of extreme weather," Masters said, "and it's a major loss, since it comes at a time when we need to better understand how much climate change is increasing disaster losses."

These moves also don't "change the fact that these disasters are escalating year over year," Kristina Dahl, vice president of science at nonprofit climate organization Climate Central. "Extreme weather events that cause a lot of damage are one of the primary ways that the public sees that climate change is happening and is affecting people." □

Trump administration invokes state secrets privilege in Kilmar Abrego Garcia's case

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration is in-

voicing the "state secrets privilege" in an apparent

attempt to avoid answering a judge's questions about its mistaken deportation of Kilmar Abrego Garcia to El Salvador.

U.S. District Judge Paula Xinis disclosed the government's position in a two-page order on Wednesday. She set a Monday deadline for attorneys to file briefs on the issue and how it could affect Abrego Garcia's case. Xinis also scheduled a May 16 hearing in Greenbelt, Maryland, to address the matter.

The Republican administration previously invoked the same legal authority to cut off a judge's inquiry into whether it defied an order to turn around planes

deporting Venezuelan migrants to El Salvador.

Abrego Garcia, 29, has been imprisoned in his native El Salvador for nearly two months. His mistaken deportation has become a flash point for President Donald Trump's immigration policies and his increasing friction with the U.S. courts.

Trump has said he could call El Salvador's president and have Abrego Garcia, who was living in Maryland, returned to the United States. Instead, Trump has doubled down on his claims that Abrego Garcia is a member of the MS-13 gang.

Police in Maryland had

identified Abrego Garcia as an MS-13 gang member in 2019 based off his tattoos, Chicago Bulls hoodie and the word of a criminal informant. But Abrego Garcia was never charged. His lawyers say the informant claimed Abrego Garcia was in an MS-13 chapter in New York, where Abrego Garcia has never lived.

The administration has balked at telling Xinis what, if anything, it has done to facilitate Abrego Garcia's return to the U.S. The judge ruled that his lawyers can question several Trump administration officials under oath about the government's response to her orders. □



Jennifer Vasquez Sura, the wife of Kilmar Abrego Garcia of Maryland, who was mistakenly deported to El Salvador, speaks during a news conference at CASA's Multicultural Center in Hyattsville, Md., Friday, April 4, 2025.

Associated Press

Democrats block stablecoin bill as they raise concerns about Trump's crypto ventures

By MARY CLARE JALONICK
and ALAN SUDERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Democrats have blocked legislation to regulate stablecoins, a form of cryptocurrency, after arguing that the bill needed stronger protections and airing concerns that it could help President Donald Trump enrich himself. The bill, which would regulate how stablecoin issuers operate in the U.S., had previously won some Democratic support. But it failed 49-48 on a procedural vote Thursday after Democrats said that they needed to see more changes to the legislation before they could back it.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune said that Republicans would work with Democrats if they allowed the bill to move forward, but they refused. All Democrats voted not to bring it up.

The vote is a blow to one of Trump's top legislative priorities and a setback for the cryptocurrency industry, which spent heavily in last year's election and has been emboldened to cement its influence in politics and the mainstream financial system. The legislation would aim to create a federal framework to regulate the stablecoin industry,



Then Former President Donald Trump speaks at the Bitcoin 2024 Conference, July 27, 2024, in Nashville, Tenn.

Associated Press

which is currently governed by a patchwork of existing federal and state laws. Stablecoins are a fast-growing corner of the cryptocurrency industry that have produced enormous profits for some of the major players involved. They offer a buffer from cryptocurrency's notorious volatility because they are pegged to real-world assets, like U.S. dollars or gold. Typically, that means a single stablecoin is worth \$1, making them a much more reliable digital asset to make com-

mercial transactions than other forms of crypto.

While some Democrats agree that regulation is needed, and several voted to move the bill out of committee, Trump's involvement in the crypto industry has complicated the legislation's path. Trump launched a meme coin earlier this year that has generated more than \$320 million in fees for its creators, according to the blockchain analysis firm Chainalysis. And earlier this week, Trump promoted a

dinner he's set to attend on May 22 that's open to almost anyone who buys enough of the coins.

Another Trump-family linked crypto venture called World Liberty Financial recently announced that it was issuing its own stablecoin, called USD1. The stablecoin got a huge boost when World Liberty Financial announced last week that an investment fund in the United Arab Emirates would be using \$2 billion worth of USD1 to purchase a stake in Binance,

the world's largest cryptocurrency exchange.

Among other proposed changes, Democrats said that elected officials and their families should be barred from owning, controlling or promoting stablecoin business ventures.

"The Senate should not pass a bill that facilitates Trump's breathtaking corruption and lines his pockets and welcomes other elected officials to do the same," said Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren.

A former skeptic turned zealous promotor, Trump has promised to usher in a golden age for the cryptocurrency industry. His administration has already taken many early actions without Congress to boost crypto, including establishing a strategic bitcoin reserve and undoing previously enforcement actions. But Trump needs Congress to get some of his and the deep-pocketed industry's top priorities passed, including enacting the stablecoin legislation.

The legislation could still move forward if the two parties can come to a deal. Virginia Sen. Mark Warner, a Democrat who has been helping negotiate the legislation, said in a statement after the vote that he would continue to work on it. □

U.S. infant mortality dropped in 2024. Experts partly credit RSV shots

By MIKE STOBBE
AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The nation's infant mortality rate dropped last year after two years of hovering at a late-pandemic plateau.

Some experts think one reason for the drop could be a vaccination campaign against RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus, which is a common cause of cold-like symptoms that can be dangerous for infants.

The infant mortality national rate dropped to about 5.5 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 2024, according to provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention posted Thursday. That's down from about 5.6 per 1,000 live births, where it had been the previous two years. CDC officials believe the findings will not

change much when the final numbers come out later this year.

Infant mortality is the measure of how many babies die before they reach their first birthday. Because the number of babies born in the U.S. varies from year to year, researchers instead calculate rates to better compare infant mortality over time.

U.S. infant deaths fell to about 19,900 last year, according to CDC data, compared with about 20,150 in 2023.

The U.S. infant mortality rate has been worse than other high-income countries, which experts have attributed to poverty, inadequate prenatal care and other things. Even so, the U.S. rate generally has improved over the decades because of medical advances and public health efforts. □



A sign marks the entrance to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, on Oct. 8, 2013.

Associated Press

Federal officials set timeline for Helene aid to farmers as Georgia enacts tax breaks

By **JEFF AMY**

Associated Press

FORSYTH, Ga. (AP) — Georgia's governor signed a law Thursday to exempt federal crop insurance and disaster payments following Hurricane Helene damage from Georgia state income taxes, but it could be months more before some federal money starts flowing to farmers in the hardest-hit states.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture published a schedule Wednesday to start disbursing disaster aid, part of a \$100 billion package passed by Congress in December.

The September storm cut a swath from Florida's Big Bend across eastern Georgia and upstate South Carolina before causing historic flooding in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee.

Helene is the seventh-most expensive disaster in the United States since 1980, causing an estimated \$78 billion in damage and 219 deaths.

Officials have estimated that Helene caused billions in property and economic damage to agriculture, including \$5.5 billion in Georgia and \$4.9 billion in North Carolina.



A cotton picker moves through Chris Hopkins' cotton field, Friday, Dec. 6, 2024, near Lyons, Ga. **Associated Press**

Federal officials in March began handing out \$10 billion designated in the bill for farmers nationwide harmed by low crop prices and high fertilizer prices. But billions more were set aside for farmers harmed by Helene and other natural disasters in 2023 and 2024.

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins was questioned about the timeframe Tuesday by lawmakers including Democratic U.S. Sen. Jon Ossoff of Georgia. He told Rollins that "Time is of the essence."

"I've seen the devastation firsthand," Rollins said. "It is heartbreaking to witness it." Some farmers have dipped into savings to pay for losses not covered by insurance. Others have unpaid debts from last year, restricting borrowing to plant 2025 crops. A few have sold equipment or land to generate cash.

The schedule shows federal officials will open applications for some aid in stages from May 30 through Sept. 15. But states have to negotiate plans to distribute oth-

er aid through block grants. If state and federal officials agree on a plan by May 28, block grants would be finalized by June 13, federal officials said. If agreements can be reached by June 13, they would be finalized by June 30. After that, states must give out the money.

Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Tyler Harper said Thursday that he didn't know how much money Georgia would get in block grants. He said whether the state made the May

28 deadline "depends on how our negotiations go with USDA over the next couple of weeks."

Kemp on Thursday signed into law tax breaks for farmers and timber owners harmed by Helene that could be worth nearly \$300 million.

"Farmers operate on extremely tight margins, and to rebuild from a storm of this magnitude could be impossible for some to shoulder," Kemp said at Georgia Forestry Association headquarters in Forsyth, saying Helene was "a storm like no other in our state."

The tax breaks come on top of \$867 million in spending that Georgia lawmakers earlier allotted for Hurricane Helene relief.

The law exempts federal payments to farmers because of Helene from Georgia state income taxes. That could be worth \$140 million.

Georgia's law also lets private timberland owners claim a credit for damaged timber on state income taxes if they replant trees. The timberland tax break could be worth \$83 million to \$104 million through 2030, estimates show. □

New York set to lower hiring age of prison guards to 18 amid correction officer shortage

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — New York is set to lower the minimum hiring age for prison

guards from 21 to 18, seeking to boost the ranks of corrections officers during

a shortage that was exacerbated by the firing of more than 2,000 guards after a weeklong strike crippled the state's prison system.

State lawmakers approved the measure on Wednesday and Gov. Kathy Hochul, a Democrat, is expected to sign it into law. The bill establishes some rules for the younger guards, including policies that they cannot obtain or use firearms or transport inmates outside of prisons. They also must be supervised when performing "contact roles" with inmates during the first year-

and-a-half on the job.

The push to lower the age for correction officers came after guards walked off the job in February while striking to protest poor working conditions. Hochul was forced to deploy the state National Guard to prisons to maintain operations during the strike. The governor ended up firing more than 2,000 guards who refused to return to work after the state and guards' union reached a deal to end the walkout, which lasted around three weeks.

Hochul has barred the guards who were fired

from holding other state jobs in the future.

The state corrections commissioner has since directed the department to begin the process of releasing some inmates early because of a shortage of guards.

But the early discharges have been limited to inmates who were convicted of minor crimes and were already set for release in the near future. Inmates convicted of sex crimes, violent felonies or serious felonies such as murder, terrorism and arson would not be eligible for early release, the agency said. □



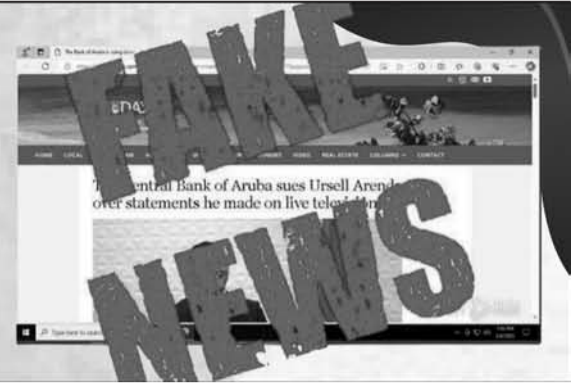
A guard tower and barbed wire fencing stand outside Sing Sing, Sunday, Feb. 16, 2020 in Ossining, N.Y.

Associated Press

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Robert Prevost, first pope from U.S. in history of the Catholic Church, takes the name Leo XIV

By NICOLE WINFIELD
Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Robert Prevost, the Chicago-born missionary who spent his career ministering in Peru and took over the Vatican's powerful office of bishops, was elected the first pope from the United States in the history of the Catholic Church.

Prevost, a 69-year-old member of the Augustinian religious order, took the name Leo XIV.

In his first words as Pope Francis' successor, uttered from the loggia of St. Peter's Basilica, Leo said, "Peace be with you," and emphasized a message of peace, dialogue and missionary evangelization. He wore the traditional red cape of the papacy a cape that Francis had eschewed on his election in 2013 suggesting a return to some degree of tradition after Francis' unorthodox pontificate.

Prevost had been a leading candidate for the papacy, but there had long been a taboo against a U.S. pope, given the country's geopolitical power already wielded in the secular sphere. But Prevost was seemingly eligible because he's also a Peruvian citizen and lived for years in Peru, first as a missionary and then as an archbishop.

Francis clearly had his eye on Prevost and in many ways saw him as his heir apparent. He sent Prevost to take over a complicated diocesan situation in Peru, then brought him to the Vatican in 2023 to serve as the powerful head of the office that vets bishop nominations from around the world, one of the most important jobs in the Cath-



Newly elected Pope Leo XIV appears at the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, Thursday, May 8, 2025.

olic Church. And in January he elevated him into the senior ranks of cardinals. As a result, Prevost had a prominence going into the conclave that few other cardinals had.

The crowd in St. Peter's Square erupted in cheers when white smoke poured out of the Sistine Chapel on the second day of the conclave, the most geographically diverse in history. Priests made the sign of the cross and nuns wept as the crowd shouted "Viva il papa!"

Waving flags from around the world, tens of thousands of people waited to learn who had won and were shocked when an hour later, the senior cardinal deacon appeared on the loggia and said "Habemus Papam!" and announced the winner was Prevost.

He spoke to the crowd in Italian and Spanish, but not English.

"Greetings ... to all of you, and in particular, to my beloved diocese of Chiclayo in Peru, where a faithful people have accompanied their bishop, shared their faith," he said in Spanish.

U.S. President Donald Trump said it was "such an honor for our country" for the new pope to be American.

"What greater honor can there be," he said. The president added that "we're a little bit surprised and we're happy."

The last pope to take the name Leo was Leo XIII, an Italian who led the church from 1878 to 1903. That Leo softened the church's confrontational stance toward modernity, especially science and politics and laid the foundation for modern Catholic social thought, most famously with his 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, which addressed workers' rights and capitalism at

the beginning of the industrial revolution.

An Augustinian pope Vatican watchers said Prevost's decision to name himself Leo was particularly significant given the previous Leo's legacy of social justice and reform, suggesting continuity with some of Francis' chief concerns.

"I think this pope is saying something about social justice by choosing this name, that it is going to be a priority.

He is continuing a lot of Francis' ministry," said Natalia Imperatori-Lee, the chair of religious studies at Manhattan University in the Bronx.

The new pope was formerly the prior general, or leader, of the Order of St. Augustine, which was formed in the 13th century as a community of "mendicant" friars dedicated to poverty, service and evangelization. There have been six previ-

ous Augustinian popes.

The requirements and ethos of the order are traced to the fifth century St. Augustine of Hippo, one of the theological and devotional giants of early Christianity.

The Order of St. Augustine has a presence in about 50 countries, according to its website. Its ethos includes a contemplative spirituality, communal living and service to others. A core value in their rule is to "live together in harmony, being of one mind and one heart on the way to God."

Prevost graduated from the Augustinian Villanova University, in suburban Philadelphia, and his election thrilled American students studying in Rome who happened to be in St. Peter's Square to witness history.

"That's the first American pope in history. How exciting!" said Alessandra Jarrett, a 21-year-old political science student at Rome's John Cabot university. "Crazy that we're able to be here and see it, and this was even our last day in school."

The past of Pope Leo Francis moved Prevost from the Augustinian leadership back to Peru in 2014 to serve as the administrator and later archbishop of Chiclayo.

He remained in that position, acquiring Peruvian citizenship in 2015, until Francis brought him to Rome in 2023 to assume the presidency of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America. In that job he would have kept in regular contact with the Catholic hierarchy in the part of the world that counts the most Catholics and who clearly would have had a hand in his election. □

The EU publishes a U.S. product hit list and prepares for WTO action against Trump's tariffs

By **LORNE COOK**

Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union published on Thursday a list of U.S. imports that it would target with retaliatory duties if no solution is found to end U.S. President Donald Trump's tariff war, which could include aircraft maker Boeing.

The EU's executive branch, the European Commission, said it also would begin legal action at the World Trade Organization over the "reciprocal tariffs" that Trump imposed on countries around the world last month.

"The EU remains fully committed to finding negotiated outcomes with the U.S.," commission President Ursula von der Leyen said. "At the same time, we continue preparing for all possibilities."

The commission manages trade deals and disputes on behalf of the 27 EU countries. In early April, Trump put a 20% levy on goods from the EU as part of his tariff onslaught against global trading partners. A week later, he paused them for 90 days to give countries a chance to negotiate solutions to U.S. trade concerns. A blanket 10% tariff still applies to EU imports.



European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen delivers her speech on EU support for peace in Ukraine, Wednesday, May 7, 2025 at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, eastern France.

Associated Press

The commission drew up countermeasures to target 20.9 billion euros (\$23.6 billion) of U.S. goods, roughly the equivalent of what Trump would be hitting in Europe. But it also put them on hold for 90 days to give negotiations a chance.

The bloc's top trade official has shuttled between Brussels and Washington trying to find a solution, but with little to show, the commission has made public a list of American imports for possible targeting worth 95 billion euros (\$107 billion).

The list is broken down into sectors and broad categories of products rather than brand names. It contains 10.5 billion euros (\$11.9 billion) worth of aircraft, 10.3 billion euros (\$11.6 billion) in vehicle parts and 2 billion euros (\$2.3 billion) in vehicles. European airlines are big Boeing customers: German airline Lufthansa has unfilled orders for 101 Boeing planes, and Irish airline Ryanair 184, for example. The American aerospace giant and Airbus, its European rival, dominate the

global markets for commercial and military planes. Boeing did not comment on the European Commission's announcement Thursday. CEO Kelly Ortberg told a U.S. Senate committee last month that 80% of Boeing's commercial passenger planes go to airlines and other companies outside the U.S.

"So it's important that we continue to have access to that market and that we don't get in a situation where certain markets become closed to us," Ort-

berg said. Under the EU's proposed list, around 1.3 billion euros (\$1.5 billion) in imports of U.S. wine, beer and spirits also could take a hit. European wine producers have been deeply concerned that Trump's tariffs would deal a severe blow to their sector, which relies on the U.S. as its top market. The commission gave interested companies and parties until June 10 to provide feedback, before it decides on the next steps. "Boeing is very welcome to make comments on this list," a commission official said, briefing reporters on the list and the rationale for the EU's approach.

Also Thursday, the commission approved 5 billion euros in insurance aid for French wine and spirits exports to the U.S. through July 8, after which the sweeping tariffs announced by Trump are scheduled to go into effect. The plan is meant to help protect French exporters from political risks during the next two months.

In parallel, the commission said that it would be taking legal action at world trade's governing body, and would soon request consultations with the United States to try to resolve the issue, which must take place within two months. □

Orthodox Church leader says faith is humanity's safeguard against the 'impending robotocracy'

By **DEREK GATOPOULOS and PETROS GIANNAKOURIS**
Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — The spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians



Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew speaks during his meeting with Greece's Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, in Athens, on Thursday May 8, 2025.

Associated Press

has said that religious faith should serve as humanity's safeguard amid rapidly advancing technology and what he described as the "impending robotocracy." Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, 85, said that Orthodox tradition preserves "valuable human-centric wisdom" essential for navigating a world of accelerating technological change and automation. His comments during an event at Athens University reflect growing concerns across major branches of Christianity and ongoing dialogue between them about artificial intel-

ligence's potential impact on human dignity and social structures, as well as the dangers posed by autonomous weapons systems.

"In a world of rapid change, an upheaval of values, and dizzying technological advances from artificial intelligence to the impending robotocracy our Church proclaims that 'there is nothing more sacred than the human being, with whom God Himself shared His nature,'" Bartholomew said. The patriarch, who is based in Istanbul, Turkey, made the remarks late Wednesday in a speech published on Thursday.

Religious tradition, the patriarch said, "upholds the absolute priority of the person over systems ... and the need for an education that cultivates and supports the spiritual nature of humanity." While not opposing technological advancement, Bartholomew emphasized the need for innovation to remain human-centered. The comments echo similar concerns raised by other Christian leaders, who increasingly frame their responses to AI and robotics through theological perspectives on human uniqueness, free will, and spiritual nature. □

The Lionfish

And its threat to our marine wild life

(Oranjestad)—Despite its colorful and striking appearance, the lionfish has become a Caribbean-wide problem for Atlantic sea life. The Aruban marine wild life is also affected by this beautiful dilemma, as it is foreign to our waters and has become

a danger to our local fish and reefs.

Originating from the Indo-Pacific Ocean, the lionfish is a relatively small fish. It has no teeth, but it does protect itself against predators using its sharp, colorful spikes. It is

said that the sting of a lionfish can be up to 100 times more painful than that of a bee's sting.

Its natural predators in the Indo-Pacific are sharks and barracudas, but in the Caribbean Sea, local fish do not recognize the lionfish as part of their diet. In other words, the lionfish has no predators in the Caribbean Sea. And this becomes a major problem for our local marine life; if there are no predators to stimulate population control of lionfish, these fish can continue to reproduce and expand to other parts of the Atlantic, become more invasive and dangerous for other types of fish.

For Aruba, the lionfish is a problem especially for our local coral reefs. According to Patrick van Brakel, lionfish expert and hunter from the Hunting Lionfish Aruba



Patrick also shares the origins of lionfish in the Caribbean Sea. It is theorized that the introduction of these fish in the Atlantic happened in Florida, where people would buy lionfish from across the world to keep in their aquariums. However, lionfish grow, and as these buyers realized that the fish were too much upkeep, they were let out into the ocean to roam free. From continental USA, the lionfish travelled to and invaded the entire Caribbean area, from Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao up to New York. In Aruba,

jewelry making.

They are caught with a hand spear, an object resembling a garbage picker with 4 sharp prongs. These spears are used like a sling shot to catch lionfish from a distance. These fish are then put into a collecting tube and taken out of the water. Van Brakel not only catches them himself, but also cooks them for locals and tourists at The LionFish Snack Aruba in Paradera. This way, he does his part in protecting the local wild life. □



Food culture in Aruba

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

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

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

Breakfast

Breakfast in Aruba is quite simple: a cup of coffee or tea, some bread, and sometimes an egg. Sometimes, due to the need of a quick "to-go" breakfast, you may also find many snack trucks and cafes that sell sandwiches, pastechis (meat pie), arepas and empanadas early in the morning.

Main Meal

The main meal is typically eaten in most households around noon or in the afternoon. This can consist of meat, fish, and chicken—stewed

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

Dinner Time

Dinner time can vary significantly from household to household. Unlike the U.S. or in Europe, dinner time typically does not consist of a whole (warm) meal. Instead, the evening "meal" can typically consist of something lighter, like a sandwich, though it is not uncommon to see leftovers from the main meal reheated and eaten again. Tea and coffee are often also served with the evening snack.

(Religious) Holidays

Christmas is probably the biggest global holiday, and every culture has its own spin on what their Christmas cuisine entails. In Aruba, our Christmas cuisine is again largely based on Latin-American



influences, most notably from Venezuela. Ayacas and the famous pan di ham* are two crucial holiday dishes, along with stuffed turkey, roasted glazed ham topped with pineapples, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken) and potato salad, among other items. Traditional drinks include ponche crema (Aruban eggnog), chuculati pinda (hot chocolate with peanut butter), and homemade fruit punch. Desserts include, bolo di pistachio (pistachio cake), bolo di cashupete (cashew cake), quesillo (flan), bolo preto (dark fruit cake), drigidek (gingerbread), pan boyo (bread cake) and more.

Snacks and tasty delights

Besides meals and dishes that are eaten on the dinner table, Aruba also has a food tradition that includes snacks and other tasty delights that you may easily find around the island. These include,

Saco*, basket, pastechi, kroket, deditos, Johnny cake and more. These snacks are usually sold at local snack trucks and cafes, often located on the side of the road. In the area of Tanki Leendert and Tanki flip, for example, there are many of these trucks parked on the side of the road and often open until late at night—offering tasty and filling snacks post night-life fun. □

*ABC Islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao

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

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

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

The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba has just added exclusive slot machines that can't be played anywhere else on the Island.



(Palm Beach)—The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba is thrilled to announce the new and latest slot machines to the slot floor, featuring over 200 state-of-the-art slot machines. This exciting addition includes a remarkable line-up of exclusive slot machines and themes unique to the island, only available at The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba. In addition, the slot floor features attractive progressive jackpots starting at \$8,000 and the highest jackpot reaching an impressive \$160,000.

Here are some of the new exclusive slot machines only available at The Casino at Ritz-Carlton, Aruba:

Tiger & Dragon, Cash on Reels:

The Tiger & Dragon Theme is one of the newest additions to the slot floor, with cash on reels and Lock & Re-spin features, with players watching for Up Arrows that can lead to massive instant win awards. A unique betting structure that unlocks big values and more Up Arrows!

Bank Busters "Buy the Bonus Feature":

Bank Buster is the first slot game to combine three overlapping bonuses with repeat wins for the ultimate jackpot experience. It is also the first time Aristocrat's instant feature appears in a premium game. The instant feature allows players to buy directly into the bo-



nus features.

Mystery of The Lamp:

Mystery of the Lamp is an enchanting slot game that transports players to a magical Arabian world. This 5-reel, 50-payline slot offers an immersive gaming experience with stunning graphics, captivating soundtrack, and innovative features.

Grand Crystal Roulette, "Diamond Ball Feature":

In April, The Casino launched the Grand Crystal Roulette which features classic roulette with the option to play the "Diamond Ball Feature", which has a bet multiplier of up to 300x times. This brings an exciting spin to the traditional game of roulette, with elevated win possibilities exceeding \$30,000 per spin.

In addition, we have more new and unique themes available on our slot floor such as Bingo Frenzy Stampede, San Fa Panda and Tiger, Temple Falls, Double Gold Pinball, and many more!



Come check out our brand-new, exhilarating slot machines. Don't miss out and experience the excitement firsthand!

The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba paid out over \$1.6 million (AWG 2.8M) in jackpots. And since January 1st, the total payouts have exceeded \$5.6 million (AWG 10M).

The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba offers its Elevate Loyalty Program, where its members can enjoy unique benefits at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba including hotel stays, Food & Beverage credit for renowned restaurants such as Casa Nonna New York and BLT Steak and also their prestigious Spa.

For more information about the Elevate Tier Program and other promotions, visit us at The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba VIP Desk or call us at 527-2276/ 527-2277 and we will be delighted to assist you. □



(Oranjestad)—If you have ever or will ever go off-roading on the island, you may encounter the native Cascabel. Learning about the Cascabel and local perspective on it may help you understand what you need to do if you ever were to encounter one during your touring session on the island.

The small Cascabel or Aruba Island Rattlesnake averages 70 cm in length. The body color is often uniform gray or light brown. There

The Cascabel

may be a faint pattern of diamond shaped markings on the back. This pattern is most noticeable on younger snakes. The most distinctive feature of this snake is the rattle at the end of its tail which makes a buzzing sound when the snake is alarmed. Cascabels are shy and not aggressive, but their venom can be dangerous to humans. In fact, it's the only venomous snake native to the island. It is best to leave this snake alone. Do not attempt to catch or kill it, as it could not only be dangerous, but this snake is also endemic to the island, and its preservation has become a legal mandate for all residents and visitors.

Cascabels hunt by waiting under bushes and fruiting trees to catch passing lizards, mice, rats, small rabbits, and an occasional bird. This is often considered to be one of the

rarest rattlesnakes in the world. The range of the Cascabel is restricted to the rugged and mountainous areas of the island mostly within Arikok National Park. The Arikok National Park was designated in the early 1980s to include most of the rattlesnake's population, providing a safe refuge in which the snake can be protected and monitored. The government has also implemented outreach and education initiatives to change local perception of the snake and highlight its ecological and economic importance – it is now being promoted as a national symbol. Arikok's partnership with the Toledo zoo has safeguarded the rattlesnake ex-situ and led to a number of research projects collecting critical data on the Cascabel's abundance, life history and habitat requirement to help guide future conservation efforts. □

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Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins

According to *Etnia Nativa*, in the 18th century most of the inhabitants of Aruba were indigenous who lived on the north coast, one of the largest communities lived in Alto Vista.

As they were very religious, they had a chief with the name of Antonio Silvester who guided them in the Christian life and it was he who decided to build a stone chapel with a roof of corn rods, which would serve as a place of prayer. In 1750 it was blessed by Father Algamesi who came from Coro-Venezuela and appointed Domingo Antonio Silvester as the island's first prosecutor in the name of the Spanish crown and Rome. In 1752 the prosecution passed into the hands of Antonio Silvester's son-in-law, Miguel Álvarez, who continued to guide the parishioners in their prayers.

According to the book, *The History of Alto Vista* by R.H. Nooyen, it is not known when

Domingo Antonio Silvester came to Aruba from Venezuela. The elders believe Antonio was a Spaniard. In 1780, father Joseph Antonio de la Vegal called Bernardino Silvester, one of Antonio's sons with his wife Anna Cathalina Tromp, "neighbors and naturals of the island Aruba" and thus they became natives.

At the end of the eighteen century many inhabitants the island died as a result of the black fever epidemic and since people believed that the Alto Vista area was the

most infected, they began to build their homes further south within the Noord area, so the town of Noord began to grow into a community fill getting its own Church. However religious festivals continued to be celebrated at this sacred native place, with the custom of arriving in procession to Alto Vista.

Two-hundred years after the beautiful time of Alto Vista, people can no longer see much of the town of Alto Vista from 1750. With a lot of work they found the old foundations of the Church of the Queen of the Holiest Rosary to build a new chapel on the same place. The entire surrounding area was empty and desolated, making it hard to imagine that Alto Vista was a town at all. A hundred years later, people can see the remains of around twenty houses, some made of stone and others of clay. Nowadays, only around six of these houses remain.



South of the chapel in the yard two graves can be observed, there was the cemetery which father Pablo de Algemesi blessed. It is not certain, but it is believed that the two graves belong to Antonio Silvester and Miguel Alvares, according to Nooyen. About 50 meters near the chapel there are still the markings of an old house, where Antonio and Bernardino Silvester would have lived. About 200 meters from the chapel there is a water tank which the locals call Tanki Cacique. In

the past this tank was closed. But mostly water was brought out from the Poz di Noord, a well dug in the sand.

The chapel can be viewed from basically any point in the north side, even from Paradera and Sero Plat. All the historical remains around the chapel provide us with an idea on how the old people of Alto Vista used to live. Don't miss the opportunity to visit a place of historical significance with a window to Aruba's past. □



Aruba to me

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

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names,

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Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Shelley Moquin from Middleboro, Massachusetts, USA.

She wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is the most relaxing vacation spot on earth!"

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □



Monuments in Oranjestad: Town House and Cas Veneranda



(Oranjestad)—If you've ever taken a stroll through main street Oranjestad, you may have stumbled upon a big green house with beautiful colonial design. This legendary house, now used as a town hall for civil marriages, was once owned by a wealthy doctor and formed part of the elite neighborhood in Oranjestad.

Jacobo Eloy Arends was an Aruban physician, and in lived in Oranjestad during the 1920s. In 1922, he married Maria Monica Lacle, the daughter of well-known business man at the time, Adriaan Lacle. The two lived a posh life in the city center, and their mansion—once the center for neighborhood parties—now serves as a public town hall for civil marriages and is a cultural monument on the island.

The house was designed by architect Chibi Wever,

and constructed under the leadership of famous master carpenter, Dada Picus, who was famous at the time for his construction of beautiful buildings.

The construction of the house started once Jacobo and Maria got engaged. It is said that during the time of construction, Maria was

not allowed to see the building nor be anywhere near the construction site. It wasn't until after her honeymoon that she saw the completed mansion for the first time, furnished entirely by her sisters-in-law.

The mansion also contained the doctor's office, as well as a pharmacy. After the death of Jacobo, the house was inherited by his son, an Aruban dentist, who converted Jacobo's office into his own dental practice. Over the years, the house was rented and used by third parties, but eventually fell into disrepair, as the maintenance cost became too high to cover.



The land was sold to Land Aruba in 1986, but it did not see a renovation until 1997. Nowadays, it serves to host weddings, and is attached to a modern building situated behind—the Aruban census office.

Jacobo and Maria's mansion was situated in front of another famous mansion, owned by Jacobo's brother Frederico Maximiliaan (Machi) Arends. Frederico was married to Veneranda (whom the mansion was named after). Their house was also con-

structed by Dada Picus, utilizing Veneranda's design vision that was inspired by a house she saw in Cartagena, Colombia.

Nowadays, this mansion lies in ruins. However, the Aruban government announced its official restoration last year, with ongoing steps to convert this monument into a governmental office and public space for visitors of Oranjestad. Source and pictures credited to: "De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over the geschiedenis van Aruba)" by Evert Bongers. □

Why You Should Not Miss Aruba's Free City Center Street Car Tour

ORANJESTAD - Aruba's City Center Street Car - or as we call it in Dutch; "Tram van Oranjestad" - is a single track tram line in Oranjestad, the capital city of Aruba. It was inaugurated on 22 December

2012, being the first and so far the only passenger rail service on Aruba and the rest of the Dutch Caribbean. There are two trolleys, a single-deck one with 42 seats and a double-decker with 64 seats. The line was

inspired by the popular battery-powered streetcar operation at the Grove in Los Angeles, USA. Aruba's streetcars are powered by hydrogen fuel cells, which are charged by the island's year-round trade winds.

Caya Betico Croes, mostly referred to as our "main street" has been developed into a pollution-free pedestrian mall. The double-decker offers you a 360 degree view of the downtown area with a picture perfect scenery of the island's clear blue skies. Who would not enjoy a ride on this beautiful and naturally air-conditioned vehicle? The tour consists of a total of 9 stops approximately 200 meters apart from each other; all stops are clearly marked. The tram will bring you close to different museums, historical plazas, monuments, the Protestant church, Aruba's high-end mall, retail shops, and a va-

riety of local and international cuisine restaurants. The "I love Aruba" trademark also belongs to that list. The third stop on the route is close to a 5-minute walk to the famous Renaissance Marina showcasing luxurious yachts and Aruba's blue waters.

The "Tram van Oranjestad" starts from a balloon loop near the Port of Call and serves the downtown area and ends at Plaza Nicky. The first ride starts at 10:00 am sharp with intervals of 25minutes. The last trolley departs from the cruise port at 5:00pm. Don't miss this tour of the beautiful Aruba's City Center- it is free for all! □



The Aruban Cunukero From past to present

(Oranjestad)—Aruba's culture consists of rich historical traditions that make up the Aruban identity and lifestyle. However, the life of the cunukero (farmer) is perhaps the most important aspect of our culture, in a sense representing to locals the true essence of the Aruban.

Historically, cunucus (farms) played a huge role in the early social and economic development of Aruba, and its relevance dates back to the early days of the colonization era. Upon being discovered by Spanish conquistadors in the late 15th century, Aruba was used primarily as a ranch, housing horses and cattle brought from Europe. During the Dutch colonization era where the West Indian Company (WIC) dominated the economic sphere on the island, using the land to set up cattle farms and ranches remained popular.

Anthropologist Sidney Mintz divided Caribbean farmers back in four categories:

1. The "squatters", who were mostly comprised of illegal and poor colonists, runaway slaves and deserters who took advantage of the Spanish's weak supervision on Caribbean islands like Cuba and the DR;
2. Then you have "Early Yeomen", who were legal farmers who came to the west under contract. Once their contract expired, they were given a plot of land for independent use;
3. Proto-Peasants were plantation slaves who were allowed to have a small piece of land to grow food for their own consumption. This was to curb the cost of living on the plantations;
4. Lastly you have the "Runaway Peasantries", usually comprised of runaway slaves who acquired farming tools and cattle through stealing or through secret exchanges with other slaves from different plantations.

However, the Aruban cunukeros back then are hard to place, and their history may explain why.

From 1636 (beginning of Dutch colonization era) to before the oil industry in 1924, Aruba's population consisted of mostly farmers. These farmers were mostly indigenous and were characterized as peasants. They weren't allowed to participate in trading, but instead

were granted a piece of land to live off of. However, in exchange for this grant, these indigenous farmers were obligated to work for the WIC, doing daily tasks such as taking care of or hunting cattle—large majority of which were destined for Curacao, clean water tanks and chop wood, among other things.

As much as these farmers were given to opportunity to live "free" with a plot of land, their exclusion from the trading and business world, as well as being deprived the chance to become real property and cattle owners, made them a unique group among Caribbean farmers at the time.

The WIC placed a lot of restrictions on these indigenous farmers—a method to safeguard their cattle deposit on the island. The indigenous farmers were mostly granted less than 7 acres of land. Those who owned bigger land were either once affiliated with the WIC or were colonists who settled on the island to try their luck at farming. In 1767, there were about 120 houses/cunucus on the island.

These Aruban farmers were also limited to the amount of cattle they could keep. Most kept goats as cattle, as only those who were affiliated with the WIC could keep (more) sheep. Of the 76 goat herders on the island, about 45 of them had less than 30 goats, and only 7 of them had more than 60 goats.

It wasn't until the WIC was defunct in late 18th century that these farmers were able to obtain more freedom as cunukeros. After 1824, the government gave these farmers official permission to keep livestock, and the obligations once



placed on them were officially discarded.

Because of the dry climate in Aruba, growing food for commercial purposes was not popular. The focus was mainly on cattle herding and taking care of livestock. However, livestock need food to survive, and when Aruba experienced its duper dry climate, many farmers would see a big loss in their livestock, and hence profit.

Although the WIC at one point did try to come up with an initiative to get more people to have land on the island, the climate never really allowed real profit from farming. Because of the climate, Aruban farmers in general could not keep large quantities of livestock. At a certain point toward the end of the 18th century, the climate got so bad that many farmers decided to leave the island for a while. For this reason, the farming econ-

omy on the island remained small. As the years went by and people noticed that these farms could not really produce any sustainable profit, farmers kept their small piece of land just to live off of. This is why the Aruban cunukeros only played a very tiny role into the plantation economy.

In modern Aruba, cunucus and cunukeros still exist on the island, fortunately with more freedom and more opportunity to tap into the agricultural market. These farmers usually sell their produce on a smaller scale, like during farmers' market events and other types of (holiday) events.

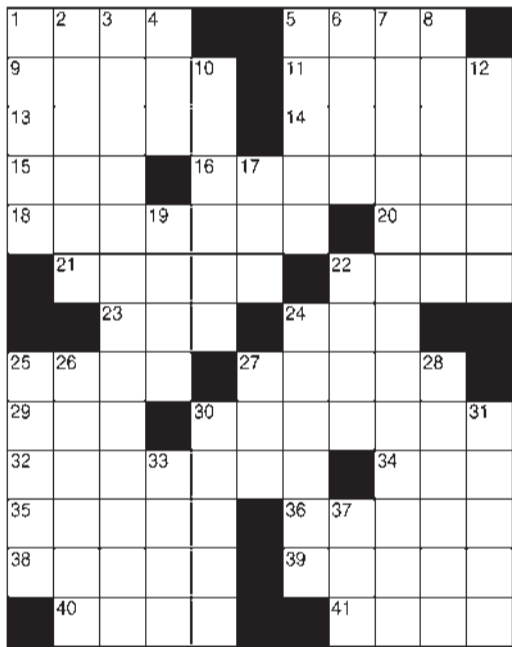
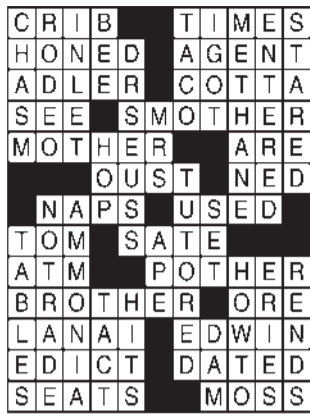
Source: "Arubaans Akkoord: Opstellen over Aruba van voor de komst van de olieindustrie (Aruban Accord: Essays on Aruba Before the Arrival of the Oil Industry)" by Alofs, Luc; Rutgers, Wim; Coomans, Henny E. red. □

CROSSWORD

By **THOMAS JOSEPH**

- ACROSS**
- 35 Sparkly crown
 - 1 Freeway exit
 - 5 May honorees
 - 9 Love affair
 - 11 Wed in haste
 - 13 Plateau's kin
 - 14 Meyers and Rogen
 - 15 Fire proof
 - 16 Walkers' straps
 - 18 Vacillates
 - 20 Geologic period
 - 21 Un-manned flier
 - 22 Deuce topper
 - 23 Unconscious
 - 24 Egg — yung
 - 25 Grass clump
 - 27 Gang territories
 - 29 Band blaster
 - 30 Dickens boy
 - 32 Grabbed with a toothpick
 - 34 Med. coverage group

- DOWN**
- 8 Bubble shape
 - 1 Moroccan city
 - 2 Tickled
 - 3 Button material
 - 4 Deposit
 - 5 Plateaus' kin
 - 6 Bullfight cries
 - 7 Herb with an oregano-like scent
 - 8 Bubble shape
 - 25 Critical asset
 - 10 Show mercy
 - 12 School paper
 - 17 Before, in poems
 - 19 Promote action
 - 22 Thatcher, for one
 - 24 Supplier of money
 - 25 Critical asset
 - 26 Strike caller
 - 27 Bind
 - 28 Smile coyly
 - 30 Market action
 - 31 Truck part
 - 33 Son of Hera
 - 37 Procured



5-12

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

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

5-12

CRYPTOQUOTE

Q B K G E F B E W W U D R Y F I L
W C L G V B V U D O L H K V U B T R C
D M V L B B G F B P D D F I D D J .

— IKYY HBVVLQWDG

Cryptoquote: IF YOU THINK YOU ARE TOO SMALL TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, YOU HAVEN'T SPENT THE NIGHT WITH A MOSQUITO.
— AFRICAN PROVERB

Cruise ship Schedule: May 1 - 11 2025

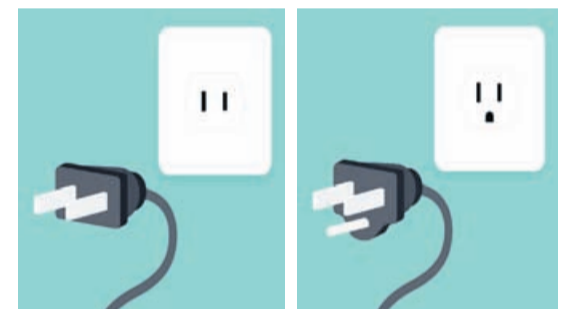
			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
THU	01	CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	09.00	23.00	C	1
SUN	04	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	G	-
TUE	06	CARNIVAL MAGIC	08.00	22.00	C	1
WED	07	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
SUN	11	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

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

Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Drinking water

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



Supermarket hours

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



Safety

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



Cancer before age 50 is increasing. A new study looks at which types

By CARLA K. JOHNSON
AP Medical Writer

Cancer before age 50 is rare, but increasing, in the United States and researchers want to know why.

A new government study provides the most complete picture yet of early-onset cancers, finding that the largest increases are in breast, colorectal, kidney and uterine cancers. Scientists from the National Cancer Institute looked at data that included more than 2 million cancers diagnosed in people 15 to 49 years old between 2010 and 2019.

Of 33 cancer types, 14 cancers had increasing rates in at least one younger age group. About 63% of the early-onset cancers were among women.

"These kinds of patterns generally reflect something profound going on," said Tim Rebbeck of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, who studies cancer risk and was not involved in the research. "We need to fund research that will help us understand."

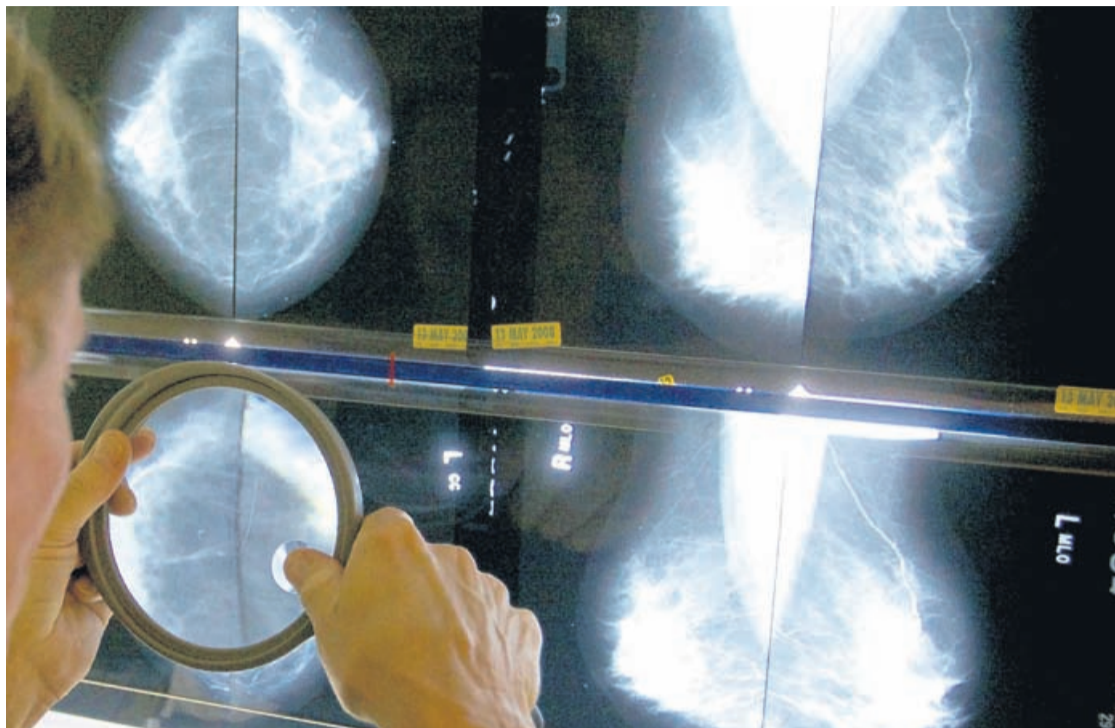
The findings were published Thursday in *Cancer Discovery*, a journal of the American Association for Cancer Research.

How many extra cancers are we talking about? The researchers compared cancer rates in 2019 to what would be expected based on 2010 rates.

Breast cancer made up the largest share of the excess cancers, with about 4,800 additional cases. There were 2,000 more colorectal cancers compared with what would be expected based on the 2010 rates. There were 1,800 more kidney cancers and 1,200 additional uterine cancers.

Reassuringly, death rates were not rising for most cancers in the young adult age groups, although increasing death rates were seen for colorectal, uterine and testicular cancers.

Why is this happening? Explanations will take more research. The big databases used for the study don't



A radiologist uses a magnifying glass to check mammograms for breast cancer in Los Angeles, May 6, 2010.

include information on risk factors or access to care. Theories abound and a big meeting is planned later this year to bring together experts in the area.

"Several of these cancer types are known to be associated with excess body weight and so one of the leading hypotheses is increasing rates of obesity," said lead author Meredith Shiels of the National Cancer Institute.

Advances in cancer detection and changes in screening guidelines could be behind some early diagnoses.

For breast cancer, the

trend toward women having a first child at older ages is a possible explanation. Pregnancy and breastfeeding are known to reduce risk. It's not a uniform trend for all cancers

This isn't happening across the board. Cancer rates in people under 50 are going down for more than a dozen types of cancer, with the largest declines in lung and prostate cancers.

Cigarette smoking has been declining for decades, which likely accounts for the drop in lung cancer among younger adults.

The drop in prostate can-

cer is likely tied to updated guidelines discouraging routine PSA testing in younger men because of concerns about overtreatment.

Associated Press

ARUBA TODAY

Editor
Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

Editors

Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks
Angette Figuero

Sales

Mark Gomes
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800
E: news@arubatoday.com
W: www.arubatoday.com
@arubatoday



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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Varrooom! It's back on the bikes for Ewan and Charley for Europe trek in 'Long Way Home.'

By **MARK KENNEDY**

AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The last time Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman went on a motorcycle adventure, they rode cutting-edge, electric Harley-Davidsons. For their latest trip, they took a trip back in time.

The British best friends and actors chose to use vintage bikes this time as they ride through 17 European countries for Apple TV+'s "Long Way Home," the fourth installment of their popular road trip docuseries. It starts airing Friday.

McGregor picked a 1974 Moto Guzzi Eldorado, which was used as a patrol bike by the Los Angeles Police Department and California Highway Patrol. Boorman picked a rusted-out BMW R75/5 and scrambled to make it road worthy.

"I guess there's just sort of nowhere else to go other than backwards," says McGregor. "We felt that we hadn't done a trip on old bikes. I've always loved old bikes."

A trip to see their neighbors The duo start at McGregor's home in Scotland they leave serenaded by a



This image released by Apple TV+ shows Ewan McGregor, left, and Charley Boorman in a scene from "Long Way Home."

bagpipe band and, naturally, rain into Holland, up through the Nordics, Arctic Circle, down to the Baltics before going through the Alps and France.

Unlike the Harleys or BMWs they've ridden before, using older bikes gave McGregor and Boorman a nostalgic feeling and something practical: The ability to get them back on the road should disaster strike.

"They're fixable," says McGregor. "At the side of the road, you can pretty much with a bit of sandpaper and

a screwdriver and a hammer you could probably get them running again. Whereas with something like the electric bike, if something happens if something goes wrong, as we learned in Central America it's catastrophic."

Series highlights include the duo donning Viking costumes and axe throwing in Norway, camping at a windmill near Amsterdam and kayaking alongside a glacier in the Arctic Circle. "It's so Mad Max everywhere" says McGregor be-

side the icy water.

The duo spend the longest day of the year on a beach with a bonfire on an island off the Norwegian coast, try logrolling in Finland, get tattoos in Poland, paraglide in the Alps and spend the night in the northern-most cabin in the world.

"One of the great things about it is seeing the planet that we live on off the back of a motorcycle when you're sort of part of the environment. If it's cold, you're cold. If it's wet, you're wet. It's a very real experience,"

says McGregor.

They spent about two months on the road before finishing at Boorman's home in England, taking time to enjoy the scenery more this time and reducing their speed.

"We were doing a loop of Europe. We weren't covering days and days getting across far eastern Russia, where the landscape barely changes. On those BMWs, we could ride at 80 miles an hour, 90 miles an hour," says McGregor. "We didn't need to do that on this loop. So riding at 60, 65 is a nice speed to go at," he adds.

Fourth time out there The series marks the 20-year anniversary of the first series, 2004's "Long Way Round," which saw the pair drive from London through Europe, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Russia, across the Pacific to Alaska, then down through Canada and America.

They also paired up in 2007 for "Long Way Down," a 15,000-mile journey from Scotland to the southern-most tip of South Africa, and in 2019 for "Long Way Up" through 13 South and Central American countries. □

Associated Press

Trump administration will provide programming from conservative network OAN for Voice of America

By **DAVID BAUDER**

AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Trump administration, which has fought to dismantle or hollow out government-run outlets that provide news to other countries, has agreed to use the conservative media network OAN's feed on Voice of America and other services.

Voice of America hasn't operated since mid-March because of funding cuts ordered by President Donald Trump, who has criticized it and similar services like Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty as promoting a news agenda with a liberal bias.

That has triggered court fights that are still unre-

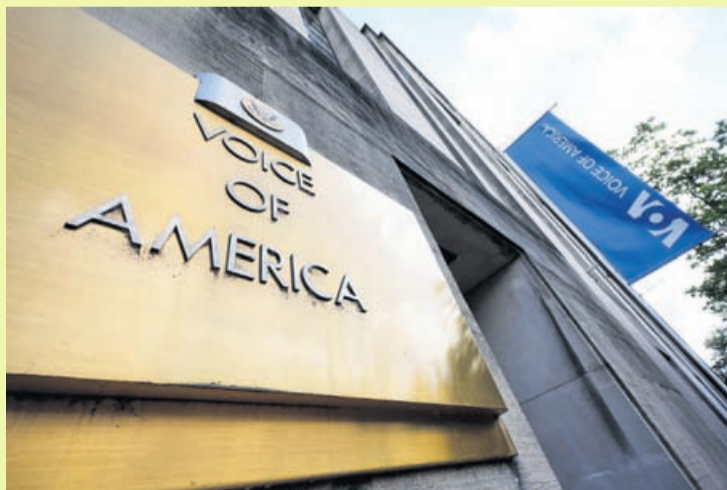
solved. But Kari Lake, Trump's representative at the U.S. Agency for Global Media, the funding arm for these services, said she had reached out to OAN,

which has offered to provide its news and video free of charge.

In an announcement, Lake called it "an enormous benefit to the Ameri-

can taxpayer." She said she initially reached out to OAN at the suggestion of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting. It was unclear on Wednesday how or when the OAN material will be used. The One America News Network is pro-Trump in its outlook. Recently, the network promoted an "investigation" of Trump's early days in office, titled "100 Golden Days." Its White House correspondent, Daniel Baldwin, said that "President Donald Trump has ushered in a new era of American prosperity in just 100 days the closed border, inflation eradicated, women protected, investments galore." Baldwin has also endeared himself to the

president through questions asked at press availabilities. In one Oval Office meeting, Baldwin said that previous American leaders lacked the conviction to begin talks with Russia. "What gave you the moral courage and conviction to step forward and lead that?" he asked Trump. "Oh, I love this guy!" Trump said. How OAN is used on Voice of America is in VOA's hands, Charles Herring, OAN's president, told The Associated Press. "We simply wished to help when asked," he said. Shortly before stopping operations in mid-March, Voice of America canceled contracts with news services like the AP, Reuters and AFP. □



This is the Voice of America building in Washington, May 5, 2025.

Associated Press

Mikko Rantanen and other trade deadline additions are having big impacts on the NHL playoffs

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**
AP Hockey Writer

Mikko Rantanen is showing exactly why Dallas was willing to pay such a hefty price to put him the roster. One of the players the Stars traded for Rantanen is also making a positive impact for his new team.

Nearly every team in the second round of the NHL playoffs is benefitting from moves they made at the trade deadline. That includes Toronto with Brandon Carlo and Scott Laughton; Florida with Brad Marchand and Seth Jones; Washington with Anthony Beauvillier; Edmonton with Jake Walman and Trent Frederic; Winnipeg with Brandon Tanev and Luke Schenn; and the Carolina Hurricanes also with Taylor Hall and Mark Jankowski.

One of those teams or maybe Vegas, which made a move to get Reilly Smith back will hoist the Stanley Cup in June and have a trade or two to credit for the journey.

The Stars and Hurricanes are co-Cup favorites according to BetMGM Sportsbook after making the biggest deadline deal: Rantanen to Dallas for Logan Stankoven, two first-round picks and a third-rounder to Car-



Florida Panthers forward Brad Marchand (63) and Toronto Maple Leafs forward Scott Laughton (24) vie for control of the puck during the third period of Game 1 in an NHL hockey second-round playoff series in Toronto, Monday, May 5, 2025.

olina. Rantanen has had a hat trick in each of the past two games last weekend in Game 7 to knock out the Colorado Avalanche who traded him in late January and then in Wednesday's series opener at Winnipeg. "It's a treat," teammate Sam Steel said. "He's one of the best players in the world and he's just on fire right now, so we're just trying to get him the puck." Stars coach Peter DeBoer

said Rantanen had an easy transition. That may be an understatement, as the 28-year-old Finn leads the postseason with eight goals and 15 points.

"We all know how elite he is," Jets winger Nino Niederreiter said. "He's really done it these last few games and throughout his whole career always a fantastic player."

That was the Hurricanes' thinking when they sent

Martin Necas, Jack Drury and two picks to Colorado for Rantanen in an unexpected, blockbuster trade more than a month before the deadline.

Avalanche president of hockey operations Joe Sakic who drafted Rantanen with the 10th pick in 2015 heard after that move that the possibility of another trade back West was possible.

With the clock ticking to-

ward the deadline on March 7, first-year Hurricanes general manager Eric Tulsy made the most of the situation and dealt Rantanen to the Stars, who then signed him to an eight-year, \$96 million extension. Rantanen is a playoff producer (101 points in 81 games before this spring, including helping Colorado win the Cup in 2022).

Carolina has gotten three goals this playoffs from Stankoven and three points from Hall, while Jankowski was a big reason for a perfect penalty kill in the first round.

"They've all helped in a lot of different ways on both sides of the puck," captain Jordan Staal said. "Three great players that have really kind of solidified our lineup and played really well for us."

So has Marchand for defending champion Florida, so far scoring at a point-a-game pace this playoffs. He and Jones felt welcomed right away.

"This team is built to want to win, and they have that drive," Marchand said. "And when you walk in the room, everyone was really excited for each and every one of us to come in and be part of the group." □

Associated Press

Rafael Devers homers and drives in two runs as the Red Sox beat the Rangers 5-0

By **BRENDAN MCGAIR**
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Rafael Devers homered and drove in two runs, and five Boston pitchers combined for a five-hit shutout as the Red Sox defeated the Texas Rangers 5-0 on Thursday afternoon.

Devers hit a solo shot for his sixth home run of the season, sending it into the Green Monster seats in the seventh inning. His first RBI of the game came on a single in the fifth inning. Carlos Narvaez also produced a run-scoring single for the Red Sox, which took two of three against the Rangers.

Red Sox starter Bryan Bello teamed up with four relievers to produce Boston's third shutout of the season. Justin Slaten (1-3) earned the win with 1.1 scoreless innings. Garrett Whitlock tossed one inning with Liam Hendricks finishing off Texas with two innings.

Texas starter Jack Leiter (2-2) took the loss, giving up four runs and walking four in 5.1 innings. No. 9 hitter Tucker Barnhart collected two of the Rangers' five hits. Texas has now dropped nine of its last 12 games.

Boston took advantage of Leiter issuing two walks and throwing a wild pitch in the second inning en route to building a 2-0 lead. Trevor Story led off with a single and scored on a wild pitch while Jarren Duran's grounder to second plated the second run of the frame.

Bello ran into control problems that left him one out short of qualifying for his third win. Boston manager Alex Cora turned to the bullpen after Bello issued his fifth walk to set up a two-on, two-out scenario for the Rangers in the fifth inning. □



Boston Red Sox's Rafael Devers (11) beats the throw to Texas Rangers second baseman Marcus Semien as he steals second base in the fifth inning of a baseball game, Thursday, May 8, 2025, in Boston.

Associated Press



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Last-place Pirates fire manager Derek Shelton, promote bench coach Don Kelly

By **WILL GRAVES**
AP Sports Writer

PITTSBURGH (AP) — The Pittsburgh Pirates fired manager Derek Shelton following a rocky opening month to the season that saw Pittsburgh quickly slip into last place in the NL Central.

General manager Ben Cherington made the announcement Thursday. Bench coach Don Kelly will take over for Shelton, who is the first manager fired across Major League Baseball this season.

The decision comes with Pittsburgh riding a seven-game losing streak that saw its record fall to 12-26. Shelton, hired by Cherington in November 2019 as part of a franchise-wide reset by owner Bob Nutting, went 306-440 in five-plus seasons with the Pirates.

"Derek worked incredibly hard and sacrificed a lot over five-plus years," Cherington said in a statement.

"His family became a big part of the Pirates family, and we will miss that. He's an incredibly smart, curi-

ous, and driven baseball leader. I believe he was the right person for the job when he was hired. I also

believe that a change is now necessary.

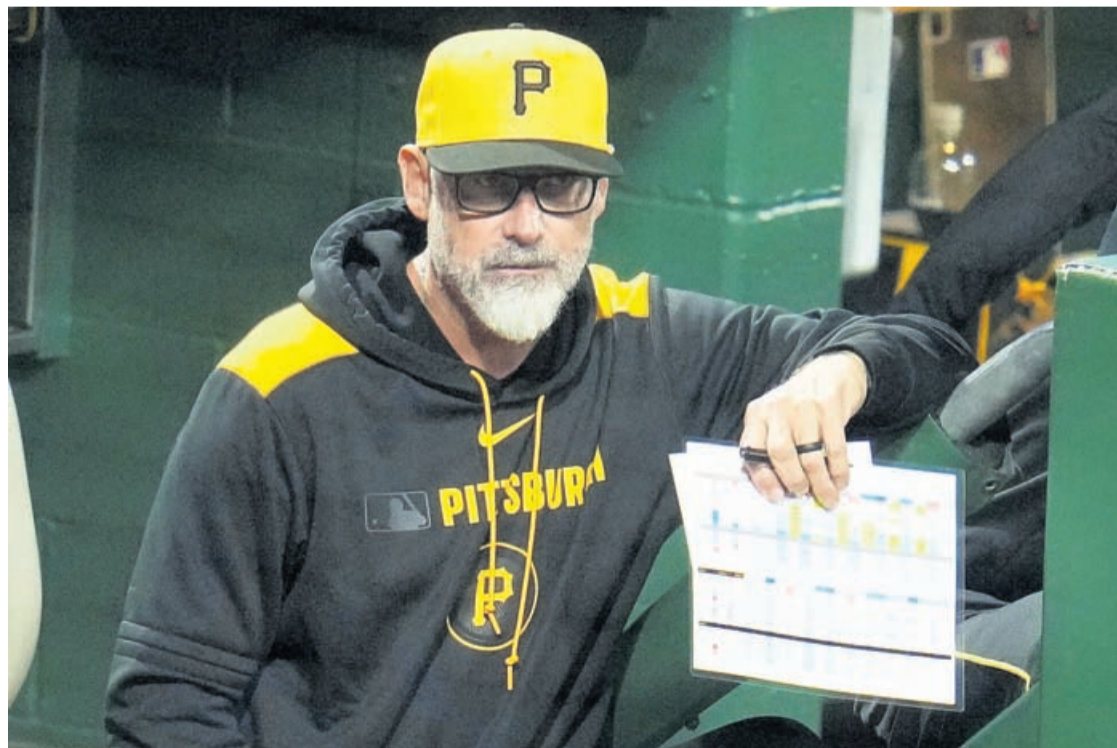
I wish Derek and his family all the best in their next

chapter."

The Pirates, ranked 26th out of 30 MLB teams in opening day payroll, began the season hoping to contend behind reigning National League Rookie of the Year Paul Skenes. While the 22-year-old Skenes has been solid and the starting rotation in general has been steady, Pittsburgh's offense has languished near the bottom of the NL all season.

The Pirates are in the middle of a difficult stretch that began by getting swept by both San Diego and St. Louis. Pittsburgh's next nine games are against NL powers Atlanta, the New York Mets and Philadelphia.

Nutting called the first quarter of the season "frustrating and painful for all of us." Kelly, a Pittsburgh native, spent nine years in the major leagues as a utility player. He has been the Pirates bench coach since 2020. □



Pittsburgh Pirates manager Derek Shelton stands in the dugout during a baseball game against the San Diego Padres in Pittsburgh, Friday, May 2, 2025.

Associated Press