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Troops will miss paychecks next week without action on the government shutdown

By **BEN FINLEY**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Heather Campbell lost her job working for a food bank over the summer because of federal funding cuts. Her husband serves as an officer in the Air Force, but now he's facing the prospect of missing his next paycheck because of the government shutdown.

If lawmakers in Washington don't step in, Campbell's husband won't get paid on Wednesday. Because the couple lacks the savings to cover all their expenses, they expect to survive on credit cards to pay the mortgage and feed their three children, racking up debt as the political stalemate drags on.

"You're asking us to put our lives on the line or the people we love to put their lives on the line," said Campbell, 39, who lives outside Montgomery, Alabama, near Maxwell Air Force Base. "And you're not even going to give us our paycheck. What? There is a lot of broken trust there."

The nation's third shutdown in 12 years is once again raising anxiety levels among service members and their families because those in uniform are working without pay. While they would receive back pay once the impasse ends, many military families live paycheck to paycheck. During previous shutdowns, Congress passed legislation to ensure that troops kept earning their salaries, but time is running out before they miss their first paycheck in less than a week.

"There are so many things that Congress can't agree on right now," said Kate Horrell, the wife of a Navy veteran whose Washington, D.C., company provides financial advice to military families. "I don't want to assume that they're going to be able to agree on this." Paying the troops has support, but it's unclear when a deal might pass.

When asked if he would support a bill to pay the troops, President Donald Trump said, "that probably



An Iwo Jima Memorial tribute statue is pictured near the entrance of Marine Base Quantico, Friday Sep. 26, 2025, in Quantico, Va.

Associated Press

will happen."

"We'll take care of it," Trump said Wednesday. "Our military is always going to be taken care of."

Rep. Jen Kiggans, a Virginia Republican and former Navy helicopter pilot, has introduced a measure to maintain military and Coast Guard salaries, and it has bipartisan co-sponsors.

The House is closed for business until next week, leaving two days to take action before Wednesday's payday. Missed paychecks for military service members are among the most serious pressure points in the shutdown, causing political pain for the lawmakers. Several proposals have been floated for voting on stand-alone legislation that would ensure no interruption in pay, but those are not expected to be brought up for consideration, for now.

Amanda Scott, whose husband is an Air Force officer in Colorado, said the uncertainty goes beyond the stress of just getting by — it chips away at the military's ability to retain the best people and their readiness to fight.

"How ready and lethal are you if you don't know if you can feed your family?" said Scott, 33, of Colorado Springs, who works for a

defense contractor and volunteers as an advocate for military families. "A lot of these service members are highly skilled and can go out and make much more money in the civilian sector."

Aid is available for service members, but it's not enough for some families. Support is available for military families through non-profits and charities. For example, some financial institutions are offering zero-interest loans, while each military branch has a relief organization.

But Campbell said she and her husband in Alabama can't apply for a payday loan because they're refinancing their house. They lack a substantial emergency fund because they were paying off student loans and moved several times in the last few years to military posts. It was often challenging for her to find steady work and child care.

"The opportunity to build up savings is really difficult on just one income," Campbell said. "I don't know many military families that have a month's worth of income set aside just in case, let alone multiple months' worth."

Jen Cluff, whose husband recently left the Air Force,

said her family was on a food aid program during the 2019 shutdown. But even the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, also known as WIC, which helps more than 6 million low-income mothers and young children, would run out of federal money within two weeks unless the shutdown ends, experts say.

"We made so little and had three young children," said Cluff, 42, of San Antonio. "We were definitely a family that had very little buffer." If Congress had not passed legislation to pay troops during the last shutdown, missing more than two paychecks "would have been catastrophic for us," she said.

"Resentment can grow quickly," Cluff said of the shutdown, adding that "the general public, and many in government, truly don't understand the daily sacrifices our military members and their families make for our country."

Wider effects feared in military-heavy areas. The economic impact will ripple through regions with large military footprints, like coastal Virginia, home to the nation's largest Navy base and several other installations. The area's

88,000 active duty service members and their families likely have pulled back significantly on spending, said Rick Dwyer, executive director of the Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance, an advocacy group.

"Think about service members who are deployed right now around the world," said Dwyer, who served in the Air Force during previous shutdowns. "They're having to wonder if their families are going to be able to pay the rent, the child care bills, the car payments."

A shutdown contingency plan posted on the Pentagon's website cites the use of funds to continue military operations from Trump's big tax and spending cut bill. The Congressional Budget Office has said money appropriated to the Defense Department under the new law could be used to pay active duty personnel.

It was not clear if the funding would be used for that. The Pentagon said Thursday that it could not provide information "at this time."

Its contingency plan says it will "continue to defend the nation and conduct ongoing military operations" as well as activities "necessary for the safety of human life and the protection of property."

Listed among the highest priorities are securing the U.S.-Mexico border, operations in the Middle East and the future Golden Dome missile defense program. The plan also noted that "child care activities required for readiness" would continue.

Raleigh Smith Duttweiler, chief impact officer for the National Military Family Association, said most child development centers on military bases are still operating. But she said most service members pay for child care off base.

"Last I checked, my kids' babysitter doesn't take an IOU from the federal government," said Duttweiler, whose husband is a Marine. □

New York Attorney General Letitia James charged in fraud case after pressure campaign by Trump

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER,
MICHAEL R. SISAK and ERIC
TUCKER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — New York Attorney General Letitia James was charged Thursday as part of a mortgage fraud investigation aggressively pushed by the Trump administration, becoming the latest foe of the president to be prosecuted by his Justice Department. James, who infuriated President Donald Trump by suing him and his company for fraud in a case that played out as he was running for office, was indicted on charges of bank fraud and false statements to a financial institution following a presentation to a grand jury in Virginia by a prosecutor who was hastily appointed last month amid Trump administration pressure to deliver criminal cases against his adversaries.

James' office had no immediate comment Thursday. Her lawyers have vigorously denied any allegations and characterized the investigation as an act of political revenge.

The indictment, two weeks after a separate criminal case charging former FBI Director James Comey with lying to Congress, is the latest indication of the Trump administration's norm-busting determination to use the law enforcement powers of the Justice Department to pursue



New York Attorney General Letitia James speaks during a press briefing, Feb. 16, 2024, in New York.

sue the president's political foes and public figures who once investigated him.

The James case remained under seal Thursday, making it impossible to assess what evidence prosecutors have. But as was the case with the Comey charges, the prosecution followed a strikingly unconventional route. The Trump administration, two weeks ago, pushed out Erik Siebert, the veteran prosecutor who had overseen the investigation for months but had resisted pressure to file a case, and replaced him with Lindsey Halligan, a White House aide who was once Trump's personal lawyer but

who has never worked as a federal prosecutor.

Halligan presented the case to the grand jury herself, as she did in the case against Comey, a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press.

"No one is above the law. The charges as alleged in this case represent intentional, criminal acts and tremendous breaches of the public's trust," Halligan said in a statement. "The facts and the law in this case are clear, and we will continue following them to ensure that justice is served."

Trump has been advocating charging James for months,

posting on social media without citing any evidence that she's "guilty as hell" and telling reporters at the White House, "It looks to me like she's really guilty of something, but I really don't know." Her lawyer has accused the Justice Department of concocting a bogus criminal case to settle Trump's personal vendetta against James, who last year won a staggering judgment against Trump and his companies in a lawsuit alleging he lied to banks and others about the value of his assets. The Justice Department has also been investigating mortgage-related allegations against Federal Reserve

board member Lisa Cook, using the probe to demand her ouster, and Sen. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., whose lawyer called the allegations against him "transparently false, stale, and long debunked."

But James is a particularly personal target. As attorney general, she sued the Republican president and his administration dozens of times and oversaw a lawsuit accusing him of defrauding banks by dramatically overstating the value of his real estate holdings on financial statements.

An appeals court overturned the fine, which had ballooned to more than \$500 million with interest, but upheld a lower court's finding that Trump had committed fraud.

The Justice Department probe began after Federal Housing Finance Agency Director William Pulte sent a letter in April to Attorney General Pam Bondi, asking her to investigate James over her role in the 2023 purchase of a house in Norfolk, Virginia. In seeking the investigation, Pulte cited a two-page power-of-attorney form that James signed on Aug. 17, 2023, which states, "I intend to occupy this property as my principal residence." He speculated that claiming the house as her primary residence might have allowed James to avoid higher interest rates that often apply to second homes. □

New California law aims to stabilize insurance for people who can't get private coverage

By TRÂN NGUYEN

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a bipartisan bill Thursday that aims to prevent the state's home insurer of last resort from running out of money following a natural disaster. The FAIR Plan is an insurance pool that provides policies to people who can't get private insurance because their properties are deemed too risky to insure. The number of homeowners forced onto the FAIR Plan has skyrocketed.

With high premiums and basic coverage, the plan is designed as a temporary option until homeowners can find permanent coverage.

But more Californians are relying on it than ever as increasingly devastating and destructive fires spark across the state, including in densely populated areas. There were nearly 600,000 home policies on the FAIR Plan as of June. Leaders of the plan last year warned state lawmakers that it could go insolvent after a major wildfire

or disaster.

That reality came true earlier this year after wildfires swept through Los Angeles and destroyed more than 17,000 structures. The plan faced a loss of roughly \$4 billion and needed a \$1 billion bailout from private insurers to pay out claims. Half of that cost is expected to be passed onto all policyholders.

The law Newsom signed allows the FAIR Plan to request state-backed loans and bonds and spread out claims payments over multiple years after a disaster.



California Gov. Gavin Newsom speaks before signing legislation related to student literacy in Los Angeles on Thursday, Oct. 9, 2025.

Associated Press

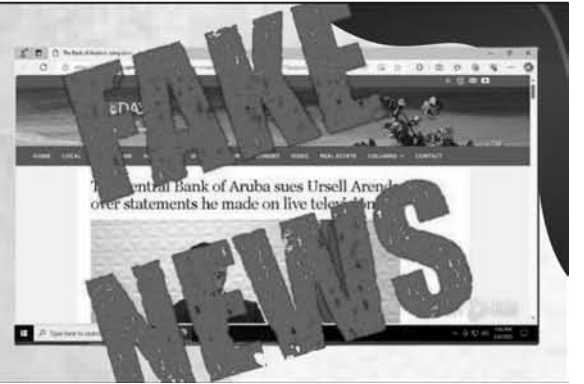
ter. Insurance companies were previously required to pay the full bailout within 30 days. Supporters of the

new law said it will prevent the need for future bailouts that raise rates for everyone. □

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Judge upholds North Dakota's ban on gender-affirming care for kids



North Dakota State District Judge Jackson Lofgren listens during a court hearing on March 31, 2025, at the Burleigh County Courthouse in Bismarck, N.D.

Associated Press

By JACK DURA
Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A North Dakota judge has upheld the state's ban on gender-affirming care for children, in a blow to families who have had to travel out of state to obtain the medical treatments they said are crucial for their kids' well-being.

District Judge Jackson Lofgren said in his decision Wednesday that the law discriminates based on age and medical purpose, not sex, and that there's little evidence the Legislature passed the law for "an invidious discriminatory purpose." He also noted various concerns and ongoing debates over the medical treatments involved.

"The evidence presented at trial establishes there is a legitimate concern regarding the capacity of minors to understand and appreciate the long-term consequences of the practices prohibited by the Health Care Law," the judge wrote, adding that he doesn't believe the law violates the state constitution.

The ruling means parents who decided to seek gender-affirming medical care

for their children after the state's ban took effect in April 2023 will need to do so out of state.

"This ruling is devastating for transgender youth and their families in North Dakota. The evidence in this case was overwhelming: this law inflicts real harm, strips families of their constitutional rights, and denies young people the medical care they need to thrive," Jess Braverman, the legal director for the gender equity nonprofit Gender Justice, which represented the plaintiff, said in a statement.

Republican state Rep. Bill Tveit, who introduced the legislation, said he is pleased with the ruling.

"It's a law that needs to be there. We need to protect our youth, and that's what the whole goal of this thing was from the beginning," Tveit said.

The lawsuit was brought by several affected families and a pediatric endocrinologist, but the judge dismissed some of their claims and left only the physician as a plaintiff.

About half of U.S. states, nearly all of which have fully Republican-led governments, have banned

gender-affirming care for minors. North Dakota's law makes it a misdemeanor for a health care provider to prescribe or give hormone treatments or puberty blockers to a transgender child. It also makes it a felony to perform gender-affirming surgery on a minor.

The law's backers said it would protect children from what they said are irreversible effects of treatments and surgeries, though such surgeries were never available in the state. Opponents said the law harms transgender children by denying them crucial medical care. Although the law exempts children who were already receiving treatments before North Dakota's ban took effect, attorneys for the families who sued said providers held off because they perceived the law as vague and didn't want to risk it. That led the families to miss work and school so they could travel to Minnesota for treatment.

The judge later said those kids can receive any medical care they were receiving before the law took effect, though that decision wasn't enough of a final ruling to satisfy attorneys for health care organizations. His Wednesday ruling granted a request that those kids' treatments continue, citing the law and his previous findings.

At least two pediatric endocrinologists were providing gender-affirming care in North Dakota before the ban.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in June that states can ban gender-affirming medical care for transgender minors.

At least 27 states have adopted laws restricting or banning the care. □

U.S. diplomat fired over relationship with woman accused of ties to Chinese Communist Party



The State Department seal is seen on the briefing room lectern at the State Department in Washington, Jan. 31, 2022.

Associated Press

By MATTHEW LEE
AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The State Department said Wednesday that it has fired a U.S. diplomat over a romantic relationship he admitted having with a Chinese woman alleged to have ties to the Chinese Communist Party.

The dismissal is believed to be the first of its kind for violating a ban on such relationships that was introduced late last year under the Biden administration.

The Associated Press reported earlier this year that in the waning days of Democrat Joe Biden's presidency, the State Department imposed a ban on all American government personnel in China, as well as family members and contractors with security clearances, from any romantic or sexual relationships with Chinese citizens.

Tommy Pigott, a State Department spokesman, said in a statement that the diplomat in question was dismissed from the foreign service after President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio reviewed the case and determined that he had "admitted concealing a romantic relationship with a Chinese national with known ties to the Chinese Communist Party."

"Under Secretary Rubio's leadership, we will maintain a zero-tolerance policy for any employee who is caught undermining our country's national security," Pigott said. The statement did not identify the diplomat, but he and his girlfriend had been featured in a surreptitiously filmed video posted online by conservative firebrand James O'Keefe.

In Beijing, a Chinese government spokesperson declined to comment on what he said is a domestic U.S. issue. "But I would like to stress that we oppose drawing lines based on ideological difference and maliciously smearing China," the Foreign Ministry's Guo Jiakun said at a daily briefing. □

Putin says Russian air defenses were to blame for Azerbaijani jet's crash last year, killing 38

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV
Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — President Vladimir Putin said Thursday that Russia's air defense were to blame for downing an Azerbaijani jetliner in December that killed 38 people, his first public admission of responsibility for the crash in an effort to ease tensions between the neighbors.

Putin said the missiles fired by Russian air defenses to target a Ukrainian drone exploded near the Azerbaijan Airlines plane flying from Baku as it was preparing to land in Grozny, the regional capital of the Russian republic of Chechnya, on Dec. 25, 2024. Ukrainian drones have regularly struck deep inside Russia.

Speaking at a meeting with Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev in Tajikistan's capital of Dushanbe, where both were attending a summit of the former Soviet nations, Putin pledged to punish those responsible and provide compensation.

Azerbaijani authorities had said the Embraer 190 jet was hit accidentally by Russian fire, then tried to land in western Kazakhstan, where



Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev talk during their meeting on the sidelines of the Russia-Central Asia summit in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on Thursday, Oct. 9, 2025.

it crashed and killed 38 of 67 people aboard.

Days after the crash, Putin apologized to Aliyev for what he called a "tragic incident" but stopped short of acknowledging responsibility. Aliyev, meanwhile, criticized Moscow for trying to "hush up" the incident.

The controversy over the

crash has roiled the previously warm ties between Moscow and Baku. Their relations were further destabilized by deaths of ethnic Azerbaijanis rounded up by police in a Russian city in June and a series of arrests of Russians in Azerbaijan.

Speaking to Aliyev on Thursday, Putin said that Russian

air defenses that targeted a Ukrainian drone fired on the Azerbaijani airliner because of a "technical malfunction," adding that two missiles exploded just 10 meters (33 feet) away from the passenger jet.

"The Russian side will obviously do everything to provide compensation and

give legal assessment to all responsible officials' action," he said.

"Of course, these words related to this tragedy, aimed at supporting morally supporting the families do not solve the main problem: We can't bring back to life those who died as a result of the tragedy," Putin added.

Aliyev, for his part, thanked Putin for investigating the cause of the plane's downing.

"I would like to thank you for keeping the situation under your personal control," he said.

Relations with Baku have become increasingly important for the Kremlin since it sent troops into Ukraine in 2022, especially as Azerbaijan's close ally Turkey has become a key economic partner for Russia as it faced sweeping Western sanctions.

Azerbaijan is a key transport corridor for Russia's trade with Iran and other partners in the Middle East. The energy-rich Caspian Sea nation also has bought oil and natural gas from Russia to meet internal demand while exporting its own hydrocarbons to the West. □

Associated Press

Colombian President Petro suggests Qatar could mediate U.S. military actions off Venezuela

By ASTRID SUÁREZ
Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Colombian President Gustavo Petro proposed Thursday that Qatar could serve as "mediator" so that the United States would end its military deployment in international waters off the coast of Venezuela, where it has attacked small boats it says were carrying drugs.

Petro's comments while on a trip to Brussels came a day after he said, without offering evidence, that Colombians may have been aboard the last boat the U.S. military destroyed in the Caribbean. The Trump administration has reported sinking four small

boats allegedly carrying drugs.

Petro noted that Qatar is a proven mediator in tense situations, so would probably be successful in getting the United States to "cease the aggression with missiles" in the Caribbean Sea.

Qatar's government did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the proposal.

The U.S. disputed Petro's comments about Colombians being aboard the boat and wants him to publicly retract them, according to a White House official who was not authorized to speak publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Regarding the suggestion of involving Qatar, the official said that despite policy differences, the U.S. considers Colombia an essential strategic partner and the U.S. remains committed to close cooperation with Colombia on shared priorities.

Last Friday, U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth announced the strike on a small boat he accused of carrying drugs in the waters off Venezuela. He said the strike killed four men but offered no details on who they were or what group they belonged to.

U.S. President Donald Trump has told U.S. lawmakers he was treating drug traffickers as unlaw-

ful combatants and military force was required to combat them.

Venezuelan President

Nicolás Maduro has said repeatedly that his country is not a major drug trafficking player. □



President of Colombia Gustavo Petro Urrego addresses the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2025, at U.N. headquarters.

Associated Press

United Nations to cut 25% of its global peacekeeping force in response to U.S. funding strains

By FARNOUSH AMIRI
Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United Nations will begin slashing its peacekeeping force and operations, forcing thousands of soldiers in the next several months to evacuate far-flung global hotspots as a result of the latest U.S. funding cuts to the world body, a senior U.N. official said.

The official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss a private meeting, briefed reporters Wednesday on the 25% reduction in peacekeepers worldwide as the United States, the largest U.N. donor, makes changes to align with President Donald Trump's "America First" vision.

Roughly 13,000 to 14,000 military and police personnel out of more than 50,000 peacekeepers deployed across nine global missions will be sent back to their home countries. The U.N. support office in Somalia will also be affected. The U.N. plans to reduce the peacekeeping force's budget by approximately 15% for this year.



U.S. UN Ambassador Mike Waltz arrives to a High-Level Security Council on Palestinians and Israel during the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2025.

Associated Press

The countries where the U.N. has peacekeeping missions include Congo, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Lebanon, Cyprus and Kosovo.

Each of the U.N.'s 193 member countries is legally obliged to pay its share toward peacekeeping. U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres has argued that

with a budget "representing a tiny fraction of global military spending around one half of one percent U.N. peacekeeping remains one of the most effective and cost-effective tools to build international peace and security."

The decision to institute a major overhaul of the peacekeeping force

known globally for their distinctive blue berets or helmets followed a meeting Tuesday between Guterres and representatives from major donor countries, including Mike Waltz, the new U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

Waltz and other Trump administration officials have argued that the U.N.'s

budget and agencies are bloated and redundant, pledging not to make any further contributions until the State Department has assessed the effectiveness of every single U.N. agency or program. Upon entering his second term in January, Trump ordered a review of the U.N. and other multilateral institutions, which has already resulted in cutting U.S. ties from the U.N. cultural agency UNESCO, the World Health Organization and the top U.N. human rights body, while reassessing its funding for others.

At the U.N., more than 60 offices, agencies and operations are facing 20% job cuts, part of Guterres' reform effort and reaction to already announced Trump funding cuts.

In a television interview last week, Waltz said the U.S. is focused on getting "the U.N. back to basics of promoting peace, enforcing peace, preventing wars." He added, "We have to cut out all of this other nonsense."

U.N. peacekeeping operations have grown dramatically. □

Hail of gunfire interrupts key meeting of Haiti's leaders trying to fend off gangs



People walk past the National Palace in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, March 25, 2024.

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Heavy gunfire erupted in downtown Port-au-Prince on Thursday after Haiti's leaders made the rare and defiant decision to meet at the National Palace to

symbolize the retaking of an area long controlled by powerful gangs. There were no immediate reports of injuries or deaths, but at least one armored vehicle driving through the

area was shot up, according to local media reports. Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aimé and members of Haiti's transitional presidential council, along with other high-ranking government officials, were at the National Palace when the heavy gunfire began.

It wasn't immediately clear if the officials were evacuated, but local news site Tripotay Lakay filmed a caravan of official cars quickly exiting the National Palace from its rear exit as people in the area ran for cover. The government officials had gathered at the palace for a key meeting in which they were expected to approve budgets and important measures. Before the meeting began, they gathered out-

side on the grounds of the palace as a police band played and Haiti's flag was raised, with heavily armed officers standing watch on the second floor behind sandbags for protection. "This government meeting marks a symbolic and decisive step in the gradual resumption of state control over downtown Port-au-Prince, the historic heart of republican power," read a government statement issued Thursday before gunfire erupted.

Haiti's leaders have long stayed away from the National Palace since it's located in an area that until recently was considered unsafe and controlled by a gang coalition known as Viv Ansanm. But in recent weeks, government work-

ers began clearing and securing the area with hopes of reclaiming it from the hands of gangs.

"We are taking back control of our capital and giving our people the security and dignity they deserve," said Fils-Aimé shortly before the attack began. Gangs are estimated to control up to 90% of Port-au-Prince, and they have remained entrenched in the downtown area and nearby communities.

Leslie Voltaire, a former vice president of the transitional presidential council who presided over the meeting because the council's leader was on an official overseas trip, did not refer to the violence in a post on X in which he praised the meeting. □

Planning on snorkeling? Get to know our “Dorado”

(Oranjestad)—If you're ever planning on snorkeling during your vacation on Aruba, you may spot fish that you can't recognize. One of these may be the “Dorado”, a common fish that swims all year long in the waters of Aruba. Here's some information about the beloved Dorado.

Dorado has many different names it can be referred to. Dral, Dorao, Drals, Drado, are some of them in Papiamentu. In English, it is also called Mahi Mahi, Dolphin-fish, or Dorado. It's a good example to reflect on why there can be many names. The same fish becomes known by different common names, why? Common names come only when a group of people, to understand each other, assign a name to a fish. Mahi Mahi, for example, comes from Hawaii and means “very strong”. Dorado is based on Spanish and refers to the golden yellow color that the fish shines with under the sun.



Why it's called Dolphin-fish in English is not well defined and while there are several stories around this, none have been confirmed.

Dorado is found in all tropical to subtropical oceans around the world. Dorado is very popular both for recreational fishing and for consumption. It is known among

fishermen as an exciting catch and a fish that puts up a good fight. Its meat is very good for consumption and it is also commercially fished for that reason.

They grow very fast, up to 2.7 inches (almost 7 cm) per week. They can live up to a maximum of 5 years although very few reach that

age. Most become adults within 1 year but many become reproductive after just 5 or 6 months and reproduce very quickly too. They live in open water on the surface most of the time. Many fish seek them around sushi lines or floating objects on the sea. Often you will find a group landing together and if you keep a male on

the line, often the others will stay close or can keep the group interested by giving shrimp or squid.

Description:

Dorado has a distinctive body. It has a large tail and its long, flat body ends in a large blunt head. Its color of yellow and green or blue makes it immediately recognizable, even with small variations in these colors.

Dorado has clear differences between adult females and males. The male is larger and can easily reach 50 to 80 pounds and has a much flatter head compared to the female. Therefore, male Dorados are also called “bull Dorado”.

Dorado can be found in our waters around the island all year round, but there are periods when it is easier to find than others. □

Source: The Department of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries (Santa Rosa).

Today Is Going To Be A Good Day

(Oranjestad)—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.acf.aw

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 start-



ed 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.

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. □





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Blackstone Beach



(Oranjestad)—Named after its most recognizable feature, the Blackstone Beach almost represents the opposite of the typical Aruban beaches. For one, it has black sand and is covered in black smooth stones. Secondly, it lies on the northern side of the island, away from the white sandy beaches of in the southern region. So, if you feel up for something different—or if it's opposite day, visit the Blackstone Beach.

Blackstone Beach shows the more natural side of Aruba: the stones that cover the beaches and the shape of it has been crafted for thousand years via volcanic eruptions, coral reef movements and wave activity of the rural northern part of the island.

Located further east to the Natu-

ral Bridge and Andicuri Beach, the Blackstone Beach is relatively easy to access. Once you get passed the Ayo Rock Formation, take the Andicuri road leading up to Andicuri Beach. There, you can park your car and take a 1km hike towards Blackstone Beach.

This beach forms part of the Arikok National Park and is therefore a site that is preserved. This is why it is also relatively untouched by commercial influences. Despite being called a beach, do note that it is not advised to swim in the water, as the current is very strong and can easily stray you further in the wild ocean. However, you can still enjoy a spectacular view of the stones and the northern ocean that stretches out in front of the beach and take a picture with your friends or family! ☐

Aruba: The island of Aloes

ORANJESTAD – Aloe vera, a succulent plant species, is renowned for its incredible properties for the skin. It is widely distributed and usually grows in tropical, semi-tropical and arid climates on the planet. But this plant also had a very prominent role in the history of Aruba, and its significance to the island's economy endures to this day.

The leaves of Aloe vera contain a good amount of gel which when used topically,

is great for the skin. Traditionally, Arubans use this gel to treat minor burns and other skin ailments, or just to keep skin supple and looking bright and nourished. Aside from the gel, aloe contains a bitter, yellow substance (called aloin) which is a gentle but powerful laxative, and it is also the origin of the industry of aloe in Aruba.

According to the website of Royal Aruba Aloe, Aloe vera was introduced in Aruba around 1840, when most of

the island's inhabitants were farmers of little means. Dutch Governor Van Raders introduced the plant after it had been introduced in other islands of the Caribbean to cultivate and harvest the aloe to produce the laxative. Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes."

Under Commander Jan Helenus Ferguson (1866-1871), aloe experienced a boom,



which is why there is a road named after him, which goes through the aloe fields. In the 19th century, Aruba was the main supplier of aloin for laxative, which was imported abroad to the United States and Europe. The aloin from Aruba and Curaçao was known to be one of the best in the world and was more expensive, which meant that at the time, it had significant economic impact, particularly for the local farmers. However, by the time the oil industry arrived on Aruba, it changed the labor market on Aruba, shifting away from agriculture. It would be after World War II that aloe would make a comeback. And eventually, as science learned about the amazing properties of aloe gel, the industry shifted from produc-

ing laxative to producing skin care. An interesting fact is that in 1951, the production of Aruban aloe amounted to around 30 percent of the total global production! The impact and relevance of aloe is visible all around Aruba. While most homes will have a few plants for personal use and decoration, houses are also decorated with aloe motifs, and at some point, aloe even featured on post stamps. Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes." And in 1955, the aloe became a part of Aruba's coat of arms, symbolizing prosperity for the island. □

Images from the archive of the National Library of Aruba.

MIG-ESP:

Thermal Coating That Slashes Energy Costs and Keeps Mold Away

Tara Eco Supplies, Aruba's leading distributor of eco-conscious products, is proud to offer MIG-ESP, a next-generation thermal coating that dramatically reduces energy consumption and prevents mold growth in residential and commercial buildings.

Developed by German manufacturer Material Innovative Gesellschaft mbH (MIG), MIG-ESP is a breathable, high-performance coating that applies like paint—but performs like insulation. It reflects thermal radiation (UV and infrared rays) and moisture, keeping buildings cooler, drier, and far more energy-efficient.

Key Benefits of MIG-ESP Unique Formula:

- **Energy Efficiency:** Reduces interior temperatures by up to 9°C, which means up to 40% lower energy bills
- **Mold & Mildew Elimination:** Maintains dry, neutral-temperature surfaces to eliminate mold growth in humid environments
- **Moisture Control:** Repels external moisture while allowing trapped humidity to evaporate
- **Versatility:** Adheres to cement, metal, ceramic tiles, drywall, and shingles, making it suitable for both interiors and exteriors, including walls and roofs.
- **LEED-certified, non-toxic, fire-resistant, and covered by a 10-year warranty on both thermal performance and color brilliance**

Proven Results in Aruba and Beyond

MIG-ESP has been commercially available since 2017, and was first introduced to Aruba in 2022 at Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort—a certified carbon-neutral property. At Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort, MIG-ESP was applied to a hotel wing alongside an AC upgrade, resulting in 20% energy savings in the coated wing.

"Buildings coated with MIG-ESP show remarkable energy savings and a tangible difference in comfort levels—even in peak heat," said Ewald Biemans, Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort Owner & CEO. "It's one of the smartest investments property owners can make today."

Since then, clients including Hilton Aruba, Amsterdam Manor, Aruba Queen Beatrix Airport,



and Marriott Stellaris have experienced the benefits.

Notably, even a limited application shows impact. Coating only the roof produced impressive results: 4.7°C reduction in peak temperature and 2.2°C drop in average daily heat. Each degree Celsius corresponds to 6-10% reduction in energy bill.

What Clients Are Saying

"You can really feel the difference with MIG-ESP Interior. In one office, it's cold and clammy; in the MIG-coated one, it's dry, comfortable, and just feels better to be in." — Jairzinho Theodora, Construction & Maintenance Engineer, Aruba Queen Beatrix Airport "Applying MIG-ESP® Exterior to our towers has noticeably brightened their appearance. The light-reflective properties enhance the visual appeal and contribute to a more comfortable indoor environment. Using MIG-ESP® Exterior aligns with our commitment to eco-friendly practices by improving energy efficiency and reducing CO₂ emissions." — Lennart de Bie, Interim General Manager, Hilton Aruba

About Tara Eco Supplies

Tara Eco Supplies is committed to bringing innovative, sustainable technologies to Aruba and the Caribbean. The company specializes in solutions that reduce environmental impact while improving comfort.

For more information, visit our store located at Bushiri 24, contact us at +297 583 9646, send an email to manager@taraeco.com, or explore our website at www.taraeco.com.

Rock stacking and its harmful effects



(Oranjestad)—Through a Facebook post, the organization Aruba Birdlife Conservation has raised an alarm about the phenomenon of "rock stacking" reaching the area of Baby Beach and warned about the dangers it poses, especially for children.

As known, "rock stacking" is not illegal in Aruba, but its impact on nature is harmful as the stones form part of the natural habitat of small animal species living in Aruba's wilderness. Experts warn that "rock stacking" could even lead certain species to extinction.

In Aruba, much of the "rock

stacking" also occurs near Arikok National Park. Although this activity is not illegal in Aruba, it may be time for park authorities to impose stricter regulations on this activity.

Tourists often believe that the meaning behind this activity is making a wish, but they do not realize its negative impact.

Aruba Birdlife Conservation's post not only raises alarms about the activity but also now that this phenomenon has reached Baby Beach, some of the stacked stone towers are up to 1.7 meters high, which can be very dangerous, especially for children. □

How Aruban beaches came to be!



(Oranjestad)—We've talked about the best beaches to visit on the island before, but have you ever wondered how Aruba got its white, sandy beaches, and why there's a clear difference between the northern and

southern shores? Here are some fun facts about the development of Aruban beaches.

How did Aruba get its white, sandy beaches?

Aruba's beaches have developed over the span of thousands of years. Waves crashing on the rocky formations along our coast line (which consists mainly of coral reefs) have started to wear and tear the reefs over time, resulting in its gradual breakdown. Fish that feed off corals also contribute to this, one small bite at a time. Over the course of thousands of years, as waves continue to crash and fish continue to eat off the corals, sand starts to accumulate around the area. However, whether the sand stays there is another question to be answered, and this is where we highlight the biggest difference between the northern and southern coast of the island.

The sand that accumulates around a torn coral reef is swept away along with the debris by the ocean stream. However, in areas where it's shallow and the stream is weaker, the sand tends to stick to the bottom

faster. This is why the beaches in the south—the areas with weaker stream and shallower ocean floors—has sand that stretches for miles. In contrast, the northern area, where the stream is much stronger and the ocean floor is much deeper, there is no sand present—they were swept away with the current!

Why north deep, but south shallow?

Ah! Good question...and interesting phrasing.

Aruba is a continental island. The island actually forms part of South America, and the space between Aruba and the South American continent is simply referred to as land that runs under the ocean. This is why it gets gradually deeper in the south, whereas the ocean floor in the north runs steeply to the bottom. □

Source: archival document provided by the National Archive of Aruba (ANA).

Aruba's Nature is to be Cherished

The national park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There is numerous wildlife to discover like for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches. There are more places on the island that are a preserved area like the Bubali Plas which is a bird sanctuary.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the island's past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities



is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In

the national park, a Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches. A very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Bubali Magic

This beautiful close-up image of the pink bird is courtesy of Michiel Oversteegen of the Aruba Birdlife Conservation. This important foundation showcases and builds awareness of Aruba's birds and other native flora and fauna. You may have seen a 'pink cloud' lately at the Bubali or Spanish Lagoon Wetlands areas? It's most likely to be Roseate Spoonbills (*Ajaia ajaja*) or 'Chucharon Cora' as they are known in Papiamentu. This unusual looking bird forages in shallow muddy water while

sweeping its flattened bill from side to side to catch small fish, crustaceans and other aquatic invertebrates. The Roseate Spoonbill remains an uncommon sight as they are vulnerable to degradation of feeding and nesting habitats (Wetlands). (Source: arikok national park)

The afore mentioned is just a part of what Aruba's nature has to offer. We cannot stress enough to go, see for yourself. The island has the most beautiful beaches but it is also worthwhile to go beyond this and get an idea of our entire island. Lately there is a discussion going on about the effect certain activities have on our nature, for example the ATV vehicles cause a lot of dust, noise and leave tire tracks. Animals live in these areas where the vehicles run, often with high speed and with detrimental consequences to flora and fauna. Motorized vehicles are forbidden to drive on the sand dunes in the Northern part of the island and all beaches in Aruba are forbidden for any motorized vehicle. Treasure our island to enjoy it like you do: as a tropical and natural paradise. We truly appreciate it! □



Get to know the history of the gold industry on Aruba



(Oranjestad)— We have talked about the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruin before and its brief history during the gold industry on Aruba, but get to know a little more about the history of the “Aruban Gold Rush.”

The first hint of gold on Aruba actually dates back to 1725, when rumors about gold being found in dug up treasure chests of the Spanish colonial era prompted the first official exploration for gold on the island, commissioned by the Dutch West India Company. Under the leadership of Mr. Paulus Printz, a three-year search was conducted on Aruba, to no avail. Though they found some specks of gold, it was not enough to motivate a further search, and the assignment was discontinued by Printz himself. It wasn't until 100 years later, in 1824, when a young farmer boy named Willem Rasmijn found a lump of gold while out herding his father's sheep in the area of Rooi Fluit on the north coast. His father took it to a local merchant who then sold the lump for \$70. Unbeknownst to the boy and his father, they quite literally struck gold, and as word got out, a gold fever spread among the locals who started searching for more gold.

When the colonial governor in Curacao, Governor Cantz'laar, heard about the news, he sent his adjutant, Capitan van Raders, to start harvesting gold. This was in July 1824. In August of that same year, the governor followed suit to the island, accompanied by high-ranking military officials. When citizens started swarming the area in search for gold, The Netherlands sent more troops to safe guard the gold.

Prominent places where gold was found was in Daimari, Wacobana, Arikok, Rooi Fluit, Hadicouradi and later West punt, where gold ore was found. Because of a lack in advanced technology and materials to harvest the gold, the process took a more primitive approach: Clay rocks containing traces of gold were left to dry in the sun. Then, workers would start chipping the clay away on a large canvas to catch the gold particles that were left behind after the wind blew away the dust from the clay.

In the harvest period of 1824-1825, there was a total of 71,000 kilos collected through commissioned harvesting. Locals themselves reportedly found about 25 pounds worth of gold in the nearby rivers. The following years after that first big harvest, commission work fell off, and in 1828, the director of the goldmines, Johan Gravenhorst, decided to halt harvesting.

Almost 40 years later, the London-based Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. was granted concession. The firm built their gold mines on Bushiribana, and in the port of Oranjestad a long road that connected the gold mill to the port. The ores themselves came from Sero Plat en Sero Cristal.

By this point, workers were still using primitive methods to harvest the ores. For example, when someone had to go into the mines, there were no stairs or lifts; the person had to be brought down in a big bucket, with two or more workers holding the bucket by a thick rope above ground. Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. reportedly operated until 1899, and right after the Aruba Gold Concession Ltd. was established, coincidentally also based in London. This time, the gold mill in Balashi was built, and more mines were dug up all around the island. The gold ores that were found were transported via track engine, locally called the “trekinchi”. Despite being more equipped for the job, the Aruba Gold Concession Ltd. could not produce any real profit, and so the concession was terminated just eight years later, in 1908.

A local firm, the “Aruba Goud Maatschappij” (Aruba Gold Company) took over the concession, along with all the materials and equipment. In the beginning, the company saw good profit, and for a while, the island's economy depended primarily on the mining and harvesting of gold. But just like its predecessors, the streak of luck for the Aruba Gold Company came to an end when WWI broke out.

The main reason why production stopped this time was reportedly because of a lack in dynamite for extracting the ores from the mines, as well as a lack in raw materials like German cyanide for the refining process. By the time the war ended, the equipment that was left at Balashi were too old to use again. After the war, gold production on the Aruba was left to a standstill.

According to an issue in Aruba Esso News paper in 1953, Henny Eman wanted to start up digging again, this time using independent miners. He argued that there was proof of more gold to be discovered. Plus, hiring independent miners would boost the island's employment rate.

When it was proven that gold was in fact still present, the executive board on the island promised to fund the project only if the gold dug up proved to be valuable. However, nothing else was reported after this, so it could be concluded that there was no real profitable market on the island anymore.

The ruins of the Bushiribana and Balashi Gold Mills are still standing, and open for the public to visit. These structures offer a glance into the past, to a time where Aruba experienced one of its first wave of industrialization. Today, these structures are persevered as historical monuments. □

Source:

1. “De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over the geschiedenis van Aruba)” by Evert Bongers.
2. Aruba Esso News, 1953 issue.

CROSSWORD

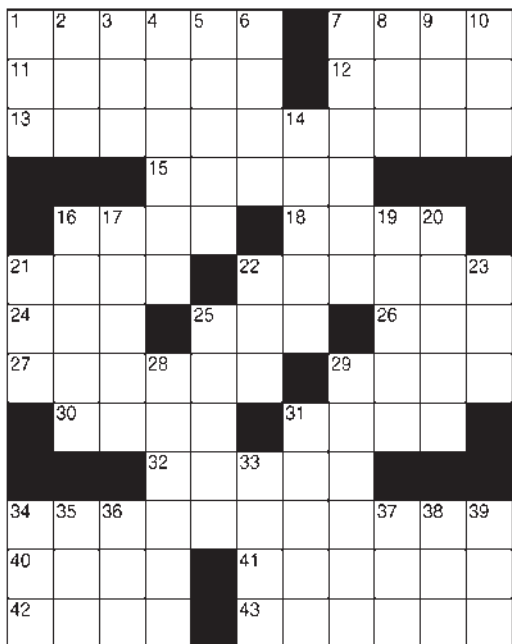
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 "In Cold Blood" writer
7 Matador's need
11 Sauntered
12 Weary sigh
13 Up-and-comers
15 High-level execs
16 Writer Harte
18 Go fast
21 Foot features
22 Code
24 Worker in a colony
25 Gear part
26 Yale student
27 Sack material
29 Like an abyss
30 Bath need
31 Ocean bird
32 Aspiration
34 Rifts
40 Lotion additive
41 Beginning
42 Implores
43 Swift
- 2 French friend
3 "Nova" network
4 Martini garnishes
5 Doctrine
6 Keenness
7 Burger topper
8 In the style of
9 Golf goal
10 Twisty turn
14 Parsley unit
16 Worker's reward
17 Stylishly quaint
19 Very thin

HANGS SEDAN
APORT PLANE
MEDEA AKITA
AMEN SIT
POSTPAID
IDID TEARAT
SODAS LLAMA
ARENAS MUIR
EMERALDS
SPA OMIT
HUSKY DICED
ARTIE GAUGE
GRAND ENDOW

- 20 Daughter of Leda
21 Bar bill
22 Beat walker
23 Tear book
25 Island off Naples
28 Soup servers
29 Reduce in rank
31 Touch base
33 Son of Seth
34 Like the Beatles
35 Pub quaff
36 Record
37 Purpose
38 Danson of "The Good Place"
39 Pig's place



10-17

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.

10-17 CRYPTOQUOTE

NV JGW XAQS CSSHSE AL KOS

OSNEK, KOS RAE EGE MSKV

ZXS NLSE NLC ZXS NLSE.

— EWRA

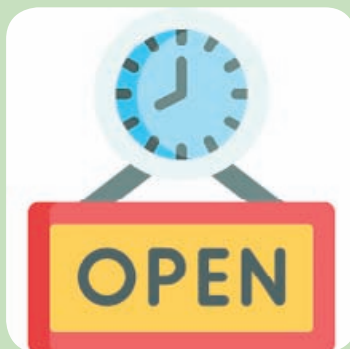
Cryptoquote: ANYONE WHO THINKS FALLEN LEAVES ARE DEAD HAS NEVER WATCHED THEM DANCING ON A WINDY DAY. — SHIRA TAMIR

Cruise ship Schedule: Oct. 01 - 12 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	CALLS
WED	01	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
SUN	05	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-
TUE	07	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS CARNIVAL VISTA	07.00 13.00	16.00 23.00	B C	1 1
WED	08	GRAND PRINCESS RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS FREEWINDS	08.00 08.00 06.00	18.00 23.00 ****	B C E	1 1 1
THU	09	SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	18.00	C	1
SUN	12	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.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 8 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 tourist 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.



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.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku



Difficulty: ★★★★★

11/8

Answer to previous puzzle

5	3	1	7	6	8	4	9	2
9	7	6	2	4	5	3	8	1
2	8	4	3	9	1	6	7	5
4	2	8	1	5	9	7	3	6
1	5	7	6	3	4	9	2	8
3	6	9	8	7	2	5	1	4
6	1	3	4	8	7	2	5	9
8	4	5	9	2	3	1	6	7
7	9	2	5	1	6	8	4	3

Difficulty: ★★★★★

11/7

One Tech Tip: Annoyed by junk calls to your iPhone? Try the new iOS 26 call screen feature

By **KELVIN CHAN**
AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — iPhone users have a new tool to combat the scourge of nuisance phone calls: a virtual gatekeeper that can screen incoming calls from unknown numbers. It's among the bevy of new features that Apple rolled out with last month's release of iOS 26. The screening feature has been getting attention because of the ever-increasing amount of robo-calls and spam calls that leave many phone users feeling harassed. Here's a run-through of the new function:

How to activate call screening

First, you'll need to update your iPhone's operating system to iOS 26, which is available to the iPhone 11 and newer models.

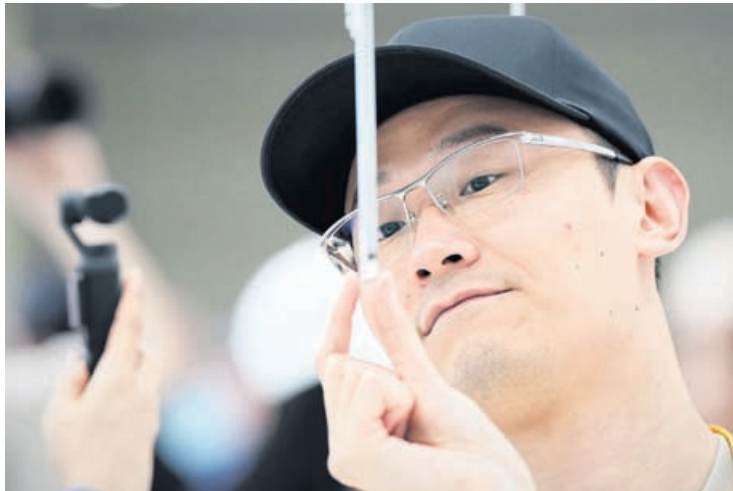
To switch call screening on, go into Settings--AppStore. Scroll down and you'll find a new option: Screen Unknown Callers.

You'll be presented with three choices. The Never option lets any unknown call ring through, while Silence sends all unidentified numbers directly to voicemail. What you want to tap is the middle option: Ask Reason for Calling.

If the option isn't there, try restarting your phone. I still couldn't find it after updating to iOS 26, but, after some online sleuthing, I checked my region and language settings because I saw some online commenters reporting they had to match. It turns out my region was still set to Hong Kong, where I lived years ago. I switched it to the United Kingdom, which seemed to do the trick and gave me the updated menu.

How it works

Call screening introduces a layer between you and new callers. When someone who's not in your contacts list dials your number, a Siri-style voice will ask them to give their name and the purpose of their call.



An attendee takes a closer look at the iPhone Air during an announcement of new products at Apple Park on Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2025, in Cupertino, Calif.

Associated Press

At the same time, you'll get a notification that the call is being screened. When the caller responds, the answers will be transcribed and the conversation will pop up in speech bubbles. You can then answer the call. Don't want to answer? Send a reply by tapping one of the pre-written messages, such as "I'll call you later" or "Send more information," which the AI voice will read out to the caller. Or you can type out your own message for the computer-generated voice to read out.

If you don't respond right away, the phone will continue to ring while you decide what to do. Teething troubles

In theory, call screening is a handy third way between the nuclear option of sil-

encing all unknown callers including legitimate ones or letting them all through. But it doesn't always work perfectly, according to Associated Press colleagues and anecdotal reports from social media users.

One AP colleague said she was impressed with how seamlessly it worked. Another said it's handy for screening out cold callers who found his number from marketing databases. "However, it's not great when delivery drivers try to call me and then just hang up," he added.

Some internet users have similar complaints, complaining that important calls that they were expecting from their auto mechanic or plumber didn't make it through. Perhaps the callers assumed

it was an answering machine and didn't seem to realize they had to stay on the line and interact with it. I encountered a different issue the first time it kicked in for me, when an unknown caller whether mistakenly or not threw me off by giving my name instead of theirs. So I answered because I assumed it was someone I knew, forgetting that I could tap out a reply asking them again for their name. The caller turned out to be someone who had obtained my name and number and was trying to get me to do a survey. I had to make my excuses and hang up.

If you don't like call screening, you can turn it off at any time.

As for Android, Apple is catching up with Google, which introduced a similar automatic call screening feature years ago for Pixel users in the United States. □



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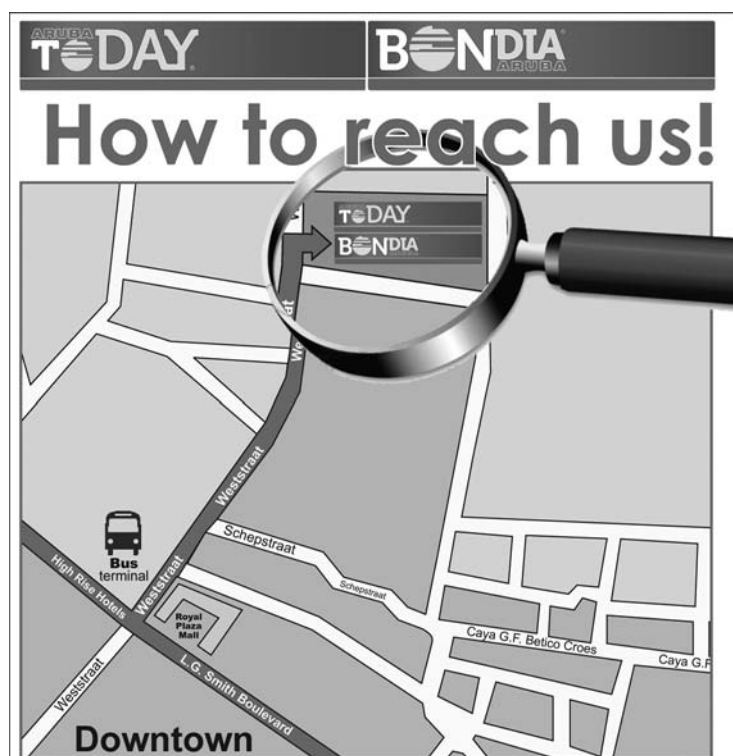
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Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm
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San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

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Oduber: Tel. 587 9011

San Nicolas:

Seroe Preto: Tel. 584 5794

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850

Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002

Urgent Care 586 0448

Walk-In Doctor's Clinic

+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

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Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

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American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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FAVI- Visually Impaired	Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous	Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous	Tel. 583 8989
Fundacion Contra Violencia Relacional	Tel. 583 5400
Centre for Diabetes	Tel. 524 8888
Child Abuse Prevention	Tel. 582 4433
Quota Club	Tel. 525 2672

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

How 'The Great Lock In' can help achieve your financial and wellness goals

By **ADRIANA MORGA**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — As the end of 2025 approaches, a viral TikTok trend is helping people achieve their wellness goals: "The Great Lock In" encourages participants to finish the year strong by fully focusing on their life goals from Sept. 1 through Dec. 31.

Many people focus on exercise or eating healthier. But the trend can also help you achieve your financial goals.

There are no set rules for "The Great Lock In." The phrase "lock in" is popular on social media and it means to focus intensely on a task.

"Something I like about this particular trend is that it's like New Year's resolutions' little sister," said Lindsay Bryan-Podvin, financial therapist and founder of Mind Money Balance, a financial wellness podcast and blog. For Julissa Mercedes, 28, one of her lock in goals is to build a \$2,500 emergency savings fund.

"Having some liquid cash will make me feel a little bit safer," said Mercedes, a San Diego resident who works in finance. Aside from building an emergency fund, Mercedes has three other goals: making a new friend, creating a morning routine, and picking up a new hobby.

"The Great Lock In" is meant to help people achieve



A shopper shops at a retail store in Arlington Heights, Ill., Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2025.

Associated Press

New Year's resolutions that might have fallen by the wayside. If you started your year planning to pay down debt by cutting unnecessary expenses, and have yet to follow up on that, this challenge might help you with that goal.

"I think that's appealing to a lot of people who are just tired of feeling stuck and like they haven't been able to make any progress," said Ben Markley, personal finance educator and host of Sketchy Advice by YNAB, a budgeting app.

If you're thinking of participating in "The Great Lock In," or if you're already doing it, here are some expert

recommendations to make your financial goals stick:

Review your finances

To build a goal that will benefit you, it's essential to review your finances, Bryan-Podvin said. She suggested that you review your bank account and spend some time figuring out how much you earn each month, as well as what you spend it on.

If you made a New Year's resolution around finances, this could be a good opportunity to check on your progress and see if you need to reassess your approach.

Set attainable goals

When participating in a

challenge, it's best to set attainable goals, Markley said. Sometimes online challenges inspire people to make significant changes, but they can also lead them to create unattainable goals.

"A lot of people can't sustain that at all, so they drop off," he said. "Or, they do sustain it, but then they go back to their normal life after the challenge, and their spending habits haven't fundamentally changed." Setting a goal that is realistic in relation to your budget and lifestyle is the best way to make sure you can achieve it by the end of the challenge. Bryan-Pod-

vin recommends looking at "The Great Lock In" as a 5K race rather than a marathon.

Focus on habit-building

To continue achieving your financial goals into 2026, Markley recommends centering some of your lock in goals around building new habits or skills.

For example, if your goal is to stop spending on takeout, focus on building a habit that's related to cooking.

"Find easy meals that you could cook at home with your skill level so that when you want to eat out, you have that to fall back on," Markley said.

A great way to help create a habit is to use a habit-tracking tool. It can be as simple as setting reminders on your phone or downloading an app that sends you regular notifications, Bryan-Podvin said.

Create community and accountability

Social media can be a good place to find community support for achieving your goals, whether it's joining a Facebook group, commenting on creators' videos, or posting your own content. As she started "The Great Lock In" challenge at the beginning of September, Mercedes also decided to document her experience on TikTok. Sharing her journey with followers helps with accountability, she said. □

IRS will furlough nearly half of its workforce as the government shutdown enters a second week



The headquarters of the Internal Revenue Service is in Washington, August 10, 2024.

Associated Press

By **FATIMA HUSSEIN**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The IRS will furlough nearly half of its workforce on Wednesday as part of the ongoing government shutdown, according to an updated contingency plan posted to its website. Most IRS operations are closed, the agency said in a separate letter to its workers.

The news comes after President Donald Trump and Congress failed to strike an agreement to fund federal operations, and the government shutdown has entered its second week, with no discernible endgame in sight. The agency's ini-

tial Lapsed Appropriations Contingency Plan, which provided for the first five business days of operations, stated that the department would remain open using Democrats' Inflation Reduction Act funds. Now, only 39,870 employees, or 53.6%, will remain working as the shutdown continues. It is unclear which workers will remain on the job.

Doreen Greenwald, president of the National Treasury Employees Union, said in a statement that taxpayers should expect increased wait times, backlogs and delays implementing tax law changes as the shutdown continues. □

Dominance of the Las Vegas Aces threatens to make short work of WNBA's expanded finals

By DAVID BRANDT

AP Sports Writer

PHOENIX (AP) — The Las Vegas Aces are in position to make short work of the WNBA's expanded playoff schedule.

A'ja Wilson's turnaround jumper with 0.3 seconds remaining lifted the Aces over the Phoenix Mercury for a thrilling 90-88 win on Wednesday night. It also gave Las Vegas a 3-0 lead in the first best-of-seven WNBA Finals in league history.

In the previous best-of-five format, the Aces would already be celebrating their third championship in four seasons.

In 2025, there's more work to do. Game 4 is on Friday night in Phoenix.

"We don't look at it too big," Wilson said. "We just win one game, win one possession, win one quarter and then everything will pan out."

The Aces were one of the best teams in the WNBA all season, earning the No. 2 seed in the playoffs with a 30-14 record, but they looked surprisingly vulnerable early in the postseason. They dropped a game to Seattle in the opening round and needed the



Las Vegas Aces center A'ja Wilson (22) and guard Chelsea Gray (12) celebrate during the first half in Game 2 of the WNBA basketball finals against the Phoenix Mercury, Sunday, Oct. 5, 2025, in Las Vegas.

full five games to squeeze past the Indiana Fever in the semifinals, prevailing in overtime for a 107-98 win in the decisive Game 5.

In the finals, the Aces have looked unstoppable. Wilson, a four-time MVP who is already one of the league's all-time greats continued to add to her legacy on Wednesday night with a 34-point, 14-rebound performance that

helped the Aces navigate a hostile road environment and shake off a late Mercury rally.

Wilson has already set a WNBA record with 291 postseason points through 11 games and is averaging 26.5 points and 10.1 rebounds per game. The 29-year-old is still at the peak of her basketball powers, using her 6-foot-4 frame and soft touch around the

basket to score in bunches. "I always have to credit my teammates, because they give me the basketball in the right space at the right time," Wilson said. "Like Jewell (Lloyd) said, the ball has energy. Players understand, there's something different where you get a pass and it's like 'This is a pass to score the basketball.'"

Wilson's presence was more important than ever in the

closing moments of Game 3.

The Aces had coughed up a 76-59 lead entering the fourth quarter and the game was tied at 88 with 5 seconds left. Las Vegas had the ball and the daunting task of trying to close the game against a desperate Mercury team that had a raucous home crowd on its side.

Aces coach Becky Hammon didn't need to consult her playbook for the right call.

Just throw it to A'ja. Boom. Game over.

"These are the moments that you dream of, the times you see on TV, you're watching and you're like, 'Oh my god, to be in that building,'" Wilson said.

The Mercury will try to shake off the tough loss and force the series back to Las Vegas for a Game 5. Phoenix will be without star forward Satou Sabally, who suffered a concussion late in Wednesday's game after scoring 24 points.

DeWanna Bonner led the Mercury with 25 points in Game 3 while Alyssa Thomas was one assist short of a triple double, finishing with 14 points and 12 rebounds. □

Associated Press

Jaguars and Browns trade cornerbacks, with Campbell going to Cleveland and Newsome to Jacksonville

By MARK LONG

AP Pro Football Writer

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP)

— Tyson Campbell was far from a perfect fit in Jacksonville's new defensive scheme, and he was getting paid like a shutdown cornerback.

It was hardly an ideal setup for the rebuilding Jaguars. So they traded him for another player from the 2021 NFL draft.

Jacksonville and Cleveland swapped starting cornerbacks Wednesday night, with Tyson Campbell going to the Browns (1-4) and Greg Newsome heading to the Jaguars (4-1).

"We are trying to win football games now and part of this trade is that we think

Greg Newsome helps us do that," Jaguars general manager James Gladstone said. "We will be aggressive to make us the best possible team this year."

The teams also exchanged late-round draft picks in 2026, with Jacksonville getting a sixth-rounder from Cleveland and the Browns getting a seventh-rounder from the Jaguars.

"We felt like Greg's skillset with how we've shifted the defensive scheme to play with more vision on the quarterback to be a strong fit for how we operate and his capacity to find the football was a trait he possessed," Gladstone said.

Jacksonville's previous regime general manager

Trent Baalke and coach Doug Pederson signed Campbell to a four-year, \$76.5 million extension last year that included \$54.4 million guaranteed. But the second-round pick from Georgia struggled to find the ball in the team's zone-heavy scheme.

Campbell has 296 tackles and six interceptions in 60 career games. He had 34 tackles, six pass defenses and a forced fumble this season. The Browns play at Pittsburgh on Sunday, and Campbell is expected to at least be active for the game.

Newsome, the 26th overall pick in 2021 from Northwestern, is in the final year of a contract that pays him

\$13.4 million. He has 178 tackles and three interceptions in 59 games with the

Browns. He has 23 tackles and three pass defenses this season. □



Kansas City Chiefs running back Brashard Smith (24) runs the ball under pressure from Jacksonville Jaguars cornerback Tyson Campbell (3) during the first half of an NFL football game, Monday, Oct. 6, 2025, in Jacksonville, Fla.

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Aaron Judge remains without World Series ring as Yankees' title drought reaches 16 years

By **RONALD BLUM**
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Aaron Judge walked slowly from first base to the Yankees' dugout after Cody Bellinger ended the game with a strikeout, then turned his head to watch the Toronto Blue Jays celebrate on New York's infield.

"You don't like seeing it and it kind of leaves an impression," Judge said. "Make sure this doesn't happen next year."

New York's 16th consecutive season without a World Series championship ended Wednesday night with a 5-2 loss to Toronto, which won the AL Division Series 3-1 and advanced to a matchup against Seattle or Detroit for the American League pennant.

An hour after the game, Giancarlo Stanton walked over to Judge, seated by his locker in the quiet clubhouse, and put a consoling arm around the captain's shoulder.

"Didn't execute when we needed to," Stanton told reporters a few minutes later. "Timely at-bats, timely pitches, we just didn't do it as well as they did."

Judge hit .500 with seven RBIs in seven postseason games, including .600 (9 for 15) with one homer, six RBIs, four walks and a 1.617 OPS against the Blue Jays. But a year after losing a five-game World Series to the Los Angeles Dodgers, the Yankees are still looking for championship No. 28.

"This has been a tough year



New York Yankees' Aaron Judge reacts after striking out against the Toronto Blue Jays during the eighth inning of Game 4 of baseball's American League Division Series, Wednesday, Oct. 8, 2025, in New York.

for me personally," manager Aaron Boone said after his eighth season without a title. "It's terrible. It hurts." Now 33 and perhaps on the verge of his third AL MVP award, Judge has had eight unfulfilling trips to the playoffs in 10 big league seasons.

Instead of moving alongside Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Joe DiMaggio, Yogi Berra, Mickey Mantle and Derek Jeter in adding to the Yankees' championship collection, Judge remains in the same category as Don Mattingly and Dave Winfield star players also known for not winning a World Series in the Bronx.

"It doesn't mean it's not going to happen, and he and

I wholeheartedly believe that it will," Boone said. "You keep working your tail off to get back to this position and punch through." Judge won his first AL batting title this season by hitting .331 with 114 RBIs and 53 home runs reaching 50 for the fourth time. He is on a Hall of Fame track with a .294 career average and 368 homers, and he has a .235 postseason average with 17 homers and 41 RBIs in 65 games.

"It's almost like we take it for granted because he only had 50-something homers and not 60," said Paul Goldschmidt, a seven-time All-Star who joined the Yankees for this season. "Took it to a whole new level.

He's the best that I've ever been around. He's also just the greatest teammate I've been around, the best leader."

It is unclear whether Judge's right elbow, both of Stanton's elbows and shortstop Anthony Volpe's left shoulder might need surgery.

"We'll do some work on it and get it right," Judge said.

Asked whether an operation could be needed, he responded: "I'm not a doctor. I don't know."

A year after an AL East title and a five-game World Series loss to the Los Angeles Dodgers, the Yankees had a winning record for the 33rd straight season. But

they finished second to Toronto in the division on a tiebreaker, then rallied to win their best-of-three Wild Card Series against archrival Boston after losing the opener.

New York was outscored 34-19 by the Blue Jays and outthomered 9-4, a surprise for an offense that led the major leagues with 274 homers and scored a big league-high 50.2% of its runs on longballs, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

And just like last year, defense precipitated the demise. Second baseman Jazz Chisholm Jr. allowed Andrés Giménez's hard one-hopper to skip off his glove for an error instead of turning it into an inning-ending double play, and Nathan Lukes hit a two-out, two-run single off Devin Williams for a 4-1 lead in the seventh.

"Just missed it," Chisholm said an hour after the final out. "Been thinking about that since the play happened, still thinking about it now."

Still can't get it out of my head."

Judge's supporting cast needs a remake. New York's 4.37 bullpen ERA ranked 23rd out of 30 teams. The team's 7-8-9 batters combined to hit just .224 with a .687 OPS. Volpe batted .212 during the season and .192 in the playoffs with 16 strikeouts in 26 at-bats.

"I'm sure there will be a lot of sleepless nights," Volpe said. □