

Saturday
February 7, 2026

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Snakes of Aruba

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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

MONDAY:
ANDERSON BAHAMON
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

TUESDAY:
JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

WEDNESDAY:
MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

THURSDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

FRIDAY:
MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
7:00 TO 9:00 P.M.

SATURDAY:
RICKY THOMAS
GUITAR
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

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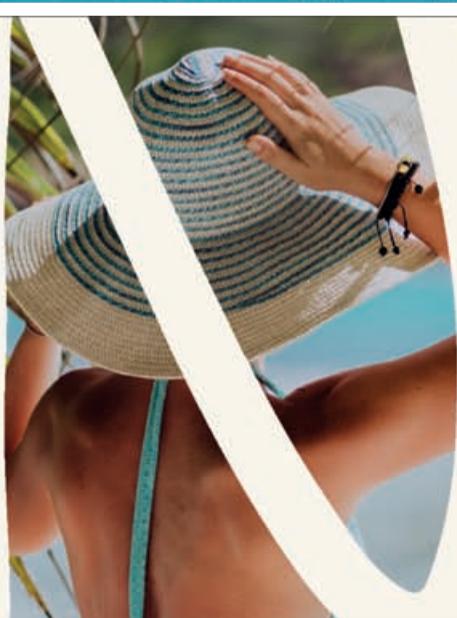
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The consumer-friendly Energy Star program survived Trump. What about other efficiency efforts?

By ALEXA ST. JOHN

Associated Press

Energy Star, the program that helps guide consumers to more energy-efficient appliances and electronics, has survived the Trump administration's plans to cut it.

The program received sufficient support in Congress that it was included in budget legislation signed this week by President Donald Trump.

Environmentalists and advocates called it good news for consumers and the planet, but raised concerns over how the program will be administered under a shrunken Environmental Protection Agency. But Energy Star is not the only energy efficiency program targeted by Trump. Here's what to know about the outlook for that program and others.

What's Trump got against energy efficiency?

Trump has regularly said efficiency standards for household items and appliances many strengthened under predecessor Joe Biden's administration rob consumers of choice and add unnecessary costs.

His first executive order upon returning to office last year outlined a vision to "unleash American energy." In it, he emphasized safeguarding "the Ameri-



An Energy Star logo is displayed on a box for a freezer Jan. 21, 2025, in Evendale, Ohio.

Associated Press

can people's freedom to choose" everything from light bulbs to gas stoves to water heaters and shower heads.

At the same time Trump has targeted efficiency, he's also sought to block renewable energy development such as wind and solar and boosted fossil fuels that contribute to warming, including gas, oil and coal.

What happened with Energy Star?

Energy Star is a voluntary, decades-old EPA-run program that informs consumers about how efficient home appliances and

electronics are, including dishwashers, washing machines and more. The idea is to simultaneously reduce emissions and save consumers money on their energy bills.

The Department of Energy develops product testing procedures for Energy Star, while the EPA sets performance levels and ensures the certification label is reliable for consumers. It also applies to new homes, commercial buildings and plants.

EPA says the program has saved 4 billion metric tonnes (4.41 billion tons) of planet-warming green-

house gas emissions since launching in 1992, and can save households an average of \$450 annually.

Last May, EPA drafted plans to eliminate Energy Star as part of a broader agency reorganization that targeted air pollution regulation efforts and other critical environmental functions. The agency said the reorganization would deliver "organizational improvements to the personnel structure" to benefit the American people.

Many groups advocated against the potential closure of the program, citing

its benefits to consumers.

The legislation Trump signed this week allocated \$33 million for the program, slightly more than 2024's \$32.1 million, according to the Congressional Research Service, but it continues the general trend of declining funding for the program over the past decade. The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers, among many industry groups to advocate for keeping the program in letters sent to Congress, said it was "very pleased" to see the funding continue.

Some concerns remain

Experts say uncertainty around the program likely didn't impact consumers much over the past year. They note that manufacturers can't change their product lines overnight.

Amanda Smith, a senior scientist at climate research organization Project Drawdown, said the uncertainty may have had a bigger effect on EPA's ability to administer the program. She was among experts wondering how staffing cuts may affect EPA's work.

EPA spokesperson Brigit Hirsch didn't address a question about that, saying in a statement only that EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin "will follow the law as enacted by Congress." □

NASA delays astronauts' lunar trip until March after hydrogen leaks mar fueling test



The NASA Artemis II SLS (Space Launch System) rocket with the Orion spacecraft is seen at Launch Complex 39B at the Kennedy Space Center, Sunday, Feb. 1, 2026, in Cape Canaveral, Fla.

Associated Press

By MARCIA DUNN
AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — NASA's long-awaited moonshot with astronauts is off until at least March because of hydrogen fuel leaks that marred the dress rehearsal of its giant new rocket. It's the same problem that delayed the Space Launch System rocket's debut three years ago. That first test flight was grounded for months because of leaking hydrogen, which is highly flammable and dangerous.

"Actually, this one caught us off guard," NASA's John Honeycutt said Tuesday, hours after the test came to an abrupt halt at Kennedy Space Center. Until the exasperating fuel leaks, the

space agency had been targeting as soon as this weekend for humanity's first trip to the moon in more than half a century.

"When you're dealing with hydrogen, it's a small molecule. It's highly energetic and we like it for that reason and we do the best we can," Honeycutt explained. Officials said the month-long delay will allow the launch team to conduct another fueling test before committing the four astronauts three U.S. and one Canadian to a lunar fly-around. It's too soon to know when the countdown dress rehearsal might be repeated.

Any repairs to deformed or damaged seals, or other components, can likely be completed at the pad, managers said. □



Members of the Never Miss a Super Bowl Club, from the left, Tom Henschel, Gregory Eaton, and Don Crisman pose for a group photograph during a welcome luncheon, in Atlanta, Feb. 1, 2019.

Associated Press

They will have been to all 60 Super Bowls. This year is possibly their last

By PATRICK WHITTLE
Associated Press

KENNEBUNK, Maine (AP) —

It just wouldn't feel like the Super Bowl for them if they weren't all there. And this might be the last time they all do it.

That's what three old friends were coming to grips with just before this year's Super Bowl. The trio of octogenarians are the only fans left in the exclusive "never missed a Super Bowl" club.

Don Crisman of Maine, Gregory Eaton of Michigan and Tom Henschel of Florida were back for another big game this year. But two of them are grappling with the fact that advancing years and decreasing mobility mean this is probably the last time.

This year's game pits the Seattle Seahawks against the New England Patriots at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, California, on Sunday. Crisman, a Patriots fan since the franchise started, was excited to see his team in the game for a record-setting 12th time.

"This will definitely be the final one," said Crisman, who made the trip with his daughter, Susan Metevier. "We made it to 60."

Getting older, scaling back

Crisman, who first met

Henschel at the 1983 Super Bowl, turns 90 this year. Meanwhile, Henschel, 84, has been slowed by a stroke. Both said this is the last time they'll make the increasingly expensive trip to the game, although members of the group have said that before. For his part, Eaton, 86, plans to keep going as long as he's still physically able.

Eaton, who runs a ground transportation company in Detroit, is the only member of the group not retired. And he'd still like to finally see his beloved Detroit Lions make it to a Super Bowl. Even so, all three said they've scaled back the time they dedicate each year to the trip.

Crisman used to spend a week in the host city, soaking in the pomp and pageantry. These days, it's just about the game, not the hype.

"We don't go for a week anymore, we go for three or four days," Crisman said. Eaton, too, admits the price and hype of the big game have gotten to be a lot. "I think all of them are big, they're all fun. It's just gotten so commercial. It's a \$10,000 trip now," he said. It's worth it to see Don and Tom, Eaton said. "They're my brothers," he

said during a Friday news conference with the others. "We check on each other."

Friendly rivalries over the years

Henschel said this year's Super Bowl would be the most challenging for him because of his stroke, but he, too, was excited to see Eaton and Crisman one more time.

Eaton met Crisman and Henschel in the mid-2010s after years of attending the Super Bowl separately. And Henschel and Crisman have a long-running rivalry: Their respective favorite teams the Pittsburgh Steelers and the New England Patriots are AFC rivals.

The fans have attended every game since the first AFL-NFL World Championship Game, as the first two Super Bowls were known at the time, in 1967. They have sometimes sat together in the past, but logistics make it impossible some years.

But this year it was just about being able to go to the game at all, Henschel said.

"I don't talk or walk good," he said.

Still, he can't wait for kickoff.

"It's in my blood. I love football over all the sports," Henschel said Friday. "It's the best dang game."

Actor Michael Keaton to be honored as Man of the Year by Harvard's Hasty Pudding theater group

By MICHAEL CASEY
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Actor Michael Keaton is set to be honored Friday as the 2026 Man of the Year by Harvard University's Hasty Pudding Theatricals.

The theater group, which dates to 1844 and claims to be the world's third-oldest still operating, said Keaton will receive his Pudding Pot award at a celebratory roast in the evening. Afterward he will attend a performance of Hasty Pudding's 177th production, "Salooney Tunes."

Hasty Pudding Theatricals gives out its Man and Woman of the Year awards to people who have made lasting and impressive contributions to the world of entertainment.

The Academy Award-nominated and Emmy-winning actor is known for roles in such films as "Batman," "Birdman," "Beetlejuice" and "Spotlight." More recently Keaton has starred in and directed the short film "Sweetwater" and starred in and was executive producer on the eight-part Hulu miniseries "Dopesick."

"He was Batman, then Birdman, and now, most importantly, he's a Pudding man!" Hasty Pudding producer Eloise Tunnell said in a statement. "Keaton is no stranger to being a superhero, but let's see if that training earns him a Pudding Pot. We cannot wait to welcome him on February 6th: until then, don't say his name three times!"

Actor Jon Hamm won the award last year. Other recent honorees have included Clint Eastwood, Tom Hanks, Robert De Niro, Harrison Ford, Samuel L. Jackson and Ryan Reynolds.

Hasty Pudding's Woman of the Year, which dates to 1951, will be awarded Feb. 13 to Australian actor Rose Byrne.

Friday's event comes days after the Justice Department released a huge trove of records surrounding Jeffrey Epstein, a longtime donor to the organization. The documents provided new details about the amount of money Epstein had given to Hasty Pudding roughly between 2013 and 2019, regularly donating \$50,000 each year to secure top-tier donor status and receiving perks of free tickets and other gifts in return, totaling more than \$300,000.

The donations were made through the Jeffrey Epstein Virgin Islands Foundation and Gratitude for America, a charity affiliated with Epstein. □



Michael Keaton arrives at the premiere of "Goodrich" on Tuesday, Oct. 8, 2024, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

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Valentine's Day flowers are unwrapped and inspected by U.S. Customs and Border Protection agriculture specialists at Miami International Airport, on Friday, Feb. 6, 2026, in Miami.

Associated Press

Valentine flower imports increase at Miami airport, despite tariffs and higher costs, officials say

By DAVID FISCHER
Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Winged babies shooting heart-shaped arrows might get most of the credit on Valentine's Day, but the real magic behind millions of romantic bouquets happens in a cargo warehouse at a South Florida airport.

Agricultural specialists at Miami International Airport will process about 990 million stems of cut flowers in the weeks before Feb. 14, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Around 90% of the fresh cut flowers being sold for Valentine's Day in the United States come through Miami, while the other 10% pass through Los Angeles. Roses, carnations, pompons, hydrangeas, chrysanthemums and gypsophila arrive on hundreds of flights, mostly from Colombia and Ecuador, to Miami on their journey to florists

and supermarkets across the U.S. and Canada.

Miami's largest flower importer is Avianca Cargo, based in Medellín, Colombia. In preparation for Valentine's Day, the company is transporting about 19,000 tons of flowers on 320 full cargo flights, CEO Diogo Elias said Friday in Miami. They're running more than twice as many flights compared to normal.

"We fly flowers for the whole year, but Valentine's is special," Elias said. "Much more concentrated on roses, red roses especially. More than 50-60% are red roses at this time."

Customers buying flowers will likely see an increase in price this year. Christine Boldt, executive vice president for the Association of Floral Importers of America, said the cause is largely related to tariffs placed last year on imports from Colombia and Ecuador,

along with a new minimum wage enacted this year in Colombia.

"This adds significant dollars to the bouquets that are coming in," Boldt said. "Every consumer is gonna have to face additional costs."

Despite higher prices, Flowers continue to make up one of MIA's largest imports, airport director Ralph Cutié said. The airport received almost 3.5 million tons of cargo last year, with flowers accounting for about 400,000 tons. More than a quarter of those flowers are shipped before Valentine's Day, marking a 6% increase over last year. "The mother, the wife, the girlfriend in Omaha, Nebraska, that gets their flowers for either Valentine's or Mother's Day, chances are those flowers passed through our airport," Cutié said. "And that's something we take a lot of pride in." □

U.S. births dropped last year, suggesting the 2024 uptick was short-lived



The toes of a baby are seen at a hospital in McAllen, Texas, on Wednesday, July 29, 2020.

Associated Press

By MIKE STOBBE
AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. births fell a little in 2025, according to newly posted provisional data.

Slightly over 3.6 million births have been reported through birth certificates, or about 24,000 fewer than in 2024. The decline seems to confirm predictions by some experts, who doubted a slight increase in births in 2024 marked the start of an upward trend.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated its provisional birth data late last week, filling in two months of missing data and offering the first good look at last year's tally.

The posted numbers account for nearly all of the babies born in 2025, according to the CDC. Data is still being compiled and analyzed, but the final tally might only add "a few thousand additional births," said Robert Anderson, who oversees birth and death tracking at the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics. Experts say people are marrying later and also worry about their ability to have the money, health insurance and other resources needed to raise children in a stable environment.

Last year, the Trump administration took steps to encourage more births, like issuing an executive order meant to expand access to and reduce costs of in vitro fertilization and backing the idea of "baby bonuses" that might encourage more couples to have kids. So far, only the number of births are available and not birth rates and other information that can give insights into who is having babies.

For example, although births increased in 2024 over the year before, the fertility rate actually fell, noted Karen Guzzo, a family demographer at the University of North Carolina.

The fertility rate is a statistic describing whether each generation has enough children to replace itself about 2.1 kids per woman. □

The Kinshasa 'fashion lab' harnessing C.African talent

Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

In an abandoned hangar surrounded by dusty trucks in Kinshasa, young student models strut down a catwalk of artificial grass, showcasing their first-ever collection to their Congolese fashion school peers.

Container ships rumble outside in the Democratic Republic of Congo's capital, but the room holding the makeshift runway in the Regional Fashion Institute in Africa (IRMA) reverberates with chic electro basslines. IRMA welcomed a dozen students from five African countries in July, offering them free training in the basics of sewing and fashion entrepreneurship.

"I want to get noticed by brands or sponsors," Benjamin Biloa, a 24-year-old Cameroonian designer who dreams of opening a "haute couture house" in Yaounde, told AFP. The France-backed project aims to train more than 200 young people by 2026 in a bid to scout talent and boost the Congolese fashion industry, which is struggling in the face of low-price textiles imported from Asia.



A sapeur, a member of the Société des Ambianceurs et des Personnes Élégantes (SAPE) a subculture of exceptionally stylish, elegantly dressed men and women in Brazzaville (Republic of Congo) and Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo), arranges shoes on a table backstage ahead of a dress rehearsal ahead of a fashion show at the Regional Fashion Institute in Africa (IRMA) in Kinshasa, on January 31, 2026.

"The idea is to turn it into a fashion laboratory" in Central Africa, explained director Sidonie Latere during a tour of the institute, which boasts a photography studio, a library and an exhibition space.

Waste into work of art

The students rush to apply the finishing touches before gracing the catwalk.

One model slips into a pair of tartan ankle boots designed by the Congolese sapeur designer Koko Lingwala.

The model's immaculate suit, completed with a top hat and feathered cane, is an expression of "Sape", which stands for Société des Ambianceurs et des Personnes Élégantes roughly translating from French

as the Society of Ambiance Makers and Elegant People.

The subculture traces its origins to the colonial era when locals encountered European fashion, and sapeurs are known for their ultra-elegant clothing and sense of style.

Other fashionistas don a coat made of old curtains

and hessian, a bag of "tears of Job" from a bead-producing plant, and a skirt of plastic bags -- all with a view to giving a new lease of life to used clothes imported from Europe by blending them with natural materials.

"We can't keep going with fast fashion. I discovered that the textile industry is one of the most polluting," said Biloa, who designed a jacket of kuba cloth, a traditional textile made from the raffia palm.

"You can't go into fashion today and ignore the environmental consequences," Latere agreed.

"We can create an industry that turns this waste into works of art."

According to the director, most Congolese people already dress themselves in secondhand clothes.

Congolese creativity

Jules Kumpava, 27, was living on Kinshasa's streets when he decided to apply for the IRMA programme.

"My parents didn't want me to become an artist, so I had to leave home and find a way to support myself," said the young man, who has tried to launch his own T-shirt brand. □

As winter comes, so does garbage. A river in Bosnia chokes in tons of waste year after year

By ELDAR EMRIC
Associated Press

VISEGRAD, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AP) — Dejan Furtula sighed with despair while looking at construction machines working around the clock to remove tons of trash clogging the Drina River near his hometown of Visegrad, in eastern Bosnia.

The environmental activist is frustrated because the problem is not new. Every winter, garbage carried by swollen rivers in the region accumulates downstream, eventually piling up by barriers installed by a hydro power plant in Visegrad.

"This is a clear example of the lack of political will and inactivity of all rel-

evant institutions," Furtula, who runs the Eko Centar environmental group, said. "They meet year after year and make promises, but as we can see these scenes repeat themselves."

The sight recalls scenes from environmental disaster movies: an otherwise emerald green surface of river thickly covered with plastic bottles, pieces of wood or furniture, rusty barrels, home appliances or even dead animals. Furtula said medical waste is also there.

"This is an ecological disaster," he said. "The Drina is rich with fish and you can imagine the toxins that are being released here, there is virtually everything, it is a

big catastrophe." The waste comes from illegal dump sites upstream in Bosnia but also in neighboring Serbia and Montenegro. Several smaller tributaries across the region float into the Drina, all carrying their portion of the garbage.

In summer, the rivers are popular with rafters and nature lovers. The garbage problem culminates during winter months when swollen rivers sweep away illegal dump sites along their banks.

Officials from the three countries have pledged to work together to solve the issue. One such meeting of the environment ministers of Bosnia, Serbia and

Montenegro was held at the site back in 2019 but no solution appears to be in sight years later.

The situation illustrates how decades after the dev-

astating 1990s wars in the former Yugoslavia, the region lags behind the rest of Europe both economically and with regard to environmental protection. □



An aerial view shows tons of waste filling the Drina river in Visegrad, Bosnia, Thursday, Feb. 5, 2026.

Associated Press

Seed guardians of the Amazon: A family's solitary fight to save endangered plants

By GONZALO SOLANO

Associated Press

ALTO ILA, Ecuador (AP) —

On a recent journey into the Ecuadorian Amazon jungle, Ramón Pucha realized he was being trailed. Fresh puma tracks now lined the path alongside his own footprints. Unfazed, he continued his trek, focused entirely on the precious cargo he carried: seeds from some of the world's most endangered plant species.

Pucha and his family have spent years recreating their own piece of jungle with rescued species on a 32-hectare farm called El Picaflor in the Indigenous Quichua community of Alto Ila, 128 kilometers (80 miles) southeast of the capital, Quito.

"I have a passion for nature, for plants, for animals," said Pucha, 51, noting that his drive to protect the environment is so intense that many people in his community consider him "crazy." To save endangered plant species, Pucha ventures deep into the jungle, often alone, for up to five days at a time. On more than one occasion, he said he returned empty-handed because as a consequence



Ramon Pucha shows seeds and plant materials he has collected from the forest near his family farm in Alto Ila, in Ecuador's Amazon region, where he grows native species and shares seedlings with neighboring communities in an effort to preserve local species, Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2026.

Associated Press

of climate change and severe droughts across the region, many of the large trees had stopped producing seeds annually.

Once the seeds reach home, Pucha's wife, Marlene Chiluisa, takes charge. She plants them in suitable soil and compost so that they can begin to grow into plants that are then

replanted in the rainforest. The family even shares the fruits of their labor, selling or gifting a percentage of the plants to neighbors committed to forest regeneration.

Jhoel, the couple's 21-year-old son, has stepped into his father's role as the family's successor. An expert botanist, he moves through the forest identifying plants

by their common, traditional and scientific names with ease. He also serves as a guide, ferrying visitors across the turbulent Ila River in a precarious craft made of wooden planks lashed to a buoy.

Yet, for all their effort, the family's struggle remains a solitary one.

"Nobody gives us any incentive not the govern-

ment, not foundations, not anyone," said Chiluisa.

Ecuador's Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock recognizes the importance of the family's work, calling El Picaflor a "living laboratory" and a vital seed bank in an area scarred by 50 years of constant logging. But while Ecuador was the first country to enshrine the "rights of nature" in its constitution, that reputation is now at risk. Environmentalists and Indigenous groups warn that President Daniel Noboa's decision to merge the Ministry of Environment with the Ministry of Energy and Mines threatens the very landscape the family is fighting to save.

'That is my legacy'

As he walks across the property that was once barren pastureland, Pucha pauses to observe the plants, describing the unique purpose of each one. His eyes light up as he points to a small, growing tree, which he says is now rare in the area a type of fine wood that will reach maturity in 100 years. Though he knows he will never see it fully grown, he remains committed to his mission. □

Indian teacher who created hundreds of learning centers wins \$1 million Global Teacher Prize

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — An Indian teacher and activist known for creating hundreds of learning centers and painting educational murals across the walls of slums won the \$1 million Global Teacher Prize on Thursday.

Rouble Nagi accepted the award at the World Governments Summit in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, an annual event that draws leaders from across the globe.

Her Rouble Nagi Art Foundation has established more than 800 learning centers across India. They aim to have children who never attended school

begin to have structured learning. They also teach

children already in school. Nagi also paints murals



Indian teacher Rouble Nagi, left, receives the Global Teacher Prize trophy from Dubai Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed Al Maktoum, at a ceremony in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Thursday, Feb. 5, 2026.

Associated Press

that teach literacy, science, math and history, among other topics. Accepting the award, Rouble said the prize was an honor for herself and for India. She said she began 24 years ago with 30 children in one small workshop, and now reached over a million children.

"I think every step has just motivated me, inspired me to take every child in India to school," Rouble said. "You know when I was a child it was my dream to see every child at school and as you grow up fulfilling that for as many as we can reach, I think it's a very humbling experience." □

The prize is awarded by the Varkey Foundation, whose founder, Sunny Varkey, established the for-profit GEMS Education company that runs dozens of schools in Egypt, Qatar and the UAE.

"Rouble Nagi represents the very best of what teaching can be — courage, creativity, compassion, and an unwavering belief in every child's potential," Varkey said in a statement posted to the Global Teacher Prize website. "By bringing education to the most marginalized communities, she has not only changed individual lives, but strengthened families and communities." □

Downtown Aruba Condos: A Smart Investment in a Revitalized City Core

For years, Aruba's real estate spotlight has focused on Eagle Beach and Palm Beach. Today, however, downtown Aruba is emerging as one of the island's most strategic opportunities for buyers and investors alike. With ongoing revitalization, investor-friendly fiscal policies, walkable city living, and fewer rental restrictions than traditional residential areas, downtown condos offer a compelling combination of lifestyle and income potential.

The Revival of Downtown Aruba

Downtown Aruba is undergoing a dynamic transformation. Public and private investment is breathing new life into the city core through upgraded infrastructure, restored historic buildings, and modern residential developments. Streets are becoming more pedestrian-friendly, businesses are thriving, and a growing residential population is creating a vibrant community, lived-in atmosphere.

This revitalization positions downtown as a long-term growth area—appealing not only for lifestyle buyers, but also for investors seeking appreciation and consistent demand.

Beneficial Fiscal Policies for Investors

Aruba remains one of the most stable and transparent real estate markets in the Caribbean. Foreign buyers enjoy the same ownership rights as locals; property taxes are competitive, and the legal framework is well established. These factors provide confidence and predictability for long-term ownership and investment planning.

Downtown properties benefit fully from these policies while still offering more accessible entry prices than resort-centric zones. More people living downtown, restaurants and nightlife will soon come and create a vibrant

More Affordable Than Eagle or Palm Beach

Compared to Eagle Beach and Palm Beach, downtown condos are typically priced lower per square meter. Buyers often gain newer construction, modern layouts, and central locations at a more attractive cost. This affordability can translate into stronger rental yields and a lower barrier to entry for investors.

For end users, it means enjoying Aruba condo living without paying a beachfront premium.

Short-Term Rental Flexibility: A Key Investment Advantage
One of the most significant advantages of owning a condo downtown is short-term rental flexibility.

Downtown properties are generally not subject to the same annual rental limitations found in designated residential areas such as Noord and Pontón, where short-term rentals are restricted to a maximum of 90 days per year. These limitations can significantly impact income potential and investment strategy.

In contrast, downtown condo developments allow year-round short-term rentals, making them particularly attractive for Airbnb-style vacation rentals, business travelers, and short stays. This flexibility is a critical factor for investors seeking higher occupancy rates, diversified rental strategies, and stronger returns.

For buyers focused on income generation, this distinction alone can make downtown a far more compelling choice.

City Living—Aruban Style

Downtown condos offer true city living, something relatively rare on the island. Residents enjoy close proximity to offices, retail, cultural attractions, and everyday services. The atmosphere is lively yet relaxed, blending Aruba's easy-going lifestyle with the convenience of an urban setting.



This appeals to professionals, long-term residents, digital nomads, and investors targeting guests who prefer authentic, centrally located accommodations.

Walkable, Convenient, and Connected
Walkability is a defining feature of downtown living. Restaurants, cafés, shops, museums, and entertainment venues are all within easy reach. Daily life doesn't require constant car use, creating a more social, convenient, and sustainable lifestyle.

Downtown is also well connected to public transportation, marinas, and main roadways, making island-wide access simple.

A Growing Culinary Destination

Downtown Aruba has evolved into one of the island's most exciting culinary hubs. From fine dining and chef-led concepts to local eateries and international cuisine, the area continues to attract new restaurants, cocktail bars, and cafés. This vibrant food scene enhances both lifestyle appeal and short-term rental demand.

Close to the Beach—Without the Beach-front Premium

While downtown condos are not directly on the sand, Aruba's beaches are only minutes away. Residents and guests enjoy quick access to the coast while avoiding beachfront pricing, offering a balanced blend of urban living and island lifestyle.

The Bottom Line

Downtown Aruba condos offer a rare combination of revitalized urban living, favorable fiscal policies, lower entry prices, walkability, and crucially, short-term rental flexibility. Unlike residential areas with strict rental caps, downtown allows investors to fully capitalize on year-round rental demand.

Whether you're purchasing for personal use, income generation, or long-term appreciation, downtown Aruba stands out as one of the island's most strategic and future-forward real estate opportunities.

And if overlooking Paardenbai (Bay of Horses) and the Caribbean, even better. □

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Snakes of Aruba

BOA
(Boa constrictor)



SANTANERO
(Leptodeira bakeri)



CASCABEL
(Crotalus unicolor)



Arikok National Park is home to various unique plant and animal species such as Aruba's rare endemic rattlesnake *Crotalus unicolor*. This rattlesnake is locally known as the 'Cascabel'. But Aruba has two more snake species living on the island: the Santanero and the Boa.

Cascabel (*Crotalus unicolor*)

The small Cascabel or Aruba Island Rattlesnake averages 70 cm in length. The body color is often uniform gray or light brown. There 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. It is best to leave this snake alone. Do not attempt to catch or kill it.

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.

Santanero

The slender Santanero or Aruban Cat-eyed Snake is typically less than 50 cm long. This snake is recognizable by the large scales on the top of its head and by its pattern of dark brown bands alternating with light brown bands. The belly is plain white or cream colored without any markings. This snake is shy and not aggressive. However, it has enlarged teeth at the back of its mouth and mild venom which is not dangerous to humans. How-

ever, the venom can paralyze small lizards and frogs. Santaneros are most active at night when they search for food. During the day, they hide under rocks or leaves. They frequently climb trees and cactus. Santaneros eat toads, frogs, insects, and lizards. You may find Santaneros near dams during periods of rainy weather or crossing roads at night. This snake is found island wide. A Santanero in your garden will keep away the unwanted insects. If you encounter a Santanero around your garden, please do not harm this species.

Boa (Boa constrictor)

Boas are Aruba's largest snakes. The longest Boa found on the island was slightly less than 3 m. Newborn Boas average 35 cm. Boas are not venomous. The most distinctive feature of a Boa is its pattern of dark brown and tan blotches which become red toward the tail. The belly is white or cream colored with numerous black spots. Boas are excellent climbers and may be found in trees and cactus. Boas also hide in the leaves under bushes waiting to catch prey that pass. Boas catch their prey with their teeth and then constrict it in their coils. The Boa's diet consists of birds, lizards, rats, mice, and rabbits. Large Boas have been known to eat small goats and chickens. When threatened, Boas will hiss loudly. Boas are a non-native species. The first Boas were reported on the island in 1999. Since that time they have been found across the entire island in all types of habitats. □





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Lessons from our elders: Plants and fruits for medicinal use

(Oranjestad)— Though western medicine is now widely used for common illnesses and to keep our bodies healthy and happy, it is still very common in every household in Aruba (and around the world) to have staple home remedies that is passed on through generations. Here are some tips that our elders have passed on to us over the years.

Sweet potato

According to our elders, sweet potato is mostly useful for low blood pressure. People who suffer from low blood pressure were advised to eat sweet potato 2 to 3 times a week. However, if you have high blood pressure, it is best not to eat too much sweet potato, as this raises blood pressure. Sweet potatoes are also great for people who

work hard labor jobs, and it's been said to be aid blood circulation in the body, as well as help those with hemorrhoids or diarrhea.

Many of our elders opted to plant sweet potatoes themselves, mostly because of how easy it was to do so. Cut the end of a sweet potato let it sit in shallow water until it starts to sprout. Then you may plant it in the ground. Sweet potatoes need plenty of water to grow, especially in the first week in the ground. It was said that once you start to notice the ground crack underneath the flowers, it is time to harvest. This should happen around month 3.

Pomegranate

Pomegranates are also one of the easier fruits to plant and harvest. Originated from Persia, this plant

can grow almost everywhere. In Aruba, there are many homes that have a tiny or big pomegranate tree. You may be wondering what the difference is between a small and big pomegranate tree, for which the answer is based on harvest time. Tiny trees produce tinier pomegranates that can be harvested early on. Contrarily, big trees produce bigger pomegranates, but they need enough time to fully ripen before harvesting, otherwise you might end up with bitter seeds. Pomegranate trees are also very easy to plant. In essence, if you just throw the seeds on the ground, they could grow into a tree.

In terms of medicinal use, pomegranate skins are said to have a few benefits for our health. Ac-



cording to customs, pomegranate skin tea can help those that suffer from diarrhea. Dried pomegranate skin tea is also good for people who have worms. Pomegranate flowers can be boiled to make a drink and this can be used for irritated gums; just take a swig and let the tea sit in your mouth for a couple minutes. □

Source: Remedi i Kustumber di nos Bieunan (Medicine and Customs of our Elderly) by Dinah Veeris

Aruba's cultural and literary development: Then and now

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban culture has seen many substantial developments over the course of a century. With the introduction of the Lago Refinery at the turn of the 20th century, followed by the breakout of the Second World War and the general incentive for political independence during the mid-century, a cultural identity on the island began to take form and have since developed through international and local influences.

In the pre-industrial era of the 19th century, much could not be said about a cultural identity on the island. Still being a part of a Dutch colonial territory at the same, as well as not having political or economic autonomy (Curacao was the center of commerce, cultural life, and political management of the Netherland Antilles at the time), the small population of Aruba consisted mostly of farmers and fishermen, tending to their crops and their cattle, or going out to fish to provide for their family. As Quito Nicolaas states in his article *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* (Literary History of Aruba: Cultural Life), "during the pre-industrial period, there were no significant economic activity that could have created a cultural ambience, with only one way to generate profit at the time for the sub existence of Aruban families."

It wasn't until the introduction of the Lago Refinery in San Nicolas in 1928, that the island saw a small boom in cultural manifestations and entertainment, as farmers left the 'cunucu' (country) life to work in the refinery, which resulted in Aruba acquiring a different economic pillar. Before this, entertainment and cultural manifestations



were mostly experiences by local parishes and the island's elite, who often partook in cultural and entertaining activities around the island, like going to the movie theater or coming together to share poetry on Sundays after church.

Literary life

Throughout the 19th century and up until the 1940s, there were also not much trace of a cultural climate for the cultural-literary sector on the island. Primary education was introduced on the island mid-19th century, followed by secondary and higher education around the late 30's and 40's. It wasn't until the 1950s, with the introduction of the E.R.N.A agreement in 1951 and the signing of the Statute in 1954, which allowed more space for and control over the economic and cultural development of Aruba, that the literary life on the island began to grow substantially

compared to decades before. This was in response to local institutions established in the 1940s for cultural and literary growth on the island, but that did not yet capture the attention of the general public. The 1950 brought with it a boom of literary production on the island, like those of V.S. Piternella, as well as migrant authors José Ramón Vicioso y Rings William Rufus, who have also contributed to the literary development on the island. The literary movement was further promoted by local broadcasters Voz di Aruba and Radio Kelkboom, with their regular broadcast of literary works.

The 50s and 60s also saw the influence of international cultures, especially that of the United States. During this time, because of international influences as well as the continued prosperity of the oil refinery, cultural traditions in Aruba began to really take form and

become widespread, as different worldly and local concepts were introduced in the Aruban society. With the establishment of local television broadcast station Tele-Aruba in 1963, and with time and possibilities, local programs such as "Nos Tera" ("Our Land") started to pay more attention to the Aruban culture and worked to form a cultural consciousness in the community. The 1960s also saw the rise of local authors and artists, who were more comfortable in producing works in our native tongue, Papiamento, but who also produced works in Spanish, English and Dutch. This new phenomenon was in response to the interaction between economic growth, individual prosperity, cultural life and literary expression.

The 21st century

Nowadays, international influence on our culture is still prevalent, especially those from Latin America, the United States and The Netherlands. Nevertheless, there also exists a strong cultural identity and traditions that are exclusive to the Aruban culture, often manifesting during traditional celebrations, like Dia di San Juan/Dera Gay (St. John's Day), Dia di Himno y Bandera (National Hymn and Flag Day), Camping during Easter and much more. With the surge of social media in the last decade, artistic voices, especially those of the younger generation, has become even more prevalent and easily accessible to the community of Aruba through online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. □

Source: *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* by J.R. "Quito" Nicolaas



Cas di Torto



Cas di torto (also called **cas di lodo** or **cas di bara**) is a traditional building technique from Aruba. It refers to a type of houses made of mud with rounded corners. These houses were usually found around the plantations. The few structures that still exist are the oldest structures that are left standing in the country.

The technique probably came over from the Venezuelan Paraguaná Peninsula in the 18th century. Existing houses date back 150 years. Until 1925 many houses on Aruba were built using this technique, afterwards it fell into disuse. In 2005 there were 62 cas di torto houses left, of which only four were in good condition.

The skeleton of the houses is made up of round wooden poles placed with distances of 1.5 feet between them. Branches are interwoven between them, completing the structural support. On this basis, loam is applied, mixed with sand, water and paragrass. This is then coated with aloe vera juice, which gives the white color and helps to protect against the weather.

On top of the poles pieces of wood are fitted that serve as the base for the roof beams. Until 1815 the roofing usually consisted



of corn (maize) stems, afterwards the nuclei of columnar cacti were used. The floor is made of loam, mixed with cement or cow dung.

The houses were usually divided into a kitchen, a living room, a porch and a bedroom. In the kitchen would be a wooden or metal barrel for storing water that was collected in small rain ponds. Around this barrel a thick loam wall would be erected. Often large families would live in these houses; people would sleep on mats on the

floor.

If you visit the Arikok National Park you will be able to see a very nice cas di torto. □

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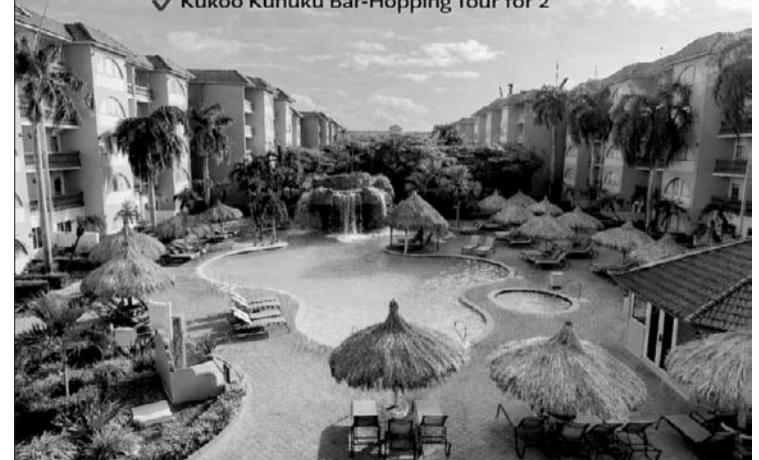
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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

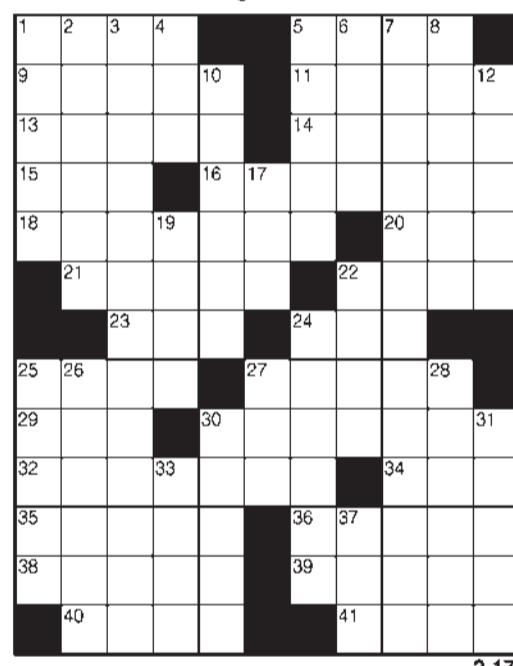
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38 More
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9 Mood 40 Sibilant
of the summons
people 41 Org.'s kin

11 Oryx's cousin
13 Make amends
14 "Otello" composer
15 Plunked down
16 Extreme
18 Like some cars
20 Wallet bill
21 Extreme pain
22 Quiche start
23 Gene messenger
24 Rascal
25 Thin board
27 Luminous glows
29 Femur's upper end
30 Fitting
32 Takes a breath
34 Crude abode
35 Annoy- ance
36 More than plump


DOWN

1 Minimum amount 10 Arizona 25 Armada city famed makeup
2 Parliament city for its red 26 Roster rocks 27 Orang-utan, e.g.
3 Shot takers 12 Chops up 17 Singer 28 Drunks Orbison 30 Not drowsy
5 Burton of "Roots" 19 Warning 31 Boat word back
6 Pub brews 22 Franc's replacement 33 Birds, to biologists
7 Map-makers 24 Screen 37 Sheep sight call



2-17

 A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

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.

2-17
CRYPTOQUOTE

A Y Q G Z B U P O W B G Z B P O X .

X O W B S F B Q F Y B Z O T B

Y C G G Y B Q E X Q C X N Y D B X A B

C X U Q A C B G K . — P O E W G R O C X

Cryptoquote: MUSIC EXPRESSES THAT WHICH CANNOT BE SAID AND ON WHICH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO BE SILENT. — VICTOR HUGO

Cruise ship Schedule: Feb. 2 - 8 2026

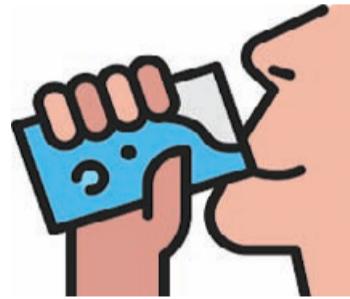
			ARR	DEPT	BERTH
MON	02	OCEANIA NAUTICA FREEWINDS - Dept.	07.00 ****	19.00 22.30	C E - -
TUE	03	CARNIVAL HORIZON SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00 08.00	22.00 23.00	B C 1 1
WED	04	ROTTERDAM BRILLIANCE OF THE SEAS FREEWINDS	08.00 08.00 06.00	17.00 23.00 ****	B C 1 1
THU	05	SILVER SHADOW BRILLIANT LADY NORWEGIAN SKY	13.00 10.00 13.30	22.00 22.30	B C I 1
FRI	06	SILVER SHADOW - Dept. MARELLA DISCOVERY NORWEGIAN STAR	**** 08.00 11.00	18.00 20.00 20.00	B C I 1
SAT	07	CARNIVAL LEGEND	09.00	22.00	C - 1
SUN	08	CARNIVAL MIRACLE CELEBRITY ASCENT FREEWINDS - Dept.	09.00 09.00 ****	22.00 23.00 22.30	B C 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.


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.

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

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

Difficulty: ★★★★

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ****

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2/6

Snack like a pro on Super Bowl Sunday with Panko-crusted chicken strips and game-changing sauce

By KATIE WORKMAN

Associated Press

Sometimes a chicken nugget is just a chicken nugget. Sometimes it's a crisp, panko-crusted strip of chicken breast with a sweet and tangy sauce. This is the latter.

Super Bowl Sunday is snack time at its finest. No one is looking for fancy footwork (at least not in the food realm; we do want to see that on the field). I have hosted more Super Bowl parties than I can (want to) count, and what I can tell you is that the delicate little canapes aren't going to fly off the buffet as fast as the nachos.

The best Super Bowl food lives in the same realm as the best bar food. And that includes chicken tenders.

If you tend to think of chicken strips as a guilty, kiddie-centric pleasure, give yourself permission to relax and enjoy them. They're basically fried chicken sans bone. But these chicken strips bake on a wire rack for maximum crispiness without frying. A little olive oil in the panko makes all the difference. For a spicy kick, add Sriracha to the egg wash.

Now the sauce, simple but game-changing: Melt apricot or orange preserves, stir in Dijon mustard and fresh thyme, and dip away. It's sweet, tangy and herbaceous, perfect for dunking each golden strip.

Bake, sauce, serve. The platter disappears fast, so consider making a double batch for a larger crowd. Easy enough for a weeknight, special enough for the big game, and guaranteed to impress both kids and adults.

Crispy Chicken Strips with Apricot Mustard Dipping Sauce

Serves 4 to 6

Ingredients:

1/2 cup all-purpose flour
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
2 large eggs
1/2 teaspoon Sriracha or other hot sauce, or to taste
1 1/2 cups Panko bread-



This image shows a recipe for crispy chicken strips with an apricot mustard dipping sauce.

Associated Press

crumbs

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 1/2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut crosswise into 1-inch thick strips (or use chicken tenders)

1 cup apricot or orange preserves

3 tablespoons Dijon mustard

1/2 teaspoon minced fresh thyme leaves

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place a wire cooling rack into a rimmed baking sheet.

2. Place the flour, salt and pepper in a shallow bowl. Whisk together the eggs

and Sriracha in a second shallow bowl. Combine the Panko and olive oil in a third bowl.

3. Working in small batches, toss the chicken strips in the flour, shake off any excess, dip them in the egg mixture, allow extra egg to drip back into the bowl, and roll them in the panko. Shake off any excess, then place the strips at least 1 inch apart on the wire rack. (It's possible you may need to bake these in two batches.)

4. Bake until the chicken strips are golden brown and cooked through, 15 to 18 minutes.

5. While the chicken is cooking, place the preserves in a small saucépan or skillet. Heat over low heat until melted, stirring occasionally, then stir in the mustard and thyme. □



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Drew Brees and Larry Fitzgerald headline a Hall of Fame class missing Bill Belichick

By JOSH DUBOW
AP Pro Football Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)

— Drew Brees and Larry Fitzgerald headlined the 2026 Pro Football Hall of Fame class featuring five players but not six-time Super Bowl winning head coach Bill Belichick.

Brees and Fitzgerald both made it in their first year of eligibility in results announced at NFL Honors on Thursday night after prolific careers. Luke Kuechly and Adam Vinatieri made it in their second seasons of eligibility, while Roger Craig was the lone pick among seniors, coaches and contributors.

"One of the coolest moments was getting up on that stage with all the other Hall of Famers," Fitzgerald said. "That moment kind of crystallized it for me."

But the class is also noteworthy for Belichick's absence as at least 11 of the 50 voters opted against giving him a vote despite a career with 333 wins in the regular season and playoffs and the most Super Bowl titles of any head coach. A report last week that



Adam Vinatieri, from left, stands with Luke Kuechly, Larry Fitzgerald, Roger Craig and Drew Brees after being announced for the Pro Football Hall of Fame class of 2026 during football's NFL Honors award show in San Francisco, Thursday, Feb. 5, 2026.

Associated Press

Belichick fell short in his first year of eligibility was met with widespread criticism of both the voters and the process for choosing Hall of Famers. "His stats speak for themselves," said Vinatieri, who played six years for Belichick.

"I thought he'd have a real good chance to be

up there as well. The people who voted made their votes and I think he'll be up here one day."

The man who hired Belichick in New England to set the stage for the Patriots dynasty also fell short, with owner Robert Kraft failing to get enough votes.

This is the second straight year with a smaller class after only four people made it last year as new rule changes have made it harder to get into the Hall. There had been at least seven people inducted in the previous 12 classes before last year.

That contributed to the

snub for Belichick and Kraft, who were grouped with Craig and two other players Ken Anderson and L.C. Greenwood who have been retired for at least 25 seasons. The voters picked three of the five candidates with the highest vote-getter and anyone else above 80% getting the honor.

Craig, who was in his 28th year of eligibility, was the only one of those five to make it. Craig was the first player ever to have 1,000 yards rushing and 1,000 yards receiving in the same season, which happened in 1985, and he led the NFL with 2,036 yards from scrimmage in 1988 when he helped San Francisco win the Super Bowl.

Craig also was part of the title-winning teams for the 49ers in the 1984 and 1989 seasons. His 410 yards from scrimmage in those Super Bowl wins are the third-most ever behind Hall of Famers Jerry Rice and Franco Harris. The four modern-era candidates all overlapped for several years, waging many battles against each other. □

Seahawks rookie safety Nick Emmanwori expects to play in Super Bowl after injuring ankle in practice

By ANDREW DESTIN
AP Sports Writer

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — Seahawks rookie safety Nick Emmanwori expects to play in the Super Bowl despite injuring his ankle during Wednesday's practice at San Jose State University as Seattle prepares to face New England.

Emmanwori said Thursday he was defending a pass on a routine out route, and when he landed, he rolled his ankle on the grass. He walked off the field on his own, and Emmanwori said he expects to play on Sunday.

"It just kind of caught me off guard," Emmanwori said. "Nobody really wants to get hurt or banged up during the Super Bowl

week or any week like that. It just kind of caught me off guard."

Emmanwori said he injured the same ankle as the one

he banged up in Week 1 in a 17-13 loss to the San Francisco 49ers, but that this time, it isn't as severe. Upon waking up Thursday morning, Emmanwori said

he was not sore.

Coach Mike Macdonald referred to Emmanwori's injury as a low ankle sprain, and even joked with reporters in San Jose before addressing the rookie's health.

"There's no way the first question's about Nick, is it?" Macdonald said. "Just rolled his ankle yesterday and has got a low ankle sprain."

Emmanwori did not participate in practice Thursday. Even so, Macdonald said he fully expects Emmanwori to play.

"He's doing great, and moving around," Macdonald said. "Just got to make sure we handle it the right way, and probably going to be overcareful and

overcautious at this point." Emmanwori, a second-round draft pick, appeared in 14 games during the regular season and had 81 tackles, 2 1/2 sacks, one interception and 11 pass breakups in the regular season.

During the playoffs, Emmanwori has a fumble recovery and four passes defensed, including three in the NFC championship game.

To prepare for Super Bowl 60, Emmanwori anticipates watching a lot of film to supplement any missed time on the practice field.

"It's nothing too serious to be even worried about," Emmanwori said. "I definitely feel good and know myself and I'll be ready to go." □



Seattle Seahawks safety Nick Emmanwori (3) speaks during a news conference on Thursday, Feb. 5, 2026, in San Jose, Calif., ahead of Super Bowl 60 between the New England Patriots and the Seattle Seahawks.

Associated Press

Super Bowl 2026: Time, channel, halftime show, how to watch

Patriots vs. Seahawks livestream

By DAVID BRANDT

AP Sports Writer

If the Super Bowl 60 matchup between the New England Patriots and Seattle Seahawks gives off a familiar vibe, it is completely understandable.

That's because it's a rematch of one of the most memorable Super Bowls in recent history: In 2015, the Patriots secured a 28-24 victory over the Seahawks after Malcolm Butler intercepted a Russell Wilson pass from the 1-yard line in the final minute.

Many Seattle fans are still incredulous that Marshawn Lynch didn't get the ball on a handoff at the 1.

This year's Patriots-Seahawks matchup features a new cast of characters on both sides. New England is seeking its NFL-record seventh Super Bowl victory and is led by young quarterback Drake Maye, coach Mike Vrabel and a stifling de-



New England Patriots head coach Mike Vrabel celebrates with the trophy after the AFC Championship NFL football game between the Denver Broncos and the New England Patriots, Sunday, Jan. 25, 2026, in Denver.

Associated Press

How do I watch the Super Bowl?

The game will be aired on NBC and Telemundo. Mike Tirico will be the play-by-play announcer with Cris

Collinsworth as the analyst. Melissa Stark, Kaylee Hartung and rules analyst Terry McAulay are also part of the broadcast team.

What time is the Super Bowl?

It will start at roughly 6:30 p.m. EST on Sunday, Feb. 8.

Which team is the Super Bowl favorite?

The Seahawks are a 4 1/2 point favorite, according to BetMGM Sportsbook.

What are the streaming options for the Super Bowl?

Some of the streaming options include Peacock, Hulu + Live TV, YouTube TV, NFL+ and DirecTV.

What's the recent Super Bowl news?

Unheralded players who

could make a big impact in the Super Bowl

Don't tune into the Super Bowl hoping for a break from politics

Patriots defensive coordinator Terrell Williams thrilled to be cancer-free, with team for Super Bowl

Drake Maye's shoulder injury improves ahead of Super Bowl showdown

Seahawks' Clint Kubiak focused on Super Bowl, not Raiders job

Who is performing during the Super Bowl halftime show?

Bad Bunny will bring his Latin trap and reggaeton swagger to the NFL's biggest stage: The Grammy winner will headline the Apple Music Super Bowl halftime show in Northern California. □

NFL launches challenge to improve facemasks and reduce concussions

By JOSH DUBOW

AP Pro Football Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The NFL is challenging innovators to improve the facemask on football helmets to reduce concussions in the game.

The league announced on Friday at an innovation summit for the Super Bowl the next round in the HealthTECH Challenge series, a crowdsourced competition designed to accelerate the development of cutting-edge football helmets and new standards for player safety.

The challenge invites inventors, engineers, startups, academic teams and established companies to improve the impact protection and design of football helmets through improvements to how facemasks absorb and reduce the effects of contact on the field. □



A Seattle Seahawks helmet is seen during an NFL Super Bowl football practice on Wednesday, Feb. 4, 2026, in San Jose, Calif., ahead of Super Bowl 60 between the New England Patriots and the Seattle Seahawks.

Associated Press

Most progress on helmet safety has come from improvements to the shell and padding, helping to reduce the overall rate of concussions. But this past season, 44% of in-game concussions resulted from impact to the player's facemask, up from 29% in 2015, according to data gathered by the NFL. □

History awaits: Will the Super Bowl finally see a punt return touchdown?

By JOSH DUBOW
AP Pro Football Writer

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — The first touchdown in Super Bowl history came on a pass from Bart Starr to Max McGee 59 years ago for the Green Bay Packers. The most recent came on a 50-yard deep strike from Patrick Mahomes to Xavier Worthy last year.

In between those, there have been 323 additional touchdowns scored in Super Bowl history coming on runs, passes, interception returns, kick returns, fumble returns and blocked punts. Surprisingly, no one has ever returned a punt for a score in the NFL's biggest game in a drought that just might come to an end this year in a game featuring



Seattle Seahawks wide receivers Rashid Shaheed (22) and Montorie Foster Jr. (87) stretch during an NFL Super Bowl football practice on Wednesday, Feb. 4, 2026, in San Jose, Calif., ahead of Super Bowl 60 between the New England Patriots and the Seattle Seahawks.

Associated Press

two of the league's most dynamic returners.

"I just got educated about that," New England's Marcus Jones said this week. "Being able to be the first one in history to do that would mean a lot."

Jones has three career punt return touchdowns, including two this season. His counterpart in Seattle, Rashid Shaheed, also has three in his career, including one this season.

Shaheed said he was asked this week to guess how many there had been in a Super Bowl and figured at least two, before finding out the actual answer.

"That's crazy," he said before echoing Jones in that it would mean a lot to be the first.

After 259 punt returns ended short of the end zone in Super Bowl history, could this be the year someone breaks through?

It nearly happened three years ago when Kansas City's Kadarius Toney had a 65-yard return that set up a 5-yard TD drive in the fourth quarter in one of the key moments in the Chiefs' win over Philadelphia.

Shaheed and Jones will try to do a little better this year. "It would be obviously, history," Shaheed said. "It would mean a lot to the team, being able to create

a game-changing play like that. It would be amazing." It would be fitting if a big special teams play had a major impact on the Super Bowl after a season that seemed to produce more game-altering plays in the often overlooked third phase of the game.

The 2025 season was the year of special teams with a record number of long field goals, a staggering number of blocked kicks, big returns and costly blunders playing a big role every week.

The 44 blocked kicks were tied for the most in any season since 2017 and the 15 punt return touchdowns were the most since 2012. There were also an NFL-record 73 made field goals from at least 55 yards — including 12 from 60-plus for more than double the previous high for a season.

The kick return rate jumped to 74% from 33% last season in the second year of the so-called "dynamic" kickoff for the highest return rate in 15 years.

"I think a big part of that is because now you're covering every kick and because of that now you're putting more focus on kickoffs and returns and maybe not as much focus on punt returns," Patriots special teams coordinator Jeremy Springer said. "Now you are getting a good mix of big punt returns, punt blocks, kickoff returns, kickoffs."

"It's been fun. You have to embrace it and find ways to beat it."

While Drake Maye, Sam Darnold and the stellar defenses for New England and Seattle might be getting most of the headlines this week, the team that wins the kicking game Sunday might well end up hoisting the Lombardi Trophy. The Seahawks, under special teams coordinator Jay Harbaugh, were the top team in the NFL this season in expected points added by special teams play, gaining nearly four points per game better than average. □

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