

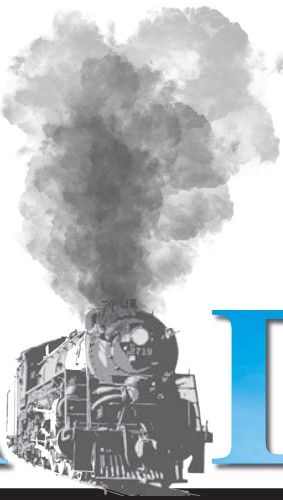
GIVING SEASON

Toys for Tots supporting families in need • News 3A



MUSTANGS DEFEAT DRAGONS

Northwest sweeps doubleheader with BPH • Sports 11A



Weekend Edition

SEDALIA DEMOCRAT

Issue 247 • Volume 154

Saturday, December 17, 2022

SedaliaDemocrat.com • \$2

Festive lights bring holiday glow



City of Sedalia Christmas Light Contest winners announced

First place winners Michael and Patty Burdick's display at 606 E. 11th St. is beautiful even though fiber optic crews are digging their way through the front yard.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT



Second place winners Brandon Hammond and Steve Borun of 235 S. Park Ave. have a wonderfully tasteful display on their home across the street from the Liberty Park Christmas lights.

See LIGHTS | 6A



An inflatable gingerbread house and gingerbread man welcome visitors to the Burdick home on East 11th Street.

Dick says goodbye to Pettis County Commission

By Skye Melcher skyem@sedaliademocrat.com



David Dick

On Dec. 31, Pettis County Presiding Commissioner David Dick will say goodbye to the courthouse and hello again to the farm.

Dick has served as Presiding Commissioner since Jan. 1, 2015, after being elected into office for the first time and has served eight years in the seat.

To remind himself every day about being a good leader, Dick had a photo of his great-grandfather, who was the road superintendent of the 12 Mile Road District for 20 years, on the edge of his computer. Dick said it also served as a reminder to do the right thing.

"It was a picture taken probably in the early '20s..." Dick said. "He was in a horse and buggy and my grandpa was on top of a team of horses with a wagon with bridge timbers on it and then my great-uncle, my

grandfather's brother, was on another teaming wagon off to the right."

The commission has changed vastly over the eight years Dick has served in office. The job is more than what residents think it is.

"When I first got here, it was pretty simple — the basic worry was about the roads," Dick said. "Jim (Marcum) was here when I got here and Brent Hampy was the Eastern Commissioner and they were so good to me and they were so good to work with."

See DICK | 6A

United Way to accept Day of Action applications

By Faith Bemiss fbemiss@sedaliademocrat.com

Director Samantha Gilpin said from there, the volunteers focus on surrounding neighborhoods.

Beginning Jan. 1, United Way of Pettis County will accept 2023 Day of Action Project applications.

The Day of Action is United Way's largest volunteer event, where it partners with the city to see if an area needs revitalization. UWPC Executive

"We usually bring together from 200 to 300 volunteers," she added. "They do tasks like trash pick-up, raking up leaves, picking up sticks, mowing. We've had groups clean gutters, painting, washing windows."

See UNITED | 5A



Volunteers work to clean up Vermont Park during the 2022 United Way of Pettis County Day of Action. UWPC will begin accepting 2023 Day of Action applications on Jan. 1.

PHOTO COURTESY OF UNITED WAY OF PETTIS COUNTY

Katy Trail land survey in Windsor cuts into yards, home



Patrick Smith, of Windsor, shows the new Missouri State Parks boundary marker, which appeared in his yard Wednesday, cutting hundreds of feet from his property.

PHOTO BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT

By Chris Howell chrish@sedaliademocrat.com

WINDSOR — Residents of Windsor whose properties border the Katy Trail State Park are concerned as a land survey by Missouri State Parks is finding much of what they thought was their property is on the Missouri State Parks easement.

Patrick Smith has a home on Colt Street he rents to his father. It has a gently sloping lawn that adjoins the State Park that now has a property marker from the recent survey.

"My father rents my property from me, and he sent me a picture from Wednesday morning," Smith said. "They put a State Park boundary line right up against my house, which takes up approximately half of my property."

Smith's neighbor recently installed a new privacy fence, which Smith believes may have initiated the State's survey. Smith said he called the director of Missouri State Parks and was given the same impression.

See KATY | 5A



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Letters to Santa!

Drop off your letters to Santa in the North Pole Mailbox located in the lobby of the Heckart Community Center! Letters that arrive before December 17th will receive a letter from Santa in return. Santa letters are free to drop off but please include a return address to make sure Santa can mail a letter back to you! Letter drop off is open from December 1-17.

Group Swim Lessons!

Session 3 of our indoor group swim lessons begin on January 21 and run thru February 25th. Lessons are at the Heckart Community Center on Saturday mornings. \$40 per person. Register by January 13th! To register, call or stop by the Heckart Community Center or online registration is available!

Biddy Basketball/Little Hoopsters!

Instructor led with parent interaction, this program will work to teach kids the skill set of basketball. \$25 per player for ages 3-6. Program starts February 27 and will be held at the Heckart Community Center. All players get a tshirt.

## OBITUARIES

### Virginia Hodges

Virginia Hodges, 92, of Stover, MO, passed away Wednesday, December 14, 2022, at Golden Age Living Center in Stover.

She was born November 11, 1930, a daughter of Jack & Gertrude (Todd) Lee. On October 15, 1950, she married William Dean Hodges and he preceded her in death on June 30, 2011. They were married for 61 years.

Virginia was a member of the Stover United Methodist Church. She was a past member of the Eastern Star in Versailles. Virginia was always busy with many different jobs, she enjoyed baking and cooking for her family and loved to share with others. She loved going to all her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren's sporting events.

Virginia was a wonderful loving caretaker to her mother and her husband. She leaves behind many family and friends who were blessed by having her in their lives.

Survivors include, five children, Lynda Hiller (Lloyd) of Russellville,

Vicki Jones (Mark) of La Monte, Ron Hodges (Sue), Shelly Hodges Nelson, all of Stover, and Scott Hodges (Stephanie) of Arizona; 15 grandchildren, 46 great-grandchildren with one due on January, 5 great-great-grandchildren; one sister-in-law Darlene Lee.

In addition to both of her parents and her husband she was preceded in death by two brothers, Robert Lloyd Lee and Nelson E. Lee; two sisters-in-law, Vivian Lee and Erma Marriott, and two great-grandchildren.

Visitation will be held at 1:00 p.m. until service time on Sunday, December 18, 2022, at the Stover United Methodist Church. Funeral services will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday at the church with burial to follow in the Versailles Cemetery. Memorial contributions are suggested to the Stover United Methodist Church, Golden Age Living Center Activities Fund, or Stover Booster Club. Arrangements are in the care of Scrivner-Page-Dady Funeral Home in Stover, MO.



### Evelyn "Sue" Branson

Evelyn "Sue" Branson, 93, of Sedalia, MO, passed away on Wednesday, December 14, 2022, at EW Thompson Health and Rehabilitation Center in Sedalia. She was born on August 31, 1929, in Hurdland, MO, the daughter of Blair Reed and Mary M. Gelbach.

On May 27, 1948, in Nashua, IA, she was united in marriage to H.N. "Chuck" Branson, who preceded her in death.

Sue loved handworks such as counted cross stitch, embroidery, needlepoint, beading, and quilting, but her favorite was knitting. She taught many people how to knit. She opened Tiffany Yarns and Needlecraft in May of 1973 and reluctantly closed the shop in 1992. She loved antiques and had a great eye for potential treasures.

She attended the Central Business College of Sedalia to learn secretarial skills. She landed a job as secretary to the Academic Dean at State Fair Community College in 1968. She held the position

until her retirement in 1995. She loved her job, her coworkers, the students, and Roadrunner Basketball.

Sue made friends easily wherever she was. She loved life and found joy in everyday things.

Sue is survived by four children, Fred N. Branson (Sally Lockett) of Sedalia, Tom R. Branson of Grass Valley, CA, Michael T. Branson, and Dana Branson, both of Sedalia; five grandsons; and four great-grandchildren.

Other than her parents and husband, she is preceded in death by a brother, Blair Reed Gelbach Jr.

A Celebration of Life gathering will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. on Tuesday, December 20, 2022, at Rea Funeral Chapel in Sedalia.

Honorary bearers will be her grandsons.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the State Fair Community College Foundation or the Sedalia Animal Shelter in care of Rea Funeral Chapel.



## FUNERALS

### Hodges, Peter William "Bill,"

11 a.m. Saturday at Sacred Heart Church. Arrangements are under the direction of McLaughlin Funeral Chapel in Sedalia.

### Winfrey, Richard Allen

oon Saturday at New Life Church Ministries in Sedalia. Cremation arrangements are under the direction of Heckart Funeral Home and Cremation Service in Sedalia.

### Hodges, Virginia

2 p.m. Sunday at the Stover United Methodist Church. Arrangements are under the direction of Scrivner-Page-Dady Funeral Home in Stover.

### Pollard, David Earl

6 p.m. Monday at Rea

Funeral Chapel in Sedalia. Arrangements are under the direction of Rea Funeral Chapel.

### Branson, Evelyn "Sue"

4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday at Rea Funeral Chapel in Sedalia. Arrangements are under the direction of Rea Funeral Chapel.

### Combs, Mary Ruth (Mittelhauser)

11 a.m. Thursday at First Christian Church. Arrangements are under the direction of Heckart Funeral Home in Sedalia.

### McNeal, James Edward "Jim"

7 p.m. Thursday at New Hope Baptist Church. Arrangements are under the direction of Rea Funeral Chapel in Sedalia.

On the evening of Wednesday, December 14, Mary Ruth (Mittelhauser) Combs was welcomed into her eternal home.

Mary Ruth was born on December 28, 1939, to Maynard and Ruth (McKenzie) Mittelhauser in Neelyville, MO. On August 11, 1957, she married the love of her life, Ray Combs.

When she was young, her family moved to Sedalia, Missouri. She attended the one-room Brown Schoolhouse, which would later become part of her and Ray's property. She was a proud graduate of the Smith-Cotton class of 1957 and cherished her many lifelong high school friends.

Mary Ruth worked for Dr. David Edwards while in high school and up until the time she and Ray moved to Fort Lewis, Washington.

### Mary Ruth (Mittelhauser) Combs

When they returned after Ray's discharge from the Army, she became a full-time homemaker raising four children. She



had a large garden and canned most of their vegetables for the next year. She was also a gifted seamstress and made clothes for both her daughters as well as herself.

Food was a large part of her legacy – the family ate well, and she shared food with lots of friends and family.

In 1978 Mary Ruth once again joined the workforce working for Dr. Anderson, DDS, specializing in oral surgery. Mary Ruth managed his office and was responsible for filing insurance claims. After his retirement, Dr. Beasley bought the practice and she ultimately retired in 2014 from the offices of Dr. Flack and Stone.

### Robert E. Dart

Robert E. Dart, 81, of Ashley, passed away on December 15, 2022.

The Snyder-Rodman Funeral Center is honored to serve the Dart family. For a full obituary or to leave a condolence or memory, please visit [www.snyderfuneralhomes.com](http://www.snyderfuneralhomes.com).



### Wyman Lloyd Griffith

Wyman Lloyd Griffith was born May 16, 1931, on the family farm near Kingsley, Iowa, to Lloyd and Mabel Warren Griffith. He excelled academically and in numerous track and field events at Kingsley High School, graduating as valedictorian in 1949.

Wyman married Emma Lou Coffey on October 18, 1956, in Lincoln, Mo., where they lived most of their 40 years together. Three children were born into this union, Twyla, Dana and Delmar.

Wyman's main life work was as a pipelayer, working as a union laborer for 30 years. He was a published songwriter, an accomplished poet and a lifelong learner, especially enjoying scientific discovery.

Wyman was preceded in death by his wife, Emma Lou, a daughter-in-law, Joyce Griffith, a brother Warren "Pete" Griffith and his parents.

He is survived by two sisters, Gwen Bierman of Kingsley, Iowa, and Colleen (Lloyd) Keck of Washta, Iowa; one brother, Bob Griffith of Kingsley, Iowa; his children, Twyla (Kent) Rader of Cincinnati, Ohio, Dana and Georgia Griffith of Sedalia, Mo., and Delmar Griffith of Smithton, Mo.; seven grandchildren, Keith, Maggie, Jon, Jeremy, Michelle, Darin, and Lisa; 10 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Wyman was buried in his hometown of Kingsley, Iowa, on December 12, 2022.

### David Earl Pollard

David Earl Pollard, 73, of Sedalia, MO, passed away Thursday, December 15, 2022, at the University of Missouri Hospital in Columbia, MO. He was born on September 7, 1949, in Fayette, MO, the son of Russell Earl Pollard, who preceded him in death, and Mary Bernice (Maher) Pollard, who resides in Marshall, MO.

On November 26, 1976, in Macon, GA, he was united in marriage to Linda Elizabeth Morton, who resides in the home.

Dave was a 1973 graduate of Central Missouri State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. He served his country honorably in the Missouri Army National Guard. Dave enjoyed watching NASCAR and going to the races. He was an avid Kansas City Chiefs fan. Dave loved going camping and to the beach. He especially loved spending time with

his family.

Along with his wife and mother, Dave is survived by five children, Angela Ennis of South Carolina, Nikki Kaufman (Newly) of Florida, Matt Pollard (Jennifer) of Georgia, Ashley Pollard (Jake) of Oregon, and Tiffany Flood (Rick), of South Carolina; eight grandchildren, Tristan, Devin, Trinity, Connor, Jackson, Nate, Cameron, and Tucker; a brother, Steve Pollard (Heidi) of Marshall, MO and a sister, Regina Malcom of Blue Springs, MO.

In addition to his father, Dave was preceded in death by a grandson, Carson Earl Pollard.

A celebration of life gathering with family and friends will be held from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. Monday, December 19, 2022, at Rea Funeral Chapel, Sedalia.



Mary Ruth was a lifelong member of the Brown Community Club. She was also a faithful member of First Christian Church, where she belongs to the Bethany Sunday School Class, Group 5 and DWM. She was a 4-H Leader for Brown 4-H Club. Mary Ruth loved many things, but what she loved most were her children and grandchildren. She bent over backward to make family plans that worked for everyone.

Survivors include her husband Ray of 65 years; four children, all of Sedalia: Christy Goodman (Mickey), Kevin (Loletta), Kenneth (Terri) and Carla Curry (Bill); six grandchildren: Nicholas (Lindsey) of Martin, TN, Jacelyn Hejtmank (Kyle) of Kansas City, MO, Miles (Lindsey) Curry of Sedalia, Mitchel Curry (Cord) of Lee's Summit, Macie Curry of Sedalia and McCade Curry of Sedalia; four great-

grandchildren; a brother Carl Mittelhauser (Crystal) of Cocoa Beach FL; a sister Donna Ray of St. Louis, MO; along with several nieces and nephews.

The family would like to thank all who were involved in her care. She was loved by many.

Visitation will be at First Christian Church, Sedalia, MO, on Wednesday, December 21, 2022, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. The funeral service will be Thursday, December 22, 2022, at 11 a.m. at the church, with burial following at Memorial Park. The service will be live-streamed by the church.

While Mary Ruth loved flowers, she always believed that memorial donations left a more lasting impression. The family suggests donations to First Christian Church or a charity of your choice. Arrangements are by Heckart Funeral Home.

### James Edward "Jim" McNeal

James Edward "Jim" McNeal, 72, of Sedalia, MO, was received into the arms of Jesus on Thursday, December 15, 2022. He was born October 4, 1950, in Tipton, MO, to Margaret Pauline (Blankenship) McNeal and Luther Edward McNeal.

After eight years of courtship, he married the love of his life, Lisa, on April 6, 2012.

Jim was a hard worker, never one to sit idly, and held many jobs from the time he was a young boy. His employment roles varied from catching groundhogs to painting cars to being an over-the-road truck driver to riding the Missouri Pacific rails looking for damage. He was a bus mechanic at R.W. Harmon & Sons and owned and operated McNeal's Auto Repair for several years. After 22 years of service, he retired from Sedalia School District as a custodian. He spent most of his career at Horace Mann, where his favorite part of the job was interacting with the kids, who affectionately called him Mr. Jim.

Jim's favorite hobbies included walking the Katy Trail, smoking meats, cooking, fishing, shooting, hunting, camping, vegetable gardening, and model trains. He taught himself

woodworking, carpentry and automotive skills. He loved visiting Colorado and exploring the Garden

of the Gods.

He treasured fellowship with his Christian brothers at New Hope. Above all, his grandsons were his greatest joy.

Jim leaves a lifetime of beautiful

memories for his wife; his daughter, Rebecca Fairfax (Jimmy); his stepchildren, Heather Ross and Michael Ross; his grandson, Jayce Richardson; and bonus granddaughters, Jacquelyn Fairfax and Raegan Fairfax. He is also survived by siblings Gladys Hill, Frances Albers (Steve), and Margaret Jones.

He was preceded in death by his parents, siblings Wanda Aldrich, Jeanne Curry, Charles McNeal and Anna James, and his grandson Noah Richardson.

A celebration of life service will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday, December 22, 2022, at New Hope Baptist Church in Sedalia. The family will receive friends at the church one hour prior to the service.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude to help children fight cancer.

Arrangements are under the direction of Rea Funeral Chapel.

### William Lee Noland

William Lee Noland, 81, of Sedalia, MO, passed away on Thursday, December 15, 2022, at his home in Sedalia, with his wife by his side. He was born on February 28, 1941, in Kansas City, MO, the son of Robert Thomas and Beatrice Marie "Wright" Noland, who preceded him in death.

On September 1, 1973, in Sedalia, MO, he was united in marriage to Nilda "Griffiths" Noland, who survives in the home.

Bill graduated high school from Smith-Cotton High School in 1959. He was named All-American in football for Smith-Cotton. Bill served his country honorably in the United States Army. He worked for the Pipe Fitter's Local #533 in Kansas City, MO, until his retirement on April 1, 2001. Bill loved to barbecue. He owned and operated Noland's 59er

Diner in Sedalia. He also enjoyed fishing, watching football, and associating with his friends. Bill

especially loved spending time with his family.

Along with his wife, Bill is survived by two daughters, Alisha Robinson of Alpharetta, GA, and Michelle Lynn Marek of Sedalia; a

brother, Robert Thomas Noland of California; nine grandchildren, Chance, Braden, Tanner, Gabrielle, Zack, Chris, Heather, Rachel, and Garaleigh; 10 great-grandchildren; several cousins, nieces, and nephews.

In addition to his parents, Bill was preceded in death by a son, Gary Noland.

There will be no formal services held.

Cremation arrangements are in the care of Rea Funeral Chapel.



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# Toys for Tots supporting families in need

**By Meliyah Venerable**  
meliyahv@warrensburgstarjournal.com

WARRENSBURG — The Marine Corps Toys for Tots is finishing up its 2022 campaign. This year, the local campaign is able to service over 2,000 families across five counties, which is over 200 more families than the 2021 campaign.

This particular campaign, coordinated by Jerome Coleman, serves Johnson, Pettis, Lafayette, Henry, and Benton counties.

Although the campaign is able to help thousands of families, they had struggles this year with obtaining enough donations from businesses around Missouri.

Coleman said one of the supporting stores, Dollar General, has been a huge factor in donations.

"I get most of my toy donations from stores like Dollar General," Coleman said. "A lot of the sponsors we had last year did not help this year. But the Dollar Generals have been a major toy donation."

With the lack of donations, Coleman had to reach out to the Toys for Tots foundation for some support. The foundation was able to send another shipment of toys to the Warrensburg location.

"We [the foundation] spent about \$25,000 on toys," Coleman said. "We gained about \$7,000 in donations. Overall the foundation has stepped up. This is the second supplement we have received and they only send second supplements if the campaign is lacking. We were lacking, we had so many orders... so I had to reach out to the Toys for Tots Foundation."

The truck arrived at the Warrensburg Toys for Tots location on Wednesday, Dec. 14, with five pallets filled with boxes of toys.

After unloading the boxes and unpackaging the toys, the team will begin to put together bags for the children and families that have requested assistance.

Community National Bank was one of the businesses around Johnson County that was able to support the Toys for Tots campaign. Their employees raised \$250, which the bank matched for a total donation of \$500 to the foundation.

Coleman stressed the importance of Toys for Tots and why the support from businesses in the five counties is so important. There has been a steady increase in the number of families reach-



From left, Toys for Tots coordinator Jerome Coleman is joined by Community National Bank's Janet Mudd, Mary Andrew and Presley Stropes inside CNB on Wednesday, Dec. 14.

PHOTO BY MELIYAH VENERABLE | WARRENSBURG STAR-JOURNAL

ing out to the foundation for assistance.

"If we were not doing this, this holiday would not be what it is for five different counties. You can tell just by the numbers that if we were to not do this, those children would not have gifts," he said.

The 2022 campaign is wrapping up, but the 2023 campaign will begin on Oct. 1, 2023. Coleman hopes for more community support to guarantee children in Johnson, Pettis, Lafayette, Henry, and Benton counties have a merry Christmas.

"We will need more support

from our business," Coleman said. "We cater to over 2,000 kids."

For more information, contact Warrensburg.mo@toysfortots.org or visit warrensburg-mo.toysfortots.org.

Meliyah Venerable can be reached at 660-747-8123.



Toys for Tots coordinator Jerome Coleman demonstrates how to unpackage teddy bears inside the Warrensburg Toys for Tots warehouse on Wednesday, Dec. 14.



Volunteers from Standing in the Gap Ministries and Whiteman Air Force Base unload a trailer full of toys at the Warrensburg Toys for Tots warehouse on Wednesday, Dec. 14.

## POLICE REPORTS

This list is a sampling of crime in Sedalia and the surrounding area. Information is taken from official police reports, which do not necessarily contain statements from all parties involved in each case.

### Sedalia Police Department Arrests Dec. 14

4:35 p.m.: Lindsay D. Brown, 25, of Smithton, was arrested after officers were dispatched to the 1500 block of South Missouri Avenue for a domestic disturbance. While trying to de-escalate the situation, a primary aggressor was determined and Brown was taken into custody for fourth-degree domestic assault. She was transported to the Pettis County Jail and placed on a 24-hour hold.

### Incidents Dec. 13

1 p.m.: Officers were dispatched to the 400 block of West Fifth Street in reference to a possible hostage situation. After 35 minutes of attempting to make contact with the resident, it was discovered only one person was inside the house. The

subject was released and the incident was documented with a report.

**Dec. 14**  
11:50 a.m.: Officers took a report in the lobby in reference to a sexual assault in the 300 block of West Third Street. The suspect in the case has not been located.

**Dec. 15**  
9:31 a.m.: Officers spoke with a party of theft that occurred in the 400 block of East Fifth Street. She had a package stolen from the post office that has not been

recovered.  
8:22 p.m.: A victim contacted the Sedalia Police Department to report debit card fraud in the 400 block of West Broadway Boulevard. The victim was interested in pursuing charges.

10:17 p.m.: Officers responded to the SPD lobby for a theft report of an incident from the 600 block of Duke Drive. Information was collected and a report was completed. There are no suspects.

Compiled by Chris Howell.

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# Want to email your doctor? You may be charged for that

**By Amanda Seitz**  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The next time you message your doctor to ask about a pesky cough or an itchy rash, you may want to check your bank account first — you could get a bill for the question.

Hospital systems around the country are rolling out fees for some messages that patients send to physicians, who they say are spending an increasing amount of time poring over online queries, some so complex that they require the level of medical expertise normally dispensed during an office visit.

Patient advocates, however, worry these new fees may deter people from reaching out to their doctor and that they add another layer of complexity to the U.S. health care system's already opaque billing process.

"This is a barrier that denies access and will result in hesitancy or fear to communicate and potentially harm patients with lower quality of care and outcomes at a much higher cost," said Cynthia Fisher, the founder of Patient Rights Advocate,

a Massachusetts-based nonprofit that pushes for online price transparency.

The explosion of telehealth over the last three years — driven by the COVID-19 outbreak and relaxed federal regulations for online care — prompted many doctors to adopt more robust telecommunication with their patients. Consultations that once happened in an office were converted to computer or smart phone visits. And health care systems invited patients to use new online portals to message their doctors with a question at any time, American Medical Association president Jack Resneck Jr. told The Associated Press.

"When people figured out this is cool and could improve care, you saw hospitals and practice groups saying to patients, welcome to your portal ... you can ping your physician with questions if you want," Resneck said. "We found ourselves as physicians getting dozens and dozens of these a day and not having time built in to do that work."

The charges vary for each patient and hospital system, with messages

costing as little as \$3 for Medicare patients to as much \$160 for the uninsured. In some cases, the final bill depends on how much time the doctor spends responding.

Health systems that have introduced these new policies, many in recent months, say they automatically alert patients that they may be charged when they message their doctor through online portals, such as MyChart, an online system that many organizations now use for scheduling appointments or releasing test results to patients.

Under new billing rules devised during the pandemic, doctors are permitted to bill Medicare for as little as 5 minutes of time spent on an online message in a seven-day period, according to the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare.

Doctors need to be paid for the time they spend doling out expert medical advice — even over messages, said University of Chicago health economist Katherine Baicker. But it's also important that hospital systems are transparent about what patients can expect to pay as they roll

out these new charges, she added.

"Co-pays do not accomplish anything when they are not clear for patients ahead of time," Baicker said.

Physicians at University of California San Francisco Health field roughly 900,000 email threads — 3 million total messages — in a year, according to Jess Berthold, a spokesperson for the system.

The hospital announced in November 2021 it would start charging for some of those messages, after noting a spike during the pandemic. During a year's time, 1.4% of email threads, or about 13,000, have resulted in a bill.

Only certain messages trigger a charge. Patients won't be charged, for example, for prescription refills, scheduling an appointment, asking a follow-up question about an office visit within the last seven days, or if their doctor advises they should schedule a visit in response.

What types of messages will prompt a bill? Sending your doctor a picture of a new rash, asking for a form to be filled out or requesting a change in

medication.

Navigating how much you might end up owing can be trickier.

At UCSF, patients on Medicaid who message their doctor won't have any out-of-pocket costs, and those on traditional Medicare may have to pay \$3 to \$6. Patients on private insurance will be billed a co-pay — typically about \$20 — as will patients on Medicare Advantage, the private insurance plans for Medicare.

Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, the latest major hospital system to announce charges for online messages, rolled out similar guidelines late last month, with messages costing as much as \$50 for those on private insurance. And at Northwestern Medicine in Chicago, which charges \$35 for some messages, fewer than 1% of those correspondences resulted in a bill, spokesman Christopher King said.

All of those systems use the online portal MyChart. Epic, the privately owned software company that runs MyChart, does not track which health systems charge patients for messages, spokeswoman

an Barb Hernandez said in an email. The company did not answer questions about whether it receives a share of the fees from those charges.

Giving patients advice online can save a patient time or money in the long run, hospital systems argue. If the doctor can answer a patient's question over email, the patient can cut out wait times for an appointment and avoid taking time off work to go to the doctor's office.

Plus, some patients simply prefer the convenience of getting a quick answer from the doctor on an app, Berthold of UCSF added.

"If patients can have access to a doctor right when questions or concerns arise, they can seek care more quickly and be treated more quickly," Berthold said.

But Fisher argues it could have the opposite effect with patients thinking twice before they message a doctor. Instead, some people may turn to free, unreliable advice online.

"It becomes a slippery slope, and that slippery slope is not in favor of the patient," she said.

# Pentagon has received 'several hundreds' of new UFO reports

**By Tara Copp**  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A new Pentagon office set up to track reports of unidentified flying objects has received "several hundreds" of new reports, but no evidence so far of alien life, the agency's leadership told reporters Friday.

The All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office (AARO) was set up in July and is responsible for not only tracking unidentified objects in the sky, but also underwater or in space — or potentially an object that has the ability to move from one domain to the next. The office was estab-

lished following more than a year of attention on unidentified flying objects that military pilots have observed but have sometimes been reluctant to report due to fear of stigma.

In June 2021 the Office of the Director of National Intelligence reported that between 2004 and 2021, there were 144 such encounters, 80 of which were captured on multiple sensors.

Since then, "we've had lots more reporting," said anomaly office director Sean Kirkpatrick. When asked to quantify the amount, Kirkpatrick said "several hundreds." An updated report

from the Director of National Intelligence that will provide specific figures on new reports received since 2021 is expected by the end of the year, the officials said.

The office was set up not only to examine the question of whether there's extraterrestrial life, but also because of the security risk posed by so many encounters with unknown flying objects by military installations or military aircraft.

This May, Congress held its first hearing in more than half a century on the topic, with multiple members expressing concern that whether or not the objects are alien

or potentially new, unknown technology being flown by China, Russia or another potential adversary, the unknown creates a security risk.

So far, "we have not seen anything, and we're still very early on, that would lead us to believe that any of the objects that we have seen are of alien origin," said Ronald Moultrie, under secretary of defense for intelligence and security. "Any unauthorized system in our airspace we deem as a threat to safety."

The office is also working on ways to improve its ability to identify unknown objects, such as by reca-

librating sensors that may be focused just on known adversary aircraft or drone signatures, Moultrie said.

One reason for the hundreds of additional reports coming in may be the outreach the department has done to destigmatize reporting potential encounters. Each service has also established its own reporting processes, Kirkpatrick said.

Beyond unidentifiable objects, there's a lot of new technology — such as future stealth bombers and stealth fighters, drones and hypersonic missiles being fielded by both the U.S. and China — that could be

mistaken for a UFO. Kirkpatrick said the new office has been coordinating with the Pentagon and the U.S. intelligence community to get the signatures of U.S. technology in order to rule out those aircraft or drones.

"We are setting up very clear mechanisms with our blue programs, both our DOD and IC programs, to deconflict any observations that come in with blue activities, and ensure that we weed those out and identify those fairly early on," Kirkpatrick said, referring to the "blue" U.S. aircraft programs in operation by the Pentagon or intelligence agencies.

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# Katy

From Page 1A

"I mentioned that fence right there a minute ago," Smith said. "I can only assume that that is what got it started, because she said that somebody was wanting to put a fence in that easement and they told them they would have to charge them. Well now, you see the fence, so that might be the State just trying to flex here."

Melanie Smith, Deputy Regional Director with the Missouri State Parks, says they had some inquiries into what the official park boundary was, and had not conducted a full survey through the city of Windsor. They had their State Park survey crew conduct the land survey.

"Will be looking at each individual situation," Smith said. "In many cases, they already may have a use agreement for that right of way; perhaps it was already put into place when the railroad was put into place, so we have those agreements and will be referencing those. If



Behind Patrick Smith, of Windsor, is a new wooden privacy fence, whose construction, he surmised, initiated the land survey.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT

there are improvements that are in the area and don't have a license for use, we'll be dealing with that individual property owner."

The new blue State Parks border sign next to his home means the land Smith owns and has been paying taxes on may be the State's.

"I've been paying taxes

on it, have been maintaining it. I bought the property in 2020," Smith said. "The person that had it before me had it for 12 years, so this is 15 years that somebody has been paying taxes and maintaining this property."



This new State Park boundary marker appears to dissect this Windsor home, seen Friday. Homeowners are concerned their property rights may be in jeopardy.

The new signs describe an unseen line that crosses Smith's yard, the neighbor's fence and several backyards along the trail, and even seem to claim half of one home.

Smith hopes to get out and meet the neighbors

who may also be confused by the land grab.

"I'm planning on going and knocking on doors," Smith said. "While I was waiting for you, I drove up the road to the south and they have boundary markers that are going to

absorb people's houses."

Smith hopes the State is reasonable. So far, only the signs indicate they may want back what he and his neighbors in Windsor thought they owned.

"If I want to put a shed there, if I want to build a fence, if I want to do a garden, I can't do it because they have assumed the land based on what the boundary marker says," Smith said. "Not to mention I bought two lots right here: a house and then this lot right beside it. I want what I paid for."

Smith worries the State Parks will try to wrest his green, sloping lawn from him, but he won't give it up easily.

"If I lose my property, I'm not going to lose it without fighting," Smith vowed.

Those wanting to gather and share information are encouraged to call Smith at 417-655-2132.

Chris Howell can be reached at 660-530-0146

# United

From Page 1A

Some groups have also gone inside the homes to paint a room.

"Those little odds and ends that can't be completed due to not having time, age, not having family," she said. "It just really brings the community together in making sure everybody has what they need."

Gilpin will announce the application process on social media. Applications will be available at the office and can also be emailed to recipients. She noted this is her first experience with the applications.

"The Day of Action that was held this past June was actually planned for October of 2021," explained Gilpin, who joined United Way in January 2022. "It was canceled due to rain and poor weather."

"So, I haven't had the experience to go through the application process," she continued. "I understand it's a pretty lengthy process."

After applications are submitted, UWPC will make appointments to go out and survey the properties.

"We will take pictures of the requested project, and then we'll form a committee that will actually review these (requests)," she noted. "They'll review the pictures and determine who has a larger need, (and) who is going to be a good fit."

Gilpin said is if someone isn't chosen for the Day of Action, they can still be referred to another organization.

"I've been working with Sedalia Helping Hands," she noted. "They are a group of individuals within the community — so hopefully, if it's not a good fit for Day of Action, there's still potential that we can refer it on to another group."

Applications are for individuals and organizations in Pettis County that have a need.

"June of this year, we actually went out to La Monte Senior Housing," Gilpin explained. "They needed gutters cleaned and some yard work done. So, even if it's an organization that doesn't have the capacity or hands on deck to complete the project, I would encourage them also to apply."

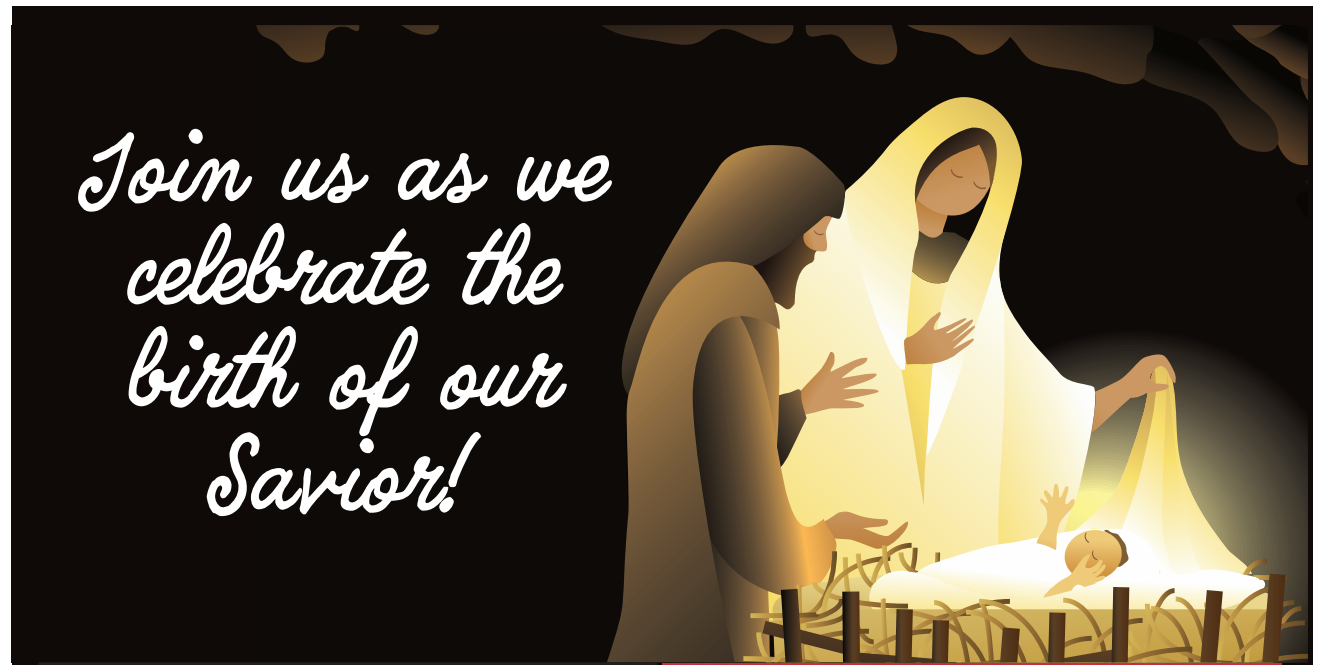
In 2022, UWPC had 10 projects for the Day of Action in addition to Vermont Park. The 2023 Day of Action is planned for Saturday, June 17.

"What we'll do, is, once we have a better idea of applicants, how many projects we'll have," she said. "Then, probably in February, we'll start reaching out to the community to gather teams of volunteers."

She added all volunteers need to do is show up, and UWPC will provide breakfast, lunch, and all tools to complete the jobs.

For more information about the 2023 Day of Action Project application process, call Gilpin at 660-826-2980 or come to the office at 1400 S. Limit Ave. Suite 29.

Faith Bemiss can be reached at 660-530-0289 or on Twitter @flbemiss.



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# Dick

## From Page 1A

Dick said he worried about the jail when he got elected due to its large fiscal expense to the county.

"Between the time I was elected in November and the first part of January when I first took my oath of office, I went over there and was in there three times," Dick said.

Former Sheriff Kevin Bond walked Dick through the process of the jail and his office so that he could understand what goes into running the jail.

Dick added that he was on good personal terms with the courthouse office-holders since he knew all of them before being elected.

"So that part of the transition was pretty good but then you get into the different intricacies of each office and what they need and what they think you need to do for them," Dick said.

Stepping into public office for the first time came with a learning curve for Dick, but he said it was OK because he learned along the way.

"Back then, I thought it was about roads and bridges and various other things, then



Nick Gerke, right, chair of the Pettis County Junior Livestock Committee, is pictured with David Dick, treasurer, with a \$4,000 donation from Pilot Grove Cooperative Elevator Inc. as part of its Sharing Success program in January 2021.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ISRAEL BAEZA

got here and found out it was about that and a whole lot more," Dick added.

One of the only agendas Dick had when stepping into office was to help support the agriculture industry in Pettis County. He soon learned that helping the other industries in the county helps support the entire county.

One key success Dick saw during his eight years was improving the Road and Bridge Department.

The department was located on Main Street, but with the high traffic traveling on the road, it was hard for the employees to get out with equipment. The department was moved to North Ohio Avenue.

"The opportunity came about and they moved to a better shop, a better location, easier access, larger, and they are much more well equipped to handle all their own stuff," Dick said.



Pettis County Presiding Commissioner David Dick waves to supporters from a classic Chevy truck during the 2022 Fourth of July parade.

DEMOCRAT FILE PHOTO

Two other areas of success Dick has seen were working with the Recorder's Office to digitalize all county records and with the Collector's Office, where tax collection is in the 90% range. There are very few delinquent payments and the Collector's Office worked on getting options online and doing monthly payments.

"(Clerk) Nick (La Strada) has gotten a set of voting machines that have improved our ability to conduct elections," Dick said. "I worked with (Prosecutor) Phillip Sawyer and then Sheriff Bond to get the Law Enforcement Restitution Fund Board re-established and functioning."

There were also unforeseen things the county had to do, like repairing the Dough Boy and Statue of Liberty statues on the courthouse lawn.

One of the unforeseen problems was taking the county through the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I thought it was very important that we had a weekly COVID call that involved the hospital, the health center, and Katy Trail. That way, everybody was at the table and we knew what was going on every week," Dick said. "We knew what our county numbers were every week."

The COVID-19 Task Force reported Pettis County num-

bers, hospitalizations, deaths and the vaccination rate.

"We didn't do the mask mandate; number one, I'm not qualified to tell you to wear a mask that's your own choice," Dick said.

He also allowed businesses across Sedalia to handle their COVID-19 regulations and mask mandates while still aiding them through the pandemic.

He is not seeking any other elected office but will preside as the President of the Missouri Cattleman's Association in 2023.

"The other thing people probably don't know is that I did retire from the (Missouri State) Fair (as Livestock Superintendent)," Dick added. "It just came around and I've been there 45 days short of 35 years, but sometimes you just kind of have to let go."

He said while getting misty-eyed that it's been a distinct privilege to serve as Presiding Commissioner for Pettis County residents.

Once he leaves the commissioner's office at the end of the month, Dick will get back into his farm business full-time.

"David was a farmer when he came here and David will leave here and go home and be a farmer again," Dick added.

Skye Melcher can be reached at 660-530-0144.



From left, Pettis County Eastern Commissioner Israel Baeza, U.S. Rep. Vicky Hartzler, R-District 4, Western Commissioner Jim Marcum and Presiding Commissioner David Dick discuss the Pettis County U.S. Route 65 overpass project at the Pettis County Courthouse on Oct. 23, 2020.

DEMOCRAT FILE PHOTO



Ryan Welch is proud of the lights at 2401 S. Grand Ave. The display gets bigger each year, according to his family.

PHOTO BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT

# THE WEATHER

AccuWeather | Go to AccuWeather.com

## SEVEN-DAY FORECAST

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
32 / 19	40 / 27	39 / 23	28 / 15	29 / 13	16 / -7	9 / 3
Some sun; breezy in the p.m.	Mostly sunny and not as cold	A bit of snow and rain	Clouds and sun	Cold with a little icy mix	A little morning snow; colder	Cold with some sun

## SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	7:25 a.m.
Sunset tonight	4:53 p.m.
Moonrise today	12:54 a.m.
Moonset today	1:08 p.m.

New	First	Full	Last
Dec 23	Dec 29	Jan 6	Jan 14

## WEATHER HISTORY

An ice storm in Illinois on Dec. 17, 1924, caused more than \$21 million in damage. Ice accumulation was almost 2 inches. Wires snapped and trees cracked. The ice stayed on the ground until Jan. 4.

## ALMANAC

Sedalia Regional Airport Thursday

TEMPERATURES	
High	36
Low	30
Normal high	43
Normal low	24
Record high	77 in 2021
Record low	-14 in 1943

PRECIPITATION	
Thursday	Trace
Month to date	1.69"
Normal m-t-d	1.14"
Year to date	39.06"
Normal y-t-d	42.53"

## HEATING DEGREE DAYS

Index of energy consumption indicating how many degrees the average temperature was below 65 degrees for the day.

Thursday	32
Month to date	364
Season to date	1261
Normal season to date	1502
Last season to date	927

## RIVER LEVELS

In feet as of 7 a.m. Friday

Blackwater	Stage	Chg	Fid	Stg
Blue Lick	10.26	+0.94	24	
Valley City	4.46	-1.70	22	

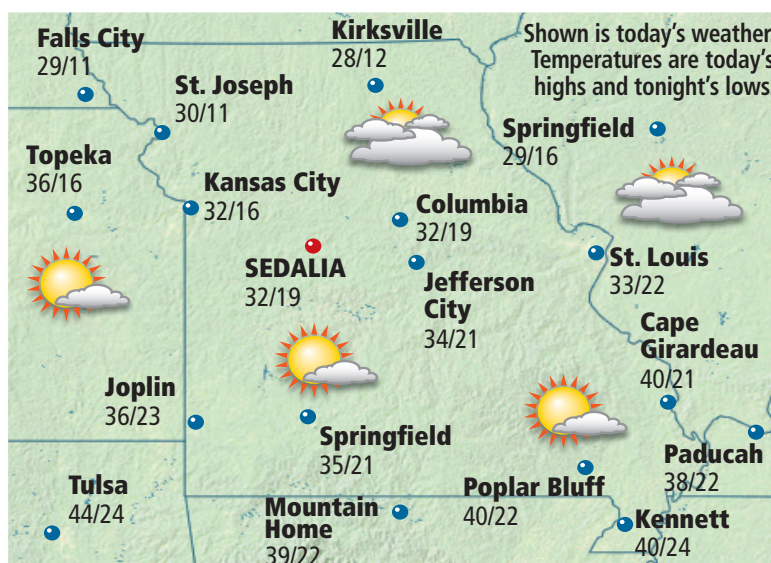
## Lamine

Otterville	3.24	-1.89	15
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## Missouri

Boonville	5.32	+1.83	21
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Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2022



**BRANSON**  
High: 38. Low: 23. Plenty of sunshine today; extreme cold outbreak expected later next week into Christmas weekend. Clear tonight. Partly sunny tomorrow.

**KANSAS CITY**  
High: 32. Low: 16. Periods of clouds and sun today. Clear tonight. Sunny to partly cloudy tomorrow.

**ST. LOUIS**  
High: 33. Low: 22. Partly sunny, brisk and cold today. Clear tonight. Plenty of sunshine tomorrow.

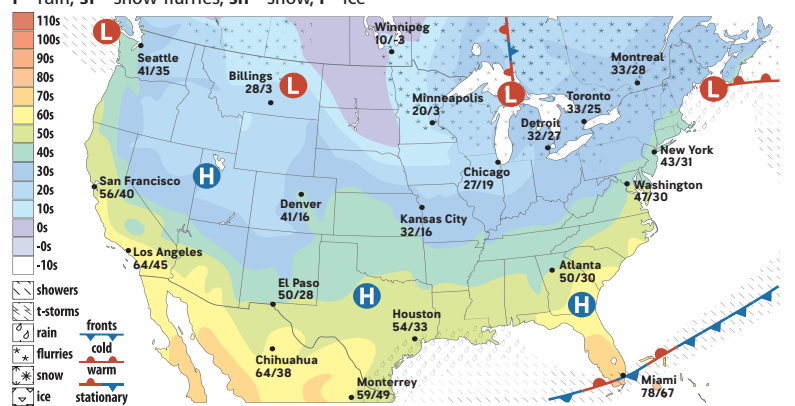
**NEW YORK CITY**  
High: 43. Low: 31. Sunny to partly cloudy and breezy today. Clear to partly cloudy tonight. Partly sunny tomorrow.

**LOS ANGELES**  
High: 64. Low: 45. Considerable cloudiness today. Cloudy and chilly tonight. Some clouds, then sunshine tomorrow. Monday: sunshine and patchy clouds.

## NATIONAL WEATHER

	Today Hi/Lo/W	Sunday Hi/Lo/W	Today Hi/Lo/W	Sunday Hi/Lo/W
Atlanta	50/30/c	49/29/s	31/20/sf	23/14/pc
Baltimore	45/29/s	39/28/pc	44/26/pc	43/27/s
Billings	28/3/pc	8/-2/c	51/41/r	53/43/s
Boston	44/31/r	41/31/pc	52/34/s	43/30/pc
Buffalo	33/27/sn	32/27/sf	46/26/s	50/36/c
Charlotte	52/29/pc	48/27/s	72/52/pc	65/43/pc
Chicago	27/19/sf	27/16/pc	61/46/pc	60/39/pc
Cleveland	31/25/sf	30/24/sf	32/24/c	29/21/sf
Dallas	53/32/pc	54/42/pc	36/26/sn	38/25/c
Denver	41/16/pc	39/12/pc	41/36/c	42/33/c
Detroit	32/27/sf	32/24/c	52/32/s	51/35/s
Honolulu	81/66/sh	81/69/sh	33/22/pc	39/26/s
Houston	54/33/c	57/43/pc	56/40/s	54/42/s
Indianapolis	29/19/c	30/21/s	41/35/s	41/26/c
Las Vegas	49/33/pc	52/32/s	47/30/s	42/29/s

Weather (W): s - sunny, pc - partly cloudy, c - cloudy, sh - showers, t - thunderstorms, r - rain, sf - snow flurries, sn - snow, i - ice



Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation today. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

**Summary:** Snow showers and locally heavy lake-effect snow will extend from the Upper Midwest to the interior Northeast today. Rain will gather near the western Gulf coast while most other areas stay dry and chilly.

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# Drivers are stuck in limbo as world's oil supply reshuffles

By Cathy Bussewitz and David McHugh

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — At a gas station outside New York City, retired probation officer Karen Stowe was faced with a pump price she didn't want to pay. She bought groceries from the convenience store instead, planning to buy cheaper gas elsewhere.

"The price is so high, people have to think very hard about where they're driving to," said Stowe, who had just been volunteering at a food pantry. "People are in trouble, and that's the truth."

Though drivers in the U.S., Europe and elsewhere are getting a break from the sky-high gasoline prices they endured over the summer, the cost is still difficult for many who have been struggling with relentless inflation. The U.S. average was \$3.19 per gallon, down from a record \$5 in June, while European Union pump prices have dropped the equivalent of 55 cents, to \$6.41 per gallon, since October.

Drivers now hope the situation doesn't get worse after a series of cutbacks tied to Russia's war in Ukraine, accidents and the slowing global economy have strained the

world's oil supply. While oil and gasoline prices have dropped despite a recent supply crunch, those threats could end up pushing costs higher this winter.

What's the world facing?

— An EU ban on imports of most Russian oil took effect last week.

— At the same time, the Group of Seven leading democracies and 27-nation EU capped the price of Russian crude for other countries at \$60 per barrel.

— There was a major leak along the Keystone pipeline in the U.S., which halted oil shipments along a major corridor.

— Dozens of oil tankers were stuck in Turkey for days.

— The OPEC+ coalition of oil producers has cut back production.

"The global system can withstand probably a few more days of these outages, but if they persist, they're going to play a major role in price hikes," said Claudio Galimberti, senior vice president of analysis at Rystad Energy.

A key reason restrictions on oil supply have not sent prices higher: Traders think there will be less demand for oil in the future, due to fears that the global economy is headed into recession, which

would mean less driving and manufacturing. And some investors worry China's looser COVID-19 restrictions could backfire for the nation's economy.

"It can quickly turn into a major COVID wave which engulfs the hospitals and then is going to have a worse effect on demand than COVID policy," Galimberti said.

The restrictions on Russian exports are likely to have a bigger impact on oil prices next month. Although Western nations have banned Russian oil, customers in India and China are buying it, so there's enough oil on the market for those who need it. More than 97% of Russia's seaborne crude exports went to China and India last month, according to Refinitiv, a financial market data provider.

"We do not ask our companies to buy Russian oil. We ask them to buy oil," Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said in Parliament last week. "But it is a sensible policy to go where we get the best deal in the interest of Indian people, and that's exactly what we are trying to do."

In February, global oil supply could get more limited, because European nations won't be able to buy Russian refined prod-

ucts such as gasoline and diesel, so Russia could cut back on producing oil.

"So far, there hasn't been a major decline in Russian production. But once Russia cannot export products to Europe, they will need to decrease production, and that will result in a supply shortage, which will be reflected in the prices most likely," Galimberti said.

Russia also could decide not to produce oil due to the G-7 price cap. Its oil is selling for less than that now. But if the price goes up and approaches the cap, Russia could decide to take oil off the market, analysts said.

"There's another shoe to drop on that front," said Kevin Book, managing director at Clearview Energy Partners.

The price cap will lock in a discount on Russian oil, especially in light of the \$100 per barrel Russia earned just a few months ago, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said.

"We are focused on limiting Putin's ability to profit from rising prices to fund his illegal war, while promoting stable global energy markets," Jean-Pierre said. "This is not about Russian oil off the market. This is about the cap — the cap at this level

maintains clear incentives for Russia to continue exporting, and we believe that it should."

International standard Brent crude oil was selling for about \$80 a barrel Friday. That's likely to grow to \$92 per barrel on average next year, according to projections by the U.S. Energy Information Administration. That is still below \$125 seen this summer.

When it comes to prices at the pump, they're lower than they were last year, but Americans have paid \$2 to \$3 per gallon for most of the last decade, according to AAA data.

In the EU, where taxes account for a larger share of the cost of gasoline, prices fell to 1.65 euros per liter (\$6.41 per gallon) as of Dec. 12 from 1.80 euros per liter (\$6.96 per gallon) at the end of October, according to figures from the bloc's executive Commission.

The recent price drop coupled with freezing weather has kept Aria Razdar, 28, behind the wheel of his BMW hatchback in Frankfurt, Germany. During the summer price spike, he would ride a Vespa scooter to work and school, but gasoline prices fell and so did the temperature.

"Right now, prices are a

little more reasonable — actually they're still high, but in comparison," Razdar, a child care worker studying to be a teacher, said as he finished pumping fuel in an icy wind.

He spent a bit under 30 euros (\$32) to fill up for the week, a cost he said he could manage for the convenience of driving 12 minutes to work instead of spending 45 minutes on public transit.

Others also wished prices were lower.

Gary Schwuchow, a retired maintenance supervisor, said he's taking fewer road trips and saving money because he lives off his pension and Social Security payments.

"I used to be able to fill the tank up for \$40 or \$42, and now it's almost \$60," he lamented as he gassed up his Nissan Sentra at a station in Yonkers, New York, where a gallon of regular gas was selling for \$3.79. "I don't fill it anymore. I put in \$25 at a time."

McHugh reported from Frankfurt, Germany. Associated Press writers Fatima Hussein in Washington and Ashok Sharma in Delhi contributed.

# US recession a growing fear as Fed plans to keep rates high

By Paul Wiseman and Stan Choe

AP Business Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — After scaling 40-year highs, inflation in the United States has been slowly easing since summer. Yet the Federal Reserve seems decidedly unimpressed — and unconvinced that its fight against accelerating prices is anywhere near over.

On Thursday, stock markets buckled on the growing realization that the Fed may be willing to let the economy slide into recession if it decides that's what's needed to drive inflation back down to its 2% annual target.

The S&P 500 stock index lost roughly 100 points — 2.5% — in its worst day since early November. The losses came a day after the Fed raised its benchmark interest rate for the seventh time this year. The half-point hike the Fed announced — to a range of 4.25% to 4.5% — had been widely expected.

What spooked investors was Wall Street's growing understanding of how much further the Fed seems willing to go to defeat high

inflation. In updated projections they issued Wednesday, the Fed's policymakers forecast that they will ratchet up their key rate by an additional three-quarters of a point — to a hefty 5% to 5.25% — and keep it there through 2023. Some Fed watchers had expected only an additional half-point in rate hikes.

Those higher rates will mean costlier borrowing costs for consumers and companies, ranging from mortgages to auto and business loans.

The policymakers also downgraded their outlook for economic growth in 2023 from the 1.2% they had forecast in September to a puny 0.5% — as near to a recession forecast as they were likely to make. What's more, they raised their expectation for the unemployment rate next year to 4.6% from 3.7% now.

All of which suggested that the officials expect — or at least would accept — an economic downturn as the price of taming inflation.

The message the Fed was sending, said Ryan Sweet, chief U.S. economist at Ox-

ford Economics, was blunt: "We're going to break something. We're going to break inflation or we're going to break the economy."

Many investors had convinced themselves that with inflation pressures gradually easing, the Fed might soon declare some progress in their fight and perhaps even reverse course and cut rates sometime in 2023.

There was seemingly reason for optimism: Consumer prices rose 7.1% last month from a year earlier, down from 9.1% in June and the fifth straight drop. Even more encouragingly, on a month to month basis, prices inched up just 0.1%. And core inflation, which excludes volatile food and energy costs and which the Fed tracks closely, rose just 0.2% from October to November, the mildest rise since August 2021.

A slowing economy has eased pressure on supply chains, which had previously been overwhelmed with customer orders, causing shortages, delays and higher prices. Oil prices, too, have plunged, easing prices at the pump. A gallon of unleaded

gasoline cost an average \$3.19 on Thursday, down from \$5.02 in mid-June, according to AAA.

Yet Fed Chair Jerome Powell, who had been slow to recognize the inflation threat when it emerged in the spring of 2021, was in no mood to celebrate. Powell essentially shrugged off the signs of incremental progress.

"Two good monthly reports are very welcome," he told reporters Wednesday. "But we need to be honest with ourselves... 12-month core inflation is 6%" — three times the Fed's target. "It's good to see progress but let's just understand we have a long ways to go to get back to price stability."

Powell seemed to bat down hopes that the Fed might end up cutting rates by late next year — a move that typically acts like steroids for markets and the economy — unless inflation had dropped significantly by then, which he does not appear to expect.

The policymakers increased their inflation forecast for next year above what they were expecting back in

September. It suggested that they feel their anti-inflation fight isn't having as much impact as they had hoped.

Many economists were caught off-guard by that change. For next year, the Fed is projecting more rate hikes, a slower economy and higher unemployment than it did three months ago.

All those things typically help tame inflation. Yet the Fed's officials predict that their preferred inflation gauge will be 3.1% at the end of 2023, up from their 2.8% forecast in September. That's above their 2% target and likely too high for them to feel they can cut rates.

The Fed wasn't the only source of rising recession fears Thursday. The European Central Bank, which is waging its own aggressive war against inflation, signaled that it, too, might send rates higher than markets expected, thereby raising the likelihood of a downturn in Europe.

On Thursday, the U.S. government reported that Americans slashed their spending at retailers in November. That was disconcerting news in the midst of

the holiday shopping season. And the Federal Reserve Banks of New York and Philadelphia issued downbeat reports on manufacturing in their regions. Yields on long-term Treasuries fell, a sign that bond investors are growing more concerned about a possible recession.

Even the goods news out Thursday — a drop in the number of Americans seeking unemployment benefits — had a downside: It reinforced the Fed's concern that a strong and resilient job market is putting upward pressure on wages and overall inflation.

The Fed is especially worried that a worker shortage in the labor-intensive services sector — everything from restaurants and hotels to airlines and entertainment venues — could keep pay growth high and make inflation more intractable.

Sweet of Oxford Economics said he suspects that "the Fed is overstating how strong inflation might be."

Choe reported from New York. AP Economics Writer Christopher Rugaber contributed to this report.

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**SEDALIA  
DEMOCRAT**

**CONTRIBUTING COLUMN**

The season of perpetual hope

“No! No, no, no, no WAY!” yells Catherine O’Hara’s character in Home Alone, banging her fist on the airline ticket counter. “This is CHRISTMAS. The season of perpetual hope!”



**Liz Schleicher**  
Contributing Columnist

The patrons in line behind Kevin McAllister’s desperate mother stare. The bespectacled airline employee is visibly uncomfortable.

“I don’t care if I have to get out on your runway and hitchhike!” Mrs. McAllister threatens, lowering her voice and fixing a steely eye on the attendant. “If it costs me everything I own, if I have to sell my soul to the Devil himself, I am going to get home to my son.”

This steely-eyed determination, head down and fists up, making a way where there is no way using only the power of love — this is the virtue of Christian hope. Christmas hope.

It’s not “close your eyes and make a wish,” or scratching off a lottery ticket and dreaming about the money, or waiting passively to be delivered by something stronger than yourself.

Real hope takes grit.

The Christian season of Advent is an exploration of the theological virtue of hope. We wait in hope for the day of Jesus’ birth, and we reflect on the many generations who waited for the Messiah, their empires rising and falling, their people fighting and clawing their way toward an unknown future they believed would finally deliver them from evil.

Until one day, a light shined in the darkness. And the darkness comprehended it not.

The darkness is still with us, even in this season of merriment. His birth did not banish it from the world. But it struck a blow so hard that the powers of evil couldn’t even understand the wound. The Book of the Wisdom of Solomon says:

“For while all things were in quiet silence, and the night was in the midst of her course, thy almighty

word leapt down from heaven from thy royal throne, as a fierce conqueror into the midst of the land of destruction.”

This is What and Who and How we are supposed to hope. We have forgotten and discarded the virtue, mistakenly believing hope to be childish and passive. But this sudden, saving ferociousness is what the letter to the Hebrews calls the “anchor of our soul” and the entrance to “that within the veil.”

An acquaintance of mine, a woman I met in my online cancer support group, traveled to St. Louis this month for a clinical trial to battle her metastatic synovial sarcoma. She and her husband will be there until sometime after the holidays, far away from their children and their home. She has been beating back her cancer since 2017, and this cutting-edge trial is the latest in her arsenal. Yesterday she posted this quote by historian and Twitter user @CrowsFault:

“People speak of hope as if it’s this delicate ephemeral thing made of whispers and spider’s webs. It is not. Hope has dirt on her face, blood on her knuckles, the grit of the cobblestones in her hair, and just spat out a tooth as she rises for another go.”

Head down, fists up, sudden and fierce, fighting and clawing in the darkness with a single beam of light that evil cannot even comprehend.

This is Christmas. The season of perpetual hope.

*Liz Schleicher lives in Green Ridge and is a wife, stay-at-home mother, writer and rare cancer survivor.*



**CONTRIBUTING COLUMN**

*Christmas joy with Hue the cat*

Hue the Cat likes to sleep under the Christmas tree. The day it first goes up, she slithers under the lowest branches, gliding back toward the wall, becoming almost invisible in the darkness. When the Christmas tree lights go on, she blinks a couple of times, so we can see her luminous green eyes (Max says they are yellow), but we can still only surmise the rest of her shape.

As the days go by, and the packages pile up, she has to wind her way through the blank spaces to find a large enough hidey-hole so that she can curl up comfortably, sheltering herself from the outside world, and find her way to slumberland. Even when to our eyes she shouldn’t be able to find a port of entry through the brightly wrapped and tied boxes, she contorts her lithe cat body and, like a rubber band, stretches through the tiniest gap in the wall of packages until she is exactly where she wants to be.

I understand from other cat parents that felines often climb up into the tree, knocking down ornaments and making themselves



**Deborah Mitchell**  
Contributing Columnist

big, fat nuisances. Hue hasn’t tried to do anything like that. She did, however, as we were loading the ornaments onto the tree, try to play badminton with one that was hanging precipitously close to the floor. She stopped when we scolded her, and instead went directly to her scratching post, taking out her frustration on the furry thing we try to hide under the piano.

At least she didn’t scratch the chair, as she has done in the past, pretty much obliterating a corner of the upholstered club chair so nicely re-done by the folks at Re-Cover It. I now know how my father felt when Hildegard, the Devil Dog, ate entirely through one of our club chairs, strewing the stuffing all through the living room and hallway. Chairs were expensive, and

my family had no money with which to buy them willy-nilly. I now can understand and channel his irritation.

Hue also will not try to open packages, nor will she play with the bows — at least not while I am looking. In this way, she is unlike Hildegard, who opened my grandfather’s box of Pangburn’s chocolates and ate them all — every year. Why my mother continued to put the chocolate under the tree year after year is still a mystery to me. And Grandpa never got his chocolates. Worst? I have heard that chocolate is deadly to dogs. Well, you can’t prove that by Hildegard. She ate the entire one-pound box and simply gained weight. Oh, I think she spent some extra time outside, but the chocolate didn’t kill her. I think Daddy was hoping against hope.

I suppose that when we open some packages, Hue might want to play with the ripped paper, but I fully expect that she will skedaddle to under the bed when she hears the noise of the paper and the loud exclamations of the vociferous teenagers. She will, I’m

sure, be perfectly happy when all this folderol is over and she can go back to her happy life of catting around the house at night, waiting impatiently for the automatic food dispenser to release her meager pellet allotment at 6:30 in the morning, coming in on little cat feet like Carl Sandburg’s fog into the bedroom before we are fully awake just to check on us, and then spending the rest of the day alternating between playing with her favorite little stuffed mouse, playing soccer with her favorite colored ping-pong ball, and, of course, best of all, sleeping.

On the other hand, I will not be happy when the folderol is over. As I discovered when I was in Afghanistan, now 10 Christmases ago, most of my joy at Christmas comes from preparing — cooking, trying to find the right present for the right person, playing Christmas music on the piano, wrapping presents and trying to fashion acceptable bows, making plans. I just never figured I would be sharing that joy with a cat.

*Deborah Mitchell is a Sedalia attorney.*

**Letters to the Editor Policy**

The Sedalia Democrat welcomes letters from its readers on topics of general public interest. Persons with questions concerning Letters to the Editor may contact the Democrat at 660-826-1000 during regular business hours. Please note the following guidelines for letters and their submission:

- All letters to be considered for publication must include the name and address of the writer and a daytime telephone number where the writer may be reached during normal business hours.
- All letters must be signed. The name and hometown of the writer will be published.
- Letters must be 250 words or less.
- Letters may be mailed to:

*Letters to the editor, Sedalia Democrat, 111 W. Fourth St., Sedalia, Mo., 65301 or emailed to news@sedaliademocrat.com.*

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**American Red Cross has responded to a year of crises**

**Dear Editor:**

2022 has been a year of crisis — both seen and unseen — for families and communities.

The big crises the American Red Cross has responded to include flooding, tornadoes and daily home fires locally and we’ve sent disaster responders across the U.S. to help with the extreme disasters such as Hurricane Ian in Florida, Hurricane Fiona in Puerto Rico, Tropical Storm Merbok in Alaska, severe floods in Kentucky, wildfires in California and the first-ever national American Red Cross blood crisis in January 2022.

There were personal crises too — unseen to many beyond those experiencing them: the family whose home was destroyed by fire, the person who needed CPR during a cardiac arrest, the family who needed to contact a deployed service member during an emergency, and the hospital patient who needed a

lifesaving blood transfusion.

For all these crises and more, people throughout the Missouri and Arkansas Region stepped up to help from coast to coast. Our volunteers — who comprise more than 90% of the national Red Cross workforce — along with our financial, blood and platelet donors, are simply amazing. Although they are ordinary individuals like you and me, their compassionate gifts make an extraordinary difference in people’s most dire moments.

As crises continue to upend lives every day, we ask everyone to consider giving help and hope for the many people in need of American Red Cross assistance by visiting redcross.org to make a financial donation, to schedule an appointment to give blood or to become a Red Cross volunteer.

On behalf of everyone we serve, we thank you for your support in 2022!

**Rebecca Gordon**  
Executive Director  
Red Cross of Central and Northern Missouri



# Report: Executions continued decline but many 'botched'

**By Juan A. Lozano**  
Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Public support and use of the death penalty in 2022 continued its more than two-decade decline in the U.S., and many of the executions that were carried out during the year were "botched" or highly problematic, an annual report on capital punishment says.

There were 18 executions in the U.S. in 2022, the fewest in any pre-pandemic year since 1991. There were 11 executions last year. Outside of the pandemic years, the 20 death sentences handed out in 2022 were the fewest in any year in the U.S. in a half-century, according to the report by the Washington, D.C.-based Death Penalty Information Center.

"All the indicators point to the continuing decline in capital punishment and the movement away from the death penalty is durable," said Robert Dunham, executive director of the nonprofit, which takes no position on capital punishment but has criticized the way states carry out executions.

In the U.S., 37 states have abolished the death penalty or not carried out an execution in more than a decade. On Tuesday, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown commuted the sentences of all 17 of the state's death row inmates to life in prison without parole. Oregon last executed a prisoner in 1997. There have been no federal executions since January 2021 following a historic use of capital punishment by the Trump administration. In July 2021, the Justice Department imposed a moratorium on federal executions.

The report called 2022 the "Year of the Botched Execution" as seven of the 20 execution attempts in the U.S. were visibly problematic or took an inordinate amount of time. That prompted some states to put them on hold so processes and protocols could be reviewed.

Significant problems were reported with all three of Arizona's executions as corrections officers struggled to find suitable veins for IV lines to deliver the lethal injection. In Alabama, Gov. Kay Ivey ordered a "top-to-bottom" review of the state's capital punishment system last month after three failed lethal injections, including two in 2022 involving problems with intravenous lines used to administer the drugs.

Other concerns with executions included a South Carolina judge's ruling in September that called unconstitutional the state's newly created execution firing squad, as well as its use of the electric chair. The state's Supreme Court is set to hear arguments on the issue next month.

In April, Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee halted lethal injections in his state because the drugs used in executions hadn't been tested. The oversight had forced Lee to abruptly halt plans to execute inmate Oscar Smith, an hour before he was to die last April.

Dunham said he believes ongoing issues with botched executions or reviews of execution protocols by states is helping to erode public support of capital punishment. Gallup polling shows public

support of the death penalty has steadily dropped in the last 28 years, falling from 80% in 1994 to 55% this year.

"There are very few states that are trying to carry out the death penalty. But they are acting in ways that ... their conduct is undermining public confidence that states can be trusted with the death penalty," Dunham said.

While five of the 18 executions that took place in 2022 were in Texas, that is well below what the nation's busiest capital punishment state has seen historically. In 2000, Texas executions reached a high of 40, according to this year's annual report by the Texas Coalition to Abolish

the Death Penalty.

Kristin Houle Cuellar, the coalition's executive director, said she believes Texas' "era of excessive use of the death penalty is gone" as prosecutors will continue to instead use lengthy prison sentences to hold people accountable.

Deborah Denno, a law professor at Fordham University in New York, said she's not surprised by the declining use and public support of capital punishment. She cites as reasons: more people learning about the various problems in carrying out executions, doubts about whether it deters crime and a growing number of exonerations of inmates.

"Any sort of prediction about the future would suggest the death penalty is going to be limited to a few states. With time, there will be growing pressure in those states to abolish the death penalty," Denno said.

Dunham said he believes the number of botched executions has contributed significantly to the movement among lawmakers, particularly conservatives, to express doubts about the death penalty.

In Oklahoma, GOP state Rep. Kevin McDugle, a self-described death-penalty supporter, became one of the strongest advocates for death row inmate Richard

Glossip after concerns were raised about lost or destroyed evidence and police bias. Glossip's execution was delayed last month.

In Texas, GOP state Rep. Jeff Leach helped lead a bipartisan group of lawmakers who believe new evidence shows death row inmate Melissa Lucio didn't fatally beat her daughter. Leach and some of the lawmakers visited Lucio on death row before her execution was delayed in April.

In an interview with The Associated Press earlier this year, Leach said he hopes lawmakers can work to make sure "there's no chance that we're executing an innocent Texan."

"To say I'm wrestling with the very existence of the death penalty in Texas would be a dramatic understatement," Leach said.

Michael Benza, a law professor at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, said the shifting political environment around the death penalty has made it easier for policymakers to have meaningful discussions about capital punishment.

"And they have trouble with it when they really do look at what is happening. I think politicians are wondering whether or not this is in fact the right thing to be doing," Benza said.

## SEDALIA DEMOCRAT

# Prizeweek Puzzle

**This week's puzzle is worth:**

# \$1800

for SEDALIA DEMOCRAT  
Subscribers

**This week's puzzle is worth**

# \$900

for Non Subscribers

**Entries must be received by Noon on Wednesday**  
Puzzles in 2 pieces will be rejected

**ACROSS:**

3. The town's main thoroughfare is a busy one, made more so by the recent addition of \_.
5. "I'll bet that's worth quite a lot," says friend, admiring \_ he's been shown.
6. Well-known psychologist is used to dealing with patients with a heightened sense of anxiety due to a number of \_.
9. Wife's disappointed in podcast, claiming just because speaker is espousing strong moral values doesn't mean speaker has to be \_.
10. Useful when mixing a recipe's ingredients.
14. At high school reunion, woman looks at roomful of excited participants and remarks on how \_ they appear to be.
15. In good shape..
17. Travelling salesman complains about seemingly constant need to \_ a car in strange locations when making sales calls.
18. A celebratory meal.

**DOWN:**

1. News commentator claims it's no surprise that such an empathetic person would be \_ on a potentially dangerous mission.
2. "I envy how easily that magician manages to do that \_ trick," says amateur magician watching video.
3. Used on boats powered by wind.
4. World War Two movie's suspenseful scene depicts British bomber pilot zeroing in on enemy's crucial \_ location.
6. There have been many incidents of a \_ expanding rapidly, shortly after starting up.
7. Heliskiing guide warns group of skiers that the \_ of the mountain could prove daunting in certain areas.
8. Student's first day on the job at landscaping company involves learning the most efficient way to \_ a lawn.
11. Son is told that to \_ as much money as is necessary, is a prime goal of many parents.
12. Highly qualified speaker is confident that by specifying his unusual \_, he'll get the complete attention of listeners.
13. At labor board hearing, company representative claims union's policy to \_ to radically change "work conditions" could ruin the firm.
15. Homeowner tells gardening consultant flowers in back of property bloomed beautifully, before the \_.
16. Farmer's two children have separate livestock to care for, with oldest daughter claiming \_ are the most difficult.

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

Clip out completed puzzle and return to this newspaper

**CHECK ONE**
 Subscriber
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**THIS LIST INCLUDES, AMONG OTHERS, THE CORRECT WORDS FOR THIS PUZZLE.**

AGED	FIT	LEASE	SAVE
AWED	FLIGHTS	LEAVE	SENT
BENT	FRIGHTS	MEDAL	SHOPS
BOWL	FRONT	METAL	SIDE
CARD	FROST	MOW	SIZE
DECREE	GRIM	PATROL	SOW
DEGREE	HARD	PETROL	STOPS
FEAST	HAVE	PRIM	STRIKE
FIRE	HENS	SAIL	STRIVE
FIRM	HERS		

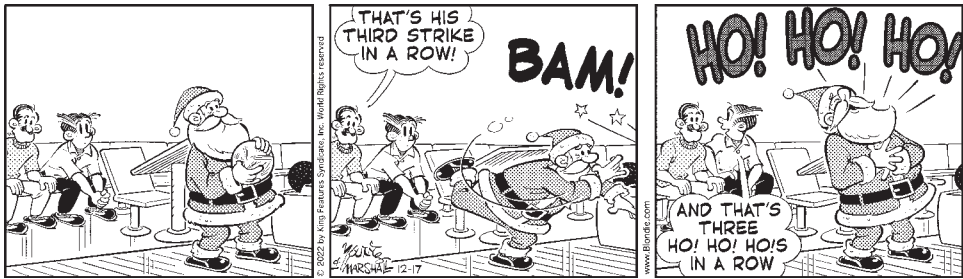
## OFFICIAL RULES

1. Solve the PRIZE WEEK PUZZLE (PWP) by filling in the missing letters to make the words that you think best fit the clues. Read the clue carefully, for you must think them out & give every word its true meaning.
2. Check the word list given. It has all the contest answers, plus some that you will have to eliminate.
3. You need not be a subscriber to the Sedalia Democrat in order to enter PWP, but you must be a resident of our circulation area. You may submit as many entries as you wish on the entry blank printed in the Sedalia Democrat. (MECHANICALLY PRODUCED OR CARBON DUPLICATE FACSIMILES OF ANY TYPE WILL BE REJECTED. PUZZLES IN 2 OR MORE PIECES WILL BE REJECTED.)
4. Anyone is eligible to enter PWP meeting the above requirements except employees of the Sedalia Democrat and family members of their household.
5. All entries must be received by mail at the Sedalia Democrat or deposited as instructed above by Noon Wednesday following the date of publication. The Sedalia Democrat will award prize money to the contestant who sends in an all-correct solution. In the event of more than one all-correct solution the prize will be divided equally among the winners. If no all-correct solution is received, the weekly grand prize will be increased by \$50.00 to Sedalia Democrat subscribers, \$25 to non-subscribers & added to the following week's PWP.
6. There is only one correct solution to each PWP & only the correct answer can win. The decision of the judges is final & all contestants agree to abide by the judges' decision. All entries become the property of the Sedalia Democrat. Only one prize will be awarded to a family unit.
7. The winner & answers will be published in the Following Friday's paper. Every entry will be checked. No claiming is necessary.
8. The Sedalia Democrat reserves the right to correct any typographical errors which may appear during the PWP game. ERRORS OR CROSS OUTS WILL VOID ANY ENTRY.
9. PWP clues may be abbreviated & such words as AN, THE & A omitted.
10. In fairness to all, the Sedalia Democrat cannot answer questions or respond to phone calls or letters regarding the Prizeweek puzzle.
11. When you've completed your PWP, CUT IT OUT & BRING IT OR MAIL IT TO THE ADDRESS LISTED BELOW.
12. Players can only win one (1) time in a 12 month period. One winner per household during a 12 month period allowed.

**Sedalia Democrat- Prizeweek Puzzle • 111 W. 4th St., Sedalia, MO 65301**

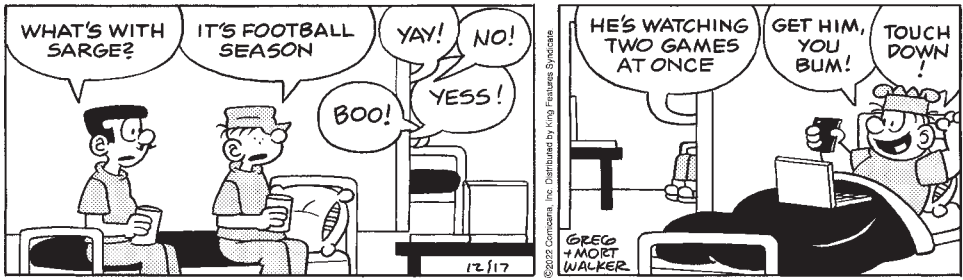
**BLONDIE**

BY DEAN YOUNG AND JOHN MARSHALL



**BEETLE BAILEY**

BY MORT, GREG AND BRIAN WALKER



**HAGAR THE HORRIBLE**

BY CHRIS BROWNE



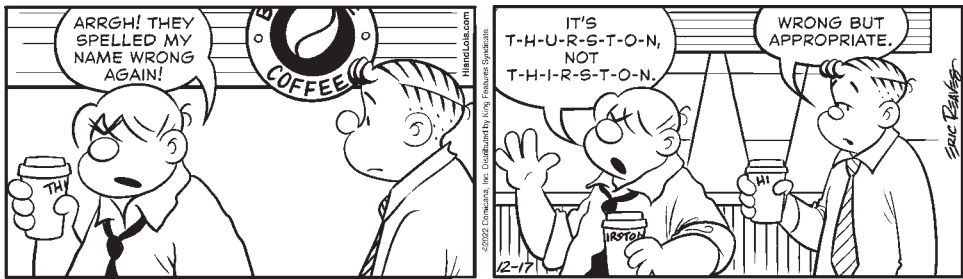
**ZITS**

BY JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



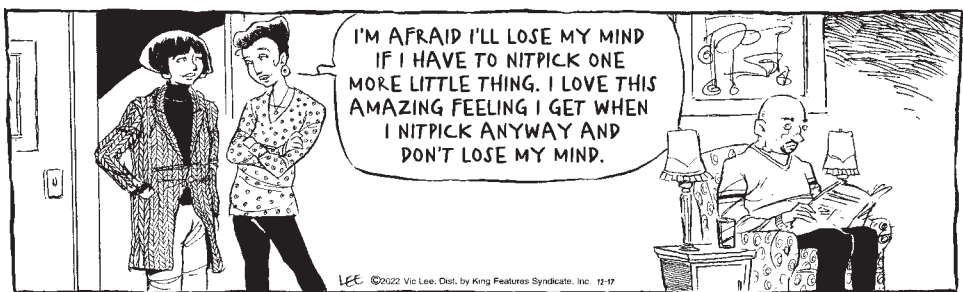
**HI AND LOIS**

WRITTEN BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER; DRAWN BY CHANCE BROWNE



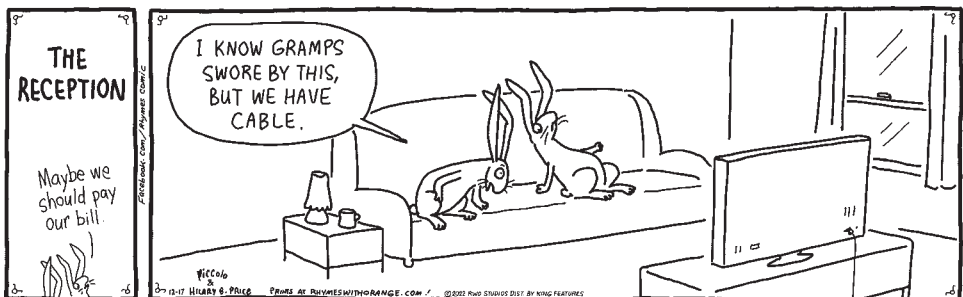
**PARDON MY PLANET**

BY VIC LEE



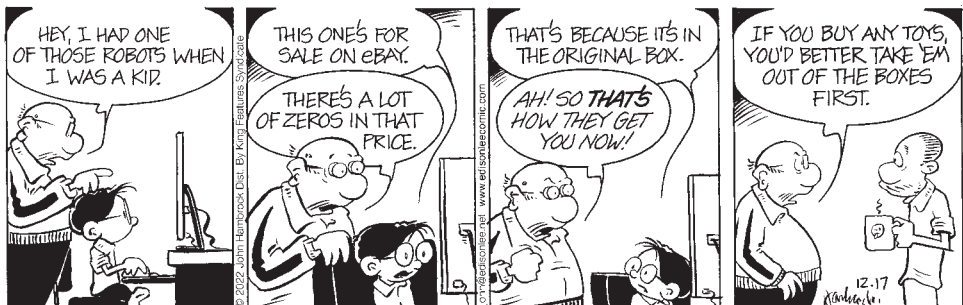
**RHYMES WITH ORANGE**

BY HILARY PRICE



**THE BRILLIANT MIND OF EDISON LEE**

BY JOHN HAMBROCK



**DUSTIN**

BY STEVE KELLEY & JEFF PARKER



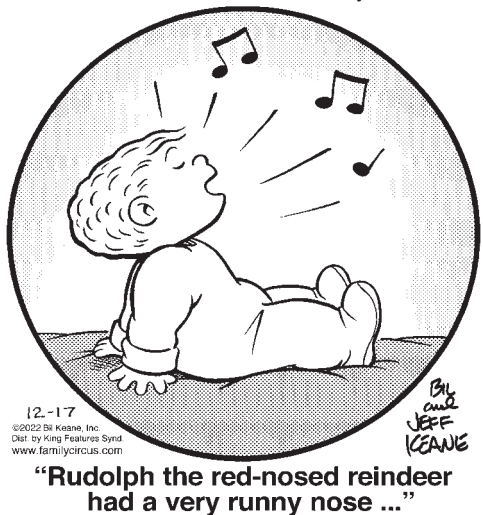
**DENNIS THE MENACE**

BY HANK KETCHAM



**THE FAMILY CIRCUS**

By Bil Keane



**CROSSWORD**

By THOMAS JOSEPH

**ACROSS**

- 1 Honey bunch
- 5 Cuff site
- 10 Knight wear
- 12 Heart outlet
- 13 Stately
- 14 Car parts
- 15 Put away
- 16 Opposite of post-
- 18 Bolt partner
- 19 Petite
- 21 Monopoly pair
- 22 "Amsterdam" co-star
- 24 Took steps
- 25 "La La Land" co-star
- 29 Thunder sound
- 30 Bearlike
- 32 Galley item
- 33 Gorilla, for one
- 34 Garage sight
- 35 Annoys
- 37 Fragrance
- 39 Potato dumpling
- 40 Floor squares

**41 Good judgment**

**42 Soccer legend**

**DOWN**

- 1 Predictably trite
- 2 Hot
- 3 Davidtz of "Mansfield Park"
- 4 Note after fa
- 5 Walk through water
- 6 Milne youngster
- 7 Sly, in a way
- 8 Hit
- 9 Refinement
- 11 Copy
- 17 Gathers one's strength
- 20 Chaplin persona
- 21 Nitwits
- 23 Fall back
- 25 Galahad's mother
- 26 Game fish
- 27 Kidman of "The Others"
- 28 Canine coat
- 29 Bottle
- 31 Wipe away
- 33 Tennis great Arthur
- 36 Snaky shape
- 38 Tear

M	A	C	H	O		M	E	C	C	A	
O	T	H	E	R		E	T	H	E	R	
S	T	A	N	D		S	T	A	R	T	
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W	A	R	R	A	N	T		R	O	E	
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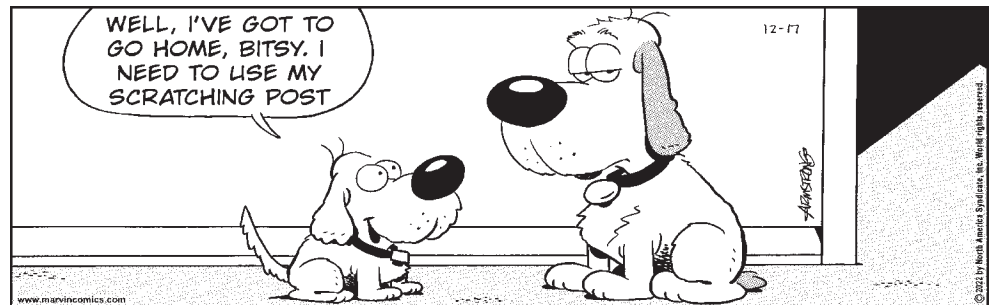
**Yesterday's answer**

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

12-17

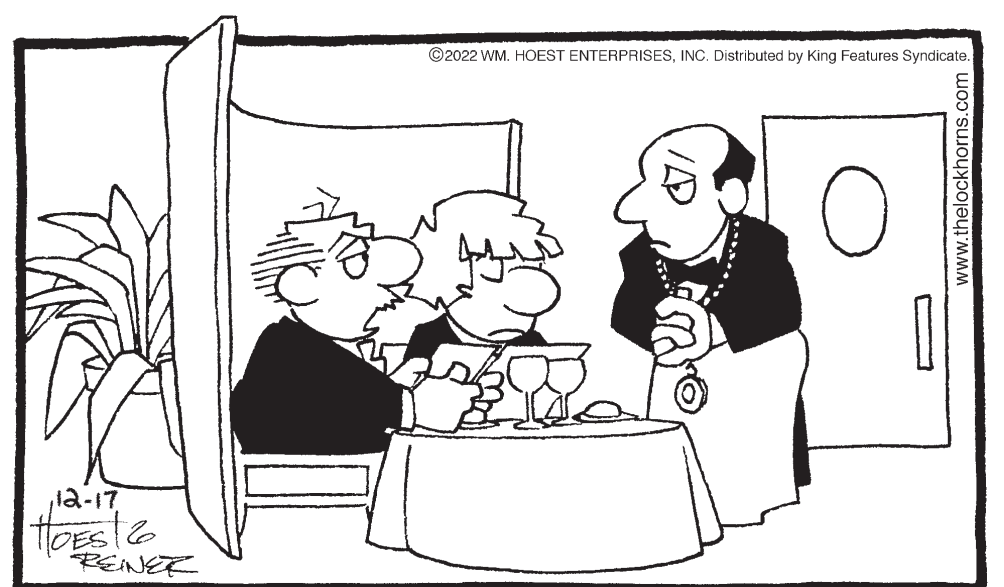
**MARVIN**

BY TOM ARMSTRONG



**THE LOCKHORNS**

BY BUNNY HOEST & JOHN REINER



"WHAT DO YOU RECOMMEND TO HELP FORGET THIS NIGHT EVER HAPPENED?"

**SUDOKU**

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Concepts Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

**Concepts Sudoku**

By Dave Green

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

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Difficulty Level ★★★★★

12/17

**Answer to previous puzzle**

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

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

12/16



## Lady Mustangs tame Dragons ahead of Otterville tourney

By Bryan Everson  
bryane@sedaliademocrat.com

Northwest girls basketball will hope to carry its momentum from one tournament to the next following Thursday night's performance at State Fair Community College.

The Lady Mustangs were engaged in a relatively tight contest at the W-K Holiday Shoot-Out against Bunceton with Prairie Home before pulling away late to win, 55-44.

With the teams separated by two points or fewer after each of the first three quarters, Northwest looked poised to initially pull away up seven before a missed layup and a 3-pointer by BPH's Ava Marcum closed it to 46-42. A turnover that led to a layup by the Dragons' Abby Gerke made it a one-possession game, but Karli Smith responded on the other end to bring the lead to four, then Gabby Meyer cleaned up a missed shot to make it 50-44.

The two teams traded a pair of turnovers before

Northwest broke the Dragons' press, leading to a layup by Grace Walker around the two-minute mark, and the Lady Mustangs did well enough to milk the clock by cycling the ball, ensuring victory.

Smith was perfect on her seven free-throw attempts and finished with 27 points, including 21 after the break.

"That's a good place to have her — we'd like to get her there more," Lady Mustangs head coach Caleb Crooker said.

BPH wasn't as dangerous down the stretch after Madison Brown fouled out. She scored all of her team-high 14 points before that final period. It wasn't totally by accident, however, as Northwest looked to repeatedly drive and fight for points and second chances inside.

"At halftime, our assistant coach Robert Norfleet talked about going to a different offense and attacking more with our bigs to draw them out and work the ball in with a three-post look,

See TAME | 14A



Northwest freshman Gabby Meyer draws contact while attempting to shoot in Thursday night's game at the W-K Holiday Shoot-Out in Sedalia. PHOTO BY BRYAN EVERSON | DEMOCRAT



New York Jets quarterback Zach Wilson (2) reacts against the Chicago Bears during an NFL football game, Nov. 27, 2022, in East Rutherford, N.J. PHOTO BY ADAM HUNGER | AP PHOTO

## Wilson to start at QB for Jets; White not cleared by doctors

By Dennis Waszak Jr.  
AP Pro Football Writer

FLORHAM PARK, N.J. (AP) — Zach Wilson is back under center for the New York Jets this week.

Coach Robert Saleh announced Friday that Wilson will start at quarterback Sunday against the Detroit Lions after Mike White was not cleared by doctors to play with a rib injury.

White started the last

three games, but was twice knocked out of the Jets' 20-12 loss at Buffalo last Sunday. X-rays at the stadium were clear and he finished the game, but CT scans at a hospital revealed a fracture to his ribs on his right side.

"A couple in a row," White said, "that makes that area just kind of really vulnerable."

White was cleared to practice and said throughout the week he had no

doubt he would start Sunday, but Saleh said Friday that team doctors wouldn't clear him for contact. White added that doctors told him if he got hit "in the right spot," it could lead to further damage.

"Mike White is an absolute warrior and has been doing everything he could this week to find another opinion to get him onto the football field,

See JETS | 15A

## Cowboys' Parsons made valid point about MVP debate

By Rob Maaddi  
AP Pro Football Writer

Micah Parsons took a lot of heat this week for expressing his opinion about the MVP race.

The Dallas Cowboys' star linebacker said the Philadelphia Eagles are 12-1 more because of the overall talent on the team than Jalen Hurts. The Eagles' third-year quarterback is a front-runner for NFL Most

Valuable Player entering Week 15.

Speaking on Von Miller's podcast, Parsons pointed out the Eagles have an excellent defense and superb players on offense around Hurts.

"It's system and team!" Parsons said about the credit.

He's not wrong.

The Eagles have the league's most domi-

nant offensive line. A.J. Brown and DeVonta Smith are among the best wide receiver tandems. The rushing attack led by Miles Sanders is outstanding. And, coach Nick Siriani and offensive coordinator Shane Steichen have devised an offensive scheme that maximizes Hurts' skills and helped him elevate his all-around game.

See DEBATE | 15A



Dallas Cowboys linebacker Micah Parsons sits on the bench during the first half of an NFL football game against the Minnesota Vikings, Sunday, Nov. 20, 2022, in Minneapolis. PHOTO BY ANDY CLAYTON-KING | AP PHOTO

## Column: We could do without 3rd-place game, all these bowls



Morocco's Yahia Attiyat Allah consoles a teammate at the end of the World Cup semifinal soccer match between France and Morocco at the Al Bayt Stadium in Al Khor, Qatar, Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2022. France won 2-0 and will play Argentina in Sunday's final. PHOTO BY MANU FERNANDEZ | AP PHOTO

By Paul Newberry  
AP Sports Columnist

As the World Cup holds a game to decide third place — who cares? — and a tidal wave of unnecessary bowl games gets cranked up — really, who cares? — we're reminded that sports, as great as they can be, have a few things we could definitely do without.

Modern pentathlon, anyone?

We'll get back to that befuddling sport in a moment.

For now, let's focus on a World Cup game of zero significance Saturday between Morocco and

Croatia, plus the first of 42 major college bowls — only three of which mean anything — being played Friday in a country (the Bahamas) that has no real affinity for American-style football.

Morocco made a stunning run at the World Cup, becoming the first African team to reach the semifinals while sparking joyous celebrations in the Arab world and beyond.

For all intents and purposes, that electrifying performance ended with a 2-0 loss to defending world champion France in the semifinals Wednesday. The Moroccans should be at home now, reveling in

the adulation of an appreciative nation.

Instead, they'll be back on the pitch one more time in Qatar, deciding the tournament's third-best team when they face a Croatian squad that lost to Argentina 3-0 in the other semifinal.

The players tried to act like this means something.

Trust us, it doesn't.

Morocco and Croatia will long be remembered for making it to the semis. The winner of the third-place game is sure to be quickly forgotten.

Morocco coach Walid Regragui summed it up best.

See BOWLS | 15A

# SPORTS CALENDAR

## Saturday ON TAP HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL

Smith-Cotton vs KC Northeast (at SFCC)  
 Lincoln vs Prairie Home with Bunceton (at Otterville)  
 Northwest vs Smithton (at Otterville)  
 Slater at Otterville  
 Stover vs Santa Fe (at SFCC)  
 Sacred Heart vs Sweet Springs (at SFCC)  
 Cole Camp vs St. Paul Lutheran (at SFCC)  
 Lincoln, Northwest, Smithton at Otterville Holiday Classic

## HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL

Smith-Cotton vs KC Northeast (at SFCC)  
 Northwest vs Smithton (at Otterville)  
 Lincoln vs Hermitage (at Otterville)  
 Stover vs Santa Fe (at SFCC)

Sacred Heart with Otterville vs Sweet Springs (at SFCC)  
 Cole Camp vs St. Paul Lutheran (at SFCC)

## HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS SWIM

Sacred Heart, Smith-Cotton at Truman Invite

## HIGH SCHOOL BOYS WRESTLING

Smith-Cotton at Harrisonville Tournament

Cole Camp, Tipton, Windsor at Battle on the Katy Trail

## HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS WRESTLING

Smith-Cotton at Eldon Tournament

Cole Camp, Tipton, Windsor at Battle on the Katy Trail

## ON AIR BOXING

9 p.m. SHO — WBA Showtime Championship: Michel Rivera vs. Frank Martin (Lightweights), Las Vegas

## COLLEGE BASKETBALL (MEN'S)

11 a.m. BTN — Wake Forest at Rutgers  
 ESPN2 — Indiana at Kansas  
 11:30 a.m. FOX — Providence at Seton Hall  
 Noon ACCN — North Florida at Pittsburgh  
 CBS — Gonzaga vs. Alabama, Birmingham, Ala.  
 1 p.m. BTN — DePaul at Northwestern  
 ESPN2 — Houston at Virginia  
 2 p.m. ACCN — Cornell at Syracuse  
 CBS — CBS Sports Classic: North Carolina vs. Ohio St., New York  
 SECN — Nicholls St. at Mississippi St.  
 3 p.m. BTN — Alabama A&M at Illinois  
 CBSSN — Villanova at Saint Joseph's  
 4 p.m. SECN — Temple at Mississippi  
 4:30 p.m. CBS — CBS Sports Classic: UCLA vs. Kentucky, New York  
 5 p.m. CBSSN — Utah at BYU  
 5:15 p.m. BTN — Davidson at Purdue  
 6 p.m. ESPNU — Texas A&M at Memphis  
 FS1 — UConn at Butler  
 SECN — Winthrop at LSU  
 7 p.m. CBSSN — Legends of Basketball: Wyoming vs. Dayton, Chicago  
 PAC-12N — Portland at Oregon  
 7:30 p.m. BTN — SE Missouri at Iowa  
 8 p.m. ESPNU — Oklahoma St. at Wichita St.  
 9 p.m. PAC-12N — Idaho St. at Washington  
 9:30 p.m. CBSSN — Legends of Basketball: NC State vs. Vanderbilt, Chicago  
 ESPN2 — Tennessee at Arizona  
**COLLEGE FOOTBALL**  
 10 a.m. ESPN — The

## Wasabi Fenway Bowl:

Cincinnati vs. Louisville, Boston  
 11 a.m. ABC — The Cricket Celebration Bowl: Jackson St. vs. NC Central, Atlanta  
 Noon CNBC — HBCU Pigskin Showdown: Team Selma vs. Team Marion, Marion, Ala.  
 ESPNU — NCAA Division II Tournament: Colorado Mines vs. Ferris St., Championship, McKinney, Texas  
 1:30 p.m. ESPN — The SRS Distribution Las Vegas Bowl: Florida vs. Oregon St., Las Vegas  
 2:30 p.m. ABC — The Jimmy Kimmel LA Bowl: Washington St. vs. Fresno St., Los Angeles  
 3 p.m. ESPNU — NCAA FCS Tournament: Montana St. at S. Dakota St., Semifinal  
 4:45 p.m. ESPN — The LendingTree Bowl: Rice vs. Southern Miss., Mobile, Ala.  
 6:30 p.m. ABC — The New Mexico Bowl: SMU vs. BYU, Albuquerque, N.M.  
 8:15 p.m. ESPN — The Frisco Bowl: N. Texas vs. Boise St., Frisco, Texas  
**COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL (WOMEN'S)**  
 7 p.m. ESPN2 — NCAA Tournament: Louisville vs. Texas, Championship, Omaha, Neb.  
**GOLF**  
 2 a.m. GOLF — DP World Tour: The AfrAsia Bank Mauritius Open, Third Round, Mont Choisy Le Golf, Mont Choisy, Mauritius  
 1 p.m. NBC — PGA Tour/PGA Tour Champions: The PNC Championship, First Round, Ritz-Carlton Golf Club, Orlando, Fla.  
 2 a.m. (Sunday)  
 GOLF — DP World Tour: The AfrAsia Bank Mauritius Open, Final Round, Mont Choisy Le Golf, Mont

## Choisy, Mauritius HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

3 p.m. ESPNU — Geico State Champions Bowl Series: Chaminade-Madonna (Fla.) vs. Bishop Gorman (Nev.), Las Vegas  
**HORSE RACING**  
 1 p.m. FS1 — NYRA: America's Day at the Races  
 4 p.m. FS2 — NYRA: America's Day at the Races  
**NBA BASKETBALL**  
 4 p.m. NBATV — Miami vs. San Antonio, Mexico City  
 8 p.m. NBATV — New Orleans at Phoenix  
**NFL FOOTBALL**  
 Noon NFLN — Indianapolis at Minnesota  
 3:30 p.m. NFLN — Baltimore at Cleveland  
 7:15 p.m. NFLN — Miami at Buffalo  
**NHL HOCKEY**  
 Noon NHLN — Columbus at Boston  
 6 p.m. NHLN — Toronto at Washington  
**SOCCER (MEN'S)**  
 6:25 a.m. CBSSN — SPFL: Celtic at Aberdeen  
 9 a.m. FOX — FIFA World Cup: Croatia vs. Morocco, Third-Place Match, Al Rayyan, Qatar  
**Sunday ON AIR COLLEGE BASKETBALL (MEN'S)**  
 11 a.m. BTN — Canisius at Penn State  
 Noon ESPN2 — Pac-12 US LBM Coast To Coast Challenge: Stanford vs. Texas, Dallas  
 1 p.m. ESPNU — Boost Mobile Chris Paul HBCU Challenge: NC A&T vs. Norfolk St., Las Vegas  
 3:30 p.m. CBSSN — Southern U. at UAB  
 ESPNU — Boost Mobile Chris Paul HBCU Challenge: Hampton vs. Texas Southern, Las Vegas  
 4 p.m. PAC-12N — N. Colorado at Colorado

4:30 p.m. ESPN — Auburn at Southern Cal  
 ESPN2 — Holiday Hoopsgiving: Notre Dame vs. Georgia, Atlanta  
 5:30 p.m. FS1 — Iona at New Mexico  
 6 p.m. PAC-12N — San Diego at Arizona St.  
 9 p.m. ESPN — Pac-12 US LBM Coast To Coast Challenge: Washington St. vs. Baylor, Dallas  
**COLLEGE BASKETBALL (WOMEN'S)**  
 11 a.m. ACCN — Wake Forest at Syracuse  
 Noon ESPN — The Invesco QQQ Basketball Hall of Fame Women's Showcase: Florida St. vs. UConn, Uncasville, Conn.  
 SECN — Samford at Auburn  
 1 p.m. ACCN — Louisville at Pittsburgh  
 BTN — New Orleans at Rutgers  
 2 p.m. ABC — Tennessee at Stanford  
 SECN — SMU at Texas A&M  
 2:30 p.m. ESPN — The Invesco QQQ Basketball Hall of Fame Women's Showcase: Iowa St. vs. Villanova, Uncasville, Conn.  
 ESPN2 — Pac-12 US LBM Coast To Coast Challenge: Southern Cal vs. Texas, Dallas  
 3 p.m. ACCN — Notre Dame at Virginia Tech  
 3:30 p.m. FS1 — Providence at St. John's  
 4 p.m. SECN — Illinois at Missouri  
 5 p.m. ACCN — Clemson at NC State  
 6:30 p.m. ESPN — Pac-12 US LBM Coast To Coast Challenge: Arizona vs. Baylor, Dallas  
**GOLF**  
 2 a.m. GOLF — DP World Tour: The AfrAsia Bank Mauritius Open, Final Round, Mont Choisy Le Golf, Mont Choisy, Mauritius

11:30 a.m. GOLF — PGA Tour/PGA Tour Champions: The PNC Championship, Final Round, Ritz-Carlton Golf Club, Orlando, Fla.  
 12:30 p.m. NBC — PGA Tour/PGA Tour Champions: The PNC Championship, Final Round, Ritz-Carlton Golf Club, Orlando, Fla.  
**HORSE RACING**  
 1:30 p.m. FS1 — NYRA: America's Day at the Races  
 3:30 p.m. FS2 — NYRA: America's Day at the Races  
**NFL FOOTBALL**  
 Noon CBS — Regional Coverage: Detroit at NY Jets, Pittsburgh at Carolina, Kansas City at Houston  
 FOX — Regional Coverage: Philadelphia at Chicago, Atlanta at New Orleans, Dallas at Jacksonville  
 3:05 p.m. FOX — Regional Coverage: Arizona at Denver, New England at Las Vegas  
 3:25 p.m. CBS — Regional Coverage: Tennessee at LA Chargers, Cincinnati at Tampa Bay  
 7:15 p.m. NBC — NY Giants at Washington  
**NHL HOCKEY**  
 1 p.m. NHLN — Ottawa at Minnesota  
 6:30 p.m. ESPN — NY Rangers at Chicago  
**RODEO**  
 1 p.m. CBSSN — PBR: The Manchester Invitational, Championship Round, Manchester, N.H.  
**SNOWBOARDING**  
 11:30 a.m. NBC — FIS World Cup: Halfpipe, Copper Mountain, Colo. (Taped)  
 3:30 p.m. NBC — FIS World Cup: Big Air, Copper Mountain, Colo. (Taped)  
**SOCCER (MEN'S)**  
 9 a.m. FOX — FIFA World Cup: Argentina vs. France, Final, Lusail, Qatar

# AP source: White Sox, Benintendi agree to \$75M, 5-year deal

**By Jay Cohen**  
 AP Sports Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — The Chicago White Sox agreed to a \$75 million, five-year contract with All-Star outfielder Andrew Benintendi, a person familiar with the situation said Friday.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because the deal was pending a physical. ESPN first reported the agreement.

The 28-year-old Benintendi helped Boston capture a

World Series championship in 2018. He won a gold glove with Kansas City in 2021 and was chosen to his first All-Star team last season before the Royals traded him to the New York Yankees on July 27. He hit a career-high .304 in 126 games, though his home run total dropped to five from 17 in 2021.

Benintendi batted .254 in 33 games with the Yankees and missed the playoffs because of a broken right wrist. He has a .279 average and 73 homers over seven seasons with Boston, Kansas City and

New York. Benintendi reunites with new White Sox manager Pedro Grifol, who took over for Hall of Famer Tony La Russa after spending the past 10 years in a variety of coaching roles with Kansas City.

Chicago is looking to bounce back from a disappointing 2022 season, when it went 81-81 and finished 11 games back of surprising AL Central champion Cleveland. The White Sox were coming off back-to-back playoff appearances and ran away with the division in 2021.



New York Yankees left fielder Andrew Benintendi catches a fly ball hit by Tampa Bay Rays' Ji-Man Choi during the first inning of a baseball game Friday, Sept. 2, 2022, in St. Petersburg, Fla. FILE PHOTO BY SCOTT AUDETTE | AP PHOTO

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## HOROSCOPES

By Georgia Nicols

**Moon Alert:** There are no restrictions to shopping or important decisions today. The Moon is in Libra.

**Happy Birthday for Saturday, Dec. 17, 2022:**

You are high-energy, outgoing and friendly. You have a strong work ethic and are a natural leader. People admire you. This year you will reap the benefits of the past efforts and receive recognition -- a raise, praise, kudos or awards. Well done! Bravo!

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

**ARIES (March 21-April 19)**

★★★ Be careful today. Discussions with close friends and partners might get intense. Meanwhile, bosses, parents and people in authority might throw you a curveball or do something you didn't expect. Therefore, tread carefully! Keep your head down and your powder dry. Tonight: Patience.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)**

★★★ Travel plans might suddenly change today. They might be canceled or rescheduled, or perhaps you have to travel when you didn't expect to do so. Meanwhile, people at work are opinionated! Likewise, issues related to a pet are intense. Tonight: Cooperate.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20)**

★★★★ This is a playful, flirtatious day. Accept invitations to party, because you have lots of energy and you want to have some fun. However, keep an eye on your banking situation and anything related to inheritances and shared property. Something unexpected might impact these areas. Stay in the know. Tonight: Relax.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22)**

★★★ A partner or close friend might catch you off guard today. Or perhaps you will meet someone who is different or unusual. Either way, this could lead to an intense family discussion at home. (Of course, everyone has their opinion to share, so they will chip in their two cents.) Tonight: Cocoon.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)**

★★★ Your work routine might change today. Staff shortages, power outages, late shipments, canceled appointments or surprise announcements might be a few things that catch you off guard today. On the upside, you might have some brilliant ideas. Your mind is sharp today. Tonight: Be courteous.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)**

★★★ Your ambition is aroused today, which is why you will try to go after whatever you want. Stay light on your feet: social plans might change today. Meanwhile, parents should be aware that this is a mildly accident-prone day for their kids, which means they should be vigilant. Tonight: Be generous.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)**

★★★★ Today the Moon is in your sign dancing with Mars, which gives you lots of energy and mental clarity. You might see ways to improve your appearance or your health. Meanwhile, get ready for some interruptions to your home routine. Perhaps it's an unusual family conversation or an unexpected knock at the door. Tonight: Caution.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)**

★★★ Your daily routine will probably change today because something unexpected might occur. Incidentally, pay attention to everything you say and do. This is a mildly accident-prone day. You also might come up with zany or genius-like ideas. Stay light on your feet! Tonight: Solitude.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)**

★★★★ A discussion with a friend, perhaps a female, will be animated and intense today. You have ideas, and so do they. Meanwhile, keep an eye on your money and your possessions, because something unpredictable might happen. You might find money; you might lose money. Tonight: Be gracious.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)**

★★★ It's curious, but people notice you today for some reason. In fact, some seem to know personal details about your private life. Be aware of this in case you have to do some damage control. Guard against rash, impulsive actions. Think before you speak or act so you have no regrets later. Tonight: Show respect.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)**

★★★★ Do something different today, because you're a bit restless and yearning for some adventure. What you need is a little change of scenery. You don't have to hop on a jet. Just visit a store or restaurant that you've never been to before. Stretch your wings and discover your neighborhood. Tonight: Explore.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)**

★★★ A friend or even a casual acquaintance might surprise you today. Possibly, you will meet someone new who is unusual or different. This discussion could come about because of your interest in shared property, inheritances or something to do with the wealth and resources of others. Tonight: Check your finances.

**BORN TODAY**

Actress Sarah Paulson (1974), actress Katheryn Winnick (1977), actor Giovanni Ribisi (1974)



FIFA President Gianni Infantino meets the media at the FIFA World Cup closing press conference in Doha, Qatar, Friday, Dec. 16, 2022.

PHOTO BY MARTIN MEISSNER | AP PHOTO

# Infantino gives FIFA wish list of new and revamped events

By Graham Dunbar

AP Sports Writer

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — A 32-team men's Club World Cup in 2025. A new version of the tournament for women. National teams from different continents playing each other more often between World Cups.

FIFA president Gianni Infantino shared his wish list Friday to create and revamp games and events under the soccer body's control.

A "FIFA World Series" was floated of four-team friendly tournaments in March before major championships in even-numbered years, plus combining the international breaks in September and October to a single block of four national team games.

Some of the ideas are not new, but the debate and announcement in Qatar two days before the World Cup final still caught soccer officials in Europe by surprise.

"We will now consult on all of these topics and then elaborate on all the details," Infantino said at a news conference after the 37-member FIFA Council agreed on "strategic principles" for new competitions.

Members of the European Club Association and European Leagues groups

said they were scrambling to learn the unexpected details of FIFA's plans.

A Club World Cup of 24 teams was due in 2021 in China but was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, though no tournament format had been agreed to nor commercial partners signed.

Infantino committed FIFA to a 32-team version in 2½ years, one week after failing to secure a working agreement in Doha with the influential ECA and one day after the proposed Super League project endured another setback in court in Luxembourg.

"The 32-team tournament will go ahead, making it really like a World Cup," Infantino said about an event in June-July 2025 that would require some teams to play six or seven games.

It is unclear how teams would qualify for the event — potentially worth tens of millions of dollars to each in prize money — or how many entries each continent would get, though Europe would likely have 12.

"The details, the location and so on still need to be discussed, agreed and decided," Infantino said.

Former England defender Jamie Carragher, who is now a broadcaster on British television, called it a

"ridiculous idea."

"Players need rest at some point, they are getting treated like cattle," Carragher wrote on Twitter. "FIFA hate the (Champions League) & want something similar themselves. European clubs should boycott it."

A women's Club World Cup is less controversial and has been a FIFA target since the 2019 World Cup in France. No new details were given Friday.

Citing surprising results at this year's World Cup, with European and South American teams beaten by African and Asian opponents, Infantino said FIFA wanted teams from different regions to meet more often.

Space in the congested calendar of international games could be found in March in years when a World Cup, European Championship or Copa América is scheduled, Infantino said.

He suggested a "FIFA World Series" for friendly games between four teams, each from a different continent.

Drafting a new FIFA-managed calendar to start in 2025 has long been a pressing issue in the soccer industry, but stalled when it became mixed with Infantino's failed push last year for playing World Cups

every two years.

FIFA had suggested playing all qualifying games for national team tournaments in two blocks — one in the spring, one in the fall — to replace the current system of nine double-headers spread over two years.

The latest compromise is for a four-game block in the fall that would shut down domestic leagues for back-to-back weekends but would mean one fewer long-haul return trip for national team players.

Infantino restated proposals to organize annual Under-17 World Cups for boys and girls starting in 2024, and to add four women's teams to the Olympic tournament.

A 16-team women's Olympic tournament would be the same as the men's event, but the addition would require the IOC and organizers to find space for about 70 extra athletes, plus team officials.

Infantino also confirmed that FIFA wants to pick hosts in 2024 for the 2030 World Cup and the 2027 Women's World Cup.

The host for the 2031 women's tournament is expected to be picked in 2025 "in order to really align men and women," Infantino said.

# Phillies finalize 4-year, \$72M deal with RHP Taijuan Walker

By The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Taijuan Walker wanted to keep uniform No. 99, so he figured 29 of the 30 major league teams were options.

"I think there's only one team that I could go to where I couldn't be 99 and that was the Yankees," he said, a reference to AL MVP Aaron Judge's jersey number. "I think every other team was available. I was tired of switching my number."

The 30-year-old right-hander finalized a \$72 million, four-year contract with the National League champion Phillies on Friday and will become the fourth Philadelphia player to wear No. 99 after Mitch Williams (1993), Turk Wendell (2001) and So Taguchi (2008).

Walker wore No. 44 growing up and got it with Seattle in 2016. Traded to Arizona, where Paul Gold-

schmidt had the number, he switched to No. 99. Then he was dealt to Toronto, where Hyun Ryu was 99, and Walker switched to 00. He signed as a free agent with New York, where mascot Mr. Met had 00, so Walker went back to 99 for the past two seasons.

Walker, who gets an \$18 million salary in each of the next four years, went 12-5 with a 3.49 ERA in 29 starts this season for the Mets, one of Philadelphia's biggest NL East rivals. He slots into a rotation that includes Zack Wheeler, Aaron Nola and Ranger Suárez,

"Very talented individual, goes out there every five days with quality stuff," Phillies president of baseball operations Dave Dombrowski said. "We really love his split finger that he threw a lot more last year and will continue to do so."

Walker already spoke with manager Rob Thomson, pitching coach Caleb

Cotham and director of pitching development Brian Kaplan. Walker increased the use of a splitter from 14% to 27% last season and added a cutter, though just 5%.

He switched this year to the splitter grip used by teammate Carlos Carrasco.

"With the Mets, I was able to learn how to throw my splitter more and how to use it," Walker said. "I think coming over here, already speaking with Caleb, I think that we can tweak my cutter a little bit and my slider, but also just up the use of my splitter."

Walker is looking forward to pitching in front of fans at Citizens Bank Park.

"I actually talked to Ryan Howard a couple of days ago and he was telling me playing in the playoffs here in Philly it's the loudest he's ever heard a stadium," Walker said. "So for me, that's exciting, to have a fanbase who's so passionate

and cares so much about the team and who shows up every day. Every time we came to play when I was with the Mets, the Phillies fans were here, they were out, they were loud."

Walker was selected by Seattle with the No. 43 pick in the 2010 amateur draft. He made his big league debut with the Mariners in 2013.

Walker signed with New York as a free agent in February 2021. He turned down a \$7.5 million player option last month in favor of a \$3 million buyout, making his deal worth \$17 million over two seasons.

The 6-foot-4 Walker made the All-Star team for the first time in 2021, putting together a fast start before fading to 7-11 with a 4.47 ERA in 30 games, 29 starts.

To make room for Walker on the 40-man roster, right-hander Tayler Scott was designated for assignment.

# Broncos rule out Russell Wilson for Cardinals game Sunday

**By Arnie Stapleton**

AP Pro Football Writer

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP) — Broncos quarterback Russell Wilson cleared concussion protocol, but will be held out of Denver's game against the Arizona Cardinals, coach Nathaniel Hackett said Friday.

Hackett said Wilson wasn't pleased with the decision, but the Broncos want to take every precaution with their 34-year-old quarterback's health.

Wilson sustained a concussion on a head-first dive into several defenders at the goal line following a 14-yard scramble against the Kansas City Chiefs last weekend.

He appeared to get briefly knocked unconscious and when his helmet was removed a swelling was clearly visible on his forehead. He was replaced by Brett Rypien, who will make his third career start Sunday.

Wilson swiftly progressed through the league's concussion rules this week, participating in individual throwing drills Wednesday, taking limited snaps Thursday and participating fully on Friday.

After Friday's practice, however, Hackett said Rypien, who got the bulk of the snaps at practice this week, would start Sunday when the Broncos (3-10) host Arizona (4-9).

The Cardinals also will start their backup, Colt McCoy, with starter Kyler Murray sidelined by an ACL tear in his right knee he suffered last week.

"Russell Wilson has passed the concussion protocol," Hackett said. "... As an organization, we've decided to give him another week so he's ready to go against the Los Angeles Rams" on Christmas Day."

Hackett had said all week that the organization's top concern was Wilson's health, so the move wasn't entirely unexpected.

Wilson has only missed four games in his 11-year NFL career, three of them last season in Seattle when he broke a finger on his throwing hand and one earlier this season because of a pulled hamstring.

"Russ is one of our ultimate competitors in this game. He's unbelievable," Hackett said. "We informed him of the decision. He's not happy with it. He wants to be out there and play. He's very, very competitive, as we all know, and wants to compete for this team and be out there."

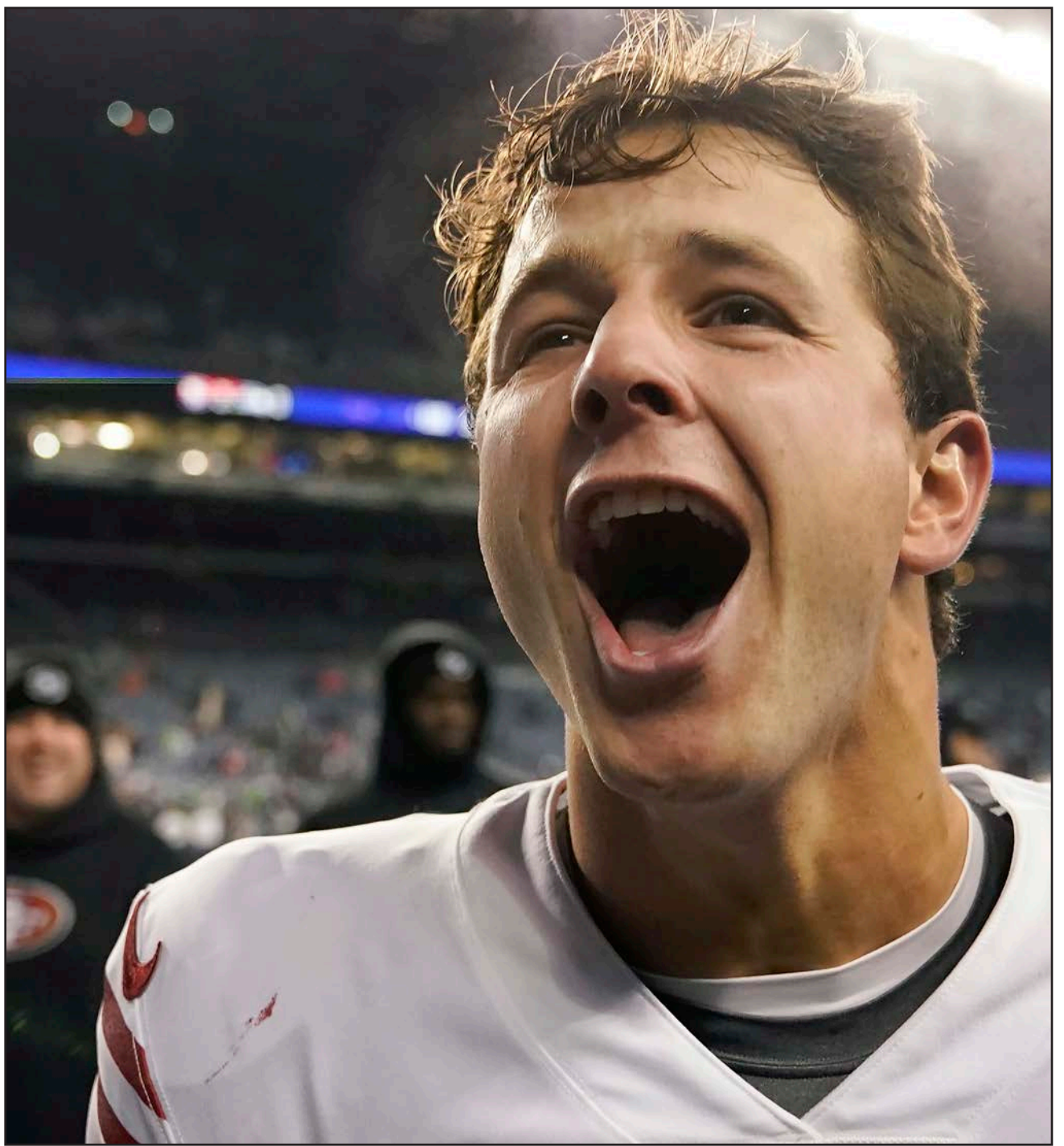
"And we as an organization, after discussing and talking throughout this entire week, have decided it's best for our organization, it's best for Russell. And we talked about this from top all the way to the bottom," Hackett said. "So we looked at every single thing and just want to give him another week to get ready. We're very confident in 'Ryp,' very excited about 'Ryp' and this opportunity."

Rypien has made two career starts, both against the New York Jets, whom he beat in 2020 and lost to on Oct. 23 when Wilson was sidelined.

Wilson's difficult first season in Denver includes just 11 touchdown passes — three of which came last week before he got hurt early in the fourth quarter—and 43 sacks after he signed a \$245 million contract before the season that included a \$50 million signing bonus, making his salary this season \$57 million.

Wilson's acquisition cost the Broncos four premium draft picks, including their 2023 first-rounder. With Denver's unexpected struggles this year, Seattle stands to get the second overall pick in the NFL draft next April.

Also ruled out Friday were receivers Courtland Sutton and Kendall Hinton, who are among a rash of Broncos who have pulled hamstrings.



San Francisco 49ers quarterback Brock Purdy celebrates after the 49ers defeated the Seattle Seahawks in an NFL football game in Seattle, Thursday, Dec. 15, 2022. PHOTO BY MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ | AP PHOTO

# 49ers surging into playoffs behind rookie QB Brock Purdy

**By Josh Dubow**

AP Pro Football Writer

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — The switch to a third-string rookie quarterback has done nothing to slow down the surging San Francisco 49ers.

Instead, with Brock Purdy running a talented offense combined with the NFL's stingiest defense, the Niners are enjoying their most dominant stretch ever under coach Kyle Shanahan.

A banged-up Purdy threw two more TD passes and the defense did much of the rest of the work Thursday night when the 49ers clinched their second division title in the last 10 seasons by beat-

ing rival Seattle 21-13 on Thursday night.

"This isn't our final goal by any means," Shanahan said. "I'm very proud of our team, what we accomplished throughout the year to get to this. Our goal is to get in the tournament. We accomplished that. Now it's all trying to set that up to be the best situation we can."

Instead of falling apart after Jimmy Garoppolo broke his foot in the first quarter of a Week 13 win over Miami, the 49ers (10-4) haven't missed a step and look like one of the top contenders in the NFC.

They have outscored the opposition 86-30 since Purdy took over the

offense.

"He's definitely the most poised rookie I've ever had," Shanahan said. "He's been like that since he's gotten here."

The Niners have won seven straight games for their earliest clinching since 2011. They have allowed 17 points or fewer in all of those games — something they had only done in a seven-game win streak in one season in their 1981 and '84 Super Bowl campaigns.

Purdy has had plenty of help with the midseason addition of Christian McCaffrey providing a big spark to the offense.

But he has more than done his job as well. Since taking over for Garoppolo,

Purdy has completed 69% of his passes, with six TDs, one interception and a 108.8 passer rating.

He has earned the respect and admiration from his teammates and coaches and now is in position to lead a team into the playoffs after being the final pick of the draft in April.

"It's special and everything," he said. "Honestly I'm just like another component. I'm another piece of this team in terms of a guy coming in, doing what he's asked. I'm the quarterback. I have to make decisions. I trust in how the coaches teach me throughout the week. I just try to get the ball out to the guys on time."

# Tame

From Page 11A

force them into a man-to-man game to create the matchups we liked. We adjusted and that was the difference, I feel."

Behind Smith, Walker finished with 11 points, as did Meyer, just a freshman.

"[Gabby] is super physical and doesn't play like a freshman," Crooker said. "She's only going to get better. Mary Walker off the bench did a great job, and another freshman, Emma Newton off the bench did a good job for us, too."

The Lady Mustangs, now 6-3, head into the Otterville Holiday Classic as the top-seeded team and will open Saturday morning's action at 9 a.m. against Smithton. The winner of Lincoln and Hermitage (4:30 p.m.) will await Northwest on Tuesday.

# Northwest 77, Prairie Home with Bunceton 64

In the final game of the evening at the W-K, the Mustangs controlled the game, leading by 10 after the opening period, then stretching it to double up the Dragons 46-23 by halftime.

Northwest's quartet of players in double figures was headed by Gavin Killion (29 points, five steals), followed by Issac Nieters (18 points, 15 rebounds). Lain Tichenor had a dozen points and Bo Crooker

followed with 10.

Of Northwest's unbeaten start of nine games, a win over Sacred Heart in the final of the Pilot Grove Tournament is so far the standout.

"I thought both teams really played well — we had seven turnovers, they had eight — and we defended really well against the 3, and from my point of view we ran our offense really well," Northwest head coach Rick Mills said. "We got more second chances than they did, and I thought [Tanner] Damlo, their post, did a great job, but when he fouled out, that hurt them. Once he went out, we controlled the inside. It was a sweet win against a very good ballclub."

Mills said the defense has come along swiftly, and it will be counted on again when Northwest takes on another Kaysinger opponent, Smithton, to open the Otterville tourney on Saturday at 10:30 a.m.

Later in the day, host Otterville will take on No. 3 Slater at noon, with the winners of those two games facing off on Tuesday. On the opposite side of the boys bracket, No. 1 Lincoln faces Prairie Home with Bunceton, and Iberia also plays Hermitage.

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## Retirement Announcement

After 35 years of dedicated service to the Sedalia community, Dr. John Drenon, Optometrist at Eyecare Specialties in Sedalia, is setting his sights on a well-deserved retirement and spending more time with his wife, children and grandchildren.

Dr. John Drenon began his career in 1987 practicing with his father, Dr. John Drenon Sr., at his Optometric practice here in Sedalia. He worked side by side with his father for 11 years until his father took his retirement in 1998. Dr. Drenon then continued to serve his patients until joining Eyecare Specialties in 2014, working with Dr. Brett Liesemeyer, where he is finishing his career in December.

There are many people in the Sedalia community that have benefitted from Dr. Drenon's knowledge and passion for optometry and optical health. We would like to invite those people of the community to attend Dr. Drenon's retirement reception that will be held on **December 19th** between **5:00 and 7:00 pm** at **Eyecare Specialties in Sedalia at 3403 W 10th Street.**

**All of us here will miss Dr. John Drenon and will never forget his kindness and dedication to our community. Please join us in wishing John the best in his retirement.**



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# Jets

From Page 11A

to find somebody who would clear him for contact," Saleh said.

White acknowledged he spoke to nearly 10 doctors to see if he could find one that would give him the OK to play.

"And they just won't," White said. "And I completely understand why, but I'm always going to try to fight like hell to be out on the field with my guys. So, it's frustrating, but it's kind of part of football, part of life that you've got to deal with."

So instead of starting for the Jets (7-6) who are trying to keep pace in the AFC playoff hunt, White will merely be a spectator.

"It's one of those things where we've got to do what's best for the player," Saleh said. "And we've got to protect the player from the player."

Saleh said the Jets will re-evaluate White's injury Monday, but acknowledged it will be a short turnaround with New York hosting Jacksonville next Thursday night.

Wilson, the No. 2 overall pick last year, was benched last month to focus on improving his mental approach and mechanics. The Jets elevated him earlier this week from No. 3 behind White and Joe Flacco to No. 2.

"I was excited," Wilson said of getting the news Friday he would start. "It's a cool opportunity."

Wilson missed the first three games of this season while recovering from a knee injury, with Flacco starting in his place. Wilson started the next seven and the Jets went 5-2 in those games, but his play was mostly shaky. He had four

touchdown passes and five interceptions and had a 55.6 completion percentage as New York's offense struggled to produce points.

After Wilson went just 9 of 22 for 77 yards in a 10-3 loss at New England in Week 11, the Jets elevated White to starter.

Meanwhile, Wilson was inactive the last three games, and not even dressed in uniform on the sideline.

"This is going to be a great opportunity for Zach," Saleh said. "When he was elevated to the No. 2 quarterback, it was with the understanding there's a strong possibility he was going to play and to prepare accordingly."

Added Wilson: "I'm ready to go, man. I feel like these past three weeks or whatever, I've been just trying to keep improving and getting better and taking each day with the mentality as if I was playing."

Wilson rubbed some within the organization the wrong way after the loss to the Patriots when he said he didn't feel as though he let the defense down despite his poor play. Wilson apologized to his teammates a few days later, but there was a perception that perhaps he had lost some support in the locker room.

"I think our guys trust him," Saleh said. "I feel like he's had a really good week of practice."

Wilson said he wanted his benching to be "a reset," a time to get better on and off the field — and recapture his love for the game.

"The mindset's got to be I've got to do the best I can every single play," Wilson said. "I'm not going to go out there with any expectations of whatever. It's got to be, what's the best decision I can make, let me go out there play, have fun and be grateful to be on this field."

# Debate

From Page 11A

Parsons also argued that Patrick Mahomes would be his MVP choice because he's having another tremendous season for the Kansas City Chiefs without star wide receiver Tyreek Hill, who was traded to Miami.

Of course, some Eagles fans took offense to Parsons' comments. Others considered his words a compliment about the team. Hurts and his teammates, to their credit, refused to engage. The Eagles and Cowboys face each other in Dallas on Christmas Eve.

Parsons provided plenty of fodder for talk shows and reporters by openly sharing his thoughts. He didn't do his team any favors by giving Hurts and the Eagles

bulletin-board material for next week's game. Then again, players shouldn't need extra motivation to play their best, especially in a rivalry game with playoff implications. The Cowboys (10-3) still have a shot winning the NFC East.

The conversation between Parsons and Miller about Hurts and other MVP candidates is a similar debate voters are having. With four games remaining, it's a close race between Hurts and Mahomes with Joe Burrow and Josh Allen also in the mix. Tua Tagovailoa could enter the discussion with a spectacular finish. Hill and Justin Jefferson deserve consideration, though a non-quarterback hasn't won the award since Adrian Peterson in 2012.

Parsons was at least one voter's choice at the midpoint of the season but only two defensive players have

ever won MVP. Parsons also is the leading candidate for the AP Defensive Player of the Year.

Hurts has made a dramatic leap in his second full season as Philadelphia's starter. He led the team to a 9-8 record and a playoff appearance last season but the front office still had questions about his ability to be a franchise QB and considered trading for Russell Wilson and other proven starters.

Given another season in Sirianni's offense, Hurts has thrived. He has 3,157 yards passing, 22 touchdowns and only three interceptions, and leads the NFL in passer rating at 108.4. Hurts also has 686 yards rushing and 10 TDs on the ground.

Despite losing Hill, Mahomes, the 2018 NFL MVP, leads the NFL with 4,160 yards passing and 33 TDs. The Chiefs are 10-3 with

losses to Allen's Bills and Burrow's Bengals.

Burrow, who led Cincinnati to the AFC championship in his second season last year, has overcome an 0-2 start and helped the Bengals (9-4) win five straight.

Allen has Buffalo (10-3) sitting in the top spot in the AFC.

The MVP winner will be decided down the stretch and it could end up being Hurts or the AFC quarterback who leads his team to the No. 1 seed.

The Associated Press announces the league's MVP winner at NFL Honors on Feb. 9. A panel of 50 voters, comprised of national writers and broadcasters, including former players and coaches, will select a top five for the first time this season.

Until then, the debate continues.

# Bowls

From Page 11A

"You are so disappointed," he said. "You've just lost a semifinal and then two days later, you have to go back out there."

Of course, when it comes to worthless contests, nothing beats the college football bowl system.

Four teams — Georgia, Michigan, TCU and Ohio State — have berths in the College Football Playoff. The Peach and Fiesta semifinals, followed by the national championship game, are the only major-college postseason games that matter.

Yet, over the next 2 1/2 weeks, there will be 39 more — essentially serving as huge bloc of holiday programming for ESPN and a few other

networks, as monotonous and insignificant as all those Hallmark Christmas movies.

In a match-up of 6-6 teams that had never faced each other before and had little reason to travel to the Bahamas for their first meeting, UAB held on for what was admittedly a thrilling 24-20 victory over Miami of Ohio.

Beyond all the whooping and hollering from the players, the reaction to a game-winning tackle just short of the goal line was silence. The stadium appeared to be largely empty, as it should have been.

At least UAB and Miami got to enjoy a week in paradise.

Other bowls are set for decidedly non-paradise locales such as Boise, Idaho; Shreveport, Louisiana; Fort Worth, Texas; and Montgomery, Alabama.

Why? While we're at it, here's a

few other things we should sweep into the dustpan of sports history:

— The aforementioned modern pentathlon, which somehow remains an Olympic event even though only a few dozen people in the entire world seem to know what it is. We're told it has something to do with mimicking the skills needed by a pre-20th century soldier: shooting, sword fighting, swimming, running and riding a horse. The riding part appears on the way out after a coach — apparently a fan of "Blazing Saddles" — was accused of punching a horse at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Here's a better idea: Let's just get rid of the whole sport.

— Roman gladiators are no longer a thing, which we can all agree is a good thing, right? There's no need in a modern, supposedly civilized world for the

"sport" (yep, I'm doing air quotes) of MMA, which is essentially two people in a cage attempting to beat each other to a bloody pulp, break someone's arm or choke the other fighter into unconsciousness.

— All-Star games, of any kind. The NFL sort of wised up, eliminating its farce known as the Pro Bowl, though it still plans to have a skills competition and flag football game (FWIW, I won't be watching that, either). Major League Baseball's all-star game once served an actual purpose, matching the best players from two leagues that didn't face each other during the regular season, but inter-league play ended that. As for the NBA and the NHL, their midseason showcases are defense-free affairs that in no way mimic actual games.

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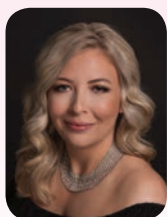
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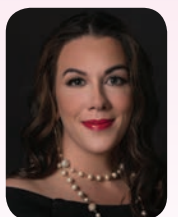
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## Jazzy 'Charlie Brown Christmas' swings on after 57 years

By David Bauder  
AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Mendelson family would love to find the envelope where their father, Lee, scribbled some lyrics to jazz musician Vince Guaraldi's composition "Christmas Time is Here" for an animated TV special featuring the "Peanuts" gang in 1965.

The producer always said it had taken less than half an hour to write, and he likely tossed the scrap of paper away. He was in a rush. Everything was rushed. No one even knew, once the special aired, whether it would ever be seen again.

Instead, "A Charlie Brown Christmas" became an indelible holiday tradition and so, too, has Guaraldi's music — perhaps even more so.

"Christmas just doesn't feel like Christmas without hearing that album in the background," said Derrick Bang, author of the biography "Vince Guaraldi at the Piano."

The special itself was a bit of an oddity: a cartoon story of the meaning of Christmas soundtracked by a sophisticated, mostly instrumental jazz trio of piano, bass and drum.

Yet it worked. Guaraldi's cascading piano evokes both motion and lightly falling snow on "Skating." The driving melody of "Linus and Lucy" is the eternal backdrop to a swinging party. "O Tannenbaum" shifts from the traditional carol to a bass-driven groove. A children's choir adds charm to "Christmas Time is Here."

The soundtrack has sold more than five million copies. Its nostalgia-fueled popularity has only grown, getting a crucial boost in 1998 when Starbucks began selling it in stores, and fed steadily by new products. The latest, a box set of outtakes from Guaraldi's recording sessions, was released this year.

"A Charlie Brown Christmas" has aired every year since 1965, although that tradition is about to change.

The special's run on broadcast television ended last year. Apple TV+ bought the rights, and streams it exclusively starting this year. While a recognition of television's new direction, will that reduce the chances of new generations of children happening upon the story and music?

"I just remember, back in the days of three channels and scheduled programming, that was one of those things we were excited about because we knew it was coming on and we were familiar with it," said Harry Connick Jr., who covered "Christmas Time is Here" for his own holiday disc just out.

"It was actually an amazing opportunity for music like that to be heard by a lot of people," added Connick, a jazz devotee even as a youngster. "It was not necessarily the kind of music that would be played on regular radio."

That's even less likely now, as jazz recedes into the history books or the background of dinner parties, said Nathaniel Sloan, musicologist at the University of Southern California and co-host of the "Switched on Pop" podcast.

During the 1960s, jazz was closer to the mainstream and more likely to be played alongside pop music, he said.

The music Guaraldi created for the soundtrack is ambiguous and more complex than most holiday music, Sloan said. Tied to warm feelings for illustrator Charles M. Schulz's classic comic page characters, time has made it traditional holiday music.

The list of people who have recorded "Christmas Time is Here" is long and varied. They include John Legend, Alicia Keys, Gloria Estefan, Mariah Carey, Mel Tormé, Dave Brubeck, Sarah McLachlan, Stone Temple Pilots, Chicago, and Toni Braxton.

Similarly, the unexpected places where the melody to "Linus and Lucy" have appeared testifies to how ingrained it is in American life. Michelle Obama played it on the piano when returning to her childhood home in the "Becoming" documentary. Foo Fighters included it in a rocking "Saturday Night Live" holiday medley. Prince banged it out during his last concert.

See JAZZY | 4B



This image provided by Crate & Barrel shows their collection of white ceramic buildings. Crate & Barrel's collection includes alpine homes and hotels as well as midcentury split levels and ranch homes. Add a tealight for a welcoming glow.

PHOTO BY CRATE & BARREL VIA AP

# Mini but very merry: *Holiday villages a flexible tradition*

By Kim Cook  
Associated Press

Whether in cardboard, wood or porcelain, little villages — with houses, shops, miniature figures and snowy fir trees — have long been part of many families' holiday decorating tradition.

They're also popular now as part of an ongoing love of the cozy and the do-it-yourself.

"Nostalgia is at the forefront of holiday decor this year," says Dayna Isom Johnson, a trend expert at the crafts site Etsy.com. "So it's no surprise that tiny Christmas villages are trending."

"From classic scenery with snowy layers to modern ceramics with clean lines, families are putting their creative spin on this decades-old tradition," she says.

Little 19th century-style villages came to America with European immigrants and were further popularized by the father of five-and-dime stores,

F.W. Woolworth, who sold tiny German-made cardboard houses.

In the 1970s and '80s came ceramic houses; the company Department 56 began making their popular ones in 1976 and still do today. These sturdier buildings were easy to store seasonally.

Robin Zachary, who works as a prop stylist on commercial photo shoots, has amassed a collection of vintage cardboard houses, matchbox cars, bottlebrush trees and little people that she likes to set up for the holidays in her New York City home.

She advises checking out model train shops for accessories: "The scale is perfect for a holiday village vignette."

She also suggests using fake snow to dress your display, "with a dash of silver or gold glitter mixed in, and snips of fresh evergreens placed in tiny containers."

And if you've got limited space for a holiday display? "I'd create a village as a



This image provided by Balsam Hill shows their Christmas Mantel Village. The village is crafted of plywood and hand painted. With built-in lights, it's a charming Victorian-era decoration for mantels, windows or tabletops.

PHOTO BY BALSAM HILL VIA AP



This image provided by Crate & Barrel shows their collection of white ceramic buildings. Crate & Barrel's collection includes alpine homes and hotels as well as midcentury split levels and ranch homes. Add a tealight for a welcoming glow.

PHOTO BY CRATE & BARREL VIA AP

centerpiece on a dining table or console," Zachary says. "A large platter can serve as the base, lined with fake snow and fresh evergreen branches that encircle your village. That's easily moved if you need to use the space temporarily."

Sarah Fishburne, Home Depot's director of trend and design, says fireplace mantels and side tables also make great display spots for mini Christmas villages.

"You could also place one on the floor surrounding your Christmas tree, or distribute your pieces throughout a bookcase," she says.

If you're making a Christmas village yourself, Fishburne says, get everybody in the family involved, whether decorating a miniature tree, assembling a little structure or adding other personal elements.

You'll find sets of unfinished

wood and cardboard miniature houses online; you add the paint, washi tape or other decorative trim. Some will fit nicely over a battery-operated tealight to glow in the evenings.

Kelly Mandell, a DIY blogger in Los Angeles, transformed birdhouses into a modern holiday village using pastel-hued craft paint and loads of glitter. Drifts of fluffy snow and colorful bottlebrush trees added to the playful vibe.

Another creative option: a village of snow globe houses. Buy your ownmade ones, or make your ready-made clean, jar, distilled water, a droplet of glycerin to suspend your tinsel glitter, and then whatever elements you'd like to attach to the jar lid. Cyd Converse, a DIY blogger in Watertown, New York, shares a how-to at [www.thesweetestoccasion.com](http://www.thesweetestoccasion.com).

See MINI | 4B



## HARMS BIRTHDAY

Virginia Louise Harms will celebrate her 100th birthday with a reception from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 18 at Christ and Trinity Lutheran Church, 2101 W. 32nd St.; friends and family are invited.

She was born Dec. 18, 1922, in Benton County, west of Lincoln. Virginia graduated from Lincoln High School in 1941, and moved to Kansas City where she attended Central Busi-

ness College. Virginia was married to the late Lawrence Harms on Dec. 23, 1945, and resided in Windsor before moving to Sedalia.

She is retired from the insurance business and her hobbies include reading, traveling, camping, fishing, journaling and cooking. The couple have two children Keith Harms, and Kent Harms; and three grandchildren.

## BIRTHDAYS

**Kuhn**  
Linda Kuhn will observe her 83rd birthday Dec. 18.

She was born Dec. 18, 1939, in Rolla. Before retiring, she was a sales representative. Her hobbies include traveling, staying at her lake home, shopping, reading and playing cards.

Linda has three children, Kelly, of Knob Noster, Richard, of Georgia, and John, of Kansas.

Birthday cards may be sent to Linda at the Sylvia G. Thompson Residence Center, 3333 W. 10th St., Sedalia, Mo. 65301.

**Schroeder**  
Marjorie Schroeder will observe her 86th birthday Dec. 19.

She was born Dec. 19, 1936.

Marjorie was a housewife and her hobbies include play-

ing bridge. She has two children, Lisa Rehm, of Warsaw, and Carol Norman, of Rogersville.

Birthday cards may be sent to Marjorie at the Sylvia G. Thompson Residence Center, 3333 W. 10th St., Sedalia, Mo. 65301.

**Jageles**  
Ethelene Jageles will observe her 74th birthday Dec. 21.

She was born Dec. 21, 1948.

Before retiring she was the administrative assistant at State Fair Community College for 31 years. Her hobbies include being a skilled seamstress, crafts, quilting and line dancing.

Birthday cards may be sent to Ethelene at the Sylvia G. Thompson Residence Center, 3333 W. 10th St., Sedalia, Mo. 65301.

## CLUB NOTES

### Martin Warren Chapter Learns About Flour Sack Clothing

The Martin Warren Chapter, Missouri Society, Sons of the American Revolution (MOSSAR) held its December meeting at the Rise Café in Warrensburg. The guest of honor and program presenter was Marilyn Henry, registrar of the Henry County, Missouri Society, Daughters of the American Revolution (MOSDAR).

Henry's presentation topic was "Flour Sack Clothing." Henry explained that flour sack or feed sack clothing was a common article of clothing in rural U.S.A. and Canadian communities from the late 19th century through the mid-20th century. They were made at home, usually by women, using the cotton sacks in which flour, sugar, animal feed, seeds, and other commodities were packaged, shipped, and sold.

They became an iconic part of rural life from the 1920s through the Great Depression, World War II, and post-World War II years. Henry showed numerous sacks and clothing articles made from flour and feed sacks. She explained that the practice of using flour and seed sacks became so popular, that manufacturers began producing flour and seed sacks to attract women to their product and, no doubt, exert an influence on their husbands to purchase particular patterns and, perhaps,

even particular brands. This practice declined after World War II when flour and seed sacks were made cheaper by using paper containers rather than cotton cloth.

Following her presentation, Henry was presented with the Martha Washington Medal and Certificate. The Martha Washington Medal was first authorized by the SAR in 1971 to recognize women for their outstanding service to the Sons of the American Revolution.

The Martin Warren Chapter (MWC) meets at 10:30 a.m. at the Rise Café in Warrensburg on the third Saturday of the month, except in December on the second Saturday. The Chapter does not meet in February, July and August. Those interested in becoming a member of the NSSAR may contact the Chapter Genealogist at mark.e.parks@gmail.com.

### Grow and Glow Garden Club FGCM

The Grow and Glow Garden Club FGCM met Dec. 13 in Versailles at the Bee's Knees meeting room. Cynthia Broderson gave the blessing of the food and the 19 members had lunch of a pizza buffet, salad, pasta, and breadsticks.

The business meeting was led by Linda Dahl. She expressed appreciation to Debbie Ellis-Harper for creating the red pickup to add to the club's Christmas display at the park. Ellis-Harper



From left are Marilyn Henry and Doug Christie, president of the Martin Warren Chapter, MOSSAR. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MARTIN WARREN CHAPTER, MISSOURI SOCIETY, SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

and husband Gary, Linda and Jim Reid and Gay Nau were thanked for putting up the display.

The meeting time for the club has been changed to 1 p.m. starting with the January meeting.

Barbara Harrison thanked the group for the many thoughtful acts she received at the passing of her husband.

Harrison has submitted applications for two awards for our 2022 New Project at the Old Presbyterian Church in Tipton. The recipients of the awards will be announced in the spring.

The group approved a new project for the 2023 year that will involve planting flowers around the new sign at the United Methodist Church in Tipton.

Shirts to identify the club as hosts of the Spring Central District Meeting will be available to try on at the January meeting to determine size desired. LeManda Loganbill will provide samples.

A picnic table has

been given to the club by the Beverage Hut to be used at the roadside park.

Nancy Byars will contact the restaurants each month to alert them that we are planning to eat there prior to the meeting that month. Brodersen will assume the duty of Chaplain in place of Twila Garber who is relinquishing the position.

December birthdays honored were: Charleen Meyer, Dec. 13; Micki Williams, Dec. 14, and Dorothy Collett, Dec. 17.

The day was made complete by a fun gift exchange of garden related gifts.

The January Price James Library floral arrangement will be provided by JoAnn Collier.

The January club meeting will be at 1 p.m. Jan. 17 at the Fortuna Baptist Church. The optional pre-meeting member lunch will be at 11:30 a.m. at Bobbio's Eatery.

For more information about the garden club, call 660-433-2366.

## BRL2GO SCHEDULE

### Boonslick Regional Library Monday

9 to 11:45 a.m.: Houstonia.

1:15 to 4 p.m.: La Monte City Park.

**Wednesday**  
9:30 to 11:45 a.m.: Cole Camp City Park.

1:15 p.m.: Lincoln City Hall.

1:30 to 3:45 p.m.: Lincoln City Park.

**Friday**

9 to 11:45 a.m.: Brooking Park Village.

1:15 to 4 p.m.: Otterville.

## NEW BOOKS

### Sedalia Public Library Fiction

"Tom Clancy: Red Winter," by Marc Cameron (suspense).  
"The Light Pirate," by Lily Brooks-Dalton.  
"The Dressmakers

of Prospect Heights," by Kitty Zeldis (historical fiction).

"W.E.B. Griffin: The Devil's Weapons," by Peter Kirsanow (suspense).  
"The Fall of Nu-

menor," by J.R.R. Tolkien (science fiction).

"The Widomaker," by Hannah Morrissey (suspense).  
"A Dangerous Business," by Jane Smiley.

**Nonfiction**

"Number One is Walking," by Steve Martin (biography).

"The Last Campaign," by H.W. Brands.

"The Jordanaires," by Gordon Stoker.

## MEALS ON WHEELS

Meals on Wheels is a nonprofit organization that delivers meals to seniors,

the homebound and handicapped citizens of Sedalia. The food is prepared by Superior Vendall and is delivered by volunteers. Meals cost \$4. For more information on receiving meals or becoming a volunteer, call

660-826-5039.

Meals will be delivered by Parkview Christian Church and Sedalia Realtors.

**Monday:** Cheeseburger on Bun, Macaroni Salad, Baked beans, peaches and milk.  
**Tuesday:** Spaghetti, corn, breadstick,

brownie and milk.

**Wednesday:** Pizza, salad, tropical fruit and milk

**Thursday:** Beef and noodles, green beans, pudding and milk.

**Friday:** Roast beef, potatoes and gravy, peas, cookies and milk.

## DIVORCES

These people were recently granted divorces in Pettis County Circuit Court:  
Latisha Koetting and Chris Koetting;  
Adam T. Shireman

and Sarah B. Miller;  
Kaitlynn J. Hern and Jonathan B. Hern;  
Scott W. Abney and Jasmine E. Abney;  
Tyler J. Freitas and Autumn J. Freitas.



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# Season's Greetings

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Saturday, Dec 24th - Closed  
Sunday, Dec 25th - Closed  
Monday, Dec 26th - Closed  
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# Community Calendar DECEMBER

To have your event or meeting listed or changed, send details to fbemiss@sedaliademocrat.com or call 660-826-1000 ext. 1481.

## SUNDAY

Each day: AA meets at 417 E. Pettis St.

Noon and 7 p.m.: Alcoholics Anonymous 12x12 Non-smoking group, Sunday through Saturday; at 417 W. Pettis St., sedalia12x-12aa@gmail.com.

1:30 p.m.: Open Door Soup Kitchen, 417 W. Pettis St. Call 660-827-1613.

7 p.m.: Narcotics Anonymous Because We Care and 7:30 p.m. Wednesday; First Christian Church, 200 S. Limit Ave.

## MONDAY

Each day: AA meets at 417 W. Pettis St.

10 a.m.: Show-Me Mad Tatters, University Extension Office Conference Room, 1012A Thompson Blvd.

11:30 a.m.: Open Door Soup Kitchen, 417 W. Pettis St. Call 660-827-1613.

Noon: Sedalia Rotary Club, Best Western State Fair Inn, 3120 S. Limit Ave.

1:45 p.m.: TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) Chapter 0102 Sedalia meets at the Boonslick Regional Library, 219 W. Third St., in the lower level meeting room. All are welcome to attend. The first meeting is always free. Call 660-525-4142.

5:30 p.m.: The Dream factory meeting, call 660-827-1561 for location.

6 p.m.: Altrusa International, Inc., Sedalia, at the Katy Trail Community Health Center, community room, 821 Westwood Ave.

6 p.m.: Cornerstone Celebrate Recovery. A Bible-based 12-step program for Hurts, Habits and Hangups; Cornerstone Baptist Church, 660-827-4833.

6 p.m.: Pettis County Democrat Club meets in the basement of Boonslick Regional Library, 219 W. Third St.

6 p.m.: Smithton Senior Citizens Group Pitch and Pool, Smithton Senior Center on Washington Street.

6:30 p.m.: Bingo at VFW Post 2591, 121 S. Ohio Ave. Bonanza blackout starts at 6 p.m.

6:30 p.m.: Show Me Sound, Sweet Adelines International, in-person rehearsals at Wesley United Methodist Church basement, 1322 W. Broadway Blvd. All women who like to sing are welcome. For more information, call 660-851-2205.

7 p.m.: Al-Anon, at 417 W. Pettis St. For more information, call 660-473-0855.

7 p.m.: Sedalia Chorale Rehearsal, rehearsal room 67 in the Stauffacher Center at State Fair Community College.

## TUESDAY

Each day: AA meets at 417 W. Pettis St.

8 a.m.: Central MO Business Builders (BNI), at Heckart Family Center, 903 S. Ohio Ave.

8:30 a.m.: Sedalia Literacy Council, basement meeting room, Boonslick Regional Library, 219 W. Third St.

11:30 a.m.: Open Door Soup Kitchen, 417 W. Pettis St. Call 660-827-1613.

Noon: Sedalia Optometrist Club, in Room C at

the Heckart Community Center, 1800 W. Third St.

12:30 to 4:30 p.m.: Birthright Pregnancy Center, 1810 W. 11th St., Tuesday through Friday; and other hours by appointment. The office number is 660-826-9060.

1 to 3 p.m.: Baby Grace is open at Wesley United Methodist Church 1322 W. Broadway Blvd., for those who need diapers, pull-ups or wipers,

6 p.m.: NarAnon meetings at LifePointe Church, 2921 W. Broadway Blvd.

6 p.m.: Sedalia Runners Club-Track at Smith Cotton Track.

7 p.m.: Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA) is a 12-step fellowship of men and women at the First United Methodist Church Celebration Center, 1701 W. 32nd St.; for more information, call Barbara at 660-827-6522.

7 p.m.: Fraternal Order of Eagles Auxiliary, Lincoln.

7 p.m.: Loyal Order of Moose, Sedalia Lodge 1494, at the lodge, 119 Winchester Ave.

7 p.m.: Masonic Granite Lodge 272 meeting, 601 W. Broadway Blvd.

## WEDNESDAY

Each day: AA meets at 417 W. Pettis St.

10 a.m.: Community Retired Teachers meeting, Christ and Trinity Lutheran Church, 3201 Southwest Blvd.

10 a.m.: TOPS (Take off Pounds Sensibly) Chapter 958, First Baptist Church, 200 E. Sixth St. First visit is free; 816-916-6237.

11:30 a.m.: Open Door Soup Kitchen, 417 W. Pettis St. Call 660-827-1613.

Noon: Sedalia Lions Club, Heckart Community Center, 1800 W. Third St.

5:30 p.m.: Amigos de Cristo, Teen Mom Classes at 3003 W. 11th St., 660-826-2788.

6:30 p.m.: Friends of the Cole Camp Library meeting, at Cole Camp Boonslick Library.

6:30 p.m.: Sedalia-Pettis County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for executive committee; 7 p.m., meeting, Anthony Buckner Community Center, 500 Welch Ct.

7 p.m.: Elks Lodge 125, Elks Lodge, 320 S. Kentucky Ave.

## THURSDAY

Each day: AA meets at 417 W. Pettis St.

11:30 a.m.: Open Door Soup Kitchen, 417 W. Pettis St. Call 660-827-1613.

Noon: Kiwanis of Sedalia, at Lamy's, 108 Pacific St.

1 p.m.: Sedalia Duplicate Bridge Club at First Christian Church, 200 S. Limit Ave.

6 p.m.: Women in Crisis Group, call 660-827-5555 for location.

6:30 p.m.: Sedalia Landlords Inc., Community of Christ Church, 2000 S. Ingram Ave.

7 p.m.: Sedalia Bible Academy, Boonslick Regional Library, 219 W. Third St., Sedalia. For more information, call 660-826-9988. It is free and open to the public.

## FRIDAY

Each day: AA meets at 417 W. Pettis St.

11:30 a.m.: Open Door Soup Kitchen, 417 W. Pettis St. Call 660-827-1613.

Noon: Pettis County Pachyderms, Best Western State Fair Inn, 3120 S. Limit Ave.

## SATURDAY

Christmas Eve

# UK royals keep calm, carry on after Harry and Meghan series

By Jill Lawless  
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain's royal family stuck to routine and remained silent Friday over the second half of Prince Harry and his wife Meghan's documentary series, which made hard-hitting claims against Harry's brother, Prince William.

While the first half of the six-part Netflix series concentrated on the couple's bruising encounters with the British media, the final three episodes aimed criticism at the royal "firm" — the family and its staff.

In three hour-long episodes released Thursday, Harry claimed William screamed at him during a family meeting and accused palace officials of lying to protect his elder sibling, who is now heir to the throne. Meghan talked about wanting to end her life

as she struggled to cope with toxic press coverage.

Harry, a grandson of the late Queen Elizabeth II, married U.S. actress Meghan Markle in a fairy-tale wedding at Windsor Castle in 2018. Less than two years later the couple left Britain, citing what they saw as the media's racist treatment of Meghan and a lack of support from the palace.

In the documentary Harry, 38, said William lashed out at him during a family summit at Sandringham Castle in January 2020 to talk about the couple's plan to step down as senior royals.

"It was terrifying to have my brother scream and shout at me and my father say things that just simply weren't true. And my grandmother, you know, quietly sit there and take it all in," Harry said.

He also accused royal

communications officials of "leaking" and "planting" stories in the media, claiming staff would seek to deflect negative coverage of one royal by issuing a story about another member of the family.

Meghan, 41, revealed she thought about killing herself amid a torrent of negative media coverage before the couple decided to make a break with the royal household.

"It was like 'All of this will stop if I am not here,'" she said.

Harry added that he believed the Mail on Sunday's publication of a letter Meghan wrote her estranged father — over which she successfully sued the paper's publisher — contributed to her having a miscarriage in 2020.

Neither Buckingham Palace, which represents the king, nor William's Kensington Palace office has commented on the

series.

There were no dissenting views in the documentary, which included interviews with the couple and supportive friends and commentators.

Royal expert Pauline Maclarnan, author of "Royal Fever: The British Monarchy in Consumer Culture," said the relationship between William and Harry would be "very hard to repair" after the bombshell claims.

"This does seem to be very final," she said.

Hours after the final episodes were released, senior royals put on a show of unity, attending a Christmas charity concert in London on Thursday evening. William, his wife Kate and their two elder children, George and Charlotte, were joined at the Westminster Abbey carol concert by King Charles III, Queen Consort

Camilla and other family members.

British newspapers, the focus of much of the couple's ire, were furious about the series. The Daily Mail said in an editorial that "the only saving grace" was that Queen Elizabeth II, who died in September, "was spared seeing this tawdry exercise in self-promotion."

The Sun branded Harry a "traitor," contrasting him with "dutiful" William.

The Times of London urged Meghan and Harry to give up their royal titles, Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

"Harry and Meghan must see the hypocrisy of claiming still to be royal," the newspaper said in an editorial.

"They have made clear that they consider themselves to be at war with the institution of monarchy, an institution that they appear to hold in

contempt."

The show comes at a crucial moment for the monarchy. The king is trying to show that the institution still has a role to play after the death in September of his mother, whose personal popularity dampened criticism of the crown during her 70-year reign.

While the Netflix series has soured the couple's relationship with the royal family — perhaps irreparably — Maclarnan said it would likely help the couple forge their new careers as U.S.-based charity campaigners and media personalities.

"I think it will have built their brand quite well," she said. "I think a lot of people will see their perspective more, but particularly (the) younger generation. And I think really that's where they've always aimed anyway."

## MARRIAGE LICENSES

Pettis County Recorder of Deeds Barbara Clevenger recently issued marriage licenses to:

John Ele Weilbacher, 63, and Elsinger Peter, 54, both of Marshall;

Franklin Eli Crowder III, 38, and Rebecca Ann Smith, 45, both of Sedalia;

Luis Ernesto Reyes, 33, and Vianca Jamberly Proano

Espinoza, 23, both of Marshall;

Kurt William Ross, 36, and Victoria Caitlin Marie Brown, 25, both of Sedalia;

Artur Sergeevich Ivanov, 24, of Sedalia, and Aloyna Gennadiyevna Barbin, 19, of Little Suamico, Wisconsin.

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# Mini

## From Page 1B

You might even weave village elements into the branches of a wreath, Fishburne suggests.

Beyond the traditional, Dickensian look, Fishburne suggests creating a vignette that reflects your family's favorite activities. Are you all ice skaters? Do you love to bake? Is a visit to grandparents a holiday must? You could depict these things in your village display with mementos and other items.

Or get inspired by the places you've visited on your travels. Fishburne says her family always brings home a little building or other miniature from a destination.

Etsy makers offer a variety of creative and decorative miniatures to bring a holiday scene to life, and retailers have a wide selection.

Balsam Hill's plywood Victorian village has intricately carved houses, trees and street elements integrated into a single base. A remote controls the warm backlighting. There are little houses with a sturdy hook to use as stocking

holders, too.

If your vibe is contemporary, West Elm, for instance, has a collection of ceramic-and-wood, minimalist buildings and trees. Or create your own modern neighborhood with ceramic ranch houses and split levels, from Crate & Barrel. All will glow nicely at night with some battery-operated tealights.

Anthropologie has shelf-ready wooden monogram letters carved with vignettes of snow revelers and evergreens.

Finally, if there's no space for a 3-D display, Zachary suggests a different kind of family craft project: a village mural of sorts.

"Why not have the kids draw and decorate houses, then pin them up in a row on the wall? Make sure they make some trees, as well as any of your town's significant buildings," she says. "You can pin up a glittery garland of stars or fairy lights above the skyline."

—  
New York-based writer Kim Cook covers design and decor topics regularly for The AP. Follow her on Instagram at @kimcook-home.

# Jazzy

## From Page 1B

It all started in the San Francisco area, home base for Guaraldi, as it was for Mendelson and Schulz. Mendelson's popular documentary on Willie Mays — Schulz's favorite baseball player — convinced the reclusive cartoonist to participate in a "day in the life" film about his work. One of Mendelson's favorite songs was Guaraldi's breezy hit, "Cast Your Fate to the Wind," so the jazzman was recruited for a soundtrack.

In the days before cable and streaming, Mendelson couldn't sell the documentary, so it went unseen.

After the popularity of "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" in 1964, a sponsor asked Mendelson if he'd considered making a "Peanuts" Christmas special. He lied that he had. Schulz agreed to outline a story, and Guaraldi came aboard, too, recycling "Linus and Lucy" from the documentary.

Animation is time-consuming, so the team had a tight deadline to make it onto television. It was Mendelson who decided that "Christmas Time is Here" was missing something without lyrics. He asked several songwriters to take on the task, but the deadline was too daunting.

So Mendelson sat in his office and did it himself: "Christmas time is here, happiness and cheer..."



This image released by Peanuts Worldwide shows promotional art for the 1965 animated TV special "A Charlie Brown Christmas." The soundtrack has sold more than five million copies.

PHOTO BY PEANUTS WORLDWIDE VIA AP

"I've always loved the music and the melody, but I really didn't understand how beautiful the lyrics were until I recorded it," said Norah Jones, who included her take on the song on a disc released last year.

"The version with the children singing is so special," she told The Associated Press. "There's something very unique and heartwarming about children singing."

The St. Paul's Church Choir from San Rafael, California, was hired to sing "Christmas Time is Here" and "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing." Producers infuriated the choir director by choosing a slightly out-of-tune version of the carol; they thought it captured an

innocence they were seeking, said Bang, who wrote liner notes for the box set.

Some at CBS were nervous before the special aired. Executives wondered if viewers would accept their favorite comic strip characters come to "life" with voices and movement. Schulz's insistence that the show quote from the Bible gave it a religious focus that television entertainment typically steered clear of.

But it was a hit, winning Peabody and Emmy awards, and never went away.

Guaraldi never had the chance to see his music age into standards. He died of a heart attack in 1976, only 47 years old.

"He's the best-known jazz musician whose

name you don't know, because the music from the Christmas special has become so ubiquitous," Bang said.

Lee Mendelson died at 86 in 2019 — on Christmas Day. His son Jason, one of four children, is reluctant to say how much money his father earned from his few minutes of writing the "Christmas Time is Here" lyrics.

Here's one hint: The song makes enough money, every year, to pay for all of the extended family's holiday shopping.

And he never tires of hearing Guaraldi's music, frequently attending concerts where the holiday songs are recreated live.

"I've never seen a bad one," he said.



This image provided by Crate & Barrel shows their collection of white ceramic buildings. Crate & Barrel's collection includes alpine homes and hotels as well as midcentury split levels and ranch homes. Add a tealight for a welcoming glow.

PHOTO BY CRATE & BARREL VIA AP



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# Eagles belt holiday hits on 'Philly Special Christmas' album

By Dan Gelston

AP Sports Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The burly, bearded men belting out holiday classics have made the night before Christmas more than just a time this year to watch the Philadelphia Eagles try and slay the competition.

Lane Johnson, Jason Kelce and Jordan Mailata — with a little assist from some melodic teammates — have made a season already pretty jolly in Philly a bit more sweet-sounding with the release of their Christmas album, "A Philly Special Christmas."

Yes, the album title is an ode to Old Saint Nick, in this case former QB Nick Foles and the trick play that helped the Eagles win their only Super Bowl in the 2017 season.

The trio of Eagles offensive linemen can sing about as well as they can pass protect -- Johnson might not even let Santa Claus down the chimney as he holds the record for most consecutive games without allowing a sack -- and an All-Star cast of musicians was assembled to record the album.

Leading the charge was Charlie Hall, drummer for the Grammy-winning band War on Drugs.

"If we're going to do this, let's make it meaningful. Let's make it awesome," Hall said. "It's not a goof."

While the tone is light, this is no novelty record. "Oh, football players making a record, it's like 'Super Bowl Shuffle,'" Hall said with a laugh. "But no, this was born out of sincerity and a deep love and appreciation of music."

The cover art features Johnson, Kelce and Mailata sketched



War on Drugs drummer Charlie Hall poses in Philadelphia, Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022. Hall teamed up with several members of the Philadelphia Eagles football team and other musicians to record the seven-song LP "A Philly Special Christmas." Proceeds from this record will benefit Children's Crisis Treatment Center and other charities in Philadelphia.

PHOTO BY MATT ROURKE | AP PHOTO

in an homage to the Peanuts characters on the "A Charlie Brown Christmas" album and the songs are standards found on Christmas playlists.

"I did not think it was going to get to this level of quality," Kelce said.

The guys in green sing "White Christmas," "Blue Christmas," "Silent Night" and Eagles radio announcer Merrill Reese narrates "The Night Before Christmas."

On the field, the Eagles play the Dallas Cowboys Dec. 24.

There's a philanthropic slant to the album as well, with proceeds going to the Children's Crisis Treatment Center in Philadelphia. More than \$100,000 has al-

ready been raised.

Good luck buying the album, though.

Well, at least a vinyl copy, as previous pressings have quickly sold out. The last batch sold out in 120 seconds -- some albums are going for \$4,000 on eBay -- and there's one final order available on Friday. "A Philly Special Christmas" is of course available on streaming services and one song a week has been dropped each Friday leading to the full record's release on Dec. 23.

The idea for an album was kicked around last year by Kelce and friends around last Christmas and former Eagle Connor Barwin used his music connections -- War

on Drugs have headlined the former defensive end's charity show -- to get the ball rolling. The album was recorded over several days at various Philadelphia-area studios this past summer.

"It's 98 degrees and we're recording a Christmas album," Kelce said, wearing a Christmas sweater, Eagles Santa hat and holding a beer, in a making-of video.

Barwin served as an executive producer. The seven-song LP from Vera Y Records also features musicians from The Hooters, Dr. Dog and 98-year-old saxophone player Marshall Allen of Sun Ra Arkestra.

The recording team brought in a vocal coach to assist the Eagles as

they made the transition from the huddle to the studio.

"That was the lesson in all this, just being game for something," Hall said. "They're like, 'yeah, show me what to do. Show me how to be better and I'll do it.' Just totally coachable."

Kelce, who dressed as a Mummer during the Super Bowl parade and sang the national anthem at a 76ers game last season, channeled his inner Bruce Springsteen for the classic "Santa Claus is Coming to Town."

Kelce bursts into laughter when the 25-year-old Mailata hits all the high notes of falsetto on the the "I-I-I am dreaming of a white Christmas" doo-wop

part popularized by The Drifters.

"What Jordan did, you could call singing," Kelce said. "What Lane did, you could call singing. I don't know if you could call what I did singing. I'm very much just a yeller in certain tones."

Mailata has the best pipes of the bunch and even competed on the Fox reality show "The Masked Singer."

"Jordan could straight up quit football and be a singer if he wanted to," Hall said. "But they're all great. Their voices are like a reflection of their personalities. Lane has this incredibly soulful voice. If they were to get out of this line of business, Jordan would have no trouble finding a gig singing."

Hall already felt the holiday spirit with the War on Drugs set to play three-sold out "Drugember To Remember" charity shows next week at the Philly rock venue Johnny Brenda's. The money raised goes toward The Fund for the School District of Philadelphia, a nonprofit that raises and coordinates investments into the Philadelphia public schools.

War on Drugs had just won a Grammy and were on tour in Australia in February 2018 when the Eagles beat the New England Patriots in the Super Bowl.

"It was like 10 in the morning and we all crammed into a hotel room and were screaming and throwing chairs out of excitement," Hall said.

Now they're building Christmas traditions together.

"It's sort of a beautiful reminder that we're all just connected through life and music and friendship," Hall said.

# The AP names its nine Breakthrough Entertainers of 2022

By The Associated Press

They worked hard, with the rewards coming slowly but surely. Then something came along — often a key role or sometimes a cluster, maybe an album — and it all became next-level, a shift triggering where-did-you-come-from vibes.

That describes most of this year's nine Associated Press' Breakthrough Entertainers of the Year, a class of talent that flowered in 2022. They are Sadie Sink, Stephanie Hsu, Tenoch Huerta, Joaquina Kalukango, Iman Vellani, Daryl McCormack, Tobe Nwigwe, Simone Ashley and Danielle Deadwyler.

Sink had been on Broadway and worked alongside stars such as Naomi Watts and Helen Mirren. But playing Max Mayfield in the fourth season of "Stranger Things," she broke through as a brave skater girl who never lets go of her Walkman, who hates pink, plays video games and is a "Dragon's Lair" champion.

Hsu also was a Broadway veteran with a few TV credits when she was asked to play both a sullen teen and an intergalactic supervillain in the movie "Everything Everywhere All at Once." That led to an unforgettable performance that

included dressing as Elvis and walking a pig on a leash.

Like many of the others on the list, Kalukango had racked up plenty of Broadway credits when she took a risk and played the lead in a Broadway musical, "Paradise Square." It led to a best actress in a leading role Tony Award and a stunning moment in the telecast when she sang "Let It Burn."

"Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" isn't one of Huerta's biggest roles but the Mexican actor suddenly launched a hundred memes as the mutant leader of a kingdom based on Mayan and Aztec influences beneath the ocean for centuries. Huerta, known for roles in the Netflix series "Narcos: Mexico" and the movie "The Forever Purge," has taken a big step for movie diversity.

Nwigwe, just nominated for a Grammy as best new artist, has been bubbling up with noted appearances on NPR's Tiny Desk Concert series and earning a spot on Michelle Obama's 2020 workout playlist with "I'm Dope." This year, the Houston-based artist was featured on the "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" soundtrack and dropped the EP "momINTS" to acclaim.

McCormack has



This combination of photos shows AP's 2022 breakthrough entertainers of the year. Actor/recording artist Joaquina Kalukango, top row from left, actor Tenoch Huerta, actor Danielle Deadwyler, actor Daryl McCormack, middle row from left, actor Iman Vellani, actor Sadie Sink, actor Simone Ashley, bottom row from left, actor Stephanie Hsu, and actor/recording artist Tobe Nwigwe.

AP PHOTO

worked consistently since 2018 but 2022 seems to have turned into something special with a constellation of roles — "Peaky Blinders," the buzzy, dark comedy thriller "Bad Sisters," plus a star-making performance as the title character in the film "Good Luck to You, Leo Grande" opposite Emma Thompson.

Ashley, a British actress of Indian heri-

tage with a Tamil background, found herself leading season two of the Regency-era period drama "Bridgerton." She had a role in the series "Sex Education," but playing the fiercely independent Kate Sharma for Shonda Rhimes was her first lead character in a major production.

Deadwyler burst into the awards race this year with her performance in "Till" as Mamie Till-Mo-

bley, the mother of teenager Emmett Till, who was lynched in 1955. She has also appeared in "The Harder They Come," "Watchmen" and the Netflix series "From Scratch" and "Station Eleven."

Vellani, another member of the Marvel Cinematic Universe on this list, is the exception, having had no such slow burn. The 19-year-old actor in "Ms. Marvel"

plays a high school student enamored with all things superheroes only to find herself suddenly wielding powers of her own. And Vellani, in real life, is just starting to find her powers, like all the entertainers nominated here.

For more on AP's 2022 class of Breakthrough Entertainers, visit [apnews.com/hub/ap-breakthrough-entertainers](https://apnews.com/hub/ap-breakthrough-entertainers).

# Mike Rowe gets filthy on 'Dirty Jobs' to reconnect Americans

By Mark Kennedy  
AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — It may come as no surprise to fans of Mike Rowe that when he recently visited the Florida Panhandle, he didn't lay out on the beach or take a cruise.

He donned a 100-pound diving helmet, waded into a smelly, muddy creek and joined a work crew putting concrete jackets around wooden bridge pylons. Emerging from the muck after several hours, he told the crew: "Glad you do it. Don't know how you do it."

Rowe has been immersing himself like that in some of the toughest professions for years as host of "Dirty Jobs" every Sunday on Discovery and streaming on discovery+. A new season started this month.

"What makes the show relevant, I think, is that it's a constant reminder to things we've become disconnected from as a country," says Rowe. "You can learn a lot from dirty jobs collectively."

The show shines a light on those hardworking Americans whose contributions are rarely acknowledged in industries like construction, sanitation, manufacturing and more.

"If you share my addiction to smooth roads and affordable energy and well-maintained runways and indoor plumbing, then the show has a message for you," he says.

The new season sees Rowe stirring massive vats of hot sauce made



This image released by Discovery Communications shows Mike Rowe, host of "Dirty Jobs," a series airing every Sunday on Discovery and streaming on discovery+. PHOTO BY DISCOVERY COMMUNICATIONS VIA AP

from fearsome chili peppers in Fort Mill, South Carolina, and getting dirtier by the minute trying to empty ultrafine carbon dust bags in Berthoud, Colorado.

He descends into an aging manhole in Tennessee to provide sewer maintenance and helps control the Texas feral cat population by sedating, shaving and neutering two dozen kitties.

"The intent with every segment is to make people who have nothing to do with that industry feel connected to it," says Rowe. "Think about the people who allow the

lights to come on when you flip the switch."

There are some TV rules: No second takes, no preproduction, no casting and no writing. Just a behind-the-scenes camera that's always rolling, trying to capture a day in the life. He is inspired to visit dirty job sites by viewers who nominate candidates.

Rowe is eager to explode any stereotypes of what blue-collar and white-collar work is these days or what is a so-called good job. Many of the workers he gets dirty with are millionaires, though you wouldn't

know it.

Part of the appeal of the show is the humor, both Rowe's self-deprecating style and that which naturally emerges from the workers, whether they're gently mocking Rowe or good-naturedly joshing with each other.

"All you have to do is get out of the way and let it come out because it always will," Rowe says. "There's always humor. Sometimes it's gallows, sometimes it's inappropriate, sometimes dad jokes. But whatever it is, that honestly became the most important component."

Rowe did some 300 "Dirty Jobs" shows after he sold the concept in 2003 and took a break in 2012, having shot in all 50 states half a dozen times. The network continued to air reruns for the next decade.

"When 'Dirty Jobs' was at its best, we were going to towns you couldn't find on maps to meet people you didn't know existed doing jobs you didn't know got done," he says.

Then the pandemic in 2020 put a focus on jobs like nursing, food delivery workers and store cashiers that suddenly

became vital for Americans, reviving interest in new "Dirty Jobs" episodes.

Rowe started back up in July 2020 with a four-episode run of "Dirty Jobs: Rowe'd Trip," in which he toiled around the country in an RV, and the main show returned in January 2022.

"Essential work is suddenly back in the headlines," he says. "Something's happening with work in general and that was reason enough to kick the tires."

Rowe is alarmed by what he notes is an employment picture that shows 7 million able-bodied men between 25 and 54 who are not looking for work.

"That worries me. Because there are 11 million open jobs in the country. A lot of them look dirty, most of them are better than people think and almost none of them require four-year degree."

In 2008, Rowe created the mikeroweWORKS Foundation to launch a national campaign for skilled labor and has a scholarship program to help people get trained for in-demand skilled jobs.

One sector Rowe is eager to highlight is environmental jobs, like visiting a biochar maker that turns scrap lumber into highly absorbent charcoal fertilizer.

There's money in green jobs, but he has an on-brand warning: "If you want to clean the planet, you better be willing to get dirty."

# Pope returns Greece's Parthenon Sculptures in ecumenical nod

By Nicole Winfield  
Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis will send back to Greece the three fragments of the Parthenon Sculptures that the Vatican Museums have held for two centuries, in the latest case of a Western museum bowing to demands for restitution of artifacts to their countries of origin.

In announcing the decision Friday, the Vatican termed the gesture a "donation" from Francis to His Beatitude Ieronymos II, the Orthodox Christian archbishop of Athens and all Greece, and said it was "a concrete sign of his sincere desire to follow in the ecumenical path of truth."

The return, which is expected to still take some time to execute, is likely to add further pressure on the British Museums, which has refused decades of appeals from Greece to return its much larger collection of Parthenon sculptures, which has been a centerpiece of the museum since 1816.

The 5th century B.C. sculptures are mostly remnants of a 160-meter-long (520-foot) frieze that ran around the outer walls of the Parthenon Temple on the Acropolis, dedicated to Athena, goddess of wisdom. Much of the frieze and the temple's other sculptural decoration was lost in a 17th-century bombardment, and about half the remaining works were removed in the early 19th century by a British diplomat, Lord



The marble head of a young man, a tiny fragment from the 2,500-year-old sculptured decoration of the Parthenon Temple on the ancient Acropolis, is displayed during a presentation to the press at the new Acropolis Museum in Athens on Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2008. PHOTO BY THANASSIS STAVRAKIS | AP PHOTO

Elgin.

Aside from the British Museums, fragments have ended up in museums around Europe, and recently a small museum in Sicily decided to return its lone fragment to Greece in a loan that Greek authorities hope will be extended indefinitely.

The Vatican's three fragments include a head of a horse, a head of a boy and a bearded male head. The head of the boy had been loaned to Greece for a year in 2008.

Greece's Culture Ministry said it welcomed the pope's donation, which it said followed a request by Ecumenical

Patriarch Bartholomew I, the spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians.

The decision helps Greek efforts for the return of the Parthenon Sculptures from the British Museum "and their reunification with those on display in the Acropolis Museum," a ministry statement said. The Acropolis Museum, for its part, also welcomed Francis' gesture.

The Vatican statement suggested the Holy See wanted to make clear that it's donation was not a bilateral state-to-state return, but rather a religiously inspired donation from a pope to a primate. The intent may

be to avoid a precedent that could affect other priceless holdings in the Vatican Museums, amid broader demands from Indigenous groups and colonized countries for Western museums to return looted artifacts, and artworks and material culture obtained under questionable circumstances during colonial times.

In the case of the Vatican Museums, Indigenous groups from Canada have made clear they want the Holy See to return artifacts sent by Catholic missionaries to the Vatican for a 1925 exhibition and are now part of its ethnographic collection.

Jos van Beurden, who administers the "Restitution Matters" Facebook group that tracks the global restitution debate, suggested the use of the term "donation" for specifically religious purposes and "not a government to government affair" was deliberate and could inspire other groups to seek the return of items on similar grounds.

"Does this offer a chance to a claim of an Ethiopian diaspora group in the USA for the return of hundreds of ancient manuscripts looted from the Debre Libanos Monastery by the Italian fascist Enrico Ceruli during Italy's

occupation of Ethiopia?" he asked. "Or to the Ethiopian claim for eleven Tabots in the British Museums?"

He was referring to the 11 plaques that are a foundational part of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and have been the subject of repeated appeals from Ethiopian patriarchs and others to the British Museum for restitution. According to the Museum Association, the plaques were looted by the British in an 1868 battle but have never been displayed or photographed in recognition of their sanctity.

The British Museum recently pledged not to dismantle its Parthenon collection, following a report that the institution's chairman had held secret talks with Greece's prime minister over the return of the sculptures, also known as the Elgin Marbles.

The Parthenon was built between 447-432 B.C. and is considered the crowning work of classical architecture. The frieze depicted a procession in honor of Athena.

Francis last met with Ieronymos in 2021 in Athens where he issued an appeal for greater unity between Catholics and Orthodox. At the time, Francis "shamefully" acknowledged the "mistakes" that the Catholic Church had inflicted on others over the centuries, actions which he said "were marked by a thirst for advantage and power."

— Elena Becatoros contributed from Athens.

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STATEMENT OF REVENUES COLLECTED, EXPENDITURES PAID AND CHANGES IN  
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YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

	Governmental Fund Types				Total Governmental Funds
	General (Incidental) Fund	Special Revenue (Teachers) Fund	Debt Service Fund	Capital Projects Fund	
<b>REVENUES COLLECTED:</b>					
Local	\$ 1,455,193	\$ 388,772	\$ 172,082	\$ 803	\$ 2,016,850
County	64,582	8,652	43,156	-	116,390
State	147,683	1,439,805	-	-	1,587,488
Federal	277,562	300,782	-	-	578,344
Received from other districts	-	144,724	-	-	144,724
Total Revenues Collected	1,945,020	2,282,735	215,238	803	4,443,796
<b>EXPENDITURES PAID:</b>					
Regular instruction	190,805	1,541,817	-	-	1,732,622
Special instruction	24,175	331,763	-	-	355,938
Vocational instruction	730	-	-	-	730
Student activities	170,480	73,151	-	-	243,631
Tuition paid to other districts	-	60,098	-	-	60,098
Student support services	73,985	52,214	-	-	126,199
Instructional support services	85,528	-	-	-	85,528
Board of Education services	29,075	-	-	-	29,075
Executive administration	36,178	126,857	-	52,780	215,815
Building level administration	74,440	179,612	-	-	254,052
Business/central services	97,305	-	-	-	97,305
Operation of plant	370,708	-	-	10,828	381,536
Pupil transportation	226,726	-	-	-	226,726
Food services	276,260	-	-	-	276,260
Adult education and community services	9,278	-	-	-	9,278
Facilities acquisition and construction	-	-	-	123,908	123,908
Principal retirement	-	-	100,000	-	100,000
Interest and fees	-	-	80,311	-	80,311
Total Expenditures Paid	1,665,673	2,365,512	180,311	187,516	4,399,012
EXCESS/(DEFICIT) OF REVENUES COLLECTED OVER EXPENDITURES PAID	279,347	(82,777)	34,927	(186,713)	44,784
<b>OTHER FINANCING SOURCES/(USES):</b>					
Transfers	(82,777)	82,777	-	-	-
Total Other Financing Sources/(Uses)	(82,777)	82,777	-	-	-
EXCESS/(DEFICIT) OF REVENUES COLLECTED AND OTHER FINANCING SOURCES OVER EXPENDITURES PAID AND OTHER FINANCING USES	196,570	-	34,927	(186,713)	44,784
FUND BALANCES, BEGINNING OF YEAR	1,712,704	-	212,820	460,792	
FUND BALANCES, END OF YEAR	\$ 1,909,274	\$ -	\$ 247,747	\$ 274,079	

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