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Chicago Tribune



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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2019

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Opal Lang, who received a heart transplant this year, decorates Christmas cookies with her mother, Priscilla Lang, at their Highland Park home.

Toddler home for the holidays with new heart

Last Christmas, Highland Park girl, 2, was kept alive by machines

BY ELVIA MALAGÓN

Opal Lang wanted to cry as she struggled to balance herself.

The soon-to-be 3-year-old had already fallen, and her mother, Priscilla Lang, rolled up Opal's green pants so she could try again. The toddler steadied herself and, in a few steps across the living room of her parents' Highland Park home, landed in the arms of her grandmother.

It may seem like a small victory, but a year ago Opal's family and doctors didn't even know if she would make it to this moment. The family spent last Christmas, along with Opal's early January birthday, praying for a heart donation that would give her a second chance at life. Last Christmas Eve, Cardinal Blase Cupich blessed Opal and other children who were waiting for hearts at Lurie Children's Hospital.

She remained hospitalized for months, hooked up to machines to keep her alive, before she received a new heart in a seven-hour operation last April. Days later, her mother gave birth to Opal's little brother, Apollo.

Looking back a year, Priscilla Lang said, she couldn't "even imagine that we would be here."

But months after Opal was released from the hospital, Lang and her husband, Tyler, are gearing up for holiday celebrations,

trying to enroll Opal in a pre-kindergarten program and planning a "Sesame Street"-themed party for her upcoming birthday.

This time around, the Lang household will be buzzing with relatives taking turns visiting. The day after Thanksgiving, the family set up their "Star Wars"-themed Christmas tree.

"We are always celebrating life around here, but it's going to be extended family festivities of celebrating," Priscilla Lang said.

Opal's health problems started when she was about 15 months old and her pediatrician noticed her heart rate was irregular when she screamed or cried. One of her doctors, Dr. Phil Thrush, previously explained that her pumping chamber was larger than it should be and was not working properly.

Turn to **Heart**, Page 6

With trial in limbo, Trump lashes out

President targets Pelosi after holiday greetings to troops

BY TOLUSE OLORUNNIPAN AND JOHN WAGNER
The Washington Post

PALM BEACH, Fla. — President Donald Trump lashed out again Tuesday at House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other Democrats involved in his impeachment after a teleconference in which he exchanged holiday greetings with members of the military stationed around the globe from his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida.

"She hates the Republican Party," Trump said of Pelosi, D-Calif., predicting that she would lose her speakership. "She hates all of the people who voted for me and the Republican Party. ... She's doing a tremendous disservice to the country."

Speaking to reporters who had just witnessed his teleconference, Trump aired an array of grievances about the impeachment process, claiming that Democrats "had no evidence at all" about misconduct in his dealings with Ukraine and that he is "in a very good position" as he faces a trial in the Senate.

His comments come amid a standoff regarding the timing and scope of a

Turn to **Trump**, Page 10

Teenagers don't use email — colleges do

That's a problem during college admissions season

BY DAWN RHODES

Amber Fitzgerald never uses email.

When the 18-year-old started applying to colleges this year, the crush of messages flooding her inbox made her stop checking it.

"I get 10 emails a day just from two colleges," said Fitzgerald, a senior at Hersey High School in Arlington Heights. "If I go a week (without checking) we're talking 100 emails easily from schools I'm not even interested in."

Email is not the default for most teenagers, but it remains the primary avenue for colleges to communicate with prospective and current students. That can mean aggravation for college-bound teens and their families at the time of year when schools send critical admissions and financial aid information mostly via email.

While parents are used to being the main conduit of important information about their kids, the college application process marks one of the first times when the communication has to go directly through the teenage applicant.

Turn to **Email**, Page 3

Quilt project reveals fabric of woman's life

Through her stitches, they sought to know her and then honor her

BY ALISON BOWEN

The words top plaque after plaque in corners of The Art Institute of Chicago, accompanying a cotton quilt top, an embroidered wool rug, a baptismal certificate from 1809.

"Artist Unknown." Looking at the pieces, Shannon Downey was not surprised. Downey, an artist, teacher, director of development at Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and an activist, or as she calls it, a "craftivist," is used to seeing elaborate work, often sewn artworks created by women, attributed to anonymity.

Works are often presented, she said, as, "Here's this neat thing that got left behind, without thinking of the context of who created that, why they created that, how they created that."



Rita Smith

But there is one local artist she has made known.

When Downey's not teaching business classes at Columbia College, she can be found sewing on, among other things, embroidery hoops in her Rogers Park apartment that say things like "Women are magic" or "Social media can be used for good."

And, with the help of other stitchers, she is putting together a quilt she found in a plastic tub at a Mount Prospect estate sale in September that shows 50 states around an already-embroidered map of the United States.

"Rita's quilt," as the project is known, became a viral sensation in the fall, when dozens of people across the country came together to finish it.

Turn to **Quilt**, Page 8



CAMILLE FINE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Volunteers Cory Lippiello, left, and Vanessa Walliko help finish a quilt of a map of the United States at Wishcraft Workshop in Chicago's North Center neighborhood on Dec. 7.

"I want you all to do it in honor of both Rita and women who have been stitching and making since the beginning of time and sharing their story."

— Shannon Downey, to a group assembled to sew together parts of Rita Smith's quilt



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Christmas lesson in tolerance from the foxholes of WWII



RON GROSSMAN

Often when I hear carolers singing, my inner ear segues into “My Yiddishe Mamma.” A schmaltz pop song of the 1920s, it was part of a Christmas Eve service on a World War II battlefield.

Unlikely as that might now seem, it was a perfect musical metaphor for the values our GIs were defending. America was far from perfect; black people were second-class citizens. But it was a beacon of brotherhood compared with the totalitarian countries we were fighting. Japanese soldiers were drilled in the idea that Westerners were barbarians. Germans were taught that Jews were a pestilence that had to be eradicated at Auschwitz and Treblinka.

But on Dec. 24, 1942, a Catholic priest from Brooklyn, New York, and a Jewish boxer from Chicago put together a midnight Mass for U.S. Marines of various hues and creeds. The service was held amid the foxholes of Guadalcanal, a South Pacific island.

The story of the Rev. Fred Gehring and Barney Ross is worth reflecting upon this holiday season when our country is experiencing a wave of virulent intolerance for those who look different or worship differently than we do.

Like Gehring, Ross was once headed to a clerical career. His immigrant father was a Talmudic scholar who supported his family with a small grocery store in the Maxwell Street neighborhood. His fondest dream was that his son would attend a rabbinical seminary.

But when Barney Ross was 13, his father was killed by a stick-up man. Ross’ mother had a nervous breakdown, and his siblings had to be raised by relatives or sent to an orphanage. “It was just fate, I guess that dad was killed,” Ross told Arch Ward, the Tribune’s sports editor, in 1932.

A child of the streets, Ross scraped out a marginal living until discovering the magic of his mitts. He started boxing and wound up the world champion of three weight classes. His purses enabled him to bring the Ross family back together.

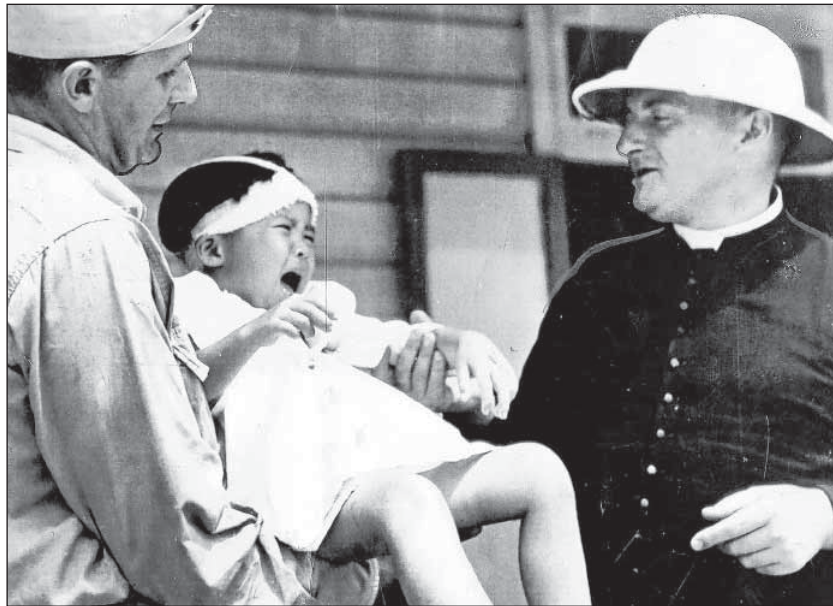
Retired from boxing and 33 years old, he enlisted upon hearing that the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. The military wanted to send him on morale-boosting tours. But insisting on seeing combat, Ross landed on Guadalcanal with B Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment.

There he met Gehring. They were two peas in a pod.

On Guadalcanal, Gehring rescued numerous missionaries trapped behind the Japanese lines, which earned him the Legion of Merit.

In mid-December, Ross found himself and other GIs trapped in a foxhole surrounded by the enemy. The only one not wounded, he held the Japanese at bay by firing his weapon and throwing grenades all night long. By morning, he and another Marine were the only ones alive. So he carried his buddy back to the American base.

Given narcotics for his wounds, Ross struggled with drug addiction after the war. He described kicking his



UNITED STATES NAVY

The Rev. Fred Gehring, a Navy chaplain, left, holds Patsy Lee, 5, whom the Japanese left to die in a Guadalcanal ditch after bayonetting her circa 1943.



HAROLD REVOIR/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Corp. Barney Ross and his mother leave the Municipal Airport on March 11, 1943, after Ross flew home from the Marines.

habit in “God Was In My Corner” in the November 1947 edition of Coronet magazine.

But on the runup to Christmas in 1942, he was preoccupied with a favor the priest had asked of him. Gehring played the violin and found a portable organ. Ross was the only one who could play it, so Gehring asked if he would play “Silent Night” on Christmas Eve.

Ross said the only problem was he didn’t know the tune. It wasn’t much heard in the West Side neighborhood where he grew up. So Marines hummed it for Ross until he could play it by ear.

At midnight Mass, the war momentarily seemed far away as Ross accompanied hundreds of Marines singing: “All is calm, all is bright.”

In the silence that followed, the priest asked Ross to do an encore. Perhaps something from his tradition?

He chose “My Yiddishe Mama,” which had been his boxing theme song and had been played as he shadowboxed and danced his way from a stadium’s dressing room to the ring.

It is about a Jew who terribly misses his or her mother. But the sentiment is universal. It is written in the mournful tones of a minor key that can move someone who doesn’t know a word of Yiddish.

And that is what happened on a jungle island, 76 Christmas Eves ago,

as Ross recalled to columnist Jimmy Breslin:

“There was a Jewish kid playing an organ and singing in Yiddish about his mama and a Catholic priest standing next to him with a violin trying to help it sound nice, and all around there were guys who came from every religion and some of them didn’t even have one, but they were all crying and thinking about the same thing.”

When Ross translated the lyrics, many a GI must have pictured his own mother as she’d trotted alongside a troop train pulling out of a station in Wichita, Kansas, or maybe Escanaba, Michigan:

“I long to hold her hands once more as in days gone by and ask her to forgive me for things I did that made her cry.

How few were her pleasures, she never cared for fashion’s styles. Her jewels and treasures she found them in her baby’s smile.”

Some things are universal.

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JOHN KASS
has today off.

FACT #341
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Email

Continued from Page 1

If students aren't in the habit of sifting through their clogged accounts, they could be missing looming deadlines, to-do notices to complete their applications and announcements about financial aid, scholarships and awards.

"There has to be things that are falling through the cracks," said Carly Oishi, director of financial capability for Ladder Up, a Chicago organization that provides financial advice. "If you're applying to 10, 15, 20 schools, there's no way that you're going to get everything in, review every single thing on time. There's probably money being missed out on, applicants not being admitted, that kind of thing."

Fitzgerald experienced that. She said she missed a deadline to apply for a scholarship because she did not see the email in time. It took several emails for her to realize that she'd been accepted into one of her top schools, Loyola University Chicago.

"I get distracted and I keep pressing delete, delete, delete," Fitzgerald said. "Just last week, I got an email about financial aid and I deleted it because I wasn't paying attention. But my mom also gets the emails and she asked me about it."

This dynamic can be confounding for adults because teenagers typically are nimble with technology. But some say email aversion has less to do with mastering the mechanics of it and more to do with learning executive functioning skills they need for college and beyond.

Thus, it falls to teachers, counselors, mentors, parents or even email-weary older siblings to send up flares, smoke signals, whatever it takes (other than email) to get the message across: Check. Your. Email.

"It's a general social thing that we're running up against," Oishi said. "We have this expectation that



STACEY WESCOTT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Seniors work their yearbook class at Hersey High School on Dec. 16 in Arlington Heights.

because students are tech-savvy, that email makes sense. From everything that I've witnessed, that is not true."

Email is not how teens naturally communicate

Consider all the steps you have to take to send an email: Open a new message, type in the address, type a subject line, write the message, hit send — maybe click on "send anyway" if you really DO mean to send it without a subject line.

Yeah, teenagers aren't doing all that. They'd rather just text or DM.

"They grew up in an era where text messaging and instant messaging was more prevalent," said Christopher Chiakulas, postsecondary counselor at Hersey High School. "They're not communicating with their friends via email."

To remedy that, lessons on how and why to email figure in heavily to the education of students at Andrew High School in Tinley Park.

Andrew is a Google school, meaning all the students have their own Gmail accounts and around 90% of teachers are using Google Classroom in their instruction, Principal Robert Nolting said. Staff also teach students about aspects of

email throughout their four years in school.

"It's progressive with age," Nolting said. "So in the beginning, it's how to get to your email, why do we use email. As they get older it's more about how to communicate professionally."

"It doesn't seem labor-intensive, but to a 14- or 15-year-old, sometimes it's a little too much."

Chiakulas also said getting students comfortable with email is a priority; if not for high school, then beyond.

"Our district's goal is to have students be college-, career- and life-ready," Chiakulas said. "You can't go into a job and ignore emails because there are too many. We do try to get them in the habit of having these real-world skills. You have to check it, you need to check it regularly, you have to respond if there's an action item in there."

Email overload

Applying to colleges back in the day meant being bombarded with snail mail: flyers, ads, postcards, letters.

Today, much of that has been put in electronic form, and that's what teenagers see when they log in. For teens who are already bargaged by marketing emails, it can be tricky to distinguish between an important

email and an ignore-able one.

"When they sign up for the SAT or some other testing, their information is taken, so they get tons of these general emails from colleges," Chiakulas said. "So when they get a real personal email that tells them something like, 'you need to submit this form', or 'we're missing this document', they overlook it as just another college email and they don't realize, 'This is specific to me, and there's something I need to do'."

Louisa Bopp, a senior at Lycée Français de Chicago, ultimately only applied to one school. Because she created an account with the Common App, which can be used to apply to hundreds of colleges throughout the world, she sometimes felt overwhelmed by the sheer volume of messages.

"Important emails tend to get mixed up or you don't see them," said Bopp, 17.

Email is one thing, but schools also have application procedures specific to their institution. Some schools also have their own portals that require unique logins and passwords.

That's what nearly tripped up Fitzgerald in learning she'd been admitted to Loyola.

"I went and found the email, but it didn't say 'congratulations' or any-

thing. It just said, check your portal," Fitzgerald said. "I assumed they would just email it."

What's more, colleges know teenagers aren't always checking email, so they also try other modes of communication to reach students and families.

"In addition to email, we communicate with students and parents via paid advertisements on social media," said Andy Borst, undergraduate admissions director at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. "We also have a call campaign and use text messages to reach Illinois residents from historically underrepresented backgrounds as an additional point of contact."

That's a lot for a 17- or 18-year-old to track.

So. What to do? 'It helps if everyone is on board.'

Here are some expert life hacks.

One suggestion is students should establish a separate, dedicated email account just to gather the college information. That way, "it doesn't get lost in your Old Navy coupons and things like that," Chiakulas said.

Another idea is create a shared email account both a student and parent can access. Continue to use that throughout college to collect important notices — like tuition payments.

Oishi, of Ladder Up, said it often surprises parents to learn they won't be receiving emails and documents from schools along with their students.

"Telling parents that the student is the only person who is going to get this information, you see a light bulb go off," Oishi said. "They know their child isn't checking it, the student is not going to communicate that, so now it's up to them to be more proactive."

Getting organized is crucial. Chiakulas and fellow counselors encourage Hersey students to use a chart to help track their

applications to each school.

That's how Christine Hultman of Northbrook managed it with her oldest child, who graduated from college last year.

"It helps if everyone is on board," Hultman said. "We kept a spreadsheet in the Google Drive. Everything was in there in terms of the school, the deadline dates, financial aid, if they got in, which scholarships were being offered. He checked it every few days to make sure we were on top of things, particularly during his senior year. If questions were ever asked, he would go check the (Google) Drive."

Bopp agrees. She set a routine for checking emails, organizing her inbox and setting frequent reminders for herself.

Without all that, she said she could have overlooked messages informing her she could apply early and that she was accepted to her first-choice school in Italy.

"Those emails weren't even in my (main) inbox or updates. I had to make sure I was checking everything in the middle of all the other college emails," Bopp said. "If I hadn't read my notifications, I probably wouldn't have seen it, I would not have applied early and I probably would not have gotten in."

All else failing, it could come down to old-fashioned pestering by parents — and patience.

Some parents text or Snapchat their teens to tell them to check their email. As a last resort, some screenshot emails and text those to their kids.

"Some of these lessons took a long time to learn, but they're humans, they're growing up," Hultman said. "Eventually it sinks in. We have to cut these guys some slack. They're teenagers."

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Chicago Tribune CHICAGOLAND



ERIN HOOLEY/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Deeqwan and Adrianna Collins and give a treat to Local at the Christmas Eve with the Animals event Tuesday in Chicago.

Dogs meet Santa, volunteers spread Christmas Eve cheer

Annual animal shelter event lifts spirits with 'very good dogs'

BY MARIE FAZIO

'Twas the day before Christmas and volunteers from around Chicago gathered at the city animal shelter to spread holiday spirit among the homeless pets.

Nearly 100 people passed out lavender-scented blankets and treats, sang carols and brought dogs to meet Santa Claus at Chicago Animal Care and Control, 2741 S. Western Ave, during the shelter's annual Christmas event.

Terissa Chin and her children,

Marco and Lucia, who frequently take in foster dogs through a group called Peace for Pits, pushed treats through the metal grates of cages to eager dogs.

"We know these dogs could use some enrichment in their lives so we share this holiday with them," said Chin.

After feeding a treat to Bella, a gray Akita, Marco remarked, "Mom, I wanna take this doggie home."

A few lucky canines had the opportunity to meet Santa. The first dog to meet the man in red was an energetic 6-year-old pit bull mix, fittingly named Noel. She tugged at her leash and when her attention finally turned to

Santa she enthusiastically licked his face.

Next in line was Pumpkin Spice, a 5-year-old pit bull mix.

Nicole Quattrochi, who has been volunteering at the shelter for two years, said December is usually slower in terms of intake of animals compared with the busy season in the spring.

"If you're not sure about making a long-term commitment, try fostering," Quattrochi said.

In the midst of the festivity Mia Mujkovic, 7, arrived at the shelter with her mother and grandmother. She was dressed in a sparkly gold and red dress and a sequined cat-ear headband. She's been asking for a kitten for a year and

her mother surprised her by bringing her to the shelter.

They picked out a 3-month-old calico kitten named Salsa, but Mia said she wants to change her name to Princess. When a volunteer told the family their adoption application had been approved, Mia's face lighted up.

Toward the end of the event, Santa held a puppy named Dugan in his lap. When asked by a reporter if he thought the dogs were good or bad this year, Santa laughed.

"They've all been very good dogs," he said. "There's no such thing as a bad dog."

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Thick fog causes flight delays, cancellations

Murky conditions lead to restrictions by FAA on busy Christmas Eve

BY KATHERINE ROSENBERG-DOUGLAS AND HANNAH LEONE

Fog led to hundreds of flight delays and cancellations Tuesday morning, launching a chain reaction that delayed travelers at the city's two airports as the clock ticked away hours that were to have been spent with loved ones on Christmas Eve.

About 5:30 a.m., as a thick fog rolled in and seemed to engulf the city, the Federal Aviation Administration issued restrictions on all flights coming into or departing from O'Hare International Airport and Midway Airport, according to agency spokesman Lynn Lunsford.

Midway was first to clear restrictions on incoming and outgoing flights about 8 a.m., and later O'Hare's restrictions applied only to incoming flights until the entire "ground stop" ended there about 9:30 a.m.

Shortly after 6 p.m., 742 flights had been delayed at O'Hare, while at Midway, 53 flights were delayed. O'Hare reported 106 cancellations and Midway had 71, according to the Chicago Department of Aviation.

A brief, second ground stop at O'Hare was issued about 11 a.m., and Lunsford said that was likely related to a lack of gate availability in the United terminal. A United representative, however, said it was not a result of delays from the earlier fog restrictions, but because of holiday travel.

"We had a little bit of a delay ... because we have so many flights for the holiday," said United Airlines spokeswoman Leigh Schramm.

Mark Rakocy whiled away hours Tuesday in the United terminal, where festive Christmas music all but drowned out flight announcements. At the gate for a delayed flight to Minneapolis/St. Paul, employees brought out a snack cart, and Rakocy took a bag of baked Ruffles and a granola bar.

His layover from Los Angeles to Columbus, Ohio, did not have a clear end in sight, and he was growing worried about joining his family in time for Christmas.

His original connection was supposed to leave at 8 a.m., and around 9:30, he was No. 10 of 15 people on standby for a flight departing a little before 10:20 a.m.

He was told there "might be" other flights later, but so far he knew of only one other potential option around 6 p.m.

"That's basically the whole day gone," Rakocy said.

He wasn't alone. Sisters Ashley Francis, 30, and Morgan Kiser, 23, could at least say they were together, and they also had Francis' 17-month-old son in tow. After setting out at 5 a.m. Hawaii time, the group was expecting a total travel time of about 19 hours, if the delay estimates they were provided about 9 a.m. held and didn't grow.

The trio arrived at O'Hare from Honolulu to find out their 8:30 a.m. United connection to Dayton, Ohio, was delayed by nearly three hours. Francis lives in Hawaii, but Kiser and others in their family are still in Ohio. After Kiser went to spend time on the island with her sister, the group was headed home for Christmas. Kiser joked she wished she could be like her nephew, who was sound asleep in a green stroller.

With nothing to do but wait, Francis said they were "good, just tired." It seemed like their flight's new gate had been switching every 30 minutes, but until it was closer to boarding, she said they were staying put.

Ralph Korson's flight back to his hometown of Traverse City, Michigan, after visiting friends was canceled, but he said he was able to get on an 11:50 a.m. flight. Minutes before 8 a.m., he wasn't sure how he was going to kill the



BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Foggy weather delays Southwest Airlines flights on Tuesday at Midway Airport. O'Hare reported 106 cancellations and Midway had 71.

time.

"Well, it's boring," Korson said, figuring he'd sit somewhere and "get a magazine or something."

Travelers at Midway fared better, especially because visibility, which was reduced to less than a quarter-mile at both airports about 6 a.m., improved to a mile at Midway about 8 a.m., said Casey Sullivan, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

The FAA suggests travelers check directly with their airline to determine if a flight has been delayed, and it has a page on its website that provides links to all major airlines. Delays on many airlines at O'Hare were an average of 30 minutes throughout the morning, the city's Aviation Department noted.

Seats were scarce at many gates at O'Hare, with some travelers sleeping on the floor or while sitting upright. Others weren't sure how they were going to kill time during the mounting delays, while those on arriving flights were waiting on luggage.

Employees behind an American Airlines gate desk tried to help delayed travelers make alternate plans. For Pamela Weinzapfel, a 40-minute layover at O'Hare nearly tripled, and her new flight was to take her to Louisville, Kentucky, rather than her hometown of Evansville, Indiana.

Her sisters' trip to pick her up from the airport would be about

two hours longer too, she said.

"I called them and they're like, 'yeah, whatever, we'll be there,'" said Weinzapfel, 30.

It will be her first time back since moving to Washington, D.C., in June. She said because she had a basic economy ticket, she was limited to flights with the same airline, but the American Airlines staff who helped her were "super nice, super friendly."

The dense fog was also expected to affect road travel, with decreased visibility for motorists. But the chance of fog lessened by Tuesday night, while mild temperatures remained. With a high of 55 degrees, Chicago saw its warmest Christmas Eve since 1982, according to the weather service.

The AAA expects more travelers on the road this holiday season nationwide than ever before.

"AAA forecasts that 104 million Americans will travel by car — the most on record — for a year-end holiday," according to Jeanette Casselano, an AAA spokeswoman. The figure represents a 3.9% increase from motorists last year, and AAA said travel will be at its peak Thursday.

Chicago Tribune's Alice Yin contributed.
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Acquitted mom put back into custody

Ruled insane in 2010 killing of daughter in Bloomingdale

BY CLIFFORD WARD

A woman judged not guilty by insanity in the 2010 killing of her young daughter has been ordered back into state custody weeks after she was released from a mental hospital.

Marci Webber, who has long maintained that medication she was on caused the delusions that led her to slash the throat of her 4-year-old daughter Maggie in suburban Bloomingdale, was released following a Dec. 11 court order.

But on Monday, the same DuPage County judge who issued the order — and who earlier found Webber not guilty by reason of insanity — issued a warrant for her to be detained and returned to the custody of the Illinois Department of Human Services.

Judge George Bakalis had ruled this fall that Webber could be released from state custody if she met certain conditions.

Prosecutors, who oppose Webber's release, successfully appealed the order, and Illinois' 2nd District Appellate Court on Friday placed a hold on the order until a full appeal can be heard.

Webber's attorney, Justin Schwartz, said Tuesday that she has been living in an apartment in Glen Ellyn since her release and was not in custody as of Monday. He said his client, who is 52, went to the appeals court offices in Elgin on Monday to obtain a copy of the stay order.

"There is some information that the appeal was not timely and the stay may not be effective," said Schwartz, adding that he's trying to get clarification on the most recent court action.

An attempt to reach the DHS was not successful Tuesday. A law enforcement source, though, said Tuesday that Webber had turned herself in to DHS.

Prosecutors have argued that Webber is not ready for release based on her previous psychiatric history and reports from her treating psychiatrists.

Webber, prosecutors said in their appeal, "remains in need of inpatient hospitalization, as there exists no clear and convincing evidence that she would not reasonably be expected to inflict serious physical harm upon herself or another in the community at large."

The appellate ruling was the latest turn in a nine-year saga that began when Webber was charged in the murder of her daughter in November 2010 while the two, who lived in New York, were visiting relatives outside Chicago. Webber drugged her child and then cut her throat before slashing her own wrists, authorities said.

At a 2012 trial, Bakalis ruled that Webber was not guilty after hearing psychologists testify that she had suffered a psychotic break and was unable to distinguish between right and wrong. Webber had said she was suffering from delusions and hallucinations, brought on by psychotropic medication, and that she killed her daughter to protect her from falling into the hands of sex traffickers.

Following the verdict, Webber was placed in DHS custody and has been held for periods at Chicago-Read and Elgin mental health centers. After five years in DHS custody, Webber applied to be released, saying she no longer suffered from mental illness. After a series of hearings, though, Bakalis turned down the request in late 2017.

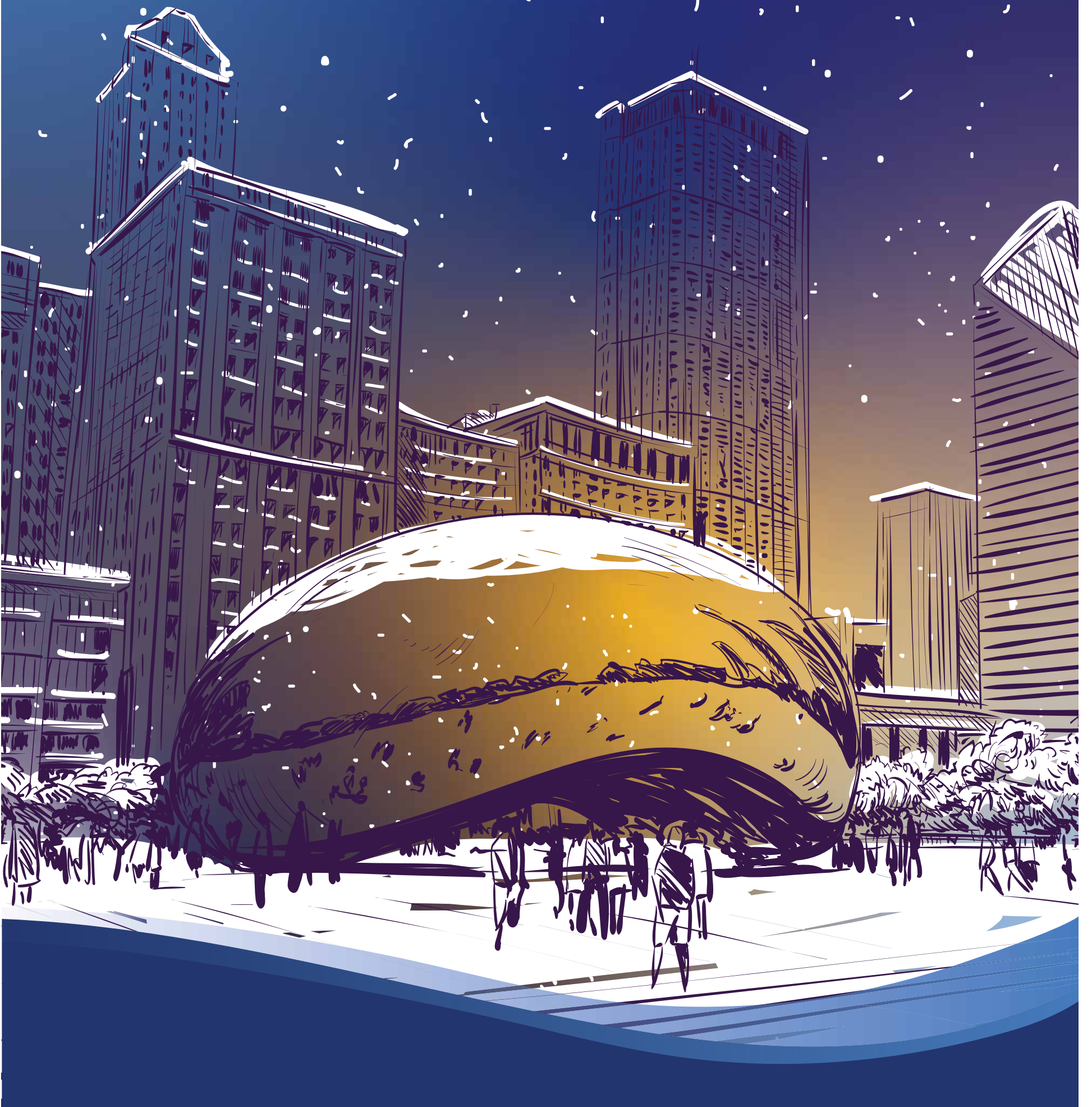
She reapplied, and after another hearing process, which included testimony from mental health experts, Bakalis issued a September order saying that if Webber could meet certain conditions, she could be released. On Dec. 11, the judge said the conditions had been met and ordered her release. Prosecutors, who maintain that Webber is not ready to be released, appealed that order. That led to the stay issued Friday.

Clifford Ward is a freelance reporter.



Webber

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over the years?



There's a classic movie many of us watch this time of year. *It's a Wonderful Life* is the story of George Bailey, who's about to end it all on Christmas Eve. His guardian angel, Clarence, intervenes and shows him what the world would be like if he hadn't been born. George is stunned to see the impact on those he loves — and on his town, too.

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Philip D. Cacciatore
Chairman & CEO, Lakeside Bank



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Heart

Continued from Page 1

The toddler had a heart muscle disorder, though doctors weren't able to pinpoint what exactly triggered it, said Dr. Elfriede Pahl, one of Opal's doctors at Lurie who monitor her recovery.

An emergency pacemaker was implanted, and Opal was also connected to a machine called a Berlin Heart that stabilizes the heart rhythm and assists blood flow. She also suffered a minor stroke.

Side effects of the stroke linger, and they're why she has trouble walking on her own, Pahl said.

But there's been much progress. For example, when Opal was first released from the hospital, she was taking about 19 medications and vitamins. Now, she's down to six a day, including two anti-rejection drugs, her mother said.

Every few weeks, Opal has a check-in with her doctors where she gets her blood drawn and undergoes an EKG and an echocardiogram test, which is like a cardiac ultrasound, Pahl said. Opal also undergoes regular biopsies, where doctors examine tissue from the heart to see if the body is rejecting it.

"She's doing really well," Pahl said by phone. "She has been saying more words. She's a toddler, so obviously toddlers are learning to walk. She's been learning to talk. She has a baby brother who she interacts with. It's just delightful to see her."

Opal was hospitalized once since she was allowed to go home in June. Although it seemed like a small stomach bug, she was still admitted as a precaution and was soon released, Lang said.

Doctors are more vigilant with children who've had transplants, advising parents to take their children to the hospital if they have a fever, Pahl said. It's inevitable that, like all children, young transplant pa-



BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTOS

Opal Lang, 2, decorates cookies with her mother, Priscilla while family friend Lisa Lucenti holds Opal's brother, Apollo.



Lang with father Tyler after Opal's heart transplant at Lurie Children's Hospital.

tients will catch a cold or other virus, but it's important to keep them under doctors' observation, she said.

Opal can continue to be treated at Lurie until she reaches her early 20s, Pahl said. It's not common for patients to need a second heart transplant. In fact, Pahl estimates they've only had to do about two dozen second heart transplants in the past 30 years.

"Every year, the heart is lasting longer and longer with better medication and better survival for patients," Pahl said.

So it's possible that one day Opal could even play sports in school.

But other things won't be the same for Opal. Lang plans to keep a line of communication open with other parents in Opal's pre-kindergarten class so she can find out when other

students are sick. And when Lang takes her daughter to a community center, the girl wears a mask to protect her. A routine trip to Target also doubles as a form of therapy so she can practice walking, especially after Opal used all of the allotted therapy sessions the family's insurance would cover, Lang said.

"She's really wobbly and, you know, kind of shaky. Sometimes I think it's her own fear of falling," Lang said. "Because at Target the other day, we took her to the doll aisle, and she loves dolls, and she's looking and she's like, 'Hi, baby,' and walking. And she looked so amazing, so stable."

While the family has celebrated Opal's triumphs, it's bittersweet knowing the heart donation meant another family lost someone.

The Langs aren't allowed to reach out to the donor family through the hospital until next year. And although the donor family could have reached out to them by now, the

"We are always celebrating life around here, but it's going to be extended family festivities of celebrating."

— Priscilla Lang

Langs haven't heard from them. Lang thinks about this family often, wanting to tell them that their child is now living through Opal.

"We've had Opal here now a year longer than we thought we could have her," Lang said. "And we have gotten all of these days with her, (but) someone else is experiencing their very first holidays without their little loved one. My heart is just really full, but also there is a part of it that is sending so much love to this other family."

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Nearly 12K city sticker scofflaws get fine relief

BY GREGORY PRATT

Nearly 12,000 Chicago motorists were relieved of about \$11.5 million in outstanding tickets for not having city stickers through an amnesty program that ended earlier this month, officials said Tuesday.

The city sticker amnesty initiatives were launched in October by Mayor Lori Lightfoot and Clerk Anna Valencia in an effort to fix what they say is an unfair system of fines and fees that is harshest on the city's poorest residents. The amnesty gave breaks to people who owed money or hadn't purchased a sticker, officials said.

Chicago officials also allowed individuals to buy a city sticker in October without requiring they pay back charges or late fees.

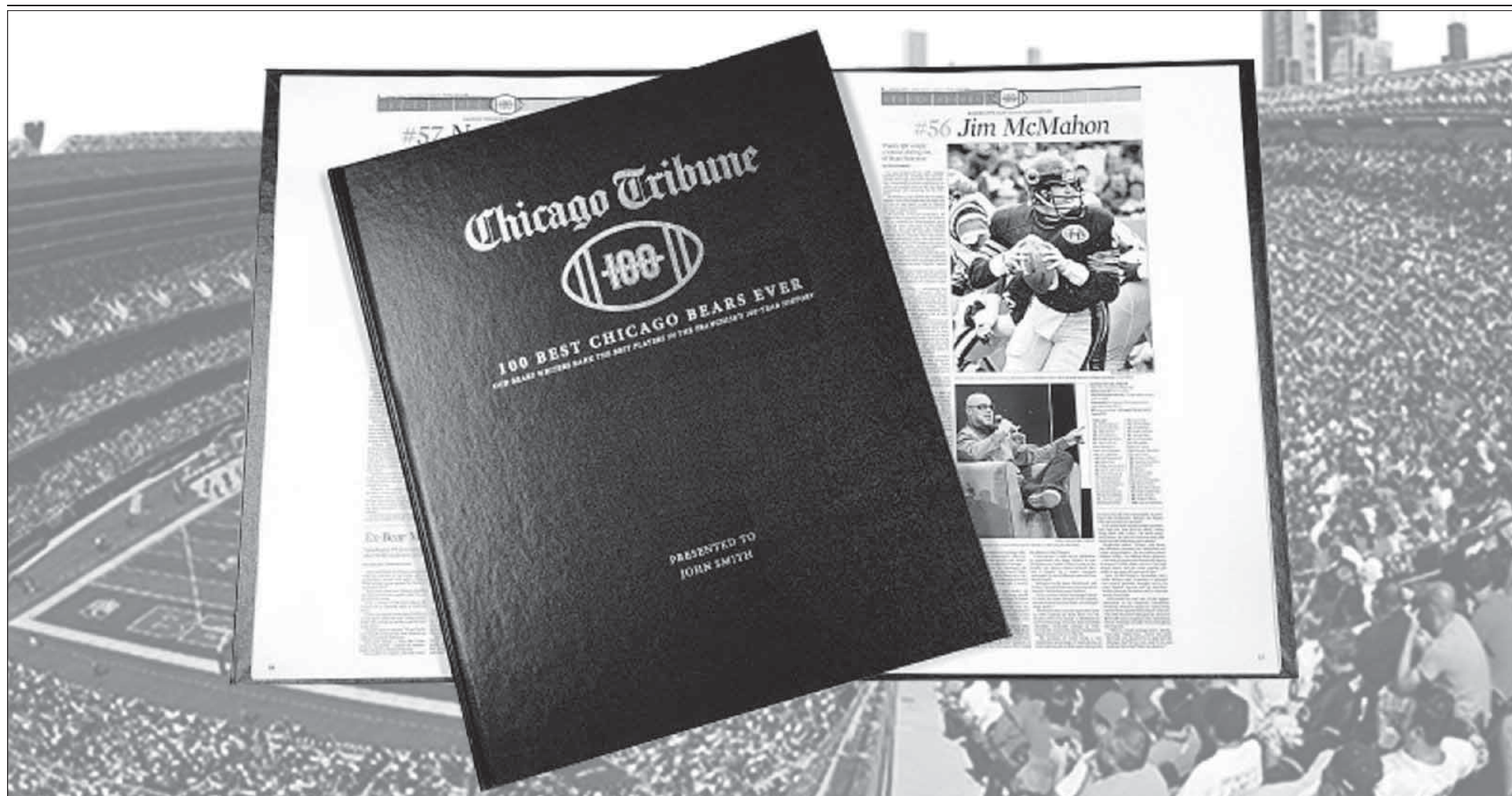
Lightfoot's office also touted the introduction of a reduced term sticker, allowing residents to purchase the required vehicle registration for a shorter period of time to make it easier to comply.

More than 3,000 residents bought the shorter-term sticker in the first month it was available, the mayor's office said.

"I grew up in a family that lived paycheck to paycheck, so I personally understand how it is that regressive fines and fees affect thousands of Chicagoans who already struggle to make ends meet, particularly in our black and brown communities," Lightfoot said in a statement.

The amnesty process allowed vehicle owners to purchase a new city sticker without any fines in October. Once a sticker was purchased, residents could apply to get any tickets waived for not having one waived through Dec. 15.

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Quilt

Continued from Page 1

stitchers hope to honor Rita Smith, an Illinois woman they never met.

"She never had the opportunity to brag or show off or display or take her quilt and put it in a quilt judging contest," said James P. Smith, Rita Smith's son.

He said his mother, who died in August at age 99, would have been flattered by the stitchers who came together to finish her work. "She just did it because she liked to do it, and because she'd been taught to do it by her mother," he said.

James Smith, who grew up in Evanston with his family but now lives in New York, said his mother was sewing until the end, requesting a new sewing machine and buying denim so that she could make her own jeans. She loved knitting and sewing; she'd pulled out hours' worth of stitches to replace parts of a sweater she made him when it wasn't perfect enough. She made him that exact sweater again years later, when the neck had become too loose. She created his costumes for a high school play, made the quilt that sat on her bed, sewed the Boy Scout merit badges onto his sash.

"Everybody else used airplane glue to glue their badges," he said. "Mine were exquisitely sewn."

The quilt will be on display from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday at Woman Made Gallery in Pilsen. It has also garnered international attention. Downey has fielded requests ranging from the BBC to The Kelly Clarkson show, where she appeared with the quilt.

"We're really proud of our mother," Smith said.

Rita Smith was a feminist, a nurse, a woman from a family of immigrants. She was also stubborn and "would set her jaw," her son said. She insisted on working, even when her husband said she didn't need to. She was married for 60 years, until her husband's death in 2009. She insisted on Sunday dinners at 2 p.m.



ARMANDO L. SANCHEZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTOS
Sarah Evans assembles "Rita's quilt" on a 12-foot long-arm frame in her Skokie home.



A quilt block of New York is pieced into "Rita's quilt" while Sarah Evans assembles it.

"Still on Sunday at 2 o'clock, I sometimes pause," James Smith said.

Downey didn't know the history behind the plastic tub full of fabric she bought for \$6. She started going to estate sales with friends. Occasionally, she would encounter unfinished works — efforts abandoned for reasons of possibly illness or death; she never really knew. She just knew she felt called to finish them for the people who started them.

"They didn't expect to not finish it," she said.

So far, the items she finished were small — a Bible verse, a picture of puppies. After completing them, she gave them away.

But the quilt was different.

"I walked in, and it was like tunnel vision," she said. "This one was just so stunning."

Inside the plastic tub were patterns and cloth and a carefully folded bed sheet at the bottom, which Downey surmised was backup cloth. She found a bamboo embroidery hoop, and a half-stitched New Jersey quilt block.

"Everything was perfectly organized," she said. "I know how much effort and work and talent went into making that map."

Downey went to Instagram, asking for help to complete it. Within 24 hours she received more than 1,000 offers to help.

As she prepared to mail out the assignments, she

found within the plastic tub two states that had been completed: Alaska and Georgia.

"I could study her stitches and see what her vision for this quilt was," she said. "That woman is no joke."

She noticed that the state outlines were in black and blue; that she used three strands of thread. She noticed how she filled in the flowers, the birds. She passed along this information to her volunteers, who she also gave creative freedom.

And so they spent the past couple of months carefully working on the quilt. It has become more than a task, more than an assignment. A Facebook group brought people together; two stitchers realized they lived two blocks away from each other in Massachusetts and met up to sew.

Some were inspired to finish or begin separate projects; many shared stories of who taught them to sew and works passed throughout their families. One even got a tattoo to honor the project.

Participation was not without its pressure.

Chicagoan and nursing student Norah Kilpatrick, 24, messaged Downey on Instagram to offer help and

was assigned to stitch the state of Illinois. She felt intimidated; she was both a fan of Downey's work and also excited about securing what was, in the stitching community, a precious spot in a viral project.

"Embroidery can go across centuries, can go across decades," she said. "To have something that you've worked on and that you've finished and that you've grown from ... it doesn't have to be perfect, it just has to be something that you want to share."

Kilpatrick weighed whether to stitch solely the outline or fill it in completely. Ultimately, she led with color, stitching a bright red cardinal and lilac flowers.

And she used French knots, which Rita Smith had a clear affinity for.

"You can pick out a French knot in every one of the states," Kilpatrick said.

Those who stitched pieces of the quilt included Downey's dad, who she recently taught to sew while he recovered from heart surgery. He completed a star with a flower in the center.

Downey almost forgot to give herself part of the project, belatedly assigning herself two stars — each made up of 5,000 French knots.

She knows people are eager to share their stories about connecting through art. The enthusiasm has been exhilarating and uplifting, she said.

But to her, it means more than that.

She has long spoken out about how some dismiss works of art like the elaborate embroidery in the Art Institute as "crafting." To her, the tone can signify a take that is condescending, minimizing, a way to take something often created by women and place it in a lesser category.

"For me, finishing these projects, and the work that I make, is around saying, 'This is art, and it should be valued and respected and seen, but it hasn't, because of gender, and because of

patriarchy," she said. "And so for me, this is a political act."

She plans to spend 2020 pushing to get Rita Smith's art in front of the widest possible audience. After its Chicago debut, it will be trucked to Paducah, Kentucky, to be featured at the National Quilt Museum in March.

"It needs to be on display," she said. "That is a stunning piece of work. That is a gorgeous piece of art."

Downey created a GoFundMe campaign to fund her dream of moving into an RV and bringing stitching and art and activism across the country. She wants to bring the quilt. She wants to teach people how to stitch. She wants to host stitch-ups, where stitchers meet and sew and learn together, which she's done throughout Chicago. She wants to go estate sale shopping. She's raised more than \$10,000 of the \$350,000 she estimates it will cost for the RV, health insurance, gas, laundry, food and campground rentals.

In Chicago, on a recent December afternoon, dozens of people met up at Wishcraft Workshop to sew together the states, working near a makeshift shrine for Rita Smith.

"I want you all to do it in honor of both Rita and women who have been stitching and making since the beginning of time and sharing their story," Downey told those assembled, adding, "I'm totally not going to cry today."

Smith said his mother regularly met with her neighborhood sewing club, bringing projects and swapping stories. This feels, he said, like a newer version of that.

"She would be so flattered," he said. "She would also be kicking me in the shins saying, 'Hey, it doesn't do you any good to cry. If you're crying, you can't talk about me. And I want you to talk about me.'"

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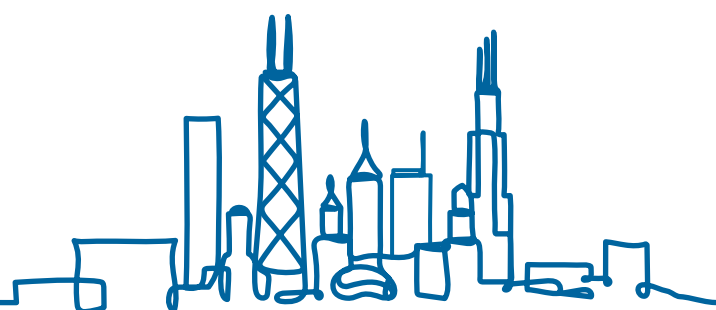
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NATION & WORLD

Masses gather to celebrate birth of Jesus in Bethlehem

BY MOHAMMAD DARAGHMEH AND PATTY NIEBERG
Associated Press

BETHLEHEM, West Bank — Thousands of Christians on Tuesday flocked to the West Bank town of Bethlehem, celebrating Christmas Eve in the traditional birthplace of Jesus.

Visitors converged on the town's large Christmas tree in Manger Square, near the spot believed to mark Jesus' birthplace. Uniformed Palestinian scouts wearing yellow and gold capes paraded past assembled visitors, the sound of drums and bagpipes filling the cool, clear air.

Vendors hawked snacks and holiday gifts, adding to the festive atmosphere.

Roger Hoagland, a Christian educator and missionary from Louisville, Kentucky, said he had come to lead a Baptist choir for a fourth time and described his visit as the experience of a lifetime.

"We love this opportunity," he said. "We have 40 people and many of them are from the U.S. and other countries. They come to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ."

While Bethlehem is in the Palestinian-administered area of the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Israel's separation barrier encloses parts of the city and is a constant reminder of the complex political reality. Most of the Christmas Eve visitors appeared to be local residents, with foreign pilgrims seeming to make up a modest portion of the crowd.

Still, the celebrations capped the most successful year in history for Palestinian tourism, according to



HAZEM BADER/GETTY-AFP

Palestinian scouts perform during a parade Tuesday at Manger Square in Bethlehem.

Tourism Minister Rula Maayah.

Bethlehem, located just outside of Jerusalem, has invested heavily in tourism. It's built new hotels and tried to diversify itself by offering culinary and cultural destinations in addition to its traditional holy sites.

Maayah estimated that some 15,000 pilgrims were staying overnight in Bethlehem's fully booked hotels this Christmas. Tourists were also staying in other West Bank towns, such as Ramallah and Jericho, in addition to Jerusalem.

In all, she said the number of foreign tourists visiting the West Bank this year is estimated to reach 3.5 million people, up from 3 million last year.

Christmas festivities are

typically a boost for Bethlehem's flagging economy and for the Holy Land's dwindling Christian population, which has shrunk over the decades as people fled conflict and searched for better opportunities abroad.

The Church of the Nativity, where Christians believe Jesus was born, hosted Palestinian dignitaries and pilgrims from around the world for a midnight Mass.

Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, the head Catholic cleric in the Holy Land, had crossed an Israeli army checkpoint from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, where he was greeted by prominent members of Bethlehem's Christian community.

Pizzaballa celebrated midnight Mass at the Church of the Nativity,

which houses the grotto revered as Jesus' birthplace.

Pizzaballa said that he draws hope from the "desire, especially in the youth, to do something for their societies, families."

Meanwhile, at the Vatican, Pope Francis assured the faithful that God loves everyone — "even the worst of us" — as he celebrated the joyous birth of Christ after a less-than-joyful year of scandals and opposition.

With a choir singing the Christmas hymn "The First Noel," Francis processed down the center aisle of St. Peter's Basilica late Tuesday and unveiled a statue of the newborn Jesus lying in a nativity scene at the foot of the altar.

Francis said the birth of Jesus, which Christians

commemorate on Christmas Day, was a reminder of God's unconditional love for everyone, "even the worst of us."

"God does not love you because you think and act the right way," he said. "You may have mistaken ideas, you may have made a complete mess of things, but the Lord continues to love you."

At the same time though, he called for the faithful to allow themselves to be transformed by Jesus' "crazy love" and to stop trying to change others.

Francis has frequently emphasized his call for "personal conversion" in his reform-minded papacy, believing that true reform cannot be imposed from on high, but discerned from within.

The pontiff has similarly denounced the "holier-than-thou" attitude of doctrinal and legal purists, who have chafed at his progressive openings to gays, divorcees and people on the margins.

Those critics have seized on the sexual abuse and financial scandals that have buffeted the papacy of the 83-year-old Jesuit pope.

The scandals are likely to follow Francis into 2020, with developments in a corruption investigation involving hundreds of millions of dollars in donations to the Holy See and the release of a report on what the Vatican knew about ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, who was defrocked for sexually abusing adults and minors.

Putin says Russia is leading world in hypersonic weapons

BY VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV
Associated Press

MOSCOW — President Vladimir Putin said Tuesday that Russia has got a strong edge in designing new weapons and that it has become the only country in the world to deploy hypersonic weapons.

Speaking at a meeting with top military brass, Putin said that for the first time in history, Russia is now leading the world in developing an entire new class of weapons unlike in the past when it was catching up with the United States.

The Russian leader noted that during Cold War times, the Soviet Union was behind the United States in designing the atomic bomb and building strategic bombers and intercontinental ballistic missiles.

"Now we have a situation that is unique in modern history when they are trying to catch up to us," he said. "Not a single country has hypersonic weapons, let alone hypersonic weapons of intercontinental range."

The Pentagon and the U.S. military services have been working on the development of hypersonic weapons in recent years, and Defense Secretary Mark Esper said in August that he believes "it's probably a matter of a couple of years" before the U.S. has one. He has called it a priority as the military works to develop new long-range fire capabilities.

The U.S. also has repeatedly warned Congress about hypersonic missiles being developed by Russia and China that will be harder to track and defeat. U.S. officials have talked about putting a layer of sensors in space to more quickly detect enemy missiles, particularly the more advanced hypersonic threats. The administration also plans to study the idea



MIKHAIL KLIMENTYEV/SPUTNIK

Russian President Vladimir Putin addresses an annual meeting with top military officials Tuesday in Moscow.

of basing interceptors in space, so the U.S. can strike incoming enemy missiles during the first minutes of flight when the booster engines are still burning.

Putin said the first unit equipped with the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle is set to go on duty this month, while the air-launched Kinzhal hypersonic missiles already have entered service.

The Russian leader first mentioned the Avangard and the Kinzhal among other prospective weapons systems in his state-of-the-nation address in 2018.

Putin said then that the Avangard has an intercontinental range and can fly in the atmosphere at a speed 20 times the speed of sound. He noted that the weapon's ability to change both its course and its altitude en route to a target makes it immune to interception by the enemy.

"It's a weapon of the future, capable of penetrating both existing and prospective missile defense systems," Putin said Tuesday.

The Kinzhal, which is carried by MiG-31 fighter jets, entered service with the Russian air force last year. Putin has said the missile flies 10 times faster than the speed of sound, has a range of more than 1,250 miles and can carry a

nuclear or a conventional warhead. The military said it's capable of hitting both land targets and navy ships.

The United States and other countries also have worked on designing hypersonic weapons, but they haven't entered service yet.

The Kremlin has made military modernization its top priority amid tensions with the West that followed the 2014 Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea.

Putin on Tuesday described a buildup of NATO's forces near Russia's western borders and the U.S. withdrawal earlier this year from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty among top security threats.

He argued that Russia must have the best weapons in the world.

"It's not a chess game where it's OK to play to a draw," he said. "Our technology must be better. We can achieve that in key areas and we will."

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu reported Tuesday that the military this year has received 143 warplanes and helicopters, 624 armored vehicles, a submarine and eight surface warships. He said that the modernization of Russia's arsenals will continue at the same rapid pace next year.

75 years ago, king of swing vanished over English Channel

BY MICHAEL E. RUANE
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The news broke most places on Christmas Day 1944, crammed onto front pages amid the blaring war headlines: Glenn Miller was missing.

The legendary American big band leader, whose music cheered the war-weary and thrilled a generation, had vanished over the English Channel while flying from Britain to France.

He had been missing for 10 days, and for part of that time no one realized he was overdue.

Seventy-five years ago this month, in one of the strangest episodes of World War II, the U.S. military "lost" Maj. Glenn Miller, the king of swing and one of the biggest stars of his era.

It took four days before top officers discovered that Miller, without authorization, had hitched a ride on a small plane with a friend and a 22-year-old pilot, had flown into foul weather and probably crashed, according to historian Dennis Spragg.

Based in England, Miller was going to France to arrange for his Army Air Force band's move to Paris, now that the allies had showed the Germans back during World War II.

A missing-aircrew report was filed for the plane Dec. 16 when it did not radio its arrival, Spragg said. But military officials did not know that Miller was aboard and considered the report routine. "Nobody connects it with Miller," he said.

Plus, the report was eclipsed by the gigantic German attack the same day that began the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium and France.

It was only when Miller failed to meet his band in Paris a few days later that people realized he might be missing.

"When Glenn wasn't



AP

Big band leader Glenn Miller in 1941, a year before he joined the Army.

there to meet us, I knew something was wrong," recalled Carmen Mastrin, a guitarist in Miller's band, according to Geoffrey Butcher's history of the band's war years. "He had gone on ahead to make arrangements for us and I knew he would accomplish what he started to do."

Spragg said after one top U.S. staff officer was briefed, he exploded: "How the hell did we lose Glenn Miller!"

It was a monumental embarrassment, as well as a tragedy.

Miller had been the top bandleader in the United States for years, and the Army Air Forces band he put together abroad in 1944 may have been the best big band ever assembled, Spragg said.

Staffed with the best musicians in the service, it was "a juggernaut entertainment machine," he said.

Miller's recordings of pieces such as the jazzy, foot-stomping "In the Mood" and the romantic "Moonlight Serenade," along with "American Patrol," "A String of Pearls" and "Chattanooga Choo Choo," made up the soundtrack for a generation and became embedded in the American music psyche.

"Between '38 and '42 he

had ... more charted stuff than anybody in history," Spragg said.

The single-engine aircraft in which he was a passenger had left an air base near Bedford, England, on Dec. 15 about 1:45 p.m. Miller was accompanied by an acquaintance, Lt. Col. Norman Francis Baesell, and the pilot, Flight Officer John R.S. Morgan, according to Spragg's 2017 book "Glenn Miller Declassified."

Morgan had filed a flight plan but probably didn't know he would have the famous Miller as a passenger, Spragg said in a telephone interview. Miller, for his part, was a VIP. He was supposed to stick to the military's regularly scheduled passenger transports, and keep the brass informed of his whereabouts.

But the English weather had grounded scheduled flights, and Miller was in a hurry to get to Paris. Baesell had a plane and a pilot and was also in a hurry to get to France. He offered Miller a ride.

The War Department, after realizing that Miller was missing, investigated for six days and notified Miller's wife, Helen, in Tenafly, New Jersey, on Dec. 23.

An official announcement on Christmas Eve made most papers on Christmas.

Alton Glenn Miller was a musical giant of his day, with a status like that of the Beatles for a later generation. And his loss was akin to the sudden deaths of John Lennon, Michael Jackson or Prince.

Miller joined the Army in 1942.

He formed a 50-piece Army Air Force Band, took it to Italy in the summer of 1944 and gave hundreds of performances, according to author Jeffrey Benton. He was often joined by other stars of the time, including Bing Crosby and Dinah Shore.



MANU BRABO/AP

Egyptian migrants walk through a mountain area thought to be littered with landmines.

Going west, migrants wander Bosnia in the Balkan winter

By MANU BRABO
Associated Press

BIHAC, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Bosnia's notorious Vucjak camp may have closed down after an international outcry, but the plight of migrants stranded in the country while trying to reach Western Europe is far from over.

The tent camp near the northwestern town of Bihac stood on a former landfill and near a mine field, becoming a symbol of migrant suffering as they travel through the Balkans. The camp was flattened earlier this month, its residents transferred to other parts of Bosnia. Yet they are making their way back to Bihac because it is closest to the place they want to get to — Bosnia's neighbor, European Union member Croatia.

In Bihac, migrants look for abandoned buildings or factories, or stay in the town's migrant center if they are lucky. They camp among bare walls, waiting for a warm meal from aid groups.

With the winter settling in, migrants want to hurry toward Croatia before the weather gets even worse. But this is not easy — they have to go over a mountain

pass and police often turn them back.

They call it the "Game" — a cat-and-mouse chase with Croatia's border patrols over the mountain tracks. Sometimes migrants try several times before they manage to cross, sometimes it takes weeks, even months.

It's toughest for families with small children. Babies can't stop crying. Parents bring the children as close to the fire as possible to keep them warm, but they are tired and the cold nonetheless bites at their faces.

A family from Syria and a couple from India paused briefly this month before moving on in subfreezing temperatures, loaded with belongings and carrying children. The women, Fatima, 24, from Syria, and Nishademi, 22, from India, are tired and scared.

Elsewhere near the border, at an abandoned house, a group of young men are camping as they prepare to set off along a snowy road toward Croatia. Many wear only sneakers and have to wrap themselves in blankets.

About 20 migrants from Afghanistan eventually went toward Croatia, but half of them gave up along the way and returned. The

snow had fallen overnight and it became too cold.

Inside the houses by the border, old, dirty mattresses serve as temporary beds for those who come by. Volunteers bring firewood and garbage is everywhere, testifying to the groups who have passed this way in the past.

Sometimes, young migrants play in the snow. Many are just children, often encouraged to leave home by their parents, who choose to send them on perilous journeys across the world rather than have them live lives without hope in their countries.

Bosnian authorities say there are several thousand people from the Middle East, Africa and Asia who are staying in the country while on their way toward wealthy EU nations.

Bosnia's border police say they don't have enough manpower to stop the flow — the impoverished country is struggling to accommodate the newcomers.

But with nowhere to go in Bosnia's harsh winter, some migrants opt to wait. They go back to the previous country they passed through, Serbia, to spend the winter, ready to try their luck again next spring.

Trump

Continued from Page 1

Senate trial. Pelosi has declined to send the two articles of impeachment — abuse of power and obstruction of Congress — to the Senate yet as Democrats demand more information about the parameters of a trial.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., has requested subpoenas for several witnesses and documents that were not part of the House impeachment inquiry because of stonewalling by the White House.

"Now they come to the Senate and they want everything," Trump said, repeating claims that he did not receive "due process" in the House proceedings.

Trump was invited to participate in the Judiciary Committee hearings that preceded his impeachment but refused to do so. He was impeached for obstruction of Congress after blocking several witnesses from his administration from providing documents and testimony sought by House Democrats.

At the heart of the Democrats' abuse-of-power case is the allegation that Trump tried to leverage a White House meeting and military aid, sought by Ukraine to combat Russian military aggression, to pressure Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to launch an investigation of former Vice President Joe Biden and his son Hunter Biden, as well as a probe of an unfounded theory that Kyiv conspired with Democrats to interfere in the 2016 presidential election.

Trump's comments to reporters echoed complaints made about the impeachment process in a series of morning tweets.

"The Radical Left, Do Nothing Democrats have gone CRAZY," Trump said in one of them. "They want to make it as hard as possible for me to properly run our Country!"

Democrats responded to Trump's attacks by noting how they were out of sync



NICHOLAS KAMM/GETTY-AFP

President Trump answers questions from reporters Tuesday after a video call to U.S. troops stationed worldwide.

with the holiday spirit.

"It's Christmas Eve. Get A. Life," Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., tweeted to Trump in response to the president's claim that Pelosi "knows nothing" about the trade agreement with Mexico and Canada that was recently passed by the House.

During his phone call with representatives from the military, Trump repeatedly stated that he had rebuilt the armed forces, and asked service members to confirm that they had seen a marked improvement in equipment and resources since his election.

"You feel a lot different than you did three years ago, Frank?" Trump asked Cmdr. Frank Azzarello aboard the destroyer USS Forrest Sherman in the Gulf of Aden.

"Yes, sir," Azzarello replied.

Asked whether he would offer a pardon for his longtime confidant Roger Stone, Trump said he hadn't considered it — before asserting that the felon was "a nice guy" who had been mistreated by prosecutors.

"You know, Roger Stone was not involved in my campaign in any way," Trump said. "Other than the very, very beginning. Before I think I — long before I announced. A little

bit." Stone was in direct contact with high-ranking officials in Trump's campaign throughout much of 2016, including during a period in which he claimed to have insider information about Democratic computer files hacked by Russia and made public by the anti-secrecy group WikiLeaks. Trump deputy campaign chairman Rick Gates testified during Stone's trial that he overheard a phone call in which Trump seemed to discuss WikiLeaks with Stone.

Stone was convicted last month of tampering with a witness and lying to Congress about his efforts to learn of hacked Democratic emails during the 2016 U.S. presidential election. He faces up to 50 years in prison on seven felony counts.

While distancing himself from Stone, Trump used his conviction to make the case that the Justice Department had been biased against the president and his associates.

"We had dirty cops, we had people spying on my campaign," Trump said, echoing debunked claims about politically biased wiretapping during the 2016 election.

As he prepared to depart for his golf club, Trump added: "Have a good time, everybody. Merry Christmas."

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Joan Lunden, former host of Good Morning America and senior living advocate.



FACT #341

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NEWS BRIEFING

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Israeli army: Civilian deaths unexpected in Gaza airstrike

JERUSALEM — The Israeli military Tuesday said that it has wrapped up an investigation into an airstrike that killed nine members of a Palestinian family in the Gaza Strip. The report admitted it didn't expect the strike to result in civilian casualties.

The Nov. 14 airstrike in the central Gaza town of Deir al-Balah came in the closing hours of a fierce two-day burst of fighting between Israel and the

Islamic Jihad militant group.

The military said its investigation found the building had served as a "military compound" used by Islamic Jihad.

Fatou Bensouda, the chief prosecutor at the International Criminal Court in the Hague, said there was evidence that militant groups have intentionally targeted Israeli civilians and used Gaza's own civilian population as human shields.

Officials: NH hotel fire, blast injures 2 firefighters, 8 guests

LEBANON, N.H. — An explosion and fire in a hotel in New Hampshire sent two firefighters and eight guests to the hospital Tuesday, officials said.

None of the injuries suffered at the Element Hotel in Lebanon was life-threatening, officials said. But a firefighter with a broken arm and broken ribs was expected to spend Christmas in the hospital, Lebanon Fire Chief Chris Christopoulos

told WMUR-TV.

"I've been doing this for 37 and a half years and, by far, this has been the worst incident I've been involved in in my life," the chief said.

The explosion happened in the early morning, just after crews responded to a fire alarm, according to the New Hampshire Fire Marshal's office. Officials do not believe the cause was criminal in nature.

Court files: Feb. 3 trial set for Iowan charged in hate crimes

DES MOINES, Iowa — A trial has been scheduled for an Iowa woman accused of hate crimes in the Des Moines area, including intentionally running over a girl she thought was Mexican.

Nicole Marie Poole is charged with assault in violation of individual rights in connection with an incident at a convenience store and is scheduled to go on trial Feb. 3 in Des Moines. Court docu-

ments indicate she also goes by the name of Nicole Franklin.

Poole went to a convenience store Dec. 9 where she threw items at a clerk and directed racial epithets at him and customers, West Des Moines police said in a court document. She also was charged with operating a vehicle under the influence, second offense. Poole has pleaded not guilty to both charges.



Merry Christmas from Thailand: A nurse adjusts the outfits of newborns dressed in Santa Claus costumes on Christmas Eve at Synphaet Hospital in Bangkok, the capital.

35 civilians, 80 jihadists killed in attack in Burkina Faso

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso — Jihadists attacked a town in northern Burkina Faso and killed 35 civilians, most of them women, and ensuing clashes with security forces left 80 jihadists dead, the West African nation's president announced late Tuesday.

The violence, which erupted in the town of Arbinda in Sahel region near the country's border with Mali, lasted for several hours, according to a military statement.

"The heroic action of our soldiers has made it possible to neutralize 80 ter-

rorists," President Roch Marc Christian Kabore said. "This barbaric attack resulted in the death of 35 civilians, most of them women."

It was not immediately clear where the women were at the time of the attack and why so many died.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack. A number of Islamic extremist groups are known to operate in Burkina Faso, though they generally do not usually come forward when civilian casualties are high.

For years Burkina Faso

was spared the kind of Islamic extremism long seen across the border in Mali, where it took a 2013 French-led military intervention to dislodge jihadists from power in several major towns.

That changed with a pair of deadly attacks in 2016 and 2017 in the capital of Ouagadougou, both of which targeted spots popular with foreigners.

While Burkina Faso's military has received training from former colonizer France and the United States, it has so far failed to stem the surge in extremist violence.

UN: Bomb attacks hamper aid groups in Yemen

SANAA, Yemen — A dozen humanitarian organizations in war-torn southern Yemen suspended their operations following a string of targeted attacks, the United Nations said, while the country's rebel-led health ministry announced on Tuesday that severe outbreaks of swine flu and

dengue fever have killed close to 200 people since October.

The suspension of aid work came after unknown assailants fired rocket-propelled grenades at three aid organizations in the southwestern province of Dhale over the weekend, according to the U.N. Humanitari-

an Office in Yemen, wounding a security guard and damaging several office buildings.

The bombings signaled "an alarming escalation in the risks faced by humanitarian workers" and halted the provision of badly needed aid to 217,000 residents, the U.N. said.

28 killed as bus plunges into ravine in Indonesia

PALEMBANG, Indonesia — A bus plunged into a ravine on Indonesia's Sumatra island after its brakes apparently malfunctioned, killing at least 28 people and injuring 13 others, police and rescuers said Tuesday.

The accident occurred just before midnight Monday on a winding road in South Sumatra province's Pagaralam district.

One of the injured was in critical condition, local police chief Dolly Gumara said.

Gumara said the bus plunged into a 262-foot-deep ravine and crashed into a fast-flowing river after the driver lost control of the vehicle in an area with a number of sharp declines.

Survivors told authorities that the vehicle's brakes apparently malfunctioned, but police were still investigating the cause of the accident, Gumara said.

Spelling error: Some spelling mistakes are tough to see, but that doesn't include the one that was made on 10,000 trash bins in Prichard, Ala.

The city's new residential garbage cans say the town is located in "Mobile Country," but they were supposed to say it's located in "Mobile County" without the extra "r." The mistake is printed in large letters on two sides of the big, gray cans.

Prichard Mayor Jimmie Gardner told WPML-TV the city's public works department had the duty of making sure the writing was spelled correctly.

The city doesn't plan to replace the bins, and that's fine with some people.

"It doesn't really matter as long as they pick it up," said resident Murlean Henderson.

Crossword

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54						55						56		
57						58						59		
60						61						62		

By Jacqueline E. Mathews. © 2019 Tribune Content Agency, LLC. All rights reserved. 12/25/19

- ACROSS**
- 1 Go quickly
 - 4 Personnel
 - 9 Pleased
 - 13 Fishing spot
 - 14 ___ up; amassed
 - 15 Husband of a rani
 - 16 Soap lather
 - 17 Cold & business-like
 - 19 Wrath
 - 20 Long lock of hair
 - 21 Military chaplain
 - 22 Part of KFC
 - 24 Racket
 - 25 Potato salad ingredients
 - 27 Topeka resident
 - 30 Weather forecast
 - 31 Bangkok folks
 - 33 Trawler's need
 - 35 TV crime drama series
 - 36 Gets an "F"
 - 37 Command to Fido
 - 38 All ___; fully prepared
 - 39 Stanza
 - 40 Cricket's sound
 - 41 Get back money spent
 - 43 Cool dessert
 - 44 Stale
 - 45 ___ beans; burrito filling
 - 46 ___ off; disregard
 - 49 ___ out; get rid of gradually
 - 51 Womanizer
 - 54 Brave
 - 56 ___ monster; biting lizard
 - 57 Beame & Vigoda
 - 58 Uneven
 - 59 Actor Christian
 - 60 Apple pie à la ___
 - 61 Early guitars
 - 62 ___ as a fox
- DOWN**
- 1 Rush ___; busy traffic period
 - 2 Vague
 - 3 Ames & Asner
 - 4 Church toppers
 - 5 Used a stopwatch
 - 6 Austrian skier's milieu
 - 7 Charges
 - 8 20th-century U.S. president
 - 9 Responses to a corny joke
 - 10 Come to shore
 - 11 Slightly open
 - 12 Valley
 - 13 Fraternity letter
 - 18 Twirls
 - 20 Itsy-bitsy
 - 23 Serling & Steiger
 - 24 Speaker's platform
 - 25 Has possession of

Solutions

A	T	S		S	E	S	I	T	L	E		M	D	E								
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						V			A	R	A		D	E		D				D	N	O
						G			L	A	D		S	T	A	F				H	I	E

26 Friendlier
27 Curly cabbage
28 Standoffish
29 Approaches
31 Waterproof covering
32 "He's got the whole world in ___ hands..."
34 Use a PC keyboard
36 Long-running dispute
37 Close
39 Europe's longest river
40 Ice cream scoop holder
42 College class
43 Feels the loss of
45 TV remote button
46 Illegal way to make money
47 Vagabond
48 Wished one hadn't done
49 Lima's nation
50 Hilarious person
52 Actress Sheedy
53 Daniel ___ Kim
55 Become firm
56 Shaw's monogram

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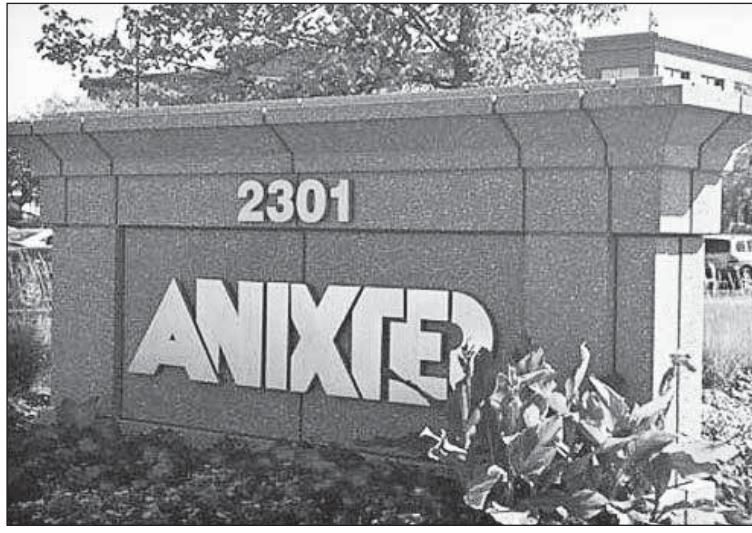
Anixter suitor raises acquisition price to \$4B

BY ABDEL JIMENEZ

A day after Glenview-based Anixter International agreed to a revised purchase offer valued at \$4 billion from a private investment firm, a competitor from Pittsburgh revealed it was seeking to buy the company.

Wesco International, an industrial parts supplier, confirmed in a news release Tuesday that it had made an offer to buy Anixter for \$90 per share. The transaction — a stock and cash option — is worth about \$4.1 billion, Anixter's Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Ted Dosch said.

Anixter's board voted Monday on a revised all-cash offer from an affiliate of private equity firm Clayton, Dublier & Rice for \$86 per share, up from a prior offer — that the board had agreed to — of \$81 per share, or \$3.8 billion, in October.



ANIXTER INTERNATIONAL

After announcing the October deal, Anixter disclosed in regulatory filings earlier this month that an anonymous bidder was still in

the running. Dosch said Tuesday the board evaluated both bids and decided the all-cash offer from the private

equity firm was better than Wesco's stock-and-cash offer. Another reason the board rejected Wesco's offer was the antitrust approval needed for the deal, which could delay its closing, Dosch said.

Clayton, Dublier & Rice's revised offer also includes \$2.50 per share that will be paid to Anixter shareholders if Clayton, Dublier & Rice also agrees to acquire Wesco or sell Anixter to Wesco within a year after closing the deal, Anixter said.

Clayton, Dublier & Rice made a bid to acquire Wesco, but Wesco's board declined the offer, Anixter said. Wesco declined to comment.

Wesco provides electrical, industrial and communications products. The company reported third-quarter earnings of more than \$47 million, down from \$87 million in the year-ago period.

The offer from the private in-

vestment firm requires approval from shareholders, who will vote on the proposal Feb. 4. If approved, the deal would take Anixter private.

William R. Anixter and his brother, Alan, formed Anixter Bros. in 1957, after each pitched \$5,000 that they borrowed in part from their mother. In 1967, the company went public and by 1982 sales exceeded \$500 million.

The brothers later sold the company in 1986 to Sam Zell's Chicago-based Iteq Corp., which later changed its name to Anixter and then to Anixter International. Before selling the firm, Anixter Bros. was making more than \$700 million in sales.

Anixter reported third-quarter earnings of \$59.3 million, up from \$47.6 million a year earlier.

abjimenez@chicagotribune.com; Twitter @abdell1019

New law means big changes to how we save for retirement

BY SARAH SKIDMORE SELL
Associated Press

Legislation signed into law last week means some major changes to how Americans save for retirement.

President Donald Trump signed a spending package Friday night that included the Secure Act — which stands for Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement. The legislation is designed to help more people set aside more money for retirement, primarily by removing some of the hurdles that keep people from saving.

Among its highlights is a provision that would make it easier for small businesses to band together to offer retirement plans to their employees. It also opens the door for long-term part-time employees to gain access to workplace retirement plans.

In addition, it raises the age that Americans must start drawing from retirement savings, known as the re-

quired minimum distribution age, from 70½ to 72, as people are living and working longer. It also provides more years for people to contribute to individual retirement accounts, for the same reason.

It creates new rules that could expand lifetime-income options within workplace plans, such as annuities. That's aimed at helping people establish reliable streams of income in retirement. It would also make it easier for employees to transfer retirement plan assets when they change jobs.

It also fixes a component of the 2017 tax overhaul that raised taxes on benefits received by family members of deceased military veterans, as well as taxes on some students and members of Native American tribes.

It is widely considered the biggest piece of retirement legislation since the Pension Protection Act of 2006. The Secure Act had bipartisan support among lawmakers, as well as many in the financial and retirement industries.



MCDONALD'S

McDonald's River North testing fashion

BY ALEXIA ELEJALDE-RUIZ

What do you get for the fast-food lover who has everything? How about a Big Mac purse?

McDonald's announced Monday that it is testing a merchandise shop inside its flagship River North restaurant to sell branded apparel and accessories.

The Chicago-based company plans to launch more year-round shops across the globe in restaurants in "notable tourist

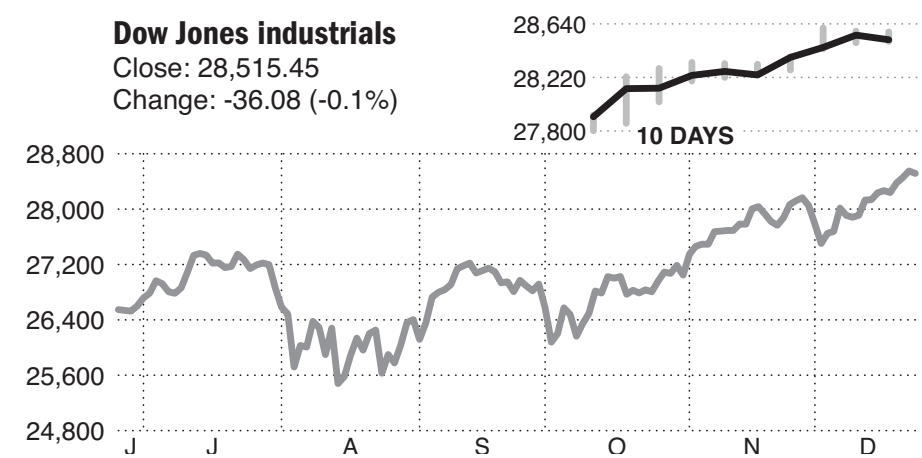
destinations."

Earlier this month McDonald's launched the online shop Golden Arches Unlimited to sell merchandise, which includes socks depicting its french fries, "sesame seed" umbrellas and a round wristlet meant to look like a Big Mac, among other items.

It has been selling limited-time collections through its delivery arm since 2017, including, in September, a line of loungewear and slippers.

MARKET ROUNDUP

Dow High: 28,576.80 Low: 28,503.21 Previous: 28,551.53



Nasdaq	S&P 500	Russell 2000
Close: 8,952.88	Close: 3,223.38	Close: 1,678.01
High: 8,957.12	High: 3,226.43	High: 1,678.09
Low: 8,934.36	Low: 3,220.51	Low: 1,673.74
Previous: 8,945.64	Previous: 3,224.01	Previous: 1,674.14

10-yr T-note	Gold futures	Yen	Euro	Crude Oil
-0.03 to 1.90%	+16.60 to \$1,499.10	+0.03 to 109.40/\$1	+0.0005 to .9019/\$1	+0.59 to \$61.11

Major market growth and decline

5-day % change			30-day % change			1-year % change		
DOW +.88	NASD +1.47	S&P +.97	DOW +1.40	NASD +3.53	S&P +2.64	DOW +30.85	NASD +44.57	S&P +37.10

FUTURES	AMOUNT-PRICE	MO.	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	SETTLE	CHG.
LIGHT SWEET CRUDE (NYM)	1,000 bbl. - dollars per bbl.	Feb 20				61.11	+59

NOTE: Complete futures information was unavailable at press time.

LOCAL STOCKS

Stocks listed may change due to daily fluctuations in market capitalization. Exchange key: N=NYSE, O=NASDAQ

STOCK	XCHG.	CLOSE	CHG.	STOCK	XCHG.	CLOSE	CHG.
Abbott Labs	N	87.28	-.07	Envestnet Inc	N	71.16	-.16
AbbVie Inc	N	89.85	-.40	Equity Commonwlt	N	32.34	+0.14
Allstate Corp	N	111.17	+0.29	Equity LifeSty Prop	N	69.19	+0.52
Apptgroup Inc	N	114.73	-.64	Equity Residential	N	80.38	+0.67
Arch Dan Mid	N	46.08	+0.06	Exelon Corp	O	45.32	+0.12
Baxter Intl	N	84.69	+0.17	First Indl RT	N	40.58	-.10
Boeing Co	N	333.00	-4.55	Fortune Brds Hm&Sec	N	65.31	+0.84
Brunswick Corp	N	61.27	-.24	Gallagher AJ	N	94.56	+0.30
CBOE Global Markets	N	118.97	+0.67	Grainger WW	N	337.38	-.34
CDK Global Inc	O	54.78	-.65	GrubHub Inc	N	48.58	-.05
CDW Corp	O	142.97	+0.10	Hill-Rom Hldgs	N	113.86	-.15
CF Industries	N	47.94	+0.19	IAA Inc	N	46.65	-.33
CME Group	O	203.36	+0.08	IDEX Corp	N	171.89	-1.47
CNA Financial	N	44.16	+0.10	ITW	N	180.18	-.89
Cabot Microelect	O	143.86	+0.02	Ingredion Inc	N	92.55	+0.46
Caterpillar Inc	N	147.48	-1.02	Jones Lang LaSalle	N	171.66	-.16
ConAgra Brands Inc	N	34.05	+0.03	Kemper Corp	N	76.74	+0.24
Deere Co	N	174.50	-.55	Kraft Heinz Co	O	31.98	+0.06
Discover Fin Svcs	N	85.28	-.06	LKQ Corporation	O	35.89	+0.10
Dover Corp	N	115.26	-.59	Littelfuse Inc	O	190.52	+0.39

MOST ACTIVE STOCKS

NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE

STOCK	CLOSE	CHG.
Aurora Cannabis Inc	1.99	-.02
Chesapeake Energy	.94	-.01
Gen Electric	11.19	+0.03
Callon Petrol	4.67	-.16
Bank of America	35.22	+0.05
Uber Technologies	30.44	+0.11
Ford Motor	9.47	+0.03
Transocean Ltd	6.55	+0.01
Rite Aid Corp	16.14	+1.13
Yamana Gold Inc	3.80	+0.21
Freeport McMoRan	12.99	+0.14
Snap Inc A	15.61	+0.12
AT&T Inc	38.96	-.11
US Steel Corp	11.89	+0.08
Barrick Gold	18.31	+0.55
Kinross Gold	4.62	+0.17
Energy Transfer LP	13.07	+0.02
EnCana Corp	4.57	+0.05
Hecla Mng	3.38	+0.12
Nokia Corp	3.63	-.01
Sthwstn Energy	2.34	-.04
Verizon Comm	61.28	-.12
McDermott Intl	1.06	-.08
Apache Corp	26.17	-.36

LARGEST COMPANIES

Based on market capitalization

STOCK	CLOSE	CHG.
AT&T Inc	38.96	-.11
Alibaba Group Hldg	214.26	-.57
Alphabet Inc C	1343.56	-5.28
Alphabet Inc A	1344.43	-6.20
Amazon.com Inc	1789.21	-3.79
Apple Inc	284.27	+0.27
Bank of America	35.22	+0.05
Berkshire Hath B	225.47	-.01
Exxon Mobil Corp	70.02	-.27
Facebook Inc	205.12	-1.06
JPMorgan Chase	137.58	+0.38
Johnson & Johnson	145.93	-.51
MasterCard Inc	297.48	+0.21
Microsoft Corp	157.38	-.03
Procter & Gamble	125.22	+0.32
Taiwan Semicon	57.76	-.46
Visa Inc	187.57	+0.49
WalMart Strs	119.51	+0.48

LARGEST MUTUAL FUNDS

Based on total assets

FUND	NAV	CHG	1-YR %RTN
American Funds AMCPA m	33.61	...	+34.8
American Funds AMRNBAL m	28.47	...	+23.6
American Funds CPTWIDGR m	63.17	+0.02	+30.8
American Funds CPTILNBL m	61.95	+0.02	+20.7
American Funds FDMTLNVA m	51.18	+0.01	+35.5
American Funds GRFAMCA m	23.20	-.01	+36.9
American Funds INVCAMCA m	39.55	-.02	+31.2
American Funds INVPRSPCTVA m	47.17	+0.02	+37.3
American Funds WAMTLNVA m	48.15	-.01	+33.2
Dodge & Cox Inc	14.02	+0.01	+9.8
Dodge & Cox IntlStk	43.51	+0.01	+26.7
Dodge & Cox Stk	193.74	-.01	+32.1
DoubleLine TIREtBd	10.67	+0.01	+6.1
Fidelity 500dxInvsPrrm	111.74	-.01	+39.9
Fidelity Contrafund	13.68	+0.01	+39.3
Fidelity InvmGradeBd	11.57	+0.01	+10.0
Fidelity THMKTLdxInvsPrrm	90.42	+0.01	+39.4
Fidelity USBDlxdInvsPrrm	11.92	+0.01	+8.9
Franklin Templeton IncA1 m	2.34	-.01	+81.0
Metropolitan West TIREtBd	10.93	+0.01	+9.3
PIMCO IncI2	12.05	...	+8.1
PIMCO IncIstl	12.05	...	+8.2
PIMCO TIREtIn	10.39	+0.02	+8.6
Schwab SP500dx	49.27	...	+39.9
T. Rowe Price BCGR	124.28	-.13	+40.2
T. Rowe Price GrStk	73.25	-.07	+40.4
Vanguard 500dxAdmrl	297.38	-.03	+39.9
Vanguard BalIdxAdmrl	39.19	+0.02	+26.6
Vanguard DivGrInv	30.51	-.01	+36.4
Vanguard EqIncAdmrl	79.37	-.03	+32.1
Vanguard GrdAdmrl	93.48	+0.05	+46.8
Vanguard HCAdmrl	88.28	+0.12	+30.4
Vanguard InTrTEAdmrl	14.46	...	+6.9
Vanguard InsdInxs	289.48	-.04	+39.9
Vanguard InsdInxsPlus	289.50	-.04	+39.9
Vanguard INSTSMInPls	68.54	+0.02	+39.4
Vanguard IntlGrAdmrl	102.54	+0.04	+36.7
Vanguard MktCpdxAdmrl	220.25	+0.28	+39.0
Vanguard PrrmCpAdmrl	144.66	-.01	+37.1
Vanguard STInvmGrdAdmrl	10.72	+0.01	+5.8
Vanguard SmCpdxAdmrl	79.49	+0.05	+35.9
Vanguard TrgtRtr2020Inv	33.62	+0.02	+20.8
Vanguard TrgtRtr2025Inv	20.32	+0.01	+23.4
Vanguard TrgtRtr2030Inv	37.24	+0.01	+25.2
Vanguard TrgtRtr2035Inv	22.99	...	+27.1
Vanguard TBMIdxAdmrl	11.05	+0.01	+8.9
Vanguard TBMdxInvs	11.05	+0.01	+8.9
Vanguard TtInBldxAdmrl	22.65	+0.01	+8.2
Vanguard TtInBldxInvs	33.98	+0.01	+8.2
Vanguard TtInSldxAdmrl	29.73	...	+24.7
Vanguard TtInSldxInvs	118.89	...	+24.7
Vanguard TtInSldxInvsPlus	118.92	+0.01	+24.7
Vanguard TtInSldxInv	17.77	...	+24.5
Vanguard TtISMdxAdmrl	79.54	+0.01	+39.3
Vanguard TtISMdxInvs	79.56	+0.01	+39.3
Vanguard TtISMdxInv	79.52	+0.01	+39.2
Vanguard WlngtnAdmrl	76.87	+0.02	+27.0
Vanguard WlslyIncAdmrl	66.11	+0.05	+18.6
Vanguard WndsrldAdmrl	64.52	-.02	+36.4

FOREIGN MARKETS

INDEX	CLOSE	CHG./%
Shanghai	2982.68	+19.9/+7
Stoxx600	418.86	+6/+1
Nikkei	23830.58	+9.5/+0
MSCI-EAFE	2029.32	+2.0/+1
Bovespa	115518.40	+501.1/+4
FTSE 100	7632.24	+8.7/+1
CAC-40	6029.55	+2/+...

d - Deferred sales charge, or redemption fee. m - Multiple fees are charged, usually a marketing fee and either a sales or redemption fee. Source: Morningstar.

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EDITORIALS



CHICAGO TRIBUNE HISTORICAL PHOTO

WGN announcer Johnnie Neblett leads children of the Martha Washington Home for Crippled Children in singing Christmas carols on Dec. 23, 1943.

As Christmas dawns

‘Praise the innocence of children
 as they stand awed ...’

What is this day, this Christmas, that dawns with a chorus of joy? What river of love and magic speeds the message from that moment of wonder in Bethlehem across the cold darkness of centuries long forgotten? How does it warm us this morning as we awaken in a world the Wise Men could scarcely imagine to a radiance that once each year makes it all just a little bit better?

As a republic, we cannot prostrate ourselves in religious observance. But as a people, a nation — Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, atheist, name it — we know this day, this Christmas, that dawns with a chorus of joy. And as one people, almost as one world, we now join in the celebration on the birthday of the Babe with the fervent hope that the elusive gift of peace will not slip from our grasp. We do not doubt that the day’s promise is ours whether we accept the Messenger as our Prince of Peace or merely find solace and rare hope in the sure rising on one blessed day of a tide of essential goodness, a promise of the perfectibility of our most imperfect world.

This should not dilute, but strengthen, the miracle for Christians. For this day, this Christmas, belongs to us all as it dawns with a chorus of joy. Sing out the praises of Christmas, sing them in shouts and whispers. Praise the innocence of children as they stand awed before the tree, rubbing sleep and amazement from wide eyes. Praise the capacity of parents, their own innocence scraped raw by the rough edges of life, to recapture it fleetingly in this instant of observed enchantment. Praise the tolerance of grandparents for all the childish excesses in grandchildren that they scolded their own kids for each Christmas morn.

And don’t try too hard to sort out whether it’s fireplace smoke or tender nostalgia that tears the occasional eye in this reliving of family traditions. Christmas tears are to cherish, not to analyze. Christmas tears are to be shed, too, for those beyond the hearth. Let us open our hearts and cry for the pain of the lonely, the unloved, the deserted and the desolate; for the hungry, the homeless, the

ill-clothed and the unprotected; for the uncared-for aged, the mentally and the physically ill, the addicts and alcoholics; for the victims, the abused children and adults, the battered, the helpless, the casualties of war and other crimes. Let us cry for them and for untold others.

But let us also remember that in our sadness for the pain of others is a redemption of the spirit, the Christmas joy of sharing our humanity. In our passion for the righting of all wrongs, we are but living our inheritance, the command of all religions and most philosophies in every time and place that we love one another. We are our brothers’ and our sisters’ keepers.

Renewed in that simple knowledge, that easy act of faith in our own humanness, let us set aside the sadness, but not our deepest caring, and rejoice in the accumulated sights and sounds of the season that fill us this Christmas Day.

The bells, always the bells. Carillons rolling and street Santas shaking. The memories stirred by the gentle ching-a-ling-a-ling through soft-falling snow on darkened streets. Or the brassy caroling of a Salvation Army band. Songs, hear the songs, the old, the new, the radio marathons of Christmas tunes, the stores bathing shoppers in inspiration.

And forgive the merchants their commerce as you recall small noses pressed against the windowpanes of happiness, bright eyes drinking in the stuff of dreams that only children know. Curse the crass corruption of the season? Not with an honest heart, if you have ever known a child, or been a child. Exorcise the greed, if you will. It belongs to a grown-up world. But leave a time, this special time, for the dreams of children.

For our love of peace, for our love of each other and especially for our love of the children and our belief in their need to dream, we welcome, yes, praise, this day, this Christmas, that dawns with a chorus of joy.

This editorial has appeared in the Tribune annually since 1988.

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

On this day, a child was born

In the Tribune article “Is it a lie or the magic of Christmas?” (Dec. 23), both questions are legitimate. I remember how let down I felt when I found out there wasn’t a Santa Claus.

But there was a real Jesus, born to be the savior of the world, whose birth was foretold hundreds of years before it happened, right down to the name of the town in which he was born, to the fact that he was born of a virgin, to the gifts brought to him by the Magi.

No one ever needs to worry that they’re believing a lie if they know the “reason for the season.”

It wasn’t that long ago that many people recognized Christmas as what it was originally meant to be — celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ.

And that is the true magic of Christmas, that God loved us so much that he sent his son into the darkness of our world to bear our sins and restore the relationship between God and humans.

God’s gift was what inspired humans, from the Magi to St. Nicholas on down, to give gifts to one another on Christmas.

— Kathy Zawilenski, Chicago

Home is where we want to be

Most everyone speaks of home, especially at this season, as the place we want to be. Want to gather. Want to savor. We sing about it in carols and portray it in cards.

But in the annual rush of holly-scented adrenaline, how often do we pause to reflect about not where is home, but why is home?

Why does our very DNA seem to connect with certain places and not others?

The answer is a moving target.

It pretty much depends on when you ask the question.

When you are a youngster filled with the awe of the season, home is wherever Mom and Dad are. They and their loving fuss are what home is for you.

When you’re an adolescent percolating with the need to find your own way, Christmas at home with the folks may run second to that big bash planned by your peers.

Later, when you yourself have become a parent, home is that aura you now are trying to create.

To the GIs far from home, home becomes almost mystical as they conjure up images of those faraway days.

Trees, mangers, gifts, turkey and all those faces they once took for granted now leap into their cathedral of memories. Home is never so celestial as when you’re not able to be there.

Here’s the point that you know as well as I.

Home is a feeling, a stirring, a yearning for the safety and security we all silently crave. Only at this special time of year can we speak about it out loud without embarrassment.

— Jack Spatafora, Park Ridge

Thanks to all the first responders

To the nurses, clinicians, paramedics and all first responders working this Christmas Day: I hope the ER is empty and the operating rooms are quiet. May the night be silent and the roads safe. Thank you for giving up your holiday with your family to provide care and comfort to mine.

Much appreciation, because this probably isn’t the first time that you have worked on a holiday. Tidings of comfort and joy, peace on earth and goodwill to all.

Merry Christmas!

— Dr. Charles Nozicka, Advocate Children’s Hospital, Park Ridge and Oak Lawn

For online exclusive letters go to www.chicagotribune.com/letters. Send letters by email to letters@chicagotribune.com or to Voice of the People, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Third Floor, Chicago, IL 60601. Include your name, address and phone number.

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

As a therapist, I’m often asked to explain why depression and anxiety are so common among children and adolescents. One of the most important explanations, and perhaps the most neglected, is declining interest in religion. This cultural shift already has proved disastrous for millions of vulnerable young people.

A 2018 study in the American Journal of Epidemiology examined how being raised in a family with religious or spiritual beliefs affects mental health. Harvard researchers had examined religious involvement within a longitudinal data set of approximately 5,000 people. ... Children or teens who reported attending a religious service at least once per week scored higher on psychological well-being measurements and had lower risks of mental illness. Weekly attendance was associated with higher rates of volunteering, a sense of mission, forgiveness, and lower probabilities of drug use and early sexual initiation. Pity then that the U.S. has seen a 20% decrease in attendance at formal religious services in the past 20 years, according to a Gallup report earlier this year. ...

It’s rare to find a faith that doesn’t encourage gratitude as an antidote to entitlement, or empathy for anyone who needs nurturing. These are the building blocks of strong character. They are also protective against depression and anxiety.

In an individualistic, narcissistic and lonely society, religion provides children a rare opportunity for natural community. ... Today the U.S. is a competitive, scary and stressful place that idealizes perfectionism, materialism, selfishness and virtual rather than real human connection. Religion is the best bulwark against that kind of society. Spiritual belief and practice reinforce collective kindness, empathy, gratitude and real connection.

Erica Komisar, The Wall Street Journal

SCOTT STANTIS





WILSON WEBB/COLUMBIA PICTURES

Florence Pugh, from left, Saoirse Ronan and Emma Watson in a scene from Greta Gerwig's "Little Women."

'LITTLE WOMEN' ★★★★★

Eccentrically perfect match

Gerwig lets audience know what it's in for in Alcott's classic work

BY MICHAEL PHILLIPS

Fresh off "Lady Bird" (2017), a wonderful movie about a young writer leaving home, the writer-director Greta Gerwig has made another wonderful movie about a young writer leaving home, although she ends up there.

Gerwig has taken on Louisa May Alcott's "Little Women," which she begins with a title card featuring Alcott's own words: "I had lots of troubles, so I write jolly tales."

With a frequently adapted classic, it's useful to tip your hand and let the audience know what it's in for. The new film's pacing reveals Gerwig's full-gallop approach to the four March sisters, their mother and their intertwining private lives during and after the Civil War. The way Gerwig handles them, the March family's stories are treated as a disarming comedy of manners under serious, cloudy skies. By the end of this "Little Women," freer visually as well as narratively compared with "Lady Bird," Alcott's story and Jo March's story dovetail into a third, hybrid tale of one woman's freedom from want.

"A Very Charming Book for Girls": That's how Alcott's first volume (price: \$1.50), clearly unfit for half the planet, sold itself in the October 1868 Chicago Tribune



Saoirse Ronan is Jo March in the newest screen version of Louisa May Alcott's "Little Women."

classifieds, promising something "fresh, sparkling, natural and full of soul." The many previous film versions of "Little Women" include George Cukor's 1933 deluxe edition starring Katharine Hepburn as Jo, one of her greatest early screen performances. Director Gillian Armstrong's

1994 version, better and more moving than people tend to remember, has a lot in common with Gerwig's adaptation; it's full of natural, easy-breathing ensemble work. Gerwig's comic instincts bubble to the surface more often, though, and I'm grateful she trusted them enough to give us

MPAA rating: PG (for thematic elements and brief smoking)

Running time: 2:15

Opens: Dec. 25

something new, and bracing.

Gerwig begins well after the end of the war, with Jo, played with exquisite precision by "Lady Bird" star Saoirse Ronan, in New York City. She's negotiating with the condescending publisher Mr. Dashwood (a wry Tracy Letts, sporting this year's best supporting mutttonchops). No spinsters allowed in his stories, he scolds her, running a pencil through large swaths of her prose. Female protagonists must be "married by the end of the story. Or dead. Either way."

Damned with faint praise, Jo and her story then go back seven years, to Concord, Massachusetts, where all previous "Little Women" adaptations begin. With their pastor father (Bob Odenkirk) off fighting, the March home muddles through. Marmee (Laura Dern, as fine and honest here as she is in "Marriage Story") in effect runs a sort of artists' colony for her daughters: author Jo, artist Amy (Florence Pugh, a brilliant standout), pianist Beth (Eliza Scanlan) and the eldest, Meg (Emma Watson), who dreams of the stage.

The class divide locates the Marches on one side, and their wealthy, grieving neigh-

Turn to **Women**, Page 15

Top Chicago indie albums of 2019

Jamila Woods, Twin Peaks, Whitney and Pelican released gems of independent music

BY GREG KOT

It's been another strong year for independent music in Chicago. Here are my favorite local indie albums of 2019:

1. Jamila Woods, "Legacy! Legacy!" (Jagjaguwar): Woods has made her mark as a poet, educator, activist and musician, and her second solo album pulls together all those threads. In paying homage to artists such as Sun Ra and Octavia Butler who turned their oppression into an explosion of creativity, Woods does the same on this ambitious cross-section of soul, gospel, hip-hop and fiery protest.

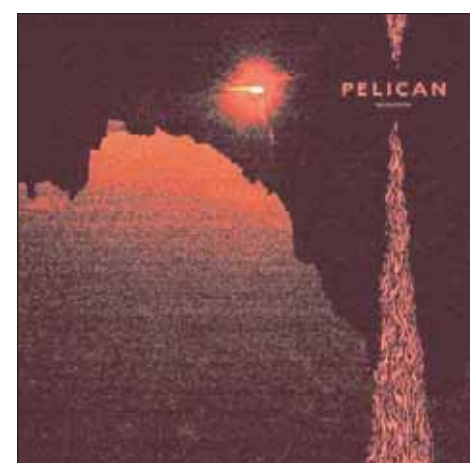
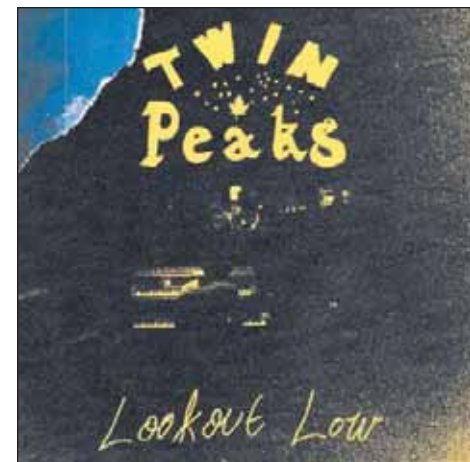
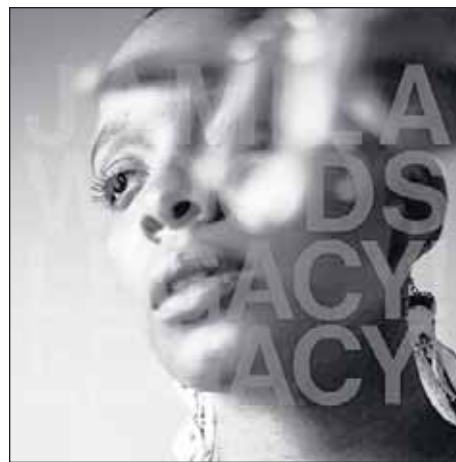
2. Twin Peaks, "Lookout Low" (Grand Jury): The lo-fi bash-and-crash of the band's earliest recordings has morphed into a more refined but no less impassioned country-soul vibe on its fourth

studio album. For these roll-up-their-sleeves upstarts-turned-scene-veterans, "maturity" sounds a whole lot like gratitude, as if they were collectively saluting the better angels in their lives for their guidance and love.

3. Intellexual, "Intellexual" (Fantasy): This pairing of two members of Chance the Rapper's Social Experiment, trumpet maestro Nico Segal and keyboardist Nate Fox, produces a subversive pop album that skirts genre boundaries. Some all-star collaborators, including Esperanza Spalding and Vic Mensa, chime in, but the duo turns what could have been a messy exercise in name-that-influence into a coherent collection of songs.

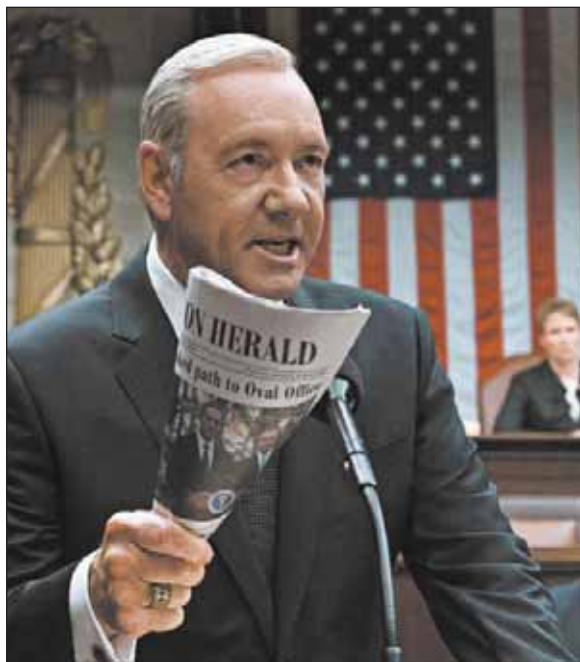
4. Whitney, "Forever Turned Around" (Secretly Canadian): Songs of absence, distance and heartache linger beneath the inviting melodies of drummer Julien Ehrlich and guitarist Max Kakacek. The follow-up to the band's 2016 debut, "Light

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CELEBRITIES

Tribune news services



DAVID GIESBRECHT/NETFLIX

Kevin Spacey played Frank Underwood on Netflix's "House of Cards" from 2013 to 2017.

Spacey posts cryptic Christmas video again

Kevin Spacey shared a bizarre, minutelong video on Christmas Eve, in which he again channels his "House of Cards" character Frank Underwood.

"You didn't really think I was going to miss the opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas, did you?" asked Spacey as Underwood, who was killed off "House of Cards" in the show's final season.

Spacey posted a similar video last year, vaguely addressing the sexual assault allegations that derailed his career. He was accused in 2017 of sexual assault by more than a dozen people. In October, the Los Angeles County district attorney's office dropped a sexual assault case after the accuser died. He got another legal break in July when prosecutors dismissed a different sexual assault case, citing "unavailability" of the complaining witness, an 18-year-old busboy in Nantucket.

Spacey made an equally offbeat appeal for attention over the summer, when he recited a poem about a beaten down boxer at a museum in Rome.

"It's been a pretty good year, and I'm grateful to have my health back," he continued. "And in light of that, I've made some changes in my life and I'd like to invite you to join me."

The video, titled "KTWK," acts as a strange plea for kindness toward the disgraced actor.

"As we walk into 2020, I want to cast my vote for more good in this world," he said. "Ah, yes, I know what you're thinking. Can he be serious? I'm dead serious. And it's not that hard, trust me. The next time someone does something you don't like, you can go on the attack. But you can also hold your fire and do the unexpected. You can kill them with kindness."

— Variety



CHRIS PIZZELLO/INVISION

Game of books: "Game of Thrones" author and television producer George R.R. Martin is adding bookstore owner to his resume. The fantasy writer quietly opened Beastly Books last month in Santa Fe next to the movie theater he revived in 2013, the Santa Fe New Mexican reported. The shop sells books by him and by local authors, plus "Game of Thrones" merchandise. Martin, a longtime Santa Fe resident, wrote on his blog that he opened the bookstore in part because the lobby of his Jean Cocteau Cinema theater was too small to display books by visiting authors.

'Yummy' Christmas to you:

Justin Bieber used Christmas Eve morning to slide some news down fans' chimneys: He'll be embarking on a 45-city stadium tour in the summer of 2020, starting May 14 at Seattle's CenturyLink Field and continuing through a Sept. 26 show at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey. Bieber also used the occasion to announce he'll be putting out a new single, "Yummy," on Jan. 3, with an album and docu-series to follow. "It's the music that I've loved the most out of anything I've done," Bieber promised of the album in a minute-and-a-half teaser video.

Dec. 25 birthdays: Actor Gary Sandy is 74. Singer Jimmy Buffett is 73. Country singer Barbara Mandrell is 71. Actress Sissy Spacek is 70. Actress CCH Pounder is 67. Singer Annie Lennox is 65. Guitarist Robin Campbell is 65. Actress Klea Scott is 51. Singer Dido is 48. Country singer Alecia Elliott is 37. Singers Jess and Lisa Origiasso are 35. Actress Perdita Weeks is 34. Musician Lukas Nelson is 31.



ASK AMY

By AMY DICKINSON

askamy@amydickinson.com Twitter @askingamy

Addressing transgender man correctly

Dear Amy: I'm a college sophomore. I came out to my parents as a transgender man a few months back. Since I don't live at home, this hasn't been much of an issue; but recently when I went home for Thanksgiving, both of my parents introduced me to their friends as their daughter.

I'm a man, and I look like one. There's always visible confusion on these people's faces, and for the most part I've just let it slide, but it makes me incredibly uncomfortable.

Should I correct my folks in the moment, or simply reintroduce myself later? The Christmas season means I'll be home again, and that means meeting more people.

— Embarrassed

Dear Embarrassed: Talk to your parents about this. Tell them how you want to be addressed. If you have changed your first name, make sure they understand that it is easier on you and others if they introduce you this way.

You have been living in your body during your transition, but your parents haven't physically been with you and are still anchored to the person they raised as a daughter.

Loved ones sometimes struggle with the loss they associate with this change. Your folks may worry about you and feel guilty about the pain you might have felt, pre-transition. Help them understand that this is liberating and beautiful for you. Assume they will adjust to this change, as you have, in sometimes-awkward stages.

Because you have chosen to be home for the

holidays, I assume your family is flawed, like all families, but loving at its core.

Glaad.org has some helpful information that your folks might use — about how to become an ally to transgendered people. Share these tips (and any other info) with them.

If you face your family relationships with honesty, grace, forgiveness and humor, you might lead the way toward a new way of behaving and relating. This is a big lift for a young person, but you know who you are — and now you can show the world.

If a botched introduction leads to confusion, you can say, "I'm a transgender man. We're all adjusting. Please, call me 'Carlo.' I'm very happy to see you, and Merry Christmas!"

Dear Amy: I have a "friend" who has asked me for money a couple of times. We have lent it to her, and she and her husband have paid us back. We have also helped them with their vehicle, done some house-sitting for them, and we've watched their children so that they could have a date night.

I have asked her to attend some events and activities, and she has either said "no," or she will say "yes" and then flake out. She is something of a homebody, so I let it go and try not to take it personally.

I don't want to confront her for what I see as selfishness because I fear saying something that I may regret.

My husband has no issues with her husband. We see him often with mutual friends and run the risk of seeing her as well.

How do I distance myself without being rude?

— Going the Distance

Dear Going: Your friend sounds like an introvert, or she might have some social anxiety, which would account for behavior that you interpret as flaky. She might accept invitations because she feels beholden to you (because you and your husband have done so many nice things for her), but when it comes down to it, she struggles to follow through.

The way to distance yourself is to simply stop extending yourself and to stop initiating invitations, where she is likely to disappoint you.

In terms of your generous impulses, continue to respond to requests on a case-by-case basis, but don't do so expecting a more intimate friendship.

Dear Amy: Thank you, thank you, for responding with such humor to the question from "Holiday Grown-ups," the newly married woman whose in-laws maintained the cringe-worthy tradition of filming their adult children coming down the staircase on Christmas morning.

My wife and I literally laughed out loud when you compared this to "Meet the Parents." I hope this DIL can see this with as much humor as you did.

— Big Fans

Dear Fans: Personally, I thought this tradition sounded fairly awesome.

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'1917' ★★ 1/2

In WWI drama, young actors do heavy lifting

By ANN HORNADAY

The Washington Post

As a technical exercise in filmmaking, "1917" is reminiscent of Alfred Hitchcock's "Rope" and "Birdman" — a nearly two-hour "oner," or continuous shot, during which the story seems to unfold in seamless real time.

The fact that Sam Mendes used the conceit to portray the bravery, anguish, death and desecrated landscapes of World War I feels like the right approach at the right time: Just last year, Peter Jackson's magnificent documentary "They Shall Not Grow Old" reignited interest in the Great War, and sequences like Joe Wright's single-shot depiction of Dunkirk in "Atonement" prove just how powerfully immersive such bravura gestures can be.

Which makes it all the more of a letdown that "1917" is impressive but oddly distancing; ultimately stirring but too often gimmicky. While its visual language and subjective camera might hold promise for conveying the suffering and sacrifice of World War I to a generation raised on video games and virtual reality, there are moments when "1917" feels



UNIVERSAL PICTURES

An all-star cast of Britain's finest actors, including Benedict Cumberbatch (above), appears in brief but vivid cameos in "1917"

as rote as any other exercise in leveling-up. Thankfully, the film is anchored by a lead performance that overcomes its self-imposed limitations.

As a British lance corporal named Schofield, George MacKay delivers a breakout performance, acquitting his primary task — to both witness the horrors of war and confidently lead the audience through them — with just the right combination of vulnerabil-

ity and quiet command. As "1917" opens, Schofield and his friend Blake (Dean-Charles Chapman) are assigned the daunting task of delivering a life-or-death message to 1,600 British troops preparing to attack German enemy lines. What ensues is a classic race against the clock — made more urgent by the fact that the survival of Blake's own brother is at stake — as the soldiers encounter perils as well as moments of im-

probable poetry, altruism and blunt human cruelty.

And, as idealistic young men, they must endure the war-ravaged pessimism of their elders, who appear right on cue to give voice to variations on the theme of war-as-hell. As cinematographer Roger Deakins sends his unchained camera through the muddy, rat-infested trenches, corpse-strewn battlefields and abandoned farms of the French countryside, an

all-star cast of Britain's finest actors shows up to appear in brief but vivid cameos, including Colin Firth, Benedict Cumberbatch, Mark Strong and Andrew Scott. Using occasional moments of darkness as editing opportunities, Deakins creates a remarkably convincing simulation of the uninterrupted flow of time: doing away with shaky-cam naturalism, he combines fluid, dancery movement with

MPAA rating: R (for violence, some disturbing images and strong language)

Running time: 1:58

stately composition and framing to create images of breathtaking beauty.

As often as not in "1917," those images exist side-by-side with hyper-real sequences that would be right at home in any action movie or aforementioned video game, where protagonists dodge booby traps, collapsing buildings and other obstacles to gain extra life.

As generic or even downright corny as some of these encounters can be, MacKay and Chapman do an outstanding job of grounding them in the palpable fears and shaky courage of men who are still clearly boys.

Although Mendes and his co-screenwriter Krysty Wilson-Cairns eschew the kind of commentary that made films like "Paths of Glory" such persuasive indictments of military hierarchy, "1917" leaves viewers with the indelible and overwhelming impression that war isn't just hell but an unconscionable waste.

Women

Continued from Page 14

bor Mr. Laurence (Chris Cooper) on the other. The latter's dashing grandson Laurie is played by Timothee Chalamet, like Ronan and Letts an alum of "Lady Bird." His slow-motion, tousled-hair introduction in "Little Women" brakes right at the edge of parody, while ensuring a new generation of instantly broken hearts.

For those new to the romantic machinations of

"Little Women," let's merely say that Laurie becomes the oscillating object of desire for more than one March. The war, offscreen, grinds on; the family nervously awaits the return of the father; one of the girls succumbs to death. Even more tragically to some readers, Jo in Alcott's original text succumbs to a baldly contrived marital wrap-up with an older, stiffer, respectable pill. In Gerwig's version, he becomes a much younger and more Jo-worthy professor and literary critic played by Louis Garrel.

In all film versions of "Little Women," this one especially, there's a "You Can't Take It With You" element to the bohemian household of eccentric artists at work and play. The top-flight cinematographer Yorick Le Saux chases after the swirl of activity with a masterly eye for natural light, or light faked to look that way. Gerwig's hardly the first contemporary director to take on a 19th century literary favorite with an eye toward fluidity; Ang Lee's "Sense and Sensibility" (1995) relished its cin-

ematic sweep, and Joe Wright's lovely take on another Jane Austen novel, "Pride & Prejudice" (2005), dove headlong into elaborate long takes and choreographed lines of action. In Gerwig's film, the Civil War-era sequences move quickly, with a lot of short scenes, while the post-war storyline becomes calmer and more stately.

It takes a little while to get the hang of it. Gerwig's adaptation lays out a challenging interweave of adult Jo's development as a writer, set in counterpoint to her exhilarating blur of a

life several years earlier — full of love, longing, tragedy and artistic ferment. Now and then the story compass takes a moment to establish direction. These aren't serious flaws, though. They're more like imaginative hurdles Gerwig and her inspired collaborators have set up for themselves. The idea is to make Jo's advancement in the world live and breathe in the present; the present just happens to be the 1860s, a time when women had precious little legal or societal currency.

The casting's not entirely

ideal: Watson seems like the youngest March sister, not the oldest, and while Chalamet's a huge talent, his Laurie seems a little fogged-in. Meryl Streep dines out on the role of the cranky Aunt March, whose money comes with endless strands of guilt and recrimination. She's also loving, in her way. Gerwig, like Alcott, sees many sides of everyone on her canvas.

Michael Phillips is a Tribune critic.

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Best concerts of 2019

From Lizzo and Eilish to Musgraves and Dylan, a year of great performances

BY GREG KOT

Here are my favorite concerts of 2019:

Lizzo at the Riviera, May 3

The singer, aka Melissa Jefferson, didn't always fit in as a flute-playing, genre free hip-hop artist. But her roof-raising charisma, potent mix of humor and protest, and powerhouse voice — on full display in a commanding performance at the Riv — have turned her into a feminist warrior and role model with a string of hit anthems. This relatively intimate performance at the 2,500-capacity theater paved the way for what turned out to be a blockbuster year, including two sold-out concerts at the Aragon a few months later. Even losing her voice hours before the Riv show couldn't silence her. "Flu?" she announced. "Never heard of her!"

Ric Wilson at the Pitchfork Music Festival in Union Park, July 20

Wilson didn't arrive empty-handed on this summer day. He brought hand puppets, a portion of the Lane Tech Marching Band and enough dance moves to fill a season of "Soul Train." Shifting from horn-spackled, high-stepping disco to rap and soul, Wilson sang, rapped and served as a cheerleader and aerobics instructor. He topped off his exuberant set by jumping into the audience to lead a dance party for the ages.

Robyn at the Aragon, March 6

After a decade away, the Swedish singer was ready to cut loose. She skipped, twirled, tumbled, crawled and even backflipped as the beats rolled on. Yet the most striking moment arrived when Robyn stood stock still, turned her back and wrapped her arms across her shoulders as "Dancing on My Own" concluded in near darkness, a reminder of the heartache lurking within those inescapable rhythms. The white-curtained staging suggested that she was singing from inside a cloud, but as always her sanctuary was the one place she knows best: the dance floor.

Idles at Lollapalooza in Grant Park, Aug. 2

The British quintet plays every show like there is nothing to lose, a sense that the world is spinning out of control, so let's just go for it. In introducing the stirring and timely plea for tolerance, "Danny Nedelko," singer Joe Talbot called immigration "the best thing to ever happen" to his homeland, a declaration marching into the crest of the Brexit wave. The set ended in instrument-swapping, invite-the-fans-onstage chaos amid the anti-fascist screed "Rottweiler."

Rosanne Cash and Ry Cooder at the Chicago Theatre, June 18

Rosanne Cash was always reluctant to perform her father's songs in concert, but at the urging of Cooder, she made an ex-



CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Lizzo battled through losing her voice hours before her Riviera Theatre performance in May. "Flu?" she announced. "Never heard of her!"



JOHN J. KIM/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Swedish pop singer Robyn cut loose at the Aragon Ballroom in March.



CAMILLE FINE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Ric Wilson at the Pitchfork Music Festival in July.



CAMILLE FINE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Joe Talbot, lead singer of Idles, at Lollapalooza in August.

ception for a handful of concert dates. The chemistry between the singer and guitarist led to a series of transcendent moments, including a sultry reinvention of the iconic "I Walk the Line" and a jumping "Hey Porter."

Kacey Musgraves at the Chicago Theatre, March 25

The singer grew up in a small Texas town of a few hundred people, but her music — which swept the Grammys a few weeks before this concert — cast a wide net of inclusion. Both

sonically and lyrically, Musgraves stretched country boundaries and sang of love and mercy in an understated voice brimming with resolve.

Billie Eilish at the United Center, June 9

By arena standards, this was a modest show, with the teenage singer in a floppy T-shirt on a big stage with two other musicians and some video screens. But the audience response to her songs was ecstatic, as Eilish plunged into the dark side of adolescent anxiety and grow-



CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Rosanne Cash played the Old Town School of Folk Music in 2018.

ing pains with fresh honesty and danceable rhythms drawing on hip-hop, Goth-rock and industrial music.

Bob Dylan at Credit Union 1 Arena, Oct. 30

The singer may be 78 years old, but he looked and sounded rejuvenated, his gravelly voice transformed into an atypically sharp, clear instrument perfect for conveying the nuances in "When I Paint My Masterpiece," bringing robust rawness to "Highway 61 Revisited" and dipping "Not Dark Yet" in

noir-movie drama.

Jamila Woods at Thalia Hall, May 26

The singer merged music and message with a light, danceable touch. Even as her voice channeled the creative protest of personal heroes such as Zora Neale Hurston and Betty Davis, the rhythms bubbled and the singer-poet shimmered.

Tasha at South by Southwest in Austin, Texas, March 14

The Chicago singer-songwriter played a strong

set with her band at the Pitchfork festival in July, but the performance that resonated most for me was at SXSW a few months earlier. A lot of singer-songwriters were no match for the noise at many local clubs, but Tasha brought the audience into her world with just voice and guitar. Her gentle, patiently developed songs invited listeners to lean in, and created an atmosphere of beguiling intimacy.

Greg Kot is a Tribune critic.

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Albums

Continued from Page 14

Upon the Lake," feels like meticulously crafted echo of its predecessor — less surprising, perhaps, but richer in detail. Ornamented with horns, keyboards and incisive guitar fills and riffs, the music's prettiness belies the anxiety just beneath the surface.

5. Pivot Gang, "You Can't Sit With Us" (self-released): "Still see the sounds like onomatopoeia," this crew announces over an intoxicating flute riff. The West Side collective —

MCs Saba, Joseph Chilliams, MFN Melo, Frsh Waters plus stellar producers daedaePIVOT and SqueakPIVOT — sees hip-hop as not just an art form, but as a means of processing tragedy. Building on Saba's landmark 2018 release, "Care for Me," Pivot Gang's debut album serves as a fitting eulogy for founding member John Walt, who died in 2017.

6. Girl K, "For Now" (self-released): Kathy Patino started Girl K as a solo outlet for her songs, but now she's got a band that puts some bounce into her melancholy vocals and she turbocharges her melodies with newfound confi-

dence. Patino's filters her anxiety through a matrix of hooks that can't be denied. The exuberant title track brims with so many shades of catchiness that its five-minute length feels more like two.

7. Divino Nino, "Foam" (Winspear): The quartet has roots in Colombia and Miami but perfected its bilingual sound after moving to Chicago in 2010. Psychedelic whimsy and Latin groove whimsy and psych groove whimsy through the band's most accomplished, layered recording yet.

8. Pelican, "Nighttime Stories" (Southern Lord): The band serves no

particular sub-genre of metal and hard rock, but somehow integrates most of them into its dynamic, tightly arranged instrumentals. After a six-year break, the quartet blends beauty and dread while eulogizing friends and family. Rarely have hymns to the silence sounded so head-banger friendly.

9. Various artists, "Too Late to Pray: Defiant Chicago Roots" (Bloodshot): The local label's anniversary albums have become essential signposts marking the trail of insurgent country through the last quarter-century. On this 25th birthday present to itself and its followers,

Bloodshot once again delivers the goods, whether it's the hardcore bluegrass of Robbie Fulks' "Lonely Ain't Hardly Alive" or the country-adjacent swing and R&B of Tammi Savoy and Chris Casello's take on Little Esther's "If It's News to You" and Kelly Hogan's fever-inducing cover of Floyd Tillman's "Gotta Have my Baby Back."

10. Jeff Lescher, "All is Grace" (Kunaki): As the leader of Green, Lescher made a series of extraordinary albums that never made much of a dent beyond a devoted cult following. A decade after Green's last album, "The Planets," Lescher returns with his

debut solo album, a collection of 20 songs from a career that stretches back to the '80s. As with all things Lescher, there are some ramshackle moments, but the high points turn this into a mini-history of the singer's diverse tastes and influences: the Kinks-like splendor of "Maybe Someday," the glam stomp of "Can't Do it Without You," the country-soul of "You Make Life Sweet," the wan, almost desperate optimism of the staggering, densely orchestrated "I Might Shine Again."

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WATCH THIS: WEDNESDAY



Erin Krakow

“When Calls the Heart” (7 p.m., Hallmark): A special holiday episode called “Home for Christmas” finds Elizabeth (Erin Krakow) getting ready for Little Jack’s first Christmas and birthday, with her closest friends on hand. Despite all their support, however, she finds herself missing Jack more than ever. Nathan (Kevin McGarry) receives a highly tempting job offer in Union City, but is reluctant to leave Elizabeth.

“Die Hard” (7 a.m., 10 a.m., 1 p.m., 4 p.m., 7 p.m., 10 p.m., PARMT): The first and the best of the big-screen adventures of Bruce Willis as John McClane, this 1988 thriller finds the New York cop flying to Los Angeles to meet his estranged wife (Bonnie Bedelia) at her office Christmas party. Shortly after his arrival, terrorists take the employees hostage. Now it’s the main bad guy’s (Alan Rickman) turn to be surprised when McClane shows his well-developed skill at kicking butt.

“Disney Parks Magical Christmas Day Parade” (9 a.m., ABC): Actor Matthew Morrison (“Glee”) joins Emma Bunton of the Spice Girls and TV personality Jesse Palmer to continue a Christmas morning TV tradition by hosting Disney’s annual yuletide celebration from Cinderella Castle at Walt Disney World Resort in Florida and Sleeping Beauty Castle at California’s Disneyland Resort. The two-hour special offers sneak peeks of new Disney park attractions.

“The Polar Express” (12:45 p.m., 11 p.m., AMC): Director Robert Zemeckis’ animated 2004 interpretation of Chris Van Allsburg’s holiday story features Tom Hanks in multiple roles through a technique called “motion capture,” which creates a pseudo-real look. Hanks is most recognizable as the conductor of a train that takes a youngster on a wild ride to the North Pole.

“Doctor Who” (5 p.m., BBCA): Head writer Steven Moffat says of this Dickens-inspired “A Christmas Carol” episode: “It’s all your favorite Christmas movies at once, in an hour, with monsters. And the Doctor. And a honeymoon. And ... oh, you’ll see.” Matt Smith, Katherine Jenkins and Michael Gambon star.

“Dr. Seuss’ How the Grinch Stole Christmas” (7 p.m., NBC): Since its first airing in 1966, this adaptation of the Dr. Seuss children’s book has evolved into an annual holiday viewing tradition. Legendary animator Chuck Jones directed the story about a green-skinned grouch who sets out to spoil Christmas for the citizens of Whoville. Boris Karloff provides narration.

TALK SHOWS

- “Conan”** (10 p.m. 11:30 p.m., TBS): Comedian Gary Gulman.*
- “The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon”** (10:34 p.m., NBC): Actress Daisy Ridley; actor Tom Hiddleston; author Michael Eric Dyson; Noah Cyrus and Leon Bridges perform.*
- “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert”** (10:35 p.m., CBS): Actor LL Cool J; chef José Andrés.*
- “Jimmy Kimmel Live!”** (10:35 p.m., ABC): Celebrity guests and comedy skits.*

* Subject to change

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BLUE SKY STUDIOS

Lance Sterling (Will Smith) gets help from Walter (Tom Holland) in “Spies in Disguise.”

‘SPIES IN DISGUISE’ ★★ 1/2

Will Smith and Tom Holland bond in gentler spy animation

BY KATIE WALSH
Tribune News Service

Will Smith has had a hit-or-miss year at the movies. His experiment with high-frame-rate action and acting opposite a digital composite of his younger self in Ang Lee’s “Gemini Man” didn’t exactly light the world on fire. So it’s nice that he’s closing out the year on a more positive note, with the insubstantial but lightly entertaining animated spy feature “Spies in Disguise.”

Longtime animation artists Nick Bruno and Troy Quane make their directorial debuts on the film, written by Brad Copeland and Lloyd Taylor. The film takes its premise and inspiration from the 2009 animated short by Lucas Martell, “Pigeon: Impossible,” and therein lies all you need to know about “Spies in Disguise,” a strange tonal mashup that turns the hypermasculine and hyper-violent world of glamorous spies, in the vein of James Bond or “Mission: Impossible,” and turns it into kid-friendly family entertainment.

But what becomes apparent is that introducing and then skewering those tropes is at the heart of “Spies in Disguise,” a film

MPAA rating: PG (for action, violence and rude humor)

Running time: 1:41

that wonders if conflict could be cuddlier, and if lone wolves can work as a team, or perhaps a flock. Smith voices the smooth Lance Sterling, super spy and the star of his agency, headed up by a tough talking Southern-twanged boss, Joy Jenkins (Reba McEntire). On a dangerous mission fighting a nefarious supervillain with a robotic hand (Ben Mendelsohn), he discovers that one of his exploding gadgets has been replaced with kitty holograms and glitter, which are surprisingly effective at incapacitating his would-be assassins, who are overcome with “awww.” Though Sterling emerges victorious, he seeks out the odd-ball tech who slipped him the kitty glitter, Walter (Tom Holland), and fires him.

The tables are turned when the arrogant Sterling needs Walter’s help to go underground, finding himself at the center of an internal affairs investigation led by the hard-hitting Marcy (Rashida Jones), who has accused Sterling of theft and sabotage. At

Walter’s home lab, Sterling gulps down a mysterious liquid and finds himself transformed into a pigeon. On the run from his own agency in avian form, Sterling’s going to have to learn to use his wings, and fast.

Walter is a wunderkind scientist who firmly believes in nonlethal weapons: protective balloons that wrap you up in an inflatable hug, sticky pink bubblegum that stops anyone in their tracks. It takes time for Lance to get on board, but the advantages of life as a pigeon spy soon reveal themselves. It’s through his friendship with Walter, and with the help of a few feathered friends, that Lance learns to embrace friendlier methods too.

There’s a warm message of companionship and teamwork at the center of “Spies in Disguise,” but what makes it subversive is its emphasis on gentler methods of conflict resolution. It’s refreshing to see bubbles, bubblegum and lots of kitty glitter defeat murderous robots. But “Spies in Disguise,” despite a fun chemistry between Smith and Holland, is a lot like a soap bubble: entertaining for a bit, but disappears on contact. It’s entertaining but ephemeral.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, DEC. 25

	PM	MOVIES							
		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	
BROADCAST	CBS	2	The Neighborhood ©	Bob Hearts Abishola ©	Mom ©	Carol’s Second Act ©	All Rise: “The Joy From Oz.” ©	News (N) ▶	
	NBC	5	Dr. Seuss’ Grinch	How the Grinch Stole Christmas (PG,‘00) ★★	Jim Carrey. A curmudgeon hates the Christmas-loving Whos of Whoville. ©		NBC 5 News (N) ▶		
	ABC	7	NBA Basketball: Los Angeles Clippers at Los Angeles Lakers. From Staples Center in Los Angeles. (N) (Live) ©			black-ish ©	News at 10pm (N) ▶		
	WGN	9	black-ish ©	black-ish: “Stuff.” ©	Last Man Standing ©	Last Man Standing ©	WGN News at Nine (N)	Chicago’s Merry Own	WGN News at Ten (N)
	Antenna	9.2	B. Miller	Bunker	Family Ties	Benson ©	Johnny Carson ©	Gimme	
	Court	9.3	Closing Arguments						Closing Arguments with Vinnie Politan © ▶
	PBS	11	Lucy Worsley’s 12 Days of Tudor Christmas (N)		Call the Midwife: “Holiday Special.” (N)			Dreaming of a Jewish Christmas ©	
	CW	26.1	iHeartRadio Jingle Ball 2019 ©		Whose Line	Broke Girl	Broke Girl	Seinfeld ©	
	The U	26.2	Dr. Phil ©		Tamron Hall (N) ©		The Steve Wilkos Show	Cops ©	
	MeTV	26.3	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Gomer Pyle	Green Acres	Hogan Hero	Hogan Hero	C. Burnett
H&I	26.4	Star Trek: “Friday’s Child.”		Star Trek: Next		Star Trek: Deep Space 9	Star Trek ▶		
Bounce	26.5	The Game	The Game	Family Time	Family Time	Greyson Family Christmas (NR,‘19) ▶			
FOX	32	The Moodys: “Pilot; Episode 2.” ©		The Moodys: “Episode 3; Episode 4.” ©		Fox 32 News in Review	Modern Family ©		
Ion	38	Blue Bloods: “Blues.”		Blue Bloods: “Past Tense.”		Blue Bloods: “Two-Faced.”	Blue Blood ▶		
TeleM	44	Decisiones: unos (N)		Decisiones: unos (N)		El señor de los cielos (N)	Chicago (N)		
MNT	50	Chicago P.D. ©		Dateline ©		Dateline: “Broken Bonds.”	Chicago ▶		
UniMas	60	*(6) Elf (PG,‘03) ★★		Fantastic Four (PG-13,‘15) ★		Miles Teller.	Riddick ★★		
WJYS	62	Salem Baptist Church		Joyce Meyer Robison		Coach’s Cor.	Paid Prog.	Monument	
Univ	66	*(6) Ringo (N)		La Rosa de Guadalupe		El dragón (N)	Noticias (N)		
CABLE	AE	Live PD: “Top 40 Moments of 2019, Part 1.” ©					Live PD © (Part 2 of 2) ▶		
	AMC	Elf (PG,‘03) ★★ Will Ferrell, James Caan. ©					Elf (PG,‘03) ★★ Will Ferrell. © ▶		
	ANIM	The Zoo: From Inside (N)					The Zoo: From Inside (N)		
	BBCA	Doctor Who (7:40) Doctor Who: “The Snowmen.”					Doctor Who: “The Time of the Doctor.”		
	BET	*(6) Meet the Browns (PG-13,‘08) ★★					(8:33) Madea’s Family Reunion (PG-13,‘06) ★★		
	BIGTEN	BTN Football in 60 ©					BTN Football in 60 ©		
	BRAVO	*(5:30) Couples Retreat					Dirty Dancing (PG-13,‘87) ★★ Jennifer Grey. ©		
	CLTV	Larry Potash News (N)					News at 8		
	CNN	Finding Jesus: Faith, Fact					Finding Jesus: Faith, Fact		
	COM	Night at the Museum (PG,‘06) ★★ Ben Stiller. ©					Bad Santa (R,‘03) ★★ Tony Cox © ▶		
DISC	Alaskan Bush People (N)					Man vs. Bear: “Sharp Skills and Sharper Teeth.” (N) © ▶			
DISN	Raven					Gabby			
DISN	Roll With It					Coop			
DISN	Big City					Sydney-Max			
DISN	K.C. Under.								
E!	*(5) It’s a Wonderful Life					It’s a Wonderful Life (PG,‘46) ★★ James Stewart. © ▶			
ESPN	NBA Basketball: Los Angeles Clippers at Los Angeles Lakers. (N) ©					NBA Basketball (N) ▶			
ESPN2	Basketball					College Basketball (N)			
FNC	Tucker Carlson (N)					Hannity (N) ©			
FNC	The Ingraham Angle (N)					Fox News			
FOOD	Guy’s Grocery Games					Guy’s Grocery Games (N)			
FOOD	Guy’s Grocery Games					Guy’s Grocery Games			
FREE	Home Alone (7:20) Home Alone 2: Lost in New York (PG,‘92) ★★ ©					700 Club ▶			
FX	*(6:15) Office Christmas Party (‘16) ★★					The Night Before (R,‘15) ★★ Joseph Gordon-Levitt.			
HALL	When Calls the Heart (N) ©					Cherished Memories: A Gift to Remember 2 (‘19) ©			
HGTV	Property Brothers					Property Brothers (N)			
HGTV	Property Brothers					Property Brothers			
HIST	The Food That Built America: “Best Served Cold.”					(9:05) The Food That Built America ▶			
HLN	Forensic					Forensic			
HLN	Forensic					Forensic			
HLN	Forensic					Forensic			
HLN	Forensic					Forensic			
IFC	*(6) The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (‘13) ★★ ©					Hunger Games: Mockingjay 1 ▶			
LIFE	Christmas Hotel (NR,‘19) Tatyana Ali. ©					(9:03) You Light Up My Christmas ▶			
MSNBC	All In With (N)					Rachel Maddow Show (N)			
MSNBC	The Last Word (N)					11th Hour (N)			
MTV	Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn					The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (‘12) ★★ ▶			
NBCSCH	SportsTalk Live (N)					Crossover			
NBCSCH	Hawk					All Access			
NICK	Casagran					Loud House			
NICK	Friends ©					Friends ©			
NICK	Friends ©					Friends ©			
NICK	Friends ©					Friends ©			
OVATION	*(6) The Fugitive (PG-13,‘93) ★★ Harrison Ford.					Point Break (R,‘91) ★★ © ▶			
OWN	Baking Christmas (NR,‘19) Tim Reid, Aloma Wright.					Carole’s Christmas (NR,‘19) ▶			
OWN	Snapped ©					Dateline: Secrets			
OWN	Dateline: Secrets					Dateline ▶			
PARMT	Die Hard (R,‘88) ★★ Bruce Willis, Alan Rickman. ©					Die Hard ▶			
SYFY	Futurama					Futurama			
SYFY	Futurama					Futurama			
SYFY	Futurama					Futurama			
SYFY	Futurama					Futurama			
TBS	Big Bang					Big Bang			
TBS	Big Bang					Big Bang			
TBS	Big Bang					Big Bang			
TBS	Big Bang					Big Bang			
TCM	*(6) The LEGO Movie ★★ ©					(8:45) Topper Takes a Trip (‘39) ★★			
TCM	Best Show ▶								
TLC	Dr. Pimple Popper					Dr. Pimple			
TLC	Dr. Pimple Popper					Dr. Pimple Popper			
TLC	Tumor ▶								
TLN	Baptist					King			
TLN	Christmas Wonderland					Life Today			
TLN	Exalted					Humanit ▶			
TNT	*(6) A Christmas Story					The Wizard of Oz (G,‘39) ★★ Judy Garland.			
TNT	Maleficent ▶								
TOON	*(6) The LEGO Movie ★★					Amer. Dad			
TOON	Amer. Dad					Amer. Dad			
TOON	Amer. Dad					Amer. Dad			
TOON	Family Guy					Family Guy			
TRAV	Merry Scary Christmas (N)					Yuletide Yeti (N) ©			
TRAV	Bigfoot ▶								
TVL	Raymond					Raymond			
TVL	King					King			
TVL	King					King			
USA	WWE NXT (N) (Live) ©					Harry Potter and Half-Blood ▶			
USA	Movie © ▶								
VH1	*(4:30) The Temptations ©								
WE	Four Christmases (PG-13,‘08) ★★ Vince Vaughn. ©					Four Christmases (PG-13,‘08) ★★ © ▶			
WGN America	*(5:30) Die Hard (R,‘88) ★★ ©					Die Hard 2 (R,‘90) ★★ Bruce Willis. © ▶			
PREMIUM	HBO	Bohemian Rhapsody (PG-13,‘18) ★★ Rami Malek.					(9:15) Love Actually (R,‘03) ★★ © ▶		
	HBO2	The Ice Harvest (R,‘05) ★★ ©					Meet the Fockers (PG-13,‘04) ★★ Robert De Niro. ©		
	MAX	Skyscraper (PG-13,‘18) ★★ ©					(8:45) Ready Player One (PG-13,‘18) ★★ ▶		
	SHO	Green Book (PG-13,‘18) ★★ Viggo Mortensen. ©					(9:10) A Bad Moms Christmas ★★		
	STARZ	Men					(7:40) Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle (‘17) ★★		
STARZ	(9:42) The Intruder ▶▶								
STZNC	Ice Age: The Meltdown (PG,‘06) ★★					(8:33) The Good Dinosaur (‘15) ★★			
STZNC	Horton ▶								

SHOWSTOPPING NEWS

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Horoscopes



Today's birthday (Dec. 25): Imagine perfection and make plans this year. Steady action lays the foundation for personal expansion. Glorious winter bounty could cause friction with a partner ... change direction. Adapt plans next summer, as your partnership gets especially sweet. Pursue a personal passion and discover deeper connection.

Aries (March 21-April 19): Today is an 8. Professional opportunities shine under this new moon. Accept new responsibilities as you prepare. Develop a project from an idea to reality.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): 9. Study with a master. Education, travels and exploration sprout under this new moon. Consider different views and perspectives.

Gemini (May 21-June 20): 9. Find creative ways to grow your family's nest egg. A lucrative phase dawns with this new moon. Launch a profitable initiative with your team.

Cancer (June 21-July 22): 8. Support each other through changes or transformations. Long-term partnership blossoms under this new moon. Collaborations flower beautifully with nurturing. Begin a new chapter together.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): 9. Your physical moves seem energized. This Scorpio new moon sparks growing health and strength. Put your heart into your actions.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): 9. This new moon sparks a two-week family, fun and passion phase. A romantic relationship transforms. It's all for love and love for all.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): 8. Wrap your love around home and family. A new domestic phase arises with this Capricorn new moon. A seed planted long ago flowers.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): 9. Profit through communications. Breakthroughs arise in conversation under this new moon. Reach out for a powerful connection.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): 9. Make profitable connections. Creativity with sales and marketing flourishes under this new moon. Step into new levels of prosperity.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): 9. A new personal phase dawns with this new moon in your sign. Take charge. Take your talents, capacities and skills to new levels.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): 8. Insights, breakthroughs and revelations sparkle under this new moon. Dreams seem within reach. Practice benefits a philosophical, spiritual and mindful phase. Make long-term plans.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): 8. Take a group endeavor to new heights. Breakthroughs in friendship, social networks and community provide cause for celebration under the Capricorn new moon.

— Nancy Black, Tribune Content Agency

The Argyle Sweater By Scott Hilburn



Bliss By Harry Bliss



Bridge

Both vulnerable, South deals

North		East	
♠ A J 6 4	♥ A Q 9	♠ Q 10 8 7 3	♥ J 8 6 5
♦ 9 6 2	♣ Q 10 6	♦ 3	♣ K 3 2
South			
♠ K 9 5	♥ K 7 3		
♦ A Q J 7 5 4	♣ A		

South bid his hand aggressively, but the final contract was quite reasonable, seemingly needing either a diamond finesse or a spade finesse for success. The opening spade lead, however, had the look of a singleton. Opponents rarely lead dummy's first-bid suit, especially when there are unbid suits to lead.

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	4NT	Pass
6♦	All pass		

Opening lead: Two of ♠

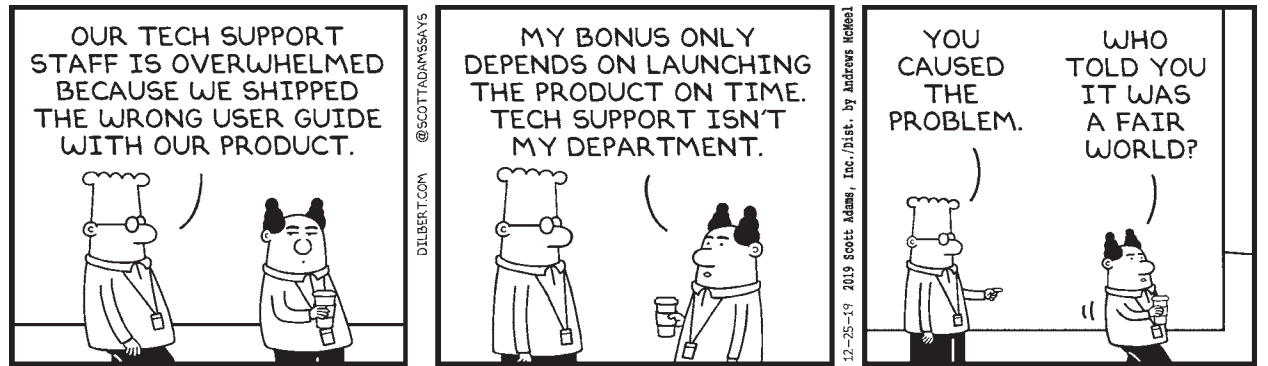
finesse. He won the heart and drew the outstanding trumps. South cashed his last heart winner and then started to run his trumps. This was the position with one trump to go:

North		East	
♠ A J	♥ Void	♠ Q 8	♥ Void
♦ Void	♣ Void	♦ Void	♣ Void
♠ Q 10		♠ K 2	
South			
♠ 9 5	♥ Void		
♦ 4	♣ A		

South cashed the last diamond, shedding the jack of spades from dummy, and East couldn't defend the position. Whatever East chose to discard, South would cash the ace in that suit and cross to the other hand for two more winners. Well played by South and Merry Christmas to you!

— Bob Jones
tcaeditors@tribpub.com

Dilbert By Scott Adams



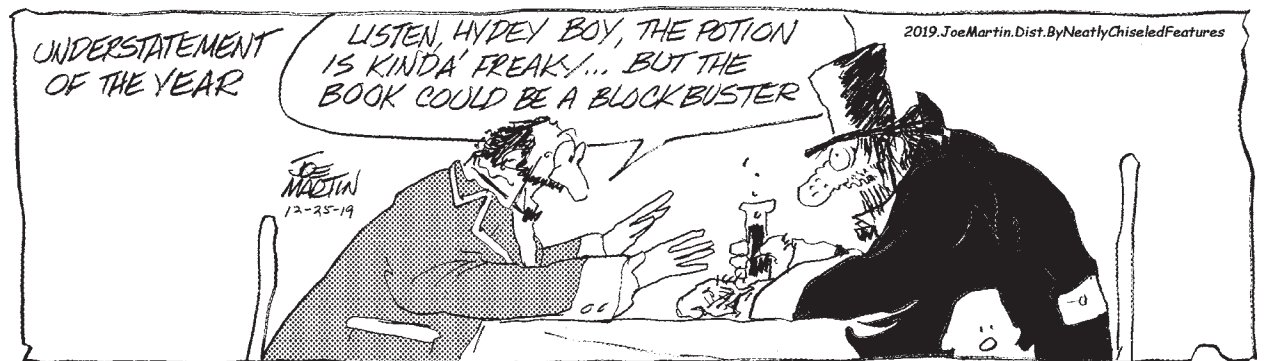
Baby Blues By Rick Kirkman and Jerry Scott



Zits By Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman



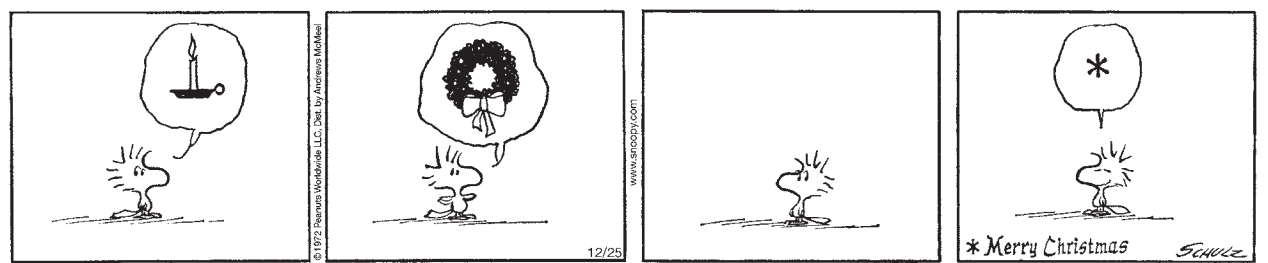
Mr. Boffo By Joe Martin



Frazz By Jef Mallett



Classic Peanuts By Charles Schulz



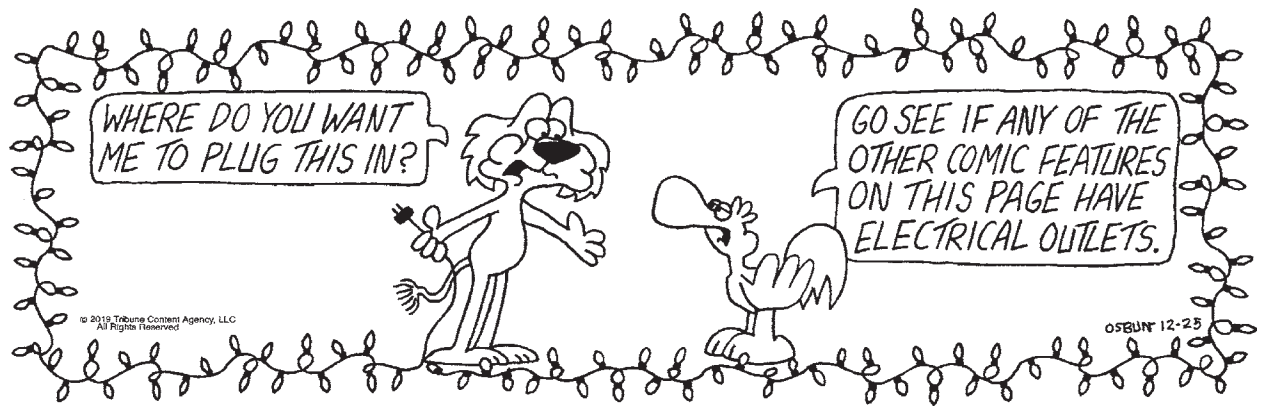
Pickles By Brian Crane



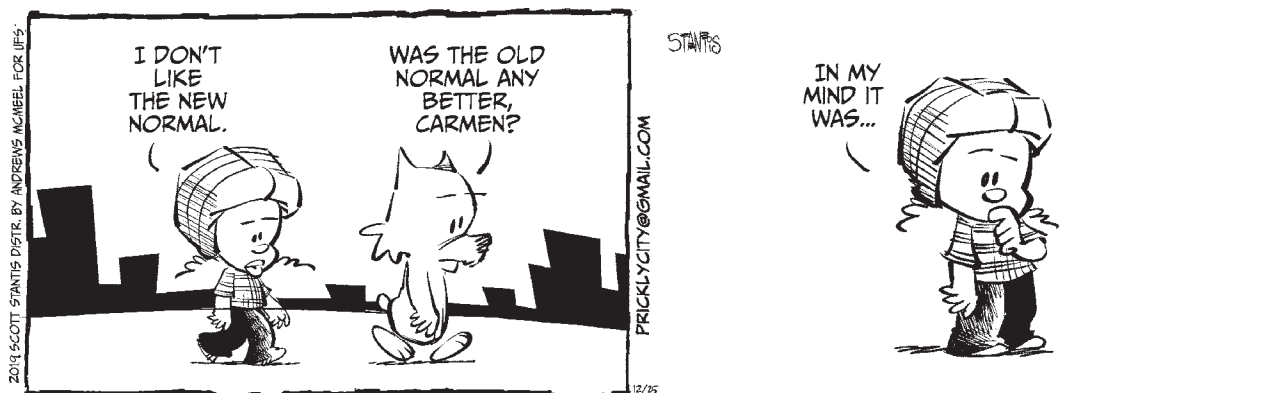
Dick Tracy By Joe Staton and Mike Curtis



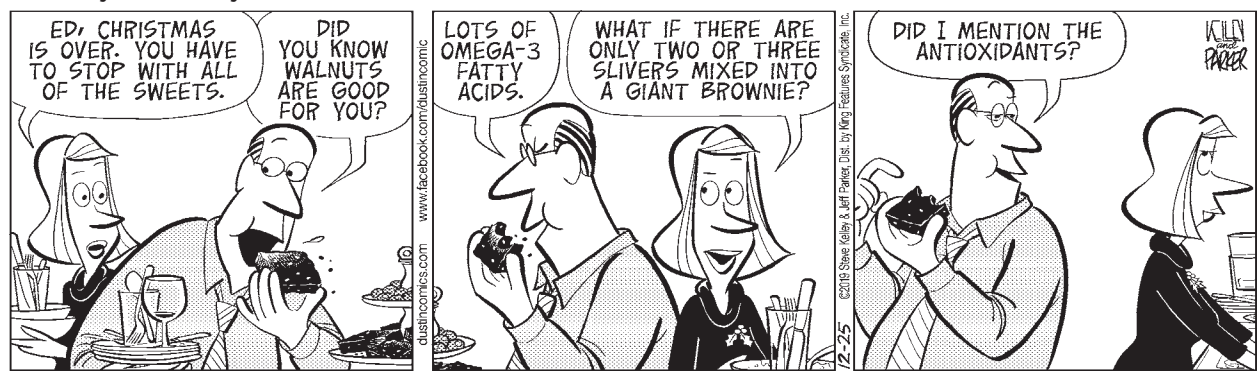
Animal Crackers By Mike Osburn



Prickly City By Scott Stantis



Dustin By Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



For Better or for Worse By Lynn Johnston



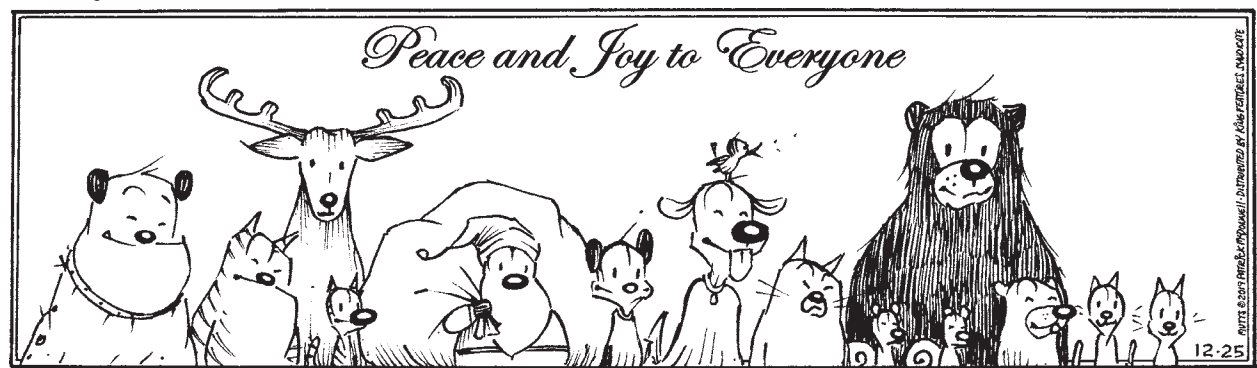
Blondie By Dean Young and John Marshall



Hägar the Horrible By Chris Browne



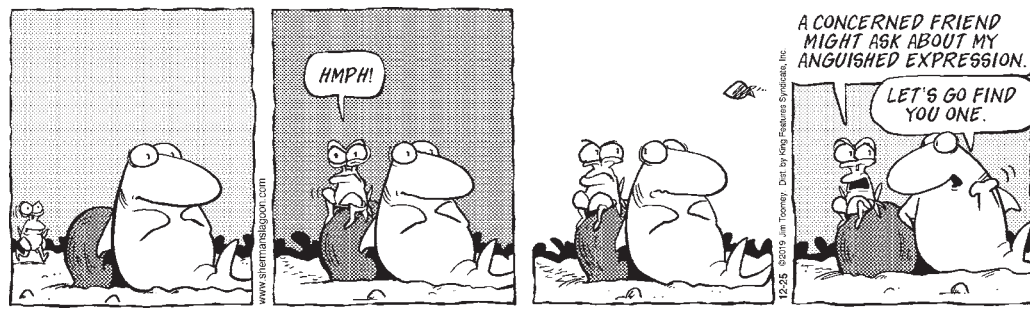
Mutts By Patrick McDonnell



WuMo By Mikael Wulff and Anders Morgenthaler



Sherman's Lagoon By Jim Toomey



Brewster Rockit: Space Guy! By Tim Rickard



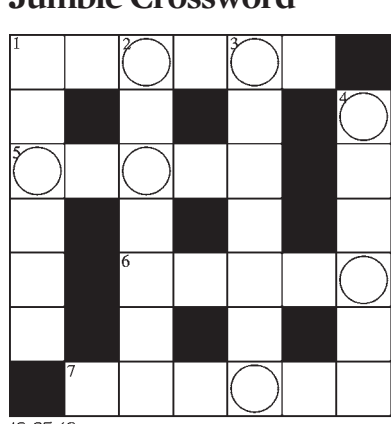
Broom-Hilda By Russell Myers



Trivia Bits

Yellowcake is an oxide produced during the processing of what ore?
 A) Gold
 B) Iron
 C) Tungsten
 D) Uranium
 Tuesday's answer: Pepsin produced by the stomach helps digest protein.

Jumble Crossword



CLUE ACROSS
 1. Imperative
 5. Damp
 6. Blender setting
 7. Kitchen gizmo

CLUE DOWN
 1. Extreme, maximum
 2. Quick look
 3. ___ selection
 4. Streak maker

ANSWER
 ACROSS: 1. RETURN, 5. DAMP, 6. BLENDER, 7. KITCHEN
 DOWN: 1. TSTOUM, 2. LSEPGMI, 3. URAANTL, 4. EOEMRT

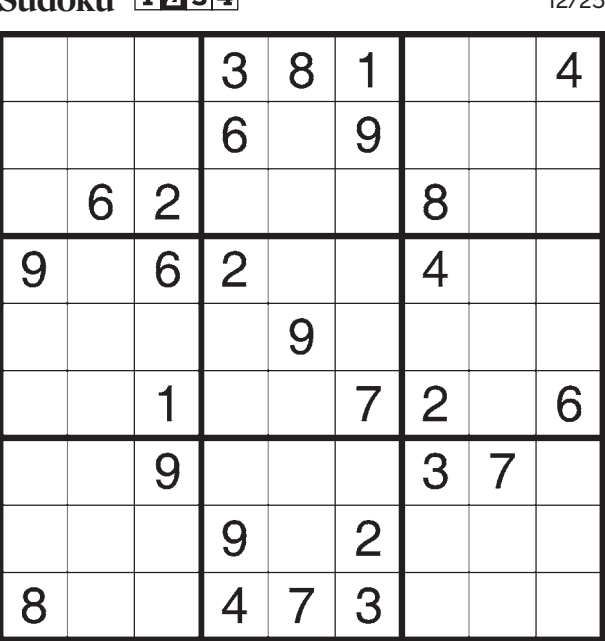
How to play - Complete the crossword puzzle by looking at the clues and unscrambling the answers. When the puzzle is complete, unscramble the circled letters to solve the BONUS.

CLUE: This animal is closely related to the vole and muskrat.

BONUS ○○○○○○○○

Sudoku 1 2 3 4

12/25



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

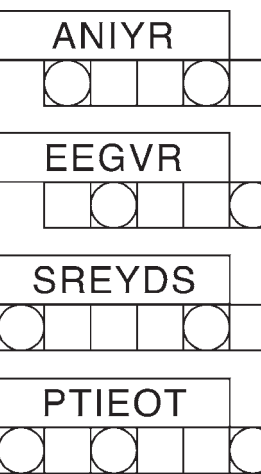
Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box in bold borders contains every digit 1 to 9.

Tuesday's solutions

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Jumble

Unscramble the four Jumbles, one letter per square, to form four words. Then arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by this cartoon.



Answer here

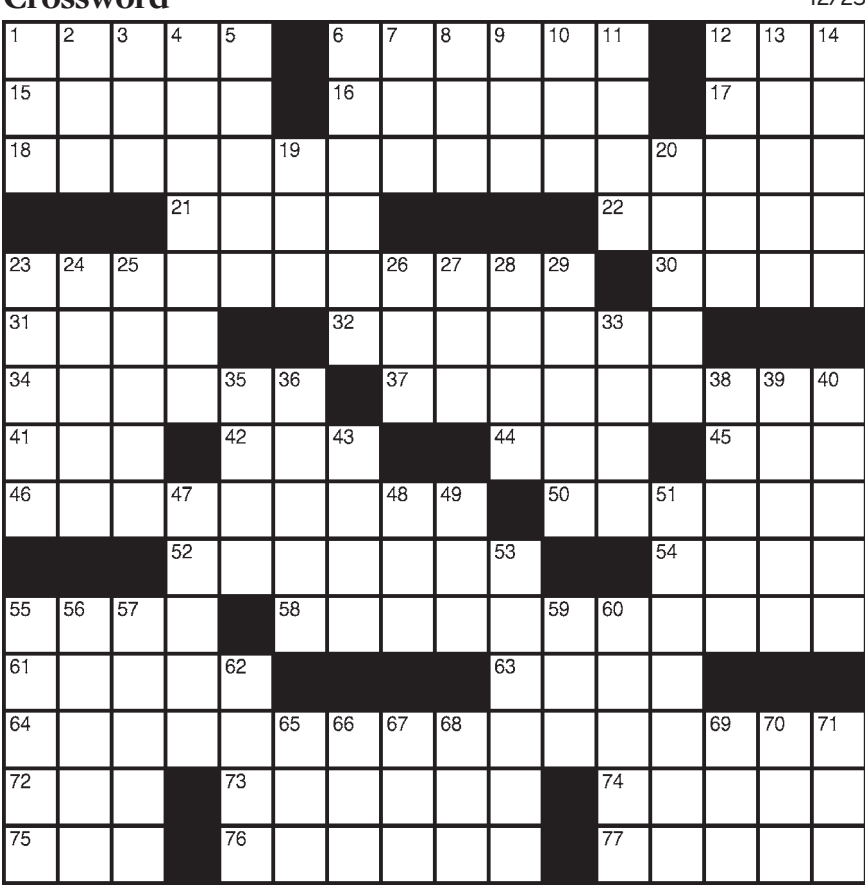


Tuesday's answers

Jumbles: RANCH THYME SIMMER BENIGN
 Answer: When they put a cocktail lounge on the 96th floor of the Hancock, they — SET THE BAR HIGH
 By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek. © 2019 Tribune Content Agency, LLC. All rights reserved.

Crossword

12/25



Across
 1 "The Chosen" novelist Potok
 6 Doofuses
 12 Itinerary info
 15 Light weight
 16 Hullabaloo
 17 "Your Moment of ___": "The Daily Show" bit
 18 Pretrial proceeding to determine if the accused is released or held during trial
 21 Family unit
 22 Ties up
 23 Tawdry
 30 Get-up-and-go
 31 Peddle
 32 Again, in Spanish
 34 Having a low pH
 37 Stop communicating
 41 Master
 42 Easy throw
 44 Forget a date, e.g.

Down
 45 Actress Vardalos
 46 Programmer's hint of a still bigger problem
 50 Pines
 52 Plays at, with "in"
 54 Costa ___
 55 Source of chips
 58 Soothsayer's ability
 61 Watering hole
 63 Vicinity
 64 Wake up ... or what five long Across answers do?
 72 Chicken-king link
 73 Polar jacket
 74 Dishonorable fellow
 75 Chop off
 76 Big Apple area, with "the"
 77 Nasser's successor

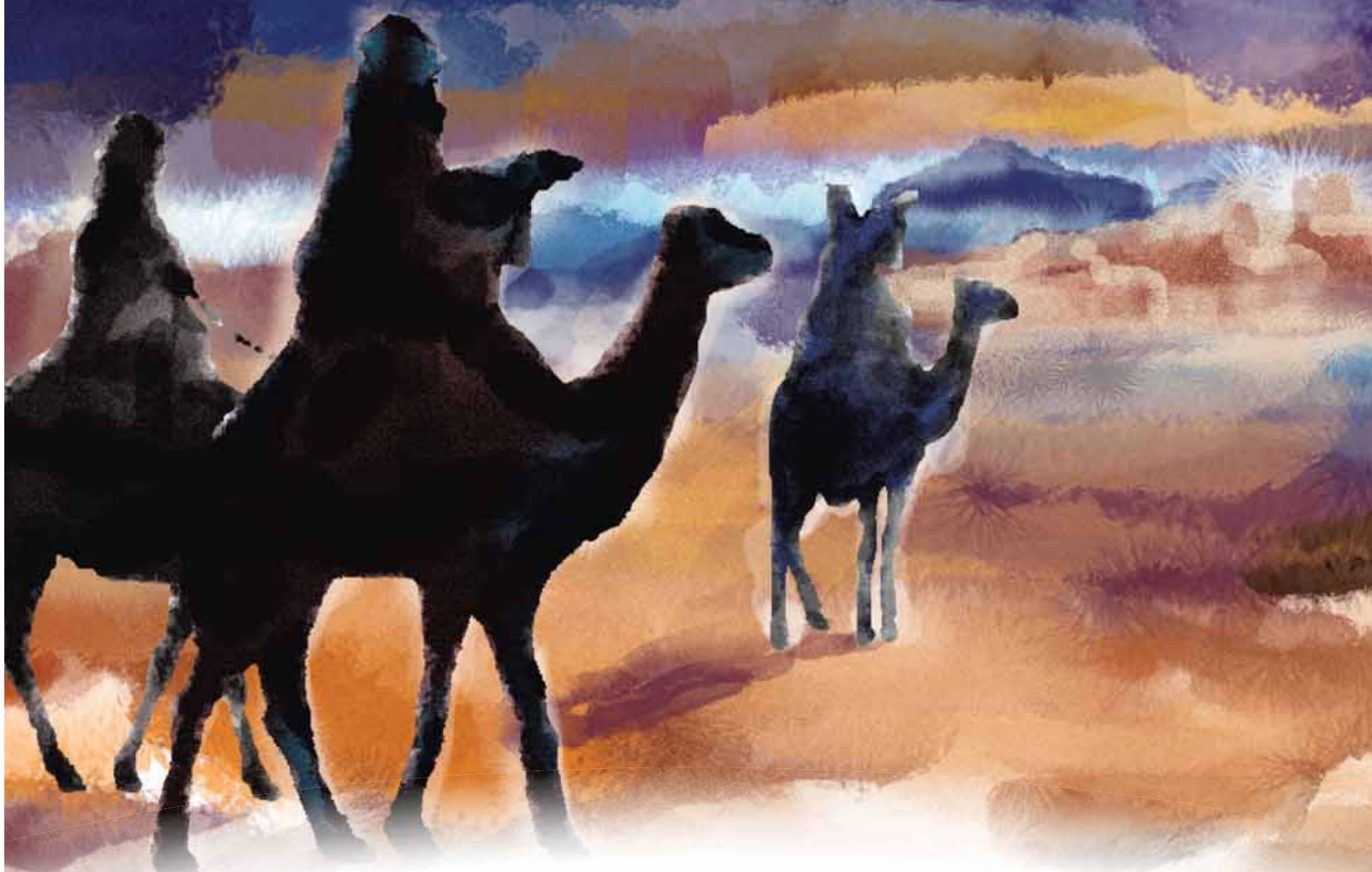
Tuesday's solution
 S A P S CHARGE HST
 A T R A A U B U R N A C E
 F O O D P Y R A M I D U R N
 A N O D E S O L E O L E
 R E F E R W O R L D V I E W
 I G E R T A U S I N C H
 S O D F A C T D I N G H Y
 B L O O D L I N E
 O P E R A S U I E S H A D
 W I F E F E E T C A R R
 L E F T F I E L D T H Y M E
 R O T I N T S O A R E D
 N C R B A N K O P E N I N G
 Y E T E N T R E E D I E
 C I D S R E S T I E D L E A D

By Blake Slonecker. Edited by Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis. © 2019 Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

She will bear a son,
and you shall call his
name Jesus for he
will save his people
from their sins.

Matthew 1:21

Merry
Christmas!



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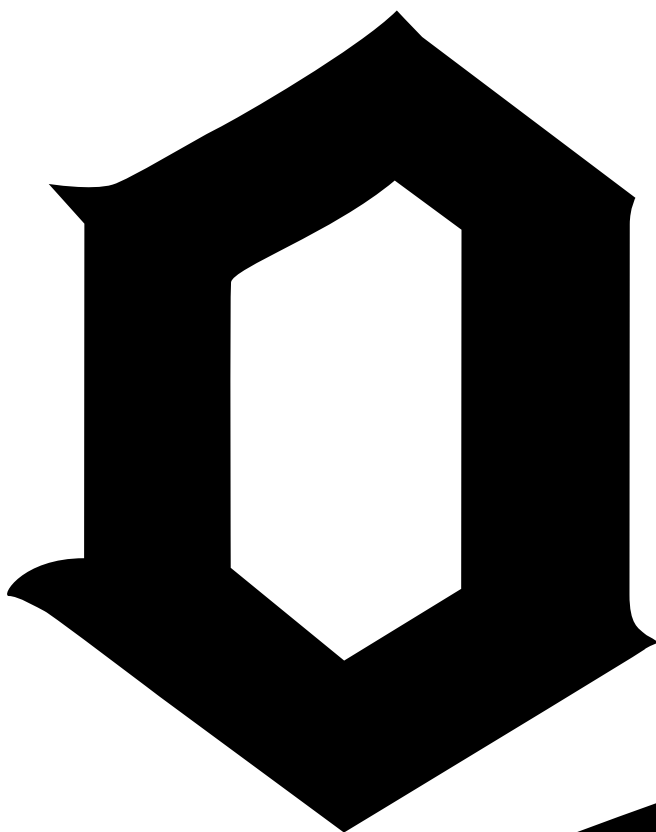
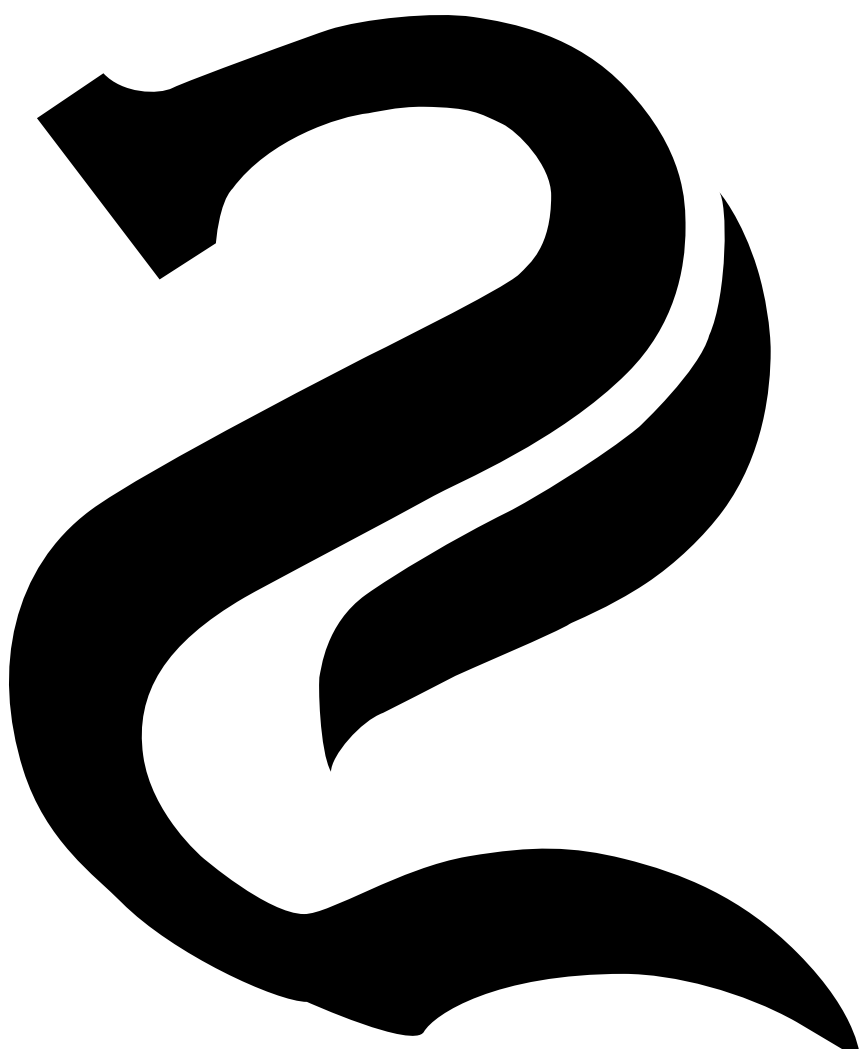


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Chicago Tribune CHICAGO SPORTS

Chicago's best sports section, as judged by the Associated Press Sports Editors



Is next year here? The White Sox are ready to contend again



DAVID HAUGH
*In the Wake
of the News*

Inside the hearts of so many White Sox fans this week, a tug of war ensues between hope and history.

Let go of the rope, South Siders. Give in to your gut that says the days of empty promises and flimsy excuses are gone.

It's fun to think big again. It's fine to imagine October in December. It's time to bury the past and begin a new way of viewing a Sox team capable of entering 2020 with higher

expectations than the Cubs.

How long has it been since that happened?

The Sox will arrive in Arizona for spring training as one of the most improved teams in baseball — and they're not done adding to the roster.

Turn to **Haugh, Page 2**

Bolstered by the additions of Dallas Keuchel, from left, Gio Gonzalez and Yasmani Grandal (so far), the White Sox are thinking playoffs in 2020.

GETTY PHOTOS

Trubisky still missing shots at huge plays



RICH CAMPBELL
On the Bears

As a passer this season, Mitch Trubisky hasn't sustained anything close to the playmaking panache of draft classmate Patrick Mahomes.

Watching Mitch Trubisky and Patrick Mahomes on the same field Sunday night in the Bears' 26-3 loss to the Chiefs highlighted the significant playmaking disparity between the two — not that it was new information.

Their bodies of work are well established as they end their third NFL season. But we saw it live and up close, and the difference is everything for both teams.

This stood out most on Trubisky's overthrow of Allen Robinson on what could've been a 46-yard touchdown in the second quarter at Soldier Field.

Turn to **Campbell, Page 5**

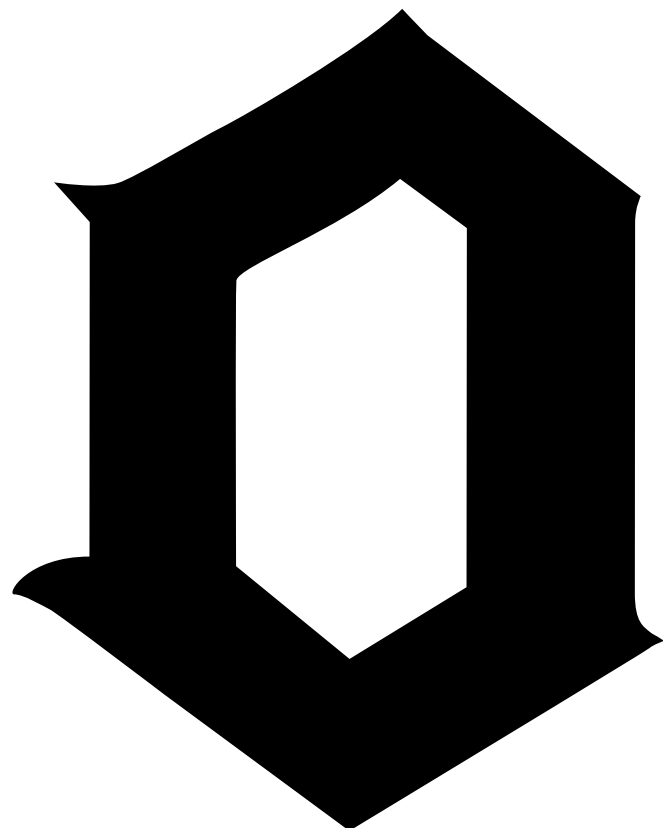
SEASON FINALE | Bears at Vikings
Noon Sunday in Minneapolis, FOX-32

Below: Mitch Trubisky didn't have it in a 26-3 loss to the Chiefs on Sunday. **BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**



Playoff picks are in

The Chicago Tribune's Teddy Greenstein makes his call on LSU-Oklahoma and Ohio State-Clemson, plus all the Big Ten bowl games and Notre Dame-Iowa State. Also, a look back at another season at the betting window. **Page 3**



TOP OF THE SECOND

CINDY BOREN

Rodgers, Packers are 'winning ugly'

"Winning ugly" — it's the new "R-E-L-A-X."

The Packers' victory Monday night over the Vikings in Minneapolis was hardly a thing of beauty or the kind of masterpiece Aaron Rodgers is used to painting with his arms, legs and brain. But you know what? He's just fine with that. The Packers won their fourth straight game and have stayed hot since their quarterback said he was more than happy with ugly wins.

"Winning is always beautiful," Rodgers told ESPN after the Packers' latest unsightly victory, "and defense wins NFC North championships."

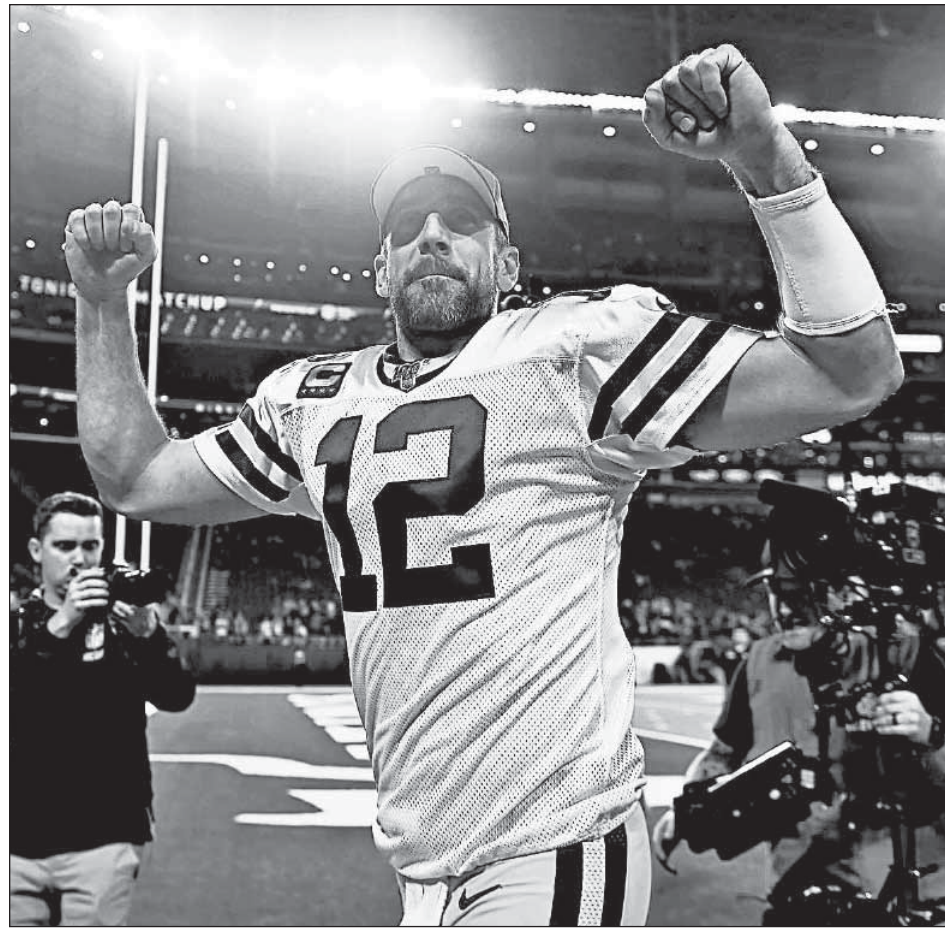
Rodgers threw an interception in the 23-10 victory that clinched the division title and, for now, slotted the Packers as the No. 2 seed in the NFC. The Packers had three turnovers in the first half — on Aaron Jones and Davante Adams fumbles and Rodgers' third interception in 15 games — but it didn't matter because the defense repeatedly thwarted Vikings quarterback Kirk Cousins, while kicker Mason Crosby kept the Packers in the game until they took the lead on a third-quarter touchdown run by Jones. He added another in the fourth.

Winning ugly and loving it is latest mantra for Rodgers, who successfully has employed such catchphrases before. Early in the 2014 season, Rodgers advised fans to relax because "we're going to be OK" after a 1-2 start.

They were, finishing 12-4 and losing to the Seahawks in overtime in the NFC championship game. After a tough loss to the Redskins in 2016, Rodgers expressed confidence that the team would "run the table," and the Packers indeed won their last six games, claiming the division before falling to the Falcons in the NFC championship game.

Rodgers uncorked this season's motto after a 20-15 victory over the three-win Redskins in early December, one in which he passed for an un-Rodgers-like 195 yards, as Jones rushed for 134 yards and added 58 receiving yards. Afterward, the buzz was about Jones, which was fine with the two-time NFL MVP.

"I wouldn't mind winning ugly all the way to the Super Bowl," Rodgers told reporters then. "Winning is the only thing that matters. Even in the midst of some of these games that aren't great flow the entire time, we are winning. We expect to win games when the defense holds them to less than 20 points. We'll find our rhythm. I'm not worried about that on offense. We'll keep getting the ball to our playmakers and figure out what's going to work that week."



CRAIG LASSIG/AP

Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers runs off the field after beating the Vikings on Monday.

It's a theme he returned to Monday night after the Packers won the NFC North for the first time in three years. Rodgers, for the third time this season, did not have a passing touchdown. He completed 26 of 40 passes for 216 yards.

Rodgers, 12th among NFL quarterbacks with 3,679 passing yards and a rating of 97.9, professes that he's fine occupying a back seat to the running game and a defense that sacked Cousins five times — with Za'Darius Smith accounting for three. Rodgers has failed to pass for a touchdown in three games — but the Packers won them all.

"I don't mind it as long as we're winning," Rodgers said, via Madison.com. "There's a lot of emphasis on looking pretty or dominating. I thought tonight (against the Vikings) was a really good performance for us. We had really good balance. It doesn't matter how we get it done — as long as we get it done."

The NFC North championship shirts bore that out with the words "The North Is Not Enough."

Entering the regular-season finale Sunday against the Lions, the Packers are in position to take the No. 2 seed in the NFC and a first-round bye with a win. If the Seahawks beat the 49ers, the Packers could take the No. 1 seed and home-field advantage throughout the playoffs.

"I've always just tried to do what the team needed," said Rodgers, who was sacked three times and had a 68.3 passer rating Monday night. "There have been times over the years where I needed to do some of the things I've done."

"This year is different based on the personnel we have and the scheme we're running. I'm trying to be opportunistic, but we have a pretty good run game going."

The bottom line is that the team is 12-3 in Matt LaFleur's first season as a head coach.

"We've won a lot of tight games and we've won so many different ways. That's what this game's about — it's about winning," LaFleur said. "It hasn't always been pretty for us, but that's OK. We find a way."

Cindy Boren writes for the Washington Post.

LET'S PLAY 2

	Sunday @Vikings Noon FOX-32	End of season
	Friday Islanders 7:30 p.m. NBCSCH	Sunday @Jackets 4 p.m. NBCSCH
	Saturday Hawks 7 p.m. NBCSCH	Monday Bucks 7 p.m. NBCSCH

WEDNESDAY ON TV/RADIO

NBA		
11 a.m. Celtics at Raptors		ESPN
1:30 p.m. Bucks at 76ers		ABC-7
4 p.m. Rockets at Warriors		ABC-7
7 p.m. Clippers at Lakers		ABC-7, ESPN
9:30 p.m. Pelicans at Nuggets		ESPN

MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL		
12:30 p.m. Portland vs. Ball State		ESPN
3 p.m. Boise State vs. UTEP		ESPN
5:30 p.m. Georgia Tech vs. Hawaii		ESPN2
8 p.m. Houston vs. Washington		ESPN2

ASK THE REPORTER

BRAD BIGGS

Does general manager Ryan Pace have the willingness to make a real change at quarterback?

Marc B., Nashville, Tenn.

That's the million-dollar question. The Bears need to determine whether they want to proceed with Mitch Trubisky as the unquestioned starter in 2020 or replace him. The Bears can't go halfway with this decision — it wouldn't make sense to find a veteran with little starting experience to come into a competition weighed heavily in Trubisky's favor. They either need to commit to replacing Trubisky or circle the wagons and do some heavy lifting with the personnel around him and hope things begin to click in Year 4. I haven't seen enough consistent performances in terms of mechanics, decisions, throws and overall play that lead me to believe Trubisky ever will become a front-line starter. Perhaps I'm wrong. We'll see.

ON THE WEB

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Chicago Tribune

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PODCAST

How will the second-year QB adapt to the new head coach's Xs and Os?
Will the rookie LB make an impact on the "D"?

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DAN WIEDERER
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Haugh

Continued from Page 1

The influx of proven new players with promising young prospects will give the Sox a realistic chance of competing for a division title or wild-card spot. At the moment, you would be hard-pressed to say the same thing about the budget-conscious Cubs, who have two months to edit their offseason narrative.

But the Sox have more than city supremacy on their minds. As they should. The Twins improved from winning 78 games in 2018 to 101 last season. The Sox, who went 72-89 in 2019, have every reason to expect at least a 15-victory improvement in an AL Central that includes the lowly Royals and Tigers and an Indians franchise in flux.

Reaching agreement with former Cy Young Award winner Dallas Keuchel on a three-year, \$55.5 million contract restored a measure of credibility the Sox front office had squandered. This was the good news that skeptics still stinging from the Manny Machado and Bryce Harper rejections last year had every reason to doubt. This was the left-handed starter at the top of the rotation the Sox targeted this offseason, the elusive box that general manager Rick Hahn finally checked. This was the end of all the talking and the start of all the doing.

This was the unofficial ribbon-cutting at 35th and Shields where Hawk Harrelson puts on a hard hat, grabs a megaphone and announces to anyone who will listen that the rebuild is "Ovah!"

Keuchel came on board after the Sox signed crafty lefty Gio Gonzalez to a one-year, \$5 million prove-it deal. Both finesse lefties will benefit from the framing skills of free-agent catcher Yasmani Grandal, the first to take a leap of faith — and the Sox's money — when he signed a four-year, \$73 million contract, the richest in team history.

Imagine the happy-hour debate at Cork and Kerry over whether Grandal will help Keuchel more by buying strikes with his glove or by hitting homers with his bat. Funny how adding Keuchel and Gonzalez in the past week quieted some of the overwrought reaction to the Sox trading for untapped 24-year-old power hitter Nomar Mazara, a 6-foot-4, 215-pound left-handed-hitting slugger who could benefit from a change of scenery.

Optimism can be harder to find on the South Side than a Cubs hat, but the Sox have given their fans enough to get excited about with rumors suggesting more big moves. Reports say Hahn remains engaged in talks with right-handed slugger Edwin Encarnacion, whose negotiations were put

on hold as he mourned the death of his father. Encarnacion, 37, still possesses pop in a bat that has hit at least 30 home runs in eight straight seasons. His veteran impact on young sluggers Eloy Jimenez and Luis Robert would be immeasurable.

Speaking of Robert, James Fox of Future Sox reported that the Sox have discussed a contract extension with the outfielder before opening day to avoid any service-time awkwardness, the way they did with Jimenez — a wise move. And before you know it, scrappy second baseman Nick Madrigal will be turning double plays and making contact in a way that figures to make him a fan favorite.

What a time to be a Sox fan. With Keuchel and Gonzalez, the Sox have six potential starters for a five-man rotation — Lucas Giolito, Keuchel, Michael Kopech, Dylan Cease, Gonzalez and Reynaldo Lopez — with Carlos Rodon expected back midseason from Tommy John surgery. That's starting pitching depth, a rare luxury.

Tim Anderson is the reigning AL batting champion. Jose Abreu is the returning AL RBI leader. Many observers consider Yoan Moncada the best all-around player of the bunch. The Sox could use another arm to add to a strong bullpen, but suddenly it has become fair to wonder how manager Rick Renteria's team will handle the weight of expectations that wilt so many young teams before they win. How will Renteria, whose strength is his perspective, strike the balance between getting the Sox to play with swagger without getting carried away with the attention they surely will generate?

The 2015 Cubs didn't deal with the kind of noise the Sox will encounter. After the city's five major professional sports teams missed the playoffs in 2019 for the first time in 15 years, the Sox will continue to create buzz locally and perhaps nationally. They proved last summer to be a likable bunch. They also haven't won a playoff game since Oct. 5, 2008 — 23 days before Derrick Rose's NBA debut with the Bulls.

That's the longest drought in town. The Bulls last won one April 18, 2017, in Game 2 against the Celtics. The Cubs last won Oct. 18, 2017, in Game 4 of the NLCS against the Dodgers. The Blackhawks last won April 23, 2016, in Game 6 against the Blues. The Bears haven't won a playoff game since beating the Seahawks on Jan. 16, 2011.

Chicago badly needs a team to capture its imagination after so much disappointment.

The Sox look like they can be that team in 2020.

It's OK to believe.

David Haugh is a special contributor to the Chicago Tribune and co-host of the "Mully and Haugh Show" weekdays from 5-9 a.m. on WSCR-AM-670.

BLACKHAWKS

HAWKS TAKEAWAYS

Loss was a complete team effort

BY JIMMY GREENFIELD

A piece of good news came out of Blackhawks coach Jeremy Colliton's postgame news conference Monday night after an abysmal 7-1 loss to the Devils at the United Center.

Although rookie defenseman Adam Boqvist left the game with a right shoulder injury in the first period and might miss a game or two, the injury appears to be minor.

Thus ends anything resembling good news. Everything else was dreadful without exception.

The power play was shut out in seven opportunities and allowed a short-handed goal. The defense allowed 43 shots. The starting goalie allowed four goals in 20 shots and his replacement another three goals in 24 shots.

It was as complete an effort as the Hawks have put together all season, only the wrong kind. That it came after impressive road wins against the Jets and Avalanche only punctuated how devastating it was to be blown out at home by the team with the second-fewest points in the league.

"We should be embarrassed," Colliton said. "If we're going to make progress, you've got to give yourself a chance to make progress. I don't think we did that tonight."

"Seems like we need to start over all the time. I've made the point in the games (that) we've had trouble stringing shifts together. Well, we have trouble stringing performances together. So you just can't build any momentum."

With 44 games left after the NHL's three-day holiday break, the Hawks are running out of time.

Here are two takeaways from Monday's game.

1. The Hawks have to start winning at home if they have any hope of turning things around.

They returned from winning a pair of tough road games only to flop at the United Center.

This isn't anything new. The Hawks did the same thing earlier this month when they beat the Bruins and Devils on the road, and then lost at home to the Coyotes to begin a four-game losing streak.

Developing consistency has been nearly impossible the way the Hawks have played at home. They have been playing with six rookies recently, but Colliton dismissed the idea that it has anything to do with playing terribly at home after expending a lot of energy in road games.

"We've been poor at home overall no matter who we've played," Colliton said. "We've played some good teams and we haven't been good enough. I definitely would not point to the young players as being the culprit. They're part of it, but you'd be hard-pressed to look at our lineup tonight and find someone who got up to the standard."

Only the Devils and Red Wings have fewer home wins than the Hawks, who dropped to 8-9-3, including 2-6-1 in their last nine at the UC. In their last two home games, the Hawks were outscored 11-2.

"At home, whether we're coming off momentum of good performances or whether we have rest, it seems like we come in and think it's just going to happen," Colliton said. "That's obviously far from the case because our home record is really letting us down. Our road record (7-8-3) is good enough. Our home record is nowhere near what it needs to be."

2. The Blackhawks need to remember the words of Herb Brooks.

Whether Colliton meant them to be or not, his postgame comments were reminiscent of legendary coach Herb Brooks, who led the overachieving 1980 "Miracle on Ice" U.S. Olympic team to a gold medal.

Brooks would tell his players they "don't have enough talent to win on talent alone."

Well, the Hawks are in the same boat. During the championship years, they could sleepwalk through some games and still win, but those days are long gone. Colliton has preached for weeks that the Hawks need to bring a strong work ethic to every game to have a chance.

After Monday's loss, he drove home the point that they're not going to win on talent alone.

"We need to understand what kind of team we are," Colliton said. "We've got to work every day, and when we do, we're good enough and we've shown we can get points. We've had some big-time character wins, but the work and compete's got to be there."

Duncan Keith helped to inspire the Hawks after last week's loss to the Avalanche by admonishing his teammates to start playing like they're "pissed off." That lasted two games. Piggybacking off of what Keith began, Jonathan Toews was fed up with an inability to play hard over a lengthy period.

"Enough's enough," Toews said. "We've talked about being pissed off, and we can't keep letting this slide and just talk about the X's and O's like it's just another game. We showed a great example of these last two games on the road of how we want to play for each other, and that's got to be the standard. We just completely got away from it tonight."

COLLEGE FOOTBALL



ANDY LYONS/GETTY

Justin Fields and the Buckeyes have been too good to lose now, right?

LSU, Ohio State look the part



TEDDY GREENSTEIN
On college football

We know the official standings, the ones that yielded an Ohio State-Wisconsin Big Ten title game and led to the second coming of Greg Schiano at Rutgers.

But how about the, um, alumni satisfaction standings? Here's how every Big Ten team fared against the spread in 2019, according to Actionnetwork.com:

■ Ohio State: 9-4	■ Penn State: 5-6-1
■ Illinois: 8-4	■ Iowa: 5-7
■ Purdue: 8-4	■ Maryland: 5-7
■ Wisconsin: 8-5	■ NU: 3-7-2
■ Indiana: 7-5	■ Rutgers: 4-8
■ Michigan: 7-5	■ Michigan St.: 3-9
■ Minnesota: 6-4-2	■ Nebraska: 3-9

Santa has no presents for you, Mark Dantonio and Scott Frost.

Before we move on to the most wonderful week of the year, a quick Big Ten sports wagering season in review:

Most ridiculous spread: Michigan State minus 14½ against Arizona State. The Spartans didn't score until the fourth quarter and lost outright 10-7.

Bad beat of the year: Northwestern plus 6½ at Stanford was money until a strip-sack touchdown on the final meaningful — make that very meaningful — play of the Cardinal's 17-7 victory.

My worst prediction: I took Maryland plus 6½ when the Terrapins played host to Penn State. The Nittany Lions won 59-0.

My best prediction: I had Nebraska minus 5 against Maryland. The score was 54-0 with five minutes to play.

Spread of the year: Perhaps the season's worst game yielded the most stress. The line on Massachusetts-Northwestern ranged from 38½ to 41. The Wildcats won 45-6 after UMass didn't care enough to try to score from 16 yards out before time expired.

Onto the Big Ten bowls, plus two bonus picks. The lines are below with our latest picks against the spread. Tuesday morning odds courtesy of MyBookie.ag. Selections in bold.

Pinstripe Bowl: Wake Forest (plus 3½) vs. Michigan State

2:20 p.m. Friday, ESPN

Anyone else permanently scarred by last year's Spartans bowl game? Oregon beat Michigan State 7-6. Thanks, guys. What a show! I'll stay away from Mark Dantonio, America's most stubborn coach, and take Wake.

Holiday: USC (plus 2) vs. Iowa

7 p.m. Friday, FS1

This matchup pits comedy against drama. Trojans coach Clay Helton was reportedly a goner, and then he wasn't. And then his 2020 recruiting class was ranked dead last in the Pac-12 after the early signing period, leaving USC alumni to dust off their gold-plated pitchforks. Iowa football has no such shenanigans. Kirk Ferentz is in his 21st season, and the Hawkeyes perform reliably in bowls when they're not facing Christian McCaffrey.

Camping World: Iowa State (plus 3½) vs. Notre Dame

11 a.m. Saturday, ABC-7

Offensive coordinator Chip Long is out at Notre Dame after devising successful schemes but wearing on his players. Lance Taylor will coordinate the Irish rushing attack against Iowa State, and Tom Rees, who interviewed for the Northwestern offensive coordinator job, will devise the passing attack. Look for the Irish to play relaxed and play well.

Cotton: Memphis (plus 7) vs. Penn State

11 a.m. Saturday, ESPN

Speaking of coaches exiting stage right, Penn State offensive coordinator Ricky Rahne left for the top job at Old Dominion, while Memphis coach Mike Norvell bolted for Florida State. Offensive line coach Ryan Silverfield got promoted, and the Tigers players either love him or are great actors. I'll take the points.

Peach: Oklahoma (plus 14) vs. LSU

3 p.m. Saturday, ESPN

America's not buying into a Heisman jinx, pushing this line from 11 to 14 with 77% of money going on the Tigers. The Sooners wouldn't dare mess up the specter of LSU playing for the national championship in New Orleans, would they? No way. LSU's Joe Burrow will feast on Oklahoma's thin secondary.

Fiesta: Ohio State (plus 2) vs. Clemson

7 p.m. Saturday, ESPN

We'll have much deeper thoughts on this game as kickoff nears, but for now understand that my Big Ten heart is trumping my Big Ten brain. After watching the Buckeyes slaughter the best of the Midwest every week, I simply cannot pick Clemson — even if these Tigers are as good as the group that stampeded through the playoffs last season.

Redbox: Illinois (plus 6½) vs. California

3 p.m. Monday, FOX-32

It would be nice to know why the Illini used their zombie clones for the season finale against Northwestern and whether their bodies and brains will make the trip west. Quarterback Brandon Peters should be back after missing the Northwestern game with a concussion, so I'll take the Illini in a low-scoring (but hopefully high-energy) game.

Outback: Minnesota (plus 7½) vs. Auburn

Noon Jan. 1, ESPN

Turn away, Purdue fans. Remember what the Tigers did last year as a mere 3½-point favorite? They buried Purdue 63-14. This year's spread is north of a touchdown, and the 2019 Gophers are much better than the 2018 Boiler-makers. But still, we'll take an Auburn team with three pretty losses: Florida (24-13), LSU (23-20) and Georgia (21-14).

Citrus: Michigan (plus 7½) vs. Alabama

Noon Jan. 1, ABC-7

As the AP's Ralph Russo put it, this game should create enough content to feed "The Paul Finebaum Show" through June. Watch out for talk-show hosts who make this a referendum on whether Jim Harbaugh can win the big one and/or Nick Saban can mind-control his best draft-eligible players into suiting up. Thanks to the hook, I'll take Michigan.

Rose: Oregon (plus 3) vs. Wisconsin

4 p.m. Jan. 1, ESPN

I'm hoping 6,000-yard back Jonathan Taylor can run off into the San Gabriel Mountains sunset after this one. But after seeing Oregon thump an uber-reliable Utah team in the Pac-12 title game, I have a bit more faith in the defense of the Ducks.

Gator: Indiana (plus 2) vs. Tennessee

6 p.m. Jan. 2, ESPN

The Vols started 1-4 with a loss to Georgia Southern. Indiana stumbled a bit down the stretch, giving up a truckload of points and yards to Purdue in the season finale, and had offensive coordinator Kalen DeBoer leave for Fresno State's head coaching job, though he will call plays for Indiana in the bowl game. And yet, for reasons I can't articulate, I like the Hoosiers.

Last week: 7-3.

Season total: 75-66-3.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF

Sooners' Hurts enjoying final college ride

Stoic demeanor still there, but he's also loosened up at times

BY CLIFF BRUNT

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Almost begrudgingly, Jalen Hurts is having fun.

His Oklahoma teammates and coaches have defended their quarterback when asked about Hurts seemingly aloof personality. Hurts has let loose on a few occasions, revealing another side of the Alabama transfer.

"I told Jalen before he came here that if he did come here, that one of my goals was going to be for him to be able to enjoy it and have fun with it," Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley said. "I think that's an important part of this game."

It's understandable given his path why Hurts remains so focused. He knows how quickly things can change.

He was Alabama's starting quarterback for two seasons before Tua Tagovailoa replaced him at halftime of the national championship game following the 2017 season. Tagovailoa rallied the Tide to victory against Georgia and got the starting job the next year. Hurts stayed at Alabama instead of transferring and in ironic twist of fate, he endeared himself to Alabama fans by rallying the Tide past none other than Georgia in the Southeastern Conference championship game after Tagovailoa was injured.

After graduating from Alabama, Hurts transferred to Oklahoma — where he is having a memorable run. He was the Heisman Trophy runner-up and has led the Sooners to the College Football Playoff. He has passed for 3,634 yards and 32 touchdowns and rushed for 1,255 yards and 18 touchdowns. He'll play in the College Football Playoff for the fourth time when Oklahoma faces top-ranked LSU on Saturday in a national semifinal.

"My situation is unprecedented," Hurts said. That's the best way I can say it."

He allowed himself to relax a bit after the Sooners rallied from 25 points down to beat Baylor in the regular season — albeit just momentarily.

"It's something you want to try to soak in," he said after the win. "The greatest comeback in school history. Something that we wanted to enjoy. But now, that great comeback is not going to win us the game this week."

If it was up to Hurts, he'd probably never talk about any of it. He prefers to "keep the main thing the main thing," as he sometimes says.

"The 'main thing' is going out there and attacking every single day, every opportunity we have to get better," he said. "Attacking and trying to improve. Taking big steps."

Certainly, he's a far cry from Baker Mayfield's enormous personality. Hurts calls praise "rat poison," something he carried from playing for coach Nick Saban at Alabama.

"I really enjoy that from him," Oklahoma center Creed Humphrey said. "I'm kind of the same way. I don't really pay attention to statistics. It's all about doing your job to the best of your ability on every play. That's his attitude toward everything."

Hurts definitely has a different approach than some of his peers.

When asked about the rivalry with Texas the week of the game, he quipped, "Everybody's a rival." When asked if he did anything fun while he was in New York for the Heisman Trophy ceremony, he said, "Got some cheesecake."

Running back Trey Sermon once called Hurts an "old head" who listens to old-school music and makes jokes his uncle would make.

Even as Hurts presents himself as stoic, he has occasionally shown a desire to be more animated. In Oklahoma's spring game, he took a photo with his teammates in an end zone celebration — something he said he wouldn't have done at Alabama.

"He can certainly loosen up, laughs and jokes and has fun," Riley said. "There's certainly that side to him as well."

Oklahoma linebacker Kenneth Murray said Hurts' teammates see more of that person than the outside world.

"Business is business, and when it comes down to improving on things and comes down to trying to be the best, you have to take those things serious, but I think he's just like us on the team," Murray said.

"He's a guy that we're able to clown around with and joke around with," Murray added. "We also understand there's a time and place for everything and so when it's time to handle business, we've got to handle business."

Hurts probably knows that as well as anyone in the playoffs.



RONALD MARTINEZ/GETTY

As a graduate transfer, Jalen Hurts was a runner-up for this year's Heisman Trophy.



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BEARS



ARMANDO L. SANCHEZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Bears quarterback Mitch Trubisky hugs Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes on Sunday.

Campbell

Continued from Page 1

From the shotgun on first-and-10, Trubisky faked an inside handoff and rolled to his right. Bears coach Matt Nagy moved the passing point by design, exactly what Trubisky lobbied for after losing to the Packers seven days earlier. As a result, Trubisky had plenty of time and space to throw.

It was a leak play — Robinson ran a wheel route across the formation, finishing with a vertical run on the back side. Robinson isn't a burner, but his patience early in the down helped him gain two steps of separation from Chiefs safety Tyrann Mathieu.

Robinson was open at the 10-yard line when Trubisky's long, high throw landed at the 8. He overthrew the touchdown by 2 yards. He knew it right away, too, as evidenced by how he angrily clapped his hands and yelled "Damn it!" when the ball fell incomplete.

"It's one that we would all just say he missed," Nagy said Monday. "There are times in the games where you're going to miss some throws. That happened to be one. He felt it. Those are ones you want to learn from, and you want to try to hit those."

So what's the lesson?
"The lesson is that you want to hit them," Nagy said.
Gotcha, Coach.

This speaks to playmaking ability. Without a concrete coaching point to fix that overthrow, it boils down to either Trubisky has the feel for making that play or he doesn't.

Trubisky has proved throughout this season he doesn't consistently have it. His fourth-quarter overthrow of Taylor Gabriel on a potential 58-yard touchdown against the Chargers comes to mind — the would-have-been "dagger," as Nagy called it, in an eventual 17-16 defeat.

Or the late, underthrown incompleteness to Anthony Miller down the right seam that could've been an 83-yard touchdown against the Rams in that 17-7 loss.

The quarterback has to make good throws to capitalize on those big-play opportunities when they pop up, either because of play design or coverage bust. Be explosive. Be the reason your team wins.

"Mitch knows that he can make that throw," Nagy said. "He has made it in practice. His reaction after the throw, you knew that he would've wanted it back. I don't think 'pressing' is the word. I just think it's one of those deals where those are the type of plays that we want to hit. If we get that, it's 10-7."

Another one of Nagy's points on this missed opportunity: The overthrow didn't give Robinson a chance to play the ball. If the ball had been underthrown by 2 yards, there would have been a chance for pass interference or for Robinson to make a contested catch. Then again, you don't want to underthrow an open touchdown, especially considering the Bears' red-zone inconsistencies.

Just hit the throw.
"Mitch knows all this stuff," Nagy said. "This is nothing that I'm criticizing him for. It's just one that he missed."

Nagy doesn't need to call it criticism. It's just fact. Trubisky hasn't made such plays consistently enough. One or two more per game might have turned a couple close losses into wins, like the one-point Chargers defeat.

Oh, and for the few folks who insist Robinson slowed down at the end of the play, he didn't. Take it straight from the coach and the quarterback, both of whom said Trubisky missed the throw. The well-known shortcomings of Trubisky's supporting cast don't apply in this case to Robinson, the Bears' best offensive player.

As for Mahomes, the Bears kept the Chiefs without a play of 20 yards or more. But Mahomes made winning plays in other ways, specifically on third down.

One example: his 19-yard completion to Tyreek Hill on third-and-18 to extend the opening drive. Or his 12-yard touchdown run to finish that drive, when he saw Leonard Floyd vacate the edge and open a running lane.

Overall, Mahomes completed 6 of 9 third-down passes for five conversions, 91 yards and a touchdown. That amounted to a third-down passer rating of 136.8. He also had the touchdown run on third down. He did really well keeping his eyes up and downfield while feeling the pass rush around him in the pocket.

"He made some throws that he makes each week," Nagy said. "I thought schematically, we did a good job of preventing that long ball, that deep ball. You see it over and over over the course of games where they're hitting these 40-, 50-, 60-yard throws all the time. I thought that part was good. Third down for us defensively is where I felt like they had a couple plays on third down where they made some plays. But it's what they've been doing all year."

For what it's worth, Chiefs coach Andy Reid called Mahomes' three-touchdown game "a good, solid performance," an understatement that reflects Mahomes' weekly standard.

"He had some unbelievable throws in the mix there, and not a lot of guys can do that," Reid said. "So, he showed that part of his game. He showed the toughness part when 52 (Khalil Mack) is bearing down on you. He hung in there, and our offensive line did a pretty good job against (Mack) ... so it was overall a good job."

The Bears continue to suffer from a lack of takeaways.

Sunday was the Bears' third straight game without a takeaway and their sixth overall this season.

Wrap your head around the fact the Bears are tied for 25th in the NFL with only 16 takeaways. Last year, they led the league with 36. They could finish this season with less than half of last year's total.

The difference is in the interceptions. The Bears had 27 picks last season. This year, they have only eight, which would tie for the single-season franchise-record low (set in 2015, '16 and '17).

There are a few reasons for the drop-off. Luck and injuries are factors. A major one, presumably, is the Bears haven't played with a lead as often as they did last season. They've been the team that has to abandon its game plan and throw the ball to try to score fast.

Last season, the Bears led for an average of 36 minutes, 6 seconds per game, second-longest in the league, according to Football Outsiders. The Chiefs were the best at 39:09.

This year, the Bears have led for an average of 21:28 per game, which ranks 22nd. And that's through the Packers game — the average is sure to drop with the Week 16 update because the Bears trailed the Chiefs for the final 46:30.

That's a long way of saying Bears opponents have consistently been able to run the ball late instead of throwing in uncomfortable situations. When the opponent has to chase the game, it allows pass rushers to tee off and defensive backs more chances to get their hands on passes.

It's more difficult to quantify the effect of the change in play-caller from coordinator Vic Fangio to Chuck Pagano. But it's worth noting how widespread the praise was in the locker room for Fangio's knack for putting players in position to make plays, preparing them for opponents' tendencies and calling sound defenses at the right times.

It all adds up to a negative impact on a team formula that has produced a losing record and no playoff berth.

"Last year, we were on another level, another world with all those takeaways that we had," Nagy said Monday. "It's hard to replicate that. Not to say it can't be done. It's a part of flipping the field. It's a part of momentum. You didn't see that a whole lot (Sunday) on either side turnover-wise."

NFL POWER RANKINGS

Ravens, Saints 1-2 again

By BRAD BIGGS | Chicago Tribune



1. Ravens 13-2 (last week: 1): They had a tough go early in Cleveland, but then Lamar Jackson took over as the Ravens cruised to their 11th straight win.



2. Saints 12-3 (2): The machine rolls on. Drew Brees passed for 279 yards and three TDs and Alvin Kamara ran for two scores in a 38-28 road victory over the Titans.



3. Chiefs 11-4 (3): The defense is peaking at the right time. The Chiefs have limited their last five opponents to a total of 48 points while winning all five games.



4. 49ers 12-3 (4): A win over the Rams kept the 49ers in the hunt for the NFC's top seed. Jimmy Garoppolo needs to be cleaner as the Rams picked him off twice.



5. Patriots 12-3 (6): They rolled to their 11th consecutive AFC East title, a remarkable string of dominance, and are in position to secure the No. 2 seed.



6. Packers 12-3 (7): They clinched the NFC North by springing an upset Monday night in Minnesota. That keeps the Packers in the hunt for the No. 1 seed in the NFC.



7. Texans 10-5 (10): They continue to find a way in close games, winning for the fourth time in their last five games. All four victories have come by six points or fewer.



8. Seahawks 11-4 (5): The loss to the Cardinals proved very costly as running back Chris Carson went out with a hip injury. Enter 'Beast Mode.'



9. Bills 10-5 (9): The Bills have come up short in two of their last three and with the fifth seed in the AFC locked up, they can zero in on the Texans.



10. Vikings 10-5 (8): Monday's loss to the Packers locked the Vikings into the sixth seed in the NFC, making the finale Sunday against the Bears meaningless.



11. Titans 8-7 (11): Poor special teams play hurt the Titans as they struggled on kickoff coverage against the Saints. You can't live that way against that offense.



12. Rams 8-7 (14): A loss last Saturday in San Francisco on Robbie Gould's 33-yard FG as time expired ended the reigning NFC champions' playoff hopes.



13. Eagles 8-7 (16): The left-for-dead Eagles will win the NFC East if they can close out the season with a road victory over the Giants.



14. Steelers 8-7 (12): The struggling offense has hit a wall over the last two weeks. The Steelers scored only 10 points in each, losing both.



15. Buccaneers 7-8 (15): A four-game winning streak ended when they tangled with a team with a winning record in the Texans.



16. Bears 7-8 (17): The Bears have been very good in the third quarter most of the season, but not good enough to regularly overcome deficits.



17. Cowboys 7-8 (13): The Cowboys can make the playoffs if they beat the Redskins and the Giants top the Eagles, but this has been a slow march to a coaching change.



18. Falcons 6-9 (18): They have followed up a 1-7 start with a nice little run, but the hole dug for coach Dan Quinn in the first half seems too deep.



19. Colts 7-8 (20): They owe Jacoby Brissett \$7 million next season, and he can earn another \$8 million if he plays, but they may still be looking for a quarterback.



20. Raiders 7-8 (24): They swept the season series with the Chargers to snap a four-game skid and remain barely alive in the AFC playoff race.



21. Broncos 6-9 (21): Four losses have come by four points or fewer, so it's fair to wonder if the team has turned the corner with rookie quarterback Drew Lock.



22. Cardinals 5-9-1 (25): The stunning part of the upset in Seattle was the way the defense performed, limiting the Seahawks to 224 yards.



23. Jets 6-9 (26): The Jets have played pretty solid defense most of the season and were stout Sunday by limiting the Steelers to 10 points.



24. Browns 6-9 (22): The circus continued Sunday when TV cameras caught Odell Beckham Jr. throwing his helmet and in a heated confrontation.



25. Jaguars 5-10 (19): Changes have started as executive vice president Tom Coughlin was fired early in the week. What happens from here remains to be seen.



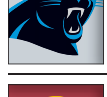
26. Chargers 5-10 (23): A miserable two-year existence at Dignity Health Sports Park ended Sunday in what amounted to a home game for the Raiders.



27. Dolphins 4-11 (29): The tank job they were supposed to pull off never really materialized. Instead of picking No. 1, they'll land in the top five.



28. Giants 4-11 (28): First-round pick Daniel Jones will make the coaching job look appealing if the Giants fire Pat Shurmur.



29. Panthers 5-10 (27): A seventh consecutive loss appears to have been the breaking point for veteran TE Greg Olsen. "I'm not sure what our plan is," he said.



30. Redskins 3-12 (30): They're one loss from guaranteeing they will pick No. 2 in the 2020 draft, and that could net Ohio State edge rusher Chase Young.



31. Lions 3-11-1 (31): The rest of the NFC North may have been enthused last week when the Lions announced GM Bob Quinn and coach Matt Patricia will return in '20.



32. Bengals 1-14 (32): The Bengals will pick No. 1 in the 2020 draft. That means they can start fitting a jersey for LSU quarterback Joe Burrow.



STEVEN RYAN/GETTY

Steelers QB Mason Rudolph throws a pass Sunday against the Jets.

NFL NOTES

Steelers' Rudolph on IR

News services

Mason Rudolph's season is over.

The Steelers placed the second-year QB on injured reserve on Tuesday, two days after he hurt his left shoulder in the third quarter of a loss to the Jets.

The move clears up the Steelers picture under center heading into the regular-season finale Sunday against the Ravens. Rookie Devlin "Duck" Hodges will make his fifth straight start for the Steelers (8-7), who are in a tie with the Titans for the final AFC wild-card spot.

The Steelers don't control their own destiny to reach the postseason. The clearest playoff path includes beating the AFC North champion Ravens while hoping the AFC South champion Texans top the Titans.

"We made the bed, we're willing to lay in it," Steelers coach Mike Tomlin said. "I've been in these circumstances before. We'll see where we are when the dust settles."

The Steelers need Hodges to be more careful with the ball. He's thrown six interceptions over his past two games and was pulled in the second quarter against the Jets after tossing picks on two of the Steelers' first three possessions.

It doesn't get any easier heading into Week 17. Hodges will have to play without C Maurkice Pouncey, who is out with a left knee injury sustained one snap before Rudolph went down.

Watt back at practice: J.J. Watt returned to practice with the Texans, clearing the way for the star DE to play in a playoff game next month.

The three-time NFL Defensive Player of the Year has been out since Oct. 27 after tearing a pectoral muscle and later undergoing surgery.

"I feel really good," Watt said. "We've worked extremely hard at rehab. We've had a very smooth process and everything's been going extremely well."

The Texans will have 21 days from Tuesday to take him off the injured reserve and add him to the active roster. If they plan to play him in their first playoff game during the weekend of Jan. 4-5, they'll have to activate him by 4 p.m. ET the day before the game.

The Texans (10-5) have already clinched the AFC South.

Extra points: The Seahawks have officially signed former star RB Marshawn Lynch. The club desperately need backfield help after Chris Carson (hip) and C.J. Prosise (arm) suffered season-ending injuries Sunday. ... Ravens QB Lamar Jackson surprised his offensive linemen on Christmas Eve by presenting each one with a Rolex watch, ESPN reported. Jackson leads the league with 36 TD passes and is the only player in NFL history with 3,000 yards passing in a season. ... Rams CB Jalen Ramsey will not play in Sunday's season finale against the Cardinals because of a knee injury.

SCOREBOARD

NBA

Table with columns: Conference, Team, W, L, PCT, GB. Includes Eastern and Western Conferences.

TUESDAY'S RESULT
No games scheduled.
WEDNESDAY'S GAMES
Boston at Toronto, 11 a.m.

NHL

Table with columns: Conference, Team, W, L, OT, Pts, GF, GA. Includes Eastern and Western Conferences.

Table with columns: Conference, Team, W, L, OT, Pts, GF, GA. Includes Eastern and Western Conferences.

GOLF

2020 LPGA TOUR SCHEDULE
Jan. 16-19: Diamond Resorts Tournament of Champions, Four Seasons Golf and Sports Club Orlando, Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

HOW AP MEN'S TOP 25 FARED
Tuesday
1. Gonzaga (13-1) did not play. Next: vs. Detroit, Monday, Dec. 30.

MEN'S SCHEDULE

TUESDAY
WEST
Ball St. vs. UTEP at Honolulu, H.I., late
WEDNESDAY
WEST
Boise St. vs. UTEP at Honolulu, H.I., TBA

HOW AP WOMEN'S TOP 25 FARED

Tuesday
1. UConn (10-0) did not play. Next: vs. Wichita State, Thursday, Jan. 2.

USA TODAY WOMEN'S TOP 25
Table with columns: RK, TEAM, W-L, PTS, LW

NFL

Table with columns: AFC, EAST, W, L, T, PCT, PF, PA, HOME, AWAY, AFC, NFC, DIV. Includes AFC and NFC divisions.

WEEK 16

MONDAY'S RESULT
Green Bay 23, Minnesota 10
WEEK 17
SUNDAY'S GAMES
Chicago at Minnesota, noon

ODDS

Table with columns: NBA, Pregame.com, SP, OU, WEDNESDAY. Includes odds for various games.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Table with columns: SP, OU, THURSDAY, THURSDAY. Includes college basketball odds.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Table with columns: SP, OU, THURSDAY, THURSDAY. Includes college football odds.

NFL

Table with columns: WEEK 17, SP, OU, SUNDAY. Includes NFL odds for Week 17.

TENNIS

2020 WTA SCHEDULE
Jan. 4-11: Shenzhen (China) Open
Jan. 6-12: Brisbane (Australia) International



LeBron James (23) and Anthony Davis will play on Christmas Day as teammates for the first time.

NBA

Now the real season starts

Christmas Day slate headlined by Lakers-Clippers

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

The MVP is playing. So are the reigning champions, north of the border. And in LA, the NBA's newest dynamic duos will square off as well.

On the 65th day of the season, with 454 games — more than one-third of the schedule — already in the books, the NBA's unofficial start date has arrived.

"It's going to be cool, man," said Raptors guard Kyle Lowry, who'll be making his Christmas debut.

The good news from a ratings perspective: Four of the Eastern Conference's five best teams so far are on the schedule, all playing each other.

IN BRIEF

Mich. AG suspends probe of MSU involving Nassar

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel suspended a nearly two-year-long investigation into Michigan State University's handling of complaints against now-imprisoned serial sexual abuser Larry Nassar, a spokeswoman said Tuesday.

The probe, which began under Nessel's predecessor, resulted in charges against three former school officials. One was convicted. Two others, including former president Lou Anna Simon, were ordered to trial.

College football: Ohio State QB Justin Fields may not be fully healthy when the second-round Buckeyes face No. 3 Clemson in the Fiesta Bowl on Saturday.

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OBITUARIES

LARRY HEINEMANN 1944-2019

The Chicago-born novelist explored ghosts of Vietnam

BY MATT SCHUDEL
The Washington Post

Larry Heinemann, a Vietnam veteran who explored his lingering battlefield memories in two acclaimed novels, including “Paco’s Story,” which unexpectedly won the National Book Award in 1987, died Dec. 11 at a hospital in Bryan, Texas. He was 75.

The cause was chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, said his daughter, Sarah Heinemann.

Drafted into the Army in 1966, Heinemann was sent to Vietnam, where he saw combat while peering over the barrel of a .50-caliber machine gun. After a tour of duty with the 25th Infantry Division, he returned to his hometown of Chicago and studied writing, compelled to tell the world about what he had experienced.

“I was a soldier of the most ordinary kind and the war took much away from me,” he wrote in a 2005 foreword to a new edition of “Paco’s Story,” “but the war also gave me a story that simply would not be denied, as well as a way of looking at the world.”

At a time when other books about Vietnam, including Philip Caputo’s “A Rumor of War” and Tim O’Brien’s “Going After Cacciato,” were gaining wide recognition, Heinemann’s first novel, “Close Quarters” (1977), received little notice.

Described as “a first-person grunt’s-eye view of the Vietnam War” by novelist Ivan Gold in the New York Times, “Close Quarters” recounted a year in the life of an infantry unit, with all its drudgery, violence, brutality — and ever-present fear.

“It rains harder for a time, then slacks,” he wrote. “The moonlight dims and the rain picks up again. Then the not-quite-rain sound. Not the rustling of crickets and hares, not a night sound, but the stride of farmers, plodding some, quick and silent some. Bare feet squeak in the grass. A silver and black shadow stands upright in the rain. ... He fires.”

“Close Quarters” gained a certain gritty renown, literary scholar Gerald Nicosia wrote in 2005, and “was quickly discovered and treasured by a loyal coterie of combat vets for its graphic, down-and-dirty realism.”

In 1986, Heinemann published “Paco’s Story,” the pained saga of a badly wounded soldier, Paco Sullivan, returning from Vietnam as the sole survivor of an attack that killed everyone else in his unit. The novel follows Paco as he wanders the country, getting off a bus in Texas,



CHICAGO TRIBUNE 2005

After a tour of duty with the 25th Infantry Division, Larry Heinemann returned to his hometown of Chicago and studied writing

where he works as a dishwasher, with his thoughts invariably returning to the horrors he witnessed in Vietnam.

The story, related by one of Paco’s ghostly fallen comrades, is addressed to an imaginary character referred to as James, whose only role is to listen in silence to the harrowing tale. The language is rough-hewn, profane and digressive, reflecting an attitude of cynicism and contempt toward authority of every kind. In one of his more lyrical passages, Heinemann wrote:

“And the next morning, in the bright, hot light of day, with the monsoon clouds clearing away to the west, the medic rose, stretched, and yawned ... and he looked around, soured, at the carnage and the ruin, the wreckage, at his fellows in Bravo Company (Which one of them will die today?). And, James, it was as if he saw the sheer, manifest ugliness — the blunt and pervasive, raw and stupefying ugliness — of that place for the first time.”

“Paco’s Story” was one of five finalists for the National Book Award for fiction, including Toni Morrison’s “Beloved” and Philip Roth’s “The Counterlife.” When Heinemann was announced as the winner, there was an awkward moment of stunned silence.

“This is an interesting surprise,” Heinemann said in accepting the award, which included a \$10,000 check and a sculpture by Louise Nevelson. “I didn’t come here expecting to win.”

Several days later, New York Times critic Michiko Kakutani published a tartly worded essay, noting the “surprise and astonishment” of “the literary community” and suggesting that “Paco’s Story” was not in the same league as “Beloved.” A group of African-American writers published a letter of protest in the Times, upset that Morrison had been overlooked.

(Her novel was awarded the Pulitzer Prize several months later.)

“They can squawk all they want to,” Heinemann said. “I ain’t giving back the Nevelson and the \$10,000 check has been cashed.”

Larry Curtis Heinemann was born Jan. 18, 1944, in Chicago. His father was a bus driver, his mother a homemaker.

Heinemann studied at a community college before serving in the Army. After coming back from Vietnam, he attended Columbia College Chicago, supporting himself as a bus driver before graduating in 1971.

“I became a writer because of the war,” he later said. “If not for Vietnam, I’d be driving a bus.”

Two of Heinemann’s brothers also served in the military during the Vietnam War. One of them vanished after returning from combat, and the other died by suicide.

“Everybody who came back knew that the war was a lie and that we had been betrayed and lied to,” Heinemann told the Los Angeles Times in 1988. “Basically we were used, wasted and dumped.”

He taught for 15 years at his alma mater, Columbia College Chicago, and in 1992 published a comic novel, “Cooler by the Lake,” that received lukewarm reviews. He received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Guggenheim Foundation and studied Vietnamese folklore on a Fulbright fellowship in Hue, Vietnam.

Heinemann was a writer-in-residence at several colleges, including at Texas A&M University from 2005 until his retirement in 2015.

His 45-year marriage to the former Edie Smith ended in divorce. Survivors include his partner of several years, Kathy Favor; two children from his marriage, Sarah Heinemann and Preston Heinemann; and a granddaughter.

In 2005, Heinemann published a memoir, “Black Virgin Mountain,” about his experiences in Vietnam and their lasting effect on his life.

“I arrived in Vietnam scared to death, and we were not pleasant people (down where the rubber met the road, so to speak) and the war was not a pleasant business,” he wrote. “I have no doubt we radicalized more southern Vietnamese to Ho Chi Minh’s nationalist revolution than we ‘saved.’ We understood perfectly well that we were the unwilling doing the unnecessary for the ungrateful.”

“Like everyone else, I simply wanted out.”

crossed the Delaware River for a surprise attack against Hessian forces at Trenton, New Jersey.

In 1818, “Silent Night” was performed for the first time, at the Church of St. Nikolaus in Oberndorff, Austria.

In 1868, President Andrew Johnson granted an unconditional pardon to everyone involved in the Southern rebellion that resulted in the Civil War.

In 1926, Hirohito became emperor of Japan, succeeding his father, Emperor Yoshihito. (Hirohito was formally enthroned almost two years later.)

In 1931, New York’s Metropolitan Opera broadcast an entire opera over radio for the first time: “Hansel and Gretel” by Engelbert Humperdinck.

In 1941, during World War II, Japan announced the surrender of the British-Canadian garrison at Hong Kong.

In 1989, ousted Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, were executed following a popular uprising.

In 1991, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev went on television to announce his resignation as the eighth and final leader of a communist superpower that had already gone out of existence.

In 1994, a Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up at a Jerusalem bus stop, injuring a dozen other people.

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Chicago Tribune Death Notices
Chicago Tribune extends our condolences to the families and loved ones of those who have passed.
chicagotribune.com/deathnotice

In Memoriam

Bernard Avello

Sweet are the happy hours we once enjoyed. A voice we loved is still. Merry Christmas.
Mary Ann and family

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Martin Peter Sum

Merry Christmas Pete on your seventh Christmas in Heaven. Christmas is not the same without you beside me. I love and miss you so much. I’m sending you all my love until we meet again.
Love always, Nancy.

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Death Notices

Chandler, Clarissa Haffner

Clarissa Haffner Chandler, 93, Passed away on December 20, 2019. She was born in Chicago, IL on October 9, 1926 to Charles C. Jr. and Clarissa (nee Donnelley) Haffner.

Clarissa grew up in Lake Forest and attended The Day School (which later became the Lake Forest Country Day School). She graduated from The Masters School in 1944, and Vassar College in 1948. After college, she moved to New York City and worked as a researcher for Time/Life for three years, before marrying Henry and moving to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Together, they lived and raised their family in several small midwestern cities — Lawrenceburg, Indiana; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Shaker Heights, Ohio — before returning to Lake Forest in 1962. After her children were grown, she received a Master’s in Education from National Lewis University. Clarissa’s dedicated lifelong community service included work as a Trustee of Lake Forest College; Trustee of Ragdale Foundation; an officer of Lake Forest Garden Club; third generation member of Lake Forest Coterie; a member and President of Contemporary Club of Chicago; member of the Friday Club of Chicago; and member of the Women’s Board of the Chicago Botanical Garden. She volunteered at Thresholds in Chicago, and taught Special Education at Lake Forest Country Day School. Clarissa was a passionate and discerning collector of contemporary art. Clarissa’s greatest joys included gardening, skiing in the Rockies and sailing with her husband Henry.

Clarissa is survived by her children Laura Emerson Chandler (Cary Stevens), Edward Kent Chandler (Susan) and Phoebe Chandler Turner (Arthur); her grandchildren Grace S. Chandler, Edward M. Chandler, Thomas H. Chandler, Adele O. Watel, and Charlotte G. Watel; sisters Frances Haffner Colburn and Phoebe Haffner Andrew. She was preceded in death by her loving husband Henry Tuttle Chandler (2016); her beloved son Henry Tuttle Chandler, Jr. and her brother Charles C. Haffner III.

A memorial service will be held in Lake Forest, at a later date to be determined. Memorial contributions may be sent to: Lake Forest College, 555 N. Sheridan Road, Lake Forest, IL 60045; Lake Forest Open Lands Association, 350 North Waukegan Road, Lake Forest, IL 60045; or Thresholds, 4423 N. Ravenswood Avenue, Chicago, IL 60640. Info: **Wenban Funeral Home** (847) 234-0022 or www.wenbanfh.com



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Farley, Jr., Donald Curtis

Donald C. Farley, Jr., 97, died peacefully on December 21, 2019. Don is survived by his three daughters, Carol, Sarah (Betty), and Ginger (Bob); grandchildren Harley, Lydia (Sam), Owen, and Nora; step-grandchildren Gabe and Nate; and brother Russell. Don was preceded in death by his dear wife Martha Struthers Farley, and his brother Roger. Our beloved father — grandfather — friend will be so dearly missed and lovingly remembered.

Don was born in Brookings, South Dakota in 1922, and completed life in his Evanston, Illinois home. Don’s lifelong passion for learning encompassed degrees in history, cello performance, divinity, and teaching, as well as countless continuing education classes and study tours. Don viewed his time as an Oberlin teaching fellow in China (1948-51) as a pivotal experience. Over the years, Don and Martha hosted hundreds of long- and short-term guests from around the world, resulting in a worldwide network of lifelong friends. After beginning college at Oberlin, Don served in the Army Airways Communication System in the South Pacific as a radio telegraph operator (1943-1945), attaining the rank of staff sergeant. Throughout his military service, during free time, Don could be found at concerts, notably at the first performance of a symphony orchestra in Tokyo during the U.S. occupation of Japan. After the war he returned to Oberlin College, where he and Martha met. He later earned a Master of Divinity degree at Yale University. Don’s professional work life began with ministry in the United Church of Christ, serving congregations in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, and Illinois over 20 years. During the 1970s, Don taught high school English. Music filled the Farley home. Don, a lifelong cellist, shared his love of music with every community of which he was a part. Sunday afternoon chamber music, annual “do-it-yourself”/sing-along Handel’s Messiah, singing as a part of every family gathering, and on and on: music was a constant from childhood to hospice. His love of music further bloomed in retirement with multiple amateur orchestra and recital performances, frequent concert attendance, and active leadership as an organizer of community music. A memorial celebration of Don’s life will be held at Tuesday, January 7, 10:30 a.m. at Alice Millar Chapel, 1870 Sheridan Rd, Evanston, IL 60208. Reception to follow at The Mather, 425 Davis St., Evanston. In lieu of flowers, contributions in Don’s memory may be made to the scholarship fund at Oberlin College and Conservatory, or to the American Indian College Fund.

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Hanson, Nadine Marie

Nadine Marie Hanson, 52, of Wheeling, beloved mother of Eric Bramer and Lauren Bramer; loving daughter of Robert (Dolores) and the late Joan Hanson; dear sister of Robert (Victoria) Hanson and Thomas (Kimberly) Hanson. Funeral service at **Simkins Funeral Home** 6251 Dempster St. Morton Grove, IL 60053 on Friday at 10:00 a.m. Interment Town of Maine Cemetery. Visitation Thursday from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Sign online guest book at www.simkinsfh.com. (847) 965-2500



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Heffernan, James K.

James K. Heffernan, Age 66, Born into Eternal Life on December 22, 2019. Beloved husband of Kathleen (nee McSweeney) for 43 years. Loving father of Patrick (Meghan), and Daniel Heffernan. Proud grandpa of Robert. Beloved son of the late Matthew and Kathleen Kenny Heffernan. Loving brother of the late Matthew (Jenny), Kathleen Lennon, Eileen Heffernan, CPD Ret. and Maureen Heffernan. Devoted son-in-law of Shirley and the late Robert McSweeney, CPD Ret., U.S.M.C. Fond brother-in-law of Hon. Colleen McSweeney (John Moore), Robert, CPD Ret. (Brid), Maureen (the late Arthur) Escherich, Timothy (Julia) McSweeney, Mary (Nicholas) Stiglich, and Julie (Rob) Rush. Dear uncle of many nieces and nephews. Proud alumnus of Mt. Carmel H.S. (1971) and St. Xavier University (1982), Past President of Mt. Carmel Alumni, and Man of the Year, Member of I.B.E.W. Local # 9, former Deputy Commissioner of Bureau of Electricity for the City of Chicago and Deputy Director of O.E.M.C., 19th Ward Precinct Captain, and a founding member of the Southside Irish Parade Committee. Visitation Friday, December 27th, 3-9pm at **Curley Funeral Home (Heeney-Laughlin Directors)**, 6116 W. 111th St., Chicago Ridge, IL 60415. Family and friends will meet at St. Cajetan Church, 112th St. & Artesian Ave., Chicago, IL 60655 on Saturday, December 28th for Mass of Christian Burial at 9:30am. Interment Mt. Olivet Cemetery. Memorials to Chicago Police Memorial Foundation, 1407 W. Washington Blvd., Chicago, IL 60607 are most appreciated. Info: Heeney-Laughlin Funeral Directors 708-636-5500 or heeneyfh.com



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Hilquist, Clara Ann

Decatur - Colonel Clara Ann Hilquist (retired) of Decatur, formerly of Park Ridge, IL passed away on Sunday Dec. 22, 2019 at Randall Residence in Decatur. Clara was born on Jan.26, 1932 in Morrisonville, IL the daughter of George and Veronica (Goebel) Richter. She was preceded in death by her husband Thomas A. Hilquist. Services will be Friday Dec. 27, 2019 at St. Maurice Church in Morrisonville, IL. Visitation will start at 10:00 am and the funeral Mass will follow at 11:00 am -- burial at St. Maurice cemetery with lunch served following the graveside rights at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Morrisonville, IL. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in her name to St. John’s School or Nursing in Springfield, IL. Arrangements by **Moran & Goebel** Funeral Home, Decatur, IL. www.moranandgoebel.com.

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Honquest, Marian

Marian Honquest, 77, died Saturday, December 21, 2019 at her home. Mass of Christian Burial: 10 a.m. Monday, December 30, 2019 at St. Jude Catholic Church. Visitation: 5 p.m. Sunday, Eulogies: 6:15 pm Sunday, Rosary: 6:30 p.m. Sunday, December 29, at Thompson’s Harveson & Cole Funeral Home. Private Interment.

Memorials: In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in her name to Mother & Unborn Baby Care or a charity supporting Dementia Research. Marian Therese Carew Honquest was born October 3, 1942 in Chicago, IL, the daughter of Joseph and Margaret Roche Carew. She was a graduate of Visitation Schools in Chicago and was a Registered Nurse.

On August 17, 1968, she married Jim Honquest and they were members of St. Francis deSales Catholic Church in Lake Zurich, IL. They transferred to Texas in 1980 and lived in Mansfield for the past 32 years. Marian dedicated her life to helping others through her volunteer work with Mother and Unborn Baby Care, Rose Life, and John Bosco Home School. She was a lay member of the Discalced Carmelites and an active member of St. Jude Catholic Church.

Above all, she was a loving wife, mother and grandmother. Marian was preceded in death by her parents and her brother, John Joseph Carew. Survivors: Husband, of 51 years, Jim Honquest; son, Mike Honquest and wife, Mary Carol, and their children, Dan, Shannon, Michael, Matthew and Bridget, of Elmhurst, IL; daughter, Kristen Honquest and her children, Katie, Kelsey and Kylie of Fort Worth; daughter, Kathy Cash and her husband, Mike, and their son, Braedon, of Fort Worth.

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In 1066, William the Conqueror was crowned king of England.

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In 1776, Gen. George Washington and his troops

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Mega Millions	27 37 48 63 66 / 11
Mega Millions jackpot:	\$45M
Pick 3 midday	239 / 7
Pick 4 midday	2984 / 6
Lucky Day Lotto midday	14 32 33 35 39
Pick 3 evening	843 / 2
Pick 4 evening	4820 / 7
Lucky Day Lotto evening	59 13 38 41
Dec. 25 Powerball:	\$183M
Dec. 26 Lotto:	\$15.5M
WISCONSIN Dec. 24	
Pick 3	391
Pick 4	2090
Badger 5	2 10 15 16 31
SuperCash	3 24 25 26 31 39

INDIANA Dec. 24	
Daily 3 midday	777 / 4
Daily 4 midday	5701 / 4
Daily 3 evening	568 / 8
Daily 4 evening	5764 / 8
Cash 5	4 27 36 38 39
MICHIGAN Dec. 24	
Daily 3 midday	517
Daily 4 midday	2095
Daily 3 evening	747
Daily 4 evening	9225
Fantasy 5	47 25 26 39
Keno	6 7 16 18 25 32
	34 35 38 44 47 48 49 50
	51 52 57 66 70 74 76 79

More winning numbers at chicagotribune.com/lottery

Chicago Tribune Death Notices

chicagotribune.com/deathnotice

Leeper, Robert B. 'Bob'

Bob Leeper, 82 Loving husband of Mardell for 60 years.



Bob showed amazing courage through a long illness. The son of the late Edward and Dolores Leeper of Bemidji, MN. Bob was one of six children, Mary Dillworth, Beverly Jensen, the late Sharon Coyne, the late Patty Tenca, and the late Jim Leeper. He is the brother in law of Sherman (Karen) Cundiff, and Marilyn Chaplin; and the cherished uncle of many.

With no children, Bob still had the honor of being a father of two brides and the father of one groom in Montreal and Maui.

Bob never had a formal education and started working by the age of 13 at the local pharmacy and Doctor's office. At the age of 17 he started working with a grocery and by the time he was 30, Bob had purchased his first grocery store. Bob later became the Chairman of the board of directors for Central Grocers, and Chairman of the board of directors of the Roselle Bank.

Bob had a cabin in Wisconsin that he had shared with family and friends for many years. He saw a "For Sale" sign on an old Bar/Restaurant and bought the place. He did not know the first thing about running a restaurant and bar but the "Pla-Mor" ran for ten years just by Bob saying "We can do this!"

His next venture was with Golf Stores; and 'Nevada Bob's' was created. He was most proud of opening eleven locations, including one in California. The corporation noted Bob as the best in the business. He really loved the Golf Business. Bob was always "Pressed and Dressed" and has been quoted saying "Right Time, Right Place and the Right People." He gave all the credit to everyone involved... "Nobody works for me, they work with me." Bob's success was people; "You don't do it alone." He loved business - it was never work, it was pure joy.

Bob was a self taught, self made, brilliant businessman, with a huge personality.

He was a kind, giving, guiding advisor, a mentor, a loving beautiful man, and a distinguished, charming and elegant man. Bob loved everyone. Bob mentored troubled high school students and said that kids will share more with someone other than their family.

Bob was a very generous man beginning with every charity that came into his mailbox... he gave to all of them. His most important charity was the Mayo Clinic.

When it came to his wife, Mardell, he always said, "I married the most beautiful girl, and I am the luckiest guy on earth." He would also tell everyone, "It's been a good ride and an incredible journey." He and Mardell have traveled the world for the past 60 years. Bob loved reading, he loved tennis, played golf, traveling, theater, City Evenings, Dancing, entertaining and sunsets. He was ever thankful and grateful to everyone and for everything. Bob's best saying was, "Do as much as you can as fast as you can and be kind along the way." In Lieu of flowers please make a donation to your favorite charity in Bob's name.

Family and friends will gather at Sax-Tiedemann Funeral Home, 9568 Belmont Ave., Franklin Park on Sunday, January 12, 2019 from 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm to Celebrate Bob's Life. for information please call (847) 678-1950 or www.sax-tiedemann.com

Sign Guestbook at chicagotribune.com/obituaries

Ludwig, Mary Ellen

Mary Ludwig, 94, of McHenry, passed away on November 10, 2019.



She was born May 21, 1925 in Chicago, IL. Her birth parents were Frederick Richard Rabold 1902-1990 and Julia Margaret Bannon 1902-1960. Mary was raised by caring foster parents Henry Cromey 1874-1950 and Anna Cromey 1885-1952.

She reportedly has a half sister Judith E. Mazzolini (Rabold), born in 1941.

She was preceded in death by husbands, Leonard Panske 1920-1976, William Ludwig 1924-1996 and Jerome Paradise 1925-2003.

Mary had children, Richard Bell (James Pluess) (Karen), Paul Panske Ludwig (Jackie) and Patricia Ludwig Wenberg (Dan).

Grandchildren Michelle, Patty, Jim, Laurie, Victoria, Karen and Todd.

Great Grandchildren Zac, Nikol, Priscilla, Timothy, Anthony, Anja, Lyla and Madison.

Mary enjoyed family and friends above all and also participated with mass and church activities. We were all blessed to have her in our lives and she will live on in us all.

Sign Guestbook at chicagotribune.com/obituaries

Rosenberg, Donald

Donald Rosenberg, age 87, beloved husband of Ruth Rosenberg, happily married for 30 years;

devoted husband of the late Marcia Rosenberg; loving father of Sheryl and Michael (Denise) Rosenberg; much loved step-father of Jody and David Rein; cherished Papa of Jessica (Chris), Justin, Jillian (Matt) and Brett (Kat); wonderful step-grandfather of Peter and Jacob; Donald was a proud great-grandfather of seven and a beloved family man. A special thank you to James and Francis for their care and dedication. Graveside service Thursday, December 26, 12:00 PM at Shalom Memorial Park, 1700 W. Rand Road, Arlington Heights. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to a charity of your choice. For information and condolences: 847-255-3520 or www.shalom2.com

 Shalom
Memorial Funeral Home

Sign Guestbook at chicagotribune.com/obituaries

Sinderson, Jean M.

Jean Sinderson
Nee Dvorak

Age 86 passed away peacefully Sunday December 22, 2019. A resident of the Carillon Community in Plainfield, formerly of Lemont and Berwyn. Beloved twin sister of Joan Dvorak; daughter of the late Frank and Mae Dvorak, sister of the late Frank (Virginia) Dvorak and Eleanor (Edward) Lukes; loving wife of the late Joseph Belina and Thomas Sinderson; aunt of one niece and three nephews. She was a 42-year employee of the 3M company. Visitation Friday December 27, 2019 from 9 am to 10:30 am at Anderson Memorial Chapel, 606 Townhall Dr., Romeoville, IL 60446. Funeral Mass to follow 11 am at St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Romeoville. Family and friends are invited to meet at Queen of Heaven Cemetery in Hillside for Committal Prayers at 1 pm, no procession. (www.Anderson-Goodale.com) (815) 886-2323

Sign Guestbook at chicagotribune.com/obituaries

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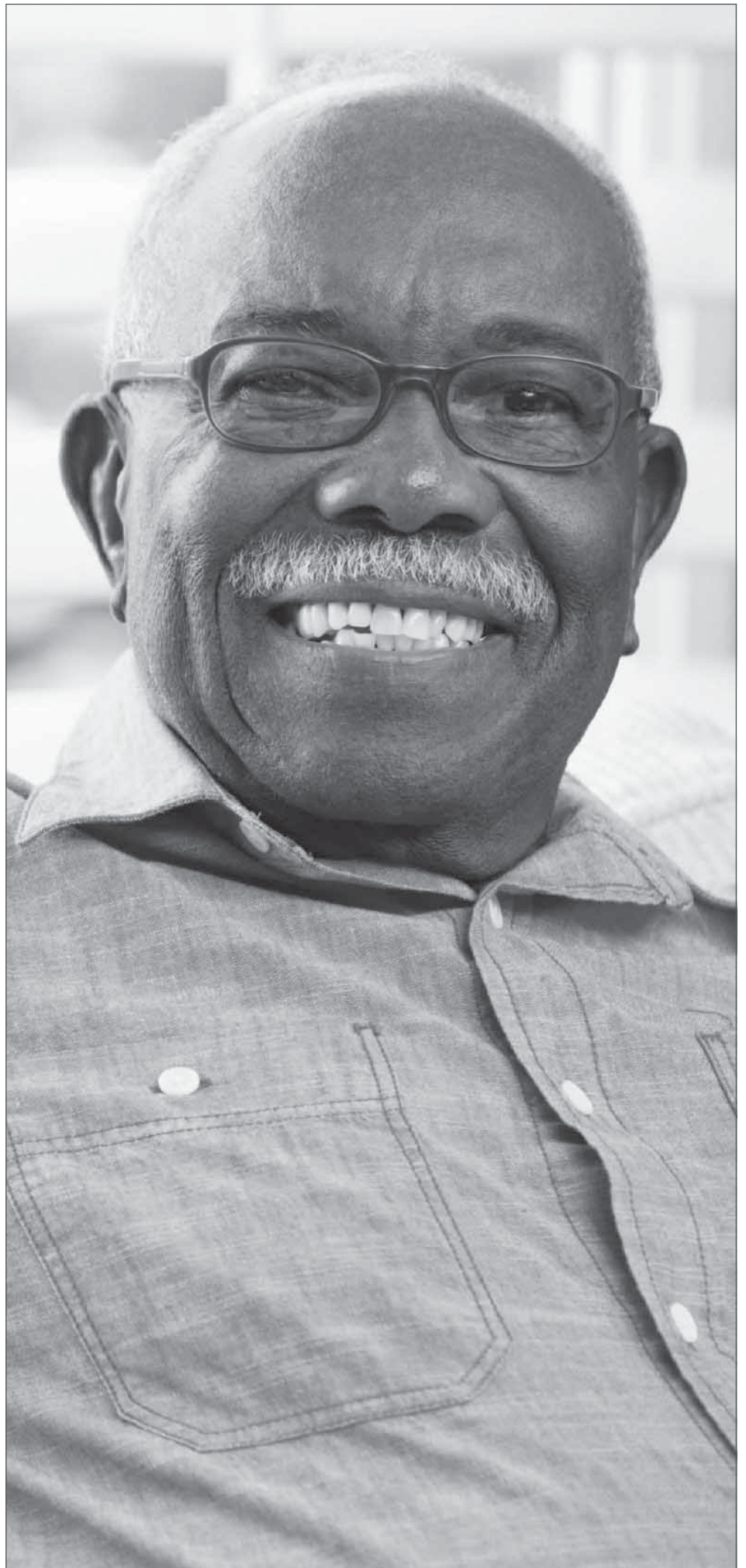
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Chicago Tribune

Visit:

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Chicago Tribune

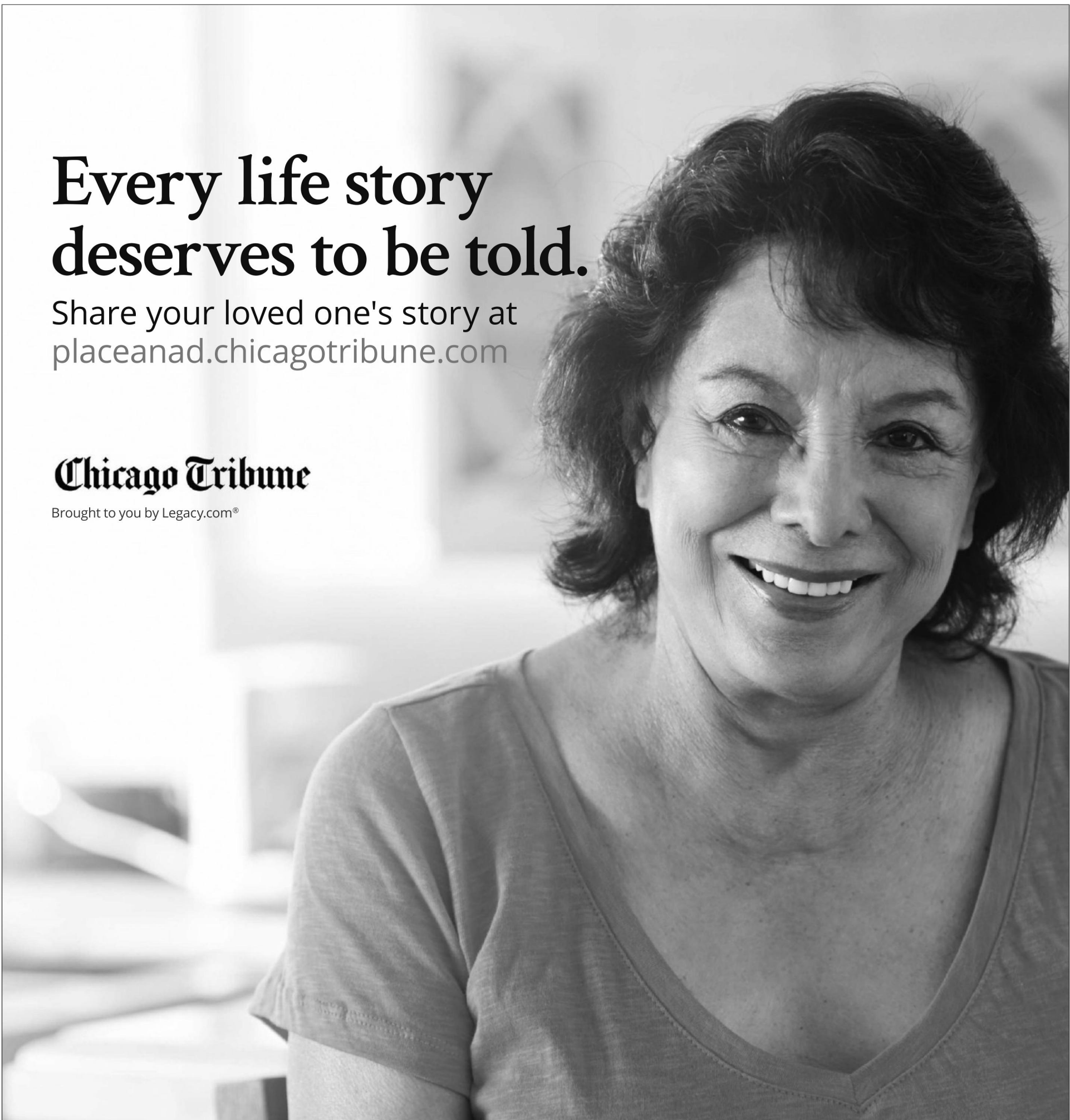
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CHICAGO WEATHER CENTER

chicagoweathercenter.com | BY TOM SKILLING AND WGN9



WEDNESDAY, DEC. 25 NORMAL HIGH: 32° NORMAL LOW: 18° RECORD HIGH: 64° (1982) RECORD LOW: -17° (1983)

City to bask in one of its warmest Christmases

LOCAL FORECAST

HIGH 57 **LOW** 43

- Chicagoans bask in what could be the city's second-warmest Christmas on record.
- Some morning fog and haze early, then skies become partly sunny.
- Unseasonably mild as high reach the middle and upper 50s, about 25 degrees above normal.
- South-southwest winds 10-18 mph.
- Mostly cloudy and mild overnight. Lows in the lower and middle 40s.

NATIONAL FORECAST



Dense fog blanketed the Chicago area Tuesday morning, causing ground stops at O'Hare and Midway airports and disrupting holiday travel. However, the fog dissipated by mid-morning, and the return of filtered sunshine accompanied by southerly winds allowed temperatures to climb into the 50s for the third straight day.

The unseasonable warmth will continue with the 57-degree high expected on Christmas, likely to be the city's second warmest on record, runner-up to the record 64-degree high reached on Christmas in 1982. The warmth should continue Thursday, potentially breaking the 55-degree record high for Dec. 26, set in 1971.

A strong storm system is forecast to develop over the weekend and will bring heavy snowfall to the upper Midwest, but rain to the Chicago area.

THURSDAY, DEC. 26

HIGH 58 **LOW** 43

Potentially a record-warm Boxing Day. (old record 55° in 1971). Filtered sunshine and gusty south-southwest winds. Mostly cloudy overnight as winds shift to the west.

FRIDAY, DEC. 27

HIGH 49 **LOW** 39

Mainly sunny. Gusty west winds. Not as warm as highs hold in the 40s, but readings still more than 15 degrees above normal. Cloudy overnight with a chance of rain by morning.

SATURDAY, DEC. 28

HIGH 52 **LOW** 44

Windy and mild with periods of rain. Gusty southeast winds. Highs reach the lower 50s inland, but 40s prevail near the lake most of the day. Showers diminish overnight as winds shift northwest.

SUNDAY, DEC. 29

HIGH 46 **LOW** 25

Windy and sharply colder with temperatures falling into the 30s. Gusty west winds 15-25 mph. Scattered showers change to snow showers as temperatures fall into the mid/upper 20s.

MONDAY, DEC. 30

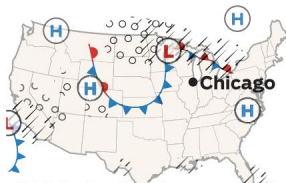
HIGH 31 **LOW** 22

Partly sunny and seasonably cold with gusty northwest winds 15-25 mph. Some lake-effect snow showers in the usual Michigan and Indiana snow belts.

TUESDAY, DEC. 31

HIGH 36 **LOW** 24

A mostly sunny and seasonably cold New Year's Eve. West winds 10-15 mph. Fair and cold overnight. Temps in the upper 20s as 2020 begins.



NOTE: Predicted high/low temps on Tribune weather page are chronological—the "high" refers to maximum reading expected during day and "low" is the minimum reading expected the following night.

ASK TOM

Dear Tom,
Except for test stations that may be located in the Arctic or Antarctic, is Winnipeg, Canada, the coldest city on the planet?

Alex Grayes

Dear Alex,
With an average annual temperature of 38 degrees, Winnipeg is far from being the coldest city on earth. (Chicago's average annual temperature, by comparison, is about 50 degrees, depending on the location.)

Many towns in northern and central Canada and in Alaska are considerably colder, and locations in Siberia are much colder.

Verkhoyansk, in northeastern Siberia (Russia) has an average annual temperature of 5.9 degrees, and is probably the coldest town on earth, with the exception of locations in Antarctica.

On Feb. and 7, 1892, Verkhoyansk registered a temperature of minus-90 degrees, its lowest temperature ever.

Write to: ASK TOM
2501 W. Bradley Place
Chicago, IL 60618
asktomwhy@wgn9.com

WGN-TV meteorologists Mark Carroll, Steve Kahn, Richard Koeneman, Paul Merzlock and Paul Dailey, plus Bill Snyder, contribute to this page.

Hear Demetrius
Ivory's weather updates weekdays 3 to 6 p.m. on WGN-AM 720 Chicago.

Warmth to last through Christmas before end-of-year chill

CLIMATOLOGICAL GHOSTS OF CHRISTMAS PAST

- Average high/low: 32°/18°
- Warmest: 64° in 1982
- Coldest: -17° in 1983
- Highest minimum: 46° in 1936
- Lowest maximum: -5° in 1983
- Most precipitation: .50" in 1950 and 1909
- Most snow: 5.1" in 1950
- Deepest snow cover: 17" in 1951

WHITE CHRISTMAS (1" snow cover)

45% OF THE YEARS
Most recent: 2017 (2")

EARLY-MORNING FOG DISRUPTS CHRISTMAS EVE TRAVEL

Cancellations/delays plague both O'Hare and Midway

LOWEST VISIBILITIES TUESDAY MORNING, 12/24

O'Hare visibility plot
One-eighth mile: 7:30 AM to 9:05 AM

THE OTHER BOOT DROPS

Weekend storm could bring heavy snows to upper Midwest...

...seasonable cold returns here as 2019 wanes

High temps for Monday, December 30

LATE-DECEMBER WARMTH

City logs third straight 50°+ day could tie longest late Dec. streak

12/22	52°	12/25	57°*
12/23	52°	12/26	58°*
12/24	55°		

*forecast

Since 1870, only one 5-day string of 50°+ days beyond Dec. 21: December 23-27, 1971

12/23	51°	12/26	55°
12/24	51°	12/27	57°
12/25	55°		

MIDWEST CITIES				OTHER U.S. CITIES				WORLD CITIES							
WED./THURS.	FC	HI	LO	WED./THURS.	FC	HI	LO	WED./THURS.	FC	HI	LO	WEDNESDAY	FC	HI	LO
Illinois	pc	62	52	41	Albany	su	74	45	sh	68	52	Kingston	pc	86	76
Carbondale	pc	57	47	37	Albuquerque	pc	46	28	sh	40	34	Lima	pc	67	67
Champaign	pc	57	47	37	Amarillo	pc	62	35	sh	60	36	Amsterdam	sh	48	37
Decatur	pc	60	49	38	Anchorage	ss	23	15	ss	19	-5	Ankara	sh	42	35
Moline	pc	59	47	36	Asheville	pc	62	36	sh	66	36	Athens	sh	58	46
Peoria	pc	60	48	37	Aspen	pc	31	12	pc	30	11	Auckland	pc	72	60
Quincy	pc	66	50	35	Atlanta	pc	62	40	sh	64	48	Baghdad	pc	69	53
Rockford	pc	55	45	35	Atlantic City	pc	49	33	sh	48	42	Bangkok	pc	92	78
Springfield	pc	60	50	35	Austin	pc	71	54	sh	71	55	Barbados	pc	86	79
Sterling	pc	56	45	35	Baltimore	pc	48	32	pc	48	37	Barcelona	pc	63	47
Indiana					Billings	pc	38	25	pc	37	25	Bogota	pc	72	60
Bloomington	pc	62	49	38	Birmingham	pc	68	47	sh	67	52	Buenos Aires	pc	71	59
Evansville	pc	64	51	39	Bismarck	sh	21	18	sh	25	7	Cairo	pc	67	58
Fort Wayne	pc	57	42	31	Boise	pc	40	33	sh	40	32	Cancun	pc	80	67
Indianapolis	pc	58	47	36	Boston	pc	21	18	sh	25	7	Caracas	pc	80	64
Lafayette	pc	58	49	38	Brownsville	pc	77	63	sh	77	62	Casablanca	pc	76	64
South Bend	pc	56	45	35	Buffalo	pc	47	33	sh	45	44	Cebu	pc	82	70
Wisconsin					Burlington	sh	36	19	sh	33	28	Dublin	pc	41	31
Green Bay	fg	38	35	fg	46	30	23	pc	66	54	Dubai	pc	73	61	
Kenosha	pc	52	43	pc	66	54	41	pc	62	50	Dushanbe	pc	75	63	
La Crosse	cl	47	38	cl	42	37	31	pc	62	50	Edmonton	pc	21	6	
Madison	cl	51	41	pc	52	29	23	pc	62	50	Geneva	pc	50	34	
Milwaukee	pc	52	41	pc	55	32	26	pc	62	50	Hanoi	pc	51	45	
Wausau	fg	38	34	sh	40	25	19	pc	62	50	Hong Kong	pc	50	26	
Michigan					Charlotte	pc	58	35	pc	62	39	Istanbul	sh	51	45
Detroit	pc	51	36	fg	54	48	42	pc	62	50	Jakarta	pc	56	46	
Grand Rapids	pc	51	39	fg	55	49	43	pc	62	50	Johannesburg	pc	83	67	
Marquette	sh	36	34	sh	41	32	26	pc	62	50	Kabul	pc	50	26	
St. Ste. Marie	sh	36	31	sh	38	34	28	pc	62	50	Kiev	sh	43	35	
Lafayette	pc	58	49	sh	61	42	36	pc	62	50	London	pc	51	41	
South Bend	pc	56	45	sh	60	37	31	pc	62	50	Los Angeles	pc	66	48	
Iowa					Chicago	pc	57	43	pc	57	43	Los Angeles	pc	66	48
Ames	pc	56	31	pc	40	22	16	pc	62	50	Los Angeles	pc	66	48	
Cedar Rapids	pc	56	40	pc	46	26	20	pc	62	50	Los Angeles	pc	66	48	
Des Moines	pc	59	34	pc	42	24	18	pc	62	50	Los Angeles	pc	66	48	
Dubuque	pc	54	42	pc	49	27	21	pc	62	50	Los Angeles	pc	66	48	

FORECAST (FC) ABBREVIATIONS: su-sunny pc-partly cloudy cl-cloudy rn-rain ts-thunderstorm sn-snow fl-furries fr-freezing rain sl-sleet sh-showers rs-rain/snow ss-snow showers w-windy na-unavailable

CHICAGO DIGEST

TUESDAY TEMPERATURES

LOCATION	HI	LO	LOCATION	HI	LO
Aurora	54	27	Midway	55	28
Gary	55	25	O'Hare	55	30
Kankakee	56	26	Romeoville	54	26
Lakefront	55	28	Valparaiso	52	27
Lansing	54	23	Waukegan	45	28

CHICAGO PRECIPITATION

PERIOD	2019	NORMAL
Tue. (through 4 p.m.)	0.00"	0.06"
December to date	0.17"	1.83"
Year to date	48.16"	36.47"

CHICAGO SNOWFALL

PERIOD	O'HARE	MIDWAY
Tue. (through 4 p.m.)	0.0"	0.0"
Season to date	8.8"	6.9"
Normal to date	7.4"	7.7"

LAKE MICHIGAN CONDITIONS

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
Wind	S 10-22 kts. SW 11-22 kts.
Waves	1-3 feet 2-4 feet
Tue. shore/crib water temps	36°/33°

U.S. SNOW COVER

DEC. 24	2019	2018
Area covered by snow	25.5%	22.8%
Average snow depth	2.0"	1.6"

TRACKING THE COLD

SINCE OCT. 15	O'HARE	MIDWAY
Sub-32° highs	10 days	8 days
Subzero lows	0 days	0 days

CHICAGO AIR QUALITY

Tuesday's reading: Moderate
Wednesday's forecast: Moderate
Critical pollutant: Particulates

WEDNESDAY RISE/SET TIMES

Sun	7:16 a.m.	4:24 p.m.
Moon	6:40 a.m.	4:06 p.m.

WEDNESDAY PLANET WATCH

PLANET	RISE	SET
Mercury	6:41 a.m.	3:41 p.m.
Venus	9:28 a.m.	6:59 p.m.
Mars	4:09 a.m.	1:56 p.m.
Jupiter	7:25 a.m.	4:30 p.m.
Saturn	8:25 a.m.	5:43 p.m.

BEST VIEWING TIME DIRECTION

Mercury	Not visible
Venus	5:15 p.m. 15° SW
Mars	5:30 a.m. 12.5° SE
Jupiter	Not visible
Saturn	5:15 p.m. 4° SW

SOURCE: Dan Joyce, Triton College

SHOWSTOPPING NEWS

From one of the most influential theater critics in America.

Chicago's own Chris Jones, covering theater news and reviews from Chicago to Broadway: chicagotribune.com/theaterloop

Chicago Tribune
the Theater Loop
WITH CHRIS JONES

Chicago Tribune

HEALTH & FAMILY



ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Alexis Brown, shown Dec. 13, was seriously injured in a car accident in March. The impact of the collision left her with a broken leg, jaw, hand and thumb. Her ankle took the most damage.

‘Not a sign of weakness’

BY DARCEL ROCKETT

Holiday stress can lead to mental health issues this season; it's OK to ask for help

Bronzeville resident Alexis Brown was driving to a friend's south suburban home in the early morning hours of March 16 when exhaustion led to her collision with a median in Dolton.

The self-taught mixologist said she doesn't really know the sequence of events after that, but she does recall not being able to feel her right upper thigh because the crash had broken her femur in half. The crash also broke her jaw in three places, her hand and her thumb. But her ankle was the worst. It took her eight months to relearn how to walk.

"I hit the median head-on, and the first responders didn't expect someone to survive that," she said. "I couldn't put any pressure on my foot for the first two or three months after the accident, and my mouth was wired shut, so I had to get fed through a syringe. I couldn't use the bathroom because I couldn't move to the bathroom that well. The nurses would have to change me."

In the hospital for a little under a week, the 30-year-old said she had a mini-mental breakdown the day that they were trying to discharge her. Looking back, Brown

said, the accident occurred because she felt she had to "be present for everything, be involved in everything," because if she didn't, she wouldn't be relevant — especially in the bartending industry, where she is one of only a few people of color.

"I was trying to cram everything in. Normally, I take a nap before a shift, but I didn't and worked a shift from about 9 p.m. to about 5 a.m.," she said.

Being "on" all the time. Social isolation. Both can be causes of a mental health tailspin, especially during the holiday season, says Dr. Oluola Ajilore, an associate professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Illinois at Chicago and a researcher with UIC's Center on Depression and Resilience.

"Around the times of the holidays, people have constant reminders of what one's ideal life should look like, surrounded by friends and family, and if that's not your reality, it can be very difficult with a lot of the images

you see in commercials," he said. "It's a constant reminder of what one might be missing in one's life, and that can be difficult dealing with during the holidays."

But that's not the only cause of concern when talking about mental health in black and brown communities. Therapy is taboo for many, so the topic is often not discussed. Socioeconomic barriers and historical factors, including slavery, police brutality and mass incarceration as well as educational, social and economic discrimination can play parts in accessibility to mental health services.

According to the Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health, African Americans are 10% more likely to experience serious psychological distress than the average American, and approximately 30% of African American adults with mental illness receive treatment each year, compared with the U.S. average of 43%, according to the National Alliance on Mental

Illness.

"What I hear from some of my patients is that even though they've come to terms with their mental illness and have insight into their condition and what they need to do to treat it, they sometimes face resistance from friends or a family member," Ajilore said. "I had a patient whose family members threw away her medication. This was a woman on antidepressants and mood stabilizers. She was actually off medication for some time before I could get her back on. It's really difficult because there are a lot of barriers for people to even get to the point where they're seeing a psychiatrist or a therapist, and then to get that kind of resistance makes it very difficult."

The unwritten rule is that you're expected to deal with trauma and tragedy and get over it just by being strong, Ajilore said. He typically counsels patients dealing with such situations by telling them to set up appropriate boundaries with a

loved one who may be toxic or difficult, someone who doesn't believe that they need to get treatment or that they need to pray more or use other methods.

"Seeking help is not a sign of weakness," Ajilore added. "Everybody needs help, and there are qualified people out there that can deliver that help. The important thing is one needs to pay attention to their emotional well-being, which is just as important as their physical well-being. Oftentimes I will have patients who say, 'I've tried therapy — it wasn't for me.' And I'll say maybe it just wasn't the right fit. Sometimes you might have to meet with two or three therapists or audition a couple of people before you find the right one."

Brown, co-founder of Causing A Stir, whose goal is to "educate new emerging talent and empower leaders in underserved and underrepresented communities within the hospitality industry," agrees. While others would be discouraged by an accident such as hers, Brown chose to slow down and "pay attention to what's important in life." She's back behind the bar these days,

Turn to **Health**, Page 2

Christmas with older kids is a little too calm



HEIDI STEVENS
Balancing Act

I wrapped Christmas gifts on my living room floor, next to our Christmas tree, at the perfectly sensible hour of 5:30 p.m. last week.

The kids were not in bed. One,

in fact, was all of 200 feet away, watching "Gilmore Girls" on her phone.

I did not hide what I was doing, nor did I hide the gifts before they were wrapped. They've mostly been sitting in my bedroom, next to my desk, in shopping bags. Not stowed away in our cold, scary attic or in the back of my closet behind the jeans I haven't worn in 14 years but, hey, they might come back in style one day so take that, Marie Kondo.

Our Elf on the Shelf has never

been more sedentary. My son told me three days after Thanksgiving, "I don't think there's really a Santa." And I kept my face neutral. And he added, "And I think you move the elf every night." And I kept my face neutral. And he kept his face neutral. And then I said, "It was fun all those years though, wasn't it?" And he said, "Yeah."

So now the elf just sits there. Not one single time this year did my husband or I wake up in a cold sweat at 4 a.m. and say, "The elf!"

No one is begging to go to Win-

ter Wonderfest at Navy Pier. No one is begging to drive around and look at holiday lights. It was like an isentropic flow equation to find an evening they were both free to have dinner by the big tree at the Walnut Room with my mom, an annual tradition we started when my daughter was 8 weeks old. They were happy to go, but they weren't counting down the minutes to go, the way they used to.

The weeks leading up to Christmas were ... calm this year.

It's making me a little sad.

Calm is relative, of course. We were still squeezing a dozen extra activities/errands/outings into each week. Buy a tree and put up a tree and string some lights and bake some cookies and buy an ugly sweater for the winter dance and a coat for the winter coat drive and a plain black shirt for the winter band concert and gifts for the family we adopted and gifts for our friends and another

Turn to **Stevens**, Page 2

Kids & Students visit **FREE** with code "WINTER19" through January 5

VISIT ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM



3D Interactive Survivor Holograms
Abe & Ida Cooper Survivor Stories Experience

See Eva Kor, Mengele twin experiment survivor, through December.

What will you ask her?



Make a Difference!
The Harvey L. Miller Family Youth Exhibition
Hands-on activities that empower children ages 8-12 to take action



Take A Stand Lab
The power of change is in your hands.
How will you #TakeAStand?

Abe & Ida Cooper Survivor Stories Experience features Dimensions in Testimony, developed by USC Shoah Foundation in partnership with Illinois Holocaust Museum

ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

Teens vaping marijuana on the rise, NIH says

BY KATE THAYER

Teens are vaping marijuana more, even as they engage in other illicit drug use, drink and smoke less, according to survey results released Wednesday by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

The annual Monitoring the Future survey of more than 42,000 eighth-, 10th- and 12th-graders from nearly 400 schools across the country showed that although use of all other categories of illicit drugs, as well as alcohol and tobacco, remained steady or declined over last year, marijuana vaping among young people climbed.

"Any substance use has the potential for harm, particularly in young people, because the drugs affect their (developing) brain," said Jack Stein, chief of staff at NIDA, part of the National Institutes of Health. But vaping is "kind of unique. Vaping is a technology, and it's a way to administer substances that came to the surface only a handful of years ago."

That technology has become appealing to teens because the sleek vaping devices are easy to hide, whether they're vaping marijuana or nicotine, Stein said. But education and prevention have yet to catch up to the spread of the trend.

The trend also worries public health officials given a mysterious, vaping-related respiratory illness that researchers now think could be tied to black-market, marijuana vaping. So far, more than 2,400 people have been hospitalized and at least 52 have died, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

And as the Jan. 1 legalization of marijuana looms in Illinois, those who work in addiction worry that access will only improve for teens.

The survey, led by a University of Michigan researchers, asks teens

about drug use in the previous month as well as the previous year.

The report showed past-month vaping in 12th-graders nearly doubled from 7.5% last year to 14% this year — the second largest one-year jump the survey has recorded since it started in 1975. Results also showed 20.8% of 12th-graders, 19.4% of 10th-graders and 7% of eighth-graders said they'd vaped marijuana in the past year. Overall, past-year vaping has more than doubled since 2017, according to the report.

For all secondary students, the increase in marijuana vaping means at least 1 million more marijuana vapers in 2019, compared with the year prior, researchers said.

For the first year, the survey also asked teens if they vape marijuana daily, and found that 3.5% of 12th-graders, 3% of 10th-graders and 0.8% of eighth-graders said they did.

Jim Brunetti, director of clinical services at the Renz Addiction Counseling Center in Elgin, works on education and prevention for youth, specifically surrounding vaping. He said he's not surprised by the results, and it's a sign people in his field need to reach teens when they're younger.

There should also be a shift in how school administrators deal with catching a student vaping, whether it's marijuana or nicotine.

"They need to make it not as much of a punitive thing if someone gets caught," he said, and rather "give them the right tools."

That means counseling and education on the dangers of vaping, Brunetti said, adding that he's also concerned the upcoming legalization of the product will send teens "the wrong message."

There's also a continued increase in vaping nicotine products among young people, according to the survey.

Those results were re-



GABBY JONES/BLOOMBERG

"Any substance use has the potential for harm, particularly in young people, because the drugs affect their (developing) brain."

— Jack Stein, chief of staff at NIDA, part of the National Institutes of Health

leased early, in September, as researchers wanted to sound the alarm on the teen vaping epidemic. They showed 2019 use of nicotine e-cigarettes more than doubled since 2017 in all three grades with more than 25% of 12th-graders, more than 20% of 10th-graders, and about 9% of eighth-graders vaping

nicotine in the previous month.

Marijuana use, in general, continues to be the most commonly used illicit drug by teenagers, according to researchers, and although use has remained stable for "many years," the latest survey recorded an increase in daily marijuana use among eighth- and

10th-graders at 1.3% and 4.8%.

But Stein also pointed to positive news in other substance abuse trends tracked by the survey, particularly in the use of prescription drugs among teens, given the ongoing opiate crisis. The survey recorded the lowest level of use for Oxycontin among 12th-graders (at 1.7%) since the drug was first measured in 2002. Similarly, past-year use of Vicodin among 12th-graders at 1.1% also was the lowest percentage recorded.

"This probably reflects better education out there, as well as more vigilance by the health care profession" in limiting the accessibility of prescription drugs, Stein

said.

Teen drinking is also on a downward trend. The survey recorded a five-year drop among 10th- and 12th-graders, now at 37.7% and 52.1% who say they consume alcohol. Binge drinking, defined as five or more drinks in a row in the past two weeks, has also decreased among that group, with 14.4% of 12th-graders saying they engaged in that behavior in 2019, compared with 19.4% in 2014.

For 10th-graders, 8.5% said they engaged in binge drinking, compared with 12.6% five years ago.

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PARENTING Q&A

When teen steps out of line, keep communication open

BY MEGHAN LEAHY

Special to The Washington Post

Q: My 16-year-old daughter has become challenging. Previously easygoing and good-natured, she's like a different person now — talking back at home and school, rude to school administrators, mean to siblings.

I'm not big on punishment, but there have been consequences. She is always willing to explain what happened and why she did or said what she did, but it's always the other person's fault: "The teacher was disrespectful to me so I wasn't nice back." "The administrator said my jacket wasn't black but charcoal and I had to take it off. I was cold and didn't want to, so I said, 'Go to hell!'"

She's limited to phone/tablet use at home only for homework (teachers say she's behind on work, too). We can't afford therapy, though I think it would be beneficial. Until I can do that, how do I respond to her when she thinks she's being logical? (I don't think she really believes it was appropriate to say "Go to hell," but she's fully entrenched in appearing loud and abrasive.)

Her dad and I are newly divorced, and I know she is still unsettled about that, but that doesn't seem to factor in as much as I'd expect it to as a reason for her behavior. What else can I do besides keep talking to her? Taking things away may have worked when she was younger, but now it has little effect and seems a paltry attempt at curbing this behavior. That she thinks it's acceptable to tell a teacher "No" when she's

asked to answer a question is concerning and making me question what I've been teaching her.

A: Teens lash out for a number of reasons, so I want to be clear: It is more important to understand why she is struggling than it is to plan which consequence will work best (for now). I'm not saying your daughter shouldn't be held to any standards, but her suffering plus added suffering (punishments from you) usually equals more animosity, resentment and bad behavior.

So, why is your daughter acting out as well as playing the blame game? I don't know, but you dropped a doozy of a reason in the letter: You and your husband recently divorced. Some think that because a 16-year-old can look and sound like an adult, they don't suffer from a separation the way a 7-year-old would, for instance.

This is (mostly) not the case. A 16-year-old feels the loss of a parent from the home acutely and, depending on the emotional climate of the home, doesn't feel safe to express all her feelings to the proper adults. Teens feel all the big feelings of loss, but it can make them feel too vulnerable to take those feelings out on parents, so they lash out at teachers, siblings, etc.

Laura Reagan, a clinical social worker who specializes in trauma, says: "Any time a child has a change in behavior at home or at school, the first thing we ask is whether any changes have happened in the child's life recently. Children don't have the emotional maturity to tell us that they're having a hard time adjusting to a transition in their lives, but their behavior lets us know that

emotional storms are brewing internally."

The line of communication between you and your daughter must be kept open. Punishments and consequences are the fastest way to shut down communication. If you also allow her to act out, however, she feels increasingly out of control. How do you manage that?

Psychologist Kelly Heiges recommends you "try to keep up routines when possible and create space for them to open up about what change feels like for them. Because sassiness is common in teen communication, try to ignore the tone and listen for your child's 'real' message. What does she want you to know? Is she overwhelmed? Is she feeling out of control?"

This advice is crucial because nonjudgmental communication will bring a feeling of safety to a teen, but it is not an overnight fix. If you need to have consequences for your teen, discuss them ahead of time if possible. When emotions are level and the communication is flowing, call a meeting with her where you discuss rewards and consequences for her behavior. There is nothing wrong with rewarding her for her efforts, and you can decide what should be done if she is rude to her teachers and siblings. But I recommend not issuing punishments in the heat of the moment.

Finally, there is plenty of good therapy as well as therapeutic groups for children of divorce, and they often exist right there in the high school. Be sure to reach out to the counselor, as well her teachers, to let them know that your daughter isn't bad, she is suffering. Most teachers will immediately have compassion and empathy.

Stevens

Continued from Page 1

gift for the office gift exchange and Frangos for all the teachers and then chaperone the dance and applaud at the concert and bring wine to the grown-up parties and give genuine thanks for all of it.

But it happened against a backdrop of calm at home. I'm choosing the word "calm" because it feels better than the word "apathy." And I don't think my kids are at apathy levels yet — they helped decorate the tree, they open Advent calendars, they sing along when I play Christmas carols in the car. But they're shrugging a little bit more. They're opting out of a little bit more.

They're staying in the other room while I wrap gifts.

Honestly, it's so much easier. I'm getting more sleep, and every once in a while I even go to the gym, and the other day I started reading a book. In December! A book!

But I miss the chaos. I miss them not being able to sleep as soon as it turned December because December, the whole of it, was magical. I miss them begging for more — more outings, more stuff on their

lists, more hot chocolate, more marshmallows, more ornaments, more glitter, metaphorical and actual.

The year I got divorced, I had to keep my holiday decorations in a storage unit because my new condo was so tiny. I remember dreading the day I had to take my kids, then 3 and 7, to retrieve our lights and wreaths and candles from this grim, artificially lit, eerily quiet warehouse of other people's stuff. *What have I done*, I remember thinking. *What am I doing?*

I also remember my children skipping up and down the empty halls of that storage place. They hollered Christmas carols at the tops of their lungs and listened for their echoes. They played hide-and-seek and laughed a lot. It was December, after all. It would take a lot more than bad lighting to dampen their spirits.

I will never be that mom who says to young parents, "Enjoy every second." Every second is not enjoyable. So many of the seconds are truly unenjoyable. You are exhausted and you are worried and you are pretty sure you're doing it all wrong and someone always has an ear infection. (You hope! You hope it's just an ear infection!)

But I will be the mom,

this year, who says to parents who celebrate a December holiday and whose kids are still young enough to believe in the magic and refuse to fall asleep and hop out of bed to find the elf and beg for more, more, more: Look for the beauty in that chaos.

Try to cherish how utterly thrilled you are able to make a child, how much delight they take in your efforts, how pure it all is.

I knew all along it was fleeting. I knew they would grow and change and become wonderful in different, less outwardly enthusiastic ways. But I didn't realize how quickly it would happen. I didn't expect to be reading a book in December. I didn't expect this gained time to feel a little bit like loss.

Calm is lovely and restorative. Joyful chaos, though, there's nothing like it. Wishing you and your family a blend of both — with chaos taking up a little more room than calm.

Join the Heidi Stevens *Balancing Act* Facebook group, where she continues the conversation around her columns and hosts occasional live chats.

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Twitter @heidistevens13

Health

Continued from Page 1

but she can't stand on her feet as long as she could before the accident. She gets fatigued, her ankle swells and high-volume shaking of drinks doesn't happen as often because her grip isn't what it once was.

"I had to get back," she said. "It is my livelihood, so I try to do what I can with what I have. I have a lot of help, and that's how I'm able to bring other people in and open up the opportunities for other people."

"I was filling up my schedule so much, I never

had time for myself just to decompress. I would just say, 'Yes, I'll be there. I'll try to make that happen,' " she said. "Since I was forced to literally sit down and be with myself and my thoughts after the accident, I wrote out who I wanted to become coming out of this. I just felt this can't be my life, so I changed my circumstances. Sometimes the things that we're going through ... we have to grasp the fact that sometimes we have to fight a little bit harder to get out of certain circumstances, but it's worth it all in the end. And therapy can help with coping with those things."

Ajilore thinks the stigma against getting mental health treatment has lessened over time due to better portrayals of mental illness in the media. He said healthy portrayals of mental illness in shows like "Empire" and "The Real Housewives of Atlanta" tend to "normalize mental health treatment."

"Even in music, you have a lot of rappers who are very open about their mental health struggles. Giving a voice to it makes it easier for people to seek help when they recognize it in the people that they admire," he said.

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National Institutes of Health researchers found an increased chance of breast cancer among women who regularly used permanent hair dye, particularly African Americans.

Hair dye, straighteners may increase breast cancer risk

BY MARIE MCCULLOUGH
Philadelphia Inquirer

A large study led by government scientists is renewing concern about whether chemicals used to dye and straighten hair raise the risk of cancer.

National Institutes of Health researchers found an increased chance of breast cancer among women who regularly used permanent hair dye, particularly African Americans. Black women who used dye at least every two months had a 60% higher breast cancer risk, while white women had an 8% higher risk. Straightener use was linked to an 18% increase in risk.

Decades of studies of hair dye and various cancers have produced conflicting and inconclusive results.

The authors of the latest study, published recently in the International Journal of Cancer, said their results need to be confirmed and put in context.

"We know that a lot of different factors influence a woman's risk of developing breast cancer, and these risks we see here, they are meaningful but they are small," senior

author Alexandra White, and NIH epidemiologist, told the "Today" show. "Women should take that into context with everything else in their life, including their physical activity and diet. These are all factors we have to consider when we're thinking about our long-term health risks."

Co-author Dale Sandler, also an NIH epidemiologist, echoed that sentiment in a press release — but also suggested that women might want to err on the side of caution.

"While it is too early to make a firm recommendation," Sandler said, "avoiding these chemicals might be one more thing women can do to reduce their risk of breast cancer."

The National Cancer Institute, part of the NIH, explains on its website that early hair dyes contained chemicals that were found to cause cancer in animals. But in the 1970s, manufacturers eliminated some of these chemicals to make products safer.

"It is not known whether some of the chemicals still used in hair dyes can cause cancer," the cancer institute says. "Given the widespread use of hair dye products, even a

small increase in risk may have a considerable public health impact."

The new findings are based on data from 46,709 women in the Sister Study, a huge NIH study that followed women who had a sister with breast cancer.

More than half of the women reported using permanent hair dye, and 75% of black women said they used chemical straighteners.

After the women were followed for an average of eight years, 2,794 breast cancers were diagnosed. That translated to an overall 9% higher risk of breast cancer in women who used permanent dyes compared with those who did not.

Although the women's family history put them at higher risk of developing breast cancer to begin with, the researchers believe the hair dye link still can be extended to the general population.

What might explain the more elevated risk in black women?

The researchers point to previous studies of potentially toxic chemicals, including the hormone estrogen, which can accelerate the growth of cancerous breast cells.

PEOPLE'S PHARMACY PRESCRIPTIONS AND HOME REMEDIES

This elderberry elixir may tame cold symptoms

BY JOE GRAEDON AND TERESA GRAEDON
King Features Syndicate

Q: Now that we are into cold season, it's a pity that the use of elderberry isn't better known. A traditional treatment for coughs and colds is elderberry rob. To make this, elderberries are boiled with honey, cinnamon and allspice, and the resulting syrup is strained and mixed with a little brandy as a preservative. A few spoonfuls of this mixed into hot water usually reduces cold symptoms very effectively.

A: Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*) grows wild in many places in North America. I suspect that the homemade syrup probably retains more of the plant's properties than most over-the-counter *Sambucus* preparations.

Elderberry juice preparations have long been used to treat respiratory infections. Although it is not well studied, an analysis concluded that "Supplementation with elderberry was found to substantially reduce upper respiratory symptoms" (Complementary Therapies in Medicine, February 2019). An Australian study found that air travelers taking elderberry were less prone to colds and had milder symptoms (Nutrients, March 24, 2016).

When making elderberry rob or another preparation, be sure to use only ripe berries and do not include stems or leaves. These contain cyanide-related compounds that can be toxic.

Q: I had five falls in 14 months and injured myself each time. Concerned about this, I went



JAN NEWTON/TNS

A traditional treatment for coughs and colds is elderberry rob, a syrup made with elderberry, honey and spices.

to a neurologist. In addition, my memory was shot, and I could not focus on anything.

A: He put me through several tests, including one for vitamin B12. I was very deficient, but I did not have pernicious anemia. To address the problem, he started me on weekly injections of B12. That was more than two years ago, and we have switched to monthly injections. I have not fallen since that time, and I've regained my memory. I would like others to recognize that vitamin B12 deficiency is serious.

Vitamin B12 deficiency is more common than many people realize, and can easily go unrecognized. Pernicious anemia, in which people lack "intrinsic factor," is not the only cause. Symptoms include balance and memory problems such as you experienced. Other complications include tingling in hands and feet, fatigue, heart palpitations, depression, shortness of breath and sore tongue.

Certain medicines, especially those that block stomach acid such as the PPIs, can contribute to vitamin B12 deficiency. The diabetes medicine metformin can also lower levels of vitamin B12. Moreover,

people who don't eat animal products don't get this vitamin in their usual diet.

Q: As a dairy farmer, I have to wash my hands many times daily. The cracked fingertips that result are very painful.

A: To counter that, I keep a tube of lip balm (any kind) handy in my pocket and apply it often. It is very thick and stays in the crack to help it heal.

Many people have trouble with cracked fingertips at this time of year. Some people close the cracks with liquid bandage or household instant glue containing cyanoacrylate. One reader offered the following:

"I've tried liquid bandage as well as white glue on my cracked fingertips, but they don't help much. Nothing works as well as A+D Ointment for cracked thumb and fingertips as well as split skin on my knuckles and heels. I rub it in and give it five minutes to soak in. Although A+D Ointment is traditionally used on babies' bottoms, it works great on adults too, and it is inexpensive."

In their column, Joe and Teresa Graedon answer letters from readers. Send questions to them via www.peoplespharmacy.com.



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'An entire world inside your nose'

In addition to colds and flu, it's also sinusitis season for millions

BY STACEY BURLING
Philadelphia Inquirer

Fourteen-year-old Dawit "D.J." Debebe, a freshman at Perkiomen Valley High School, had long struggled with allergies, but something new, and much worse, attacked his sinuses in September.

He started having headaches so painful he had to sit out football practice. He worried he might have a concussion. "It was just constant pain," he said.

The pain was so horrific that his mother, Victoria Debebe, took him to an emergency department. An MRI revealed that all of the sinuses on his left side — air-filled cavities in the skull that produce mucus and, ideally, wash away impurities — were not only completely clogged, but that bone surrounding the larger sinuses was bending from the force of the trapped mucus.

Antibiotics and steroids were no help. James Palmer, director of rhinology (sinus surgery) at Penn Medicine, concluded an allergic immune response to fungus was the problem. The only reliable treatment was endoscopic sinus surgery, a procedure done from inside the nose without outside incisions.

So D.J. found himself in an operating room in Penn's Perelman Center for Advanced Medicine, anesthetized as Palmer pulled thick green blobs of infected mucus from his nasal passages and snipped and drilled away at a honeycomb of thin, non-

essential bones in his sinuses to improve drainage.

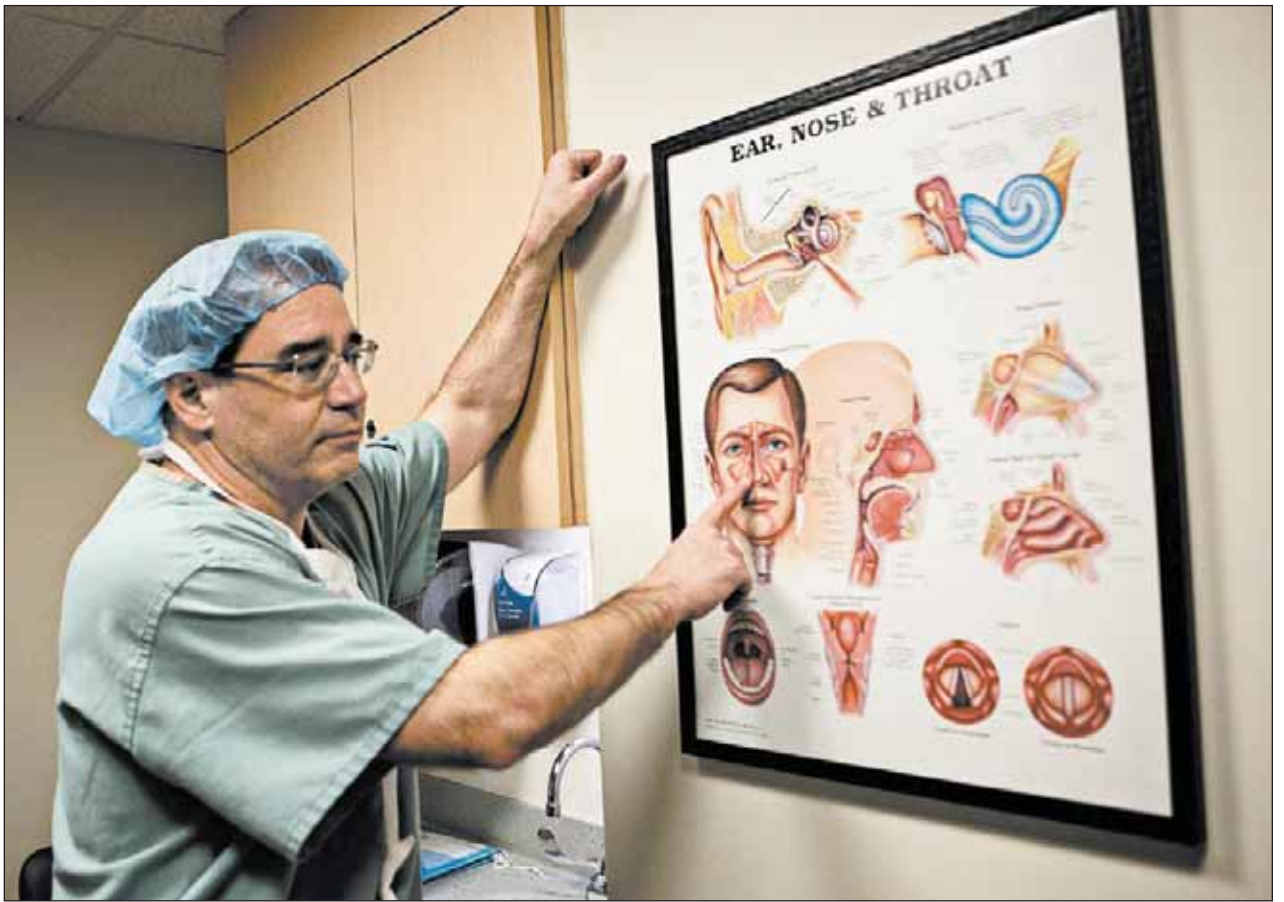
D.J. is an extreme example of what can go wrong with sinuses. But each fall and winter these little caves in our heads torment millions with pain, pressure and thick, yucky mucus that lengthens the misery after seasonal viral ailments have run their course.

This is not just cold and flu season. It's sinusitis season.

You can get a sinus infection at any time of the year, but doctors say they see more patients with sinus complaints in fall and winter because cold, dry air and respiratory bugs set the stage for sinus malfunction.

Unlike the flu, sinus infections rarely kill, but they are still a big deal. Count yourself lucky if you've never had a clogged sinus make it feel as if your head might explode. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 29 million adults — 11% of the population — were diagnosed with sinusitis in 2018. Palmer says 5% to 20% of the population has chronic sinusitis — sinus inflammation that lasts more than a couple of months. The American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology estimates that people spend \$1 billion a year on over-the-counter medications and \$150 million on prescription drugs for sinus infections. Twenty percent of prescriptions for antibiotics are for sinus infections, said Noam Cohen, a Penn Medicine otorhinolaryngologist.

Troubling as they can be,



James Palmer, director of rhinology at Penn Medicine, explains the steps he takes to relieve a patient's chronic sinusitis.



Palmer conducts a surgical procedure to relieve chronic sinusitis on Dawit "D.J." Debebe, 14, in November.

sinuses are also weird and interesting. "There's an entire world inside your nose. It's a window to your entire body," Palmer said. "Sinuses are a reflection of the overall health of the patient a lot of times." Sinus malfunction, he said, has been associated with sleep, heart and lung problems.

We're most likely to worry about sinus infections, but you don't necessarily need bacterial infection to have nasty sinus

symptoms. Doctors more often use the broader term sinusitis or rhinosinusitis, which refers to inflammation and swelling in the nose and sinus cavities that lead to poor sinus drainage. Sinusitis can be caused by viruses, fungi, allergies and irritants, said Kenneth Einhorn, chief of the division of otolaryngology at Abington-Jefferson Health.

The inflammation can pave the way for bacteria. When mucus gets trapped

in a sinus, it provides what Donald Solomon, an ENT at Cooper University Hospital, calls a "warm, happy environment" for bacteria that might normally be swept away.

Sinusitis can be acute, recurrent or chronic. It's considered acute if it lasts no more than a month or two. Some people have frequent, short-term sinus problems that they're able to clear. These are recurrent. Still others end up with sinus problems that linger for many weeks or months. This is chronic sinusitis.

Typically, true sinus infections happen after you've had something else, like a cold or the flu, so you're looking for symptoms that get worse after a couple of weeks. Sinus infection symptoms, Einhorn said, include thick mucus, pressure pain over an inflamed sinus, pressure in upper molars, ear fullness, postnasal drip, sore throat and coughing that's worse at night. Headaches, fatigue and fever can also

be present.

Sinus specialists are big fans of good sinus hygiene. Rinsing frequently with salt water — sprays don't do the job — clears out the sinuses and helps keep tissue moist, doctors said. A neti pot can work, but doctors said the NeilMed squeeze bottle available in drugstores is well-designed.

Sinus sufferers need to take particular care to keep symptoms under control during their allergy season or when they catch a respiratory virus.

With a cold, Palmer said, "hit the saline hard." Steam, including long showers, is also helpful. Use a humidifier in the winter.

Einhorn recommends starting an over-the-counter steroid spray like Flonase or Nasacort. Use a decongestant spray like Afrin for no more than three or four days.

If you've taken all the preventive measures above for 10 to 14 days and you still have symptoms, it's probably time to see a doctor.

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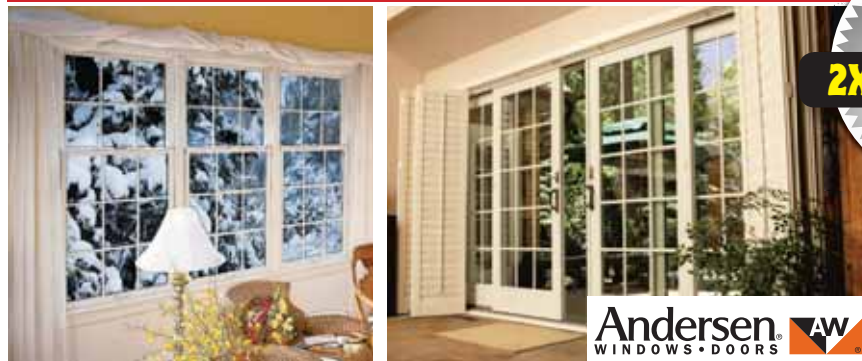


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Chicago Tribune

FOOD & DINING

Speed-round dining reviews

Quick looks at 7 Chicago spots we couldn't get to in 2019

BY PHIL VETTEL, NICK KINDELSPERGER, LOUISA CHU, GRACE WONG, JENNIFER DAY, JOSH NOEL AND ADAM LUKACH

In a year notable for dozens of restaurant openings — from the much-hyped and splashy (Cabra and Cira in the Hoxton and Time Out Market Chicago) to the quieter yet memorable (Middle Brow brewery's Bungalow brewpub) — we reviewed or otherwise covered well over 100 places. Yet as 2019 nears its end, we look back at restaurants we'd meant to cover and somehow did not quite have time to get to.

And so, as 2020 drew near, the Food & Dining team set out in what has become an annual year-end project to visit seven restaurants that opened this year with the intent of giving them quick reviews. Think of it like speed-round dating, but dining. We chose notable restaurants that stood out to us for their ambition and/or buzz, then made single-visit evaluations, trying as much of the menus as we could. You'll find our results below. Though they are not our usual full reviews (and for that reason we don't award stars to any of them), we hope there's enough information on the food, atmosphere and service to guide your decisions on whether to visit them in the new year. — Joe Gray

Machine

This "engineered dining & drink" Wicker Park spot opened in mid-March with a global menu by chef Trevor Hoyte. But by October, Hoyte was gone (he's in Cincinnati these days), and the owners brought in Chicago veteran Dirk Flanigan (opening chef at The Gage, among other credentials) to give the restaurant a stronger identity.

Machine definitely could use one. The name suggests something industrial, even steam-punk-y, but there are mixed-era elements throughout the space, and the overall look is distinctly floral (live and dried flora throughout, a room-length niche



PHIL VETTEL/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The front room at Machine includes a working flower shop, which will assemble custom take-home bouquets for customers.

that appears to be made of backlit white roses), culminating with an actual, on-premises florist shop.

The flower shop is no side hustle; when making reservations, one can preorder a bouquet for the table (\$30 to \$40, though the sky's the limit on customizations), or wait until dinner to order a custom arrangement (six stems \$20, a dozen stems \$35)

from the traveling flower cart. Not a bad date-night destination, in other words.

The place looks pricey and a bit twee, exactly the impressions Flanigan was brought in to contradict. To that end, he replaced the menu's filet mignon with a more robust prime ribeye, and there's a hefty signature burger (\$17) with Parmesan aioli, foie

gras, Comte cheese and maitake mushrooms. Flanigan's lavender chicken, slicked with a honey glaze and perked up with pink peppercorns, is an especially good option.

Two of the four exterior walls are floor-to-ceiling glass, so visiting at brunch — when, at this time of year, there's at least a possibility of sunshine — makes

sense. The daytime menu lists such dishes as chilaquiles, Dutch pancake with banana cream and French toast with almond-praline cream. Sturdier options include a very good egg-potato skillet dish bolstered with smoked chicken and white cheddar, a first-rate shrimp and grits enhanced with

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ABEL URIBE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE; SHANNON KINSELLA/FOOD STYLING

Pretzels, corn chips or potato chips get an upgrade with chocolate candy or a drizzle of melted chocolate.

Let go of those holiday party worries

Put together an impromptu dinner for friends

BY ROBIN MATHER
Chicago Tribune

This year's midweek holidays mean lots of people scheduled time off for the intervening days, and maybe you're one of them. If you have friends or family dropping by, but no plan for them, relax, there is still time to host informal gatherings.

For many years, I was reluctant to invite friends over on the spur of the moment. "My house is too messy," I'd think, as I surveyed the detritus of in-process crafting projects, the dust kittens in the corners. "I just don't have the time to put together a fancy dinner party," I'd think, as I looked over the wreckage in the kitchen after preparing a holiday meal.

Fortunately, I met my chum Scott. He, a fellow journalist, and his wife, Margaret, a teacher, hosted near-weekly impromptu dinner gatherings when we all lived in Detroit. The menus were never elaborate; it might be burgers-and-beer, or a pan of enchiladas, or tacos-and-something, or soup. Inexpensive food, prepared to feed a crowd, appropriate given their status as parents of a little boy — and later, a second. Whatever they had planned for dinner, they just made more to accommodate a few extra at the table.

I loved these dinners. You could feel the stress fall off as guests came through the door, could see their shoulders drop in

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SHOWSTOPPING
NEWS

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Chicago's own Chris Jones, covering theater news and reviews from Chicago to Broadway:

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Chicago Tribune
the Theater Loop
WITH CHRIS JONES

My favorite breakfast dishes in 2019



INA PINKNEY
Breakfast With Ina

What a year! It began with me eating hospital food in January. In February, healing from a broken leg at home, I used several food delivery services to bring breakfast to me and told you my No. 1 advice was to make breakfast at home.

Finally, by March I was back to eating out thanks to my chef friend Michael Fiddler, who shlepped me and a wheelchair or walker or scooter so I could find worthwhile places for my week-day breakfast. And did I ever.

I'm happy to report there are many places and dishes that linger in my memory and that you should try. One note: It's always wise to recheck the hours.

So, in alphabetical order, here's my list of the 17 best breakfast dishes I had in 2019.

All Together Now

The breakfast sandwich on a house-made English muffin, with crispy soppressata (move over bacon and ham), a fried egg and Fresno chile aioli was a knockout.

2119 W. Chicago Ave., 773-661-1599, alltogethernow.fun

Arbor

Break Potato is the perfect name for this dish — salt-roasted baked potato, broken open and topped with scrambled eggs, bacon jam and sausage, with chive sour cream with fried onions on the side.

The Green Exchange, 2545 W. Diversey Ave., 312-866-0795, arborprojects.com

Bond Coffee Collective

A breakfast toast spread with hummus and garnished with roasted eggplant, zucchini, roasted red onion, pickled Fresno chile and lemon tahini dressing, all on multigrain bread.

7555 N. California Ave., bondcoffeecollective.com

Bungalow

The country toast had creamy, smooth ricotta with candied sweet oranges and dried prickly pear.

Middle Brow Beer Co., 2840 W. Armitage Ave., middlebrowbeer.com

Cafe Robey

The Cuban sandwich was the best I've had. Built on a freshly baked ciabatta with tender pork shoulder, Gruyere, avocado, jalapenos and mustard, it was masterful.

1616 N. Milwaukee Ave., 872-315-3084, caferobey.com

Cira

The shakshuka, which is also featured on a lot of other menus



MICHELLE KANAAR/FOR THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Perfectly scrambled egg sandwiches featuring house-made croissants star on the menu at Le Cafe, a gem hidden inside GoGrocer.



CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The croque Mexique with three cheeses from Panango.



YOUNGRAE KIM/FOR THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Hummus and roasted vegetable toast at Bond Coffee Collective.

around town, had a little twist with the addition of merguez sausage in the spicy tomato sauce with baked eggs. A hot piece of baguette perched on top finished the dish beautifully.

The Hoxton, 200 N. Green St., 312-761-1777, cirachicago.com

Claremont Diner

The Woodsman Skillet had sauteed mushrooms, caramelized onions, filet mignon and bacon on crispy hash browns with an

egg on top.

2325 W. Taylor St., 312-526-3425, claremontdiner.com

Cracked — The Egg Came First

Chilaquiles verde with homemade corn tortilla chips, tomatillo salsa, grilled chicken, red onion, over-easy eggs, avocado, crema, cotija cheese and cilantro.

1359 N. Milwaukee Ave., 312-989-2247, crackedteef.com



CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The Woodsman Skillet at Claremont Diner features filet mignon with mushrooms and bacon on a bed of hash browns with an egg on top.



MICHELLE KANAAR/FOR THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The Bushwick sandwich at Taste of New York Bagels & Deli.

D Cuisine

Look at the pictures on the morning menu and just point to what looks good!

2723 N. Clark St., 773-360-7239, dcuisinechicago.com

Finom

Mushroom paprikas featured mushrooms, sour cream, cured egg yolks and black truffle pearls on paprikas sauce.

4200 W. Irving Park Road, 312-620-5010, finomcoffee.com

Frida's

The chicken carnitas omelet — with Chihuahua cheese, pico de gallo and guacamole — accompanied by potatoes (that were so good) and a corn muffin.

618 Church St., Evanston, 847-859-6342

Le Cafe

The croissant sandwich with perfectly seasoned and scrambled eggs, thickly sliced applewood bacon and cheddar cheese.

4250 N. Marine Drive, 773-857-0224, and 5419 N. Sheridan Road (both inside GoGrocer shops), facebook.com/pg/lecafechicago

Panango

The croque Mexique, hot from oven, was brought to life

with warm crusty bread, chicken and bacon, melty Manchego, Chihuahua and cheddar cheeses and a little spicy chipotle chile bechamel.

720 N. State St., panango.us

Peach's at Currency Exchange

The salmon croquettes with cheese grits and biscuits.

305 E. Garfield Blvd., 312-300-4471, peachs-exchange.com

Taste of New York Bagels & Deli

The Bushwick with turkey sausage, eggs and cheese on an everything bagel.

3268 N. Clark St., 773-904-7934, tonybagelsdeli.com

Taureaux Tavern

The corned beef hash was dreamy, resting in a crunchy hash brown nest with some hollandaise and sunny side up eggs on top.

155 W. Van Buren St., 312-624-8778, taureauxtavern.com

Travelle at The Langham

The Florentine Benedict had spinach and artichokes and was topped with barnaise sauce — deeply delicious.

Langham Hotel, 330 N. Wabash Ave., 312-923-7705, travellechicago.com

Impromptu

Continued from Page 1

relaxation as they settled in. We talked, sometimes as a group and sometimes one-on-one; we often played word games; we listened to music and gazed into the darkness over the licking flames of a fire in the backyard.

Certainly I can't speak for every attendee, but I'm willing to posit that everyone present cared more about the company than they did that the house had the look of a busy, engaged family, with work papers, books and toys scattered about. As I attended these events, I began to realize that I was just wrong. My house wasn't too messy, and I didn't need to host a "fancy dinner party."

Your house is fine, too, and you don't need to ramp up your anxieties with a carefully plotted-out dinner. Instead, this year, why not call a couple of your friends this afternoon and invite them over for tomorrow night? And yes, it's OK to say, "bring whatever you'd like to drink."

Is your budget tight? Make soup, because everybody likes soup. Not much time? Prepare a couple of easy appetizers and snacks from what you have around the house.

Savory

If savory's your goal, any of these might work:

Frittata: Made with scraps from the fridge that might include cheese(s); chopped vegetables; leftover proteins such as the relics of that holiday roast or the odd bits of chicken; cubes of the remainder of that half-eaten good loaf of bread, or your dinner rolls. Saute any uncooked vegetables



ABEL URIBE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE; SHANNON KINSELLA/FOOD STYLING

A frittata, left, takes advantage of leftovers in the fridge, elevating them to an elegant appetizer. For an easy hummus alternative, puree a can of white beans, then stir in giardiniera, the pickled Italian vegetables, right.

first, then add everything else to the pan before you pour beaten eggs over it all. Cook on the stove-top over medium heat and run it under the broiler to finish the top if needed. Cut it in wedges or squares and pretend you're eating tapas in Spain.

Popcorn: Offered with different seasonings. I like a dill and ranch dressing mix; chili powder with lime butter; or make it sweet with cinnamon sugar or cocoa powder mixed 50/50 with chili powder.

Crispy garbanzos: If you have a couple of cans of garbanzo beans handy, drain them, rinse them and roll them around in a kitchen

towel to dry them off. Toss them with olive oil or melted butter, then season with cumin, cardamom, cinnamon and ground black pepper before popping into a 425-degree oven. Roast them until they're crisp, shaking the baking sheet a couple of times while they cook.

Hummus alternatives: Mashed anything seems to qualify as hummus these days. Things to mash could include canned beans of any type, edamame, cooked lentils, roasted peppers, cooked broccoli or cauliflower, and many other things. Season the mix any way you wish with a generous hand. We like to stir in a few table-

spoons of chopped giardiniera; the brine or olive oil it's packed in will help flavor the dip. Any kind of crackers or crisp things handy can serve as dippers, including vegetables.

Sweet

If sweet's more your direction, try these:

Salty snacks: Pretzels, corn chips or potato chips get an upgrade if you drizzle them with melted chocolate. You don't need much to make an impact.

Cheesy cinnamon bites: Have crackers handy? Fill a baking

sheet with them, brush with melted butter, sprinkle cinnamon sugar over everything and strew mild grated cheese, such as mozzarella or jack, over them. Run them into a 350-degree oven until the cheese is melty. Dust with more cinnamon sugar before serving.

Sweet spiced nuts: They're perennially popular. I generally toast the nuts in a skillet with a little butter, then stir in something sweet (maple syrup or brown sugar are both good choices) and something spicy, whether that's curry powder, hot sauce, chipotle chile powder, crushed red pepper or some other thing to contribute a bit of heat.

Barks: They're are easy to prepare if you have any kind of chocolate on hand, including white. Melt the chocolate and pour it over crumbled cookies, crushed candies (peppermints are good), or nuts laid out on a parchment-lined baking sheet.

Such evenings are most memorable when people can interact with each other. Watching a movie together can be fun, but word or board games are even more so. Simply providing a friendly place where people can talk to each other is the goal. As M.F.K. Fisher famously said, "There is communion of more than our bodies when bread is broken and wine drunk." In an era when having a sense of community seems more precious than ever, your impromptu gatherings will bolster that sense.

That seems so much more important to me than dusty sideboards and dust kittens.

Robin Mather is a longtime food journalist and the author of "The Feast Nearby," a collection of essays and recipes from a year of eating locally on a tight budget.

Dessert wine is the perfect meal-ender

BY DAVE MCINTYRE
The Washington Post

We tend to fret about what wines to have with dinner, especially dinner parties or family feasts around the holidays. But we overlook dessert, which offers a wide array of wine pairing possibilities. And what about after dessert? When the feast is finished, la grande bouffe is done and you can't imagine ever eating another bite, not even a wafer-thin mint — well, you need another drink.

When dessert comes around, whether we're having cheese, cake or pastry, we tend to sip whatever wines were not finished with the main course. That's a missed opportunity. But there are ways to boost the end of your meal into a grand finale.

A cheese course is a great partner for sweet white wines, such as late-harvest riesling, sauternes or even moscato. The sweetness of the wine helps cut the fat of the cheese, especially the creamier, funkier curds. The earthiness in the cheese meets the unctuous fruitiness of the wine in a way that enhances the flavors of both. These wines would also be great with fruit tarts.

For chocolate desserts, I recommend a ruby-style port to match richness with richness. For contrast, look to a lighter, slightly sweet sparkling red such as brachetto from Italy. (Bold choice: sparkling shiraz from Australia or sparkling norton from Casanel Vineyards in Virginia.)

Aged tawny port and madeira are lovely by themselves or with custard desserts such as flan or puddings. The roasted nut flavors in the wine, accented with a hint of citrus rind, also pair well with nut-based cakes and tarts.

And after dessert? One of the biggest mistakes we



A slightly sweet sparkling red such as brachetto goes well with a dessert like this strawberry tart.

KATHERINE FREY/FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

make is thinking of an after-dinner drink as excessive rather than digestive. That last little dram — emphasis on little — can help settle your stomach and provide a fitting coda to your meal. Old vintage port with cigars is a classic combo. Other fortified wines can fit the bill too.

"I love a Frasqueira madeira after a long holiday meal, especially a drier style like Sercial," says Matt Stamp, a master sommelier and co-owner of Compline wine bar and restaurant in Napa, California. A Frasqueira is a vintage madeira aged at least 20 years in large wooden casks before bottling. "The wine's incredible acidity, potent strength and assertive character provide a serious and pal-

ate-cleansing end to a long meal," Stamp says.

My own introduction to the joys of the digestif came many years ago at Restaurant Helene Darroze in Paris. I usually have trouble remembering what I ate for breakfast, but I vividly recall a tasting menu that began with foie gras ice cream in roasted chestnut soup, followed by a slab of foie gras, a scallop course, the most amazing pork loin in memory, cheese and one or two desserts. Just when I thought I would burst from overindulgence, a server trundled to the table a cart laden with vintage armagnac made by Francis Darroze, the chef's father. Not wanting to waste an opportunity, I chose what I hoped would be a modestly priced glass of the vintage

from the year I graduated from high school. It was delicious. It settled my stomach, and I walked out of the restaurant fantasizing about the next morning's croissant.

Armagnac and other brandies are classic after-dinner drinks. So are fruit-flavored schnapps and eaux de vie, potent marc from Burgundy or grappa from Italy. A shot of grappa can awaken the senses while settling the stomach.

Brandies and eaux de vie combine flavors of fruit and alcoholic heat. Perhaps the quintessential coda to a big meal is an amaro. From the Italian word for bitter, amaro is a fortified neutral spirit or wine flavored with medicinal herbs. Vermouth fits in this category and can be a stimulating aperitif,

especially over ice with a slice of orange, or after dinner.

The most bitter type of amaro, the bitterest of the bitter, is called fernet, and the darling of this category is Fernet-Branca. Sommeliers, for whom overindulgence is an occupational hazard, swoon at the mention of Fernet-Branca. This entrancing bitter liqueur is flavored with as many as 27 roots and herbs, according to the company website. These include cinchona bark (helps with digestion), chamomile (helps with relaxation), cinnamon (antioxidant, aphrodisiac), linden (more of the latter), iris (antiseptic) and saffron (energy and mood boost).

It can be an acquired taste. Or something, as the saying used to go, we would

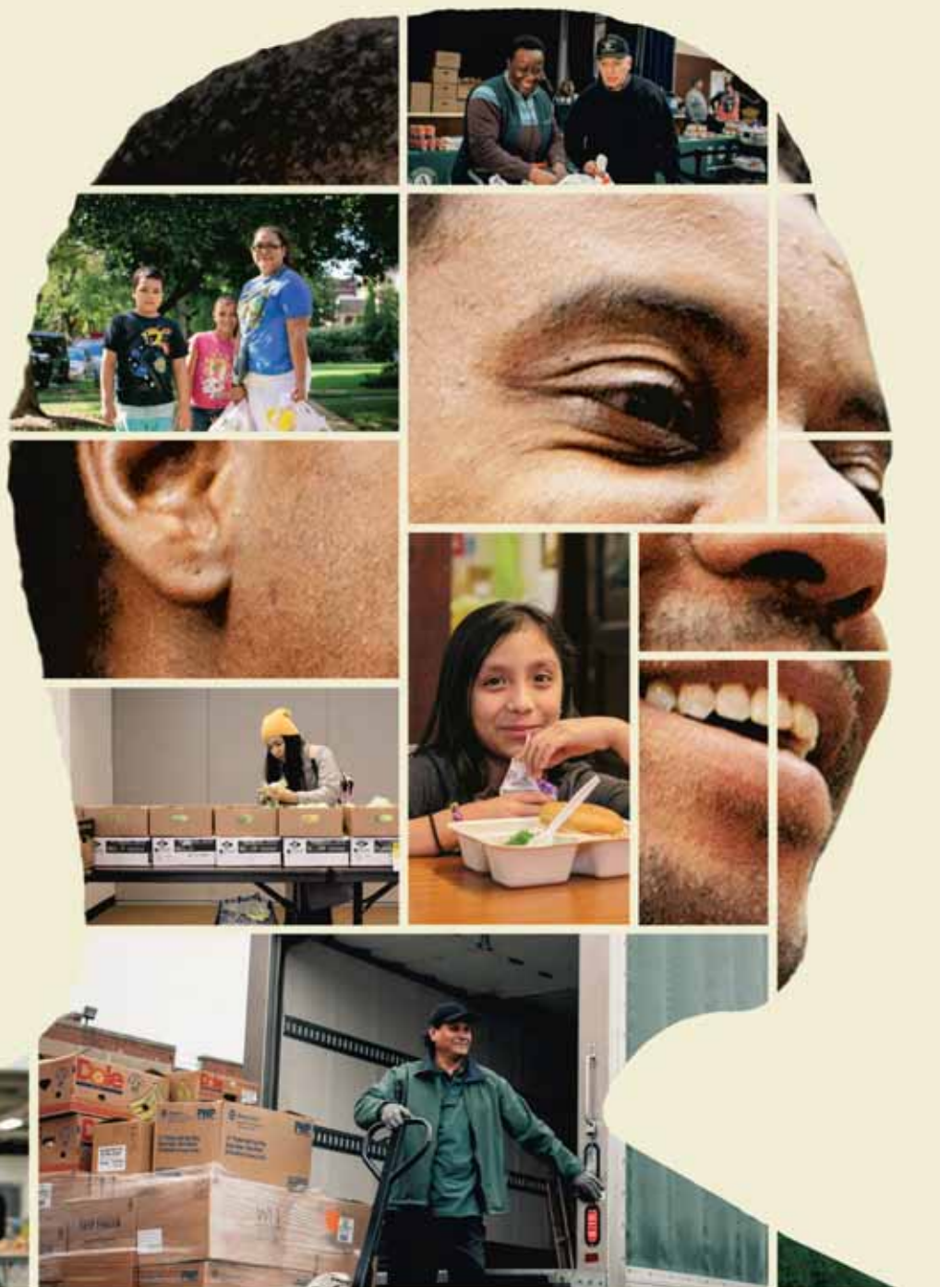
drink "for medicinal purposes only."

"I used to think amaro was the most vile thing I ever tasted," says Erik Segelbaum, a sommelier, consultant and wine educator based in Washington, D.C. "But then I realized it made me feel better after a big meal. Now I love it, and that flavor signals to me that I will feel better." He attributes the restorative properties to the flavorings, not the alcohol.

A shot of Fernet-Branca, or another amaro, is a fitting end to a meal, Segelbaum says. "It's like the period at the end of a sentence," he says. "It doesn't change the meaning, it just says, 'We're done!'"

Dave McIntyre is a freelance writer.

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EASY CANDY, BIG REWARD

Treat yourself
to decadent
chocolate
truffles



JAMES P. DEWAN
Prep School

Don't get me wrong: I am not — repeat: NOT — saying that if you don't like chocolate, there's something wrong with you, that maybe you are not from this planet (Earth). Perish the thought.

On another topic, quick question: Is it possible there are actual aliens from another world living among us disguised as humans? I think that's a reasonable proposition. Remember the scene in that Abbott and Costello movie where the gorilla is trying to wake up Lou Costello and you're thinking, "Wait, is that a real gorilla, or just a guy in a gorilla suit?" Hard to say. Maybe if you offered him a banana you could tell: guy or gorilla?

Like offering someone a chocolate truffle: human or alien? Speaking of truffles ...

Why you need to learn this

O, the weather outside is frightful. Cruel death lurks 'round every corner. And you're not getting any younger. Have a truffle, for God's sake. You'll feel better.

If you're not an alien, that is.

The steps you take

Truffles are made from that wonderful brown goo the kids like to call "ganache." Rhymes with "panache."

Ganache is chocolate melted with heavy cream. If that sounds rich and delicious, no need to show me your Earth I.D. card. You've probably eaten ganache in a thousand cakes.

Or a billion truffles, because truffles are simply small balls of ganache. Sometimes they're enhanced with bold flavors like espresso or booze, and usually they're coated with something like crushed nuts or those little sprinkly things your mom would put on cookies. Because truffles can be messy, that coating prevents your hands from getting all chocolatey as you gorge yourself like a dingo in an abattoir.

Because of the truffle's paucity of ingredients, my advice is to start with a bar of high-quality dark chocolate, something in the 60% to 70% cacao range.

As for the cream, the thing you want to pay attention to is ratios. Ganache comes in different thicknesses, like lenses at the optometrist. For truffles, you want a fairly stiff ganache, roughly a 2 to 1 ratio of chocolate to cream. If you're flavoring your truffles, figure about an ounce of booze or a teaspoon of extract per cup of



E. JASON WAMBSGANS/CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTOS; SHANNON KINSELLA/FOOD STYLING

Use a serrated knife to shave the chocolate bar into thin pieces. This makes the chocolate melt more quickly when you pour the hot cream over it.

Chocolate truffles

Prep: 30 minutes **Chill:** 30 to 60 minutes **Makes:** 45 truffles

1 pound block good bittersweet or semisweet chocolate, 60% or higher cacao

8 ounces heavy cream

1 ounce softened butter

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Dutch-processed cocoa powder, crushed nuts, powdered sugar, sprinkles or other coating ingredients

1. Using a serrated knife, shave chocolate into thin slices, then mince the pile of shavings to make very small pieces. Scrape chocolate into a clean, dry, stainless steel bowl.

2. Heat cream to simmering, then pour over chocolate. Stir in a tight circle from center of bowl, gradually working in cream from edges to form an emulsion. This is your ganache. (Note: If your chocolate doesn't melt all the way, place the bowl over a bain marie — a saucepan in which a couple inches of water is simmering. Keep the flame turned low and take care not to get any water in the ganache while you continue stirring until the chocolate is completely melted.)

3. When the cream is fully incorporated and the chocolate ganache is smooth and creamy, stir in butter and vanilla until incorporated.

4. To form truffles, there are two common methods, which we'll call Method A and Method B:

Method A: Pipe small ganache pyramids onto a parchment-covered baking sheet. Refrigerate until firm, about 30 minutes, then roll each piece between your palms to form a sphere.

Method B: Refrigerate all the ganache in the mixing bowl or in a flatter container (for faster chilling), until firm, 30 to 60 minutes. Using a melon baller, carve out spheres of chocolate and place them on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Do not obsess over the perfection or lack thereof of your ganache balls. When the baking sheet is full, roll each ball between your palms to achieve a more spherical shape.

5. Place cocoa powder, nuts, powdered sugar or some other coating ingredient into a bowl. Roll each truffle in coating, then return to baking sheet. Refrigerate up to 2 weeks, as if they'll last longer than a couple days.

Nutrition information per truffle: 73 calories, 7 g fat, 4 g saturated fat, 7 mg cholesterol, 5 g carbohydrates, 3 g sugar, 1 g protein, 1 mg sodium, 1 g fiber

cream.

To make ganache, bring your cream to a simmer in a small saucepan. While it heats, turn your chocolate bar into little shards: Using a serrated knife, such as a bread knife, shave off thin slices and the chocolate will crumble into bits like a desiccated mummy — just what you want. When you've got enough, give the chocolatey pile a few more chops to reduce the size of the pieces even further. Do this part with a chef's knife, as you can rock its curved blade over the chocolate like you're mincing garlic.

Next, grab a metal mixing bowl. Make sure it's dry as a lunar plain, because water can make melting chocolate seize up like an oil-starved V6. Put your chocolate

into the bowl and dump in the hot cream, letting it sit for several seconds to start the chocolate melting.

To combine the cream and chocolate, don't use a whisk; use a rubber spatula. Stir in small circles from the inside out, working the chocolate into the cream to form a smooth and silky pond of delight. This is ganache.

Here's a thing: It's possible the diminishing heat from your cooling cream will not be enough to complete the meltification process. If that happens, make a bain marie: Bring about 2 inches of water to a boil in a saucepan, then reduce the heat to low. Place your bowl of creamy choco-lumps on top, taking care not to get any water into the bowl. (Should this

happen and your chocolate seizes, mix in a little boiling water and it should turn liquid again.) Continue stirring over the steam until the aforementioned pond is achieved.

At this point, you have a decision to make: Melon baller or piping bag?

Shouldst thou go with the melon baller (what we with the fancy French culinary edumacation like to call a "Parisian scoop"), first use your spatula to scrape the ganache into a cake pan or casserole, something in which it can cool quickly. Place it in the fridge for an hour or two to firm up, then use your melon baller to scoop out individual portions and set them on a parchment-covered baking sheet. You

could also use a plain old spoon, seeing as how a later stage involves hand-rolling each truffle anyway.

Or you could scrape the ganache into a piping bag and pipe out little brown blobs onto a parchment-covered baking sheet.

When you're done, pop the pan into the fridge until your blobs are firm and ready to roll.

Oh, and in case you're wondering how big to make your truffles, well, most truffles are in the half-ounce to 1-ounce range. I suggest piping (or scooping) out a couple blobs of different sizes, then using whichever one you prefer as your guide.

Whether your ganache is piped or scooped, now comes the rolling. Working quickly, place a blob between your palms and roll it into a spheroid shape. And listen: Be ye not concerned with perfection. Imperfection is a hallmark of artisanship, and proclaims with stentorian confidence, "I made these truffles with my own two hands!"

By the way, the reason I said to work quickly is because as the unrolled truffles sit out, they warm up. Also, you don't want the truffles to stay in your hands any longer than necessary because they'll start to melt. But, look, don't kid yourself: Chocolate is messy, and by the time you're done your hands will remind you of those halcyon days spent mud wrestling out back of the tavern. Still, the faster you roll, the cleaner you'll stay. You could always pop the ganache back in the fridge to chill if things get too warm.

Once all your truffles look like tiny brown moons, roll them in something dry, such as powdered sugar, cocoa powder, coconut flakes, crushed nuts, etc. You could also dip them in melted chocolate, but that will be a longer lesson for another day. Store them in the fridge for up to a week, or, before you do that, you could just see how many you can cram into your piehole all at once. Either way, you will revel in your humanity.

Rhine Hall and Alinea pair for a coffee liqueur

BY ADAM LUKACH

Look on any bar cart, and you could wait awhile before seeing any brandy. Look behind the bar at Chicago's Rhine Hall, however, and that's virtually the only spirit your eyes will meet.

Since it began operations in the city's hospitality-heavy West Loop neighborhood in 2012, Rhine Hall has specialized in eau de vie, a European-style fruit brandy made of pure fruit distillate. The craft distillery has grown steadily, opening a taproom the following year and continually expanding its brandy varieties.

Rhine Hall's apple brandy is something of its flagship spirit, the first in a lineup that has grown to nearly 20 spirits — all distilled from a range of fruit from plums to mangos. That lineup also offers a small selection of liqueurs, including the distillery's newest creation, a coffee liqueur.

After being steeped in esoteric brandies for years, Rhine Hall co-founder Jennifer Solberg Katzman said one of her favorite things about the coffee beverage is its simplicity and familiarity (along with the taste, obviously).

"It's nice to have something you can share with friends and not have to explain so much," Solberg Katzman said. "People understand what to do with a coffee liqueur more than, like, a barrel-aged plum brandy."

The self-explanatory spirit's origin story is less humble. Solberg Katzman said she had always had her mind on developing a coffee liqueur one day, but she had yet to give it a try until she was approached by the then-beverage director for the renowned Alinea Restaurant Group. The group has multiple operations neighboring Rhine Hall, including the



ADAM LUKACH/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Rhine Hall's coffee liqueur, in a collaboration with Alinea barista Richard Alvarez, is made with barrel-aged pineapple brandy. The coffee comes from Metric Coffee Co.

cocktail bar the Aviary. Alinea wanted a special coffee liqueur to create a drink at the Aviary, and it wanted Rhine Hall to create it.

Solberg Katzman said she was excited about the inquiry, and after 12 months of collaborating on a recipe with Alinea Group barista Richard Alvarez, the first batch of the liqueur was born, made from barrel-aged pineapple brandy, a custom coffee concentrate and a sugar syrup steeped with vanilla beans.

That specific batch, in fact, remains available only at Alinea and Aviary. Per the group's request, it was uniquely made with a base

of 100% barrel-aged pineapple brandy, and the coffee concentrate came from Counter Culture coffee beans. The subsequent batches, Solberg Katzman said, all use a barrel-aged pineapple-brandy blend for the base and Metric Coffee Co. beans for the concentrate.

The end product is not too sweet and low in viscosity — two elements to which Solberg Katzman said she wanted to give specific attention.

"I used to drink a lot of white Russians," she said. "A common reaction with drinks like that is that they're too sweet or overly syrupy."

Her favorite way to enjoy Rhine Hall's newest addition, then, shouldn't be surprising. She likes to keep it easy.

"Simplicity is the thing, minimal ingredients," she said. "You could really replace it in any stirred cocktail, or just drink it on the rocks. I like white Russians, but you could also just put it in your hot chocolate or coffee."

The spirit is available in the Chicago and New York City markets for the holidays, priced at \$25-\$30 for 375 milliliters and \$45-\$55 for 750 milliliters.

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ABEL URIBE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE; SHANNON KINSELLA/FOOD STYLING

DRINK

Cognac is coming back to cocktails

BY LISA FUTTERMAN
Chicago Tribune

I prefer grape-based spirits to grain-based. Back in the 19th century, so did many American drinkers, until a late century Phylloxera outbreak wiped out much of France's grapes and essentially cut off the flow of wine, brandy and cognac. That's when drinkers in the U.S. had to turn to domestic spirits like whiskey and bourbon in their tipples. It's time to go back to cognac.

Cognac is basically blended brandy aged in French oak — its flavor rich and complex, with a deep bouquet, that retains lively fruit notes and loads of vanilla, caramel and even coconut. It was originally made for export and transported in oak barrels to Holland, and later, the U.S.

These days, bartenders love to mix cocktails with cognac as the base spirit. Many bars, like Vol. 39 in

Metropolitan

Makes: 1 cocktail

2 ounces cognac

1 ounce sweet vermouth

Dash simple syrup

3 dashes Angostura bitters (or another flavor)

1 to 2 brandied cherries, such as Luxardo

Combine all the ingredients except the cherries in an ice-filled mixing glass. Stir until very cold, about 1 minute. Strain into a chilled coupe glass; garnish with cherries.

Chicago's Gray Hotel, serve cognac Old-Fashioneds in addition to whiskey-based ones, perhaps as a nod to Wisconsin's unofficial state drink, the brandy Old-Fashioned, but more likely to show off the elegant spirit.

"While cognac is a beautiful year-round spirit,

there is something essentially autumnal about it and other aged fruit brandies," says Seth Sempere, a bartender at Zig Zag in Seattle. "They have depth and heft but are also sprightly and playful." He created a drink called the Midnight Society, which includes cognac, gin, amaro, aromatized cider and a dash of bitters. "I wanted to make a cocktail that captures the aromas of the season: wood smoke, resinous pine, sweet apples, the earthy pungency of kicking through fallen leaves."

At Chicago's Violet Hour, Abe Vucekovich created the "It's not you," with cognac, saffron-flavored liqueur, lemon, fresh ginger, toasted coconut and Angostura bitters. A riff on the classic cognac sidecar, it's served up, and the addition of saffron makes it glow from within. Revival Cafe Bar in the downtown Chicago food hall of the same name, features the

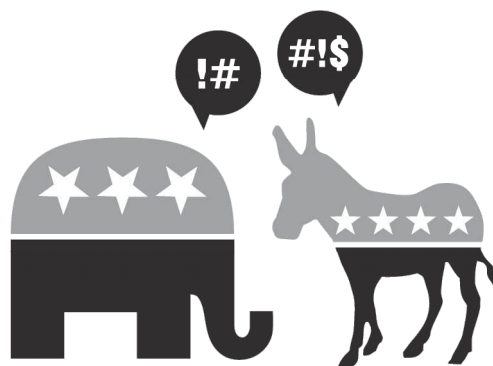
Marquette cocktail, a New York sour riff using cognac as the base, plus saffron amaro, lemon juice, a house cherry/ginger cordial and a float of dry lambrusco. The result is a tart, effervescent and very pretty cocktail.

"We like working with cognac because the neutral oak aging and grape base allow for a leaner, more nuanced flavor profile when compared to other aged spirits made from grain and matured in charred barrels," says Mark Phelan, bar manager.

You don't need a \$150 bottle of XO cognac to make a fantastic drink. Pick up a bottle of VS or VSOP cognac, or something like the Pierre Ferrand 1840 or Hardy Legend 1863, any of which are delightful (and decadent) in cocktails. Then mix up a Metropolitan, the grape lover's Manhattan.

Lisa Futterman is a freelance writer.

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Reviews

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chicharrones and smoky bacon, and a protein-heavy Land & Sea Benedict, with pork belly and shrimp alongside poached-egg-topped English muffins slathered with a spicy (mildly so) hollandaise.

Whatever time you visit, the extensive cocktail list is worth checking out, as much for the pun-filled names (Eye Don't Carrot All, Ice Sage, Alco'Hall & Oates) and novel presentations (some drinks are covered with a latticed-sugar cage, which you break through with a tiny hammer, giving new meaning to the phrase "getting hammered") as the well-crafted drinks themselves. Large-format pours, which serve 2-4 or 4-6, include a memorably smoky-spicy bloody maria (mezcal-based), but when I balked at tackling that much booze, the bar happily mixed me a single-person serving.

1846 W. Division St., 773-276-7422, dinemachine.com. Dinner daily; lunch/brunch Friday-Sunday.

— Phil Vettel

Flat & Point

Flat & Point opened this spring calling itself a barbecue restaurant. It's easy to think it still is. Walk into the large Logan Square space and a gargantuan smoker weighing 3,000 pounds and stretching longer than a Honda Civic dominates the open kitchen. Plus, most of the menu items feature food that has spent some time hanging out with wood smoke.

But over the past several months, chef Brian Bruns, who spent time at Spiaggia and Tru, has transformed the restaurant into something far different and intriguing. Instead of serving brisket on a metal tray with some barbecue sauce on the side, here you'll find a dish called brisket "like a steak," which is served on a plate with a rich red wine sauce and topped with a fat slice of blue cheese.

Flat & Point now describes itself as an Alpine smokehouse, taking inspiration from the hearty cuisine around the Alps in Europe. It's also dedicated to sourcing local ingredients, especially meat, and crafting them into a range of charcuterie.

Any visit should start with a platter of that charcuterie (\$15), which features three house-cured meats, pickles, crusty bread and jam. The offerings change daily, but I was particularly taken with the silky chicken liver mousse and thin slices of head cheese.

Turns out that the brisket "like a steak" is accurately named, as the beef has the tender juiciness of a flat slab of ribeye, albeit with a hint of smoke floating on top. The blue cheese adds a slap of fat and funk, offering just the right amount of too much. It's available in four sizes (5 ounces \$18, 8 ounces \$28, 12 ounces \$38, 1 pound \$50). I found the 8-ounce portion to be more than ample.

Bruns co-owns the restaurant with Taylor Bruns, his wife. She has crafted a wild wine list full of surprising choices (ever tried kekfrankos from Hungary?) with lots of acidity that pair well with the hearty cuisine. Know that if you go on a Thursday, all bottles of wine are half off.

My favorite dish deviates the furthest from the original barbecue theme. Brian's pasta is the ever-changing daily pasta special. (Here's where the Spiaggia training comes in handy.) When I visited, the kitchen was offering al dente bigoli (a fat noodle) paired with creamy and sweet squash and a hint of truffle (\$13). I can't wait to get back to try what's available next.

In fact, thanks to the comforting cuisine and welcoming atmosphere, I can't imagine a place I'd rather be on a miserably cold Chicago winter night than Flat & Point.

3524 W. Fullerton Ave., 773-904-7152, flatandpoint.com. Dinner Wednesday-Sunday, lunch Saturday-Sunday.

— Nick Kindelsperger

Ciccio Mio

Say you've just watched "The Irishman," and you're in the mood to eat like a Scorsese character. Have I got the place for you: Ciccio Mio. The restaurant had been open a little shy of two months when we visited, but it had all the confidence and comfort of a tested classic.

Perhaps that shouldn't be a surprise. The restaurant is the latest from Brendan Sodikoff of Hogsalt Hospitality, and it follows his playbook: Take iconic cuisine and serve it in a space that could double as a movie set. As with Sodikoff's other restaurants, the food at Ciccio Mio isn't especially surprising — or even modern. But it's executed with such care that it might just be the best version of a dish you've had a thousand



The Land & Sea benedict at Machine includes pork belly, grilled shrimp and poached eggs smothered in a spicy hollandaise sauce

PHIL VETTEL/CHICAGO TRIBUNE



This stuffed artichoke represents Ciccio Mio's approach to food: satisfying, classic fare, executed perfectly.

JENNIFER DAY/CHICAGO TRIBUNE



The chicken thighs in a red adobo marinade at Gadabout, served with roasted garlic mofongo, chicharrones, salsa verde and pickled red onion.

ADAM LUKACH/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

times before.

Ciccio Mio recreates the Italian American supper club. It's a jewel box of a dining room with about a dozen tables, most of them plush, burgundy banquettes, situated below walls crowded with art hung salon style. Waiters wear tuxedos; food runners are in shirtsleeves and ties. It's a 1950s throwback. The decor hedges on its masculine vibe, falling somewhere between old man's club and your great-aunt's living room — but with none of the smoke or mustiness.

The meal starts with fougasse, a wonderfully tangy and crusty bread, served with olive oil, balsamic vinegar, giardiniera and a few slices of nicely spiced soppressata. From there, we shared a stuffed artichoke (\$13.95), and I daresay it was better than your grandma's. It had just the right breadcrumb ratio to satisfy, while cutting it with a tonnato sauce that was as bright with lemon and capers as it was rich with tuna and anchovy.

We shared a plate of orecchiette pugliese (\$18.95) — pasta spiked with hot pork sausage balanced with bitter rapini and Parmesan — as well as the shrimp scampi (\$32.95) roasted with fennel pollen and Calabrian chile. The orecchiette tasted like something out of my grandfather-in-law's kitchen; my cranky husband was as happy as I've ever seen him in an Italian restaurant. The scampi was nicely charred and enhanced, rather than overpowered, by the herb rub. We rounded out the meal with a side

of roasted acorn squash (\$12.95), which contributed a nice, buttery sweetness to the meal.

You certainly don't need to order dessert here — you're not going to leave hungry — but the pavlova seemed possible. As we were ordering it, our 3-year-old daughter exuberantly blurted out, "And some chocolate ice cream!" Which was not on the menu. Soon, a delightfully fluffy pile of meringue, vanilla ice cream, whipped cream and berries arrived — along with a parfait glass full of chocolate ice cream. It was topped with a blazing sparkler.

226 W. Kinzie St., 312-796-3316, cicciochio.com. Dinner Wednesday-Sunday.

— Jennifer Day

Gadabout

Dining at Gadabout feels a lot like eating at a friend's house — albeit a very well-decorated house. The global street food restaurant in Andersonville, led by chef Rolf Pedersen, pulls its culinary inspirations from many cultures, but Gadabout's interior feels intimate, cozy and almost familiar. It captures the scale of a meal at home in an endearing way.

The scope of the menu, meanwhile, could not be more vast. Diners will discover a huge variety of cuisines and styles on a menu that itself is lengthy, regularly offering almost a dozen vegetarian options, a handful of both seafood and meat options, plus desserts.

Pedersen's menu is portioned

tapas-style, small-to-medium plates that can be paced to your preference. This proved to work for better and for worse on my visit. Our server suggested two or three plates per person for myself and my friend, offered a few suggestions when we asked her and said we could stagger our dinner.

We went with seven plates total, two of which were on the smaller end — fried potatoes and a half-dozen grilled oysters — thinking that, since we were quite hungry, we'd wind up with only a little to take home.

This proved misguided. The portion sizes were much larger than expected given her recommendations, and the meal was coursed-out over 90-plus minutes. By the final course, we were more than too full.

Much of the food was worth returning for, particularly the vegetarian items. The fried potatoes (\$8) were rightly cooked, soft inside and crunchy outside, topped with a chaat masala crema, tamarind, crispy shallots and cilantro. The picturesque avocado salad (\$12) was bright and delicious, highlighted by its charred poblano vinaigrette.

The potatoes were an exceptional example of restraint, as most of the dishes were heavy and rich, often due to an accompaniment, like salsa negra and queso fresco on the grilled flap steak (\$22) or chicharrones alongside the chicken thighs (\$17). Both proteins were prepared nicely but were somewhat lost on the plate among the cre-

ativity.

We thankfully made room for dessert, some great chocolate-covered key lime pops (\$7) by pastry/sous chef Meg Pedersen, who, yes, is married to Rolf.

Frankly, some additional orientation on the menu would have helped, given its breadth, not to mention the variance of "small plates" from restaurant to restaurant in Chicago. The front half of the menu also proved better than the second half, as those larger plates became a bit bogged down.

Still, the space is lovely, and outside of our specific server, the service was strong — a pleasant place for a bite, especially if the other elements fall into place.

5212 N. Clark St., 773-944-0429, gadaboutchicago.com. Dinner daily.

— Adam Lukach

Papa Cenar

Papa Cenar is a restaurant in search of an identity.

It is Spanish (albondigas), but Mediterranean (falafel). Spicy (Brussels sprouts), but bland (octopus). Skillfully executed (mussels), but clumsy (that falafel again).

Papa Cenar's search for identity is plain; barely open two months, it has already abandoned a series of main courses to focus on small plates and to add paella to the menu. (Our server seemed too unsure of the paella to recommend one. So we skipped.)

Such a quick and radical menu update isn't encouraging, and neither was Papa Cenar's relatively sparse crowd on a Friday night. But the truth is it's facing an uphill climb.

Born from the ashes of Twain — a modern take on Midwestern cuisine that closed after eight months after failing to wow its gentrifying Logan Square neighborhood — Papa Cenar feels very much like what it obviously is: a bid for a gentrifying neighborhood to love it after the previous concept fell flat.

As a pack-em-in, weekend destination sort of place, Papa Cenar doesn't feel terribly promising. One problem: The space is clearly too large. The other: hit-and-miss food.

The octopus (\$18) was well-cooked, but lacked flavor. The falafel was middling and expensive (\$12 for three pieces). It was also inexplicably served on a metal tray beside a whipped feta that picked up some of the metallic flavor. Ick.

Brussels sprouts (\$9) were well-prepared but a touch too spicy. The albondigas (\$12) were tasty enough but odd, served atop caramelized onions rather than within the standard tomato-based sauce.

That's not to say Papa Cenar is a crushing disappointment. No dish was an egregious failure, and the mussels, arriving in a reddish shrimp-based broth and spiked with chorizo, are well worth a visit.

It just doesn't quite meet its ambition. Papa Cenar is more of a Tuesday night sort of place: sit at the bar, order those mussels and a glass of wine (the recommendation here is the \$10 Portuguese blend) and move on.

2445 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773-697-8463, papacenar.com. Dinner daily; Sunday brunch. Closed Monday.

— Josh Noel

Young American

Gone is the goth bread, the goofy yet glorious coal black bake that seemed destined to become the signature dish of chef Nick Jirasek at Young American. The Logan Square bar and restaurant opened in February in the shadow of Lula Cafe and Billy Sunday, with an identity based on playful yet polished late night bar snacks and CBD cocktails.

Seven months later, Jirasek transitioned the menu into Filipino-inspired munchies reflecting his roots. You can see some of that online, but the site still doesn't show some of the new dishes, or an option called The Entire Menu (\$100). Yes, everything, plus a few extras. That's what I ordered for my party of four, which included my parents, the octogenarian Mom and Pop Chu. Lest you question their open-mindedness, my dad recently revealed he tried opium when he was 10 years old. The ideas are indeed inspired, and if you ordered nothing but the Royal Sampler (\$15), pancit (\$10) and golden oat milk CBD cocktail (\$12), you'd feel like you hit the jackpot.

The snack sampler includes super crispy, fresh cut, potato starched fries; adobo chicken tendies, aka tenders; popcorn shrimp, hilariously yet judiciously sprinkled with popcorn butter; and lumpia, aka Filipino egg rolls, stuffed with Spam, pork, beef and smelt bagoong, a house-made funky fish condiment. My dad declared the lumpia a lot like the spring rolls he grew up with in old Shanghai. Jirasek also

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makes all the dipping sauces, from banana ketchup to fermented chile ranch.

The Filipino spaghetti was so close to success with a fantastic pig face Bolognese studded with hot links, but tossed with ambitious handmade nixtamalized noodles cooked unfortunately gummy.

Warm olives tossed with cardamom and lemongrass are served with a side of Sour Patch Kids candy, which didn't help the medicinal flavor called out by my mom, who's tolerated every type of medicine from traditional Chinese potions to the prescription good stuff.

Jirasek delivered most the dishes himself, describing each earnestly. Most of the staff on the night we went though did him no favors. When my crew rolled up with Mom and Pop, no one behind the bar bothered to drop a word. I get the chill vibe, but that was cold. Besides the bar stools, a few high top tables serve as the only seating suitable for dining so it's not fully accessible.

I mentioned to my parents that even a couple of small side tables might work with the raised banquettes around the dance floor. "They call that a dance floor?" said my mom, who walks with a cane. "It's not even smooth enough."

2545 N. Kedzie Ave., youngamericanbar.com. Dinner daily, brunch weekends.

— Louisa Chu

Cebu

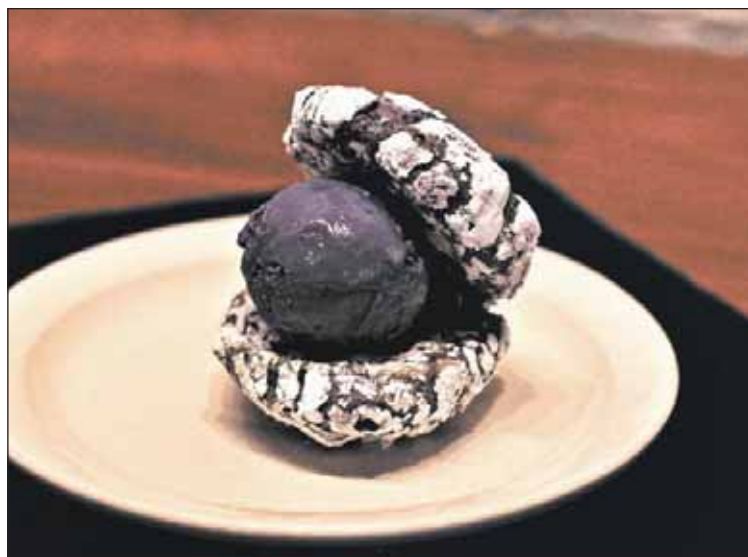
I knew Cebu had something special when NIKI's song "Warpaint" was the soundtrack to me crunching down on a piece of lumpia, and Joji crooned "Midsummer Madness" while I shoveled Cebuano pancit into my mouth. Serving dishes from their home city of Cebu, Philippines, after which the restaurant is named, Malvin, Marlon and Cybill Tan have created a restaurant that reflects their culture and values, just like they had hoped.

The pork barbecue skewers (\$10) are a wonderfully sweet, funky and salty way to start the meal. Charred to perfection, each porky bite is juicy and delectable thanks to a marinade of soy, pineapple juice, banana ketchup



JOSH NOEL/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Halloumi with eggplant caponata, cucumber yogurt and pistachios at Papa Cenar.



GRACE WONG/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Cranky Cookies at Cebu sandwich two soft and luscious ube crinkle cookies with ube ice cream.



JOHN J. KIM/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Young American's Royal Sampler includes potato starched fries, adobo chicken tendies, popcorn shrimp and lumpia (in the Spam can).

and fish sauce. The dish is served with a side of atchara, sweet and sour pickled green papaya, and a citrusy soy calamansi sauce. Order a side of comforting garlic rice (\$3) and pillowy pan de sal (\$3) to go with it. The lumpia (\$9) are perfectly fried Filipino egg rolls stuffed with savory, bouncy pork, bright orange carrots and shiitake mushrooms. In a past visit, Cebu offered six small pieces rather than four large ones, which I prefer for maximum crunchiness. But the dish is a winner, no matter the format.

You'll want to bring a friend to tackle the main dishes. The Bam-I (\$18) is Cebuano-style pancit, with egg noodles and glass noodles among strips of chicken and pork, sweet Chinese sausage, shiitake mushrooms and cabbage. But the real star among entrees is the Cebu lechon (\$26), a three-hour, slow-roasted slab of Cheshire pork belly nestled into a bowl and curled around a mound of rice. It has a shatteringly crispy skin and juicy, tender meat, with all its fatty bits bursting with flavor. This is that show-stopping,

jaw-dropping, camera-snapping kind of dish.

But even if it weren't for these delicious savory options, I'd visit Cebu just for the Cranky Cookies (\$7), two soft and luscious ube crinkle cookies with ube ice cream sandwiched in between. It's an argument that all desserts should be bright purple and made with ube, and you'll want to eat them by the dozen. The halo-halo (\$12) is a more traditional option, with finely shaved, frozen condensed and evaporated milk topped with a dizzying variety of

toppings like red bean, kaong (sugar palm fruit), nata de coco, corn flakes and cubes of leche flan. Mine even had a tiny meringue Christmas tree. Just be sure to order the ube ice cream with it.

If you're looking for a cozy restaurant serving crave-worthy Filipino dishes, your search ends at Cebu.

2211 W. North Ave., 773-799-8650, cebuchicago.com. Dinner Tuesday-Saturday; brunch Saturday-Sunday.

— Grace Wong

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