

Aruba's ONLY English newspaper

Celebrate King's Day at these events!



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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY
PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY



SUNDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

MONDAY:
ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

TUESDAY:
JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

WEDNESDAY:
EDDIE KROON
SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm

KARAOKE 9:00 - 11:00pm

THURSDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

FRIDAY:
RICKY THOMAS
GUITARIST
7:00 - 9:00pm

SATURDAY:
EDDIE KROON
SINGER
4:00 - 6:00pm

ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

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Elon Musk's X sues to overturn Minnesota political deepfakes ban

By STEVE KARNOWSKI

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — X Corp., the social media platform owned by Trump adviser Elon Musk, is challenging the constitutionality of a Minnesota ban on using deepfakes to influence elections and harm candidates, saying it violates First Amendment speech protections.

The company's federal lawsuit filed this week also contends that the 2023 state law is preempted by a 1996 federal statute that shields social media from being held responsible for material posted on their platforms.

"While the law's reference to banning 'deep fakes' might sound benign, in reality it would criminal-



Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk walks to the stage to speak at the Butler Farm Show, Oct. 5, 2024, in Butler, Pa.

Associated Press

elections. Minnesota's law is clear and precise, while this lawsuit is petty, misguided and a waste of the Attorney General Office's time and resources," her statement said.

Democratic Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison's office, which is legally obligated to defend the constitutionality of state laws in court, said in a statement that it's "reviewing the lawsuit and will respond in the appropriate time and manner."

The Minnesota law was already the subject of a constitutional challenge by Christopher Kohls, a content creator, and GOP state Rep. Mary Franson, who likes to post AI-generated parodies of politicians. That case is on hold while they appeal to overturn a judge's denial of their request to suspend the law.

The attorney general's office argues in that case that deepfakes are a real and growing threat to free elections and democratic institutions, that the law is a legitimate and constitutional response to the problem, and that it contains important limitations on its scope that protect satire and parody.

X, formerly known as Twitter, said it's the only social media platform challenging the Minnesota law, and that it has also challenged other laws it considers infringements of free speech, such as a 2024 California political deepfakes law that a judge has blocked. X said in its statement that its "Community Notes" feature allows users to flag content they consider problematic, and that it's been adopted by Facebook, YouTube and TikTok. The company's lawsuit said its "Authenticity Policy" and "Grok AI" tool provide additional safeguards. Alan Rozenshtein, a University of Minnesota law professor and expert on technology law, said in an interview Friday that it's important to separate the free-speech issues from whatever one thinks about the controversial Musk. □

ize innocuous, election-related speech, including humor, and make social-media platforms criminally liable for censoring such speech," the company said in a statement. "Instead of defending democracy, this law would erode it." Minnesota's law imposes criminal penalties including jail time for disseminating a deepfake video, image or audio if a person knows it's fake, or acts with reckless disregard to its authenticity, either within 90 days before a party nominating convention, or after the start of early voting in a primary or general election.

It says the intent must be to injure a candidate or influence an election result. And it defines deepfakes as material so realistic that a reasonable person would believe it's real, and generated by artificial intelligence or other technical means.

"Elon Musk funneled hundreds of millions of dollars into the 2024 presidential election and tried to buy a Wisconsin Supreme Court seat," said the law's author, Democratic state Sen. Erin Maye Quade.

"Of course he is upset that Minnesota law prevents him from spreading deepfakes that meant to harm candidates and influence

LONG LIVE THE KING

Happy King's Day

ARUBA ARUBA TOURISM AUTHORITY

FBI arrests a Milwaukee judge accused of helping a man evade immigration authorities

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER,
DEVI SHASTRI and COREY
WILLIAMS

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE (AP) — The FBI on Friday arrested a Milwaukee judge accused of helping a man evade immigration authorities, escalating a clash between the Trump administration and local authorities over the Republican president's sweeping immigration crackdown. Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge Hannah Dugan is accused of escorting the man and his lawyer out of her courtroom through the jury door last week after learning that immigration authorities were seeking his arrest. The man was taken into custody outside the courthouse after agents chased him on foot.

The judge's arrest dramatically escalates tensions between federal authorities and state and local officials, whom President Donald Trump's administration has accused of interfering with his immigration enforcement priorities. It also comes amid a growing battle between the Trump administration and



This 2016 photo shows Judge Hannah Dugan in Milwaukee.

the federal judiciary over the president's executive actions over deportations and other matters. Democratic Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers, in a statement on the arrest, accused the Trump administration of repeatedly using "dangerous rhetoric to attack and attempt to undermine our judiciary at every level."

"I have deep respect for the rule of law, our nation's judiciary, the importance of judges making decisions impartially without fear or favor, and the efforts of law enforcement to hold people accountable if they commit a crime," Evers said. "I will continue to put my faith in our justice system as this situation plays

out in the court of law." Dugan was taken into custody by the FBI on Friday morning on the courthouse grounds, according to U.S. Marshals Service spokesperson Brady McCarron. She appeared briefly in federal court in Milwaukee later Friday before being released from custody. She faces charges of "conceal-

ing an individual to prevent his discovery and arrest" and obstructing or impeding a proceeding.

"Judge Dugan wholeheartedly regrets and protests her arrest. It was not made in the interest of public safety," her attorney, Craig Mastantuono, said during the hearing. He declined to comment to an Associated Press reporter following her court appearance.

Court papers suggest Dugan was alerted to the presence of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents in the courthouse by her clerk, who was informed by an attorney that they appeared to be in the hallway.

The FBI affidavit describes Dugan as "visibly angry" over the arrival of immigration agents in the courthouse and says that she pronounced the situation "absurd" before leaving the bench and retreating to her chambers. It says she and another judge later approached members of the arrest team inside the courthouse, displaying what witnesses described as a "confrontational, angry demeanor." □

Associated Press

Americans linked to Congo coup attempt plead not guilty to U.S. criminal charges

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Four Americans have pleaded not guilty to criminal charges in federal court in Utah after authorities said they conspired to stage a violent coup in Congo that failed.

Three of the defendants were charged this month following their return to the United States from Congo, where the death sentences they faced were commuted prior to repatriation. Among them is 22-year-old Marcel Malanga, son of opposition figure Christian Malanga, who led the coup attempt targeting the presidential palace in Kinshasa.

A fourth man in Utah alleged by prosecutors to

be an expert in explosives is charged with aiding the plot.

Marcel Malanga, Tyler Thompson Jr., and Benjamin Zalman-Polun were ordered to remain in custody after pleading not guilty during a joint court appearance Thursday. The alleged explosives expert, Joseph Peter Moesser, 67, appeared separately and was also ordered to remain in custody after entering a not guilty plea. Prosecutors say he provided explosives training and instructions at his Utah home and contributed weapons. The May 2024 coup attempt aimed to overthrow Congolese President Félix Tshisekedi. At least six

people, including Christian Malanga, died when armed men in camouflage fatigues led an attack on the homes of the president and a deputy prime minister.

The four Americans are charged with crimes including conspiracy to use weapons of mass destruction, conspiracy to bomb government facilities and conspiracy to kill or kidnap persons in a foreign country. They face lengthy prison sentences if convicted. The three who traveled to Congo were among 37 people sentenced to death last September by a military court in Congo for their role in the coup attempt.

Lawyers for Moesser and Zalman-Polun declined to comment.

Attorneys for Malanga and

Thompson could not immediately be reached by phone or email. □



Benjamin Reuben Zalman-Polun, left, Marcel Malanga and Tyler Thompson, all American citizens, attend a court verdict in Congo, Kinshasa, Friday, Sept. 13, 2024, on charges of taking part in a coup attempt in May 2024.

Associated Press

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Ex-US Rep. George Santos sentenced to over 7 years in prison for fraud and identity theft

By PHILIP MARCELO
Associated Press

CENTRAL ISLIP, N.Y. (AP)

— Disgraced former U.S. Rep. George Santos was sentenced Friday to over seven years in prison, sobbing as he learned his punishment for the crimes that led to his expulsion from Congress.

Santos, who pleaded guilty last summer to federal wire fraud and aggravated identity theft, appealed for mercy. In a federal court a short drive from his old congressional district, he said through tears that he was “humbled” and “chastised” and realized he had betrayed his constituents’ trust.

“I offer my deepest apologies,” he said, adding: “I cannot rewrite the past, but I can control the road ahead.”

U.S. District Court Judge Joanna Seybert evidently wasn’t convinced.

“Where is your remorse? Where do I see it?” she asked as she sentenced him to 87 months behind



Former U.S. Rep. George Santos arrives at federal court for sentencing, Friday, April 25, 2025, in Central Islip, N.Y.

Associated Press

bars. “It’s always someone else’s fault.” The New York Republican served in Congress barely a year before becoming just the sixth member of the House to be ousted by colleagues.

He admitted to deceiving donors and stealing the identities of nearly a dozen people, including his family members, to fund his winning campaign. His plea deal included agreeing to pay roughly \$580,000 in

penalties.

“From the moment he declared his candidacy for Congress, Santos leveraged his campaign for his own enrichment and financial benefit,” U.S. Attorney John Durham, whose office

prosecuted the case, said outside court.

Santos, 36, is due to report to prison July 25. He didn’t respond to reporters’ shouted questions outside the courthouse, but he had told The Associated Press by text Thursday that he was “ready to face the music.”

Santos’ victims included a woman with brain damage and two octogenarian men, prosecutor Ryan Harris told the judge.

Speaking in court, New York Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon argued that the victims of Santos’ crimes even included jobless and struggling New Yorkers.

Before winning office, Santos collected unemployment benefits while actually working for a Florida company. Once in Congress, he cosponsored legislation intended to root out unemployment fraud.

For Santos, Reardon said, it was “do as he says, not as he does.” □



Vehicles move along the 710 highway near the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, Monday, March 10, 2025, in Long Beach, Calif.

Associated Press

California proposes allowing testing of self-driving heavy-duty trucks

By JAIMIE DING
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — California regulators have released a new proposal to allow the testing of self-driving heavy duty trucks on public roads.

The state’s Department of Motor Vehicles announced proposed regulations Friday to allow the testing of self-driving vehicles over 10,001 pounds, opening the door for companies to test self-driving technology with previously prohibited autonomous commercial semi-trucks on the road.

Regulators say self-driving heavy-duty trucks are already being tested in other states including Texas, Arizona and Arkan-

sas. California is the only state with regulations that explicitly ban them.

The regulations are subject to a public comment period that ends in June.

They will likely face pushback from the labor unions that represent the state’s hundreds of thousands of commercial truck drivers, who are concerned about safety and losing truck driving jobs to automation in the future. The California Legislature passed a bill in 2023 to require human drivers aboard self-driving trucks, but it was vetoed by Gov. Gavin Newsom, who said additional regulation was unnecessary because existing laws governing self-driving vehicles were sufficient. □

New Syrian foreign minister attends U.N. Security Council in first U.S. appearance since Assad's fall

By ABBY SEWELL and FAR-NOUSH AMIRI

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Syria's foreign minister attended a U.N. Security Council briefing Friday after raising his country's new flag at the international body's headquarters. It was the first public appearance by a high-ranking Syrian government official in the United States since the fall of President Bashar Assad in a lightning rebel offensive in December.

Asaad al-Shibani is part of a delegation of authorities from Damascus' new government who have traveled to the United States this week in hopes of receiving relief from harsh sanctions that were imposed by America and its allies after Assad's brutal crackdown on anti-government protests in 2011 that spiraled into a civil war.

"The brutal policies of that era deepened divisions, forcing entire families to immigrate and leaving behind their hopes and dreams that were reduced to ashes," al-Shibani said in his remarks to the Security Council. "However, I'm



Syria's Foreign Minister Asaad Al-Shibani attends a Security Council meeting on the Situation of the Middle East at United Nations Headquarters on Friday, April 25, 2025.

Associated Press

here today to represent that new Syria."

His arrival marks a stunning new chapter for the war-torn country, which has spent the better part of the last several decades isolated and ostracized from the rest of the world.

Marking the arrival of a new Syria

The presence of the new Syria was evident outside

the U.N. headquarters as al-Shibani watched the three-starred flag previously used by opposition groups replace the two-starred flag of the Assad era as the country's official emblem.

"This flag is not a mere symbol but rather a proclamation of a new existence ... embodying a future that emerges from resilience

and a promise of change after years of pain," al-Shibani said.

Members of the Security Council, the U.N.'s most powerful body, welcomed the new interim minister, saying his attendance is a "positive step" toward a more prosperous Syria. But many countries and U.N. officials warned there is still much more work to be

done to heal the country's wounds.

"Syria has moved beyond a caretaker government to a new, expanded and more diverse cabinet," Geir Pedersen, the U.N. special envoy for Syria, told the council. "This is an improvement from what went before. Yet it is still not a fully inclusive framework for political transition. And this leaves many Syrians unsure of their place in the emerging new Syria." The U.N.'s deputy humanitarian chief, Joyce Msuya, described the situation on the ground in Syria as among the "world's largest" humanitarian crises, with nearly three-quarters of the population requiring assistance, more than half of the country facing food insecurity and at least 7 million people displaced.

"Millions of refugees and internally displaced persons who have expressed their desire to return home will continue to be dissuaded by a lack of basic services and livelihood opportunities," Msuya said, urging U.N. members to deliver the basic funding required to address these issues. □

African leaders call for more peacekeepers for Somalia to defend against al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA

Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) — African leaders meeting in Uganda on Friday called for more peacekeepers for Somalia to defend against the extremist al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab militant group that has been wreaking havoc in the Horn of Africa nation.

A statement at the end of a regional leaders' meeting in the Ugandan capital of Kampala suggested additional troops could possibly come from Egypt.

More than 10,000 African Union troops are currently deployed to Somalia, nearly half of them from Uganda. The AU troops were authorized by the United Nations Security Council

and multiple versions of the peacekeeping mission have been deployed there since 2007.

The latest mission, which took over earlier this year and is known as the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia, faces funding challenges and regional disagreements over which countries are authorized to deploy troops.

Somali authorities want Egyptian troops in the mission but not those from Ethiopia. However, relations between Ethiopia and Egypt have been strained in recent years over Ethiopia's construction of a \$4 billion dam on the Blue Nile, a key tributary of the Nile River. Egypt claims the

project will likely diminish its share of the water from the Nile. Al-Shabab militants have fought for more than 15 years to overthrow Somalia's internationally backed government. To this day, the extremists launch deadly raids and bombings, including in Somalia's seaside capital of Mogadishu, despite a new offensive by government troops as well as routine airstrikes by the United States. Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud told the meeting in Kampala that the government offensive against al-Shabab is "now at a critical juncture," urging for continued international support.

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni encouraged So-

malia to recruit volunteers among its citizens willing to fight al-Shabab.

"A small Somali national army, in terms of numbers,

plus a small (AU) force from friends is a very dangerous underdose that has caused the chronic sickness of insecurity" Museveni said. □



African Union peacekeepers from Uganda provide security as Somali lawmakers arrive to cast their vote in the presidential election, at the Halane military camp in Mogadishu, Somalia Sunday, May 15, 2022.

Associated Press

U.N. food agency says its food stocks in Gaza have run out under Israel's blockade

By **WAFAA SHURAF** and **LEE KEATH**

Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — The World Food Program says its food stocks in the Gaza Strip have run out under Israel's nearly 8-week-old blockade, ending a main source of sustenance for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the territory.

The WFP said in a statement that it delivered the last of its stocks to charity kitchens that it supports around Gaza. It said those kitchens are expected to run out of food in the coming days. Some 80% of Gaza's population of more than 2 million relies primarily on charity kitchens for food, because other sources have shut down under Israel's blockade, according to the U.N.

The WFP has been supporting 47 kitchens that distribute 644,000 hot meals a day, WFP spokesperson Abeer Etefa told The Associated Press. It was not immediately clear how many kitchens would still be operating in Gaza if those shut down. But Etefa said the WFP-backed kitchens are



Palestinian children receive donated food at a distribution center in Khan Younis, Gaza Strip, Monday, April 21, 2025.

the major ones in Gaza. Israel cut off entry of all food, fuel, medicine and other supplies to Gaza on March 2 and then resumed its bombardment and ground offensives two weeks later, shattering a two-month ceasefire with Hamas. It says the moves aim to pressure Hamas to release hostages it still

holds. Rights groups have called the blockade a "starvation tactic" and a potential war crime. COGAT, the Israeli military agency in charge of coordinating aid in Gaza, declined to comment on the amount of supplies remaining in the territory. It has previously said Gaza had enough aid after a surge

in distribution during the ceasefire. Israel accuses Hamas of diverting aid for its purposes. Humanitarian workers deny there is significant diversion, saying the U.N. strictly monitors distribution. They say the aid flow during the ceasefire was barely enough to cover the immense needs from throughout the war

Associated Press

when only a trickle of supplies got in.

With no new goods entering Gaza, many foods have disappeared from markets, including meat, eggs, fruits, dairy products and many vegetables. Prices for what remains have risen dramatically, becoming unaffordable for much of the population. Most families rely heavily on canned goods. Malnutrition is already surging. The U.N. said it identified 3,700 children suffering from acute malnutrition in March, up 80% from the month before. At the same time, because of diminishing supplies, aid groups were only able to provide nutritional supplements to some 22,000 children in March, down 70% from February. The supplements are a crucial tool for averting malnutrition.

Almost all bakeries shut down weeks ago and the WFP stopped distribution of food basics to families for lack of supplies. With stocks of most ingredients depleted, charity kitchens generally can only serve meals of pasta or rice with little added. □

Swiss leader says Trump administration foresees 'privileged' talks with 15 countries on US tariffs

By **JAMEY KEATEN**

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — The Swiss president says Switzerland is among 15 countries with which the United States plans to conduct "privi-

leged" negotiations to help reach a deal in the wake of sweeping U.S. tariffs on dozens of countries that have shaken global markets. Karin Keller-Sutter, in an interview with broadcaster

SRF published Friday, said she was "satisfied" with talks in Washington this week that included an International Monetary Fund conference and her one-on-one meeting with U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent. Keller-Sutter also serves as Switzerland's finance minister.

"The United States has defined a group of 15 countries with which it wants to find ... a quick solution in this tariff question. Switzerland is part of this group of these 15 countries," she told reporters separately late Thursday in Washington.

It was not immediately clear which 14 other countries were included, but she told SRF that "the U.S. envisages conducting I would

say somewhat privileged negotiations and finding solutions" with that group. Before the Trump administration paused some of its most stringent tariff plans, products imported from Switzerland had been set to face tariffs of 31% more than the 20% tariffs on goods from the European Union. Switzerland is not a member of the 27-country bloc.

According to figures published by the Swiss Embassy in Washington, the U.S. has been Switzerland's most important goods export market worldwide since 2021, while Switzerland is the fourth most important export market for U.S. services. The bilateral trade volume in goods and services between Switzerland

and the U.S. reached a total of \$185.9 billion in 2023, the embassy says on its website.

Keller-Sutter said a memorandum of understanding was to be drawn up after which negotiations can begin. A document would also lay out the most important topics, and "we have also been assigned a specific contact person. This is not easy in the U.S. administration," she was quoted as saying.

"The U.S. authorities have clearly expressed their desire to find a solution with Switzerland," Keller-Sutter told SRF. She said no timetable had been set, but the two sides agreed to move forward quickly "because uncertainty is poison for the economy." □



Swiss Federal Councillor Karin Keller-Sutter speaks during a Swiss National Day flag raising ceremony with New York Mayor Eric Adams, not pictured, at Bowling Green, Thursday, Aug. 1, 2024, in New York.

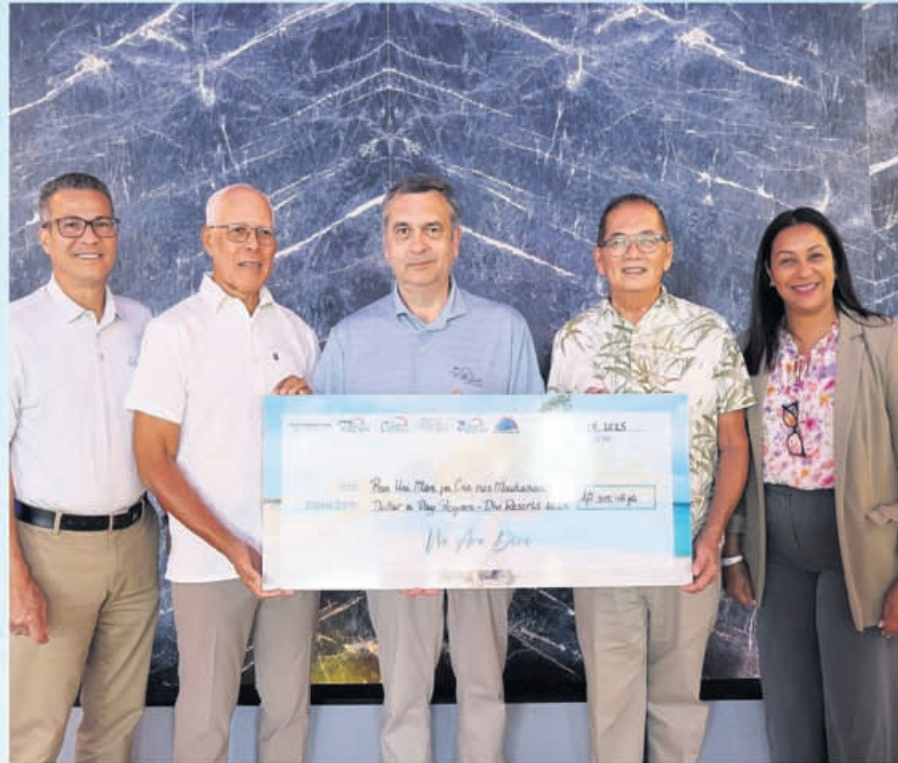
Associated Press

A Small Gesture, A Big Impact


In 2023, the Divi Impact Foundation expanded its beloved \$1 A Day Donation Program to Divi Aruba Phoenix Resort, Divi Village, and Divi Dutch Village. This heartfelt initiative now known as Community Assistance, invites our generous owners and guests to contribute just \$1 per day during their stay, helping to uplift our local community in meaningful ways.

Through this program, we proudly partnered with Ban Uni Man Pa Cria Nos Muchanan, an organization dedicated to nourishing Aruba's future, our children. Together, we were able to present a check of AWG 315,116.96, supporting daily breakfast for over 500 schoolchildren.

With the cost of feeding one child for a year at approximately AWG 550, we



successfully secured meals for 572 of 780 children, ensuring they begin each school day with a full stomach and a focused mind.

This incredible achievement was made possible thanks to the kindness of our owners and guests and the support of Divi Resorts, which added 15% to every guest contribution made in 2024. Together, we're not just feeding children, we're fueling dreams, nurturing young minds, and making a lasting difference. 

Thank you for helping us care for our community! One dollar, one meal, one child at a time.



Place names in San Nicolas and their origins

(Oranjestad)--If you're ever taking a tour of Aruba, San Nicolas would definitely be on your itinerary. From relaxing on the white, sandy beaches of Baby and Roger's Beach, to exploring the prehistoric caves of Quadirikiri and Fontein, you are taking in a full view of what San Nicolas has to offer. But did you know that you are also passing through areas whose names have historical origins? Here are a few place names in San Nicolas and their origin story.

Sero Colorado

On your way to Baby or Roger's Beach, you'll pass by the famous Red Anchor at what was once the entrance to the Colony residential community and be greeted with red soiled hills by the coast. This is Sero Colorado. Named after the 30-meter, deep red, limestone hill, "Sero Colorado" translates to "Colored Hill". Sero Colorado has deep



historical ties with the once-thriving phosphate industry in the area. Matter of fact, there are still underground shafts and passages deep in Sero Colorado from the time of phosphate mining. In 1958, the refinery at the time, Lago, adopted this name for the residential section of its employees.

Vader Piet

Another well visited area, Vader Piet is located in the

Arikok National Park. Recognizable sites within this area includes the Wind Mills and the Quadirikiri Cave. The origin of this name is part historical and speculation, as there are slight deviations from what actually happened.


In 1829, Pieter Lampe was a planter and the person responsible for governing this remote area. As the story goes, Pieter was well known

and beloved for his kindness and good treatment of his employees, and was therefore also called Vader Piet (Father Piet). However, he was tragically murdered—some speculate at the hands of a slave. For his work and good heart, the area was named after him.

San Nicolas

Of course we can't forget San Nicolas itself. Much like Vader Piet, the origin

of the name San Nicolas has so far two different accounts. In the literal sense, "San Nicolas" translates to "Saint Nicolas", leading many to believe that this district was named after a Spanish saint. Though one account does support this with the theory that the district was named after the saint by Spanish colonizers, the other account is much less divine, but does refer to an influential figure in the area.

Nicolaas van der Biest was a successful landowner during the time of the phosphate boom in late 19th century Aruba. Back then, landowners (most, if not all of them men) were referred to as "Shon" by their subordinates. So, the district was originally named after Shon Nicolaas. Over time, the name evolved into what is now San Nicolas. 

Source: "Aruba: Short History" by Dr. J. Hartog.

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Today we celebrate our King Willem-Alexander!



(Oranjestad)—Today, our island has the great honor of celebrating King Willem-Alexander. Although his birthday is on April 27th, this Sunday, the Royal Palace recently issued a decree that this year's celebrations will held today, April 26th.

Willem-Alexander is the first King of the Netherlands since the death of his great-great-grandfather William III in 1890. On April 20, 2013, Willem-Alexander's inauguration took place at the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam. Willem-Alexander ascended the throne immediately after the abdication of his mother, Queen Beatrix, on the same day.

Under the constitution, the king, along with the ministers, forms the

government. The king represents the Kingdom of the Netherlands at home and abroad. In addition to his formal duties, King Willem-Alexander works in the interests of the Dutch people.

As head of state, it is the king's duty to unify, represent, and encourage the people.

The ministers, not the monarch, are responsible for government actions, and the ministers are accountable to Parliament for what they do and say. The ministers, together forming the cabinet, are responsible for decision-making.

The king holds weekly meetings with the prime minister, regularly meets with ministers and state secretaries,

signs all laws and royal decrees (KB), and ratifies international treaties as part of the government. At the State Opening of Parliament on the third Tuesday of September, he delivers his Throne Speech, in which the government announces its plans for the upcoming parliamentary year.

The constitution requires the monarch to appoint, dismiss, and swear in all ministers and state secretaries. In view of this constitutional role, and upon the request of Parliament, the king may be kept informed of all developments in the formation process.

The monarch is officially the president of the Council of State, a historic role that is purely symbolic in nature. The Council of State provides the government and Parliament with independent advice on legislation and governance and also serves as the highest administrative court in the country. In addition to the plenary meetings attended by the king, the Council of State consists of an Administrative Jurisdiction Division and an Advisory Division, whose meetings do not involve the king. Accordingly, the king is not involved in practice in the two main areas of activity of the Council. The vice-president is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Council of State and presides over its meetings.

Positions held by King Willem-Alex-



ander since April 30, 2013:
President of the Council of State;
Member of the Board of the Archives of the House of Orange-Nassau Foundation;
Member of the Board of the Crown Property Trust;
Member of the Board of the Royal Gifts Trust.

King's Day events for the family!

26 April:

- Kite Flying at Centro di Barrio Playa Pabao
- Flee market and Dutch Food at Bingo Restaurant Noord
- King's Day Glow in the Dark Walk & Run in the Alhambra Parking Lot
- Fleemarket at Rococo Plaza in Tanki Leendert
- Fleemarket at Superfood Plaza
- King's Day Beach Party at Surf-side Beach Bar
- King's Day Party at Café 080
- King's Day Festival at Hoya in Playa Daniel Leo

27 April:

- Rocking King's Day & Art Fair Musica at The Music Hub Foundation (Weststraat 7) ☐



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Aruba's kite flying tradition for King's Day



(Oranjestad)—Every year for King's Day, Arubans gather with friends and family to fly kites. Big or small, paper or plastic, blue skies fill up with these colorful flying contraptions, brightening our yearly celebration of the Dutch Monarch.

The tradition of flying kites starts at home in the weeks leading up to King's Day. These kites were traditionally made with things found in the nearby mondi* and in the kitchen at home. Using dried up cactus sticks for the frame, old news papers, and glue made from flour, water and salt to dry faster (some people even use cornstarch slurry as glue), kids usually make their own kites with their friends, parents or other close family members. Tails are made from old bed sheets, ripped and tied together to create a long string

of fabric trailing behind the back end of the kite. To finish off the process, people used fish lines or thin rope to tie three corners of the kite together. Another long string of rope is tied in the knotted center and bundled up, used to steer the kite as it flies in the air. Decorating the kite was especially important, and children would use paint to create their own designs—the more colorful, the better!

People usually fly their kites in big open fields, like empty soccer and baseball fields found all around the island around noon, when the sun is at its brightest.

In the past few years, kite flying has become a sport in which groups of people would battle against each other to see whose kite is the biggest, the prettiest,

and whose could fly flawlessly and longer in the air. For this year's celebration, Centro di Bario Playa Pabao located in Madiki is organizing another edition of their kite flying event with different categories of height starting



at 8AM.

Gather your family and be a part of this colorful Aruban tradition in celebration of

our King Willem-Alexander's birthday!

*Mondi: Aruban woods. □

Aruba Beach Club supports efforts to spay and neuter animals on the island!



Aruba Beach Club supports efforts to spay and neuter animals on the island! Members of Aruba Beach Club approached the ABC Board of Directors several months ago asking how they could help the island and its residents with the homeless dog and cat population that can very often seem out of control. The ABC Board along with its General Manager were very supportive of the idea!

An ABC board member along with an ABC member reached out to various sources to determine which organization would be best suited to accept monetary donations and put them to good use.

Although there are several animal rescue organizations on the island, it was decided at this point in time to donate any proceeds to the Animal Welfare Alliance of Aruba. AWAA has a no-cost spay and neuter clinic to help the dogs and cats of low income

families. Their mission is to help with spaying and neutering, and creating awareness through educational school programs. Aruba Beach Club recently placed a donation box in the lobby of the club. Within just a few short weeks, enough money was raised to spay/neuter 14 animals! The restaurant at ABC, Kokoa, has recently agreed to have a donation box at their bar area as well.

It is the hope of ABC and AWAA that more resorts/restaurants will follow suit and place donation boxes at their facilities as well. Raising funds to educate Arubans and/or assist with the homeless animal population on this beautiful island is so important. Aruba is a small island with a big heart. We can all help solve this problem together. Aruba Beach Club is proud to be able to lead the charge!

Pictured: Aruba Beach Club Board of Directors, Aruba Beach Club General Manager, AWAA Volunteers





It is with profound sadness that we share the news
of the passing of

Wil den Hartog

The beloved father of our respected colleague & friend
Michiko Eman

Our thoughts and heartfelt condolences are with
Inge, Michiko, Siegfried, Dawn, Stefano,
and their family during this time of immense sorrow.
May they find strength and comfort in the love and
support that surrounds them.

Management and Personnel
Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort

Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins

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

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

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



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

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

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

Two-hundred years after the beautiful time of Alto Vista, people can no longer see much of the town of Alto Vista from 1750. With a lot of work they found the old

foundations of the Church of the Queen of the Holiest Rosary to build a new chapel on the same place. The entire surrounding area was empty and desolated, making it hard to imagine that Alto Vista was a town at all. A hundred years later, people can see the remains of around twenty houses, some made of stone and others of clay. Nowadays, only around six of these houses remain.

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



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

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

Basic driving rules on Aruba: Roundabouts

(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.

Speed limit

Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive in—both at maximum and minimum speed—is on the right lane.

Roundabouts

Speaking of roundabouts, it



is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.

Most roundabouts have these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far

left (exit 3), then you need to switch to the left lane on the high way before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be quite tricky to navigate...

Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout)

Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could—and has—caused confused among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout (left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout, now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of the roundabout. The rules don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

Airport roundabout

Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy (hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out heading east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is

used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

"Las Americas" roundabout

The Las Americas roundabout is located near the Talk of the Town hotel, west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout—and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt! ☐



CROSSWORD

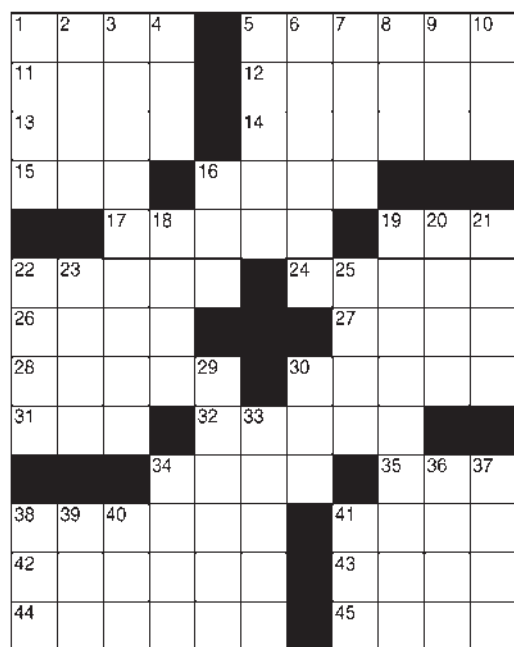
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Wanes
- 5 Try to win
- 11 Enthusiasm
- 12 Shrewd
- 13 Risqué
- 14 Right away
- 15 Bible boat
- 16 Singer Baez
- 17 Left over
- 19 Used to be
- 22 Loser to Truman
- 24 River through Nantes
- 26 Way to go
- 27 Pants part
- 28 "Olympia" painter
- 30 Heart, for one
- 31 Texting letters of shock
- 32 Young pigeon
- 34 Close
- 35 Vacuum's lack
- 38 Perfect place
- 41 Realty unit
- 42 Job ad datum
- 43 Tattoo site
- 44 FBI employees
- 45 "You there!"

DOWN

- 1 Poet
- 2 Yellowstone animal
- 3 Start of a golf stroke
- 4 Crafty
- 5 Mist
- 6 Lebanon neighbor
- 7 School on the Thames
- 8 Merriment
- 9 Mel of the Giants
- 10 Old auto
- 16 Crested bird
- 18 Singer Seeger
- 19 Some offensive players
- 20 Open space
- 21 Glimpsed
- 22 Band sample
- 23 Midterm, for one
- 25 Gumbo veggie
- 29 Casual top
- 30 Unconscious
- 33 Wharves across
- 34 Reach across
- 36 Fancy flower
- 37 Budget amount
- 38 Can. neighbor
- 39 Price setting
- 40 Bullfight cheer
- 41 Nile serpent



4-26

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

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

4-26

CRYPTOQUOTE

BV NBS GSVZ FSP RFGVQZPWFG

ISRQ ZXUVFTV NXUU MQSCWCUI

FSP RFGVQZPWFG ISRQ NSQGZ.

— VUCVQP BRCCWQG

Cryptoquote: CHOCOLATE COMES FROM COCOA, WHICH IS A TREE. THAT MAKES IT A PLANT. CHOCOLATE IS SALAD. — ANONYMOUS

Cruise ship Schedule: April 22 - 30 2025

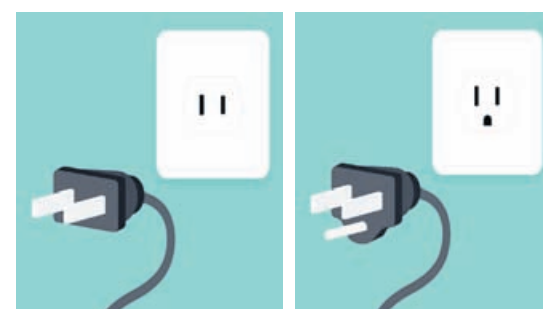
			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
TUE	22	CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	C	1
		OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	I	1
WED	23	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
THU	24	NORWEGIAN GEM	08.00	20.00	C	1
FRI	25	NORWEGIAN GETAWAY	11.00	21.00	C	1
SUN	27	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS	11.59	23.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-
TUE	29	CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00	22.00	B	1
		CELEBRITY REFLECTION	08.00	23.00	C	1
WED	30	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

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

Electrical power

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



Drinking water

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



Supermarket hours

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



Safety

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



Trade war and leery travelers have airlines trimming flights and withdrawing financial guidance



American Airlines passenger jets prepare for departure, Wednesday, July 21, 2021, near a terminal at Boston Logan International Airport, in Boston.

Associated Press

By **MICHELLE CHAPMAN**
AP Business Writer

Major U.S. airlines are reducing their flight schedules and revising or withdrawing their profit outlooks for the year due to less domestic travel demand as sentiment about the national and global economies sours.

American Airlines pulled its financial guidance for 2025 on Thursday, joining rivals Southwest and Delta in declaring the economic outlook too uncertain to provide full-year forecasts. All three airlines cited weakening sales among economy class leisure travelers. "We came off a strong fourth quarter, saw decent business in January, and really domestic leisure trav-

el fell off considerably as we went into the February time frame," American Airlines CEO Robert Isom told CNBC. Consumer reluctance to book vacations would correspond with a new poll that showed many people fear the U.S. is being steered into a recession and that President Donald Trump's broad and haphazardly enforced tariffs will cause prices to rise. There's also increasing concerns about international travelers. Michael Feroli, chief U.S. economist at J.P. Morgan, said in a client note that anti-American sentiment could be spurring a travel dropoff, with data showing that international visitors to the U.S. are running about 5%

lower than a year ago. "In recent weeks there have been numerous news stories about tourists canceling trips to the U.S. in protest of the perceived heavy-handedness of recent trade policies," he wrote. "This points to potentially another channel to consider in assessing the effects of tariffs on economic activity." Some economic indicators point to expectations of a slowdown. Sales of previously occupied U.S. homes slowed in March, and U.S. consumer sentiment plunged in April, the fourth consecutive month of declines. However, fears of a downturn have not translated into layoffs. Trump announced sweeping tariffs on April 2 that triggered panic in financial markets and generated recession fears, leading consumers and businesses to start pulling back on spending, which includes

travel. The president put a partial 90-day hold on the import taxes but increased his already steep tariffs against China. Beijing increased its import tax on American goods to 125% in retaliation. On Thursday China denied Trump's assertion that the two sides were involved in active negotiations to end or mitigate their trade war. □



Marriott Aruba Surf Club PLATINUM SEASON

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2 Bed Ocean view \$22,500
2 Bed Garden view \$18,500
3 Bed Ocean view \$36,000
2 Bed WK 51 Ocean view \$65,500
2 Bed WK 52 Ocean View \$65,500
2 Bed WK 7 and 14 - all views

GOLD SEASON

2 Bed Oceanfront \$20,000
2 Bed Oceanside \$15,500
2 Bed Ocean view \$14,500
2 Bed Garden view \$13,000
3 Bed Ocean view \$30,000

Marriott Aruba Ocean Club PLATINUM SEASON

2 Bed Oceanfront \$45,000
2 Bed Ocean view \$29,000
1 Bed Ocean front \$23,000
1 Bed Ocean View \$17,000

GOLD SEASON

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1 Bed Ocean View \$11,500

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Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

So you saw 'Conclave' the movie. Here's what it got right and wrong about real-life conclaves

By HOLLY MEYER
Associated Press

Speculation surrounding a conclave to elect a pope is a time-honored tradition. But for the impending conclave following the death of Pope Francis, the ranks of armchair Vatican experts have swelled thanks to Hollywood.

"Conclave" the film, a moody 2024 political thriller, introduced many laypeople to the ancient selection process with its arcane rules and grand ceremony, albeit with a silver screen twist packed full of palace intrigue and surprise.

Though it has its critics, the film treats the gravity of a papal election with respect and accurately portrays many rituals and contemporary problems facing today's Catholic Church. But Vatican experts warn the movie doesn't get everything right.

Here's a look at what "Conclave" does get right and wrong about conclaves. (Spoilers ahead.)

Scenery and aesthetics

The movie excels at re-creating the look and feel of a conclave.

"The film gets a lot right. They tried to reproduce the mise-en-scene of the Vatican accurately," William Cavanaugh, a Catholic studies professor at DePaul University in Chicago, said in an email. "They show that a lot of the drama is around the preconclave conversations among car-



Italian Cardinal Giacomo Biffi, center, takes an oath at the beginning of the conclave to elect the next pope in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican, Monday, April 18, 2005.

Associated Press

dinals."

It's not a perfect re-creation, according to the Rev. Thomas Reese, a senior analyst with the Religion News Service and a Vatican expert.

He called the movie's production values "marvelous," but noted slight discrepancies in the cardinals' dress.

"The red in the cardinals' garments was a deep red, while the reality is more orange. Frankly, I like the Hollywood version better," Reese, a Jesuit priest who wrote "Inside the Vatican: The Politics and Organization of the Catholic Church," said in an email.

Papal protocols

The movie aligns with real-

life expectations for a quick conclave, said Massimo Faggioli, a historical theology professor at Villanova University in Pennsylvania.

"A long conclave would send the message of a Church divided and possibly on the verge of a schism. The history of the conclaves in the last century is really a story of short conclaves," he said via email.

Reese pointed out other discrepancies. While the voting process was depicted accurately, he said, the ballots are burned not after each vote, but after each session, which is typically two votes.

Holy plot holes

There are a few particularly egregious errors that, if cor-

rected, would lead to a very different movie.

A key character in the film, the archbishop of Kabul, Afghanistan, arrives just before the conclave with paperwork declaring the late pope had made him a cardinal "in pectore" "in secret" allowing him to vote for the next pope.

"The biggest mistake in the movie was the admission of a cardinal in pectore into the conclave," said Reese. "If the name is not announced publicly by the pope in the presence of the College of Cardinals, he has no right to attend a conclave."

Cavanaugh agreed and noted that while the movie's twist about the Ka-

bul archbishop was far-fetched, it does point to a certain truth about conclaves.

"The cardinals do not always know who they're getting when they elect a pope," he said. "If the cardinals knew how (Jorge Mario) Bergoglio would be as Pope Francis, many of them wouldn't have voted for him. Pius IX was elected as a liberal and turned into an archconservative. John XXIII was supposed to be a jolly caretaker pope, and he unleashed Vatican II," a series of modernizing reforms.

Another of the movie's more outlandish storylines involves the dean of the College of Cardinals breaking the seal of the confessional by revealing to another cardinal what a nun confessed to him, said Reese.

"He committed a mortal sin and would be automatically excommunicated. Such an action would be egregiously wrong," Reese said.

In addition to that, a cardinal paying for votes, as shown in the film, is unheard of in modern times, said Cavanaugh, and the politicking is exaggerated. And so are the politics.

The movie errs in making cardinals into either liberal or conservative champions, said Kurt Martens, professor of canon law at the Catholic University of America in Washington. □



This cover image released by St. Martin's Press shows "Things Left Unsaid" by Sara Jafari.

Associated Press

Sara Jafari's 'Things Left Unsaid' is a tale of tentative lovers who keep connecting

By AROUN RASHID DEEN
Associated Press

Sara Jafari's "Things Left Unsaid" is a love-craving, tumbling tale of two Iranian British friends who first meet in high school the self-skeptic and pessimist Shirin Bayat, and the traumatized Kian Rahimi.

Kian was 15 years old when his older brother, Mehdi, was incarcerated and blames himself partly for what happened. Shirin, for her part, battles anxiety and depression. In high school in the northern English city of Hull, Shirin falls in love with Kian, her only close male friend, but she can't open up to him about it. Kian feels the same about Shirin; he fancies her and imagines her lips on his, but kept it quiet. Shirin and Kian both went their separate ways

after school until 10 years later when they unexpectedly meet again at a friend's party in London. They have a lot in common: They have both faced discrimination they were their school's only two non-white students and now Shirin finds the same situation at work.

Shirin kept thinking of Kian throughout the decade-long separation. Even though Shirin kept in touch with her female friends from her high school days, she always had a sense of unfulfillment, a sense of pessimism and skepticism. Her parents had separated when she was in college.

"Shirin thinks there is an ugliness inside her sometimes, some kind of repressed anger that she takes out on other people in her mind," the author writes. □

Excellent start for baseball's NL West foreshadows a potentially historic 4-team summer race

By DAVID BRANDT
AP Baseball Writer

PHOENIX (AP) — The Los Angeles Dodgers seem like they have nearly unlimited amounts of money, three former MVPs in their starting lineup with Shohei Ohtani, Mookie Betts and Freddie Freeman, and a pitching staff that never runs out of overpowering arms.

So far, that's good for third place in their five-team division.

Welcome to the National League West, which is far from a one-team show four weeks into the season. Going into Friday night's games, the San Diego Padres (17-8), San Francisco Giants (17-9), Dodgers (16-9) and Arizona Diamondbacks (14-11) are all off to a good start, foreshadowing a potentially fascinating summer race.

"For us, who are so close to it, not surprised," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said.

"They're all very good teams. I think it's the best division in baseball.

We're all sort of built differently, too, which is inter-



San Diego Padres' Fernando Tatis Jr., center, is congratulated after scoring on a fielder's choice during the first inning of a baseball game against the Detroit Tigers, Monday, April 21, 2025, in Detroit.

Associated Press

esting and fun if you look at the construction, the strengths, weaknesses of the four clubs.

"It's going to be an interesting season how this all plays out."

To be clear, the big-spending Dodgers have not underperformed this season.

Los Angeles has a .640 winning percentage through 25 games, which translates to a 104-win pace. That's right where everyone pretty much expected them to be.

Instead, it's the great play from the Padres and Giants and to a lesser extent

the D-backs that has set up a summer of fun. Since baseball split the NL and AL into three divisions in 1994, the 2002 AL West has the record for the highest winning percentage with a .566 mark.

So far, the 2025 version of the NL West is off to a .544

start and that's including the Colorado Rockies, who are a dreadful 4-20 for the worst record in baseball. Take out the Rockies, and the other four teams have combined for a .634 winning percentage.

"It's gonna be a battle the entire season," Giants third baseman Matt Chapman said. "We knew the Dodgers are the Dodgers, the Padres are really, really good and so are the Diamondbacks."

The Dodgers continue to be the undeniable favorites to win the division. Los Angeles is off to a quality start despite Betts' illness that caused him to drop around 15 pounds, Freeman's shower mishap and Blake Snell's arm trouble.

A good first month from Tommy Edman, Will Smith and Teoscar Hernández at the plate have showcased the lineup's depth. Yoshinobu Yamamoto looks like a potential NL Cy Young award winner with an 0.93 ERA through five starts. Ohtani has slugged six homers with his return to the mound looming. □

Top seeds Zverev and Sabalenka advance with easy victories at Madrid Open

By TALES AZZONI
AP Sports Writer

MADRID (AP) — Top seeds Alexander Zverev and Aryna Sabalenka scored comfortable victories in their opening matches at the Madrid Open on Friday.

Zverev cruised past home favorite Roberto Bautista Agut 6-2, 6-2, while Sabalenka triumphed against qualifier Anna Blinkova 6-3, 6-4.

Zverev, the Madrid champion in 2018 and 2021, extended his winning streak to six matches. The German player moved to No. 2 in the world after capturing the Munich title last weekend.

"A good match, I knew I had to focus against Roberto," said Zverev, who improved to 24-5 in Madrid. "This is my favourite center

court in the world, I only lost twice here in my entire life. I hope that stays the way throughout the next 10 days and that I can continue playing good tennis." In the third round, Zverev faces Nuno Borges or Alejandro Davidovich Fokina. Sabalenka tops Blinkova. Sabalenka, Madrid winner in 2021 and 2023 and last year's runner-up to Iga Swiatek, converted three of her seven break opportunities to defeat the 76th-ranked Blinkova.

The top-ranked Sabalenka will face No. 28 seed Elise Mertens in the third round. Anastasia Potapova upset eighth-seeded Qinwen Zheng, while 15th-seeded Amanda Anisimova lost to fellow American Peyton Stearns 6-2, 2-6, 7-5. Sixth-seeded Jasmine Paolini

eased past Katie Boulter 6-1, 6-2.

Third-seeded Jessica Pegula reached the third round by defeating Eva Lys 6-2, 6-2. Pegula reached the Madrid final in 2022, losing to Ons Jabeur.

Pegula, who has a tour-leading 27 wins, will next face Moyuka Uchijima, who defeated Jabeur in three sets.

Fritz advances In other action on the men's side, fourth-ranked Taylor Fritz of the U.S. who returned from an abdominal injury that kept him sidelined since Miami routed Christopher O'Connell of Britain 6-1, 6-4, and Casper Ruud beat Arthur Rinderknech 6-3, 6-4.

"It feels great to come back and play a really solid match," Fritz said. "The first

ball I hit since the match I lost in Miami was the day before I flew here, so I had three weeks of nothing, then five days of tennis. I'm super happy I can come out and produce that level on the little bit of prep I

had."

Fellow American Ben Shelton rallied past Mariano Navone 4-6, 7-6 (5), 6-3. The 85th-ranked Navone served for the match at 5-4 in the third set. □



Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus celebrates after defeating Anna Blinkova of Russia during the Madrid Open tennis tournament in Madrid, Spain, Friday, April 25, 2025.

Associated Press



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Roger Goodell says he believes owners will reach a consensus on the tush push

By **JOSH DUBOW**
 AP Pro Football Writer

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell believes owners will come to a consensus in May on whether rule changes will be needed to eliminate the tush push play that's helped the Philadelphia Eagles win one Super Bowl and reach another. A proposal by the Green Bay Packers to eliminate the play was tabled at the league meetings this month but will be brought back up for a vote when the owners meet again in May. Some proponents of eliminating the play point to player safety even though there's no evidence of an increased injury risk, as well as the fact that the NFL prohibited pushing a ball carrier until a rule change that was put in place in 2005. The original proposal by the Packers would have only banned pushing a player who was lined up directly behind the snapper and receives the snap, immediately at the snap. There also has been discussion about banning pushing a ball carrier at any spot on the field. "A lot of coaches would tell you that's not part of football, right. It may be rugby but it's not us," Goodell said Friday on "The Pat McAfee Show" at the NFL draft in Green Bay, Wisconsin. "The second thing is really the safety of the game. And that's of primary importance to us. Is it a play that's unsafe when you're in those positions where you're getting pushed or pulled and you can't control where you're going. Those are the two factors. On the other side, there's a legitimate argument that everyone can do it, and



NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell rides a bike onstage before the first round of the NFL football draft, Thursday, April 24, 2025, in Green Bay, Wis.

you know, if somebody does it better than the others, that's the way the game is played." It takes 24 of 32 votes to approve rule changes and neither side of the argument had clear support at the league meetings earlier this month. "There were different concepts that were discussed. I would say there was a split," Goodell said on McAfee's show. "There wasn't an overwhelming push either way, but I think as people see the different things the committee has been considering and hear the conversation, I think that they'll actually develop a consensus." Goodell touched on several other topics in the interview: **Playoff seeding** Goodell touched on another potential rule change that was tabled until May, saying he believes there

could be a modification to the proposal from Detroit to seed the playoffs by record instead of guaranteeing the division winners a top-four seed and at least one home game. The Lions made the proposal after Minnesota was forced to go on the road as a wild-card despite winning four more games than the Rams last season. Goodell said he believes the owners could approve a smaller move to deny division winners a home game if they finish with a losing record. "The question is at some point, if you're not .500 or better, do you deserve the ability to have a home game, too?" he asked. "I think that's pretty hard to argue." There have been four division winners in a non-strike shortened season who hosted a playoff game despite having a losing re-

cord, with Tampa Bay the last to do it in 2022. **18th game** Goodell remains committed to adding an 18th regular-season game to the schedule in the future. The NFL went from 16 games to 17 in 2021, reducing the preseason to three games, and would like to get to a model of 18 regular-season and two preseason games. Goodell said he believes changes in equipment, practice rules and the offseason program have improved safety enough to add another week of games and the revenue that comes with it. But the league needs approval from the NFLPA to do it. "They have a right to approve it," he said. "So that's going to be really important for us, in having that conversation, say yes, we can grow the pie and they get a percentage of it. Is it the right step? I think we feel

strongly that it is, but that may be something that will have to happen over a longer term. It may not be a shorter-term thing."

International play

The NFL will be playing games in Ireland and Spain for the first time this season and are set for the first game in Australia in 2026, expanding the number of countries to host a regular-season game to eight outside the United States. Goodell said the long-term plan is to get to 16 international games a year, up from seven scheduled for this season.

"I think we'll get to Asia pretty soon," he said. "I think we can be worldwide with our game."

Holiday play

Goodell said he was pleased with the league's two Christmas games on Netflix last season and said the NFL will be a staple on the holiday going forward. There will be three games on Christmas this year, when it falls on a Thursday, and he said the league plans to play at least three Christmas games every year going forward. He also said there will be a small tweak to the Thanksgiving schedule with the Detroit Lions' annual home game moving from 12:30 p.m. ET to 1 p.m. ET. □

