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States move to shore up voting rights protections after courts erode federal safeguards

Minnesota State Rep. Emma Greenman poses for a photo in her office in the State Capitol complex, March 12, 2024, in St. Paul, Minn.

Associated Press
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States move to shore up voting rights protections after courts erode federal safeguards

By **STEVE KARNOWSKI**
Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — An appeals court ruling that weakened a key part of the Voting Rights Act is spurring lawmakers in several states to enact state-level protections to plug gaps that the ruling opened in the landmark federal law aimed at prohibiting racial discrimination in voting.

Democratic-led states have been taking matters into their own hands because national legislation to expand voting rights remains stalled in a divided Congress. Meanwhile, Republican lawmakers in many states have tried to erode safeguards in the name of protecting election integrity amid former President Donald Trump's

false claims that vote fraud cost him the 2020 election. Legislators in Minnesota, Michigan, Maryland, New Jersey and Florida are pursuing state voting rights acts, building on ones enacted by New York in 2022 and Connecticut in 2023, as well as ones enacted earlier in Virginia, Oregon, Washington and California. "And we know of interest



Minnesota Senate President Bobby Joe Champion sits at his desk in his office in the State Capitol complex, March 11, 2024, in St. Paul, Minn.

Associated Press

from other states that are considering taking up state VRAs in the next year or so," said Michael Pernick, an attorney for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund in New York. In Minnesota, Democratic Rep. Emma Greenman, of Minneapolis, said she felt an urgent need to act after the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled last year in an Arkansas case that voters and groups could no longer sue under Section 2 of the federal Voting Rights Act — only the U.S. attorney general.

Section 2 prohibits voting practices or procedures that discriminate on the basis of race, including maps that disadvantage voters of color. Lawsuits have long been brought under the section to try to ensure Black voters have adequate political representation in places with a long history of racism, including many Southern states.

The appeals court decision currently applies only to the seven states in the 8th Circuit, which stretches from Minnesota to Arkansas. Legal observers expect the case to end up before the U.S. Supreme Court.

"As with other areas of pol-

icy, what you're seeing is, states really have to say, "We need to make sure that ... we have a system that is free from discrimination, we need to protect the rights of voters," Greenman said.

The 1965 Voting Rights Act is seen as a crowning achievement of the civil rights movement. But federal courts have "chipped away" at it over the decades, said Lata Nott, an attorney with the Campaign Legal Center in Washington, D.C., who testified for the Minnesota bill. The biggest blow to the federal law in the view of voting rights advocates was a 2013 Supreme Court ruling in an Alabama case that stripped the government of a potent tool to stop voting bias by eliminating the requirement that jurisdictions with a history of racial discrimination in voting get "preclearance" from the federal government for major changes in the way they hold elections.

Conservatives have argued the requirement did not account for racial progress and other changes in society and that existing voting rights protections are adequate. □

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Google to purge billions of files containing personal data in settlement of Chrome privacy case

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE
AP Technology Writer
SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Google has agreed to purge billions of records containing personal information collected from more than 136 million people in the U.S. surfing the internet through its Chrome web browser.

The massive housecleaning comes as part of a settlement in a lawsuit accusing the search giant of illegal surveillance.

The details of the deal emerged in a court filing Monday, more than three months after Google and the attorneys handling the class-action case disclosed they had resolved a June 2020 lawsuit targeting Chrome's privacy controls. Among other allegations, the lawsuit accused Google of tracking Chrome users' internet activity even when they had switched the browser to the "Incognito" setting that is supposed to shield them from being shadowed by the Mountain View, California, company. Google vigorously fought the lawsuit until U.S. District Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers rejected a request to dismiss the case last August, setting up a po-



The Google building is seen in New York, Feb. 26, 2024.

tential trial. The settlement was negotiated during the next four months, culminating in Monday's disclosure of the terms, which Rogers still must approve during a hearing scheduled for July 30 in Oakland, California, federal court.

The settlement requires Google to expunge billions of personal records stored in its data centers and make more prominent privacy disclosures about Chrome's Incognito option when it is activated. It also

imposes other controls designed to limit Google's collection of personal information.

Consumers represented in the class-action lawsuit won't receive any damages or any other payments in the settlement, a point that Google emphasized in a Monday statement about the deal.

"We are pleased to settle this lawsuit, which we always believed was meritless," Google said. The company asserted it is only be-

ing required to "delete old personal technical data that was never associated with an individual and was never used for any form of personalization."

In court papers, the attorneys representing Chrome users painted a much different picture, depicting the settlement as a major victory for personal privacy in an age of ever-increasing digital surveillance.

The lawyers valued the settlement at \$4.75 billion to \$7.8 billion, relying on

calculations based primarily on the potential ad sales that the personal information collected through Chrome could have generated in the past and future without the new restrictions. The settlement also doesn't shield Google from more lawsuits revolving around the same issues covered in the class-action case. That means individual consumers can still pursue damages against the company by filing their own civil complaints in state courts around the U.S.

Investors apparently aren't too worried about the settlement terms affecting the digital ad sales that account for the bulk of the more than \$300 billion in annual revenue pouring into Google's corporate parent, Alphabet Inc. Shares in Alphabet rose 3% to close Monday at \$155.49, giving the company a market value of \$1.9 trillion.

Austin Chambers, a lawyer specializing in data privacy issues at the firm Dorsey & Whitney, described the settlement terms in the Chrome case as a "welcome development" that could affect the way personal information is collected online in the future. □

Associated Press

U.S. traffic deaths fell 3.6% in 2023, the 2nd straight yearly drop. But nearly 41,000 people died

DETROIT (AP) — U.S. traffic deaths fell 3.6% last year, but still, almost 41,000 people were killed on the nation's roadways, according to full-year estimates by safety regulators.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said it was the second year in a row that fatalities decreased. The agency also released final numbers for 2022 on Monday, saying that 42,514 people died in crashes.

NHTSA Deputy Administrator Sophie Shulman said that traffic deaths declined in the fourth quarter of last

year, marking the seventh straight quarterly drop that started with the second quarter of 2022.

The declines come even though people are driving more. Federal Highway Administration estimates show that Americans drove 67.5 billion more miles last year than the previous year, a 2.1% increase. The death rate per 100 million miles driven fell to 1.26 last year, down from 1.33 in 2022, NHTSA said.

Authorities have said that even with a decline, the number of deaths is still too high. Shulman blamed

the problem in part on distracted driving. In 2022, an estimated 3,308 people were killed in crashes that involved distracted drivers, while 289,310 were injured. Almost 20% of people killed in distracted driving crashes were people outside of vehicles including pedestrians, bicyclists and others, she said.

"Distracted driving is extremely dangerous," she said while kicking off a rebranded campaign against it called "Put the Phone Away or Pay." The agency will start an advertising campaign this month,



In this aerial photo, responders are seen near wreckage in the aftermath of a fatal, multi-vehicle pileup on I-55 in Manchac, La., Oct. 23, 2023.

Associated Press

and law enforcement officers will crack down on the behavior in a campaign from April 4 to 8.

Traffic deaths spiked in 2021 with a 10.5% increase over 2020 as people started driving more as the COVID-19 pandemic started

to ease. That was the highest number since 2005 and the largest percentage increase since 1975.

At the time, authorities blamed the increase on speeding and more reckless behavior, as well as distracted driving. □

Florida Supreme Court upholds state's 15-week abortion ban, but voters will soon have a say

By **BRENDAN FARRINGTON**
Associated Press

TALLHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — The Florida Supreme Court on Monday cleared the way for the state to ban abortions after six weeks of pregnancy, before many women know they are pregnant, while also giving voters a chance to remove restrictions in November. The court that was reshaped by former presidential candidate and Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis ruled 6-1 to uphold the state's ban on most abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy, meaning a ban on six weeks could soon take effect. But under a separate 4-3 ruling, the court allowed a ballot measure to go to voters that would enshrine abortion rights in Florida's constitution.

The 15-week ban, signed by DeSantis in 2022, has been enforced while it was challenged in court. The six-week ban, passed by the Legislature last year, was written so that it would not take effect until a month after the 2022 law was upheld.

Planned Parenthood, the American Civil Liberties Union and others challenged the law in court. They argued the Florida Constitution's unique priva-



Protesters hold signs as Barbara DeVane, of the Tallahassee National Organization for Women, speaks outside the Florida Historic Capitol, June 24, 2022, in Tallahassee, Fla., during a rally protesting the Supreme Court's overturning of *Roe v. Wade*.

Associated Press

cy clause for more than 40 years has explicitly protected a right to abortion in the state and should remain in force.

Lawyers for the state, however, said when the privacy clause was adopted by voter referendum in 1980, few people understood it would cover abortion. They told the justices the clause was mainly meant to cover "informational privacy" such as personal records and not abortion.

The Florida justices agreed, saying that when voters approved the privacy clause, they didn't know it would affect abortion laws.

"The debate — as framed to the public — overwhelmingly associated the Privacy Clause's terms with concerns related to government surveillance and disclosure of private information to the public" the court wrote. "Prolife and prochoice groups did not join in the fray. These groups

are not politically bashful—not now, and not in 1980." DeSantis, who was took office in 2019, appointed five of the court's seven justices. Abortion rights proponents were disheartened by the ruling.

"This decision demonstrates how precarious our personal freedoms are in this state," said Democratic Rep. Anna Eskamani. "It's so extreme you're going to see Floridians having to go out of state, probably to

Virginia, to get care." The Florida Access Network plans to switch its strategy for women in Florida to paying for their travel expenses to go to out of state, said Stephanie Loraine Pineiro, the advocacy group's executive director.

"People who can't afford to travel, can't afford to lose their jobs because they have to travel for abortion care, these are the people who are going to be forced to remain pregnant," she said. "The collateral damage is all of us."

The proposed constitutional amendment that will be on the November ballot says "no law shall prohibit, penalize, delay, or restrict abortion before viability or when necessary to protect the patient's health, as determined by the patient's healthcare provider." It provides for one exception that is already in the state constitution: Parents must be notified before their minor children can get an abortion.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* in June 2022, most Republican-controlled states have adopted bans or restrictions on abortions. Every ban has faced a court challenge. □

U.S. defense official had 'Havana syndrome' symptoms during a 2023 NATO summit, the Pentagon confirms

By **TARA COPP**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A se-

nior Defense Department official who attended last year's NATO summit in Vilni-

us, Lithuania, had symptoms similar to those reported by U.S. officials who have experienced "Havana syndrome," the Pentagon confirmed Monday.

Havana syndrome is still under investigation but includes a string of health problems dating back to 2016, when officials working at the U.S. Embassy in Havana reported sudden unexplained head pressure, head or ear pain, or dizziness.

The injuries to U.S. government personnel or their families were part of a "60 Minutes" report Sunday that suggested Russia is behind

the incidents, one of which took place during the 2023 NATO summit in Vilnius.

"I can confirm that a senior DOD official experienced symptoms similar to those reported in anomalous health incidents," deputy press secretary Sabrina Singh told reporters Monday. Singh referred questions on whether Russia had a role to the intelligence community, which is still investigating. The official, who was not identified, was not part of Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin's official traveling delegation to Vilnius, Singh said, but was there "sepa-

rately, attending meetings that were part of the NATO summit."

Singh did not say whether the affected defense official had to seek further medical care, retire or cease performing duties, citing medical privacy.

In February the Office of the Director of National Intelligence in its 2024 threat assessment found that it was "unlikely" that a foreign adversary was responsible for causing the mysterious ailments but noted that U.S. intelligence agencies had varying levels of confidence in that assessment. □



Tourists ride classic convertible cars on the Malecon beside the United States Embassy in Havana, Cuba, Oct. 3, 2017.

Associated Press

Israeli strike on Iran's consulate in Syria killed two generals, Iranian officials say

By **KAREEM CHEHAYEB** and **ALBERT AJI** Associated Press
DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) —

An Israeli airstrike that demolished Iran's consulate in Syria on Monday killed two Iranian generals and five officers, according to Iranian officials. The strike appeared to signify an escalation of Israel's targeting of military officials from Iran, which supports militant groups fighting Israel in Gaza, and along its border with Lebanon.

Since the war in Gaza began nearly six months ago, clashes have increased between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah militants based in Lebanon. Hamas, which rules Gaza and attacked Israel on Oct. 7, is also backed by Iran. Israel, which rarely acknowledges strikes against Iranian targets, said it had no comment on the latest attack in Syria, although a military spokesman blamed Iran for a drone attack early Monday against a naval base in southern Israel.

Israel has grown increasingly impatient with the daily exchanges of fire with Hezbollah, which have escalated in recent days, and warned of the possibility of a full-fledged war. Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen have also been launching long-range missiles toward Israel, includ-



Emergency services work at a destroyed building hit by an air strike in Damascus, Syria, Monday, April 1, 2024.

Associated Press

ing on Monday.

The airstrike in Syria killed Gen. Ali Reza Zahdi, who led the elite Quds Force in Lebanon and Syria until 2016, according to Iran's Revolutionary Guard. It also killed Zahdi's deputy, Gen Mohammad Hadi Hajriahimi, and five other officers.

A member of Hezbollah, Hussein Youssef, also was killed in the attack, a spokesperson for the militant group told The Associated Press. The spokesperson spoke on condition of anonymity in line with group's

rules; Hezbollah has not publicly announced the death. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which is based in Britain, said two Syrians were killed in that attack.

Two police officers who guarded the consulate were among those wounded, and first responders were still searching for bodies under the rubble.

While Iran's consular building was leveled in the attack, according to Syria's state news agency, its main embassy building remained

intact. Still, the Iranian ambassador's residence was inside the consular building. Iran's ambassador, Hossein Akbari, vowed revenge for the strike "at the same magnitude and harshness."

Hamas and Islamic Jihad — another Palestinian militant group backed by Iran — accused Israel of seeking to widen the conflict in Gaza. Experts said there was no doubt that Iran would retaliate. The strike in Syria was a "major escalation," Charles Lister, a Syria expert at the

Middle East Institute in Washington, said on the social media platform X.

A spokesman for Iran's foreign ministry, Nasser Kanaani, called on other countries to condemn the strike.

Israel has carried out scores of Iranian-linked targets in Syria over the years, many of them believed to be aimed at disrupting arms transfers and other cooperation with Hezbollah, which has sent thousands of fighters to support Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces.

An Israeli airstrike in a Damascus neighborhood in December killed a longtime Iranian Revolutionary Guard adviser to Syria, Seyed Razi Mousavi. A similar strike on a building in Damascus in January killed at least five Iranian advisers.

Last week, an Iranian adviser was killed in airstrikes over the eastern Syrian province of Deir el-Zour, near the Iraqi border. The chief spokesman for Israel's army, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, said a Monday drone attack on a naval base in southern Israel was "directed by Iran" and caused no injuries.

Early on Tuesday, the Israeli military said some kind of weapon fired from Syria toward Israel crashed before reaching its intended target. □

Court orders a detained Russia-U.S. journalist to remain in custody for two more months

MOSCOW (AP) — A court in Russia on Monday ordered a detained Russian-American journalist to be held in jail for two more months pending investigation and trial, in a further step in the Kremlin's crackdown on dissent and free speech.

Alsu Kurmasheva, an editor for the U.S. government-funded Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Tatar-Bashkir service, was taken into custody on Oct. 18 and charged with failing to register as a foreign agent while collecting information about the Russian military. Later, she was also charged with spreading

"false information" about the Russian military.

A court in Tatarstan Monday ordered her to remain behind bars at least until June 5.

Kurmasheva, who holds U.S. and Russian citizenship and lives in Prague with her husband and two daughters, could face up to 10 years in prison if convicted, according to RFE/RL.

She told reporters in the courtroom on Monday that she wasn't doing "very well physically" and that some of her medical conditions have flared up in detention. "Living conditions are very bad, I have no way of

taking care of my health," she said, adding that medical assistance in the detention center was "minimal."

Russian authorities have intensified a crackdown on Kremlin critics and independent journalists after President Vladimir Putin sent troops to Ukraine in February 2022, using legislation that effectively criminalized any public expression about the conflict that deviates from the Kremlin line.

Kurmasheva was the second U.S. journalist detained in Russia last year, after Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich was arrested



Alsu Kurmasheva, an editor for the U.S. government-funded Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Tatar-Bashkir service, holds a card depicting her portrait and with a sign in Russian that reads "They're waiting for her at home", during a court hearing in Kazan, Russia on Monday, April 1, 2024.

Associated Press

on espionage charges in March. Gershkovich and his employer have rejected the charges, and the U.S. authorities designated him wrongfully detained.

He has spent a year in cus-

tody.

Kurmasheva was initially stopped on June 2 at Kazan International Airport after traveling to Russia the previous month to visit her ailing elderly mother. □

Japan's royal family makes formal debut on Instagram as world's oldest monarchy tries to draw youth

By **MARI YAMAGUCHI**
Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's imperial family made an Instagram debut with a barrage of posts on Monday, hoping to shake off their reclusive image and reach out to younger people on social media.

The Imperial Household Agency, a government agency in charge of the family's affairs, posted 60 photos and five videos showing Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako's public appearances over the past three months.

The agency said they wanted the public to have a better understanding of the family's official duties and that Instagram was chosen because of its popularity among youth.

By Monday evening, their verified account *Kunaicho.jp* had more than 270,000 followers.

The first photo published was of the imperial couple sitting on a sofa with their 22-year-old daughter Princess Aiko, all smiling as they marked New Year's Day. Other postings also included the imperial couple's meetings with foreign dignitaries, including Brunei Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah his wife.

A video of Naruhito ad-



The part of the Instagram page of Japan's Imperial Household Agency is seen on a mobile phone Monday, April 1, 2024, in Tokyo.

ressing well-wishers during his Feb. 23 birthday celebrations garnered over 21,000 views in less than a day. So far, the images are limited to the family's official duties and do not include private or candid moments. The agency said it was considering adding activities of other royal members.

"It's nice we get to see a bit of their activities because we hardly know what they are doing," said Koki Yoneura, a 21-year-old student.

"It's good that they seem to be a bit closer to us."

Yukino Yoshiura, also a student, said she was excited to see more posts about Princess Aiko. "Aiko-sama is close to our age and just graduated from university, so I'm very happy to be able to see her images," she said while calling the princess with the respectful honorific "sama."

However, both said they didn't plan on following the royal family's Instagram account. The Japanese im-

perial family's social media debut comes 15 years after Britain's royal family joined X, formerly Twitter, in 2009.

"I actually assumed they already had one. So I am surprised it's just now that they are making one," said Daniela Kuthy, an American student. She said the content seemed "very PR-clean," but that wasn't necessarily a negative thing.

Naruhito's father, Emperor Emeritus Akihito — who abdicated the throne in 2019 — and his wife were popu-

lar during their time. But currently, the royal family's fans largely belong to older generations.

Palace officials had been considering using social media to get more people interested in the family and their activities. Last year, the agency set up a team of experts to study the effects of using social media on the imperial family.

The agency had become cautious after the Emperor's niece Mako Komuro and her commoner husband faced a severe backlash on social media and in tabloids following concerns over her mother-in-law's financial situation, causing her marriage to be delayed. She also declined to receive a dowry as the public did not fully celebrate her union.

The former princess said, at the time, she suffered psychological trauma because of the media bashing, including those online. Experts say social media could help bring the royal family closer to the people and give the agency the ability to control the narrative and respond to disinformation, but concerns over how the world's oldest monarchy can be friendly without losing its nobility or avoid blowups remain. □

Associated Press



Ecuador's President Daniel Noboa shakes hands with a farmer during his visit to Poalo, Ecuador, Thursday, March 21, 2024, where he met with dairy farmers and handed out 400 land titles.

Associated Press

QUITO, Ecuador (AP) — Gunmen attacked a group of people in Ecuador's coastal city of Guayaquil killing nine and injuring 10 others, police said Sunday,

the latest in a string of violent incidents in the South American country.

The attack took place around 7 p.m. local time Saturday in the southern

Gunmen in Ecuador kill 9, injure 10 others in attack in coastal city of Guayaquil as violence surges

neighborhood of Guasmo. According to police, the armed group entered a pedestrian street in a grey Chevrolet Spark, where a group of people were practicing sports. The gunmen got out of the vehicle and proceeded to shoot people. "So far, the result is nine people dead and 10 injured," police Col. Ramiro Arequipa told journalists around midday on Sunday. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

It was the second mass kill-

ing in as many days. On Friday, five people who had been kidnapped were killed execution style in the coastal province of Manabi by an armed gang. Police said there were signs the victims were tourists mistakenly caught up in a local drug-trafficking dispute. They didn't elaborate.

In that incident, an armed group had kidnapped a total of 11 people. Police said the other six, including five minors, were rescued and handed over to their families. Two suspects were

arrested on Saturday morning, according to police.

The killings in Manabi "remind us that the battle continues," said Ecuador's President Daniel Noboa on the social media network X, formerly Twitter, on Saturday.

"Narcoterrorism and its allies are looking for spaces to scare us, but they will not succeed," Noboa said. His post contained a video of a man handcuffed and bent over, being led away forcefully by an armed police officer. □

Rhythms Circus Company Aruba: putting Aruba's name on the world stage



Rhythms Circus Company Aruba is a talented group of young people working daily to present their art in the form of acrobatics, dancing, acting and singing. After an impactful participation in one of America's biggest talent shows, they are now bringing their amazing talent to Aruba!

In a show full of light, music, and with performances to famous musical figures like Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson and Tina Turner, the group consisting of 15 people from various countries delights the audience with their artistic prowess at the Paseo Herencia Mall, every Wednesday and Friday starting at 7pm. Each day has a different show, so you can attend both nights for the complete experience!

RCCA also offers the possibility for you and your family to enjoy dinner before the show! Starting from 6pm, you and your family can delight from the wide-ranged menu that includes a variation of delicious main course meals complete with a delectable flan dessert as a sweet treat. Enjoy your dinner even more at a VIP table complete with comfort seating!

The group, under the leadership of directors and creators Diego Jaramillo and Yamila Hernandez are opening the doors to the ballroom to our local audience as well as our visitors so that everyone can have the privilege of experiencing this wonderful show.

Hernandez explained that the idea for this project started in 2010 when she came to work in Aruba. After being on the island for a while she decided to stay and live here, and she met Diego Jaramillo, who is currently her partner. Together they came with the idea to establish a company together with other professional artists, with the goal of living from their art.

Hernandez says that the work is hard – all of the performers are professional artists, and while the production of the show is not a challenge for them, selling the idea proved difficult since at the time, there weren't any shows of its kind on the island.

America's Got Talent

Currently they are offering a show with music, choreography and at the end, they have

a shocking acrobatics ending, one that was seen by thousands of people around the world when the group travelled to Los Angeles in the United States to represent Aruba in America's Got Talent. Hernandez said that the show was very important for them to meet the public present because people could experience this performance live and right before their eyes.

Their presentation in America's Got Talent "was incredible" and they were able to meet the jury and many other artists staying there for three months. But the exhaustion and physical toll was so great that Diego suffered an accident, and because of this, they had to cancel all future commitments.

Reservations and tickets

To make a reservation to see this incredible display of creativity and acrobatics, scan the QR code which will take you directly to their website for a booking. To find more information about RCCA, please visit their Instagram page @rccaruba. □



Best spots to view the sunset

(Oranjestad)—Today we celebrate Valentine's Day, and what can be more romantic than surprising your partner with a date watching the sunset. Aruba's sunset leave many speechless, and luckily, the best spots to view the sunset are entirely accessible and easy to find. Here are some of the best places to view the sunset on the island.

California Light House

Of course, being one of the highest point easily accessible to locals and tourists, the California Light House hill not only offers a tremen-

dous view of the sunset, but also a breath taking scenery of most of the island. In the distance you can spot all the hotels, the western shoreline and the wild waves that crash on the northern side of the island.

Manchebo & Eagle Beach

Speaking of the western shoreline, the best spots for viewing the sunset on the beach has to be either Manchebo Beach or at Eagle Beach, which stretch along the entire western coast of the island starting from behind Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort up to the

Amsterdam Manor roundabout. The sunset on these beaches is truly breathtaking; the sky and ocean look so big and spacious, and paired with the orange/pink hue of the sunset, the white sandy beaches and the soft sounds of waves crashing—it can only be described as an experience!*

Arashi Beach

Another beach that has to be considered as another great spot to view the sunset. Arashi Beach is the last beach you will find along the western coast line, just

before you drive up the hill to the California Light House. A favorite for surfers and body boarders, the Arashi sky stretches out for miles, lending a spectacular canvas for the sun to create a masterpiece of orange, pink and purple hue.

Hooiberg Hill

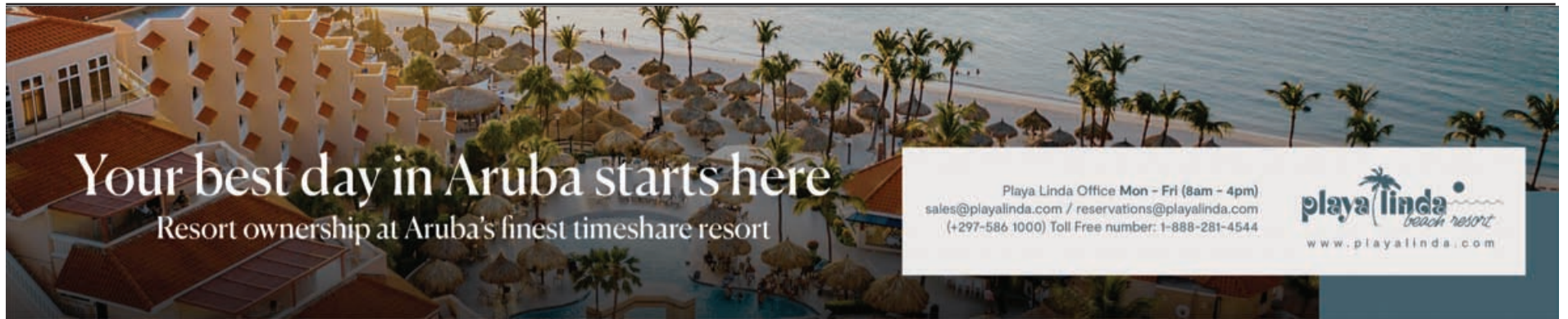
These last two options are for more active couples. If you and your partner like to hike, the Hooiberg Hill may be a great place for you to get your daily workout in and enjoy a beautiful view of the sunset and the island as a little reward. Climb on

top the 587-step stairs and reach the top to enjoy this incredible scenery.

Casibari Rock Formation

If you're a rock climber, you might enjoy watching the sunset on top of the Casibari Rock Formation. It's no Yosemite, but it does offer a fun little exercise to get to the top. But if you prefer not to get your hands a little dirty, you can always use the stairs in the back.

Editor's note: This spot may be my personal favorite, if you couldn't already tell... □



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Create museum memories

ORANJESTAD — Museums are an integral part of conserving and honoring cultures, and Aruba is no exception. Our Island has a wide selection of various museums for our locals and visitors to see. Take this opportunity to learn about our island and experience a different day beyond the beach. Let us introduce to you these museums.



Museum of Industry Aruba

The Museum of Industry is located in San Nicolas—better known as the art capital of Aruba. This museum exhibits the industrial history of gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and tourism through elaborated displays and multimedia installations. The Museum of Industry is situated

in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history, which began in the 19th century. The Water Tower was built in 1939 and consists of three sections: the substructure, the high-rising vertical shaft, and the tank at the top. The Water Tower was purchased by the Monuments Fund in 2003 so it can be restored and preserved as one of Aruba's monuments. The Museum of Industry is part of Aruba Museum Foundation (Fundacion Museo Aruban), which is a foundation set to maintain, preserve, and protect the Aruban cultural sector, history, and nature. The museum of Industry is open daily from 9 am till 6 pm.

For more information, check out their Facebook page Museum of Industry Aruba.

Archaeological Museum of Aruba

The Archaeological Museum of Aruba is located at Schelpstraat 42 in downtown Oranjestad. The renovated historic Ecury complex in the area has been transformed from a family home to a modern museum that preserves Aruba's Amerindian cultural heritage. This 21st century museum is especially designed to preserve valuable artifacts dating back to the Pre-Ceramic period of 2500 BC.



In the late 1980's, AMA identified its need for an adequate housing for its collection and activities. After studying various options, a project proposal was drawn up, including the acquisition and restoration of historical buildings in downtown Oranjestad.

These historical buildings were formerly the property of the Ecury family. The "Ecury Complex", is a cluster of single and two-story historic buildings, mainly Dutch colonial architecture from the late 19th and 20th century on a plot of approximately 1.700 m2.

In 1997, the Aruban Government bought the complex for the National Archaeological Museum project. In 2004, a financial agreement was signed with the European Development Fund and in 2006,

restoration and construction work began on the monumental buildings and the soon-to-be exhibition space. In December 2007, the key to the complex was delivered and the museum's employees moved to the new location. The final design for the exhibit was completed in November 2007 and the permanent exhibit, financed by the Aruban Government and the Union of Cultural Organizations (UNOCA), opened in July 2009.

At the new location, the National Archaeological Museum Aruba disposes of approximately 500 m2 for its permanent exhibit. This exhibit conveys information on the origin and culture of the first inhabitants of the island through archaeological objects and modern exhibition techniques. The new permanent exhibit gives the visitor an insight into the cultures that inhabited the island in Pre-Historical and Early Historical times. The museum also hosts attractive public programs, including lectures, educational projects, temporary exhibits and workshops.

The museum is open daily from 9:30 am till 4:30 pm. For more information check out the Facebook page Museo Arqueologico Nacional Aruba. □

Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from our awesome visitor Ron Carlson from Tampa, Florida, USA.

He wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is all about adventure. Driving ATVs around the island is a great way to see its natural beauty outside of the resorts. I highly recommend going out and having a look around."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □



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The Aruba Tourism Authority honor loyal visitors on the island

Recently, Ms. Marouska Heyliger had the great pleasure to honor a Loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba at their home away from home.

The honorees:

Elena and Paul Coffey as Distinguished Visitors from Massachusetts Karen Huels as Emerald Ambassador from Illinois

The symbolic honorary title is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba

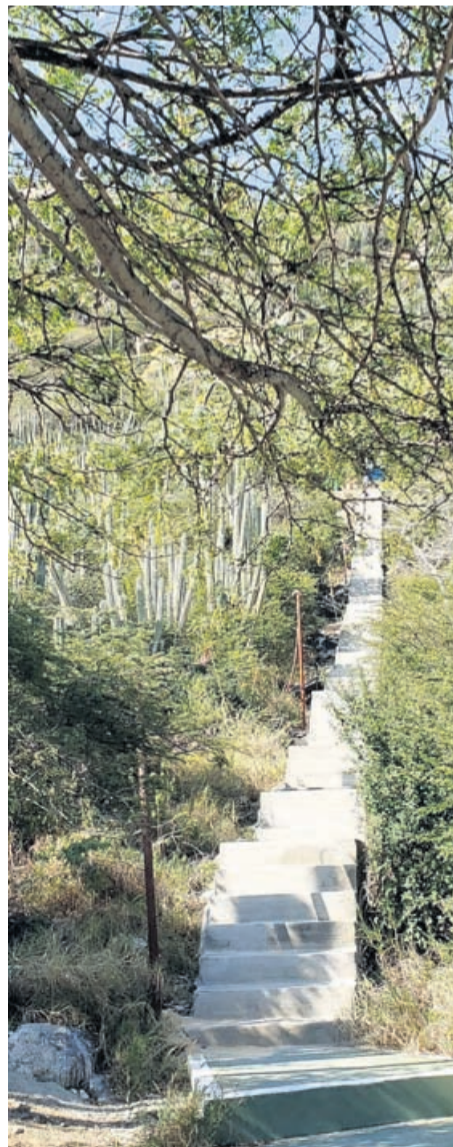
between 10-20-35 and more consecutive years.

Ms. Marouska Heyliger thanked them for choosing Aruba as their vacation destination and as their home away from home for so many years together with the members of Divi Phoenix resort.

Top reason for returning provided by the honorees were: Warmth of the island, beautiful weather and their happy place. □



Enjoy one of the best views on Aruba at the top of the Hooiberg Hill



(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the most popular climbing sites on the island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and sometimes even the Santa Anna mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

Located at the center district of the island, Santa Cruz, the Hooiberg Hill is the second highest point on the island at 165 meters above sea level (or about 540 feet above sea



level). The highest point is Jamanota Hill at 189 meters (620 feet), located in the Arikok National Park. The staircase that run on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when



Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase consisted of 900 steps. Over time, as the steps faced erosion, the government decided to renovate these stairs in 1991. This new project delivered the newer staircase with only 587 steps. However, don't be fooled—it may still be a work out to get on top. In addition, there is now a gazebo placed halfway up the stair for a little rest. The view at this resting stop is also a sight to see. The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day. □



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Aruba's underwater wonderland

ORANJESTAD - Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are many fascinating under water spots, where you can take your snorkeling gear and we selected the top spots for you.

Tres Trapi



Tres Trapi means tree steps in Papiamentu, Papiamentu is together with Dutch the official language spoken on Aruba. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by the tree steps carved into the rocks. Tres Trapi is a small rocky beach, located on the north-western side of the island, approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm Beach. From the unique steps you can easily walk over the beach into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While snorkeling you will encounter all kind of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of the Caribbean sea and if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles. Respect the animal, keep your distance and enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience.

Antilla shipwreck

Antilla is a 400-foot-long long ship, built in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany. Antilla came to Aruba, because it had to find a neutral port. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, the crew decided to let their own ship sink, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Dutch Navy. Antilla lies on its portside in Malmok bay, and the sunken world war two ship is now one of Aruba's most popular snorkeling and dive spots. However, the ship wreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the ship wreck alone is already impressive enough.

Baby Beach

Baby beach; a white beach, with a crystal blue ocean. The beach is located on the southern part of the island. On the way to the famous beach, you will drive through the old capital of Aruba, San Nicolas. The old Aruban culture can be still felt and experienced here, so do not hesitate to get out of your car and walk around for a while. Baby beach is a child friendly beach, since it is shallow and the water has a pleasant temperature. The name therefore fits well with the beach. Baby beach is



an excellent beach for snorkeling, especially if you want to go with small children, because the water remains shallow and there are still many underwater wonders to see. In the ocean there is an area marked until where it is recommended to snorkel and on the beach you will find different facilities. It is a perfect beach to spend your day snorkeling and relaxing.

Mangel Halto



Mangel Halto beach is located in Savaneta, on the southern-west part of the island. The beach is different from the other beaches in Aruba; it is beach full of mangroves. You reach the beach by a bridge through the mangroves and then you will have several entrances to the sea. There are diverse spots where you can enjoy a perfect beach day, wooden stairs made to enter the water and a dock to sit on and enjoy the view. Mangel Halto is also worth a visit for the snorkeling experience. Inside the bay, the water is clear and you find many colorful fish. Outside the bay is a bit more challenging for beginners because of the wind and the waves, but the coral is alive and it is just like snorkel heaven. □



Did you know about...?

The history and meaning of the Aruban florin

(Oranjestad)—Aruba Today is proud to officially introduce a new segment called *Did you know about...?*, where we dive into some (historical) facts of Aruba, its culture and way of living. In this first edition, we look back at the Aruban florin: its history, design and symbolism.

In Aruba, we know the 5, 10, 25 and 50 cent coins, along with the 1 and 5 Florin coin. Aruban Florin bills include the 10, 25, 50, 100, and rarely, the 200 bills. In Papiamentu we call our currency Florin, but the umbrella term for money is *placa*. Cents are called *cen* (pronounced: *seng*), both in the singular and plural form. Most coins are circular and their size depend on their worth. However, the 50 cent coin is easily recognizable by their square shape, as is the 5 Florin coin by their golden color. Every coin has the Aruban emblem carved on it, with the other side displaying the worth of the coin. The bigger 1 and 5 florin coins, however, contain the carving of the emblem on one side, while displaying the side profile of the Dutch king, Willem-Alexander, on the other side. When his mother, Princess Beatrix, was reigning queen, it was her profile that was carved on the two coins.

Outdated Aruban coins and their names

In the past, Aruban coins had distinctive names and also varied in worth. For example, a 5-cent coin was once called *Dos placa*; 10-cent coins were called *debchi*; 25-cent coins were called *diez placa* and the 50-cent coin was once called *Yotin* (pronounced: *jo-teen*). We also used a distinctive coins worth 2 ½ cents, called *placa too*. However, this last coin is no longer in use and has become a relic of Aruban money. Back then, the 5-Florin coin used to also be square, but now it is circular.

Aruban bills: their design and symbolism

The Aruban Florin collection contains a variation of colorful bills, displaying incredibly detailed and beautiful designs that tell the story of Aruba on a single piece of paper.

Prior to 2019, the Aruban Florin bills were relatively simpler in design compared to now, but still included beautiful designs and colors, often depicting local animals. These past designs were made by the Aruban



artist Everino Fingal in 1990 up to 2019. Between 1990 and 1993, the 5 Florin coin was a bill. The Fingal designs also included a 500-Florin bill, which has now been discontinued.

In 2019, the Central Bank of Aruba commissioned a new design of the Aruba Florin bills, this time selecting artist and former art teacher, Nigel Matthew, to present his new design. Matthew kept the tradition of including local animals and the familiar colors on the bills. However, he included additional designs that represent the Aruban culture and link to the Indigenous inhabitants that were the first to set foot on the island.



Current design and symbolism 10 florin

On the 10-florin bill, you can see a *Turtuga blanco* (white turtle). The blue color symbolizes the blue Caribbean Sea. You can also see the ruins of the *Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins*, a coral motif, and the symbols of *Cas Floria* (traditional Aruban house design) with a piece of mosaic.

25 florin

On this orange bill, you can see an Aruban medicinal plant called *Shoshoro*. The birds *Trupiaal*, *Shoco*, rock drawings, and the symbols of *Cas Floria* with a piece of mosaic are also depicted. There is also

a *Purun di ceramica* (clay pot), in reference to the relics left behind by our indigenous ancestors.

50 florin

On this bill, we see the *Cododo* (blue lizard found on the ABC islands), *Cangreu di tera* (land crab), *Willem III Tower*, and again the symbols of *Cas Floria* with a piece of mosaic, as well as a beach plant called *Banana di rif*. The colors are pink/purple.

100 florin

This bill is green in color, representing nature. Here we see the *Yuwana* (Iguana), *Aloe*, *Toteki* (lizard), the symbols of *Cas Floria* with a piece of mosaic, and a dance group performing the *Baile di cinta* (folkloric dance with silk ribbons).

200 florin

There is another bill with a value of 200 dollars. The brown color symbolizes the earth of Aruba. Here we see the *Dornasol* and the *Warawara*—both local birds, along with the symbols of *Cas Floria* with a piece of mosaic, the *Tuna cactus* plant, and the *Caha di orgel* (folkloric instrument, used for many traditional songs).

Extra fact:

the word "florin" supposedly is named after the Italian city of Florence or it's a reference to the Italian word "florino", both explanations related to historical Italian currencies. □

Source: *Placa, placa, placa* by the National Library of Aruba

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 41 Music

1 Buffalo's range

NHL team

7 Mexican Waller

peninsula

11 Glacial intently

period

12 Heaps

13 2006

Chris-

topher

Nolan film

15 2020

Chris-

topher

Nolan film

16 Location

18 College

head

21 Doe or

buck

22 Lord of

the jungle

24 Museum

focus

25 Light

brown

26 Much of

N. Amer.

27 Used a

rotary

phone

29 Recite the

rosary

30 Linen

source

31 Yule

song

32 Pesto

herb

34 2023

Chris-

topher

Nolan film

40 Sense

M	A	R	C	O		P	O	R	T	S		
U	S	E	U	P		A	D	O	R	E		
S	H	O	R	T		Y	E	M	E	N		
					T	I	E	D		P	E	T
A	T	L	A	N	T	I	C					
C	H	A	I		C	R	U	M	B	S		
R	U	I	N	S		T	R	O	O	P		
E	G	R	E	T	S		T	O	N	E		
					D	E	P	L	A	N	E	D
W	E	B			M	A	L	I				
A	X	I	O	M		A	L	A	M	O		
S	P	A	R	E		M	E	T	A	L		
P	O	S	E	D		A	D	A	G	E		

Yesterday's answer

DOWN

1 Plop

down

2 German

cry

3 Hive

dweller

4 "Jurassic

Park" dino

5 Snowy

bird

6 Glimpsed

7 Future

cake

8 Boxing

great

9 Use the

track

10 Had lunch

14 Car type

16 Letter

stroke

17 Rose part

19 Blue hue

20 Said with

a twang

21 Pop

22 Young

fellow

23 Opposing

vote

25 Dallas

native

28 Jar

29 Tactful

31 Nephew's

sister

33 Mall unit

34 Not

running

35 Pod

item

36 Favorite

37 Spoil

38 Genesis

woman

39 Scarlet

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	
11							12				
13							14				
			15								
	16	17				18		19	20		
21						22				23	
24				25					26		
27			28					29			
	30							31			
			32			33					
34	35	36							37	38	39
40								41			
42								43			

4-2

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.

4-2 **CRYPTOQUOTE**

A T H C J Z S C K K F E B P Y J X A E

S C K K G Y T T C J P A A . G E K X E J .

K C I P S C K K Z P M S Y H B P H .

— Y J C M Y R H C N N Y J

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: THE FIRST OF APRIL IS THE DAY WE REMEMBER WHAT WE ARE THE OTHER 364 DAYS OF THE YEAR. — MARK TWAIN

Cruise ship Schedule: Apr 2 - Apr 07 2024

TUE	02	OOSTERDAM	08.00	17.00	B
		RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	21.00	C
		CELEBRITY REFLECTION	09.00	22.00	I
WED	03	EURODAM	07.00	16.00	B
		ODYSSEY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C
		CARNIVAL HORIZON	07.00	15.00	I
THUS	04	NORWEGIAN SKY	08.00	20.00	C
SAT	06	SEABOURN OVATION	08.00	23.00	B
		CELEBRITY BEYOND	16.00	****	C
SUN	07	CELEBRITY BEYOND - Dept.	****	18.00	C

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

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

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.



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 occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.



Drinking water



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

Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply

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A faster spinning Earth may cause timekeepers to subtract a second from world clocks



Custodian Ray Keen inspects a clock face before changing the time on the 100-year-old clock atop the Clay County Courthouse Saturday, March 8, 2014, in Clay Center, Kan.

Associated Press

By SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

Earth's changing spin is threatening to toy with our sense of time, clocks and computerized society in an unprecedented way — but only for a second.

For the first time in history, world timekeepers may have to consider subtracting a second from our clocks in a few years because the planet is rotating a tad faster than it used to. Clocks may have to skip a second — called a "negative leap second" — around 2029, a study in the journal Nature said Wednesday.

"This is an unprecedented situation and a big deal," said study lead author Duncan Agnew, a geophysicist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California, San Diego. "It's not a huge change in the Earth's rotation that's going to lead to some catastrophe or anything, but it is something notable. It's yet another indication that we're in a very unusual time."

Ice melting at both of Earth's poles has been counteracting the planet's burst of speed and is likely to have delayed this global second of reckoning by about three years, Agnew said.

"We are headed toward a negative leap second," said Dennis McCarthy, retired director of time for the U.S. Naval Observatory who wasn't part of the study. "It's a matter of

when."

It's a complicated situation that involves, physics, global power politics, climate change, technology and two types of time.

Earth takes about 24 hours to rotate, but the key word is about.

For thousands of years, the Earth has been generally slowing down, with the rate varying from time to time, said Agnew and Judah Levine, a physicist for the time and frequency division of the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

The slowing is mostly caused by the effect of tides, which are caused by the pull of the moon, McCarthy said.

This didn't matter until atomic clocks were adopted as the official time stan-

dard more than 55 years ago. Those didn't slow. That established two versions of time — astronomical and atomic — and they didn't match. Astronomical time fell behind atomic time by 2.5 milliseconds every day. That meant the atomic clock would say it's midnight and to Earth it was midnight a fraction of a second later, Agnew said.

Those daily fractions of seconds added up to whole seconds every few years. Starting in 1972, international timekeepers decided to add a "leap second" in June or December for astronomical time to catch up to the atomic time, called Coordinated Universal Time or UTC. Instead of 11:59 and 59 seconds turning to midnight, there would be another second at 11:59 and 60 seconds. A negative leap second would go from 11:59 and 58 seconds directly to midnight, skipping 11:59:59.

Between 1972 and 2016, 27 separate leap seconds were added as Earth slowed. But the rate of slowing was tapering off. Earth's speeding up because its hot liquid core — "a large ball of molten fluid" — acts in unpredictable ways, with eddies and flows that vary, Agnew said. Agnew said the core has been triggering a speed-

up for about 50 years, but rapid melting of ice at the poles since 1990 masked that effect. Melting ice shifts Earth's mass from the poles to the bulging center, which slows the rotation much like a spinning ice skater slows when extending their arms out to their sides, he said. □

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Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

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What financial planners wish you knew about Social Security

By **KATE ASHFORD**
of **NerdWallet**

Only about 1 in 8 adults know when they'll be eligible for full retirement benefits through Social Security, according to the Nationwide Retirement Institute 2023 Social Security Survey. And compared to 2014, fewer people age 50 and up now know whether they may be eligible for Social Security benefits based on an ex-spouse's record (they may) or if Social Security may offer benefits for their spouse or children (also yes). For a program that's been around for nearly 90 years, there's still a lot of confusion about how it works. Here are some of the Social Security topics financial pros find are often misunderstood.

WORKING MIGHT MEAN A SMALLER SOCIAL SECURITY CHECK

If you claim Social Security before you hit full retirement age (66 to 67, depending on when you were born) and you're still earning income, you'll lose some of your Social Security benefits if your earnings go over a certain threshold.

The threshold isn't terribly high: If you're not full retirement age in 2024, you'll lose \$1 in Social Security benefits for every \$2 you earn above \$22,320. If you will reach full retirement age this year, you'll lose \$1 in benefits for every \$3 you earn above \$59,520, until the month you turn full retirement age. From that month forward, you're in the clear.



A Social Security card is displayed on Oct. 12, 2021, in Tigard, Ore.

"It's just important to be informed that this penalty exists," says David Haas, a certified financial planner in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey. "And you're supposed to report it, which nobody ever does." The net result of this quirk is that you might get a bill from Social Security for the income it wants back — but not for a few years.

"They bill you for it and tell you they're willing to take it out of future payments," Haas says. And if you report it, it can take the Social Security Administration, or SSA, some time to make the adjustments, he says.

SOCIAL SECURITY IS TAXED

Alas, Social Security benefits aren't tax-free — and you

have to ask Social Security to withhold taxes for you. Nicholas Bunio, a CFP in Downingtown, Pennsylvania, recalls a client who forgot to have anything withheld from their Social Security benefits. "When they did their taxes, they realized they owed \$10,000 to the feds and \$2,000 to the state," Bunio says.

According to the SSA, federal taxes come into play if the combination of 50% of your Social Security benefit plus any other earned income is more than \$25,000 a year if you're filing individually, or \$32,000 a year if you're filing jointly. To have taxes withheld, submit Form W-4V, Voluntary Withholding Request, to the Social Security Admin-

istration.

WHEN ONE SPOUSE DIES, A SOCIAL SECURITY CHECK ENDS

If your spouse dies and their Social Security check was larger than yours, survivors benefits mean you can start collecting their higher payment. But you don't get to keep both checks.

"The survivorship is really just collecting the higher benefit, but that means you have to forgo the lower benefit," Bunio says. "There is going to be a loss of income."

For this reason, planners often recommend that the higher-earning spouse wait as long as possible to claim. "Because that's the benefit that's going to remain when one of you

passes away," says Michael Dunham, a CFP in Dallas.

BUSINESS OWNERS MAY BE HURTING THEIR BENEFIT AMOUNT

Entrepreneurs sometimes try to claim as little earned income as possible to pay as little in income tax as they can. But Social Security bases your benefits on your income over your best 35 earning years, and the lower your income in those years, the smaller your Social Security benefit will be in retirement. "Business owners say, 'Reduce my tax, I pay too much in taxes,'" says Catherine Valega, a CFP in Winchester, Massachusetts. People tend to overvalue the tax break now versus the long-term consequences of a smaller benefit later, she says.

To keep an eye on your Social Security numbers, create an account on SSA.gov. You'll be able to review (and potentially correct) your earnings history.

THE BEST CLAIMING AGE IS DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE

Although starting Social Security at age 70 nets you the highest benefit, it's not the only answer to the when-to-claim question. Like a lot of planning, it depends on your circumstances. "We had a client where no one in her family had lived longer than age 76," said John Scherer, a CFP in Middleton, Wisconsin, in an email. "She wasn't super interested in making sure her income was robust into her nineties." □

Associated Press



Pedestrians walk past the Nasdaq building Tuesday, March 26, 2024, in New York.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Less than a week after a flashy stock market debut, Donald

Trump's social media company is disclosing that it lost nearly \$58.2 million in 2023.

Donald Trump's social media company lost \$58 million last year. Freshly issued shares tumble

Losses in 2023 for Trump Media & Technology Group — whose flagship product is Truth Social — mark a stark decline compared with the profit of \$50.5 million that the former president's company reported for 2022, according to a regulatory filing Monday.

Revenue for Trump Media topped just over \$4.13 billion in 2023, the SEC filing shows, although that's up from \$1.47 billion in 2022.

After merging with with a blank-check company called Digital World Acquisition Corp., Trump Media

began trading Tuesday on the Nasdaq under ticker symbol DJT. It's been a volatile ride.

Trump Media's shares soared in their first couple days of trading — surpassing \$79 at one point Tuesday — but have since fallen closer to their initial offering price of \$49.95.

As of midday Monday, Trump Media's stock plunged more than 23% to below \$48, meaning a lot of early investors are taking a hit.

Industry analysts have compared the fervor around

Trump Media to the meme stock craze, which notably boosted shares of struggling companies such as GameStop and the movie chain AMC Entertainment to exorbitant heights in 2021.

On Monday, shares for these so-called meme stocks slid as well, with GameStop and AMC down more than 7% and 11%, respectfully. And Reddit, another company that recently went public and looped into meme stock frenzy comparisons, slumped more than 6%. □

Shota Imanaga stars in major league debut as Cubs beat Rockies 5-0 in Wrigley Field opener

By JAY COHEN
AP Baseball Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — For his warmup music ahead of his first major league start, Shota Imanaga picked The Fratellis' "Chelsea Dagger" — the goal-scoring song for the NHL's Chicago Blackhawks. It sure sounds as if he is feeling at home in Chicago.

Imanaga pitched six sparkling innings in his major league debut, and the Cubs used another defensive mistake by Nolan Jones to beat the Colorado Rockies 5-0 on Monday. Working in short sleeves on a cold, gray afternoon, Imanaga struck out nine in Chicago's home opener. The Japanese left-hander, who signed a \$53 million, four-year contract with the Cubs in January, allowed two singles and walked none — throwing 65 of his 92 pitches for strikes. "What he did really well today is something that he's always done well is he threw a ton of strikes," said manager Craig Counsell, who won his home debut with Chicago after he was hired in November. "And then with the conditions today, the walk is kind of one of the worst things you can do from a pitching standpoint."

Dakota Hudson also was impressive in his first start for Colorado, but a pair of errors on Jones on one play in the sixth sent the right-hander to the loss.

With one out and runners on first and second in a scoreless game, Christopher Morel lined a single into left field. The ball went under the glove of a charging Jones and rolled all the way to the wall.

Ian Happ and Seiya Suzuki raced home as the Wrigley Field crowd of 40,072 roared its approval. Jones' throw from the warning track got away from second baseman Brendan Rodgers in the outfield grass, and Morel scored on a headfirst slide. Jones also dropped a routine fly ball during Sunday's 5-1 loss at Arizona, leading to two unearned runs.

"I just think I didn't get my glove down," he said. "It's two days in a row that I've

made mistakes in the outfield and lost us games. It's unacceptable and I need to be better for our team." Cody Bellinger added a two-run single in the seventh as Chicago earned its second straight win after dropping the first two games of the season at Texas.

Hudson (0-1) was charged with three unearned runs and four hits in 5 1/3 innings. He agreed to a one-year deal with Colorado in free agency.

"Good to get out there. ... Just trying to eat up some innings and keep the ball on the ground the best I could," Hudson said.

Yency Almonte worked the seventh for Chicago before Drew Smyly finished the

three-hitter.

Imanaga (1-0) was working on a no-hitter before Charlie Blackmon singled to center with two out in the sixth inning. Rodgers followed with another base hit, but Imanaga escaped the jam by fanning Jones.

"It was a unique atmosphere, especially in the last strikeout," Imanaga said through a translator. "And it might have not been the best pitch (with) regards to pitch speed, but getting the support from the fans I was able to get that strikeout."

Colorado got its first baserunner when Kris Bryant reached on third baseman Morel's error in the second. But Ryan McMahon and Elias Díaz struck out swinging be-



Chicago Cubs starting pitcher Shota Imanaga throws against the Colorado Rockies during the first inning of a baseball game Monday, April 1, 2024, in Chicago.

Associated Press

fore Ezequiel Tovar flied out, ending the inning.

UP NEXT

Colorado left-hander Kyle Freeland and Chicago right-hander Javier Assad take the mound on Tuesday

night. Freeland (0-1, 38.57 ERA) was rocked for 10 runs and 10 hits in 2 1/3 innings in a 16-1 loss at Arizona on Thursday on opening day. Assad is making his first appearance of the season. □



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Start this year's vacation with this amazing experience in the heart of Costa Linda Beach Resort

Water's Edge Restaurant is a jewel many had the pleasure to find!

Eagle Beach – When you think of a restaurant that pleases the needs of a whole family or a large group of people with all different tastes? Think Water's Edge Restaurant. Located at the shore of Aruba's most wonderful beach, The Eagle Beach Aruba. Water's Edge Restaurant is guaranteed to serve you a fantastic magical night to remember. Whether you prefer to enjoy the view from indoors air conditioned comfort, outdoors in the soft tropical breeze or under a palapa with your toes in the sand. This spectacular restaurant offers the best ocean view sunset or sky full of stars dinner while the crispy Caribbean night wind caresses your face and plays with your hair.

From the minute you arrive there will be a great staff welcoming you with the most contagious smiles and warmth. The intense menu with a great variety of appetizers, main courses and delicious desserts will not disappoint. Seafood, Steaks and international favorites. All on one menu specially made just for you.

Culinary Voyage

Start your gastronomic journey with a scrumptious appetizer such as the Maryland Crab Cakes, maybe the Crispy



Calamari or the mouthwatering creamy Garlic Tarragon Shrimp. You can also opt for a classic French Onion Soup, a Lobster Bisque or the famously Water's Edge House Wedge, a crisp wedge of fresh romaine lettuce topped with homemade blue cheese dressing, diced tomatoes, chopped bacon, caramelized pecans and blue cheese crumbles, drizzled with balsamic reduction. This followed by the Chef's special of seafood such as Fresh salmon filet seasoned and grilled, topped with lemon cilantro butter and served with homemade mashed potatoes and fresh asparagus, a nice plate of Ahi Tuna or a succulent pasta dish like the Florentina Fettuccine Alfredo. Meat Lovers will have their fix with choices of a devourable 22oz. Bone-In "Tomahawk" Rib-Eye, pan seared in garlic infused oil and finished in the oven or our juicy N.Y Strip Loin, seasoned & grilled. All our steaks options are seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Served with homemade mashed potatoes, seasoned vegetables and a choice of red wine reduction, green peppercorn demi glace, mushroom sauce, or bacon blue cheese butter. For extra sides the options are delectable. Fresh asparagus, seasonal vegetables, mashed or baked potatoes, fries or rice and beans. Combine your personal choice with one of the most exclusive wine from the great selection of international wines to compliment your dish. Kids will enjoy every item of the specially compiled kids menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians and gluten-free guests. To end the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness, the desserts are wild. From a piece of coconut flan, NY cheese cake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with choco-



late sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.

Creating memories

If you are planning a birthday dinner, here you will receive a nice bottle of champagne to take home with you to extend your experience even further whether on the beach or your own private balcony.

Live entertainment

Just about every day of the week, there is a different live entertainment by the best local artists for you to enjoy. Whether you're in a romantic mood, or more in a swinging mood, there is absolutely a night especially for you where you can combine great music with delicious cocktails mixed with concoctions. In addition, Water's Edge offers three daily Happy Hours from 12pm-1pm, 4pm-6pm and again from 9pm-10pm with all premium brands specially priced.

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Whether you join us for breakfast, lunch or dinner, Water's Edge Restaurant & Bar offers a relaxed and inspirational dining experience overlooking the beautiful Eagle Beach with spectacular ocean views. Gather with friends and family for drinks and appetizers or a night of pampering and relaxation.

Thank you to all our guests

From the bottom of our hearts, we would like to Thank all of our guests who showed us so much love and support all throughout the year, and hopefully will continue to do so in the years to come. What we are most grateful for is that we could get back to doing what we love, which is looking after our guests. So, thank you for every dinner, lunch, breakfast, every to-go order, every glass of wine, every birthday, anniversary and date-night that you spent with us this last year. To our new guests, Welcome! We hope you to see you back soon! ☐



"Water's Edge Restaurant is where magnificent beach views, amazing food and excellent service come together."

Water's Edge is open daily from 8am – 11pm

To reserve your table please call **+297 583-8000 / ext 8106** or direct line **+297 586-9494**

For more information about the menus, entertainment and hours, please visit the website **watersedge-aruba.com**