



THE DAILY NEWS

Longview-based Red Canoe Credit Union has new CEO start

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Events: Local art show, historical exhibits are open Saturday

PAGE A4

Saturday, February 15, 2025

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SNOWFALL IN THE CITY



GREG SELLENTIN, FOR THE DAILY NEWS

Snow covers the bridge to Lake Sacajawea Park's Japanese Garden on Thursday, Feb. 13 in Longview. The National Weather Service forecasts a chance of rain and snow through Saturday, then just rain Saturday night through Monday in Longview-Kelso. View more snow photos on A6.

BUDGET WOES

Kelso schools project \$2M shortfall next year

Minka Atkinson
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With Governor Bob Ferguson predicting a \$10-12 billion deficit in the state budget, school districts like Kelso are bracing for budget shortfalls of their own.

Early estimates of Kelso's budget for the 2025-2026 school year show a shortfall of \$2-2.5 million, Chief Financial and Operations Officer Scott Westlund reported at a school board meeting Monday.

"It's just going to depend on how much the state can afford to get us there," he said.

If not addressed, those missing funds could affect the district's ability to maintain its current staffing and programming, Westlund said.

Kelso families are invited to share their budget priorities through an online survey at bit.ly/ksd-budget-0125. The survey will be open until midnight Feb. 28.

Less funding, higher costs
Inflation has led to higher operating costs for schools, but state funding has not risen to keep up with them, Westlund said.

The portion of state funding allocated to schools has decreased from 52.4% in 2019 to 43.1% in 2024, according to the state Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Kelso's materials, supplies and operating costs rose from around \$6.3 million in the 2020-2021 school year to a projected \$8.2 million for the current school year. However, the state only funded around \$5 million in 2020 and about \$6.9 million this year, according to

district data.

The district makes up the difference with local levies. Its most recent educational programs and operations levy, which covers things like supplies, special education and staffing, was approved in a February 2024 election.

"We're having to use what are supposed to be enrichment dollars from our community to go above and beyond — we're utilizing over \$1 million of that money each year just for basic education," he said.

Staffing expenses, which make up 82% of the district's budget, are also rising due to cost of living increases, Westlund said.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that

Please see **SCHOOLS** PAGE A3

22-vehicle pileup on I-5 south

Semi blocks CR northbound

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Authorities report 22 vehicles were involved in a Thursday accident that blocked all the southbound Interstate 5 lanes at milepost 60 near Exit 59-Cowlitz River in Toledo for hours.

The accident occurred at 11:38 a.m., one lane opened at about 3 p.m., and the rest as of 5:20 p.m. at the exit for RiversEdge

Lodge & RV Park.

Six people were transported to nearby hospitals, including two who were taken to PeaceHealth St. John Medical Center in Longview, according to Washington State Patrol Trooper and spokesperson Will Finn. He did not provide further details on the injured people like their names, ages or cities of residence.

All lanes on I-5 north at milepost 56, south of

Jackson Highway in Castle Rock, also closed Thursday afternoon due to a disabled semitruck, as snow and ice hit the region.

The Washington State Department of Transportation warned of both delays on social media at about 12:30 p.m., stating there was no estimated time to reopen. The northbound lanes reopened at about 2:30 p.m., according

Please see **PILEUP** PAGE A2



WSDOT, CONTRIBUTED

A disabled semi-truck blocks all the lanes on northbound Interstate 5 in Castle Rock on Thursday, Feb. 13.

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EDUCATION
Longview super-intendent discuss state funding.



WEATHER
Snow fall outside Longview library on Thursday.



SPORTS
Charlie Jones of MM pin an opponent on Tuesday.

PILEUP

From A1

to the department.

Crews were working to clear the roadway as other semi-trucks experienced traction issues, with many stopping to chain their tires on the roadway.

The Cowlitz County Sheriff’s Office urged drivers to not use alternate routes off the freeway during such slowdowns. The department advised those roads, parallel to I-5 – such as West Side Highway, Old Pacific Highway North and Bond Road – were also facing high traffic due to slick roads and other collisions.

The Cowlitz County Department of Public Works advised drivers Friday of slippery roads as crews worked to clear

semi-trucks obstructing the roadway in Castle Rock after Thursday’s snowstorm.

According to the department, the semi-trucks that were blocking roads in Castle Rock have been moved as of Friday morning. At least two trucks were removed from Barns Road, which was limited to local traffic and had compacted snow and ice.

The log truck on Ostrander Road remained as of 9:46 a.m. Friday and there are two loaded log trucks stuck on Old Cathlamet Road, according to Savannah Clement, deputy director of Cowlitz County Public Works.

Clement added that Ostrander Road was set to be cleared Friday, while Old Cathlamet Road may have to wait until Saturday.



COWLITZ COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS, CONTRIBUTED
Barnes Drive in Castle Rock was blocked as of Thursday, Feb. 13 by a semitruck.

1 hurt in Longview house fire

Columbia Valley Garden home hit during freezing temperatures



THE DAILY NEWS
frontdoor@tdn.com

One person suffered a minor burn due to a house fire Wednesday morning in the Columbia Valley Gardens area of Longview.

Longview Fire Department reports in a press release that crews responded at about 6:10 a.m. in the 2600 block of 36th Avenue, after reports of a fire on the front porch and people evacuating the home.

After crews arrived, firefighters saw the blaze was spreading into the attic, and a second alarm was called about

30 minutes later for backup.

The night’s freezing temperatures also caused issues, including water runoff freezing on the ground and on equipment, the department reports. Still, firefighters put out the fire by 6:59 a.m.

Members from Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue, Medix Ambulance, Longview Police, Cowlitz PUD, and Servpro were also on scene.

Longview Fire Department crews are investigating the cause of the fire.

LONGVIEW FIRE DEPARTMENT, CONTRIBUTED
Firefighters work to extinguish a house fire in the 2600 block of 36th Avenue on Wednesday, Feb. 12, in Longview.

Hiker rescued near Coldwater Lake

THE DAILY NEWS
frontdoor@tdn.com

A 67-year-old Ridgefield man was saved last week after a hike at Coldwater Lake became a rescue mission.

The man went hiking about 7 miles northwest of Mount St. Helens at about 10:30 p.m. on Feb. 7, dressed only in a pair of jeans, flannel shirt and coat, according to an announcement from the Cowlitz County Sheriff’s Office.

The sheriff’s office did not name the man, who the office reports didn’t have food, water or supplies to build a shelter, and was located at about 3,200 feet above sea level.

As he became confused in the dark – with temperatures dropping to the mid -20s and snow falling – he called his family for help, who then called 911.

Using an aerial drone from the sheriff’s office, authorities located the hiker, who was about a mile from the South Coldwater Trailhead in deep snow.

He was moderately hypothermic, shivering, unable to move, and barley able to speak, the sheriff’s office reports. Once first responders arrived, they provided assistance.

Rescue efforts took about eight hours from the initial 911 call.

A military helicopter was requested to assist with the search efforts, but the craft was later

declined due to weather conditions.

The hiker was treated at the scene by Toutle Fire and Rescue and was then released to his son, according to the sheriff’s office.

Cowlitz County Search and Rescue President Jim Peters advises in the notice that people traveling in the winter should keep extra gear – like more clothes, a blanket or sleeping bag, water, snow chains, a flashlight, and small shovel – in their vehicles. Also, hikers should tell people their plans and estimated return time to ensure people know if they are in trouble, especially if cell service doesn’t work on the trail.



COWLITZ COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, CONTRIBUTED
The Cowlitz County Search and Rescue mobile command unit used in the search of the missing hiker near Mount St. Helens on Friday, Feb. 7 at Coldwater Lake.

THE DAILY NEWS

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New CEO takes reins at Red Canoe

Previous leader retires after 15 years

NICK MORGAN
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A woman with more than two decades of experience in the financial industry is the new leader of a Longview-based credit union with more than \$1 billion in assets and 60,000 members across two states.

Deidra Miner became president and CEO of Red Canoe Credit Union effective Feb. 1, according to a press release issued by the credit union. She succeeds retiring CEO David Spaulding, who doubled the credit union in

size and assets during his 15 years at the helm.

Miner has served as the chief operating officer for the Cowlitz County-based credit organization before the board named her last month to be Spaulding’s successor. She has been with the organization since 2018, and the credit union states in the release that she has “a proven track record of growth and strategic planning.”

Red Canoe was first founded in 1937 as a credit union for Weyerhaeuser employees, and took its current name in 2006.

Spaulding joined the credit union in 1995 as its chief financial officer, and served as the credit union’s president and CEO from 2009 until his retirement in last month.

Under his leadership Spaulding facilitated a merger with Cowlitz Credit Union in 2014, opened six new branches across the Pacific Northwest — up to 10 today in Washington plus one in Albany, Oregon — and under his leadership grew the member-owned cooperative to \$1.1 billion in assets.



Miner



Spaulding

BUDGET

From A1

mation for Cowlitz County specifically was not available.

Kelso has implemented a number of new programs to address student needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the Social/Emotional Learning Program and the expansion of the Family and Community Resource Center. To keep these programs running, the district will need to find a reliable funding source for them, Westlund said.

Lower enrollment has also been an issue. The board approved \$1.5 million in budget reductions for the current school year after ending the previous year with 36 fewer students than budgeted.

Last school year, the annual average enrollment was equivalent to 4,780 fulltime students. Westlund reported in

September that the annual average for this year was predicted to be lower, but as of Feb. 1 it is 4,887 fulltime equivalents, or 22 students above budget.

Longview

At its Monday meeting, the Longview School Board held a budget workshop focused on best practices for reductions. Superintendent Karen Cloninger said it’s too early to know whether any will be necessary, but that she wanted the board to start thinking about how to prioritize.

Longview School District’s four-year budget plan, which the board approved in August along with this year’s budget, shows that expenditures are expected to be higher than revenue until 2027. The current school year has a projected gap of about \$1.6 million, which the district is filling using last year’s ending fund balance.

1 injured in I-5 crash

WSP cites overcorrection

THE DAILY NEWS
frontdoor@tdn.com

A two-car crash on Interstate 5 in Kalama sent one person to the hospital Thursday. According to a press memo from the Washington State Patrol, the crash occurred around 12:26 a.m.

Vernon W. Schletzbaum, 66, of Portland, was headed northbound on Interstate 5 in a red 1996 Toyota Tercel near milepost 27, not that far from Lone Pine Boarding Kennels.

At the same time, and in the southbound lanes, Dennis P. Clark, 42, of Toledo who was driving a blue 2007 Toyota Yaris, when Schletzbaum lost control, crossed into the southbound lanes, and struck Clark’s Yaris, the memo states.

The crash was caused by an overcorrection, intoxicants were not involved and both vehicles were deemed totaled, as stated in the press memo.

Both parties were wearing their seatbelts. However, Schletzbaum was transported to PeaceHealth St. John Medical Center, while Clark was unharmed in the crash.

Tourism grants OK’d

\$120K to 15 county groups

THE DAILY NEWS
frontdoor@tdn.com

Earlier this month, the county awarded \$120,400 in tourism marketing grants to groups throughout the county to build up local tourism. The grants reimburse organizers for the costs of promoting events in Cowlitz County, according to a county press release.

The recipients are:

- Kalama Cultural Festival: \$15,000
- Lelooska Foundation Advertising & Outreach: \$12,000
- Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens Lilac Days: \$10,000
- Kelso Longview Chamber’s SquatchFest: \$10,000
- Rotary Club of Longview’s Squirrel Fest: \$10,000
- Rotary Club of Longview’s Crafted

- Beer & Food Festival: \$10,000
- Big Smoke in Little Kalama: \$10,000
- Rotary Club of Longview’s Tour de Blast: \$10,000
- Kalama’s Summer Lights on the 4th: \$8,000
- City of Longview’s Rainier to Longview R2L Bridge Run: \$7,500
- Downtown Woodland Revitalization’s Hot Summer Nights: \$4,250
- Downtown Woodland Revitalization’s Winterfest 2025: \$4,250
- Nanocon International by LCC students: \$4,000
- Ladies of the Lake Quilt event: \$2,000
- TCB Entertainment Summer Solstice: \$3,400

Longview JOANN fabric store closing



DAVID PAUL MORRIS/BLOOMBERG/GETTY IMAGES VIA CNN NEWSOURCE

A Joann store in El Cerrito, California is set to close. Joann, the fabrics and crafts retailer, is closing more than half of its 800 stores in the coming months.

NICK MORGAN
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Distressed fabric and crafts retailer JOANN has listed its Longview location as one of 21 stores in Washington state and more than 500 stores across the country to be shuttered potentially starting this weekend.

Subject to court approval, going-out-of-business sales could begin as soon as Saturday but could last several months, according to a Wednesday bankruptcy court filing seeking court authority to begin closing 533 designated stores — including 21 in Washington and 15 in Oregon — and information on its website, joannrestructuring.com. The closures make up more than half of the chain’s roughly 800-store footprint.

The Longview store is located in the strip

mall at 700 Ocean Beach Hwy., near Kelso’s Catlin Hall.

JOANN filed Chapter 11 last month in order to pursue a bankruptcy restructuring and court-supervised sale to another buyer, according to the company.

A spokesperson for JOANN issued the following statement:

“As part of the ongoing Chapter 11 process and our efforts to maximize the value of the business, JOANN has filed a motion seeking court authority to begin closing approximately 500 stores across the nation. This was a very difficult decision to make on our Team Members, our customers and all of the communities we serve. A careful analysis of store performance and future strategic fit for the company determined which stores should remain operating as usual at this time. Right-sizing

our store footprint is a critical part of our efforts to ensure the best path forward for JOANN.”

The company ceased selling gift cards after it filed for bankruptcy on Jan. 15. The store accepts gift cards as payment for in-store purchases, but not for joann.com online purchases.

The company is working with restructuring firm Gordon Brothers Retail Partners to facilitate selling the company. JOANN states in the release that Gordon Brothers is the “stalking horse” bidder and that they are working to solicit bids from other buyers.

Gordon Brothers has indicated that if it ends up being the buyer, it will liquidate the fabric and craft chain’s inventory and conduct going-out-of-business sales at all JOANN locations.



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EVENTS

THE DAILY NEWS
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Master Gardeners to give away raised beds

Master Gardeners to give away raised beds

Interested in gardening, but having a hard time with your starter plot? The Washington State University Master Gardeners may be able to help.

The masters gardeners and Kellogg Supply have teamed up to give away 10 raised planting beds to promote vegetable gardening in Cowlitz County. The beds also include soil and plant starters.

Ten applicants will get a bed built for them for free.

To apply, or for more information, contact Gary Fredricks by phone at 360-577-3014, extension 4, or email garyf@wsu.edu. Applications are due on March 15.

2 featured artists at Broadway Gallery

Painter Scott McRae and the late 3D gourd carver Diane Springer are the featured guests for The Broadway Gallery in February.

The gallery is open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday at 1418 Commerce Ave. in Longview.

McRae is a Longview resident and graduate of both Linfield College and Washington State University. He began painting professionally in 1991 and also teaches art, according to the gallery.

Springer, a resident of Battle Ground, was a long-time gallery member, according to fellow Gallery artist Debra Chase.

WA state archives exhibit featured in Kelso

The Cowlitz County Historical Museum has a new temporary exhibit.

The exhibit “Browsing the Stacks: Washington State Archives,” a selection of stories on loan from the Secretary of State’s office, runs through about the end of November.

The exhibit, according to a museum press release, includes topics from 19th-century loggers to UFO sightings and the Seattle World’s Fair, introducing guests to “topics that make our state unique.”

During the exhibit’s opening, there will be a complimentary “staff picks” section where the staff will share their favorite addition to the museum acquired in 2024. Light refreshments will also be served.

Attendance is free.

The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

Love Street Playhouse presents ‘The Miracle Worker’

Love Street Playhouse’s upcoming theatrical performance “The Miracle Worker” is running at Love Street Playhouse, 126 Loves Ave., Woodland.

“The Miracle Worker” is a historical drama following the growth of Annie Sullivan and her blind and deaf student, Hellen Keller.

Showings run Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from Feb. 14 through March 9. There will also be performances on Thursday, Feb. 27, and March 6. Showings are at 7:30 p.m., except for additional Sunday and Saturday matinees at 2 p.m., a press release by Love Street Playhouse stated.

To view the complete performance schedule, or to purchase tickets, call 800-966-8865. Tickets are \$26 per person, with a \$3 online ticket fee, the Love Street Playhouse website stated.

“The Miracle Worker,” written by William Gibson, tells the story of Helen Keller’s journey to learning communication as a blind and deaf individual. Teacher Annie Sullivan is hired to tutor Keller. After many weeks, the pair reaches a breakthrough that allows them to communicate. Keller then begins to experience the joys that life with communication can bring, the press release stated.

— *The Reflector*

Pomona to meet Feb. 15

The Cowlitz/Wahkiakum Pomona No. 7 has scheduled its next meeting.

The meeting, which is set to begin at 1 p.m. on Saturday, will be held at the Sunnyside Grange at 214 Cowlitz Ave. W in Castle Rock.

The meeting will begin with a potluck lunch. They will then discuss their entry in the annual grange contest, which will be held on April 18.

The grange also announced their monthly project, which is to collect and donate socks.

Library to host talk on Black culture

The nonprofit group Humanities Washington will be hosting a discussion at 2 p.m. on Saturday at the Longview Public Library.

The event features a presentation by LaToya Brackett, an associate professor at the University of Puget Sound. Brackett’s talk is entitled “They Want Our Rhythm, but Not Our Blues: African American Innovation Through Pop Culture,” and focuses on how Black culture has often



MAUREEN GILMER, TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

WSU Master Gardeners and Kellogg Supply are giving away 10 raised planting beds to help promote vegetable gardening in Cowlitz County

been shaped in an atmosphere of oppression and later adopted by the same society that oppressed them.

The event is free and open to all.

Woodland library to hold book sale

The Woodland Public Library needs to make some space on its shelves, and you can help by filling yours.

The Friends of Woodland Community Library announced they will hold a bag sale for used books at the new library, at 411 Lakeshore Dr.

The sale will run from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Feb. 19-21 and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Feb. 22.

For \$8, you can fill one of the library’s provided bags with used books to take home. Genres available include mysteries, westerns, young adult, fantasy, sci-fi, romance, military fiction, crafting, cookbooks, non-fiction and children’s books. Proceeds from the sale will support library activities and programs.

For more information, call 360-225-2294.

4-H program offers program for K-8 kids

Cowlitz County 4-H is offering kids the opportunity to go hands-on.

Local kids can join an outreach program, divided into two sets based on ages: kindergarten through third grade, and fourth through eighth graders. Possible project topics include baking or cooking, leather tooling, plant science and container gardening, creative arts, cardboard animals, hand sewing and basic poultry.

The programs will be held from 1-3 p.m. one Saturday a month. Younger kids started meeting last week and will meet every second Saturday of the month through July 12, while older kids start Feb. 22 and meet on the fourth Saturday through July 26.

The program costs \$10 per participant. Kids are encourage to come to all six sessions, and there is an opportunity for participants to join 4-H, as well as to participate in the 4-H still life (non-animal) division at the Cowlitz County Fair.

Space is limited to 10 kids in each of the two programs. To reserve a space, contact at jleach@wsu.edu or 360-577-3104, extension 4.

Roland Wines to host jazz nights

Roland Wines will be hosting jazz nights on the third Thursday of every month, according to a press release from the Longview venue.

Roland is suggesting a \$10 donation at the door.

On Feb. 20, Nic Johnson will be on guitar, Colin Corner on bass and Cook will return on drums. March’s show will feature Dmitri Matheny’s flugelhorn, Steve Christofferson’s keyboard, Eric Gruber’s bass and Cook’s drums. Finally, the April show includes guitarist John Stowell and bass player Dave Friesen, accompanied by Alan Cook on drums.

Local square dance club to host events

Dust off your dancing shoes; the R Square D Square Dance Club has called their next two dances.

The Boot Scootin’ Boogie and Chili Feed is set for 7 p.m. on Feb. 22. The Shamrock Dance is scheduled to start at 7 p.m. on March 14, St. Patrick’s Day. Both events will be at Catlin Hall, located at 106 NW Eighth Ave. in Kelso.

Admission is by donation, and the group is suggesting \$7. The dance will include light refreshments, door prizes and a raffle.

For more information, call Craig Abercrombie at 503-417-5482.

Longview library hosts LongCon

Longview Public Library will host its mini-convention, LongCon, 10 a.m. -5 p.m. Feb. 22.

The free event celebrates comics, graphic novels and related art. It will fea-



COWLITZ COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM, CONTRIBUTED

A model fallout shelter is on display in the Cowlitz County Historical Museum, part of its new temporary exhibit, ‘Browsing the Stacks.’



LCC, CONTRIBUTED

Author Jane Wong will be appearing at Lower Columbia College on March 4 as part of the Northwest Voices series.

ture a gaming room, crafts, vendor booths and activities.

Schedule

10:30 a.m.: Panel discussion
11:30 a.m.: Costume contest
1:30 p.m.: Ignite LongCon
3:30 p.m.: Lip sync battle

Northwest Voices to feature author Jane Wong

Award-winning author Jane Wong will be featured at Lower Columbia College as part of the Northwest Voices event.

Wong will lead a writing workshop at room 148 in LCC’s main building starting at 2 p.m. on March 4. There will also be a reading at the Longview Public Library at 5:30 p.m. the same day.

The events are free and open to the public.

Wong is the author of the memoir “Meet Me Tonight in Atlantic City,” which won the 2023 Washington State book award, and two collections of poetry, “How to Not Be Afraid of Everything” and “Overpour.” She is an associate professor at Western Washington University.

Wong has won a Pushcart Prize and has also won several fellowships and residencies, including the U.S. Fulbright Program and Harvard University’s Woodberry Poetry Room.

Registrations open for volunteer fair

The Longview Public Library has opened registration for its second annual community volunteer fair.

The event, which will run from 10 a.m. -1 p.m. on March 8 at the library, gives local nonprofits a place to meet people looking to volunteer in the community. While the event is free, space is limited, so the library asks nonprofits to register for a spot at the event.

Volunteers do not need to register, and attendance is free for everyone participating.

Registration for the event closes on Feb. 28. The signup form is available online in the events section of the Longview Public Library’s website.

The Daily News

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ANOTHER VIEW | MARJ HALPERIN

Civil service mass exodus would be disastrous

Civil service is another term for “professional workforce” and we want this in government, right? And yet, as I write this, our government is being taken over by the opposite kind of worker.

The uncredentialed Elon Musk is running a massive government operation. His team of similarly-unaccredited private-sector tech wonks have taken control of the vast Treasury database of our personal information as well as the federal payment database.

In an unprecedented misappropriation of authority, they are deciding who gets federal payments for work authorized by Congress. And, they are reportedly shutting down the U.S. Agency for International Development that was mandated by a 1961 congressional act.

This abruptly halts humanitarian aid and international disaster assistance to tens of millions around the world, all considered critical to national and global security, according to Google search highlights from the agency’s website, which is now shut down.

Although Donald Trump won his first term, in part, by complaining about Hillary Clinton using a private server for certain emails, Musk and his team have gained access to this database of our Social Security numbers, bank information and other highly sensitive data. It’s perhaps the most massive data breach in our country’s history.

Then they locked legitimate employees out of federal computers. When actual government employees tried to stop this raid on confidential data, Musk fired them. With no legal standing, his team sent a letter pushing all federal workers to resign, and are now sending layoff notices to targeted civil service workers across the federal government.

Overriding official acts of Congress could be illegal, but it’s also bad business.

I’d like to find another business manager who thinks it’s a good idea to offer a blanket buyout to their entire staff. Trump and the man behind this idea, Musk, seem to think that all workers are expendable. The insulting effort to “buy out” 2 million federal employees with the threatening “Fork in the Road” letter makes no distinction between experienced employees with valuable institutional knowledge and those who might be cut without damaging government services.

These are not all interchangeable cogs in the federal machinery. They are the people who make sure Social Security checks get to seniors on time and process Head Start money for preschoolers. They have the experience to manage air traffic, rebuild crumbling roads and bridges, protect our clean air and water, and make sure the food we eat

is safe from contamination. Mass exodus from these and other key positions would be disastrous for our communities.

We should all be outraged at the news that those employees who stay in government are being forced to pledge loyalty to the president, including questions on who they voted for and when their moment of “MAGA revelation” occurred.

This effort to put Trump’s own interests over the best interests of the American people and even the Constitution is not the pathway to public safety or national security. And it has little to do with the professed goal of eliminating waste in the bureaucracy. Certainly, there is redundancy and savings to achieve with thoughtful reductions in the workforce. But that won’t be the result of Trump’s ham-handed effort to force out any federal employees who don’t pledge loyalty to him.

Let’s be clear that the purpose of civil service is to prevent exactly what Trump is doing.

Early in our country’s history, presidents routinely hired workers based on party affiliation, a practice codified by the “Spoils Act” in 1820. That limited the term of all government officials to four years to correspond with the president’s term. But it wasn’t long before party loyalty tests were understood to be a vehicle for corruption. In 1883, Congress created the United States Civil Service Commission to replace the Spoils System with merit hiring and use professional qualification tests to determine job readiness.

For the first time, appointments were open to all, and tenure protection ensured political neutrality so employees couldn’t be fired because of a change in the presidency. This history used to be found on the U.S. Office of Personnel Management website; today it has disappeared, apparently replaced by an FAQ about Musk’s “Fork” buyout letter.

Congress has updated civil service guidelines several times over the years to keep up with changes in human resource management standards. But there has never been such a thorough effort to usurp this congressional authority and undermine the fundamental goal of preventing political loyalty from replacing professional qualifications.

And the American people should not allow that to happen today.

*Marj Halperin is an award-winning journalist and former Democratic analyst for WGN-TV, currently heard on WGN radio’s *Mincing Rascals* podcast. A community activist, she’s a leader of the Chicago neighborhood group *One Community Near South* and *Indivisible Chicago’s Blue Beginning* chapter.*

MY VIEW | JOHN DEERING



ANOTHER VIEW | THE COLUMBIAN

State voters committed to climate act

In November, Washington voters overwhelmingly affirmed their support for the Climate Commitment Act. Now, as Republicans in the Legislature attempt to undermine that affirmation, they should heed the will of the voters.

House Bill 1324 would redirect some revenue from the Climate Commitment Act toward road projects. The legislation was introduced by Rep. Andrew Barkis, R-Olympia, and is co-sponsored by Southwest Washington Republicans John Ley, David Stuebe, Ed Orcutt and Peter Abbarno — along with 18 other representatives.

The bill has little chance of passing; it has been referred to the House Transportation Committee and has not yet been scheduled for a hearing. But its existence and its broad support from Republicans provides some insight to the legislative process.

“Washington’s roads are in dire need of repair,” Barkis said in calling for the bill to receive a hearing. “We rank 47th nationally in road quality, face an increasing number of bridges in poor condition, and have a highway system in the early stages of failure.”

There is no denying the need for infrastructure investment. But in seeking avenues for such funding, lawmakers should not override the

clearly stated desire of Washington voters.

The Climate Commitment Act was passed by the Legislature in 2021 and launched in 2023. The cap-and-trade program places limits on carbon emissions from polluting companies and allows them to purchase credits through state-run auctions. In the first year, those auctions raised \$2.2 billion designated for climate initiatives, clean air and water, and additional environmental protections.

Last year, Initiative 2117 was placed on the statewide ballot in an effort to repeal the Climate Commitment Act. That effort was rejected by 62 percent of voters.

The messages have been clear: A solid majority of Washington lawmakers and residents strongly support a commitment to reducing carbon emissions and protecting the environment.

That points out the shortcomings of Republicans’ attempt to undermine the legislation. It also points out the annoying tendency of lawmakers of both parties, at both the state and federal levels, to take money designated for one goal and capriciously repurpose it.

As Rep. Jake Fey, D-Tacoma and chair of the Transportation Committee, wrote to the Columbia Basin Herald: “Investing in our

ANOTHER VIEW | SHULI REN

Xi squanders his strongest trade war asset

The tables have turned. As U.S. President Donald Trump reignites his trade war with China, he’s got all the bargaining chips.

The growth trajectories of the world’s two-biggest economies have diverged sharply since Trump’s first term. While global investors are doubling down on U.S. exceptionalism, keeping faith that the dollar and American equities will continue to outperform, the Chinese economy is limping along and might not be able to shake off deflation, perhaps for decades to come.

This could use some introspection. Knowing that the U.S. wanted an ugly divorce as early as 2018, when Trump first started slapping tariffs on Chinese imports, did President Xi Jinping mismanage the economy somehow, or was it pure bad luck?

In a global trade war, the economy with a powerful consumer base wins. Trump can throw insults at foreign heads of state and coerce big businesses to reshore in the U.S., because he is able to block access to the world’s most resilient spenders. Selling goods and services to Americans is just that much more profitable, thanks to robust demand.

That insight seems to have gone missing in Beijing. Instead of encouraging consumption, Beijing

has doubled down on industrial policy. It’s fostering high-end manufacturing, such as electric vehicles, semiconductors and robotics, with subsidies and cheap financing. State-owned banks have been offering low-interest loans to industrial companies, while reining in lending to the real estate sector, which arguably triggered a deep property downturn.

At the same time, the welfare of China’s middle class has been ignored. As they stumbled out of pandemic-related lockdowns in late 2022, they discovered an economy that suffers from long COVID. “Rotten tails,” or residential projects distressed developers had sold but were unable to finish, are peppered across the country. A harsh big tech crackdown has left fresh college graduates jobless and their middle-aged parents anxious. Between 2018 and 2024, the number of births tumbled by more than a third, hard evidence of the economic pressure couples are facing.

Consumers are hunkering down. Household savings more than doubled from 2018 to about 151 trillion yuan (\$20.7 trillion) last year, even as banks repeatedly cut deposit rates. Instead of slavishly buying European luxury goods, until recently a symbol of aspiration and economic success, people are opting for self-care and engaging in activities that don’t cost much, such as camping and road trips.

What this has resulted in is an economy that’s even more imbalanced than before. Last year, consumption contributed only about 30% to economic growth, versus 68% at the onset of 2018.

Most of the 5% gross domestic product growth came from net exports, as the likes of EV maker BYD Co. took the world by storm.

It’s a dismal report card; boosting consumption would have been a low-hanging fruit. Private consumption is relatively low in China. It accounts for just about 40% of the economy, versus around 55% in Japan and Germany, and 63% in Brazil.

This also puts Xi in a tight spot as he jostles with a mercurial Trump, who has a knack for finding pain points. As an example, the U.S. Postal Service is temporarily suspending inbound international packages from China and Hong Kong, potentially delaying or blocking shipments from retailers like Shein and PDD Holdings Inc.’s Temu. That would hurt: Textile and apparel that the two e-commerce platforms sell are the third-biggest category of U.S. imports from China after computers and electrical equipment. Without exporters, Xi can kiss his 5% growth target goodbye.

After Trump’s win, perhaps in a nod to its vulnerability, Beijing signaled to the public in December that boosting consumption would be its top priority this year. Is that a real pivot, or mere lip service? Only time will tell. But one thing is certain: Xi squandered his most powerful trade war weapon — his people.

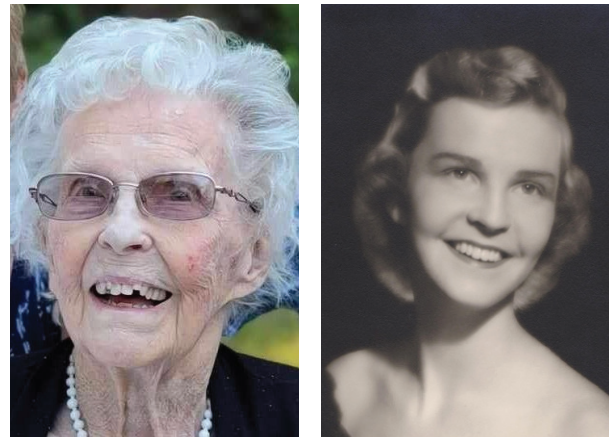
Shuli Ren is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering Asian markets. A former investment banker, she was a markets reporter for Barron’s. She is a CFA charterholder.

Letters to the Editor policy

Letters should be original and no longer than 250 words. Letters must include the author’s name, street address or telephone number for verification. The newspaper does not share that information with third parties. Only the name and city of residence are published. One submission can print per month. All submissions are subject to editing for length, spelling, grammar and clarity. Send submissions to letters@tdn.com or The Daily News, PO Box 1666, Longview, WA 98632.

IN MEMORIAM

Genevieve Ellen Olson
January 2, 1929 - February 1, 2025



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our beloved mother, Genevieve “Gee Gee” Ellen Olson. She passed away peacefully in Longview, Wash., one month after celebrating her 96th birthday.

Gee Gee was born on January 2, 1929, in Pittsburgh, Pa., to George and Julia Goal. She was their only child. They moved to Lake Geneva, Wis., where she found her love of swimming, water ballet and sailing. After high school she attended the University of Wisconsin, where she earned a degree in Home Economics in 1952.

Gee Gee taught kindergarten before marrying and moving to Arkansas, where they started a family. They loved the outdoors: boating, camping, hiking, visiting national parks and historical sites across the country. Soon they moved to Longview, Wash., where they settled. There she raised three children as a single mom.

Gee Gee worked as the administrative assistant to the CEO of Monticello Hospital for many years. She was also a member of St. Stephens Episcopal Church teaching Sunday school and singing in the choir.

After retiring she became an active volunteer in the community. She worked at Parents Place and volunteered at the Hall of Justice and the library. She supported the Red Hat by mending clothes for resale to support local non-profits. Her love of knitting also benefited local hospitals with caps and sweaters for newborns. She was also an avid gardener, becoming a Master Gardener.

Cannon Beach was a favorite place for Gee Gee and her family. They vacationed there for over 55 years. As the family grew, the rental houses got bigger and bigger. At one point, there were four adults and seven children in one house.

Gee Gee is survived by her three children, Karla (Dan), Martha (Warren), and Eric (Larry); four grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

Gee Gee was an amazing mother, she loved and supported her children unconditionally, couldn’t get enough of her grandkids and great grandkids climbing all over her, and of course, her insatiable need to, “go get a mocha.” Mom, we miss you immensely.

Donations can be made in her honor to Red Hat or Parents Place in Longview.

Stephanie Dannialle Griffith
March 17, 1978 - December 26, 2024



Stephanie Dannialle Griffith, 46, of Bellingham, Washington, passed away peacefully on December 26, 2024, surrounded by her loving family.

Born on March 17, 1978, in Longview, Washington, Stephanie was the beloved daughter of Danial and Susan Griffith, and sister to Erin and Philip Griffith. She grew up in Longview, active in dance, theater, and youth group. She

graduated from R.A. Long High School in 1996, and earned an Associate’s Degree from Lower Columbia College in 1998.

Stephanie was a loving daughter, sister, aunt, and friend. She loved spending time with her family and friends, especially going to Seattle Mariners games, concerts, and her niece’s many activities. As a valued employee and coworker at Pediatrics at Peace Health, Stephanie was devoted to her coworkers and the children that she served. Her infectious smile, compassion, and sense of humor will be sorely missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing her.

Stephanie is survived by her mother, Susan Griffith; siblings Erin Griffith (spouse Bill Hall) and Philip Griffith (spouse Denise); nieces Lily and Parker Hall, as well as a host of other relatives and friends. She was preceded in death by her father Danial Griffith.

A memorial gathering will be held on March 15, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. at the Bellingham Yacht Club in Bellingham, Washington.

REVIEW AND PLACE
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CR schools levy passing in early results

Minka Atkinson
matkinson@tdn.com

Early election results show Castle Rock schools’ education programs and operations levy is passing.

As of about 8:10 p.m. Tuesday, Cowlitz County elections results show about 56% of voters supported the levy, and 45% turned it down.

The next round of results released Thursday show similar numbers, according to the county elections office.

“We’re very excited and grateful for the voters that turned out,” Castle Rock Superintendent Chris Frisch said.

The renewal of the district’s

three-year educational programs and operations levy would run from 2026 to 2028 and have an estimated tax rate of \$1.72 per \$1,000 of assessed property value in 2026, \$1.75 in 2027 and \$1.79 in 2028.

This would cost the owner of a median-valued home an average of around \$724 per year. The Washington Center of Real Estate Research at the University of Washington reports that the median resale price of a home in Cowlitz County was \$413,500 in the third quarter of 2024.

Educational programs and operations levies fund staff salaries, extracurricular activities, sports, school supplies and other expenses. About 13% of the district’s budget comes from local levies, Fritsch said.

“I’m looking forward to the results being certified and knowing that one piece of the financial picture will be stable for the next three years,” he said.

The next question for the district is how much state and federal funding it can expect. Governor Bob Ferguson predicted a \$10-12 billion deficit in the state budget in November, but it’s too soon to say how that might affect education funding, Fritsch said.

Federal funding for things like special education seems unlikely to be affected by the recent funding freeze, but that may change, he said.

“It seems like things are changing on a day-to-day basis right now,” he said.

SNOWFALL IN THE CITY



GREG SELLENTIN, FOR THE DAILY NEWS

Snow falls on the log arch at Hemlock Plaza at Lake Sacajawea Park on Thursday, Feb. 13 in Longview. The Longview 23 Club installed the arches in June 2022 after the previous longstanding structure was torn down in October 2019 when a city inspection found the base had unrepairable wood rot.

Oregon wrestles with poor scores, looming cuts

JULIA SILVERMAN
The Oregonian

Late last month, when newly released national test scores showed Oregon elementary and middle school students ranked near the bottom of the barrel in math and reading, the silence was palpable.

The state Department of Education did not issue any press releases about the results of what’s known as the Nation’s Report Card, scores that were otherwise scrutinized from coast to coast for any sign that students were recovering from pandemic setbacks.

Gov. Tina Kotek, too, was quiet.

Organizations representing the state’s school board members and school administrators said nothing.

There were crickets from the Oregon Education Association teachers union, which has long railed against drawing any conclusions about school performance based on test scores.

Instead, the focus from many of those advocates is to gear up for a huge push to convince lawmakers to pump more money into Oregon schools, beyond the \$11.3 billion proposed by Kotek for the next two years. Their aim is to stave off looming cuts as districts prepare to shed counsel-

ors, educational assistants and librarians to reflect decreased student enrollment and rising labor costs.

In the past eight years, their efforts paid off: Oregon super-sized spending on education, including from the landmark \$1 billion a year corporate tax designed to fuel student success and via more than a billion dollars in pandemic relief funds. Yet it has seen test scores drop steadily since 2017, exacerbated by the pandemic’s toll, eventually landing in the nation’s basement.

Those results have fueled a simmering counternarrative that the fundamental problem isn’t a lack of money: It’s how Oregon schools spend it, amid a vacuum of direction and lack of insistence on best practices from the state Department of Education and the governor’s office.

“Something has to change in Oregon schools,” Marguerite Roza, the director of the Edumomics Lab at Georgetown University told the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education last month. “More money did not produce any kind of bumper increase in student outcomes.”

The discussion isn’t just academic. Students’ eighth grade math scores correlate directly with

whether they graduate from high school, whether they go to college and how much they earn over their lifetimes, Roza said.

“Not only that, they are a predictor of the state’s future economy. If Oregon is hoping to spur economic growth going forward, this is a four-alarm fire,” Roza added.

It’s not that more money doesn’t matter. In fact, rigorous research shows that when spent correctly, it can have a significant impact, particularly for low-income students, said Matt Chingos, the vice president for education data and policy at the left-leaning Urban Institute. He and his team analyzed the national test score data and found that, when adjusted for household income and demographics, Oregon elementary and middle school students scored lower than those in any other state on reading and math.

Any curious person, he said, would look at such results and wonder what can be learned from states like Florida and Mississippi, which spend significantly less per pupil than Oregon and get much better results for students of color and those from poorer families.

“If you’re a state that’s spending a lot and getting relatively poor outcomes, it’s probably time to take

a hard look in the mirror,” he said.

States that are successful, Roza told The Oregonian/OregonLive in a follow-up interview, have a laser focus on clear academic goals, are upfront about disappointing results, require data-informed course corrections and are willing to pay stellar teachers more to work in high-needs schools.

Oregon checks none of those boxes.

Instead, the state allows each of its 197 school districts to decide how best to spend the bulk of their state funds, save for carve-outs on early literacy and career-technical education. State regulators collect basic metrics — a time-consuming, sometimes duplicative chore for districts — but provide minimal oversight and guidance.

Republicans seized on Roza’s message, casting it as a reason to support vouchers so parents can pull their children out of the public school system in favor of private or religious alternatives on the state’s dime.

Such a proposal will go nowhere in Oregon, given Democrats’ political control and the strength of the state teachers union. But some Democrats are signaling that they are ready to talk about how to get greater bang for the state’s buck.

WEEK IN REVIEW

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IN THE NEWS

Hegseth: Ukraine should give up on war

U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Wednesday that NATO membership for Ukraine was unrealistic and suggested Kyiv should abandon hopes of winning all of its territory back from Russia and instead prepare for a negotiated peace settlement to be backed up by international troops.

Hours later, President Donald Trump said he and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to begin negotiations on ending the Ukraine war. In a social media post, Trump disclosed a call between the two leaders. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's office said Zelenskyy and Trump also had a phone conversation.

On Thursday, several NATO allies stressed that Ukraine and Europe must not be cut out of peace negotiations.

TARIFFS: President Donald Trump on Thursday rolled out his plan to increase U.S. tariffs to match the tax rates that other countries charge on imports. "It's fair to all. No other country can complain," he said. On Monday, Trump ordered that all steel imports be taxed at a minimum of 25%.

FEDERAL BUDGET: House Republicans released a budget plan Wednesday, providing for up to \$4.5 trillion in tax cuts and a \$4 trillion increase in the debt limit so the U.S. can continue to pay its bills.

CONFIRMATIONS: Conservative lawyer Brooke Rollins was confirmed Thursday as secretary of agriculture. Also on Thursday, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. was confirmed as health secretary. On Wednesday, Tulsi Gabbard was confirmed as director of national intelligence.



ALEX BRANDON, ASSOCIATED PRESS

MUSK, TRUMP TALK WORKFORCE CUTS AT NEWS CONFERENCE

President Donald Trump made a rare appearance with Elon Musk on Tuesday in the Oval Office before signing an executive order to continue downsizing the federal workforce. Musk, the head of the Department of Government Efficiency, called federal employees an "unelected" fourth branch of government that needed to be held accountable. Also on Tuesday, federal Judge Jeannette A. Vargas made some clarifications but left intact a Feb. 7 ruling that prevents DOGE from accessing Treasury Department records containing sensitive personal data for millions of Americans. Above, Trump listens as Musk, joined by his son X Æ A-Xii, addresses reporters Tuesday at the White House.

BIG NUMBER

127.7M Average U.S. viewers across television and streaming platforms for last Sunday's Super Bowl between the Philadelphia Eagles and Kansas City Chiefs at Caesars Superdome in New Orleans. The total set a record. The Eagles beat the Chiefs 40-22.

SHE SAID ...

“We reserve the right to decide who gets to go into the Oval Office.”
— **White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt, after AP reporters were banned over the Gulf of Mexico naming dispute.**

THE WATER COOLER

BEST IN SHOW: A giant schnauzer named Monty won the top prize at the Westminster Kennel Club dog show Tuesday night at New York's Madison Square Garden. Monty bested six other finalists to take best in show, considered the most prestigious prize in the U.S. dog show world.

SURPRISE GIG: Paul McCartney played a surprise show Tuesday night in New York at the Bowery Ballroom, capacity about 575. The news swept through Manhattan earlier in the day, sending New Yorkers sprinting for a chance to snag a ticket. "So, here we are," McCartney said, grinning. "Some little gig. New York. Why not?"

BYE, PENNY: President Donald Trump said last Sunday he directed the Treasury Department to stop minting new pennies, citing the rising cost of production. The U.S. Mint reported losing \$85.3 million last year on the nearly 3.2 billion pennies it produced. Every penny cost nearly \$0.037 — up from \$0.031 the year before.

ROCK HALL: The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame announced the 2025 nominations for induction on Wednesday. Mariah Carey, Chubby Checker, Cyndi Lauper, OutKast and Phish were on the list, as well as Bad Company, Joe Cocker, Billy Idol, Joy Division/New Order and Soundgarden.

IN THE NEWS

CFPB workers told to stop 'work tasks'

Russ Vought, President Donald Trump's budget chief, sent an email to Consumer Financial Protection Bureau employees Monday morning saying they should "not perform any work tasks."

They were directed to contact the top lawyer for the Office of Management and Budget "to get approval in writing before performing any work task."

Over the weekend, windows in two basement conference rooms at CFPB offices were covered with brown paper, concealing the occupants.

The Washington headquarters of the agency, created to protect Americans from financial fraud, abuse and deceptive practices, shut down for the week amid fears it will be gutted like the U.S. Agency for International Development.

TRANSGENDER POLICY: The Department of Education took another step Tuesday in advancing the Trump administration's new transgender policy for sports by asking the NCAA and a key high-school sports organization to restore titles, awards and records it says have been "misappropriated by biological males competing in female categories."

CONSUMER PRICES: The Labor Department reported Wednesday that the consumer price index increased 3% in January from a year ago, up from 2.9% the previous month.

HEALTH WEBSITES: U.S. District Judge John Bates ruled Tuesday that government agencies must restore public access to health-related webpages and data that they removed to comply with an executive order by President Donald Trump.

— Associated Press

RARE EARTH ELEMENTS

MINERALS FOR WEAPONS

Ukrainian resources could keep American military aid flowing

SAMYA KULLAB | Associated Press

Ukraine has offered to strike a deal with U.S. President Donald Trump for continued American military aid in exchange for developing Ukraine's mineral industry, which could provide a valuable source of the rare earth elements that are essential for many kinds of technology.

Trump said he wanted such a deal earlier this month, and it was initially proposed last fall by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as part of his plan to strengthen Kyiv's hand in future negotiations with Moscow.

"We really have this big potential in the territory which we control," Andrii Yermak, chief of staff to the Ukrainian president, said. "We are interested to work, to develop, with our partners, first of all, with the United States."

Here is a look at Ukraine's rare earth industry and how a deal might come together:

What are rare earth elements?

Rare earth elements are a set of 17 elements that are essential to many kinds of consumer technology, including cellphones, hard drives and electric and hybrid vehicles.

It's unclear if Trump is seeking specific elements in Ukraine, which also has other minerals to offer.

"It can be lithium. It can be titanium, uranium, many others," Yermak said. "It's a lot."

China, Trump's chief geopolitical adversary, is the world's largest producer of rare earth elements. Both the U.S. and Europe have sought to reduce their dependence on Beijing.



Now-President Donald Trump meets with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Sept. 27 at Trump Tower in New York.
JULIA DEMAREE NIKHINSON, ASSOCIATED PRESS

For Ukraine, such a deal would ensure that its biggest and most consequential ally doesn't freeze military support. That would be devastating for the country, which has been at war for nearly three years after Russia's full-scale invasion on Feb. 24, 2022.

The idea also comes at a time when reliable and uninterrupted access to critical minerals is increasingly hard to come by globally.

What is the state of the Ukrainian minerals industry?

Ukraine's rare earth elements are largely untapped because of the war and because of state policies regulating the mineral industry. The country also lacks good information to guide the development of rare earth mining.



OLEG PETRASIUK, UKRAINE 24TH MECHANIZED BRIGADE
A soldier prepares to fire a howitzer toward Russian positions Feb. 7 on the front line near Chasiv Yar, Donetsk region, Ukraine.

Geological data is thin because mineral reserves are scattered across Ukraine, and existing studies are considered largely

inadequate. The industry's true potential is clouded by insufficient research, according to business officials and analysts.

In general, the outlook for Ukrainian natural resources is promising. The country's reserves of titanium, a key component for the aerospace, medical and automotive industries, are believed to be among Europe's largest. Ukraine also holds some of Europe's largest known reserves of lithium, which is required to produce batteries, ceramics and glass.

In 2021, the Ukrainian mineral industry accounted for 6.1% of the country's gross domestic product and 30% of exports.

An estimated 40% of Ukraine's metallic mineral resources are inaccessible because of Russian occupation, according to data from We Build Ukraine, a Kyiv-based think tank. Ukraine has argued that it's in Trump's interest to develop the remainder before Russian advances capture more.

The European Commission, the executive branch of the European Union, identified Ukraine as a potential supplier for more than 20 critical raw materials and concluded that if the country joins the 27-nation EU, it could strengthen the European economy.

What happens next?

Details of any deal will likely develop in meetings between U.S. and Ukrainian officials. Zelenskyy and Trump will probably discuss the subject when they meet.

U.S. companies have expressed interest, according to Ukrainian business officials. But striking a formal deal would likely require legislation, geological surveys and negotiation of specific terms.

It's unclear what kind of security guarantees companies would require to risk working in Ukraine, even in the event of a ceasefire. And no one knows for sure what kind of financing agreements would underpin contracts between Ukraine and U.S. companies.

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Lassies send more than half of district wrestlers to state

PAGE B3



Running backs get their spotlight after Super Bowl triumph

PAGE B5

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

MM boys basketball coach Ken Kelly is living up to the high standards



ANDREW LWOWSKI, THE DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO

Mark Morris boys basketball coach Ken Kelly calls out a play to his team versus R.A. Long in the first Civil War meeting of the 2024-25 season at Bill Bakamus Gymnasium on Wednesday, Jan. 15. Kelly led the Monarchs to a 19-3 record in his first season as head coach.

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After taking over for legendary coach Bill Bakamus, Mark Morris boys basketball coach Ken Kelly knew that the expectations would be high.

Under Bakamus, the Monarchs won 587 games, 25 league championships, 11 district titles and had 24 state tournament appearances with 11 assorted state trophies. They also won 18 straight league titles from 2001-18 while winning at least 20 games every season from 2001-10. Was Kelly the guy that could continue down that path of success?

Living up to the expectations

Despite losing Braydon Olson, the leading scorer in program history and other important pieces such as Malakai Gray and Dossen Morrow, the Monarchs finished the regular season 19-3 and took second place in the 2A Greater St. Helens League. It's clear that Kelly was the guy for the job.

"There were a lot of people who doubted us and doubted them, but for us to sit here (as) the only team to beat (Columbia) River twice, sitting at 19-3, second in what I think is the toughest league in the state, we've accomplished a lot that a lot of people didn't think we could and in some ways, that to me is gonna be more important (than winning a league cham-

pionship)."

Earlier in the season, Kelly felt the weight of the expectations, but as the season went on and the Monarchs kept winning, the burden slowly lifted.

"I think that that question's been answered so a lot of the stress that was on me early on in the season is really kind of alleviated because I think now everybody in the community knows that, 'OK well, (it) doesn't look like Mark Morris may be going anywhere anytime soon,'" he said.

Mark Morris was right there at the top of the league, but missed out on winning a share of the league title after falling to R.A. Long in the regular-season finale at The Lumerdome, an outcome that Kelly

described as disappointing.

"For somebody to take away the league title from us, they were gonna have to rip it from our hands and credit R.A. Long for doing that," Kelly said.

That loss was tough, especially for Mark Morris senior Dalton Stevens, who lost to the Jacks twice in one season for the first time in his career.

"I hate losing, especially to them, it's definitely a tough one," Stevens said. "I really wanted to beat them, especially last time playing in this gym."

Kelly knows that his team still has plen-

Please see KELLY, Page B3

Longview, Woodland boys wrestlers advance State wrestling championships next weekend

ANDREW LWOWSKI
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As the scope of the field narrows, the competition of wrestlers seeking glory stiffens.

"The thrill of victory and agony of defeat ... That's kind of the picture for something like this," Mark Morris wrestling coach Mark Patrick said.

From the qualifier tournament hosted by Mark Morris Tuesday, nine local wrestlers between R.A. Long, Mark Morris and Woodland locked their tickets for state. It was a battle of will.

The league championship, which was held Feb. 8, produced four wrestlers who advanced — two from the District IV 2A Evergreen Conference and two from the Greater St. Helens League.

The remaining qual-

ifying spots took place between three mats in Bill Bakamus Gymnasium in a winner-to-state match where the winner from each mat at each respective weight class moves on.

Mat 1 was GSHL No. 3 vs. EVCO No. 5; Mat 2 was GSHL No. 4 vs. EVCO No. 4; and Mat 3 was GSHL No. 5 vs. EVCO No. 3.

Tuesday, the Monarchs produced four: Charlie Jones (120), Axton Flemens (150), Kenneth Mullen (190) and Camren Lair (190).

The Beavers produced three: Roberto Clayton (132), Jake Sams (144) and Nathan Karchesky (175).

The Lumberjacks yielded two: Adam Silvia (120) and Richard Ramirez (150).

Mullen of Mark Morris will be making his state debut in his first year wrestling, but will have the guidance of Aimen

Flemens, the brother of Axton, and Jones, both of whom have experience in the big stage.

"I'm a little nervous, obviously because there's kids that are better than me since it's my first year," Mullen said.

Mullen, a running back for the Monarch's football team, was convinced by friends to try out for wrestling his senior year. And given the physical nature of the sport, he's grown to

Please see WRESTLERS
PAGE B3

Andrew Lwowski, The Daily News

Johannes Diedericks of Mark Morris (blue) attempts to pin Henry Matias-Rodas of Centralia in the 126-pound weight class Tuesday, Feb. 11 during the 2A District tournament at Mark Morris High.



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



Feb. 11, 1990: James “Buster” Douglas pulls one of the biggest upsets in boxing history when he knocks out Mike Tyson in the 10th round to capture the heavyweight championship at the Tokyo Dome. The loss was the first of Tyson’s career.

Feb. 11

1970: The Atlanta Hawks score 97 points, the most ever scored in the second half of an NBA game, en route to a 155-131 win at San Diego.

1982: Houston Rockets center Moses Malone grabs an NBA-record 21 offensive rebounds in a 117-100 win over Seattle.

1982: For the first time in NHL history, referee Kerry Fraser awards penalty shots in the same period. Vancouver’s Thomas Gradin and Ivan Hlinka each score against Red Wings goalie Gilles Gilbert in the third period of a 4-4 tie at Detroit’s Joe Louis Arena.

1988: Wayne Gretzky gets his NHL-record ninth 100-point season. Gretzky scores a goal and has two assists in the Edmonton Oilers’ 7-2 victory at Vancouver to give him 101 points. He passes Marcel Dionne, who had eight seasons.

1995: For the first time an NBA team to has two of its players sweep the All-Star Saturday competition. Harold Miner wins the Slam Dunk and Glen Rice captures the Long Distance Shootout for the Miami Heat.

2017: Ajee’ Wilson breaks the American record in the women’s indoor 800 meters to win the event for the fourth straight year in the NYRR Millrose Games. Wilson finishes in 1:58.27 at The Armory to break the mark of 1:58.71 set by Nicole Teter in 2002.



Feb. 14, 1995: Clyde Drexler is traded to the Houston Rockets, reuniting with former University of Houston teammate Hakeem Olajuwon. The two lead the Rockets to the NBA title later that year.

2023: Super Bowl LVII, State Farm Stadium, Glendale, Arizona: Kansas City Chiefs beat Philadelphia Eagles, 38-35; MVP: Patrick Mahomes, KC, QB.

Feb. 13

1923: The New York Renaissance, the first all-black pro basketball team, is organized. Rens become one of the dominant basketball team of the 1920s and 1930s.

1937: The NFL Redskins move from Boston to Washington.

1948: Dick Button, the Olympic gold medalist, beats Hans Gerschwiler again to win the men’s World Figure Skating championship in Davos, Switzerland.

Feb. 12

1937: Cleveland is granted an NFL franchise. The Rams play in Cleveland for nine years before moving to Los Angeles. After the 1994 season, the Rams move to St. Louis.

1989: The largest crowd (44,735) in NBA All-Star Game history turns out at the Houston Astrodome to watch the West beat the East 143-134. Utah’s Karl Malone win MVP honors after scoring a team-high 28 points.

2005: Allen Iverson scores 60 points, a career high, to lead the Philadelphia 76ers to a 112-99 victory over the Orlando Magic.

2007: Duke, saddled by its first four-game losing skid in 11 years, falls out of The Associated Press men’s poll for the first time since the end of the 1995-96 season. The Blue Devils had been in the media poll for 200 straight weeks: the second longest streak behind UCLA’s record 221 weeks.



Feb. 13, 2022: The Los Angeles Rams become the second consecutive team to win a Super Bowl in its home stadium as it beats the Cincinnati Bengals, 23-20, at SoFi Stadium. **Cooper Kupp** is named MVP.

1954: Furman’s Frank Selvey scores 100 points in a 149-95 victory over Newberry. Selvey breaks the record of 73 points, set by Temple’s Bill Mlkvy in 1951, with 41 field goals and 18 free throws.

1977: Julius Erving, playing in his first NBA All-Star Game, is voted MVP, despite his East team losing 125-124. Erving scores 30 points and grabs 12 rebounds.

1994: Tommy Moe wins the men’s downhill over local hero Kjetil Andre Aamodt at the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway. Moe won by .04 seconds, the closest Alpine race in Olympic history. Norwegian speed skater Johann Olav Koss has a world record-setting gold medal performance in the 5,000 meters in 6 minutes, 34.96 seconds.

1995: Connecticut is voted No. 1 in The Associated Press Top 25 and joins the school’s women’s team at the top. It is the first time teams from one school were ranked No. 1 in the men’s and women’s college basketball polls.

Feb. 14

1966: Wilt Chamberlain breaks the NBA career scoring record with 20,884 points.

1987: The Detroit Pistons host the Philadelphia 76ers at the Pontiac Silverdome. The attendance of 53,745 fans is the third-largest in NBA history.

2018: American snowboarder Shaun White claims an unprecedented third Olympic gold medal in the halfpipe during the Pyeongchang Games. White won gold in 2006 and 2010.

Feb. 15

1980: Eric Heiden of the United States win the 500m at the Lake Placid Olympics in a record 38.03 seconds. It is the first of five gold medals Heiden wins during the Olympics.

1991: Troy State sets an NCAA Division II record of 103 points in the second half in a 187-117 rout of DeVry Institute.

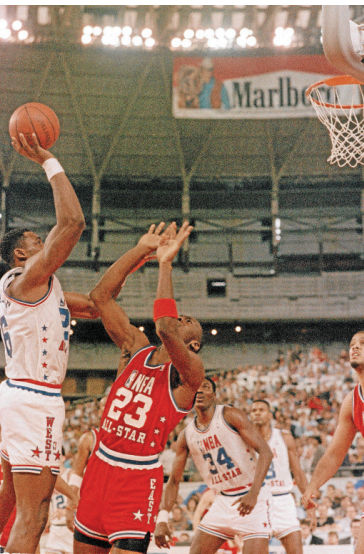
2000: Martin Brodeur becomes the first goaltender in NHL history to get credit for a game-winning goal when the New Jersey Devils defeat the Philadelphia Flyers, 4-2.

TRIVIA

Question

Who did Iowa’s Caitlin Clark set the all-time women’s Division I career scoring record against, and how many did she score in breaking the record on Feb. 15, 2024?

NUMBER



44,735

On Feb. 12, 1989, the NBA All-Star Game was played in front of what was the largest crowd in the history of the event when 44,735 fans filed into the Astrodome. The West beat the East, 143-134.

THE BOX



On Feb. 11, 2024, The Kansas City Chiefs won their second consecutive Super Bowl by defeating the San Francisco 49ers, 25-22, in overtime. Patrick Mahomes was named the game’s MVP, and the 123.4 million average viewership was the largest in U.S. history.

Feb. 11, 2024

Super Bowl XLVIII

At Allegiant Stadium, Las Vegas

San Francisco	0	10	0	9	3-22
Kansas City	0	3	10	6	6-25

Second Quarter

SF—FG Moody 55, 14:48.
SF—McCaffrey 21 pass from Jennings (Moody kick), 4:23.
KC—FG Butler 28, :20.

Third Quarter

KC—FG Butler 57, 5:01.
KC—Valdes-Scantling 16 pass from Mahomes (Butler kick), 2:28.

Fourth Quarter

SF—Jennings 10 pass from Purdy (kick failed), 11:22.
KC—FG Butler 24, 5:46.
SF—FG Moody 53, 1:53.
KC—FG Butler 29, :03.

Overtime

SF—FG Moody 27, 7:22.
KC—Hardman 3 pass from Mahomes, :03.
A—61,629.

	SF	KC
First downs	23	24
Rushes-yards	31-110	30-130
Passing	276	333
Comp-Att-Int	24-39-0	34-46-1
Sacked-Yards Lost	1-4	3-8
Fumbles-Lost	2-2	5-1
Penalties-Yards	6-40	6-55
Time of Possession	38:31	36:26

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—San Francisco: McCaffrey 22-80, Purdy 3-12, Samuel 3-8, Mitchell 2-8, Juszczyk 1-2. Kansas City: Mahomes 9-66, Pacheco 18-59, Rice 2-5, Edwards-Helaire 1-0.

PASSING—San Francisco: Purdy: 23-48-255-1, Jennings 1-1-21-1. Kansas City: Mahomes 34-46-333-2.

RECEIVING—San Francisco: McCaffrey 8-80, Aiyuk 3-49, Jennings 4-42, Samuel 3-33, Juszczyk 2-31, McCloud 1-19, Conley 1-18, Kittle 2-4. Kansas City: Kelce 9-93, Hardman 3-57, Watson 3-54, Rice 6-39, Pacheco 6-33, Gray 2-22, Valdes-Scantling 3-20, McKinnon 2-15.



AP FILE PHOTOS

Minnesota Wild left winger Zach Parise (11) watches the puck beat Buffalo Sabres goaltender Jhonas Enroth (1), of Sweden, on a goal by Thomas Vanek in 2015.

THE LIST

NHL record losing streaks

On Feb. 12, 1993, the San Jose Sharks tied the NHL record with a 17th consecutive loss when it fell 6-0 against the Edmonton Oilers. The Sharks tied the 1974-75 Washington Capitals for the record.

Team	Streak	Dates
Washington Capitals	17	Feb. 18, -March 26, 1975
San Jose Sharks	17	Jan. 4-Feb. 12, 1993
Philadelphia Quakers	15	Nov. 29, 1930-Jan. 8, 1931
Kansas City Scouts	14	Dec. 30, 1975-Jan. 29, 1976
Detroit Red Wings	14	Feb. 24-March 25, 1982
Quebec Nordiques	14	Oct. 21-Nov. 19, 1990
Ottawa Senators	14	March 2-April 7, 1993
Buffalo Sabres	14	Dec. 29, 2014-Jan. 30, 2015

TRIVIA



49

Clark scored a career-high 49 points against Michigan to set the NCAA career scoring record.

Lassies send 17 to state

Kelso girls wrestling wins the district tournament



KELSO GIRLS WRESTLING, CONTRIBUTED

The Kelso girls wrestling team poses for a photo after winning the district tournament on Saturday, Feb. 8 at Union High School.

Dan Rosenfield
drosenfield@tdn.com

About 77% of the Lassies who competed at last weekend's district wrestling tournament are headed to state.

That's 17 girls on their way to the Mat Classic later this month in Tacoma.

Kelso finished first as a team during Saturday's district championship at Union High School. Plus, the school had 13 finalists and eight champions at the tournament.

The top three placers in each weight class advanced to state.

"We got a good number," Kelso coach Bob Freund said. "I'm happy with where we're at."

Freund believes he has some girls who can make their way

into the finals for their respective weight classes at state.

"If we wrestle aggressively," he said. "I mean we're (in) attack mode, we're putting (our opponents) on their heels the whole time and forcing them to make the mistakes."

"We have some girls that can punch their way into the state finals."

There is a reason for the confidence.

The Lassies have already been in big tournaments and come out on top all season long.

These tournaments featured girls from California, Idaho, Oregon and Nevada, and, most notably, the Lassies took first place in the Kelso Braided 64 — one of the biggest high school

girls wrestling tournaments in the country.

"(The) Braided 64, in a lot of ways, it's bigger than state," Freund said. "Most of the top girls and teams are in that tournament ... The majority of the best girls in the northwest we've seen."

Freund is aiming for a top-eight finish as a team. He just hopes it doesn't go quite like it did for the Chiefs in the Super Bowl.

"It's just another tournament for us; we just gotta go produce and not tighten up and make it into something that it's not," he said

"... Go produce and not pull a Kansas City."

Champions:

- 105: Leah Wallway
- 110: Marina Jimenez-Gonzalez
- 115: Kamiah Gaerlan
- 120: Olivia Engel
- 130: Alexa Ortiz-Marquez
- 135: Kaycee Potts
- 145: Ava Risner
- 190: Neveah Thomas

- 110: Jazmine Meza
- 115: Madison Fowler
- 125: Aurora Hiebert
- 190: Talia Alexander
- 3rd Place Finishers:
- 100: Peyton Polk
- 130: Brynja Arnesen
- 140: Alexis Escobar
- 155: Jacinda Marshall

Mat Classic (3A)
When: Thursday, Feb. 20 - Friday, Feb. 21
Where: Tacoma Dome

KELLY

From B1

ty more to play for such as winning a district title and competing for a state championship.

"I told (my team) that this season is like a book, and it has chapters, so you close the first chapter," he said. "Now you open up the second chapter, and what does that second chapter look like? How well can you pick yourself up off the mat?"

The Monarchs will start their journey in the district tournament on Saturday and could potentially have

a rematch with the Jacks in the title game. However, despite losing out on the league championship this year, their path in the district tournament may be more favorable than R.A. Long's, especially since they went 5-1 against the teams on their side of the bracket, but Kelly wasn't willing to make that kind of argument.

"I think if you say that, then you're discrediting some of the other teams ... it's a situation where there just isn't an easy path ... To say a path is easy would be a pretty bold statement, that's not a statement that

I'm gonna make," he said.

Even more so than their accomplishments on the court, Kelly is emphatic about what the Monarchs have done off the court such as with the Monarch Giving Project, where the team hosted a basketball camp for Life Works clients.

"I don't know what label is gonna go up on our wall in terms of a district finish or a state finish and or if one will, but it'll go down as one of the greatest Monarch teams because of the character of these kids and the things that they do," he said.



Andrew Lwowski, The Daily News

Jake Sams of Woodland (black) attempts to pin Fisher Vaughter of Tumwater in the 144-pound weight class at the 2A Districts held at Mark Morris High Tuesday, Feb. 11.

WRESTLERS

like it.

He was able to pin Centralia's Zachary King to earn a berth.

Jones, who pinned John Alexander of W F West, has been to state every year since he was a freshman, Patrick said, and Aimen Flemens has been to state twice and has placed both times.

"They know their way around and we'll count on them to be examples to the younger guys. ... Hopefully they go in with the attitude that they're in it to win it, so to speak, and not just going on a hotel trip," Patrick said.

State Wrestling Championships are scheduled for Feb. 21 and 22 in Tacoma.

WEDNESDAY

BOYS BASKETBALL

1B Districts:
Wahkiakum def. Naselle, 63-48

GIRLS BASKETBALL

2A Districts:
Tumwater def. R.A. Long, 54-32

1A Districts:
Montesano def. Kalama, 74-40

- Aubrey Doerty — 13 points, 5 rebounds, 3 assists, 3 steals
- Sienna DiCristina — 7 points
- Hannah Johnson — 6 points, 7 rebounds, 3 steals
- Bridgette Hollifield — 5 rebounds, 5 assists

Kalama coach Amber Doerty: "Have some key players (Hannah and Aubrey) with that illness going around hoping it is short lived they battled as hard as they could. Monty capitalized on our miscues for sure. Can't win a game with 28 turnovers. We can do better and we will in round two."

Seton Catholic def. Castle Rock, 65-12

Castle Rock coach Jordan Garbe: "It was a tough night for our team against the best team in the district. They are rated top ten in the RPI for a reason. I hope we can bounce back next week and give it our all against White Salmon."

1B Districts:
Wahkiakum def. Naselle, 50-37

NWAC MEN'S BASKETBALL

Lower Columbia def. Pierce, 76-42

- James Grose — 25 points, 6 rebounds, 2 steals
- Kap Laila — 14 points, 9 rebounds, 3 assists, 2 blocks
- Amir Locus — 12 points
- Javares Reid — 8 points
- David Young — 7 points, 3 steals

NWAC WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Lower Columbia def. Pierce, 75-53

- Karlee VonMoos — 18 points, 7 rebounds, 3 assists, 2 steals, 1 block
- Lisa Lorenz Conrotto — 17 points, 4 steals
- Lauren Katryniuk — 8 points, 5 rebounds, 5 assists, 3 steals
- Maris Baklund — 8 points, 5 assists
- Brooke Ravet — 8 points
- Morgan Hamilton — 6 points, 6 rebounds, 3 steals

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Are Dodgers even better now?



ROSS D. FRANKLIN, ASSOCIATED PRESS
Los Angeles Dodgers' Shohei Ohtani, of Japan, warms up with other pitchers and catchers at the Dodgers baseball spring training facility, Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2025, in Phoenix.

Defending World Series champions add more firepower in offseason

DAVID BRANDT
Associated Press

GLENDALE, Ariz. — Yoshinobu Yamamoto let loose a few fastballs and some nasty breaking balls during a bullpen session while manager Dave Roberts and pitching coach Mark Prior stood a few steps to each side of the pitcher, smiling as the ball popped into the mitt of catcher Will Smith. The Los Angeles Dodgers were in a pretty good mood as spring training began at Camelback Ranch. The defending World Series champions went through a light workout on Tuesday and most of their stars were on the field, including NL MVP Shohei Ohtani and Mookie Betts. Left-hander Clayton Kershaw played catch, a sign that the three-time Cy Young Award winner is returning for his 18th season.

“Everyone’s more hungry than ever,” third baseman Max Muncy said. Muncy said he’s been in Arizona for the past 1 1/2 weeks, coming to the Dodgers facility early to get in defensive work with Betts and Miguel Rojas. It’s been a short offseason: The Dodgers hoisted the World Series trophy barely three months ago after beating the New York Yankees in five games. Betts said the quick turnaround presents challenges, but they’re good problems to have. “It’s definitely tough, but we didn’t win last year because we were talking about the World Series every day,” Betts said. “We won last year because we talked about the task at hand every day. “We have an end goal, of course, but you have to take stepping stones to get there. We’ll get there when we get there.”

Los Angeles opens against the Chicago Cubs in Tokyo on March 18-19 and is trying to become the first team to win back-to-back World Series since the New York Yankees won three in a row from 1998-2000. The Dodgers’ owners spent to sign two-time All-Star Blake Snell, Japanese pitcher Roki Sasaki and relievers Tanner Scott and Kirby Yates. “Talent will take you to a certain place,” Rojas said. “But then the character will make you win championships. We realized that last year.” Ohtani didn’t pitch last year following elbow surgery and is recovering from a partially torn labrum in his left (non-throwing) shoulder, an injury sustained while sliding into second base during the World Series. Even without pitching, Ohtani won MVP last season after becoming the

first MLB player to hit 50 homers and have 50 stolen bases in the same season. Now he’ll try to return to the mound, where he was 10-5 with a 3.14 ERA in 2023 with the Los Angeles Angels. Roberts said at the team’s fan fest on Feb. 2 that a May return to the mound is “about right.” The manager also said Ohtani’s recovery from the offseason shoulder surgery was encouraging. “He looks really strong,” Roberts said. “I saw some videos recently and you just wouldn’t think that there was any shoulder surgery this past winter.” Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred said last week that some fans were concerned about the sport’s lack of a salary cap, mostly because of the big spending of teams like the Dodgers and New York Mets.

Ichiro HOF plaque to add M’s logo

DAVID BRANDT
Associated Press

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. — CC Sabathia will have a New York Yankees logo on the cap of his Hall of Fame plaque and Billy Wagner will have the symbol of the Houston Astros. The hall announced the decisions Monday for all five of this year’s inductees. Ichiro Suzuki will have the cap of the Seattle Mariners, Dave Parker of Pittsburgh Pirates and Dick Allen of the Philadelphia Phillies. Players and their families give input on the choices to the hall, which makes the final decisions. Inductees could make the pick through the 2001 induction, and the hall took over the decision ahead of the 2002 vote. The change followed reports in 1999 that Tampa Bay offered to compensate the newly retired Wade Boggs if his plaque bore a Devil Rays logo. Boggs was inducted in 2005 and his plaque has a Boston Red Sox logo. Sabathia spent the last 11 seasons of a 19-year big league career with the Yankees (2009-19) after

pitching for Cleveland (2001-08) and Milwaukee (2008). Suzuki played for the Mariners in 14 of 19 seasons (2001-12, 2018-19) and also for the Yankees (2012-14) and Miami (2015-17). Wagner pitched for Houston for his first nine seasons (1995-2003), then played for Philadelphia (2004-05), the New York Mets (2006-09), Boston (2009) and Atlanta (2010). Parker spent his first 11 seasons with Pittsburgh (1973-83), then played for Cincinnati (1984-87), Oakland (1988-89), Milwaukee (1990), California (1991) and Toronto (1991). Allen played for the Phillies in nine seasons (1963-69, 1975-76) while also spending time with St. Louis (1970), the Los Angeles Dodgers (1971), Chicago White Sox (1972-74) and Oakland (1977). Inductions will take place July 27. Plaques include an image of the person and list of accomplishments in about 90 words, including each team a person played for or managed.

For up-to-date news and scores visit [tdn.com](https://www.tdn.com)

Vonn apologizes for comments about Shiffrin teamup

Legendary U.S. skier says ‘I didn’t help myself’ with social media posts

ANDREW DAMPF
Associated Press

SAALBACH-HINTERGLEMM, Austria — Lindsey Vonn acknowledged that “I didn’t help myself” by firing back on social media after learning that she wasn’t paired with Mikaela Shiffrin for Tuesday’s team combined race at the skiing world championships. The 40-year-old Vonn had campaigned to race with Shiffrin in a skiing “dream team” for the new event, which will also make its Olympic debut next year. When Vonn saw Shiffrin announce on Instagram that she was racing with recently-crowned downhill world champion Breezy Johnson, Vonn reacted with displeasure on X, formerly known as Twitter. “Why am I not surprised?” Vonn wrote Monday on X with a shrug emoji, before deleting her post and adding another. “Maybe I didn’t help myself or the team by having my Twitter fingers out,” Vonn said Tuesday. “But at the same time, I’m a human being and I was disappointed in the communication. And I let my feelings be known. I’m

a human. I have feelings. So shoot me.” The new combined event entails one racer competing in a downhill run and another in a slalom, with the times of the two added together to determine the final results. Johnson and Shiffrin won gold on Tuesday while Vonn and AJ Hurt, her partner, finished 16th after Vonn had a dismal downhill run that left her team 21st after the morning leg. Vonn was the only one of the eight U.S. skiers competing who did not take part in the podium celebration for Johnson and Shiffrin. She ran to catch a plane for a ski school event in Switzerland later Tuesday. But Vonn did congratulate Johnson and Shiffrin on X, saying “What a team!!!” Lauren Macuga, another American, led the downhill portion, while Johnson was fourth. In downhill, Vonn placed one position above Andorra’s Cande Moreno in a field of 26 starters — 2.51 seconds behind Macuga. “I was in my tuck pretty much the whole way down and just not accelerating anywhere,” said Vonn, who returned this season after



CHRISTOPHE ENA, ASSOCIATED PRESS
United States’ Lindsey Vonn, right, chats with United States’ Mikaela Shiffrin after women’s downhill training at the 2018 Winter Olympics

nearly six years of retirement. “So I have clearly work to do. I think it’s my boots that I have to play with to figure out what’s better ... but it’s hard to really change your entire setup while you’re racing in the world championships.” The combined pairings were selected by the U.S. team’s coaching staff based on “season-best results” in downhill and slalom. “I didn’t have a problem

with the selection process,” Vonn said. “It was 100% the right decision. Breezy and Mikaela should be the pair. “They’re the fastest two skiers ... my only problem was that it wasn’t communicated to me. I found out about it on Instagram. And I just think it’s a little unprofessional. It’s just a simple phone call or text message. I think that’s not

a really difficult thing to ask for.” Vonn said she reached out and that Shiffrin agreed it would be great to race together. But then Vonn was told that Shiffrin wasn’t entering the combined. Vonn only learned of Shiffrin’s final decision to race it via Instagram. “It would have been a cool thing if those two greats would have raced

together, but at the moment others are stronger in their performance,” U.S. speed coach Alex Hoedlmoser said. “We had to make sure to bring the fastest pairings together, and it was very obvious that Breezy was the fastest in the downhill and therefore would race with Mikaela.”

SPOTLIGHT | COLLEGE BASEBALL



AP FILE PHOTOS

Tennessee coach Tony Vitello, center, hoists the championship trophy following his team's 6-5 victory over Texas A&M in Game 3 of last year's College World Series.

NEW LOOK, SAME GOAL

Defending champ Vols lost eight starters, still eye another title

ERIC OLSON
Associated Press

It was as if the 2024 Tennessee Volunteers were built to win a national championship with their dominant pitching and an offense that produced the second-most home runs in a season in NCAA history. They ended up with an SEC-record 60 wins and beat Texas A&M in a three-game College World Series finals.

Eight players from that team were drafted, including six in the first four rounds. That's left coach Tony Vitello to approach 2025 as a building year, though much is still expected of the Vols as defending champions. They're picked second behind Texas A&M in the Southeastern Conference preseason coaches' poll and are a consensus top-five team in the national polls.

"They're the 2025 team and they want to put their own stamp on this particular year," Vitello said. "I think our guys are ready to move on and kind of use this blank canvas they have and start splashing some paint on there."

The Vols open with a three-game home series against Hofstra starting Friday, Division I baseball's opening day.

The weekend rotation could take some time to get established. Mississippi transfer Liam Doyle is in line to be the No. 1 starter. Nate Snead, a 10-game winner as a reliever last season, likely will move

into a starter's role. Junior college transfer Brandon Arvidson, the returning Marcus Phillips and heralded freshman Tegan Kuhns are among pitchers competing for a spot.

The everyday lineup also will look a lot different. Sluggers Christian Moore, Dylan Dreiling, Blake Burke, Kavares Tears and Billy Amick left via the draft after combining for 120 of the Vols' 184 homers.

Preseason All-SEC pick Dean Curley will be in his second year at shortstop and Hunter Ensley will be back in center field. Curley and Ensley, with 12 apiece, are the top returning home run hitters.

Ensley has been in the program since the post-pandemic rise of the Vols. Their 211 wins and .773 winning percentage since 2021 rank No. 1 nationally. They went 0-2 in the 2021 CWS, lost a home super regional as the No. 1 national seed in 2022, and went 1-2 in the 2023 CWS before winning it all last year.

"I definitely think there's more eyes on the baseball program now," Ensley said. "You could really just walk over to the baseball field and kind of look around, and to me, that kind of tells you the whole story. More people are buying in, more people are invested, more people are involved, more people kind of want to be around the program."

So while the names on the lineup card

change, the expectations remain the same for the team's expanded fan base. The Vols ranked seventh nationally in attendance last year with an average of 5,339 per game, more than twice as many as the 1,721 per game that showed up in Vitello's first season in 2018.

"We built a little bit of a brand here," he said.

Since South Carolina won back-to-back titles in 2010-11, only one returning national champion has made it back to Omaha, Nebraska, for the CWS. That was Florida, which won the 2017 title and lasted four games in the 2018 CWS.

LSU, the 2023 champion, had a losing record in SEC play and lost in regionals last year. Mississippi and Mississippi State, winners of the previous two championships, finished under .500 and didn't make the NCAA Tournament the next year.

Snead makes no promises about how the Vols will fare the year after their championship.

"I mean, we lost a lot of our guys that contributed to that team," he said. "So obviously the expectation for everybody outside of the team is always there, and they always want us to win. Obviously, we want to win, too, but it's just baseball. I mean, you really can't control much. So we're going to go out there and just play. Hopefully we win again."

Ten players to watch *Listed in alphabetical order*

Jamie Arnold, Florida State
The junior lefty made himself a high first-round draft prospect after finishing third in the country with 159 strikeouts in 105 2/3 innings. He pitched 24 1/3 shutout innings to begin last season, and he finished 11-3 with a 2.98 ERA. His 17 strikeouts against Pittsburgh were most by an FSU pitcher since 1987.

Aiva Arquette, Oregon State
Scouts are high on the 6-foot-5 Arquette, who excelled under the radar at Washington. He played second base but will be the Beavers' shortstop. He's trending toward being a high first-round pick after showing excellent range in the field and batting .325 with 12 homers.

Tyler Bremner, UC Santa Barbara
The junior right-hander was 11-1 over 19 appearances, including nine starts, and struck out 104 in 88 2/3 innings. Opponents batted .182 against him, and he had a 2.54 ERA. He became a starter the second half of the season and could be a top-five pick with his mix of a mid-90s fastball and wicked changeup.

Cam Cannarella, Clemson
Cannarella goes into his junior season as one of the top all-around players in the country. He's a career .363 hitter with 18 homers, 107 RBIs and 24 stolen bases. He has a .988 career fielding percentage with just three errors in 117 games.

Henry Ford, Virginia
Ford was one of the nation's top rookies in 2024, setting Virginia freshman records with 17 home runs, team-best 69 RBIs and 151 total bases. He batted .336 and had a triple and 13 doubles. Known as "Model T" around the program, the draft-eligible sophomore is moving from first base to the outfield.

Jace LaViolette, Texas A&M
The junior outfielder could be the No. 1 overall pick in the Major League Baseball draft after becoming the first player in program history with back-to-back 20-homer seasons. He hit 29 last season, drove in 78 runs and drew a program-record 64 walks.

Tre Phelps, Georgia
The sophomore is primarily an infielder but made a combined 34 starts at five different positions. Phelps batted .353 with 12 home runs and 40 RBIs. His first hit as a collegian was a home run against Northern Kentucky, and he went deep four times in a three-game sweep at South Carolina.

Nolan Schubart, Oklahoma State
The Big 12 preseason player of the year led the conference in homers (23), RBIs (68), on-base percentage (.513) and slugging (.838) despite missing 12 games because of injury. The junior outfielder made headlines last season when he homered a school-record four times against Wichita State.

Devin Taylor, Indiana
The Big Ten preseason player of the year hit a conference-best 20 homers, most by an Indiana player since 2010, and batted .357 with 54 RBIs. The outfielder goes into his junior season needing 12 homers to break the program career record of 47.

Tanner Thach, UNC Wilmington
Thach's only Division I offer out of high school was from the Seahawks, and now the junior first baseman is a projected first-round draft pick after he hit a school-record 27 homers and stood out in the Cape Cod League. His 42 career homers are the school record. He committed just one error in 553 chances.

Ten teams to watch

In alphabetical order with 2024 record:

Arkansas (44-16)
Strong pitching and defense are hallmarks of Dave Van Horn's program. Finding more offense was the offseason priority. Transfers Rocco Peppi (Fresno State) and Brent Iredale (New Mexico JC) hit for power and Logan Maxwell was TCU's leading hitter. Gabe Gaekle, last year's closer, and lefty transfers Zach Root (East Carolina) and Landon Beidelschies (Ohio State) are top candidates for the weekend rotation.

Florida State (49-17)
The Seminoles reached the final four of the College World Series with one of the top offenses in the country. Catalysts Cam Smith and James Tibbs III, both first-round draft picks, are gone. Max Williams, junior college transfer Blaydon Plain and freshman Myles Bailey are being counted on to replace some of that firepower. Ace Jamie Arnold returns, and Joey Volini (South Florida) and Wes Mendez (Mississippi) are promising lefties.

LSU (43-23)
The Tigers hope to avoid the ups and downs of a year ago when they struggled in SEC play but reached a regional final and won 10 of their last 13 games. Seven position players with starting experience are back, including Jared Jones (28 homers) and preseason All-America shortstop Michael Braswell III. Gavin Guidry, a bullpen stalwart for two years, is in line to become a starter and joined on the staff by a host of transfers.

Nebraska (40-22)
The Cornhuskers won the Big Ten Tournament and made their sixth regional since 2014, and they bring back an experienced roster. Seven everyday players return, and they added Summit League player of the year Cael Frost from South Dakota State. Mason McConaughy takes over for conference pitcher of the year Brett Sears as the No. 1 starter, and Tyner Horn is likely the No. 2 after drawing good reviews in the fall.

North Carolina (48-16)
The Tar Heels are a consensus top-10 team in the preseason despite losing first-round pick Vance Honeycutt and two other outfielders to the draft from their CWS team. Jason Decaro is back as No. 1 starter after going 6-1 with a 3.81 ERA as a freshman. Matthew Matthijs led the ACC with 12 wins in 36 appearances out of the bullpen. Luke Stevenson is the No. 1 catcher prospect for the draft, according to MLB.com.

Oklahoma State (42-19)
The Cowboys are the Big 12 favorites and they have the conference preseason player of the year in Nolan Schubart, who batted .370 with 23 homers. But seven players were lost to the draft, and it could take time for the Cowboys to find their rhythm. The biggest question is pitching. Gabe Davis, mostly a reliever for two years, and transfers Harrison Bodendorf (Hawaii) and Mario Pesca (St. John's) are competing for weekend spots.

Oregon State (45-16)
The Beavers will play as an independent in the first season of a dormant Pac-12. Only 20 of their 56 games will be at home. Nationally, expectations remain the same as Oregon State adjusts to not having No. 1 overall draft pick Travis Bazzana. The Beavers are a consensus top-10 team with Gavin Turley and Dallas Macias among the top returnees, Aiva Arquette (Hawaii) the top transfer and pitcher Dax Whitney the top freshman.

Tennessee (60-13)
The Volunteers won the national title with a lineup that amassed 184 home runs, four behind the NCAA record set by LSU in 1997. Most of the big boppers are gone after the draft took five everyday players. Mississippi transfer Andrew Fischer hit 20 homers, and the Vols are solid up the middle with Dean Curley at shortstop, Louisville transfer Gavin Kilen at second and Hunter Ensley in center. Mississippi transfer Liam Doyle and Nate Snead are the top two pitchers.

Texas A&M (53-15)
Michael Earley was promoted from hitting coach to head coach shortly after Jim Schlossnagle bolted for Texas. Few first-year coaches inherit so much talent. The Aggies are the consensus No. 1 team in the preseason and SEC favorites. Potential No. 1 draft pick Jace LaViolette hit 29 homers with 78 RBIs and is the headliner of a lineup that returns most of the pieces from the national runner-up team. The ace is lefty Ryan Prager, a third-round draft pick who turned down a fat bonus from the Angels to return to school.

Virginia (46-17)
The Cavaliers are a consensus top-five team and the ACC favorites, and no one would be surprised to see them in a third straight CWS. Henry Ford, Jacob Ference and Henry Godbout spark the offense. Evan Blanco returns as No. 1 starter, with Jay Woolfolk and Bryson Moore competing for weekend spots. Eric Becker is first in line to replace three-year starting shortstop Griff O'Ferrall. Two freshmen are budding stars, left-handed pitcher Tomas Valincius and outfielder James Nunnallee.

NCAA.com preseason rankings

1. Texas A&M

2. Virginia

3. LSU

4. Tennessee

5. Arkansas
6. North Carolina

7. Oregon State

8. Georgia

9. Florida State

10. Florida
11. Duke

12. Oregon

13. NC State

14. Wake Forest

15. Clemson
16. Vanderbilt

17. Oklahoma State

18. Mississippi State

19. Texas

20. Dallas Baptist
21. Arizona

22. UC Santa Barbara

23. TCU

24. Nebraska

25. Troy

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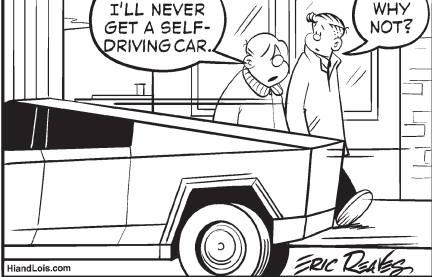
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JERRY SCOTT & JIM BORGMAN



HI & LOIS



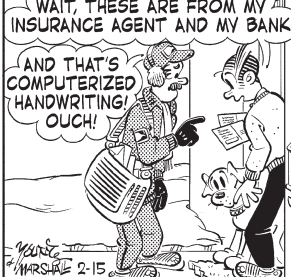
BRIAN & GREG WALKER



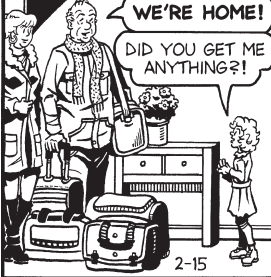
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DEAN YOUNG & JOHN MARSHALL



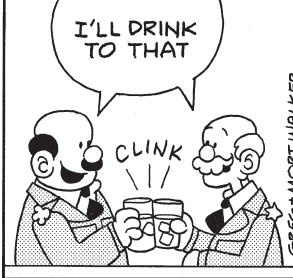
SALLY FORTH



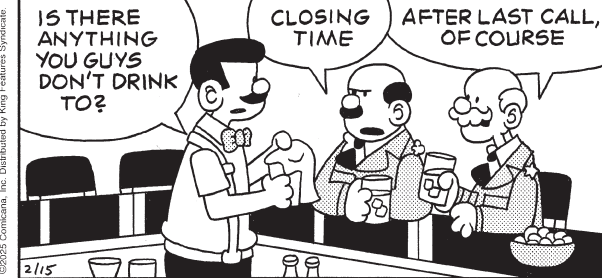
FRANCESCO MARCIULIANO & JIM KEEFE



BEETLE BAILEY



GREG, BRIAN & NEAL WALKER



MACANUDO



LINIERS

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



CHRIS BROWNE

BREAK OF DAY
NATE FAKES



FAMILY CIRCUS
BIL & JEFF KEANE



BARNEY GOOGLE & SNUFFY SMITH



JOHN ROSE



SHEFFER CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Interior design
- Views
- Made over
- "Phooey!"
- Aromatic herb
- Found out, to
- Brits
- Party pooper
- "Dream on!"
- Prof's helpers
- Poker pot
- Covert agent
- Jungfrau, for one
- Melodies
- Emmy winner
- Paintings of artists, say
- Dessert fruit
- Not even one
- Mom's mate
- "—hoo!"

40 Grant

- basis, at times
- Home for mil. jets
- Horse's halter?
- Eight (Pref.)
- Illusionist
- app
- Boris of tennis
- Hearth remains
- Gardeners, at times
- Synthetic fabric
- DOWN
- 1 Woodland grazer
- 21 Snooze

2 Writer Bu-

- chanan
- Line dance
- Small bill
- Affinity
- Pieces for one
- Kitchen VIPs
- Coach
- Par-seghian
- Bowlful served with chips
- Sicilian spouter
- Swift jets
- "May-berry —"
- Hot chili pepper
- 21 Snooze

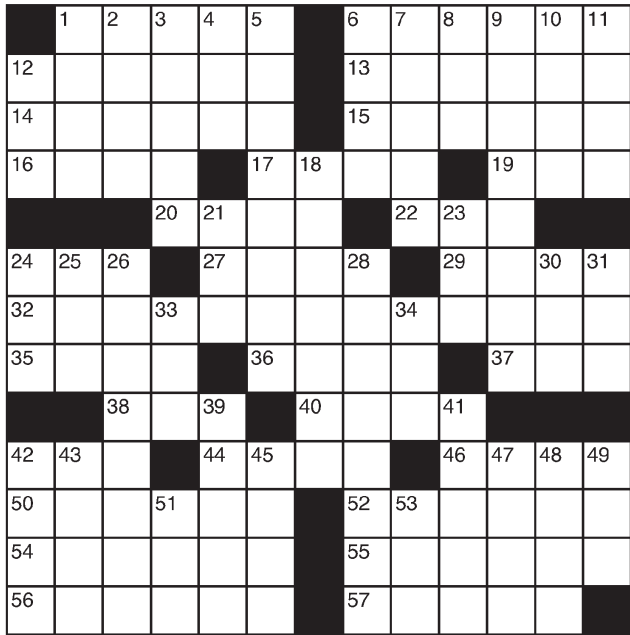
23 Pod

- dweller
- Nile viper
- Director
- Spike
- Listen to a recording
- Football game
- prankster
- Judge
- Lance
- Mental-ist's claim
- Swing to and —
- Deli bread
- Proprietor
- Surround sound name
- Short-ened wd.
- Dog bane
- Towel word
- Jazz singer
- Laine
- Shore bird
- Hosp. areas
- Mamie's man
- "— Little Teapot"

Solution time: 26 mins.



Yesterday's answer 2-15

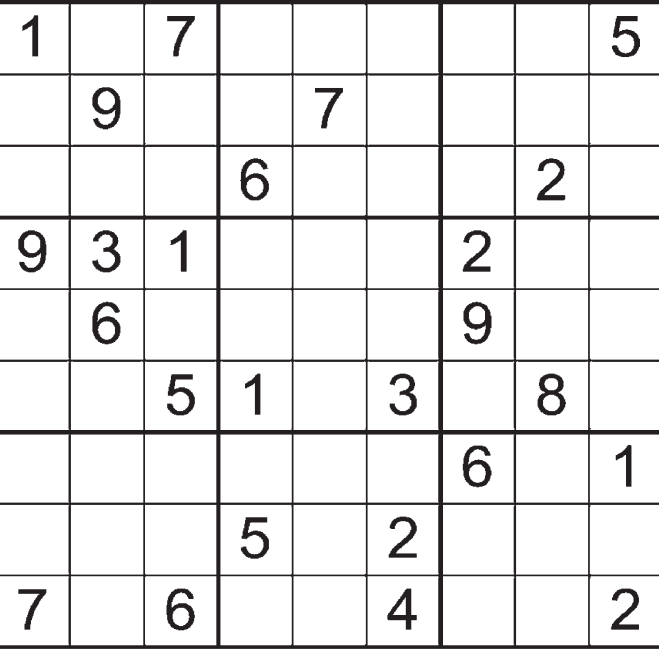


KING CLASSIC SUDOKU

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

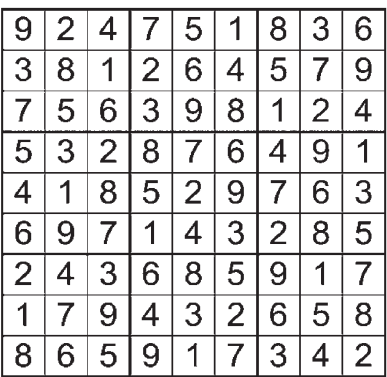
King Classic Sudoku



Difficulty: ★★★★★

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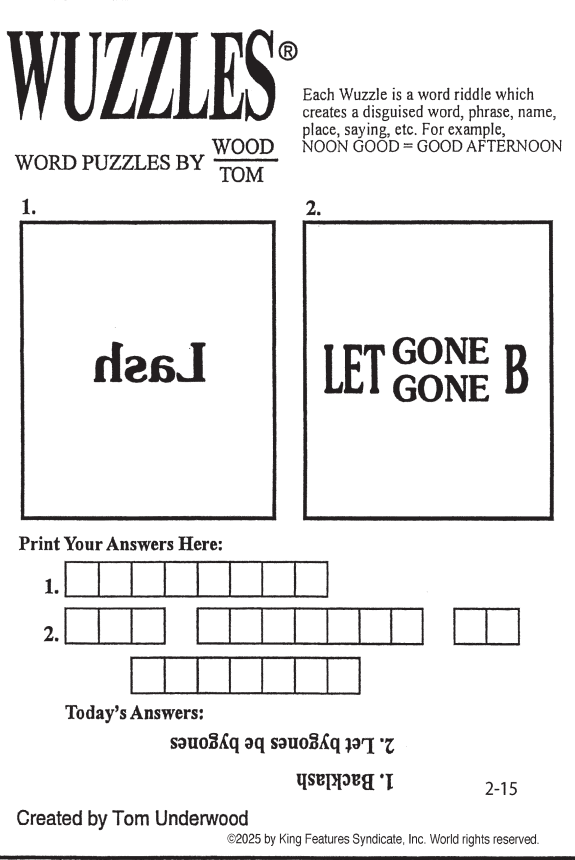
Answer to previous puzzle



Difficulty: ★★★★★

2/14

WUZZLES



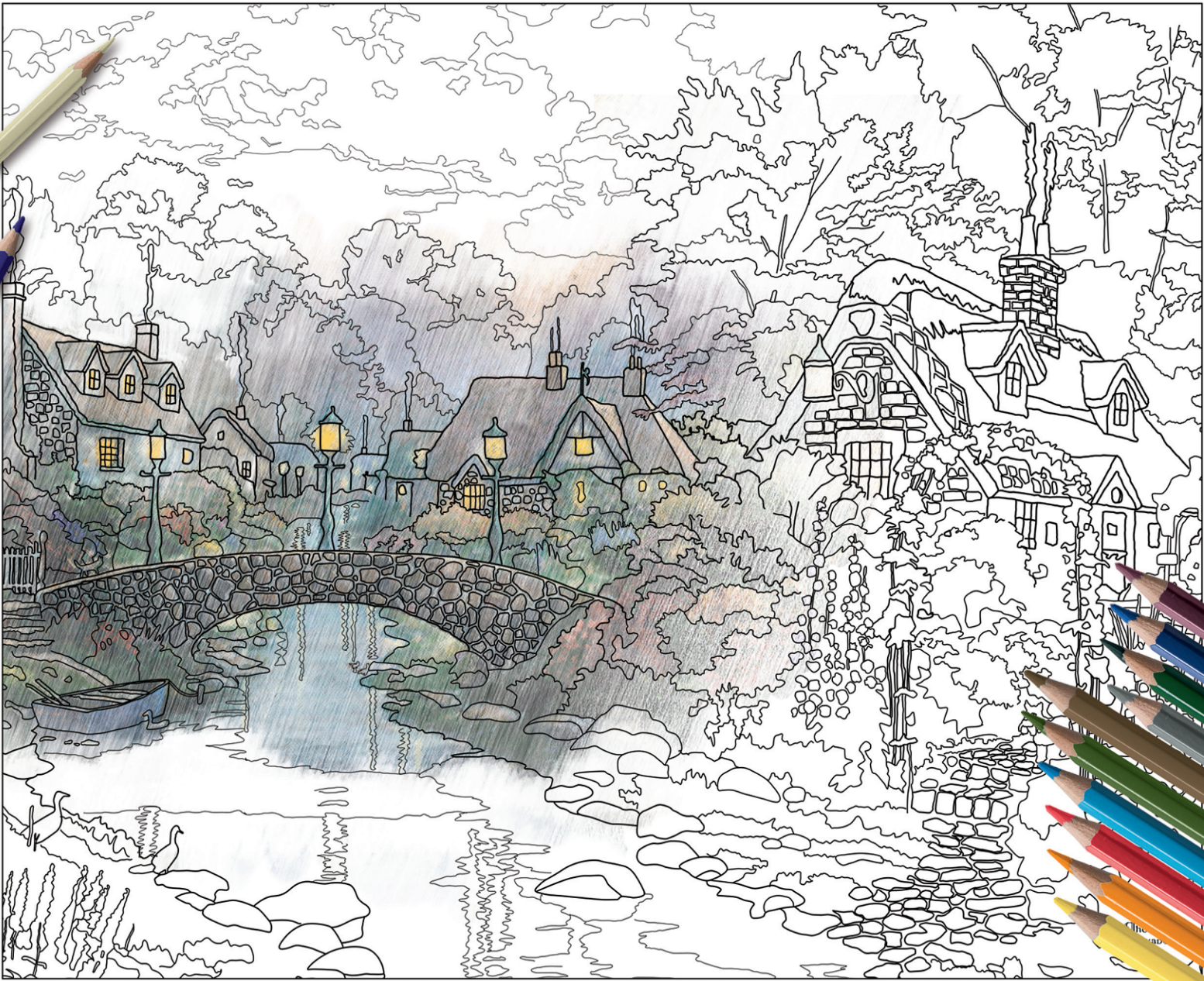
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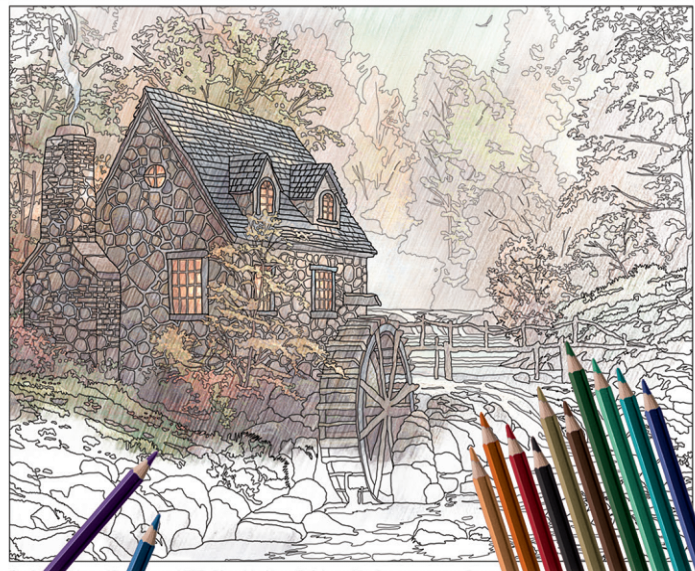
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