

KIRKSVILLE Daily Express

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Snow falls in downtown Kirksville on Jan. 1, 2022. NEMO PHOTOGRAPHY

Snowing in the new year

Kirksville starts 2022 with several inches of snow

It might not have been a white Christmas, but Kirksville got a white New Year's. Kirksville received a blanketing of snow over the first two days of 2022, with National Weather Service data saying the city received just over five inches across Jan. 1 and 2.



A man walks his dog on a snowy Jan. 1, 2022. NEMO PHOTOGRAPHY

NEMO set to stay in same congressional district

Daily Express staff

Adair County's place in Missouri's congressional district map will likely remain the same.

The proposed congressional map was released late last week as the state's redistricting effort continues. The state's congressional districts, along with districts for the state Senate and House, are updated every 10 years.

And the new congressional map keeps congressional District 6 largely unchanged. The northeast chunk that includes Adair County and the surrounding counties will remain intact.

This new map, if approved, will move Chariton, Carroll and Monroe counties from District 6 into District 4. But District 6 would add part of Ray County and all of Lincoln County.



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The proposed updated map of Missouri's congressional districts.

Arrest made in connection to fatal Dec. 30 shooting

Austin Miller
Daily Express

The Kirksville Police Department has made an arrest in connection with last Thursday's shooting that killed two people and injured two more.

Ray Francis Rijos Romero, a 52-year-old Kirksville man, was arrested on the evening of Jan. 2. KPD was assisted by U.S. Marshalls, the Adair County Sheriff's Office and the Missouri State Highway Patrol. Romero was arrested at a residence on South First Street in Kirksville.

Romero has been charged with two counts of first-degree murder, two counts of first-degree assault, two counts off first-degree attempted murder, two counts of first-degree assault — serious physical injury, one count of abuse or neglect of a child — serious physical injury resulting in death, and seven counts of armed criminal action.

Anquan Glover remains a suspect in the case and is still at large as of Monday. KPD has been unable to locate him but believes he might be in the Kansas City area.

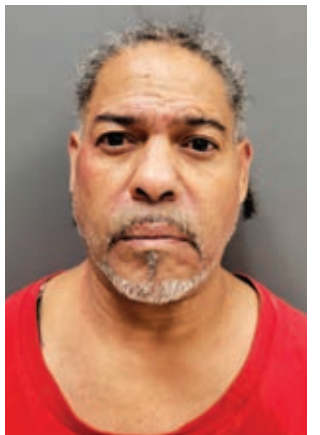
The shooting occurred on Dec. 30 just before noon. Officers responded to a shots fired call around Dodson and Fifth streets.

According to court documents, when police arrived at the scene, a male was found laying on the ground near the intersection with an apparent gunshot wound to the head. Officers saw a trail of blood leading back to a duplex.

Inside the residence, officers found a woman and child with gunshot wounds to the head.

At the scene, officers were briefly able to speak with Braxton Cottrill, who had been shot, court documents say. He told officers Glover shot him. Cottrill, 22, was taken to Northeast Regional Medical Center and then to University Hospital in Columbia, where he later died.

An 18-month-old child named Parker was also killed. A GoFundMe has



Ray Francis Rijos Romero



Anquan "AJ" Glover

been setup to help his family.

Alissa Anders, 18, the woman who was shot, was also taken to NRMCMC and later University Hospital. Court documents say Anders was also 35 weeks pregnant. An emergency C-section was performed and the child was delivered and breathing. Anders is still in critical condition.

Also shot was Randall Yarrington, 21. Police spoke with him at NRMCMC. He identified two shooters at the scene, Glover and a man named Ray.

Police believed that to be Romero since there have been previous police reports with Romero and Glover together, including a June incident with pending burglary, kidnapping and armed criminal action charges. That investigation is still ongoing. Police later presented Yarrington with a photo lineup. He identified Glover and Romero in those photos.

On Dec. 31, Yarrington gave police his memory on what happened the day before.

See **SHOOTING**, Page A3

Crowded field set for 2022 City Council election

Austin Miller
Daily Express

The 2022 Municipal Election features a packed ballot for the Kirksville City Council.

Nine candidates filed for three spots on the council. That is the most since 2006, when nine candidates filed. More recently, eight candidates filed in the 2019 race.

There are two full, three-term positions available and one partial term for one year. The top two vote-getters will take the full terms and the third-place finisher will receive the partial term.

Current councilmembers Zac Burden, Jessica Parks and Jennifer Walston all filed for re-election.

Burden was appointed to the council in 2018 to fill a vacancy and then was elected to a full term in 2019. He has been appointed Kirksville's Mayor each year since 2019.

Parks also joined the council in 2019 and seeks her second term.

Walston joined the council in 2021, appointed by the council

to fill the vacancy left by Chuck Long.

The other six candidates include Wesley Gerber, Kevin A. Alm, Dana (Danny) McDowell, Robert A. Prough, Stephanie Deren and Kabir Bansal.

Alm, Bansal and McDowell were also on the ballot in 2021 for one council spot. Bansal took second behind John Gard-

ner with 27.85 percent of the vote. McDowell received 11.53 percent and Alm received 4.34 percent.

The election is scheduled for April 5.

The County Clerk's office will certify those candidates on Jan. 25. So candidates could decide to remove themselves from the ballot.

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OBITUARIES INSIDE

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In Your own Backyard: Kirksville events for Jan. 6-12

Submitted by Debi Boughton

Debi Boughton, Kirksville Tourism Director, has some suggestions for enjoying time “In Your Own Backyard.” For any activities, be sure to follow the CDC guidelines for health and safety. If you have ideas or suggestions email: debi.boughton@visitkirksville.com.

Thursday, January 6

Today is Epiphany. The name Epiphany comes from the Greek epiphaneia, meaning “appearance” or “manifestation,” and refers to the manifestation of Jesus Christ to the world. The holiday is also called the Feast of Epiphany, Theophany, or Three Kings’ Day.

Many people bake a King’s cake to celebrate. The 12 days of Christmas end on Epiphany.

Saturday, January 8

The 2022 Kirksville Junior Tiger Classic Wrestling meet is all day beginning at 9:15 a.m. at the Kirksville Primary School, 1815 E. Hamilton Street. Weigh-in begins at 6:30 a.m. Competitors range from age 6 and under to ages 14 and under. For more information and cost email: kirksvillwrestling@yahoo.com.

Monday January 10

Welcome back Truman students. Classes begin today at Truman State University. And welcome back ATSU

students who began the semester on January 3rd. And welcome back Moberly Area community College students who begin classes on January 18th.

Monday, January 10

Do you want to get in shape in the new year? Kirksville Aquatic Center has classes offers classes: Friends Water Aerobics; Arthritis Water Aerobics and Evening Water Aerobics. For costs, times and more information go to: Kirksvillecity.com/parksandrec, or call 660-627-1485.

Tuesday, January 11

Join the Friends of the Library Book Discussion at 6:00 p.m. at the Adair Coun-

ty Annex, 300 N. Franklin. The book is “The Warmth of Other Suns” by Isabel Wilkerson. For more information call 660-665-6038.

Tuesday, January 11

Missouri Department of Conservation is hosting a Women’s event for Nature Jewelry Crafting. Join the staff at the Conservation Center, 3500 S. Baltimore, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. to make beautiful jewelry from deer antlers, turkey and duck feathers and much more. This workshop is for women 18 and older and girls 14-17 accompanied by an adult. This is a free workshop. Registration is required and the deadline is January 10. Register at: www.mdc.mo.gov/events.

Two more COVID-19 deaths reported in Adair County

The Adair County Health Dept.

Adair County enters 2022 with two additional COVID-related deaths and 58 newly confirmed cases since last Thursday, Dec. 30. The overall case count is now 4,473 and confirmed deaths now stand at 48.

Both deaths are previously reported cases and neither resident was vaccinated. A 66-year-old female admitted to Northeast Regional Medical Center Dec. 13 died Jan 1. A 48-year-old male died Jan. 3.

Today’s cases include females ages 1, two age 2, 4, 12, 18, two age 20, two age 21, 22, 25, two age 26, 27, 29, 32, 34, 37, 40, 44, 48, two age 51, 53, 57, 58, 60, 65, 69, two age 75 and 84.

Males are ages 7, 10, 12, 17, 20, 22, three age 23, two age 26, two age 29, 32, 33, 44, 45, 50, two age 51, 56, 57, 63, 70 and 71.

Twenty-one cases are breakthrough infections. The Adair County Health Department recommends that all county residents ages 5 and older get vaccinated against COVID-19 and all residents ages 16 and older get vaccinated and boosted. Vaccines are easily accessible, free, and continue to demonstrate that they prevent serious illness, hospitalization, and death.

A list of upcoming pediatric and adult COVID vaccine clinics at the Adair County Health Department appear on its website at adair.lphamo.org. Adult vaccination clinics are scheduled for the four Tuesdays in January and pediatric vaccination clinics are scheduled for the four Thursdays in the month.

Adult clinics are from 2-4 p.m., Jan. 4, 11, 18 and 25. Pediatric clinics are from 3-5 p.m., Jan. 6, 13, 20 and 27. Residents should call the Health Department at 660-665-8491 to schedule an appointment.

Jake’s mice: Searching for answers to the puzzle of autism

By LAURA UNGAR
AP Science Writer

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Jake Litvag leaned in for a closer look as a lab mouse scurried around an enclosure, stopping to sniff a large block.

“Hi, Jakob 1. I’m Jake,” the 16-year-old said, naming the little furry creature engineered to have the same genetic abnormality he has.

That mouse and its lab-grown relatives are the first in the world to mirror the missing gene that causes Jake’s autism. Scientists at Washington University in St. Louis bred the mice, and grew stem cells derived from Jake’s blood, to study and find ways to treat his rare disorder – and look for answers to the larger puzzle of autism.

Jake’s family raised money for the early research, which scientists then parlayed into a \$4 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to delve more deeply into Jake’s gene, one of more than 100 implicated in autism. They hope to find “points of convergence” that could someday help people with all forms of the neurodevelopmental condition affecting one in 44 U.S. children.

Jake knows he inspired their work. And that’s helped him see autism as something to be proud of rather than something that makes him different from other kids. His parents, Joe and Lisa Litvag, figured meeting the scientists – and the mice – would show him firsthand what he had brought into being.

“Oh wow. Cool!” Jake said as he watched a mouse climb down a pole while others scampered in a bin.

Walking out of the lab, tears welled up in Lisa Litvag’s eyes as she thought about the language within her son’s cells helping other kids.

“We’re deeply proud and humbled to be part of this,” said Joe Litvag. “What do we live this life for? It’s ultimately to try to, in one way, shape or form, be of service to others.”

JAKE’S GIFT

The Litvags realized early on that Jake wasn’t reaching childhood milestones. He couldn’t walk without assistance until he was 4. He struggled to string sentences together in first grade.

At first, no one could pin down why. Jake had a mix of different traits. He was hyperactive and



Research assistant Katie McCullough holds up a mouse for Jake Litvag, 16, to see inside a Washington University lab where doctors are using the mice and Jake’s genes to study a rare form of autism linked to a mutation in the MYT1L gene Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2021, in St. Louis. Researchers are using a mouse model and cell line with Jake’s exact mutation to try to better understand the mutation. JEFF ROBERSON - STAFF, AP

impulsive but also social, warm and funny. It took until he was 5 to get a firm diagnosis of autism.

Around that time, the Litvags heard that child psychiatrist Dr. John Constantino, an expert on the genetic underpinnings of autism, was giving a talk at the Saint Louis Science Center. They decided to go in the hopes of meeting him. They did, and he began seeing Jake as a patient.

About five years later, Constantino proposed genetic testing. It revealed the missing copy of the MYT1L gene believed to cause one out of every 10,000 to 50,000 autism cases. Having an extra copy can cause schizophrenia.

The finding brought the family peace. They’d heard lots of people say autism was mostly caused by external factors, like birth trauma. “For a long time,” Lisa Litvag said, “I thought it was something that I did.”

Actually, a large multinational study suggests that up to 80% of the risk for autism can be traced to inherited genes.

“One of the big things it did for us as a family is it made us realize that it’s nothing that we did wrong,” Joe Litvag said. “It’s just that people are born all the time” with genetic differences.

The couple, whose younger son Jordan doesn’t have the condition, talked openly with Jake about his autism and tried to bolster his self-esteem when he worried about being seen as different. They sent him to a small private school that tailors its curriculum to each child’s learning abilities. And they encouraged his social tendencies, cheering him on when he and some classmates formed a band, the Snakes.

“We never wanted him to feel there was shame around his diagnosis,” Lisa Litvag said. “We continued to kind of reinforce that this is a superpower, you

are special, you are awesome ... and because you have autism, there are gifts you have to give other people.”

GIFTS BLOSSOM

When Constantino suggested studying the little-understood MYT1L gene, the Litvags enthusiastically agreed to help. Constantino – who is on the local board of a group they’ve long been active in called Autism Speaks – asked if they’d be interested in raising money for early research.

Joe Litvag, an executive in the live music industry, and Lisa Litvag, a partner in a marketing firm, reached out to family and friends and raised the \$70,000 needed in about six months.

With half the money, researcher Kristen Kroll and her team reprogrammed cells from Jake’s blood into “induced pluripotent stem cells,” which can be prodded into becoming various cell types. With the other half, scientist Joseph Dougherty and his team followed the blueprint of Jake’s genome and induced his mutation in mice using the gene-editing tool CRISPR.

Like the people they’re meant to model, mice with the mutation tended to be more hyperactive than siblings without it, running around their cages much more. They were nonetheless generally heavier, especially the first generation of mice. They had slightly smaller brains and a little less of the white matter that speeds communication between different brain regions.

Since starting the research about three years ago, scientists have bred around 100 mice with Jake’s mutation and are now using the great-great grandchildren of the first one they engineered. They recently published about the mice in the journal Neuron.

While scientists can’t go back and see how Jake’s brain developed, Dougherty said, mice allow them to watch the mutation play out through generations.

A GIFT IN RETURN

Dougherty and his colleagues hope what they learn about how MYT1L functions ultimately leads to medicines or gene therapies that improve or even correct the problems the mutation causes.

They are sharing their findings with scientists studying other autism-causing genes or trying to figure out how various genes work together to cause the condition. According to the Simons Foundation Autism Research Initiative, more than 100 genes have strong evidence linking them to autism and a growing list contains several hundred more genes thought to be linked to the condition.

In cases where autism is caused by a single gene, Dougherty said that gene probably does many things to brain development. A key to understanding autism overall is to find one or two things shared across different forms of autism -- which could then be targets for treatment. Though not everyone with autism wants treatment, Dougherty said it could help those who do.

Since the research began, Dougherty has been writing notes to the Litvags explaining the latest discoveries. But as a lab scientist, he’s mostly removed from the people sparking the research and first met the family when they were invited by the school to visit in December.

After meeting the mice, they stopped into another lab, where Jake peered through a microscope at his blue-stained stem cells.

“That’s me! That’s cool stuff. I never saw anything like that in my life,” he said, stepping back to lean into his dad, who pulled him close.

Dougherty used the visit as an opportunity to share some news, a gift of sorts that he wanted to tell the family in person.

The missing gene doesn’t seem to shorten life. The mice live 2 to 3 years, the same as their siblings.

“So, a normal life span?” Joe Litvag asked hopefully.

“Yes,” Dougherty answered. “As far as we can tell, identical. I know that’s a big relief, too.”

Joe Litvag turned to his son. “So Jake, maybe you will live to be 100.”

“I will be 112!” Jake replied with a grin.

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OBITUARIES

John Gilbert Bowen, Sr.

Feb 10, 1940 - Dec 29, 2021

John Gilbert Bowen Sr., 81, of LaPlata, Missouri passed away at University of Missouri Hospital on December 29, 2021.

John was born February 10, 1940 at Savannah, Georgia, the son of Gilbert Bowen and Edna Ruth Lindsey. On November 24, 1979 he was united in marriage to Sharon Wallace.

John graduated from High School in Savannah, Georgia in 1957 and joined the United States Army until 1959. In 1973 attended Hendersoville, North Carolina school of Ministry. He was also a mechanic and was the Pastor of The Lighthouse of Love in Brashear, Missouri until his passing and member of Anchor Bay Evangelistic Association out of Kansas.

He is survived by wife, Sharon Bowen of 42 years; 3 sons, James Bowen of Moberly, MO, Terry Bowen of Cam-

denton, MO, and William Scott Bowen of Salsburv. MO; 3 daughters, Angela Brock of Moberly, MO, Barbara Henry of Salsbury, MO; and many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; 1 brother, Reginald Bowen; 1 sister, Joyce Sherer; 3 sons, Donnie, Ronnie, and Johnny Bowen; 2 daughters, Jannette Porting and Stacy Freeman; 1 grandson, Brandon Bowen and 2 granddaughters, Jessica and Kelsey Bowen.

John was an avid fisherman and hunter and love to Minister the word of God.

Visitation with the family will be Tuesday, January 4th, 2022 from 1 to 3 p.m. at Davis-Playle-Hudson-Rimer Funeral Home. It was his wish to be cremated.

Donations can be made to the Lighthouse of Love in Brashear. MO.

Arrangement in the care of Davis-Playle-Hudson-Rimer Funeral Home; www.davisplaylehudsonrimer.com.



Elizabeth (Beth) A. Berry Kellison

Jan 17, 1944 - Dec 16, 2021

Elizabeth (Beth) A. Berry Kellison passed away on Thursday, December 16th, 2021, in Lawrence Kansas. Graveside services will be held at 2:00 pm, Saturday, January 22nd, 2022, at Highland Park Cemetery, 2391-2399 E. Normal Avenue, Kirksville, Missouri.

Beth was born January 17th, 1944 in Kirksville, Missouri, and graduated from Kirksville High School in 1961. She grew up in Nind, Missouri, and had lived in Lawrence, Kansas since 1975.

For over 30 years of her working career, she was an office manager for K-Mart, retiring from the company in 2012.

Beth married Gary Dean Kellison on December 22nd, 1961. They began their marriage while Gary served in the US Army, stationed in various locations in Germany and around the U.S. Gary preceded her in death in 2005.



Beth is also preceded in death by her parents, Azle and Marie Berry, Nind, Mo, two brothers, Jim and Ed Berry of Kirksville, Missouri, and one granddaughter, Jessica Kellison. She is survived by one brother, Spencer (Connie) Berry of Kirksville, Missouri. She is also survived by three sons, Brian (Cheryl) of Lawrence Kansas, Gary (Terry) of Kingsville, Missouri, and Jimmy of Lawrence Kansas. She is also survived by 10 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren, and multiple nieces and nephews.

Beth was everyone's friend, a beloved mother, wife, sister, grandmother, and great-grandmother. The world was a better place with Beth in it. Her kindness, love, and ferocious loyalty will be greatly missed.

The family suggests, in lieu of flowers, that contributions be made to The Wounded Warrior Project at <https://support.woundedwarriorproject.org/donate>. Online condolences made at rumsey-yost.com.

Jan. 6 committee prepares to go public as findings mount

By MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — They’ve interviewed more than 300 witnesses, collected tens of thousands of documents and traveled around the country to talk to election officials who were pressured by Donald Trump.

Now, after six months of intense work, the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection is preparing to go public.

In the coming months, members of the panel will start to reveal their findings against the backdrop of the former president and his allies’ persistent efforts to whitewash the riots and reject suggestions that he helped instigate them. The committee also faces the burden of trying to persuade the American public that their conclusions are fact-based and credible.

But the nine lawmakers — seven Democrats and two Republicans — are united in their commitment to tell the full story of Jan. 6, and they are planning televised hearings and reports that will bring their findings out into the open.

Their goal is not only to show the severity of the riot, but also to make a clear connection between the attack and Trump’s brazen pressure on the states and Congress to overturn Joe Biden’s legitimate election as president.

“The full picture is coming to light, despite President Trump’s ongoing efforts to hide the picture,” said Wyoming Rep. Liz Cheney, the committee’s vice chairwoman and one of its two Republican members.

“I don’t think there’s any area of this broader history in which we aren’t learning new things,” she said.

While the fundamental facts of Jan. 6 are known, the committee says the extraordinary trove of material they have collected — 35,000 pages of records so far, including texts, emails and phone records from people close to Trump — is fleshing out critical details of the worst attack on the Capitol in two centuries, which played out on live television.



FILE - Members of the House of Representatives gather in the chamber to vote on creation of a select committee to investigate the Jan. 6 Capitol insurrection, at the Capitol in Washington, on June 30, 2021. J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE - STAFF, AP

They hope to fill in the blanks about the preparations before the attack, the financing behind the Jan. 6 rally that preceded it and the extensive White House campaign to overturn the 2020 election. They are also investigating what Trump himself was doing as his supporters fought their way into the Capitol.

True accountability may be fleeting. Congressional investigations are not criminal cases and lawmakers cannot dole out punishments. Even as the committee works, Trump and his allies continue to push lies about election fraud while working to place similarly minded officials at all levels of state and local government.

“I think that the challenge that we face is that the attacks on our democracy are continuing — they didn’t come to an end on Jan. 6,” said another panel member, Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., also chairman of the House Intelligence Committee.

Still, the lawmakers hope they can present the public with a thorough accounting that captures what could have been “an even more serious and deeper constitutional crisis,” as Cheney put it.

“I think this is one of the single most important congressional investigations in history,” Cheney said.

The committee is up against the clock. Republicans could disband the investigation if they win the House majority in the November 2022 elections. The committee’s final report is expected before then, with a possible interim report coming in the spring or summer.

In the hearings, which could start in the coming weeks, the committee wants to “bring the people who conducted the elections to Washington and tell their story,” said the panel’s chairman, Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-Miss. Their testimony, he said, will further debunk Trump’s claims of election fraud.

The committee has interviewed several election officials in battleground states, including Arizona, Georgia, Michigan and Pennsylvania, about Trump’s pressure campaign. In some cases, staff have traveled to those states to gather more information.

The panel also is focusing on the preparations for the Jan. 6 rally near the White House where Trump told his supporters to “fight like hell” — and how the rioters may have planned to block the electoral count if they had been able to get their hands on the electoral ballots.

They need to amplify to the public, Thompson said, “that

it was an organized effort to change the outcome of the election by bringing people to Washington ... and ultimately if all else failed, weaponize the people who came by sending them to the Capitol.”

About 90% of the witnesses called by the committee have cooperated, Thompson said, despite the defiance of high-profile Trump allies such as Steve Bannon and former White House chief of staff Mark Meadows. Lawmakers said they have been effective at gathering information from other sources in part because they share a unity of purpose rarely seen in a congressional investigation.

House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy of California, a close Trump ally, decided not to appoint any GOP members to the committee after House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., rejected two of his picks last summer.

Pelosi, who created the select committee after Republican senators rejected an evenly bipartisan outside commission, subsequently appointed Republicans Cheney and Adam Kinzinger of Illinois, Trump critics who shared the Democrats’ desire to investigate the attack.

“I think you can see that Kevin made an epic mistake,” Kinzinger said. “I think part of

the reason we’ve gone so fast and have been so effective so far is because we’ve decided and we have the ability to do this as a nonpartisan investigation.”

Kinzinger said the investigation would be “a very different scene” if Republicans allied with Trump were participating and able to obstruct some of their work.

“I think in five or 10 years, when school kids learn about Jan. 6, they’re going to get the accurate story,” Kinzinger said. “And I think that’s going to be dependent on what we do here.”

Democrats say having two Republicans working with them has been an asset, especially as they try to reach conservative audiences who may still believe Trump’s falsehoods about a stolen election.

“They bring to the table perspectives and ability to translate a little bit what is being reflected in conservative media, or how this might be viewed through a conservative lens,” says Rep. Stephanie Murphy, D-Fla. “And that’s been really helpful.”

There is “no division, no hostility, no partisan bickering — it’s like, let’s just get this job done,” said California Rep. Zoe Lofgren, another member and a veteran of congressional investigations going back to the Watergate investigation of President Richard Nixon when she was a staffer on the House Judiciary Committee.

The nine-member group has bonded over a friendly text chain where they discuss business and occasionally their personal lives. There are messages wishing a happy birthday, for example, or congratulating another on a child’s wedding.

“It’s good, it’s how Congress should be,” said Rep. Pete Aguilar, D-Calif.

Aguilar says the biggest challenges for the committee are the calendar and the small group of Trump loyalists who are trying to run out the clock by stonewalling or suing them. In the end, he said, he thinks the committee’s final report will stand the test of time, similar to the investigations of the 9/11 attacks and Watergate.

For now, though, “we are still in the eye of the hurricane,” Aguilar said.

DISTRICT

Continued from Page A1

District 6 also loses a chunk of Jackson County as the Kansas City area has all been pulled into District 5. That likely eliminates a large number of Democratic votes in the district.

Sam Graves is the current United States representative for District 6 and has served in that position since 2001. He was re-elected in 2020 with 67.1 percent of the vote.

“This is a fair and constitutional map with common-sense boundaries that everyday Missourians can recognize,” said Senator Mike Bernskoetter, R-Jefferson City, chair of the

Senate Select Committee on Redistricting. “This map, which must be passed by both the House and Senate, is also drawn to achieve the greatest amount of consensus possible. My House counterpart and I chose to make this joint announcement to emphasize the great care that went into drawing a map we were confident could survive legislative, judicial, and public scrutiny,” Bernskoetter added.

“The task of creating this congressional district map required balancing the legislative process while maintaining compactness, contiguity, equal population, and preserving the existing districts’ core identities. I look forward to working with

my House and Senate colleagues to deliver HB 2117 to Governor Parson for his signature without delay,” said Representative Dan Shaul, R-Imperial, chair of the House Special Committee on Redistricting.

Each congressional district is drawn to have about 770,000 people in it.

The maps for the House and Senate districts remain in progress. The committee tasked with redrawing the House districts appears to have a plan in place to finalize a map, while the Senate map will probably be decided by state courts.

District proposals have to be passed by the state legislature, which will begin its annual session this month.

SHOOTING

Continued from Page A1

Court documents say he told police he and Cottrill were driving around earlier in the day when a friend of Cottrill’s, Anders, said they could come over and eat.

Yarrington told police they were sitting at a kitchen table for about five minutes when two individuals walked into the living room area from a hallway. They were both pointing guns at Cottrill. He said Glover had a bandana over his face but could recognize his voice and body from previous times they hung out.

Glover then ordered Cottrill

and Yarrington into the living room and told them to sit on the couch. Yarrington said Cottrill and Romero got into an altercation and then heard a gun shot. Yarrington said he heard two more shots come from the kitchen, with Anders saying, “Hey, there is a child in here.”

Yarrington told police Glover made him walk toward the kitchen to look inside, then making him sit back on the couch. He said Glover then looked at him, said, ‘Sorry Randall, wrong place, wrong time,’ and shot him twice in the chest. Glover went walking toward the hallway and Yarrington fled the residence for help. He was taken to the hospital in a private vehicle.

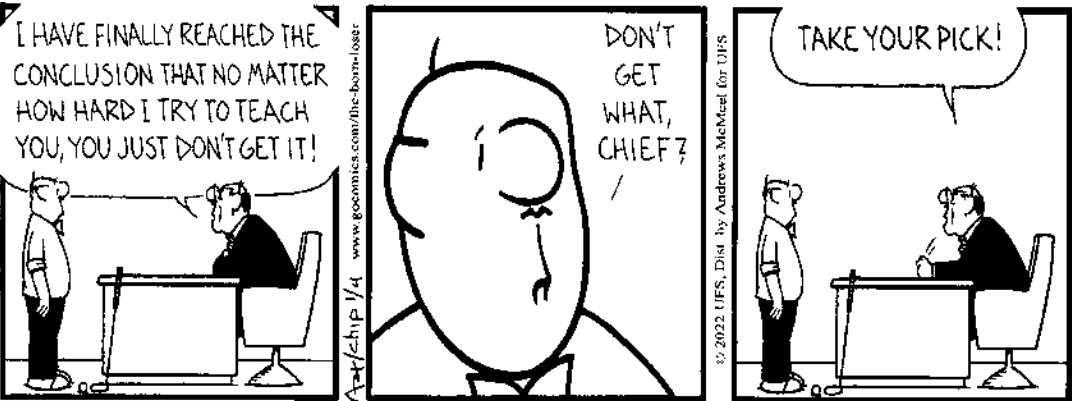
ARLO AND JANIS



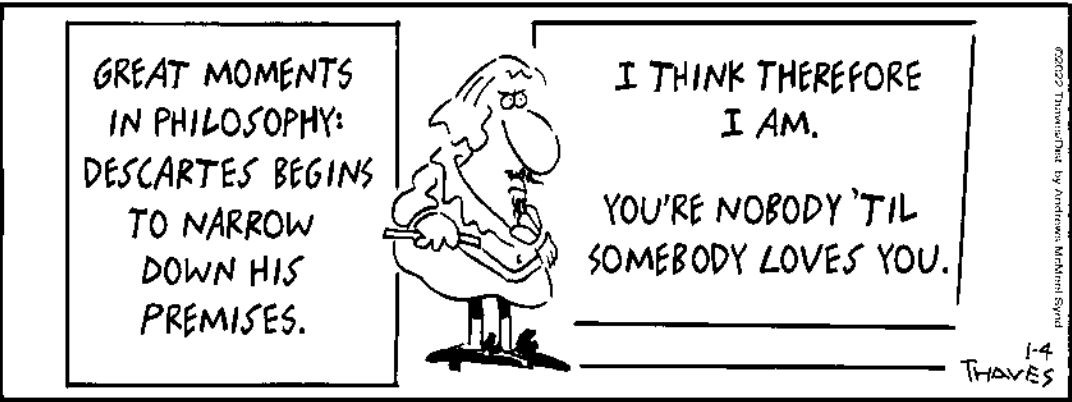
BIG NATE



THE BORN LOSER



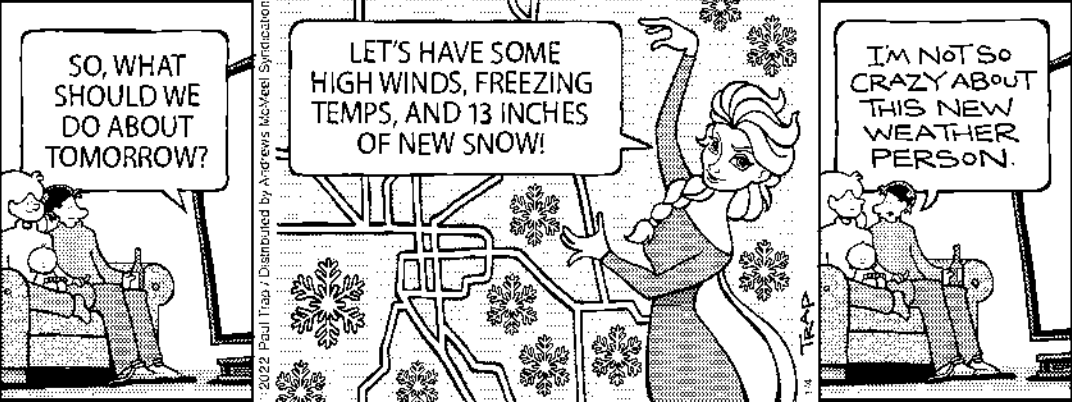
FRANK AND ERNEST



MONTY



THAT A BABY



SUDOKU

Here's How It Works: Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

PREVIOUS ANSWER

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

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

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Jerry's toon pursuer

4 Food thickener

8 Ounce fraction

12 "Pulp Fiction" name

13 Bantu language

14 Hire a decorator

15 Disraeli or Franklin

17 Stove part

18 Cancels

19 Six-shooter

21 Like it was

22 Nobel Prize category

26 Straw hat

30 Terrible

31 — Raton, Fla.

34 Terre Haute inst.

35 Philosopher — Descartes

36 Departure

37 Small cask

38 Two fives for —

39 Pentagon VIP

40 Add herbs

42 Smuggle

44 Slippery — eel

47 Caustic solution

49 Nuclear

51 Teasdale or Paretsky

54 Keep in mind

56 Baking powder ingredient

57 Assert positively

58 "The Name of the Rose" author

59 Floor model

60 Neutral colors

61 Agt.

DOWN

1 Big horn

2 Fore-shadows

3 Miracle food

4 Showy flower

5 Mouth parts

6 "Thrilla in Manila" boxer

7 Pealed

8 Hum

9 Step on the gas

10 Juice-based drink

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

11 Sun. follower

16 Eager to accept (2 wds.)

20 Put — fight

23 Drive the getaway car

24 Walking stick

25 Early garden?

27 Reebok rival

28 On the briny

29 Steins

31 More than asks

32 Strong haulers

33 Movie

35 Rescue price, maybe

40 Aurora locale

41 John Wayne movies

43 San Antonio landmark

45 Deep yellow

46 Brother's daughter

48 Q.E.D. part

49 Revival shout

50 Farm yield

51 Long-faced

52 Yeasty brew

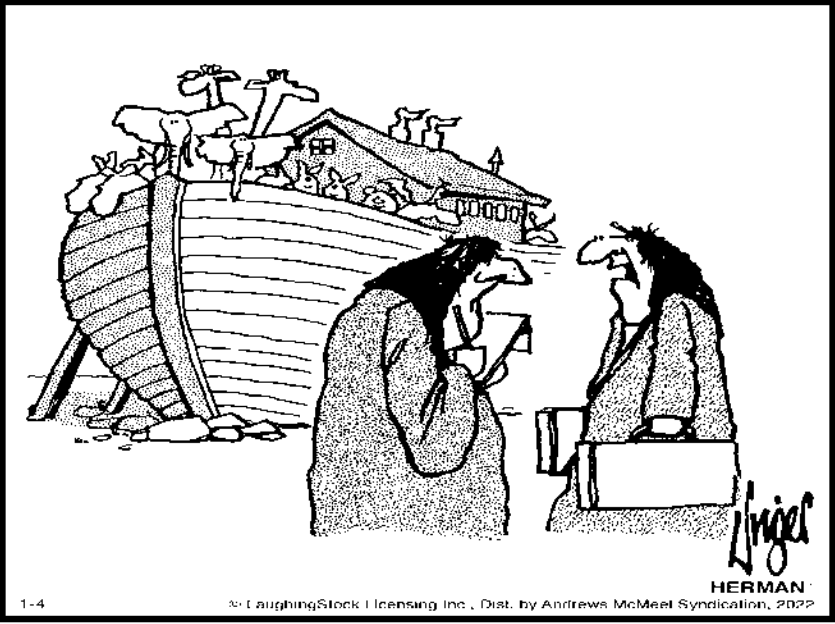
53 Mai tai ingredient

55 Ms. Longoria

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15			16						17			
18							19	20				
	21							22		23	24	25
			26		27	28	29			30		
31	32	33			34				35			
36					37				38			
39				40				41				
42			43					44		45	46	
			47		48		49					50
51	52	53			54	55						
56					57					58		
59					60					61		

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HERMAN



ASTROGRAPH BY EUGENIA LAST

Pay attention to what's happening around you and to the people who truly matter to you. Eliminate what's no longer needed and simplify your life. It's best to embrace change rather than have it forced upon you. Check out what's trending and adapt to take advantage of what's available. Put your unique stamp on whatever you do and move forward with confidence.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) -- Question and assess your life and the changes you want to make. Focus on truth, facts and timing. Your intuition is there to guide you. Trust your gut and do what you need to do.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) -- Channel your energy into something constructive. Make changes based on needs, not on what someone is doing or wants you to pursue. Fine-tune your skills to suit what's trending.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) -- Do your best and let others do as they please. More time spent building your brand and less spent trying to re-make someone else will lead to greater rewards and personal satisfaction.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) -- An intellectual attitude will win you favors. Reconnect with someone who is always helpful. Your strengths will stand out if you are enthusiastic and positive when dealing with others.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) -- An emotional situation will cause stress and worry. Do something physical to release tension and clear your head. Being productive will build confidence. Dig in and get things done.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) -- There will be a shift in how you think about your current direction.

Distance yourself from anyone putting pressure on you. Use your intelligence and choose to do your own thing.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) -- Money, contracts, shared responsibilities and fairness will be necessary if you want to maintain stability. An unexpected change of plans will require diplomacy. Work alongside others peacefully.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) -- You'll gravitate toward reliable people, but if you take advantage of them, you will eventually damage your reputation and ability to get the support you need. Don't make promises you can't keep.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) -- You'll gain momentum if you channel your energy into what matters to you most. What you physically accomplish will make a difference. All talk and no action will make others question your ability.

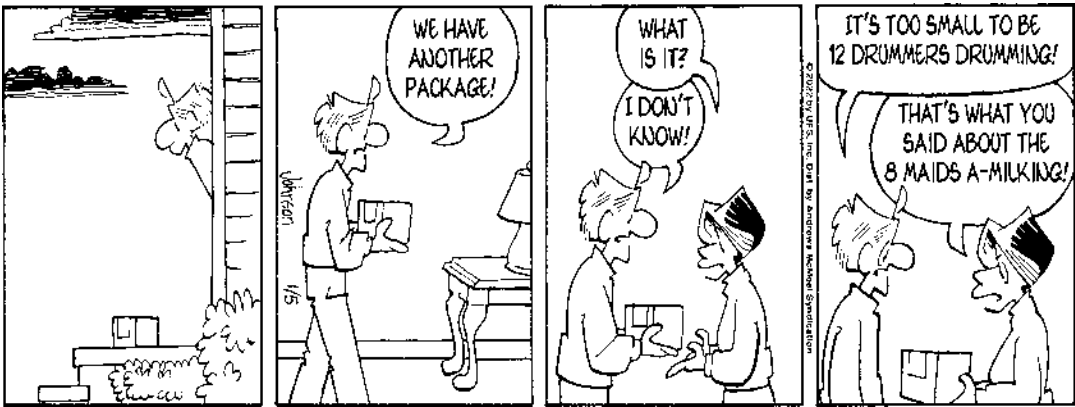
LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) -- Change and stress go together. Stay centered and think matters through. Don't feel pressured to rush things when attention to detail and care are required. Follow your heart.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) -- Talk less and do more. Don't waste time discussing trivial matters when productivity is what counts. Live up to your promises, meet your deadlines and be reliable in all things.

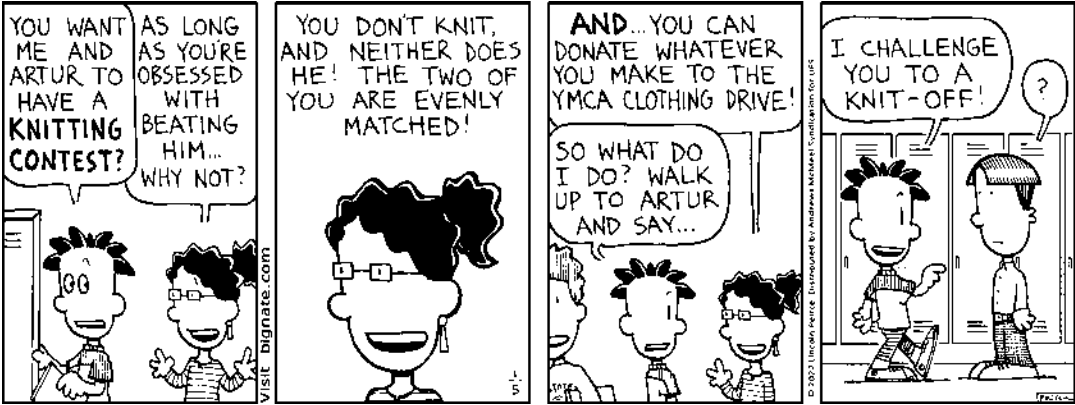
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) -- Make preparation a priority. Acting in haste will lead to mistakes. Concentrate on mastering what you are doing and producing something that you can be proud of. Savor success.

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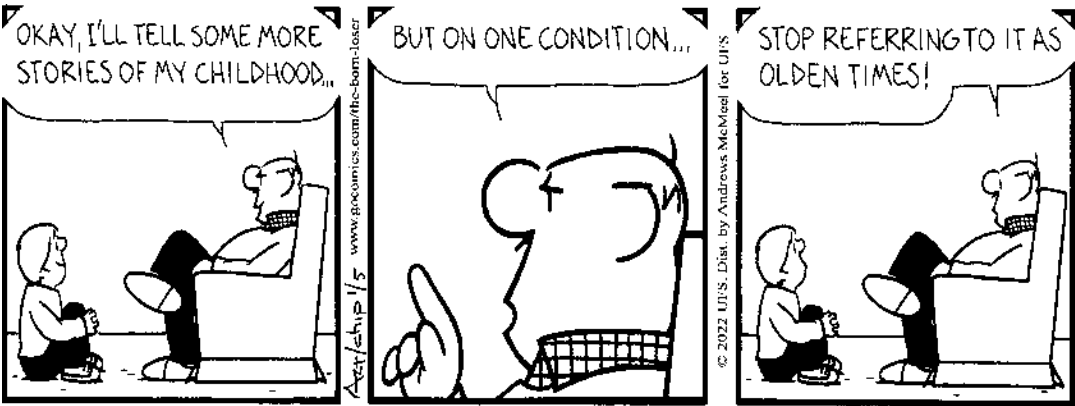
ARLO AND JANIS



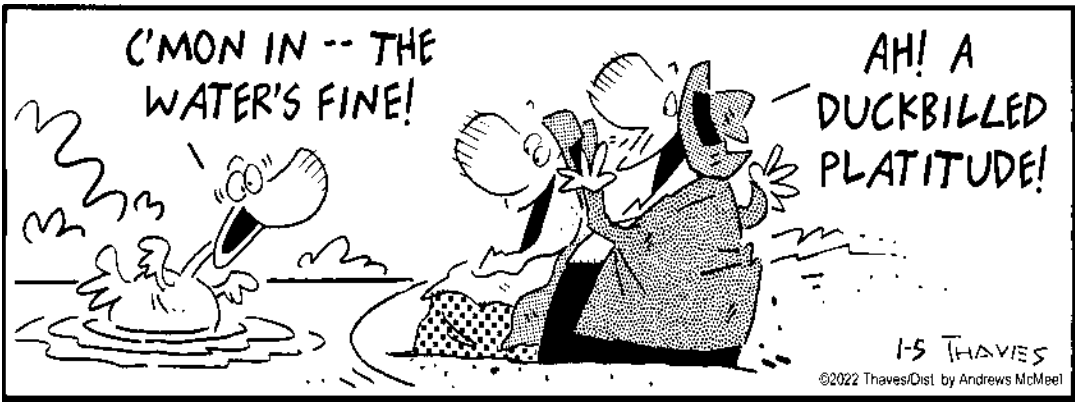
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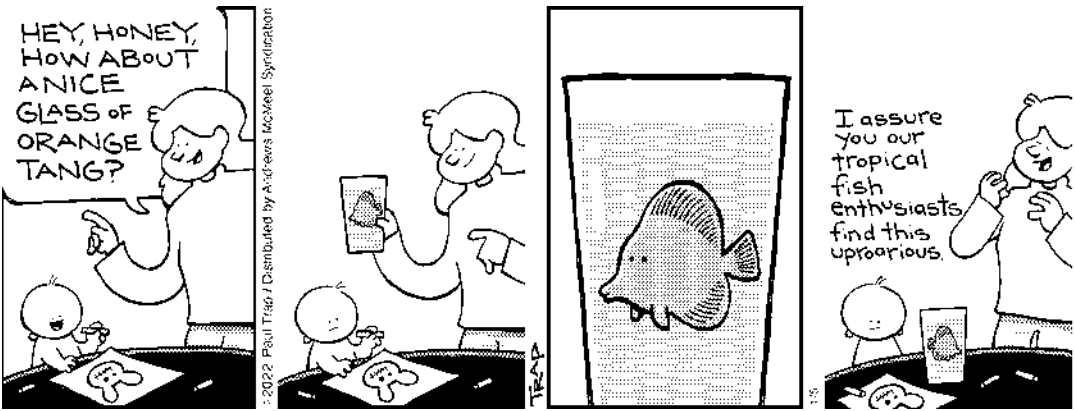
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9	8	3	1	4	5	6	7	2
5	2	7	9	6	3	1	8	4
1	9	8	4	5	7	2	6	3
7	6	5	8	3	2	4	9	1
3	4	2	6	9	1	7	5	8

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

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Gives the boot to

6 Flourished (Var.)

12 Made tea

14 Rock band crew member

15 Before deadline (2 wds.)

16 Imaginary

17 None

18 — out a living

19 Horse command

21 Road topping

23 Type of overalls

26 Prince Val's son

27 Kiosk buy, slangily

28 Kind of vinegar

30 Complain persistently

31 Cigar residue

32 Reference book

33 Special skill

DOWN

1 Kimono belt

2 Large vase

3 Become solid

4 String

5 Turnpike rumbler

6 More sincere

35 Visitor from Melmac

37 Mdse. bill

38 Secret motive

39 Date regularly

40 Puppy bite

41 Team cheer

42 Consumed

43 Epoch

44 San Francisco hill

46 Quipster

48 Mountainous

51 Honey source

55 Beepers

56 Barked

57 Battery terminals

58 Peasants

7 Goose's call

8 Cheese dish

9 Shelley offering

10 Travel word

11 Lamprey

13 River formations

19 A favorite relative

20 Hire

22 Horrified

24 Running in neutral

25 — Babies

26 "Puppy Love" singer

27 Use force

28 Bistro

29 Invitation addendum

34 Jangled

36 Room to maneuver

42 Ocean depths

43 Graceful and quick

45 Man-eating giant

47 Imitates

48 Auditor, for short

49 Bled, as a color

50 In time past

52 Calendar abbr.

53 TKO official

54 Fabric meas.

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11
12					13		14				
15							16				
			17				18				
	19	20			21	22			23	24	25
26				27				28			29
30				31				32			
33			34			35	36			37	
38						39				40	
	41				42				43		
			44	45			46	47			
48	49	50					51			52	53
54							55				
56							57				
58								59			

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HERMAN



“There’s the last-minute replacement jockey for your hot-tip.”

ASTROGRAPH BY EUGENIA LAST

Reflect before you initiate change. Observing, addressing unstable or questionable situations and considering the results you are trying to achieve will save you time and money. Eliminate confusion and take notes, and you'll get a clear picture of what's possible.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) -- Ponder over what to do next. Refuse to let anyone push you in a direction you aren't ready to pursue. Stay focused on what's important to you instead of putting what others want first.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) -- You can enforce change. You will make a difference if you take charge. Don't count on everyone to agree with you, but the ones who do will contribute handsomely.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) -- Go over every detail before you make a move. Don't be afraid to do things on your own if necessary. Someone may have ulterior motives, so tread carefully. Strive for a peaceful life.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) -- Surround yourself with people who share your beliefs and interests. Discuss alternatives and be a team player. Don't get worked up over something you cannot change.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) -- Don't step on someone's toes. Do your own thing, and leave others to their devices. Try to get along with others and to be transparent and up-front in all your dealings.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) -- Rev things up and finish what you start. How you deal with your deadlines and responsibilities will determine how vulnerable you appear to others. Refuse to let anyone lead you astray.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) -- Live, learn and move along. Perpetual motion keeps life interesting. Explore what's available to you and share what you find with someone you respect. Keep your valuables in a safe place.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) -- Put your energy into looking and feeling your best. Strive for perfection, strength and a healthy attitude, and you will get the results you want. Be yourself and trust your instincts.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) -- Network, socialize and do something that pumps you up and gives you the drive you require to follow through with your plans. Take a unique approach to relationships and networking.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) -- Set your sights on what you want to achieve and refuse to let anything sidetrack you. Pay attention to detail and be disciplined. Knowledge is the key to getting things done right the first time.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) -- A sudden change based on what someone says or does will leave you in a quandary. Rely on your intuition, and you'll choose what's best for you. Progress can be made.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) -- Let your heart lead the way. Take responsibility for your words and actions, and refuse to let anyone take advantage of you. When in doubt, do your research and sit tight.

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660-216-7268

ORDER OF PUBLICATION OF NOTICE

THE STATE OF MISSOURI to the natural Father, Austin York, of K.A.Y., a minor child under the age of 17:

1. You are hereby notified that an action has been commenced in the Circuit Court of Adair County, by Petition, the object and general nature of which is to obtain a decree of adoption of **K.A.Y., by Steven VanSickel AND Stephanie VanSickel, Petitioners.**
2. The names of all parties to said suit are stated above in the caption hereof and the name and address of the attorney for the Petitioners is **JOSHUA E. DeLEEuw**, 210 N. Elson Street, Kirksville, Missouri 63501.
3. You are further notified that, unless you file an answer or other pleading or shall otherwise appear and defend against the aforesaid petition within forty-five (45) days after the 5th day of January, 2022, a decree of adoption may be rendered in favor of the Petitioners.
4. It is ordered that a copy hereof be published according to the law in the **Kirksville Daily Express**, a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Adair, State of Missouri.

A true copy from the record.

**Witness my hand and seal of
The Circuit Court, County of Adair, State of
Missouri, the 27th . day of December, 2021.**

Linda Decker, Adair County Circuit Clerk

Publication Dates - January 5, 12, 19 and 26, 2022.

*Find the stuff you want and
sell the stuff you don't in the
newspaper classifieds.*



Truman's Hazekamp selected as GLVC Player of the Week

Austin Miller
Daily Express

Truman's Elijah Hazekamp starts 2022 with a present. He was announced Monday as the Great Lakes Valley Conference's Player of the Week, the first time he

has won the award. The red-shirt sophomore averaged 19.5 points per game in Truman's wins over Grand View and Lindenwood. He was the top Truman scorer in each of those two games. Hazekamp also averaged 8 rebounds per games. His 6.5 rebounds per game this

season leads the team. Cade McKnight previously won Player of the Week honors back on Nov. 15. Truman (9-2) heads to Quincy on Tuesday, then returns to Kirksville for a home game on Thursday night against Lewis. Tipoff is set for 7:30 p.m.



Daily Express file photo of Truman's Elijah Hazekamp. AUSTIN MILLER/KDE



Kansas City Chiefs head coach Andy Reid argues a pass interference call during the first half of an NFL football game against the Cincinnati Bengals, Sunday, Jan. 2, 2022, in Cincinnati. DAVID DERMER - FREELANCER, FR171035 AP

Chiefs fall from No. 1 seed with last-second loss to Bengals

By DAVE SKRETTA
AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — The Kansas City Chiefs probably felt as if they were looking in a mirror on Sunday in Cincinnati. There was a young, hotshot quarterback carving up their defense for 446 yards and four touchdowns. An equally young, dynamic wide receiver catching 11 balls for 266 yards and three of the scores. And a talented young running back that was doing just enough on the ground to keep the defense frustrated. Sounds a lot like the Chiefs, huh? Joe Burrow's incredible performance and Ja'Marr Chase's record-setting day catching his passes — and some help from Joe Mixon and the run game — was enough to lift the Bengals to a 31-28 victory and the AFC North title.

It also left the Chiefs looking in the mirror at themselves. Their defense committed breakdowns that hadn't happened since early in the season. Patrick Mahomes threw for 259 yards and a couple of TDs, but the Chiefs offense didn't reach the end zone in the second half. Both sides of the ball were responsible for 10 penalties, including a couple that ruined a goal-line stand that would have forced overtime. There also was a coaching let-down. If the Chiefs would have let the Bengals score at the goal line, they could have gotten the ball back with a chance to drive for a tying touchdown and force overtime on their own.

Instead, the Bengals got a winning field goal as time expired and Kansas City dropped out of the No. 1 seed in the AFC. "This is a response-driven league," Chiefs safety Tyrann Mathieu said. "I just didn't think we responded well enough today. I know some people are gonna talk about certain calls that were made late in the game, and outside of that I still feel like we could have responded a lot better defensively." Now, the Chiefs (11-5) are in a predicament. Their regular-season finale against Denver was flexed to Saturday, and they will need to win and hope Tennessee loses to Houston on Sunday to climb back into the top spot and earn a first-



Cincinnati Bengals wide receiver Ja'Marr Chase (1) catches a pass for an 18-yard touchdown as Kansas City Chiefs cornerback Charvarius Ward (35) defends during the first half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Jan. 2, 2022, in Cincinnati. DAVID DERMER - FREELANCER, FR171035 AP

round bye. With a loss, the Chiefs could conceivably fall out of the No. 2 seed depending on results elsewhere. "As coaches and players, you learn from it. That's all you can do right now," Chiefs coach Andy Reid said. "The guys battled and I thought played good, aggressive football. We just came up short against a good team. And so we'll go back, we'll study it and we'll try to get better from it."

WHAT'S WORKING

The Chiefs defensive line kept stuffing Cincinnati at the goal line in the final minutes, and in truth it played well most of the game. It only allowed 60 yards rushing, Chris Jones had two of their four sacks and they hit Burrow 10 times in all.

WHAT NEEDS HELP

The secondary. Could there be any other answer? Chase made cornerback Charvarius Ward and the rest of his teammates look foolish on Sunday, while Tee Higgins caught three balls for 62 yards and Tyler Boyd had four for 36 yards and a score.

STOCK UP

Darrel Williams ran 14 times for 88 yards and two touchdowns while catching three passes for 19 yards, carrying a heavy load with starter Clyde Edwards-Helaire dealing with a shoulder injury. Williams also did it behind a pair of backup

tackles after Orlando Brown Jr. got hurt in warmups and Lucas Niang left during the game.

STOCK DOWN

Tyreek Hill and Travis Kelce were underwhelming once again, Hill in his second game since having COVID-19 and Kelce in his first. Hill was held to six catches for 40 yards while Kelce had five for 25 yards and a touchdown.

INJURIES

The Chiefs hope to get Edwards-Helaire back for the playoffs. It's unclear how long Brown (calf strain) will be out. Niang is likely done for the season after tearing his patellar tendon against the Bengals.

KEY NUMBER

0 — The amount of money Reid was willing to pay the NFL for complaining about the officiating Sunday. Several of the calls were questionable, including a pass interference penalty on L'Jarius Sneed. "I'd like to comment on each one but I don't want to be fined," Reid said.

NEXT STEPS

The Chiefs need to beat the Broncos on Sunday and then hope former assistant David Culley can lead Houston past the Titans on Sunday. That would give Kansas City the No. 1 seed in the playoffs, a first-round bye and home-field advantage.



Tennessee Titans running back D'Onta Foreman (7) and quarterback Ryan Tannehill, right, celebrate after Foreman scored a touchdown against the Miami Dolphins in the first half of an NFL football game Sunday, Jan. 2, 2022, in Nashville, Tenn. WADE PAYNE - FREELANCER, FR23601 AP

Titans can clinch AFC's No. 1 seed with Henry's return near

By TERESA M. WALKER
AP Pro Football Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — The resilient Tennessee Titans now are two-time AFC South champs and just one victory away from making the AFC playoffs come through Nashville.

So much for a season during which they've been without the league's two-time rushing champ since Halloween and used 88 players, most ever for a non-strike season in the NFL.

The Titans (11-5) go to Houston on Sunday to wrap up a third straight season in their old hometown. This time, a Tennessee victory locks down the No. 1 seed in the AFC, something this franchise has done only twice previously since leaving Texas and not since 2008.

And they just might have Derrick Henry back for the playoffs. Titans coach Mike Vrabel said Monday they've been discussing when to open the 21-day practice window for Henry, who still ranks sixth in the NFL with his 937 yards rushing despite a broken right foot that put him on injured reserve Nov. 1.

"He's doing some work today, and we'll see when that window opens and probably make a decision mid-week," Vrabel said.

Not only are the Titans healthier than they've been in weeks after having their bye Dec. 5, they have won three of four, including a 34-3 rout of Miami that clinched a second straight consecutive division title for the first time since this franchise won the Eastern Division the first three seasons in the AFL.

The Titans also are staying on message that they're nowhere near finished.

"I'm going around telling the guys that we're just getting started," Titans quarterback Ryan Tannehill said after beating the team that drafted him into the NFL. "It's a big step and enjoy it, but we're just getting started. We've got a long way to go."

Winning the AFC South is just the first step for the Titans.

"That's our goal is to win championships," Vrabel said. "It starts with winning the division. Guys were excited, they put a lot into it. I'm happy for them, but this is a huge week, this is another critical week."

WHAT'S WORKING

The run game. The Titans insisted they wouldn't change their offensive approach without Henry, and they haven't. They've leaned on a committee approach with D'Onta Foreman, signed

See **TITANS**, Page A8



Tennessee Titans head coach Mike Vrabel yells in the second half of an NFL football game against the Miami Dolphins Sunday, Jan. 2, 2022, in Nashville, Tenn. WADE PAYNE - FREELANCER, FR23601 AP

LOCAL ROUNDUP

Dec. 31

High school boys basketball

- Kirksville 66, Liberal 30**
No stats reported.
- Mid-Buchanan 53, Milan 37**
No stats reported.
- Winston 55, Green City 50**
Green City - Laydon Felds, 15 points;
Asher Buggs-Tipton, 12 points;
Grant O'Haver, 11 points.

High school girls basketball

- Kirksville 46, Smithville 27**
No stats reported.
- Milan 56, Mid-Buchanan 37**
Milan - Cady Pauley, 37 points, 15 rebounds.
- Green City 38, Winston 31**
Green City - Celeste Athon, 17 points;
Maddie Lunsford, 16 points.
- King City 44, La Plata 39**
No stats reported.

Dec. 30

High school boys basketball

- Kirksville 64, Ewing Marion Kauffman 52**
No stats reported.

High school girls basketball

- Kirksville 69, Oak Grove 42**
No stats reported.

Dec. 29

High school girls basketball

- Macon 67, Boonville 62**
Macon - Lexi Miller, 40 points.

High school boys basketball

- Macon 63, Boonville 44**
Macon - Maurice Magruder, 12 points.
- Westran 56, La Plata 19**
La Plata - Cutter St. Clair, 7 points.

Dec. 28

High school girls basketball

- Chillicothe 64, Milan 54**
Milan - Cady Pauley, 34 points.

Dec. 27

High school boys basketball

- Milan 62, Norborne 31**
No stats reported.

TITANS

Continued from Page A7

off the street Nov. 2, running for 100 yards or more three times. He had a career-high 132 yards against Miami. The Titans have run for 985 yards over eight games since losing Henry, matching the 2020 NFL Offensive Player of the Year's 4.3-yard per carry average before his injury on Oct. 31. The big difference? Henry's ability to finish drives. He scored 10 TDs in eight games, while the replacements have combined for six, along with four by Tannehill.

WHAT NEEDS HELP

The Titans are first in the NFL scoring in goal-to-go situations, scoring on 86.2% of those situations. But they still have some issues finishing off drives. Against Miami, a fumble recovery put them at the Dolphins 14, and the Titans wound up settling for a field goal early in the second quarter.

STOCK UP

Linebacker David Long. He started eight games before a hamstring injury sidelined him for six straight games. He returned after a week of practice and made the most of 34 snaps with an interception and four tackles.

STOCK DOWN

Receiver A.J. Brown. After catching a career-high 11 passes in a win over the 49ers, Brown caught only two of the five passes Tannehill threw to him. He did finish with 41 yards with both catches converting first downs while covered by Xavien Howard.

INJURED

Tight end MyCole Pruitt had surgery Monday for a gruesome right ankle injury that Vrabel said will keep him out an extended period of time.

KEY NUMBER

3 — The number of consecutive play-off berths for the Titans, something this franchise has not done since their "Run and Shoot" days as the Houston Oilers between 1987 and 1993 when they reached seven straight postseasons.

NEXT STEPS

The Titans will look to beat the Texans in Houston to clinch the No. 1 seed in the AFC along with a first-round bye and more time for Henry to work himself into football condition.



Georgia head coach Kirby Smart celebrates after winning the Orange Bowl NCAA College Football Playoff semifinal game against Michigan, Friday, Dec. 31, 2021, in Miami Gardens, Fla. Georgia won 34-11. REBECCA BLACKWELL - STAFF, AP

Smart can rewrite legacy by ending Georgia's title drought

By CHARLES ODUM
AP Sports Writer

Kirby Smart did his best to get ahead of the questions about Nick Saban while acknowledging the topic was inevitable.

It seems the Georgia coach can't avoid Saban, when championships — and Smart's big-game legacy — are on the line.

Smart is 0-4 against Saban, his former boss at Alabama. That includes Georgia's 41-24 loss to Saban's Crimson Tide in the Southeastern Conference championship game in Atlanta on Dec. 4.

Smart fielded questions about Saban prior to that game before earning a rematch when the Bulldogs beat Michigan 34-11 on Friday night in the College Football Playoff semifinal.

The Georgia coach insisted on Monday the Georgia-Alabama rematch for the national title is not about Smart vs. Saban.

"Each game has been different," Smart said. "And it will never be about he and I. I know he won't make it that and I won't make it that, because that's for you guys to do that."

Smart's Georgia legacy is on the line. That's about more than how he compares with Saban, already assured of being remembered as one of the greatest coaches in college football history.

As Smart wraps up his sixth season at his alma mater, the national championship game will help determine his place in Georgia history. That includes how he will be judged in comparison with his predecessor, Mark Richt, as well as Vince Dooley, who won Georgia's last national championship in 1980.

Smart was hired to give Georgia the push it lacked



Georgia head coach Kirby Smart speaks with Alabama head coach Nick Saban before the first half of the Southeastern Conference championship NCAA college football game, Saturday, Dec. 4, 2021, in Atlanta. BRYNN ANDERSON - STAFF, AP

to win the biggest games. He was hired to bring championships to the Bulldogs.

So far, Smart trails Richt. Thanks to the humbling loss to the Crimson Tide last month, Smart remains stuck on one SEC title, in 2017. Richt won two SEC championships in his first five seasons in Athens.

Smart's big-game history also includes an overtime loss to the Crimson Tide in the 2017 national championship game.

By bringing the Bulldogs to another national title game, Smart has made Georgia a regular part of the championship picture. He has brought Georgia to the biggest games.

Saban has blocked Smart's path to big-game success. Smart can change that script by winning the biggest game of all in his second national title appearance against Alabama.

Saban has won seven national championships, including six in the last 12 years at Alabama. He is looking for back-to-back titles with the Crimson Tide.

Smart was the defensive coordinator on Saban's Alabama staff before he was hired to lead Georgia's program.

Smart's Bulldogs were 12-0 following their first undefeated regular season since 1982 and on track for their first national championship in 41 years before the SEC title game loss to Alabama.

Sure, Smart doesn't deny that Saban and Alabama are a hurdle the Bulldogs have not yet cleared. Smart says he's not alone.

Smart said the Crimson Tide "have also been a problem and a thorn for any team they've played besides ours. We have that in common with a lot of teams."

Smart knew better than to celebrate Friday's run-away rout of Michigan in the Orange Bowl. He called a timeout and put a firm roadblock on plans by running backs Zamir White and James Cook to empty a watercooler on his head at the end of the game.

Playoff semifinal wins don't merit watercooler

baths. Only minutes after the game, Smart already was looking ahead to Alabama.

"I was wanting to get a real shower, not a Gatorade bath, because I want to get focused on Alabama," Smart said after Friday's win, before adding, "To be honest with you guys, I'm not interested in celebrating that."

Players got the message. They know what's at stake.

Quarterback Stetson Bennett said Monday a heavy burden accompanies Georgia's national championship drought.

"Maybe I'm not capable of holding that weight on my shoulders, but, no, I'm just treating it as a football game," Bennett said. "Do I know that means a lot to a lot of people? Yes. Am I trying to play some kind of savior by winning a national championship for millions of people? No. I don't think that's my job."

Indeed, that is Smart's job.

If Bennett feels that weight as a former walk-on, then Smart surely must carry a much greater load. Smart is coaching for championship-starved fans and for his lifetime commitment to the Bulldogs as a player, assistant and coach.

Smart showed no sign of that burden one week before another big-game test.

"Our guys are excited and being excited to work and really take another shot and go play these guys," Smart said, adding he has "a lot of respect for Alabama and coach Saban and everything they've been able to do. And we know that we've got to play one of our best games and our guys are excited for the opportunity."

Georgia quarterback Stetson Bennett tosses oranges after their win against Michigan in the Orange Bowl NCAA College Football Playoff semifinal game, Friday, Dec. 31, 2021, in Miami Gardens, Fla. Georgia won 34-11. LYNNE SLADKY - STAFF, AP