

## House returns for vote on debt limit

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Members of the House were scrambling back to Washington on Tuesday to approve a short-term lift of the nation's debt limit and ensure the federal government can continue fully paying its bills into December.

The \$480 billion increase in the country's borrowing ceiling cleared the Senate last week on a party-line vote. The House is expected to approve it swiftly so President Joe Biden can sign it into law this week. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen had warned that steps to stave off a default on the country's debts would be exhausted by Monday, and from that point, the department would soon be unable to meet the government's financial obligations.

A default would have immense fallout on global financial markets built upon the bedrock of U.S. government debt. Routine government payments to Social Security beneficiaries, disabled veterans and active-duty military personnel would also be called into question.

"It is egregious that our nation has been put in this spot, but we must take immediate ac-

tion to address the debt limit and ensure the full faith and credit of the United States remains intact," said House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md.

But the relief provided by the bill's passage will only be temporary, forcing Congress to revisit the issue in December — a time when lawmakers will also be laboring to complete federal spending bills and avoid a damaging government shutdown. The year-end backlog raises risks for both parties and threatens a tumultuous close to Biden's first year in office.

The present standoff over the debt ceiling eased when Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., agreed to help pass the short-term increase. But he insists he won't do so again.

In a letter sent Friday to Biden, McConnell said Democrats will have to handle the next debt-limit increase on their own using the same process they have tried to use to pass Biden's massive social spending and environment plan. Reconciliation allows legislation to pass the Senate with 51 votes rather than the 60 that's typically required. In the 50-50 split Senate, Vice President Kamala Harris gives

Democrats the majority with her tiebreaking vote.

In his focus on the debt limit, McConnell has tried to link Biden's big federal government spending boost with the nation's rising debt load, even though they are separate and the debt ceiling will have to be increased or suspended regardless of whether Biden's \$3.5 trillion plan makes it into law.

"Your lieutenants on Capitol Hill now have the time they claimed they lacked to address the debt ceiling through standalone reconciliation, and all the tools to do it," McConnell said in the letter. "They cannot invent another crisis and ask for my help."

McConnell was one of 11 Republicans who sided with Democrats to advance the debt ceiling reprieve to a final vote. Subsequently, McConnell and his GOP colleagues voted against final passage.

Agreement on a short-term fix came abruptly. Some Republican senators said threats from Democrats to eliminate the 60-vote threshold for debt ceiling votes — Biden called it a "real possibility" — had played a role in McConnell's decision.

## Texas governor bans all COVID-19 vaccine mandates

*Associated Press*

AUSTIN, Texas — Texas Gov. Greg Abbott issued an executive order Monday to prohibit any entity, including private business, from enforcing a COVID-19 vaccine mandate on workers and called on state lawmakers to pass a similar ban into law.

The move comes as the Biden administration is set to issue rules requiring employers with more than 100 workers to be vaccinated or test weekly for the coronavirus. Several major companies, including Texas-based American Airlines and Southwest Airlines, have said they would abide by the federal mandate.

"No entity in Texas can com-

pel receipt of a COVID-19 vaccine by any individual, including an employee or a consumer, who objects to such vaccination for any reason of personal conscience, based on a religious belief, or for medical reasons, including prior recovery from COVID-19," Abbott wrote in his order.

Abbott, who was previously vaccinated and also later tested positive for COVID-19, noted in his order that "vaccines are strongly encouraged for those eligible to receive one, but must always be voluntary for Texans."

Texas has seen a recent decrease in newly reported COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. But a rising death toll from the recent surge caused by the

delta variant has the state rapidly approaching 67,000 total fatalities since the pandemic began in 2020.

The governor added the issue to the agenda for lawmakers to address during the ongoing special session Abbott called for redrawing voting maps and new restrictions on transgender student athletes.

Montana has passed a law preventing employers from mandating workers get vaccines, and a number of states have explicitly said schools cannot require vaccinations.

Abbott previously barred vaccine mandates by state and local government agencies, but until now had let private companies make their own rules for their

workers. It was not immediately clear if Abbott's latest executive order would face a quick court challenge.

Abbott's new order also carries political implications.

The two-term Republican is facing pressure from two candidates in next year's GOP primary, former state Sen. Don Huffines and former Florida congressman and Texas state party chairman Allen West, have attacked Abbott's COVID-19 policies and have strongly opposed vaccine mandates.

"He knows which way the wind is blowing. He knows conservative Republican voters are tired of the vaccine mandates and tired of him being a failed leader," Huffines tweeted.

# 7th Fleet gets its customizable vessel

By MATTHEW M. BURKE  
*Stars and Stripes*

WHITE BEACH NAVAL FACILITY, Okinawa — The newest addition to the 7th Fleet is a customizable command-and-control vessel that recently arrived on Okinawa to give Navy and Marine commanders a look at its capabilities.

The USS Miguel Keith — a Lewis B. Puller-class expeditionary staging base — pulled into White Beach Naval Facility on Oct. 5 and was open to tours by officers of the 7th Fleet and III Marine Expeditionary Force who may one day put the ship to work during humanitarian crises or in battle.

The Miguel Keith has the third-largest flight deck in the fleet and will remain in the Indo-Pacific for the foreseeable future, executive officer Cmdr. Marty Blomberg said during a tour Wednesday.

The ship can be modified to fit each mission with interchange-

able shipping containers that can be turned into anything from berthing for special operations troops to showers, cold storage and laundry facilities. It can also launch helicopters and small boats.

“This ship brings remarkable humanitarian assistance/disaster response capabilities,” Expeditionary Strike Group 7 commander Rear Adm. Chris Engdahl said in an interview Wednesday on the ship’s expansive mission deck, an open space below the flight deck designed for storing equipment and launching boats.

“The flight deck has great potential,” he said.

San Diego-based General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Co. started work on the Miguel Keith in 2018. It is the third Puller-class ship, after the USS Hershel “Woody” Williams, and was commissioned May 8.

The ship’s homeport is Saipan, but only on paper, Blomberg said. It will likely move around the region.

The ship bears the name of Medal of Honor recipient Marine Lance Cpl. Miguel Keith, who died attacking an overwhelming enemy force in Quang Ngai province in 1970 during the Vietnam War.

It was built with four core capabilities in mind: aviation, habitability, staging and command and control, ship commander Capt. Troy Fendrick said Wednesday.

“So, from that aspect you can think of it as a floating staging base for numerous missions,” he said.

The flight deck has space for four helicopters at a time and separates the forward and aft deckhouses.

The aft deckhouse is home to about 40 civilian mariners who are responsible for engineering

and navigation. The forward deckhouse is home to a Navy crew of about 100, which rotates in “blue” and “gold” teams from San Diego on five-month deployments. Fendrick goes back and forth between the two, Blomberg said.

The ship has a hangar for maintenance on the largest helicopters, but no well deck, so it carries no hovercraft or larger boats.

The ship is not built to accommodate short-takeoff and vertical-landing F-35B joint strike fighters.

The civilians and sailors collaborate with one another in deck operations and back each other up in damage control, for example.

“We share responsibilities; we communicate openly with them,” command Master Chief Suxuan Oonyu said. “It’s actually a very good relationship and that’s probably a key to our success in many ways.”

## Russia reaffirms opposition to US troops in Central Asia

*Associated Press*

MOSCOW — Russia on Tuesday reaffirmed its strong opposition to any U.S. military presence in Central Asia to a visiting senior U.S. diplomat.

Undersecretary of State Victoria Nuland arrived in Moscow on Monday on a three-day visit for talks that the U.S. State Department said would touch on a range of bilateral, regional and global issues.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said after Tuesday’s meeting with Nuland that they discussed arms control and the situation in Afghanistan among other subjects.

Ryabkov told the Interfax news agency that he stressed that “the U.S. and its allies bear the main

responsibility among foreign actors for normalizing life in Afghanistan, since their presence actually led to the current situation.”

The Russian diplomat described the conversation as “direct and businesslike,” adding that he again emphasized Moscow’s opposition to any U.S. presence in the former Soviet Central Asian nations in the wake of the U.S. exit from Afghanistan.

The U.S. and its allies hoped to negotiate basing agreements, overflight rights and increased intelligence-sharing with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan that border Afghanistan or other ex-Soviet nations in Central Asia.

But Russia has bristled at any such U.S. presence.

## North Korea’s Kim vows to build an ‘invincible’ military

*Associated Press*

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un reviewed powerful missiles developed to launch nuclear strikes on the U.S. mainland, as he vowed to build an “invincible” military to cope with what he called persistent U.S. hostility, state media reported Tuesday.

In an apparent continued effort to drive a wedge between Washington and Seoul, Kim also used his speech at a rare exhibition of weapons systems Monday to stress that his military might isn’t targeted at South Korea and that there shouldn’t be another war pitting Korean people against each other.

“The U.S. has frequently signaled it’s not hostile to our state,

but there is no action-based evidence to make us believe that they are not hostile,” Kim said Monday, according to the official Korean Central News Agency. “The U.S. is continuing to create tensions in the region with its wrong judgments and actions.”

Calling the United States a “source” of instability on the Korean Peninsula, Kim said his country’s most important objective is possessing an “invincible military capability” that no one can dare challenge.

The exhibition, which KCNA says was meant to mark the 76th birthday of the ruling Workers’ Party on Sunday, was the first of its kind since Kim took power in late 2011, according to Seoul officials.

# DOJ seeks halt to Texas abortion law

*Associated Press*

AUSTIN, Texas — The Biden administration urged the courts again Monday night to step in and suspend a new Texas law that has banned most abortions since early September, as clinics hundreds of miles away remain busy with Texas patients making long journeys to get care.

The latest attempt comes three days after the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reinstated the nation's most restrictive abortion law after a brief 48-hour window last week in which Texas abortion providers — following a blistering ruling by a lower court — had rushed to bring in patients again.

The days ahead could now be key in determining the immediate future of the law known as Senate Bill 8, including whether there is another attempt to have the U.S. Su-

preme Court weigh in.

The law bans abortions in Texas once cardiac activity is detected, which is usually at six weeks and before some women even know they are pregnant. Although other GOP-controlled states have had similar early bans on abortions blocked by courts, the Texas law has proved durable because the state offloads enforcement solely onto private citizens, who can collect at least \$10,000 in damages if they successfully sue abortion providers.

"If Texas's scheme is permissible, no constitutional right is safe from state-sanctioned sabotage of this kind," the Justice Department told the appeals court.

In wording that seemed to be a message to the Supreme Court, the Justice Department raised the specter that if allowed to stand,

the legal structure created in enacting the law could be used to circumvent even the Supreme Court's rulings in 2008 and 2010 on gun rights and campaign financing.

It is not clear when the 5th Circuit court will decide whether to extend what is currently a temporary order allowing the Texas law to stand.

Just as some Texas abortion providers last week quickly moved to once again perform abortions for patients past six weeks, the New Orleans-based appeals court set that order aside while it reviews the case. Planned Parenthood, the largest abortion provider in Texas, relayed to the court in a separate filing Monday night numerous stories of Texas women impacted by the law, including one patient who they said was only 12 years old.

## Calif. winds spark new wildfires and power outages

*Associated Press*

SAN FRANCISCO — Blustery winds still surged through California on Tuesday after downing trees, fanning wildfires and shutting off power to about 21,000 customers in northern and central regions.

Red flag warnings of dangerous fire conditions continued in mountains, valleys, canyons and deserts because of dry, windy weather. Winds of 25 mph with gusts up to 70 mph were expected into early Tuesday evening.

Pacific Gas & Electric shut off power to about 21,000 customers in 20 central and

northern California counties to reduce the risk that power lines could be toppled, sparking wildfires.

At least a half-dozen fires erupted around the state Monday. Most remained small, but a blaze west of Santa Barbara, up the coast from Los Angeles, quickly spread to thousands of acres. The fire burned in dense chaparral through an area of ranches, canyons and parks.

The flames prompted the mandatory evacuation of El Capitan State Park along with campsites, cattle and horse ranches near Refugio State Beach, and U.S. 101 —

the only highway along the coast — was shut down as the blaze moved south toward the ocean, U.S. Forest Service spokesman Andrew Madsen said.

On the Central Coast, a tree fell onto power lines at Hearst San Simeon State Park, sparking a small fire in the brush, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection tweeted.

And strong winds knocked down a tree, destroying three parked cars and damaging a home in the coastal town of El Granada, in San Mateo County, CalFire said. No injuries were reported, however.

## Celebrations, protests mark Indigenous Peoples Day

*Associated Press*

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — Indigenous people across the United States marked Monday with celebrations of their heritage, education campaigns and a push for the Biden administration to make good on its word.

The federal holiday created decades ago to recognize Christopher Columbus' sighting in 1492 of what came to be known as the Americas increasingly has been rebranded as Indigenous Peoples Day.

For Michaela Pavlat, cultural interpreter at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, the day is one of celebration, reflection and recognition that Indigenous communities are fighting for land

rights, for the U.S. government to uphold treaties, and for visibility and understanding.

"As long as you're on Native land and stolen land, it's Indigenous Peoples Day," said Pavlat, who is Sault Ste. Marie Band of Chippewa Indians (Anishinaabe). "We have a lot of movement and a lot of issues we're facing in our communities, and you can have that conversation every day."

More than a dozen protesters linked arms and sat along the White House fence line Monday to call on the Biden administration to do more to combat climate change and ban fossil fuels. Others cheered and chanted in support from across the street as po-

lice blocked off the area with yellow tape and arrested the seated protesters.

At the Boston Marathon, race organizers honored 1936 and '39 winner Ellison "Tarzan" Brown and three-time runner-up Patti Catalano Dillon, a member of the Mi'kmaq tribe. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, a member of Laguna Pueblo, said she ran for missing and slain Indigenous people and their families, the victims of the boarding school era and the "promise that our voices are being heard and will have a part in an equitable and just future in this new era."

Others gathered for prayers, dances and other commemorations in cities across the U.S.



# 30 Afghan evacuees leave Fort McCoy, Wis.

By J.P. LAWRENCE  
AND ZUBAIR BABAKARKHAIL  
*Stars and Stripes*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. — The 30 Afghan evacuees who boarded a bus Monday left behind the Army barracks that served as temporary homes and embarked on the last stage of their long journey, hopeful of finding work and resettling in communities across America.

They are among about 1,200 people who have now been resettled, officials at Fort McCoy told Stars and Stripes, out of approximately 50,000 evacuees at eight U.S. bases, with more arriving from overseas installations soon.

"I'm so happy that we are able to move to our final destination," said Formuli, an evacuee who asked that his full name not

be used out of fear for the safety of relatives still in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan.

Formuli used to work in information technology at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul. He and his family are headed to New York state after 41 days of processing, paperwork and vaccinations at Fort McCoy.

But even for highly skilled Afghans like Formuli, finding jobs may prove challenging.

Some 60% of recipients of Special Immigrant Visas who worked for U.S. forces in Afghanistan and Iraq were unemployed and reliant on cash assistance 90 days after arriving in America, according to a 2018 report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

A more recent but smaller survey of SIV

holders found half were unemployed or underemployed, a report in January by the advocacy group No One Left Behind found.

Many of the unemployed had high levels of education and proficiency in English, and they were frustrated that their experience did not lead to skilled work, according to both reports. Others with professional backgrounds took jobs as taxi drivers, warehouse workers and security guards to survive, the GAO report stated.

On Monday, some Afghans said they will be connected to resettlement agencies on arriving at their new homes.

The Afghans leaving Fort McCoy on Monday said they hope the U.S. will continue supporting them, but said they wanted to become self-sufficient using the skills they learned in Afghanistan.

## La. team works to return vaults moved by storms

*Associated Press*

LAFITTE, La. — Hurricane Ida swept through Louisiana with furious winds that ripped roofs off buildings and storm surges so powerful they moved homes. What it wrought on the living it also wrought on the dead, moving vaults and caskets and adding another layer of trauma for families and communities recovering from the powerful storm.

"Once you bury a relative, you expect that to be the permanent resting place," said the Rev. Haywood Johnson Jr., who lives in the small community of Ironton, south of New Orleans along the Mississippi River. Ida's surge destroyed nearly every home in the community and pushed heavy vaults — including those containing Johnson's mother and other relatives — from their resting spots into the streets.

"Some of those tombs weigh a couple of tons. And the water just came and disrupted it like they were cardboard boxes. That was the force of the water," Johnson said.

Louisiana's location in a hurricane-prone region coupled with cultural burial practices that of-

ten lay the dead to rest above ground make the problem common in the aftermath of strong hurricanes or other flooding.

Ryan Seidemann chairs the state's Cemetery Response Task Force, which was formed after the 2016 floods in Baton Rouge led to widespread problems at cemeteries across the flood-stricken region. Members of the task force start surveying cemeteries as soon as they can after a storm to assess damage.

In some cases, storm surges or flooding from heavy rain can move the vaults so far it's not immediately clear where they were buried. Often made of thousands of pounds of concrete or cinder block, vaults can have air pockets inside and the concrete itself can actually be more buoyant than people realize, Seidemann said.

"They float. They tend to go wherever the water goes. We've recovered them from yards, from levees, from underneath stairwells," he said. "There's no rhyme or reason, really, to where they come to rest, and then it's kind of our logistical problem to figure out how to get them out of there."

## Small plane crashes in Calif., killing pilot, UPS van driver

*Associated Press*

SANTEE, Calif. — A twin-engine plane that killed at least two people and left a swath of destruction in a San Diego suburb nose-dived into the ground after repeated warnings that it was flying dangerously low, according to a recording.

The Cessna 340 smashed into a UPS van, killing the driver, and then hit houses just after noon Monday in Santee, a suburb of 50,000 people. The pilot is also believed to have died, and at least two people on the ground were hurt, including a woman who was helped out the window of a burning home by neighbors.

The plane was heading in to land at Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport in San Diego when it crashed.

Shortly before, when the plane was about a half-mile from the runway, an air traffic controller alerted the pilot that the aircraft was too low.

"Low altitude alert, climb immediately, climb the airplane," the controller tells the pilot in audio obtained by KSWB-TV.

The controller repeatedly urged the plane to climb to 5,000 feet, and when it remained at

1,500 feet warned: "You appear to be descending again, sir."

KGTV-TV, an ABC affiliate, posted video the station said it received from a viewer showing the plane arcing in the sky and then plunging into the neighborhood in a burst of flames.

The plane was owned by Dr. Sugata Das, who may have been piloting the aircraft and died in the crash. He worked at Yuma Regional Medical Center in Arizona, the hospital's chief medical officer said.

Das, a licensed pilot, lived in San Diego and commuted back and forth to Yuma, according to a website for a nonprofit organization he served as director. He leaves two young sons.

People a block away from the scene said their homes shook from the thunderous crash.

Michael Keeley, 43, ran barefoot outside and saw flames engulfing the UPS truck and a home on the corner. He joined two neighbors at the burning home in calling through an open window.

With thick smoke inside the home and flames licking the roof, Keeley reached through the window to grab a woman's arm and help her climb out.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

**Air passenger detained after erratic behavior**

**NY** NEW YORK — A passenger aboard a Republic Airways flight from Indianapolis was taken into custody on the tarmac of LaGuardia Airport, shortly after the plane touched down.

Authorities said another passenger had reported the man acting suspiciously and erratically, prompting the pilot to declare an emergency landing and halting the airplane on the taxiway short of its intended gate.

Video posted on social media showed a man spread-eagled face down on the runway asphalt as a pair of emergency personnel knelt beside him. The man did not appear to resist.

Other passengers appeared bewildered by the scene as they were escorted away from the plane.

In an email, a spokesperson for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security said “nothing harmful was on the aircraft.”

**Vandals paint ‘38’ on Lincoln statue**

**VT** BENNINGTON — An Abraham Lincoln statue at a Vermont museum has been vandalized with the number “38,” which police said they believe is a reference to the execution of 38 Native Americans ordered by the former president in 1862.

Police said an employee at the Bennington Museum arrived to find a large banner that read “LAND BACK” had been put up between two light poles at the entrance to the museum’s courtyard.

The Lincoln statue in the

courtyard had reddish spray paint on its face and hands, along with the number “38” painted on its chest, police said.

Officials said it is expected to cost several thousand dollars to repair the statue and remove the paint.

**Zoo appealing loss of its accreditation**

**OH** COLUMBUS — The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium said it is appealing the loss of its most important accreditation, but will retain that accreditation during the 30-day appeals process.

The accrediting group cited concerns about the zoo’s animal programs department and inappropriate business practices by its former leaders. Investigations and reviews by the Ohio attorney general’s office and the Ohio auditor are pending.

The accrediting body also voiced concerns about the zoo’s acquisition of ambassador animals. A recent documentary, “The Conservation Game,” raised questions about how celebrity conservationists, including Jack Hanna, acquired exotic animals.

The zoo has since cut ties with animal vendors who don’t meet certain standards of animal care.

**Board orders doughnut shop to rehire workers**

**OR** PORTLAND — Some workers at Voodoo Doughnuts who were fired during a deadly Pacific Northwest heat wave in June after going on strike are set to get their jobs back.

KOIN-TV reported the National Labor Relations Board ruled the workers at the Por-

tland Old Town location should be reinstated because the firings were unjust. The Board also ordered that the reinstated workers should get back pay.

Eleven employees at that Voodoo Doughnuts went on strike after facing heat exhaustion during the record-breaking heat wave. Seven of the 11 were fired.

**Symphony collecting instruments for kids**

**MI** DETROIT — The Detroit Symphony Orchestra, community groups and local businesses are hoping to collect 2,500 new and used instruments for kindergarten through 12th grade students in Detroit.

The effort runs through the end of October and supports its Detroit Harmony program, the DSO said.

Used instruments collected will be refurbished before going to students.

Michigan State University’s Spartan Marching Band and the University of Michigan’s Michigan Marching Band are joining the effort.

**Head of police union out after federal raids**

**NY** NEW YORK — Federal agents raided the offices of a New York City police union, the Sergeants Benevolent Association, and the Long Island home of its bombastic leader, who has clashed with city officials over his incendiary tweets and hard-line tactics.

Agents were seen carrying boxes out of the union’s Manhattan headquarters and loading them into a van. The FBI also searched union president Ed Mullins’ home in Port Washing-

ton, Long Island, FBI spokesperson Martin Feely said.

Mullins resigned as the union’s president, according to a message the union’s board sent to members. The board said he did so at its urging. The union represents about 13,000 active and retired NYPD sergeants.

Mullins, a police sergeant detached to full-time union work, is in the middle of department disciplinary proceedings for tweeting NYPD paperwork last year regarding the arrest of Mayor Bill de Blasio’s daughter during protests over the Minneapolis police killing of George Floyd.

**Protester sentenced for fire made near precinct**

**WA** SEATTLE — A man was sentenced to two years in prison for setting a fire outside a Seattle police precinct during the city’s “occupied” zone protest in June 2020.

Isaiah Thomas Willoughby, of Tacoma, Wash., admitted he used gasoline to soak a debris pile outside the abandoned police precinct on June 12, 2020, and set it ablaze, according to Acting U.S. Attorney Tessa Gorman.

The U.S. District Court in Seattle also imposed a 3-year period of supervised release following the 2-year sentence, The Seattle Times reported.

Surveillance video showed Willoughby, 36, lighting the fire and walking away.

The fire, the U.S. attorney’s office said, put some protesters who were camping in the area at risk and scorched the side of the police building before it was extinguished by other protesters.

— From wire reports

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# Sacrifice fly puts Red Sox in ALCS

*Associated Press*

BOSTON — Back in raucous Fenway Park for postseason baseball a year after a last-place finish, the Boston Red Sox are getting the bounces, knocking big hits in bunches and even benefiting from a little small ball.

Hardly a perfect team, even by their own estimation, Alex Cora and the wild-card Red Sox are four wins from a return to the World Series anyway.

Kiké Hernández delivered Boston's second straight walk-off win, scoring pinch-runner Danny Santana with a sacrifice fly in the ninth inning to send the Red Sox to the AL Championship Series with a 6-5 win over the Tampa Bay Rays on Monday night.

After winning Game 3 of their best-of-five AL Division Series on Sunday with Christian Vázquez's two-run homer in the 13th, Boston took Game 4 for its first set of back-to-back walk-off postseason wins since 2004 ALCS Games 4 and 5, both

from David Ortiz against the Yankees.

"We always said we had a good baseball team that had some holes, and we still have some holes, but at the end, for how bad it looked sometimes, we're still here. We're still in the dance," Cora said.

Rafael Devers had a three-run home run off rookie Shane Bieber to ignite a five-run third inning that put Boston in front 5-0. Tampa Bay battled back and tied it in the eighth.

The wild-card Red Sox will await the winner of the other ALDS matchup between the Houston Astros and Chicago White Sox. Houston led 2-1 going into Game 4 in Chicago on Tuesday, a makeup of Monday's rainout.

"Since day one, you guys believed in this group," Cora told his players before setting off a bubbly clubhouse celebration.

Boston improved to 15-3 in potential clinching postseason games since 2004 and has won each of its last eight. It's the

Red Sox's first under second-year chief baseball officer Chaim Bloom, who came over from the Rays before the 2020 season and promptly oversaw the unpopular trade of Mookie Betts.

With Cora rehired last off-season following a one-year suspension for his role in the Astros' cheating scandal, the retooled team is four games from the World Series a year after finishing last in the AL East.

The 2018 champs have needed a little luck. Vázquez's homer Sunday came half an inning after Tampa Bay missed out on the go-ahead run on a bizarre ground-rule double that bounced off right fielder Hunter Renfroe and over the outfield fence.

That all followed a Game 2 rout in which Boston slugged a franchise postseason-record five homers in a 14-6 drubbing. The Red Sox hit .341 as a team with nine homers and a .915 OPS in the series.

For the Rays, it's an abrupt end to aspirations of back-to-back trips to the World Series after winning 100 games during the regular season and rolling to the AL East title.

"There's no doubt there's disappointment," Tampa Bay manager Kevin Cash said. "We had high aspirations to get deep into this thing. We ran into a Red Sox team that they just beat us — no other way around it. They got the big hits."

Boston is the second team to clinch a postseason series with consecutive walk-off wins. The other was the Minnesota Twins in the 1991 World Series, according to STATS.

Vázquez led off the ninth with a single to left field and moved to second on a sacrifice bunt by Christian Arroyo. Travis Shaw hit a bouncing ground ball to third that went for an infield single when Yandy Díaz bounced his difficult throw to first baseman Ji-Man Choi. Vázquez got to third and Santana entered to run for him.

# Giants shut out Dodgers to take 2-1 lead in NLDS

*Associated Press*

LOS ANGELES — Evan Longoria powered a home run off Max Scherzer through fierce wind. Chris Taylor and pinch-hitter Gavin Lux fell short, putting the defending World Series champions on the brink of elimination.

Longoria's shot in the fifth inning held up, giving the Giants a 1-0 win over the Los Angeles Dodgers on a cold, blustery Monday night with conditions more akin to San Francisco. The Giants took a 2-1 lead in the NL Division Series.

"I don't remember a lot of nights at Dodger Stadium where the wind was blowing like that," said San Francisco manager Gabe Kapler, who grew up in Los Angeles. "Super strange."

The gusty winds whipped the flags in center field and even caused Scherzer to stumble delivering an early pitch.

"The wind was really pushing me towards home plate," said Scherzer, who lost a postseason game he started for the first time since Oct. 12, 2017, against the Chicago Cubs.

The Dodgers nearly tied it with two outs in the ninth, when Lux launched a long drive to left-center with an exit velocity of 107 mph. Statcast estimated the hit would be a homer 69% of the time and gave the ball a likely batting average of .890. But the wind knocked it down and the ball was caught on the warning track, leaving Lux in disbelief.

"My stomach pretty much sank when he hit it. I couldn't be-

lieve that it didn't go," Longoria said. "I guess it was our night."

Taylor flied out to deep right-center with a runner on in the sixth.

"I think any other night the CT ball, the Gavin Lux ball, would have been home runs, yeah," Los Angeles manager Dave Roberts said.

It was the Giants' second shut-out in the best-of-five series after winning the opener 4-0.

Game 4 was Tuesday at Dodger Stadium and Game 5 is in San Francisco on Thursday, if necessary.

Los Angeles routed its longtime rival 9-2 to win Game 2, but mustered just five hits back at home. NL batting champion Trea Turner and Mookie Betts each went 0-for-4, and Corey Seager

was 0-for-4 with a walk.

"I thought we took some good at-bats and we just didn't get rewarded," Roberts said.

Longoria broke out of an 0-for-23 slump in a big way with his leadoff shot on an 0-2 pitch to left-center. It was his first postseason homer since the 2013 ALDS with Tampa Bay.

"Just this environment ... this is crazy," Longoria said. "What a wild night, too — the wind. I mean, I think that the sound in here was kind of dampened by the wind."

After the home run, Scherzer retired his final six batters. But the Dodgers pitcher lost for the first time in his 13 starts with the team since being acquired from Washington at the July 30 trade deadline.



# Pederson, Braves take 2-1 NLDS lead

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Joc Pederson credits his postseason success to “not making any moment bigger than it needs to be.”

With another jolt, Pederson put the Atlanta Braves on the verge of advancing in the playoffs.

Pederson kept enhancing his “Joctober” nickname with a three-run, pinch-hit homer and the Braves shut down Milwaukee once again, beating the Brewers 3-0 on Monday to take a 2-1 edge in the NL Division Series.

“It was pretty special,” Pederson said of the fifth-inning drive. “To come up big in a moment like that was pretty cool.”

In a matchup dominated by pitching, Ian Anderson and the Atlanta bullpen combined on a five-hitter and won by a 3-0 score for the second straight game.

Boosted by shortstop Dansby Swanson’s athletic defense, the Braves were set to try reaching a second straight NL Championship Series when they hosted Game 4 on Tuesday.

Pederson’s homer was his second of the series, both as a pinch-hitter against Adrian

Houser. Pederson singled as a pinch-hitter in his only other at-bat in this series, and has driven in four of Atlanta’s seven runs.

Pederson has hit 11 postseason home runs overall and helped the Los Angeles Dodgers win the World Series last year with his longballs. He then signed as a free agent with the Chicago Cubs in the winter and was traded to Atlanta in July.

“He’s been in the big moment, the big stage, and he’s performed and guys appreciate that,” Braves manager Brian Snitker said.

Since winning the opening game of the series, NL Central champion Milwaukee has not scored in 19 consecutive innings. It was 0-for-8 with runners in scoring position in this loss.

Asked about the poorly timed offensive slump, manager Craig Counsell said, “We’re in it. I thought we swung the bats better today. ... We’ve got to catch a break, frankly.”

Anderson was dominant for NL East champion Atlanta, allowing three hits over five innings with no walks and six strikeouts. Will Smith, the fourth Braves reliever, pitched

a perfect ninth for his second save of the series.

Brewers starter Freddy Peralta pitched four scoreless innings and was pulled for a pinch-hitter when Milwaukee threatened in the fifth.

Houser gave up singles to Travis d’Arnaud and Swanson to open the fifth. Pederson, hitting for Anderson, pulled a high, inside fastball deep into the right-field seats for a 3-0 lead.

“It didn’t look like a bad pitch to me, but give him credit,” Counsell said.

Asked how he pulled the high pitch for the homer, Pederson shrugged and said, “I guess I’m a pretty good player, I don’t know. I knocked it out of the yard.”

Adam Duvall made a crucial baserunning mistake when he tried to advance from first to second as Austin Riley tried to score from third on d’Arnaud’s fly ball in the second. Left fielder Christian Yelich nailed Duvall for the third out before Riley crossed the plate, costing Atlanta a run.

The Brewers hit only .183 in the first two games of the series, including a 3-0 loss in Game 2.

Counsell made one lineup change, inserting Luis Urías at third base for Eduardo Escobar.

Milwaukee couldn’t score in the fifth after putting runners on second and third with no outs. Urías, hit by a pitch, moved to third on a double by Omar Narváez.

Anderson escaped when Lorenzo Cain’s sharp grounder was stopped by a diving Swanson, who held the baserunners before throwing to first. Urías was caught in a rundown on pinch-hitter Daniel Vogelbach’s grounder to third base, and Kolten Wong lined out to Freddie Freeman at first base to end the inning.

Swanson turned an acrobatic double play to end the eighth after Luke Jackson walked Jace Peterson and gave up a one-out single to Willy Adames.

Pederson still wore the pearl necklace in his postgame news conference that became part of his uniform late this season. He said the pearls are real and were ordered from his jeweler.

“I think I just saw the pearls and thought that looked cool,” he said, adding the necklace “kind of caught my eye.”

## Rivers claims 76ers want Simmons back with team

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The 76ers and representation for disgruntled All-Star Ben Simmons have neared a resolution of the guard’s holdout that could potentially see him rejoin the team this week.

The first step was in motion Monday night: Simmons was in Philadelphia and coach Doc Rivers did not rule out the possibility of a return to practice at some point this week.

“Clearly that’s what we want, or we wouldn’t be talking if that wasn’t part of it,” Rivers said.

Simmons missed training

camp and the preseason in the wake of his offseason trade demand that had left the Sixers without their three-time All-Star — and Simmons out millions in lost salary and fines. The 25-year-old Australian still has \$147 million and four years left on his contract.

Rivers said he has not talked to Simmons during the holdout, only Klutch Sports CEO Rich Paul. Sixers President Daryl Morey has fielded offers for Simmons but has yet to find a package to his satisfaction that would keep the the Sixers among the Eastern Conference’s best teams.

Morey and Rivers have been publicly optimistic since the start of training camp that Simmons would play again for the Sixers. Rivers said he did not know if the situation could be resolved this week.

But the possibility of a reunion — as far-fetched as it once seemed — could be coming soon.

“We’ve said from Day 1 what we’ve wanted,” Rivers said. “We’d love to have him back. Other than that, honestly, there’s nothing to report.”

The bottom line of the holdout may very well be about the bottom line; the more games and

practices Simmons misses, the more money he loses. Report to Philadelphia and, even if he never plays, the financial bleeding starts to ease up.

Simmons, the No. 1 pick of the 2016 draft, had been paired with Joel Embiid as the franchise cornerstones as the Sixers chase their first NBA championship since 1983. Simmons, though, took the brunt of the blame for the top-seeded Sixers’ second-round exit in last season’s playoffs. He shot 34% from the free-throw line in the postseason and was reluctant to attempt a shot from anywhere on the floor late in games

# Gruden resigns over offensive emails

*Associated Press*

Jon Gruden has resigned as coach of the Las Vegas Raiders after emails he sent before being hired in 2018 contained racist, homophobic and misogynistic comments.

Gruden released a statement Monday night, saying: "I have resigned as head coach of the Las Vegas Raiders. I love the Raiders and do not want to be a distraction. Thank you to all the players, coaches, staff, and fans of Raider Nation. I'm sorry, I never meant to hurt anyone."

He stepped down after The New York Times reported that Gruden frequently used misogynistic and homophobic language directed at Commissioner Roger Goodell and others in the NFL.

Special teams and assistant head coach Rich Bisaccia will take over on an interim basis.

It was a rapid downfall for Gruden, who is in the fourth year of a 10-year, \$100 million contract he signed with the Raiders in 2018. It started on Friday when The Wall Street Journal reported that Gruden used a racist term to describe NFL union chief DeMaurice Smith in a 2011 email to former Washington executive Bruce Allen.

The emails were discovered in a workplace misconduct investigation into the Washington Football Team but ended up costing Gru-

den his job when they also showed Gruden denounced the drafting of a gay player and the tolerance of players protesting during the playing of the national anthem among other issues.

Gruden apologized for his "insensitive remarks" about Smith, saying they were made out of frustration over the 2011 lockout. But the latest emails sent from between 2011-18, when Gruden was an analyst for ESPN, show his use of derogatory language went well beyond that.

A league source confirms the accuracy of the emails and said they were sent to the Raiders last week. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the league hasn't made the emails public.

Raiders owner Mark Davis said last week that the email about Smith was "disturbing and not what the Raiders stand for" and said the team was reviewing the additional emails. Davis issued a statement Monday saying only that he accepted Gruden's resignation.

The Times reported that Gruden used a gay slur to insult Goodell and said he was "clueless" and "anti-football." He also said Goodell shouldn't have pressured the Rams to draft "queers," a reference to Michael Sam, who was the first openly gay player drafted by an NFL team.

Raiders defensive end Carl Nassib came out as gay in June and is the first openly gay

player to appear in an NFL game.

In a 2017 email, the Times said Gruden responded to a sexist meme of a female official by saying: "Nice job roger."

The paper also said Gruden criticized Goodell and the NFL for trying to reduce concussions, and said that Eric Reid, a player who had demonstrated during the playing of the national anthem, should be fired.

The newspaper said Gruden also mocked an article in 2017 about players calling on Goodell to support their efforts promoting racial equality and criminal justice reform.

"He needs to hide in his concussion protocol tent," Gruden wrote.

Gruden and Allen have a long relationship, having worked together in Oakland and Tampa Bay. The emails between the two and other men included photos of women wearing only bikini bottoms, including one photo of two Washington team cheerleaders.

Smith said earlier Monday that he appreciates that Gruden reached out to him following the initial report, but that the email is evidence that the fight against racism is ongoing.

"But make no mistake, the news is not about what is said in our private conversation, but what else is said by people who never thought they would be exposed and how they are going to be held to account," Smith wrote in a Twitter thread.

## Jackson leads Ravens to overtime victory over Colts

*Associated Press*

BALTIMORE — Even more than usual, the Baltimore Ravens needed Lamar Jackson to do pretty much everything as they tried to climb out of a second-half hole.

Their running backs had been stopped, and another key offensive player had left with an injury — but the Ravens still had their star quarterback, whose latest scintillating effort may have been the best of his young career.

"It's one of the greatest performances I've ever seen," coach John Harbaugh said. "It wasn't easy. It wasn't like we came out, just up and down the field. We had to overcome and fight through some things."

Jackson threw a 5-yard touchdown pass to Marquise Brown on

the first possession of overtime to give Baltimore a 31-25 victory over the Indianapolis Colts on Monday night. The quarterback threw for a career-high 442 yards and four touchdowns, including a pair of short TD passes to Mark Andrews in the fourth quarter as the Ravens rallied from a 25-9 deficit.

Andrews also caught the two two-point conversions during that furious comeback.

Jackson went 37-for-43 without an interception. He also ran for 62 yards. If you subtract the 5 yards Jackson lost when sacked, he accounted for 499 of Baltimore's 523 net yards on the night.

"I was just locked in," Jackson said. "I was just calm. Everything was just moving slow."

The Ravens had to withstand a

47-yard field goal attempt by Rodrigo Blankenship on the final play of regulation, but the Colts kicker missed, sending the teams to overtime.

Baltimore had its record-tying streak of 43 straight 100-yard rushing games snapped, and it looked as if it was in big trouble after Jackson fumbled near the goal line in the third quarter. But after that turnover, the Ravens scored a touchdown on each of their final four possessions.

The Indianapolis kicking game was a big reason the game got to overtime. Blankenship — who hurt a hip in warmups — missed an extra point in the third quarter. With the Colts up 25-17, he had a 37-yard kick blocked by Calais Campbell with 4:29 remaining, giving Baltimore a chance to tie

the game.

"Tough loss. Proud of the way our guys fought. We have to learn from our mistakes and learn how to finish games," Indianapolis coach Frank Reich said. "No one is going to feel sorry for us. We have to learn from it and get better."

Jackson directed an 11-play, 75-yard drive that ended with a 4-yard touchdown pass to Andrews with 39 seconds remaining. Then Jackson flipped a two-point conversion pass over the middle to Andrews to tie it.

The Colts (1-4) made it back into field-goal range, with the help of an unnecessary roughness penalty on the Ravens' Tavon Young with 13 seconds left, but Blankenship's kick sailed wide left.