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Voice of the Fighting Irish, Inc.
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Issue: News

Program Name: Associated Press News, read by Notre Dame students and WSND community announcers

Aired Monday-Friday at 7:30am, 8:30am, 12:30pm, 4:30pm and 5:30pm

01/08/24 - WASHINGTON (AP) — Congressional leaders have reached an agreement on overall spending levels for the current fiscal year that could help avoid a partial government shutdown later this month. House Speaker Mike Johnson is hailing the agreement in a letter to colleagues as “the most favorable budget agreement Republicans have achieved in over a decade.” President Joe Biden says the agreement is one step closer “to preventing a needless government shutdown and protecting important national priorities.” Lawmakers needed an agreement on overall spending levels so that appropriators could write the bills that set line-by-line money for agencies. Funding is set to lapse Jan. 19 for some agencies and Feb. 2 for others.

BEIRUT (AP) — An Israeli airstrike has killed an elite Hezbollah commander in southern Lebanon. It's the latest in an escalating exchange of strikes along the border that have raised fears of another Mideast war even as the fighting in Gaza exacts a mounting toll on civilians. A Lebanese security official said today's strike on an SUV killed a commander in a secretive Hezbollah force that operates along the border. Hezbollah identified the slain fighter as Wissam al-Tawil without providing further details. He is the most senior Hezbollah militant to have been killed since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack into southern Israel triggered all-out war in Gaza and lower-intensity fighting between Israel and Hezbollah, which has escalated since an Israeli strike killed a senior Hamas leader in Beirut last week.

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — A federal official says the Boeing jetliner that suffered an inflight blowout over Portland, Oregon, was not being used for flights to Hawaii after a warning light that could have indicated a pressurization problem lit up on three different flights. Alaska Airlines decided to restrict the aircraft from long flights over water so the plane could land quickly if the warning light reappeared. Aviation officials also have found the chunk of the fuselage that was expelled from the aircraft. Today, federal officials approved a process for inspecting other similar Boeing planes to avoid a repeat of the scare on Alaska Airlines. That could speed the return to flying of 171 planes worldwide that U.S. officials ordered grounded on Saturday.

NORTH LIBERTY, Iowa (AP) — When Donald Trump launched his 2024 presidential campaign after a disappointing midterm election for Republicans, his trajectory was something of a mystery. But seven days before Iowa's kick-off caucuses, his standing among the GOP faithful is hardly in doubt. Voters, campaign operatives and even some of the candidates on the ground largely agree that the Republican former president is the overwhelming favorite heading into the caucuses. But that's not to say serious risks don't loom for the front-runner.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House says the administration will review what rules or procedures weren't followed when Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin did not disclose his

hospitalization for days. The Pentagon is maintaining its silence on why Austin was hospitalized and says he has no plans to resign. Austin was admitted into intensive care on Jan. 1, but President Joe Biden and senior White House officials were not notified until three days later. National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said today the administration will look at the processes in place and "try to learn from this experience."

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — A moon landing attempt by a private US company appears doomed because of a fuel leak on the newly launched spacecraft. Astrobotic Technology managed to orient the lander toward the sun today so its solar panel could capture sunlight and charge its onboard battery. The propulsion system problem was reported hours after a successful liftoff from Florida. Astrobotic was aiming to be the first private company to successfully land on the moon, something only four countries have accomplished. A second lander from a Houston company is due to launch next month. NASA gave the companies millions to build landers and make deliveries to the moon.

WASHINGTON (AP) — A home owned by the judge overseeing the federal election subversion case against former president Donald Trump was targeted by a fake emergency call Sunday night, the latest in a spate of similar swatting reports at the homes of public officials. Police said they responded late Sunday to reports of a shooting at a Washington, D.C., home linked in public records to U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan, but found that no shooting had happened. Chutkan has been targeted by multiple threats since she was assigned the case. There's also been a spike in swatting attempts targeting public officials and hoax bomb threats at state capitols and courthouses, something Attorney General Merrick Garland has called unacceptable.

PARIS (AP) — French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne has resigned following recent political turmoil over a new immigration law. That paves the way for President Emmanuel Macron to seek fresh momentum by appointing a new government in the coming days. The shakeup is widely seen as an attempt by the 46-year-old centrist Macron to head off a looming lame-duck status. Macron's term is to end in 2027, and he won't be able to run again for president in line with the French Constitution. Borne had been appointed in May 2022 after Macron's reelection for a second term. She was France's second female prime minister. Macron's office says Borne will continue in her duties until a new government is appointed.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Supreme Court has rejected Alaska's bid to revive a proposed copper and gold mine that was blocked by the Environmental Protection Agency. The justices did not comment in turning away Alaska's attempt to sue the Biden administration directly in the high court over its desire to revive the proposed Pebble Mine in the state's Bristol Bay region. A year ago, the EPA stopped the mine proposal, citing concerns with potential impacts on a rich aquatic ecosystem that supports the world's largest sockeye salmon fishery. Alaska still can try to reverse the decision, starting in a lower court and appealing any unfavorable decisions to the Supreme Court.

The S&P 500 gained 1.41% and the Nasdaq Composite jumped 2.2%. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 0.58%.

SPORTS

Tiger Woods is no longer a Nike athlete after 27 years, ending a partnership between the swoosh and golf's biggest star and raising questions about the future of both in the sport. Woods in a social media post thanked Nike co-founder Phil Knight for his "passion and vision" that brought Nike and the Nike Golf partnership with Woods together. Mark Steinberg, his agent at Excel Sports, confirmed the end of the deal that began in 1996. Nike also posted to social media, saying in a photo, "It was a hell of a round, Tiger."

Dak Prescott and the Dallas Cowboys made sure they'll start the playoffs at home, where they're undefeated. Josh Allen and the Buffalo Bills are going home with a division title instead of heading back to Miami for a rematch. The NFL playoff field is set. Fourteen teams will compete for a trip to Super Bowl 58 in Las Vegas next month. The postseason starts with six games across three days over wild-card weekend. The Bills rallied for a 21-14 win over the Dolphins to clinch their fourth straight AFC East title and the No. 2 seed. The Packers and Buccaneers got in with wins earlier in the day. The Steelers secured their spot when the Jaguars collapsed in Tennessee.

BERLIN (AP) — Germany's World Cup-winning coach Franz Beckenbauer has died. He was 78. Beckenbauer's family issued a statement to news agency DPA saying that Beckenbauer "passed away peacefully in his sleep yesterday, Sunday, surrounded by his family." The German soccer federation said Beckenbauer was "one of the best players our sport has ever seen." Beckenbauer was one of German soccer's central figures. He captained West Germany to the World Cup title in 1974. He also coached the national side for its 1990 World Cup win against Argentina. In recent years the former Bayern Munich great struggled with health problems.

HOUSTON (AP) — No. 1 Michigan and No. 2 Washington playing for the College Football Playoff national championship tonight is just about the perfect way to close the 2023 season. The matchup of unbeatens hits all the major themes of the past five months from conference realignment to the transfer portal — with Michigan coach Jim Harbaugh as the main character. Michael Penix Jr., The sixth-year quarterback who revived his career by transferring from Indiana University to Washington, and the Huskies will try to deliver the Pac-12 its first championship since 2004 in their last football game before joining Michigan in the Big Ten. Purdue is still atop the AP Top 25 but Houston has jumped Kansas into second place as the last unbeaten team in Division I men's college basketball. The Boilermakers picked up five more first-place votes and had 54 of the 63 available. The Cougars received seven first-place votes after improving to 14-0 for the third time in school history. Kansas had the other two first-place nods but fell to third. Defending national champ UConn and Tennessee rounded out the top five. San Diego State, Utah State and Creighton are ranked at the expense of Ole Miss, James Madison and Providence.

South Carolina remains No. 1 in The Associated Press Top 25 women's basketball poll and is one of just three unbeaten teams left. No. 2 UCLA and No. 4 Baylor are the others. Iowa moved up to third after previously unbeaten N.C. State lost to Virginia Tech. The Wolfpack fell to sixth. Colorado was fifth. North Carolina and UNLV are back in the poll while TCU and Syracuse dropped out. Notre Dame's women are ranked 16, but that was before their home loss yesterday to North Carolina.

01/15/24 - White House says 'it's the right time' for Israel to scale back Gaza war as fighting hits 100 days

JERUSALEM (AP) — The White House says "it's the right time" for Israel to scale back its military offensive in the Gaza Strip, even as Israeli leaders vow to intensify their operation against the territory's ruling Hamas militant group. The U.S. comments on Sunday exposed the growing differences between the close allies on the 100th day of the war. Also Sunday, Israeli warplanes struck targets in Lebanon following a Hezbollah missile attack in northern Israel that killed two Israeli civilians — an older woman and her adult son. The exchange of fire underscored concerns that the Gaza violence could trigger wider fighting across the region.

As Israel-Hamas war reaches 100-day mark, here's the conflict by numbers

JERUSALEM (AP) — The Israel-Hamas war has quickly shattered many records when it comes to the history of conflicts between the bitter enemies. It's the deadliest, the most destructive, and the longest. Israel has razed large swaths of the Gaza Strip, where researchers assess that nearly half of all buildings are likely damaged or destroyed. Nearly 24,000 people in the Gaza Strip have been killed, which amounts to more than 1% of Gaza's population. Meanwhile, the Hamas attack on Israel that spurred the war was the single deadliest day in Israeli history.

Iowa caucuses: What to watch as voters weigh in on the Republican campaign's first contest of 2024

Monday marks the official start to the Republican presidential nominating contest with the Iowa caucuses. Iowa has been relatively quiet this cycle compared to years past. That's because Donald Trump is dominating the contest. That makes one of the things to watch Monday who comes in second — Ron DeSantis or Nikki Haley? Will the arctic weather change the turnout and results? Will the election paranoia that Trump sewed among his electorate after his 2020 loss affect the caucus? Will novice candidate Vivek Ramaswamy make a mark?

Millions of Americans face below-zero temperatures as storms bring blast of Arctic air, snow and ice

Subfreezing temperatures blasting much of the U.S. have put millions of Americans at risk of potentially dangerous cold as winter storms continue to dump snow from coast to coast. The National Weather Service said Sunday that wind chills could plummet as low as minus 70 degrees in Montana and the Dakotas. An estimated 95 million Americans faced potential windy, frigid conditions with temperatures below zero even into northern Texas. Buffalo, New York, could see up to 2 feet of snow, weather so severe it forced an NFL playoff game between the Buffalo Bills and Pittsburgh Steelers to be postponed from Sunday to Monday. Elsewhere, parts of Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee braced for a round of snow.

Guatemalans angered as president-elect's inauguration delayed by wrangling in Congress
GUATEMALA CITY (AP) — Guatemalan President-elect Bernardo Arévalo is waiting to be sworn in as the old-guard Congress dawdling has delayed the inauguration ceremony. That sparked angry protests Sunday by demonstrators tired of months-long attempts to keep the new president from taking office. Supporters who had been waiting hours for a festive inauguration celebration in Guatemala's City's emblematic Plaza de la Constitución marched to the building where congress was meeting. They scuffled with lines of riot police, sweeping them roughly out of their way before gathering outside congress demanding legislators name the delegation that

must attend the ceremony. The inauguration was tinged by the same legal wrangling and tensions since Arévalo's resounding Aug. 20 election victory.

Iowa principal who risked his life to protect students during a high school shooting has died
DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — An Iowa principal who put himself in harm's way to protect students during a school shooting earlier this month has died. Caldwell Parrish Funeral Home & Crematory confirmed the death of Perry High School Principal Dan Marburger after the family announced it on a GoFundMe page. Marburger died Sunday morning after he was critically injured during the Jan. 4 attack. An 11-year-old was also killed in the shooting, and six other people were injured before the 17-year-old shooter died of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Nicaragua says it released Bishop Rolando Álvarez and 18 priests from prison, handed them to Vatican

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The Nicaraguan government says it has released Bishop Rolando Álvarez and 18 Catholic clergy members from jail and handed them over to Vatican authorities. In the past, imprisoned priests have been quickly flown to Rome. Bishop Álvarez has remained in prison for more than a year and received a 26-year sentence after refusing to get on a February flight to the United States. Since repressing popular protests in 2018 that called for his resignation, President Daniel Ortega's government has systematically silenced opposing voices and zeroed in on the church. In November, Nicaragua released a dozen Catholic priests jailed on a variety of charges and sent them to Rome following an agreement with the Vatican.

More countries join talks on Ukraine leader's peace formula. But Russia is absent and war grinds on

DAVOS, Switzerland (AP) — Leaders of talks on Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's peace formula say a growing number of countries are working to help set the groundwork for Russia to join one day. It's an admittedly distant goal as the nearly two-year war grinds on and neither side willing to cede ground. The fourth such meeting of national security advisers was held in the Swiss town of Davos on Sunday. Zelenskyy plans to attend the World Economic Forum's annual meeting starting Tuesday in Davos. He will endeavor to keep up international focus on Ukraine's defense amid eroding support for Kyiv in the West and swelling distractions like conflict in the Middle East.

District attorney defends the qualifications of a prosecutor hired in Trump's Georgia election case

ATLANTA (AP) — Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis is defending the qualifications of a special prosecutor she hired for her case against Donald Trump and others over efforts to overturn the 2020 election in Georgia. She's speaking out after a defense lawyer in the case accused Willis of professional impropriety. On Sunday, Willis made her first public remarks since the accusation was leveled in a court filing last week. Willis offered a vigorous defense of her leadership of the office and she pushed back against critics. She was received warmly by the congregation of Big Bethel AME Church in Atlanta when she spoke at a service a day before the holiday honoring the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

'The Honeyymooners' actress Joyce Randolph has died at 99; played Ed Norton's wife, Trixie
NEW YORK (AP) — "The Honeyymooners" actress Joyce Randolph, who played Ed Norton's sarcastic wife Trixie, has died. She was 99. Randolph died of natural causes Saturday night at

her home on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, her son Randolph Charles told The Associated Press Sunday. She was the last surviving main character of the beloved comedy from television's golden age of the 1950s. "The Honeymooners" starred Jackie Gleason as the blustering bus driver Ralph Kramden. With him were Audrey Meadows as his wisecracking wife, and Art Carney and Randolph as their neighbors, Ed and Trixie Norton. More than 50 years after she played Trixie, Randolph still received dozens of letters a week.

01/29/24 - Biden says US 'shall respond' after drone strike by Iran-backed group kills 3 US troops in Jordan

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — President Joe Biden says the U.S. "shall respond" after a drone strike by an Iran-backed group killed three American troops in Jordan and injured dozens more near the Syrian border. Biden's national security team briefed him as he traveled Sunday in South Carolina. Appearing at a church banquet hall, he said the U.S. had a "tough day last night in the Middle East" and that "we shall respond." He also asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of the slain service members. They are the first U.S. fatalities after months of strikes by such groups against American forces across the Middle East amid the Israel-Hamas war.

Israel notes 'significant gaps' after cease-fire talks with US, Qatar, Egypt but says constructive RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israel says "significant gaps" remain after cease-fire talks with the United States, Qatar and Egypt, but it calls them constructive and says they will continue in the week ahead. It's a tentative sign of progress on a potential agreement that could see Israel pause military operations against Hamas in exchange for the release of remaining hostages. Meanwhile, the U.S. announced its first military deaths in the region since the war began and blamed Iran-backed militants amid concerns about a wider conflict. Gaza's 2.3 million people face a deepening humanitarian crisis as the U.N. urges supporters to resume funding its agency helping Palestinians.

Pakistan and Iran agree to work together to improve security after tit-for-tat airstrikes ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistan and Iran have agreed to work together to improve their security cooperation. The development came hours after the top Iranian diplomat arrived in Islamabad for talks Monday on deescalating tensions, which flared up after deadly airstrikes by Tehran and Islamabad earlier this month and killed at least 11 people. The strikes marked a significant escalation in fraught relations between the neighbors. Relations between the two were dramatically imperiled after Iran targeted militant hideouts in Pakistan's restive southwestern Baluchistan province, killing two children, two weeks ago. Pakistan a day later launched airstrikes against alleged militant hideouts inside Iran, in the Sistan and Baluchestan province, killing at least nine people.

Taking away Trump's business empire would stand alone under New York fraud law NEW YORK (AP) — Within days, Donald Trump could have his sprawling real estate business empire ordered "dissolved" for repeated misrepresentations on financial statements to lenders, adding him to a short list of scam marketers, con artists and others who have been hit with the ultimate punishment for violating New York's powerful anti-fraud law. An Associated Press analysis of nearly 70 years of civil cases under the law showed that such a penalty has only been imposed a dozen previous times, and Trump's case stands apart in a significant way: It's

the only big business found that was threatened with a shutdown without a showing of obvious victims and major losses.

China Evergrande has been ordered to liquidate. The real estate giant owes over \$300 billion HONG KONG (AP) — A Hong Kong court has ordered China Evergrande, the world's most heavily indebted real estate developer, to be liquidated following a failed effort to restructure \$300 billion owed to banks and bondholders that fueled fears about China's rising debt burden. China Evergrande Group is one of the biggest of dozens of Chinese developers that have collapsed since 2020 under official pressure to rein in surging debt the ruling Communist Party views as a threat to China's slowing economic growth. But a crackdown on excess borrowing has tipped the property industry into crisis, making it a drag on the economy. It's unclear how the liquidation order will affect Evergrande's vast operations in the Chinese mainland.

North Korea says leader Kim supervised tests of cruise missiles designed to be fired from submarines

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea says leader Kim Jong Un has supervised test-firings of cruise missiles designed to be launched from submarines and also reviewed efforts to build a nuclear-powered submarine. The reports say those activities came as Kim reiterated his goal of building a nuclear-armed navy to counter what he portrays as growing external threats. The reports Monday came a day after South Korea's military said it detected North Korea firing multiple cruise missiles over waters near the eastern port of Sinpo, where the North has a major shipyard developing submarines. It was the latest in a streak of weapons demonstrations by North Korea amid increasing tensions with the United States, South Korea and Japan.

Alex Murdaugh tries to prove jury tampering led to his murder conviction

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Alex Murdaugh is returning to a South Carolina courtroom, but this time the convicted killer, disbarred attorney and admitted thief won't be fidgeting in the spotlight. Instead, the judge will be questioning the jurors who found him guilty of the shooting deaths of his wife and son. Monday's unusual hearing is part of an appeal filed by Murdaugh's attorneys, who accused a court clerk of tampering with the jury in last year's murder case. Colleton County Clerk Becky Hill also is expected to be grilled by Murdaugh's lawyers. The judge has limited questions to the tampering allegations and not other possible misconduct by the clerk.

Inflation has slowed. Now the Federal Reserve faces expectations for rate cuts

WASHINGTON (AP) — Chair Jerome Powell will enter this week's Federal Reserve meeting in a much more desirable position than he likely ever expected: Inflation is getting close to the Fed's target rate, the economy is still growing at a healthy pace, consumers keep spending and the unemployment rate is near a half-century low. When they last met in December, the Fed's policymakers said they expected to cut their benchmark rate three times this year. Yet the timing of those rate cuts, which would lead to lower borrowing costs for consumers and businesses, remains uncertain. Most economists say they expect the first rate cut to occur in May or June.

The Super Bowl is set: Mahomes and the Chiefs will face Purdy and the 49ers

Patrick Mahomes, Travis Kelce and the Kansas City Chiefs are heading to Las Vegas with a chance for a rare repeat while facing the San Francisco 49ers in a Super Bowl rematch from four years ago. The Chiefs beat Lamar Jackson and the No. 1-seeded Baltimore Ravens 17-10 in the AFC championship game Sunday to advance to the Super Bowl for the fourth time in five years. Brock Purdy later rallied the No. 1-seeded 49ers to a 34-31 victory over Detroit in the

NFC title game. The Chiefs will try to become the first back-to-back champions since New England during the 2003-04 seasons. The 49ers seek a record-tying sixth Super Bowl title in their eighth appearance.

Dying thief who stole 'Wizard of Oz' ruby slippers from Minnesota museum will likely avoid prison

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A dying thief who confessed to stealing ruby slippers that Judy Garland wore in "The Wizard of Oz" is expected to stay out of prison after he's sentenced.

Seventy-six-year-old Terry Jon Martin stole the slippers in 2005 from the Judy Garland Museum in the late actor's hometown of Grand Rapids, Minnesota. His sentencing hearing is scheduled for Monday. Martin's attorney says he had gone straight, but wanted to pull off "one last score." The attorney says Martin gave into temptation after an old mob associate persuaded him that the famous shoes were adorned with real rubies. Both sides are recommending he be sentenced to time served because he is in hospice care.

Issue: Politics

Program Name: PBS Newshour

Aired Monday-Friday, 7-8pm

01/02/24 - Tuesday on the NewsHour, as the war in Gaza rages on, we speak with a former Israeli hostage in her first interview since being released by Hamas. The president of Harvard resigns after igniting controversy with comments regarding responses to the Israel-Hamas war. Plus, big cities in the U.S. contend with an influx of migrants, including thousands sent by Republican governors.

01/18/24 - Thursday on the NewsHour, Congress passes a stopgap measure to keep the government funded and avert a shutdown. The Justice Department issues a scathing review of the police response to the 2022 Uvalde school massacre. Plus, a doctor who worked in Gaza details the increasingly dire humanitarian situation faced by civilians caught in the Israel-Hamas war.

01/30/24 - Tuesday on the NewsHour, Qatar mediates the push for a pause in fighting between Israel and Hamas. Then, protesters demand their city councils pass resolutions pressuring the Biden administration to act on the Israel-Hamas war. Plus, House Republicans continue the process of impeaching Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas.

Issue: The Environment

Program Name: StarDate

Aired daily at noon and 5pm Monday-Friday on WSND-FM

01/02/24 - It might be winter here in the northern hemisphere, but the Sun is biggest and closest to us for the entire year today. Earth is at a point in its orbit called perihelion. The Sun is about 91.4 million miles away – about one and a half million miles closer than average.

Earth's orbit isn't a perfect circle. Instead, it's an ellipse – a shape that looks like a slightly flattened circle. So over the course of a year, the Earth-Sun distance varies by about three

percent. The oceans and atmosphere distribute heat around the planet, so the changing distance doesn't cause a change in global temperatures.

The date of perihelion isn't fixed. Instead, it shifts forward by an average of about one day every 58 years. That's because Earth "wobbles" on its axis like a gyroscope that's running down. About 800 years ago, Earth was closest to the Sun on the winter solstice, in December. And about 4300 years from now, it'll be closest on the spring equinox, in March.

The changing distance to the Sun doesn't create the seasons. Instead, the seasons are caused by Earth's tilt on its axis. But the distance to the Sun does have an impact on the seasons. Earth moves fastest in its orbit when it's closest to the Sun, and slowest when it's farthest away. That means the seasons are different lengths. In the northern hemisphere, winter is the shortest season – about five days shorter than summer, when Earth is farthest from the Sun.

01/15/24 - Betelgeuse will blast itself to bits as a supernova. Many astronomers agree that that's likely to happen within the next hundred thousand years. But estimates of the exact timing range from the full hundred thousand years to as little as a few decades.

Betelgeuse marks the shoulder of Orion the hunter. The bright orange star is in the east at nightfall, to the left of Orion's three-star belt.

In late 2019, the supergiant star blew out a huge blob of gas. The gas cooled and condensed, forming a dark cloud that made the star fade to a third of its normal brightness. Betelgeuse rebounded, then grew almost 50 percent brighter than normal last year.

The timing of the supernova depends on what's happening in the star's core, which we can't see. It may be "fusing" helium to make carbon. But it could be fusing carbon to make heavier elements. If so, then the star's demise could come fairly soon.

A study last year suggested that Betelgeuse is late in the carbon-fusion process. After that stage, it'll "burn" through a series of elements, ending with iron. At that point, the core will collapse, and the star's outer layers will blast into space. The study said that, if Betelgeuse is deep into the carbon-burning process, it could explode in a few centuries — or perhaps even a few decades. For now, all we know for sure is that Betelgeuse faces a spectacular demise — sometime in the next hundred thousand years.

01/30/24 - Astronomers have been studying the star cluster Messier 36 for almost four centuries. Yet they still aren't sure about its details. There's disagreement about its distance, its age, and the number of stars it contains.

M36 is in Auriga the charioteer. The constellation is high in the eastern sky this evening. Its brightest star is Capella, one of the brighter stars in the night sky. M36 is one of four clusters to the lower right of Capella that are visible through binoculars.

Estimates of the cluster's distance vary by hundreds of light-years, with an average of about 4,000. Star counts place its population at up to 200 stars. And estimates of its age range from about 15 million to 30 million years.

One recent study favored the lower age. In fact, it found several stars that are no more than 200 thousand years old. That suggests that even more stars could be born there in the future.

As with many other details, though, there's some uncertainty — it's not confirmed that the infant stars are part of M36. They're inside a small cloud of cold, dark gas and dust. It's on the cluster's edge. So it could be part of M36, or it could be a separate structure that happens to be close by.

So it's going to take more studies — and more years — to lock down the details of Messier 36.

Issue: News

Program Name: Associated Press News, read by Notre Dame students and WSND community announcers

Aired Monday-Friday at 7:30am, 8:30am, 12:30pm, 4:30pm and 5:30pm

02/02/24 - Analysis shows destruction and possible buffer zone along Gaza Strip's border with Israel

JERUSALEM (AP) — Satellite photos show new demolition along a 1-kilometer-deep path on the Gaza Strip's border with Israel. The destruction comes as Israel has said it wants to establish a buffer zone there, further tearing away at land the Palestinians want for a state over international objections. The demolition along the path represents only a sliver of the wider damage from the war seen in the Gaza Strip, which one assessment suggests has damaged or destroyed half of all the buildings within the coastal enclave. But independent analysts and an Associated Press assessment of the damage along the path suggests Israel may be moving forward with its proposed buffer zone, despite U.S. warnings not to occupy land in Gaza Strip. US hints large response to Iran-backed militias is imminent as Houthi rebels target another ship WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin says it's time to more significantly disable Iran-backed militias that have struck at U.S. forces and ships in the Middle East. And he says the U.S. is poised to take significant action in response to the deaths of three U.S. service members in Jordan on Sunday. For days the U.S. has hinted strikes are imminent. While the threat of retaliation has driven some militant groups to say they were stopping hostilities, as late as Thursday Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels were still attacking vessels and fired a ballistic missile at a Liberian-flagged container ship in the Red Sea.

Nikki Haley has called out prejudice but rejected systemic racism throughout her career COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Nikki Haley's messages on race are sometimes contradictory. Throughout her career, the Republican presidential candidate has generally called out acts of individual prejudice and the people responsible. She has avoided denouncing society or groups of people as racist. As the GOP presidential contest moves to South Carolina, the state's former governor is trying to cut into Donald Trump's advantage. The former president has repeatedly

attacked adversaries throughout his career with racist language. Haley is the South Carolina-born daughter of Indian immigrants. She wants to appeal to as many voters as possible without alienating conservatives who reject the idea that systemic racism exists in the United States. But her approach sometimes has drawn bipartisan criticism.

California pummeled by first of back-to-back atmospheric rivers as 'Pineapple Express' sweeps state

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The first of back-to-back atmospheric rivers is drenching California. Heavy rain and gusty winds began hitting the state's north on Wednesday before moving south along the coast and snarling the Thursday morning commute in Los Angeles. The storm has flooded roads, toppled trees and caused traffic accidents, but also dumped welcome snow in the mountains. Forecasters say the storm will be followed by an even more powerful one arriving late Saturday night. The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services has activated its operations center and positioned personnel and equipment in areas most at risk from the weather.

The Senate is headed for a crucial test vote on new border policies and Ukraine aid
WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate leaders are attempting to push forward a deal to pair new policies at the southern border with wartime aid for Ukraine and other American allies, but they will have to overcome heavy skepticism from Republicans. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer says that he will next week put in motion a test vote on the national security package. However, with some Republicans resisting the timeline and many remaining uncommitted to supporting the border policy changes, the bill's future remains uncertain. Senate negotiators are expected in the coming days to release the bill that would overhaul the U.S. asylum system with tougher and quicker enforcement as well as send tens of billions of dollars in military assistance to Ukraine, Israel and other allies in Asia.

Biden sanctions Israeli settlers accused of attacking Palestinians and peace activists in West Bank

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden has issued an executive order that targets Israeli settlers in the West Bank who've been accused of attacking Palestinians and Israeli peace activists in the occupied territory. The order Thursday imposes financial sanctions and visa bans in an initial round against four individuals. The order says those settlers were involved in acts of violence, as well as threats and attempts to destroy or seize Palestinian property. The penalties aim to block the four from using the U.S. financial system and bar American citizens from dealing with them. U.S. officials are evaluating whether to punish others involved in attacks that have intensified during the Israel-Hamas war. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu denounced the U.S. penalties.

Guatemala's new president appeals for society's help to overcome entrenched powers

GUATEMALA CITY (AP) — Guatemalan President Bernardo Arévalo says that with his political party suspended, little support in congress and an attorney general in hot pursuit, he will appeal to the people to help him overcome the entrenched old guard and achieve the change he campaigned on. In an interview with The Associated Press on Thursday, Arévalo said: "We are clear that in the current context, we depend on society and convincing them that together we begin to row. We can't depend on a political system where those criminal and patronage

networks still lurk." Arévalo won the presidency in August, beating the establishment candidate by a comfortable margin.

Lupus and other autoimmune diseases strike far more women than men. Now there's a clue why

WASHINGTON (AP) — Women are far more likely than men to get autoimmune diseases, illnesses like lupus or rheumatoid arthritis that occur when the immune system mistakenly attacks their own bodies. That gender disparity has baffled scientists for decades but new research may finally explain why. Females have two X chromosomes and Stanford University researchers say how cells handle that extra X can be a red flag for the immune system, essentially an early risk factor. The findings, published Thursday in the journal *Cell*, could lead to better ways to detect autoimmunity.

Skyscraper-size asteroid will buzz Earth on Friday, safely passing within 1.7 million miles
CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Astronomers say an asteroid as big as a skyscraper will pass within 1.7 million miles of Earth on Friday. There's no chance of it hitting us since it will pass seven times the distance from Earth to the moon. NASA estimates the space rock is between 690 feet and 1,575 feet across. That means the asteroid could be similar in size to New York City's Empire State Building or Chicago's Willis Tower. The asteroid was discovered in 2008. It won't be back our way again until 2032, but it will be a much more distant encounter, staying 45 million miles away.

Washington Commanders hiring Dallas Cowboys defensive coordinator Dan Quinn as coach, AP sources say

The Washington Commanders have an agreement with Dan Quinn to hire him as coach, two people with knowledge of the move tell The Associated Press. Quinn has been the Dallas Cowboys' defensive coordinator for the past three seasons. He coached the Falcons to a Super Bowl appearance in his five-plus years in Atlanta. Quinn became the choice for Washington after Lions offensive coordinator Ben Johnson informed teams he was staying with Detroit. Controlling owner Josh Harris, new general manager Adam Peters and Quinn give the organization a much-desired new approach after four years of Ron Rivera in charge turned out to be a disappointment.

02/16/24 - MOSCOW (AP) — Russian authorities say that Alexei Navalny, the fiercest foe of Russian President Vladimir Putin who crusaded against official corruption and staged massive anti-Kremlin protests, died in prison. He was 47. The Federal Penitentiary Service said in a statement that Navalny felt unwell after a walk on Friday and lost consciousness. An ambulance arrived to try to revive him, but he died. Navalny's spokeswoman said on X that the politician's team had no confirmation of his death so far and that his lawyer was traveling to the town where he was held.

NEW YORK (AP) — A verdict is expected Friday in Donald Trump's New York civil fraud trial, adding to a monumental week on the former president's legal calendar. Trump could be on the hook for hundreds of millions of dollars in penalties and other sanctions for allegedly inflating his wealth on financial statements that were given to banks, insurers and others to make deals and secure loans. The case, brought by New York Attorney General Letitia James, cuts to the heart of Trump's image as a savvy billionaire businessman and threatens to upend the real estate

empire that vaulted him to fame and the White House. Trump has denied wrongdoing and his lawyers have said they'll appeal if Judge Arthur Engoron rules against him.

BERLIN (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has signed a bilateral security agreement with Germany and plans to sign another with France. It's a strong signal of long-term support as Kyiv works to shore up Western support nearly two years after Russia launched its full-scale war. The Ukrainian leader met German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in Berlin Friday and was continuing to Paris to meet French President Emmanuel Macron. The bilateral security and long-term support agreements follow a security agreement between Ukraine and the U.K. signed last month. Zelenskyy will continue Saturday to the Munich Security Conference, an annual gathering of high-ranking security and foreign policy officials, where he plans meetings with U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris among others.

WASHINGTON (AP) — An FBI informant has been charged with lying to authorities about a multimillion-dollar bribery scheme between President Joe Biden, his son Hunter and a Ukrainian energy company. The claim is central to a Republican impeachment inquiry in Congress. Prosecutors say Alexander Smirnov falsely told FBI agents in June 2020 that executives associated with the Ukrainian energy company Burisma paid Hunter and Joe Biden \$5 million each in 2015 or 2016. The allegations became a flashpoint in Congress over the summer as Republicans demanded the FBI release the unredacted form documenting the allegations as they pursued investigations of President Biden and his family. An attorney for Smirnov declined to comment on the allegations.

LONDON (AP) — Voters in two districts in England have delivered new blows to beleaguered Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. Results Friday show they elected opposition-party lawmakers in seats that Sunak's Conservatives had held for years. Labour Party candidates won the House of Commons seats of Kingswood in southwest England and Wellingborough in the country's center. The Conservatives won both by large margins at the last national election in 2019. The hard-right Reform Party came third, putting more pressure on the Conservatives. Labour leader Keir Starmer said the results "show people want change." The results will likely worsen fears among Conservatives that the party is heading for defeat when a national election is held in less than a year.

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Tiger Woods is back on the PGA Tour and his lasting memory was a shank. Woods hit a shank with an 8-iron from the 18th fairway at the Genesis Invitational. He attributes that to back spasms over the last two holes. At least he made a terrific recovery. He still made bogey and shot 72. That leaves him eight shots out of the lead. He'll need a better round Friday to make sure he sticks around for the weekend. Woods says his back has been acting up at home. He also says there was rust from not having played much.

02/23/24 - WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States and the European Union are piling new sanctions on Russia on the eve of the second anniversary of its invasion of Ukraine and in retaliation for the death of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny last week. The U.S. Treasury Department plans to impose more than 500 new sanctions on Russia and its war machine in the largest single tranche of penalties since Russia's invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022. Also Friday, the European Union announced it is imposing sanctions on several foreign companies

over allegations that they have exported dual-use goods to Russia that could be used in its war against Ukraine.

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The latest figures from the National Police show that more than 30,000 people have been reported missing in Ukraine during two years of war. Among them are military personnel, civilians and children. Tens of thousands of people have disappeared under a variety of circumstances, their whereabouts unknown. The families endure excruciating uncertainty, desperately seeking any sign of their missing loved ones. For many, this agonizing quest has persisted for the duration of Russia's unprovoked war aimed at seizing Ukraine. The International Committee of the Red Cross says since February 2022 its team has been contacted more than 100,000 times by families searching for their loved ones.

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israel seeks open-ended control over security and civilian affairs in the Gaza Strip, according to a long-awaited postwar plan by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. His ideas were swiftly rejected Friday by Palestinian leaders and run counter to Washington's vision for the war-ravaged enclave. Netanyahu presented the two-page document to his security Cabinet late Thursday for approval. Separately, cease-fire efforts appeared to gain traction, with mediators to present a new proposal at an expected high-level meeting this weekend in Paris. In Gaza, Israeli airstrikes in the center and south of the territory killed at least 68 Palestinians, including children and women. The overall Palestinian death toll surpassed 29,500.

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — A private lander has made the first U.S. moon landing in more than 50 years. Intuitive Machines' lander touched down Thursday, but left flight controllers scrambling before gaining better contact. Tension mounted in the company's Houston control center when there was no immediate word from the lander following the designated touchdown time. A faint signal finally was acquired. Once communication was improved, the company confirmed the lander was upright and starting to send back data. The landing put the U.S. back on the moon for the first time since NASA's Apollo moonwalkers.

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Defense lawyers say a former FBI informant who claims to have links to Russian intelligence and is charged with lying about a multimillion-dollar bribery scheme involving President Joe Biden's family has been taken back into the custody of U.S. Marshals. Alexander Smirnov had been released with a GPS monitor ahead of trial. He was arrested during a meeting Thursday morning at his lawyers' offices in downtown Las Vegas. The arrest came after prosecutors asked a judge in California, where the case originally was filed, to reconsider Smirnov's custody status while he awaits trial. He is charged with making a false statement and creating a false and fictitious record.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former President Donald Trump is urging a federal judge in Florida to dismiss the criminal case charging him with illegally retaining classified documents. Trump's lawyers claim in part that presidential immunity protects him from prosecution — an argument they have already submitted to the U.S. Supreme Court in his election interference case. Trump faces dozens of felony counts accusing him of illegally hoarding classified documents at his Mar-a-Lago estate and obstructing government efforts to retrieve them. The case is currently set for trial on May 20, but that date could be pushed back.

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — Jaylen Wells had a 4-point play in the final minute and scored 27 points to help No. 21 Washington State beat No. 4 Arizona 77-74 on Thursday night for its eighth

straight victory. Washington State (21-6, 12-4 Pac-12) won in its first game in the AP Top 25 since the 2007-08 season and leapfrogged the Wildcats (20-6, 11-4) for first place in the conference race. Arizona's Caleb Love made a layup and was fouled with 51.2 seconds left, hitting the free throw to complete the 3-point play for a 74-71 lead. Wells responded on the next possession with a corner 3 — also while being fouled — and made the free throw for a 4-point play and a 75-74 lead with 24.6 seconds left.

Issue: Politics

Program Name: PBS Newshour

Aired Monday-Friday, 7-8pm

02/05/24 - Monday on the NewsHour, a bipartisan Senate deal to fund border security, Israel and Ukraine looks like a no-go after House Speaker Johnson says it's "dead on arrival." Secretary of State Blinken returns to the Middle East to push for a truce and release of hostages held in Gaza. Plus, delays in Donald Trump's insurrection case push his court dates further into election season.

02/14/24 - Wednesday on the NewsHour, a top congressional intelligence leader issues an urgent warning about a national security threat. The political fallout from the historic impeachment of Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas. Plus, in this consequential election year, Judy Woodruff visits a mock presidential convention to hear what young voters think about the candidates and the nation's deep divisions.

02/28/24 - Wednesday on the NewsHour, the Supreme Court agrees to hear arguments on whether Donald Trump is immune from prosecution in the 2020 election interference case. Republican Mitch McConnell announces he's stepping down from Senate leadership after 17 years at the helm. Plus, the results of Michigan's presidential primary and the warning signs they contain for leading candidates of both parties.

Issue: The Environment

Program Name: StarDate

Aired daily at noon and 5pm Monday-Friday on WSND-FM

02/01/24 - Almost a century ago, astronomers split the celestial sphere into 88 constellations. Most of them — the famous ones — date from ancient times. But 14 of them — none of which is famous — were created by a single man, in the 18th century.

Nicolas Louis de La Caille was a French astronomer. In 1751, he set up an observatory in South Africa to study the stars of the southern hemisphere. Over the following year, he cataloged about 10,000 stars. Later, he used those stars to draw constellations in parts of the sky that weren't visible from most of Europe.

He called one of them Mons Mensa — table mountain. It honored a feature near La Caille's observatory. He named all the others for scientific instruments, such as the telescope and microscope, or artist's tools, such as the painter's easel.

One of those constellations is Fornax, the furnace, which is quite low in the south as night falls.

Originally, La Caille called it Fornax Chemica, after a small heater that was used for chemistry experiments. Another astronomer shortened the name a few decades later.

Fornax isn't much to look at — at least not with the eye alone. It contains only one modestly bright star, Alpha Fornacis. But a telescope reveals many treasures within its borders. That includes some beautiful individual galaxies, plus a giant cluster of galaxies — fiery visions in the celestial furnace.

02/15/24 - The Sun is near the top of its class — class “G.” Such stars all have about the same temperature, so they look yellow. Members of the class that are in the prime of life, as the Sun is, are also close to the Sun's mass, size, and brightness.

That doesn't mean the stars are just alike, though. They're different ages, they spin at different rates, and they have different levels of activity.

A close example is Kappa Ceti, in Cetus, the whale. The star is about 30 light-years away. It's almost exactly the same size and mass as the Sun. But it's only 85 percent of the Sun's brightness, and it spins about three times faster. And those two facts are related.

Kappa Ceti is a few hundred million years old — less than 10 percent the age of the Sun. Younger stars rotate faster than older stars — a result of their formation. They spin fast as the cloud of dust and gas that gave them birth collapses. A rapidly spinning star generates a stronger magnetic field. That creates more and bigger “starspots” — dark storms on the surface. And that reduces the star's overall brightness. In the case of Kappa Ceti, some of the spots are so big that they cause the star's brightness to change as the spots rotate into and out of view.

Kappa Ceti is high in the south-southwest at nightfall. Under dark skies, it's just visible to the unaided eye. It's well to the left of the brilliant planet Jupiter, and to the lower left of the Moon.

02/29/24 - The remaining dates of 2024 will take a big leap. They'll jump over a day of the week. That's because this is leap year, and today is leap day — extending the year from 365 days to 366.

Leap years are needed to keep the calendar in sync with the seasons. Without it, the equinoxes and solstices would slide across the calendar. So after many centuries, the spring equinox would happen in February, with the winter solstice backing into November. And over the ages, the shift would grow even larger.

The modern calendar is based on one instituted by Julius Caesar. It had a 365-day year, with a leap day added to every fourth year, for an average of 365 and a quarter days per year. But the

true year is about 11 minutes shorter than that average, so the calendar drifted out of alignment with the seasons.

To fix that problem, in 1582 Pope Gregory XIII instituted an update. Under this calendar, three leap days are dropped off for every 400 years. With this change, the difference between the calendar year and the astronomical year adds up to one day every 3300 years.

The name “leap” year comes from the fact that the extra day causes succeeding dates to leap over a day of the week. For example, Christmas fell on a Monday last year. Without the leap day, this year it would fall on a Tuesday. But with the extra day, it will “leap” over Tuesday and fall on Wednesday.

Issue: News

Program Name: Associated Press News, read by Notre Dame students and WSND community announcers

Aired Monday-Friday at 7:30am, 8:30am, 12:30pm, 4:30pm and 5:30pm

03/03/24 - ATLANTA (AP) — The judge overseeing the Georgia 2020 election interference case has dismissed some of the charges against ex-President Donald Trump, but others remain. Fulton County Superior Court Judge Scott McAfee wrote today in an order that six of the charges in the indictment must be quashed, including three against Trump. The order leaves intact many other charges in the indictment. The judge wrote that prosecutors could seek a new indictment on the charges he dismissed. The six charges in question have to do with soliciting elected officials to violate their oaths of office. One of the counts stems from a phone call Trump made to fellow Republican Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger on Jan. 2, 2021. Trump denies wrongdoing.

WASHINGTON (AP) — A TikTok spokesman is criticizing Congress for being too secretive as it advances a proposal that could lead to a nationwide ban of the popular video app. The House today passed a bill that would ban TikTok in the U.S. if its China-based owner doesn't sell. Lawmakers are concerned the company's current ownership structure is beholden to the Chinese government and poses a U.S. national security threat. A Chinese foreign ministry spokesman accuses Washington of resorting to political tools when U.S. businesses fail to compete. The House bill now goes to the Senate, where its prospects are unclear. TikTok has 150 million American users and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Chinese technology firm ByteDance Ltd.

President Vladimir Putin says that Russia is ready to use nuclear weapons if its sovereignty or independence is threatened. It was another blunt warning to the West just days before an election in which the Russian leader is all but certain to win another six-year term. Putin has repeatedly talked about his readiness to use nuclear weapons since launching a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Putin was asked in an interview with Russian state television released early today if he has ever considered using battlefield nuclear weapons in Ukraine. He responded that there has been no need. But Putin said that Moscow is ready to use nuclear weapons in case of a threat to its sovereignty or independence.

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — A proposal to install new leadership in Haiti appears to be crumbling as some political parties rejected the plan to create a presidential council that would manage the transition. The panel would be responsible for selecting an interim prime minister and a council of ministers that would attempt to chart a new path for the Caribbean country that has been overrun by gangs. The violence has closed schools and businesses and disrupted daily life across Haiti.

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Evangelicals have been among Israel's fiercest foreign supporters for years. This is particularly true in the United States, where their political influence has helped shape the Israel policy of recent Republican administrations. Since the Israel-Hamas war began five months ago, evangelicals have been visiting Israel in growing numbers to volunteer and help support the war effort. Tourism to Israel has plummeted since October. The Tourism Ministry says up to half of those who do visit now come with faith-based groups. Evangelicals believe Israel is key to an end-times prophecy that will bring about the return of the Christian Messiah.

NEW YORK (AP) — Researchers have linked another kind of amoeba to nasal rinsing. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention today published a report that for the first time connects Acanthamoeba infections to use of neti pots and other nasal rinsing devices. For years, scientists have known people can become infected with a different germ — a brain-eating amoeba — through the misuse of neti pots. Cases are extremely rare. But officials also are renewing their warning against using common tap water for nasal rinsing. The CDC recommends using boiled, sterile or distilled water. If tap water is used, it must be boiled first.

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Federal prosecutors say three men from Kansas City, Missouri, face firearms charges, including gun trafficking, after an investigation into the mass shooting during the Kansas City Chiefs' Super Bowl parade and rally. The U.S. Attorney's Office in Kansas City says 22-year-old Fedo Antonia Manning, was charged in a 12-count complaint. Ronnel Dewayne Williams Jr., 21, and Chaelyn Hendrick Groves, 19, were charged in four-count complaints. The charges were filed Monday and unsealed today, after the arrests. Court documents that were part of the complaint said 12 people brandished firearms and at least six people fired weapons at the rally attended by an estimated 1 million people on Feb. 14. One woman died and nearly two dozen other people were injured.

U.S. stocks drifted to a mixed close as a lull carried through financial markets worldwide. The S&P 500 slipped 0.2%, a day after setting an all-time high. The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 37 points to pull within 90 points of its record, and the Nasdaq composite lost 0.5%.

SPORTS

Derrick Henry is leaving the Tennessee Titans to team up with MVP Lamar Jackson and the Baltimore Ravens with a two-year deal worth up to \$20 million, a person with knowledge of the deal tells The Associated Press. Henry's deal follows several others for running backs during the NFL's two-day legal tampering period. The position has been devalued in recent years, but this year's run shows teams will go after running backs at the right price. At least a dozen running backs are switching teams along with at least 10 quarterbacks, including Kirk Cousins and Russell Wilson.

GLENDAL, Ariz. (AP) — There is a bridge that runs from Tommy John and Dr. Frank Jobe in 1974, all the way to Justin Verlander and Bryce Harper. A thread that connects an increasing number of baseball's biggest stars. Almost 50 years ago, on Sept. 25, 1974, Jobe reconstructed a torn ulnar collateral ligament in John's left arm. It was a pioneering achievement for Jobe and a lifeline for John, who went from a career-ending injury to 14 more years in the majors. The procedure became known as Tommy John surgery. It is one of baseball's most important operations, extending the careers of some of the game's biggest stars.

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Tiger Woods has never done it. Neither has Jack Nicklaus or any other of golf's best over the last half-century. The challenge facing Scottie Scheffler this week at The Players Championship is trying to be the first player to win it back-to-back. Scheffler has the odds in his favor, just not history. He is coming off a five-shot victory at Bay Hill when he got his putter to finally cooperate. He also won by five shots at The Players last year. The field isn't the strongest in golf because of all the stars now with LIV Golf.

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — Louisville has fired coach Kenny Payne after going 12-52 in two seasons that marked the worst consecutive finishes in the storied basketball program's history. The move came a day after the Cardinals' 94-85 first-round loss to North Carolina State in the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament. Louisville's eighth consecutive defeat capped an 8-24 season. Athletic director Josh Heird says in a statement that "change is needed to help this program achieve what is expected and attainable." The 57-year-old Payne is set to receive an \$8 million buyout under terms of a six-year contract through 2028.

TOLEDO, Ohio (AP) — Former UFC champion Mark Coleman was airlifted to an Ohio hospital after saving his parents from a house fire. Coleman's daughter Morgan posted on Instagram that her father went back in several times to get his parents out of the blaze. She said he also went back in to save a dog, named Hammer. The dog did not survive despite Coleman's efforts. Coleman's mother Connie posted on Facebook "Thank God we're alive" and requested prayers for her son. Morgan Coleman has started a gofundme.com page for her father.

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. Senator Ted Cruz says there's a 50-50 chance of Congress passing legislation regulating college athletics by the end of the year. Cruz lowered his estimate of a bill getting through by the end of this session and said he and his counterparts are running out of time. The senator from Texas believes something will get done to standardize name, image and likeness and other financial aspects of college sports in the country. His comments came after Cruz oversaw a roundtable discussion on the topic with former Alabama football coach Nick Saban, Alabama athletic director Greg Byrne, ACC commissioner Jim Phillips and others.

03/13/24 - WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden has formally clinched a second straight Democratic nomination. Now his party's presumptive nominee, he faces an all-but-certain rematch with former President Donald Trump. Biden clinched the nomination Tuesday after winning enough delegates in Georgia. His nomination will become official at the Democratic National Convention to be held in Chicago in August. Biden, who mounted his first bid for president 37 years ago, did not face any serious Democratic challengers to his run for reelection at age 81. That's despite facing low approval ratings and a lack of voter enthusiasm for his presidency, driven in part by his age.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump stands on the brink of unofficially securing the Republican presidential nomination for a third time after winning primaries in Georgia and Mississippi and with additional votes being cast in Washington and Hawaii. He'll need about eight out of every 10 delegates available in those states to do it in Tuesday's contests. Otherwise, the former president will have to wait up to a week before he can once again claim the title of presumptive nominee. Trump's near-clean sweep of last week's Super Tuesday contests, as well as his more recent win in American Samoa's caucuses, put him just 126 delegates shy of the 1,215 needed to clinch the nomination heading into Tuesday's contests. Trump needs about 78% of the 161 delegates in Tuesday's elections.

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — A ship loaded with some 200 tons of food is sailing to Gaza. It's a pilot program for the opening of a sea corridor to the territory, where the Israel-Hamas war has driven hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to the brink of starvation. The food was gathered by the World Central Kitchen charity. It's being transported by the Spanish aid group Open Arms. The ship left the Mediterranean island nation of Cyprus and is expected to arrive in Gaza in two to three days. On Monday, the first day of the normally festive month of Ramadan, children in the urban Jabaliya refugee camp were given a small portion of cooked carrots and sweet potatoes to break their fast.

03/27/24 - BALTIMORE (AP) — Investigators are collecting evidence from the cargo ship that plowed into Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge and caused its collapse. Meanwhile in the waters below, divers searched today through twisted metal for six construction workers who plunged into the harbor and were feared dead. The investigation picked up speed as the Baltimore region reeled from the sudden loss of a major transportation link that's part of the highway loop around the city. The disaster also closed the port that is vital to the city's shipping industry. Officials with the National Transportation Safety Board boarded the ship and planned to recover information from its electronics and paperwork.

A series of Israeli airstrikes across southern Lebanon has killed at least 16 people, including paramedics. It's one of the deadliest days of fighting on the Israel-Lebanon border since the war in Gaza broke out nearly six months ago. A barrage of 30 rockets Wednesday also killed one Israeli. It was claimed by the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, which said it was responding to the deadly airstrike targeting a paramedic center linked to a Sunni Muslim group. International mediators have been scrambling to prevent an all-out war between Israel and Hezbollah amid near-daily violence, mostly confined to the area along the border.

ATLANTA (AP) — Many Americans are unenthusiastic about a November rematch of the 2020 presidential election. But presumptive GOP nominee Donald Trump appears to stoke more fear and anger among Democrats than President Joe Biden does among Republicans. That's according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. A potential Trump victory inspires more excitement among Republicans than a Biden win does among Democrats, though, highlighting a potential weak point for Biden. The findings are notable in an unusual campaign pitting an incumbent president against his predecessor, with both men facing doubters within their own parties and among independents.

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden will share a stage with former Presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton in New York as he raises money for his reelection campaign. Thursday's

event is a one-of-a-kind political extravaganza that will showcase decades of Democratic leadership. Although the three have occasionally campaigned against each other, they've spent more time working together. The event will be a sharp contrast to Donald Trump's relative isolation from other Republican leaders. Although the presumptive Republican nominee has solidified control over his party, not even his own former vice president, Mike Pence, has been willing to endorse his bid for another White House term.

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump has lashed out at the New York judge who put him under a gag order that bars him from commenting publicly about witnesses, prosecutors, court staff and jurors in his upcoming hush-money criminal trial. The former president also lambasted the judge's daughter, who posted a photo illustration of Trump behind bars. Trump posted on social media today that the gag order was "illegal, un-American, unConstitutional" and said Judge Juan M. Merchan was "wrongfully attempting to deprive me of my First Amendment Right to speak out against the Weaponization of Law Enforcement" by Democratic rivals. The gag order does not bar comments about Merchan or his family. Messages seeking comment were left with the Judge, Loren Merchan and a court spokesperson.

CHICAGO (AP) — When the Supreme Court ended affirmative action, it left the college essay as one of few places where race can play a role in admissions decisions. Yet the added weight of the college essay has fallen unevenly on students of color, who often feel pressure to exploit their hardships as they compete for a spot on campus. This year's senior class is the first in decades to navigate college admissions without affirmative action. The Supreme Court upheld the practice in decisions going back to the 1970s, but this court's conservative supermajority said it is unconstitutional for colleges to give students extra weight because of their race alone. For the first time in history, world timekeepers may have to consider subtracting a second from our clocks in a few years because the planet is rotating a tad faster. Today's study in a scientific journal says that clocks may have to skip in a second — called a "negative leap second" — around 2029. Ice melting at both of Earth's poles has been counteracting the planet's burst of speed and is likely to have delayed the global second of reckoning by about three years. It's a complicated situation that involves physics, global power politics, climate change, technology and two types of time.

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Allies of Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, and Disney, have reached a settlement agreement in a state court fight over how Walt Disney World is developed in the future following the takeover of the theme park resort's government by the Florida governor. In a meeting this morning, the DeSantis-appointed members of the board of the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District approved the settlement agreement, ending almost two years of litigation that was sparked by DeSantis' takeover of the district from Disney supporters. The takeover was a result of the company's opposition to Florida's so-called "Don't Say Gay" law, which has been largely rescinded in a legal settlement.

U.S. stocks broke out of a three-day lull to close at a record. The S&P 500 added 0.9%, beating the all-time high it set last week. The Dow Jones Industrial Average climbed 1.2%, and the Nasdaq composite added 0.5%. The Dow and Nasdaq closed just short of their own records.

SPORTS

NCAA President Charlie Baker is urging states with legal wagering on sporting events to ban betting on individual player performances. Prop bets allow gamblers to wager on statistics a player will accumulate during a game. The NBA has opened an investigation into Toronto Raptors two-way player Jontay Porter amid gambling allegations related to his own performance in individual games. Ohio, Vermont and Maryland are among the states that have removed prop betting on college athletes. The American Gaming Association estimates \$2.7 billion will be bet this year on the NCAA men's and women's basketball tournaments through legal sportsbooks, not counting your office pool and other "off-books" betting outlets.

NEW YORK (AP) — Baseball season openers in New York and Philadelphia Thursday have been postponed until Friday because of rainy forecasts in both cities.

David Rubenstein's purchase of the Baltimore Orioles has been approved by Major League Baseball owners. That clears the way for the Angelos family to finalize the sale after over three decades running the team. Approval of 75% of all owners was required, and MLB said the vote was unanimous. It came the day before the team is scheduled to open the season at home against the Los Angeles Angels. Rubenstein can now take over once his investor group officially closes the sale, which is expected sometime today. The Angelos family has been in control of the Orioles since 1993, when Peter Angelos purchased the team for \$173 million, an outright bargain in today's market.

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Only a week has passed since the Los Angeles Dodgers abruptly fired Ipeei Mizuhara, the interpreter and constant companion of their new \$700 million slugger & pitcher, Shohei Ohtani. But the shocking events have been the biggest story of baseball's spring, and the saga doesn't appear over as the regular season begins in earnest. The scandal encompasses gambling, alleged theft, extensive deceit and the breakup of an enduring partnership between the biggest star in the majors and his right-hand man. Investigations are underway by the IRS and Major League Baseball, and Ohtani laid out his version of events in a news conference yesterday.

NFL owners were busy this week, approving a series of rule changes that address player safety, overhaul the kickoff and expand the use of instant replay. The changes were all overwhelmingly approved but they don't come without some level of controversy, with many players opposing the ban on the use of the "swivel hip-drop" tackle, in which a defender wraps his arms around a ball-carrier's waist and drops his weight on the ballcarrier's legs and feet, often causing injury. They also have many questions about how the rules will be enforced and the impact they will have on games.

Issue: Politics

Program Name: PBS Newshour

Aired Monday-Friday, 7-8pm

03/01/24 - Friday on the NewsHour, thousands gather for the funeral of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, defying the Kremlin and fears of a police crackdown. Four years after the first COVID death in the U.S., we speak to the CDC director about new guidance. Plus, a Nobel Peace Prize winner working to combat poverty in his home country of Bangladesh defends his reputation against corruption charges.

03/13/24 - Wednesday on the NewsHour, a bipartisan majority in the house passes legislation that could result in a TikTok ban in the U.S. if its Chinese owners don't sell. The race for the White House is officially a rematch of 2020 after Biden and Trump clinch their parties' nominations. Plus, the dangerous journey migrant children take, many on their own, seeking safety in the U.S.

03/28/24 - Thursday on the NewsHour, disgraced cryptocurrency mogul Sam Bankman-Fried is sentenced to 25 years in prison for defrauding investors. The sister of the American journalist jailed in Russia for a year speaks out about his detention. Plus, the legacy and impact of the late senator and vice presidential nominee Joe Lieberman.

Issue: The Environment

Program Name: StarDate

Aired daily at noon and 5pm Monday-Friday on WSND-FM

03/01/24 - Many bright stars highlight the sky this evening: Sirius, the brightest of them all; Regulus, the heart of the lion; several sparklers in Orion, and more. Astronomers know a lot about these stars. But most of what they know is a bit uncertain. So when they pin numbers to a star, they give themselves some wiggle room to compensate.

Consider Sirius, which is in the south at nightfall. It's one of the Sun's closest neighbors, at a distance of about 8.6 light-years. But that could be off by up to a few percent of a light-year either way. That's a total variation of perhaps half a trillion miles.

There's a similar uncertainty in the distance to Regulus, the brightest star of Leo, which is in the east at nightfall. It's measured at 79 light-years away — give or take that same half a trillion miles.

And the uncertainty is much greater for stars like Betelgeuse — an orange supergiant at the shoulder of Orion. It puffs in and out, and its outer layers are so thin that it's hard to tell just where its surface is. That makes it harder to get a fix on its position, so it's harder to measure the distance. Betelgeuse is thought to be roughly 550 light-years away. But it could be perhaps a hundred light-years farther, or 50 light-years closer.

Without an exact distance, it's hard to determine a star's size, its true brightness, and more. So the stars are pretty well known — but with sometimes big uncertainties.

03/15/24 - If you're ready for a taste of summer, look no farther than the dawn sky. The constellations in view at first light are just what you'll see as night falls in July and August. Scorpius is low in the south, with Sagittarius in the southeast. The Big Dipper hangs from its handle in the northwest. And the Summer Triangle — the stars Vega, Deneb, and Altair — stands high in the east.

As Earth orbits the Sun, our viewing angle on the stars changes. As a result, each star rises about four minutes earlier each night. So a star that rises at dawn now, will rise eight hours earlier in July, 10 hours earlier in August, and 12 hours earlier in September.

Now you might think this all means that we'd see the current morning configuration 12 hours earlier in the night during September — half a year from now. And you'd be partially right. The same configuration of stars will be in the sky at that hour. But the Sun sets later then, so it's still daylight when the stars stand in their current dawn positions. So by sunset then, Scorpius and the others will have rotated farther to the west. That means the best time to see this setup in the early evening sky is a month or two earlier — July and August.

That all sounds a bit confusing, but trust us: The stars have been following that pattern for a long time — moving the same stars we see in the dawn sky now into the evening sky during the short nights of summer.

03/30/24 - The stories behind the constellations don't always match the pictures we see in the sky. Consider Corvus, which rises in the southeast in mid-evening. In Greek mythology, it represented a naughty crow. The god Apollo sent the crow to fetch a cup of water. Instead, Corvus spent days gorging on fresh figs. He then grabbed a water snake and told Apollo that it had kept him from completing his task. Apollo knew the crow was lying, so he flung Corvus, the cup, and the snake into the sky.

To modern eyes, though, the crow's brightest stars form the outline of a sail. Going clockwise from the sail's highest point as it rises, the stars are Delta, Gamma, Epsilon, and Beta Corvi.

A couple of the stars are binaries, with two stars bound together by gravity. But the main stars in those systems, and the single stars in the other two, have a lot in common. They're all bigger, heavier, and brighter than the Sun. And at least three of them are late in life. They've used up all or most of the original hydrogen fuel in their cores. That's made the stars puff up, which has made them shine much brighter.

Astronomers aren't sure about the fourth star. It might be in the same phase of life as the others. On the other hand, it might be quite young — just settling into life as a mature star.

Look for the sail — or the crow — in the southeast after about 9:30 or 10. It's due south after midnight.