

# Terra Nova Times

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Terra Nova High School

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## U.S. Capitol Building attacked

By Samantha Guerrero  
Times staff writer

The United States found itself in a state of shock on Wednesday Jan. 6 after a group of President Trump's supporters stormed the Capitol building in Washington, D.C. on the day Congress was meeting to affirm Joe Biden's election victory. Those in attendance were answering the president's call to gather in protest of Trump's defeat in Nov. The riot that ensued forced lawmakers to take shelter, the building to be put on lockdown, and resulted in the death of five people. Here is a breakdown of how the incident occurred last week.

Just before midday, thousands of Trump supporters gathered at the Ellipse, near the White House, where they listened to the president's speech at a "Save America" rally. President Trump told them, "We're going to walk down Pennsylvania Avenue...and we're going to the capitol and we're going to try and give...our Republicans, the weak ones...the kind of pride and boldness that they need to take back our country." He also swore "We will never concede" before reiterating his false claims about the election, reiterating, "Make no



Washington State House Democrats

**This event shocked the entire country, and caused calls for Trump's removal to grow.**

mistake, this election was stolen from you, from me and from the country" and suggested his VP, Mike Pence, derail the confirmation, although Pence had no power to do so. As the speech ended, fired-up crowds made their way towards the Congress building where they were met by police barriers. Chanting crowds gathered on

both sides of the building, quickly thwarting D.C. Metro and Capitol Police efforts to keep the crowd at bay. Meanwhile, Congress was gathered, and as per custom, Mike Pence opened sealed envelopes from each state in alphabetical order, read them aloud, and conferred them to "tellers" from both the House and Senate. He and lawmakers

were able to get to Arizona, but were forced to abandon the procedure after the growing crowd outside had found their way in.

Police officers struggled to maintain control as rioters advanced on the building in multiple areas. On the east side of the building, crowds forced their way through barricades and moved to the main entrance,

where they easily found access to the Great Rotunda, which is the center area of the building. They headed towards the Senate and House chambers, which are on the far left and right areas of the building. A makeshift barricade was placed in front of the doors of the House; however, the crowd smashed windows and doors. Apart from that, they left graffiti with messages like "murder the media," and took selfies, such as a man sitting in Speaker Nancy Pelosi's office with his foot on the table. Videos and images show these rioters chanting "Stop the steal" and other phrases associated with those who continue to believe Trump's fraudulent messages that the election was stolen.

Minutes before 3:00 PM, shots were heard in the building. 35-year-old Ashli Babbitt was shot and killed by Capitol police as she tried to force her way into the House chamber. Three other people — Kevin Greeson, 55, Benjamin Phillips, 50, and Rosanne Boyland, 34 — later died due to medical emergencies. Police officer Brian D. Sicknick died in the hospital a day later from injuries he sustained when rioters chucked a fire extinguisher at his head.

*See Capitol on page 6*

## Democrats sweep Georgia runoff elections

By Elliott Song  
Times staff writer

The past couple of months have been a chaotic mess of elections that to the everyday American might have been more than a little confusing. However, this past week, all eyes were turned towards Georgia as we waited in suspense for the results of their two Senate runoff elections. Control of the Senate for at least the next two years was at stake. Come Tuesday, Jan. 5, we had our results, as both Democratic candidates had won, pushing the Senate into the control of the Democratic Party.

The two different races were between David Perdue (Rep.) vs. Jon Ossoff (Dem.), and Kelly Loeffler (Rep.) vs. Raphael Warnock (Dem.). So why does this even matter in the grand scheme of things?

If both runoffs were not won by the Democratic candidates, the Republican party would have gained control of the Senate, whether it would have been

a 51 - 49, or 52 - 48 advantage. In that case, the country would have had to live with two years of divided government until the next round of Senate elections. However, with the miraculous victory of both Ossoff and Warnock, the Senate votes have been brought to a tie of 50 - 50.

If you're wondering how a tie spells victory for the Democrats, here's a little fact for you. In case of a split 50 - 50 vote in the Senate, the vice president is afforded the authority to act as a tiebreaker. Seeing as our future vice president is Democrat Kamala Harris, we'll be seeing split votes in the Senate being tipped in favor of the Democrats.

The Democratic party already won the House of Representatives largely due to the campaigning of both President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Harris, although their hold on the House is much narrower than before November. Now with the Senate under the control of the Democrats as well, the first two years of Biden's presidential term will likely



Elliott Song / Terra Nova Times

**These Senate races were key to determine which party would hold power in Congress.**

see very few roadblocks for his party to pass legislation.

Overall, this election serves as a huge victory for the Democratic party. As for the Republican party, the elections in the past couple of months have definitely yielded some unde-

sirable results, with both the Presidency and Senate changing hands and going blue.

Biden has obviously been supportive of the runoff results. On the other hand, President Trump has been under fire by both parties. One reason for

this is because of the events that unfolded in the capital this Wednesday. However, another reason for this is his constant questioning of the legitimacy of the election process that may have discouraged red party voters from turning out.

# NBA basketball is back in action

By Miles Palmer  
Times staff writer

After a postponed season that ended four months later than normal, the NBA has begun the 2020-2021 season. Dec. 22 marked the official start of a season that will likely be just as strange as the last.

Only 72 games will be played, ten fewer than the regular 82 games. This will make it so the players can still play in the 2021 Tokyo Olympics, as long as that happens on schedule. The start date raised some controversy amongst players. The Los Angeles Lakers and Miami Heat had about 2-3 months of rest before the first game was played, the shortest offseason in NBA history. This is significantly shorter than teams that did not make it to the bubble, who have not played since Mar. 11.

Lakers star LeBron James was not quite thrilled with this decision. His teammate Danny Green spoke about James and the upcoming season. "Bron's been in the Finals 10 years out of his



Jack Gillen / Terra Nova Times

**The wait hasn't been long, but fans are still happy that basketball is back.**

17 years, which is unbelievable mentally. It's draining to do that. To have that quick a restart, I wouldn't expect to see him there. I wouldn't expect to see him probably the first month of the season. He'd probably work out with us but I don't expect guys to want to be there or show up willingly," Green said.

Despite the short offseason for the veteran James, he contributed 22 points in the Lakers loss to the LA Clippers on opening night.

While the start of the season may have not pleased some NBA players, fans everywhere are excited for the sport's return. Avid fan Gio Thompson is loving

being able to see players such as Atlanta Hawks point guard Trae Young. However, Thompson disagrees with James's complaints that his team had too short of an offseason. "I think it's very fair," Thompson remarked when asked about the unfairness of a short offseason. "They had four months off when the NBA was shut down, so they already had their time off."

Nonetheless, the 2021 NBA season has been living it up to its potential. Steph Curry dropped a career high 62 points in Golden State's win against the Trail Blazers. Dallas Mavericks point guard Luka Doncic continues to keep fans on the edge of their seats. Kevin Durant and the shifty point guard Kyrie Irving have been tearing things up in Brooklyn. On opening night, Jason Tatum hit a game winning three on reigning MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo. Not to mention, James and Anthony Davis are still dominating the league just as they had done in the fall. The holiday season was a perfect time to enjoy some of the world's best play the beautiful game, and fans look forward to all the action this season is likely to bring.

## The Warriors look towards successful season

By Miguel Valdes  
Times staff writer

After a poor season and a short offseason, the Golden State Warriors are looking to return to their status as championship contenders. Last year, the Warriors lost Kevin Durant to the Nets, Klay Thompson to an ACL tear, and Stephen Curry to a broken wrist that required surgery, all devastating losses. The Warriors did acquire Andrew Wiggins in the middle of the year; however, this addition did not compensate for the loss of their premier starters, and the Warriors ended the season 15-50, the worst record in the NBA. They did acquire the second overall pick in the draft and signed a much needed big man named James Wiseman. With Thompson, Curry, and Draymond all returning from injury plus newly acquired Wiggins and Wiseman, things were looking

promising for the new season.

And then tragedy struck: Thompson suffered an Achilles tear just before the season started. The Warriors still have a chance at making some headlines this season despite the hurdles in front of them, but finding a player to replace Thompson will be a challenge. Newly acquired Kelly Oubre is looking to fill in for superstar Thompson, but those are big shoes to fill. If Oubre's performance is consistent with his work in Phoenix, it will be hard to imagine the Warriors doing any better under these conditions, but Oubre is hopeful that he can make an impact with Golden State.

"The way my game has continuously grown is that you can throw me at pretty much any position, and I would help the team out," Oubre told reporters from NBC Sports Bay Area. "I just feel like it's positionless basketball. We all can adapt and adjust to different game plans and play whatever position that



Miles Palmer / Terra Nova Times

**The Warriors are hoping for another championship parade.**

on paper it says, but we're all basketball players over here and we all can formulate and adapt together on the court."

This year will be a proving year for former two-time

NBA most valuable player and three-time NBA champion Stephen Curry. Sitting out for even one season in the NBA allows other players to quickly shoot up the rankings, leaving leg-

ends such as Curry briefly out of the conversation. Still, no one would ever doubt the former MVP's ability to reinvent himself. Curry is going into his 12th season in the league at age 32, which has led to doubt of his athletic and shooting ability. However, Curry's skill set is one that allows him to transition through eras and still play the game at a high level.

Fans like Nathaniel Bendo (11) aren't ready to count their team out, either. "The Warriors are a great team man, I'd never count out a team that went to the finals 5 times in a row. With Dray and Curry out there, no one can stop them. They the OG's, they'll shock the world starting with Curry winning the MVP this year and Coach Kerr winning coach of the year," said Bendo.

Although Curry looks like he is in mid-season form on his fourth game, dropping from a career-high of 62 against the Trailblazers to 30 the following game, it looks like a long season.

## After a short retirement, Conor McGregor is returning to the octagon

By Jack Gillen  
Times staff writer

Conor McGregor will be returning to the octagon on Jan. 23 for UFC 257 against Dustin Poirier. McGregor, who retired, is coming back to the UFC to continue his career. It is no surprise that McGregor is once again coming out of retirement, as he has also said in 2016 and 2019 that he had hung up the gloves for good. McGregor has not fought that much recently, as throughout all of 2020 he only fought once, in a 40-second bout with Donald Cerrone before announcing his retirement last June.

The main card that will be occurring in UFC 257 will be a rematch with

Dustin Poirier, Conor McGregor's first high profile fight. The fight will not be at featherweight like it was the first time, but at lightweight. There was bad blood between the two at UFC 178, as there was constant trash talk at press conferences and the weigh-in. However, it is very different this go around, as the fighters have been a lot more friendly towards each other online with tweets from McGregor's saying, "I look forward to the fresh test Dustin will bring since our first bout, while also showcasing my own incredibly deep cache of weaponry."

Usually, there would be press conferences held where McGregor is famous, or rather infamous, for his trash talk, but due to COVID-19, there are no press conferences and other promotions, which

may be a key reason as to McGregor's silence. McGregor has also wanted this fight to be for charity and has announced, "I am also really excited about aiding Dustin's charity 'The Good Fight Foundation.'" This fight will bring in massive amounts of revenue, as McGregor is the most famous fighter in UFC history, so having a charity bout would be very beneficial to whatever charities the fighters decide on if McGregor gets his wish.

At the moment, this fight may be a lot different than the first one, as Poirier has had a lot more experience than McGregor since their first fight. McGregor has won six fights since their last encounter, whereas Poirier has ten wins to his name. Some of the wins that Poirier has stacked up were against former light-

weight champions like Anthony Pettis or interim champion Justin Gaethje. He is also the number seven pound for pound fighter in the world and the number two contender in the lightweight division.

McGregor brings an audience that no other fighter in the UFC can even match, and while he is a -255 favorite with a 71.8% chance of winning, Poirier is much different than the opponent he fought in UFC 178 in 2014. This fight will be watched by many and will be a true test to both fighters to see how they have both improved since their first encounter. This fight may also lead to a title shot due to the vacant title spot of Khabib Nurmagomenov if he did truly retire, so the stakes are high for both fighters stepping into the octagon later this month.

# NFL playoffs are now underway

By Miles Palmer  
Times staff writer

After a thriller of a season, the NFL playoffs are underway. Jan. 9 marked the official start of the Wildcard round. On Saturday, the Colts played the Bills, the Rams played the Seahawks, and the Buccaneers took on the Washington Football Team. The next day, the Ravens faced the Titans, the Bears played the Saints, and the weekend ended with the Browns vs. the Steelers.

The Los Angeles Rams and Seattle Seahawks Wildcard game was the third time these NFC West teams have played each other this year. Both teams had one win, but it was the Rams who claimed victory and took down Seattle, beating them 30-20. Another division rivalry turned Wildcard game featured the Cleveland Browns demolishing the Pittsburgh Steelers 48-37, the Browns first playoff win since 1994. On Sunday, the Ravens trav-



Jack Gillen / Terra Nova Times

**With a new 14-team format, this year's playoffs should be electric.**

eled to Tennessee and beat the Titans after losing to them in last year's divisional game. In week 17, after the Washington Football Team gained a spot in the playoffs, their rookie defensive end Chase Young ran off the field screaming, "I want Tom Brady!" Brady was not

fazed by the remark in Saturday's game, as he threw for 381 yards and two touchdowns in a 31-23 victory. The Indianapolis Colts' defense played a hard fought game against the Buffalo Bills, but Buffalo came back and won 27-24. The Chicago Bears traveled to the Super-

dome to face the New Orleans Saints, and in a slime-filled affair that was broadcast on Nickelodeon, the Saints came out victorious, winning 21-9.

Many fans were eager to see phenomenal teams and players compete last weekend. Terra Nova Junior Danny Ortner said

prior to the games that he was excited to watch the Bills play and wants to see them have a good playoff run. Washington running back Antonio Gibson has caught the attention of Ortner, who said, "I think he's extremely underrated and could make a huge impact in an upset over the Bucs." Gibson's 14 carries for 31 yards wasn't enough to pull a win for Washington, but the young running back shows promise.

With the Divisional round now set, the Rams go to the freezing Lambeau Field on Saturday to face Aaron Rodgers and the Green Bay Packers. Saturday night will see the Bills and the Ravens playing, two teams with young and talented quarterbacks. The Browns play the reigning Super Bowl champs Kansas Chiefs on Sunday, and the weekend will end with the Buccaneers playing the Saints. This matchup is highlighted by the two veterans, Brady and Brees, possibly competing against each other for the last time.

## Devonta Smith wins a close Heisman race

By Miguel Valdes  
Times staff writer

A wild college football season is nearing its conclusion, and with it came the Heisman trophy ceremony. The Heisman award is the most prestigious award in college football and is awarded to the most outstanding player in college football. With a week left in college football regular season, it's time to meet the finalists to win the Heisman award.

First up is Mac Jones, a Quarterback from Alabama. It's nothing new seeing a Crimson Tide player on the Heisman award watch list. Alabama has been known to produce many Heisman winning players and superstar players in the NFL. Nevertheless, Jones is special. He cruised in Alabama's 31-14 Rose Bowl win over Notre Dame, throwing 297 yards and four touchdowns and went 25-for-30 passing. He's at 4,036 yards, 36 touchdowns and four interceptions in the regular season. Jones is leading college football in QBR and is tied for least interceptions thrown in the season.

In a close second, receiver DeVonta Smith from the University of Alabama is having a season nobody will forget. It's been a long time since there's been



Jack Gillen / Terra Nova Times

**Smith's historic win was well deserved after his season.**

a non-quarterback on the Heisman trophy watch. The 6'1" stud has been Mac Jones' favorite target all season, and it showed in the CFB playoffs against #4 ranked Notre Dame. Smith hauled in seven passes for 130 yards and three touchdowns. Looking NFL ready, Smith has 105 catches for 1,641 yards and 20 touchdown catches through all of the regular season and playoffs. Smith leads the NCAA in receiving yards and is the

best wide receiver in college football.

QB Kyle Trask from the University of Florida made his case for a run at the trophy as well. The 6'5" senior threw 433 yards and four touchdowns this season, putting him second all-time behind Danny Wuerffel for the most passing touchdowns in Florida's history. He has thrown 3,243 yards, 38 touchdowns and three interceptions in nine games. The Gators ended the season 8-4 and were not

eligible for the CFB playoffs. They ended the season ranked #8 after starting the season ranked #3, but Trask led college football in touchdowns and is second in passing yards behind Dillon Gabriel.

Another player who has made a push for the trophy in the last couple of weeks is QB Trevor Lawrence from Clemson University, the projected #1 overall pick in this year's NFL draft. Lawrence has been on the Heisman watch lists since he was a freshman, and this year, people were sure he was going to win, but due to COVID-19, he was sidelined for a couple of games, hurting his chances.

Before the winner was announced, Corey O'Brien (11), who was watching the race closely, predicted, "I think DeVonta Smith has it in the bag because he's been playing stellar this whole year and nobody can guard him. But it'll be interesting to see because in college football anything can happen. Like Trevor Lawrence, he's a stud, too, and he might just sneak up from behind him and snatch it ... But I really think Smith got it." O'Brien's prediction was dead on, as Smith was named the winner of this year's Heisman trophy, something that seemed inevitable after his Rose Bowl performance. He is the first wide receiver to win the award since Desmond Howard in 1991.

## As the NFL season wraps up, we anticipate end of year award winners

By Jack Gillen  
Times staff writer

Many NFL players have been performing at an exceptional level this year, and as the season comes to an end, it is time to see who will be recognized for their play. Some players are set to win certain awards. For example, the Green Bay Packers' QB Aaron Rodgers has a high probability of winning MVP award,

as he has thrown 48 touchdown passes and just five interceptions. Another predictable award is the Offensive Rookie of the year. It was a tight race between two QBs: Joe Burrow for the Cincinnati Bengals and Justin Herbert for the Los Angeles Chargers; however, Burrow had a gruesome season-ending injury that resulted in multiple torn ligaments in his left knee.

Unlike the last two awards, some awards are for what play-

ers do off the field. The Comeback Player of the Year award is given to whomever makes the most significant return after an injury, a slump in performance, or any other issue that hindered their play. Alex Smith is likely to win, due to the fact that he broke his leg two years ago, which nearly killed him due to infection, and took 17 surgeries to repair. Af-

*See Awards on page 6*



Jack Gillen / Terra Nova Times

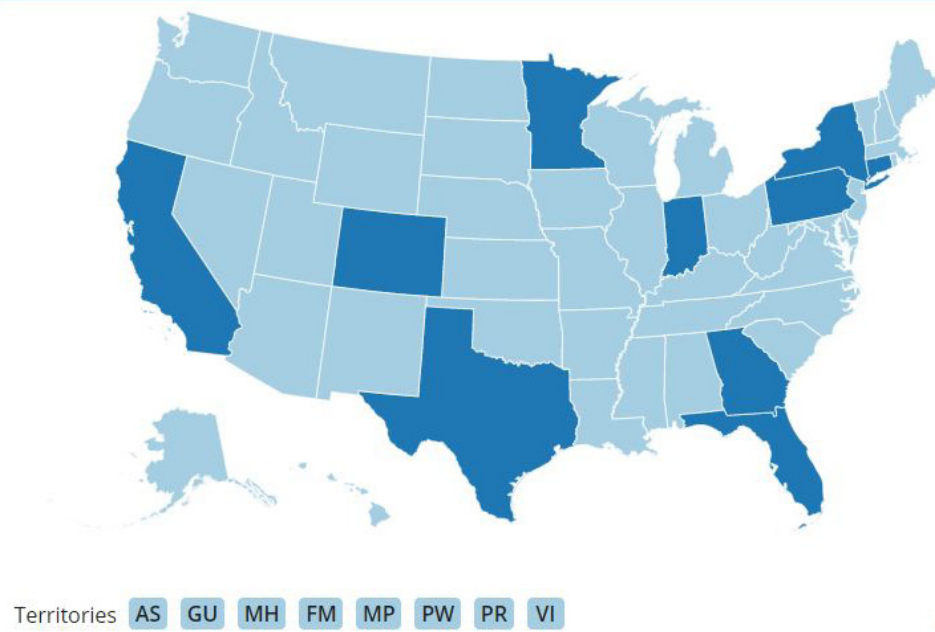
# New COVID strains wreak havoc

By Kyle Gossage  
Times staff writer

New variants of COVID-19 have appeared approximately one year after the first infection in 2019. Mutations and variants of viruses are normal for long-lasting viruses, but most variants disappear quickly after their entrance. Variants of viruses are small changes in the genetic makeup of the virus caused by mutations during the viruses duplication.

Variants have very few changes from the original virus. Scientists have been able to identify the current variants through the changes in the crown-like structures on the outside of the virus, which have not led to changes in fatality compared to the original strain, but are more infectious. At a press briefing on Jan. 11, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the head of the World Health Organization, said last week, described the new mutations as “highly problematic” because although they do not cause more severe disease, they are far more infectious and could cause more cases and hospitalizations if the virus’ spread isn’t immediately suppressed.

B.1.1.7 Lineage Cases in the United States\*+ Total Cases: 72



CDC.gov

B.1.1.7 is rapidly spreading within the United States.

Two of the recent variants, the UK variant and South African variant, originating from the United Kingdom and South Africa, and have been found to

spread quicker and easier than the original strain. The UK strain, known as B117, has dominated the viral landscape within the United Kingdom, causing in-

creasing cases. In the last month, B117 has been detected in numerous states in the U.S., including California. The third strain found in Nigeria has had no evidence supporting it behaves any differently than the original strain. According to the CDC, “There is no evidence that these variants cause more severe illness or increased risk of death.” But more cases means more severe illness.

However, there is another variant causing trouble closer to home. The L452R variant, original detected in May 2020, is the source of an outbreak in Santa Clara County that sickened over 90 people, and is spreading rapidly.

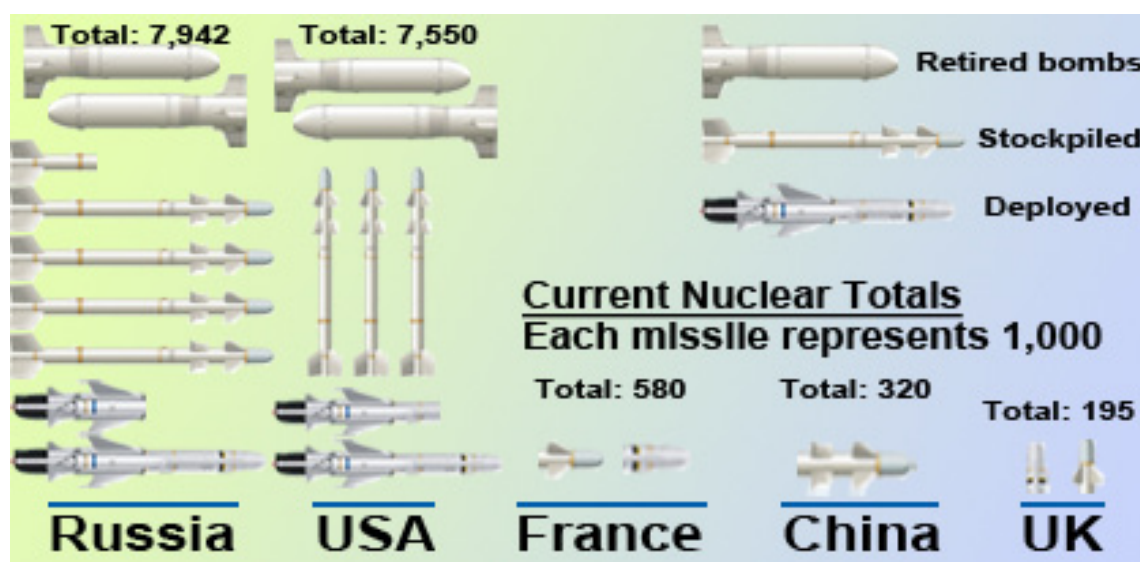
The variants have a slightly different makeup than the original strain. Scientists at WHO and Pfizer worry this may affect how the vaccines protect against them, or if they are detectable by COVID-19 testing. Currently, all the strains found have been able to be detected by at least one form of testing. A study conducted by researchers at Pfizer found that, “Pfizer’s COVID-19 vaccine can protect against a mutation found in the two more-contagious variants of the coronavirus that have erupted in Britain and South Africa.”

## Future of New START treaty uncertain

By Eleanor Jonas  
Times staff writer

A nuclear treaty between Russia and the US is set to expire in 2021, unless President Trump or soon-to-be President Biden decide to extend it for another five years. Since Feb. 5, 2011, the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, also known as “New START,” has limited the strategic arms that both the US and Russia can employ. Both arsenals are limited to 1,550 strategic deployed warheads and currently deploy about 1,350 on bombers and missiles. Of the approximately 13,500 warheads in the world, more than 90% belong to Russia and the US alone.

To put this in perspective, only 100 nuclear weapons are necessary for deterrence in worst-case scenarios, accord-



Victor Wu / Terra Nova Times

There are currently enough warheads worldwide to destroy the planet more than once.

ing to a 2018 study by Michigan Technological University professor Joshua Pearce and David Denkenberger, assistant professor at Tennessee State University and director of Alliance to Feed the Earth in Disasters. Pearce and Denkenberger state that “...using more than 100 nuclear weap-

ons by any aggressor nation... would cause unacceptable damage to their own society.”

New START expires shortly after Biden becomes president, unless he agrees to extend the treaty until 2026; an extension is a provision included in the 2011 treaty. Russia has indicated their

willingness to extend New START, but Trump has demanded changes to the treaty before he will agree to a renewal. His ultimatums include China joining the treaty and Russia freezing nuclear weapons in its stockpile. However, China refuses to involve itself, seeing Trump’s demands

as unreasonable in light of its much smaller nuclear force.

Failing to extend New START may prompt an arms race among countries with nuclear stockpiles, increasing the threat of nuclear war and destruction. Though Putin may be unhappy with the results of the US election, he fortunately does not seem to be planning to shun future President Biden. According to the New York Times, Putin wrote in a message of congratulations to Biden that he is “ready for contacts and interactions with you.”

While Biden can take action to extend New START on his own, activist organizations believe support for the treaty from Congress may be necessary to ensure this. Organizations such as Beyond the Bomb are encouraging citizens to write their state representatives, requesting their support for New START and other nuclear policies that would indicate to President-elect Biden the necessity of protecting the treaty.

## Florida court acts to protect conversion therapy as “free speech”

By Matthew Lim  
Times staff writer

A South Florida court ruling on Nov 20. declared that a ban on conversion therapy was unconstitutional within the area, reversing previously held laws barring the practice.

The court case was first brought up by two conversion therapists, Robert Otto and Julie Hamilton, challenging both Palm Beach County and the city of Boca Raton’s decision to ban conversion therapy. The pair were represented by Liberty Counsel, a religious group that aims to

advance “religious freedom, the sanctity of human life and the family through strategic litigation,” according to the group’s website. While initially being rejected by district courts, the case was eventually brought to the attention of the Circuit, which led to the ruling on Nov 20.

The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals decided in a 2-1 ruling that bans on the practice violated free speech laws, with Judge Britt Grant stating that “the First Amendment has no carve-out for controversial speech.” Subsequently, the judges also ruled that religious views on sexuality should not be interfered with by the surrounding community, writing that the

First Amendment “does not allow communities to determine how their neighbors may be counseled about matters of sexual orientation or gender.” The singular dissenting opinion, written by Judge Beverly Martin, detailed the possible negatives of conversion therapy, stating that the bans are permissible due to the potential harm the practice may cause.

This ruling conflicts with other courts’ decisions on the practice, specifically the 9th and 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals from San Francisco and Philadelphia, respectively. Within these cases, both courts ruled that bans on conversion therapy were constitutional. Because of the dif-

ferences in rulings among the Circuits, the courts are now split between differing interpretations of the same subject matter, possibly leading to conflicting opinions on the constitutionality of the bans. What this means for Florida itself, however, is that any attempts on banning the harmful practice would effectively be shut down due to the appeals case. Because of the controversy the decision has garnered, the mayor of Tallahassee and local governments from around the country such as St. Louis and Pima County, Arizona have urged a rehearing for the case, although this demand ultimately remains unnoticed as of now.

# How to get the best night's sleep

By Katalina Huazano  
Times staff writer

A bedroom ceiling is a familiar sight to those who deal with insomnia or other sleep pathologies, as finding ways to sleep can be difficult. Terra Nova alumna Katie Rodriguez, who struggles with insomnia, said, "Every night, it's different, either you get sleep or you don't. You can be laying in your bed for what you think is two hours, then you look at the time, and it's 6:30 AM, realizing that you haven't gotten any sleep."

According to the National Institute of Health, over 40 million Americans have sleeping disorders, and 20 million Americans report dealing with sleeping issues. The most common reason for sleep troubles for Americans is self-inflicted; this can look different for everyone. In an article by sleep medicine specialist Brandon Peters, he recommends that people stay away from caffeine, sugar, alcohol, and, in general, to eat at least three hours before sleeping. When eating late and then going to sleep, your body is still awake and digesting the food, preventing you from falling asleep or entering deep sleep and increasing your chances of experiencing heartburn.

Living in the 21st century, the ma-



Courtesy of Leila Vuskovic

Leila Vuskovic (12) reads to wind down before going to sleep.

majority of Americans have access to internet devices, which is a beacon for blue light. Harvard researchers conducted an experiment and found that blue light suppresses melatonin and shifts people's circadian rhythm, since it acts as a stimulant, causing people to become more awake. Some ways to help ensure that blue light is not affecting your sleep is by avoiding being on electron-

ics two to three hours before going to sleep. Blue light glasses are a substitute if you can not steer clear of it at night.

In a Healthline article by Rachel Nall, Nall says that to keep your circadian rhythm stable, it is good to expose yourself to lots of light during the day to release serotonin, which helps you feel calm, focused, and boost your mood. And that at night, people should be exposed to

darker light in order for melatonin to be released and help to fall asleep. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the best light to be exposed to at night that has no effect on your sleep wake cycle is red light, which will help your body wind down and get ready for sleep. Other ways to keep your circadian rhythm stable is by creating a sleep schedule and sticking to it, which will help your mind create the habit of knowing when to fall asleep and wake.

Those who suffer from sleeping disorders that are not as easily prevented can practice breathing rhythms, a form of relaxing meditation that allows the body to ease into sleep. In addition, listening to white noise, which is multiple frequencies played at the same time consistently, such as radio static and rainstorms, can stimulate the brain, invoking sleep. Terra Nova senior Leila Vuskovic, who deals with sleep anxiety, said, "When getting ready for bed, I like to try to turn off my electronics and stop homework just to let my brain wind down. I like to read before bed and maybe journal. I also have the Calm app, and if I really can't sleep I'll listen to a sleep story or a podcast."

If you feel as if you may have a sleeping disorder, then it is best to make an appointment with a sleep doctor to undergo a sleep study.

## It's never too cold to start a garden in Pacifica

By Maya Orsi  
Times staff writer

As quarantine drones on, many people have picked up gardening as a way to pass time. Over the summer, herb gardens of basil, mint, and parsley blossomed and thrived under the warmth of Pacifican sun. However, the bitter temperatures of wintertime create a whole new set of plants to explore.

When choosing flowers for a pop of color in your garden, winter has many beautiful options. Arricca Elin Sansone from Country Living recommends planting violas. "The brightly colored, charming little 'faces' of violas are a welcome sight on chilly mornings. In mild climates, they'll last all winter long. Even though they're annuals, they self-seed



Perrin Belway

A peak inside Mrs. Belway's winter garden.

freely, so you'll usually get many more baby plants in subsequent years," Sansone recommends. Among these lovely purple blossoms, she also suggests cyclamen, pansies, and

English primrose flowers.

Herb gardens allow even more variety, as many herbs have stronger stems that help them thrive all year long. One of these is rosemary, which can be used in the kitchen to add seasoning to your favorite dishes. Along with rosemary, there are oregano, chives, and thyme — all of which can endure the winter temperatures.

Retired Terra Nova biology teacher and avid gardener Mrs. Belway recommends that beginning gardeners start with greens. She suggests, "I do plant a winter garden, although because of the cold weather, it is not as successful as the summer garden. I grow them in warm boxes to protect them from the chill factor that takes place."

Belway has many specific recommendations for plants that can easily thrive during the

cold months. "The best ones to grow are things like lettuce, or radishes, because they are easy to germinate. Make sure that they all have good soil and that they are watered because they are isolated from the rainfall that might take place." You don't have to start lettuce from seed, either; many gardening or hardware stores sell six-packs of started plants.

Winter can leave many feeling down, and being outdoors and taking up new hobbies is essential to maintaining mental health. Gardening can be a year-long hobby as long as the correct plants are used and the timing is right. For beginner gardeners, herb gardens are a wonderful way to start, even during these cold months. Regardless of what you choose to plant, your garden is not limited to the warm months.

## Bizarre news

By Luke Avery  
Times staff writer

This time on Bizarre News, we're hitting everything from robots to aliens in a week-long, straight-out-of-a-Pixar-movie extravaganza. We got odd and confusing news from the dry town of Salt Lake City, Utah, all the way to Anime central in downtown Yokohama, Japan.

Starting our news off right, Japan's new tourist attraction fad is the embodiment of "go big or go home." After a hard-hitting year on tourists because of strict lockdown for coronavirus, Japan wanted to spruce things up to get the show on

the road, and this somehow culminated with the creation of a 60-ft robot. Built in with 360-degree movement, signature phrase, and no moral compass, this towering behemoth is meant to spread joy and amazement to all the Who's in Whoville for this holiday season. Chief cabinet secretary Katsunobu Kato is on the Gundam Gravy train, claiming that "this will lead to stimulating tourism demands and revitalizing local areas."

Next up on our conga line of crazy, we are going back to infamous Florida for another bizarre story. Discovered 86 miles off the Florida coast, Resident Stuart Bee was found capsized on his boat bobbing up and down at sunset. In a thrilling turn

of events, it became apparent that Florida native Stuart Bee was adrift this far from the mainland because he fell asleep. When asleep, water flooded his boat, and quickly capsized Bee into a scene straight from The Titanic. This event is the only time I think anyone would recommend that a Florida man should've consumed a Monster energy drink.

Finishing up our list of things that we probably should have guessed that would happen because of our 2020 luck so far: aliens. A 13-ft silver monolith was found in Utah near Salt Lake city that had weird hieroglyphs on a protected national reserve. Speculators think that this may have been left there by Westworld

producers, who filmed in the immediate area for their show. This, however, was not the most shocking part as just this month the monolith was reported missing without a trace. The exact same monolith was found this week in Batca Doamnei Hill in the city of Piatra Neamt in northeastern Romania. Is it an art exhibition from outer space, a gigantic USB drive downloading our oil, or just the CIA, the answer remains out there.

For more updates on intergalactic communication, Florida men, bad puns, and more, Bizarre News is the place to go because when it comes to weird things, humans will never let you down, especially if we're bored in a pandemic.

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**Awards**

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ter earning his first win in 742 days, Smith said “I’m grateful for so many things. Certainly, to be in this position again I didn’t think was ever possible for a long time. It is a good reminder to look around at how lucky you are, how lucky I am.”


One of the most prestigious awards given is the Walter Payton Man of the Year award, given to a player that has positively impacted their commu-

nity. Each team nominates one of their players and those 32 nominees are voted on. In 2017, J.J. Watt of the Houston Texans, who raised \$37 million for hurricane relief funds, won the award in 2018. Of his efforts, he said, “I’ve been fortunate to be on this stage and to win Defensive Player of the Year awards, but everything that you do on the field pales in comparison to what you do off the field.”

Awards are handed out to players the night before the Super Bowl, but no one knows how this year will go due to COVID-19.



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**Capitol**

*Continued from Page 1*

While rioters were inside the Capitol, President-elect Joe Biden gave a live address where he demanded President Trump get on national television and calm the chaos. Biden sternly stated the attack was “not a protest, it’s an insurrection.” Shortly after, Trump posted a video on Twitter in which he called for “peace” and told rioters to go home, but in the same breath, he further made false claims of election fraud and told the insurrectionists, “We love you. You’re very special.” Facebook and Twitter removed the video after concluding that

it did more to incite further violence than to calm the situation.

By 3:40 PM, the building was cleared and several thousand National Guard troops, FBI agents, and US Secret Service were deployed to help. More than six hours after Congress was interrupted, they resumed their session. The final Electoral College vote was confirmed before dawn after lawmakers handled objections to Pennsylvania’s slate of electors, followed by Trump’s social-media director issuing a statement in which he said, “Even though I totally disagree with the outcome of the election, and the facts bear me out, nevertheless there will be an orderly transition on January 20th.”



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