

# International NEWS MEDIA

MARCH 2024

## BOSTON HOSPITAL PERFORMS FIRST PIG KIDNEY TRANSPLANT TO HUMAN



Surgeons perform the world's first genetically modified pig kidney transplant into a living human, at Massachusetts General Hospital, in Boston, March 16, 2024. (Massachusetts General Hospital via AP)

Doctors in Boston say they have successfully transplanted a genetically modified pig kidney into a 62-year-old patient with end-stage kidney disease.

The announcement on Thursday, March 21, marks the first time a pig kidney has been transplanted into a living person, according to Massachusetts General Hospital.

Previous attempts involved temporary transplants into brain-dead donors and there have been two unsuccessful heart transplants from pigs.

Doctors say the patient, Richard 'Rick' Slayman of Weymouth, Massachusetts, is recovering well after the procedure, which took place earlier this month, and is expected to return home from the hospital soon.

"Mass General Brigham researchers and clinicians are constantly pushing the boundaries of science to transform medicine and solve significant health issues facing our patients in their daily lives," said Anne Klibanski, MD, President and CEO, Mass General Brigham. "Nearly seven decades after the first successful kidney transplant, our clinicians have once again demonstrated our commitment to provide innovative treatments

and help ease the burden of disease for our patients and others around the world."

The milestone represents progress in xenotransplantation, using animal organs to treat humans, with recent efforts focusing on modifying pig organs to be more compatible with humans after decades of failure. Source: VOA/Some information for this report came from The Associated Press.

### DOJ sues Apple for monopolizing smartphone markets

The Justice Department, joined by 16 other state and district attorneys general, filed a civil antitrust lawsuit against Apple for monopolization or attempted monopolization of smartphone markets in violation of Section 2 of the Sherman Act.

The complaint, filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey, alleges that Apple illegally maintains a monopoly over smartphones by selectively imposing contractual restrictions on, and withholding critical access points from, developers. Apple undermines apps, products, and services that would

otherwise make users less reliant on the iPhone, promote interoperability, and lower costs for consumers and developers. Apple exercises its monopoly power to extract more money from consumers, developers, content creators, artists, publishers, small businesses, and merchants, among others. Through this monopolization lawsuit, the Justice Department and state Attorneys General are seeking relief to restore competition to these vital markets on behalf of the American public.

"Consumers should not have to pay higher prices because companies violate

the antitrust laws," said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland. "We allege that Apple has maintained monopoly power in the smartphone market, not simply by staying ahead of the competition on the merits, but by violating federal antitrust law. If left unchallenged, Apple will only continue to strengthen its smartphone monopoly. The Justice Department will vigorously enforce antitrust laws that protect consumers from higher prices and fewer choices. That is the Justice Department's legal obligation and what the American people expect and deserve." - DOJ

### Hong Kong passes own national security law

Hong Kong's legislature unanimously — and with surprising speed approved its own sweeping national security law on Tuesday, March 19, strengthening the government's ability to silence dissent.

Critics say that its restrictions and vague language could hinder the work of journalists, business people and clergy members.

The sanctions, approved on a vote of 90-0 by the pro-Beijing chamber, goes further than a similar bill imposed by China in 2020 in the wake of 2019 pro-

democracy protests.

Chief Executive John Lee announced the new law will take effect on March 23, calling its passage "a historic moment for Hong Kong."

The new law will cover treason, insurrection, espionage, theft of state secrets, foreign influence and interference and sabotage, including the use of computers and electronic systems to conduct acts that endanger national security. Anyone convicted under the new law could face prison terms ranging from several years to life. - VOA News

### PH Senate orders Quiboloy's arrest; DOJ files sex raps



MANILA, Philippines, March 20 — After snubbing the Senate investigation into alleged sexual abuses of Apollo Quiboloy, the self-proclaimed son of God, the upper chamber officially ordered the arrest and detention of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KOJC) leader for contempt.

The arrest order was signed by Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri and Sen. Risa Hontiveros, chair of the committee on women, children, family relations and gender equality.

Quiboloy was "ordered arrested and detained at the Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms until such time that he will appear and testify before the committee, or otherwise purges himself of that contempt."

"The Sergeant-at-Arms is hereby directed to carry out and implement this order and make a return hereof within 24 hours from its enforcement," the order read.

In an interview, Zubiri said it was "ministerial" for him to sign the arrest order after the Senate accorded Quiboloy due process with the issuance of a show-cause order. - Philippine Star

### OSCAR WINNERS



OSCAR WINNERS (L to R): Da'Vine Joy Randolph, Best Supporting Actress "The Holdovers"; Cillian Murphy, Best Actor, "Oppenheimer"; Emma Stone, Best Actress, "Poor Things"; and Robert Downey Jr., Best Supporting Actor, "Oppenheimer". For more, see page 7, Life is Beautiful.

### IOC: Russians, Belarusians not allowed in Paris Olympics opening ceremony parade

The International Olympic Committee says athletes from Russia and Belarus will not be allowed to take part in the parade of the opening ceremony for the 2024 Paris Olympics on July 26.

The IOC on March 19 held an executive board meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland, to discuss issues in the run-up to the Games.

Russians and Belarusians will not be competing as representatives of their countries due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. They will instead be competing as individual neutral athletes, or AINs.

The IOC decided that they "will not participate in the parade of delegations during the opening ceremony, since they are individual athletes." - NHK

### • THE SEVEN LAST WORDS •

The First Word

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

Luke 23:34

### NewsBriefs

#### Qatar "cautiously optimistic" Israel-Hamas ceasefire can be reached

Qatari officials are "cautiously optimistic" that Israel and Hamas can reach a new cease-fire in the war in Gaza and the release of more hostages held by the militants, Majed al-Ansari, a Qatari Foreign Ministry spokesperson said on March 18 after talks in Doha that included Israeli intelligence chief David Barnea. But Ansari said it was "too early to announce any successes."

A six-week truce is being considered. It would be only the second in more than five months of fighting, with the first being a weeklong cease-fire in November. A hiatus in the conflict could lead to the release of about 40 of the remaining 100 or so hostages held by Hamas in exchange for dozens of Palestinians jailed by Israel. It could also have Israel allowing more food and humanitarian aid into Gaza. - VOA News

#### Former President of Honduras convicted

A federal jury convicted Juan Orlando Hernández, also known as JOH, 55, of Honduras, on all three counts in the indictment, which included cocaine importation and weapons offenses.

"Juan Orlando Hernández abused his position as President of Honduras to operate the country as a narco-state where violent drug traffickers were allowed to operate with virtual impunity, and the people of Honduras and the United States were forced to suffer the consequences," said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland.

Hernández is scheduled to be sentenced on June 26. - DOJ

#### Transit crime back as top concern in some US cities

NEW YORK — Fear of crime on subways and buses is back as a top concern in some U.S. cities, and so are efforts to persuade the public officials take the issue seriously.

New York's Governor Kathy Hochul said she would task 750 members of the National Guard with helping patrol the nation's busiest subway system. Meanwhile, in Pennsylvania, legislators created a special prosecutor to go after crimes committed in the transit system that serves the southeast of the state. - AP

#### 2 former US Marines, nurse practitioner sentenced in \$65 million TRICARE fraud

SAN DIEGO — Three members of a massive conspiracy to bilk the military's healthcare program known as TRICARE out of more than \$65 million have been sentenced in federal court. Former U.S. Marines, Daniel Castro and Jeremy Syto, were sentenced to 21 months and 15 months, respectively; Nurse Practitioner Candace Craven was sentenced to serve three months in home confinement. Castro and Syto recruited fellow Marines to receive expensive compounded drugs; Craven and others wrote bogus prescriptions and filled out fraudulent paperwork to process the insurance reimbursements. All told, tens of millions of dollars in false claims were submitted; everyone got kickbacks.

## SpaceX launches its 30th Dragon cargo mission to the ISS

SpaceX launched its 30th cargo mission to the International Space Station (ISS) for NASA Thursday afternoon (March 21), carrying 3 tons of supplies and scientific hardware to the orbiting lab.

A Falcon 9 rocket carrying an uncrewed Cargo Dragon spacecraft lifted off today at 4:55 p.m. EDT (2055 GMT) from Space Launch Complex-40 (SLC-40) at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida.

The mission, known as CRS-30, was the first cargo launch from SLC-40 since March 2020. Since then, the pad has been outfitted with a new launch tower, which allows for more efficient cargo loading and upgrades the facility to support crewed launches as well.

The Falcon 9's first stage booster came back to Earth as planned, making a vertical touchdown at SpaceX's Landing Zone-1, at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, about eight minutes after launch. It was the sixth launch and landing for the booster, according to a SpaceX mission description. NASA and its partners also sent studies aboard the mission on plant metabolism in space and a set of new sensors for free-flying Astrobees robots to provide 3D mapping capabilities. - NASA



A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket carrying the Dragon spacecraft lifts off from Launch Complex-39A at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida on Thursday, Nov. 9, 2023, on the company's 29th commercial resupply services mission for the agency to the International Space Station. (Credits: SpaceX)

## GERMANY ON COURSE TO REACH CO2 GOALS

BERLIN -- Germany emitted 673 million tons of greenhouse gases in 2023, 76 million million tons fewer than the previous year.

That represents a reduction of around ten percent and the biggest drop since 1990. Extrapolated into the future, the decrease would mean that Germany would be to achieve its aim of lowering CO2 emissions by 65 percent of 1990 levels at the end of this decade. - PRNewswire

## United raises miles for Girls Scouts of the USA to help inspire the next generation of leaders



United raises miles for Girl Scouts of the USA to help fund travel for educational experiences and leadership programs.

CHICAGO -- This March, in celebration of International Women's Day and Girl Scouts' 112th birthday, United is encouraging MileagePlus® members to donate miles to Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) to help fund life-changing experiences for Girl Scouts through travel.

United will match the first one million miles raised for GSUSA through Miles on a MissionSM, United's leading fundraising and crowdsourcing program, giving MileagePlus members a chance to use their miles for good.

Travel is an essential part of many Girl Scouts' journeys as they are encouraged to explore, make global connections and cultivate skills they can use for the rest of their lives. More than 59,000 Girl Scouts traveled either domestically or internationally in 2023, with many troops funding their own adventures with money earned through the Girl Scout Cookie Program®. - PRNewswire

## Governor Abbott signs Statement Of Mutual Cooperation with The United Kingdom

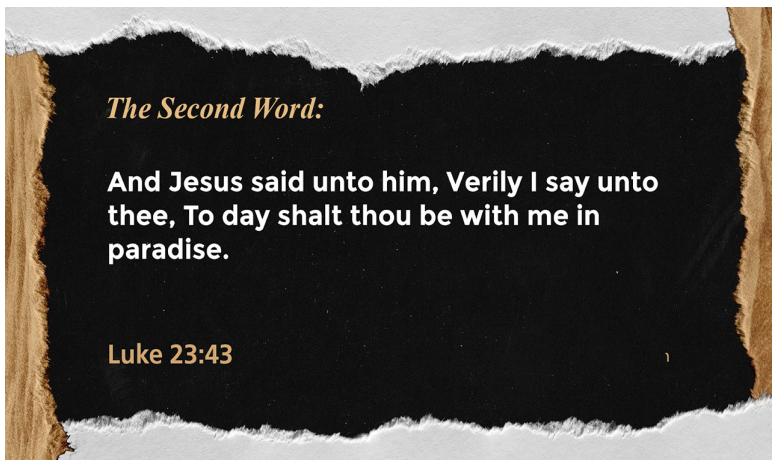
Governor Greg Abbott on March 13 signed a Statement of Mutual Cooperation (SMC) with United Kingdom Secretary of State for Business and Trade Kemi Badenoch while in London on an economic development trip to deepen the strong partnership between the United Kingdom and Texas, encourage expanded trade in critical industries, and attract new job-creating business investments to Texas. The signing ceremony took place at 10 Downing Street, the historic residence of British prime ministers since 1735.

"As our ninth largest trade partner, the United Kingdom plays a critical role in the Texas economic juggernaut," said

Governor Abbott. "Strengthening the bond between Texas and the United Kingdom is crucial for our shared economies to prosper."

"The United Kingdom and Texas already share \$18 billion worth of goods trade last year, and today's signing brings us even closer," said Secretary of State Badenoch. "This MoU is designed to make it cheaper and easier for the United Kingdom and Texan businesses to thrive in each other's markets. It will strengthen trade ties and help us work together on shared expertise like life sciences and professional business services. I want to thank Governor Abbott and his team for helping to make it happen."

### • THE SEVEN LAST WORDS •



## U.S. Postal Service pays homage to Heroes of the Underground Railroad with new Forever stamps

CHURCH CREEK, Md. -- The U.S. Postal Service celebrated the ingenuity, bravery, and resilience of 10 courageous men and women who helped guide enslaved people to freedom via the Underground Railroad, a network of secret routes and safehouses in use before the Civil War.

A dedication ceremony for the stamps was held on March 9 at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center in Church Creek.

"For many enslaved African Americans, the Underground Railroad was their only hope to escape the brutality of slavery," said Ronald A. Stroman, a member of the USPS Board of Governors. "The Underground Railroad demonstrated the power of collective action and solidarity in achieving social change, even when the odds seemed insurmountable. The United States Postal Service is privileged to celebrate the ingenuity and resilience of the enslaved people and those who bravely assisted them in the face of adversity with the dedication of these new stamps."

Also at the ceremony were descendants of some of the people honored on the stamps.

The pane of 20 stamps depicts 10 key figures of the Underground Railroad — freedom seekers and those who aided others' escapes. The top third of each stamp features a sepia-toned portrait. Below it are several lines of text with



Ten courageous men and women who helped guide enslaved people to freedom via the Underground Railroad.

the words: BLACK/WHITE, COOPERATION, TRUST/DANGER, FLIGHT/FAITH, COURAGE/RISK, DEFIANCE/HOPE, and UNDERGROUND RAILROAD/USA.

Alcalá designed the stamps using existing photographs.

On the pane's verso is a map showing the general routes freedom seekers followed, along with text from the National Park Service that describes the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom. - PRNewswire

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## Montefiore's Albert Einstein College of Medicine announces free tuition in perpetuity for all medical school students

BRONX, N.Y. -- Dr. Philip Ozuah, President and CEO of Montefiore Einstein, the umbrella organization for Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Montefiore Health System, recently announced that Albert Einstein College of Medicine has received a transformational gift from Ruth L. Gottesman, Ed.D., Chair of the Einstein Board of Trustees and Montefiore Health System board member. This historic gift — the largest made to any medical school in the country — will ensure that no student at Einstein will have to pay tuition again.

This transformational gift is intended to attract a talented and diverse pool of individuals who may not otherwise have the means to pursue a medical education. It will enable generations of healthcare leaders who will advance the boundaries of research and care, free from the burden of crushing loan indebtedness.

With this donation, all current fourth-year students will be reimbursed their spring 2024 semester tuition and, effective beginning in August of this year, all students moving forward will receive free tuition at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Albert Einstein College of Medicine was founded in 1955 with

a mission to welcome all students, without restrictions. Today this gift furthers that mission by removing the financial restrictions for those without the economic means to afford medical school.

### • THE SEVEN LAST WORDS •





## INTERNATIONAL NEWS MEDIA

An Exclusive Interview by **AWEE ABAYARI** WITH **ROSEMARIE MEJIA**

• Realtor • SRES Senior Real Estate Specialist • Investor • Entrepreneur •

For more of the interview: [www.youtube.com/AweeAbayari](http://www.youtube.com/AweeAbayari) • [www.youtube.com/AANewsMedia/AweeA](http://www.youtube.com/AANewsMedia/AweeA)



**AWEE ABAYARI:** What makes for a successful realtor, real estate specialist, investor and entrepreneur?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** As a Realtor- Great service, hard work & dedication, always looking out for client's best interests. As Investor - having great vision & determining property's potential. As Entrepreneur - taking care of business & property wholeheartedly as well as your tenants & people working for you.

**AWEE ABAYARI:** How did you survive the ups and downs of real estate?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** Hard work, patience, keeping up with the trends/real estate info, going extra miles in service for clients, communication with your sphere of influence.

**AWEE ABAYARI:** Is real estate still a good investment and why?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** Yes! Real estate is still the best investment in my humble opinion. It is because it is tangible, as opposed to other investments, that you are just holding a paper where you can be a millionaire for a day or so and lose everything in the following days if you are not careful. Having a real estate property, you have complete control when to sell or not to sell. It is a fixed asset! Many expenses can be claimed as tax deductible too. It also comes with pride of ownership.

**AWEE ABAYARI:** Which is a better investment: stocks or real estate, and why?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** Real estate, for the reasons I mentioned above.

**AWEE ABAYARI:** Is owning a home no longer the American dream?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** It is still the American dream! However, many cannot afford it anymore due to very high interest rates. People's income is not commensurate with expenses caused by high inflation.

**AWEE ABAYARI:** Is renting now a better option compared to buying a home? Why?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** Renting for now. People cannot afford to buy because of high interest rates. Also, people's income must be much improved to meet the high expenses caused by inflation.

However, for people who can afford it, I encourage them to go for it & invest in real estate instead of putting their money in the bank earning almost nothing! For the extra mortgage payments you have to make due to high interest rates, that can be negated later when market gets better thus equity gets higher leaving you more money when you decide to sell. Interest you paid as part of your mortgage payment is also tax deductible.

**AWEE ABAYARI:** What is the current real estate situation and does interest rate affect the decision of future homebuyers?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** Interest is still high & people's income is not up there to meet the mortgage, property tax, etc as well as their basic essentials. Yes, high interest rates affect the buyers' decision to buy. They have to make sure they can afford it & to sustain it.

**AWEE ABAYARI:** If we are in a seller's market, is it better to postpone buying a home? Is there such a thing as a good time to buy?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** It's ok even if it's seller's market to buy a home as long as the interest rate is reasonable & you can meet all your obligations. It is ideal to buy a home during buyer's market. However, the interest rates must be affordable to you & you can meet all your obligations. The key factors are interest rates and affordability in this case, whether it's seller's or buyer's market.

Certainly, the subject property plays a big part in the decision making too, location, desirability, & potential!

**AWEE ABAYARI:** What is the best loan program for homebuyers and why?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** FHA Loan, since it is government loan,



**ROSEMARIE MEJIA**  
Beauty Queen/ Fashion Model/ Icon

lower down payment, better interest rate, and leniency in credit score requirement.

**AWEE ABAYARI:** What is your advice to future homebuyers before searching for a home?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** Make sure you have enough money for down payment plus reserves. You have a good credit. At least two years on the job. Filed income tax for at least two years. Having enough income to sustain you for all the expenses in owning a home plus your basic necessities. Stable good earning job. Minimum debts, i.e., credit cards, car loan, etc. Get a loan pre-approval first, with the best interest rate & loan program the lender can offer.

**AWEE ABAYARI:** Is it better to be pre-approved for a loan before searching for a home?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** Absolutely!

**AWEE ABAYARI:** Many people say they can pay the monthly mortgage but not the downpayment and closing costs when buying a home. What is your advice?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** There are some lenders giving loans with no down payment. However, their interest rate is much higher from already high current interest rates. Therefore, your mortgage will be much higher. Closing costs, sometimes your agent can negotiate that seller pays for it. However, if your agent is not careful in negotiating, seller can tuck-in the closing costs on their selling price. As the saying goes, "there are no free lunches."

When the seller pays for the closing costs, many buyers are still happy because they don't need to come up for more cash & though the seller included that in the price, buyer looks at it that it is being

paid in installments anyway via their mortgage & spread out for many years so not much extra payment in addition to their regular mortgage payment.

**AWEE ABAYARI:** What is the least amount of downpayment (3%)? How do you estimate the closing cost?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** 3%. Usually 1-1.5% of the purchase price, that is if the lender or loan broker is not charging high points!

**AWEE ABAYARI:** What are the most important things to consider in buying a home after Location, Location, Location?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** Price, desirability & potential!

**AWEE ABAYARI:** Would it be advisable to buy an old home or a fixer upper in a very good location or a move-in ready home in a fairly good location? Why?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** It all depends on what the buyer wants & can afford. Many buyers want a fixer upper to save money. They have time to fix it themselves or hire a contractor. They don't mind the hassle, lost of use, & lost of their time. They also have money ready to spend for the repairs.

On the other hand, many buyers prefer a move-in ready home. They just want to enjoy their new home, no time to do the repairs or know how, no money to shell out for fixing & don't want the hassle & headaches! They are content to just pay the mortgage, etc.

**AWEE ABAYARI:** Finally, what is your most important advice to sellers and buyers considering the current real estate situation?

**ROSEMARIE MEJIA:** Be careful with high interest loans! Never get a variable loan. This was experienced by tens of thousands of homeowners who lost their properties when the interest rate became high after a few years of getting it. Interest rate was so high that they could not meet the payments hence losing their properties by foreclosure. This happened in 2007! Real estate burst and many investors & homeowners lost their life savings! Very sad.

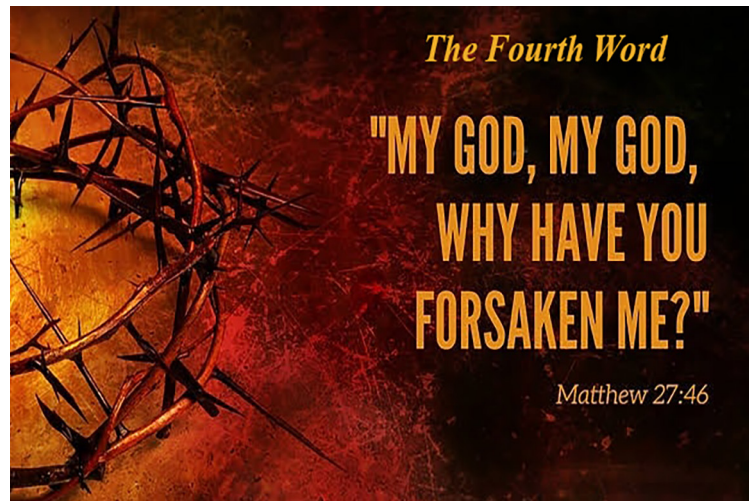
Do not be lured by realtor, lenders & loan brokers to accept a variable loan with specific short term with low interest, only to face a very high interest rate later which you cannot afford to pay. It will be a disaster for you. Some people are like that, unfortunately, not looking out for you but only their gain.

Always get a fixed loan & work with people you can really trust!

**AWEE ABAYARI:** Thank you very much.



• THE SEVEN LAST WORDS •



## UN chief urges ‘genuine, credible’ political solution in Syria, as conflict approaches thirteenth anniversary

The UN Secretary-General has highlighted the urgent need for a negotiated political solution in Syria, emphasizing the protection of civilians and the dire humanitarian situation. March marks the thirteenth anniversary of the conflict in Syria, with systematic atrocities and untold suffering of civilians.

According to UN estimates, 16.7 million people, equivalent to 70 per cent of the total population, will require humanitarian assistance in 2024. Roughly half the pre-war population remains displaced inside or outside Syria.

Compounding the crisis, a series of earthquakes struck the country's north in February last year, claiming nearly 5,900 lives, severely damaging infrastructure, and exacerbating the vulnerability of millions already struggling to meet their basic needs. Entire communities are struggling to survive, as humanitarian funding has dropped to an all-time low. In 2023, for instance, only \$2.02 billion or 37.4 per cent – was received against the \$5.41 billion required for UN-led humanitarian efforts. - UN



In this 2016 photo, two boys collect water for their families in the Syrian city of Aleppo, which suffered massive destruction in the conflict. © UNICEF/Khuder Al-Issa

## US and Philippine governments aim to deepen commercial ties

MANILA, Philippines – U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo led a delegation of senior executives from 22 prominent U.S. businesses and non-profit organizations on a first-of-its-kind Presidential Trade and Investment Mission to the Philippines on March 11 & 12.

The Mission delivers on President Biden's commitment during Philippine President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s May 2023 visit to Washington, D.C. to work together to advance U.S.-Philippines economic ties and internationally recognized labor rights.

While in the Philippines, Secretary Raimondo reaffirmed the importance the United States places on a strong bilateral trade and investment relationship between the two countries. She commended the Philippine government for recent legal and regulatory reforms undertaken to open key sectors such as renewable energy, railways, airports, expressways,

and telecommunications to 100 percent foreign ownership.

Raimondo encouraged both the U.S. and Philippine private sectors and Philippine government to capitalize on the historic momentum in U.S.-Philippine relations and to seize new opportunities related to clean energy, digital transformation and the innovation economy, and supply chain resilience.

Secretary Raimondo was joined on this Mission by U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines MaryKay Carlson, U.S. Ambassador and Director of the Asian Development Bank Chantale Wong, and Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Admiral John Aquilino.

Together, delegates participating in the Mission have announced over \$1 billion of recently-completed or anticipated U.S. investments, creating educational and career opportunities for an estimated over 30 million Filipinos.

## Sweden lifts aid ban against UNRWA

LONDON – Sweden has announced that it is lifting a freeze on aid for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine Refugees after the UN warned the Security Council last week of “imminent famine” in the Gaza Strip.

The Nordic country pledged to give the initial USD20 million after receiving guarantees from the agency of extra checks on its expenditure and personnel.

The agency had promised to “allow controls, independent audits, to strengthen internal supervision and extra controls of personnel,” it said.

Sweden and other countries, including the US, Canada, the UK and Australia, suspended their aid to UNRWA after Israeli accusation that some of its staff were involved in the Oct. 7 attack.

Canada had earlier resumed sending its aid to UNRWA. (Anadolu)

## WTO launches call for candidates for 2025 Young Professionals Programme

The WTO has issued a call for candidates for the 2025 Young Professionals Programme (YPP). Candidates up to the age of 32, as of 1 January 2025, from eligible developing economies and least-developed countries (LDCs) are invited to submit their application by 2 April 2024. The selected candidates will work in the WTO Secretariat for one year, starting in January 2025.

The online application form can be accessed at [https://wto.wd3.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/External/details/Young-Professionals\\_JR102629](https://wto.wd3.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/External/details/Young-Professionals_JR102629)

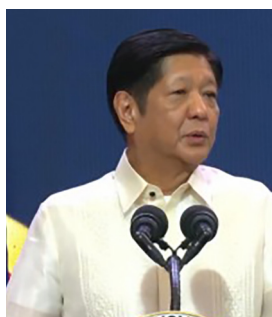
## EU Project “Increasing the Participation of Women in Public Life in Egypt”



The “Increasing the Participation of Women in Public Life in Egypt” project has now come to an end. It contributed to the empowerment of Egyptian women & increasing their participation in public life.

The project was funded by the European Union and implemented by the National Council for Women, in cooperation with the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development and in partnership with the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin. - EU

## PBBM: Gov’t assisting families of seafarers killed in Houthi attack



MANILA – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. has extended his sympathies to the families of the two Filipino seafarers who died on March 6 in the recent attack by Houthi rebels aboard a merchant vessel navigating the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

In a statement, the President assured all efforts are being exerted to bring the remains home.

“I join the nation in offering our deepest sympathies to the families of the two Filipino

seafarers who perished in the Houthi attack on True Confidence. The government is in constant contact with their families, and we will spare no effort in bringing their remains home,” Marcos said.

President Marcos said the 13 surviving Filipino seafarers are safe in Djibouti.

The Philippine Embassy in Cairo, Egypt is leading efforts for the seafarers' safe return home as soon as possible, along with three others who were injured during the attack. - PNA

## CALLING ALL ALUMNI OF PCC/PUP

Calling All Alumni of Philippine College of Commerce/ Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PCC/PUP) to join our association.

We are a group of alumni devoted to giving back to our “Sintang Paaralan”. Our mission and vision are geared to helping out our Alma Mater and many well-deserving students who are financially challenged.

Our Alma Mater paved the way for all of us to be successful in our chosen fields, and we want to give the same opportunity to those deserving students through our scholarship fund program. We are also a donor and support PUP's Education on Wheels which culminated at the wake of Covid 19. We wanted the students to have continuous education despite of the circumstances brought by Covid 19.

At the outset, our association humbly donated the construction of a two-storey athletic building inside the sta. Mesa campus, which now houses our pup athletes..

Small as it is our organization now, we are all very proud of our humble accomplishments. Having more

members who also have loyal, grateful, and kind hearts, we know that we will be able to do more.

Please come and join us in this endearing, inspiring, and grateful journey to change many people's lives as our way of giving back to our dear alma mater, our sintang paaralan ... PCC/PUP!

Hope to hear from you all, and looking forward to hopefully one day we meet in person.

Please contact vp-membership, vangie codilla @ (818) 468 3386 or email: [vangie.Codilla@gmail.com](mailto:vangie.Codilla@gmail.com)

Hep hep hooray to PUP - We entered for the first time the QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKING IN ASIA. There were 16 universities included and we made it as no. 7!

God bless us all! To God be the glory!

Warmest regards,  
Rosemarie T. Mejia  
VP-Goals & Planning

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## INM Book Choice

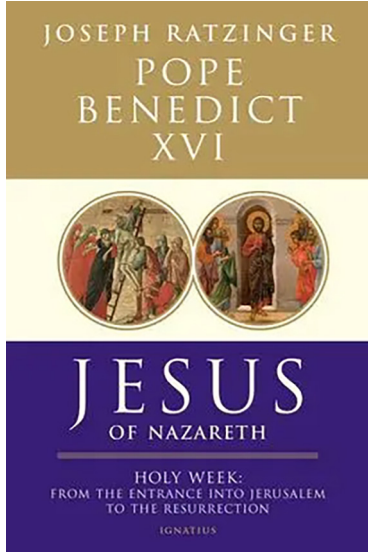
### JESUS OF NAZARETH Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection By POPE BENEDICT XVI

For Christians, Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God, who died for the sins of the world, and who rose from the dead in triumph over sin and death. For non-Christians, he is almost anything else—a myth, a political revolutionary, a prophet whose teaching was misunderstood or distorted by his followers.

Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God, and no myth, revolutionary, or misunderstood prophet, insists Benedict XVI. He thinks that the best of historical scholarship, while it can't "prove" Jesus is the Son of God, certainly doesn't disprove it. Indeed, Benedict maintains that the evidence, fairly considered, brings us face-to-face with the challenge of Jesus—a real man who taught and acted in ways that were tantamount to claims of divine authority, claims not easily dismissed as lunacy or deception.

Benedict XVI presents this challenge in his new book, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection*, the sequel volume to *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*.

Why was Jesus rejected by the religious leaders of his day? Who was responsible for his death? Did he establish a Church to carry on his work? How did Jesus view his suffering and death? How should we? And, most importantly, did Jesus really rise from the dead and what does his resurrec-



tion mean? The story of Jesus raises many crucial questions.

Benedict brings to his study the vast learning of a brilliant scholar, the passionate searching of a great mind, and the deep compassion of a pastor's heart. In the end, he dares readers to grapple with the meaning of Jesus' life, teaching, death, and resurrection.

"Only in this second volume do we encounter the decisive sayings and events of Jesus' life . . . I hope that I have been granted an insight into the figure of Our Lord that can be helpful to all readers who seek to encounter Jesus and to believe in Him."  
-Pope Benedict XVI

### EASY EASTER EATS:

#### One-pan dishes to make hosting simple

MISSION, Kan.-- Easter is a time meant for fun and fellowship with the food just one part of the celebration.

Building the menu around simple, one-pan dishes can keep the focus where it needs to be: spending time and creating memories with family and friends.

A dish like EASTER ROAST lets you check both the main course and side dishes off your list, relying on the oven to do most of the work for you after some quick prep work.



Cover and cook 2 1/2 hours then remove from oven, add asparagus and cook uncovered 30 minutes.

Serve from pan or place on platter for more formal presentation.

Finish off your feast with an adaptable dessert like this Blueberry Crumble.

**BLUEBERRY CRUMBLE**  
Ingredients:  
1 can blueberry pie filling  
1 box yellow cake mix  
1 bag (4 ounces) chopped pecans  
1 stick butter, melted  
1/4 cup oil  
whipped cream, for serving (optional)  
vanilla ice cream, for serving (optional)

Directions:  
Preheat oven to 350 F.  
Spread pie filling on bottom of 9-by-11-inch pan. Sprinkle cake mix and pecans on top. Do not mix.

Drizzle melted butter and oil on top of cake mix and pecans. Do not mix. Lift pan and tilt from side to side until cake mix is completely covered in butter.

Bake 1 hour until golden brown and bubbly.

Serve with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream, if desired.

Lent, in the Christian church, a period of penitential preparation for Easter. In Western churches it begins on Ash Wednesday, six and a half weeks before Easter, and provides a 40-day period for fasting and abstinence (Sundays are excluded), in imitation of Jesus Christ's fasting in the wilderness before he began his public ministry. Almsgiving, the practice of giving money or food to the poor and performing other acts of charity, is also encouraged. In Eastern churches Lent begins on the Monday of the seventh week before Easter and ends on the Friday that is nine days before Easter. This 40-day "Great Lent" includes Saturdays and Sundays as relaxed fast days.  
Source: *Encyclopedia Britannica*

## Lent/Christianity



## DID YOU KNOW?

### RAMADAN

Ramadan (also spelled Ramazan, Ramzan, Ramadhan, or Ramathan) is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting (sawm), prayer(salah), reflection, and community.

A commemoration of Muhammad's first revelation, the annual observance of Ramadan is regarded as one of the Five Pillars of Islam and lasts twenty-nine to thirty days, from one sighting of the crescent moon to the next.

Source: *Wikipedia*

### TOYOTA JOINS THE INAUGURAL CONCACAF W GOLD CUP AS A FOUNDING PARTNER

PLANO, Texas, -- Thousands of soccer fans flocked to stadiums in Houston, Texas, Los Angeles and San Diego, California to witness the first-ever edition of Concacaf's women's international competition, the 2024 W Gold Cup. Toyota joined in the action as an inaugural and official automotive partner of the competition.

Additionally, Toyota extended its ongoing partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs of America, presenting a donation of \$80,000 during halftime of the final game. As a founding partner of the organization's workforce readiness programs, the funds will support the organization's ongoing work to empower youth to excel in school while leading healthy, productive lives. - *PRNewswire*

## Fruits AVOCADOS



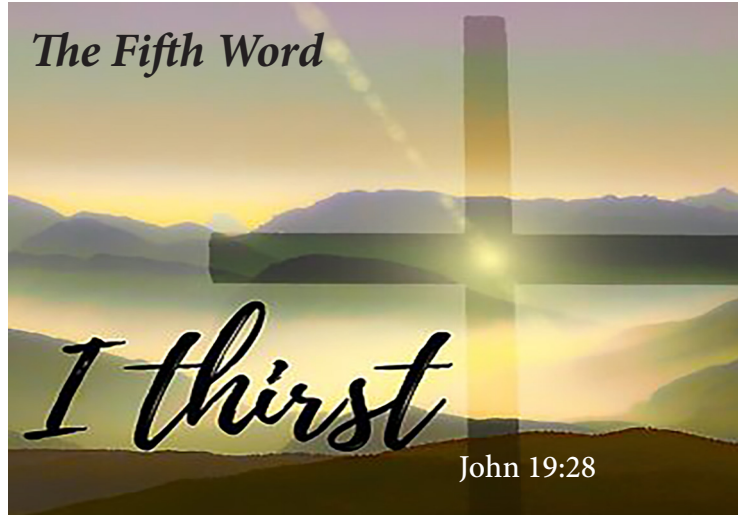
Avocados have been marketed as a healthy dietary choice and as a good source of beneficial monounsaturated oil. A whole medium avocado contains approximately 15 percent of the FDA's recommended daily amount of saturated fat.

In addition, avocados have 60 percent more potassium than bananas. They are also rich in B vitamins, vitamin E, vitamin K and folate.

Avocados are also a benefit to a diabetic diet. With diabetes increasing in the United States, avocados can offer a nutritious choice for those following a diabetic diet. -- *agmrc.org*

### THE SEVEN LAST WORDS

#### The Fifth Word



## TECH TALK

### Soul Machines unveils groundbreaking digital Marilyn Monroe at SXSW 2024

SAN FRANCISCO -- Soul Machines, the leader in Biological AI-powered Digital People™, unveiled "Digital Marilyn," a groundbreaking new project in partnership with Authentic Brands Group (Authentic). This innovative, interactive experience merges Soul Machines' proprietary Biological AI technology with Marilyn Monroe's iconic likeness, offering both fans and brands a unique and personalized engagement opportunity. The company provided an exclusive first look at Digital Marilyn at SXSW in Austin, TX on March 8.



#### Introducing Marilyn Monroe to a New Generation with Biological AI

Digital Marilyn interacts with fans in real-time using advanced natural language processing, deep learning and GPT 3.5. This hyper-real Digital Celebrity answers questions in Marilyn's signature voice and style, shares anecdotes, and even delivers personalized greetings, creating an unforgettable experience for Marilyn fans.

"This collaboration exemplifies the transformative power of AI in connecting brands and consumers," said Greg Cross, CEO and Co-founder of Soul Machines. "Digital Marilyn showcases our Biological AI, bringing an iconic personality to life through engaging dialogues and emotional intelligence. It's more than nostalgia; it's a glimpse into the future of immersive interactions." - *PRNewswire*



**Rosemarie Mejia**  
Real Estate Agent License #01147862



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## IMMIGRATION UPDATES

By **ATTY. JACK GOLAN**

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3250 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 1918, Los Angeles, CA 90010  
Telephone No: (213) 383 3222

**Question 1:** I plan to apply for a parole visa to be able to attend the funeral service for my beloved mother. How do I do this? Will I be able to re-enter the United States? - Brianna

**J. GOLAN:** You may apply for "advance parole" only if you have a pending application, or some status that provides for such a visa (such as "DACA").

**Question 2:** I am a U.S. citizen and would like to petition my only brother who is an engineer who plan to retire soon. He has a wife and two children who are gainfully employed but also would like to have the opportunity to experience living in the United States. What do you think are the chances?

**J. GOLAN:** You may petition for your brother, which will put him and his family on an extremely long waiting list; 2) You may find a company willing to sponsor (make a job offer) for him based on his skills which could get him and his family immigrant visas (Green Cards) within two (2) years (estimate only).

**Question 3:** Recently, I was interviewed at the U.S Embassy for a tourist/business visa. My employer was shouldering all the expenses for a two-week stay and observation tour. I am unmarried, worked for this company for the last year as a manager, own a house and supporting my parents. I do not know why the Consul did not approve my application. Should I try again? - Ignacio S

**J. GOLAN:** You can try again, but you should wait some time, maybe one more year (in the same job).

**Question 4:** I was invited to deliver free lectures in the United States this summer. I am a European professor in the university. May I know what type of visa should I apply for and what documentation would I need? - Dr. E

**J. GOLAN:** Your question does not have enough information to enable an answer.

## HEALTH

**DR. ERNESTO BANAAG, Resource Person**

Family Practice Physician in Los Angeles, California

As defined, health is not just the absence of disease but that of having a wholeness that makes you really feel good, fulfilled and satisfied. The whole being is at peace, and in harmony with his Creator and his fellowmen.

In terms of physical health, do only what is best to maintain ourselves, which is good nourishment, daily and consistent moderate activity. In terms of diet, you have to know and accept that there are really "bad foods" out there, sure they may taste good, but they are not good for the body. I'll dwell on that later. And then there is the aspect of moderation.

Questions/Answers

1. What are the advantages of practicing intermittent fasting? - Jenny

Answer: Intermittent fasting, depending on how long

between fasting, is good because it allows your digestive and metabolic system to rest and rejuvenate itself, ready to work again at optimum levels.

2. Is it true that when you take cholesterol medication, you will have to take it for the rest of your life? - Alexander

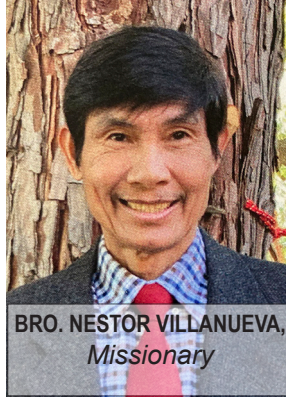
Answer: Not true, it will always depend on present habit and lifestyle, if you adjust and monitor the numbers, you also react to the present numbers.

3. I am a vegetarian. What type of protein and iron supplements would you advise I take? - Sylvia M

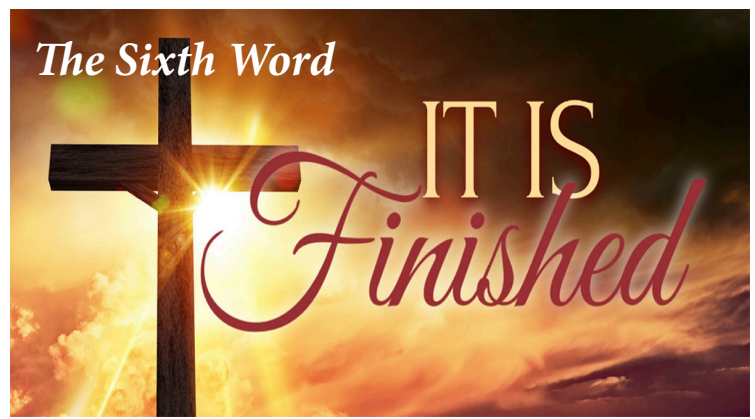
Answer: Natural supplements are always easier for our body, if you need to use commercial supplements, check for purity and less additives.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

**PRAISE AND WORSHIP • BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY  
LED BY BRO. NESTOR VILLANUEVA (A MISSIONARY)  
TOGETHER WITH A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS HELD WEEKLY AT  
MONTROSE CONVALESCENT CENTER, CALIFORNIA**



### • THE SEVEN LAST WORDS •



## Public Affairs

with **AWEE ABAYARI**



**TOPICS :**

- Public Service • Education • Culture •
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For questions:  
radiotvanchor1@gmail.com • www.youtube.com/Awee Abayari



**INTERNATIONAL NEWS MEDIA**

### IRS Free File provides quick, easy way to file tax filing extension

WASHINGTON — As the end of tax season draws near, the Internal Revenue Service reminds taxpayers there's an easy way to get a tax filing extension through the Free File program.

A tax filing extension guarantees the taxpayer six additional months to file – with an extended deadline of Oct. 15, 2024. The IRS Free File program is one of the easiest ways to get an extension.

Although an extension grants extra time to file, it does not extend the obligation to pay taxes due on April 15, 2024. To avoid penalties and late fees, taxpayers who owe should pay either their full tax bill or at least what they can afford to pay by the April 15 deadline.

Taxpayers in Maine and Massachusetts have until April 17 to file and pay taxes due this year. This is because these states observe the Patriots' Day holiday on April 15 this year and April 16 is the Emancipation Day holiday in the District of Columbia. - IRS

### FBI San Diego warns of romance scams

SAN DIEGO—Scammers are targeting victims using online dating sites. A whirlwind online romance can turn into fraud that causes victims to lose large amounts of money. Romance scams, a type of confidence fraud, begin when an individual believes they are in a romantic relationship and is tricked into sending money, personal information, financial information, or items of value to the perpetrator.

In a romance scam, the scammers target and take advantage of people looking for companionship or romantic partners and con them out of their money. The criminals who carry out romance scams typically target victims via social media messaging and emails with the intention of establishing a relationship and building trust as quickly as possible.

FBI San Diego is monitoring a trend where romance scams turn into crypto investment fraud schemes. The scam starts similarly as an online relationship, but instead of asking for cash, the scammer convinces the victim to invest in cryptocurrency. To demonstrate the returns on investment, victims are directed to websites that appear authentic but are instead controlled by the scammer.

If you develop a relationship with someone you meet online, FBI San Diego suggests the following tips to avoid becoming a victim of a romance scam:

- If it doesn't feel right, then it probably isn't. Trust your instincts.
- If you suspect an online relationship is a scam, stop all contact immediately.
- Do not give any personal information or money to anyone you have only communicated with by telephone or online.
- Be careful what you post online. Scammers can use details shared on social media platforms and dating sites to legitimize their story.
- If you are planning to meet someone in person you have met online, proceed with caution, especially if you plan to travel to a foreign country. Review the State Department's travel advisories before arranging travel. (travel.state.gov)

Anyone who believes they've been a victim of fraud or knows someone who may be a victim should file a report on ic3.gov or call the FBI San Diego Field Office at (858) 320-1800. For more information on romance scams, visit www.fbi.gov/romancescams.



• PEOPLE • PLACES • EVENTS • ENTERTAINMENT •

• THE SEVEN LAST WORDS •

The Seventh Word

Jesus cried out in a loud voice, **“Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.”**

Luke 23:46



## First-Ever National Conference for Women marks Women’s History Month

BOSTON-- The nation’s largest network of women’s conferences hosted its first-ever National Conference for Women on March 14.

In recognition of Women’s History Month—and the importance of women supporting women—the virtual gathering featured Margaret Atwood, America Ferrera, Carla Harris, Kristen Kish, Michelle Zauner, and dozens more.

Over 55,000 women attend conferences in California, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Texas annually. This year, the organization that produces these events decided to bring together all four regional communities, along with women who purchased tickets from various states and countries.

The Conferences for Women also launched a free, year-round career development resource. The complimentary, 24/7 Career Connections Program was created to support women in their career growth, whether advancing in their current organization or making the leap to a new opportunity. Resources are designed to help provide the coaching, guidance, skill-building, community, and support women need to reach the next level. - PRNewswire

March 14, 2024

A GROUNDBREAKING VIRTUAL GATHERING

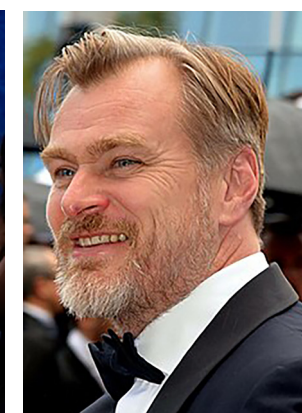
9:30AM-6PM EASTERN  
8:30AM-5PM CENTRAL  
6:30AM-3PM PACIFIC



## WINNERS OF THE 2024 ACADEMY AWARDS



Cillian Murphy, winner of the award for best performance by an actor in a leading role for “Oppenheimer,” left, poses with Mstyslav Chernov, winner of the award for best documentary feature film for “20 Days in Mariupol” on March 10, 2024.



Christopher Nolan, Best Director, “Oppenheimer”



Justine Triet shares the award for Best Original Screenplay “Anatomy of a Fall” with and Arthur Harari

- The list of winners at the Academy Awards on March 10:**  
 BEST PICTURE: “Oppenheimer”  
 BEST ACTRESS : Emma Stone, “Poor Things”  
 BEST ACTOR: Cillian Murphy, “Oppenheimer”  
 SUPPORTING ACTOR: Robert Downey Jr., “Oppenheimer”  
 SUPPORTING ACTRESS: Da’Vine Joy Randolph, “The Holdovers”  
 DIRECTOR: Christopher Nolan, “Oppenheimer”  
 LIVE ACTION SHORT FILM: “The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar”  
 SOUND: “The Zone of Interest,” Tarn Willers and Johnnie Burn  
 ORIGINAL SCORE: “Oppenheimer,” Ludwig Göransson  
 ORIGINAL SONG: “What Was I Made For?” from “Barbie”  
 VISUAL EFFECTS: “Godzilla Minus One”  
 FILM EDITING: “Oppenheimer,” Jennifer Lame  
 DOCUMENTARY SHORT FILM: “The Last Repair Shop”

- DOCUMENTARY FEATURE: “20 Days in Mariupol”  
 CINEMATOGRAPHY: “Oppenheimer,” Hoyte Van Hoytema  
 ANIMATED SHORT FILM: “WAR IS OVER!  
 Inspired by the Music of John & Yoko”  
 ANIMATED FILM: “The Boy and the Heron”  
 ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY: “Anatomy of a Fall,”  
 Justine Triet and Arthur Harari  
 ADAPTED SCREENPLAY: “American Fiction,”  
 Cord Jefferson  
 MAKEUP AND HAIRSTYLING: “Poor Things,”  
 Nadia Stacey, Mark Coulier & Josh Weston  
 PRODUCTION DESIGN: “Poor Things,” James Price,  
 Shona Heath and Zsuzsa Mihalek  
 COSTUME DESIGN: “Poor Things,” Holly Waddington  
 INTERNATIONAL FEATURE FILM: “The Zone of Interest”  
 (United Kingdom)

• People • Events •

### New England Symphonic Ensemble to perform Verdi’s Overture to La forza del Destino

The New England Symphonic Ensemble performs Verdi’s Overture to La forza del destino and Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 4—plus, the Crystal Children’s Choir sings choral classics on Sunday, Mar 31, 2024, 2:00 pm at the Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall.



### Smart City Expo USA takes place in New York City and features Mayor Eric Adams

NEW YORK -- Smart City Expo USA today announced that its 2024 conference will be held in New York City on May 22-23 at Pier 36, with the support of the city. New York City Mayor Eric Adams, New York City Chief Technology Officer Matthew Fraser, and New York Economic Development Corporation CEO Andrew Kimball will all give remarks as part of the event. - PRNewswire

### The Black Keys Receive SoundExchange Hall Of Fame Award

The Black Keys have been honored with the SoundExchange Hall of Fame Award, recognizing their stature as one of the most streamed acts in the organization’s 20-year history.

Patrick Carney and Dan Auerbach were presented during the recent SXSW conference and music festival in Austin, Texas, on March 16 where duo delivered a featured keynote, premiered the Jeff Dupre-directed documentary This is a Film About The Black Keys, and performed a pair of headlining sets. The band will release its twelfth studio album, Ohio Players, on April 5 via Nonesuch/Warner Records.



Photo (L-R): The Black Keys – (L-R) Patrick Carney and Dan Auerbach – receive the SoundExchange Hall of Fame Award at SXSW in Austin, Texas (Photo credit: Rafael Sanchez)

### Easter Markets in Graz, Austria

Easter in Graz is an especially delightful time, featuring one of the country’s most beautiful and lively Easter markets. Here, artisans showcase their crafts, and culinary masters offer unusual seasonal delicacies.



### Andrea Bocelli & Son Matteo perform stunning ‘In Memoriam’ Tribute at the 2024 Oscars



Andrea Bocelli and his son Matteo Bocelli did beautiful justice to the Hollywood legends who died in the past year by singing a heart-wrenching duet of “Time to Say Good-Bye (Con Te Partirò)” during the 2024 Oscars on Sunday (March 10).

## HEALTH NEWS

### Iron restriction keeps blood stem cells young

BRONX, N.Y. -- As we age, our hematopoietic (blood-forming) stem cells (HSCs) become less able to produce new red and white blood cells and other vital blood components—contributing to chronic inflammation and accelerating the onset of blood cancers and degenerative diseases. Researchers at Albert Einstein College of Medicine and the National Cancer Institute-designated Montefiore Einstein Comprehensive Cancer Center(MECCC) have found that failing HSC function can be prevented or even reversed by reducing iron levels in these adult stem cells.

The findings were published on March 7 in the print edition of the journal *Cell Stem Cell*. - PRNewswire

### FDA approves first treatment to reduce risk of heart problems in overweight adults

SILVER SPRING, Md. -- On March 8, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved a new indication for use for Wegovy (semaglutide) injection to reduce the risk of cardiovascular death, heart attack and stroke in adults with cardiovascular disease and either obesity or overweight.

Wegovy should be used in addition to a reduced calorie diet and increased physical activity. Cardiovascular disease is a group of diseases of the heart and blood vessels. - PRNewswire

### Age estimated by changes to DNA can help predict health outcomes and mortality in older adults

Estimates of biological age, as measured by epigenetic changes such as DNA methylation (DNAm), can aid prediction of age-related health outcomes, including multiple chronic diseases, impaired cognitive function, functional limitations, and mortality in older adults.

However, other factors, such as demographics, socioeconomic status, mental health, and health behaviors, are comparable — and often more robust — predictors of late-life health outcomes. These are findings of an NIA-funded study published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. - NIA

### How Nature’s Body boosts immunity

As the cold and flu season slowly drags toward its end, it’s important for people to remain invested in their health. The best way to do this is through preventative health measures, to keep the body strong and healthy. The Australian health and wellness brand Nature’s Body line of top-shelf supplements features products that help keep the body’s immune system healthy. Ashwagandha, Lion’s Mane, N-acetyl cysteine (NAC) and Quercetin are examples of products that have shown the potential to boost immunity. - PRNewswire



Have a blessed  
Easter!

**"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die."**

**--John 11:25-26**

# EASTER

For the Christian tradition, the bodily resurrection was the restoration to life of a transformed body powered by spirit, as described by Paul and the Gospel authors, that led to the establishment of Christianity. In Christian theology, the resurrection of Jesus is “the central mystery of the Christian faith”. It provides the foundation for that faith, as commemorated by Easter, along with Jesus’s life, death and sayings. For Christians, his resurrection is the guarantee that all the Christian dead will be resurrected at Christ’s parousia (second coming). - *Source:*

*Wikipedia*