

Sports: Timberwolves break Warriors' home streak with late 3s. **B1**



Sports: It's tentative at the top for Wild, who face big tests this week as Central leaders. **B1**



World: Ukraine calls for emergency U.N. talks after Putin's nuclear threats. **A8**



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EXECUTIONS

Biden strict on death penalty

DOJ opposing appeals 'as usual' since last administration

By Michael Tarm and Alanna Durkin Richer
The Associated Press

CHICAGO » Rejon Taylor hoped the election of Joe Biden, the first U.S. president to campaign on a pledge to end the death penalty, would mean a more sympathetic look at his claims that racial bias and other trial errors landed him on federal

death row in Terre Haute, Ind.

But two years on, Justice Department attorneys under Biden are fighting the Black man's efforts to reverse his 2008 death sentence for killing a white restaurateur as hard as they did under Donald Trump, who oversaw 13 executions in his presidency's final months.

"Every legal means they have

available they're using to fight us," said the 38-year-old's lawyer, Kelley Henry. "It's business as usual."

Election promises

Death penalty opponents expected Biden to act within weeks of taking office to fulfill his 2020 campaign promise to end capital punishment on the federal level

and to work at ending it in states that still carry out executions. Instead, Biden has taken no steps toward fulfilling that promise.

But it's not just inaction by Biden. An Associated Press review of dozens of legal filings shows Biden's Justice Department is fighting vigorously in courts to maintain the sentences of death row inmates, even after Attorney General Merrick Garland temporarily paused executions. **EXECUTIONS » PAGE 10**

ISRAEL

Protests erupt after Netanyahu fires chief

Defense minister had criticized judicial overhaul

By Patrick Kingsley
The New York Times

JERUSALEM » Civil unrest broke out in parts of Israel on Sunday night after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu fired his defense minister for criticizing the government's divisive judicial overhaul, prompting protesters to surge into the streets, universities to shut their doors and union leaders to hint of a looming general strike.

Announced in a one-line statement by the prime minister's office, the dismissal of Yoav Gallant intensified an already dramatic domestic crisis — one of the gravest in Israeli history — set off by the government's attempt to give itself greater control over the selection of Supreme Court justices and to limit the court's authority over parliament.

Gallant's dismissal unleashed chaotic late-night demonstrations in and around Tel Aviv, where protesters blocked a multilane highway and set fires in at least two major roads, and in Jerusalem, where crowds broke through police barriers outside Netanyahu's private residence.

As midnight approached, it also prompted the heads of Israel's leading research universities to collectively announce that they were closing their classrooms for the immediate future; Israel's consul-general in New York to resign; and Histadrut, the country's largest workers' union, to warn that it may announce a general strike Monday in conjunction with leading businesses. **ISRAEL » PAGE 10**

MISSISSIPPI TORNADO DAMAGE

STORM RECOVERY BEGINS



SCOTT OLSON — GETTY IMAGES

An aerial view on Sunday shows the piles of debris remaining where homes once stood before Friday's EF-4 tornado in Rolling Fork, Miss. At least 25 people died when the tornado ripped through the small town and other nearby communities. Search and recovery crews dug through the wreckage Sunday, even as the South faced forecasts of more extreme weather. Story, A3.

ST. PAUL » RONDO

Community celebrates veteran's 100 years

Gordon Kirk has been generous leader in church, VFW

By Nick Woltman
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There were four generations of Gordon Kirks at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church on Sunday morning.

The eldest Gordon Kirk celebrated his 100th birthday last week, and his grandson, great-grandson and great-great-grandson joined about two dozen parishioners in the church's basement after the 10 a.m. service to mark their namesake's milestone.

"I guess I'm just one of the lucky ones," Kirk said of his longevity. "I've been blessed. I mean, I'm the first Kirk to ever reach 100 years old. Dad died at 99, mother died at 94."

St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter and Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz both issued proclamations last week recognizing the World War II veteran's service to his city and state.

Kirk has spent much of his long life helping others. Holy Trinity parishioner Paula Mitchell described Kirk as a pillar of the community.

"We could always depend on him," she said Sunday. "At 100 years old, he's still trying to be of assistance to others. ... He's just always been so giving."

A longtime resident of St. Paul's Rondo neighborhood, Kirk's sharp memory is also a repository of local history.

"He's still able to talk and tell stories," Mitchell said. "If you don't have that, how do you have a culture you can call on, that you can believe in?"

Kirk was born in Helena, Mont., on March 23, 1923. His father's career with the Northern Pacific Railway moved the family west to Seattle just as he was starting grade school. When Kirk was 10 years old, they finally settled in St. Paul in the depths of the Great Depression.



NICK WOLTMAN — PIONEER PRESS

Gordon Kirk, who celebrated his 100th birthday last week, was honored on Sunday with a party at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in St. Paul.

Kirk enlisted in the U.S. Army shortly after graduating from Marshall High School in 1942. Sent to Texas for basic training, he first encountered the open rac-

ism of the segregated south when he and his fellow Black recruits were boarding a train in Kansas City. **KIRK » PAGE 2**

SPACE

Planets will align this week

After sunset Tuesday best chance to see all 5

By Maddie Burakoff
The Associated Press

NEW YORK » Keep an eye to the sky this week for a chance to see a planetary hangout.

Five planets — Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Uranus and Mars — will line up near the moon.

Where and when can you see them?

The best day to catch the whole group is Tuesday. You'll want to look to the western horizon right after sunset, said NASA astronomer Bill Cooke.

The planets will stretch from the horizon line to around halfway up the night sky. But don't be late: Mercury and Jupiter will quickly dip below the horizon around half an hour after sunset. **PLANETS » PAGE 10**

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WEATHER

H: 42 L: 22
Full report on » B6



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