

Groton Daily Independent

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UpComing Events

Tuesday, Nov. 30

Groton Novice Debate
JH GBB hosting Clark/Willow Lake (7th at 6 p.m. with 8th to follow)

Wednesday, Dec. 1

8:30 a.m. to Noon: ACT Practice Test

Thursday, Dec. 2

LifeTouch Pictures Retake at Elementary, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

8:30 a.m. to Noon: ACT Practice Test

JH GBB at Northwestern (7th at 6:30 p.m. followed by 8th)

Friday, Dec. 3

State Oral Interp at Huron

8:30 a.m. to Noon: ACT Practice Test



Saturday, Dec. 4

State Oral Interp at Huron

10 a.m.: JH GBB Jamboree in Groton

10 a.m.: Wrestling Invite at Clark-Willow Lake

Monday, Dec. 6

4 p.m.: School Board planning/work session

JH GBB hosts Langford. 7th at 6 p.m. with 8th to follow

Tuesday, Dec. 7

GBB hosts Flandreau Indian. Varsity only at 6 p.m.

JHGBB at Tiospa Zina (7th at 4 p.m. with 8th to follow)

Thursday, Dec. 9

7 p.m.: MS/HS Christmas Concert

Friday, Dec. 10

GBB hosts Britton-Hecla. JV at 6 p.m. with Varsity to follow

Saturday, Dec. 11

8 a.m. to Noon: ACT testing at GHS

10 a.m.: Wrestling Tourney at LaMoure

Boys Basketball at Britton-Hecla. JV at 1:30 p.m. followed by varsity game.

Groton Daily Independent
PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445
Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.
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THE BEST STEAKS TASTE BETTER



The Delightful Gift

- 4 Butcher's Cut Top Sirloins (5 oz.)
- 4 Filet Mignon Burgers (5.3 oz.)
- 4 Boneless Chicken Breasts (1 lb. pkg.)
- 4 Gourmet Jumbo Franks (3 oz.)
- 4 Individual Scalloped Potatoes (3.8 oz.)
- 4 Caramel Apple Tartlets (4 oz.)
- 1 jar Signature Seasoning (3.1 oz. jar)
- 8 **FREE** Filet Mignon Burgers (5.3 oz.)

65658TLN separately \$223.93* **\$99.99**
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United Methodist Church

Groton and Conde

Sunday, November 28, 2021

UM Student Day
Conde Worship 9:00 AM
NO Sunday School 10:00 AM
Groton Worship 11:00 AM

Monday, November 29, 2021

Pastor Brandon Christmas Study 7:00 PM

Wednesday, December 1, 2021

Community Coffee Hour 9:30 AM
Confirmation Snack Time 3:30 PM
Confirmation 4:00 PM
Angel Tree Shopping 5:00 PM

Sunday, December 5, 2021

Communion in Worship
Conde Worship 9:00 AM
Sunday School - Lesson and practice Christmas Program 10:00 AM
Groton Worship 11:00 AM

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Groton

Sunday, Nov. 28

9am Worship
No Sunday School

Monday, Nov. 29

6:30am Bible Study

Wednesday, Dec. 1

5:00pm Sarah Circle
6:30pm Confirmation
6:30pm League

Thursday, Dec. 2

2:00pm Nigeria Circle
6:00pm Grace Alone

Sunday, Dec. 5

9am Worship/Communion
10:15 Sunday School
10:15 Grace Alone Study
7:00pm Choir practice

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton &

St. Joseph Catholic

Groton and Turton

Weekend Mass Schedule

Saturday 4:30pm Groton
Sunday 8:30am Groton & 11:00am Turton

Weekday

Tues 5:00pm Turton, W-F 8:30am Groton
Sat 10am Newman Center

Confessions:

Sat. 3:45-4:15pm & Sun. 7:45am to 8:15am (G)
Sun. 10:30-10:45am (T)

St. John's Lutheran Church

Groton

Sunday, Nov. 28

8 a.m.: Bible Study
9 a.m.: St. John's
11 a.m.: Zion

Death Notice: Spike Nehls

Carroll "Spike" Nehls, 86, of Groton passed away November 27, 2021 at his home in Groton. Services are pending with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

To submit your monthly or weekly church calendar, email to
news@grotonsd.net

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*Olive Grove's
5th Annual*

*Christmas
Tour of Homes
& Holiday
Party*

**Weston & Emily Dinger
Cassels House Inn & Events
Julie Schaller (3 of Life)
Wage Memorial Library & City Office
Olde Bank N Café B & B**

**SATURDAY,
DEC. 4, 2021**

**TOUR OF
HOMES
4-7 P.M.**

**HOLIDAY
PARTY**

4-CLOSE

**Silent Basket Items
Bidding closes at 8:30 p.m.
Live Auction begins at 8:30 p.m.**

Coffee, Apple Cider and Goodies at the Club House
A variety of snacks served.

**\$15 tickets available at
Lori's Pharmacy, Groton
Groton Ford**

Hair & Company, Aberdeen

Come on out for a fun evening!

Support your local golf course!

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\$252,392 Dakota Cash jackpot on Saturday

PIERRE, S.D. – A South Dakota Lottery player will have even more to be thankful for after Saturday's Dakota Cash drawing.

Saturday's drawings featured a \$252,392 Dakota Cash jackpot winner. The winning ticket was purchased at The Corner Gas & Goodies, located at 20402 478th Ave. in White.

The winning numbers were 4, 20, 30, 32 and 34. The odds of hitting the jackpot were 1:324,632.

If you are Saturday's winner, please sign the back of your ticket immediately and visit a South Dakota Lottery validation center to claim your prize. The Sioux Falls Lottery office is located at 3605 Western Ave., Suite B.

The Dakota Cash game is exclusive to South Dakota with drawings each Wednesday and Saturday. For more information on the game, visit <https://lottery.sd.gov/games/lottogames/dakotacash>.

SCAM ALERT

The Social Security Administration will never threaten, scare, or pressure you to take an immediate action.

If you receive a call, text, or email that...

Threatens to suspend your Social Security number, even if they have part or all of your Social Security number

Warns of arrest or legal action

Demands or requests immediate payment

Requires payment by gift card, prepaid debit card, internet currency, or by mailing cash

Pressures you for personal information

Requests secrecy

Threatens to seize your bank account

Promises to increase your Social Security benefit

Tries to gain your trust by providing fake "documentation," false "evidence," or the name of a real government official

...it is a SCAM!

Do not give scammers money or personal information – Ignore Them!

Protect yourself and others from Social Security-related scams

Try to stay calm. Do not provide anyone with money or personal information when you feel pressured, threatened, or scared.

Hang up or ignore it. If you receive a suspicious call, text, or email, hang up or do not respond. Government employees will not threaten you, demand immediate payment, or try to gain your trust by sending you pictures or documents.

Report Social Security-related scams. If you receive a suspicious call, text, or email that mentions Social Security, ignore it and report it to the SSA Office of the Inspector General (OIG). Do not be embarrassed if you shared personal information or suffered a financial loss.

Get up-to-date information. Follow SSA OIG on Twitter @TheSSAOIG and Facebook @SSA Office of the Inspector General for the latest information on Social Security-related scams. Visit the Federal Trade Commission for information on other government scams.

Spread the word. Share your knowledge of Social Security-related scams. Post on social media using the hashtag #SlamtheScam to share your experience and warn others. Visit oig.ssa.gov/scam for more information. Please also share with your friends and family.

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FREE DATE CHANGES



FROM
\$2,549*
\$2,299*



FROM
\$1,949*
\$1,699*

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BEST OF HAWAII FOUR-ISLAND TOUR

12 days, departs year-round

Oahu • Hawaii Island • Kauai • Maui

— Enjoy a fully guided 4-island Hawaiian vacation with centrally located lodging in Waikiki on Oahu, and beachfront lodging on the “Big Island” of Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui. Guided throughout by our friendly Tour Directors—your local experts. Includes 3 inter-island flights.

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* Prices are per person based on double occupancy plus up to \$299 in taxes & fees. Single supplement and seasonal surcharges may apply. Add-on airfare available. Free date changes prior to final payment. Deposits and final payments are non-refundable. Onboard Credit requires purchase of Ocean View or Balcony Cabin. Offers apply to new bookings only, made by 12/31/21. Other terms & conditions may apply. Ask your Travel Consultant for details.

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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE



He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

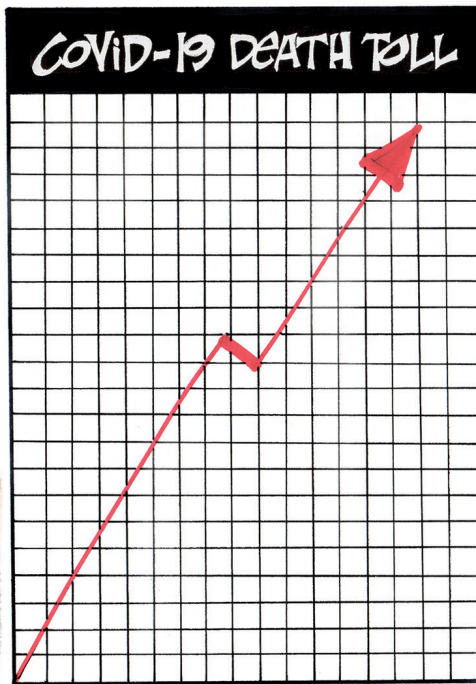
REVELATION 2:7

Detail of "Tree of Science" by Ramon Llull (1296)

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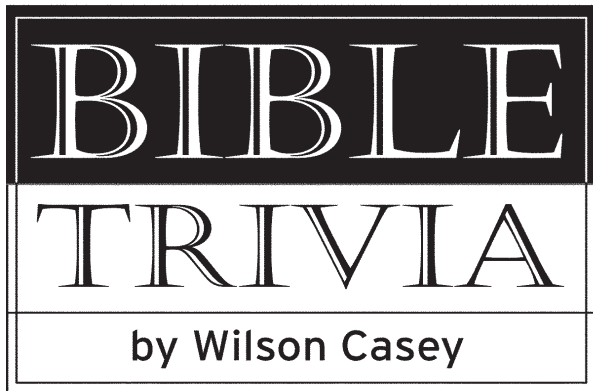
WHAT YOU CAN WATCH DROP IF YOU GET VACCINATED...



WHAT YOU CAN WATCH RISE IF YOU DON'T.

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1. Is the book of Psalms in the Old Testament or New Testament or neither?

2. From 2 Chronicles 26, at what age did Uzziah become king of Jerusalem? *16, 30, 65, 99*

3. In Genesis 4, who did God ask, "Why is thy countenance fallen"? *Eve, Ahaz, Cain, Esau*

4. Which prophet saw the Lord's angel riding on a red horse? *Hosea, Nathan, Zechariah, Isaiah*

4. Who was the first person to build an altar unto the Lord? *Abraham, Noah, Artaxerxes, Levi*

5. From Exodus 33, who/what saw the back of God? *Adam, The serpent, Abraham, Moses*

ANSWERS: 1) Old; 2) 16; 3) Cain; 4) Zechariah; 5) Noah; 6) Moses

Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in stores and online. It makes a great holiday gift.

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by Healthy Exchanges

Pea and Pasta Salad

During the hectic days leading up to the holidays, it's nice to have side salads waiting in the refrigerator for last-minute meals. This great pasta salad is perfect alongside grilled burgers or baked chicken breasts.

- 1/2 cup fat-free mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup sweet pickle relish
- 1 (2-ounce) jar chopped pimiento, drained
- 1 1/2 cups cold cooked rotini pasta, rinsed and drained
- 1 1/2 cups frozen peas, thawed
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons shredded reduced-fat Cheddar cheese

1. In a large bowl, combine mayonnaise, pickle relish and pimiento. Add rotini pasta and peas. Mix well to combine. Fold in Cheddar cheese.

2. Cover and refrigerate for at least 15 minutes. Gently stir again just before serving. Makes 6 (2/3 cup) servings.

* Each serving equals: 164 calories, 4g fat, 9g protein, 23g carb., 153mg sodium, 3g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 1/2 Starch, 1 Meat.

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DR. HANS ZARKOV

ONE OF THE MOST BRILLIANT SCIENTISTS THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN... AN INVALUABLE ALLY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST MING.

ZASK!

FLASH GORDON

11-21 By JIM KEEFE

THIS MAN LEFT FLASH TO DIE! HE'S NOT FIT TO BE A LEADER. I DEMAND HE BE... **YOU DEMAND NOTHING BEFORE THE QUEEN.**

LONAK.

EXCUSE THE CAPTAIN, MISS ARDEN. WE'VE ALL BEEN UNDER A LOT OF STRAIN. RONAL HAS ALSO GONE MISSING...

"...HE FOUGHT OFF THOSE CREATURES SINGLE-HANDEDLY IN ORDER FOR CAPTAIN LONAK TO GET ME TO SAFETY."

"IT'S IRONIC. RONAL ALWAYS INSISTED THE KRONATORS WERE DOCILE CREATURES, THAT THEY POSED NO THREAT."

I TRIED TO WARN HIS MAJESTY, BUT UNFORTUNATELY HE WOULDN'T LISTEN.

THOOM!!

THOOM!

WHAT IN BLAZES?!

HARD TO IMAGINE SOMEONE NOT LISTENING TO YOU.

IT'S THOSE INFERNAL BEASTS. THEY KNOW WE'RE IN HERE.

IF ONLY WE WEREN'T CUT OFF FROM OUR ARSENAL.

I THINK I CAN BE OF HELP.

I HAVE A DEVICE THAT JUST MIGHT BE OF ASSISTANCE...

IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME...

TO BE CONT'D

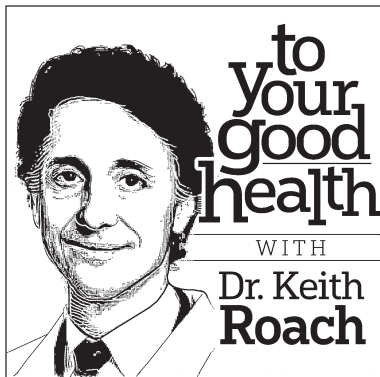
Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO SACRIFICE FUNDAMENTALS FOR GIMMICKS WHEN YOU PRACTICE.

BEGIN EACH SESSION WORKING ON TEMPO AND "FEEL," WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT WHERE THE SHOTS FINISH.

THEN MOVE ON TO THE FUNDAMENTALS THAT HAVE WORKED FOR YOU BEFORE, AND **STICK** TO THEM.

PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE BASICS OF GRIP, ALIGNMENT, AND POSTURE - WHICH IN MY BOOK ACCOUNT FOR 80 PERCENT OF GOOD GOLF.



Twisted Colon Is a Surgical Emergency

DEAR DR. ROACH: This past weekend, during my son's wedding festivities, experienced a sigmoid volvulus. Doctors recommended surgery, but I opted for a colonoscopy, which was performed successfully. Thank goodness. I was immediately a new woman, and no one would have dreamed I went through this emergency. The surgeons recommended I have my sigmoid colon removed in order to decrease the risk of recurrence. Ideally, this would happen as soon as possible.

What could have prompted the sigmoid volvulus? Is it an absolute that I must have my sigmoid colon removed? What are the odds of it recurring? If I do need the surgery, how can I best prepare for it, and what are the

side effects? -- M.B.

ANSWER: A volvulus is the twisting of a hollow structure in the body around its long axis (imagine holding one end of a sock in each hand and flipping the middle so it twists on itself). The sigmoid colon is the most common location. It is a surgical emergency, as tissue death and gangrene may follow.

The biggest risk factor for volvulus is chronic constipation, but some people just have anatomy that predisposes them to get a volvulus.

Surgery is the definitive treatment, but colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy may be used to untwist the colon; medical professionals use the term "reduce." However, your surgeon was right that you are at risk for this happening again. In those people with a history of volvulus, 50% to 60% will get another, and if you have two, the recurrence rate is even higher.

For a person in generally good health, I would recommend definitive surgery to prevent recurrence of volvulus. There are no specific instructions to prepare for surgery, beyond taking good care of yourself and following your surgeon's instructions about your medications (if any).

Any abdominal surgery has the risk of bleeding, infection and adhesions (connections between loops of bowel that can lead to painful obstruction later); however, these risks are quite small.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm a 71-year-old male who just underwent surgery for tongue cancer. It was diagnosed as an invasive squamous cell carcinoma with strong P16 staining consistent with human HPV. We've never been vaccinated for HPV. Is it advisable for my wife (66 years old) and me to be vaccinated with Gardasil 9? She was tested by her gynecologist and does not have HPV at this time. -- R.L.

ANSWER: Human papillomavirus is an increasing cause of cancer in the head and neck, and it is believed that vaccination is likely to prevent most cases of this type of cancer, which mostly occur in men. Although there are clinical trials ongoing now to see whether vaccination may help treat existing HPV-related cancers, it is not routinely recommended for people with HPV-related cancers.

Your wife was wise to get tested for HPV. Given her age, she would not normally be considered a candidate for the vaccine. Odds are she has already been exposed to the virus during your marriage and has successfully resisted the infection. Some people in her situation might consider the vaccine, given its low risk of side effects, despite lack of proven effectiveness in this situation. However, it would be three doses of the vaccine, which would not normally be covered by insurance in the U.S.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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How to With John Wilson (TV-MA) — Director and producer John Wilson spends a lot of time walking around New York trying to find the answers to some of life's biggest questions. This observational docuseries returns for its second season and continues to enthrall with Wilson's deadpan sarcasm. His uncanny ability to start out with a ridiculously boring premise and somehow have it snowball into an utterly bizarre and totally different topic than anyone ever saw coming is fascinating. His lack of polished commentary is hilariously genuine. It's like watching a 40-year-old man present an eighth-grade school project he created on his dad's video camera. (HBOMax)

Passing (PG-13) — Imagine running into a childhood friend after many years, realizing they are now living their life as a member of another race, and at that moment you are the only person who knows the truth. Based on a 1929 novel of the same name, "Passing" is the story of two black women in 1920s New York City, one of whom is living as a wealthy white woman married to a racist white man who is blissfully ignorant of his wife's true self. When Clare realizes how much she misses her former black life in Harlem, she insinuates herself into Irene's family, friends, and home there. It's an emotionally charged film that relies on silence as much as dialogue, and very effectively so. Starring Tessa Thompson, Ruth Negga and Andre Holland. (Netflix)

The Fight Before Christmas (R) — Nothing quite quashes the good cheer of merry gentlemen like a disagreement between neighbors over what constitutes "too many" Christ-

mas lights in one's yard. OK, so it's not just lights, but also a 35-person choir, and a live camel or two. Jeremy Morris is an Idaho attorney who ticked off most of his town when he attempted to produce a giant Christmas show on his own property. When his homeowners' association said "no way" and neighbors threatened legal action, it became Morris's life's mission to deck the halls and trees and shrubs grandly enough to be seen from space. What followed was an explosion of ego instead of peace on earth, goodwill toward men. (AppleTV+)



Netflix, Inc.

Ruth Negga and Tessa Thompson in "Passing"

The Housewife & the Shah Shock-er (NR) — Bravo's "Housewives" franchise is always good for some drama; lucky for us, producers are quick to capitalize on the salacious legal entanglements in which some of the women find themselves. From the Salt Lake City team, Jen Shah was arrested by federal agents earlier this year — on camera — after being investigated in a money-laundering scheme. The castmates were just embarking on a group trip together when Jen received a phone call and quickly exited without explanation. The tip wasn't enough to escape agents, though. Jen was arrested along with her assistant, charged, pled not guilty, and awaits trial. This ABC News originals special will delve further into her alleged wrongdoings, the coordinated arrest and what her co-stars might have known about her "business." (Hulu)

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1. Who wrote and released "Love Will Tear Us Apart"?
2. Which artist had the first hit with "Everlasting Love"?
3. Name the three truckers in C.W. McCall's "Convoy."
4. What was the title of John Travolta's debut single, his only Top 10 hit?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Snowflakes in the air, carols everywhere, olden times and ancient rhymes of love and dreams to share."

Answers

1. Joy Division, in 1980. Songwriter Ian Curtis wrote the song about his own relationship difficulties. Rolling

Stone put it on their list of the 500 best songs in both 2004 and 2011.

2. Robert Knight, in 1967. Numerous others have covered the song since then, including Gloria Estefan, the Four Tops and the Temptations.

3. "Rubber Duck," "Pig Pen" and "Sodbuster." The 1978 film "Convoy" was based on the song. It was also used in "Grand Theft Auto V."

4. "Let Her In," released in 1976.

5. "Christmas Time Is Here," written by Vince Guaraldi and sung by St. Paul's Episcopal Church, in 1965. The song is most known for its use in the animated "A Charlie Brown Christmas."

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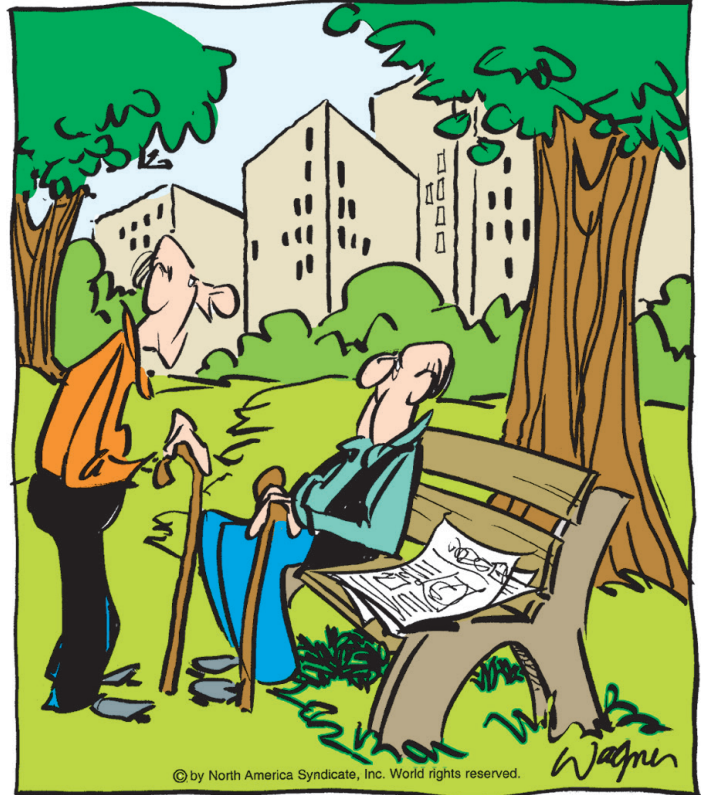
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Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{by Wagner}

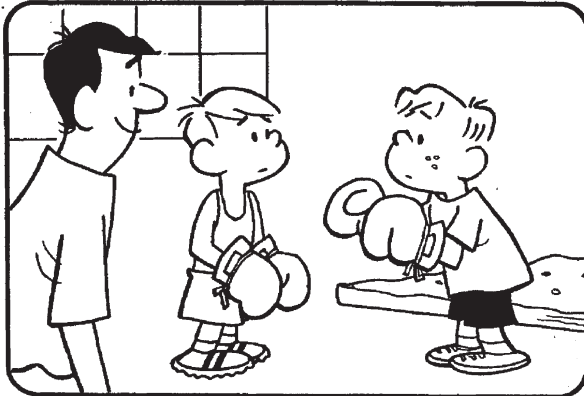


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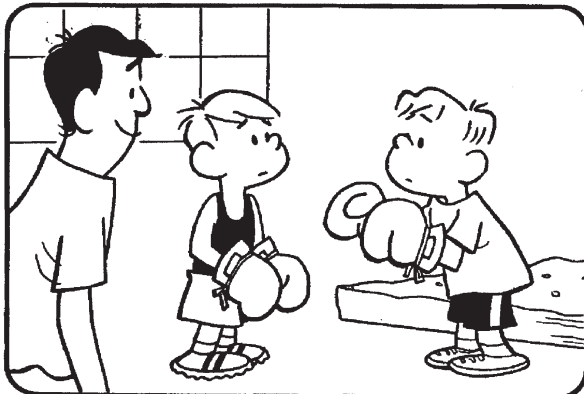
"In my case, there's a detour on Memory Lane."

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Shirt is shorter. 2. Sleeve is shorter. 3. Freckles are missing. 4. Mat is thicker. 5. Stripe is added. 6. Nose is smaller.

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- Got plastic packaging that's a pain to get open? Use your can opener. Run it around the sides to break into your packages. It works!

- For every side dish that requires extra preparation time, plan for one or two that don't. For instance, if you are preparing a casserole with many ingredients and complicated instructions, serve a package of vegetables that require nothing more than steaming.

- Wine buyers tip: Experts say to multiply the number of adult guests by a half bottle to determine how many bottles of wine to buy for your holiday gathering. Add an additional glass of wine per guest for every hour after dinner you expect guests to linger.

- How to peel potatoes: Boil whole potatoes with skin on for 20-30 minutes (depending on the size of your potatoes). You should be able to stick a knife all the way through without resistance. Then remove them to an ice bath for 10 seconds each. The skin

will slip right off.

- "Have kids make their own whipped cream with a jam jar! Fill a screw-top jar (glass, chilled, works really well) halfway with heavy cream, a little sugar and any flavoring extracts you like, then seal and shake. Kids also can make butter with cream in a jar. You may add a pinch of salt instead of sugar, and shake longer." — *A.A. in Florida*

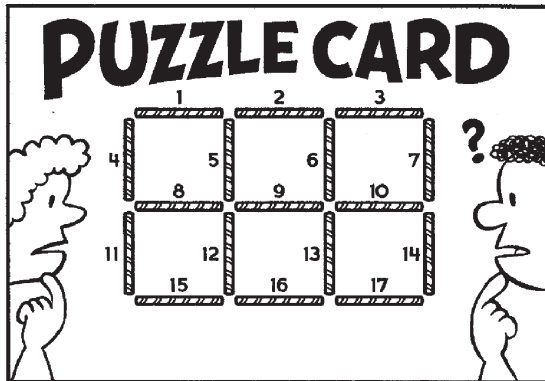
- Researchers tell us that the best time to interview is late morning on a Tuesday. You will avoid the interviewer's likely Monday/Friday crunch, and have his or her full attention. Do your homework on the company, and get ready to shine!

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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YOUR PROBLEM is to remove five straws from the 17 shown here and have three squares left.

If you remove straws 1, 3, 4, 7 and 16, you will be left with three squares.

THE BIRTHDAY BOY! When asked the day of his birth, Harry replied: "Two days ago I was 14 years old. Next year I shall be 17." From his answer can you figure out on what day of the year Harry's birthday occurs?

Dec. 31. Harry is speaking on Jan. 1.

FIND-A-WORD! On the top line is our mystery word. You need to fill in the missing letters. Clue words (smaller words contained in letter-by-letter order within the mystery word) are defined below.

1. Mound of earth.
2. Sports official.
3. Good friend.
4. Droning sound.



1. Hump. 2. Ump. 3. Chum. 4. Hum. Mystery word: Chump.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

1.	L					S
2.		L				S
3.			L		S	
4.				L	S	
5.			S		L	
6.	S					L
7.	S					L

FIND THE BIG WORDS!

Using the definitions and anagrams below, you must find the seven eight-letter words that fit into the framework pictured on the left.

The letters in the two anagram words for each definition must be unscrambled and used to form the word asked for.

Definitions & Anagrams:

1. Reddish beetles
glad + busy
2. Puritanical person
soul + been
3. Thick sugar syrup
mass + lose
4. Sudden collapse
snit + pail
5. Opened an envelope
duel + sane
6. Bring parts together
slab + seem
7. Beach find
less + heal



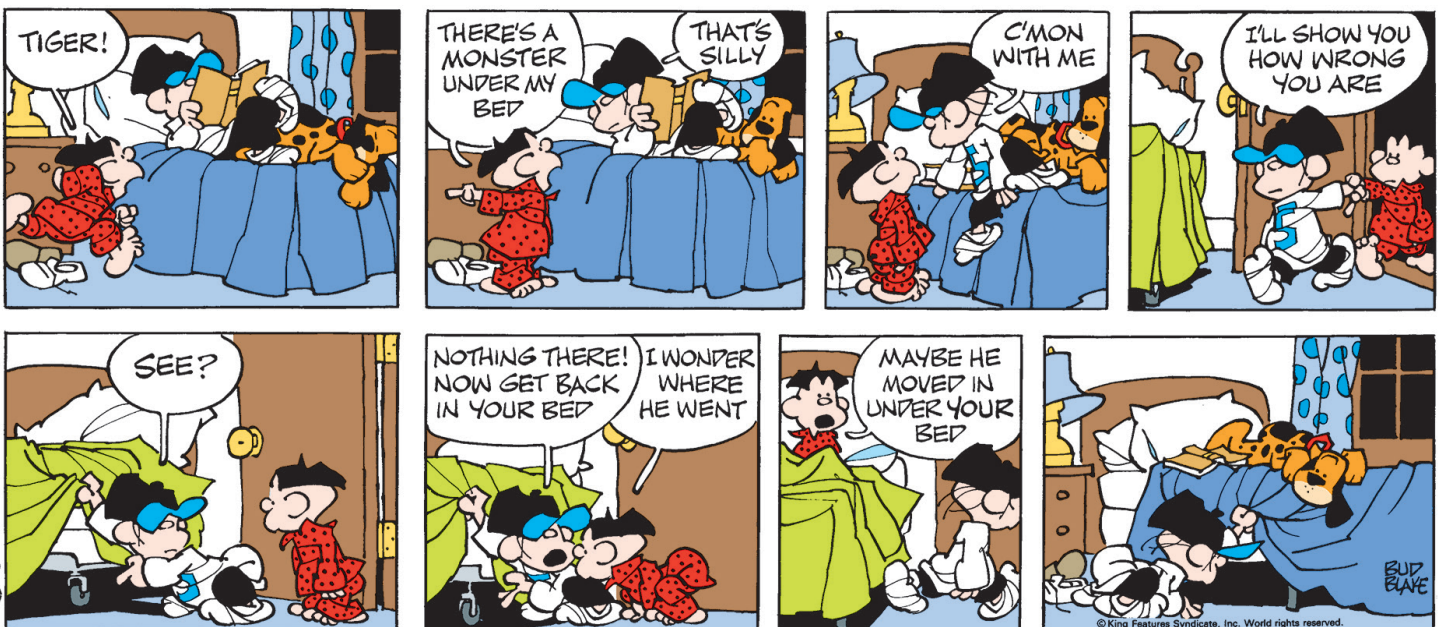
1. Ladybugs. 2. Bluenose. 3. Molasses. 4. Talispin. 5. Unsealed. 6. Assemble. 7. Seashell.

C					P
1.					
	2.				
3.					
4.					

Illustrated by David Coulson

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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Groton Daily Independent

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Creche trio
- 5 The whole enchilada
- 8 Outlet letters
- 12 Teensy bit
- 13 Irish actor Stephen
- 14 Vivacity, in music
- 15 At the summit of
- 16 Her bed was too soft
- 18 Jungle trek
- 20 Make happy
- 21 Swindles
- 23 Workout site
- 24 Spaghetti topper
- 28 Whirled
- 31 Hosp. area
- 32 Small stream
- 34 "As I see it," to a texter
- 35 Lavish affection (on)
- 37 Lunar light
- 39 Family card game
- 41 Greek letters
- 42 Regard highly
- 45 Morals
- 49 Legume used in Asian cuisine
- 51 Acknowledge
- 52 Wax-coated cheese
- 53 Baton Rouge

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 31 Hosp. area 32 Small stream 34 "As I see it," to a texter 35 Lavish affection (on) 37 Lunar light 39 Family card game 41 Greek letters 42 Regard highly 45 Morals 49 Legume used in Asian cuisine 51 Acknowledge 52 Wax-coated cheese 53 Baton Rouge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sch. 54 Country's McEntire 55 Actress Ward 56 Shrill bark 57 "Hey!" <p>DOWN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 "Serpico" author Peter 2 "— girl!" 3 Blunder 4 Influence 5 How lovers may stroll 6 Meadow 7 Genie's home 8 Monasteries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 Slapstick mis-sile 10 "Buenos —!" 11 Apple center 17 H.S. math 19 Eldest Stark child on "Game of Thrones" 22 Sailing vessel 24 Central 25 Green prefix 26 Fall-related 27 Relax 29 Actress Thurman 30 — de plume 33 Make a scarf |
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— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 22 mins.

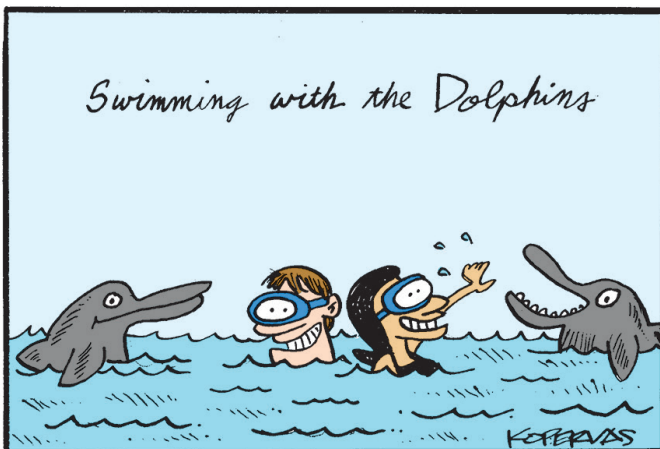
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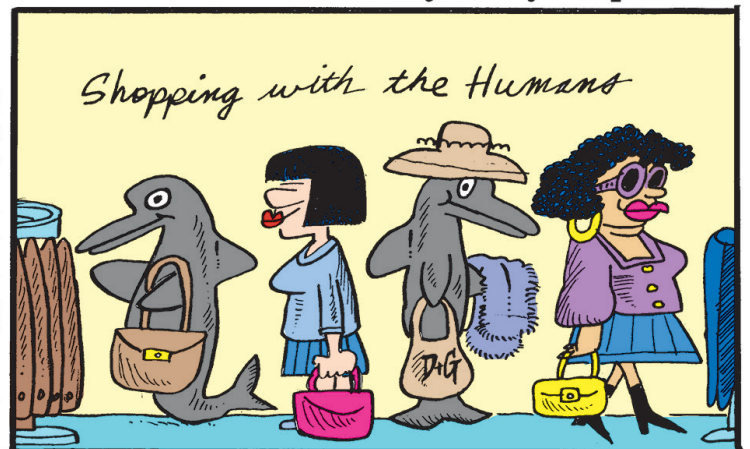


"Try to keep him away from helicopters, okay?"

Out on a Limb



by Gary Kopervas



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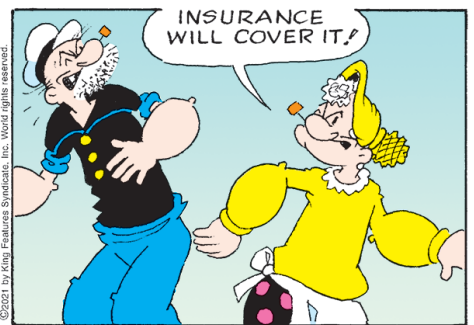
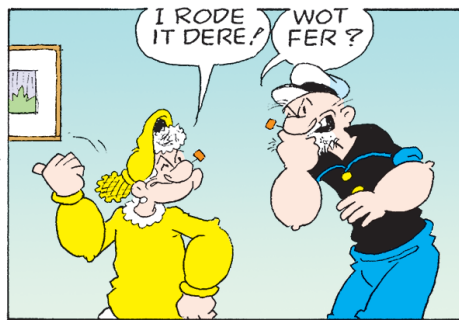
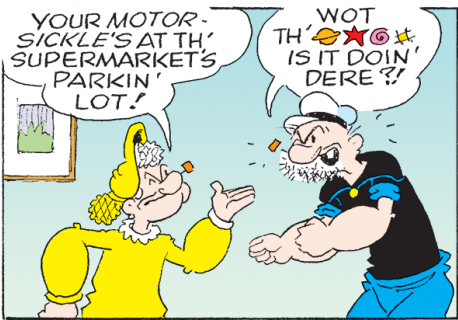
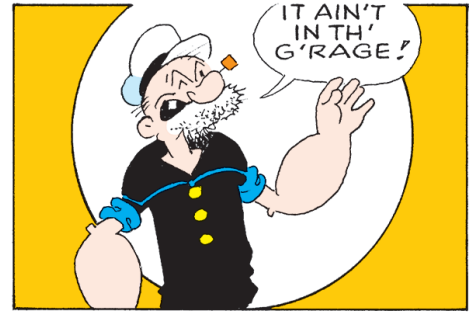
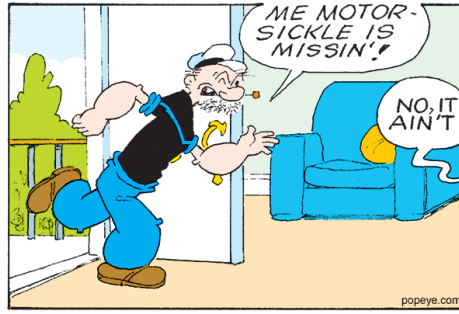
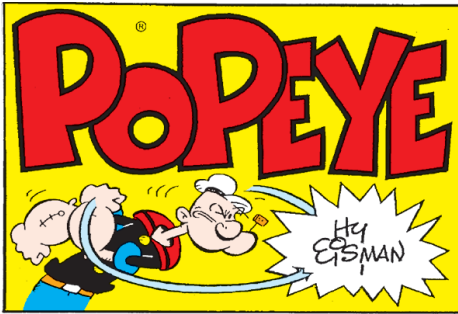
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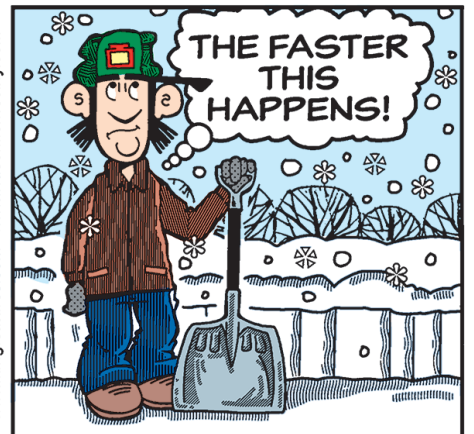
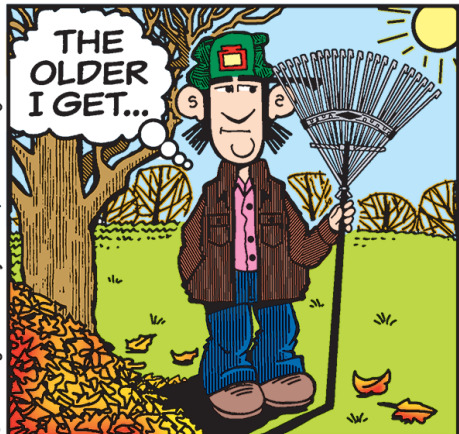
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R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



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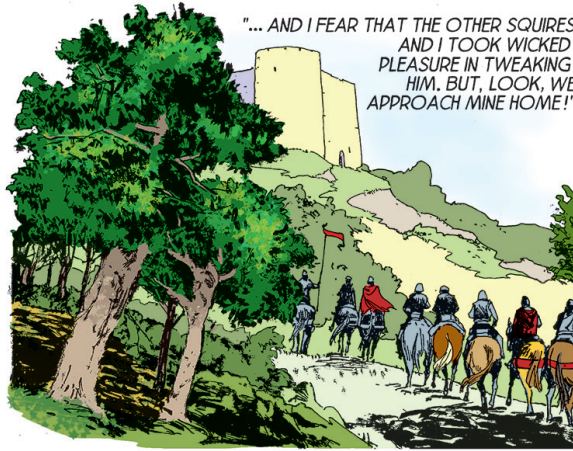
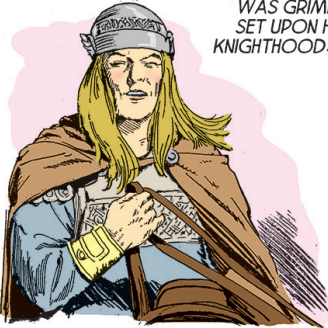
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WAL FOSTER'S
Prince Valiant
BY GIANNI AND SCHULZ

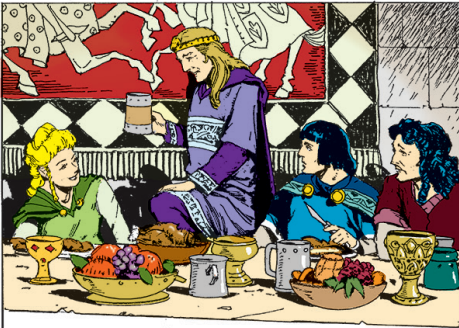
MERRY SIR COEL TELLS TALES OF YESTERYEAR, AT VAL'S EXPENSE: "THE YOUNG PRINCE WAS GRIMLY SET UPON HIS KNIGHTHOOD..."



"... AND I FEAR THAT THE OTHER SQUIRES AND I TOOK WICKED PLEASURE IN TWEAKING HIM. BUT, LOOK, WE APPROACH MINE HOME!"

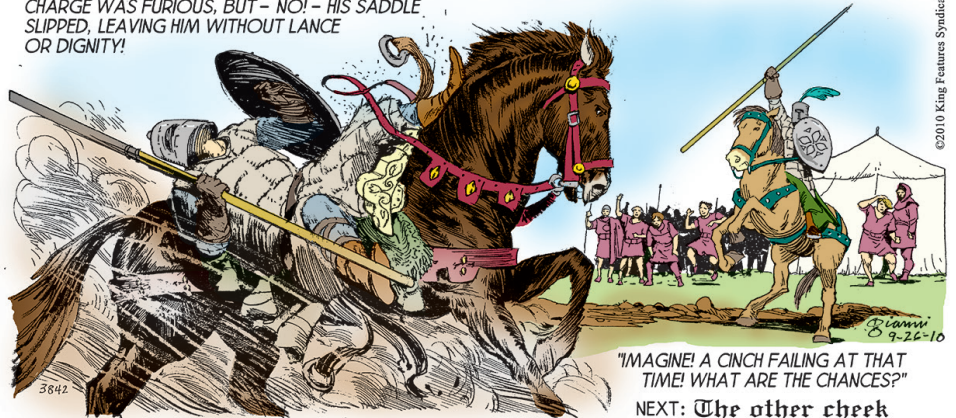


ALETA IS AMUSED BY VAL'S DISCOMFORT: "SIR COEL, I PRAY YOU CONTINUE TO ENTERTAIN US TONIGHT WITH THESE STORIES UPON WHICH MY HUSBAND HAS SAT SILENT."



INDEED, AFTER SUPPING, THE HOST CONTINUES BRIGHTLY. "HOW FONDLY I RECALL THE MOCK JOUSTING TOURNAMENTS OF OUR YOUTH..."

"... AND THE TIME WE MET IN THE FINAL, WITH VAL SO DESPERATE TO WIN. OH, HIS CHARGE WAS FURIOUS, BUT - NO! - HIS SADDLE SLIPPED, LEAVING HIM WITHOUT LANCE OR DIGNITY!"

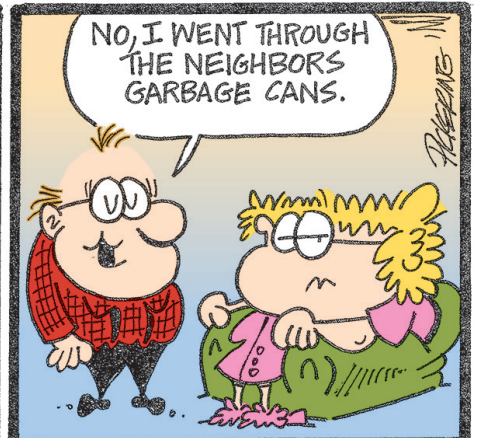
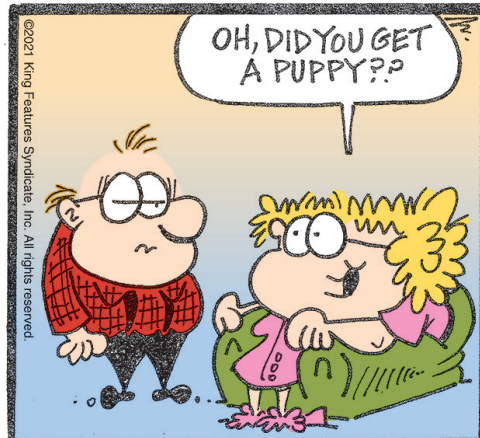


"IMAGINE! A CINCH FAILING AT THAT TIME! WHAT ARE THE CHANCES?"
NEXT: The other cheek

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The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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PICKERING

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Christmas Dinner Moves Indoors

Those in power at the senior center have now decreed that we will have the annual Christmas dinner indoors instead of out in the parking lot. This flash of brilliance came after they received a number of responses that were more along the lines of “Are you crazy?” rather than the expected RSVPs.

The original plan was to spread tables across the asphalt outside, with culinary arts students bringing food and drink out from the kitchen in the center, and to park a bunch of senior citizens outside in the cold in the middle of December in New England to eat that dinner.

Saner heads prevailed, I hear, when a retired nurse posed the question: “And just how many of our members do you suppose are going to end up in the hospital after two hours of exposure to outdoor December temperatures?”

The student chef, I also hear, claimed that he’d been asked to provide a “hot dinner” and wasn’t thrilled about having to work for hours over hot stoves only to have his creations subjected to icy temperatures.

As of now, the dinner will be indoors with fewer tables. Santa will still arrive via limo, and the high-school chorus will still sing (although they’ll be out in the hall as there is no place for all of them in the actual room).

Watch this space, however, because I hear there is a movement afoot (as well as a petition from members) to ditch the sit-down dinner completely and instead have a standup event with finger foods arrayed on tables and a cash bar over in the corner. “We want to see our friends and mingle” has been the cry (as well as what is written on the petition). “We want some good dance music” penciled in one signer.

In a perfect world, the powers-that-be would have asked the members first.

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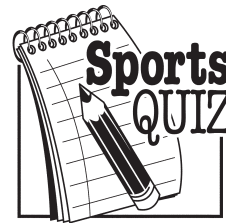
1. What member of the Polynesian Football Hall of Fame played 12 NFL seasons from 1987-98 as a defensive lineman for the Detroit Lions, Kansas City Chiefs and Seattle Seahawks?

2. A rooster named Footix was the official mascot for the 1998 FIFA World Cup soccer tournament hosted by what country?

3. Name the U.S. track and field Olympian who won gold medals in the men's 400-meter hurdles at the 1976 Montreal and 1984 Los Angeles Summer Games.

4. What traveling football team, established in 1922 by dog breeder Walter Lingo, played two seasons in the NFL and had Jim Thorpe as a player and coach?

5. When British commentator Rob Walker says his catchphrase, "Let's



by Ryan A. Berenz

get the boys on the baize!," what sport is he covering?

6. Ebonite, Brunswick, 900 Global and Motiv are manufacturers of equipment for what sport?

7. What long-running TV game show often includes a golf putting challenge called Hole in One (or Two)?

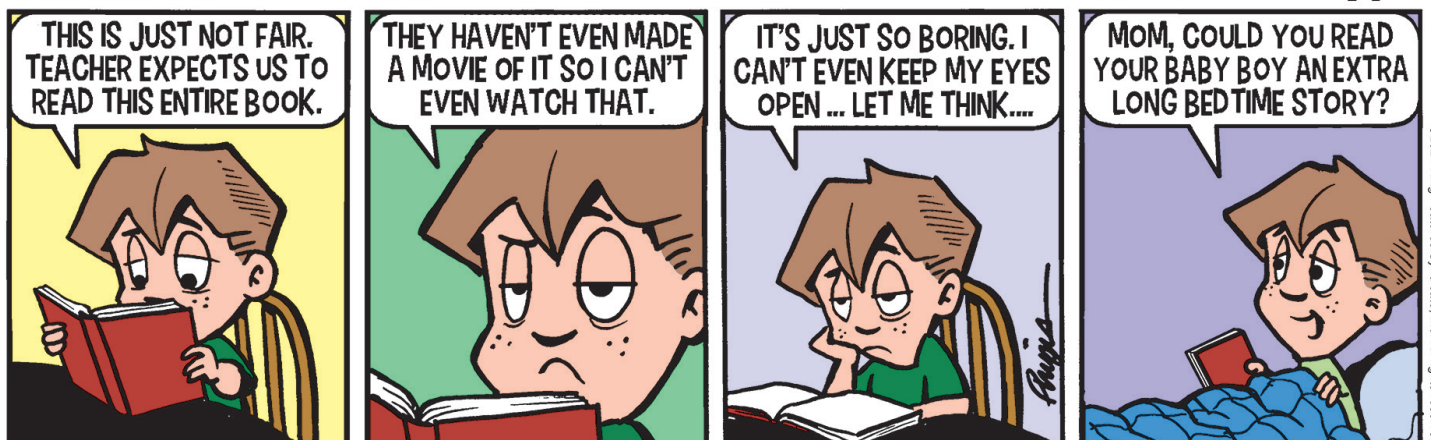
Answers

1. Dan Saleaumua.
2. France.
3. Edwin Moses.
4. The Oorang Indians.
5. Snooker.
6. Bowling.
7. "The Price Is Right."

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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The Best Leash-Collar Combo for Your Dog

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I'd like to upgrade my Lab's collar and leash, because he's pretty powerful and tugs against his collar all the time until he starts to choke. What do you recommend? — *Sara B., via email*

DEAR SARA: I'm a fan of harnesses, especially for dogs that like to pull at the leash. A harness fits around a dog's front legs and torso, and has a top strap with a clip ring for the leash located between the dog's shoulders. It's secure and sturdy, it stays on your dog, and he won't injure himself trying to pull away from you. (You can also keep his collar on, mainly so his license tag is always visible.)

Some dog harnesses come with a sturdy handle sewn onto the top strap. It's not so much for picking up the dog

but is an additional point of control if you're worried about your dog bolting or jumping up on other people.

For the long term, of course, your Lab needs to improve his basic obedience skills. He should never tug at his leash, but should walk next to you. Putting him into a harness will give you more control. Dogs tend to respond more often to a tug on the harness, which applies pressure at several points rather than just around the neck. Those multiple contact points disperse pressure around the dog's torso so that he remains comfortable and uninjured, reducing anxiety and hopefully making him more receptive to training commands.

Harnesses are not as cheap as collars, but they're well worth the investment, especially when dealing with a strong, independent thinker like your Lab.

Send your questions, tips or comments to ask@pawscorner.com.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

annulled if it was performed as a dare.

* At the center of every snowflake is a pollen or dust particle on which an extremely cold water droplet has frozen to form an ice crystal.

* "Passion purpura" is the medical term for a hickey.

* Saccharin, the first artificial sweetener, was discovered by accident when chemist Dr. Constantine Fahlberg forgot to wash his hands after work and tasted something "unspeakably sweet" during dinner. He interrupted the meal to sample every beaker in his lab, which fortunately contained nothing poisonous.

* The distress signal SOS does not actually stand for anything.

* "Buffalo buffalo Buffalo buffalo buffalo buffalo Buffalo buffalo" is a grammatically correct sentence using buffalo as a proper noun, verb and noun. To put it more simply: "Buffalo bison that other Buffalo bison bully also bully Buffalo bison."

* Donald Trump was the first president in 168 years not to have a pet in the White House.

* It took Frank Lloyd Wright 15 years, 700 sketches and six sets of working drawings to create the Guggenheim Museum in New York.

Thought for the Day: "The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe, the less taste we shall have for destruction." -- Rachel Carson

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* During the first Gulf War in 1991, every U.S. soldier was sent a frozen Snickers bar as a Thanksgiving treat.

* Mario Puzo, author of "The Godfather" books who also helped adapt them to film, had no formal training and had never written a screenplay before. After winning two Oscars for the first two movies, he bought a book to help himself learn how to be a screenwriter.

* Delaware and Colorado allow a marriage to be

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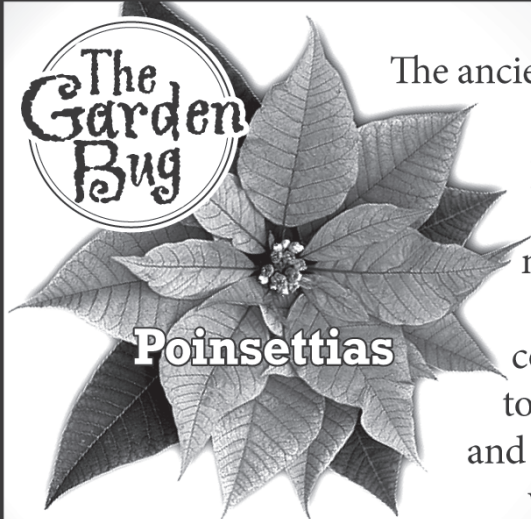
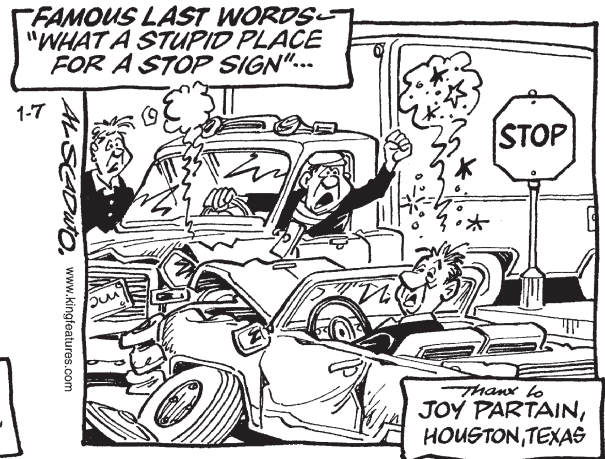
THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME



WRONG MOVE DEP'T- MIGRAINA CONVINCED HUBBY BARF WELL TO OPERATE HIS BUSINESS FROM RIGHT HERE AT HOME... "HOW HE'D SAVE COMMUTING TIME AND WORK IN THE UNINTERRUPTED PEACE AND QUIET OF THE HOUSE", SHE SAID.... OH-H-H YEAH...

Thank to L. ARROYO, SPRINGFIELD, MA.

BY AL SCADUTO



The ancient Aztecs called this brilliant plant *cuetlaxochitl*, or "the flower that perishes like all that is pure." It was very highly esteemed, and used medicinally and in worship to their gods. Later, during the Spanish colonial period, the plant continued to be used during the religious feasts and holy days in southern Mexico, and was called *Flor de Nochebuena* (the

Christmas Eve flower) by the monks. American diplomat Joel Poinsett brought samples of it from southern Mexico to his home in South Carolina, and it became popular as the "poinsettia" plant.

Sources: www.ambius.com, mexicounexplained.com

- Brenda Weaver

VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

VA Expands Assistance to Homeless Veterans

With prices soaring all around us, imagine how bad it must be in places that already had high costs when it came to rental housing. In an effort to help homeless veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs has updated its grant program to raise assistance caps in housing and subsidies.

Specifically, in certain areas, the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) rent grant will increase from 35% to 50% of reasonable rent, without a need for recertification for two years. That has to be a huge aid to eligible veterans with families who are seeking stability.

Additionally, the length of time a veteran and the family can stay in emergency housing has increased 15 days to a maximum of 60 days. This will be especially helpful in places with few rental vacancies.

The SSVF program is a series of

grants to private non-profit organizations that provide support services to very-low-income veterans and their families. The role of these non-profits is to get them into permanent housing that includes a lease, either annual or month to month, or even home ownership. They determine eligibility for assistance in part by considering whether the veteran is at risk of becoming homeless without the grant, doesn't have a fixed place to sleep at night and will likely continue in that condition without the grant, or is at risk of becoming homeless within 90 days

If you're a homeless vet with a family or are in danger of becoming homeless, hook up with Supportive Services for Veterans Families as soon as possible. There are several eligibility conditions, and you might qualify for Rapid Rehousing. Call them 24/7 at 1-877-424-3838. You also can call the nearest VA medical center and ask for the Homeless Coordinator.

The VA is behind this change so much that it finalized the rule without even waiting for the typical public comment period after publication in the Federal Register.

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CONGRESSMAN
DUSTY JOHNSON
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



Thankful to Gather

This Thanksgiving, like so many South Dakotans, I'm looking forward to spending time with my wife and three boys at home. Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays, not only because of the roasted turkey, stuffing, and mashed potatoes, but because it brings people together in a spirit of thankfulness and allows me to reflect on what I am truly grateful for.

This year in particular, I am especially thankful for the ability to safely gather again after the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. There's no greater way to celebrate moving past a couple tough years than to connect around a table filled with delicious food and even better company. The events of the last year and a half serve as a reminder to never take these moments for granted.

Since last year, scientists developed a Covid-19 vaccine in record time, allowing much of our lives to go back to normal. Our kids have stayed in school, traveling is safer, our favorite sports teams are playing with fans in the stands, and events have resumed.

I'm also grateful for the opportunity to serve each South Dakotan in the halls of Congress. This job is an honor of a lifetime and I feel immensely privileged to be trusted with this opportunity.

With annual events coming back – like the Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade® – be on the lookout for the South Dakota Department of Tourism's "Mount Rushmore's American Pride" float. My family watches every year and this year will be no exception.

Wishing you and yours a happy, healthy Thanksgiving.

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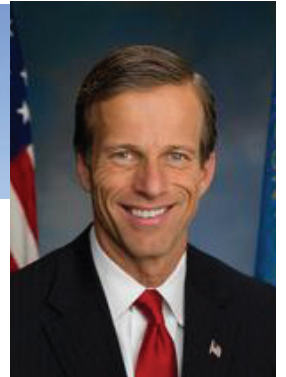
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U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Counting Our Blessings

Thanksgiving has always been one of my favorite holidays. But this year, it feels extra special. Last year, our celebrations may have looked a bit different as we were navigating through the uncertainties of the pandemic, but this holiday season represents a big step toward normalcy for families across South Dakota. And for that, I couldn't be more grateful.

I'm home in South Dakota celebrating Thanksgiving with my wife, daughters, sons-in-law, and grandkids. As usual, I'll be on turkey carving duty and presumably helping out with some dishes in between chasing the grandkids, soaking up memories, and counting my blessings. And in this country, that's a pretty long list.

I'm grateful to have been born in the greatest country on earth where I've been able to raise my family in the best state in America. Family is everything to me, and the one Kimberley and I have built over the years has continued to grow. "Dad" will always be a title I'm proud of, but the joy of being a grandparent is hard to fully explain unless you are one yourself. If you are, you know exactly what I mean.

Living in this country is a blessing in and of itself, but I'm beyond thankful for all the brave men and women who put their lives on the line every day to preserve the freedoms we enjoy. Our military men and women represent the very best of America, and South Dakotans never take their service and sacrifice for granted.

I'm tremendously humbled by the work I get to do for the people of South Dakota. The opportunity to represent them in the Senate is one of the great privileges of my life, and I want to thank them for putting their faith in me to serve them in Washington. South Dakotans are my top advisors – the people who I count on to provide me with honest and straightforward advice that helps me be the best senator I can be for them and the state.

There's a lot to be grateful for this time of year – a good chance to pause, reflect on what matters in life, and give thanks. I pray that every South Dakotan has a happy and healthy holiday season.

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The First Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving – it's the time of year where you can turn to the paper and are almost guaranteed to find a few fluffy columns about counting blessings and being thankful. But this year, it would ring hollow coming from me. As many of you know, I lost Jean, my wife of 43 years, to cancer on November 2. She was the love of my life and, without her in it, my world will never be the same.

Often when we think about love, we think about all the firsts. The first date. The first kiss. The first time bringing her home to mom and dad. But what about the painful firsts love throws at us? The first night shutting off the lights alone in bed. The first snowfall without her by my side. Even in death, love remains; yet is the source of grief.

This is my first holiday alone. And while family will be there, I'm still alone. No amount of people can replace Jean's presence. For 43 years, we shared everything together. In marriage, we became one. She was my soulmate, my rock and her void is impossible to fill.

Hardly an hour goes by where I don't think about Jean. She's my first thought in the morning and the last before I go to bed. She was everything to me and is constantly on my mind.

Everyone grieves differently and it can hit you at any time. Feelings come when you least expect them and some moments are worse than others. Sometimes longing, sometimes anger, sometimes pain. We often don't get to choose how we feel. But when I can, I choose to be thankful.

Thankful that God brought that Lake Preston farm girl into my life. Thankful for every minute we shared together. And that family was always first.

Thankful for the friends, family and even strangers who prayed for us and loved us through it all. Thankful for the doctors and nurses who worked so hard to cure her and to make her comfortable. The kindness we felt made a difference and will never be forgotten.

Thankful she is no longer in pain and is finally at peace. No more long trips to Mayo. No more poking and prodding. No more radiation or chemo. Just peace.

Thankful for everything she left with me. The memories. The kids. The grandkids. I'll take care of them and they'll take care of me. That's what family does and we'll get through this together. A part of Jean lives in each of us, and in that we can find comfort.

And thankful for our Faith, which gives us the hope that we will be with each other again someday. 65 is too young to leave this earth. While death may separate us now, love binds us together forever.

Like our ancestors who faced a new, unknown world on the first Thanksgiving, I find myself this Thanksgiving anticipating an entirely new world. But relying on courage and Faith, I know God will continue to provide and give me the strength to live out the purpose he has remaining for me. As Jean and I would remind one another, "When you have Faith, you have hope."



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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Help Wanted? Try These Resources

It's the holiday season 2021 and—just about everywhere you look—businesses are hiring. “Help Wanted” signs dot store windows in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, and all points in-between. For the past two months, the South Dakota Department of Labor & Regulation has posted between 20,000 and 31,000 active jobs on their (DLR) website. That's good news for our state as unemployment numbers remain well below the national average.

Communities and families directly benefit from the high employment rates; however, the increase in the number of job openings puts a strain on businesses that need more help. Many South Dakotans see this at restaurants trying to operate while shorthanded, but the problem affects many other sectors of the economy, too. Health care jobs make up about 20% of all available positions in the state, and many retail and manufacturing posts remain open and unfilled.

Now is the perfect time for South Dakota employers to get creative to fill those openings. By knocking on the doors of state agencies, service-based non-profit organizations, and our universities, employers can provide opportunities for new careers for fellow South Dakotans looking for their own unique way to make their way in the world.

South Dakota's Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) offers an incredible job resource website called South Dakota Works that can help employers with staff needs. There, employers can find candidates for jobs and find the resumes of job seekers. DLR provides and facilitates support, education and training to strengthen businesses in South Dakota. It makes a coordinated effort to partner with non-profit, business and educational organizations to provide the tools and resources necessary for sustainable employment and economic self-sufficiency for the citizens of South Dakota. For employers in need of new employees, DLR can make the connections to fill those openings.

But the government cannot solve this problem on its own. The private sector must step up, and in fact here in South Dakota the private sector does step up. Charities like The Salvation Army of Nebraska, South Dakota, and Western Iowa help individuals close the gap between joblessness and gainful employment by providing career training, skills assessment, and referrals for and assistance with job placement. Employers in need of workers can turn to the Salvation Army, with offices all over the state, to fill those needs. In doing so they will not just provide a job—they will transform lives.

The state government can help, private charities can help, and our public and private universities can help, too. Universities around the state are developing top-tier entrepreneurial talent through business incubators. Some of these programs connect college students with small businesses to provide general marketing services and business plan development that benefits the students and the businesses. Growing companies can get help from the next generation of talented leaders. For these students, they graduate college with an impressive portfolio of experience and work-product while businesses benefit from the students' services.

There are many places for businesses to turn to find the talent they are looking for. By reaching out in new and unexpected ways to fill open jobs, employers and businesses can turn “help wanted” into help found. And in doing so, those businesses will transform lives.

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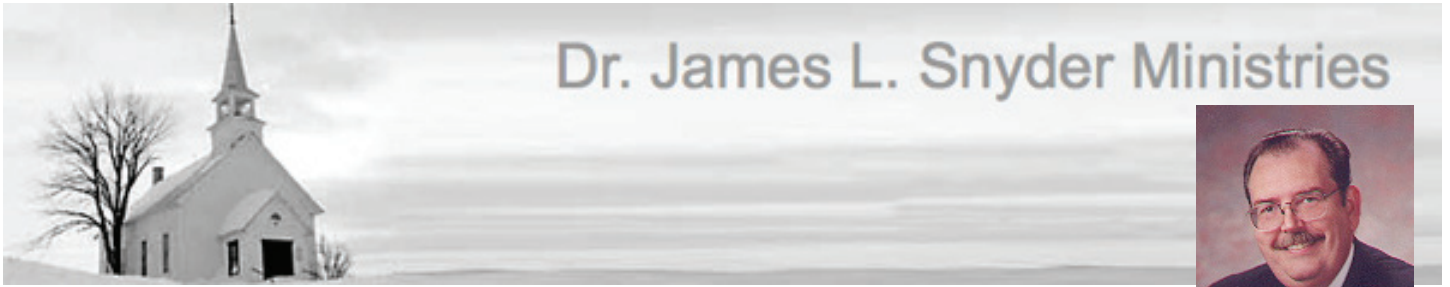
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Eating Healthy Is for Sissies



As a youngster, I often heard my father say things that later turned out not to be on the true side of the table. So I guess that is a father's prerogative, and I probably have done the same thing many times. But I don't want to research that aspect of my life right now.

One that he said quite often was, "Eating healthy is for sissies."

At the time, I had no idea what he was talking about, but I did know that good old mom worked very hard to make sure he had healthy food to consume. So she did her job, but he did not fare well with that. He always ate in the opposite of healthy, and that just was the way he was.

Later in life, he had diabetes, high blood pressure, clogged arteries and finally, several heart attacks. Then he died.

According to him, these things had nothing whatsoever to do with his eating. They were just things that happened and he had no control over them.

No matter how sick he was at any given time, he always found it in himself to enjoy a dessert with lots of sugar in it. His favorite dessert was the one he was eating at the time.

I had not remembered that for the longest period until several weeks ago, when I had my first heart attack. Who knew I even had a heart! And, what did my heart have against me that it wanted to attack me?

My main artery was 90% clogged, and the doctors called it the "widowmaker." That was something relatively new to me.

I spent about half a week in the hospital having a stent put in to help the main artery. The nurses took more blood out of me than I knew I had. Count Dracula would have been jealous.

One nurse, I called Nurse Porcupine because she had more needles than a porcupine had quills. It took half a dozen attempts to find an artery that had blood in it. Both my arms are black and blue and have the appropriate needle marks in them.

My stay in the hospital was only three days, but felt like an eternity. Its experiences like that make you appreciate your own home and bed and lazy chair. I was so happy to get home.

Then I again thought about my father. He spent most of his time in the hospital during the last few years of his life. I am not quite sure how he made it through those experiences, but he did. Then I thought about his healthy diet remarks.

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According to him, a diet consisted of what he wanted at the time. All this cautious eating was far beyond his modus operandi.

I remember once he spent two weeks in a hospital to have his arteries cleansed and purged, or whatever they call it, and when he came home, his idea was, "I'm healthy now so I can eat whatever I want to eat."

It did not take long until he was back where he was before he went into the hospital.

Thinking about this, I had a dire option before me.

I could take things as my father did in a very hap-hazardous way and not take my dietary routine seriously.

On the other hand, I could take my health and my eating habits seriously.

My first impression is to go along with my dad. After all, dads are never wrong, right?

Not to criticize my father, who has been gone for over a decade, but he did not really take his health seriously. He assumed it was just a given that he could eat whatever he wanted with no consequences involved.

As the situation is, the biggest obstacle in my decision concerning my health and eating habits is the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. For some reason, she has taken my diet quite seriously as though it was hers.

The quandary I am in is that she is the one who supervises the culinary activities in the house. I have been barred from the kitchen for years because of an incident that happened a few years back, which I am not comfortable getting into right now.

Being in a health-challenging situation right now, I do not have many choices. It's either eat what the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has produced or starve. Starving is not the particular exercise that I enjoy.

I must admit my wife is a marvelous cook and makes very delicious meals, which I am assured, are most healthy. From my point of view, if it does not have broccoli, then it is delicious.

Her healthy array of desserts is mouthwatering.

Therefore, I can do my own thing and be in a lot of trouble or allow the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage to do her thing and be in charge of the dietary activities in our home.

In pondering this quandary that I am in, I realized a wonderful verse in the Bible. "And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God" (Ecclesiastes 3:13).

Instead of getting all caught up in some ritualistic eating habits, I believe from God's perspective he would want me to enjoy my life. But, of course, as I realize now, enjoying life means that I take care of my eating habits to the glory of God.

EARTHTALK ™



Florida's manatees face a host of threats, not the least of which is boat strikes which have killed hundreds of them in the Indian River Lagoon alone this year. Credit: NOAA, Unsplash.

Dear EarthTalk: How are Florida's manatees faring lately and what has the government and/or conservationists been doing to protect them?

-- JoAnne B., Sumter, SC

Indeed, Florida's manatees have come back from where they stood on the brink of extinction in the late 1960s, when only a few hundred individuals remained in the wild. Today over 6,000 of the herbivorous "sea cows" swim the Indian River Lagoon and Florida's other near-shore waterways. But newer threats including the die-off of their preferred browse (seagrass), habitat destruction due to shoreline development and runoff, an uptick in commercial and recreational activities and global warming have put Florida's manatees back on the ropes, and conservationists are again ramping up efforts to protect them.

Given all we know about being respectful to wildlife and giving them space, it's hard to believe that 2021 has been the worst year in recorded history for manatees, with Florida wildlife officials reporting a whopping 1003 manatee deaths in state waters so far this year. That's a 37 percent increase in manatee deaths over 2020, when biologists recorded 637 kills.

More than half of 2021's deaths have been in the Indian River Lagoon, a 156-mile east central Florida coastal estuary that stretches across six counties. Manatees have long thrived in the Lagoon's warm, brackish waters and consumed its abundant seagrass. Over the past 20 years, however, tens of thousands of acres of seagrass have vanished; the University of Florida estimates that up to 95 percent of seagrass is gone from some areas of the Lagoon. The main culprit is runoff from fertilizer and septic systems, which has polluted the water and promoted toxic algae blooms. These blooms deplete the water's oxygen levels and cloud its surface, decreasing the amount of light available to seagrasses for photosynthesis.

While it is currently illegal in Florida to feed manatees in the wild, conservation groups like Save the Manatee Club are now considering taking matters into their own hands by providing "supplemental feedings" to halt the unprecedented starvations. Meanwhile, rescuing injured or starving manatees remains a top priority of the group, which has helped rescue upwards of 130 manatees in 2021 alone while also funding facilities to rehab injured manatees so they can return to the wild.

Meanwhile, biologists from the University of Florida, University of Central Florida and elsewhere are working to restore water-filtering oyster populations along the Lagoon. These bivalves consume and remove harmful contaminants from the water, nurturing otherwise dwindling seagrass communities that serve as the lifeblood and main nutrient of manatees.

Just four years ago, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) down-listed the manatee from endangered to threatened. In light of this year's population plight, Florida Congressmen Vern Buchanan and Darren Soto are currently backing the Manatee Protection Act, which would place the manatee back into endangered status under the Endangered Species Act. An upgraded endangered status would require the FWS to accelerate action on manatee repopulation efforts.

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South Dakota COVID-19 Report

New
Confirmed
Cases
383

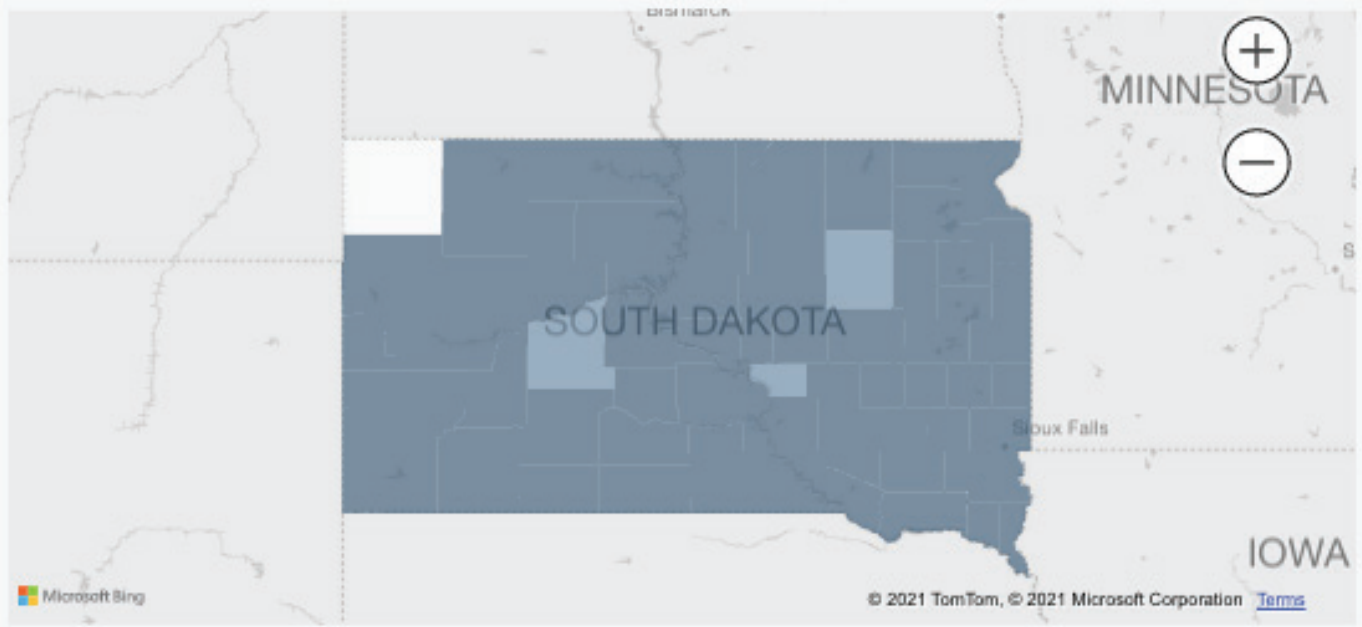
New
Probable
Cases
191

Active Cases
7,080
+260

Recovered
Cases
154,892

Currently
Hospitalized
231

Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread Low Moderate Substantial High

Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange boxes.

Total
Confirmed
Cases
140,761

Total Probable
Cases
23,531

PCR Test
Positivity Rate,
Last 7 Days
15.8%
11/16/2021 - 11/22/2021

Total Tests
1,693,607

Ever
Hospitalized
8,339

Deaths
Among
Cases
2,320

% Progress
(September
Goal: 44233 Te...
303%

% Progress
(October Goal:
44233 Tests)
233%

% Progress
(November Goal:
44233 Tests)
183%

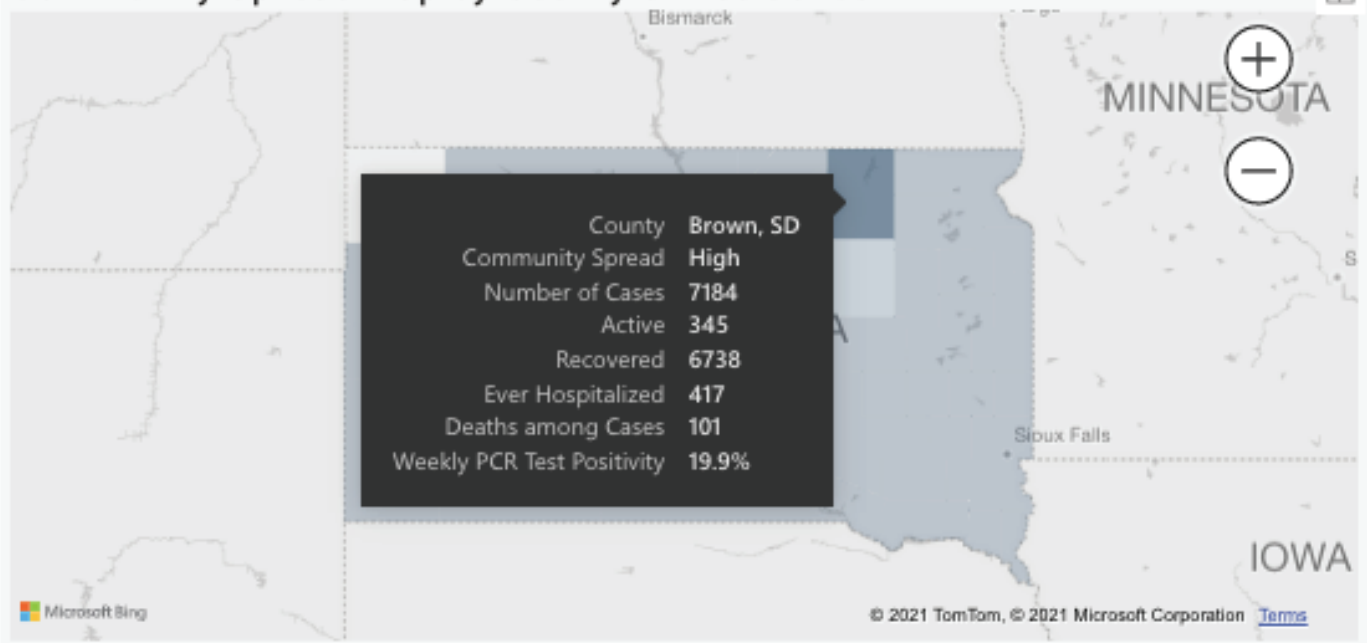
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Brown County COVID-19 Report

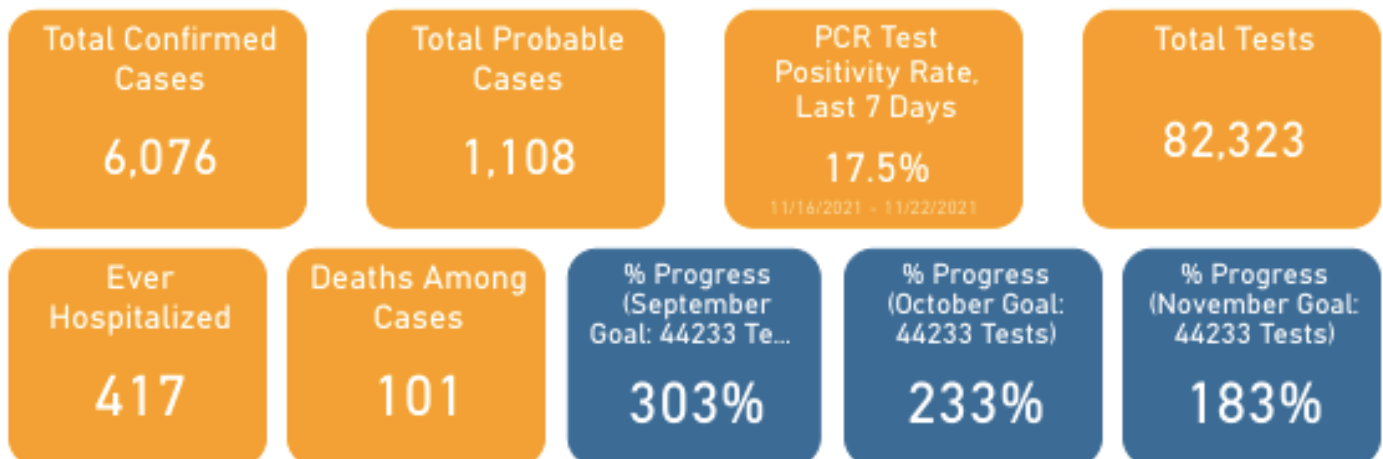


Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread Low Moderate Substantial High

Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange boxes.



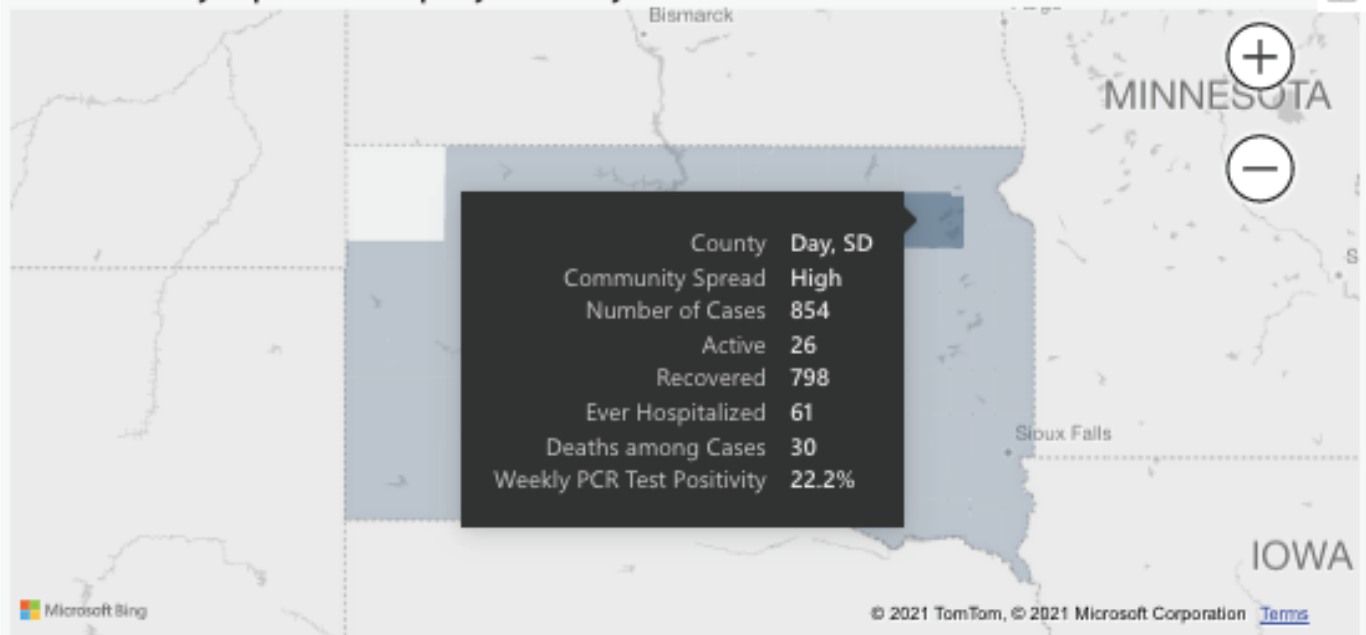
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Day County COVID-19 Report

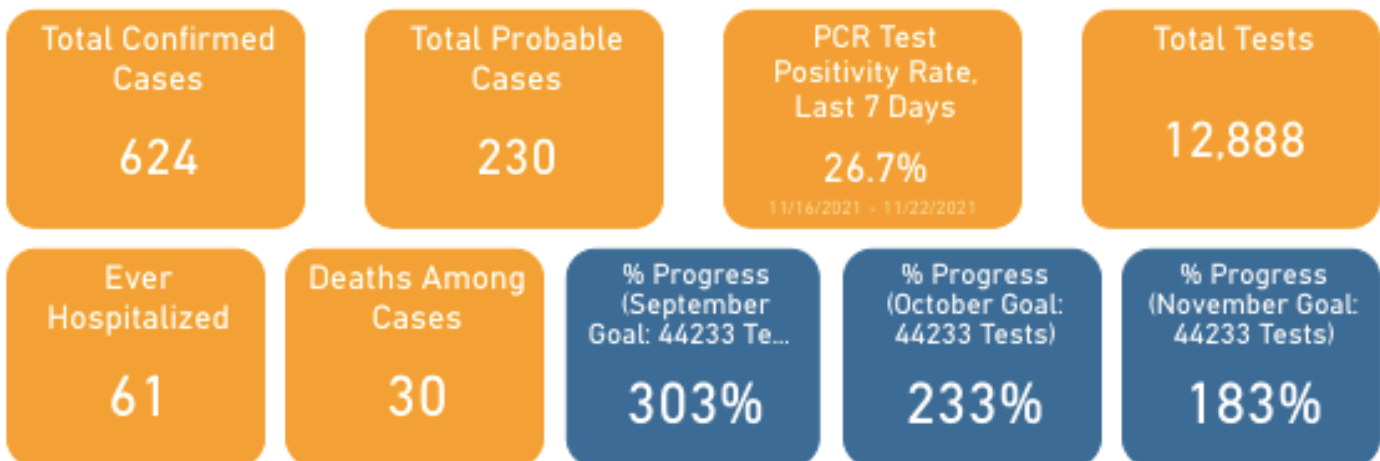


Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread Low Moderate Substantial High

Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange boxes.



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COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Currently Hospitalized	-3	231
Deaths Among Cases	+15	2320
Active Cases		7080
Ever Hospitalized		8339
Recovered Cases		154892
Total Cases		164292

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths Among Cases
Female	85885	1071
Male	78407	1249

VARIANT CASES OF COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

COVID-19 Variant	# of Cases
Delta (B.1.617.2, AY.1-AY.25)	909
Alpha (B.1.1.7)	175
Gamma (P.1)	3
Beta (B.1.351)	2

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range with Years	# of Cases	# of Deaths Among Cases
0-9 years	9391	0
10-19 years	20089	0
20-29 years	28080	11
30-39 years	27276	34
40-49 years	22975	57
50-59 years	21938	155
60-69 years	18360	342
70-79 years	9677	540
80+ years	6506	1181

RACE/ETHNICITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Race/Ethnicity	# of Cases	% of Cases
Asian / Pacific Islander	2159	1%
Black	3890	2%
Hispanic	6676	4%
Native American	19461	12%
Other	1752	1%
Unknown	4953	3%
White	125401	76%

Groton Area School District
 Active COVID-19 Cases
 Updated November 19, 2021; 9:22 AM

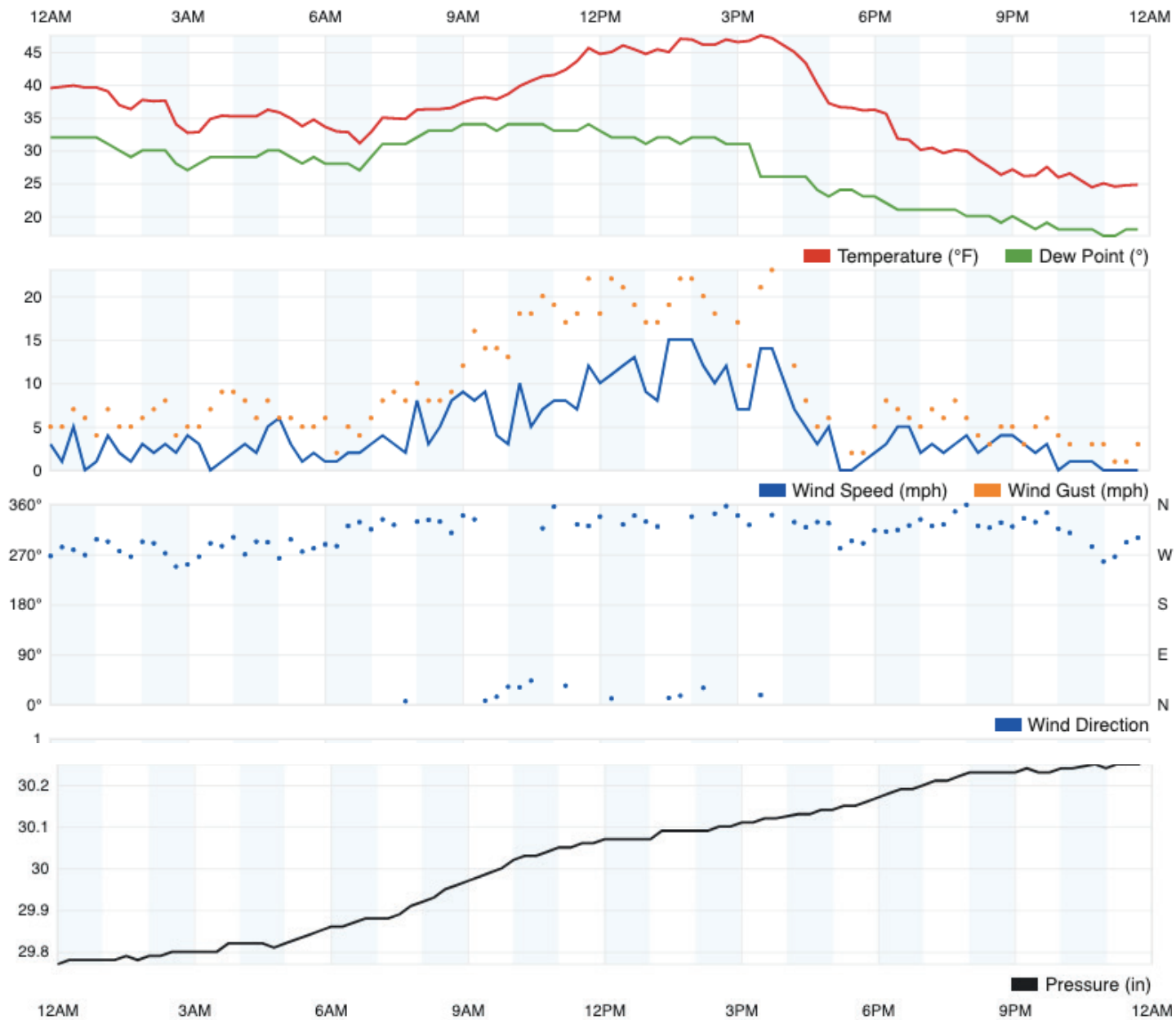
Increase of 1 from last week

J	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	1	1	S	T
K	G										0	1	2	t	o
														f	a
														f	i
														1	1

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
				
Partly Sunny then Slight Chance Rain	Slight Chance Rain then Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 44 °F	Low: 33 °F	High: 54 °F	Low: 30 °F	High: 45 °F

Warm Weather Ahead

Highs 15 to 25° above average through at least Thursday
Warmest west of the Missouri River

Today
41 to 56°



Mon
50 to 60°



Tue
43 to 52°



Wed
54 to 64°



 This Evening: Light Rain over ne SD, turning into a Wintry Mix over w central MN late evening.

www.weather.gov/abr



Warm Weather Ahead: Highest Temperatures Monday and Wednesday. High temperatures will be 15 to 25 degrees above average through at least Thursday. While most locations will remain dry, there is a small chance of light rain over northeastern South Dakota this evening. Precipitation should change into a light wintry mix as it moves into west central Minnesota late this evening. Little precipitation is expected.

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Today in Weather History

November 28, 2000: Heavy snow of 6 to 9 inches fell across parts of northeast South Dakota, causing travel difficulties and school closings. Some snowfall amounts included 6 inches at Britton, Roy Lake, Webster, Waubay, Summit, and Wilmot; 8 inches at Columbia and south of Bristol; and 9 inches at Houghton.

November 28, 2005: A significant winter storm visited the region on November 27-29, 2005, producing a wide range of wintry precipitation across the area. Snow and blizzard conditions occurred across central and north central South Dakota, while freezing rain and ice accumulations took front stage in northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota. Across most of central and north central South Dakota, snow began in the late afternoon and early evening hours of the 27th, with significant snowfall accumulations occurring by the time the snow ended later in the day on the 28th. Snowfall accumulations ranged from as little as two inches to as much as 20 inches. Strong northwest winds of 30 to 50 mph, with gusts to 70 mph, caused widespread blizzard conditions from the early morning until the late afternoon hours of the 28th. Visibilities were reduced to zero many times across the area with snowdrifts of 5 to 10 feet in some places. Some power lines were also brought down in the Pierre and Fort Pierre area due to snow accumulation and high winds. Many roads, including Interstate 90, were closed due to the treacherous travel conditions. Several accidents occurred during the storm, and many motorists were also stranded. Several people had to be rescued. Schools, businesses, government offices, and many other organizations were closed. FEMA, state officials, and the governor surveyed the storm damage. Some of the significant snowfall amounts included 7 inches at Eureka, 8 inches at Onaka, 10 inches at Onida and Fort Thompson, 11 inches near Presho, 16 inches at Highmore, and 21 inches at Kennebec. To the east of this heavy snow and blizzard area, widespread freezing rain began during the morning to early afternoon of the 27th, creating significant ice accumulations of 1 to over 2 inches. The freezing rain changed to snow on the 28th, and northwest winds increased to 30 to 40 mph, gusting to 60 mph. The high winds and heavy ice accumulations caused several thousand power poles (some steel), along with several thousand miles of power lines, to come down, resulting in widespread power outages. The ice and winds also damaged several hundred miles of high-voltage power lines and towers. Some power substations were also shut down by the ice and wind. Thousands of trees were also either damaged or downed due to the heavy ice accumulations and the wind. Many of the fallen trees and branches caused damage to homes and vehicles. The radio station in Milbank went off the air due to its collapsing radio tower. Tens of thousands of people in many communities and rural areas were without power for several days, with some people without power for as long as two weeks. Telephone and cellular phone service was also down for several days. Countless schools, businesses, government offices, and other organizations were closed for several days. FEMA, state officials, and the governor also toured this damaged area, resulting in a presidential disaster declaration. Hundreds of utility workers from South Dakota, Minnesota, and nine other surrounding states worked 14- to 18-hour days in cold conditions to bring power back to the area. The National Guard also helped with getting generators, cots, blankets, and meals to storm shelters. Generators supplied power to many communities and rural areas, while others continued without power. Shelters were set up for those who did not have generator power or another place to go. There were also problems with livestock with the water supplies cut off for some time. One electric cooperative stated that repairs to the infrastructure would continue for months and years to restore a system that took decades to build. Roads were treacherous with many accidents and rollovers, some resulting in injuries. Due to the icy road conditions, many roads were closed, including Interstate 29. Around noon on the 27th, on US Highway 212 two miles west of Zell in Faulk County, a 59-year old man was killed when his car spun out of control and hit an oncoming pickup truck. Around 1:30pm on the 28th, on Day County Road One about two miles south of Waubay, a 17-year old girl was killed and three others were injured when one vehicle spun out of control and struck a truck in the oncoming lane. Air traffic was also brought to a halt across much of the area. This was one of the largest ice storms in the region's history. One electric cooperative said it was the most damage they had in their 65 years of existence. After the icing came snowfall of 2 to 12 inches, which combined with the high winds to bring blizzard conditions and low wind chills to northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota from the morning of the 28th until the early morning of the 29th. Some of the significant snowfall amounts included 7 inches at Watertown, 8 inches at Waubay, 10 inches at Redfield, and 12 inches at Sisseton.

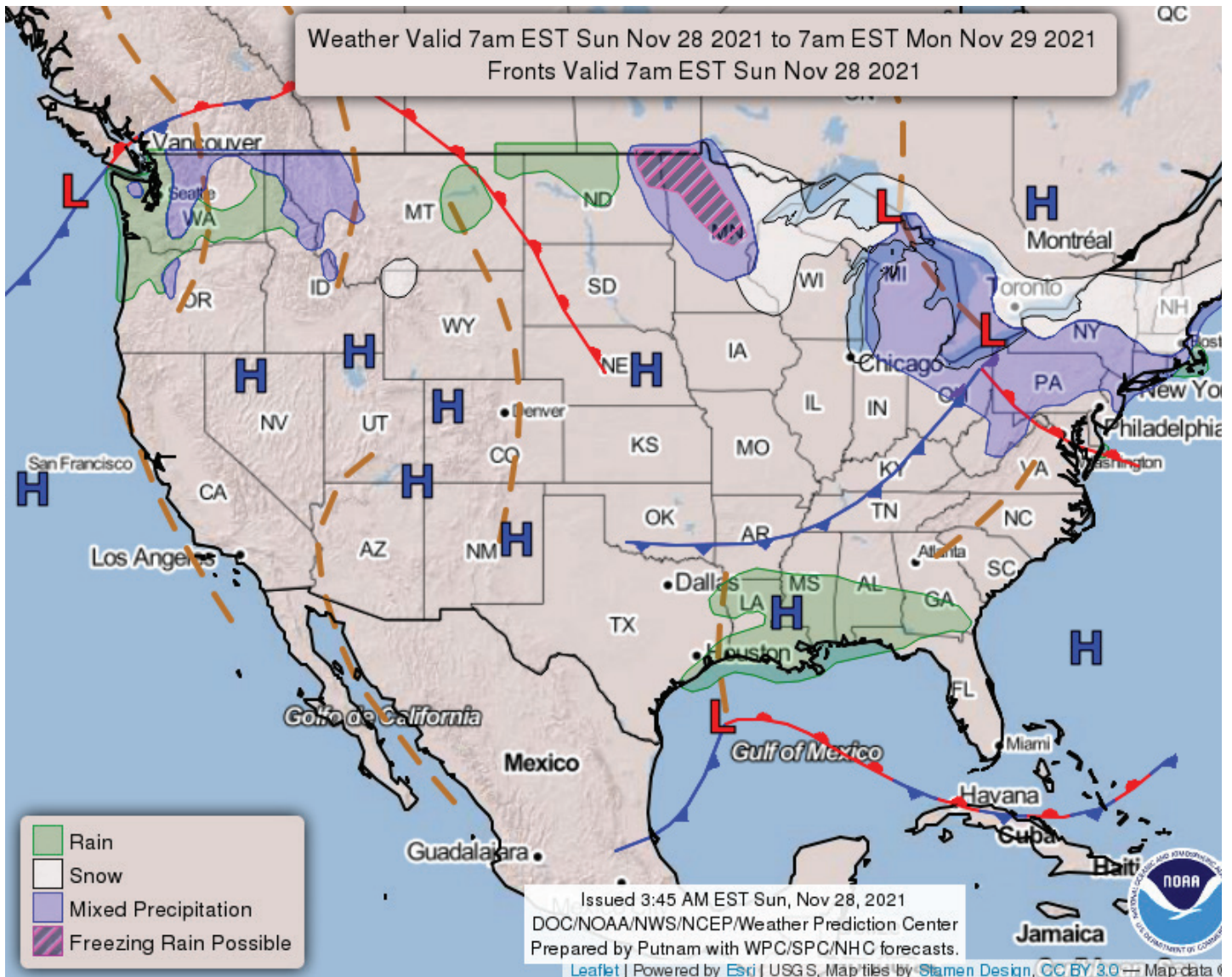
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 48 °F at 3:27 PM
Low Temp: 24 °F at 10:38 PM
Wind: 23 mph at 1:36 PM
Precip: 0.00

Record High: 60° in 2020
Record Low: -21° in 1985
Average High: 36°F
Average Low: 14°F
Average Precip in Nov.: 0.70
Precip to date in Nov.: 0.16
Average Precip to date: 21.17
Precip Year to Date: 19.88
Sunset Tonight: 4:53:49 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:48:23 AM



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GRACE FOR OUR GRIEF

God's grace is greater than any grief we may ever have to endure. Psalm 107 describes the greatness of His grace with the Israelites.

First, like them, we are pilgrims: "They wandered in desert wastelands..." We are all "wandering" as pilgrims most of the time. We struggle to determine right from wrong and often make wrong decisions because we have left God out of our thoughts. We have a great example of what to do when this happens: When the children of Israel realized that they were wandering, they returned to the Lord and asked for His directions. He would always welcome them back and point them, once again, in the right direction. Remember, too, the words of Jesus: "I am the way." Wherever or whenever we wander, His grace is always available to welcome us back.

Second, we are all prisoners: "Some of them (were) prisoners, suffering in chains." Sin fascinates for a while, but it soon fastens us in chains that keep us from enjoying God's best. Habits are easy to form but difficult to forsake. But when the Israelites called upon God to free them, He always "snapped" their chains, and they were released from their bondage. Whomever God saves, His grace sets free.

Third, we are often overwhelmed with grief when persons we thought loved us turn on us and hurt and harm us. "...give thanks to the Lord for His unfailing love." We have all suffered unbearable pain when someone whom we thought loved us turned against us and tried to destroy us. Being abandoned is difficult to survive alone. Thank God Jesus said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you!" We have His promise of His never-ending presence.

Prayer: Thank You, Father, that You love us, care for us and will always be there for us. You are Home, Freedom, and You are Faithful. Thank You for Your grace. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle. Psalm 107:4

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2021 Community Events

- Cancelled** Legion Post #39 Spring Fundraiser (Sunday closest to St. Patrick's Day, every other year)
03/27/2021 Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
04/10/2021 Dueling Pianos Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm
04/24/2021 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
04/25/2021 Princess Prom (Sunday after GHS Prom)
05/01/2021 Lions Club Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
05/31/2021 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
6/7-9/2021 St. John's Lutheran Church VBS
06/17/2021 Groton Transit Fundraiser, 4-7 p.m.
06/18/2021 SDSU Alumni & Friends Golf Tournament at Olive Grove
06/19/2021 U8 Baseball Tournament
06/19/2021 **Postponed to Aug. 28th:** Lions Crazy Golf Fest at Olive Grove Golf Course, Noon
06/26/2021 U10 Baseball Tournament
06/27/2021 U12 Baseball Tournament
07/04/2021 Firecracker Golf Tournament at Olive Grove
07/11/2021 Lions Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 10am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
07/22/2021 Pro-Am Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/30/2021-08/03/2021 State "B" American Legion Baseball Tournament in Groton
08/06/2021 Wine on Nine at Olive Grove Golf Course
08/13/2021 Groton Basketball Golf Tournament
Cancelled Lions Club Crazy Golf Fest 9am Olive Grove Golf Course
08/29/2021 Groton Firemen Summer Splash Day at GHS Parking Lot (4-5 p.m.)
09/11/2021 Lions Club Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
09/12/2021 Sunflower Classic Golf Tournament at Olive Grove
09/18-19 Groton Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
10/08/2021 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
10/09/2021 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm (Saturday before Columbus Day)
10/29/2021 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
10/29/2021 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat (Halloween)
11/13/2021 Legion Post #39 Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
11/11/2021 Veteran's Day Program at the GHS Arena
11/21/2021 Groton Area Snow Queen Contest
11/25/2021 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)
11/30/2021 James Valley Telecommunications Holiday Open House 10am-4pm
12/04/2021 Olive Grove Tour of Homes
12/11/2021 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-Noon

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News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) _ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Saturday:

Dakota Cash

04-20-30-32-34

(four, twenty, thirty, thirty-two, thirty-four)

Estimated jackpot: \$252,000

Lotto America

05-14-27-49-50, Star Ball: 9, ASB: 3

(five, fourteen, twenty-seven, forty-nine, fifty; Star Ball: nine; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$4.61 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$102 million

Powerball

08-32-55-64-66, Powerball: 10, Power Play: 2

(eight, thirty-two, fifty-five, sixty-four, sixty-six; Powerball: ten; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$243 million

Cox, Southern Illinois knock off S. Dakota in FCS playoffs

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Avante Cox had a career-high 10 receptions for 148 yards and a touchdown, Romeir Elliott scored on a 5-yard run midway through the fourth quarter and Southern Illinois beat South Dakota 22-10 on Saturday night in the first round of the FCS playoffs.

Southern Illinois improved to 4-3 all-time against the Coyotes. Despite both teams being in the Missouri Valley Football Conference, the programs hadn't faced off since the Salukis won 48-28 at South Dakota in 2019.

The Salukis (8-4), ranked No. 23 in the FCS coaches poll, plays at third-ranked and No. 2 seed North Dakota State — another MVC member — next Saturday. Southern Illinois won its last meeting with the Bison 38-14 on Feb. 27, ending NDSU's 39-game win streak.

Southern Illinois scored on drives of 14, 15 and 16 plays in the first half to take a 13-0 lead into the break. Nico Gualdoni made a 50-yard field goal to cap a 30-yard drive and open the scoring midway through the first quarter, an 85-yard drive culminated when Cox caught a wide-open 4-yard TD pass with 8:04 left in the second quarter and the Salukis marched 83 yards before Gualdoni kicked a 26-yard field goal as time expired in the first half.

SIU's Qua Brown, a sixth-year senior who went into the game with two career interceptions, picked off two passes in Salukis territory. On the opening possession, Carson Camp sailed a pass over the middle intended for Caleb Vander Esch that Brown intercepted at the 26 and Brown undercut a back-shoulder pass at the 1 to preserve a 16-3 lead late in the third quarter.

Camp, who went into the game having thrown just four interceptions this season, was picked off a third time when Clayton Bush intercepted a pass on third-and-17 with 5:29 to play. The No. 20 South Dakota (7-5) defense forced the Salukis to go three-and-out. Camp then scrambled 29 yards on third-and-8 to the Southern Illinois 31 but Dorian Davis punched out the ball and PJ Jules recovered for the Salukis with 2:29 left to seal it.

Camp was 19-of-31 passing for 202 yards.

More AP college football: <https://apnews.com/hub/college-football> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25.
Sign up for the AP's college football newsletter: <https://apnews.com/cfbtop25>

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South Dakota State forces 6 INTs, routs UC Davis 56-24

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Isaiah Davis and Pierre Strong combined for over 400 yards rushing, Dalys Beanum had three interceptions and South Dakota State routed UC Davis 56-24 on Saturday in the first round of the Football Championship Series playoffs.

The Jackrabbits (9-3), who finished with a program-playoff record six interceptions, will face fourth-seeded Sacramento State in the second round.

Davis had 15 carries for 217 yards with an 18-yard touchdown run. Strong added 185 yards on the ground with TD runs of 2 and 13 yards. Strong also threw a 10-yard touchdown pass to Chris Oladokun.

Oladokun was 8-of-17 passing for 89 yards with two touchdown passes.

Linebacker Adam Bock intercepted a deflected pass and ran 39 yards into the end zone in the third quarter for the Jackrabbits. Beanum's 59-yard pick-6 stretched the lead to 56-17 midway through the fourth.

Ulonzo Gilliam's 2-yard touchdown run late in the second quarter pulled UC Davis (8-4) to 28-17. Hunter Rodrigues had a 14-yard touchdown run late in the fourth, but he finished with four interceptions.

South Dakota State has won the last five games against the Aggies and is 6-2 overall in the series.

More AP college football: <https://apnews.com/hub/college-football> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25.
Sign up for the AP's college football newsletter: <https://apnews.com/cfbtop25>

Tominaga, McGowens lead Nebraska past South Dakota 83-70

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Keisei Tominaga and Bryce McGowens combined to score 45 points and Nebraska earned its fourth-straight win by knocking off South Dakota 83-70 on Saturday.

Tominaga, a junior college transfer from Nagoya, Japan scored a season-high 23 points, hitting 5 of 6 3-point attempts, to lead the Cornhuskers. McGowens, a freshman, scored 22, reaching double-digit scoring for the third straight game.

McGowens scored seven points in the first 4:10 of the game, knocking down a 3 and converting 4 of 5 free throws as Nebraska took an 11-3 lead. Tominaga came off the bench and knocked down three 3-pointers during a two-minute span and spark a 14-3 run that put Nebraska up 34-29 and the Cornhuskers (5-2) held a 43-35 advantage at intermission.

McGowens finished shooting 6 of 12 from the field, including 2 of 5 from 3-point range, converted 8 of 10 from the line, grabbed nine rebounds and passed out four assists. The five-star point guard scored 25 points in his Nebraska debut and tallied 18, 18 and 22 in his last three games.

Kruz Perrott-Hunt paced the Coyotes (4-2) with 19 points, converting 4 of 9 from beyond the arc. Mason Archambault added 12 points.

More AP college basketball: <https://apnews.com/Collegebasketball> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25

SDSU women beat No. 19 UCLA 76-66 at Gulf Coast Showcase

ESTERO, Fla. (AP) — Lindsey Theuninck and Tori Nelson each scored 11 points and South Dakota State beat No. 19 UCLA 76-66 on Saturday at the Gulf Coast Showcase.

The Jackrabbits outscored UCLA 25-13 in the second quarter to take a 37-31 lead into the break. Paiton Burckhard opened the fourth quarter with a 3-pointer and South Dakota State led by at least five points the rest of the way. Haleigh Timmer made SDSU's last field goal with 3:37 left.

Burckhard and Paige Meyer added 10 points apiece for South Dakota State (3-4), which will play in the fifth-place game on Sunday. Myah Selland reached 500 career rebounds. The Jackrabbits made 23 of 28 free throws.

UCLA was given a technical at the end of the third quarter and Meyer sank both free throws for a 50-46 lead.

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Iimar'I Thomas scored 18 points for UCLA (3-2). Jaelynn Penn and Charisma Osborne each added 15 points.

Thomas became the fourth player in program history to reach 2,000 career points, joining Denise Curry 3,198 (1978-81) , Jordin Canada 2,153 (2014-18) and Maylana Martin 2,101 (1997-00).

More AP women's college basketball: <https://apnews.com/hub/womens-college-basketball> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25

Big cats back at Sioux Falls zoo after negative virus tests

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Big cats are back on display at the Great Plains Zoo in Sioux Falls after a snow leopard died of COVID-19.

The animals, including tigers and snow leopards, have tested negative for the virus and were to return to their exhibits on Wednesday, zoo officials said.

On Oct. 6, the zoo reported that a tiger tested positive for the virus . Shortly after, other big cats at the zoo began exhibiting similar symptoms, zoo officials said.

A day later, a snow leopard died.

Necropsy results on the snow leopard later confirmed she had died from pneumonia induced by the virus, zoo officials said.

The Argus Leader reports the zoo's veterinary staff has run consistent lab tests on the big cats throughout their illness. Lab tests confirm all of the zoo's big cat collection is clear of the virus and can once again be in the exhibit space and seen by the public.

Australia finds omicron, Israel bans foreign travelers

By GEIR MOULSON and ZEN SOO Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Australia on Sunday became the latest country to detect the omicron variant of the coronavirus in travelers who arrived from southern Africa, while Israel decided to bar entry to foreign nationals — the toughest of a growing raft of curbs imposed by nations around the world as they scramble to slow its spread.

Confirmed or suspected cases of the new variant have already emerged in several European countries, in Israel and in Hong Kong, just days after it was identified by researchers in South Africa. The "act first, ask questions later" approach reflected growing alarm about the emergence of a potentially more contagious variant nearly two years into a pandemic that has killed more than 5 million people, upended lives and disrupted economies across the globe.

While much remains to be learned about the new variant, researchers are concerned that it may be more resistant to the protection provided by vaccines and could mean that the pandemic lasts for longer than anticipated.

Israel moved to ban entry by foreigners and mandate quarantine for all Israelis arriving from abroad.

"Restrictions on the country's borders is not an easy step, but it's a temporary and necessary step," Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said at the start of the weekly Cabinet meeting.

Dr. Ran Balicer, head of the government's advisory panel on COVID-19, told Israel's Kan public radio that the new measures were necessary for the "fog of war" surrounding the new variant, saying it was "better to act early and strictly" to prevent its spread.

Many countries have restricted or banned travel from various southern African countries — among the latest New Zealand, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Saudi Arabia. Places that already had imposed restrictions include Brazil, Canada, the European Union, Iran, and the U.S. This goes against the advice of the World Health Organization, which has warned against any overreaction before the variant is thoroughly studied.

Authorities in Australia said two overseas travelers who arrived in Sydney from Africa became the first in the country to test positive for the omicron variant. Arrivals from nine African countries are now required

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to quarantine in a hotel upon arrival.

The United States' top infectious diseases expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, said he would not be surprised if the omicron variant was already in the U.S., too.

"We have not detected it yet, but when you have a virus that is showing this degree of transmissibility ... it almost invariably is ultimately going to go essentially all over," Fauci said on NBC television.

In Europe, much of which already has been struggling with a sharp increase in cases over recent weeks, officials also were on their guard.

The U.K. on Saturday tightened up rules on mask-wearing and on testing of international arrivals after finding two omicron cases. Spain announced it won't admit unvaccinated British visitors starting Dec. 1. They are currently allowed to enter with a negative coronavirus test.

Italy was going through lists of airline passengers who arrived in the past two weeks after a business traveler who returned from Mozambique and landed in Rome on Nov. 11 tested positive for omicron.

"The phase of searching for the new variant has started. Controls at airports, ports and train stations have been reinforced," said the Lazio region's top health official, Alessio D'Amato. The region that includes Rome's Leonardo da Vinci international airport also is sending random virus test samples to the Spallanzani infectious disease hospital in Rome to be analyzed for the new variant.

In France, Health Minister Olivier Veran said that while no cases have yet been confirmed in France, "it's a question of hours," given that omicron infections have been reported in multiple neighboring countries. "It is probable that there currently are cases in circulation," he said on a visit to a Paris vaccination center.

While it is not clear yet how existing vaccines work against the omicron variant, Veran said the French government isn't changing its strategy to fight the latest surge of infections driven by the delta variant, which centers on increasing vaccinations and boosters.

David Hui, a respiratory medicine expert and government adviser on the pandemic in Hong Kong, said that even though it is not clear if current coronavirus vaccines are effective against the new variant, the city's vaccination rate should be increased and booster doses should be implemented as soon as possible.

He said that the two people who tested positive for the omicron variant had received the BioNTech-Pfizer shot and exhibited very mild symptoms, such as a sore throat.

"Vaccines should work but there would be some reduction in effectiveness," he said.

Zen Soo reported from Hong Kong. Adam Schreck in Bangkok and Associated Press writers around the world contributed to this report.

Follow AP's coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-pandemic>

Camped in Calais, migrants renew resolve to try for England

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

CALAIS, France (AP) — At the makeshift camps in France near Calais and Dunkirk, migrants are digging in, waiting for their chance to make a dash across the English Channel despite the deaths of at least 27 people this week when their boat sank a few miles (kilometers) from the French coast.

Police have stepped up patrols in recent days and the weather has worsened, making this a bad time to attempt a crossing. But most migrants say the tragedy won't prevent them from climbing into a flimsy inflatable boat packed with up to 50 people in hopes of reaching Britain.

"I don't afraid of anything," a 22-year-old from Iran who identified himself only as Kawa said in halting English. "Water? If we die ... sorry to say this but we already died. Nobody accepts us anywhere. We're useful. Useless, sorry," he said, correcting himself. "Just look at these people."

Kawa and his father spent the past six years in the Denmark, where they say they never felt free because they constantly had to report to police and other authorities. Now they want to reach England, and eventually Canada, because "they are good to Iranians."

They are among a group of about 150 young Kurdish men and a smattering of families camped Saturday

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on a disused railroad line in hopes of escaping the damp ground below. Alongside a collection of incongruously bright red, green and blue tents near Dunkirk, they pull hoods over their heads, hunch shoulders inside winter jackets and huddle next to small fires to stay warm as an early winter chill grips northern Europe. The smell of burning plastic hangs in the air as the migrants use anything they can find as fuel.

The coast around Calais has long been the jumping-off point for migrants anxious to get to the U.K. But this week's disaster underscores the combination of dreams and despair that drives people to camp in drizzling rain with temperatures hovering around 40 Fahrenheit (4 Celsius) for the chance to risk their lives at sea.

But first they have to pay smugglers about 2,500 pounds (\$3,300) for a seat in a boat.

Ari, who like other migrants declined to give his last name for fear of being deported if he is caught, is a physics teacher from Iraq who left home because he couldn't find work.

He says he is frightened about the crossing — but the chance for a better life is worth the risk.

"Everyone is scared But everyone here — they die (a little) every day," he said, giving a subtle nod to the camp littered with rotting banana peels, soggy shoes and tents abandoned by migrants who have already left for England.

Wednesday's tragedy came amid a jump in the number of migrants trying to cross the channel in inflatables and other small craft after the COVID-19 pandemic limited air and ship travel and Britain's departure from the European Union curtailed cooperation with neighboring countries in processing asylum-seekers and other migrants.

More than 23,000 people have already entered the U.K. on small boats this year, up from 8,500 last year and just 300 in 2018, according to data compiled by Parliament.

Despite this increase, the number of people applying for asylum in Britain is still relatively low compared with other European countries. Migrants heading for Britain usually do so because of family, historical or geopolitical reasons, said Nando Sigona, chair of International Migration and Forced Displacement at the University of Birmingham.

"So people in Calais are there because they want to come here," he said.

Britain has criticized France for not doing enough to stop the boats before they are launched, but migrants say police have become more active since the deaths.

So they are simply waiting for things to calm down and the weather to improve.

Amanj, 20, a Kurdish activist from Iran, says he has no choice but to press on. His father was recently jailed and the family doesn't know what happened to him. Amanj fears he could be next.

"Maybe I would die if I was in Iran, you know. Maybe I was ... killed by police with a gun, Nobody knows," he said. "If not today, maybe tomorrow you die anyway."

Fifteen miles (25 kilometers) to the west at a camp outside Calais, migrants from Sudan kick a soccer ball around a patch of bare ground and hang laundry on a fence in hopes it will dry in the weak sunshine.

Patrick yearns to reach Liverpool and study political science. He says he has tried to smuggle himself onto a vehicle heading for Britain every day for the past six months. Now he's ready to try the boats, if he can find the money.

"I dream of England," he said "I know that some people died in the sea, but I will try by sea or by any other way."

In Calais, aid groups have taken over a warehouse where they collect supplies like sleeping bags, food and firewood that they distribute to migrants at designated spots around the city.

Opie Cook, 27, is sorting vegetables for a vat of salad after taking a leave of absence from her job at HP to help the migrants.

"It's sad that it has taken such a tragedy for this to be talked about again," she said.

Back in the camps, men take off their shoes and nudge their feet as close to the campfires as possible, trying to dry them off and stay warm.

Amid the despair, there is also determination.

Ari, the teacher from Iraq, traveled first to Belarus before taking a train through Poland, then through

Germany to reach the channel coast.

His destination is Bournemouth, where he has family. And he intends to make it.

"We want to get free," he says. "That's why we're here."

Josephine Baker, 1st Black woman honored in French Pantheon

By ARNO PEDRAM and SYLVIE CORBET Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — France is inducting Josephine Baker — Missouri-born cabaret dancer, French World War II spy and civil rights activist — into its Pantheon, the first Black woman honored in the final resting place of France's most revered luminaries.

On Tuesday, a coffin carrying soils from the U.S., France and Monaco — places where Baker made her mark — will be deposited inside the domed Pantheon monument overlooking the Left Bank of Paris. Her body will stay in Monaco, at the request of her family.

French President Emmanuel Macron decided on her entry into the Pantheon, responding to a petition lobbying for her "pantheonization." In addition to honoring an exceptional figure in French history, the move is meant to send a message against racism and celebrate U.S.-French connections.

"She embodies, before anything, women's freedom," Laurent Kupferman, the author of the petition for the move, told The Associated Press.

Baker was born in 1906, in St. Louis, Missouri. At 19, having already divorced twice, had relationships with men and women, and started a performing career, she moved to France following a job opportunity.

"She arrives in France in 1925, she's an emancipated woman, taking her life in her hands, in a country of which she doesn't even speak the language," Kupferman said.

She met immediate success on the Theatre des Champs-Elysees stage, where she appeared topless and wearing a famed banana belt. Her show, embodying the colonial time's racist stereotypes about African women, caused both condemnation and celebration.

"She was that kind of fantasy: not the Black body of an American woman but of an African woman," Theatre des Champs-Elysees spokesperson Ophélie Lachaux told the AP. "And that's why they asked Josephine to dance something 'tribal,' 'savage,' 'African'-like."

She became a French citizen after her marriage in 1937 to industrialist Jean Lion, a Jewish man who later suffered from anti-Semitic laws of the collaborationist Vichy regime.

In September 1939, as France and Britain declared war against Nazi Germany, Baker got in touch with the head of the French counterintelligence services. She started working as an informant, traveling, getting close to officials and sharing information hidden on her music sheets.

Researcher and historian Géraud Létang said Baker lived "a double life between, on the one side, the music hall artist, and on the other side, another secret life, later becoming completely illegal, of intelligence agent."

After France's defeat in June 1940, she refused to play for the Nazis who occupied Paris and moved to southwestern France. She continued to work for the French Resistance, using her artistic performances as a cover for her spying activities.

That year, she notably brought into her troupe several spies working for the Allies, allowing them to travel to Spain and Portugal.

"No one finds shocking that she is with her impresario, make-up artists, technicians ... so she brings them with her, and information is being conveyed," Létang said. "She risks the death penalty or, at least, the harsh repression of the Vichy regime or of the Nazi occupant."

The next year, seriously ill, Baker left France for North Africa, where Gen. Charles De Gaulle later arrived from London with the Free French Forces. Baker gathered intelligence for De Gaulle, including spying on the British and the Americans — who didn't fully trust him and didn't share all information.

She also raised funds, including from her personal money. It is estimated she brought the equivalent of 10 million euros (\$11.2 million) to support the French Resistance.

In 1944, Baker joined a female group in the Air Force of the French Liberation Army as a second lieu-

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tenant. The group's logbook notably mentions a 1944 incident off the coast of Corsica, when Senegalese soldiers from colonial troops fighting in the French Liberation Army helped Baker out of the sea. After her plane had to make an emergency landing, they brought "the shipwrecked to the shores, on their large shoulders, Josephine Baker in the front," the logbook writes.

Baker also organized concerts for soldiers and civilians near combat zones. After the defeat of the Nazis, she went to Germany to sing for former prisoners and deportees freed from the camps.

"Baker's involvement in politics was individual and atypical," said Benetta Jules-Rosette, a leading scholar on Baker's life and a sociology professor at the University of California, San Diego.

After the war, Baker got involved in anti-racist politics. She fought against American segregation during a 1951 performance tour of the U.S., causing her to be targeted by the FBI, labeled a communist and banned from her homeland for a decade. The ban was lifted by President John F. Kennedy in 1963, and she returned to be the only woman to speak at the March on Washington, before Martin Luther King's famed "I Have a Dream" speech.

Back in France, she adopted 12 children from all over the world, creating a "rainbow tribe" to embody her ideal of "universal fraternity." She purchased a castle and land in the southwestern French town of the Milandes where she tried to build a city embodying her values.

"My mother saw the success of the rainbow tribe, because when we caused trouble as kids, she would never know who had done it because we never ratted on each other, risking collective punishment," one of Baker's sons, Brian Bouillon Baker, told the AP. "I heard her say to some friends 'I'm mad to never know who causes trouble, but I'm happy and proud that my kids stand united.'"

Toward the end of her life, she ran into financial trouble, was evicted and lost her properties. She received support from Princess Grace of Monaco, who offered Baker a place for her and her children to live.

She rebuilt her career but in 1975, four days after the triumphant opening of a comeback tour, she fell into a coma and passed away from a brain hemorrhage. She was buried in Monaco.

While Baker is widely appreciated in France, some critics of Macron question why he chose an American-born figure as the first Black woman in the Pantheon, instead of someone who rose up against discrimination in France itself.

The Pantheon, built at the end of the 18th century, honors 72 men and five women, including Baker. There are two other Black figures in the mausoleum: Gaullist resister Felix Eboué and famed writer Alexandre Dumas.

"These are people who have committed themselves, especially to others," Pantheon administrator David Medec told the AP. "It is not only excellence in a field of competence, it is really the question of commitment, commitment to others."

COVID variant spreads to more countries as world on alert

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The new potentially more contagious omicron variant of the coronavirus popped up in more European countries on Saturday, just days after being identified in South Africa, leaving governments around the world scrambling to stop the spread.

The U.K. on Saturday tightened its rules on mask-wearing and on testing of international arrivals after finding two cases. New cases were confirmed Saturday in Germany and Italy, with Belgium, Israel and Hong Kong also reporting that the variant has been found in travelers.

In the U.S., Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious diseases expert, said he would not be surprised if the omicron variant was already in the United States, too.

"We have not detected it yet, but when you have a virus that is showing this degree of transmissibility ... it almost invariably is ultimately going to go essentially all over," Fauci said on NBC television.

Because of fears that the new variant has the potential to be more resistant to the protection offered by vaccines, there are growing concerns around the world that the pandemic and associated lockdown restrictions will persist for far longer than hoped.

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Nearly two years since the start of the pandemic that has claimed more than 5 million lives around the world, countries are on high alert. Many have already imposed travel restrictions on flights from southern Africa as they seek to buy time to assess whether the omicron variant is more transmissible than the current dominant delta variant.

In Britain, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said it was necessary to take "targeted and precautionary measures" after two people tested positive for the new variant in England.

"Right now this is the responsible course of action to slow down the seeding and the spread of this new variant and to maximize our defenses," he told a news conference.

Among the measures announced, Johnson said anyone arriving in England must take a PCR test for COVID-19 on the second day after their arrival and self-isolate until they provide a negative test. And if someone tests positive for the omicron variant, then he said their close contacts will have to self-isolate for 10 days regardless of their vaccination status — currently close contacts are exempt from quarantine rules if they are fully vaccinated.

He also said mask-wearing in shops and on public transport will be required and said the independent group of scientists that advises the British government on the rollout of coronavirus vaccines has been asked to accelerate the vaccination program. This could involve widening the booster program to younger age groups, reducing the time period between a second dose and a booster and allowing older children to get a second dose.

"From today we're going to boost the booster campaign," he said.

Britain's Department of Health said the two cases found in the U.K. were linked and involved travel from southern Africa. One of the two new cases was in the southeastern English town of Brentwood, while the other was in the central city of Nottingham. The two confirmed cases are self-isolating with their households while contact tracing and targeted testing takes place.

The British government also added four more countries — Angola, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia — onto the country's travel red list from Sunday. Six others — Botswana, Eswatini (formerly Swaziland), Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe — were added Friday. That means anyone permitted to arrive from those destinations will have to quarantine.

Many countries have slapped restrictions on various southern African countries over the past couple of days, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, the European Union, Iran, Japan, New Zealand, Thailand and the United States, in response to warnings over the transmissibility of the new variant. This goes against the advice of the World Health Organization, which has warned against any overreaction before the variant was thoroughly studied.

Despite the banning of flights, there are mounting concerns that the variant has already been widely seeded around the world.

Italy and Germany were the latest to report confirmed cases of the omicron variant.

An Italian who had traveled to Mozambique on business landed in Rome on Nov. 11 and returned to his home near Naples. He and five family members, including two school-age children, have since tested positive, the Italian news agency LaPresse said. All are isolating in the Naples suburb of Caserta in good condition with light symptoms.

The variant was confirmed by Sacco hospital in Milan, and Italy's National Health Institute said the man had received two doses of the vaccine. Italy's health ministry is urging all regions to increase its tracing of the virus and sequencing to detect cases of the new variant first identified in South Africa.

In Germany, the Max von Pettenkofer Institute, a Munich-based microbiology center, said the omicron variant was confirmed in two travelers who arrived on a flight from South Africa on Nov. 24. The head of the institute, Oliver Keppler, said that genome sequencing has yet to be completed, but it is "proven without doubt that it is this variant," German news agency dpa reported.

The Dutch public health institute said the omicron variant was "probably found in a number of the tested persons" who were isolated after arriving Friday in Amsterdam on two flights from South Africa. The institute said in a statement that further sequencing analysis is underway to determine for sure that it is the new variant. The results were expected Sunday. A total of 61 people were tested.

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Israel said it detected the new strain in a traveler who had returned from Malawi and was tracing 800 travelers who returned recently from southern African countries. And Australia said early Sunday its scientists were working to determine whether two people who tested positive for COVID after arriving from southern Africa are infected with the omicron variant.

The variant's swift spread among young people in South Africa has alarmed health professionals even though there was no immediate indication whether the variant causes more severe disease.

A number of pharmaceutical firms, including AstraZeneca, Moderna, Novavax and Pfizer, said they have plans in place to adapt their vaccines in light of the emergence of omicron. Pfizer and its partner BioNTech said they expect to be able to tweak their vaccine in around 100 days.

Professor Andrew Pollard, the director of the Oxford Vaccine Group, which developed the AstraZeneca vaccine, expressed cautious optimism that existing vaccines could be effective at preventing serious disease from the omicron variant, noting that most of the mutations appear to be in similar regions as those in other variants.

"At least from a speculative point of view we have some optimism that the vaccine should still work against a new variant for serious disease, but really we need to wait several weeks to have that confirmed," he told BBC radio.

Some experts said the variant's emergence illustrated how rich countries' hoarding of vaccines threatens to prolong the pandemic.

Fewer than 6% of people in Africa have been fully immunized against COVID-19, and millions of health workers and vulnerable populations have yet to receive a single dose. Those conditions can speed up spread of the virus, offering more opportunities for it to evolve into a dangerous variant.

"One of the key factors to emergence of variants may well be low vaccination rates in parts of the world, and the WHO warning that none of us is safe until all of us are safe and should be heeded," said Peter Openshaw, a professor of experimental medicine at Imperial College London.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke Saturday with his South African counterpart, Naledi Pandor, and they stressed the importance of working together to help African nations vaccinate their populations, the State Department said in a statement. It said Blinken praised South Africa's scientists for quickly identifying the omicron variant and the government for its transparency in sharing this information, "which should serve as a model for the world."

Geir Moulson in Berlin, Mike Corder in The Hague, Netherlands, Colleen Barry in Milan, Lynn Berry in Washington, and Fares Akram in Gaza City, Gaza Strip, contributed to this report.

Follow AP's coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-pandemic>

Flood watches issued in Northwest as some urged to evacuate

By SARA CLINE Associated Press/Report for America

Residents in Washington state were preparing for possible flooding as "atmospheric rivers" once again threatened parts of the Northwest, which saw heavy damage from extreme weather earlier this month.

People in the small communities of Sumas and Everson in northwest Washington were asked to voluntarily evacuate Saturday night, The Bellingham Herald reported. Both towns near the Canadian border saw extreme flooding from the previous storm.

An emergency alert said road closures in the area could start early Sunday morning.

Flood watches have been issued for much of western and north-central Washington for the weekend, and the National Weather Service warned that flooding was possible through Sunday.

Heavy rains and rising rivers were also expected over the weekend in the Cascade mountains in the center of the state and the Olympic mountains near the coast.

"We are expecting rivers to rise, and possible flooding in some locations by early tomorrow morning,"

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Gary Schneider, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service's Seattle office, said Saturday morning. "Right now, there's no river flooding going on."

Schneider said that if flooding were to occur, it would likely happen Saturday night or Sunday morning.

Forecasters say an atmospheric river — a huge plume of moisture extending over the Pacific and into the Northwest — could bring up to 3 inches (7.6 centimeters) of rain in some areas hit by the recent flooding.

The state is still assessing millions of dollars in damage from the last storm, also blamed on an atmospheric river.

In northwest Washington's Whatcom County, officials said damage costs could reach as high as \$50 million.

The last floods closed the U.S.-Canada border in Sumas and three bridges in Bellingham, with landslides blocking Interstate 5 south of Bellingham.

This weekend's atmospheric river event should not be as "severe" as the one earlier this month, Schneider said.

"It's still going to be a pretty decent rain event, but (the flooding earlier this month) was kind of an historic event. So we're not expecting a repeat of that," Schneider said.

Meteorologists predict that rain will taper off on Sunday and that Monday should be relatively dry.

Sara Cline is a corps member for The Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

Michigan beats Ohio State 42-27, ends 8-game skid in rivalry

By LARRY LAGE AP Sports Writer

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (AP) — Jim Harbaugh got the win he wanted perhaps as desperately as any coach in sports.

Hassan Haskins matched a school record with five rushing touchdowns and Aidan Hutchinson had three sacks to break a single-season program mark, helping No. 6 Michigan finally beat No. 2 Ohio State 42-27 Saturday to give Harbaugh his first win as a coach against the Buckeyes.

"It feels like the best one," Harbaugh said.

The Wolverines clinched the Big Ten East and will play in the conference title game next week with playoff hopes in hand after snapping an eight-game losing streak to Ohio State.

"It feels like the beginning," Harbaugh said.

Michigan (11-1, 8-1 Big Ten, No. 5 CFP) advanced to the conference championship for the first time. The Wolverines now have a chance to win a Big Ten title for the first time since 2004 and a national championship for the first time since 1997.

Harbaugh has been dissed and dismissed as a coach long on hype and short on substance over his first six seasons with his alma mater, but he earned a win that should quiet at least most of his critics.

"I'm so happy to be a part of his first win, and to have a top-five game at home," Hutchinson said. "He was just so happy."

Minutes after the game, long-suffering fans filled the Big House turf to celebrate a rare win in the storied series and they were in no rush to leave as music blared.

"Watching the snow fall and the crowd rush rush onto the field was truly a surreal moment," said Michigan quarterback Cade McNamara, who was 13 of 19 for 159 yards with an interception.

Ohio State had a school-record winning streak in the rivalry, taking 15 of 16 to turn The Game into its game.

The Buckeyes (10-2, 8-1) blew their chances to continue their dominance with 10 penalties, many before the snap, and because they simply could not stop Michigan's running game.

"I feel awful," Ohio State coach Ryan Day said. "I just got done talking to the team, and when you work this game 365 days out of the year and you come up short, it's a failure. It hurts. It hurts a lot."

Harbaugh clearly had his team ready to beat the Buckeyes.

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After Harbaugh's pay was slashed in his new deal last winter in part because of his lack of success against the Buckeyes, he reshaped his coaching staff again and renamed a running-heavy period of practice the "Beat Ohio," drill for to add another layer of focus on the rivalry.

It seemed to work.

Haskins had 169 yards rushing on 28 carries, scoring a go-ahead touchdown late in the second half and four more after halftime to pad Michigan's lead.

"It's an amazing feeling, I want to thank each and every one of my linemen," Haskins said.

Blake Corum returned from a two-plus game absence to run six times for 87 yards, helping the Wolverines gain a total of 297 yards on a ground against a rival that has pushed them around for much of this century.

"It was dominant," Harbaugh acknowledged. "There was continual movement up front by the guys."

The Buckeyes could not disagree.

"You have to stop the run in a Big Ten game," Ohio State safety Bryson Shaw said. "It's embarrassing."

Harbaugh also seemed to out coach Day, who had not lost a Big Ten game until Saturday, by sprinkling in some surprise plays such as a slot-around with A.J. Henning running for a 14-yard TD to cap the game-opening 10-play, 75-yard drive and calling a flea flicker later in the game that fooled Ohio State.

Ohio State's high-powered offense seemed rattled against Michigan's new-look defense with first-year coordinator Mike Macdonald making all the right moves. Hutchinson, who set a single-season school record with 13 sacks, was in the backfield all day.

"Definitely should be in strong consideration for the Heisman Trophy," Harbaugh said.

C.J. Stroud was 34 of 49 for 394 with two touchdowns, including a 25-yard pass to Garrett Wilson that gave the Buckeyes a 10-7 lead early in the second quarter. The Buckeyes turned it over on downs on their last possession, failing to protect Stroud. He was sacked four times, doubling the total from any other game this season.

"People are probably going to hate me for it, but I know in my heart I put up everything," Stroud said.

OVERHEARD

After Harbaugh's news conference, he was met by athletic director Warde Manuel.

"You hit a home run," Manuel told Harbaugh.

TEMPERS FLARE

The Wolverines and Buckeyes were pushing, shoving and talking in the tunnel at halftime. The emotions spilled out onto the field many times.

As Michigan receiver Roman Wilson lay in the end zone, he grabbed the left leg of cornerback Cameron Brown, who responded by ripping Wilson's helmet off and getting called for unsportsmanlike conduct.

That set off a scrum that officials and coaches were able to contain.

"These guys have been disrespecting us, stepping on our jerseys, talking about hanging 100 on us," Hutchinson said.

THE TAKEAWAY

Ohio State: The Buckeyes had won 26 straight Big Ten games, a streak that trailed only the school's 30-game run from 2012-15 in Big Ten history. Ohio State also had won 21 games in a row over ranked Big Ten teams.

Michigan: The Wolverines will have to come down quickly and focus on the Big Ten title game. Win that and a spot in the College Football Playoff is practically a lock.

RANKING RAMIFICATIONS

Michigan will jump past Ohio State in the College Football Ranking and the AP Top 25.

UP NEXT

Ohio State: Waits for its postseason plans, likely landing in a New Year's Six bowl game.

Michigan: Plays Iowa in Indianapolis next Saturday. The Wolverines did not play the Hawkeyes in the regular season.

Follow Larry Lage at <https://twitter.com/larrylage>

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More AP college football: <https://twitter.com/Collegefootball> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25

No. 3 Alabama rallies late, survives 4 OTs to beat Auburn

By JOHN ZENOR AP Sports Writer

AUBURN, Ala. (AP) — Pushed to the limits, Alabama delivered plays to celebrate in a stadium that has produced a few devastating ones.

The result was another unforgettable Iron Bowl.

John Metchie caught a scoring pass from Bryce Young in the fourth overtime to give No. 3 Alabama a 24-22 comeback victory over rival Auburn on Saturday, rescuing the Crimson Tide's national title hopes.

It was the first overtime in the Iron Bowl.

"Wow, what a game," Tide coach Nick Saban said.

Freshman Kool-Aid McKinstry tipped away T.J. Finley's pass in the final OT and Young hit Metchie just as he did in the previous one.

Alabama (11-1, 7-1 Southeastern Conference, No. 3 CFP) moves on to face No. 1 Georgia in the league championship game with its College Football Playoff hopes on the line. The Tigers (6-6, 3-5) dropped their fourth straight game after smothering Young and the Tide's prolific offense most of the way.

"After halftime, it just seemed like everybody was all in and we were fighting like I've never seen us fight all year long," Saban said. "Our players were as happy as I've ever seen them after the game."

Young capped a 97-yard drive with a 28-yard touchdown to freshman Ja'Corey Brooks — his fourth catch and first touchdown this season — with 24 seconds left in regulation.

Young converted a fourth-and-7 to Jahleel Billingsley, followed by two incompletions under pressure for an offense that had been held in check for 59 minutes.

"It was crazy. It was crazy," said Young, who passed for 317 yards and two touchdowns with an interception. "When you're playing in the Iron Bowl, what else are you supposed to expect? Throughout all the ups and downs, even that last drive, I have so much faith in my guys. My confidence never wavered."

There were times when it easily could have against an Auburn defense that was yielding little.

The Tigers had been trying to win their third straight Iron Bowl at Jordan-Hare Stadium, and fourth in five years. They nearly pulled it off. Auburn had won with a Kick-Six (2013) and two pick-sixes (2019).

Fans didn't get to storm the field this time.

"There was a lot of fight from our team," first-year Auburn coach Bryan Harsin said. "I'm proud of our guys. I told them I was proud of their fight. ... Our guys played hard and put ourselves in a position to win the game. We just came up short."

The teams traded touchdowns and field goals in the first overtime and both delivered scoring passes after lining up from the 3 the first time.

Alabama was without two of its top offensive players in the overtime periods.

Tailback Brian Robinson was on the sideline with an apparent leg injury sustained earlier in the game. Star receiver Jameson Williams was ejected for targeting on punt coverage in the first half.

Held to 70 passing yards in the first half, Young finished 25 of 51, many of the completions to Metchie. Metchie caught 13 passes for 150 yards.

Auburn's T.J. Finley, who started the final two games after Bo Nix's season-ending ankle injury, was 17 of 26 for 137 yards and a pair of touchdowns. He left the game at one point with a left ankle injury and returned with it taped up.

"I really couldn't move how I wanted to," Finley said. "I'm a big guy, so I don't really move as much anyway. When your ankle is kind of bothering you ... it forces you to stand in the pocket and deliver great balls."

Kicker Ben Patton, a sub for injured Anders Carlson, kept Auburn alive with a 49-yard field goal in the second overtime.

Derick Hall had three sacks for the Tigers.

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"When you come down to the wire like that and don't finish, it sucks," Hall said. "It's painful."

THE TAKEAWAY

Alabama hardly looked ready to face the Bulldogs and the nation's top defense most of the way. The Tide had 11 penalties for 129 yards and gave up seven sacks a few days after Saban called out the fans for being critical because his team wasn't blowing out opponents.

Auburn's defense played terrific and held on for dear life for a team that had blown two straight double-digit leads. The home-field advantage continues to be huge in this intense rivalry even if the Tigers fell short in the end.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

Alabama had a chance to move up a spot after No. 2 Ohio State fell 42-27 to fifth-ranked Michigan. The game-long struggle with an unranked team makes that far less certain.

UP NEXT

Alabama: Faces No. 1 Georgia in the SEC Championship game.

Auburn: Awaits bowl destination.

More AP college football: <https://apnews.com/hub/college-football> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25. Sign up for the AP's college football newsletter: <https://apnews.com/cfbtop25>

News crew guard dies after being shot in attempted robbery

DAISY NGUYEN Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — A security guard has died after he was shot while he protected a San Francisco Bay Area television news crew covering a smash-and-grab theft, part of a rash of organized retail crime in the region.

"We are devastated by the loss of security guard and our friend, Kevin Nishita. Our deepest sympathy goes to Kevin's wife, his children, his family, and to all his friends and colleagues," KRON-TV's vice president and general manager, Jim Rose, said in a statement issued Saturday.

Nishita was an armed guard for Star Protection Agency and provided security for television news crews in the region, who are often targeted by robbers for their equipment.

He was shot in the abdomen during an attempted robbery of KRON-TV's camera equipment near downtown Oakland on Wednesday, police said.

The news crew was covering a recent robbery where a group of thieves broke in and stole from a clothing store.

A reward of \$32,500 is being offered for information that leads to an arrest in Nishita's killing.

Nishita was a police officer for the cities of Hayward, San Jose, Colma before retiring in 2018. The Alameda County Sheriff's office said deputies escorted his body from the hospital with full law enforcement honors.

"This senseless loss of life is due to yet another violent criminal act in the Bay Area. We hope that offering a reward will help lead to the arrest of those responsible so they can face justice for this terrible tragedy," Rose said.

The region has been struck by organized retail thefts in which bands of thieves, some carrying crowbars and hammers, break into high-end stores and snatch merchandise.

Similar thefts have been reported in Los Angeles and Beverly Hills and elsewhere in the country.

At least eight thieves stormed a Home Depot store in Lakewood on Black Friday and grabbed hammers, crowbars and sledgehammers in the tool section before dashing off in a getaway vehicle, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department said.

Four people who may have participated in the Home Depot theft were later arrested in Beverly Hills after officers stopped two cars that were part of a caravan of vehicles driving around the city's business district, police Lt. Giovanni Trejo said. A bystander called police after seeing that some of the vehicles did not display license plates, he said.

Meantime, police in Los Angeles arrested three people suspected of storming a designer clothing store

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on Melrose Place after stopping a vehicle and seeing clothes in plain view, said LAPD Officer Mike Lopez. He said more than 10 people ransacked another store on La Brea Avenue.

The thefts are believed to be part of sophisticated criminal networks that recruit people to steal merchandise in stores throughout the country and then sell it online. Experts and law enforcement officials say the thefts are ratcheting up as the holiday shopping season gets underway.

Associated Press radio reporter Julie Walker in New York contributed to this report.

Donations pour in for Missouri man freed after 43 years

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — More than \$1.4 million had been raised as of Saturday for a man who spent 43 years behind bars before a judge overturned his conviction in a triple killing.

The Midwest Innocence Project set up the GoFundMe fundraiser as they fought for Kevin Strickland's release, noting that he wouldn't receive compensation from Missouri and would need help paying for basic living expenses. The state only allows wrongful imprisonment payments to people who were exonerated through DNA evidence, so the 62-year-old Strickland wouldn't qualify.

Judge James Welsh, a retired Missouri Court of Appeals judge, ordered his release on Tuesday, finding that evidence used to convict Strickland had since been recanted or disproven. By Saturday evening, more than \$1.45 million had been donated to help Strickland.

Strickland has always maintained that he was home watching television and had nothing to do with the killings, which happened in 1978 when he was 18 years old.

As he left prison, he said he was "thankful for God walking me through this for 43 years."

High inflation? Low polling? White House blames the pandemic

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Inflation is soaring, businesses are struggling to hire and President Joe Biden's poll numbers have been in free fall. The White House sees a common culprit for it all: COVID-19.

Biden's team views the pandemic as the root cause of both the nation's malaise and his own political woes. Finally controlling COVID-19, the White House believes, is the skeleton key to rejuvenating the country and reviving Biden's own standing.

But the coronavirus challenge has proved to be vexing for the White House, with last summer's premature claims of victory swamped by the more transmissible delta variant, millions of Americans going unvaccinated and lingering economic effects from the pandemic's darkest days.

All of that as yet another variant of the virus, omicron, emerged overseas. It is worrying public health officials, leading to new travel bans and panicking markets as scientists race to understand how dangerous it may be.

Although the economy has actually been coming back, there are multiple signs that COVID-19 will leave its scars even if the pandemic fades.

For now, in the administration's view, an intransigent minority that is resisting vaccination is spoiling the recovery for the rest of the country — forcing masks on the vaccinated and contributing to lingering anxiousness everywhere you look.

Asked why Americans aren't getting the message that the economy is improving, White House press secretary Jen Psaki said this past week: "We're still in the middle of fighting a pandemic and people are sick and tired of that. We are, too."

The state of affairs, she said, affects everything from how people feel about sending their kids out the door to the price for a gallon of gas.

The administration views vaccination mandates as critical, not only to preventing avoidable illness and death but to safeguarding the economic recovery — and salvaging Biden's political position.

"We have the tools to accelerate the path out of this pandemic widely available," White House COVID-19 coordinator Jeff Zients told a coronavirus briefing. While he ruled out large-scale lockdowns like the United

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States experienced in 2020 and like those popping up again across Europe, Zients renewed the administration's appeals for more Americans to get their shots.

But on Friday, the discovery of the new variant in southern Africa had much of the world acting to shut down travel from the region and contain a threat that the World Health Organization suggested could be worse than the ravaging waves from delta.

Inside the White House and among allies of the president, there has been frustration for weeks over the slow government action to approve booster shots for all adults. The regulatory process, they fear, contributed to misinformation and confusion around the boosters and means the nation isn't optimally protected for the holiday season.

Biden on Friday appealed for unvaccinated Americans to be "responsible" and get the shot and for those eligible for a booster to get that, too. "That is the minimum that everyone should be doing. ... We always talk about whether this is about freedom, but I think it's a patriotic responsibility to do that."

Still, for all the hand-wringing over Biden's sagging standing with Americans, Democrats say a turnaround may be within reach.

"From Trump to Biden, people have gone from feeling like it's mourning again in America to feeling on the cusp of morning again in America," said party strategist Jesse Ferguson.

"Getting past the pandemic unlocks the door for the economy, for our way of life and for people feeling less divided," he added.

To Biden's critics, though, it's a stretch to blame all the nation's problems on COVID-19 or to think that containing the virus will solve them.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, in fact, puts the blame for high prices on Biden's big pandemic relief package, saying recently: "There is no question what is keeping working Americans awake at night. Inflation. The runaway prices and unpredictability that Democrats' policies have fueled."

The lingering effects of the virus have taken a toll on the president's approval ratings, even if his handling of the virus has been seen as a relative strength.

In an October AP-NORC poll, 54% of Americans said they approved of Biden's job on the pandemic. That was somewhat higher than his approval rating overall and much higher than approval on his handling of the economy, at 48% and 41%, respectively.

As recently as July, 66% had approved of Biden on COVID-19 and 59% approved of his job performance overall.

In last month's poll, only about one-third of Americans said the nation was heading in the right direction, down from about half in late February.

Views of the economy have dimmed as well, with only about one-third saying conditions are good, compared with close to half in September.

To the White House, fixing blame on the pandemic is emerging as a modern version of the old "It's the economy, stupid" mantra from the Bill Clinton years.

When Psaki was pressed on what the administration was doing to contain higher prices, she replied: "We know what the root causes of those are, right? Global supply chain issues."

"The best thing we can do as the government is to get the pandemic under control. That's what the president's number one focus is."

The same message ripples throughout the administration.

"As long as the pandemic continues, there will be pandemic-driven shortages, which is why the best way to fix that is to end the pandemic," Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said recently, stressing the need for vaccination.

Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, speaking about the administration's response to spiking gasoline prices, said getting people vaccinated was "the ultimate answer."

Economists largely endorse the sentiment, but caution that the solution is not simple.

"The root of the problems in the economy is the virus," said Harvard economist James Stock, "and the best way to minimize the spread of the virus is to increase vaccinations. It's the number one economic

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policy in my mind.”

But with experts predicting that COVID-19 is becoming endemic, Stock said, “you’ve got to be realistic that it’s not going to go away.”

Even if the virus fades, economists warn, there will be harmful lingering effects.

Goldman Sachs noted in a recent analysis that roughly half of the 5 million people who have left the labor force since the pandemic have retired, making it harder for businesses to regain lost jobs. Work by Stanford University economist Nicholas Bloom and others indicates that companies expect more people to keep working from home and shopping online, a problem for local retailers that depend on office workers to buy lunch and people to return to stores.

Just 5% of Americans’ total work days were at home pre-pandemic, a figure that is now 25%, according to Bloom. More than three-quarters of workers surveyed by his colleagues and him would prefer to have at least one day a week working from home and nearly one-third would rather work from home for all five days. This could make it harder for employers to evaluate their workers and efficiently use office space.

The administration is also dealing with a global economy, so solving pandemic issues at home has its limits.

Coronavirus outbreaks in Asia shut down computer chip plants, worsening the shortage of semiconductors, one sign that vaccination worldwide could be as critical as the administration’s domestic efforts. One of the rationales for Biden’s infrastructure spending to strengthen the supply chain is to minimize the damage from these shutdowns.

“If a factory in Malaysia shuts down due to a COVID outbreak — which they have — it causes a ripple effect that can slow down auto manufacturing in Detroit,” Biden said in one recent speech. “Why? They can’t get the computer chips they need.”

Associated Press writers Josh Boak and Hannah Fingerhut contributed to this report.

Some states dropping ‘dehumanizing’ terms for immigrants

By ACACIA CORONADO Report for America/Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Luz Rivas remembers seeing the word on her mother’s residency card as a child: “alien.”

In the stark terms of the government, it signaled her mother was not yet a citizen of the U.S. But to her young daughter, the word had a more personal meaning. Even though they were going through the naturalization process, it meant the family did not belong.

“I want other children of immigrants, like me, to not feel the same way I did, that my family did, when we saw the word ‘alien,’” said Rivas, now an assemblywoman in the California Legislature.

The Democratic lawmaker sought to retire the term and this year authored a bill — since signed into law — that replaces the use of “alien” in state statutes with other terms such as “noncitizen” or “immigrant.” Her effort was inspired by a similar shift earlier this year by the Biden administration.

Immigrants and immigrant-rights groups say the term, especially when combined with “illegal,” is dehumanizing and can have a harmful effect on immigration policy.

The word became a focal point of debate in several states earlier this year as the number of migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border swelled and led to fierce backlash against Biden administration policies by Republican governors and lawmakers.

Lawmakers in at least seven states considered eliminating use of “alien” and “illegal” in state statutes this year and replacing them with descriptions such as “undocumented” and “noncitizen,” according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Only two states, California and Colorado, actually made the change.

“I want all Californians that are contributing to our society, that are small business owners, that work hard, to feel that they are part of California communities,” Rivas said of the reason behind her legislation.

State Sen. Julie Gonzales, who co-sponsored the new Colorado law, said during a legislative committee hearing that words such as “illegal” were “dehumanizing and derogatory” when applied to immigrants.

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Gonzales said the legislation aimed to remove the only place in Colorado statute where "illegal alien" was used to describe people living in the U.S. illegally.

"That language has been offensive for many people," she said. "And some of the rationale behind that is really rooted in this idea that a person can certainly commit an illegal act, but no human being themselves is illegal."

Using "alien" to describe those who are not U.S. citizens has a long history, dating to the nation's first naturalization law, passed while George Washington was president. Fearing a war with France, Congress also passed the Alien and Sedition Acts in 1798, which sought to suppress political subversion.

Changing the long-standing government terminology around immigration is not universally accepted as necessary or desirable.

Sage Naumann, spokesperson for the Colorado Senate Republicans, said the Democratic-controlled Legislature should be spending its time on matters of deeper importance to residents, such as taking steps to fight inflation, tackle crime and improve education.

Naumann said he doubted that "the average Coloradan — or American — cares about what semi-controversial words are buried in their state statutes."

The Biden administration also received some pushback after its change in policy.

In April, U.S. Customs and Border Protection ordered employees to avoid using the word "alien" in internal documents and public communications and instead use "noncitizen" or "migrant." "Illegal alien" also was out, to be replaced by descriptions such as "undocumented noncitizen."

"We enforce our nation's laws while also maintaining the dignity of every individual with whom we interact," Troy Miller, acting commissioner, wrote to employees of the largest U.S. law enforcement agency, which includes the Border Patrol. "The words we use matter and will serve to further confer that dignity to those in our custody."

Border Patrol Chief Rodney Scott objected, writing to others in the agency that the edict contradicted language in criminal statutes — although Miller made an exception for legal documents — and plunged the agency into a partisan debate. Scott, a Trump-era appointee, refused to sign off on the order and believes his outspokenness on that and other issues contributed to him being forced out of his position in June.

"To change the law is fine, but until then you're really politicizing the mission," Scott said in an interview.

An analysis by The Associated Press (which doesn't refer to people as "aliens" except in direct quotes) found that more than a dozen states still use the terms "alien" or "illegal" in statutes referring to immigrants. Among them is Texas, where a legislative attempt to transition to different terminology advanced out of committee with bipartisan backing this year but failed to get a hearing before the full Texas House.

State Rep. Art Fierro, a Democrat, said he expected "kickback" when he originally proposed the change. But following committee discussions, he said that to his surprise the change was seen by both parties as an effort to use more "dignified, respectful" terms. He said he suggested the change because he felt the original terms were belittling to those seeking to work through the immigration process.

Fierro said he plans to introduce another bill to replace the terms during the state's next regular legislative session, in 2023.

"We are just trying to treat people humanely," he said.

Rosalidia Dardon knows from personal experience why the language surrounding immigration is so important.

After fleeing violence in El Salvador, she spent roughly 16 months in an immigration detention center in California before arriving at a refugee home in Texas in 2016. She was determined to find a job while she sought asylum but had lost her work visa after her protected status expired.

Dardon, 54, blames the ankle monitor she was required to wear and the description of immigrants with terms such as "illegal" for a job search marked by rejection after rejection.

One specific moment remains frozen in her memory.

"I won't give you a job because you are a criminal," Dardon told the AP in Spanish, repeating what a hiring manager in Texas said to her.

"I would ask myself and God why I was given an ankle monitor if my only sin was to go to a country that

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was not my own," said Dardon, whose immigration case remains pending. "Without Latinos, this country would spiral downwards. That's why we should be treated better."

Associated Press writers Patty Nieberg in Denver and Elliot Spagat in San Diego contributed to this report. Coronado is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

Panel OKs bid to demolish Wright Brothers' 1st bike shop

DAYTON, Ohio (AP) — The Dayton Board of Zoning Appeals has approved the city's request to demolish a 129-year-old historic building that once was the site of the Wright brothers' first bike shop.

The city wants to tear down the site because the building has deteriorated to a point where it can no longer be maintained and redeveloped, the Dayton Daily News has reported. Public safety concerns have also been raised by some who fear the building could collapse.

While agreeing that most of the building should be demolished, the Dayton Landmarks Commission rejected the demolition request in September. The panel instead recommended that the city re-advertise the property and encourage its renovation in a way that preserves the historic facade.

Preservation groups had also opposed the city's plan. They argued that keeping the building's facade and incorporating it into a redevelopment project would make the project eligible for historic tax credits.

The city appealed the landmarks commission's decision to the zoning appeals board, claiming it erred in its application of architectural design standards. The board voted 5 to 1 this week to reverse the commission's decision and gave the city permission to raze the property.

The shop was first built in 1892 to serve as the Wright brothers' first bike shop. Soon thereafter, Gem City Ice Cream Co. bought the property and housed it until 1975 until it was sold to another company.

Years after a wide array of owners, the city attempted to sell the rundown property to developers but it failed inspection tests. The building was deemed structurally damaged and in danger of collapse.

City officials had also previously attempted to receive approval to bulldoze the property but did not move forward after hearing community concerns.

The Wright brothers, Wilbur and younger sibling Orville, were aviation pioneers and are generally credited with building the first airplane. They started their work on flight several years after they built the shop that will be razed.

The brothers made their initial powered flight with the Wright Flyer in December 1903 at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, then came home to Dayton to work the bugs out. A memorial stands at Huffman Prairie, where they made flights in 1904-05 and really learned to control the plane.

Russia jails 5 people over coal mine disaster that killed 51

By DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — A Russian court on Saturday ordered five people to remain in pre-trial detention for two months pending an investigation into a devastating blast in a coal mine in Siberia that resulted in dozens of deaths.

Russian authorities reported 51 deaths after a methane explosion rocked the Listvyazhnaya mine in the Kemerovo region in southwestern Siberia on Thursday — 46 miners and five rescuers. The tragedy appears to be the deadliest in Russia since 2010.

The Central District Court in the city of Kemerovo ruled to jail the director of the Listvyazhnaya mine, Sergei Makhrov, his deputy Andrei Molostvov and section supervisor Sergei Gerasimenok. They are facing charges of violating industrial safety requirements for hazardous production facilities that resulted in multiple deaths. If convicted, they may be imprisoned for up to seven years.

Two officials of the local branch of Rostekhnadzor, Russia's state technology and ecology watchdog — Sergei Vinokurov and Vyacheslav Semykin — have also been jailed for two months on the charge of

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negligence that led to two or more deaths, punishable by up to seven years in prison as well.

Law enforcement officials said Friday that miners had complained about the high level of methane in the mine. Russia's top independent news site, Meduza, reported that this year authorities suspended the work of certain sections of the mine nine times and issued fines of more than 4 million rubles (roughly \$53,000) for safety violations.

A total of 285 miners were in the Listvyazhnaya mine Thursday morning at the time of explosion, which quickly filled the mine with toxic smoke. A total of 239 people were rescued shortly after the blast, and more than 60 sought medical assistance for an assortment of injuries.

Officials on Thursday said 11 miners and three rescuers perished while searching for others in a remote section of the mine. Thirty-five miners were still trapped in the mine when rescuers were forced to halt their search several hours into it because of a buildup of methane and carbon monoxide gas.

Three more rescuers went missing and had been presumed dead along with the trapped miners by Thursday night. However, on Friday morning, search teams found one rescuer in the mine who was still alive and conscious. He has suffered shock and carbon monoxide poisoning of moderate severity and is undergoing treatment at a hospital.

Officials have described his rescue as a "miracle" and said that finding any other survivors at that point was highly unlikely.

Kemerovo Governor Sergei Tsivilyov on Saturday announced the resumption of the search operation, saying that "we need to lift everybody (to the surface)." He noted, however, that rescue crews must act "cautiously."

"We don't have the right to lose even a single person more," Tsivilyov wrote on the messaging app Telegram.

Later Saturday, search teams recovered the bodies of five miners.

German minister hopes patient transfers a 'wake-up call'

BERLIN (AP) — Germany's health minister said Saturday he hopes that the sight of air force planes transferring patients across the country will act as a "wake-up call" to millions who are still holding out on getting vaccinated against COVID-19.

Health Minister Jens Spahn said there has been a welcome increase over the past week in the number of people getting their first shots, with 450,000 recorded. He put that down to pressure from Germany's worsening coronavirus situation and to increasing requirements to people to provide proof of vaccination or recent recovery to take part in many activities.

But it's still not enough and "this figure of nearly 12 million unvaccinated adults is still far, far too high," Spahn said at an online town hall event. So far, 68.4% of the population of 83 million people is fully vaccinated, below the 75% minimum threshold eyed by the government. There are significant regional variations.

Hospitals in southern and eastern regions of Germany have warned they are running out of intensive care beds because of the large numbers of seriously ill COVID-19 patients. Germany is having to organize large-scale transfers of patients within the country for the first time since the outbreak began in early 2020, including with help from the military.

"This hopefully will give many people a wake-up call that vaccination is a pretty good thing," Spahn said.

Germany has seen a relentless increase in coronavirus infections over recent weeks, with the infection rate hitting a new high every day. On Saturday, it stood at 444.3 new cases per 100,000 residents over the past seven days. Germany's known COVID-19 death toll climbed above 100,000 on Thursday.

A new government is expected to take over in early December, and the transition period has been blamed for paralyzing Germany's response to the pandemic.

Follow AP's coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-pandemic>

Channel migrant deaths: Smugglers net millions per kilometer

By LORI HINNANT and DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

CALAIS, France (AP) — The price to cross the English Channel varies according to the network of smugglers, between 3,000 and 7,000 euros (\$3,380 and \$8,000) though there are rumors of discounts.

Often, the fee also includes a very short-term tent rental in the windy dunes of northern France and food cooked over fires that sputter in the rain that falls for more than half the month of November in the Calais region. Sometimes, but not always, it includes a life vest and fuel for the outboard motor.

And the people who collect the money — up to 300,000 euros (\$432,000) per boat that makes it across the narrows of the Channel — are not the ones arrested in the periodic raids along the coastline. They are just what French police call “the little hands.”

Now, French authorities are hoping to move up the chain of command. The French judicial investigation into Wednesday’s sinking that killed 27 people has been turned over to Paris-based prosecutors who specialize in organized crime.

To cross the 33-kilometer (20-mile) narrow point of the Channel, the rubber dinghies must navigate frigid waters and passing cargo ships. As of Nov. 17, 23,000 people had crossed successfully, according to Britain’s Home Office. France intercepted about 19,000 people.

At a minimum, then, smuggling organizations this year have netted 69 million euros (\$77.7 million) for the crossing — that’s 2 million euros per kilometer.

“This has become so profitable for criminals that it’s going to take a phenomenal amount of effort to shift it,” the U.K. Home Office’s Dan O’Mahoney told Parliament on Nov. 17.

Between coronavirus and Brexit, “this is a golden age for the smugglers and organized crime because the countries are in disarray,” said Mimi Vu, an expert on Vietnamese migration who regularly spends time in the camps of northern France.

“Think of it like a shipping and logistics company,” Vu said.

The leg through central Europe can cost around 4,000 euros (\$4,500), according to Austrian authorities who on Saturday announced the arrest of 15 people suspected of smuggling Syrian, Lebanese and Egyptian migrants into the country in vanloads of 12 to 15 people. The suspects transported more than 700 people at a total cost of more than 2.5 million euros (\$2.8 million), police said. In this network, the migrants were bound for Germany.

The alleged smugglers — from Moldova, Ukraine and Uzbekistan — were recruited in their home countries via ads on social media offering work as drivers for 2,000-3,000 euros (\$2,250-3,380) a month.

The men handling the last leg are essentially just making the final delivery. If arrested, they are replaceable, Vu said.

Frontex, the European border agency, echoed that in a 2021 risk report that describes the operational leaders as managers who “are able to orchestrate the criminal business from a distance, while mostly exposing low-level criminals involved in transport and logistics to law enforcement detection.”

The chain starts in the home country, usually with an agreed-upon price, arranged over social media. That fee tends to shift over the journey, but most willingly pay extra as their destination grows closer, she said. That’s precisely when the logistics grow more complicated.

Channel crossings by sea were relatively rare until a few years ago, when French and British authorities locked down the area around the Eurotunnel entrance. The deaths of 39 Vietnamese migrants in the back of a container truck may also have contributed to a new reluctance to use that route.

But the first attempts were disorganized, using small inflatables and even kayaks bought at the local Decathlon sports store.

“At the beginning, it’s always the pioneers,” said Nando Sigona, professor of international migration and forced displacement at the University of Birmingham. “But once it started to seem that it was working for a number of people, you could see the bigger players came to be involved.”

One migrant from Sudan, who would only give his name as Yasir, had been trying for three years to get to the U.K.

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While shaking his head about the tragedy, he pointed out that other methods of smuggling, such as hiding on a truck, were also dangerous.

"You could break a leg," he said. "You can die."

And as dangerous as the sea voyage might prove, it seemed to many migrants to be safer than other options. The only thing preventing it is the cost, which he had heard was 1,200 euros (\$1,350).

"We don't have any money," Yasir said. "If I had money, I'd go to the boat."

Police cracked down on local boat purchases, and the larger inflatables started to show up, hauled by the dozens inside cars and vans with German and Belgian tags, police said. France's interior minister, Gérald Darmanin, said a car with German tags was seized in connection with the investigation.

Police raids on the camps to pull down tents and disrupt operations have given smugglers yet another chance to make money, said Nikolai Posner, of the aid group Utopia 56. Now, the fee includes a short-term tent rental and access to basic food, usually cooked over an open fire.

"There is one solution to stop all this, the deaths, the smugglers, the camps. Make a humanitarian corridor," said Posner. He said asylum requests should be easier on both sides of the Channel.

In part because of Brexit and coronavirus, expulsions from the U.K. this year dropped to just five people, according to the Home Office. Vu said people who are intercepted at sea or land by British border forces end up in migrant centers, but usually just get back in touch with the smuggling networks and end up working black market jobs.

That's the complaint in France, where the interior minister said British employers appear more than happy to hire under the table, providing yet another financial incentive.

"If they're in Calais, it's to get to Britain, and the only people who can guarantee them passage are these networks of smugglers," said Ludovic Hochart, a Calais-based police officer with the Alliance union. "The motivation to get to England is stronger than the dangers that await."

On Sunday ministers from France, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and EU officials will meet to search for solutions. But, with France and Britain at sharp odds over migration, fishing and how to rebuild a working relationship after Brexit, there is one notable absence: a British delegation.

For Vu, that's a missed opportunity: "This is transnational crime. It spans many borders and it's not up to only one country to solve it."

Lori Hinnant reported from Paris. Frank Jordans contributed to this report from Berlin.

South African scientists brace for wave propelled by omicron

By ANDREW MELDRUM Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Worried scientists in South Africa are scrambling to combat the lightning spread across the country of the new and highly transmissible omicron COVID-19 variant as the world grapples with its emergence.

In the space of two weeks, the omicron variant has sent South Africa from a period of low transmission to rapid growth of new confirmed cases. The country's numbers are still relatively low, with 2,828 new confirmed cases recorded Friday, but omicron's speed in infecting young South Africans has alarmed health professionals.

"We're seeing a marked change in the demographic profile of patients with COVID-19," Rudo Mathivha, head of the intensive care unit at Soweto's Baragwanath Hospital, told an online press briefing.

"Young people, in their 20s to just over their late 30s, are coming in with moderate to severe disease, some needing intensive care. About 65% are not vaccinated and most of the rest are only half-vaccinated," said Mathivha. "I'm worried that as the numbers go up, the public health care facilities will become overwhelmed."

She said urgent preparations are needed to enable public hospitals to cope with a potential large influx of patients needing intensive care.

"We know we have a new variant," said Mathivha. "The worst case scenario is that it hits us like delta

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... we need to have critical care beds ready.”

What looked like a cluster infection among some university students in Pretoria ballooned into hundreds of new cases and then thousands, first in the capital city and then to nearby Johannesburg, South Africa’s largest city.

Studying the surge, scientists identified the new variant that diagnostic tests indicate is likely responsible for as many as 90% of the new cases, according to South Africa’s health officials. Early studies show that it has a reproduction rate of 2 — meaning that every person infected by it is likely to spread it to two other people.

The new variant has a high number of mutations that appear to make it more transmissible and help it evade immune responses. The World Health Organization looked at the data on Friday and named the variant omicron, under its system of using Greek letters, calling it a highly transmissible variant of concern.

“It’s a huge concern. We all are terribly concerned about this virus,” Professor Willem Hanekom, director of the Africa Health Research Institute, told The Associated Press.

“This variant is mostly in Gauteng province, the Johannesburg area of South Africa. But we’ve got clues from diagnostic tests ... that suggest that this variant is already all over South Africa,” said Hanekom, who is also co-chair of the South African COVID Variant Research Consortium.

“The scientific reaction from within South Africa is that we need to learn as much as soon as possible. We know precious little,” he said. “For example, we do not know how virulent this virus is, which means how bad is this disease that it causes?”

A key factor is vaccination. The new variant appears to be spreading most quickly among those who are unvaccinated. Currently, only about 40% of adult South Africans are vaccinated, and the number is much lower among those in the 20 to 40-year-old age group.

South Africa has nearly 20 million doses of vaccines — made by Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson — but the numbers of people getting vaccines is about 120,000 per day, far below the government’s target of 300,000 per day.

As scientists try to learn more about omicron, the people of South Africa can take measures to protect themselves against it, said Hanekom.

“This is a unique opportunity. There’s still time for people who did not get vaccinated to go and get the vaccine, and that will provide some protection, we believe, against this infection, especially protection against severe infection, severe disease and death,” he said. “So I would call on people to vaccinate if they can.”

Mogomotsi Magome contributed to this report.

Bob Dylan artwork show opens in Miami, new cinema paintings

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Bob Dylan has been telling stories through songs for 60 years. But recently America’s master lyricist has also captured moments in a new series of paintings that, just like his songs, are intimate and a bit of a mystery.

The most comprehensive exhibition of the Nobel laureate’s visual art to be held in the U.S. goes on display on Tuesday in Miami at the Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum. Forty new pieces by the 80-year-old songwriter will be showcased for the first time.

The exhibition with more than 180 acrylics, watercolors, drawings and ironwork sculptures will kick off the same week as Art Basel Miami Beach and will run through April 17 with no future stops announced yet. Tickets are \$16 and are booked by hourly slots.

“Retrospectrum” includes some of Dylan’s works from the 1960s, starting with pencil sketches he made of his songs such as “Highway 61 Revisited” and “Like a Rolling Stone.” His pieces, loaned from private collections around the world, also include abstract sketches from the 1970s, and covers six large rooms. But the vast majority was created in the past 15 years.

“He was recognized in every possible way as a writer, as a composer, as a singer, as a performer and

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so on. It is now that the audience sees also the last element," said Shai Baitel, who conceived the show as the artistic director of the Modern Art Museum Shanghai, where it debuted. "Dylan is able to express himself in so many ways."

A breathtaking giant canvas of a sunset in Monument Valley on the Utah-Arizona line serves as an introduction to Dylan's newest works. He has mentioned his admiration of Western movie director John Ford, who used that same iconic landscape in many of his films.

Past the wall with the painting of the reddish buttes is a room with the new series called "Deep Focus," named after a technique in cinematography where nothing is blurred out.

"All these images come from films. They try to highlight the different predicaments that people find themselves in," Dylan is quoted as saying in one of the walls. "The dreams and schemes are the same — life as it's coming at you in all its forms and shapes.

Dylan offers a lot of city life the way Ashcan School artists advocated when they depicted realistic images of people's hardships at the turn of the 20th century.

A jazz band plays in a colorful club in one of the paintings; a gray-haired man counts wads of cash in another. He depicts two men fighting in a boxing match and portrays a woman sitting alone at a bar drinking and smoking with an intriguing look on her face.

Linking the images of Dylan's latest works to specific movies will take some internet sleuthing.

Richard F. Thomas is a Harvard University classicist who has studied and written about Dylan. He said in an essay for the exhibit that he found online references tying one of the paintings showing a man in a black leather jacket pouring sugar on his coffee to a scene at a diner in the 1981 film "The Loveless," where actor Willem Dafoe embodies a biker.

Thomas found a scene from the 1971 movie "Shaft" with actor Richard Roundtree ordering street food in Times Square. Other new works show cowboys, men in undershirts and barber's poles, another recurring object used by Dylan.

"Just like the scenes he has been creating in songs for all these years, the scenes of 'Deep Focus' will keep Dylan scholars busy in the years to come," Thomas wrote.

Besides the works in his new series, other works that will be shown in Miami have been previously exhibited in places such as the Halcyon Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery in London.

Previous paintings reflect images of America from the point of view of a road traveler. Realistic depictions of diners, motels, marquees, gas stations and railway tracks appear frequently throughout his artwork.

"It's almost like looking at a pamphlet of his memories," Baitel, the artistic director, said.

Dylan has also experimented with perspective, seemingly imitating the work of Vincent Van Gogh in "The Bedroom" to paint corners of a New York City apartment. And he has done variations by drawing the same characters changing the color of the backdrops and their clothing, or just depicting them at a different time of the day, like Claude Monet's Rouen Cathedral series.

The exhibit has some interactive displays for music fans. The 64 cards with words from the lyrics of "Subterranean Homesick Blues" that he flipped through in one of the earliest music videos ever made were framed and lined up in eight columns by eight rows, while the clip is played on loop.

It's not yet clear whether Dylan, who is currently on tour for his 39th album "Rough and Rowdy Ways" will pay a visit.

Jordana Pomeroy, director of the Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, said it will be its first ticketed event since the museum first opened in 2008. The Florida International University will be holding a symposium on Dylan inviting scholars to discuss the songwriter's entire body of work.

"That's the treatment we are going to give Bob Dylan," Pomeroy said.

Burkina Faso security forces fire tear gas at protesters

By SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso (AP) — Security forces fired tear gas at protesters throwing rocks in Burkina Faso's capital on Saturday, as tensions rose across the conflict-riddled nation with the population

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angry at the government's inability to stem violence linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group.

Several hundred protestors took to the streets, calling for President Roch Marc Christian Kabore to resign. The army and police drove through downtown Ouagadougou, the capital, during clashes with protesters, who barricaded streets, set fire to tires and threw rocks and bricks.

"We refuse to lose Burkina Faso. We will put in someone who is competent to assure the security of the nation," said Isaac Pagberam. "We've already lost two-thirds of our territory, nobody can travel the country in peace. We say no! We can't sit until the jihadis come to Ouagadougou to kill us."

The protest comes after the deadliest attack in years against the security forces in the Sahel's Soum province earlier this month, where more than 50 security forces were killed and after an attack in the Center North region where 19 people including nine members of the security forces were killed.

The unrest against the government also comes in the wake of anti-French protests last week, where at least four people were injured when French forces fired warning shots at protestors in Kaya who stopped its military convoy coming from Ivory Coast that was trying to pass into Niger. While Saturday's protest was mostly against the government, anti-French protestors threw rocks at foreigners as well.

The government's crackdown on the protestors follows a week of a mobile internet shutdown, which the government said was for national security reasons. The president vowed to increase aid to the military and investigate the deaths in the Sahel while calling on the population to maintain calm.

"The Burkinabe people have the right and the duty to express themselves freely on the conduct of public affairs," said Kabore. "I would like to invite everyone to be sensible and not to believe that breaking the thermometer will cure the fever."

But anger across the country is mounting with more protests planned in the coming weeks. Earlier this month, the opposition gave the president a one-month ultimatum to stem the violence or said it would begin protests demanding his resignation.

The international community is calling for a return to peaceful social and political life, according to a statement from the European Union. However, diplomats say it's clear that the ruling political elite is losing support and so is the West, which stands with the government, according to a Western diplomat who wasn't authorized to speak to the media so spoke of condition of anonymity.

Shippers prepare for another pandemic crush of holiday gifts

By DAVID SHARP Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — The last holiday season was far from the most wonderful time of the year for the U.S. Postal Service: Sick and quarantined workers, a flood of packages from shoppers loath to set foot in stores and a last-minute dump of packages from overwhelmed private shippers.

Postal workers who recall packages and letters piled up in distribution hubs are better prepared this time as they gear up for another pandemic crunch. But low product inventories, and port and supply chain disruptions are creating new uncertainty about getting gifts delivered.

Already, workers are seeing a surge in holiday packages that began several weeks ago.

"A lot of the workers are saying, 'Oh no. Here we go again,'" said Scott Adams, local president of the American Postal Workers Union in Portland.

The U.S. Postal Service and private shippers UPS and FedEx are bolstering their hiring — bringing in about 230,000 temporary workers — and taking other steps to ensure they don't become overwhelmed by packages.

Nearly 3.4 billion parcels are expected to crisscross the country this holiday season, representing an estimated increase of about 400 million compared to last year, said Satish Jindel, from Pennsylvania-based ShipMatrix, which analyzes shipping package data.

When cards and letters are included, the U.S. Postal Service said it'll be delivering more than 12 billion items.

"The pandemic is still here. The supply chain is a challenge that's going to impact how people shop and how products move," said Mark Dimondstein, president of the American Postal Workers Union, which represents more than 200,000 postal workers.

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Despite the precarious situation, the Postal Service, UPS and FedEx are in better shape to handle the peak volume, and several trends could work in their favor, Jindel said.

More people are shopping in stores compared to last year, and people have been placing online orders earlier because they're keenly aware of supply chain problems, Jindel said. Also, with workers returning to offices, there are fewer office supply shipments being made to homes, he said.

Most importantly, the shippers are adapting after their rough-and-tumble experience last year, he said.

U.S. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, who faced withering criticism last year but reported on-time improvements and reduced operating losses this month, says the service is ready for the crunch.

"We are ready, so send us your packages and your mail," he said.

A year ago, more than a third of Postal Service first-class mail was late by the time Christmas arrived.

Tractor-trailers stuffed with mail were left idling outside some postal-sorting facilities. Packages and letters piled up in distribution hubs. Delays grew by days, and then weeks, in many instances.

Two things were painfully obvious. More workers and more space were needed — and both are being addressed.

To get a handle of the volume, the Postal Service is transitioning more than 30,000 non-career employees to the ranks of career employees by peak season, hiring 40,000 seasonal employees, and leasing extra space at more than 100 locations to ensure there's room for parcels.

The Postal Service installed more than 100 new package sorting machines as of early November, part of \$40 billion of planned investment over 10 years. Also, more than 50 package systems capable of sorting large packages are expected to be deployed before December. Combined, these expand capacity by an additional 4.5 million packages per day, officials said.

UPS, for its part, is hiring more than 100,000 seasonal employees across the country and continues to add aircraft and automation. It expects nearly 90% of its packages to flow through automated facilities by year's end.

FedEx, meanwhile, is in the process of boosting its nationwide workforce by 90,000 across its operating companies. Most of those new workers are expected to remain after the holidays, the company said.

Despite all those extra workers, the shippers agree that this is not the year for shoppers to procrastinate.

"Complete your holiday shopping as soon as possible," said Jim Mayer, spokesperson for UPS.

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Nov. 28, the 332nd day of 2021. There are 33 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 28, 1942, fire engulfed the Cocoanut Grove nightclub in Boston, killing 492 people in the deadliest nightclub blaze ever. (The cause of the rapidly spreading fire, which began in the basement, is in dispute; one theory is that a busboy accidentally ignited an artificial palm tree while using a lighted match to fix a light bulb.)

On this date:

In 1520, Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan reached the Pacific Ocean after passing through the South American strait that now bears his name.

In 1859, American author Washington Irving died in present-day Tarrytown, New York, at age 76.

In 1907, future movie producer Louis B. Mayer opened his first movie theater, in Haverhill, Massachusetts.

In 1919, American-born Lady Astor was elected the first female member of the British Parliament.

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet leader Josef Stalin began conferring in Tehran during World War II.

In 1961, Ernie Davis of Syracuse University became the first African-American to be named winner of the Heisman Trophy.

In 1964, the United States launched the space probe Mariner 4 on a course toward Mars, which it flew past in July 1965, sending back pictures of the red planet.

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In 1979, an Air New Zealand DC-10 en route to the South Pole crashed into a mountain in Antarctica, killing all 257 people aboard.

In 1990, Margaret Thatcher resigned as British prime minister during an audience with Queen Elizabeth II, who then conferred the premiership on John Major.

In 1994, serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer was slain in a Wisconsin prison by a fellow inmate. Sixties war protester Jerry Rubin died in Los Angeles, two weeks after being hit by a car; he was 56.

In 2001, Enron Corp., once the world's largest energy trader, collapsed after would-be rescuer Dynegy Inc. backed out of an \$8.4 billion takeover deal. (Enron filed for bankruptcy protection four days later.)

In 2010, actor Leslie Nielsen died in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, at age 84.

Ten years ago: Egyptians, despite a recent wave of unrest, waited peacefully in long lines to vote in the first parliamentary elections since the ouster of Hosni Mubarak; Islamist parties were the big winners. Occupy Wall Street protesters defied a deadline to remove their weeks-old encampment on the Los Angeles City Hall lawn.

Five years ago: An 18-year-old Somali native drove a car into a crowd of students at Ohio State University, then attacked bystanders with a knife before he was shot and killed by a campus police officer; 13 people were injured. A chartered plane carrying a Brazilian soccer team crashed near Medellin, Colombia, killing all but six of the 77 people on board. The first commercial flight from the United States to Havana in more than 50 years arrived in Cuba as the island began week-long memorial services for Fidel Castro. Former NBC chairman and TV producer Grant Tinker, 90, died in Los Angeles.

One year ago: Pennsylvania's highest court threw out a lower court's order preventing the state from certifying dozens of contests on its Nov. 3 election ballot; it was the latest lawsuit filed by Republicans attempting to undo President-elect Joe Biden's victory in the battleground state. Biden broke his right foot while playing with one of his dogs in Delaware; doctors said he would likely have to wear a walking boot for several weeks. Sarah Fuller became the first woman to participate in a Power Five conference football game when she kicked off for Vanderbilt to start the second half at Missouri. David Prowse, the British weightlifter-turned-actor who was the body, though not the voice, of Darth Vader in the original "Star Wars" trilogy, died at 85.

Today's Birthdays: Recording executive Berry Gordy Jr. is 92. Former Sen. Gary Hart, D-Colo., is 85. Former U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross is 84. Singer-songwriter Bruce Channel is 81. Singer Randy Newman is 78. CBS News correspondent Susan Spencer is 75. Movie director Joe Dante is 74. Former "Late Show" orchestra leader Paul Shaffer is 72. Actor Ed Harris is 71. Former NASA astronaut Barbara Morgan is 70. Actor S. Epatha (eh-PAY'-thah) Merkerson is 69. Former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff is 68. Country singer Kristine Arnold (Sweethearts of the Rodeo) is 65. Actor Judd Nelson is 62. Movie director Alfonso Cuarón (kwahr-OHN') is 60. Rock musician Matt Cameron is 59. Actor Jane Sibbett is 59. Comedian Jon Stewart is 59. Actor Garcelle Beauvais (gar-SEHL' boh-VAY') is 55. Actor/comedian Stephnie (cq) Weir is 54. R&B singer Dawn Robinson is 53. Actor Gina Tognoni is 48. Hip-hop musician apl.de.ap (Black Eyed Peas) is 47. Actor Malcolm Goodwin is 46. Actor Ryan Kwanten is 45. Actor Aimee Garcia is 43. Rapper Chamillionaire is 42. Actor Daniel Henney is 42. Rock musician Rostam Batmanglij (baht-man-GLEESH') is 38. Rock singer-keyboardist Tyler Glenn (Neon Trees) is 38. Actor Mary Elizabeth Winstead is 37. R&B singer Trey Songz is 37. NHL goalie Marc-Andre Fleury (marhk-ahn-dray FLOOR'-ee) is 37. Actor Scarlett Pomers is 33. Actor-rapper Bryshere Gray is 28.