

Groton Daily Independent

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Wednesday, Sept. 14

Senior Menu: Baked pork chop, au grain potatoes, carrots, apple sauce, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Eggs and breakfast potatoes.

School Lunch: Grilled cheese sandwich, corn.

Emmanuel: 6 – 7:15 pm Confirmation with 7th & 8th graders & parents; 6:30 pm League

Thursday, Sept. 15

Senior Menu: Breaded codfish, parsley buttered potatoes, seasoned cabbage, fruit, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.

School Lunch: Stromboli square, chips.

11 a.m.: Golf Meet at Dakota Magic Golf Course

4 p.m.: Cross Country at Lee Park, Aberdeen

Volleyball Hosts Clark/Willow Lake (8th grade at 6 p.m. followed by 7th grade in gym; Arena games have C match at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity)

Friday, Sept. 16

Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, mixed vegetables, garlic toast, pears, sherbert.

School Breakfast: Biscuits and Jelly.

School Lunch: Fish nuggets, mashed potatoes.

7 p.m.: Football at Deuel (Clear Lake)

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



Saturday, Sept. 17

SEAS Confession: 3:45-4:15 p.m., SEAS Mass: 4:30 p.m.

3/4 and 5/6 football jamboree in Groton

Volleyball Tourney at Hamlin

9 a.m.: JH Volleyball at Redfield

9 a.m.: Groton Youth FB Jamboree (3rd-4th, 5th-6th)

Emmanuel: 9am 2nd Confirmation retreat for 9th graders

NO OUTDOOR WATERING!

Effective immediately, no outdoor watering is permitted in the City of Groton until further notice. (About 4-6 weeks)

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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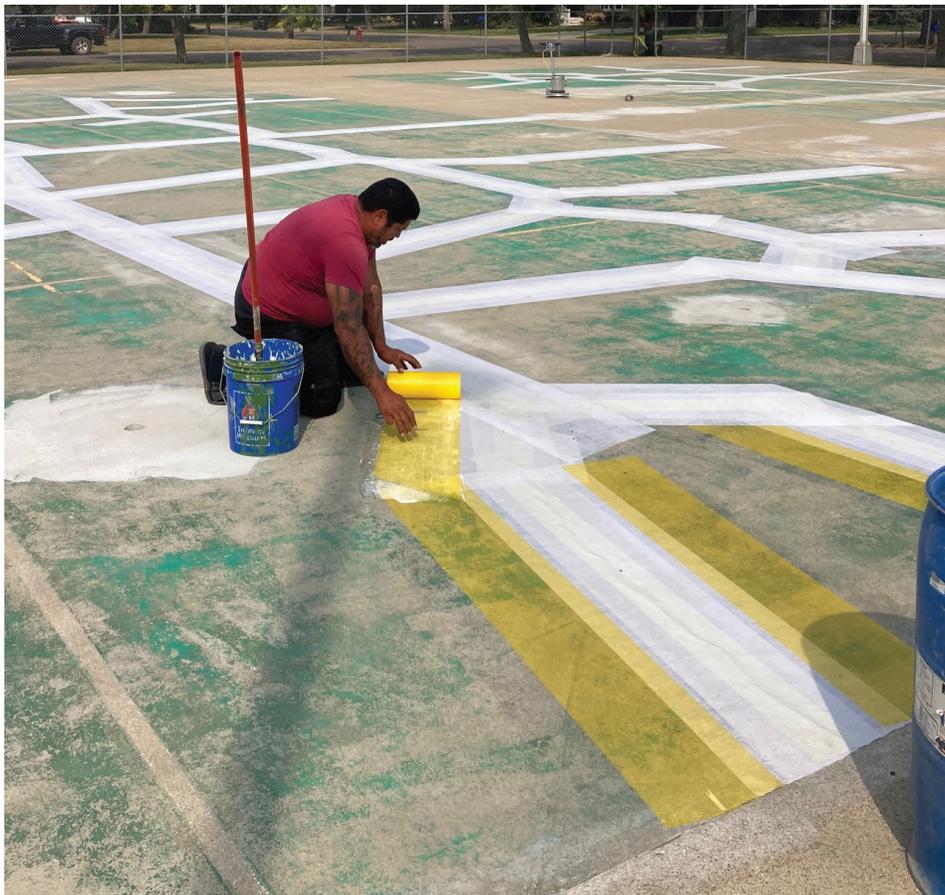
Work begins on the reservoir

A crew started sandblasting the Groton City Water Reservoir on Tuesday with one person on the roof and one on the ground. The sound of the sandblasting is very loud. Once it is sandblasted, it will then be primed and painted. The roof of the inside of the reservoir also needs to be sandblasted and painted. Work could take up to six weeks to complete. In the meantime, there is no outdoor watering permitted.



Work continues on pickle ball and tennis courts

Work continues on the pickle ball courts and tennis court. A crew from Pro Track and Tennis, Inc., Omaha, Neb., has been busy preping the court for the painting work that will be done. All the cracks have to be sealed up. The crack sealing part should be done on Wednesday with painting then beginning, weather permitting. Working the court are Carlos Rosado and Alejandro Martinez. Martinez is pictured on the right in the left photo and in the bottom photo. No word on the posts yet; however, there are quickset pickle ball bets that are removable that can be used for play until the net posts arrive.



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Enrich Groton SoDak Inc. Chairman Lance Larsen receives a donation to The Pantry from Groton Chamber President Carol Kutter from the Chamber's recent shirt fundraiser. Enrich Groton SoDak Inc. is a non profit entity in Groton formed to run The Pantry and Common Cents Community Thrift Store. (Photo Courtesy April Abeln)



Enrich Groton SoDak Inc. welcomed as new business

Members of The Groton Chamber of Commerce met with members of Enrich Groton SoDak Inc. on Tuesday to welcome their new store, Common Cents Community Thrift Store.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store is open Tuesdays from 3-6pm and every 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Saturday from 10am-1pm at 209 N Main Street in Groton.

Pictured here are Enrich Groton SoDak Inc. board members Topper Tastad, Lance Larsen, Kari Bartling, & April Abeln (not pictured are Karyn Babcock and Nancy Larsen), Chamber board members pictured are Carol Kutter, Katelyn Nehlich, Kellie Locke and Ashley Smith. Abeln is a Chamber board member as well.

(Photo Courtesy April Abeln)

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GHS Homcoming Candidates

Back row: Jacob Lewandowski, Andrew Marzahn, Caleb Hanten, Cole Simon, Kaleb Antonsen
Front Row: Gracie Traphagen, Brooke Gengerke, Shallyn Foertsch, Aspen Johnson, and Shaylee Peterson. (Courtesy Photo)

Homecoming Theme: Movies

Coronation: Monday, 7:30 p.m.

Jungle Day: Thursday.

Homecoming Parade: Friday, 1 p.m.

FFA Serving Meal at Homecoming Football Game beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Homecoming Game: 7 p.m., against Sisseton

Parade Marshalls: Merle and Janet Harder

Dress Up Days

Middle/High School

Monday Country Club or Country
Tuesday First Letter of your Name
Wednesday Dress Like Your Parent
Thursday Class Color (seniors-black, juniors-white, sophomores-grey, freshman-gold, 8th grade-purple, 7th grade-blue, 6th grade-red, staff-pink.
Friday Black & Gold

Elementary School

Monday Mix and Match/Mismatched Day
Tuesday Beach Day
Wednesday Dream Job Day
Thursday Pajama Day
Friday Spirit Day

Harders are Homecoming parade Marshals

by Dorene Nelson

Merle and Janet Harder have been chosen to be the 2022 homecoming parade marshals. These two civic-minded individuals have dedicated their lives to helping others, teaching children, and serving their communities in many vital ways.

"After we were married, we moved to my parents' farm where I was born and raised," Janet explained. "When a fire destroyed our home, we moved into Groton where we lived until moving to our current home on Enemy Swim Lake."

"I began working for the Groton School District in 1987," Merle stated. "I worked with Bill Lovell, eventually becoming the Buildings and Grounds supervisor, a position I held for twenty-six years."

"While living in the City of Groton, I served as a volunteer fireman for seventeen years," he added.

"I was also on the Groton City Council for fourteen years, thirteen of them as the council president."

"After graduating from Northern State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Music, I started my teaching career at Tulare," Janet said. "I taught there one year followed by another year at Roncalli."

"I taught the next twenty years for the Aberdeen Public School System," she explained, "followed by eighteen years in Groton."

"We sold our home in Groton and moved to Enemy Swim Lake where we still live," Merle said, "Janet decided she wasn't done teaching yet, so she worked the next seven years at Enemy Swim Day School."

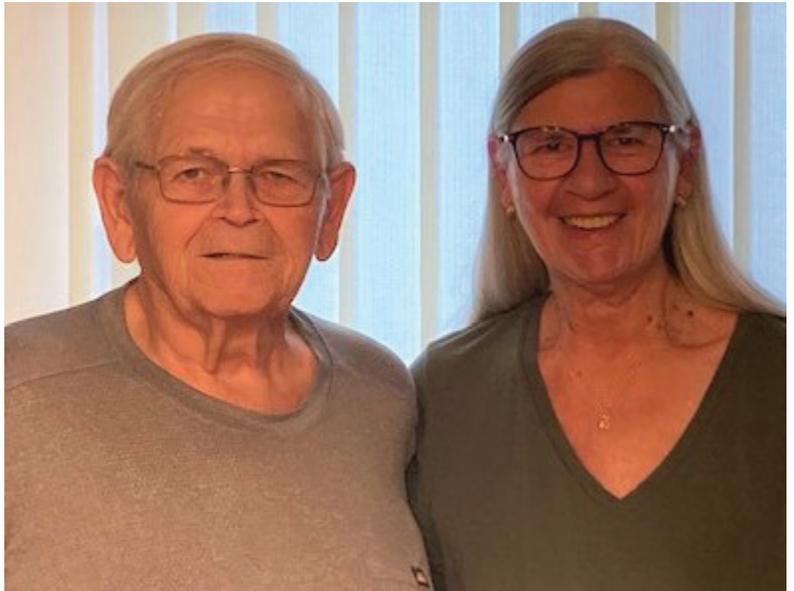
"That gave me a total of forty-seven years in the classroom, but I no longer taught music," she admitted. "I was the special education supervisor at Enemy Swim, working with approximately forty students every day."

"An interesting addition to this job was Merle's working as a substitute in special ed for two years!" Janet smiled. "They always needed subs there."

"Our work in Enemy Swim has been very rewarding as well as difficult at times," Janet said. "We worked very closely with these kids and became close to many of them! We tried to make a difference in their lives and believe that we were successful a majority of the time. I finally retired completely on June 1, 2022!"

"In addition to our various jobs in the classroom, we have both been members of the Groton School Board," Janet explained. "Merle and I were both on the school board in Groton for six years, but not at the same time!"

"We have four children, nine grandchildren, and one great grandchild," she listed. "Brian currently lives in Chicago, and Corey lives in Harrisburg. T.J., who is currently serving his second term on the Groton School Board, lives on my family farm. T.J. and Adam both do the farming."



Merle and Janet Harder

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Preschool Developmental Screening

Groton Area Schools #06-6

Preschool Developmental Screening is for children ages 3-4 who reside in the Groton Area School District. The child needs to be 3 years of age before the screening date/day. This screening is not required to enter Kindergarten.

The screening consists of adaptive, personal/social, communicating/speaking, motor, and concepts skills. If you believe your child has difficulties in any of these areas please contact the school.

If your child is already receiving services or enrolled at Groton Elementary School they will not need to be screened. If your child has already been screened but you have concerns please contact the elementary school. If you are new to the district and have a child under the age of 5, we also ask you to contact the elementary school.

Screenings will be held on Friday, September 30 8:00-3:30. Information will be sent to families who have already been identified. Please contact Heidi Krueger at 605-397-2317 to schedule a screening time.

Conde National League

Sept. 12 Team standings: Braves 3, Mets 3, Pirates 2, Giants 2, Tigers 1, Cubs 1

Men's High Games: Ryan Bethke 221, Chad Furney 169, Russ Bethke 168

Men's High Series: Ryan Bethke 522, Chad Furney 467, Russ Bethke 430

Women's High Games: Sam Bahr 171, Vickie Kramp 164, Joyce Walter 162

Women's High Series: Vickie Kramp 470, Joyce Walter 415, Michelle Walter 407

Groton Area Cross Country Results

Webster Area Invite - 9/12/22

JV Boys - 3K

18th - Gavin Kroll - 15:17

29th - Garrett Schultz - 17:15

35th - Nathan Unzen - 18:59

38th - Logan Clocksene - 22:18

39th - Kayson Oswald - 22:38

JV Girls - 3K

1st - Faith Traphagen - 14:12

6th - Ryelle Gilbert - 15:11

13th - Rylie Rose - 16:58

17th - Carlee Johnson - 17:31

*1st Place JV Girls Team

Varsity Boys - 5K

36th - Jacob Lewandowski - 21:36

48th - Jayden Schwan - 23:11

Britton-Hecla Invitational - 9/6/22

JV Boys - 3K

6th - Gavin Kroll - 12:56

17th - Garrett Schultz - 15:46

21st - Nathan Unzen - 16:19

23rd - Kayson Oswald - 16:39

27th - Logan Clocksene - 18:58

JV Girls - 3k

3rd - Ryelle Gilbert - 13:18

6th - Carlee Johnson - 14:39

Boys Varsity - 5K

16th - Jacob Lewandowski - 23:35

22nd - Jayden Schwan - 24:43

Redfield Invitational - 9/1/22

Varsity Boys - 5K

66th - Jacob Lewandowski - 21:51

JV Girls - 3K

12th - Ryelle Gilbert - 13:48

18th - Rylie Rose - 14:35

31st - Carlee Johnson - 15:26

JV Boys - 3K

5th - Tristin McGannon - 11:11

19th - Jayden Schwan - 12:19

39th - Gavin Kroll - 13:35

56th - Garrett Schultz - 14:46

64th - Nathan Unzen - 16:42

Middle School Boys - 2K

44th - Logan Clocksene - 11:18

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Hamlin Varsity Volleyball Tournament

Saturday September 17, 2022

Pool 1 - Hamlin, Sisseton, F/H, JVC

Pool 2 - Castlewood, Colman Egan, TZ, Groton

		EAST COURT	
		<u>Home</u>	<u>Away</u>
9:00am		Castlewood	Colman Egan
TBA		Groton	TZ
TBA		Castlewood	Groton
TBA		TZ	Colman Egan
TBA		Colman Egan	Groton
TBA		TZ	Castlewood
TBA		7th place (Pool A 4th vs Pool B 4th)	
TBA		3rd / 4th (Pool A 2nd vs Pool B 2nd)	

		WEST COURT	
		<u>Home</u>	<u>Away</u>
9:00am		Hamlin	Sisseton
TBA		JVC	F/H
TBA		Hamlin	JVC
TBA		F/H	Sisseton
TBA		Hamlin	F/H
TBA		Sisseton	JVC
TBA		5th / 6th (Pool A 3rd vs. Pool B 3rd)	
TBA		Championship Pool A 1st vs Pool B 1st	

Locker room assignments

Boys HS TZ, Colman Egan

Girls HS Hamlin, Groton

Boys JH JVC, Castlewood

Girls JH Sisseton, F/H

Format All matches are best of three to 25 points (No cap).
All necessary third games will be played to 25 points (No cap).

Warmups 20 minute warm-ups will be used prior to each team's first match.
5 minute warm-ups will be used for subsequent matches.
The Multipurpose Gym will be available for warm-up

Book Home team (1st team listed) will be responsible to keep the official book.
Each team will be required to provide a line judge for their matches

Tie Breakers

1. Match Record
2. Head to Head Record

Awards Medals will be awarded to the individuals on teams placing 1st, 2nd or 3rd.

Fee \$125 per team – Please mail or bring with you the day of the tournament.

Make checks payable to Hamlin School c/o Terri Gaikowski

Admissions - Adult \$5, Student \$3

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Groton Youth Football 3rd-4th Grade Jamboree September 17th, 2022

1 - Sisseton Red
2 - Oakes
3 - Sisseton Black
4 - Groton
5 - Clark
6 - Webster

Time	Game	Teams	Elementary Field	Varsity Field
9:00 AM	Game 1	1 vs. 6	East	North
	Game 2	3 vs. 4		North
9:45 AM	Game 3	2 vs. 5	East	North
	Game 4	4 vs. 6		North
10:30 AM	Game 5	6 vs. 2	East	North
	Game 6	3 vs. 5		North
11:15 PM	Game 7	3 vs. 6	East	North
	Game 8	1 vs. 5		North
12:00 PM	Game 9	4 vs. 2		North
12:45 PM	Game 10	4 vs. 5	East	North
	Game 11	1 vs. 2		

Groton Youth Football 5th-6th Grade Jamboree September 17th, 2022

1 - Sisseton
2 - Oakes
3 - Groton
4 - Clark

Time	Game	Teams	Varsity Field
9:00 AM	Game 1	1 vs. 3	South
9:45 AM	Game 2	2 vs. 4	South
10:30 AM	Game 3	3 vs. 4	South
11:15 PM	Game 4	1 vs. 2	South
12:00 PM	Game 5	1 vs. 4	South
12:45 PM	Game 6	2 vs. 3	South

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Fliehs places sixth at Redfield Golf Meet

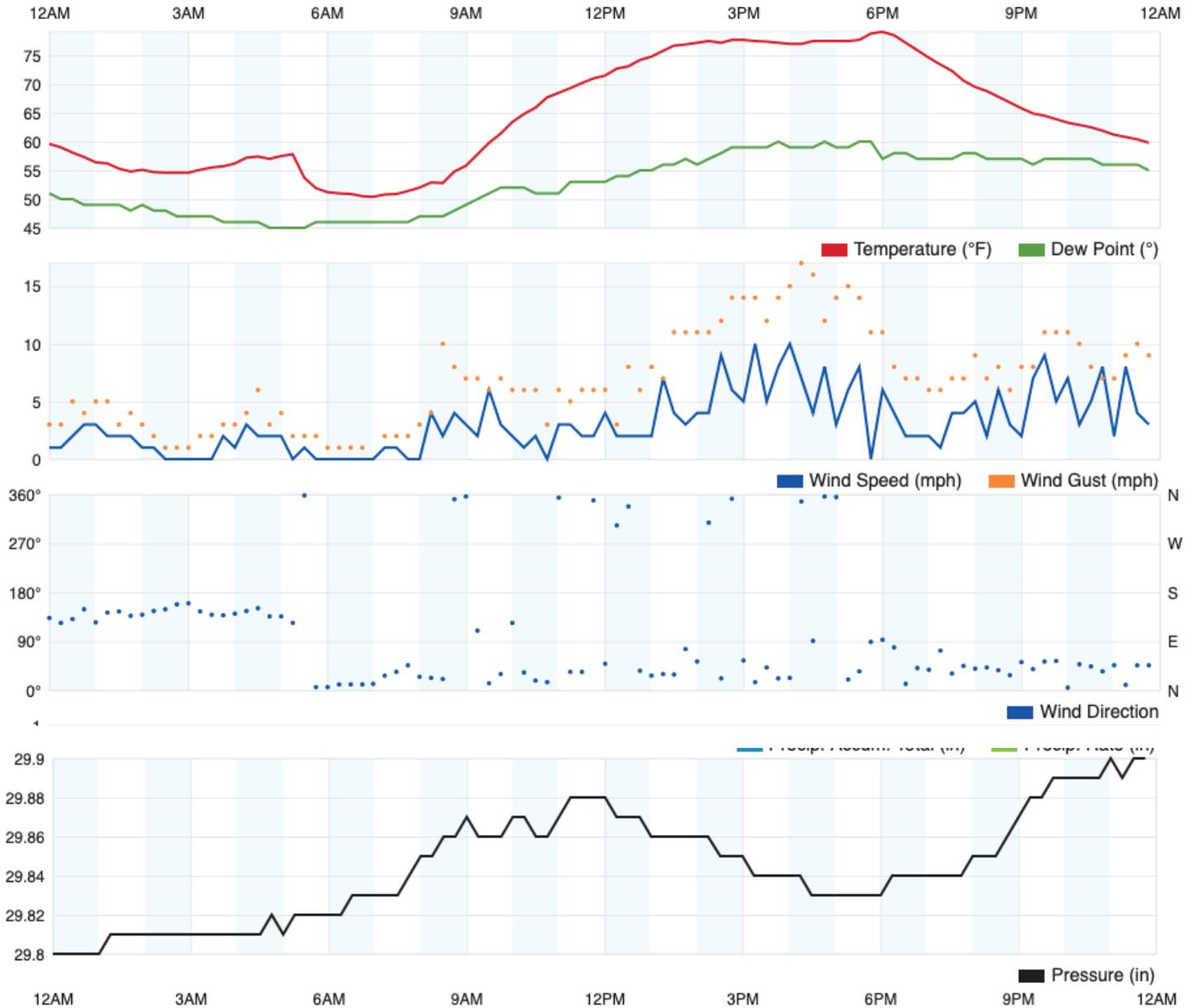
Brevin Fliehs placed sixth at the Redfield Invitational Golf Meet held Tuesday. He shot a 43 and a 44 for a total score of 87. Carter Simon placed 11th with scores of 44 and 45 and a total of 89. Cole Simon placed 12th with scores of 45 and 48 and a total score of 93. Logan Pearson was 22nd with scores of 49 and 51 and a total score of 100. Jace Johnson placed 23rd with scores of 48 and 52 and a total score of 100. Jayden Schwan placed 30th with scores of 52 and 57 for a total score of 109.

Aberdeen Roncalli won the team title with 328 points followed by Sioux Valley with 349, Groton Area was third with 369, Milbank followed with 393, Redfield with 401 and Sisseton with 443.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
				
Mostly Sunny	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Cloudy then Slight Chance Showers
High: 89 °F	Low: 66 °F	High: 83 °F	Low: 56 °F	High: 70 °F

Wednesday Sept 14th

Aberdeen, SD   



1 PM – 6 PM

7 PM – 3 AM



High to Very High Fire Danger Across Central SD

High temperatures in the mid 80s to low 90s.

30 mph southerly winds gusts.

25-35 percent relative humidity.

Safety considerations: Avoid burning, don't carelessly discard cigarettes, use caution with heavy equipment.

Thunderstorm Chances (30-50%)

Begins across central SD, moves northeast with time.

Strong wind gusts, brief heavy downpours and lightning are the main threats.

Safety considerations: Move inside if storms approach

Temperatures should climb into the mid 80s to low 90s today, which is 15 or more degrees above normal for mid-September. Increasing southerly winds and decreasing humidity will lead to elevated fire danger this afternoon, particularly across portions of central SD. Thunderstorm chances increase this evening, and there could be isolated strong to severe storms with strong winds being the main threat. Unsettled conditions continue on Thursday, with the best chance for additional showers and storms being across south central and northeastern SD and west central MN.

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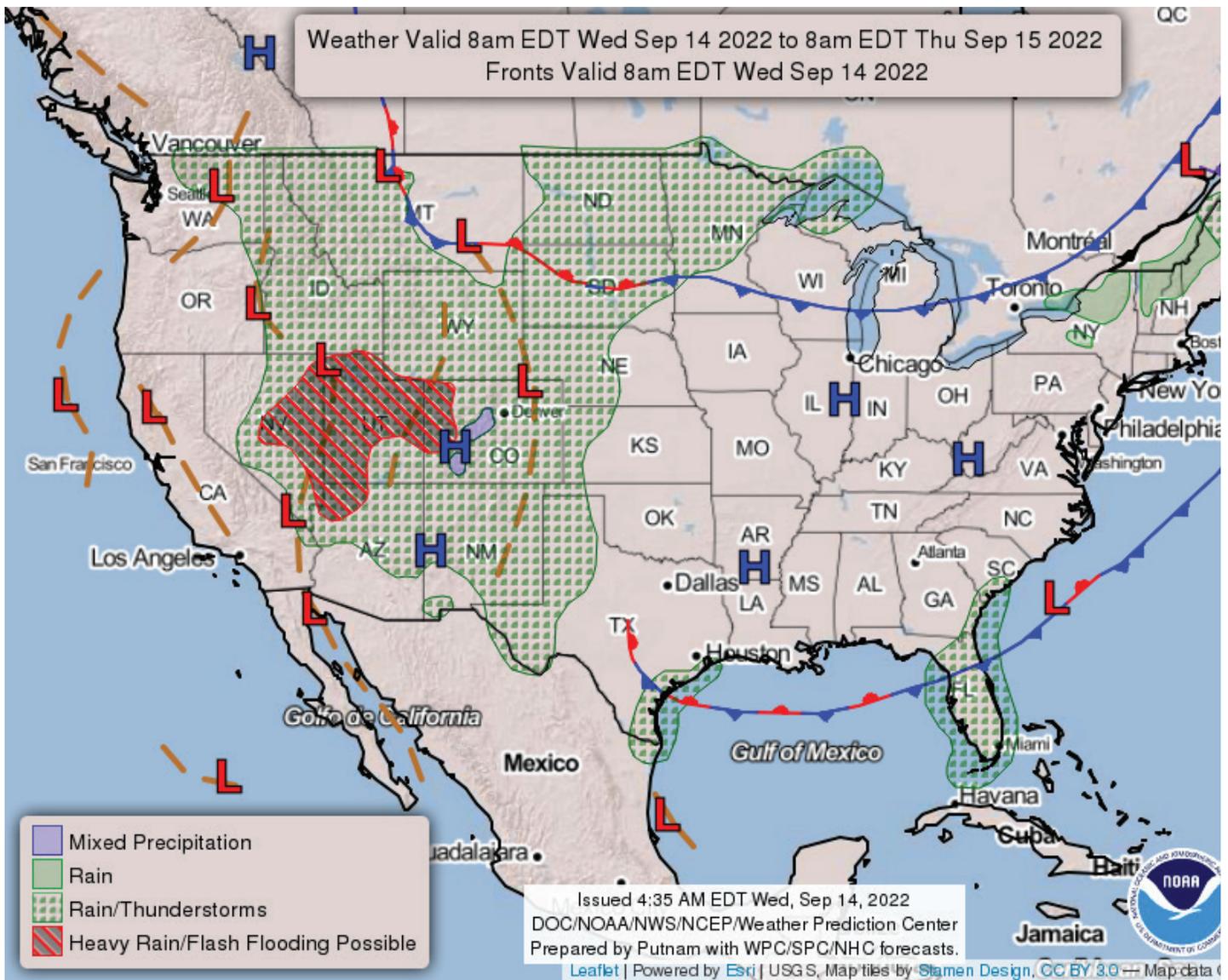
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 79 °F at 5:52 PM
Low Temp: 50 °F at 6:57 AM
Wind: 17 mph at 4:14 PM
Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 102 in 1948
Record Low: 28 in 1949
Average High: 76°F
Average Low: 48°F
Average Precip in Sept.: 0.95
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 17.29
Precip Year to Date: 15.96
Sunset Tonight: 7::47:10 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:09:46 AM

Day length: 12 hours, 38 minutes



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Today in Weather History

September 14, 1993: An early freeze and frost hit the state of South Dakota on the 14th and 15th. On the morning of the 14th, some low temperatures included 24 degrees at Rapid City, 19 degrees at Camp Crook and Porcupine, and 31 degrees at Pierre. The 24 degrees low at Rapid City broke the old record for the date by 10 degrees and was the earliest in the season it has ever been that cold. The air mass had moderated some by the time it hit eastern South Dakota early on the 15th. Some low temperatures on the 15th included 28 degrees at Brookings, 30 degrees at Watertown, and 32 at Sioux Falls.

1928: A violent, estimated F4 tornado, with winds of 200 mph, tore across Rockford, Illinois. The tornado first touched down 8 miles south-southwest of Rockford and moved across the southeast part of the city. The tornado was on the ground for 25 miles with a width varying from 200 to 500 feet. A total of 14 people were killed, with around 100 injuries reported in Rockford alone. Two hundred buildings were damaged or destroyed.

1937 - The mercury soared to 92 degrees at Seattle, WA, a record for September. (The Weather Channel)

1944 - A very destructive hurricane swept across Cape Hatteras and Chesapeake Bay, side swiped New Jersey and Long Island, and crossed southeastern Massachusetts. The hurricane killed more than four hundred persons, mainly at sea. The hurricane destroyed the Atlantic City NJ boardwalk. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1970 - The temperature at Fremont, OR, dipped to 2 above zero to equal the state record for September set on the 24th in 1926. (The Weather Channel)

1977: Severe thunderstorms produced several tornadoes in eastern Arkansas, killing one.

1987 - Barrow, AK, received 5.1 inches of snow, a record for September. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1987 - Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced severe weather from Minnesota to Texas. Thunderstorms in Iowa produced baseball size hail at Laporte City, and 80 mph winds at Laurens. Hail caused more than ten million dollars damage to crops in Iowa. Thunderstorms in Missouri produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Missouri City and Kansas City. A thunderstorm in Texas deluged the town of Fairlie with two inches of rain in just two hours. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Hurricane Gilbert made the first of its two landfalls on Mexico, producing 170 mph winds at Cozumel. (The Weather Channel)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather over the Texas panhandle during the evening hours. One thunderstorm spawned a strong (F-2) tornado in the southwest part of Amarillo, and deluged the area with five inches of rain. The heavy rain left roads under as much as five feet of water, and left Lawrence Lake a mile out of its banks. Hurricane Gilbert lost some of its punch crossing the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico. Its maximum winds diminished to 120 mph. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Unseasonably cool weather prevailed across the south central U.S. Eight cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Raton NM with a reading of 30 degrees. The afternoon high of 59 degrees at Topeka KS marked their third straight record cool maximum temperature. Unseasonably warm weather continued in the Pacific Northwest. Seattle WA reported a record eight days in a row of 80 degree weather in September. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2005: Hurricane Ophelia caused some damage and beach erosion along the United States coastline from Florida to North Carolina. The closest approach occurred on September 14 and 15 with its western eyewall crossing land and the eye remaining just offshore in the Carolinas. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the NWS Office in Charleston, South Carolina.

2008: Hurricane Ike became extratropical on this day. The St. Louis Metropolitan Area experienced hurricane conditions, with Ike's remnants inflicting severe damage to homes. Several areas in Illinois and Indiana, already flooded by the frontal boundary to the north, saw significant additional rainfall. Due to flooding in Chicago, a state of emergency was declared for Cook County due to flooding of the Des Plaines River. Hurricane-force wind gusts were reported to the east of the center across parts of Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania with significant wind damage including structural damage to buildings and trees.

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

A SURE SIGN OF WISDOM

"Dr. Guido," she said rather timidly, "how do you see yourself? All of the teachers we have are different. But tell us, what makes you different from all of the others?"

My first thought was to explain how my world view differed from most other professors because of my faith in Christ. That would have been a safe, standard answer. But I wanted to say something that made the way I taught distinct from other professors. As I reflected on the importance of her question, I realized how critical my answer would be.

After a few moments, God brought a word to my mind that I had never associated with teaching before. I looked at the young lady and said, "I see my role as being similar to the role of a midwife. I believe that it is my responsibility to bring in to your life, and the lives of others, what God has planted or will plant within you. My role is to work with God to bring what He plants in your head and heart to life, and to prepare you for the life He has for you."

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and the one who is wise saves lives," wrote Solomon. What we do in our relationships with others is a matter of life and death. We are responsible, with the opportunities and guidance that God gives us, to bring others into a saving relationship with Him. We are to use whatever gifts, talents, skills, influence or position God has given us to bring His message of "life" to others.

A "tree of life" will grow in the life of one who has been redeemed by Christ. And, that "tree" will also bear fruit and bring "the tree of life" to others by its fruit. By this we will be known.

Prayer: Lord, we plant "seeds" continually by what we do and what we say. May we constantly plant Your "seeds," bring "life" and "near fruit" wherever we go. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and the one who is wise saves lives. Proverbs 11:30



We all need the encouragement, comfort, and peace that comes through God's grace. Our daily devotionals, known as Seeds of Hope, have been a means through which thousands of people have experienced this grace. Each devotional comes from God's Word and we pray this good "seed" finds good soil in your heart. Our aim is that the Seeds of Hope will be a great source of daily encouragement to you and that God will use them to draw you near to Him

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2022-23 Community Events

- 07/21/2022: Pro Am Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/22/2022: Ferney Open Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start
07/24/2022: Moonlight Swim at the Swimming Pool 9-11pm for 9th grade to age 20
07/27/2022: Golf Fundraiser Lunch at Olive Grove Golf Course 11a-1pm
08/05/2022: Wine on Nine at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm
08/12/2022: GHS Basketball Golf Tournament
No Date Set: Groton Firemen Summer Splash Day 4-5pm GHS Parking Lot
09/10/2022: Lions Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
09/11/2022: 6th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3-5pm
09/11/2022: Couples Sunflower Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10 a.m.
09/02-04: Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
10/01/2022: Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
10/07/2022: Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
10/31/2022: Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)
10/31/2022: United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
11/12/2022: Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
11/24/2022 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)
12/03/2022 Tour of Homes & Holiday Party at Olive Grove Golf Course
12/10/2022: Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-12pm
01/29/2023 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am-1pm, Community Center
01/29/2023 85th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
04/01/2023 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)
04/22/2023 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
04/23/2023 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)
05/06/2023 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
05/29/2023 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
07/04/2023 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration, 10am Start (4th of July)
07/09/2023 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
09/09/2023 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
10/31/2023 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)
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The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

- Black & White \$48.99/year
- Colored \$79.88/year
- Colored \$42.60/6 months
- E-Weekly* \$31.95/year

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State, Zip Code _____

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The following will be used for your log-in information.

E-mail _____

Password _____

Pay with Paypal. Type the following into your browser window:

paypal.me/paperpaul



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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 Tuesday:

Mega Millions

14-25-38-59-64, Mega Ball: 21, Megaplier: 4

(fourteen, twenty-five, thirty-eight, fifty-nine, sixty-four; Mega Ball: twenty-one; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$256,000,000

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: 206,000,000

Tuesday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Arlington def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-6, 25-11, 25-14

Brandon Valley def. Brookings, 25-18, 23-25, 25-15

Edgemont def. Hemingford, Neb., 25-14, 23-25, 25-15, 25-15

Freeman def. Bridgewater-Emery, 25-19, 29-27, 25-9

Howard def. Menno, 25-17, 15-25, 25-14, 25-23

Huron def. Yankton, 25-22, 25-18, 16-25, 25-21

Jones County def. White River, 25-16, 25-15, 25-19

Madison def. Ethan, 25-19, 25-22, 25-18

Milbank def. Waubay/Summit, 25-16, 25-11, 25-11

Miller def. Northwestern, 25-12, 24-26, 25-16, 25-15

Mobridge-Pollock def. Timber Lake, 25-14, 25-15, 25-18

Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Redfield, 25-19, 25-17, 25-21

North Central Co-Op def. Langford, 23-25, 20-25, 25-20, 25-19, 15-13

Potter County def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-22, 25-21, 25-17

Rapid City Central def. Douglas, 23-25, 27-25, 25-23, 25-14

Scotland def. Andes Central/Dakota Christian, 30-28, 25-10, 22-25, 25-19

Sioux Falls Christian def. Vermillion, 25-16, 25-14, 25-15

Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Watertown, 25-18, 25-15, 25-21

Tea Area def. Parker, 25-20, 25-15, 25-9

Tripp-Delmont/Armour def. Bon Homme, 15-25, 26-24, 25-14, 25-15

Warner def. Ipswich, 25-14, 25-15, 25-13

Wessington Springs def. Sanborn Central/Woonsocket, 21-25, 25-11, 25-15, 25-13

Irene-Wakonda Invite=

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Lennox, 19-25, 25-16, 19-25, 25-21, 15-11

Rapid City Christian Tournament=

Rapid City Christian def. Philip, 25-17, 25-13, 25-14

Some high school volleyball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

Tennessee staff fret as contentious charter school denied

By KIMBERLEE KRUESI and JONATHAN MATTISE Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — When local school officials voted down a Tennessee charter school linked to Hillsdale College this summer, staffers at the state commission that would soon have to decide whether to let the controversial school open anyway reacted with shock at how things unfolded.

The text messages they exchanged, obtained through a records request by The Associated Press, showed the close attention state staffers paid to the school board's resounding rejection in the wake of Hillsdale President Larry Arnn's disparaging comments about teachers. When no one showed up to make the case for the Hillsdale-affiliated charter school application, the alarm among those who would be left holding the bag was palpable.

"What!!!! They invited both schools to speak and (they) did not show!!!!" texted Beth Figueroa, the commission's director of authorizing.

"WHAT," replied Chase Ingle, commission spokesperson.

"I'm speechless!!!" Figueroa wrote.

Critics ranging from some Democratic lawmakers to educators have argued the Tennessee Charter School Commission was designed to rubberstamp charters that local communities don't want, with several members tied to pro-charter groups. The nine members are handpicked by Republican Gov. Bill Lee — a vocal charter schools supporter and proponent of Hillsdale College's charter initiative — and confirmed by lawmakers in the GOP-supermajority General Assembly. The staffers work for the commission.

Hillsdale, a small conservative college in Michigan, holds outsized influence with Republican politicians. Arnn had recently spearheaded the "1776 Curriculum," inspired by former President Donald Trump's short-lived "1776 Commission," as a direct response to The New York Times' "1619 Project" focusing on America's history of slavery. Curriculum materials glorify the founders, downplay America's role in slavery and condemn the rise of progressive politics.

Its prominence has strengthened among conservatives amid the national debate over the role schools should play in teaching race and sexuality. South Dakota, for one, turned to a former Hillsdale politics professor to write proposed social studies standards for its public schools. They align with the "1776 Curriculum."

Tennessee's state commission will be put to the test this week during public hearings— run by commission staffers — as board members consider whether to approve applications from three Hillsdale-affiliated charter schools appealing their rejections by local school boards.

The texts were among hundreds of documents the commission provided after the AP requested all conversations relating to Hillsdale College and their charter school affiliates. Most of the records showed commission staffers helping applicants navigate the appeals process, telling them what information was needed and offering appeals training.

But the documents also included texts as staffers watched the fallout of Arnn's disparaging remarks on teachers as local school boards in Rutherford, Jackson-Madison and Clarksville-Montgomery school board denied the Hillsdale-affiliated applications.

"Are we having fun yet?" texted Tess Stovall, commission executive director, on Aug. 10 after sending a link to a news article on the panel's independence being tested. "I like my quotes."

During the Rutherford County school board meeting on July 18, Ingle and Figueroa texted while watching the livestream. When no one showed from the Hillsdale-affiliated school to defend their application, both expressed alarm. Board members voted 6-1 to reject the charter.

Ingle wrote, "Beth, that's a tough look."

"This does not help us," Ingle continued. He said the Rutherford school board member who voted against rejecting Hillsdale calls him "once a quarter."

The text messages drew further skepticism about the commission from Jim Wrye, a representative of Tennessee's largest organization representing educators.

"The administration sold the state charter commission to the General Assembly as a neutral appellate body," Wrye, Tennessee Education Association government relations director, told the AP. "We believed

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the goal was to undermine local control and drop charter schools on communities that do not want them. That belief is only growing.”

In 2010, Hillsdale began establishing charter schools nationwide. Hillsdale maintains it does not operate or manage them, but instead offers support by licensing their curriculum for free and providing training and other resources to so-called member schools.

Tennessee’s state commission could overrule local decision-makers on Hillsdale-affiliated schools. Or, the panel could spike them after Arnn’s comments, including a declaration that educators are “trained in the dumbest parts of the dumbest colleges in the country.” The governor, who was on stage with Arnn during some of his remarks, has refused to condemn his words.

Asked about the texts, the commission said staffers regularly monitor local school board meetings to stay “fully prepared” for potential appeals.

“(At) the time of these text messages, commission staff was anticipating 16 new start appeals. Of those 16 possible appeals, we are currently handling 13 public charter school appeals, an unprecedented number in Tennessee since the state started hearing appeals in 2002,” Ingle said via email, noting the commission only had three appeals last year, its first year operating.

Any charter school approved at the local level spares the commission from the time and effort required for additional appeals, Ingle said.

Democratic Senate Majority Leader Jeff Yarbro questioned the commission’s logic, saying, “Hillsdale’s poor showing only makes the commission’s job harder if their mandate is to greenlight new schools.”

“The commission shouldn’t have a rooting interest in the charter schools under review,” Yarbro told the AP. “Here, the danger is a commission and staff focused on opening more charters rather than ensuring a fair and independent process.”

Tennessee’s Charter School Commission was formed in 2019. Rep. Mark White, the Republican who sponsored the legislation backed by Gov. Lee, said at the time the proposal would move the charter school appeals process from the state education board — which has a wide variety of oversight responsibilities — to a new charter-focused panel.

White, who joined in widespread outcry against Arnn’s comments, told the AP he still believes the state commission is the best option for vetting and ensuring Tennessee has quality charter schools. He said the text messages show staffers carefully watch the proceedings because it would affect their workload.

“I know where they’re coming from, and I know they’re solid,” he said.

—
This story has been updated to correct the spelling of Tess Stovall’s last name.

Ten injured in partial barn collapse in South Dakota

SUMMIT, S.D. (AP) — Officials in northeastern South Dakota are investigating the partial collapse of a barn that injured ten workers.

Grant County Emergency Management says the barn at Blooming Valley Dairy near Summit was under construction when the rafters gave way about 5:30 p.m. Monday.

Ten workers were injured and taken by ambulance for medical care in Watertown, Milbank, Webster and Ortonville. Their conditions were not released.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol was among agencies responding to the accident.

New PGA Tour season starts in California, LIV to Chicago

By The Associated Press undefined

PGA TOUR

FORTINET CHAMPIONSHIP

Site: Napa, California.

Course: Silverado Resort & Spa (North). Yardage: 7,123. Par: 72.

Prize money: \$8 million. Winner’s share: \$1.44 million.

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Television: Thursday-Sunday, 6-9 p.m. (Golf Channel).

Defending champion: Max Homa.

FedEx Cup champion: Rory McIlroy.

Last tournament: Rory McIlroy won the Tour Championship.

Notes: This starts a new PGA Tour season, and it will be the last year for a wraparound season that begins in September. The 2024 season will start in January. ... Max Homa won the first of his two PGA Tour titles last season at Silverado. ... Hideki Matsuyama is the only player from the top 20 in the world playing the PGA Tour opener. ... Matsuyama is among five players in the field who will play at the Presidents Cup next week. Other International team members are Corey Connors, Cameron Davis and Taylor Pendrith. Max Homa is on the U.S. team. ... Jimmy Walker, who won the tournament in 2013, returns to competition for the first time since the Texas Open in early April. Because of 16 players joining LIV Golf and resigning or being suspended, he moved to No. 50 in career money and used his one-time exemption. ... Rickie Fowler is in the field. He starts the season after changing his swing coach and caddie.

Next week: Presidents Cup.

Online: <https://www.pgatour.com/>

LIV GOLF

LIV GOLF INVITATIONAL-CHICAGO

Site: Sugar Grove, Illinois.

Course: Rich Harvest Farms. Yardage: 7,355. Par: 70.

Prize money: \$25 million. Winner's share: \$4 million (individual), \$3 million (team).

Television: LIVGolf.com.

Points leader: Dustin Johnson.

Money leader: Dustin Johnson.

Last tournament: Dustin Johnson won a playoff at LIV Golf Invitational-Boston.

Notes: This is the fifth of seven LIV Golf Invitational events that feature an individual and a team winner. It's also the fourth consecutive tournament in the U.S. ... Dustin Johnson and Talor Gooch are the only players to finish in the top 10 against the 48-man field in every LIV event. ... Gooch and Patrick Reed were the only LIV Golf players to finish among the top 10 at the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth. ... Sergio Garcia withdrew after an opening round of 76 at Wentworth. He was coming off a pair of top 10s in the previous two LIV Golf events. ... Scott Vincent would be the defending champion this week on the Japan Golf Tour. ... The next two LIV Golf events will be held in Thailand and Saudi Arabia before the team finale outside Miami. ... Phil Mickelson is 50th on the LIV golf money list (individual and team combined) out of 68 players who have competed in at least one event. ... Rich Harvest Farms hosted the 2009 Solheim Cup.

Next tournament: LIV Golf Invitational-Bangkok on Oct. 7-9.

Online: <https://www.livgolf.com/>

LPGA TOUR

AMAZINGCRE PORTLAND CLASSIC

Site: Portland, Oregon.

Course: Columbia Edgewater CC. Yardage: 6,478. Par: 72.

Prize money: \$1.5 million. Winner's share: \$225,000.

Television: Thursday-Sunday, 3-6 p.m. (Golf Channel).

Defending champion: Jin Young Ko.

Race to CME Globe leader: Minjee Lee.

Last week: Ally Ewing won the Kroger Queen City Championship.

Notes: The tournament returns to Columbia Edgewater after being held last year at Oregon Golf Club. ... Ally Ewing was the 20th player to win on the LPGA Tour this year in 24 tournaments, including the team

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tournament in Michigan. ... Jennifer Kupcho leads the LPGA Tour with three victories this year. Brooke Henderson and Minjee Lee are the other players with multiple wins. ... Eight players are first-time winners on the LPGA Tour this year. A year ago, there were six first-time winners. ... Players from 12 countries have won on the LPGA this year. The Americans lead with six wins. ... Nelly Korda, who missed four months earlier this year with a blood clot, and Lexi Thompson are the only players from the top 10 in the world who have not won on the LPGA this year. Thompson is not playing this week after missing the cut in Cincinnati. ... Lucy Li, who already has her card for next year through the Epson Tour, is playing on a sponsor exemption.

Next week: Walmart NW Arkansas Open.

Online: <https://www.lpga.com/>

EUROPEAN TOUR

DS AUTOMOBILES ITALIAN OPEN

Site: Rome.

Course: Marco Simone GC. Yardage: 7,268. Par: 71.

Prize money: 3 million euros. Winner's share: 500,000 euros.

Television: Thursday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (Golf Channel); Saturday-Sunday, 7:30 a.m. to noon (Golf Channel).

Defending champion: Nicolai Hojgaard.

DP World Tour points leader: Rory McIlroy.

Last week: Shane Lowry won the BMW PGA Championship.

Notes: The Italian Open has attracted a strong field at Marco Simone as a preview for the Ryder Cup matches next year. ... Rory McIlroy is playing for the first time as part of a European stretch of playing three out of four weeks. ... McIlroy won the Tour Championship and was runner-up in the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth in consecutive starts. ... Ryder Cup captain Luke Donald is in the field. ... Former British Open champion Francesco Molinari won his national open twice. ... McIlroy leads the DP World Tour points list over Will Zalatoris, who is out the rest of the season with a back injury. ... U.S. Open champion Matt Fitzpatrick is playing, along with his young brother, Alex, who turned pro this year. ... One of the sponsor exemptions was given to Clancy Waugh, who has been playing on the Sunshine Tour. He is the son of PGA of America CEO Seth Waugh. ... The tournament dates to 1925.

Next week: Cazoo French Open.

Online: <https://www.europeantour.com/dpworld-tour/>

PGA TOUR CHAMPIONS

SANFORD INTERNATIONAL

Site: Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Course: Minnehaha CC. Yardage: 6,729. Par: 70.

Prize money: \$2 million. Winner's share: \$300,000.

Television: Friday-Sunday, 9:30-11:30 p.m. (Golf Channel-tape delay).

Defending champion: Darren Clarke.

Charles Schwab Cup leader: Steven Alker.

Last week: Pdraig Harrington won the Ascension Charity Classic.

Notes: Pdraig Harrington has won two of his last three starts on the PGA Tour Champions. He can move atop the Charles Schwab Cup standings if he were to win this week. ... Harrington joined Steven Alker, Miguel Angel Jimenez and Jerry Kelly as three-time winners this year. They are the top four in the Schwab Cup. ... Justin Leonard made his PGA Tour Champions debut last week with a tie for 19th. Leonard is not in the field this week. ... Davis Love III is in the field a week before he is captain of the U.S. team for the Presidents Cup. ... Steve Flesch has been runner-up in the Sanford International each of the last two years, losing in a three-man playoff last year. ... Mario Tiziani, the brother-in-law of Steve Stricker, is playing on

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a sponsor exemption. ... David Duval has yet to finish in the top 30 on the PGA Tour Champions this year.
Next week: Pure Insurance Championship.
Online: <https://www.pgatour.com/champions.html>

OTHER TOURS

Epson Tour: Guardian Championship, Capitol Hill GC, Prattville, Alabama. Previous winner: Janie Jackson.
Online: <https://www.epsontour.com/>

Japan Golf Tour: ANA Open, Sapporo GC (Wattsu), Hokkaido, Japan. Defending champion: Scott Vincent.
Online: <https://www.jgto.org/en/>

USGA: U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship, Erin Hills GC, Erin, Wisconsin. Defending champion: Stewart Hagestad. Online: <https://www.usga.org/>

Challenge Tour: Portugal Open at Royal Obidos, Royal Obidos Spa & Golf Resort, Vau Obidos, Portugal. Defending champion: Marcel Schneider. Online: <https://www.europeantour.com/challenge-tour/>

Ladies European Tour: Lacoste Ladies Open de France, Golf Barriere, Deauville, France. Defending champion: Celine Boutier. Online: <https://ladieseuropeantour.com/>

PGA Tour Canada: Fortinet Cup Championship, Deer Ridge GC, Kitchener, Ontario. Defending champion: Patrick Fishburn. Online: <https://www.pgatour.com/canada/en>

PGA of America: PGA Cup, Foxhills Club & Resort, Surrey, England. Defending champion: United States. Online: <https://www.pga.com/>

Sunshine Tour: Vodacom Origins of Golf, San Lameer CC, Southbroom, South Africa. Last series winner: Anthony Michael. Online: <https://sunshinetour.com/>

Japan LPGA: Sumitomo Life Vitality Ladies Tokai Classic, Shin Minami Aichi CC, (Mihama), Aichi, Japan. Defending champion: Yuna Nishimura. Online: <https://www.lpga.or.jp/en/>

Korea LPGA: KB Financial Group Star Championship, Blackstone Icheon, Icheon, South Korea. Defending champion: Ha Na Jang. Online: <https://klpga.co.kr/>

More AP golf: <https://apnews.com/hub/golf> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Ukraine's Zelenskyy visits recently retaken, devastated city

By ELENA BECATOROS and HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

IZIUM, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited the recently retaken city of Iziium on Wednesday, greeting soldiers and thanking them for their efforts in retaking the area, as the Ukrainian flag was raised in front of the burned-out city hall building.

Russian forces left the war-scarred city last week as Ukraine pressed forward in a sweeping counteroffensive that has reclaimed vast swaths of territory in the country's northeastern Kharkiv region in a matter of days.

Much of Iziium has been devastated. Apartment buildings are blackened by fire and pockmarked by artillery strikes. The entire center of one residential building had collapsed, a gaping hole and piles of rubble where homes used to be.

"The view is very shocking but it is not shocking for me," Zelenskyy said in brief comments to the press, "because we began to see the same pictures from Bucha, from the first de-occupied territories ... so the same destroyed buildings, killed people."

Bucha is a neighborhood near Kyiv where the bodies of civilians, many of them bearing signs of torture, were found dumped in the streets, in mass graves and in yards after Russian forces withdrew hastily in March.

On the northern outskirts of Iziium, the remains of Russian tanks and vehicles lie shattered along the road. "Our soldiers are here. That's a very important thing. It supports people," Zelenskyy said. "I see how people meet them, in what a sensitive moment. It means that with our army, the life comes back."

Ukrainian troops have recently carried out a dramatic counteroffensive that has allowed them to recap-

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ture large swaths of territory around Kharkiv and inflict a stunning blow on Moscow's military prestige.

Following those gains, a new front line has started to emerge in the war, a Washington-based think tank said Wednesday.

The Institute for the Study of War said the Oskil River appeared to be becoming the new front line in the area after Kyiv's significant gains in recent days.

The Oskil River flows south and largely represents the eastern edge of Ukraine's Kharkiv region.

"Ukrainian forces are continuing localized ground assaults to threaten Russian positions behind the Oskil River," the institute said.

"Russian troops are unlikely to be strong enough to prevent further Ukrainian advances along the entire Oskil River because they do not appear to be receiving reinforcements, and Ukrainian troops will likely be able to exploit this weakness to resume the counter-offensive across the Oskil if they choose," it added.

The counter-offensive has also left more weapons in Ukrainian hands.

Russian forces likely left behind dozens of tanks, armored personnel carriers and other heavy weaponry as they fled Ukraine's advance in the east of the country, a Ukrainian think tank said Wednesday.

The Center for Defense Strategies said one single Russian unit that was around Iziurm left behind 39 T-80 tanks and 35 infantry fighting vehicles, known by the acronym BMP. Another unit left behind 47 tanks and 27 armored vehicles.

The center said Russian forces tried to destroy some of the abandoned vehicles through artillery strikes as they fell back. Typically, armed forces destroy equipment left behind so their opponent can't use it.

However, the chaos of the Russian withdrawal apparently saw them leave untouched ammunition and weapons behind.

In other areas, Russia has continued its attacks over the past day, causing the death toll to keep rising in the war that has now dragged on for more than seven months.

Russian shelling of seven Ukrainian regions over the past 24 hours killed at least seven civilians and wounded 22 more, Ukraine's presidential office reported on Wednesday morning.

Two people were killed and three injured after Russia attacked Mykolaiv with S-300 missiles overnight, said regional Gov. Vitaliy Kim. An educational institution, infrastructure objects and residential buildings were damaged. Settlements near the frontline in Mykolaiv region remain under constant fire.

The Nikopol area, which is across the Dnieper River from the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, was shelled three times during the night, but no injuries were immediately reported, said regional Gov. Valentyn Reznichenko. Nikopol city itself was shelled two times and left almost 3,000 families without electricity. Reznichenko said the electricity has been partially restored.

In the Kharkiv region, where Ukrainian forces have retaken more than 300 cities and villages, the process of demining is underway; three people have been injured over the past 24 hours.

In the neighbouring Luhansk region, where some of the Russian troops retreated from the Kharkiv region, mobile internet has been shut down, according to the region's governor Serhiy Haidai, and intense shelling of Ukrainian forces continues.

The fighting continued in the Donetsk region as well. Avdiivka, Bakhmut and Kramatorsk have come under a barrage of shelling, which killed five civilians and wounded 16 more.

"Every night in Donbas is restless. The civilians should leave the region. It's a matter of life and death," Donetsk governor Pavlo Kyrylenko said.

Jon Gambrell in Kyiv contributed.

Kenya's new president promises ambitious climate plan

By WANJOHI KABUKURU Associated Press

MOMBASA, Kenya (AP) — Kenya's newly elected president William Ruto said that climate change will be key to the government's agenda and made an ambitious pledge to ramp up clean energy and phase out fossil fuels for electricity by 2030.

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"In our country, women and men, young people, farmers, workers, and local communities suffer the consequences of climate emergency," said President Ruto at his inauguration speech on Tuesday at Nairobi's Moi International Sports Complex.

"We must act urgently to keep global heating levels below 1.5 Celsius, help those in need and end addiction to fossil fuels," he added, echoing calls by the United Nations Secretary-General to cut the world's reliance on coal, oil and gas.

Taking cues from the country's revised commitments on climate change submitted to the U.N., known as nationally determined contributions, President Ruto promised the country will have a full and just transition to electricity exclusively produced by solar, wind and geothermal energy by 2030 that will ensure all communities benefit from the move.

"Kenya is on a transition to clean energy that will support jobs, local economies, and the sustainable industrialization," Ruto said. "We call on all African states to join us in this journey. Africa can lead the world. We have immense potential for renewable energy. Reducing costs of renewal energy technologies make this the most viable energy source."

The move, although welcome, might have too tight of a deadline given that the current devastating drought in Africa severely undermines hydropower, according to Evans Mukolwe, Kenya's former Meteorological Department head. He added that unless deliberate efforts are made to increase geothermal and solar power, the President's new goal may be difficult to achieve.

Ruto, who won the August presidential elections, was sworn in as Kenya's fifth President on Tuesday. He succeeds President Uhuru Kenyatta who stepped down after serving the constitutional two-term limit.

President Ruto will also take over Kenyatta's position as chair of the Committee of African Heads of State on Climate Change, which is the continent's highest decision-making body on climate issues.

During the forthcoming U.N. climate conference in Sharm el Sheikh in Egypt this November, Ruto said he will lead the continent in negotiating the delivery of finance and technology to the continent to support nations dealing with the effects of climate change.

Associated Press climate and environmental coverage receives support from several private foundations. See more about AP's climate initiative here. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Live updates: Horses get special training for procession

By The Associated Press undefined

LONDON — Horses, troops and military bands performed a full dress rehearsal before daybreak for the procession that will take Queen Elizabeth II's coffin from Buckingham Palace to Parliament's Westminster Hall.

Officials say the horses taking part have undergone special training for the Wednesday afternoon event, including how to handle mourners and flowers and flags being thrown toward the procession.

"They get exposure to loud noises, crowds, flags, flowers, people sobbing, even to the point of banging lots of drums and making aggressive noises," said Sergeant Tom Jenks, who will be leading the gun carriage that carries the queen's coffin.

Among the horses is Cassius, an 18-year-old horse who participated in former U.K. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's funeral in 2013.

The procession on Wednesday afternoon will feature King Charles III and other royals walking behind the queen's coffin to Westminster Hall in Parliament. The queen's coffin will lie in state for four days for people to pay their respects.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS:

- Thousands come for last glimpse of queen
- London diaspora district remembers a queen — ambivalently
- What to know about the queen's lying in state

- Renewed interest in UK memorabilia in Hong Kong
- A piece of the queen: New souvenirs mark monarch's death
- Anger over past, indifference meets queen's death in India
- Former British colonies are conflicted over Queen Elizabeth II's legacy
- Find more AP coverage here: <https://apnews.com/hub/queen-elizabeth-ii>

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

LONDON — Crowds are gathering in London as the city prepares for a somber procession taking Queen Elizabeth II's coffin from Buckingham Palace to the Houses of Parliament.

There, the late monarch will lie in state for four days before her funeral next Monday.

Huge crowds are expected for Wednesday's somber afternoon procession, and long lines are also predicted to view the coffin at Parliament's Westminster Hall.

People are standing behind metal barriers or sitting on folding chairs. Under gray skies hours before the coffin was scheduled to leave the monarch's official London residence, they have umbrellas at the ready and takeout coffees in hand.

The coffin will be taken on a horse-drawn gun carriage past the crowds of mourners, with the queen's son and heir King Charles III and other royals walking behind.

The queen died in Scotland last Thursday at age 96, ending a 70-year reign.

Crowds have lined the route of the queen's coffin whenever it has been moved on its journey from Scotland back to London.

Crowds gather in London to see queen's coffin procession

By MIKE CORDER and DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Queen Elizabeth II's coffin will leave Buckingham Palace for the last time Wednesday as it is taken amid somber pageantry on a horse-drawn gun carriage past crowds of mourners to the Houses of Parliament, where the late monarch will lie in state for four days.

Crowds began massing early along the flag-lined road outside the palace for the procession from the monarch's official London residence to the historic Westminster Hall at Parliament. King Charles III and other members of the royal family will walk behind the coffin.

Thousands of people are gathering on The Mall outside Buckingham Palace and along the banks of the River Thames hours before the coffin procession begins. People in the crowd cheered when Charles waved to them as he drove from his residence, Clarence House, to the palace.

The crowds are the latest manifestation of a nationwide outpouring of grief and respect for the only monarch most Britons have ever known, who died at her beloved Balmoral summer retreat on Thursday at age 96, ending a 70-year reign.

"It's a very sad day, but it's our last opportunity to do our duty for the queen and it's our first opportunity to do it for the king, and that makes us all very proud," said Maj. Gen. Christopher Ghika, of the Household division, who is responsible for organizing the ceremonial aspects of the queen's funeral.

Troops involved in the procession have been preparing since the queen died. So have the horses of the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery.

Sgt. Tom Jenks, from the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery, said that the horses have undergone special training, including how to handle weeping mourners, as well as flowers and flags being thrown onto streets as the procession passes by.

People stood behind metal barriers or sat on folding chairs, umbrellas at the ready, takeout coffees in hand under gray skies hours before the coffin was scheduled to leave the landmark palace at 2:22 p.m. (1322 GMT).

Crowds have lined the route of the queen's coffin whenever it has been moved in its long journey from Scotland back to London.

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On Tuesday night, thousands braved a typical London drizzle as the state hearse, with interior lights illuminating the sovereign's flag-draped casket, drove slowly from a military air base into the heart of London.

Geoff Colgan, a taxi driver who took the day off to witness the moment, stood stunned in the moments after the queen's coffin passed.

"It's one of those things you know would happen, but when it does you can't believe it," he said, holding his toddler.

Earlier, in Edinburgh, some 33,000 people filed in silent respect past her coffin as it lay for 24 hours at St. Giles' Cathedral.

Hundreds of thousands are expected to do the same in London when the queen lies in state at the 900-year-old Westminster Hall, the oldest building in Parliament, for four days before her state funeral on Monday.

The hall is where Guy Fawkes and Charles I were tried, where kings and queens hosted magnificent medieval banquets, and where ceremonial addresses were presented to Queen Elizabeth II during her silver, golden and diamond jubilees.

Chris Bond, from Truro in southwest England, was among those lining up along the banks of the River Thames. He also attended the lying in state of the queen's mother in 2002.

"Obviously, it's quite difficult queuing all day long, but when you walk through those doors into Westminster Hall, that marvellous, historic building, there was a great sense of hush and one was told you take as much time as you like, and it's just amazing," he said.

"We know the queen was a good age and she served the country a long time, but we hoped this day would never come," he added.

Chris Imafidon, secured the sixth place in the queue.

"I have 1,001 emotions when I see her," he said. "I want to say, God, she was an angel, because she touched many good people and did so many good things."

Follow AP coverage of Queen Elizabeth II at <https://apnews.com/hub/queen-elizabeth-ii>

Hasty Russian retreat leaves a devastated Ukrainian village

By ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

HRAKOVE, Ukraine (AP) — There's not much left of Hrakove. Its houses and shops lie in ruins, its school is a bombed-out hull. The church is scarred by rockets and shells, but the golden dome above its blasted belfry still gleams in the fading autumn light.

Only about 30 people remain, living in basements and gutted buildings in this small village southeast of Ukraine's second-largest city, Kharkiv, according to resident Anatolii Klyzhen. About 1,000 lived here when Russian troops rolled over the border in February, occupying the village shortly after.

Those forces abandoned Hrakove around Sept. 9 as Ukrainian soldiers advanced in a lightning-swift counteroffensive. That blitz could be a turning point, setting the stage for further gains in the east and elsewhere — but it could also trigger a violent response from Moscow, leading to a new and dangerous escalation in the war.

There were no signs the Russian soldiers were about to leave. "Nobody knew anything. They left very quietly," said Viacheslav Myronenko, 71, who has lived in the basement of his bombed-out apartment building with three neighbors for more than four months.

The detritus of a fleeing army still litters the village: packs of empty Russian army food rations, abandoned crates with instructions for using grenades, a gas mask dangling on a tree, an army jacket trampled into the mud. Just outside the village by the bus stop, a Russian tank lies rusting on a road pockmarked with craters from shells, its turret and cannon blown off its body.

Feral dogs roam the mud-rutted streets, and authorities warn of mines and booby-traps in the weeds.

"Before, the village looked really beautiful," said Klyzhen, who spent 45 days living in his building's basement while Russian soldiers occupied his now-trashed apartment on the second floor. He eventually

managed to flee, deciding to take his chances at checkpoints.

The Russian soldiers were both frightened and paranoid, he said, and would check residents' mobile phones for anything anti-Russian or anything they thought might give away their positions. Some people were taken away, and he never saw them again.

"I figured I could die at home or die at the checkpoint," the 45-year-old said Tuesday. But he made it through, and returned after Hrakove was liberated.

After retaking the village, Ukrainian authorities removed abandoned Russian military vehicles, and exhumed the bodies of two men who had been buried by the side of a road after being shot in the head, Klyzhen said. He thinks they were Ukrainian soldiers, but he's not sure.

"They were killing locals, shooting them," he said. "There was nothing good in here."

Serhii Lobodenko, head of the Chuhuiv district that includes Hrakove, said the area saw fierce battles during six months of occupation.

"There were a lot of destroyed roads, private houses, a lot of people dead and a lot of people missing, both military and civilians," he said, as residents in nearby Chkalovske gathered to receive recently delivered aid. "Now we are trying to repair the infrastructure, the electricity and gas. The food is brought in because people did not have food."

During the Russian occupation, Myronenko and his neighbors banded together to clear junk out of the basement of their apartment building and turn it into a shelter. With their apartments destroyed, it remains their home.

They found a couple of metal pipes and wedged them between the floor and the ceiling, hoping that would keep it from caving in as the building shook from explosions, said one of the four, 70-year-old Oleh Lutsai. They ventured outside to plant potatoes despite the incessant shelling, knowing they needed food to survive.

"Of course it was scary, it is very scary for everyone, when everything is shaking in here," said Lutsai. An oil lamp hung on the wall, casting a soft glow over the cramped room. A kettle whistled softly on a wood-burning stove that Lutsai and his neighbors built.

Leaving wasn't an option for him. "I'm 70 years old, I was born here," he said. "Even if I had to die here — but obviously I want to live — I just want to die in Ukrainian Ukraine, not (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's one. ... So why should I run away from here?"

Follow AP war coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine>

Car guy Biden to tout electric vehicles at Detroit auto show

By COLLEEN LONG and TOM KRISHER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden, a gearhead with his own vintage Corvette, will showcase his administration's efforts to promote electric vehicles during a visit to the Detroit auto show.

The Democratic president, who recently took a spin in his pine-green 1967 Stingray with Jay Leno for a segment on CNBC's "Jay Leno's Garage," may get the chance to slide behind the wheel of a new vehicle Wednesday during his stop in Detroit. He doesn't get many chances anymore in the driver's seat; he's not allowed to drive on public roads as president.

But he's mostly going to the North American International Auto Show to talk shop, plugging the huge new climate, tax and health care law that offers tax incentives for buying electric vehicles.

While Biden has been taking credit for the recent boom in electric vehicle battery and assembly plant announcements, most were in the works long before the Inflation Reduction Act was signed into law on Aug. 16. Biden's 2021 infrastructure legislation could have something to do with it — it provides \$5 billion over five years to help states create a network of EV charging stations.

Under the newest law, electric vehicles must be built in North America to be eligible for a new federal tax credit of up to \$7,500. Batteries for qualifying vehicles also must be made in North America, and there are requirements for battery minerals to be produced or recycled on the continent. The credits are aimed

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at creating a U.S. electric vehicle supply chain and ending dependence on other countries, mainly China. Passage of the measure set off a scramble by automakers to speed up efforts to find North American-made batteries and battery minerals from the U.S., Canada or Mexico to make sure EVs are eligible for the credit.

In April, Ford started building electric pickup trucks at a new Michigan factory. General Motors has revamped an old factory in Detroit to make electric Hummers and pickups.

Long before legislators reached a compromise on the legislation, each company announced three EV battery factories, all joint ventures with battery makers. A GM battery plant in Warren, Ohio, has already started manufacturing. A government loan announced in July will help GM build its battery factories.

Ford said last September it would build the next generation of electric pickups at a plant in Tennessee, and GM has announced EV assembly plants in Lansing, Michigan; Spring Hill, Tennessee; and Orion Township, Michigan. In May, Stellantis, formerly Fiat Chrysler, said it would build another joint venture battery factory in Indiana, and it has announced a battery plant in Canada.

Hyundai announced battery and assembly plants in May to be built in Georgia, and Vietnamese automaker VinFast announced factories in North Carolina in July. Honda and Toyota both announced U.S. battery plants after the act was passed, but they had been planned for months.

Biden has been talking for a long time about the importance of building a domestic EV supply chain and that may have prodded some of the companies to locate factories in the U.S. But it's also advantageous to build batteries near where EVs will be assembled because the batteries are heavy and costly to ship from overseas.

And auto companies are rolling out more affordable electric options even despite battery costs. The latest came last week from General Motors, a Chevrolet Equinox small SUV. It has a starting price around \$30,000 and a range-per-charge of 250 miles, or 400 kilometers. Buyers can get range of 300 miles, or 500 kilometers, if they pay more.

The Equinox checks the North American assembly box. It will be made in Mexico. The company won't say where the battery will be made but it is working on meeting the other criteria for getting the tax credit.

Krisher reported from Detroit.

World shares fall, tracking Wall St dismay over price data

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

World markets slipped Wednesday after Wall Street fell the most since June 2020 as a report showed inflation has kept a surprisingly strong grip on the U.S. economy.

European benchmarks were marginally lower while Asia saw bigger losses. U.S. futures edged higher, with the contracts for the Dow industrials and the S&P 500 up 0.3%. European futures were lower.

Tuesday's report showed U.S. inflation slowed only to 8.3% in August, instead of the 8.1% economists expected. That dashed hopes that inflation was falling back to more normal levels after peaking in June at 9.1%, allowing the Federal Reserve to moderate its interest rate hikes.

Now, traders are bracing for the Federal Reserve to ultimately raise interest rates more than expected to combat inflation, with all the risks for the economy that entails.

Germany's DAX lost 0.2% to 13,165.86 and the CAC 40 in Paris gave up 0.3% to 6,2275. Britain's FTSE 10 shed 0.7% to 7,334.75. The futures for the Dow industrials and S&P 500 both were down about 0.3%.

Tensions between the U.S. and China also were weighing on sentiment. Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin are due to meet later in the week, underscoring the countries' warming ties as the West pushes ahead with sanctions against Moscow for its invasion of Ukraine.

The meeting Thursday in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, on the sidelines of a summit dominated by Moscow and Beijing, reflect the strong ties between the former Communist rivals now locked in rivalry with the U.S.

The U.S. is meanwhile reportedly considering new sanctions against Beijing aimed at deterring aggression against Taiwan, a self-governed island democracy that China claims as its own territory.

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Hong Kong's Hang Seng index lost 2.3% to 18,875.59 and the Shanghai Composite index declined 0.8%, to 3,237.54.

Tokyo's benchmark Nikkei 225 lost 2.8% to 27,818.62, while Sydney's S&P/ASX 200 declined 2.6% to 6,828.60. In Seoul, the Kospi lost 1.6% to 2,411.42.

On Tuesday, the Dow lost more than 1,250 points and the S&P 500 sank 4.3% after Tuesday's hotter-than-expected report on inflation. The Nasdaq composite closed 5.2% lower.

Bond prices also fell sharply, sending their yields higher.

The yield on the two-year Treasury, which tends to track expectations for Fed actions, soared to 3.74% from 3.57% late Monday. The 10-year yield, which helps dictate where mortgages and rates for other loans are heading, rose to 3.42% from 3.36%.

Traders now see a one-in-three chance the Fed may hike its benchmark rate by a full percentage point next week, quadruple the usual move.

The Fed has already raised its federal funds rate four times this year, with the last two increases by three-quarters of a percentage point. The rate is currently in a range of 2.25% to 2.50%.

Higher rates hurt the economy by making it more expensive to buy a house, a car or anything else usually purchased on credit. Mortgage rates have already hit their highest level since 2008, creating pain for the housing industry. The hope is that the Fed can pull off the tightrope walk of slowing the economy enough to snuff out high inflation, but not so much that it creates a painful recession.

Tuesday's data casts doubt on hopes for such a "soft landing." Higher rates also hurt prices for stocks, bonds and other investments.

Expectations for a more aggressive Fed have also helped the dollar add to its already strong gains for this year. The dollar has been surging against other currencies in large part because the Fed has been hiking rates faster and by bigger margins than many other central banks.

That's especially true for Japan, where the benchmark rate remains at minus 0.1%. The dollar bought 143.47 Japanese yen, down from 144.57 yen late Tuesday. The euro rose to 0.9981 cents, up from 0.9969 cents.

U.S. benchmark crude lost 47 cents to \$86.84 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It lost 47 cents to \$87.31 on Tuesday. Brent crude, the international pricing standard, gave up 53 cents to \$92.64 per barrel.

Under COVID lockdown, Xinjiang residents complain of hunger

By DAKE KANG Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Residents of a city in China's far western Xinjiang region say they are experiencing hunger, forced quarantines and dwindling supplies of medicine and daily necessities after more than 40 days in a virus lockdown.

Hundreds of posts from Ghulja riveted users of Chinese social media last week, with residents sharing videos of empty refrigerators, feverish children and people shouting from their windows.

The dire conditions and food shortages are reminiscent of a harsh lockdown in Shanghai earlier this year, when thousands of residents posted complaints online that they were delivered rotting vegetables or denied critical medical care.

But unlike in Shanghai, a glittering, cosmopolitan metropolis of 20 million people and home to many foreigners, the harsh lockdowns in smaller cities such as Ghulja have received less attention until recently.

As more infectious variants of the coronavirus creep into China, flareups have become increasingly common. Under China's "zero-COVID" strategy, tens of millions of people are experiencing rolling lockdowns, paralyzing the economy and making travel uncertain.

The lockdown in Ghulja is also evoking fears of police brutality among the Uyghurs, the Turkic ethnic group native to Xinjiang. For years, the region has been the target of a sweeping security crackdown, ensnaring huge numbers of Uyghurs and other largely Muslim minorities in a vast network of camps and prisons. An earlier lockdown in Xinjiang was particularly tough, with forced medication, arrests and resi-

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dents being hosed down with disinfectant.

Yasinuf, a Uyghur studying at a university in Europe, said his mother-in-law sent fearful voice messages this past weekend saying she was being forced into centralized quarantine because of a mild cough. The officers coming for her reminded her of the time her husband was taken to a camp for over two years, she said.

"It's judgment day," she sighed in an audio recording reviewed by The Associated Press. "We don't know what's going to happen this time. All we can do now is to trust our creator."

Food has been in short supply. Yasinuf said his parents told him they were running low on food, despite having stocked up before the lockdown. With no deliveries, and barred from using their backyard ovens for fear of spreading the virus, his parents have been surviving on uncooked dough made of flour, water and salt. Yasinuf declined to give his surname for fear of retribution against his relatives.

He hasn't been able to study or sleep in recent days, he said, because thoughts of his relatives back in Ghulja keep him up at night.

"Their voices are always in my head, saying things like I'm hungry, please help us," he said. "This is the 21st century, this is unthinkable."

Nyrola Elima, a Uyghur from Ghulja, said her father was rationing their dwindling supply of tomatoes, sharing one each day with her 93-year-old grandmother. She said her aunt was panicking because she lacked milk to feed her 2-year-old grandson.

Last week, the local governor apologized at a news conference for "shortcomings and deficiencies" in the government's response to the coronavirus, including "blind spots and missed spots," and promised improvements.

But even as authorities acknowledged the complaints, censors worked to silence them. Posts were wiped from social media. Some videos were deleted and reposted dozens of times as netizens battled censors online.

Multiple people in the region told AP the posts online reflected the dire nature of the lockdown, but declined to detail their own situations, saying they feared retribution.

On Monday, local police announced the arrests of six people for "spreading rumors" about the lockdown, including posts about a dead child and an alleged suicide, which they said "incited opposition" and "disrupted social order."

Leaked directives from government offices show that workers are being ordered to avoid negative information and spread "positive energy" instead. One directed state media to film "smiling seniors" and "children having fun" in neighborhoods emerging from the lockdown.

"Those who maliciously hype, spread rumors, and make unreasonable accusations should be dealt with in accordance with the law," another notice warned.

The AP was unable to independently verify the notices. China's Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

As the authorities mobilize, conditions have improved for some. One resident, reached by phone, said food deliveries resumed after stopping for a couple of weeks. Residents in her compound are now allowed to take walks in their courtyard for a few hours a day.

"The situation is gradually improving, it's gotten a lot better," she said.

Authorities have ordered mass testing and district lockdowns in cities across China in recent weeks, from Sanya on tropical Hainan island to southwest Chengdu, to the northern port city of Dalian.

In the city of Guiyang, in mountainous southern Guizhou province, a zoo put out a call for help last week, asking for pork, chicken, apples, watermelons, carrots and other produce out of concern they could run out of food for their animals.

Elsewhere in the city, residents in one neighborhood complained of hunger and missing food deliveries, prompting a surge of comments online. Local officials apologized, saying that despite their best efforts, they were overwhelmed.

"Due to lack of experience and inappropriate methods," they said in a public notice, "the supply of basic necessities wasn't enough, bringing inconvenience to everyone. We are deeply sorry."

Package explodes on Boston campus; 1 injured, FBI involved

By WILLIAM J. KOLE Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — A package exploded on the campus of Northeastern University in Boston late Tuesday, and the college said a staff member suffered minor injuries.

Authorities said another suspicious package was found near a prominent art museum and the FBI was assisting with the investigation.

The parcel that blew up was one of two that were reported to police early in the evening. Boston's bomb squad neutralized a second package near the city's Museum of Fine Arts, which is on the outskirts of the Northeastern campus.

NBC Boston reported that the package that exploded went off as it was being opened near the university's Holmes Hall, which is home to the university's creative writing program and its women's, gender and sexuality studies program. It said the FBI was assisting the investigation.

Authorities declined to elaborate, but Northeastern spokesperson Shannon Nargi said in a statement that an unidentified university staff member suffered minor injuries to his hand in the explosion. Felipe Colon, a Boston police superintendent, later described the victim as a 45-year-old man.

Police converged on the campus shortly before 7:30 p.m., and the university asked students who had gathered for an evening journalism class at the hall to evacuate the building.

Northeastern is a private university in downtown Boston with about 16,000 undergraduate students. WCVB-TV said one of its reporters, Mike Beaudet, was teaching a class there at the time. Beaudet told the station his class was moved outside but that neither he nor his students heard an explosion.

Michael Davis, chief of Northeastern's police force, told reporters the campus was secure. Boston police didn't say whether any other suspicious packages were found.

"We're monitoring the situation at Northeastern and we're ready to work with the university and our law enforcement partners on any prosecutions that may develop," Suffolk County District Attorney Kevin Hayden said, promising "a comprehensive investigation to determine exactly what occurred here."

Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, both on the other side of the Charles River separating Boston from Cambridge, said they were increasing patrols on their campuses as a precaution and urging students and faculty to report anything suspicious.

Tuesday's explosion marked one of the first big scares in Boston since 2013, when two bombs planted near the finish line of the Boston Marathon killed three spectators and wounded more than 260 others.

As monkeypox drops in the West, still no vaccines for Africa

By MARIA CHENG and CHINEDU ASADU Associated Press

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — With monkeypox cases subsiding in Europe and parts of North America, many scientists say now is the time to prioritize stopping the virus in Africa.

In July, the U.N. health agency designated monkeypox as a global emergency and appealed to the world to support African countries so that the catastrophic vaccine inequity that plagued the outbreak of COVID-19 wouldn't be repeated.

But the global spike of attention has had little impact on the continent. No rich countries have shared vaccines or treatments with Africa, and some experts fear interest may soon evaporate.

"Nothing has changed for us here, the focus is all on monkeypox in the West," said Placide Mbala, a virologist who directs the global health research department at Congo's Institute of Biomedical Research.

"The countries in Africa where monkeypox is endemic are still in the same situation we have always been, with weak resources for surveillance, diagnostics and even the care of patients," he said.

Monkeypox has sickened people in parts of West and Central Africa since the 1970s, but it wasn't until the disease triggered unusual outbreaks in Europe and North America that public health officials even thought to use vaccines. As rich countries rushed to buy nearly all the world's supply of the most advanced

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shot against monkeypox, the World Health Organization said in June that it would create a vaccine-sharing mechanism to help needy countries get doses.

So far, that hasn't happened.

"Africa is still not benefiting from either monkeypox vaccines or the antiviral treatments," said Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, WHO's Africa director, adding that only small amounts have been available for research purposes. Since 2000, Africa has reported about 1,000 to 2,000 suspected monkeypox cases every year. So far this year, the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have identified about 3,000 suspected infections, including more than 100 deaths.

In recent weeks, monkeypox cases globally have fallen by more than a quarter, including by 55% in Europe, according to WHO.

Dr. Ifedayo Adetifa, head of the Nigeria Center for Disease Control, said the lack of help for Africa was reminiscent of the inequity seen during COVID-19.

"Everybody looked after their (own) problem and left everybody else," he said. Adetifa lamented that monkeypox outbreaks in Africa never got the international attention that might have prevented the virus from spreading globally.

Rich countries have stretched their vaccine supplies by using a fifth of the regular dose, but none have expressed interest in helping Africa. WHO's regional office for the Americas recently announced it had struck a deal to obtain 100,000 monkeypox doses that will start being delivered to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean within weeks. But no similar agreements have been reached for Africa.

"I would very much like to have vaccines to offer to my patients or anything that could just reduce their stay in the hospital," said Dr. Dimie Ogoina, a professor of medicine at Nigeria's Delta University and a member of WHO's monkeypox emergency committee.

Since WHO declared monkeypox a global emergency, Nigeria has seen the disease continue to spread, with few significant interventions.

"We still do not have the funds to do all the studies that we need," Ogoina said.

Research into the animals that carry monkeypox and spread it to humans in Africa is piecemeal and lacks coordination, said Mbala, of Congo's Institute of Biomedical Research.

Last week, the White House said it was optimistic about a recent drop in monkeypox cases in the U.S., saying authorities had administered more than 460,000 doses of the vaccine made by Bavarian Nordic.

The U.S. has about 35% of the world's more than 56,000 monkeypox cases, but nearly 80% of the world's supply of the vaccine, according to a recent analysis by the advocacy group Public Citizen.

The U.S. hasn't announced any monkeypox vaccine donations for Africa, but the White House did make a recent request to Congress for \$600 million in global aid.

Even if rich countries start sharing monkeypox tools with Africa soon, they shouldn't be applauded, other experts said.

"It should not be the case that countries only decide to share leftover vaccines when the epidemic is declining in their countries," said Piero Olliaro, a professor of infectious diseases of poverty at Oxford University. "It is exactly the same scenario as COVID and it is still completely unethical."

Olliaro, who recently returned to the U.K. from a trip to Central African Republic to work on monkeypox, said WHO's emergency declaration appeared to offer "no tangible benefits in Africa."

In Nigeria's Lagos state, which includes the country's largest city and is hard hit by monkeypox, some people are calling for the government to urgently do more.

"You can't tell me that the situation wouldn't have improved without a vaccine," said Temitayo Lawal, 29, an economist.

"If there is no need for vaccines, why are we now seeing the U.S. and all these countries using them?" he asked. "Our government needs to acquire doses as well."

Maria Cheng reported from London.

"History": Thousands come for last glimpse of queen

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — When Rachel Brading was a child she waited hours to see Queen Elizabeth II pass by her hometown in the midlands of England. Forty years later she was waiting again, one among a crowd of thousands hoping to catch one last glimpse of the late monarch's coffin before her burial.

With tears in her eyes, Brading, now in marketing, recalled how the queen had waved to her that day decades ago. On Tuesday, her coffin whizzed passed, heading toward Buckingham Palace, the queen's official London residence, in a blink of an eye. "It was surreal, just surreal," she said.

Her daughter, Ella, said they had come and waited in the rain to witness history. "This is something I will tell my children about," she said.

The coffin will be taken by horse-drawn gun carriage Wednesday to the Houses of Parliament to lie in state for four days before Monday's funeral at Westminster Abbey. Many are already queuing up to pay their last respects, erecting tents and preparing for many hours of waiting. Many thousands are expected.

Thousands have already come to the park adjacent to the palace to pay their respects with flowers and written notes for the queen. One read: "We have loved you, as you have loved us. Off to your next mission."

For Steven Bazell, it was a strange way to celebrate a birthday.

The accountant turned 43 the same day the queen's coffin was due to arrive to London. Instead of celebrating, he brought his four children to wait on the Mall, the grand processional route that leads toward the palace.

"I want my kids to understand their country," he said. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

Bobby Cunsden, 31, held a large bouquet of flowers and waited for hours to say her final goodbyes to the late monarch. "She is the only queen I have ever known," Cunsden said of Elizabeth whose rule spanned 70 years.

Marie Ward, 62, came from Australia to visit her grandchildren living in the U.K but stayed to mourn the queen. "I will always appreciate her gentle guidance," Ward, a nurse, said. "She's a grandma, and I am a grandma."

Despite the distance from most of English society, many in the crowd professed to feeling a strange familiarity with the royal family, knowing the innermost details of their lives.

Some gossiped about whether there had been a reconciliation between brothers Prince William and Harry, days after they had greeted the public outside Windsor Castle in a show of unity. Others begrudgingly accepted that King Charles III's wife, Camilla, now the queen consort, had managed to win over public opinion after the death of the nation's beloved Princess Diana.

"They are like part of our family," said Ward.

The crowd was heavy with anticipation in the moments before the queen's hearse finally arrived at the palace after a long journey from Balmoral in Scotland. They cheered as the car drove past, with many crying out "God save the Queen!" and clapping.

Steve Watson, a police officer, was speechless in the moments that followed. "Blimey," was all he could muster.

"That was impressive. She was an impressive lady," he said.

Armenia, Azerbaijan trade blame for renewed shelling

By AVET DEMOURIAN Associated Press

YEREVAN, Armenia (AP) — Armenia and Azerbaijan accused each other of new rounds of shelling on Wednesday morning as hostilities reignited between the two longtime adversaries.

Armenia's Defense Ministry accused Azerbaijani forces of launching combat drones in the direction of the Armenian resort of Jermuk overnight and renewing the shelling from artillery and mortars in the morning in the direction of Jermuk and Verin Shorzha village near the Sevan lake.

The Azerbaijani military, in turn, charged that Armenian forces shelled its positions in the Kalbajar and Lachin districts in the separatist Nagorno-Karabakh regions.

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Fighting on the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan erupted on Tuesday, killing about 100 troops in total. Armenia said at least 49 of its soldiers were killed; Azerbaijan said it lost 50.

The two countries have been locked in a decades-old conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, which is part of Azerbaijan but has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since a separatist war there ended in 1994.

Azerbaijan reclaimed broad swaths of Nagorno-Karabakh in a six-week war in 2020 that killed more than 6,600 people and ended with a Russia-brokered peace deal. Moscow deployed about 2,000 troops to the region to serve as peacekeepers under the deal.

The Russian Foreign Ministry on Tuesday urged both parties "to refrain from further escalation and show restraint." Moscow has engaged in a delicate balancing act in seeking to maintain friendly ties with both ex-Soviet nations. It has strong economic and security ties with Armenia, which hosts a Russian military base, while also has been developing close cooperation with oil-rich Azerbaijan.

The international community also urged calm.

The Armenian government said it would officially ask Russia for assistance under a friendship treaty between the countries, and also appeal to the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, a Moscow-dominated security alliance of ex-Soviet nations.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov refrained from comment on Armenia's request but added during a conference call with reporters that Putin was "taking every effort to help de-escalate tensions."

A London diaspora district remembers a queen —ambivalently

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — In a church in a West London district known locally as Little India, a book of condolence for Queen Elizabeth II lies open. Five days after the monarch's passing, few have signed their names.

The congregation of 300 is made up largely of the South Asian diaspora, like the majority of the estimated 70,000 people living in the district of Southall, a community tucked away in London's outer reaches and built on waves of migration that span 100 years.

First came the Welsh coal miners, then the Irish. Then, after World War II's devastation, an influx of Afro-Caribbeans and Indians settled in Southall. The latter remained for decades: Heeding calls from the monarchy to former colonies to help plug widespread labor shortages, they carried vouchers that secured their passage. In doing so, they helped steer Britain away from economic ruin.

Now, for some in Southall, the queen's death has re-opened the old wounds of a complicated history.

The district's experiences mirror those in other London diaspora communities with colonial pasts. An older generation maintains a deep respect for the late monarch and the opportunity to prosper in Britain. But young people are unsure; they struggle to reconcile their identity as Brits with the brutal colonialism that upended the lives of their forebears. They demand a reckoning with the past.

Then there are the ambivalent — families hit hard by COVID-19, Britain's energy crisis and inflation following Brexit. They express respect for the late queen but struggle to see the relevance of royalty in their daily toil.

"What's the monarchy got to do with us?" Ranjit Singh, 45, said outside a butcher shop where he has worked for 10 years. "There was a queen, she is dead, another one will take her place. What more is there to say?"

In recent years, Southall has welcomed an assortment of comers — conflict-zone refugees, Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans seeking opportunity, and scores of asylum-seekers living clandestinely as they await the all-important paperwork that can legalize their presence. Almost 76% of the community hails from South Asia.

Grand Sikh temples stand meters from mosques and Hindu mandirs. Gurmukhi, the Sikh script, is paired alongside English on storefronts. The main drag, The Broadway, is reminiscent of India's busy markets with dazzling textiles and sizzling street food. English is seldom heard on the street, and some merchants cannot speak the language at all.

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Yet Southall has a couple of distinct royal connections — about which most here are unaware.

The mother of Catherine Middleton, the new Princess of Wales, was raised in Southall. It is also home to what restaurateur Gulu Anand insists is King Charles III's favorite Indian eatery.

Anand arrived from Kenya in the 1970s and opened the restaurant Brilliant in Southall. Charles first visited in 1981, after Anand sent many invitations. The future king would return two more times in 2007 and 2014, Anand says. Photos of Charles hang on the restaurant's walls.

When the queen died, the businessman was devastated. "I am as British as you can get," he said.

Not everyone feels the same way. That's what the Rev. Mark Poulson told his congregation during Sunday's sermon at his Southall church, St. John's. "It's important that we recognize that," he told the largely immigrant following.

Still, Poulson said Southall's Christians hold the queen in high regard, with many coming from countries where they did not enjoy the same freedom to worship.

There are only two obvious markers of the queen's passing in Southall: a poster outside the pharmacy, and a British flag flying half-staff in the town hall building.

The flag was Janpal Basran's doing. The head of the Southall Community Alliance noticed more than two days after Elizabeth's death that the flag had not been lowered. He made urgent calls, concerned that the community would be perceived as disrespectful.

Basran spends his days catering to local needs — including many people who live close to the poverty line and are struggling. Does the queen's death impact their lives? "The reality of those people is yes, it does," Basran said. "But depending on where you are, the length of your mourning will vary."

Southall's early South Asian immigrants left the subcontinent within a decade of Partition in 1947, arriving in London to work in factory assembly lines and as custodial crews at Heathrow Airport. Wages were low and hours long. Laborers coming from northern India in particular had lost land and savings through the mass dislocation that accompanied Partition. Among them was Basran's father, who arrived in 1964.

Businesses opened to respond to the local needs of the diaspora community and grew. More migrants made their way to Southall, and white residents responded with hostility.

Racial tensions rose in the 1970s, with violent riots and incidents of maiming and killing of South Asians and African Caribbeans. Anti-immigration sentiments also fueled the inflammatory rhetoric of the National Front Party, a fascist political party. In 1970, race riots engulfed the area.

This turbulent history, paired with the recent advent of social movements like Black Lives Matter, has led to an awakening among younger people seeking to dissect colonial legacies. Their relationship with the monarchy — in particular the notion of empire and the deeds of Elizabeth's forefathers — is strained.

"It's tough," said Narvir Singh, an artist whose grandfather was among the first wave of Punjabi migrants to Southall, "It's a day-to-day struggle ... as a person who exists as a consequence of so many upsetting horrible events."

Singh's work has dissected the history of the 1970s Southall race riots. The presence of the monarchy in his life is reducible to a few objects: pocket money bearing the queen's profile and the flag.

"I am neither celebrating nor commiserating," he said of the queen's death. "It's just one of those things, the forces of change."

Pru Miah, 46, a former counselor in East London, said that "most people are respectful that the queen died, because we are taught to be respectful of our elders." He said he was not taught about the brutalities of the British Empire growing up attending public schools in London. A university course later opened his eyes.

"There is a collective amnesia about what happened, and there is no public narrative about it," he said. "The queen was a symbolic representation of that system."

Ismail Lea South was once an anti-monarchist. His grandparents arrived in England as part of the influx of people from Caribbean countries between 1948 to 1971.

South grew to resent the royal family as inequalities he witnessed on the streets of London contrasted sharply with the lavish lives of the royals. That changed when he left his banking job to become a youth

worker helping prison inmates, gang members, drug users and former extremists get their lives back on track. It was The Prince's Trust, founded by Charles, that provided the best service for his cases, he said.

"This helped me re-evaluate my views," South said.

Mohammed Osman, a Southall cafe owner of Somali descent, takes a pragmatic approach to the events unfolding around him. He is less interested in the colonial past and more focused on how the newly minted King Charles III plans to help him recover from his economic woes.

"The queen?" he said. "I never met her."

Samya Kullab, Iraq correspondent for The Associated Press, is on assignment in London covering the death of Queen Elizabeth II. Follow her on Twitter at http://twitter.com/samya_kullab

Close New Hampshire Senate primary tests direction of GOP

By WILL WEISSERT and HOLLY RAMER Associated Press

CONCORD, N.H. (AP) — The Republican contest for Senate in New Hampshire remained a tight race early Wednesday between conservative Donald Bolduc and the more moderate Chuck Morse as the final primary night of the midterm season again tested the far right's influence over the GOP.

Republicans see Democratic incumbent Sen. Maggie Hassan of New Hampshire as beatable in the general election, now just eight weeks away. But a strong competitor in the GOP contest is Bolduc, a retired Army brigadier general who some in the party believe is too far to the right for some swing voters in the general election. Morse, the president of the state Senate, has been backed by the Republican establishment.

New Hampshire's Senate seat could prove pivotal for whichever party controls the chamber after November. President Joe Biden carried the state by more than 7 percentage points and Bolduc has campaigned on a platform that includes lies that Donald Trump won the 2020 election and conspiracy theories about vaccines.

Hassan clinched her party's nomination against only token opposition while Gov. Chris Sununu won the Republican party's nomination for another term. He's heavily favored against Democrat Tom Sherman, who was unopposed for his party's governor's nomination.

Sherman, a state senator and physician, was quick to remind voters that Sununu signed a late-term abortion ban into law last year. "As governor I will stand up for our freedoms and protect a woman's right to choose, not cave to extremists like Chris Sununu," he said.

Sununu countered in a statement that the "stakes are too high this November to change direction now."

Still, a Bolduc victory might reignite disappointment among some national Republicans that Sununu, a relatively popular moderate who likely could have posed more of a threat to Hassan, chose instead to run for reelection. The GOP is grappling with the possibility of again nominating a candidate who is popular with the party's base but struggles to broaden support ahead of the November general election.

Republican primary voters have similarly chosen conservative candidates this year in moderate or Democratic-leaning states including Massachusetts and Maryland, potentially putting competitive races out of the party's reach.

Neil Levesque, director of the New Hampshire Institute of Politics, said Bolduc is a type of candidate who would have struggled to succeed in GOP politics before Trump's rise. He's never held elected office and had just \$75,000 in cash on hand last week. Bolduc has nonetheless been able to make inroads by positioning himself as an ally of Trump and his election falsehoods.

"That is because the theme of his campaign and messaging is very similar to former President Trump," Levesque said. "If it mirrors the former president, it's been effective."

Federal and state officials and Trump's own attorney general have said there is no credible evidence the election was tainted. The former president's allegations of fraud were also roundly rejected by courts, including by judges Trump appointed.

Known for kicking off the primary season during presidential campaigns, New Hampshire is instead concluding the nominating process for this year's midterms. There were also primaries Tuesday in Rhode

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Island and Delaware, where Biden traveled late Tuesday to cast his ballot.

But New Hampshire's Senate race is perhaps most revealing about the direction of the GOP. Morse has been endorsed by Sununu, who called him "the candidate to beat Sen. Hassan this November and the candidate Sen. Hassan is most afraid to face."

By contrast, Sununu called Bolduc a conspiracy theorist and suggested he could have a tougher time winning the general election.

Bolduc wasn't bothered by Sununu's criticism, calling the governor "a Chinese communist sympathizer." Bolduc wasn't formally endorsed by Trump, who propelled many primary candidates to victory in key races throughout the summer. But the former president has called Bolduc a "strong guy."

The final primary contests unfolded at a dramatic moment in the midterm campaign. Republicans have spent much of the year building their election-year message around Biden and his management of the economy, particularly soaring prices. But Democrats are now entering the final stretch with a sense of cautious optimism as approval of Biden steadies and inflation has slowed for the second straight month, even as it remains high.

The Supreme Court's decision overturning a woman's constitutional right to an abortion may provide Democrats with the energy they need to turn back the defeats that historically accompany a new president's first midterms.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell acknowledged the challenge last month, saying his party may be more likely to end Democrats' narrow control of the House than the Senate. He bemoaned "candidate quality" as a factor that could sway some outcomes in his chamber.

Some Democratic groups, meanwhile, sponsored primary ads promoting Bolduc, predicting he'd make an easier November opponent for Hassan. That's consistent with Democratic-aligned organizations backing pro-Trump candidates in key races around the country — a strategy some have criticized, arguing that it could backfire if those candidates go on to win their general elections.

Republicans in New Hampshire and around the country scoff at the notion that being a Trump loyalist — or not — could be a deciding general election factor, noting that the still unpopular Biden will be a drag on his party regardless.

The New Hampshire Republican Party has tweeted that Hassan "votes with Joe Biden 96.4% of the time."

Many of the same dynamics swirling around the former president were at work in the GOP primary for New Hampshire's other congressional district, which encompasses Manchester and the southeastern part of the state. Karoline Leavitt, who worked in Trump's White House's press office, topped some more experienced Republicans with ties to the former president and will square off against Democratic Rep. Chris Pappas in another November contest that could be close.

Leavitt, 25, said she was "sending a strong and clear message to the Washington, D.C., establishment, and our Democratic opponent that our votes cannot be bought, our conservative voices can not be silenced." She also laced into Pappas, saying he "has campaigned his entire political career as a moderate, bipartisan voice for our district. But he has voted as a far left socialist Democrat."

Pappas also wasted little time going on the offensive against Leavitt, saying, "I will fight with everything I've got to stop extreme politicians like Karoline from hijacking our democracy."

Weissert reported from Washington. Associated Press Writer Kathy McCormack contributed to this report.

Q&A: Pope, Chinese leader Xi to cross paths in Kazakhstan

By HUIZHONG WU Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Chinese President Xi Jinping's first trip overseas since the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic will overlap with a visit by Pope Francis to Kazakhstan, although the Vatican says there are no plans for them to meet.

Xi's state visit Wednesday comes just weeks ahead of an all-important political meeting in China where he is expected to take a third term as he cements his grip on power. The pope is in Kazakhstan until

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Thursday for a state visit and an interfaith congress of world religious leaders.

Asked during his flight to Kazakhstan about a possible meeting with Xi, the pope said, "I don't have any news about this. But I am always ready to go to China."

The two have been in the same vicinity before and not met, including New York for the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 and Xi's visit to Italy in 2019.

The Vatican and China are due to renew their 2018 deal on bishop nominations at the end of this month. A Vatican delegation recently returned from Beijing, and Holy See officials expect the deal to be continued.

Here's a look at Beijing's complicated relationship with the Vatican and the conditions that worshippers face in China.

WHAT IS CHINA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE VATICAN?

China does not have diplomatic relations with Vatican, ever since the ruling Communist Party required Roman Catholics in China to sever ties with the Vatican in the 1950s. For decades, people could worship only in churches affiliated with the party-controlled Patriotic Catholic Association.

The Association follows Vatican doctrine and sends theologians to Rome for study sessions, but the ruling party rejects any role for the pope in picking bishops in China or managing churches.

The two sides reached an agreement in 2018 that gave the Holy See the final say over bishops proposed by Beijing, but details have never been released. Francis has said the process involves a dialogue, but that he has the final say.

Beijing had long insisted that it must approve appointments as a matter of its national sovereignty. The Vatican has insisted on the pope's divine authority to choose the successors of Christ's apostles.

Vatican officials have said if the Vatican didn't hammer out something new, there was a risk of the Catholic Church in China becoming irrevocably split.

Vatican City, of which the pope is head of state, is the last European government to maintain ties with Taiwan, the self-ruled island democracy the Communist Party claims as part of its territory. Any agreement to establish formal ties with Beijing would likely require the Vatican to break diplomatic ties with Taiwan and endorse the party's claim to the island.

HOW HAS THE BEIJING-VATICAN RELATIONSHIP CHANGED IN RECENT YEARS?

Vatican officials have said they hope the 2018 deal will lead to improvements in the conditions for the Chinese Catholic community and not just focus on bishop nominations.

The deal has brought China and the Vatican closer together in the past four years, said Chang Chia-lin, a professor of religious studies at Tamkang University in Taiwan.

"In the future, if China agrees to let the pope make a visit, I think the possibility for Vatican-China to establish diplomatic relations will deepen," Chang said.

Despite the closer ties, Catholics practicing outside state churches face great pressure and harassment. Rights groups have criticized the deal, saying the costs outweighed whatever benefits have been brought.

Joseph Zen, a prominent Catholic cardinal in Hong Kong who had been a staunch critic of China's Communist Party, was arrested in May as part of a crackdown on dissent in the semi-autonomous Chinese city.

The Vatican issued a statement of concern — a rarity given its delicate relationship with Beijing.

"It seems likely that in order to maintain the positive diplomacy required to continue with the Sino-Vatican agreement, the Vatican has been unwilling to condemn the Chinese government's ongoing crimes against humanity targeting Uyghurs and the human rights crackdown in Hong Kong — even when it has affected prominent Catholics like Cardinal Zen," said William Nee, the Research and Advocacy Coordinator at Chinese Human Rights Defenders.

An estimated one million or more Uyghurs and others from predominantly Muslim ethnic groups were held in internment camps in the western Xinjiang region in what the U.N.'s human rights body said may amount to "crimes against humanity."

WHAT IS THE SITUATION FOR CHRISTIANS IN CHINA?

Under Xi, China has launched a crackdown on Christianity in recent years, part of an overall tightening on religious freedoms that has also affected worshippers of Islam and, to a lesser extent, Buddhism and Daoism.

Tens of millions of Chinese Roman Catholics as well as Christians had worshipped for decades in informal "house churches" and their presence was tolerated.

But China's drive to "Sinicize" religion and give ultimate control to the Communist Party rather than a religious leader has led to informal churches coming under intense pressure to shut down. Christian worshippers have seen their churches raided, while facing interrogations and surveillance. Police have arrested pastors and priests associated with these churches.

Some, like the Shenzhen Holy Reformed Church, have fled overseas in order to practice their version of their religion.

Despite the crackdown, the number of Catholics and believers of other Christian denominations have grown over the past few decades, experts say.

"In China, an ordinary Christian, or Catholic, they have limited religious freedom. They can go to the church for Mass and prayer, and this so-called limited religious freedom, and it's under the church which is controlled by the Communist Party," said Chang.

Associated Press writers Joe McDonald in Beijing and Nicole Winfield in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, contributed to this report.

Pandemic, labor shortage keep hurricane victims in limbo

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM and GARY D. ROBERTSON Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Nearly six years after flood damage from Hurricane Matthew displaced Thad Artis from his home in Goldsboro, North Carolina, he has still not been placed in permanent housing.

Living alone in a motel for the last two years, growing increasingly frustrated with what he considers empty promises of swift action from government officials, the 68-year-old spends every penny on his wife's health care after a stroke left her unable to walk.

Before he moved his wife into an assisted living facility, the two lived in their decaying house, roughly an hour southeast of Raleigh by car, for several years after the storm — both developing respiratory illnesses as mold spores grew in the ceiling and bird droppings spattered atop their leaking roof. Roaches and "other creepy crawlies" inhabited the kitchen floorboards. The back of the house was so rotten, Artis said, that the washroom was about to fall through the floor.

"We stayed sick for a year," he said. "The house and all the furniture, it's gone, it's rotten. We ain't got nothing. I take everything I can get right down the road to see her, to take care of her. I don't give up because I got to help my wife."

Waiting on an unfinished modular home in nearby Pikeville, Artis is among hundreds of low-income homeowners enrolled with the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency who are living in temporary accommodations years after the 2016 storm and Hurricane Florence in 2018.

A new bipartisan General Assembly committee tasked with investigating these delays in disaster relief will hold its first meeting Wednesday — the four-year anniversary of when Florence made landfall in North Carolina.

Co-chair Rep. John Bell, a Wayne County Republican whose district along the Neuse River incurred some of the worst flood damage statewide, said he's seeking accountability on behalf of displaced constituents like Artis.

"We had to deal with multiple hurricanes, tropical storms and a pandemic, but those are the realities, not the excuse," Bell said in an interview. "We've been back and forth on this issue for years now. We've made some headway, and then we take a step backwards and then politics gets thrown into it. It never should've gotten to this point."

While meteorologists say the Atlantic hurricane season has been quiet this year — a record-tying zero

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storms formed in August — residents of storm-prone Southeastern states remain vigilant. Still working through long-term repairs from Matthew and Florence, North Carolina officials say recent labor shortages and supply chain issues have exacerbated the existing challenges.

Laura Hogshead, director of the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency, said in an interview that complications brought on by COVID-19, compounded by rising prices and high demand for contractors, have slowed efforts to make homeowners whole.

"I cannot overstate the impact of the pandemic, particularly on construction," she said. "It doesn't matter how good your general contractor is. If you can't get windows, you can't get windows. It's been frustrating for all involved."

Construction holdups have left some funding recipients like Artis in short-term lodging for months or even longer. Hogshead said that is partially the result of two manufactured housing vendors pulling out of contracts with the state in 2021 and 2022 as unit prices soared.

North Carolina's legislature created NCORR in 2018, in part to distribute what became \$778 million in federal recovery funds awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for Matthew in 2017 and Florence in 2020.

The agency has committed more than 60% of these funds to support homeowners, with about \$231 million actually spent so far. Under federal mandate, the money must be expended by mid-2026.

Funds are used to make major repairs or replace homes owned by low-income families in counties battered by both storms. They also support affordable and public housing projects that are less susceptible to flooding.

Expending these funds isn't designed to be easy, with multiple safeguards to ensure they're spent properly. Homeowners must navigate an eight-step process designed to ensure they qualify and haven't already received similar disaster money. It includes an environmental review of their damaged property, followed by a grant award, contractor selection and construction.

Of the nearly 4,200 Homeowner Recovery Applicants since Matthew money arrived, nearly 800 projects are completed, according to NCORR. But Hogshead said additional applicants — now more than 1,100 — are either waiting to find a contractor willing to take on a government-funded project with its additional paperwork, or for the contractor to begin work.

Bell said he has been performing unannounced drop-ins at construction sites in his district, occasionally finding far less progress than the contractors had reported to the state.

"Frankly, we've had some situations that folks weren't straight up on what was being done," Bell said.

As of Tuesday, 294 applicants currently waiting for repairs or a replacement manufactured home were living in temporary accommodations — often a rental property or hotel.

Shiletha Smith, 68, has inhabited her damaged home in Fremont — a five-minute drive north of Pikeville — since Hurricane Matthew flooded the property in 2016, wiping out her insulation, destroying the central air conditioning unit and damaging the roof. This week, Smith said, she is finally moving into a hotel so construction can begin.

"Finally, after two years of waiting, they're supposed to start construction on my home," Smith said. "I almost got flooded out of my house and had to repair the whole side of my house that was from the water damage."

Smith described the relief application process as "extremely frustrating" and said her award determination was so minimal, she felt like she had no choice but to appeal, further delaying repairs.

"At least my home was livable," Smith said, noting she is not sure how long she will have to live in a hotel. "About two years waiting for them to start repairs, but at least I got to stay in my home."

With another hurricane season in full swing, Hogshead said she's always checking the tropics for developing storms that could cause further damage or delays.

"The thing I really worry about is another storm," she said. "Upsetting this apple cart in the middle of construction is the X-factor that none of us can control."

Driven by consumers, US inflation grows more persistent

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By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. inflation is showing signs of entering a more stubborn phase that will likely require drastic action by the Federal Reserve, a shift that has panicked financial markets and heightens the risks of a recession.

Some of the longtime drivers of higher inflation — spiking gas prices, supply chain snarls, soaring used-car prices — are fading. Yet underlying measures of inflation are actually worsening.

The ongoing evolution of the forces behind an inflation rate that's near a four-decade high has made it harder for the Fed to wrestle it under control. Prices are no longer rising because a few categories have skyrocketed in cost. Instead, inflation has now spread more widely through the economy, fueled by a strong job market that is boosting paychecks, forcing companies to raise prices to cover higher labor costs and giving more consumers the wherewithal to spend.

On Tuesday, the government said inflation ticked up 0.1% from July to August and 8.3% from a year ago, which was down from June's four-decade high of 9.1%

But excluding the volatile categories of food and energy, so-called core prices jumped by an unexpectedly sharp 0.6% from July to August, after a milder 0.3% rise the previous month. The Fed monitors core prices closely, and the latest figures heightened fears of an even more aggressive Fed and sent stocks plunging, with the Dow Jones collapsing more than 1,200 points.

The core price figures solidified worries that inflation has now spread into all corners of the economy.

"One of the most remarkable things is how broad-based the price gains are," said Matthew Luzzetti, chief U.S. economist at Deutsche Bank. "The underlying trend in inflation certainly has not shown any progress toward moderating so far. And that should be a worry to the Fed because the price gains have become increasingly demand-driven, and therefore likely to be more persistent."

Demand-driven inflation is one way to say that consumers, who account for nearly 70% of economic growth, keep spending, even if they resent having to pay more. In part, that is because of widespread income gains and in part because many Americans still have more savings than they did before the pandemic, after having postponed spending on vacations, entertainment, and restaurants.

When inflation is driven mainly by demand, it can require more drastic action from the Fed than when it's driven mainly by supply shocks, such as an oil supply disruption, which can often resolve on their own.

Economists fear that the only way for the Fed to slow robust consumer demand is to raise interest rates so high as to sharply increase unemployment and potentially cause a recession. Typically, as fear of layoffs rises, not only do the jobless reduce spending. So, too, do the many people who fear losing their jobs.

Some economists now think the Fed will have to raise its benchmark short-term rate much higher, to 4.5% or above, by early next year, more than previous estimates of 4%. (The Fed's key rate is now in a range of 2.25% to 2.5%.) Higher rates from the Fed would, in turn, lead to higher costs for mortgages, auto loans and business loans.

The Fed is widely expected to raise its benchmark short-term rate by a substantial three-quarters of a point next week for a third consecutive time. Tuesday's inflation report even led some analysts to speculate that the central bank could announce a full percentage point hike. If it did, that would amount to the largest increase since the Fed began using short-term rates in the early 1990s to guide consumer and business borrowing.

Even though headline inflation barely rose last month, underlying inflation, which reflects broader economic trends, worsened. A measure that the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland uses to track median inflation, which essentially ignores categories with the biggest price swings, rose 0.7% in August. That was the biggest monthly increase since records began in 1983.

Higher prices have yet to cause much of what economists call "demand destruction" — a pullback in spending that could quell inflation. Though higher gas prices have caused Americans to drive less, there isn't much evidence of significant cutbacks elsewhere.

Restaurant prices, for example, jumped 0.9% in August and have risen 8% in the past year. But that hasn't noticeably discouraged people from going out. Restaurant traffic has surpassed pre-pandemic levels on Open Table, an app that tracks reservations, and was still increasing into September.

Overall, consumers have largely kept up their spending, even with rampant inflation, though perhaps through gritted teeth. In July, spending rose 0.2% after adjusting for higher prices.

The spread of inflation into services, such as rental costs and health care, largely reflects the impact of higher wages. Hospitals and doctors' offices have to pay more for nurses and other staff. And as more Americans find jobs or get raises, they're able to move out from family homes or split from roommates. Rental costs have increased 6.7% in the past year, the most since 1986.

Wages and salaries jumped 6.7% in August from a year earlier, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta's wage tracker, the biggest increase in nearly 40 years. And Luzzetti noted that the same data shows a record wage premium for people who switch jobs, compared with those who stay put. That means employers are still offering big raises to try to fill jobs.

Economists had hoped that rising services prices would be offset by falling costs for goods such as new and used cars, furniture, and clothing, after those items spiked in the pandemic. As supply chain backups improved, a better flow of such goods were expected to bring prices down.

Yet so far, that hasn't happened.

"We've seen shipping costs come down, we've seen supply chain congestion ease a little bit, production has improved and inventories have risen," said Laura Rosner-Warburton, senior economist at MacroPolicy Perspectives. "So all of that suggests some supply side improvement. And yet companies are still putting through large price increases for those goods, and that's problematic."

Such trends could renew the debate over how much corporations' ability to raise prices has been fueled by a lack of competition, a phenomenon referred to as "greedflation." But most economists attribute the ability of companies to still charge more to consumers' willingness to pay.

"It appears that retailers are now raising prices because they can, not because they have to. Consumer demand is still too strong," said Aneta Markowska, chief economist at Jefferies, an investment bank, in a research note.

Ancient skeleton found in Mexico cave threatened by train

By MARK STEVENSON Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — A prehistoric human skeleton has been found in a cave system that was flooded at the end of the last ice age 8,000 years ago, according to a cave-diving archaeologist on Mexico's Caribbean coast.

Archaeologist Octavio del Rio said he and fellow diver Peter Broger saw the shattered skull and skeleton partly covered by sediment in a cave near where the Mexican government plans to build a high-speed tourist train through the jungle.

Given the distance from the cave entrance, the skeleton couldn't have gotten there without modern diving equipment, so it must be over 8,000 years old, Del Rio said, referring to the era when rising sea levels flooded the caves.

"There it is. We don't know if the body was deposited there or if that was where this person died," said Del Rio. He said that the skeleton was located about 8 meters (26 feet) underwater, about a half-kilometer (one third of a mile) into the cave system.

Some of the oldest human remains in North America have been discovered in the sinkhole caves known as "cenotes" on the country's Caribbean coast, and experts say some of those caves are threatened by the Mexican government's Maya Train tourism project.

Del Rio, who has worked with the National Institute of Anthropology and History on projects in the past, said he had notified the institute of the discovery. The institute did not immediately respond to questions about whether it intended to explore the site.

But Del Rio said Tuesday that institute archaeologist Carmen Rojas told him that the site was registered and would be investigated by the institute's Quintana Roo state branch Holocene Archaeology Project.

He stressed that the cave — whose location he did not reveal because of a fear the site could be looted or disturbed — was near where the government has cut down a swath of jungle to lay train tracks, and

could be collapsed, contaminated or closed off by the building project and subsequent development.

"There is a lot more study that has to be done in order to correctly interpret" the find, Del Rio said, noting that "dating, some kind of photographic studies and some collection" would be needed to determine exactly how old the skeleton is.

Del Rio has been exploring the region for three decades, and in 2002, he participated in the discovery and cataloguing of remains known as The Woman of Naharon, who died around the same time, or perhaps earlier, than Naia — the nearly complete skeleton of a young woman who died around 13,000 years ago. It was discovered in a nearby cave system in 2007.

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador is racing to finish his Maya Train project in the remaining two years of his term over the objections of environmentalists, cave divers and archaeologists. They say his haste will allow little time to study the ancient remains.

Activists say the heavy, high-speed rail project will fragment the coastal jungle and will run often above the fragile limestone caves, which — because they're flooded, twisty and often incredibly narrow — can take decades to explore.

Caves along part of the coast already have been damaged by construction above them, with cement pilings used to support the weight above.

The 950-mile (1,500-kilometer) Maya Train line is meant to run in a rough loop around the Yucatan Peninsula, connecting beach resorts and archaeological sites.

The most controversial stretch cuts a more than 68-mile (110-kilometer) swath through the jungle between the resorts of Cancun and Tulum.

Del Rio said the route through the jungle should be abandoned and the train should be built over the already-impacted coastal highway between Cancun and Tulum, as was originally planned.

López Obrador abandoned the highway route after hotel owners voiced objections, and cost and traffic interruptions became a concern.

"What we want is for them to change to route at this spot, because of the archaeological finds that have been made there, and their importance," said Del Rio. "They should take the train away from there and put it where they said they were going to build before, on the highway ... an area that has already been affected, devastated."

MyPillow exec Lindell says FBI agents seized his cellphone

By MICHAEL BALSAMO and CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — MyPillow chief executive Mike Lindell said Tuesday that federal agents seized his cellphone and questioned him about a Colorado clerk who has been charged in what prosecutors say was a "deceptive scheme" to breach voting system technology used across the country.

Lindell was approached in the drive-thru of a Hardee's fast-food restaurant in Mankato, Minnesota, by several FBI agents, he said on his podcast, "The Lindell Report." The agents questioned him about Dominion Voting Systems, Mesa County Clerk Tina Peters and his connection to Doug Frank, an Ohio educator who claims voting machines have been manipulated, he said.

The agents then told Lindell they had a warrant to seize his cellphone and ordered him to turn it over, he said. On a video version of his podcast, Lindell displayed a letter signed by an assistant U.S. attorney in Colorado that said prosecutors were conducting an "official criminal investigation of a suspected felony" and noted the use of a federal grand jury.

The circumstances of the investigation were unclear. The Justice Department did not immediately respond Tuesday night to a request for comment about the seizure or investigation.

"Without commenting on this specific matter, I can confirm that the FBI was at that location executing a search warrant authorized by a federal judge," FBI spokeswoman Vikki Migoya said in an email.

Federal prosecutors have been conducting a parallel investigation alongside local prosecutors in Colorado who have charged Peters with several offenses, including attempting to influence a public servant, criminal impersonation and official misconduct. The Republican was elected in 2018 to oversee elections

in Colorado's Mesa County. A deputy clerk, Belinda Knisley, was also charged in the case, pleaded guilty and was sentenced to two years of probation.

For more than a year, Peters has appeared onstage with supporters of former President Donald Trump who made false claims that the 2020 presidential election was stolen. The charges against Peters and Knisley allege the two were involved in a "deceptive scheme which was designed to influence public servants, breach security protocols, exceed permissible access to voting equipment, and set in motion the eventual distribution of confidential information to unauthorized people."

State election officials first became aware of a security breach in Mesa County in 2021 when a photo and video of confidential voting system passwords were posted on social media and a conservative website. Because each Colorado county has unique passwords maintained by the state, officials identified them as belonging to Mesa County, a largely rural area on the border with Utah.

Peters appeared onstage in August 2021 at a "cybersymposium" hosted by Lindell, who has sought to prove that voting machines have been manipulated and promised to reveal proof of that during the event.

While no evidence was provided, a copy of Mesa County's voting system hard drive was distributed and posted online, according to attendees and state officials.

The copy included proprietary software developed by Dominion Voting Systems that is used by election offices around the country. Experts have described the unauthorized release as serious, saying it provided a potential "practice environment" that would allow anyone to probe for vulnerabilities that could be exploited during a future election.

Nearly two years after the 2020 election, no evidence has emerged to suggest widespread fraud or manipulation, while reviews in state after state have upheld the results showing President Joe Biden won.

The Mesa County breach is just one of several around the country that have concerned election security experts. Authorities are investigating whether unauthorized people were allowed to access voting systems in Georgia and Michigan.

Lindell said the federal agents had also questioned him about when he first met Frank, an Ohio math and science educator, who is among a group of people who have been traveling across the U.S. meeting with community groups claiming to have evidence that voting machines were rigged in the 2020 election.

In court records, prosecutors say Frank met with Peters and members of her staff in April 2021 in her office. During the meeting, Frank told Peters that the county's election management system was vulnerable to outside interference and the group discussed concerns the state was going to "wipe" the machines, according to the court records.

Associated Press writers Jill Colvin, Eric Tucker and Michelle R. Smith contributed to this report.

Ken Starr, whose probe led to Clinton impeachment, dies

By JAKE BLEIBERG Associated Press

Ken Starr, a former federal appellate judge and a prominent attorney whose criminal investigation of Bill Clinton led to the president's impeachment and put Starr at the center of one of the country's most polarizing debates of the 1990s, has died at age 76, his family said Tuesday.

Starr died at a hospital Tuesday of complications from surgery, according to his former colleague, attorney Mark Lanier. He said Starr had been hospitalized in an intensive care unit in Houston for about four months.

For many years, Starr's stellar reputation as a lawyer seemed to place him on a path to the Supreme Court. At age 37, he became the youngest person ever to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, where Chief Justice John Roberts and justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Clarence Thomas and Antonin Scalia also had served. From 1989-93, Starr was the solicitor general in the administration of President George H.W. Bush, arguing 25 cases before the Supreme Court.

Roberts said Tuesday: "Ken loved our country and served it with dedication and distinction. He led by example, in the legal profession, public service, and the community."

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell remembered Starr Tuesday as "a brilliant litigator, an impressive

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leader, and a devoted patriot.”

Despite his impressive legal credentials, nothing could have prepared him for the task of investigating a sitting president.

In a probe that lasted five years, Starr looked into fraudulent real estate deals involving a long-time Clinton associate, delved into the removal of documents from the office of deputy White House counsel Vincent Foster after his suicide and assembled evidence of Clinton’s sexual encounters with Monica Lewinsky, a former White House intern. Each of the controversies held the potential to do serious, perhaps fatal, damage to Clinton’s presidency.

In a Tuesday tweet, Lewinsky expressed mixed emotions on the news of Starr’s death. “As I’m sure many can understand, my thoughts about Ken Starr bring up complicated feelings,” she tweeted. “But of more importance, is that I imagine it’s a painful loss for those who love him.”

As Clinton’s legal problems worsened, the White House pilloried Starr as a right-wing fanatic doing the bidding of Republicans bent on destroying the president.

“The assaults took a toll” on the investigation, Starr told a Senate committee in 1999. “A duly authorized federal law enforcement investigation came to be characterized as yet another political game. Law became politics by other means.”

In a bitter finish to his investigation of the Lewinsky affair that engendered still more criticism, Starr filed a report, as the law required, with the U.S. House of Representatives. He concluded that Clinton lied under oath, engaged in obstruction of justice and followed a pattern of conduct that was inconsistent with the president’s constitutional duty to faithfully execute the laws. House Republicans used Starr’s report as a roadmap in the impeachment of the president, who was acquitted in a Senate trial.

In 2020, he was recruited to help represent Trump in his first impeachment trial. In a memorable statement to Congress, Starr said “we are living in what I think can aptly be described as the ‘age of impeachment.’” He said that “like war, impeachment is hell, or at least presidential impeachment is hell.”

In a post to his Truth Social account, Trump paid tribute to Starr as “a true American Patriot who loved our Country and the Law. I so appreciated his support and his thoughts that our cause against fascists and other mentally sick people in our Country is just.”

Clinton’s legal problems began during the 1992 presidential campaign. Questions arose over the candidate’s ties to the owner of a failed Arkansas savings and loan. The issue faded quickly. But it caught the attention of federal regulators, who began looking into whether money from the S&L had been diverted to a real estate venture called Whitewater in which Bill and Hillary Clinton and the S&L’s owner, Jim McDougal, shared a financial interest.

Bowing to intense political pressure from Republicans and some members of his own party, Clinton called for appointment of a special counsel to investigate Whitewater. A three-member appeals court for independent counsels selected Starr.

On the Whitewater front, Starr’s prosecutors investigated Mrs. Clinton’s legal work for Jim McDougal’s S&L. Both she and the president were questioned by Starr’s prosecutors and their videotaped depositions were played for juries in criminal trials of McDougal and his ex-wife Susan. Neither of the Clintons was ever charged in connection with Whitewater.

The investigation of Clinton’s intimate relationship with Lewinsky was a Washington spectacle.

In 1995, Lewinsky went to work at the White House as an intern. During the government shutdown late that year, she and Clinton had a sexual encounter in a hallway near the Oval Office, the first of 10 sexual encounters over the next year and a half. Lewinsky confided the affair to a co-worker, Linda Tripp, who tape-recorded some of their conversations and brought the tapes to Starr’s prosecutors. Lewinsky was granted immunity from prosecution in the case that brought Starr celebrity and thrust a presidential sex scandal into America’s living rooms. She became Starr’s chief witness against the president, who had denied having sexual relations with her.

Putting the investigation behind him, Starr embarked on a career in academia, first as dean of the law school at Pepperdine University where he taught constitutional issues and civil procedures, then as president

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of Baylor University in his home state of Texas. He also became an author, writing "First Among Equals: The Supreme Court in American Life."

Starr was demoted from the presidency at Baylor in 2016 amid a sex assault scandal that rocked the Big 12 school and its football program, as women alleged campus leaders at the nation's largest Baptist school bungled or ignored their assault complaints. Baylor eventually settled with several women who filed a cascade of lawsuits, including a case where the victim of a 2015 attack accused Baylor of fostering a "hunting ground for sexual predators."

The school's board of regents allowed Starr to stay on as chancellor and law school professor, jobs that carried no "operational" duties at Baylor. He resigned altogether a few months later. Football coach Art Briles also was fired.

A review commissioned by the school found that under Starr, school administrators discouraged students from reporting or participating in student conduct reviews, and even contributed to or accommodated a "hostile" environment against the alleged victims.

In a statement, Starr apologized to "those victims who were not treated with the care, concern, and support they deserve."

Starr also drew scrutiny for his role helping defend Jeffrey Epstein, the multimillionaire who killed himself in jail in 2019 while awaiting trial on charges that he sexually abused multiple underage girls. Starr was part of a team that helped Epstein reach a controversial plea agreement in 2008 that led to him receiving a 13-month sentence instead of facing more serious federal charges for sex abuse.

Starr was born in Vernon, a small Texas town near the Oklahoma state, and raised in San Antonio. He earned his B.A. from George Washington University in 1968, his M.A. from Brown University in 1969 and his J.D. degree from Duke University Law School in 1973. He was a law clerk to Chief Justice Warren E. Burger from 1975 to 1977.

As a young attorney at the law firm of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher in Los Angeles, Starr worked with William French Smith, who became attorney general in the administration of President Ronald Reagan. Starr became counselor to Smith, and from there was nominated by Reagan to the federal appeals court.

Bleiberg reported from Dallas. Associated Press writers Jim Vertuno in Austin, Terry Wallace in Dallas and the late Pete Yost contributed to this report.

Whistleblower: China, India had agents working for Twitter

By MARCY GORDON, MATT O'BRIEN and BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Business Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Twitter's former security chief told Congress Tuesday there was "at least one agent" from China's intelligence service on Twitter's payroll and that the company knowingly allowed India to add agents to the company roster as well, potentially giving those nations access to sensitive data about users.

These were some of the troubling revelations from Peiter "Mudge" Zatko, a respected cybersecurity expert and Twitter whistleblower who appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee to lay out his allegations against the company.

Zatko told lawmakers that the social media platform is plagued by weak cyber defenses that make it vulnerable to exploitation by "teenagers, thieves and spies" and put the privacy of its users at risk.

"I am here today because Twitter leadership is misleading the public, lawmakers, regulators and even its own board of directors," Zatko said as he began his sworn testimony.

"They don't know what data they have, where it lives and where it came from and so, unsurprisingly, they can't protect it," Zatko said. "It doesn't matter who has keys if there are no locks."

"Twitter leadership ignored its engineers," he said, in part because "their executive incentives led them to prioritize profit over security."

In a statement, Twitter said its hiring process is "independent of any foreign influence" and access to data is managed through a host of measures, including background checks, access controls, and monitoring and detection systems and processes.

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One issue that didn't come up in the hearing was the question of whether Twitter is accurately counting its active users, an important metric for its advertisers. Tesla CEO Elon Musk, who is trying to get out of a \$44 billion deal to buy Twitter, has argued without evidence that many of Twitter's roughly 238 million daily users are fake or malicious accounts, aka "spam bots."

Even so, "that doesn't mean that Musk won't use Zatkó's allegation that Twitter was disinterested in removing bots to try to bolster his argument for walking away from the deal," said Insider Intelligence analyst Jasmine Enberg.

The Delaware judge overseeing the case ruled last week that Musk can include new evidence related to Zatkó's allegations in the high-stakes trial, which is set to start Oct. 17. During the hearing, Musk tweeted a popcorn emoji, often used to suggest that one is sitting back in anticipation of unfolding drama.

Separately on Tuesday, Twitter's shareholders voted overwhelmingly to approve the deal, according to multiple media reports. Shareholders have been voting remotely on the issue for weeks. The vote was largely a formality, particularly given Musk's efforts to nullify the deal, although it does clear a legal hurdle to closing the sale.

Zatkó's message echoed one brought to Congress against another social media giant last year. But unlike that Facebook whistleblower, Frances Haugen, Zatkó hasn't brought troves of internal documents to back up his claims.

Zatkó was the head of security for the influential platform until he was fired early this year. He filed a whistleblower complaint in July with Congress, the Justice Department, the Federal Trade Commission and the Securities and Exchange Commission. Among his most serious accusations is that Twitter violated the terms of a 2011 FTC settlement by falsely claiming that it had put stronger measures in place to protect the security and privacy of its users.

Sen. Dick Durbin, an Illinois Democrat who heads the Judiciary Committee, said Zatkó has detailed flaws "that may pose a direct threat to Twitter's hundreds of millions of users as well as to American democracy."

"Twitter is an immensely powerful platform and can't afford gaping vulnerabilities," he said.

Unknown to Twitter users, there's far more of their personal information disclosed than they — or sometimes even Twitter itself — realize, Zatkó testified. He said Twitter did not address "basic systemic failures" brought forward by company engineers.

The FTC has been "a little over its head", and far behind European counterparts, in policing the sort of privacy violations that have occurred at Twitter, Zatkó said.

Zatkó's allegation that Twitter was more concerned about foreign regulators than the FTC, Enberg said, "could be a wakeup call for U.S. lawmakers," who have been unable to pass meaningful regulation on social media companies.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Republican from South Carolina, said one positive result that could come out of Zatkó's findings would be bipartisan legislation to set up a tighter system of regulation of tech platforms.

"We need to up our game in this country," he said.

Many of Zatkó's claims are uncorroborated and appear to have little documentary support. Twitter has called Zatkó's description of events "a false narrative ... riddled with inconsistencies and inaccuracies" and lacking important context.

Still, Zatkó came off as a convincing whistleblower who has "a lot of credibility in this space," said Ari Lightman, professor of digital media and marketing at Carnegie Mellon University. But he said many of the problems he raised can likely be found at many other digital technology platforms.

"They avoid security protocols in a sense of innovating and running really fast," Lightman said. "We gave digital platforms so much autonomy at the beginning to grow and develop. Now we're at a point where we're, 'Wait a minute ... This has gotten out of hand.'"

Among the assertions from Zatkó that drew lawmaker attention was Twitter's apparent negligence in dealing with governments that sought to get spies a job inside the company. Twitter's inability to log how employees accessed user accounts made it hard for the company to detect when employees were abusing their access, Zatkó said.

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Zatko said he spoke with "high confidence" about a foreign agent that the government of India placed at Twitter to "understand the negotiations" between India's ruling party and Twitter about new social media restrictions and how well those negotiations were going.

Zatko also revealed Tuesday that he was told about a week before his firing that "at least one agent" from the Chinese intelligence service MSS, or the Ministry of State Security, was "on the payroll" at Twitter.

He said he was similarly "surprised and shocked" by an exchange with current Twitter CEO Parag Agrawal about Russia — in which Twitter's current CEO, who was chief technology officer at the time, asked if it would be possible to "punt" content moderation and surveillance to the Russian government, since Twitter doesn't really "have the ability and tools to do things correctly."

"And since they have elections, doesn't that make them a democracy?" Zatko recalled Agrawal saying.

Sen. Charles Grassley, the committee's ranking Republican, said Tuesday that Agrawal declined to testify at the hearing, citing the ongoing legal proceedings with Musk. But the hearing is "more important than Twitter's civil litigation in Delaware," Grassley said. Twitter declined to comment on Grassley's remarks.

In his complaint, Zatko accused Agrawal as well as other senior executives and board members of numerous violations, including making "false and misleading statements to users and the FTC about the Twitter platform's security, privacy and integrity."

Zatko, 51, first gained prominence in the 1990s as a pioneer in the ethical hacking movement and later worked in senior positions at an elite Defense Department research unit and at Google. He joined Twitter in late 2020 at the urging of then-CEO Jack Dorsey.

O'Brien reported from Providence, R.I.; Ortutay reported from Oakland, Calif.

Follow Marcy Gordon at <https://twitter.com/mgordonap>

Iowa teen who killed rapist sentenced, ordered to pay \$150K

By MARGERY A. BECK Associated Press

A teenage human trafficking victim who was initially charged with first-degree murder after she stabbed her accused rapist to death was sentenced Tuesday in an Iowa court to five years of closely supervised probation and ordered to pay \$150,000 restitution to the man's family.

Pieper Lewis, 17, was sentenced Tuesday after she pleaded last year to involuntary manslaughter and willful injury in the June 2020 killing of 37-year-old Zachary Brooks of Des Moines. Both charges were punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

Polk County District judge David M. Porter on Tuesday deferred those prison sentences, meaning that if Lewis violates any portion of her probation, she could be sent to prison to serve that 20-year term.

As for being required to pay the estate of her rapist, "this court is presented with no other option," Porter said, noting the restitution is mandatory under Iowa law that has been upheld by the Iowa Supreme Court.

Lewis was 15 when she stabbed Brooks more than 30 times in a Des Moines apartment. Officials have said Lewis was a runaway who was seeking to escape an abusive life with her adopted mother and was sleeping in the hallways of a Des Moines apartment building when a 28-year-old man took her in before forcibly trafficking her to other men for sex.

Lewis said one of those men was Brooks and that he had raped her multiple times in the weeks before his death. She recounted being forced at knifepoint by the 28-year-old man to go with Brooks to his apartment for sex. She told officials that after Brooks had raped her yet again, she grabbed a knife from a bedside table and stabbed Brooks in a fit of rage.

Police and prosecutors have not disputed that Lewis was sexually assaulted and trafficked. But prosecutors have argued that Brooks was asleep at the time he was stabbed and not an immediate danger to Lewis.

Iowa is not among the dozens of states that have a so-called safe harbor law that gives trafficking victims at least some level of criminal immunity.

Lewis, who earned her GED while being held in juvenile detention, acknowledged in a statement prior

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to her sentencing that she struggled with the structure of her detention, including “why I was treated like fragile glass” or wasn’t allowed to communicate with her friends or family.

“My spirit has been burned, but still glows through the flames,” she read from a statement she had prepared. “Hear me roar, see me glow, and watch me grow.”

“I am a survivor,” she added.

The Associated Press does not typically name victims of sexual assault, but Lewis agreed to have her name used previously in stories about her case.

Prosecutors took issue with Lewis calling herself a victim in the case and said she failed to take responsibility for stabbing Brooks and “leaving his kids without a father.”

The judge peppered Lewis with repeated requests to explain what poor choices she made that led up to Brooks’ stabbing and expressed concern that she sometimes did not want to follow rules set for her in juvenile lockup.

“The next five years of your life will be full of rules you disagree with, I’m sure of it,” Porter said. He later added, “This is the second chance that you’ve asked for. You don’t get a third.”

Karl Schilling with the Iowa Organization for Victim Assistance said a bill to create a safe harbor law for trafficking victims passed the Iowa House earlier this year, but stalled in the Senate under concerns from law enforcement groups that it was too broad.

“There was a working group established to iron out the issues,” Schilling said. “Hopefully it will be taken up again next year.”

Iowa does have an affirmative defense law that gives some leeway to victims of crime if the victim committed the violation “under compulsion by another’s threat of serious injury, provided that the defendant reasonably believed that such injury was imminent.”

Prosecutors argued Tuesday that Lewis waived that affirmative defense when she pleaded guilty to manslaughter and willful injury.

GOP’s Graham unveils nationwide abortion ban after 15 weeks

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Upending the political debate, Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham introduced a nationwide abortion ban Tuesday, sending shockwaves through both parties and igniting fresh debate on a fraught issue weeks before the midterm elections that will determine control of Congress.

Graham’s own Republican Party leaders did not immediately embrace his abortion ban bill, which would prohibit the procedure after 15 weeks of pregnancy with rare exceptions, and has almost no chance of becoming law in the Democratic-held Congress. Democrats torched it as an alarming signal of where “MAGA” Republicans are headed if they win control of the House and Senate in November.

“America’s got to make some decisions,” Graham said at a news conference at the Capitol.

The South Carolina Republican said that rather than shying away from the Supreme Court’s ruling this summer overturning *Roe v. Wade*’s nearly 50-year right to abortion access, Republicans are preparing to fight to make a nationwide abortion ban federal law.

“Oh, no, no, no, no, no, no, we’re going nowhere,” the senator said while flanked by female advocates from the anti-abortion movement. “We welcome the debate. We welcome the vote in the United States Senate as to what America should look like in 2022.”

Reaction was swift, fierce and unwavering from Democrats who viewed Graham’s legislation as an extreme example of the far-right’s hold on the GOP, and as a political gift of self-inflicted pain for Republican candidates now having to answer questions about an abortion ban heading toward the midterm elections.

“A nationwide abortion ban — that’s the contrast between the two parties, plain and simple,” Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said.

Sen. Patty Murray, a Democrat from Washington who is in her own fight for reelection, said Republicans “want to force” women to stay pregnant and deliver babies.

“To anyone who thought they were safe, here is the painful reality,” she said. “Republicans are coming

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for your rights.”

The sudden turn of events comes in a razor-tight election season as Republicans hoping to win control of Congress are struggling to recapture momentum, particularly after the Supreme Court’s landmark decision sparked deep concerns among some voters, with signs of female voters peeling away from the GOP.

In a midterm election where the party out of the White House traditionally holds an advantage, even more so this year with President Joe Biden’s lackluster approval ratings, the Democrats have regained their own momentum pushing back the GOP candidates in House and Senate races.

Tuesday’s announcement set up an immediate split screen with Biden and Democrats poised to celebrate their accomplishments in a ceremony at the White House after passage of the Inflation Reduction Act and Republicans forced to answer for Graham’s proposed abortion ban.

“This bill is wildly out of step with what Americans believe,” White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said in a statement.

“While President Biden and Vice President Harris are focused on the historic passage of the Inflation Reduction Act to reduce the cost of prescription drugs, health care, and energy – and to take unprecedented action to address climate change — Republicans in Congress are focused on taking rights away from millions of women,” Jean-Pierre said.

Graham’s legislation has almost zero chance of becoming law, but it elevates the abortion issue at a time when other Republicans would prefer to focus on inflation, border security and Biden’s leadership.

The Republican bill would ban abortions nationwide after 15 weeks of pregnancy, except in cases of rape, incest or risk to the physical health of the mother. Graham said it would put the U.S. on par with many countries in Europe and around the world.

In particular, Graham’s bill would leave in place state laws that are more restrictive. That provision is notable because many Republicans have argued that the Supreme Court’s ruling leaves the abortion issue for the states to decide. But the legislation from the Republicans makes it clear states are only allowed to decide the issue if their abortion bans are more stringent.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell, who is one seat away from majority control, declined to embrace Graham’s legislation.

“I think every Republican senator running this year in these contested races has an answer as to how they feel about the issue,” McConnell said. He said most GOP senators prefer having the issue dealt with by the states, rather than at the federal level. “So I leave it up to our candidates who are quite capable of handling this issue to determine for them what their response is.”

The Democratic senators most at risk this fall and other Democratic candidates running for Congress appeared eager to fight against Graham’s proposed nationwide abortion ban.

Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, a Nevada Democrat, tweeted that Graham “and every other anti-choice extremist can take a hike.”

Her Republican opponent, Adam Laxalt, has during his campaign insisted that abortion is protected in the state constitution, which it may no longer be under this bill.

In Colorado, another Democrat up for reelection, Sen. Michael Bennet, tweeted: “A nationwide abortion ban is outrageous.”

Bennet pledged “to defend a woman’s right to make her own health care decisions, no matter what ZIP code she lives in. We cannot afford to let the Republicans take back the Senate.”

His opponent in Colorado, Republican Joe O’Dea, who supports putting abortion access that had been guaranteed under Roe v. Wade into law, agreed, in part: “A Republican ban is as reckless and tone deaf as is Joe Biden and Chuck Schumer’s hostility to considering any compromise on late term abortion, parental notification or conscience protections for religious hospitals.”

The races for control of Congress are tight in the split 50-50 Senate, where one seat determines majority control, and in the House, where Speaker Nancy Pelosi can afford to lose only a few seats.

Pelosi called Graham’s bill the “clearest signal of extreme MAGA Republicans’ intent to criminalize women’s health freedom in all 50 states and arrest doctors for providing basic care. Make no mistake: if Republicans get the chance, they will work to pass laws even more draconian than this bill.”

Republican leaders on Capitol Hill tried to hold the party together amid the differences.

"I think that what it's attempting to do is probably change the conversation a little bit," said Sen. John Thune, a South Dakota Republican and second-ranking party leader.

"Democrats are implying that all Republicans are for a ban without exceptions, and that's not true," Thune said. "There are Republicans who are in favor of restrictions. And I think this is an attempt to at least put something out there that reflects the views of a lot of Republicans who are in favor of some restrictions."

Associated Press writers Kevin Freking in Washington and Nick Riccardi in Denver contributed to this report.

Armenia, Azerbaijan report 99 troops killed in border clash

By AVET DEMOURIAN Associated Press

YEREVAN, Armenia (AP) — Fighting on the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan killed about 100 troops Tuesday as attacks on both sides fed fears of broader hostilities breaking out between the longtime adversaries.

Armenia said at least 49 of its soldiers were killed; Azerbaijan said it lost 50.

The fighting erupted minutes after midnight with Azerbaijani forces unleashing an artillery barrage and drone attacks in many sections of Armenian territory, according to Armenia's Defense Ministry. It said shelling grew less intense during the day but Azerbaijani troops were trying to advance into Armenian territory.

Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry said it was responding to a "large-scale provocation" by Armenia late Monday and early Tuesday. It said Armenian troops planted mines and fired on Azerbaijani military positions.

The two countries have been locked in a decades-old conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, which is part of Azerbaijan but has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since a separatist war there ended in 1994.

Azerbaijan reclaimed broad swaths of Nagorno-Karabakh in a six-week war in 2020 that killed more than 6,600 people and ended with a Russia-brokered peace deal. Moscow deployed about 2,000 troops to the region to serve as peacekeepers under the deal.

The Russian Foreign Ministry on Tuesday urged both parties "to refrain from further escalation and show restraint." Moscow has engaged in a delicate balancing act in seeking to maintain friendly ties with both ex-Soviet nations. It has strong economic and security ties with Armenia, which hosts a Russian military base, while also has been developing close cooperation with oil-rich Azerbaijan.

The international community also urged calm.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged Armenia and Azerbaijan "to take immediate steps to deescalate tensions, exercise maximum restraint and resolve any outstanding issues through dialogue" and implement previous agreements, his spokesman said.

The U.N. Security Council scheduled closed consultations Wednesday on the renewed fighting.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan called Russian President Vladimir Putin and later also had calls with French President Emmanuel Macron, European Council President Charles Michel and Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov spoke by phone with his Azerbaijani counterpart, Jeyhun Bayramov.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with both Pashinyan and Azerbaijan's president, Ilham Aliyev. The U.S. has a special envoy in the region, Blinken said, "and my hope is that we can move this from conflict back to the negotiating table and back to trying to build a peace."

Speaking in parliament early Tuesday, Pashinyan accused Azerbaijan of having had an uncompromising stance at recent European Union-brokered talks in Brussels.

Armenia said the Azerbaijani shelling Tuesday damaged civilian infrastructure and wounded an unspecified number of people.

On Facebook, Aliyev expressed condolences "to the families and relatives of our servicemen who died on September 13 while preventing large-scale provocations committed by the Armenian armed forces in

the direction of the Kalbajar, Lachin, Dashkasan and Zangilan regions of Azerbaijan.”

Turkey, an ally of Azerbaijan, also placed the blame for the violence on Armenia. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan expressed support for Aliyev and said in a statement that Turkey and Azerbaijan are “brotherly ... in all matters.”

The governor of Gegharkunik province, one of the regions that came under Azerbaijani shelling, said there was a 40-minute lull in the fighting, apparently reflecting Moscow’s attempt to negotiate a truce, before it later resumed. The governor, Karen Sarkisyan, said four Armenian troops in his region were killed and another 43 were wounded by the shelling.

The Armenian government said it would officially ask Russia for assistance under a friendship treaty between the countries, and also appeal to the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, a Moscow-dominated security alliance of ex-Soviet nations.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov refrained from comment on Armenia’s request but added during a conference call with reporters that Putin was “taking every effort to help de-escalate tensions.”

Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow contributed to this report.

Asian markets open lower after price data slam Wall Street

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

Asian markets skidded lower on Wednesday after Wall Street fell the most since June 2020 as a report showed inflation has kept a surprisingly strong grip on the U.S. economy.

Tokyo’s benchmark Nikkei 225 lost 2.8% in early trading Wednesday, to 27,816.58, while Sydney’s S&P/ASX 200 declined 2.5% to 6,834.80. In Seoul, the Kospi lost 2.6% to 2,386.29.

U.S. futures edged higher, with the contracts for the Dow industrials and the S&P 500 up 0.1%. European futures also declined.

On Tuesday, the Dow lost more than 1,250 points and the S&P 500 sank 4.3%. Tuesday’s hotter-than-expected report on inflation has traders bracing for the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates still more, adding to risks for the economy.

The steep sell-off didn’t quite knock out the market’s gains over the past four days, but it ended a four-day winning streak for the major U.S. indexes and erased an early rally in European markets.

The S&P 500 sank 4.3% to 3,932.69. The Dow fell 3.9% to 31,104.97 and the Nasdaq composite closed 5.2% lower, at 11,633.57.

Bond prices also fell sharply, sending their yields higher, after a report showed inflation decelerated only to 8.3% in August, instead of the 8.1% economists expected.

The yield on the two-year Treasury, which tends to track expectations for Fed actions, soared to 3.74% from 3.57% late Monday. The 10-year yield, which helps dictate where mortgages and rates for other loans are heading, rose to 3.42% from 3.36%.

The hotter-than-expected reading has traders bracing for the Federal Reserve to ultimately raise interest rates more than expected to combat inflation, with all the risks for the economy that entails.

“Right now, it’s not the journey that’s a worry so much as the destination,” said Brian Jacobsen, senior investment strategist at Allspring Global Investments. “If the Fed wants to hike and hold, the big question is at what level.”

All but six of the stocks in the S&P 500 fell. Technology and other high-growth companies fell more than the rest of the market because they’re seen as most at risk from higher rates.

Most of Wall Street came into the day thinking the Fed would hike its key short-term rate by a hefty three-quarters of a percentage point at its meeting next week. But the hope was that inflation was falling back to more normal levels after peaking in June at 9.1%.

Such a slowdown might let the Fed reduce the size of its rate hikes through the end of this year and then potentially hold steady through early 2023.

Tuesday’s report dashed some of those hopes. Many of the data points were worse than economists

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expected, including some the Fed pays particular attention to, such as inflation outside of food and energy prices.

Markets honed in on a 0.6% rise in such prices during August from July, double what economists expected, said Gargi Chaudhuri, head of investment strategy at iShares.

Traders now see a one-in-three chance the Fed will hike the benchmark rate by a full percentage point next week, quadruple the usual move. No one in the futures market was predicting such a hike a day earlier.

The Fed has already raised its benchmark interest rate four times this year, with the last two increases by three-quarters of a percentage point. The federal funds rate is currently in a range of 2.25% to 2.50%.

Higher rates hurt the economy by making it more expensive to buy a house, a car or anything else bought on credit. Mortgage rates have already hit their highest level since 2008, creating pain for the housing industry. The hope is that the Fed can pull off the tightrope walk of slowing the economy enough to snuff out high inflation, but not so much that it creates a painful recession.

Tuesday's data casts doubt on hopes for such a "soft landing." Higher rates also hurt prices for stocks, bonds and other investments.

Investments seen as the most expensive or the riskiest are the ones hardest hit by higher rates. Bitcoin tumbled 9.4%.

Expectations for a more aggressive Fed also helped the dollar add to its already strong gains for this year. The dollar has been surging against other currencies in large part because the Fed has been hiking rates faster and by bigger margins than many other central banks.

The dollar bought 144.59 Japanese yen, up from 144.57 yen late Tuesday. The euro rose to 0.9973 cents, up from 0.9969 cents.

Oil prices rose. U.S. benchmark crude added 38 cents to \$87.69 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It lost 47 cents to \$87.31 on Tuesday. Brent crude, the international pricing standard, climbed 38 cents to \$93.55 per barrel.

AP Business Writers Stan Choe, Alex Veiga and Damian J. Troise contributed.

Casket of Queen Elizabeth II arrives at Buckingham Palace

By JILL LAWLESS and MIKE CORDER Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The coffin of Queen Elizabeth II returned to Buckingham Palace on Tuesday evening, making its way through a drizzly London as crowds lined the route for a glimpse of the hearse and to bid her a final farewell.

People parked their cars along a normally busy road, got out and waved as the hearse, with lights inside illuminating the flag-draped coffin, made its way into London. In the city, people pressed in on the road and held their phones aloft as it passed.

Thousands outside the palace cheered, shouted "God save the queen!" and clapped as the hearse swung around a roundabout in front of the queen's official London residence and through the wrought iron gates. Her son, King Charles III, and other immediate family members waited inside.

The coffin traveled to London from Edinburgh, where 33,000 people filed silently past it in the 24 hours at St. Giles' Cathedral after it had been brought there from her cherished summer retreat, Balmoral. The queen — the only monarch many in the United Kingdom have ever known — died there Sept. 8 at age 96 after 70 years on the throne.

The military C-17 Globemaster carrying the casket touched down at RAF Northolt, an air force base in the west of London, about an hour after it left Edinburgh. U.K. Prime Minister Liz Truss, Defense Secretary Ben Wallace and a military honor guard were among those at the base for the arrival.

One who stood in the rain waiting for the hearse to pass, retired bus driver David Stringer, 82, recalled watching the queen's coronation on a newsreel as a boy.

"It's a great shame," he said. "I mean, I didn't think about her every day, but I always knew she was there, and my life's coming to a close now and her time has finished."

The coffin will be taken by horse-drawn gun carriage Wednesday to the Houses of Parliament to lie in

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state for four days before Monday's funeral at Westminster Abbey.

"Scotland has now bid our Queen of Scots a sad, but fond farewell," said Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon. "We will not see her like again."

Charles had returned to London from Northern Ireland, where his visit drew a rare moment of unity from politicians in a region with a contested British and Irish identity that is deeply divided over the monarchy.

The new king is making his own journey this week, visiting the four nations of the U.K. — England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Hundreds gathered around Hillsborough Castle near Belfast, the royal family's official residence in Northern Ireland, in the latest outpouring of affection following the queen's death. The area in front of the gates to the castle was carpeted with hundreds of floral tributes.

Charles and his wife Camilla, the Queen Consort, got out of their car to wave to the crowd and sometimes used both hands to reach out to villagers, including schoolchildren in bright blue uniforms. Charles even petted a corgi — famously his late mother's favorite breed of dog — held up by one person, and some chanted "God save the king!"

"Today means so much to me and my family, just to be present in my home village with my children to witness the arrival of the new king is a truly historic moment for us all," said Hillsborough resident Robin Campbell.

While there was a warm welcome in Hillsborough, the British monarchy draws mixed emotions in Northern Ireland, where there are two main communities: mostly Protestant unionists who consider themselves British and largely Roman Catholic nationalists who see themselves as Irish.

That split fueled three decades of violence known as "the Troubles" involving paramilitary groups on both sides and U.K. security forces, in which 3,600 people died. The royal family was touched personally by the violence: Lord Louis Mountbatten, a cousin of the queen and a much-loved mentor to Charles, was killed by an Irish Republican Army bomb in 1979.

A deep sectarian divide remains, a quarter century after Northern Ireland's 1998 peace agreement.

For some Irish nationalists, the monarch represents an oppressive foreign power. But others acknowledge the queen's role in forging peace. On a visit to Northern Ireland in 2012, she shook hands with Sinn Fein deputy leader Martin McGuinness, a former IRA commander — a once-unthinkable moment of reconciliation. On Tuesday the new king shook hands with Sinn Fein Vice President Michelle O'Neill.

In a sign of how far Northern Ireland has come on the road to peace, representatives of Sinn Fein attended commemorative events for the queen and meeting the king on Tuesday.

Alex Maskey, a Sinn Fein politician who is speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, said the queen had "demonstrated how individual acts of positive leadership can help break down barriers and encourage reconciliation."

Charles responded that she had tried to play a role "in bringing together those whom history had separated, and in extending a hand to make possible the healing of long-held hurts."

He said he would draw on his mother's "shining example" and "seek the welfare of all the inhabitants of Northern Ireland."

Still, not everyone was welcoming the new king.

On the Falls Road in Belfast, a nationalist stronghold, several walls are decorated with murals of Bobby Sands, an IRA member who died while on a hunger strike in prison in 1981, and others killed in the Troubles.

"No, he's not our king. Bobby Sands was our king here," said 52-year-old Bobby Jones. "Queen never done nothing for us. Never did. None of the royals do."

Irish leaders attended a service of reflection at St. Anne's Cathedral in Belfast despite tense relations between Dublin and London over Brexit. Since Britain left the European Union in 2020, the U.K. and the EU have been wrangling over trade rules for Northern Ireland, the only part of the U.K. that shares a border with a member of the bloc.

Before being flown to London, the queen's oak coffin was carried from St. Giles' Cathedral to the strain of bagpipes. Crowds lining the Royal Mile through the historic heart of Edinburgh broke into applause as

the coffin, accompanied by the queen's daughter, Princess Anne, was driven to Edinburgh Airport.

"I was fortunate to share the last 24 hours of my dearest mother's life," Princess Anne said in a statement. "It has been an honour and a privilege to accompany her on her final journeys. Witnessing the love and respect shown by so many on these journeys has been both humbling and uplifting."

Follow AP stories on the death of Queen Elizabeth II and Britain's royal family at <https://apnews.com/hub/queen-elizabeth-ii>

Judge unseals additional portions of Mar-a-Lago affidavit

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal judge Tuesday unsealed additional portions of an FBI affidavit laying out the basis for a search of former President Donald Trump's Florida home, showing that agents earlier obtained a hard drive after issuing a subpoena for surveillance footage recorded inside Mar-a-Lago.

A heavily redacted version of the affidavit was made public last month, but the Justice Department requested permission to show more of it after lawyers for Trump revealed the existence of a June grand jury subpoena that sought video footage from cameras in the vicinity of the Mar-a-Lago storage room.

"Because those aspects of the grand jury's investigation have now been publicly revealed, there is no longer any reason to keep them sealed (i.e. redacted) in the filings in this matter," department lawyers wrote.

The newly visible portions of the FBI agent's affidavit show that the FBI on June 24 subpoenaed for the footage after a visit weeks earlier to Mar-a-Lago in which agents observed 50 to 55 boxes of records in the storage room at the property. The Trump Organization provided a hard drive on July 6 in response to the subpoena, the affidavit says.

The footage could be an important piece of the investigation, including as agents evaluate whether anyone has sought to obstruct the probe. The Justice Department has said in a separate filing that it has "developed evidence that government records were likely concealed and removed from the Storage Room and that efforts were likely taken to obstruct the government's investigation."

The Justice Department has been investigating the holding of top-secret information and other classified documents at Mar-a-Lago after Trump left the White House. FBI agents during their Aug. 8 search of the home and club said they recovered more than 11,000 documents and 1,800 other items, including roughly 100 with classification markings.

Separately Tuesday, the Justice Department again urged U.S. District Aileen Cannon to lift her hold on core aspects of the investigation. Cannon last week granted the Trump team's request for an independent arbiter to review the seized documents and weed out from the investigation any records that may be covered by claims of executive or attorney-client privilege.

She also ordered the department to halt its review of the records pending any further court order or the completion of a review by the yet-to-be-named special master. The department urged Cannon last week to put her order on hold and told the judge Tuesday that its investigation would be harmed by a continued delay of its ability to scrutinize the classified documents.

"The government and the public unquestionably have an interest in the timely enforcement of criminal laws, particularly those involving the protection of highly sensitive information, and especially where, as here, there may have been efforts to obstruct its investigation," the lawyers wrote.

The Trump team on Monday urged the judge to leave her order in place. His lawyers raised questions about the documents' current classification status and noted that a president has absolute authority to declassify information, though they pointedly did not say that Trump had actually declassified anything.

Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

Richardson visits Moscow as Griner, Whelan remain jailed

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Bill Richardson, the former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and a frequent emissary in hostage negotiations who has worked to secure the releases of WNBA star Brittney Griner and another jailed American, Paul Whelan, visited Moscow this week and held meetings with Russian leaders, a person familiar with the matter said Tuesday night.

The visit came as American officials have continued to press Russia to release Griner, who was sentenced last month to nine years in prison in a drug possession case, and Whelan, a Michigan corporate security executive serving a 16-year sentence on espionage-related charges. The U.S. government regards both as wrongfully detained.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced in July that the U.S. had made a "substantial proposal" to Russia to facilitate a swap. Though he did not detail the terms, a person familiar the matter said the U.S. had offered to release convicted Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout.

In an interview with The Associated Press last month, Richardson said he was hopeful about the chances of a two-for-two prisoner swap. In cases like this, Richardson said at the time, "it's proportional — two-for two."

The person who confirmed Richardson's visit insisted on anonymity to discuss private negotiations. The Richardson Center for Global Engagement, which Richardson founded, issued a statement declining to comment on his visit. The nature of the dialogue and any outcome were not immediately clear.

CNN was first to report Richardson's visit.

Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

In Northern Ireland, praise for monarchy vies with disdain

By ADAM GELLER AP National Writer

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) — It's less than ten minutes walk from the Falls Road to the Shankill Road in Northern Ireland's capital, where Catholics and Protestants still live in segregated enclaves.

But to hear people in these adjoining neighborhoods explain their almost diametrically opposite views of the British monarchy, it might as well be 1,000 miles.

And so as King Charles III arrived in Northern Ireland for the first visit since his mother's death elevated him to the throne, the voices of Belfast offered a sharp reminder of the country's persistent, complicated and, at times, bloody political realities.

On the street residents call The Shankill -- center of a Protestant neighborhood with a long history of loyalty to the crown -- British flags fluttered over shops and from light poles. At the foot of a giant mural of a young Elizabeth II proclaiming her "the people's monarch," many proud to be her subjects came bearing flowers and notes of emotional farewell.

"We swore our allegiance to the queen and she stuck by us," said Jacqueline Humphries, 58, once a soldier in the Ulster Defence Regiment, established by the British Army to police Northern Ireland during the decades of sectarian violence known as The Troubles. "I think Charles will do just as good a job. She trained him well."

Not half a mile away on the Falls Road -- the nationalist stronghold that served as base for the Irish Republican Army and its decades-long guerrilla campaign against British rule -- those heading to work Tuesday brushed off any suggestion that Charles' visit could validate the crown's claim to Northern Ireland.

"They can believe that, but we still believe we will get a united Ireland," said Paul Walker, 55, walking past a 3-story-high mural of Bobby Sands, an IRA militant who died while on a hunger strike in prison in 1981.

Charles is "not our king. Bobby Sands was our king here," said 52-year-old Bobby Jones. "Queen never done nothing for us. Never did. None of the royals do."

Walker and others said Queen Elizabeth II had earned a measure of respect, if never affection, for her decision in 2012 to shake hands with Martin McGuinness, the former IRA commander who went on to

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serve as Northern Ireland's deputy first minister. But Charles is unwelcome.

"He won't be up here much. We don't have a place for Charles," said a man named Christy, 61, who like others declined to provide his full name, pointing to Belfast's fading, but brutally memorable, record of retribution on both sides.

The new king walked a delicate line Tuesday, thanking Northern Ireland officials for their condolences and praise of his mother for her efforts to foster reconciliation.

The queen, he said, "felt deeply, I know, the significance of the role she herself played in bringing together those whom history had separated, and in extending a hand to make possible the healing of long-held hurts."

It's not clear, though, if Charles will benefit from goodwill earned by his mother. She had decades to build a reputation as a steadfast leader even in the most difficult of times; not so, her son, who some see as aloof. And nowhere else in the lands that make up this less than United Kingdom is the divide over the crown so fierce.

Most of Ireland gained independence from Britain in 1921 after a guerrilla war. But Northern Ireland, where a Protestant majority favored Britain, remained a part of the United Kingdom.

The shaky peace exploded in August 1969 with sectarian violence after protests by the Catholic minority for civil rights. The British Army sent in forces, ostensibly to contain the violence and protect Catholics.

"Army in Control Here For At Least Four Months," warned the front page of *The Irish News*, now displayed in a museum of IRA history just off the Falls Road.

Instead, The Troubles lasted nearly 30 years, resulting in the deaths of more than 3,000 people.

A few minutes in either neighborhood is all it takes to unearth memories of the violence and the gaping divide over the role of the British government.

"Once you saw the Brits, once you saw the police, you went running the other way because you were guilty before you innocent," said Damian Burns, a postal worker, walking to work past the offices of Sinn Fein, the political party long affiliated with the IRA that is now the largest in Northern Ireland's power-sharing government.

The Sinn Fein bookstore onsite sells posters with a portrait of Sands over the slogan: "England Get Out of Ireland."

Over on the Shankill, Humphries, now a housing assistance counselor, recalled that when The Troubles started she was living in an area mixed with both Protestants and Catholics. After joining the British-allied military she received death threats from the Irish National Liberation Army, forcing a move to the loyalist neighborhood where she has lived ever since. Others on both sides also moved to be near those like them, and the city became even more divided.

The royal family was not immune to the violence. In 1979, the IRA assassinated Lord Louis Mountbatten, a cousin of the queen and mentor to Charles, detonating a bomb planted aboard his fishing boat. Three others also died.

The Troubles finally ended with the Good Friday Agreement of 1998. But all these years later, the Falls Road and the Shankill remain divided from one another by a "Peace Line" -- high walls with steel gates that are still closed each evening.

Charles, unwanted by some here and unproven to others, will have to thread his way carefully through the volatility. But it could offer valuable lessons - at least in what not to do - for the new monarch. In Scotland, where a referendum on independence from Britain was narrowly defeated in 2014, rhetoric remains heated and officials are pushing for a follow-up vote. In Wales, too, some people bridle at being kept under London's control.

Residents of Belfast will be watching closely, regardless of their allegiances.

On the Falls Road of 25 or 30 years ago, the queen was vilified as a symbol of British oppression, said Walker, who is confident the two Irelands will eventually be united.

He won't change his mind about that, he said, but even with a bitter past, he's become more willing to see the queen, who was 96, as more than a foe.

She was, after all, someone's grandmother.

"It's always in the back of your mind who these people are," he said, "and not just that they're the head of military forces."

AP National Writer Adam Geller is on assignment in the United Kingdom covering the queen's death. Follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/adgeller>

Ukrainian troops keep up pressure on fleeing Russian forces

By ELENA BECATOROS and HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KHARKIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian troops piled pressure on retreating Russian forces Tuesday, pressing deeper into occupied territory and sending more Kremlin troops fleeing ahead of the counteroffensive that has inflicted a stunning blow on Moscow's military prestige.

As the advance continued, Ukraine's border guard services said the army took control of Vovchansk — a town just 3 kilometers (2 miles) from Russia seized on the first day of the war. Russia has acknowledged that it recently withdrew troops from areas in the northeastern region of Kharkiv.

Russian troops were also pulling out from Melitopol, the second largest city in Ukraine's southern Zaporizhzhia region, the city's pre-occupation mayor said. His claim could not immediately be verified.

Melitopol has been occupied since early March. Capturing it would give Kyiv an opportunity to disrupt Russian supply lines between the south and the eastern Donbas region, the two major areas where Moscow-backed forces hold territory.

Melitopol Mayor Ivan Fedorov wrote on Telegram that the Russian troops were heading toward Moscow-annexed Crimea. He said columns of military equipment were reported at a checkpoint in Chonhar, a village marking the boundary between the Crimean peninsula and the Ukrainian mainland.

In the newly freed village of Chkalovske in the Kharkiv region, Svitlana Honchar said the Russians' departure was sudden and swift.

"They left like the wind," Honchar said Tuesday after loading cans of food aid into her car. "They were fleeing by any means they could."

Some Russians appeared to have been left behind in the hasty retreat. "They were trying to catch up," she said.

It was not yet clear if the Ukrainian blitz, which unfolded after months of little discernible movement, could signal a turning point in the nearly seven-month war.

But the country's officials were buoyant, releasing footage showing their forces burning Russian flags and inspecting abandoned, charred tanks. In one video, border guards tore down a poster that read, "We are one people with Russia."

Momentum has switched back and forth before, and Ukraine's American allies were careful not to declare a premature victory since Russian President Vladimir Putin still has troops and resources to tap.

In the face of Russia's largest defeat since its botched attempt to capture Kyiv early in the war, Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said troops were hitting back with "massive strikes" in all sectors. But there were no immediate reports of a sudden uptick in Russian attacks.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that Ukrainian forces were carrying out "stabilization measures" across recaptured territory in the south and east, and rounding up Russian troops, "saboteurs" and alleged collaborators.

In his nightly address, Zelenskyy also pledged to restore normalcy in the liberated areas.

"It is very important that together with our troops, with our flag, ordinary, normal life enters the de-occupied territory," he said, citing an example of how people in one village had already begun receiving pension payments after months of occupation.

Reports of chaos abounded as Russian troops pulled out — as well as claims that they were surrendering en masse. The claims could not be confirmed.

Ukrainian Deputy Minister of Defense Hanna Maliar said Kyiv is trying to persuade even more Russian

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soldiers to give up, launching shells filled with flyers ahead of their advance.

"Russians use you as cannon fodder. Your life doesn't mean anything for them. You don't need this war. Surrender to Armed Forces of Ukraine," the flyers read.

In the wake of the retreat, Ukrainian authorities moved into several areas to investigate alleged atrocities committed by Russian troops against civilians.

Since Saturday, the Kharkiv regional police have repeatedly reported that local law enforcement officers have found civilian bodies bearing signs of torture across territories formerly held by Russia. It was not possible to verify their statements.

On Tuesday, regional police alleged that Russian troops set up "a torture chamber" at the local police station in Balakliya, a town of 25,000, that was occupied from March until last week.

In a Facebook post, the head of the police force's investigative department, Serhii Bolvinov, cited testimony from Balakliya residents and claimed that Russian troops "always kept at least 40 people captive" on the premises.

Meanwhile, military analysts sought to understand the blow sustained by Moscow.

British intelligence said that one premier force, the 1st Guards Tank Army, had been "severely degraded" during the invasion, along with the conventional Russian forces designed to counter NATO.

"It will likely take years for Russia to rebuild this capability," the British officials said.

The setback might renew Russia's interest in peace talks, said Abbas Gallyamov, an independent Russian political analyst and former speechwriter for Putin.

But even if Putin were to sit down at the negotiating table, Zelenskyy has made it clear that Russia must return all Ukrainian territory, including Crimea, Gallyamov said.

"This is unacceptable to Moscow, so talks are, strictly speaking, impossible," he said.

Putin's previous actions "have restricted his room to maneuver," so he "wouldn't be able to put anything meaningful on the table."

For talks to be possible, Putin "would need to leave and be replaced by someone who's relatively untarnished by the current situation," such as his deputy chief of staff, the Moscow mayor or the Russian prime minister, Gallyamov said.

The retreat did not stop Russia from pounding Ukrainian positions. It shelled the city of Lozova in the Kharkiv region, killing three people and injuring nine, said regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov.

And Ukrainian officials said Russia kept up shelling around Europe's largest nuclear facility, where fighting has raised fears of a nuclear disaster. The Nikopol area, which is across the Dnieper River from the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, was shelled six times during the night, but no injuries were immediately reported, said regional Gov. Valentyn Reznichenko.

Strikes have also continued unabated on the city of Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest and one that has been hammered by artillery for months.

Among Kharkiv's battle-scarred apartment buildings, one man who returned to feed the birds struck a defiant tone, saying that the success of the Ukrainian counteroffensive would likely prompt harsh Russian retaliation against civilian targets. But he said the Kremlin would not succeed in intimidating ordinary Ukrainians.

Putin "will strike so we don't have water, electricity, to create more chaos and intimidate us," said Serhii who only gave his first name. "But he will not succeed because we will survive, and Putin will soon croak!"

The counteroffensive has provoked rare public criticism of Putin's war in Russia. Some of the war's defenders played down the idea that the success belonged to Ukraine, blaming instead Western weapons and fighters for the losses.

Arhirova reported from Kyiv.

Follow AP war coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine>

Sandy Hook witnesses testify about Alex Jones' hoax claims

By DAVE COLLINS Associated Press

WATERBURY, Conn. (AP) — A sister of a teacher killed in the 2012 Sandy Hook massacre and an FBI agent who responded to the school shooting became overwhelmed with emotion Tuesday as they described what it has been like to be accused of being crisis actors by conspiracy theorist Alex Jones and others.

Carlee Soto Parisi and FBI agent William Aldenberg were the first witnesses to testify as a Connecticut jury began hearing evidence in a trial to decide how much money Jones owes for spreading the lie that the 2012 mass shooting in Newtown that killed 20 first graders and six educators didn't happen.

Soto Parisi said she has been hounded, both in Connecticut and after she moved to North Carolina, by those who believe she was acting. Some of the hoax believers went online and posted photos of grieving women, including an Associated Press photo of a distraught Soto Parisi outside Sandy Hook Elementary School after the shooting, saying they were the same actor.

"I frequently got threatening emails and messages on all social media," she testified, crying at times. "And it got to a point where they would use the gun emoji. And I spoke with cops in Connecticut and my husband ended up having to speak with cops in North Carolina, because we were scared for our lives."

Aldenberg also broke down as he described being among the first law enforcement officers to enter the two classrooms where 20 children died. He described watching as the phone next to Vicki Soto's body lit up with messages from those trying to reach her.

"Was what you saw in that school fake?" asked attorney Christopher Mattei, a lawyer for the plaintiffs.

"No," Aldenberg said. "It's awful. It's awful."

He also testified about how he and others in the community and law enforcement were targeted with threats and conspiracy theories, including one that claimed he was an actor who also pretended to be the father of a victim.

"It's one of the worst things that ever happened, if not the worst thing that ever happened here, what happened to them," Aldenberg said. "And people want to say this didn't happen? And then they want to get rich off of it? That's the worst part."

The trial in Waterbury, less than 20 miles (32 kilometers) from Newtown, was attended by more than a dozen family members of victims, including David Wheeler, the father who conspiracy theorists had claimed was the same person as Aldenberg. Wheeler nodded his head as Aldenberg apologized for what Wheeler had to endure because of their resemblance.

Jones did not attend the trial on Tuesday. He is expected in court next week. Jones and his Infowars brand are based in Austin, Texas.

The Sandy Hook families and Aldenberg say they have been confronted and harassed for years by people who believed Jones' false claim that the shooting was staged by crisis actors as part of a plot to take away people's guns.

Some say strangers have videotaped them and their surviving children. They've also endured death threats and been subjected to abusive comments on social media. And some families have moved out of Newtown to avoid harassment. They accuse Jones of causing them emotional and psychological harm.

"You know, you can say whatever you want about me, I don't care," Aldenberg said. "Just say what you want. I'm a frigging big boy. I can take it. But then they want to make profits, they want to make millions and millions of dollars. They want to destroy people's lives. Their children got slaughtered. I saw it myself, and now they have to sit here and listen to me say this."

It's the second such trial for Jones, who was ordered by a Texas jury last month to pay nearly \$50 million to the parents of one of the slain children. Jones was not at the trial Tuesday and is expected to attend next week.

A jury of three men and three women along with several alternates will decide how much Jones should pay relatives of eight victims and Aldenberg. Judge Barbara Bellis found Jones liable for damages without a trial last year after he failed to turn over documents to the families' lawyers.

The judge also sanctioned Jones on Tuesday for failing to turn over analytic data related to his website

and the popularity of his show. She told his lawyers that because of that failure, they will not be allowed to argue he didn't profit from his Sandy Hook remarks.

In opening statements, Jones was described by Mattei as a bully and by his own attorney as a crank in a town square who should be ignored.

Mattei showed jurors data indicating how Jones' audience increased as he spread lies about the shooting. He also showed them photos and videos of things Jones had said, and told the panel they already had the tools from their own life experiences to decide what to do in this case.

"What your parents taught you, what your grandparents taught you to know the difference between right and wrong, to know the difference between the truth and a horrible lie, to know the importance of standing up to bullies when they prey on people who are helpless and profit from them and to know unless you stop a bully, a bully will never stop," he said. "And when it comes to stopping Alex Jones, that will be the most important work that you do."

Jones' attorney, Norm Pattis, argued that his client has espoused a number of conspiracy theories over the years, something he has a Constitutional right to do.

"At what point do we regard him as a crank on the village green, a person we can walk away from if we choose?" he asked.

Pattis told the jury that although Jones is liable for damages, any award should be minimal and alleged the families were overstating the harm they say Jones caused them.

On his Infowars web show on Tuesday, Jones portrayed himself as the victim of unfair show trials.

"How am I handling it? We're at war. This is total tyranny," he said. "I'll tell you this, we can appeal this for years. We can beat this."

The trial is expected to last about a month and feature testimony from more victims' relatives. Jones also will be testifying, Pattis said.

Jones now says he believes the shooting was real. At the Texas trial, he testified that he realizes what he said was irresponsible, did hurt people's feelings and he apologized. He continues, however, to insist that his comments were protected free speech. He views the lawsuits as efforts to silence him and put him out of business.

Jones' lawyers say he intends to appeal the judgment against him in Texas. Jones also will face a third trial back in Texas involving the parents of another slain child.

Associated Press writer Pat Eaton-Robb contributed to this story from Hartford, Connecticut.

Rapper PnB Rock fatally shot in Los Angeles restaurant

By JONATHAN LANDRUM JR. Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Rapper PnB Rock was fatally shot during a robbery at a South Los Angeles restaurant where police believe a social media post may have tipped the assailant to his location.

The Philadelphia artist, whose real name is Rakim Allen, was gunned down Monday at a Roscoe's Chicken and Waffles restaurant while eating with his girlfriend. A robber approached their table and demanded items from the victim, according to Los Angeles police. A verbal exchange ended when the assailant opened fire, striking the rapper multiple times.

Rock's girlfriend had posted the location and tagged the rapper in an Instagram post that has since been deleted. Detectives are investigating whether the post prompted the attack, police Chief Michel Moore told the Los Angeles Times on Tuesday.

He "was with his family — with his girlfriend or some kind of friend of his -- and as they're there, enjoying a simple meal, (he) was brutally attacked by an individual who apparently (came) to the location after a social media posting," Moore said.

The robber took some items from the victim and fled in a car that was waiting in the parking lot, said Officer Jeff Lee, a police spokesperson. No one else was injured in the shooting and the victim was pronounced dead at the hospital.

Police were still searching for the shooter.

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PnB Rock stood out with his rap-crooner R&B style. The Philadelphia native is best known for his 2016 hit "Selfish" making guest appearances on other likeable songs such as YFN Lucci's "Everyday We Lit," Ed Sheeran's "Cross Me" with Chance the Rapper and XXXTentacion's "Bad Vibes Forever," featuring Trippie Redd. He released his latest song, "Luv Me Again," on Sept. 2.

The rapper released a series of mixtapes before his two albums "Catch These Vibes" in 2017 and "Trapstar Turnt Popstar" in 2019 through Atlantic Records. His stage name derives from a street corner called Pastorius and Baynton, an area where he grew up in the Philadelphia neighborhood of Germantown.

PnB Rock's label called the death a "senseless loss" in a post on Instagram. The statement was confirmed by a representative for the rapper.

Atlantic Records said PnB Rock a great friend and a "wonderful father to two beautiful little girls."

Roscoe's Chicken and Waffles offered the company's condolences to the Allen family.

"The safety of our employees and guests are our utmost priority," the restaurant posted on Facebook. "We have and will continue to keep our place of business as safe as possible."

TMZ first reported the shooting. A graphic video reportedly taken at the scene shows PnB Rock laying in a pool of blood on the restaurant's floor.

In a recent interview, PnB Rock spoke about the gang culture in Los Angeles and how robberies of rappers are becoming common in the city, calling criminals "bold." He told a story about a group of people who followed him, his girlfriend and child.

In Arizona, worry about access to Colorado River water

By TONY DAVIS Arizona Daily Star

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — Robbie Woodhouse's grandfather began nearly a century of family farming along the Gila River near Yuma in the middle 1920s when he dug up a bunch of mesquite stumps on his land to make way for his barley, wheat, Bermuda seed, cotton and melon fields.

Farming never really took off at the Woodhouse homestead until 1954, when the federal government finished a 75-mile-long concrete canal to bring Colorado River water to what's now known as the Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation and Drainage District, which covers about 58,500 acres along the Gila River east of the Colorado.

Today, Woodhouse presides over the governing board of a district with more than 120 individual growers, partnerships, trusts and other operating entities growing about 100 different crops, including seed crops as well as staples like wheat, cotton, lettuce and other produce. Wellton-Mohawk is one of six agricultural districts in the Yuma area that together grow 90% of the cauliflower, lettuce, broccoli and other winter vegetables sold in the U.S.

But now, the future of this district, of farming in the Yuma area in general and of Arizona's second largest drinking water supply for urban residents are all mired in a sea of uncertainty. Due to a logjam in interstate negotiations for massive cuts in Colorado River water deliveries, farmers and urban users have no idea how much water use they'll be ordered to cut, possibly starting next year.

All the Yuma area irrigation districts depend entirely on Colorado River water to nourish their crops. While groundwater does lie beneath many of the farm fields, its quality is uncertain or poor in many places.

"Obviously we're very, very concerned," said Woodhouse, whose 1,250 acres grow mostly produce, such as cauliflower, broccoli and lettuce. "Without the water, we don't grow anything. But I wouldn't say we are scared. We do feel an obligation to do our part."

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is part of a collaborative series on the Colorado River as the 100th anniversary of the historic Colorado River Compact approaches. The Associated Press, The Colorado Sun, The Albuquerque Journal, The Salt Lake Tribune, The Arizona Daily Star and The Nevada Independent are working together to explore the pressures on the river in 2022.

Water officials of Arizona cities of Tucson, Goodyear and Scottsdale are also concerned and a little on

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edge although they're not panicking. They are the most dependent of Arizona cities on river water delivered through the Central Arizona Project, a \$4 billion, 336-mile-long canal system running from the river to the Phoenix and Tucson areas.

While all these cities have backup supplies, led by groundwater, to cushion them in the short- to medium-term in the event of river water cuts, their long-term picture is more uncertain because the CAP was extended into Arizona nearly 40 years ago precisely to get them off groundwater.

Arizona got about 36% of its total water supply from the river as recently as 2020. That share of river water feeding farms and cities has declined some since then, with the advent of a federally approved Drought Contingency Plan that will cut the state's river water use by 21% starting in 2023. It's expected to drop even further in the coming years but nobody knows how much right now.

The uncertainty was triggered first in June, when Reclamation Commissioner Camille Touton testified at a U.S. Senate Committee hearing that to stabilize the river's declining reservoirs Lakes Mead and Powell, the basin states need to cut their water use by roughly up to 30% starting in 2023, and come up with a plan to do that by mid-August. If a plan doesn't appear by then, she warned the federal government would impose its own, to "protect the system."

But mid-August came and went with no agreement and no plan or timetable for a plan from the bureau. The bureau did say at an Aug. 16 news conference, however, that it was going to look closely at several measures such as modifying the Hoover and Glen Canyon dams so they can keep delivering water at lower elevations and counting evaporation of water from Lake Mead and the river against the Lower Basin's total water supply, thereby reducing that supply by hundreds of thousands of acre-feet a year.

So now, Wellton Mohawk and the other irrigation districts are pushing a plan to cut one acre-foot of water used per acre annually, on 925,000 acres along the Lower Colorado River in Arizona and California. In return, they're seeking \$1,500 an acre-foot in compensation, or a total of \$1.387 billion annually.

With that money, they'll invest in water-efficient farming tools like drip irrigation, gradually switch to less thirsty crops from water-slurping alfalfa and weather economic losses from reduced water use, Woodhouse said.

"What we want to have happen is for each individual farmer to operate their farms in the manner that they want to operate and plant the crops that they feel they can maintain the fertility of their soils," he said. "I'm sure it's going to greatly change crop rotations and also change management practices of individual farmers, to exist on less water. It's real important that those decisions be left to each individual farm."

This proposal has been roundly criticized by urban water leaders, however. While saying farms must take the biggest water use curbs because they use 72% of Arizona's water and close to 80% basin-wide, Central Arizona Project officials say the farmers' price tag is unrealistically high and that whatever money is paid should be used strictly to modernize irrigation practices for the long term.

"Anytime anyone wants to sit down with us and talk about it, we're more than willing to do so. But no one has been willing to discuss it," countered Wade Noble, an attorney representing the Yuma-area irrigation districts. "Until we get to that point, our voluntary forbearance of a significant amount of the water we control will remain on the terms we put on the table. We're not going to negotiate with ourselves."

Where both Arizona farms and cities agree is that the other river basin states and the federal government haven't moved fast enough to reduce water use.

"Reclamation has got to show some leadership and say this has got to be done and give us a guide map as to how the system is protected as the commissioner promised what it would be," Noble said.

The CAP's board president Terry Goddard and its previous president Lisa Atkins wrote a letter on Aug. 19 to Interior Secretary Deb Haaland that made essentially the same point. To date, no written response from Interior has been forthcoming.

With no action forthcoming on a deal, some Arizona water users have pulled back on past commitments to leave water in Lake Mead to prop it up. The Tucson City Council, for instance, had pledged earlier this year to leave 30,000 acre-feet in the lake in 2022 and 2023 but has since backed off that pledge and voted to order its full allocation of 144,191 acre-feet for 2023 pending the negotiations' outcome. The Gila River Indian Community withdrew an even larger commitment, to leave nearly 130,000 acre-feet in Mead

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next year. The CAP is holding onto 35,000 acre-feet it was going to leave in Mead and announced plans to remove another 18,000 acre-feet from the lake next year.

"Unfortunately, the community has been shocked and disappointed to see the complete lack of progress in reaching the kind of cooperative basin-wide plan necessary to save the Colorado River system," said Gila River Indian Community Chairman Stephen Roe Lewis.

Until now, it's left almost 600,000 other acre-feet of its CAP supply in Mead since 2016. In 2022 alone, CAP users and other Arizona Colorado River users left nearly 800,000 acre-feet in Mead, led by 512,000 acre-feet it legally had to leave there under the terms of the 2019 Drought Contingency Plan due to the lake's falling levels. Arizona and California left another 268,000 acre-feet in the lake this year from what's called the "500 Plus Plan," which had sought a half-million acre-feet in voluntary contributions to the lake, but projections for next year show more water will be removed from the lake under that plan than will be left in it.

Many Arizona cities using river water are preparing for the inevitability they'll have to use less. In Good-year, in the Phoenix area's West Valley, whose population is about 101,000, the city has recharged about half of its annual CAP supplies into the ground for several years. It's also been recharging treated sewage effluent into the ground, and has stored a total of seven years' supply of both sources. It anticipates no short-term problems in delivering water to customers, said Ray Diaz, Goodyear's water resources and sustainability manager.

Colorado River shortfalls aren't going to affect what the city does now but could in the future.

"What would happen if we were shorted and had to continue our approved development?" said Diaz. "It's something we would have to look into and really assess what we could afford for the future — how much water we can provide."

In Scottsdale in the Phoenix area's East Valley, CAP supplies about 70% of the water for its 250,000 residents. Most is delivered directly to homes and businesses rather than recharged. If the city had to sustain a large cut in CAP supplies, it would have to rely much more heavily on groundwater, said Gretchen Baumgardner, the city's water policy manager.

It has stored about 230,000 acre-feet of CAP water and treated sewage effluent in the ground — about 2.5 years worth of its current supply — but town officials don't want to use it all at once, Baumgardner said. It also gets about 15% of its supply from Salt and Verde River surface supplies, delivered by the quasi-public utility the Salt River Project.

"There will be a larger portion of groundwater" used in the future, said Baumgardner, adding that city officials won't know how much until they learn how drastic the cuts in CAP deliveries will be.

The city is also looking to extend its supply further. Its wastewater treatment plant in North Scottsdale operates a pilot project to treat a small amount of effluent to exceed state drinking water standards, a process called "direct potable reuse." The city is working with the State Department of Environmental Quality to help set up new state regulations that would allow the plant to reuse its wastewater for drinking on a larger scale.

But when asked if a "Day Zero" could ever arrive in which Scottsdale failed to meet all residents' demands for water, Baumgardner replied, "It's just one of those uncertainties right now. That will really be hard to answer," in part because of a pending effort by federal officials to overhaul its guidelines for operating its reservoirs — an effort that won't be finished until 2026.

In Tucson, officials of the Tucson Water utility are more optimistic about their ability to survive major CAP cuts. The utility about 40 years ago signed up to take almost a third more CAP water than it needs today to serve the 735,610 customers living inside and outside city limits. That's allowed it to store nearly five and a half years worth of CAP in large, recharge basins — water that can be pumped when needed during CAP shortages later. The utility also has access to a huge aquifer lying under a large expanse of former farmland northwest of the city that it bought and retired in the 1970s. It also is regularly recharging and storing underground large amounts of partially treated effluent that can be pumped later for drinking.

But there is one cautionary note. A recent Bureau of Reclamation study found that as the Southwest's climate warms up, runoff of melting snows into rivers and washes surrounding the city is likely to decline,

meaning less water will be replenishing its aquifer than in the past. That would increase the possibility that groundwater pumping in place of CAP water use could put increased pressure on the aquifer, triggering higher pumping costs and more likelihood of subsidence in which the ground collapses, possibly triggering fissures.

Ultimately, the story of CAP water in Arizona is a story about groundwater, added Kathryn Sorensen, a researcher for Arizona State University's Kyl Center for Water Policy. When there's less Colorado River water delivered to Arizona, the cities, farms and other users fall back on groundwater, she said.

"We are very blessed to have plentiful aquifers in central Arizona we can fall back on," Sorensen said while noting they are fossil aquifers, meaning water entered them thousands of years ago and they are not easily replaced.

"If we pump them and are unable to replenish the pumping, the aquifers will pay the price," she said.

Suns owner Sarver suspended 1 year, fined \$10M after probe

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The NBA has suspended Phoenix Suns and Phoenix Mercury owner Robert Sarver for one year, plus fined him \$10 million, after an investigation found that he had engaged in what the league called "workplace misconduct and organizational deficiencies."

The findings of the league's report, published Tuesday, came nearly a year after the NBA asked a law firm to investigate allegations that Sarver had a history of racist, misogynistic and hostile incidents over his nearly two-decade tenure overseeing the franchise.

Sarver said he will "accept the consequences of the league's decision" and apologized for "words and actions that offended our employees," though noted he disagreed with some of the report's findings.

The report said Sarver "repeated or purported to repeat the N-word on at least five occasions spanning his tenure with the Suns," though added that the investigation "makes no finding that Sarver used this racially insensitive language with the intent to demean or denigrate."

The study also concluded that Sarver used demeaning language toward female employees, including telling a pregnant employee that she would not be able to do her job after becoming a mother; made off-color comments and jokes about sex and anatomy; and yelled and cursed at employees in ways that would be considered bullying "under workplace standards."

The \$10 million fine is the maximum allowed by NBA rule.

"I take full responsibility for what I have done," Sarver said. "I am sorry for causing this pain, and these errors in judgment are not consistent with my personal philosophy or my values. ... This moment is an opportunity for me to demonstrate a capacity to learn and grow as we continue to build a working culture where every employee feels comfortable and valued."

Sarver, the league said, cannot be present at any NBA or WNBA team facility, including any office, arena, or practice facility; attend or participate in any NBA or WNBA event or activity, including games, practices or business partner activity; represent the Suns or Mercury in any public or private capacity; or have any involvement with the business or basketball operations of the Suns or Mercury.

The league said it would donate the \$10 million "to organizations that are committed to addressing race and gender-based issues in and outside the workplace."

"The statements and conduct described in the findings of the independent investigation are troubling and disappointing," NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said. "We believe the outcome is the right one, taking into account all the facts, circumstances and context brought to light by the comprehensive investigation of this 18-year period and our commitment to upholding proper standards in NBA workplaces."

It's the second-largest penalty — in terms of total sanctions — ever levied by the NBA against a team owner, behind Donald Sterling being banned for life by Silver in 2014. Sterling was fined \$2.5 million, the largest allowable figure at that time, and was forced to sell the Los Angeles Clippers as part of the massive fallout that followed him making racist comments in a recorded conversation.

The allegations against Sarver were reported by ESPN last year, which said it talked to dozens of current

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and former team employees for its story, including some who detailed inappropriate behavior. He originally denied or disputed most of the allegations through his legal team.

On Tuesday, Sarver's representatives said the investigation's findings "confirmed that there was no evidence, whatsoever, to support several of the accusations in ESPN's reporting from November 2021."

"While it is difficult to identify with precision what motivated Sarver's workplace behavior described in this report, certain patterns emerged from witness accounts: Sarver often acted aggressively in an apparent effort to provoke a reaction from his targets; Sarver's sense of humor was sophomoric and inappropriate for the workplace; and Sarver behaved as though workplace norms and policies did not apply to him," read the report from the New York-based investigating firm of Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz.

Sarver will have to complete a training program "focused on respect and appropriate conduct in the workplace" during his suspension, the league said.

Sarver, through his attorney, continued denying the allegations as recently as June in a letter to the league and insisted the claims against him were "demonstrably false."

The attorney, Thomas Clare, wrote that Sarver's record shows a "longstanding commitment to social and racial justice" and that it attests to his "commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion."

"Mr. Sarver is one of few NBA owners who continues to support and advance the development of women's professional basketball," Clare wrote, citing upgrades to the Mercury team facilities, how the Suns claim a league-best rate of 55% employment of minorities within its front office and how more than half of the Suns' coaches and general managers in Sarver's tenure — including current coach Monty Williams and current GM James Jones — are Black.

Among the league's findings:

— That Sarver engaged in "crude, sexual and vulgar commentary and conduct in the workplace," including references to sexual acts, condoms and the anatomy, referring to both his own and those of others.

— The investigation also found that Sarver sent a small number of male Suns employees "joking pornographic material and crude emails, including emails containing photos of a nude woman and a video of two people having sex."

— Sarver, the investigation found, also exposed himself unnecessarily to a male Suns employee during a fitness check, caused another male employee to become uncomfortable by grabbing him and dancing "pelvis to pelvis" at a holiday party, and standing nude in front of a male employee following a shower.

— He also made comments about female employees, the investigation found, including the attractiveness of Suns dancers, and asked a female Suns employee if she had undergone breast augmentation.

The league also will require the Suns and Mercury to engage in a series of workplace improvements, including retaining outside firms that will "focus on fostering a diverse, inclusive and respectful workplace."

Employees of those organizations will be surveyed, anonymously and regularly, to ensure that proper workplace culture is in place. The NBA and WNBA will need to be told immediately of any instances, or even allegations, of significant misconduct by any employees.

All those conditions will be in place for three years.

The league said the results of the investigation were based on interviews with 320 individuals, including current and former employees who worked for the teams during Sarver's 18 years with the Suns, and from the evaluation of more than 80,000 documents and other materials, including emails, text messages and videos.

Sarver and the Suns and Mercury "cooperated fully with the investigative process," the league said.

"Regardless of position, power or intent, we all need to recognize the corrosive and hurtful impact of racially insensitive and demeaning language and behavior," Silver said. "On behalf of the entire NBA, I apologize to all of those impacted by the misconduct outlined in the investigators' report. We must do better."

More AP NBA coverage: <https://apnews.com/hub/NBA> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

What's left as Jan. 6 panel sprints to year-end finish

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — With only three months left in the year, the House Jan. 6 committee is eyeing a close to its work and a final report laying out its findings about the U.S. Capitol insurrection. But the investigation is not over.

The committee has already revealed much of its work at eight hearings over the summer, showing in detail how former President Donald Trump ignored many of his closest advisers and amplified his false claims of election fraud after he lost the 2020 election to Joe Biden. Witnesses interviewed by the panel — some of them Trump's closest allies — recounted in videotaped testimony how the former president declined to act when hundreds of his supporters violently attacked the Capitol as Congress certified Biden's victory on Jan. 6, 2021.

Lawmakers say there is more to come. The nine-member panel — seven Democrats and two Republicans — interviewed witnesses through all of August, and they are hoping to have at least one hearing by the end of the month. Members met Tuesday to discuss the panel's next steps.

Because the Jan. 6 panel is a temporary, or "select," committee, it expires at the end of the current Congress. If Republicans take the majority in November's elections, as they are favored to do, they are expected to dissolve the committee in January. So the panel is planning to issue a final report by the end of December.

What's left for the committee in 2022:

HEARINGS

The panel's Democratic chairman, Mississippi Rep. Bennie Thompson, said after the private members' meeting Tuesday in the Capitol that the committee's goal is to hold a hearing Sept. 28, but that members were still discussing whether it would happen at all.

"We'll we're still in the process of talking," Thompson said. "If it happens, it will be that date. We're not sure at this point."

Members of the committee had promised more hearings in September as they wrapped up the series of summer hearings. Wyoming Rep. Liz Cheney, the Republican vice chairwoman, said the committee "has far more evidence to share with the American people and more to gather."

"Doors have opened, new subpoenas have been issued and the dam has begun to break," Cheney said at a July 21 hearing that was held in prime time and watched by 17.7 million people. "We have considerably more to do."

It's unclear if the hearing would provide a general overview of what the panel has learned or if they would be focused on new information and evidence. The committee conducted several interviews at the end of July and into August with Trump's Cabinet secretaries, some of whom had discussed invoking the constitutional process in the 25th Amendment to remove Trump from office after the insurrection.

WITNESSES

The panel has already interviewed more than 1,000 people, but lawmakers and staff are still pursuing new threads. The committee recently spoke to several of the Cabinet secretaries, including former Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin in July and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and former Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao in August.

The committee also wants to get to the bottom of missing Secret Service texts from Jan. 5-6, 2021, which could shed further light on Trump's actions during the insurrection, particularly after earlier testimony about his confrontation with security as he tried to join supporters at the Capitol. Thompson said Tuesday that the committee has recently obtained "thousands" of documents from the Secret Service.

The committee has also pursued an interview with conservative activist Virginia "Ginni" Thomas, who's married to Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. Lawmakers want to know more about her role in trying to help Trump overturn the election. She contacted lawmakers in Arizona and Wisconsin as part of that effort.

TRUMP AND PENCE

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Members of the committee are still debating how aggressively to pursue testimony from Trump and former Vice President Mike Pence.

Some have questioned whether the committee needs to call Pence, who resisted Trump's pressure to try and block Biden's certification on Jan. 6. Many of his closest aides have already testified, including Greg Jacob, his top lawyer at the White House who was with him during the insurrection as they hid from rioters who were threatening the vice president's life. Jacobs characterized much of Pence's thought process during the time when Trump was pressuring him.

The panel has been in discussions with Pence's lawyers for months, without any discernible progress. Still, the committee could invite Pence for closed-door testimony or ask him to answer written questions.

The calculation is different for the former president. Members have debated whether they should call Trump, who is the focus of their probe but also a witness who has fought against the investigation in court, denied much of the evidence and floated the idea of presidential pardons for Jan. 6 rioters. Trump is also facing scrutiny in several other investigations, including at the Justice Department and over the classified documents he took to his private club.

HOUSE REPUBLICANS

Another bit of unfinished business is the committee's subpoenas to five House Republicans, including Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy.

In May the panel subpoenaed McCarthy, R-Calif., and Reps. Jim Jordan of Ohio, Scott Perry of Pennsylvania, Andy Biggs of Arizona and Mo Brooks of Alabama. The panel has investigated McCarthy's conversations with Trump the day of the attack and meetings the four other lawmakers had with the White House beforehand as Trump and some of his allies worked to overturn his election defeat.

The five Republicans, all of whom have repeatedly downplayed the investigation's legitimacy, have simply ignored the request to testify. But the Jan. 6 committee seems unlikely to meet their defiance with contempt charges, as they have with other witnesses, in the weeks before the November elections. Not only would it be a politically risky move, but it is unclear what eventual recourse the panel would have against its own colleagues.

FINAL REPORT

The committee must shut down within a month after issuing a final report, per its rules. But lawmakers could issue some smaller reports before then, perhaps even before the November elections. Thompson said earlier this summer that there may be an interim report in the fall.

The release of the final report will likely come close to the end of the year so the panel can maximize its time. While much of the findings will already be known, the report is expected to thread the story together in a definitive way that lays out the committee's conclusions for history.

LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee is expected to weigh in on possible legislative changes to the Electoral Count Act, which governs how a presidential election is certified by Congress.

A bipartisan group of senators released proposed changes over the summer that would clarify the way states submit electors and the vice president tallies the votes. Trump and his allies tried to find loopholes in that law ahead of Jan. 6 as the former president worked to overturn his defeat to Biden and unsuccessfully pressured Pence to go along.

The Jan. 6 panel's final report is expected to include a larger swath of legislative recommendations.

Associated Press writers Lisa Mascaro and Farnoush Amiri contributed to this report.

At 50, TV's 'The Waltons' still stirs fans' love, nostalgia

By BOBBY ROSS Jr. Associated Press

The Rev. Matt Curry's parents were children of the Great Depression, just like "The Waltons" — the beloved TV family whose prime-time series premiered 50 years ago.

When Curry was growing up on a farm in northern Texas, his carpenter father and teacher mother often

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argued playfully over who had a poorer childhood.

"The Depression was the seminal time of their lives — the time that was about family and survival and making it through," said Curry, now a 59-year-old Presbyterian pastor in Owensboro, Kentucky. "My dad used to talk about how his dad would go work out of town and send \$5 a week to feed and clothe the family."

So when "The Waltons," set in 1932 and running through World War II, debuted on CBS on Sept. 14, 1972, the Currys identified closely with the storylines. Millions of others felt the same, and the Thursday night drama about a Depression-era family in rural Virginia became one of TV's most popular and enduring programs.

At a time when the networks generally avoided "dangerous" content, "The Waltons" was notable for taking on difficult topics — religion, in particular — said Robert Thompson, director of Syracuse University's Bleier Center for Television and Popular Culture.

"I think it was an important show, and I think it actually doesn't get the attention that it deserves," Thompson said.

"The Waltons' really did get down and roll around in some very, very serious spiritual themes," he added. "For example, an atheist comes to town, and we get this whole discussion between atheism and spirituality."

"The Waltons" ran for nine seasons and 221 episodes, ranking as high as No. 2 in the Nielsen ratings. A half-century later it still stirs nostalgia among loyal fans who can't resist taking in cable TV reruns, bingeing episodes via streaming apps and keeping up with former stars through social media.

Based on the life of its creator, the late Earl Hamner Jr., the show followed a large extended family living in a white, two-story farmhouse and running a sawmill in the fictional Blue Ridge foothills town of Walton's Mountain. The parents, grandparents and seven children — John Jr., Jason, Mary Ellen, Erin, Ben, Jim-Bob and Elizabeth — were depicted wearing overalls and dresses, praying at meals and overcoming adversity through hard work and grace.

"The Waltons" focused on John Jr., known as John-Boy, played by Richard Thomas and modeled on Hamner. The oldest sibling, he aspired to be a writer and experience the world beyond his humble upbringing.

Now 71 and starring as lawyer Atticus Finch in a touring production of "To Kill a Mockingbird," Thomas said he still hears fans call "Good night, John-Boy!" after each performance. The familiar catchphrase pays homage to the Emmy-winning role that made him famous.

"It's kind of astonishing that we're still talking about a show 50 years later," said Thomas, who narrates "A Waltons Thanksgiving," a made-for-TV movie airing this fall on the CW network.

"To have that kind of longevity and then have it mean enough for people to want to do a new version of it — I'm not sure exactly why," he added. "I know it affected a lot of people's lives. But I think primarily Earl Hamner's writing was just so great and the cast loved each other so much and we were so committed."

John-Boy had a lot to do with the show's popularity — and inspired many a crush back then among fans like Jerri Harrington, now 67, of Centreville, Virginia.

Harrington still watches an episode every night with her husband of 47 years. During the frightening early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, she said, its characters — particularly grandma Esther, played by the late Ellen Corby — brought a sense of comfort and return to childhood.

"It just feels familiar," said Harrington, a grandmother herself.

Another lifelong fan, Carol Jackson, like Curry the daughter of Depression-era parents, sees her own family's story reflected.

She became a fan as a kindergartner and as an adult placed "Waltons" DVDs in the resort cabins that her family operated in the Ozarks of northern Arkansas. The homespun stories still connect with the 55-year-old mother of three.

"I just told my kids, 'One day when I'm old and in my wheelchair ... just wheel me in front of 'The Waltons' on a continual loop, and I'll be happy,'" Jackson said.

Kami Cotler, who was 6 years old when she first starred as youngest sibling Elizabeth in a 1971 holiday TV movie that launched the series, still interacts regularly with such fans via her Facebook page, which

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has nearly 150,000 followers.

Cotler said "The Waltons" shared "universal truths" that help explain its lasting popularity.

"The show frequently told really simple human stories that resonate with people because that's what life is like," said Cotler, now an educator in Southern California. "People will joke that it was very saccharine sweet, but I don't think that it actually was."

On the show, parents John Walton Sr. and Olivia Walton — played, respectively, by the late Ralph Waite, an ordained minister in real life, and Michael Learned — frequently clashed over their differing approaches to God. Olivia was a devout Baptist, but John Sr. was not a churchgoer.

"I've always looked for God in my own way," he said in one episode.

An ongoing theme was the appearance in Walton's Mountain of an outsider — a Jewish family fleeing Nazi persecution, a Black boxer and preacher raising money for a new church, a Hollywood actress who smoked and drank — who met a mixed reception.

In 1972's "The Sinner" episode, a young pastor played by the late John Ritter arrived preaching fire-and-brimstone Bible verses. But he inadvertently became intoxicated after drinking too much of the "secret recipe" served by the Baldwin sisters, two prim and proper recurring characters who didn't seem to realize they were bootleggers.

After the mishap touched off something of a scandal, John Sr. made a rare appearance at church and pointed to Jesus' words from John 8:7: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone."

"The religious aspect of the show had to do with the fact that Earl Hamner was talking about a time and a place ... where those issues were very much in play," said Thomas, now a grandfather of four. "I mean, in a small community in the mountains of Virginia in the Depression, if you don't deal with the church aspect of things, then you don't deal with things as they were."

Over the show's long run, the Waltons and their neighbors learned valuable lessons about overcoming differences and treating everyone with love and respect. Those lessons, Cotler said, "are perhaps even more relevant today."

On a personal note, Cotler, a secular Jew, credits grandpa Zeb, played by the late Will Geer, with teaching her how to sing church songs on the show.

Curry, the Kentucky pastor, said "The Waltons" reflected how Jesus often rebukes religious people for hypocrisy in the Bible, while commending an unexpected person — such as a Samaritan who helped a stranger — for showing love and grace.

The show "talked about religion and faith ... in a way that does not demean people," Curry said. "There's something in there that we are missing today, and it's the sense of community, of unity, of battling through hard times."

Associated Press religion coverage receives support through the AP's collaboration with The Conversation US, with funding from Lilly Endowment Inc. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

Panel: Archives still not certain it has all Trump records

By FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The National Archives is still not certain that it has custody of all Donald Trump's presidential records even after the FBI search of his Mar-a-Lago club, a congressional committee said in a letter Tuesday.

The House Committee on Oversight and Reform revealed that staff at the Archives on an Aug. 24 call could not provide assurances that they have all of Trump's presidential records. The committee in the letter asked the Archives to conduct an assessment of whether any Trump records remain unaccounted for and potentially in his possession.

"In light of revelations that Mr. Trump's representatives misled investigators about his continued possession of government property and that material found at his club included dozens of 'empty folders' for classified material, I am deeply concerned that sensitive presidential records may remain out of the control

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and custody of the U.S. Government," Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y., the chairwoman of the Oversight Committee, wrote in the letter.

The House committee has jurisdiction over the Presidential Records Act, a 1978 law that requires the preservation of White House documents as property of the U.S. government. The request is the latest development in a monthslong back-and-forth between the agency and the committee, which has been investigating Trump's handling of records.

The request also comes weeks after the FBI recovered more than 100 documents with classified markings and even more than 10,000 other government documents from Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate. The search came after lawyers for Trump provided a sworn certification that all government records had been returned.

Maloney and other Democratic lawmakers on the panel have been seeking a briefing from the National Archives, but haven't received one due to the Justice Department's ongoing criminal investigation into the matter.

But the letter notes a call between Archives staff and the committee on Aug. 24, where lawmakers were informed that documents could still be missing.

As a result, Maloney wrote, the committee is asking the agency to conduct an "urgent review" of all of the government records that have been recorded from the Trump White House to determine whether any additional records remain unaccounted for and potentially in the possession of the former president.

In addition, the committee also asked for the Archives to get a personal certification from Trump "that he has surrendered all presidential records that he illegally removed from the White House after leaving office."

The committee is asking the Archives to provide an initial assessment of this review by Sept. 27.

Woman's rape cries go unheard in unmonitored drug sting

By JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, La. (AP) — A woman outfitted with a tiny microphone and hidden camera walked up to a dilapidated drug house on a chilly afternoon last year looking to buy meth from a dealer known on the streets as "Mississippi."

But as the informant disappeared inside with a career criminal with a rap sheet spanning three decades, her law enforcement handlers left her undercover on her own — unprotected and unmonitored in real time. And the devices she carried passively recorded a crime far more horrific than any drug buy.

Under threat of violence, the dealer forced the woman to perform oral sex on him — twice — in an attack so brazen he paused at one point to conduct a separate drug deal, according to interviews and confidential law enforcement records obtained by The Associated Press.

"It was one of the worst depictions of sexual abuse I have ever seen," said a local official who viewed the footage and spoke to AP on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss the ongoing case.

"Just the audio from it is enough to turn your stomach," the official said. "It's a female being sexually brutalized while she's crying and whimpering."

Even as the woman cried and her assailant threatened to put her "in the hospital," narcotics deputies remained down the block in the blighted neighborhood, unaware of what was going on. That's because, as authorities told the AP, they never considered such an attack might happen and the devices the woman carried didn't have the ability to transmit the operation to law enforcement in real time.

"It was recording but not to where my guys were monitoring it," said Rapides Parish Sheriff Mark Wood, blaming the January 2021 incident on his inexperience from only being in the top job six months at that time. "There are always things you learn that you can do better."

The case in this central Louisiana city of 47,000 underscores the perils confidential informants face seeking to "work off" criminal charges in loosely regulated and often secretive arrangements with law enforcement. Police rely on informants in a wide range of cases, compensating them with money or leniency in their own cases yet often providing little or no training.

Records show it wasn't until the woman left the area on her own and contacted her handlers that depu-

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ties searched the single-family home and arrested Antonio D. Jones, 48, on charges of second-degree rape, false imprisonment and distribution of meth after recovering 5 grams of the substance in the sting.

Deputies surveilling the home after the woman went inside assumed she "must be OK" because someone else entered after her to buy drugs, said Lt. Mark Parker, the ranking officer in the operation.

Parker, who retired this month, told the AP that the sheriff's office didn't start using equipment capable of monitoring in real time until after the alleged rape, and often would send informants into stings without any recording equipment at all.

"We've always done it this way," Parker said. "She was an addict and we just used her as an informant like we've done a million times before. Looking back, it's easy to say, 'What if?'"

And while it's not clear what kind of deal the woman struck with the Rapides Parish Sheriff's Office, her cooperation as an informant didn't seem to make much difference in clearing her own criminal record.

Just three weeks after her recorded assault, court records show, the woman was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia stemming from an arrest that happened about a month before the sting, and she's been pulled over and booked on possession charges at least twice since then. The woman, who declined interview requests and is not being named because the AP does not typically identify victims of sexual assault, pleaded guilty to possessing drug paraphernalia last year and was placed in behavioral health court in lieu of jail time.

"It's absolutely horrible," said the woman's attorney, Harold Murry. "She has a drug problem and I don't know if she's going to be able to beat it or not. But when you become a snitch, they keep your drug problem going and then they arrest you for it."

Wood, who worked in the sheriff's office for two decades before his election, confirmed that the alleged rape has prompted his department to finally update its equipment to keep an eye on undercover transactions as they're happening.

"That changed everything, the way we do business," Wood said. "Technology has grown unbelievably. There's things that we can do to keep the folks safe."

Experts who reviewed the case for AP noted that the technology to monitor undercover transactions has existed for generations and should have been used to protect the woman in this case. The safety of the confidential informant is paramount, they said, prioritized over evidence collection or any other aim of the operation.

"I see this as a massive ineptitude," said Michael Levine, a former U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agent who worked undercover for years and now testifies as an expert on police procedures. The deputies, he said, should "never in a million years" have sent the informant into such a high-risk setting without the ability to monitor the operation. "They're cowards."

David Redemann, a longtime Seattle police officer who now leads training on such stings, said the case highlights the vast disparities in law enforcement's undercover playbook, with many agencies lacking the resources to properly train officers or monitor informant drug buys.

"We do this 10,000 times a day around the country, and not everybody has transmitting equipment," Redemann said. "Is this tragic as hell? Absolutely. We need to learn from what happened here."

Law enforcement's use of confidential informants is akin to a black market in which "deals are made under the table and often undocumented," said Alexandra Natapoff, a Harvard law professor and leading expert on informants.

Not only are informants treated as disposable pawns, she said, but qualified immunity has made it very difficult to sue the police when things go off the rails.

"As a matter of common sense and humanity, police should take obvious, straightforward precautions to protect their informants," Natapoff said, "but there is no law that says they have to."

With few exceptions, states have been slow to track or regulate law enforcement's use of informants, even in the wake of high-profile oversights. In 2009, Florida lawmakers adopted Rachel's Law, the first comprehensive legislation in the country governing use of informants, after the fatal shooting of 23-year-old Rachel Hoffman in connection with an undercover drug sting for Tallahassee police. Among other things,

the law requires police consider the "risk of physical harm" to the informant.

None of the deputies who arranged the undercover buy in Louisiana were disciplined, the sheriff said, and no other law enforcement agencies were asked to examine the handling of the case. A spokesman for the Alexandria Police Department said the agency had not been made aware of the sexual assault, even though it allegedly happened in the city and the suspect Jones has an extensive criminal history dating to 1992, including convictions in neighboring Mississippi for robbery, car theft, aggravated assault and drug distribution.

Jones is scheduled to stand trial Oct. 17, having refused a plea offer from prosecutors. His attorney declined to comment.

Last month, as AP was reporting this story, prosecutors without explanation reduced Jones' charges from forcible second-degree rape to third-degree rape, or simple rape, significantly lowering the amount of time he could spend behind bars if convicted.

Prosecutors did not respond to requests for comment on why the charges were reduced or why the informant was charged with drug crimes even after her cooperation in the ill-fated sting.

Weeks before the charges were reduced, Rapides Parish District Attorney Phillip Terrell defended the deputies' handling of the case, telling AP "there is no indication in my file that law enforcement did anything wrong." The prospect of any informant coming under attack "had not crossed their mind," the district attorney said, adding he was "certain they wish this would not have occurred."

"They never thought of that, and had they known that was occurring they would have certainly stopped it," Terrell said. "One of their big concerns now is the safety of the confidential informant."

Contact AP's global investigative team at Investigative@ap.org. Follow Jim Mustian on Twitter at @Jim-Mustian.

EU lawmakers support ban of goods linked to deforestation

By SAMUEL PETREQUIN Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — European Union lawmakers have backed a proposal for a law that would ban the sale in the 27-nation bloc of agriculture products linked to the destruction of forests.

MEPs gathered on Tuesday in Strasbourg, France, supported and strengthened a plan from the EU's executive arm with 453 votes to 57, and 123 abstentions.

The EU Parliament will now start negotiations on the final text with EU member states.

Once approved, the law would force companies and producers to give assurances that products are "deforestation-free." Businesses would be forced to verify that agricultural goods sold in the EU have not been made on "deforested or degraded land anywhere in the world," the Parliament said.

"Acknowledging that the EU is responsible for around 10% of global deforestation, we have no choice but to ramp up our efforts to halt global deforestation," said Christophe Hansen, the lawmaker in charge of the Parliament's report.

In addition, MEPs proposed that banks and financial institutions should be covered by the law to prevent them from investing in projects linked to deforestation.

"This could be the beginning of the end of the money pipeline that is destroying forests around the world — but only if national governments across the EU step up and support this plan to make European banks deforestation-free in negotiations on the final law," said Giulia Bondi, from Global Witness campaigning group.

Deforestation in South America, Africa and Asia is driven mainly by agricultural expansion.

Quoting data from the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, the EU Parliament said that some 420 million hectares of forest were lost to deforestation between 1990 and 2020. This is an area larger than the EU.

The European Commission, which proposes EU laws and supervises the way they are enacted, suggested last year that the legislation covered soy, cattle, palm oil, wood, cocoa and coffee.

Under the position adopted Tuesday, lawmakers also want to include pig meat, sheep and goats, poultry, maize and rubber, as well as charcoal and printed paper products.

"MEPs also want companies to verify that goods are produced in accordance with human rights provisions in international law and respect the rights of indigenous people," the Parliament said.

Environmental group Greenpeace praised the result of the vote.

"Nobody wants to worry that their weekly shop might be linked to death and destruction – the vote today is a big step towards breaking that link," said Greenpeace EU forest campaigner Sini Eräjää.

At the U.N.'s climate conference, COP26, last year, over 100 nations representing more than 85% of the world's forests pledged to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030. Among them were several countries with massive forests, including Brazil, China, Colombia, Congo, Indonesia, Russia and the United States.

Follow AP's climate coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/climate-and-environment>

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UN sums up climate science: world heading in wrong direction

GENEVA (AP) — With weather disasters costing \$200 million a day and irreversible climate catastrophe looming, the world is "heading in the wrong direction," the United Nations says in a new report that pulls together the latest science on climate change.

The World Meteorological Organization, in the latest stark warning about global warming, said weather-related disasters have increased fivefold over the last 50 years and are killing 115 per day on average – and the fallout is poised to worsen.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres cited the floods in Pakistan, heat waves in Europe, droughts in places such as China, the Horn of Africa, and the United States – and pointed the finger at fossil fuels.

"There is nothing natural about the new scale of these disasters. They are the price of humanity's fossil fuel addiction," he said. "This year's United in Science report shows climate impacts heading into uncharted territories of destruction."

"Yet each year we double-down on this fossil fuel addiction, even as the symptoms get rapidly worse," he added.

The report, drawn from data compiled by several U.N. agencies and partners, cited a 48% chance that global temperature rise compared to pre-industrial times will reach 1.5 degree Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) in the next five years. There's a 93% percent chance that one year in the next five will see record heat.

It comes amid fresh warnings from scientists last week that four climate "tipping points" will likely be triggered if that temperature threshold — set in the 2015 Paris climate accord — is passed.

Many governments are already trying to address the threat of more severe weather due to climate change, and data show that deaths from natural disasters are down in recent years. Yet the economic cost of climate-induced catastrophes is projected to rise sharply.

The U.N. report says such "losses and damages" can be limited by timely action to prevent further warming and adapt to the temperature increases that are now inevitable. Questions around compensation for the damage that poor nations suffer as a result of emissions produced by rich countries will play a major role at the upcoming U.N. climate talks in Egypt this fall.

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A piece of the queen: New souvenirs mark monarch's death

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By KELVIN CHAN and JEFFREY SCHAEFFER Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — There are fridge magnets, tea sets and flags. And of course mugs, T-shirts and sweat-shirts with the face of Queen Elizabeth II that are inscribed with the dates of her 70-year reign: 1952-2022.

Just days after the death of Britain's longest-serving monarch, unofficial souvenirs have rolled out at royal-themed gift shops in London and online marketplaces like Amazon and Etsy.

Cool Britannia, a shop selling U.K.-themed memorabilia across the street from Buckingham Palace, pushed its suppliers to work overnight to get mementos ready by Saturday, just two days after the queen's death, store manager Ismayil Ibrahim said. Items depicting the new monarch, King Charles III, were also on their way to Ibrahim's shop, where tourists were buying other royal gifts like queen bobbleheads and rubber ducks wearing crowns.

Official merchandise, however, will take longer to arrive to approved vendors, who have suspended sales of royal souvenirs out of respect for the mourning period.

Based on strong customer demand for gifts for the queen's recent Platinum Jubilee celebrating her seven decades on the throne, Ibrahim anticipates even greater interest in souvenirs commemorating her life and death.

"People kept asking us, 'Have you got anything yet?' Ibrahim said.

So he quickly stocked T-shirts and mugs saying, "Forever in our Hearts" and "Gone but not forgotten," bearing a portrait of the queen as a young woman. Another version carried portraits of the queen both young and old with the words: "Queen Elizabeth II — The Greatest Reign 1952-2022."

There was a constant stream of tourists browsing at the shop Monday, and two others nearby, though not many were buying the items commemorating her reign.

Lorenzo Corbani, an Italian living in Bath, England, bought a solar-powered bobblehead figure of the queen for his mother, who was a big fan.

"She felt she was a great woman," said Corbani, 35.

Unofficial gifts have spread quickly online, too. Sellers on eBay are already hawking King Charles III souvenir mugs, badges, fridge magnets, and key rings that say "God Save The King." Amazon vendors are flogging similarly tacky and hastily churned out royal merchandise like Union Jack flags adorned with Charles' portrait and decals and posters commemorating Queen Elizabeth II's life. There's even a pet bandana with the dates of her reign.

At Majestic Gifts near Buckingham Palace, Paul Callaghan splurged on a tin of Platinum Jubilee English breakfast tea bearing the queen's picture for 15 pounds (\$17.50), which he said was a one-off purchase.

"It's not cheap, but it's limited. It's never going to happen again," said Callaghan, 35, who works in financial services and was visiting London from Dublin.

Now that the queen has died, he decided to buy a memento "before all the stocks run out."

"Because, again, it's quite a historic thing. You're never going to see a queen live until this long or reign this long," Callaghan said. "And not only that, but we're probably not going to have another queen for another century."

There's likely to be big demand for King Charles III souvenirs, and vendors of unofficial royal merchandise like Ibrahim are poised to capitalize on it, raising questions over copyright. But it's unlikely that the royal family will take legal action, according to a lawyer specializing in trademark law.

"Given the fascination with the monarchy it would be a full-time job to stop unlicensed merchandise," said Charlotte Wilding, a partner at the firm Wedlake Bell.

"I suspect the Royal Family takes the view that it would rather not punish the general public for its 'support,' even if that support may not be in the correct form," Wilding said by email. "Bad press is just not something the Royal Family want to be a part of or risk being a part of, even if they are legally in the right."

In the meantime, official vendors of royal gifts are observing a 10-day mourning period. One of them, the Royal Collection Trust, which manages public access to the queen's residences, said on its website that its shops have closed in London, Windsor and Edinburgh and online sales of items like Buckingham Palace magnets have been suspended.

With no official items to snag, Judy Kline, a 74-year-old tourist from suburban Detroit, spent 32 pounds

on souvenirs at a tourist shop at London's famed Piccadilly Circus, including several ornate blue and white fridge magnets with the queen's portrait.

"I have some friends who are very envious that they're not on this trip with us. I wanted to give them a little token," Kline said.

Kline said she felt a certain affinity with the royals and wanted to buy King Charles III memorabilia but would be departing before any arrived at souvenir shops and stalls.

"The prince — I mean the king — is a year younger than I am. So I saw him as a little kid, and he was like my peer, you know?" Kline said. "And then their grandkids are just a little bit younger than our grandkids."

Associated Press writer Danica Kirka contributed from London.

Follow all AP stories on Britain's royal family at <https://apnews.com/hub/queen-elizabeth-ii>.

Trump's PAC faces scrutiny amid intensifying legal probes

By JILL COLVIN, BRIAN SLODYSKO and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sitting on top of more than \$115 million across several political committees, Donald Trump has positioned himself as a uniquely indomitable force in the GOP who would almost certainly have the resources to swamp his rivals if he launched another presidential campaign.

But that massive pile of money is also emerging as a potential vulnerability. His chief fundraising vehicle, Save America PAC, is under new legal scrutiny after the Justice Department issued a round of grand jury subpoenas that sought information about the political action committee's fundraising practices.

The scope of the probe is unclear. Grand jury subpoenas and search warrants issued by the Justice Department in recent days were related to numerous topics, including Trump's PAC, according to people familiar with the matter who requested anonymity to discuss an ongoing investigation. The subpoenas seek records as well as testimony and ask at least some of the recipients about their knowledge of efforts to engage in election fraud, according to one of the people.

The subpoenas also ask for records of communication with Trump-allied lawyers who supported efforts to overturn the 2020 election results and plotted to line up fake electors in battleground states. A particular area of focus appears to be on the "Save America Rally" that preceded the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, the person said.

The investigation is one of several criminal probes Trump currently faces, including scrutiny of how documents with classified markings wound up at the former president's Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Florida. Regardless of Save America's ultimate role in the investigations, the flurry of developments has drawn attention to the PAC's management, how it has raised money and where those funds have been directed.

Trump spokesman Taylor Budowich slammed the subpoenas, saying a "weaponized and politicized Justice Department" was "casting a blind net to intimidate and silence Republicans who are fighting for his America First agenda." Representatives for the Justice Department have declined to comment.

While Trump has more than \$115 million held across various committees, the vast majority of it is stored at Save America. The PAC ended July with more than \$99 million cash-on-hand, according to fundraising records — more than the Republican and Democratic national campaign committees combined.

Trump has continued to shovel up small-dollar donations in the months since, frustrating other Republicans who have been struggling to raise money ahead of the November midterm elections.

Save America is set up as a "leadership PAC" designed to allow political figures to fundraise for other campaigns. But the groups are often used by would-be candidates to fund political travel, polling and staff as they "test the waters" ahead of potential presidential runs. The accounts can also be used to contribute money to other candidates and party organizations, helping would-be candidates build political capital.

Much of the money Trump has amassed was raised in the days and weeks after the 2020 election, which he lost to Democrat Joe Biden. That's when Trump supporters were bombarded with a nonstop stream of emails and texts, many containing all-caps lettering and blatant lies about a stolen 2020 election, soliciting

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cash for an "election defense fund."

But no such fund ever existed. Instead, Trump has dedicated the money to other uses. He's financed dozens of rallies, paid staff and used the money to travel as he's teased an expected 2024 presidential run.

Other expenses have been more unusual. There was the \$1 million donated last year to the Conservative Partnership Institute, a nonprofit that employs Cleta Mitchell and former Trump chief of staff Mark Meadows, both of whom encouraged Trump's failed attempt to overturn the 2020 election.

There was the \$650,000 "charitable contribution" in July to the Smithsonian Institution to help fund portraits of Trump and the former first lady that will one day hang in the National Portrait Gallery, according to the Smithsonian spokesperson Linda St. Thomas.

Much of the money has also funded a different sort of defense fund — one that has paid the legal expenses of Trump confidants and aides who have been called to testify before the Jan. 6 committee.

Overall, Trump's sprawling political operation has spent at least \$8 million on "legal consulting" and "legal expenses" to at least 40 law firms since the insurrection, according to an analysis of campaign finance disclosures.

It's unclear how much of that money went to legal fees for staffers after a congressional committee started investigating the origins of the attack. But at least \$1.1 million has been paid to Elections LLC, a firm started by former Trump White House ethics lawyer Stefan Passantino, according to campaign finance and business records. An additional \$1 million was paid to a legal trust housed at the same address as Passantino's firm. Passantino did not respond to a request for comment Monday night. Payments have also been made to firms that specialize in environmental regulation and real estate matters.

As of July, only about \$750,000 had been doled out to candidates for Congress, with an additional \$150,000 given to candidates for state office, records show. Trump is expected to ramp up his political spending now that the general election season has entered full swing, though it remains unclear how much the notoriously thrifty former president will ultimately agree to spend.

Trump has long played coy about his 2024 plans, saying a formal announcement would trigger campaign finance rules that would, in part, force him to create a new campaign committee that would be bound by strict fundraising limits.

In the meantime, Trump aides have been discussing the prospect of creating a new super PAC or repurposing one that already exists as gets he closer to an expected announcement. While Trump could not use Save America to fund campaign activity after launching a run, aides have discussed the possibility of moving at least some of that money into a super PAC, according to people familiar with the talks who insisted on anonymity to discuss private plans.

Campaign finance experts are mixed on the legality of such a move. Some, like Richard Briffault, a professor at Columbia Law School and an expert in campaign finance, said he didn't see a problem.

"There may be some hoops he has to jump through," he said. But "I don't see a problem with it going from one PAC to another ... I don't see what would block it."

Others disagree.

"It is illegal for a candidate to transfer a significant amount of money from a leadership PAC to a super PAC. You certainly can't do \$100 million," said Adav Noti, a former Federal Election Commission attorney who now works for the Campaign Legal Center, a Washington-based government watchdog group focused on money and politics.

And whether or not Trump would face any consequences is a different matter.

For years, the FEC, which polices campaign finance laws, has been gridlocked. The commission is split evenly between Republicans and Democrats, and a majority vote is needed to take any enforcement action against a candidate.

Indeed, legal experts say Trump has repeatedly flouted campaign finance law since launching his 2016 White House run, with no consequence.

More than 50 complaints involving Trump and his various campaign committees have been filed with the FEC. In roughly half of those instances, FEC lawyers have concluded that there was reason to believe that

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he or his committees may have broken campaign finance law. But the commission, which now includes three Trump-appointed Republicans, has repeatedly deadlocked.

The list of dismissed complaints against Trump is extensive. In 2021, Republicans on the commission rejected the claim, supported by the FEC's staff attorneys, that a Trump orchestrated hush-money payment by his former lawyer to pornographic film star Stormy Daniels amounted to an unreported in-kind contribution. In May, the commission similarly deadlocked over whether his campaign broke the law by hiding how it was spending cash during the 2020 campaign.

And over the summer, the commission rejected complaints stemming from Trump's threat to withhold \$391 million in aid for the Ukraine unless the Ukrainian officials opened an investigation into the relationship President Joe Biden's son Hunter Biden had with a Ukrainian gas company called Burisma, which the FEC's attorney's determined was a potential violation of campaign finance law.

"There is no legal basis whatsoever for believing that Congress intended the FEC to police official acts of the government that may be intended to assist an officeholder's reelection," the commission's three Republicans said in a written statement late last month.

That means any enforcement action would likely have to come from the Justice Department.

"He has nothing to fear from the Federal Election Commission until either its structure is changed or there is turnover among the FEC Commissioners," said Brett G. Kappel, a longtime campaign finance attorney who works at the Washington-based firm Harmon Curran and has represented both Republicans and Democrats. "That doesn't mean he doesn't have anything to fear from the Justice Department, which is already apparently investigating Save America. From what I can see, there are multiple wire fraud allegations that could be the subject of a Justice Department investigation."

In the meantime, Trump and Save America continue to rake in contributions from grassroots supporters, blasting out fundraising solicitations with aggressive demands like "this needs to be taken care of NOW" and threatening donors that their "Voter Verification" canvass surveys are "OUT OF DATE," even as some of the Republican Senate contenders Trump endorsed and helped drag across the finish line in primaries are struggling to raise cash.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., has urged those candidates to ask Trump for money, which the former president has so far proven reluctant to provide. That has left the candidates, some of whom presented themselves as McConnell antagonists during their primaries, to grovel to McConnell and the Senate Leadership Fund, the super PAC he controls and has \$100 million in reserve.

It also strengthens McConnell's hand in his long-simmering feud with Trump, who has urged GOP senators to oust the Kentucky Republican. Some close to Trump acknowledge the candidates could use the money, but said he doesn't see it as his responsibility to fill the void.

Colvin reported from New York.

Follow AP's coverage of Donald Trump at <https://apnews.com/hub/donald-trump>.

Today in History: September 14, Star Spangled Banner written

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Sept. 14, the 257th day of 2022. There are 108 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 14, 1901, President William McKinley died in Buffalo, New York, of gunshot wounds inflicted by an assassin; Vice President Theodore Roosevelt succeeded him.

On this date:

In 1814, Francis Scott Key was inspired to write the poem "Defence of Fort McHenry" (later "The Star-Spangled Banner") after witnessing the American flag flying over the Maryland fort following a night of British naval bombardment during the War of 1812.

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In 1847, during the Mexican-American War, U.S. forces under Gen. Winfield Scott took control of Mexico City.

In 1861, the first naval engagement of the Civil War took place as the USS Colorado attacked and sank the Confederate private schooner Judah off Pensacola, Florida.

In 1867, the first volume of "Das Kapital" by Karl Marx was published in Hamburg, Germany.

In 1927, modern dance pioneer Isadora Duncan died in Nice (nees), France, when her scarf became entangled in a wheel of the sports car she was riding in.

In 1982, Princess Grace of Monaco, formerly film star Grace Kelly, died at age 52 of injuries from a car crash the day before; Lebanon's president-elect, Bashir Gemayel (bah-SHEER' jeh-MAY'-el), was killed by a bomb.

In 1991, the government of South Africa, the African National Congress and the Inkatha (in-KAH'-tah) Freedom Party signed a national peace pact.

In 1994, on the 34th day of a strike by players, Acting Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig announced the 1994 season was over.

In 2001, Americans packed churches and clogged public squares on a day of remembrance for the victims of the Sept. 11 attacks. President George W. Bush prayed with his Cabinet and attended services at Washington National Cathedral, then flew to New York, where he waded into the ruins of the World Trade Center and addressed rescue workers in a flag-waving, bullhorn-wielding show of resolve.

In 2009, death claimed "Dirty Dancing" star Patrick Swayze at 57; former White House press secretary Jody Powell at age 65; and comic character actor Henry Gibson at age 73.

In 2012, fury over an anti-Muslim film ridiculing the Prophet Muhammad spread across the Muslim world, with deadly clashes near Western embassies in Tunisia and Sudan, an American fast-food restaurant set ablaze in Lebanon, and international peacekeepers attacked in the Sinai.

In 2015, Rowan County, Kentucky, clerk Kim Davis returned to work for the first time since she was jailed for defying a federal court and announced that she would no longer block her deputies from issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

Ten years ago: Fury over an anti-Muslim film ridiculing the Prophet Muhammad spread across the Muslim world, with deadly clashes near Western embassies in Tunisia and Sudan, an American fast-food restaurant set ablaze in Lebanon, and international peacekeepers attacked in the Sinai.

Five years ago: CIA Director Mike Pompeo canceled a planned appearance at Harvard University over the school's decision to name Chelsea Manning a visiting fellow. Former CIA deputy director Mike Morell resigned from his post at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, saying he couldn't be part of an organization that "honors a convicted felon and leaker of classified information."

One year ago: The Justice Department said it was curtailing federal agents' use of "no-knock" warrants, and would also prohibit its agents from using chokeholds in most circumstances. South Carolina state police said Alex Murdaugh, a prominent lawyer, had tried to arrange his own death so that a son would get a \$10 million life insurance payment, but that the planned fatal shot only grazed his head. (Murdaugh was later charged in the deaths of his wife and their younger son; he is also charged with stealing \$8.5 million from people who hired him as an attorney.) Standup comic and former "Saturday Night Live" star Norm Macdonald died at 61; his management team said he'd had cancer for nine years, but kept it private. Signaling that Broadway was inching back to normalcy, three powerhouse shows — "The Lion King," "Hamilton" and "Wicked" — reopened to audiences at full capacity.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Walter Koenig (KAY'-nihg) is 86. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Larry Brown is 82. Singer-actor Joey Heatherton is 78. Actor Sam Neill is 75. Singer Jon "Bowzer" Bauman (Sha Na Na) is 75. Actor Robert Wisdom is 69. Rock musician Steve Berlin (Los Lobos) is 67. Country singer-songwriter Beth Nielsen Chapman is 66. Actor Mary Crosby is 63. Singer Morten Harket (a-ha) is 63. Country singer John Berry is 63. Actor Melissa Leo is 62. Actor Faith Ford is 58. Actor Jamie Kaler is 58. Actor Michelle Stafford is 57. Rock musician Mike Cooley (Drive-By Truckers) is 56. Actor Dan Cortese is 55. Contemporary Christian singer Mark Hall is 53. Actor-writer-director-producer Tyler Perry is 53. Actor Ben Garant is 52.

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Rock musician Craig Montoya (Tri Polar) is 52. Actor Kimberly Williams-Paisley is 51. Actor Andrew Lincoln is 49. Rapper Nas is 49. Actor Austin Basis is 46. Country singer Danielle Peck is 44. Pop singer Ayo is 42. Chef/TV personality Katie Lee is 41. Actor Sebastian Sozzi is 40. Actor Adam Lamberg is 38. Singer Alex Clare is 37. Actor Chad Duell (TV: "General Hospital") is 35. Actor Jessica Brown Findlay is 35. Actor-singer Logan Henderson is 33. Actor Emma Kenney is 23.