

Groton Daily Independent

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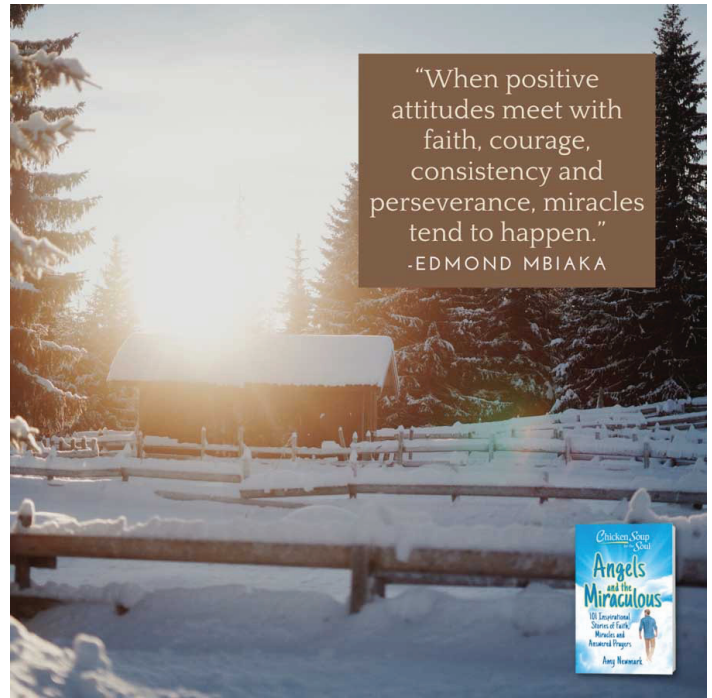
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Friday, May 10

Chicken pasta salad, grape juice, dinner roll apple crisp, carrots and peas.
School Breakfast: Egg wraps.
School Lunch: Hot dogs chips.
Elementary Track and Field Day, Groton, 12:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 11

Common Cents Community Thrift Store hours 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.



Sunday, May 12

GHS Graduation, 2 p.m.
Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Worship Service at 10:30 a.m.
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m., SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.
First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Worship at St. John's 9 a.m., and at Zion, 11 a.m.
United Methodist: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Honor graduates during coffee hour and worship; Sunday School Carnival, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m. (Sunday School sings); Doris Strom's 99th Birthday, 3 p.m.

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

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1440

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The Biden administration yesterday unveiled a proposed change in the asylum process that could allow immigration officials to deport some migrants within days. Under the policy, key eligibility determinations would shift from the interview stage, which currently can take years, to the initial screening stage.

A British toddler born with a rare form of deafness can hear after receiving a pioneering gene therapy treatment developed by pharmaceutical company Regeneron. The news follows a similar treatment in January by Eli Lilly, allowing 11-year-old Aissam Dam to hear for

the first time.

Two broods of periodical cicadas are emerging across the US. The event marks the first time in over 200 years these two broods—out of almost 3,400 known species—will appear simultaneously.

Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Filmmaker Mohammad Rasoulof sentenced to eight years in prison in Iran over alleged "intent to commit crimes against country's security"; Rasoulof's newest film is set to premiere at next week's Cannes Film Festival.

MLB star Shohei Ohtani's former interpreter pleads guilty to bank fraud and faces 33 years in prison for stealing \$17M from Ohtani.

Disney and Warner Bros. Discovery team up to bundle Disney+, Hulu, and Max streaming services. New "Lord of the Rings" film set for 2026 release.

Science & Technology

National Museum of Brazil receives more than 1,100 fossils donated from private collector Burkhard Pohl; museum was nearly completely destroyed in a 2018 fire.

Researchers produce highest resolution 3D map of the brain to date; study reveals network of an estimated 150 million synapses in a cubic millimeter of brain tissue. Brain implant company Neuralink sees reduced accuracy and speed in first human chip implant as some threads retract from brain.

Scientists identify likely ancestor of all modern hoofed animals; chinchilla-like creature lived in what is now Colorado roughly 65 million years ago.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher (S&P 500 +0.5%, Dow +0.9%, Nasdaq +0.3%) as new data on weekly jobless claims raise expectations of interest rate cuts. US weekly jobless claims rise to 231,000 for week ending May 4; figure is the highest level since August 2023.

Vice Media to relaunch digital properties through joint venture with Nashville-based Savage Ventures; news comes one year after Vice filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

Roblox shares fall 22% after online gaming giant lowers guidance for full-year bookings, with latest quarterly report showing drop-off in player engagement.

Politics & World Affairs

Adult film star Stormy Daniels returns to the witness stand in former President Donald Trump's hush money trial. Trump's 18-year-old son Barron to serve as a delegate for Republican National Convention. Hunter Biden's request to dismiss gun charges rejected by appeals court, clearing way for June trial.

Death toll rises to at least 107 people from severe flooding in Brazil's southern state of Rio Grande do Sul; more than 100 people are still missing and roughly 165,000 people have been displaced.

First shipment of humanitarian aid from Cyprus heads to US-built floating pier off Gaza's coast. At least 80,000 people have fled Gaza's southern city of Rafah since Monday, according to the UN.

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—Weber—
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Hours: M-F 10-6
Sat 10-4 ~ Sun 12-4

Donley's Construction Class Builds Small House

Two years ago, Joe Foertsch was the first area businessman to help Donley's construction class with the building of their small house by helping to level the floor. He was also the last one to volunteer this spring by assisting students in hanging the front door.

Several area businessmen volunteered to help teach the students in various areas involved in the construction process. These men include Jim Lane, Austin Blocker, Locke Electric who assisted with wiring, John Sippel who helped with the cabinets, and Ryan Scepaniak who helped with the plumbing.

A huge thank you also goes to S&S Lumber as most of the materials were purchased from this business. Everything was provided by local contractors and businesses except for the rare occasion when a few items were not available in Groton.

The greatest lesson learned was how willing these businesses and contractors were with their support and help as well as the importance of keeping it local!

The small house is just under 500 square feet with 2x6 walls, insulated floor, energy heel on the rafters with 18" of insulation in the attic, LED lighting, and LE windows.

It is hoped that \$44,000.00 can be raised with the sale of this small house to pay for the materials. Any extra funds received beyond the cost of the materials will be placed in the school's shop department account. The house can easily be moved with a stack mover.

This project gave the students an excellent opportunity to sample different aspects of the various construction trades.

A sincere thank you goes out to all the area contractors, businesses, and individuals who donated their time in teaching the students all of the various mechanics that go into building a house.



Standing in back Joe Foertsch Students in front Blake Dennert, Nick Morris, Kaden Kampa, Jaeger Kampa, Carson Herrick, Christian Ehresmannm, Riley Carman, absent Tristan Kampa. (Photo by Dorene Nelson)



Now HIRING!

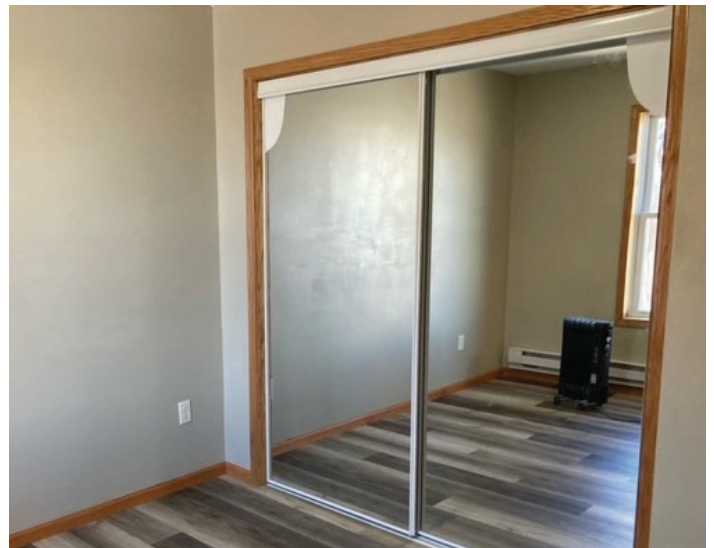
Dairy Queen in Groton is hiring! If you're looking for a fun job with lots of variety, look no further! We're looking for energetic, smiling people – we provide free meals, uniforms, competitive wages, fun atmosphere and flexible scheduling. Part-time – day, evening, week-end shifts available. We will work with your schedule. Stop in today and pick up an application.

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Donley's Construction Class Builds Small House

(Photos by Dorene Nelson)



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Groton Area takes first in three events at NEC Track Meet

The Northeast Conference track meet was held Thursday in Sisseton where Groton Area took first in three events.

Emma Kutter took first in the Javelin, McKenna Tietz took first in the 300m hurdles and the boys sprint medley relay team took first place.

Boy's Division

100 Meters: 2. Keegen Tracy, 11.59

200 Meters: 10. Lane Tietz, 25.09; 18. Gage Sippel, 26.43

400 Meters: 2. Keegen Tracy, 52.22; 12. Gage Sippel, 57.82

800 Meters: 7. Jayden Schwan, 2:18.58

1600 Meters: 17. Garrett Schultz, 5:59.12

300m Hurdles: 11. Tristin McGannon, 49.47

4x200 Relay: 5. Lane Tietz, Colby Dunker, Blake Pauli, Gage Sippel, 1:41.85

4x800 Relay: 6. Tristin McGannon, Logan Warrington, Jayden Schwan, Garrett Schultz, 9:52.90.

SMR 1600m: 1. Lane Tietz, Colby Dunker, Keegen Tracy, Blake Pauli, 3:46.90.

Shot Put: 6. Logan Ringgenberg, 42' 11; 10. Karter Moody, 36' 11.25; 11. Holden Sippel, 36' 8

Discus: 4. Logan Ringgenberg, 123' 7; 7. Holden Sippel, 116' 5; 21. Karter Moody, 88' 2

Javelin: 11. Karter Moody, 101' 1; 28. Drew Thurston, 80' 1.

Triple Jump: 12. Tristin McGannon, 32' 8.5SR

Girl's Division

100 Meters: 3. Laila Roberts, 13.24; 4. Rylee Dunker, 13.44; 21. Hannah Sandness, 14.93

200 Meters: 2. Laila Roberts, 28.61; 3. Rylee Dunker, 29.39; 13. Elizabeth Flihs, 31.02

400 Meters: 2. Taryn Traphagen, 1:02.18; 4. Laila Roberts, 1:02.83; 5. Kella Tracy, 1:03.66

800 Meters: 3. Faith Traphagen, 2:35.34; 4. Taryn Traphagen, 2:38.95

1600 Meters: 4. Rylee Gilbert, 5:42.97

3200 Meters: 5. Rylee Gilbert, 13:08.50

100m Hurdles: 2. McKenna Tietz, 18.07; 10. Talli Wright, 18.93; 15. Emerlee Jones, 20.16

300m Hurdles: 1. McKenna Tietz, 51.98; 5. Emerlee Jones, 54.03; 6. Talli Wright, 54.53

4x100 Relay: 5. McKenna Tietz, Rylee Dunker, Jerica Locke, Elizabeth Flihs, 54.97.

4x200 Relay: 2. Rylee Dunker, McKenna Tietz, Jerica Locke, Elizabeth Flihs, 1:52.55.

4x400 Relay: 2. Jerica Locke, Kella Tracy, Taryn Traphagen, Ashlynn Warrington, 4:17.94.

4x800 Relay: 2. Faith Traphagen, Kella Tracy, Taryn Traphagen, Ashlynn Warrington, 10:01.47.

SMR 1600m: 6. Elizabeth Flihs, Ashlynn Warrington, Jerica Locke, Kella Tracy, 4:58.15.

Shot Put: 2. Emma Kutter, 34' 4; 15. Avery Crank, 27' 3.5; 21. Faith Flihs, 26' 0

Discus: 11. Avery Crank, 78' 7; 13. Faith Flihs, 78' 5; 16. Emma Kutter, 74' 1

Javelin: 1. Emma Kutter, 87' 10; 18. Avery Crank, 64' 5; 23. Ashley Johnson, 58' 10

Long Jump: 8. Laila Roberts, 13' 11.75; 18. Teagan Hanten, 13' 3

Triple Jump: 18. Emerlee Jones, 27' 7.75; 20. Teagan Hanten, 27' 5

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Queen of Hearts

The tenth week of the Queen of Hearts drawing was held Thursday night. The jackpot was \$14,765. Ticket sales for the week were \$1,740 with 10 percent of that as a consolation prize. June Thompson got the consolation prize of \$174. Her number was 29 with the eight of spades.



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Interest rates likely to stay high, economist tells state Banking Commission

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - MAY 9, 2024 6:45 PM

STIOUX FALLS — An economist told the South Dakota Banking Commission on Wednesday that the Federal Reserve is unlikely to lower interest rates anytime soon.

"I think higher for longer," said Joseph Santos, director and professor of economics at the Ness School of Management and Economics at South Dakota State University.

The governor appoints the Banking Commission, which regulates the state's banking industry.

The Federal Reserve is the central bank of the United States. Its federal funds rate is a benchmark that influences the rates people receive when they borrow and save money. The Fed began raising rates in 2022 and has kept rates high to counteract the rate of inflation, which soared to 8% in 2022.

Santos' remarks come amid ongoing speculation about the Fed's next moves. In March, the Fed declined to cut interest rates, citing uncertainties about the pace at which inflation is slowing.

The Fed's interest rate policies have had a noticeable impact on South Dakota's economy.

Homebuyers have been particularly affected by rising mortgage rates, according to a new economic report Thursday from the South Dakota Secretary of State's Office and Dakota Wesleyan University. Using the example of Mitchell, where the median home price is \$284,000, the report says current interest rates have added \$54,000 in costs over the life of a 30-year mortgage, compared to rates last year.

Meanwhile, according to a report from the Dakota Institute, inflation-adjusted average home list prices surged 36.2% from the end of 2020 through the end of 2023.

The report from the Secretary of State's Office quotes Trevor Dierks, president at First Dakota National Bank, talking about the effect of interest rates on the local economy.

"Since Mitchell and the surrounding areas compose more small businesses, interest rates can make it difficult for those small businesses to grow," Dierks said.

At the Banking Commission meeting, Chairman Jeff Erickson said low unemployment and high demand for workers is driving wages up. And when workers earn more money, that can contribute to inflation by driving prices up.

"There are more jobs available than workers able to work," Erickson told South Dakota Searchlight. "Why wouldn't people expect more pay? But again, can businesses keep passing that onto their customers?"

Joshua Haiar is a reporter based in Sioux Falls. Born and raised in Mitchell, he joined the Navy as a public affairs specialist after high school and then earned a degree from the University of South Dakota. Prior to joining South Dakota Searchlight, Joshua worked for five years as a multimedia specialist and journalist with South Dakota Public Broadcasting.

South Dakota joins pushback against new EPA coal rules

BY: JEFF BEACH - MAY 9, 2024 5:12 PM

South Dakota has joined a group of states, led by North Dakota and West Virginia, in asking a federal court to review new pollution standards impacting the coal industry.

Attorneys general from 23 states signed the petition asking for a review of the regulations that took effect Tuesday. The final proposed rules became public on April 25.

"This rule intentionally sets impossible standards to destroy the coal industry," North Dakota Attorney

General Drew Wrigley said in a news release.

Wrigley said the Biden administration has ignored limits on its authority set by Congress.

"Federal agencies cannot decide on a whim to destroy entire industries," Wrigley said.

The petition was filed Wednesday in the U.S. District Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C., asking the court to review the Environmental Protection Agency rule.

Other states that signed the petition were Alaska, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia and Wyoming.

In its announcement of the rules on April 25, EPA Administrator Michael Regan said "EPA is cutting pollution while ensuring that power companies can make smart investments and continue to deliver reliable electricity for all Americans."

In particular, North Dakota officials have taken issue with new, stricter mercury emissions standards.

Dave Glatt, director of the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality, said the mercury standard provides no measurable health benefits and are a "death sentence for coal."

Jason Bohrer, president and CEO of the Lignite Energy Council, released a statement after the final rule was announced in April.

"Electricity demand is surging, and the EPA's agenda will severely impact our ability to rely on electricity 24/7," Bohrer said. "These regulations mandate either fuel switching or the implementation of unproven technology, jeopardizing the stability of the national power supply, and putting over 12,000 jobs in the lignite industry at risk."

The Lignite Energy Council says the North Dakota coal industry contributes \$5.75 billion to the state economy and more than \$100 million in state and local taxes.

In addition to mercury reductions, the new rules also lower the levels of pollutants that coal-fired power plants can discharge through wastewater, sets standards for handling coal ash and sets limits on carbon emissions. North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum and other state officials have repeatedly complained about onerous regulations from the Biden administration, with Burgum even making a plea to a legislative committee to provide adequate funding for the state's legal battles with the federal government.

North Dakota Monitor Deputy Editor Jeff Beach is based in the Fargo area. His interests include agriculture, renewable energy and rural issues.

Fossil researchers discover new genus of deer at Badlands National Park

BY: SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - MAY 9, 2024 12:32 PM

INTERIOR — A team of researchers studying fossil remains found by an intern in South Dakota's Badlands National Park have discovered a previously unknown type of tiny, hornless deer that lived in the area 32 million years ago, the National Park Service announced Thursday.

Researchers from the park, the American Museum of Natural History, and California State Polytechnic University say the remains are a new genus. Mattison Shreero and Ed Welsh of Badlands National Park headed the research, which was published this week in the Proceedings of the South Dakota Academy of Science.

The new deer, *Santuccimeryx* ("Santucci's ruminant"), was named after Vincent L. Santucci to honor his contributions to the paleontology program at Badlands National Park. He is the senior paleontologist and paleontology program coordinator in the Geologic Resources Division of the National Park Service.

Santuccimeryx belongs to the extinct family Leptomerycidae, whose members were about the size of house cats and lived in North America from about 41 million years ago to about 11 million years ago. They are considered close relatives to the living chevrotains, or mouse deer, from the tropical forests of central and western Africa and southeast Asia.

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Geoscientists-in-the-Parks intern Tiffany Leone discovered and submitted a visitor site report in 2016 about what turned out to be the first and only known skull of *Santuccimeryx*.

Shreero said in a news release that the find highlights the importance of citizen science.

"This is the only skull of this animal ever found," she said. "And if somebody had walked away with it, or if they just hadn't reported it and it had eroded away, we would have never known about it."

What to do if you find a fossil in Badlands National Park

Visitors at Badlands who spot a fossil or artifact are asked to leave it in place and submit a report at the Visitor Center, with a park ranger, or by email to Badlands_fossil_finds@nps.gov. They should take a photo of the undisturbed find, preferably with another object or feature in sight to show scale, and document the coordinates or location.

Still much unknown on how marijuana policies would change in states under Biden plan

BY: JACOB FISCHLER - MAY 9, 2024 6:00 AM

U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland has proposed loosening the illegal status of marijuana at the federal level – but that doesn't mean the federal government now condones recreational or medicinal use in the many states that have legalized the drug.

Moving marijuana from the government's list of the most dangerous and least useful substances to a less serious category was a clear signal that the federal government, at least under President Joe Biden's administration, wants to ease restrictions on a drug that's been legal in an increasing number of states for more than a decade.

For years, the federal government has not pursued enforcement of state-legal marijuana operations, and the recent move appears to solidify that approach.

But it didn't solve the many thorny issues that have resulted from a split between what is legal in dozens of states and what the federal government allows.

It's unclear exactly what the rescheduling will mean. The Justice Department has not made public the text of Garland's proposal — a DOJ spokesman declined States Newsroom's request this week for a copy and state regulators say it has not been shared with them.

Even if the proposal were public, it would be expected to go through changes over months of rulemaking.

Here are some questions covering what is known at this early stage about what rescheduling would and would not do.

Q: Is weed legal now?

A: No.

Even in states that have legalized recreational use, the federal government would likely still consider the state system as illegal under federal law.

Other Schedule III drugs, including Tylenol with codeine and anabolic steroids, are tightly regulated and available only by prescription at pharmacies.

State-legal medicinal marijuana dispensaries do not fit that description and recreational-use dispensaries are even further from what the Food and Drug Administration requires of Schedule III drugs.

"This does not make marijuana state operations legal," Shawn Hauser, a partner at Denver-based marijuana law firm Vicente LLP, said on a May 3 webinar. "They are not selling FDA-approved drugs and they are not licensed or meet the control requirements for Schedule III. So cannabis and state-legal dispensaries will remain in violation of federal law."

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Q: What is the difference between Schedule I and Schedule III?

A: Among the most significant is the recognition that the drug may have some medicinal value. Under the federal Controlled Substances Act, the Drug Enforcement Administration has five levels of drug classifications.

Schedule I is the most restricted level, comprising the drugs most ripe for abuse that have no medicinal value. Other drugs on the list include heroin and LSD.

Because the definition of Schedule I substances includes no medicinal use, it is illegal to even study substances on the list.

Schedule III is the strictest level that acknowledges some medicinal value, making some hopeful that research on the drug could be improved.

"Moving cannabis to Schedule III would be a big step for recognition of the medical uses of cannabis, what voters here recognized by a wide margin in 1998," the Washington state Liquor and Cannabis Board said in a May 1 statement. "And it would say very clearly that the federal government no longer considers cannabis among the most dangerous drugs."

Q: How are states preparing?

A: Until they have more details, state regulators cannot do much, Amanda Borup, the senior policy analyst for the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission, said in an interview.

"We really have to wait and see what they release," she said, referring to the DEA's rulemaking.

Other states are considering what the impacts might be.

The statement from Washington's Liquor and Cannabis Board said rescheduling would "hopefully" ease restrictions on cannabis research, while it is "possible" the move would allow state-legal businesses to take advantage of tax deductions available to other industries.

Q: Why does research matter?

A: Marijuana advocates have had trouble providing evidence of any marijuana benefits because research has been restricted, which in turn made it more difficult to show that the restrictions should be lifted.

It could also help establish industry guidelines for ancillary issues. For example, the restrictions on research contribute to a lack of data on what pesticides are safe for use in marijuana cultivation.

Q: How does this affect policy on taxes, banking and criminal justice?

A: On its own, rescheduling likely won't address several complaints marijuana industry members and advocates have about federal prohibition.

Some are hopeful, though, that the signal from the Biden administration will spur momentum toward other changes.

Most businesses can deduct their costs from their income and pay taxes on their net income. Marijuana businesses cannot take that deduction, known as 280E, according to the Marijuana Policy Project, an advocacy group.

Schedule I status also makes access to the U.S. banking system difficult.

Others complain that making marijuana legal in some states has not been fair to the communities of color that saw the most active enforcement.

Rescheduling would not fix those issues on its own, but advocates are hopeful it is a sign of momentum toward full legalization.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and Democratic Sens. Cory Booker of New Jersey and Ron Wyden of Oregon reintroduced a bill last week to de-schedule the drug altogether. The measure includes expanding the 280E tax break and several provisions meant to address social justice.

Q: Could Trump reverse this if he wins in November?

A: Probably, though there's no indication that's on his agenda.

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It's unclear what the status of the rescheduling will be when the next Inauguration Day arrives on Jan. 20. If former President Donald Trump wins back the presidency and the rescheduling is still pending, he could direct the DEA and DOJ to scrap the change.

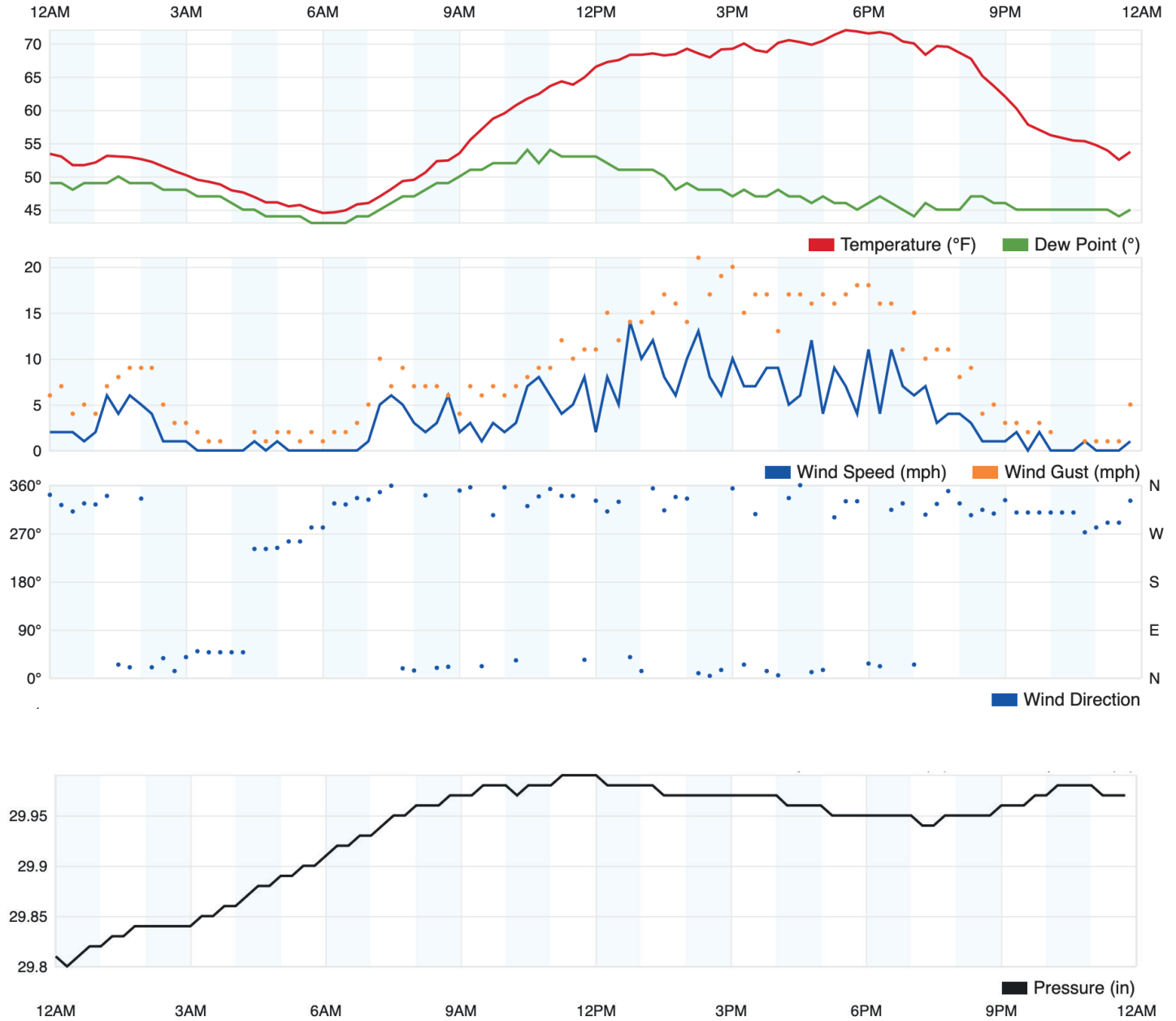
Trump has not commented on the issue.

Jacob covers federal policy as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Based in Oregon, he focuses on Western issues. His coverage areas include climate, energy development, public lands and infrastructure.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today

Tonight

Saturday

Saturday Night

Sunday



High: 74 °F

Sunny and
Breezy



Low: 43 °F

Mostly Clear



High: 79 °F

Sunny



Low: 51 °F

Partly Cloudy



High: 78 °F

Sunny

TODAY



HIGHS: 70-77°F

NORTHWESTERLY WINDS
WITH GUSTS OF 25-35 MPH

SATURDAY



HIGHS: 74-82°F

WESTERLY WINDS WITH
GUSTS OF 15-25 MPH

SUNDAY



HIGHS: 75-80°F

NORTHERLY WINDS WITH
GUSTS OF 15-20 MPH

May 10, 2024 4:21 AM

National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

A frontal boundary crossing the area will bring increasing northwesterly winds with gusts of 25 to 35 mph. High temperatures today will warm into the 70s. Warmer temperatures can be expected on Sunday with highs in the mid 70s to around 80 degrees.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 72 °F at 5:34 PM

Low Temp: 44 °F at 5:56 AM

Wind: 21 mph at 2:05 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 14 hours, 47 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 95 in 1911

Record Low: 20 in 1981

Average High: 68

Average Low: 42

Average Precip in May.: 1.10

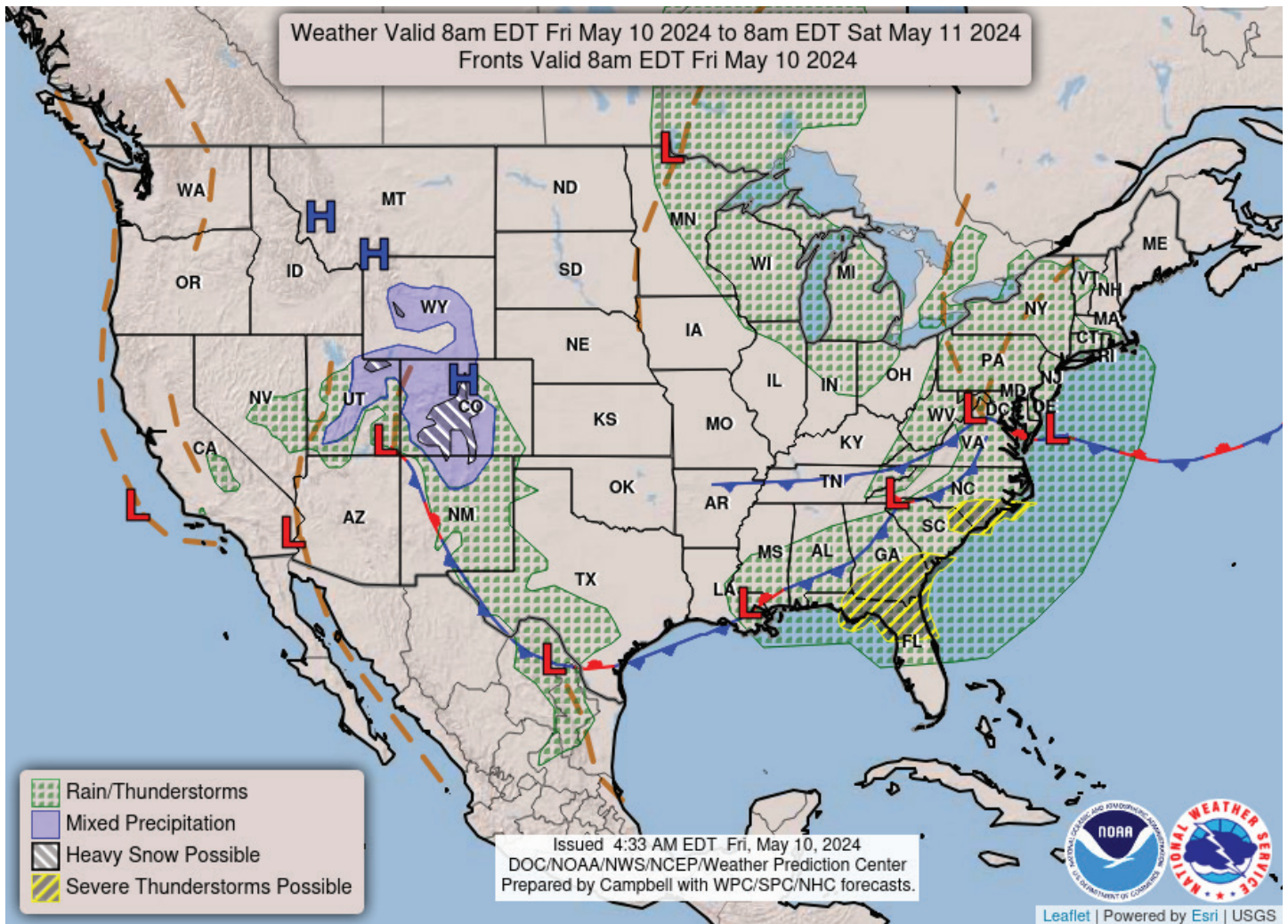
Precip to date in May: 0.68

Average Precip to date: 5.07

Precip Year to Date: 5.21

Sunset Tonight: 8:52:22 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:03:56 am



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Today in Weather History

May 10, 1982: An F3 tornado was first sighted six miles west of Tintah, Minnesota. The storm moved into the town of Tintah and then northeastward, dissipating north of Wendell. Two farms, sites were damaged west of Tintah. Nearly one dozen farm buildings were destroyed, and 50 cows were killed. Hail as large as softballs preceded the tornado into Tintah where there was extensive damage. A school and church received heavy damage, two railroad cars were overturned, homes and grain buildings were damaged, and utility poles and trees were uprooted.

1880: A tornado estimated to be F4 intensity moved across 20 miles of Scott and Morgan Counties in central Illinois. The tornado touched down near Aley and moved northeast, passing 8 miles south of Jacksonville. The tornado was strongest in the Pisgah area, where 30 buildings were destroyed. Seven people were killed.

1905: On Wednesday, May 10th, 1905, the Oklahoma Territory was struck by one of the worst natural disasters in early American history. Tornadoes pounded the southwest part of the Territory, one of which flattened the town of Snyder. The "official" death toll is listed today as 97, but the actual number of victims may never be known. One hundred years later, this single tornado remains the second most deadly in Oklahoma history.

1953: Four, F4 tornadoes touched down in parts of eastern Minnesota and western Wisconsin. One F4 tornado moved northeast from northeast of Fountain City, Wisconsin to Colburn, Wisconsin. Total damage from this storm was \$1 million, and it caused ten injuries.

The second F4 tornado moved from 5 miles southwest of Chester, Iowa to 4 miles northeast of Chatfield, Minnesota. One man was killed as his barn was destroyed one mile southeast of Wykoff. A rural school was leveled 3 miles south of Chatfield as well.

The third F4 tornado moved northeast and passed about 2 miles northwest of St. Charles, Minnesota. Farms were torn up all along the track. An infant was killed, and four other people were injured in a car that was thrown 100 feet. Overall this tornado killed one person and injured 11 people.

The final F4 tornado moved across Rusk, Price, and Taylor counties in Wisconsin. Over \$150,000 worth of damage resulted. An F3 tornado moved northeast across Clayton County, Iowa. At least 60 head of cattle were killed. A farmer was carried 700 feet but suffered only minor injuries.

1966 - Morning lows of 21 degrees at Bloomington-Normal and Aurora, IL, established a state record for the month of May. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Summer-like "Father's Day" type weather prevailed in the north central and western U.S. for "Mother's Day", as seventeen cities reported record high temperatures for the date. Jamestown ND soared to a record high of 96 degrees. Thunderstorms along the Central Gulf Coast deluged Lillian AL with 14.5 inches of rain, and nearby Perdido Key FL with 12.8 inches of rain. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front crossing the Plateau Region produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Butte MT, and gusts to 77 mph at Choteau MT. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - A spring storm produced heavy snow in Upper Michigan and eastern Wisconsin. Totals ranged up to 12 inches at Marquette MI, with eight inches reported at Muskego WI and Hartford WI. The heavy wet snow, and winds gusting to 35 mph, damaged or destroyed thousands of trees, and downed numerous power lines. Total damage from the storm was more than four million dollars. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2010: On this day, Oklahoma experienced its largest tornado outbreak since May 3, 1999. Fifty-five twisters tore through the state, including two rated EF4. The EF4 storms took three lives and injured 81 people. Ironically, both EF4 tornadoes struck Norman, Oklahoma, home of the Storm Prediction Center and the National Severe Storms Laboratory. Fourteen additional tornadoes hit Oklahoma during May 11-13. The May 10 disaster racked up insured property losses of \$2 billion.

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

GOOD FOR SOMETHING

Pat Kelly was an infielder who played for several major league baseball teams in the 90s. Once, while having a conversation with his manager he said, "Aren't you glad that I walk with the Lord?"

"I certainly am," came the reply. "But I'd much rather you walked with the bases loaded."

Sometimes Christians think that the most important thing that they can do is to "be good." But that is not enough. Christians must do good. It is not enough that we strive to be holy, we must also be helpful. More important than simply wanting to be grateful, we must also be generous.

We read in Acts that "God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him."

Jesus not only lived a perfect life but lived the life of a servant. His sermons were powerful and transformed the lives of individuals everywhere He went. But He also fed the hungry, comforted the grieving, consoled the brokenhearted, gave water to the thirsty and food to the hungry. He did simple things for simple people having simple needs. But He did not stop there.

When He saw a need He met the need. And after He met their physical needs He always reached out and met their spiritual needs. What a great example for us!

Prayer: Lord, trouble our hearts with the things that troubled Your heart. May we never be so comfortable with what we have that we fail to see the needs of others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. Acts 10:38



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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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.07.24

26 28 36 63 66 15

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$331,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 54 Mins 18
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.08.24

5 11 18 38 47 5

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$2,300,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 9
DRAW: Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.09.24

3 6 7 22 41 4

TOP PRIZE:
\$7,000/week

NEXT 16 Hrs 24 Mins 18
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.08.24

1 13 25 28 29

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$90,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 24
DRAW: Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.08.24

10 22 43 55 57 2

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 53
DRAW: Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.08.24

7 41 43 44 51 5

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$36,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 53
DRAW: Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Countries struggle to draft 'pandemic treaty' to avoid mistakes made during COVID

By MARIA CHENG and JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — After the coronavirus pandemic triggered once-unthinkable lockdowns, upended economies and killed millions, leaders at the World Health Organization and worldwide vowed to do better in the future. Years later, countries are still struggling to come up with an agreed-upon plan for how the world might respond to the next global outbreak.

A ninth and final round of talks involving governments, advocacy groups and others to finalize a "pandemic treaty" is scheduled to end Friday. The accord's aim: guidelines for how the WHO's 194 member countries might stop future pandemics and better share scarce resources. But experts warn there are virtually no consequences for countries that don't comply.

WHO's countries asked the U.N. health agency to oversee talks for a pandemic agreement in 2021. Envoys have been working long hours in recent weeks to prepare a draft ahead of a self-imposed deadline later this month: ratification of the accord at WHO's annual meeting. But deep divisions could derail it.

U.S. Republican senators wrote a letter to the Biden administration last week critical of the draft for focusing on issues like "shredding intellectual property rights" and "supercharging the WHO." They urged Biden not to sign off.

Britain's department of health said it would only agree to an accord if it was "firmly in the U.K. national interest and respects national sovereignty."

And many developing countries say it's unfair that they might be expected to provide virus samples to help develop vaccines and treatments, but then be unable to afford them.

"This pandemic treaty is a very high-minded pursuit, but it doesn't take political realities into account," said Sara Davies, a professor of international relations at Griffith University in Australia.

For example, the accord is attempting to address the gap that occurred between COVID-19 vaccines in rich and poorer countries, which WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said amounted to "a catastrophic moral failure."

The draft says WHO should get 20% of the production of pandemic-related products like tests, treatments and vaccines and urges countries to disclose their deals with private companies.

"There's no mechanism within WHO to make life really difficult for any countries that decide not to act in accordance with the treaty," Davies said.

Adam Kamradt-Scott, a global health expert at Harvard University, said that similar to the global climate agreements, the draft pandemic treaty would at least provide a new forum for countries to try to hold each other to account, where governments will have to explain what measures they've taken.

The pandemic treaty "is not about anyone telling the government of a country what it can do and what it cannot do," said Roland Driece, co-chair of WHO's negotiating board for the agreement.

There are legally binding obligations under the International Health Regulations, including quickly reporting dangerous new outbreaks. But those have been flouted repeatedly, including by African countries during Ebola outbreaks and China in the early stages of COVID-19.

Suerie Moon, co-director of the Global Health Center at Geneva's Graduate Institute, said it was critical to determine the expected role of WHO during a pandemic and how outbreaks might be stopped before spreading globally.

"If we fail to seize this window of opportunity which is closing ... we'll be just as vulnerable as we were in 2019," she warned.

Some countries appear to be moving on their own to ensure cooperation from others in the next pandemic. Last month, President Joe Biden's administration said it would help 50 countries respond to new outbreaks and prevent global spread, giving the country leverage should it need critical information or

materials in the future.

Yuanqiong Hu, a senior legal and policy adviser at Doctors without Borders, said it's unclear what might be different in the next pandemic, but hoped that focusing attention on some of the glaring errors that emerged in COVID-19 might help.

"We will mostly have to rely on countries to do better," she said. "That is worrisome."

'Where's Ronald Greene's justice?': 5 years on, feds still silent on Black motorist's deadly arrest

By JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press

SHREVEPORT, La. (AP) — Mona Hardin has been waiting five long years for any resolution to the federal investigation into her son's deadly arrest by Louisiana State Police troopers, an anguish only compounded by the fact that nearly every other major civil rights case during that time has passed her by.

It took just months for Tyre Nichols' beating death last year to result in federal charges against five Memphis police officers. A half-dozen white lawmen in Mississippi have been federally sentenced in last year's torture of two Black suspects. And federal prosecutors long ago brought swift charges in the slayings of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia and Breonna Taylor in Kentucky.

Every one of those cases happened months or years after the death of Ronald Greene in northern Louisiana on May 10, 2019, which sparked national outrage after The Associated Press published long-suppressed body-camera video showing white troopers converging on the Black motorist before stunning, beating and dragging him as he wailed, "I'm scared!"

Yet half a decade after Greene's violent death, the federal investigation remains open and unresolved with no end in sight. And Hardin says she feels ghosted and forgotten by a Justice Department that no longer even returns her calls.

"Where's Ronald Greene's justice?" asked Hardin, who refuses to bury her son's cremated remains until she gets some measure of accountability. "I still have my boy in that urn, and that hurts me more than anything. We haven't grieved the loss of Ronnie because we've been in battle."

Justice Department spokesperson Aryele Bradford said the investigation remains ongoing and declined to provide further details.

Under federal law, no statute of limitations applies to potential civil rights charges in the case because Greene's arrest was fatal. But prosecutors have wavered for years on whether to bring an indictment, having all but assured Greene's family initially that an exhaustive FBI investigation would produce charges of some kind.

A federal prosecution seemed so imminent in 2022 that one state police supervisor told AP he expected to be indicted. The FBI had shifted its focus in those days from the troopers who left Greene handcuffed and facedown for more than nine minutes to state police brass suspected of obstructing justice by suppressing video evidence, quashing a detective's recommendation to arrest a trooper and pressuring a state prosecutor.

All the while, federal prosecutors asked local District Attorney John Belton to hold off on bringing state charges until the federal investigation was complete. They later reversed course, and in late 2022 a state grand jury indicted five officers on counts ranging from negligent homicide to malfeasance. Charges remain against only two, with a trial scheduled for later this year for a senior trooper seen on video dragging Greene facedown by his ankle shackles.

State police initially blamed the 49-year-old's death on a crash following a high-speed chase over a traffic violation, an explanation called into question by photos of Greene's body on a gurney showing his bruised and battered face, a hospital report noting he had two stun gun prongs in his back and the fact that his SUV had only minor damage. Even the emergency room doctor questioned the troopers' initial account of a crash, writing in his notes: "Does not add up."

All that changed two years later when AP published graphic body-camera video of Greene's final moments, showing him being swarmed by troopers even as he appeared to raise his hands, plead for mercy

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and wail, "OK, OK. I'm sorry" and "I'm your brother! I'm scared! I'm scared!" Troopers repeatedly jolted Greene with stun guns before he could even get out of the car, with one of them wrestling him to the ground, putting him in a chokehold and punching him in the face. Another called him a "stupid motherf---." They then ordered a shackled Greene to remain facedown on the ground, even as he struggled to prop himself up on his side.

A reexamined autopsy ordered by the FBI ultimately debunked the crash narrative and listed "prone restraint" among other contributing factors in Greene's death, including neck compression, physical struggle and cocaine use.

Greene's family members weren't the only ones baffled by the pace of the federal inquiry. Then-Gov. John Bel Edwards expressed private frustration with the lack of answers in a closed-door meeting with state lawmakers, saying he believed from the first time he saw the video, in late 2020, that Greene's treatment was criminal and racist.

"Are they ever going to come out and have a charge?" the Democratic governor asked amid reporting by AP that he had been notified within hours of Greene's death that troopers engaged in a "violent, lengthy struggle."

Alanah Odoms, executive director of the ACLU of Louisiana, said the "failure to pursue federal prosecution in this case would undermine public trust and confidence in the federal government's commitment to upholding the rule of law."

Perhaps the most significant hurdle to federal charges was the untimely death of Chris Hollingsworth, the trooper who was seen on the video repeatedly bashing Greene in the head with a flashlight and was later recorded by his own body camera calling a fellow officer and saying, "I beat the ever-living f--- out of him." Hollingsworth died in a high-speed, single-vehicle crash in 2020 hours after he was told he would be fired over his actions in Greene's death.

Another major sticking point has been whether prosecutors could prove the troopers acted "willfully" in abusing Greene — a key component of civil rights charges that has complicated such prosecutions around the country. The FBI even enhanced the video of the arrest in an ultimately inconclusive attempt to determine whether he had been pepper-sprayed after he was in custody, focusing on an exchange in which a deputy jeeringly said, "S--- hurts, doesn't it?"

The Justice Department has also been conducting a sweeping investigation into use of force by the Louisiana State Police and whether it engages in "racially discriminatory policing." The department began that "pattern-or-practice" inquiry nearly two years ago following an AP investigation that found Greene's arrest was among at least a dozen cases in which troopers or their bosses ignored or concealed evidence of beatings, deflected blame and impeded efforts to root out misconduct.

Also still pending is the federal wrongful death lawsuit Greene's family filed four years ago seeking damages from the officers, who have denied wrongdoing. The civil case has been put on hold as the criminal proceedings play out.

Hardin said it's long past time for the state of Louisiana to make amends.

"It started with a lie — we were told Ronnie was killed in a car crash," she said. "That was wrong, and it has to be addressed. I will go to my grave knowing I did everything I could to get justice for Ronnie."

The Latest | More than 100,000 flee Rafah as Netanyahu vows to widen Gaza assault despite US warning

By The Associated Press undefined

About 110,000 people have fled Rafah in southern Gaza and food and fuel supplies in the area are critically low, a U.N. official says.

All crossings into southern Gaza remain closed, cutting off supplies and preventing medical evacuations and the movement of humanitarian staff, said Georgios Petropoulos, an official for the U.N.'s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs working in Rafah.

Some 1.3 million Palestinians — over half Gaza's population — had sought refuge in Rafah.

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The World Food Program will run out of food for distribution in southern Gaza by Saturday unless more aid arrives, Petropoulos said.

U.N. officials warn that the lack of fuel is undermining medical facilities, water supplies and sewage systems across Gaza.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Thursday that a U.S. threat to withhold some weapons would not deter Israel from expanding its offensive in Gaza. A limited Israeli operation earlier this week captured the Gaza side of Rafah's border crossing with Egypt, throwing humanitarian operations into crisis.

The death toll from the war in Gaza has soared to more than 34,500 people, according to local health officials, and caused vast destruction to apartments, hospitals, mosques and schools across several cities. The U.N. says northern Gaza is already in a state of "full-blown famine."

The war began Oct. 7 when Hamas attacked southern Israel, killing around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting about 250 others. Israel says militants still hold around 100 hostages and the remains of more than 30 others.

Currently:

- A West Bank village feels helpless after Israeli settlers attack with fire and bullets
- UN to vote on resolution that would grant Palestine new rights and revive its UN membership bid
- Pro-Palestinian protesters demand endowment transparency. But it's proving not to be simple
- US says Rafah offensive would jeopardize cease-fire talks as Biden threatens to halt more Israel aid
- The Biden-Netanyahu relationship is strained like never before. Can the two leaders move forward?
- What are the latest obstacles to bringing aid into Gaza, where hunger is worsening?

Follow AP's coverage of the war at <https://apnews.com/hub/israel-hamas-war>

Here's the latest:

ISRAELI TROOPS BATTLE PALESTINIAN MILITANTS IN RAFAH, GAZA CITY

JERUSALEM — Israeli troops are battling Palestinian militants in the southern city of Rafah, where a rocket attack and an Israeli incursion earlier this week closed crucial crossings needed for humanitarian aid.

There are also battles underway in the Zeitoun area on the outskirts of Gaza City in the northern part of the territory. Northern Gaza was the first target of the ground offensive and Israel said late last year that it had mostly dismantled Hamas there.

In a statement released Friday, the military said it had located several tunnels in eastern Rafah, near the border with Egypt, and had eliminated militants "during close-quarters combat and with an aerial strike."

Hamas' military wing said it carried out a complex attack in which it struck a house where Israeli troops had taken up a position, an armored personnel carrier and soldiers operating on foot.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military. It was not possible to independently confirm the battlefield accounts from either side.

Hamas also said it launched a number of mortar rounds at the nearby Kerem Shalom crossing, close to where Israeli troops are operating. The military said it intercepted two launches.

The crossing was closed after a rocket attack last weekend that killed four Israeli soldiers. Israel says it has re-opened its side of the crossing, but the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees says the Gaza side is inaccessible because of the ongoing fighting.

Israeli forces captured the Gaza side of the nearby Rafah crossing with Egypt on Tuesday, forcing it to shut down. It's unclear when it will reopen.

Aid groups say a prolonged closure of the crossings will severely hinder humanitarian operations in the territory, where hunger is already rampant.

UN TO VOTE ON RESOLUTION THAT WOULD GRANT PALESTINE NEW RIGHTS AND REVIVE ITS MEMBERSHIP BID

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. General Assembly is expected to vote Friday on a resolution that would grant new "rights and privileges" to Palestine and call on the Security Council to favorably reconsider its request to become the 194th member of the United Nations.

The United States vetoed a widely backed council resolution on April 18 that would have paved the way

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for full United Nations membership for Palestine, a goal the Palestinians have long sought and Israel has worked to prevent. U.S. deputy ambassador Robert Wood made clear Thursday the Biden administration is opposed to the assembly resolution.

Under the U.N. Charter, prospective members of the United Nations must be "peace-loving," and the Security Council must recommend their admission to the General Assembly for final approval. Palestine became a U.N. non-member observer state in 2012.

Unlike the Security Council, there are no vetoes in the 193-member General Assembly and the resolution is expected to be approved by a large majority.

The draft resolution "determines" that a state of Palestine is qualified for membership, dropping the original language that in the General Assembly's judgment it is "a peace-loving state." It therefore recommends that the Security Council reconsider its request "favorably."

At numerous council and assembly meetings, the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinians in Gaza and the killing of more than 34,000 people in the territory, according to Gaza health officials, have generated outrage from many countries.

AL JAZEERA SAYS ALL STAFF HAVE LEFT ISRAEL AFTER GOVERNMENT ORDERED ITS OFFICES CLOSED JERUSALEM — The pan-Arab satellite channel Al Jazeera said Friday it no longer has any staff operating inside of Israel after an order closing the broadcaster's offices and halting its on-the-ground reporting there.

The comment by Al Jazeera to The Associated Press comes after Israel's Communication Ministry said police raided an office of the broadcaster in Nazareth on Thursday after alleging it had been transmitting live video from there.

"Al Jazeera has no staff operating inside Israel. All of our staff have moved to Ramallah to continue the coverage from there, abiding by the law," the channel said. "However, whoever makes such comments does not understand modern day technologies which allow users to utilize a simple mobile phone to post or share a video online."

Al Jazeera's headquarters are in Doha, Qatar.

Israel ordered the local offices of Al Jazeera to close Sunday, escalating a long-running feud between the broadcaster and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hard-line government as Doha-mediated cease-fire negotiations with Hamas hang in the balance.

The extraordinary order, which includes confiscating broadcast equipment, preventing the broadcast of the channel's reports and blocking its websites, is believed to be the first time Israel has ever shuttered a foreign news outlet operating in the country.

Since the order, the broadcaster has moved many of its English-language service correspondents from Israel to Amman, Jordan. Others still operate from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

UNRWA WILL CLOSE ITS JERUSALEM OFFICE AFTER ISRAELI PROTESTERS SET FIRE TO PERIMETER TWICE

JERUSALEM — The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees is closing its Jerusalem compound after Israeli protesters twice set fire to its perimeter.

Philippe Lazzarini, the commissioner-general of UNRWA, said no one was injured but that staff had to put the fires out themselves because firefighters and police were slow to arrive.

He shared video of Thursday's protest, in which the crowd can be heard chanting "Burn the U.N." in Hebrew. In a post on the platform X, Lazzarini called it an "outrageous development," saying "once again, the lives of UN staff were at a serious risk."

He said that in light of the "appalling incident" he had taken the decision to shut down the compound.

On Tuesday, protesters damaged the gate of the compound, prompting the U.N. to lodge a protest with Israeli authorities.

Israel has accused UNRWA, which is the largest provider of humanitarian aid to Gaza, of having links to Hamas and other Palestinian militants, some of whom allegedly took part in the Oct. 7 attack that triggered the war in Gaza.

UNRWA denies any links to such groups. It immediately fired the employees when it was informed about

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the allegations pertaining to Oct. 7 and launched an internal investigation.

An independent review last month found that UNRWA had submitted full lists of its thousands of staffers to Israel every year since 2011, without Israel expressing concern about any of them.

The review said the agency has "robust" procedures to uphold the U.N. principle of neutrality but cited gaps in implementation.

NETANYAHU VOWS TO 'FIGHT WITH OUR FINGERNAILS' AS U.S. SAYS IT WON'T SEND WEAPONS FOR RAFAH ASSAULT

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu minister said Thursday that his country will "stand alone" if it has to in its war against Hamas after President Joe Biden said the U.S. would not provide offensive weapons for Israel's long-promised assault on the southern Gaza city of Rafah.

"If we need to, we will fight with our fingernails," he said. "But we have much more than fingernails."

Netanyahu's comments come amid a deepening crisis in relations with the United States.

Israel says that Rafah is Hamas' last stronghold in Gaza, and Netanyahu has repeatedly vowed to invade the city despite widespread international opposition due to concerns over the more than 1 million Palestinian civilians huddled in the city.

Biden's comments about providing weapons were the latest sign of steadily deteriorating relations between Israel and its closest and most important ally after seven months of Israel's war against Hamas.

Pro-Palestinian protesters demand endowment transparency. But its proving not to be simple

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH and TRISHA AHMED Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — On college campuses across the country, a rallying cry of pro-Palestinian protesters has been "Disclose, divest! We will not stop, we will not rest."

Now some are winning the first of those two demands: Promises to provide information about how much university endowment money is invested in companies profiting from the Israel-Hamas war.

As part of that effort, the University of Minnesota, for one, disclosed this week that about \$5 million of its \$2.27 billion endowment investments — or less than a quarter of 1% — are tied to Israeli companies or U.S. defense contractors.

To Ali Abu, a 19-year-old University of Minnesota student and member of Students for Justice in Palestine, the disclosure is a first step in what he described as "just the beginning of our fight." The ultimate goal, he said, remains divestment. A meeting with the university's Board of Regents is scheduled for Friday.

But Jewish leaders have raised concerns, and endowment experts say the potential fallout from disclosure is hard to predict. Transparency, they say, has pros and cons.

"I think the broader trend towards transparency is probably healthy. In response to a very charged situation, I think people get nervous about it. Once the information is there, what's done with that information?" said Kevin Maloney, a former investment manager who is now chair of the finance department at Bryant University in Rhode Island.

Endowments face little federal regulation compared with other fundraising institutions. And there have long been calls for more transparency.

Maloney said portfolio managers might just say they don't want to bother with all the attention.

University endowments have increasingly been targeted for divestment by activists.

Over the last decade, students have pushed universities to cut financial ties with fossil fuel producers, weapons manufacturers, tobacco companies and prison firms. Often it has been done in tandem with students in the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, which seeks to cut ties with Israel and companies that support it.

Most colleges have held firm, saying their investments provide financial aid for future generations and should be protected from politics.

Neal Stoughton, a professor of finance at the University of Waterloo in Canada, said colleges are wary of releasing information because they don't want competition from other universities or institutions. He

likened it to billionaires' reticence to share investment tips.

"Those types of people don't tell you exactly where all their money is," said Stoughton, the former director of the Endowment Research Center at Vienna University of Economics and Business in Austria. He is currently doing research and consulting at the University of Arizona.

At the University of Michigan, officials responded to recent calls for divestment by saying the institution's decades-old policy "is to shield the endowment from political pressures and to base our investment decisions solely on financial factors such as risk and return."

Michigan's policy allows for exceptions — it divested from tobacco companies and apartheid-era South Africa — but the bar "has intentionally been set extremely high."

Officials disclosed only that there are no direct investments with Israeli companies and that indirect investments through funds amount to less than \$15 million, a small fraction of the university's \$18 billion endowment.

Universities also cite the complexities around divestment. Much of endowments is often held in investment funds that bundle large numbers of assets together. It can be difficult to trace exactly where the money goes, and universities generally can't pick and choose among a fund's investments.

Other schools that have opted for the disclosure route include Northwestern University outside Chicago, which said in an agreement posted to its website last week that it will answer questions from any internal stakeholder about holdings.

The University of California, Riverside, also said it would start posting information online with a goal of "full disclosure of the list of companies in the portfolio and the size of the investments."

And in New York state, Vassar College vowed "greater transparency about major independent contractors," as well as a review of a proposal for divestment from defense-related investments.

At the University of Minnesota, the decision to provide more endowment details came as part of a deal to end protesters' encampment on the Minneapolis campus. Chants in recent weeks have included "Not another nickel, not another dime. No more money for Israel's crimes."

Tye Gregory, CEO of the Jewish Community Relations Council, said disclosure will just lead to calls for divestment and that risks harming Jewish students without actually changing the course of the fighting in Gaza.

"From my experience, unless you give in to all of their demands, they're not going to relent against the administration," he said. "And the administrations are not in a position to give in to all their demands. So my advice — not that they're going to take it — is just not to negotiate on that. You're not going to make them happy."

Abu, who is one of the protest leaders, said the students plan to demand full disclosure of all investments at Friday's regents meeting, beyond just the \$5 million that university leaders have provided details about already.

The information provided by the school names different companies that the university has holdings in through investments or through funds. The list includes defense contractor Honeywell, which protesters have singled out during rallies. Honeywell didn't immediately return an email message from The Associated Press seeking comment.

The goal, Abu said, is to "target all weapons companies that the university is invested in, and all stocks or contracts and bonds in countries that are complicit in war crimes."

Prince Harry, Meghan arrive in Nigeria to champion the Invictus Games and meet with wounded soldiers

By CHINEDU ASADU Associated Press

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, arrived in Nigeria on Friday to champion the Invictus Games, which he founded to aid the rehabilitation of wounded and sick servicemembers and veterans, among them Nigerian soldiers fighting a 14-year war against Islamic extremists.

The couple, visiting the West African nation for the first time on the invitation of its military, arrived in

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the capital, Abuja, early in the morning, according to defense spokesman Brig. Gen. Tukur Gusau.

Harry and Meghan will be meeting with wounded soldiers and their families in what Nigerian officials have said is a show of support to improve the soldiers' morale and wellbeing.

"This engagement with Invictus is giving us the opportunity for the recovery of our soldiers," Abidemi Marquis, the director of sports at Nigeria's Defense Headquarters, told reporters on Thursday.

Harry served in Afghanistan as an Apache helicopter copilot gunner, after which he founded the Invictus Games in 2014 to offer wounded veterans and servicemembers the challenge of competing in sports events similar to the Paralympics. Nigeria was among the nations that participated in last year's edition of the games.

During their stay, they will attend basketball and volleyball matches and will meet with local non-governmental organizations in Abuja and Lagos that are receiving support from them. Meghan will also co-host an event on women in leadership with Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director General of the World Trade Organization, according to their spokesman Charlie Gipson.

The news of Meghan's visit excited some in Nigeria where her life — and association with the British royal family — is closely followed.

The Nigerian military has touted the Invictus Games as one which could help the recovery of thousands of its personnel who have been fighting the homegrown Boko Haram Islamic extremists and their factions since 2009 when they launched an insurgency.

"Eighty percent of our soldiers that have been involved in this recovery program are getting better (and) their outlook to life is positive," Marquis, the military's sports director, said.

"The recovery program has given them an opportunity to improve their personal self-esteem, to improve their mental health and emotional intelligence."

The Biden-Netanyahu relationship is strained like never before.

Can the two leaders move forward?

By AAMER MADHANI, ZEKE MILLER and JULIA FRANKEL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have long managed a complicated relationship, but they're running out of space to maneuver as their views on the Gaza war diverge and their political futures hang in the balance.

Their ties have hit a low point as Biden holds up the delivery of heavy bombs to Israel — and warns that the provision of artillery and other weaponry also could be suspended if Netanyahu moves forward with a widescale operation in the southern Gaza city of Rafah.

Netanyahu, for his part, is brushing off Biden's warnings and vowing to press ahead, saying, "If we have to stand alone, we will stand alone."

"If we need to, we will fight with our fingernails. But we have much more than fingernails," he said.

Biden has long prided himself on being able to manage Netanyahu more with carrots than sticks. But the escalation of friction over the past seven months suggests that his approach may be long past its best-by date.

With both men balancing an explosive Mideast situation against their own domestic political problems, Netanyahu has grown increasingly resistant to Biden's public charm offensives and private pleading, prompting the president's more assertive pushback in the past several weeks.

"If they go into Rafah, I'm not supplying the weapons that have been used historically to deal with Rafah, to deal with the cities, that deal with that problem," Biden said in a CNN interview Wednesday, laying bare his growing differences with Netanyahu.

Biden aides nonetheless insist the president is unwilling to allow the U.S.-Israel relationship to truly rupture on his watch. They cite not only the political imperative — a majority of Americans support Israel — but also Biden's personal history with the country and his belief in its right to defend itself.

The president's aides, watching how pro-Palestinian protests have roiled his party and the college campuses that have been breeding grounds for Democratic voters, have mused for months that Biden could

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be the last classically pro-Israel Democrat in the White House.

Their optimism about their ability to contain Netanyahu may be falling into the same trap that has vexed a long line of American presidents who have clashed with the Israeli leader over the decades.

White House national security spokesman John Kirby on Thursday declined to say whether Biden informed Netanyahu of his decision to suspend shipment of 3,500 bombs when the leaders spoke earlier this week. But he said Biden has been "direct and forthright" with Netanyahu about his concerns.

Biden and Netanyahu have known each other since Biden was a young senator and Netanyahu was a senior official in Israel's embassy in Washington.

They've hit rough patches before.

There were differences over Israel building settlements in the West Bank during Barack Obama's administration when Biden was vice president. Later, Netanyahu vehemently opposed Biden's push to resurrect the Iran nuclear deal sealed by Obama and scrapped by Donald Trump. Netanyahu chafed at Biden prodding him to de-escalate tensions during Israel's bloody 11-day war with Hamas in 2021.

The leaders went more than a month earlier this year without talking as Biden's frustration with Netanyahu grew over the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

The relationship remained workable despite such differences between the center-left Democrat and the leader of the most far-right coalition government in Israel's history.

But with the Biden-Netanyahu relationship now coming under greater strain than ever before, it is unclear how the leaders will move forward.

Netanyahu is caught between public pressure for a hostage deal and hard-liners in his coalition who want him to expand the Rafah invasion, despite global alarm about the harm it could do to some 1.3 million Palestinians sheltering there. He's made clear that he will push forward with a Rafah operation with or without a deal for hostages.

The Israeli leader vowed to destroy Hamas after its Oct. 7 rampage in southern Israel in which 1,200 people were killed and some 250 were captured and taken hostage. But his public standing has cratered since then, as he faces pressure to find a pathway to a truce that would bring home the remaining hostages and the remains of Israelis who have died in captivity.

He's resisted an investigation into what led to the intelligence and military failures leading up to the Hamas attack. All the while, he's still facing legal problems, including a long-running corruption trial in which he is charged with fraud and accepting bribes.

Netanyahu's political survival may depend on the Rafah offensive. If he reaches a hostage deal that stops short of conquering Rafah, hardliners in his coalition have threatened to topple the government and trigger new elections at a time when opinion polls forecast he would lose.

"To keep his partners on board and prevent them from pre-empting an election, in which Likud will be decimated and he will be turned out of office, he needs to keep the 'total victory' myth alive – and that is only possible by avoiding a deal with Hamas," wrote Anshel Pfeffer, a columnist and author of a Netanyahu biography, in the Haaretz daily.

Aviv Bushinsky, a former spokesman and chief of staff for Netanyahu, said the Israeli leader remains focused on the war's primary goal – defeating Hamas – because of concerns about his image and legacy.

He said Netanyahu has spent his career branding himself as the "tough guy on terror."

"He thinks this is how he will be remembered. He's been promising for a decade to cream Hamas," Bushinsky said. "If he doesn't, in his mind he'll be remembered as the worst prime minister of all time."

Biden, meanwhile, faces mounting protests from young Americans, a segment of the electorate critical to his reelection. And he's faced backlash from Muslim Americans, a key voting bloc in the battleground state of Michigan. Some have threatened to withhold their votes in November to protest his administration's handling of the war.

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, a Biden ally who has been frustrated by the administration's handling of the war, said Thursday Biden should go further and suspend delivery of all offensive weaponry to Israel.

"The United States does and should stand by its allies, but our allies must also stand by the values and

the laws of the United States of America," Sanders said. "We must use all of our leverage to prevent the catastrophe in Gaza from becoming even worse."

At the same time, Biden is facing bruising criticism from Republicans, including presumptive 2024 GOP presidential nominee Trump, who say that his decision to hold back weapons is a betrayal of an essential Mideast ally.

"What Biden is doing with respect to Israel is disgraceful. If any Jewish person voted for Joe Biden, they should be ashamed of themselves. He's totally abandoned Israel," Trump told reporters on Thursday.

Idaho Sen. Jim Risch, the top Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said Biden's move is "simply a nod to the left flank" that is handing "a great victory to Hamas."

Friction between the U.S. and Israeli leaders is not without precedent.

President George H.W. Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's relationship was strained as the Republican administration threatened to withhold \$10 billion in loan guarantees to thwart new settlement activity in the West Bank. Obama and Netanyahu's relationship was marked by mutual distrust over the Democrat's effort to reignite the Middle East peace process and forge the Iran nuclear deal.

"There were always workarounds if the heads of government really don't get along. We may get to that," said Elliot Abrams, a senior national security official in the George W. Bush administration. "But of course, this may be a sort of problem that solves itself in that one or both of them may be gone from office" in a matter of months.

A West Bank village feels helpless after Israeli settlers attack with fire and bullets

By JACK JEFFERY Associated Press

DUMA, West Bank (AP) — Charred homes and cars dotting this hilltop village surrounded by olive groves are a searing reminder of Palestinians' vulnerability to rising violence from Israeli settlers.

The trail of wreckage along Duma's main road is the aftermath of a three-hour attack in mid-April that left 15 homes damaged by arson and six residents injured by bullets, the head of its village council said. It was one of nearly 800 settler attacks against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank since Hamas attacked Israel from the Gaza Strip on Oct. 7, according to the U.N.

The burnt remains in Duma also highlight the village's limited resources to clean up and rebuild, let alone defend itself from future incursions, which seem inevitable as gun-toting settlers patrol the area roughly 20 miles (30 kilometers) north of Jerusalem.

"We as the village of Duma ... do not have the power to defend ourselves," said Suleiman Dawabsha, chairman of the village council for this community of more than 2,000 people. He estimated the attack caused five million shekels (\$1.3 million) in damage.

The rampage on April 13 echoed a similar event that took place almost a decade ago. In 2015, three Palestinians from Duma were killed, including an 18 month-old baby, after settlers fire-bombed a home there. An Israeli man was later convicted for murder.

The latest attack against Duma was part of a wave of settler violence touched off by the death of a 14-year-old Israeli who went missing on the morning of April 12. Authorities found his body the next day and they have arrested a man from Duma who they say was connected to the boy's alleged murder.

On April 15, two days after the attack in Duma, two Palestinians were shot dead by settlers near the town of Aqraba, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry. And in a related spurt of violence, a man was killed by Israeli fire on April 12 in nearby al-Mughayyir, though it remains unclear whether the fatal bullet was fired by a soldier or settler.

There have been 794 settler attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank since Oct. 7 — from stones thrown at passing cars to bullets fired at residents, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. At least 10 Palestinians have been killed by settlers in these attacks, it said.

Attacks by settlers aren't the only form of violence on the rise in the West Bank.

Since the war in Gaza began, nearly 500 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire in the territory, ac-

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According to the Health Ministry based in Ramallah, which says the overwhelming majority have been shot dead by soldiers. Palestinians in the West Bank have killed nine Israelis, including five soldiers, since Oct. 7, according to U.N. data.

The war has undoubtedly heightened tensions between settlers and Palestinians. But Israeli human rights groups blame the far-right government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for fueling settler violence by promoting an ideology of total Israeli supremacy in the West Bank.

These groups say the Israeli army doesn't do enough to stop the violence, and even facilitates it in some cases by offering the settlers protection. The Israeli army said in a statement it tries to protect everyone living in the West Bank and that complaints about soldiers are investigated.

No one was killed in the attack on Duma, but residents described narrow escapes.

Ibrahim Dawabsha, a truck driver and father of four, said most of his family hid in the kitchen as settlers launched firebombs and set part of their home ablaze.

"My daughter was at her uncle's house, there was no one there," he said. "What they (might) do to her I don't know."

The heads of Duma and al-Mughayyir said Israeli troops arrived shortly after the attacks on their communities began but did little to intervene. Instead, they fired at Palestinians attempting to confront the settlers, these officials said.

A prominent Israeli human rights group, Yesh Din, described it as an "umbrella of security" — a collaboration it says has become increasingly common since Israel's right-wing coalition government came to power in late 2022.

"As soon as the Palestinians try to protect themselves, they're the ones who the army attacks," said Ziv Stahl, Yesh Din's director.

The United States has increased pressure on Israel to curb settler attacks in the West Bank, sanctioning some leaders, including a close ally of Israel's far-right national security minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir.

Dawabsha, the chief of Duma, does not believe the pressure campaign will be effective. "I am not pinning my hopes on the American government," he said.

Israel captured the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza in the 1967 Mideast war, territories Palestinians want as part of a future state. Settlers claim the West Bank, home to some 3 million Palestinians, is their biblical birthright.

Around 500,000 Israeli settlers live across hundreds of settlements and outposts in the West Bank. These segregated and tightly guarded communities vary in size and nature. Larger settlements are akin to Jerusalem's sprawling suburbs, while smaller unauthorized outposts can consist of just a few caravans parked on a hilltop.

Outposts often receive tacit government support and sometimes they gain formal recognition — and receive funding — from the Israeli government.

Duma's geography makes it uniquely vulnerable to attack.

Overlooking Jordan and Israeli settlements to the east, the village is surrounded more closely by at least three outposts that the head of its council says have expanded gradually over the past decade. Duma is in a section of the West Bank known as Area B: Its civil affairs are governed by the Palestinian Authority, but the Israeli military is in charge of its security.

Palestinians largely consider the PA to be ineffective and corrupt, and it rarely opposes Israel's military operations in the territory.

Over the past year, settlers have cut off Duma's access to four vital springs and wells that surround the village by sabotaging roads and other infrastructure, according to residents.

In the days following Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel, more than 100 Bedouin Arabs that were living a nomadic lifestyle in the pastures south of Duma relocated to its fringes in search of greater safety and resources.

One of them, Ali Zawahiri, said his extended family relocated after settlers had begun burning their tents and stealing their livestock in apparent revenge attacks. The Bedouin Arabs living near Duma are one of

16 such communities in the West Bank that have relocated because of settler violence or threats since the start of 2023, according to Yesh Din.

"He is armed with a gun and I am just a person with nothing," Zawahiri said.

An armed unit run by the Palestinian Authority that formerly patrolled the perimeter of West Bank towns at night halted operations shortly after the Gaza war broke out, when members of the force were kidnapped by settlers.

When asked how they might better defend themselves in the future, residents of Duma struggled to answer.

"What preparations?" said Ibrahim Dawabsha, whose truck — his main source of income — was burnt to ashes. "There are no preparations."

Ex-Venezuelan diplomat 'never' considered being president but will launch campaign this month

By REGINA GARCIA CANO Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — A few weeks ago, Edmundo González Urrutia was just another grandfather visiting his daughter and grandchildren, who live abroad, enjoying two months of family time in retirement. But the leisurely pace - and the anonymity - will have to wait as he now campaigns to become Venezuela's next president.

President is not a title González ever sought. "Never," he emphatically told The Associated Press in an interview Thursday at his apartment in his country's capital, Caracas.

In the whirlwind world of Venezuelan politics, the former ambassador is now crucial to efforts to oust President Nicolás Maduro as the main opposition faction's presidential candidate.

"I have never held an elected position. I have never participated in partisan politics of positions of elected office," he said. "I accepted it with enormous responsibility and as a contribution on my part to the democratization of the country, to the process of trying to seek the understanding, reconciliation, of Venezuelans."

González became the opposition Unitary Platform's candidate last month after former lawmaker María Corina Machado, who easily won the group's presidential primary last year, and her handpicked alternative were banned from registering. The coalition's leaders selected him 15 days after he returned from vacation, and he accepted under a few conditions, including that his wife be convinced of the decision.

The July 28 election will have 10 candidates, but apart from the Unitary Platform, none are expected to pose a threat to Maduro's power base. Maduro officially launched his candidacy in March for a third term that would last until 2031.

Machado has been campaigning for more than a year, including after Venezuela's ruling party-loyal top court affirmed an administrative decision blocking her candidacy. She recently began instructing supporters gathered by the thousands at rallies to vote for González, but he is yet to appear before crowds. He said he plans to kick off his campaign later this month and explained that Machado and other opposition leaders will continue to host events around the country.

"The important thing about this is the enthusiasm with which it is happening," he said of people's support, which comes after years of calls from the opposition for election boycotts and a sense of general apathy from voters who were repeatedly disappointed by the faction's earlier promises of change. "Those feelings of joy - of a democratic party at its core - are awakening."

Asked what role Machado would have in his government should he win, González said it was "premature to think what position she is going to take." What matters at the moment, he said, is that Machado and the Unitary Platform are "rowing in the same direction."

Machado is not a member of the platform, but she was allowed to participate in its Oct. 22 primary, which she won with more than 90% of support.

Even among Venezuela's opposition, few have heard of the 74-year-old former diplomat. González began his professional career as an aide to Venezuela's ambassador in the U.S. He had postings in Belgium and

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El Salvador and served as Caracas' ambassador to Algeria.

His last post was as Venezuela's ambassador to Argentina during the first years of Hugo Chávez's presidency. More recently, he worked as an international relations consultant, writing about recent political developments in Argentina as well as authoring a historical work on Venezuela's foreign minister during World War II.

His years in El Salvador and Algeria coincided with periods of armed conflicts in both countries. For a time, his whereabouts were tracked by locals in El Salvador, and he would get calls at home meant to intimidate him, with the callers saying they were aware that González had just gotten home.

Although those countries' conditions were entirely different from Venezuela's current political situation, they have prepared González for the unique stress that can come with being a candidate or political leader in the South American country, where real and perceived government adversaries, including campaign staffers of Machado, have been detained, threatened and charged ahead of the election.

Maduro's government has cracked down on the opposition despite promises to pave the way to fair elections in exchange for relief from economic sanctions imposed by the United States last decade as democratic and human rights conditions deteriorated in Venezuela. The recent moves prompted the Biden administration to re-impose crushing oil sanctions last month.

"They are situations that teach one to live in stressful situations, in dangerous situations, in risky situations, in situations where personal insecurity is evident," he said of his experiences in El Salvador and Algeria. "So yes, in that sense they are experiences that help you manage, function, in an environment that is complicated and difficult."

UN to vote on resolution that would grant Palestine new rights and revive its UN membership bid

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. General Assembly is expected to vote Friday on a resolution that would grant new "rights and privileges" to Palestine and call on the Security Council to favorably reconsider its request to become the 194th member of the United Nations.

The United States vetoed a widely backed council resolution on April 18 that would have paved the way for full United Nations membership for Palestine, a goal the Palestinians have long sought and Israel has worked to prevent, and U.S. deputy ambassador Robert Wood made clear Thursday the Biden administration is opposed to the assembly resolution.

Under the U.N. Charter, prospective members of the United Nations must be "peace-loving," and the Security Council must recommend their admission to the General Assembly for final approval. Palestine became a U.N. non-member observer state in 2012.

"We've been very clear from the beginning there is a process for obtaining full membership in the United Nations, and this effort by some of the Arab countries and the Palestinians is to try to go around that," Wood said Thursday. "We have said from the beginning the best way to ensure Palestinian full membership in the U.N. is to do that through negotiations with Israel. That remains our position."

But unlike the Security Council, there are no vetoes in the 193-member General Assembly and the resolution is expected to be approved by a large majority, according to three Western diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity because negotiations were private.

The draft resolution "determines" that a state of Palestine is qualified for membership – dropping the original language that in the General Assembly's judgment it is "a peace-loving state." It therefore recommends that the Security Council reconsider its request "favorably."

The renewed push for full Palestinian membership in the U.N. comes as the war in Gaza has put the more than 75-year-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict at center stage. At numerous council and assembly meetings, the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinians in Gaza and the killing of more than 34,000 people in the territory, according to Gaza health officials, have generated outrage from many countries.

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The original draft of the assembly resolution was changed significantly to address concerns not only by the U.S. but also by Russia and China, the diplomats said.

The first draft would have conferred on Palestine "the rights and privileges necessary to ensure its full and effective participation" in the assembly's sessions and U.N. conferences "on equal footing with member states." It also made no reference to whether Palestine could vote in the General Assembly.

According to the diplomats, Russia and China which are strong supporters of Palestine's U.N. membership were concerned that granting the list of rights and privileges detailed in an annex to the resolution could set a precedent for other would-be U.N. members — with Russia concerned about Kosovo and China about Taiwan.

Under longstanding legislation by the U.S. Congress, the United States is required to cut off funding to U.N. agencies that give full membership to a Palestinian state — which could mean a cutoff in dues and voluntary contributions to the U.N. from its largest contributor.

The final draft drops the language that would put Palestine "on equal footing with member states." And to address Chinese and Russian concerns, it would decide "on an exceptional basis and without setting a precedent" to adopt the rights and privileges in the annex.

The draft also adds a provision in the annex on the issue of voting, stating categorically: "The state of Palestine, in its capacity as an observer state, does not have the right to vote in the General Assembly or to put forward its candidature to United Nations organs."

The final list of rights and privileges in the draft annex includes giving Palestine the right to speak on all issues not just those related to the Palestinians and Middle East, the right to propose agenda items and reply in debates, and the right to be elected as officers in the assembly's main committees. It would give the Palestinians the right to participate in U.N. and international conferences convened by the United Nations — but it drops their "right to vote" which was in the original draft.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas first delivered the Palestinian Authority's application for U.N. membership in 2011. It failed because the Palestinians didn't get the required minimum support of nine of the Security Council's 15 members.

They went to the General Assembly and succeeded by more than a two-thirds majority in having their status raised from a U.N. observer to a non-member observer state. That opened the door for the Palestinian territories to join U.N. and other international organizations, including the International Criminal Court.

In the Security Council vote on April 18, the Palestinians got much more support for full U.N. membership. The vote was 12 in favor, the United Kingdom and Switzerland abstaining, and the United States voting no and vetoing the resolution.

One man was a Capitol Police officer. The other rioted on Jan. 6. They're both running for Congress

By JOHN RABY Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — For Derrick Evans, being part of the mob that stormed the U.S. Capitol wasn't enough. The former West Virginia lawmaker wants to make his path to the halls of Congress permanent.

On the other side of the metal barricades that day, Police Officer Harry Dunn couldn't stand what he saw as he defended the Capitol and its inhabitants from rioters on Jan. 6, 2021. Ultimately, the Maryland resident watched lawmakers he had protected vote to acquit former President Donald Trump and deny the violence and trauma that led to the deaths of some of his fellow officers.

On Tuesday, Evans and Dunn will make bids for U.S. House seats in their respective state primaries. They come into the election with dramatically different interpretations about what happened that day, and their performance in Tuesday's primaries in West Virginia and Maryland could hint at whether voters' opinions about the attack and its meaning have changed over time.

In terrorizing the Capitol for an entire afternoon, rioters wielded pipes, bats and bear spray. They used flagpoles as weapons, brutally beat police officers, chanted that they wanted to hang Vice President Mike

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Pence, broke through the glass and busted through doors as lawmakers frantically evacuated. A Georgia man bragged that he "fed" a police officer to the mob. More than 100 police officers were injured, many beaten and bloodied. At least nine people who were there died during and after the rioting, including a female rioter who was shot and killed by police.

More than 1,350 people have been charged with federal crimes related to the Capitol riot. Over 850 of them have been sentenced — roughly two-thirds received prison terms ranging from a few days to 22 years.

The two candidacies "symbolize a shift on the part of the two big parties regarding their commitment to law and order," said Timothy Naftali, a senior researcher at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.

It's remarkable, Naftali said, that on the same day, a former police officer could become a Democratic nominee while Republicans could "select an unrepentant felon" in Evans, who "proudly displays the fact that he violated the law on Jan. 6."

"That is a split screen that one might not have been able to imagine 15 years ago," he said.

While Evans is seen as a longshot to unseat an established incumbent and doesn't have the fundraising advantage Dunn enjoys in Maryland, their candidacies at least raise the possibility that they could serve together while holding starkly different views of the violence and destruction of Jan. 6. But even if Dunn wins and Evans loses, he'd be serving alongside dozens of Republicans who have come to view the defendants as "hostages."

Dunn, a 40-year-old Democrat, resigned last December from the Capitol Police after more than 15 years of service. He was four years short of pension eligibility.

"I'm running for Congress because the forces that spurred that violent attack on January 6th are still at work in our country today, and as a patriotic American, I believe it is my duty to step up and defend our democracy," Dunn said.

Dunn leads all candidates in fundraising by wide margins in Maryland's 3rd District race, with \$4.6 million raised and \$714,000 cash on hand, according to his latest campaign finance report with the Federal Election Commission.

Evans, a 39-year-old Republican and avid Trump supporter, calls himself the only elected official who "had the courage" to stand behind efforts to temporarily halt certification of President Joe Biden's 2020 election victory. He livestreamed himself on Facebook cheering on what he described as a "revolution."

Evans was arrested two days after the riot and resigned from his West Virginia House of Delegates seat a month before the 2021 legislative session. He pleaded guilty to a felony civil disorder charge and served three months in prison. At his sentencing hearing, Evans apologized for his actions, but he did an about-face upon leaving prison. He began portraying himself as a victim of a politically motivated prosecution.

Evans once called himself a Democrat, finishing sixth out of seven candidates in a state House primary in 2016. He then switched to the Libertarian Party in the general election and finished last among five candidates.

Evans is taking on West Virginia 1st Congressional District Rep. Carol Miller, also a big Trump backer. In 2022, Miller received 66% of the vote in a five-candidate GOP primary en route to winning her third term in Congress.

Miller is focused on her own accomplishments and endorsements, not any criticism from Evans or his status as a Jan. 6 defendant.

"I don't think about him at all," she said.

Dunn is among nearly two dozen Democrats running in Maryland's 3rd Congressional District, where incumbent Democrat John Sarbanes is not seeking reelection. The heavily Democratic jurisdiction stretches between Baltimore and the nation's capital.

Trump and New York Rep. Elise Stefanik have referred to Jan. 6 defendants who went to prison as "hostages," reflecting a shifting tone among some conservatives toward the violent attempt to overturn the election result. Evans wrote a 2023 book titled "Political Prisoner: The Untold Story of January 6th."

"I kind of think it fits into the general theme of what's viewed as accepted political behavior among some Republicans in the 2020s that probably wouldn't have been the case 10-20 years ago," said Scott

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Crichlow, an associate political science professor at West Virginia University. "Specifically, I think it fits into the general Derrick Evans sphere of behavior. But also that seems to more and more kind of fit, with at least among some Republicans, what you want to see candidates doing and saying today."

Later this month, another convicted Jan. 6 defendant, construction superintendent Chuck Hand, is running in a GOP U.S. House primary in southwest Georgia's 2nd District. Hand faces three other Republicans on May 21 for the right to take on longtime Democratic incumbent Sanford Bishop. Hand and his wife, Mandy Robinson-Hand, were convicted of misdemeanor parading and picketing at the Capitol. Both were sentenced to 20 days in federal prison.

Both Hand and Evans echo false claims still made by Trump that the 2020 election was stolen.

Dunn is repulsed by such rhetoric.

"I won't sit on the sidelines while Donald Trump and his MAGA allies in Congress try to tear our country apart," he said, referring to Trump's "Make America Great Again" slogan.

How much legitimacy there is to rioters' candidacies remains to be seen. None of those seeking public office have gained much traction with voters so far.

In New Hampshire, Capitol riot defendant Jason Riddle plans to run in a crowded GOP primary for the state's 2nd District U.S. House seat. The candidate filing period for the Sept. 10 primary is in early June. Incumbent Democratic Rep. Annie Kuster announced in March that she won't seek a seventh term. Riddle was sentenced to 90 days in prison for helping himself to some wine from a lawmaker's liquor cabinet and stealing a Senate procedure book that he later sold.

In Arizona, Jacob Chansley, the spear-carrying rioter whose horned fur hat, bare chest and face paint made him one of the riot's more recognizable figures, served about 27 months of a 41-month sentence. He hoped to run as a Libertarian in Arizona's 8th Congressional District seat but failed to meet a deadline to turn in required petition signatures to get his name on the ballot.

Tuesday's primaries in Maryland and West Virginia will offer a more tangible test.

"On the one hand, Evans is looking at it as something to be proud of. Dunn's looking at it as something that should never happen again," said Crichlow. "And in that way, these two campaigns really do kind of capture fundamentally different perspectives about the last few years in politics and what politics will look like going forward."

Shunned for centuries, Vodou grows powerful as Haitians seek solace from unrelenting gang violence

By DÁNICA COTO Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — The Vodou faithful sing, their voices rising above the gunfire erupting miles away as frantic drumbeats drown out their troubles.

They pause to swig rum out of small brown bottles, twirling in unison as they sing in Haitian Creole: "We don't care if they hate us, because they can't bury us."

Shunned publicly by politicians and intellectuals for centuries, Vodou is transforming into a more powerful and accepted religion across Haiti, where its believers were once persecuted. Increasingly, they seek solace and protection from violent gangs that have killed, raped and kidnapped thousands in recent years.

The violence has left more than 360,000 people homeless, largely shut down Haiti's biggest seaport and closed the main international airport two months ago. Basic goods including food and life-saving medication are dwindling; nearly 2 million Haitians are on the verge of famine.

From January to March alone, more than 2,500 Haitians were killed or injured, up more than 50% from the same period last year, according to the U.N.

Amid the spiraling chaos, numerous Haitians are praying more or visiting Vodou priests known as "oungans" for urgent requests ranging from locating loved ones who were kidnapped to finding critical medication needed to keep someone alive.

"The spirits help you. They're always around," said Sherly Norzéus, who is initiated to become a "mambo," or Vodou priestess.

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In February, she invoked Papa Ogou, god of war and iron, when 20 armed men surrounded her car as she tried to flee the community of Bon Repos.

Her three children and the two children of her sister, who died during childbirth, sat next to her.

"We are going to burn you alive!" she recalled the gunmen yelling.

Gangs had invaded their neighborhood before dawn, setting fire to homes amid relentless gunfire.

"I prayed to Papa Ogou. He helped me get out of the situation," Norzéus said.

When she opened her eyes, the gunmen signaled that she was free to leave.

Vodou was at the root of the revolution that led Haiti to become the world's first free Black republic in 1804, a religion born in West Africa and brought across the Atlantic by enslaved people.

The syncretic religion that melds Catholicism with animist beliefs has no official leader or creeds. It has a single God known as "Bondye," Creole for "Good God," and more than 1,000 spirits known as the lwa — some that aren't always benevolent.

During Vodou ceremonies, lwa are offered treats ranging from papayas and coffee to popcorn, lollipops and cheese puffs. A ceremony is considered successful if a Vodouist is possessed by an lwa.

Some experts consider it a religion of the exploited.

"Vodou is the system that Haitians have developed to deal with the suffering of this life, a system whose object is to minimize pain, avoid disaster, soften losses, and strengthen the survivors as much as the survival instinct," Haitian sociologist Laënnec Hurbon wrote in a recent essay.

Vodou began to take shape in the French colony of Saint-Domingue during funeral rituals for enslaved people and dances called "calendas" that they organized on Sunday evenings. It also was practiced by slaves known as Maroons who escaped to remote mountains and were led by François Mackandal, a Vodou priest.

In August 1791, some 200 slaves gathered at night in Bois-Caiman in northern Haiti for a Vodou ceremony organized by Dutty Boukman, a renowned enslaved leader and Vodou priest. They sacrificed a pig, drank its blood and swore to keep secret an imminent revolt against slavery, according to a surgeon present at the ceremony.

After a 13-year revolution, Haiti became independent, but Vodou remained oppressed.

The country's new leaders condemned Vodou worship, as did the Catholic Church.

Catholic leaders demanded parishioners take an oath renouncing Vodou in 1941.

Thousands of Vodou followers were lynched and hundreds of symbolic spaces destroyed in what became the most violent attack in Haiti's history against the religion, according to journalist Herbert Nette.

But Vodou persisted. When François Duvalier became president in 1957, he politicized the religion during his dictatorship, appointing certain oungans as its representatives, Hurbon wrote.

By 2003, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a Salesian priest who became Haiti's first democratically elected president, recognized Vodou as one of Haiti's official religions.

Despite the formal recognition, Vodou remains shunned by some Haitians.

"When you say you are a Vodouist, they stigmatize you," said Kadel Bazile, a 42-year-old civil engineer.

Until recently, Bazile was a practicing Catholic. But when he lost his job and his wife left him nearly two years ago, a friend suggested he try Vodou.

"What I find here is spirituality and fraternity. Being here is like being with family," he said while attending a May 1 ceremony to honor Kouzen Zaka, the lwa of harvest.

He identifies the most with Erzulie Dantor, the divinity of love represented by a Black Madonna with scars on her right cheek.

"That is the spirit who lives in me," he said. "She is going to protect me."

As the ceremony started, Bazile smiled and moved to the beat of the drums while dancers twirled nearby, their long earrings swaying to the rhythm.

Vodou is attracting more believers given the surge in gang violence and government inaction, said Cecil Elien Isac, a 4th-generation oungan.

"Whenever the community has a big problem, they come here, because there is no justice in Haiti. You find it in the ancestral spirits," he said.

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When Isac opened his temple years ago in Port-au-Prince, about eight families in the area became members. Now he counts more than 4,000, in Haiti and abroad.

"We have a group of intellectuals who have joined," he said. "Before, it was people who couldn't read or write. Now it has more visibility."

Credited with that turnaround are thinkers like Jean Price-Mars, whose 1928 book, "Thus Spoke the Uncle," visualized Vodou as a religion, "without making the Haitian elites blush," wrote sociologist Lewis Ampidu Clorméus.

"Until the 1920s, Haitian Vodou was generally regarded as a string of superstitions, witchcraft and ritual cannibalism," Clorméus wrote. "Talking about Vodou constituted a shame for Haitian intellectuals."

Vodou has since become a key ingredient in Haiti's rich cultural scene, inspiring music, art, writing and dance.

It's unknown how many people currently practice Vodou in Haiti, but there's a popular saying: "Haiti is 70% Catholic, 30% Protestant and 100% Vodou."

Vodou also has countless lwas, although Ogou Je Wouj — the god of red eyes — has grown more significant to Haitians given the lack of security in the country, said Erol Josué, a singer, oungan and director of Haiti's National Bureau of Ethnology.

Ogou Je Wouj is a manifestation of the god of war and is believed to wield a machete.

"They want power in their body and in their mind," Josué said of those who seek the god.

While spirits infuse believers with energy and hope, Vodou priests warn they don't perform miracles.

"We're praying, but we're also taking precautions," Isac said. "There are a lot of lwas to protect you from kidnapping, but if you walk through certain areas, no lwa is going to protect you."

On a recent afternoon, hundreds of Haitians gathered on a steep hill and squeezed into a small church to celebrate St. George, a Christian martyr believed to be a Roman soldier revered by Catholics and Vodouists alike.

They offered him money and prayers in hopes they would make it through Haiti's deepening crisis.

"It's very important to be here," said Hervé Hyppolite, a chef who practices Christianity and Vodou. "You find force, courage and also protection."

Surrounding him was a sea of people clad in khaki and red, the saint's colors. Some held candles as a handful of women danced nearby,

"St. George!" the priest leading the celebration yelled. The crowd shouted in response, "We need you!"

Josué, the singer and oungan, noted that some young people becoming Vodouists are trying to change traditional prayers or certain practices, but he said oungans and mambos are not embracing the push.

"We make them understand that those spirits are a symbol of resistance of the Haitian nation," he said. "There's a lot of substance in Vodou that can lead to a renaissance of Haiti."

Third week of testimony in Trump's hush money trial draws to a close, with Michael Cohen yet to come

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ, JENNIFER PELTZ, MICHAEL R. SISAK and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The third week of testimony in Donald Trump's hush money trial draws to a close Friday after jurors heard the dramatic, if not downright seamy, account of porn actor Stormy Daniels, while prosecutors gear up for their most crucial witness: Michael Cohen, Trump's former attorney.

Daniels' story of an alleged sexual encounter with Trump was a crucial building block for prosecutors, who are seeking to show that the Republican and his allies buried unflattering stories in the waning weeks of the 2016 presidential election in an effort to illegally influence the race.

Trump, who denies the sexual encounter ever happened, walked out of the court in a rage Thursday, angrily telling reporters, "I'm innocent." His attorneys pushed for a mistrial over the level of tawdry details Daniels went into on the witness stand, but Judge Juan M. Merchan denied the request.

Over more than 7½ hours of testimony, Daniels relayed in graphic detail what she says happened after

the two met at a celebrity golf outing at Lake Tahoe where sponsors included the adult film studio where she worked. Daniels explained how she felt surprise, fear and discomfort, even as she consented to sex with Trump.

During combative cross-examination, Trump's lawyers sought to paint Daniels as a liar and extortionist who's trying to take down the former president after drawing money and fame from her claims. Trump attorney Susan Necheles pressed Daniels on why she accepted the payout to keep quiet instead of going public, and the two women traded barbs over what Necheles said were inconsistencies in Daniels' story over the years.

"You made all this up, right?" Necheles asked Daniels.

"No," Daniels shot back.

The defense has sought to show that the hush money payments made on his behalf were an effort to protect his reputation and family — not his campaign — by shielding them from embarrassing stories about his personal life.

After Daniels stepped down from the stand Thursday, Trump's attorneys pressed the judge to amend the gag order that prevents him from talking about witnesses in the case so he could publicly respond to what she told jurors. The judge denied that request too.

This is all before Trump and jurors are faced with Cohen, who arranged a \$130,000 payout to Daniels. It's not clear when prosecutors will put on the stand their star witness, who pleaded guilty to federal charges and went to prison for his role in the hush money scheme.

Trump is charged with 34 counts of falsifying internal Trump Organization business records. The charges stem from paperwork such as invoices and checks that were deemed legal expenses in company records. Prosecutors say those payments largely were reimbursements to Cohen for Daniels' hush money payment.

Back on the witness stand Friday morning is Madeleine Westerhout, a Trump aide who was working at the Republican National Committee when Trump's infamous "Access Hollywood" tape leaked right before the 2016 election. That tape is important because prosecutors say the political firestorm it caused hastened the payment to Daniels.

Westerhout, who went on to serve as Trump's personal secretary, told jurors Thursday that the tape rattled RNC leadership so much that "there were conversations about how it would be possible to replace him as the candidate, if it came to that."

Witnesses in the case have seesawed between bookkeepers and bankers with often dry testimony to Daniels and others with salacious and unflattering stories about Trump and the tabloid world machinations meant to keep them secret. Despite all the drama, in the end, this a trial about money changing hands — business transactions — and whether those payments were made to illegally influence the 2016 election.

This criminal case could be the only one of four against the presumptive Republican presidential nominee to go to trial before voters decide in November whether to send him back to the White House. Trump has pleaded not guilty and casts himself as the victim of a politically tainted justice system working to deny him another term.

Meanwhile, as the threat of jail looms over Trump following repeated gag order violations, his attorneys are fighting the judge's order and seeking a fast decision in an appeals court. If that court refuses to lift the gag order, Trump's lawyers want permission to take their appeal to the state's high court.

Raucous crowd roars its approval for Caitlin Clark in her home debut with Fever, an 83-80 win

By MICHAEL MAROT AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Caitlin Clark walked into her new home arena Thursday night with No. 22 shirts and jerseys peppered from floor to ceiling.

She left as a first-time WNBA winner.

A late-arriving but louder-than-usual crowd roared during her official introduction to Fever fans and again when Clark made her first basket, a layup with 7:00 left in the first quarter. The cheers grew when

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she completed a three-point play a few minutes later and hit a crescendo when she finally made a long 3-pointer from the edge of the fieldhouse logo late in the third quarter.

Yes, Clark successfully navigated the city's most anticipated rookie debut since Peyton Manning played for the NFL's Indianapolis Colts in 1998 even though it wasn't quite the start most expected.

In an 83-80 preseason victory over the Atlanta Dream, Clark had 12 points, eight rebounds, six assists and six turnovers, going 4 of 12 from the field and 2 of 9 on 3s in 31 minutes.

"It was a lot of fun, I thought they were loud, I thought they were into it. It was fun to see," Clark said following her home debut. "This is a preseason game on a Thursday night and there's 13,000 people here. I think that just shows you what it's going to be like for us all season. It's going to help us."

The crowd certainly made a difference Thursday as Clark helped the Fever rally from an early double-digit deficit following last week's preseason opening loss at Dallas.

One girl held a sign that read "Welcome to Indy Caitlin! — Caitlin M."

Officially, the attendance came in at 13,028 — nearly three times larger than the slightly more than 4,000 per game Indiana averaged for its 20 regular-season home games in 2023. Afterward, Clark found close friend and former college teammate Gabbie Marshall and the two took a photo together.

Most of the fans came to see Clark — even for a rescheduled contest.

Indiana was initially scheduled to play Friday but moved the game when the NBA announced the Indiana Pacers and New York Knicks would play Game 3 of their best-of-seven series in that time slot.

For Clark, the WNBA's overall No. 1 draft pick, it's been a quick transition from playing college ball a month ago to the pro style. And this game didn't come with as much pomp and circumstance as might have been expected.

Clark went through her pregame warmups quietly and focused as music blared and the stands started filling up. But once the game started, Clark & Co. were all business.

"I don't think I was that effective, honestly," Clark said. "I thought more than anything I did a really good job of passing the ball, finding my teammates. Obviously, I would have liked to have made a couple more 3s, but sometimes that's how you shoot it."

The fault didn't fall entirely on Clark's shoulders.

Opponents are naturally game-planning to slow down the top scorer in NCAA Division I history. Atlanta's ploy was to challenge Clark with hard closeouts, multiple defenders forcing the ball out of her hands and physical play intended to get Clark off her spot.

The result: Clark struggled early as the Fever fell behind, and her teammates struggled to convert her crisp passes into points. But they also got a glimpse into what this season could be.

"She pushes the pace for us, she gets the ball where it needs to be, if you run the floor you've got to look up because the ball is coming," said Nalyssa Smith, who had a game-high 21 points. "She can spread the floor, everybody can score and she's looking to pass the ball."

Through it all Clark was both a big hit and a welcome change for a franchise in search of a turnaround. She's generated more interest and attention in women's basketball than most of her predecessors, giving her a platform few others possess and she's taking full advantage of it.

Her presence, coupled with others in perhaps the most heralded rookie class in WNBA history, prompted league commissioner Cathy Engelbert to announce earlier this week she's poised to spend \$50 million on charter flights over the next two seasons.

Meanwhile, the curiosity surrounding Clark has some opponents moving games to larger venues to accommodate ticket sales and a team that hasn't been to the playoffs since 2016 will now have 36 of its 40 regular-season games on national television.

For Clark, playing in front of full arena has become the norm. For her teammates and coaches, this could be the start of something bigger than they could have imagined. Especially when it comes to a generational-type player such as Clark, who has fully embraced her new home city.

"For me, this is the best part of it," Clark said. "You've got to go out and compete every single night and if one night is not good for us, you have an opportunity to come back a couple days later and respond. I think this group will be ready (for the regular season) and everybody's excited."

Senate passes bill improving air safety and service for travelers, a day before FAA law expires

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate has passed a \$105 billion bill designed to improve safety and customer service for air travelers, a day before the law governing the Federal Aviation Administration expires.

The bipartisan bill, which comes after a series of close calls between planes at the nation's airports, aims to boost the number of air traffic controllers amid a shortage, improve safety standards and make it easier for customers to get refunds after flights are delayed or canceled, among other measures.

After passing the legislation on a strong 88-4 vote, the Senate passed a one-week extension to ensure that the law doesn't expire before the House considers the bill next week. The FAA has said it would have had to furlough around 3,600 workers if the law expired at midnight Friday.

The bill stalled for several days this week after senators from Virginia and Maryland objected to a provision that would allow an additional 10 flights a day to and from the heavily trafficked Reagan Washington National Airport. Other senators tried to add unrelated provisions, as well, seeing it as a prime chance to enact their legislative priorities.

But Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer called a vote Thursday evening after it became clear that senators would not be able to agree on amendments to the bill before the law expired. The Senate then passed the one-week extension that the House had already passed, sending that to President Joe Biden's desk.

The FAA has been under scrutiny since it approved Boeing jets that were involved in two deadly crashes in 2018 and 2019. The Senate legislation would govern FAA operations for the next five years and put several new safety standards in place.

The bill "gives the FAA the stability it needs to fulfill its primary mission — advancing aviation safety — while also making travel more convenient and accessible," said Senate Commerce Committee Chairwoman Maria Cantwell, D-Wash.

The legislation aims to increase the number of air traffic controllers, provides for more safety inspectors at manufacturing facilities and requires the FAA to use new technology designed to prevent collisions between planes on runways. It would require new airline planes to have cockpit voice recorders capable of saving 25 hours of audio, up from the current two hours, to help investigators after safety incidents.

It would try to improve customer service for flyers by requiring airlines to pay a refund to customers for flight delays — three hours for a domestic flight and six for an international one. Lawmakers tweaked the bill this week to make it even easier for customers to receive refunds, revising language that would have put most of the onus on the customers to request them. The change put the Senate bill more in line with new regulations issued by the Biden administration last week.

In addition, the bill would prohibit airlines from charging extra for families to sit together and triple the maximum fines for airlines that violate consumer laws. And it would require the Transportation Department to create a "dashboard" so consumers can compare seat sizes on different airlines.

The legislation would also improve access for passengers with disabilities, requiring airlines to accommodate seating requests for disability-related needs, setting new training standards for airline personnel who handle and store wheelchairs and awarding grants for airport accessibility upgrades.

Failure to pass the popular bipartisan bill by May 10 would have been the latest setback after months of delays on the measure, and the last-minute deal to pass it was the most recent example of Congress struggling to pass major legislation that had broad bipartisan support.

Schumer, who had urged lawmakers to drop their objections and come to agreement on the legislation, said after passage that "passing this FAA bill is the best thing Congress can do to give Americans the peace of mind they deserve."

Virginia Sens. Tim Kaine and Mark Warner, both Democrats, had pushed for a vote on their amendment to block the additional long-haul flights at Virginia's Reagan National. They say the airport is restricted in size and too busy already, pointing to a close call there between two planes earlier in April that they said

is a “flashing red warning light.”

Several Western lawmakers have argued for more flights at the airport, saying it is unfair to consumers that there is a restriction on long-haul flights. The provision’s chief proponent is Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, the top Republican on the Senate Commerce Committee, who is up for reelection this year and has argued that San Antonio should have a direct flight from the airport. Cruz blocked a vote on Kaine and Warner’s amendment when Schumer tried to bring it up shortly before final passage.

Like lawmakers, airlines are also split on the idea of additional flights at Reagan National. Delta Airlines has argued for more flights, while United Airlines, with a major operation at farther-out Dulles Airport, has lobbied against the increase.

The House last year passed its own version of the FAA legislation without additional Reagan National flights after intense, last-minute lobbying from the Virginia delegation — a bipartisan vote on an amendment to the FAA bill that saw members aligning not by party but geographic location. Lawmakers use the airport frequently because it is the closest Washington airport to the Capitol, and Congress has long tried to have a say in which routes have service there.

“Some of our colleagues were too afraid to let the experts make the call,” Kaine and Warner said in a joint statement Thursday evening, after Cruz blocked a vote on their amendment. “They didn’t want to show the American people that they care more about a few lawmakers’ desire for direct flights than they care about the safety and convenience of the traveling public. That is shameful and an embarrassment.”

Kaine, Warner and Maryland’s two senators, Democrats Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen, were the only four senators to vote against final passage.

Airman shot by deputy doted on little sister and aimed to buy mom a house, family says

By STEPHEN SMITH and SUDHIN THANAWALA Associated Press

FORT WALTON BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Just two days before a sheriff’s deputy in Florida shot him dead, U.S. Air Force airman Roger Fortson called home to find out what his 10-year-old sister wanted for her birthday.

It was a typical gesture for the 23-year-old from Atlanta, who doted on the girl and was devoted to helping her, a younger brother and his mom prosper, his family says.

“He was trying to give me everything that I never could get for myself,” his mother, Chantemekki Fortson, said Thursday at a news conference in Fort Walton Beach, where her son was living when he was killed.

He was her “gift,” she said, the man who taught her to love and forgive and served as her co-worker and counselor.

An Okaloosa County sheriff’s deputy shot Fortson on May 3. Sheriff’s officials say he acted in self-defense while responding to a call of a disturbance in progress at the apartment complex. But civil rights attorney Ben Crump, who is representing the Fortson family, has accused the deputy of going to the wrong apartment and said the shooting was unjustified.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement is investigating.

At Thursday’s news conference, Chantemekki Fortson held a large framed portrait of her son in dress uniform. He joined the Air Force in 2019, the same year he graduated from Ronald McNair — a majority Black high school in metro Atlanta’s DeKalb County where roughly half of students don’t graduate in four years.

Air Force service was a lifelong dream, and Fortson rose to the rank of senior airman. He was stationed at Hurlburt Field near Fort Walton Beach.

“Where we come from, we don’t end up where Roger ended up,” his mother said.

Fortson, a gunner aboard the AC-130J, earned an Air Medal with combat device, which is typically awarded after 20 flights in a combat zone or for conspicuous valor or achievement on a single mission. An Air Force official said Fortson’s award reflected both — completing flights in a combat zone and taking specific actions during one of the missions to address an in-flight emergency and allow the mission to continue. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to provide additional details that had not been made public.

But his service, like almost everything else he did, had a larger purpose.

"He was trying to help his family have a better life," Crump said Thursday.

That meant serving as a role model for his 16-year-old brother, his mom said, saving up to try to buy her a house, and getting her a new car. His nickname was "Mr. Make It Happen."

Chantemekki Fortson recalled that her son, then in high school, accompanied her in an ambulance to the hospital when she was giving birth to her daughter and tried to tell the doctor how to deliver the baby.

The girl and his brother were always in his thoughts. Fortson was assigned to the 4th Special Operations Squadron as a special missions aviator, where one of his roles was to load the gunship's 30mm and 105mm cannons.

Chantemekki Fortson said her son was injured while loading a plane and was in such severe pain he thought he would die. But he told his mom he had to push through for his brother and sister.

He was also by her side when she got into an accident a short time later and needed to go to the emergency room.

"That's the kind of gift he was," she said. "They took something that can never be replaced."

Netanyahu on US threat to withhold arms: Israel will fight with its 'fingernails' if needed

By JOSEPH KRAUSS and JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Thursday that a U.S. threat to withhold some arms would not prevent Israel from continuing its offensive in Gaza, indicating it might proceed with an invasion of the packed city of Rafah against the wishes of its closest ally.

President Joe Biden has urged Israel not to go ahead with such an operation over fears it would exacerbate the humanitarian catastrophe in the Palestinian enclave. On Wednesday, he said the United States would not provide offensive weapons for a Rafah offensive, raising pressure on Netanyahu.

But in a statement released Thursday, Netanyahu said "if we have to stand alone, we will stand alone. If we need to, we will fight with our fingernails. But we have much more than fingernails."

Israel's top military spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, also appeared to downplay the practical impact of any arms holdup. "The army has munitions for the missions it plans, and for the missions in Rafah, too -- we have what we need," he said in response to a question at a news conference.

Israel has repeatedly threatened to invade Rafah, where some 1.3 million Palestinians — over half the population — have sought refuge. The city in southern Gaza is also the main hub for humanitarian operations, which have been severely hindered by the closure of Gaza's two main crossings this week.

Israel says Rafah is the last stronghold of Hamas and that the army must go in if it hopes to dismantle the group and return scores of hostages captured in the Oct. 7 attack that triggered the war.

In an earlier response to Biden's decision, Israel's far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir wrote a post on the platform X with a heart emoji between the words "Hamas" and "Biden." He and other ultra-nationalist members of Netanyahu's coalition support a large-scale Rafah operation and have threatened to bring down his government if it doesn't happen.

Aid groups say a Rafah invasion would be catastrophic. The U.N. says most of the territory's 2.3 million Palestinians suffer from hunger and that northern Gaza is already experiencing "full-blown famine."

Even the limited operation Israel launched earlier this week, in which a tank brigade captured the Gaza side of the Rafah border crossing with Egypt, has thrown humanitarian operations into crisis.

It also complicated what had been months of efforts by the U.S., Qatar and Egypt to broker a cease-fire and the release of hostages. Hamas this week said it had accepted an Egyptian-Qatari cease-fire proposal, but Israel says the plan does not meet its "core" demands. Several days of follow-up talks appeared to end inconclusively on Thursday.

Some analysts said Biden's tough line against Israel, and the rift between the allies, threatened to weaken Israel's negotiating position and harden Hamas' stances. Hamas has demanded guarantees for an end to the war and a full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza as part of any deal — steps Israel has ruled out.

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"It sends a discordant message at a time when Hamas is holding out on a hostage deal in the hopes that pressure will grow on Israel and it will gain a cease-fire without having to give anything in return," said the Israel Policy Forum, a pro-Israel organization based in New York.

The war began with Hamas' surprise attack into southern Israel, in which it killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and took another 250 hostage. The militants are still holding some 100 captives and the remains of more than 30 after most of the rest were released during a cease-fire last year.

The war has killed over 34,800 Palestinians, mostly women and children, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. Israel's offensive, waged with U.S.-supplied munitions, has caused widespread devastation and forced some 80% of Gaza's population to flee their homes.

Israel's capture of the Rafah crossing Tuesday forced the closure of a key entry point for fuel, and it's unclear when it will reopen. The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, known as UNRWA, said it only has enough stocks to maintain operations for a few days and has started rationing.

Israel reopened its side of the nearby Kerem Shalom crossing — Gaza's main cargo terminal — after a rocket attack over the weekend, but UNRWA, the main provider of aid in Gaza, says aid cannot be brought in on the Palestinian side because of the security situation.

A recently reopened route in the north is still functioning, but only 60 trucks entered on Tuesday, far below the 500 that entered Gaza each day before the war.

The first aid ship bound for an American-built floating pier to be installed in Gaza departed early Thursday. But it's unclear when that corridor will be up and running, and even then it won't be able to handle as much aid as Gaza's two main land crossings.

Maj. Pete Nguyen, a Pentagon spokesman, said Thursday that parts of the pier are still in the Israeli port of Ashdod awaiting more favorable seas before being moved into position off Gaza. He said the U.S. vessel Sagamore, which left Cyprus, would transport aid to another ship, the Roy P. Benavidez, which is off the coast of Gaza.

"In the coming days, the U.S. will commence an international community-backed effort to expand the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza using a floating pier," he said.

Stormy Daniels delivers shocking testimony about Trump, but trial hinges on business records

By MICHAEL R. SISAK, JAKE OFFENHARTZ, JENNIFER PELTZ and COLLEEN LONG Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump's defense attorney on Thursday accused Stormy Daniels of slowly altering the details of an alleged 2006 sexual encounter with Trump, trying to convince jurors that a key prosecution witness in the former president's hush money criminal trial cannot be believed.

"You have made all of this up, right?" lawyer Susan Necheles asked.

"No," Daniels shot back.

As the jury looked on, the two women traded barbs over what Necheles said were inconsistencies in Daniels' description of the encounter with Trump in a Nevada hotel suite. He denies the whole story.

But despite all the talk over what may have happened in that hotel room, despite the discomfiting testimony by the adult film actor that she consented to sex in part because of a "power imbalance," the case against Trump doesn't rise or fall on whether her account is true or even believable. It's a trial about money changing hands — business transactions — and whether those payments were made to illegally influence the 2016 election.

Trump is charged with 34 counts of falsifying internal Trump Organization business records. The charges stem from paperwork such as invoices and checks that were deemed legal expenses in company records. Prosecutors say those payments largely were reimbursements to Trump attorney Michael Cohen, who paid Daniels \$130,000 to keep quiet.

The testimony over the past three weeks has seesawed between bookkeepers and bankers relaying the nuts and bolts of check-paying procedures and wire transfers to unflattering, seamy stories about Trump and the tabloid world machinations meant to keep them secret.

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This criminal case could be the only one against the presumptive Republican presidential nominee to go to trial before voters decide in November whether to send him back to the White House. Trump has pleaded not guilty and casts himself as the victim of a politically tainted justice system working to deny him another term.

Meanwhile, as the threat of jail looms over Trump following his repeated gag order violations, his attorneys are fighting Judge Juan M. Merchan's order and seeking a fast decision in an appeals court. If the court refuses to lift the gag order, Trump's lawyers want permission to take their appeal to the state's high court.

At the same time, they also asked Merchan to modify the order so Trump could publicly respond to Daniels' testimony and made a second request for a mistrial based on what they argued was her "extremely prejudicial testimony" that has "has nothing to do with the false business records" charges. Merchan rejected both.

"My concern is not just with protecting Ms. Daniels or a witness who has already testified. My concern is with protecting the integrity of these proceedings as a whole," Merchan said in refusing to change the gag order.

Turning away the mistrial request, Merchan said Trump's lawyers had opened the door to detailed testimony about the alleged sexual encounter when they asserted in their opening statement that no sex had occurred. "Your denial puts the jury in the position of choosing who they believe."

"The more specificity Ms. Daniels can provide about the encounter, the more the jury can weigh about whether the encounter did occur and if so, whether they choose to credit Ms. Daniels' story," Merchan said.

Trump fumed outside the courtroom at the end of the day.

"I'm innocent," he said. "I'm being held in this court with a corrupt judge who's totally conflicted."

At the time of the payment to Daniels, Trump and his campaign were reeling from the October 2016 publication of the never-before-seen 2005 "Access Hollywood" footage in which he boasted about grabbing women without their permission.

Prosecutors have argued that the political firestorm over the "Access Hollywood" tape hastened Cohen's payment to keep Daniels from going public with her claims that could further hurt Trump in the eyes of female voters.

The tape rattled the Republican National Committee leadership, and "there were conversations about how it would be possible to replace him as the candidate if it came to that," according to testimony from Madeleine Westerhout, a Trump aide who was working at the RNC when the recording leaked.

Daniels was on the stand for 7½ hours over two days. During questioning from prosecutors, she relayed in graphic detail what she said happened during their encounter, after the two met at a celebrity golf outing at Lake Tahoe where sponsors included the adult film studio where she worked.

Trump scowled and shook his head through much of Daniels' description, including how she found him sitting on the hotel bed in his underwear after she returned from the bathroom and that he did not use a condom. The judge told Trump's lawyers on Tuesday that he could hear him "cursing audibly."

Trump's lawyers sought to paint Daniels as a liar and extortionist who's trying to take down Trump after drawing money and fame from her claims. And they say hush money payments made on his behalf were an effort to protect his reputation and family — not his campaign — by shielding them from embarrassing stories about his personal life.

On Thursday, Necheles grilled Daniels on her description of the encounter in which she described fear and discomfort even as she consented to sex. She testified earlier this week that while she wasn't physically menaced, she felt a "power imbalance" as Trump, in his hotel bedroom, stood between her and the door and propositioned her.

As for whether she felt compelled to have sex with him, she reiterated Thursday that he didn't drug her or physically threaten her. But, she said, "My own insecurities, in that moment, kept me from saying no."

Necheles suggested that her work in porn meant her story about being shocked and frightened by Trump's alleged sexual advances was not believable.

"You've acted and had sex in over 200 porn movies, right?" Necheles asked. "And there are naked men

and women having sex, including yourself, in those movies, right?"

Necheles continued, "But according to you, seeing a man sitting on a bed in a T-shirt and boxers was so upsetting that you got lightheaded."

The experience with Trump was different from porn for a number of reasons, Daniels explained, including the fact that Trump was more than twice her age and larger than she and that she was not expecting to find him undressed when she emerged from the bathroom.

"I came out of the bathroom and saw an older man in his underwear that I wasn't expecting to see there," she said.

Necheles pressed her on why she accepted the payout to keep quiet instead of going public.

"Why didn't you do that?" she asked, wondering why Daniels didn't hold a news conference as she had planned.

"Because we were running out of time," Daniels said.

Did she mean, Necheles asked, that she was running out of time to use the claim to make money?

"To get the story out," Daniels countered. The negotiations were happening in the final weeks of the 2016 presidential campaign.

She testified that she never spoke with Trump about payment, and said she had no knowledge of whether Trump was aware of or involved in the transaction.

"You have no personal knowledge about his involvement in that transaction or what he did or didn't do," Necheles asked.

"Not directly, no," Daniels responded.

Prosecutor Susan Hoffinger later asked Daniels, "Have you been telling lies about Mr. Trump or the truth about Mr. Trump?"

"The truth," said Daniels, who also said that although she has made money since her story emerged, she also has had to spend a lot to hire security, move homes and take other precautions, and she still owes Trump hundreds of thousands of dollars in attorneys' fees.

"On balance, has publicly telling the truth about Mr. Trump been a net positive or net negative in your life?" Hoffinger asked.

"Negative," Daniels replied quietly.

Life after Florida Georgia Line: Brian Kelley ready to reintroduce himself with new solo album

By MARIA SHERMAN AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Allow Brian Kelley to reintroduce himself.

Best known as one-half of the country super-duo Florida Georgia Line, Kelley will release a solo album, "Tennessee Truth," on Friday. It is a collection of 12 anthemic country songs ripe for a road trip and tailgate in equal measure.

For "Tennessee Truth," produced by Dann Huff, Kelley says he aimed to "dive into the music I grew up on — obviously the music I love and themes of just country living, rural living, hard work, good times, outdoors, love," he told The Associated Press from his home in Nashville.

Good songwriting, Kelley says, is a lot like fishing — you need patience. "I wrote probably over 100 songs for this record."

Eight of the 12 songs on the album were written by Kelley, and he worked with whomever he could on others, trying to get outside his comfort zone. "Every song gets you to the next song," he says.

"I think it's a fun record," he says, adding that the creative process was dependent on these tracks translating live.

Geography still plays a prominent role in the music Kelley makes. Throughout "Tennessee Truth" are beaches in Florida, farms in Nashville, his wife's family farm in Georgia. Hunting, sitting on the porch drinking sweet tea and eating peanuts, conversations with loved ones — that's the kind of life he hopes comes across on the album. "Just being free," he says.

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Fans looking for more coastal country from Kelley — like what was found on his pandemic album, “Sunshine State of Mind,” released in 2020 — will want to skip over to “10 O’Clock On The Dock.”

“It was a passion project,” he says of “Sunshine State of Mind.” “It was supposed to just be its own little thing.”

Kelley says he also made that record with the thought that he would record solo and with Florida Georgia Line. “I made it with a sonic respect to what we were, what we had done and what we had built. So, I didn’t want to tread on anything even close to that, out of respect, you know?”

He says he considers “Tennessee Truth” his true solo debut.

In 2022, Florida Georgia Line embarked on an indefinite hiatus. At that point, the duo of Kelley and Tyler Hubbard had been together more than a decade, and whether you were a fan of their bro country sound or not, their music (“Cruise,” “Meant to Be,” “Round Here”) set the tone for a generation of country fans. The following year, Hubbard released a self-titled debut solo record.

“I’m thankful that (Brian) had the courage to step into this new space and to make that decision that ultimately kind of pushed me to make the same decision and lead me to where I’m at now,” Hubbard told AP at the time. “I had quite a few people tell me that it couldn’t be done and that I should definitely continue with FGL, and it sort of lit a spark in me, a fire.”

The closing song on “Tennessee Truth” is the feisty “Kiss My Boots,” which features Kelley delivering vinegary lyrics like: “Want the world to know that you did me wrong / I don’t know how you act sweet, after how you did me / Here’s a middle finger to you through a song.” Some fans theorize it is a direct message to Hubbard.

“I’ve read some of that, too,” Kelley says, adding that he understands people might make associations in order to find meaning in the song.

“But at the end of the day,” he says, the song means a lot of different things for his collaborators, “And it really means a lot of different things for me.

“I really put that song out because I wanted people to know that I’m a real human, and I’m not just some face on social media or some somebody that’s had some success,” he adds. “You know, I’ve been through hard times in my life.”

But could there be a reunion on the horizon?

“The old saying is, ‘Tell God your plans and he’ll laugh,’” he says. “So, I have no idea. I really don’t know what the future holds. I know that I’m really focused on what I’m doing now, and I’m really proud of ... the work that I put in.”

Body camera video shows fatal shooting of Black airman by Florida deputy in apartment doorway

By STEPHEN SMITH and MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

FORT WALTON BEACH, Fla. (AP) — A Florida sheriff released body camera video Thursday showing a deputy outside an apartment door and firing immediately when it was opened by a Black man carrying a handgun pointed downward, a killing the family denounced as “unjustifiable.”

Okaloosa County Sheriff Eric Aden presented the video hours after the family of U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Roger Fortson and their attorneys held a news conference in which they disputed that the deputy acted in self-defense. Aden rejected assertions made by civil rights attorney Ben Crump, who is representing Fortson’s family, that the deputy had gone to the wrong apartment, covered the door’s peephole and did not announce himself.

The video shows the deputy arriving at a Fort Walton Beach apartment building on May 3 and speaking to a woman outside who described someone hearing an argument. The deputy then went up an elevator and walked down an outdoor hallway.

The video shows the deputy banging on the door and stepping aside, seemingly out of view of the door. Twice he shouted: “Sheriff’s office! Open the door!”

Fortson opened the door and could be seen holding what appeared to be handgun pointed down toward

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the floor. The deputy shouted, "Step back!" and fired off shots. He then shouted, "Drop the gun! Drop the gun!"

"It's over there," Fortson said.

"Drop the gun!" the deputy yelled back.

"I don't have it," Fortson said, lying on the ground.

The deputy then called paramedics on his radio.

The sheriff's office has declined to identify the responding deputy or his race. The deputy was placed on administrative leave pending an investigation.

Crump released a statement later noting that the officer did not tell Fortson to drop his gun before shooting "multiple times within a split second of the door being opened."

"We remain adamant that the police had the wrong apartment as Roger was on the phone with his girlfriend for a substantial amount of time leading up to the shooting, and no one else was in the apartment," the statement said.

Crump also told reporters earlier that Fortson was talking to his girlfriend on FaceTime and that he grabbed his gun because he heard someone outside his apartment. He said that the deputy burst into the apartment, citing the account of the girlfriend, who has not yet been identified.

"The girlfriend acknowledges that even though she initially thought the door was forced open by the police that she stands by her emotional recollection of what happened," Crump's later statement said.

In a clip from the FaceTime video captured by Fortson's cellphone, the airman can be heard groaning and saying, "I can't breathe." A deputy can be heard yelling back at him, "Stop moving!" The phone is pointed at the ceiling and does not show what is going on in the apartment.

Aden said he had met with the family Thursday and extended his deepest condolences.

"This result is one we never hope to encounter," Aden said. "These investigations take time, but I want to assure you that we are not hiding or attempting to cover anything up."

Officials have said the Florida Department of Law Enforcement is investigating. FDLE spokeswoman Gretl Plessinger told The Associated Press on Wednesday that it is unlikely the agency will have any further comment until the investigation is complete.

The sheriff said the probe was being handled as a criminal investigation and that no determination had yet been made on whether the deputy's actions were justified or not. However, the initial news release from the sheriff's office that described the shooting said that the deputy "reacted in self-defense after he encountered a 23-year-old man armed with a gun."

Fortson's mother, Chantemekki Fortson, walked into the morning news conference with Crump holding a framed portrait of her son in his dress uniform. She burst into tears as Crump spoke about her son's death.

"My baby was shot up," she said.

Crump called the shooting "an unjustifiable killing."

"For whatever reason, they thought he was a bad guy, but he was a good guy. He was a great guy. He was an exceptional guy," Crump said. "They took a patriot from us."

Crump said Fortson, originally from Atlanta, was shot six times.

Fortson enlisted in the Air Force after graduating high school, Crump said. He was based at the Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field. As a special missions aviator, one of his roles was to load the gunship's cannons during missions.

Crump, based in Tallahassee, Florida, has been involved in multiple high-profile cases of Black people in fatal encounters with law enforcement and vigilantes, including those of Ahmaud Arbery, Trayvon Martin, Tyre Nichols, George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, who was also killed in her home during a no-knock police raid that targeted her ex-boyfriend in 2020.

Fortson's death draws striking similarities to other Black people killed in recent years by police in their homes.

In 2018, a white Dallas police officer fatally shot Botham Jean, who was unarmed, after mistaking his apartment for her own. Amber Guyger, the former officer, was convicted of murder and was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

In 2019, a white Fort Worth, Texas, officer fatally shot Atatiana Jefferson through a rear window of her home after responding to a nonemergency call reporting that Jefferson's front door was open. Aaron Dean, the former officer, was convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to nearly 12 years in prison.

Crump represented families in both cases as part of his effort to force accountability for the killings of Black people at the hands of police.

2 skiers killed after being caught in Utah avalanche following late spring snowstorms, sheriff says

By RICK BOWMER and AMY BETH HANSON Associated Press

SANDY, Utah (AP) — Two backcountry skiers were killed and one was rescued after they were swept up and buried in an avalanche Thursday in the mountains outside of Salt Lake City that occurred after several days of spring snowstorms, authorities said.

A rescue team went to the area mid-morning after the avalanche was reported near Lone Peak in the Wasatch Range southeast of Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County Sheriff Rosie Rivera said. One of the skiers, who was able to dig himself out of the snow, was rescued and taken to a hospital, Rivera said. She said she believed he was the one who called for help. Officers were speaking with him at the hospital to get more information about what happened, the sheriff said.

Rescuers in a helicopter flew over the area Thursday afternoon and confirmed the other two skiers were deceased, Rivera said. They are two men, ages 23 and 32. Their names have not been released, but their families have been notified, the sheriff said.

Conditions were not safe enough to allow for a recovery on Thursday, and crews planned to go out Friday morning, weather permitting, Rivera said.

The deaths bring this winter's tally of avalanche deaths in the U.S. to at least 15, which is less than the average of about 30 people who are killed by avalanches each year. The Colorado Avalanche Information Center, which keeps track of the figure nationally, tallied 13 deaths before authorities announced Thursday's fatalities.

The site of the avalanche, Lone Peak, is one of the highest peaks in the Wasatch Range towering over Utah's capital city. Its steep, rugged terrain makes it a popular destination for advanced backcountry skiers, and experienced climbers can be found scaling its sheer granite walls in the warmer months.

The slide happened in the Big Willow Cirque, said Craig Gordon with the Utah Avalanche Center.

"This is very serious terrain. It's steep. It's north-facing. The crew that was up there would have to be experienced," Gordon said.

Rivera said they were experienced skiers who were prepared for the skiing.

About 2.5 feet (76 centimeters) of heavy, wet snow fell in the area in the past three days during storms that also brought very strong winds, he said.

"With spring, avalanche conditions can change in an instant," Gordon said.

Storm-battered South is again under threat.

A boy swept into a drain fights for his life

By KRISTIN M. HALL and GEORGE WALKER IV Associated Press

COLUMBIA, Tenn. (AP) — Dangerous storms crashed over parts of the South on Thursday even as the region cleaned up from earlier severe weather that spawned tornadoes, killed at least three people, and gravely injured a boy who was swept into a storm drain as he played in a flooded street.

A heavy line of storms swept into Atlanta near the end of the morning rush hour. Busy hub airports in Atlanta and Charlotte, North Carolina, reported delays. The National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center cited an "enhanced risk" for severe weather from Texas to South Carolina. An emergency manager reported "significant wind damage" from a possible tornado Thursday afternoon in the Vidalia, Georgia, area, a region known for producing onions.

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The storms continue a streak of torrential rains and tornadoes this week from the Plains to the Midwest and, now, the Southeast. Since Monday, 39 states have been under threat of severe weather and at least four people have died. On Wednesday and Thursday, about 220 million people were under some sort of severe weather risk, with some in danger multiple days, said Matthew Elliott, a Storm Prediction Center forecaster.

The weather comes on the heels of a stormy April in which the U.S. had 300 confirmed tornadoes, the second-most on record for the month and the most since 2011.

More than 100,000 homes and businesses still lacked power Thursday afternoon in several Southern states after storms the night before, according to PowerOutage.us.

One in Tennessee damaged homes, injured people, toppled power lines and trees, and killed a 22-year-old man in a car in Claiborne County, north of Knoxville, officials said. A second person was killed south of Nashville in Columbia, the seat of Maury County, where officials said a tornado with 140 mph (225 kph) winds damaged or destroyed more than 100 homes.

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee said the woman who died in Maury County was in a mobile home that was thrown several feet into a wooded area. Lee visited emergency managers and Tennessee Department of Transportation officials in the storm-stricken area Thursday. He thanked workers who spent the night clearing trees and debris from roads.

Later, Lee told reporters that it is "heartbreaking" to see families whose lives have been affected by the tornado.

"To observe another family in a moment of crisis is hard to watch, but it is hopeful to be able to walk up and see their interaction with their neighbors and comments that they're going to make it," Lee said.

Bob Booth had just gotten home to Columbia from Georgia and was sitting down to watch television when he heard a "crazy racket."

"I get up and look out, and it was all hell breaking loose outside," Booth said. "Then the top half of one of my trees goes down across the road."

Retired pastor Walter Shell said he and his wife grabbed their two dogs and headed for the basement when his phone alerted him to a tornado.

"It missed where me and my wife were standing by about 4 inches. It went around," he said. "It pays to pray, I can tell you."

Torrential rains led to a flash flood emergency and water rescues northeast of Nashville, and the weather service issued a tornado emergency, its highest alert level, for nearby areas.

A 10-year-old boy was seriously injured in Christiana, southeast of Nashville, when he got caught in a storm drain and swept under streets while playing with other children as adults cleared debris, his father, Rutherford County Schools Superintendent Jimmy Sullivan, posted on social media.

The boy, Asher, emerged in a drainage ditch and survived after being given CPR, "but the damage is substantial," Sullivan posted on Facebook, asking for prayers.

"Asher needs a miracle," Sullivan wrote.

Dozens of people gathered at the school district's offices for a prayer vigil Thursday. They bowed their heads and closed their eyes in prayer, and they sang "Amazing Grace" together.

Schools were closed Thursday and Friday in Rutherford and Maury. In Georgia, some districts north of Atlanta canceled in-person classes or delayed start times because of storm damage overnight that included fallen trees on houses and vehicles around Clarkesville. No injuries were reported there.

"We're just trying to clean up right now and wait for the next round," said Lynn Smith, director of the Habersham County Emergency Management Agency.

A strong tornado damaged at least 20 homes in northern Alabama's DeKalb County and caused injuries but no deaths, officials said.

In North Carolina, a state of emergency was declared Wednesday night for Gaston County, west of Charlotte, after a storm that toppled power lines and trees, including one that landed on a car. One person in the car was killed, and another was taken to a hospital, officials said.

The storms followed heavy rain, strong winds, hail and tornadoes in parts of the central U.S. on Monday,

including a twister that ripped through an Oklahoma town and killed one person. On Tuesday, the Midwest took the brunt of the bad weather. Tornadoes touched down in parts of Michigan, Ohio and Indiana, according to the weather service.

Michigan's Kalamazoo area was hard hit as a FedEx facility was ripped apart, with downed power lines trapping about 50 people.

Tornadoes were also confirmed near Pittsburgh, in central Arkansas and in northern West Virginia. The West Virginia twister was at least the 11th tornado this year in the state, which sees two tornadoes in an average year.

Both the Plains and Midwest have been hammered by tornadoes this spring.

Trump is limited in what he can say about his court case. His GOP allies are showing up to help

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON Associated Press

Former President Donald Trump is limited in what he can publicly say as he fights charges that he made payments to a porn actor to illegally influence the 2016 election. But he's getting help from some GOP allies who are glad to show up and talk.

U.S. Sen. Rick Scott of Florida was the latest surrogate to accompany Trump, joining him Thursday for the 14th day of his hush money trial in New York. Last week, it was Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton who joined the presumptive GOP presidential nominee.

The Republicans' courtroom presence can help Trump connect with constituents while he's stuck in court and feeling the pressure of a gag order placed on him by the judge. Both Scott and Paxton have been through legal troubles of their own, and have railed against what they call politically motivated prosecutions — a message that echoes Trump's own. And while having friends by one's side is a common practice encouraged by attorneys to show support for defendants in court, it's also a chance for Trump's friends to publicly demonstrate their loyalty to the leader of the GOP.

Scott started his day Thursday as the 6 a.m. guest on the morning show "Fox & Friends." He later entered the courtroom behind Trump and witnessed the tense exchange between Stormy Daniels and Trump's defense attorney as they were going over the alleged 2006 sexual encounter between the former president and the porn actor.

The senator filed into the first row of the courtroom gallery behind the defense table, joining Trump's entourage, and spoke with Trump lawyer and spokesperson Alina Habba before taking a seat.

After an hour and a half, Scott left the courtroom and walked across the street to speak to news outlets. There, he commented on a subject Trump has been ordered not to, bringing up Judge Juan Merchan's daughter and saying she was a political operative who raises money for Democrats.

"This is just a bunch of Democrats saying we want to make sure that Donald Trump can't talk," Scott said. "Then they've got a gag order, so he can't go campaign. They've got him holed up in a courtroom."

The gag order prohibits Trump from making or directing others to make public statements about people connected to the case, including the judge's family.

Scott denied his presence had anything to do with the gag order.

"No. I'm fed up," he said. "This is just simply they don't want this guy on the ballot."

Paxton did not speak publicly when he joined Trump last week, but he gave interviews later to Fox Business and Newsmax about the trial, calling it "perversion of justice."

"This is tyrannical, and to stop him from speaking out and defending himself and keep him from basically campaigning, I think is hard to believe and I hope the American people do not put up with this," Paxton told Fox Business the day after.

David Weinstein, a legal analyst and former federal prosecutor, said Trump can't directly or indirectly comment, adding that an indirect comment would include a friend saying something Trump shared or told. But surrogates like Scott are free to speak.

"They can say whatever they want to say. They are not bound by a gag order," he said.

Weinstein said Trump is not only on trial for the crimes he is charged with, but he's also before the court of opinion while trying to win an election.

"He can bring other people in, can show constituents of other states that he has the backing of other politicians," he said. "This is a political and a public relations tactic. It's got nothing to do with his defense."

Trump's attorneys have argued against the gag order, saying the former president should be allowed to respond to Daniels' testimony. But Merchan on Thursday refused a request to modify it.

Gustavo Lage, a criminal defense attorney, said it is controversial as to what extent this gag order applies. "I think the court would have a hard time saying that a third party can't voice their opinion or their feelings about a trial," Lage said.

As far as connecting with voters by bringing in surrogates and allies, Lage said that should not be relevant in court.

"I don't think that is something the court could or should control as long as it doesn't interfere with the administration of justice in the courtroom," he said.

The Latest | Judge denies defense's 2nd request for mistrial in Trump's hush money case

NEW YORK (AP) — The judge in Donald Trump's hush money case denied a second request from defense attorneys to declare a mistrial over porn actor Stormy Daniels' testimony, which concluded Thursday.

Judge Juan M. Merchan, echoing his denial Tuesday of the defense's initial mistrial motion, said Trump's lawyers had ample opportunities to object to questions that elicited what they said were damaging details about the alleged sexual encounter between the former president and Daniels.

Daniels spent roughly 7 1/2 hours on the stand over two days. The porn actor recounted, among other things, the alleged 2006 sexual encounter with the former president that she was eventually paid to keep quiet about during the 2016 presidential election.

The former president's attorneys aggressively sought to poke holes in Daniels' credibility during cross-examination accusing her of trying to extort Trump, rehearsing her testimony and changing her story over the years — all things she forcefully denied.

Trump denies the two ever had sex.

Defense attorneys asked New York's mid-level appeals court on Wednesday to expedite a decision on Trump's gag order appeal.

The court did not take immediate action but set deadlines for court filings in the next two weeks.

Prosecutors say Trump and two of his associates orchestrated a scheme to influence the 2016 election by purchasing and then burying stories that might damage his campaign.

Daniels' testimony is a build-up to the prosecution's star witness Michael Cohen, who arranged the \$130,000 payment to Daniels and later went to prison for orchestrating the payments and other charges.

Trump is accused of falsifying internal business records to cover up the hush money payments and instead recording them as legal expenses. He has pleaded not guilty.

The case is the first-ever criminal trial of a former U.S. president and the first of four prosecutions of Trump to reach a jury.

Currently:

- Here is what Stormy Daniels testified happened between her and Donald Trump
- Inside the courtroom where Trump was forced to listen to Stormy Daniels
- Hush money, catch and kill and more: Terms to know in Trump trial
- Key players: Who's who at Donald Trump's hush money criminal trial
- The hush money case is just one of Trump's legal cases. See the others here

Here's the latest:

TRUMP LEAVES COURT, CALLS RULING 'A DISGRACE'

Speaking briefly to reporters outside the courtroom late Thursday afternoon, Donald Trump railed against

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Judge Juan M. Merchan, who had just denied his lawyers' requests to modify the gag order so he could respond to Stormy Daniels' testimony, and to declare a mistrial based on what she said.

"This judge, what he did, and what his ruling was, is a disgrace," Trump said. "Everybody saw what happened today."

Court will resume on Friday morning.

JUDGE DENIES SECOND REQUEST FOR MISTRIAL

The judge in Donald Trump's hush money case on Thursday denied another request from defense lawyers for a mistrial over Stormy Daniels' testimony.

Judge Juan M. Merchan, echoing his denial Tuesday of the defense's initial mistrial motion, said Trump's lawyers had ample opportunities to object to questions that elicited what they said were damaging details about the alleged sexual encounter between the former president and Daniels.

"There were many times, not once or twice, but many times when Ms. Necheles could've objected but didn't," Merchan said.

In particular, the judge said, the defense should've objected to prosecutor Susan Hoffinger's question about whether Trump used a condom, which led to Daniels' response that he hadn't.

"I agree. That should never have come out. That question should never have been asked and that answer should never have been given," Merchan said. "For the life of me, I don't know why Ms. Necheles didn't object."

PROSECUTION SAYS CLAIM DANIELS CHANGED HER STORY IS 'EXTRAORDINARILY UNTRUE'

Prosecutor Joshua Steinglass countered a claim by Donald Trump's defense attorneys that Stormy Daniels changed her story as "extraordinarily untrue," though there may be details "said in one forum and not another." And, he said, the defense lawyers' claim that they couldn't foresee what prosecutors would ask and what Daniels would answer "is just nonsense."

Steinglass said on Thursday that prosecutors have always contended that the details of the alleged 2006 encounter — a two-hour conversation Daniels said she had with Trump in his hotel suite — corroborate her account that they had sex and, therefore, adds to Trump's motivation to silence her.

"If they want to offer testimony that the sex never happened, that's their prerogative," Steinglass said.

Steinglass argued the defense was trying to discredit Daniels' allegations while precluding prosecutors from corroborating the details of the claim.

"They're basically trying to have their cake and eat it too," he said in pushing back against the defense's request for a mistrial.

DEFENSE CALLS DANIELS' TESTIMONY 'SO PREJUDICIAL'

Defense attorneys in Donald Trump's hush money trial on Thursday said Stormy Daniels' testimony went far afield of rules established to protect Trump from being prejudiced by tawdry details, and didn't match the account that was offered up to Cohen when he decided to pay her \$130,000 for the rights to her story.

"That is a power description. That is an extremely prejudicial statement by a witness and there's no evidence that was said to AMI or Mr. Cohen, no evidence it had anything to do with the motive to enter into that NDA," Todd Blanche said, arguing in favor of a mistrial.

"That is so prejudicial and so incredible for a jury to hear," Blanche added, blaming prosecutors for asking questions that elicited intimate details of the alleged sexual encounter, including asking Daniels about whether Trump had used a condom.

"It's a dog whistle for rape," Blanche concluded.

IN BID FOR MISTRIAL, TRUMP'S LAWYERS ARGUE DANIELS' STORY IS INCONSISTENT

In renewing their bid for a mistrial in Donald Trump's hush money case, Trump's lawyers leaned on what they say are discrepancies between Stormy Daniels' testimony and her previous tellings of the alleged sexual encounter, which Trump denies ever happened.

Under defense questioning earlier, Daniels insisted that while some reports on what she said had been incomplete, she hadn't changed her story or fabricated it.

Defense lawyer Todd Blanche also alleged that prosecutors elicited a level of detail from Daniels that

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went far beyond what was agreed to.

"You have jurors who are now hearing about an imbalance of power between a man and a woman, none of that is information that goes to motive in this case," Blanche said, adding: "We didn't know these questions were coming. We didn't know."

Blanche further took issue with Daniels' testimony about the visceral reaction she had when she says she saw Trump sitting on the bed of his hotel suite stripped down to his boxers and T-shirt. Daniels testified that she felt like the room was spinning, blood rushing from her hands and feet, and feeling like she'd blacked out.

Even as she described the power dynamic, though, Daniels told attorneys the sex was consensual.

JUDGE REJECTS REQUEST TO ALTER GAG ORDER

Judge Juan M. Merchan on Thursday rejected the defense's request to modify the existing gag order to allow Donald Trump to publicly respond to Stormy Daniels' testimony.

"My concern is not just with protecting Ms. Daniels, or a witness who has already testified. My concern is with protecting the integrity of these proceedings as a whole," Merchan said.

As the judge described his "very threatening attacks" on potential witnesses, Trump sat forward in his chair, hands clasped in front of him. Once the order was read, Trump leaned back, appearing to exhale.

The gag order bars the former president from speaking publicly about jurors, witnesses and others connected to the hush money case.

PROSECUTION PUSHES BACK ON DEFENSE REQUEST FOR CHANGES TO GAG ORDER

The prosecution in Donald Trump's hush money case pushed back Thursday on a defense request for changes to the gag order that bars the former president from speaking publicly about jurors, witnesses and some others connected to the case.

Prosecutor Christopher Conroy responded that the gag order shouldn't be altered to allow comments about Stormy Daniels because those remarks could have a chilling effect on other witnesses. He added that he's spoken with one future witness who is worried about the consequences of taking the stand.

Trump, Conroy said, goes after "anyone he deems worthy of his venom. He does it selfishly with no concern for the safety of the people he's attacking."

Conroy said he'd had a conversation Wednesday night with a witness whose role was simply to authenticate some records and who was worried about the consequences of testifying.

"Modifying this gag order now would signal to future witnesses that they could be at risk," Conroy argued.

TRUMP'S LAWYERS ASK JUDGE TO LET HIM PUBLICLY RESPOND TO DANIELS' TESTIMONY

Donald Trump's attorneys have asked Judge Juan M. Merchan to alter his gag order so that the former president can "respond publicly to what happened in court over the last day and a half" with Stormy Daniels' testimony.

Defense lawyer Todd Blanche was concerned that Trump is being harmed by unchecked reporting on various claims she made about him on the witness stand.

"He needs an opportunity to respond to the American people and the reasons for the gag order as it relates to Ms. Daniels is over. She's no longer a witness," Blanche said.

Blanche contends "this isn't just the same story that has been going around for the last couple years, it's much different."

Prosecutor Christopher Conroy, meanwhile, accused Trump's defense team of living in an "alternate reality" and said that the gag order shouldn't be altered to allow comments about Daniels because those remarks could have a chilling effect on other.

TESTIMONY CONCLUDES FOR THE DAY AS DEFENSE RENEWS MISTRIAL MOTION

Testimony in Donald Trump's hush money case has concluded for the day.

Madeleine Westerhout's testimony will continue on Friday. The judge is now sending the jury home so that he can attend to several issues the defense plans to raise, including renewing its motion for a mistrial following Stormy Daniels' testimony.

FORMER SECRETARY ON WHY SHE WAS FIRED FROM THE WHITE HOUSE

Madeleine Westerhout wiped tears from her eyes and asked for a moment as prosecutors turned to her

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exit from the White House during her testimony on Thursday.

She said she was fired after divulging private details about the job during a dinner with reporters that she believed was "off the record."

"I am very regretful of my youthful indiscretion," she said. Donald Trump at the time said she was dismissed for saying things about his children.

As she spoke in court, Trump shook his head twice from the defense table.

Westerhout went on to publish a book, "Off the Record," about her time in the White House, in order to "to share with the American people the man that I got to know," she testified. "I don't think he's treated fairly and I wanted to tell that story" she added.

STACKS OF CHECKS WERE SENT TO WHITE HOUSE FOR TRUMP TO SIGN

Earlier Thursday, Trump Organization executive assistant Rebecca Manochio testified about her practice of sending batches of unsigned checks to the White House via FedEx for Donald Trump to sign from his personal account.

Westerhout provided the White House perspective on that arrangement, recounting how Trump would receive packages about twice a month — some containing one check and others with a stack about a half-inch thick. The checks were often attached to invoices stating what the payment was for.

After signing the checks, Westerhout said Trump would give them back to her and she'd sent them back to the Trump Organization using a pre-labeled FedEx envelope.

At times, Westerhout said Trump would sometimes pull aside a check and ask for more information before signing. In those instances, she said she remembered Trump calling the company's then-chief finance chief "Allen Weisselberg or someone else in the Trump Organization to ask for clarification."

Manochio had testified earlier that, to her knowledge, Trump didn't speak to Weisselberg once he became president.

JURORS SEE TRUMP CONTACT LIST, INCLUDING BILL O'REILLY, TOM BRADY AND OTHERS

Jurors in Donald Trump's hush money trial got a look at a redacted contact list that Trump's assistant at his company sent to Madeleine Westerhout, representing people he spoke to frequently or might want to.

It's a who's who of big names, including former Fox News host Bill O'Reilly, tennis player Serena Williams, casino mogul Steve Wynn, football legends Tom Brady and Bill Belichick, and "The Apprentice" producer Mark Burnett.

Their contact details are redacted.

Closer to home, the list included the names of some of Trump's family members, as well as trial figures David Pecker, Michael Cohen and Allen Weisselberg.

Another name on the list, Fox News' Jeanine Pirro, was in attendance at the trial earlier Thursday, watching Stormy Daniels' testimony from an overflow room down the hall.

EX-DIRECTOR OF OVAL OFFICE OPERATIONS TAKES THE STAND

Prosecutors in Donald Trump's hush money trial called Madeleine Westerhout — Trump's personal secretary from 2017 to 2019 and the former director of Oval Office Operations for the Trump White House from February to August 2019 — to the stand Thursday afternoon.

Before going to the White House, Westerhout worked for the Republican National Committee. She was there when Trump's infamous "Access Hollywood" tape was made public weeks before the 2016 election.

She recalled, in testimony, the tape "rattling RNC leadership" and that "there were conversations about how it would be possible to replace him as the candidate if it came to that."

After Trump won the 2016 election, Westerhout and others from the RNC began working frequently in Trump Tower to aid the transition. And late that year, she said, her boss asked whether she had any interest in working right outside the Oval Office.

"I said, 'Yes, I would. That sounds like a really cool job,'" she recalled with a smile.

MANOCHIO CONCLUDES TESTIMONY

Following roughly four minutes of cross-examination after a lunch break Thursday afternoon, Rebecca Manochio finished giving testimony in Donald Trump's hush money trial.

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Manochio, a junior bookkeeper at the Trump Organization at the time Donald Trump was president, was responsible for sending unsigned checks for him to sign at the White House for his personal expenses.

Manochio confirmed previous testimony that Trump was the only person authorized to sign checks for his personal account and that he was not involved in signing any checks for his business because those assets had been put into a revocable trust while he was president. His son Donald Trump Jr. and Allen Weisselberg, then-Trump Organization chief financial officer, had authority to sign checks for the business.

Manochio testified that Trump and Weisselberg would speak at least once a day before Trump embarked on his run for president. After Trump started campaigning and was out of the office more often, the frequency of their contacts decreased, Manochio said. And, to her knowledge, she testified, Trump and Weisselberg didn't speak at all after Trump became president.

DEFENSE TO RENEW CALL FOR A MISTRIAL

Before breaking for lunch, Trump lawyer Todd Blanche told Judge Juan M. Merchan that the defense plans to renew its call for a mistrial in the hush money case based on Stormy Daniels' testimony.

Blanche also said they will seek to prevent former Playboy model Karen McDougal from testifying and that they will make further arguments about the gag order that bars Donald Trump from speaking publicly about jurors, witnesses and others connected to the case.

Merchan said he would send the jury home at 4 p.m. and subsequently take up the defense's arguments.

DANIELS CONCLUDES TESTIMONY

Stormy Daniels concluded her testimony in Donald Trump's hush money trial midday Thursday following the conclusion of cross-examination by the defense and a brief round of redirect questioning from prosecutors.

She has completed her testimony, given over two days in Trump's criminal trial.

As Daniels walked off the stand and out of the courtroom, Trump turned his gaze away from her, appearing to look at a screen in front of him.

DANIELS ACKNOWLEDGES

LEDGES SHE NEVER SPOKE TO TRUMP ABOUT THE HUSH MONEY PAYMENT

Stormy Daniels testified Thursday that she never spoke with Donald Trump about the \$130,000 hush money payment she received from Michael Cohen and had no knowledge of whether Trump was aware of or involved in the transaction.

"You have no personal knowledge about his involvement in that transaction or what he did or didn't do," Trump lawyer Susan Necheles asked.

"Not directly, no," Daniels responded.

Upon further questioning, Daniels noted that she didn't negotiate directly with Cohen, either, but that her lawyer at the time, Keith Davidson did.

Necheles used the questions in the final moments of her cross-examination to underscore that Daniels does not know of any of the allegations underlying Trump's charges in the case, that he falsified his company's records to hide the true nature of reimbursement payments to Cohen.

Necheles asked Daniels if she was aware of what Trump had been indicted for, producing an uncomfortable answer that the lawyer wanted stricken from the record. Her answer: "There's a lot of indictments."

Daniels went on to say that she knew the charges involved business records, but when asked if she knew anything about Trump's business records, she acknowledged: "I know nothing about his business records. No. Why would I?"

JURORS APPEAR RIVETED BY THE BACK-AND-FORTH OF CROSS-EXAMINATION

Amid the tension between Stormy Daniels and defense lawyer Susan Necheles during cross-examination in Donald Trump's hush money trial, the courtroom itself was relatively calm.

There were no audible reactions from the gallery — mostly reporters with one row of public observers — when testimony grew particularly tense Thursday morning. If anything, the drama unfolded somewhat like a Broadway show with Necheles and Daniels playing off each other.

Many jurors viewed the back and forth the way they might watch a tennis match: swiveling their heads between the lawyers' lectern and the witness box with each question and answer. Some jurors scribbled notes, others leaned back in their chairs.

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Trump watched intently.

The rest of the audience watched wide-eyed but respectful of the court's decorum.

DANIELS INSISTS HER STORY HAS NOT CHANGED

Before a morning break in Donald Trump's hush money trial, Stormy Daniels pushed back on suggestions by the defense that her story about their alleged sexual encounter has changed over time.

Daniels testified earlier this week that while she wasn't physically menaced, she felt a "power imbalance" as Trump, in his hotel bedroom, stood between her and the door and propositioned her.

As for whether she felt compelled to have sex with him, she reiterated Thursday that he didn't drug her or physically threaten her.

But, she said, "My own insecurities, in that moment, kept me from saying no."

Trump denies any sexual encounter happened.

Several times, defense lawyer Susan Necheles accused Daniels of altering the details of her story over time, saying at one point: "Your story has completely changed."

Daniels insisted it has not. "You're trying to make me say that it changed, but it hasn't changed at all."

NECHELES HOM

ES IN ON DANIELS' CAREER IN PORNOGRAPHY

Donald Trump's defense attorney zeroed in on Stormy Daniels' career in adult films to suggest that her story about being shocked and frightened by Trump's alleged sexual advances is not believable.

"You've acted and had sex in over 200 porn movies, right?" asked Necheles. "And there are naked men and women having sex, including yourself, in those movies?"

Necheles continued: "But according to you, seeing a man sitting on a bed in a T-shirt and boxers was so upsetting that you got lightheaded, the blood left your hands and feet and you felt like you were going to faint."

Daniels replied that the experience with Trump was different from porn for several reasons — including the fact that Trump was more than twice her age, larger than her and that she was not expecting to find him undressed when she emerged from the bathroom.

"I came out of a bathroom seeing an older man that I wasn't expecting to be there," she said.

TRUMP'S LAWYER TRIES TO POKE HOLES IN DANIELS' TESTIMONY

Defense lawyer Susan Necheles tried to show during cross-examination on Thursday that details from Stormy Daniels' story of meeting Donald Trump in 2006 have changed over time, pointing to a 2011 interview in which she said the two talked "before, during and after" dinner in his hotel room, though she testified earlier this week that they never got any food.

Daniels rebuffed the idea that there was a discrepancy: saying that what she meant was that they talked during dinnertime but that she never said they actually got food, to her frustration, as she's "very food-motivated."

"I've maintained that in every interview — that we never actually ate," she said during an extended exchange on the dinner details, and explained: "Having dinner, at least from where I'm from, doesn't necessarily mean you have to put food in your mouth. You're going to someone's house for dinner, it's dinnertime."

"The details of your story keep changing, right?" Necheles asked at one point.

"No," Daniels said.

DANIELS ADDR

ESSES PARANORMAL EXPERIENCES AND MORE

In one of the hush money trial's odder moments, Stormy Daniels was pressed about her experience dealing with a ghost — which may have just been a marsupial.

Asked by Trump lawyer Susan Necheles about her claim that she lived in a New Orleans home that was "haunted and the spirits attacked you," Daniels launched into an explanation of her possible encounter.

"The house had some very unexplained activity. We brought in experts, people to measure the electromagnetic fields, religious experts, scientists," she said. "A lot of the activity was completely debunked as a giant possum that was under the house."

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The line of questioning appeared aimed at undermining Daniels' credibility while giving Necheles a chance to highlight that Daniels is working on a paranormal investigation show called Spooky Babes.

Necheles then turned pointedly to Daniels' career, asking: "You have a lot of experience in making phony stories about sex appear real?"

"The sex in those films is real, just like the sex in that room," Daniels replied. "The character themes might be different, but the sex is very real. That's why it's pornography, not a B movie."

Regarding her account of having a sexual encounter with Trump — a claim he denies — Daniels said: "If that story was not true I would've written it to be a lot better."

"Because you're a good story writer, right?" Necheles responded.

NECHELES HIGHLIGHTS DANIELS' TRUMP-RELATED MERCHANDISE

Defense lawyer Susan Necheles pressed Stormy Daniels on her social media marketing of merchandise tied to her public persona as a Trump antagonist.

Asked about an "in celebration of new indictments" promotion from last year that offered a gift for new orders, Necheles asked whether the performer wasn't using the circumstances to flog products.

"Not unlike Mr. Trump," Daniels calmly retorted.

Necheles then suggested Daniels was "bragging" by offering a "Stormy Saint of Indictments" candle.

"No, I'm not bragging. I think it's funny that a store made that for me to sell," Daniels said.

And no, she corrected Necheles, she's not making \$40 per candle, but rather about \$7.

DANIELS TO DEFENSE LAWYER: 'YOU'RE PUTTING WORDS IN MY MOUTH'

Several times on Thursday, Stormy Daniels has taken issue with Trump lawyer Susan Necheles' questioning.

Amid questions about the financial arrangements for her documentary, Daniels accused Necheles of "trying to trick me into saying something that's not entirely true."

At another point, Daniels demanded the defense lawyer back up her claim about something she claimed Daniels had said regarding Donald Trump's arrest.

"Show me where I said I'd be instrumental in putting President Trump in jail," the witness said, steady and unflustered.

After Necheles showed Daniels a social media post she'd made that did not reflect those precise words, Daniels replied: "I don't see the 'instrumental' or 'jail.' You're putting words in my mouth."

Trump spent much of the first hour of testimony leaning back in his seat and staring straight ahead, nodding at times as his attorney called jurors' attention to social media posts by Daniels insulting him.

It was a far cry from the visible repulsion he displayed during her initial testimony to prosecutors.

DANIELS UNDERSCORES COMPENSATION SHE HAS AND HAS NOT RECEIVED

During cross-examination Thursday morning, porn actor Stormy Daniels underscored several times that she received no compensation for a "60 Minutes" interview she gave in 2018, relaying her alleged sexual encounter with Donald Trump. But Susan Necheles, the defense lawyer, contended that the publicity from the TV appearance led to other moneymaking opportunities, including a book deal and a strip club tour.

Daniels said she's received \$100,000 and is due another \$25,000 for footage and other rights she provided to the makers of a documentary about her experiences that aired recently on the NBC streaming service Peacock.

Some of the money was used to compensate camera operators who had filmed her before the documentary's producers got involved, she said.

Daniels said she was not paid for any interviews she gave for the documentary.

DEFENSE LAWYER GOES

STORMY THROUGH NDA WITH DANIELS

Trump attorney Susan Necheles ran through the finer points of the nondisclosure agreement that Stormy Daniels had with Michael Cohen, asking Daniels to confirm that she agreed to highlighted portions.

Daniels responds in terse one-word answers, "Yes," adding: "I signed this only based on what my attorneys suggested."

Necheles confronted Daniels with two statements she signed in early 2018 denying that she ever had

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any sexual involvement with Trump or received money to keep quiet. She said her then-lawyer, Keith Davidson, advised her to sign it, and that she was told that Cohen was pressing him to get her to do so.

Necheles noted that by then, Trump wasn't running for election — an apparent effort to buttress the defense's argument that Trump's desire to squelch what he says are false claims about his personal life wasn't related to his political ambitions, but rather to protect his family and reputation.

"I wouldn't know what he wanted to protect," Daniels said.

DANIELS DENIES YELLING AT HER FORMER LAWYER

Stormy Daniels conceded Thursday that she was angry when Michael Cohen was slow to pay her the \$130,000 he'd promised in exchange for her silence about a sexual encounter with Donald Trump, but she denied ever yelling at her then-lawyer Keith Davidson demanding to be paid.

"You were furious, weren't you?" Trump lawyer Susan Necheles asked during cross-examination.

"Yes," Daniels testified.

Necheles then played an audio recording of a phone call in which Davidson told Cohen that if he didn't pay up, the boyfriend of Daniels' manager might go public claiming he'd heard her on the phone screaming at Davidson to settle the case.

Davidson, relaying what the boyfriend might say about Daniels, was heard saying: "If (Trump) loses this election, we all lose all (expletive) leverage. This case is worth zero."

Daniels denied that the third-hand imagined account of what her manager's boyfriend might say bore any resemblance to how she actually interacted with her lawyer at the time.

"I've never yelled at Keith Davidson on the phone," Daniels testified, looking at a transcript of the recording. "This specifically says Gina's boyfriend was going to go out and tell a story."

DEFENSE ACCUSES DANIELS OF TRYING TO PROFIT OFF STORY

Defense attorney Susan Necheles resumed cross-examination of Stormy Daniels on Thursday by pressing her on why she decided to take money to keep silent about her alleged sexual encounter with Donald Trump instead of holding a press conference, as Daniels has said she wanted to do.

"Why didn't you do that?" Necheles asked.

"Because we were running out of time," Daniels said. Did she mean, Necheles asked, that she was running out of time to use the claim to make money? "To get the story out," Daniels countered. The negotiations were happening in the final weeks of the 2016 presidential campaign.

As Daniels was negotiating her non-disclosure agreement with Michael Cohen, she testified, she was also speaking with other journalists, including an editor at Slate as a "backup" plan.

While Daniels said she was most interested in getting her story out and ensuring her family's safety, Necheles accused her of refusing to share the story with reporters because she wouldn't be paid for it.

"The better alternative was for you to get money, right?" Necheles said.

"The better alternative was to get my story protected with a paper trail so that my family didn't get hurt," Daniels replied.

TRUMP WANTS HIS GAG ORDER REMOVED

Donald Trump's lawyers asked New York's mid-level appeals court on Wednesday to expedite a decision on his gag order appeal.

The court did not take immediate action but set deadlines for court filings in the next two weeks. If the court refuses to lift the gag order in Trump's hush money case, his lawyers want permission to take their appeal to the state's high court, called the Court of Appeals.

The gag order bars the former president from speaking publicly about jurors, witnesses and some others in his criminal trial.

THE STORMY DANIELS EFFECT

Over the first few weeks of Donald Trump's hush money trial, the scene outside the courthouse has largely settled into a routine — a few dozen members of the public, a typically small group of demonstrators and the journalists covering the day-to-day developments.

But the arrival of Stormy Daniels seems to have shifted that equilibrium.

With Daniels set to re-take the stand on Thursday, a far larger share of the public has amassed outside

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100 Centre Street, alongside new ranks of media from the U.S. and abroad. A few minutes before 8 a.m., as lines swelled to their longest since the start of the trial, court officers said they had no choice but to turn people away.

Among the members of the public in line was Rose Brennan, a 63-year-old woman wearing a hand puppet meant to resemble Donald Trump. "He has accompanied me on many adventures," she said of the puppet. "Even though I hoped he would have been retired by now."

She said she and the puppet traveled from New Jersey, arriving outside the courthouse at 5:30 a.m. because "I just want to be a witness to history."

A WEEK OF DEVELOPMENTS IN TRUMP'S OTHER CASES

Donald Trump is facing four criminal indictments and a civil lawsuit. You can track all of the cases here.

A Georgia appeals court on Wednesday agreed to review a lower court ruling allowing Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis to continue to prosecute the election interference case she brought against the former president.

On Tuesday, the federal judge in Florida presiding over the classified documents prosecution of Trump has canceled the May 20 trial date, postponing it indefinitely.

TRUMP LEANS INTO THE PAGEANTRY OF VICE PRESIDENTIAL TRYOUTS

As former President Donald Trump remains stuck in the courtroom listening to salacious details of an extramarital sexual encounter he denies, another spectacle is playing out in the background as his vice presidential tryouts get underway.

The dynamic was on full display in Florida at a fundraiser at his Mar-a-Lago club that doubled as a VP audition.

"This weekend, we had 15 people. ... They're all out there campaigning," Trump told Spectrum News 1 Wisconsin on Tuesday. "It might actually be more effective this way because, you know, every one of them thinks they could be chosen, which I guess possibly is so."

For now, the presumptive GOP nominee is happy to revel in the attention as reporters parse his choices and prospective candidates jockey and woo him in an "Apprentice"-style competition.

Technology crushing human creativity?

Apple's new iPad ad has struck a nerve online

By WYATTE GRANTHAM-PHILIPS AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A newly released ad promoting Apple's new iPad Pro has struck quite a nerve online.

The ad, which was released by the tech giant Tuesday, shows a hydraulic press crushing just about every creative instrument artists and consumers have used over the years — from a piano and record player, to piles of paint, books, cameras and relics of arcade games. Resulting from the destruction? A pristine new iPad Pro.

"The most powerful iPad ever is also the thinnest," a narrator says at the end of the commercial.

Apple's intention seems straightforward: Look at all the things this new product can do. But critics have called it tone-deaf — with several marketing experts noting the campaign's execution didn't land.

"I had a really disturbing reaction to the ad," said Americus Reed II, professor of marketing at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. "I understood conceptually what they were trying to do, but ... I think the way it came across is, here is technology crushing the life of that nostalgic sort of joy (from former times)."

The ad also arrives during a time many feel uncertain or fearful about seeing their work or everyday routines "replaced" by technological advances — particularly amid the rapid commercialization of generative artificial intelligence. And watching beloved items get smashed into oblivion doesn't help curb those fears, Reed and others note.

Several celebrities were also among the voices critical of Apple's "Crush!" commercial on social media this week.

"The destruction of the human experience. Courtesy of Silicon Valley," actor Hugh Grant wrote on the

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social media platform X, in a repost of Apple CEO Tim Cook's sharing of the ad.

Some found the ad to be a telling metaphor of the industry today — particularly concerns about big tech negatively impacting creatives. Filmmaker Justine Bateman wrote on X that the commercial "crushes the arts."

Experts added that the commercial marked a notable difference to marketing seen from Apple in the past — which has often taken more positive or uplifting approaches.

"My initial thought was that Apple has become exactly what it never wanted to be," Vann Graves, executive director of the Virginia Commonwealth University's Brandcenter, said.

Graves pointed to Apple's famous 1984 ad introducing the Macintosh computer, which he said focused more on uplifting creativity and thinking outside of the box as a unique individual. In contrast, Graves added, "this (new iPad) commercial says, 'No, we're going to take all the creativity in the world and use a hydraulic press to push it down into one device that everyone uses.'"

In a statement shared with Ad Age on Thursday, Apple apologized for the ad. The outlet also reported that Apple no longer plans to run the spot on TV.

"Creativity is in our DNA at Apple, and it's incredibly important to us to design products that empower creatives all over the world," Tor Myhren, the company's vice president of marketing communications, told Ad Age. "Our goal is to always celebrate the myriad of ways users express themselves and bring their ideas to life through iPad. We missed the mark with this video, and we're sorry."

Cupertino, California-based Apple unveiled its latest generation of iPad Pros and Airs earlier this week in a showcase that lauded new features for both lines. The Pro sports a new thinner design, a new M4 processor for added processing power, slightly upgraded storage and incorporates dual OLED panels for a brighter, crisper display.

Apple is trying to juice demand for iPads after its sales of the tablets plunged 17% from last year during the January-March period. After its 2010 debut helped redefine the tablet market, the iPad has become a minor contributor to Apple's success. It currently accounts for just 6% of the company's sales.

House Speaker Mike Johnson survived a motion to vacate.

Here's why his job is far from safe

By FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Mike Johnson's job isn't safe yet.

In a stunning show of unity in the often divided House, Democrats joined a majority of Republicans on Wednesday to save the GOP speaker from an attempt by fellow Republican Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene to remove him from his post.

But while Democrats in the minority threw the Louisiana congressman a life raft by voting on his side, they made clear they might not do so again. That means the threat for Johnson still lingers as Greene and other lawmakers can at any time call up another motion to oust him.

The episode highlights the increasingly precarious situation for Johnson, who faces the same conservative forces that took down his predecessor, Kevin McCarthy, but with an even smaller majority that has forced him to continuously rely on Democratic support to carry out the most basic functions of legislating. Republicans control the House by the barest of margins, 217-213.

Here's what to know about how the House can remove a speaker and what's ahead for Johnson:

WHAT IS A MOTION TO VACATE?

The current rules of the House allow any lawmaker — Democrat or Republican — to put forward a resolution declaring the speaker's chair vacant. If the House approves the resolution, it has the effect of ousting the speaker from office.

The "motion to vacate" has existed for most of congressional history. But it had never been deployed successfully until last October when a rebel band of Republicans joined with Democrats to oust McCarthy as speaker.

McCarthy's removal came, in part, as the result of the concessions he was forced to make to win the

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speaker's gavel in the first place. Among the concessions was agreeing that a motion to vacate could be triggered by a single member — the threshold that historically has been the norm, but that had been abandoned by Democrats in the majority.

Proponents of allowing a single lawmaker to file the motion said it promotes accountability, noting its long history in the House.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

At any point, a member of the House can introduce a privileged resolution — a designation that gives it priority over other measures — to declare the office of the speaker of the House of Representatives vacant.

Once the motion is introduced, the lawmaker sponsoring it can request a vote on the House floor. Such a request forces House leaders to take action within two legislative days.

But there are procedural motions that members of either party can make to slow or stop the process — and that's exactly what happened when Greene called for a vote Wednesday on removing Johnson.

The No. 2 House Republican, Steve Scalise, immediately made a motion to "table" Greene's resolution, which defeats it if successful. The vote to table was fast and overwhelming, with lawmakers voting 359-43 to defeat her effort and keep Johnson in the job.

WHO IS TRYING TO OUST JOHNSON AND WHY?

The speaker had fought for months to navigate an increasingly fractured Republican conference, which has — in effect — been operating in the majority in name only since January 2023.

Republicans unanimously chose Johnson late last year to replace McCarthy after several candidates for the job failed to gain enough support. His conservative bent was seen as a welcome departure by the most extreme members of his party who had accused McCarthy for years of being too moderate.

But Greene, who became a McCarthy ally late in his tenure, has been skeptical of Johnson's speakership from the beginning. While she criticized her fellow far-right colleagues for toppling McCarthy, she had warned Johnson for months that she would try to remove him in a similar fashion if he were to push ahead with a package to support Ukraine as it battles Russia's invasion.

"He should not bring funding for Ukraine," Greene had told reporters.

But Johnson did just that last month when he advanced a foreign aid package for Ukraine to the floor where it was overwhelmingly approved and signed into law.

Other Republicans are also critical of Johnson, including Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky, who was a co-sponsor of Greene's resolution to oust him.

COULD THERE BE ENOUGH VOTES TO OUST JOHNSON?

It remains to be seen, but the vote Wednesday showed Johnson's job is far from safe.

Without Democratic help, Johnson could have easily been ousted. Eleven Republicans voted to proceed with Greene's effort, more than the number of GOP votes it took to oust McCarthy last fall. Seven Democrats voted present and all but 32 of the others voted with Republicans to block the effort to oust him.

"Our decision to stop Marjorie Taylor Greene from plunging the country into further chaos is rooted in our commitment to solve problems," Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries said after the vote.

Asked what they might do if there were another attempt to oust the speaker, Jeffries said, "Haven't given it a thought."

Some Republicans are frustrated by the threats to Johnson and were dismissive of Greene. Rep. Dusty Johnson, R-S.D., said of those trying to remove the speaker, "They're pretty good at getting attention, but they have not been recognized for their ability to get things done."

He said if they keep pushing to oust the speaker, "I think you can expect more of the same: Failure."

IF JOHNSON IS OUSTED, WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT?

The speaker of the House, under the rules of the chamber, is required to keep a list of individuals who can act as speaker pro tempore in the event a chair is vacated. The list, which is oddly written by the sitting speaker at any given time, remains with the House clerk and would be made public if the speakership were vacant.

The first person on that list would be named speaker pro tempore and their first order of business would be to hold an election for a new speaker. The House then would vote as many times as it took to elect

a speaker.

In the case of McCarthy, the role of speaker pro tem fell to his close confidant Rep. Patrick McHenry, R-N.C., the chair of the House Financial Services Committee. He was in the role for three weeks, until Johnson's election.

Torchbearers in Marseille kick off the Olympic flame's journey across France

By SYLVIE CORBET Associated Press

MARSEILLE, France (AP) — Joyful crowds gathered along the streets of France's southern port of Marseille on Thursday to see torchbearers carrying the Olympic flame through the city's most emblematic sites, a day after it arrived on a majestic three-mast ship for a welcoming ceremony.

It was the first leg of an 11-week journey across the country for the torch, which will be carried by about 10,000 bearers as it passes through more than 450 towns until the Games' opening ceremony in Paris on July 26.

Former soccer player Basile Boli, who played with the Marseille team in the 1990s, kicked off Thursday's relay from the Notre Dame de la Garde basilica that overlooks Marseille and the Mediterranean.

"I'm very proud," Boli said. "You feel like you're on top of the world, because with an Olympic flame there's a special fervor. ... It's the symbol of sport!"

Basketball player Tony Parker later took his turn in the relay, praising "a great honor." On a nearby crowded beach, swimmers and sunbathers cheered the torch bearers as the flame passed.

"The enthusiasm of Marseille for the flame is phenomenal," Maurice Genevois, a local resident, said. "Honestly, I have rarely seen such a celebration."

Magali Évrard, who came from the town of Martigues, in Marseille's region, said "it's been so long since we started talking about this and now we're in it!"

"We are on the road to Paris. We can't wait, it's great," she added.

A fencing champion, a skateboarder, a Michelin-starred chef and a comedian were also chosen to carry the flame on Thursday.

"Let's go for a fantastic celebration," said Tony Estanguet, president of the Paris Olympics organizing committee. "The Games are back in our country. ... Let's share this fantastic moment of celebration with millions of people in the country."

Participants were scheduled to run all day past landmarks in the city to bring the torch to the roof of the famed Stade Vélodrome, home to Marseille's passionate soccer fans. Ivory Coast's Didier Drogba, a former star player for the Marseille club, was the last torchbearer of the day and lit the Olympic cauldron just outside the stadium.

Sports Minister Amélie Oudéa-Castéra said "it's fantastic to give that sense of pride to the French people and to show to the whole world what we're capable to achieve."

"We're going to give happiness to the whole world," she added.

Torchbearers included Ukrainian gymnast Mariia Vysochanska, who won two gold medals at the 2020 European Championships and competed at the Olympic Games in Tokyo.

Her inclusion was an expression of solidarity with Ukraine as well as a symbolic gesture to mark Europe Day, which falls on May 9 each year. Vysochanska led a group of 27 other athletes who represent all European Union member states.

"It's a way to really celebrate Europe, its values and also to demonstrate our attachment to the European sport model," Oudéa-Castéra said. Ukraine received the green light last year to start accelerated talks on joining the EU.

"(Ukrainians) face that terrible war of aggression, and we want to really express that we support them the best we can," she added. "This is unity. This is hope. This is solidarity. And we want their victory."

Marseille on Wednesday celebrated with great fanfare the flame's arrival, with more than 230,000 people attending the ceremony in the Old Port, according to the city's mayor, Benoît Payan.

During the Games, the sailing competition and some soccer matches will be held in Marseille.

Biden administration will seek partial end to special court oversight of child migrants

By ELLIOT SPAGAT Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — The Biden administration will seek to partially end the 27-year-old court supervision of how the federal government cares for child migrants traveling alone, shortly after producing its own list of safeguards against mistreatment, an attorney involved in the case says.

The Justice Department has told opposing attorneys it will ask a federal judge on Friday to terminate the so-called Flores agreement at the U.S. Health and Human Services Department, which takes custody of unaccompanied children within 72 hours of arrest by the Border Patrol, according to Leecia Welch, deputy litigation director at Children's Rights, which represents children in the case.

The landmark settlement — named for a child immigrant from El Salvador, Jenny Flores — would remain in effect at the Border Patrol and its parent agency, the Department of Homeland Security, creating what Welch called a "piecemeal" dismantling. Attorneys for unaccompanied children will oppose the move, which would be subject to approval by U.S. District Judge Dolly Gee in Los Angeles.

The Justice Department declined to comment. Health and Human Services had no immediate comment.

Flores is a policy cornerstone, forcing children to be quickly released to family in the U.S. and setting standards at licensed shelters, including for food, drinking water, adult supervision, emergency medical services, toilets, sinks, temperature control and ventilation. It grew out of widespread allegations of mistreatment in the 1980s.

The move has the potential to strain President Joe Biden's already rocky relationship with immigration advocates as the Democratic leader confronts an unprecedented surge in border crossings in an election year. Border arrests have topped 2 million in each of the last two budget years, including nearly 300,000 unaccompanied children.

Biden has tacked toward heavier enforcement as Republicans attack his handling of the border. His administration plans another rule aimed at denying more asylum claims during initial screenings, a potential prelude to actions for a broader border crackdown.

The bid to partially undo Flores would come less than three weeks after Health and Human Services published a rule establishing safeguards for child custody. Secretary Xavier Becerra said the rule, effective July 1, will set "clear standards for the care and treatment of unaccompanied (migrant) children."

Welch said ending special oversight can prevent attorneys for children from inspecting Health and Human Services shelters and interviewing children in the department's care.

"My only guess for why they would want to do this now is because Flores counsel is a thorn in their side," Welch said. "We can go into (their) facilities whenever we want, we can talk to the young people there, and when they're out of compliance we can file motions to enforce, and they don't like that."

Keeping court oversight for the Homeland Security Department would keep critical parts of Flores intact, including a 20-day limit on the Border Patrol holding unaccompanied children and parents traveling with a child. Border Patrol holding facilities have experienced extreme overcrowding as recently as 2021, and the Biden administration has steadfastly resisted calls to detain children and families beyond 72 hours.

When Flores took effect in 1997, caring for child migrants was within the full domain of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, which disbanded six years later with the creation of Homeland Security. Since 2003, Health and Human Services has taken custody of unaccompanied children within 72 hours of arrest. The split became a nightmare in 2018 when the Trump administration separated thousands of children from their parents at the border, and computers for the two departments weren't properly linked to quickly reunite them.

A surge of unaccompanied children at the border in 2014 brought heightened scrutiny of the federal government, and elevated flows continue today. Arrests of children traveling alone at the Mexican border topped 130,000 last year. Health and Human Services releases the vast majority of unaccompanied children to close relatives while immigration judges weigh their futures.

In 2020, an appeals court granted the Trump administration's bid to end Flores for Health and Human

Services but blocked its attempt to lift oversight at Homeland Security. The change never took effect.

"It was kind of quiet for a while and then we started hearing rumblings that they were going to forge ahead with their own set of regulations that were going to be bigger and better and consistent with Flores," Welch said.

Health and Human Services released a proposal in October that generated more than 70,000 public comments. It published a final version last month.

The department said last month that the rule "implements and goes beyond" Flores. Among other things, it creates an independent ombudsman's office, establishes minimum standards at temporary overflow shelters, and formalizes advances in screening protocols for releasing children to families and sponsors and for legal services.

Welch said the new rule has "a lot of positives" but doesn't address unlicensed shelters contracted by Health and Human Services, which she considers the most critical piece of Flores. In 2021, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott revoked state licenses of facilities that care for migrant children.

Holy Year or holy mess, Vatican and Rome begin dash to 2025 Jubilee with papal bull, construction

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — The Vatican crossed a key milestone Thursday in the runup to its 2025 Jubilee with the promulgation of the official decree establishing the Holy Year. It's a once-every-quarter-century event that is expected to bring some 32 million pilgrims to Rome and has already brought months of headaches to Romans.

Pope Francis presided over a ceremony in the atrium of St. Peter's Basilica for the reading of the papal bull, or official edict, that laid out his vision for a year of hope: He asked for gestures of solidarity for the poor, prisoners, migrants and Mother Nature.

"Hope is needed by God's creation, gravely damaged and disfigured by human selfishness," Francis said in a vigil service afterward. "Hope is needed by those peoples and nations who look to the future with anxiety and fear."

The pomp-filled event, attended by cardinals, bishops and ordinary faithful, kicked off the final seven-month dash of preparations and public works projects to be completed by Dec. 24, when Francis opens the basilica's Holy Door and formally inaugurates the Jubilee.

In a novelty, Francis announced in the papal bull that he would also open a Holy Door in a prison "as a sign inviting prisoners to look to the future with hope and a renewed sense of confidence."

For the Vatican, the Holy Year is a centuries-old tradition of the faithful making pilgrimages to Rome to visit the tombs of Saints Peter and Paul, and receiving indulgences for the forgiveness of their sins in the process. For the city of Rome, it's a chance to take advantage of some 4 billion euros (\$4.3 billion) in public funds to carry out long-delayed projects to lift the city out of years of decay and neglect.

"In a beautiful city, you live better," said the Vatican's Jubilee point-person, Archbishop Renato Fisichella, who himself is not indifferent to the added bonus of Jubilee funding. "Rome will become an even more beautiful city, because it will be ever more at the service of its people, pilgrims and tourists who will come."

Pope Boniface VIII declared the first Holy Year in 1300, and now they are held every 25 years. While Francis called an interim one devoted to mercy in 2015, the 2025 edition is the first big one since St. John Paul II's 2000 Jubilee, when he ushered the Catholic Church into the third millennium.

As occurred in the runup to 2000, pre-Jubilee public works projects have overwhelmed Rome, with flood-lit construction sites operating around the clock, entire swaths of central boulevards rerouted and traffic snarling the city's already clogged streets.

The Tiber riverfront for much of the city center is now off limits as work crews create new parks. Piazzas are being repaved, bike paths charted and 5G cells built. The aim is to bring the Eternal City up to par with other European capitals and take advantage of the 1.3 billion euros (\$1.4 billion) in special Jubilee funding

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and some 3 billion euros (\$3.2 billion) more in other public and post-pandemic EU funds that are available.

"It's really putting our patience to the test," said Tiziana Cafini, who operates a tobacco shop near the Pantheon and says she has taken to walking to work rather than riding a bus into the city center because it gets stuck in traffic. "And it's not just in the center. There are an infinite number of construction sites all around Rome."

Though she knows the discomfort will be worth it in the end, the end is still pretty far off. In addition to the Jubilee construction, there's a longer-term, separate project to extend Rome's Metro C subway line into Rome's historic center which has encountered years of delays thanks to archaeological excavations of ancient Roman ruins that must be completed first.

For the next four years at least, central Piazza Venezia and its Imperial Forum-flanked boulevard to the Colosseum are scheduled to be congested and blighted by giant, 14-meter (yard) high green silos that are needed for the subway drilling operation.

"We're upset, but we're Romans, we'll make do," Cafini said.

Rome Mayor Roberto Gualtieri said recently he was satisfied with the pace of the Jubilee works so far, noting that they got off to a months-delayed start due to the 2022 collapse of Premier Mario Dragi's government.

But Gualtieri promised they would be completed on time. And in a nod to Romans and tourists who have suffered from the traffic chaos and acute shortage of taxis already, he promised that an extra 1,000 taxi licenses had been approved and would be in use by December.

Yet as of late last month, only two of the 231 city projects had been completed; 57 were under way and another 44 were expected to be started by the end of May, Gualtieri told reporters. Another 18 are up for bids, seven have been assigned, 90 are planned. Thirteen have been canceled.

"We have recovered a lot from the initial delay," Gualtieri told the foreign press association, adding that he expected the "essential" projects to be completed on time. Other projects were always planned to take longer than the Jubilee but were lumped into the overall project to take advantage of the accelerated timeframe.

The most significant project, and one that has caused the greatest traffic disruption to date, is a new Vatican-area piazza and pedestrian zone connecting Castel St. Angelo with the Via della Conciliazione boulevard that leads to St. Peter's Square.

Previously, a major thoroughfare divided the two landmarks, causing an unsightly and pedestrian-unfriendly barrier.

The new works call for a tunnel to divert the oncoming traffic underneath the new pedestrian piazza. But that project required re-routing and replacing a huge underground sewage system first, which has only recently been completed. Now crews are working through the night to try to complete the tunnel in time.

The Philadelphia Phillies are hot, loose and loving life as one of the best teams in baseball

By DAN GELSTON AP Sports Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The Phillies are hot, that much is certain, with Bryce Harper and Zack Wheeler powering and pitching the team to the best record in baseball and a recent home winning streak that nearly matched the franchise record.

Hot, yes. But sexy, too?

Well, no team has been quite as alluring to the packed crowds at Citizens Bank Park as the Phillies. Just ask them.

Brandon Marsh, the outfielder with the Rip Van Winkle whiskers, was mic'd up for an ESPN Sunday night game when he was relayed a fan question from social media by the broadcast booth: If you had to start a rock band, who would you take from the team and what's the band name?

Marsh rattled off catcher Garrett Stubbs, slugger Kyle Schwarber and outfielder Cristian Pache as his

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fellow band members, then as he hustled off the field after making a catch, blurted out the name that has since launched a blossoming business of the catchphrase T-shirts.

"Stay Loose and Sexy, baby," Marsh said.

Marsh said he has his own band shirt — which he has yet to reveal — and the Phillies have reveled this week in the attention the fictional name has stirred.

Stubbs — the backup catcher/clubhouse DJ/ Bud box hat fashionista — wants in as guitarist and backup singer. Of note, he does not play guitar or sing much more than on team karaoke nights.

"Pretty electric from Marshy," Stubbs said.

Taking center stage as an MLB headline act, the Phillies are about as plugged in to playing good baseball as a team can be these days. Just take a look at their greatest hits — such as Harper's three-run homer in a Monday win over San Francisco. For an encore? Harper smashed a grand slam the next night against Toronto.

"As a team, any given night, everyone's going to do their job," Harper said. "We're not really worried about our numbers as individuals. We're just going out there trying to win the games we need to. No matter who comes through at the right time or who comes through each night."

Want consistent hitting? Third baseman Alec Bohm this week just wrapped up an 18-game hitting streak. Perfect pitching? Ranger Suárez — with a 6-0 record and 1.77 ERA — takes the mound Friday for the start of a three-game series in Miami.

"There won't be many people, probably, at the ballpark," manager Rob Thomson said. "You've got to internally create your own energy. We have a good group of people that can do that. Stubbs, Marsh, they tend to bring that every day."

Some of the super stats tell the story.

The Phillies are 26-12 and their .684 winning percentage was tops in baseball entering Thursday's games.

They won 11 straight home games before Wednesday's loss to Toronto, one shy of matching the Citizens Bank Park record. They have won 11 of 13 games overall and 26 of their last 36. Harper has hit three times this season with the bases loaded — and has two grand slams. They are 22-1 when leading after six innings and 23-0 when leading after the eighth.

Philadelphia's biggest accomplishment, though, just might be this: They are leading — yes, leading — the NL East by two games over the Atlanta Braves.

The Phillies ended each of the last two seasons among baseball's best. Led by a homer-happy, bat-spiking offense, the Phillies lost the 2022 World Series in six games to the Houston Astros. Last season, the Phillies took a 3-2 series lead into Game 6 of the NL Championship Series before losing the final two games at home to the Arizona Diamondbacks and bowed out.

What's not forgotten in Philly is the long climb it took for the Phillies to reach October.

They were 25-30 at the end of last May. The Phillies opened 2022 at 22-29 when they fired manager Joe Girardi and promoted Thomson. Slow starts and sizzling Junes — 18-8 last year; 19-8 in 2022 — had become the norm for the Phillies.

This year's team does have unfinished business in the postseason. The first World Series championship since 2008 remains the ultimate goal. But a great wire-to-wire regular season and even the division title that has eluded them is on the table this year.

Anchored by Wheeler and Suárez, the Phillies boast the best rotation in baseball. One hiccup is two-time All-Star shortstop Trea Turner will miss at least six weeks with a strained left hamstring. Turner had started all 30 games this season and was hitting .343 with two homers, 10 doubles, nine RBIs and 10 stolen bases. Without him, the Phillies are still 4-1.

"I think what happened the last two years at the end is really motivating for this group," Thomson said. "It's not just Bryce that's competitive. I think the entire room is competitive. They feed off of each other that way. These guys, they come to play every day. They are tough. And they have fun at the same time. It's just a really good group, a special group."

On the stat sheet, the Phillies are better than those '22 and '23 teams.

That won't matter much come October. But if Harper again goes on a late-season tear and Wheeler keeps shutting teams down, the Phillies are primed to make another World Series run.

Well, they can just as long as they remember to stay loose and sexy, baby.

In new memoir, Tom Selleck looks back at the hard years that made him a star in 'Magnum, P.I.'

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Tom Selleck starts his memoir in the middle of a car crash. He is 17 and in the passenger seat when he and two friends go airborne in his mom's red Chevy Corvair, tumbling off Mulholland Drive in Los Angeles. Everyone would be eventually fine, but it's a harrowing moment and a unique way to kick off a look back.

"That's an unusual way to start," the "Magnum, P.I." and "Blue Bloods" star admits in an interview. "It seemed like the perfect way to go back a little bit and talk about my upbringing through the bad accident and the ramifications."

"You Never Know" takes readers through Selleck's years at the University of Southern California, in the Army, being bachelor No. 2 on "The Dating Game" and small roles and commercials before earning an Emmy and lasting fame as Thomas Magnum.

"I didn't have one of those headline-grabbing lives," the 79-year-old actor tells The Associated Press. "The only way I could make the book entertaining — and I think my primary job and goal in this book is to entertain — was to get into these stories in a way that the reader got inside my head."

Selleck spent four years writing the book longhand on yellow legal pads, quoting from George Will and Raymond Chandler along the way. He would write in the afternoon and read what he'd written to his wife at dinner.

The self-portrait that emerges is of an actor who put his head down and worked at his craft — he did six unsold pilots and his first big movie was in the unfortunate "Daughters of Satan" — until hitting the big time in his mid-30s.

"If Selleck has one thing to sell its authenticity," says Ellis Henican, Selleck's co-writer. "He is a guy who knows who he is. He has managed to make a very successful career in a rough business over many decades by finding a way to be himself."

Selleck says he had no intentions of writing a tell-all or sharing salacious details of his life, though he does reveal details about his secret marriage to his second wife, Jillie Mack, who he first spotted onstage in "Cats." (Yes, he fell in love with Rumpelstiltskin.)

"There's plenty of stuff I have not talked about and there's plenty of stuff that everybody else has talked about and it isn't really accurate," he says.

Readers will learn that Selleck — known for his 6-foot-4 matinee-idol looks and build, sense of humor and effortless style — was often racked by insecurity and doubts, writing, "That critic on your shoulder is a formidable opponent."

"I wanted to speak the language of our business to young actors," he says. "It's not an easy road. The product you're selling — when somebody says no, which is 99% of the time — is you."

Famously, his shooting schedule for "Magnum, P.I." forced him to decline an offer to play Indiana Jones in "Raiders of the Lost Ark," a part which went to Harrison Ford. A Hollywood strike actually made it possible to do both, but Selleck is at peace, writing "my only regret was that the what-if was there from time to time."

The role of Magnum — a Vietnam war veteran-turned easygoing detective who zipped around Hawaii in a red Ferrari — aired from 1980-1988.

Selleck earned an Emmy in 1984 for the episode "Home from the Sea," in which Magnum treads water alone in the Pacific Ocean until he is rescued, talking to figures in his past. "I made it, Dad. Why didn't you?" the character deliriously asks his father, who was shot down over Korea in 1951. He was thrust into

hosting the Emmys on the year he won one.

"A part of me was still in host mode. I grabbed my Emmy and ran across the stage to my host podium. I put down my Emmy and looked out at the applauding audience for the first time. When I did, I gotta say, the applause grew louder and stayed that way for quite a bit longer than I expected," he writes.

Selleck bet on himself throughout his career, turning down a steady gig on "Young and the Restless" and showing up for work on the 1979 TV miniseries "The Sacketts" even though the director made a point of saying he didn't want him.

"I'm most proud that I, as a person, was willing to take risks. They didn't always pay off, but many times they did," he says. "Risk is the price you pay for opportunity itself."

Portraits of other stars also make appearances, like Carol Burnett, Princess Diana and Frank Sinatra, whose last acting job was on "Magnum, P.I." and who showed off his temper as well as his acting chops while navigating a colostomy bag.

Fans of "Blue Bloods" have to wait for the last few pages to discover that Selleck initially fought for it to be a character-driven show and not a procedural, as the pilot had been. He won and the show is in its 14th season. He writes "I can't be that lucky twice."

Selleck writes that he approached his career as a bricklayer, making sure each role was done with the highest quality and then moving on to the next. If that meant pushing back on scripts or budgets, so be it.

"Just showing up and getting a paycheck wasn't my idea of the work," he says. "I tried to always do it in a businesslike way. You know, not throw tantrums and throw scripts against the wall."

Guns are being stolen from cars at triple the rate they were 10 years ago, a report finds

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The rate of guns stolen from cars in the U.S. has tripled over the last decade, making them the largest source of stolen guns in the country, an analysis of FBI data by the gun safety group Everytown found.

The rate of stolen guns from cars climbed nearly every year and spiked during the coronavirus pandemic along with a major surge in weapons purchases in the U.S., according to the report, which analyzes FBI data from 337 cities in 44 states and was provided to The Associated Press.

The stolen weapons have, in some cases, turned up at crime scenes. In July 2021, a gun taken from an unlocked car in Riverside, Florida, was used to kill a 27-year-old Coast Guard member as she tried to stop a car burglary in her neighborhood.

The alarming trend underscores the need for Americans to safely secure their firearms to prevent them from getting into the hands of dangerous people, said Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Director Steve Dettelbach, whose agency has separately found links between stolen guns and violent crimes.

"People don't go to a mall and steal a firearm from a locked car to go hunting. Those guns are going straight to the street," said Dettelbach, whose agency was not involved in the report. "They're going to violent people who can't pass a background check. They're going to gangs. They're going to drug dealers, and they're going to hurt and kill the people who live in the next town, the next county or the next state."

Nearly 112,000 guns were reported stolen in 2022, and just over half of those were from cars — most often when they were parked in driveways or outside people's homes, the Everytown report found. That's up from about one-quarter of all thefts in 2013, when homes were the leading spot for firearm thefts, the report says.

Stolen guns have also been linked to tragic accidents, such as when a 14-year-old boy in St. Petersburg, Florida, killed his 11-year-old brother after finding in an alley a gun that had been stolen from an unlocked car a few days before.

At least one firearm was stolen from a car every nine minutes on average in 2022, the most recent year for which data was available. That's almost certainly an undercount, though, since there's no federal law

requiring people to report stolen guns and only one-third of states require a report.

"Every gun stolen from a car increases the chances it'll be used in a violent crime," said Sarah Burd-Sharp, senior director of research at Everytown, which advocates for gun control policies. It's unclear what's driving the trend. The report found higher theft rates in states with looser gun laws, which also tend to have higher rates of gun ownership.

The report analyzed crime data from the FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System, which includes details about what was stolen and where it came from. Guns stolen from cars bucked car theft trends overall — the rate of other things stolen from cars has dropped 11% over the last 10 years, even as the rate of gun thefts from cars grew 200%, Everytown found in its analysis of FBI data.

In Savannah, Georgia, city leaders last month passed an ordinance requiring people to secure firearms left inside cars after seeing more than 200 guns stolen from unlocked cars in a year. The measure is facing pushback from the state's attorney general.

The ATF has separately said that theft is a significant source of guns that end up in the hands of criminals. More than 1 million guns were reported stolen between 2017 and 2021, the agency found in a sweeping report on crime guns released last year. And the vast majority of gun thefts are from individuals.

The agency is prohibited by law from publicly releasing detailed information about where stolen guns end up. The information can, however, be shared with police investigating a crime.

Trump-affiliated group releases new national security book outlining possible second-term approach

By LYNN BERRY, DIDI TANG, JILL COLVIN and ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Making future military aid to Ukraine contingent on the country participating in peace talks with Russia. Banning Chinese nationals from buying property within a 50-mile radius of U.S. government buildings. Filling the national security sector with acolytes of Donald Trump.

One of several groups trying to lay the groundwork for a second Trump administration if the former Republican president wins in November is out with a new policy book that aims to articulate an "America First" national security agenda.

The book, shared with The Associated Press before its release Thursday, is the latest effort from the America First Policy Institute. Like the Heritage Foundation's "Project 2025," the group is seeking to help Trump avoid the mistakes of 2016, when he entered the White House largely unprepared.

Beyond its policy efforts, the institute's transition project has been working to draft dozens of executive orders and developing a training program for future political appointees. Heritage has been building an extensive personnel database and offering its own policy manuals.

Both groups stress they are independent from Trump's campaign, which has repeatedly tried to distance itself from such efforts, insisting that the only Trump-backed policies are those the candidate articulates himself.

Still Fred Fleitz, the book's editor, noted that he and retired Lt. Gen. Keith Kellogg, who served for a time as Trump's acting national security adviser and wrote several of the chapters, have been in frequent touch with the former president, soliciting feedback and discussing topics such as Ukraine at length.

"We hope this is where he is. We're not speaking for him, but I think he will approve," said Fleitz, who formerly served as the National Security Council's chief of staff.

He said he hopes the book will serve as "a guidebook that will be an intellectual foundation for the America First approach" to national security "that's easy to use."

"It's a grand strategy," added Kellogg. "You don't start with the policies first. You start with the strategies first. And that's what we've done."

The group casts the current trajectory of U.S. national security as a failure, thanks to a foreign policy establishment it accuses of having embraced an interventionist and "globalist" approach at the expense of America's national interests.

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While short on specifics, the book offers some guideposts to how a future Trump administration could approach foreign policy issues such as Russia's war against Ukraine. Trump has said, that if elected, he would solve the conflict before Inauguration Day in January, but has declined to say how.

The book's chapter on the war spends more time discussing how the conflict unfolded than how to end it. But it says the U.S. should make future military aid contingent on Ukraine participating in peace talks with Russia.

It predicts the Ukrainian army will likely lose ground over time and advises against the U.S. continuing "to send arms to a stalemate that Ukraine will eventually find difficult to win." But once there is a peace agreement, it says the U.S. would continue to arm Ukraine as a deterrent to Russia.

The authors seem to endorse a framework in which Ukraine "would not be asked to relinquish the goal of regaining all its territory" but would agree to diplomacy "with the understanding that this would require a future diplomatic breakthrough which probably will not occur before (Russian President Vladimir) Putin leaves office."

It acknowledges that Ukrainians "will have trouble accepting a negotiated peace that does not give back all of their territory or, at least for now, hold Russia responsible for the carnage it inflicted on Ukraine. Their supporters will also. But as Donald Trump said at the CNN town hall in 2023, 'I want everyone to stop dying.' That's our view, too. It is a good first step."

The book blames Democratic President Joe Biden for the war and repeats Trump's claim that Putin never would have invaded if Trump had been in office. Its main argument in defense of that claim is that Putin saw Trump as strong and decisive. In fact, Trump cozied up to the Russian leader and was reluctant to challenge him.

The bulk of the chapter is spent laying out an at times erroneous timeline of Biden's handling of the war.

Going forward, it suggests Putin could be persuaded to join peace talks if Biden and other NATO leaders offer to put off NATO membership for Ukraine for an extended period. It suggests that the U.S. instead establish a "long-term security architecture for Ukraine's defense that focuses on bilateral security defense." It provides no explanation of what this would entail. It also calls for placing levies on Russian energy sales to pay for reconstruction in Ukraine.

The book is critical of Trump's transition efforts in 2016, bemoaning a broad lack of preparation before Trump took office.

"The tumultuous transition of 2016/2017 did not serve President Trump and the nation well and slowed the advancement and implementation of his agenda," the authors wrote. For instance, they note that before the election, Democrat Hillary Clinton's transition team had submitted more than 1,000 names for future security clearance. Trump's team submitted just 25.

The group says it has identified roughly 1,200 national security-related positions that the next administration will need to fill and urges it to be ready on Day 1 with Trump loyalists who adhere to the "America First" approach.

"It's not about retaliating against people or trying to politicize government positions. It's about making sure government workers do their job and keep politics out of their work," Fleitz said.

The book describes China as the nation's most pressing national security threat, eager to displace the U.S. as the world's premier power. It proposes a hawkish policy that builds on approaches from both the Trump years and the Biden administration with the goal of making Beijing's policies "largely irrelevant to American life."

It elevates economic concerns with China to those of national security and proposes a reciprocal approach that would deny Beijing access to U.S. markets in the same way American companies have been denied in China.

The book also recommends more rigorous screening of cyber and tech companies owned by U.S. adversaries, especially China, to make sure they are not collecting sensitive information. It also recommends that Chinese nationals be banned from buying property within a 50-mile radius of any U.S. government property.

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It calls for visa restrictions on Chinese students wishing to study in the United States and for the banning of TikTok and other Chinese apps out of concerns for data privacy. Trump, however, has spoken out against a law that would force TikTok's sale or block U.S. access.

The analysts' views of what an "America First" policy looks like often reflect the writers' personal focuses. For Ellie Cohan, a former Trump deputy State Department envoy charged with monitoring and combating antisemitism, "America First" looks a lot like a shopping list for the Israeli military.

The U.S. should rush Israel a squadron of "25 Lockheed Martin F-35s, one squadron of Boeing's F-15 EX, and a squadron of Apache E attack helicopters," Cohan wrote.

The U.S. should give some of its billions of dollars in military funding to Israel in Israeli currency so Israel can spend it at home, and Washington should push Arab states to foot the bill for the rebuilding of Gaza and accept Israel's shelving any political talks with the Palestinians pending an indefinite period of compulsory deradicalization for the Palestinian people, she wrote.

Today in History: May 10

Nazis invade Netherlands, Belgium and France

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Friday, May 10, the 131st day of 2024. There are 235 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 10, 1940, during World War II, German forces began invading the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Belgium and France. The same day, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain resigned, and Winston Churchill formed a new government.

On this date:

In 1775, Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys, along with Col. Benedict Arnold, captured the British-held fortress at Ticonderoga, New York.

In 1818, American patriot Paul Revere, 83, died in Boston.

In 1865, Confederate President Jefferson Davis was captured by Union forces in Irwinville, Georgia.

In 1869, a golden spike was driven in Promontory, Utah, marking the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in the United States.

In 1924, J. Edgar Hoover was named acting director of the Bureau of Investigation (later known as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or FBI).

In 1933, the Nazis staged massive public book burnings in Germany.

In 1941, Adolf Hitler's deputy, Rudolf Hess, parachuted into Scotland on what he claimed was a peace mission. (Hess ended up serving a life sentence at Spandau Prison until 1987, when he apparently committed suicide at age 93.)

In 1994, the state of Illinois executed serial killer John Wayne Gacy, 52, for the murders of 33 young men and boys.

In 1995, 104 miners were killed in an elevator accident in Orkney, South Africa.

In 2002, a tense 39-day-old standoff between Israeli troops and Palestinian gunmen at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem ended with 13 suspected militants flown into European exile and 26 released into the Gaza Strip.

In 2013, U.S. government scientists said worldwide levels of carbon dioxide, the chief greenhouse gas blamed for global warming, had hit a milestone, reaching an amount never before encountered by humans.

In 2014, Michael Sam was picked by the St. Louis Rams in the seventh round of the NFL draft, becoming the first openly gay player drafted by a pro football team.

In 2022, Russia pummeled the vital Ukrainian port of Odesa in an apparent effort to disrupt supply lines and Western weapons shipments critical to the defense of the capital, Kyiv.

In 2023, Rep. George Santos, the New York Republican infamous for fabricating his life story, was indicted on charges that he duped donors, stole from his campaign and lied to Congress about being a millionaire.

Groton Daily Independent

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Today's Birthdays: Author Barbara Taylor Bradford is 91. Actor David Clennon is 81. Writer-producer-director Jim Abrahams is 80. Singer Donovan is 78. Singer-songwriter Graham Gouldman (10cc) is 78. Singer Dave Mason is 78. Sports anchor Chris Berman is 69. Actor Bruce Penhall is 67. Former Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., is 66. Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith, R-Miss., is 65. Actor Victoria Rowell is 65. Rock singer Bono (BAH'-noh) (U2) is 64. Former Sen. Dean Heller, R-Nev., is 64. Rock musician Danny Carey (Tool) is 63. Actor Darryl M. Bell is 61. Playwright Suzan-Lori Parks is 61. Model Linda Evangelista is 59. Rapper Young MC is 57. Actor Erik Palladino is 56. Rock singer Richard Patrick (Filter) is 56. Actor Lenny Venito is 55. Actor Dallas Roberts is 54. Actor Leslie Stefanson is 53. Actor-singer Todd Lowe is 52. Actor Andrea Anders is 49. Race car driver Helio Castroneves is 49. Rock musician Jesse Vest is 47. Actor Kenan Thompson is 46. Actor Odette Annable is 39. Actor Lindsey Shaw is 35. Actor Lauren Potter is 34. Olympic gold medal swimmer Missy Franklin is 29.