

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 1 of 87

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- SD News Watch: South Dakota bucks trend of people waiting to marry](#)
- [2- Manhart Ad](#)
- [3- Christopher Reder Ad](#)
- [4- Witte Exteriors Ad](#)
- [5- Adult Mosquito Control conducted last night](#)
- [6- Harry Implement Ad](#)
- [6- Groton Locke Electric at Merchants today](#)
- [7- Sunday Extras](#)
- [25- Gov. Noem's Weekly Column](#)
- [26- Sen. Thune's Weekly Column](#)
- [27- Rep. Johnson's Weekly Column](#)
- [28- Rev. Snyder's Column](#)
- [30- EarthTalk - Attribution Science](#)
- [31- SD SearchLight: Republican factions fighting for control of the party in Tuesday's primary election](#)
- [36- Weather Pages](#)
- [42- Daily Devotional](#)
- [43- Subscription Form](#)
- [44- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [45- News from the Associated Press](#)

Sunday, June 2

Junior Legion at Mobridge 5:30 p.m. (2)
Groton Locke Electric at Northville Merchants, 5 p.m.
United Methodist: Worship with communion, at Conde at 8:30 a.m., at Groton at 10:30 a.m., coffee hour at 9:30 a.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion at 9 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.
Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion at St. John's, 9 a.m., and at Zion, 11 a.m.

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



This is Pluto

Pluto used to be the ninth planet of the solar system until 2006 when scientists removed it from the list and declared it a dwarf planet. But Pluto continued orbiting the Sun as before. Pluto doesn't care what others think about it. **Be like Pluto!**

Monday, June 3

Senior Menu: Meatballs, mashed potatoes and gravy, Harvard beets, Pineapple tidbits, whole wheat bread.
Legion at Lake Morden, 6 p.m. (2)
Junior Teeners hosts W.I.N., 5:30 p.m. (2)
U10 R/W hosts Watertown, 6 p.m. (2)
U8 R/B at Britton, 5:30 p.m. (4)
SB U8 hosts Oakes, 5 p.m.
SB U10 Blk hosts Oakes, 6 p.m.
State Golf Meet at Bakker Crossing Golf Course, Sioux Falls
The Pantry at Community Center, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.
© 2024 Groton Daily Independent

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 2 of 87



**SOUTH DAKOTA
NEWS WATCH**

Inform. Enlighten. Illuminate.

South Dakota bucks trend of people waiting to marry

"We're kind of the first ones. And it's not that we're the example, but it's fun being the first ones. We're kind of testing the waters."

By Greta Goede

South Dakota News Watch

BROOKINGS, S.D. – While the average age for first-time marriages nationally has been steadily increasing since 2000, South Dakotans are among the youngest to tie the knot.

The state ranks No. 6 for the lowest median age for marriages, with the average median age of 26.7, 6.5% lower than the national average. On average, women get married at 25.5 and men at 27, according to the US Census Bureau (USCB).

States on the East Coast have higher median ages for marriage compared to Midwestern and Southern states.

One reason for this difference might be the conservative beliefs that vary by state.

According to Pew Research Center, 47% of South Dakotans consider themselves conservative and are 32% moderate. Almost 59% of the population is religious, Pew found. Research shows a link between religion and early marriages.

Courtney Dykstra, 23, and Caleb Huizenga, 23, are two South Dakotans following the trend. They agree that the beliefs in South Dakota likely influence why some couples choose to get married early.

"I think South Dakota, sometimes it goes back to kind of ... (I) don't want to say stuck in the Stone Age or anything like that, but we are definitely a step behind on culture," Huizenga said.



MANHART

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

DISTRICT 1

**Working to Protect & Promote
Traditional American Values**

- Pro Law Enforcement
- Pro Constitution
- Pro Family
- Property Rights



Visit the Campaign Site
ManhartForHouse.com or
facebook.com/ManhartLogan

Paid for by Manhart for State House

Primary Election: *Vote Now Through June 4th*

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 3 of 87

Why many Americans delay marriage

The upward trend of men and women getting married later in life started in the 1950s but has accelerated since the turn the century, according to the USBC.

Americans used to typically marry in their early 20's but now often wait until their late 20s or early 30s. The average age of marriage in the country is 28.4 years old for women and 30.2 years old for men, according to data from the USBC. The overall median age for marriage in 2023 was 32, which is an increase from 31 in 2022.

According to Pew, young adults are reaching several milestones later in life compared to before. In 2021, 22% of 25 year olds were married, compared to 63% in 1980, and only 17% had a child, compared to 39% in 1980.

Several possible reasons are cited for the change.

On average, people are seeking higher education more than past generations and are spending their early 20s developing their careers, according to data from the National Center of Education, while earlier generations spent this time developing families.

Financial instability could be another factor for this age increase. Younger generations are waiting until they are financially stable to commit to marriage and a family, according to The Institute of Family Studies (IFS). Since starting a family can be an investment, some people are waiting until they pay off debt before they take this step in life.

Effects of this trend on the US

The increase of the average median of marriage also impacts divorce rates and birth rates in the U.S., according to IFS.

Birth rates have also been declining the over the past decades. Women who get married later in life have fewer children, and birth rates reached a record low in 2023, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

South Dakota birth rates are still higher than the national average, but the past three years have had the lowest birth rate in years, according to the South Dakota Department of Health (SDDOH).

Divorce rates are also on the decline in the U.S. According to the IFS, people who get married later in life are less likely to get divorced compared to those who get married younger.

South Dakota divorce rates in 2021 were the lowest since 1972, according to SDDOH. The divorce rate in the state is 2.3 per 1,000 population while the national is 2.4 per 1,000 population, CDC data show.

Relationship bloomed while duck hunting

Dykstra and Huizenga met their senior and junior years in college, respectively. Two years later, the couple is planning their wedding and providing advice to others following their lead.

PAID FOR BY REDER FOR SD HOUSE

DEAR SD DISTRICT #1,
I AM A NAVY VETERAN,
... AND A DAD, FOUNDER OF THE DTOM 22/0 FOUNDATION,
NATIONAL PUBLIC SPIRIT AWARD WINNER, & SOUTH DAKOTA VETERAN OF THE YEAR.

NOT A CAREER POLITICIAN

A CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICAN VOICE THAT YOU CAN TRUST TO
GET THE JOB DONE & GET HOME.

CHRISTOPHER
REDER
DISTRICT 1 HOUSE

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 4 of 87

"We're kind of the first ones. And it's not that we're the example, but it's fun being the first ones. We're kind of testing the waters," Huizenga said. "A lot of people use our information in our planning we've done and they'll use that for their weddings. It's kind of exciting to see that coming up."

The couple met on the Hinge dating website and bonded over a shared interest in hunting. Soon after they connected, the couple went waterfowl hunting together near Brookings, and the relationship continued from there.

"So my buddies and I kind of threw her in the deep end, one of the first times we met," Huizenga said.

Not long after, Huizenga proposed and the wedding planning started.

"I mean, there's no reason to wait," he said. "It's kind of the next step into the future. I'm just really excited to get married to her and take that next step in life."

The wedding is happening this summer in Pierre. The couple has had a busy year working out the details while still finishing school.

"We've got little minor things to still figure out. But the wedding is basically planned," Dykstra said.

The couple chose Pierre because it's Huizenga's hometown and they plan to live there the next couple of years. Dykstra, who is originally from George, Iowa, decided to stay in the state after graduation and move with him to Pierre. Huizenga and Dykstra both have jobs in the capital city and bought a house together in December.

"We're trying to get college loans paid off, get the house in a better spot, stuff like that. And it's where we both have work," Huizenga said.

He attended South Dakota State University and graduated in 2023 with a degree in engineering. Dykstra graduated this year from Southeast Technical College in Sioux Falls with a degree in surgical technology.

The soon-to-be husband and wife aren't the only ones in their circle of friends planning their next step into the future. Huizenga said he has seen a lot of people his age getting married in the past couple of years.

"A lot of my classmates from (high school) are now getting married," he said.

This story was produced by South Dakota News Watch, a nonpartisan, nonprofit news organization. Read more in-depth stories at sdnewswatch.org and sign up for an email every few days to get stories as soon as they're published. Contact Greta Goede at info@sdnewswatch.org

WITTE 
EXTERIORS LLC

Specializing in Asphalt and Wood Shingles

Call for an estimate

Zack Witte ~ 605-695-7874

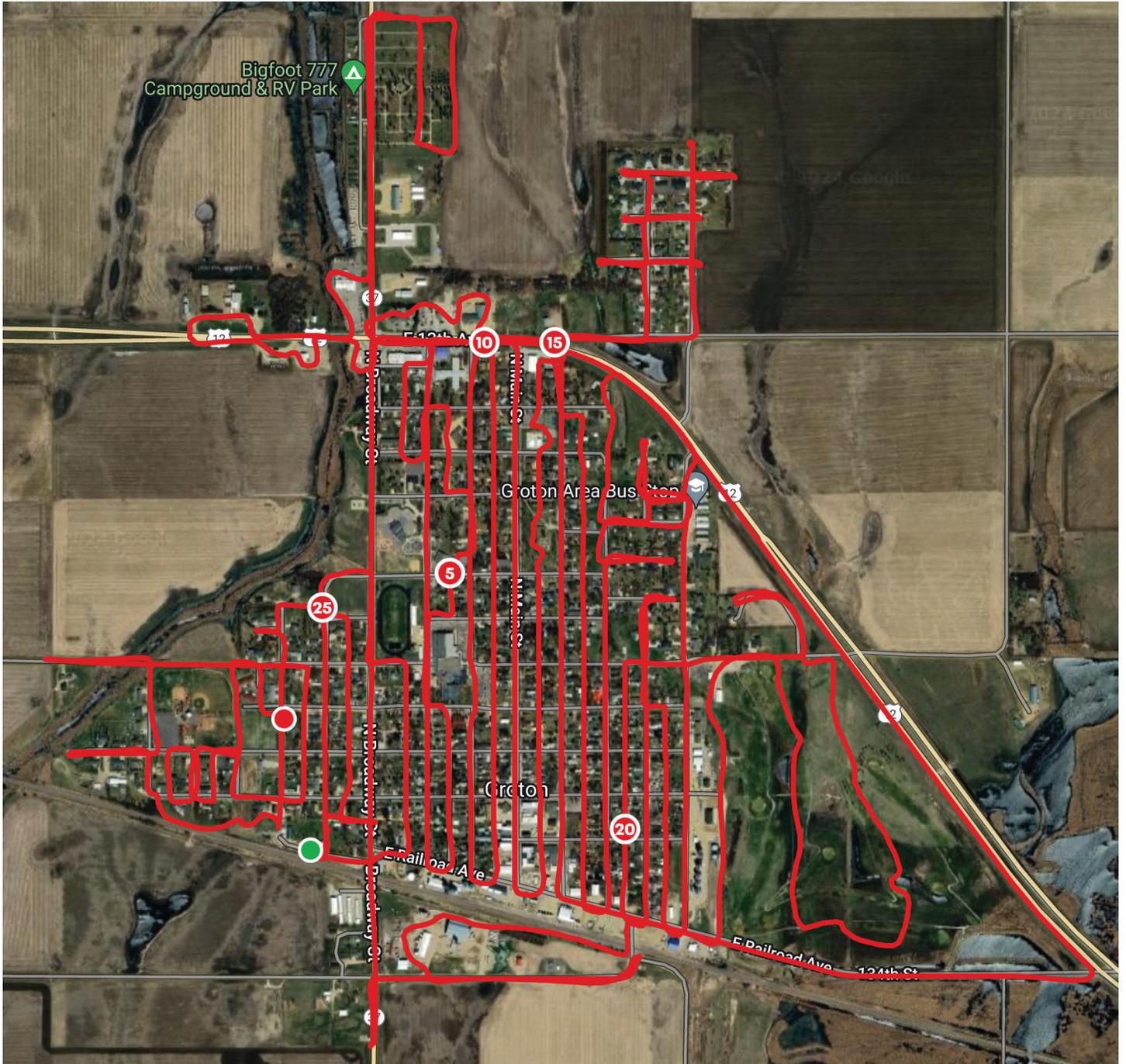
Webster, SD

No Contracts!

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 5 of 87

Adult Mosquito Control conducted last night



The City of Groton conducted adult mosquito control last night. Eight gallons of Perm X 4-4 was used, covering 27 miles in three hours. There was a light ESE wind and the temperature hovered in the mid to upper 60s. The cost of the mosquito was \$385.

Groton Locke Electric 2024 To Play Merchants

Groton Locke Electric 2024 will play at Northville Merchants today at 5 p.m.

Last Time Out:

Groton Locke Electric 2024 fell to Clark 18-2. Merchants were defeated by Redfield Dairy Queen 13-2.

Player Highlight:

Garret Knebel has played five innings at right field. Knebel has put together one quality at bat this season.

About Groton Locke Electric 2024:

Groton Locke Electric 2024 has a 0-1 record this season. Ty Sieber's 1.667 OPS leads Groton Locke Electric 2024. The infielder has a 0.667 OBP and a 1.000 slugging percentage this season. Aaron Severson leads Groton Locke Electric 2024 with five innings pitched. Spencer Locke leads Groton Locke Electric 2024 with 17 total fielding chances this season. Locke's primary position is catcher.

About Merchants:

Merchants has zero wins against one loss this season. Jeremiah Maxfield's 1.750 OPS leads Merchants. The left-handed hitter has a 0.750 OBP and a 1.000 slugging percentage this season. Niko Pezonella leads Merchants with four innings pitched. The righty has a 3.50 ERA this season. Kyle Stahl leads Merchants with 11 total fielding chances this season. Stahl's primary position is catcher.



Cub Cadet

ULTIMA^{ZTS}

STEER IT TO BELIEVE IT.

Engineered for precision and confident control on challenging hills — all backed by the strength, comfort and quality of a Cub Cadet® zero-turn.

Your independent Cub Cadet Dealer - Expert Service. Locally Owned.
The Advice, Service, Selection and Support you need to find the right fit for

Harry Implement
"Family Owned & Operated Since 1935!"
(605) 395-6421 ~ Ferney



Ultima™ ZTS1 42 ZERO-TURN

- 22 HP** Kohler® KT 7000 Series V-Twin OHV engine
- 42" AeroForce™ fabricated twin-blade deck
- Sealed ball bearing maintenance-free spindles

\$4,399*



Ultima™ ZTS1 46 ZERO-TURN

- 22 HP** Kohler® 7000 Series V-Twin OHV engine
- 46" AeroForce™ fabricated twin-blade deck
- Sealed ball bearing maintenance-free spindles

\$4,499*



Ultima™ ZT1 50 ZERO-TURN

- 23 HP** Kawasaki® FR691V V-twin OHV engine
- 50" AeroForce™ fabricated triple-blade deck
- Dual Hydro-Gear® EZT-2200™ transmission

\$3,299*

*Actual retail prices are set by dealer and may vary. Taxes are additional and vary by location. Freight and PDI charges may be additional and vary by dealer. Models subject to limited availability. Images may not reflect dealer inventory and/or specifications. As rated by Kohler, all power levels are added to gross horsepower at 3600 RPM per SAE J1940 as rated by engine manufacturer. **As required by Kawasaki, horsepower tested in accordance with SAE J1925 and rated in accordance with SAE J1923 and certified by SAE International. †See operator's manual for warranty details and information. Certain restrictions apply. Kohler® is a registered trademark of Kohler Co., Wisconsin. ® is a registered trademark of KAWASAKI. J1925, J1923, J1940, and PDI are trademarks of Kohler Co., Wisconsin. © 2024 Cub Cadet

FOR FULL PRODUCT SPECS

Cub Cadet

VISIT CUBCADET.COM

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 7 of 87

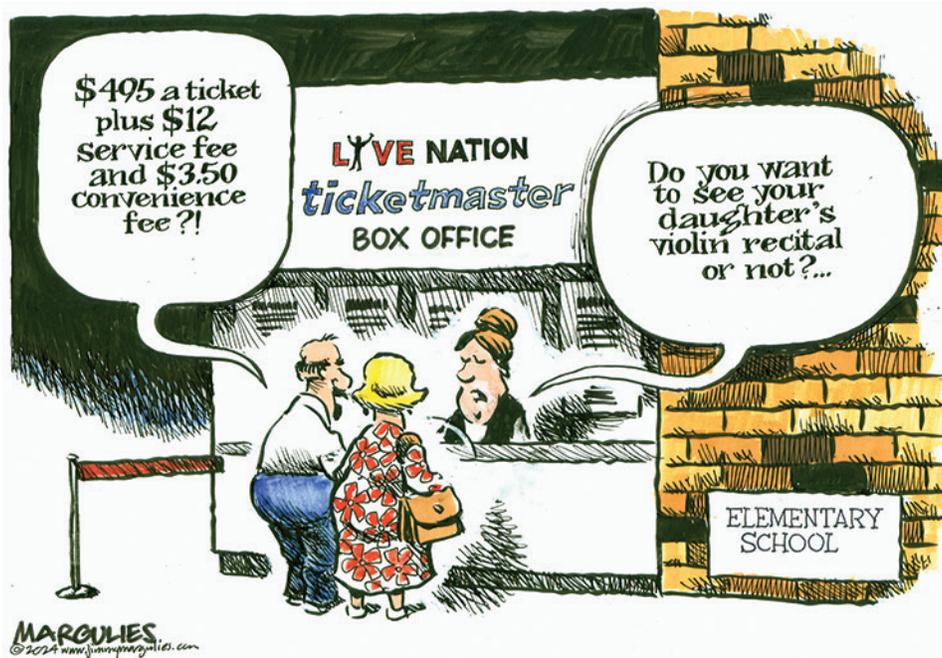


THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE



...If you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight. 1 KINGS 9:6,7

© 2024 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.



BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Deuteronomy (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. From John 20, by what other name was the apostle Thomas known? *Caleb, Naaman, Omri, Didymus*

3. Which book begins, “And the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness”? *Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Joel*

4. What did Jesus and Peter pay for with a coin found in a fish’s mouth? *Tax, Bread, Lodging, Sandals*

5. From Proverbs 11, what word did Solomon use to describe soul winners? *Warm, Wise, Wealthy, Wonderful*

6. What prophet was saved from death by a talking donkey? *Balaam, Ezekiel, Joel, Samuel*

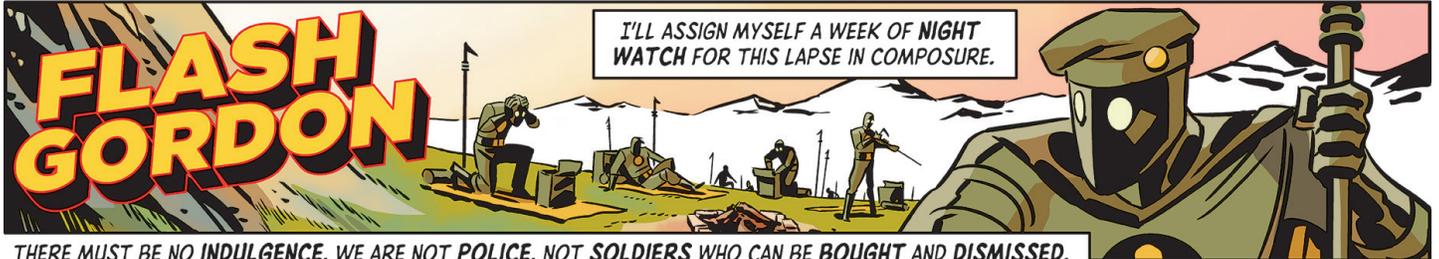
ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) Didymus, 3) Numbers, 4) Tax, 5) Wise, 6) Balaam

Comments? More Trivia? Gift ideas? Visit www.TriviaGuy.com.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 9 of 87

MY MEN WAKE, PERFECTLY SILENT. THEY EXECUTE THEIR WEAPONS CHECKS AND AFFIX THEIR COMBAT MASKS. FOR JUST A MOMENT, I FEEL PRIDE.



FLASH GORDON

I'LL ASSIGN MYSELF A WEEK OF NIGHT WATCH FOR THIS LAPSE IN COMPOSURE.

THERE MUST BE NO INDULGENCE. WE ARE NOT POLICE. NOT SOLDIERS WHO CAN BE BOUGHT AND DISMISSED. WE ARE A LONG-RANGE DEATH PATROL, SWORN TO CAPTURE THE ENEMIES OF EMPEROR MING. THE MAN MAY BE GONE, BUT THE OATH REMAINS.



TARGETS ENTERING THE TRADING POST, SERGEANT MORDO.

CONFIRM IDENTITIES, MAJOR.



"ZARKOV, HANS. SCIENCE ASSET. TARGET RANK B.



"ARDEN, DALE. INTELLIGENCE ASSET. TARGET RANK D.



"DRAGONMAN BOK. COMBAT TRAITOR. TARGET RANK C.



"GORDON, FLASH. EMPIRE ENEMY ONE. TARGET RANK S."



CONFIRMED. PINCER FORMATION 2-23.

DEATH PATROL!

ATTACK!

DAN SCHKADE 6-2-24



HEAVY RESISTANCE FROM GORDON AND BOK -- DP 5 AND 11 DOWN -- DP 8 --

--ARDEN WOUNDED--

ALL POINTS! INCOMING!



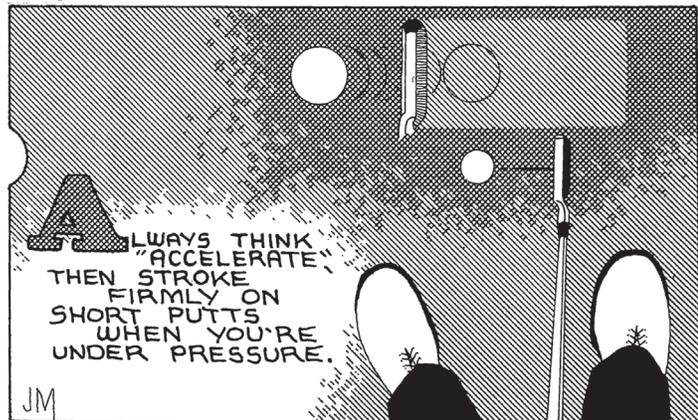
HAWKMEN!

REPEAT-- HAWKMEN!!

NEXT: RAPTOR SEASON

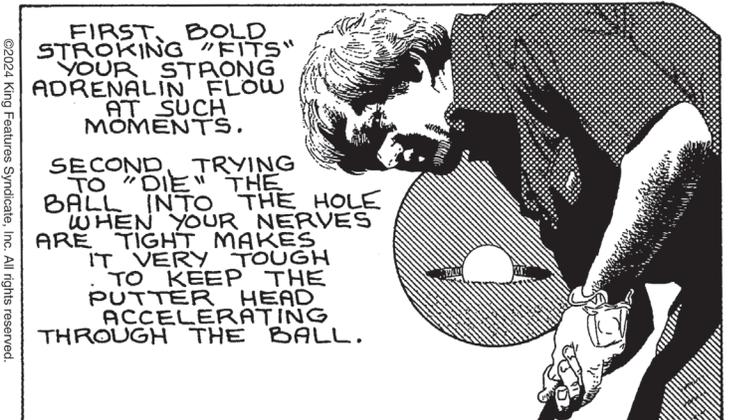
©2024 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



ALWAYS THINK "ACCELERATE" THEN STROKE FIRMLY ON SHORT PUTTS WHEN YOU'RE UNDER PRESSURE.

JM



FIRST, BOLD STROKING "FITS" YOUR STRONG ADRENALIN FLOW AT SUCH MOMENTS.

SECOND, TRYING TO "DIE" THE BALL INTO THE HOLE WHEN YOUR NERVES ARE TIGHT MAKES IT VERY TOUGH TO KEEP THE PUTTER HEAD ACCELERATING THROUGH THE BALL.

©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.



Narrowing Down the Main Cause Behind Insulin Resistance

DEAR DR. ROACH: What is the main cause for insulin resistance? I was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes about five years ago. I've maintained a consistent weight under 200 pounds, and I'm only 5 feet, 9 inches tall. I was able to get my A1C level down to 7.2% last summer, but in late fall, my numbers started spiking, even with insulin. I now find myself injecting crazy amounts of insulin just to maintain normal glucose levels.

I'm on a diet of 40 grams of carbohydrates a day. I walk close to 20,000 steps a day. But on a regular day, I inject 30-40 units of mealtime insulin before eating a low-carb, high-protein meal. Still, my level spikes above 250 mg/dL, and it stays there for a few hours. -- A.R.N.

ANSWER: Insulin is a signal that there is plenty of sugar in the body, and the body uses insulin to take sugar out of the blood into cells. Normally, just a little insulin will make blood sugar levels go down a lot. When it takes a lot of insulin to lower blood sugar levels, we say that there is insulin resistance. A great deal of work has been done in trying to elicit why people develop resistance to insulin.

There are some rare congenital cases involving mutations of the insulin receptor. There are rarely acquired immune-mediated causes that have antibodies to insulin or the insulin receptor. These antibodies have an extremely high resistance to insulin.

However, most cases of insulin resistance are associated with obesity. Your BMI is 29.5, suggesting that you're overweight but not obese. In this case, abdominal fat is more metabolically important, since it can lead to free fatty acids and compounds called adipocytokines, which may contribute to insulin resistance.

People with abdominal obesity and insulin resistance often have abnormal cholesterol levels and high blood pressures, a combination called "metabolic syndrome." Blood pressure and cholesterol must often be treated separately.

Insulin works to lower blood sugar, but there are four main hormones that oppose insulin and raise blood sugar: cortisol, catecholamines, glucagon and growth hormone. Elevated levels of any of these hormones will cause insulin resistance. I know this isn't your case, but the pregnancy hormone human placental lactogen causes insulin resistance and is the proximate cause for gestational diabetes.

Some medicines (steroids, birth control pills, and HIV medicines) can cause insulin resistance. Critically, glucose itself can cause insulin resistance! High blood sugar levels prevent insulin release as well. This is why getting and keeping a normal blood sugar level is so critically important, especially when a person is first diagnosed.

Management of a person with high amounts of insulin resistance can be challenging. You are already doing amazingly well with exercise, and it sounds as though your diet is of the type that is commonly recommended. Medications that reduce insulin levels -- such as metformin, GLP-1 agonists and thiazolidinediones -- are often recommended to reduce the amount of insulin used.

Your situation is not common, and you should absolutely be in the hands of an endocrinologist who specializes in diabetes.

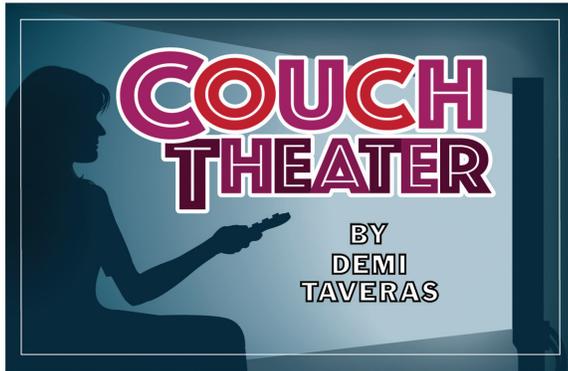
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

(c) 2024 North America Synd., Inc.

All Rights Reserved

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 11 of 87



Miranda Cosgrove, left, and Brooke Shields star in "Mother of the Bride." Courtesy of Netflix

"Challengers" (R) -- Director Luca Guadagnino ("Call Me by Your Name") usually excels with critics and fails at the box office, but his latest release seems as if it has succeeded in both respects. This romantic-sports drama immediately had Gen Z swooning on TikTok, no doubt due to the

incredible trio leading the film: Zendaya ("Dune: Part Two"), Josh O'Connor ("The Crown") and Mike Faist ("West Side Story"). Zendaya portrays Tashi, a former tennis player turned coach, who now coaches her husband - tennis champion Art Donaldson (Faist). Although he's struggling with an injury, Art just needs one more U.S. Open title to get a Career Grand Slam, so Tashi enters him in what seems to be a simple Challenger event. But when Art finds out his opponent is Patrick Zweig (O'Connor), his ex-best friend and Tashi's ex-boyfriend, Art realizes that this match might be the most important one of his life. Out now to rent. (Apple TV+)

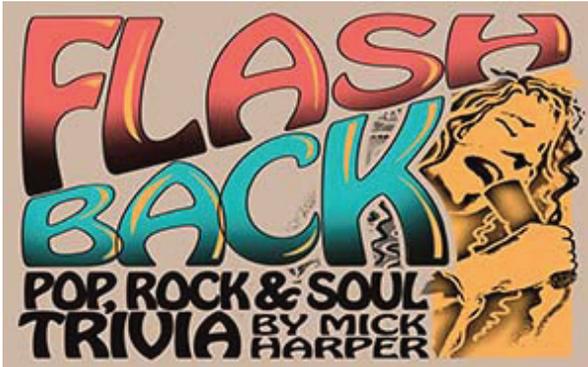
"Spacey Unmasked" (TV-14) -- A documentary detailing a mountain of allegations against disgraced actor Kevin Spacey has arrived, yet still, this might not be enough to keep Spacey out of Hollywood. The two-part docuseries, out now, includes interviews with 10 men who allege that Spacey sexually harassed them over the span of five decades. A completely different set of people from those whose cases have since been settled, these men worked alongside him in theaters in New York and London, met him in dodgy places like The Viper Room, and even knew him in high school. With so many individuals pinpointing the same atrocious behavior since the 1970s all the way to the 2010s, it's astonishing that Spacey himself said this was "a dying network's one-sided 'documentary' about me in their desperate attempt for ratings." The only desperate one here seems to be you, Spacey. (Max)

"Mother of the Bride" (TV-PG) -- Looks like it's Comeback City for these handful of actors who decided to star in this cheesy, tropey rom-com out now. Starring Brooke Shields, Miranda Cosgrove, Chad Michael Murray, and Benjamin Bratt, this film follows mom-and-daughter duo Emma (Cosgrove) and Lana (Shields), who are very close since the death of Emma's father when she was 8. So, naturally, Emma shocks Lana with the news that she's getting married in Phuket, Thailand, with her company footing the bill. (Must be nice.) But when they arrive in Thailand, Lana receives an even bigger shock when she realizes that the groom's father is her college ex-boyfriend, Will (Bratt) - the same guy who smashed her heart into smithereens. What a totally unplanned coincidence that definitely isn't going to make the movie completely unbelievable, right? Well, let's hope this gets some better projects off the ground for these actors. (Netflix)

(c) 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 12 of 87



1. Name the singer who started his career with The Decibels before moving on to The Town Criers, The Omens and The Last Heard.
2. Which singer wrote and released "Ain't That a Shame"?
3. Which song by The Byrds had trouble getting airplay?
4. Where did Jesse Colin Young get his name?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Sometimes it's better to let it all go, I've been there and I think I should know."

Answers

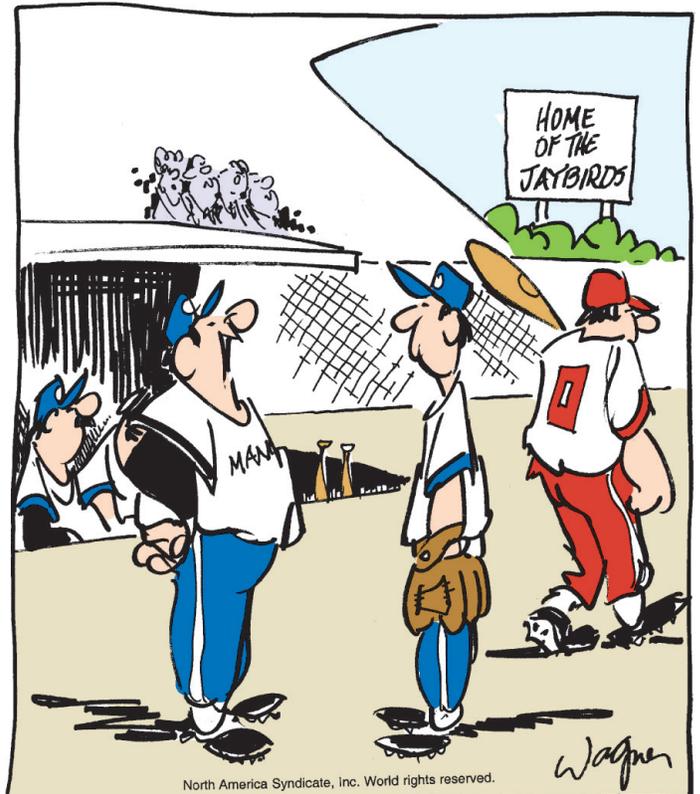
1. Bob Seger. In 1974 he put together the Silver Bullet Band.

He was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2004.

2. Fats Domino, in 1955. The song is included in Rolling Stone's 500 Greatest Songs of All Time.
3. "Eight Miles High," in 1966. Radio stations were concerned the song was about drug use, but the group claimed it was about their plane trip to England.
4. Born Perry Miller, he decided on the new stage name by blending the names of the Lotus car designer, Colin Chapman, and two outlaws, Jesse James and Cole Younger.
5. "Better Love Next Time," by Dr. Hook in 1979 on their "Sometimes You Win" album. While the song made a commendable appearance on the Hot 100 chart, it rose to No. 3 on the Adult chart.

(c) 2024 King Features Syndicate

GRIN and BEAR IT ^{by Wagner}



North America Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.

"No, Figgy ... a steroid-free zone doesn't mean you get them for nothing!"

Just Like Cats & Dogs

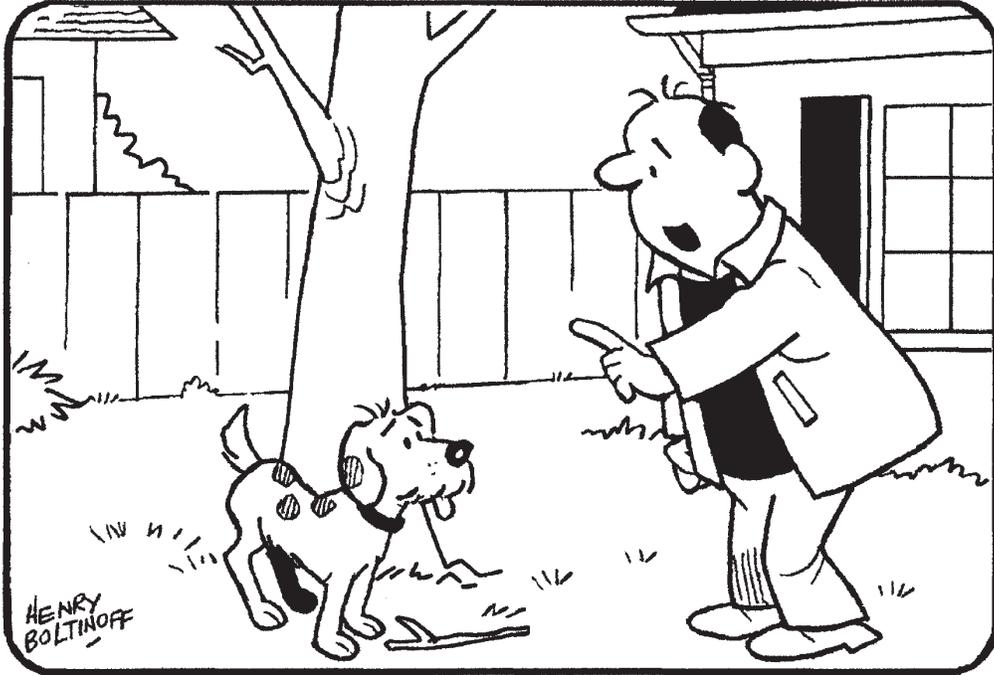
by Dave T. Phipps



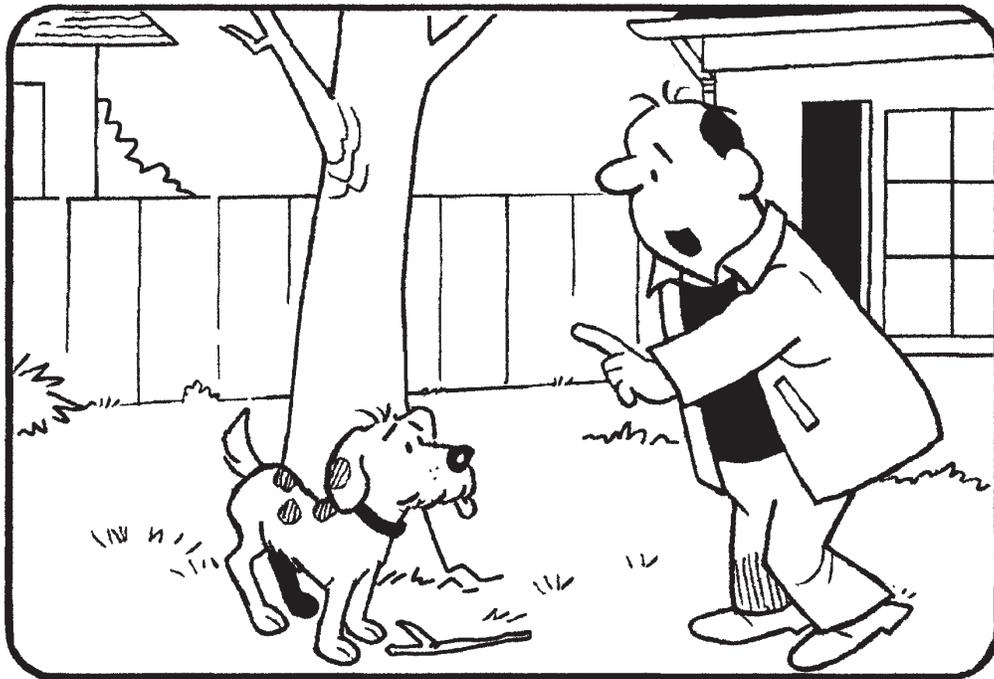
©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

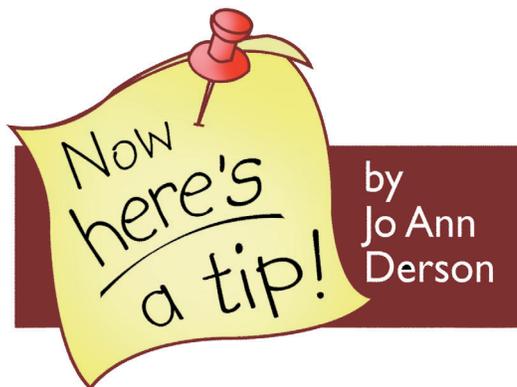


©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

Differences: 1. Arm is not showing. 2. Dog's tongue is moved.
3. Leg is moved. 4. Ear is moved. 5. Tree limb is higher.
6. Sweater is shorter.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 14 of 87



* "Use a bandanna to strain coffee if you've accidentally had a filter bust. It works. I first used this tip when camping, but I have used it at home, too. The coffee goes through it faster than a paper filter, which is fine when it's already brewed, since you lose less heat." -- T.R. in Arkansas

* Recycling notes: Cardboard that's greasy or food-caked is just not recyclable. It's trash. On the plus side, your glass jars don't have to be perfectly clean, nor your cans crushed, in order to take them to the recycling center or drop curbside if your community has a plan in place.

* "To freshen stuffed animals, dampen a cloth with a solution of 1 cup vinegar and 3 cups water. Wipe outside fur thoroughly, being careful not to soak. Secure in a delicates bag or tie inside

a pillowcase, then put in a dryer at low heat until completely dry. Adding a fabric softener sheet for the final five minutes is nice, too." -- D.W. in Oklahoma

* Wonderful tip from Fibrenew, a leather, vinyl and plastics refurbishing specialist, on what to do if you get ink on your leather car seats: "DON'T use dish soap or hair spray to remove the marks. The degreasing agents in dish soap can permanently degloss and damage the top coating on the leather surface. Hair spray, another commonly recommended remedy, has alcohol in it and will ruin the surface coating on your leather." Use a special leather-cleaning kit instead, or contact a local professional to fix it for you.

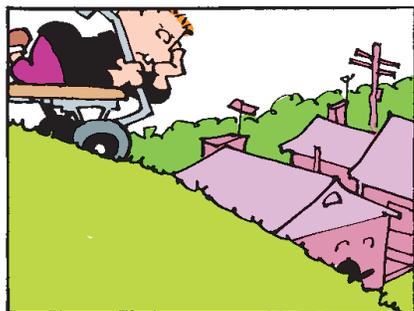
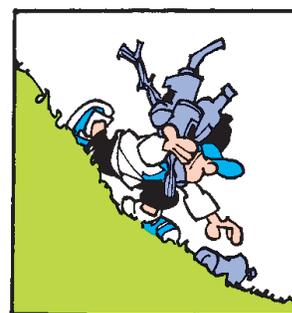
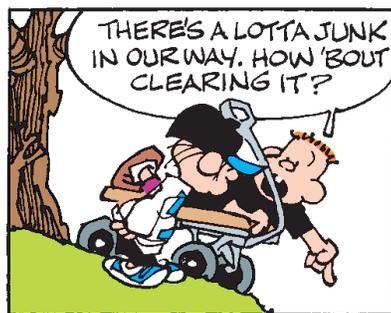
* "Remove tea stains from your teapot with a few drops of bleach added to a pot of hot water. Let sit for five or so minutes, then swish with a brush. Most tea stains will come right out. Be sure to rinse well." -- A.A. in Florida

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

(c) 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 15 of 87

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Haunting
- 6 Seizes
- 11 Cancels
- 12 More apt to seep
- 14 April 1 gags
- 15 Consult
- 16 Scrooge por-trayer Alastair
- 17 Feudal work-ers
- 19 Oahu, for one (Abbr.)
- 20 Nobel Prize subj.
- 22 San Francis-co's — Hill
- 23 Sufficient, informally
- 24 Philosopher Kierkegaard
- 26 Droning reed
- 28 Tease
- 30 USO patrons
- 31 Flood protec-tion
- 35 "Cabaret" director Bob
- 39 Tactic
- 40 Pantheon member
- 42 Future doc's exam
- 43 Gore and Green
- 44 Bamboozles
- 46 Med. plan option

	1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	
11							12					13
14							15					
16				17		18				19		
20			21		22				23			
24				25		26		27				
			28		29		30					
31	32	33				34		35		36	37	38
39					40		41		42			
43				44				45		46		
47			48				49		50			
51								52				
	53							54				

- 47 " — shabby!"
- 49 Take it slow
- 51 Saunter
- 52 Andean pack animals
- 53 Rescued
- 54 Austin native
- 6 Course load?
- 7 Aussie hop-pers
- 8 Dye type
- 9 Two-piece suit
- 10 Establishes
- 11 Basilica areas
- 13 Husband of Pocahontas
- 18 Filch
- 21 Hardly hip
- 23 — salts
- 25 Pen tip
- 27 Computer image, briefly
- 29 Novelist Enid
- 31 Bridges
- 32 Doles out
- 33 Cosa —
- 34 Sticky stuff
- 36 Blueprint, e.g.
- 37 Pacific islander
- 38 Short jackets
- 41 Resided
- 44 Only
- 45 Auction
- 48 "Mazel —!"
- 50 Jazz band instrument

DOWN

- 1 Physicist Fermi
- 2 Captivate
- 3 Skedaddle
- 4 Sorts
- 5 Ruhr Valley city

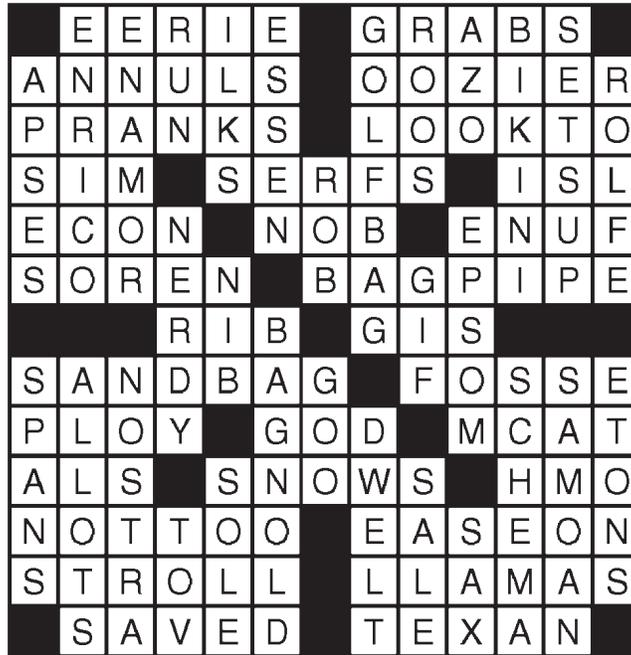
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 16 of 87

— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.



Out on a Limb

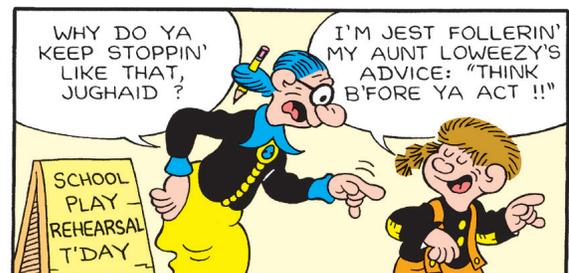
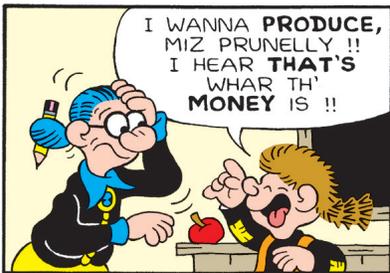
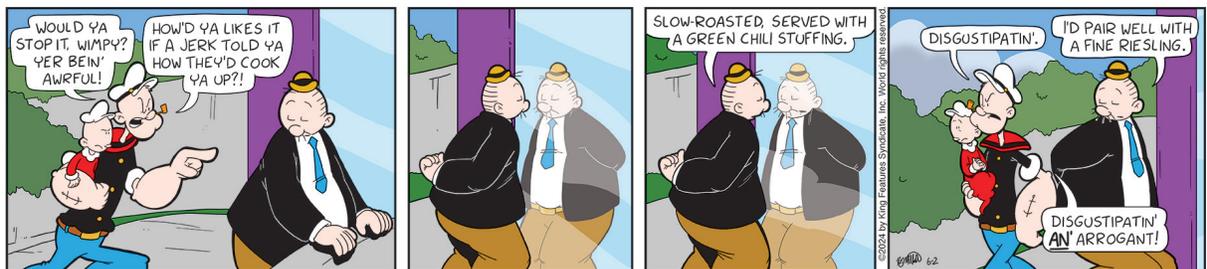
by Gary Kopervas

ANOTHER
DAY ON THE
HONEY FARM...



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 17 of 87

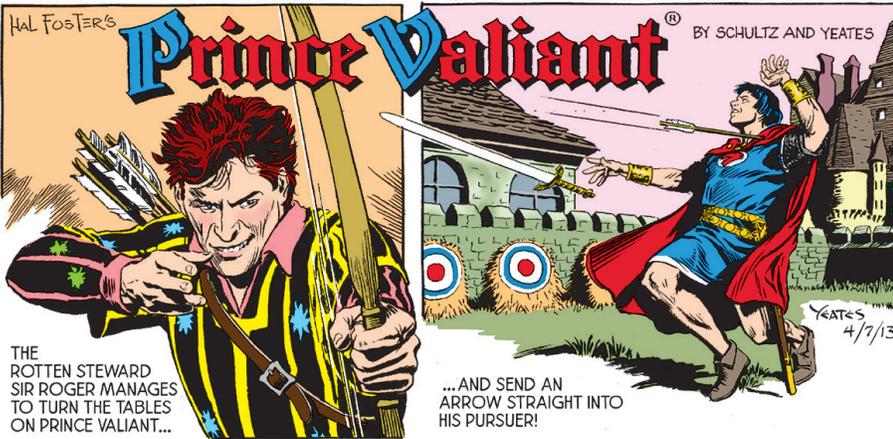


©2023 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. Word rights reserved.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 18 of 87

HAL FOSTER'S **Prince Valiant**® BY SCHULTZ AND YEATES



... AND SEND AN ARROW STRAIGHT INTO HIS PURSUER!

THE ROTTEN STEWARD SIR ROGER MANAGES TO TURN THE TABLES ON PRINCE VALIANT...

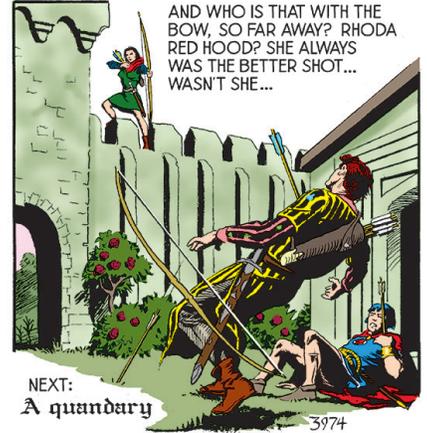


BUT, TYPICAL OF HIS AIM, ROGER'S ARROW STRIKES A BIT ABOVE THE INTENDED TARGET - VALS HEART. THE STEWARD CURSES HIS BAD LUCK...



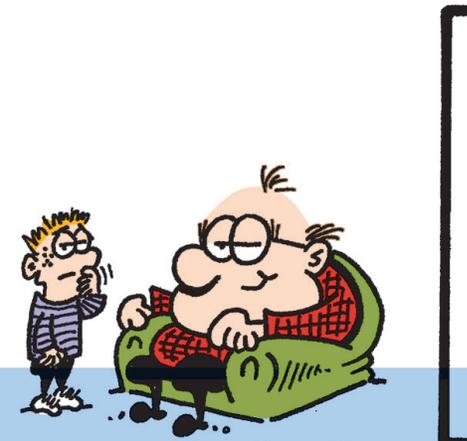
... AND STRIDES FORWARD TO FINISH THE JOB AT CLOSE RANGE, WHEN...

©2013 King Features Syndicate, Inc.



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Surviving summer heat

While winter cold can cause health problems for seniors, the summer heat can be just as dangerous. Heat that's too high can lead to heat exhaustion. Nausea, feeling weak or dizzy, being thirsty, having rapid pulse -- those are all signs that we're too hot. Then there is heat rash, heat edema (swollen ankles and feet), heat cramps, heat stroke ... all with their own list of serious medical results.

The risks can come not only from the temperature, but from some of the prescription drugs we take, drinking alcohol and caffeine, living without air conditioning and having certain medical conditions.

The National Institutes for Health has a list of suggestions for dealing with summer heat:

Consult with your doctor about how many ounces of water you need to drink on a daily basis. Ask if it needs to be only water, or if juices count in your daily intake of liquid.

Keep the drapes closed to block the sun.

Go somewhere else during the heat of the day, ideally a cool place with air conditioning. Think about the library, a movie theater or the mall during the heat of the afternoon until the sun goes down.

Ask the rec center, senior center, town government or health department if they have cooling centers.

Wear lightweight cotton clothes instead of synthetics. It's not just the heat, humidity adds to the temperature as well. Seniors don't produce as much sweat as we used to, so there's little natural cooling as breezes blow over us.

Keep an eye on the news for advance notice about heat waves in your area. Plan ahead for where you might go to cool off and for meals that don't heat up the kitchen.

And remember: If you do have air conditioning, use it! A heatwave is not the time to worry about the electric bill!

(c) 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 20 of 87

1. In 1988, what women's tennis player completed the "Golden Slam" by winning all four major tournaments and an Olympic gold medal in a calendar year?

2. What Northeastern university's athletic teams are nicknamed the Catamounts?

3. The Henri Delauney Trophy is awarded to the winning team of what international soccer tournament?

4. What 24-year-old Swedish golfer finished second at the 2024 Masters in his major championship debut?

5. First presented in 1976, the Eclipse Award of Merit is the highest honor recognizing career achievement in what sport?

6. Name the aeronautical engineer who designed the first aluminum laminate alpine ski and brought it to market in the early 1950s.

7. Estadio Daniel Alcides Carrion, the highest stadium in the world at roughly 14,000 feet above sea level, is located in what South American country?



Answers

1. Steffi Graf.
2. The University of Vermont.
3. The UEFA European Championship ("The Euro").
4. Ludvig Aberg.
5. Horse racing.
6. Howard Head.
7. Peru.

(c) 2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Quelling a cat's separation anxiety

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: Here's a weird one. I went away on a business trip for three weeks, leaving my 9-year-old cat "Jenks" with a friend. Since I've returned, Jenks will not leave my side. He clambers onto my lap while I have Zoom meetings; he follows me to and fro around the house; and he insists on sleeping on the bed at night. He also meows loudly if he can't see me. This is a new behavior for him. What's going on? -- Claudio G. in Brooklyn

DEAR CLAUDIO: Jenks may have separation anxiety. Even though he never exhibited these behaviors before while you were away, it's possible for a cat to develop this issue with no clear triggers.

Monitor his behavior patterns closely for a few days. In addition to meowing loudly when you're out of sight, is he grooming his coat more than usual? Is he doing anything destructive like clawing up a new piece of furniture? Have his eating habits changed -- eating too little or gulping his food? These can also be signs of anxiety.

Try the following and note if his behaviors lessen or normalize:

- Don't make a big production out of leaving the house or coming home. Extra affection may make him more anxious.
- Leave the TV, radio or speaker on while you're away, playing a program or music.
- Set up a cat perch near the window so he can watch the world.
- Create a den or nook where he can rest, safe and cozy.

If the behavior doesn't improve, or it worsens, contact the veterinarian. They will recommend an exam to rule out any illnesses. They'll offer advice on additional ways to help calm Jenks, and if necessary, will prescribe medication to reduce his anxiety.

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

(c) 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 22 of 87

Strange BUT TRUE

* A killer fog that swathed London in 1952 and left as many as 12,000 people dead led to Parliament's passing the first Clean Air Act in 1956.

* "Percussive maintenance" is the technical term for hitting something until it works.

* Richard Anthony Jones spent 17 years in jail on a robbery charge until talk by some of his fellow inmates revealed he had a doppelganger with the same first name in the same jail. This second Jones was actually the guilty party.

* Before his acting career took off, Harrison Ford worked as a roadie for The Doors. That gig proved so intense that he humorously claimed he was "one step away from joining a Jesuit monastery" after it ended.

* Black cats are considered to bring good luck in Japan.

* While doing research for the film "Castaway," William Broyles Jr. isolated himself on a beach for a week to immerse himself in the survival experience, which lent authenticity to the screenplay.

Thought for the Day: "By seeing each day and each situation as a kind of training exercise, the stakes suddenly become a lot lower. The way you interpret your own mistakes and the mistakes of others is suddenly a lot more generous." -- Ryan Holiday

(c) 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

* "Witch windows," or diagonal windows, exist almost exclusively in Vermont. Their moniker comes from the superstition that witches can't maneuver their broomsticks through slanted windows.

* More than 70 species of mushrooms glow in the dark.

* A 67-year-old woman named Dorothy Fletcher had a heart attack on a plane. When the stewardess asked if a doctor was on board, luck was on Dorothy's side: Fifteen people on their way to a cardiology conference stood up! Dorothy survived.

The Garden Bug



The app **merlin.allaboutbirds.org** can ask you questions about a bird you are trying to identify, and will give you a list of possible matches. It can listen to the birds around you and show real-time suggestions for who's singing. It can identify birds in your own photos, and help you build a digital scrapbook of them. It can help you find out what birds may be available in your area to look for, and connect you to **birdsoftheworld.org** to view comprehensive information on birds from every corner of the globe.

- Brenda Weaver

Sources: **merlin.allaboutbirds.org**
birdsoftheworld.org



by Freddy Groves

Healthcare Scams

It takes a lot of nerve to cook up a scheme to steal large amounts of money from government agencies such as the VA, especially since in the end the criminals get caught.

One thief tried to convince the VA that he couldn't use his feet anymore. The scam got him a 100% disability rating (as well as the monthly benefits that went along with it), plus a specially adapted car. He was ratted out by several witnesses who saw

him drive to a VA medical center, get out and walk around and sit in a wheelchair before rolling into the center. He was also seen by several others (who had known him a long time) walking around in a mall. Not only did he get sent to prison, but he has to pay back a large amount of money.

And what about the eye doctor who took kickbacks for ordering unnecessary brain scans? His partner in crime was a medical diagnostics company. Not only did they generate fake diagnoses, but they pulled this on hundreds of patients and then sent out the bills. The money he stole ran into the millions, although he only made \$100 or so for each fake diagnosis and brain scan he ordered. What would make a doctor, who'd been in practice for 40 years, think he could get away with a scheme like this? He'll have plenty of time to think about that in prison.

The bigger the scam and the more moving parts, the more likely the criminals are to be caught. Such was the case with a guy who had his fingers in several types of health care fraud: offering and paying kickbacks to doctors who wrote fake test orders, compounded medicines and genetic cancer screenings (costing \$10,000 each). The players included not only the doctors but pharmacies, labs and durable medical equipment companies. The perp's share of the \$51 million cash haul for all these schemes was \$10 million. He won't get to spend that in prison.

(c) 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 24 of 87

Wishing Well®



3	6	2	3	2	7	5	4	8	6	4	8	2
A	A	E	G	N	B	A	L	T	F	O	E	J
4	7	6	3	4	2	3	4	6	3	8	2	5
V	L	R	R	E	O	I	O	I	N	N	Y	S
6	2	6	2	8	6	4	2	7	5	7	5	4
E	Y	N	O	S	D	F	U	I	S	S	I	R
2	5	2	3	7	8	4	8	3	2	8	3	7
R	S	F	T	S	I	E	O	O	R	N	D	I
8	6	4	6	4	2	6	8	5	3	4	2	3
R	V	S	I	E	E	S	E	T	A	A	E	Y
2	6	5	4	2	6	4	8	7	6	2	4	8
D	I	O	R	O	T	C	D	S	S	M	H	U
5	7	5	7	8	5	8	5	8	7	5	7	7
T	Y	H	O	C	E	E	R	D	U	S	R	S

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

©2024 King Features Syndicate

1. TELEVISION: What subject does Walter White teach at the beginning of "Breaking Bad"?
2. GEOGRAPHY: Which three countries make up the Baltic states in Europe?
3. MUSIC: What is the title of The Beatles' first album?
4. LITERATURE: Prince Edward Island is the inspiration for which novel series?
5. HISTORY: Which Roman emperor built a wall across northern England to deter invaders?
6. MOVIES: Which movie first featured the character Lisbeth Salander?
7. ASTRONOMY: The asteroid belt lies between which two planets in our solar system?
8. U.S. STATES: Which state's coast was dubbed the "Graveyard of the Atlantic" because so many ships wrecked there?
9. FOOD & DRINK: What does the term "a la carte" mean?
10. SCIENCE: What is the process called when a gas changes into a liquid?

Answers

1. Chemistry.
2. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.
3. "Please Please Me."
4. "Anne of Green Gables."
5. Hadrian.
6. "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo."
7. Jupiter and Mars.
8. North Carolina.
9. According to the menu.
10. Condensation.

© 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Tackling the Tribal Public Safety Crisis

I have a deep sense of compassion and respect for our Native American population here in South Dakota. And I firmly believe that we solve problems best when we work together and communicate.

This is why I have made it a priority to call attention to the public safety crisis on our tribal reservations.

The smuggling of drugs and trafficking of humans into sex slavery across our Southern Border has increased dramatically because of President Biden's open border policies. The criminals committing these acts have found a haven on South Dakota's tribal reservations and impact all families who live in our state. The responsibility for upholding law and order on tribal reservations lies with the tribal government and the federal government. As Governor I have no jurisdiction on tribal reservations. But, just like the warzone at our Southern Border, Joe Biden is turning his back on our tribal communities.

In turn, I have taken unprecedented action to help South Dakota's tribes. The immediate challenge is a huge shortage of law enforcement officers. I have urged the Biden Administration to adequately fund tribal law enforcement. I've also pushed for comprehensive, transparent, public audits to determine exactly what that need is.

It quickly became clear that we needed to continue to take matters into our own hands when it comes to helping our tribes. That's why I launched a tribal-focused law enforcement training course in partnership with Attorney General Marty Jackley. This is the first training course of its kind in the country, and it will allow our officers to receive their training without having to leave their families for an extended period of time.

I also announced that I will be hosting a Tribal Public Safety Crisis Summit in Pierre on Monday, June 24th. I have invited a number of elected leaders and law enforcement officials at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels to join us. It is my hope that this Summit will allow us to start an important conversation and get the ball rolling towards real solutions.

We will proudly celebrate the 100th anniversary of Native American citizenship on June 2nd. I will continue working to improve life not only for our tribal members, but all South Dakotans. Those efforts will include our Stronger Families Together initiative. It is important for Native American foster children to grow up in a home that reflects their culture and heritage. With Stronger Families Together, we are prioritizing recruiting more Native American foster families across our state. Tragically, suicide disproportionately impacts Native American communities. I am constantly working with many of our state agency to disseminate suicide prevention information.

One of the best things we can do is join in mutual aid agreements with our tribes. These agreements allow State law enforcement to work with tribes to enforce tribal law, help those in need on our reservations, and combat the public safety crisis we see across our state. I have repeatedly urged all nine of South Dakota's Native American tribes to join in mutual aid agreements with the State of South Dakota, and I will continue to encourage them to do so.

I remain open to any additional solutions that others may propose to address this serious crisis. Through these efforts and collaborations, I am confident we can continue moving forward and building a stronger future for South Dakota.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



No Escape From "Bidenomics"

Life is more expensive in the Biden economy. Today, a typical South Dakota household is paying \$1,064 more per month just to maintain the same standard of living it had when the president took office. And after three-plus years of higher prices and tighter budgets, there's still no end in sight.

Since President Biden took office, prices have risen by nearly 20 percent. Grocery prices are up 21 percent. Car repairs are up 30 percent. Rent is up more than 20 percent. And as Americans turn on their air conditioners this summer, they can contemplate a grim report from the Wall Street Journal that found electricity prices have increased 13 times faster in the last three years than during the previous seven years.

To make matters worse, prices have risen faster than wages during the Biden administration, which has only exacerbated the economic pain many Americans have faced due to inflation. That is why it is so shocking to hear the president say things like he did recently when he suggested that people "have the money" to pay higher prices. But that's the kind of disconnect we've come to expect from a president who has persistently downplayed and denied the economic reality Americans are facing because of his reckless spending.

Inflation has also made it more difficult for many Americans to get ahead. People are putting more on their credit cards, and paying off that debt has gotten harder as interest rates have gone up to combat inflation. The dream of homeownership is out of reach for many Americans. Prospective homebuyers need to earn nearly twice as much as they did four years ago to afford a typical home today. And higher input costs have created serious challenges for Americans who own their own business or operate their family farm or ranch.

As bad as the economy has been over the past three years, it could get worse. After his reckless spending sparked an inflation crisis, President Biden continues to propose tax hikes. His latest budget proposal contains a staggering \$5 trillion in job-killing tax hikes. And just recently the president said he would allow the 2017 tax cuts to expire if he is reelected. And if those cuts are allowed to expire, a typical family is looking at a \$1,600 tax hike in 2026. That money matters to working families, and maintaining lower tax rates is a priority for my Republican colleagues and me. After three-plus years of "Bidenomics," our country needs pro-growth economic policy more than ever.

The president's misguided economic policies have brought economic pain for too many Americans for too long. And, unfortunately, the president never seems to learn or consider a course correction. I hope the American people don't have to endure a second term of "Bidenomics;" we can't afford it.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 27 of 87



CONGRESSMAN

DUSTY JOHNSON

Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



The Choice to Protect and Defend our Country

Life is a series of choices. Some of these choices determine the direction of our life from a young age. Eleven brave South Dakotans, who made the decision to attend a service academy and join our nation's military, are about to begin their military training at the United States Air Force Academy, the United States Military Academy, and the United States Naval Academy.

One of Jackson Coberley's big decisions was to remain in Japan to complete his senior year while his family transferred to Ellsworth Air Force Base. Last year, Maya Lee of Dell Rapids chose to accept a scholarship to attend a military preparatory school, knowing she would likely spend five years at college instead of the common four. Soon, both will enter the Air Force Academy's community of like-minded people with a shared mission to serve.

Sometimes our choices are informed by childhood dreams, and sometimes our childhood dreams come true. Jhett Waltman of Rapid City was influenced by his father's and grandfathers' military service and set his eyes on the service academies when he was in fifth grade. That dream will soon be a reality – he will be attending the Military Academy to study aeronautical engineering. Since middle school, Ryan Fiechtner of Aberdeen has wanted to pursue a career in the nuclear field. He believes the Naval Academy will afford him unique opportunities and he views the mandatory service after commissioning as an officer as an honor, not a requirement. Aleydis Bruening also plans to study nuclear engineering at the Naval Academy, following her father's lead into the armed forces.

Approximately thirty percent of Naval Academy graduates commission as Marine Corps officers. Nicholas Hanson of Dakota Dunes aspires to do so and will be the fifth generation in his family to be a sailor or Marine.

Each of these students excel academically and athletically, but what really sets them apart is their involvement in school, community, church, and the workforce. Trey Murray from Gregory volunteered in his community, played five sports, and was in band and choir. Nicholas Gray of Fort Pierre played competitive hockey, volunteered, and served as a page for the South Dakota Legislature. Dale Kinyon II from Rapid City was active in school groups, church, and comes from a military family. I'm confident they will continue to grow at the Air Force Academy and Military Academy.

I also want to mention Aubrey Fraasch and Caleb Pitsenberger, who will be attending preparatory schools. They have a great opportunity to prepare for the Academy next year.

I'm confident these young men and women will succeed because their choices so far prove they are incredibly motivated and stand ready to protect and defend our great country.

If you know someone interested in learning more about the service academies, direct them to my website at dustyjohnson.house.gov/services/service-academy-nominations, and check out my video with South Dakotan cadets and midshipmen.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 28 of 87



What If I Do Have A Brain

After about a month on a health hiatus, things started returning to normal, and then I had a doctor's visit scheduled for a checkup.

I don't know why they call us patients because I'm not very patient with these doctors.

At my visit, the doctor thoroughly examined me but couldn't find anything wrong, and then I saw him standing there scratching his chin. Then he said, "I wonder if maybe you had a mini stroke?"

These doctors sometimes over think.

He looked at me a little bit and then said, "I think maybe you did have a mini stroke and we need to take some more examinations to check it out. I'll schedule you for an MRI next week. I want to see if maybe there is any brain damage."

I certainly wasn't ready for that kind of thing. After all, do I have a brain?

Quite often, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage would tell me when I screwed something up, "Do you have a brain or what?"

I've been married long enough to realize that there are many things that you don't respond to, and this was one. If I would answer, I would screw things up a lot worse than what it is. Controlling my tongue is the greatest challenge I have in life.

She will also tell me when I don't get things done precisely on schedule, "Where is your brain today?"

A few weeks ago, I was trying to fix something, and nothing was going right. Then, the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage walked in and casually told me, "If only you had a brain." She laughed and then left.

Our relationship works so well because there is nothing I can't break, and there is nothing she can't fix. So, between the two of us, everything is working out right.

If I had a brain, it might not work out as it does now. If I had a brain, I would think things through, and I don't believe it would come out that well.

But now that the doctor wants to check my brain to see what condition it's in and if I had a mini-stroke. This brings me to a new crossroads in life.

What if, for example, the doctor finds I have a brain and has the proof? How would that set with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage?

If they find my brain, I'll definitely keep any pictures they might have.

Then, when The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage says, "If you only had a brain." I could pull out the picture of my brain, show it to her, and say, "Oh, my dear, here is a picture of my brain." What's she going to say then?

Of course, the other side is, if they do not find my brain and have evidence to show that I don't have a brain, I'm going to be in severe trouble. Or am I?

There is the idea that if you don't have a brain, you're not responsible for what you do. I have to explore that idea. When The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage catches me up in something I'm doing wrong, I could always respond by saying, "Well, my dear, I don't have a brain, so I'm not responsible. Here's my evidence."

I don't know if that will work, but it might be worth trying.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 29 of 87

The worst side of this scenario is that if the doctor does find my brain, and he has evidence that I do have a brain, then, the worst days of my life begin. No matter what I do, it is my responsibility now. After all, I do have a brain.

Not having a brain can be an advantage. And then, having a brain can be an advantage. The thing is to understand the difference between having no brain and having a brain. I'm not sure how that's going to turn out.

I was sitting in my easy chair drinking coffee when The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage came in and sat down.

She asked me, "Are you ready for your MRI tomorrow?"

I was quiet for a moment, and then, looking at her, I said, "What if they find out that I do not have a brain?"

Without skipping a beat, she said, "Well, if that happens nothing will change. You'll be the same person you've always been."

Staring at her, she suddenly broke into hysterical laughter.

It took her a while to calm down, and when she did, she explained her laughter.

"As long as I've known you, you have worked quite well without using your brain. I'm sure that will continue for a long time yet to come."

I'm not sure when, but one of these days, I will use my brain and surprise her. I'm not sure how she will handle that shock, and I'm not sure how I will do it. I'm just going to have to wait for the results of the MRI.

As I was waiting for my doctor's appointment, I thought of Bible verses in James 1:19-20, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

My father always told me, "Listen and think before you speak." This has been the great challenge of my life. My tongue does not seem to be attached to my brain for some reason.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What is so-called attribution science and how does it relate to climate change?

-- William C., New York, NY

Attribution science is a rapidly evolving field that aims to understand the link between human activities and extreme weather. By discerning the extent to which climate change affects the frequency and intensity of these events, attribution science plays a crucial role in climate research. Understanding this relationship is essential for developing effective climate policies and enhancing global resilience to climate impacts.

Attribution science seeks to quantify the influence of climate change on specific weather events. It involves the use of sophisticated computer models and extensive data analysis to compare current climatic conditions with hypothetical scenarios devoid of human-induced changes. The primary objective is to determine how climate change alters the probability and severity of extreme weather events. Key terms in this field include: climate, which refers to long-term atmospheric conditions; climate change, indicating significant changes in these conditions over time; computer models, which simulate climate behavior under various scenarios; and data, which provide the empirical basis for these simulations.

There are two main types of attribution science: event attribution and source attribution. Event attribution focuses on how climate change affects specific extreme weather events. For instance, human-caused climate change significantly increased the likelihood of the 2019 European heatwave and made the 2018 South African drought three times more likely. Moreover, climate change increased the rainfall during Hurricane Harvey by at least 15 percent and nearly doubled the area burned by wildfires in Western US forests. Meanwhile, source attribution identifies the pollutants and activities contributing to climate change. It involves measuring atmospheric concentrations, analyzing emissions data, and conducting modeling studies to pinpoint specific sources of greenhouse gasses.

Attribution science has roots in the 1990s and has advanced considerably with the development of more sophisticated computer models and statistical methods. These advancements have enhanced its accuracy and reliability, allowing for more precise connections between human activity and climate-related events.

The methodology involves comparing real-world data with counterfactual models—simulations of the world without human-induced climate change. High-quality observational data is crucial for these comparisons, but there are challenges, particularly in data-scarce regions like developing countries. Future research aims to develop new methods suitable for such regions with limited data, examine regional impacts, and quantify slow-onset phenomena like sea level rise. These advancements will enhance our understanding of climate impacts and inform more effective adaptation strategies. Attribution science is crucial for shaping climate policies and strategies. Communicating the links between specific weather events and climate change raises public awareness and influences real-time decisions. Insights from attribution studies help communities build resilience against future climate risks.



The rapidly evolving field of attribution science aims to understand the link between human activities and extreme weather. Credit: Pexels.com.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Republican factions fighting for control of the party in Tuesday's primary election

Rival groups spending money to influence GOP legislative races

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - JUNE 1, 2024 12:30 PM

Most of the action in Tuesday's South Dakota primary election is in Republican legislative races, where a fight for control of the party has drawn in players ranging from upstart challengers to fundraising groups affiliated with members of Congress.

There are 44 Republican legislative primary races across the state, and only one Democratic legislative primary. Winners will go on to represent the party in the Nov. 5 general election, when all 105 seats in the Legislature will be up for grabs.

Republicans currently hold all but 11 of those seats, and their grip on the majority is not in doubt. But the party's direction could be influenced by Tuesday's results, many of which will be the final result. Among 35 districts, 16 of them lack general election contests for House seats and 20 lack general election contests for Senate seats, due to candidates running unopposed or one of the parties (mostly Democrats) failing to field a candidate. In other words, in some districts, the primary election is the de facto general election.

One of the Republicans trying to influence the primary results is Toby Doeden, who considered challenging Republican U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson but decided against it. Doeden has since launched Dakota First Action, a political action committee aiming to remove "fake Republicans and their whole crony crowd" from the state House of Representatives, replacing them with "America First" candidates, according to Doeden. "Then we'll take the Senate and governor's office," Doeden said, referring to future elections.

Doeden contributed \$100,000 of his own money to the committee and reported it as a donation, according to a campaign finance report. After online commenters pointed out the \$10,000 limit on individual contributions to political action committees, Doeden said the contribution should have been reported as a loan, not a donation.

Pat Powers, a Republican blogger, has filed an affidavit alleging Doeden is "flagrantly violating" campaign finance laws. Powers also published correspondence from Attorney General Marty Jackley indicating that Jackley's office is investigating.

As of the last filing deadline, Doeden's committee had spent \$25,000 on "data acquisition," and recently sent text messages to District 25 voters alleging a Republican candidate he dislikes is a liberal in disguise.

Another political action committee seeking to challenge the Republican establishment in Pierre is Spearfish Republican Rep. Scott Odenbach's Liberty Tree. It spent \$58,000 ahead of the primary.

Former executive director of Rapid City Catholic Social Services Jim Kinyon's Protecting SD Kids donated \$37,000 to similar candidates, as did anti-abortion activists' South Dakota Right to Life PAC, spending \$11,600. The PAC is affiliated with the nonprofit South Dakota Right to Life, which includes Rep. Jon Hansen, R-Dell Rapids, Rep. Fred Deutsch, R-Watertown, Sen. Al Novstrup, R-Aberdeen, and former representative and current candidate Spencer Gosch on its board.

None of the money spent by those committees went to Republican candidates currently serving in legislative leadership positions.

Former Republican state senator Tom Dempster, of Sioux Falls, warns that confrontational politics within the party will contribute to further divides in an already divided country.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 32 of 87

"We have way too many candidates on the fringe that want people to rally around them because they simply want to upset the system," Dempster said. "It's just the opposite of what our democracy needs today. We need people who know how to handle conflict and pull people together."

The kinds of candidates Dempster favors are receiving help in the primary from longtime Republican state lawmaker Lee Schoenbeck, of Watertown, who isn't seeking reelection. He founded a political action committee in 2021, South Dakota Strong. The committee spent \$46,000 on nine candidates ahead of this primary, according to its campaign finance report.

Schoenbeck said today's Republican party consists of two different groups of people.

"There are the normal Republicans, and there are these strange individuals who are not conservative. They're just unusual," Schoenbeck said. "But they turn out big in primary elections. So, if normal, regular-thinking conservative folks don't vote in this primary, the highly unusual folks will win."

Mort PAC, run by House Majority Leader Will Mortenson, R-Fort Pierre, spent \$48,271 to help some of the same candidates. It received \$10,000 from Republican U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds' Peter Norbeck Leadership PAC and \$10,000 from Republican U.S. Sen. John Thune's Heartland Values PAC.

Dusty PAC, managed by supporters of U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson, donated \$25,750 to many of the same candidates and more.

Dakota Legacy PAC, run by Senate Majority Leader Casey Crabtree, R-Madison, took a similar approach, giving \$16,700 to candidates and spending \$10,000 on advertising. The committee also received \$10,000 apiece from Thune's and Rounds' PACs.

Following are summaries of some races that people on both sides of the Republican divide say they're watching closely.

House of Representatives

In state House of Representatives primaries, the top two vote-getters from each party advance to the general election, where they will vie for two House seats in each legislative district.

District 18 (Clay, Yankton counties): Incumbents Mike Stevens and Julie Auch, and challenger John Marquardt, all of Yankton.

Auch received money from South Dakota Right to Life PAC and a 91.7% scorecard rating from South Dakota Citizens for Liberty, a group that says it advocates for limited government. Stevens received money from Dusty PAC and a 33.3% rating on the Citizens for Liberty scorecard.

Meanwhile, Auch received a D rating from a scorecard published by the Republican blogger Powers, the Real Conservative Scorecard, and Stevens received a B+ rating.

Yankton County Commission Chairman Marquardt received donations from Mort PAC and Dusty PAC.

District 13 (Lincoln, Minnehaha counties): Incumbent Tony Venhuizen and challengers Brad Jankord, John Hughes and Penny BayBridge, all of Sioux Falls. There is no Democratic or independent candidate, which means the two Republican primary winners will win the two House seats.

Venhuizen formerly served as chief of staff for Governors Kristi Noem and Dennis Daugaard and has been involved in Republican state politics for many years.

Jankord received donations from Dusty PAC, Mort PAC, former Gov. Dennis Daugaard, Venhuizen and others, totaling over \$60,000.

Hughes has received funding from Odenbach's Liberty Tree, South Dakota Right to Life PAC, Protecting SD Kids and others, totaling over \$40,000.

BayBridge took in \$4,703 from various individuals.

With Venhuizen taking in over \$100,000, plus the fundraising by other candidates, the district's primary election is the most expensive South Dakota Searchlight found.

District 9 (Minnehaha County): Incumbent Bethany Soye, of Sioux Falls, and challengers Kristi Golden, Daryl Christensen and Tesa Schwans, all of Hartford.

Soye has a 97.5% Citizens for Liberty rating and contributions from Liberty Tree, South Dakota Right to Life PAC and Protecting SD Kids. She was given a D rating on the Real Conservative Scorecard.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 33 of 87

Schwans received donations from South Dakota Right to Life PAC, Protecting SD Kids and Liberty Tree. Golden received donations from Dusty PAC and Mort PAC, and Christensen received donations from Venhuizen and Daugaard.

District 2 (Minnehaha County): Incumbents John Sjaarda, of Valley Springs, and David Kull, of Brandon, face challenger Jake Schoenbeck, of Sioux Falls. There is no Democratic or independent candidate, which means the two Republican primary winners will win the two House seats.

Sjaarda has an 87.5% Citizens for Liberty rating and contributions from Liberty Tree and Protecting SD Kids. Schoenbeck is the son of longtime legislative leader Lee Schoenbeck (who isn't seeking reelection). South Dakota Strong gave Jake Schoenbeck \$5,000. He also received contributions from Mort PAC and Dusty PAC.

Kull has an A rating on the Real Conservative Scorecard and received donations from Dusty PAC and Mort PAC.

District 21 (Aurora, Charles Mix, Douglas, Gregory and Tripp counties): Incumbent Marty Overweg, of New Holland, and challengers Lee Qualm, of Platte, and Jim Halverson, of Winner. There is no Democratic or independent candidate, which means the two Republican primary winners will win the two House seats.

Overweg has a 97.5% Citizens for Liberty rating and contributions from Liberty Tree and South Dakota Right to Life PAC. Qualm, a former legislator, also has Liberty Tree and South Dakota Right to Life PAC contributions, plus an endorsement from Dakota First Action.

Halverson, whose daughter is involved with U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson's reelection campaign, received donations from Dusty PAC and Mort PAC.

District 23 (Brown, Campbell, Edmunds, Faulk, Hand, McPherson, Potter, Walworth counties): Incumbents Scott Moore, of Ipswich, and Majority Whip James Wangsness, of Miller, and challenger Spencer Gosch. There is no Democratic or independent candidate, which means the two Republican primary winners will win the two House seats.

Gosch previously served as speaker of the House. He received contributions from Protect SD Kids, Liberty Tree and a PAC affiliated with the South Dakota Freedom Caucus, whose members sometimes clash with Republican legislative leaders.

Wangsness has an A+ rating on the Real Conservative Scorecard and received contributions from Dusty PAC and Mort PAC.

Moore's pre-primary finance report includes donations from Dusty PAC, Protecting SD Kids and the South Dakota Freedom Caucus PAC.

Senate

In state Senate primaries, only the top vote-getter from each party advances to the general election to vie for one Senate seat in each legislative district.

District 16 (Lincoln, Turner, Union counties): Kevin Jensen vs. Eric Hohman, both of Canton. There is no Democratic or independent candidate, which means the Republican primary winner wins the seat.

Jensen, a current state representative, is term-limited in the House. He has an 83.3% Citizens for Liberty rating and a contribution from Liberty Tree and South Dakota Right to Life PAC.

Hohman's campaign has received contributions from Lee Schoenbeck's South Dakota Strong PAC, Senate Majority Leader Casey Crabtree's Dakota Legacy PAC and the Dusty PAC.

District 3 (Brown County): Carl Perry vs. Katherine Washnok, both of Aberdeen. There is no Democratic or independent candidate, which means the Republican primary winner wins the seat.

Current state representative Perry is attempting a switch to the Senate against Brown County Republican Chair Washnok.

Washnok says she "grew up in" the state Republican Party. She has a contribution from Dakota Legacy PAC and Dusty PAC.

Perry has a 75% SD Citizens for Liberty rating, a Dakota First Action endorsement, and checks from Liberty Tree and South Dakota Right to Life PAC.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 34 of 87

District 30 (Custer, Fall River, Pennington counties): Incumbent Julie Frye-Mueller, of Rapid City, vs. Amber Hulse, of Hot Springs, and Forrest Foster, of Rapid City.

Frye-Mueller is one of two Republicans with a 100% rating from Citizens for Liberty. The state Senate censured Frye-Mueller in 2023. She had allegedly verbally harassed a Legislative Research Council staffer, including criticism of the staffer's decision to have her baby vaccinated.

Hulse is a lawyer and former Miss South Dakota who worked as an intern in President Donald Trump's administration. She received a donation from Dusty PAC.

Foster received \$1,600 ahead of the primary, including \$1,000 from himself.

District 8 (Brookings, Kingsbury, Lake, Miner counties): Incumbent Casey Crabtree, of Madison, vs. Rick Weible, of Elkton. There is no Democratic or independent candidate, which means the Republican primary winner wins the seat.

Crabtree is the Senate majority leader and reports taking in about \$69,000 on his pre-primary finance report. He has a 31.8% rating from Citizens for Liberty.

Weible is a leader in attempts to get rid of vote-counting machines and force hand-counting. He received a donation from the South Dakota Freedom Caucus and took in \$6,000 total.

District 4 (Clark, Codington, Deuel, Grant, Hamlin and Roberts counties): Fred Deutsch, of Florence, vs. Stephanie Sauder, of Bryant. There is no Democratic or independent candidate, which means the Republican primary winner wins the seat.

With term limits forcing John Wiik out of the Senate, current representatives Deutsch and Sauder are seeking the open seat.

Deutsch has a 66.7% Citizens for Liberty rating and received donations from South Dakota Right to Life PAC and Protecting SD Kids. Sauder has a 43.5% Citizens for Liberty rating and contributions from South Dakota Strong and Dusty PAC.

District 35 (Pennington): Incumbent Mike Walsh, of Box Elder, vs. challengers Greg Blanc and Curtis Nupen, both of Rapid City. There is no Democratic or independent candidate, which means the Republican primary winner wins the seat.

Walsh was appointed to an open seat this year by Gov. Kristi Noem. He has a contribution from South Dakota Strong. Blanc has contributions from Liberty Tree and South Dakota Right to Life PAC. Nupen gave himself \$6,000.

District 34 (Pennington): Jason Green vs. Taffy Howard, both of Rapid City.

With incumbent Michael Diedrich not seeking reelection, former legislator Howard is seeking a return to the Legislature. She is a former primary challenger to U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson, whom she described as insufficiently conservative. She has contributions from Liberty Tree, South Dakota Right to Life PAC and Protecting SD Kids, and a Dakota First Action endorsement.

Green is endorsed by outgoing Sen. Diedrich and received donations from Dusty PAC and Lee Schoenbeck.

District 25 (Minnehaha and Moody counties): Incumbent Tom Pischke, of Dell Rapids, vs. challenger Jordan Youngberg, of Colman.

Pischke has an 80.7% rating from Citizens for Liberty, a contribution from Liberty Tree and a Dakota First Action endorsement. He made statewide news for being banned from the House during the last days of the most recent legislative session for a breach of decorum.

Youngberg, a former legislator, has contributions from South Dakota Strong and Dusty PAC.

District 17 (Clay and Union counties): Incumbent Sydney Davis, of Burbank, vs. Jeffrey Church, of Vermillion. There is no Democratic or independent candidate, which means the Republican primary winner wins the seat.

Church has contributions from Liberty Tree and Protecting SD Kids, and is highlighting Davis' 20% Citizens for Liberty rating in his campaign material. Davis has donations from Dusty PAC and others totaling about \$39,000.

District 9 (Minnehaha County): Joy Hohn, a vocal opponent of eminent domain for carbon dioxide pipelines, faces off with former representative Mark Willadsen. There is no Democratic or independent candidate, which means the Republican primary winner wins the seat.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 35 of 87

Doeden's Dakota First Action endorsed Hohn, and she has donations from Liberty Tree and South Dakota Right to Life PAC.

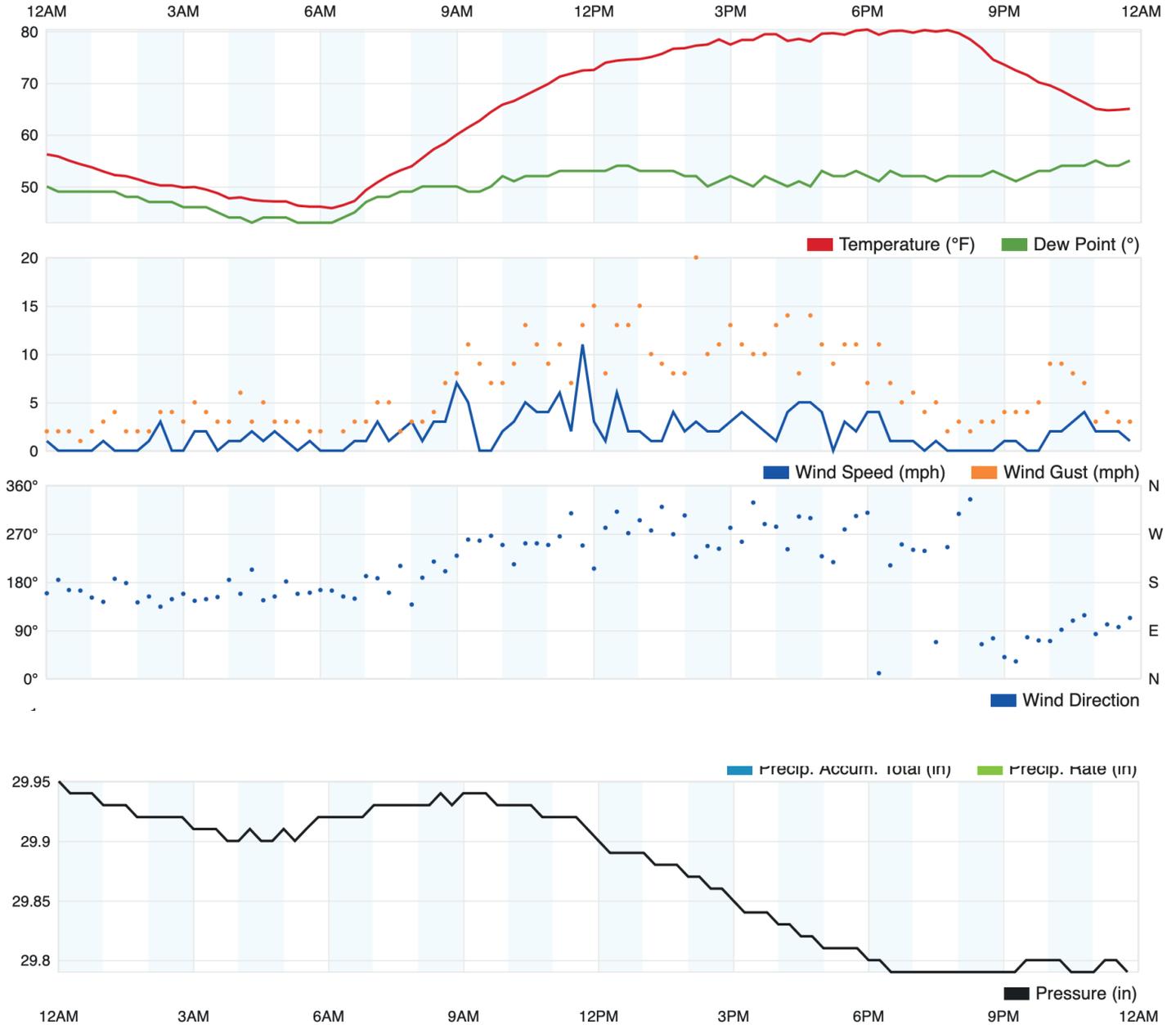
Willadsen has donations from Dusty PAC, former Gov. Daugaard, and former speaker of the state House, Mark Mickelson.

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.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 36 of 87

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Broton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 37 of 87

Sunday

Sunday Night

Monday

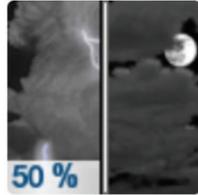
Monday Night

Tuesday



High: 80 °F

Severe
Thunderstorms
and Breezy



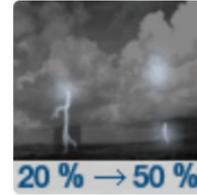
Low: 55 °F

Severe
Thunderstorms
then Mostly
Cloudy



High: 83 °F

Mostly Sunny



Low: 63 °F

Slight Chance
T-storms then
Chance
T-storms



High: 75 °F

Chance
Showers



Severe Weather Threat Overview

June 2, 2024
3:17 AM

This afternoon and evening

Timing/Location

Strong to severe storms possible along and east of the Missouri River this afternoon and evening.

Primary Threats for the **YELLOW** areas

Tornado Potential

Very Low **Low** Medium High

Max Hail Size

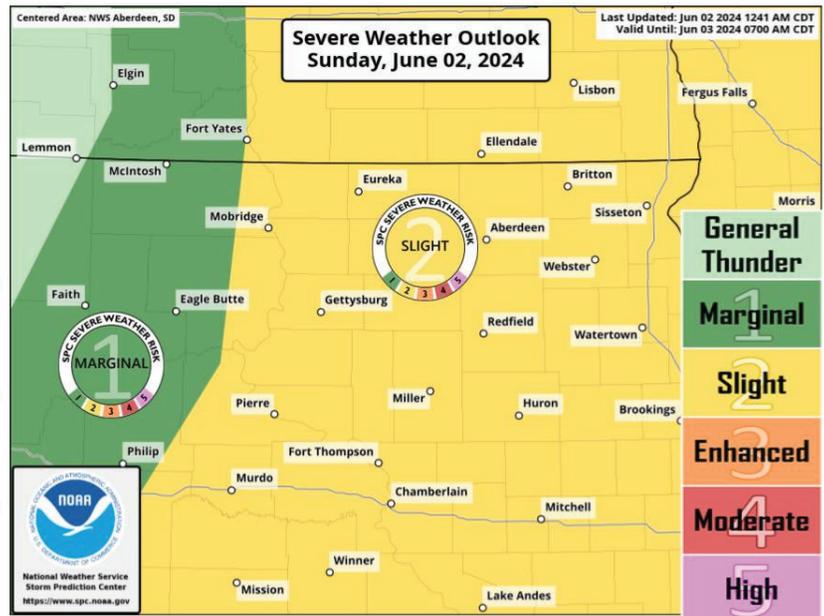
Dimes **Quarters** **Golfball** Baseball

Max Wind Speed

< 60 mph 60-70 mph **70-80 mph** > 80mph

Heavy Rain/Flooding Potential

Very Low **Low** Medium High



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Thunderstorms are expected today into tonight over portions of the region. Severe weather will be possible with these storms, mainly this afternoon and evening. Winds over 70 mph and hail over 2 inches in diameter will be the main threats with a few tornadoes also possible. Frequent lightning and heavy rain are also expected.

Broton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 38 of 87



Severe Weather Timing

June 2, 2024
3:29 AM

Timing Highlights

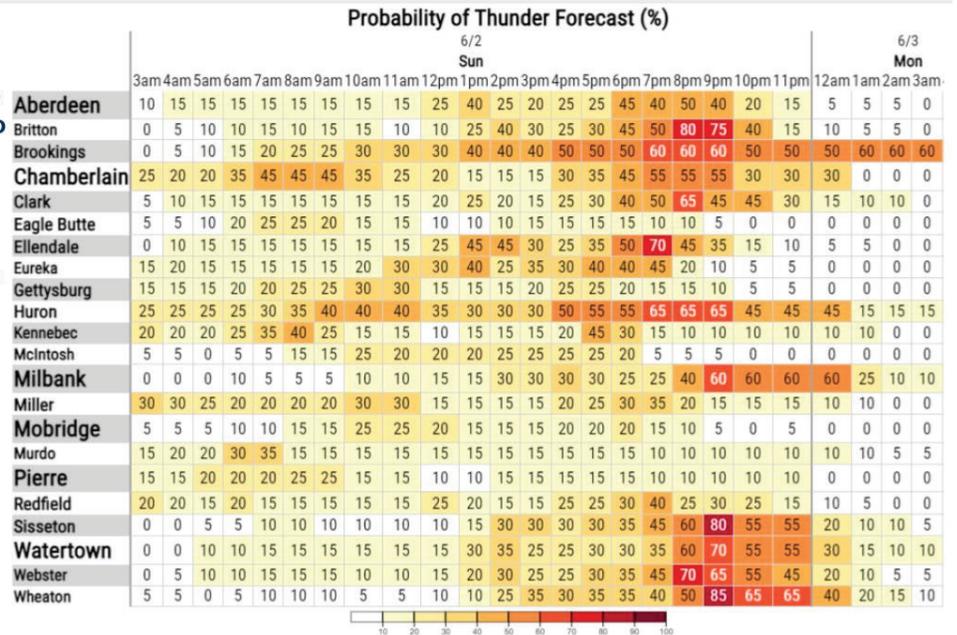
A cold front sweeping east across the region will bring the **potential for severe thunderstorms later this afternoon into this evening.**

Storms will initially develop in the central Dakotas, especially in ND, between 1-4 PM CDT, then move to the east-southeast through the evening hours.

The greatest thunderstorm threat will be over northeast SD between 5 PM and Midnight.

Cities At Greatest Risk

Aberdeen, Watertown, Sisseton, Webster, Wheaton, Ortonville (northeastern SD/west central MN)



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

A cold front sweeping east across the region will bring thunderstorms to the region. They will develop in the central Dakotas this afternoon and then spread east across the rest of northeast SD late this afternoon into the evening hours before departing west central MN around midnight.

Broton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 39 of 87



May 2024 Climate Summary

June 1, 2024
5:15 PM

Near Normal Temperatures - Dry Central, Above Normal Rainfall east of the James River



	Aberdeen <small>(since 1893)</small>	Pierre <small>(since 1933)</small>	Mobridge <small>(since 1911)</small>	Watertown <small>(since 1898)</small>	Sisseton <small>(since 1932)</small>
Avg Temp	57.5°	57.5°	57.4°	56.7°	57.7°
Departure	+0.2°	+0.3°	-0.2°	+1.0°	+0.4°
Warmest	91° (5/17)	86° (5/17)	90° (5/17)	86° (5/17)	87° (5/17)
Coldest	30° (5/4)	32° (5/3)	33° (5/1)	36° (5/4)	35° (5/5)
Rainfall	2.85"	1.51"	1.87"	4.77"	5.69"
Departure	-0.43"	-1.74"	-1.07"	+1.90"	+2.90"
Greatest Daily Rainfall	1.23" (5/23)	0.47" (5/14)	0.59" (5/30)	1.60" (5/21)	1.35" (5/30)



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

May 2024 ended up being near normal temperature wise, but rainfall differed from the central to the eastern part of South Dakota. Over central SD, rainfall was 0.5-1.75" below normal. Meanwhile, areas east of the James River Valley experienced rainfall 1.5-3" above normal.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 40 of 87

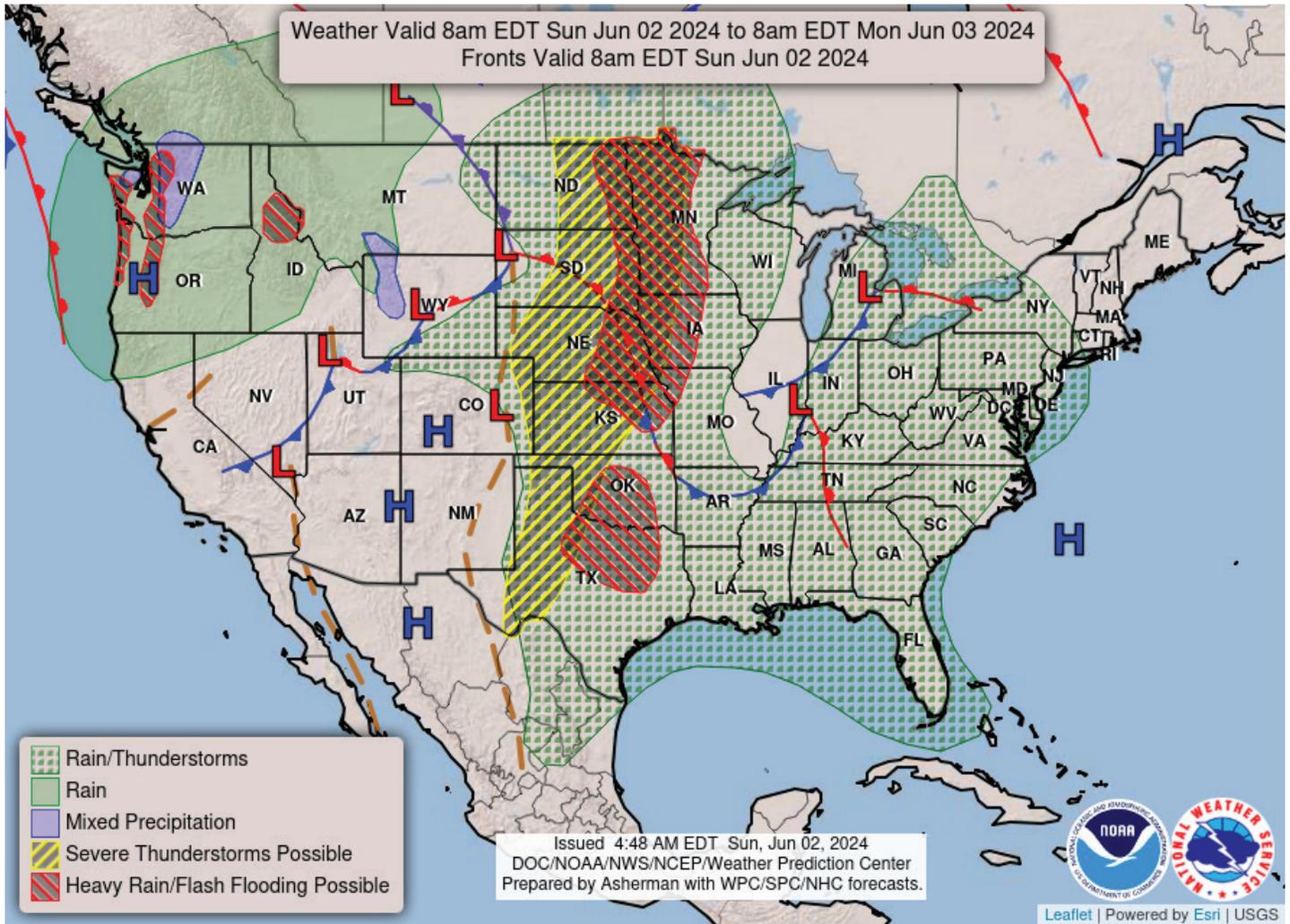
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 81 °F at 7:52 PM
Low Temp: 46 °F at 6:14 AM
Wind: 20 mph at 2:10 PM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 15 hours, 32 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 100 in 2017
Record Low: 30 in 1946
Average High: 77
Average Low: 51
Average Precip in June.: .21
Precip to date in June: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 7.46
Precip Year to Date: 7.07
Sunset Tonight: 9:16:36 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:44:00 am



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 41 of 87

Today in Weather History

June 2, 1891: An estimated F3 tornado moved northeast, passing one mile south of Hazel in Hamlin County, where three people were killed in a barn. The farm home was entirely swept away. A horse was seen being carried in the air for 400 yards. The tornado was estimated to be on the ground for about 5 miles.

After touching down, an estimated F2 tornado moved northeast along the eastern edge of Watertown, where a barn was destroyed, and debris was scattered for a half mile. Two homes were leveled 5 miles northeast of Watertown. Near Waverly, one person was injured in the destruction of a flour mill. This tornado was estimated to be on the ground for about 15 miles.

June 2, 1964: Some bitter cold temperatures were observed during the early morning hours on the 2nd. Some low temperatures include; 27 degrees 12 miles SSW of Harrold; 28 degrees in Andover and 23 N of Highmore; 29 degrees 4 NW of Gann Valley, Redfield, and 2 NW of Stephan; 30 degrees in Castlewood and 1 W of Highmore; 31 degrees in Britton, 1 NW of Faulkton, and in Kennebec; and 32 degrees in McLaughlin.

June 2, 2008: Several supercell thunderstorms rolled southeast from northwest South Dakota into central South Dakota bringing large hail, damaging winds, and flash flooding during the late afternoon and evening hours. The large hail, up to baseball size, and high winds killed a large number of birds, pheasants, grouse, and rabbits. Thousands of acres of grassland and cropland along with many shelter belts received minor to major damage in Stanley and Hughes County. The large hail also knocked out many windows and damaged the siding of tens of buildings and homes in both Stanley and Hughes counties. Many roads and cropland were also affected by flash flooding throughout Hughes and Stanley counties. Very heavy rain of over 3 inches caused flash flooding in many parts of Pierre into the early morning hours. Many roads were reportedly flooded with 1 to 2 feet of water. Several homes in southeast Pierre received sewer backup. Also, several houses on Grey Goose Road received flood damage. A Federal Disaster Declaration was issued for Hughes and Stanley counties mainly for the flooding. Tennis ball hail broke most of the west side windows out of the house near Mission Ridge in Stanley County. Hail up to the size of baseballs fell in Pierre breaking some windows out of homes and vehicles. Very heavy rains of 2 to 4 inches fell across much of Stanley County causing extensive flash flooding. Seventeen roads also sustained some form of damage from the flooding.

1889: The same storm that caused the historic dam failure in Johnstown, PA, also affected Washington, D.C. The streets and reservations in the center of the city and all the wharves and streets along the riverfront were under water. Pennsylvania Avenue was flooded from 2nd to 10th Streets. The Potomac River crested at the Aqueduct Bridge at 19.5 feet on June 2. Additionally, damage occurred on Rock Creek, with the Woodley Lane Bridge washed away. Considerable damage occurred to machinery plants and material at the Navy Yard.

1917: The temperature at Tribune, Kansas dipped to 30 degrees to establish a state record for June.

1998: Frostburg, Maryland on June 2, 1998, at 9:45 PM - This was part of a killer outbreak of tornadoes that moved southeast from Pennsylvania. The storm entered Garrett County, Maryland striking the town of Finzel. It then moved up and over Big Savage Mountain in Allegany County and ripped through the northern portion of Frostburg. It reached its peak strength as it crossed the ridge. Winds were estimated between 210 and 250 mph (F4 on the Fujita Tornado Damage Scale). This was the first tornado to "officially" be rated an "F4" in the State of Maryland. The National Weather Service adopted the Fujita Damage Scale in 1973. The total damage path of the Frostburg tornado was over 25 miles long (8 miles in Allegany County) and up to a half-mile wide. Along most of its path, it was producing winds over 125 mph (F2 or stronger). The damage path was continuous as it moved up and down over 2000-foot mountain ridges. The fact that no one was killed in Maryland was attributed to 5 to 10 minutes warning that was well communicated to people in Frostburg over television, radio, scanners, telephones, and sirens. People took quick action to move to their basements. A mother and child rode out the storm as it destroyed their house hiding under a table in the basement. They were shaken but unharmed. A jacket from a Frostburg home was found 25 miles away. A diploma was found near Winchester, Virginia, 60 miles away and a bill was found near Sterling Virginia (about 100 miles away).

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 42 of 87

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

A BETTER WORLD

One day the Abbotts were watching the morning news. After observing one tragic event after another, Jon turned to his wife and said, "You know, I could make a better world than this one."

Turning to him she politely said, "Why don't you?"

We read in Genesis that God "looked over all that He made, and He saw that it was excellent in every way." Every small detail that God brought into existence was the way He intended it to be - excellent. From placing light in the sky and fish in the sea; land for farmers to grow crops and people to enjoy; and the sun and moon and stars to govern days and nights and seasons; and fish and birds and animals for man's enjoyment, use and nourishment - even men and women were created without flaw. It was all perfect.

But then through man - the triumph of His creation - sin entered the world and all that was the way He wanted it to be was ruined. Satan entered His creation and brought destruction and death.

Any goodness in us or in the world is of God. He is the source of light and life, grace and goodness, peace and purity. And it is only as we let God through Christ, Who is Lord, rule and reign in our lives that we can become good and do good for God and reclaim His work.

Christ in us, the hope of glory.

Prayer: Help us, Father, do Your work in Your world as we surrender our lives to Your will. May we make the world better through Your Son, our Savior. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good! Genesis 1:31



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

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 43 of 87

The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

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

* The E-Weekly is a PDF file emailed to you each week. It does not grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Groton Daily Independent

www.397news.com

Subscription Form

This option will grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

- 1 Month \$15.98
- 3 Months..... \$26.63
- 6 Months..... \$31.95
- 9 Months..... \$42.60
- 12 Months..... \$53.25

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

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

E-mail _____

Password _____

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

paypal.me/paperpaul



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 44 of 87



WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 05.31.24

4 11 23 33 49 23

MegaPlier: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$560,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.01.24

13 15 19 29 39 5

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$2,800,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.01.24

22 29 33 36 40 15

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 52 Mins 0 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.01.24

1 4 17 28 29

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$132,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.01.24

24 40 53 56 59 5

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.01.24

28 38 52 54 68 8

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$171,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

In a rare step, 3 South Dakota counties are set to vote on counting ballots by hand

By JACK DURA Associated Press

Voters in at least three rural South Dakota counties are set to decide Tuesday whether to return to counting ballots by hand, the latest communities around the country to consider ditching machine tabulators based on unfounded conspiracy theories stemming from the 2020 presidential election.

The three counties, each with fewer than 6,000 residents, would be among the first in the U.S. to require old-school hand counts, which long ago were replaced by ballot tabulators in most of the country.

A number of other states and local governments have considered banning machine counting since the 2020 election, but most of those efforts have sputtered over concerns of cost, the time it takes to count by hand and the difficulty of hiring more staff to do it.

Experts say counting the votes by hand is less accurate than machine tabulation.

Supporters of the South Dakota effort aren't deterred by such worries.

"We believe that a decentralized approach to the elections is much more secure, much more transparent, and that the citizens should have oversight over their elections," said Jessica Pollema, president of SD Canvassing, a citizen group supporting the change.

Like efforts elsewhere, the South Dakota push for hand counting has its origins in false claims pushed by former President Donald Trump and his allies after the 2020 presidential election. They made claims of widespread voter fraud and spread conspiracy theories that voting machines were manipulated to steal the election. There has been no evidence to support such claims, but they have become embedded in many places that voted heavily for Trump.

The citizen initiatives in South Dakota to prohibit tabulating machines are set to appear on Tuesday's primary ballot in Gregory, Haakon and Tripp counties. Similar petition efforts for future measure votes are underway in more than 40 other counties in the conservative state, Pollema said. At least four counties have rejected attempts to force hand counting.

Earlier, the Fall River County Commission voted in February to count ballots by hand for the June election, and Tripp County counted its general election ballots by hand in 2022.

If the measure passes Tuesday, Gregory County Auditor Julie Bartling said the county will have to increase the number of precincts to lessen the burden of hand counting. That will force it to buy more assisted voting devices for disabled voters. The county also will face the difficult task of hiring more election workers.

Bartling, who runs elections in the county, opposes the initiative and said she has "full faith in the automated tabulators."

Todd and Tripp County Auditor Barb DeSersa said she also opposes attempts to require hand counting of all ballots because the process isn't as accurate. She said the 2022 hand count left election workers exhausted.

"I know the ones that have done it the last time didn't want nothing to do with it this time, so I think once they do it once or twice, they'll get tired of it, and it'll be harder to find people to volunteer to do that," DeSersa said.

DeSersa's office estimated it would cost \$17,000 to \$25,000 for elections in Tripp County to be counted by hand, compared to about \$19,000 to \$21,000 using tabulators. Haakon County Auditor Stacy Pinney said she initially estimated hand counting will cost between \$750 and \$4,500, but "overall, an election cost is hard to determine at this point."

According to a state attorney's analysis for Haakon County, it would take two election workers using a tabulator three to four hours to count all the ballots. It would take 15 to 20 election workers between five and 15 hours to do a hand count, depending on the number of contested races.

The three counties have a combined 7,725 active registered voters, according to a statewide report.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 46 of 87

Republican state Rep. Rocky Blare, who lives in Tripp County, said he will vote against the measure. "They can't prove to me that there's been any issues that I think have affected our election in South Dakota," Blare said.

Secretary of State Monae Johnson, a Republican, expressed confidence in tabulating machines, noting they have been used for years. In a statement, she pointed to "safeguards built in throughout the process and the post-election audit on the machines after the primary and general election to ensure they are working properly."

The June election will be the first with a post-election audit, a process included in a 2023 state law. It involves hand counting all the votes in two races from 5% of precincts in every county to ensure the machine tabulation is accurate. Johnson's office said there was no evidence of any widespread problems in 2020 or 2022. One person voted twice, she said, and was caught.

After repeated attacks against machine-counting of ballots in the 2020 presidential election, Dominion Voting Systems last year reached a \$787 million settlement in a defamation case against Fox News over false claims the network repeatedly aired. The judge in that case found it was "CRYSTAL clear" none of the claims about Dominion's machines was true, and testimony showed many Fox hosts quietly doubted the claims their network was airing.

Since 2020, only a few counties have made the switch to hand counting. In California, officials in Shasta County voted to get rid of their ballot tabulators, but state lawmakers later restricted hand counts to limited circumstances. Officials in Arizona's Mohave County rejected a proposal to hand count ballots in 2023, citing the \$1.1 million cost.

David Levine, a former local election official in Idaho who is now a senior fellow with the Alliance for Securing Democracy, said research has shown hand counting large numbers of ballots is more costly, less accurate and takes more time than machine tabulators.

"If you listen to conspiracy theorists and election skeptics throughout the U.S., one reason the 2020 election was illegitimate was because of an algorithm. Hence, if you take computers out of the voting process, you'll have a more secure election," Levine said. "The only problem: it's not true."

While some areas do count ballots by hand, mainly in the Northeast, it typically happens in places with a small number of registered voters. Hand counts are common during post-election tests to check that machines are counting ballots correctly, but only a small portion of the ballots are manually checked.

Election experts say it's unrealistic to think workers in large jurisdictions, with tens or hundreds of thousands of voters, could count all their ballots by hand and report results quickly, especially since ballots often include multiple races.

"The issue is that people aren't very good at large, tedious, repetitive tasks like counting ballots, and computers are," Levine said. "Those who believe otherwise are either unaware of this reality or choose to ignore it."

Most US students are recovering from pandemic-era setbacks, but millions are making up little ground

By COLLIN BINKLEY AP Education Writer

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) — On one side of the classroom, students circled teacher Maria Fletcher and practiced vowel sounds. In another corner, children read together from a book. Scattered elsewhere, students sat at laptop computers and got reading help from online tutors.

For the third graders at Mount Vernon Community School in Virginia, it was an ordinary school day. But educators were racing to get students learning more, faster, and to overcome setbacks that have persisted since schools closed for the COVID-19 pandemic four years ago.

America's schools have started to make progress toward getting students back on track. But improvement has been slow and uneven across geography and economic status, with millions of students — often those from marginalized groups — making up little or no ground.

Nationally, students made up one-third of their pandemic losses in math during the past school year and

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 47 of 87

one-quarter of the losses in reading, according to the Education Recovery Scorecard, an analysis of state and national test scores by researchers at Harvard and Stanford.

But in nine states, including Virginia, reading scores continued to fall during the 2022-23 school year after previous decreases during the pandemic.

Clouding the recovery is a looming financial crisis. States have used some money from the historic \$190 billion in federal pandemic relief to help students catch up, but that money runs out later this year.

"The recovery is not finished, and it won't be finished without state action," said Thomas Kane, a Harvard economist behind the scorecard. "States need to start planning for what they're going to do when the federal money runs out in September. And I think few states have actually started that discussion."

Virginia lawmakers approved an extra \$418 million last year to accelerate recovery. Massachusetts officials set aside \$3.2 million to provide math tutoring for fourth and eighth grade students who are behind grade level, along with \$8 million for literacy tutoring.

But among other states with lagging progress, few said they were changing their strategies or spending more to speed up improvement.

Virginia hired online tutoring companies and gave schools a "playbook" showing how to build effective tutoring programs. Lisa Coons, Virginia's superintendent of public instruction, said last year's state test scores were a wake-up call.

"We weren't recovering as fast as we needed," Coons said in an interview.

U.S. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona has called for states to continue funding extra academic help for students as the federal money expires.

"We just can't stop now," he said at a May 30 conference for education journalists. "The states need to recognize these interventions work. Funding public education does make a difference."

In Virginia, the Alexandria district received \$2.3 million in additional state money to expand tutoring.

At Mount Vernon, where classes are taught in English and Spanish, students are divided into groups and rotate through stations customized to their skill level. Those who need the most help get online tutoring. In Fletcher's classroom, a handful of students wore headsets and worked with tutors through Ignite Learning, one of the companies hired by the state.

With tutors in high demand, the online option has been a big help, Mount Vernon principal Jennifer Hamilton said.

"That's something that we just could not provide here," she said.

Ana Marisela Ventura Moreno said her 9-year-old daughter, Sabrina, benefited significantly from extra reading help last year during second grade, but she's still catching up.

"She needs to get better. She's not at the level she should be," the mother said in Spanish. She noted the school did not offer the tutoring help this year, but she did not know why.

Alexandria education officials say students scoring below proficient or close to that cutoff receive high-intensity tutoring help and they have to prioritize students with the greatest needs. Alexandria trailed the state average on math and reading exams in 2023, but it's slowly improving.

More worrying to officials are the gaps: Among poorer students at Mount Vernon, just 24% scored proficient in math and 28% hit the mark in reading. That's far lower than the rates among wealthier students, and the divide is growing wider.

Failing to get students back on track could have serious consequences. The researchers at Harvard and Stanford found communities with higher test scores have higher incomes and lower rates of arrest and incarceration. If pandemic setbacks become permanent, it could follow students for life.

The Education Recovery Scorecard tracks about 30 states, all of which made at least some improvement in math from 2022 to 2023. The states whose reading scores fell in that span, in addition to Virginia, were Nevada, California, South Dakota, Wyoming, Indiana, Oklahoma, Connecticut and Washington.

Only a few states have rebounded to pre-pandemic testing levels. Alabama was the only state where math achievement increased past 2019 levels, while Illinois, Mississippi and Louisiana accomplished that in reading.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 48 of 87

In Chicago Public Schools, the average reading score went up by the equivalent of 70% of a grade level from 2022 to 2023. Math gains were less dramatic, with students still behind almost half a grade level compared with 2019. Chicago officials credit the improvement to changes made possible with nearly \$3 billion in federal relief.

The district trained hundreds of Chicago residents to work as tutors. Every school building got an interventionist, an educator who focuses on helping struggling students.

The district also used federal money for home visits and expanded arts education in an effort to re-engage students.

"Academic recovery in isolation, just through 'drill and kill,' either tutoring or interventions, is not effective," said Bogdana Chkoumbova, the district's chief education officer. "Students need to feel engaged."

At Wells Preparatory Elementary on the city's South Side, just 3% of students met state reading standards in 2021. Last year, 30% hit the mark. Federal relief allowed the school to hire an interventionist for the first time, and teachers get paid to team up on recovery outside working hours.

In the classroom, the school put a sharper focus on collaboration. Along with academic setbacks, students came back from school closures with lower maturity levels, principal Vincent Izuegbu said. By building lessons around discussion, officials found students took more interest in learning.

"We do not let 10 minutes go by without a teacher giving students the opportunity to engage with the subject," Izuegbu said. "That's very, very important in terms of the growth that we've seen."

Olorunkemi Atoyebi was an A student before the pandemic, but after spending fifth grade learning at home, she fell behind. During remote learning, she was nervous about stopping class to ask questions. Before long, math lessons stopped making sense.

When she returned to school, she struggled with multiplication and terms such as "dividend" and "divisor" confused her.

While other students worked in groups, her math teacher took her aside for individual help. Atoyebi learned a rhyming song to help memorize multiplication tables. Over time, it began to click.

"They made me feel more confident in everything," said Atoyebi, now 14. "My grades started going up. My scores started going up. Everything has felt like I understand it better."

100 years ago, US citizenship for Native Americans came without voting rights in swing states

By MORGAN LEE Associated Press

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — Voter participation advocate Theresa Pasqual traverses Acoma Pueblo with a stack of sample ballots in her car and applications for absentee ballots, handing them out at every opportunity ahead of New Mexico's Tuesday primary.

Residents of the tribal community's original mesa-top "sky city" that endured after the Spanish invasion in the late 1500s know firsthand the challenges voters have faced across Indian Country, where polling places are often hours away and restrictive voter laws and ID requirements only add to the barriers.

It's been a century now since an act of Congress granted citizenship to Native Americans, but advocates say that right bestowed in 1924 still hasn't translated into equal access to the ballot. Inequities are especially pronounced in remote regions across the U.S., and some key Southwestern states with large Native American populations.

New Mexico is trying something new — a test run of sorts for many new and contested provisions that are part of the state's Native American Voting Rights Act that was passed last year. The measure promises tribal communities a greater voice in how and where they can vote, even opening the possibility that tribal offices can be designated as a street address for remote households that have none.

This should help at Acoma, where Pasqual said some residents still do not have standard addresses.

Native Americans in New Mexico — home to 22 federally recognized tribal communities and holdings of an Oklahoma-based tribe — were among the last to gain access to voting, decades after the U.S. extended birthright citizenship to the land's original inhabitants on June 2, 1924 through the Indian Citizenship Act.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 49 of 87

That legislation took shape in the aftermath of World War I in which thousands of Native Americans had volunteered to serve overseas in the military.

A patchwork of statutes and treaties already offered about two-thirds of Native Americans citizenship, sometimes in exchange for land allotments that fractured reservations, gestures of assimilation, military service and even the renunciation of tribal traditions. The one-sentence Indian Citizenship Act swept away those requirements in an attempt to grant citizenship to all Native Americans.

At the same time, Congress deferred to state governments qualifications on who qualified to vote. Legal access to the ballot was denied under existing state constitutional provisions and statutes until 1948 in Arizona and New Mexico — and until 1957 on reservations in Utah.

It was by design, said Maurice Crandall, an Arizona State University history professor and citizen of the Yavapai-Apache Nation of Camp Verde. Pointing to the largest Native populations in New Mexico and Arizona, he said: “They don’t want a large group of Native people who can swing elections.”

Fast forward to 2020, he said, and “many people credit the Native vote with deciding to bring Arizona into the (Joe) Biden camp.”

Biden won Arizona by about 10,500 votes, as voter turnout surged on the Navajo and Hopi reservations.

At Laguna Pueblo in New Mexico, voting has provided Native Americans with a path to power amid the political rise of pueblo member Deb Haaland. She became one of the first two Native American women in Congress in 2018 before taking the reins of the Interior Department to oversee U.S. obligations to 574 federally recognized tribes.

For the upcoming primary, Laguna is on the front lines of two Democratic contests with first-time female Native American candidates competing in districts that were redrawn in 2021 to increase Native influence. In the general election, eligible voters among 8,000 Laguna residents will cast ballots in a congressional swing district rematch between U.S. Rep. Gabe Vasquez and Republican Yvette Herrell, who lost in 2022 by 1,350 votes. Herrell seldom invokes her Cherokee heritage.

The state’s new voting rights legislation for Native Americans provides new tools for tribal communities to request convenient on-reservation voting sites and secure ballot deposit boxes with consultation requirements for county clerks and an appeals process.

But there are still obstacles, said Laguna Pueblo administrator Ashley M. Sarracino, pointing to tensions with county election administrators over a decision to withdraw three Election Day voting sites at the pueblo this year, leaving three open.

In Arizona, the anniversary of the Indian Citizenship Act stirs up frustration among Native American leaders, including Gov. Stephen Lewis of the Gila River Indian Community. He has denounced efforts by the Republican National Committee and state lawmakers to revive and extend voter ID requirements through the 2024 general election.

Two of Lewis’ community members sued in 1928 after being turned away from the polls, only to have the Arizona Supreme Court rebuff their case. The community wouldn’t realize the right to vote until 1948 — after World War II and the raising of an American flag at Iwo Jima that included Ira Hayes, who was part of the Gila River community.

Lewis during a recent online forum counted the years that passed between the time the U.S. Declaration of Independence was inked and the Indian Citizenship Act was signed. He said elected officials for years have “made laws for us, about us, but never with us.”

Native Americans have held widely divergent views about citizenship and voting, said Torey Dolan, a research fellow at the University of Wisconsin Law School and citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Some view U.S. citizenship as incompatible with being Indigenous people; others see it more like dual citizenship.

With approval of the citizenship act, many Native Americans feared the expansion of U.S. citizenship might undermine the special status of trust land that allows tribes to make their own decisions about tax-exempt land and shield it from speculators.

“It was really seen in many parts of Indian Country as being aimed at breaking down tribal cultures, par-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 50 of 87

ticularly in the Southwest," said Geoffrey Blackwell, general counsel to the National Congress of American Indians that advocates for Native American rights and sovereignty.

For some, ensuring voting rights was worth the fight. In 1948, Isleta Pueblo member and World War II military veteran Miguel Trujillo challenged the status quo that barred Native Americans in New Mexico from voting by attempting to vote in Valencia County. He was rejected, sparking a landmark lawsuit that was supported by Washington-based federal Indian law pioneer Felix Cohen and the National Congress of American Indians.

A 1956 federal survey of Native voting in the Southwest found anemic participation, with no polling places set up at New Mexico pueblos. In Arizona, Jim Crow-style discrimination set in with widespread application of literacy tests to block Native-language speakers from voting until the practice was barred in 1970 under the federal Voting Rights Act.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 spurred a new movement within tribal communities to encourage participation, said Laura Harris, the Albuquerque-based director of Americans for Indian Opportunity and a citizen of the Comanche Nation of Oklahoma.

In 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a key provision of the Voting Rights Act that gave the Justice Department election oversight in states with a history of discrimination. Since then, several states have enacted new voting laws that some legal experts say make it unreasonably difficult for Native Americans to vote, including a flurry of restrictions from Republicans enacted in the wake of the 2020 election.

But in New Mexico, the Sandoval County clerk's office has expanded early voting services in recent years for tribal communities. Only one pueblo in the county declined the opportunity this year. Native language interpreters are posted at each of the sites, which are open to all county residents.

Evelyn Sandoval works with the county attorney's office as a liaison to Native Americans. She teaches families how to use newly available tools to register online and receive absentee ballots by mail.

"I'm trying to get them to be self-reliant," said Sandoval, a 54-year-old former oil and gas company worker who was raised Ojo Encino, a Navajo community with fewer than 300 residents. Her mother spoke only Navajo.

The Israeli army says it investigates itself. Where do those investigations stand?

By JULIA FRANKEL and JACK JEFFERY Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Throughout its grinding seven-month war against Hamas, Israel has pledged to investigate a series of deadly events in which its military forces are suspected of wrongdoing. The commitment comes in the face of mounting claims — from human rights groups and the International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor — that the country's leaders are committing war crimes in Hamas-ruled Gaza.

In one of the highest-profile cases, an attack on a World Central Kitchen convoy that killed five foreign aid workers, the Israeli army promptly published its findings, acknowledged misconduct by its forces and dismissed two soldiers. But other investigations remain open, and admissions of guilt are rare.

Israel's Military Advocate General, Maj. Gen. Yifat Tomer-Yerushalmi, said this week that the military is investigating about 70 cases of alleged wrongdoing. She gave few details. The military refused to disclose the full list of investigations and told The Associated Press it could only respond to queries about specific probes.

A look at some of the investigations that have been publicly announced:

A DEADLY STRIKE ON A TENT CAMP KILLS DISPLACED FAMILIES

On Tuesday, Israel revealed the preliminary results of an investigation into a deadly strike on a tent camp sheltering displaced families in the southern Gaza city of Rafah.

Sunday's strike killed at least 45 people and caused widespread destruction. Most of the victims were women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which doesn't distinguish between the deaths of civilians and Hamas militants.

The military's chief spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, said a preliminary investigation found that

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 51 of 87

the Israeli munitions used that day in efforts to eliminate two Hamas militants were too small to be the source of a fire that broke out.

Hagari said the destruction may have been caused by secondary explosions, possibly from Palestinian militants' weapons in the area. Hamas did not respond to that explanation, but a member of the militants' political bureau remarked Tuesday that Israel "believes that it is deceiving the world, with its false claim that it did not intend to kill and burn children and women, and its claim to investigate its crimes."

The Israeli military said in a statement that the investigation had been turned over to a fact-finding group that operates independently outside the army's chain of command. Those findings are then handed to the military advocate general, who decides if there should be disciplinary measures. It's not clear how long the probe will last.

SCORES OF CIVILIANS ARE SHOT DEAD AROUND A FLOUR CONVOY

In February, witnesses said Israeli troops fired on a crowd of Palestinians waiting for aid in Gaza City. At least 104 people were killed and 760 were wounded, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which described it as a massacre.

Israel's military swiftly released preliminary investigation results, saying huge crowds tried to grab supplies off of a pre-dawn convoy of 30 army trucks carrying flour toward hard-hit northern Gaza. The army said dozens of Palestinians were killed in a stampede, with some run over by the trucks as the drivers tried to get away. It said its troops only fired when they felt endangered by the crowd.

The military said the case is also being investigated by the fact-finding group.

AL-AHLI HOSPITAL EXPLOSION SETS OFF DEADLY INFERNO

An explosion in October in the courtyard of the Al-Ahli hospital, where thousands of Palestinians had sought shelter or medical treatment, set off an inferno that burned men, women and children alive.

There are still conflicting claims over what happened.

Officials in Gaza quickly said an Israeli airstrike had hit the hospital, killing at least 500 people. Images of the aftermath ignited protests across the region.

Within hours, Israeli officials said they had conducted an investigation and determined that they had not been involved. They released live video, audio and other evidence that it said showed the blast was caused by a rocket misfired by Islamic Jihad, another Palestinian militant group.

Islamic Jihad denied responsibility.

An AP investigation, along with U.S. and French intelligence assessments, concluded a misfired rocket likely caused the explosion.

A PALESTINIAN MAN IS SHOT WHILE WALKING WITH OTHERS

In January, the Israeli government announced it was investigating the death of a Palestinian man who was fatally shot while walking with four others.

Video footage shows one of the men holding a white flag — the international symbol of surrender — and the others behind him holding their hands in the air. They then scramble backward as several shots ring out.

In a second clip, one of the men is lying on the ground. The shooter is not visible in the video but before the shots are fired, the camera pans, showing what looks to be an Israeli tank positioned nearby. Ahmed Hijazi, a citizen journalist who filmed the episode, told The Associated Press that an Israeli tank fired on the group.

The army said it conducted an in-depth investigation and found the tank did not fire at the men. It also said it was "not possible to determine with certainty" whether the man was killed by Israeli fire.

FOUR PALESTINIANS ARE SHOT ON A DIRT ROAD

On March 22, Israel's military launched an investigation after footage emerged appearing to show the bombing of five Palestinians near the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis.

Aerial footage circulating on social media shows four men walking along a dirt road before a strike hits them, killing all four instantly. Another man farther along the road tries to run away before he is hit and killed. The origin of the footage remains unclear.

The military said the investigation had been turned over to the independent fact-finding group.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 52 of 87

A GAZA SURGEON DIES IN AN ISRAELI PRISON

Famed Gaza surgeon Adnan al-Bursh died in an Israeli prison after he was rounded up in an arrest raid on Al Awda hospital in mid-April, according to the United Nations.

Bursh led the orthopedic department at Al-Shifa Hospital. At the time of his arrest in December, he was reportedly in good health and operating on patients, the U.N. said.

But those who saw Bursh in detention reported that he looked depleted and bore signs of violence, according to Physicians for Human Rights-Israel. Israel's military and police did not respond to requests for comment.

Palestinian detainees who have returned from Israeli detention have reported beatings, harsh interrogations and neglect while in Israeli custody. Israel has denied the reports. Bursh was transferred to Israel's Ofer military prison in the West Bank, where he died.

Israeli police will conduct an autopsy of Bursh's body with a doctor from Physicians for Human Rights-Israel present, the group said, noting it had filed a petition on behalf of Bursh's family. It's unclear when the autopsy will be conducted.

Authorities have released no information on the cause of death and it is unclear who is investigating. Israel's military and police referred questions to Israel's Prison Service, which referred questions back to the military.

Trump's attacks on US justice system after guilty verdict could be useful to autocrats like Putin

By EMMA BURROWS Associated Press

After his historic guilty verdict in his hush money case, Donald Trump attacked the U.S. criminal justice system, making unfounded claims of a "rigged" trial that echoed remarks from the Kremlin.

"If they can do this to me, they can do this to anyone," Trump said Friday, speaking from his namesake tower in New York on Friday. Thousands of miles away, Russian President Vladimir Putin was probably "rubbing his hands with glee," said Fiona Hill, a former senior White House national security adviser to three U.S. presidents, including Trump.

Hill and other analysts say Trump's attacks could be useful to Putin and other autocrats as they look to boost their standing among their own citizens, potentially sway the upcoming U.S. presidential election in which Trump is the presumptive Republican nominee, and undermine the United States' global influence.

Some autocratic countries reacted swiftly in support of Trump.

Moscow agreed with Trump's assessment of Thursday's verdict, calling it the "elimination of political rivals by all possible legal or illegal means," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. In September, Putin said the prosecution of Trump was political revenge that "shows the rottenness of the American political system."

After the verdict, Hungary's populist, pro-Russia prime minister, Viktor Orban, called Trump a "man of honor" and urged him to "keep on fighting."

China's state-owned Global Times newspaper suggested Trump's conviction adds to the "farfetched nature" of this year's U.S. presidential election, adding that it will aggravate political extremism and end in "more chaos and social unrest."

Putin is especially likely to see the latest turmoil as an opportunity, analysts say. He has long sought to widen divisions in Western societies in an attempt to advance a Russian worldview. Since the invasion of Ukraine, and ahead of crucial elections throughout the West this year, Russia has been accused of carrying out multiple attacks of sabotage and of targeting dissidents abroad to stoke anxieties and sow discord.

Moscow was accused of meddling in the 2016 U.S. election that Trump won by creating a troll factory, hacking Hillary Clinton's campaign, spreading fake news and trying to influence Trump-linked officials.

"What mischief does he have to make when you have people within the American system itself denigrating it and pulling it down?" Hill said of Putin.

Political chaos can benefit autocratic leaders by distracting Washington from key issues, including the war in Ukraine. Russia's goal is to move voices from the "fringes of the political debate to the mainstream,"

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 53 of 87

said David Salvo, Managing Director of the Alliance for Securing Democracy at the German Marshall Fund in Washington, D.C.

The Kremlin does that partly by pushing Russian points of view under the guise of news and social media posts that look like they originate in the West.

Salvo noted that disagreements in Congress that delayed an aid package to Ukraine followed a Russian social media campaign aimed at Americans. That led to Russia gaining the upper hand on the battlefield.

The attacks on the U.S. justice system from Trump and his allies are "perfect fodder" for another "major propaganda and influence operation," Hill told The Associated Press, suggesting Russia could target swing voters in battleground states ahead of the November election.

For generations, U.S. presidential administrations have depicted America as a bastion of democracy, free speech and human rights and have encouraged other states to adopt those ideals. But Trump suggested the justice system is being used to persecute him — something that happens in some autocratic countries.

Leaders including Putin "must love" that Trump is criticizing "the key institutions of democracy" in the way autocratic states have done for years as it legitimizes them in the eyes of their own people said Graeme Robertson, a political science professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Trump sees himself as a "strongman ruler" and looks to Putin for inspiration, Hill said. His attacks encourage any nation — from those with a mild gripe to the openly hostile — to "have their moment to bring down the colossus," Hill said.

The message to Chinese and Russian citizens watching the drama unfold in the U.S. is that they are better off at home. The message to countries that Russia and China are courting as they attempt to expand their influence in Africa, Asia and Latin America is that Moscow and Beijing can offer more reliable partnerships.

The threat from the "new axis of authoritarians," including Russia, China, Iran and North Korea is "daunting," as those states work more closely together with overlapping interests said Matthew Kroenig, a former defense official and vice president at the Atlantic Council's Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security.

Moscow in particular, Kroenig said, will likely try to use the political turmoil in the U.S. to divide the NATO security alliance. It could try to turn the public in NATO states against the U.S. by encouraging them to question whether they have "shared values" with Americans, he said. If successful, that could lead to a fundamental reshaping of global security architecture — a goal of Russia and China — since the end of the Cold War.

Some Western governments, meanwhile, are caught in a delicate dance between not wanting to ostracize Trump as a potential next U.S. president and the need to respect the U.S. justice system. Others, such as EU member Hungary, openly court him.

"For Putin it must be perfect because it creates a mess that he can try to seek advantage from," Hill said.

California firefighters battle wind-driven wildfire east of San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — California firefighters aided by aircraft battled a wind-driven wildfire burning Saturday in an area straddling the San Francisco Bay Area and central California, authorities said.

The Corral Fire began burning Saturday near the city of Tracy, 60 miles (96 kilometers) east of San Francisco, and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in the city of Livermore, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, or Cal Fire.

Dark plumes of smoke traveled high into the sky over the fire area comprised mostly of grassy hills, where strong winds were expected to continue overnight.

Late Saturday, Cal Fire updated the size of the fire to 15.6 square miles (40.4 square kilometers) with 13% contained, which increased from an earlier report of 13.7 square miles (35.4 square kilometers).

Interstate 580, which connects the San Francisco Bay Area to San Joaquin County in central California, was closed in both directions from Corral Hollow Road to Interstate 5 due to the lack of visibility from the smoke, the California Department of Transportation said in a statement.

Cal Fire Santa Clara Unit Chief Baraka Carter said two fire workers were injured, the San Francisco Chronicle reported.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 54 of 87

The San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services issued an evacuation order, pinpointing the wildfire in an area east of Interstate 580. Residents between Corral Hollow Road and Tracy Boulevard were ordered to leave their homes, with residents south of Tracy Boulevard told to be prepared for evacuation.

An evacuation update included areas west of the California Aqueduct south of Corral Hollow Creek, west to Alameda County and south to Stanislaus County. A temporary evacuation point was established at Larch Clover Community Center in Tracy, the county emergency services office said on its website.

The wildfire was near the Lawrence Livermore laboratory's Site 300 southwest of Tracy, Cal Fire said in a social media post late Saturday.

Lawrence Livermore is a research and development institution primarily focusing on the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile. Site 300, 15 miles (24 kilometers) east of the laboratory's main installation, supports "development of explosive materials as well as hydrodynamic testing and diagnostics," according to the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory website.

"Here, our researchers can safely formulate, fabricate, and test high-explosive assemblies to assess the performance of nonnuclear weapon prototypes and components," the website says of Site 300.

The wildfire presented no threats to any laboratory facilities or operations and the fire had moved away from the site, Lawrence Livermore spokesperson Paul Rhien said in a statement to The Associated Press early Sunday.

"We have been working in close partnership with Cal Fire, Alameda County Fire Dept, and other emergency services partners throughout the evening," Rhien said. "As a precaution, we have activated our emergency operations center to monitor the situation through the weekend."

Iran's hard-line former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad registers for June 28 presidential election

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran's hard-line former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad registered Sunday as a possible candidate for the presidential election, seeking to regain the country's top political position after a helicopter crash killed the nation's president.

The populist former leader's registration puts pressure on Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. In office, Ahmadinejad openly challenged the 85-year-old cleric, and his attempt to run in 2021 was barred by authorities.

The firebrand, Holocaust-questioning politician's return comes at a time of heightened tensions between Iran and the West over Tehran's rapidly advancing nuclear program, its arming of Russia in its war on Ukraine and its wide-reaching crackdowns on dissent. Meanwhile, Iran's support of militia proxy forces throughout the wider Mideast have been in increased focus as Yemen's Houthi rebels attack ships in the Red Sea over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

Ahmadinejad is the most prominent candidate to register so far. Speaking after his registration, he vowed to seek "constructive engagement" with the world and improved economic relations with all nations.

"The economic, political, cultural and security problems are beyond the situation in 2013," Ahmadinejad said, referring to the year he left the presidency after two terms.

After speaking to journalists in front of a bank of 50-odd microphones, Ahmadinejad said, his finger in the air: "Long live the spring, long live Iran!"

Before his arrival at Iran's Interior Ministry, his supporters chanted and waved Iranian flags. They quickly surrounded Ahmadinejad, 67, shouting: "God is the greatest!"

He descended the stairs at the ministry, showing his passport as is custom to dozens of photographers and video journalists on hand for the registration process. As a woman processed his candidacy, he sat, turned to the journalists, nodding and smiling for the cameras. He was expected to give remarks after concluding his registration.

An election is planned June 28 to replace Khamenei's hard-line protégé President Ebrahim Raisi, who died in a helicopter crash in May along with seven other people.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 55 of 87

Former parliament speaker Ali Larijani, a conservative with strong ties to Iran's former relatively moderate President Hassan Rouhani, has already registered, as has former Iranian Central Bank chief Abdolnasser Hemmati, who also ran in 2021.

Who else will seek to run remains in question. The country's acting president, Mohammad Mokhber, previously a behind-the-scenes bureaucrat, could be the front runner because he has already been seen meeting with Khamenei. Also discussed as a possible aspirant is former reformist President Mohammad Khatami, but, as with Ahmadinejad, whether he would be allowed to run is another question.

The five-day registration period will close on Tuesday, and the Guardian Council is expected to issue its final list of candidates within 10 days. That will allow for a shortened two-week campaign before the vote in late June.

Ahmadinejad previously served two four-year terms from 2005 to 2013. Under Iranian law, he became eligible to run again after four years out of office, but he remains a polarizing figure even among fellow hard-liners. His disputed re-election in 2009 sparked massive "Green Movement" protests and a sweeping crackdown in which thousands of people were detained and dozens were killed.

Abroad, he became a caricature of Western perceptions of the Islamic Republic's worst attribute, questioning the Holocaust, insisting Iran had no gay or lesbian citizens and hinting Iran could build a nuclear weapon if it chose to do so.

But Ahmadinejad remains popular among the poor for his populist efforts and home-building programs. Since leaving office, he's raised his profile via social media and written widely publicized letters to world leaders. He's also criticized government corruption, though his own administration faced graft allegations and two of his former vice presidents were jailed.

Khamenei warned Ahmadinejad in 2017 that his standing for office again would be a "polarized situation" that would be "harmful for the county." Khamenei said nothing during Ahmadinejad's 2021 attempt, when his candidacy was rejected by the 12-member Guardian Council, a panel of clerics and jurists ultimately overseen by Khamenei. That panel has never accepted a woman or anyone calling for radical change to the country's governance.

That panel could reject Ahmadinejad again. However, the race to replace Raisi has yet to draw a candidate with clear, overwhelming support from Khamenei.

Democrats wanted an agreement on using artificial intelligence. It went nowhere

DAN MERICA Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Democratic National Committee was watching earlier this year as campaigns nationwide were experimenting with artificial intelligence. So the organization approached a handful of influential party campaign committees with a request: Sign onto guidelines that would commit them to use the technology in a "responsible" way.

The draft agreement, a copy of which was obtained by The Associated Press, was hardly full of revolutionary ideas. It asked campaigns to check work by AI tools, protect against biases and avoid using AI to create misleading content.

"Our goal is to use this new technology both effectively and ethically, and in a way that advances — rather than undermines — the values that we espouse in our campaigns," the draft said.

The plan went nowhere.

Instead of fostering an agreement, the guidelines sparked a debate about the value of such pledges, particularly those governing fast-evolving technology. Among the concerns expressed by the Democratic campaign organizations: Such a pledge might hamstring their ability to deploy AI and could turn off donors with ties to the AI industry. Some committee officials were also irked that the DNC gave them only a few days to agree to the guidelines.

The proposal's demise highlighted internal divisions over campaign tactics and the party's uncertainty

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 56 of 87

over how to best utilize AI amid warnings from experts that the technology is supercharging the proliferation of disinformation.

Hannah Muldavin, a senior spokesperson at the Democratic National Committee, said the group is not giving up on finding a consensus.

The DNC, she said, "will continue to engage with our sister committees to discuss ideas and issues important to Democratic campaigns and to American voters, including AI."

"It's not uncommon for ideas and plans to shift, especially in the midst of a busy election year, and any documents on this subject reflect early and ongoing conversations," Muldavin said, adding the "DNC and our partners take seriously the opportunities and challenges presented by AI."

The wrangling comes as campaigns have increasingly deployed artificial intelligence — computer systems, software or processes that emulate aspects of human work and cognition — to optimize workloads. That includes using large language models to write fundraising emails, text supporters and build chatbots to answer voters' questions.

That trend is expected to continue as November's general election approaches, with campaigns turning to supercharged generative AI tools to create text and images, as well as clone human voices and create video at lightning speeds.

The Republican National Committee used AI-generated images in a television spot last year predicting a dystopian future under President Joe Biden.

Much of that adoption, however, has been overshadowed by concerns about how campaigns could use artificial intelligence in ways that trick voters. Experts have warned that AI has become so powerful that it has made it easy to generate "deep fake" videos, audio snippets and other media targeting opposing candidates. Some states have passed legislation regulating the way generative artificial intelligence can be used. But Congress has so far failed to pass any bills regulating artificial intelligence on the federal level.

In the absence of regulation, the DNC sought a set of guidelines it could point to as evidence the party was taking seriously the threat and promise of AI. It sent the proposal in March to the five Democratic campaign committees that seek to elect House, Senate, gubernatorial, state legislative and state attorneys general candidates to office, according to the draft agreement.

The goal was to have each committee agree to a slate of AI guardrails and the DNC proposed issuing a joint statement proclaiming such guidelines would ensure that campaigns could use "the tools they need to prevent the spread of misinformation and disinformation, while empowering campaigns to safely, responsibly use generative AI to engage more Americans in our democracy."

The Democratic committee had hoped the statement would be signed by Chair Jaime Harrison and the leaders of the other organizations.

Democratic operatives said the proposal landed with a thud. Some senior leaders at the committees worried that the agreement might have unforeseen consequences, perhaps constricting how campaigns use AI, according to multiple Democratic operatives familiar with the outreach.

And it might send the wrong message to technology companies and executives who work on AI, many of whom help fill campaign coffers during election years.

Some of the Democratic Party's most prolific donors are top tech entrepreneurs and AI evangelists, including Sam Altman, the CEO of OpenAI, and Eric Schmidt, the former CEO of Google.

Altman has donated over \$200,000 to the Biden campaign and his aligned Democratic joint fundraising committee since the start of last year, according to data from the Federal Election Commission, and Schmidt's contributions to those groups have topped \$500,000 over the same time.

Two other AI proponents, Dustin Moskovitz, the co-founder of Facebook, and Reid Hoffman, the co-founder of LinkedIn, donated more than \$900,000 to Biden's joint fundraising committee this cycle, according to the same data.

The DNC plan caught the committees off guard because it came with little explanation, other than a desire to get each committee to agree to the list of best practices within a few days, said multiple Democratic operatives who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to discuss the matter. Aides to the Democratic Congressional Campaign and Democratic Senatorial Campaign committees said

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 57 of 87

they felt rushed by a DNC timeline that urged them to sign quickly.

Representatives from the Democratic Attorneys General Association did not respond to the Associated Press' request for comment. Spokesmen from the Democratic Governors Association and Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee declined to comment.

The Republican National Committee did not respond to questions about its AI guidelines. The Biden campaign also declined to comment when asked about the DNC effort.

The four-page agreement — "Guidelines on Responsible Use of Generative AI in Campaigns" — covered everything from ensuring that artificial intelligence systems were not trusted without a human checking its work to notifying voters when they are interacting with AI-generated content or systems.

"As the explosive rise of generative AI transforms every corner of public life – including political campaigns – it's more important than ever that we limit this new technology's potential threat to voters' rights, and instead leverage it to build innovative, efficient campaigns and a stronger, more inclusive democracy," the proposal said.

The guidelines were divided into five sections that included titles such as "Offering Human Alternatives, Consideration and Fallback" and "Providing Notice and Explanation." The proposed rules would have required the committees to ensure "a real person should be responsible for approving AI-generated content and be accountable for how, where, and to whom it is deployed."

The directive outlined how "users should always be aware when they are interacting with an AI bot" and stressed that any images or video created by AI "should be flagged" as such. And it stressed that campaigns should use AI to assist staffers, not replace them.

"Campaigns are a human-driven and human motivated business," read the agreement. "Use efficiency gains to teach more voters and focus more on quality control and sustainability."

It also urged campaigns not to use "generative AI to create misleading content. Period."

Parade for Israel in NYC focuses on solidarity this year as Gaza war casts a grim shadow

NEW YORK (AP) — An annual New York City parade for Israel that draws thousands of people is scheduled to hit the streets Sunday with heightened security and a focus on solidarity during the war in Gaza.

The parade comes almost eight months after the unprecedented Oct. 7 attack by Hamas, the deadliest in Israel's history. The parade in the past was dubbed "Celebrate Israel," but organizers said the exuberant atmosphere would be paused this year given the war and Israeli hostages still being held in captivity, as well as outbursts of antisemitism worldwide.

The parade, now called "Israel Day on Fifth" because of the route along Fifth Avenue from 57th Street to 74th Street in Manhattan, will instead focus on solidarity, strength and resilience, said Mark Treyger, CEO of the Jewish Community Relations Council.

"This is not a mood of confetti and music," Treyger said. "This is more of a mood of unwavering, ironclad solidarity with hostages to bring them home, and also our unwavering love and pride in our Jewish identity."

The parade, which is in its 59th year, kicks off at about 11:30 a.m. Sunday and is expected to draw more than 40,000 participants, including Israeli dignitaries, celebrities and some of the hostages' families.

There was never a thought of cancelling the parade this year, Treyger said, despite what he termed an astronomical rise in antisemitism.

"This is a moment that we have to meet," he said.

But there will be significant security.

New York Police Department officials said Friday they plan to implement measures typically used for high-profile events such as New Year's Eve and July 4. That includes drones, K-9 units, bike patrols, fencing and barriers and designated entry points for spectators all along the parade route.

Backpacks, large bags and coolers will be prohibited. Spectators will have to pass through metal detectors and only be allowed to line the east side of Fifth Avenue, with police blocking off the west side.

City officials stressed Friday there were no specific or credible threats to either the parade or the city and any protestors have the right to demonstrate so long as its done peacefully.

"We're not going to allow any unlawfulness and any disruption of any celebration of one's heritage in this city," New York City Mayor Eric Adams said at a security briefing.

The parade represents the first large-scale Jewish event in the city since the war started, although there have been roughly 2,800 protests in the city, with about 1,300 of them related to the conflict, the Democrat said.

Israel faces growing international criticism for its strategy of systematic destruction in Gaza, at a huge cost in civilian lives. Israeli bombardments and ground offensives in the besieged territory have killed more than 36,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between combatants and civilians.

A growing community of breast milk donors in Uganda gives mothers hope

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) — Early last year, Caroline Ikendi was in distress after undergoing an emergency Caesarean section to remove a stillborn baby and save two others. Doctors said one of the preterm babies had a 2% chance of living.

If the babies didn't get breast milk — which she didn't have — Ikendi could lose them as well.

Thus began a desperate search for breast milk donors. She was lucky with a neighbor, a woman with a newborn baby to feed who was willing to donate a few millilitres at a time.

"You go and plead for milk. You are like, 'Please help me, help my child,'" Ikendi told The Associated Press.

The neighbor helped until Ikendi heard about a Ugandan group that collects breast milk and donates it to mothers like her. Soon the ATTA Breastmilk Community was giving the breast milk she needed, free of charge, until her babies were strong enough to be discharged from the hospital.

ATTA Breastmilk Community was launched in 2021 in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, by a woman who had struggled like Ikendi without getting support. The registered nonprofit, backed by grants from organizations and individuals, is the only group outside a hospital setting in Uganda that conserves breast milk in substantial amounts.

ATTA, as the group is known, receives calls for support from hospitals and homes with babies born too soon or too sick to latch onto their mothers' breasts.

More than 200 mothers have donated breast milk to support over 450 babies since July 2021, with over 600 liters of milk delivered for babies in that period, according to ATTA's records.

In a measure of efforts to build a reliable community, many donors have given multiple times while others help to find new ones, said ATTA administrator Racheal Akugizibwe.

"We are an emergency fix," Akugizibwe said. "As the mother is working on their own production, we are giving (her) milk. But we do it under the directive and under the support of a lactation specialist and the medical people."

She added: "Every mother who has given us milk, they are kind of attached to us. They are we; we are them. That's what makes it a community."

ATTA makes calls for donors via social media apps like Instagram. Women who want to donate must provide samples for testing, including for HIV and Hepatitis B and C, and there are formal conversations during which ATTA tries to learn more about potential donors and motivations. Those who pass the screening are given storage bags and instructed in safe handling.

Akugizibwe spoke of ATTA's humble beginnings in the home of its founder, Tracy Ahumuza, who would store the milk in her freezer. Ahumuza started the group amid personal grief: She hadn't been able to produce breast milk for her newborn who battled life-threatening complications. Days later, after the baby died, she started lactating.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 59 of 87

She asked health workers, "Where do I put the milk that I have now?" Akugizibwe said. "They told her, 'All we can do for you is give you tablets to dry it out.' She's like, 'No, but if I needed it and I didn't get it, someone could need it.'"

In the beginning, ATTA would match a donor to a recipient, but it proved unsustainable because of the pressure it put on donors. ATTA then started collecting and storing breast milk, and donors and recipients don't know each other.

Akugizibwe said the group gets more requests for support than it can meet. Challenges include procuring storage bags in large quantities as well as the costs of testing. And donors are required to own freezers, a financial obstacle for some.

"The demand is extremely, extremely high," Akugizibwe said, "but the supply is low."

Lelah Wamala, a chef and mother of three in Kampala who twice has donated milk, said she was spurred to act when, while having a baby in 2022, she saw mothers whose premature babies were dying because they didn't have milk.

Being a donor is a time-consuming responsibility, "but this is the right thing to do," she said.

Via motorcycle courier on Kampala's busy streets, breast milk from donors is taken to ATTA's storage and delivered to parents in need.

ATTA's goal is to set up a full-fledged breast milk bank with the ability to pasteurize. The service is necessary in a country where an unknown number of women suffer for lack of lactation support, said Dr. Doreen Mazakpwe, a lactation specialist who collaborates with ATTA.

Mazakpwe cited a range of lactation issues mothers can face, from sore nipples to babies born too sick or too weak to suckle and stimulate milk production.

If both mother and baby are healthy, "this mother should be able to produce as much milk as the baby needs because we work on the principle of supply and demand," said Mazakpwe, a consultant with a private hospital outside Kampala. "So, in situations where there's a delay in putting the baby on the breast, or the baby is not fed frequently enough ... you can eventually have an issue where you have low supply."

Mazakpwe said she advises mothers on how to establish their own supply within about a month of receiving donated breast milk, and sometimes all that's needed is to hold the baby the right way. When mothers start lactating, it frees up supply for new ones who need ATTA's help, she said.

Akugizibwe said their work is challenging in a socially conservative society where such a pioneering service raises eyebrows. Questions, even from recipients, include fears that babies who drink donated breast milk might inherit the bad habits of their benefactors.

In addition, "if you don't breastfeed there is a lot of negativity," said Ikendi, whose premature babies survived on donated milk. "Society looks at you as though you've just literally refused to breastfeed."

She spoke of struggling even when she knew she had no choice after seeing her babies in the intensive care unit for the first time. Through the glass she saw they were so tiny, on oxygen therapy and bleeding from their noses. The babies, a boy and a girl, had been removed at seven months.

Ikendi's babies received donated breast milk for two months.

One recent morning, an emotional Ikendi held her children as she described how the donated milk "contributed 100% to our babies' growth."

Most US students are recovering from pandemic-era setbacks, but millions are making up little ground

By COLLIN BINKLEY AP Education Writer

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) — On one side of the classroom, students circled teacher Maria Fletcher and practiced vowel sounds. In another corner, children read together from a book. Scattered elsewhere, students sat at laptop computers and got reading help from online tutors.

For the third graders at Mount Vernon Community School in Virginia, it was an ordinary school day. But educators were racing to get students learning more, faster, and to overcome setbacks that have persisted since schools closed for the COVID-19 pandemic four years ago.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 60 of 87

America's schools have started to make progress toward getting students back on track. But improvement has been slow and uneven across geography and economic status, with millions of students — often those from marginalized groups — making up little or no ground.

Nationally, students made up one-third of their pandemic losses in math during the past school year and one-quarter of the losses in reading, according to the Education Recovery Scorecard, an analysis of state and national test scores by researchers at Harvard and Stanford.

But in nine states, including Virginia, reading scores continued to fall during the 2022-23 school year after previous decreases during the pandemic.

Clouding the recovery is a looming financial crisis. States have used some money from the historic \$190 billion in federal pandemic relief to help students catch up, but that money runs out later this year.

"The recovery is not finished, and it won't be finished without state action," said Thomas Kane, a Harvard economist behind the scorecard. "States need to start planning for what they're going to do when the federal money runs out in September. And I think few states have actually started that discussion."

Virginia lawmakers approved an extra \$418 million last year to accelerate recovery. Massachusetts officials set aside \$3.2 million to provide math tutoring for fourth and eighth grade students who are behind grade level, along with \$8 million for literacy tutoring.

But among other states with lagging progress, few said they were changing their strategies or spending more to speed up improvement.

Virginia hired online tutoring companies and gave schools a "playbook" showing how to build effective tutoring programs. Lisa Coons, Virginia's superintendent of public instruction, said last year's state test scores were a wake-up call.

"We weren't recovering as fast as we needed," Coons said in an interview.

U.S. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona has called for states to continue funding extra academic help for students as the federal money expires.

"We just can't stop now," he said at a May 30 conference for education journalists. "The states need to recognize these interventions work. Funding public education does make a difference."

In Virginia, the Alexandria district received \$2.3 million in additional state money to expand tutoring.

At Mount Vernon, where classes are taught in English and Spanish, students are divided into groups and rotate through stations customized to their skill level. Those who need the most help get online tutoring. In Fletcher's classroom, a handful of students wore headsets and worked with tutors through Ignite Learning, one of the companies hired by the state.

With tutors in high demand, the online option has been a big help, Mount Vernon principal Jennifer Hamilton said.

"That's something that we just could not provide here," she said.

Ana Marisela Ventura Moreno said her 9-year-old daughter, Sabrina, benefited significantly from extra reading help last year during second grade, but she's still catching up.

"She needs to get better. She's not at the level she should be," the mother said in Spanish. She noted the school did not offer the tutoring help this year, but she did not know why.

Alexandria education officials say students scoring below proficient or close to that cutoff receive high-intensity tutoring help and they have to prioritize students with the greatest needs. Alexandria trailed the state average on math and reading exams in 2023, but it's slowly improving.

More worrying to officials are the gaps: Among poorer students at Mount Vernon, just 24% scored proficient in math and 28% hit the mark in reading. That's far lower than the rates among wealthier students, and the divide is growing wider.

Failing to get students back on track could have serious consequences. The researchers at Harvard and Stanford found communities with higher test scores have higher incomes and lower rates of arrest and incarceration. If pandemic setbacks become permanent, it could follow students for life.

The Education Recovery Scorecard tracks about 30 states, all of which made at least some improvement in math from 2022 to 2023. The states whose reading scores fell in that span, in addition to Virginia, were Nevada, California, South Dakota, Wyoming, Indiana, Oklahoma, Connecticut and Washington.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 61 of 87

Only a few states have rebounded to pre-pandemic testing levels. Alabama was the only state where math achievement increased past 2019 levels, while Illinois, Mississippi and Louisiana accomplished that in reading.

In Chicago Public Schools, the average reading score went up by the equivalent of 70% of a grade level from 2022 to 2023. Math gains were less dramatic, with students still behind almost half a grade level compared with 2019. Chicago officials credit the improvement to changes made possible with nearly \$3 billion in federal relief.

The district trained hundreds of Chicago residents to work as tutors. Every school building got an interventionist, an educator who focuses on helping struggling students.

The district also used federal money for home visits and expanded arts education in an effort to re-engage students.

"Academic recovery in isolation, just through 'drill and kill,' either tutoring or interventions, is not effective," said Bogdana Chkoumbova, the district's chief education officer. "Students need to feel engaged."

At Wells Preparatory Elementary on the city's South Side, just 3% of students met state reading standards in 2021. Last year, 30% hit the mark. Federal relief allowed the school to hire an interventionist for the first time, and teachers get paid to team up on recovery outside working hours.

In the classroom, the school put a sharper focus on collaboration. Along with academic setbacks, students came back from school closures with lower maturity levels, principal Vincent Izuegbu said. By building lessons around discussion, officials found students took more interest in learning.

"We do not let 10 minutes go by without a teacher giving students the opportunity to engage with the subject," Izuegbu said. "That's very, very important in terms of the growth that we've seen."

Olorunkemi Atoyebi was an A student before the pandemic, but after spending fifth grade learning at home, she fell behind. During remote learning, she was nervous about stopping class to ask questions. Before long, math lessons stopped making sense.

When she returned to school, she struggled with multiplication and terms such as "dividend" and "divisor" confused her.

While other students worked in groups, her math teacher took her aside for individual help. Atoyebi learned a rhyming song to help memorize multiplication tables. Over time, it began to click.

"They made me feel more confident in everything," said Atoyebi, now 14. "My grades started going up. My scores started going up. Everything has felt like I understand it better."

More populist policies or tougher fight with cartels?

Mexicans weigh choice as they pick new leader

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Voters choosing Mexico's next president are deciding Sunday between a former academic who promises to further the current leader's populist policies and an ex-senator and tech entrepreneur who pledges to up the fight against deadly drug cartels.

In an election likely to give Mexico its first woman president, nearly 100 million people are registered to vote in the race to replace outgoing President Andrés Manuel López Obrador. Voters will also elect governors in nine of the country's 32 states, and choose candidates for both houses of Congress, thousands of mayorships and other local posts.

The elections are widely seen as a referendum on López Obrador, a populist who has expanded social programs but largely failed to reduce cartel violence in Mexico. His Morena party currently holds 23 of the 32 governorships and a simple majority of seats in both houses of Congress. Mexico's constitution prohibits the president's reelection.

Morena hopes to gain the two-thirds majority in Congress required to amend the constitution to eliminate oversight agencies that it says are unwieldy and wasteful. The opposition, running in a loose coalition, argues that would endanger Mexico's democratic institutions.

Both major presidential candidates are women, and either would be Mexico's first female president. A third candidate from a smaller party, Jorge Álvarez Máynez, trails far behind.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 62 of 87

Mexico City Mayor Claudia Sheinbaum is running with the Morena party. Sheinbaum, who leads in the race, has promised to continue all of López Obrador's policies, including a universal pension for the elderly and a program that pays youths to apprentice.

Opposition presidential candidate Xóchitl Gálvez, whose father was Indigenous Otomi, rose from selling snacks on the street in her poor hometown to start her own tech firms. A candidate running with a coalition of major opposition parties, she left the Senate last year to focus her ire on López Obrador's decision to avoid confronting the drug cartels through his "hugs not bullets" policy. She has pledged to more aggressively go after criminals.

The persistent cartel violence, along with Mexico's middling economic performance, are the main issues on voters' minds.

The Mexican peso has strengthened against the U.S. dollar in recent years, mainly because of high domestic interest rates and a huge surge in money sent home by migrants. But the gross domestic product has averaged only about 1% growth per year under the current president.

López Obrador claims to have reduced historically high homicide levels by 20% since he took office in December 2018. But that's largely a claim based on a questionable reading of statistics; the real homicide rate appears to have declined by only about 4% in six years.

About 675,000 Mexicans living abroad are registered to vote, but in the past only a small percentage have done so. Voting is not mandatory in Mexico, and overall turnout has hovered around 60% in recent elections. That compares to turnout in recent U.S. presidential elections. An exception was in 2020, when the matchup between then-President Donald Trump and future President Joe Biden pushed U.S. voter turnout to 67%, its highest point in decades.

Just as the upcoming November rematch between Biden and Trump has underscored deep divisions in the U.S., Sunday's election has revealed how severely polarized public opinion is in Mexico over the direction of the country, including its security strategy and how to grow the economy.

Beyond the fight for control of Congress, the race for Mexico City — whose top post is now considered equivalent to a governorship — is also important. Sheinbaum is just the latest of many Mexico City mayors, including López Obrador, who went on to run for president. Governorships in large, populous states such as Veracruz and Jalisco are also drawing interest.

Polls open at 8 a.m. and close at 6 p.m. in most of the country. The first preliminary, partial results are expected by 9 p.m., after the last polls in different time zones close.

Paris is aiming for the most sustainable Olympics yet. Organizers acknowledge the plan isn't perfect

By JOHN LEICESTER and PETER PRENGAMAN Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Of all the decisions Paris Olympics organizers made about where to hold each sport, sending surfing competitions to the other side of the world — in the Pacific waters of Tahiti — provoked the strongest reactions. Tahitians and others railed against the building of a new viewing tower on Teahupo'o reef because of fears it would hurt marine life.

But organizers say it wasn't just the world-class waves that lured them to the French territory 16,000 kilometers (9,942 miles) away. Paris Olympic officials had set an ambitious target of halving their overall carbon footprint compared with the 2012 London and 2016 Rio Games.

Tahiti's surfing reef is too far offshore for fans to see the action clearly from the beach, so organizers say they calculated that most would watch on television instead of taking flights, a major source of carbon emissions.

And fewer spectators, they said, would require little new construction, another key emissions source.

"We actually did the math," said Georgina Grenon, director of environmental excellence for the Paris Games. "There was less impact in Tahiti compared to other metropolitan areas."

Tahiti's selection provides a window into Games organizers' approach to hitting their goal of reducing emissions, the driver of climate change. It also underscores an inherent tension in the drive for sustain-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 63 of 87

ability: There are tradeoffs, and reducing emissions doesn't necessarily mean preserving the environment.

Organizers' goal is to limit emissions to 1.58 million metric tons of CO2 equivalent for the July 26-Aug. 11 Games and Paralympics that follow. That's still a lot of pollution — equal to that of about 1.3 million economy passengers flying one way from New York to Paris on Boeing 787 jets, according to myclimate, a climate and sustainability consultancy.

It's a lot less, however, than the footprint of previous Games.

Organizers say they're thinking about the Games' future, not just the planet's. Fewer cities are volunteering to spend billions on infrastructure that sometimes falls into disuse. Paris and the next host, Los Angeles in 2028, were the only cities left in the race when picked in 2017. For organizers, hosting less-wasteful Games is key, along with including more inclusive, youth-oriented events such as skateboarding.

Paris is under additional pressure to be a sustainable model: The city hosted the 2015 U.N. climate talks that resulted in the Paris Agreement, the most significant international climate accord to date. Delegates agreed the world should limit average global temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) above that of the 1850s, and ideally cap it at 1.5 degrees (2.7 Fahrenheit) — a goal looking increasingly unattainable.

Independent experts say Paris appears to be decarbonizing in the systematic ways businesses do: Calculate total emissions, then start cutting, including myriad small CO2 savings that add up significantly. Organizers targeted reductions across three categories: construction, transportation and operations.

"They seem to be taking a very thoughtful approach," said Adam Braun of Clarasight, which builds carbon-planning software for companies. "They are trying to do something that is indicative of how many organizations will be holding themselves accountable."

The biggest break from previous Games is in construction. Organizers say 95% of facilities are existing or will be temporary. Two new structures were deemed unavoidable: The Olympic Village, to house athletes and later become housing and office space, and the aquatics center in Paris' disadvantaged northern suburbs.

Using wood, low-carbon cement, and salvaged materials helped reduce emissions by 30% compared with traditional methods, Grenon said.

Reductions in operations include food. The average meal in France — restaurant- or home-prepared — produces about 2 kilograms (4.4 pounds) of CO2, said Philipp Würz, the Games' catering head. Paris aims to halve that by sourcing 80% of ingredients locally, cutting transport emissions, and offering spectators 60% plant-based foods.

Winning minds as well as tastebuds could take work. "Locally grown food, and supporting local farmers, are beautiful things," tennis player Victoria Azarenka said. But "when people are doing these big gestures, I'm not fully convinced of the impact," she added of Paris' overall climate efforts.

Another emissions-savings source is energy. Energy will represent only 1% of emissions, organizers said. They intend to use 100% renewable power from wind and solar farms, plus solar panels on some venues.

Stadiums and temporary venues will get power from the grid instead of diesel generators, which produce much CO2. Giant electrical plugs at venues will remain post-Games, removing the need for generators at future events.

Reducing transportation-related emissions is arguably Paris' biggest challenge. Tourism officials expect 15.3 million visitors for the Olympics and Paralympics, including 1.9 million from outside France, with at least 850,000 taking long-haul flights.

In Paris, there are low-carbon transport options — cycling routes, Metro trains, buses and other public transit — to all venues.

But the inability to control how people get to the Olympics, or any big event, raises questions about whether humanity can afford such get-togethers at the cost of further climate damage.

"Maybe things like the Olympics have to be reconsidered," said Seth Warren Rose of the Eneref Institute, an advocacy and research group focused on sustainable development. "Having millions of people congregate in a single area is a very intensive thing."

Rose said organizers' efforts are laudable, but they should have gone further — reducing emissions

beyond half and finding more ways to make sustainability a central fan experience.

Some critics have also questioned some sponsors. Air France, ports operator CMA CGM Group and metals giant ArcelorMittal are leaders in carbon-intensive industries. On their websites, all tout their Olympic sponsorship and sustainability efforts.

The Upright Project, a Finnish company that creates and analyzes data to evaluate companies' impact on the world, looked at sponsors, assigning scores for positive and negative impacts on environment, health, jobs and other metrics.

On environment, sponsors' emissions had an overall 10-fold negative impact.

"I do find the current sustainability discourse, where we effectively celebrate companies' miniscule sustainability tweaks and greenwashing efforts like they actually make a difference to climate change, extremely harmful," Upright Project's Annu Nieminen said in a statement. "If the Paris 2024 sponsors are celebrated by the organizers for their 'sustainability,' that's contributing to the same harmful discourse."

In a statement, organizers said the Games presented "a unique opportunity to encourage partner businesses to adopt more responsible practices."

For emissions it can't cut, Paris plans to compensate – a practice called offsetting. Planting trees, for example, could help take CO2 out of the atmosphere that the Games put in. But offset markets aren't well regulated, and investigations by news organizations have found some projects to be fraudulent while others miscalculated the quantity of emissions captured.

Organizers say they'll continue to adapt sustainability plans as they go, including those in Tahiti. The metal judging tower, which replaced the aging wooden one Tahiti previously used to host surfing competitions, was scaled back in size in response to concerns about environmental harm, organizers say. Finished earlier this year, the tower will be dismantled after the Games. It will be erected and used again when Teahupo'o holds world surfing events.

Organizers say they expect about 1,300 people with Olympic accreditation on the island, including 500 flying in. That total, likely much smaller than if the competition took place off France's coast, includes surfers, judges, journalists and Games workers.

"We say that sustainability is a collective sport," Grenon said. "Will everything be perfect? No, right? We cannot say that. We're still working very, very hard to go as far as we can."

Chinese defense minister accuses US of causing friction with its support for Taiwan and Philippines

By DAVID RISING Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — China's defense minister on Sunday acknowledged the importance of newly renewed military-to-military communications with the United States as tensions escalate in the Asia-Pacific, while at the same time accusing Washington of causing the friction with its support for Taiwan and the Philippines.

"We will not allow anyone to bring geopolitical conflicts or any war, whether hot or cold, into our region," Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun told the Shangri-La defense forum in Singapore through a translator.

"We will not allow any country or any force to create conflict and chaos in our region," he added.

China has been increasingly assertive in pressing its claim to virtually the entire South China Sea, a key global shipping route, which has led to a growing number of conflicts, most notably with the Philippines, whose ships have been rammed by Chinese vessels and hit with water cannons.

Dong insisted that China's "strategic culture is anchored in universal love and non-aggression," before threatening the Philippines, which has grown rapidly pro-American since the election of Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in 2022.

Since territorial hostilities with China surged last year in the South China Sea, Marcos Jr.'s administration has taken steps to forge new security alliances with a number of Asian and Western countries and allowed a larger U.S. military presence in more Philippine bases under a 2014 defense pact.

Dong accused the Philippines of deliberately provoking China, "emboldened by outside powers."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 65 of 87

"China has recognized great restraint in the face of such infringements and provocations," he said. "But there is a limit to our restraint."

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Saturday said that American support for the Philippines was "ironclad" and praised Marcos' Friday speech at the forum as a powerful statement "about how the Philippines is standing up for its sovereign rights under international law."

Austin also stressed the significance of renewing military-to-military communications between China and the U.S. to avoid "misperceptions" and prevent "miscalculations."

"There are a number of things that can happen at sea or in the air, we recognize that," he said. "But our goal is to make sure that we don't allow things to spiral out of control unnecessarily."

Dong is a former naval commander who was appointed in late December after his predecessor, Li Shangfu, was abruptly removed from office.

Dong met with Austin on Friday on the sidelines of the Singapore forum, which were the first in-person talks between top Chinese and American defense officials since contacts between the two countries' militaries broke down in 2022 after then-U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan, infuriating Beijing.

China regards Taiwan as a renegade province that must come under its control, by force if necessary.

The U.S., like most countries, does not have formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan but is bound by its own laws to provide the island with the means to defend itself. Washington is Taiwan's biggest provider of military hardware and congressional delegations regularly visit Taiwan's leaders.

Dong said China remains "open to exchanges and cooperation with the U.S. military," but added "this requires efforts from both sides."

He accused the U.S. of emboldening Taiwan's new government, which refuses to accept Beijing's insistence that the island is part of China, of "pursuing separation in an incremental way."

"We will take resolute actions to curb Taiwan independence and make sure such a plot never succeeds," he said. "Anyone who dares to separate Taiwan from China will only end up in self-destruction."

Boeing's first astronaut flight called off at the last minute in latest setback

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Last-minute computer trouble nixed Saturday's launch attempt for Boeing's first astronaut flight, the latest in a string of delays over the years.

Two NASA astronauts were strapped in the company's Starliner capsule when the countdown automatically was halted at 3 minutes and 50 seconds by the computer system that controls the final minutes before liftoff.

With only a split second to take off, there was no time to work the latest problem and the launch was called off.

Technicians raced to the pad to help astronauts Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams out of the capsule atop the fully fueled Atlas V rocket at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. Within an hour of the launch abort, the hatch was reopened.

The team can't get to the computers to troubleshoot the problem until the rocket is drained of all its fuel, said Tory Bruno, CEO for the rocket maker, United Launch Alliance.

Bruno said one of the three redundant computers located near the rocket at the pad was sluggish. All three must work properly to proceed with a launch, he said.

Depending on what needs to be fixed, the next launch attempt could be as early as Wednesday. If it doesn't blast off this coming week, then that would be it until mid-June in order to move the rocket off the pad and replace batteries.

"This is the business that we're in," Boeing's Mark Nappi said. "Everything's got to work perfectly."

It was the second launch attempt. The first try on May 6 was delayed for leak checks and rocket repairs. NASA wants a backup to SpaceX, which has been flying astronauts since 2020.

Boeing should have launched its first crew around the same time as SpaceX, but its first test flight with no one on board in 2019 was plagued by severe software issues and never made it to the space station.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 66 of 87

A redo in 2022 fared better, but parachute problems and flammable later caused more delays. A small helium leak in the capsule's propulsion system last month came on top of a rocket valve issue.

More valve trouble cropped up two hours before Saturday's planned liftoff, but the team used a backup circuit to get the ground-equipment valves working to top off the fuel for the rocket's upper stage. Launch controllers were relieved to keep pushing ahead, but the computer system known as the ground launch sequencer ended the effort.

"Of course, this is emotionally disappointing," NASA astronaut Mike Fincke, the backup pilot, said from neighboring Kennedy Space Center shortly after the countdown was halted.

But he said delays are part of spaceflight. "We're going to have a great launch in our future."

The ANC party that freed South Africa from apartheid loses its 30-year majority in landmark election

By GERALD IMRAY and MOGOMOTSI MAGOME Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — The African National Congress party lost its majority in a historic election result Saturday that puts South Africa on a new political path for the first time since the end of the apartheid system of white minority rule 30 years ago.

With more than 99% of votes counted, the once-dominant ANC had received just over 40% in Wednesday's parliamentary election, well short of the majority it had held since the all-race vote of 1994 that ended apartheid and brought it to power under Nelson Mandela.

The final results are still to be formally declared Sunday by the Independent Electoral Commission, but the ANC cannot pass 50% and an era of coalition government — also a first for South Africa — is looming.

The ANC remains the biggest party despite a staggering loss of support since the last election in 2019 as South Africa struggles with deep poverty and inequality. The country has one of the highest unemployment rates in the world and voters also blamed the ANC for shortages of clean water, electricity, housing and other services.

The ANC will now likely need to look for a coalition partner or partners to remain in the government and reelect President Cyril Ramaphosa for a second and final term. Parliament must meet to elect the South African president within 14 days after the election result is declared.

"The way to rescue South Africa is to break the ANC's majority and we have done that," said John Steenhuisen, the leader of the main opposition Democratic Alliance party.

Julius Malema, the leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters opposition party, said that the ANC's "entitlement of being the sole dominant party" was over.

The way forward could be complicated for Africa's most advanced economy, and there's no coalition on the table yet. The three main opposition parties and many more smaller ones were in the mix as the bargaining begins.

"We can talk to anybody and everybody," ANC Chairman Gwede Mantashe said on national broadcaster SABC.

Steenhuisen's Democratic Alliance received around 21% of the vote. The new MK Party of former President Jacob Zuma, who has turned against the ANC he once led, was third with just over 14% of the vote in the first election it has contested. The Economic Freedom Fighters was fourth with just over 9%.

More than 50 parties contested the election, many of them winning tiny shares, but the three main opposition parties appear to be the most obvious for the ANC to approach.

Electoral commission Chairman Mosotho Moepya said it was a time for everyone to keep calm "and for leaders to lead and for voices of reason to continue to prevail."

"This is a moment we need to manage and manage well," he said.

Steenhuisen said his party is open to discussions with the ANC, as did Malema. The MK Party said one of their conditions for any agreement was that Ramaphosa is removed as ANC leader and president. That underlined the fierce personal political battle between Zuma, who resigned as South African president under a cloud of corruption allegations in 2018, and Ramaphosa, who replaced him.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 67 of 87

"We are willing to negotiate with the ANC, but not the ANC of Cyril Ramaphosa," MK Party spokesperson Nhlamulo Ndlela said.

MK and the far-left Economic Freedom Fighters have called for parts of the economy to be nationalized. The centrist Democratic Alliance, or DA, is viewed as business-friendly. Analysts say an ANC-DA coalition would be more welcomed by foreign investors.

DA has been the most critical opposition party for years and doesn't share the ANC's pro-Russia and pro-China foreign policy. South Africa takes over the presidency of the Group of 20 industrialized and emerging-market nations next year.

An ANC-DA coalition "would be a marriage of two drunk people in Las Vegas. It will never work," Gayton McKenzie, the leader of the smaller Patriotic Alliance party, told South African media.

DA says an ANC-MK-EFF agreement would be a "doomsday coalition" given MK and EFF are made up of former ANC figures and would pursue the same failed policies.

The three opposition parties had a combined share that was bigger than the ANC, but they are highly unlikely to all work together. The DA was also part of a preelection agreement with other smaller parties to potentially form a coalition.

Amid it all, there was no sense of celebrations from ordinary South Africans, but rather the realization that a rocky political road was ahead. The Daily Maverick newspaper had a South African scratching his head with the words: "What Does It Mean For Our Future?" on its front page. The Die Burger newspaper led with an image of about a dozen political parties' logos going into a meat grinder.

South African opposition parties were united in one thing — something had to change in the country of 62 million, which is Africa's most developed but also one of the most unequal in the world.

The official unemployment rate is 32% and the poverty disproportionately affects Black people, who make up 80% of the population and have been the core of the ANC's support for years. The violent crime rate is also high.

The ANC has seen a steady decline in its support over the last 20 years, but by around three to five percentage points each election. It dropped 17 percentage points this time from the 57.5% it won in 2019.

Nearly 28 million South Africans were registered to vote, and turnout was expected to be around 60%, according to the electoral commission.

People lined up on a cold winter night and waited hours after the official poll closing time, with some votes being cast at 3 a.m. the following day. That indicated the desire from many to have their say, but also reflected one of South Africa's inherent problems — some voting stations had delays because of electricity outages plunging them into the dark.

Israeli leader Netanyahu faces growing pressure at home after Biden's Gaza proposal

By SAM MEDNICK and WAFAA SHURFAFA Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Israel's prime minister faced growing pressure Saturday after U.S. President Joe Biden announced a proposed agreement to end the fighting in Gaza, with many Israelis urging Benjamin Netanyahu to embrace the deal but far-right allies threatening to collapse his government if he does.

Netanyahu called a permanent cease-fire in Gaza a "nonstarter" until long-standing conditions for ending the war are met, appearing to undermine the proposal that Biden described as an Israeli one.

A huge demonstration in Israel on Saturday night, led by families of hostages held by Hamas, urged the government to act now. Mediators the U.S., Egypt and Qatar pressed Israel and Hamas, saying the proposed deal "offers a road map for a permanent cease-fire and ending the crisis" and gives immediate relief to both hostages and Gaza residents.

But far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and Minister of National Security Itamar Ben Gvir said they would break up the government if it takes the deal. That could expose Netanyahu to new elections, scrutiny over security failures that led to the war and — if he loses the prime minister post — prosecution on longstanding corruption charges.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 68 of 87

Netanyahu's statement said that "Israel's conditions for ending the war have not changed: the destruction of Hamas' military and governing capabilities, the freeing of all hostages and ensuring that Gaza no longer poses a threat to Israel. Under the proposal, Israel will continue to insist these conditions are met before a permanent cease-fire is put in place."

In a separate statement, Netanyahu accepted an invitation from U.S. congressional leaders to deliver an address at the Capitol, a show of support for Israel while top ally the U.S. shows frustration. No date has been set.

Biden on Friday asserted that Hamas militants are "no longer capable" of carrying out a large-scale attack on Israel like the one on Oct. 7. He urged Israel and Hamas to reach an agreement to release about 100 remaining hostages, along with the bodies of around 30 more, for an extended cease-fire.

Talks on a deal halted last month after a push by mediators in hopes of averting a full-scale Israeli invasion of Gaza's southern city of Rafah. Israel says the Rafah operation is key to uprooting remaining Hamas battalions, even as the militants regroup elsewhere in the territory.

Israel on Friday confirmed its troops were operating in central parts of Rafah. Around 1 million Palestinians — almost half of Gaza's population — have left Rafah, and the U.N. World Food Program has called living conditions "horrific and apocalyptic" as hunger grows.

Families of hostages said time was running out.

"This might be the last chance to save lives," Gili Roman told The Associated Press. His sister, Yarden Roman-Gat, was freed during a weeklong cease-fire in November, but sister-in-law Carmel is still held. "Our leadership must not disappoint us. But mostly, all eyes should be on Hamas," Roman said.

Families described an aggressive meeting Thursday with Israel's national security adviser, Tzachi Hanegbi, who told them the government wasn't ready to sign a deal to bring all hostages home and there was no plan B.

Many hostages' families accuse the government of a lack of will.

"We know that the government of Israel has done an awful lot to delay reaching a deal, and that has cost the lives of many people who survived in captivity for weeks and weeks and months and months," Sharone Lifschitz said. Her mother, Yocheved, was freed in November but her father, Oded, is still held.

The first phase of the deal described by Biden would last for six weeks and include a "full and complete cease-fire," a withdrawal of Israeli forces from all densely populated areas of Gaza and the release of a number of hostages, including women, older people and the wounded, in exchange for the release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners.

The second phase would include the release of all remaining living hostages, including male soldiers, and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza. The third phase calls for the start of a major reconstruction of Gaza, which faces decades of rebuilding from the war's devastation.

Biden acknowledged that keeping the proposal on track would be difficult, with "details to negotiate" to move from the first phase to the second. Biden said if Hamas fails to fulfil its commitment under the deal, Israel can resume military operations.

Hamas has said it viewed the proposal "positively" and called on Israel to declare an explicit commitment to an agreement that includes a permanent cease-fire, a complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza, a prisoner exchange and other conditions.

In Deir al-Balah, where many Palestinians have fled following Israel's assault on Rafah, there was some hope.

"This proposal came late, but better late than never," said Akram Abu Al-Hasan.

The main difference from previous proposals is the readiness to stop the war for an undefined period, according to analysts. It leaves Israel the option to renew the war and diminish Hamas' ability to govern, but over time, said Michael Milshtein, head of the Palestinian Studies Forum in Dayan Center at Tel Aviv University.

"It was a very good speech ... it seems that Biden is trying to force it on the Israeli government. He was clearly speaking directly to the Israeli people," said Gershon Baskin, director for the Middle East at

the International Communities Organization.

Also on Saturday, Egypt's state-run Al-Qahera News said officials from Egypt, the United States and Israel would meet in Cairo over the weekend about the Rafah crossing, a crucial aid entry point that has been closed since Israel took over the Palestinian side in May. Egypt has refused to open its side, fearing the Israeli control will be permanent.

Hamas' attack on Oct. 7 killed around 1,200 people — mostly civilians — and abducted about 250. More than 36,370 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza by Israel's offensive, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. Its count doesn't differentiate between civilians and combatants.

Chad Daybell sentenced to death for killing wife and girlfriend's 2 children in jury decision

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — A jury in Idaho unanimously agreed Saturday that convicted killer Chad Daybell deserves the death penalty for the gruesome murders of his wife and his girlfriend's two youngest children, ending a grim case that began in 2019 with a search for two missing children.

The 55-year-old Daybell, wearing a dress shirt and tie, sat with his hands in his lap at the defense table. He showed no emotion when learning he would face the death penalty for the murders of Tammy Daybell, 16-year-old Tylee Ryan and 7-year-old Joshua "JJ" Vallow.

When asked by the judge whether he wanted to make a statement, Daybell declined.

Jurors found him guilty Thursday and decided on the death sentence after deliberating for just over a day.

The mother of the children is Lori Vallow Daybell, whom Chad Daybell married shortly after his wife's death. Vallow Daybell was convicted last year in the three murders and is now awaiting trial in Arizona, charged with murder in connection with the shooting death of her fourth husband, Charles Vallow. Charles Vallow was JJ's father.

The case began in 2019, when a family member called police. Investigators soon realized both children were missing, and a multistate search ensued. Nearly a year later, their remains were found buried on Chad Daybell's property. Tylee's DNA was later found on a pickaxe and shovel in a shed on the property, and JJ's body was wrapped in trash bags and duct tape, prosecutors have said.

During a nearly two-month-long trial, prosecutors said Chad Daybell, a self-published author who wrote doomsday-laced fiction, promoted unusual spiritual beliefs including apocalyptic prophecies and tales of possession by evil spirits in order to justify the killings.

"This has been a tough case because of its complexity, both in telling the story of an investigation that spanned years and trying to figure out the best way to present it in a way that would make sense to others," Fremont County Prosecutor Lindsey Blake said outside the Boise courthouse after the sentencing.

Relatives of the victims welcomed the jury's decision.

"This is the best justice we can possibly get. And again, it doesn't change the outcome, but it is good news, and it brings closure for everybody that's been hurt," Colby Ryan, Vallow Daybell's oldest child, told reporters.

Larry Woodcock, JJ's grandfather, thanked the judge, law enforcement and the people who have followed the case and shared their support over the years.

"You are family," he said. "I look at the faces, and I'm going to tell you all: I'm going to miss you."

"We saw justice," he added. "Equal, honest and righteous."

Daybell's defense attorney, John Prior, argued during the trial that there wasn't enough evidence to tie Daybell to the killings, and suggested Vallow Daybell's older brother, Alex Cox, was the culprit. Cox died in late 2019 and was never charged, and Vallow Daybell was convicted last year and sentenced to life in prison without parole.

During the sentencing hearing, Prior asked the jurors to judge Daybell on his life before he met Vallow Daybell, describing her as a bomb that blew him off the trajectory of an otherwise wholesome life. But Daybell also declined to offer any mitigating evidence during the sentencing hearing. Mitigating evidence is often used to encourage jurors to have sympathy for a defendant in an effort to show that a life sentence

would be more appropriate than capital punishment.

Family members of the victims gave emotional statements to the jurors. JJ Vallow's grandmother, Kay Woodcock, tearfully described how the 7-year-old would show empathy and compassion to others through soft touches and by frequently asking if those around him were OK. She also said Tylee was a doting big sister, and that it warmed her heart to see them together.

"I can't express just how much I wish for more time to create memories," Woodcock said, beginning to weep.

Ryan, Vallow Daybell's oldest child, described what it was like to lose his entire family. His father died years earlier.

"My three kids will never know the kindness of Tylee's heart or JJ's silly and goofy personality ... The only way I could describe the impact of their lives being lost is like a nuclear bomb dropping," he said. "It's not an overstatement to say that I lost everything."

To impose the death penalty, the jurors had to unanimously find that Daybell met at least one of the "aggravating circumstances" that state law says qualifies someone for capital punishment. They also had to agree that those aggravating factors weren't outweighed by any mitigating factors that might have lessened his culpability or justified a lesser sentence.

The jury decided there were aggravating factors including an utter disregard for human life and the murders being especially heinous and cruel.

Idaho law allows for execution by lethal injection or firing squad, though firing squad executions have never been used in the state.

Republicans join Trump's attacks on justice system and campaign of vengeance after guilty verdict

By LISA MASCARO and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Embracing Donald Trump's strategy of blaming the U.S. justice system after his historic guilty verdict, Republicans in Congress are fervently enlisting themselves in his campaign of vengeance and political retribution as the GOP runs to reclaim the White House.

Almost no Republican official has stood up to suggest Trump should not be the party's presidential candidate for the November election — in fact, some have sought to hasten his nomination. Few others dared to defend the legitimacy of the New York state court that heard the hush money case or the 12 jurors who unanimously rendered their verdict.

And those Republicans who expressed doubts about Trump's innocence or political viability, including his former hawkish national security adviser John Bolton or top-tier Senate candidate Larry Hogan of Maryland, were instantly bullied by the former president's enforcers and told to "leave the party."

Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., said she's voting for Trump "whether he is a free man or a prisoner of the Biden regime."

She also posted the upside-down American flag that has come to symbolize the "Stop the Steal" movement Trump started with allies before the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

The swift, strident and deepening commitment to Trump despite his felony conviction shows how fully Republican leaders and lawmakers have been infused with his unfounded grievances of a "rigged" system and dangerous conspiracies of "weaponized" government, using them in their own attacks on President Joe Biden and the Democrats.

Rather than shunning Trump's escalating authoritarian language or ensuring they will provide checks and balances for a second Trump term, the Republican senators and representatives are upturning long-standing faith in U.S. governance, and setting the stage for what they plan to do if Trump regains power.

On Friday, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, demanded the prosecutors Alvin Bragg and Matthew Colangelo appear for a June hearing on the "weaponization of the federal government" and "the unprecedented political prosecution" of Trump — despite the fact that Biden, as president, has no authority over the state courts in New York.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 71 of 87

"What we're gearing up for is if Trump wins, he's going to use the apparatus of the state to target his political opponents," said Jason Stanley, a professor at Yale and the author of "How Fascism Works."

Stanley said history is full of examples of people not believing the rhetoric of authoritarians. "Believe what they say," he said. "He's literally telling you he's going to use the apparatus of the state to target his political opponents."

At his Trump Tower on Friday in New York, the former president returned to the kinds of attacks he has repeatedly lodged in campaign speeches, portraying Biden as the one who is "corrupt" and the U.S. as a "fascist" nation.

Trump called the members of the bipartisan House committee that investigated the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol "thugs" and said Biden was a "Manchurian candidate," a phrase inspired by the 1960s movie portraying a puppet of a U.S. political enemy.

A Trump campaign memo contained talking points for Republican lawmakers, suggesting they call the case a "sham," "hoax," "witch hunt," "election interference" and "lawfare" designed by Biden, whom it called "crooked."

Biden faces no such charges, and the House GOP's efforts to impeach the president over his son Hunter Biden's business dealings have largely stalled out. Hunter Biden is due in court next week on an unrelated firearms charge in Wilmington, Delaware.

Joe Biden said Friday that "it's reckless, it's dangerous, it's irresponsible, for anyone to say this is rigged just because they don't like the verdict."

Asked later at the White House if this could happen to him, Biden said: "Not at all. I didn't do anything wrong. The system still works."

As for Trump's claims the case is being orchestrated by the Democratic president to hurt him politically, Biden quipped: "I didn't know I was that powerful."

In the hush money case, Trump was found guilty of trying to influence the 2016 election by falsifying payment to a porn actor to bury her story of an affair. He faces three other felony indictments, including the federal case over his effort to overturn the 2020 election. But they are not likely to be heard before November's expected election rematch with Biden.

Thursday's verdict came after a jury in 2023 found Trump to be liable for sexual abuse against advice columnist E. Jean Carroll and a judge in a 2024 business fraud case determined that Trump lied about his wealth for years, ordering him to pay a staggering \$355 million in penalties.

Almost to a person, the Republicans in Congress who spoke out provided a singular voice for Trump.

Speaker Mike Johnson on "Fox & Friends" amplified the claim, without evidence, that Democrats are trying to hurt Trump. Johnson, R-La., said he thinks the Supreme Court should "step in" to resolve the case.

"The justices on the court, I know many of them personally, I think they're deeply concerned about that as we are," Johnson said.

The outgoing Senate Republican leader, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, said he expected Trump would win the hush money case on appeal, but the three senators seeking to replace McConnell as leader echoed Trump with stronger criticisms of the judicial system.

South Dakota Sen. John Thune said the case was "politically motivated." Texas Sen. John Cornyn called the verdict "a disgrace." Sen. Rick Scott of Florida said that everyone who calls themselves a party leader "must stand up and condemn" what he called "lawless election interference."

Sen. Susan Collins, the Maine Republican who is known as a bipartisan leader, said the prosecutor "brought these charges precisely because of who the defendant was rather than because of any specified criminal conduct."

With sentencing in the hush money case expected in July before the Republican National Convention, Republican Rep. Chip Roy of Texas said the GOP should move up the convention to speed up Trump's nomination as the party's presidential pick.

Republican judicial advocate Mike Davis, a former top Senate aide mentioned for a future Trump administration position, circulated a letter outlining the next steps.

"Dear Republicans," he said in a Friday post. If their response to the guilty verdict was "we must respect the process" or "we are too principled to retaliate," he suggested they do two things: One was an expletive, the other: "Leave the party."

Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, circulated his own letter in which he suggested it was the White House that "made a mockery" of the rule of law and altered politics in "un-American" ways. He and other senators threatened to stall Senate business until Republicans take action.

"Those who turned our judicial system into a political cudgel must be held accountable," Lee said.

UN official highlights how better preparation has shrunk disaster deaths despite worsening climate

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

As climate change makes disasters such as cyclones, floods and droughts more intense, more frequent and striking more places, fewer people are dying from those catastrophes globally because of better warning, planning and resilience, a top United Nations official said.

The world hasn't really noticed how the type of storms that once killed tens or hundreds of thousands of people now only claim handfuls of lives, new United Nations Assistant Secretary-General Kamal Kishore, who heads the UN's office for disaster risk reduction told The Associated Press. But he said much more needs to be done to keep these disasters from pushing people into abject poverty.

"Fewer people are dying of disasters and if you look at that as a proportion of total population, it's even fewer," Kishore said in his first interview since taking office in mid-May. "We often take for granted the progress that we've made."

"Twenty years ago there was no tsunami early warning system except for one small part of the world. Now the whole world is covered by a tsunami warning system" after the 2004 tsunami that killed about 230,000 people in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand, Kishore said.

People are getting better warnings about tropical cyclones — also called hurricanes and typhoons — so now the chances of dying in a tropical cyclone in a place like the Philippines are about one-third of what they were 20 years ago, Kishore said.

As the former disaster chief for India, Kishore points to how his country has cut deaths thanks to better warnings and community preparedness such as hospitals being ready for a surge in births during a cyclone. In 1999, a supercyclone hit eastern India, killing almost 10,000 people. Then a nearly similar sized storm hit in 2013, but killed only a few dozen people. Last year, on Kishore's watch, Cyclone Biparjoy killed fewer than 10 people.

The same goes for flood deaths, Kishore said.

The data backs up Kishore, said disaster epidemiologist Debarati Guha-Sapir of the Catholic University of Louvain in Brussels, who created a global disaster database. Her database — which she acknowledges has missing pieces — shows that global deaths per storm event has dropped from about a ten-year average of 24 in 2008 to ten-year average of about 8 in 2021. Flood deaths per event have gone from ten-year averages of nearly 72 to about 31, her data indicates.

While there are fewer deaths globally from disasters, there are still pockets in the poorest of countries, especially in Africa, where deaths are worsening or at least staying the same, Guha-Sapir said. It's much like public health's efforts to eradicate measles, success in most places, but areas that can least cope are not improving, she said.

India and Bangladesh are poster nations for better dealing with disasters and preventing deaths, especially in cyclones, Guha-Sapir said. In 1970, a cyclone killed more than 300,000 people in Bangladesh in one of the 20th century's greatest natural disasters and now "Bangladesh has done fantastic work in disaster risk reduction for years and years and years," she said.

Pointing out wins is important, Guha-Sapir said: "Gloom and doom will never get us anywhere."

While countries such as India and Bangladesh have created warning systems, strengthened buildings such as hospitals and know what to do to prepare for and then react to disasters, a lot of it is also just

because these countries are getting richer and better educated and so they can handle disasters better and protect themselves, Guha-Sapir said. Poorer countries and people can't.

"Fewer people are dying, but that's not because climate change is not happening," Kishore said "That is despite the climate change. And that is because we have invested in resilience, invested in early warning systems."

Kishore said climate change is making his job tougher, yet he said doesn't feel like Sisyphus, the mythical man pushing a giant boulder up a hill.

"You are getting more intense hazards, more frequently and (in) new geographies," Kishore said, saying places, like Brazil that used to not worry too much about floods now are getting devastated. The same goes for extreme heat, which he said used to be an issue for only certain countries, but now has gone global, pointing to nearly 60,000 heat wave deaths in Europe in 2022.

India, where temperatures have been flirting with 122 degrees (50 degrees Celsius), has reduced heat deaths with specific regional plans, Kishore said.

"However with the new extreme temperatures we are seeing, every country needs to double its efforts to save lives," he said. And that means looking at the built environment of cities, he added.

Cutting deaths is only part of the battle to reduce risk, Kishore said.

"We are doing a better job of saving lives but not of livelihoods," Kishore said.

While fewer people are dying "you look at people who are losing their houses, people who are losing their businesses, a small farmer that is running a poultry farm," Kishore said. When they get flooded or hit by a storm, they may survive but they've got nothing, no seeds, no fishing boats.

"On that we're not doing as well as we should," Kishore said. "We cannot accept that losses will occur. Of course they will occur, but they could be minimized by an order of magnitude."

Is intermittent fasting better than counting calories?

Maybe not, but you might stick with it

By JONEL ALECCIA AP Health Writer

As weight-loss plans go, it's easy to see the allure of intermittent fasting: Eat what you want, but only during certain windows of time — often just eight hours a day.

Instead of counting calories or measuring portions, dieters just have to pay attention to the clock, said Courtney Peterson, a nutrition researcher at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"You have this really simple rule: Eat or don't eat," Peterson said.

The technique has skyrocketed in popularity in recent years, becoming a leading trending topic on social media.

But does time-restricted eating, a form of intermittent fasting, really help people shed pounds and boost health?

Here's what you need to know about the practice:

WHAT IS INTERMITTENT FASTING?

Intermittent fasting is a meal strategy where people switch between fasting and eating on a regular schedule, defined as at least 14 hours with no food, Peterson said. That can mean variations such as eating every other day, eating five days a week and then fasting for two days or limiting daily eating to certain hours.

Time-restricted eating, where people condense all of their eating into a daily window of 10 hours or less, is the most popular form of intermittent fasting. Diners will delay breakfast until 10 a.m. or noon and then eat dinner by 6 p.m. or 8 p.m., forgoing food the rest of the time.

HOW IS IT SUPPOSED TO HELP?

The theory behind time-restricted eating is that it supports the circadian rhythm, or the body's internal clock. Spending more time in a fasting state may boost the body's processes that govern blood sugar and fat metabolism, for instance, scientists say.

Early studies in mice starting in 2012 seemed to show health benefits from time-restricted eating. Small

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 74 of 87

studies in people with obesity suggested that the practice might help them lose weight and improve other health markers.

IS TIME-RESTRICTED EATING EFFECTIVE FOR WEIGHT LOSS?

Research has shown that people on time-restricted eating plans tend to eat fewer calories, which could explain weight loss.

Results from combined studies suggested that adults with obesity who limited their eating hours without focusing on calories naturally reduced their energy intake by 200 to 550 calories a day, losing 3% to 5% of their baseline body weight.

But a larger study of people observed over a longer period of time showed that the time restrictions alone might not matter.

A 2022 study published in the New England Journal of Medicine tracked 139 people with obesity for a year. Participants either followed a calorie-restricted diet during a certain time window or ate the same number of calories throughout the day. Both groups lost weight — 14 to 18 pounds on average — but there was no significant difference between the strategies.

“Our data right now suggests that time-restricted eating isn’t any better or worse than cutting calories,” Peterson said. Nor does the technique help burn more calories, she added.

Still, Peterson said, the simplicity of time restriction might be easier to maintain than a typical diet.

“Almost no one likes calorie counting,” she said.

IS INTERMITTENT FASTING SAFE?

Early clinical trials with eating windows of six to 10 hours found that time-restricted eating was “generally safe,” researchers reported in the journal Obesity.

But headline-grabbing research presented this year at an American Heart Association scientific session suggested that people following an 8-hour time-restricted diet had a much higher risk of death from cardiovascular disease than those who ate over 12 to 16 hours.

That research hasn’t been published in a peer-reviewed journal, noted Dr. Francisco Lopez-Jimenez, of the Mayo Clinic.

But he said there is reason to be cautious. Longstanding evidence suggests that skipping breakfast may be linked to cardiovascular disease and death. People should check with their health care providers before they try restricted eating, especially if the fasting window lasts until midday.

“It’s a call for pausing before you just recommend a particular diet,” Lopez-Jimenez said.

Voting ends in the last round of India’s election, a referendum on Modi’s decade in power

By SHEIKH SAALIQ and KRUTIKA PATHI Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — India’s 6-week-long national election came to an end Saturday with most exit polls projecting Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to extend his decade in power with a third consecutive term.

During the grueling, multi-phase election, candidates crisscrossed the country, poll workers hiked to remote villages, and voters lined up for hours in sweltering heat. Now all that’s left is to wait for the results, which are expected to be announced Tuesday.

The election is considered one of the most consequential in India’s history. If Modi wins, he’ll be only the second Indian leader to retain power for a third term after Jawaharlal Nehru, the country’s first prime minister.

Exit polls by major television news channels projected Modi’s Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party and its allies were leading over the broad opposition alliance led by the Congress party. Most exit polls projected BJP and its allies could win more than 350 seats out of 543 — far ahead of the 272 seats needed to form the next government.

Indian television channels have had a mixed record in the past in predicting election results.

Modi’s campaign began on a platform of economic progress, with vows to uplift the poor and turn India into a developed nation by 2047. But it turned increasingly shrill in recent weeks as Modi escalated polar-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 75 of 87

izing rhetoric in incendiary speeches that targeted the country's Muslim minority, who make up 14% of India's 1.4 billion people.

After campaigning ended on Thursday, Modi went to a memorial site honoring a famous Hindu saint to meditate on national television. The opposition Congress party called it a political stunt and said it violated election rules as the campaigning period has ended.

When the election kicked off in April, Modi and his BJP were widely expected to clinch another term.

Since coming to power in 2014, Modi has enjoyed immense popularity. His supporters see him as a self-made, strong leader who has improved India's standing in the world, and credit his pro-business policies with making the economy the world's fifth-largest.

At the same time, his rule has seen brazen attacks and hate speech against minorities, particularly Muslims. India's democracy, his critics say, is faltering and Modi has increasingly blurred the line between religion and state.

But as the campaign ground on, his party faced stiff resistance from the opposition alliance and its main face, Rahul Gandhi of the Congress party. They have attacked Modi over his Hindu nationalist politics and are hoping to benefit from growing economic discontent.

Pre-poll surveys showed that voters were increasingly worried about unemployment, the rise in food prices and an overall sentiment that only a small portion of Indians have benefitted despite brisk economic growth under Modi, making the contest appear closer than initially anticipated.

The seventh round of polls covered 57 constituencies across seven states and one union territory, completing a national election to fill all 543 seats in the powerful lower house of parliament. Nearly 970 million voters — more than 10% of the world's population — were eligible to elect a new parliament for five years. More than 8,300 candidates ran for the office.

In Kolkata, the capital of West Bengal, voters lined up outside polling stations early Saturday morning to avoid the scorching heat, with temperatures expected to reach 34 degrees Celsius (93.2 Fahrenheit). Modi was challenged there by the state's chief minister, Mamata Banerjee, who heads the regional Trinamool Congress party.

"There is a crunch for jobs now in the present market. I will vote for the government that can uplift jobs. And I hope those who cannot get jobs, they will get jobs," said Ankit Samaddar.

In this election, Modi's BJP — which controls much of India's Hindi-speaking northern and central parts — sought to expand their influence by making inroads into the country's eastern and southern states, where regional parties hold greater sway.

The BJP also banked on consolidating votes among the Hindu majority, who make up 80% of the population, after Modi opened a long-demanded Hindu temple on the site of a razed mosque in January. Many saw it as the unofficial start of his campaign, but analysts said the excitement over the temple may not be enough to yield votes.

Modi ramped up anti-Muslim rhetoric after voter turnout dipped slightly below 2019 figures in the first few rounds of the 2024 polls, in a move seen as a bid to energize his core Hindu voter base. But analysts say it also reflected the absence of a single big-ticket campaign issue, which Modi has relied on to power previous campaigns.

In 2014, Modi's status as a political outsider with plans to crack down on deep-rooted corruption won over voters disillusioned with decades of dynastic politics. And in 2019, he swept the polls on a wave of nationalism after his government launched airstrikes into rival Pakistan in response to a suicide bombing in Kashmir that killed 40 Indian soldiers.

But things are different this time, analysts say, giving Modi's political challengers a potential opportunity.

"The opposition somehow managed to derail his plan by setting the narrative to local issues, like unemployment and the economy. This election, people are voting keeping various issues in mind," said Rasheed Kidwai, a political analyst.

Panama prepares to evacuate first island in face of rising sea levels

By MATÍAS DELACROIX and JUAN ZAMORANO Associated Press

GARDI SUGDUB, Panama (AP) — On a tiny island off Panama's Caribbean coast, about 300 families are packing their belongings in preparation for a dramatic change. Generations of Gunas who have grown up on Gardi Sugdub in a life dedicated to the sea and tourism will trade that next week for the mainland's solid ground.

They go voluntarily — sort of.

The Gunas of Gardi Sugdub are the first of 63 communities along Panama's Caribbean and Pacific coasts that government officials and scientists expect to be forced to relocate by rising sea levels in the coming decades.

On a recent day, the island's Indigenous residents rowed or sputtered off with outboard motors to fish. Children, some in uniforms and others in the colorful local textiles called "molas," chattered as they hustled through the warren of narrow dirt streets on their way to school.

"We're a little sad, because we're going to leave behind the homes we've known all our lives, the relationship with the sea, where we fish, where we bathe and where the tourists come, but the sea is sinking the island little by little," said Nadín Morales, 24, who prepared to move with her mother, uncle and boyfriend.

An official with Panama's ministry of housing said that some people have decided to stay on the island until it's no longer safe, without revealing a specific number. Authorities won't force them to leave, the official said on condition of anonymity to discuss the issue.

Gardi Sugdub is one of about 50 populated islands in the archipelago of the Guna Yala territory. It is only about 400 yards (366 meters) long and 150 yards (137 meters) wide. From above, it's roughly a prickly oval surrounded by dozens of short docks where residents tie up their boats.

Every year, especially when the strong winds whip up the sea in November and December, water fills the streets and enters the homes. Climate change isn't only leading to a rise in sea levels, but it's also warming oceans and thereby powering stronger storms.

The Gunas have tried to reinforce the island's edge with rocks, pilings and coral, but seawater keeps coming.

"Lately, I've seen that climate change has had a major impact," Morales said. "Now the tide comes to a level it didn't before, and the heat is unbearable."

The Guna's autonomous government decided two decades ago that they needed to think about leaving the island, but at that time it was because the island was getting too crowded. The effects of climate change accelerated that thinking, said Evelio López, a 61-year-old teacher on the island.

He plans to move with relatives to the new site on the mainland that the government developed at a cost of \$12 million. The concrete houses sit on a grid of paved streets carved out of the lush tropical jungle just over a mile (2 kilometers) from the port, where an eight-minute boat ride carries them to Gardi Sugdub.

Leaving the island is "a great challenge, because more than 200 years of our culture is from the sea, so leaving this island means a lot of things," López said. "Leaving the sea, the economic activities that we have there on the island, and now we're going to be on solid ground, in the forest. We're going to see what the result is in the long run."

Steven Paton, director of the Smithsonian Institution's physical monitoring program in Panama, said that the upcoming move "is a direct consequence of climate change through the increase in sea level."

"The islands on average are only a half-meter above sea level, and as that level rises, sooner or later the Gunas are going to have to abandon all of the islands almost surely by the end of the century or earlier."

"All of the world's coasts are being affected by this at different speeds," Paton said.

Residents of a small coastal community in Mexico moved inland last year after storms continued to take away their homes. Governments are being forced to take action, from the Italian lagoon city of Venice to the coastal communities of New Zealand.

A recent study by Panama's Environmental Ministry's Climate Change directorate, with support from universities in Panama and Spain, estimated that by 2050, Panama would lose about 2.01% of its coastal

territory to increases in sea levels.

Panama estimates that it will cost about \$1.2 billion to relocate the 38,000 or so inhabitants who will face rising sea levels in the short- and medium-term, said Ligia Castro, climate change director for the Environmental Ministry.

On Gardi Sugdub, women who make the elaborately embroidered molas worn by Guna women hang them outside their homes when finished, trying to catch the eye of visiting tourists.

The island and others along the coast have benefitted for years from year-round tourism.

Braucilio de la Ossa, the deputy secretary of Carti, the port facing Gardi Sugdub, said that he planned to move with his wife, daughter, sister-in-law and mother-in-law. Some of his wife's relatives will stay on the island.

He said the biggest challenge for those moving would be the lifestyle change of moving from the sea inland even though the distance is relatively small.

"Now that they will be in the forest their way of living will be different," he said.

European vote could tip the balance on Meloni's far-right agenda in Italy

By COLLEEN BARRY Associated Press

MILAN (AP) — While Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni adopts a reassuring Western-allied foreign policy, cultural wars at home are preserving her far-right credentials heading into a European parliamentary election, where her neo-fascist-rooted Brothers of Italy party is projected to secure significant gains — and a possible coalition role.

In less than two years leading the EU's third-largest economy, Meloni has emerged as the most powerful right-wing leader in Europe, a position emphasized in a fiery speech in May to a Vox rally in Spain that included French far-right leader Marine Le Pen, Hungary's President Viktor Orbán and pro-Trump Republicans.

Still, her pro-Ukraine and Israel policies have proven reassuring to centrist American and European allies as Italy prepares to host U.S. President Joe Biden and other leaders of the Group of Seven most industrialized nations in late June.

The European elections June 6-9 could begin to tip Meloni's balancing act.

"I think there are two Melonis, and the Meloni that is getting more attention is the pragmatic, pro-Ukrainian Meloni," said Wolfgang Piccoli of the London-based Teneo consultancy. "There is another Meloni, back in Italy, where she is pursuing a clear right-wing agenda on a variety of issues from migration to social-cultural values. The European elections could be a bit of a moment of truth. She has never been forced to take a clear ideological stand."

After campaigning on an anti-EU platform, Meloni has adjusted her rhetoric as Europe pours more than 210 billion euros (\$228 billion) in pandemic recovery funds into Italy. As premier, Meloni has a potential political ally in EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, who has not ruled out inclusion of Meloni's party in a grand coalition, if needed.

Meloni's Brothers of Italy party is forecast to grow from six seats to at least 20 seats when Italians vote June 8-9, with Meloni personalizing the polls by asking voters to write her name, "Giorgia," besides checking the party symbol.

Even as her popularity grows, Italian opposition leaders, activists and journalists are sounding an alarm over the spread of far-right policies that are curbing LGBTQ+ and women's rights while creating what some see as a climate of xenophobia and intimidation.

Senator-for-life Liliana Segre, a nonagenarian Holocaust survivor, told the news agency ANSA that she is "really very worried" about the European election outcome.

So far in her term, Meloni has delegated most of the cultural social politics to her ministers, giving her a degree of separation on many hot-button issues.

Migration is the exception, as she champions her so-called Mattei Plan to fund projects in African coun-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 78 of 87

tries along migrant routes in exchange for better controls, while pressing ahead with plans to run asylum reception centers in Albania — winning consensus from von der Leyen, a development she ballyhoos on the campaign trail.

“Here we make history. ... This is a referendum,” Meloni told a final election rally in Rome’s Piazza del Popolo on Saturday.

“When it comes to Meloni and the potential impact on EU politics after the European election, (the victory) depends on the numbers and the chemistry that emerge,” said Simone Tagliapietra, an analyst at the Bruegel think tank in Brussels. He noted that the kind of social-cultural policies that her government has been most keen to tackle in Italy fall largely under national, not EU, competencies.

Meloni’s government barred city administrations from legally registering a non-biological parent in same-sex couples, effectively limiting their parental rights, and made access to abortion more difficult by allowing anti-abortion activists to enter abortion clinics, which activists say creates an intimidating environment. Her government also has come out against gender theory and is pushing a law through parliament that would ban surrogacy motherhood.

Culture Minister Gennaro Sangiuliano is unapologetically vanquishing foreigners and left-leaning appointees from running landmark museums, institutions and opera houses, exhibiting a desire to command the cultural debate in a way that hasn’t been seen in previous ideological shifts between the left and the right. The late Silvio Berlusconi, a three-time conservative premier, never so much as blinked at Italy’s cultural institutions.

Under Meloni, the media watchdog Reporters Without Borders has downgraded Italy five notches in its annual press freedom index, putting it in the “problematic” category alongside Poland and Hungary. In one recent episode, journalists at RAI state television accused new government-installed leadership of censoring a planned Liberation Day monologue denouncing fascism.

More recently, the editor of the Turin daily La Stampa, Massimo Giannini, said four police agents woke him at his hotel room at 4 a.m. to deliver a defamation complaint for comments critical of the Meloni government made on a television talk show the evening before. Giannini told private TV La7 that such treatment is usually reserved for “drug traffickers, not journalists.”

The new Made in Italy Ministry has engaged in grandstanding tactics, like recently impounding dozens of Fiat Topolino microcars emblazoned with the emblem of the Italian flag despite being made in Morocco.

Such operations serve a dual purpose, Piccoli said, distracting from Italy’s ongoing structural issues and stagnant economy, while appealing to Brothers of Italy stalwarts.

“The beauty of all this in my view is that we are almost halfway through her term, and none of the structural issues in Italy have been addressed,” he said, including addressing the right-wing issue of the demographic collapse or reforming pensions. “You just wonder whether they just go for the easier stuff, which helps to mobilize public opinion, rather than addressing the structural problem of this country, including the lack of economic growth.”

Some analysts say that Meloni’s pragmatic streak brings into question the degree to which she personally believes in the far-right social and cultural agenda.

Political analyst Roberto D’Alimonte notes that the growing popularity of the Brothers of Italy is taking on board fickle voters who don’t necessarily have the same ideology, which could give Meloni room to loosen the far-right orthodoxy if she increases her mandate in the next Italian parliamentary vote.

“She is a shrewd politician,” said D’Alimonte, of Rome’s LUISS university. “If she wins the next election, we might see a Meloni who tries to change that, becoming more conservative even on cultural matters, rather than far-right.”

From collapsed plea deal to trial:

How Hunter Biden has come to face jurors on federal gun charges

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden's son was in federal court, prepared to plead guilty to misdemeanor tax offenses. The culmination of a sprawling investigation, the deal between Hunter Biden and prosecutors was going to spare him a politically explosive trial in the middle of his father's reelection campaign and likely prison time.

But it all fell apart.

Now, Hunter Biden is headed to trial on federal gun charges in a case brought by his father's Justice Department at a time when America's political and legal worlds are colliding like never before. Dogged for years by investigations, scrutinized over his troubled personal life and vilified by Republicans, the younger Biden is now also confronting the threat of felony convictions and time behind bars.

The case opening Monday with jury selection in Delaware is not about Hunter Biden's business dealings, which have been the focus of the yearslong federal investigation and Republicans' fruitless impeachment inquiry into the Democratic president. It's about a gun Hunter Biden had for about 11 days — a .38-caliber Colt Cobra Special. Prosecutors say he bought it illegally in October 2018 because he falsely swore on a federal form that he was not a drug user. He never fired the gun, according to his lawyers, and it ended up dumped in a trash can.

The trial will lack details about his foreign business matters that Republicans have seized on to try to paint the Biden family as corrupt, but it is expected to feature deeply personal and embarrassing testimony about dark time in the younger Biden's life. And it probably will provide new political impetus for Donald Trump's allies, who are eager to distract from the presumptive Republican presidential nominee's own legal problems after he was convicted of 34 felony counts in his hush money trial.

Allies of Joe Biden are worried about the toll the trial may take on the president, who already is concerned about the well-being and sobriety of his only living son and who must now watch as that son's darkest moments are relived in public. They also are worried that the trial could become a distraction as the president tries to campaign while facing anemic poll numbers and is scheduled to prepare in Wilmington for a June 27 debate with Trump as the trial plays out nearby.

THE DEAL THAT NEVER WAS

It once looked like Hunter Biden was going to avoid prosecution in the gun case altogether.

The deal was announced last June. Nearly three years earlier, Hunter Biden had confirmed the federal investigation into his tax affairs in December 2020, shortly after his father was elected.

The younger Biden would have pleaded guilty to misdemeanor tax offenses; prosecutors would have recommended two years of probation. There was also a "diversion agreement" that would have allowed him to escape prosecution on a felony gun charge as long he stayed out of trouble for two years.

But the plea hearing quickly unraveled.

U.S. District Judge Maryellen Noreika, who was nominated to the bench by Trump, quizzed both sides with concerns about the deal. To her, it seemed unusual and required her to be involved in the case in a way most federal judges are not. The lawyers huddled, trying to salvage the deal. At one point they could be heard yelling at each other.

"Well, we'll just rip it up!" Chris Clark, Biden's then-attorney, shouted as tempers flared.

"So what do we do now?" the judge later asked the lawyers.

"Then there is no deal," prosecutor Leo Wise told her.

A few weeks later, Attorney General Merrick Garland named David Weiss, the Trump-nominated U.S. attorney in Delaware who was leading the investigation, as a special counsel.

Hunter Biden was indicted a month after that on three gun counts. They are punishable by up to 25 years in prison, though first-time offenders do not get anywhere near the maximum and it is unclear whether the judge would actually give him time behind bars if he were convicted.

COURTROOM TENSION

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 80 of 87

The bitterness between prosecutors and Hunter Biden's legal team is glaring. It's likely to be on display Monday.

Clark withdrew from the case, saying he might be called to testify in a potential legal dispute over the now-defunct deal. Another defense lawyer, Abbe Lowell, has accused Weiss of caving to political pressure to indict the president's son after Trump and other Republicans blasted the "sweetheart deal." The defense has noted that charges related to gun possession by drug users are rare when not in connection with a more serious crime.

"Mr. Biden is not being prosecuted for any sin that DOJ (the Department of Justice) believes he has committed. He is being punished for the perceived sins of his father — the sin of opposing Mr. Trump's election to the president," according to court papers filed by Lowell, who also has represented Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner, the former president's daughter and son-in-law.

Prosecutors say Lowell's contention is "fiction designed for a Hollywood script."

"Contrary to his assertion, he has not established that the Special Counsel, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of President Biden and his Attorney General, is punishing the defendant 'for the perceived sins of his father' in order to capitulate to a former President because of his tweets," Weiss' team responded.

Weiss has said "political considerations" played no part in the investigation. He told lawmakers behind closed doors last year that that no one at the Justice Department prevented him from pursuing charges or taking other necessary steps, disputing claims from two IRS whistleblowers that the department improperly interfered in the tax investigation.

A DARK TIME

The case stems from a period where, by his own admission, Hunter Biden was addicted to crack.

In his memoir "Beautiful Things," he described becoming consumed by drugs and alcohol after his older brother, Beau, died in 2015 at age 46 from brain cancer. The brothers were very close, having survived a car crash when they were young that killed their mother and baby sister.

Hunter Biden has said he has been sober since 2019. But prosecutors intend to use his memoir to make the case that he knew he was addicted to drugs when he denied it on the form that every person must fill out when buying a gun. They plan to show jurors text messages, videos and photos of Hunter Biden smoking crack, as well details about cocaine residue that authorities say was found on the pouch he used to hold his gun.

"I'm a liar and a thief and a blamer and a user and I'm delusional and an addict unlike beyond and above all other addicts that you know and I've ruined every relationship I've ever cherished," Hunter Biden wrote in one text message weeks after he bought the firearm, according to prosecutors.

Jurors are expected to hear testimony from his ex-wife and other former romantic partners, including Beau's widow, Hallie Biden, with whom Hunter Biden had a relationship after his brother's death. Hallie Biden found the gun in Hunter Biden's truck and threw it in a trash. It was found by a man collecting recyclables who gave it to the police.

The defense has suggested it will attack the credibility of the gun shop employees, noting there were changes to the gun-purchase form after the sale. Prosecutors say there were minor additions unrelated to the parts Hunter Biden filled out. His lawyers have suggested they may argue that Hunter Biden did not see himself as an addict when prosecutors say he checked "no" to the question on the form.

"The terms 'user' or 'addict' are not defined on the form and were not explained to him," the defense wrote in a recent filing. "Someone, like Mr. Biden who had just completed an 11-day rehabilitation program and lived with a sober companion after that, could surely believe he was not a present tense user or addict."

The case is expected to last a couple of weeks. He also is scheduled to stand trial in September in California in the case where he is accused of failing to pay at least \$1.4 million in taxes over four years.

US defense secretary says war with China neither imminent nor unavoidable, stressing need for talks

By DAVID RISING Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — United States Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin told a gathering of top security officials Saturday that war with China was neither imminent nor unavoidable, despite rapidly escalating tensions in the Asia-Pacific region, stressing the importance of renewed dialogue between him and his Chinese counterpart in avoiding “miscalculations and misunderstandings.”

Austin’s comments at the Shangri-La defense forum in Singapore came the day after he met for more than an hour on the sidelines with Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun, the first in-person meeting between the top defense officials since contacts between the American and Chinese militaries broke down in 2022 after then-U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan, infuriating Beijing.

Neither side budged from their longstanding positions on Taiwan — which China claims as its own and has not ruled out using force to take — and on China’s sweeping claims in the South China Sea, which has led to direct confrontations between China and other nations in the region, most notably the Philippines.

While declining to detail the specifics of their conversation, Austin said the most important thing was that the two were again talking.

“As long as we’re talking, we’re able to identify those issues that are troublesome and that we want to make sure that we have placed guardrails to ensure there are no misperceptions and no miscalculations ... that can spiral out of control,” he said.

“You can only do that kind of thing if you are talking.”

Addressing the same forum on Friday night, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. bluntly outlined what could be at stake, saying that if a Filipino were killed as China confronts his country’s coast guard and merchant fleet to press its claims in the South China Sea, it would be “very, very close to what we define as an act of war and therefore we will respond accordingly.”

Marcos added that he assumed the Philippines’ treaty partners, which include the U.S., “hold the same standard.”

In his own speech, Austin lauded how Marcos “spoke so powerfully last night about how the Philippines is standing up for its sovereign rights under international law.” But when pressed later, he would not say how the U.S. might react if a Filipino were killed in a confrontation with China, calling it hypothetical.

He did say the U.S. commitment to the Philippines as a treaty partner is “ironclad,” while again stressing the importance of dialogue with China.

“There are a number of things that can happen at sea or in the air, we recognize that,” he said. “But our goal is to make sure that we don’t allow things to spiral out of control unnecessarily.”

Dong was to speak to the conference himself Sunday morning. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who has been pushing for more air defense systems from Western allies, arrived unannounced on Saturday evening and will take part in a panel discussion on Sunday.

Beijing in recent years has been rapidly expanding its navy and is becoming growingly assertive in pressing its claim to virtually the entire South China Sea.

Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Richard Marles noted that not only had Philippine ships been rammed and hit with water cannons by China, but said a Chinese warplane dropped flares above an Australian helicopter earlier in the year, and in November a Chinese navy ship injured Australian divers in Japanese waters with sonar.

“In the face of these multiple sources of tension, it’s even more imperative that every country plays its part in managing increasing strategic risk,” he said.

In his own meeting with Dong, Japanese Defense Minister Minoru Kihara expressed “serious concerns” about China’s increasing military activities in the sea and airspace around Japan, including joint exercises with Russia, the Japanese Defense Ministry said in a statement.

To counter the Chinese activity, the U.S. has been ramping up military exercises in the region with its allies to underscore its “free and open Indo-Pacific” concept, meant to emphasize freedom of navigation

through the contested waters, including the Taiwan Strait.

Chinese Senior Col. Cao Yanzhong, a researcher at China's Institute of War Studies, asked Austin whether the U.S. was trying to create an Asian version of NATO with its emphasis on partnerships and alliances, a common Chinese claim. He suggested that could trigger conflict with China, citing ally Russia's claim that NATO's eastward expansion was a threat, which President Vladimir Putin has used as an excuse for his invasion of Ukraine.

"The eastern expansion of NATO has led to the Ukraine crisis," Cao said. "What implications do you think the strengthening of the U.S. alliance system in the Asia-Pacific will have on this region's security and stability?"

Austin said the U.S. is simply cooperating with "like-minded countries with similar values" and not trying to create a NATO-type alliance, while rejecting Cao's interpretation of the cause of the Ukraine war.

"The Ukraine crisis obviously was caused because Putin made a decision to unlawfully invade his neighbor," Austin said.

Expressing the concerns of some in the region, Indonesian academic Dewi Fortuna Anwar said any de-escalation of tensions "would be very welcome to this part of the world," but wondered whether the U.S. would allow China's assertive military posture to grow uncontested if Washington's main emphasis was now dialogue.

"We are also worried if you guys get too cozy, we also get trampled," she said.

Austin said that many of those issues were best addressed through talks, but also assured that Washington will continue to ensure that the rights of nations in the region were protected and that they continued to have access to their exclusive economic zones.

"War or a fight with China is neither imminent, in my view, or unavoidable," Austin said.

"Leaders of great power nations need to continue to work together to ensure that we're doing things to reduce the opportunities for miscalculation and misunderstandings," he said. "Every conversation is not going to be a happy conversation, but it is important that we continue to talk to each other. And it is important that we continue to support our allies and partners on their interests as well."

The Biden administration says Israel hasn't crossed a red line on Rafah. This could be why

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Acknowledging only "an uptick" in Israeli military activity, the United States has gone to lengths to avoid any suggestion that Israeli forces have crossed a red line set by President Joe Biden in the deepening offensive in the southern Gaza city of Rafah.

In just the past week, Israeli strikes that hit displaced families sheltering in tents drew international condemnation and Israel confirmed that its forces were operating in the city's center. Still, Biden administration officials say Israel has avoided massive attacks on what had been thickly crowded neighborhoods of Rafah and kept strikes more limited and targeted than earlier in its nearly 8-month-old war with Hamas.

That refrain underscores an increasingly isolated U.S. position.

Critics charge that Biden, who declared early last month that he would not supply offensive weapons if Israel launched an all-out assault on Rafah, has come up against a domestic red line of his own and decided not to cross it: challenging ally Israel, which has support from Republicans and many American voters, in an election year.

Administration officials "keep moving the goalposts when it comes to the Rafah operation, saying, 'You know, we won't let the Israelis do X, Y or Z,'" said Colin Clarke, an international security expert and research director at the Soufan Center, a research center. "And then somebody says, 'Well, aren't they doing that?'"

"So they've been playing semantics around what the Rafah operation constitutes," he said. "I think if it weren't an election year, you would see the president being a lot more forceful."

Administration officials insist Israel has changed its tactics in an effort to reduce civilian deaths as the military sweeps through the city and targets Hamas operatives — even as humanitarian conditions worsen.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 83 of 87

Some 1 million Palestinians have fled the Rafah offensive and are sheltering in squalid tent camps, and aid is only trickling into the territory. The United Nations estimates as few as 200,000 to 300,000 people still remain.

"We have been clear about what this isn't, which is not a major military operation," State Department spokesman Vedant Patel said Thursday. He referred to Israeli strikes on the outskirts of the city and seizure of an adjoining border region with Egypt as an "uptick."

Pressed on the question, national security adviser Jake Sullivan told reporters that there's "no mathematical formula" to determining when and if the Rafah assault has gone beyond the conditions set by the Democratic president.

The U.S. would be looking at whether the operation was causing "a lot of death and destruction" or was "more precise and proportional," Sullivan said.

Unlike earlier in the Israeli drive to cripple Hamas militants in Gaza, Israelis have conveyed their specific battlefield goals and plans for getting there in the Rafah offensive, a senior administration official said Friday. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to brief reporters under ground rules set by the White House, said if those plans change and Israel goes back to earlier tactics, "that might be a different story."

Israel launched its war in Gaza after attacks by Hamas killed about 1,200 Israelis on Oct. 7. More than 36,000 Palestinians have been killed since then, many of them women and children. Fighting and Israeli restrictions on aid shipments through border crossings mean nearly all 2.3 million people in Gaza are facing severe hunger. U.N. officials say famine has already started in the north.

It was the Israeli operation against Hamas in Rafah that brought on the strongest warnings from Biden last month about how Israel was conducting the war and that the U.S. could cut its supply of offensive weapons. The population of Rafah had swelled to some 1.3 million as Israeli offensives to the north pushed Palestinian civilians south.

"If they go into Rafah, I'm not supplying the weapons," Biden told CNN on May 9. He indicated the red line as being an attack on "population centers" in the city.

At about the same time, U.S. officials confirmed that the administration had suspended a shipment of heavy bombs to Israel to ensure they were not dropped on Rafah.

Republicans' condemnation of Biden's move was fast and fierce. Soon after, the chief prosecutor for the world's top war crimes court sought an arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the top U.N. court ordered Israel to cease its operations in Rafah, increasing the political pressure on the U.S. and Israel.

Brian Finucane, a former State Department official who is now a senior adviser for the International Crisis Group, notes "changes in tone and tenor" in the administration's public comments toward Israel from around that time. Biden said the effort for a Netanyahu arrest warrant was "outrageous."

Administration warnings and threats to Israel over the Rafah campaign ebbed. Biden, in a White House address Friday to urge Hamas to accept an Israeli proposal for a cease-fire and hostage release, made only a passing mention of the operation there, noting widely circulated images of children killed in an Israeli strike last Sunday that burned some of 45 victims alive.

Far more important than whether the U.S. scolds or only echoes Israeli talking points, Finucane said, is "what the administration actually does in terms of policy ... to bring about a shift in what's actually happening on the ground in Gaza."

Sexist tropes and misinformation swirl online as Mexico prepares to elect its first female leader

By DAVID KLEPPER Associated Press

Mexican voters are poised to elect their first female president, a cause of celebration for many that has also touched off a flurry of false and misogynist online claims, blurring the lines behind fact and fiction.

The two leading candidates, both women, have had to respond to demeaning attacks about their appearance, their credentials and their ability to lead the nation.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 84 of 87

The candidate considered the favorite in Sunday's contest, former Mexico City Mayor Claudia Sheinbaum, has also faced slurs about her Jewish background as well as repeatedly debunked claims she was born in Hungary. This week, in an apparent bid to undermine her candidacy, a social media account impersonating a legitimate news outlet posted fake, AI-generated audio of Sheinbaum admitting that her campaign was failing in a key Mexican state.

The wave of election misinformation facing voters in Mexico is the latest example of how the internet, social media and AI are fueling the spread of false, misleading or hateful content in democracies around the world, warping public discourse and potentially influencing election outcomes.

"We have a general atmosphere of disinformation here in Mexico, but it's slightly different from what is happening in India, or the U.S.," said Manuel Alejandro Guerrero, a professor and communications researcher at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City.

In Mexico's case, that misinformation is the result of growing distrust of the news media, violence committed by drug cartels, and rapid increases in social media usage coupled with a lag in digital literacy. Guerrero added one more contributing factor now familiar to Americans: political leaders who willingly spread disinformation themselves.

Sheinbaum is a member of the Morena party, led by current President Andrés Manuel López Obrador. She faces opposition candidate Xóchitl Gálvez and Jorge Álvarez Máynez of the small Citizen Movement party.

Compared with election misinformation spread about male candidates, the attacks against Gálvez and Sheinbaum often take a particularly personal nature and focus on their gender, according to Maria Calderon, an attorney and researcher from Mexico who works with the Mexico Institute, a think tank based in Washington, D.C., that studies online politics.

"I was surprised by how cruel the comments could be," said Calderon, whose analysis found that attacks on female candidates like Sheinbaum and Gálvez typically focus on their appearance, or their credentials, whereas misinformation about male candidates is more often about policy proposals.

"A lot of direct attacks on their weight, their height, how they dressed, the way they behave, the way they talk," Calderon said.

She suggested that some of the sexism can be traced back to Mexico's "machismo" culture and strong Catholic roots. Women only received the right to vote in Mexico in 1953.

Lopez Obrador has spread some of the false claims targeting Gálvez, as he did last year when he erroneously said she supported plans to end several popular social programs if elected. Despite her efforts to set the record straight, however, the narrative continues to dog her campaign, showing just how effective political misinformation can be even if debunked.

Con artists have also gotten in on the misinformation business in Mexico, using AI deepfake videos of Sheinbaum in an effort to peddle investment scams, for instance.

"You'll see that it's my voice, but it's a fraud," Sheinbaum said after one deepfake of her supposedly pitching an investment scam went viral.

As they have in other nations, the tech companies that operate most of the major social media platforms say they have rolled out a series of programs and policies designed to blunt the effect of misinformation ahead of the election.

Meta and other U.S.-based tech platforms have been criticized for focusing most of their efforts on misinformation in English while taking a "cookie-cutter" approach to the rest of the globe.

"We are focused on providing reliable election information while combating misinformation across languages," according to a statement from Meta, the owner of Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, about its election plans.

The specter of violence has haunted the election since the first campaigns began. Dozens of candidates for smaller offices have been killed or abducted by criminal gangs. Drug cartels have spread terror in the lead up to the election, spraying campaign rallies with gunfire, burning ballots and preventing polling places from being set up.

"This has been the most violent election that Mexico has had since we started recording elections," Calderon said.

Black leaders call out Trump's criminal justice contradictions as he rails against guilty verdict

By AARON MORRISON and MATT BROWN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — As Donald Trump lambasted the guilty verdict of his hush money trial this week, he stood inside a Manhattan courthouse that was the site of one of the most notorious examples of injustice in recent New York history. And he had a part in that.

It's the same courthouse where five Black and Latino youths were wrongly convicted 34 years ago in the beating and rape of a white female jogger. The former president famously took out a newspaper ad in New York City in the aftermath of the 1989 attack calling for the execution of the accused in a case that roiled racial tensions locally and that many point to as evidence of a criminal justice system prejudiced against defendants of color.

But on Friday, a day after making history as the first U.S. president convicted of felony crimes in a court of law, Trump blasted that same criminal justice system as corrupt and rigged against him.

"This is a scam," he said of the case brought by the Manhattan District Attorney's Office led by Alvin Bragg, the first Black person in the role, and overseen by Judge Juan Merchan, who is of Colombian descent.

"This is a rigged trial. It shouldn't have been in that venue. We shouldn't have had that judge," the presumptive Republican presidential nominee said Friday from Trump Tower in Manhattan.

Some Black Americans found irony in Trump railing against the injustice of his own conviction, in a courthouse where five Black and Latino teenagers were wrongly convicted in a case Trump supported so vociferously. The Central Park Five case was Trump's first foray into tough-on-crime politics that precluded his full-throated populist political persona. To many, Trump employed dog whistles as well as overtly racist rhetoric in both chapters of his public life.

But lately, in his outreach to Black and Hispanic communities, Trump has adopted the language of criminal justice reform advocates. He claims Black Americans and Latinos can relate to him because prosecutors are out to get him like they have been out to get many men and boys in their communities.

"Donald Trump's conviction is going to be a problem for him with many Black people because, guess what, many Black people do not like people who violate our criminal laws," said Maya Wiley, a New York civil rights attorney and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights.

"Black people are disproportionately the victims of crime. It's not that they just side with people who've been convicted of a crime."

Wiley, who ran unsuccessfully for New York City mayor in 2021, said the city's Black and Hispanic residents also remember Trump's comments about the Central Park jogger case.

"They haven't forgotten the fact that Donald Trump took out a full-page ad suggesting the death penalty for the Central Park Five, who have been exonerated and were the victims of an abusive system," Wiley said.

The Rev. Al Sharpton, an advocate for the five exonerated men, called Trump's conviction a symbolic measure of justice for them.

"This is the same building that Antron McCray, Kevin Richardson, Yusef Salaam, Raymond Santana, and Korey Wise all passed into, day after day, as they endured a show trial for a crime they did not commit," Sharpton said just after the verdict was read.

"Now the shoe is on the other foot. Donald Trump is the criminal, and those five men are exonerated," he said.

Salaam, who won a seat on the New York City Council last year, said he didn't take pleasure in the former president's guilty verdict "even though Donald Trump wanted me executed even when it was proven that I was innocent."

Salaam and the other young men had their convictions vacated in 2002 after evidence linked another person to the crime. Trump in 2019 refused to apologize to the exonerated men.

"We should be proud that today the system worked," Salaam wrote Thursday on the social media platform X. "But we should be somber that we Americans have an ex-President who has been found guilty on 34 separate felony charges."

"We have to do better than this. Because we are better than this," he wrote.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 86 of 87

Judith Browne Dianis, executive director of the Advancement Project Action Fund civil rights group, said Trump hasn't been subject to the type of unfair treatment in the criminal justice system that Black and Hispanic communities know too well.

"He didn't have a violent arrest by police, he didn't stay a night in Rikers Island because he couldn't afford bail, he didn't even go to jail. He could pay a battery of lawyers to represent him and he can pay for an appeal," Dianis said.

Racial justice advocates are also using the historic moment to remind the public that Trump and his associates attempted to overturn the will of voters by challenging the 2020 presidential election results in heavily Black and Latino districts. The hush money trial was just one part of a broader narrative around electoral justice, said Derrick Johnson, president and CEO of the NAACP, who called the verdict against Trump "a monumental step toward justice for the American people."

"Whether it's an attempt to steal an election or overthrow our government, one thing has long been apparent: Donald Trump is unfit to represent American democracy," Johnson said after the verdict was heard Thursday.

Johnson, who leads the nation's oldest civil rights organization, said Trump's criminal conviction ought to disqualify him from the Oval Office.

"As Black Americans have been denied basic human rights due to less offensive crimes, any attempt to advance Donald Trump's nomination for presidency would be a gross advancement of white supremacist policy," he said.

Sharpton cautioned against gloating over the verdict.

"Instead, celebrate by casting votes for leaders who will protect democracy — not who want to kill it."

Today in History: June 2, Elizabeth II becomes queen of England

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, June 2, the 154th day of 2024. There are 212 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 2, 1953, Queen Elizabeth II was crowned at age 27 at a ceremony in London's Westminster Abbey, 16 months after the death of her father, King George VI.

On this date:

In 1924, Congress passed, and President Calvin Coolidge signed, a measure guaranteeing full American citizenship for all Native Americans born within U.S. territorial limits.

In 1941, baseball's "Iron Horse," Lou Gehrig, died in New York of a degenerative disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as ALS; he was 37.

In 1961, playwright and director George S. Kaufman, 71, died in New York.

In 1962, Soviet forces opened fire on striking workers in the Russian city of Novocherkassk; a retired general in 1989 put the death toll at 22 to 24.

In 1966, U.S. space probe Surveyor 1 landed on the moon and began transmitting detailed photographs of the lunar surface.

In 1979, Pope John Paul II arrived in his native Poland on the first visit by a pope to a Communist country.

In 1981, the Japanese video arcade game "Donkey Kong" was released by Nintendo.

In 1997, Timothy McVeigh was convicted of murder and conspiracy in the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City that killed 168 people. (McVeigh was executed in June 2001.)

In 1999, South Africans went to the polls in their second post-apartheid election, giving the African National Congress a decisive victory; retiring president Nelson Mandela was succeeded by Thabo Mbeki (TAH'-boh um-BEH'-kee).

In 2011, a judge in Placerville, California, sentenced serial sex offender Phillip Garrido to life in prison for kidnapping and raping Jaycee Dugard; Garrido's wife, Nancy, received a decades-long sentence.

In 2012, ousted Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was sentenced to life in prison after a court convicted

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 342 ~ 87 of 87

him on charges of complicity in the killing of protesters during the 2011 uprising that forced him from power (Mubarak was later acquitted and freed in March 2017; he died in February 2020).

In 2016, autopsy results showed superstar musician Prince died of an accidental overdose of fentanyl, a powerful opioid painkiller.

In 2018, the number of homes destroyed reached 80 in an eruption of Hawaii's Kilauea Volcano. (The eruption would eventually destroy more than 700 homes.)

In 2020, defying curfews, protesters streamed back into the nation's streets, hours after President Donald Trump urged governors to put down the violence set off by the death of George Floyd. Police said four officers were hit by gunfire after protests in St. Louis that began peacefully became violent.

In 2021, the NFL pledged to stop the use of "race-norming" in a \$1 billion settlement of brain injury claims; the practice had made it harder for Black players to show a deficit and qualify for an award.

In 2022, Queen Elizabeth II drew wild cheers from a crowd of tens of thousands as she carefully stepped on to the Buckingham Palace balcony at the start of four days of celebrations of her 70 years on the throne. (The queen's reign would end with her death three months later).

In 2023, a massive train derailment involving two passenger trains in India left more than 280 people dead and hundreds injured.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Ron Ely (EE'-lee) is 86. Filmmaker and movie historian Kevin Brownlow is 86. Actor Stacy Keach is 83. Actor Charles Haid is 81. R&B singer Chubby Tavares (Tavares) is 80. Movie director Lasse (LAH'-suh) Hallstrom is 78. Actor Jerry Mathers is 76. Actor Joanna Gleason is 74. NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman is 72. Actor Dennis Haysbert is 70. Comedian Dana Carvey is 69. Actor Gary Grimes is 69. Pop musician Michael Steele is 69. Rock singer Tony Hadley (Spandau Ballet) is 64. Actor Liam Cunningham is 63. Actor Navid Negahban is 60. Singer Merrill Bainbridge is 56. TV personality-producer Andy Cohen ("The Real Housewives" TV franchise) is 56. Rapper B-Real (Cypress Hill) is 54. Actor Paula Cale is 54. Actor Anthony Montgomery is 53. Actor-comedian Wayne Brady is 52. Actor Wentworth Miller is 52. Rock musician Tim Rice-Oxley (Keane) is 48. Actor Zachary Quinto is 47. Actor Dominic Cooper is 46. Actor Nikki Cox is 46. Actor Justin Long is 46. Actor Deon Richmond is 46. Actor Morena Baccarin is 45. Rock musician Fabrizio Moretti (The Strokes) is 44. Olympic gold medal soccer player Abby Wambach is 44. Singer-songwriter ZZ Ward is 38. Rapper/actor Awkwafina is 36. Actor Brittany Curran is 34. Actor Sterling Beaumon is 29.