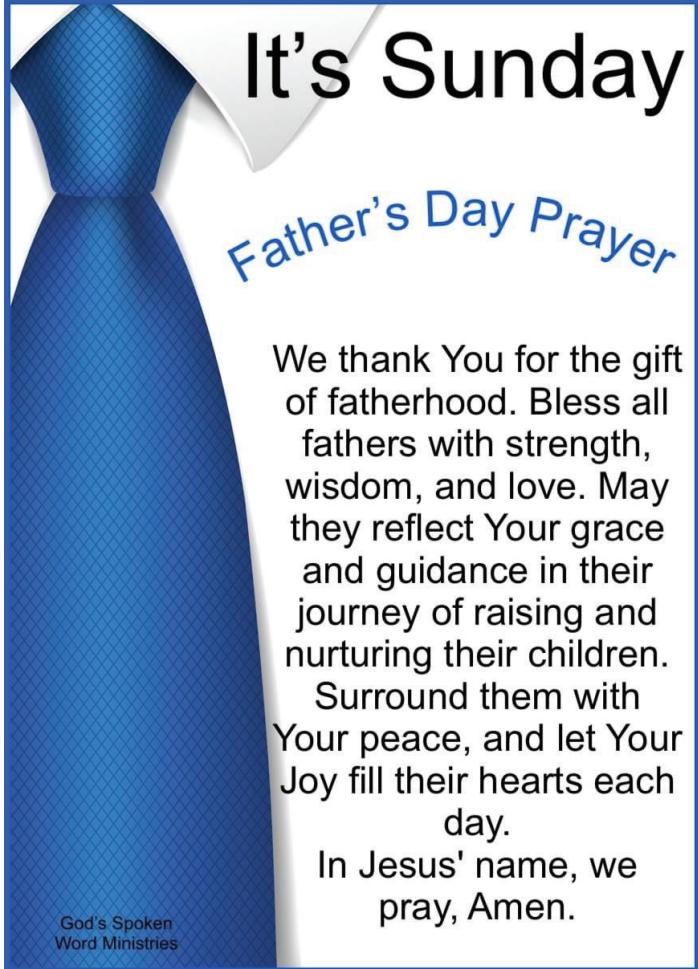


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It's Sunday

Father's Day Prayer

We thank You for the gift of fatherhood. Bless all fathers with strength, wisdom, and love. May they reflect Your grace and guidance in their journey of raising and nurturing their children. Surround them with Your peace, and let Your Joy fill their hearts each day.

In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen.

God's Spoken Word Ministries

Sunday, June 16

U8 Older at Milbank Tourney
United Methodist: Worship 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.

Monday, June 17

Senior Menu: Lasagna bake, tossed salad with dressing, fruit cocktail, cookie, whole wheat bread.
Legion at Battle of Omaha, Neb.
Cancelled: Junior Teeners at Britton, 5:30 p.m. (2)
U10 B/W hosts Webster, 6 p.m. (2)
U8 R/B at Webster, 6 p.m. (4)
T-Ball G/B scrimmage, 6 p.m.
Ladies Invitational Golf Tourney at Olive Grove, Registration at 9 a.m., shotgun start at 10 a.m.
The Pantry at Community Center, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

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

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*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 unit specifications. † As rated by Kohler, all power levels are stated in gross horsepower at 3600 RPM per SAE J1940 as rated by engine manufacturer. †† As required by Kawasaki, horsepower tested in accordance with SAE J1195 and rated in accordance with SAE J2723 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. Kawasaki® is a registered trademark of KAWASAKI JUKOYO KABUSHIKI KAISHA.
© 2024 Cub Cadet

Meade County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash
Where: SD Highway 79, mile marker 24, 11 miles north of Sturgis, SD
When: 10:21 a.m. Friday, June 14, 2024

Driver 1: Male, 44, no injuries
Vehicle 1: 2022 Ford F-350
Seatbelt Use: No
Passenger 1: Male, 44, no injuries
Seatbelt Use: Yes

Driver 2: Female, 83, fatal injuries
Vehicle 2: 2016 Chrysler 300
Seatbelt Use: Yes

Meade County, S.D.- An 83-year-old woman died Friday morning when a trailered boat came unhitched and collided with her vehicle head-on near Sturgis, SD.

The names of the persons involved have not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates the driver of a 2016 Chrysler 300 was traveling south on SD Highway 79 near mile marker 124. At the same location, the driver of a 2022 Ford F-350 pulling a trailered pontoon boat was traveling north when the trailer coupler disconnected from the pickup and the safety chains failed to control the trailer and boat. The trailer and boat entered the south-bound lane and collided with the Chrysler. The trailer, boat, and Chrysler came to rest on the south-bound shoulder and in the west ditch. The driver of the Chrysler received fatal injuries. There were no injuries to the driver and passenger of the pick-up.

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Zack Witte ~ 605-695-7874

Webster, SD

No Contracts!

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Groton Transit Fundraiser

Thursday, June 20th, 2024

5:00 pm - 7:00pm at

Groton Community Center

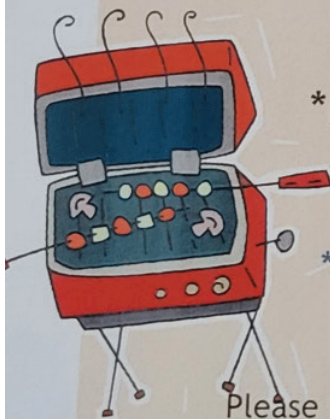
***109 N 3rd Street-One block East of Groton
Transit***

Let us do the cooking for you!!

Burgers, Brats, Beans,
Watermelon, Chips and the
Famous Mini Donuts!!

*Food*Fun*Door Prizes*

FREE WILL DONATION



Please join us & Help support Groton Transit!!

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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.

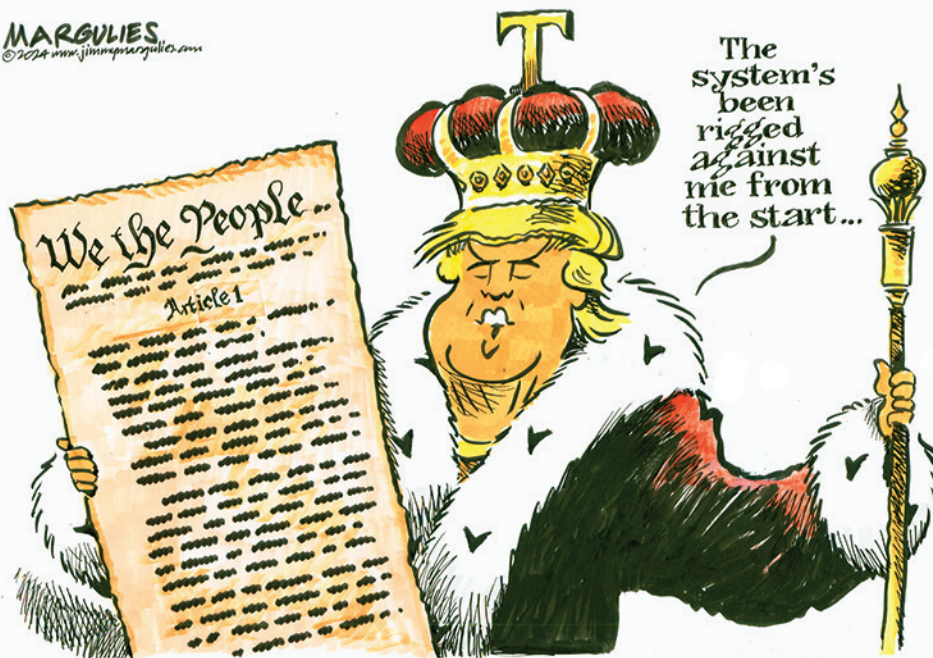
GENESIS 7: 11,12

Detail of "The Flood" by Clare Leighton (1952)



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MARGULIES
© 2024 www.jimmymargulies.com



BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. Moses and Aaron were instructed to sacrifice what color of heifer without blemish? *Red, White, Gold, Green*

3. Which book begins, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God"? *Mark, Romans, Galatians, Ephesians*

4. What Old Testament woman was buried in a cave in the field of Machpelah? *Eve, Ruth, Sarah, Esther*

5. How many righteous people did Sodom need to keep God from destroying the city? *1, 2, 10, 20*

6. From 2 Kings 17, who was the god of the men of Cuth? *Succhothbenoth, Nergal, Hamath, Ashima*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Red, 3) Ephesians, 4) Sarah, 5) 10, 6) Nergal

Hardcore trivia fan? Visit Wilson Casey's subscribersite at www.patreon.com/triviaguy.

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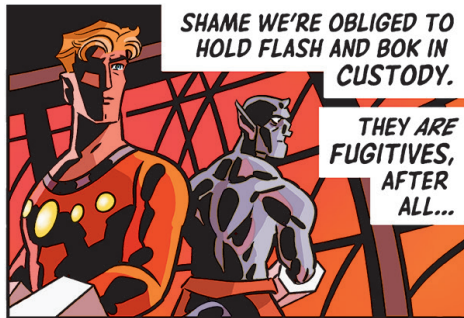
FLASH GORDON

HAIL, FRIENDS NEW AND OLD!

WELCOME TO SKY CITY!



GOOD NEWS!
DALE ARDEN IS RECEIVING LIFESAVING TREATMENT IN OUR SKY CITY SANATORIUM!



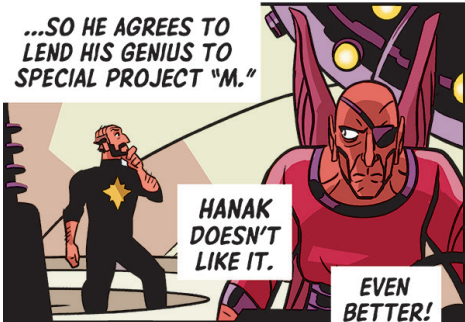
SHAME WE'RE OBLIGED TO HOLD FLASH AND BOK IN CUSTODY.

THEY ARE FUGITIVES, AFTER ALL...



...BUT WE CAN GRANT THEM WORK RELEASE -- IF DR. ZARKOV WILL SPONSOR THEM.

OF COURSE, HE'LL NEED TO PAY HIS OWN WAY...



...SO HE AGREES TO LEND HIS GENIUS TO SPECIAL PROJECT "M."

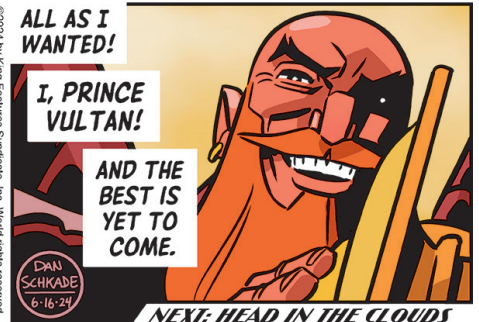
HANAK DOESN'T LIKE IT.

EVEN BETTER!



FLASH AND BOK PAY FOR THEIR FREEDOM IN OUR FABRICATION LEVEL--

--AS MY MEN KAY AND MUISE KEEP WATCH.



ALL AS I WANTED!

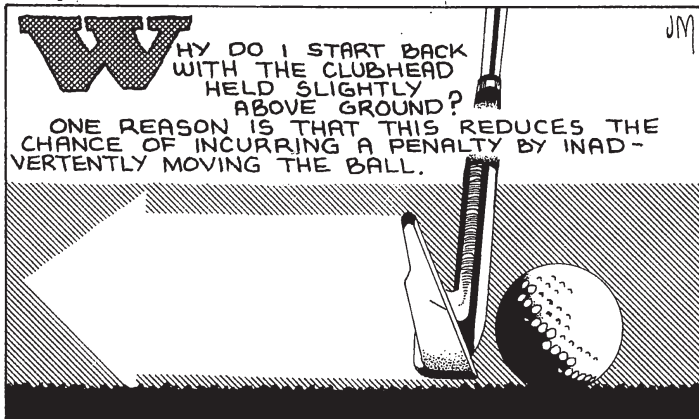
I, PRINCE VULTAN!

AND THE BEST IS YET TO COME.

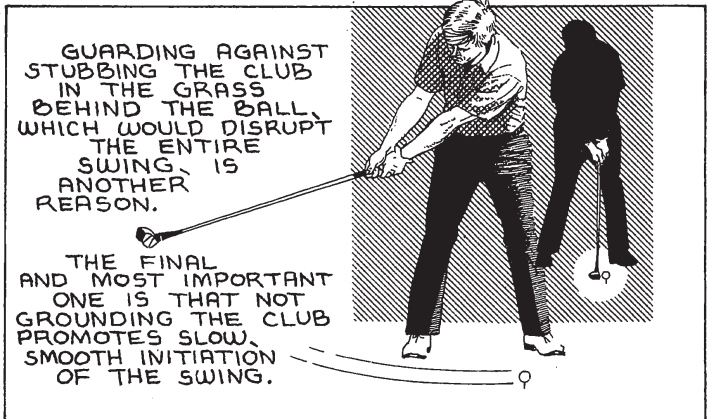
DAN SCHKADE 6-16-24

NEXT: HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



WHY DO I START BACK WITH THE CLUBHEAD HELD SLIGHTLY ABOVE GROUND? ONE REASON IS THAT THIS REDUCES THE CHANCE OF INCURRING A PENALTY BY INADVERTENTLY MOVING THE BALL.



GUARDING AGAINST STUBBING THE CLUB IN THE GRASS BEHIND THE BALL, WHICH WOULD DISRUPT THE ENTIRE SWING, IS ANOTHER REASON.

THE FINAL AND MOST IMPORTANT ONE IS THAT NOT GROUNDING THE CLUB PROMOTES SLOW, SMOOTH INITIATION OF THE SWING.

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Can Sciatica Be Relieved Through Steriod Shots?

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am wondering what the best treatment is for sciatic pain. Would a steroid shot help? The pain is behind my knee, down the outside of my leg, and now on my foot. -- J.F.

ANSWER: "Sciatica" is a general term for a process that compresses the nerve roots, which causes symptoms such as pain, numbness, tingling, and a loss of reflexes. The sciatic nerve supplies much of the innervation to the leg. The area that you describe is most likely the first sacral nerve (S1), and pain here is most frequently caused by disc herniation at the L5-S1 space. This can cause acute symptoms that are often quite severe.

Initial treatment is usually conservative, consisting of anti-inflammatories and avoiding activities that worsen pain. While bed rest was sometimes prescribed, it is seldom necessary for more than a day or two, and many

people actually feel better when they are up and about. After a week, most people are able to do light activity, and I tell my patients neither to push themselves to do more than they can, nor force themselves to rest if they feel OK with light activity.

Steroids have certainly been used in this situation, and they are injected into the epidural space by an expert who uses imaging. Although there is a slight improvement in pain around three months among those who are treated with epidural steroids, there was no longer a benefit found around six months. This means that you get better only a little faster than normal at the cost of a small risk from the injection.

If a person isn't recovering well within a few weeks, I often refer them to physical therapy. If they aren't getting benefit at all (or they are getting worse), then it is time to find out what the cause is with an MRI and a referral to an expert.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I recently read some comments stating there are studies indicating that metoprolol can cause Raynaud's. I have been taking 25 mg of metoprolol daily (to control palpitations, not for high blood pressure) for about eight years, and last year, I was diagnosed with Raynaud's. Are these comments accurate? I do not have any known autoimmune diseases that would indicate secondary Raynaud's. -- H.B.

ANSWER: Raynaud's phenomenon (RP) is an accentuated physiological response to cold. When the known diseases that cause RP aren't found, we call it primary RP.

Drugs that constrict blood vessels can certainly precipitate RP. Decongestants, amphetamines, some cancer chemotherapy drugs, and cocaine are more likely on the list than beta blockers like metoprolol. But what you read is correct. Metoprolol, even at the low dose you take, can sometimes cause RP. However, it's also possible that you just have primary RP and metoprolol has nothing to do with it.

It's worth rethinking whether you need metoprolol. Palpitations can happen in healthy people without any pathological heart issues. If you have a known reason for the palpitations, ask your cardiologist (or whomever is prescribing the metoprolol) whether it would be possible for you to take a calcium blocker. Some calcium-channel blockers are vasodilators and are the first-line treatment for primary RP.

Unfortunately, calcium blockers with antiarrhythmic properties are not effective with RP, so it's possible that you may need both.

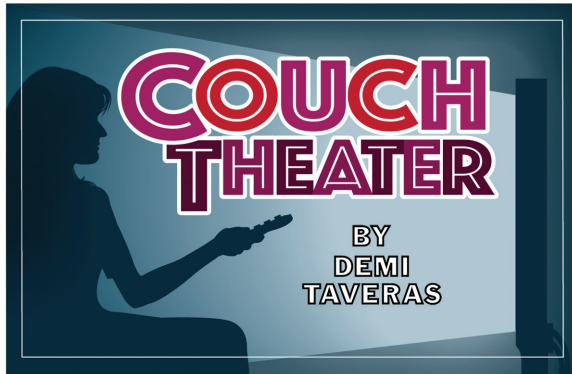
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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"House of the Dragon, Season 2" (TV-MA) -- In 2022, when this series first released across HBO and its streaming service, it became the most-watched premiere in HBO's history with over 10 million viewers. It also went on to win the Golden Globe Award in 2023 for Best Drama Television

From left, Emma D'Arcy, Eve Best and Jamie Kenna star in "House of the Dragon, Season 2."

Courtesy of Max

Series. Two years later, fans of this spin-off of "Game of Thrones" finally get to rejoice as the much-anticipated second season kicks off. (Spoilers ahead!) Following the final events of the first season after Princess Rhaenyra (Emma D'Arcy) learns of her son Lucerys' accidental and tragic death, the first episode, out now, is appropriately titled "A Son for a Son." Whether you're decidedly Team Black or Team Green, I'm sure we're all ready to see Rhaenyra's wrath spawn into another action-packed season that will leave us hanging on the edge of our seats. The remaining seven episodes will release every Sunday. (Max)

"Marmalade" (NR) -- Joe Keery ("Stranger Things") leads this romantic heist film, directed by Keir O'Donnell ("Wedding Crashers") in his directorial debut. Keery plays a young small-town man named Baron, who takes care of his ailing mother, Eda, amid not being able to keep a job. When he meets a pink-haired beauty named Marmalade (Camila Morrone), Baron finds himself head over heels for her and goes so far as to agree with her dangerous idea of robbing a bank after the price of Eda's medication increases. The seemingly dim-witted Baron seems to put all his faith in Marmalade, but is his love of Marmalade true enough to overcome the prison time that looms ahead of him? You'll have to see for yourself. Out on June 21. (Hulu)

"The 77th Tony Awards" (TV-PG) -- You can now stream the annual Tony Awards ceremony that recognizes Broadway productions from the past 2023-24 season! This year's Tony Awards were, again, hosted by Arian DeBose, making it the third time the actress has hosted the ceremony. The productions that received the most nominations were "Hell's Kitchen," a semi-autobiographical musical about musician Alicia Keys, and the dramatic stage play "Stereophonic," which follows a fictional rock band in the '70s. Notable actors nominated for their performances were Leslie Odom Jr. for "Purlie Victorious," Jeremy Strong for "An Enemy of the People," Rachel McAdams for "Mary Jane," and Sarah Paulson for "Appropriate." (Paramount+)

"Godzilla Minus One" (PG-13) -- Out now, this kaiju film from Takashi Yamazaki won eight Japan Academy Film Prizes and the Best Visual Effects Award at the Oscars this past award season. Set near the end of World War II, the film follows kamikaze pilot Koichi Shikishima (Ryunosuke Kamiki) as the troops at his garrison find themselves face to face with a large monster named Godzilla. After barely surviving this encounter, Shikishima continues to experience tragedy after tragedy due to the war, all while Godzilla continues to grow stronger from nuclear tests done in the U.S. As Godzilla once again heads for Japan, Shikishima and his new crew are assigned with the task of stalling Godzilla's attack. But with so much revenge boiling inside of him, the kamikaze pilot will stop at nothing to make sure that the monster is obliterated. (Netflix)

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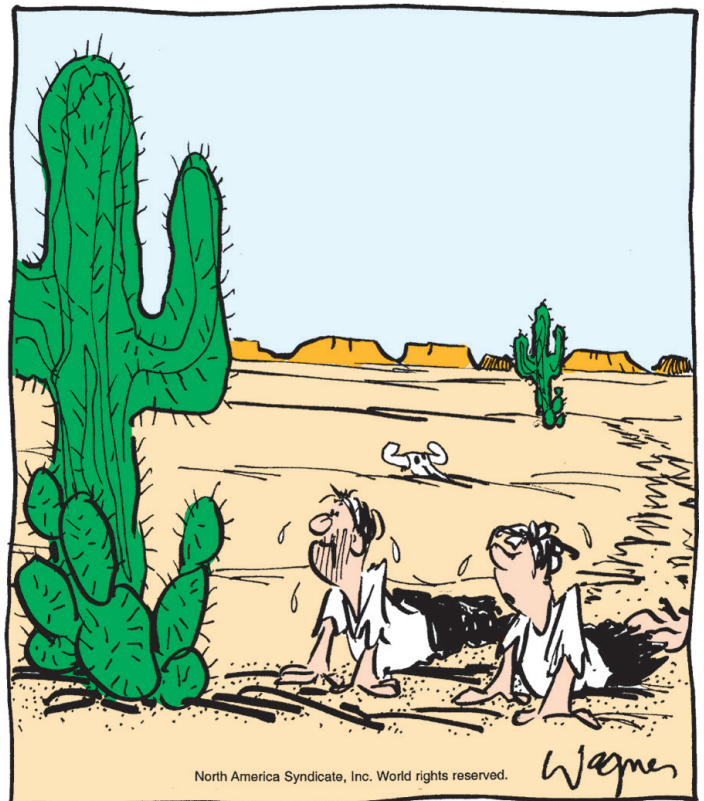
1. Name the Beatles album that includes "I've Just Seen a Face," "You Won't See Me" and "Michelle."
2. Which duo released "The Closer I Get to You"?
3. Where did Thin Lizzy get their name?
4. Who was Stagger Lee in the song?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "I watched you die, I heard you cry every night in your sleep."

Answers

1. "Rubber Soul," in 1965. It was released with 14 songs in the U.K. and 10 in the U.S. with an additional two taken from another album.
2. Roberta Flack and Donny Hathaway in 1978. The song climbed the charts in the U.S. and was nominated for Best Vocal Performance by a Duo in 1979.
3. From a character in the 1937 comic "The Dandy," which had a character called Tin Lizzie, a robot maid.
4. "Stag" Lee Shelton was a gambler who killed Billy Lyons in 1895 during a card game in St. Louis.
5. "Because of You," by Kelly Clarkson in 2005. Clarkson wrote the song when she was a teenager in response to the pain of her parents' divorce. The accompanying video won Best Female Video at MTV's awards the next year.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{by Wagner}



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"You don't get scenery like this from a car!"

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



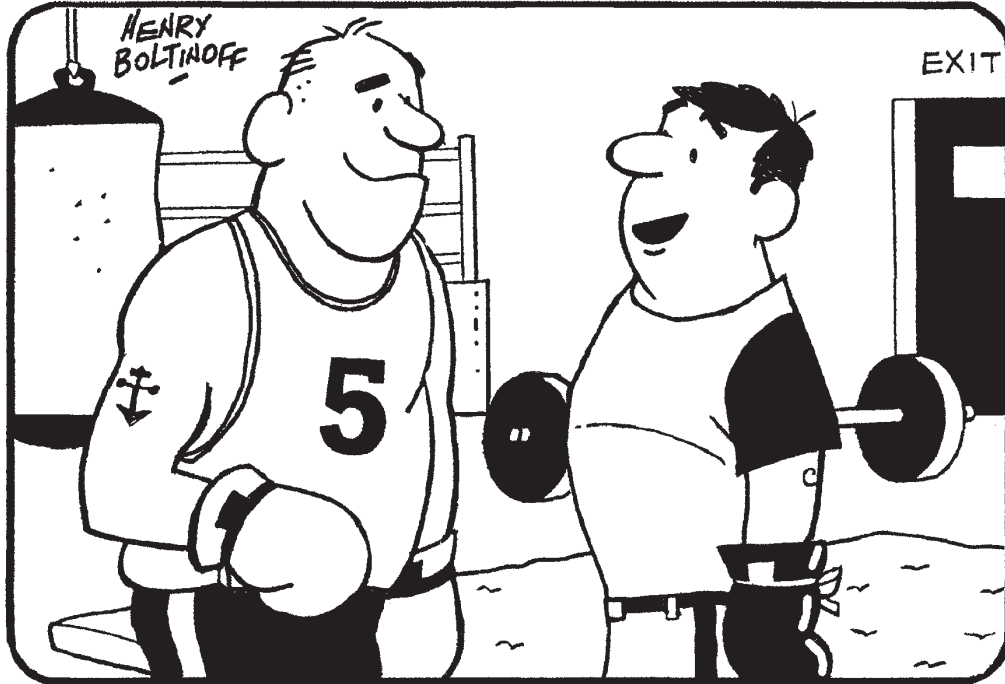
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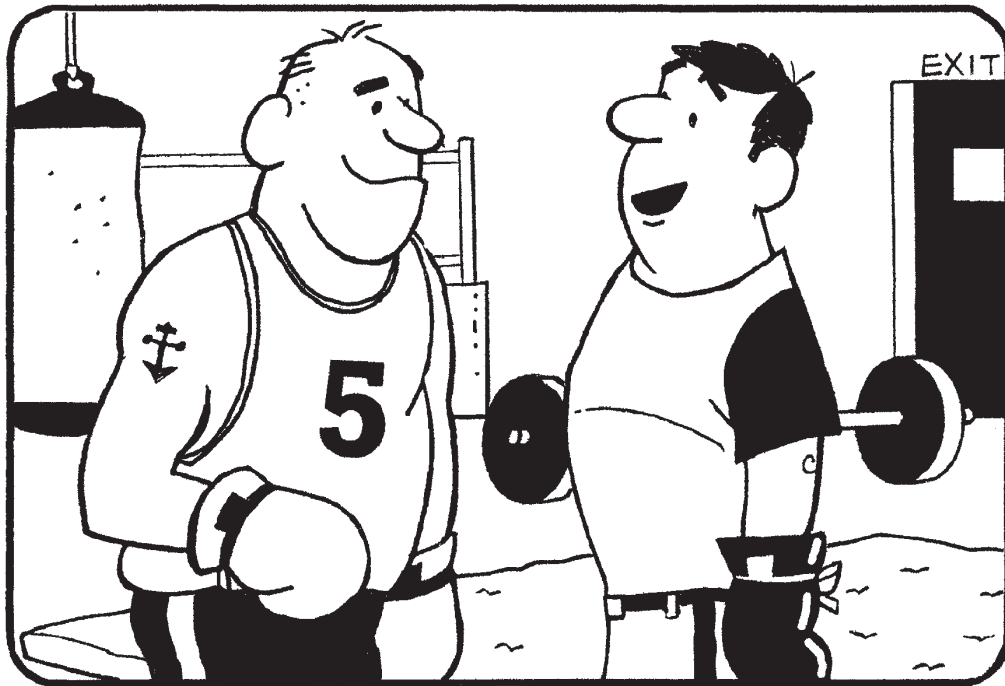
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Door is larger. 2. Tattoo is moved. 3. Punching bag is smaller. 4. Mat is larger. 5. Man is taller. 6. Middle rope is missing.

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* To clean out your coffee grinder in order to use it for spices, add about a half-cup of white rice, then pulverize it. Repeat until scent is gone and rice powder comes out clean.

* It's food-smart to separate utensils and cutting boards used for veggies, meats, poultry, etc. Here's a handy chef's trick: Color code. Paint a different color stripe down the edge of cutting boards and around the handle of utensils for each variety: green for veggies, yellow for poultry and red for beef.

* Line the bottom of your dog's food dish (underside) with silicone caulk. Use a crisscross pattern in the center. This will keep the dish from sliding around when your pet eats.

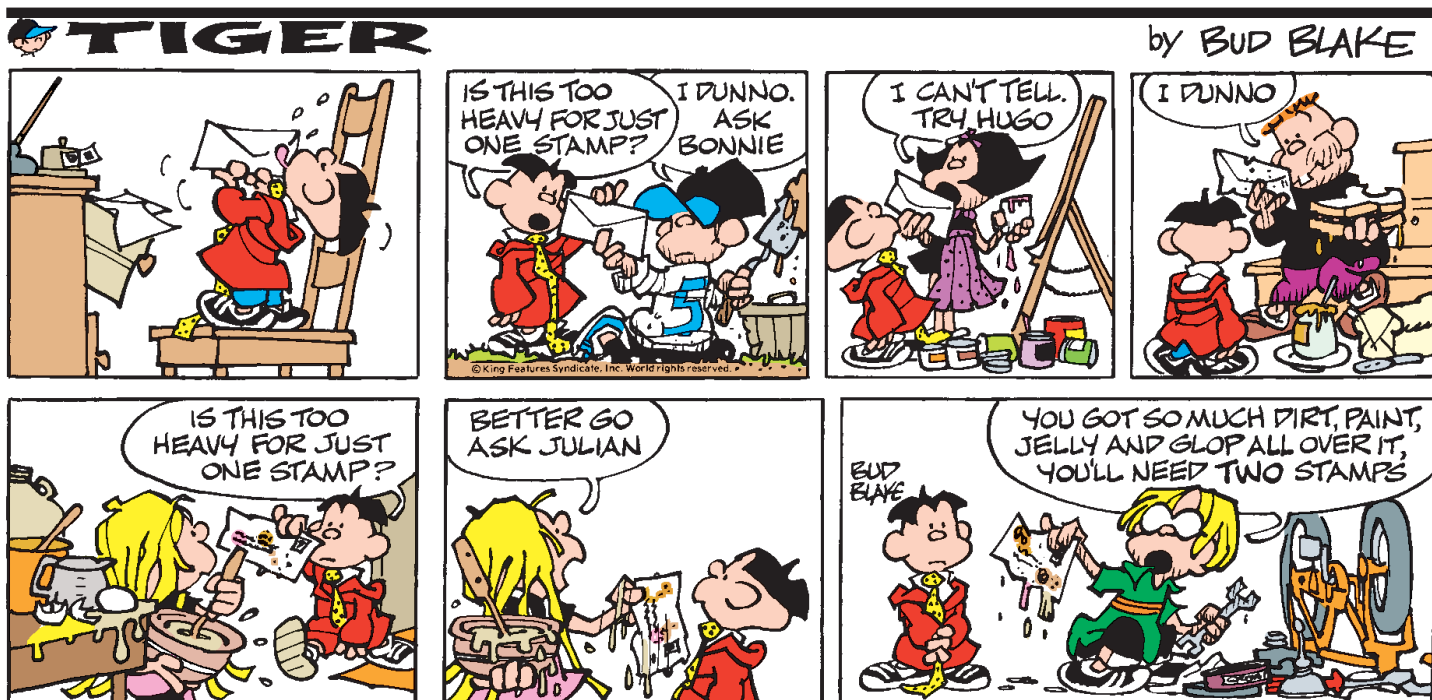
* "If you are painting your ceiling and are bothered by drips, try protecting your eyes with an old pair of swimming goggles. They will keep your eyes safe from drips and splatters, and fumes will be much less bothersome." -- E.G. in Virginia

* "I needed a hot water bottle for my legs, but I couldn't find mine anywhere. My husband suggested filling a soda-pop bottle (the two liter kind) with hot water and wrapping a towel around it. It worked magically, and I think better than the regular bottle." -- C.C. in Iowa

* Want quick-cooking meatloaf? Use your muffin tins. The same meat mixture and flavor cooks in half the time and is in a cute, easy portion. I also make mashed potatoes as "frosting" for these dinner "cupcakes"!

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

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 — of Sandwich
- 5 Saigon soup
- 8 URL opener
- 12 Coagulate
- 13 Charged bit
- 14 Pitcher Hersher
- 15 Romantic appointments
- 17 Skater Lipinski
- 18 Like aspirin, briefly
- 19 Ozone, for one
- 20 Governing gp.
- 21 That chap's
- 22 — -Magnon
- 23 "Evita" sur-name

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
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38	39	40				41				42	43	44
45					46				47			
48					49				50			
51					52				53			

- 26 Gym gear
- 30 "— Rhythm"
- 31 Chum
- 32 Cowgirl's footwear
- 33 Spider's traps
- 35 Baby collie
- 36 Owns
- 37 Prohibit
- 38 Sound of Washington
- 41 Flushed
- 42 Aunt, in Acapulco
- 45 Skin soother
- 46 Donna Summer hit song
- 48 Sagan or Sandburg

- 49 Ambulance VIP
- 8 Frank holder
- 34 Nosh
- 50 Luminary
- 9 Streetcar
- 35 Cushions
- 51 Singles
- 10 Actress Hatcher
- 37 White of "The Golden Girls"
- 52 Horse chow
- 11 Scheme
- 38 Designer Rabanne
- 53 Prefix with pilot
- 16 Opposite of "fer"
- 39 — Bator

DOWN

- 1 Canyon sound
- 21 Toy car brand
- 41 Capital of Italia
- 2 Oodles
- 22 Cartoon frame
- 42 Ballet attire
- 3 Campus mil. group
- 23 Photo, for short
- 43 "— first you ..."
- 4 Old Ford model
- 24 Conceit
- 44 Roundish do
- 5 Pocket breads
- 25 Steal from
- 46 Devilish laugh
- 6 Works the soil
- 26 Existed
- 47 Airport screening org.
- 7 Carry- — (travel bags)
- 27 Jump
- 28 Pinnacle
- 29 Hog haven
- 31 "Nova" ainer

— King Crossword —

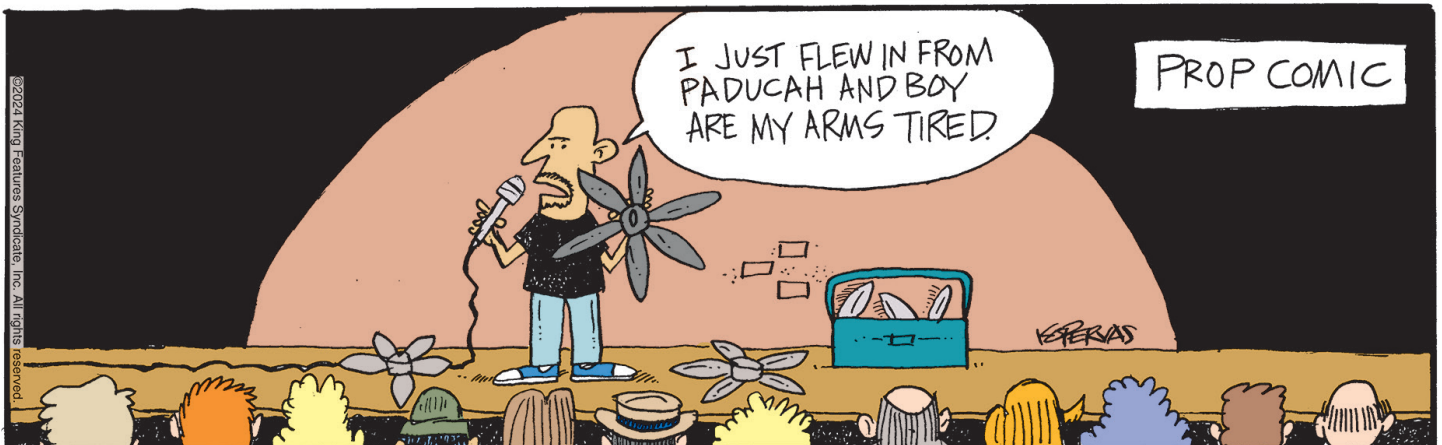
Answers

Solution time: 23 mins.

E	A	R	L		P	H	O		H	T	T	P
C	L	O	T		I	O	N		O	R	E	L
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O	T	C		G	A	S		A	D	M	I	N
			H	I	S		C	R	O			
P	E	R	O	N		W	E	I	G	H	T	S
I	G	O	T		P	A	L		B	O	O	T
C	O	B	W	E	B	S		P	U	P	P	Y
			H	A	S		B	A	N			
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A	L	O	E		H	O	T	S	T	U	F	F
C	A	R	L		E	M	T		S	T	A	R
O	N	E	S		H	A	Y		A	U	T	O

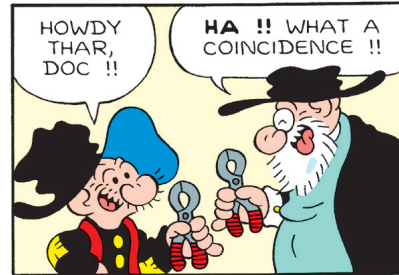
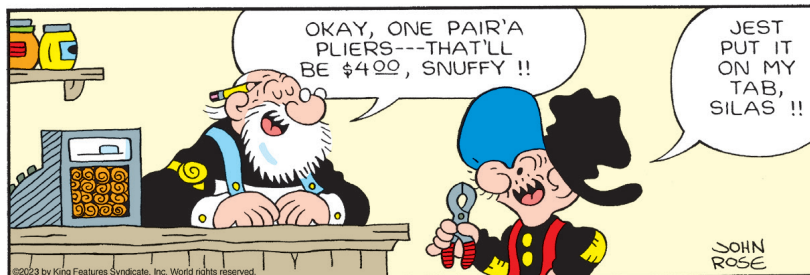
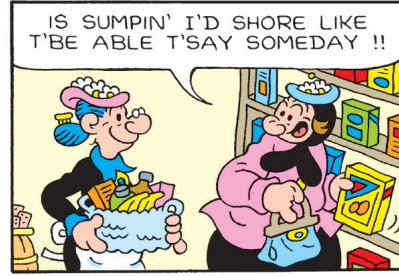
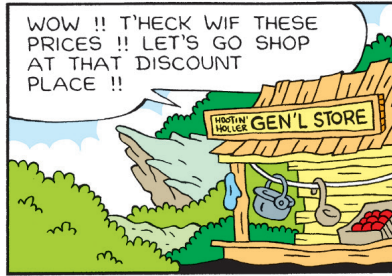
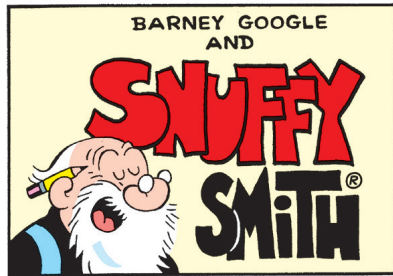
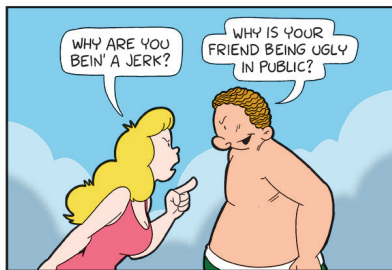
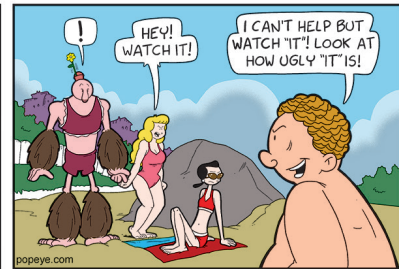
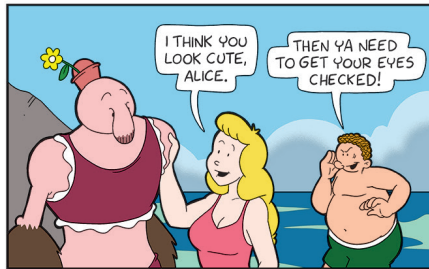
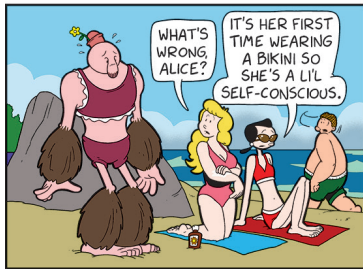
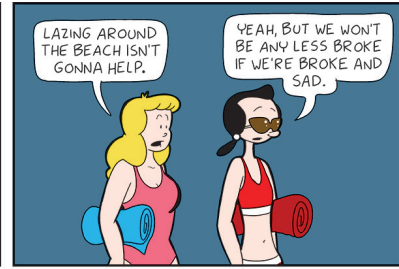
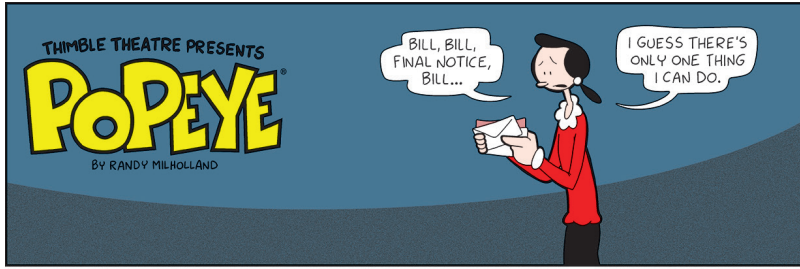
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



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HAL FOOTER'S

Prince Valiant

BY SCHULTZ AND YEATES

THE BADLY WOUNDED VAL IS TREATED WITH THE BEST CARE AVAILABLE IN LOCKBRAMBLE. BITTER HERBAL CONCOCTIONS ARE Poured DOWN HIS GULLET.

HE IS KEPT BUNDLED AND OVERHEATED IN ORDER TO SWEAT OUT THE FEVER THAT GRIPS HIM TERRIBLY.

IN HIS FEVERED STATE, HE SLIPS IN AND OUT OF CONSCIOUSNESS. HE SEES AND HEARS THINGS THAT MAKE NO SENSE. IS THAT GAWAIN AND RHODA? DO THEY TALK OF LOCKBRAMBLE AND DEMOCRACY?



AND NOW THIS PLACE SEEMS FULL OF RHODA'S REBELS. IS HE NOT IN THE CASTLE? WHY ARE THESE USURPERS HERE, MURMURING OF ALDERMEN AND LORD GRUNYARD?

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FINALLY THE FEVER BREAKS AND IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT VAL WILL ONCE AGAIN BEAT THE REAPER.

YEATES 4/21/13

HE STILL WONDERS IF HE CAN TRUST HIS MIND, AS HE SEES THE ROGISH GAWAIN BEHAVING UNCHARACTERISTICALLY TENDERLY TOWARD RHODA.

NEXT: *The council*

3976

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

I WAS ONCE IN THE KLEPTOMANIAC OLYMPICS.

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HOW DID YOU DO?

I TOOK THE BRONZE, SILVER, AND GOLD.

PICKERING

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Handling the rising cost of living

"There are only so many big box stores around here," said an acquaintance as we sat around chatting with our group. The topic was finances and how seniors are scrambling to stay afloat (and stay fed). Hence the interest in taking on a part-time job, possibly as a door greeter somewhere. "It's not like we're suitable for stocking shelves," she said. And we all nodded.

A recent AARP survey said that 70% of us are concerned about prices going up faster than our income. If there's one thing we're all getting good at, it's math. Calculation of dollars in and dollars out are second nature now, and figuring out how many sandwiches can be made from various loaves of bread is easy math.

One of the group shared the result of the most recent survey of consumer finances by the Federal Reserve Board: The average 70-year-old senior has \$60,000 tucked away in checking and savings accounts. We laughed, but in a sad way as we contemplated having that much cash to rely on.

But we weren't laughing when one of the group shared that her landlord is trying to increase her monthly rent by \$300.

I did a poll of our little group, with the question being: How do we survive this constant rise in prices of everything?

The answers were varied. If you have a job and are thinking of retiring, keep working. Pay off all debts while you still have income, especially credit cards and cars.

If you've already retired, sign up for every assistance program you can, including help with utilities and rent. Use the food bank or Meals on Wheels; call about community meals at churches or SNAP benefits. Look into drug discounts, perhaps at GoodRx.

But the biggest suggestion was this: Try not to take Social Security until your full retirement age, which depends on your year of birth.

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1. For what college team did actor Tom Selleck play basketball from 1965-67?

2. What power-hitting member of the 1995 World Series champion Atlanta Braves was nicknamed "Crime Dog"?

3. Name the soccer great, nicknamed "The Hurricane," who scored in all six games (and twice in one game) en route to Brazil winning the 1970 FIFA World Cup.

4. What Pittsburgh Pirates pitcher threw a no-hitter on June 12, 1970, and later revealed that he'd accomplished the feat while under the influence of LSD?

5. Who won more head-to-head matches in the epic tennis rivalry between Martina Navratilova and Chris Evert from 1973-88?

6. From 1997-2008, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers' Ronde Barber played against his twin brother, the New York Giants' Tiki Barber, a total of eight times. Who won more games in the series?

7. As of the 2022 Beijing Winter Games, who leads all U.S. women in Olympic medals won in alpine skiing with one gold (2006), two silver (2010), and one bronze (2014)?



by Ryan A. Berenz

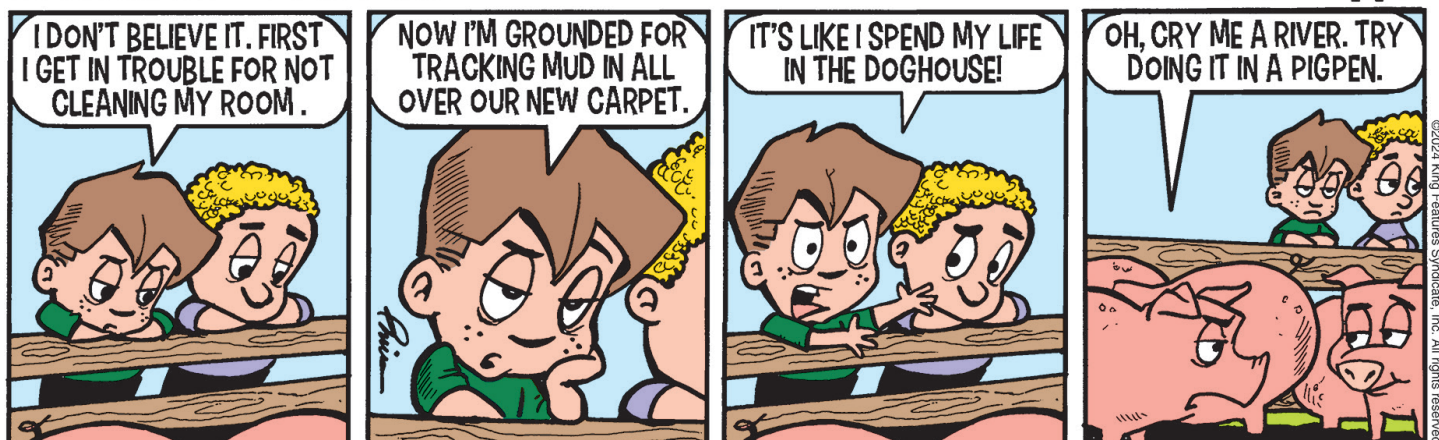
Answers

1. The USC Trojans.
2. Fred McGriff.
3. Jairzinho.
4. Dock Ellis.
5. Navratilova, 43-37.
6. Tiki Barber's Giants, 5-3.
7. Julia Mancuso.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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Senior cat's arthritis is impacting his quality of life

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My cat "Sticky" is 14 years old and still in great shape. He loves chasing after a laser beam and rolling around with his toys. However, I've noticed that when he comes over to leap up on my lap, he hesitates and just puts his paws on my leg and meows. I have to encourage him to leap, and he doesn't seem happy about it. Could something be wrong with him? -- Janine in Gulfport, Mississippi

DEAR JANINE: At age 14, Sticky is definitely a senior cat, and it sounds like he's beginning to develop a common senior cat problem: arthritis. Just like us, cats can suffer from stiff, achy joints as they get older.

You're doing a great job of observing his behavior and spotting changes in the way he interacts. Arthritis (typically osteoarthritis, sometimes abbreviated as OA) is progressive, and sometimes not noticeable right away. There are four key things to watch for:

Running -- Does your cat run with a fast, fluid motion, or in stops and starts?

Jumping -- Does your cat hesitate to take jumps that were effortless in the past?

Climbing -- Does your cat walk or run confidently on the stairs, or hesitate on each step?

Playing -- Does your cat keep up with the laser pointer, or start to lag behind?

Other noticeable behaviors, like excessive meowing, hiding away or even occasionally missing the litter box also signal that your cat is uncomfortable or in pain.

It's important to consult with Sticky's veterinarian at this point. Together, you can evaluate his pain level and function, and discuss options for improving his comfort. There are treatments for cats with OA that will greatly improve his quality of life and get him back to his old self.

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

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Strange BUT TRUE

* In 1865, William E. Brockway printed a counterfeit \$100 bill that was so perfect, it left the Treasury Department with the sole option of withdrawing all authentic \$100 bills from circulation.

* The official name for Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, is Krung Thep Maha Nakhon, which is an abbreviation of its ceremonial name: "Krung Thep Mahanakon Amon Ratanakosin Mahinthara Ayuthaya Mahadilok Phop Noppharat Ratchathani Burirom Udomratchaniwet Mahasathan Amon

Piman Awatan Sathit Sakkathattiya Witsanukam Prasit." Which is why we just call it "Bangkok."

* Plastic surgery first took place in India around 600 B.C., when it was used with skin from the forehead to reconstruct the noses of criminals that had been amputated as punishment.

* In 1928, the German engineer Herman Sorgel proposed increasing Europe and Africa's land mass by slowly draining the Mediterranean Sea, via a dam across the Strait of Gibraltar. Unsurprisingly, the idea never made it past the drawing board.

* The word "dunce," meaning a dull-witted or ignorant person, comes from the name of John Duns Scotus, one of the greatest minds of his time.

* Jean-Baptiste Lully, the first documented conductor, was the first musician to use a baton -- a six-foot-long staff that he pounded on the ground in time to the music. Sadly, he accidentally stuck the staff into his foot during a concert, developing fatal gangrene as a result.

* The quagga, a close relative of the zebra but with stripes only on its head and neck, became the first extinct animal to have its DNA studied, in 1984.

* The 13th of the month is more likely to fall on Friday than on any other day of the week.

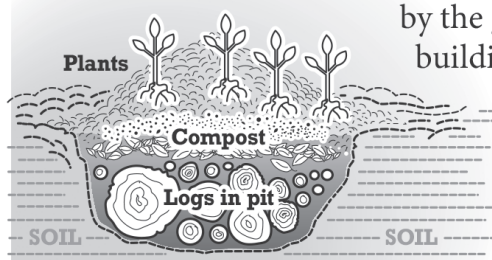
Thought for the Day: "One doesn't discover new lands without consenting to lose sight of the shore for a very long time." -- André Gide

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The Garden Bug

Hugelkultur is a traditional European gardening practice whereby fallen branches, logs and other woody debris are put into a **pit**, topped with **compost**, and covered with a **growing medium** into which a **garden** is planted.

The buried wood acts like a sponge for moisture as it decays, and also provides nutrients for the soil, which are tapped into by the growing plants. The vertical building up of the pile maximizes space. This method dramatically reduces the need for irrigation.



— Brenda Weaver

Source: permaculturenews.org



by Freddy Groves

Accessible mental health care

Veterans no longer have to pay the copays for the first three outpatient visits for mental health and substance use disorder care during each calendar year ... until the end of 2027. If any copays were paid going back to June 27, 2023, those costs will be reimbursed automatically.

There is a rule however: The outpatient appointment has to be with a mental health professional at the VA or someone in the VA's approved network of community providers.

For new patients at the VA, the waiting times for appointments have decreased over the past year with primary care falling 11% percent and mental health visit wait times coming down 7%. That's quite an accomplishment, since last year the VA provided over 116 million health care visits, which was 3 million more than the previous highest year. At the same time, over 400,000 veterans enrolled in health care in the past year, and the Crisis Line fielded over 1 million calls, up 15% over the previous year.

An important note: Any veteran in acute suicidal crisis can go to any health care facility for emergency care, whether it's a VA or non-VA facility. This rule has been in place since Jan. 17, 2023, but too many don't know about this option. The veteran is eligible for up to 30 days of inpatient care or up to 90 days of outpatient care. Being signed up in the VA health care system is not required, and there is no cost to the veteran, including for ambulance transportation.

There are a couple of rules to make sure the VA ends up paying for this care. The facility must be an emergency department at a full medical facility like a hospital. An urgent care facility doesn't count. The VA must be notified within 72 hours. Ideally, it's the facility that will call VA at 844-724-7842, but a friend or relative can call as well. See www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/providers/info-EmergencyCare.asp for more information.

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Wishing Well®

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

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.

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1. GEOGRAPHY: Which country's native name is Cymru?
2. HISTORY: Which country is the first to recognize same-sex marriage?
3. MOVIES: Who voices the character of Frozone in the animated movie "The Incredibles"?
4. FOOD & DRINK: What is the primary ingredient in baba ganoush?
5. LITERATURE: The movie "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" is based on a short story written by which American author?
6. MEASUREMENTS: How many grams are in a pound?
7. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What cultural phenomenon is celebrated on May 4?
8. TELEVISION: Rhoda Morgenstern is a sidekick in which 1970s TV sitcom?
9. SCIENCE: What is the process called when iron is coated with zinc?
10. U.S. STATES: What is the only vowel that is NOT the first letter of a state?

Answers

1. Wales.
2. The Netherlands.
3. Samuel L. Jackson.
4. Eggplant.
5. F. Scott Fitzgerald.
6. 454 grams.
7. "Star Wars" movies.
8. "The Mary Tyler Moore Show."
9. Galvanization.
10. E.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Father's Day: Shining a Light on the Fatherless

This week I had the opportunity to spend time with a group of people who are involved with our Foster Care system and some of the young people who participate in it. Our Secretary of Social Services invited me to attend, as the day was facilitated by his wonderful staff. When I walked into the gym, I was suddenly stuck by the number of young people in the room who were 14-17 years old and were there to learn how to prepare to live independently. Some had foster families caring for them, but many are currently living in group homes in communities throughout the state. I could tell that many of them must have been thinking, "this lady has no idea who I am or even cares." I saw crossed arms, hard faces, and even some anger.

I started to speak to the group about how I had no idea what their current situation was or what challenges they had faced already in their young lives. I knew many of them have suffered loneliness, loss of family, addiction, or even abuse. Some may never return to their homes for different reasons and may never be adopted before turning 18 years old.

I told them I had no idea what it was like to be them or what their days were like, but that my name was Kristi, I have a husband named Bryon, three kids, and three grandbabies. I told them I grew up with a foster brother, had spent a lot of time with kids in their situation over my lifetime, have spent more years living without my dad than I had with him, and have faced family conflict and difficulties. The room started to grow quiet as I began to tell them the story of a pearl.

Years ago, I met a woman named Shari who owned a pearl store. When I asked her why, she informed me that pearls are the only precious gem that is created by a living creature. That makes it unique and special. Pearls are created by oysters who get sand or grit into their shell, and it begins to irritate the soft tissue inside. It can be hurtful, painful, and very uncomfortable for the oyster. But over time, the oyster goes through a process where it takes that hurt and turns it into something beautiful – something precious.

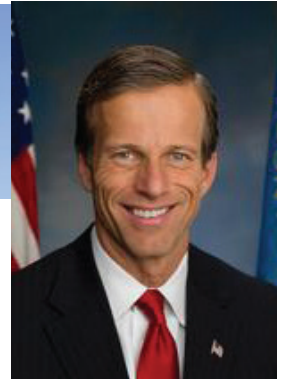
I told them that my prayer was that whatever hard thing they had faced in their lives, whatever challenge they have gone through or will go through, that they will work to turn it into something that can be for good. Maybe even beautiful or precious. That it would build in them a compassion for other people and encourage them to serve others, which is what God created us all for.

When we are focused on other people, we are often happier and have better perspective on our own problems. All these kids have dreams, and I encouraged them keep going – that their success, despite the hard things they have gone through, will be a source of incredible hope to others who find themselves in similar situations. Hope is what people need. Hope is not wishful thinking – it is optimism with a plan.

After I spoke with these young people, I spent some time with their caseworkers and caregivers. I'm so grateful for every one of these adults who dedicate their lives to working with these kids. Hearing their stories at times was heartbreaking, but I thought of how one person could impact their lives by mentoring, spending time, being a friend, or even a mom or a dad to them. I left with a lot of "what ifs" running through my mind. "What if" they each just had one adult who decided to be there for them besides their case worker? "What if" they could go home to a healed family? "What if" a church, or better yet, ALL churches, decided this was their mission, to be fathers to the fatherless, wrap their arms around these kids, love them, and show up? It would be miraculous – life changing!

This Father's Day, I am grateful for the wonderful father my children have been blessed with and all the fathers in our family. But I am also going to do all I can to try to shine a light on what every person, including myself, can do this Father's Day for those who may not have one. May God richly bless you and your family and give you a heart for those around you who need you in their lives.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



More Farm in the Farm Bill

Agriculture is the lifeblood of South Dakota. Our state's farmers and ranchers rise before dawn and put in the hard work necessary to feed America. As a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I have the opportunity to advocate for South Dakota producers, and the farm bills that Congress takes up every few years are among my top priorities as a senator.

I've had a hand in crafting four farm bills during my time in Congress, and my number one goal is always to ensure each bill reflects the needs and priorities of the men and women on the ground: farmers and ranchers, their families, and everyone else who helps strengthen our state's agriculture community. As I travel around the state, I always take special note of my conversations with agriculture producers, and many of the bills I introduce for inclusion in the farm bill are based on these conversations.

The current farm bill will expire later this year, which is why Congress needs to focus on advancing the next farm bill. Not only are deadlines approaching, but updates are needed to a number of farm programs, and this work is all the more critical given the headwinds farmers and ranchers are currently facing.

Sen. John Boozman (R-Ark.), the lead Republican on the Senate Agriculture Committee, recently released a farm bill framework to get this process moving. It builds off of House Republicans' farm bill, which advanced out of the House Agriculture Committee with bipartisan support. Unfortunately, progress in the Senate has been hamstrung by my Democrat colleagues' insistence on prioritizing things like climate over the needs of farmers and ranchers. I hope that this new framework and the action in the House will refocus efforts on farmers and ranchers – instead of Democrats' climate obsession – and move deliberations along.

In preparation for this next farm bill, I introduced a number of pieces of legislation that I hope to get included in the final bill. As I mentioned, they are based on the conversations I've had with farmers and ranchers as I travel throughout South Dakota, as well as events I've held to hear from producers about their priorities for the farm bill.

Importantly, this framework would make improvements to the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage programs, which are essential elements of the farm safety net. I'm pleased that the Senate framework also contains measures from a number of the bills I introduced. It includes elements of my Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Improvement Act, which would make CRP a more effective option for producers. It also includes my CRP Flexibility Act, which would provide additional drought flexibilities for CRP contract holders. And it includes legislation I introduced to make crop insurance more affordable for young farmers, plus elements of another bill I introduced to increase processing options for livestock producers and expand smaller meatpackers' capacity are incorporated into the framework.

This framework is an important step forward in producing a farm bill that delivers for farmers and ranchers. Again, I hope that my Democrat colleagues will approach pursuing a bipartisan farm bill with a new seriousness about helping farmers and ranchers, not advancing their climate agenda. There needs to be more farm in the farm bill, and farmers and ranchers can't afford any more unnecessary delays.

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



BIG Update

Only 32% of current military families would recommend that a family member or friend join the military. Unfortunately, our servicemembers' quality of life has declined, causing low morale and stress. They've struggled with the high inflation and housing costs that have continued to rise in this economy. This is not the treatment our military men and women deserve.

I voted to pass the annual defense bill which will improve servicemembers' quality of life by improving their housing, access to health care, support for their spouses, and boosting compensation. Specifically, junior enlisted servicemembers will receive a 19.5% pay raise. This is great news for our armed forces.

The annual defense bill also strengthens our national security by deterring China, defending Israel, and securing our southern border. It also included two of my policies to crack down on China and safeguard our supply chains. One provision would investigate China's unfair pricing in global shipping markets and the other works to counter China's monopoly of shipping container production.

A fair and functioning supply chain is necessary to ensure our national defense, both within our country and globally. These provisions will strengthen America on the world stage and stifle China's agenda..

BIG Idea

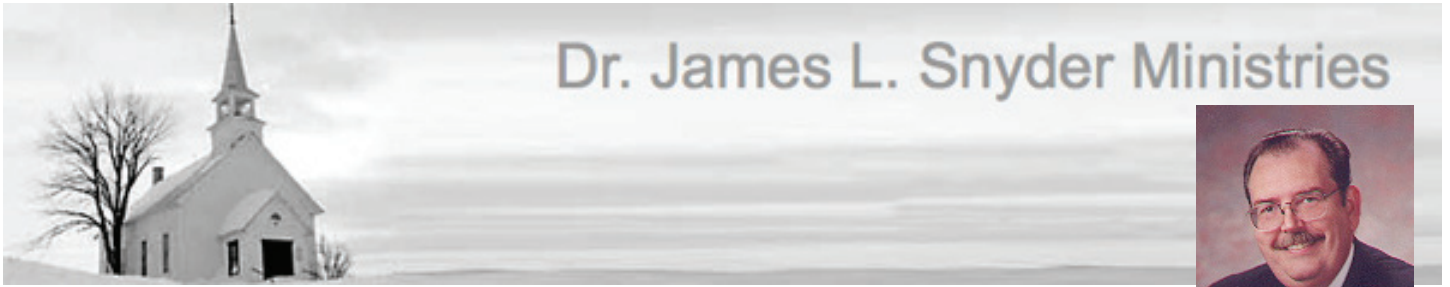
When you think of public transit, you typically think of trains or buses in bigger cities. However, the services that rural transit providers offer are used heavily by older or disabled individuals, helping folks get to and from medical appointments and errands. I spoke with a panel of transportation leaders on what challenges rural providers face and how to ensure rural South Dakotans have access to these necessary services.

BIG News

The aviation industry is flying towards a more sustainable future. From sustainable aviation fuel to Advanced Air Mobility and hydrogen aviation, there are a lot of new technologies emerging that will improve air travel. I launched the Congressional Sustainable Aviation Caucus with Representative Sharice Davids to facilitate conversations between members and industry leaders regarding fuel supply resiliency, new innovations, and national security.

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I'll Tell You When I've Had Enough

It was evening, and the day was just about over. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I were chilling in the living room, watching TV.

It is always lovely when the day ends, and you can relax. Doing nothing can become a habit.

I'm not sure what we were watching on TV; it really doesn't matter. What matters is that we were relaxing and enjoying the evening together. No appointments, no plans, just an evening of doing nothing. It's that kind of relaxing that I can't get enough of. It's too late to do anything, and it's too early to go to bed. What a wonderful scenario.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage went out into the kitchen and then called me and said, "Do you think you've had enough ice cream for the day?"

I didn't know if it was a rhetorical question or she was setting me up for a trap. I've been set up before, and I'll never know when the next one will be. Anything with ice cream is worth the chance.

I cheerfully responded, "I'll tell you when I've had enough ice cream and I haven't had enough for today."

A soft voice from the kitchen area said, "Would you like me to bring you another bowl of ice cream?"

I responded, "That would be wonderful, and I sure would appreciate that."

I can never think of a time when I had too much ice cream. My mother often told me I had too much ice cream. But you know how mothers are? They don't always tell the truth.

When it comes to vegetables, I can have too much of that. I can have too much when it comes to other things as well. But who in their right mind could ever say they've had too much ice cream?

My mother once told me, "You should be eating more fruits instead of ice cream."

I responded, "Well then, get me some peach ice cream."

As I was growing up, all my mother wanted to do was feed me vegetables. It's not that I don't like vegetables, but there comes a time when I've had enough.

When I was young, my favorite Saturday morning cartoon was, Popeye the Sailor Man. As you know, Popeye is famous for eating spinach, which gave him all the energy and strength he needed.

One Saturday, as I was watching Popeye, my mother came in and said, "Oh, I see your watching Popeye the Sailor Man. Do you know he loves spinach? I think maybe you should start eating spinach like Popeye."

I looked at my mother seriously and said, "You do know that Popeye smoked a pipe. So if I eat his spinach do I also smoke his pipe?"

That was the last time my mother ever brought that subject up.

As a youngster, I mowed the grass for our neighbor next door, who had a tiny grocery shop. When I mowed the grass, I went into her little shop, and she gave me soda pop and my favorite ice cream cone.

She could've paid me money to mow the grass, but what value can you put on your favorite ice cream cone?

So when The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage asked me if I'd had enough ice cream, I cheerfully told her, "absolutely not". There is no way under the sun that I could ever have enough ice cream in one day.

If there ever comes a time when I answer my wife's question by saying, "Yes, my dear, I think I've had enough ice cream for today," you know I've lost my mind.

I've often wondered who invented ice cream. They sure have my approval. I think they did a wonderful

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thing to the human race by creating something as delicious as ice cream. Even to this day, I can't name all of the different flavors of ice cream.

My goal in life is to find all the different flavors of ice cream and sample each one for the world's record.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage brought me a very nice bowl of ice cream. "Here you are, I hope this is enough ice cream for tonight."

I just smiled at her because I never think beyond the ice cream I'm eating at the time. I refuse to compromise that marvelous experience of eating ice cream by thinking of other things.

Then my wife said something rather strange. "Do you know," she said rather seriously, "that there is no ice cream in heaven?"

I chuckled as I ate another spoonful of ice cream. I looked at her and said, "That's why I'm trying to eat as much ice cream as I can now. I want to get my share of ice cream while I still have the opportunity."

While eating that ice cream I remembered a verse in the Bible. It caused me to think about some of my habits.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:7-8).

Sometimes I want what I want when I want it. Usually, I don't give much thought to consequences.

I need to sharpen my focus on my spiritual life and trust God to lead me everyday.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: Which countries are leading the shift from internal combustion engine automobiles to EVs?

-- Mike B., Austin, TX

Electric vehicles (EVs) are powered by an electric motor that draws electricity from a battery that can be charged from an external source. No exhaust is emitted from a tailpipe, and there are no fuel tanks or other liquid fuel components. Globally, China is leading the transition to EVs in terms of sheer numbers. But other countries are further ahead in terms of per capita shifting to EVs.

China has an EV sales share of 29 percent and an impressive number of publicly available fast-charging stations.

There are 760,000 charging stations country-wide—almost six times more than all the combined charging stations in other countries! In June 2024, China unveiled a \$73.65 billion package of tax breaks over four years to incentivize Chinese citizens to buy EVs and other greener cars.

Sweden has a higher share of EV sales than China (54 percent) but less publicly available charging stations (2,600). People with battery EVs in Sweden pay the least road tax and are exempt from ownership tax for five years. Norway has the highest share of EV sales (88 percent) and many publicly available charging stations (9,100). However, the annual increase in EV sales in Norway was about 36 percent from 2021-2022. Compare that to China (about 63 percent) and Sweden (about 68 percent).

China, Sweden and Norway are clear leaders in EV adoption, but it is also interesting to note which countries produce the most EV batteries. The supply chain for batteries starts in the mines, where raw materials containing the needed components are extracted. These materials have to be processed and refined, then made into battery cells, assembled into modules and then sold to automakers. Most EVs use lithium-ion batteries since they have a high power-to-weight ratio and long life. China holds 62.5 percent of global lithium-ion manufacturing capacity, Germany 11.3 percent, and the United States 6.3 percent.

Still other countries lead in EV vehicle production after batteries reach automakers. China is the top country for car production, followed by Japan and India. Some carmakers have formed partnerships with battery makers to produce their own batteries. NIO, the equivalent of Tesla in China, is one such example.

EVs are gaining momentum in Africa, too. About two years ago, the Ethiopian government introduced incentives for Ethiopians to adopt EVs, including exemption from several kinds of taxes. People were further incentivized by increased restrictions on internal combustion imports, which are set to be banned entirely in the near future. Ethiopia originally set a goal to have 150,000 electric cars on the roads by 2030. Since 100,000 has already been surpassed, the target has been moved closer to 500,000!

By buying an electric vehicle, you can support the global effort to transition from gasoline-powered vehicles to EVs. Educate yourself on rebates, tax incentives and other programs in your state to make the switch to an EV easier.

• • EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to: question@earthtalk.org.



China may be way ahead in terms of the sheer number of EVs produced, but Sweden, Norway & Ethiopia have higher per capita rates of adoption. Credit: Pexels.com



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

COMMENTARY

The funding of a civic engagement center is its own civics lesson **After multiple rejections by lawmakers, proposal still gets money** **by Dana Hess**

Rep. Scott Odenbach has to wonder why he went to so much trouble. The Spearfish Republican was the driving force behind two legislative attempts to create a center for civic engagement at Black Hills State University. Little did he know, all he had to do was put in a good word with the Joint Appropriations Committee and the center that had been rejected multiple times by his colleagues in the Legislature would get the funding it needed.

Odenbach's quest began in 2023 with a bill that sought to fund a Center for Exceptionalism at BHSU. "Exceptionalism" is a conservative buzzword that translates into something like: "Your country is fine, but ours is GREAT!"

That version of the center was charged with creating curriculum for K-12 schools that would teach "students to balance critical thinking with love of country." Indeed, some of the backers of the bill waxed on about love of country to the extent that it seemed students who came up short in that department were destined for failure.

Because of its \$150,000 price tag, the bill needed a two-thirds majority in the House or 47 favorable votes. It failed twice on 46-23 votes.

This year, Odenbach edited "exceptionalism" out of the title of the center, instead hoping to capitalize on the reputation of a recently deceased and beloved professor to create the Nicholas W. Drummond Center for Civic Engagement. Odenbach called the new bill a "generalist" approach.

While the bill held fewer specifics about what the center would do, it inspired the same patriotic fervor in lawmakers who spoke in favor of the legislation, with one saying students need to know "why America is an affirmative good" and another claiming students need to "learn about the greatness of our democracy."

Obviously even in its generalist version, exceptionalism was alive and well with the bill's backers. The bill did appeal to Odenbach's House colleagues, flying through that chamber with a 63-5 vote. It did not, however, get as warm a greeting in the Senate where it again failed by one vote, 16-17.

Now here's where the story gets weird. Faced with legislative setbacks in not one but two legislative sessions, the civic engagement center got new life from the Joint Appropriations Committee. As noted in a South Dakota Searchlight story, committee members slipped BHSU an extra \$926,406 in funding. The executive director of the Board of Regents told the appropriators that was surely enough to cover the estimated \$200,000 in start-up money the center would need.

Lawmakers who had balked at funding the center approved the new dollar amount for BHSU, including the funding for the civic engagement center, when they approved the state budget bill.

In a Dakota Scout story, BHSU President Steve Elliott said the center would be tasked with developing curriculum, creating civics-focused events on campus and providing experiential learning opportunities as well as civic programming.

According to South Dakota Searchlight, BHSU will present the center's progress to the Legislature during the 2025 session. If it's already up and running, perhaps the center's representative can explain the civics lesson inherent in the center's creation. Maybe that person can justify how the center was created and funded by a Legislature that proved multiple times that it didn't think such a center was a good idea.

Maybe that civics lesson can explain to lawmakers what two year's worth of committee hearings and floor

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debates were worth. Maybe that civics lesson could teach lawmakers the actual significance of the votes they took after their wishes were so casually flouted by appropriators who were willing to spend money on a project that lawmakers rejected three times.

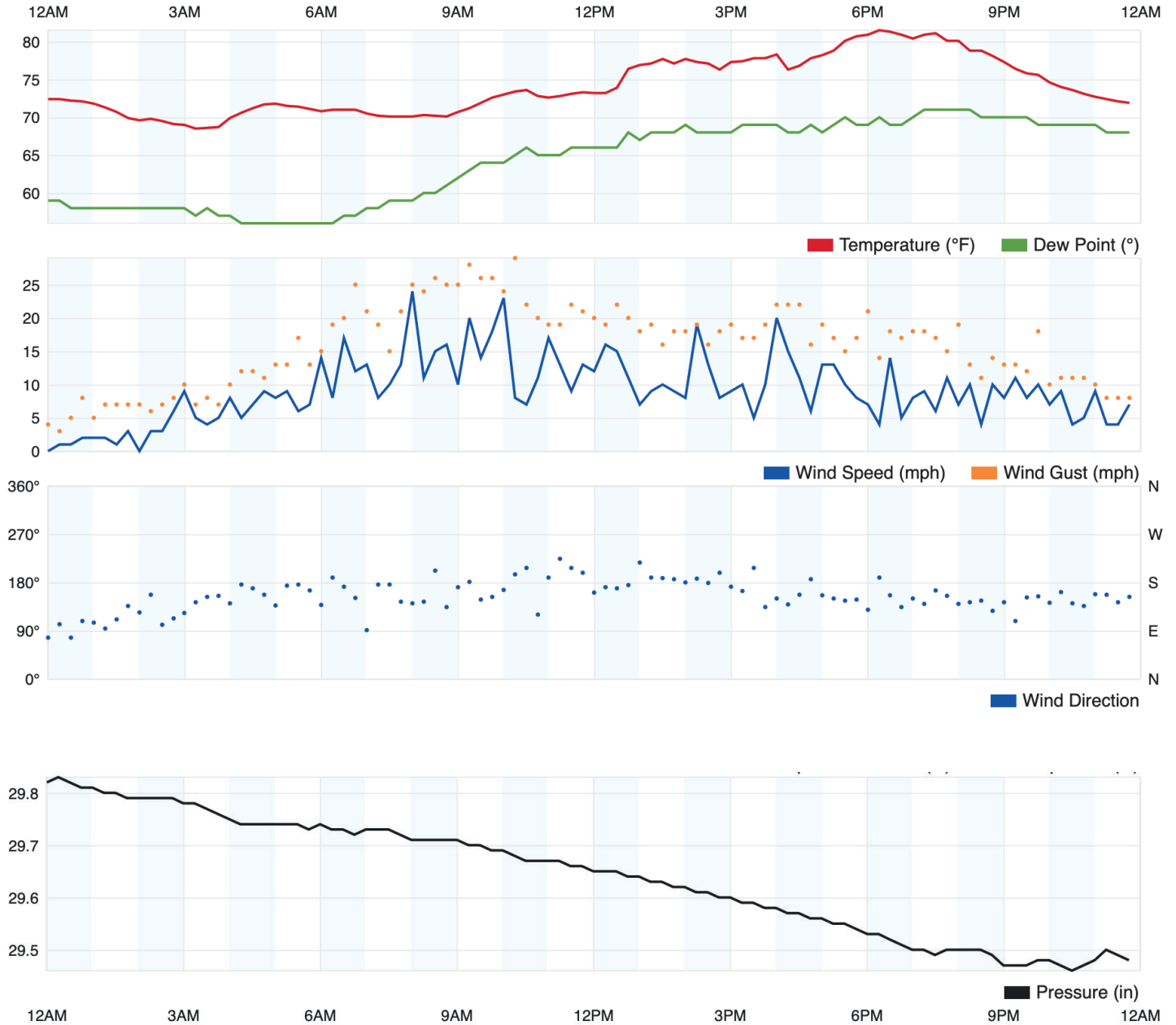
Maybe the civics lesson here is that the real power in Pierre is located with the people who control the state checkbook. It would seem that the rest of the Legislature is just going through the motions.

Dana Hess spent more than 25 years in South Dakota journalism, editing newspapers in Redfield, Milbank and Pierre. He's retired and lives in Brookings, working occasionally as a freelance writer.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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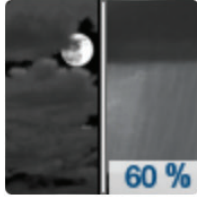
Sunday



High: 82 °F

Partly Sunny

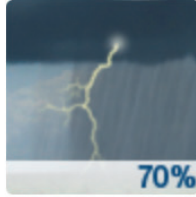
Sunday Night



Low: 55 °F

Mostly Cloudy
then Showers
Likely

Monday



High: 70 °F

Severe
Thunderstorms

Monday Night



Low: 59 °F

Severe
Thunderstorms

Tuesday



High: 78 °F

Chance
T-storms



Heavy Rainfall Potential Upcoming

June 15, 2024
3:15 PM

Key Messages & Timing

Key Messages

- Two waves of moisture late Sunday through early Tuesday
- Widespread coverage of thunderstorms
- Area of greatest concern: northeastern South Dakota & western Minnesota due to potential for multiple rounds of thunderstorm activity
- Locally dry conditions in some areas will help mitigate some of the heavy rainfalls potential impacts

Probability of Precipitation Forecast (%)

	6/16 Sun		6/17 Mon								6/18 Tue				
	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm
Aberdeen	0	0	10	60	65	70	70	50	50	85	85	80	80	20	20
Britton	0	5	5	55	70	80	80	60	60	90	90	80	80	30	30
Brookings	0	40	40	80	80	70	70	60	60	60	60	50	50	20	20
Chamberlain	0	50	50	75	75	40	40	30	30	55	55	45	45	5	5
Clark	0	10	15	70	80	80	80	60	60	75	75	65	65	25	25
Eagle Butte	0	10	25	55	65	45	45	20	20	75	75	60	60	10	10
Ellendale	0	0	5	55	75	70	70	50	50	85	85	85	85	20	20
Eureka	0	5	20	55	80	60	60	35	35	75	75	85	85	15	15
Gettysburg	0	10	25	80	80	60	60	30	30	75	75	70	70	15	15
Huron	0	40	40	80	80	65	65	55	55	70	70	55	55	10	10
Kennebec	0	25	65	75	80	40	40	30	30	65	65	50	50	10	10
McIntosh	0	15	30	50	65	50	50	30	30	80	80	70	70	20	20
Milbank	0	10	10	50	80	80	80	60	60	75	75	70	70	45	45
Miller	0	15	40	85	85	65	65	40	40	70	70	55	55	15	15
Mobridge	0	5	30	50	75	50	50	25	25	75	75	75	75	10	10
Murdo	0	35	65	75	80	40	40	35	35	65	65	50	50	5	5
Pierre	0	20	60	80	80	35	35	25	25	65	65	60	60	5	5
Redfield	0	10	15	85	80	70	70	45	45	75	75	65	65	20	20
Sisseton	0	5	5	55	75	85	85	60	60	85	85	80	80	45	45
Watertown	0	10	20	65	80	75	75	55	55	75	75	65	65	30	30
Webster	0	5	5	65	80	85	85	60	60	85	85	70	70	35	35
Wheaton	0	5	5	45	70	85	85	65	65	85	85	80	80	55	55



A series of systems late Sunday through early Tuesday will bring multiple rounds of widespread thunderstorm activity with the potential for heavy rainfall.

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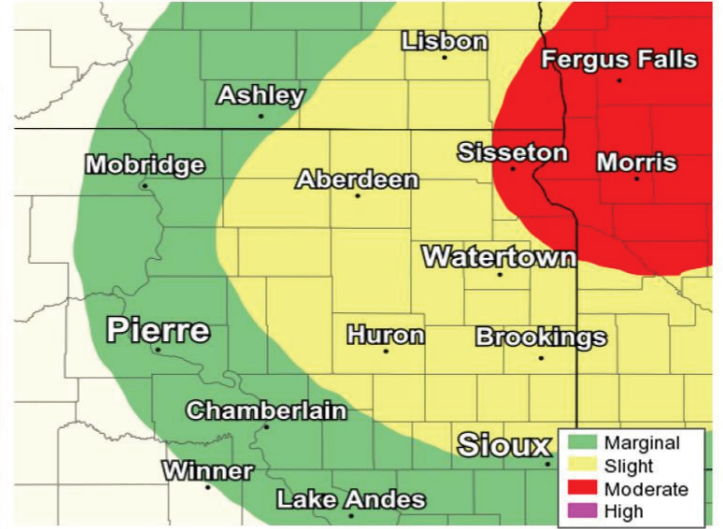
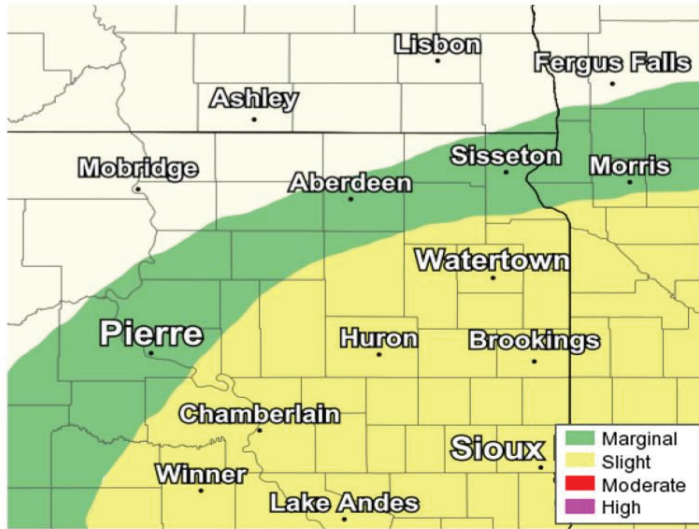


Heavy Rainfall Potential Upcoming

June 15, 2024
3:45 PM

Sunday Night/Early Monday

Monday/Monday Night



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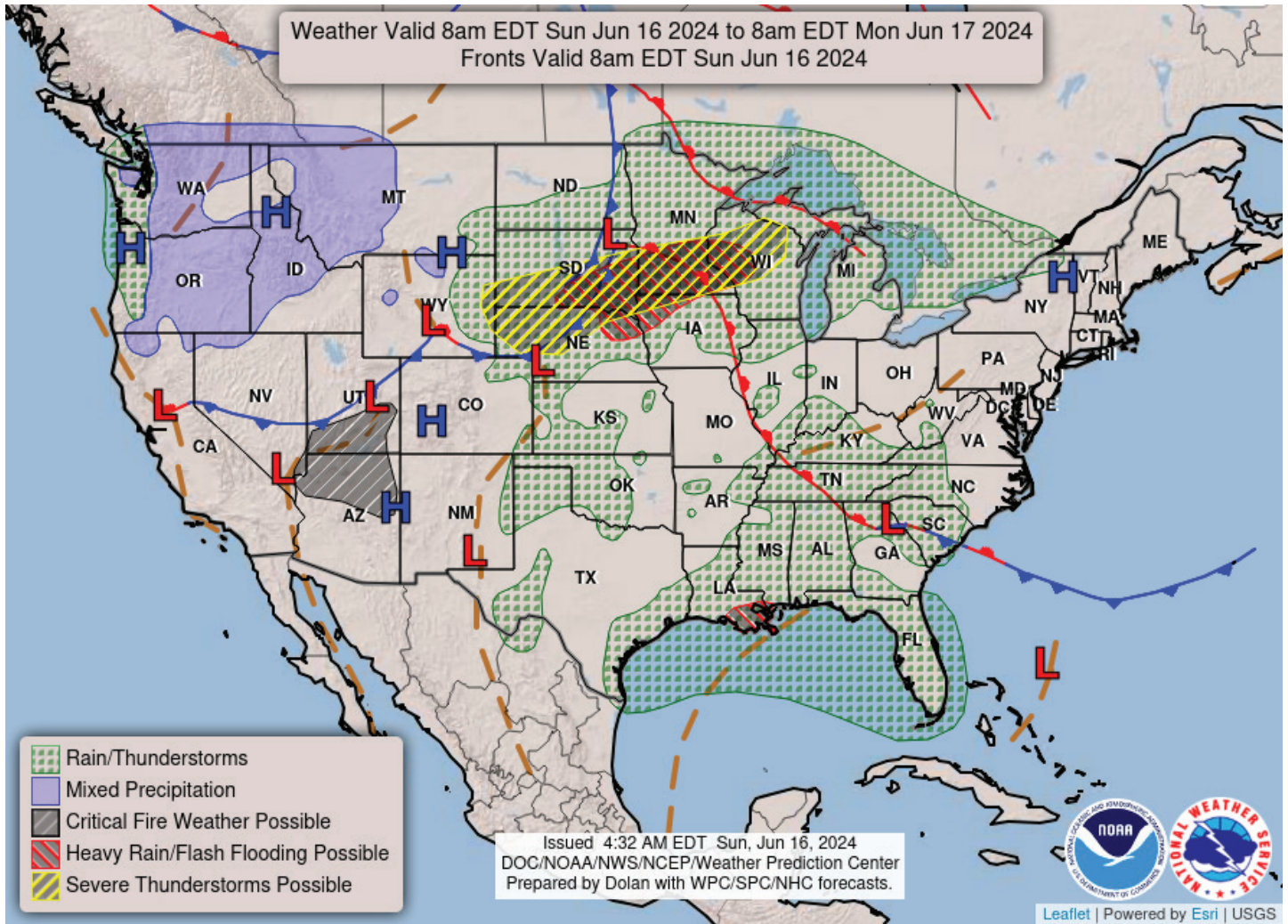
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 82 °F at 6:11 PM
Low Temp: 68 °F at 3:21 AM
Wind: 29 mph at 10:15 AM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 15 hours, 43 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 109 in 1933
Record Low: 34 in 1903
Average High: 81
Average Low: 56
Average Precip in June.: 1.90
Precip to date in June: 0.50
Average Precip to date: 9.15
Precip Year to Date: 7.57
Sunset Tonight: 9:25:07 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:41:33 am



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Today in Weather History

June 16, 1915: A tornado swept over a narrow path in Hughes, Hyde, and Hand counties during the afternoon hours. This tornado caused several thousands of dollars in property damage and seriously injured many people. Luckily there were no fatalities reported.

June 16, 1992: An F3 tornado caused significant destruction as it moved northeast across the northwestern side of Ft. Thompson. The tornado virtually destroyed the Lake Sharpe Visitor Center. In Ft. Thompson, the tornado destroyed at least four homes, and 15 mobile homes were damaged, leaving about 55 persons homeless. Eight people were injured, two of them seriously. The storm also destroyed other buildings, six 50,000 bushel grain bins, and four high voltage towers from Big Bend Dam. At the Shady Bend Campground, 19 campers and several boats were destroyed.

Also, heavy rains fell over three days beginning on the 15th. The hardest-hit area was in Clear Lake, where the three-day total was 11.53 inches. As a result, a wall of water up to 15 feet high swept down creeks in the Clear Lake area. The resultant flash flooding went through the first floors of many houses and even filled basements of homes on hills. In addition, all roads into Clear Lake were cut off as the town became surrounded by water. Officials in Deuel County estimated at least 37 bridges and culverts were destroyed. Other three-day rainfall totals include; 6.35 inches in Conde; 5.99 in Castlewood; 4.91 inches 2NW of Big Stone City; 4.90 in Redfield; and 4.65 inches at Artichoke Lake.

June 16, 2009: An upper low-pressure area brought several supercell thunderstorms, which produced severe weather across parts of central and northeast South Dakota. Large hail up to 2 inches in diameter, several tornadoes, and flash flooding occurred with these storms. Slow-moving thunderstorms brought heavy rains of 2 to 4 inches in and around Aberdeen, causing extensive road flooding. Dozens of basements were flooded and damaged, along with some sewer backups. Many vehicles became stalled with the police sent out to direct traffic. There were also some power outages. A tornado touched down briefly northwest of Lebanon in Potter County with no damage occurring. A tornado touched down southeast of Polo in Hand County in an open field. No damage occurred. Heavy rains of 3 to over 5 inches caused flash flooding of several roads and crops in north-central and northeast Spink County. Torrential rains from 3 to 6 inches fell across southeast Brown County, bringing flash flooding. Many roads were flooded and damaged, along with many acres of cropland. A tornado touched down in southeastern Hand County and remained on the ground for nearly 15 minutes before lifting. No damage occurred with this tornado as it stayed in the open country.

June 16, 2010: Very strong winds were observed during the evening hours in Dewey County, South Dakota. Three weather stations near Lantry observed winds from 101 to 142 mph. One station had recorded a 101 mph wind before it was destroyed. The other two stations recorded 131 mph and 142 mph winds. The winds destroyed an airplane hangar and severely damaged another one. Several semi-trailers were also tipped over and damaged by the very high winds.

June 16, 1806: The great American total solar eclipse occurred from California to Massachusetts, nearly five minutes in duration.

June 16, 1895: Heavy rain fell in portions of central Arkansas, damaging several roads and bridges. At Madding, east of Pine Bluff, 6.12 inches of rain fell in six hours.

June 16, 1896: A tsunami ravages the coast of Japan, killing between 22,000 and 27,000 people.

June 16, 1957: A violent F4 tornado struck the communities of Robecco Pavese and Valle Scurpasso in Pavia, Italy, flattening many large stone buildings. The tornado killed seven people and injured 80. Images of the damage indicate that tornado may have reached T10 (low-end F5) intensity.

June 16-23, 1972: Agnes was first named by the National Hurricane Center on June 16, 1972: It would go on to make landfall between Panama City and Apalachicola, Florida, on the afternoon of June 19. Hurricane Agnes would later cause catastrophic flooding in the mid-Atlantic states, especially Pennsylvania. Agnes caused over 100 fatalities.

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

IRREVERSIBLE CALL

The legendary Babe Ruth was known for stating his opinion - whether wanted or not. On one occasion there was an umpire who displeased "The Babe" and he violently disagreed with one of his calls.

Shouted Ruth, "There are 40,000 people in the stands who know that pitch was a ball!"

"Maybe so," said Umpire Pinelli, "but my call is the only one that counts."

Not quite. There is an Ultimate Judge. Scripture declares that "As surely as I live, says the Lord, every knee will bend to me, and every tongue will confess and give praise to God. Yes, each of you will give a personal account to God."

Paul states clearly that there is a Righteous Judge before whom we play the game of life. He knows each of us by name and everything there is to know about us. He is infallible and impartial and cannot be bought or bribed.

Unfortunately, many Christians adopt or adapt their standards of conduct on what others in society are doing. This reflects a weak faith and a disregard for the teachings of the Word of God.

Since we will all give an account to the Lord for every thought we think and deed we do, we must look to Him for His guidance and His Word for directions.

Prayer: Father, we often live life as if what we do does not matter. Awaken us to the reality that we will stand before You to be judged for everything we do. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: "As surely as I live," says the Lord, "every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God." Romans 14:11



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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.14.24

1 25 26 31 65 2

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$61,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.15.24

26 31 32 36 49 1

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$3,190,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.15.24

2 7 8 12 21 16

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 53 Mins 49 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.15.24

2 10 19 25 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$20,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.15.24

30 38 44 54 55 22

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.15.24

4 36 48 54 56 2

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$44,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Which states could have abortion on the ballot in 2024?

By GEOFF MULVIHILL and KIMBERLEE KRUESI Associated Press

Deadlines are coming up between now and July 5 in five states where advocates are trying to gather enough voters' signatures to put abortion-related questions on ballots in November's elections.

Measures that would enshrine the right to abortion in state constitutions are already on the ballot in four states, and officials in two more are checking whether the petitions submitted there are valid. Additionally, New York's attorney general is trying to get a question reinstated after a court removed it.

The push continues after the Supreme Court's June 13 abortion ruling denying on technical grounds an effort to roll back the federal approval for mifepristone, a drug used for medication abortions. But abortion rights supporters are cautioning against that ruling instilling too much confidence because it's possible a similar lawsuit brought by someone else could succeed.

It adds up to an election season in which abortion rights will be a major issue, directly and in races for candidates for state and federal office.

The fate of the measures could reshape or confirm the trendlines that have developed in the nearly two years since the U.S. Supreme Court removed the nationwide right to abortion.

Since the court's 2022 ruling, most Republican-controlled states have new abortion restrictions in effect, including 14 banning it at every stage of pregnancy. Most Democratic-led states have laws or executive orders to protect access.

Voters in seven states — California, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Montana, Ohio and Vermont — have sided with abortion rights supporters on ballot measures since 2022.

Some efforts that sought to restrict or ban abortion also have failed to reach ballots.

In Wisconsin, the House approved a measure asking voters to ban abortion after 14 weeks, but the legislative session ended without a vote from the state Senate. Likewise, Iowa lawmakers ended their session without approving a measure asking voters to find there is no constitutional right to abortion.

Pennsylvania lawmakers previously pursued a similar amendment, but it's not expected to be added to the ballot this year. A Louisiana measure to enshrine abortion rights in the state constitution died in committee, one in Maine effectively died when it fell short of receiving the approval of two-thirds of the House and a Minnesota measure was not passed by lawmakers.

What's now on 2024 ballots?COLORADO

Colorado's top election official confirmed in May that a measure to enshrine abortion protections in the state constitution, including requirements that Medicaid and private health insurers cover it, made the ballot for the fall election.

Supporters said they gathered more than 225,000 signatures, nearly double the requirement of over 124,000 signatures. Amending the state constitution requires the support of 55% of voters.

Those backing a dueling measure, a law to ban abortion, did not turn in signatures, and the measure will not go before voters.

Abortion is legal at all stages of pregnancy in Colorado.

FLORIDA

The state Supreme Court ruled in April that a ballot measure to legalize abortion until fetal viability could go on the ballot despite a legal challenge from state Attorney General Ashley Moody, who argued there are differing views on the meaning of "viability" and that some key terms in the proposed measure are not properly defined.

Advocates collected nearly a million signatures to put a state constitutional amendment to legalize abortion until viability on the ballot, surpassing the nearly 892,000 required.

To take effect, the measure would need agreement from 60% of voters.

Abortion is currently illegal in Florida after the first six weeks of pregnancy, before many women know

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they are pregnant, under a law that took effect May 1.

MARYLAND

Maryland voters also will be asked this year to enshrine the right to abortion in the state's constitution. The state already protects the right to abortion under state law and Democrats outnumber Republicans 2-1. Abortion is allowed in Maryland until viability.

SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota voters will decide this fall on a measure that would ban any restrictions on abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy. It would allow the state in the second trimester to "regulate the pregnant woman's abortion decision and its effectuation only in ways that are reasonably related to the physical health of the pregnant woman."

An abortion ban would be allowed in the third trimester, as long as it included exceptions for the life and health of the woman.

The state's top election official announced May 16 that about 85% of the more than 55,000 signatures submitted in support of the ballot initiative are valid, exceeding the required 35,017 signatures.

Opponents still have until Monday to file a challenge with the secretary of state's office.

Where else could abortion be on the ballot in 2024? ARIZONA

A signature drive is underway to add a constitutional right to abortion in Arizona. Under the measure, the state would not be able to ban abortion until the fetus is viable, with later abortions allowed to protect a woman's physical or mental health. Supporters must gather nearly 384,000 valid signatures by July 4.

Abortion is currently legal for the first 15 weeks of pregnancy in Arizona. An Arizona Supreme Court ruling in April said enforcement could begin soon for a near-total ban that was already on the books. The governor has since signed a bill repealing that law. It is still expected to be in effect for a time, however.

ARKANSAS

Proponents of an amendment to allow abortion in many cases must gather nearly 91,000 signatures by July 5 for it to get on the Nov. 5 ballot.

The measure would bar laws banning abortion in the first 20 weeks of gestation and allow abortion later in pregnancy in cases of rape, incest, threats to the woman's health or life, or if the fetus would be unlikely to survive birth. Because it allows abortion to be banned 20 weeks into pregnancy, the proposal does not have the support of Planned Parenthood Great Plains, which includes Arkansas.

The state currently bans abortion at all stages of pregnancy, with narrow exceptions.

MISSOURI

Missouri abortion rights advocates turned in more than 380,000 signatures, more than twice the required 171,000, for a measure asking voters to approve a constitutional amendment to guarantee abortion until viability.

Local election officials have until July 30 to verify the signatures, then it's up to the secretary of state to declare whether there were enough.

A group of moderate Republicans have for this year abandoned efforts for an alternate amendment that would have allowed abortion up to 12 weeks, with limited exceptions afterward.

Abortion is currently banned in Missouri at all stages of pregnancy, with limited exceptions.

MONTANA

Abortion rights proponents in Montana have proposed a constitutional amendment that would bar the government from denying the right to abortion before viability or when it's necessary to protect the life or health of the pregnant person.

After a legal battle over the ballot language, the Montana Supreme Court in April wrote its version of the language that would appear on the ballot if supporters gather more than 60,000 signatures by Friday.

Abortion is legal until viability in Montana under a 1999 state Supreme Court opinion.

NEBRASKA

Advocates are trying to collect about 123,000 signatures needed by July 5 to put a constitutional amendment before voters to protect abortion rights until fetal viability.

A competing petition effort would add a constitutional amendment mirroring a law adopted last year

that bans abortion after 12 weeks, with some exceptions.

A third effort for a measure that would ban abortion throughout pregnancy has struggled to raise money and is not expected to gather enough signatures to make the ballot.

NEVADA

Organizers in May said they turned in almost twice as many signatures as needed to put an abortion rights measure on Nevada's ballot in November.

Under the amendment, abortion access for the first 24 weeks of pregnancy, or later to protect the health of the pregnant person, would be enshrined in the state constitution.

Such access is already ensured under a 1990 law. More than 102,000 valid signatures are required to place the measure on the ballot, and organizers said they submitted more than 200,000. Now, county election officials must verify signatures.

To change the constitution, voters would need to approve it in both 2024 and 2026.

NEW YORK

A judge in May removed an equal protection amendment involving reproductive health care from the November ballot, finding lawmakers missed a procedural step when they put it there.

Attorney General Letitia James said she would appeal the ruling.

The measure would bar discrimination based on "pregnancy outcomes" and "reproductive healthcare," along with sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin and disability. The language does not explicitly preserve a right to abortion in New York, where it's currently allowed until viability.

Shooting in Detroit suburb injures 9, leaving an 8-year-old in critical condition

ROCHESTER HILLS, Mich. (AP) — Nine people were injured, including two young children and their mother, after a shooter opened fire at a splash pad in a Detroit suburb where families gathered to escape the summer heat Saturday. Law enforcement tracked a suspect to a home, where the man died by a self-inflicted gunshot wound, authorities said.

An 8-year-old boy was shot in the head and in critical condition Saturday night, Oakland County Sheriff Mike Bouchard said during a news conference. The boy's mother also was in critical condition after being wounded in the abdomen and leg, and his 4-year-old brother was in stable condition with a leg wound.

Authorities initially said they believed as many as 10 people had gunshot wounds from the shooting in Rochester Hills, but that number was revised after they checked with area hospitals.

The other six victims, all 30 or older, were in stable condition, Bouchard said. They included a husband-and-wife couple and a 78-year-old man.

The shooting happened just after 5 p.m. at a city park featuring a recreation area with a nonslip surface where people can turn on sprays and fountains of water to play in. Bouchard said the attack appeared to be random, with the shooter driving up to the park, walking to the splash pad and firing as many as 28 times, stopping multiple times to reload.

At least one witness reported that the shooter appeared to use two hand guns during the attack, but that has not yet been confirmed, the sheriff said.

In the chaos, "People were falling, getting hit, trying to run," Bouchard said. "Terrible things that unfortunately all of us in our law enforcement business have seen way too much."

The gunman was "apparently in no rush. Just calmly walked back to his car," the sheriff said.

Police heard the 911 call reporting the shooting as it came in, Bouchard said, because the agency uses a service that simultaneously sends emergency calls to first responders. An officer was at the scene within two minutes, he said.

Bouchard said the first deputies who arrived immediately began providing first aid including tourniquets. Officers also were able to quickly come up with a likely address, and a car matching the suspect's vehicle was at the residence.

Deputies surrounded the home and tried to make contact with the suspect inside, to no avail, Bouchard

said. They sent a drone inside the home and then entered to find the suspect was dead.

Another weapon was found inside. The quick containment of the suspect may have prevented a "second chapter" to the shooting, the sheriff said, displaying a photo of a semiautomatic rifle on a table inside the home.

The suspect did not live in Rochester Hills and investigators do not yet know why he went to the splash pad, according to Bouchard.

Officials did not release the man's name. Bouchard described him as a 42-year-old white man and said officials believe he lived with his mother. The man's mother was notified, Bouchard said.

"In terms of the 'why,' I don't know," Bouchard said of the gunman's motive.

At the splash pad, authorities found a handgun, three empty magazines and 28 spent shell casings. At the home, they recovered a semiautomatic rifle and another handgun believed to have been used by the suspect to take his life, Bouchard said.

Police cordoned off the area with tape and dozens of yellow evidence markers lay on on the ground among colorful folding chairs.

"When I got on scene I started to cry because I know what a splash pad is supposed to be," a place where people gather and have fun, Rochester Hills Mayor Bryan Barnett said.

The shooting was a reminder "that we live in a fragile place," Barnett said.

Rochester Hills is about 15 miles (24 kilometers) south of Oxford, where in 2021 a 15-year-old fatally shot four high school students.

Counseling would be made available at a local public service office on Sunday to anyone in need, Bouchard said. The Oxford Resiliency Center, established to help those impacted by the 2021 shooting at Oxford High School, remains in operation and can assist community members, he said.

"Our most fervent hope, at least at his point, is that all of the injured victims have speedy recoveries," Bouchard said. "None of us ... anticipated going into Father's Day weekend with this kind of tragedy that families will be deeply affected by forever."

Saturday's shooting came at the end of the first full week of summer vacation for students attending Rochester Community schools.

Bouchard called it "a gut punch" for the county.

"We've gone through so many tragedies," the sheriff said. "You know, we're not even fully comprehending what happened at Oxford. And, you know, now we have another complete tragedy that we're dealing with."

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said on the social platform X that she was heartbroken to learn of the shooting and was in touch with local officials.

Pilgrims commence the final rites of Hajj as Muslims celebrate Eid al-Adha

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

MINA, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Masses of pilgrims on Sunday embarked on a symbolic stoning of the devil in Saudi Arabia. The ritual marks the final days of the Hajj, or Islamic pilgrimage, and the start of the Eid al-Adha celebrations for Muslims around the world.

The stoning is among the final rites of the Hajj, which is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. It came a day after more than 1.8 million pilgrims congregated at a sacred hill, known as Mount Ararat, outside the holy city of Mecca, which Muslim pilgrims visit to perform the annual five-day rituals of Hajj.

The pilgrims left Mount Arafat on Saturday evening to spend their night in a nearby site known as Muzdalifa, where they collected pebbles to use in the symbolic stoning of pillars representing the devil.

The pillars are in another sacred place in Mecca, called Mina, where Muslims believe Ibrahim's faith was tested when God commanded him to sacrifice his only son Ismail. Ibrahim was prepared to submit to the command, but then God stayed his hand, sparing his son. In the Christian and Jewish versions of the story, Abraham is ordered to kill his other son, Isaac.

On Sunday morning, crowds headed on foot to the stoning areas. Some were seen pushing disabled

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pilgrims on wheelchairs on a multi-lane road leading to the complex housing the large pillars. Most pilgrims were seen sweltering and carrying umbrellas to protect them against the burning summer sun.

An Associated Press reporter saw many pilgrims, especially old ones, collapsing on the road to the pillars because of the burning heat. Security forces and medics were deployed to help, carrying those who fainted on gurneys out of the heat to ambulances or field hospitals.

Many pilgrims will spend up to three days in Mina, each casting seven pebbles at three pillars in a ritual to symbolize the casting away of evil and sin.

While in Mina, they will visit Mecca to perform their final "tawaf," or circumambulation, which is circling the Kaaba in the Grand Mosque counterclockwise seven times. The Farewell Tawaf marks the end of Hajj as pilgrims prepare to leave the holy city.

The rites coincide with the four-day Eid al-Adha, which means "Feast of Sacrifice," when Muslims with financial means commemorate Ibrahim's test of faith through slaughtering livestock and animals and distributing the meat to the poor.

Most countries marked Eid al-Adha on Sunday, others, like Indonesia, will celebrate it Monday.

Once the Hajj is over, men are expected to shave their heads and remove the shroud-like white garments worn during the pilgrimage, and women to snip a lock of hair in a sign of renewal and rebirth.

Most of the pilgrims then leave Mecca for the city of Medina, about 340 kilometers (210 miles) away, to pray in Prophet Muhammad's tomb, the Sacred Chamber. The tomb is part of the prophet's mosque, one of the three holiest sites in Islam, along with the Grand Mosque in Mecca and the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

All Muslims are required to make the Hajj once in their lives if they are physically and financially able to do so. Many wealthy Muslims make the pilgrimage more than once. The rituals largely commemorate the accounts of Prophet Ibrahim and his son Prophet Ismail, Ismail's mother Hajar and Prophet Muhammad, according to the Quran, Islam's holy book.

More than 1.83 million Muslims performed Hajj in 2024, Saudi Hajj and Umrah Minister Tawfiq bin Fawzan al-Rabiah said in a briefing, slightly less than last year's figures when 1.84 million made the rituals.

Most of the Hajj rituals are held outdoors with little if any shade. It is set for the second week of Dhu al-Hijjah, the last month in the Islamic lunar calendar, so its time of the year varies. And this year the pilgrimage fell in the burning summer of Saudi Arabia. The heat soared to 47 C (116.6 F) at Mount Arafat on Saturday.

This year's Hajj came against the backdrop of the devastating Israel-Hamas war, which has pushed the Middle East to the brink of a regional conflict.

Palestinians in the Gaza Strip weren't able to travel to Mecca for Hajj this year because of the closure of the Rafah crossing in May when Israel extended its ground offensive to the city on the border with Egypt. And they will not be able to celebrate the Eid al-Adha as they used to do in previous years.

Dozens of Palestinians gathered Sunday morning near a destroyed mosque in Gaza's southern city of Khan Younis to perform the Eid prayers. They were surrounded by debris and rubble of collapsed houses. In the nearby town of Deir al-Balah in central Gaza, Muslims held their prayers in a school-turned shelter. Some, including women and children, went to cemeteries to visit the graves of loved ones.

"Today, after the ninth month, more than 37 thousand martyrs, more than 87 thousand wounded, and hundreds of thousands of homes were destroyed," Abdulhalim Abu Samra, a displaced Palestinian, told the AP after wrapping up the prayers in Khan Younis. "Our people live in difficult circumstances."

There is also the conflict between rival generals in Sudan that has raged unabated for 14 months. The conflict killed thousands and created the world's largest displacement crisis with over 10 million forced to flee their homes.

Chinese premier promises more pandas and urges Australia to put aside differences

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Chinese Premier Li Qiang's visit to Australia on Sunday focused on positive aspects of the bilateral relationship including shared giant pandas and a rebounding wine trade as he promised a new breeding pair of the rare bears and urged both countries to put aside their differences.

China's most powerful leader after President Xi Jinping arrived late Saturday in Adelaide, the capital of South Australia state, which has produced most of the Australian wine entering China since crippling tariffs were lifted in March that had effectively ended a 1.2 billion Australian dollar (\$790 million) a year trade since 2020.

Li visited Adelaide Zoo, which has been home to China-born giant pandas Wang Wang and Fu Ni since 2009, before he was to have lunch at a restaurant at Adelaide winery Penfolds Magill Estate.

He announced that the zoo would be loaned another two pandas after the pair are due to return to China in November.

"China will soon provide another pair of pandas that are equally beautiful, lively, cute and younger to the Adelaide Zoo, and continue the cooperation on giant pandas between China and Australia," Li said in Mandarin, adding that zoo staff would be invited to "pick a pair."

Li was impressed by the 18-year-old male Wang Wang's appetite and indifference to his high-ranking visitors.

"The panda is very obsessed with eating and doesn't pay attention to us even when we are the people from its hometown visiting," Li said at the panda enclosure.

"It has completely treated here as its second hometown," Li said. "Very pretty, adorable, with charming naivety."

The pair are the only pandas in the Southern Hemisphere and failed to produce offspring in Australia.

Foreign Minister Penny Wong thanked Li for ensuring that pandas would remain the zoo's star attraction.

"It's good for the economy, it's good for South Australian jobs, it's good for tourism, and it is a signal of goodwill, and we thank you," Wong said.

Tom King, the managing director of Penfolds, one of Australia's oldest wineries, told Chinese state media ahead of Li's arrival that such visits helped strengthen economic and cultural ties.

"It's pleasing to see the stabilizing of relations between the Australian and Chinese governments, including regular high-level visits between the two countries," King was quoted as saying by the Global Times newspaper last week.

Li's visit is the first to Australia by a Chinese premier in seven years and marks an improvement in relations since Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's center-left Labor Party was elected in 2022.

Li noted that Albanese in November was the first Australian prime minister to visit China since 2016.

"China-Australia relations were back on track after a period of twists and turns, generating tangible benefits to the people of both countries," Li said, according to a translation released by the Chinese Embassy in Australia on Sunday.

"History has proven that mutual respect, seeking common ground while shelving differences and mutually beneficial cooperation are the valuable experience in growing China-Australia relations, and must be upheld and carried forward," Li added.

Hundreds of pro-China demonstrators, human rights protesters and democracy activists gathered outside the zoo before Li's visit.

Among the protesters was former Hong Kong lawmaker Ted Hui, who fled to Australia three years ago to avoid a prison sentence for his activism. He said the panda offer was a cynical move to soften China's image and to distract from the government's human rights failings.

"It's a public relations move by the Chinese regime and, disappointingly, the Australian government is reciprocating by welcoming him and shaking hands," Hui said.

Hui said Li showed cowardice by entering the zoo by a rear entrance while most of the protesters and

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China supporters had gathered at the main entrance. But Hui and other protesters were able to shout slogans at Li from a distance inside the zoo.

China initiated a reset of the relationship after the previous conservative administration's nine years in power ended.

Relations collapsed over legislation that banned covert foreign interference in Australian politics, the exclusion of Chinese-owned telecommunications giant Huawei from rolling out the national 5G network due to security concerns, and Australia's call for an independent investigation into the causes of and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Beijing imposed an array of official and unofficial trade blocks in 2020 on a range of Australian exports including coal, wine, beef, barley and wood that cost up to AU\$20 billion (\$13 billion) a year.

All the trade bans have now been lifted except for Australian live lobster exports. Trade Minister Don Farrell predicted that impediment would also be lifted soon after Li's visit with Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao.

Wong said Li's visit was the result of "two years of very deliberate, very patient work by this government to bring about a stabilization of the relationship and to work towards the removal of trade impediments."

"We will cooperate where we can, we will disagree where we must and we will engage in our national interest," Wong told Australian Broadcasting Corp. before joining Li for lunch.

Li's agenda becomes more contentious after he left Adelaide late Sunday for meetings in the national capital, Canberra, on Monday and a Chinese-controlled lithium processing plant in resource-rich Western Australia state on Tuesday.

Albanese has said he will raise with Li during an annual leaders' meeting recent clashes between the two countries' militaries in the South China Sea and Yellow Sea that Australia argues endangered Australian personnel.

Albanese will also raise the fate of China-born Australian democracy blogger Yang Hengjun, who was given a suspended death sentence by a Beijing court in February. Australia is also concerned for Hong Kong-Australia dual national Gordon Ng, who was among 14 pro-democracy activists convicted by a Hong Kong court last month for national security offenses.

Li's visit to Tianqi Lithium Energy Australia's processing plant south of the Western Australia capital of Perth will underscore China's interest in investing in critical minerals. The plant produces battery-grade lithium hydroxide for electric vehicles.

Australia shares the United States' concerns over China's dominance in the critical minerals, which are essential components in the world's transition to renewable energy sources.

Citing Australia's national interests, Treasurer Jim Chalmers recently ordered five Chinese-linked companies to divest their shares in the rare earth mining company, Northern Minerals.

Asked if Chinese companies could invest in processing critical minerals in Australia, Wong replied that Australia's foreign investment framework was "open to all."

"We want to grow our critical minerals industry," Wong said.

Australia is the second stop of Li's tour after New Zealand, and will end in Malaysia.

Israel's army says it will pause daytime fighting along a route in southern Gaza to help ramp up aid

By JOSEF FEDERMAN, WAFAA SHURAFI and JULIA FRANKEL Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's military announced on Sunday that it would pause fighting throughout daytime hours along a route in southern Gaza to free up a backlog of humanitarian aid deliveries destined for desperate Palestinians enduring a humanitarian crisis sparked by the war, now in its ninth month.

The "tactical pause" announced by the military, which applies to about 12 kilometers (7.4 miles) of road in the Rafah area, falls far short of a complete cease-fire in the beleaguered territory that has been sought by the international community, including Israel's top ally, the United States. If it holds, the limited halt in fighting could help address some of the overwhelming needs of Palestinians that have surged even more

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in recent weeks with Israel's incursion into Rafah.

The army said the pause would begin at 8 a.m. (0500 GMT) and remain in effect until 7 p.m. (1600 GMT). It said the pauses would take place every day until further notice.

The pause is aimed at allowing aid trucks to reach the nearby Israel-controlled Kerem Shalom crossing, the main entry point for incoming aid, and travel safely to the Salah a-Din highway, a main north-south road, the military said. The crossing has suffered from a bottleneck since Israeli ground troops moved into Rafah in early May.

COGAT, the Israeli military body that oversees aid distribution in Gaza, said the route would increase the flow of aid to other parts of Gaza, including Khan Younis, Muwasi and central Gaza. Hard-hit northern Gaza, which was an early target in the war, is being served by goods entering from a crossing in the north.

The military said the pause came after discussions with the United Nations and international aid agencies.

Aid agencies, including the U.N., did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The pause along the southern route comes as Israel and Hamas are weighing the latest proposal for a cease-fire, a plan that was detailed by President Joe Biden in the administration's most concentrated diplomatic push for a halt to the fighting and the release of hostages taken by the militant group. While Biden described the proposal as an Israeli one, Israel has not fully embraced it and Hamas has demanded changes that appear unacceptable to Israel.

Israel's eight-month military offensive against the Hamas militant group, sparked by the group's Oct. 7 attack, has plunged Gaza into a humanitarian crisis, with the U.N. reporting widespread hunger and hundreds of thousands of people on the brink of famine. The international community has urged Israel to do more to ease the crunch and has said the ongoing fighting, including in Rafah, has complicated aid deliveries throughout the war.

From May 6 until June 6, the U.N. received an average of 68 trucks of aid a day, according to figures from the U.N. humanitarian office, known as OCHA. That was down from 168 a day in April and far below the 500 trucks a day that aid groups say are needed.

The flow of aid in southern Gaza declined just as the humanitarian need grew. More than 1 million Palestinians, many of whom had already been displaced, fled Rafah after the invasion, crowding into other parts of southern and central Gaza. Most now languish in ramshackle tent camps, using trenches as latrines, with open sewage in the streets.

COGAT says there are no restrictions on the entry of trucks. It says more than 8,600 trucks of all kinds, both aid and commercial, entered Gaza from all crossings from May 2 to June 13, an average of 201 a day. But much of that aid has piled up at the crossings and not reached its final destination.

A spokesman for COGAT, Shimon Freedman, said it was the U.N.'s fault that its cargos stacked up on the Gaza side of Kerem Shalom. He said the agencies have "fundamental logistical problems that they have not fixed," especially a lack of trucks.

The U.N. denies such allegations. It says the fighting between Israel and Hamas often makes it too dangerous for U.N. trucks inside Gaza to travel to Kerem Shalom, which is right next to Israel's border.

It also says the pace of deliveries has been slowed because the Israeli military must authorize drivers to travel to the site, a system Israel says was designed for the drivers' safety. Due to a lack of security, aid trucks in some cases have also been looted by crowds as they moved along Gaza's roads.

The new arrangement aims to reduce the need for coordinating deliveries by providing an 11-hour uninterrupted window each day for trucks to move in and out of the crossing.

It was not immediately clear whether the army would provide security to protect the aid trucks as they moved along the highway.

Singapore rushes to clean-up oil slick after boat hits stationary fuel supply ship

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — An oil spill caused by a dredger boat hitting a stationary cargo tanker has blackened part of Singapore's southern coastline, including the popular resort island of Sentosa, and sparked concerns it may threaten marine wildlife as a clean-up operation was underway Sunday.

The Netherlands-flagged dredger Vox Maxima struck the Singaporean fuel supply ship Marine Honor on Friday. It damaged the cargo tank on Marine Honor, which leaked oil into the sea.

Singapore's Maritime and Port Authority said in a statement late Saturday the oil leak from the vessel had been contained, and that the oil that escaped from the damaged tanker had been treated with dispersants.

But due to the tidal current, it said the treated oil had landed along shorelines including at Sentosa and other southern islands, a nature reserve and a public beach park. Sentosa, which attracts millions of visitors annually, houses one of Singapore's two casinos, golf courses and Southeast Asia's only Universal Studios theme park.

Part of the beachfront at the public park and at the nature reserve have been closed to facilitate clean-up efforts, it said. The Sentosa beach will remain open to the public but sea activities and swimming are prohibited.

On Sunday, workers in orange suits were seen scooping up sand in a clean-up operation at an empty beach in Sentosa. Black water washed up on the oil-stained shore.

Authorities have deployed 18 crafts for the clean-up efforts and laid close to 1,500 meters of container booms, temporary floating barriers to trap the oil spill.

"More will be laid over the next few days to prevent further spread of oil onto the shore, and facilitate the recovery of the trapped oil off the affected shorelines and lagoons to prevent them from going back to sea," the statement said.

Conservationists and biologists are monitoring the full extent of the damage on marine and wildlife.

Local conservation group Marine Stewards reportedly said there were photos of dead fish, otters and kingfishers covered in oil slick.

Group founder Sue Ye told Singapore Straits Times that oil spills smother and suffocate fish, birds and marine animals that have to go to the surface for air, such as turtles and dolphins.

Clooney and Roberts help Biden raise \$28 million at a fundraiser featuring dire warnings about Trump

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE and WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Some of Hollywood's brightest stars headlined a glitzy fundraiser for President Joe Biden on Saturday night, helping raise what his reelection campaign said was \$28 million and hoping to energize would-be supporters for a November election that they argued was among the most important in the nation's history.

George Clooney, Julia Roberts and Barbra Streisand were among those who took the stage at the 7,100-seat Peacock Theater in Los Angeles. Late-night host Jimmy Kimmel interviewed Biden and former President Barack Obama, who both stressed the need to defeat former President Donald Trump in a race that's expected to be exceedingly close.

During more than half an hour of discussion, Kimmel asked if the country was suffering from amnesia about the presumptive Republican nominee, to which Biden responded, "all we gotta do is remember what it was like" when Trump was in the White House.

Luminaries from the entertainment world have increasingly lined up to help Biden's campaign, and just how important the event was to his reelection bid could be seen in the Democratic president's decision to fly through the night across nine time zones, from the G7 summit in southern Italy to Southern California, to attend.

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He also missed a summit in Switzerland about ways to end Russia's war in Ukraine, instead dispatching Vice President Kamala Harris who made a whirlwind trip of her own to represent the United States there, a stark reminder of the delicate balance between geopolitics and Biden's bid to win a second term.

Further laying bare the political implications were police in riot gear outside the theater, ready for protests from pro-Palestinian activists angry about his administration's handling of Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza.

The event featured singing by Jack Black and Sheryl Lee Ralph, and actors Kathryn Hahn and Jason Bateman introduced Kimmel, who introduced Biden and Obama. The comedian deadpanned, "I was told I was getting introduced by Batman, not Bateman."

But he quickly pivoted to far more serious topics, saying that "so much is at stake in this election" and listing women's rights, health care and noting that "even the ballot is on the ballot" in a reference to the Biden administration's calls to expand voting rights.

Kimmel asked the president what he was most proud of accomplishing, and Biden said he thought the administration's approach to the economy "is working."

"We have the strongest economy in the world today," Biden said, adding "we try to give ordinary people an even chance."

Trump spent Saturday campaigning in Detroit and criticized Biden's handling of the economy and inflation. The president was fundraising "with out-of-touch elitist Hollywood celebrities," Trump campaign spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt said.

But Biden told the crowd in California that "we passed every major piece of legislation we attempted to get done." And Obama expressed admiration for sweeping legislation on health care, public works, the environment, technology manufacturing, gun safety and other major initiatives that the administration of his former vice president has overseen.

"What we're seeing now is a byproduct of in 2016. There were a whole bunch of folks who, for whatever reason, sat out," said Obama, who, like Biden wore a dark suit and a white shirt open at the collar.

Obama, speaking about the Supreme Court, added that "hopefully we have learned our lesson, because these elections matter in very concrete ways."

Trump nominated three justices who helped overturn Roe v. Wade, the landmark decision guaranteeing a constitutional right to an abortion. The audience expressed its displeasure at the mention of Roe, to which Obama responded, "don't hiss, vote." That was a play on his common refrain prioritizing voting over booing.

Biden said the person elected president in November could get the chance to nominate two new justices, though a second Biden term probably wouldn't drastically overhaul a court that currently features a 6-3 conservative majority.

He also suggested if Trump wins back the White House, "one of the scariest parts" was the Supreme Court and how the high court has "never been this far out of step."

Biden also referenced reports that an upside-down flag, a symbol associated with Trump's false claims of election fraud, was flown outside the home of Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito in January 2021. He worried Saturday that, if Trump is reelected, "He's going to appoint two more who fly their flags upside down."

Kimmel brought his special brand of humor to the event. At one point he asked how can a president get back at a talk-show host who makes fun of him on TV every night.

"Ever hear of Delta Force?" Biden responded, referring to the Army special operations unit.

Earlier in the program, Kimmel noted Biden's campaign promise to restore the soul of America and said "lately it seems we might need an exorcism." Then he asked Biden, "Is that why you visited the pope?" Biden and Pope Francis met in Italy on Friday.

Biden's campaign said it was still counting, but Saturday night's gathering had taken in at least \$28 million, more money than any event for a Democratic candidate in history.

That meant outpacing the president's fundraiser in March at Radio City Music Hall in New York, which raised \$26 million and featured late-night host Stephen Colbert interviewing Biden, Obama and former President Bill Clinton.

Biden held an early lead in the campaign money race against Trump, but the former president has gained

ground since he formally locked up the Republican nomination.

Trump outpaced Biden's New York event by raking in \$50.5 million at an April gathering of major donors at the Florida home of billionaire investor John Paulson. The former president's campaign and the Republican National Committee announced they raised a whopping \$141 million in May, padded by tens of millions of dollars in contributions that flowed in after Trump's guilty verdict in his criminal hush money trial.

That post-conviction bump came after Trump and the Republican Party announced collecting \$76 million in April, far exceeding Biden and the Democrats' \$51 million for the month.

Oilers rout the Panthers 8-1 in Game 4 to avoid being swept in the Stanley Cup Final

By STEPHEN WHYNO AP Hockey Writer

EDMONTON, Alberta (AP) — Connor McDavid scored, "La Bamba" played in the Edmonton Oilers locker room and the Stanley Cup Final is heading back to Florida after a statement win.

McDavid scored his first goal of the series as part of a four-point performance, Stuart Skinner was spectacular in making 32 saves and the Oilers routed the Florida Panthers 8-1 in Game 4 on Saturday night, chasing Sergei Bobrovsky and avoiding a sweep. Game 5 is Tuesday in Sunrise.

"It's just one win," McDavid said. "That's all it is, whether you score eight or you score one. It's just one win. We've got to go to Florida and do a job and drag them back to Alberta."

The Panthers' party will have to wait after a complete meltdown from a team with many players who have never been this close to hoisting the Cup. Bobrovsky was part of that, getting pulled five minutes into the second period after allowing five goals on 16 shots — more than he gave up in the first three games of the series combined.

"It had nothing to do with 'Bob,'" Panthers winger Matthew Tkachuk said. "It was more of a wake-up call to everybody. We know he's going to come back better than ever."

Whether it was a last-gasp effort in front of a jacked up home crowd hoping to see the start of a historic comeback or the breakthrough coach Kris Knoblauch has been foreshadowing, the Oilers from Skinner in net out were dominant in every facet of a game they needed to win to keep the NHL season going.

It started with Mattias Janmark scoring 3:11 in on a 2-on-1 rush with Connor Brown. Janmark staked Edmonton to a two-goal lead less than five minutes later, setting up Adam Henrique for his second career goal in the Cup final 12 years after the game-winner for New Jersey that also prevented a sweep in the final.

The odds remain long for the Oilers, given that the 1942 Toronto Maple Leafs are the only team to erase a 3-0 deficit at this stage of the playoffs and only four teams total have ever done it.

"Obviously that was a massive win, but we still know what the circumstances are," said Dylan Holloway who had two goals after not scoring since the second round. "We're still down 3-1. The biggest thing for us is kind of just to forget that and use it, bottle it kind of, keep notice that can do it but just move forward."

But the belief will certainly be tangible after breaking out offensively and building a lead rather than holding on to protect it, a quality they had in spades through the first three rounds to win the Western Conference. Florida cutting its deficit to one on Vladimir Tarasenko's goal midway through the first period did not cause Edmonton to fold, with Skinner making the most important save of the night on Carter Verhaeghe on a 2-on-1 chance and Holloway answering before intermission.

"He was great," McDavid said of Skinner. "You talk about goaltending and needing timely saves. He made some really timely saves. That was as big a save as you're going to get."

The offense just kept coming. McDavid, the reigning and three-time NHL MVP beat Bobrovsky early in the second and minutes later set up Darnell Nurse for the defenseman's first goal of the playoffs. That sent the goalie known as "Bob" to the bench amid derisive chants of "Sergei! Sergei!" as Anthony Stolarz came in for his postseason debut.

The Panthers, hours after family members arrived for a potential celebration more than 2,500 miles from home, took their frustrations out in a handful of post-whistle scums. One of them gave the Oilers power

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play more target practice, and the unit that came into the final looking nearly automatic and started 0 for 12 made them pay with Ryan Nugent-Hopkins scoring on the 5-on-3 advantage.

"I'm not counting 5 on 3," Florida coach Paul Maurice said.

McDavid with three assists now has 32 on this run, breaking Wayne Gretzky's record from 1988 for the most in a single postseason. He had more points Saturday night than in the first three games of the series combined, and he was the Oilers' leading scorer while other top players were quiet.

"He just continues to impress everyone," Knoblauch said. "It was a great performance."

At even strength and on the power play, another adjustment by Knoblauch paid off as the playoffs of Edmonton's rookie coach pushing all the right buttons continued. He moved Nugent-Hopkins down to play with Leon Draisaitl, and each of the first two lines scored a big goal.

The outburst and a comfortable lead got fans going with everything from "We want seven!" to a singalong of Bon Jovi's "It's My Life." They got it when Holloway scored with under six minutes left and some extra when Ryan McLeod added the exclamation point with the eighth goal with 3:19 on the clock.

Skinner also heard "STUUUU!" plenty as he had his best game of the final, denying the Panthers on several high-quality scoring chances as they tried to get back into it.

Confidence in the possibility of extending the series that was evident inside the home locker room extended around downtown Edmonton. A fresh sign reading, "BELIEVE" was added to a window around the corner from Rogers Place on Saturday.

Inside, one fan held up a sign saying, "So you're saying there's a chance?" And now the Oilers have another chance to put pressure on the Panthers with the series returning to South Florida.

Trump challenges Biden to a cognitive test but confuses the name of the doctor who tested him

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump on Saturday night suggested President Joe Biden "should have to take a cognitive test," only to confuse who administered the test to him in the next sentence.

The former president and presumptive Republican nominee referred to Texas Republican Rep. Ronny Jackson, who was the White House physician for part of his presidency, as "Ronny Johnson." The moment came as Trump was questioning Biden's mental acuity, something he often does on the campaign trail and social media.

"He doesn't even know what the word 'inflation' means. I think he should take a cognitive test like I did," the former president said of Biden during a speech at a convention of Turning Point Action in Detroit.

Seconds later, he continued, "Doc Ronny Johnson. Does everyone know Ronny Johnson, congressman from Texas? He was the White House doctor, and he said I was the healthiest president, he feels, in history, so I liked him very much indeed immediately."

Jackson was elected to Congress in 2021 and is one of Trump's most vociferous defenders on Capitol Hill.

Trump, who turned 78 on Friday, has made questioning whether the 81-year-old Biden is up for a second term a centerpiece of his campaign. But online critics quickly seized on his Saturday night gaffe, with the Biden campaign — which has long fought off criticism about the Democratic president's verbal missteps — posting a clip of the moment minutes later.

Trump took the cognitive test in 2018 at his own request, Jackson told reporters at the time. The exam is designed to detect early signs of memory loss and other mild cognitive impairment.

The Montreal Cognitive Assessment that Trump took includes remembering a list of spoken words; listening to a list of random numbers and repeating them backward; naming as many words that begin with, say, the letter F as possible within a minute; accurately drawing a cube; and describing concrete ways that two objects — like a train and a bicycle — are alike.

Trump later said that he had to remember and accurately recite a list of words in order: "Person. Woman. Man. Camera. TV."

During the same speech in Detroit, Trump also referenced a video clip widely circulated online in Repub-

lican circles where Biden is seen during the recently concluded Group of Seven summit in Italy watching skydivers land with flags from different nations.

A cropped version of the video shows Biden stepping away from the leaders, turning his back and walking in the other direction. He flashes a thumbs-up but it's not clear who he is gesturing to. A more complete angle of the same scene, however, shows that the president had turned to face a skydiver who has landed.

Trump nonetheless seized on the video clip, falsely describing Biden turning around "to look at trees," drawing laughter and hoots from the crowd.

The Biden campaign issued a statement dismissing the clip as misleadingly cropped and accusing those disseminating it as "tampering with the video to make up lies."

Toyota shareholders demand vote against chairman Toyoda as automaker embroiled in testing scandal

By YURI KAGEYAMA AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Toyota's chairman Akio Toyoda will be facing some disgruntled shareholders this week, as two major proxy groups demand a vote against keeping the grandson of the founder on its board.

The vote expected at the June 18 annual shareholders meeting comes after Toyota apologized recently over fraudulent certification tests for vehicles, a major embarrassment for a company that prides itself on a reputation for excellent quality. The raft of problems at Japanese automakers including Toyota are said not to involve any safety problems and no recalls were announced. But Toyota suspended production of three models produced by group companies in Japan.

Toyota's stock prices had tripled over the last five years to nearly 3,800 yen (\$24) before cascading downward amid its latest troubles. Its shares are now trading at above 3,000 yen (\$20) — a loss of about 3 trillion Japanese yen (\$18 billion) in market value.

Institutional Shareholder Services, majority owned by the German capital market company Deutsche Borse Group, which advises investors, said in its proxy report that Toyoda "should be considered ultimately accountable."

It noted his promises for change did not involve reshuffling of the board. While Toyota said it plans to communicate better with workers on the ground, that likely wasn't enough to prevent a recurrence of problems with cheating on testing, ISS said.

"The company's propensity to preserve its corporate culture is in fact suspected, and Toyoda should be held accountable for that," it said.

ISS is not opposing appointments of other board members, including Toyota Chief Executive Koji Sato, who took up his post in 2023.

The past year has brought a flurry of scandals involving improper checks on vehicles, including collision tests, at group companies Daihatsu Motor Co., which makes small models, truckmaker Hino Motors and Toyota Industries Corp., a manufacturer of forklifts and other machinery.

Japanese officials say such violations were also found at Honda Motor Co., Mazda Motor Corp. and Suzuki Motor Corp.

Another major shareholder, proxy advisory company Glass Lewis & Co. recommended voting against the reappointment of Toyoda and Shigeru Hayakawa, another top executive.

"More specifically, we believe that Mr. Toyoda holds responsibility for failing to ensure that the Group maintained appropriate internal controls and for the failure to ensure appropriate governance measures were implemented at Group companies," it said in its proxy report.

"Moreover, given the widespread occurrence of issues throughout the Toyota Group, this further raises questions concerning the corporate culture which has developed under the leadership of Mr. Toyoda."

Hayakawa oversaw appointments of board members, and more independent board members should be added, according to Glass Lewis, which is based in San Francisco. It also recommended voting against a proposal on lobbying by Toyota on climate change, stressing a need for more disclosure.

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Under Toyoda, the automaker has pushed a “multi-pathway” approach to ecological vehicles, emphasizing hybrids, which have both a gasoline engine and electric motor, and using hydrogen for fuel instead of focusing on battery electric vehicles that some ecologists favor for cutting auto emissions.

Toyoda is unlikely to be ousted at the general shareholders’ meeting, to be held at the company’s headquarters in the central Japanese city named after the maker of the Prius hybrid, Lexus luxury models and Camry sedan.

The biggest of Toyota’s nearly 1 million shareholders are Japanese companies such as Japanese banks and financial institutions that are unlikely to challenge the automaker. Toyota Industries, a group company, is the No. 2 shareholder.

Tightly held cross-shareholdings among affiliates, long the rule in Japan, are gradually unraveling but longstanding loyalties are likely strong enough to keep Toyoda in his post. Last year, he won re-election with nearly 85% of the vote, although that was down from 96% in 2022.

In a recent report on Toyota, Kazunori Maki, an auto analyst at SMBC Nikko Securities, noted that the shipments Toyota suspended affected just 1% or 2% of its global sales.

He also hinted that factory workers might have skirted rules seen as meticulous but not vital for safety.

In the fiscal year ended in March, Toyota’s profits doubled from the previous year, to 4.9 trillion yen (\$31.9 billion), exceeding its own projections, as vehicle sales surged and a weak Japanese yen inflated overseas earnings.

Even though Toyota has lagged in shifting to EVs, the company is the world’s leading automaker, with sales of 9.4 million vehicles in the fiscal year that ended in March.

The company is doing well, said Aaron Ho, an equity analyst at CFRA Research. The recent scandal would make only “a small dent,” he said. “So there are no fundamental issues. We merely think that since production is being halted — for likely a few months, we estimate — deliveries will be affected,” he told The Associated Press.

“We really do not see any deterioration in the company’s culture or how the company is being managed.”

In his apology over the latest problems, Toyoda referred to how he had faced a massive recall scandal in the U.S., shortly after becoming chief executive in 2009, over what was called “unintended acceleration.”

Toyoda was questioned by Congress, and apologized. This time, he appeared to be reassuring himself as well as the public that Toyota had gone through worse, and survived.

“We are not a perfect company. But if we see anything wrong, we will take a step back and keep trying to correct it,” he said.

Trump blasts immigrants for taking jobs as he courts voters at a Black church, MAGA event in Detroit

By STEVE PEOPLES and JOEY CAPPELLETTI Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Donald Trump blamed immigrants for stealing jobs and government resources as he courted separate groups of Black voters and hardcore conservatives in battleground Michigan on Saturday.

The Republican former president also made several new baseless claims attacking the nation’s voting system.

But Trump’s fiery comments on illegal immigration, long a staple in his unapologetic message, marked a connecting theme in downtown Detroit as he sought to stitch together a delicate political coalition at both a Black church and a group known to attract white supremacists.

“The people coming across the border — all those millions of people — they’re inflicting tremendous harm to our Black population and to our Hispanic population,” Trump told a cheering crowd of thousands of conservative activists packed into a vast convention hall.

“They’re not human beings. They’re animals,” he said later in referencing members of violent immigrant gangs.

Trump’s diverse weekend schedule underscores the evolving political forces shaping the presidential

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election this fall as he tries to deny Democratic President Joe Biden a second term.

Few states may matter more in November than Michigan, which Biden carried by less than 3 percentage points four years ago. And few voting groups matter more to Democrats than African Americans, who made up the backbone of Biden's political base in 2020. But now, less than five months before Election Day, Black voters are expressing modest signs of disappointment with the 81-year-old Democrat.

Trump, who turned 78 on Friday, is fighting to take advantage of his apparent opening.

His crowd was far smaller, but also warmly receptive, when he visited the 180 Church earlier in the day. Derelict vehicles sat outside the modest brick building with "Black Americans for Trump" signs affixed. Rap music and barbecue smoke wafted from a pre-event gathering organized by the Black Conservative Federation group.

"It's a very important area for us," Trump told the church crowd, which included a significant number of white people. He promised to return "some Sunday" for a sermon.

He argued that the Black community "is being hurt" by immigrants in the country illegally.

"They're invading your jobs," he said.

Trump offered a similar message later in the day while addressing the "People's Convention" of Turning Point Action, a group that the Anti-Defamation League says has been linked to a variety of extremists.

Roughly 24 hours before the former president spoke, well-known white supremacist Nick Fuentes entered the hall surrounded by a group of cheering supporters. Security quickly escorted him out, but Fuentes created political problems for Trump after attending a private lunch with the former president and the rapper formerly known as Kanye West at Trump's Florida estate in 2022.

Turning Point has emerged as a force in GOP politics in the Trump era, particularly among his "Make America Great Again" movement, despite the Anti-Defamation League's warning that the group "continues to attract racists."

"Numerous individuals associated with the group have made bigoted statements about the Black community, the LGBTQ community and other groups," the ADL, an international anti-hate group, wrote in a background memo. "While TPUSA (Turning Point USA) leaders say they reject white supremacist ideology, known white nationalists have attended their events."

Turning Point spokesperson Andrew Kolvet dismissed the ADL's characterization as "smears and lies." He added that Turning Point has been blocking Fuentes from attending its events for "years."

"The ADL is a scourge on America, which sows poison and division. They've completely lost the plot," Kolvet said, describing the ADL's criticism as "a badge of honor."

Meanwhile, Democrats offered a competing perspective from afar.

"Donald Trump is so dangerous for Michigan and dangerous for America and dangerous for Black people," said Michigan Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist II, who is African American. He called it "offensive" for Trump to address the Turning Point conference, which was taking place at the same convention center that was "the epicenter of their steal the election effort."

Indeed, dozens of angry Trump loyalists chanting "Stop the count!" descended on the TCF Center, now named Huntington Place, the day after the 2020 presidential election as absentee ballots were being counted. Local media captured scenes of protesters outside and in the lobby. Police prevented them from entering the counting area.

The protests occurred after Trump had tweeted that "they are finding Biden votes all over" in several states, including Michigan.

The false notion that Biden benefited from widespread voter fraud has been widely debunked by voting officials in both parties, the court system and members of Trump's former administration. Still, Trump continues to promote such misinformation, which echoed throughout the conservative convention over the weekend.

Speaking from the main stage, Turning Point founder and CEO Charlie Kirk falsely described the conference location as "the scene of a crime."

Pitching the conversation forward, Trump raised the possibility of election fraud this fall.

"We need to watch the vote. We need to guard the vote," Trump charged. "It's so corrupt, the whole

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election process.”

Such extreme rhetoric does not appear to have hurt Trump’s standing with Black voters.

Among Black adults, Biden’s approval has dropped from 94% when he started his term in January 2021 to just 55%, according to an Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll published in March.

About 8 in 10 Black voters have an unfavorable opinion of Trump, with roughly two-thirds saying they have a “very unfavorable” view of him, according to an AP-NORC poll conducted in June.

Trump won 8% of the Black vote in 2020, according to AP VoteCast. And in what is expected to be a close election, even a modest shift could be consequential.

Omar Mitchell, a Detroit restaurant owner who participated in the church gathering, said he supports Trump because “money was pumping” when he was president.

“In the old days, how we grew up was just because you’re Black means you’re a Democrat,” Mitchell said. “That’s out the door nowadays.”

Trump argues he can pull in more Black voters due to his economic and border security message, and that his felony indictments make him more relatable. At the church on Saturday afternoon, he repeatedly vowed to “bring back the auto industry” while also noting, “The crime is most rampant right here and African American communities.”

Kimberly Taylor, who was invited on stage at the church by the Trump campaign, thanked Trump for “coming to the hood,” while pastor Lorenzo Sewell said Biden attended an NAACP dinner in the city “but never came to the hood.”

The pastor asked Trump how to “keep the Black dollar in the Black community.”

The Black community, Trump said, “needs to stop the crime.”

Much of US braces for extreme weather, from southern heat wave to possible snow in the Rockies

By The Associated Press undefined

After days of intense flooding in Florida, that state and many others are bracing for an intense heat wave, while the Pacific Northwest will experience unseasonably cold weather and there is a potential for late-season snow in the Rocky Mountains early next week.

The chaotic weather map includes the possibility of severe thunderstorms developing in between hot and cold fronts. Forecasters said the colliding fronts could lead to areas of flash flooding between eastern Nebraska and northern Wisconsin on Saturday night, as well as strong storms across parts of eastern Montana into North and South Dakota.

Meanwhile a plume of tropical moisture will reach the central Gulf Coast during the next couple of days, with heavy rain expected to start Monday morning, according to the National Weather Service.

“They’re all related,” said David Roth, a forecaster with the National Weather Prediction Center in College Park, Maryland. “This heat that’s going to be building over the Midwest and the Northeast is because we have an unusually amplified weather pattern for June.”

A trough of low pressure in the Northwest brought scattered thunderstorms and hail to Seattle and other cities in western Washington in the afternoon, and frost warnings prompted gardeners in northern Idaho to cover delicate plants for the weekend.

In Phoenix, temperatures reached 111 degrees Fahrenheit by 5 p.m. and were predicted to climb a few degrees higher. Lee Franklin, a spokesperson for the Phoenix Public Library, said more than 5,000 visitors had sought respite at library cooling centers so far, including a new, 24-hour one at the Burton Barr Library.

“We definitely see a need and a use of our heat relief effort on these high-heat days,” Franklin said.

Forecasters said the threat of heavy rains in Florida continues to dissipate, but some thunderstorms could cause local flooding given the already saturated soil. Some areas between Miami and Fort Lauderdale were left underwater in recent days as storms dumped up to 20 inches (50 centimeters) in southern parts of the state.

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The damaging no-name storm system coincided with the early June start of hurricane season, which this year is forecast to be among the most active in recent memory amid concerns that climate change is increasing storm intensity.

Across much of the southern parts of the country, temperatures were rising Saturday.

In Atlanta, where highs were forecast to near 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) both weekend days, city officials opened a cooling center to provide relief. The city also postponed a "Family and Friends Field Day" due to the heat.

And in the west Texas city of El Paso, Saturday highs were expected to approach 105 F (40.6 C), and the National Weather Service issued a heat advisory through Monday morning for the region. The city has opened five cooling centers that will operate daily until further notice.

Though Arizona is entering its three-month monsoon season, when a shift in wind patterns typically pulls moisture in from the tropical coast of Mexico, no rain is forecast for most of the coming week.

"No chances of rain across the state," National Weather Service meteorologist Ted Whittock said, while noting that there is a 30% chance of showers in southeastern Arizona next Friday.

An atmospheric river of moist air is getting funneled into the upper Midwest, causing an unusual "moderate risk of excessive rainfall" from Sunday into next week in Minnesota, Roth said.

"They don't get heavy rain events like this very often. We're forecasting up to 7 inches in Minnesota — it can't be understated how unusual this is," Roth said. The last time the state tallied that much precipitation in one event was in 2008, he said.

In Tennessee, tens of thousands of revelers at the Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival braved a hot, sunny weekend to take in more than 150 performances at the 700-acre farm campground and concert venue that hosts the annual event. While medical crews treated various heat-related conditions, some fans constructed elaborate canopy and tent combinations for shade. Others had their sunscreen confiscated upon entry because of restrictions on full-size bottles and aerosol cans, The Tennessean reported.

Temperatures in the Mid-Atlantic and New England will likely peak in the mid- to upper 90s next week, which is "nothing to sneeze at even in the middle of the summer, let alone this early in the summer," National Weather Service meteorologist William Churchill said. The high humidity will make it feel even hotter in many places, he added.

The expected highs in the Northeast could set daily and even monthly records over the next several days, Roth said. Even northern Maine has a very low chance of reaching 100 degrees, he said.

"The town of Caribou in northern Maine usually counts how many 80-degree days they have in a year. The fact that they have any chance of reaching 100 is very unusual," Roth said.

Last year the U.S. had the most heat waves — abnormally hot weather lasting more than two days — since 1936. In the South and Southwest, last year was the worst on record, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

While most of the country bakes, parts of Montana have been placed under winter storm watches with a potential for wet snow lasting into Monday night.

Churchill said the northwestern cold front is connected to the heat wave because one extreme is often accompanied by the other.

Heavy rain and sporadic thunderstorms were expected in western Washington into Saturday evening. In Edmonds, where an outdoor art festival was underway, the National Weather Service warned in the early afternoon that a stronger thunderstorm was headed in.

Hikers and other outdoor enthusiasts in the state's Cascade Mountains and Montana's Rocky Mountains were also likely to see snow at lower elevations than normal. The National Weather Service issued a winter weather watch for north-central Idaho and western Montana from Sunday through Tuesday.

The agency warned of a hypothermia risk and said backcountry roads could become impassible due to the expected snowfall and possible downed trees and branches.

As much as 6 inches (15 centimeters) of heavy, wet snow was expected in the mountains around Missoula, Montana, and as much as 20 inches (51 centimeters) was predicted for higher elevations around Glacier National Park.

Outraged Brazilian women stage protests against bill to equate late abortions with homicide

By ELÉONORE HUGHES and GABRIELA SÁ PESSOA Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — Thousands of demonstrators took to the streets of Sao Paulo on Saturday as protests sweep across Brazil in opposition to a bill that would further criminalize abortions. If passed, the law would equate the termination of a pregnancy after 22 weeks with homicide.

The bill, proposed by conservative lawmakers and heading for a vote in the lower house, would also apply in cases of rape. Critics say those who seek an abortion so late are mostly child rape victims, as their pregnancies tend to be detected later.

To rally opposition, rights' groups created the 'A child is not a mother' campaign that has flooded social media. Placards, stickers and banners emblazoned with the slogan have abounded during demonstrations. And viral visuals depicting women in red cloaks compare Brazil to Gilead, the theocratic patriarchy Margaret Atwood created in her dystopian novel, "The Handmaid's Tale."

About 10,000 people, mostly women, filled several blocks of Sao Paulo's main boulevard on Saturday afternoon, organizers estimated. It was the biggest demonstration yet, following events in Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia, Florianopolis, Recife, Manaus, and other cities. Many wore green clothes and scarves, a common sight in women's rights mobilizations across Latin America.

Marli Gavioli, 65, has mostly refrained from protesting since demonstrations in the 1980s that called for the end of the military dictatorship, but she told The Associated Press she's too outraged to remain home.

"I couldn't stay out of this, or I would regret it too much. We are being whipped from all sides, us women. It's past time we do something," she said.

Brazil only permits abortion in cases of rape if there is an evident risk to the mother's life or if the fetus has no functioning brain. Aside from those exceptions, Brazil's penal code imposes between one and three years jail time for women who end a pregnancy. Some Brazilian women fly abroad in order to obtain abortions.

If the bill becomes law, the sentence would rise to between six and 20 years when an abortion is performed after 22 weeks. Critics have highlighted that would mean convicted rapists could receive lesser sentences than their victims.

Experts say that late access to abortion reflects inequalities in health care. Children, poor women, Black women and those living in rural areas are particularly at risk.

"We cannot be sentenced to prison for having suffered a rape and not receiving support and care," Talita Rodrigues, a member of rights' group National Front against the Criminalization of Women and for the Legalization of Abortion, said by phone.

Of the 74,930 people who were victims of rape in Brazil in 2022, 61.4% were under 14 years old, according to a 2023 study of the Brazilian Forum on Public Safety, an independent group that tracks crimes.

"For children, it is common for a pregnancy to be discovered only after 22 weeks," Ivanilda Figueiredo, a professor of law at the State University of Rio de Janeiro, said by phone. For example, they might not know that periods — a sign women aren't pregnant — are monthly, she said.

Among the protesters in downtown Rio on Thursday was Graziela Souza, a 25-year-old student who was sexually assaulted as a child.

"I think it's very important for victims to be present, as much as it hurts," Souza said. "We must speak out and fight against it, because if we stay at home we are going to lose."

Defenders of the bill have argued that abortions at a later stage were unimaginable when Brazil's penal code was adopted in 1940, which explains why there is currently no time limit. Had it been envisioned, they argue, it would be considered infanticide.

The bill's author, lawmaker and Evangelical pastor Sóstenes Cavalcante, declined an interview request from the AP.

On Wednesday, the lower house Speaker Arthur Lira rushed through a procedure to fast-track the bill in under 30 seconds, with many lawmakers reportedly unaware it was taking place. The maneuver allows

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the plenary to vote without the bill first clearing committees. Lira has been a top target for protesters' ire. Signs on Saturday read "What if it happened to your daughter, Lira?" and simply "Lira out."

Conservative lawmakers proposing the bill — who protesters have dubbed 'the rape caucus' — are playing politics, hoping to boost turnout and support from Evangelical voters in October municipal elections, Fernanda Barros dos Santos, a political scientist at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, said by phone. Abortion is a topic of high concern for Christians, who make up a majority of voters in Brazil.

"The bill puts people who are progressive in a very difficult situation, because they lose votes by defending abortion rights," said Figueiredo, the law professor.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's government has been seeking inroads with Evangelicals, a key voting bloc for far-right former president Jair Bolsonaro. Lula beat Bolsonaro in the 2022 presidential election.

"The president sent a letter to Evangelicals in the campaign saying he was against abortion. We want to see if he will veto it. Let's test Lula," Cavalcante, the bill's author, told local news outlet G1 on Tuesday.

First lady Rosângela da Silva, known as Janja, slammed the proposal on social media Friday, saying women and girls who are raped need to be protected, not revictimized. Lula finally weighed in on Saturday, speaking at the G7 in Italy.

"I had five kids, eight grandchildren and a great-grandchild. I'm against abortion. However, since abortion is a reality, we need to treat abortion as a public health issue," he said in a news conference. "And I think it's insanity that someone wants to punish a woman with a sentence that's longer than the criminal who committed the rape."

Although strict abortion laws have long been the norm across the predominantly Roman Catholic region of Latin America, feminist movements have gained momentum in recent years and delivered successive victories for abortion-rights campaigners. Colombia's Supreme Court decriminalized abortion in 2022, following a similar breakthrough ruling by Mexico. Argentina's Congress legalized abortion in 2020, and a few years earlier Chile rolled back a strict ban.

In the U.S., the Supreme Court on Thursday unanimously preserved access to a medication that was used in nearly two-thirds of all abortions in the country last year, in the court's first abortion decision since conservative justices overturned *Roe v. Wade* two years ago.

Last September, Brazil's top court opened a session on decriminalization of abortion. Former Chief Justice Rosa Weber, now retired, voted in favor. Chief Justice Luís Roberto Barroso — who also supports decriminalization — asked for an adjournment and the vote can be resumed at his behest.

"We are behind on this issue, and we need to fight for progress," Eduarda Isnoldo, a 27-year-old English teacher, said through tears at the Sao Paulo protest. "When you realize that your rights can be taken away so easily, it's impossible to stay quiet."

Sean 'Diddy' Combs returns key to New York City in response to video of him attacking singer Cassie

NEW YORK (AP) — Sean "Diddy" Combs has returned his key to New York City after a request from Mayor Eric Adams in response to the release of a video showing the music mogul attacking R&B singer Cassie, officials said Saturday.

The mayor's office said Combs returned the key after Adams sent letters to the embattled musician's offices in New York and California on June 4 rescinding the key and asking for it to be sent back to City Hall. The city received the key June 10.

In his letter, Adams wrote he was "deeply disturbed" by the attack, adding "I strongly condemn these actions and stand in solidarity with all survivors of domestic and gender-based violence."

Combs' career has been derailed by numerous accusations of sexual abuse, as well as a federal criminal sex-trafficking investigation that led to raids of Combs' mansions in Los Angeles and Miami.

In May, CNN aired security video of Combs attacking Cassie in a hotel hallway in Los Angeles in 2016. Combs has said he is "truly sorry" for the attack on Cassie and called his actions "inexcusable." Cassie, whose legal name is Cassandra Ventura, sued Combs last year, setting off a wave of increased scrutiny

on Combs. That case was settled a day after it was filed.

Adams awarded Combs with the key at a ceremony last year that coincided with the release of a new album.

Howard University this month rescinded an honorary degree awarded to Combs and ended a scholarship program in his name following the release of the video involving Cassie.

Combs, founder of Bad Boy Records, is one of the most influential hip-hop producers and executives in the last three decades, turning musical success into a business empire.

An email sent to a representative listed online for Combs was not immediately returned.

Indiana Republicans upset Mike Braun's choice for lieutenant governor, backing far-right pick

By ISABELLA VOLMERT Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Indiana Republicans rejected Sen. Mike Braun's choice for lieutenant governor on Saturday, instead nominating a podcasting pastor with far-right views to be his running mate.

Braun, who is leaving the Senate, endorsed state Rep. Julie McGuire for his running mate when he became the GOP nominee for governor. Indiana delegates usually back the nominee's chosen running mate without a challenge.

But during Saturday's state Republican Party convention, party delegates instead chose pastor Micah Beckwith, who promotes uncompromising positions on abortion, gender and sexuality and cohosts his "Jesus, Sex and Politics" podcast. The ultra-conservative Christian pastor lobbied delegates for a year to win the nomination at the convention.

Beckwith received the votes of 891 delegates, while McGuire got 828 votes, Indiana Republican Party spokesperson Griffin Reid said.

Braun had been endorsed by former President Donald Trump and campaigned largely on national issues such as immigration. Trump made a surprise endorsement Thursday night for McGuire ahead of the convention, indicating Beckwith's campaign had some teeth.

"There's no doubt about this, I'm in charge, and Micah is going to be someone that works with me. If he doesn't, I think that means it will probably not be as fruitful," Braun said after Beckwith's victory.

Braun, who is leaving the U.S. Senate, had announced McGuire as his choice in May, a day after winning the primary election with about 40% of the votes. Trump won Indiana in the 2020 election by 16 points.

Braun will now run with Beckwith against Democratic gubernatorial nominee Jennifer McCormick, a former state education chief, and Libertarian nominee Donald Rainwater. Democrats haven't won a statewide office in Indiana since 2012.

The Indiana Republican Party said in a statement that with Beckwith's nomination as Braun's running mate and state Attorney General Todd Rokita's nomination Saturday for a second term in that post, "the statewide Republican ticket is set and ready to win in November!"

Beckwith, who unsuccessfully ran for Congress from central Indiana in 2020, actively campaigned for lieutenant governor for a year, courting delegates months ahead of the convention. He is known for his far-right stances on gender, sexuality and abortion. He cast himself as a political outsider who would keep the governor's office in check, limit property taxes and oppose school efforts to support the LGBTQ+ community.

Indiana Democratic Party Chairman Mike Schmuhl said in a statement that Beckwith's nomination "shows how out-of-the-mainstream extremism has hijacked the current Indiana GOP."

"Beckwith will bring the worst of the culture wars to the lieutenant governor's office, which is usually tasked with increasing tourism and supporting agriculture. He is dangerous for business, dangerous for women, dangerous for families, and dangerous for Indiana's future," Schmuhl added.

McGuire, from Indianapolis, was a policy analyst for Senate Republicans until 2022, when she unseated a representative who had angered other Republicans in part by repeatedly pushing a complete ban on

abortion. Indiana's current law allows exceptions in rare and limited circumstances.

Braun said he selected McGuire for her strongly conservative legislative and policy record despite her short time in office. If ultimately elected by voters in November, she would be the latest in a series of women to reach the second-highest office in a state that has never seen a female governor.

Indiana's lieutenant governor runs four state agencies, ceremoniously presides over the Senate and would break tie votes there, if that would ever happen in a chamber where the GOP enjoys a supermajority.

Delegates sometimes buck their leaders' choices. In 2022, they defied Republican Gov. Eric Holcomb's backing of the incumbent secretary of state for a second term and instead elected Diego Morales, who went on to win the general election.

8 Israeli soldiers killed in southern Gaza in deadliest attack on Israeli forces in months

By JACK JEFFERY Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — An explosion in southern Gaza killed eight Israeli soldiers, the military said Saturday, making it the deadliest attack on Israeli forces in months.

The attack, coming more than eight months into a grinding war that shows few signs of ending soon, was likely to fuel new calls for a cease-fire by Israeli protesters. It also came as the government confronts widespread anger over exemptions from military service for young ultra-Orthodox men.

Israel launched an air and ground invasion of Gaza in response to an Oct. 7 cross-border attack by Hamas and other militants that killed some 1,200 people and took 250 others hostage. The Israeli offensive has killed over 37,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials, who do not differentiate between civilians and combatants. It also has unleashed a humanitarian disaster in Gaza, where over 80% of the population has been displaced and Israeli restrictions and ongoing fighting have hindered efforts to bring in humanitarian aid, fueling widespread hunger.

Saturday's explosion took place in Rafah, a southern city that Israel has identified as Hamas' last major stronghold. It sent in ground troops to the city in early May and has given no indication when the operation will end.

"They knew they might have to sacrifice their lives, but they did it so we could live in this country. I salute them and hug their families," said Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz in a post on X, formerly Twitter.

The military said the explosion happened just after 5 a.m. in the Tal al-Sultan area of Rafah. Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, an Israeli military spokesman, said it was caused either by an explosive placed by Hamas or by an anti-tank missile.

"We need to defeat the Rafah Brigade of Hamas and we are doing this with determination," he said.

In January, 21 Israeli troops were killed in a single attack by Palestinian militants in Gaza.

President Joe Biden earlier this month unveiled a new cease-fire proposal that seeks the release of the roughly 120 hostages who remain in Gaza and an end to the fighting. While the international community has broadly embraced the plan, both Israel and Hamas have expressed misgivings. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says he will not halt the war until he achieves the twin goals of destroying Hamas' military and governing capabilities.

"Today we paid another heartbreaking price in our just war for the defense of the homeland," Netanyahu said Saturday. "With deep sorrow, in heavy mourning, I bow my head together with all the citizens of Israel and mourn the fall of our heroic warriors."

The inconclusive war has divided the Israeli public, with tens of thousands of people taking to the streets each Saturday night to call on the government to reach a deal that would bring the hostages home. The Israeli government has already pronounced over 40 of the hostages held by Hamas to be dead, and officials fear that number could grow the longer they remain in captivity.

At a rally Saturday evening, participants watched a video message from Andrey Kozlov, who was rescued from Hamas captivity a week ago.

"More than 120 hostages are still there, and I can't feel all the happiness from this situation because

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I was rescued and they were not," he said, according to The Hostages Families Forum Headquarters. "I ask to bring them home as soon as possible. Israel, world, Hamas, I ask you to make a deal as soon as possible."

Speaking at the weekly gathering of relatives of hostages in Tel Aviv, Rotem Kalderon, son of hostage Ofer Kalderon, said he isn't ready "to live in a world full of death."

"I am not ready to live in a country with a government that sends us to settle in the borders and fight in wars and in the end abandons us," he said. "I'm not ready to live without a father."

The deadly explosion also comes days after Netanyahu's coalition voted in favor of extending the controversial exemptions from the military draft given to ultra-Orthodox men.

Although the vote was only procedural, it caused an uproar at a time when Israel continues to fight Hamas militants in Gaza and Hezbollah militants along the country's northern border with Lebanon and the death toll continues to climb. Over 600 soldiers have been killed in fighting since Oct. 7, according to the military.

Last month, Israel's Supreme Court ordered an end to government subsidies for ultra-Orthodox men who don't serve in the army. But Netanyahu's government, which includes politically powerful ultra-Orthodox parties, has found ways to keep money flowing to religious institutions.

The government is still under orders to pass a new draft law.

Most Jewish men and women are required to serve in the military from the age of 18. The exemptions granted to religious men have long been a source of contention among the broader public.

Israel's defense minister, Yoav Gallant, was the only member of Netanyahu's coalition to vote against this week's legislation. Gallant, a member of the country's War Cabinet, has insisted that all sectors of Israeli society contribute equally during its war against Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip.

If Netanyahu's ultra-Orthodox partners leave the government, the country would be forced into new elections at a time when Netanyahu's popularity is low and his re-election prospects are questionable.

At an anti-government demonstration Saturday, thousands of people demanded new elections and the release of the hostages.

"The fact that eight soldiers got killed today just emphasizes the fact that we need a change," said Amir Schnabel, one of the demonstrators. "We can't live this reality for a long time. If today eight soldiers were killed, more will get killed the next day and the day after. And the only way to make a change is just to protest and bring the government down, and we have to do it as soon as possible."

Months of cease-fire negotiations have failed to find common ground between Israeli and Hamas. On Wednesday, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that Hamas proposed changes to a U.S.-backed plan, some of which he said were "workable" and some not.

Hamas has continually called for a permanent cease-fire and complete Israeli troop withdrawal from Gaza as part of any deal that would see the hostages released. While the proposal announced by U.S. President Joe Biden includes these two provisions, Hamas has expressed concern about whether Israel will commit to them.

Meanwhile, violence has flared in the West Bank since the Israel-Hamas war erupted. On Saturday, a 16-year-old Palestinian was shot dead by Israeli forces near the northern city of Nablus, the Ramallah-based Health Ministry said. An Israeli security official confirmed Israeli forces opened fire at Palestinians who were throwing rocks at troops during a counterterrorism operation in the area. He spoke on condition of anonymity, pending a formal announcement by the army.

Think cicadas are weird? Check out superfans, who eat the bugs, use them in art and even striptease

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

FOREST PARK, Illinois (AP) — Mayumi Barrack sees a pair of mating periodical cicadas getting together, whips out her phone, says, "Hi guys!" and takes their picture.

"I'm not really a bug person, but as I look more and more I feel they are adorable," Barrack explained,

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noting that many other creatures — birds, squirrels, raccoons and more — are just as eager to get close to the bugs, if only to turn them into food. “I just want to document they existed.”

And boy has she. Barrack has posted more than 4,600 photos of the bugs on the Cicada Safari app for cicada enthusiasts. That’s 2,000 more than her nearest competitor. She’s the queen of cicada chasers, though she doesn’t really chase — most of the pictures are from her backyard — and she sees herself more as a mother to the bugs than as a queen.

“I’m caring for them,” said Barrack, standing in her tree-and-flower filled suburban Chicago backyard.

Periodical cicadas are strange, with eccentricities that include super-strong urine flow and a zombie fungus infection. But their superfans are unusual, too, or at least highly passionate.

Gene Kritsky, a professor of biology at Mount St. Joseph University in Cincinnati, has been working toward this year’s massive cicada emergence for decades. He first heard about cicadas in 1972 and has been studying and chasing them since 1974. He wrote the book on the current emergence, “A Tale of Two Broods.” He also created the cicada tracking app that enthusiasts like Barrack use to post pictures and find where the bugs are in large numbers.

This is the third time Kritsky has mapped Brood XIII of the cicadas. That’s quite an accomplishment since they only come out every 17 years.

Often wearing a safari hat that makes him look like the Indiana Jones of cicadas, which he has been called, Kritsky and his artist wife Jessee Smith have driven back and forth from Ohio to Illinois several times this spring to revel in the bugs. Over several long nights at a forest north of Chicago, he’s seen massive numbers including his first one-in-a-million blue-eyed cicada. He cited the May 24 emergence as “incredible” with thousands coming out that night at his location.

“Periodical cicadas are the gateway drug to natural history,” Kritsky said.

For New York City chef Joseph Yoon, cicadas aren’t just amazing, they’re dinner. His Brooklyn Bugs company is on a mission to spread the word about the taste and sustainability of edible insects, though he knows many people are grossed out by the thought.

Yoon spent nine days in Illinois collecting, freezing and then bagging tens of thousands of cicadas. After getting back home, he served up tempura cicada to 400 people at a Syracuse University event.

Yoon said collecting and cooking cicadas “is quite painful for me because I love the cicada so much.”

But he added: “At the same I also can acknowledge and appreciate that each one of these cicadas’ lives represents a potential to transform somebody’s perception or opinion about eating insects.”

Yoon’s friend, Wisconsin artist and professor Jennifer Angus, also sees the beauty in cicadas and other insects — so much so that she incorporates the actual bugs into her art. Sometimes she put them in outfits and posed them as dolls.

“I love them because they just have great faces and bulging eyes and they’re very hardy,” Angus said. “They stand up to the wear and tear at my exhibitions.”

“I find their faces humorous,” Angus said.

Renee Martin is an architecture professor at the University of Kentucky who also dabbles in puppetry. For a Cincinnati puppet festival three years ago — when Brood X was making big news on the East Coast — someone suggested she come up with a cicada costume or puppet.

“What would I do? A cicada strip-tease?” she asked her friends, who gave a resounding yes.

She worked up “something between a puppet and a costume” for that festival, then hauled it out again for this year’s big emergence, putting on a show in a Cincinnati alley for friends, neighbors and visiting journalists.

Martin, wearing faux fishnet stockings and moving comically to stripper music, starts out as a cardboard pale nymph and then bursts through as a red-eyed adult nymph. The audience added to the effect with noisemakers and cries of “ooh la la” and “sexy cicada.”

Meanwhile, photos of cicadas are swarming in to Kritsky’s app, with nearly 5,000 people posting. About 150 people have posted at least 100 cicada pictures, but none are close to Barrack — who said she’s surprised to be leading.

“I have so many pictures I haven’t sent yet,” she said.

World leaders meet in Switzerland to discuss a Ukraine peace roadmap. Russia is notably absent

By JAMEY KEATEN and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

ÖBBÜRGEN, Switzerland (AP) — Dozens of world leaders converged on a Swiss resort Saturday to discuss how to bring peace to war-ravaged Ukraine, though any hopes of a real breakthrough were muted by the absence of Russia.

More than two years into the war, the combatants remain as far apart as they've ever been, with Kyiv sticking to its demands that Russia leave all Ukrainian territory it has seized and Moscow pressing on with its grinding offensive that has already taken large swaths of eastern and southern Ukraine.

Despite Russia's absence from the conference at the Bürgenstock resort overlooking Lake Lucerne, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy suggested that one measure of the two-day event's success was "bringing back to the world the idea that joint efforts can stop war and establish a just peace."

Attendees faced a tricky balancing act, with many chastising Russia for breaking international law while hedging their positions to leave the door open for Moscow to join future peace talks that might bring about an end to the conflict one day.

"Here, there are representatives from Latin America, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and Asia, the Pacific, North America and religious leaders," Zelenskyy said. "Now, there is no Russia here. Why? Because if Russia was interested in peace, there would be no war."

"We must decide together what a just peace means for the world and how it can be achieved in a truly lasting way," he said. "At the first peace summit, we must determine how to achieve a just peace, so that at the second, we can already settle on a real end to the war."

About half of the roughly 100 delegations were led by heads of state and government. Analysts said turnout would be a key indicator about how much pull Ukraine and its staunch Western backers have with the broader international community.

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday sought to cast a shadow over the Swiss-Ukrainian initiative for the conference. Some countries such as India, Turkey and Saudi Arabia that have retained ties, at times lucrative, with Moscow — unlike Western powers that have sanctioned Russia over the war — were also on hand.

Saudi Arabia's foreign minister, Prince Faisal bin Farhan, told the conference that credible peace talks will need Russia's participation and require "difficult compromise."

Turkey's foreign minister, Hakan Fidan, acknowledged the mistrust between Russia and Ukraine, saying "each side regards the other party's steps (in floating proposals) as an extension of broader war effort."

"Excellencies, I must also note that this summit could have been more results-oriented if the other party to the conflict — Russia — was present in the room," he added.

Entering the venue, President Gitanas Nausėda of Lithuania, a NATO member country that has been one of the most stalwart supporters of fellow former Soviet republic Ukraine, said Russian troops must leave Ukraine, and that Moscow must be held accountable for crimes there and pay reparations for the war damage.

"Right now it seems unrealistic, but I think we have to stay united, and if international society will push the Russian Federation, everything is possible," he told The Associated Press. "I think the situation is very clear: Ukraine has to seek territorial integrity."

U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris, representing the United States while President Joe Biden attended a fundraiser in California, reiterated America's full backing for Ukraine and announced \$1.5 billion in new U.S. assistance for an array of projects such as energy infrastructure and civilian security.

China, which backs Russia, joined scores of countries that sat out the event. Beijing has said any peace process would require the participation of Russia and Ukraine, and has floated its own ideas for peace.

In a separate initiative last month, China and Brazil agreed to six "common understandings" toward a political settlement of the Ukraine crisis, asking other countries to play a role in promoting peace talks to be held "at a proper time" with both Russia and Ukraine involved.

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The standoff over Ukraine is steeped in security for Europe — it is the continent's deadliest conflict since World War II — and big-power geopolitics.

U.S. intelligence officials say China has increased sales of machine tools, microelectronics and other technology to Russia that Moscow is using to produce missiles, tanks, aircraft and other weaponry to fuel its war effort.

"What is clear is that China is not here, and I presume they're not here because Putin asked them not to come and they obliged Putin," said Biden's top foreign policy advisor, Jake Sullivan. "And I think that says something about where China stands with respect to Russia's war in Ukraine. I think countries should take notice of that."

Harris and Sullivan both acknowledged that not all participants were on the same page about an eventual peace settlement.

Russian troops who control nearly a quarter of Ukraine have made territorial gains in recent months. When talk of the Swiss-hosted peace summit began last summer, Ukrainian forces had recently regained large tracts of territory, notably near the southern city of Kherson and the northern city of Kharkiv.

The conference centers on three agenda items — seen as the least controversial bits of a 10-point peace "formula" laid out by Zelenskyy: Nuclear safety, including at the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia power plant; possible prisoner of war exchanges; and global food security. The war has disrupted shipments of food and fertilizer through the Black Sea.

Zelenskyy's plan also called for the withdrawal of Russian troops from occupied Ukrainian territory, the cessation of hostilities and the restoration of Ukraine's original borders with Russia, including Russia's withdrawal from occupied Crimea. With Ukrainian mostly on the defensive these days, those appear to be increasingly distant hopes.

Putin wants any peace deal to be built around a draft agreement negotiated in the early phases of the war that included provisions for Ukraine's neutral status and limits on its armed forces, while delaying talks about Russian-occupied areas. Ukraine's push to join NATO over the years has rankled Moscow.

He wants Ukraine to drop its bid to join NATO and pull its forces out of regions that Russia illegally annexed in 2022.

"The situation on the battlefield has changed dramatically," said Alexander Gabuev, director of the Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center, noting that although Russia "can't achieve its maximalist objectives quickly through military means," it is gaining momentum on the battlefield.

As world leaders discussed a pathway to peace in Switzerland, the war ground on in Ukraine, where shelling killed at least three civilians and wounded 15 others on Friday and overnight into Saturday, regional officials said.

Meanwhile, Vyacheslav Gladkov, the governor of Russia's southern Belgorod region, blamed Ukraine in a social media post for shelling that struck a five-story apartment building in the town of Shebekino on Friday, killing five people. There was no immediate comment from Kyiv.

Muslim pilgrims converge at Mount Arafat for daylong worship as Hajj reaches its peak

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

MOUNT ARAFAT, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Following the footsteps of prophets beneath a burning sun, more than 1.83 million Muslims from around the world congregated Saturday at a sacred hill in Saudi Arabia for worship and reflection amid a sweltering heat.

The ritual at Mount Arafat, known as the hill of mercy, is considered the peak of the Hajj pilgrimage. It is often the most memorable for pilgrims, who stand together asking God for mercy, blessings, prosperity and good health. The hill is about 20 kilometers (12 miles) southeast of Mecca.

Thousands of pilgrims walked here through the predawn darkness. On the slopes of the rocky hill and the surrounding area, many raised their hands in worship with tears streaming down their faces.

"For sure it is something great. It is the best day for Muslims during the year, and the best feeling that

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anyone can experience," Hussein Mohammed, an Egyptian pilgrim, said as he stood on the slopes at dawn. "It is the best place for anyone hoping to be (here) on this day and at this moment."

It's believed that Prophet Muhammad delivered his final speech, known as the Farewell Sermon, at Mount Arafat 1,435 years ago. In the sermon, the prophet called for equality and unity among Muslims.

Ali Osman, a Spanish pilgrim, was overwhelmed, as he stepped down from the hill. He said he felt that he gained spiritual and physical strength at the sacred site.

"The place, thank God, (gives) very good energy," he said. "I came here, thank God. It is my first time. I hope to come again in the future."

Hajj is one of the largest religious gatherings on earth. The rituals officially started Friday when pilgrims moved from Mecca's Grand Mosque to Mina, a desert plain just outside the city.

More than 1.83 million Muslims performed Hajj in 2024, Saudi Hajj and Umrah Minister Tawfiq bin Fawzan al-Rabiah said in a briefing. That's slightly less than last year's figures when 1.84 million made the rituals.

The pilgrimage is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. All Muslims are required to make the five-day Hajj at least once in their lives if they are physically and financially able to do so.

The rituals largely commemorate the Quran's accounts of Prophet Ibrahim, his son Prophet Ismail and Ismail's mother Hajar — or Abraham and Ismael as they are named in the Bible.

This year's Hajj came against the backdrop of the Israel-Hamas war, which pushed the Middle East to the brink of a regional conflict.

Palestinians in the Gaza Strip weren't able to travel to Mecca for Hajj this year because of the closure of the Rafah crossing in May, when Israel extended its ground offensive to the city on the border with Egypt.

Staving off potential protests or chants about the war during the Hajj, Saudi authorities said they won't tolerate politicizing the pilgrimage.

In his sermon Saturday at the sprawling, six-minaret Namera mosque in Arafat, Saudi cleric Maher Bin Hamad al-Mu'wiql, also cautioned about politicizing Hajj.

However, he urged pilgrims to pray for the Palestinians who have been "harmed and hurt by their enemy" that killed them, and "deprived them of what they need from food, medicine and clothing." He didn't mention Israel in his sermon.

The war has killed more than 37,000 Palestinians there, according to Gaza health officials, while hundreds of others have been killed in Israeli operations in the West Bank. It began after Hamas-led militants attacked Israel on Oct. 7, killing about 1,200 people and taking around 250 hostage.

The time of year when the Hajj takes place varies, given that it is set for five days in the second week of Dhu al-Hijjah, the last month in the Islamic lunar calendar.

Most of the Hajj rituals are held outdoors with little if any shade. When it falls in the summer months, temperatures can soar to over 40 C (104 F). The Health Ministry has cautioned that temperatures at the holy sites could reach 48 C (118 F) and urged pilgrims to use umbrellas and drink more water to stay hydrated.

Most of the pilgrims at Mount Arafat carried umbrellas, while others sat in the shade. Many were seen splashing water on their faces and bodies. And, as at Mina and the Grand Mosque, cooling stations on the roads leading to the hill and in its surrounding areas sprayed pilgrims with water to help fight the heat, which had already climbed to 47 C (116.6 F) at Mount Arafat, according to Saudi metrological authorities.

Saudi Health Minister Fahd bin Abdurrahman Al-Jalajel told The Associated Press that more than 150 pilgrims have been treated for heat exhaustion. He urged pilgrims to drink water and carry umbrellas as they perform Hajj's rituals.

As pilgrims perform their worships, contracted migrant cleaners with lime-green jumpsuits were collecting empty water bottles and other trash around Mount Arafat.

At sunset Saturday, pilgrims left Mount Arafat, heading to a nearby site known as Muzdalifa to collect pebbles that they will use in the symbolic stoning of pillars representing the devil back in Mina. Many walked, while others were transported there by buses.

Pilgrims then return to Mina for three days, coinciding with the festive Eid al-Adha holiday, when financially able Muslims around the world slaughter livestock and distribute the meat to poor people. Afterward, they return to Mecca for a final circumambulation, known as Farewell Tawaf.

Once the Hajj is over, men are expected to shave their heads, and women to snip a lock of hair in a sign of renewal. Most of the pilgrims then leave Mecca for the city of Medina, about 340 kilometers (210 miles) away, to pray in Prophet Muhammad's tomb, the Sacred Chamber. The tomb is part of the prophet's mosque, which is one of the three holiest sites in Islam, along with the Grand Mosque in Mecca and the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

Missouri woman's murder conviction tossed after 43 years. Her lawyers say a police officer did it

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH Associated Press

A judge has overturned the conviction of a Missouri woman who was a psychiatric patient when she incriminated herself in a 1980 killing that her attorneys argue was actually committed by a now-discredited police officer.

Judge Ryan Horsman ruled late Friday that Sandra Hemme, who has spent 43 years behind bars, had established evidence of actual innocence and must be freed within 30 days unless prosecutors retry her. He said her trial counsel was ineffective and prosecutors failed to disclose evidence that would have helped her.

Her attorneys say this is the longest time a woman has been incarcerated for a wrongful conviction. They filed a motion seeking her immediate release.

"We are grateful to the Court for acknowledging the grave injustice Ms. Hemme has endured for more than four decades," her attorneys said in a statement, promising to keep up their efforts to dismiss the charges and reunite Hemme with her family.

A spokesperson for Missouri Attorney General Andrew Bailey didn't immediately respond to a text or email message seeking comment Saturday.

Hemme was shackled in leather wrist restraints and so heavily sedated that she "could not hold her head up straight" or "articulate anything beyond monosyllabic responses" when she was first questioned about the death of 31-year-old library worker Patricia Jeschke, according to her lawyers with the New York-based Innocence Project.

They alleged in a petition seeking her exoneration that authorities ignored Hemme's "wildly contradictory" statements and suppressed evidence implicating Michael Holman, a then-police officer who tried to use the slain woman's credit card.

The judge wrote that "no evidence whatsoever outside of Ms. Hemme's unreliable statements connects her to the crime."

"In contrast," he added, "this Court finds that the evidence directly ties Holman to this crime and murder scene."

It started on Nov. 13, 1980, when Jeschke missed work. Her worried mother climbed through a window at her apartment and discovered her daughter's nude body on the floor, surrounded by blood. Her hands were tied behind her back with a telephone cord and a pair of pantyhose was wrapped around her throat. A knife was under her head.

The brutal killing grabbed headlines, with detectives working 12-hour days to solve it. But Hemme wasn't on their radar until she showed up nearly two weeks later at the home of a nurse who once treated her, carrying a knife and refusing to leave.

Police found her in a closet, and took her back to St. Joseph's Hospital, the latest in a string of hospitalizations that began when she started hearing voices at the age of 12.

She had been discharged from that very hospital the day before Jeschke's body was found, showing up at her parents house later that night after hitchhiking more than 100 miles (160 kilometers) across the state.

The timing seemed suspicious to law enforcement. As the interrogations began, Hemme was being treated with antipsychotic drugs that had triggered involuntary muscle spasms. She complained that her eyes were rolling back in her head, the petition said.

Detectives noted that Hemme seemed "mentally confused" and not fully able to comprehend their questions.

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"Each time the police extracted a statement from Ms. Hemme it changed dramatically from the last, often incorporating explanations of facts the police had just recently uncovered," her attorneys wrote.

Eventually, she claimed to have watched a man named Joseph Wabski kill Jeschke.

Wabski, whom she met when they stayed in the state hospital's detoxification unit at the same time, was charged with capital murder. But prosecutors quickly dropped the case upon learning he was at an alcohol treatment center in Topeka, Kansas, at the time.

Upon learning he couldn't be the killer, Hemme cried and she said was the lone killer.

But police also were starting to look at another suspect — one of their own. About a month after the killing, Holman was arrested for falsely reporting that his pickup truck had been stolen and collecting an insurance payout. It was the same truck spotted near the crime scene, and the officer's alibi that he spent the night with a woman at a nearby motel couldn't be confirmed.

Furthermore, he had tried to use Jeschke's credit card at a camera store in Kansas City, Missouri, on the same day her body was found. Holman, who ultimately was fired and died in 2015, said he found the card in a purse that had been discarded in a ditch.

During a search of Holman's home, police found a pair of gold horseshoe-shaped earrings in a closet, along with jewelry stolen from another woman during a burglary earlier that year.

Jeschke's father said he recognized the earrings as a pair he bought for his daughter. But then the four-day investigation into Holman ended abruptly, many of the details uncovered never given to Hemme's attorneys.

Hemme, meanwhile, was growing desperate. She wrote to her parents on Christmas Day 1980, saying, "Even though I'm innocent, they want to put someone away, so they can say the case is solved." She said she might as well change her plea to guilty.

"Just let it end," she said. "I'm tired."

And that is what she did the following spring, when she agreed to plead guilty to capital murder in exchange for the death penalty being taken off the table.

Even that was a challenge; the judge initially rejected her guilty plea because she couldn't share enough details about what happened, saying: "I really didn't know I had done it until like three days later, you know, when it came out in the paper and on the news."

Her attorney told her that her chance to not be sentenced to death was to get the judge to accept her guilty plea. After a recess and some coaching, she provided more information.

That plea later was thrown out on appeal. But she was convicted again in 1985 after a one-day trial in which jurors weren't told of what her current attorneys describe as "grotesquely coercive" interrogations.

Larry Harman, who helped Hemme get her initial guilty plea thrown out and later became a judge, said in the petition that he believed she was innocent.

"The system," he said, "failed her at every opportunity."

Haitian leaders oust police chief and appoint a new one as gang violence claims officers' lives

By EVENS SANON and DÁNICA COTO Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Haitian leaders have ousted Frantz Elbé, the beleaguered director of Haiti's National Police, following months of criticism that he wasn't doing enough to protect officers under assault by gangs.

A government official not authorized to speak to the media told The Associated Press on Saturday that former Haitian police chief Normil Rameau will once again take the helm of an underfunded and ill-equipped department that a U.N. report notes only has around 4,000 officers on duty at a time in a country of more than 11 million inhabitants. Rameau had been dismissed from the post nearly four years ago under a different administration,

More than 2,500 people have been killed or injured across Haiti in the first three months of the year as gang violence continues to surge.

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Among those killed are nearly two dozen police officers, overwhelmed by gangs that control 80% of Port-au-Prince and are better-equipped and have more powerful weapons. The most recent killings targeted three officers from a newly formed anti-gang tactical unit who were on patrol in an armored vehicle. A fourth remains missing.

From 2015 to 2024, more than 320 police officers have been killed, with 120 of them slain under Elbé's administration, according to a survey released this week by the local nonprofit group National Network for the Defense of Human Rights.

Rameau's appointment comes as a newly selected prime minister and Cabinet take the reins of Haiti's government with a transitional presidential council at their side.

Rameau previously served as police director-general under slain former President Jovenel Moïse, who appointed him in August 2019. Prior to that, he oversaw the detective division. He was ousted as police chief in November 2020 after Prime Minister Joseph Jouthe accused him of being incompetent and not producing results at a time when gangs were seizing control of more territory.

Neither Rameau nor Elbé returned messages for comment.

Haiti's Office of Citizen Protection praised the selection of Rameau as police chief and demanded that he act swiftly to stop gang activity and establish a security plan to curb violence.

It also urged police to push judicial authorities to open investigations into the killings of citizens, including journalists, and into what it called the "spectacular" escape of more than 4,500 prisoners in March after gangs stormed Haiti's two biggest prisons. The office said that the attack took place "with the complete indifference" of Elbé and the former ministers of justice and public security.

Haiti's police unions have repeatedly called for Elbé's resignation and arrest, noting that gangs have raided and burned at least 30 police stations and substations in recent months as part of a series of attacks that began on Feb. 29 that targeted critical state infrastructure and led to the eventual resignation of former Prime Minister Ariel Henry.

On Wednesday, a police union known as SPNH-17 held a news conference to condemn the state of the department and deplore the deaths of the officers.

"Look at these young men, hacked to death," spokesman Garry Jean-Baptiste said as he pointed to rows of pictures behind him that depicted officers killed on duty.

The union also issued a statement the day Haiti celebrated the creation of its police department.

"Haiti's National Police is 29 years old, but it still can't walk ... it hasn't grown because corruption and incompetence has held it hostage," it said.

Meanwhile, another police union known as SYNAPOHA called on newly installed Prime Minister Garry Conille this week to make strengthening the department a priority.

Conille went along on a patrol with police on June 2, donning a flak jacket and helmet as he entered an armored vehicle. SNPH-17 said at the time that the prime minister would notice during the patrol that the country had no leadership and that criminals had too much control.

"The prime minister must see the need to have another team at the top," the union said.

Elbé was appointed head of Haiti's National Police in October 2021, replacing Léon Charles.

Last year, under Elbé, at least 36 officers were killed in gang-related violence from January to mid-August, according to a U.N. report.

The international community has provided training and other resources to help boost Haiti's National Police, which also is awaiting the U.N.-backed deployment of a police force from Kenya as it struggles to contain gang violence and boost morale.

The survey by the National Network for the Defense of Human Rights, which interviewed 132 police officers, confirmed long-known issues, including unpaid salaries, nonexistent health care and a lack of psychological help. Police officers for the most part do not receive additional training after graduating from the academy and are forced to use old and substandard equipment, the survey found.

It also noted that certain police officers work with gangs: "Consequently, the police institution, weakened by state authorities, severely hit by insecurity and welcoming into its midst agents who are in collusion with criminals, tries as much as possible to confront the situation of general decay."

Some hawking stem cells say they can treat almost anything. They can't

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH Associated Press

The mailings promised "Life Without Pain!" via stem cell injections or IVs administered in a patient's own home. The allure was obvious: more than 20% of U.S. adults endure chronic pain.

The flyers invited Iowans to free dinners across the state. Afterward, sales people traveled to potential customers' homes for high-pressure pitches disguised as pre-screenings, according to prosecutors. More than 250 people signed up, paying \$3,200 to \$20,000 each for a total of \$1.5 million. For this, a nurse practitioner came to their homes to administer injections and IVs filled with stem cells derived from umbilical cords.

Yet experts and regulators have alternately labeled such treatments as ripoffs, scams or simply unproven. In some cases, studies have documented real harm.

Last fall, Iowa's attorney general sued two proprietors responsible for the mailings in her state, naming a Minnesota man who hosts a Christian entrepreneurship podcast and his Florida business partner for allegedly deceiving consumers, many of them elderly.

In bringing the lawsuit, Iowa joined attorneys general in New York, North Dakota, Georgia, Nebraska, Arkansas and Washington state who have sued businesses alleging they fraudulently promoted unproven stem cell treatments.

Stem cells have long fascinated researchers because of their ability to reproduce and, in some cases, transform into other cell types. Because of this, they are thought to hold the potential for treating many diseases and injuries.

But the FDA has approved only a handful of such therapies, and only for certain forms of blood cancer and immune system disorders. Stem cells are considered experimental for most uses, despite being marketed as a treatment for everything from autism and emphysema to sports injuries.

The FDA has repeatedly warned Americans to be wary of businesses hawking unapproved, unproven and costly stem cell therapies, which occasionally have caused blindness, bacterial infections and tumors.

In a 2020 notice, the agency expressed concern about patients being misled about products that are "illegally marketed, have not been shown to be safe or effective, and, in some cases, may have significant safety issues."

Dr. Jeffrey Goldberg, chair of ophthalmology at the Byers Eye Institute at Stanford University, whose work has documented vision loss in some patients treated with cells removed from patients' own bodies, processed and reinjected, lamented that people are "desperately willing to shell out large sums of money for unproven and in some cases, explicitly sort of sham, so-called therapeutics."

Since August 2017, the FDA has issued about 30 warning letters regarding the unproven treatments.

Experts, including Dr. Paul Knoepfler, a stem cell researcher at the University of California at Davis, and Leigh Turner, a bioethicist at the University of California, Irvine, are among those who have raised alarm that such federal action is too little to regulate a U.S. industry which Turner estimated in 2021 topped 2,700 clinics.

Because states can seek substantial fines against wayward operators, Turner said their legal actions offer promise.

"If you look at them collectively, they might over time start to have an impact," he said.

The FDA offers training to attorneys general pursuing such cases. Dr. Peter Marks, director of the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, said federal regulators partner with state law enforcers in a "shared mission."

That puts people like Iowa Attorney General Brenna Bird on the front lines.

Last year, Bird brought the case over mailers offering Iowans a pain-free life, naming the now dissolved Biologics Health and Summit Partners Group, which operated under the name Summit Health Centers, as defendants. The state also sued the companies' proprietors: Rylee Meek, of Prior Lake, Minnesota, and Scott Thomas, of Thonotosassa, Florida.

Neither man claims to have any medical training. Yet over a series of free dinners across Iowa, attendees listened to their presentations about how stem cells could ostensibly repair damage linked to back or joint pain. The claims came despite an FDA warning that no such product has been approved to treat any orthopedic condition.

One testimonial featured a woman quoted as saying she had multiple sclerosis, fibromyalgia, degenerative joint problems and scoliosis. It implied the treatment worked so well she was able to stop using a walker and taking opioids. Prosecutors say that left people believing stem cells are effective at treating all the conditions listed.

The company offered packages ranging from 5 million cells to up to 60 million to fix customers' ailments. Iowa's lawsuit described the practices as "scattershot, for-profit experimentations."

Research has shown dead cells are often injected, Knoepfler said.

The Iowa case is still in the discovery stage, with the trial set for March 2025.

Meek and Thomas did not return multiple text and email messages from The Associated Press. Nor did their attorney, Nathan Russell, though he did rebut many of the allegations in court filings, including that the promotional information was "deceptive or misleading." The filing stressed that Meek and Thomas always emphasized they were not doctors.

Instead, Meek promoted himself as the "\$100 million man" and touted his business prowess on his King's Council podcast. His and Thomas' book, "Intentional Influence in Sales: The Power of Persuasion with Neuro-linguistic Programming," is described as a way to "get people to think the way you want them to think, without them even realizing it."

Meek previously reached a settlement with the North Dakota attorney general to resolve allegations that a business he ran sold insulation and energy conservation products without a proper license.

As for the stem cell business, Bird argued in the Iowa lawsuit that the companies downplayed safety concerns.

Sales material described the most worrisome side effects as "flu-like symptoms" in a "very small percentage of patients." It's an assertion that Meek's and Thomas' attorney argued lacked context.

Complaints, which the businessmen described as "rare," trickled in, including from a man whose hip pain hadn't improved after undergoing a \$5,845 treatment. His wife paid \$2,650 for hers. Another person said she had "no improvement whatsoever" after spending \$16,580 to help her sciatic nerve pain and arthritis.

A nurse practitioner responded by telling such patients healing could take longer and they should drink more water, the lawsuit said.

"The problem," Knoepfler said, "is that people actually get hurt and they get ripped off."

UK royals unite on palace balcony, with Kate back at her first public event since cancer diagnosis

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain put on a display of birthday pageantry Saturday for King Charles III, a military parade that marked the Princess of Wales' first appearance at a public event since her cancer diagnosis early this year.

The annual event was also a show of stability by the monarchy after a testing few months in which both the king and Kate, wife of heir to the throne Prince William, have been sidelined by cancer treatment.

In a symbolic display of unity, Charles, Queen Camilla, William, Kate and their children were joined by other members of the royal family on a Buckingham Palace balcony at the end of the King's Birthday Parade. The family waved to the gathered crowd as they watched a flyby of military aircraft to cap ceremonies marking the monarch's official birthday.

It was Kate's first appearance at a public event since December. She disclosed in March that she was undergoing chemotherapy for an unspecified form of cancer.

"I am making good progress, but as anyone going through chemotherapy will know, there are good days and bad days," Kate said in a statement released Friday, adding that she faces "a few more months"

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of treatment.

Kate said she is "not out of the woods yet" and officials stress that Saturday's engagement doesn't herald a full return to public life.

Huge crowds turn out each June to watch the birthday parade, also known as Trooping the Color, which begins with a procession involving horses, musicians and hundreds of soldiers in ceremonial uniform from Buckingham Palace.

The 42-year-old princess traveled in a horse-drawn carriage from the palace down the grand avenue known as the Mall with her children George, 10, Charlotte, 9, and 6-year-old Louis. Bystanders cheered as they caught a glimpse of Kate, dressed in a white dress by designer Jenny Packham and wide-brimmed Philip Treacy hat.

She watched the ceremony with the children from the window of a building overlooking Horse Guards Parade, a ceremonial parade ground in central London. Louis yawned broadly at one point in proceedings, but mostly watched intently, even dancing along to the military music.

William, in military dress uniform, rode on horseback for the ceremony, in which troops parade past the king with their regimental flag, or "color." The display of precision marching and martial music stems from the days when a regiment's flag was an essential rallying point in the fog of battle.

Charles, who also is being treated for an undisclosed form of cancer, traveled in a carriage with Queen Camilla, rather than on horseback as he did last year. The king inspected the troops from a dais on the parade ground, saluting as elite regiments of Foot Guards marched past.

Five regiments take it in turns to parade their color, and this year it was the turn of a company of the Irish Guards, which has Kate as its honorary colonel. The troops in scarlet tunics and bearskin hats were led onto the parade ground by their mascot, an Irish wolfhound named Seamus.

Charles, 75, disclosed his cancer in February, and has recently eased back into public duties. He attended commemorations last week for the 80th anniversary of D-Day, the Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe on June 6, 1944.

In one of the many quirks of British royal convention, Saturday is not the king's real birthday — that's in November. Like his mother Queen Elizabeth II before him, Charles has an official birthday on the second Saturday in June. The date was chosen because the weather is generally good, though early sunshine on Saturday gave way to a blustery, rainy day in London.

The rain held off for most of the ceremony but began pelting down as the massed troops escorted the royal carriages back to Buckingham Palace past soggy but enthusiastic crowds.

Blue sky briefly returned as the family emerged onto the balcony to watch a flyby that included the Royal Air Force aerobatic team, the Red Arrows, trailing red, white and blue plumes of vapor.

Thousands of royal fans in raincoats and umbrellas cheered, as a smattering of anti-monarchist protesters chanted "Not my king."

Spectator Joseph Afrane, 60, said that he was happy to see Kate return — and to get a "big wave" as she passed by.

"It was fantastic when I heard it on the news yesterday," he said. "I thought, 'God, I thank you for bringing Kate back,' because she's very hardworking."

Spectators who braved the volatile weather were treated to a display of pomp and precision involving 1,400 soldiers, 250 military musicians and more than 200 horses. The equine participants included Trojan, Tennyson, and Vanquish, three of the five military horses who sparked mayhem in April when they bolted and ran loose through central London, crashing into vehicles and causing chaos during the morning rush hour.

The army says the other two horses are recovering well and are also expected to return to duty.

\A usually joyous Muslim holiday reminds families in Gaza of war's punishing toll

By FATMA KHALED and WAFAA SHURAFU Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Last summer, Palestinians in the Gaza Strip celebrated the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha the way it's supposed to be: with large family feasts, meat shared with those less fortunate, and new clothes and gifts for children.

But this year, after eight months of devastating war between Israel and Hamas, many families will eat canned food in stifling tents. There's hardly any meat or livestock at local markets, and no money for holiday treats or presents — only war, hunger and misery, with no end in sight.

"There is no Eid this year," said Nadia Hamouda, whose daughter was killed in the war and who fled from her home in northern Gaza months ago and is staying in a tent in the central town of Deir al-Balah. "When we hear the call to prayer, we cry over those we lost and the things we lost, and what has happened to us, and how we used to live before."

Muslims around the world will celebrate the four-day Eid al-Adha, the Feast of the Sacrifice, early in the week. It commemorates the Prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son, Ismail, as recounted in the Quran. In the Jewish and Christian traditions, Abraham is called to sacrifice his other son, Isaac.

Gaza was impoverished and isolated even before the war, but people still managed to celebrate by hanging up colorful decorations, surprising children with treats and gifts, and purchasing meat or slaughtering livestock to share with those less fortunate.

"It was a real Eid," Hamouda said. "Everyone was happy, including the children."

Now much of Gaza is in ruins and most of the population of 2.3 million Palestinians have fled their homes. After Hamas' surprise attack into Israel on Oct. 7, in which Palestinian militants killed some 1,200 people and took another 250 hostage, Israel launched a massive air and ground assault.

The war has killed over 37,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. It has destroyed most of Gaza's agriculture and food production, leaving people reliant on humanitarian aid that has been held up by Israeli restrictions and the ongoing fighting.

United Nations agencies have warned that over a million people — nearly half the population — could experience the highest level of starvation in the coming weeks.

In early May, Egypt shut down its crossing into the southern Gazan city of Rafah after Israel captured the Palestinian side of it, sealing the only route for people to enter or leave the territory. That means virtually no Palestinians from Gaza will be able to make the annual Hajj pilgrimage that precedes the Eid.

Ashraf Sahwi, who was among hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who fled from Gaza City earlier in the war and is also living in a tent, has no idea when or if he'll be able to return.

"We don't even know what happened to our houses or whether we'll be able to live in them again, or if it's even possible to rebuild," he said.

Abdelsattar al-Batsh said he and his family of seven haven't eaten meat since the war began. A kilogram (2 pounds) of meat costs 200 shekels (around \$50). A live sheep, which could be bought for as little as \$200 before the war, now costs \$1,300 — if it's even available.

"Today, there is only war. No money. No work. Our houses have been destroyed. I have nothing," al-Batsh said.

Iyad al-Bayouk, who owns a now-shuttered cattle farm in southern Gaza, said severe shortages of both livestock and feed due to Israel's blockade have driven up prices. Some local farms have been turned into shelters.

Mohammed Abdel Rahim, who has been sheltering in a building in an empty cattle farm in central Gaza for months, said the farm-turned-shelter was particularly bad in the winter, when it smelled like animals and was infested with bugs. As the heat set in, the ground dried out, making it more bearable, he said.

Abdelkarim Motawq, another displaced Palestinian from northern Gaza, used to work in the local meat industry, which did brisk business ahead of the holiday. This year, his family can only afford rice and beans.

"I wish I could work again," he said. "It was a busy season for me, during which I would bring money home and buy food, clothing, nuts, and meat for my children. But today there's nothing left."

How Elon Musk's \$44.9B Tesla pay package compares with the most generous plans for other U.S. CEOs

By TOM KRISHER AP Auto Writer

Even though the median U.S. CEO pay package last year was nearly 200 times more than a worker in the middle of their company pay scales, Elon Musk's record-setting Tesla compensation dwarfs them by comparison.

Tesla shareholders on Thursday voted overwhelmingly in favor of restoring Musk's 10-year pay plan, valued by the company in April at \$44.9 billion. It was worth more early in the year, but Tesla's stock value has fallen about 25% since then.

The all-stock package, approved by the board and shareholders in 2018, rewards Musk for hitting milestones that include raising Tesla's market value, pretax income and revenue.

It had been tossed out by a Delaware judge in January who said the process for approving it was "deeply flawed." The court ruled that Musk controlled the company's board, and shareholders weren't fully informed.

But the company said Musk deserves the pay because he turned Tesla into the top-selling electric vehicle maker in the world, increasing its market value by billions.

Even with the reapproval vote, Musk won't get access to the stock options just yet. Tesla is expected to ask the judge to revisit her decision in light of the vote, and if she doesn't, the company probably will appeal the ruling to Delaware's Supreme Court. The whole process could take months.

No matter the outcome, Musk's package — the largest award to a CEO of a U.S. public company — is far above what's been granted to other chief executives. Here's how the package compares:

WITH THE MEDIAN CEO PAY

The median pay package for an S&P 500 U.S. CEO last year was \$16.3 million, according to data analyzed for The Associated Press by Equilar. If you multiply that by 10 to get \$163 million for a decade of work, Musk's earnings still would be 275 times greater.

In her January ruling that struck down the package, Delaware Chancellor Kathaleen St. Jude McCormick wrote that Musk's package, then worth about \$56 billion, was 250 times larger than the median peer CEO's pay plan.

WITH INDIVIDUAL CEOS

The top earner in the AP's survey was Hock Tan, CEO of artificial intelligence company Broadcom Inc. His package, mostly consisting of stock awards, was valued at about \$162 million, when given to Tan at the start of fiscal 2023. Thanks to a surging stock price, Broadcom in March valued Tan's pay package, plus older options he hadn't yet cashed in, at \$767.7 million. That's an amount easily eclipsed by Musk's potential haul of 304 million shares worth almost \$45 billion.

Other CEOs at the top of AP's survey are William Lansing of Fair Isaac Corp, (\$66.3 million); Tim Cook of Apple Inc. (\$63.2 million); Hamid Moghadam of Prologis Inc. (\$50.9 million); and Ted Sarandos, co-CEO of Netflix (\$49.8 million).

Technically, Musk got no compensation last year because he didn't get any stock options. But he stands to get even richer if his pay package goes through.

WITH TESLA WORKERS

It's difficult to calculate what Musk's annual pay would have been last year. The company says he got nothing. But if his compensation package makes it through the courts, his pay will be in the billions. According to the company's proxy filing this year, the median annual pay of a non-CEO Tesla employee last year was \$45,811.

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Today in History: June 16

Donald Trump launches presidential campaign

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, June 16, the 168th day of 2024. There are 198 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 16, 2015, real estate mogul Donald Trump launched his successful campaign to become president of the United States with a speech at Trump Tower in Manhattan.

On this date:

In 1858, accepting the Illinois Republican Party's nomination for the U.S. Senate, Abraham Lincoln said the slavery issue had to be resolved, declaring, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

In 1903, Ford Motor Co. was incorporated.

In 1933, the National Industrial Recovery Act became law with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's signature. (The Act was later struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court.)

In 1941, National Airport (now Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport) opened for business with a ceremony attended by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In 1963, the world's first female space traveler, Valentina Tereshkova (teh-ruhsh-KOH'-vuh), 26, was launched into orbit by the Soviet Union aboard Vostok 6; Tereshkova spent 71 hours in flight, circling the Earth 48 times before returning safely.

In 1970, Kenneth A. Gibson of Newark, New Jersey, became the first Black politician elected mayor of a major Northeast city. Chicago Bears running back Brian Piccolo, 26, died at a New York hospital after battling cancer.

In 1977, Soviet Communist Party General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev was named president, becoming the first person to hold both posts simultaneously.

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter and Panamanian leader Omar Torrijos (toh-REE'-ohs) signed the instruments of ratification for the Panama Canal treaties during a ceremony in Panama City.

In 1999, Thabo Mbeki (TAH'-boh um-BEH'-kee) took the oath as president of South Africa, succeeding Nelson Mandela.

In 2011, U.S. Rep. Anthony Weiner, D-N.Y., announced his resignation from Congress, bowing to the furor caused by his sexually charged online dalliances with a former porn performer and other women.

In 2013, Justin Rose captured his first major championship and became the first Englishman in 43 years to win the U.S. Open, shooting a closing 70 at Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, Pennsylvania, for a 1-over 281 total.

In 2016, Walt Disney Co. opened Shanghai Disneyland, its first theme park in mainland China.

In 2017, President Donald Trump acknowledged for the first time that he was under federal investigation as part of the expanding probe into Russia's election meddling as he lashed out at a top Justice Department official overseeing the inquiry.

In 2018, a 23-foot-long python swallowed a 54-year-old woman in central Indonesia, an extremely rare occurrence.

In 2020, federal authorities announced murder and attempted murder charges against an Air Force sergeant, Steven Carrillo, in the fatal shooting of a federal security officer outside a U.S. courthouse in Oakland, California. (Carrillo, who had ties to the far-right, anti-government "boogaloo" movement, pleaded guilty to a federal murder charge after prosecutors agreed not to seek the death penalty.)

In 2022, witnesses testified to the Jan. 6 committee that Donald Trump's closest advisers viewed his last-ditch efforts to pressure Vice President Mike Pence to reject the tally of state electors and overturn the 2020 election as "nuts," "crazy" and even likely to incite riots.

In 2023, Daniel Ellsberg, the government analyst and whistleblower who leaked the Pentagon Papers in 1971, died at age 92.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Eileen Atkins is 90. Actor Bill Cobbs is 90. Author Joyce Carol Oates is 86. Country

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singer Billy "Crash" Craddock is 86. R&B singer Eddie Levert is 82. Actor Joan Van Ark is 81. Actor Geoff Pierson is 75. Boxing Hall of Famer Roberto Duran is 73. Pop singer Gino Vannelli is 72. Actor Laurie Metcalf is 69. Actor Arnold Vosloo is 62. Actor Danny Burstein is 60. Model-actor Jenny Shimizu is 57. Actor James Patrick Stuart is 56. Rapper MC Ren is 55. Actor Clifton Collins Jr. is 54. Golfer Phil Mickelson is 54. Actor John Cho is 52. Actor Eddie Cibrian is 51. Actor Fred Koehler is 49. Actor China (chee-nah) Shavers is 47. Actor Daniel Bruhl is 46. Bluegrass musician Caleb Smith (Balsam Range) is 46. Actor Sibel Kekilli is 44. Actor Missy Peregrym (PEH'-rih-grihm) is 42. Actor Olivia Hack is 41. Singer Diana DeGarmo (TV: "American Idol") is 37. Actor Ali Stroker is 37. Tennis player Bianca Andreescu is 24.