

Groton Daily Independent

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Sunday, June 23

Junior Legion at Clark Tournament
Legion at Northville Tournament
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 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 Daily Independent
PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445
Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460

Life is like a Camera..

Focus on what's important,
Capture good times,
Develop from negatives, and
if things dont work out..
Take another shot!



Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m. (Julia (Grenz) and Jordan Kroll will be the guest speakers)

St. John's Lutheran: Worship at St. John's, 9 a.m., and at Zion, 11 a.m.

Monday, June 24

Senior Menu: Sloppy Joe on bun, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, fruit, whole wheat bread.

Junior Teeners host Watertown, 5 p.m. (2)

U12 B/W at Sisseton, 5:30 p.m. (2)

U8 R/B hosts Britton, 5:30 p.m. (4)

SB at Mellette (U8 at 6 p.m. (1), U10 Gld at 7 p.m. (2))

The Pantry at Community Center, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Groton Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, Potluck at noon

Blood Drive at the Groton Community Center, 1:15 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

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Governor Noem Signs Emergency Declaration for Storms and Flooding

PIERRE, S.D. – Today, Governor Kristi Noem signed Executive Order 2024-04 declaring an emergency for the recent storms and associated flooding. State agencies have already been responding and will continue assisting local governments throughout the emergency.

"Even though the rain is slowing down, we need to keep vigilant. The worst of the flooding along our rivers will be Monday and Tuesday," said Governor Kristi Noem. "Check SD511.org for updates on road conditions, and please reach out to your county emergency manager if you have immediate needs."

The EO also issued a "no boating declaration" on the waters of Lake Alvin in Lincoln County, Lake Henry in Bon Homme County, Marindahl Lake in Yankton County, Menno Lake in Hutchinson County, and Swan Lake in Turner County, South Dakota.

*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 J1340 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 JUKOKYO KABUSHIKI KAISHA.

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Governor Noem Declares "No Boating" on Several South Eastern South Dakota Lakes

PIERRE, S.D. - In order to protect public health, safety and private property, South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem has enacted a "no boating declaration" into effect on the waters of:

Lake Alvin in Lincoln County,
Lake Henry in Bon Homme County,
Marindahl Lake in Yankton County,
Menno Lake in Hutchinson County,
Swan Lake in Turner County,
Wall Lake in Minnehaha County,
Lake Vermillion in McCook County, South Dakota.

Noem's declaration states, "This restriction shall be in full force and effect from this date forward until modified or removed by a subsequent declaration by the Office of the Governor, or by Kevin Robling, Secretary of the Department of Game, Fish and Parks, who I am hereby appointing as my designee in order to enable him to add to, delete or modify boating restrictions for any bodies of water similarly affected in South Dakota."

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Groton Post 39 Firing On All Cylinders Against Claremont Post 262 Honkers 18U

By GameChanger Media

Groton Post 39 easily dispatched Claremont Post 262 Honkers 18U on Saturday, 11-1.

Groton Post 39 got on the board in the bottom of the first inning after Bradin Althoff doubled, Ryan Groeblichhoff walked, and Groton Post 39 scored on a wild pitch, each scoring one run.

Groton Post 39 added to their early lead in the bottom of the second inning after Brevin Flihs walked, and Claremont Post 262 Honkers 18U committed an error, each scoring one run.

Groton Post 39 added to their early lead in the bottom of the third inning when Flihs tripled, scoring three runs, and Althoff singled, scoring one run.

Taylor Diegel earned the win for Groton Post 39. The righty surrendered three hits and one run over three and one-third innings, striking out six and walking none. Tristan Leidholt took the loss for Claremont Post 262 Honkers 18U. The starting pitcher went two and two-thirds innings, allowing nine runs (eight earned) on four hits, striking out two and walking eight. Althoff appeared in relief for Groton Post 39.

Althoff and Flihs each collected two hits for Groton Post 39. Flihs went 2-for-2 at the plate as they led the team with three runs batted in. Groeblichhoff paced Groton Post 39 with three walks. Overall, the team had patience at the plate, accumulating nine walks for the game. Flihs stole two bases.

Will Schuller led Claremont Post 262 Honkers 18U with one run batted in. The third baseman went 1-for-2 on the day. Chris Cutler, Schuller, and Kassen Keough each collected one hit for Claremont Post 262 Honkers 18U. Keough stole two bases.

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Groton Post 39 Take Lead And Never Look Back In Win Over Castlewood Post 250

By GameChanger Media

Groton Post 39 easily dispatched Castlewood Post 250 on Saturday, 9-0.

Groton Post 39 opened the scoring in the second after Bradin Althoff doubled, scoring three runs.

A single by Taylor Diegel, and a walk by Althoff helped Groton Post 39 extend their early lead in the third.

Dillon Abeln earned the win for Groton Post 39. The starting pitcher gave up two hits and zero runs over five innings, striking out six and walking none. Brody Bass took the loss for Castlewood Post 250. They went four innings, allowing nine runs on seven hits, striking out three and walking eight.

Groton Post 39 tallied 10 hits in the game. Althoff provided pop in the middle of the lineup, and led Groton Post 39 with three runs batted in. They went 1-for-2 on the day. Karsten Flihs and Brevin Flihs each collected two hits for Groton Post 39. Groton Post 39 had patience at the plate, collecting eight walks for the game. Abeln, Flihs, and Diegel led the team with two walks each. Flihs stole two bases. Groton Post 39 didn't commit a single error in the field. Althoff had the most chances in the field with seven.

Watson Grantham and Riggs Prouty each collected one hit for Castlewood Post 250.

Next up for Groton Post 39 is a game at Warner-Ipswich-Northwestern Legion on Sunday.

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Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 Defeat Tri-Valley Mustangs 16U Maroon In Nail-Biter

By GameChanger Media

Despite seeing their 5-run lead whittled down by the end, Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 still held off for an 8-7 victory on Saturday. Tri-Valley Mustangs 16U Maroon closed the gap by scoring on a single, a double, and an error.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 got on the board in the top of the first inning after Gavin Englund lined out, and Jarrett Erdmann walked, each scoring one run.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 added one run in the third after Tristin McGannon was struck by a pitch.

Tri-Valley Mustangs 16U Maroon tied the game in the bottom of the third thanks to a single by Alex Wingen, and a double by Tristen Bunde.

In the top of the fifth inning, Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 went back into the lead after Erdmann walked, and Jackson Williams balked, each scoring one run.

Englund stepped on the bump first for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. The right-handed pitcher surrendered eight hits and five runs over six and two-thirds innings, striking out nine and walking four. Williams stepped on the hill first for Tri-Valley Mustangs 16U Maroon. The starting pitcher surrendered four hits and seven runs over six innings, striking out one and walking five. Erdmann appeared in relief for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39.

Englund and Jordan Schwan were tough to handle back-to-back in the lineup, as each drove in one run for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. Jordan Schwan led Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 with two hits in three at bats. Erdmann and Jordan Schwan each stole multiple bases for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39.

Tri-Valley Mustangs 16U Maroon collected 10 hits in the game. Tristen Bunde provided pop in the middle of the lineup, and led Tri-Valley Mustangs 16U Maroon with four runs batted in. The infielder went 2-for-4 on the day. Wingen went 3-for-4 at the plate to lead Tri-Valley Mustangs 16U Maroon in hits. Tri-Valley Mustangs 16U Maroon ran wild on the base paths, tallying six stolen bases for the game.

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Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 Fall In Back-And-Forth Affair Against Colton Teeners

By GameChanger Media

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 and Teeners passed the lead back-and-forth on Saturday, but eventually Teeners prevailed 18-7. The game was tied at six in the top of the eighth when Jeter Scoular drew a walk, scoring one run.

Teeners got on the board in the first inning after a wild pitch scored one run.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 jumped back into the lead in the bottom of the first inning after Jarrett Erdmann singled, and Nick Groeblichhoff doubled, each scoring one run.

Aiden Kelly lined out, which helped Teeners tie the game at two in the top of the third.

In the bottom of the fourth, Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 broke up the tie when Gavin Kroll was struck by a pitch, driving in a run. Then a hit by a pitch followed to extend the lead to 4-2.

Teeners made the score 5-4 in the top of the sixth after Jeter Scoular singled, scoring two runs, and Keaton Johnson drew a walk, scoring one run.

Erdmann walked, which helped Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 tie the game at five in the bottom of the sixth.

A walk by Tyler Heinje gave Teeners the lead, 6-5, in the top of the seventh.

Alex Abeln walked, which helped Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 tie the game at six in the bottom of the seventh.

Teeners flipped the game on its head in the top of the eighth, scoring 12 runs on two hits to take a 18-6 lead. The biggest blow in the inning was a walk by Mason Allen that drove in two.

Erdmann opened the game for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. The southpaw surrendered three hits and two runs (one earned) over five innings, striking out nine and walking five. Keaton Johnson began the game

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for Teeners. The starting pitcher allowed five hits and four runs (two earned) over four innings, striking out four and walking two.

Erdmann drove the middle of the lineup, leading Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 with two runs batted in. The left-handed hitter went 1-for-4 on the day. Jordan Schwan went 3-for-5 at the plate to lead Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 in hits. Groeblichhoff collected two hits for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 in four at bats. Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 had a strong eye at the plate, amassing six walks for the game. Lincoln Krause and Abeln led the team with two free passes each. Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 were sure-handed in the field and didn't commit a single error. Gavin Englund had the most chances in the field with 11.

Jaxson Wiese and Jeter Scoular each collected two hits for Teeners. Jaxson Wiese, Mack Koplín, and Jeter Scoular each drove in two runs for Teeners. Keaton Johnson led Teeners with three walks. Overall, the team had a strong eye at the plate, accumulating 16 walks for the game. Mason Allen stole two bases. Teeners turned one double play in the game.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 will travel to Hamlin Area 16U for their next game on Thursday.

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GROTON
CUSTOMER APPRECIATION



Walking Tacos!

11 am - 2 pm
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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26

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Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 **8 - 7** Tri-Valley Mustangs 16U Maroon

📍 Away 📅 Saturday June 22, 2024

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R	H	E
GRTN	2	0	1	0	2	2	1	8	6	3
TR-V	0	0	3	0	0	0	4	7	10	3

BATTING

Groton Jr. Legion P	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
L Krause (C)	4	1	1	0	0	0
Jordan Schwan (L...	3	3	2	1	1	0
G Englund (P, 3B)	2	0	1	1	2	0
J Erdmann (CF, P)	2	1	0	0	2	1
N Groeblichhoff (...)	4	1	1	0	0	0
T McGannon (3B,...)	2	0	0	0	0	1
A Abeln (SS)	4	0	1	0	0	0
G Kroll (RF)	4	0	0	0	0	1
Shayden Wood (...)	0	1	0	0	0	0
K Antonsen (2B)	1	1	0	0	0	0
Totals	26	8	6	2	5	3

2B: G Englund, **TB:** L Krause, G Englund 2, N Groeblichhoff, Jordan Schwan 2, A Abeln, **CS:** G Englund, **HBP:** T McGannon 2, K Antonsen 2, **SB:** J Erdmann 2, T McGannon, Jordan Schwan 2, **LOB:** 6

PITCHING

Groton Jr. Le	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
G Englund	6.2	8	5	5	4	9	0
T McGannon	0.0	2	2	1	0	0	0
J Erdmann	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	7.0	10	7	6	4	9	0

W: G Englund, **P-S:** J Erdmann 6-3, G Englund 107-65, T McGannon 6-3, **WP:** J Erdmann 2, G Englund 2, **BF:** J Erdmann 2, G Englund 31, T McGannon 2

Tri-Valley Mustang	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
M Hemme (2B, P)	3	1	1	0	1	1
A Wingen (SS)	4	2	3	2	0	0
Tristen Bunde (3B...	4	1	2	4	0	1
J Williams (P, 3B)	3	0	1	0	1	0
D Bicknase (1B)	4	0	1	0	0	0
P Atwood (C)	3	0	0	0	0	2
K Bernards (RF)	2	0	0	0	1	2
G Egger (LF)	3	0	1	0	0	0
P Hemme (CF)	3	1	0	0	0	2
O Bunde (RF)	2	2	1	0	1	1
Totals	31	7	10	6	4	9

2B: O Bunde, A Wingen, Tristen Bunde 2, **TB:** D Bicknase, O Bunde 2, A Wingen 4, M Hemme, G Egger, J Williams, Tristen Bunde 4, **SB:** P Hemme, D Bicknase, K Bernards, O Bunde, M Hemme, G Egger, **LOB:** 7

Tri-Valley Mu	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
J Williams	6.0	4	7	7	5	1	0
M Hemme	1.0	2	1	1	0	2	0
Totals	7.0	6	8	8	5	3	0

L: J Williams, **P-S:** M Hemme 23-12, J Williams 106-56, **WP:** M Hemme, J Williams 7, **HBP:** J Williams 4, **BF:** M Hemme 5, J Williams 30

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Teeners 18 - 7 Groton Jr. Legion Post 39

📍 Home 📅 Saturday June 22, 2024

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	R	H	E
TNRS	1	0	1	0	0	3	1	12	18	8	4
GRTN	2	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	7	7	0

BATTING

Teeners	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
Jaxson Wiese (CF)	4	2	2	2	2	2
Keaton Johnson (...)	2	2	1	0	3	0
Mack Koplin (1B, P)	3	2	1	2	1	2
Tyler Heinje (C)	4	1	0	0	2	3
Zach Karges (SS, ...)	4	1	0	1	1	1
Aiden Kelly (3B)	4	1	0	0	1	1
Derek Karst (LF)	2	0	1	0	1	0
Lance Engebrets...	0	1	0	0	0	0
Brady Allen	0	2	0	1	0	0
Mason Allen (2B)	2	3	1	0	2	0
Will Muellenbach...	3	1	0	0	2	1
Jeter Scoular (RF, ...)	4	2	2	2	1	1
Totals	32	18	8	8	16	11

TB: Jeter Scoular 2, Mason Allen, Mack Koplin, Jaxson Wiese 2, Derek Karst, Keaton Johnson, **HBP:** Brady Allen, Mason Allen, Mack Koplin 2, Derek Karst, Keaton Johnson, **SB:** Mason Allen 2, Jaxson Wiese, Will Muellenbach, Keaton Johnson, **LOB:** 14

PITCHING

Teeners	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
Keaton Joh...	4.0	5	4	2	2	4	0
Jeter Scoular	2.0	1	1	1	3	2	0
Mack Koplin	2.0	1	0	0	1	2	0
Totals	8.0	7	7	5	6	8	0

Groton Jr. Legion F	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
L Krause (SS, LF, P)	3	2	1	0	2	2
Kolton Antonsen...	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jordan Schwan (L...	5	0	3	1	0	1
G Englund (C)	2	1	0	1	1	2
J Erdmann (P, 1B)	4	0	1	2	1	0
T McGannon (CF, ...)	4	1	0	0	0	2
N Groeblichhoff (...)	4	1	2	1	0	0
A Abeln (1B, 2B, S...	2	1	0	0	2	0
K Antonsen (2B, P...	2	0	0	0	0	1
G Kroll (RF, LF)	3	1	0	1	0	0
Totals	29	7	7	6	6	8

2B: N Groeblichhoff, **TB:** Jordan Schwan 3, N Groeblichhoff 3, L Krause, J Erdmann, **SAC:** K Antonsen, **CS:** Jordan Schwan, J Erdmann, **HBP:** G Kroll, G Englund 2, K Antonsen, **LOB:** 11

Groton Jr. Le	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
J Erdmann	5.0	3	2	1	5	9	0
K Antonsen	0.2	3	3	3	3	0	0
T McGannon	1.2	0	3	3	3	1	0
L Krause	0.1	2	8	8	5	0	0
N Groeblich...	0.1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Totals	8.0	8	18	17	16	11	0

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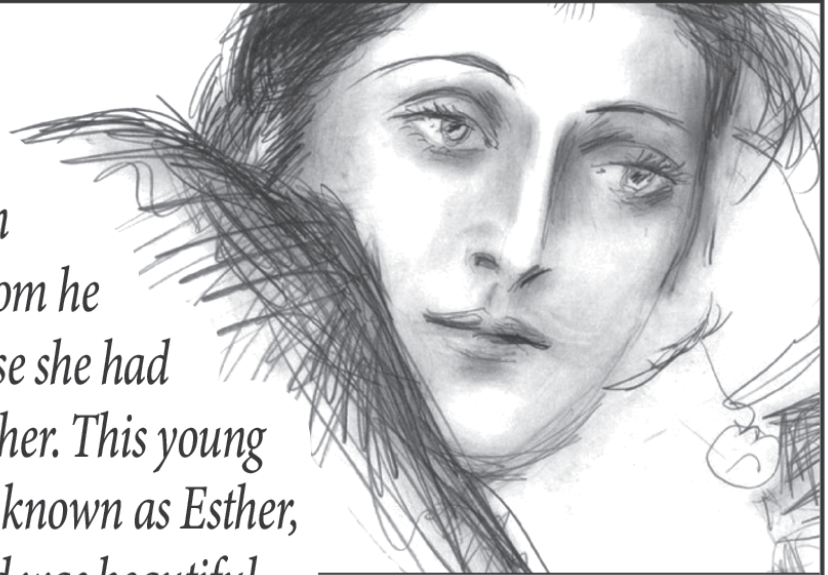
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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

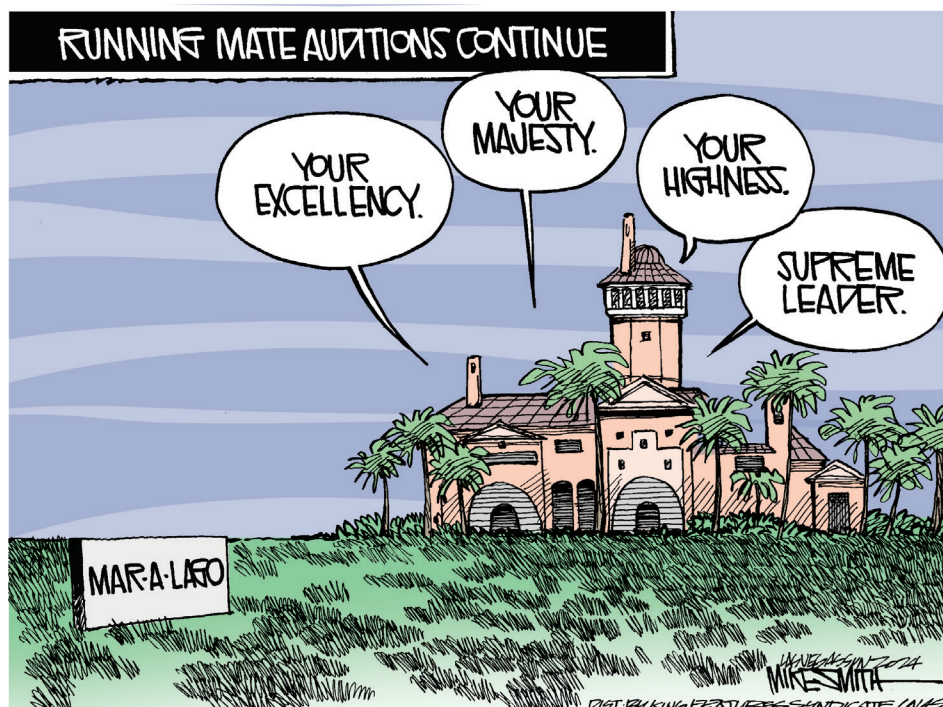
Mordecai had a cousin named Hadassah, whom he had brought up because she had neither father nor mother. This young woman, who was also known as Esther, had a lovely figure and was beautiful.

ESTHER 2:7



Detail of "Portrait of Dora Maar" by Pablo Picasso (1937)

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BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of 2 Thessalonians (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. From Song of Solomon 8, what is so powerful that many waters cannot quench it? *Hope, Love, Salvation, Peace*

3. Which book begins, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past"? *Philippians, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews*

4. Thorns and what else grew from the ground that God cursed after Adam and Eve's sin? *Vines, Ivy, Thistles, Weeds*

5. According to Paul, in hardships, Christians are more than _____. *Friends, Conquerors, Warriors, Innkeepers*

6. From Luke 19, what town was home to Zacchaeus? *Jericho, Tarsus, Thessalonica, Corinth*

ANSWERS: 1) New, 2) Love, 3) Hebrews, 4) Thistles, 5) Conquerors, 6) Jericho

Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online.

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HE'S MUISE.
An' he's KAY.
WE'RE GUARD-HAWKS.
We're real good, too.



WHAT'S OUR SECRET, MUISE?
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE!
FAST AN' REGULAR.



So, we're MUISE an' KAY.
YEAH, WE'RE UP HERE MAKING SURE THOSE WORKERS KEEP THEIR EYES DOWN.



Some of 'em are on work release -- like THESE two.

An' the UNION birds don't like SCABS.



HEH! BAD FIGHT TO PICK.

Yeah, these scabs can SCRAP.



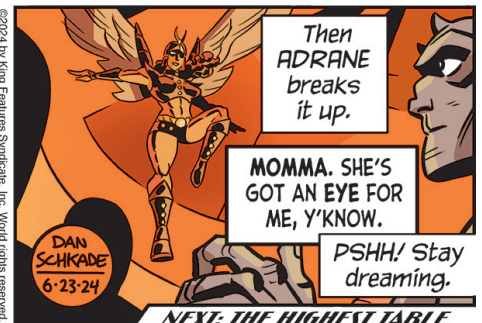
THE WORK CHIEF STARTS ON ABOUT HOW THE MARTIAL LAW IS HURTING THE WORKERS...

Time we shut him UP.



BUT THEY ACTUALLY DEFEND HIM!

LIKE WE'RE THE BAD GUYS HERE!



Then ADRANE breaks it up.

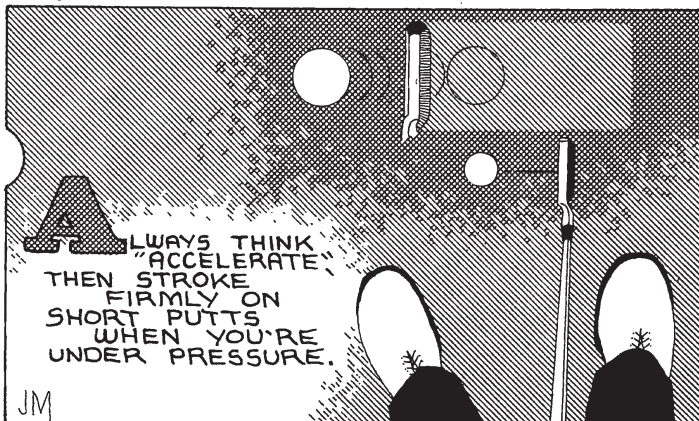
MOMMA. SHE'S GOT AN EYE FOR ME, Y'KNOW.

PSHH! Stay dreaming.

DAN SCHKADE
6-23-24

NEXT: THE HIGHEST TABLE

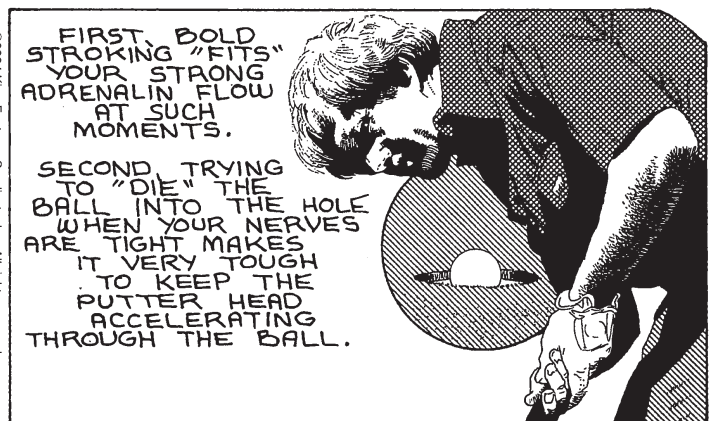
Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



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

JM

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

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



Medicines Usually Maintain Efficacy Past Their Expiration Dates

DEAR DR. ROACH: I recently tested positive for COVID using an expired home test, and I self-isolated for five days. I also realized every Tylenol, antihistamine, DayQuil, NyQuil and allergy pill that I had was past its expiration date. Some were only expired by a few months, but most were expired by two to four years. I guess I don't get sick often.

My question is: Before I dispose of these, how effective are they, and are any of them dangerous to use? -- K.L.

ANSWER: Drug manufacturers are required to make expiration dates, and they guarantee that the drugs are what they say they are and are effective until a certain date (at least if they are properly stored in a cool and

dark area). This does not necessarily mean that they become ineffective or dangerous after expiring, and many drugs have been proven to maintain efficacy for years or decades after the printed expiration date.

A military study found that 90% of drugs are still effective 15 years after expiration. It is rare for a drug to become dangerous; however, the tetracycline class of antibiotics is one where toxicity has been found.

In general, if a drug is a few months to a year past its expiration date, it is probably OK. (Liquid drugs, nitroglycerin and insulin are notable exceptions.) But at some point, you have to ask yourself whether it is worth the small risk of the medicine being less effective, especially for inexpensive over-the-counter (OTC) drugs.

Also, COVID test kits may have an extended expiration date. The Food and Drug Administration maintains a list at [tinyurl.com/COVIDTestKitExpire](https://www.fda.gov/oc/ohrt/COVIDTestKitExpire).

DEAR DR. ROACH: Can you comment on N-acetyl cysteine (NAC), an OTC supplement for psychiatric illness? I am interested in its safety and effectiveness and whether there any side effects or cautions when taking it.

Also, what is the safe daily dosage, and how long does it take for benefits to occur? -- L.B.

ANSWER: NAC has been intravenously used for many years in medicine as a specific antidote to acetaminophen toxicity. It is also used via inhalation to thin out thick mucus so that it can be coughed out. As you say, several recent studies have looked at its effectiveness with a variety of mental health issues, including depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and cannabis use disorder. Although there is a risk of a severe allergic response when used intravenously, it is generally safe when used orally. Some studies have looked at the effectiveness of NAC by itself, while others looked to see whether NAC can improve outcomes in combination with the standard treatments.

Although the literature is mixed, I say that there is promise with this treatment. When I recommend it, it is most commonly with patients who do not want to use the standard treatments or who want the lowest possible dosage. The dose used in most studies is 1-3 grams daily.

In one well-done study that looked at adults with major depression, the group who combined NAC with the standard treatment showed superiority over those who received the standard treatment alone. The difference was seen after 20 weeks of treatment. Not all studies showed a benefit.

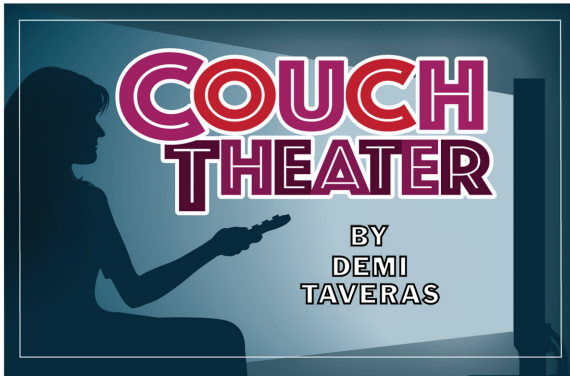
I want to emphasize that an OTC supplement, no matter how promising, is not a substitute for medical care, especially psychiatric care. If you have a mental health issue, ask your mental health provider about NAC.

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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Isabel DeRoy-Olson, left, and Lily Gladstone star in "Fancy Dance."

Courtesy of AppleTV+

"A Family Affair" (PG-13) -- From the producers of "Anyone but You," this rom-com is led by quite the interesting trio -- Nicole Kidman ("Expats"), Zac Efron ("The Iron Claw"), and Joey King ("The Kissing Booth" trilogy) -- with Kathy Bates and Liza Koshy co-starring. King plays Zara, the personal

assistant to celebrity Chris Cole (Efron), while Kidman plays Brooke, Zara's widowed mother. Upon learning that her boss of two years is hooking up with her mother, Zara understandably undergoes a bit of a crisis, especially knowing firsthand how much of a selfish man Chris can be. Amid Zara's protests, Brooke and Chris' relationship starts to deepen, as Brooke acknowledges that she hasn't felt this way in years since the death of her husband. So, will Zara continue to stand in her mother's way, or will Nicole Kidman get her happily ever after with Zac Efron? (Who would've thought!) Find out on June 28. (Netflix)

"Red Right Hand" (NR) -- In this action-thriller film out on June 28, Orlando Bloom dons a Southern accent to become Cash, a hardworking man who is just trying to live a quiet life with his niece and brother-in-law after the death of his sister. But his past wasn't as clean as his present, and the presence of the kingpin Big Cat (Andie MacDowell) in his town is a reminder of that tragic past. But when Cash finds out that his brother-in-law owes Big Cat a hefty sum of \$100,000, Big Cat starts showing her claws and terrorizes their family. So, Cash is left with no choice but to fall back into her trap, and he promises to do three jobs for her to repay the debt. Despite his honorable intentions, he quickly realizes that he underestimated the mercy Big Cat will show and buckles up to finally put the kitty down. (Hulu)

"Fancy Dance" (R) -- Erica Tremblay makes her feature directorial debut with the perfect actress to lead this emotional drama. Taking place on the Seneca-Cayuga Nation Reservation, Lily Gladstone ("Under the Bridge") stars as Jax, an aunt who is helping prepare her 13-year-old niece, Roki (Isabel DeRoy-Olson), for an upcoming powwow. Because Roki's mother recently went missing again, this powwow holds a special importance to Roki, and Jax tries her best to step up in Roki's mother's place. But law enforcement fails to show any desire to find Roki's mother, rather showing an interest in Jax's criminal background that they think makes her an unsuitable guardian. Even though they force Roki to live with her close-minded grandparents, the renegade Jax sneaks Roki out to embark on a journey to find her mother in time for the powwow. This moving film premieres June 28. (Apple TV+)

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1. Who was Stu Sutcliffe?
2. What was the name of Elvis Presley's first movie?
3. "Twist and Shout" and "Ask Me Why" were on which Beatles album?
4. Which group wrote and released "It's Your Thing"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Well, I came across a child of God, he was walking along the road."

Answers

1. Sutcliffe was the original bass guitarist of the Beatles, sometimes known as the Fifth Beatle. He was also a painter and preferred to head in that direction instead of stay in music. He died of a brain hemorrhage at the age of 22 while studying at an art college in Germany.
2. "Love Me Tender," in 1956. It was to be titled "The Reno Brothers" until Presley's recently released "Love Me Tender" song went gold and the film title was changed. Originally, his was a small part, but due to demand, Presley's role expanded.
3. Their debut album, "Please Please Me," in 1963.
4. The Isley Brothers, in 1969.
5. "Woodstock," by Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, in 1970. Written by Joni Mitchell, the CSNY cover tells the story of making a journey to the Woodstock festival, held at Max Yasgur's farm in Bethel, New York.

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GRIN *and* BEAR IT ^{Wagner}



"And to my gold-digger wife, I leave my pick and shovel."

Just Like Cats & Dogs ^{by Dave T. Phipps}



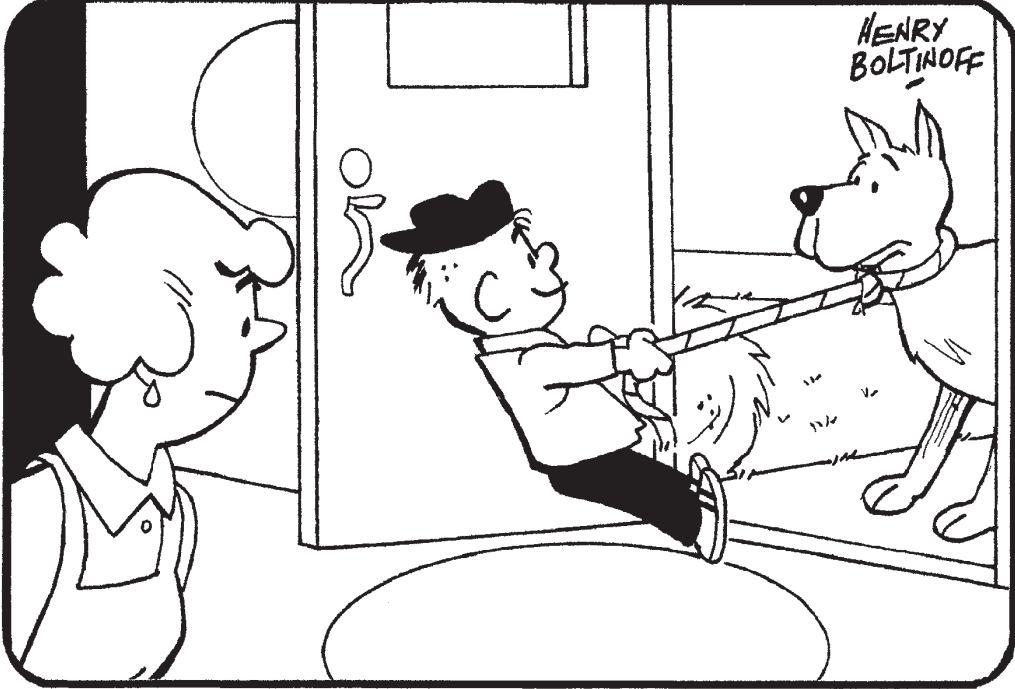
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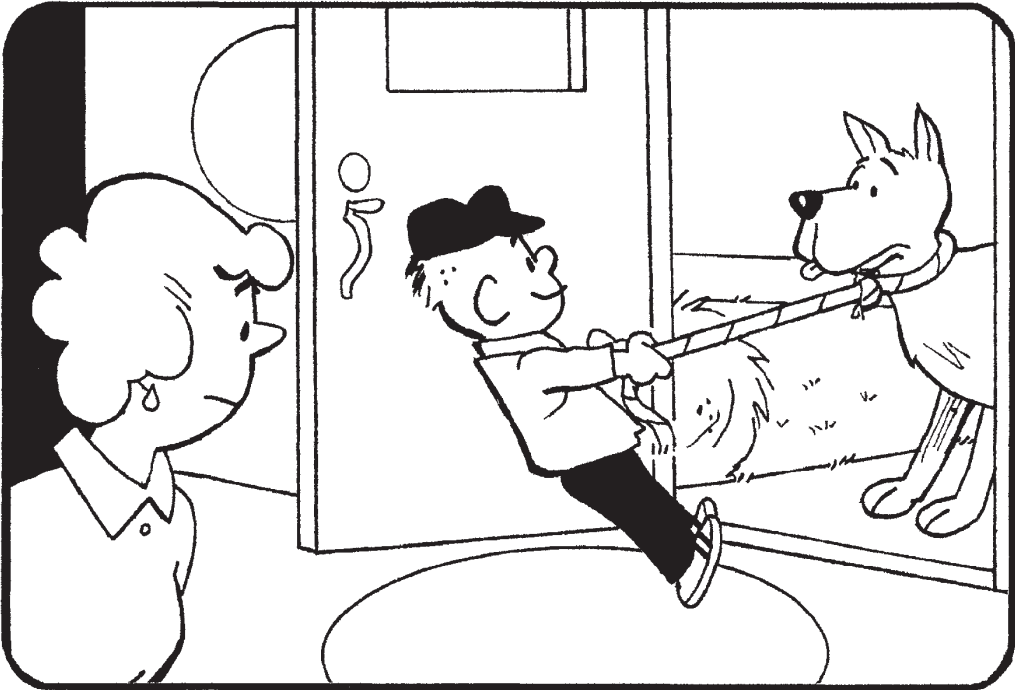
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTIHOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Legs are moved. 2. Hair is different. 3. Dog's leg is moved. 4. Cap is turned around. 5. Tongue is added. 6. Apron is missing.

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* My best tip for the beach? A laundry basket and a bungee cord. I put my cooler, bags and sand toys in the basket and pull it along the sand using the bungee. It has worked for me many times -- and it's so convenient to keep things corralled in! Here's more tips on beach vacationing. -- JoAnn

* Must-haves at the beach: Zipper-top bags for trash and clothespins to clip a napkin down so it won't blow away!

* "Freeze bottles of water (take out a sip or two to allow the ice to expand) and juice boxes or pouches before you head out to the beach (or anytime you're taking a cooler). They will act as ice packs to keep food and snacks cool, and double as refreshing beverages along the way!" -- A.A. in Florida

* "My eyesight started to falter a few years ago, and I had found that my glasses slipped and were uncomfortable during seaside trips. I dearly love to read, and have since discovered audiobooks, or books on tape. I download them to a digital music player and can listen all day if I like. It also allows me to people-watch and even doze off! I am almost 80, so I can do that if I feel like it!" -- R.A. in Connecticut

* "I keep an empty gallon jug in the trunk of my car. When I go to the beach, if there's no shower, I can fill it with water at a faucet and get a good rinse there before I leave." -- L.G. in Mississippi

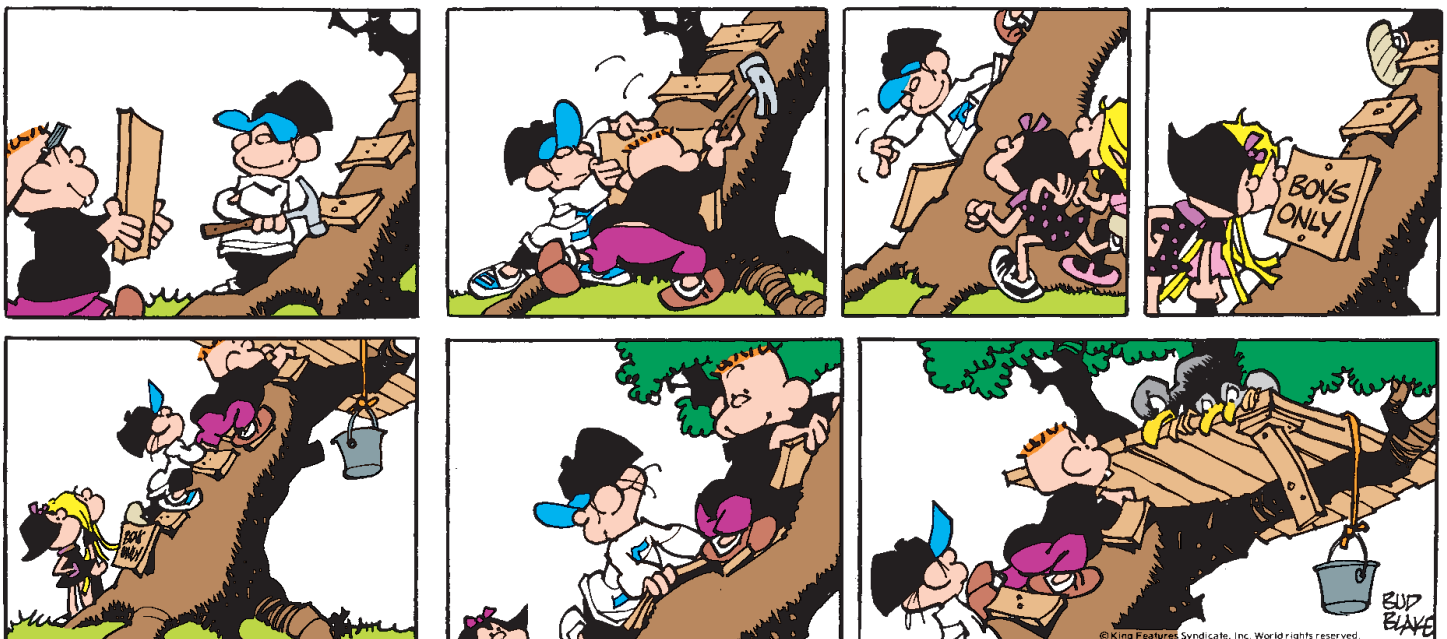
* "I bring a thin nylon bag to the beach in case I go shopping or collect shells, etc. It folds and zips down really small, so it takes up no room, but has come in handy most times that I've gone to the shore." -- T.T. in New York

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

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TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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BUD BLAKE

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Mortgage again, for short
- 5 Carried out
- 8 Classic Fords
- 12 Golf bag item
- 13 King, in Cannes
- 14 Black-and-white cookie
- 15 Candidate
- 17 Texas city
- 18 Fall flowers
- 19 Activate
- 21 Wee bit
- 22 Elevator name
- 23 Enjoy the Alps
- 26 "Family Guy" daughter
- 28 "Have —!"
- 31 Teller's partner
- 33 '60s war zone
- 35 Canyon sound
- 36 Loses color
- 38 eBay offer
- 40 Badge metal
- 41 Computer debut of 1998
- 43 Wrong (Pref.)
- 45 Tranquil
- 47 Circular window
- 51 War god
- 52 Cancel a choice
- 54 Pudding variety

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
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- 55 Greek H
- 56 Hardy cabbage
- 57 Deeds
- 58 Radiator sound
- 59 Lovers' quarrel
- 6 Winter Games org.
- 7 "Same here"
- 8 Like some jeans
- 9 Cut across
- 10 1920s art style
- 11 Anon
- 16 Baby carriage
- 20 Actress Hagen
- 23 Suntan lotion letters
- 24 Mauna —
- 25 Roundabout
- 27 Prattle
- 29 Sushi fish
- 30 Great weight
- 32 Archrivals
- 34 Brunch cocktails
- 37 — Diego
- 39 "Monopoly" cubes
- 42 Surrenders
- 44 Mopes
- 45 Poet Teasdale
- 46 Idle of Monty Python
- 48 Bound
- 49 Golden State sch.
- 50 Editor's "keep it"
- 53 UFO crew

DOWN

- 1 Morning co-host Kelly
- 2 Messes up
- 3 Yard fraction
- 4 Map within a map
- 5 City on the Elbe

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— King Crossword —

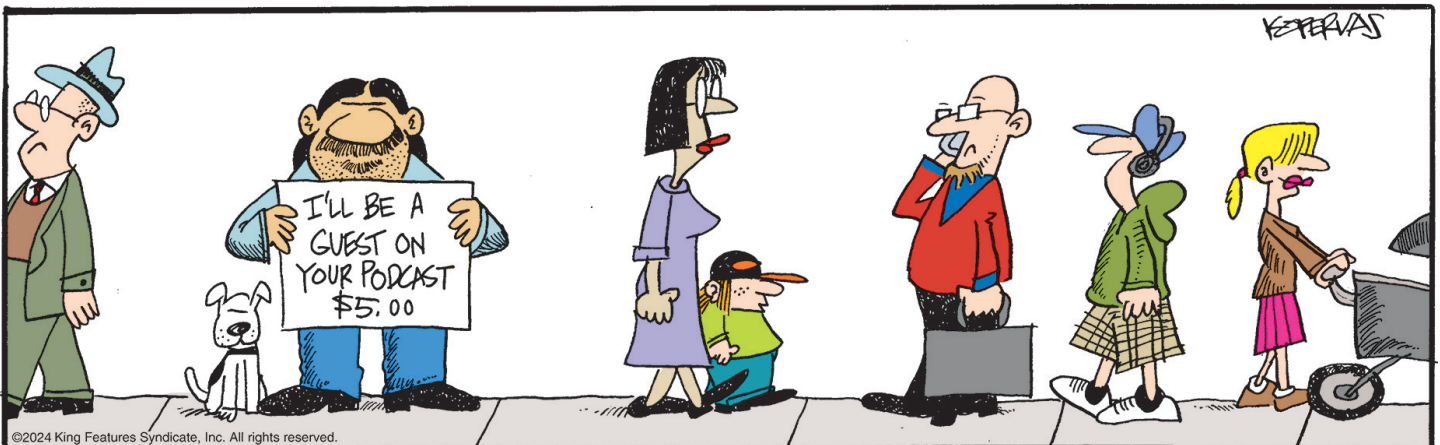
Answers

Solution time: 24 mins.

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Out on a Limb

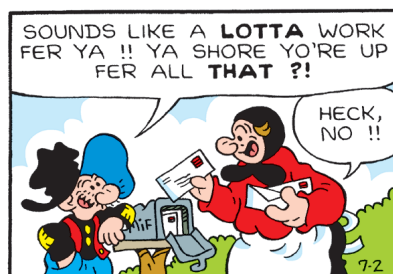
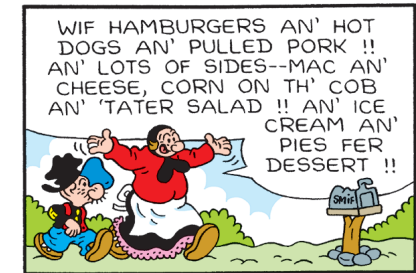
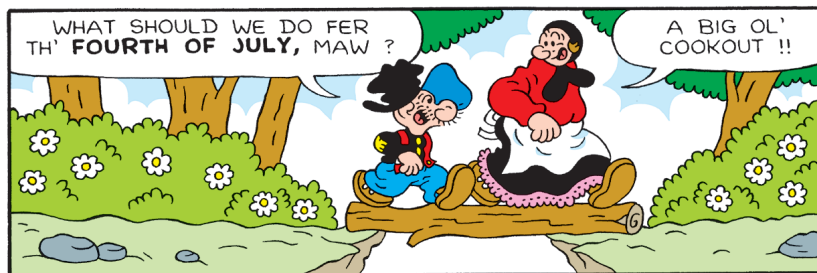
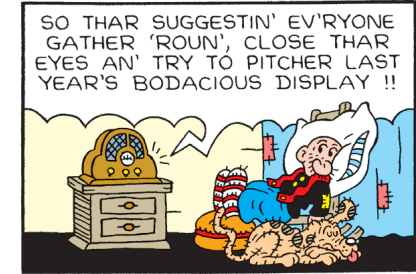
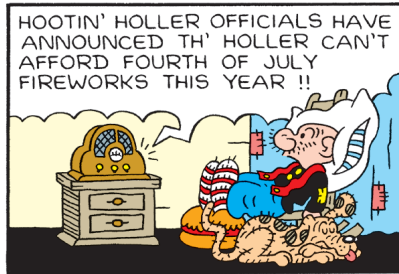
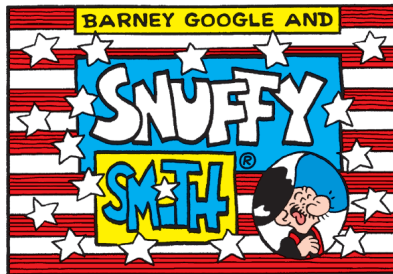
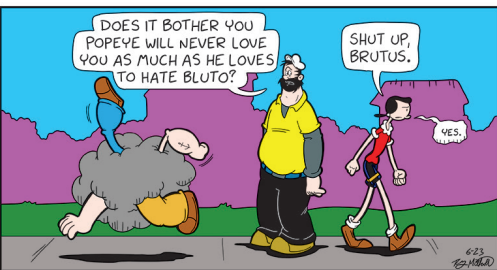
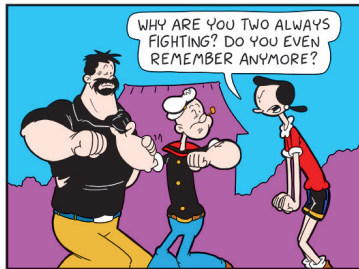
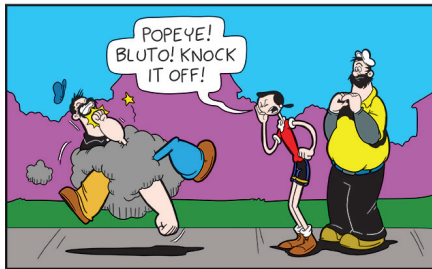
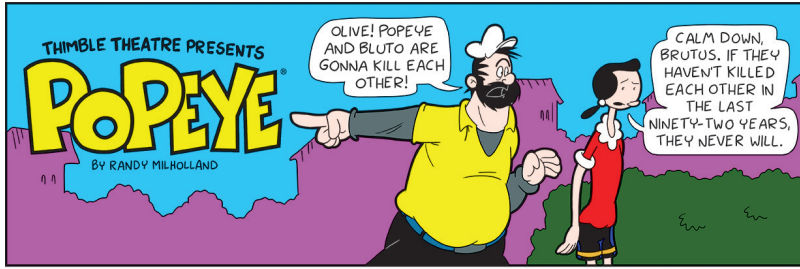
by Gary Kopervas



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Hal Foster's **Prince Valiant**

BY SCHULTZ AND YEATES

AT LONG LAST VAL'S INJURIES HAVE HEALED WELL ENOUGH TO ALLOW HIM TO RISE. THE BEDRIDDEN PRINCE HAS HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO NOTICE THE GROWING CLOSENESS BETWEEN GAWAIN AND RHODA - AND HE QUESTIONS HIS PARTNER'S INTENT. "THE RAKE YOU KNEW MAY HAVE CHANGED IN THE WEEK YOU SPENT AT DEATH'S DOOR." GAWAIN ALLOWS.

RHODA SPEAKS: "ALL IN LOCKBRAMBLE ARE DEEPLY INDEBTED TO YOUR SERVICE ON OUR BEHALF. ONCE YOU HAD CHASED ROGER FROM THE FIELD OF BATTLE, EVEN HIS GUARD WAS PERSUADED TO JOIN OUR CAUSE. MUCH BLOODSHED WAS AVOIDED..."

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"... AND LOCKBRAMBLE'S FUTURE..." HERE VAL CUTS IN: "AH! LOCKBRAMBLE'S FUTURE! I HAD THE MADDEST VISIONS WHILE IN THE FEVER - I SEEMED TO SEE YOU TWO DISCUSSING DEMOCRACY - COMMONERS GOVERNING THEMSELVES! MAD DREAMS!"

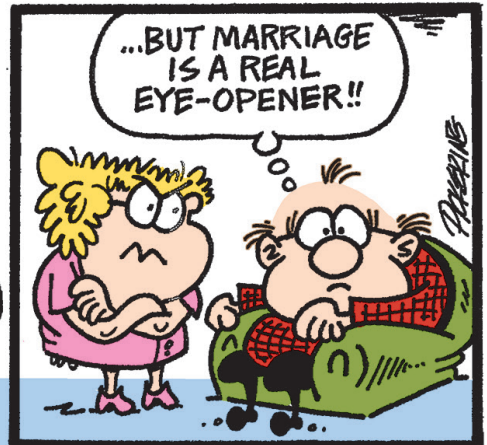
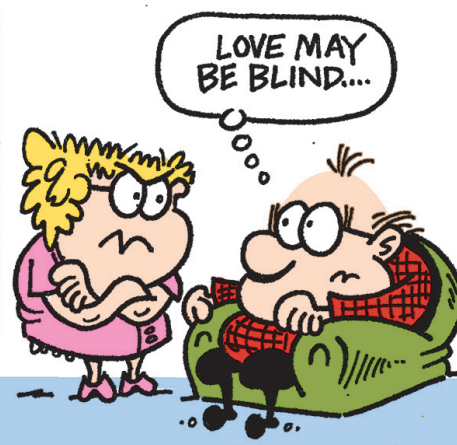
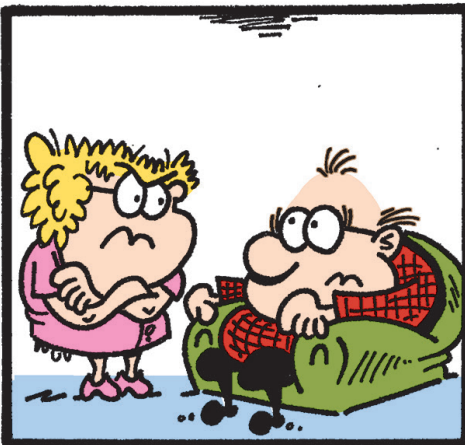
YEATES
4/28/13 3977

RHODA SMILES. "NOT SO MAD, PRINCE VALIANT. MUCH AS THE NORSE HAVE THEIR ALTHING, AND THE SAXONS HAVE THEIR FOLKMOT, I PRESENT TO YOU THE PROVISIONAL ALDERMEN OF THE NEW LOCKBRAMBLE. WE SHALL RULE OURSELVES." VAL CAN BARELY KEEP FROM COLLAPSING. SUCH A TRAVESTY IN FAIR ARTHUR'S KINGDOM? IT IS DISLOYAL AND UNNATURAL!

NEXT:
A good reason why

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Beware the pepper

Oh my goodness. There's an electric stove that turns itself on, with the heating elements spontaneously getting hot! Or the temperature changes all by itself!

And there is a garden tiller that, due to a faulty instruction manual, can come apart with the tines posing a laceration hazard when the machine is used.

And there is a vinegar cleaning solution that's so caustic there is a risk of chemical burns in consumers.

These warnings come courtesy of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (www.cpsc.gov/recalls).

In the case of the stove, the manufacturer is stepping up with a free inspection and repair.

The manufacturer of the tiller is sending out new assembly instructions.

The remedy for the caustic vinegar cleaning solution, however, is less than satisfactory. The response is to stop using it and send away for a new warning label to paste on the bottle.

Other recent recalls on the CPSC website include defective crib bumpers that can obstruct breathing, a pool drain cover that can entrap swimmers, a smoke and carbon monoxide detector that doesn't work, kids' pajamas that are a burn hazard and eyelid wipes for dogs that are full of bacteria.

So many defective products! And without product safety alerts we might never know, until someone we know gets hurt.

A few hints:

Before you buy a product, check online for any safety alerts.

Save your receipts when you buy products, especially those that are complicated enough to come with a user manual. Tape the receipt inside the front cover of the manual or keep a folder of receipts for products you purchase.

To stay safe, sign up for product recall alerts. Besides the CPSC website, check www.recalls.gov for an even wider selection of product types and, foodsafety.gov for food alerts. Right now they have a salmonella alert for black pepper.

Black pepper? Who would have suspected something was wrong with pepper.

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1. What Boston Red Sox catcher hit a walk-off home run in the 12th inning to give the Sox a 7-6 win over the Cincinnati Reds in Game 6 of the 1975 World Series?

2. What Pro Football Hall of Fame running back had his No. 3 jersey retired by the Green Bay Packers?

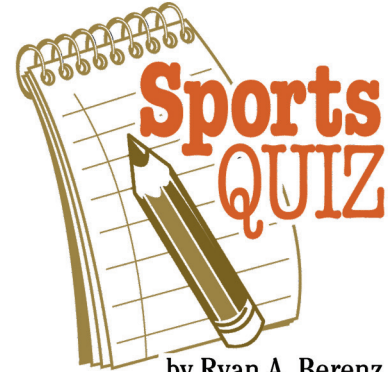
3. How many panels are there on a traditional Adidas Telstar truncated icosahedron soccer ball?

4. Name the Finnish NHL player who was captain of the Montreal Canadiens from 1999-2009.

5. Basketball Hall of Fame referee Dick Bavetta holds the record for number of NBA games officiated with how many?

6. Where did Pro Football Hall of Famers Lem Barney, Walter Payton, Robert Brazile and Jackie Slater play college football?

7. What is the circumference in inches of the ball used in the "blooperball," "cabbageball" or "Chicago ball" variant of softball?



by Ryan A. Berenz

Answers

1. Carlton Fisk.

2. Tony Canadeo.

3. 32 (12 black pentagons and 20 white hexagons).

4. Saku Koivu.

5. 2,635 (all consecutive).

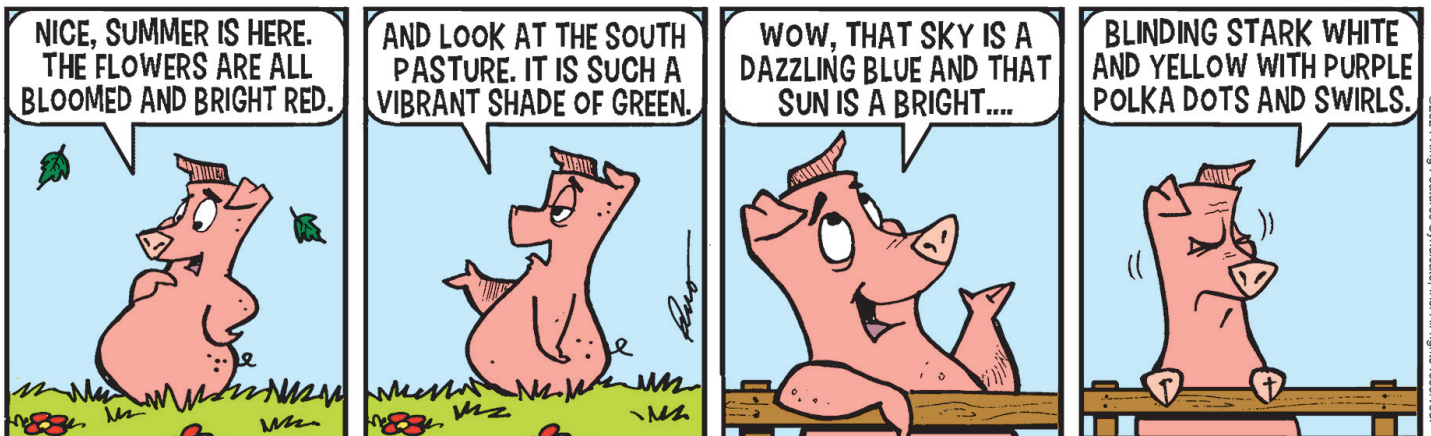
6. Jackson State University.

7. 16 inches.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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How to remove a tick from your pet

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: While checking my little Terrier, "Fritz," after a walk, I found one small tick just hanging on his fur. I don't know what I would have done if it had attached itself to his skin. What's the procedure? Should I rush him to the vet if a tick attaches itself? -- Carla in Albany, New York

DEAR CARLA: Excellent work in checking Fritz's coat right away after your walk! Ticks are so common now that it's important to check after every outdoor foray, even if your dog never leaves the sidewalk. A tick check is a fast way to make sure -- just by running your hand along your pet's coat, down and then up.

You do not need to rush your dog to the vet for an embedded tick. You can remove it yourself. Here's how:

- Grab a pair of tweezers and a magnifying glass. If you have surgical gloves and a tick remover tool, even better.
- Have another person hold your dog still while you locate the embedded tick.
- Carefully grasp the tick with the tweezers as close to the dog's skin as possible, near its head.
- Slowly, steadily pull the tick out. Don't jerk. Place the tick into a plastic bag with a little isopropyl alcohol.
- Clean the dog's skin with a dab of isopropyl alcohol and apply antibiotic ointment.

After removing the tick, monitor your dog for a few days and keep an eye on the bite area to make sure an infection doesn't develop. If you notice changes in his behavior, signs of illness or the bite area gets infected, then it's time to see the vet, and bring the tick along in a plastic bag.

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

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Strange BUT TRUE

* On July 4, 1776, King George III wrote in his diary entry, "Nothing important happened today."

* A 5-month-old fetus has 200,000,000,000 brain cells, but by birth half of them have been lost.

* Superstitious folks understandably took note in Santa Clara, California, on Oct. 22, 1931, when the Gamma Eta Gamma legal fraternity was partially destroyed by fire: The house was located at 1313 Franklin Street, its phone number was Santa Clara 13, and the postman wore badge number

13! The damage sustained to the house was even estimated at \$13,000.

* An AK-47 is depicted on the flag of Mozambique.

* Einstein's ideas on relative acceleration were partly inspired by a guy who fell off a roof in Berlin. Surviving without injury, he told the physicist that he had not felt the effects of gravity.

* Until the 17th century, the word "upset" meant to set up (i.e., erect) something.

* The oldest recorded death sentence is found in the Amherst papyri, a list of state trials of ancient Egypt dating to 1,500 B.C. A teenage boy, convicted of "magic," was ordered to kill himself by either poison or stabbing.

* Apart from humans, the Asian elephant is the only mammal that can stand on its head.

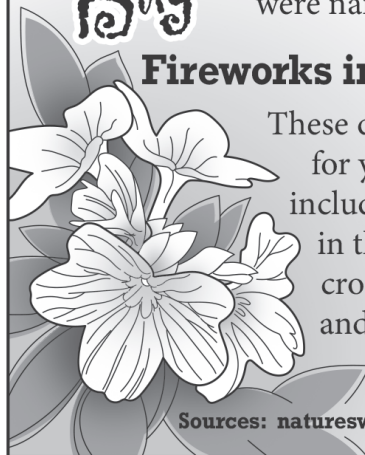
* In 2002, the Nevada state legislature authorized a license plate depicting a mushroom cloud from an exploding nuclear bomb to commemorate nuclear weapons tests conducted in the state's desert between 1945 and 1992. The Department of Motor Vehicles, however, rejected it.

* Soviet craftsman Nikolai Syadrisky carved a set of chess figures that were so small they could only be distinguished when magnified 2,000 times with a microscope.

Thought for the Day: "In any given moment we have two options: to step forward into growth or step back into safety." -- Abraham Maslow

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The Garden Bug



The earliest fireworks were developed in China from 960 to 1279, during the Song dynasty.

The firework displays that resembled flowers were named after them, such as peonies, dahlias and chrysanthemums.

Fireworks in the garden

These days you can find many flowers available for your garden that resemble fireworks and include the words "fireworks" or "firecracker" in their commercial name. The much-loved crossandra is known as "firecracker flower," and russelia is known as "firecracker plant."

- Brenda Weaver

Sources: natureswayflorida.com, monrovia.com, southernliving.com



by Freddy Groves

Benefits and health care for female veterans

The VA health care signed up over 53,000 female veterans in the past year, the biggest enrollment increase ever for women. But it's not just the VA chasing the numbers ... the VA has the services and facilities to provide the care female veterans need.

Among other things, female veterans under age 40 who had toxin exposure have access to breast cancer screenings and mammograms. (Breast cancer is a presumptive under the PACT Act.) In addition, screenings can be scheduled for colon, lung, skin and cervical cancers.

General health screenings can include blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis, as well as the whole array of standard immunizations such as flu, tetanus, Covid and more.

Reproductive and maternity care services are also available, with maternity care being handled by a coordinator who offers support for care within and outside of VA health care.

Female veterans also have a special call center. Call 1-855-VA-WOMEN (1-855-829-6636) Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. There is also an online chat.

The call center can point you in the right direction for a wide variety of questions: enrolling in VA health care, what care options are available near you, eligibility, disability ratings, benefits including education and home loans, and more.

Their help extends to reporting harassment at VA, complaints about medical staff at VA, infertility services and help for military sexual trauma.

If you don't know where to start, begin with the call center. Or call your closest facility and ask for the Women Veterans Program Manager. Every VA medical facility has one.

For a long list of the services available for female veterans, go to www.womenshealth.va.gov/WOMEN-SHEALTH/overview.asp

If you're a female veteran who hasn't connected with the VA, either for health care or benefits, consider contacting the call center or the WVP manager at the closest facility and getting started.

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Wishing Well®

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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. HISTORY: What is America's first colony?
2. ENTERTAINERS: Which actress' mother is actress Melanie Griffith and grandmother is actress Tippi Hedren?
3. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president is the only one born on Independence Day?
4. GEOGRAPHY: In which country is the Mont-Saint-Michel medieval monastery located?
5. SCIENCE: What does a kelvin measure?
6. ASTRONOMY: Which star is the brightest in the sky?
7. MUSIC: What are the first names of the Gibb brothers who formed The Bee Gees?
8. AD SLOGANS: Which company's slogan is "You're in good hands"?
9. MYTHOLOGY: What did Prometheus steal from the gods, resulting in his eternal punishment?
10. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a baby turkey called?

Answers

1. Jamestown, Virginia.
2. Dakota Johnson.
3. Calvin Coolidge was born on July 4, 1872.
4. Normandy, France.
5. Temperature.
6. The Dog Star, Sirius.
7. Barry, Robin and Maurice.
8. Allstate.
9. Fire.
10. A poult.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Keeping South Dakota Ag on Offense

Farmers are some of the biggest gamblers I know. They go to a bank, borrow money to buy land – borrow more money to buy equipment. Then they go back and get an operating note so they can buy seed, fertilizer, and chemical. And then they bury it all in the dirt. They pray that it might rain, that something might grow, and that they'll have something to sell so that they can pay back those loans.

But if we didn't have people willing to make that gamble, then families across the country and around the world wouldn't have food to put on the table.

Their work is not easy – and we have so much appreciation for our ag producers.

Agriculture is South Dakota's most important industry for good reason. We feed the world. We have more cows-per-person than any state. I am tremendously proud of that fact. About 95% of South Dakota farms are still family-owned and operated. Ag contributes more than \$32 billion to our state's economy – about 30% of our economic output.

When ag prospers, South Dakota prospers; when droughts hit or markets slide, everyone feels that, too.

Thankfully, South Dakota's economy is booming. But we are not leaving ag behind in all this growth. My Governor's Office of Economic Development has identified Precision Ag and Value-Added Ag as key sectors of our economy to grow and develop. Our Dairy industry is one of South Dakota's fastest-growing economic engines. And with new food production coming in, like the state-of-the-art Asian food production plant that Schwan's is building in Sioux Falls, we are not slowing down.

With all the growth we have seen, it is vital that we keep farmers farming. My team is constantly focusing on ag's growth – asking questions like what's the next opportunity, the next innovation, the next risk to take?

We want to keep South Dakota ag on offense. And to do that, I'm happy to play defense wherever necessary.

Attacks on Ag are coming from both within and from outside of our nation. The Biden Administration seems determined to put as much red tape and regulations in our producers' way as possible. I have testified against such regulations in front of Congress, and I am working to challenge whatever unconstitutional regulations the Biden Administration puts in our way.

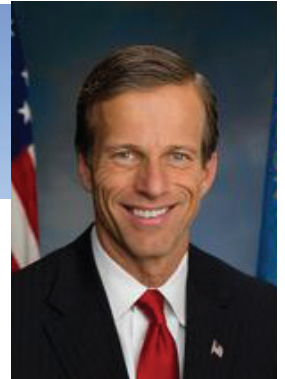
We decided a long time ago that it is important that we grow our own food in this country – that we have a diverse, safe food supply that provides for our people without undue foreign interference. So we are defending South Dakota ag from undue foreign influence.

This past legislative session, I signed legislation to protect South Dakota ag land from being purchased by six "Evil Foreign Governments" and their agents. The Chinese Communist Party has increased their holdings of American ag land by more than 5000% in the last 10 years. These Communist dictators are not our friends. They are not our allies. They should not be our neighbors.

My dad always told me, "Kristi, God's not making any more land." In a lot of ways, our land is our most precious asset, and we should encourage one another to be visionary about protecting our farms. We shouldn't be selling that asset to nations that hate us – and now we have the laws in place to stop that from happening.

Ag is so important to our economy, and it's also important to the future of our nation. South Dakota will continue to focus on how to keep ag growing and thriving for the future.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Biden's Latest Student Loan Giveaway

One year ago, the U.S. Supreme Court rightly ruled that President Biden did not have the authority to unilaterally forgive federal student loan debt. But that hasn't stopped the president from contriving new student loan giveaways that amount to de facto loan forgiveness and will cost taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars.

In April, the president announced his latest \$150 billion student loan giveaway. Among other things, this latest scheme would waive accrued and capitalized interest for certain borrowers, and it would provide student loan forgiveness to 750,000 borrowers with an average income of more than \$300,000.

This comes on top of the \$475 billion loan forgiveness plan the president announced last summer. The so-called SAVE Plan will implement de facto forgiveness on a massive scale by creating a system in which the majority of future federal borrowers will never fully repay their student debt. The U.S. Department of Education estimated that undergraduate borrowers would expect to pay back just \$6,121 for every \$10,000 borrowed. That means that, on average, taxpayers will be taking on almost 40 percent of these borrowers' student loans.

By one estimate, recent student loan policies will cost more than all federal spending on higher education in the nation's entire history. For all this money, the Biden bailout plans do nothing to fix the actual problem: the cost of higher education. In fact, they could make things worse. For one, these plans don't incentivize colleges to rein in their prices. They could also encourage students to increase their borrowing. And then there's the troubling message it sends to students that they can expect to be bailed out for debt they take on, even though they agreed to repay it.

The president's student loan schemes all involve a fundamental unfairness though. Many Americans never attended college. Others worked hard to pay off their entire student debt, or they worked to put themselves through college. Many Americans covered the cost of education by serving our country in the armed forces. Why should these Americans have to shoulder the massive cost of all this loan forgiveness now?

My Republican colleagues and I are pushing back against these misguided and costly policies. I'm also working on policies that help people pay off their student debt without putting taxpayers on the hook for massive amounts of money. My bipartisan Employer Participation in Repayment Act became law in 2020. It allows employers to make tax-free payments toward their employees' student loans. It's no silver bullet, but it's a fiscally responsible way of easing the burden of student debt.

President Biden's student loan giveaways are not the right answer, and they may cause more problems than he claims they will solve. Unfortunately, I suspect the president sees a chance to win a few votes he will need in November – at the expense of taxpayers across the nation.

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



Planning a Trip to D.C.

It's almost the 4th of July, which is one of the best times to visit our nation's capital. Washington, D.C. has endless activities. From checking out any of the more than 80 museums, attending a major league sports game, or visiting some of the most famous memorials, there is something for everyone. If you're planning a trip to visit D.C. this summer, here are a few things to remember to have a fun and memorable trip.

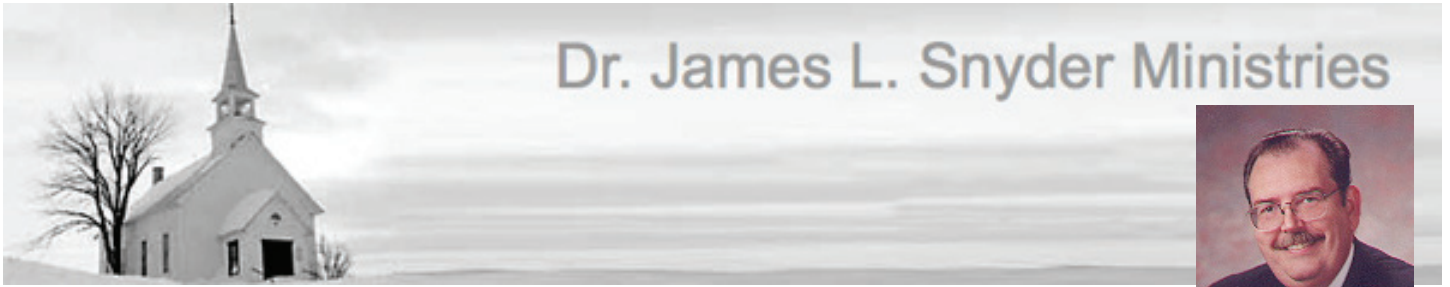
If you are planning a visit, a Capitol Tour is a must-do. For assistance booking tours of the Capitol, White House, FBI Building, and Supreme Court, call my office at (202) 225-2801 or visit my website dustyjohnson.house.gov. All tours are first come, first served, so be sure to reserve as soon as possible.

The city is filled with iconic landmarks everywhere you go. As you walk down the National Mall or downtown streets, you'll see monuments, memorials, and statues honoring influential Americans throughout history. If you are interested in theater, you're in luck! D.C is home to more than 13 iconic theatres, like the Kennedy Center and Ford's Theatre. Tickets are available throughout the summer for many famous performances.

While I'm in D.C. for work, I often don't have time to see the sights, but in April, I visited the American History Museum with my family, gave them a tour of a Capitol, and rode scooters down the National Mall. We all had a great time.

They don't call D.C. "the Swamp" for no reason. Summers are hot and humid, so before you pack your bags, check the weather forecast for your trip so you can pack properly. Remember to stay hydrated and bring an umbrella for those unexpected afternoon thunderstorms.

To see a full list of landmarks, museums, and activities to check out while visiting, look under "services" on my website, linked here. Feel free to contact my office with questions. I hope to see you out here!



Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



Did You See My Key?

My life has been bombarded with questions from the beginning of the day until I fall asleep at night.

For the most part, I don't prioritize questions. Usually, when people ask me a question, there is something behind that question. If I don't see what's behind the question, I could answer it in such a way as to get myself in trouble—and believe me, I've been in trouble many times before.

This is no truer than with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. She can taunt me with a question out of nowhere. I get in deep trouble when I realize what is behind the question.

A good example is the other day when she came into the living room and, with both hands on her hips, said, "Did you see my key?"

At first, I had no idea what she was talking about. Usually, when she asks a question, I have been in Lala land for so long that I couldn't bring my thoughts together.

I looked back at her and said, "Oh, my dear, what key are you talking about?"

Looking into her purse, you will find she has a key to everything. I refuse to ramble through those keys because I might find a key she has for me. Of course, if I had seen that key, it might have solved a lot of my problems, or it might not have.

Responding to me, she said, "You know, the key to my car."

"You mean to your Sissy Van?"

I could hear her grit her teeth as she stared at me with one of "those stares".

"I had my key yesterday and I cannot find it today. Have you seen it?"

If I had seen her keys, this would've been a great opportunity for me. I could use them as a bargaining chip to get something for myself. Oh, how I wished I knew where that key was. Imagine what I could get for it.

"I'm sorry," I said reluctantly, "I have not seen your key anywhere."

On occasion, I have driven her Sissy Van, but it's been well over a year since I did. I tried to think of where those keys might be, and I searched a few places, but as always, I came up empty; what I wouldn't give to be able to find that key.

That's the way life is for me. I have an opportunity before me, but I just don't have the resources to seize it.

I hadn't seen her key for so long that I didn't even know what it looked like. But that didn't keep me from looking around because finding those keys would have been a treasure.

One thing about The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, when she starts something she never stops until she finishes it. Most of the time, it drives me crazy, which, according to her, is a very short drive.

If I don't find something I need at the time, I just quit looking, knowing that when I least expect it and when I'm not looking for it, I will find it. That's happened to me so many times I can't recall.

A friend used to say, "If you have something, you usually don't need it, and when you need something, you usually don't have it." That seems to be the rule in my life as far back as I can remember.

With The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, she must have it right then and there when she needs something. "Now" is her favorite word.

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Trying to console her, I said, "If you just make up your mind that you don't need your keys right now, because you do have a spare key, you sooner or later will find it when you least expect it. That's just the way life is."

I can remember a dozen things I lost, and no matter how hard I looked for them, I could never find them. Then, I found them when I gave up and started something else and just assumed they were gone forever.

It was the next day, and I had forgotten about her lost key. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage came to me and said, "Well, I found my key." She said it as though she was rubbing it in my face.

"Where did you find it?" I asked, curious to find out where it had been all this time.

Looking at me a little nervously, she said, "I found it in my purse." She paused for a moment and then continued, "There's a little pocket in front of one of my other pockets in my purse. I always forget that it's there, and I never looked until today."

I was happy for her and congratulated her on finding her lost key. The key was not lost; she had just forgotten where she had put it.

In my Bible reading today I read a very important verse. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

There was a time when I was lost spiritually and didn't know it. The whole reason for Jesus to come into this world was for lost people just like me. At the time I thought I was fine, but then God interrupted my life and showed me I was indeed lost. It is through Jesus that I found my way back to God.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What's the latest in residential air conditioning? How can I stay cool but stay green this summer?

-- Jackie B., Reno, NV

The environmental impact of traditional air conditioning systems is significant. Fortunately, there are several advancements in A/C technology that allow you to stay cool while minimizing your carbon footprint. Here's are some eco-friendly cooling solutions and tips on how to stay green this summer.

One of the significant advancements in A/C is inverter technology. Unlike traditional units that turn on and off to regulate temperature, inverter models adjust the compressor motor speed to maintain a consistent temperature. This is more efficient and reduces wear and tear, extending the life of the unit.

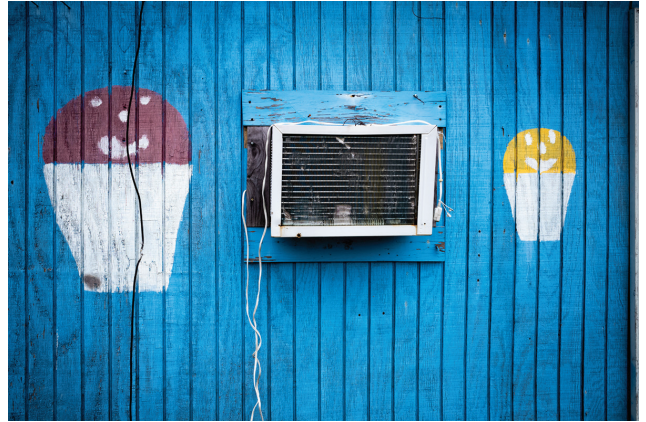
Harnessing solar energy for cooling is a game-changer. Solar-powered A/C units use photovoltaic panels to convert sunlight into electricity, significantly reducing reliance on the grid and lowering electric bills. The initial installation can be costly, but the long-term savings and environmental benefits are substantial.

Another green option is geothermal heat pumps that utilize stable underground temperatures to cool in the summer and heat in the winter. These systems use up to 50 percent less power than conventional heating and cooling. Installation is complex and expensive, but the energy savings over time can be significant.

When selecting an A/C unit, look for models with high Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratios (SEER) and Energy Star certifications. These ratings indicate that the unit meets stringent energy efficiency guidelines set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), ensuring reduced energy usage and lower carbon emissions. Meanwhile, ensure that your air conditioning system is running efficiently by scheduling regular maintenance. Cleaning or replacing filters, checking for leaks, and ensuring the unit is in good working order can improve performance and extend its lifespan.

Regardless of the type of cooling technology in your home, investing in a smart thermostat can optimize your system's efficiency. These devices learn your schedule and preferences, adjusting temperatures automatically to reduce energy consumption when you're not home. They can also be controlled remotely via smartphone apps, allowing you to make adjustments on the go.

Another way to keep the indoors cool—and reduce the load on whatever A/C system you have—is to improve insulation. Use fans to circulate the air inside to make it feel cooler than the actual ambient air temperature. And use curtains, blinds or reflective window films to block the sun's heat during the hottest parts of the day. Plant trees or install awnings outside to provide shade and reduce heat gain. And open windows to circulate fresh air, which reduces the need for A/C and also improves indoor air quality.



There's never been a better time to invest in a home air conditioning system now that new technology has made A/C greener. Credit: Vhines200,

FlickrCC.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Strained wastewater systems, swollen rivers remain threats in flooded southeast SD

Officials ask public to limit water use and prepare for cresting streams

BY: SETH TUPPER - JUNE 22, 2024 9:23 AM

Sioux Falls is asking area residents to limit their contributions to the wastewater system, while state officials are warning of river crests that will arrive Monday and Tuesday as southeast South Dakota recovers from several days of historic rainfall totaling more than 17 inches in some locations.

Mayor Paul TenHaken said Sioux Falls is diverting wastewater into holding facilities that have never been used before, and those facilities are full.

"This is the most strained the system has ever been," he said.

He asked people in the Sioux Falls area to temporarily avoid doing laundry, taking showers, running their dishwasher or doing anything else that would contribute unnecessary wastewater to the system.

TenHaken participated in a media teleconference Saturday morning with Gov. Kristi Noem and other officials.

Noem encouraged everyone affected by flooding to document their property damages and relay that information to their insurance agent and their county emergency management director. She said the state will collect that information and apply it toward the \$1.6 million statewide damage threshold needed to unlock assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The governor said rainfall totals since Thursday include 18.2 inches in Canton (Noem said that figure twice, and her spokesman confirmed the figure to South Dakota Searchlight afterward), 7.48 inches in Mitchell, 7.3 inches in Sioux Falls and 7.15 inches in Chamberlain. She said 21 of the state's 66 counties are experiencing flooding.

"We have seen a tremendous amount of rainfall," Noem said.

There are widespread reports of flooded roads and basements, but officials on the call said they have not received any reports of deaths, while reported injuries have been minor.

TenHaken said Sioux Falls emergency responders rescued six people during the prior 24 hours, including one man in the Big Sioux River near the falls. TenHaken said that man is lucky to be alive.

People may want to view the water roaring over the falls, TenHaken said, but they should stay away and view it through webcam feeds on the internet.

"Just maybe avoid going to the falls, would be appreciated," TenHaken said. "It's not really a safe place right now."

Noem warned against complacency as the rainfall ends.

"All of that water is moving through our system and moving through our tributaries, our streams, our rivers and our dams," she said, "and we are expecting high water flows to come downstream."

Officials said several rivers are expected to crest Monday or Tuesday, including the James River near Yankton at 25.1 feet, the Big Sioux River near Sioux City at 38.4 feet, and a portion of the Vermillion River at around 30 feet. The Big Sioux figure would be a record for that segment, Noem said.

Those are all tributaries of the Missouri River, which is managed with dams. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said Friday that rainfall in eastern South Dakota, northeastern Nebraska and northwestern Iowa was 600% of normal during the prior 24 hours. The corps responded by lowering releases at Fort Randall and Gavins Point dams. The lower releases, continuing through Sunday, are expected to raise the water

level behind Gavins Point by 2 feet.

John Remus is the chief of the corps' Missouri River Basin Water Management Division.

"While the decreased releases are expected to bring lower downstream river stages, they cannot offset all the flooding in the Sioux City area," Remus said in a Friday news release.

South Dakota's secretary of public safety, Bob Perry, said a portion of Interstate 29 south of the Canton exit remains closed due to water over the road. He said an alternate route that had been established through Iowa "seems also closed at this point."

Perry urged drivers to visit <https://sd511.org> or download the SD511 mobile app to view all current road closures, no-travel advisories and highway obstructions. Further information about South Dakota flooded roads is available at <https://dot.sd.gov/travelers/travelers/flooding-information>, and information about roads in Iowa and Minnesota is available at <https://www.511ia.org/> and <https://511mn.org/>.

The National Weather Service forecast for southeast South Dakota includes scattered showers and storms through early Saturday afternoon with less than a quarter-inch of new rain in most areas. The forecast for Sunday is mostly dry with a chance of isolated showers and storms, and there are more widespread rainfall chances Monday night into Tuesday.

Seth is editor-in-chief of South Dakota Searchlight. He was previously a supervising senior producer for South Dakota Public Broadcasting and a newspaper journalist in Rapid City and Mitchell.

Despite GOP headwinds, citizen-led abortion measures could be on the ballot in 9 states

Proposed South Dakota constitutional amendment being challenged in court

BY: ANNA CLAIRE VOLLERS, STATELINE - JUNE 22, 2024 7:00 AM

For abortion rights supporters in Florida, it was a tumultuous day of highs and lows.

On April 1, the Florida Supreme Court paved the way for the state to ban nearly all abortions after six weeks of pregnancy. But it also OK'd a ballot measure that would allow Florida voters to overturn the ban this November.

"I was elated and devastated," said Natasha Sutherland, the communications director for Floridians Protecting Freedom, a coalition of state and national organizations that gathered nearly 1 million signatures for a proposed constitutional amendment enshrining the right to abortion.

"Many women don't even know they're pregnant by the time they're outside of the six-week window for abortion care," said Sutherland, who lives in Tallahassee. "Considering the stakes are so high with the abortion ban we're now under, it was really important for us to ensure we gave it all we've got."

This November, voters in as many as nine states could sidestep their legislators and directly decide whether to expand access to abortion through citizen-led ballot initiatives. Constitutional amendments in Colorado, Florida and South Dakota already have qualified for the ballot (although the South Dakota measure is being challenged in court), while coalitions in Arizona, Arkansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska and Nevada are still collecting signatures or awaiting state approval on their measures.

Two more states, Maryland and New York, have abortion rights ballot measures that were referred by their state legislatures, though New York's is currently tied up in litigation.

In June 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court dismantled the constitutional right to an abortion, kicking the issue back to the states. Fourteen states have outlawed abortion with almost no exceptions, while another seven states ban abortions at or before 18 weeks of pregnancy, according to the Guttmacher Institute, a pro-abortion rights research organization.

Yet access to abortion remains popular, even in conservative states. Since the high court's 2022 decision, voters in six states have approved abortion access via ballot measure, including in red states such

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as Kansas and Kentucky.

"The whole idea of the initiative process is to put pressure on state lawmakers when there appears to be support for an issue that the median voter in the electorate might want but the median lawmaker doesn't want," said Daniel Smith, a professor and chair of the political science department at the University of Florida, who has authored books and papers on ballot initiatives.

In several states, Republican lawmakers opposed to abortion rights have tightened signature requirements or raised the percentage of the vote required for ballot initiatives to pass. Proponents of stricter rules say they want to prevent out-of-state interests from manipulating the process by funneling money to initiative campaigns. They say they also want to ensure that populous urban centers don't have too much power. But in several cases, GOP backers have acknowledged that their goal is to thwart abortion rights measures that are broadly popular.

Mat Staver, an attorney based in Orlando, Florida, said it should be harder to get constitutional amendments passed because organizations from outside the state are funneling money into ballot initiatives such as the ones expanding reproductive rights. Staver is the co-founder of Liberty Counsel, a Florida-based nonprofit that opposes abortion-related ballot measures in Florida and other states.

"Even though we have a 60% threshold [in Florida], if you have the financial resources, you can get pretty much anything on the ballot you want," he said. "That's not good for Floridians because that doesn't allow for debate."

Critics argue that legislators' attempts to impose new restrictions subvert one of the purest forms of direct democracy available to citizens.

"Democracy requires compromise," said Alice Clapman, senior counsel at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law, a progressive law and policy nonprofit. "I am concerned that there seems to be a resistance to leaving these issues to the democratic process. Some people in power in these states feel certain issues shouldn't be up for democratic debate."

'Monopoly power'

For decades, legislators on both sides of the political aisle have tried to make it harder for citizens to get various proposals on the ballot, said Smith. It just depends on who's controlling the state's levers of power.

"The ballot initiative takes away the monopoly power of lawmakers," he said. "We can look at restrictions by Republicans right now on the initiative process, but doing so is myopic. It happens on both sides."

In today's polarized political climate, voter support for a ballot measure doesn't necessarily translate into support for a political candidate who backs it. Smith's research has found that many people may vote for a ballot measure while also voting for candidates from the political party that opposes it.

"And they're fine with that," Smith said. "There's no cognitive dissonance in the voter's mind. [The ballot measure] is a one-off."

Ballot measures typically don't boost voter turnout in presidential election years like they do in midterms and special elections. But 2024 could be different, Smith said, thanks to tepid public enthusiasm for the repeat matchup between President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump. A ballot measure might prod more people to head to the polls.

'Not unlike gerrymandering'

Last month, the Missourians for Constitutional Freedom campaign turned in more than twice the likely number of signatures needed for its measure to qualify for Missouri's ballot in November. The proposed constitutional amendment, like Florida's, would legalize abortion up to fetal viability — the point at which a fetus can survive outside the uterus, often considered around 24 or 25 weeks of pregnancy.

"The signature-gathering piece of this campaign was the most incredible thing I've ever been a part of," said Mallory Schwarz, executive director at Abortion Action Missouri, one of the organizations participating in the campaign. "I have never seen the level of enthusiasm about the issue that I saw this year."

Coalition organizations trained more than a thousand volunteers who canvassed in their communities,

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held house parties, and knocked on tens of thousands of doors in less than three months, Schwarz said, eventually gathering more than 380,000 signatures. The state must now certify the petition for it to appear on the ballot.

Missouri voters of all political stripes have a deep attachment to the ballot initiative process that dates back more than a century, Schwarz said: "We've seen issues that may be presented as partisan really appeal to people across the board, year in and year out."

In recent years, ballot measures in Republican-controlled Missouri have raised the state minimum wage, expanded Medicaid, overturned a so-called right-to-work law and decriminalized cannabis use.

This year, Missouri Republicans put forth several proposals designed to defeat abortion rights initiatives, including one that would require ballot measures to win not just a majority of votes statewide, but also a majority of votes in Missouri's congressional districts.

After heated debate, the bill passed the Senate, but the House couldn't reconcile different versions of the bill before the session ended.

"It's not unlike gerrymandering," Schwarz said. "The only way they can stop the will of the people is to change the rules of the game."

Florida lawmakers filed a similar bill last year. They proposed a constitutional amendment to increase the percentage of votes a ballot measure needs to pass, from 60% to a two-thirds supermajority. The bill passed the House but died in the Senate.

In 2023, ballot initiatives in eight states attracted more than \$205 million in donations, according to OpenSecrets, a nonprofit that tracks campaign financing and lobbying. Sutherland, with Floridians Protecting Freedom, pointed out that the campaign raised nearly \$12 million in April and May, but about 70% of contributions coming from within Florida.

An array of tactics

After abortion rights advocates gathered nearly 500,000 signatures in Ohio to get a reproductive rights amendment on the November 2023 ballot, the Republican secretary of state and the Ohio Ballot Board changed the wording of the amendment's summary in a way that opponents said was incomplete and inaccurate. Ohio voters approved the ballot measure anyway, enshrining abortion access in the state constitution last November.

A similar scenario unfolded in Missouri, where Republican Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft attempted to change the wording of a proposed abortion rights ballot measure so that it would ask voters whether they were in favor of "dangerous and unregulated abortions until live birth." A Missouri court later struck down the language.

In Arizona, GOP lawmakers have put their own constitutional amendment on the November 2024 ballot that would require organizers to gather a certain percentage of signatures from every one of Arizona's 30 legislative districts rather than in the state as a whole. They've also considered a strategy to introduce their own abortion-related ballot measures to compete with the abortion rights measure.

If reproductive rights ballot amendments pass, they'll likely face legal challenges that stretch far beyond the election.

Staver, of the Liberty Counsel, said his organization would investigate legal channels for blocking implementation of Florida's amendment.

"There may be litigation that would be necessary to argue that preexisting constitutional rights override this amendment," said Staver, who believes the amendment is overly broad.

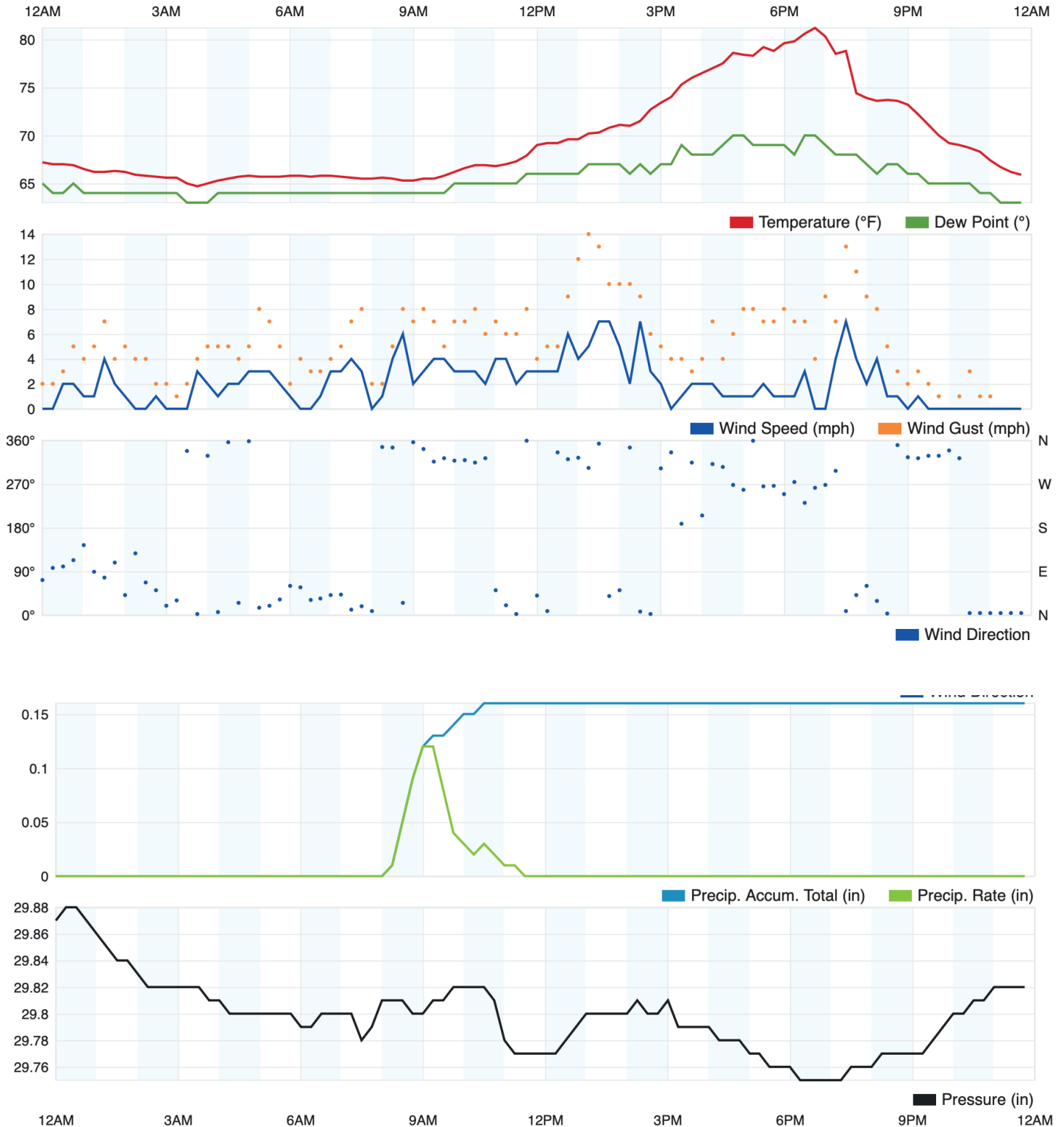
Clapman, with the Brennan Center, said she also expects lawmakers to continue pushing back against ballot measures: "It's not a fight that's going to go away even if initiatives pass."

Anna Claire Vollers covers health care for Stateline. She is based in Huntsville, Alabama.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



High: 86 °F

Patchy Fog then Sunny

Tonight



Low: 65 °F

Mostly Clear

Monday



High: 94 °F

Hot

Monday Night



Low: 63 °F

Slight Chance T-storms

Tuesday



High: 87 °F

Mostly Sunny



Summer Heat Returns

June 22, 2024
3:34 PM

- Very warm temperatures Sunday and Monday
- Heat Indices will approach 100 degrees in some locations on Monday.



Maximum Temperature Forecast (°F)

	6/23 Sun					6/24 Mon							
	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm
Aberdeen	79	84	86	86	78	70	66	72	83	91	95	94	84
Britton	74	80	82	81	73	65	65	72	82	86	89	90	81
Brookings	74	79	82	81	73	68	66	70	80	86	88	88	82
Chamberlain	78	85	87	87	78	73	70	72	84	92	95	95	84
Clark	74	80	82	81	74	68	65	69	79	85	88	87	80
Eagle Butte	75	80	84	83	77	70	68	70	83	89	91	89	79
Ellendale	76	82	84	83	76	66	63	70	81	88	92	90	81
Eureka	76	83	85	85	76	66	65	68	81	89	91	90	79
Gettysburg	75	82	85	84	75	69	66	70	81	89	92	90	80
Huron	76	80	84	85	76	71	70	72	82	89	92	92	84
Kennebec	76	83	86	86	77	70	68	71	86	93	96	94	83
McIntosh	75	81	84	84	77	70	68	70	81	86	88	86	76
Milbank	75	81	82	81	73	65	63	67	80	86	89	89	82
Miller	76	82	84	83	74	69	67	70	82	91	95	93	83
Mobridge	79	86	89	88	79	71	68	71	83	91	93	91	80
Murdo	75	82	86	86	78	71	68	71	86	91	94	91	81
Pierre	79	86	89	89	81	74	71	73	86	93	97	94	83
Redfield	76	84	85	85	76	69	66	69	81	91	95	93	84
Sisseton	76	81	82	81	74	65	63	68	80	86	90	90	82
Watertown	73	80	82	81	74	67	64	69	80	85	88	89	82
Webster	73	79	80	80	72	64	63	68	79	85	88	87	80
Wheaton	74	80	82	82	73	64	62	68	78	86	90	89	81

Created: 3 pm CDT Sat 6/22/2024 | Values are maximums over the period beginning at the time shown.



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

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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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 81 °F at 6:43 PM

Low Temp: 65 °F at 3:40 AM

Wind: 14 mph at 1:12 PM

Precip: : 0.16

Day length: 15 hours, 43 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 104 in 1911

Record Low: 33 in 1942

Average High: 82

Average Low: 57

Average Precip in June.: 2.83

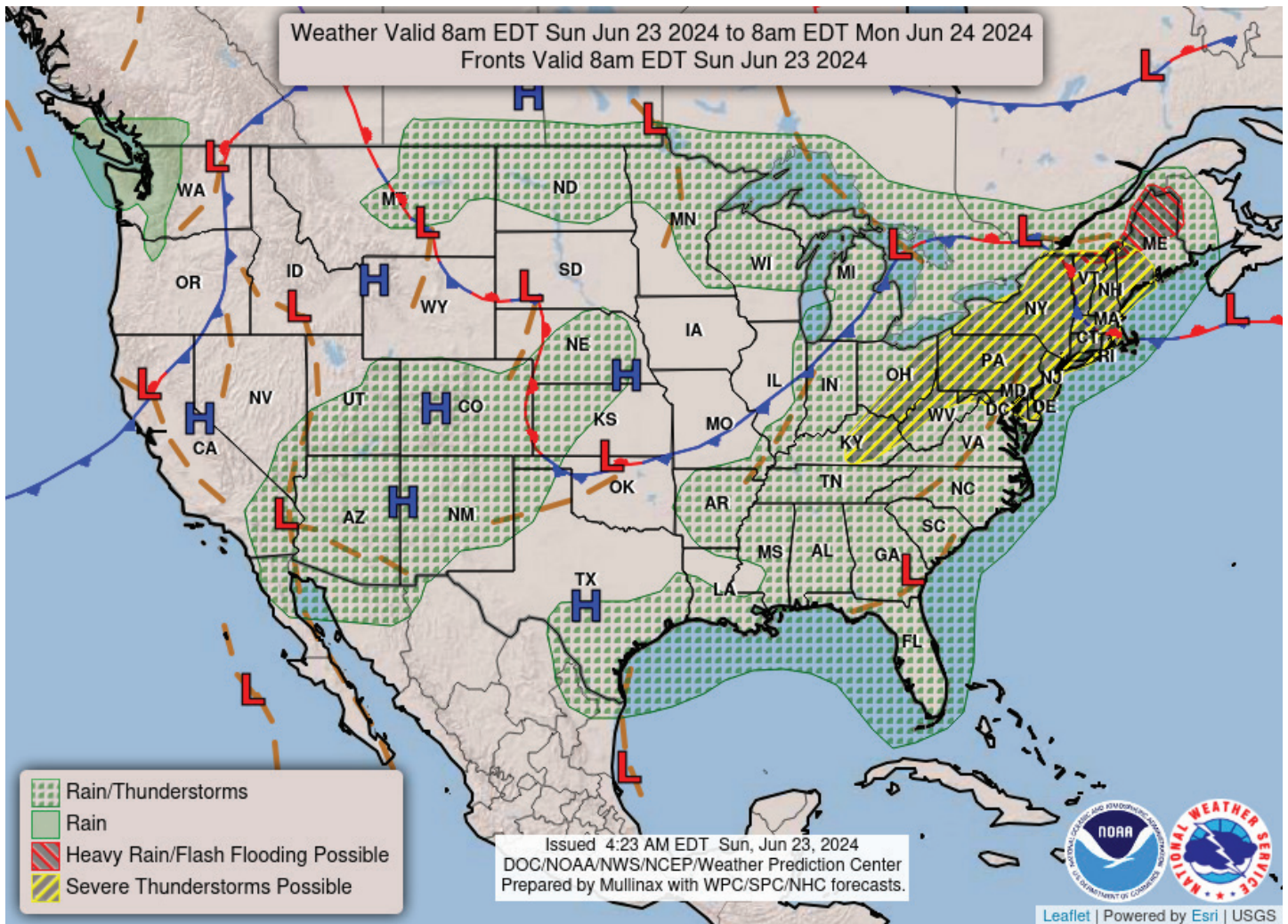
Precip to date in June: 2.73

Average Precip to date: 10.08

Precip Year to Date: 9.80

Sunset Tonight: 9:26:47 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:43:10 am



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Today in Weather History

June 23, 1914: A destructive, estimated F3 tornado moved east across Altamont Township in Brown County. All buildings were destroyed on at least four farms. A man was killed trying to keep his family from being blown out of a shallow cellar.

Another storm moved east from the southeastern part of Watertown to north of Goodwin. Over 200 homes were heavily damaged at Watertown by both an estimated F2 tornado and downburst winds. Barns were destroyed on three farms east of Watertown. The estimated cost was at \$200,000.

June 23, 2002: A powerful supercell thunderstorm produced six tornados from eastern McPherson County and across northern Brown County during the evening hours. The first tornado to touchdown was a brief F0, and occurred 6.4 miles northeast of Leola and resulted in no damage. The second tornado was an F1 and touched down 8.5 miles northeast of Leola and crossed over into Brown County where it dissipated 9 miles northwest of Barnard. This tornado brought down many trees and a barn and caused damage to the siding and the roof of a farmhouse in McPherson County. A third weak satellite F0 tornado occurred following the dissipation of the second tornado and resulted in no damage. A fourth, stronger F3 tornado developed 6 miles west of Barnard and moved east before dissipating 3 miles southeast of Barnard. This tornado brought down some high power lines along with a support tower and tossed a pickup truck 100 yards into a group of trees. The pickup truck was totaled. The tornado caused extensive damage to two farmhouses, several farm buildings, and farm equipment. One farmhouse lost the garage and had many trees completely snapped off down low and debarked. The fifth tornado developed 5 miles southeast of Barnard and became a violent F4 tornado. This tornado caused damage to one farmhouse, several outbuildings, trees, and equipment as it moved northeast and strengthened. The tornado then completely demolished two unoccupied homes, several outbuildings, along with destroying or damaging some farm equipment before dissipating 7.6 miles northeast of Barnard. The sixth tornado was a weak satellite F0, which occurred with this violent tornado and caused no damage. The F4 tornado was the first recorded in Brown County and one of few recorded in South Dakota. The total estimated property loss exceeded a million dollars.

1902 - The temperature at Volcano Springs, CA, soared to 129 degrees to set a June record for the U.S. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders)

1944: The deadliest and strongest tornado in the state of West Virginia occurred on this day. The Shinnston Tornado that ravaged a path of destruction from Shinnston to Cheat Mountain, then on to Maryland and ending in Pennsylvania in the Allegheny Mountains, is the only twister to produce F4 damage in West Virginia. This tornado killed 103 people.

1957 - A few miles west of Fort Stockton TX, softball size hail injured 21 persons unable to find shelter, mostly farm laborers. Some livestock were killed. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A massive hailstorm hit eastern Colorado causing an estimated 60 to 70 million dollars damage. At La Junta, CO, hail as large as softballs caused 37 million dollars damage. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thirty-four cities reported record high temperatures for the date. The reading of 90 degrees at Bluefield, WV, equalled their record for the month of June. The record high of 104 degrees at Billings, MT, was their thirteenth of the month. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Six cities in the High Plains Region reported record low temperatures for the date, including Sheridan, WY, with a reading of 38 degrees. Showers and thunderstorms in the eastern U.S. deluged New Castle County, DE, with 2.5 inches of rain in one hour. (The National Weather Summary)

2010: An F2 tornado destroyed approximately 50 homes and caused damages estimated to be \$15 million in Midland, Ontario. 12 people were reported to be injured. Ontario provided immediate provincial assistance of up to \$1 million to aid in cleanup and repairs.

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: 06.21.24

3 18 27 40 44 19

MegaPlier: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$97,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.22.24

1 26 37 39 44 1

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$3,630,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.22.24

12 14 22 38 46 4

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 45 Mins 2
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.22.24

15 20 25 27 33

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$20,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.22.24

6 23 48 49 54 14

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.22.24

4 5 15 32 62 21

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$84,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Flooding forces people from homes in some parts of Iowa while much of US broils again in heat

By ED WHITE and JOHN HANNA Associated Press

Floodwaters forced people out of their homes in parts of Iowa, the result of weeks of rain, while much of the United States longed for relief Saturday from yet another round of extraordinary heat.

Sirens blared at 2 a.m. in Rock Valley, Iowa, population 4,200, where people in hundreds of homes were told to get out as the Rock River could no longer take rain that has slammed the region. The city lacked running water because wells were unusable.

Mayor Kevin Van Otterloo said a state helicopter was on its way to help but was called off when boats were able to reach stranded residents.

"We've had so much rain here," he said. "We had 4 inches last night in an hour and a half time. Our ground just cannot take anymore."

Gov. Kim Reynolds declared a disaster for 21 counties in northern Iowa, including Sioux County, which includes Rock Valley. In drone video posted by the local sheriff, no streets were visible, just roofs and treetops poking above the water.

In South Dakota, Gov. Kristi Noem declared an emergency after the southeastern part of the state received heavy rainfall. The town of Canton, 30 miles (48 kilometers) southeast of Sioux Falls, has received 18 inches (45.72 centimeters) of rain.

Several highways were closed, including a key stretch of Interstate 29 south of Sioux Falls that later reopened. Sioux Falls, the state's largest city, had more than 7 inches (17.7 centimeters) of rain in three days.

"Even though the rain is slowing down, we need to keep vigilant," said Noem. "The worst of the flooding along our rivers will be Monday and Tuesday."

Elsewhere in the U.S., the miserable grip of heat and humidity continued. The National Weather Service said roughly 15 million people were under a heat warning — the highest level of alert — while another 90 million were under a heat advisory. Millions across the country have had their lives disrupted by stretches of unusually high temperatures.

Last year the U.S. experienced the most heat waves since 1936, experts said. An AP analysis of data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that excessive heat contributed to more than 2,300 deaths, the highest in 45 years of records.

Temperatures around 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8 degrees Celsius) were predicted for Washington, D.C., and Richmond, Virginia, while Philadelphia; Newark, New Jersey; Columbus, Ohio; and Detroit were bracing for the high 90s.

Heat-related hospital visits in New York state lately were 500% higher than on the average June day, according to the Department of Health.

"We still have this prolonged heat wave across portions of the Ohio Valley and into the Northeast," weather service meteorologist Marc Chenard said. "We get a little bit of relief by early in the week, at least in the eastern U.S., the Northeast, but in general above-normal temperatures are going to cover a large portion of the country even into next week."

In southeastern Michigan, DTE Energy said 7,400 customers remained without power as of Saturday afternoon due to storm-related outages, down from 75,000 earlier in the week.

A heat index of around 100 Fahrenheit (37.8 Celsius) didn't stop Florida couple Judy and Bill Watson from watching the Tigers play the White Sox at Detroit's Comerica Park. Their afternoon visit was a milestone: Bill Watson has now seen games at all 30 MLB ballparks.

"We're from Florida. You might be interviewing the wrong people about heat," the 71-year-old Bradenton man said with a smile. "We drank water, beer occasionally. We were just happy it didn't get rained out."

Across the country in California, temperatures in the state's Central Valley were expected to reach as

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high as 106 Fahrenheit (41.1 Celsius), and the NWS issued a heat advisory through 8 p.m. Nearly 4,000 homes and businesses in Sacramento lost power for less than an hour in the middle of the day, the Sacramento Bee reported.

In Iowa, power was cut off at wastewater treatment plants in Hawarden and Spencer, which together have 14,000 residents.

Aiden Engelkes said he and his girlfriend grabbed clothes, cats and bottled water and left their flooded first-floor apartment in Spencer for a friend's dry space on the fourth floor. His Chevy SUV was under the roiling water outside, except for a bit of its antenna. Across the street, he said, friends were on a roof waiting for help.

"It's terrifying," said Engelkes, 20.

While the chances for rain were forecast as small into the middle of next week, the National Weather Service predicted expanded flooding before then in the area as high water moved downstream on several rivers in northern Iowa.

Flooding also closed state highways and county roads in southern Minnesota. Windom, a town of about 4,800 people, received 1.25 inches (3.2 centimeters) of rain on top of earlier heavy downpours, and the Des Moines River there had a record crest.

"We're having a tough time just keeping up, putting up barricades," city council member Jenny Quaid said. "We put barricades up, and then all of a sudden the water's rising so much, the barricade's way back in the water."

In New Mexico, heavy rain and flash flood warnings prompted officials to order some evacuations, with shelters set up for displaced residents.

The NWS announced a flash flood emergency on Friday night through early Saturday. The impacted areas included the city of Las Vegas, New Mexico, and communities near Albuquerque.

In Ruidoso, a mountain village in New Mexico, full-time residents will be allowed to return Monday after they were forced out by wildfires, though everyday life won't return to normal.

"You're going to need to bring a week's worth of food, you're going to need to bring drinking water," Mayor Lynn Crawford said on Facebook.

It was meant to be a Christian utopia. Now this Nigerian community is helpless against rising seas

By TAIWO ADEBAYO and DAN AKPOYI Associated Press

AYETORO, Nigeria (AP) — The coastal Nigerian community of Ayetoro was founded decades ago and nicknamed "Happy City," meant to be a Christian utopia that would be sinless and classless. But now its remaining residents can do little against the rising sea.

Buildings have sunk into the Atlantic Ocean, an increasingly common image along the vulnerable West African coast. Old timber pokes from the waves like rotten teeth. Shattered foundations line the shore. Waves break against abandoned electrical poles.

For years, low-lying nations have warned the world about the existential threat of rising seas. Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, struggles to respond. Some plans to address shoreline protection, even for Ayetoro, have come to nothing in a nation where corruption and mismanagement is widespread.

Prayers against the rising sea are "on the lips of everybody" in the church every Sunday, according to youth leader Thompson Akingboye. But they know the solution will require far more.

Even the church has been relocated away from the sea, twice. "The present location is now also threatened, with the sea just 30 meters (98 feet) away," Akingboye said.

Thousands of people have left. Of those who remain, Stephen Tunlese can only gaze from a distance at the remnants of his clothing shop.

Tunlese said he lost an investment of eight million naira, or the equivalent of \$5,500, to the sea. Now he adapts to a watery future. He repairs canoes.

"I will stay in Ayetoro because this is my father's land, this is heritage land," he said.

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The Mahin mud coast where the community is slipping away has lost more than 10 square kilometers, or nearly 60% of its land, to the ocean in the past three decades.

Researchers studying satellite imagery of Nigeria's coast say a number of things are contributing to Ayetoro's disappearance.

Underwater oil drilling is one reason, according to marine geologist Olusegun Dada, a professor at the Federal University of Technology in Akure who has studied years of satellite imagery. As resources are extracted, the ground can sink.

But he and colleagues note other reasons, including the deforestation of mangroves that help anchor the earth and the erosion caused by ocean waves.

"When we started coming to this community, then we used to have fresh water," Dada said. Today, the freshwater ecosystem is transforming into a salty, marine one.

The transformation is enormously costly in Nigeria. The World Bank in a 2020 report estimated the cost of coastal degradation in three other coastal Nigerian states — nearby Lagos, Delta and Cross River — at \$9.7 billion, or more than 2% of the country's GDP. It looked at erosion, flooding, mangrove loss and pollution, and noted the high rate of urbanization.

And yet dramatic images of coastal communities slipping away only capture Nigeria's attention from time to time, as when the annual flooding occurs — another effect of climate change.

But Ayetoro residents can't turn away.

"Ayetoro was like a paradise, a city where everyone lived joyfully, happily," said Arowolo Mofeoluwa, a retired civil servant.

She estimated that two-thirds of the community has been slowly swept under the waves, along with some residents' multiple attempts to rebuild.

"This is the third house we are living in, and there are some living in the fourth house now, and we do not have enough space for ourselves again. Four or five people living in a small room, you can just imagine how painful it is," Mofeoluwa said.

"If you look where the sea is now, that is the end of the former Ayetoro."

For the community's traditional leader and head of the local church, Oluwambe Ojagbohunmi, the pain is not only in the loss of land but also "what we are losing in our socio-cultural and religious identity."

Some residents say even burial grounds have been washed away.

Early this year, the Ondo state government announced a commitment to finding "lasting solutions" to the threat to Ayetoro. But residents said that's been vowed in the past.

It might be too late for efforts to be effective, Dada said. For years, he has hoped for an environmental survey to be carried out to better understand what's causing the community's disappearance. But that's been in vain.

The Niger Delta Development Commission, a government body meant in part to address environmental and other issues caused by oil exploration, didn't respond to questions from The Associated Press about efforts to protect the community's shoreline.

The commission's website lists a shoreline protection project in Ayetoro. A photo shows a sign marking the feat with the motto, "Determined to make a difference!"

The project was awarded two decades ago. Project status: "Ongoing."

Residents say nothing ever started.

"Help will come one day, we believe," youth leader Akingboye said.

Afghanistan stuns Australia to keep Twenty20 World Cup dream alive. India beat Bangladesh

KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent (AP) — Afghanistan kept its Twenty20 World Cup semifinal hopes alive by stunning previously unbeaten Australia by 21 runs in a thrilling encounter on Saturday.

Despite a second successive hat-trick by Australian bowler Pat Cummins, Afghanistan posted 148-6 after being asked to bat first on a tricky pitch at the Arnos Vale Ground.

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Afghanistan pair Rahmanullah Gurbaz and Ibrahim Zadran put on 118 for the highest opening partnership against Australia in a T20 match before Australia's bowlers rallied late, including Cummins' second career hat-trick — just two days after his first.

Australia then stumbled with the bat and were all out for 127, with only Glenn Maxwell (59 off 41 balls) coming to grips with the superb Afghanistan bowling attack and the turning wicket.

Man of the match Guldabin Naib took four wickets in an inspired spell in the middle overs to stall Australia's chase before Azmatullah Omarzai had final wicket Adam Zampa caught in the deep in the final over to complete a stunning win amid jubilant celebrations among the Afghan players and team management.

"It's a massive win for us as a team and as a nation in the World Cup beating (the) champions," captain Rashid Khan said.

"It's so important for us in back home for everyone all around the world where Afghanistan people, the Afghans are there, you know, they are badly missing this win and I'm sure they would have been so proud of and they would have enjoyed the game and I think it's just the beginning now for us," he added.

The victory moves Afghanistan to two points in Group 1 and level with Australia, but behind on net run rate. India leads the group on four points. Bangladesh are bottom after two losses but still have a chance of qualifying for the semifinals.

The final group standings will be decided on Monday when Afghanistan plays Bangladesh at St. Vincent and Australia play India Monday at St. Lucia.

Earlier, Gurbaz scored 60 off 49 balls, while Zadran made a steady 51 off 48 balls as they laid a solid platform — helped by some uncharacteristically poor fielding by Australia.

Marcus Stoinis eventually made the breakthrough in the 16th over, dismissing Gurbaz which led to a flurry of wickets as the momentum shifted.

Adam Zampa (2-28) took two wickets in the next over, including Zadran's, before Pat Cummins again came to the fore.

The seam bowler had Rashid Khan (two) caught by Tim David in the deep with the final ball off the 18th over.

Cummins (3-28) returned to bowl the final over of the innings and with his first ball had Karim Janat (13) again caught by David.

For the hat-trick ball Cummins' cleverly disguised a slower delivery which Guldabin Naib could only loft to Glenn Maxwell running in from the boundary to claim the catch.

Australia stumbled early in the chase as it lost Travis Head bowled by Naveen-ul-Haq for no score with the third ball of the innings.

Captain Mitchell Marsh (12) played two big shots before he was Naveen's second wicket and when David Warner (three) was out to spinner Mohammad Nabi's first ball the Aussies were in trouble at 32-3 in the sixth over.

Stoinis and Maxwell steadied the Australian innings as they reached 70-3 at the halfway stage.

Gulbadin (4-20) was the eighth bowler used by Afghanistan inside the first 11 overs and it paid a near instant dividend as Stoinis could only sky a pull shot which was caught by Gurbaz.

Gulbadin then removed David (two) and when the allrounder had Maxwell spectacularly caught by Noor Ahmad an upset victory appeared likely.

Australia's lower order batters couldn't find the big hits that the moment demanded either and when veteran Nabi took a catch on the boundary to dismiss Zampa (nine), Afghanistan's deserved victory was confirmed.

India beats Bangladesh by 50 runs At North Sound, Antigua, Hardik Pandya blasted Bangladesh with a 27-ball half-century and Kuldeep Yadav's three wickets finished off India's win earlier Saturday.

Pandya struck four boundaries and three sixes in an unbeaten 50 to lead India to 196-5.

Yadav then took 3-19 in four overs to limit Bangladesh to 146-8.

India moved to the top of Group 1 in the Super Eight with two wins from two matches. Afghanistan moved to two points after it beat Australia by 21 runs later Saturday, but stayed behind Australia in third

place on net run rate. Bangladesh remained winless.

Put into bat, India started quick as captain Rohit Sharma scored 23 off 11 balls. Virat Kohli added 37 off 28, hitting three sixes. The duo put on 39 off 22 balls for India's best opening stand in the tournament.

Sharma was caught in the fourth over off Shakib al Hasan, while Kohli put on another 32 off 27 balls with Rishabh Pant for the second wicket.

Tanzim Hasan Sakib struck twice in the ninth over, getting Kohli and Suryakumar Yadav for 6 as India slumped to 77-3.

But Rishabh Pant anchored one end with 36 off 24, including four fours and two sixes, putting on 31 off 19 balls with Shivam Dube.

Despite Pant's dismissal in the 12th over, Dube's prowess against spin came in handy — he hit three sixes, scoring 34 off 24 balls.

But it was Pandya who took charge in the death overs. India scored 62 runs in the last five overs.

Pandya was named player of the match.

"We have played some really good cricket (to win five straight games)," he said. "We have executed our plans well, but as a group we can still improve. We sometimes lose wickets in a bunch, but apart from that things are looking good."

Bangladesh's reply made a steady start. Openers Litton Das (13) and Tanzid Hasan (29) added 35 off 27 until Pandya got the breakthrough in the fifth over.

The Tigers were at 66-2 in the 10th over and scoring slower. The chase unravelled when Yadav came on to bowl. He trapped Hasan lbw, and dismissed Towhid Hridoy for 4 and claimed the big wicket of Shakib for 11.

Bangladesh lost three wickets for 32 runs across 24 balls and didn't recover.

Pace bowlers Jasprit Bumrah (2-13) and Arshdeep Singh (2-30) helped to seal India's fifth win over Bangladesh in the T20 World Cup.

Thousands of Iran-backed fighters offer to join Hezbollah in its fight against Israel

By BASSEM MROUE and QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Thousands of fighters from Iran-backed groups in the Middle East are ready to come to Lebanon to join with the militant Hezbollah group in its battle with Israel if the simmering conflict escalates into a full-blown war, officials with Iran-backed factions and analysts say.

Almost daily exchanges of fire have occurred along Lebanon's frontier with northern Israel since fighters from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip staged a bloody assault on southern Israel in early October that set off a war in Gaza.

The situation to the north worsened this month after an Israeli airstrike killed a senior Hezbollah military commander in southern Lebanon. Hezbollah retaliated by firing hundreds of rockets and explosive drones into northern Israel.

Israeli officials have threatened a military offensive in Lebanon if there is no negotiated end to push Hezbollah away from the border.

Over the past decade, Iran-backed fighters from Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan fought together in Syria's 13-year conflict, helping tip the balance in favor of Syrian President Bashar Assad. Officials from Iran-backed groups say they could also join together again against Israel.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said in a speech Wednesday that militant leaders from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and other countries have previously offered to send tens of thousands of fighters to help Hezbollah, but he said the group already has more than 100,000 fighters.

"We told them, thank you, but we are overwhelmed by the numbers we have," Nasrallah said.

Nasrallah said the battle in its current form is using only a portion of Hezbollah's manpower, an apparent reference to the specialized fighters who fire missiles and drones.

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But that could change in the event of an all-out war. Nasrallah hinted at that possibility in a speech in 2017 in which he said fighters from Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan and Pakistan "will be partners" of such a war.

Officials from Lebanese and Iraqi groups backed by Iran say Iran-backed fighters from around the region will join in if war erupts on the the Lebanon-Israel border. Thousands of such fighters are already deployed in Syria and could easily slip through the porous and unmarked border.

Some of the groups have already staged attacks on Israel and its allies since the Israel-Hamas war started Oct. 7. The groups from the so-called "axis of resistance" say they are using a "unity of arenas strategy" and they will only stop fighting when Israel ends its offensive in Gaza against their ally, Hamas.

"We will be (fighting) shoulder to shoulder with Hezbollah" if an all-out war breaks out, one official with an Iran-backed group in Iraq told The Associated Press in Baghdad, insisting on speaking anonymously to discuss military matters. He refused to give further details.

The official, along with another from Iraq, said some advisers from Iraq are already in Lebanon.

An official with a Lebanese Iran-backed group, also insisting on anonymity, said fighters from Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces, Afghanistan's Fatimiyoun, Pakistan Zeinabiyoun and the Iran-backed rebel group in Yemen known as Houthis could come to Lebanon to take part in a war.

Qassim Qassir, an expert on Hezbollah, agreed the current fighting is mostly based on high technology such as firing missiles and does not need a large number of fighters. But if a war broke out and lasted for a long period, Hezbollah might need support from outside Lebanon, he said.

"Hinting to this matter could be (a message) that these are cards that could be used," he said.

Israel is also aware of the possible influx of foreign fighters.

Eran Etzion, former head of policy planning for the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said at a panel discussion hosted by the Washington-based Middle East Institute on Thursday that he sees "a high probability" of a "multi-front war."

He said there could be intervention by the Houthis and Iraqi militias and a "massive flow of jihadists from (places) including Afghanistan, Pakistan" into Lebanon and into Syrian areas bordering Israel.

Daniel Hagari, Israel's military spokesman, said in a televised statement this past week that since Hezbollah started its attacks on Israel on Oct. 8, it has fired more than 5,000 rockets, anti-tank missiles and drones toward Israel.

"Hezbollah's increasing aggression is bringing us to the brink of what could be a wider escalation, one that could have devastating consequences for Lebanon and the entire region," Hagari said. "Israel will continue fighting against Iran's axis of evil on all fronts."

Hezbollah officials have said they don't want an all-out war with Israel but if it happens they are ready.

"We have taken a decision that any expansion, no matter how limited it is, will be faced with an expansion that deters such a move and inflicts heavy Israeli losses," Hezbollah's deputy leader, Naim Kassem, said in a speech this past week.

The U.N. special coordinator for Lebanon, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, and the commander of the U.N. peacekeeping force deployed along Lebanon's southern border, Lt. Gen. Aroldo Lázaro, said in a joint statement that "the danger of miscalculation leading to a sudden and wider conflict is very real."

The last large-scale conflict between Israel and Hezbollah occurred in the summer of 2006, when the two fought a 34-day war that killed about 1,200 people in Lebanon and 140 in Israel.

Since the latest run of clashes began, more than 400 people have been killed in Lebanon, the vast majority of them fighters but including 70 civilians and non-combatants. On the Israeli side, 16 soldiers and 11 civilians have been killed. Tens of thousands have been displaced on both sides of the border.

Qassir, the analyst, said that if foreign fighters did join in, it would help them that they fought together in Syria in the past.

"There is a common military language between the forces of axis of resistance and this is very important in fighting a joint battle," he said.

FBI offers reward for information about deadly southern New Mexico wildfires

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS undefined

RUIDOSO, N.M. (AP) — Federal authorities offered a reward for information about those responsible for igniting a pair of New Mexico wildfires that killed two people and destroyed hundreds of homes in the past week.

The FBI on Saturday offered up to \$10,000 for information in connection with the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire in southern New Mexico, which forced thousands to flee.

An agency statement said it was seeking public assistance in “identifying the cause” of the fires near Ruidoso, New Mexico, that were discovered June 17. But the notice also pointedly suggested human hands were to blame, saying the reward was for information leading to arrest and conviction of “the person or persons responsible for starting the fires.”

The South Fork Fire, which reached 26 square miles (67 square kilometers), was 26% contained on Saturday, while the Salt Fire, at 12 square miles (31 square kilometers), was 7% contained as of Saturday morning, according to the National Interagency Fire Center. Full containment was not expected until July 15.

Recent rains and cooler weather have assisted more than 1,000 firefighters working to contain the fires. Fire crews on Saturday took advantage of temperatures in the 70s Fahrenheit (21 to 26 Celsius), scattered showers and light winds to use bulldozers to dig protective lines while hand crews used shovels in more rugged terrain to battle the fires near the mountain village of Ruidoso.

Elsewhere in New Mexico, heavy rain and flash flood warnings prompted officials to order some mandatory evacuations Friday in the city of Las Vegas, New Mexico, and communities near Albuquerque, about 200 miles (320 kilometers) north of Ruidoso. Las Vegas set up shelters for displaced residents, and some evacuation orders remained in place there on Saturday.

Flash flood warnings were canceled Saturday, though the National Weather Service said afternoon storms could produce excessive runoff and more flooding in the area.

The wildfires have destroyed or damaged an estimated 1,400 structures. Other fallout from the fires, including downed power lines, damaged water, sewer and gas lines, flooding in burn scars, continued “to pose risks to firefighters and the public,” according to a Saturday update from the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department.

Evacuations in areas near Ruidoso and road closures were still in effect. In Ruidoso, full-time residents will be allowed to return Monday, though everyday life won’t return to normal.

“You’re going to need to bring a week’s worth of food, you’re going to need to bring drinking water,” Mayor Lynn Crawford said on Facebook.

President Joe Biden issued a disaster declaration for parts of southern New Mexico on Thursday, freeing up funding and more resources to help with recovery efforts including temporary housing, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property and other emergency work in Lincoln County and on lands belonging to the Mescalero Apache Tribe.

Deanne Criswell, administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, met with Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, Crawford and Mescalero Apache President Thora Walsh Padilla on Saturday. “These communities have our support for as long as it takes to recover,” Criswell posted on the social media platform X.

Much of the Southwest has been exceedingly dry and hot in recent months. Those conditions, along with strong wind, whipped the flames out of control, rapidly advancing the South Fork Fire into Ruidoso in a matter of hours. Evacuations extended to hundreds of homes, businesses, a regional medical center and the Ruidoso Downs horse track.

Nationwide, wildfires have scorched more than 3,344 square miles (8,660 square kilometers) this year, a figure higher than the 10-year average, according to the National Interagency Fire Center.

Sha'Carri Richardson sprints onto US Olympic team after winning 100 in 10.71 seconds

By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer

EUGENE, Ore. (AP) — Two steps before she reached the finish line, Sha'Carri Richardson started pounding her chest.

She knew she had it won. Anyone who doesn't see her as the sprinter to beat later this summer at the Paris Olympics should probably think again.

Richardson notched the latest stop on her "I'm Not Back, I'm Better" tour with a 10.71-second sprint in the 100 meters at U.S. track trials on Saturday that makes her the fastest woman in the world this year and officially earned her a trip to France where the women start racing Aug. 2.

The final marked the third time in this meet that Richardson did not get off to a stellar start. It also marked the third time in the meet she finished well in the clear.

She was .09 seconds ahead of training partner Melissa Jefferson, the 2022 U.S. champion. Another sprinter in coach Dennis Mitchell's camp, Twanisha Terry, finished third and also earned a spot on the women's 100-meter team.

"I feel honored," Richardson said. "I feel every chapter I've been through in my life prepared me for this moment."

A few seconds after her line-crossing celebration, she was down on a knee, clearly caught up in emotion.

"The emotion was just joy because of the hard work I put in, not just physically on the track, but mentally and emotionally to grow into the mature young lady I am today," she said.

It has been quite a ride for the 24-year-old Texan. Three years ago, she won this race, too (in 10.86 seconds), only to see the victory stripped because of a positive marijuana test that laid bare everything from her own struggles with depression to an anti-doping rulebook that hadn't changed with the times.

That's when the hard work began. What emerged, Richardson said, was a better and more in-tune person than the one who lit up this same Hayward Field back in 2021 — her orange hair flowing, looking like this sport's breakout star.

It took nearly two years for the results to show up on the track again. But she won the national championship in 2023 and declared "I'm not back, I'm better," then backed that up a month later with the world title.

"I'd say the message I'm sending out is to believe in yourself no matter what," Richardson said, echoing much the same thoughts from last year in Budapest. "You want to remain solid in yourself. Stay grounded in yourself and your hard work."

It's risky business to hand her the gold medal in Paris given the competition she'll face. Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, Shericka Jackson and two-time defending champion Elaine Thompson-Herah have 19 Olympic medals between them — Richardson has never been to the games — and all are slated to run at next weekend's Jamaican trials.

A recent injury to Thompson-Herah has mixed up that math. Meanwhile, Fraser-Pryce has been a rarely seen commodity in 2024 and Jackson is the two-time world champion at 200 meters — a race Richardson finished third in at worlds and is entered in next week at trials.

Back in the U.S., the Americans are feeding off each other, and Mitchell, a huge name in sprinting in the 1990s, pulled off a rarity by placing all three of his best sprinters in the Olympics.

"The odds of getting all three is probably a point-zero-zero-zero-zero-zero-zero-something," Mitchell said. "But those girls didn't care about those odds. They went out there and had a plan and they executed well and they deserve everything they got."

Given she bettered the season's best time despite a mediocre start and after pounding her chest and pulling up before the end of the race, it's hard to argue that Richardson is the favorite. Asked if she had a time in mind for the Olympics, she did not bite.

"I just know that if I execute and run the race I'm trained to prepare for that the time will come with it," she said.

Next up, Noah Next up, it's Noah Lyles' turn. Before Richardson took center stage, the reigning world

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champion at 100 meters ran his preliminary heat in 9.92 seconds, the fastest time in the first round of men's qualifying. He'll race Sunday for a spot in the Olympics.

Lyles, like Richardson, dealt with depression in the COVID-fueled days of the Tokyo Olympics. He made it to the games but took a bronze medal in the 200. The last 24 months have been about adding the 100 to his repertoire. He looked in good form in his first race this week at Hayward.

"It's been 'a long time' for a long time," Lyles said. "And I'm just so glad to be happy, glad to be out here, glad to be racing and feeling like myself."

Other tickets punched Michigan State's Health Baldwin won the decathlon to make his first Olympic team. He'll be joined by Zack Ziemek, who is on his third team, and Harrison Williams, who is also making his debut.

Jasmine Moore, Keturah Orji and Tori Franklin earned the three spots in women's triple jump.

Shot put Ryan Crouser overcame a balky elbow to win his eighth outdoor national title. He's looking for a third straight Olympic gold medal. Joe Kovacs, who finished runner-up to Crouser at both Olympics, finished second and Payton Otterdahl came in third.

Speaking to the strength of the U.S. in the event, Crouser said "if the whole world came to trials they'd get one, maybe one, spot" in the Olympics.

Abortion access has won when it's been on the ballot. That's not an option for half the states

By KIMBERLEE KRUESI, CHRISTINE FERNANDO and LEAH WILLINGHAM Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — Tucked inside the West Virginia Statehouse is a copy of a petition to lawmakers with a simple request: Let the voters decide whether to reinstate legal access to abortion.

The request has been ignored by the Republican lawmakers who have supermajority control in the Legislature and banned abortions in the state in 2022, shortly after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned a constitutional right to the procedure.

The petition, with more than 2,500 signatures, is essentially meaningless given the current makeup of the Legislature. But it illustrates the frustratingly limited options millions of Americans face in trying to re-establish abortion rights as the country marks the two-year anniversary since the Supreme Court's ruling.

West Virginia is among the 25 states that do not allow citizen initiatives or constitutional amendments on a statewide ballot, an avenue of direct democracy that has allowed voters to circumvent their legislatures and preserve abortion and other reproductive rights in a number of states over the past two years.

Republicans there have repeatedly dismissed the idea of placing an abortion-rights measure before voters, which in West Virginia is a step only lawmakers can take.

"It makes you wonder what they're so afraid of," said Democratic Del. Kayla Young, one of only 16 women in the West Virginia Legislature. "If they feel so strongly that this is what people believe, prove it."

The court's ruling to overturn *Roe v. Wade* was praised by abortion opponents as a decision that returned the question to the states. Former President Donald Trump, who named three of the justices who overturned *Roe*, has repeatedly claimed "the people" are now the ones deciding abortion access.

"The people are deciding," he said during a recent interview with Fox News host Sean Hannity. "And in many ways, it's a beautiful thing to watch."

But that's not true everywhere. In states allowing the citizen initiative and where abortion access has been on the ballot, voters have resoundingly affirmed the right to abortion.

Voters in seven states, including conservative ones such as Kentucky, Montana and Ohio, have either protected abortion rights or defeated attempts to curtail them in statewide votes over the past two years. Reproductive rights supporters are trying to put citizen initiatives on the ballot in several states this year.

But voters don't have a direct say in about half the states.

This is particularly true for those living in the South. Republican-controlled legislatures, many of which have been heavily gerrymandered to give the GOP disproportionate power, have enacted some of the

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strictest abortion bans since the Supreme Court ruling while shunning efforts to expand direct democracy.

States began adopting the initiative process during the Progressive Era more than a century ago, giving citizens a way to make or repeal laws through a direct vote of the people. Between 1898 and 1918, nearly 20 states approved the citizen initiative. Since then, just five states have done so.

"It was a different time," said John Matsusaka, professor of business and law at the University of Southern California. "There was a political movement across the whole country when people were trying to do what they saw as good government."

Some lawmakers argue citizen initiatives bypass important checks and balances offered through the legislative process. In Tennessee, where Republicans have gerrymandered legislative districts to give them a supermajority in the statehouse, House Majority Leader William Lamberth likened ballot measures to polls rather than what he described as the legislature's strict review of complicated policy-making.

"We evaluate bills every single year," he said.

As in West Virginia, abortion-rights supporters or Democratic lawmakers have asked Republican-controlled legislatures in a handful of states to take the abortion question straight to voters, a tactic that hasn't succeeded anywhere the GOP has a majority.

"This means you're going to say, 'Hey Legislature, would you like to give up some of your power? Would you like to give up your monopoly on policymaking?'" said Thad Kousser, professor of political science at the University of California, San Diego. "You need a political momentum and then have the process cooperate."

In South Carolina, which bans nearly all abortions, a Democratic-backed resolution to put a state constitutional amendment on the ballot never got a hearing this year. Attempts to attach the proposal to other pieces of legislation were quickly shut down by Republicans.

"If you believe you are doing the right thing for all the people of South Carolina — men and women and babies — you should have no problem putting this to the people," said Democratic Sen. Margie Bright Matthews, alleging that Republicans fear they would lose if the issue went directly to voters.

In Georgia, Democratic Rep. Shea Roberts said she frequently fields questions from her constituents asking how they can get involved in a citizen-led ballot measure. The interest exploded after voters in Kansas rejected an anti-abortion measure from the Legislature in 2022 and was rekindled last fall after Ohio voters overwhelmingly passed an amendment codifying abortion rights in the state's constitution.

Yet when she has brought legislation to create a citizen initiative process in Georgia, the efforts have been ignored inside the Republican-controlled Legislature.

"Voters are constantly asking us why we can't do this, and we're constantly explaining that it's not possible under our current constitution," Roberts said. "If almost half of states have this process, why shouldn't Georgians?"

The contrast is on stark display in two presidential swing states. Michigan voters used a citizen initiative to enshrine abortion rights in their state constitution in 2022. Voters in neighboring Wisconsin don't have that ability.

Instead, Wisconsin Democrats, with a new liberal majority on the state Supreme Court, are working to overturn Republican-drawn legislative maps that are among the most gerrymandered in the country in the hope of eventually flipping the Legislature.

Analiese Eicher, director of communications at Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin, said a citizen-led ballot measure process would have been especially valuable for her cause.

"We should have legislators who represent their constituents," she said. "And if they don't, there should be another option."

In West Virginia, Steve Williams acknowledges the petition he spearheaded didn't change minds inside the Legislature.

But the Democratic mayor of Huntington, who is a longshot candidate for governor, said he thinks state Republicans have underestimated how strongly voters believe in restoring some kind of abortion access.

Republican leadership has pointed to a 2018 vote in which just under 52% of voters supported a constitutional amendment saying there is no right to abortion access in the state. But Williams said the vote also had to do with state funding of abortion, which someone could oppose without wanting access com-

pletely eliminated.

The vote was close, voter participation was low and it came before the Supreme Court's decision that eliminated a nationwide right to abortion. Williams said West Virginia women weren't facing the reality of a near-total ban.

"Let's face it: Life in 2024 is a heck of a lot different for women than it was in 2018," he said.

A Mexico City neighborhood keeps the iconic Volkswagen Beetle alive

By MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Janette Navarro's 1996 Volkswagen Beetle roars as it barrels up a steep hill overlooking concrete houses stacked like boxes on the outskirts of Mexico City.

She presses her foot on the pedal, passes a lime green Beetle like hers, then one marked with red and yellow, then another painted a bright sea blue.

"No other car gets up here," she said. "Just the vocho."

The Volkswagen Beetle, or "vocho" as it's known in Mexico, may have been born in Germany, but in this hilly neighborhood on the fringes of Mexico City, there's no doubt about it: The "Bug" is king.

The Beetle has a long history in the country's sprawling capital. The old-school models like these — once driven as taxis — used to dot city blocks as the quirky look captured the fascination of many around the world. It was long known as "the people's car."

But after production of older models halted in Mexico in 2003, and the newer versions in 2019, the Bug population is dwindling in the metro area of 23 million people. But in the northern neighborhood of Cuauhtepec, classic Beetles still line the streets — so much so that the area has been nicknamed "Vocholandia."

Taxi drivers like Navarro say they continue to use the vochos because the cars are inexpensive and the engine located in the back of the vehicle gives it more power to climb the neighborhood's steep hills.

Navarro began driving Beetles for work eight years ago as a way to feed her three children and put them through school.

"When they ask me what I do for work, I say proudly that I'm a vochera (a vocho driver)," Navarro said a day before the International Day of the VW Beetle on Saturday. "This work keeps me afloat ... It's my adoration, my love."

While some of the older cars wobble along, paint long faded after years of wear and tear, other drivers dress their cars up, keeping them in top shape.

One driver has named his bright blue car "Gualupita" after his wife, Guadalupe, and adorns the bottom with aluminum flames blasting out from a VW logo. Another painted their VW pink and white, sticking pink cat eyes on the front headlights.

Mechanics in the area, though, say driving vochos is a dying tradition. David Enojosa, a car mechanic, said his family's small car shop in the city used to sell parts and do maintenance primarily on Beetles. But since Volkswagen halted production five years ago, parts have been harder to come by.

"With the current trend, it will disappear in two or three years," Enojosa said, his hands blackened by car grease. "Before we had too many parts for vochos, now there aren't enough ... So they have to look for parts in repair shops or junkyards."

As he spoke, a customer walked up carrying a worn down bolt, looking for a replacement for his Volkswagen's clutch.

The customer, Jesús Becerra, was in luck: Enojosa strolled out of his shop holding a shiny new bolt.

Less lucky drivers have to do laps around the neighborhood looking for certain parts. Even more cars fall into disrepair and don't pass emissions inspections.

But Becerra is among those who believed that the vochos will endure in his neighborhood.

"You adapt them, you find a way to make it keep running," he said. "You say, 'We're going to do this, fix it and let's go.'"

Others like Joaquín Pérez say continuing to drive his 1991 white, Herbie-style Beetle is a way to carry on his family tradition. He grew up around Bugs, he explained as his car rumbled. His father was a taxi

driver just like him and he learned how to drive in a VW.

Now, 18 years into working as a driver himself, his dashboard is lined with trinkets from his family. A plastic duck from his son, a frog stuffed animal from his daughter and a fabric rose from his wife.

"This area, always, always since I can remember has been a place of vochos," he said. "This here is the car of the people."

With its new pact with North Korea, Russia raises the stakes with the West over Ukraine

By The Associated Press undefined

Behind the smiles, the balloons and the red-carpet pageantry of President Vladimir Putin's visit to North Korea last week, a strong signal came through: In the spiraling confrontation with the U.S. and its allies over Ukraine, the Russian leader is willing to challenge Western interests like never before.

The pact that he signed with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un envisions mutual military assistance between Moscow and Pyongyang if either is attacked. Putin also announced for the first time that Russia could provide weapons to the isolated country, a move that could destabilize the Korean Peninsula and reverberate far beyond.

He described the potential arms shipments as a response to NATO allies providing Ukraine with longer-range weapons to attack Russia. He bluntly declared that Moscow has nothing to lose and is prepared to go "to the end" to achieve its goals in Ukraine.

Putin's moves added to concerns in Washington and Seoul about what they see as an alliance in which North Korea provides Moscow with badly needed munitions for its war in Ukraine in exchange for economic assistance and technology transfers that would enhance the threat posed by Kim's nuclear weapons and missile program.

A landmark pactThe new agreement with Pyongyang marked the strongest link between Moscow and Pyongyang since the end of the Cold War.

Kim said it raised bilateral relations to the level of an alliance, while Putin was more cautious, noting the pledge of mutual military assistance mirrored a 1961 treaty between the Soviet Union and North Korea. That agreement was discarded after the Soviet collapse and replaced with a weaker one in 2000 when Putin first visited Pyongyang.

Stephen Sestanovich, senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations noted that when Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev signed the deal with Pyongyang in 1961, he also tested the world's biggest nuclear bomb, built the Berlin Wall and probably started thinking about moves that led to the Cuban missile crisis in 1962.

"The question for Western policymakers now is whether Putin is becoming comparably reckless," Sestanovich said in a commentary. "His language in North Korea -- where he denounced the United States as a 'worldwide neocolonialist dictatorship' — might make you think so."

South Korea responded by declaring it would consider sending arms to Ukraine in a major policy change for Seoul, which so far only has sent humanitarian assistance to Kyiv under a longstanding policy of not supplying weapons to countries engaged in conflict.

Putin insisted Seoul has nothing to worry about, since the new pact only envisions military assistance in case of aggression and should act as a deterrent to prevent a conflict. He strongly warned South Korea against providing lethal weapons to Ukraine, saying it would be a "very big mistake."

"If that happens, then we will also make corresponding decisions that will hardly please the current leadership of South Korea," he said.

Asked whether North Korean troops could fight alongside Russian forces in Ukraine under the pact, Putin said there was no need for that.

Potential weapons for PyongyangLast month, Putin warned that Russia could provide long-range weapons to others to hit Western targets in response to NATO allies allowing Ukraine to use its allies' arms to make limited attacks inside Russian territory.

He followed up on that warning Thursday with an explicit threat to provide weapons to North Korea.

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"I wouldn't exclude that in view of our agreements with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea," Putin said, adding that Moscow could mirror the arguments by NATO allies that it's up to Ukraine to decide how to use Western weapons.

"We can similarly say that we supply something to somebody but have no control over what happens afterward," Putin said. "Let them think about it."

Sue Mi Terry, senior fellow for Korea studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, warned that Moscow could share weapons technologies with Pyongyang to help improve its ballistic missile capabilities, noting there is evidence of this happening already, with Russia possibly providing help to North Korea with its successful satellite launch in November, two months after Kim last met Putin.

"This is deeply concerning because of the substantial overlap between the technologies used for space launches and intercontinental ballistic missiles," Terry said in a commentary. "Russia can also provide North Korea with critical help in areas where its capabilities are still nascent, such as submarine-launched ballistic missiles."

While raising the prospect of arms supplies to Pyongyang that would violate U.N. sanctions, Putin also said Russia would take efforts at the world body to ease the restrictions — an apparent signal that Moscow may try to keep arms supplies to Pyongyang under the radar and maintain a degree of deniability to avoid accusations of breaching the sanctions.

Russia and North Korea have rejected assertions by the U.S. and its allies that Pyongyang has given Moscow ballistic missiles and millions of artillery shells for use in Ukraine.

Going 'to the end' in a confrontation with the West by explicitly linking prospective arms shipments to Pyongyang to Western moves on Ukraine, Putin warned Kyiv's allies to back off as he pushes his goals in the war — or face a new round of confrontation.

"They are escalating the situation, apparently expecting that we will get scared at some point, and at the same time, they say that they want to inflict a strategic defeat on Russia on the battlefield," Putin said. "For Russia, it will mean an end to its statehood, an end to the millennium-long history of the Russian state. And a question arises: Why should we be afraid? Isn't it better, then, to go to the end?"

Alexander Gabuev, director of the Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center in Berlin, said Putin's statement reflected an attempt to discourage the U.S. and its allies from ramping up support for Kyiv as Russia pushes new offensives in several sectors of the front line.

"The situation is becoming increasingly dangerous, and Russia believes that it should quickly rap the West over its knuckles to show that its deeper engagement in the war will have a price," he said in remarks carried by Dozhd, an independent Russian broadcaster.

He noted that Putin's statement that Moscow wouldn't know where its arms end up if sent to Pyongyang could have been a hint at North Korea's role as an arms exporter.

Treading cautiously with China Putin's visits to North Korea handed a new challenge to Pyongyang's top ally, China, potentially allowing Kim to hedge his bets and reduce his excessive reliance on Beijing.

China so far has avoided comment on the new pact, but many experts argue that Beijing won't like losing sway over its neighbor.

Ever since Putin invaded Ukraine, Russia has come to increasingly depend on China as the main market for its energy exports and the source of high-tech technologies in the face of Western sanctions. While forging a revamped relationship with Pyongyang, the Kremlin will likely tread cautiously to avoid angering Beijing.

"Whether this upgraded Russia-North Korea relationship will be without limits depends upon China," which will watch events closely, said Edward Howell of Chatham House in a commentary. "Beijing will have taken stern note of Kim Jong Un's claim that Russia is North Korea's 'most honest friend.' Despite the likely increase in cooperation in advanced military technology between Moscow and Pyongyang, China remains North Korea's largest economic partner."

Bitter political fight in Bolivia is paralyzing the government as unrest boils over economic crisis

By CARLOS VALDEZ and ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP) — Protesters streamed into Bolivia's capital, throats hoarse from chanting and feet blistered from a week of walking along the national highway.

The throngs of street vendors in the South American country's vast informal work force ended their nearly 100-kilometer (60-mile) march from Bolivia's mountain-rimmed plains with a call that summoned years of growing anger over the nation's dangerously depleting foreign-exchange reserves: "We want dollars!"

With prices surging, dollars scarce and lines snaking away from fuel-strapped gas stations, protests in Bolivia have intensified over the economy's precipitous decline from one of the continent's fastest-growing two decades ago to one of its most crisis-stricken today.

"We can change the country because we are the engine of production," Roberto Ríos Ibáñez, secretary-general of Bolivia's Confederation of Merchants, said as weary protesters broke for lunch around him in the capital's traffic-snarled center. "The government doesn't listen. That's why we're in the streets."

Bolivia's financial quagmire stems, at least in part, from an unprecedented rift at the highest levels of the governing party.

President Luis Arce and his one-time ally, leftist icon and former President Evo Morales, are battling for the future of Bolivia's splintering Movement for Socialism, known by its Spanish acronym MAS, ahead of elections in 2025.

The political fight has paralyzed the government's efforts to deal with the deepening economic despair and analysts warn that the social unrest could explode in the historically turbulent nation of 12 million people.

Cracks in the governing party opened in 2019, when Morales, then Bolivia's first Indigenous president, ran for an unconstitutional third term. He won a contested vote plagued by allegations of fraud, setting off mass protests that caused 36 deaths and prompted Morales to resign and flee the country.

After an interim government took control in what MAS called a coup, Morales' chosen successor, Arce, won election on a campaign promise to restore prosperity to Bolivia, once Latin America's mainstay source of natural gas.

Arce had been Morales' finance minister who oversaw years of strong growth and low inflation, but assuming the presidency in 2020, he encountered a bleak economic reckoning from the coronavirus pandemic. Diminished gas production sealed the end of Bolivia's budget-busting economic model.

Still hugely popular among Bolivia's Indigenous communities, coca growers and union workers, Morales saw an opportunity. After returning from exile, the charismatic populist announced plans last year to run in the 2025 vote — setting himself on a collision course with Arce, who is expected to seek re-election.

"Bolivia has an Indigenous majority and people will instinctively support someone like Morales based on what he represents," said Diego von Vacano, an expert in Bolivian politics at Texas A&M University and former informal adviser to Arce. "Now they have the push factor, the lack of success of the Arce administration."

Earlier this month, Morales drew tens of thousands of loyalists to Cochabamba southeast of La Paz, galvanizing his rural stronghold.

"We're going to win the elections and we're going to save Bolivia," a triumphant Morales bellowed in a stadium filled with cheering supporters waving wiphalas, the checkerboards of bright colors to represent Bolivia's many peoples.

Arce disputes the legitimacy of Morales' campaign, arguing a 2023 constitutional court ruling bars him from running.

Legal experts say it's not so clear-cut.

"We've seen both the politicians manipulate the courts to decide political issues that have major bearing on the constitution," said Eduardo Rodríguez Veltzé, a Bolivian judge who served as president in 2005-2006.

Morales, who proclaimed in his speech that "we have complied with the rules," has threatened to unleash

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mass unrest if he is disqualified from running.

Meanwhile, with the cash crunch denying access to dollars to pay suppliers abroad, Bolivian merchants have produced extraordinary scenes on the border with Brazil and Peru by clamoring to buy the U.S. currency at inflated prices in the neighboring countries.

When exchange shops in La Paz ran dry last year, Bolivians waited in line all night outside the Central Bank to get hard currency.

It's a striking contrast to Bolivia's boom at the turn of the 21st century. Buoyed by a windfall of export revenue, Morales' government pulled the poverty rate down to 15%, expanded the middle class and built up sprawling cities and roads.

Trouble began in 2014 when commodity prices plunged and the government dipped into its currency reserves to sustain spending. Then it drew on its gold reserves and even sold its dollar bonds locally.

"We ate up the savings and now we are scraping the pot," said Gonzalo Chávez, economics professor at Bolivia's Catholic University.

With the government forking out \$2 billion a year to import heavily subsidized gasoline in an effort to quell public discontent, the squeeze has tightened. The Fitch rating agency in February downgraded Bolivia's debt deeper into junk territory, assigning it a CCC rating.

And the fight over MAS is exacerbating economic woes.

Morales' allies in Bolivia's Congress have consistently thwarted Arce's attempts to take on debt that would relieve the pressure. Bolivia sits on a treasure trove of lithium, but lawmakers won't give Arce approval to let foreign companies extract it.

Arce calls the gridlock an "economic boycott" aimed at subverting his presidency.

Seeking to ease investor fears, Finance Minister Marcelo Montenegro denies there is any crisis. But the long lines of frustrated motorists outside gas stations suggest otherwise. In recent days, angry truckers have blocked roads and burned tires.

"Arce has dismantled our social organizations while abandoning his management of the economy," said Jorge Cucho, an Indigenous leader and activist. "Prices have increased by 70%. Our salaries are no longer enough to go to the market."

The tensions tearing at MAS offer Bolivia's opposition its first real shot at power since Morales won an unprecedented electoral majority in 2005. Centrist and conservative politicians have jumped into the field. But the opposition is fractured and its legitimacy is in question, with dozens of its politicians behind bars.

"The opposition has far more opportunities now due to the division," said Fernando Mayorga, a sociologist at Bolivia's public university in Cochabamba. "So far, we've seen no signs that it can act on them."

Bolivians who are incensed by Morales but disappointed by Arce say the country stands at a perilous crossroads.

"The people are asleep," said Ibáñez, the union leader. "Soon they'll begin to rise up."

It's not as world-famous as ramen or sushi. But the humble onigiri is soul food in Japan

By YURI KAGEYAMA Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — The word "onigiri" became part of the Oxford English Dictionary this year, proof that the humble sticky-rice ball and mainstay of Japanese food has entered the global lexicon.

The rice balls are stuffed with a variety of fillings and typically wrapped in seaweed. It's an everyday dish that epitomizes "washoku" — the traditional Japanese cuisine that was designated a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage a decade ago.

Onigiri is "fast food, slow food and soul food," says Yusuke Nakamura, who heads the Onigiri Society, a trade group in Tokyo.

Fast because you can find it even at convenience stores. Slow because it uses ingredients from the sea and mountains, he said. And soul food because it's often made and consumed among family and friends. No tools are needed, just gently cupped hands.

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"It's also mobile, food on the move," he said.

Onigiri in its earliest form is believed to go back at least as far as the early 11th Century; it's mentioned in Murasaki Shikibu's "The Tale of Genji." It appears in Akira Kurosawa's classic 1954 film "Seven Samurai" as the ultimate gift of gratitude from the farmers.

What exactly goes into onigiri? The sticky characteristic of Japanese rice is key.

What's placed inside is called "gu," or filling. A perennial favorite is umeboshi, or salted plum. Or perhaps mentaiko, which is hot, spicy roe. But in principle, anything can be placed inside onigiri, even sausages or cheese.

Then the ball is wrapped with seaweed. Even one nice big onigiri would make a meal, although many people would eat more.

Some stand by the classic onigiri. Yosuke Miura runs Onigiri Asakusa Yadoroku, a restaurant founded in 1954 by his grandmother. Yadoroku, which roughly translates to "good-for-nothing," is named for her husband, Miura's grandfather. It claims to be the oldest onigiri restaurant in Tokyo.

There are just two tables. The counter has eight chairs. Takeout is an option, but you still have to stand in line.

"Nobody dislikes onigiri," said Miura, smiling behind a wooden counter. In a display case before him are bowls of gu, including salmon, shrimp and miso-flavored ginger. "It's nothing special basically. Every Japanese has 100% eaten it."

Also a classical flautist, Miura sees onigiri as a score handed down from his grandmother, one which he will reproduce faithfully.

"In classical music, you play what's written on the music sheet. Onigiri is the same," he says. "You don't try to do something new."

Yadoroku is tucked away in the quaint old part of Tokyo called Asakusa. It opens at 11:30 a.m. and closes when it runs out of rice, usually within the hour. Then it opens again for dinner. The most expensive onigiri costs 770 yen (\$4.90), with salmon roe, while the cheapest is 319 yen (\$2). That includes miso soup. No reservations are taken.

Although onigiri can be round or square, animal or star-shaped, Miura's standard is the triangular ones. He makes them to order, right before your eyes, taking just 30 seconds for each.

He places the hot rice in triangular molds that look like cookie cutters, rubs salt on his hands and then cups the rice — three times to gently firm the sides. The crisp nori, or seaweed, is wrapped like a kerchief around the rice, with one end up so it stays crunchy.

The first bite is just nori and rice. The gu comes with your second bite.

"The Yadoroku onigiri will not change until the end of Earth," Miura said with a grin.

Others want to experiment. Miyuki Kawarada runs Taro Tokyo Onigiri, which has four outlets in Japan. She is eyeing Los Angeles, too, and then Paris. Her vision: to make onigiri "the world's fast food."

The name Taro was chosen because it's common, the Japanese equivalent of John or Michael. Onigiri, she says, has mass appeal because it's simple to make, is gluten-free and is versatile.

And other Japanese foods like ramen and sushi have found worldwide popularity, she notes.

At her cheerful, modern shop, workers wearing khaki-colored company T-shirts busily prepare the gu and rice balls in a kitchen visible behind the cash register. The shop only serves takeout.

Kawarada's onigiri has lots of gu on top, for colorful toppings, instead of inside. Each one comes with a separately wrapped piece of nori to be placed around it right before you eat.

Her gu gets adventurous. Cream cheese is mixed with a pungent Japanese pickle called "iburigakko," for instance, and each onigiri costs 250 yen (\$1.60). Spam and egg onigiri costs 300 yen (\$1.90); the one adorned with several types of "kombu," or edible kelp, called "Dashi Punch X3," costs 280 yen (\$1.80).

"Onigiri is the infinite universe. We don't get tied down in tradition," said Kawarada.

The customers Asami Hirano, who stopped in while walking her dog, took a long time choosing her meal at Taro Tokyo Onigiri on a recent day.

"I've always loved onigiri since I was a kid. My mother made them," she said.

Nicolas Foo Cheung, a Frenchman who works nearby as an intern, had been to Taro Tokyo Onigiri a few

times before and thinks it's a good deal. "It's simple food," he said.

Miki Yamada, a food promoter, intentionally calls onigiri "omusubi," the other common word for rice balls, because the latter more clearly refers to the idea of connections. She says her life's mission is to bring people together, especially since the triple earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disasters hit her family's rice farm in Fukushima, northeastern Japan, in 2011.

"By facing up to omusubi, I have encountered a spirituality, a basic Japanese-ness of sorts," she said.

There is nothing better, she said, than plain Aizu rice omusubi with a pinch of salt and utterly nothing inside.

"It energizes you. It's that ultimate comfort food," she said.

US aircraft carrier arrives in South Korea as a show of force against nuclear-armed North Korea

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — A nuclear-powered U.S. aircraft carrier arrived Saturday in South Korea for a three-way exercise involving Japan as they step up military training to cope with North Korean threats, which have escalated following a security pact with Russia.

The arrival of the USS Theodore Roosevelt strike group in Busan came a day after South Korea summoned the Russian ambassador to protest a major deal between Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un this week.

The agreement pledges mutual defense assistance in the event of war. South Korea says the deal poses a threat to its security and warned that it could consider sending arms to Ukraine to help fight off the Russian invasion as a response — a move that would surely ruin its relations with Moscow.

Following a meeting between their defense chiefs in Singapore earlier in June, the United States, South Korea and Japan announced the Freedom Edge drills.

The Roosevelt strike group will participate in the exercise that is expected to start within June. South Korea's military didn't immediately confirm specific details of the training.

Rear Admiral Christopher Alexander, commander of Carrier Strike Group Nine, said the exercise is aimed at sharpening tactical proficiency of ships and improving interoperability between the countries' navies "to ensure we are ready to respond to any crisis and contingency."

South Korea's navy said in a statement that the arrival of the carrier demonstrates the strong defense posture of the allies and "stern willingness to respond to advancing North Korean threats." The carrier's visit comes seven months after another U.S. aircraft carrier, the USS Carl Vinson, came to South Korea in a show of strength against the North.

Following completion of the exercise, the Roosevelt strike group will leave for the Middle East to "continue promoting regional stability, deter aggression, and protect the free flow of commerce in the region," Pentagon spokesperson Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder said in a statement.

The Roosevelt strike group also participated in a three-way exercise with South Korean and Japanese naval forces in April in the disputed East China Sea, where worries about China's territorial claims are rising.

In the face of growing North Korean threats, the United States, South Korea and Japan have expanded their combined training and boosted the visibility of strategic U.S. military assets in the region, seeking to intimidate the North. The United States and South Korea have also been updating their nuclear deterrence strategies, with Seoul seeking stronger assurances that Washington would swiftly and decisively use its nuclear capabilities to defend its ally from a North Korean nuclear attack.

Trump endorses Ten Commandments in schools, implores evangelical Christians to vote in November

By MICHELLE L. PRICE and AYANNA ALEXANDER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump told a group of evangelicals they “cannot afford to sit on the sidelines” of the 2024 election, imploring them at one point to “go and vote, Christians, please!”

Trump also endorsed displaying the Ten Commandments in schools and elsewhere while speaking to a group of politically influential evangelical Christians in Washington on Saturday. He drew cheers as he invoked a new law signed in Louisiana this week requiring the Ten Commandments to be displayed in every public school classroom.

“Has anyone read the ‘Thou shalt not steal’? I mean, has anybody read this incredible stuff? It’s just incredible,” Trump said at the gathering of the Faith & Freedom Coalition. “They don’t want it to go up. It’s a crazy world.”

Trump a day earlier posted an endorsement of the new law on his social media network, saying: “I LOVE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, PRIVATE SCHOOLS, AND MANY OTHER PLACES, FOR THAT MATTER. READ IT — HOW CAN WE, AS A NATION, GO WRONG???”

The former president and presumptive Republican presidential nominee backed the move as he seeks to galvanize his supporters on the religious right, which has fiercely backed him after initially being suspicious of the twice-divorced New York City tabloid celebrity when he first ran for president in 2016.

That support has continued despite his conviction in the first of four criminal cases he faces, in which a jury last month found him guilty of falsifying business records for what prosecutors said was an attempt to cover up a hush money payment to porn actor Stormy Daniels just before the 2016 election. Daniels claims she had a sexual encounter with Trump a decade earlier, which he denies.

Trump’s stated opposition to signing a nationwide ban on abortion and his reluctance to detail some of his views on the issue are at odds with many members of the evangelical movement, a key part of Trump’s base that’s expected to help him turn out voters in his November rematch with Democratic President Joe Biden.

But while many members of the movement would like to see him do more to restrict abortion, they cheer him as the greatest champion for the cause because of his role in appointing U.S. Supreme Court justices who overturned national abortion rights in 2022.

Trump highlighted that Saturday, saying, “We did something that was amazing,” but the issue would be left to people to decide in the states.

“Every voter has to go with your heart and do what’s right, but we also have to get elected,” he said.

While he still takes credit for the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*, Trump has also warned abortion can be tricky politically for Republicans. For months, he deferred questions about his position on a national ban.

Last year, when Trump addressed the Faith & Freedom Coalition, he said there was “a vital role for the federal government in protecting unborn life” but didn’t offer any details beyond that.

In April of this year, Trump said he believed the issue should now be left to the states. He later stated in an interview that he would not sign a nationwide ban on abortion if it was passed by Congress. He has still declined to detail his position on women’s access to the abortion pill mifepristone.

About two-thirds of Americans say abortion should generally be legal, according to polling last year by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Attendees at the evangelical gathering on Saturday said that while they’d like to see a national abortion ban, Trump isn’t losing any of their deep support.

“I would prefer if he would sign a national ban,” said Jerri Dickinson, a 78-year-old retired social worker and Faith & Freedom member from New Jersey. “I understand though, that as in accordance with the Constitution, that decision should be left up to the states.”

Dickinson said she can’t stand the abortion law in her state, which does not set limits on the procedure based on gestational age. But she said outside of preferring a national ban, leaving the issue to the state “is the best alternative.”

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According to AP VoteCast, a wide-ranging survey of the electorate, about 8 in 10 white evangelical Christian voters supported Trump in 2020, and nearly 4 in 10 Trump voters identified as white evangelical Christians. White evangelical Christians made up about 20% of the overall electorate that year.

Beyond just offering their own support in the general election, the Faith & Freedom Coalition plans to help get out the vote for Trump and other Republicans, aiming to use volunteers and paid workers to knock on millions of doors in battleground states.

Trump also rallied voters in Philadelphia on Saturday with a speech heavily focused on violent crime, telling supporters at an arena that he would grant police officers immunity from prosecution.

"Under Crooked Joe, the City of Brotherly Love is being ravaged by bloodshed and crime," he said. "We will surge federal law enforcement resources to the places that need them most."

Statistics from the Philadelphia city controller say there were 410 homicides in 2023, a 20% drop compared to 2022.

Tyler Cecconi, 25, of Richmond, Virginia, said he was glad that Trump is stepping out of his comfort zone and going to places that may not be red. At the venue, a digital banner read "Philadelphia is Trump Country."

"He's showing the people that regardless if you vote for him or not, or if it's a blue county or a red county, it doesn't matter to him," Cecconi said. "A president is for everybody in this country."

The GOP Senate candidate of Pennsylvania, Dave McCormick, attended the rally and appeared on stage to talk to voters about the economy and immigration.

"This economy is not working for most Pennsylvanians, and it's not working for most Americans," McCormick said.

At both events, Trump returned several times to the subject of the U.S.-Mexico border and when describing migrants crossing it as "tough," he said that he told his friend Dana White, the president of the Ultimate Fighting Championship, to enlist them in a new version of the sport.

"Why don't you set up a migrant league and have your regular league of fighters. And then you have the champion of your league, these are the greatest fighters in the world, fighting the champion of the migrants," Trump described saying to White. "I think the migrant guy might win, that's how tough they are. He didn't like that idea too much."

Biden's campaign responded to Trump's remarks by saying it was "fitting" that Trump, convicted of a felony, spent time at a religious conference making threats about immigration and "bragging about ripping away Americans' freedoms."

"Trump's incoherent, unhinged tirade showed voters in his own words that he is a threat to our freedoms and is too dangerous to be let anywhere near the White House again," campaign spokesperson Sarafina Chitika said in a statement.

Yemen's Houthi rebels target ship in the Gulf of Aden as the Eisenhower aircraft carrier heads home

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — An attack by Yemen's Houthi rebels targeted a commercial ship traveling through the Gulf of Aden but apparently caused no damage, authorities said Saturday, in the latest strike on the shipping lane by the group.

The Houthi attack comes after the sinking this week of the ship Tutor, which marked what appears to be a new escalation by the Iranian-backed Houthis in their campaign of strikes on ships in the vital maritime corridor over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

Meanwhile, the U.S. military ordered the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower, the aircraft carrier leading America's response to the Houthi attacks, to return home after a twice-extended tour.

The captain of the ship targeted late Friday saw "explosions in the vicinity of the vessel," the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations center said. A later briefing by the U.S.-overseen Joint Maritime Information Center said the vessel initially reported two explosions off its port side and a

third one later.

"The vessel was not hit and sustained no damage," the center said. "The vessel and crew are reported to be safe and are proceeding to their next port of call."

The Houthis, who have held Yemen's capital, Sanaa, since 2014, claimed the attack Saturday night. Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree, a Houthi military spokesman, identified the vessel targeted as the bulk carrier Transworld Navigator.

The U.S. military separately destroyed three drone boats in the Red Sea over the last day, Central Command said.

The Houthis have launched more than 60 attacks targeting specific vessels and fired off other missiles and drones in their campaign that has killed a total of four sailors. They have seized one vessel and sunk two since November. A U.S.-led airstrike campaign has targeted the Houthis since January, with a series of strikes May 30 killing at least 16 people and wounding 42 others, the rebels say.

In March, the Belize-flagged Rubymar carrying fertilizer became the first to sink in the Red Sea after taking on water for days following a rebel attack.

The Houthis have maintained that their attacks target ships linked to Israel, the United States or Britain. However, many of the ships attacked have little or no connection to the Israel-Hamas war.

The Eisenhower, based in Norfolk, Virginia, is returning home after an over eight-month deployment in combat that the Navy says is its most intense since World War II. The San Diego-based USS Theodore Roosevelt will take the Eisenhower's place after a scheduled exercise in the Indo-Pacific, said Pentagon press secretary Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder.

The Roosevelt anchored Saturday in Busan, South Korea, amid Seoul's ongoing tensions with North Korea.

The Eisenhower had already reached the Mediterranean Sea, said a U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss ship movements. Flight-tracking data analyzed by The Associated Press showed a Sikorsky MH-60R Seahawk helicopter associated with the Eisenhower flying above the Mediterranean just off the coast of Port Said, Egypt, on Saturday night.

The Eisenhower had repeatedly been targeted by false attack claims by the Houthis during its time in the Red Sea. Saree on Saturday night claimed another attack on the carrier — but again provided no evidence to support it as the ship already had left the area. Central Command called the claim "categorically false."

At least 39 people killed in Israeli strikes across northern Gaza, officials say

By WAFSA SHURAF and JACK JEFFERY Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — At least 39 people were killed by Israeli strikes across northern Gaza on Saturday, as rescue workers scrambled to find survivors beneath the rubble, according to Palestinian and hospital officials.

Fadel Naem, director of the al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza City, told The Associated Press that more than three dozen bodies arrived at the hospital. The Palestinian Civil Defense, an emergency group active in Gaza, said its emergency workers were digging for survivors at the site of a strike in the Shati refugee camp west of Gaza City and that it had pulled several dozen bodies from a building hit by an Israeli strike in an eastern neighborhood of Gaza City.

Israel said Saturday that its fighter jets struck two Hamas military sites in the Gaza City area but did not elaborate further.

The deaths come a day after at least 25 people were killed in strikes on tent camps and 50 wounded near the southern city of Rafah. Israel said Saturday that it was continuing to operate in central and southern Gaza and has pushed ahead with its invasion of Rafah, where over a million Palestinians had sought refuge from fighting elsewhere. Most have now fled the city, but the United Nations says no place in Gaza is safe and humanitarian conditions are dire as families shelter in tents and cramped apartments without adequate food, water or medical supplies.

A separate Israeli strike Saturday in Lebanon's eastern Bekaa Valley killed a member of the military wing of al-Jamaa al-Islamiya, or the Islamic Group, a Sunni Muslim faction closely allied with Hamas, according to the group. The member was the seventh killed by Israeli strikes in Lebanon since the war began.

The Israel-Hamas war erupted on Oct. 7 when Hamas militants who stormed southern Israel killed about 1,200 people and took some 250 others hostage. Israel has responded by bombarding and invading the enclave, killing more than 37,400 Palestinians there according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between combatants and civilians in its count.

Also Saturday, Israel's army said an Israeli man was fatally shot in the northern West Bank town of Qalqilya, where Israeli forces fatally shot two militants Friday, the latest flare of violence in the territory since the Israel-Hamas war erupted.

At least 549 Palestinians in the territory have been killed by Israeli fire since the war began, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry, which tracks the killings. Over the same period, Palestinians in the West Bank have killed at least nine Israelis, including five soldiers, according to U.N. data.

Israeli nationals are prohibited from entering Qalqilya and other areas of the West Bank that fall under the control of the Palestinian Authority.

In April, the death of a 14-year-old Israeli settler sparked a series of settler attacks on Palestinian towns in the territory. The army said a Palestinian was later arrested in connection with the killing.

On Saturday, the Palestinian Health Ministry said a 12-year-old Palestinian boy died from his wounds after being shot by Israeli forces in Ramallah last week. Commenting on the shooting, the Israeli army said its forces raided al-Amari refugee camp near Ramallah to arrest a suspect Friday and then opened fire on a group of Palestinians who were pelting them with stones.

Israel said Saturday that it was investigating a separate incident into conduct of its soldiers after a video surfaced online showing an injured Palestinian being transported on the hood of an Israeli armored car in the northern West Bank. The army said the man in the video was a wanted suspect and injured during an exchange of fire between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces near the city of Jenin. The man was being transported to a Red Crescent ambulance situated nearby, it said. The army said the conduct in the video didn't "conform to the values" of the army.

Anger across the country is growing at the government's handling of the war in Gaza and the hostage crisis.

On Saturday, tens of thousands of people demonstrated in Tel Aviv calling for new elections and for the government to bring the hostages home. Among the families were the parents of Naama Levy, an Israeli soldier who marked her 20th birthday in captivity.

As U.S.-supplied weapons show impact inside Russia, Ukrainian soldiers hope for deeper strikes

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

KHARKIV REGION, Ukraine (AP) — Weeks after the decision allowing Ukraine to use U.S.-supplied weapons for limited strikes in Russian territory, the country is having some success in halting Russia's new push along the northeast front, but military commanders are clamoring for restrictions on long-range missiles to be lifted.

Deteriorating battlefield conditions forced the U.S. to permit Ukraine to use Western-supplied artillery and rocket systems to defend the eastern city of Kharkiv by targeting border regions where the Kremlin's forces assemble and launch attacks. The impact was swift: Ukrainian forces pushed Russian positions back, won time to better fortify their own positions and even mounted small offensive actions.

But commanders said that without the ability to use long-range guided missiles, such as ATACMS, their hands are tied.

"We could target (Russian) brigade command points and the entire northern grouping, because they are located 100 to 150 kilometers from the front line," said Hefastus, an artillery commander in the Kharkiv region who goes by his callsign. "Normal ammunition can't get at them. With this kind, we can do a lot to

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destroy their centers of command.”

The Ukrainian commanders interviewed spoke on condition that their callsigns be used, in line with brigade rules.

The U.S. expanded the scope of its policy to allow counterstrikes across a wider region Friday. But the Biden administration has not lifted restrictions on Ukraine that prohibit the use of U.S.-provided ATACMS to strike inside Russian territory, according to three U.S. officials familiar with the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly. The U.S. began providing Ukraine with long-range ATACMS earlier this year, but with rules, including that they cannot be used to strike inside Russia and must be used within sovereign territory, which includes land seized by the Russians.

That prevents attacks on airfields and military infrastructure in Russia’s deep rear, underscoring a common Ukrainian complaint that Western allies anxious about potentially provoking Russia are undermining Ukraine’s ability to fight effectively.

Ukrainian officials are pushing U.S. allies to be able to strike particular high-value targets inside Russia using ATACMS, which can reach over 100 kilometers (62 miles).

“Unfortunately, we still cannot reach, for example, airfields and their aircraft. This is the problem,” Yehor Cherniev, deputy chairman of the parliamentary committee on national security, defense and intelligence, said earlier this month. “That’s why we are asking (allies) to lift the restrictions to use long-range missiles against limited military targets in the territory of Russia.”

Since late May, Ukraine has been able to target Russian troops and air defense systems 20 kilometers (12 miles) from the border in the Kharkiv region. Moscow opened a new front in the region on May 10, capturing village after village in a sweeping advance that caught Ukrainian troops unprepared.

Though not a panacea, the move has greatly slowed Russia’s momentum, even allowing Ukrainian troops to make advances along the northeast border, including recently recapturing areas southwest of Vovchansk, according to local reports. Brigades there said high mobility army rocket systems, or HIMARS, were fired hours after permission was granted, destroying an air defense complex outfitted to launch the deadly missiles.

At the time, the stakes were high as Ukrainian military leaders anticipated another assault designed to divert troops from other intense battlegrounds in the Donetsk region. First Deputy Defense Minister Ivan Havryliuk told The Associated Press that at least 90,000 Russian troops deep in Russian territory were gearing up for a new assault.

“The HIMARS were not silent for the whole day,” Hefastus said, recalling the first hours when permission was granted to use the rocket systems. “From the first days, Ukrainian forces managed to destroy whole columns of troops along the border waiting for the order to enter Ukraine.”

“Before, we couldn’t target them. It was quite complicated. All warehouses with ammunition and other resources were located a 20-kilometer distance beyond what we could hit,” he said.

The dynamics shifted almost immediately, allowing Ukrainian forces to stabilize that part of the front line. Soldiers near a strategic area north of Kharkiv where fighting to push Russian troops back is ongoing said enemy troops had moved positions several kilometers back. Such claims could not be independently verified.

“Tactics have changed” as a result of Ukraine’s improved striking ability, said Kalina, a platoon commander for the Khartia Brigade. Before, they were only able to hit incoming infantry assaults; now, they can employ more artillery against Russian firing points.

The U.S. decision came in the 11th hour, after much lobbying by Ukrainian officials and right as troops were preparing for combat in anticipation of Russia opening a new front in the northeast.

Ukrainian officials are hoping to convince American allies to allow the use of ATACMS against specific targets.

“It seems pretty absurd when the enemy is so actively advancing on our territory and striking with all types of missiles and calibers at Ukrainian territory and we cannot strike back inside the enemy’s territory where they hold logistics and supplies,” said Lys Mykyta, the commander of a drone company in the

103rd Territorial Defense Brigade.

But Ukrainian officials said only desperate battlefield conditions are likely to convince American officials to walk back the restriction.

The renewed invasion of the Kharkiv region, which drew in precious Ukrainian reserves, pushed the U.S. to have a change of heart on allowing self-defense strikes in Russian territory, Cherniev said.

"Probably, the decision about the ATACMS will also be changed based on the situation on the ground," he said. "I hope the decision will be made as soon as possible."

3 Alabama men die after becoming distressed while swimming at Florida beach

PANAMA CITY BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Three Alabama men have died from likely drowning after becoming distressed while swimming at a Florida Panhandle beach, authorities said Saturday morning.

The young men had traveled to the Panama City Beach area Friday evening, the Bay County Sheriff's Office said in a Facebook post.

The sheriff's office received an emergency call about the distressed swimmers shortly after 8 p.m., officials said. The U.S. Coast Guard and others began rescue efforts. The men, who were not immediately identified, were found separately and eventually pronounced dead at local hospitals.

Earlier this week, single red flags had been posted at the beach, indicating high-hazard surf and rip current conditions.

On Thursday, a Pennsylvania couple visiting Florida with their six children drowned after they were caught in a rip current while swimming. The man and woman were caught in the current on Hutchinson Island, along Florida's southeast coast, the Martin County Sheriff's Office said in a Facebook post.

A U.S. envoy visits Hanoi days after Putin, saying US-Vietnam trust is at 'all-time high'

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — A senior U.S. diplomat held talks in Vietnam on Saturday and said that the trust between the two countries was at an "all-time high," just days after Russian President Vladimir Putin's state visit to Hanoi.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs Daniel Kritenbrink insisted that his trip was unrelated to Putin's visit on Thursday. Vietnam had elevated the United States to its highest diplomatic status, comprehensive strategic partner, last year, putting it at the same level as China and Russia. The elevation of the U.S. ties suggested that Vietnam wanted to hedge its friendships as Western companies look to diversify their supply chains away from China.

Kritenbrink was speaking at a briefing for selected media in Hanoi. A recording of the interaction was reviewed by The Associated Press.

Putin's trip to Hanoi had triggered a sharp rebuke from the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi, which said that "no country should give Putin a platform to promote his war of aggression and otherwise allow him to normalize his atrocities," referring to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, now in its third year.

The American East Asia envoy echoed those concerns but said that he made it clear to Vietnamese officials that the "main reason" for his trip was the partnership between the U.S. and Vietnam. He met Vietnamese Foreign Minister Bui Thanh Son.

"Only Vietnam can decide how best to safeguard its sovereignty and advance its interests," he said, while stressing the economic relations between Vietnam and its largest export market, the U.S. Trade between the two countries was \$111 billion in 2023 — compared to just \$3.6 billion between Vietnam and Russia.

Russia remains important for Vietnam, not just because it is an old ally from the Cold War era, but also because it continues to be its biggest defense supplier and Russian oil exploration technologies help maintain Vietnam's sovereignty claims in the contested South China Sea.

Kritenbrink said that China's increasingly assertive actions in pressing its claims to virtually the entire South China Sea were a cause of "great concern" for the region and the world.

The territorial disputes, which involve China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan, have long been seen as an Asian flashpoint that could pit the U.S. against China if the high seas confrontations escalate into an armed conflict.

Vietnam said Friday that it was ready to hold talks with the Philippines to settle their overlapping claims to the undersea continental shelf in the South China Sea in a diplomatic approach that contrasts with China.

"We think that China's actions, particularly its recent actions, around the Second Thomas Shoal, vis-à-vis the Philippines have been irresponsible, aggressive, dangerous, deeply destabilizing," Kritenbrink said. He stressed that defense treaties between the U.S. and its ally the Philippines were "ironclad."

The Philippines said Friday it has no plan to invoke its mutual defense treaty with the U.S. after the Chinese coast guard reportedly rammed, boarded and used machetes and axes to damage two Philippine navy boats in a chaotic faceoff that injured Filipino navy personnel.

3 dead in bombing of Kharkiv as Russia launches missiles on Ukrainian energy facilities

By TOM WILLIAMS Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — At least three people were killed in a Russian bombing attack on Ukraine's second city, Kharkiv, on Saturday afternoon, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

Another 38 people were wounded in the attack, Kharkiv Mayor Ihor Terekhov said. Four aerial bombs were launched against the city, damaging residential buildings, shops and public transport stops, said Kharkiv regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov. He said that four of the wounded were in serious condition.

"This Russian terror with guided aerial bombs must and can be stopped. Bold decisions from our partners are needed so that we can destroy Russian terrorists and Russian combat aircraft where they are," Zelenskyy wrote on the messaging app Telegram.

Zelenskyy said last month that Ukraine still urgently needs at least seven more Patriot missile systems to fend off Russian strikes against the power grid and civilian areas, as well as military targets, with devastating glide bombs that wreak wide destruction.

Russia has also continued to target Ukraine's energy infrastructure with a new barrage of missiles and drones overnight, officials in Kyiv said. The attacks damaged energy facilities in the southeast and west and injured at least two workers.

Ukraine is struggling with a new wave of rolling blackouts after relentless Russian attacks on energy infrastructure that started three months ago took out half the country's power generation capacity. Ukraine's air defenses intercepted 12 of the 16 missiles and all 13 drones launched by Russia, the air force said.

State-owned power grid operator Ukrenergo said the strikes damaged equipment at facilities in southeastern Zaporizhzhia and the western Lviv region. Two energy workers were injured in Zaporizhzhia when a fire broke out at an energy facility, according to regional Gov. Ivan Fedorov.

With no major changes reported along the 1,000-kilometer (600-mile) front line, where a recent push by the Kremlin's forces in eastern and northeastern Ukraine has made only incremental gains, both sides have taken aim at infrastructure targets, seeking to curb each other's ability to fight in a war that is now in its third year.

Moscow's overnight attack on Zaporizhzhia and Lviv follows Ukrainian military strikes on three oil refineries in southern Russia overnight into Friday.

Air defenses destroyed five drones over the Sea of Azov and the country's western Bryansk and Smolensk regions, the Russian Ministry of Defense said. A man was killed in shelling of Russia's Belgorod region, which borders Ukraine, according to regional Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov.

The governor of eastern Ukraine's partly occupied Donetsk region said Saturday that Russian attacks had killed five people and wounded seven the previous day.

In the Russia-controlled part of the region, Moscow-installed Gov. Denis Pushilin said three people were

killed and four were injured in shelling by Ukrainian forces Saturday morning.

A policeman was killed in the partly occupied region of Kherson as a result of a Russian drone attack on a checkpoint, the Ukrainian National Police said.

LGBTQ+ librarians grapple with attacks on books - and on themselves

By CLAIRE SAVAGE Associated Press

Idaho librarian June Meissner was closing up for the day at the downtown Boise Public Library when a man approached her asking for help.

As an information services librarian, answering patrons' questions is part of Meissner's day-to-day work, and serving the community is one of her favorite parts of the job.

But when the man got close enough, "he took a swing at me and tried to punch me in the head," said Meissner, a transgender woman. "I blocked it and he started yelling slurs and suggesting that he was going to come back and kill me."

Worldwide Pride Month events are well underway to celebrate LGBTQ+ culture and rights. But it is coming at a time when people who identify as LGBTQ+ say they are facing increasing difficulties at work, ranging from being repeatedly misgendered to physically assaulted.

Gender nonconforming library workers in particular, like Meissner, are also grappling with growing calls for book bans across the U.S., with books about gender identity, sexual orientation and race topping the list of most criticized titles and making the attacks all the more personal.

"When we see attacks on those books, we have to understand that those are attacks on those kinds of people as well," said Emily Drabinski, who is the president of the American Library Association and is gay. "To have my identity weaponized against libraries and library workers, the people and institutions I care about the most, has made it a difficult and painful year."

The ALA said it documented the highest-ever number of titles targeted for censorship in 2023 in more than 20 years of tracking -- 4,240. That total surpassed 2022's previous record by 65%, with Maia Kobabe's coming-of-age story "Gender Queer" topping the list for most criticized library book for the third straight year.

Lawmakers are increasingly considering lawsuits, fines, and even imprisonment for distributing books some regard as inappropriate, including in Meissner's home state of Idaho. Lawmakers there passed legislation that empowers local prosecutors to bring charges against public and school libraries if they don't keep "harmful" materials away from children. The new law, signed by Idaho Gov. Brad Little in April, will go into effect on July 1.

"I do think that a lot of that political speech around it does make things more dangerous and worse for me," Meissner said. "It is so much politicking and getting the general public riled up."

Meissner's own attacker was arrested and convicted, and she says that while the vast majority of her interactions at work are positive, she still struggles to let her guard down and is constantly assessing whether a situation could turn unsafe.

"As somebody who is working face to face with the public and trying to help people as much as possible, that really does get in the way," she told The Associated Press, describing how she waits to make eye contact with a patron "and then, based on what I see when they look at me, that'll tell me whether or not I should just be on edge, be wary."

Florida-based conservative nonprofit Moms for Liberty, which describes itself as a parental rights organization and refers to its members as "joyful warriors," has been at the forefront of a nationwide push to remove books that deal with race and gender identity.

But co-founder Tiffany Justice says the organization — which she says has more than 300 chapters in 48 states and more than 130,000 active members — is not anti-LGBTQ+, although Justice herself told the AP she thinks that the Q in the acronym, which stands for queer or questioning, "needs to go into the trash bin." And according to the ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom, about 38% of book challenges that

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“directly originated” from Moms for Liberty activity have LGBTQ+ themes.

Justice said Moms for Liberty challenges books like *Gender Queer* — a graphic novel about a young person’s struggle with gender identity that contains illustrations of sexual contact, masturbation and a sex toy — because they view the material as sexually explicit, not because they cover LGBTQ+ topics.

“The least interesting thing about a child should be their sexual orientation,” Justice said. “Why are we flooding them with sexual content?”

Despite the thousands of petitions to censor books about gender and sex, legal standards for deeming materials obscene or harmful to minors — and therefore not protected speech under the First Amendment — are very specific and high, and courts have historically sided with libraries, according to Vera Eidelman, a staff attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union who focuses on rights to free speech in the digital age.

“The mere fact that something is describing sex, describing nudity, even depicting those things, is not enough to make it qualify as obscenity,” she said.

Regardless, the book banning movement has in many cases successfully restricted access to materials in which LGBTQ+ youth can see themselves depicted.

As of June 1, Louisiana libraries must allow parents or guardians to decide which books their child can check out. M’issa Fleming, a public librarian in New Orleans who uses they/them pronouns, says the new law could make it even more dangerous for queer and trans kids, who are already at higher risk of being victims of violence, substance use, and suicide than their straight, cisgender peers. And losing access to LGBTQ+ themed books may cause kids to turn to less reliable sources like Reddit.

“Public libraries could be offering as many ways as possible to make it less dangerous to learn about yourself, and the law just added another challenge,” Fleming said.

Chaz Carey, a children’s librarian in Worthington, Ohio, knows firsthand how powerful books can be. Alison Bechdel’s 2006 graphic memoir *Fun Home*, in which the author comes to grips with her sexual orientation, changed Carey’s life as a teenager.

“I felt seen. It was like my whole body just let out a breath,” said Carey, who is queer and uses they/them pronouns. “It is just so important that these books remain on shelves. They save lives.”

Carey says being a children’s librarian is a dream job, but the rise in book challenges and anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric takes a mental toll. They are frequently misgendered at work, including by some patrons who go out of their way to do so while airing their political beliefs.

“The political environment is just an extra kind of weight as we navigate our lives and our places in our community,” said Carey, who chairs ALA’s Rainbow Roundtable, which aims to serve the information needs of LGBTQ+ people.

For Carey, what helps is “taking some time to feel sad, but then choosing queer joy and pride.”

Now an abortion rights advocate, woman raped by stepfather as a child will campaign with first lady

By COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A 22-year-old woman who became an abortion rights advocate after she was raped by her stepfather as a child will campaign with first lady Jill Biden in Pennsylvania this weekend as part of a 2024 election push around the anniversary of the fall of *Roe v. Wade*.

Hadley Duvall of Owensboro, Kentucky, first told her story publicly last fall in a campaign ad for the governor’s race in her home state, discussing the consequences of abortion restrictions, particularly those without exceptions for rape or incest.

In the ad supporting Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear, Duvall spoke of how she was raped by her stepfather at age 12, became pregnant and miscarried. Her stepfather was convicted of rape and is in prison.

In the ad, Duvall called out the anti-abortion Republican candidate by name and said that “anyone who believes there should be no exceptions for rape and incest could never understand what it’s like to stand in my shoes.”

Beshear won reelection, and Democrats have said Duvall’s ad was a strong motivator, particularly for

rural, male voters who had previously voted for Republican Donald Trump for president.

Now, Duvall is turning her attention to the White House election.

She plans to appear with first lady Jill Biden at a Pittsburgh rally on Sunday that is part of President Joe Biden's push to motivate voters on abortion rights, and Duvall will continue to campaign for the Democratic incumbent. Jill Biden will also hold an event in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on Sunday.

The Supreme Court decided on June 24, 2022 to overturn abortion rights that had been in place since 1973. Since then, roughly half the states have some sort of ban in place, and 10 states have no exceptions for rape or incest. The consequences of these bans go far beyond restricting access for those who wish to end unwanted pregnancies.

"Survivors like me have our childhood taken away from us, and it's something we are healing from every single day. At the very least, we deserve to have our own choices," Duvall said in a statement to The Associated Press. "But, because of Donald Trump, right now there are abortion bans across the country with no exceptions for rape or incest. I feel like I owe it to myself and to a lot of little girls to speak up. They can't speak up and I can -- and our lives and futures are at stake in this election."

Trump, the presumptive Republican nominee, has repeatedly taken credit for the overturning of a federally guaranteed right to abortion. He nominated three of the Supreme Court justices who voted to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. But he has publicly resisted supporting a national abortion ban.

The Pennsylvania events are part of a larger campaign push around the anniversary of the decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. That effort kicked off this week with events by Vice President Kamala Harris.

The campaign is holding more than 35 events across the country, including in the swing states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Georgia. The events feature women and doctors who have been deeply impacted by the fall of *Roe*, including Amanda Zurawski and Kaitlyn Joshua, who have said abortion restrictions put them in medical peril.

The majority of U.S. adults, including those living in states with the strictest limits on abortion, want it to be legal at least through the initial stages of pregnancy, according to a poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

In the two years since *Roe's* demise, reproductive health in the U.S. has become increasingly more fraught, and Biden and Democrats are seeking to highlight the growing fallout as a reason to reelect the president.

Women who never intended to end their pregnancies have nearly died because they could not get emergency treatment. Miscarriage care has been delayed. Routine reproductive medical care is drying up in states with strict bans. Fertility treatments were temporarily paused in Alabama.

Duvall is a senior at Midway University in Midway, Kentucky. She has also spoken publicly about a state bill that would provide narrowly tailored exceptions to the state's abortion law.

The AP does not normally identify sexual assault victims, but Duvall chose to be identified and has spoken out publicly about her experience and its connection to the debate over abortion.

New Mexico heavy rain and flash flooding prompt mandatory evacuations

LAS VEGAS, N.M. (AP) — Heavy rain and flash flood warnings in New Mexico prompted officials to order some mandatory evacuations, with shelters set up for displaced residents.

The National Weather Service office announced a flash flood emergency on Friday night through early Saturday. The impacted areas included the city of Las Vegas, New Mexico and communities near Albuquerque.

Up to 2 inches (5 centimeters) of rain had fallen by late Friday with additional rainfall up to 1.5 inches (3.8 centimeters) expected overnight, the weather service said.

There was flash flooding with multiple road closures on the north and west sides of Las Vegas, the weather service said.

The Las Vegas municipal government announced mandatory evacuations of parts of the city in social

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media posts, warning residents to prepare for overnight stays. The city said it established shelters for residents on the west and east sides of the city.

The city government asked residents to limit non-essential water use, while also clarifying that online rumors suggesting the city's water dams had broken were false and that the dams "are currently intact."

New Mexico also suffered devastating wildfires this week that killed at least two people and forced thousands to flee from the flames. The South Fork and Salt fires in south-central New Mexico destroyed or damaged an estimated 1,400 structures. FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell and New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham planned to tour the disaster area Saturday.

Today in History: June 23, Title IX signed into law

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, June 23, the 175th day of 2024. There are 191 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On June 23, 1972, President Richard Nixon signed into law Title IX, barring discrimination on the basis of sex for "any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Also on this date:

In 1860, a congressional resolution authorized creation of the United States Government Printing Office, which opened the following year.

In 1888, abolitionist Frederick Douglass received one vote from the Kentucky delegation at the Republican convention in Chicago, effectively making him the first Black candidate to have his name placed in nomination for U.S. president.

In 1931, aviators Wiley Post and Harold Gatty took off from New York on a round-the-world flight that lasted eight days and 15 hours.

In 1947, the Senate joined the House in overriding President Harry S. Truman's veto of the Taft-Hartley Act, designed to limit the power of organized labor.

In 1956, Gamal Abdel Nasser was elected president of Egypt.

In 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson, Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin (ah-LEK'-say koh-SEE'-gihn) opened a three-day summit at Glassboro State College in New Jersey.

In 1969, Warren E. Burger was sworn in as chief justice of the United States by the man he was succeeding, Earl Warren.

In 1985, all 329 people aboard an Air India Boeing 747 were killed when the plane crashed into the Atlantic Ocean near Ireland because of a bomb authorities believe was planted by Sikh separatists.

In 1994, the movie "Forrest Gump," starring Tom Hanks as a simple yet kindhearted soul who had serendipitous brushes with greatness, was released by Paramount Pictures.

In 1995, Dr. Jonas Salk, the medical pioneer who developed the first vaccine to halt the crippling rampage of polio, died in La Jolla (HOY'-ah), California, at age 80.

In 2016, Britain voted to leave the European Union after a bitterly divisive referendum campaign, toppling Prime Minister David Cameron, who had led the campaign to keep Britain in the EU.

In 2020, the Louisville police department fired an officer involved in the fatal shooting of Breonna Taylor more than three months earlier, saying Brett Hankison had shown "extreme indifference to the value of human life" when he fired ten rounds into Taylor's apartment.

In 2021, after 13 years of near silence in the conservatorship that controlled her life and money, pop star Britney Spears told a judge in Los Angeles that the conservatorship controlled by her father and others had made her feel demoralized and enslaved, and that it should come to an end. (The judge would agree to that request in November 2021.)

In 2022, in a major expansion of gun rights, the Supreme Court said Americans have a right to carry firearms in public for self-defense.

Today's Birthdays: Author Richard Bach is 88. Singer Diana Trask is 84. Actor Ted Shackelford is 78. Actor

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Bryan Brown is 77. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas is 76. Musician Glenn Danzig is 69. "American Idol" ex-judge Randy Jackson is 68. Actor Frances McDormand is 67. Rock musician Steve Shelley (Sonic Youth) is 62. Golfer Colin Montgomerie is 61. Writer-director Joss Whedon is 60. R&B singer Chico DeBarge is 54. Actor Selma Blair is 52. French soccer manager and former player Zinedine Zidane is 52. Actor Joel Edgerton is 50. Rock singer KT Tunstall is 49. Singer-songwriter Jason Mraz is 47. Rapper Memphis Bleek is 46. NFL Hall of Famer LaDainian Tomlinson is 45. Actor Melissa Rauch ("The Big Bang Theory") is 43. Rock singer Duffy is 40.