

Groton Daily Independent

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Monday, Nov. 11

Senior Menu: Goulash, mixed vegetables, oranges, breadsticks
School Breakfast: French toast.
School Lunch: Chicken legs, mashed potatoes.
VETERAN'S DAY
Veteran's Day Program, 2 p.m., GHS Arena
FFA District 1 LDE, Doland
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.
United Methodist: PEO Meeting (outside group), 7 p.m.
Pantry, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Groton Community Center
Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 12

Senior Menu: Scalloped potatoes with ham, peas, fruit, whole wheat bread.
School Breakfast: Scones.
School Lunch: Hot dogs, fries.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Council, 6 p.m.
United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.
Common Cents Thrift Store, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 209 N Main.
Pantry, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., Groton Community Center
Volleyball SoDak16
School Board Meeting, 7 a.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 13

Senior Menu: Turkey with dressing, mashed potatoes with gravy, glazed baby carrots, pumpkin bar, dinner roll.
School Breakfast: Oatmeal.
School Lunch: Beef stew with a biscuit.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, time to be determined.
St. John's Lutheran: Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.
Groton C&MA: Missions Night with Mike Picconatto (for all ages), 7 p.m.
FCCLA Food Drive, 6 p.m.

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

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FROSTY CLUE

I/My.....

11. Have always had a pet



BROWN COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE

Lynn Heupel, Auditor

Accounting | Elections | Licensing | Record-Keeping

NOTICE OF POST-ELECTION AUDIT

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with SDCL 12-17B-21, that a Post-Election Audit of the November 5, 2024 General Election will be conducted on November 14, 2024 in the Commission Chambers, Courthouse Annex, 25 Market Street, Aberdeen, SD 57401.

The Audit will start at 5:00 PM and is open to the public. This public is reminded that they shall keep a reasonable distance so as to not interfere with the audit process.

Questions concerning the Post Election Audit may be directed to the Brown County Auditor at 605-626-7110.

Lynn Heupel
Brown County Auditor

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1440

Why 1440? The printing press was invented around the year 1440, spreading knowledge to the masses and changing the course of history. More facts: In every day, there are 1,440 minutes. We're here to make each one count.

Veterans Day

Today is Veterans Day, commemorating Armistice Day at the end of World War I.

There are 15.8 million veterans alive in the US today, a figure representing 6.1% of the adult US population. Veterans have served during wartime and in peacetime, with roughly one-third having served in the Vietnam War, one-quarter in the Gulf War, and 28% serving since 9/11. The percentage of veterans alive today who served in World War II is less than 0.2%. While the vast majority of veterans are US citizens, citizenship is not a prerequisite for enlistment; as of 2015, noncitizens made up less than 1% of veterans.

There are no known living veterans from World War I; the last known US soldier from that war was laid to rest in 2007.

Chip Wars

The world's largest semiconductor maker, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company, will pause shipments of its most advanced computer chips to China in response to concerns from US regulators. The move follows the discovery of its products in devices made by Huawei, a Chinese telecom giant currently under US sanctions.

By some estimates, TSMC produces over 90% of the world's most advanced computer chips, which power everything from the latest smartphones to AI applications. Many technology companies—including Apple, Nvidia, Qualcomm, and more—outsource production of these critical components to TSMC. Analysts say the restrictions could impact a wide range of nonsanctioned Chinese companies beyond Huawei.

The decision may also have geopolitical ramifications. While Taiwan views itself as a sovereign nation, China formally considers Taiwan part of its territory and has vowed to eventually reunify the island with the mainland. The US has adopted an ambiguous stance toward the relationship.

Drones over Moscow

Russia and Ukraine exchanged unprecedented drone attacks over the weekend. Ukraine carried out its broadest drone attack on Moscow, firing more than 30 drones, per Russian officials, wounding one person, and temporarily forcing three airports to shut down. Russia fired 145 drones into Ukraine, per Ukrainian officials—an unprecedented number for a single night.

The news comes as UK's defense minister says Russia suffered its highest number of casualties from the war last month, averaging 1,500 Russian soldiers killed or wounded daily, and bringing the number of Russian casualties to roughly 700,000 people. The news comes as around 50,000 Russian and North Korean soldiers amassed in Russia's Kursk region, per US and Ukrainian officials, and as Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a mutual defense treaty with North Korea into law Saturday.

A Russian counteroffensive to retake Ukrainian-seized territory in Kursk is expected in the coming days.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Oregon's Dillon Gabriel breaks all-time major college football record for career passing touchdowns with 179.

Lionel Messi's Inter Miami eliminated from MLS Cup Playoffs after 3-2 loss to Atlanta United.

NFL looking at eight international games next season, including in the UK, Spain, Germany, Mexico, Brazil, and Ireland.

Judith Jamison, dancer and longtime artistic director at Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, dies at age 81.

Tony Todd, best known for role as titular character in "Candyman," dies at age 69.

Bobby Allison, three-time winner of the Daytona 500, dies at age 86.

Science & Technology

First-of-its-kind stem cell treatment restores vision in three patients with severely damaged corneas.

New study suggests kidney and nerve cells can perform memory functions similar to the brain; cells rearranged their functions in response to patterns of chemical signals.

Researchers discover nervous system mechanism triggering wet dogs to shake vigorously; study sheds light on how different animals respond to the sense of touch.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher Friday (S&P 500 +0.4%, Dow +0.6%, Nasdaq +0.1%) with the S&P 500 and Dow witnessing best week in a year following US election.

Bitcoin hits \$80K for first time ever.

FTX bankruptcy estate sues former White House Communications Director Anthony Scaramucci, his hedge fund SkyBridge Capital, and others to recoup investments for FTX creditors.

Billionaire Bill Ackman says he will work to end Amsterdam listing for his hedge fund, Pershing Square Holdings, and Universal Music Group following attacks against Israeli soccer fans Friday; UMG pushes back on Amsterdam delisting.

Politics & World Affairs

President-elect Donald Trump secures 312 electoral votes, per final tally, including sweeping all seven swing states.

Rep. Ruben Gallego (D-AZ) defeats Kari Lake (R) for Senate seat from Arizona.

US House control remains undetermined with 10 races still uncalled.

Qatar suspends its role in mediating talks between Hamas and Israel; US officials say Qatar also asked Hamas to end its 12-year presence in Doha; Hamas and Qatar reportedly dispute the claim.

Haiti's transitional council fires Prime Minister Garry Conille, replaces him with businessman Alix Didier Fils-Aimé.

Mountain Fire northwest of Los Angeles is 26% contained as of this writing after destroying 130 structures, damaging 88 others; roughly 9,000 of 10,000 evacuated residents allowed to return to their homes.

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Groton Post No. 39 American Legion

Annual Turkey Party

Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024

Starting at 6:30 p.m.

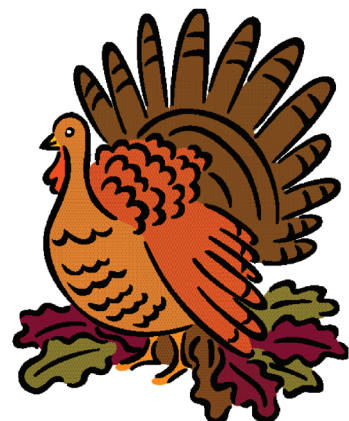
Groton Legion Post Home, 10 N. Main.

Turkey, Ham and Bacon
to be given away

FREE ADMISSION

**DOOR
PRIZE!**

Lunch served
by Auxiliary



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Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

The Minnesota Vikings sailed to Jacksonville, hunting Jaguars. In what was assumed to be an easy raid, the Vikings instead found themselves in a fierce battle, thanks in large part to self-inflicted wounds.

The Jaguars got the ball to start the game and were held to a three-and-out. The Vikings' offense took the field, and although they had a 12-play drive, they stalled and had to settle for a field goal by newly signed John Parker Romo. The Jaguars responded with a touchdown drive, and the Vikings were trailing 7-3. The Vikings got the ball back and once again moved the ball, picking up 40 yards in three plays. Unfortunately, in what would become a theme of the game, a Sam Darnold pass intended for Justin Jefferson was intercepted.

The Vikings' defense held Jacksonville to another three-and-out, then the Vikings' offense was moving down the field. 17 plays and 76 yards later, the Vikings were seven yards away from the endzone, when another pass towards Justin Jefferson was intercepted. The two teams traded punts, then went into half-time with the score remaining 7-3 Jacksonville. The Vikings were 5-for-7 on third downs and gained 182 yards in the first half, but none of that did any good when they kept giving the ball to the other team.

The Vikings got the ball to begin the second half, and got into the redzone before ANOTHER Darnold pass to Jefferson was intercepted. The Vikings defense forced another Jacksonville punt. Then Darnold threw another interception! This one was called back, but it was still an ugly throw on an ugly day for the Vikings' quarterback. The Vikings stalled out at the JAX 14-yard line and had to settle for another field goal, making the score 7-6. And, just like clockwork, the Vikings' defense forced another Jacksonville punt to end the third quarter.

Although they were dominating the stat sheet, the Vikings were down entering the fourth quarter but had the ball on offense. 16 plays and 68 yards later, the Vikings once again stalled in the redzone and settled for a field goal, finally giving the Vikings the lead. With the offense stalling (or giving the ball away), the Vikings' defense stepped up and forced a fumble two plays into the next drive, giving the Vikings excellent field position. Minnesota couldn't take advantage and had to settle for yet another field goal, making the score 12-7. Two plays into Jacksonville's next drive, the Vikings' defense forced another turnover, this time an interception by Byron Murphy. The Vikings couldn't capitalize and punted the ball back to the Jaguars with a little less than three minutes left in the game. The Vikings' defense needed to step up again, and they did, with Cam Bynum hauling in an interception to give the ball back to Minnesota with less than two minutes left in the game. The Vikings ran the clock out and snuck out of Jacksonville with the win.

At the end of the day, a win is a win - but the Vikings thoroughly dominated this game but barely got the win, which is worrying. The Vikings dominated total yards 402 to 143, time of possession 42:19 (which is the most time of possession in the NFL this season) to 17:41, and first downs 28 to 10. This game should have been a blowout.

The player of the game was John Parker Romo. After Vikings' rookie kicker Will Reichard got hurt last week, the Vikings had kicker tryouts last week. Romo won the job and was a perfect 4/4 on field goals in this game. Without him, this game could have looked a lot different.

Looking ahead, the Vikings remain on the road, heading to Tennessee to take on the Titans. The Titans are 2-7 this season, so this is another game the Vikings should win. Hopefully they figure out their offensive woes and right the ship, because the NFC North is the strongest division in the league and every win is important for playoff positioning. Skoll!

Names Released in Pennington County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash

Where: Interstate 90, mile marker 53, two miles west of Rapid City, SD

When: 6:29 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2024

Driver 1: Dustin Shawn Walz, 44-year-old male from Rapid City, SD, fatal injuries

Vehicle 1: 2007 Mazda 3

Seatbelt Used: Yes

Driver 2: James Mark Cunningham, 56-year-old male from Rapid City, SD, serious, life-threatening injuries

Vehicle 2: 2001 Ford F350

Seatbelt Used: Yes

Pennington County, S.D.- One person died and another was seriously injured Wednesday evening in a two-vehicle crash near Rapid City, SD.

Preliminary crash information indicates Dustin Shawn Walz, the driver of a 2007 Mazda 3, was traveling eastbound in the westbound lanes of Interstate 90 near mile marker 53. James M. Cunningham, the driver of a 2001 Ford F350, was traveling westbound in the in the same lane when the Mazda collided with the Ford head-on.

Walz died at the scene. Cunningham sustained serious, life-threatening injuries.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol is investigating the cause of the crash. All information released so far is only preliminary.

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

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NSU Men's Basketball

Emporia State Bests Northern State in Sunday Tilt

St. Joseph, Mo. – The Northern State University men's basketball team fell to Emporia State on Sunday afternoon in their final contest of opening weekend. Three Wolves scored in double figures in the game, led by true freshman Marcus Burks with a career high 20 points.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 69, ESU 83

Records: NSU 0-2, ESU 1-1

Attendance: 178

HOW IT HAPPENED

Northern trailed 42-32 at the half and was out-scored 41-37 in the second, leading to their 14-point loss

The Wolves shot 42.4% from the floor, 24.3% from the 3-point line, with nine made from beyond the arc, and 52.6% from the foul line

They scored 24 points in the paint, 14 points off turnovers, ten fast break points, and ten points off the bench

In addition, NSU tallied 36 rebounds, 11 assists, four steals, and two blocks

Burks led the team with his career high of 20 points and dished out five assists

Kwat Abdelkarim and James Glenn followed, knocking down 15 and 12 points respectively, which were both season highs for the DMACC transfers

Abdelkarim led the team at the rim with six rebounds, followed by Tobi Obiora with five

Leading the team off the bench was Kaleb Mitchell with six points, three rebounds, and two blocks

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Marcus Burks: 20 points, 47.1 FG%, 5 assists, 4 rebounds, 2 steals

Kwat Abdelkarim: 15 points, 55.6 FG%, 6 rebounds

James Glenn: 12 points, 40.0 F%, 3 rebounds, 2 steals

UP NEXT

Northern State will travel to Nampa, Idaho next Friday for a non-conference contest with Northwest Nazarene. Tip-off is set for 8 p.m. (CT) on November 15. The Wolves will kick off their home season on Tuesday, November 19 hosting Dakota State at 7 p.m. in Wachs Arena.

"Protecting Children from Online Harms"

By Christina Young, Director for the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment

With the rapid rise in internet use among children, the dangers of online exploitation have grown alarmingly. Children's access to the internet has become nearly ubiquitous, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic. Remote learning, online gaming, and social media are now integral to daily life, meaning more children, even preschool-age children, are regularly online, often unsupervised and unprotected. This new reality demands that we consider not only physical safety for our children, but also the dangers they are facing online.

The Scope of the Issue

In 2022, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children received almost 32 million reports of suspected child sexual abuse materials (CSAM), representing 88.3 million files. In 2023, more than 100 million such files were reported. There has also been an increase in "self-generated" content (children taking pictures of themselves and sharing it with others online), involving children as young as seven, shows how manipulation and grooming by online predators are impacting younger children.

Another concern is how easily children can access harmful content—often unintentionally. One study found that 15% of children encounter pornographic material before age 10, often due to algorithms or suggested content. This early exposure to harmful content can initiate a cycle of curiosity and risky behavior online. Over time, children can become desensitized and seek more extreme material, a phenomenon known as "content escalation." This can distort their understanding of healthy relationships and boundaries which could lead to long-term psychological and social risks that complicate their ability to form safe, meaningful connections.

Understanding Risk Factors

Every time a child accesses the internet, they face potential risks. Children with low self-esteem, developmental challenges, or mental health struggles are particularly vulnerable to manipulation. Sensation-seeking behaviors and inadequate supervision heighten this risk, as children venture into digital spaces that leave them exposed to harm.

How Technology Compounds the Problem

Artificial intelligence (AI) and social media are significant drivers of online exploitation. AI enables the creation of "deep fakes," complicating victim identification and creating new avenues for child exploitation. Meanwhile, social media algorithms frequently push harmful content to young users, and data privacy concerns remain largely unaddressed. Platforms designed for engagement can lead to addictive behaviors, making children even more vulnerable.

The Path Forward: What We Can Do

We have a shared responsibility to protect children. Here are essential steps we can take:

1. Legislative Advocacy: State and federal laws should require parental consent and enforce stricter age restrictions on content. Contacting legislators and advocating for child-centered online safety laws is vital.
2. Community Education: Parents, professionals, and policymakers must recognize the gravity of online risks. Education on privacy settings, content controls, and open dialogue with children can empower families to create safer online spaces.
3. Utilize Available Resources: Many organizations provide resources and reporting mechanisms. Platforms like the South Dakota Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment offer information on preventing online child abuse.

Protecting our children requires proactive steps from every part of our community. By remaining vigilant



Christina Young

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and informed, we can build a safer online environment and help our children navigate the digital world with resilience and security.

For more information on protecting children from online harms, visit the South Dakota Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment's website. Together, we can make a difference.

Christina Young has been an influential figure in the child welfare field for over a decade, dedicating her career to the well-being of children and families. She directed an in-home family services program covering 30 western counties in Iowa, demonstrating her commitment to community-based support. Christina has also served with a Single-Family Office and as COO of a mid-sized, midwestern law firm. Christina has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's in human services administration. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Threads. Prairie Doc Programming includes On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show (most Thursdays at 7pm on SDPB or streaming on Facebook), 2 podcasts, and a Radio program (on SDPB), providing health information based on science, built on trust.

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED ★★★★★

VETERANS DAY

★★★★★ UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

History of Veterans Day

World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” – officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America’s veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

Veterans Day Timeline

1919

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: “To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country’s service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations...”

The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m.

1926

The United States Congress officially recognized the end of World War I when it passed a concurrent resolution on June 4, 1926, with these words:

Whereas the 11th of November 1918, marked the cessation of the most destructive, sanguinary, and far reaching war in human annals and the resumption by the people of the United States of peaceful relations with other nations, which we hope may never again be severed, and

Whereas it is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations; and

Whereas the legislatures of twenty-seven of our States have already declared November 11 to be a legal holiday: Therefore be it Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that the President of the United States is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on November 11 and inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples.

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1938

An Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday—a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as “Armistice Day.” Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor Veterans of World War I,

1954

In 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, Marines and air-men in the Nation’s history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the Veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word “Armistice” and inserting in its place the word “Veterans.” With the approval of this legislation (Public Law 380) on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American Veterans of all wars.

Later that same year, on October 8th, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first “Veterans Day Proclamation” (PDF) which stated: “In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all Veterans, all Veterans’ organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose. Toward this end, I am designating the Administrator of Veterans’ Affairs as Chairman of a Veterans Day National Committee, which shall include such other persons as the Chairman may select, and which will coordinate at the national level necessary planning for the observance. I am also requesting the heads of all departments and agencies of the Executive branch of the Government to assist the National Committee in every way possible.”

1958

In 1958, the White House advised VA’s General Counsel that the 1954 designation of the VA Administrator as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee applied to all subsequent VA Administrators. Since March 1989 when VA was elevated to a cabinet level department, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has served as the committee’s chairman.

1968

The Uniform Holiday Bill (Public Law 90-363 (82 Stat. 250)) was signed on June 28, 1968, and was intended to ensure three-day weekends for Federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington’s Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. It was thought that these extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater industrial and commercial production. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holidays on their original dates.

1971

The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on October 25, 1971. It was quite apparent that the commemoration of this day was a matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens, and so on September 20th, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed Public Law 94-97 (89 Stat. 479), which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978. This action supported the desires of the overwhelming majority of state legislatures, all major veterans service organizations and the American people.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: How were elephant seals saved from extinction? -- M. Diamandis, Trot, NY

Seals, often referred to as “dogs of the sea” for their notable cuteness, are one of the most prevalent marine mammals in the world, with more than 33 different species currently occupying our land and seas. However, that count was almost lower—until recently.

In the 1700s, nearly all marine mammals, including sea otters, whales, dolphins, seals and sea lions were casualties of the Pacific Northwest fur trade. This included elephant seals, aptly named for their males’ prominent facial appendage. Characterized by their small limb (fin) size, elephant seals spend about 80 percent of their lives underwater and can swim up to 60 miles a day, shielded from the cold by their vast blubber. However, this oil-rich blubber that could be processed into lamp and machine oil was also the reason they were hunted, so near the point of extinction that, by the 1890s, there were less than 100 left.

A small group that managed to survive human threat was discovered off the coast of Mexico in 1892 and was immediately given protected status by the Mexican government, after which they slowly began recovering. By the 1920s, elephant seals were observed off the coast of California, so the U.S placed them under protected status, and the population steadily increased to some 200,000, where it is today.

But their survival did not come without consequence. Researchers have discovered that their near extinction resulted in loss of genetic diversity—meaning that elephant seals’ genetic makeup has been permanently altered. Their research indicated that the species’ severe population decline reduced beneficial genes, increased the risk of inbreeding, and potentially threatened their survival.

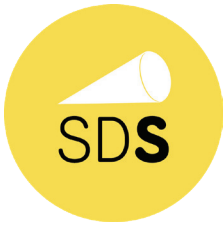
“The highly reduced genetic diversity, including the loss of beneficial gene copies, may impair the ability of northern elephant seals to cope with future environmental changes, including those caused by ...climate change, changes to the species’ habitat, or even natural threats such as disease outbreaks,” states Professor Kanchon Dasmahapatra of the University of York and senior author of the genetic research.

While elephant seals’ population may be standing strong at over 225,000 today, no aquatic species can escape modern threats like entanglement in fishing gear and collisions with boats, nor human activities like pollution, habitat degradation, and climate change. The remarkable comeback story of elephant seals is a lesson in conservation and ecosystem management from which we can all learn.



The remarkable comeback story of elephant seals is a lesson in conservation and ecosystem management from which we can all learn. Credit:

Pexels.com.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

COMMENTARY

Legislators get a taste of reporters' frustration with Noem administration

by Dana Hess

An October legislative meeting proved to be frustrating for lawmakers. For reporters, it offered the sweet taste of vindication.

At issue during the meeting of the Legislature's Government Operations and Audit Committee was the refusal of Department of Revenue Secretary Michael Houdyshell to discuss—in public or behind closed doors—changes made in his department after two former employees were indicted in a fake vehicle-titling scheme. Houdyshell's appearance was also sparked by the revelation that another former employee—since deceased—created 13 fake vehicle titles to secure bank loans that she did not repay.

Houdyshell cited ongoing criminal cases and the prospect of civil lawsuits from defrauded banks as reasons for his refusal to give lawmakers the information they sought. Lawmakers were so frustrated that they voted to subpoena Houdyshell and Rosa Yeager, director of the Revenue Department's Motor Vehicle Division, to compel them to testify before the committee.

Sen. David Wheeler, a Republican from Huron, characterized Houdyshell's refusal to discuss his department's new internal control measures as part of a pattern displayed by the executive branch.

"We need some sort of resolution to this because this is the answer we always get," Wheeler said in a South Dakota Searchlight story. "It's occurred in the past when we've had controversial matters before this committee. Officials say 'there's pending litigation, there's a threat of litigation,' therefore there's no response."

It's hard to read Wheeler's statement and not feel a certain amount of vindication for every reporter in the state who has been stonewalled by the Noem administration. Now lawmakers are getting a taste of what it's like to deal with an administration that values secrecy over transparency and prefers no comment or silence to offering citizens a full accounting for their actions.

This space has been used often to chronicle the Noem administration's shortcomings when it comes to transparency. Some are familiar: her directive that reporters must bypass longtime government sources and submit their questions in writing to department information officers; her refusal to explain how the winning bidder in the Freedom Works Here workforce development commercials ended up using the ideas submitted by another bidder; her refusal to release transcripts of calls to the "whistleblower hotline" designed to collect complaints about the state's universities; and her decision to skip the traditional weekly governor's news conference during the legislative session.

It's no wonder she avoids the legislative news conferences. During the only one she held this year, answering a question from a South Dakota Searchlight reporter, she admitted that Texas was not going to reimburse the state for its million-dollar National Guard deployments to the southern border. Certainly that's something that the state's taxpayers would prefer to know prior to a deployment rather than after it's completed.

While those transparency transgressions read like a greatest hits compilation, there's a new one climbing the charts. To this point, Noem has no response to a petition drive designed to get her to reconsider turning down \$69 million in federal funds for home energy-efficiency rebates. There has to be a reason

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why she won't let South Dakotans use the funds they paid for with their own tax dollars.

In response to recent indictments, Attorney General Marty Jackley has pledged to offer anti-corruption legislation. Here's hoping he manages to slip in a few features that will increase transparency in state government.

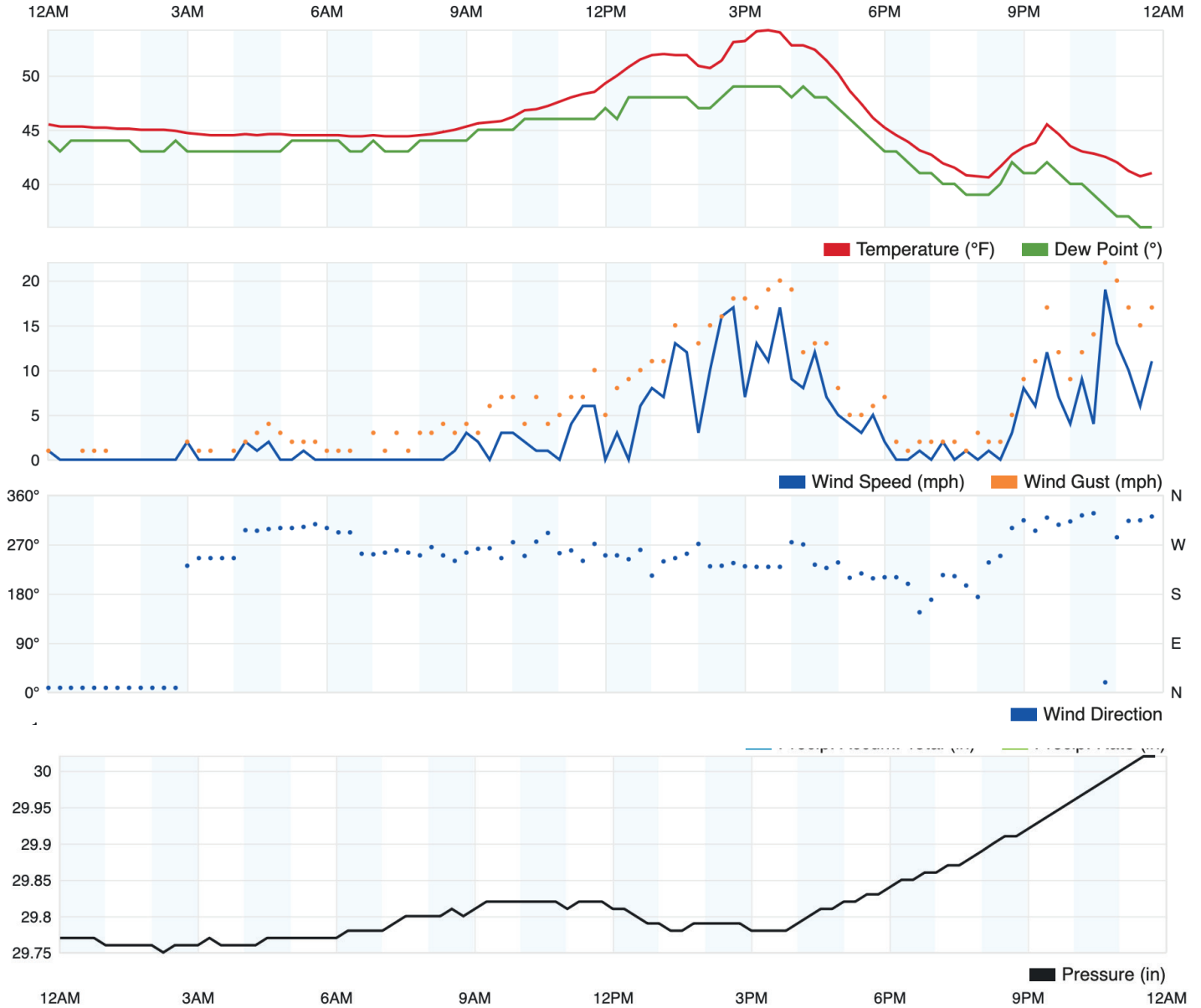
If he doesn't, or he can't, journalists in this state, lacking subpoena power, will just have to hold on for two more years and hope that the next governor has a better understanding of the need for openness and transparency in state government.

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

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Broton Daily Independent

Monday, Nov. 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 139 ~ 17 of 60

Veterans Day



High: 42 °F

Decreasing
Clouds

Tonight



Low: 30 °F

Mostly Clear
then Mostly
Clear and
Breezy

Tuesday



High: 51 °F

Partly Sunny
and Breezy

Tuesday Night



Low: 40 °F

Chance Rain

Wednesday



High: 53 °F

Slight Chance
Rain then
Sunny



The Week In Temperature + Early Wednesday Rain Chances

November 11, 2024
4:50 AM

	Maximum Temperature Forecast (°F)								Probability of Precipitation Forecast (%)									
	11/11	11/12	11/13	11/14	11/15	11/16	11/17	11/18	11/12 Tue				11/13 Wed					
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm
Aberdeen	42	51	53	56	56	52	46	46	0	0	25	25	35	35	15	15	5	5
Britton	42	51	51	53	54	51	43	44	0	0	25	25	50	50	25	25	5	5
Brookings	43	50	51	55	56	54	47	46	0	0	10	10	60	60	35	35	15	15
Chamberlain	46	55	55	62	59	54	51	49	0	0	25	25	15	15	5	5	0	0
Clark	42	48	49	53	54	51	43	44	0	0	30	30	55	55	30	30	5	5
Eagle Butte	40	54	52	55	53	47	44	44	5	5	5	5	5	5	0	0	0	0
Ellendale	42	50	53	54	55	50	44	46	5	5	25	25	45	45	10	10	0	0
Eureka	41	50	50	54	50	48	42	44	5	5	25	25	30	30	5	5	0	0
Gettysburg	42	53	51	53	56	49	43	45	5	5	15	15	10	10	5	5	0	0
Huron	46	54	54	59	58	55	50	49	0	0	40	40	45	45	20	20	5	5
Kennebec	45	56	55	62	59	54	50	49	0	0	15	15	10	10	5	5	0	0
McIntosh	43	53	51	57	53	44	42	43	5	5	15	15	10	10	0	0	0	0
Milbank	43	51	50	54	56	52	46	46	0	0	15	15	60	60	55	55	20	20
Miller	43	52	53	58	57	53	46	46	5	5	30	30	20	20	10	10	0	0
Mobridge	46	58	56	60	58	52	48	49	5	5	15	15	15	15	0	0	0	0
Murdo	44	56	53	62	58	51	48	47	0	0	5	5	5	5	0	0	0	0
Pierre	45	58	56	62	58	53	50	49	0	0	10	10	10	10	0	0	0	0
Redfield	44	52	53	57	57	53	46	46	0	0	35	35	35	35	15	15	5	5
Sisseton	42	51	51	54	55	51	44	45	0	0	15	15	60	60	40	40	10	10
Watertown	43	49	49	54	56	52	44	45	0	0	15	15	60	60	45	45	10	10
Webster	40	48	48	51	54	50	42	43	0	0	20	20	50	50	35	35	10	10
Wheaton	43	50	49	53	53	51	45	46	0	0	10	10	60	60	50	50	20	20

**Warmest
Conditions
Expected
During The
Second
Half Of The
Week (15+
Degrees
Above
Normal)**

**Best
Chances
Line up
Over And
East Of The
Prairie
Coteau
Early
Wednesday
Morning**



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

A warming trend is expected this week, along with rain chances Tuesday night into Wednesday morning throughout the far eastern portion of South Dakota over into west central Minnesota.

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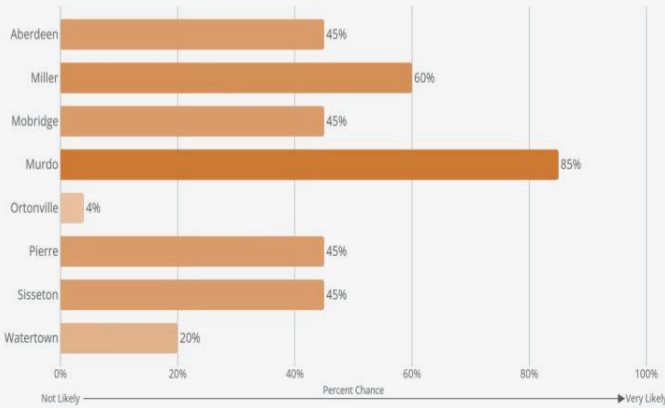
How Strong Could Tuesday's Winds Be?

November 11, 2024
4:55 AM

Greater Than 25 MPH Sustained Wind Probability



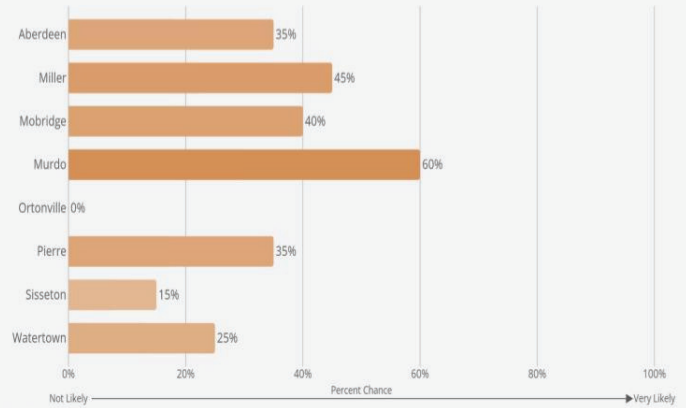
Chance of Wind Speeds Greater Than 25 mph
Tuesday Afternoon, Nov 12



Greater Than 40 MPH Wind Gusts Probability



Chance of Wind Gusts Greater Than 40 mph
Tuesday Afternoon, Nov 12



Valid: Tue 12 pm CST Issued: Mon, Nov 11, 2024, 3 am CST
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

Valid: Tue 12 pm CST Issued: Mon, Nov 11, 2024, 3 am CST

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

The two bar charts try to shed some light on the likelihood of sustained winds stronger than 25 mph and gusts stronger than 40 mph.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 54 °F at 3:28 PM

Low Temp: 40 °F at 8:10 PM

Wind: 22 mph at 10:41 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 9 hours, 42 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 70 in 1912

Record Low: -8 in 1966

Average High: 45

Average Low: 21

Average Precip in Nov.: 0.33

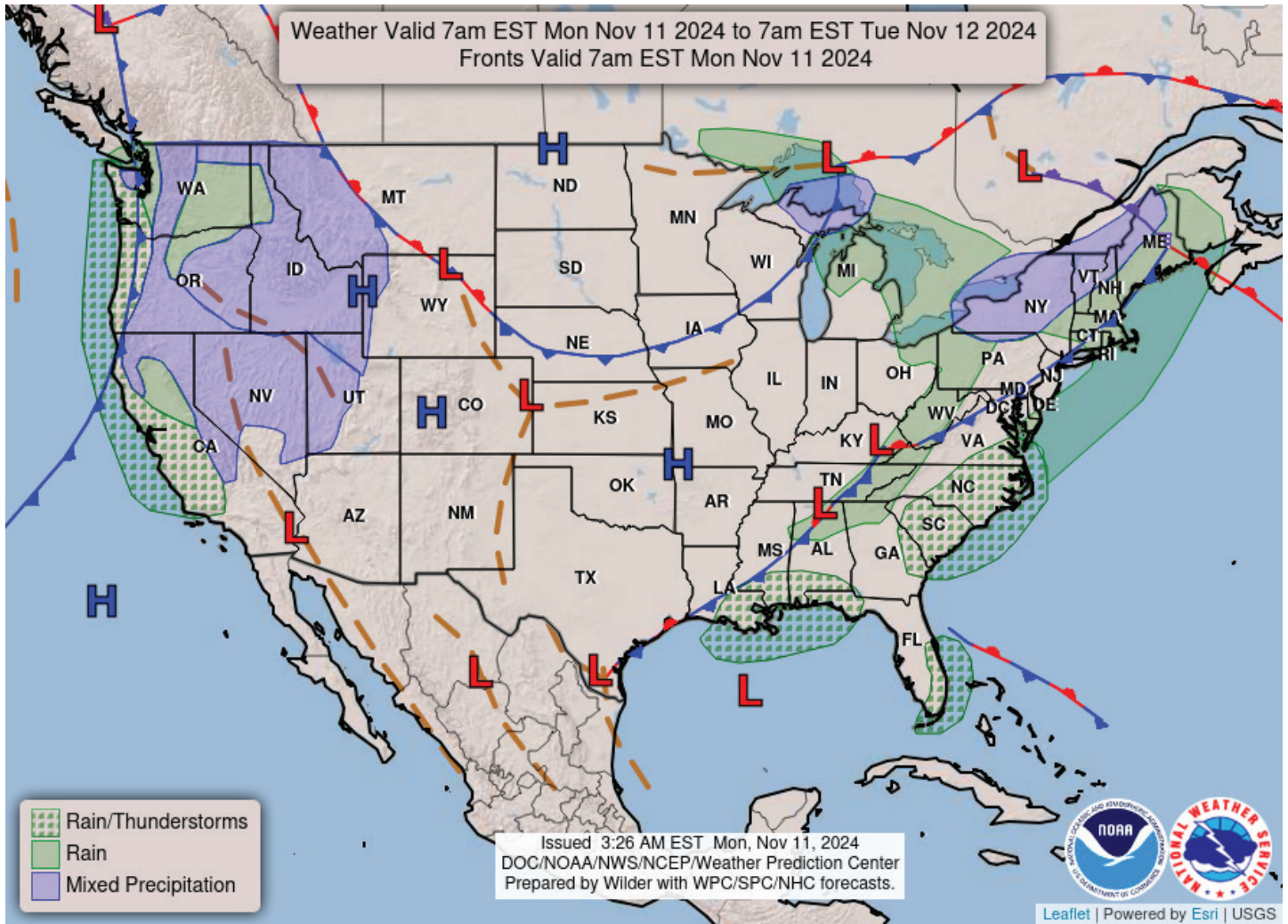
Precip to date in Nov.: 0.76

Average Precip to date: 20.80

Precip Year to Date: 20.64

Sunset Tonight: 5:07:46 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:26:37 am



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Today in Weather History

November 11th, 1982: Wet snow and winds gusting to over 50 mph snapped almost a thousand power lines and poles. Snowfall amounts were 4 to 6 inches but ranged to nearly a foot or more in Brookings County. A wind gust of 75 mph was recorded in McCook County. Several semi-trucks jackknifed on ice-covered roads, and numerous other automobile accidents were reported due to the snow and strong winds.

November 11th, 2000: Heavy snow of 6 to 14 inches fell across central and northeast South Dakota and west-central Minnesota on November 11th and 12th, causing driving difficulties throughout the region. Many vehicles became stuck in the snow or slid into ditches. There were also several accidents, and many events were canceled. Some snowfall amounts include 14.0 inches in Miller; 13.8 inches near Mellette; 12.5 inches in Highmore; 11.5 inches near Iona; 11 inches in Wilmot; 10 inches in Aberdeen, near Bryant, and Artichoke Lake MN; 9.5 inches in Clark; and 9.0 inches in Clear Lake, near Onida, and Webster.

1911 - The central U.S. experienced perhaps its most dramatic cold wave of record. During the early morning temperatures across the Central Plains ranged from 68 degrees at Kansas City to 4 above North Platte NE. In Kansas City, the temperature warmed to a record 76 degrees by late morning before the arctic front moved in from the northwest. Skies become overcast, winds shifted to the northwest, and the mercury began to plummet. By early afternoon it was cold enough to snow, and by midnight the temperature had dipped to a record cold reading of 11 degrees above zero. Oklahoma City also established a record high of 83 degrees and record low of 17 degrees that same day. In southeastern Kansas, the temperature at Independence plunged from 83 degrees to 33 degrees in just one hour. The arctic cold front produced severe thunderstorms and tornadoes in the Mississippi Valley, a blizzard in the Ohio Va

1940 - An Armistice Day storm raged across the Great Lakes Region and the Upper Midwest. A blizzard left 49 dead in Minnesota, and gales on Lake Michigan caused ship wrecks resulting in another 59 deaths. Up to seventeen inches of snow fell in Iowa, and at Duluth MN the barometric pressure reached 28.66 inches. The blizzard claimed a total of 154 lives, and killed thousands of cattle in Iowa. Whole towns were isolated by huge snowdrifts. (David Ludlum)

1955 - An early arctic outbreak set many November temperature records across Oregon and Washington. The severe cold damaged shrubs and fruit trees. Readings plunged to near zero in western Washington, and dipped to 19 degrees below zero in the eastern part of the state. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A deepening low pressure system brought heavy snow to the east central U.S. The Veteran's Day storm produced up to 17 inches of snow in the Washington D.C. area snarling traffic and closing schools and airports. Afternoon thunderstorms produced five inches of snow in three hours. Gale force winds lashed the Middle and Northern Atlantic Coast. Norfolk VA reported their earliest measurable snow in 99 years of records. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Low pressure brought snow to parts of the Rocky Mountain Region. Totals in the San Juan Mountains of southwestern Colorado ranged up to 10 inches at Summitville. Evening thunderstorms produced large hail in central Oklahoma and north central Texas. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Veteran's Day was an unseasonably warm one across much of the nation east of the Rockies. Temperatures warmed into the 70s and 80s from the Southern and Central Plains to the southern half of the Atlantic coast. Thirty-four cities reported record high temperatures for the date, including Saint Louis MO with a reading of 85 degrees. Calico AR and Gilbert AR reported record highs of 87 degrees. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)



EARNING IT IS WHAT MATTERS!

A friend of Clark Gable took her young son to his home for a visit. As they were about to leave, the boy pointed to the Oscar that Gable had won and asked, "May I have this?"

"Sure," answered Gable, giving it to the child.

"Give it back immediately," shouted the mother in shock.

"Oh, no," said Gable. "Keep it. Having the Oscar around doesn't mean anything to me. Earning it does."

Focusing on the future has many benefits. Paul boldly declared that "I am still not all I should be! But I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead I strain to reach the end of the race."

Paul had great reasons to want to forget the past – he persecuted Christians and even had them killed. He held them in great contempt creating fear and anxiety among them. But, he also had accomplished many outstanding things for Christ when he wrote these words. In all reality he could have "stayed stuck" for one reason or another: either the wrongs he had done from feelings of guilt or false pride for his service to his Lord.

These are two traps every Christian faces: our failures and our successes. Either one can destroy what God has called us to do. We must always move forward!

Prayer: Help us, Father, not to ruin the present or the future by staying stuck in the past. You have called us to do great things through Christ. May we be faithful. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: November 8 – Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13-14

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:
11.08.24

25 28 42 64 69 19

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$361,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 15
DRAW: Mins 59 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
11.09.24

14 31 34 41 48 1

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$14,250,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 30 Mins
DRAW: 59 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
11.10.24

11 18 32 38 40 3

TOP PRIZE:
\$7,000/week

NEXT 15 Hrs 45 Mins
DRAW: 59 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
11.09.24

5 6 18 25 28

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$96,000

NEXT 2 Days 15 Hrs 45
DRAW: Mins 59 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
11.09.24

9 28 40 55 57 22

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 15 Mins 0
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
11.09.24

11 24 50 56 66 16

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$103,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 15 Mins 0
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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Upcoming Groton Events

07/04/2024 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/09/2024 FREE SNAP Application Assistance 1-6pm at the Community Center
07/14/2024 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm
07/17/2024 Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar at the Groton Legion 11am-1pm
07/17/2024 Pro Am Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/25/2024 Dairy Queen Miracle Treat Day
07/25/2024 Summer Downtown Sip & Shop 5-8pm
07/25/2024 Treasures Amidst The Trials 6pm at Emmanuel Lutheran Church
07/26/2024 Ferney Open Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start
07/27/2024 1st Annual Celebration in the Park 1-9:30pm
08/05/2024 School Supply Drive 4-7pm at the Community Center
Cancelled: Wine on 9 at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm
08/08/2024 Family Fun Fest 5:30-7:30pm
08/9-11/2024 Jr. Legion State Baseball Tournament
08/12/2024 Vitalant Blood Drive at the Community Center 1:15-7pm
09/07/2024 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
09/07-08/2024 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
09/08/2024 Sunflower Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am
10/05/2024 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
10/11/2024 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
10/31/2024 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
10/31/2024 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
11/16/2024 Groton American Legion "Turkey Raffle" 6:30-11:30pm
11/28/2024 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm
12/01/2024 Groton Snow Queen Contest, 4:30 p.m.
12/07/2024 Olive Grove 8th Annual Holiday Party with Live & Silent Auctions 6pm-close
12/14/2024 Santa Day at Professional Management Services, downtown Groton
04/12/2025 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt at the City Park 10am Sharp
05/03/2025 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
05/26/2025 Memorial Day Services Groton Union Cemetery with lunch at Legion Post #39, 12pm
07/04/2025 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/09/2025 Legion Auxiliary Salad Luncheon
07/13/2025 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm
09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
09/20/2025 NSU Gypsy Day
10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm

News from the **AP** Associated Press

Eberwein's 15 lead South Dakota past Mount Marty 77-47

By The Associated Press undefined

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Shey Eberwein had 15 points in South Dakota's 77-47 win over Mount Marty on Sunday.

Eberwein shot 5 for 9 (3 for 6 from 3-point range) and 2 of 3 from the free-throw line for the Coyotes (3-0). Isaac Bruns added 11 points while going 5 of 11 (1 for 4 from 3-point range) and also had five rebounds. Quandre Bullock had 10 points.

Tash Lunday finished with seven points and seven rebounds for the Lancers. Sutton Arend added seven points for Mount Marty. Jake Jensen also had six points.

The Associated Press created this story using technology provided by Data Skrive and data from Sportradar.

Wisconsin's high court to hear oral arguments on whether an 1849 abortion ban remains valid

By TODD RICHMOND Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — The Wisconsin Supreme Court will hear oral arguments Monday on whether a law that legislators adopted more than a decade before the Civil War bans abortion and can still be enforced.

Abortion-rights advocates stand an excellent chance of prevailing, given that liberal justices control the court and one of them remarked on the campaign trail that she supports abortion rights. Monday's arguments are little more than a formality ahead of a ruling, which is expected to take weeks.

Wisconsin lawmakers passed the state's first prohibition on abortion in 1849. That law stated that anyone who killed a fetus unless the act was to save the mother's life was guilty of manslaughter. Legislators passed statutes about a decade later that prohibited a woman from attempting to obtain her own miscarriage. In the 1950s, lawmakers revised the law's language to make killing an unborn child or killing the mother with the intent of destroying her unborn child a felony. The revisions allowed a doctor in consultation with two other physicians to perform an abortion to save the mother's life.

The U.S. Supreme Court's landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling legalizing abortion nationwide nullified the Wisconsin ban, but legislators never repealed it. When the Supreme Court overturned Roe two years ago, conservatives argued that the Wisconsin ban was enforceable again.

Democratic Attorney General Josh Kaul filed a lawsuit challenging the law in 2022. He argued that a 1985 Wisconsin law that allows abortions before a fetus can survive outside the womb supersedes the ban. Some babies can survive with medical help after 21 weeks of gestation.

Sheboygan County District Attorney Joel Urmanski, a Republican, argues the 1849 ban should be enforceable. He contends that it was never repealed and that it can co-exist with the 1985 law because that law didn't legalize abortion at any point. Other modern-day abortion restrictions also don't legalize the practice, he argues.

Dane County Circuit Judge Diane Schlipper ruled last year that the old ban outlaws feticide — which she defined as the killing of a fetus without the mother's consent — but not consensual abortions. The ruling emboldened Planned Parenthood to resume offering abortions in Wisconsin after halting procedures after Roe was overturned.

Urmanski asked the state Supreme Court in February to overturn Schlipper's ruling without waiting for lower appellate courts to rule first. The court agreed to take the case in July.

Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin filed a separate lawsuit in February asking the state Supreme Court to rule directly on whether a constitutional right to abortion exists in the state. The court agreed in July

to take that case as well. The justices have yet to schedule oral arguments.

Persuading the court's liberal majority to uphold the ban appears next to impossible. Liberal Justice Janet Protasiewicz stated openly during her campaign that she supports abortion rights, a major departure for a judicial candidate. Usually, such candidates refrain from speaking about their personal views to avoid the appearance of bias.

The court's three conservative justices have accused the liberals of playing politics with abortion.

Climate talks open with calls for a path away from the 'road to ruin.' But the real focus is money

By SETH BORENSTEIN, MELINA WALLING and SIBI ARASU Associated Press

BAKU, Azerbaijan (AP) — Soaring rhetoric, urgent pleas and pledges of cooperation contrasted with a backdrop of seismic political changes, global wars and economic hardships as United Nations annual climate talks began Monday and got right to the hard part: money.

In Baku, Azerbaijan, where the world's first oil well was drilled and the smell of the fuel was noticeable outdoors, the two-week session, called COP29, got right to the major focus of striking a new deal on how many hundreds of billions — or even trillions — of dollars a year will flow from rich nations to poor to try to curb and adapt to climate change.

The money is to help the developing world transition their energy systems away from planet-warming fossil fuels and toward clean energy, compensate for climate disasters mostly triggered by carbon pollution from rich nations and adapt to future extreme weather.

"These numbers may sound big but they are nothing compared to the cost of inaction," the new COP29 president, Mukhtar Babayev, said as he took over. "COP29 is a moment of truth for the Paris Agreement" which in 2015 set a goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times.

This year, the world is on pace for 1.5 degrees of warming and is heading to become the hottest year in human civilization, the European climate service Copernicus announced earlier this month. But the Paris 1.5 goal is about two or three decades, not one year of that amount of warming and "it is not possible, simply not possible," to abandon the 1.5 goal yet, said World Meteorological Organization Secretary-General Celeste Saulo.

Signs of climate disasters abound

The effects of climate change in disasters such as hurricanes, droughts and floods are already here and hurting, Babayev said.

"We are on the road to ruin," he said. "Whether you see them or not, people are suffering in the shadows. They are dying in the dark. And they need more than compassion. More than prayers and paperwork. They are crying out for leadership and action."

United Nations Climate Secretary Simon Stiell, whose home island of Carriacou was devastated earlier this year by Hurricane Beryl, used the story of his neighbor, an 85-year-old named Florence, to help find "a way out of this mess."

Her home was demolished and Florence focused one thing: "Being strong for her family and for her community. There are people like Florence in every country on Earth. Knocked down, and getting back up again."

That's what the world must do with climate change, especially with providing money, Stiell said.

"Let's dispense with any idea that climate finance is charity," Stiell said. "An ambitious new climate finance goal is entirely in the self-interest of every nation, including the largest and wealthiest" because it will keep future warming from hitting 5 degrees Celsius, where he said the world was going before it started fighting climate change.

A backdrop of war and upheaval hangs over talks

In the past year, nation after nation has seen political upheaval, with the latest being in the United States — the largest historic carbon emitter — and Germany, a climate leading nation.

The election of Donald Trump, who disputes climate change and its impact, and the collapse of the German governing coalition are altering climate negotiation dynamics here, experts said.

"The global north needs to be cutting emissions even faster and should be decreasing by 20, 30, 40% now. But instead we've got Trump, we've got a German government that just fell apart because part of it wanted to be even slightly ambitious," said Imperial College London climate scientist Friederike Otto. "So, we are very far off."

Initially, Azerbaijan organizers who were hoping to have nations across the globe stop fighting during the two weeks of negotiations. That didn't happen as wars in Ukraine, Gaza and elsewhere continued.

Dozens of climate activists at the conference — many of them wearing Palestinian keffiyehs — held up banners calling for climate justice and for nations to "stop fueling genocide."

"It's the same systems of oppression and discrimination that are putting people on the frontlines of climate change and putting people on the front lines of conflict in Palestine," said Lise Masson, a protester from Friends of the Earth International. She slammed the United States, the U.K. and the EU for not spending more on climate finance while also supplying arms to Israel.

Mohammed Ursof, a climate activist from Gaza, called for demonstrators at the talks to "get power back to the Indigenous, power back to the people."

Jacob Johns, a Hopi and Akimel O'odham community organizer, came to the conference with hope for a better world.

"Within sight of the destruction lies the seed of creation," he said at a panel about Indigenous people's hopes for climate action. "We have to realize that we are not citizens of one nation, we are the Earth."

Hopes for a strong outcome

The financial package being hashed out at this year's talks is important because every nation has until early next year to submit new — and presumably stronger — targets for curbing emissions of heat-trapping gases from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas. That's part of the 2015 Paris agreement for nations to ratchet up efforts every five years.

Some Pacific climate researchers said that the amount of money on offer was not the biggest problem for small island nations, which are some of the world's most imperiled by rising seas.

"There might be funding out there, but to get access to this funding for us here in the Pacific is quite an impediment," said Hilda Sakiti-Waqa, from the University of the South Pacific in Fiji. "The Pacific really needs a lot of technical help in order to put together these applications."

The long-term global average temperature is now 1.3 degrees Celsius (2.3 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times, only two-tenths of a degree from the agreed-upon threshold.

For the world to prevent more than 1.5 degrees of warming, global carbon emissions must be slashed by 42% by 2030, a new United Nations report said.

"We cannot leave Baku without a substantial outcome," Stiell said. "Now is the time to show that global cooperation is not down for the count. It is rising to the moment."

Fire crews on both US coasts battle wildfires; 1 death in New York-New Jersey fire

POMPTON LAKES, N.J. (AP) — Fire crews on both coasts of the United States continued battling wildfires on Sunday, including a blaze in New York and New Jersey that killed a parks employee and another in Southern California that destroyed more than 130 structures and damaged dozens more.

Firefighters continued making progress against a wildfire northwest of Los Angeles in Ventura County that broke out Wednesday and quickly exploded in size due to dry, warm and gusty Santa Ana winds.

The Mountain Fire prompted thousands of residents to flee their homes and was 26% contained as of Sunday, up from 21% the previous day. The fire's size remains around 32 square miles (about 83 square kilometers). The cause is under investigation.

"The fire continues to creep and smolder in steep rugged terrain. Threats remain to critical infrastructure, highways, and communities," according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection,

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better known as Cal Fire.

Meanwhile, New York State Police said they were investigating the death of Dariel Vasquez, an 18-year-old state parks employee who died when a tree fell on him Saturday afternoon as he battled a major brush fire in Sterling Forest, located in New York state's Greenwood Lake near the New Jersey line.

"Rip brother your shift is over job well done," a New York State forestry services post said.

Jeremy Oldroyd, a forest ranger with New York state, said that Vasquez died "assisting with fire line construction."

"Wildland firefighting is a very dangerous profession, and we try to take as many precautions as we can mitigate some of the hazards that are out there in the wildland fire environment. But occasionally accidents do happen," he said.

New Jersey's state forest fire service said Sunday that the blaze — dubbed the Jennings Creek Wildfire — was threatening 25 structures, including two New Jersey homes. It had grown to 4.7 square miles (12 square kilometers) and was 10% contained as of Sunday night.

Health advisories were issued for parts of New York, including New York City, and northeastern New Jersey due to unhealthy air quality due to smoke from the fires. People were urged to limit strenuous outdoor physical activity if possible; those especially sensitive included the very young and very old and people with ailments such as asthma and heart disease.

But there was progress on other fires.

New Jersey officials reported 75% containment of a 175-acre (70-hectare) fire in the Pompton Lakes area of Passaic County that was threatening 55 homes, although no evacuations had been ordered, as well as progress made on other fires burning in the state amid bone-dry conditions.

In New Jersey, Ocean County prosecutors on Saturday announced arson and firearms charges in connection with a 350-acre (142-hectare) Jackson Township fire that started Wednesday.

They said that fire was sparked by magnesium shards from a shotgun round on the berm of a shooting range. Officials said firing that kind of "incendiary or tracer ammunition" was barred in the state. The majority of the blaze has been contained, officials reported Friday.

In Massachusetts, one wildfire among several fueled by powerful wind gusts and dry leaves has burned hundreds of acres in the Lynn Woods Reservation, a municipal park extending across about 3.4 square miles (8.8 square kilometers) in the city some 10 miles (16 kilometers) north of Boston.

The Lynn Fire Department cited "a dry spell we have not seen during this time of year in many years."

"We have had over 400 acres of the woods that have burned so far. We believe we have the fire contained using the main fire roads. We will maintain a presence to ensure the fire doesn't spread further," Lynn Fire Chief Dan Sullivan said in a statement late Sunday.

He said windy and dry conditions "certainly made it challenging" even as he asked people to stay away from the burned-out areas. "There are far too many weakened trees, and we don't want the public to get injured," he added.

'I got my life back.' Veterans with PTSD making progress thanks to service dog program

By NICK INGRAM and JIM SALTER Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Kan. (AP) — After working at a crowded and dangerous internment camp in Iraq, Air Force Staff Sgt. Heather O'Brien brought home with her anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder.

A bouncy labradoodle and a Kansas City-area program helped her get back on her feet.

Dogs 4 Valor, operated through the Olathe, Kansas-based organization called The Battle Within, helps retired veterans and first responders work with their service dogs to help manage depression, anxiety and other challenges.

"A lot of times the veteran with severe PTSD is homebound," said Sandra Sindeldecker, program manager for Dogs 4 Valor. "They're isolated. They're very nervous. They won't make eye contact. Some won't leave the house at all."

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The program involves both group and one-on-one training. The goal is to get the veteran and the dog comfortable with each other and understanding each other. The group takes outings to help the veterans regain their footing in public places like airports. Program leaders also provide mental health therapy at no cost.

The veterans and dogs graduate in six to nine months, but group gatherings continue.

O'Brien, 40, recalled that the camp where she worked in Iraq sometimes had over 20,000 detainees. Violence and rioting were common and it left her with severe anxiety.

"When I got out of the military, I just assumed that you're supposed to be on edge all the time as a veteran," O'Brien said.

O'Brien's mother spotted the frisky lab-poodle mix on Facebook and convinced her daughter to adopt the dog she named Albus. Months later, O'Brien learned about Dogs 4 Valor, and the pair joined the program in October 2023.

Now, O'Brien said she can get back out in public — she even went on vacation to Branson, Missouri, "things that I never would have thought I would do really, probably ever again."

Mark Atkinson, 38, served in Afghanistan as a corporal in the Marine Corps. He returned home with PTSD and major depressive disorder, causing sleeplessness and anxiety. He adopted Lexi, now 5, in 2020.

Lexi, a muscular cane corso breed, needed Atkinson as much as he needed her. Her previous owner had kept Lexi on chains before surrendering her. Since joining Dogs 4 Valor, the two can get out together and enjoy life.

"I don't really like leaving the house because I'm safe there, you know?" Atkinson said. "And having Lexi has just made me get out to be more social."

Having a group of fellow veterans facing the same challenges has also helped, Atkinson said.

"We come from the same backgrounds, different branches," Atkinson said. "Same issues. You know, PTSD or traumatic brain injuries. And they're all very welcoming as well. There's no judgment."

O'Brien compared living with Albus to a relationship with a sometimes pushy best friend who often wants to go out.

"The best friend constantly wants to make you do things that make you nervous," O'Brien laughed, acknowledging that it is ultimately up to her.

"I have to decide to walk out and just deal with life," O'Brien said. "And so that has been hard. And it still is hard from time to time, but it's it's getting manageable."

Some veterans said their family relationships have improved since they started the program.

"I'm able to talk, not fly off the handle and just get along with people and not be as stressed, not have as much anxiety," Atkinson said. "Or even if I do, she (Lexi) is right there with me."

Timothy Siebenmorgen, 61, said his relationships also are better with help from his 1-year-old American bulldog, Rosie, and Dogs 4 Valor, which he joined in July. He served in both the Marines and Army, deploying 18 times.

"You're in the military, kind of taught not to show weakness," Siebenmorgen said. "So you figure you can tackle everything yourself and you honestly believe that. And then you realize you can't do it on your own."

Veterans said the dogs, and the program, have given them new hope and a renewed ability to move forward.

"I got my life back," O'Brien said.

17 Chadian soldiers and 96 rebels killed in a Boko Haram attack, army says

By EDOUARD TAKADJI Associated Press

N'DJAMENA, Chad (AP) — Boko Haram insurgents killed 17 Chadian soldiers in a weekend attack on a military post that also left 96 of the assailants dead in the country's west, Chad's army said.

The attack in the Lake Chad region happened on Saturday, army spokesperson Gen. Issakh Acheikh said

on national television Sunday night. He did not provide details.

The Lake Chad region has been plagued this year by frequent attacks from insurgents, including Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa. It has revived fears of violence after a period of peace following a successful operation launched in 2020 by the Chadian army to destroy the extremist groups' bases.

Last month, 40 soldiers were killed during an attack on a military base, prompting President Mahamat Deby Itno to launch an operation to dislodge Boko Haram militants from Lake Chad. In March, an attack the government blamed on Boko Haram killed seven soldiers.

Boko Haram, which launched an insurgency more than a decade ago against Western education, seeks to establish Islamic law in Nigeria's northeast. The insurgency has spread to West African neighbors including Cameroon, Niger and Chad.

Chad, a country of nearly 18 million people, has been reeling from political turmoil before and after a controversial presidential election that resulted in Deby Itno's victory. He had led the country as interim president during the period of military rule that followed the death of his father in 2021.

UN climate talks to focus on money to help poor nations cut carbon pollution

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

BAKU, Azerbaijan (AP) — A complex international two-week-long game of climate change poker is convening. The stakes? Just the fate of an ever-warming world.

Curbing and coping with climate change's worsening heat, floods, droughts and storms will cost trillions of dollars and poor nations just don't have it, numerous reports and experts calculate. As United Nations climate negotiations started Monday in Baku, Azerbaijan, the chief issue is who must ante up to help poor nations and especially how much.

The numbers are enormous. The floor in negotiations is the \$100 billion a year that poor nations — based on a categorization made in the 1990s — now get as part of a 2009 agreement that was barely met. Several experts and poorer nations say the need is \$1 trillion a year or more.

"It's a game with high stakes," said Climate Analytics CEO Bill Hare, a physicist. "Right now the fate of the planet depends very much on what we're able to pull off in the next five or 10 years."

But this year's talks, known as COP29, won't be as high-profile as last year's, with 48 fewer heads of state scheduled to speak. The leaders of the top two carbon polluting countries — China and the United States — will be absent. But if money negotiations fail in Baku, it will handicap 2025's make-or-break climate negotiations, experts say.

Not only is dealing with money always a touchy subject, but two of the rich countries that are expected to donate money to poor nations — the United States and Germany — are in the midst of dramatic government changes. Even though the United States delegation will be from Biden Administration, the reelection of Donald Trump, who downplays climate change and dislikes foreign aid, makes U.S. pledges unlikely to be fulfilled.

The overarching issue is climate finance. Without it, experts say the world can't get a handle on fighting warming, nor can most of the nations achieve their current carbon pollution-cutting goals or the new ones they will submit next year.

"If we don't solve the finance problem, then definitely we will not solve the climate problem," said former Colombian deputy climate minister Pablo Vieira, who heads the support unit at NDC Partnership, which helps nations with emissions-cutting goals.

Nations can't cut carbon pollution if they can't afford to eliminate coal, oil and gas, Vieira and several other experts said. Poor nations are frustrated that they are being told to do more to fight climate change when they cannot afford it, he said. And the 47 poorest nations only created 4% of the heat-trapping gases in the air, according to the U.N.

About 77% of the heat-trapping gas in the atmosphere now comes from the G20 rich nations, many of whom are now cutting back on their pollution, something that is not happening in most poor nations or

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China.

"The countries that are rich today have become rich by polluting the Earth," said Ani Dasgupta, president of World Resources Institute.

The money being discussed is for three things: Helping poor nations switch from dirty fossil fuels to clean energy; helping them adapt to the impacts of a warming world such as sea level rise and worsening storms; and compensating vulnerable poor nations for climate change damage.

"Should the global community fail to reach a (finance) goal, this is really just signing the death warrant of many developing countries," said Chukwumerije Okereke, director of the Center for Climate Change and Development in Nigeria.

Michael Wilkins, a business professor who heads Imperial College's Centre for Climate Finance and Investment in the U.K., said since 2022 total climate finance has been nearly \$1.5 trillion. But only 3% of that is actually geared toward the least developed countries, he said.

"The Global South has been repeatedly let down by unmet pledges and commitments," said Sunita Narain, director general of New Delhi-based Centre for Science and Environment.

"Finance is really the key component that compels all types of climate action," said Bahamian climate scientist Adelle Thomas, adaptation director at the Natural Resources Defense Council. "Without that finance, there's simply not much that developing countries in particular can do."

It's an issue of both self-interest and justice, Thomas and others said. It's not charity to help poor nations decarbonize because rich nations benefit when all countries cut emissions. After all, a warming world hurts everyone.

Compensating for climate damage and helping nations prepare for future harm is a matter of justice, Thomas said. Even though they didn't create the problem, poor nations — especially small island nations — are particularly vulnerable to climate change's rising seas and extreme weather. Thomas mentioned how 2019's Hurricane Dorian smacked her grandparents home and "the only thing left standing was one toilet."

The trillion-dollar figure on the table is about half of what the world spends annually on the military. Others say global fossil fuel subsidies could be redirected to climate finance; estimates of those subsidies range from the International Energy Agency's \$616 billion a year to the International Monetary Fund's \$7 trillion a year.

"When we need more for other things, including conflict, we seem to find it," United Nations Environment Programme Executive Director Inger Andersen said. "Well, this is probably the largest conflict of all."

A U.N. climate finance committee report looked at the need from 98 countries and estimated it as ranging from \$455 billion to \$584 billion per year.

The money isn't just direct government aid from one nation to another. Some of it comes from multinational development finance banks, like the World Bank. There's also private investment that will be considered a large chunk. Developing nations are seeking relief from their \$29 trillion global debt.

Andersen said at least a sixfold increase in investment would be required to get on the path to limit future warming to just another two-tenths of a degree Celsius (0.4 degrees Fahrenheit) from now, which is the overarching goal the world adopted in 2015.

Andersen's agency calculated that with nations' current emissions-curbing targets, the difference between well-financed and current efforts translates to half a degree Celsius (0.9 degrees Fahrenheit) less future warming. Experts say stepped-up efforts that could reduce future warming even more also costs more.

Who will pay is another sticking point. Climate talks for decades have used 1992 standards to categorize two groups of nations, essentially rich and poor, deciding that rich nations like the U.S. are the ones to financially help poor ones. Financial circumstances have changed. China, the world's top carbon polluter, has increased its per capita GDP by more than 30 times since then. But neither China nor some rich oil nations are obligated to help in climate finance.

Developed nations want those countries that couldn't afford to give before, but now can, included in the next round of donors. But those nations don't want those obligations, said E3G analyst Alden Meyer, a climate negotiations veteran.

"It's a very fraught landscape to think about huge scale-up of existing climate finance," Meyer said.

Traumatized by war, hundreds of Lebanon's children struggle with wounds both physical and emotional

By SARAH EL DEEB and MALAK HARB Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Curled up in his father's lap, clinging to his chest, Hussein Mikdad cried his heart out. The 4-year-old kicked his doctor with his intact foot and pushed him away with the arm that was not in a cast. "My Dad! My Dad!" Hussein said. "Make him leave me alone!" With eyes tearing up in relief and pain, the father reassured his son and pulled him closer.

Hussein and his father, Hassan, are the only survivors of their family after an Israeli airstrike last month on their Beirut neighborhood. The strike killed 18 people, including his mother, three siblings and six relatives. "Can he now shower?" the father asked the doctor.

Ten days after surgery, doctors examining Hussein's wounds said the boy is healing properly. He has rods in his fractured right thigh and stitches that assembled his torn tendons back in place on the right arm. The pain has subsided, and Hussein should be able to walk again in two months — albeit with a lingering limp.

A prognosis for Hussein's invisible wounds is much harder to give. He is back in diapers and has begun wetting his bed. He hardly speaks and has not said a word about his mother, two sisters and brother.

"The trauma is not just on the muscular skeletal aspect. But he is also mentally hurt," Imad Nahle, one of Hussein's orthopedic surgeons, said.

Israel said, without elaborating, that the strike on the Mikdad neighborhood struck a Hezbollah target. In the war that has escalated since September, Israeli airstrikes have increasingly hit residential areas around Lebanon. Israel accuses the Lebanese militant group of hiding its capabilities and fighters among civilians. It vows to cripple Hezbollah, which began firing into northern Israel after Hamas' Oct. 7 attack triggered the war in Gaza.

But children have been caught in the midst.

With more strikes on homes and in residential areas, doctors are seeing more children affected by the violence. More than 100 children have been killed in Lebanon in the past six weeks and hundreds injured. And of the 14,000 wounded since last year, around 10% are children. Many have been left with severed limbs, burned bodies, and broken families — scars that could last for a lifetime.

Ghassan Abu Sittah, a renowned British-Palestinian surgeon who is also treating Hussein, sees that long road ahead. This is his worry: "It leaves us with a generation of physically wounded children, children who are psychologically and emotionally wounded."

'What do they want from us?'

At the American University of Beirut Medical Center, which is receiving limited cases of war casualties, Nahle said he operated on five children in the past five weeks — up from no cases before. Most were referred from south and eastern Lebanon.

A few miles away, at the Lebanese Hospital Geitaoui, one of the country's largest burns centers increased its capacity by nearly 180% since September so it could accommodate more war wounded, its medical director Naji Abirached said. About a fifth of the newly admitted patients are children.

In one of the burn center's ICU units lies Ivana Skakye. She turned 2 in the hospital ward last week. Ivana has been healing from burns she sustained following an Israeli airstrike outside their home in southern Lebanon on Sept. 23. Israel launched hundreds of airstrikes that day in different parts of Lebanon, making it the deadliest day of the war so far. More than 500 people were killed.

Six weeks later, the tiny Ivana remains wrapped in white gauze from head to toe except her torso. She sustained third-degree burns over 40 percent of her body. Her hair and head, her left side all the way to her legs, both her arms and her chest were burned. Her family home was damaged, its ceiling set afire. The family's valuables, packed in their car as they prepared to leave, were also torched. Ivana's older sister, Rahaf, 7, has recovered faster from burns to her face and hands.

Fatima Zayoun, their mother, was in the kitchen when the explosion hit. Zayoun jumped up to grab the girls, who were playing on the terrace.

It was, Zayoun said, "as if something lifted me up so that I can grab my kids. I have no idea how I

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managed to pull them in and throw them out of the window. She spoke from the ICU burns unit. "They were not on fire, but they were burned. Black ash covered them. ... (Ivana) was without any hair. I told myself, 'That is not her.'"

Now, Ivana's wound dressings are changed every two days. Her doctor, Ziad Sleiman, said she could be discharged in a few days. She's back again to saying "Mama" and "Bye — shorthand for wanting to go out.

Like Hussein, though, Ivana has no home to return to. Her parents fear collective shelters could cause an infection to return.

After seeing her kids "sizzling on the floor," Zayoun, 35, said that even if their home is repaired, she wouldn't want to return. "I saw death with my own eyes," she said.

Zayoun was 17 last time Israel and Hezbollah were at war, in 2006. Displaced with her family then, she said she almost enjoyed the experience, riding out of their village in a truck full of their belongings, mixing with new people, learning new things. They returned home when the war was over.

"But this war is hard. They are hitting everywhere," she said. "What do they want from us? Do they want to hurt our children? We are not what they are looking for."

Attacks at home can be hard for kids to deal with

Abu Sittah, the reconstructive surgeon, said most of the children's injuries are from blasts or collapsing rubble. That attack on a space they expect to be inviolable can have lingering effects.

"Children feel safe at home," he said. "The injury makes them for the first time lose that sense of security — that their parents are keeping them safe, that their homes are invincible, and suddenly their homes become not so."

One recent morning, children were playing in the courtyard of a vocational school-turned-shelter in De-kwaneh, north of Beirut, where nearly 3,000 people displaced from the south are now living. The parents were busy with an overflowing bathroom that serves one floor in a building that houses nearly 700 people.

Only playtime brings the children, from different villages in the south, together. They were divided in two teams, ages ranging between 6 and 12, competing to get the handkerchief first. A tiny girl hugged and held hands with strangers visiting the shelter. "I am from Lebanon. Don't tell anyone," she whispered in their ears.

The game turned rowdy when two girls in their early teens got into a fist fight. Pushing and shoving began. Tears and tantrums followed. The tiny girl walked away in a daze.

Maria Elizabeth Haddad, manager of the psychosocial support programs in Beirut and neighboring areas for the U.S.-based International Medical Corps, said parents in shelters reported signs of increased anxiety, hostility and aggression among kids. They talk back to parents and ignore rules. Some have developed speech impediments and clinginess. One is showing early signs of psychosis.

"There are going to be residual symptoms when they grow up, especially related to attachment ties, to feeling of security," Haddad said. "It is a generational trauma. We have experienced it before with our parents. ... They don't have stability or search for (extra) stability. This is not going to be easy to overcome."

New phases of life begin

Children represent more than a third of over 1 million people displaced by the war in Lebanon and following Israeli evacuation notices, according to U.N. and government estimates (more than 60,000 people have been displaced from northern Israel). That leaves hundreds of thousands in Lebanon without schooling, either because their schools were inaccessible or have been turned into shelters.

Hussein's father says he and his son must start together from scratch. With help from relatives, the two have found a temporary shelter in a home — and, for the father, a brief sense of relief. "I thank God he is not asking for or about his mother and his siblings," said Hassan Mikdad, the 40-year-old father.

He has no explanation for his son, who watched their family die in their home. His two sisters — Celine, 10, and Cila, 14 — were pulled out of the rubble the following day. His mother, Mona, was pulled out three days later. She was locked in an embrace with her 6-year-old son, Ali.

The strike on Oct. 21 also caused damage across the street, to one of Beirut's main public hospitals, breaking solar panels and windows in the pharmacy and the dialysis unit. The father survived because

he had stepped out for coffee. He watched his building crumble in the late-night airstrike. He also lost his shop, his motorcycles and car — all the evidence of his 16 years of family life.

His friend, Hussein Hammoudeh, arrived on the scene to help sift through rubble. Hammoudeh spotted young Hussein Mikdad's fingers in the darkness in an alley behind their home. At first he thought they were severed limbs — until he heard the boy's screams. He dug out Hussein with glass lodged in his leg and a metal bar in his shoulder. Hammoudeh said he didn't recognize the boy. He held the child's almost-severed wrist in place.

In the hospital now, Hussein Mikdad sipped a juice as he listened to his father and his friend. His father turned to him, asking if he wanted a Spider-Man toy — an effort to forestall a new outburst of tears. He said he buys Hussein a toy each day.

"What I am living through seems like a big lie. ...The mind can't comprehend," he said. "I thank God for the blessing that is Hussein."

Will Trump's hush money conviction stand? A judge will rule on the president-elect's immunity claim

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A gut punch for most defendants, Donald Trump turned his criminal conviction into a rallying cry. His supporters put "I'm Voting for the Felon" on T-shirts, hats and lawn signs.

"The real verdict is going to be Nov. 5 by the people," Trump proclaimed after his conviction in New York last spring on 34 counts of falsifying business records.

Now, just a week after Trump's resounding election victory, a Manhattan judge is poised to decide whether to uphold the hush money verdict or dismiss it because of a U.S. Supreme Court decision in July that gave presidents broad immunity from criminal prosecution.

Judge Juan M. Merchan has said he will issue a written opinion Tuesday on Trump's request to toss his conviction and either order a new trial or dismiss the indictment entirely.

Merchan had been expected to rule in September, but put it off "to avoid any appearance" he was trying to sway the election. His decision could be on ice again if Trump takes other steps to delay or end the case.

If the judge upholds the verdict, the case would be on track for sentencing Nov. 26 — though that could shift or vanish depending on appeals or other legal maneuvers.

Trump's lawyers have been fighting for months to reverse his conviction, which involved efforts to conceal a \$130,000 payment to porn actor Stormy Daniels, whose affair allegations threatened to disrupt his 2016 campaign.

Trump denies her claim, maintains he did nothing wrong and has decried the verdict as a "rigged, disgraceful" result of a politically motivated "witch hunt" meant to harm his campaign.

The Supreme Court's ruling gives former presidents immunity from prosecution for official acts — things they do as part of their job as president — and bars prosecutors from using evidence of official acts in trying to prove that purely personal conduct violated the law.

Trump was a private citizen — campaigning for president, but neither elected nor sworn in — when his then-lawyer Michael Cohen paid Daniels in October 2016.

But Trump was president when Cohen was reimbursed, and Cohen testified that they discussed the repayment arrangement in the Oval Office. Those reimbursements, jurors found, were falsely logged in Trump's records as legal expenses.

Trump's lawyers contend the Manhattan district attorney's office "tainted" the case with evidence — including testimony about Trump's first term as president — that shouldn't have been allowed.

Prosecutors maintain that the high court's ruling provides "no basis for disturbing the jury's verdict." Trump's conviction, they said, involved unofficial acts — personal conduct for which he is not immune.

The Supreme Court didn't define an official act, leaving that to lower courts. Nor did it make clear how its ruling — which arose from one of Trump's two federal criminal cases — pertains to state-level cases like Trump's hush money prosecution.

"There are several murky aspects of the court's ruling, but one that is particularly relevant to this case is the issue of what counts as an official act," said George Mason University law professor Ilya Somin. "And I think it's extremely difficult to argue that this payoff to this woman does qualify as an official act, for a number of fairly obvious reasons."

Trump's efforts to erase the verdict have taken on new urgency since his election, with a sentencing date looming at the end of the month and possible punishments ranging from a fine or probation to up to four years in prison.

Presidents-elect don't typically enjoy the same legal protections as presidents, but Trump and his lawyers could try to leverage his unique status as a former and future commander-in-chief into something of a "Get Out of Jail Free" card.

One likely argument: Trump wouldn't just be saving himself from a potential prison sentence, he'd be sparing the nation from the calamity of its leader behind bars — however remote that possibility is.

"He'll ask every court in the world to intervene if he can, including the Supreme Court, so that could drag things out a bit," said Syracuse University law professor David Driesen, author of the book, "The Specter of Dictatorship: Judicial Enabling of Presidential Power."

At the same time, Trump has been attempting to again move the case from state court to federal court, where he could also assert immunity. His lawyers have asked the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to reverse a judge's September ruling denying the transfer.

If Merchan orders a new trial, it seems unlikely that could happen while Trump is in office.

Trump's lawyers argued in court papers that, given the Supreme Court ruling, jurors shouldn't have been allowed to hear about matters including his conversations with then-White House communications director Hope Hicks, nor another aide's testimony about his work practices.

Also verboten, they said, was prosecutors' use of Trump's 2018 financial disclosure report, which he was required as president to file. A footnote mentioned that Trump reimbursed Cohen in 2017 for unspecified expenses the year before.

Trump lawyers Todd Blanche and Emil Bove argued that prosecutors were trying "to assign a criminal motive" to some of Trump's actions in office to "unfairly prejudice" him. For example, they wrote, prosecutors pushed the "dubious theory" that some of Trump's 2018 tweets were part of a "pressure campaign" to keep Cohen from turning on him.

The immunity decision "forecloses inquiry into those motives," Blanche and Bove wrote.

Prosecutors countered that the ruling doesn't apply to the evidence in question, and that regardless, it's "only a sliver of the mountains of testimony and documentary proof" the jury considered.

Satellite images and documents indicate China working on nuclear propulsion for new aircraft carrier

By DAVID RISING and DIDI TANG Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — China has built a land-based prototype nuclear reactor for a large surface warship, in the clearest sign yet Beijing is advancing toward producing its first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, according to a new analysis of satellite imagery and Chinese government documents provided to The Associated Press.

China's navy is already the world's largest numerically, and it has been rapidly modernizing. Adding nuclear-powered carriers to its fleet would be a major step in realizing its ambitions for a true "blue-water" force capable of operating in seas far from China in a growing global challenge to the United States.

"Nuclear-powered carriers would place China in the exclusive ranks of first-class naval powers, a group currently limited to the United States and France," said Tong Zhao, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, D.C. "For China's leadership, such a development would symbolize national prestige, fueling domestic nationalism and elevating the country's global image as a leading power."

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Researchers at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in California said they made the finding while investigating a mountain site outside the city of Leshan in the southwest Chinese province of Sichuan, where they suspected China was building a reactor to produce plutonium or tritium for weapons.

Instead they concluded that China was building a prototype reactor for a large warship. The project at Leshan is dubbed the Longwei, or Dragon Might, Project and is also referred to as the Nuclear Power Development Project in documents.

Neither China's Defense Ministry nor Foreign Affairs Ministry responded to requests for comment.

Satellite images and public documents helped identify likely carrier project

There have long been rumors that China is planning to build a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, but the research by the Middlebury team is the first to confirm that China is working on a nuclear-powered propulsion system for a carrier-sized surface warship.

"The reactor prototype at Leshan is the first solid evidence that China is, in fact, developing a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier," said Jeffrey Lewis, a professor at Middlebury and one of the researchers on the project. "Operating a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier is an exclusive club, one that China looks set to join."

Drawing on satellite images and public documents including project tenders, personnel files, environmental impact studies — and even a citizen's complaint about noisy construction and excessive dust — they concluded a prototype reactor for naval propulsion was being built in the mountains of Mucheng township, some 70 miles (112 kilometers) southwest of Sichuan's provincial capital Chengdu.

The reactor, which procurement documents indicate will soon be operational, is housed in a new facility built at the site known as Base 909, which houses six other reactors that are operational, decommissioned or under construction, according to the analysis. The site is under the control of the Nuclear Power Institute of China, a subsidiary of the China National Nuclear Corporation, which is tasked with reactor engineering research and testing.

Documents indicating that China's 701 Institute, formally known as China Ship Research and Design Center, which is responsible for aircraft carrier development, procured reactor equipment "intended for installation on a large surface warship" under the Nuclear Power Development Project as well as the project's "national defense designation" helped lead to the conclusion the sizable reactor is a prototype for a next-generation aircraft carrier.

Satellite images from 2020 to 2023 have shown the demolition of homes and the construction of water intake infrastructure connected to the reactor site. Contracts for steam generators and turbine pumps indicate the project involves a pressurized water reactor with a secondary circuit — a profile that is consistent with naval propulsion reactors, the researchers say.

An environmental impact report calls the Longwei Project a "national defense-related construction project" that is classified "secret."

"Unless China is developing nuclear-powered cruisers, which were pursued only by the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, then the Nuclear Power Development Project most certainly refers to a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier development effort," researchers wrote in a detailed 19-page report on their findings shared exclusively with the AP.

Jamie Withorne, an analyst at the Oslo Nuclear Project who was not involved in the research and reviewed the findings, said Middlebury's team made a "convincing argument."

"From the identifying reports, co-location with other naval reactor facilities, and correlating construction activity, I think it can be said that it is likely the Longwei Project is housed at Base 909, and it could potentially be located at the identified building," she said.

The research does not, however, provide clues as to when a Chinese nuclear-powered carrier could be built and become operational, she said.

Sarah Laderman, a senior analyst with Open Nuclear Network, a program of the U.S.-based NGO PAX sapiens foundation, said the findings were "carefully conducted and thoroughly researched."

"Given the evidence presented here, I see a compelling case made that China seems to be working towards building a nuclear propulsion system for its naval surface ships (likely aircraft carriers) at this location," said Laderman, who is based in Vienna and was not involved in Middlebury's research.

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Pursuit of a nuclear-powered carrier

China's first carrier, commissioned in 2012, was a repurposed Soviet ship, and its second was built in China but based upon the Soviet design. Both ships — named the Liaoning and the Shandong — employ a so-called "ski-jump" type launch method, with a ramp at the end of a short runway to help planes take off.

The Type 003 Fujian, launched in 2022, was the country's third carrier and its first to be indigenously designed and built. It employs an electromagnetic-type launch system like those developed and used by the U.S. Navy. All three carriers are conventionally powered.

Sea trials hadn't even started for the Fujian in March when Yuan Huazhi, political commissar for China's People's Liberation Army Navy, confirmed the construction of a fourth carrier. Asked if it would be nuclear-powered, he said at the time that would "soon be announced," but so far it has not been.

There has been speculation that China may begin producing two new carriers at once — one Type 003 like the Fujian and one nuclear-powered Type 004 — something that it has not attempted before but that its shipyards have the capacity to do.

Matthew Funaiolo, senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies' China Power Project, said he doubts China's next carrier will be nuclear-powered. Instead, he said, he would expect the People's Liberation Army Navy's fourth carrier to focus on optimizing the existing design of the Fujian carrier with "incremental improvements."

Nick Childs, senior fellow for naval forces and maritime security at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, said the Chinese "have taken an incremental approach to their carrier development with a number of ambitions that will evolve over time."

"For now, their deployments have been relatively cautious, remaining largely within range of shore support, but projecting influence and to some extent coercion within their near waters."

Eventually, however, "larger carriers more akin to their U.S. counterparts will give them more options to project power," Childs said.

It takes several years to build a carrier and bring it into operation, but developing nuclear propulsion for its next generation of warships would eventually give China more power to run advanced systems, such as electromagnetic launchers, radars and new technology weapons, Childs said.

"As well as obviating the need for the ship to refuel regularly and therefore giving it much greater range, nuclear power means that without the need to carry fuel oil for the ship there will be room aboard for fuel and weapons for its aircraft, extending their capabilities," Childs said.

"Much will depend on what overall size the next carrier is, but the addition of nuclear power will represent a significant step further in China's carrier development with a vessel more comparable to the U.S. Navy's carriers."

Zhao, of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said nuclear-powered carriers would provide the Chinese military "with greater flexibility and endurance to operate around strategic hotspots, especially along the First Island Chain, where most territories disputed by China are located," said Zhao.

The First Island Chain includes the self-governed island of Taiwan, which China claims as its own and vows to annex it by force if necessary.

The U.S. is obligated by a domestic law to supply Taiwan with sufficient weapons to deter invasion, and it could provide assistance to the island from its bases in the Pacific in the event of an invasion or blockade. Tensions also have risen in the South China Sea between China and neighboring nations over territorial disputes and maritime claims.

"These carriers could also extend Chinese operations deeper into the Western Pacific, further challenging the U.S. military's ability to 'intervene' in regional matters that China views as best resolved by countries from the region only," Zhao said.

U.S.-China rivalry

Chinese President Xi Jinping has tasked defense officials with building a "first-class" navy and becoming a maritime power as part of his blueprint for the country's rejuvenation.

The country's most recent white paper on national defense, dated 2019, said the Chinese navy was

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adjusting to strategic requirements by “speeding up the transition of its tasks from defense on the near seas to protection missions on the far seas.”

The People’s Liberation Army Navy is already the world’s largest navy with more than 370 ships and submarines. The country also boasts powerful shipbuilding capabilities: China’s shipyards are building many hundreds of vessels each year, whereas the U.S. is building five or fewer, according to a U.S. congressional report late last year.

However, the Chinese navy lags behind the U.S. Navy in many respects. Among other advantages, the U.S. currently has 11 carriers, all nuclear powered, allowing it to keep multiple strike groups deployed around the world at all times, including in the Indo-Pacific.

But the Pentagon is growingly increasingly concerned about China’s rapid modernization of its fleet, including the design and construction of new carriers.

That aligns with China’s “growing emphasis on the maritime domain and increasing demands” for its navy “to operate at greater distances from mainland China,” the Defense Department said in its most recent report to Congress on China’s military.

And China’s “growing force of aircraft carriers extend air defense coverage of deployed task groups beyond the range of land-based defenses, enabling operations farther from China’s shore,” the report said.

Trump breaks GOP losing streak in nation’s largest majority-Arab city with a pivotal final week

By JOEY CAPPELLETTI and MIKE HOUSEHOLDER Associated Press

DEARBORN, Mich. (AP) — Faced with two choices she didn’t like, Suehaila Amen chose neither.

Instead, the longtime Democrat from the Arab American stronghold of Dearborn, Michigan, backed a third-party candidate for president, adding her voice to a remarkable turnaround that helped Donald Trump reclaim Michigan and the presidency.

In Dearborn, where nearly half of the 110,000 residents are of Arab descent, Vice President Kamala Harris received over 2,500 fewer votes than Trump, who became the first Republican presidential candidate since former President George W. Bush in 2000 to win the city. Harris also lost neighboring Dearborn Heights to Trump, who in his previous term as president banned travel from several mostly-Muslim countries.

Harris lost the presidential vote in two Detroit-area cities with large Arab American populations after months of warnings from local Democrats about the Biden-Harris administration’s unwavering support for Israel in the war in Gaza. Some said they backed Trump after he visited a few days before the election, mingling with customers and staff at a Lebanese-owned restaurant and reassuring people that he would find a way to end the violence in the Middle East.

Others, including Amen, were unable to persuade themselves to back the former president. She said many Arab Americans felt Harris got what she deserved but aren’t “jubilant about Trump.”

“Whether it’s Trump himself or the people who are around him, it does pose a great deal of concern for me,” Amen said. “But at the end of the day when you have two evils running, what are you left with?”

As it became clear late Tuesday into early Wednesday that Trump would not only win the presidency but likely prevail in Dearborn, the mood in metro Detroit’s Arab American communities was described by Dearborn City Council member Mustapha Hammoud as “somber.” And yet, he said, the result was “not surprising at all.”

The shift in Dearborn — where Trump received nearly 18,000 votes compared with Harris’ 15,000 — marks a startling change from just four years ago when Joe Biden won in the city by a nearly 3-to-1 margin.

No one should be surprised

The results didn’t come out of nowhere. For months, in phone calls and meetings with top Democratic officials, local leaders warned, in blunt terms, that Arab American voters would turn against them if the administration’s handling of the Israel-Hamas war didn’t change.

The Biden-Harris administration has remained a staunch ally of Israel since the brutal Oct. 7, 2023,

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attack by Hamas, which killed 1,200 Israelis and took over 200 hostages. The war between Israel and Hamas has killed more than 43,000 people in Gaza, Palestinian health officials say. They do not distinguish between civilians and combatants.

While Harris softened her rhetoric on the war, she didn't propose concrete policies toward Israel or the war in Gaza that varied from the administration's position. And even if she had, that might not have made much of a difference in places like Dearborn.

"All she had to do was stop the war in Lebanon and Gaza and she would receive everyone's votes here," said Hammoud.

More voters thought Trump would be better able to handle the situation in the Middle East than Harris, according to AP VoteCast, a survey of more than 120,000 voters nationwide. About half of voters named Trump as better suited, compared with about a third who said Harris.

Among those who opposed more aid for Israel, 58% backed Harris in the presidential election; 39% supported Trump.

Even some Harris voters had their doubts. About three-quarters of Harris voters in Michigan said she was the better candidate to handle the situation. Few preferred Trump, but about 2 in 10 Harris voters said they were equivalent or neither would be better.

In the absence of support for Harris in the Arab American community, Trump and his allies stepped in.

A key part of Michigan's electorate — a state Trump won by nearly 11,000 votes in 2016 before he lost it by nearly 154,000 to Biden in 2020 — Arab Americans spent months meeting with Trump allies, who encouraged community leaders to endorse him.

Things began to move in September, when Amer Ghalib, the Democratic Muslim mayor of the city of Hamtramck, endorsed Trump. Shortly after, Trump visited a campaign office there.

That was a turning point, said Massad Boulos, the father of Trump's son-in-law who led his outreach with Arab Americans.

"They very, very much appreciated the president's visit and the respect that they felt," said Boulos. "That was the first big achievement, so to speak. After that, I started getting endorsements from imams and Muslim leaders."

An apparent shift toward Trump in final week

While support for Harris had been declining for months — especially after her campaign did not allow a pro-Palestinian speaker to take the stage at August's Democratic National Convention — some voters say the last week of the campaign was pivotal.

At an Oct. 30 rally in Michigan, former President Bill Clinton said Hamas uses civilians as shields and will "force you to kill civilians if you want to defend yourself."

"Hamas did not care about a homeland for the Palestinians, they wanted to kill Israelis and make Israel uninhabitable," he said. "Well, I got news for them, they were there first, before their faith existed, they were there."

The Harris campaign wanted Clinton to visit Dearborn to speak in the days following the rally, according to two sources with direct knowledge of the discussions who were not authorized to speak on them. The potential visit never materialized after backlash over Clinton's comments.

"That comment was the talk of the town. It hurt many like me, who loved him," said Amin Hashmi, who was born in Pakistan and lives in suburban Detroit. A self-proclaimed "die-hard Dem," Hashmi said casting a ballot for Trump "was a seismic move" that came after he stood in the voting booth for 25 minutes.

On the Friday before the election, Trump visited The Great Commoner in Dearborn, the Lebanese-owned restaurant. That stood in sharp contrast with Harris, who met with Dearborn's Democratic mayor, Abdullah Hammoud — who didn't endorse in the race — but never came to Dearborn herself.

"He came up to Dearborn. He spoke with residents. Whether some people say it wasn't genuine, he still made the effort. He did reach out and try to work with them, at least listen to them," said Samia Hamid, a Dearborn resident.

Amen said that at polling places in Dearborn on Tuesday, "people were coming out and saying they were either voting third party or they were voting for Trump." When she asked what led them to support Trump,

"they said, at least he came out here and he talked to us, he acknowledged our community."

Although Arab American support didn't propel him to the White House, Trump has made several promises that stuck in voters' minds. Mainly, they'll be watching to see if he'll follow through on his vow to end the war.

They also hope his next term will differ from his first, when he enacted the travel ban targeting Muslim-majority countries. His rhetoric on that score has been mixed — he even pledged to expand the ban to refugees from Gaza.

Osama Siblani, publisher of Arab American News based in Dearborn, said people will "hold him accountable." Regardless, Siblani added, the community "survived the first four years" of Trump.

"We will survive the next four," he said.

Israeli strikes kill dozens in Lebanon and isolated northern Gaza while Netanyahu and Trump speak

By WAFAA SHURAF, SAMY MAGDY and KAREEM CHEHAYEB Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli strikes killed dozens of people including children on Sunday in Lebanon and isolated northern Gaza, as the world watched for signs of how the U.S. election might affect the wars between Israel and Iranian-backed militant groups Hamas and Hezbollah.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that he has spoken three times with Donald Trump since Tuesday's election and they "see eye-to-eye regarding the Iranian threat and all of its components." Israeli President Isaac Herzog is scheduled to meet with U.S. President Joe Biden on Tuesday.

The Israeli airstrike in Lebanon killed at least 23 people, including seven children, in Aalmat village north of Beirut, far from the areas in the east and south where Hezbollah has a major presence. There was no Israeli evacuation warning. Israel's military said that it hit a Hezbollah site used to store weapons, and the strike was under review.

Hezbollah began firing rockets, drones and missiles into Israel after war broke out in Gaza, in solidarity with the Palestinians and Hamas. Israel retaliated, and a series of escalations have led to all-out war.

In northern Gaza, an Israeli strike on a home sheltering displaced people in the urban refugee camp of Jabaliya killed at least 17 people, including nine women, according to Dr. Fadel Naim, director of Al-Ahly Hospital in Gaza City.

Israel's military said that it targeted a site where militants were operating, without providing evidence. It said the details of the strike were under review.

A separate strike hit a house in Gaza City, killing Wael al-Khour, a minister in the Hamas-run government, as well as his wife and three children, according to the Civil Defense first responders who operate under the government.

Israel strikes deeper into Lebanon

Israel has struck deeper inside Lebanon since September, when it killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and most of his top commanders. Hezbollah has expanded its rocket fire from northern to central Israel. The fighting has killed more than 3,100 people in Lebanon, according to the Health Ministry, and more than 70 people in Israel.

After Israel's strike in Aalmat, around 40 kilometers (25 miles) north of Beirut, legislator Raed Berro denied that any Hezbollah personnel or assets were in the building hit.

"Everyone can see, in front of cameras, that what is being pulled from under the rubble are women, children and elderly people who have nothing to do with weapons or rocket warehouses," Berro said.

Hassan Ghaddaf, who lived next door and was slightly wounded while heading to his balcony with morning coffee, said displaced people were in the building.

"I had seen them and got to know them the other day," Ghaddaf said. "They were peaceful. On the contrary, they had someone from the Lebanese Internal Security Forces that works for the state, and we saw their garb and clothes in the rubble."

In Syria, an Israeli airstrike hit a residential building in the Damascus suburb of Sayyida Zeinab, and the

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Defense Ministry said that seven civilians were killed, state news agency SANA reported. Britain-based opposition war monitor The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights suggested that Hezbollah was targeted. Israel didn't immediately comment.

Fears of famine in northern Gaza

The mid-month deadline is approaching for the Biden administration's ultimatum for Israel: Allow more aid into Gaza or risk possible restrictions on U.S. military funding.

Israeli forces have encircled and largely isolated Jabaliya and the nearby northern Gaza towns of Beit Lahiya and Beit Hanoun for the past month, allowing only a trickle of humanitarian aid. Experts from a panel that monitors food security say famine is imminent or may already be happening.

The northern third of Gaza, including Gaza City, has suffered the heaviest destruction of the 13-month war. Israel has sent forces back in, saying Hamas has regrouped.

Israeli strikes often kill women and children. The military says it only targets militants, whom it accuses of hiding among civilians.

Also on Sunday, Israel's military released what it called footage of Hamas abusing detainees. The soundless footage, dated from 2018 to 2020, appears to show hooded detainees chained in stress positions. In some clips, men beat or poke them with batons. It wasn't possible to independently verify the videos, which the military said that it recovered during operations in Gaza.

Rights groups have long accused the Hamas-run government in Gaza and the Western-backed Palestinian Authority in the occupied West Bank of abusing detainees and violently quashing dissent. Israel has been accused of similar abuses, especially since the start of the war. Israeli prison authorities say they follow relevant laws and investigate allegations of wrongdoing.

The toll of war

The war in Gaza began when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023 and killed around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted about 250. Around 100 hostages are still inside Gaza, about a third believed to be dead.

Israel's offensive has killed more than 43,000 Palestinians, according to local health authorities who don't distinguish between civilians and militants in their count, but say more than half the dead were women and children.

Israeli bombardment and ground invasions have left vast areas of Gaza in ruins and displaced around 90% of the population of 2.3 million people, often multiple times. Hundreds of thousands live in tent camps with few if any services.

Cease-fire talks mediated by the United States, Qatar and Egypt have repeatedly stalled, as have parallel efforts by the U.S. and others to halt the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.

Qatar, a key mediator with Hamas, said Saturday that it had suspended its efforts and would resume them when "the parties show their willingness and seriousness to end the brutal war."

Some Palestinians in Gaza responded with frustration.

"The Arab silence that controls the Arab capitals, that's because of the fear of the American administration and Israel," said Akram Jarada, displaced from Gaza City.

The Singles' Day shopping festival loses its shine under China's lagging economy

By ZEN SOO AP Business Writer

HONG KONG (AP) — Merchants and consumers alike found the Singles' Day shopping festival Monday less shiny than in years past as e-commerce firms look abroad for growth.

The annual event named by the numeric form of its Nov. 11 date was started by e-commerce platform Alibaba, which offered attractive discounts to entice shoppers to spend big. The extravaganza has since expanded to other platforms like JD.com and Pinduoduo in China as well as abroad.

While Singles' Day was previously a one-day event, shopping platforms in China now kickstart the festival weeks ahead to drum up sales volume. The festival has also traditionally been regarded as a barometer

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of consumer sentiment.

But amid China's lagging domestic economy, dragged down by a real estate crisis and deflationary pressures, consumers no longer go all out on purchases during the shopping extravaganza.

"I only spent a few hundred yuan on daily necessities," said Wang Haihua, who owns a fitness center in Beijing.

Wang said that the prices offered on e-commerce platforms during Singles' Day are not necessarily cheaper than usual.

"They're all tricks and we've seen through it over the years," she said.

Zhang Jiewei, a 34-year-old who runs a barber shop in Xi'an city, echoed Wang's sentiments, saying that he no longer trust Singles' Day promotions as some merchant tend to raise the usual price of a product before offering a discount, giving consumers the illusion they are getting a deal.

"I used to buy a lot two or three years ago and I even purchased a mobile phone (during Singles' Day)," he said.

"I stopped doing that following the pandemic because of less income. I am not going to buy anything this year," Zhang added.

Some experts say that Beijing's recent stimulus measures have had little impact to boost consumer confidence.

"People are not interested in spending and are cutting back on big-ticket items," said Shaun Rein, founder and managing director of China Market Research Group in Shanghai. "Since October 2022, the weak economy means that everything has been on discount year-round, 11.11 is not going to bring in more discounts that the month before."

Rein said he expects low growth for the Singles' Day shopping festival as consumers tighten their spending in anticipation of difficult economic times ahead.

Categories such as sportswear and fitness, however, have been doing well as customers "trade down a Gucci bag for Lululemon sportswear," he said.

Platforms like JD.com and Alibaba, which operates e-commerce platforms Taobao and Tmall, previously used to publish the value of transactions made during the festival, but have since stopped revealing the total figure. While yearly growth used to be in the double digits, estimates of recent figures have dwindled to low single-digit growth.

Syntun, a data provider, estimated that last year's gross merchandising volume sales across major e-commerce platforms grew just 2% to 1.14 trillion yuan (\$156.40 billion), a far cry from double-digit growth before COVID-19.

Merchants who typically take part in the Singles' Day shopping festivals say the costs of participation no longer pay off, amid high advertising fees and unsatisfactory sales.

Zhao Gao, who owns a garment factory in eastern Zhejiang province, said that after paying advertising costs to e-commerce platforms he would only break even after sales.

"The platforms have so many rules for promotions and customers have become more skeptical," he said. "As a merchant, I no longer participate in the Singles' Day promotions."

Another merchant, Du Baonian who runs a food company processing mutton in Inner Mongolia, said that overall sales in the past year have fallen 15% as consumers downgraded and reduced consumption.

Du said that while he still takes part in the Singles' Day promotions, the higher expenses do not typically generate returns because of sluggish sales.

"We are seeing shrinking revenue, but advertisement on the platform can help us to maintain our leading sales position," he said, adding that he was considering advertising on more e-commerce platforms to target more consumers.

Meanwhile, e-commerce platforms grappling with a slowing domestic market have also turned to overseas markets to seek new growth, offering promotions like global free shipping and allowing merchants to sell globally with ease.

Alibaba, for example, said in a blog post on its Alizila site that some 70,000 merchants saw sales double with global free shipping. In markets like Singapore and Hong Kong, new customers also doubled, Alibaba said.

Haiti replaces its prime minister, marking more turmoil in its democratic transition process

By EVENS SANON Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — A transitional council created to reestablish democratic order in Haiti signed a decree Sunday firing interim Prime Minister Garry Conille and replacing him with Alix Didier Fils-Aimé, a businessman who was previously considered for the job.

The decree, set to be published on Monday, was provided to The Associated Press by a government source. It marks even more turmoil in an already rocky democratic transition process for Haiti, which hasn't held democratic elections in years in a large part due to the soaring levels of gang violence plaguing the Caribbean nation.

Fils-Aimé is the former president of Haiti's Chamber of Commerce and Industry and in 2015 ran an unsuccessful campaign for Senate. The businessman studied at Boston University and was previously considered for the position as a private sector candidate for the post before Conille took the seat.

Conille, a longtime civil servant who has worked with the United Nations, served as prime minister for only six months.

The AP on Sunday couldn't reach Conille or a spokesperson for him.

The transitional presidential council was established in April, tasked with choosing Haiti's next prime minister and Cabinet with the hope that it would help quell turmoil Haiti. But the council has been plagued with politics and infighting, and has long been at odds with Conille. Organizations like the Organization of American States tried and failed last week to mediate disagreements in an attempt to save the fragile transition, according to The Miami Herald.

The process suffered another blow in October when three members on the council faced corruption accusations, from anti-corruption investigators alleging that they demanded \$750,000 in bribes from a government bank director to secure his job.

The report was a significant blow to the nine-member council and is expected to further erode people's trust in it.

Those same members accused of bribery, Smith Augustin, Emmanuel Vertilaire and Louis Gérald Gilles, were among those to sign the decree. Only one member, Edgard Leblanc Fils, did not sign the order.

The move by the transitional council came under fire by some in Haiti like former Justice Minister Bernard Gousse, who told local media that Conille's dismissal was "illegal" because the council was over-extending its powers and because of the corruption allegations levered against them.

Joey Logano wins Phoenix finale for 3rd NASCAR Cup championship in 1-2 finish for Team Penske

By JENNA FRYER AP Auto Racing Writer

AVONDALE, Ariz. (AP) — Eliminated from the playoffs at the end of the second round, Joey Logano received a second chance when another competitor was disqualified.

He pounced on the opportunity.

Logano was added to the round of eight following Alex Bowman's disqualification and immediately went to Las Vegas Motor Speedway to win the third-round opener. It made Logano the first driver locked into Sunday's winner-take-all finale at Phoenix Raceway with three weeks to prepare his Ford for the title run.

He capitalized with his his third NACAR Cup Series championship, using a near-flawless drive to hold off teammate Ryan Blaney and give Team Penske its third major motorsports title in less than a month and third consecutive NASCAR title.

Logano actually called his shot after qualifying second Saturday when he confidently acknowledged it was his Cup Series title to lose.

"Yeah, I do. I feel like our car is strong. We got them down now," Logano boasted. "We just have to put our foot on their throats. We feel pretty strong about our team, and these type of pressure situations we

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feel really solid about as far as our team in these moments.”

It may not have been how boss Roger Penske would have phrased it, but it showed the team owner how relentless his team leader can be.

“I might have used different words, but that’s OK,” Penske said, “when you win, you can say whatever you want, I guess.”

Logano held off Blaney over the final 20 laps to beat him for the Cup series title by 0.330 seconds. Blaney was trying to become the first back-to-back champion since Jimmie Johnson won five straight from 2006 to 2010.

Instead, Logano became the 10th driver in NASCAR history to win three or more championships. Kyle Busch is the only other active driver with multiple titles.

“I love the playoffs, I love it man,” Logano said. “What a team, what a Penske battle there at the end. Three of them? That’s truly special.”

It was the first time in Team Penske history the organization finished 1-2 in the championship. And, it came after Penske’s sports car team in IMSA won the title last month and his World Endurance Championship team won the title last weekend in Bahrain.

Roger Penske said he worried in the closing laps his two drivers would crash into each other, ending the title hopes for both. He also praised longtime sponsor Shell-Pennzoil, which was on Indianapolis 500 winner Josef Newgarden’s car for his victory in May for Penske.

Penske also deferred taking too much of the credit for the team success.

“It’s all about the people,” Penske said. “My name might be on the door, but it’s all about the people who make the difference and we sure have them on this team.”

Blaney was exhausted after the race, and despite his disappointment was thrilled for the Penske organization.

“At least a Penske car won it,” Blaney said. “They put together a great playoffs, and we’re happy. If we’re going to race somebody, I’m happy it was him for the championship, and happy to be 1-2 for Roger, three in a row for Roger, super amazing, and Ford.”

Penske and Ford have won three consecutive Cup Series championships. Logano won in 2022 and Blaney won last year.

“One-two for Team Penske, three championships in a row, can’t be more proud of this team,” Logano said. “I don’t know if I’m the best driver but I’ve got the best team. And together, we’re very well-rounded and can show up when it matters the most.”

The finale was winner-take-all to the highest finisher between Logano, Blaney, William Byron in a Chevrolet for Hendrick Motorsports and Tyler Reddick of the 23XI Racing team owned by NBA Hall of Famer Michael Jordan and three-time Daytona 500 winner Denny Hamlin.

Byron finished third in the race and Reddick was sixth. It was Byron’s second consecutive appearance in the finale, first for Reddick.

“Makes you hungrier, but also just more experience in what it takes,” said Byron, the Daytona 500 winner. “I feel like this style of track has been tough on us, and we made a lot of strides this year, but still more to go. If we can just kind of inch up on this style of track, I know we’re so good at all the other ones, and we can put it all together.”

Reddick, who had been subdued all week compared to his fellow title contenders, didn’t lead a lap and had Jordan pacing behind the pit wall much of the race.

“Michael was just proud of the effort of our team all year long,” Reddick said. “Put up a good fight. We didn’t make any mistakes that took ourselves out of it. We fought as hard as we could.”

The four title contenders finished in the top six, with Reddick behind Kyle Larson of Hendrick and Christopher Bell, who led a race-high 143 laps after he was disqualified from the finale last week at Martinsville for a safety violation. Byron took his spot instead, and Bell insisted he had been cheated out of the chance to race for the title.

Logano, a 34-year-old from Connecticut, led 107 laps in the dominating win that Blaney made closer

than expected in the final laps.

But, his very presence in the final four was controversial as Logano was eliminated from the playoffs after the second round. He was reinstated before Las Vegas, where he won to give the No. 22 team three weeks to prepare for Phoenix.

"Our team is better under pressure," Logano said. "The race started in Vegas for us. The amount of work and effort that went into building this race car right here, the amount of time, I don't think anyone works harder than us. We were up at 6 in the morning this morning going over stuff. The guys just want it bad and I'm glad we delivered."

24 more monkeys that escaped from a South Carolina lab are recovered unharmed

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — More than half of the monkeys bred for medical research that escaped from a compound in South Carolina last week have now been recovered unharmed, officials said Sunday.

Twenty-four monkeys were captured on Sunday, a day after another of the 43 escaped monkeys was recovered.

A "sizeable group" remains active along the compound's fence line and bedded down in the trees for the night, police in Yemassee, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) northeast of Savannah, Georgia, said in a statement. Veterinarians have been examining the animals and initial reports indicate they are all in good health, police said.

The Rhesus macaques made a break for it Wednesday after an employee at the Alpha Genesis facility in Yemassee didn't fully lock a door as she fed and checked on them, officials said.

Since their escape, the monkeys have explored the outer fence of the Alpha Genesis compound, cooing at the monkeys inside. The primates continued to interact with their companions inside the facility Saturday, which police have said was a positive sign.

Alpha Genesis CEO Greg Westergaard has said that efforts to recover all the monkeys will continue for as long as it takes.

The monkeys are about the size of a cat. They are all females weighing about 7 pounds (3 kilograms).

Alpha Genesis, federal health officials and police all said the monkeys pose no risk to public health. The facility breeds the monkeys to sell to medical and other researchers.

Alpha Genesis provides primates for research worldwide at its compound in Yemassee, according to its website.

Trump pressures candidates for Senate GOP leader to fill his Cabinet right away

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Days before Senate Republicans pick their new leader, President-elect Donald Trump is pressuring the candidates to change the rules and empower him to appoint some nominees without a Senate vote.

Republican Sens. John Thune of South Dakota, John Cornyn of Texas and Rick Scott of Florida are running in a secret ballot election Wednesday to lead the GOP conference and replace longtime GOP leader Mitch McConnell, who is stepping aside from the job after almost two decades. All three have courted Trump's support in the race, vying to show who is the closest to the president-elect as they campaign to become majority leader.

Trump has not endorsed in the race, but on Sunday he made clear that he expects the new leader to go around regular Senate order, if necessary, to allow him to fill his Cabinet quickly. In a statement on X and Truth Social, Trump said that the next leader "must agree" to allow him to make appointments when the chamber is on recess, bypassing a confirmation vote.

"Any Republican Senator seeking the coveted LEADERSHIP position in the United States Senate must

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agree to Recess Appointments (in the Senate!), without which we will not be able to get people confirmed in a timely manner," Trump posted, adding that positions should be filled "IMMEDIATELY!"

The Senate has not allowed presidents to make so-called recess appointments since a 2014 Supreme Court ruling limited the president's power to do so. Since then, the Senate has held brief "pro-forma" sessions when it is out of town for more than 10 days so that a president cannot take advantage of the absence and start filling posts that have not been confirmed.

But with Trump's approval paramount in the race, all three candidates quickly suggested that they might be willing to reconsider the practice. Scott replied to Trump, "100% agree. I will do whatever it takes to get your nominations through as quickly as possible." And Thune said in a statement that they must "quickly and decisively" act to get nominees in place and that "all options are on the table to make that happen, including recess appointments."

Cornyn said that "It is unacceptable for Senate Ds to blockade President @realDonaldTrump's cabinet appointments. If they do, we will stay in session, including weekends, until they relent." He noted that recess appointments are allowed under the Constitution.

The social media exchange on Sunday became a first test for the three candidates since Trump was decisively elected last week to a second term.

Trump's relationship with Congress — especially the advice and consent role afforded to the Senate when it comes to nominations — was tumultuous in his first term as he chafed at resistance to his selections and sought ways to work around lawmakers. With Trump now entering a second term emboldened by his sweeping election victory, he is already signaling that he expects Senate Republicans, and by extension, their new leader, to fall in line behind his Cabinet selections.

Trump also posted on Sunday that the Senate should not approve any judges in the weeks before Republicans take power next year — a more difficult demand to fulfill as Democrats will control the floor, and hold the majority of votes, until the new Congress is sworn in on Jan. 3. Trump posted that "Democrats are looking to ram through their Judges as the Republicans fight over Leadership. THIS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE."

With days to go, the race for Senate Republican leader is deeply in flux.

Thune and Cornyn are both well-liked, longtime senators who have served as deputies to McConnell and have been seen as the front-runners, despite past statements criticizing Trump. Scott — a longtime friend of Trump's and fierce ally — has been seen as more of a longshot, but he has mounted an aggressive campaign in recent days on social media and elsewhere with the aim of getting Trump's endorsement.

Senators who are close to Trump, such as Mike Lee of Utah and Marco Rubio of Florida, have endorsed Scott, as have tech mogul Elon Musk and other people who have Trump's ear.

"We have to be the change," Scott said on Fox News' "Sunday Morning Futures." "That's what Donald Trump got elected to do, to be the change."

All three candidates are promising that they will be more open and transparent than McConnell was and that they would give senators more power to get their priorities to the floor. They have also tried to make clear that they would have a much different relationship with Trump than McConnell, who once called the former president a "despicable human being" behind closed doors.

As the Senate haggles over how to fill Trump's Cabinet, many of his allies are campaigning for the nominations. Former GOP presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy said on ABC's "This Week" that there are "a couple of great options on the table." Sen. Bill Hagerty, a Republican from Tennessee who served as U.S. ambassador to Japan between 2017 and 2019, said on CBS's "Face the Nation" that one of his greatest honors was to represent the Trump administration overseas. He said he would advance "the positions that President Trump has articulated."

"I'll do that in whatever role necessary," said Hagerty, who has endorsed Scott in the leadership race.

While Trump has made only one personnel move public so far, naming Susie Wiles his chief of staff, he has already ruled out two names for top positions.

Trump said Saturday that he would not be inviting Mike Pompeo, his former U.S. Secretary of State and CIA chief, and Nikki Haley, a former South Carolina governor who served as his U.N. ambassador and

challenged him for the GOP nomination. Pompeo rallied with Trump on the night before Election Day.

"I very much enjoyed and appreciated working with them previously, and would like to thank them for their service to our Country," Trump posted on his network Truth Social.

Trump's son, Donald Trump Jr., reposted on X a message by podcaster Dave Smith suggesting to put pressure to "keep all neocons and war hawks out of the Trump administration."

"The 'stop Pompeo' movement is great, but it's not enough," Smith posted on X. "America First: screw the war machine!"

A person is dead and 16 are hurt after a shooting at Tuskegee University; 1 arrest made

By JEFF MARTIN Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — A shooting early Sunday during homecoming weekend at Tuskegee University in Alabama left one person dead and injured 16 others, a dozen of them by gunfire, authorities said. One arrest was announced hours later.

The Alabama Law Enforcement Agency said Jaquez Myrick, 25, of Montgomery, was taken into custody while leaving the scene of the campus shooting and had been found with a handgun with a machine gun conversion device. The agency said in a statement that Myrick faces a federal charge of possession of a machine gun. It did not accuse him of using the gun in the shooting or provide additional details.

The agency did not say whether Myrick was a student at the historically Black university where the shooting erupted as the school's 100th Homecoming Week was winding down. Authorities said an 18-year-old man who died was not a university student but that some of the injured were students.

It was not immediately known if Myrick had an attorney who could speak on his behalf.

Twelve people were wounded by gunfire, and four others sustained injuries not related to the gunshots, the state agency said. Several were being treated at East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika and Baptist South Hospital in Montgomery, the university said in a statement. Their conditions were not immediately released.

The FBI joined the investigation and said it was seeking tips from the public, as well as any video witnesses might have. It set up a site online for people to upload video. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives also was involved in the investigation, a local prosecutor said.

Tuskegee University canceled classes Monday and said grief counselors will be available in the university's chapel to help students.

The parents of the victim were notified, and an autopsy was planned at the state's forensic center in Montgomery, Macon County Coroner Hal Bentley told The Associated Press.

Tuskegee city's police chief, Patrick Mardis, said the injured included a female student who was shot in the stomach and a male student who was shot in the arm.

City police were responding to an unrelated double shooting off campus when officers got the call about the university shooting at the West Commons on-campus apartments, Mardis said.

"Some idiots started shooting," Mardis told the news site Al.com. "You couldn't get the emergency vehicles in there, there were so many people there."

A person who answered the phone at Mardis' office said no other information was available.

In his 37 years as coroner, Bentley said he couldn't recall any shootings during the school's past homecoming celebrations. The mood around the small town of around 9,000 people was somber, he said.

The shooting left everyone in the university community shaken, said Amare' Hardee, a senior from Tallahassee, Florida, who is president of the student government association.

"This senseless act of violence has touched each of us, whether directly or indirectly," he said at the school's homecoming convocation Sunday morning.

A pastor who leads the Tuskegee National Alumni Association told those at the convocation service that the shooting is a reminder of the fragility of life.

"It is in moments like these that we need to be reminded not to stand on our own understanding because

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in a moment like this, I don't have understanding," said the Rev. James Quincy III.

"I can only rely on my faith, and my prayer for our entire family, this community, as we close out this marvelous family reunion that we shared this week," Quincy said, "and most importantly because of that faith walk and that trust in God, that we have resilience, resilience in the time of trouble."

Miles College in Fairfield, Alabama — the school's opponent for Tuskegee's homecoming football game on Saturday — released a statement expressing sympathy.

"Today, our hearts are with the Tuskegee family as they face the tragic aftermath of the recent shooting on campus," the college said. "We extend our deepest condolences to those impacted and pray for healing and justice. Miles College stands with you in this difficult time."

Sunday's shooting comes just over a year after four people were injured in a shooting at a Tuskegee University student housing complex. Two visitors to the campus were shot and two students were hurt while trying to leave the scene of what campus officials described as an "unauthorized party" in September 2023, the Montgomery Advertiser reported.

About 3,000 students are enrolled at the university about 40 miles (64 kilometers) east of Alabama's capital city of Montgomery.

The university was the first historically Black college to be designated a Registered National Landmark in 1966. It was also designated a National Historic Site in 1974, according to the school's website.

Norma Clayton, chairwoman of the board of the trustees, said at the Sunday morning service that "we will get through this together because in tough times, tough people band together and they survive."

'Heretic' and Hugh Grant debut with \$11 million, but 'Venom: The Last Dance' tops box office again

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — "Venom: The Last Dance" has been no blockbuster in North American theaters. But in a lethargic fall moviegoing season, even a so-so performing superhero sequel can rule the box office for three straight weeks.

For the third weekend in a row, "Venom: The Last Dance" was the No. 1 movie at the box office, collecting \$16.2 million in ticket sales in U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday. It fended off a pair of new challengers in the Hugh Grant horror thriller "Heretic" and the feel-good holiday movie "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever."

With the election on Tuesday, the major studios opted not to put any new releases into theaters. That allowed Sony Pictures' "Venom: The Last Dance," the third entry in the Tom Hardy-led franchise, to hold its position.

While "The Last Dance" hasn't been a huge hit domestically — opening below expectations in late October — it has thrived overseas, grossing almost triple what it has in North America. The "Venom" sequel has grossed \$279.4 million internationally, bringing its global total to \$394.2 million.

"Heretic" and "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" were neck and neck for second place. Counting only Friday-Sunday ticket sales, the edge went to "Heretic," which debuted with \$11 million. "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever," though, factored in \$2.2 million in sneak-peak screenings from last weekend to claim a reported opening gross of \$11.1 million.

A24's "Heretic," directed by Scott Beck and Bryan Woods, follows two Mormon missionaries (Sophie Thatcher and Chloe East) who knock on the door of a man (Grant) they'll regret trying to evangelize to. Though "Heretic" has been critically acclaimed for the darkest turn yet by Grant, audiences were less impressed, giving it a "C+" CinemaScore. Regardless, with a budget under \$10 million, "Heretic" will easily turn a profit.

"The Best Christmas Pageant Ever," released by Lionsgate and Kingdom Story Company, which specializes in Christian entertainment, is about six siblings with a bad reputation who take over the local church pageant. The film, an adaptation of Barbara Robinson's 1972 children's book directed by Dallas Jenkins, did well with audiences, who gave it a "A" CinemaScore. It, too, was modestly budgeted at about \$10 million.

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In its seventh week of release, Universal and DreamWorks Animation's "The Wild Robot" continues to show little rust in theaters. It landed in fourth place with \$6.6 million, bringing its domestic haul to \$130.2 million and its worldwide gross to \$292 million.

Sean Baker's acclaimed "Anora," starring Mikey Madison as a Brooklyn sex worker, expanded into wide release. The Neon film, an expected best-picture contender, collected \$2.4 million in 1,104 theaters. Its four-week total stands at \$7.2 million.

The papal thriller "Conclave," starring Ralph Fiennes, continues to perform exceptionally well for an adult-oriented drama. The Focus Features release, in its third weekend of release, added 487 theaters and dipped a modest 19% to earn \$4.1 million. It has collected \$21.5 million. Similarly, A24's "We Live in Time," starring Andrew Garfield and Florence Pugh, has stayed strong, grossing \$2.2 million in its fifth weekend for a \$21.8 million total.

Overall ticket sales, though, remain sluggish. Box office is running about 11% behind last year, according to Comscore. In the last two weeks, overall ticket sales are down about 50% from the pre-pandemic average, according to David A. Gross, a film consultant who publishes a newsletter for Franchise Entertainment.

The good news for theaters: The next few weeks are lined up for several big new releases, including the Amazon MGM Christmas comedy "Red One" (Nov. 15), Paramount Pictures' "Gladiator II" (Nov. 22), Universal's "Wicked" (also Nov. 22) and the Walt Disney Co.'s "Moana 2" (Nov. 27).

"Better late than never is the rule of the day and we can expect some positive success stories coming out of the Thanksgiving corridor, which looks to be on par with some of the biggest such frames over the past many years," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for Comscore.

Before opening in U.S. theaters, "Red One," starring Dwayne Johnson and Chris Evans, kicked off in 75 overseas markets, collecting \$26.6 million. The film carries a hefty price tag of about \$250 million to make.

Final domestic figures will be released Monday. Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore, are:

1. "Venom: The Last Dance," \$16.2 million.
2. "Heretic," \$11 million.
3. "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever," \$8.9 million.
4. "The Wild Robot," \$6.7 million.
5. "Smile 2," \$5 million.
6. "Conclave," \$4.1 million.
7. "Anora," \$2.5 million.
8. "Here," \$2.4 million.
9. "We Live in Time," \$2.2 million.
10. "Terrifier 3," \$1.4 million.

Amsterdam police detain pro-Palestinian protesters at banned demonstration

By MIKE CORDER Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — Police detained dozens of people Sunday for taking part in a demonstration in central Amsterdam that had been outlawed following violence targeting fans of an Israeli soccer club.

Amsterdam Mayor Femke Halsema banned all demonstrations over the weekend in the aftermath of the grim scenes of youths on scooters and on foot attacking Maccabi Tel Aviv supporters on Thursday and Friday in what was widely condemned as a violent outburst of antisemitism in the Dutch capital.

Late Sunday afternoon, the municipality, together with Amsterdam police and public prosecutor's office, extended the ban on demonstrations until Thursday morning.

In France, Paris police said Sunday that 4,000 officers and 1,600 stadium staff will be deployed for a France-Israel soccer match on Thursday to ensure security in and around the stadium and on public transportation.

Israel's ambassador to the Netherlands said that 2,000 Israelis were brought home on special flights

from Amsterdam over the past few days.

Before the match against Ajax, Maccabi fans also tore a Palestinian flag off a building in Amsterdam and chanted anti-Arab slogans on their way to the stadium. There were also reports of Maccabi fans starting fights.

Amsterdam Police said on X that they detained more than 50 people and removed 340 from the scene of the protest.

The protesters yelled slogans including "Free, free Palestine."

Amsterdam Municipality said on X that police had begun arresting demonstrators who refused to leave the square, which is in the heart of the city's downtown shopping area and close to the historic canal network.

Organizers of the protest went to court on Sunday morning seeking an injunction to allow the demonstration, but a judge upheld the ban imposed by the municipality.

At the hearing, senior Amsterdam police officer Olivier Dutilh said that there were again incidents overnight targeting people thought to be Jewish, including some being ordered out of taxis and others being asked to produce their passports to confirm their nationality.

Police launched a large-scale investigation Friday after gangs of youths conducted what Amsterdam's mayor called "hit and run" attacks on fans that were apparently inspired by calls on social media to target Jewish people. Five people were treated at hospitals and more than 60 suspects were arrested.

Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar rushed to the Netherlands on Friday and offered Israel's help in the police investigation. He met on Saturday with Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof and said in a statement that the attacks and demands to show passports "were reminiscent of dark periods in history."

Paris will deploy 4,000 police officers for France-Israel soccer match following Amsterdam violence

PARIS (AP) — Paris police said Sunday that 4,000 officers and 1,600 stadium staff will be deployed for a France-Israel soccer match to ensure security in and around the stadium and on public transportation a week after violence against Israeli fans in Amsterdam.

France and Israel are playing in a UEFA Nations League match on Thursday that French President Emmanuel Macron will attend, the Elysee presidential palace said.

Israel's National Security Council, in a statement Sunday, warned citizens abroad to avoid sports and cultural events, specifically the match in Paris, and be careful of violent attacks "under the pretense of demonstrations."

"There's a context, tensions that make that match a high-risk event for us," Paris police chief Laurent Nuñez said on French news broadcaster BFM TV, adding authorities "won't tolerate" any violence.

Nuñez said that 2,500 police officers would be deployed around the Stade de France stadium, north of the French capital, in addition to 1,500 others in Paris and on public transportation.

"There will be an anti-terrorist security perimeter around the stadium," Nuñez said. Security checks will be "reinforced," he added, including with systematic pat-downs and bag searches.

Nuñez said that French organizers have been in contact with Israeli authorities and security forces in order to prepare for the match.

Israeli fans were assaulted last week after a soccer game in Amsterdam by hordes of young people apparently riled up by calls on social media to target Jewish people, according to Dutch authorities.

Five people were treated at hospitals and dozens were arrested after the attacks, which were condemned as antisemitic by authorities in Amsterdam, Israel and across Europe. Before the game, large crowds of supporters of the Israeli team could be seen on video chanting anti-Arab slogans as they headed to the stadium, escorted by police.

On Sunday, Dutch police detained several people for taking part in a demonstration in central Amsterdam that had been outlawed following the violence targeting Israeli fans, a local broadcaster reported.

French Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau confirmed Friday that the France-Israel match would go ahead as planned.

"I think that for a symbolic reason we must not yield, we must not give up," he said, noting that sports fans from around the world came together for the Paris Olympics this year to celebrate the "universal values" of sports.

Macron's expected attendance not only is a show of support for the French team, but also aims as sending "a message of fraternity and solidarity following the intolerable antisemitic acts that followed the match in Amsterdam," an official in Macron's entourage said. The official couldn't be named in line with the Elysee's customary practices.

Gunmen open fire in a bar in central Mexico killing 10 and injuring 13

HUEHUETOCA, Mexico (AP) — Gunmen opened fire in a bar in central Mexico killing 10 people and injuring 13, local authorities said Sunday.

The attack took place Saturday in the historic city center of Querétaro in a region that had long been spared the violence seen in neighboring states like Guerrero. In recent years, however, the state of Querétaro has been marked by a handful of violent incidents, raising concern by authorities.

Juan Luis Ferrusca Ortiz, the city's head of public security, confirmed the attack and the number of victims. He said at least one person was arrested following the attack.

Ferrusca Ortiz said officials identified those responsible by tracking the license plates on the car the armed men fled in, which was later abandoned and set on fire.

Two videos from the bar's security cameras, disseminated on social networks, show a group of four walking into the bar and shooting indiscriminately at people eating at several tables. The video shows the screaming people throwing themselves on the floor and trying to seek refuge, stained with the blood of the people shot.

Two of the 13 wounded were reported to be gravely injured.

Hours after the attack, Querétaro's Gov. Mauricio Kuri vowed to bring the assailants to justice, and said he was working to provide aid for the families of those killed.

"There will be punishment for those responsible for this brutal act," Kuri wrote on the social media platform X early Sunday.

Young Black and Latino men say they chose Trump because of the economy and jobs. Here's how and why

By MATT BROWN, FERNANDA FIGUEROA, HANNAH FINGERHUT and LINLEY SANDERS Associated Press WASHINGTON (AP) — Brian Leija, a 31-year-old small-business owner from Belton, Texas, was not surprised that a growing number of Latino men of his generation voted for Donald Trump for president this year. Leija had voted for the Republican in 2016 and 2020.

Leija's rationale was simple: He said he has benefited from Trump's economic policies, especially tax cuts.

"I am a blue-collar worker," Leija said. "So, tax breaks for small businesses are ideal for what I do."

For DaSean Gallishaw, a consultant in Fairfax, Virginia, a vote for Trump was rooted in what he saw as Democrats' rhetoric not matching their actions. "It's been a very long time since the Democrats ever really kept their promises to what they're going to do for the minority communities," he said.

Gallishaw, 25, who is Black, also voted for Trump twice before. This year, he said, he thought the former president's "minority community outreach really showed up."

Trump gained a larger share of Black and Latino voters than he did in 2020, when he lost to Democrat Joe Biden, and most notably among men under age 45, according to AP VoteCast, a nationwide survey of more than 120,000 voters.

Even as Democrat Kamala Harris won majorities of Black and Latino voters, it wasn't enough to give the vice president the White House, because of the gains Trump made.

Economy and jobs made men under age 45 more open to Trump

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Voters overall cited the economy and jobs as the most important issue the country faced. That was true for Black and Hispanic voters as well.

About 3 in 10 Black men under age 45 went for Trump, roughly double the share he got in 2020. Young Latinos, particularly young Latino men, also were more open to Trump than in 2020. Roughly half of young Latino men voted for Harris, compared with about 6 in 10 who went for Biden.

Juan Proaño, CEO of LULAC, the nation's largest and oldest civil rights organization for Hispanic Americans, said the election results make it clear that Trump's messaging on the economy resonated with Latinos.

"I think it's important to say that Latinos have a significant impact in deciding who the next president was going to be and reelected Donald Trump," Proaño said. "(Latino) men certainly responded to the populist message of the president and focused primarily on economic issues, inflation, wages and even support of immigration reform."

The Rev. Derrick Harkins, a minister who has served Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York, has overseen outreach to Black American religious communities for more than a decade. He said that Trump's hypermasculine appeal worked to win over some younger men of color.

"I think that Trump with this bogus machismo has been effective amongst the young men, Black, white, Hispanic," Harkins said. "And I think unfortunately, even if it's a very small percentage, you know, when you're talking about an election like we just had it can be very impactful."

Black and Latino voters' priorities changed from 2020

While about 4 in 10 young voters under 45 across racial and ethnic groups identified the economy as the top issue facing the country, older white and Latino voters were likely to also cite immigration, with about one-quarter of each saying that was the top issue.

A clear majority of young Black voters described the economy as "not so good" or "poor," compared with about half of older Black voters. Majorities of Latino voters, regardless of age, said the economy is in bad shape.

That belief made it more difficult for Harris to highlight the actual numbers in the economy, which show that inflation has receded dramatically, unemployment remains low and wages have risen. These voters simply did not feel that progress.

This is the first time Alexis Uscanga, a 20-year-old college student from Brownville, Texas, voted in a presidential election. The economy and immigration are the issues that drove him to vote for Trump, he said.

"Everything just got a lot more expensive than it once was for me," Uscanga said. "Gas, grocery shopping even as a college student, everything has gone up in price and that is a big concern for me and other issues like immigration."

Having grown up selling tamales and used cars, and washing cars, Uscanga knows how hard it can be to make a living. When Trump was president, he said, it did not feel that way, he said.

"Under the Trump presidency more opportunities were abound," Uscanga said. "I was not very fond of President Trump because of his rhetoric in 2016 but I look aside from that and how we were living in 2018, 2019, I just felt that we lived a good life no matter what the media was saying and that's why I started supporting him after that."

Though the shift of votes to Trump from Black and Latino men was impactful, Trump could not have won without the support of a majority of white voters.

"Men of color are really beginning to emerge as the new swing voters," said Terrance Woodbury, co-founder of HIT Strategies, a polling and research firm that conducted studies for the Harris campaign.

"For a long time, we talked about suburban women and soccer moms who can swing the outcome of elections. Now men of color are really beginning to emerge as that, especially younger men of color, who are less ideological, less tied to a single party, and more likely to swing either between parties or in and out of the electorate," Woodbury said.

Desire for strong leadership made Trump more appealing

A majority of voters nationally said Trump was a strong leader; slightly fewer than half said the same about Harris. Among Hispanic voters, even more saw Trump as strong in this election. Roughly 6 in 10 Hispanic men described Trump as a strong leader, compared with 43% who said that in 2020. About half

of Hispanic women said Trump was a strong leader, up from 37%.

Black men and women were about twice as likely as in 2020 to describe Trump as a strong leader.

David Means, a purchasing manager in Atlanta who is Black, abstained from voting in the election because he did not feel either Harris or Trump was making the right appeals to Black men. But the results of the election did not disappoint him.

"I'm satisfied with the result. I don't feel slighted. I wasn't let down. I wasn't pulling for Trump or Kamala, but I did not want a woman in that position," he said. And if it were to be a woman, Means said, "I'd rather have a really strong and smart woman, for example, like Judge Judy."

6.8 magnitude earthquake shakes Cuba after hurricanes and blackouts

By ANDREA RODRÍGUEZ Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 6.8 shook eastern Cuba on Sunday, after weeks of hurricanes and blackouts that have left many on the island reeling.

The epicenter of the quake was located about 25 miles (40 kilometers) south of Bartolome Maso, Cuba, according to a report by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Rumbling was felt across the eastern stretch of Cuba, including in bigger cities like Santiago de Cuba, as well as Holguin and Guantanamo. Local media in Jamaica also reported that the island felt the tremors.

There were no immediate reports of major damage or injuries in Cuba.

Residents in Santiago, Cuba's second-largest city, were left shaken on Sunday. Yolanda Tabío, 76, said that people in the city flocked to the streets and were still nervously sitting in their doorways. She said that she felt at least two aftershocks following the quake, but that among friends and family she hadn't heard of any damages.

"You had to see how everything was moving, the walls, everything," she told The Associated Press.

Others reported hearing screams, adding that the quake was strong and stretched on. On social media, residents in the small town of Pilon reported minor damage, posting photos of crumbling roofs and cracks on building walls, not uncommon in Cuba where many structures are older and in need of repair.

The earthquake comes during another tough stretch for Cuba.

On Wednesday, Category 3 Hurricane Rafael ripped through western Cuba, with strong winds knocking out power island-wide, destroying hundreds of homes and forcing evacuations of hundreds of thousands of people. Days after, much of the island was still struggling without power.

Weeks before in October, the island was also hit by a one-two punch. First, it was hit by island-wide blackouts stretching on for days, a product of the island's energy crisis. Shortly after, it was slapped by a powerful hurricane that struck the eastern part of the island and killed at least six people.

The blackouts and wider discontent among many struggling to get by has stoked small protests across the island.

Drones strike Moscow as top UK official highlights Russian casualties in Ukraine

By SUSIE BLANN and JOANNA KOZLOWSKA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — A massive drone strike rattled Moscow and its suburbs overnight into Sunday, injuring several people and temporarily halting traffic at some of Russia's busiest airports, officials reported. Meanwhile, a huge nighttime wave of Russian drones targeted Ukraine.

This came after Russian President Vladimir Putin signed into law a pact with North Korea Saturday night, obliging the two countries to provide immediate military aid using "all means" if either is attacked. The agreement marks the strongest link between Moscow and Pyongyang since the end of the Cold War.

Earlier this week, Ukraine reported that its troops engaged for the first time with North Korean units. U.S. officials earlier confirmed the deployment of at least 3,000 North Korean troops to Russia, while Kyiv

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has repeatedly said the number is far higher. This has fueled concerns of a marked escalation in Moscow's war on Ukraine, and tensions spilling over into the Asia-Pacific.

U.K. estimates Russian troop losses at 700,000

Both Moscow and Kyiv have kept a tight lid on casualty figures since the start of the full-scale war despite regular reports of Russian forces taking huge losses following "human wave" attacks that aim to exhaust Ukrainian defenses.

However, the chief of the U.K. defense staff, Tony Radakin, told the BBC that Russian forces had suffered their worst month of casualties in October since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. He said Moscow's troops suffered an average of 1,500 dead and wounded per day, bringing their total losses in the war to 700,000.

According to Radakin, ordinary Russians were paying "an extraordinary price" for the war, even as a grueling, monthslong Russian offensive in Ukraine's industrial east continues to eke out gains. He did not say how U.K. officials had calculated the Russian casualty figures.

"There is no doubt that Russia is making tactical, territorial gains and that is putting pressure on Ukraine," he said. But he added that they were "tiny increments of land," and Moscow's mounting defense and security spending was putting an increasing strain on the country.

Radakin insisted that Ukraine's Western partners should stand by it for "as long as it takes" to beat back Russian aggression, even as allies of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump have signaled that Kyiv may have to cede territory to seek peace.

Russia is cautiously optimistic about Trump's forthcoming presidency

On Sunday, the Kremlin's official spokesman voiced cautious optimism about Trump's upcoming presidency, saying: "At least he talks about peace. ... He does not talk about confrontation."

"The signals are positive. Trump, during his election campaign, said that he perceives everything through deals, that he can make deals that will lead everyone toward peace," Dmitry Peskov told reporters at a briefing.

"He does not talk about a desire to inflict a strategic defeat on Russia, and this favorably distinguishes him from the current (U.S.) administration," Peskov said.

But Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Sunday insisted that "strong decisions" from Kyiv's Western partners are needed to stop the "terror" of Russian drone and missile strikes, and secure "reliable peace" for Ukraine.

"The killing of children, the loss of family members cannot simply be forgotten," Zelenskyy said in a post on the Telegram messaging app.

"Without strong decisions, there is no security from terror, and this is equally clear in every country. There is no reliable peace without justice," he said.

Continuing fighting causes damage and casualties on both sides

Fierce fighting has continued near the eastern Ukrainian cities of Toretsk and Kurakhove, Ukraine's General Staff reported Sunday. Between 700 and 1,000 residents remain in Kurakhove, a front-line city surrounded on three sides and battered into ruin. Most of them live underground with no running water, heating or electricity.

Meanwhile, Russia's Defense Ministry said a total of 84 Ukrainian drones were shot down overnight in Russian territory, following what it called a "mass strike on civilian infrastructure." A man died under rubble after drones struck his apartment block in Russia's Belgorod region, just kilometers from the Ukrainian border, local Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov reported.

Five other people were injured in the Moscow suburb of Ramenskoe and a nearby village, according to local officials. Russian channels on the messaging app Telegram carried eyewitness reports of drone debris setting fire to suburban homes.

Russia's aviation authority said flights were briefly grounded at major international airports including Sheremetyevo and Domodedovo. At least 14 flights bound for Moscow were rerouted to Nizhnyi Novgorod, a city over 490 kilometers (300 miles) east, airport representatives there reported.

Ukraine's General Staff claimed on Sunday that Ukrainian drones caused a fire at an arms depot in Rus-

sia's southern Bryansk region, near Ukraine and Belarus. The online update featured a photo showing thick plumes of reddish smoke rising into the night sky. The AP could not verify the circumstances in which it was taken, and there was no immediate comment from Russia.

Separately, Russia's emergencies ministry on Sunday said that a major fire broke out at a warehouse outside of Moscow. There were no immediate reports of casualties, and it was not clear whether the blaze was linked to the Ukrainian drone strikes.

Russia overnight launched a "record" 145 drones at Ukrainian territory, according to Ukraine's air force, 62 of which were shot down. A further 67 were "lost," the air force said, a likely reference to electronic jamming that caused the drones to veer off course.

At least one person was injured as Russian drones struck residential areas in Ukraine's southern port of Odesa, local Gov. Oleh Kiper reported. And at least five civilians, including a 17-year-old girl and 10-year-old boy, were injured by falling drone debris and shelling in Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region Sunday, its Gov. Oleh Syniehubov and local prosecutors said.

Russia later on Sunday said that it had struck a large deployment of Ukrainian soldiers in the Kharkiv province with thermobaric rockets, but didn't immediately provide evidence.

The Army's answer to a lack of recruits is a prep course to boost low scores. It's working

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

FORT JACKSON, S.C. (AP) — Index cards taped to a large board on the wall at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, reveal the sometimes blunt and gritty reasons that new recruits took a chance at a last-ditch program to get into the Army.

"Eviction notices motivate me," one said. Others talked about getting free college, a good job and a way to better themselves.

Known as the "Why Wall," the board is meant as an inspiration for the recruits who could not meet the Army's physical and academic test standards, so they went into the Future Soldier Prep Course. It provides weeks of instruction to help them bring up their scores.

Started as a trial program two years ago to help boost dismal recruiting numbers, the prep course is fueling the Army's enlistment comeback. Recruiting has suffered for all the military branches in recent years coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, amid low unemployment and stiff competition from private companies able to pay more and provide similar or better benefits.

By the end of this budget year on Sept. 30, the Army had made its recruiting goal of 55,000, and service leaders said more than 13,000 of those recruits — or 24% — came into active duty through the prep course.

Army leaders increased the goal to 61,000 for this year and are relying on the prep course to provide a significant chunk again.

During a recent visit to Fort Jackson, Army Secretary Christine Wormuth spoke with recruits and program leaders to see how the course is going and what changes may need to be made. She said the successful program, which more than 31,000 trainees have gone through since it started, deserves to be made permanent.

Wormuth said the Army may make adjustments based on a long-term study on the recruits coming out of the course, including looking at how well they did in their first enlistment and whether there were behavioral or disciplinary problems.

"We really want to see what kind of soldier kind of comes out at the back end of that first term, how do they do in terms of discipline," Wormuth said.

Drill sergeants have expressed concerns that they are seeing more discipline issues, disrespect and complaints from trainees in the academic course. And they say trainees whose first language is not English have a more difficult time understanding orders and dealing with computers.

While they see fewer discipline issues from recruits in the fitness section, they do see more injuries, including ankle, knee and hip problems. Those trainees, they say, may need to be brought along even

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more slowly, to increase their strength and conditioning, rather than moving them to basic training the minute they hit the minimum level of requirements.

Commanders told Wormuth that the fitness program aims to give trainees a healthy foundation in eating and working out. Instructors said they do not want to break the recruits before they get to basic training, so they do a lot of yoga, stretching and other exercises to help avoid injuries.

In the classrooms, they are learning basic math, English and other academic skills. The bulk of recruits going through the program are in the academic course.

So far, Wormuth said, the data does not reflect some of the concerns expressed by drill sergeants and commanders. Instead, she and other Army leaders said that on average, the graduation rate from basic training is a bit higher — about 94% — for those who went through the program versus those who did not, which is about 92%.

But so far, they are taking inspiration from the thoughts scrawled on the “Why Wall.”

Company commanders came up with the idea last year, to let recruits lay out their goals in their first few days so they can go back every week to get motivated or see their progress.

A bright yellow sign atop the board tells recruits: “Your WHY will keep you going even when you want to QUIT the most.” The answer for many was they had something to prove — to themselves and others.

“I joined the Army because my family thought I couldn’t accomplish anything in life. So I had to prove them wrong,” one said. Another wrote: “I wanna show my family I’m worth something.”

Others said they wanted to “be a better man,” “gain my independence” and “prove to myself that I can accomplish something and I’m not a quitter.”

One recruit was blunt: “To prove to her I’m not gonna turn into who she said I’d become.”

Recruits lined up near the wall told Wormuth that the physical fitness program is working for them.

Couper Godleski, from Pennsylvania, said that in 10 weeks he had lost 20 pounds.

Britney Vaughn, from Louisiana, said she had lost 30 pounds in six weeks. And while she said she is missing her 3-year-old daughter, “I feel like everything will be worth it.”

On the academic side, recruits told Wormuth that even as they struggle with math or English comprehension, they are getting help from instructors while learning the structure and discipline of the Army. A key goal, said one female recruit, is “to be a role model to my nieces and nephews” and get money for college so she doesn’t have to be in debt.

For Wormuth, the visit confirmed Army leaders’ intention to keep the program going.

Recruiting challenges are not going to end, she said.

“I think we’re going to probably continue to see pretty low unemployment. We’re still going to see 60% go to college. It’s a more competitive labor market,” she said. “So we’re going to have to keep fighting hard for our new recruits.”

King Charles III and Kate attend remembrance event as both slowly return to duty

By DANICA KIRKA and PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — King Charles III led the nation Sunday in a two-minute silence in remembrance of fallen service personnel in central London as the Princess of Wales looked on, a further sign that the royal family is slowly returning to normal at the end of a year in which two of the most popular royals were sidelined by cancer.

Remembrance Sunday is a totemic event in the U.K., with the monarch leading senior royals, political leaders, including Prime Minister Keir Starmer and his eight living predecessors, and envoys from the Commonwealth countries in laying wreaths at the Cenotaph, the Portland stone memorial that serves as the focal point for honoring the nation’s war dead.

The service is held on the second Sunday of November to mark the signing of the armistice to end World War I “on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month” in 1918. Across the U.K., services

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are conducted at the same time in memory of the dead.

After the two-minute silence, buglers from the Royal Marines played the "Last Post," and Charles led the wreath-laying part of the service.

The 75-year-old king, dressed in his Royal Navy uniform of the Admiral of the Fleet, laid a wreath of poppies at the base of the Cenotaph in recognition of the fallen from conflicts dating back to World War I.

His eldest son and the heir to the throne, Prince William, left his own floral tribute — featuring the Prince of Wales' feathers and a new ribbon in Welsh red.

Dressed in somber black, his wife, Kate, watched on from a balcony of the nearby Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, as is tradition. Queen Camilla, who would normally be standing next to the princess, wasn't present as she recovered from a chest infection.

It's the first time since the start of the year that Kate carried out two consecutive days of public official engagements. On Saturday, she attended the Royal British Legion Festival Of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall.

Following the wreath-laying, around 10,000 veterans, including those who have fought in wars this century, notably in Afghanistan and Iraq, marched past the Cenotaph. With the passage of time, there were only a handful of World War II veterans present.

"It's always a great honor to be back on occasions like this, but I remember the guys that never came home on my ship when it was torpedoed," said 99-year-old Stan Ford, who has had to walk with leg calipers ever since the ship that he was serving on — HMS *Fratton* — was sunk off France's Normandy coast in August 1944 at the cost of 31 lives.

"They never came home, and I always feel it's my duty to put in an appearance and thank God for those that did survive, and to pray for the ones who didn't," said Ford, who was one of 38 survivors.

Charles' ceremonial role as commander in chief of the armed forces is a holdover from the days when the monarch led his troops into battle. But the link between the monarchy and the military is still very strong, with service members taking an oath of allegiance to the king and members of the royal family supporting service personnel through a variety of charities. Charles and William served on active duty in the military before taking up full-time royal duties.

Charles was diagnosed with an undisclosed form of cancer in February, forcing him to step away from public appearances for two months as he focused on his treatment and recovery. Just a few weeks later, Kate announced her own cancer diagnosis, which sidelined her for much of the year as she underwent chemotherapy.

The king has been in good form in recent months and recently completed a taxing trip to Australia and Samoa. Kate, who made her first post-diagnosis public appearance during the monarch's birthday parade in June, is slowly returning to public duties.

Prince William reflected this week on the strain that the cancer scare has placed on the royal family.

"I'm so proud of my wife, I'm proud of my father, for handling the things that they have done," William told reporters on Thursday as he wrapped up a four-day trip to South Africa. "But from a personal family point of view, it's been, yeah, it's been brutal."

While the Cenotaph was the focus of the national remembrance service, communities throughout the U.K. held their own ceremonies on Sunday.

Needham-Crofton, who served with the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers before a truck accident ended his military career, planned to attend a local service in Eastbourne on the south coast of England.

He has spent much of his time honoring veterans and trying to help them, including 20 years as a volunteer for the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans. Like some of his army tasks, raising cash was rather grueling as it involved standing in front of London subway stations collecting coins to help fund the group's efforts.

"I like to respect all the veterans and do what I can for them," he told The Associated Press. "It's a brotherhood really. Even if you don't know a veteran that you meet, you feel a kinship toward them. That is very important to me. I shall be like that for the rest of my life."

FIFA and IOC hold different track records with Trump ahead of World Cup and Olympics in US

By GRAHAM DUNBAR AP Sports Writer

GENEVA (AP) — The two biggest events in world sports are coming to America. And if President-elect Donald Trump is not thinking about them yet, organizers of the 2026 World Cup and 2028 Los Angeles Olympics certainly are.

The World Cup and the Summer Games are rare globally shared cultural moments with potential for unifying people. But there are questions around issues like granting visas and providing security that will cross Trump's desk.

And that requires diplomacy.

Soccer body FIFA seems in a better place to resume warm relations with Trump from his first administration compared to the International Olympic Committee based on public reactions this week and previous interactions.

FIFA President Gianni Infantino used his Instagram account to congratulate Trump even before the Electoral College win early Wednesday. There has been a public silence from the IOC, though it follows a more formal protocol code.

IOC President Thomas Bach made one visit to the White House in June 2017 that is part of Olympic lore for how badly it went.

"Pray for our world," Bach was heard to say on a cellphone call later that day in Washington D.C.

This summer, at a campaign rally, Trump falsely labeled two female Olympic champion boxers as men and pledged to "keep men out of women's sports." It's the type of issue that could arise from the Trump administration despite top-tier Olympic sports track and field, swimming and cycling already excluding from women's competitions any athletes who went through male puberty.

FIFA, meanwhile, seems to have an open line of communication with Trump to talk through potential challenges such as Iran's probable qualification to the men's World Cup and the political implications it may bring.

Trump called Infantino "my great friend" at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2020.

Infantino also recently moved to Miami, just 70 miles south of Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate.

The tradition for the head of state of a host nation is to present the trophy at the World Cup final and formally open the Summer Games.

Ceremonial duties for Trump at the World Cup — which the US is co-hosting with Mexico and Canada — and LA Olympics — held after Bach leaves office — in moments watched by hundreds of millions of viewers worldwide, are in some ways the easy bit.

"My personal view would be that Trump has a very astute appreciation of being on the world stage," Michael Payne, an IOC insider since the 1984 LA Summer Games as a marketing executive and consultant, told The Associated Press.

"The challenge will be the year counting down to the events — how that doesn't compromise the agenda of everybody turning up," Payne said in a telephone interview.

Asking for and getting permission from the IOC and FIFA to host their sprawling, multi-billion dollar events requires federal government guarantees on security and letting athletes, team officials and fans enter the country.

Trump's first administration was involved in the bid campaigns — won in 2017 by LA and in 2018 by U.S. soccer officials bidding jointly with Canada and Mexico — and likely was made aware that FIFA, the IOC and fans see the events as belonging to everyone.

"The World Cup and the Olympics, I was responsible for getting both of them, actually," Trump told Bill Belichick this month on the Let's Go podcast.

During those campaigns, when both American bid teams faced questions about a backlash by global voters against Trump's rhetoric, U.S. soccer and Olympic bid officials noted he wasn't expected to be in office when the sports events opened.

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Even Trump, in a meeting with Infantino at the White House in August 2018, didn't factor in the possibility of losing the 2020 election, which opened the door for him to run again four years later and return to office in time for the 2026 World Cup.

"2026, I won't be here," said at the time.

Hosting games and races that make the world stop to watch, that create a rare sense of shared global experience, is seen as a privilege. Even when the athletes and teams come from countries that were insulted by President Trump, whose politics include travel bans and deportations.

"That responsibility extends to making people feel welcome and that the visa regime is open," said Piara Powar, executive director of anti-discrimination group Fare that works with FIFA to monitor offensive incidents at World Cup games.

Iran, a power in Asian soccer, is on track to qualify in March for its fourth straight World Cup. The Palestinian national team is still contesting one of the eight guaranteed places from Asia in the 48-nation tournament lineup. Trump has a history of support for Israel though has vowed to bring peace to the Middle East. Africa, demeaned by Trump in his first term, has nine guaranteed entries.

Track records

"Congratulations Mr President!" Infantino wrote about the man he visited twice at the White House, and also joined in Davos for a dinner event at the high-end Swiss ski resort. The post predicted "a great FIFA World Cup. Football Unites the World!"

In contrast to Trump's kind words for Infantino at Davos, there was no such public warmth exchanged with Olympic leader Bach.

Trump and Bach met once at the White House just over seven years ago. Then, the IOC was moving toward making winners of both 2024 Olympics bid rivals Los Angeles and Paris by bringing 2028 into play.

The meeting did not go well. That was suspected at the time but only confirmed years later in private conversations.

No photos, nor a readout, ever were published of Trump hosting the Olympic delegation that came from Switzerland, Los Angeles and Colorado Springs. The U.S. president was apparently dismissive of Paris and questioned why the IOC wanted the city, which hosted an acclaimed Olympics this year.

Asked why there was no formal acknowledgment of Trump's win this week, the IOC cited its tradition of neutrality and not taking political sides.

Still, in May 2017, within days of French President Emmanuel Macron first being elected, his telephone call with Bach was reported by the IOC to have included praise for a "brilliant" win.

Macron was on the field in Moscow in July 2018 for the World Cup-winning France team to receive the trophy in torrential rain. Only one umbrella was provided, held over the head of Russian President Vladimir Putin. The next day, Putin met with Trump in Helsinki in neighboring Finland.

Infantino was closely tied to Putin ahead of and during that World Cup and they were in an iconic photograph at the opening game, Russia's 5-0 win over Saudi Arabia. The other man in the photo, Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman, also is now close with Infantino and Saudi Arabia's hosting of the 2034 World Cup will be confirmed in Zurich on Dec. 11.

When a Middle East diplomatic deal, known as the Abraham Accords, was signed at the Trump White House in September 2020, Infantino was there on the South Lawn during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"If FIFA and Gianni Infantino have a good relationship with Donald Trump then we hope that could be used for the good of the World Cup," the London-based Powar said in a telephone interview, "and to ensure that it's an open and inclusive World Cup. That is the risk at the moment."

At the past two World Cups a match ticket counted as a visa and, Powar noted, in Qatar in 2022 "everybody did have the opportunity to travel there with a ticket, there were no restrictions."

Russia and Qatar — and 2022 Winter Olympics host China — know well that sports fans, administrators and media often see domestic events and legislation through their own lens.

"It puts a magnifying glass on the issues," said Payne, a close-up observer of Olympic Games for 40 years. "They take on a profile and political dimension with greater impact because everyone is watching."

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Today in History: November 11, World War I armistice signed

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Monday, Nov. 11, the 316th day of 2024. There are 50 days left in the year. Today is Veterans Day.

Today in history:

On Nov. 11, 1918, fighting in World War I ended as the Allies and Germany signed an armistice aboard a railroad car in the Forest of Compiègne (kohm-PYEHN'yeh) in northern France.

Also on this date:

In 1620, 41 Pilgrims aboard the Mayflower, anchored off Massachusetts, signed the Mayflower Compact, calling for a "civil body politick, for our better ordering and preservation."

In 1921, the remains of an unidentified American service member were interred in a Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in a ceremony presided over by President Warren G. Harding.

In 1938, Irish-born cook Mary Mallon, who'd gained notoriety as the disease-carrying "Typhoid Mary" blamed for the deaths of three people, died on North Brother Island in New York's East River at age 69 after 23 years of mandatory quarantine.

In 1966, Gemini 12 blasted off on a four-day mission with astronauts James A. Lovell and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin Jr. aboard; it was the tenth and final crewed flight of NASA's Gemini program.

In 1987, following the failure of two Supreme Court nominations, President Ronald Reagan announced his choice of Judge Anthony M. Kennedy, who went on to win confirmation.

In 2020, Georgia's secretary of state announced an audit of presidential election results that he said would be done with a full hand tally of ballots because the margin was so tight; President-elect Joe Biden led President Donald Trump by about 14,000 votes out of nearly 5 million votes counted in the state. (The audit would affirm Biden's win.)

Today's Birthdays: Music producer Mutt Lange is 76. Actor Stanley Tucci is 64. Actor Demi Moore is 62. Actor Calista Flockhart is 60. TV personality Carson Kressley is 55. Actor Leonardo DiCaprio is 50. Musician Jon Batiste is 38. Actor Tye Sheridan is 28.