

Groton Daily Independent

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Monday, March 3

Senior Menu: Beef stew, corn, peaches, biscuit.
School Breakfast: Professor's Stuffed Bagels
School Lunch: Beef sticks, mashed potatoes.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

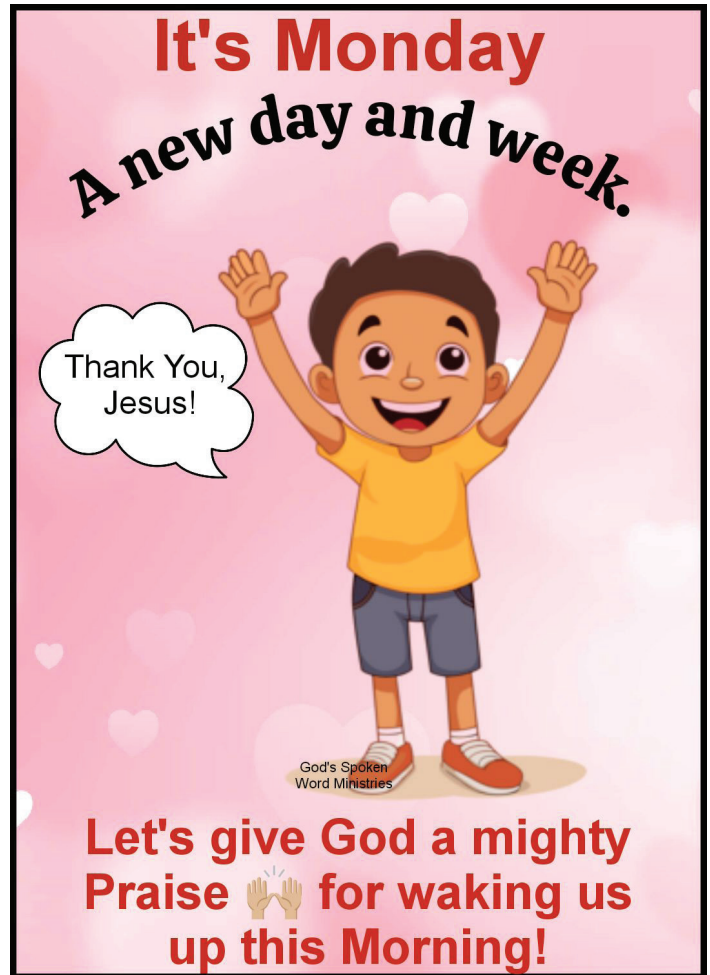
Tuesday, March 4

Senior Menu: Chicken fried steak, mashed potato with gravy, California blend, blushing pears, whole wheat bread.
School Breakfast: Mrs. White's Waffles.
School Lunch: Tacos.
Region 1A Boys Basketball
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Ladies Aid LWML, 1:30 p.m.
United Methodist: New Bible Study - Book of Ruth, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, March 5

ASH WEDNESDAY

Senior Menu: Baked fish, Mac n Cheese, peas, fruit, dinner roll.
School Breakfast: Colonel Mustard's Muffins.
School Lunch: Mac and cheese, mixed vegetables
Groton Chamber Meeting, Noon, City Hall
Groton United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.
Groton C&MA: Kid's Club, Youth Group, Adult Bible



Study, 7 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.; Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.; Lenten Supper, 6 p.m. (Host-WELCA Board), worship, 7 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.; Lenten Service, 7 p.m.

United Methodist: Community Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton Ash Wednesday Service, 6 p.m.

Thursday, March 6

Senior Menu: New England Ham Dinner, carrots, Mandarin Orange salad, whole wheat bread.
School Breakfast: Ballroom Breakfast Pizza.
School Lunch: Hamburgers, fries.
Girls SoDak16 Basketball
Emmanuel Lutheran: Nigeria Circle, 2 p.m.

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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.

Brits Pitch Peace Deal

British Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer announced over the weekend his government would work with France and Ukraine to develop a ceasefire proposal to end fighting with Russia. Starmer provided few immediate details but said the plan would be presented to the US for consideration once ready.

The comments came during a summit of European leaders attended by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and two days after a meeting between Zelenskyy, President Donald Trump, and Vice President JD Vance grew heated. A lunch and joint news conference between Trump and Zelenskyy were canceled and Zelenskyy left without signing a proposed minerals development deal that was a central reason for the visit. Trump later appeared to leave the door open for Zelenskyy, saying he could come back "when he was ready for peace."

A Big Night for 'Anora'

"Anora" was the big winner at the 2025 Academy Awards last night, taking home the ceremony's top prize of best picture. The film also nabbed four other awards. Director Sean Baker won best original screenplay, film editing, and directing, while 25-year-old Mikey Madison won best actress for the film's title role. Baker is the first to win four Oscars in one night for one film (including best picture); Walt Disney also won four Oscars in one night but for four different movies.

The historical drama "The Brutalist" secured three awards, including best actor (Adrien Brody). Kieran Culkin won best supporting actor for comedy-drama "A Real Pain," and Zoe Saldana won best supporting actress for crime musical "Emilia Pérez," which also won best original song. Fantasy musical blockbuster "Wicked" and science-fiction epic "Dune: Part Two" won two awards each.

Cuomo Eyes Return

Former New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) announced his intention to run for New York City mayor yesterday, jumping into a crowded primary race defined to date by incumbent Eric Adams' (D) ongoing legal challenges. Cuomo enters the race as a significant favorite to capture the party's nomination, polling at 38% and leading the second-place candidate by 26 points. Adams sits in third at 10%.

The effort is an attempt at a political comeback for Cuomo, who resigned from the governorship in 2021 over allegations of sexual misconduct from multiple women. A Justice Department probe that ended last year found he harassed 13 women over an eight-year span—though Cuomo denied ever intentionally mistreating any of the accusers. Prior to his resignation, Cuomo's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic received early criticism but ultimately led to rising popularity, and his approval rating reached as high as 66% in July 2020 (but he exited with 38% approval).

Primaries are scheduled for June 24, ahead of the Nov. 4 general election.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Charli XCX wins top prizes of artist and album of the year at 2025 Brit Awards, the UK's highest-profile music awards show.

The 2025 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race kicks off from Fairbanks, Alaska.

MLB commissioner to review bid by Pete Rose's family to have Rose posthumously removed from baseball's ineligible list.

David Johansen, frontman of the New York Dolls and actor, dies at age 75 of cancer.

Angie Stone, Grammy-nominated R&B singer, dies in a car crash at age 63.

Science & Technology

White House eliminates 18F program, which provided federal engineers and IT staff for agencies requiring digital services.

Firefly Aerospace becomes the first private company to land a spacecraft on the moon without crashing or falling over; Blue Ghost rover will collect rock samples, measure heat flow on the moon, and more.

New study dates the Los Chocoyos supereruption, which deposited ash across 2.3 million square miles, to 79,500 years ago; ice cores suggest global climate recovered within decades.

Business & Markets

US stock markets jump Friday (S&P 500 +1.6%, Dow +1.4%, Nasdaq +1.6%); S&P ends February down 1.4% overall.

US government to launch reserve cryptocurrency fund, calling out three—Cardano (ADA), Ripple (XRP), and Solana (SOL); all three see double-digit gains.

President Donald Trump orders Commerce Department to probe international lumber markets, says he is considering 25% global tariff on lumber and wood imports.

Politics & World Affairs

Israel blocks humanitarian aid from entering Gaza, calls on Hamas to accept US-brokered extension of ceasefire; first phase of plan ended Saturday.

Defense Department deploys roughly 3,000 additional troops, fleet of armored vehicles to US-Mexico border to support migration enforcement measures.

Federal judge blocks Trump administration's firing of head of independent watchdog agency; case expected to head to Supreme Court.

Kurdish militants declare a ceasefire following four decades of fighting between the Kurdistan Workers' Party and Turkish government.

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Wolves Run Away With Win Against Cougars

Sioux Falls, S.D. – A team effort propelled the Northern State University women's basketball team to a 75-61 victory over Sioux Falls on Sunday afternoon. The Wolves seized control early, outscoring the Cougars by 13 points at halftime. Alayna Benike spearheaded the effort, recording her second double-double of the season. Meanwhile, Rianna Fillipi not only set a new single-season assists record but also tied the single-game assists record in the win.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 75, USF 61

Records: NSU 19-10 (NSIC 15-7), USF 17-14 (NSIC 12-10)

HOW IT HAPPENED

Northern State posted 15 points in the first, 23 points in the second, 22 points in the third, and 15 points in the fourth

They recorded a 45.5% shooting percentage from the floor, 33.3% from beyond the three-point line, and 62.5% from the foul line

The Wolves tallied 46 points in the paint, 12 points off of turnovers, 11 fast break points, and seven bench points

Alayna Benike was first on the team with 18 points and 10 rebounds for her second double-double of the season

Michaela Jewett followed behind with 16 points and five rebounds on the day, along with shooting 53.6% from the floor

Madelyn Bragg and Rianna Fillipi came out as the top scorers, adding 13 and 11 points, respectively

In addition, Fillipi led the team with 11 assists on the day while also breaking the single-season assists record and tying the single-game record

NORTHERN STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Alayna Benike: 18 points, 10 rebounds, 3 assists, 3 blocks, 2 steals

Michaela Jewett: 16 points, 5 rebounds, 53.8 FG %

Madelyn Bragg: 13 points, 8 rebounds, 54.5 FG %

Rianna Fillipi: 11 points, 11 assists, 5 rebounds

Morgan Fiedler: 10 points, 4 rebounds, 2 steals

BEYOND THE BOX

Rianna Fillipi broke the season record for assists in a season with 162 total; the previous record was set in the 1989-90 season by Tanna Negaard

Fillipi also tied the individual game record with 11 assists; the previous record was set in the 2009-10 season by Emily Becken

UP NEXT

Northern State advances to the quarterfinals to take on the one seed, Concordia-St. Paul. Tip-off is set for 11 a.m. , Monday, March 3rd, from Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

“Businesses for Babies”

When businesses support working parents, they’re not just boosting their bottom line – they’re helping prevent child abuse and neglect. In South Dakota, 72.5% of all children under age six have all available parents in the workforce, making family-friendly workplace policies crucial for our state’s families.

Research shows that workplace policies like flexible scheduling, paid family leave, and childcare assistance significantly reduce major risk factors for child maltreatment by decreasing parental stress and providing essential economic stability. When parents have the flexibility to attend school events, care for sick children, or work from home when appropriate, it strengthens family bonds and creates more nurturing environments. Access to quality childcare and living wages helps ensure families can meet basic needs without the overwhelming stress that can lead to crisis.

Prevention is far better – and far less costly – than intervention after abuse occurs. Studies show that every dollar invested in prevention can save up to seven dollars in future costs related to child welfare services, healthcare, and criminal justice. By creating supportive work environments, businesses play a crucial role in building the safe, stable, nurturing relationships children need to thrive. These investments in families today help develop healthier communities and a stronger workforce for tomorrow.

The Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment’s “Businesses for Babies” campaign highlights South Dakota companies that have adopted family-friendly policies. By showcasing businesses that prioritize family well-being through flexible schedules, parental leave, and childcare support, the campaign aims to inspire more companies to implement similar policies. Together, we can create a business culture that strengthens families and protects our most vulnerable citizens – our children.

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 a bachelor’s degree in psychology and a master’s in human services administration. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairedoc.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.



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

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Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

The NFL Combine was last week, but there wasn't a whole lot of Vikings-related news coming out of the annual event. So we'll jump right into the roster breakdown, this week focusing on the wide receiver group.

The Vikings have one of the best WR groups in the NFL, and it all starts with Justin Jefferson. Not only is Jefferson considered the best receiver in the league, but he is also one of the most popular athletes in the sport. He's been setting records every year that he's been in the league, and that didn't change in year five. Jefferson caught 103 passes for 1,533 yards and 10 touchdowns, all the more impressive when you consider that most teams focus solely on stopping number 18. And, thanks to a massive contract he signed in 2024, Jefferson will be in purple and gold for many more years to come.

With most teams double (or even triple) teaming Jefferson, it leaves other players free to take advantage of single coverage. No player benefited from that more than Jordan Addison, who caught 63 passes for 875 yards and nine touchdowns in his sophomore season. Addison, a first-round pick in 2023 and a Fred Biletnikoff Award winner (given to the top receiver in college) would be the number-one option on most teams around the league. He still has two more years on his rookie deal, plus a fifth-year option, meaning he'll be in Minnesota through at least through the 2027 season.

Jalen Nailor was the team's third receiver in 2024 and caught 28 passes for 414 yards and six touchdowns. Nailor is a great WR3, and because the team also has tight end T.J. Hockenson on the team, not much is expected of Nailor. 2025 will be the last year of his rookie deal, so this is an important year for him.

Trent Sherfield Sr. and Brandon Powell rounded out the Vikings' receiving group. Sherfield had eight catches for 83 yards and a touchdown, while Powell caught seven passes for 71 yards. Both of these players are solid teammates who mostly play on special teams. It's likely the team will bring them back for another season on cheap deals. Powell was also the team's top punt returner last season, so if the team has to decide between him and Sherfield, Powell will likely get the nod.

At tight end, the Vikings have T.J. Hockenson, one of the best tight ends in the league. Because of an injury suffered at the end of the 2023 season, Hockenson didn't see the field until November last year. In just 10 games, he caught 41 passes for 455 yards but didn't find the endzone. With a full offseason under his belt, I expect Hockenson to play a bigger role next season.

Josh Oliver was signed as the Vikings' blocking tight end, so even though he got more playing time last season because of Hockenson's injury, he only caught 22 passes for 258 yards and three touchdowns. In 2023 he signed a pretty large contract to be a backup tight end, and this will be the final year of his deal.

With Hockenson out, and Oliver being a blocking tight end, Johnny Mundt filled in as the team's pass-catching TE. In the seven games that Hockenson was out, Mundt caught 20 passes for 93 yards and a touchdown. In the 10 other games, he only caught seven passes for 49 yards and a touchdown. He is a free agent this offseason, but the team could bring him back as the TE3 if he's cheap enough.

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Notice of Garbage Pickup- Effective the week of March 3rd

To help preserve our streets, Groton residents are asked to bring their garbage to the following locations until further notice:

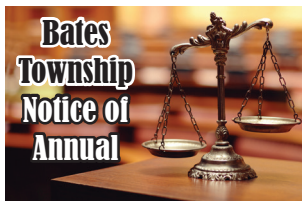
Railroad Avenue, Main Street, Sixth Street, & Highway 37

Residents of the Broadway Mobile Home Park need to take their garbage to Highway 37.

Residents north of 13th Avenue (Olson and Jacobson Developments) need to bring their garbage to the Bus Barns.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated during the spring thaw.

Please bring your garbage bags and/or cans to these locations for Tuesday pickup!



Bates Township

BATES TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

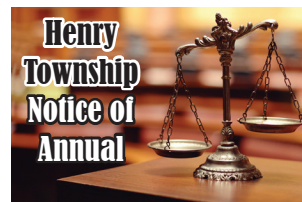
Bates Township will hold its annual meeting and election on Tuesday, March 4th, 2025 at the home of the Clerk, 14523 409th Ave, Conde.

Election of officers and business meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m.

We will be receiving bids for road maintenance and gravel. Please mail bids to Betty Geist, Bates Township Clerk, 14523 409th Ave., Conde, SD 57434 prior to meeting date.

Betty Geist, Township Clerk

Published February 19 and 26, 2025 at the total approximate cost of \$12.69 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 25276



Henry Township Annual Meeting Notice

Notice is hereby given that the annual Henry Township caucus and election of officers along with the other business that may come before the board will be held Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at 7 p.m., at Doug Abeln's Seed Company Office. Will also take bids for gravel and road maintenance.

Darlene Sass

Henry Township Clerk



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Noem's actions motivate state senator's attempt to limit executive power

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - MARCH 2, 2025 10:53 AM

PIERRE — State Sen. Chris Karr didn't like the way former Gov. Kristi Noem's administration spent money without legislative approval or oversight.

Neither did his colleagues, judging by the support he's received for a legislative package he dubbed "three big, beautiful bills." The package, which is headed to the House after its unanimous approval by the Senate, would establish new restrictions on the kind of state government spending, leasing and fund transfers that Karr said the Noem administration abused.

"There was a pattern of saying, 'We don't need to get permission — we'll just do it,'" Karr said. "These bills make sure that doesn't happen again."

The Sioux Falls Republican has served in the Legislature since 2017. He spent much of that time on the main budget committee, sometimes butting heads with fellow Republicans in the Noem administration over spending. He was elevated to the position of Senate president pro tempore this legislative session.



Sen. Chris Karr, R-Sioux Falls, speaks on the South Dakota Senate floor on Jan. 21, 2025. (Makenzie Huber/South Dakota Searchlight)

Large GF&P expenditures

The first bill would mandate that any Department of Game, Fish & Parks projects over \$2.5 million receive legislative approval.

Karr said the department's \$20 million shooting range complex north of Rapid City proceeded despite lawmakers rejecting funding requests. He said the department is building the shooting range using a mix of its own budget, donations and a discretionary fund controlled by the governor, thereby bypassing legislative approval.

"We have to strike a balance," Karr said. "Nobody wants to call a special session to approve picnic shelters or boat ramps, but when taxpayer dollars are going toward multi-million-dollar projects, the Legislature should be involved."

Oversight on long-term leases

The second bill would require any lease exceeding 15 years and \$5 million — or costing more than \$50,000

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per month – to receive legislative approval.

Karr highlighted the controversial One Stop government service centers in Sioux Falls and Rapid City as examples of why the measure is needed. The Noem administration entered into 30-year lease agreements that will ultimately cost the state hundreds of millions of dollars to consolidate state offices and employees in the buildings, without legislative approval.

Skirting legislative approval, not owning the building despite the large investment, and the long-term spending obligation have some lawmakers upset.

“Not a good process,” Karr said. “I don’t think anyone thinks that’s a good process.”

Blocking budget transfers

The final bill would tighten restrictions on budget transfers within state agencies. Currently, agencies have the authority to shift funds between budget units in the same fund, with approval from the Bureau of Finance and Management – which is part of the executive branch. The bill would additionally require legislative approval.

Karr referenced an instance when the Department of Corrections transferred funding and staff positions between prisons without informing lawmakers. Under the legislation, such transfers would have to receive approval from the Legislature’s main budget committee.

“This ensures that the budget we pass is the same one we come back to next year,” Karr said. “It prevents agencies from shifting money around after the fact and fundamentally altering the budget we approved.”

The Future Fund

Karr has also been a vocal critic of Noem’s use of the Future Fund, which is under the governor’s exclusive control.

South Dakota employers pay a fee to the Future Fund when they submit payroll taxes to the unemployment benefits program. State law says the Future Fund must be used “for purposes related to research and economic development for the state.” Unlike other funds administered by the Governor’s Office of Economic Development, Future Fund expenses don’t go through a board of citizen appointees for vetting or approval.

Noem’s uses of the Future Fund included \$13 million to help construct the Rapid City-area shooting range, \$2.5 million to promote and conduct a Governor’s Cup rodeo, and up to \$9 million on a workforce recruitment campaign starring herself.

Frustrations with Noem’s controversial uses of the fund motivated the Legislature to pass a bill last year requiring the administration to present twice-a-year reports on the fund to the Legislature.

This year, Rep. Liz May, R-Kyle, introduced a bill to do away with the Future Fund altogether. She and others, including Rep. Marty Overweg, R-New Holland, said the fund undermines the Legislature’s power of the purse.

“This is taxpayers’ money,” Overweg said. “This isn’t some magic money.”

The bill failed 32-36 in the state House of Representatives.

Opponents of the bill said the state’s new governor, Larry Rhoden, should be given a chance to use the fund appropriately.

Rhoden, the former lieutenant governor, was elevated earlier this year when Noem left to serve under President Donald Trump as his secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

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

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EARTHTALK

Dear EarthTalk: What are so-called “green corridors” in cities and how do they help mitigate climate change?

-- Peter Q, Boston, MA

Green corridors, or ecological corridors, are strips of vegetation and natural landscape dispersed throughout a city. From simple, street-lined rows of trees to interconnected networks of parks and pathways, these developments provide a flexible, natural solution for the climate effects of urbanization.

One of the most pressing environmental hazards cities face today is the urban heat island effect. Large buildings, expansive roads and other man-made infrastructures absorb more heat than surrounding rural areas, leading to significantly higher temperature levels. When combined with global warming, these uncomfortable living conditions can be very detrimental for urban residents. Local air quality also deteriorates from industrial and transportation pollution. With an expected 68 percent of world population in cities by 2050, according to the U.N., the health situation in urban environments will only grow worse.

Green corridors offer a promising start to mitigating these urban issues, allowing cities to naturally lower temperatures through evapotranspiration, a plant process that releases water vapor to cool the surrounding air. Increased vegetation will also allow more hazardous particulate matter (PM2.5) and carbon dioxide (CO2) to be absorbed, reducing greenhouse gas concentration and improving air quality.

Columbia’s second-largest city, Medellín, launched a green corridor initiative in 2016. Since then, environmental planners there added rows of vegetation along the most polluted avenues, maximizing the amount of CO2 intake from their \$16.8 million investment. Maurício Correa, a researcher studying environmental engineering at a Colombian University, found that the 8,800 trees planted became effective “green barriers” against particulate matter and reduced average city temperature by two degrees Celsius.

Fighting climate change isn’t the only thing green corridors can do. Historically, wildlife has rarely been welcomed into urban life, experiencing drastic changes in the ecosystem. However, nature-based infrastructure can promote biodiversity and provide animal species with a safe habitat. Green corridors are indeed multi-purpose and flexible. To maximize the limited space in busy cities, green corridors can function as recreational centers, city facilities and much more—all while mitigating climate change.

Green corridors can be an effective solution for any city anywhere. In New York, the Manhattan Waterfront Greenway consists of almost 32 miles of bike path lined with various plant species. Urban “Nature Ways” in Singapore mimic the natural rainforests by incorporating trees with canopies stretching across the roads.

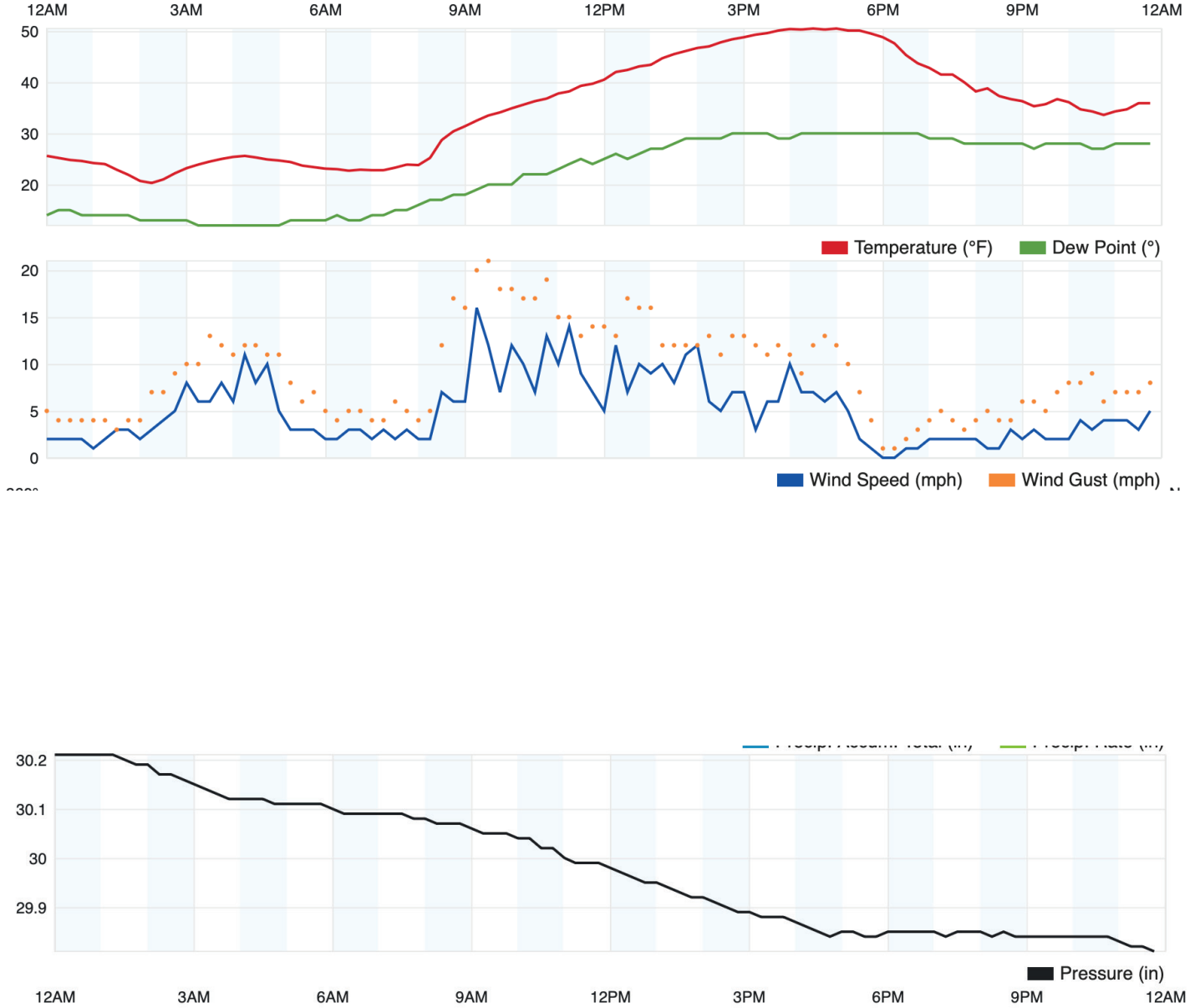


Urban wildlife corridors can help cities deal with a wide range of environmental problems including reducing human-animal interactions and mitigating the effects of climate change. Credit: Roddy Scheer.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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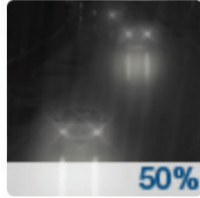
Today



High: 57 °F

Sunny

Tonight



Low: 31 °F

Chance Rain and Blustery

Tuesday



High: 31 °F

Wintry Mix Likely and Patchy Blowing Snow

Tuesday Night



Low: 19 °F

Mostly Cloudy and Blustery

Wednesday



High: 39 °F

Mostly Sunny and Breezy then Sunny



Rain Monday Night, Changing To Snow on Tuesday

March 2, 2025
2:47 PM

Associated with a strong low pressure system moving through the Central Plains

Key Points



Rain Monday night, changing to snow on Tuesday. Fastest turn over is expected to be over south central SD and the Prairie Coteau. Snow will come to an ending Tuesday night.



Temperatures will fall into the low to mid 30s on Tuesday. Where the temperatures end up, and how heavy the snow falls, will determine how much snow accumulates.



Northerly wind gusts of 35 to 45 mph will develop late Monday Night and continue into Wednesday morning.

Travel Impacts



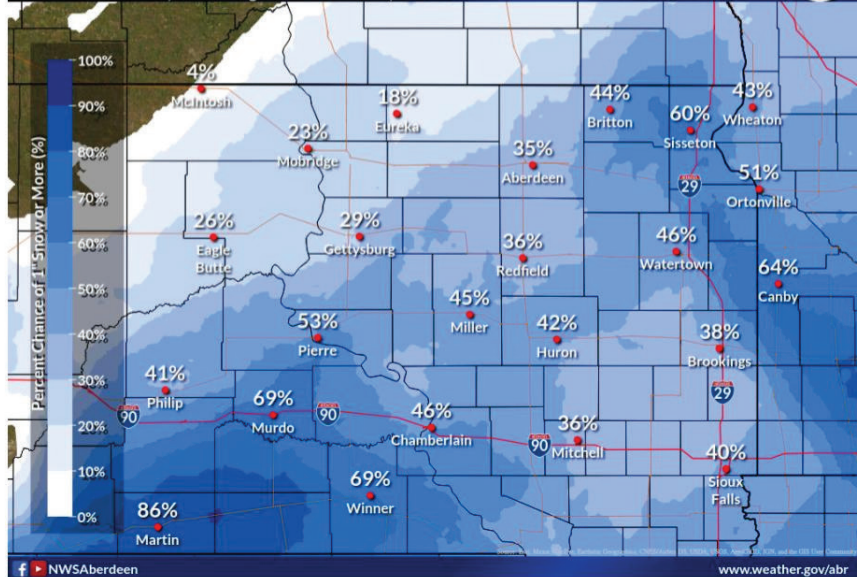
Where snow falls, roads may become slushy and slippery. Strong winds will cause travel difficulties for those travelling on west & east roads.

**Plan ahead!
Check the forecast.
Give yourself extra time.**

Percent Chance of 1" Snow or More

Valid 6 PM Mon Mar 03, 2025 through 6 AM Wed Mar 05, 2025 CST

Weather Forecast Office
Aberdeen, SD
Issued Mar 02, 2025 2:00 PM CST



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

A strong low pressure system to our south will bring rain to the region starting Monday night. Rain will transition to a rain/snow mix then to all snow through Tuesday. Probability of an inch of snow is highest over south central SD and portions of the Sisseton Hills (50-70%).

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Timing of the Precipitation

March 2, 2025
2:52 PM

Precipitation will start Monday Evening and Continue Through Tuesday Night

Weather Forecast

	3/3 Mon		3/4 Tue							
	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm
Aberdeen	25%	45%	55%	60%	75%	75%	55%	55%	15%	15%
Britton	25%	45%	55%	60%	75%	75%	60%	60%	30%	30%
Brookings	15%	15%	25%	40%	95%	95%	95%	95%	55%	55%
Chamberlain	10%	20%	45%	70%	90%	90%	65%	65%	15%	15%
Clark	20%	35%	50%	60%	90%	90%	75%	75%	30%	30%
Eagle Butte	15%	25%	30%	35%	45%	45%	20%	20%	0%	0%
Ellendale	15%	30%	40%	50%	65%	65%	45%	45%	15%	15%
Eureka	15%	30%	40%	50%	55%	55%	35%	35%	5%	5%
Gettysburg	25%	45%	50%	60%	70%	70%	40%	40%	5%	5%
Huron	10%	20%	40%	55%	90%	90%	70%	70%	25%	25%
Kennebec	25%	45%	65%	80%	85%	85%	60%	60%	10%	10%
McIntosh	5%	10%	15%	15%	40%	40%	15%	15%	0%	0%
Milbank	20%	35%	40%	50%	90%	90%	80%	80%	50%	50%
Miller	20%	35%	55%	75%	85%	85%	60%	60%	15%	15%
Mobridge	15%	25%	35%	40%	45%	45%	20%	20%	0%	0%
Murdo	30%	55%	65%	80%	80%	80%	50%	50%	5%	5%
Pierre	30%	50%	60%	70%	75%	75%	45%	45%	5%	5%
Redfield	25%	45%	60%	70%	85%	85%	60%	60%	20%	20%
Sisseton	25%	50%	60%	70%	80%	80%	70%	70%	40%	40%
Watertown	20%	30%	40%	55%	90%	90%	80%	80%	45%	45%
Webster	30%	50%	55%	60%	85%	85%	65%	65%	35%	35%
Wheaton	25%	45%	55%	65%	80%	80%	70%	70%	40%	40%

Created: 2 pm CST Sun 3/2/2025. Shows most impactful weather for the period beginning at the time shown. Weather symbols display where Probability of Precipitation ≥ 0%.

- Rain + - Fz Rain + - Wintry Mix + - Snow +

Precipitation

- Rain is expected Monday night, with it mixing with and changing to snow from west to east on Tuesday
- Snow will diminish Tuesday night



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Rain expected Monday night and will transition to snow west to east through Tuesday. Snow is expected to diminish Tuesday night



Wind Gusts

March 2, 2025
2:55 PM

Winds increasing Tuesday Morning

Winds

- Northerly winds will increase in intensity on Monday night and peak at 35 to 45 mph during the day on Tuesday.
 - Strong winds will cause travel difficulties for those travelling on west & east roads.
- The winds will still gust to 30 to 40 mph Tuesday night into Wednesday morning.
- Potential for drifting and blowing snow Tuesday
 - Blowing snow potential mainly over south, central SD and portions of the northern Sisseton Hills
 - Could result in brief drop in visibilities at times

Maximum Wind Gust Forecast (mph)

	3/3 Mon	3/4 Tue							3/5 Wed								
	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm
Aberdeen	24	29	35	39	40	44	44	38	37	36	36	32	32	30	24	13	9
Britton	18	24	30	36	38	41	41	37	37	36	36	35	35	31	26	13	9
Brookings	16	16	17	26	32	43	46	46	49	51	47	46	46	43	38	23	15
Chamberlain	17	18	28	33	38	47	48	43	46	47	37	35	35	35	30	14	8
Clark	18	20	25	31	37	41	43	41	39	38	37	36	36	33	29	17	10
Eagle Butte	37	41	43	44	44	44	44	41	38	35	33	30	28	22	17	12	15
Ellendale	25	30	35	39	43	44	44	40	39	36	36	35	35	31	24	13	10
Eureka	25	29	32	36	38	41	41	38	36	32	32	30	29	26	22	12	10
Gettysburg	26	30	32	36	38	41	41	39	36	32	32	30	29	26	21	10	12
Huron	16	18	26	32	38	47	48	44	49	49	43	40	39	38	35	16	10
Kennebec	20	23	30	38	41	46	46	40	37	33	32	30	30	28	22	9	10
McIntosh	30	35	37	39	41	44	44	40	35	31	29	25	24	20	16	12	15
Milbank	12	13	18	25	31	36	38	39	40	40	40	38	38	38	31	18	13
Miller	18	23	29	36	38	41	41	37	36	33	32	31	31	29	23	12	10
Mobridge	25	29	32	36	37	37	38	37	33	30	29	26	24	21	16	9	12
Murdo	25	32	37	43	44	45	45	40	36	32	32	29	28	25	18	10	13
Pierre	23	28	32	38	39	41	43	38	35	30	29	25	24	23	17	7	8
Redfield	21	25	31	38	41	45	45	38	38	36	36	33	33	31	26	13	9
Sisseton	13	18	25	31	35	38	39	41	41	41	41	39	39	36	29	17	12
Watertown	15	16	23	30	36	41	43	41	41	40	40	39	39	37	30	20	13
Webster	18	22	26	33	38	43	44	41	40	39	38	37	37	36	30	17	13
Wheaton	18	15	21	26	31	35	39	40	40	40	40	39	39	39	33	18	13



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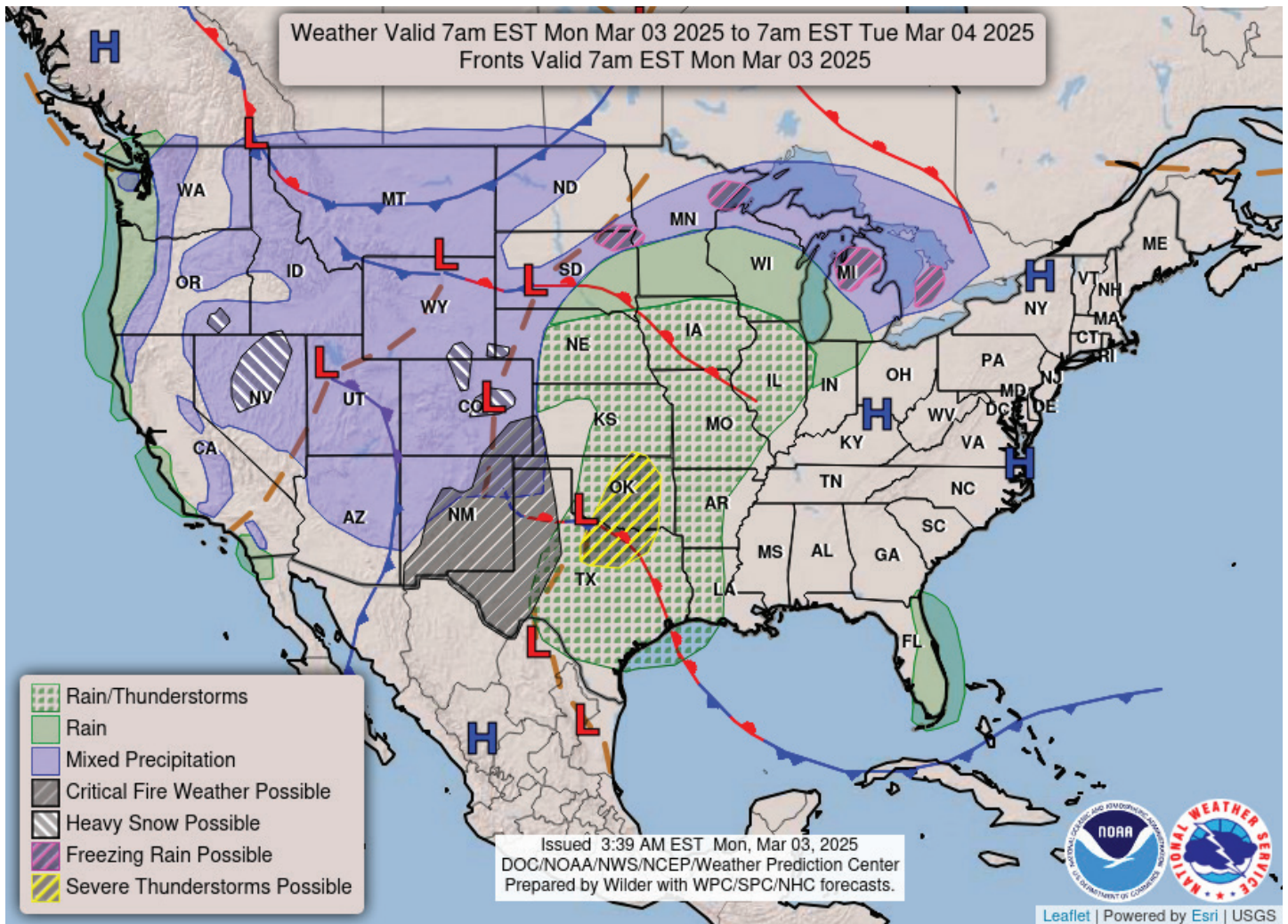
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 51 °F at 4:21 PM
Low Temp: 20 °F at 2:09 AM
Wind: 23 mph at 9:21 AM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 11 hours, 19 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 72 in 1905
Record Low: -20 in 2019
Average High: 35
Average Low: 13
Average Precip in March.: 0.07
Precip to date in March.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 1.24
Precip Year to Date: 0.45
Sunset Tonight: 6:23:55 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:02:38 am



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Today in Weather History

March 3, 1994: The melting of a very high snowpack resulted in flooding along the James River and other lowlands and farmland. Widespread problems included damaged roads, washed-out culverts, and flood damage to homes, especially basement flooding.

1896: The temperature in downtown San Francisco, California, fell to 33 degrees, which was the lowest ever for the city in March.

1966: An F5 tornado, which would become known as the "Candlestick Park" tornado, named after a shopping center in south Jackson, was destroyed by the tornado. One of only two documented F5 tornadoes to strike Mississippi in the 20th century. The worst damage occurred in parts of Hinds, Rankin, Scott, and Leake counties, where 57 people were killed and over 500 were injured.

1980 - A coastal storm produced 25 inches of snow at Elizabeth City, NC, and 30 inches at Cape Hatteras NC. At Miami FL the mercury dipped to 32 degrees. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1983 - The last of a series of storms to strike the California coast finally came to an end. Waves fifteen to twenty feet high pounded the coast for two days, and in a four day period up to 18 inches of rain drenched the Los Angeles and Santa Barbara area. On the morning of the first, thunderstorms spawned two tornadoes which moved through the Los Angeles area. (Storm Data)

1987 - A storm brought heavy rain and gale force winds to Washington and Oregon. Quillayute WA received 2.67 inches of rain in 24 hours, and winds gusted to 60 mph at Astoria OR. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A small but intense low pressure system roared across west central Mississippi at 90 mph early in the morning. A tornado in southern Mississippi picked up an automobile, carried it 150 feet, and tossed it through the brick wall of an unoccupied retirement home. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Wintry weather prevailed from the southern Rockies to the Upper Great Lakes. Neguanee MI received 19 inches of snow, and up to 24 inches of snow blanketed Colorado. Blizzard conditions were reported in Minnesota. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - An upper level weather disturbance produced snow in the Colorado Rockies, with eight inches reported at Winter Park, and a storm moving off the Pacific Ocean began to spread rain and snow across the western U.S. March continued to start off like a lamb elsewhere around the country. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1991: A significant ice storm coated parts of central and northwestern New York State with up to two inches of ice. The damage totaled \$375 million. It was the most costly natural disaster ever in the state up until that time. Nearly half a million people were without power at the height of the storm, and many would not see their power restored until the 16th. 2016: A deadly severe weather event affected the Southeastern United States on March 3, 2019. Over 6 hours, 41 tornadoes touched down across portions of Alabama, Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina. The strongest was an EF4 tornado that devastated rural communities from Beauregard, Alabama, through Smiths Station, Alabama, to Talbotton, Georgia, killing 23 people and injuring at least 100 others.

2003 - It was a day of temperature extremes. Miami reached a high temperature of 90 degrees, the earliest observed 90 degree temperature since March 5, 1964. Meanwhile Marquette, MI, dropped to 30 degrees below zero, the lowest temperature ever recorded in the city in March.



YOU CAN'T STAY WHERE YOU ARE

Someone once described life as an "incline." If we are not continually going up, we will certainly slip downward. We can never stay where we are. And when we falter and fall, it is what we do that makes a difference.

Years ago I heard of a tombstone that contained the words, "He died climbing." What a profound statement a loved one had made about him. Imagine what we might all accomplish for God if our lives were invested in moving upward and forward in love and service to Him!

When Jesus was telling His disciples about His return He said, "Stand straight and look up for your salvation is near!" He wanted His followers to focus on what they had to look forward to – not what was going on around them. Focusing on what is going on around us will cause us to lose sight of what is before us – the hope of being with our Savior in heaven!

If we only focus on the tragedies and troubles that surround us, we will find a cause of worry and fear, doubt and despair. But if we embrace the joy of living in and through our Savior and Lord, we will find a peace that passes all understanding and the comfort that comes from knowing that God is in control.

As believers we can look forward to the return of our Lord and His reign of justice and peace. Rather than fearing what is going on around us we must constantly, continually and confidently look forward to Christ's return and the hope we have of being with Him forever!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to keep our eyes and minds on You and not the things in this world. Give us strength and courage to go forward every day of our lives. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: So when all these things begin to happen, stand and look up, for your salvation is near! Luke 21:28

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: 02.28.25

9 19 30 35 66 16

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$215,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 30 Mins
39 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 03.01.25

8 9 13 33 41 6

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$25,460,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 45 Mins 39
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 03.02.25

4 24 26 32 42 12

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 39 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 03.01.25

6 16 21 31 33

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$52,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 39
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 03.01.25

6 19 37 66 68 6

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 29 Mins 39
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 03.01.25

2 23 36 44 49 25

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$279,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 29 Mins 39
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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Upcoming Groton Events

- 01/05/2025 Pancake Sunday, Historical Society Fundraiser, 10am-1pm, Community Center
- 01/26/2025 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed at the Community Center 10am-1pm
- 01/26/2025 87th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm
- 02/02/2025 Pancake Sunday, Historical Society Fundraiser, 10am-1pm, Community Center
- 02/05/2025 FB Live Electronic Hwy 12 Sign Drawing City Hall 12pm
- 03/02/2025 Pancake Sunday, Historical Society Fundraiser, 10am-1pm, Community Center
- 03/22/2025 Spring Vendor Fair at the GHS Gym 10am-2pm
- 04/05/2025 Dueling Duo Baseball/Softball Fundraiser at the Legion Post #39, 6-11:30pm
- 04/06/2025 Pancake Sunday, Historical Society Fundraiser, 10am-1pm, Community Center
- 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
- 05/12/2025 High School Girls Golf Meet at Olive Grove
- 05/26/2025 Memorial Day Services Groton Union Cemetery with lunch at Legion Post #39, 12pm
- 06/07/2025 Day of Play
- 06/13/2025 SDSU 4 Person Scramble at Olive Grove
- 06/21/2025 Groton Triathlon
- 06/23/2025 Ladies 2 Person Scramble at Olive Grove
- 07/04/2025 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 07/13/2025 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm
- 07/09/2025 Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar at the Groton Legion 11am-1pm
- 07/16/2025 Men's Pro Am Golf at Olive Grove
- 07/25/2025 Ferney Open Scramble Golf at Olive Grove
- 08/01/2025 Wine on Nine Fundraiser at Olive Grove
- 08/09/2025 2nd Annual Celebration in the Park/Rib Cook-Off 1-9:30pm
- 08/23/2025 Glacial Tournament at Olive Grove
- 09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
- 09/07/2025 Sunflower Classic Couples Scramble at Olive Grove
- 10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
- 11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1:30pm
- 12/06/2025 Olive Grove Holiday Party and Silent Live Auction Fundraiser

News from the **AP** Associated Press

Middle East latest: 1 killed and 4 wounded in stabbing attack in Haifa, Israeli officials say

By The Associated Press undefined

A man in his 60s was killed and four other people were wounded in a stabbing attack Monday in the northern Israeli city of Haifa, police said. Israeli authorities said the assailant was killed.

Police said they were treating the stabbing, which took place in a central transit hub, as a militant attack. A security guard and a civilian killed the attacker, who police said was an Arab citizen of Israel who had recently returned to Israel after some time abroad.

The attack took place as regional tensions are high surrounding the fate of the ceasefire in Gaza. The militant group Hamas praised the attack but stopped short of claiming responsibility for it.

Here's the latest:

Arab foreign ministers discuss Gaza plan to counter Trump's proposal

Arab foreign ministers are meeting in Cairo Monday for talks focusing on an Egyptian plan to rebuild the war-ravaged Gaza Strip that is meant to counter President Donald Trump's proposal to transfer Palestinians out of the coastal enclave and take it over.

The ministers' meeting comes ahead of an Arab summit Tuesday in Cairo which is meant to adopt the Egyptian plan, Egypt's Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty said.

The Egyptian plan would not remove the population from Gaza. It designates three zones within Gaza to relocate Palestinians during an initial six-month period. The zones will be equipped with mobile houses and shelters, with humanitarian aid streaming in.

The proposal also includes the establishment of an interim Palestinian administration that is not aligned with either Hamas or the Palestinian Authority, to run the strip and oversee the reconstruction efforts until a revamped PA, which administers parts of the occupied West Bank, takes over.

Netanyahu apologizes to freed Israeli hostage for taking so long to secure his release

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu apologized to a freed Israeli hostage for taking so long to secure his release, his office said Monday.

According to a statement from Netanyahu's office, the Israeli leader told Eli Sharabi, who was released last month as part of a ceasefire with Hamas: "I am sorry that it took us so long. We fought hard to get you out." They spoke Sunday.

A gaunt looking Sharabi was released after 16 months in captivity to discover that his wife and two teenage daughters were killed in Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023 attack.

Sharabi, who has spoken of the tough conditions in captivity, is set to meet with President Donald Trump in Washington on Tuesday. Netanyahu said the meeting was important and Sharabi responded, according to the statement, that perhaps "with joint efforts, we will bring this whole saga to an end."

Pope appears to be overcoming a setback in his recovery from pneumonia

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pope Francis was up and receiving therapy on Monday after apparently overcoming a setback in his recovery from pneumonia. The Vatican said he is stable, off mechanical ventilation and is showing no sign of new infection following a respiratory crisis late last week.

"The pope rested well all night," the Vatican said in its update from Gemelli hospital, where Francis has been hospitalized since Feb. 14.

On Monday, he had coffee and breakfast and was undergoing therapy.

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Earlier, doctors reported the 88-year-old pope spent all day Sunday without using the noninvasive mechanical ventilation mask that pumps oxygen into his lungs that he had to use following the coughing episode and crisis on Friday. Francis did continue to receive high flow supplemental oxygen through a nasal tube.

The respiratory crisis sparked fears of a new lung infection because Francis inhaled some vomit. Doctors aspirated it and said they needed 24 to 48 hours to determine if any new infection took hold.

On Sunday evening, they said Francis remained stable, with no fever or signs of an infection, indicating he had overcome the crisis. His prognosis remained guarded, however, meaning he wasn't out of danger.

Francis on Sunday also received a visit from the Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, and his chief of staff, Archbishop Edgar Pena Parra. The content of their talks wasn't known, but even when at the Vatican, Francis meets at least weekly with them.

He again skipped his weekly noon blessing to avoid even a brief public appearance from the hospital. Instead, the Vatican distributed a message written by the pope from the 10th floor in which he thanked his doctors for their care and well-wishers for their prayers, and prayed again for peace in Ukraine and elsewhere.

"From here, war appears even more absurd," Francis said in the message, which he drafted in recent days. Francis said he was living his hospitalization as an experience of profound solidarity with people who are sick and suffering everywhere.

"I feel in my heart the 'blessing' that is hidden within frailty, because it is precisely in these moments that we learn even more to trust in the Lord," Francis said in the text. "At the same time, I thank God for giving me the opportunity to share in body and spirit the condition of so many sick and suffering people."

The Argentine pope, who had part of one lung removed as a young man, was admitted to Gemelli on Feb. 14 after his bronchitis worsened and turned into a complex pneumonia in both lungs.

On Sunday night at the Vatican, Cardinal Konrad Krajewski presided over the evening Rosary prayer in St. Peter's Square.

"Let us pray together with the entire church for the health of the Holy Father Francis," said Krajewski, who is the pope's personal Almoner, a centuries-old job of handing out alms. Francis has elevated the job to make it an extension of his own personal charity.

The American Cardinal Robert Prevost, who heads the Vatican's powerful office for bishops, was celebrating Monday night's prayer.

Crews battle wildfires in North and South Carolina amid dry conditions and gusty winds

By The Associated Press undefined

Crews battled wildfires in North and South Carolina on Sunday amid dry conditions and gusty winds as residents were forced to evacuate in some areas.

The National Weather Service warned of increased fire danger in the region due to a combination of critically dry fuels and very low relative humidity.

In South Carolina, where more than 175 fires burned 6.6 square miles (17 square kilometers), Gov. Henry McMaster declared a state of emergency on Sunday to support the wildfire response effort, and a statewide burning ban remained in effect.

Crews made progress containing a fire in the Carolina Forest area west of the coastal resort city of Myrtle Beach, where residents had been ordered to evacuate several neighborhoods, according to Horry County Fire Rescue. Video showed some people running down the street as smoke filled the sky. But by late Sunday afternoon, the fire department announced that Carolina Forest evacuees could return home.

The South Carolina Forestry Commission estimated Sunday evening that the blaze had burned 2.5 square miles (6.5 square kilometers) with 30 percent of it contained. No structures had succumbed to the blaze and no injuries had been reported as of Sunday morning, officials said.

In North Carolina, the U.S. Forest Service said fire crews were working to contain multiple wildfires burning in four forests across the state on Sunday. The largest, about 400 acres (162 hectares), was at

Uwharrie National Forest, about 50 miles (80.47 kilometers) east of Charlotte. The Forest Service said Sunday afternoon that it had made progress on the fire, reaching about one-third containment.

The small southwestern town of Tryon in Polk County, North Carolina, urged some residents to evacuate Saturday as a fire spread rapidly there. The evacuations remained in effect Sunday. A decision on whether to lift them was expected to be made Monday after intentional burns are set to try to stop the fire from spreading.

That fire has burned about 500 acres (202 hectares) as of late Sunday, with zero percent containment, according to the Polk County Emergency Management/Fire Marshal's office. The North Carolina Forest Service was conducting water drops and back-burning operations on the ground, and area residents should expect a lot of smoke during those operations, officials said.

Officials have not said what caused any of the fires.

Key Oscar moments, from Zoe Saldaña's emotional win and 'Oz' opening to Kieran Culkin's baby wish

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

There were a lot of smiling faces at the Oscars but one had to stand out — Sean Baker saw his film "Anora" go home with the top film prize and he took four for himself. Its star Mikey Madison was crowned best actress.

Twenty-two years after winning best actor for "The Pianist," Adrien Brody won the same Oscar again for his performance as another Holocaust survivor in Brady Corbet's "The Brutalist." He somehow kept the playoff music at bay.

On Sunday, firefighters who battled recent wildfires got applauded, Mick Jagger handed out the best original song Oscar and John Lithgow was tasked with looking "slightly disappointed" when speeches ran long. One highlight was Timothée Chalamet — literally. His yellow suit got more than one comment.

Here were some other telecast highlights:

'Proud child of immigrant parents'

Zoe Saldaña was the favorite but that didn't diminish her emotional win.

After accepting the Oscar for best supporting actress for her work in "Emilia Pérez," Saldaña spoke emotionally about her family and her grandmother, tearing up during her speech.

"My grandmother came to this country in 1961 — I am a proud child of immigrant parents," she said. "With dreams and dignity and hard-working hands, and I am the first American of Dominican origin to accept an Academy Award, and I know I will not be the last. I hope. The fact that I'm getting an award for a role where I got to sing and speak in Spanish — my grandmother, if she were here, she would be so delighted, this is for my grandmother."

The accolade comes after Saldaña swept awards season, taking home the Golden Globe, Critics' Choice, BAFTA and SAG awards for playing lawyer Rita Mora Castro.

A 'Wicked' opening

Host Conan O'Brien took a back seat at the Oscars' opening number, ceding the floor to a "Wizard of Oz"-themed, 8-minute musical medley led by Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo.

Grande, in a red sparkly dress, performed a rendition of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" from "The Wizard of Oz." Then Erivo, in a white gown with floral embellishments, took the stage to sing a staggering rendition of "Home" from "The Wiz." They joined up for "Wicked's" "Defying Gravity," with Grande kissing Erivo's ring.

Wildfire-battered Los Angeles, on this night, stood in for Oz, with the graphic "We Love LA" showing after the pair were finished. The show began with a medley of film moments that used Los Angeles as a backdrop, including "La La Land," "Straight Outta Compton," "Iron Man 2" and "Mulholland Drive."

Then it was O'Brien's turn, comically pulling himself — and a missing shoe — from within the body of Demi Moore, in a take on her film "The Substance."

A very — maybe too — public family discussion

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While accepting an Emmy Award in January 2024, Kieran Culkin used his time onstage to plead with his wife for more kids. They have two, Kinsey Sioux and Wilder Wolf. "You said maybe if I win," he said, cheekily. On Sunday, he upped the demand.

Culkin from the Oscar stage repeated the story and then said that he and Jazz Charton made a deal in the parking lot at the Emmys: If he won an Oscar, she'd not only give him a third, they could plan for a fourth. They even shook on it.

"I just have to say this to you, Jazz, love of my life, ye of little faith," he said as the crowd roared. "No pressure, I love you. I'm really sorry I did this again. Now let's get cracking on those kids, what do you say?"

The moment got an echo later in the night when "I'm Not A Robot" director Victoria Warmerdam said she wasn't following Culkin's lead.

"To my producer and partner in life, Trent: I'm not having your babies because of this statue," she said after winning best live action short.

007, celebrated by women

There was no James Bond movie nominated in 2024 but there was a big James Bond section at the Oscars that ate up a lot of telecast time.

To honor transfer of the franchise to Amazon, three singers — Lisa, Doja Cat and Raye — each sang a different 007 title song. Lisa sang "Live and Let Die," Doja Cat tackled "Diamonds Are Forever" and Raye did "Skyfall."

Amazon MGM announced Thursday that the studio has taken the creative reins of the 007 franchise after decades of family control. Longtime Bond custodians Michael G. Wilson and Barbara Broccoli said they would be stepping back. On Sunday, Halle Berry thanked them for being the "heart and soul" of Bond.

The tribute began with "The Substance" nominee Margaret Qualley in a red gown taking to the stage to dance acrobatically with a team of male dancers to the James Bond theme.

Gene Hackman honored

Morgan Freeman made an understated tribute to a friend: Gene Hackman

Freeman, who starred with Hackman in two movies, kicked off the in memoriam section with a somber note about Hackman, who was found dead last week alongside his wife.

"This week, our community lost a giant. And I lost a dear friend, Gene Hackman," Freeman began in his speech. "I had the pleasure of working alongside Gene on two films, 'Unforgiven' and 'Under Suspicion.' Like everyone who ever shared a scene with him, I learned he was a generous performer and a man whose gifts elevated everyone's work."

"Gene always said, 'I don't think about legacy. I just hope people remember me as someone who tried to do good work,'" Freeman continued. "I think I speak for us all when I say, 'Gene, you will be remembered for that, and so much more.' Rest in peace, my friend."

The in memoriam section would honor such luminaries as Terri Garr, Donald Sutherland, Louis Gossett Jr, Shelley Duvall, David Lynch, Bob Newhart, Gena Rowlands, Maggie Smith and James Earl Jones. A separate section in the telecast honored Quincy Jones.

How to stop the wrap-up music

It has been an endless torment to winners everywhere whenever they hear the music swelling. It means one thing: Stop talking.

Brody had a novel response to the playoff music Sunday. He looked sternly into the camera and said: "I'm wrapping up, please turn the music off. I've done this before. Thank you. It's not my first rodeo, but I will will be brief."

It's true. He won the Oscar in 2003 for "The Pianist," memorably kissing Halle Berry at the podium. But that time he was pleading, not demanding, more time from producers.

When the music started rolling during his emotional speech back then, Brody said: "One second, please. One second. Cut it out. I got one shot at this." He added, "I didn't say more than five names, I don't think." He went on for more than a minute more.

As warming climate hammers coffee crops, this rare bean may someday be your brew

By SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

NZARA COUNTY, South Sudan (AP) — Catherine Bashiamma runs her fingers along the branches of the coffee tree she's raised from a seedling, searching anxiously for its first fruit buds since she planted it three years ago. When she grasps the small cherries, Bashiamma beams.

The farmer had never grown coffee in her village in western South Sudan, but now hopes a rare, climate-resistant species will help pull her family from poverty. "I want to send my children to school so they can be the future generation," said Bashiamma, a mother of 12.

Discovered more than a century ago in South Sudan, excelsa coffee is exciting cash-strapped locals and drawing interest from the international community amid a global coffee crisis caused mainly by climate change. As leading coffee-producing countries struggle to grow crops in drier, less reliable weather, prices have soared to the highest in decades and the industry is scrambling for solutions.

Experts say estimates from drought-stricken Brazil, the world's top coffee grower, are that this year's harvest could be down by some 12%.

"What history shows us is that sometimes the world doesn't give you a choice, and right now there are many coffee farmers suffering from climate change that are facing this predicament," said Aaron Davis, head of coffee research at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in London.

Excelsa could play a key role in adapting.

Native to South Sudan and a handful of other African countries, including Congo, Central African Republic and Uganda, excelsa is also farmed in India, Indonesia and Vietnam. The tree's deep roots, thick leathery leaves and big trunk allow it to thrive in extreme conditions such as drought and heat where other coffees cannot. It's also resistant to many common coffee pests and diseases.

Yet it comprises less than 1% of the global market, well behind the arabica and robusta species that are the most consumed coffees in the world. Experts say excelsa will have to be shown to be practical at a much larger scale to bridge the gap in the market caused by climate change.

Coffee's history in South Sudan

Unlike neighboring Ethiopia or Uganda, oil-rich South Sudan has never been known as a coffee-producing nation.

Its British colonizers grew robusta and arabica, but much of that stopped during decades of conflict that forced people from their homes and made it hard to farm. Coffee trees require regular care such as pruning and weeding and take at least three years to yield fruit.

During a visit earlier this month to Nzara County in Western Equatoria state — regarded as the country's breadbasket — residents reminisced to Associated Press reporters about their parents and grandparents growing coffee, yet much of the younger generation hadn't done it themselves.

Many were familiar with excelsa, but didn't realize how unique it was, or what it was called, referring to it as the big tree, typically taller than the arabica and robusta species that are usually pruned to be bush- or hedge-like. The excelsa trees can reach 15 meters (about 49 feet) in height, but may also be pruned much shorter for ease of harvesting.

Coffee made from excelsa tastes sweet — unlike robusta — with notes of chocolate, dark fruits and hazelnut. It's more similar to arabica, but generally less bitter and may have less body.

"There's so little known about this coffee, that we feel at the forefront to trying to unravel it and we're learning every day," said Ian Paterson, managing director of Equatoria Teak, a sustainable agro-forestry company that's been operating in the country for more than a decade.

The company's been doing trials on excelsa for years. Initial results are promising, with the trees able to withstand heat much better than other species, the company said. It's also working with communities to revive the coffee industry and scale up production. Three years ago it gave seedlings and training to about 1,500 farmers, including Bashiamma, to help them grow the coffee. The farmers can sell back to the company for processing and export.

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Many of the trees started producing for the first time this year, and Paterson said he hopes to export the first batch of some 7 tons to specialty shops in Europe. By 2027, the coffee could inject some \$2 million into the economy, with big buyers such as Nespresso expressing interest. But production needs to triple for it to be worthwhile for large buyers to invest, he said.

Challenges of growing an industry amid South Sudan's instability

That could be challenging in South Sudan, where lack of infrastructure and insecurity make it hard to get the coffee out.

One truck of 30 tons of coffee has to travel some 1,800 miles (3,000 kilometers) to reach the port in Kenya to be shipped. The cost for the first leg of that trip, through Uganda, is more than \$7,500, which is up to five times the cost in neighboring countries.

It's also hard to attract investors.

Despite a peace deal in 2018 that ended a five-year civil war, pockets of fighting persist. Tensions in Western Equatoria are especially high after the president removed the governor in February, sparking anger among his supporters. When AP reporters visited Nzara, the main road to town was cut off one day because of gunshots and people were fleeing their villages, fearful of further violence.

The government says companies can operate safely, but warned them to focus on business.

"If I'm a businessman, dealing with my business, let me not mix with politics. Once you start mixing your business with politics, definitely you will end up in chaos," said Alison Barnaba, the state's minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Environment.

Barnaba said there are plans to rehabilitate old coffee plantations and build an agriculture school, but details are murky, including where the money will come from. South Sudan hasn't paid its civil servants in more than a year, and a rupture of a crucial oil pipeline through neighboring Sudan has tanked oil revenue.

Growing the coffee isn't always easy, either. Farmers have to contend with fires that spread quickly in the dry season and decimate their crops. Hunters use fires to scare and kill animals and residents use it to clear land for cultivation. But the fires can get out of control and there are few measures in place to hold people accountable, say residents.

Coffee as a way out of poverty

Still, for locals, the coffee represents a chance at a better future.

Bashiama said she started planting coffee after her husband was injured and unable to help cultivate enough of the maize and ground nuts that the family had lived on. Since his accident she hasn't been able to send her children to school or buy enough food, she said.

Another farmer, 37-year-old Taban John, wants to use his coffee earnings to buy a bicycle so he can more easily sell his other crops, ground nuts and cassava, and other goods in town. He also wants to be able to afford school uniforms for his children.

Excelsa is an opportunity for the community to become more financially independent, say community leaders. People rely on the government or foreign aid, but when that doesn't come through they're not able to take care of their families, they say.

But for coffee to thrive in South Sudan, locals say there needs to be a long-term mentality, and that requires stability.

Elia Box lost half of his coffee crop to fire in early February. He plans to replace it, but was dispirited at the work it will require and the lack of law and order to hold people accountable.

"People aren't thinking long-term like coffee crops, during war," he said. "Coffee needs peace."

Israel is criticized after it bars Gaza aid to pressure Hamas to accept a new ceasefire proposal

By TIA GOLDENBERG and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Israel faced sharp criticism as it stopped the entry of all food and other supplies into Gaza on Sunday and warned of "additional consequences" for Hamas if a fragile ceasefire isn't extended.

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Mediators Egypt and Qatar accused Israel of violating humanitarian law by using starvation as a weapon. The ceasefire's first phase saw a surge in humanitarian aid after months of growing hunger. Hamas accused Israel of trying to derail the next phase Sunday hours after its first phase had ended and called Israel's decision to cut off aid "a war crime and a blatant attack" on a truce that took a year of negotiations before taking hold in January.

In the second phase, Hamas would release dozens of remaining hostages in return for an Israeli pullout from Gaza and a lasting ceasefire. Negotiations on the second phase were meant to start a month ago but haven't begun.

Israel backs a new proposal to speed up the release of hostages

Israel said Sunday that a new U.S. proposal calls for extending the ceasefire through Ramadan — the Muslim holy month that began over the weekend — and the Jewish Passover holiday, which ends April 20.

Under that proposal, Hamas would release half the hostages on the first day and the rest when an agreement is reached on a permanent ceasefire, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said. The militants currently hold 59 hostages, 35 of them believed to be dead.

National Security Council spokesman Brian Hughes said the United States would support whatever decision Israel makes, without commenting on the new proposal. Netanyahu said Israel is fully coordinated with the Trump administration and the ceasefire will only continue as long as Hamas keeps releasing hostages.

The UN and others warn against aid cutoff

Saying the ceasefire has saved countless lives, the International Committee of the Red Cross said that "any unraveling of the forward momentum created over the last six weeks risks plunging people back into despair."

U.N. humanitarian chief Tom Fletcher called Israel's decision "alarming," noting that international humanitarian law makes clear that aid access must be allowed.

U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres urged all parties to make every effort to prevent a return to hostilities in Gaza, and called for humanitarian aid to flow back into Gaza immediately and for the release of all hostages, said spokesman Stéphane Dujarric.

Five non-governmental groups asked Israel's Supreme Court for an interim order barring the state from preventing aid from entering Gaza, claiming the move violates Israel's obligations under international law: "These obligations cannot be condition on political considerations."

The war has left most of Gaza's population of over 2 million dependent on international aid. About 600 aid trucks had entered daily since the ceasefire began on Jan. 19, easing fears of famine raised by international experts.

But residents said prices shot up as word of the closure spread.

From the heavily destroyed Jabaliya urban refugee camp, Fayza Nassar said the closure would worsen dire conditions.

"There will be famine and chaos," she said.

Hamas warned that any attempt to delay or cancel the ceasefire agreement would have "humanitarian consequences" for the hostages. The only way to free them is through the existing deal, the group said.

Families of hostages again pressed Israel's government.

"Postponing the negotiation on the deal for everyone's (release) can't happen," Lishay Miran-Lavi, wife of hostage Omri Miran, said in Tel Aviv. "Hostages don't have time to wait for an ideal deal."

Israel was accused of blocking aid throughout the war

Israel imposed a siege on Gaza in the war's opening days and only eased it under U.S. pressure. U.N. agencies and aid groups accused Israel of not facilitating enough aid during 15 months of war.

The International Criminal Court said there was reason to believe Israel had used "starvation as a method of warfare" when it issued an arrest warrant for Netanyahu last year. The allegation is also central to South Africa's case at the International Court of Justice accusing Israel of genocide.

Israel has denied the accusations. It says it has allowed in enough aid and blamed shortages on what it called the U.N.'s inability to distribute it. It also accused Hamas of siphoning off aid — an allegation that

Netanyahu repeated Sunday.

Kenneth Roth, former head of Human Rights Watch, said Israel as an occupying power has an "absolute duty" to facilitate humanitarian aid under the Geneva Conventions, and called Israel's decision "a resumption of the war-crime starvation strategy" that led to the ICC warrant.

The war began when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking 251 hostage.

Israel's offensive has killed over 48,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. It says more than half of those killed were women and children. It does not specify how many of the dead were combatants.

Israeli bombardment pounded large areas of Gaza to rubble and displaced some 90% of the population.

UK's Starmer says Europe is at 'crossroads in history' as leaders agree to steps to Ukraine peace

By BRIAN MELLEY and EMMA BURROWS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Keir Starmer rallied his European counterparts Sunday to shore up their borders and throw their full weight behind Ukraine as he announced outlines of a plan to end Russia's war.

"Every nation must contribute to that in the best way that it can, bringing different capabilities and support to the table, but all taking responsibility to act, all stepping up their own share of the burden," he said.

Starmer's exhortation to 18 fellow leaders that they need to do the heavy lifting for their own security comes two days after U.S. backing of Ukraine appeared in jeopardy when President Donald Trump lashed out at Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and said he wasn't grateful enough for America's support.

The meeting had been overshadowed by the extraordinary scolding that took place on live television at the White House. Starmer used the opportunity as part of his broader effort to bridge the gap between Europe and the U.S. and also salvage what had seemed like the start of a peace process before Friday's spat.

Starmer said he had worked with France and Ukraine on a plan to end the war and that the group of leaders — mostly from Europe — had agreed on four things.

The steps toward peace would: keep aid flowing to Kyiv and maintain economic pressure on Russia to strengthen Ukraine's hand; make sure Ukraine is at the bargaining table and any peace deal must ensure its sovereignty and security; and continue to arm Ukraine to deter future invasion.

A 'coalition of the willing'

Finally, Starmer said they would develop a "coalition of the willing" to defend Ukraine and guarantee the peace.

"Not every nation will feel able to contribute but that can't mean that we sit back," he said. "Instead, those willing will intensify planning now with real urgency. The U.K. is prepared to back this with boots on the ground and planes in the air, together with others."

It is far from certain whether Russian President Vladimir Putin will accept any such plan, which Starmer said would require strong U.S. backing. He did not specify what that meant, though he told the BBC before the summit that there were "intense discussions" to get a security guarantee from the U.S.

"If there is to be a deal, if there is to be a stopping of the fighting, then that agreement has to be defended, because the worst of all outcomes is that there is a temporary pause and then Putin comes again," Starmer said.

Starmer said he will later bring a more formal plan to the U.S. and work with Trump.

Before arriving in London, French president Emmanuel Macron suggested in an interview with a French newspaper that he and Starmer are proposing a "truce in the air, on the seas and energy infrastructures" that would last a month.

There would be no European troops in the coming weeks and troops would only be deployed on the ground at a later stage, he said.

The question, Macron said, is "how we use this time to try and get an accessible truce, with negotiations

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that will take several weeks and then, once peace is signed, a deployment.”

Two diplomatic steps forward, one back

Europe has been anxious since Trump initiated direct peace talks with Putin, who had been isolated by most Western leaders since invading Ukraine three years ago. The scramble to remain relevant and protect European interests as their once stalwart ally appeared to be cozying up to Putin was even more troubling when Trump called Zelenskyy a dictator and falsely said Ukraine started the war.

Meetings last week had provided some hope — until Zelenskyy’s trip to the White House on Friday.

Visits to the Oval Office by Starmer and Macron, who had declared his visit a “turning point,” were seen as steps in the right direction. The meetings were cordial and Trump even took a gentler tone toward Ukraine, though he would not commit to providing U.S. security guarantees and maintained that Europe would need to provide peacekeeping troops.

Within 12 hours of Starmer’s return from Washington, the talk of peace seemed to collapse as Trump and Vice President JD Vance berated Zelenskyy for challenging Trump’s assertions that Putin could be trusted.

During his Sunday press conference, Starmer rejected the suggestion that the U.S. was no longer a reliable ally.

“There are no two countries as closely aligned as our two countries and our defense, our security and intelligence is intertwined in a way no two other countries are, so it’s an important and reliable ally for us,” he said.

Starmer does not trust Putin

Starmer told the BBC before the summit that he does not trust Russian President Vladimir Putin but does trust Trump.

Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni said she was sorry for what happened with Zelenskyy in Washington. Meloni is both a strong Ukraine supporter and — as head of a far-right party — she is a natural ally of Trump. She was the only European leader to attend his inauguration.

She said told reporters following the meeting that Europe must remain focused on its common goals and that “dividing the West would be disastrous for everyone.”

“We need to work to reinforce our unity, and I think that Italy can play a role, not just in its own interest, but in everyone’s,” she said. “I don’t want to take any other scenario into consideration.”

Starmer hosted the meeting at Lancaster House, a 200-year-old mansion near Buckingham Palace, following his charm offensive with Macron to persuade Trump to put Ukraine at the center of negotiations and tilt his allegiances toward Europe.

Leaders from Germany, Denmark, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Canada, Finland, Sweden, the Czech Republic and Romania were at the summit. The Turkish foreign minister, the NATO secretary-general and the presidents of the European Commission and European Council were also in attendance.

Turning Ukraine into a ‘steel porcupine’

Starmer used sweeping terms to describe the challenge ahead, saying Europe was at a crossroads in its history and needed to step up to meet “once in a generation moment.”

European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen emerged from the meeting and said she would present a plan to “rearm Europe” to bolster the bloc’s security after a long period of underinvestment.

As for the future of war-torn Ukraine, von der Leyen said it needs security guarantees.

“We have to put Ukraine in a position of strength so that it has the means to fortify itself and to protect itself,” von der Leyen said. “It’s basically turning Ukraine into a steel porcupine that is indigestible for potential invaders.”

Last week, Starmer pledged to boost military spending to 2.5% of gross domestic product by 2027. Other European nations may follow suit.

Starmer pledged to supply more arms to defend Ukraine, announcing that the U.K. will use 1.6 billion pounds (\$2 billion) in export financing to supply 5,000 air defense missiles.

Cartel-plagued Mexican city pins hopes on Trump's anti-drug trafficking pressure

By MARÍA VERZA Associated Press

CULIACAN, Mexico (AP) — Before dawn, an elementary school principal in the capital of Mexico's Sinaloa state checks various chats on his phone for word of shootouts or other incidents. If there's danger, he sends a message to his students' parents suspending classes.

It isn't the only new routine in Culiacan, a city of 1 million residents that for the past six months has been the battlefield for the two main factions of the Sinaloa drug cartel.

The violence has limited the hours to bury the dead. Bands that played big parties now play for money at intersections. Any loud noise sends children scurrying for cover. And those who live on the shifting front lines fear for their lives daily.

This is the first extended period of violence that has touched Culiacan's residents because there was safety in the cartel's total domination. Now, many residents are grateful for the pressure applied by U.S. President Donald Trump to get Mexico to go after the cartels and some are optimistic that this difficult period could change the persistent view that the cartel has been their protector.

'Tired of being among the bullets'

It started in September, more than a month after Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada — the Sinaloa cartel's oldest and most astute leader — says he was kidnapped by one of the sons of former leader Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán and taken to the U.S. where they were both arrested.

It unleashed a power struggle between both cartel factions and the unwritten agreement to not attack residents uninvolved in the drug trade was broken.

There were carjackings, kidnappings, innocents caught in crossfires and cartel roadblocks where gunmen would scan people's cell phones looking for any trace of contact with the other side. According to government data, there have been more than 900 killings since September.

A resident of Costa Rica, a small town south of the capital, traced the front line on the horizon: on one side the "Chapos," on the other the "Mayos." He, like most others, requested anonymity because of the danger.

An old man there said he saw gunmen dump two bodies in the street.

And sometimes people just disappear. Julio Héctor Carrillo, 34, never arrived home from visiting a relative in late January. According to his brother-in-law, Mario Beltrán, his only transgression was not respecting the locals' self-imposed curfew.

His family didn't dare to put up signs for their search, instead sticking to social platforms. A search collective looking for the disappeared found a body that is undergoing DNA testing.

"At no other time in the last 30 to 40 years that we have crime stats, have we had so many families with disappeared (relatives)," said Miguel Calderón of the State Public Security Council, a citizen organization. Some are simply picked up, interrogated and released, but others end up on the wall of faces at Culiacan's cathedral.

"Truly, we're very tired, very tired of being among the bullets," said a 38-year-old small business owner who has imposed his own family security protocol: no cycling for their 18-year-old son, who they take everywhere, including to visit his girlfriend, and track in real time through his cell phone.

Their 7-year-old daughter asks in the morning: "Dad, am I going to be able to go to school today? Did you already check (Facebook)?"

"There are things you can't hide from children," he said.

U.S.: The solution or the problem?

How Mexican authorities are addressing the violence has changed notably in the past month and locals believe Trump is the reason.

When it started, Mexico was led by President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who minimized cartel violence and expressed no interest in going after cartel leaders. His close ally, Sinaloa Gov. Rubén Rocha did the same. Rocha's spokesman, Feliciano Castro, maintains that the U.S. set off the violence by arresting

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Zambada.

Things changed when Trump won the election. Shutting down illegal immigration and going after drug traffickers were among his campaign promises and he's threatened to impose 25% tariffs Tuesday. Mexico's new President Claudia Sheinbaum had already shown herself willing to take a more aggressive hand with the cartels, especially Sinaloa, whose main business is fentanyl.

The number of security operations and arrests in Sinaloa have multiplied and now there is direct federal supervision of all security action.

"We have never seen such an overwhelming and daily operation against the cartels," said Ismael Bojórquez, a veteran Sinaloa journalist covering organized crime, who was critical of López Obrador's hands-off approach.

In December, authorities seized more than a ton of fentanyl in Sinaloa compared to just 286 pounds in all of Mexico in the first six months of 2024.

In the last 10 days of February, authorities dismantled 113 synthetic drug labs, according to preliminary state data. Authorities have not clarified if they produced fentanyl or methamphetamine. It's unknown what, if any, role U.S. intelligence played.

In Culiacan, authorities took down more than 400 cartel surveillance cameras, double what authorities had.

The recent actions have weakened both cartel factions but the government can't let up if it really wants to decimate them, Bojórquez said.

"I never thought (Trump) would have so much power to do that ... but I'm grateful," said the owner of a beer store stopped at a police checkpoint.

A 55-year-old woman sitting on a bench watching a forensics team load a murder victim's body into a truck agreed. The day before, she had attended a Mass for her son-in-law who was killed five months earlier by a stray bullet while he was walking with his daughter a few blocks away.

"We leave home but we don't know if we'll return," she said.

Overcome fear, build peace

In the halls of Socrates Elementary school in downtown Culiacan, signs explain what to do in case of a shootout and children drill suddenly dropping to the ground when the alarm sounds.

Principal Victor Manuel Aispuro says he can't remember what it was like to have all of his nearly 400 students in school. Some 80 families fled the city and there were days when no more than 10 kids attended. He decides each day if there will be in-person classes.

The last time he closed was late last month when intense firefights and low-flying helicopters panicked residents. Two key cartel members were arrested.

In January, one of his students, a 9-year-old boy, was killed along with his 12-year-old brother and their father in a carjacking. Thousands of residents took to the streets in a rare public display of indignation.

At a workshop, a nongovernmental organization of ex-police led students through an exercise writing down what scares them. One listed spiders, gun shots and white trucks (the preferred cartel transportation). Another said he's afraid of being extorted or killed.

"The people are full of a sense of collective anguish, anxiety, social anger and that's different from other crises," said Calderón, the coordinator of the citizen security group. He said he hopes it could dissolve the complicity of citizens, who for years saw the cartel as protectors, heroes or figures to emulate.

'Wildlife corridors' are encouraged to support Kenya's recovering animal populations

By NICHOLAS KOMU Associated Press

LEWA, Kenya (AP) — As nations mark World Wildlife Day, conservationists in Kenya are warning of shrinking wildlife spaces in the east African country that generates substantial revenue from wildlife tourism.

While conservation efforts over the past two decades have led to the recovery of many threatened species, the animals are losing wide swaths of habitat because of threats stemming from climate change and

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destructive human behavior, activists warn.

But they also cite an opportunity in what are known as wildlife corridors — strips of land connecting areas that would otherwise be separated by human activities. By allowing free movement of animals and reducing incidents of human-wildlife conflict, such corridors support the growth of wildlife populations.

One conservation group that is trying to create such corridors is Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, which lies about 260 kilometers (160 miles) north of Nairobi, the Kenyan capital. Lewa is owned by a nonprofit that has acquired more land in recent years in a bid to connect Mount Kenya forest preserve to rangelands in northern Kenya. The sanctuary is home to 14% of Kenya's remaining black rhinos, in addition to other mammal species ranging from lions to zebras.

An annual wildlife census was underway when the AP visited Lewa, where animal numbers have been going up over the years. The census involved the manual counting of each animal, with both ground rangers and aerial teams participating in the dayslong effort.

"All this is an effort to ensure that we undertake the responsibility of accounting for every species that is found on Lewa, especially the most critically endangered ones and the threatened ones," said Dominic Maringa, head of conservation and wildlife at Lewa. "We make sure it's a full census."

Lewa's elephant population increased from 350 individuals in 2014 to over 450 in 2024, according to figures provided by the conservancy. Similar growth was seen among white and black rhinos, a major draw for visitors.

But rising wildlife populations strain ecosystems and need to be matched by stronger efforts to protect habitats and create new corridors, Maringa said.

"As conservationists, you have to be looking at these trends, relate them to climate change, relate them with people and human-wildlife conflict," he said. "Maybe you are enjoying seeing a lot of elephants or buffalos. But at the end of the day what does that mean? You have to make sure you think ahead of the population."

Kenyan authorities report wildlife population growth trends across the country. Figures from the wildlife authority show that elephant numbers have grown from around 16,000 in the late 1980s to nearly 37,000 in 2024. Black rhinos have increased from fewer than 400 in the 1990s to over 1,000 today. Critically endangered Grevy's zebras now number over 2,000, while lions have grown to approximately 2,600.

But that success is threatened in some areas by growing human populations: Kenya's population has grown from 22 million in 1989 to over 55 million in 2025.

Kenya Wildlife Service, or KWS, is encouraging conservancies such as Lewa and private landowners to open up wildlife corridors for free animal movement, with translocation efforts also underway to redistribute animals from crowded ecosystems into less populated areas.

KWS, in a recent statement, cited the Tsavo-Amboseli ecosystem, an expansive protected area in southern Kenya that hosts key elephant migration routes, as "increasingly under pressure due to human activities affecting the free movement of wildlife."

Similarly, the wildlife corridor known as Kitengela, which connects Nairobi National Park to the grasslands of southern Kenya, has faced fragmentation due to human settlements and infrastructure development.

Beside climate change, rapid urbanization driven by population growth is a major factor in the shrinking of wildlife corridors, according to KWS.

There is also the additional problem of wildfires, with Kenya Forest Service reporting over 180 wildfires that have damaged more than 1,358 hectares of vegetation across the country since the beginning of this year.

Strip club Cinderella story 'Anora' wins best picture at 97th Academy Awards

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "Anora," a strip club Cinderella story without the fairy tale ending, was crowned best picture at the 97th Academy Awards on Sunday, handing Sean Baker's gritty, Brooklyn-set screwball

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farce Hollywood's top prize.

In a stubbornly fluctuating Oscar season, "Anora," the Palme d'Or-winner at the Cannes Film Festival, emerged as the unlikely frontrunner. Baker's tale of an erotic dancer who elopes with the son of a Russian oligarch — unusually explicit for a best-picture winner — was made for just \$6 million but went home with five big awards, including four for its scrappy indie director.

But Oscar voters, eschewing blockbuster contenders like "Wicked" and "Dune: Part Two," instead added "Anora" — which has one of the lowest box-office totals ever for a best picture winner with \$16 million in ticket sales — to a string of recent indie best picture winners, including "Everything Everywhere All at Once," "CODA" and "Nomadland."

For a film industry that's been transformed by streaming and humbled by economic turmoil, Baker and "Anora" epitomized a kind of cinematic purity. On the campaign trail, Baker called for the return to the 90-day exclusive theatrical release.

"Where did we fall in love with the movies? At the movie theater," Baker said Sunday, accepting the award for best director. "Filmmakers, keep making films for the big screen."

In personally winning four Oscars (picture, directing, editing, screenplay), Baker tied the mark held by Walt Disney, who won for four different films in 1954. That Baker and Disney share the record is ironic; his "The Florida Project" took place in a low-budget motel in the shadow of Disney World.

"Long live independent film!" shouted Baker from the Dolby Theatre stage.

Other awards spread around

Eight of the 10 movies nominated for best picture came away with at least one award in a ceremony buoyantly hosted by Conan O'Brien that favored song and dance over strong political statements. Acting awards went to Madison, Adrien Brody, Kieran Culkin and Zoe Saldaña.

Twenty-two years after winning best actor for "The Pianist," Brody won the same Oscar again for his performance as another Holocaust survivor in Brady Corbet's "The Brutalist." His win came over Timothée Chalamet ("A Complete Unknown"), who had the chance of becoming the youngest best actor ever, a record owned by Brody.

"I'm here once again to represent the lingering traumas and the repercussions of war and systematic oppression and of antisemitism and racism and othering," said Brody. "I pray for a healthier and happier and more inclusive world. If the past can teach us anything it's to not let hate go unchecked."

Madison won best actress for her breakthrough performance in "Anora," a victory that came over the category favorite, Demi Moore ("The Substance"). Both she and Baker spoke, as they did at the Cannes Film Festival where "Anora" won the Palme d'Or, about honoring the lives of sex workers.

Netflix's beleaguered contender, "Emilia Pérez," the lead nominee going into the show, went home with two awards — best song and best supporting actress, for Saldaña — after a scandal caused by offensive tweets by star Karla Sofía Gascón torpedoed its chances.

"I am a proud child of immigrant parents with dreams and dignity and hard-working hands," said Saldaña. "I am the first American of Dominican origin to accept an Academy Award, and I know I will not be the last."

An expected win and an upset

The night's first award went to Kieran Culkin for best supporting actor. Culkin has cruised through the season, picking up award after award, for his performance alongside Jesse Eisenberg in "A Real Pain."

"I have no idea how I got here," said Culkin, "I've just been acting my whole life."

The biggest upset early on came in the best animated feature category. "Flow," the wordless Latvian film upset DreamWorks Animations' "The Wild Robot." The win for "Flow," an ecological parable about a cat in a flooded world, was the first Oscar ever for a Latvian film.

"Thank you to my cats and dogs," director Gints Zilbalodis accepting the award.

'Wicked' and 'The Brutalist' each wins two

"Wicked" stars Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo kicked off the ceremony with a tribute to Los Angeles following the wildfires that devastated the Southern California metropolis earlier this year. Grande sang "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" and Erivo performed Diana Ross' "Home" before the "Wicked" stars joined

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together for "Defying Gravity" from their blockbuster big-screen musical.

Later, "Wicked," the biggest box-office hit among the best-picture nominees, won awards for production design and costume design.

"I'm the first Black man to receive the costume design award," said costume designer Paul Tazewell, who couldn't finish that sentence before the crowd began to rise in a standing ovation. "I'm so proud of this."

Best makeup and hairstyling went to "The Substance" for its gory creations of beauty and body horror. "Dune: Part Two" won for both visual effects and sound, and its sandworm — arguably the star of the night — figured into multiple gags throughout the evening.

Brady Corbet's sprawling postwar epic "The Brutalist," shot in VistaVision, won for its cinematography, by Lol Crawley, and its score, by Daniel Blumberg. The papal thriller "Conclave," which some had picked to upset "Anora," went home with just one award, for best adapted screenplay.

Politics go unmentioned, at first

Though the Oscars featured the first time an actor was nominated for portraying a sitting U.S. president (Sebastian Stan as a young Donald Trump in "The Apprentice"), politics went largely unmentioned through most of the ceremony.

The president's name was never uttered during the nearly four-hour ceremony. While the show featured several striking political moments, much of this year's Oscars was more dedicated to considering the fluctuating place of movies in today's culture, and in Los Angeles' resilience following the devastating wildfires of January.

O'Brien avoided politics completely in his opening monologue. The first exception was nearly two hours in, when presenter Daryl Hannah announced simply: "Slava Ukraini" ("Glory to Ukraine!")

"No Other Land," a documentary about Israeli occupation of the West Bank made by a collation of Palestinian and Israeli filmmakers, won best documentary. After failing to find a U.S. distributor, the filmmakers opted to self-distribute "No Other Land." It grossed more than any other documentary nominee.

"There is a different path, a political solution, without ethnic supremacy, with national rights for both our people," said Yuval Abraham, an Israeli, speaking beside co-director Basel Adra, a Palestinian. "And I have to say, as I am here, the foreign policy in this country is helping to block this path. Why? Can't you see that we are intertwined, that my people can't be truly safe if Basel's people aren't truly free?"

Walter Salles' "I'm Still Here," a portrait of resistance under the Brazilian military dictatorship, won best international film. At one point, that award seemed a lock for "Emilia Pérez." But while "Emilia Pérez" collapsed, "I'm Still Here" rode a wave of passionate support in Brazil and political timeliness elsewhere.

O'Brien scores in opening

O'Brien, introduced as "four-time Oscar viewer," opened the ceremony with genial ribbing of the nominees and the former talk-show host's trademark self-deprecation.

"A Complete Unknown.' A Real Pain.' Nosferatu.' These are just some of the names I was called on the red carpet," said O'Brien.

Hosting for the first time, O'Brien was a smash success. In his opening monologue, the former talk show host leaned on the disappointed face of John Lithgow, a full-throated "Chalamet!" from Adam Sandler and a gag of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos being delivered to the red carpet in a cardboard box.

O'Brien's most sincere comments were reserved for Los Angeles, itself, in speaking about the enduring "magic and grandeur" of film in wake of the wildfires. O'Brien, whose house in the Pacific Palisades was spared by the fires, then segued into a musical routine, singing: "I won't waste time."

An unpredictable Oscar year

This year's Oscars, among the most unpredictable in years, unspooled after a turbulent year for the film industry. Ticket sales were down 3% from the previous year and more significantly from pre-pandemic times. The strikes of 2023 played havoc with release schedules in 2024. Many studios pulled back on production, leaving many out of work. The fires, in January, only added to the pain.

Last year's telecast, propelled by the twin blockbusters of "Oppenheimer" and "Barbie," led the Oscars to a four-year viewership high, with 19.5 million viewers. With smaller indies dominating this year, the

academy was sure to be tested in finding as large an audience.

The ceremony took place days following the death of Gene Hackman. Morgan Freeman, his co-star in "Unforgiven" and "Under Suspicion," honored him.

"This week, our community lost a giant," said Freeman, "and I lost a dear friend."

Illinois man accused of deadly mass shooting at July 4th parade faces trial 3 years after attack

By SOPHIA TAREEN Associated Press

WAUKEGAN, Ill (AP) — The trial of a suburban Chicago man accused of a mass shooting at a 2022 Independence Day parade that killed seven people and wounded dozens more is set to begin Monday.

Robert Crimo III faces 21 counts of first-degree murder, three counts for each person killed, as well as 48 counts of attempted murder. Prosecutors dropped the less serious 48 counts of aggravated battery before jury selection last week.

The road to the trial has been bumpy, with delays partly due to Crimo's unpredictability, including his rejection of a plea deal that even surprised his attorneys. As potential jurors were questioned last week, he sporadically appeared in court, at times refusing to leave his jail cell.

Authorities alleged Crimo perched on a roof and fired into crowds assembled for the annual Fourth of July parade in downtown Highland Park, 30 miles (50 kilometers) north of Chicago.

Prosecutors have submitted thousands of pages of evidence, as well as hours of a videotaped interrogation during which police say Crimo confessed to the shooting. But the 24-year-old has since pleaded not guilty.

His defense attorneys have declined comment ahead of the trial, which is expected to last about a month.

His father, Robert Crimo Jr., a onetime mayoral candidate, was charged in connection with how his son obtained a gun license. He pleaded guilty in 2023 to seven misdemeanor counts of reckless conduct and served less than two months in jail.

He has attended his son's hearings, sometimes making eye contact with him during court. He declined to discuss the case in detail ahead of the trial.

"As a parent, I love my son very much," he said. "And Bobby loves this country more than anyone would ever know."

Prosecutors plan to call multiple law enforcement officers and survivors of the shooting to testify. They also will show videos of Crimo's statements to police. Some of the videos already have been shown in court as prosecutors tried unsuccessfully to have them thrown out.

Crimo's erratic behavior has contributed to court delays.

He fired his public defenders and said he would represent himself, then abruptly reversed himself. In June 2024, when he was expected to accept a plea deal and give victims and relatives a chance to address him publicly, he arrived at the court in a wheelchair and rejected the deal.

Residents in the wealthy Highland Park community of roughly 30,000 set along Lake Michigan have mourned the losses deeply. Some potential jurors were excused because of their connections to the case.

City leaders canceled the usual parade in 2023, opting for a "community walk." The parade was reinstated last year on a different route and with a memorial for the victims.

"Our community is once again reminded of the immense pain and trauma caused by the Highland Park shooting," Highland Park Mayor Nancy Rotering said in a statement ahead of jury selection. "Our hearts remain with the victims, their families, and all those whose lives were forever changed by that devastating day."

The victims killed in the shooting included Katherine Goldstein, 64; Jacquelyn Sundheim, 63; Stephen Straus, 88; Nicolas Toledo-Zaragoza, 78; Eduardo Uvaldo, 69; and married couple Kevin McCarthy, 37, and Irina McCarthy, 35.

Survivors and their families have filed multiple lawsuits, including against the maker of the semiautomatic rifle used in the shooting and against authorities they accuse of negligence.

Michigan mother asks judge to declare 3 missing sons dead nearly 15 years later

By ED WHITE Associated Press

ADRIAN, Mich. (AP) — A Michigan woman is asking a judge to declare her three missing sons dead, nearly 15 years after their father didn't return them after Thanksgiving. The disappearance has tormented a small town near Ohio and remains unsolved.

Authorities believe the brothers are deceased and they clearly suspect John Skelton is responsible, though he has not been charged with killing his sons. By November, he is expected to complete a 15-year prison sentence for his failure to give the boys back to Tanya Zuvers, the sole conviction in the saga.

A Lenawee County judge will begin hearing testimony Monday at an unusual hearing. The witness list includes Zuvers, as well as police investigators who will publicly discuss the yearslong effort to find any trace of Andrew, Alexander and Tanner Skelton.

Since November 2010, Zuvers has prayed someone "would cure her broken heart" with news about their whereabouts or that John Skelton would explain what really happened, attorney R. Burke Castleberry said in a court filing.

"Heartbreakingly, none of that has occurred," he wrote.

Nathan Piwowarski, a lawyer in Cadillac, Michigan, who specializes in probate and estate law, said there can be many reasons to have someone declared dead, including "personal closure for the family."

A court declaration also could "give someone authority to pursue a wrongful death claim or other civil claim," said Piwowarski, who is not involved in the case.

Castleberry declined to comment ahead of the hearing. Skelton, 53, did not respond to an email sent to him in prison about the petition filed by Zuvers.

The brothers, ages 9, 7 and 5, lived in Morenci, a small community next to the Ohio border, 100 miles (161 kilometers) southwest of Detroit. Zuvers was seeking a divorce from Skelton in fall 2010 and the boys were with him, a few doors away, on Thanksgiving.

They were supposed to return to Zuvers the next morning. Instead, they were gone. Police later determined Skelton's phone was in Ohio at 4:30 a.m. before it was turned off and then turned back on at 6 a.m. in Morenci.

Skelton denied harming his sons and said they were with an underground group for their safety, among other murky explanations, according to investigators.

People spent weeks searching woods and waters in Michigan and Ohio. While in prison, Skelton told authorities that a man who helps people leave Amish communities might know about the boys, but Castleberry said it was "another lie."

Investigators at the court hearing "will detail the farfetched, unfathomable yarns John Skelton spun, leading authorities on one wild goose chase after another," Castleberry said.

Years have passed, but people in Morenci have not forgotten the Skelton brothers. A plaque with their names and images is attached to a rock at a park near Bean Creek. It says, "Faith, Hope, Love."

Trump's past speeches to Congress asked them to pass his agenda. Now, he's willing to go it alone

By JOSH BOAK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Judging by his past speeches to Congress, President Donald Trump once felt the need to ask lawmakers to pass his agenda. Not so much anymore.

Trump, who is addressing Congress on Tuesday night, has asserted his authority to reshape the federal government without needing to consult the legislative branch. That's a break from his previous remarks to Congress in which he specifically sought lawmakers' backing on many of the actions he's now taking unilaterally.

On his own, Trump has signed order to levy punishing taxes on imports, deport immigrants in the coun-

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try illegally, fire hundreds of thousands of federal workers and freeze congressionally approved spending. There are limits to that approach as he will still need lawmakers' help to extend his 2017 tax cuts.

But the speeches delivered during Trump's first term show his evolution as a leader. His hopeful rhetoric in 2017 gave way to a 2020 State of the Union address in which Democrats were socialists. The event that defined the United States that year — the coronavirus pandemic — received only a brief mention by Trump.

'The torch of truth, liberty and justice'

Going into his 2017 speech, Trump had already shocked the public with his decidedly bleak "American carnage" inaugural address. But for his address to Congress, Trump was more optimistic.

He started with a celebration of civil rights as February is Black History Month, an event the president at the time saw as creating a moral obligation for the country.

"Each American generation passes the torch of truth, liberty and justice in an unbroken chain," Trump said. "That torch is now in our hands. And we will use it to light up the world. I am here tonight to deliver a message of unity and strength, and it is a message deeply delivered from my heart."

This year, Trump goes into his speech after launching a wholesale effort to eliminate any diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in the government, corporations and schools.

In his 2017 address, Trump laid out a seemingly bold set of promises to stop crime, secure the southern border, cut taxes and restore manufacturing as the engine of the U.S. economy. It was still a moment when the president himself was trying to navigate a Washington in which he was an outsider and stranger.

In his remarks, he suggested that tariffs would help iconic American companies such as Harley-Davidson, the motorcycle manufacturer. It was both an expression of his core belief in tariffs and a sign to critics that import taxes might not be the cure-all that Trump claimed.

When Trump spoke in 2017, stock in Harley-Davidson sold for more than \$55 a share. The price fell jaggedly after his remarks and bottomed out during the 2020 pandemic. Since the start of 2025 with Trump's return, the motorcycle maker's share price has fallen further to \$26.

'Our new American moment'

In his 2018 State of the Union, Trump was coming off a big legislative victory with his Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Signed in December 2017, it permanently lowered the corporate tax rate to 21% and included a series of individual income tax cuts set to expire after 2025. Republicans stressed the breadth of the \$2 trillion in tax cuts, while Democrats noted how they were tilted toward the wealthy.

"This is our new American moment," Trump promised. "There has never been a better time to start living the American Dream."

The president noted that employers had paid roughly 3 million workers "tax cut bonuses" and that median family incomes would increase by \$4,000 (which they more than did in 2019, only to fall with the pandemic and the spike in inflation during President Joe Biden's first two years in office).

Trump also noted that "Apple has just announced it plans to invest a total of \$350 billion in America, and hire another 20,000 workers." If that claim sounds familiar, it's because over the past few days, the White House has highlighted Apple's plans to invest \$500 billion over the next four years, even though the company had already planned to increase its domestic manufacturing.

Trump also asked Congress to give the executive branch the power "to remove federal employees who undermine the public trust or fail the American people." The president sought more than \$1 trillion in infrastructure investments (which Biden ultimately provided with a bipartisan law) as well as an immigration bill that would lock down the border but give "a path to citizenship for 1.8 million illegal immigrants who were brought here by their parents at a young age."

'Greatness or gridlock'

By Trump's 2019 State of the Union, Democrats had recaptured the House majority after a midterms shellacking of the Republicans. The president adjusted his rhetoric and called for bipartisan partnership.

"We must choose between greatness or gridlock, results or resistance, vision or vengeance, incredible progress or pointless destruction," he said. "Tonight, I ask you to choose greatness."

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But embedded in that message was also a request that Democrats not investigate the actions of his administration. He suggested without evidence that inquiries into his taxes, conflicts of interest and other matters could undermine economic growth.

"An economic miracle is taking place in the United States — and the only thing that can stop it are foolish wars, politics, or ridiculous partisan investigations," Trump said.

The president again pushed for harsher measures to stop illegal immigration and asked Congress to give him the authority to impose "reciprocal" tariffs, such that the import taxes charged by the United States would match those of other countries.

By December of 2019, the House had impeached Trump for withholding congressionally approved military aid to Ukraine unless that country's leadership investigated Biden's family.

'A socialist takeover'

Having avoided conviction for his first impeachment, Trump took on a decidedly partisan tone in his 2020 State of the Union address as he sought reelection. He bashed the "radical left" and said that Democratic cities were harboring unauthorized immigrants who were violent criminals.

The start of Trump's speech was an unabashed highlight reel of the economy's strength, with him taking sole credit for gains that had technically begun under President Barack Obama and continued through early 2020. The president told the country that Democrats wanted to take away their health insurance in "a socialist takeover."

"To those watching at home tonight, I want you to know: We will never let socialism destroy American health care," Trump said.

In the text of his early February speech, Trump still portrayed the coronavirus pandemic as a problem for China, against which he would safeguard the United States. He ignored economic data showing a loss of momentum in the U.S. manufacturing sector. There was no mention of the national debt or deficits.

"The best is yet to come," Trump promised.

Then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., tore up her copy of the speech afterward. About six weeks after Trump's speech, the country would be in a lockdown as millions of people were laid off due to the pandemic and the government borrowed trillions of dollars to stabilize an ailing economy.

Francis off mechanical ventilation entirely, signaling he's overcome risks from respiratory crisis

By NICOLE WINFIELD and PAOLO SANTALUCIA Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pope Francis remained in stable condition and didn't need any mechanical ventilation Sunday, the Vatican said. It was a sign that he had overcome the possible complications from a respiratory crisis Friday and that his breathing function overall was improving as he recovers from pneumonia.

The 88-year-old pope did continue to receive high flow supplemental oxygen after Friday's coughing episode, which sparked fears of a new lung infection. Doctors in their late Sunday update said Francis remained stable but again referred to the complexity of his overall condition and kept his prognosis at guarded, meaning he wasn't out of danger.

Francis, who has been in the hospital since Feb. 14, rested, prayed in his private chapel and participated in Mass after a morning visit from the Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, and his chief of staff, Archbishop Edgar Pena Parra. The content of their talks wasn't known, but even when at the Vatican, Francis meets at least weekly with them.

He again skipped his weekly noon blessing to avoid even a brief public appearance from the hospital. Instead, the Vatican distributed a message written by the pope from Gemelli Hospital in which he thanked his doctors for their care and well-wishers for their prayers, and prayed again for peace in Ukraine and elsewhere.

"From here, war appears even more absurd," Francis said in the message, which he drafted in recent days. Francis said he was living his hospitalization as an experience of profound solidarity with people who are sick and suffering everywhere.

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"I feel in my heart the 'blessing' that is hidden within frailty, because it is precisely in these moments that we learn even more to trust in the Lord," Francis said in the text. "At the same time, I thank God for giving me the opportunity to share in body and spirit the condition of so many sick and suffering people."

Signs point to a recovery

Many signs indicated he was improving, especially after a respiratory crisis on Friday afternoon that resulted in him inhaling vomit during a coughing fit and raising the possibility of new infection. Doctors aspirated the vomit and put him on noninvasive mechanical ventilation, a mask that pumps oxygen into the lungs.

He used the ventilation on Saturday, alternating it with just supplemental oxygen, and by Sunday no longer needed it.

Doctors also reported he had no fever or raised white blood cell levels, which would have indicated his body was fighting a new infection. The doctors had said they needed 24 to 48 hours after Friday's coughing episode to determine if there were any negative impacts on Francis' overall condition. The passage of time and positive reports Sunday suggested he had overcome the episode successfully.

The pope, who had part of one lung removed as a young man, has lung disease and was admitted to Gemelli on Feb. 14 after a bout of bronchitis worsened and turned into a complex pneumonia in both lungs.

Prayers continued to pour in

Francis' hospitalization has come as the Vatican is marking its Holy Year, drawing pilgrims to Rome from all over. Many have added a pilgrimage destination to their itineraries so they can pray for Francis at the Gemelli hospital, which is around a 20-minute drive from the Vatican, longer in rush hour or on public transport.

The Rev. Riccardo Fumagalli had accompanied a group of young people from Milan to Rome for the Jubilee and would have attended Francis' Angelus prayer in St. Peter's Square on Sunday if he had delivered it as usual. Instead, they went to Gemelli.

"It seemed good to us to come here to express our closeness, especially of these teenagers, to be close to the Holy Father to pray for him, to pray for this moment of illness," he said.

Cancer patient Antonino Cacace was also arriving Sunday at Gemelli from Milan for his own treatment, saying he has to undergo surgery in the coming days and was counting on Francis' prayers.

"I am glad the pope is giving me help," he said. "I am on the ninth (floor) and he is on the 10th (floor). I hope to meet him and see him," he said.

'No Other Land,' an Israeli-Palestinian collaboration, wins Oscar for best documentary

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "No Other Land," the story of Palestinian activists fighting to protect their communities from demolition by the Israeli military, won the Oscar for best documentary on Sunday.

The collaboration between Israeli and Palestinian filmmakers follows activist Basel Adra as he risks arrest to document the destruction of his hometown at the southern edge of the West Bank, which Israeli soldiers are tearing down to use as a military training zone. Adra's pleas fall on deaf ears until he befriends a Jewish Israeli journalist who helps him amplify his story.

"We made this film as Palestinians and Israelis because, together, our voices are stronger," said Israeli journalist and filmmaker Yuval Abraham. He used his acceptance speech to call out his country's government for what he called "the atrocious destruction of Gaza and its people." And he urged Hamas to release all Israeli hostages.

"No Other Land" came into the night a top contender after a successful run on the film festival circuit. It did not, however, find a U.S. distributor after being picked up for distribution in 24 countries. For the Oscar, it beat out "Porcelain War," "Sugarcane," "Black Box Diaries" and "Soundtrack to a Coup d'État."

The documentary was filmed over four years between 2019 and 2023, wrapping production days before Hamas launched its deadly Oct. 7, 2023 attack on Israel that started the war in Gaza.

In the film, Abraham embeds in a community fighting displacement, but he faces some pushback from

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Palestinians who point out his privileges as an Israeli citizen. Adra says he is unable to leave the West Bank and is treated like a criminal, while Abraham can come and go freely.

"When I look at Basel, I see my brother, but we are unequal," Abraham said on stage. "We live in a regime where I am free under civilian law and Basel is under military laws that destroy his life. There is a different path, a political solution without ethnic supremacy, with national rights for both of our people."

United States foreign policy under President Donald Trump is "helping to block this path," he said.

The film is heavily reliant on camcorder footage from Adra's personal archive. He captures Israeli soldiers bulldozing the village school and filling water wells with cement to prevent people from rebuilding.

Residents of the small, rugged region of Masafer Yatta band together after Adra films an Israeli soldier shooting a local man who is protesting the demolition of his home. The man becomes paralyzed, and his mother struggles to take care of him while living in a cave.

"About two months ago, I became a father," Adra said Sunday. "My hope to my daughter (is) that she will not have to live the same life I'm living now, always fearing settlers, violence, home demolitions and forcible displacements. We call on the world to take serious actions to stop the injustice."

Complete list of winners at the 97th Academy Awards

By The Associated Press undefined

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Adrien Brody took home his second leading man Oscar for "The Brutalist," Mikey Madison took home the best actress statuette and "Anora" was crowned best picture on its way to five awards Sunday.

Kieran Culkin won the Oscar for best supporting actor for his work on "A Real Pain" and Zoe Saldana won for her work in "Emilia Pérez." Sean Baker had a stunning night, winning the screenplay, director and editing awards for "Anora."

"Flow" beat "The Wild Robot" for best animated feature film while Paul Tazewell became the first Black man to win an Oscar for costume design for his work on "Wicked."

Here's the complete list of winners at the 97th annual Academy Awards:

Best picture: "Anora"

Best Actor: Adrien Brody, "The Brutalist"

Best Actress: Mikey Madison, "Anora"

Director: Sean Baker, "Anora"

Best Supporting Actress: Zoe Saldana, "Emilia Pérez"

Best Supporting Actor: Kieran Culkin, "A Real Pain"

International Film: "I'm Still Here"

Documentary Feature: "No Other Land"

Original Screenplay: "Anora," Sean Baker

Adapted Screenplay: "Conclave," Peter Straughan

Original Score: "The Brutalist," Daniel Blumberg

Original Song: "El Mal" from "Emilia Pérez"

Animated Film: "Flow"

Visual Effects: "Dune: Part Two"

Costume Design: "Wicked," Paul Tazewell

Cinematography: "The Brutalist," Lol Crawley

Documentary Short Film: "The Only Girl in the Orchestra"

Best Sound: "Dune: Part Two"

Production Design: "Wicked"

Makeup and Hairstyling: "The Substance"

Film Editing: "Anora," Sean Baker

Live Action Short Film: "I'm Not a Robot"

Animated Short Film: "In the Shadow of the Cypress"

Trump's next first speech to Congress is bound to have little resemblance to his last first one

By CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The nation will hear a new president sing a far different tune in his prime-time address before Congress on Tuesday night. Some Americans will lustily sing along. Others will plug their ears.

The old tune is out — the one where a president declares “we strongly support NATO,” “I believe strongly in free trade” and Washington must do more to promote clean air, clean water, women’s health and civil rights.

That was Donald Trump in 2017.

That was back when gestures of bipartisanship and appeals to national unity were still in the mix on the night the president comes before Congress to hold forth on the state of the union. Trump, then new at the job, was just getting his footing in the halls of power and not ready to stomp on everything.

It would be three more years before Americans would see Democratic Rep. Nancy Pelosi of California, then the House speaker and his State of the Union host in the chamber, performatively rip up a copy of Trump’s speech in disgust over its contents.

On Tuesday, Americans who tune into Trump’s address will see whether he speaks to the whole country, as he mostly did in his first such speech in the chamber as president, or only to the roughly half who voted for him.

They will see also whether he hews to ceremony and common courtesies, as he did in 2017, or goes full bore on showmanship and incitement.

How Democratic lawmakers will react — whether they make a scene — is another question. At least four have invited fired federal workers to come as their guests.

Trump gives the speech days after assailing Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to his face and before the cameras in the Oval Office for not expressing sufficient gratitude for U.S. support in Ukraine’s war with Russia. It was a display of public humiliation by an American president to an allied foreign leader with no parallel in anyone’s memory.

Jarrett Borden, walking to lunch on Hollywood Boulevard in Hollywood, Florida, this past week, expressed ambivalence about Trump, having heard a lot of “hogwash” from him even while liking some of what he has done. Borden anticipates a good show Tuesday and will watch.

“I want to see if he’s going to leave the mic open for Elon Musk, like it’s an open mic at a club or something,” he said, citing the billionaire architect of Trump’s civil service purge. “This is what he’s been doing recently, which is comical.”

In Philadelphia, visual artist Nova Villanueva will spend Tuesday evening doing something — anything — else. She is into avoiding politics and social media altogether these fraught days.

“Yeah, it’s kind of sad,” she said. “It’s almost like I have to be ignorant to be at peace with myself and my life right now.”

A new president’s first speech to Congress is not designated a State of the Union address, coming so close to the Jan. 20 inauguration. But it serves the same purpose, offering an annual accounting of what has been done, what is ahead and what condition the country is in, as the president sees it.

It is customary in modern times for the president to say the state of the union is strong, no matter what a mess it may be in. Trump won the election saying the state of the union was in shambles and he was going to make it right.

The Trump who addressed Congress on Feb. 28, 2017, is recognizable now, despite the measured tone and content of that speech. After all, he had already shocked the political class by assailing “American carnage” from the inaugural stage.

He told Congress that night he wanted NATO members to spend more on their armed forces, wanted trade to be “fair” as well as free, and wanted foreign countries in crises to be made stable enough so that people who fled to the U.S. could go back home. But he did not open his first term with the wrenching turns in foreign policy, civil service firings, stirrings of mass deportation or cries of “drill, baby, drill” of today.

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In a line that could have come from any president of either party, Trump noted in his 2017 speech that, "with the help of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, we have formed a council with our neighbors in Canada to help ensure that women entrepreneurs have access to the networks, markets and capital they need to start a business and live out their financial dreams."

Now he belittles Trudeau as "governor" of a land he wants to make the 51st state and is about to slam with tariffs, along with Mexico. Canadians, not known for displays of patriotism, are seething about their neighbor and rushing to buy and fly their flag.

In Philadelphia, small-time entrepreneur Michael Mangraviti cannot help but take some satisfaction in Trump's scouring of the bureaucracy as the firings pile up with scant regard for how well people did their jobs or how those jobs helped keep services to the public running.

"He said for years and years, 'Drain the swamp, drain the swamp,'" Mangraviti said. "But, you know, now is the time to actually drain the swamp."

"We've seen time and time and time again that the government is horribly, horribly ineffective at everything it wants to do," he went on. "The fact that they're actually taking action on something that they say they're going to do, the fact that they're ready to take the ax and take it to our government, is something I appreciate."

To Cassandra Piper, a Philadelphia instrumentalist, Trump's move to stop making pennies was a "fine decision" — unlike everything else he has said and done.

"I comprehensively disapprove of the changes that are being made," Piper said, stopping to speak while walking by the Liberty Bell Center. "Not that I was all too happy with the status quo beforehand in the first place, but there's absolutely no good that can come from the inhumanity of mass deportation, something that this country has already been scarred by."

So, too, with Trump's selection of vaccination skeptic Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as health secretary and his choice of Musk to lead the effort to "effectively plunder the government of its resources," in Piper's view.

In Hollywood, Florida, Borden, who is Black, said that to the extent Trump can take money that Washington spends overseas and pump it into the U.S. economy, "then you are making America great again. But do that without the racial overtones. Do that without the negative energy, and we're going to be OK."

"I think the world is just the world, and we should all just love each other," he said.

Abraham Lincoln might have agreed, as he summoned the "better angels of our nature" in an inaugural speech, a month before the Civil War, that pleaded with Americans not to "break our bonds of affection."

Trump had something to say on that subject, too, in 2017: "We all bleed the same blood."

Private lunar lander Blue Ghost aces moon touchdown with a special delivery for NASA

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — A private lunar lander carrying a drill, vacuum and other experiments for NASA touched down on the moon Sunday, the latest in a string of companies looking to kickstart business on Earth's celestial neighbor ahead of astronaut missions.

Firefly Aerospace's Blue Ghost lander descended from lunar orbit on autopilot, aiming for the slopes of an ancient volcanic dome in an impact basin on the moon's northeastern edge of the near side.

Confirmation of successful touchdown came from the company's Mission Control outside Austin, Texas, following the action some 225,000 miles (360,000 kilometers) away.

"You all stuck the landing. We're on the moon," Firefly's Will Coogan, chief engineer for the lander, reported.

An upright and stable landing makes Firefly — a startup founded a decade ago — the first private outfit to put a spacecraft on the moon without crashing or falling over. Even countries have faltered, with only five claiming success: Russia, the U.S., China, India and Japan.

A half hour after landing, Blue Ghost started to send back pictures from the surface, the first one a selfie somewhat obscured by the sun's glare. The second shot included the home planet, a blue dot glimmering

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in the blackness of space.

Two other companies' landers are hot on Blue Ghost's heels, with the next one expected to join it on the moon later this week.

Blue Ghost — named after a rare U.S. species of fireflies — had its size and shape going for it. The squat four-legged lander stands 6-foot-6 (2 meters) tall and 11 feet (3.5 meters) wide, providing extra stability, according to the company.

Launched in mid-January from Florida, the lander carried 10 experiments to the moon for NASA. The space agency paid \$101 million for the delivery, plus \$44 million for the science and tech on board. It's the third mission under NASA's commercial lunar delivery program, intended to ignite a lunar economy of competing private businesses while scouting around before astronauts show up later this decade.

Firefly's Ray Allensworth said the lander skipped over hazards including boulders to land safely. Allensworth said the team continued to analyze the data to figure out the lander's exact position, but all indications suggest it landed within the 328-foot (100-meter) target zone in Mare Crisium.

The demos should get two weeks of run time, before lunar daytime ends and the lander shuts down.

It carried a vacuum to suck up moon dirt for analysis and a drill to measure temperature as deep as 10 feet (3 meters) below the surface. Also on board: a device for eliminating abrasive lunar dust — a scourge for NASA's long-ago Apollo moonwalkers, who got it caked all over their spacesuits and equipment.

On its way to the moon, Blue Ghost beamed back exquisite pictures of the home planet. The lander continued to stun once in orbit around the moon, with detailed shots of the moon's gray pockmarked surface. At the same time, an on-board receiver tracked and acquired signals from the U.S. GPS and European Galileo constellations, an encouraging step forward in navigation for future explorers.

The landing set the stage for a fresh crush of visitors angling for a piece of lunar business.

Another lander — a tall and skinny 15-footer (4 meters tall) built and operated by Houston-based Intuitive Machines — is due to land on the moon Thursday. It's aiming for the bottom of the moon, just 100 miles (160 kilometers) from the south pole. That's closer to the pole than the company got last year with its first lander, which broke a leg and tipped over.

Despite the tumble, Intuitive Machines' lander put the U.S. back on the moon for the first time since NASA astronauts closed out the Apollo program in 1972.

A third lander from the Japanese company ispace is still three months from landing. It shared a rocket ride with Blue Ghost from Cape Canaveral on Jan. 15, taking a longer, windier route. Like Intuitive Machines, ispace is also attempting to land on the moon for the second time. Its first lander crashed in 2023.

The moon is littered with wreckage not only from ispace, but dozens of other failed attempts over the decades.

NASA wants to keep up a pace of two private lunar landers a year, realizing some missions will fail, said the space agency's top science officer Nicky Fox.

"It really does open up a whole new way for us to get more science to space and to the moon," Fox said.

Unlike NASA's successful Apollo moon landings that had billions of dollars behind them and ace astronauts at the helm, private companies operate on a limited budget with robotic craft that must land on their own, said Firefly CEO Jason Kim.

Kim said everything went like clockwork.

"We got some moon dust on our boots," Kim said.

Trudeau to bring up Trump's threat to annex Canada in meeting with King Charles

By ROB GILLIES Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will meet with King Charles III, the country's head of state, on Monday where he will discuss U.S. President Donald Trump's threats to make Canada the 51st state.

The king has come under criticism in Canada for being silent about Trump's threats to annex Canada.

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Trudeau said in London on Sunday he will discuss matters of importance to Canadians with Charles and said "nothing seems more important to Canadians right now than standing up for our sovereignty and our independence as a nation."

Charles is the head of state in Canada, which is a member of the British Commonwealth of former colonies. Overall, the antiroyal movement in Canada is small, but the silence of the monarch on Trump's threats have spurred talk in recent days.

Former Alberta Premier Jason Kenney said "for Canadians disappointed that King Charles has not commented" on Trump's threats he can only act on the advice of Canada's prime minister.

"The Government of Canada should ask the Head of State to underscore Canadian sovereignty," Kenney posted on X.

The king, who met Sunday with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has invited Trump to come to Scotland for a state visit.

"Great news that the Prime Minister will be having an audience with the King of Canada tomorrow. Hopefully this result in the King making a statement regarding his Canadian Realm," constitutional lawyer Lyle Skinner posed on X.

Academic Philippe Lagassé said the UK government will likely fight possible advice from Trudeau for the king to speak out on Canada's behalf but Daniel Béland, a political science professor at McGill University in Montreal, said many Canadians would want a public statement from the king and they might be mad if that doesn't happen.

Béland said he hopes Trudeau raises it with U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer first.

"This is a highly delicate diplomatic matter and these three players must tread very carefully, not only because of the tense international context and President Trump's potential negative public reaction but also because any mistake here could hurt the image and political legitimacy of the monarchy," Béland said.

Though Canadians are somewhat indifferent to the monarchy, many had great affection for the late Queen Elizabeth, whose silhouette marks their coins. She was the head of state for more than 40% of Canada's existence and visited the country 22 times as monarch.

Visits by Charles over the years have attracted sparse crowds.

"Canadians will need to decide what purpose King Charles III serves as King of Canada if he can't even speak up for our sovereignty," Artur Wilczynski, a former Canadian public servant, posted on X.

Abolishing the monarchy would mean changing the constitution. That's an inherently risky undertaking, given how delicately it is engineered to unite a nation of 41 million people that embraces English-speakers, French-speakers, Indigenous tribes and a constant flow of new immigrants.

Republicans once maligned Medicaid. Now some see a program too big to touch

By AMANDA SEITZ Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Every time a baby is born in Louisiana, where Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson handily won reelection last year, there's more than a 60% chance taxpayers will finance the birth through Medicaid.

In Republican Rep. David Valadao's central California district, 6 out of 10 people use Medicaid to pay for doctor visits and emergency room trips.

And one-third of the population is covered by Medicaid in GOP Sen. Lisa Murkowski's Alaska, one of the nation's costliest corners for health care.

Each of these Republicans — and some of their conservative colleagues — lined up last week to defend Medicaid, in a departure from long-held GOP policies. Republicans, who already have ruled out massive cuts to Social Security and Medicare, are turning their attention to siphoning as much as \$880 billion from Medicaid over the next decade to help finance \$4.5 trillion in tax cuts.

But as a deadline to avoid a partial government shutdown nears, hesitation is surfacing among Washington's Republican lawmakers — once reliable critics of lofty government social welfare programs such

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as Medicaid — who say that deep cuts to the health care program could prove too untenable for people back home.

"I've heard from countless constituents who tell me the only way they can afford health care is through programs like Medicaid," Valadao said on the House floor. "And I will not support a final reconciliation bill that risks leaving them behind."

And on Wednesday, President Donald Trump, too, made his position on Medicaid clear: "We're not going to touch it."

States and the federal government jointly pay for Medicaid, which offers nearly-free health care coverage for roughly 80 million poor and disabled Americans, including millions of children. It cost \$880 billion to operate in 2023.

Johnson has ruled out two of the biggest potential cuts: paying fixed, shrunken rates to states for care and changing the calculation for the share of federal dollars that each state receives for Medicaid. Just a few years ago, Johnson spearheaded a report that lobbied for some of those changes during the first Trump administration.

Johnson insisted in a CNN interview that the focus will instead be ferreting out "fraud, waste and abuse" in Medicaid, although it's unlikely to deliver the savings Republicans seek.

GOP pressure over Medicaid is mounting, with some state party leaders joining the calls to preserve the program. States are already struggling with the growing cost of sicker patients and could be left to cover more if the federal government pulls back. In some states, the federal government picks up over 80%.

More than a dozen Minnesota GOP lawmakers wrote the president recently warning that "too deep of a cut is unmanageable in any instance." Gov. Joe Lombardo, R-Nev., told Congress in a letter that "proposed reductions would put lives at risk." In Alaska, state Senate Majority Leader Cathy Giessel, a Republican and nurse, cited "huge concerns" during a floor speech.

Nationally, 55% of Americans said the government spends too little on Medicaid, according to a January poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

"It's now a very popular program that touches a very broad cross-section of American society," said Drew Altman, president of the health care research firm KFF. "Roughly half of the American people say that they or a family member have at one time been served by the program."

Significant changes to Medicaid are still on the table. They have to be for Republicans get the savings they need to pay for tax cuts.

Work requirements, which could save as much as \$109 billion over the next decade, seem to have solid support among GOP members, with some individual Republican-led states already moving to implement them.

Republicans also could consider cuts in benefits or coverage, as well as eliminating a provider tax that states use to finance Medicaid, Altman added.

Democrats warn that reductions are inevitable and could be dire.

Starting Monday, TV ads will caution people across 20 congressional districts that hospitals are at risk of closing and millions of people could lose coverage if Republicans cut Medicaid "to fund massive tax cuts for Elon Musk and billionaires." The Democratic super political action committee House Majority Forward has launched the seven-figure campaign.

Trump and Republicans have for years called for lowering government spending on health care, but they have struggled to formulate a serious plan that gains traction. Trump, for example, has spent nearly a decade arguing for an overhaul of the Affordable Care Act. His efforts to repeal the Obama-era national health care law failed during his first term, and in his most recent presidential campaign he offered only "concepts of a plan" to adapt the program.

Michael Cannon, a director of health studies at libertarian Cato Institute, believes Medicaid needs an overhaul because it is a significant part of the federal budget and a contributor to the nation's growing debt.

But Republicans, he said, are not looking at serious ways to drive down the cost of health care.

"The only reason for the cuts right now is to pay for the tax cuts," Cannon said. "None of them are talking about the need to do better health reform."

Israel has cut off all supplies to Gaza. Here's what that means

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

Israel has cut off the entry of all food and other goods into Gaza in an echo of the siege it imposed in the earliest days of its war with Hamas. The United Nations and other humanitarian aid providers are sharply criticizing the decision and calling it a violation of international law.

"A tool of extortion," Saudi Arabia's foreign ministry said. "A reckless act of collective punishment," Oxfam said. Key mediator Egypt accused Israel of using "starvation as a weapon."

Hunger has been an issue throughout the war for Gaza's over 2 million people, and some aid experts had warned of possible famine. Now there is concern about losing the progress that experts reported under the past six weeks of a ceasefire.

Israel is trying to pressure the Hamas militant group to agree to what Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government describes as a U.S. proposal to extend the ceasefire's first phase instead of beginning negotiations on the far more difficult second phase. In phase two, Hamas would release the remaining living hostages in return for Israel's withdrawal from Gaza and a lasting ceasefire.

Here's a look at what Israel's decision means and the reactions.

No word from the U.S.

The ceasefire's first phase ended early Sunday. Minutes later, Israel said it supported a new proposal to extend that phase through the Jewish holiday of Passover in mid-April. It called the proposal a U.S. one from Mideast envoy Steve Witkoff. Israel also warned it could resume the war after the first phase if it believes negotiations are ineffective.

Negotiations on the second phase were meant to start a month ago, increasing the uncertainty around the fragile truce. Hamas has insisted that those talks begin.

Later Sunday, Israel announced the immediate cutoff of aid to Gaza.

The Trump administration has not issued a statement about Israel's announcement or its decision to cut off aid. It's also not clear when Witkoff will visit the Middle East again. He had been expected to visit last week.

The U.S. under the Biden administration pressed Israel to allow more aid into Gaza, threatening to limit weapons support. Aid organizations repeatedly criticized Israeli restrictions on items entering the small coastal territory, while hundreds of trucks with aid at times waited to enter.

Israel says it has allowed in enough aid. It has blamed shortages on what it called the U.N.'s inability to distribute it, and accused Hamas militants of siphoning off aid.

For months before the ceasefire, some Palestinians reported limiting meals, searching through garbage and foraging for edible weeds as food supplies ran low.

600 trucks of aid a day

The ceasefire's first phase took effect on Jan. 19 and allowed a surge of aid into Gaza. An average of 600 trucks with aid entered per day. Those daily 600 trucks of aid were meant to continue entering through all three phases of the ceasefire.

However, Hamas says less than 50% of the agreed-upon number of trucks carrying fuel, for generators and other uses, were allowed in. Hamas also says the entry of live animals and animal feed, key for food security, were denied entry.

Still, Palestinians in Gaza were able to stock up on some supplies. "The ceasefire brought some much-needed relief to Gaza, but it was far from enough to cover the immense needs," the Norwegian Refugee Council said Sunday.

Israel's announcement came hours after Muslims in Gaza marked the first breaking of the fast during the holy month of Ramadan, with long tables set for collective meals snaking through the rubble of war-destroyed buildings.

The sudden aid cutoff sent Palestinians hurrying to markets. Prices in Gaza "tripled immediately," Mahmoud Shalabi, the Medical Aid for Palestinians' deputy director of programs in northern Gaza, told The Associated Press.

Legal implications

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Prominent in the immediate criticism of Israel's aid cutoff were statements calling the decision a violation. "International humanitarian law is clear: We must be allowed access to deliver vital lifesaving aid," said the U.N. humanitarian chief, Tom Fletcher.

Hours after Israel's announcement, five non-governmental groups asked Israel's Supreme Court for an interim order barring the state from preventing aid from entering Gaza, claiming the move violates Israel's obligations under international law and amounts to a war crime: "These obligations cannot be condition on political considerations."

Last year, the International Criminal Court said there was reason to believe Israel had used "starvation as a method of warfare" when it issued an arrest warrant for Netanyahu. The allegation is also central to South Africa's case at the International Court of Justice accusing Israel of genocide.

On Sunday, Kenneth Roth, former head of Human Rights Watch, said Israel as an occupying power has an "absolute duty" to facilitate humanitarian aid under the Geneva Conventions, and called Israel's decision "a resumption of the war-crime starvation strategy" that led to the ICC warrant.

What to know about Andrew Cuomo

NEW YORK (AP) — From the moment he resigned as New York's governor, people have speculated that it was only a matter of time before Andrew Cuomo would try to barge his way back into politics.

That day came Saturday, when the Democrat announced he was running for mayor of New York City.

Now, the big question is whether voters want him back.

In his campaign announcement video Saturday and a speech Sunday, Cuomo sought to portray New York as a city in crisis. He cast himself as a tough manager who can tackle problems like homelessness and sky-high housing costs.

Yet his entry into the race prompted immediate condemnation from some who said he doesn't deserve a second chance.

Here's a look at how we got here:

Why Cuomo resigned

Cuomo quit the governor's office in August 2021 when it looked certain he would be impeached.

A report commissioned by the state's attorney general concluded that Cuomo sexually harassed at least 11 women. Some had complained about unwanted touches, flirting, kisses and suggestive comments about their sex lives or appearance.

One aide filed a criminal complaint, saying Cuomo groped her breast. The Albany district attorney declined to prosecute, saying there wasn't enough proof.

Many top Democrats pushed Cuomo to quit, including then-President Joe Biden, former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the state's two U.S. senators, Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand.

Cuomo apologized for some of his conduct, saying he didn't realize it made people uncomfortable, but he denied the most serious allegations, particularly the alleged sexual assault.

What do Cuomo's accusers think of his comeback?

The first woman to publicly accuse Cuomo of harassment, Lindsey Boylan, wrote in an essay in Vanity Fair that letting him return to public office would be a mistake.

He has not changed, she wrote, citing among other things a "scorched earth" campaign to blacken the reputations of his accusers.

"Although some pundits have been insisting that enough time has passed — and that certain men who have fallen from power should be allowed to regain it — that stance is misguided because men like Cuomo never really lose power," she wrote. "They maintain their positions because people who are very powerful themselves are still afraid of them — a dynamic that speaks to our political moment."

What does Cuomo say?

In his initial public remarks, he only addressed the sexual harassment matter indirectly.

"Did I make mistakes, some painfully? Definitely, and I believe I learned from them and that I am a better person for it and I hope to show that every day," he said in his announcement video.

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"But I promise you this: I know what needs to be done and I know how to do it, and I will give it my all to get the job done — and it will get done."

Previously, he has blamed "cancel culture" for his ouster.

What did he get done as governor?

Cuomo pushed through legalization of same-sex marriage in New York in 2011.

His administration overhauled terminals at LaGuardia Airport, created a new train hall at Pennsylvania Station and replaced a key Hudson River crossing, the Tappan Zee bridge.

He signed laws that raised the minimum wage to \$15, instituted paid family leave for workers and oversaw rebuilding programs after Hurricane Sandy caused catastrophic damage on the state's coast.

The Democrat's administration also created an economic revitalization program that poured \$1 billion into the Buffalo metropolitan area, including deep subsidies to a factory now operated by Tesla.

That program wound up spawning a corruption scandal that led to several Cuomo allies and one of his closest political advisers getting indicted, though the U.S. Supreme Court ultimately overturned their key convictions.

What about COVID-19?

Cuomo gained national prominence when the pandemic began killing thousands of people in New York in 2020. His daily briefings on the pandemic were watched by Americans far beyond New York.

He imposed some of the nation's strictest social-distancing rules and shutdowns and then set up vaccination sites across the state when shots became available.

But Cuomo has been criticized for his pandemic response, too. The administration substantially understated deaths in nursing homes as part of an effort to deflect criticism of a policy, early in the pandemic, that barred the homes from refusing to readmit COVID-19 patients discharged from hospitals. It remains unclear whether that short-lived policy had an impact on deaths.

Why come back now?

Cuomo has a unique opportunity in New York City's mayoral contest.

The incumbent mayor, Democrat Eric Adams, was indicted on federal corruption charges last year. Prosecutors said Adams accepted free or discounted travel and illegal campaign contributions from people trying to gain his influence.

Adams' political problems only got deeper after the new leaders of the U.S. Justice Department instructed prosecutors to drop the case so that Adams could assist in President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown.

That's led to suspicion that Adams is too beholden to Trump, who remains deeply unpopular in the city. A judge is weighing what to do with the criminal case.

Most of the rest of the candidates in the primary are well to the political left of Adams and Cuomo.

Unless another big-name moderate candidate emerges, that might leave voters having to pick between liberals whose views they might not share and two scandal-scarred Democratic heavyweights.

Cuomo is betting he'll come out on top.

Following Trump's lead, his allies lash out at Ukraine's Zelenskyy and suggest he may need to resign

By JONATHAN J. COOPER Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — President Donald Trump's senior aides and allies lashed out at Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy from Washington as he attended a European summit Sunday in London to rally international support for his military's fight against the Russian invasion.

Following Trump's lead, White House officials and Republicans in Congress used news show appearances to demand that Zelenskyy display more gratitude for U.S. support and an openness to potential war-ending concessions to Russian President Vladimir Putin. Some suggested Zelenskyy should consider resigning even as Ukrainians rally around him.

But they offered little clarity as to what Zelenskyy and Ukraine could do after Friday's Oval Office meeting in which Trump and Vice President JD Vance berated him before canceling the signature of an economic

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agreement between Washington and Kyiv. The dispute leaves the future of that relationship in question, as well as the prospects for ending a conflict that began when the Kremlin invaded in February 2022.

White House national security adviser Mike Waltz, who while in Congress went to Ukraine during the first year of the war to meet Zelenskyy and once compared him to wartime British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, said Zelenskyy's behavior at the White House was "incredibly disrespectful."

Asked about that Churchill-Zelenskyy comparison, Waltz noted that Churchill was voted out of office in the final months of World War II.

Churchill "was a man for a moment, but he did not then transition England into the next phase," Waltz said. "And it's unclear whether President Zelenskyy, particularly after what we saw Friday, is ready to transition to Ukraine to an end to this war and to negotiate and have to compromise."

Waltz said a negotiated end to the war would involve territorial concessions from Ukraine as well as "Russian concessions on security guarantees," but he did not offer any more details about what Moscow would have to do.

House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., echoed the suggestion that Zelenskyy may need to step aside.

"Either he needs to come to his senses and come back to the table in gratitude, or someone else needs to lead the country to do that," Johnson said. "I mean, it's up to the Ukrainians to figure that out. But I can tell you that we are reexerting peace through strength."

Trump's director of national intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, said the contentious meeting has led to "a huge rift in the relationship" and she took issue with Zelenskyy telling Fox News afterward that he did not think he did anything wrong.

"There's going to have to be a rebuilding of any kind of interest in good faith negotiations, I think, before President Trump is going to be willing to reengage on this," she said.

The coordinated campaign of pressure from Washington played out as Zelenskyy and European leaders came to terms with Trump's overhaul of U.S. foreign policy. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the United Kingdom would use 1.6 billion pounds (\$2 billion) in export financing to supply 5,000 air defense missiles for Ukraine.

Support for Zelenskyy among congressional Republicans has been scant after the Oval Office meeting. But Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski, one of the few GOP lawmakers willing to break with Trump publicly, criticized the Republican president's stance toward the Ukrainians.

"I know foreign policy is not for the faint of heart, but right now, I am sick to my stomach as the administration appears to be walking away from our allies and embracing Putin, a threat to democracy and U.S. values around the world," Murkowski wrote on X on Saturday.

Sen. James Lankford, R-Okla., said it was inappropriate for senators to call for Zelenskyy to leave office and predicted that such a move would "spiral Ukraine into chaos right now."

Others were more vocal in support of Zelenskyy.

Millions of Americans "are embarrassed, are ashamed," said Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt.

"Our job is to defend the 250-year tradition that we have of being the democratic leader of the world, not turn our backs on a struggling country that is trying to do the right thing," Sanders said.

Waltz appeared on CNN's "State of the Union," Johnson, Sanders and Lankford were on NBC's "Meet the Press," and Gabbard spoke on "Fox News Sunday"

'Captain America: Brave New World' stays at the top on weak Oscars weekend at the box office

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "Captain America: Brave New World" kept falling but still hovered above all others at a weak weekend box office.

The latest Disney-Marvel offering brought in another \$15 million according to studio estimates Sunday, when most of Hollywood's attention was on the Oscars.

The Anthony Mackie-led "Captain America: Brave New World" opened strong at about \$120 million on

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a three-day weekend last month, but plunged to \$28.2 million last week in one of the most significant second-week drops for a Marvel movie. It's earned \$163.7 since its release.

It was slammed by many critics and audiences, failing to bring the Marvel reset some had hoped for. That task now falls to May's "Thunderbolts" and July's "Fantastic Four: First Steps." But "Captain America" will face little competition through March, and could remain at No. 1 for a while.

The weekend's only significant new release, Focus Features' "Last Breath," earned just \$7.8 million. The based-on-a-true-story adventure starring Woody Harrelson, Simi Liu and Chris Lemons is about a routine deep-sea diving mission that goes terribly wrong when a young diver is stranded some 300 feet below the surface.

It got strong reviews, with Lindsey Bahr of The Associated Press praising the "white-knuckle experience" and "pure suspense and anxiety" it brings.

At No. 3 was Oz Perkins' "The Monkey," which brought in \$6.4 million for a two-week total of \$24.6 million. It's among the strongest openings for indie distributor Neon, whose film "Anora," and its director Sean Baker could make a major mark at the Oscars later Sunday.

"The Monkey" marks another successful low-budget collaboration between Perkins and Neon, whose "Longlegs" brought in \$126.9 million globally last year.

"Paddington in Peru" was fourth with \$4.5 million in its third weekend for a total of \$31.4 million.

Top 10 movies by domestic box office

With final domestic figures being released Monday, this list factors in the estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore.

1. "Captain America: Brave New World," \$15 million.

2. "Last Breath," \$7.8 million.

3. "The Monkey," \$6.4 million.

4. "Paddington in Peru," \$4.5 million.

5. "Dog Man," \$4.2 million.

6. "Mufasa: The Lion King," \$1.9 million.

7. "Ne Zha 2," \$1.8 million.

8. "Heart Eyes," \$1.3 million.

9. "The Unbreakable Boy," \$1.2 million.

10. "One of Them Days," \$925,000.

Tributes pour in for R&B singer Angie Stone after her death at 63 in a highway crash

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — Fans are remembering the voice and songs of trailblazer Angie Stone after her death at 63 in a weekend crash on an Alabama highway as she traveled from a performance.

The Grammy-nominated R&B singer was a member of the all-female hip-hop trio The Sequence and known for the hit song "Wish I Didn't Miss You." She found a sweet spot in the early 2000s as neo-soul began to dominate R&B.

In a recent Instagram post, Stone told fans she was excited about upcoming events and "getting back in the mix."

"A lot of stuff is going on that I don't want to just let out of the bag just yet," she said. "But you can see that there's a big grin on my face."

The tributes to Stone on social media included one from rap artist MC Hammer, who posted a video featuring Stone's song "Brotha," writing "I can't tell you how many days this song blessed my Soul. R.I.P. Angie Stone."

Actor and singer Jennifer Hudson expressed disbelief in a social media post.

"What a loss !!! Angie Stone was a true pioneer," Hudson wrote. "Another one of our great soul singers gone too soon. Prayers up for her family and loved ones!"

The Alabama Highway Patrol said the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter van that Stone was traveling in overturned

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on Interstate 65 early Saturday before being hit by a 2021 Freightliner Cascadia truck. Stone was pronounced dead at the scene, the highway patrol said in a statement.

The crash occurred about 5 miles (8 kilometers) south of the Montgomery city limits. The van's driver and seven others were taken to a hospital for treatment. Officials continue to investigate the crash.

The singer-songwriter created hits like "No More Rain (In This Cloud)" which reached No. 1 for 10 weeks on Billboard's Adult R&B airplay chart, "Baby" with legendary soul singer Betty Wright, another No. 1 hit, and "Wish I Didn't Miss You" and "Brotha." Her 2001 album "Mahogany Soul" reached No. 22 on the Billboard 200, while 2007's "The Art Of Love & War" peaked at No. 11.

"Rest in Power, Angie Stone. A true pioneer, a soulful storyteller, and a voice that helped shape the sound of R&B," the NAACP Image Awards posted on social media.

The church-grown singer was born in Columbia, South Carolina. She helped form The Sequence, the first all-female group on the hip-hop trailblazing imprint Sugar Hill Records, becoming one of the first female groups to record a rap song. The group's "Funk You Up," which has been sampled by numerous artists, including Dr. Dre. Stone later joined the trio Vertical Hold before launching her solo career.

Actor and comedian Jamie Foxx said Stone would be missed "painfully."

"I know they say that God doesn't make any mistakes... but man this one hurts...," Foxx said. "Angie Stone was an incredible songwriter, and incredible artist and incredible person ... never thought in 1 million years that this would happen..."

Stone was also remembered by the Rev. Bernice King, daughter of the late Martin Luther King Jr. and CEO of the King Center.

"So heartbreaking" King posted on social media. "Rest well, soul sister. #AngieStone"

Stone's performance at the Mobile Area Mardi Gras Association's Grand Marshal's Ball on Friday night was "nothing short of phenomenal," according to the organization's president, Isadore B. Sims. In a statement, Sims said they would cherish memories of Stone's talent and warm spirit.

"Her talent captivated everyone in attendance, and her presence truly elevated the event," Sims said. "Never could we have imagined that it would be the last time we would have the honor of witnessing her perform."

At the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association's men's championship basketball game in Baltimore on Saturday, where Stone was scheduled to perform during halftime, Chaplain Pastor Jerome Barber called for a moment of silence.

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority mourned the loss of their sorority sister.

"Renowned for her contributions to the R&B and neo-soul genres, Stone's music has resonated with fans for decades," the sorority said in a statement, remembering her diabetes awareness efforts and work with the sorority's Elder Care initiatives and Zetas Helping Other People Excel.

Oscar fever for Brazil's Fernanda Torres has made her this year's Carnival muse

By GABRIELA SÁ PESSOA Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — Brazil's Carnival muse this year isn't one of the divas or drum queens parading with the Rio de Janeiro samba schools. It's Fernanda Torres, who's competing for the best actress Oscar on Sunday.

The Oscars fall smack in the middle of Carnival, Brazil's largest celebration, which runs through Tuesday. During the five-day revelry, the rest of the universe usually fades into the background as Brazilians cut loose and indulge.

Not this year, and the keen focus on the Oscars speaks to Brazil's pride for its culture and desire to be recognized on the global stage.

"Just imagine, her winning the Oscar on Carnival Sunday. It'll be a double celebration," Clarissa Salles, 33, told The Associated Press while buying a replica Oscar statuette in Sao Paulo for her costume.

Torres is nominated for her performance as the lead in the Walter Salles-directed "I'm Still Here," which

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is also nominated for best picture and best international feature. Excitement around the awards has prompted TV Globo, Brazil's largest network, to resume live coverage of the ceremony after a five-year hiatus. It will forgo the nationwide airing of high-ratings Carnival parades, instead broadcasting the Oscars everywhere except Rio.

Bars and nightclubs across Brazil are organizing Oscar watch parties and results will even be shown on a big screen to the tens of thousands of spectators gathered at Rio's Sambadrome for the parades.

"Today, all of Brazil only thinks about this," President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva said on his social media channels. "Everybody is cheering for 'I'm Still Here' and Fernanda Torres at the Oscars."

As far away as the Amazon, an Indigenous community in the Inhaa-be village promoted a screening of the film on Friday. With singing and barefoot dance, the group made up mostly of women performed their war ritual followed by their victory ritual.

"We dance around the people, positioning our thoughts and emotions so that this energy can reach where it needs to go, which is to Fernanda Torres," shaman A-yá Kukamíria said.

At one point, she fanned smoke over a sign featuring the golden statuette and the words: "The Oscar is ours!"

'A Movement'

Masks of Torres' face, plus T-shirts and caps featuring her reaction to her Golden Globe nomination — "Life is worth it!" — are everywhere. The phrase appeared on a banner at Cordao do Boitata, one of Rio's most traditional street parties.

She has even inspired entire Carnival street parties paying her tribute. Last Sunday, revelers in Rio carried a banner saying "Fernanda Torres' Impersonators" while dressed as some of her beloved TV characters.

"That's peak fame in Brazil — to become a Carnival costume," Torres said Feb. 10 at the Santa Barbara Film Festival. "I see a lot of me in the streets. I'm proud."

And plastic Oscar statuettes are flying off retailers' shelves.

The Torres craze is "a feeling, a movement," and an Oscar win would be like the national soccer team lifting a World Cup trophy, feminist writer Milly Lacombe, who chronicles sports and culture, said.

"Fractured by political divisions, Brazilians were thirsty for something that could unite them," Lacombe said. "We didn't know where it would come from. And it came from a very unexpected place — the Brazilian film industry."

From TV roles to Oscar glory

Since its November release in the country, "I'm Still Here" has drawn over 5 million Brazilians to theaters. Last week, the film was still topping the Brazilian box office, second only to Marvel's most recent "Captain America."

It has won plaudits and awards abroad while, back home, it sparked a long-overdue reflection on the trauma and legacy of the military dictatorship that ruled Brazil for more than two decades.

Torres stars as Eunice Paiva, the matriarch of an upper-class Rio family shattered by the dictatorship. In 1971, her husband, Rubens Paiva, a former leftist congressman, was taken into custody by the military and never seen again. Based on a book by their son, Marcelo Rubens Paiva, the story follows Eunice's lifelong pursuit of justice, by getting the government to admit that her husband died.

Torres, 59, first gained national recognition as a teenager acting in telenovelas. At 19, she became the first Brazilian to win best actress at Cannes for "Love Me Forever or Never." Her success continued in theater and movies as she cemented her fame in sitcoms like "Os Normais" (Normal People) and "Tapas e Beijos" (Slaps and Kisses).

Her dramatic performance in "I'm Still Here" has reshaped public perception, surprising many with her depth and restrained performance, keeping her grief, anguish and despair simmering just beneath the surface. The film's success — and her Golden Globe win — also sent viewership of her past sitcoms on TV Globo's streaming platform through the roof, according to the network. And Torres' scenes in those shows have been repurposed for countless viral memes ahead of the Oscars.

Sweet Justice?

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To understand why Torres' Oscar chances have ignited excitement in Brazil, one must first look to her mother, Fernanda Montenegro, 95, who appears as an aging Eunice Paiva in the film's final scenes.

Montenegro is a national acting legend — Brazil's Meryl Streep — who was a best actress Oscar nominee in 1999 for "Central Station." The award instead went to Gwyneth Paltrow for "Shakespeare In Love" and many Brazilians ever since have harbored the belief that Montenegro was robbed.

"As the firstborn child of the reluctantly titled 'Grande Dame of Brazilian Theater,' Fernanda Montenegro, it seemed Fernanda Torres had little professional choice. Surprisingly, she forged her own path," said journalist Pedro Bial, host of a prestigious late-night show on TV Globo, who was married to Torres in the 1980s.

"I'm Still Here' is her most significant cinematic role and it surprised some of her fans who were used to her comedic style," Bial added. "Brazilians now hope the Oscar will bring sweet justice, 25 years after her mother's heartbreaking loss."

A nation's desire to be seen

No Brazilian has ever won best actor or best actress. To some extent, Torres' international recognition is playing into some Brazilians' desire for foreign validation of their greatness, according to Lacombe, the culture writer. It's a sentiment that has surfaced from time to time in soccer, with Pelé, or in Formula One racing, with Ayrton Senna.

"We want to show that we exist, we deserve respect, and that what we create here is exceptional. Our culture is unparalleled," Lacombe said.

Torres acknowledged that element of the Brazilian psyche in a November interview.

"Brazil has this 'mongrel complex,' this lack of communication with the world, but at the same time, it pities the world for not knowing what we know," the actress told local news website UOL. "When someone breaks through that barrier and takes something deeply personal to us abroad, there's this feeling of, 'Look at what we have, look at how rich our culture is.'"

Clara Novais, a 33-year-old journalist and social media influencer who posts content about Carnival, sees in Torres a "modern, daring woman."

On Sunday, Novais will party at the traditional Carnival in Olinda, in northeastern Brazil, wearing an Oscar statuette-inspired costume and celebrating Torres' achievement.

"She shows that it's possible to do culture, entertainment, politics, and history all at once — drawing laughs while informing," Novais said. "I think Carnival is all of that, just like Fernanda."

From Alaska to Maine, communities that border Canada worry US tariffs come at a personal cost

By DEE-ANN DURBIN and SALLY HO AP Business Writers

DETROIT (AP) — At the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa, a quote from former President Ronald Reagan is engraved on one wall.

"Let the 5,000-mile border between Canada and the United States stand as a symbol for the future," Reagan said upon signing a 1988 free trade pact with America's northern neighbor. "Let it forever be not a point of division but a meeting place between our great and true friends."

But a point of division is here. On Tuesday, President Donald Trump plans to impose a 25% tariff on most imported Canadian goods and a 10% tariff on Canadian oil and gas. Mexico is also facing a 25% tariff.

Canada has said it will retaliate with a 25% import tax on a multitude of American products, including wine, cigarettes and shotguns.

The tariffs have touched off a range of emotions along the world's longest international border, where residents and industries are closely intertwined. Ranchers in Canada rely on American companies for farm equipment, and export cattle and hogs to U.S. meat processors. U.S. consumers enjoy thousands of gallons of Canadian maple syrup each year. Canadian dogs and cats dine on U.S.-made pet food.

The trade dispute will have far-reaching spillover effects, from price increases and paperwork backlogs to longer wait times at the U.S.-Canada border for both people and products, said Laurie Trautman, director

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of the Border Policy Research Institute at Western Washington University.

"These industries on both sides are built up out of a cross-border relationship, and disruptions will play out on both sides," Trautman said.

Even the threat of tariffs may have already caused irreparable harm, she said. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has urged Canadians to buy Canadian products and vacation at home.

The Associated Press wanted to know what residents and businesses were thinking along the border that Reagan vowed would remain unburdened by an "invisible barrier of economic suspicion and fear." Here's what they said:

Skagway, Alaska-Whitehorse, Yukon

People flocked from the boomtown of Skagway, Alaska, to Canada's Yukon in search of riches during the Klondike gold rush of the late 1890s, following routes that Indigenous tribes long used for trade.

Today, Skagway trades on its past, drawing more than 1 million cruise ship passengers a year to a historic downtown that features Klondike-themed museums. But the municipality with a population of about 1,100 still holds deep ties to the Yukon.

Skagway residents frequently travel to Whitehorse, the territory's capital, for a wider selection of groceries and shopping, dental care, veterinary services and swimming lessons. The Alaskan city's port, meanwhile, still supports Yukon mining and is a critical hub for fuel and other essentials both communities need.

"It's a special connection," Orion Hanson, a contractor and Skagway Assembly member, said of Whitehorse, which sits 110 miles (177 kilometers) north and has 30,000 people. "It's really our most accessible neighbor."

Hanson is concerned about what tariffs might mean for the price of building supplies, such as lumber, concrete and steel. The cost of living in small, remote places already is high. People in Whitehorse and Skagway worry about the potential impact on community relations as well as prices.

Norman Holler, who lives in Whitehorse, said the months the tariffs have loomed created "an uncomfortable feeling and resentment." If the threat becomes reality, Holler said he would probably still visit Alaska border towns but not other parts of the United States.

"Is it rational? I don't know, but it satisfies an emotional need not to go," he said.

- Becky Bohrer in Juneau, Alaska

Point Roberts, Washington-Delta, British Columbia

At the border of Washington state and British Columbia, the tension over tariffs is evident in a waterfront community that is hoping for Canadian mercy.

Point Roberts is a 5-square-mile (13-square kilometer) U.S. exclave whose only land connection lies in Canada, which supplies the unincorporated nub of American soil its water and electricity. It's a geographic oddity that requires a 20-mile drive around Canada to reach mainland Washington state.

Local real estate agent Wayne Lyle, who like many of his neighbors has dual U.S.-Canadian citizenship, said some of Point Roberts' roughly 1,000 residents are signing a petition pleading with British Columbia's premier for an exemption to whatever retaliatory tariffs Canada may institute.

"We're basically connected to Canada. We're about as Canadian as an American city can be," Lyle said. "We're unique enough that maybe we can get a break."

Lyle, who serves as the president of the Point Roberts Chamber of Commerce, said it's too early to identify measurable effects, but he fears Canadians won't visit the popular summer getaway destination out of spite.

"We don't want Canada to think we're the bad guys," Lyle said. "Please don't take it out on us."

- Sally Ho in Seattle

Billings, Montana-Alberta

The 545-mile (877-kilometer) stretch of land that separates Montana from Canada includes some of the sleepest checkpoints on the binational border. Several of the state's border posts had fewer than 50 crossings a day on average last year.

But unseen, in underground pipelines that cut through vast fields of barley, flows about \$5 billion annually worth of Canadian crude oil and natural gas, most of it from Alberta. The lines traverse a continental

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pivot point -- Montana is the only state with rivers that drain into the Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico and Canada's Hudson Bay -- and deliver to refineries around Billings.

"Canada is one of our major supply sources for oil across the United States," said Dallas Scholes, the government affairs director of Houston-based refinery company Par Pacific, which runs a processing facility along the Yellowstone River. "If tariffs are imposed on the oil and gas industry, ... it's not going to be good for consumers."

People in Montana drive long distances given its sprawling size and burn lots of natural gas through harsh winters, making its residents the highest energy consumers per capita in the U.S., according to federal data.

That means a 10% tax on Canadian energy resources would be felt broadly. The state's farmers would be among those hit more severely, given the large volumes of gasoline needed to run tractors and other equipment, according to Jeffrey Michael, director of the University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research.

"It will be painful, but there are larger concerns if I were an agricultural producer in Montana," Michael said. "I'd be worried about the trade war escalating to where my products start to get hit with reciprocal tariffs."

- Matthew Brown in Billings, Mont.

Detroit-Windsor, Ontario

The Detroit River is all that separates Windsor, Ontario, from Detroit. The cities are so close that Detroiters can smell the drying grain at Windsor's Hiram Walker distillery and Windsor can hear the music drifting from Detroit's outdoor concert venues.

Manufacturing muscle makes the Ambassador Bridge, the 1.4-mile-long span connecting the two cities, the busiest international crossing in North America. According to the Michigan company that owns the bridge, \$323 million worth of goods travel each day between Windsor and Detroit, the automotive capitals of their countries.

The U.S., Canada and Mexico have long operated as one nation when it comes to auto manufacturing, noted Pat D'Eramo, CEO of Vaughan, Ontario-based automotive supplier Martinrea. Tariffs will cause confusion and disruption, he said.

Right now, steel coils arrive at a plant in Michigan and get stamped into parts that are shipped to Martinrea in Canada. Martinrea uses the parts to build vehicle sub-assemblies that get shipped back to an automaker in Detroit.

A White House official told The Associated Press that parts would be taxed twice if they crossed the border multiple times, but it's unclear if suppliers or their customers will have to pay for the tariffs. Also unclear is how a separate 25% levy on steel and aluminum that Trump said would take effect starting March 12 factors into the mix.

D'Eramo understands the impulse to strengthen U.S. manufacturing but says the U.S. doesn't have the capacity to make all the tooling Martinrea would need if it were to shift production there. At the end of the day, he thinks it's sad tariffs will take up so much time, energy and resources, and only make vehicles even more expensive.

"We need to be spending our time and money to get more efficient and reduce our costs so customers can reduce their costs," he said.

-Dee-Ann Durbin in Detroit

Buffalo, New York-Ontario

Buffalo, New York is, decidedly, a beer town. It's also a border town.

That makes for a complementary relationship. Western New York's dozens of craft breweries rely on Canada for aluminum cans and much of the malted grain that goes into their brews. Canadians regularly cross one of the four international bridges into the region to shop, go to sporting events and sip Buffalo's beers.

Brewers and other businesses fear there may be less of that, though, if the tariffs on Canada and aluminum go into effect. Trump's repeated comments about making the neighboring nation the 51st U.S.

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state already offended its citizens - so much so that Buffalo's tourism agency paused a campaign running in Canada because of negative comments.

"Obviously, having a bad taste in their mouth and booing the national anthem at sporting events is not a great thing for them coming down here and drinking our beer and hanging out in our city," said Jeff Ware, president of Resurgence Brewing Co.

The historic factory building housing Ware's business in Buffalo is about 4 miles from the Peace Bridge border crossing, where 1.8 million cars and buses and 518,000 commercial trucks entered Buffalo from Ontario last year.

It's a terrible time to alienate customers, Canadian or American. The snowy first months of the year are hard enough for Buffalo's breweries, Ware said. Higher prices from 25% tariffs would be yet another obstacle. Ware gets about 80% of the base malt he uses to make his specialty beers from Canada.

"Labor is more expensive, energy is more expensive, all of our raw ingredients are more expensive," he said. "It's death by a thousand cuts."

- Carolyn Thompson in Buffalo, N.Y.

Cutler, Maine-New Brunswick

Commercial lobsterman John Drouin has fished for Maine's signature seafood for more than 45 years, often in disputed waters known as the "grey zone" that straddle the U.S.-Canada border.

The relationship between American and Canadian fishermen can sometimes be fraught, but harvesters on both side of the border know they depend on each other, Drouin said. Maine fishermen catch millions of pounds of lobsters every year, but much of the processing capacity for the valuable crustaceans is in Canada.

If Trump follows through with the threatened tariffs next week, lobsters sent to Canada for processing would be subject to customs duties when they return to the U.S. to go to market. Drouin fears what will happen to the lobster industry if the trade dispute persists and Canada enacts a retaliatory tariff on lobsters.

"As the price goes up to the consumer, there comes a point where it just doesn't become palatable for them to purchase it," Drouin said.

Drouin, 60, fishes out of Cutler, Maine, and sees Grand Manan Island, an island in the Bay of Fundy that is part of the province of New Brunswick, when he takes his boat out. He described his business as "right smack on the Canadian border" in terms of both economics and geography.

He described himself as a fan of Trump's first term who is "not overly thrilled with what he's been doing here." And he said he's concerned his home state could ultimately be hurt by the tariffs if the president isn't mindful of border industries such as his.

"The rhetoric is a bit much, what's taking place," Drouin said.

- Patrick Whittle in Scarborough, Maine

Today in History: March 3

Rodney King beaten by Los Angeles police

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Monday, March 3, the 62nd day of 2025. There are 303 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On March 3, 1991, motorist Rodney King was severely beaten by Los Angeles police officers after a high-speed chase; amateur video that captured the scene aired on local news that evening, sparking public outrage.

Also on this date:

In 1849, Congress established the U.S. Department of the Interior.

In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln signed the act creating the National Academy of Sciences.

In 1931, President Herbert Hoover signed a bill making "The Star-Spangled Banner" the national anthem of the United States.

In 1943, in London's East End, 173 people died in a crush of bodies at the Bethnal Green Tube station,

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which was being used as a wartime air raid shelter.

In 1945, Allied troops fully secured the Philippine capital of Manila from Japanese forces during World War II after a monthlong battle that destroyed much of the city.

In 1969, Apollo 9 blasted off from Cape Kennedy on a mission to test NASA's lunar module.

In 2022, OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma reached a nationwide settlement over its role in the opioid crisis, with the Sackler family members who own the company boosting their cash contribution to as much as \$6 billion in a deal intended to staunch a flood of lawsuits.

Today's birthdays: Filmmaker George Miller is 80. Singer Jennifer Warnes is 78. Author Ron Chernow is 76. Football Hall of Famer Randy Gradishar is 73. Musician Robyn Hitchcock is 72. Actor Miranda Richardson is 67. Radio personality Ira Glass is 66. Olympic track and field gold medalist Jackie Joyner-Kersey is 63. Rapper-actor Tone Loc is 59. Hockey Hall of Famer Brian Leetch is 57. Actor Julie Bowen is 55. Actor David Faustino is 51. Actor Jessica Biel is 43. Singer Camila Cabello is 28. NBA forward Jayson Tatum is 27.