

Groton Daily Independent

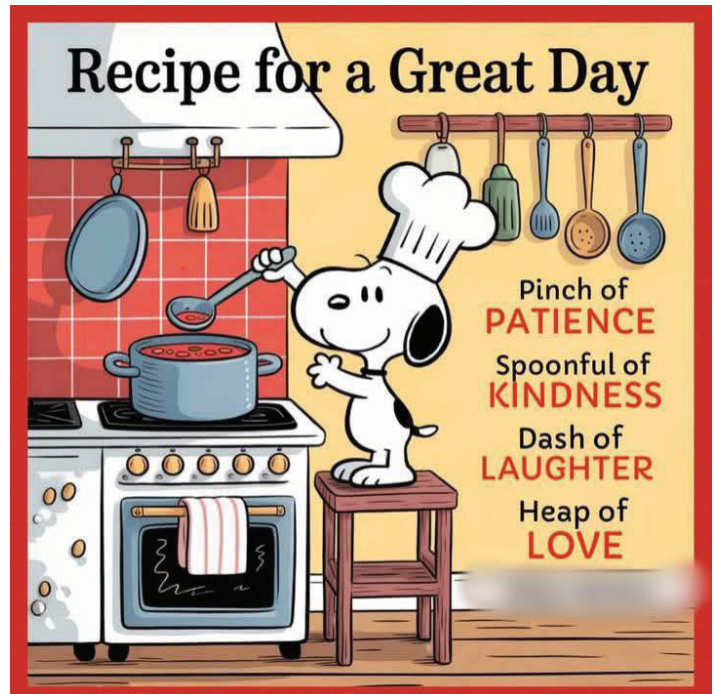
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Thursday, May 29:

Senior Menu: Taco salad with chips, Mexican rice with beans, fruit, breadstick, cookie.
James Valley Annual Meeting, 5:30 p.m., GHS Arena
State Track Meet in Sioux Falls
Jr. Legion hosts Watertown 5:30 p.m. (DH)
U12 B&W hosts Webster 5:30 p.m. (DH); U10 B@W hosts Aberdeen 5:30 p.m. (DH)

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



Friday, May 30:

Senior Menu: Hot pork sandwich, cucumber salad, oven roasted potato, honey fruit salad.
State Track Meet in Sioux Falls
Legion at Refield, 5:30 p.m.
Jr. Legion at Redfield 7:30 p.m.
Jr. Teeners hosts Clark, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

Saturday, May 31

State Track Meet in Sioux Falls

Sunday, June 1:

St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion at St. John's, 9 a.m.; at Zion 11 a.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran worship 9 a.m.
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.
First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.
Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.
United Methodist: Worship with communion at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 10:30 a.m.
Legion at Volga (vs. Canton at 2 p.m., Volga at 4 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.

Trump Pardons Chrisleys

The White House pardoned imprisoned reality TV stars Todd and Julie Chrisley earlier this week, after the couple were convicted of tax evasion and bank fraud in 2022. The news comes as the administration has ramped up granting commutations and pardons to high-profile subjects it believes to be unjustly targeted.

The pair entered the limelight in the USA Network show "Chrisley Knows Best," which showcased their family's lavish lifestyle in Georgia and Tennessee. The series ran from 2014 until 2023, when their sentences began, amassing over 2 million viewers per episode by its eighth season. The Chrisleys were found guilty in 2022 of conspiring to defraud Atlanta-area banks by submitting false documents to take out over \$36M in personal loans. Todd and Julie were sentenced to 12 and seven years, respectively.

The administration has significantly increased its pardon count from the president's first term and is separately considering a pardon for men who attempted to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) in 2020.

Hamas Leader Killed

Four Palestinians died yesterday as hundreds of people stormed a warehouse in an effort to access food aid. The news comes as the World Food Program warns that 2 million people are at risk of extreme hunger and amid international pressure over a new US-backed aid distribution process.

Separately, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Hamas' Gaza leader, Mohammed Sinwar, was killed in an Israeli airstrike this month on a hospital in southern Gaza. Sinwar was one of the last widely known Hamas leaders in Gaza. The brother of Oct. 7 attack planner Yahya Sinwar, he was responsible for a 2006 attack on an Israeli army post, resulting in the capture of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit and the eventual release of 1,000 Palestinian prisoners. Hamas has not commented on Israel's claim as of this writing.

Israel separately carried out an airstrike on Yemen's Sanaa airport yesterday. The country destroyed what it said was the last plane used by Houthi rebels.

Andrew Tate Charges

British prosecutors confirmed yesterday they authorized criminal charges against influencer Andrew Tate and his brother Tristan. The 21 charges—including rape, human trafficking, and prostitution—are connected to four alleged UK victims.

The charges are separate from an ongoing case in Romania, where the brothers stand accused of forming an organized crime group designed to lure women to the country. They face charges including rape and human trafficking in that case; they deny all wrongdoing. The brothers are due to be extradited to the UK once the Romania case concludes.

A four-time kickboxing world champion, Tate became a reality television star after a 2016 appearance on "Big Brother" in the UK. He has since amassed an online following of over 10 million followers on X, where he showcases a lavish lifestyle involving private jets and dozens of high-end cars. A self-styled misogynist, Tate also advocates for traditional gender roles in male-female relationships.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Oklahoma City Thunder top Minnesota Timberwolves 4-1 to advance to NBA Finals for first time since 2012. Defending champs Florida Panthers beat the Carolina Hurricanes to reach the NHL Stanley Cup Final for a third straight year.

Broadway hauls in \$1.9B across all productions for the 2024-25 season, an all-time record and 23% jump from last year.

Women's College World Series kicks off today with eight teams vying to become the NCAA softball national champion.

Onosato Daiki becomes first Japanese sumo grand champion, or yokozuna, since 2017; six of the last seven yokozunas were Mongolian.

Science & Technology

Astronomers discover unexplained celestial object emitting both X-rays and radio waves roughly every 44 minutes; candidates—including a strongly magnetized neutron star and a white dwarf—fit some, but not all, of the data.

Researchers successfully extract proteins from 200-year-old brain tissue, opening a new way to study the biology of deceased communities; technique relies on urea, the main component of urine, to break open cells in recovered tissue.

New fuel cell design stores three times the energy of best-in-class battery technology; prototype uses liquid sodium metal as fuel, may have applications in electric planes.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close lower (S&P 500 -0.6%, Dow -0.6%, Nasdaq -0.5%).

Federal court blocks Trump administration's reciprocal tariffs, saying president exceeded authority in using 1977 law to justify imposing duties.

Nvidia beats estimates with 69% year-over-year Q1 revenue growth.

GameStop shares down nearly 11% after purchasing over \$500M in bitcoin.

Elon Musk's xAI to pay messaging app Telegram \$300M to integrate xAI's Grok chatbot for one year.

Anthropic appoints Netflix cofounder to board.

Joby Aviation shares rise nearly 29% after electric air taxi maker receives \$250M from Toyota.

Hailey Bieber's skincare brand Rhode to be acquired by e.l.f. Beauty in up to \$1B deal.

Politics & World Affairs

Justice Department opens investigation into decade-old California law allowing transgender athletes to compete in sports teams aligning with gender identity.

Transportation Department moves to end program carving out \$37B for women- and minority-owned businesses in highway, transit contracts.

European Union lifts all non-security-related sanctions on Syria, following US decision to lift sanctions earlier this month.

Swiss glacier collapses, burying almost the entire village of Blatten; 300-person town had evacuated earlier in the month at geologists' warning.

The Life of Amber Alyse (Wegner) Cooper

June 3, 1971 - May 24, 2025



Amber Alyse (Wegner) Cooper, 53, of Johnston, Iowa, passed away at her home on May 24, 2025, surrounded by her loving family. Services will be held June 3, 2025 at Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines, IA. Visitation begins at 9:30 a.m. with funeral service at 11:00 a.m. An additional gathering will be held at Your Private Bar in West Des Moines from 5-8 p.m. to share memories and tell stories.

Amber was born on June 3, 1971, in Aberdeen, South Dakota, to Jeannette (Fliehs) and Robert W. Wegner. From her earliest days, she brought light and energy to the world around her. As a toddler, she was a familiar sight riding on the back of her parents' bicycles across the SDSU campus, being handed off between classes and admired by fellow students. Her childhood was shaped by the family's military life, with time spent in Ft. Sill, OK; Ft. Rucker, AL; and Ft. Lewis, WA - where she famously taught herself to ride a bike, likely aided by her many early years on two wheels.

Amber grew up primarily in Des Moines, Iowa, and graduated from Lincoln High School in 1989. A standout athlete, she made a lasting impact on the school's swim team, setting multiple records that remained unbroken for 25 years. She later attended Iowa State University, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance. She built a successful professional life, beginning in banking and mortgage origination, then becoming an investment and insurance agent. Her passions ultimately led her to founding her

own business, Your Private Bar. The mobile hospitality company quickly became a local favorite, providing exceptional service at weddings, corporate events, reunions, and celebrations of all kinds. Amber's energy, attention to detail, and passion for creating memorable experiences earned her numerous "Best of Des Moines" awards and the admiration of her peers and clients alike.

Outside of work, Amber's life was filled with joy, generosity, and meaningful relationships. She and her husband Matt shared 14 wonderful years together, making special memories during their vacations to Ft. Myers Beach, Florida--one of Amber's favorite places to relax and recharge. She and Matt also spent many years riding segments of RAGBRAI with her beloved DayDrinker crew, no doubt inspired by her early childhood days on a bike.

Amber lived a life overflowing with creativity, compassion, and adventure. Whether organizing an event, opening her home for "Amber Camp", or exploring the world with friends and family, she brought light and laughter wherever she went. Indeed, every activity with Amber turned into a hilarious story to be told later over drinks or cake. Her presence was a gift, and her memory will live on in all who were blessed to know and love her.

Amber is survived by her devoted husband, Matthew Cooper; her beloved daughters, Kourtnei and Kassidi Stumpf; her father and stepmother, Robert W. and Valerie Wegner; her brother, Matt (Janelle) Wegner and their children, Kaitlin and Keegan Wegner; step-sisters Stephanie Sanders (and daughters Dakota, McCoy, and Reece) and Rebecca Lesnar (and sons Hudson, Cooper, and Landry); her mother-in-law, Jackie Cooper; sisters-in-law McKenzie and Mikaela Cooper; and many loving uncles, aunts, cousins, and lifelong friends who were like family.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Jeannette (Fliehs) Wegner; maternal grandparents, Irvin and Janice Fliehs; paternal grandparents, Robert S. and Barbara Wegner; her uncle, Larry Wegner; and her father-in-law, Dean Cooper.

Honorary pallbearers are her friends and loved ones who are truly too numerous to count.

2025

Groton Area Tigers

State Track and Field Qualifiers

May 29-31 Howard Wood Field, Sioux Falls, SD

GIRLS

Faith Traphagen: 800m run, 4x800

Laila Roberts: 4x100, 4x200, 4x400, sprint medley relay

Emma Kutter: shot put

Rylee Dunker: 4x100

Kella Tracy: 4x200, 4x400, 4x800, sprint medley relay

McKenna Tietz: 300mH, 4x100, 4x200, 4x400

Taryn Traphagen: 4x200, 4x400, 4x800, sprint medley relay

Ryelle Gilbert: 800m run, 1600m run, 4x800

Makenna Krause: 100m dash, 4x100, sprint medley relay

Ashlynn Warrington: alternate

BOYS

Blake Pauli: 800m run, 4x400, 4x800, sprint medley relay

Brevin Fliehs: sprint medley relay

Keegen Tracy: 100m dash, 200m dash, 400m dash, sprint medley relay

JD Schwan: 1600m run, 3200 run, 4x400, 4x800

Lincoln Krause: sprint medley relay

Tristin McGannon: 4x800

Jace Johnson: 4x800

Ethan Kroll: triple jump, 4x400

Jordan Schwan: 4x400

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The Groton Area Track team members posed for a photo at Falls Park in Sioux Falls. (Photo by Bruce Babcock)

JAMES VALLEY TELECOMMUNICATIONS 68th ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, May 29th
Groton Area High School Arena
5:30pm Registration & Meal
6:30pm Meeting

- Membership Gift
- Serving Ken's Famous Fried Chicken, Mashed Potatoes/Gravy, Corn, & Dessert
- Many Door Prizes, including a \$500 JVT Credit

Our Groton office will close at 4pm.



JVT



Fact brief: Is South Dakota among the most vulnerable for hail damage?

**By Michael Klinski
South Dakota News Watch**

Yes.

Among state populations, South Dakota's is one of the most vulnerable to hail damage.

That's according to an analysis by the online insurance marketplace Insurify, which looked at hail-related events, the financial loss resulting from those events and the proportion of the state's population without the insurance to cover damages from hail.

South Dakota ranked seventh, with an average of 134 hail events each year causing \$12.7 million in financial losses. The state's rank would be even higher, but overall vulnerability is offset by the high number of residents with full-coverage auto insurance.

Rapid City can be hit particularly hard in the summer because of the city's proximity to the Black Hills. Winds drafting up the hills force moisture high into the air, where it freezes and falls back as hail.

South Dakota holds the U.S. record for the largest hailstone, measuring 8 inches in diameter and weighing 1.93 pounds.

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Groton Jr. Teeners Grabs Lead Late For Victory Over Milbank

By GameChanger Media

Groton Jr. Teeners bested Milbank 3-2 on Wednesday after taking the lead late in the game. Groton Jr. Teeners were down 2-1 in the bottom of the sixth inning when Lincoln Shilhanek singled, scoring two runs. Both teams were strong on the hill. Groton Jr. Teeners pitchers struck out 15, while Milbank sat down 14. A single by Trayce Schelle on an 0-2 count put Groton Jr. Teeners on the board in the bottom of the third. Milbank took the lead in the top of the fifth inning after Finley Hunt walked, and Milbank scored on a wild pitch, each scoring one run.

Schelle earned the win for Groton Jr. Teeners. The pitcher allowed two hits and zero runs over two and one-third innings, striking out four and walking one. Brady Allen took the loss for Milbank. The pitcher went one-third of an inning, giving up one run on one hit, striking out one and walking one. TC Schuster opened the game for Groton Jr. Teeners. The starting pitcher gave up zero hits and two runs (zero earned) over four and two-thirds innings, striking out 11 and walking six. Zach Karges stepped on the hill first for Milbank. The pitcher surrendered two hits and two runs over five and two-thirds innings, striking out 13 and walking two.

Shilhanek drove the middle of the lineup, leading Groton Jr. Teeners with two runs batted in. The infielder went 1-for-3 on the day. Kolton Antonsen, Schelle, and Shilhanek each collected one hit for Groton Jr. Teeners. Schuster stole two bases.

Allen and Henry Heller each collected one hit for Milbank. Karges stole two bases. Milbank had patience at the plate, accumulating seven walks for the game. Milbank were sure-handed in the field and didn't commit a single error. Heller had the most chances in the field with 14.

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Groton Jr. Teeners Triumph Over Milbank

By GameChanger Media

Groton Jr. Teeners were triumphant over Milbank 7-6 on Wednesday at Groton SD.

Groton Jr. Teeners got on the board in the first inning after Zach Fliehs singled, scoring one run.

Groton Jr. Teeners added to their early lead in the bottom of the third inning after Fliehs singled to center field, and , each scoring one run.

Milbank flipped the game on its head in the top of the fourth, scoring five runs on one hit to take the lead, 5-3. The biggest blow in the inning was a single by Andrew Karels that drove in two.

Groton Jr. Teeners captured the lead, 7-5, in the bottom of the fourth when one run scored on a dropped third strike, Fliehs grounded out, scoring one run, and Wesley Borg singled, scoring two runs.

Fliehs earned the win for Groton Jr. Teeners. The starter gave up one hit and five runs (one earned) over four innings, striking out nine and walking seven. Bennett Hunt took the loss for Milbank. The starting pitcher went four innings, allowing seven runs (five earned) on seven hits, striking out seven and walking four. Lincoln Shilhanek collected the save.

Fliehs provided pop in the middle of the lineup, and led Groton Jr. Teeners with three runs batted in. The cleanup hitter went 2-for-3 on the day. Fliehs and Trayce Schelle each collected two hits for Groton Jr. Teeners.

Karels led Milbank with two runs batted in. The outfielder went 1-for-2 on the day. Ryan Sperry, Hunt, and Karels each collected one hit for Milbank. Hunt and Karels each stole multiple bases for Milbank. Milbank had a strong eye at the plate, amassing seven walks for the game. Milbank stole six bases in the game.

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OPENING MAY 2ND
CLOSING JUNE 2ND

WEBER LANDSCAPING GREENHOUSE

620 WEST THIRD AVENUE

GROTON

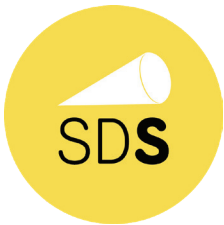
HOURS OF OPERATION

M-F 10-6

SAT 10-4

SUN 12-4





SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Doeden joins race for governor with pledge to eliminate property taxes

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - MAY 28, 2025 10:35 PM



Toby Doeden announces his candidacy for the Republican nomination for governor of South Dakota during an event on May 28, 2025, in Aberdeen. (Joshua Haiar/South Dakota Searchlight)

ABERDEEN — Toby Doeden, an Aberdeen businessman, officially launched his campaign for governor of South Dakota on Wednesday evening, promising a sweeping overhaul of state government including the elimination of property taxes.

Doeden is seeking the Republican nomination in 2026 and is the second member of his party to officially declare a candidacy, after state House Speaker Jon Hansen, of Dell Rapids. Other Republicans frequently mentioned as potential candidates include former lieutenant governor and current Gov. Larry Rhoden, who is serving the remainder of former Gov. Kristi Noem's second term after she resigned to join the Trump Cabinet, along with U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson and Attorney General Marty Jackley.

Rhoden signed a bill earlier this year that includes several forms of property tax relief. Doeden said he'll go further.

"As governor, I will fight to eliminate property taxes so that each and every resident — regardless

of class, color, creed or profession — can truly own their home and their land once and for all," Doeden told an enthusiastic crowd of at least a couple of hundred supporters.

He proposed the creation of a new agency, the "South Dakota Department of External Revenue," to identify alternative revenue sources.

Doeden repeatedly criticized what he called a "bloated \$8 billion enterprise," referring to state government and its budget. He said he would create a "South Dakota Department of Government Efficiency" and promised to audit every state agency and publicly release "every line item" of spending. He also pledged to reject a salary, eliminate executive perks such as state-funded air travel, and shred all executive branch credit cards.

Doeden called for reform of South Dakota's public education system. He pledged to refocus schools on "reading, writing, math and critical thinking," and said classrooms should be "free from indoctrination and divisive ideologies."

"I will work with President Trump and our Legislature here at home to develop and implement an education system that prepares our children for a future of winning," he said.

Doeden tied his campaign closely to President Donald Trump, saying he would work to combat crime and illegal immigration.

"Any elected official who suggests defunding the police will forfeit their right to hold office," he said.

Doeden was introduced by state Sen. Taffy Howard, R-Rapid City, who lost a 2022 primary challenge

to U.S. Rep. Johnson. Among the other state lawmakers in attendance was Rep. Brandei Schaeftbauer, R-Aberdeen.

"Toby is a businessman, and we need someone who understands jobs, the economy, and why people are struggling," Schaeftbauer said.

Doeden, a married father of four grown children, is the owner of Aberdeen Chrysler Center, Redfield Ford and other retail businesses and real estate.

When Doeden was publicly considering a challenge last year to Johnson, Doeden's past social media posts drew scrutiny. He had encouraged the shooting of immigrants in gangs, used a profane insult to describe President Joe Biden, and labeled statistics about hatred of Jewish Americans as "fake."

Doeden ultimately decided against running for U.S. House last year. He founded a political action committee called Dakota First Action, which he used to support legislative candidates and play a role in 14 June primary losses by incumbent Republican lawmakers.

The committee faced immediate scrutiny due to a \$100,000 contribution from Doeden himself. Following concerns raised about state campaign finance laws – particularly the \$10,000 limit on individual contributions to PACs – Doeden amended the report, stating that the money was a loan rather than a donation. Because loans can be forgiven, critics alleged that Doeden had found and exploited a loophole allowing him to make an unlimited individual contribution.

The Legislature passed a bill this winter closing the loophole with a new requirement that any loan, when combined with contributions from the same source, cannot exceed contribution limits in state law. Had the law been in effect last year, Doeden would have been limited to a combined \$10,000 of annual contributions and loans to his political action committee.

In October, Doeden and Dakota First Action hosted a fundraising event in Sioux Falls that sparked controversy for featuring a video message from North Carolina Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson. CNN had recently exposed Robinson's racist and sexually explicit comments on a pornographic website's message board, including referring to himself as a "black Nazi," expressing support for reinstating slavery and praising Adolf Hitler. Robinson, who was running for governor of North Carolina, lost to a Democrat in the general election.

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.

10 injured in prison violence days after protests over security and inmate treatment

BY: JOHN HULT - MAY 28, 2025 5:13 PM

A flurry of fighting broke out again Tuesday in the maximum security building on the campus of the South Dakota State Penitentiary, according to the Department of Corrections.

The violence comes less than a week after a protest over prison security and the treatment of inmates, and less than a month after the last publicly acknowledged sparring between inmates on the prison grounds in Sioux Falls.

The "series of fights" took place at the same time in "multiple sections" in the D block of Jameson Annex, DOC spokesman Michael Winder wrote in an email to South Dakota Searchlight.

No correctional staff were injured, Winder said. The state Division of Criminal Investigation is leading the inquiry into the incident.

Shortly after the release of information from the DOC, Attorney General Marty Jackley said in a news release that 10 inmates were injured as a result of the violence, which began around 1 p.m. Five were stabbed, and three of them were treated at local hospitals. Two others were treated in the prison. The

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People hold signs as organizer Tracii Barse speaks during a protest on May 23, 2025, at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls.

(John Hult/South Dakota Searchlight)

other injured inmates were attacked with blunt objects, fists and feet.

"Evidence suggests that the assaults are gang related and they will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law," said Jackley.

The Jameson Annex, built in the mid-1990s, is the area that houses the inmates dubbed most dangerous during initial intake. Jameson is also home to that initial intake area, as well as to inmates with severe mental illness and those being held for disciplinary infractions.

Some members of the state's Project Prison Reset task force, as well as some lawmakers who aren't on that prison construction work group, have pushed to build an additional floor onto Jameson to provide partial relief to overcrowding across the prison system.

Jackley, a work group member, mentioned a possible Jameson expansion in a television interview Tuesday.

Winder, of the DOC, sent a statement from Corrections Secretary Kellie Wasko about Tuesday's

Jameson violence. She praised "the staff's immediate, appropriate and professional response," which she said "brought quick order to ending the fighting."

"Our staff did recover homemade weapons that were utilized in the fights," Wasko wrote.

The DOC Office of Inspector General is assisting with the investigation.

A similar fight broke out in Jameson a few days before the first meeting of the Project Prison Reset work group, which aims to resolve the yearslong debate over new prison construction in South Dakota.

Protests over prison conditions

As the work group pores over facility plans and consultant reports – its next meeting is set to commence Tuesday in Pierre – family members and advocates for inmates have grown increasingly frustrated with the DOC's response to violence across the system.

On May 4, fighting broke out in East Hall, which is part of the penitentiary complex that opened in 1881. The prison work group voted earlier this month to replace that portion of the Sioux Falls campus, although the size, cost and location of the replacement are still up for debate.

About 50 people gathered outside East Hall on Friday to protest prison conditions, including Marlene Woodraska. She told South Dakota Searchlight in earlier interviews that her son R.J. committed suicide at Jameson in October, after she alleged the DOC had failed to protect him from prison gang threats.

On Friday, Woodraska told the assembled crowd about her son's suicide but stopped abruptly, saying she wouldn't be able to continue without crying. She and R.J.'s sister-in-law held a sign bearing R.J.'s likeness throughout the protest.

Donna German, meanwhile, said her son was injured in another recent round of prison violence.

"He is currently healing from 22 stab wounds," German told the crowd before accusing the DOC of giving her son "Band-Aids and two little packets of bacitracin" in lieu of more serious medical care.

Protesters also spoke of overdoses, demanding that the state investigate them and address the issue of drug use inside the prison.

Last week, Jackley's office confirmed that two deaths days apart at the prison this month – one in Jameson, one in the penitentiary – were being investigated as overdoses.

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Another inmate, 20-year-old Anthony Richards, died of an overdose in early February at the Jameson Annex in Sioux Falls.

The state certificate that lists his cause of death was filed nine days ago. An autopsy concluded that he'd died from the "self-administration of drug synthetic cannabinoid 5F-ADB," which is one formulation of a drug commonly referred to by inmates as "K2."

Richards' sister and grandmother told South Dakota Searchlight that as of Saturday afternoon, the state hadn't called to inform them of the cause of death. On Wednesday, his sister said the family has yet to hear from anyone with the state about the cause of death, or about any investigation into the overdose.

Tracii Barse, organizer of Friday's protest, told the crowd that the state needs to get its house in order before it commits to building upwards of \$2 billion in prison facilities. That's how much a recent consultant's report suggested the state would need to spend on new prisons to deal with current overcrowding and future inmate population growth.

During the protest, Barse balked at the focus on new facilities in the face of what he called the state's current failures.

"You guys can't even run this one," Barse said, pointing to East Hall.

John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.

Greenpeace seeks reversal of verdict, arguing jury wanted to 'punish' someone for pipeline protests

Attorneys for Dakota Access developer urge judge to let verdict, damages stand

BY: MARY STEURER - MAY 28, 2025 1:58 PM

Attorneys for Greenpeace argued this week that a jury's decision ordering it to pay \$667 million to the developer of the Dakota Access Pipeline cannot stand.

A Morton County jury delivered the verdict on March 19 after more than three weeks of trial. Jurors found the environmental group responsible for damages related to anti-pipeline protests in North Dakota in 2016 and 2017, as well as for publishing defamatory statements about Energy Transfer.

Greenpeace says the jury's decision was not based on fact, but bias against the protest movement.

"What the verdict in this case reflected, your honor, is the community's desire to punish someone who was involved in the protests," said Everett Jack, an attorney representing Greenpeace's U.S. affiliate.

The arguments followed a hearing earlier this month during which Greenpeace asked Southwest Judicial District Court Judge James Gion to reduce the \$667 million award if he moves forward with a judgment against the environmental group.

Energy Transfer wants Gion to uphold the jury's decision in full.

The award includes more than \$200 million of compensatory damages — or money meant to make the



Greenpeace Senior Legal Adviser Deepa Padmanabha, second from left, and other attorneys representing Greenpeace speak to the media March 19, 2025, outside the Morton County Courthouse. (Amy Dalrymple/North Dakota Monitor)

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plaintiffs whole for financial harms — and another roughly \$400 million in punitive damages.

Energy Transfer's core argument is that Greenpeace trained protesters to wage violent attacks to stop the Dakota Access Pipeline and that it deliberately published false statements to sabotage the company's business.

Greenpeace was one of many activist groups that sent representatives to south-central North Dakota to protest in solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. It denies Energy Transfer's allegations and says the lawsuit is an attempt to discourage environmental activism.

During a Tuesday hearing, attorneys representing the environmental group doubled down on their claims that Energy Transfer presented no concrete evidence during the trial that Greenpeace caused the company to suffer financially.

The lawsuit is against three Greenpeace entities: Greenpeace International, Greenpeace USA, and Greenpeace Fund, its United States-based fundraising arm.

Only Greenpeace USA had employees at the protests. Greenpeace USA says it had six staff members visit to provide peripheral support to the Indigenous-led demonstrations, including supplies and nonviolent trainings.

Energy Transfer attorney Trey Cox argued that Gion has no reason not to honor the jury's verdict.

Cox said the acts the jury found Greenpeace liable for — including defamatory speech, trespassing and abuse of property — do not count as constitutionally protected speech.

"They're trying to wrap themselves in the First Amendment," he said.

Cox said Greenpeace is willfully ignoring documentation Energy Transfer presented to the jury linking Greenpeace personnel to attacks against the pipeline, and that the jury's decision is the most important indicator of the evidence's credibility.

Attorneys also asked Gion to toss the jury's verdict finding the three organizations liable for defamation. Energy Transfer alleges that Greenpeace published nine defamatory statements about the Dakota Access Pipeline that harmed the energy company's business relationships.

In the United States, the standard for proving defamation claims is high — especially for individuals and organizations in the public eye.

Greenpeace attorneys said the nine statements don't meet this threshold for multiple reasons.

For one, each of the nine statements was either factually true or reflected opinions about what happened at Standing Rock, Jack said.

Energy Transfer also did not demonstrate that Greenpeace made the statements knowing they were false or with "reckless disregard" for their veracity, which are other key standards required for proving defamation, he added.

Greenpeace has also said it was not the first to circulate the statements, and that they were contemporaneously published by hundreds of other organizations and media outlets.

Judges must act as the "gatekeeper" on defamation claims to make sure the decision does not violate free speech rights, Adam Caldwell, an attorney representing Greenpeace International, argued. This standard was set in the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case on defamation *New York Times v. Sullivan*, he said.

Jack also argued that under North Dakota law, proving a defamation claim requires that a third party testify that they believe the statements in question are defamatory. He said none of Energy Transfer's witnesses fulfilled this requirement.

He pointed to the testimony of Greenpeace employees who said they believed the statements were true and came from credible sources.

Cox said jurors likely rejected this testimony as unconvincing.

"Given the very large exemplary damage award, we can readily infer that this jury found these witnesses to be liars," Cox said. "We found them to be concealing things, to be hiding things, to be non-credible."

Greenpeace International and Greenpeace Fund — which does not engage in organizing activities — say Energy Transfer has no right to involve them in the case. Neither had any personnel visit North Dakota.

Greenpeace International says it is not subject to the court's jurisdiction because it is a Netherlands-based organization that was not involved in the protests.

"The only evidence was affirmative evidence from International that it had never set foot in North Dakota," Caldwell said. "It's a textbook case of lack of personal jurisdiction."

While Greenpeace International did sign onto a letter that included two of the statements the jury found defamatory, it was one of more than 500 signatories, he said.

Greenpeace Fund similarly said there was no evidence linking it to the case.

"We shouldn't be here," said Matt Kelly, an attorney representing the organization.

Energy Transfer has argued that Greenpeace Fund and Greenpeace International conspired with Greenpeace USA on its anti-pipeline efforts. The jury found Greenpeace International and Greenpeace USA liable for conspiracy, but not Greenpeace Fund.

Gion took the motions under advisement.

The parties also recently presented arguments on a separate set of motions asking Gion to reduce the jury's nearly \$667 million award against Greenpeace. Greenpeace claims the award exceeds statutory caps on damages and that the verdict is riddled with inconsistencies.

If the jury's decision is allowed to stand, defendants have the option to appeal the verdict to the North Dakota Supreme Court. Greenpeace USA and Greenpeace International have disclosed their intent to appeal.

This story was originally published by the North Dakota Monitor. Like South Dakota Searchlight, it's part of States Newsroom, a nonprofit news network supported by grants and a coalition of donors as a 501c(3) public charity. North Dakota Monitor maintains editorial independence.

Mary Steurer is a reporter based in Bismarck for the North Dakota Monitor. A native of St. Louis, Steurer previously worked as the local government reporter for the Casper Star-Tribune newspaper in Wyoming.

HHS presses health care providers, hospitals to curb gender-affirming treatments for kids

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - MAY 28, 2025 5:26 PM



Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr. testifies before a Senate Appropriations subcommittee on Tuesday, May 20, 2025.

(Screenshot from committee webcast)

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services urged health care providers Wednesday to stop several treatments for children with gender dysphoria, including puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and surgeries.

The announcement came just a couple hours before the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services sent letters to hospitals throughout the country, promising "a comprehensive review of federal payment policies" and demanding information about how they determine children and adolescents can give their consent.

"These are irreversible, high-risk procedures being conducted on vulnerable children, often at taxpayer expense," CMS Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz wrote in a statement accompanying his agency's letter.

Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. wrote in a two-page open letter shared on social media

that health care providers should read a review that HHS published earlier this month about treatment options for children with gender dysphoria. He, however, didn't note that paper was widely criticized by major health organizations.

Kennedy, instead said that HHS expects health care providers to follow the 409-page report's recommendations

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and "make the necessary updates to your treatment protocols and training for care for children and adolescents with gender dysphoria to protect them from these harmful interventions."

The letter recommends "psychotherapy (talk therapy) as a noninvasive alternative" and seeks to discourage health care providers from following the World Professional Association for Health's Standards of Care for the Health of Transgender and Gender Diverse People, version 8.

Among the letter's criticisms for that standard of care is that it "relied on legal and political considerations rather than clinical ones."

"The Hippocratic Oath lays down the foundational commitment for the medical profession: 'First, do no harm.' The Review makes clear that 'the evidence for benefit of pediatric medical transition is very uncertain, while the evidence for harm is less uncertain,'" the HHS letter says. "For this reason, the Review states that when 'medical interventions pose unnecessary, disproportionate risks of harm, healthcare providers should refuse to offer them even when they are preferred, requested, or demanded by patients.'"

HHS did not immediately respond to a request for comment about what would happen to health care providers who opt to continue prescribing the treatment protocols that the federal government is trying to eliminate.

Associations say HHS misrepresents research

WPATH and the U.S. Professional Association for Transgender Health released a joint statement earlier this month after HHS released its initial report, saying it "misrepresents existing research and disregards the expertise of professionals who have been working with transgender and gender-diverse youth for decades."

"The HHS report fails to meet established scientific standards," the two organizations wrote. "Authored anonymously, it relies on discredited narratives and selectively compiles prior systematic reviews, omitting critical findings from recent studies that support treatment interventions for appropriately identified individuals. Instead of conducting a new systematic review, the report dismisses multiple international clinical guidelines and disregards the prevailing medical consensus on gender-affirming care."

The statement said WPATH "supports a comprehensive, multidisciplinary assessment, ensuring that mental health professionals evaluate and address any co-occurring mental health conditions in youth who are exploring their gender identity and options for treatment."

Dr. Susan J. Kressly, president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, wrote in a statement released following the earlier HHS report that the document "misrepresents the current medical consensus and fails to reflect the realities of pediatric care."

"AAP was not consulted in the development of this report, yet our policy and intentions behind our recommendations were cited throughout in inaccurate and misleading ways," Kressly wrote. "The report prioritizes opinions over dispassionate reviews of evidence."

WPATH and The American Academy of Pediatrics did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the HHS letter published Wednesday.

The Endocrine Society — which represents more than 18,000 health care providers who treat and research diabetes, obesity, fertility, bone health and hormone-related cancers, as well as gender dysphoria — wrote in a statement shared with States Newsroom on Wednesday that its "guideline development process adheres to the highest standards of trustworthiness and transparency as defined by the National Academy of Medicine."

"The widely accepted view of the professional medical community is that medical treatment is appropriate for transgender and gender-diverse teenagers who experience persistent feelings of gender dysphoria," the Endocrine Society's statement said. "Medical studies show that access to this care improves the well-being of transgender and nonbinary people."

Matt Rose, senior public policy advocate at the Human Rights Campaign wrote in a statement that the letter released Wednesday shows "HHS is focusing its time and taxpayer dollars spreading anti-science misinformation in order to interfere with health care decisions best made by families with their doctors."

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"This approach is not only ignorant, but also deliberately harmful to a community that depends on best practice, evidence-based healthcare to live their most authentic lives," Rose wrote. "This letter does nothing except attempt to frighten and compel providers into doing the Trump administration's bidding."

Louisiana Republican Sen. Bill Cassidy —chairman of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee — celebrated the HHS letter.

"As a doctor, I am extremely concerned that medical organizations continue to push irreversible gender transition procedures for children against scientific data," Cassidy wrote in a statement. "I applaud President (Donald) Trump's strong leadership in telling providers directly that these dangerous practices must end."

CMS demands info on gender-affirming care

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services sent a separate letter Wednesday to hospitals that perform gender-affirming procedures, asking them to answer a series of questions within the next month.

CMS Administrator Oz wrote in a statement released alongside the letter that hospitals "accepting federal funds are expected to meet rigorous quality standards and uphold the highest level of stewardship when it comes to public resources—we will not turn a blind eye to procedures that lack a solid foundation of evidence and may result in lifelong harm."

The letter asks hospitals to detail how staff determine that children with gender dysphoria are capable of giving medical consent for a procedure and when parental consent is required.

Hospitals are asked to tell CMS if they plan to update their clinical practice guidelines as requested in the HHS letter sent earlier in the day.

And hospitals are told to share information about "adverse events related to these procedures, particularly children who later look to detransition."

The CMS letter also tells hospitals to share billing information for the cost of pediatric gender-affirming care procedures that were "paid, in whole or in part, by the federal government." The letter says the information will be used to conduct "a comprehensive review of federal payment policies related to gender transition procedures for patients under 19 years of age."

Jennifer covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include congressional policy, politics and legal challenges with a focus on health care, unemployment, housing and aid to families.

Elon Musk says giant tax bill backed by Trump 'undermines' his DOGE cuts

BY: JACOB FISCHLER - MAY 28, 2025 3:31 PM

Elon Musk says in an interview excerpt that he was "disappointed" in the U.S. House GOP's massive legislative package of tax cuts, border funding and more of President Donald Trump's domestic policy priorities, telling CBS News the bill would undermine the work of his U.S. DOGE Service to cut government spending.

The interview, a portion of which was published Tuesday evening as a preview of this weekend's edition of "CBS Sunday Morning," marks the first public rift between Musk, the world's richest man and a major funder of Trump's 2024 campaign, and the president who gave him an influential position in his second White House stint.

During the closing days of the presidential campaign, Musk said he could find \$2 trillion per year in the federal budget to cut.

The legislation that Trump has promoted as the "big, beautiful bill" works against the goals Musk set as he spearheaded the Department of Government Efficiency that sought to slash the size of the federal workforce, Musk said.

"I was disappointed to see the massive spending bill, frankly, which increases the budget deficit, not just decreases it, and undermines the work that the DOGE team is doing," Musk said. "I think a bill can be big or it can be beautiful. But I don't know if it can be both. My personal opinion."

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GOP bill cuts Medicaid, adds to deficit

The U.S. House narrowly passed the 1,100-page bill last week with all Democrats and two Republicans voting against it. Senate Republicans are planning to use the complex budget reconciliation process to pass the bill without subjecting it to the chamber's usual 60-vote threshold for legislation.

The measure includes an extension of the 2017 tax cuts, changes to Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program that are expected to reduce federal spending on benefits by nearly \$1 trillion over a decade, and increased funding for Defense Department and border security initiatives.

The House's bill would add \$2.3 trillion to the federal deficit over 10 years, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

Musk and Republicans who wish to downsize the federal government have called for taking actions based on DOGE's recommendations.



Billionaire and SpaceX owner Elon Musk said in an interview with CBS News that he was “disappointed” in the U.S. House GOP’s massive legislative package of tax cuts, border funding and more of President Donald Trump’s domestic policy priorities. (Photo courtesy of CBS Sunday

Morning)

Trump ‘not happy about certain aspects’

Asked about Musk's comments during an Oval Office event Wednesday, Trump praised the work of House Speaker Mike Johnson and Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., and noted the slim majorities in both chambers.

He also touted the tax cuts included in the bill, but conceded he was “not happy about certain aspects of” the bill — although the administration issued a Statement of Administration Policy supporting it and saying Trump would sign it into law.

“But I’m thrilled by other aspects of it,” he said. “That’s the way they go. It’s very big. It’s the big, beautiful bill. But the beautiful is because of all of the things we have. The biggest thing being, I would say, the level of tax cutting that we’re going to be doing.”

Johnson, who spent weeks negotiating with disparate factions of his conference to win passage of the measure, attempted to soothe Musk's concerns in a Wednesday post to X, which Musk owns.

The Louisiana Republican praised Musk's work while promising spending cuts would come in bills that are outside the budget reconciliation process: annual appropriations bills and a recissions package that takes away unspent money from previous appropriations laws.

“@ElonMusk and the entire @DOGE team have done INCREDIBLE work exposing waste, fraud, and abuse across the federal government,” Johnson wrote. “The House is eager and ready to act on DOGE’s findings so we can deliver even more cuts to big government that President Trump wants and the American people demand.”

New plan for billions in cuts said to be on the way

Johnson echoed a post from White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller, who said the rules around budget reconciliation made it difficult to cut significant chunks of discretionary spending, which is separate from the major cuts projected to hit the mandatory Medicaid and SNAP programs.

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The administration is planning to send to House Republicans next week a proposal to rescind \$9.4 billion in federal spending, according to a Wednesday report in Politico that cited unnamed House Republican and administration sources. The report was published after the Musk comments appeared on CBS News' website.

On X, Johnson said the annual appropriations bills, which Congress began formal work on this month with department heads appearing at subcommittee hearings, would also provide spending cuts.

Appropriators, though, have cautioned against the aggressive cuts sought by the administration.

Rep. Mike Simpson, an Idaho Republican who chairs the House Appropriations subcommittee that writes the funding bill for environmental programs, told Interior Secretary Doug Burgum the panel would likely fund his department above what the administration request.

Burgum said he would comply with whatever spending amount Congress approves.

Jacob covers federal policy and helps direct national coverage as deputy Washington bureau chief for States Newsroom. Based in Oregon, he focuses on Western issues. His coverage areas include climate, energy development, public lands and infrastructure.

Former SD legislator selected to lead Farm Service Agency in state

BY: SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - MAY 28, 2025 12:15 PM

A former legislator is the new executive director of the South Dakota Farm Service Agency, according to a Tuesday announcement from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Roger Chase is the Trump administration's appointee for the position. The Huron Republican served in the state House of Representatives from 2017 through 2024, including a stint as chair of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. He is an owner and partner in Chase Grain and Cattle.

The USDA also announced Tuesday that Lorraine Polak will serve as director of South Dakota Rural Development. Polak grew up on a dairy farm in Nebraska and has worked in public service for more than 30 years, most recently as a housing policy specialist for U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds, R-South Dakota.

USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins issued a statement commenting on those and numerous other recent appointments.

"Our latest additions to the USDA family are personally invested in ensuring farmers and rural America prosper," Rollins said.



Rep. Roger Chase, R-Huron, listens to Gov. Kristi Noem during her 2023 budget address on the House floor of the South Dakota Capitol on Dec. 5, 2023. (Makenzie Huber/South Dakota Searchlight)

Nebraska confirms state's first measles case since 2017, in county bordering SD

BY: JUAN SALINAS II - MAY 28, 2025 7:20 AM

Nebraska confirmed its first measles case of the recent national surge, this one in the state's Panhandle in a county bordering South Dakota.

The measles case involving an "age-appropriately vaccinated child" in Sheridan County is the state's first since 2017, according to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. The child had no history of out-of-state travel.

"We are grateful the child's symptoms have been mild, and they are recovering," said Jessica Davies, health director of the Panhandle Public Health District that covers 12 western counties. "Those with known exposure have already been notified."

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The state health agency said people may have been exposed to measles in two cities in the panhandle and advised them to visit and complete the state DHHS risk assessment survey.

Measles is a highly contagious airborne disease that spreads when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. It can cause severe disease, complications and even death. Symptoms include a high fever, cough, runny nose and a rash over the body. Being vaccinated is the best way to prevent getting sick with measles or spreading it to other people.

Measles can affect anyone, but it is most common in children.

The state health agency emphasizes that if an individual thinks they have symptoms of measles, they should isolate themselves and call a health care facility in advance to get tested. State health officials also said anyone with known measles exposure and no confirmed immunity needs to stay at home and away from others for 21 days from the last date of exposure.

Vaccines have made measles rare in the U.S., leading to its elimination in 2000, but the politicization of vaccinations has played a part in the resurgence of measles in the U.S.

Many nearby states have had measles cases this year. Kansas currently has 58 cases. Nebraska Gov. Jim Pillen held a press conference in April with state health officials urging Nebraskans to get vaccinated against a disease that can cause serious health complications, especially for children under age 5.

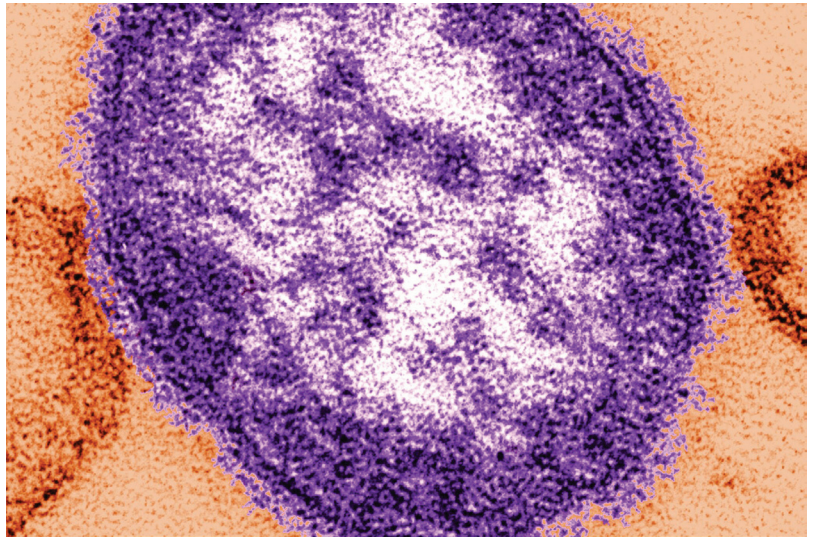
At the time, Pillen said, "It's not if it's going to come to Nebraska, but when."

South Dakota has not reported a confirmed measles case so far this year, but reported a case last year that was the state's first in nine years.

South Dakota Searchlight contributed to this report.

This story was originally published by the Nebraska Examiner. Like South Dakota Searchlight, it's part of States Newsroom, a nonprofit news network supported by grants and a coalition of donors as a 501c(3) public charity. Nebraska Examiner maintains editorial independence.

Reporter Juan Salinas II covered local and state government for numerous outlets in Texas before joining the Examiner. His coverage focuses on showing everyday people the impact of politics and government. Salinas was born and raised in North Texas and was a two-time reporting fellow with States Newsroom partner The Texas Tribune. Before that, he interned at public radio station KERA and was a year-long reporting fellow at the Fort Worth Report.

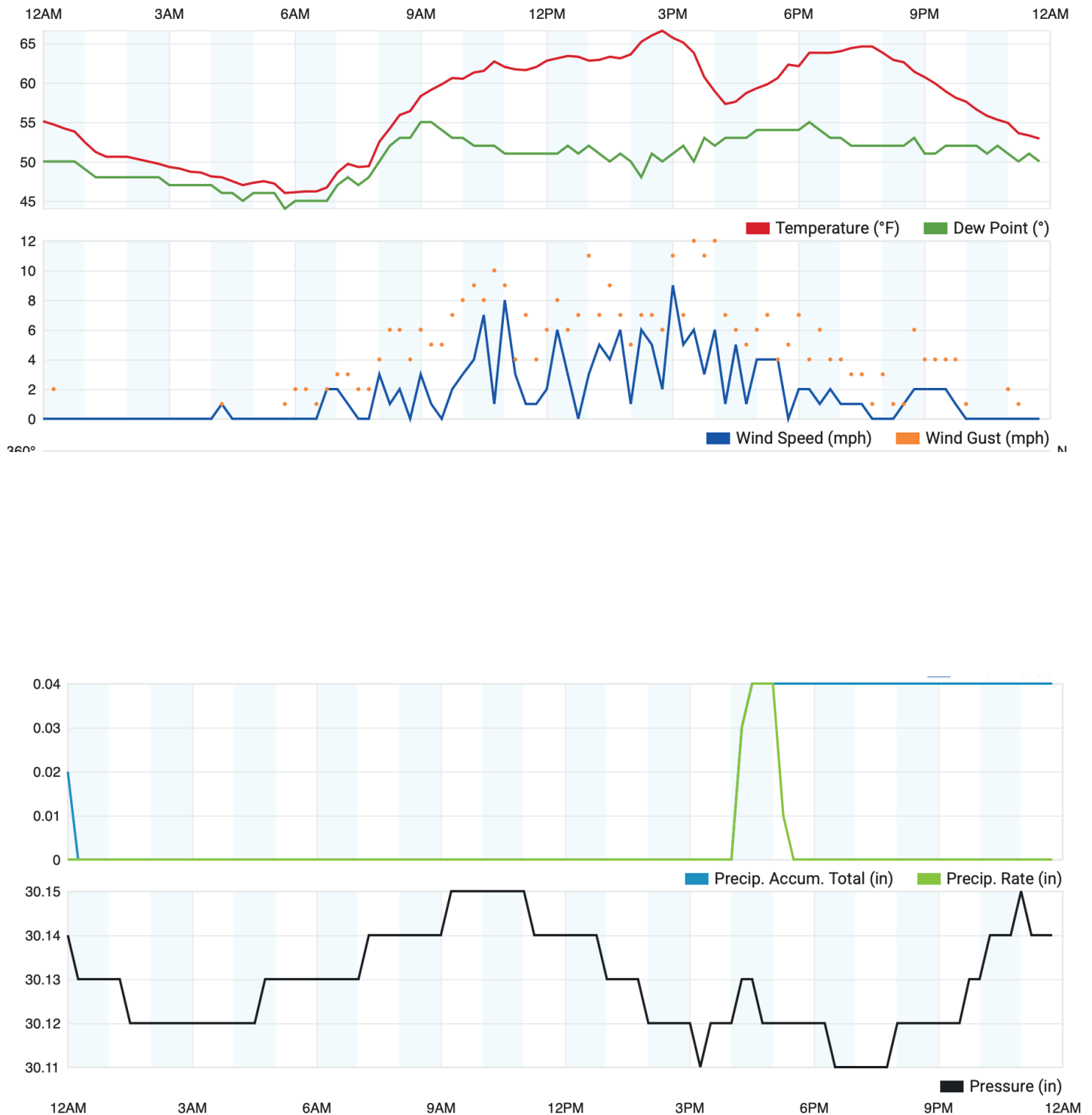


A digitally colorized, thin-section transmission electron microscopic image of a single measles virus particle. (CDC/Cynthia S. Goldsmith; William Bellini, Ph.D.)

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



High: 74 °F

Patchy Fog
then Sunny

Tonight



Low: 46 °F

Mostly Clear

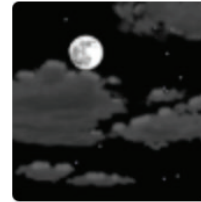
Friday



High: 82 °F

Mostly Sunny

Friday Night



Low: 54 °F

Partly Cloudy

Saturday



High: 83 °F

Sunny

3 Day Outlook

Today



64 to 70°

Thursday



68 to 75°

Friday



77 to 83°

- 20-40% chance for afternoon showers and a few storms today, mainly across northeast SD and west central MN
- Main threats from strongest storms will be lightning and pea-sized hail
- More sunshine expected the rest of the week as temperatures climb back closer to normal, if not above normal by Friday



National Weather
Service Aberdeen, South
Dakota

After some patchy fog in spots this morning, we'll be left with a partly to mostly cloudy sky. Some afternoon shower activity will once again be possible, mainly across northeast SD and west central MN. A couple of thunderstorms will be possible with the strongest activity capable of producing pea size hail and lightning. The rest of the week will feature warming temperatures and dry conditions.

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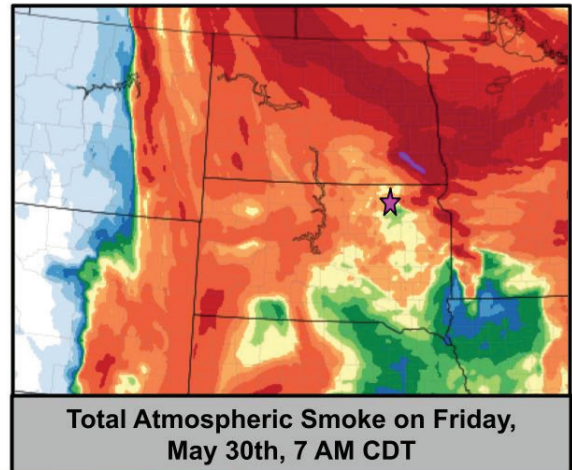
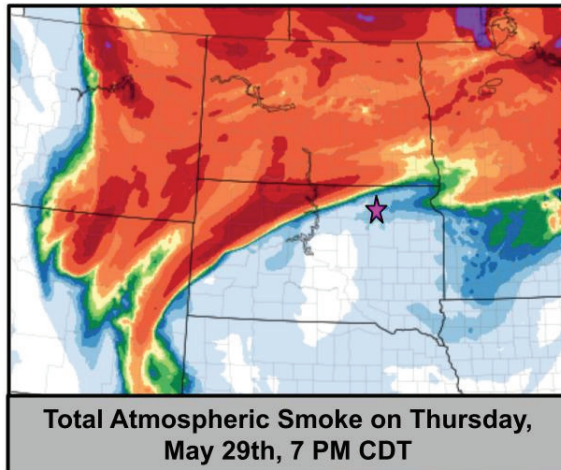


Wildfire Smoke Incoming

May 28, 2025
2:15 PM

Smoke moves over the Northern Plains for the end of this week.

- ★ Wildfire smoke from Canada is expected to move in beginning Thursday evening.
- ★ Only a small amount of smoke is expected to reach the surface, but hazy skies will be present Friday.



★ = Aberdeen



Vertically Integrated Smoke (mg/m²)

National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Wildfire smoke from Canada is expected to move over the Northern Plains, impacting central and north-eastern South Dakota beginning Thursday evening. While a little smoke will reach the surface, most of it is expected to remain elevated, creating hazy skies Friday.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 67 °F at 2:34 PM

Low Temp: 46 °F at 6:02 AM

Wind: 12 mph at 3:27 PM

Precip: : 0.04

Day length: 15 hours, 25 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 99 in 1934

Record Low: 23 in 1947

Average High: 75

Average Low: 50

Average Precip in May.: 3.07

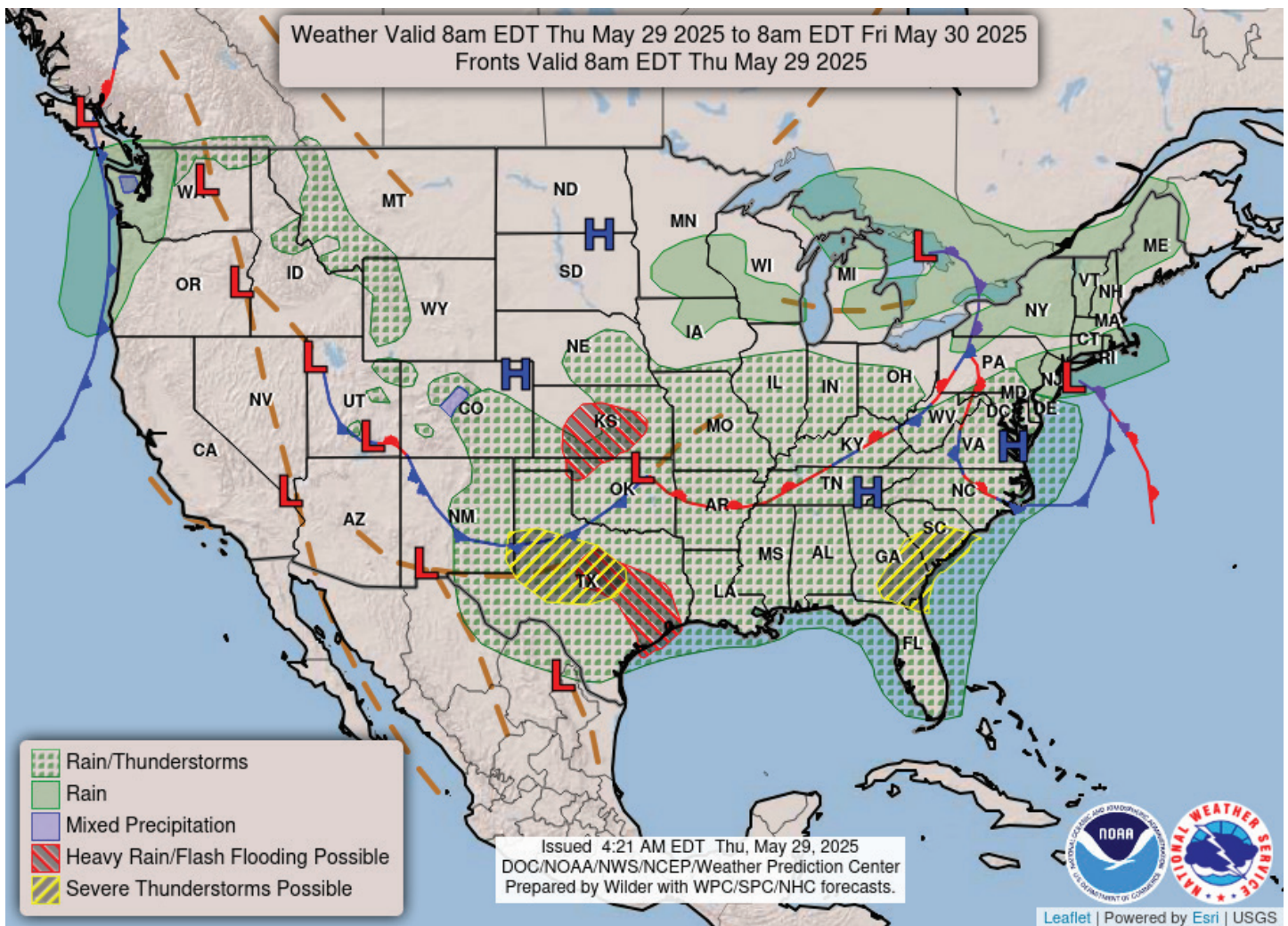
Precip to date in May.: 3.41

Average Precip to date: 7.04

Precip Year to Date: 6.04

Sunset Tonight: 9:12:53 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:46:16 am



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Today in Weather History

May 29, 1953: An auditorium was almost entirely unroofed, and barns, along with outbuildings were destroyed in McLaughlin by a tornado. Seven businesses and two homes were also damaged. Estimate of property damage at \$100,000. This tornado was estimated to have F2 strength.

May 29, 2004: Hail, with the largest a quarter sizes, fell in many parts of north-central South Dakota. Lightning struck a house in Veblen and caused some damage. Glass from a broken window hit a man, and some debris from the ceiling hit a woman. They were taken to the hospital and treated for minor injuries. The torrential rains of 3 to 6 inches fell between Westport and Columbia with cropland and many roads flooded. Also, some basements were flooded. Four, weak F0 tornadoes, also were reported. The first two touched down near Bath causing no damage. The other two occurred near Ipswich, also causing no damage.

1947: An unprecedented late-spring snowstorm blasts portions of the Midwest from eastern Wyoming to eastern Upper Michigan. The heavy snow caused severe damage to power and telephone lines and the already-leafed-out vegetation.

1951 - A massive hailstorm, from Wallace to Kearney County in Kansas, caused six million dollars damage to crops. (David Ludlum)

1953 - A tornado, 600 yards wide at times, killed two persons on its 20 mile path from southwest of Fort Rice ND into Emmons County. Nearly every building in Fort Rice was damaged. The Catholic church was leveled, with some pews jammed four feet into the ground. (The Weather Channel)

1982: Two significant tornadoes ripped through southern Illinois. The most severe was an F4 that touched down northeast of Carbondale, Illinois then moved to Marion. The twister had multiple vortices within the main funnel. Extensive damage occurred at the Marion Airport. A total of 10 people were killed, and 181 were injured. 648 homes and 200 cars were damaged or destroyed, with total damages around \$100 million.

1986: Hailstones over 3 inches in diameter pounded South Shore in Montreal, Quebec Canada causing over \$65 million in damage.

1987 - Thunderstorms in West Texas produced softball size hail at Lamesa, and hail up to twelve inches deep east of Dimmitt. Thunderstorms also spawned seven tornadoes in West Texas, including one which injured three persons at Wolfforth. Thunderstorms deluged the Texas Hill Country with up to eleven inches of rain. Severe flooding along the Medino, Hondo, Seco, Sabinal and Frio rivers caused more than fifty million dollars damage. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - A powerful cold front brought snow and high winds to parts of the western U.S. Austin, NV, was blanketed with ten inches of snow, and winds gusted to 75 mph at the Mojave Airport in California. Strong southerly winds and unseasonably warm weather prevailed in the north central U.S. Glasgow, MT, equalled their record for the month of May with a high of 102 degrees. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Wintry weather gripped parts of the northwestern U.S. for the second day in a row. Great Falls, MT, was blanketed with 12 inches of snow, which pushed their total for the winter season to a record 117.4 inches. Six inches of snow whitened the Cascade Mountains of Oregon. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Afternoon and evening thunderstorms produced severe weather from north central Colorado to the northern half of Texas. Severe thunderstorms spawned four tornadoes, and there were seventy reports of large hail or damaging winds. Midday thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 90 mph at Hobart, OK, and produced up to three and a half inches of rain in eastern Colorado in four hours. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING!

A poor widow had two sons. She was extremely consumed with their success and feared that they would fail. Both were self-employed. One sold umbrellas and the other one sold fans.

The first thing she would do each morning was to run to the window to check the weather. If it was raining, she would sigh and say, "Oh, me, no one will want to buy fans today. It's going to be cool." And, if it was sunny, she would fret and say, "Oh my, no one will need an umbrella because it's not raining."

One day a friend said to her, "Listen, if the sun is shining, someone will buy a fan and if it's raining, someone will buy an umbrella. The weather is always changing so someone will always buy one or the other."

Many of us allow the conditions around us to control the attitude that is in us. It's "what's out there" that controls "what's in here." How unfortunate! We have things backward. When we are "in Christ," we need to go to Him and ask Him to fill our hearts with thanksgiving and joy for all that we have "in Him." We have all of His promises available to us in His Word. And, if we accept them and act on them, rain or sun, come what may - God is in control and will give us what we need. "Greater is He who is within you than he who is in the world!"

Prayer: Lord, help us to see things through Your eyes, and believe that Your care for us exceeds every need we will ever have. May we accept Your promises. In Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture For Today: Always be j

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: 05.27.25

6 28 34 48 62 9

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$189,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 10 Mins
34 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 05.28.25

4 6 8 33 35 5

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$37,220,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 25
Mins 34 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 05.28.25

3 11 35 43 47 11

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 40 Mins 34
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 05.28.25

5 16 17 19 30

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$20,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 40
Mins 34 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 05.28.25

14 30 41 48 69 12

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 9 Mins
35 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 05.28.25

23 27 32 35 59 11

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$207,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 9 Mins
34 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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Upcoming Groton Events

03/22/2025 Spring Vendor Fair at the GHS Gym 10am-2pm
03/29/2025 Men's Singles Bowling Tournament at the Jungle 10am, 1pm & 4pm
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
04/12/2025 Groton Firemens Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
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
07/09/2025 Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar at the Groton Legion 11am-1pm
07/11-13/25 2025 VFW 12U Class B State Baseball Tournament
07/13/2025 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm
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
08/14/2025 Family Fun Fest, Downtown Main Street 5:30-7:30pm (2nd Thursday)
08/23/2025 Glacial Tournament at Olive Grove
09/05/2025 Homecoming Parade 1pm
09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
09/07/2025 Sunflower Classic Couples Scramble at Olive Grove
10/10/2025 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
10/11/2025 Pumpkin Fest 10am-3pm City Park
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

From Calories to Care: DYXnet's Dragon Boat Festival Charity Initiative Turns Exercise into Festive Rice Dumplings for Seniors

HONG KONG SAR - Media OutReach Newswire - 29 May 2025 - As the Dragon Boat Festival approaches, DYXnet, a wholly-owned subsidiary of VNET Group (NASDAQ: VNET) and a leading enterprise network service provider in Greater China, held a meaningful charity event on Thursday, May 22. In collaboration with the Christian Family Service Centre, the company donated festive rice dumplings to seniors at the affiliated center, embodying its commitment to community support.

DYXnet's volunteer team donated festive rice dumplings and interacted with the seniors at the Christian Family Service Centre's Lively Elderly Day Training Centre.

On the event day, DYXnet's volunteer team gathered at the Christian Family Service Centre's Lively Elderly Day Training Centre in Wong Tai Sin, where they distributed 100 rice dumplings to seniors. During the visit, volunteers engaged with the seniors by making handmade crafts and enjoying heartfelt conversations, creating a festive atmosphere filled with warmth and joy. All rice dumplings were produced by Home Café, a social enterprise operated by the Christian Family Service Centre that supports employment for people with disabilities and those in mental recovery, reinforcing the initiative's dedication to supporting vulnerable communities.

This charitable rice dumpling donation initiative is a continuation of DYXnet's employee wellness program, reflecting the company's culture of prioritizing employee health and wellness. Recently, DYXnet organized a "Health Awareness Month" for employees across various locations, promoting a diverse range of fitness activities to encourage a healthy lifestyle. In Hong Kong, the team held a "Trampoline Day", where the calories burned during the event were converted into an equivalent amount of rice dumplings, transforming sweat into food donations and allowing every employee to contribute to societal welfare.

The sports activities in other regions of DYXnet were equally engaging and innovative. In Beijing, events featured a "Plank Challenge," "Running Day," and "Step Competition," encouraging employees to develop regular exercise habits. The Shanghai team hosted a "Skipping Rope Competition" to enhance teamwork and foster a positive workplace atmosphere. In Guangzhou and Shenzhen, unique outdoor activities such as the "22-Day Skipping Rope Challenge" and "Aerobic Hiking" were introduced, along with a "Light Snack and Fruit Day" to combine fitness with a healthy diet and promote interdepartmental collaboration. In Taiwan, a "Relay Race" was organized to strengthen team cohesion and vitality.

Over the past 25 years, DYXnet has not only committed to providing high-quality enterprise networks and ICT services but has also consistently embraced corporate responsibility toward community care, believing that corporate growth and societal progress are interlinked. Since 2016, DYXnet has been recognized as a "Caring Company" for several consecutive years. DYXnet will continue to promote the well-being of its employees as well as social welfare, leveraging its expertise to give back to society and collaboratively create a better future.

Hashtag: #DYXnet

The issuer is solely responsible for the content of this announcement.

About DYXnet

DYXnet, established in 1999 in Hong Kong, became a wholly-owned subsidiary of VNET Group (NASDAQ: VNET) in 2014. It is a leading ICT service provider in Hong Kong and the Asia Pacific region, delivering innovative technologies and solutions to enterprises of all sizes and helping them fully embrace digital transformation. DYXnet offers a comprehensive portfolio of services, including enterprise networks (MPLS and SD-WAN), cloud solutions, data center services, cybersecurity, and AI solutions, empowering businesses to realize their full potential.

As a pioneer in the ICT field, DYXnet operates over 200 PoPs worldwide, covering more than 700 cities

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and serving over 30,000 client sites. DYXnet was among the first ICT service providers in the region to obtain prestigious ISO certifications, including ISO/IEC 27001, ISO/IEC 20000-1, and ISO 9001. Additionally, DYXnet is one of the inaugural official members of the China Cross-border Data Telecommunications Industry Alliance and has played a crucial role as one of the initial drafting units for SD-WAN service standards. To learn more, please visit DYXnet's website at: <https://www.dyxnet.com>.

South Dakota tribe declares state of emergency over crime

By SARAH RAZA Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Rosebud Sioux Tribe in South Dakota has declared a public safety state of emergency on its reservation, asking for more law enforcement resources from the federal government. It's the tribe's third emergency declaration in six years as members contend with methamphetamine and other illicit drug use, trafficking and gun violence on the Rosebud Indian Reservation. The tribe previously declared states of emergency in 2019 and 2024.

Kathleen Wooden Knife, president of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, wrote in the declaration on Tuesday that the emergency is due to "pervasive law and order and public health issues ... creating threats to public safety, the health and welfare of the general public."

The declaration asked for increased patrol and investigative support from federal agencies, cooperation from the 12 communities on the reservation and coordination between the tribe and federal government.

Law enforcement is stretched thin on many reservations in the U.S., leading some tribes to sue the federal government. In a lawsuit the Oglala Sioux tribe filed against the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a federal judge ruled that the U.S. government is obligated by treaty to support law enforcement on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

The Rosebud Indian Reservation has a dozen law enforcement officers for an area that stretches nearly 1 million acres (404,686 hectares) across five counties, said Lewis Good Voice Eagle, chief of staff to Wooden Knife. Low staffing is partially due to 2016 budget cuts, as well as difficulty retaining officers who don't receive the same benefits as they would working elsewhere.

After previous emergency declarations, the reservation received help from the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Interior, though it was not enough to solve the problems, Good Voice Eagle said.

"With the shortage of law enforcement and the shortage of juris doctorate barred attorneys, it has really created another nightmare on the Rosebud Indian Reservation," he said.

Crime on South Dakota's nine Native American reservations has been a longstanding issue and the subject of tense relations with former South Dakota governor and current Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem. The nine tribes in the state banned her from tribal lands last year for saying publicly that tribal leaders were catering to drug cartels on the reservations.

Chinese students anxious and angry after Rubio vows to revoke visas

By FU TING, KANIS LEUNG, and HUIZHONG WU Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Chinese students studying in the U.S. are scrambling to figure out their futures after U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced Wednesday that some students would have their visas revoked.

The U.S. will begin revoking the visas of some Chinese students, including those studying in "critical fields", and "those with connections to the Chinese Communist Party," according to the announcement.

China is the second-largest country of origin for international students in the United States, behind only India. In the 2023-2024 school year, more than 270,000 international students were from China, making up roughly a quarter of all foreign students in the U.S.

This is a "new version of Chinese Exclusion Act," said Linqin, a Chinese student at Johns Hopkins Uni-

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versity, who asked to be identified only by his first name out of fear of retaliation. He was referring to a 19th-century law that prohibited Chinese from immigrating to the U.S. and banned Chinese people already in the U.S. from getting citizenship. He said Wednesday was the first time he thought about leaving the U.S. after spending one third of his life here.

Chinese international students are point of tension between U.S. and China

China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Mao Ning, called the U.S. decision unreasonable.

"Such a politicized and discriminatory action lays bare the U.S. lie that it upholds the so-called freedom and openness," she said Thursday, adding that China has lodged a protest with the U.S.

The issue of Chinese students studying overseas has long been a point of tension in the bilateral relationship. During Trump's first term, in 2019, China's Ministry of Education warned students about visa issues in the U.S., with rising rejection rates and shortening of visas.

Last year, the Chinese Foreign Ministry protested that a number of Chinese students have been unfairly interrogated and sent home upon arrival at U.S. airports.

Chinese state media has long hyped gun violence in the U.S. and violent protests during the pandemic, and portrayed the U.S. as a dangerous place that wasn't safe for its citizens. The tense bilateral relationship has also meant that some Chinese students are opting to study in the U.K. or other countries over the U.S. after the pandemic.

Zou Renge, a 27-year-old public policy master's student at the University of Chicago, said she had planned to take some time off and work in humanitarian aid programs abroad after graduating at the end of this year.

But now, she will refrain from leaving the U.S. and will look for jobs in the meantime. "In a very uncertain environment, I'll try my best to find myself a solution," she said.

Hong Kong seeks to draw in talent amid uncertainty

Some were eager to capitalize on the uncertainty facing international students in the U.S. Hong Kong's leader John Lee told lawmakers on Thursday that the city would welcome any students who have been discriminated against by American policies to study in the city.

"The students who face unfair treatment can come from different countries beyond the U.S. I think this is an opportunity for Hong Kong," he said. "We will work with our universities to provide the best support and assistance."

That followed a widely shared post by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology inviting Harvard students to "continue their academic pursuits" there after Trump said he would revoke the university's ability to accept international students.

Hong Kong, a former British colony that returned to China in 1997, is a popular destination for mainland Chinese students to pursue their university degrees because of its international image and relative freedoms.

The city launched a new visa scheme in 2022 to counter the exodus of expatriates and local professionals that occurred after Beijing imposed a national security law to quell dissent and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kitty Wu, director of education consultancy Litz USA Student Service in Hong Kong, said some students who planned to apply to American universities in the future are now also considering the University of Hong Kong, the city's top university and an option because of its high ranking — something that had not happened before.

"Things are different every day now, we don't know how things will change in the future, so we don't know the impact for next year," she said.

Will Kwong, managing director at Hong Kong's AAS Education Consultancy, said his company was helping students with offers from American universities to apply to other institutions, predominantly in Britain and Australia.

U.S. was known for diversity and this will hurt it, students say

"Having fewer international exchanges is definitely not good for America's development," said Zhang Qi, a postdoctoral fellow in Beijing. "This could be a positive change for China's development. More talented

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individuals may choose to stay at Tsinghua or Peking University, or with the Chinese Academy of Sciences and other top institutions in China, which would benefit the development of domestic science and technology."

For many, there is little they can do as they now wait for the fallout from the move.

Chen, an incoming Chinese student at Purdue University who only gave his last name out of concern for retaliation by the Trump administration, has been waiting anxiously for his visa approval. But he was also angry. Currently in China, he said this was the exact opposite of what he thought the U.S. stood for.

"I was expecting freedom and tolerance. The U.S. was known for its diversity which allows international students to fit in, but it is a pity to see such kind of change," he said.

Israel authorizes more settlements in the occupied West Bank. Strikes on Gaza kill 13, officials say

By JULIA FRANKEL and NATALIE MELZER Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel said Thursday it would establish 22 Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank, including the legalization of outposts already built without government authorization. Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip meanwhile killed at least 13 people overnight, local health officials said.

Israel captured the West Bank, along with Gaza and east Jerusalem, in the 1967 Mideast war and the Palestinians want all three territories for their future state. Most of the international community views settlements as illegal and an obstacle to resolving the decades-old conflict.

Defense Minister Israel Katz said the settlement decision "strengthens our hold on Judea and Samaria," using the biblical term for the West Bank, "anchors our historical right in the Land of Israel, and constitutes a crushing response to Palestinian terrorism."

He added it was also "a strategic move that prevents the establishment of a Palestinian state that would endanger Israel."

Israel has already built well over 100 settlements across the territory that are home to some 500,000 settlers. The settlements range from small hilltop outposts to fully developed communities with apartment blocks, shopping malls, factories and public parks.

The West Bank is home to 3 million Palestinians, who live under Israeli military rule with the Western-backed Palestinian Authority administering population centers. The settlers have Israeli citizenship.

Israel has accelerated settlement construction in recent years — long before Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack ignited the war in Gaza — confining Palestinians to smaller and smaller areas of the West Bank and making the prospect of establishing a viable, independent state even more remote.

During his first term, President Donald Trump's administration broke with decades of U.S. foreign policy by supporting Israel's claims to territory seized by force and taking steps to legitimize the settlements. Former President Joe Biden, like most of his predecessors, opposed the settlements but applied little pressure to Israel to curb their growth.

The top United Nations court ruled last year that Israel's presence in the occupied Palestinian territories is unlawful and called on it to end, and for settlement construction to stop immediately. Israel denounced the non-binding opinion by a 15-judge panel of the International Court of Justice, saying the territories are part of the historic homeland of the Jewish people.

Calls for settlements in war-ravaged Gaza

Israel withdrew its settlements from the Gaza Strip in 2005, but leading figures in the current government have called for them to be re-established and for much of the Palestinian population of the territory to be resettled elsewhere through what they describe as voluntary emigration.

Palestinians view such plans as a blueprint for their forcible expulsion from their homeland, and experts say the plans would likely violate international law.

Israel now controls more than 70% of Gaza, according to Yaakov Garb, a professor of environmental studies at Ben Gurion University, who has examined Israeli-Palestinian land use patterns for decades.

The area includes buffer zones along the border with Israel as well as the southern city of Rafah, which

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is now mostly uninhabited, and other large areas that Israel has ordered to be evacuated.

The war began with Hamas' Oct. 7 attack, in which militants stormed into Israel, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting 251. Hamas still holds 58 hostages, around a third of them alive, after most of the rest were released in ceasefire agreements. Israeli forces have rescued eight and recovered dozens of bodies.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 54,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not say how many of the dead were civilians or combatants.

Israeli strikes killed at least 13 Palestinians overnight in Gaza, according to local hospitals.

Four were killed in a strike on a car in Gaza City late Wednesday and another eight, including two women and three children, were killed in a strike on a home in Jabaliya. A strike on a built-up refugee camp in central Gaza killed one person and wounded 18.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military, which says it only targets militants and blames civilian deaths on Hamas because the militants are embedded in populated areas.

Cats with hooked and bent tails fill Nagasaki, Japan, where they are thought to bring good luck

By MAYUKO ONO and MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

NAGASAKI, Japan (AP) — In Japan, bobtail cats are considered good luck and Nagasaki is the place to find them.

They are known as "omagari neko (bent-tail cats)" or "kagi neko (hook cats)" and have their own society of admirers and even a dedicated Shinto shrine.

Their tails come in varieties including hook-shaped at the tip, curved or in a bun, explained Kazuya Hideshima, a worker at Omagari Neko Shrine and member of the Nagasaki Cat Society.

Past findings have indicated bobtails accounted for nearly 80% of the cats in Nagasaki, twice the occurrence of anywhere else in Japan.

Japanese cats are believed to have come from China in the 6th century with Buddhist monks, serving as rat hunters to protect religious scriptures on ships.

Nagasaki bobtails have their roots in the Dutch East Indies when the city was the only foreign port during Japan's closed era in the 17th to 19th centuries. They hunted rats to protect shipments on their way from Southeast Asia to Japan, according to Nagasaki cultural officials.

Soshin Yamamoto, a veterinarian and cat specialist, said the large population of bobtails in Nagasaki is likely the result of a genetic mutation that reproduced in a relatively isolated environment when the nation was shut up tight.

"Having bobtails is no problem for most cats living a normal life, as long as they live near humans and aren't jumping and running around like wild cats in a forest," he said.

Nagasaki residents hope the cats bring in tourists and help business.

Natsuno Kani, a 50-year-old tourist from Tokyo who recently visited the bobtail shrine, said she knew Nagasaki was famous for bent-tail cats.

But Abigail Tarraso, an artist from Spain based in Takeo City in neighboring Saga prefecture, was unfamiliar with the species, which is not as popular in Spain.

"Today is the first time in Nagasaki that I have ever heard of this," said Cindy Bi, an American who is also an artist. "I am excited to look around for them. Maybe we will see a few."

Markets welcome court ruling against Trump's tariffs as shares, US dollar and oil gain

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

Financial markets welcomed a U.S. court ruling that blocks President Donald Trump from imposing sweeping tariffs on imports under an emergency-powers law.

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U.S. futures jumped early Thursday and oil prices rose more than \$1. The U.S. dollar rose against the yen and euro.

The court found the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act, which Trump has cited as his basis for ordering massive increases in import duties, does not authorize the use of tariffs.

The White House immediately appealed and it was unclear if Trump would abide by the ruling in the interim. The long term outcome of legal disputes over tariffs remains uncertain. But investors appeared to take heart after the months of turmoil brought on by Trump's trade war.

The future for the S&P 500 was up 1.5% while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 1.2%.

In early European trading, Germany's DAX gained 0.5% to 24,160.75. The CAC 40 in Paris jumped 0.9% to 7,860.67. Britain's FTSE was nearly unchanged at 8,722.63.

Japan's Nikkei 225 index jumped 1.9% to 38,432.98. American's largest ally in Asia has been appealing to Trump to cancel the tariffs he has ordered on imports from Japan and to also stop 25% tariffs on steel, aluminum and autos.

The ruling also pushed the dollar sharply higher against the Japanese yen. It was trading at 145.40 yen early Thursday, up from 144.87 yen late Wednesday.

A three-judge panel ruled on several lawsuits arguing Trump exceeded his authority, casting doubt on trade policies that have jolted global financial markets, frustrated trade partners and raised uncertainty over the outlook for inflation and the global economy.

Many of Trump's double-digit tariff hikes are paused for up to 90 days to allow time for trade negotiations, but the uncertainty they cast over global commerce has stymied businesses and left consumers wary about what lies ahead.

"Just when traders thought they'd seen every twist in the tariff saga, the gavel dropped like a lightning bolt over the Pacific," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary.

The ruling was, at the least, "a brief respite before the next thunderclap," he said.

Elsewhere in Asia, Hong Kong's Hang Seng added 1.3% to 23,561.86, while the Shanghai Composite index gained 0.7% to 3,363.45.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 gained 0.2% to 8,409.80.

In South Korea, which like Japan relies heavily on exports to the U.S., the Kospi surged 1.9% to 2,720.64. Shares also were helped by the Bank of Korea's decision to cut its key interest rate to 2.5% from 2.75%, to ease pressure on the economy.

Taiwan's Taiex edged 0.1% lower, and India's Sensex lost 0.2%.

On Wednesday, U.S. stocks cooled, with the S&P 500 down 0.6% but still within 4.2% of its record after charging higher amid hopes that the worst of the turmoil caused by Trump's trade war may have passed. It had been roughly 20% below the mark last month.

The Dow industrials lost 0.6% and the Nasdaq composite fell 0.5%.

Trading was relatively quiet ahead of a quarterly earnings release for Nvidia, which came after markets closed.

The bellwether for artificial intelligence overcame a wave of tariff-driven turbulence to deliver another quarter of robust growth thanks to feverish demand for its high-powered chips that are making computers seem more human. Nvidia's shares jumped 6.6% in afterhours trading.

Like Nvidia, Macy's stock also swung up and down through much of the day, even though it reported milder drops in revenue and profit for the latest quarter than analysts expected. Its stock ended the day down 0.3%.

The bond market showed relatively little reaction after the Federal Reserve released the minutes from its latest meeting earlier this month, when it left its benchmark lending rate alone for the third straight time. The central bank has been holding off on cuts to interest rates, which would give the economy a boost, amid worries about inflation staying higher than hoped because of Trump's sweeping tariffs.

In other dealings early Thursday, the yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 4.52% from 4.47% late Wednesday.

U.S. benchmark crude oil gained \$1.06 to \$62.90 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard,

added \$1.00 to \$65.32 per barrel.

The euro slipped to \$1.1280 from \$1.1292.

Caves and other mountain hideouts are being searched for fugitive known as 'Devil in the Ozarks'

By JEFF MARTIN, ANDREW DeMILLO and SAFIYAH RIDDLE Associated Press

There are plenty of hideouts in the rugged terrain of the Ozark Mountains, from abandoned cabins to campsites in the vast forests where searchers are hunting for a convicted former police chief known as the "Devil in the Ozarks."

Others are not only off the grid but beneath it, in the hundreds of caves that lead to vast subterranean spaces.

Local, state and federal law enforcement have continued to scour the region around the prison throughout the third day of the search.

"Until we have credible evidence that he is not in the area, we assume that he's probably still in the area," Rand Champion, a spokesman for the Arkansas Department of Corrections, said at a press conference Wednesday.

Fugitive Grant Hardin, 56, "knows where the caves are," said Darla Nix, a cafe owner in Pea Ridge, Arkansas, whose sons grew up around him. Nix, who describes Hardin as a survivor, remembers him as a "very, very smart" and mostly quiet person.

For the searchers, "caves have definitely been a source of concern and a point of emphasis," said Champion.

"That's one of the challenges of this area — there are a lot of places to hide and take shelter, a lot of abandoned sheds, and there are a lot of caves in this area, so that's been a priority for the search team," Champion said.

The area around the prison is "one of the most cave-dense regions of the state," said Matt Covington, a University of Arkansas geology professor who studies caves.

Impersonating an officer

Hardin, the former police chief in the small town of Gateway near the Arkansas-Missouri border, was serving lengthy sentences for murder and rape. He was the subject of the TV documentary "Devil in the Ozarks."

He escaped Sunday from the North Central Unit — a medium-security prison also known as the Calico Rock prison — by wearing an outfit designed to look like a law enforcement uniform, according to Champion. A prison officer opened a secure gate, allowing him to leave the facility. Champion said that someone should have checked Hardin's identity before he was allowed to leave the facility, describing the lack of verification as a "lapse" that is being investigated.

It took authorities approximately 30 minutes to notice Hardin had escaped.

Champion said that inmates are evaluated and given a classification when they first enter the prison system to determine where they are housed. There are portions of the Calico Rock facility that are maximum-security.

While incarcerated, Hardin did not have any major disciplinary issues, Champion said.

Authorities have been using canines, drones and helicopters to search for Hardin in the rugged northern Arkansas terrain, Champion said. The sheriffs of several counties across the Arkansas Ozarks had urged residents to lock their homes and vehicles and call 911 if they notice anything suspicious.

Dark places to hide

In some ways, the terrain is similar to the site of one of the most notorious manhunts in U.S. history.

Bomber Eric Rudolph, described by authorities as a skilled outdoorsman, evaded law officers for years in the Appalachian Mountains of western North Carolina. It was a five-year manhunt that finally ended in 2003 with his capture.

Rudolph knew of many cabins in the area owned by out-of-town people, and he also knew of caves in

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the area, former FBI executive Chris Swecker, who led the agency's Charlotte, North Carolina, office at the time, said in the FBI's historical account of the case.

"He was anticipating a great conflict and he had clearly lined up caves and campsites where he could go," Swecker said.

Rudolph pleaded guilty to federal charges associated with four bombings in Georgia and Alabama.

There are nearly 2,000 documented caves in northern Arkansas, state officials say. Many of them have entrances only a few feet wide that are not obvious to passersby, said Michael Ray Taylor, who has written multiple books on caves, including "Hidden Nature: Wild Southern Caves."

The key is finding the entrance, Taylor said.

"The entrance may look like a rabbit hole, but if you wriggle through it, suddenly you find enormous passageways," he said.

It would be quite possible to hide out underground for an extended period, but "you have to go out for food, and you're more likely to be discovered," he said.

Checkered past

Hardin had a checkered and brief law enforcement career. He worked at the Fayetteville Police Department from August 1990 to May 1991, but was let go because he didn't meet the standards of his training period, a department spokesman said.

Hardin worked about six months at the Huntsville Police Department before resigning, but records do not give a reason for his resignation, according to Police Chief Todd Thomas, who joined the department after Hardin worked there.

Hardin later worked at the Eureka Springs Police Department from 1993 to 1996. Former Chief Earl Hyatt said Hardin resigned because Hyatt was going to fire him over incidents that included the use of excessive force.

"He did not need to be a police officer at all," Hyatt told television station KNWA.

He continued to have trouble in his brief stint as an officer in Gateway, according to the 450-person town's mayor Cheryl Tillman.

While Hardin was the town's sole officer, "there was things that I seen that wasn't good. He was always angry," said Tillman, who wasn't mayor at the time.

Hardin pleaded guilty in 2017 to first-degree murder for the killing of James Appleton, 59. Appleton, who was Tillman's brother, worked for the Gateway water department when he was shot in the head on Feb. 23, 2017, near Garfield. Police found Appleton's body inside a car. Hardin was sentenced to 30 years in prison.

He was also serving 50 years for the 1997 rape of an elementary school teacher in Rogers, north of Fayetteville.

He had been held in the Calico Rock prison since 2017.

Oil and gas have boomed in New Mexico. Its schools are contending with pollution's effects

By ED WILLIAMS of Searchlight New Mexico and SUSAN MONTROYA BRYAN of The Associated Press
undefined

COUNSELOR, N.M. (AP) — On a Tuesday in March, Billton Werito drove his son Amari toward his house in Counselor, New Mexico, navigating the bumpy dirt road that winds through a maze of natural gas pipelines, wellheads and water tanks. Amari should have been in school, but a bout of nausea and a dull headache kept him from class.

"It happens a lot," Amari explained from the backseat, glancing up from his Nintendo Switch. The symptoms usually show up when the sixth grader smells an odor of "rotten egg with propane" that rises from nearby natural gas wells and wafts over Lybrook Elementary School, where he and some 70 other Navajo students attend class. His little brother often misses school for the same reason.

"They just keep getting sick," Amari's father, Billton, said. "I have to take them out of class because of the headaches. Especially the younger one, he's been throwing up and won't eat." The symptoms are

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putting the kids at risk of falling further behind in school.

Lybrook sits in the heart of New Mexico's San Juan Basin, a major oil and gas deposit that, along with the Permian Basin in the state's southeast, is supplying natural gas that meets much of the nation's electricity demand.

The gas pulled from tens of thousands of wells in New Mexico has reaped huge benefits for the entire country. Natural gas has become a go-to fuel for power plants from coast to coast, sometimes replacing dirtier coal-fired plants and, by extension, improving air quality. Locally, oil and gas companies employ thousands of workers, often in areas with few other opportunities, all while boosting the state's budget with billions in royalty payments.

But those benefits may come at a cost for thousands of students in New Mexico whose schools sit near oil and gas pipelines, wellheads and flare stacks. An Associated Press analysis of state and federal data found 694 oil and gas wells with new or active permits within a mile of a school in the state. This means around 29,500 students in 74 schools and preschools potentially face exposure to noxious emissions, since extraction from the ground can release unhealthy fumes.

A measurable effect on students

At Lybrook, where Amari just finished sixth grade, fewer than 6% of students are proficient at math, and only a fifth meet state standards for science and reading proficiency.

Other factors could help explain students' poor achievement. Poverty rates are higher in some areas with high levels of gas development, and students at rural schools overall tend to face challenges that can adversely affect academic performance. AP's analysis found two-thirds of the schools within a mile of an oil or gas well are low-income, and the population is around 24% Native American and 45% Hispanic.

But research has found student learning is directly harmed by air pollution from fossil fuels — even when socioeconomic factors are taken into account.

The risks go far beyond New Mexico. An AP analysis of data from the Global Oil and Gas Extraction Tracker found over 1,000 public schools across 13 states that are within five miles of a major oil or gas field. Major fields are collections of wells that produce the highest amount of energy in a state.

"This kind of air pollution has a real, measurable effect on students," said Mike Gilraine, an economics professor at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada, who studies connections between air quality and student performance.

In 2024, Gilraine co-wrote a study showing student test scores were closely associated with air contamination. Each measured increase in PM2.5, a type of pollution created from the burning of fossil fuels, was associated with a significant decline in student test scores, Gilraine found. Conversely, researchers have documented that reductions in air pollution have led to higher test scores and fewer absences.

"To me, the surprise was certainly the magnitude of the effects" of air pollution on students, Gilraine said. "It's hard to find a similar factor that would have such an impact on schools nationwide."

America's shift to natural gas has resulted in substantial increases in student achievement nationwide, Gilraine's research shows, as it has displaced dirtier coal and led to cleaner air on the whole. But there has been little data on air quality across New Mexico, even as it has become one of the most productive states in the nation for natural gas. State regulators have installed only 20 permanent air monitors, most in areas without oil or gas production.

Independent researchers have extensively studied the air quality near schools in at least two locations in the state, however. One is Lybrook, which sits within a mile of 17 active oil and gas wells.

In 2024, scientists affiliated with Princeton and Northern Arizona universities conducted an air-monitoring study at the school, finding that levels of pollutants — including benzene, a cancer-causing byproduct of natural gas production that is particularly harmful to children — were spiking during school hours, to nearly double the levels known to cause chronic or acute health effects.

That research followed a 2021 health impact assessment conducted with support from several local nonprofits and foundations, which analyzed the effects of the area's oil and gas development on residents.

The findings were startling: More than 90% of people surveyed suffered from sinus problems. Nosebleeds,

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shortness of breath and nausea were widespread. The report attributed the symptoms to the high levels of pollutants that researchers found — including, near Lybrook, hydrogen sulfide, a compound that gives off the sulfur smell that Amari Werito associated with his headaches.

Those studies helped confirm what many community members already knew, said Daniel Tso, a community leader who served on the committee that oversaw the 2021 health impact assessment.

"The children and the grandchildren need a safe homeland," Tso said during an interview in March, standing outside a cluster of gas wells within a mile of Lybrook Elementary.

"You smell that?" he said, nodding towards a nearby wellhead, which smelled like propane. "That's what the kids at the school are breathing in. I've had people visiting this area from New York. They spend five minutes here and say, 'Hey, I got a headache.' And the kids are what, six hours a day at the school breathing this?"

Lybrook school officials did not respond to requests for comment.

Despite risks, oil and gas can pump money into schools

Researchers have identified similar air quality problems in New Mexico's southeast.

In 2023, a team of scientists from a coalition of universities conducted a detailed, yearlong study of the air in Loving, a small town in the Permian Basin. Local air quality, researchers found, was worse than in downtown Los Angeles, and the tested air contained the fifth-highest level of measured ozone contamination in the U.S.

The source of the ozone — a pollutant that's especially hazardous to children — was the area's network of gas wells and related infrastructure. Some of that infrastructure sits within a half-mile of a campus that houses Loving's elementary, middle and high schools.

A small group of residents has spoken out about the area's air quality, saying it has caused respiratory problems and other health issues. But for most locals, any concerns about pollution are outweighed by the industry's economic benefits.

Representatives of the oil and gas industry have claimed the air quality studies themselves are not trustworthy.

"There needs to be a robust study to actually answer these questions," said Andrea Felix, vice president of regulatory affairs for the New Mexico Oil and Gas Association (NMOGA). Felix said other sources of emissions, such as cars and trucks, are likely a larger source of air quality problems near wells.

"Companies follow the best available science" for well placement and emissions controls, Felix said, and also contribute huge amounts of money to the state's education budget. In the most recent fiscal year, oil and gas revenue supported \$1.7 billion in K-12 spending in New Mexico, according to a NMOGA report.

Officials with Loving Municipal Schools are also skeptical of the alarm over the wells. Loving Superintendent Lee White said the school district used funds from the oil and gas industry to pay for a new wing at the elementary school, a science lab for students, turf on the sports field and training and professional development for teachers. He said the industry's contributions to state coffers can't be ignored.

"Are we willing to give that up because people say our air is not clean?" he said during an interview. "It's just as clean as anywhere else."

As White spoke, a drill rig worked a couple of miles east of Loving's elementary school while parents poured into the gymnasium to watch kindergartners collect their diplomas. White touted the district's success, saying the elementary school scores above state averages for reading, math and science proficiency, while Loving's high school students far outpace the state average for college and career readiness.

But environmental groups, attorneys and residents continue to push for limits on drilling near schools.

Those efforts saw a boost in 2023, when New Mexico State Land Commissioner Stephanie Garcia Richard issued an executive order prohibiting new oil and gas leases on state-owned land within a mile of schools.

Industry representatives decried the move, saying it added potentially insurmountable costs and barriers to drilling operators. However, AP's analysis found that relatively few wells would be impacted even if the rule applied to all of New Mexico; only around 1% of oil and gas wells in the state are within a mile of a school.

In the years since, residents of areas where exploration is heavy have lobbied for legislation prohibiting

gas operations within a mile of schools, regardless of land status. That bill died in committee during the most recent session of the New Mexico legislature.

Advocates have also sued the state over an alleged lack of pollution controls. That lawsuit is currently pending in state court.

Nepal's mountaineering community celebrates 72nd anniversary of Mount Everest conquest

By BINAJ GURUBACHARYA Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) — Nepal's mountaineering community celebrated the conquest of the world's highest mountain with a rally of climbers, guides and others who gathered for International Everest Day.

The event Thursday marked the 72nd anniversary of the first summit climb of Mount Everest on May 29, 1953, by New Zealander Edmund Hillary and Sherpa guide Tenzing Norgay.

Nepal's minister for culture and tourism led the celebration in the capital, Kathmandu, that included a walk around the city and a gathering at the old palace.

"We are celebrating May 29 as the international Sagarmatha (Everest) day because the world needs to continue to recognize the achievement and contribution of Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay," said Ang Tshering, who runs Kathmandu-based Asian Trekking.

The event was not just a celebration for the mountaineering community but also a festival for Nepal and the world, said Tshering, who has helped hundreds of clients scale the Himalayan peaks.

Nepal contains eight of the highest peaks in the world and every year hundreds of foreign climbers fly to the country in South Asia to tackle the mountains. The climbers hire thousands of people in Nepal to assist their climbs by carrying gear, cooking food and generally taking care of them as they spend weeks in the mountains.

Nepal's government collects money from the climbers through permit fees.

The end of May also marks the end of the popular spring mountaineering season, when climbers finish their adventures and retreat from the peaks before the monsoon season brings foul weather.

"This day is celebrated also to mark the end of the climbing season where we gather climbers and the community," Jiban Ghimire of Shangri-La Nepal Trek said.

According to Nepal's Department of Mountaineering, 468 foreign climbers from 57 countries received permits to climb Everest by the end of May, along with a roughly equal number of Nepalese mountain guides.

Many were able to scale the peak, but officials were still working to verify how many reached the 8,849-meter (29,032-foot) summit. Climbers must report to the department with proof they reached the summit and cleared their garbage before they are issued the official certificate.

Famed Sherpa guide Kami Rita reached the Everest summit for the 31st time Tuesday, breaking his own record for the most climbs to the top of the famed mountain.

Missing family's boat found in Alaska waters along with human remains

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — Nearly a year after the U.S. Coast Guard suspended the search for a family of four missing after the boat they were on capsized in waters off south-central Alaska, the vessel along with human remains have been found, officials said Wednesday.

The discovery came after three private Alaska companies, including one that uses sonar equipment to search underwater, offered in April to help look for the family, who are from Texas, according to a statement released by the Alaska Department of Public Safety.

Earlier this month, they found the missing boat along with human remains in 180 feet (55 meters) of water in Kachemak Bay near Homer, the department said.

Divers from the state were then able to recover three sets of remains from the sunken vessel during

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dives on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The remains have been taken to the State Medical Examiner's Office to perform autopsies and identify them, according to the public safety department. It did not say how long identifying the remains would take.

The missing family from Troy, Texas, includes Mary Maynard, 37, and David Maynard, 42, along with sons Colton, 11, and Brantley, 8, according to the statement.

The search for the family was launched in August after a report came in that a 28-foot (8.5-meter) aluminum boat carrying eight people had begun taking on water, the U.S. Coast Guard said at the time. The Coast Guard notified other ships in the area of the situation, and a boat nearby rescued four people.

The Coast Guard scoured Kachemak Bay and Alaska search and rescue crews tried to use sonar equipment to find the family, according to the state's public safety department. But they were not successful and by the next evening, the search was suspended.

Christi Wells, who provided a statement on behalf of Mary Maynard's parents at the time, said the family enjoyed spending time with friends and relatives, and traveling, according to the Anchorage Daily News. Mary Maynard was a traveling nurse and David Maynard stayed at home with the children and had a lawn care business, she said.

Defending champion Panthers head back to Stanley Cup Final with 5-3 Game 5 win over Hurricanes

By AARON BEARD AP Sports Writer

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — The horn sounded to signal a third straight trip to the Stanley Cup Final, and the Florida Panthers celebrated merely by hopping over the boards and several heading over to to congratulate goaltender Sergei Bobrovsky.

It was a subdued celebration seemingly more befitting a regular-season win for the regining Cup champs.

"I remember a few years ago, it felt like such an accomplishment from where we were at one point," forward Matthew Tkachuk said, adding: "It's all business and we've got a bigger goal in mind."

The Panthers closed out the Carolina Hurricanes in five games Wednesday night with a 5-3 victory in the Eastern Conference final, pushing ahead for good when Carter Verhaeghe broke a tie off a feed from Aleksander Barkov with 7:39 left.

Florida beat the Hurricanes in the Eastern final for the second time in three seasons. The Panthers will face the winner of the Western final between Dallas and Edmonton, with the Oilers up 3-1 in that best-of-seven series to put them within a win of a rematch with Florida for the Cup.

Sam Bennett added an empty-net goal with 54 seconds left by skating down a loose puck straight out of the penalty box after Florida had held up against a critical late power play for the Hurricanes.

That capped a wild night that saw the Hurricanes jump to a 2-0 lead by capitalizing on giveaways, and Florida answer with three second-period goals, only to see Carolina's Seth Jarvis beat Bobrovsky midway through the third to tie it at 3.

"That was all the elements that make our sport great," Florida coach Paul Maurice said. "They're all over us. And we're serving up pizzas and we don't look like we should've made the playoffs, and then the next thing you know we look pretty good."

When it was over, the Panthers posed for pictures on Carolina's home ice during the presentation of the Prince of Wales Trophy for the conference winner. Some Hurricanes fans remained defiant, offering scattered "Let's go, Oilers!" chants.

The angst is appropriate considering how Florida has now twice ended Carolina's push to its first Cup Final since winning the franchise's lone title in 2006 when now-coach Rod Brind'Amour was captain.

Florida had won the first three games of this series but lost 3-0 at home Monday night as the Hurricanes averted a second straight sweep against Florida. But by the final horn Wednesday, the Panthers had won all three games in Raleigh in the series, pushed their road winning streak in these playoffs to five games and earned an eighth postseason road win overall.

"They're a great team and it's obvious the last couple of years, they're the standard, obviously,"

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Brind'Amour said. "I thought our guy battled really hard all series."

Tkachuk, Evan Rodrigues and Anton Lundell scored on consecutive shots during Florida's second-period flurry — two of those coming in a 30-second span — while Bobrovsky finished with 20 saves.

Barkov's assist on Verhaeghe's winner also stood out as its own terrific individual effort. Florida's captain was jostling with Carolina's Dmitry Orlov in a battle near the boards on the left side when he turned toward the crease, stepped inside of Eric Robinson and sent the puck over to Verhaeghe for the finish that silenced a Hurricanes home crowd in full-throated roar after Jarvis' tying score.

"He took on one guy, then two guys and then gave the puck to me with a pretty open net," Verhaeghe said. "So it was an unbelievable play by Barky at a critical time."

Sebastian Aho scored twice in the first period for Carolina, both on neutral-zone giveaways — the first being one from Gustav Forsling that hit Aho in stride for a breakaway chance that ended up in the net. Aho added another off a giveaway from Niko Mikkola with little more than a minute left in the first for a 2-0 lead.

Carolina has won at least one postseason series in its current run of seven straight playoff appearances, though three have now ended in the Eastern final. Two of those had ended in sweeps in a losing conference-final losing streak that reached 15 games — dating to sweeps in 2009, 2019 and the 2023 first tilt with the Panthers — before Monday's Game 4 win.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scores 34 as Thunder top Timberwolves 124-94 to advance to NBA Finals

By CLIFF BRUNT AP Sports Writer

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — The Oklahoma City Thunder tried their best to balance the euphoria of the moment with the fact that they haven't completed their mission.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 34 points, and the Thunder routed the Minnesota Timberwolves 124-94 on Wednesday night to win the Western Conference finals series 4-1 and advance to the NBA Finals for the first time since 2012.

After the win, the league MVP was measured in his excitement. Oklahoma City will play the Indiana Pacers or New York Knicks in the finals. Indiana leads the Eastern Conference finals series 3-1 with Game 5 to be played in New York City on Thursday.

"We've got a lot of growing to do," he said. "We've got a lot of work to do to get to our ultimate goal, and this is not it, so that's all that I'm focused on."

Still, the young Thunder players had some of their usual fun. During a postgame interview, coach Mark Daigneault began complimenting his young squad.

"These guys are uncommon. They do everything right. They're high character."

Then, several players started draping towels over Daigneault, as they often do to local sideline reporter Nick Gallo during postgame interview sessions.

"They're idiots," Daigneault said without breaking focus.

Chet Holmgren had 22 points, seven rebounds and three blocks and Jalen Williams added 19 points and eight rebounds for the Thunder.

A fanbase that had suffered through losing Kevin Durant in free agency in 2016 and a rebuild that had the team near the bottom of the league's standings just four years ago let loose in the fourth quarter when the Thunder sat their starters with 5:14 remaining and a 108-74 lead.

Julius Randle scored 24 points and Anthony Edwards added 19 for the Timberwolves, who shot just 41.2% from the field and committed 21 turnovers.

It was a tough loss for Minnesota point guard Mike Conley. The 37-year-old point guard said these opportunities are rare.

"It's going to take a while just to kind of dissect what we just did and what we weren't able to accomplish," he said. "But at the same time, I'm proud of my team, proud of these guys, man. They really fought. Not

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just for me, but for the whole team.”

Oklahoma City opened the game on an 11-3 run and extended the advantage throughout the first quarter. Cason Wallace drained a 3-pointer as the first quarter expired to put the Thunder up 26-9 at the end of the period. The game was never close after that.

“We just struggled to find a rhythm,” Minnesota coach Chris Finch said. “Everyone was kind of trying to do it all by themselves. We lost our connectivity. But all credit to the Thunder. They certainly deserve this. They played outstanding. And we came up short in a lot of ways.”

Harvard holds commencement amid Trump funding cuts, threats to international students

MICHAEL CASEY and LEAH WILLINGHAM Associated Press

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP) — Harvard University is holding its commencement Thursday at a pivotal moment, when its place as one of the world’s leading higher education institutions is under what increasingly seems like existential threats from the Trump administration.

Other schools face the loss of federal funding and their ability to enroll international students if they don’t agree to the Trump administration’s shifting demands. But Harvard, which was founded in 1636, a century and a half before the nation itself, is taking the lead on defying the White House in federal court — and paying a significant price.

The Trump administration’s latest salvos include asking federal agencies to cancel about \$100 million in contracts with the Ivy League school. The government already canceled more than \$2.6 billion in federal research grants, moved to cut off Harvard’s enrollment of international students and threatened its tax-exempt status.

Visa interviews for international students admitted to schools nationwide were halted on Tuesday, and Trump said Wednesday that Harvard should reduce its international enrollment from 25% to about 15%.

Sustained by a \$53 billion endowment, the nation’s oldest and wealthiest university is testing whether it can be a bulwark against Trump’s efforts to limit what it calls antisemitic activism on campus, which Harvard sees as an affront to the freedom to teach and learn nationwide.

The Trump administration has demanded Harvard enact broad government and leadership reforms and changes to its admissions policies. It also demanded the university audit views of diversity on campus and stop recognizing some student clubs.

Dr. Abraham Verghese, the bestselling author and Stanford expert on infectious diseases, will be the principal speaker at the university’s 374th commencement. On Wednesday, NBA Hall of Famer and activist Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was the “Class Day” speaker, and journalist Christiane Amanpour addressed graduates of Harvard’s Kennedy School.

Both praised Harvard for standing up to the Trump administration, with Abdul-Jabbar specifically calling out the actions of Harvard President Alan Garber.

“When a tyrannical administration tried to bully and threaten Harvard, to revoke their academic freedom and to destroy free speech, Dr. Alan Garber rejected the illegal and immoral pressures,” Abdul-Jabbar said to wide applause as he compared Garber’s response to Rosa Parks’ stand against racist segregation.

“After seeing so many cowering billionaires, media moguls, law firms, politicians and other universities bend their knee to an administration that is systematically strip-mining the U.S. Constitution, it is inspiring to me to see Harvard University take a stand for freedom,” he continued.

In response to the administration’s threats, Harvard has sued to block the funding freeze and persuaded a federal judge to temporarily halt the enrollment ban. It is going to court in Boston on Thursday just as the commencement is wrapping up, hoping for a ruling that allows it to continue enrolling international students.

“We believe that the government overreach and devastating attacks on scientific and medical research are unwarranted and unlawful, and so we have taken legal action to defend the institution,” Garber said

in an interview with a university publication.

"We should all be concerned that colleges and universities have increasingly come under attack. But we should not dismiss the criticisms even when they are based on distortions or inaccuracies — we need to look for the underlying concerns that can be embedded in them," said Garber, who commissioned internal reports last year on antisemitism and anti-Arab prejudice at the Ivy League campus.

The Trump administration has said it wants "to protect American students and faculty from antisemitic violence and harassment." It cites campus protests against Israel. Like many college students around the country, Harvard students set up tents called on the university to divest from companies supporting Israel's military, which has leveled Gaza in response to attacks by Hamas.

Last year, hundreds of graduating students walked out of commencement chanting "Free, free Palestine" after weeks of campus protests. Harvard also said some protesters would not receive diplomas alongside their classmates, although it eventually allowed most to get them.

This year, the anti-war demonstrations have largely faded from view, but protesters plan a silent vigil before Thursday's ceremony.

"As a graduate of Harvard, I am horrified by Israel's mass murder of Palestinians (including by deliberate starvation), its total leveling of Gaza, its targeting of hospitals, its assaults on Palestinian educational and cultural institutions, and its relentless killings of journalists," Harvard graduate Victor Wallis explained in a statement.

Mohammed Sinwar, head of Hamas' armed wing, has been killed, Netanyahu says

By SAMY MAGDY and BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Wednesday that Mohammed Sinwar, believed to be the head of Hamas' armed wing, has been killed, apparently confirming his death in a recent strike in the Gaza Strip. There was no confirmation from Hamas.

Sinwar is the younger brother of Yahya Sinwar, the Hamas leader who helped mastermind the Oct. 7, 2023, attack that started the Israel-Hamas war, and who was killed by Israeli forces in October 2024.

Israeli strikes have decimated Hamas' leadership during the 19-month war, and Mohammed Sinwar was one of the last widely known leaders still alive in Gaza. But the militant group has maintained its rule over the parts of Gaza not seized by Israel. It still holds dozens of hostages and carries out sporadic attacks on Israeli forces.

As the head of Hamas' armed wing, Sinwar would have had the final word on any agreement to release the hostages, and his death could further complicate U.S. and Arab efforts to broker a ceasefire. Israel has vowed to continue the war until all the hostages are returned and Hamas has been either defeated or disarmed and sent into exile.

Mentioned in passing

Netanyahu mentioned the killing of Sinwar in a speech before parliament in which he listed the names of other top Hamas leaders killed during the war. "We have killed tens of thousands of terrorists. We killed (Mohammed) Deif, (Ismail) Haniyeh, Yahya Sinwar and Mohammed Sinwar," he said.

Netanyahu did not elaborate. Israeli media had reported that the younger Sinwar was the target of a May 13 strike on what the military said was a Hamas command center beneath the European Hospital in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, the Sinwars' hometown. The military declined to comment on whether Sinwar had been targeted or killed.

At least six people were killed in the strike and 40 wounded, Gaza's Health Ministry said at the time.

A Hamas veteran

Mohammed Sinwar was born in 1975 in the urban Khan Younis refugee camp. His family was among hundreds of thousands of Palestinians driven from what is now Israel during the 1948 war surrounding its creation. The refugees and their descendants today make up the majority of Gaza's population.

Like his older brother, Yahya, the younger Sinwar joined Hamas after it was founded in the late 1980s

as the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. He became a member of the group's military wing, known as the Qassam Brigades.

He rose through the ranks to become a member of its so-called joint chiefs of staff, bringing him close to its longtime commander, Deif, who was killed in a strike last year.

Mohammed Sinwar was one of the planners of a 2006 cross-border attack on an Israeli army post. In that attack, militants captured Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit, who was held for five years and later exchanged for more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners, including Yahya Sinwar.

In an interview with Qatar's Al Jazeera TV aired three years ago, Mohammed Sinwar said that when Hamas threatens Israel, "we know how to specify the location that hurts the occupation and how to press them."

Hamas has said that Mohammed Sinwar was targeted by Israel on several occasions and was briefly believed to have been killed in 2014. He is said to have been one of a handful of top commanders who knew about the Oct. 7 attack in advance.

In December 2023, the Israeli military released a video it said showed a bearded Mohammed Sinwar sitting next to a driver in a car as it moved inside a tunnel in the Gaza Strip. Hamas never confirmed what would be one of the few public images of him.

Elon Musk is leaving the Trump administration after leading effort to slash federal government

By CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Elon Musk is leaving his government role as a top adviser to President Donald Trump after spearheading efforts to reduce and overhaul the federal bureaucracy.

His departure, announced Wednesday evening, marks the end of a turbulent chapter that included thousands of layoffs, the evisceration of government agencies and reams of litigation. Despite the upheaval, the billionaire entrepreneur struggled in the unfamiliar environment of Washington, and he accomplished far less than he hoped.

He dramatically reduced his target for cutting spending — from \$2 trillion to \$1 trillion to \$150 billion — and increasingly expressed frustration about resistance to his goals. Sometimes he clashed with other top members of Trump's administration, who chafed at the newcomer's efforts to reshape their departments, and he faced fierce political blowback for his efforts.

Musk's role working for Trump was always intended to be temporary, and he had recently signaled that he would be shifting his attention back to running his businesses, such as the electric automaker Tesla and the rocket company SpaceX.

But administration officials were often vague about when Musk would step back from his position spearheading the Department of Government Efficiency, known as DOGE, and he abruptly revealed that he was leaving in a post on X, his social media website.

"As my scheduled time as a Special Government Employee comes to an end, I would like to thank President @realDonaldTrump for the opportunity to reduce wasteful spending," he wrote. "The @DOGE mission will only strengthen over time as it becomes a way of life throughout the government."

A White House official, who requested anonymity to talk about the change, confirmed Musk's departure.

Musk announced his decision one day after CBS released part of an interview in which he criticized the centerpiece of Trump's legislative agenda by saying he was "disappointed" by what the president calls his "big beautiful bill."

The legislation includes a mix of tax cuts and enhanced immigration enforcement. Musk described it as a "massive spending bill" that increases the federal deficit and "undermines the work" of his Department of Government Efficiency, known as DOGE.

"I think a bill can be big or it could be beautiful," Musk said. "But I don't know if it could be both."

Trump, speaking in the Oval Office on Wednesday, defended his agenda by talking about the delicate politics involved with negotiating the legislation.

"I'm not happy about certain aspects of it, but I'm thrilled by other aspects of it," he said.

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Trump also suggested that more changes could be made.

"We're going to see what happens," he said. "It's got a way to go."

Republicans recently pushed the measure through the House and are debating it in the Senate.

Musk's concerns are shared by some Republican lawmakers. "I sympathize with Elon being discouraged," said Wisconsin Sen. Ron Johnson.

Speaking at a Milwaukee Press Club event on Wednesday, Johnson added that he was "pretty confident" there was enough opposition "to slow this process down until the president, our leadership, gets serious" about reducing spending. He said there was no amount of pressure Trump could put on him to change his position.

Speaker Mike Johnson has asked senators to make as few changes to the legislation as possible, saying that House Republicans reached a "very delicate balance" that could be upended with major changes. The narrowly divided House will have to vote again on final passage once the Senate alters the bill.

On Wednesday, Johnson thanked Musk for his work and promised to pursue more spending cuts in the future, saying "the House is eager and ready to act on DOGE's findings."

The White House is sending some proposed rescissions, a mechanism used to cancel previously authorized spending, to Capitol Hill to solidify some of DOGE's cuts. A spokesperson for the Office of Management and Budget said the package will include \$1.1 billion from the Corporation of Public Broadcasting, which funds NPR and PBS, and \$8.3 billion in foreign assistance.

Musk occasionally seemed chastened by his experience working in government.

"The federal bureaucracy situation is much worse than I realized," he told The Washington Post. "I thought there were problems, but it sure is an uphill battle trying to improve things in D.C., to say the least."

He also recently said that he'll reduce his political spending, because "I think I've done enough."

Musk had previously been energized by the opportunity to reshape Washington. After putting at least \$250 million behind Trump's candidacy, he wore campaign hats in the White House, held his own campaign rallies, and talked about excessive spending as an existential crisis. He often tended to be effusive in his praise of Trump.

"The more I've gotten to know President Trump, the more I like the guy," Musk said in February. "Frankly, I love him."

Trump repaid the favor, describing Musk as "a truly great American." When Tesla faced declining sales, he turned the White House driveway into a makeshift showroom to illustrate his support.

It's unclear what, if any, impact that Musk's comments about the bill would have on the legislative debate, especially given his departure from the administration. During the transition period, when his influence was on the rise, he helped whip up opposition to a spending measure as the country stood on the brink of a federal government shutdown.

His latest criticism could embolden Republicans who want bigger spending cuts. Republican Utah Sen. Mike Lee reposted a Fox News story about Musk's interview while also adding his own take on the measure, saying there was "still time to fix it."

"The Senate version will be more aggressive," Lee said. "It can, it must, and it will be. Or it won't pass."

Only two Republicans — Reps. Warren Davidson of Ohio and Thomas Massie of Kentucky — voted against the bill when the House took up the measure last week.

Davidson took note of Musk's comments on social media.

"Hopefully, the Senate will succeed with the Big Beautiful Bill where the House missed the moment," he wrote. "Don't hope someone else will cut deficits someday, know it has been done this Congress."

The Congressional Budget Office, in a preliminary estimate, said the tax provisions would increase federal deficits by \$3.8 trillion over the decade, while the changes to Medicaid, food stamps and other services would reduce spending by slightly more than \$1 trillion over the same period.

House Republican leaders say increased economic growth would allow the bill to be deficit-neutral or deficit-reducing, but outside watchdogs are skeptical. The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget estimates the bill would add \$3 trillion to the debt, including interest, over the next decade.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio says the US will begin revoking the visas of Chinese students

By ANNIE MA and COLLIN BINKLEY AP Education Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Wednesday the U.S. will begin revoking the visas of some Chinese students, including those studying in “critical fields.”

China is the second-largest country of origin for international students in the United States, behind only India. In the 2023-2024 school year, more than 270,000 international students were from China, making up roughly a quarter of all foreign students in the United States.

“Under President Trump’s leadership, the U.S. State Department will work with the Department of Homeland Security to aggressively revoke visas for Chinese students, including those with connections to the Chinese Communist Party or studying in critical fields,” Rubio wrote.

The Chinese Embassy in Washington didn’t immediately respond to a message seeking comment Wednesday night.

The action comes at a time of intensifying scrutiny of the ties between U.S. higher education and China. House Republicans this month pressed Duke University to cut its ties with a Chinese university, saying it allowed Chinese students to gain access to federally funded research at Duke.

Last year, House Republicans issued a report warning that hundreds of millions of dollars in defense funding was going to research partnerships linked to the Chinese government, providing “back-door access to the very foreign adversary nation whose aggression these capabilities are necessary to protect against.”

The Department of Homeland Security raised similar issues in a letter barring international students at Harvard University last week. Secretary Kristi Noem accused Harvard of “coordinating with the Chinese Communist Party,” citing research collaborations with Chinese scholars. It also accused Harvard of training members of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, a Chinese paramilitary group.

The announcement came a day after Rubio halted the scheduling of new visa interviews for international students as the department prepares guidelines for increased vetting of their activity on social media.

The crackdown on visas adds to uncertainty for international students

Together, the announcements from the State Department added to uncertainty for America’s international students, who have faced intensifying scrutiny from President Donald Trump’s administration.

Earlier this year, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement arrested and tried to deport students who had been involved in campus protests against the Israel-Hamas war. And the Trump administration abruptly terminated the legal status of thousands of international students before reversing itself and then expanding the grounds on which students can lose permission to study in the U.S.

University of Wisconsin student Vladyslav Plyaka was planning to visit Poland to see his mother and renew his visa, but he doesn’t know when that will be possible now that visa appointments are suspended. He also doesn’t feel safe leaving the U.S. even when appointments resume.

“I don’t think I have enough trust in the system at this point,” said Plyaka, who came to the U.S. from Ukraine as an exchange student in high school and stayed for college. “I understand it probably is done for security measures, but I would probably just finish my education for the next two or three years and then come back to Ukraine.”

The Trump administration last week moved to block Harvard University from enrolling any international students, a decision that has been put on hold by a federal judge, pending a lawsuit.

Trump said Wednesday that Harvard, whose current student population is made up of more than a quarter of international students, should limit that percentage to about 15%.

“I want to make sure the foreign students are people that can love our country,” Trump told reporters in the Oval Office.

The action on Chinese students renews a priority from Trump’s first administration to clamp down on academic ties between the United States and China, which Republicans have called a threat to national security. In April, Trump ordered the Education Department to ramp up enforcement of a federal rule

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requiring colleges to disclose information about funding from foreign sources.

During his first term, the Education Department opened 19 investigations into foreign funding at U.S. universities and found that they underreported money flowing from China, Russia and other countries described as foreign adversaries.

Hours before Rubio announced the change, Eastern Michigan University announced it was ending engineering partnerships with two Chinese universities, responding to Republican pressure. Rep. John Moolenaar, the Republican chair of the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, recently urged Eastern Michigan and other universities to end partnerships with Chinese universities.

Around 1.1 million international students were in the United States last year — a source of essential revenue for tuition-driven colleges. International students are not eligible for federal financial aid. Often, they pay full price.

Northeastern University, which has more than 20,000 international students, has set up “contingency plans” for those who hit visa delays, said spokesperson Renata Nyul, without elaborating.

“This is a very dynamic situation, and we are closely monitoring the developments in real time to assess any potential impacts,” she said.

The US plans more in-depth reviews of visa applicants’ social media

In his announcement on China, Rubio said the government also will “revise visa criteria to enhance scrutiny of all future visa applications from the People’s Republic of China and Hong Kong.”

Visa applicants have been required to provide social media handles to the State Department since 2019. The cable Tuesday did not indicate what kind of additional scrutiny the new guidelines would cover, but suggested the new reviews may be more resource-intensive.

The additional vetting will deter students from coming to the U.S., said Jonathan Friedman of PEN America, a literary and free expression organization.

“The details remain vague, but this policy risks upending the long-standing place of the U.S. as a beacon for intellectual and cultural exchange with the world,” Friedman said.

The move to cut off international enrollment at Harvard stems from a dispute with the Department of Homeland Security, which has demanded that it provide information about foreign students that might implicate them in violence or protests that could lead to their deportation. Harvard says it complied with the records request, but the agency said its response fell short.

On Wednesday, Trump said more scrutiny of Harvard’s students is necessary.

“They’re taking people from areas of the world that are very radicalized, and we don’t want them making trouble in our country,” Trump said.

The Trump administration has cut over \$2.6 billion in federal grants for Harvard as it presses demands for changes to policies and governance at the Ivy League school, which the president has described as a hotbed of liberalism and antisemitism. Harvard has pushed back and filed a lawsuit against the administration.

Germany’s Merz offers to help Ukraine develop its own long-range missiles to hit Russia

By STEFANIE DAZIO and BARRY HATTON Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — German Chancellor Friedrich Merz pledged Wednesday to help Ukraine develop its own long-range missile systems that would be free of any Western-imposed limitations on their use and targets as the Kyiv government fights to repel Russia’s invasion.

Some of the advanced weapon systems that allies have supplied to Ukraine during the 3-year war were subject to range and target restrictions — a fraught political issue stemming from fears that if the weapons struck deep inside Russia, the Kremlin might retaliate against the country that provided them and draw NATO into Europe’s biggest conflict since World War II.

Standing beside visiting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Merz said that under an intensified cooperation agreement, Germany “will strive to equip the Ukrainian army with all the capabilities that truly

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enable it to successfully defend the country," including upgraded domestic missile production.

After the United States, Germany has been the biggest individual supplier of military aid to Ukraine.

"Ukraine will be able to fully defend itself, including against military targets outside its own territory" with its own missiles, Merz said at a joint news conference.

Hours after Merz's pledge, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov publicly invited Ukraine to hold direct peace talks with Moscow in Istanbul on June 2.

In a video statement, he said that Russia would use the meeting to deliver a memorandum setting out Moscow's position on "reliably overcoming the root causes of the crisis." He also said any Russian delegation would again be headed by presidential aide Vladimir Medinsky.

"We hope that all those who are sincerely interested in the success of the peace process in more than just words will support a new round of direct Russian-Ukrainian negotiations in Istanbul," Lavrov said.

Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov said his country isn't opposed to such direct peace talks but it still hasn't seen the memorandum promised by Russia and that further meetings would be "empty" without it.

"We call on them to fulfill that promise without delay and stop trying to turn the meeting into a destructive one," Umerov wrote on X. He said he had handed such a document with the Ukrainian position to the Russian side.

Low-level delegations from Russia and Ukraine held their first direct peace talks in three years in Istanbul on May 16. The talks, which lasted two hours, brought no significant breakthrough, although both sides agreed to the largest prisoner exchange of the war. It was carried out last weekend and freed 1,000 captives on each side.

Germany doesn't mention its Taurus cruise missiles

Merz declined to say whether Germany will supply its advanced Taurus long-range cruise missile to Ukraine — long a request by Kyiv and a step that Berlin has resisted.

The decision not to commit to giving Taurus missiles to Ukraine was a "big disappointment," said lawmaker Roderich Kiesewetter, a senior member of Merz's party, the Christian Democratic Union.

Merz loves "very strong personal statements" but is not able to back them up with support from his coalition partners, Kiesewetter told The Associated Press.

"We have a Moscow connection in Germany," Kiesewetter said, suggesting some politicians are in favor of Ukraine ceding territory to Russia to end the war, along with lifting some sanctions.

Asked about Germany's offer to fund long-range missile production in Ukraine, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov responded that the move was an obstacle to reaching a peace agreement.

Both Merz and Zelenskyy criticized the Kremlin's effective rejection of an unconditional ceasefire proposed by the U.S., which Kyiv accepted. Kyiv says Moscow has been slow to respond to proposals for a settlement.

Merz said last Monday that Germany and other major allies were no longer imposing range limits on weapons they send to Ukraine, although he indicated their use was limited to Russian military targets. Ukraine has launched its own long-range drones against sites that support Russia's military efforts, including refineries and chemical plants.

Then-U.S. President Joe Biden last year authorized Ukraine to use U.S.-supplied missiles for limited strikes in Russia. The decision allowed Ukraine to use the Army Tactical Missile System, known as ATACMS, against Russia.

In Berlin, Zelenskyy called for deeper defense cooperation across Europe and with Washington, stressing the need for long-range capabilities and sustained military funding to ensure Ukraine's resilience.

He said the cooperation projects already exist. "We simply want (the missiles) to be produced in the quantity we need," Zelenskyy told reporters.

Zelenskyy said Tuesday that Ukraine is ready to hold peace talks at the highest level, including a trilateral meeting with himself, Russian President Vladimir Putin and U.S. President Donald Trump.

"We are ready to meet at the level of leaders. Both the American side knows this, and the Russian side

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knows this," he said. Zelenskyy said he would accept any configuration of talks, whether that includes one trilateral meeting or separate meetings with Trump.

Peskov, the Kremlin spokesman, said Russia is grateful to Trump for his mediation efforts.

"At the same time, there is a big number of nuances to be discussed that can't be neglected and which neither party is going to sacrifice, because of its national interests," Peskov told reporters. "Just like the United States, Russia has its national interests that are of primary importance to us."

Front-line fighting, deep strikes continue

Meanwhile, fighting has continued along the roughly 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line, where Ukraine's army is shorthanded against its bigger adversary. Zelenskyy claimed Tuesday that Russia is mobilizing up to 45,000 men every month, while Ukraine mobilizes between 25,000-27,000.

Both sides are continuing to conduct deep strikes. Russia launched its biggest drone attack of the war against Ukraine on Sunday.

Russian air defenses downed 296 Ukrainian drones over 13 Russian regions late Tuesday and early Wednesday, Russia's Defense Ministry said, in what appeared to be one of the biggest Ukrainian drone assaults of the war.

Ukraine is increasing its domestic production of drones and missiles, according to Zelenskyy. He said late Tuesday that Ukraine wants European countries to help it invest in the manufacture of attack drones, air defense interceptors, cruise missiles and ballistic systems.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin said air defenses shot down Ukrainian 33 drones heading toward the capital. Moscow regional Gov. Andrei Vorobyov said 42 drones were downed. He said drone fragments damaged three residential buildings in the village of Troitskoye, but no one was hurt.

More than 60 flights were canceled Wednesday in Moscow as the capital's airports were forced to ground planes amid drone warnings, said the federal aviation agency, Rosaviatsiya.

Overnight, Russian forces launched an attack on Ukraine using five Iskander ballistic missiles, one guided air-launched missile and 88 drones, Ukraine's air force said. Air defense units shot down 34 drones, and 37 drones were jammed.

Federal court blocks Trump from imposing sweeping tariffs under emergency powers law

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST and JOSH BOAK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal court on Wednesday blocked President Donald Trump from imposing sweeping tariffs on imports under an emergency-powers law, swiftly throwing into doubt Trump's signature set of economic policies that have rattled global financial markets, frustrated trade partners and raised broader fears about inflation intensifying and the economy slumping.

The ruling from a three-judge panel at the New York-based U.S. Court of International Trade came after several lawsuits arguing Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs exceeded his authority and left the country's trade policy dependent on his whims.

Trump has repeatedly said the tariffs would force manufacturers to bring back factory jobs to the U.S. and generate enough revenue to reduce federal budget deficits. He used the tariffs as a negotiating cudgel in hopes of forcing other nations to negotiate agreements that favored the U.S., suggesting he would simply set the rates himself if the terms were unsatisfactory.

White House spokesperson Kush Desai said that trade deficits amount to a national emergency "that has decimated American communities, left our workers behind, and weakened our defense industrial base — facts that the court did not dispute."

The administration, he said, remains "committed to using every lever of executive power to address this crisis and restore American Greatness."

But for now, Trump might not have the threat of import taxes to exact his will on the world economy as he had intended, since doing so would require congressional approval. What remains unclear is whether the White House will respond to the ruling by pausing all of its emergency power tariffs in the interim.

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Trump might still be able to temporarily launch import taxes of 15% for 150 days on nations with which the U.S. runs a substantial trade deficit. The ruling notes that a president has this authority under Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974.

The ruling amounted to a categorical rejection of the legal underpinnings of some of Trump's signature and most controversial actions of his four-month-old second term. The administration swiftly filed notice of appeal — and the Supreme Court will almost certainly be called upon to lend a final answer — but it casts a sharp blow.

The case was heard by three judges: Timothy Reif, who was appointed by Trump, Jane Restani, named to the bench by President Ronald Reagan and Gary Katzman, an appointee of President Barack Obama.

"The Worldwide and Retaliatory Tariff Orders exceed any authority granted to the President by IEEPA to regulate importation by means of tariffs," the court wrote, referring to the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act.

The ruling left in place any tariffs that Trump put in place using his Section 232 powers from the Trade Expansion Act of 1962. He put a 25% tax on most imported autos and parts, as well as on all foreign-made steel and aluminum. Those tariffs depend on a Commerce Department investigation that reveals national security risks from imported products.

It was filed in the U.S. Court of International Trade, a federal court that deals specifically with civil lawsuits involving international trade law.

While tariffs must typically be approved by Congress, Trump has said he has the power to act to address the trade deficits he calls a national emergency.

He is facing at least seven lawsuits challenging the levies. The plaintiffs argued that the emergency powers law does not authorize the use of tariffs, and even if it did, the trade deficit is not an emergency because the U.S. has run a trade deficit with the rest of the world for 49 consecutive years.

Trump imposed tariffs on most of the countries in the world in an effort to reverse America's massive and long-standing trade deficits. He earlier plastered levies on imports from Canada, China and Mexico to combat the illegal flow of immigrants and the synthetic opioids across the U.S. border.

His administration argues that courts approved then-President Richard Nixon's emergency use of tariffs in 1971, and that only Congress, and not the courts, can determine the "political" question of whether the president's rationale for declaring an emergency complies with the law.

Trump's Liberation Day tariffs shook global financial markets and led many economists to downgrade the outlook for U.S. economic growth. So far, though, the tariffs appear to have had little impact on the world's largest economy.

The lawsuit was filed by a group of small businesses, including a wine importer, V.O.S. Selections, whose owner has said the tariffs are having a major impact and his company may not survive.

A dozen states also filed suit, led by Oregon. "This ruling reaffirms that our laws matter, and that trade decisions can't be made on the president's whim," Attorney General Dan Rayfield said.

Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden, top Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, said the tariffs had "jacked up prices on groceries and cars, threatened shortages of essential goods and wrecked supply chains for American businesses large and small."

Trump pardons Julie and Todd Chrisley, reality TV stars convicted in 2022 of fraud and tax evasion

By STEPHEN SMITH and RUSS BYNUM Associated Press

PENSACOLA, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump signed pardons Wednesday for reality TV stars Julie and Todd Chrisley, who were serving federal prison sentences after being convicted three years ago of bank fraud and tax evasion.

The pardons paved the way for the couple, best known for the TV series "Chrisley Knows Best," to be freed hours later. Todd Chrisley was released from a minimum-security prison camp in Pensacola in the evening, and Julie Chrisley left a facility in Lexington, Kentucky, according to Shannen Sharpe, a spokes-

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person for the couple's attorney.

"We just want to get home. We want to be reunited," the couple's daughter, Savannah Chrisley, told reporters outside the Florida prison earlier as she awaited her father. She said her brother Grayson was meeting their mother in Kentucky.

"My parents have not spoken to each other, heard each others' voices or seen each other in the past 2 ½ years," said Savannah Chrisley, who wore a bubble gum pink MAGA hat and matching "Women for Trump" jacket.

The Chrisleys' TV show portrayed them as a tight-knit family with an extravagant lifestyle. Prosecutors at the couple's 2022 trial said they spent lavishly on expensive cars, designer clothes, real estate and travel after taking out fraudulent bank loans worth millions of dollars and hiding their earnings from tax authorities.

Trump announced his intention to pardon them on Tuesday, saying the celebrity couple had been "given a pretty harsh treatment based on what I'm hearing." It was another example of the president, himself a former reality TV star, pardoning high-profile friends, supporters, donors and former staffers.

Savannah Chrisley has been a vocal Trump supporter and endorsed his candidacy in a speech at the Republican National Convention last summer. Though she has complained that the case against her parents was politically motivated, they were indicted in 2019 under a Trump-appointed U.S. attorney, Byung J. "BJay" Pak.

Regardless, Savannah Chrisley said officials in the Trump administration who reviewed her parents' case had "seen the corruption." She told reporters that the president delivered the news of the pardons himself, calling unexpectedly while she was at the grocery store.

"I didn't have to do anything other than stand firm in my beliefs and my convictions and fight for my parents," she said.

She paused to take photos with fans and supporters gathered outside the prison before getting into a vehicle that took her past its security checkpoint.

The Chrisleys' attorney, Alex Little, said Tuesday that the pardon "corrects a deep injustice" in which the couple were "targeted because of their conservative values and high profile."

Before she was pardoned, Julie Chrisley, 52, had been scheduled for release in January 2028, according to the Federal Bureau of Prisons website, while Todd Chrisley, 56, was to remain behind bars until September 2032.

Prosecutors said at trial that the Chrisleys had not yet become TV stars when they and a former business partner submitted false documents to banks in the Atlanta area to obtain fraudulent loans. New loans were taken out to pay off the old ones, according to prosecutors, until Todd Chrisley filed for bankruptcy, walking away from more than \$20 million in unpaid loans.

The defense argued that an IRS officer gave false testimony during the trial and that prosecutors lacked evidence to support convictions.

A panel of judges of the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the Chrisleys' convictions last year.

Waiting to meet her father, Savannah Chrisley said her family was making plans to do a lot of catching up.

"We're going to celebrate anniversaries, birthdays, Christmases, all the things," she said, "because we're going to make up for the lost time."

Four Palestinians die in storming of UN food warehouse a day after gunfire at new Gaza aid site

By WAFAA SHURAF, SAMY MAGDY and MELANIE LIDMAN Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Hundreds of Palestinians stormed a United Nations food warehouse Wednesday in Gaza in a desperate attempt to get something to eat, shouting and shoving each other and ripping off pieces of the building to get inside. Four people died in the chaos, hospital officials said.

The deaths came a day after a crowd was fired upon while overrunning a new aid-distribution site in Gaza set up by an Israeli and U.S.-backed foundation, killing at least one Palestinian and wounding 48

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others, Gaza's Health Ministry said.

The Israeli military, which guards the site from a distance, said it fired only warning shots to control the situation. The foundation said its military contractors guarding the site did not open fire. A Red Cross field hospital said the 48 people wounded suffered gunshot wounds, including women and children.

Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said his country killed senior Hamas leader Mohammed Sinwar, the brother of Yahya Sinwar, one of the masterminds of the militant group's Oct. 7, 2023, attack, who was killed by Israeli forces last year. Speaking before parliament, Netanyahu included Mohammed Sinwar in a list of Hamas leaders killed by Israeli forces, apparently confirming his death in a recent airstrike in Gaza.

In other developments, Israel carried out airstrikes on the international airport in Yemen's capital, Sanaa, destroying the last plane belonging to the country's flagship airline. Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz said it was the last plane used by the Iran-backed Houthi rebels.

It was not immediately clear if anyone was killed or wounded in the strikes, which came after Houthi rebels fired several missiles at Israel in recent days, without causing casualties.

The Israeli-backed distribution hub outside Gaza's southernmost city of Rafah was opened Monday by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, which has been slated by Israel to take over aid operations.

The crowd of Palestinians broke through fences Tuesday around the distribution site where thousands had gathered. An Associated Press journalist heard Israeli tank and gunfire and saw a military helicopter firing flares.

The U.N. and other humanitarian organizations have rejected the new aid system, saying it will not be able to feed Gaza's 2.3 million people and that it lets Israel use food to control the population. They have also warned of the risk of friction between Israeli troops and people seeking supplies.

Four dead as crowd storms warehouse holding U.N. aid

Palestinians burst into the U.N.'s World Food Program warehouse Wednesday in central Gaza. Two people were fatally crushed in the crowd, while two others died of gunshot wounds, officials at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital said.

Scores of aid-seekers could be seen carrying large bags of flour as they fought their way back out into the sunlight through throngs of people pressing to get inside. Each bag of flour weighs around 25 kilograms (55 pounds).

A United Nations envoy compared the limited aid being allowed into Gaza to "a lifeboat after the ship has sunk." Sigrid Kaag, acting U.N. special coordinator for the Mideast, told the U.N. Security Council that people facing famine in Gaza "have lost hope."

"Instead of saying 'goodbye,' Palestinians in Gaza now say, 'See you in heaven,'" Kaag said.

The World Food Program said "humanitarian needs have spiraled out of control" after Israel's long blockade of supplies entering Gaza, which began in early March to pressure Hamas.

The Palestinian ambassador to the U.N. broke down as he spoke of the 1,300 children killed and 4,000 wounded since Israel ended the latest ceasefire in March, and of mothers seen "embracing their motionless bodies, caressing their hair, talking to them, apologizing to them."

"If this is civilized," Riyadh Mansour said, "what is barbarism?"

Wael Tabsh, a displaced man from the city of Khan Younis, urged world leaders to help end the war.

"How long will this torture last?" he asked.

Violence erupted soon after new hub opened

Palestinians are desperate for food after nearly three months of Israeli border closures have pushed Gaza to the brink of famine.

Israel says it helped establish the new aid mechanism to prevent Hamas from siphoning off supplies, but it has provided no evidence of systematic diversion, and U.N. agencies say they have mechanisms in place to prevent it while delivering aid to all parts of the territory.

GHF says it has established four hubs, two of which have begun operating in the now mostly uninhabited Rafah. It said around eight truckloads of aid were distributed at the hubs on Wednesday without incident.

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About 600 trucks entered Gaza every day during the ceasefire earlier this year.

The GHF sites are guarded by private security contractors and have chain-link fences channeling Palestinians into a what resemble military bases surrounded by large sand berms. Israeli forces are stationed nearby in a military zone separating Rafah from the rest of the territory.

The U.N. and other aid groups have refused to participate in GHF's system, saying it violates humanitarian principles. They say it can be used by Israel to forcibly displace the population by requiring them to move near the few distribution hubs or else face starvation, a violation of international law.

Netanyahu said Tuesday there was only a brief "loss of control" at the site.

He repeated that Israel plans to move Gaza's entire population to a "sterile zone" at the southern end of the territory while troops fight Hamas elsewhere. Netanyahu has also vowed to facilitate what he refers to as the voluntary emigration of much of Gaza's population to other countries, a plan that Palestinians and many others view as forcible expulsion.

Israel says it destroyed the Houthis' last plane

The Israeli strikes on the main airport in Yemen destroyed the last plane belonging to the country's flag-ship carrier, Yemenia, according to the airport. The airline did not say if anyone was wounded.

Yemenia had a total of four registered aircraft, according to the plane-tracking website FlightRadar24. Israel destroyed three in a May 6 airstrike on the airport that also riddled the runway with craters.

Houthi-backed Yemeni President Mahdi al-Mashat visited the airport Wednesday and said his group "will not back down" from its support of people in Gaza until the siege ends, according to SABA Yemen News Agency.

The Houthis have targeted Israel throughout the war in Gaza in solidarity with Palestinians, raising their profile at home and internationally as the last member of Iran's self-described "Axis of Resistance" capable of launching regular attacks on Israel.

The Houthi missiles have mostly been intercepted, although some have penetrated Israel's missile defense systems, causing casualties and damage. Israel has frequently struck back, especially around the vital Hodeida port.

The war in Gaza began when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel in the Oct. 7 attack, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting 251. Hamas still holds 58 hostages, around a third of them believed to be alive. Most of the rest were released in ceasefire deals or other agreements. Israeli forces have rescued eight and recovered dozens of bodies.

Israel's retaliatory campaign has killed over 54,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. The ministry says women and children make up most of the dead, but it does not distinguish between civilians and combatants in its tally.

Judge says US effort to deport Mahmoud Khalil on foreign policy grounds is likely unconstitutional

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A federal judge said the Trump administration's effort to deport Mahmoud Khalil because of his pro-Palestinian activism at Columbia University likely violates the Constitution.

In a lengthy order issued Wednesday, Judge Michael Farbiarz wrote the government's primary justification for removing Khalil — that his beliefs may pose a threat to U.S. foreign policy — could open the door to vague and arbitrary enforcement.

Still, Farbiarz stopped short of ordering Khalil released from a Louisiana jail, finding his attorneys had not sufficiently responded to another charge brought by the government: that Khalil did not properly disclose certain personal details in his permanent residency application.

The judge said he would review additional evidence in the coming days as he continues to consider Khalil's request for release.

Khalil, a legal U.S. resident, was detained by federal immigration agents on March 8 in the lobby of his university-owned apartment, the first arrest under President Donald Trump's widening crackdown on

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students who joined campus protests against Israel's war in Gaza.

He has been held for nearly 12 weeks at an immigration detention center in Jena, Louisiana, missing the birth of his first child and recent graduation from Columbia University.

Attorneys for Khalil argue his detention is part of a broader attempt by the Trump administration to suppress constitutionally protected free speech.

In letters sent from the jail, Khalil has described his arrest as "a direct consequence of exercising my right to free speech as I advocated for a free Palestine and an end to the genocide in Gaza."

The federal government has not accused Khalil of breaking any laws. Instead, they have submitted a memo signed by Secretary of State Marco Rubio arguing that Khalil's presence in the country may pose a threat to U.S. foreign policy interests.

The government has offered the same justification to detain other pro-Palestinian activists, including another student at Columbia, Mohsen Mahdawi; a Tufts University student, Rumeysa Ozturk; and a Georgetown University scholar, Badar Khan Suri. All three have won their custody in recent weeks as they continue to fight their cases.

In Khalil's case, the government also said he withheld information from his residency application about his involvement in some organizations, including a United Nations agency that resettles Palestinian refugees and a Columbia protest group.

The judge on Wednesday said attorneys for Khalil had not properly responded to those allegations, but would be permitted to address the issue in the future.

An attorney for Khalil, Baher Azmy, said the charges were "factually baseless and a pretextual punishment for his First Amendment speech."

Nvidia overcomes tariff-driven turbulence to deliver Q1 results that eclipsed projections

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Artificial intelligence technology bellwether Nvidia overcame a wave of tariff-driven turbulence to deliver another quarter of robust growth amid feverish demand for its high-powered chips that are making computers seem more human.

The results announced Wednesday for the February-April period came against the backdrop of President Donald Trump's on-again, off-again trade war that has whipsawed Nvidia and other Big Tech companies riding AI mania to propel their revenue and stock prices upward.

But Trump's tariffs — many of which have been reduced or temporarily suspended — hammered the market values of Nvidia and other tech powerhouses heading into the springtime earnings season as investors fretted about the trade turmoil dimming the industry's prospects.

Those worries have eased during the past six weeks as most Big Tech companies lived up to or exceeded the analyst projections that steer investors, capped by Nvidia's report for its fiscal first quarter.

Nvidia earned \$18.8 billion, or 76 cents per share, for the period, a 26% increase from the same time last year. Revenue surged 69% from a year ago to \$44.1 billion. If not for a \$4.5 billion charge that Nvidia absorbed to account for the U.S. government's restrictions on its chip sales to China, Nvidia would have made 96 cents per share, far above the 73 cents per share envisioned by analysts.

In another positive sign, Nvidia predicted its revenue for the May-July period would be about \$45 billion, roughly the level that investors had been anticipating. The forecast includes an estimated \$8 billion loss in sales to China due to the export controls during its fiscal second quarter, after the restrictions cost it about \$2.5 billion in revenue during the first quarter.

In a conference call with analysts, Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang lamented that the U.S. government had effectively blocked off AI chip sales to China — a market that he estimated at \$50 billion. Huang warned the export controls have spurred China to build more of its own chips in a shift that he predicted the U.S. will eventually regret.

"The U.S. based its policy on the assumption that China cannot make AI chips. That assumption was

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always questionable, and now it's clearly wrong," Huang said.

Despite Nvidia's lost opportunities in China, investors were heartened by the company's first-quarter performance. Nvidia's shares gained more than 4% in extended trading after the numbers came out. Nvidia's stock price ended Wednesday's regular trading session at \$134.81, just slightly below where it stood before Trump's Jan. 20 inauguration. The price had plunged to as low as \$86.62 last month during a nosedive that temporarily erased \$1.2 trillion in shareholder wealth.

The outlook began brightening for Nvidia last month after AI leaders such as Microsoft, Alphabet and Meta Platforms reaffirmed their plans to invest heavily in AI. That spending has been a boon for Nvidia because its chipsets provide the technology's brainpower, an advantage that has helped the company's annual revenue from \$27 billion to \$130 billion in just two years.

Wedbush Securities analyst Dan Ives estimates Big Tech companies will spend about \$325 billion on long-term investments primarily revolving around AI this year, with a substantial chunk of that money budgeted for Nvidia's chips "There is one chip in the world fueling the AI revolution and it's Nvidia. That narrative is clear from these results," Ives wrote in a research note.

Trump's trade war has been raising doubts about Nvidia's ability to maintain its astounding momentum by threatening to close off other key markets besides China.

In apparent attempt to curry favor with the president, Huang last month announced Nvidia will help boost U.S. manufacturing by building some of its AI chips and supercomputers in plants located in Arizona and Texas. Huang also accompanied Trump on a trip to Saudi Arabia earlier this month, signaling Nvidia's ambitions to sell more of its AI chips in the Middle East as that region attempts to lessen its economy dependence on oil.

Trump also extended a helping hand to Nvidia of by rescinding the scheduled start export controls that had been drawn up under President Joe Biden's administration that would have broadened the restrictions on chips sales in foreign markets beyond the limits already in place on deals with China and Russia.

"The U.S. will always be Nvidia's largest market and home to the largest installed base of our infrastructure," Huang said. "Every nation now sees AI as core to the next industrial revolution."

Will you be able to get a COVID-19 shot? Here's what we know so far

By LAURAN NEERGAARD and TOM MURPHY Associated Press

Want a COVID-19 vaccination this fall? For many Americans, it's not clear how easy it will be to get one – or if they've lost the choice.

Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who was a longtime anti-vaccine activist, said this week that the shots are no longer recommended for healthy children and pregnant women, usurping a decision normally made by scientific experts, not political appointees.

The announcement follows an earlier Trump administration step to limit COVID-19 vaccinations among healthy people under age 65.

Until now, the U.S. – following guidance from independent experts who advise the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – has recommended yearly COVID-19 vaccinations for everyone age 6 months and older.

Together, the moves have left health experts, vaccine makers and insurers uncertain about what to advise and what comes next.

"It's going to add a lot of confusion overall," said Ajay Sethi, an epidemiologist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

How can I get a COVID-19 shot for myself or my healthy child?

Some of this season's vaccine is still available. Insurance industry experts say if people had insurance coverage before Kennedy's announcement, it's highly unlikely that would have ended instantly based on the secretary's video announcement. That means if someone could find a shot, they'd likely be able to get one for now.

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Will I still be able to choose a shot in the fall for myself or my child?

Who will be able to get what vaccines this fall is still unclear.

Vaccine manufacturers plan to issue updated COVID-19 shots in the late summer or fall. But the Food and Drug Administration has said it plans to limit approval of seasonal shots to seniors and others at high risk, pending more studies of everyone else.

Even if the U.S. approves vaccines only for certain groups, it still may be possible for others to get the shot depending on the outcome of upcoming advisory meetings, regulatory moves and decisions from insurers and employers.

Will my insurance still pay?

Insurers base coverage decisions on the recommendations of that CDC panel, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. It's not clear what role that panel now will play. Paying out of pocket could cost about \$200.

But some insurers and employers may decide to still cover the shots regardless of the new recommendations, said Jen Kates, a senior vice president at the non-profit KFF, which studies health care issues. She noted that they may view the expense as worthwhile if it avoids a higher bill from someone hospitalized by the coronavirus.

What's considered increased risk?

The FDA published a list of health conditions it said would qualify, including asthma, cancer, diabetes, obesity and physical inactivity. The CDC has a more extensive list.

But, again, it isn't yet known how this will play out. For example, it could be hard for people to prove they're qualified. If they're vaccinated at a drugstore, for instance, the pharmacist wouldn't normally know about underlying health problems or even ask. Kates said it's unclear whether Kennedy's move would affect whether doctors recommend the shot.

And Sethi, the UW-Madison expert, said "this elephant in the room" is that blocking vaccination to the healthy may mean people who have a risk factor and simply don't know it will miss out.

Adding to the confusion, the FDA included pregnancy and recent pregnancy on the list of conditions that would qualify someone for a shot — but Kennedy said that pregnancy was no longer a qualification in his announcement this week.

COVID-19 complications during pregnancy can include preterm birth as well as serious illness in the mother, and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine said it "strongly reaffirms" its recommendation for vaccination during pregnancy.

Stylist says Cassie confided that Sean 'Diddy' Combs pressured her into sex marathons

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and LARRY NEUMEISTER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The singer Cassie was content celebrating her 29th birthday with drinks, drugs and karaoke with friends, but her boyfriend, Sean "Diddy" Combs, had a different idea.

The hip-hop mogul insisted on taking Cassie, his R&B protégé, to a Los Angeles hotel for another of his "freak-off" sex marathons, her friend and former stylist testified Wednesday at Combs' federal sex trafficking trial.

Deonte Nash told jurors that he saw the temperamental Combs berating Cassie as she pleaded for him to let her enjoy her birthday on her own terms. Later that night, Nash said, Cassie told the stylist, "I don't want to freak-off," but that she had to because Combs was making her.

Nash testified that the 2015 conversation was one of several times Cassie, whose real name is Casandra Ventura, confided to him that she didn't want to engage in Combs' drug-fueled hotel encounters. Earlier in the trial, Cassie testified that these often involved Combs watching, directing and sometimes filming her as she had sex with a male sex worker. She said she engaged in hundreds of such encounters during her nearly 11-year relationship with Combs from 2007 to 2018.

Nash said he remains close with Cassie, even advising her on her trial wardrobe. He said he contacted

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her Tuesday to congratulate her on the birth of her third child.

Along with shedding light on Cassie's feelings about freak-offs, Nash also corroborated her testimony that Combs frequently beat and tormented her. Combs would threaten to hinder Cassie's fledgling music career and said he'd ruin her reputation by releasing recordings of their sexual encounters, Nash said.

The stylist said he was at Cassie's apartment, helping her pack for a music festival, when Combs stormed in, grabbed her by the hair, pulled her off a couch and hit her repeatedly. Nash said he jumped on Combs' back in an attempt to get him to stop, but Combs bucked and threw him to the ground.

Combs resumed whaling on Cassie, who'd fled to a bedroom with Nash and another friend, knocking her head into the edge of the bed frame and causing a large, bloody gash above her eye, the witness said.

"Look what y'all made me do," Combs said, according to Nash.

Combs, 55, has pleaded not guilty to charges that he led a racketeering conspiracy for 20 years that relied on fear and violence to get what he wanted. If convicted, he could face 15 years to life in prison.

Earlier Wednesday, Combs' lawyers asked for a mistrial — which Judge Arun Subramanian denied — after they said prosecutors had tried to imply that Combs interfered with a police investigation into the January 2012 firebombing of rapper Kid Cudi's Porsche 911. Subramanian told jurors to disregard testimony about fingerprint records that ended up being destroyed months after the fire.

Combs' ex-assistant testified Tuesday that Combs said he wanted to kill Cudi after he learned that Cassie and Cudi were dating in December 2011.

A few weeks later, Cudi's Porsche was firebombed. A Molotov cocktail was found in the front seat, made out of a 40-ounce Old English 800 malt liquor bottle and a designer handkerchief, according to Lance Jimenez, an arson investigator for the Los Angeles Fire Department, and photographs shown in court.

Combs' lawyers moved for a mistrial after Jimenez, prompted by prosecution questioning, testified that fingerprints taken from Cudi's vehicle were destroyed in August 2012, about eight months after the fire. Jimenez said someone at the Los Angeles Police Department who wasn't involved in the investigation ordered the fingerprint cards destroyed. He said this wasn't normal protocol.

Combs' lawyer Alexandra Shapiro accused the government of prosecutorial misconduct for even broaching the idea that something untoward happened with the fingerprint cards. She said prosecutors should've known better because some prospective jurors were eliminated from consideration for the trial after they said they believed Combs could buy his way out of trouble.

"These questions were designed to play right into that," Shapiro said.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Christy Slavik countered that "a mistrial is absolutely unwarranted here," telling the judge that she only asked Jimenez about the fate of the fingerprint cards to counter defense suggestions that the firebombing was poorly investigated and that the area was not canvassed for fingerprints.

No arrests were made as a result of Jimenez's investigation, but federal prosecutors contend Combs was responsible for the fire and have included the episode as one of several acts of alleged wrongdoing supporting the racketeering charge against him.

Vance urges crypto industry to stay involved in politics as he touts Trump administration's record

By ALAN SUDERMAN AP Business Writer

Vice President JD Vance praised the cryptocurrency industry Wednesday and urged it to remain active in U.S. politics and policymaking, highlighting the Trump administration's close ties to a deep-pocketed industry that's become a powerful force in Washington.

Speaking at a bitcoin conference in Las Vegas, Vance urged the crypto executives and enthusiasts to keep pressure on Congress to pass pro-crypto legislation supported by the White House.

"We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to unleash innovation and use it to improve the lives of countless American citizens," Vance said in his address. "But if we fail to create regulatory clarity now, we risk chasing this \$3 trillion industry offshore in search of a friendly jurisdiction."

Vance's speech comes after Trump promised to make the U.S. the "crypto capital of the planet" when

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he addressed the same bitcoin conference in Nashville last year in the middle of the presidential campaign. The crypto industry, which felt unfairly attacked by the Biden administration, spent heavily to help Trump and pro-crypto lawmakers win election.

Vance praised how quickly the crypto industry was able to organize and influence U.S. politics during last year's election, giving special credit to Cameron and Tyler Winklevoss, the billionaire founders of the crypto exchange Gemini.

"You chose to speak up and you chose to get involved and I believe you changed the direct trajectory of our country because of it," Vance told the crowd gathered at the Venetian Hotel.

Vance hailed crypto as a hedge that can help conservative populists protect themselves against bad politicians, overly aggressive regulators and unethical elites. He predicted its continued assimilation into the financial mainstream and said it was strategically important for the U.S. to be a world leader in the industry, noting that the Chinese government is hostile to crypto.

Vance also touted the Trump administration's record at fulfilling the campaign promises made last year.

As president, Trump has established a strategic bitcoin reserve for the federal government and pardoned Ross Ulbricht, the founder of Silk Road, a black market website that was key to the early growth of bitcoin. Trump has also staked his administration with outspoken crypto backers while his administration has undone or paused several enforcement actions taken against large crypto companies.

Several other Trump officials are speakers at the bitcoin conference, as are his sons Don Jr. and Eric. The president and his family's use of crypto as a platform to make money for the Trump brand has drawn criticism from Democrats and even crypto enthusiasts as corrupt and unseemly.

The Trump family holds about a 60% stake in World Liberty Financial, a crypto project that recently launched its own stablecoin, a fast-growing form of cryptocurrency whose values is often tied to the U.S. dollar. The U.S. Senate advanced legislation earlier this month that creates a federal framework to regulate stablecoins, a bill that Vance said the Trump administration wants passed into law quickly.

Trump's media company announced Tuesday that it was raising \$2.5 billion to buy bitcoin, the world's oldest and most popular cryptocurrency. The president and the first lady have also launched their own meme coins, with Trump recently attending a dinner for some of his coins' biggest investors.

Eric and Don Jr., who are running the Trump Organization while their father is president, have also recently announced they are partnering with an existing firm to create a crypto mining company. They also spoke at the conference Wednesday, where they criticized the traditional banking system and heaped praise on crypto and their supporters in the audience.

"I'm not sure if we would have won in the same decisive manner had it not been for this incredible community," Eric Trump said.

Air traffic control system must be improved to prevent problems like Newark airport, officials say

By JOSH FUNK Associated Press

The problems that disrupted flights at New Jersey's largest airport this spring could be repeated anywhere across the country, so Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy is trying to sell Congress on his plan to overhaul the nation's air traffic control system that will cost "tens of billions."

Duffy provided an update Wednesday on the repairs and staffing efforts that are underway to help eliminate the problems affecting Newark Liberty International Airport, which has been running more smoothly in the past few weeks since the airlines started to cut the number of flights they operate there.

And Duffy emphasized that the Newark radar outages and air traffic control shortage are a prime example of why the antiquated system needs to be improved.

"I'm concerned that we could have more Newarks. And again, why it's so important that we actually begin this build with the money that Congress is going to send us," he said.

Duffy still wouldn't give a price tag of his expansive overhaul of the air traffic control system that he said is clearly needed after the deadly midair collision over Washington, D.C., in January that killed 67 people

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and all the problems affecting Newark this spring. But he said the \$12.5 billion the House included President Donald Trump's massive bill won't be enough because "it's going to be tens of billions of dollars."

Duffy has been meeting privately with lawmakers since he unveiled the plan. But he said he wants to let Congress "do the dance the way the Congress dances" to develop a plan to pay for the program.

Problems ease at Newark airport

The problems that led to hundreds of cancellations and delays at Newark do seem to have improved since the Federal Aviation Administration limited the number of flights at the airport so they could handle it with the number of controllers available. The already short-staffed air traffic control facility in Philadelphia that directs planes in and out of Newark lost five controllers to trauma leave after the first radar and communications outage on April 28 and another one is out on medical leave.

That left the facility with only 16 certified controllers and five supervisors. But Duffy said there are another 16 experienced controllers in training that he hopes will start to get certified between now and October.

That is an example of how the FAA remains about 3,000 short on the number of air traffic controllers it wants, so Duffy has also tried to speed up the hiring and training process while offering incentives to keep experienced controllers from retiring early.

The FAA has said that it expects to be able to bump up the number of flights daily in Newark to 34 arrivals and 34 departures once a runway construction project is completed in mid-June. That is also about the time that some of the controllers on a 45-day trauma leave might be scheduled to return. The FAA will revisit the limits in October because it hopes to have more controllers trained by then.

The government also upgraded the software at the air traffic control facility after a second radar outage on May 9. That helped prevent a repeat problem on May 11.

FAA addresses telecommunications problems

The FAA is also working on the telecommunications problems. Duffy said Verizon worked quickly to install a new fiber optic line between Philadelphia and New York over the past month, but the FAA wants to thoroughly test it out before switching over, so that likely won't be available until July. After that, the FAA plans to also improve the lines between New York and the Newark airport because some of them are still copper wires.

"Clearly something wasn't going right when we experienced these outages," acting FAA administrator Chris Rocheleau said. "Right now, part of this effort, part of this initiative, is to ensure we're acting with decisiveness, right — with focus — to make sure the lines get in, to make sure those redundancies are put in, to make sure the controllers have the tools they need to make the system safe, to operate safely."

In the meantime, Duffy said it would be a good idea for pilots to brush up on their procedures of how to handle an outage because they can happen. In addition to the problems in Newark, controllers in Denver lost their radios for a couple minutes earlier this month. Duffy said there were also several other outages affecting Newark last year that didn't get public attention.

"We have to look at the real world around us and some of the issues that come up and make sure we are brushed up and ready to go, should there be a brief outage," Duffy said. "And again, that there's a lot of redundancy and a lot of procedures that keep people safe should this happen."

Tate brothers face rape and trafficking charges in the UK

By BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Influencer brothers Andrew and Tristan Tate have been charged in Britain with rape and other crimes, prosecutors said Wednesday.

The charges were authorized in January last year but not publicized, though news media at the time reported on a U.K. arrest warrant issued against the Tates, dual U.S. and British citizens who moved to Romania in 2016. The Crown Prosecution Service said this was the first time it confirmed the two had been criminally charged in Britain.

Andrew Tate, 38, faces 10 charges related to three women that include rape, actual bodily harm, human trafficking and controlling prostitution for gain. Tristan Tate, 36, faces 11 charges related to one woman

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that include rape, human trafficking and actual bodily harm.

The brothers are both former professional kickboxers who have millions of followers on social media. Andrew is more well-known, having drawn a larger following with his unapologetic misogyny that has drawn boys and young men to the luxurious lifestyle he projects.

A spokesperson for the two had no immediate comment when reached by The Associated Press. But Andrew Tate commented on the BBC's story on the charges on the X social media platform.

"They do this to any man who fights against them," Tate said, referring to the government. "Never give up men. Never give in. Do not be scared."

The Tates were arrested in Romania in late 2022 and formally indicted last year on charges that they participated in a criminal ring that lured women there, where they were allegedly sexually exploited. Andrew Tate was also charged with rape.

They have denied all the allegations in Romania.

Romanian courts have issued an order to extradite the two to the U.K. once their court case is concluded in there, British prosecutors said.

The warrant issued by Bedfordshire Police last year for the siblings dates back to allegations between 2012 and 2015.

The whereabouts of the brothers was not immediately clear. They were photographed a week ago outside a police station in Voluntari, Romania, where they have to report regularly while facing charges there.

Why 'wrench attacks' on wealthy crypto holders are on the rise

By ALAN SUDERMAN AP Business writer

The headline-grabbing tale of an Italian man who said he was kidnapped and tortured for weeks inside an upscale Manhattan townhouse by captors seeking his bitcoin highlights a dark corner of the cryptocurrency world: the threat of violence by thieves seeking digital assets.

The alleged attempted robbery is known as a "wrench attack." It's a name popularized by an online comic that mocked how easily high-tech security can be undone by hitting someone with a wrench until they give up passwords.

Wrench attacks are on the rise thanks in part to cryptocurrency's move into mainstream finance, Phil Ariss of the crypto tracing firm TRM Labs said in a recent blog post.

"Criminal groups already comfortable with using violence to achieve their goals were always likely to migrate to crypto," Ariss said.

Some of the crypto's key characteristics help explain why wealthy individuals who hold a lot of digital assets can be ripe targets for such attacks.

The draw

Cryptocurrencies like bitcoin offer traders full control of their funds without the need for a bank or permission from a government to buy, sell or hold it. The trade-off is that if funds are lost or stolen, there can be no way to get them back.

Self-reliance is a key ethos of crypto. Securing and controlling one's private keys, which are like passwords used to access one's crypto holdings, is viewed as sacrosanct among many in the crypto community. A popular motto is "not your keys, not your coins."

Transactions on the blockchain, the technology that powers cryptocurrencies, are permanent. And unlike cash, jewelry, gold or other items of value, thieves don't need to carry around stolen crypto. With a few clicks, huge amounts of wealth can be transferred from one address to another.

In the case in New York, where two people have been charged, a lot of details have yet to come out, including the value of the bitcoin the victim possessed.

Crypto thefts

Stealing cryptocurrency is almost as old as cryptocurrency itself, but it's usually done by hacking. North Korean state hackers alone are believed to have stolen billions of dollars' worth of crypto in recent years.

In response to the threat of hacking, holders of a large amount of crypto often try and keep their private

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keys off the internet and stored in what are called "cold wallets." Used properly, such wallets can defeat even the most sophisticated and determined hackers.

But they can't defeat thieves who force a victim to give up their password to access their wallets and move money.

The case in New York is the latest in a string of high-profile wrench attacks. Several have taken place in France, where thieves cut off a crypto executive's finger.

Mitigation

Experts suggest several ways to mitigate the threats of wrench attacks, including using wallets that require multiple approvals before any transactions.

Perhaps the most common way crypto-wealthy individuals try to prevent wrench attacks is by trying to stay anonymous. Using nicknames and cartoon avatars in social media accounts is common in the crypto community, even among top executives at popular companies.

Trump says he warned Netanyahu to hold off on an Iran strike to give US more time for nuclear talks

By JON GAMBRELL, ZEKE MILLER and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

President Donald Trump said Wednesday he has told Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to hold off on striking Iran to give the U.S. administration more time to push for a new nuclear deal with Tehran.

"I told him this would be inappropriate to do right now because we're very close to a solution," Trump told reporters at the White House. "Now, that could change at any moment. It could change with a phone call. But right now, I think they want to make a deal. And, if we can make a deal, (it would) save a lot of lives."

Trump added that an agreement could come together "over the next couple of weeks, if it happens."

The Israeli prime minister's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Trump's comments came as the head of the United Nations' atomic watchdog said "the jury is still out" on negotiations between Iran and the U.S. over Tehran's rapidly advancing nuclear program.

But Rafael Mariano Grossi, director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, described the continuing negotiations between Iran and the U.S. as a good sign.

Grossi said he's in near-daily conversation with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, as well as talking to Steve Witkoff, the U.S. Middle East envoy.

Grossi acknowledged one of his deputies was in Tehran on Wednesday. Iranian officials identified the official as Massimo Aparo, the head of the atomic energy agency's safeguards arm. That's the division that sends inspectors into Iran to monitor its program, which now enriches uranium up to 60% purity — a short, technical step from weapons-grade levels of 90%.

"For the moment, the jury is still out," Grossi told journalists attending a weeklong seminar at the agency in Vienna. "We don't know whether there's going to be an agreement or not."

However, he described the meetings as a good sign.

"I think that is an indication of a willingness to come to an agreement. And I think that, in and by itself, is something possible."

Iran and the U.S. so far have held five rounds of talks in both Muscat, Oman, and in Rome, mediated by Omani Foreign Minister Badr al-Busaidi. A sixth round has yet to be set.

Talks focused on Iranian enrichment

The talks seek to limit Iran's nuclear program in exchange for the lifting of some of the crushing economic sanctions the U.S. has imposed on the Islamic Republic, closing in on a half-century of enmity.

Trump has repeatedly threatened to unleash airstrikes targeting Iran's program, if a deal isn't reached. Iranian officials increasingly warn they could pursue a nuclear weapon with their stockpile of uranium.

Trump has described Iran as having an American proposal to reach a deal. However, Iran repeatedly has denied receiving such a proposal, including on Wednesday with Mohammad Eslami, the head of the

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Atomic Energy Organization of Iran.

However, if a deal is reached, Iran might allow the U.N. atomic energy agency to have American inspectors on its teams during inspections, Eslami said. Americans represent the largest single nationality of that agency's employees, a 2023 agency report showed.

Iran maintains its own pressure

Before Grossi's comments to journalists in Vienna, the head of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard issued a new warning to the U.S. as the negotiations go on.

"Our fingers on the trigger, we are in ambush and we are waiting," Gen. Hossein Salami warned. "If they make a mistake, they will immediately receive responses that will make them completely forget their past."

Despite the tensions, Grossi said he believed "there's always a way" to reach a deal between the Americans and the Iranians — even with the disagreement over enrichment.

However, he added that any possible deal likely would require a "solid, very robust" U.N. agency investigation of Iran's program to understand where it stood after years of Tehran restricting inspectors' ability to assess it.

"My conversations with my Iranian colleagues and counterparts, I always invite them to be absolutely transparent," Grossi said. "And they tell me that a nuclear weapon is un-Islamic. I tell them, 'Well, yeah. You know, that is perfect. It's a statement that I respect. But in this business, you have to show it. You have to be verified in this.'"

And asked about his own political future, Grossi acknowledged his interest in pursuing the post of U.N. secretary-general, which is now held by António Guterres, whose current five-year term expires in 2027. But for now, "I have a lot on my plate."

A new variant of COVID-19 may be driving up cases in some parts of the world, WHO says

By CARLA K. JOHNSON AP Medical Writer

COVID-19 cases are rising again as a new variant begins to circulate in some parts of the world. The World Health Organization said Wednesday the rise in cases is primarily in the eastern Mediterranean, Southeast Asia and western Pacific regions.

Airport screening in the United States has detected the new variant in travelers arriving from those regions to destinations in California, Washington state, Virginia and New York.

The new variant is called NB.1.8.1. It arrives as the United States' official stance on COVID-19 vaccination is changing. On Tuesday, Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. announced that COVID-19 shots are no longer recommended for healthy children and pregnant women — a move immediately questioned by several public health experts.

The new variant, increasing globally, had by mid-May reached nearly 11% of sequenced samples reported. The WHO has designated it a "variant under monitoring" and considers the public health risk low at the global level with current vaccines expected to remain effective.

The WHO said some western Pacific countries have reported increases in COVID cases and hospitalizations, but there's nothing so far to suggest that the disease associated with the new variant is more severe compared to other variants.

The variant called LP.8.1 is currently the dominant version in the U.S. and globally.

What we know about the escape of a former police chief and convicted killer in Arkansas

CALICO ROCK, Ark. (AP) — Officials scoured Arkansas' rugged Ozark Mountains for a former police chief and convicted killer who escaped from prison over the weekend.

Grant Hardin, who briefly served as police chief for the small town of Gateway near the Arkansas-Missouri border, was serving a decades-long sentence for murder and rape.

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Known as the "Devil in the Ozarks," he escaped Sunday from the North Central Unit, a medium-security prison in Calico Rock.

Hardin's escape happened days after 10 men fled a New Orleans jail by going through a hole behind a toilet. Eight of those fugitives have since been captured.

Here's what to know about Hardin and his escape:

How did he escape?

Hardin escaped from the prison Sunday afternoon by impersonating a corrections officer "in dress and manner," according to a court document. A prison officer opened a secure gate, allowing him to leave the facility.

The outfit was not a standard inmate or correctional uniform, said Rand Champion, a spokesperson for the Arkansas Department of Corrections. Officials are working to determine how he was either able to get the uniform or manufacture it himself.

Video surveillance shows Hardin escaped at about 2:55 p.m. on Sunday, Champion said. Officials announced his escape about two hours later.

But how he got out of the prison and escaped into a rural part of the state, as well as whether he had any help is still unclear.

Prison officials say they are investigating what led up to the escape "to help determine any assistance he may have had."

Champion said the decision to house Hardin in a medium-security facility, which has a capacity of about 800 people, weighed the "needs of the different facilities and inmates" and "assessments" of his crimes.

Why was he in prison?

Hardin had been held at the Calico Rock prison since 2017 after pleading guilty to first-degree murder for fatally shooting James Appleton, 59.

Appleton, a Gateway water department employee, was shot in the head in 2017. Police found his body inside a car. Hardin was sentenced to 30 years in prison.

Hardin's DNA was entered into the FBI's Combined DNA Index System, and it matched the 1997 rape of a teacher at an elementary school in Rogers, north of Fayetteville. He was sentenced to 50 years in prison for that crime. He was a police officer in Eureka Springs at that time.

His short tenure as police chief

Hardin became police chief of Gateway, a town of about 450 people, in 2016.

Virtually overnight, people in the community described in the HBO documentary "Devil in the Ozarks" a dramatic shift.

"He was out chasing cars for no reason," said Cheryl Tillman, one of Appleton's sisters. "He was pulling guns on the citizens here in Gateway and then as time went on with him being the police chief things just started going down hill fast."

The documentary revealed a crucial run-in between Hardin and Appleton in the Spring of 2016 in which Appleton stood up to Hardin about fixing a police car. A Benton county sheriff's office lieutenant described several times when they got into each other's faces and the dislike they both felt toward one another.

The city council gave him an ultimatum: resign or be fired. He stepped down four months after taking the position and nine months later, he killed Appleton.

The 'Devil in the Ozarks' documentary

Hardin was the focus of a popular 2023 HBO documentary, "Devil in the Ozarks," that featured interviews with everyone from the victim of the 1997 rape and sisters of the murder victim to Hardin's family.

It revealed key details about the bubbling resentment Hardin felt toward Appleton as well as revealing accounts of the moments right before and after the murder.

Then Gateway Mayor Andrew Tillman, who was Appleton's brother-in-law, described being on the phone with him when he was shot, while local resident John Bray spoke about driving past Appleton's car when the shooting happened. He was the first to find his body and identified Hardin as the shooter.

"I heard what I thought was someone had fired a rifle," he said.

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"I went back and I seen it looked like he had been shot," he added, wiping away tears.

The documentary also includes security video of Hardin at a restaurant with his family just after the shooting and the police interrogation in which he tells law enforcement he has "the right to be silent" and opted not to give a statement.

The search for Hardin

Authorities are using canines, drones and helicopters to search the rugged northern Arkansas terrain, Champion said.

Although he did not reveal the exact areas of the search, he did say it has expanded as more time has elapsed since the escape.

Officials have faced challenges searching the areas as it's very rocky and heavy rain has fallen in recent days.

The area around the prison is a rural part of the state, which can make Hardin's escape more difficult. In a small community, there's a higher chance someone will recognize him and alert the authorities, said Craig Caine, a retired inspector with the U.S. Marshals who has handled many cases involving escaped prisoners.

The Division of Correction and the Division of Community Correction are following leads with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

Dolly Parton leans on her faith after losing husband of nearly 60 years

By GARY GERARD HAMILTON Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Dolly Parton's angelic voice floated throughout her first gospel album in 1971 with songs like "I Believe," "Lord Hold My Hand" and the album's title track, "Golden Streets of Glory." The entertainment icon says the same steadfast faith that inspired those hymns have anchored her throughout her grief following the death her husband, Carl Dean.

"I am a person of faith, and I truly believe that I'm going to see him again someday. And I see him every day in my memories and in my heart, and in all the things that we used to do and all the things that we've built together," said Parton. "You just kind of have to learn to kind of make new plans — but that's the hardest part."

The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame honoree reflected on her marriage of nearly 60 years while promoting her new single-serve Southern-inspired frozen meals, following her popular Duncan Hines baking mixes via a collaboration with US-based Conagra Brands. Dean, who avoided the spotlight and inspired her timeless hit "Jolene," as well as her 2023 "Rockstar" album, died in March at 82.

"I really feel his presence," said the 10-time Grammy winner. "I just try to go on, because I know I have to. And he was ill for quite a while, and part of me was at peace that he was at peace and not suffering anymore. But that still doesn't make up for the loss and the loneliness of it."

The 79-year-old recording artist spoke with The Associated Press about her perspective on life without her husband, her entrepreneurial spirit and on why she's never embraced the title "superstar." The conversation has been edited for brevity and clarity.

AP: It seems like the entire world was thinking of you following your loss. Has your perspective changed of what you hope to accomplish after losing your husband?

PARTON: No, I just think that I've always had dreams and I'm always working. My husband understood that. Carl knew that better than anybody and he was all about it. He was very proud of me. ... So when I did lose him, I just thought, well, I'm going to take all of that energy, and I'm just going to put that back into other things, and I'll keep him ever-present in everything that I do.

AP: You have so many business ventures and philanthropic work. Where did your entrepreneurial acumen begin?

PARTON: I just think that if you're successful, if you are lucky enough to see your dreams come true, you need to make new dreams out of your other dreams. Because it's like a tree with lots of limbs and leaves, so every dream, you can kind of branch off — if you'll pardon the expression — and do other things. And

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I like the business end of things. I like seeing things happen, and I love making things happen. So, my mind just naturally works that way.

AP: You have your popular Duncan Hines cake mixes and now, your single-serve frozen meals. What other projects are you working on?

PARTON: I have a new book coming out ... this one is called 'Star of the Show,' which is actually a song I wrote years ago. But it's about my life on the road and my life on stage — all the behind the scenes and all the people that I've met, and all of the things that happen when you're traveling like that as I have for all of these years. So, that, and then I have my life story as a musical. It's called 'Dolly: An Original Musical.' And I've written a lot of original songs for it. Of course, it'll have the big hits that are woven into the story. And it's just about my life, from the time I was little until up through now.

It's going to be at the Fisher Center of Performing Arts at Belmont University (in Nashville). Then, once that has its run through the end of August, then we take it to New York to open on Broadway next year.

AP: How are you celebrating the 40th anniversary of your Dollywood theme park?

PARTON: One of the things they did for the 40th anniversary was put a big sign up on the hill there above Dollywood that says "Dollywood" like the Hollywood sign. ... Years ago, when I thought, 'Well, someday I'm going to have my own theme park and I'm gonna change that H to a D and have Dollywood.' So, they finally, after 40 years, put that sign up, even though I've talked about it for years. So, we've got a lot of wonderful things planned for the whole season that's celebrating the 40th anniversary. It seems just like a few years back, but it's like everything else: I was with Carl for 60 years, and Dollywood's 40 years old. And that's just hard to believe because I'm only 27. (laughs)

AP: Have you accepted that you're the Dolly Parton, global superstar?

PARTON: I don't think about my life in terms of 'superstar.' I'm just a workin' girl. I always say — and it's the truth — that I am a workhorse that looks like a show horse. But I gotta keep it all up and I enjoy all of it. ... My husband always said, 'If anybody was ever born to be a star, it's you.' Because he sees me loving to do all the things and playing and stuff — it's play time for me. But I take it very serious.

Astronomers discover strange new celestial object in our Milky Way galaxy

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Astronomers have discovered a strange new object in our Milky Way galaxy.

An international team reported Wednesday that this celestial object — perhaps a star, pair of stars or something else entirely — is emitting X-rays around the same time it's shooting out radio waves. What's more, the cycle repeats every 44 minutes, at least during periods of extreme activity.

Located 15,000 light-years away in a region of the Milky Way brimming with stars, gas and dust, this object could be a highly magnetized dead star like a neutron or white dwarf, Curtin University's Ziteng Andy Wang said in an email from Australia.

Or it could be "something exotic" and unknown, said Wang, lead author of the study published in the journal Nature.

NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory spotted the X-ray emissions by chance last year while focusing on a supernova remnant, or the remains of an exploded star. Wang said it was the first time X-rays had been seen coming from a so-called long-period radio transient, a rare object that cycles through radio signals over tens of minutes.

Given the uncertain distance, astronomers can't tell if the weird object is associated with the supernova remnant or not. A single light-year is 5.8 trillion miles.

The hyperactive phase of this object — designated ASKAP J1832–091 — appeared to last about a month. Outside of that period, the star did not emit any noticeable X-rays. That could mean more of these objects may be out there, scientists said.

"While our discovery doesn't yet solve the mystery of what these objects are and may even deepen

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it, studying them brings us closer to two possibilities," Wang said. "Either we are uncovering something entirely new, or we're seeing a known type of object emitting radio and X-ray waves in a way we've never observed before."

Launched in 1999, Chandra orbits tens of thousands of miles (kilometers) above Earth, observing some of the hottest, high-energy objects in the universe.

Today in History: May 29, Hillary and Norgay first to summit Mount Everest

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Thursday, May 29, the 149th day of 2025. There are 216 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On May 29, 1953, Edmund Hillary of New Zealand and Tenzing Norgay of Nepal became the first climbers to reach the summit of Mount Everest.

Also on this date:

In 1790, Rhode Island became the 13th and final original colony to ratify the United States Constitution.

In 1914, the Canadian ocean liner RMS Empress of Ireland sank in the St. Lawrence River in eastern Quebec after colliding with the Norwegian cargo ship SS Storstad; of the 1,477 people on board the Empress of Ireland, 1,012 died.

In 1977, Janet Guthrie became the first woman to race in the Indianapolis 500, finishing in 29th place (A.J. Foyt won the race for his record fourth Indy 500 victory).

In 1985, 39 people were killed at the European Cup Final in Brussels, Belgium, when rioting broke out and a wall separating British and Italian soccer fans collapsed.

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev began their fourth summit meeting, in Moscow.

In 2004, the World War II Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., was dedicated by President George W. Bush.

In 2009, a judge in Los Angeles sentenced music producer Phil Spector to 19 years to life in prison for the murder of actor Lana Clarkson. (Spector remained in prison until his death in January 2021.)

In 2020, fired Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was arrested and charged with third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter in the death of George Floyd. (Chauvin was convicted in April 2021 on those charges as well as unintentional second-degree murder.)

Today's Birthdays: Basketball Hall of Famer Richie Guerin is 93. Actor Anthony Geary is 78. Singer Rebbie Jackson is 75. Musician-composer Danny Elfman is 72. Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kansas, is 71. Singer La Toya Jackson is 69. Actor Ted Levine is 68. Actor Annette Bening is 67. Actor Rupert Everett is 66. Musician Melissa Etheridge is 64. Musician Noel Gallagher is 58. Actor Laverne Cox is 53. Singer Melanie Brown (Spice Girls) is 50. Basketball Hall of Famer Carmelo Anthony is 41. Actor Riley Keough is 36.