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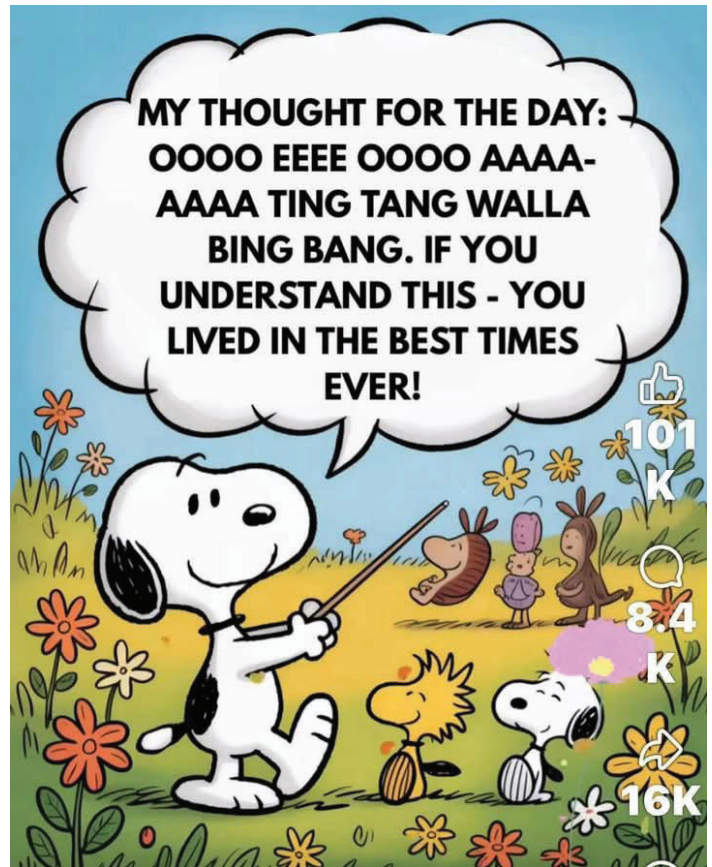
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## Saturday, June 14

FLAG DAY

Jr. Legion at Platte (vs. Platte, 10 a.m.; vs. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton, noon)

## Sunday, June 15

St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion at St. John's, 9 a.m.; at Zion 11 a.m.

United Methodist: Worship at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 10:30 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.

Legion hosts Redfield, 5:30 p.m.

## Thursday June 12

Senior Menu: Beef noodle stroganoff, Normandy blend, mixed fruit, whole wheat bread.

Groton Lions Club Meeting, 104 N Main, 6 p.m.

U12 R&B hosts Aberdeen, 5:30 p.m. (DH); U10 B&W at Webster, 6 p.m. (DH); U8 W&R at Webster, 6 p.m. (DH)

Softball: U8 at Mellette, 6 p.m. (DH)

T-Ball: Gold practice, 6 p.m.

## Friday, June 13

Senior Menu: Chicken salad sandwich, tomato juice, cauliflower/pea/carrot salad, Mandarin orange salad.

SDSU Golf Tourney at Olive Grove

Legion hosts Milbank, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

Jr. Teeners at Clark, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

T-Ball Black practice, 6 p.m.

**Groton Daily Independent**  
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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.**

## Brian Wilson Dies

Beach Boys cofounder and singer Brian Wilson has passed away at 82, his family announced yesterday. Wilson was the creative force behind the group in the mid-1960s—the most popular American rock group at the time.

Wilson formed the Beach Boys in 1961 in his hometown of Hawthorne, California. The band included his younger brothers, Dennis and Carl; cousin Mike Love; and friend Al Jardine. Hits like “Surfin’ USA,” “I Get Around,” “Don’t Worry Baby,” and “California Girls” helped propel the group to its initial successes. Their orchestral 1966 album “Pet Sounds” is considered by many critics to be the first-ever rock concept album. It included singles “Wouldn’t It Be Nice” and “God Only Knows,” which Paul McCartney called the greatest pop song ever written. The group made the Billboard Top 40 list 36 times in 36 years.

Wilson suffered from schizoaffective disorder and drug addictions, often leading to career setbacks.

## Brain Implant Milestone

For the first time, a brain implant has allowed a man to speak instantaneously and expressively, and even sing, a new study has revealed. The finding marks a significant advancement in brain-to-text systems, which have struggled to operate in real time, and to convey variety in pitch, tone, and emphasis.

The patient has ALS, a neurodegenerative disease impacting his speech. Five years into symptoms, he underwent surgery to implant 256 silicon electrodes in a brain region controlling movement. Researchers at UC Davis then began collecting data on his brain activity as he worked to say various words.

The system, known as BrainGate2, managed to translate neural signals into words in 10 milliseconds—40 times faster than other brain-to-text systems. That enabled more fluid conversations and even the ability to interject mid-discussion, with the patient rated as understandable 60% of the time. The system was even able to capture the patient humming a string of three notes.

Researchers say the advancement could pave the way for more natural conversation, including in multiple languages.

## Tentative Tariff Truce

President Donald Trump announced yesterday that the US and China had reached a provisional trade deal, following two days of negotiations in London. The framework, which needs official sign-off from Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping, addresses tariffs as well as student visas and critical minerals, two other sticking points in US-China relations.

Under the tentative agreement, the US would impose a total of 55% tariffs on Chinese goods, down from the 145% rate imposed in April. Full details haven’t been released, but the framework reportedly also entails rolling back export limits on American technologies like airplane parts and allowing Chinese students to continue studying at American universities.

In exchange, China would keep the 10% tariffs on US goods agreed to in Geneva last month. China would also reportedly ease export restrictions on magnets and rare earth minerals, which are essential components for advanced technologies and whose market China dominates.

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## Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Harvey Weinstein convicted in retrial of one charge of sexual assault and acquitted of another as jury continues to deliberate on final charge.

World's most-followed TikToker Khaby Lame departs the US after being detained by immigration officials at Las Vegas airport for allegedly overstaying his visa.

The 125th US Open golf tournament kicks off today from Oakmont Country Club in Pennsylvania; see full predictions and preview.

World Anti-Doping Agency seeks to shut down next year's "Enhanced Games," a competition that will encourage athletes to use performance-enhancing drugs.

## Science & Technology

OpenAI releases o3-pro, the most advanced version of its flagship reasoning model; company cuts price of regular o3 by 80%.

Cybersecurity researchers discover first known example of a zero-click attack—requiring no interaction by the user—on an AI agent.

Scientists develop stretchable brain implant that allows the study of neurological development in animal embryos at the earliest stages of life.

Window-sized device produces safe drinking water from atmospheric humidity without requiring an external power source; engineers estimate an array could produce enough water for a house, even in the desert.

## Business & Markets

US stock markets close lower (S&P 500 -0.3%, Dow -0.0%, Nasdaq -0.5%) as investors weigh US-China trade deal and new inflation data.

US consumer price index rose 2.4% year over year in May, from 2.3% in April; excluding food and energy, core inflation rose 2.8% year over year for third consecutive month.

US budget deficit hit \$316B in May, down 9% from a year ago, as customs receipts rose to a record \$23B under new US tariffs, per Treasury Department report.

Disney and NBCUniversal sue generative AI company Midjourney over copyright infringement; marks first legal action from Hollywood against the generative AI industry

## Politics & World Affairs

National Guard and Marines can temporarily detain—but not formally arrest—protesters in Los Angeles, commander overseeing the task force says.

Fulbright board resigns, alleging political interference from the State Department after it canceled nearly 200 US scholarships; Fulbright is the nation's flagship academic exchange program.

Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. appoints eight new members to vaccine advisory board (More)

The US authorizes voluntary departure for nonessential staff at the US embassy in Baghdad as concerns over Middle East unrest rise.

Denmark approves US military bases on Danish soil amid tensions over Greenland.

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**New Aberdeen City officers Kasey Kurtz (left) and Austin VanOverbeke (right), were sworn in Wednesday morning by the honorable Judge Sommers. They will be new officers on the Aberdeen Police Department.** (Photo from APD Facebook Page)



## Groton Transit Fundraiser



**When:** Thursday, June 19, 2025

**Time:** 5:00 pm-7:00 pm

**Where:** Groton Community Center

\*\*\* Groton Transit Fundraiser will be held at the Groton Community Center-  
109 N 3<sup>rd</sup> Street- One block East of Groton Transit\*\*\*

Let us do the Cooking for you!! Burgers, Brats, Beans, Watermelon, Chips,  
and the Famous Mini Donuts!!

**\*Food\*Fun\*Door Prizes\***

**FREE WILL DONATION**

Please join us & Help support Groton Transit!



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### **Another man found dead in his cell at South Dakota State Penitentiary**

**BY: JOHN HULT - JUNE 11, 2025 5:06 PM**

The state is investigating another death in Department of Corrections custody.

Nicholas Skorka, 42, died at the South Dakota State Penitentiary on Tuesday, according to a press release.

The release did not list a cause of death for Skorka. He is the 10th person to die in the department's custody this year and the fourth that will be subject to scrutiny by the state Division of Criminal Investigation, the investigative arm of the Attorney General's Office.

The death certificate for one of the investigated cases, that of 20-year-old Anthony Richards, lists the cause of his February death as an overdose of "synthetic cannabinoid 5F-ADB," a drug sometimes referred to as K2. Two other inmates, 39-year-old Jason Garreau and 24-year-old Joshua Arrow, died days apart late last month. Arrow's official death certificate has yet to be filed; Garreau's was filed last week and lists methamphetamine toxicity as his cause of death.

Wednesday's release did not say if Skorka's death is being investigated as drug-related. An autopsy for Skorka, whose body was found in his cell, will take place Thursday.

"DCI will do a thorough investigation, and we will determine what additional action is needed pending the results of that investigation," Attorney General Marty Jackley said in the release.

On May 29, Department of Corrections spokesman Michael Winder sent a notice saying the department had busted a drug ring at the penitentiary. Its staff seized shipments of drugs intended for delivery to Sioux Falls inmates via the mail and parcels delivered by visitors to inmates.

"If the results of the investigation warrant prosecution," that day's news release said, "criminal charges will be sought."

Jackley's spokesman Tony Mangan told South Dakota Searchlight on Wednesday that no charges have been filed for actions tied to the drug ring or in-custody deaths.

*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.*

### **State prepares to get 'punched in the nose' as utility plans shut-offs to mitigate wildfire risk**

**BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - JUNE 11, 2025 3:46 PM**

Public safety officials are scrambling to make backup plans after Black Hills Energy announced it will develop a public safety power shut-off program this summer.

A public safety power shut-off is when a utility company turns off power to a community or area to mitigate wildfire risk.

Trent Nincehelter, state radio manager for the South Dakota Bureau of Information and Technology, told members of the state Public Safety Communications Council at its Wednesday meeting in Pierre that state officials are "still wrapping our heads around" how the plans will impact emergency responders.

"As you can imagine, that creates a whole host of concerns for us in the public safety community," Nincehelter said.



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Shut-offs can disrupt communications, water wells and air conditioning as well as access to other needs, such as medical devices, that rely on electricity. The strategy has grown in recent years after a Pacific Gas & Electric equipment failure ignited the 2018 Camp Fire, which killed 84 people, ranks as the deadliest wildfire in California history and resulted in billions of dollars' worth of lawsuit settlements. The year before that, wind blew a tree onto a Black Hills Energy line in Custer State Park and ignited the Legion Lake Fire, which became the third largest wildfire ever measured in the Black Hills.

Several factors are considered before shut-offs are implemented, including heat, humidity, wind speeds and the moisture level of vegetation. The shut-off is used as a "last resort" when other mitigation measures aren't enough, according to Black Hills Energy.

Black Hills Energy Vice President Wes Ashton told South Dakota Public Broadcasting that high-risk wildfire areas more likely to be affected by a shut-off are in "rural, tree-lined areas," not urban areas. The company said affected customers would be alerted with phone calls, text messages, emails, notifications through traditional media and social media, and on the company website.

Public utilities are able to shut off service in case of emergency, according to state law. The Public Utilities Commission does not have authority to require, approve or deny shutoff plans.

Community members and local law enforcement have expressed concern about the plan to Black Hills media outlets.

South Dakota has a statewide communications network serving first responders. Ninceheler said the state is "double evaluating" propane fuel capacity at radio tower sites, generator power backups and "controlling things we can control" for state radio.

"We're probably not going to know exactly what the risk is until they shut the power off one day and we get punched in the nose, and then we'll know exactly what we're dealing with," Ninceheler said. "But to the extent that we can plan for this, I can assure you that we have put those wheels in motion already."

What the state doesn't have control over, he said, is "upstream challenges" including backup solutions for internet service providers, network providers and other communications companies that public safety relies upon.

"Any time that this public safety power shut-off plan could potentially be implemented, obviously that's a really bad time for public safety communications to go down if you're in the most critical parts of a potential wildfire season or having concerns about wildfires sparking," Ninceheler said.

Some other electric utilities serving South Dakota already have public safety power shut-off plans. NorthWestern Energy explains its shut-off plan and provides a map on its website. Xcel Energy explains its process for implementing a shut-off on its website as well.

The Black Hills Electric Cooperative will not implement a public safety power shut-off plan, according to its website; however, Black Hills Energy "controls the distribution system" that delivers power to a substation in the area, which could affect some cooperative members.

*Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan who regularly reports on the intersection of politics and policy with health, education, social services and Indigenous affairs. Her work with South Dakota Searchlight earned her the title of South Dakota's Outstanding Young Journalist in 2024, and she was a 2024 finalist for the national Livingston Awards.*

## Former state employee sentenced for forging food service inspections

**BY: SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - JUNE 11, 2025 12:37 PM**

Another person has been sentenced for a crime committed while working for the state of South Dakota. Renee Strong, 55, of Springfield, was sentenced Tuesday in Hughes County circuit court to serve five years of probation, pay \$2,000 in fines and \$466 in court costs, and perform 40 hours of community service. She previously pleaded guilty to four forgery-related felony charges for falsifying food service

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inspections while she worked for the Department of Public Safety.

The sentencing judge suspended two years of prison time on each count, meaning Strong will stay out of prison if she abides by the terms of her sentence.

"This defendant jeopardized public health when she forged health inspection records," said Attorney General Marty Jackley in a news release. "Her actions also harmed the reputation of those state employees who work hard and take pride in public service."

South Dakota's Division of Criminal Investigation investigated the case, and the Attorney General's Office prosecuted it.

The Strong case is among six criminal prosecutions Jackley has filed against former state employees since last year for allegations related to their work for state government.

One former employee, Lonna Carroll, used her position at the Department of Social Services to steal nearly \$1.8 million over the course of 13 years. A jury found Carroll guilty of grand theft, and she's scheduled to be sentenced in July. Other criminal allegations against state employees have included creating fake vehicle titles to avoid excise taxes, the use of foster family food vouchers for a state employee's own expenses, and the alleged forging of a state employee's own medical marijuana card.

In response to the run of prosecutions, Jackley supported a package of four bills passed during this year's legislative session that will expand the investigatory authority of the state auditor; strengthen the Board of Internal Controls; institute mandatory reporting requirements for state employees and penalties for failing to report; and establish protections for whistleblowers.

Gov. Larry Rhoden signed an executive order in April mandating the creation of a "secure standard reporting mechanism" for employees. The portal will deliver whistleblower reports of malfeasance to the state's auditor and attorney general.

Lawmakers also passed legislation this year strengthening the ability of the Legislature's Government Operations and Audit Committee to conduct investigations and issue orders known as subpoenas requiring people to testify or supply information.

Last year, then-Gov. Kristi Noem added an extra internal control officer position to the executive branch and ordered state employees to undergo annual training aimed at preventing criminal activity.

## Tanks, choppers descend on D.C. in prep for Army anniversary parade, Trump birthday

**BY: ASHLEY MURRAY - JUNE 11, 2025 5:37 PM**

WASHINGTON — More than 100 heavy-duty military vehicles and weapons systems will parade down Constitution Avenue in the nation's capital Saturday, just days after President Donald Trump ordered troops to Los Angeles to quell mostly nonviolent protests against deportations.

The display, on the date of the U.S. Army's 250th anniversary and Trump's 79th birthday, will feature roughly 6,700 soldiers from every division, 150 vehicles, 50 aircraft, 34 horses, two mules and one dog, at a price tag in the tens of millions of dollars, according to the Army.

The evening parade of Army vehicles and aircraft flyovers — plans for which came to light in early May — will occur as protests against the administration's immigration raids spread through major U.S. cities.

Trump ordered 2,000 California National Guard troops to Los Angeles Sunday after demonstrations opposing Immigration and Customs Enforcement arrests erupted Friday, some turning violent over the weekend in downtown LA, a suburb and a portion of a freeway.

Trump ordered another 2,000 National Guard troops and 700 Marines to LA Monday, despite numerous reports that protests remained peaceful.

Saturday's parade in D.C. has drawn criticism for the cost and optics, as Republicans on Capitol Hill seek ways to cut safety net programs, and as Trump deployed troops to LA, defying the state's Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Trump told reporters Tuesday in the Oval Office that any protests at the Army parade "will be met with



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very heavy force."

When pressed Wednesday by a reporter following up on Trump's comment, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said, "Of course the president supports peaceful protest. What a stupid question."

Mass "No Kings" protests organized by a coalition of liberal national groups and labor unions are planned across the United States Saturday, but deliberately not in D.C. Some actions from separate organizations are expected to crop up in the nation's capital, though details are sparse.

## **Army equipment stored in Maryland**

Tanks and fighting vehicles were transported into the District of Columbia Tuesday night on flatbed trucks, as shown in video circulating online. The equipment rolled in over the weekend by rail from Texas and had been staged at the CSX rail yard in Jessup, Maryland, according to the Army.

A festival to celebrate the Army's founding in 1775 has been in the works for more than a year and will feature a wreath-laying at Arlington National Cemetery as well as a fitness competition, military equipment exhibits, food trucks and appearances by professional NFL players on the National Mall.

But details of a parade only emerged in April and were confirmed in early May by The Associated Press.

According to a March 31 application obtained by WTOP News, America250.org applied for a permit for the parade along the National Mall, as well as nighttime fireworks and concert "featuring well known performers, likely from the country music world."

A press release for the event from America250, described as the "nonprofit supporting organization to the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission," celebrates Trump and his role. "Under President Trump's leadership, the U.S. Army has been restored to strength and readiness," it says. "His America First agenda has delivered historic pay raises for service members, rebuilt military stockpiles, invested in cutting-edge technologies, and ensured our soldiers have the tools and support they need to win on any battlefield." The pay raises were part of last year's defense policy bill, before Trump's presidency.

The festival and the parade will cost an estimated \$25 million to \$45 million, according to Army spokesperson Heather Hagan, though the price tag for the parade alone was not specified. The Army did not respond to a question about where the funds originated.

It is not the first time Trump has wanted a military parade. He had planned one in the nation's capital in 2018 but it was called off due to the cost, NBC reported at the time.

## **Big crowds and lots of fencing**

Matt McCool, of the U.S. Secret Service Washington field office, said for this parade, officials are expecting an "enormous turnout." The agency is leading local, state and federal law enforcement during the National Special Security Event, the sixth for D.C. this year. They are nationally or internationally significant events expected to be attended by high-level officials and large numbers of people.

Just over 18 miles of anti-scale fencing and 17 miles of "bike rack"-style fencing has been erected as a security perimeter surrounding the parade route. Members of the public wishing to see the parade will have to pass through one of the 175 metal detectors at three security checkpoints.

McCool, special agent in charge of the Washington office, said the Secret Service has been planning security since April 22, "which is shorter than normal," and that the agency is prepared for protests.

"We are paying attention obviously to what is happening (in Los Angeles) and we'll be ready for that if it were to occur here," McCool said Monday during a press conference.

## **Troops bunking in federal office buildings**

The parade will include troops from the National Guard and Army Reserve, Special Operations Command, United States Military Academy and Reserve Officer Training Corps, and it will feature period uniforms and equipment reflecting the Revolutionary War to the modern forces.

Young enlistees sent to Washington to march in the parade toured the D.C. sites near the U.S. Capitol Wednesday.

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Not every state sent Guard members. But the New York National Guard will participate, and will house roughly 460 New York and Massachusetts National Guard soldiers in an empty Department of Agriculture office building and an unused General Services Administration warehouse until June 15, according to a press release.

The troops were bused to Washington on Wednesday, and the trip cost — including meals ready-to-eat for breakfast and lunch, a hot dinner and a \$69 per diem — will be covered by the Army.

## Golden Knights to give Trump a gift

Flyovers will also occur during the parade featuring AH-64 Apaches, UH-60 Blackhawks and CH-47 Chinooks.

The Army Golden Knights parachute team is expected to land on the White House South Lawn and present Trump with a folded flag, according to media reports. Trump is expected to deliver remarks, according to the America250 organization. The White House did not respond to questions about the day's timeline.

Among the vehicles and equipment rolling down Constitution Avenue between 15th and 23rd streets will be Abrams tanks, first used in 1991 for Operation Desert Storm; High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, or HIMARS, used to launch multiple rockets at precise aim from far distances; and 9,500-pound titanium M777 lightweight Howitzers that fire 105-pound shells up to 24 miles and are currently in use on Ukraine's battlefields.

The Army Corps of Engineers released footage of 18-by-16-foot metal plates installed on D.C. streets to reinforce the roads prior to the massive vehicles driving over them.

D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser said in early June that she "remains concerned" about damage to the city's streets.

"But I gotta think that the Army is among the most qualified logistics moving agencies in the world. They have moved equipment in more precarious situations, so we're relying on their expertise. But what I can tell D.C. residents is that we will try to keep our road network usable, and if we have to fix something we will seek reimbursement from the Feds," Bowser told reporters at a June 3 press conference.

*Ashley Murray covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include domestic policy and appropriations.*

## December retirement of Justice Janine Kern opens up seat on South Dakota Supreme Court

**Gov. Rhoden will fill open position based on recommendations from Judicial Qualifications Commission**

**BY: JOHN HULT - JUNE 11, 2025 11:04 AM**

The longest-serving current justice of South Dakota's Supreme Court will step down in December, creating a vacancy to be filled by Republican Gov. Larry Rhoden.

Justice Janine Kern represents the high court's first district, which includes Custer, Lawrence, Meade and Pennington counties. Prior to her appointment by former Gov. Dennis Daugaard in 2014, Kern spent 18 years as a circuit court judge for that West River area.

Her father Paul Kern, a former circuit court judge, administered three oaths of office for her — first as an attorney, then a circuit court judge, and finally as a Supreme Court justice.

"It is with a heart brimming with gratitude for the trust and confidence placed in me, which gave me the opportunity to serve the people of this great state, that I notify you of my retirement on December 8, 2025, nearly 29 years to the day of my investiture as a circuit court judge," the 64-year-old Kern said in her retirement announcement. "It has been a deep honor and privilege to serve."

In a press release on her announcement, Chief Justice Steven Jensen praised Kern for her "unwavering commitment to justice, the integrity of the courts, and a deep compassion for the people we serve."

In addition to her service as a judicial officer, Kern served on the Council of Juvenile Services from 2004

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to 2013 and on the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice from 2004 and 2008, as well as on numerous other boards and commissions.

"I work with several young attorneys who look up to her as a role model, so her steady hand on the court will be missed," Rhoden said in a press release. "As I review potential appointments to replace her on the bench, I will be hopeful that we can find a future Supreme Court judge of her caliber."

Kern is one of two women — the other being Justice Patricia DeVaney — currently serving on the five-member high court. Kern was previously part of the state's only female-majority state Supreme Court, serving alongside Justices Lori Wilbur and Judith Meierhenry, who was the first woman appointed to the state's high court.

That female majority court heard a single case on a single day, April 25, 2017, when then-Justice Steven Zinter disqualified himself and retired Justice Meierhenry stepped in. Wilbur retired later that year.

Kern is one of three current justices appointed by Daugaard, the others being Mark Salter and Jensen, who was elected chief justice by his colleagues in 2021. Former Gov. Kristi Noem appointed Justices DeVaney and Scott Myren.

Rhoden will choose Kern's replacement based on recommendations from the state Judicial Qualifications Commission.

To be considered, potential justices must be licensed to practice law in South Dakota and voting residents of the district from which they are appointed at the time they take office.

Justices face retention elections on the November general election ballot three years after their initial appointment, and every eight years after that.

*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.*

## Five questions and answers about reconciliation in the U.S. Senate

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - JUNE 11, 2025 7:00 AM

WASHINGTON — Republicans in the U.S. Senate will spend the next couple weeks defending the party's "big beautiful bill" against Democratic criticisms and attempting to pass a final version that can win 51 votes.

Reconciliation, the name for the process under which the massive bill is being considered, comes with a lot of rules in the Senate, including that every proposal in the bill addresses federal revenue, spending, or the debt limit. And language addressing the first two cannot be deemed "merely incidental," or it gets kicked to the curb.

Reconciliation is also favorable for the party in power, in this case Republicans, since the bill is not subject to the legislative filibuster. That means the GOP will need no more than a simple majority for passage.

As you watch and read about Senate action during the coming weeks, here are the answers to five questions about reconciliation and other ways in which Congress sets a budget and allocates taxpayer money:

**Q: Where does reconciliation fit in with everything else that's happening, like the president's budget request, the budget resolution Congress approved earlier this year, the appropriations bills and rescissions?**

A: Yeah, they really don't make this easy.

The president's budget request is a proposal that serves as the starting point for lawmakers' work on a variety of fronts, including the annual appropriations bills. Nothing in the president's budget request becomes real unless Congress takes action.

Congress' budget resolution is separate from that request. It is a tax and spending blueprint that lawmakers are supposed to use to plan the country's financial future for the next decade.

It is not a bill and cannot become law, but when the House and Senate adopt a budget resolution with reconciliation instructions it unlocks the process Republicans are now using to pass their "big beautiful bill" — reconciliation.



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Reconciliation bills move through Congress similar to how a regular bill becomes a law. However, in the Senate, the political party using the process must defend its work to the parliamentarian, who ensures the legislation complies with the Byrd rule, which is actually a law.

In a process separate from this are the dozen annual appropriations bills, which is how Congress, with its power of the purse, funds the departments, agencies and programs that most people picture when they think about the federal government.

Those bills account for about one-third of federal spending. The other two-thirds comes from mandatory programs like Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security that lawmakers designed to run outside of the annual appropriations process.

Congress is supposed to approve the appropriations bills by the start of the fiscal year on Oct. 1, but lawmakers rarely complete the work before their deadline and typically have to use a stopgap spending bill to give themselves more time to negotiate full-year government funding bills.

This is why there could still be a partial government shutdown later this year, even though Congress has already adopted a budget resolution and will likely pass a budget reconciliation package in the months ahead.

Yet another process related to government spending is a rescissions request, which Trump sent to Capitol Hill earlier this month. It asks lawmakers to claw back funding approved in an earlier appropriations bill.

Just making the request allows the White House budget office to freeze funding for 45 days while the House and Senate debate the proposal. Senate approval of a rescissions bill is not subject to the chamber's 60-vote legislative filibuster, so Democratic opposition won't stop it from becoming a reality if the vast majority of GOP senators vote to cut the previously approved spending.

## **Q: What are the rules for budget reconciliation bills?**

A: Again, remember that in general, this type of legislation must address revenue, spending, or the debt limit. Neither political party can use the process to change policies unless they have a significant impact on federal coffers.

For example, Democrats had to remove a provision that would have raised the federal minimum wage from a reconciliation bill they passed during the Biden administration because the parliamentarian ruled it was "merely incidental."

## **Q: Why didn't the bill have to go through all these extra steps in the House?**

A: Congress established the reconciliation process in a 1974 budget act and passed its first reconciliation bill in 1980. But it wasn't until 1985 and 1986 that the Senate put extra guardrails in place.

The Byrd rule got its name from West Virginia Democratic Sen. Robert C. Byrd, who argued that the reconciliation process needed to be more focused on budgetary issues. The Byrd rule evolved a bit over the years before being made a statute in 1990.

The Byrd rule requires each provision to change revenue or spending in a way not deemed "merely incidental." Also, committees that receive reconciliation instructions in the budget resolution can only write bills within their jurisdiction and those committees must work within their reconciliation instructions' fiscal targets.

In addition, proposals cannot increase the deficit outside the 10-year budget window and the package cannot change Social Security.

## **Q: What is a vote-a-rama?**

A: Senate floor debate on a reconciliation package is much different than in the House, where GOP leaders were able to block any amendment debate.

The Senate is required to hold floor votes on reconciliation amendments and this usually leads to a vote-a-rama, where lawmakers debate dozens of amendments overnight and sometimes well after sunrise.

Democrats are likely to focus their amendments on proposals in the reconciliation bill that at least four GOP senators do not support, since that's the minimum number Democrats would need for any of their amendments to be adopted. Republicans control the chamber with 53 votes and a tie-breaking vote from Vice President J.D. Vance.

GOP senators are likely to call for votes on their own amendments, though typically leaders try to work

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out many of the final details before the bill comes to the floor, to avoid potentially divisive votes.

**Q: How often does Congress use this process to approve legislation?**

A: Congress has approved 27 reconciliation bills since 1980, with 23 of those becoming law. Former President Bill Clinton vetoed three and former President Barack Obama vetoed one, according to a report from the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service.

During the last decade, Congress approved three reconciliation bills — Republicans' 2017 tax law; a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package Democrats passed in 2021; and Democrats' signature climate change, health care and tax package, known as the Inflation Reduction Act, in 2022.

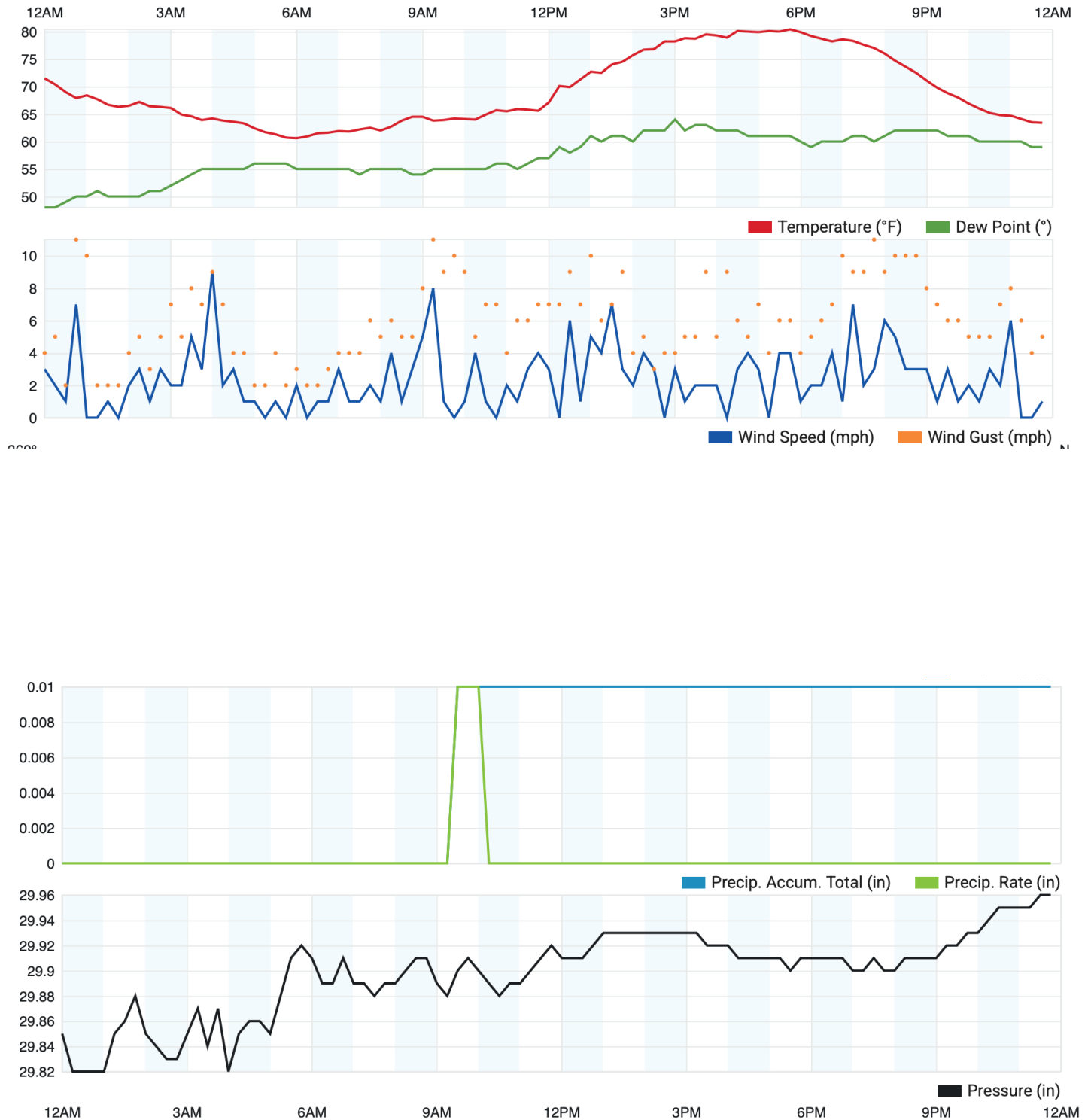
If you're interested in reading more about budget reconciliation, here is another explainer from earlier this year.

*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.*

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

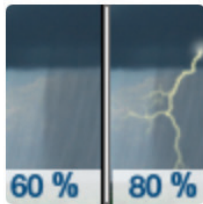




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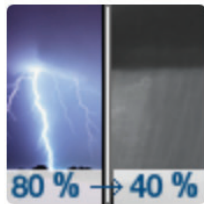
Today



High: 66 °F

Showers  
Likely then  
T-storms

Tonight



Low: 54 °F

T-storms then  
Chance  
Showers

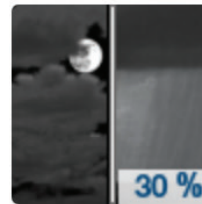
Friday



High: 66 °F

Smoke then  
Mostly Cloudy

Friday Night



Low: 49 °F

Mostly Cloudy  
then Chance  
Showers

Saturday



High: 75 °F

Mostly Cloudy  
then Slight  
Chance  
Showers



## Severe Weather Threat Today

June 12, 2025  
4:11 AM

Afternoon & Evening hours

### Timing/Location

Widespread showers/weak storms through noon.  
Isolated severe weather possible in the **dark green** areas though the afternoon & evening.

### Primary Threats in the **DARK GREEN** areas

#### Tornado Potential

Very Low **Low** Medium High

#### Max Hail Size

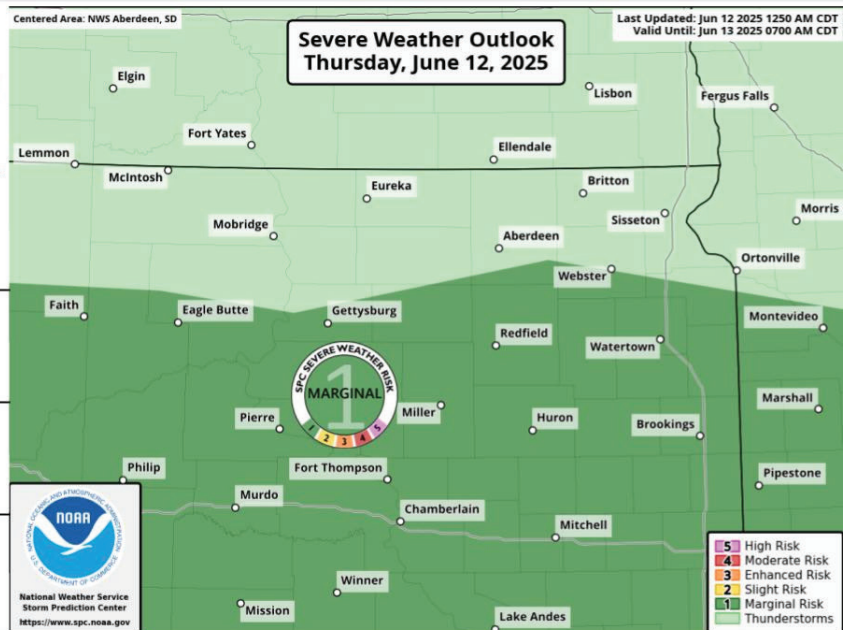
Dimes **Quarters** Golfball Baseball

#### Max Wind Speed

< 60 mph **60-70 mph** 70-80 mph > 80mph

#### Heavy Rain/Flooding Potential

Very Low **Low** Medium High



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

Showers and weak storms will continue across the area through midday, with stronger storms possible later this afternoon and evening. The stronger storm may produce quarter size hail, 60-70 mph winds, and locally heavy rainfall.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 81 °F at 5:35 PM**

**Low Temp: 61 °F at 5:47 AM**

**Wind: 12 mph at 3:58 AM**

**Precip: : 0.01**

Day length: 15 hours, 41 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 103 in 1956

Record Low: 37 in 2012

Average High: 80

Average Low: 54

Average Precip in June.: 1.40

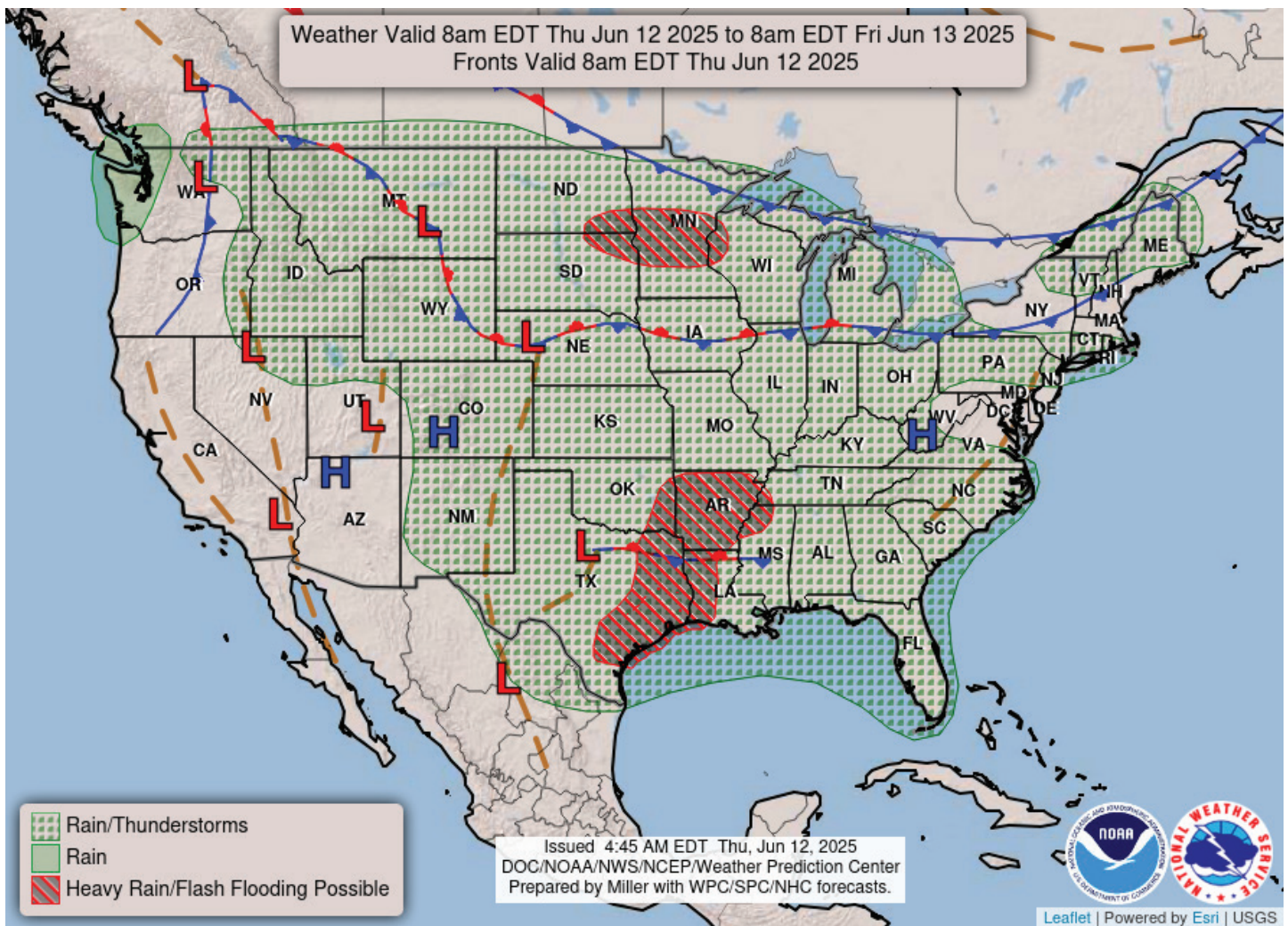
Precip to date in June: 0.46

Average Precip to date: 8.65

Precip Year to Date: 6.51

Sunset Tonight: 9:23:13 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:41:28 am





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## Today in Weather History

June 12th, 1924: A tornado moved southeast from the southwestern edge of Lake Kampeska, passing southwest of Watertown. Two barns and 20 smaller farm buildings were heavily damaged. This tornado was estimated to have F2 strength.

June 12th, 1983: Lightning struck and killed two cows near Miller in Hand County. Lightning also hit a home six miles north of Aberdeen, breaking a ceramic statue and blowing out light bulbs. Another home in Aberdeen was struck by lightning, rupturing a gas line and starting the house on fire. Also, heavy rains of up to seven inches fall around the area. Some storm total rainfall amounts include 2.00 inches at 2NW of Stephan, 2.40 inches in Miller, 3.03 at 4 miles west of Mellette, and 6.30 inches in Orient.

June 12th, 1994: In Hand County, a thunderstorm caused an estimated 3 million dollars in crop damage. Hail, the most significant being baseball size, was reported in three- to four-foot-high drifts. About 70,000 acres of cropland and pastures were destroyed. The hail killed pheasants and ducks, and many cattle were injured. Many windows were broken in homes, holes were punched in mobile homes, the contents of dwellings were damaged from hail that entered through windows, and many vehicles were extensively damaged.

June 12th, 2013: A line of thunderstorms moving northeast across the region brought damaging wind gusts from 60 to 80 mph to parts of central and northeastern South Dakota. Many branches and several trees were downed. Some buildings were also damaged, with a couple of structures destroyed. An estimated eighty mph wind destroyed a cabin on the east shore of the Missouri River and north-northwest of Pierre. A hundred-foot by seventy-five-foot storage building was flattened south of Doland in Spink County. Tractors, planters, and other equipment in the building were damaged.

1881 - Severe thunderstorms spawned more than half a dozen tornadoes in the Lower Missouri Valley. Five of the tornadoes touched down near Saint Joseph MO. In south central Kansas a tornado nearly wiped out the town of Floral. Hail and high winds struck Iowa and southern Minnesota. In Minnesota, Blue Earth City reported five inches of rain in one hour. (David Ludlum)

1947 - A heavy wet snow blanketed much of southern and central Wyoming, and gave many places their heaviest and latest snow of record. Totals included 18.4 inches at Lander, 8.7 inches at Cheyenne, and 4.5 inches at Casper. (11th-12th) (The Weather Channel)

1969 - Record late season snows covered parts of Montana. Five inches was reported at Great Falls and east of Broadus. Billings, MT, tied their June record with lows of 32 degrees on the 12th and the 13th. (The Weather Channel)

1983 - The state of Utah was besieged by floods and mudslides. Streets in downtown Salt Lake City were sandbagged and turned into rivers of relief. The town of Thistle was completely inundated as a mudslide made a natural dam. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms in Nebraska produced softball size hail around Fremont and Ames, and 3.5 inches of rain in less than one hour. Four and a half inches in less than an hour caused flooding around Ithica, NE. A tornado destroyed a mobile home near Broken Bow, NE, injuring both occupants. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Fifteen cities in the southeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Asheville with a reading of 40 degrees. Drought conditions continued to intensify across the eastern half of the nation. Rainfall at Nashville, TN, was running 12.5 inches below normal. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from Tennessee Valley to the Central Appalachians in the afternoon and evening, and produced severe weather in Oklahoma and Texas during the evening and night. Thunderstorms spawned ten tornadoes, and there were 164 reports of large hail and damaging winds. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 100 mph at Amarillo, TX, and wind gusts to 110 mph at Denton TX. Hail three inches in diameter was reported at Tucumcari NM. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2005 - A tornado in Hammond, Wisconsin damaged 22 homes and produced \$3.6 million in damage (Associated Press).



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It was a new car with a new navigation system, and we were living near the top of a mountain. We were told that our home was well over 5,500 feet above sea level. To reach our front steps was a major driving project. The road twisted and turned and included several "switchbacks" — instant "U" turns. At times it seemed as though the turns were much tighter than a paper clip.

As we sat and struggled to program our "nav system" before beginning this journey, our hearts beat with excitement. It was a new experience, and we were anxious to learn if it worked. After many mistakes and several minutes, a voice "came from the clouds" and said: "Proceed to the nearest major highway."

It was frightening! What next, we thought.

As we started down the mountain, the little arrow that was intended to point us in the direction started to go around in circles. It was spinning as though it could not determine where we were to go. This was certainly not a "confidence builder." But, we started down the mountain, twisting and turning, and when we arrived at the highway, that same voice said,

"Turn right and proceed 7.4 miles to Highway 16, and left on Highway 21."

It was correct, and our faith grew.

Trust and confidence are the most critical factors when looking for directions — especially our directions for life.

Solomon assured us that "the integrity of the upright guides them."

To live with integrity means that we are obedient to all of the commands and directions in the Bible.

Consider Joseph: He was a man of great integrity, yet suffered greatly for being obedient. In the end, however, he was able to say:

"God meant it for good! Look at these results!"

Prayer: Guide us and guard us, Lord, and give us courage to be obedient as we seek and follow Your way. Fill us with Your Spirit who will protect us from evil.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Today's Scripture: "The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity." Proverbs 11:3

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

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.10.25

10 11 14 38 45 24

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$264,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 17 Hrs 26 Mins  
DRAW: 33 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.11.25

4 12 13 20 26 4

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$2,100,000**

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 41 Mins  
DRAW: 33 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.11.25

7 9 30 36 43 4

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT 16 Hrs 56 Mins 33  
DRAW: Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.11.25

4 21 22 23 27

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$26,000**

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 56  
DRAW: Mins 34 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.11.25

4 29 37 48 56 6

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT 2 Days 17 Hrs 25  
DRAW: Mins 33 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.11.25

13 25 29 37 53 3

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$80,000,000**

NEXT 2 Days 17 Hrs 25  
DRAW: Mins 33 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  
09/6-7/25 Fly in/Drive in at Groton Municipal Airport  
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  
11/30/2025 Snow Queen Contest, 4 p.m.  
12/06/2025 Olive Grove Holiday Party and Silent Live Auction Fundraiser

## News from the **AP** Associated Press

### **Air India passenger plane with 244 aboard crashes in India's northwestern Ahmedabad city**

NEW DELHI (AP) — An Air India passenger plane with 244 people onboard crashed Thursday in India's northwestern city of Ahmedabad, the airline and local media reported.

Visuals on local television channels showed smoke billowing from the crash site near the airport in Ahmedabad.

Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, the director general of the directorate of civil aviation, told The Associated Press that Air India flight AI 171, a Boeing 787, crashed into a residential area called Meghani Nagar five minutes after taking off at 1:38 p.m. local time.

The flight was bound for London's Gatwick Airport.

There were 232 passengers and 12 crew members onboard and emergency teams have been activated at the airport, Kidwai said.

The 787 Dreamliner is a widebody, twin-engined plane. This is the first crash ever of a Boeing 787 aircraft, according to the Aviation Safety Network database.

### **Hamas says it killed 12 Israeli-backed fighters. Israeli-supported group says they were aid workers**

By SAMY MAGDY and KAREEM CHEHAYEB Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — A unit of Gaza's Hamas-run police force said it killed 12 members of an Israeli-backed militia after detaining them early Thursday. Hours earlier, an Israel-supported aid group said Hamas attacked a bus carrying its Palestinian workers, killing at least five of them.

The militia, led by Yasser Abu Shabab, said its fighters had attacked Hamas and killed five militants but made no mention of its own casualties. It also accused Hamas of detaining and killing aid workers. It was not immediately possible to verify the competing claims or confirm the identities of those killed.

The Israeli military circulated the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation's statement on its social media accounts but declined to provide its own account of what happened.

Aid initiative already marred by controversy and violence

The aid group's operations in Gaza have already been marred by controversy and violence since they began last month, with scores of people killed in near-daily shootings as crowds headed toward the food distribution sites inside Israeli military zones. Witnesses have blamed the Israeli military, which has acknowledged firing only warning shots near people it said approached its forces in a suspicious manner.

Earlier this week, witnesses also said Abu Shabab militiamen had opened fire on people en route to a GHF aid hub, killing and wounding many.

The United Nations and major aid groups have rejected the Israeli and U.S.-backed initiative, accusing them of militarizing humanitarian aid at a time when experts say Gaza is at risk of famine because of Israel's blockade and renewed military campaign.

Last week, Israel acknowledged it is supporting armed groups of Palestinians in what it says is a move to counter Hamas. Abu Shabab's militia, which calls itself the Popular Forces, says it is guarding the food distribution points set up by the Israeli- and U.S.-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation in southern Gaza. Aid workers say it has a long history of looting U.N. trucks.

GHF has denied working with the Abu Shabab group.

'They were aid workers'

In a statement released early Thursday, the foundation said Hamas had attacked a bus carrying more than two dozen "local Palestinians working side-by-side with the U.S. GHF team to deliver critical aid" near the southern city of Khan Younis.

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"We condemn this heinous and deliberate attack in the strongest possible terms," it said. "These were aid workers. Humanitarians. Fathers, brothers, sons, and friends, who were risking their lives everyday to help others."

It did not identify the men or say whether they were armed at the time.

Rev. Johnnie Moore, a Christian evangelical advisor to U.S. President Donald Trump who was recently appointed head of GHF, called the killings "absolute evil" and lashed out at the U.N. and Western countries over what he said was their failure to condemn them.

"The principle of impartiality does not mean neutrality. There is good and evil in this world. What we are doing is good and what Hamas did to these Gazans is absolute evil," he wrote on X.

Israel and the United States say the new system is needed to prevent Hamas from siphoning off aid from the long-standing U.N.-run system, which is capable of delivering food, fuel and other humanitarian aid to all parts of Gaza. U.N. officials deny there has been any systematic diversion of aid by Hamas, but say they have struggled to deliver it because of Israeli restrictions and the breakdown of law and order in Gaza.

U.N. officials say the new system is unable to meet mounting needs, and that it allows Israel to use aid as a weapon by controlling who has access to it and by essentially forcing people to relocate to the aid sites, most of which are in the southernmost city of Rafah, now a mostly uninhabited military zone. Some fear this could be part of an Israeli plan to coerce Palestinians into leaving Gaza.

Hamas says it killed traitors

Hamas has also rejected the new system and threatened to kill any Palestinians who cooperate with the Israeli military. The killings early Wednesday were carried out by the Hamas-run police's Sahm unit, which Hamas says it established to combat looting.

The unit released video footage showing several dead men lying in the street, saying they were Abu Shabab fighters who had been detained and killed for collaborating with Israel. It was not possible to verify the images or the claims around them.

Mohammed Abu Amin, a Khan Younis resident, said he was at the scene of the killings and that crowds were celebrating them, shouting "God is greatest" and condemning those killed as traitors to the Palestinian cause and agents of Israel.

Ghassan Duhine, who identifies himself as a major in the Palestinian Authority's security forces and deputy commander of the Abu Shabab group, posted a statement online saying they clashed with Sahm and killed five. He denied that the images shared by Sahm were of Abu Shabab fighters.

The Palestinian Authority, led by rivals of Hamas and based in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, has denied any connection to the Abu Shabab group, but many of the militiamen identify themselves as PA officers.

Mounting lawlessness as Israel steps up military campaign

Israel renewed its offensive in March after ending a ceasefire with Hamas and imposed a complete ban on imports of food, fuel, medicine and other aid before easing the blockade in mid-May.

The ongoing war and mounting desperation have plunged Gaza into chaos, with armed gangs looting aid convoys and selling the stolen food. The Hamas-run police force, which maintained a high degree of public security before the war, has largely gone underground as Israel has repeatedly targeted its forces with airstrikes. The military now controls more than half of the territory.

The war began when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking 251 hostage. They are still holding 53 captives, less than half of them believed to be alive, after most of the rest were released in ceasefire agreements or other deals.

Israel's military campaign has killed over 55,000 Palestinians, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which has said women and children make up more than half of the dead. It does not say how many of those killed were civilians or combatants.

Israel's offensive has flattened large areas of Gaza and driven around 90% of the population of roughly 2 million Palestinians from their homes. The territory is almost completely reliant on humanitarian aid because nearly all of its food production capabilities have been destroyed.



## World shares are mixed as markets shrug at latest China-US trade deal

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — World shares were trading mixed early Thursday after Wall Street's rally stalled, as investors appeared not to react much to the results of the latest round of China-U.S. trade talks.

Germany's DAX lost 0.7% to 23,787.77 and the CAC 40 in Paris slipped 0.4% to 7,744.41.

Britain's FTSE 100 was nearly unchanged at 8,863.07.

The futures for the S&P 500 and the Dow Jones Industrial Average were down 0.3%.

In Asian trading, Japan's Nikkei 225 lost 0.5% to 38,216.06.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng sank 0.5% to 24,234.80, while the Shanghai Composite index edged 0.1% lower to 3,404.66.

In South Korea, the Kospi gained 0.9% to 2,933.44, while Australia's S&P/ASX 200 edged 0.1% higher to 8,604.50.

Taiwan's Taiex lost 0.8%.

On Wednesday, the S&P 500 fell 0.3% to 6,022.24 for its first loss in four days. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was virtually unchanged at 42,865.77 after edging down by 1 point. The Nasdaq composite slipped 0.5% to 3,400.30.

Several Big Tech stocks led the way lower, and a 1.9% drop for Apple was the heaviest weight on the market. It's been listless this week after unveiling several modest upcoming changes to the software that runs its devices.

The action was stronger in the bond market, where Treasury yields eased after a report suggested President Donald Trump's tariffs are not pushing inflation much higher, at least not yet.

U.S. consumers had to pay prices for food, gasoline and other costs of living that were 2.4% higher overall in May than a year earlier. That was up from April's 2.3% inflation rate, but it wasn't as bad as the 2.5% that Wall Street was expecting.

A fear has been that Trump's wide-ranging tariffs could ignite an acceleration in inflation, just when it had seemed to get nearly all the way back to the Federal Reserve's 2% target from more than 9% three summers ago. It hasn't happened, though economists warn it may take months more to feel the full effect of Trump's tariffs.

Trump said Wednesday that China will supply rare-earth minerals and magnets to the United States, while his government will allow Chinese students into U.S. universities in a deal that still needs an agreement by him and by China's leader. Trump also said that "President XI and I are going to work closely together to open up China to American Trade. This would be a great WIN for both countries!!!"

Investors are still hoping for a more sweeping trade deal that would ease tensions between the world's two largest economies.

Hopes for such deals between the United States and countries around the world have been one of the main reasons the S&P 500 has charged nearly all the way back to its all-time high after dropping roughly 20% below a couple months ago. Without them, the fear is that Trump's high tariffs could drive the economy into a recession while pushing inflation higher. The S&P 500 is now sitting 2% below its record.

Tesla swung between gains and losses before finishing with a rise of 0.1% to continue its shaky run. It's been recovering much of its big losses taken last week after Elon Musk's relationship with Trump imploded, which in turn raised fears about a loss of business for the electric-vehicle company. Musk on Wednesday backed away from some of his earlier comments and said they went "too far."

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury eased to 4.41% from 4.47% late Tuesday. Shorter-term yields, which more closely track expectations for what the Federal Reserve will do with overnight interest rates, fell more.

Wednesday's better-than-expected reading on inflation raised expectations along Wall Street that the Fed could cut its main interest rate at least twice by the end of the year.

In other dealings early Thursday, U.S. benchmark crude oil lost 46 cents to \$67.69 per barrel. Brent

crude, the international standard, shed 53 cents to \$69.24 per barrel.

The U.S. dollar slipped to 143.90 Japanese yen from 144.60 yen. The euro rose to \$1.1518 from \$1.1487.

## **More than 55,000 Palestinians have been killed in the Israel-Hamas war, Gaza health officials say**

By WAFAA SHURAF and FATMA KHALED Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — The Palestinian death toll from the 20-month Israel-Hamas war passed 55,000, the Gaza Health Ministry said Wednesday, and hospitals said at least 21 people were killed while on their way to aid distribution sites.

The circumstances of the deaths reported near the sites were not immediately clear. The Israeli army said Wednesday it fired warning shots in central Gaza toward “suspects” that posed a threat to troops.

The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, which operates the aid distribution sites, said at least five of its local aid workers were killed in an attack that it blamed on Hamas as they headed to one of the centers.

The Gaza Health Ministry doesn’t distinguish between civilians and combatants, but has said that women and children make up more than half the 55,000 dead. Israel says it only targets militants and blames civilian deaths on Hamas, accusing the militants of hiding among civilians, because they operate in populated areas.

The ministry says 55,104 people have been killed since the start of the war and 127,394 wounded. Many more are believed to be buried under the rubble or in areas that are inaccessible to local medics. The figure did not include Wednesday’s deaths.

The Health Ministry is part of Gaza’s Hamas-run government, but staffed by medical professionals who maintain and publish detailed records. Its tolls from previous conflicts have largely aligned with those of independent experts, though Israel has questioned the ministry’s figures.

Also Wednesday, Israel said forces recovered the remains of two additional hostages held in Gaza. Militants still hold 53 captives, less than half of them believed to be alive.

**Casualties at separate aid hubs, health officials say**

Health officials in Gaza said 14 people were killed while on their way to collect aid near the southern city of Rafah. Their bodies were taken to Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis. In central Gaza, Al-Awda Hospital said that seven additional people were killed while on their way to an aid distribution site.

The Israeli military said troops fired warning shots before daylight toward people it identified as suspects “who were advancing while posing a threat” in central Gaza. The military had no immediate comment on the reports of casualties in southern Gaza.

Safaa Farmawi said her daughter, Ghazal Eyad, 16, was killed while on her way to collect food in Rafah.

“My daughter and I went to get aid, she came before me, I looked for my daughter but couldn’t find her. People told me your daughter was martyred,” Farmawi told the AP.

Near-daily shootings have erupted as crowds make their way to aid sites run by a newly created aid group rejected by the United Nations. Palestinian witnesses to previous shootings have said Israeli forces fired toward the crowds. The military has acknowledged firing warning shots toward people it says approached its forces in a suspicious manner.

The foundation says there has been no violence in or around the distribution points. It has warned people to stay on the designated routes and recently paused delivery to discuss safety measures with the military.

**Foundation says some of its aid workers have been killed**

The GHF accused Hamas of attacking a bus carrying two dozen of its Palestinian workers who helped deliver aid. It said in a statement that at least five people died, multiple others were injured and it fears some may have been taken hostage.

It said the attack happened as the team was heading to one of its aid distribution sites in the area west of Khan Younis.

“Our hearts are broken and our thoughts and prayers are with every victim, every family, and every person still unaccounted for,” the statement said.

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The AP could not confirm the foundation's account.

New aid system marred by chaos

The aid system rolled out last month has been marred by chaos and violence, while a longstanding U.N.-run system has struggled to deliver food because of Israeli restrictions and a breakdown of law and order, despite Israel loosening a total blockade it imposed from early March to mid-May.

Experts and human rights workers say hunger is widespread and that the territory of some 2 million Palestinians is at risk of famine if Israel does not fully lift its blockade and halt its military campaign, which it renewed in March after ending a ceasefire with Hamas.

Israel says the new aid distribution system is designed to prevent Hamas from siphoning off aid, but U.N. agencies and major aid groups say there is no evidence of systematic diversion.

They say the new system violates humanitarian principles by allowing Israel to control who receives aid and by encouraging more mass displacement as Palestinians seek access to just three operational sites, two of them in the territory's southernmost city of Rafah, now a mostly uninhabited military zone.

Israel recovers remains of 2 more hostages

Israeli authorities identified one of the hostages recovered as Yair Yaakov who was killed during the Oct. 7, 2023, attack and whose body was taken into Gaza. His partner and two children were also taken captive and released in a ceasefire deal early in the war.

The second hostage's identity was not disclosed.

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz said the bodies were retrieved in a "complex" operation without disclosing details. The Israeli military said they were recovered from Khan Younis.

The war began when Hamas-led militants killed around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, in the Oct. 7 attack and abducted 251 hostages. More than half the captives have been released in ceasefires or other deals. Israeli forces have rescued eight and recovered the remains of dozens more.

Hamas has said it will only release the remaining hostages in return for more Palestinian prisoners, a lasting ceasefire and a complete Israeli withdrawal. It has offered to hand over power to a politically independent Palestinian committee, but has not agreed to disarm.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has rejected those terms, saying that Israel will only agree to temporary ceasefires to facilitate the return of hostages. He has vowed to continue the war until all the hostages are returned and Hamas is defeated or disarmed and sent into exile.

Netanyahu says Israel will control Gaza indefinitely and facilitate what he refers to as the voluntary emigration of much of its population to other countries. The Palestinians and most of the international community reject such plans, viewing them as forcible expulsion that could violate international law.

## Dozens of LA-area mayors demand the Trump administration stop intensified immigration raids

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ and HALLIE GOLDEN Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Dozens of mayors from across the Los Angeles region banded together Wednesday to demand that the Trump administration stop the stepped-up immigration raids that have spread fear across their cities and sparked protests across the U.S.

But there were no signs President Donald Trump would heed their pleas.

About 500 of the National Guard troops deployed to the Los Angeles protests have been trained to accompany agents on immigration operations, the commander in charge said Wednesday. And while some troops have already gone on such missions, he said it's too early to say if that will continue even after the protests die down.

"We are expecting a ramp-up," said Maj. Gen. Scott Sherman, noting that protests across the nation were being discussed. "I'm focused right here in LA, what's going on right here. But you know, I think we're, we're very concerned."

Hours later, a demonstration in Los Angeles' civic center just before start of the second night of the city's



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downtown curfew briefly turned chaotic when police in riot gear — many on horseback — charged at a group, striking them with wooden rods and later fired crowd control projectiles, including one that struck a woman who writhed in pain on the ground. After the curfew went into effect, a handful of arrests were made before the area cleared out and the evening quieted down.

The LA-area mayors and city council members urged Trump to stop using armed military troops alongside immigration agents.

"I'm asking you, please listen to me, stop terrorizing our residents," said Brenda Olmos, vice mayor of Paramount, who said she was hit by rubber bullets over the weekend. "You need to stop these raids."

Speaking alongside the other mayors at a news conference, Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass said the raids spread fear at the behest of the White House. The city's nightly curfew will remain in effect as long as necessary. It covers a 1-square-mile (2.5-square-kilometer) section of downtown where the protests have been concentrated in the city that encompasses roughly 500 square miles (1,295 square kilometers).

"If there are raids that continue, if there are soldiers marching up and down our streets, I would imagine that the curfew will continue," Bass said.

Those who have been caught up in the nationwide raids include asylum seekers, people who overstayed their visas and migrants awaiting their day in immigration court.

The administration has cited the protests in its decision to deploy the military.

Governor asks court to step in

California's Democratic governor, Gavin Newsom, has asked a federal court to put an emergency stop to the military helping immigration agents in the nation's second-largest city. This week, guardsmen began standing protectively around agents as they carry out arrests. A judge set a hearing for Thursday.

The Trump administration called the lawsuit a "crass political stunt endangering American lives" in its official response on Wednesday.

The military is now closer to engaging in law enforcement actions such as deportations, as Trump has promised in his crackdown. The Guard has the authority to temporarily detain people who attack officers, but any arrests must be made by law enforcement.

The president posted on the Truth Social platform that the city "would be burning to the ground" if he had not sent in the military.

Some 2,000 National Guard soldiers are in Los Angeles and are soon to be joined by 2,000 more along with about 700 Marines, Sherman said.

Speaking in an interview with The Associated Press and ABC, Sherman initially said National Guard troops had already temporarily detained civilians in the Los Angeles protests over immigration raids. He later said he based his comments on photos and footage he had seen that turned out not to be a representation of Guard members in Los Angeles.

Curfew continues in downtownLA

Police detained more than 20 people, mostly on curfew violations, on the first night of the curfew and used crowd-control projectiles to break up hundreds of protesters. But officers were more aggressive in controlling demonstrators Wednesday evening and as the curfew took effect, police were beginning to make arrests.

Los Angeles police have made nearly 400 arrests and detentions since Saturday, the vast majority of which were for failing to leave the area at the request of law enforcement, according to the police department.

There have been a handful of more serious charges, including for assault against police officers and for possession of a Molotov cocktail and a gun. Nine police officers have been hurt, mostly with minor injuries. Some were transported to a hospital and released.

Protests have spread nationwide

Demonstrations have also spread to other cities nationwide, including Dallas and Austin in Texas, and Chicago and New York, where thousands rallied and more arrests were made.

In New York City, police said they took 86 people into custody during protests in lower Manhattan that lasted into Wednesday morning. Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said the majority of demonstrators were peaceful.

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A 66-year-old woman in Chicago was injured when she was struck by a car during downtown protests Tuesday evening, police said. Video showed a car speeding down a street where people were protesting.

In Texas, where police in Austin used chemical irritants to disperse several hundred demonstrators Monday, Republican Gov. Greg Abbott's office said Texas National Guard troops were "on standby" in areas where demonstrations are planned.

Guard members were sent to San Antonio, but Police Chief William McManus said he had not been told how many troops were deployed or their role ahead of planned protests Wednesday night and Saturday. Officers with the Texas Department of Public Safety said the Texas National Guard was present at a protest downtown.

The protests began Friday after federal immigration raids arrested dozens of workers in Los Angeles.

## Thunder find themselves in familiar territory in NBA Finals, trailing 2-1 in another series

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Game 1, a loss on the opposition's final shot. Game 2, an easy win. Game 3, another loss to fall behind in the series again.

This formula is not the one that would be considered optimal by the Oklahoma City Thunder, especially in the NBA Finals. But if there is some consolation for the overall No. 1 seed in these playoffs, it's this: the Thunder have been in this exact spot before and found a way to prevail.

That resiliency will be tested yet again, after the Indiana Pacers beat the Thunder 116-107 on Wednesday night to take a 2-1 series lead in these finals. Game 4 is in Indianapolis on Friday night.

"I thought it was an uncharacteristic night in a lot of ways for us," Thunder coach Mark Daigneault said. "We got to learn from it and then tap back into being who we are in Game 4. If we do that, I think we'll have a much better chance to win."

It was not very Thunder-like in Game 3. They blew a fourth quarter lead for the second time in the series, gave up 21 points off turnovers and let the Pacers' bench run wild — outscoring the OKC reserves 49-18.

"We'll watch it. It wasn't all bad," Daigneault said. "But we definitely have to play our style and impose our will for more of the 48 minutes if we want to come on the road and get a win."

There are uncanny similarities between the first three games of this series and the first three games of the Western Conference semifinal matchup between Oklahoma City and Denver.

— In Game 1 of the West semifinals, Aaron Gordon hit a 3-pointer with about 3 seconds left to give the Nuggets a win in Oklahoma City. In Game 1 of the NBA Finals, Tyrese Haliburton hit a jumper with 0.3 seconds left to give the Pacers a win in Oklahoma City.

— In Game 2 of the West semifinals, the Thunder evened things up with an easy win. In Game 2 of the NBA Finals, the Thunder evened things up with an easy win.

— In Game 3 of the West semifinals, Denver — at home for the first time in that series — played from behind most of the night before fighting into overtime and eventually getting a win for a 2-1 series lead. In Game 3 of the NBA Finals, Indiana — at home for the first time in the series — trailed for much of the first half before eventually getting a win for a 2-1 series lead.

The Thunder dug their way out of that hole against the Nuggets. And now, the same task awaits — with an NBA title at stake.

"I wouldn't say that now is the time for emotions, to be thinking about how you're feeling, emotional this, emotional that," Thunder forward Chet Holmgren said. "You kind of have to cut that out and look at the substance of what it is. We have a great opportunity here and the great thing is we have another game coming up, Game 4."

## Court hearing set on Trump's use of National Guard and Marines to help with immigration raids in LA

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A federal court hearing is scheduled for Thursday on whether the Trump administration can use the National Guard and Marines to assist with immigration raids in Los Angeles.

California Gov. Newsom has depicted the federal military intervention in the nation's second largest city as the onset of a much broader effort by Trump to overturn political and cultural norms at the heart of the nation's democracy. Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass has echoed that, saying the deployment of troops was unnecessary and meant to undermine local jurisdictions and intimidate the city's large immigrant population.

Newsom filed an emergency motion requesting the court's intervention after President Donald Trump ordered the deployment of roughly 4,000 National Guard members and 700 Marines to Los Angeles following protests over his stepped-up enforcement of immigration laws.

The Trump administration called the lawsuit a "crass political stunt endangering American lives" in its official response on Wednesday.

The Democratic governor argued the troops were originally deployed to protect federal buildings and said sending troops to help support immigration raids would only promote civil unrest.

The protests over immigration raids in Los Angeles intensified after Trump called up the National Guard and have since spread to other cities, including Boston, Chicago and Seattle.

Federal immigration agents have been arresting people at Home Depot parking lots and other businesses, sparking fear in immigrant communities, after the Trump administration said it wanted to dramatically increase arrests under its immigration crackdown.

Trump has described Los Angeles in dire terms that Bass and Newsom say are nowhere close to the truth.

Most demonstrations have been peaceful but this weekend some turned raucous with protesters setting cars on fire in downtown Los Angeles. The city has imposed a nightly curfew covering a 1-square-mile (2.5-square-kilometer) section where protests have occurred in the sprawling metropolis of 4 million people.

The Marines have not yet been spotted in Los Angeles and Guard troops have had limited engagement with protesters.

Newsom filed the motion Tuesday, the same day the military announced some members of the National Guard were now standing in protection around federal agents. The change moves troops closer to engaging in law enforcement actions like deportations as Trump has promised as part of his administration's immigration crackdown. The Guard has the authority to temporarily detain people who attack officers but any arrests ultimately would be made by law enforcement.

Senior U.S. District Judge Charles R. Breyer chose not to rule immediately but set the hearing for Thursday in federal court in San Francisco.

Dozens of mayors from across the Los Angeles region banded together Wednesday to demand the raids stop and the troops leave.

## Austria falls silent for a minute as questions remain about the motive for a deadly school shooting

By PHILIPP JENNE Associated Press

GRAZ, Austria (AP) — Austria fell silent for a minute on Wednesday and people laid candles in the city of Graz in memory of the 10 people killed in a school shooting that shocked the country.

Investigators said they found a farewell letter and video, a non-functional pipe bomb and abandoned plans for a bombing in a search of the assailant's home near Graz. But they said they don't yet know what his motive was.

Nine students were killed — six girls and three boys aged between 14 and 17, one of whom had Polish citizenship — as well as a teacher, police said. Another 11 people were wounded. The attacker took his own life.

Austria has declared three days of national mourning following what appears to be the deadliest attack

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in its post-World War II history. At 10 a.m. on Wednesday, marking the moment a day earlier when police were alerted to shots at the BORG Dreierschützengasse high school, the country stopped for a minute of silence.

Hundreds of people lined the central square in Graz, Austria's second-biggest city. Some laid more candles and flowers in front of the city hall, adding to a growing memorial to the victims. The first candles were laid on Tuesday evening as a crowd gathered on the square, some people hugging each other as they tried to come to terms with the tragedy. Hundreds of people joined Austrian officials at a service Tuesday evening in the Graz cathedral.

Among those on the square Wednesday was Chiara Komlenic, a 28-year-old art history student who finished her exams at the school there.

"I always felt very protected there. The teachers were also very supportive," she said. "I made lifelong friendships there. It just hurts to see that young girls and boys will never come back, that they experienced the worst day of their lives where I had the best time of my life. I still know a few teachers, it just hurts a lot."

In the capital, Vienna, the local transport authority had trams, subway trains and buses stop for a minute.

The 21-year-old Austrian man lived near Graz and was a former student at the school who hadn't completed his studies. Police have said that he used two weapons, a shotgun and a pistol, which he owned legally.

Police said the attacker lived with his mother near Graz and investigators found the two farewell messages, a pipe bomb that wouldn't have worked and abandoned plans for a bombing when they searched his apartment. They didn't elaborate on those findings in a post on social network X Wednesday, other than to say they haven't yet been able to draw conclusions.

"A farewell letter in analog and digital form was found," Franz Ruf, the public security director at Austria's Interior Ministry, told ORF public television Tuesday night. "He says goodbye to his parents. But no motive can be inferred from the farewell letter, and that is a matter for further investigations."

Asked whether the assailant had attacked victims randomly or targeted them specifically, Ruf said that is also under investigation and he didn't want to speculate.

He said that wounded people were found on various levels of the school and, in one case, in front of the building.

By Wednesday morning, the authority that runs hospitals in Graz said that all patients were in stable condition. Nine were still in intensive care units, with one needing a further operation on a facial wound and a second on a knee injury, while another two had been moved to regular wards.

Police said none of their lives were in danger and that the wounded people were aged between 15 and 26. Two are Romanian nationals and one is an Iranian citizen.

"Graz is the second-largest city in Austria, but we still say that Graz is a village," said Fabian Enzi, a university student among those on the main square of the city of about 300,000 people Wednesday.

"Every time you are out you meet people you know. There is a high chance that with such an attack you know people which are affected," the 22-year-old said. "There are a lot of desperate faces."

## Russian attacks kill 3 and wound 64 as drones hit Kharkiv and other parts of Ukraine

By ILLIA NOVIKOV Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian forces launched a new drone assault across Ukraine overnight on Wednesday, killing three people and wounding 64 others, Ukrainian officials said.

One of the hardest-hit areas was the city of Kharkiv in northeastern Ukraine, where 17 attack drones struck two residential districts, Mayor Ihor Terekhov said. Emergency crews, municipal workers and volunteers worked through the night to extinguish fires, rescue residents from burning homes, and restore gas, electricity and water services.



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"Those are ordinary sites of peaceful life — those that should never be targeted," Terekhov wrote on Telegram.

Three people were confirmed killed, according to Kharkiv regional head Oleh Syniehubov. In a statement, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that 64 people had been wounded and reiterated his calls for greater international pressure on Moscow.

"Every new day now brings new vile Russian attacks, and almost every strike is telling," he said. "We must not be afraid or postpone new decisions that could make things more difficult for Russia. Without this, they will not engage in genuine diplomacy. And this depends primarily on the United States and other world leaders. Everyone who has called for an end to the killings and for diplomacy must act."

Moscow's forces have launched waves of drones and missiles in recent days, with a record bombardment of almost 500 drones on Monday and a wave of 315 drones and seven missiles overnight on Tuesday.

The attacks come despite discussions of a potential ceasefire in the war. The two sides traded memorandums at direct peace talks in Istanbul on June 2 that set out conditions. However, the inclusion of clauses that both sides see as nonstarters make any quick deal unlikely.

## Zelenskyy urges more sanctions

Speaking at a meeting of leaders of countries of southeast Europe in Odesa, Zelenskyy urged the European Union to toughen its latest package of sanctions now being prepared.

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said Tuesday that the bloc is proposing to lower a cap on the price of Russian oil from \$60 to \$45, which is lower than the market price, to deprive the Kremlin of extra profits to fund its war in Ukraine.

Zelenskyy prodded the EU to lower the cap further, arguing that "real peace comes with a \$30 cap — that's the level that will truly change thinking in Moscow."

"You can all see — Putin does not want to end this war," he told his audience. "He believes that as long as he can fight and dominate his neighbors, he stays politically alive."

"But no matter what he believes, our job is to force Russia into a position where they must seek peace and political survival by non-military means. This is absolutely possible."

## Widespread destruction

Kharkiv has been frequently targeted in recent months as Russia launched repeated large-scale drone and missile attacks on civilian infrastructure.

Wednesday's strikes also caused widespread destruction in Kharkiv's Slobidskyi and Osnovianskyi districts, hitting apartment buildings, private homes, playgrounds, industrial sites and public transportation. Images from the scene published by Ukraine's Emergency Service on Telegram showed burning apartments, shattered windows and firefighters battling the blaze.

"We stand strong. We help one another. And we will endure," Terekhov said. "Kharkiv is Ukraine. And it cannot be broken."

Ukraine's air force said that 85 attack and decoy drones were fired over the country overnight. Air defense systems intercepted 40 of the drones, while nine more failed to reach their targets without causing damage.

## 'Repatriation of the deceased'

In other developments, Russia has returned 1,212 bodies of Ukrainian soldiers in line with an agreement reached during the talks in Istanbul between Russian and Ukrainian delegations.

Ukraine's Coordination Headquarters for Treatment of Prisoners of War said that the bodies came from Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson regions, as well as Russia's Kursk region where Ukrainian forces waged an incursion. It said that authorities would work to determine their identities as quickly as possible.

Russia has received the bodies of 27 fallen soldiers as part of an exchange with Ukraine, said Vladimir Medinsky, who led Russia's delegation at the Istanbul talks.

International Committee of the Red Cross spokesperson Pat Griffiths said the ICRC was involved in the repatriation of remains as neutral observers, providing technical advice and monitoring the process.

"The repatriation of the deceased is an important step that can be taken by authorities to maintaining the dignity of the dead," Griffiths said. "It can provide answers to their families and give closure to people

who have lived with endless uncertainty as they waited for news of their loved ones.”

## Los Angeles-area mayors demand that Trump administration stop stepped-up immigration raids

By CHRISTOPHER WEBER, AMY TAXIN, JAKE OFFENHARTZ and JOHN SEEWER Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Dozens of mayors from across the Los Angeles region banded together Wednesday to demand that the Trump administration stop the stepped-up immigration raids that have spread fear across their cities and sparked protests across the U.S.

But there were no signs President Donald Trump would heed their pleas.

About 500 of the National Guard troops deployed to the Los Angeles protests have been trained to accompany agents on immigration operations, the commander in charge said Wednesday. And while some troops have already gone on such missions, he said it's too early to say if that will continue even after the protests die down.

“We are expecting a ramp-up,” said Maj. Gen. Scott Sherman, noting that protests across the nation were being discussed. “I’m focused right here in LA, what’s going on right here. But you know, I think we’re, we’re very concerned.”

Hours later, a demonstration in Los Angeles’ civic center just before the second night of the city’s downtown curfew was set to start, suddenly turned chaotic, as police in riot gear — many on horseback — charged at a group, striking them with wooden rods and pushing them out of a park in front of City Hall. Officers also fired crowd control projectiles, striking at least one young woman, who writhed in pain on the ground as she bled from her hip.

It wasn’t clear what initiated the confrontation. Minutes earlier, some protesters had lit fireworks as they approached the federal building, the site of numerous showdowns in recent nights. Simultaneously, a larger portion of the protest were in the middle of a dance party.

“It was chill the whole time, it was cool vibes, peaceful protesting,” Raymond Martinez said. “Once we got by the federal building the horses started coming.”

The LA-area mayors and city council members urged Trump to stop using armed military troops alongside immigration agents.

“I’m asking you, please listen to me, stop terrorizing our residents,” said Brenda Olmos, vice mayor of Paramount, who said she was hit by rubber bullets over the weekend. “You need to stop these raids.”

Speaking alongside the other mayors at a news conference, Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass said the raids spread fear at the behest of the White House. The city’s nightly curfew will remain in effect as long as necessary. It covers a 1-square-mile (2.5-square-kilometer) section of downtown where the protests have been concentrated in the city that encompasses roughly 500 square miles (1,295 square kilometers).

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Those who have been caught up in the nationwide raids include asylum seekers, people who overstayed their visas and migrants awaiting their day in immigration court.

The administration has cited the protests in its decision to deploy the military.

California’s Democratic governor, Gavin Newsom, has asked a federal court to put an emergency stop to the military helping immigration agents in the nation’s second-largest city. This week, guardsmen began standing protectively around agents as they carry out arrests. A judge set a hearing for Thursday.

The Trump administration called the lawsuit a “crass political stunt endangering American lives” in its official response on Wednesday.

The military is now closer to engaging in law enforcement actions such as deportations, as Trump has promised in his crackdown. The Guard has the authority to temporarily detain people who attack officers, but any arrests must be made by law enforcement.

The president posted on the Truth Social platform that the city “would be burning to the ground” if he

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had not sent in the military.

Some 2,000 National Guard soldiers are in Los Angeles and are soon to be joined by 2,000 more along with about 700 Marines, Sherman said.

Speaking in an interview with The Associated Press and ABC, Sherman initially said National Guard troops had already temporarily detained civilians in the Los Angeles protests over immigration raids. He later said he based his comments on photos and footage he had seen that turned out not to be a representation of Guard members in Los Angeles.

LA curfew will continue in downtown

Police detained more than 20 people, mostly on curfew violations, on the first night of the curfew and used crowd-control projectiles to break up hundreds of protesters. But officers were more aggressive in controlling demonstrators Wednesday evening and as the curfew took effect, police were beginning to make arrests.

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Protests have spread nationwide

Demonstrations have also spread to other cities nationwide, including Dallas and Austin in Texas, and Chicago and New York, where thousands rallied and more arrests were made.

In New York City, police said they took 86 people into custody during protests in lower Manhattan that lasted into Wednesday morning. Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said the majority of demonstrators were peaceful.

A 66-year-old woman in Chicago was injured when she was struck by a car during downtown protests Tuesday evening, police said. Video showed a car speeding down a street where people were protesting.

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Guard members were sent to San Antonio, but Police Chief William McManus said he had not been told how many troops were deployed or their role ahead of planned protests Wednesday night and Saturday. Officers with the Texas Department of Public Safety said the Texas National Guard was present at a protest downtown.

The protests began Friday after federal immigration raids arrested dozens of workers in Los Angeles.

## **Brian Wilson, Beach Boys visionary leader and summer's poet laureate, dies at 82**

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

Brian Wilson, the Beach Boys' visionary and fragile leader whose genius for melody, arrangements and wide-eyed self-expression inspired "Good Vibrations," "California Girls" and other summertime anthems and made him one of the world's most influential recording artists, has died at 82.

Wilson's family posted news of his death to his website and social media accounts Wednesday. Further details weren't immediately available. Since May 2024, Wilson had been under a court conservatorship to oversee his personal and medical affairs, with Wilson's longtime representatives, publicist Jean Sievers and manager LeeAnn Hard, in charge.

The eldest and last surviving of three musical brothers — Brian played bass, Carl lead guitar and Dennis drums — he and his fellow Beach Boys rose in the 1960s from local California band to national hitmakers to international ambassadors of surf and sun. Wilson himself was celebrated for his gifts and pitied for his demons. He was one of rock's great Romantics, a tormented man who in his peak years embarked on an ever-steeper path to aural perfection, the one true sound.

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The Beach Boys rank among the most popular groups of the rock era, with more than 30 singles in the Top 40 and worldwide sales of more than 100 million. The 1966 album "Pet Sounds" was voted No. 2 in a 2003 Rolling Stone list of the best 500 albums, losing out, as Wilson had done before, to the Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." The Beach Boys, who also featured Wilson cousin Mike Love and childhood friend Al Jardine, were voted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1988.

Wilson feuded with Love over songwriting credits, but peers otherwise adored him beyond envy, from Elton John and Bruce Springsteen to Katy Perry and Carole King. The Who's drummer, Keith Moon, fantasized about joining the Beach Boys. Paul McCartney cited "Pet Sounds" as a direct inspiration on the Beatles and the ballad "God Only Knows" as among his favorite songs, often bringing him to tears.

Wilson moved and fascinated fans and musicians long after he stopped having hits. In his later years, Wilson and a devoted entourage of younger musicians performed "Pet Sounds" and his restored opus, "Smile," before worshipful crowds in concert halls. Meanwhile, The Go-Go's, Lindsey Buckingham, Animal Collective and Janelle Monáe were among a wide range of artists who emulated him, whether as a master of crafting pop music or as a pioneer of pulling it apart.

An endless summer

The Beach Boys' music was like an ongoing party, with Wilson as host and wallflower. He was a tall, shy man, partially deaf (allegedly because of beatings by his father, Murry Wilson), with a sweet, crooked grin, and he rarely touched a surfboard unless a photographer was around. But out of the lifestyle that he observed and such musical influences as Chuck Berry and the Four Freshmen, he conjured a golden soundscape — sweet melodies, shining harmonies, vignettes of beaches, cars and girls — that resonated across time and climates.

Decades after its first release, a Beach Boys song can still conjure instant summer — the wake-up guitar riff that opens "Surfin' USA"; the melting vocals of "Don't Worry Baby"; the chants of "fun, fun, fun" or "good, good, GOOD, good vibrations"; the behind-the-wheel chorus "Round, 'round, get around, I get around." Beach Boys songs have endured from turntables and transistor radios to boom boxes and iPhones, or any device that could lie on a beach towel or be placed upright in the sand.

The band's innocent appeal survived the group's increasingly troubled backstory, whether Brian's many personal trials, the feuds and lawsuits among band members or the alcoholism of Dennis Wilson, who drowned in 1983. Brian Wilson's ambition raised the Beach Boys beyond the pleasures of their early hits and into a world transcendent, eccentric and destructive. They seemed to live out every fantasy, and many nightmares, of the California myth they helped create.

From the suburbs to the national stage

Brian Wilson was born June 20, 1942, two days after McCartney. His musical gifts were soon obvious, and as a boy he was playing piano and teaching his brothers to sing harmony. The Beach Boys started as a neighborhood act, rehearsing in Brian's bedroom and in the garage of their house in suburban Hawthorne, California. Surf music, mostly instrumental in its early years, was catching on locally: Dennis Wilson, the group's only real surfer, suggested they cash in. Brian and Love hastily wrote up their first single, "Surfin,'" a minor hit released in 1961.

They wanted to call themselves the Pendletones, in honor of a popular flannel shirt they wore in early publicity photos. But when they first saw the pressings for "Surfin,'" they discovered the record label had tagged them "The Beach Boys." Other decisions were handled by their father, a musician of some frustration who hired himself as manager and holy terror. By mid-decade, Murry Wilson had been displaced and Brian, who had been running the band's recording sessions almost from the start, was in charge, making the Beach Boys the rare group of the time to work without an outside producer.

Their breakthrough came in early 1963 with "Surfin' USA," so closely modeled on Berry's "Sweet Little Sixteen" that Berry successfully sued to get a songwriting credit. It was their first Top 10 hit and a boast to the nation: "If everybody had an ocean / across the USA / then everybody'd be surfin,' / like Cali-for-nye-ay." From 1963-66, they were rarely off the charts, hitting No. 1 with "I Get Around" and "Help Me, Rhonda" and narrowly missing with "California Girls" and "Fun, Fun, Fun." For television appearances, they



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wore candy-striped shirts and grinned as they mimed their latest hit, with a hot rod or surfboard nearby. Their music echoed private differences. Wilson often contrasted his own bright falsetto with Love's nasal, deadpan tenor. The extroverted Love was out front on the fast songs, but when it was time for a slow one, Brian took over. "The Warmth of the Sun" was a song of despair and consolation that Wilson alleged — to some skepticism — he wrote the morning after President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. "Don't Worry Baby," a ballad equally intoxicating and heartbreaking, was a leading man's confession of doubt and dependence, an early sign of Brian's crippling anxieties.

Stress and exhaustion led to a breakdown in 1964 and his retirement from touring, his place soon filled by Bruce Johnston, who remained with the group for decades. Wilson was an admirer of Phil Spector's "Wall of Sound" productions and emulated him on Beach Boys tracks, adding sleigh bells to "Dance, Dance, Dance" or arranging a mini-theme park of guitar, horns, percussion and organ as the overture to "California Girls."

By the mid-1960s, the Beach Boys were being held up as the country's answer to the Beatles, a friendly game embraced by each group, transporting pop music to the level of "art" and leaving Wilson a broken man.

## The Beach Boys vs. The Beatles

The Beatles opened with "Rubber Soul," released in late 1965 and their first studio album made without the distractions of movies or touring. It was immediately praised as a major advance, the lyrics far more personal and the music far more subtle and sophisticated than such earlier hits as "She Loves You" and "A Hard Day's Night." Wilson would recall getting high and listening to the record for the first time, promising himself he would not only keep up with the British band, but top them.

Wilson worked for months on what became "Pet Sounds," and months on the single "Good Vibrations." He hired an outside lyricist, Tony Asher, and used various studios, with dozens of musicians and instruments ranging from violins to bongos to the harpsichord. The air seemed to cool on some tracks and the mood turn reflective, autumnal. From "I Know There's an Answer" to "You Still Believe in Me," many of the songs were ballads, reveries, brushstrokes of melody, culminating in the sonic wonders of "Good Vibrations," a psychedelic montage that at times sounded as if recorded in outer space.

The results were momentous, yet disappointing. "Good Vibrations" was the group's first million-seller and "Pet Sounds," which included the hits "Sloop John B" and "Wouldn't It Be Nice," awed McCartney, John Lennon and Eric Clapton among others. Widely regarded as a new kind of rock LP, it was more suited to headphones than to the radio, a "concept" album in which individual songs built to a unified experience, so elaborately crafted in the studio that "Pet Sounds" couldn't be replicated live with the technology of the time. Wilson was likened not just to the Beatles, but to Mozart and George Gershwin, whose "Rhapsody in Blue" had inspired him since childhood.

But the album didn't chart as highly as previous Beach Boys releases and was treated indifferently by the U.S. record label, Capitol. The Beatles, meanwhile, were absorbing lessons from the Beach Boys and teaching some in return. "Revolver" and "Sgt. Pepper," the Beatles' next two albums, drew upon the Beach Boys' vocal tapestries and melodic bass lines and even upon the animal sounds from the title track of "Pet Sounds." The Beatles' epic "A Day in the Life" reconfirmed the British band as kings of the pop world and "Sgt. Pepper" as the album to beat.

All eyes turned to Wilson and his intended masterpiece — a "teenage symphony to God" he called "Smile." It was a whimsical cycle of songs on nature and American folklore written with lyricist Van Dyke Parks. The production bordered on method acting; for a song about fire, Wilson wore a fire helmet in the studio. The other Beach Boys were confused, and strained to work with him. A shaken Wilson delayed "Smile," then canceled it.

Remnants, including the songs "Heroes and Villains" and "Wind Chimes" were re-recorded and issued in September 1967 on "Smiley Smile," dismissed by Carl Wilson as a "bunt instead of a grand slam." The stripped down "Wild Honey," released three months later, became a critical favorite but didn't restore the band's reputation. The Beach Boys soon descended into an oldies act, out of touch with the radical '60s,

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and Wilson withdrew into seclusion.

Years of struggle, and late life validation

Addicted to drugs and psychologically helpless, sometimes idling in a sandbox he had built in his living room, Wilson didn't fully produce another Beach Boys record for years. Their biggest hit of the 1970s was a greatest hits album, "Endless Summer," that also helped reestablish them as popular concert performers.

Although well enough in the 21st century to miraculously finish "Smile" and tour and record again, Wilson had been diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder and baffled interviewers with brief and disjointed answers. Among the stranger episodes of Wilson's life was his relationship with Dr. Eugene Landy, a psychotherapist accused of holding a Svengali-like power over him. A 1991 lawsuit from Wilson's family blocked Landy from Wilson's personal and business affairs.

His first marriage, to singer Marilyn Rovell, ended in divorce and he became estranged from daughters Carnie and Wendy, who would help form the pop trio Wilson Phillips. His life stabilized in 1995 with his marriage to Melinda Ledbetter, who gave birth to two more daughters, Daria and Delanie. He also reconciled with Carnie and Wendy and they sang together on the 1997 album "The Wilsons." (Melinda Ledbetter died in 2024.)

In 1992, Brian Wilson eventually won a \$10 million out-of-court settlement for lost songwriting royalties. But that victory and his 1991 autobiography, "Wouldn't It Be Nice: My Own Story," set off other lawsuits that tore apart the musical family.

Carl Wilson and other relatives believed the book was essentially Landy's version of Brian's life and questioned whether Brian had even read it. Their mother, Audree Wilson, unsuccessfully sued publisher HarperCollins because the book said she passively watched as her husband beat Brian as a child. Love successfully sued Brian Wilson, saying he was unfairly deprived of royalties after contributing lyrics to dozens of songs. He would eventually gain ownership of the band's name.

The Beach Boys still released an occasional hit single: "Kokomo," made without Wilson, hit No. 1 in 1988. Wilson, meanwhile, released such solo albums as "Brian Wilson" and "Gettin' In Over My Head," with cameos by McCartney and Clapton among others. He also completed a pair of albums for the Walt Disney label — a collection of Gershwin songs and music from Disney movies. In 2012, surviving members of the Beach Boys reunited for a 50th anniversary album, which quickly hit the Top 10 before the group again bickered and separated.

Wilson won just two competitive Grammys, for the solo instrumental "Mrs. O'Leary's Cow" and for "The Smile Sessions" box set. Otherwise, his honors ranged from a Grammy lifetime achievement prize to a tribute at the Kennedy Center to induction into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. In 2018, he returned to his old high school in Hawthorne and witnessed the literal rewriting of his past: The principal erased an "F" he had been given in music and awarded him an "A."

## At least 49 people have died in flooding in South Africa with toll expected to rise, officials say

By MICHELLE GUMEDE and GERALD IMRAY Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — At least 49 people were confirmed dead Wednesday as floods devastated one of South Africa's poorest provinces, and officials said the toll was expected to rise as more bodies are recovered in the search for missing people.

The floods hit the largely rural Eastern Cape province in the southeast of the country early Tuesday after an especially strong weather front brought heavy rains, gale force winds and also snow in some parts.

"As we speak here, other bodies are being discovered," Eastern Cape Premier Oscar Mabuyane told reporters at a briefing, adding that it was one of the worst weather-related disasters his province had experienced. "I have never seen something like this," he said.

The death toll included six high school students who were washed away when their school bus was caught in floodwaters on Tuesday near a river close to the town of Mthatha, which was especially hard hit and at the center of the worst flooding. Four other students were among the missing, Mabuyane said.

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Authorities found the school bus earlier Wednesday, but it was empty. Three of the students were rescued on Tuesday when they were found clinging to trees and crying out for help, the provincial government said.

A driver and another adult who were on the bus with the schoolchildren were among the dead.

Search and rescue operations would continue for a third day on Thursday, authorities said, though they didn't give details on how many people might still be missing. They said they were working with families to find out who was still unaccounted for.

Disaster response teams have been activated in Eastern Cape province and the neighboring KwaZulu-Natal province after the torrential rain and snow hit parts of southern and eastern South Africa over the weekend. Mabuyane said there had also been reports of mudslides.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said the National Disaster Management Center was also working with local authorities in the Eastern Cape, the province that took the brunt of the extreme cold front that weather forecasters had warned was on its way last week. There were unusually large snowfalls in parts of Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State province in South Africa's interior.

Ramaphosa offered his condolences to the affected families in the Eastern Cape in a statement from his office and described the situation as "devastation."

Power outages have affected hundreds of thousands of homes in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

Eastern Cape provincial government officials said hundreds of families were left homeless and in temporary shelters in that province after their houses were washed away or broken apart, while at least 58 schools and 20 hospitals were damaged by the floods, which mostly affected Mthatha and the surrounding district.

Other houses were left submerged under water. Cars and debris that were carried away by the floods were left strewn in piles as the rain stopped and the water began to subside.

South Africa is vulnerable to strong weather fronts that blow in from the Indian and Southern Oceans. In 2022, more than 400 people died in flooding caused by prolonged heavy rains in the east coast city of Durban and surrounding areas.

Poor areas with informal housing are often the worst affected and where the majority of fatalities occur.

## US reduces the presence of staffers not deemed essential in the Middle East as tensions rise

By MATTHEW LEE, TARA COPP and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States is drawing down the presence of staffers who are not deemed essential to operations in the Middle East and their loved ones due to the potential for regional unrest, the State Department and military said Wednesday.

The State Department said it has ordered the departure of all nonessential personnel from the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad based on its latest review and a commitment "to keeping Americans safe, both at home and abroad." The embassy already had been on limited staffing, and the order will not affect a large number of personnel.

The department, however, also is authorizing the departure of nonessential personnel and family members from Bahrain and Kuwait. That gives them the option of leaving those countries at government expense and with government assistance.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth "has authorized the voluntary departure of military dependents from locations" across the region, U.S. Central Command said in a statement. The command "is monitoring the developing tension in the Middle East."

Speaking at the Kennedy Center in Washington on Wednesday evening, President Donald Trump said, "They are being moved out, because it could be a dangerous place, and we'll see what happens. We've given notice to move out, and we'll see what happens."

Tensions in the region have been rising in recent days as talks between the U.S. and Iran over its rapidly advancing nuclear program appear to have hit an impasse. The talks seek to limit Iran's nuclear program in exchange for the lifting of some of the crushing economic sanctions that the U.S. has imposed on the Islamic Republic. Iran insists its nuclear program is peaceful.

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The next round of talks — the sixth — had been tentatively scheduled for this weekend in Oman, according to two U.S. officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss diplomatic matters. However, those officials said Wednesday that it looked increasingly unlikely that the talks would happen.

Trump, who has previously said Israel or the U.S. could carry out airstrikes targeting Iranian nuclear facilities if negotiations failed, gave a less-than-optimistic view about reaching a deal with Iran, telling the New York Post's "Pod Force One" podcast that he was "getting more and more less confident about" a deal.

"They seem to be delaying, and I think that's a shame. I'm less confident now than I would have been a couple of months ago. Something happened to them," he said in the interview recorded Monday and released Wednesday.

Iran's mission to the U.N. posted on social media that "threats of overwhelming force won't change the facts."

"Iran is not seeking a nuclear weapon, and U.S. militarism only fuels instability," the Iranian mission wrote.

Iranian Defense Minister Gen. Aziz Nasirzadeh separately told journalists Wednesday that he hoped talks with the U.S. would yield results, though Tehran stood ready to respond.

"If conflict is imposed on us, the opponent's casualties will certainly be more than ours, and in that case, America must leave the region, because all its bases are within our reach," he said. "We have access to them, and we will target all of them in the host countries without hesitation."

Meanwhile, the Board of Governors at the International Atomic Energy Agency was potentially set to vote on a measure to censure Iran. That could set in motion an effort to snap back United Nations sanctions on Iran via a measure in Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers that's still active until October. Trump withdrew from that agreement in his first term.

Earlier Wednesday, a statement from the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations center, a Mideast-based effort overseen by the British navy, issued a warning to ships in the region that it "has been made aware of increased tensions within the region which could lead to an escalation of military activity having a direct impact on mariners."

It urged caution in the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman and the Strait of Hormuz. It did not name Iran, though those waterways have seen Iranian ship seizures and attacks in the past.

The top U.S. military officer for the Middle East, Gen. Erik Kurilla, was scheduled to testify before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday, but that testimony has now been postponed, according to the committee's website. The Pentagon has not commented on the postponement.

Meanwhile, Iraq's state-run Iraqi News Agency said in a statement attributed to an unnamed government official that the evacuation of some nonessential employees from the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad was part of "procedures related to the U.S. diplomatic presence in a number of Middle Eastern countries, not just Iraq" and that Iraqi officials "have not recorded any security indicators that warrant an evacuation."

"We reiterate that all security indicators and briefings support the escalating assessments of stability and the restoration of internal security," the statement said.

## **Kennedy's new CDC panel includes members who have criticized vaccines and spread misinformation**

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. on Wednesday named eight new vaccine policy advisers to replace the panel that he abruptly dismissed earlier this week.

They include a scientist who researched mRNA vaccine technology and became a conservative darling for his criticisms of COVID-19 vaccines, a leading critic of pandemic-era lockdowns, and a professor of operations management.

Kennedy's decision to "retire" the previous 17-member Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices was widely decried by doctors' groups and public health organizations, who feared the advisers would be replaced by a group aligned with Kennedy's desire to reassess — and possibly end — longstanding vaccination recommendations.



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On Tuesday, before he announced his picks, Kennedy said: "We're going to bring great people onto the ACIP panel – not anti-vaxxers – bringing people on who are credentialed scientists."

The new appointees include Vicky Pebsworth, a regional director for the National Association of Catholic Nurses, who has been listed as a board member and volunteer director for the National Vaccine Information Center, a group that is widely considered to be a leading source of vaccine misinformation.

Another is Dr. Robert Malone, the former mRNA researcher who emerged as a close adviser to Kennedy during the measles outbreak. Malone, who runs a wellness institute and a popular blog, rose to prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic as he relayed conspiracy theories around the outbreak and the vaccines that followed. He has appeared on podcasts and other conservative news outlets where he's promoted unproven and alternative treatments for measles and COVID-19.

He has claimed that millions of Americans were hypnotized into taking the COVID-19 shots and has suggested that those vaccines cause a form of AIDS. He's downplayed deaths related to one of the largest measles outbreaks in the U.S. in years.

Other appointees include Dr. Martin Kulldorff, a biostatistician and epidemiologist who was a co-author of the Great Barrington Declaration, an October 2020 letter maintaining that pandemic shutdowns were causing irreparable harm. Dr. Cody Meissner, a former ACIP member, also was named.

Abram Wagner of the University of Michigan's school of public health, who investigates vaccination programs, said he's not satisfied with the composition of the committee.

"The previous ACIP was made up of technical experts who have spent their lives studying vaccines," he said. Most people on the current list "don't have the technical capacity that we would expect out of people who would have to make really complicated decisions involving interpreting complicated scientific data."

He said having Pebsworth on the board is "incredibly problematic" since she is involved in an organization that "distributes a lot of misinformation."

Kennedy made the announcement in a social media post on Wednesday.

The committee, created in 1964, makes recommendations to the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC directors almost always approve those recommendations on how vaccines that have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration should be used. The CDC's final recommendations are widely heeded by doctors and guide vaccination programs.

The other appointees are:

—Dr. James Hibbeln, who formerly headed a National Institutes of Health group focused on nutritional neurosciences and who studies how nutrition affects the brain, including the potential benefits of seafood consumption during pregnancy.

—Retsef Levi, a professor of operations management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who studies business issues related to supply chain, logistics, pricing optimization and health and health care management. In a 2023 video pinned to an X profile under his name, Levi called for the end of the COVID-19 vaccination program, claiming the vaccines were ineffective and dangerous despite evidence they saved millions of lives.

—Dr. James Pagano, an emergency medicine physician from Los Angeles.

—Dr. Michael Ross, a Virginia-based obstetrician and gynecologist.

Of the eight named by Kennedy, perhaps the most experienced in vaccine policy is Meissner, an expert in pediatric infectious diseases at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, who has previously served as a member of both ACIP and the Food and Drug Administration's vaccine advisory panel.

During his five-year term as an FDA adviser, the committee was repeatedly asked to review and vote on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines that were rapidly developed to fight the pandemic. In September 2021, he joined the majority of panelists who voted against a plan from the Biden administration to offer an extra vaccine dose to all American adults. The panel instead recommended that the extra shot should be limited to seniors and those at higher risk of the disease.

Ultimately, the FDA disregarded the panel's recommendation and OK'd an extra vaccine dose for all adults.

In addition to serving on government panels, Meissner has helped author policy statements and vaccination schedules for the American Academy of Pediatrics.

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ACIP members typically serve in staggered four-year terms, although several appointments were delayed during the Biden administration before positions were filled last year. The voting members all have scientific or clinical expertise in immunization, except for one "consumer representative" who can bring perspective on community and social facets of vaccine programs.

Kennedy, a leading voice in the anti-vaccine movement before becoming the U.S. government's top health official, has accused the committee of being too closely aligned with vaccine manufacturers and of rubber-stamping vaccines. ACIP policies require members to state past collaborations with vaccine companies and to recuse themselves from votes in which they had a conflict of interest, but Kennedy has dismissed those safeguards as weak.

Most of the people who best understand vaccines are those who have researched them, which usually requires some degree of collaboration with the companies that develop and sell them, said Jason Schwartz, a Yale University health policy researcher.

"If you are to exclude any reputable, respected vaccine expert who has ever engaged even in a limited way with the vaccine industry, you're likely to have a very small pool of folks to draw from," Schwartz said.

The U.S. Senate confirmed Kennedy in February after he promised he would not change the vaccination schedule. But less than a week later, he vowed to investigate childhood vaccines that prevent measles, polio and other dangerous diseases.

Kennedy has ignored some of the recommendations ACIP voted for in April, including the endorsement of a new combination shot that protects against five strains of meningococcal bacteria and the expansion of vaccinations against RSV.

In late May, Kennedy disregarded the committee and announced the government would change the recommendation for children and pregnant women to get COVID-19 shots.

On Monday, Kennedy ousted all 17 members of the ACIP, saying he would appoint a new group before the next scheduled meeting in late June. The agenda for that meeting has not yet been posted, but a recent federal notice said votes are expected on vaccinations against flu, COVID-19, HPV, RSV and meningococcal bacteria.

A HHS spokesman did not respond to a question about whether there would be only eight ACIP members, or whether more will be named later.

## Wall Street's rally stalls as US stocks dip for their 1st loss in 4 days

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Wall Street's rally stalled on Wednesday after U.S. stocks climbed back within 2% of their all-time high.

The S&P 500 fell 0.3% for its first loss in four days. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was virtually unchanged after edging down by 1 point, and the Nasdaq composite slipped 0.5%.

Several Big Tech stocks led the way lower, and a 1.9% drop for Apple was the heaviest weight on the market. It's been listless this week after unveiling several modest upcoming changes to the software that runs its devices.

The action was stronger in the bond market, where Treasury yields eased after a report suggested President Donald Trump's tariffs are not pushing inflation much higher, at least not yet.

U.S. consumers had to pay prices for food, gasoline and other costs of living that were 2.4% higher overall in May than a year earlier. That was up from April's 2.3% inflation rate, but it wasn't as bad as the 2.5% that Wall Street was expecting.

A fear has been that Trump's wide-ranging tariffs could ignite an acceleration in inflation, just when it had seemed to get nearly all the way back to the Federal Reserve's 2% target from more than 9% three summers ago. It hasn't happened, though economists warn it may take months more to feel the full effect of Trump's tariffs.

"Another month goes by with little evidence of tariffs, but the longer-term inflation challenge they pose remain," according to Ellen Zentner, chief economic strategist for Morgan Stanley Wealth Management.

Financial markets also had only modest reactions to the conclusion of two days of trade talks between

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the United States and China in London.

Trump said Wednesday that China will supply rare-earth minerals and magnets to the United States, while his government will allow Chinese students into U.S. universities in a deal that still needs an agreement by him and by China's leader. Trump also said that "President XI and I are going to work closely together to open up China to American Trade. This would be a great WIN for both countries!!!"

Investors are still hoping for a more sweeping trade deal that would ease tensions between the world's two largest economies.

Hopes for such deals between the United States and countries around the world have been one of the main reasons the S&P 500 has charged nearly all the way back to its all-time high after dropping roughly 20% below a couple months ago. Without them, the fear is that Trump's high tariffs could drive the economy into a recession while pushing inflation higher. The S&P 500 is now sitting 2% below its record.

On Wall Street, Chewy dropped 11% after the seller of pet supplies reported a weaker profit for the latest quarter than analysts had forecast. Expectations were high after its stock had already rallied nearly 37% coming into the day for the year so far.

Tesla swung between gains and losses before finishing with a rise of 0.1% to continue its shaky run. It's been recovering much of its big losses taken last week after Elon Musk's relationship with Trump imploded, which in turn raised fears about a loss of business for the electric-vehicle company. Musk on Wednesday backed away from some of his earlier comments and said they went "too far."

All told, the S&P 500 fell 16.57 points to 6,022.24. The Dow Jones Industrial Average slipped 1.10 to 42,865.77, and the Nasdaq composite sank 99.11 to 19,615.88.

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury eased to 4.41% from 4.47% late Tuesday. Shorter-term yields, which more closely track expectations for what the Fed will do with overnight interest rates, fell more.

Wednesday's better-than-expected reading on inflation raised expectations along Wall Street that the Fed could cut its main interest rate at least twice by the end of the year.

The Fed has been keeping interest rates steady so far this year, going on pause after cutting rates at the end of last year. It has been waiting to see how much Trump's tariffs raise inflation because cutting interest rates could push inflation up even more, in addition to giving the economy a boost.

"The Fed could be justified in doing some preemptive rate cuts," said Brian Jacobsen, chief economist at Annex Wealth Management. "They were afraid that inflation would rise before growth would slow, but the script has been flipped and they will likely change their tune."

In stock markets abroad, indexes fell across much of Europe after rising in Asia. South Korea's Kospi was one of the best performers and jumped 1.2%.

## **Photos show accuser in NYC crypto kidnapping leaving house freely, defense lawyers say**

By PHILIP MARCELO Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A man who says he was kidnapped by two crypto investors for his Bitcoin was seen in photos and videos "laughing and smiling" and moving about Manhattan freely during the days he claimed he was tortured in captivity, lawyers for the two suspects said in court Wednesday.

William Duplessie, 32, and John Woeltz, 37, pleaded not guilty and were ordered held in custody until their next court date on July 15. Prosecutors argue the man was clearly in distress because he ran barefoot and bloodied to the nearest police officer after escaping 17 days in captivity.

However, Duplessie's lawyer said Wednesday that videos show the accuser participating in group sex and smoking crack cocaine while "laughing and smiling the whole time." In other photos, Sam Talkin said, the accuser is seen visiting an eyeglass store with one of the defendants and could have fled or sought help at any time.

"The story that he is selling doesn't make sense," Talkin said in Manhattan criminal court as the defen-

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dants were formally arraigned.

Woeltz's lawyer, Wayne Gosnell, added that witnesses told him the accuser came and went as he pleased from the upscale town house where he says he was held — going to church, clubs and dinners.

The accuser, a 28-year-old Italian national, has not been named by officials. Prosecutors say the defendants have known him personally for years.

In court Wednesday, Assistant District Attorney Sarah Khan argued that someone who supports the defendants was selectively leaking videos to present a counternarrative of the events.

In reality, she said, the accuser was constantly watched, was not permitted to leave the house without being guarded and was subjected to violence, including being pistol-whipped and cut with a small chain saw.

The defendants also took photos of the man in various poses and acts to create the impression that he was not being held against his will, Khan said.

Police searching the town house found evidence corroborating his story, including a loaded pistol, chain saw and other instruments purportedly used to torture him.

They also located photographs, including one where the defendants point a gun to the accuser's head, another where the accuser is tied to a wheelchair, and still another showing the accuser being set on fire.

When prodded by the judge, Khan explained that the man didn't actually sustain any burn injuries because the defendants would quickly douse the flames, sometimes by urinating on him.

What's more, she said, prosecutors believe this is not the first time the defendants have held a person against their will. They are aware of two other potential victims in two other locations, according to Khan.

Lawyers for the two men, meanwhile, sought their release on \$1 million bail and home confinement with their parents. They rejected suggestions from prosecutors that their clients could flee the country.

"He's so far from a flight risk here. He's ready to fight this case. He's not going anywhere," Talkin said of Duplessie.

The two appeared handcuffed in prison uniforms and didn't speak in court other than to formally enter their pleas. They are charged with kidnapping, assault, unlawful imprisonment and criminal possession of a weapon and face up to life in prison if convicted.

Prosecutors say that on May 6, the two men lured the victim to a town house in Manhattan's posh SoHo neighborhood by threatening to kill his family.

The man said the two investors tormented him with electrical wires, forced him to smoke from a crack pipe and at one point dangled him from a staircase five stories high.

The man said he eventually agreed to hand over his computer password, then managed to flee as his captors went to retrieve the device.

Khan said Wednesday that last month's kidnapping was at least the third instance in which the two had convinced the man to meet them in person, only to threaten him and take his electronic devices in order to obtain his cryptocurrency.

To date, Khan said, he hasn't received his money or electronic devices back.

## **Jury convicts Harvey Weinstein of top charge in split verdict at #MeToo sex crimes retrial**

By JENNIFER PELTZ and MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former movie mogul Harvey Weinstein was convicted Wednesday of one of the top charges in his sex crimes retrial but acquitted of another, and jurors were as yet unable to reach a verdict on a third charge.

The split verdict meted out a measure of vindication to his accusers and prosecutors — but also to Weinstein — in the landmark case.

The partial verdict came after an extraordinary day in which the jury foreperson indicated he felt bullied and Weinstein himself urged the judge to halt the trial, declaring: "It's just not fair."

"My life is on the line, and you know what? It's not fair," the former Hollywood heavy-hitter declared after making an unusual request to address the court. "It's time, it's time, it's time, it's time to say this



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trial is over.”

Weinstein’s initial conviction five years ago seemed to cement the downfall of one of Hollywood’s most powerful men in a pivotal moment for the #MeToo movement. But that conviction was overturned last year, and the case was sent back for retrial in the same Manhattan courthouse.

This time, a majority-female jury convicted the former studio boss of forcibly subjecting Miriam Haley, a producer and production assistant, to a criminal sex act in 2006. Jurors acquitted Weinstein of another criminal sex act charge, this one related to former model Kaja Sokola’s allegations of forcible oral sex in 2006.

Haley, who had qualms about testifying again, said outside court Wednesday it had been “exhausting and at times dehumanizing.”

“But today’s verdict gives me hope,” she added.

Jurors were to continue deliberating Thursday on a rape charge involving hairstylist and actor Jessica Mann. Under New York law, the third-degree rape charge carries a lesser penalty than the first-degree criminal sex act offense.

But the judge told the foreperson he won’t have to go in the jury room if he doesn’t want to, adding more uncertainty to the proceedings.

Weinstein, 73, denies sexually assaulting or raping anyone.

Tension in the jury room

Jury-room strains started leaking into public view Friday, when a juror asked to be excused because he felt another was being treated unfairly. Then Monday, the foreperson complained that other jurors were pushing people to change their minds and talking about information beyond the charges.

The man raised similar concerns again Wednesday. In a closed-door discussion with prosecutors, defense lawyers and the judge, the foreperson said another juror was yelling at him for sticking to his opinion and at one point vowed, “You going to see me outside.”

“I feel afraid inside there,” the foreperson told the judge and attorneys, according to a transcript.

Weinstein’s lawyers asked unsuccessfully for a mistrial each time the concerned jurors came forward.

Weinstein and #MeToo

The trial once again turned a legal lens — and, to some extent the public eye — on the man whose reputed history of brutishness toward women propelled the #MeToo era that began in 2017.

Weinstein’s companies produced or distributed a string of best Oscar winners for decades. He personally stood on the Oscars stage as a producer of 1999 best picture winner “Shakespeare in Love.” He also became a prominent Democratic donor.

When an Italian model told police in 2015 that Weinstein had abruptly groped her in his New York office, no charges resulted.

Then, two years later, The New York Times and The New Yorker detailed decades of sexual harassment and sexual assault allegations against Weinstein.

Those disclosures made #MeToo a global rallying cry for sexual misconduct awareness and accountability.

Weinstein ultimately was convicted of sex crimes and sentenced to prison in New York and California.

His California appeal is ongoing. But New York’s highest court awarded Weinstein a new trial, saying the former trial judge had allowed prejudicial testimony.

The accusations and Weinstein’s defense

The retrial was expanded with new charges related to Sokola, a Polish psychotherapist who said Weinstein forced oral sex on her when she was a 19-year-old model.

Sokola called Wednesday’s partial verdict “a big win for everyone” and the “closing of a chapter that caused me a lot of pain throughout my life.”

In one of the tensest moments of testimony, she was confronted with a passage from her private journal. At other flashpoints, Mann pointed indignantly at Weinstein as she walked past him in court, and Haley cursed at him from the witness stand.

Weinstein’s accusers said he exploited his Tinseltown influence to dangle career help, get them alone

and then trap and force them into sexual encounters.

In a complexity they spent days explaining, the women stayed in contact with Weinstein, saw him again, and at times accepted or requested invitations or favors, according to testimony and documents. Mann said she had a consensual relationship with Weinstein that began before and continued after he allegedly raped her.

The accusers said they were trying to reckon with what had happened, attempting to suppress the assaults for their careers' sake or trying to keep the peace with an influential, well-connected and irascible man.

Weinstein chose not to testify. His attorneys portrayed his accusers as Hollywood wannabes and hangers-on who willingly hooked up with him to court opportunity, then recast the encounters as crimes years later to collect settlement funds and #MeToo approbation.

The Associated Press generally does not name people who say they have been sexually assaulted, unless they agree to be identified. Haley, Mann and Sokola did so.

## Things to know about the retrial of Karen Read in the killing of her police officer boyfriend

By PATRICK WHITTLE and KIMBERLEE KRUESI Associated Press

Karen Read will not take the witness stand in the second trial about the death of her Boston police officer boyfriend, as the defense rested on Wednesday.

Read, 45, is accused of striking John O'Keefe with her car outside a suburban house party and leaving him to die in the snow in January 2022. She has been charged with second-degree murder, manslaughter and leaving the scene.

Read's lawyers say O'Keefe, 46, was beaten, bitten by a dog, then left outside a home in Canton in a conspiracy orchestrated by the police that included planting evidence against Read.

Read's second trial has so far followed similar contours to the first, which ended in a mistrial last year. The judge, who also oversaw the first trial, said closing statements could arrive on Friday.

The defense rested on the 31st day of the second trial.

Read will not testify at second trial

Read did not testify at her first murder trial and will not testify at this one, either.

Read told reporters on Tuesday that the defense has called its final witness and that the jury has already heard from her in the form of interview clips. The case could be headed toward closing statements as soon as this week.

"They've heard my voice," Read told reporters outside court. "They've heard a lot of me."

The case will go to the jury after closing statements. Read's announcement came a day before the defense rested its case.

Crash expert says damage to the SUV and clothing are inconsistent with a collision

Daniel Wolfe, who works for the accident reconstruction firm ARCCA, testified Monday about the numerous tests he and others conducted of a dummy colliding with a replica of Read's SUV taillight at various speeds.

Wolfe, who testified for the prosecution at Read's first trial but this time is being paid to speak in her defense, also described a test in which an SUV backed into a crash test dummy's arm suspended in the air and a full-body dummy wearing clothing that matched O'Keefe's outfit on the night he died.

A prosecution expert testified that O'Keefe's injuries were consistent with having been struck by a vehicle. But Wolfe said the damage to Read's taillight and O'Keefe's clothing was inconsistent with striking an arm or a body.

Wolfe acknowledged that the dummy arm he used for some of the tests weighed more than 2 pounds (0.9 kilogram) less than O'Keefe's arm likely weighed, based on his height and weight. He denied that it made a difference in his conclusions and noted that the actual weight of O'Keefe's arm was not known.

Andrew Rentschler, a biomechanical engineer and accident reconstructionist from ARCCA, also testified on Tuesday and Wednesday. He also found O'Keefe's injuries were inconsistent with a vehicle strike.

Rentschler was the defense's final witness.

Former medical examiner says O'Keefe died of trauma, not hypothermia

The medical examiner's report says O'Keefe died from hypothermia and blunt impact injuries to the head. But on Tuesday, an expert witness for the defense called that autopsy into question.

Elizabeth Laposata, a forensic pathologist, said O'Keefe died from blunt force trauma alone.

"The body did not have any hypothermia," Laposata said.

The medical examiner who performed O'Keefe's autopsy, Irini Scordi-Bello, testified earlier that she could not determine the cause of O'Keefe's death to a reasonable degree of medical certainty but that hypothermia was a contributing factor.

Laposata also said she didn't think eye injuries suffered by O'Keefe were consistent with being hit by the rear of Read's SUV. She said there was no evidence of impact from a vehicle at all.

The judge barred Laposata from testifying about potential dog bite wounds, but allowed her to say that some of O'Keefe's injuries were consistent with an animal bite. She said they were "very much" consistent with bite or claw marks, and appeared to be inflicted before death.

## **Trump says US gets rare earth minerals from China and tariffs on Chinese goods will total 55%**

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE, JOSH BOAK, PAUL WISEMAN and DIDI TANG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump announced Wednesday that China will make it easier for American industry to obtain much-needed magnets and rare earth minerals, clearing the way for talks to continue between the world's two biggest economies. In return, Trump said, the U.S. will stop efforts to revoke the visas of Chinese nationals on U.S. college campuses.

Trump's comment on social media came after two days of high-level U.S.-China trade talks in London.

Details remain scarce. Trump didn't fully spell out what concessions the U.S. made. Beijing has not confirmed what the negotiators agreed to, and Chinese President Xi Jinping and Trump himself have yet to sign off on it.

What Trump described as a "deal" is actually less than that: It's a "framework" meant to set the stage for more substantive talks.

And Trump's own comments created confusion about what was happening to his taxes - tariffs — on Chinese imports, generating uncertainty about more than \$660 billion in annual trade between the two countries.

On social media, Trump declared: "WE ARE GETTING A TOTAL OF 55% TARIFFS, CHINA IS GETTING 10%. RELATIONSHIP IS EXCELLENT!" But a White House official, who was not authorized to discuss the terms publicly and insisted on anonymity to describe them, said the 55% was not an increase on the previous 30% tariff on China because Trump was including pre-existing tariffs, including some left over from his first term.

"We have no idea what the rules are," said Rick Woldenberg, CEO of the educational toy company Learning Resources, who is part of a lawsuit challenging Trump's authority to impose the tariffs.

In a follow-up social media post, Trump said he and Xi "are going to work closely together to open up China to American Trade. This would be a great WIN for both countries!!!"

The framework emerged late Tuesday in London after intense talks involving U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and U.S. Trade Rep. Jamieson Greer. Leading the Chinese delegation was Vice Premier He Lifeng.

Since returning to the White House in January, Trump has deployed tariffs aggressively, seeing them as a way to raise money for the federal government, protect American industries, lure factories back to the United States and pressure other countries into bending to his will.

He has imposed baseline 10% tariffs on imports from almost every country on earth after having introduced and then suspended for 90 days bigger tariffs on countries based on the size of U.S. trade deficits last year.

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To American trading partners and to businesses calculating their import tax bills, the president's mercurial approach to trade policy can be baffling. For example, he recently doubled his steel and aluminum tariffs to 50%, likely increasing costs for U.S. manufacturers and construction companies that rely on the metals as raw materials.

Likewise, he threatened a 50% tariff on the European Union under the belief that it would jumpstart talks with the bloc, only to back down as his self-imposed 90-day negotiating period is set to expire around July 9.

But his approach to China has been especially bewildering. After imposing a 20% tariff on Chinese imports, the American president quickly upped the ante, raising the levy to 54% to offset what he said were China's unfair trade practices. Then, enraged when China retaliated with tariffs of its own, he increased those levies to a staggering 145%. Beijing counterpunched with 125% tariffs on U.S. imports.

Those triple-digit tariffs threatened to effectively end trade between the United States and China, causing a hair-raising selloff in financial markets. At a meeting in Geneva last month, the two countries agreed to back off: America's tariffs went back down to a still-high 30% and China's to 10%.

In April, the Chinese announced licensing requirements that slowed the supply of desperately needed rare earth minerals to the United States. Furious about the move, Trump threatened to call off the Geneva arrangement, setting the stage for talks Monday and Tuesday in London. And there the Chinese agreed to speed up the rare earths shipments.

The agreement came as an international rights group said that several global brands are among dozens of companies at risk of using forced labor through their Chinese supply chains because they use critical minerals or buy minerals-based products sourced from the far-western Xinjiang region of China.

The report by the Netherlands-based Global Rights Compliance says companies including Avon, Walmart, Nescafe, Coca-Cola and Sherwin-Williams may be linked to titanium sourced from Xinjiang, where rights groups allege the Chinese government runs coercive labor practices targeting predominantly Muslim Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities.

Many analysts complained that all the drama hadn't accomplished much.

Dan Kritenbrink, who was assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs in the Biden administration, said the London meeting produced "a fragile truce."

"Both sides have now demonstrated that they know where the other's weak points are," said Kritenbrink, now a partner at the Asia Group. "They demonstrated that they both have leverage and tools they can use to inflict damage on the other."

The Chinese know that when it comes to rare earths they "can turn that spigot on and off at will... They really have incredible leverage over the United States in the global economy with rare earths, and they're not afraid to use it."

Still, he welcomed the London ceasefire because "the alternative is no truce at all, and a supply chain war that threatens not just U.S. and Chinese economies but the global economy as well."

Danny Russel, vice president for international security and diplomacy at the Asia Society Policy Institute, said Trump's latest pressure campaign on China appeared to "be ending with a whimper, not a bang."

"The U.S. found it needed to back off the restrictions it had thought would generate leverage," he said, "and in exchange, they get merely a promise by the Chinese to dole out critical minerals a bit more quickly."

Veronique de Rugy, senior research fellow at George Mason University's Mercatus Center, dismissed the London truce as "a handshake deal ... It can change at any time."

## 25 years after Tiger's romp, a huge fan, Chase Johnson, is US Open's only player of Black heritage

By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer

OAKMONT, Pa. (AP) — One of the first memories for the last man to make the field at this year's U.S. Open was watching Tiger Woods.

In that respect, Chase Johnson has plenty of company. In another, he has none.

On the 25-year anniversary of Woods' historic dismantling of Pebble Beach in the U.S. Open — a mile-



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stone win that some thought might puncture golf's stereotype as a sport for rich, white men — Johnson is the only player of Black heritage in the 156-man field at Oakmont.

That's hardly the only valid storyline for the 29-year-old former standout at Kent State who:

—Adopted a cross-hand chipping style to avoid the shanks.

—Beat players like Max Homa and Rickie Fowler in qualifying to earn an alternate's spot that eventually got him in the field.

—Made a whirlwind trip from qualifying in Ohio to the U.S. Open in Pennsylvania with detours to Arizona for a tournament, then to Michigan to celebrate his fiancée's birthday.

But neither does Johnson shirk from his position at the national championship this week.

He is the 2025 season points leader on the Advocates Professional Golf Association, a nonprofit tour that promotes diversity in golf. He landed there after short stints on the Korn Ferry Tour. He also plays on the developmental PGA Tour Americas circuit.

A quarter-century after Woods made history, Johnson is not trying to be the next Tiger, only trying to show what can happen for a young player with a good work ethic and a love of the game.

"We're going to keep on working on it, but hopefully I can continue to build my platform and build that platform for other players to just continue to grow the game," Johnson said.

Diversity has been a work in progress for golf for ages — one that took on new meaning when Woods burst on the scene with his Masters win in 1997, then backed it up in 1999-2000 with four straight major victories, including the 15-shot win at Pebble Beach.

Two years ago, when not a single Black player qualified for the U.S. Open at the Los Angeles Country Club, USGA president Fred Perpall, who is Black, said it was a disappointment and he found it hard not to wish "we could just press the magic wand" to make those numbers look better.

On the eve of the first round at Oakmont, with Perpall's term coming to an end, he and CEO Mike Whan touted some encouraging signs: Of the 24 million Americans who said in a recent survey that they're "extremely interested" in playing golf, 24% are Black and Hispanic. Perpall said the USGA's 2-year-old U.S. National Development Program will be the pathway for America's elite for the next 100 years.

"It's not going to be a fast road," Perpall said of the effort to make golf more diverse. "I mean, we didn't get here overnight. We will not get out of here overnight. But if you get down to the junior level and you get down to the elite junior level, I think you're going to see a lot more diverse game than you see out there" at country clubs and at Oakmont this week.

Johnson's path was literally inspired by Woods. He recalls watching the 15-time major champion not as one of his first golf memories, but one of his first memories of anything.

In the Woods video game Johnson played as a kid, the game gave "trophy balls" as prizes. Johnson's father, Mel, gave out "Daddy Trophy Balls" as rewards to motivate his kid.

Like Woods, Johnson is mixed race. His father is Black and his mother, Cheryl, is white. The entire family, along with fiancée, Katie Howarth, will be on hand for either two or four rounds this week.

"I was a little shocked with my dad's response" upon finding out he had qualified, Johnson said. "He was like: 'This is amazing. It's Father's Day weekend. I couldn't ask for anything more.' I was like, 'I think we could think of one thing by Sunday that we could get for you.'"

Nothing wrong with dreaming big.

But in the game he's playing, a victory might also look like a couple of young kids seeing someone who looks like them playing at the U.S. Open — then picking up a club themselves.

"I want to see what he does with this platform," Johnson's coach, Kyle VanHise, said in a 2023 profile in Golf Digest. "The amount of people he's going to help and influence will be incredible. Who is the one kid that, because he met you, his life was changed forever?"

## Veterans are divided over the Army's big parade, being held on Trump's birthday

By BEN FINLEY Associated Press

NORFOLK, Va. (AP) — James McDonough served in the U.S. Army for 27 years, fighting in Vietnam and delivering humanitarian aid to Rwanda. For him, Saturday's military parade in Washington for the Army's 250th anniversary — coinciding with President Donald Trump's birthday — is about the resilience of a vital institution and the nation it serves.

"The soldiers marching that day represent all of that history," said McDonough, 78, of Crofton, Maryland. "They don't represent a single day. They don't represent a single person. It's the American Army still standing straight, walking tall, ready to defend our country."

Christopher Purdy, an Army veteran who served in Iraq, called the parade a facade that paints over some of the Republican president's policies that have targeted military veterans and current service members, including cuts at the Department of Veterans Affairs and a ban on transgender troops.

Purdy said the parade, long sought by Trump, will needlessly display U.S. military might on the president's 79th birthday.

"It's embarrassing," said Purdy, 40, of Atlanta. "It's expensive. And whatever his reasons are for doing it, I think it's entirely unnecessary."

Until recently, the Army's long-planned birthday celebration did not include a big parade. Added under the Trump administration, the event, featuring hundreds of military vehicles and aircraft and thousands of soldiers, has divided veterans.

Some liken it to the military chest-pounding commonly seen in North Korea, a step toward authoritarianism or a perverse birthday party for Trump.

Others see it as a once-in-a-lifetime accounting of the Army's achievements and the military service of millions of soldiers over centuries. The parade is not about Trump, they say, but the public seeing the faces of soldiers when so few Americans serve.

The Army expects up to 200,000 people could attend and says the parade will cost an estimated \$25 million to \$45 million.

Trump, speaking at Fort Bragg this week, said Saturday would be "a big day" and noted "we want to show off a little bit."

"We're going to celebrate our greatness and our achievements," he said. "This week, we honor 250 years of valor and glory and triumph by the greatest fighting force ever to walk the face of the Earth: the United States Army."

'Divisive politics have ruined it'

For Edmundo Eugenio Martinez Jr., an Army veteran who fought in Iraq, the parade is a missed opportunity to honor generations of veterans, many of whom paid a steep price and came home to little fanfare.

"Sadly, the timing and the optics and divisive politics have ruined it," said Martinez, 48, of Katy, Texas. "And I'm not picking one side or the other. Both sides are guilty."

'It's just suspicious'

Joe Plenzler, a retired Marine who fought in Iraq, said Trump wants to see troops saluting him on his birthday as tanks roll past.

"It's just suspicious," the 53-year-old from Middletown, Virginia, said of the timing.

"I absolutely love the Army from the bottom of my cold black Marine heart," he said. "But if the Army's birthday was a day later, we probably wouldn't be doing it. I'd rather see that \$50 million take care of the men and women who went off to war and came back with missing arms, legs and eyeballs, and with damaged brains."

'Part of American culture'

Joe Kmiec, who served in the Army and Minnesota National Guard from 1989 to 1998, supports the parade because the Army is "part of American culture and our fabric."

He notes the Army's pioneering contributions to engineering and medicine, from dams to new surgical

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techniques. Like many veterans, he has a strong familial connection: His father served in the Army, and so did his maternal grandfather, who fought in World War II.

"I didn't vote for President Trump, but the commander in chief is going to be part of that celebration," said Kmiech, 54, of Roberts, Wisconsin. "The distinction needs to be made that the parade is a celebration of our Army, not of a person."

'Stroking Trump's ego'

For Gulf War Army veteran Paul Sullivan, Trump and the parade are inextricably linked.

"This Trump tank travesty is all about stroking Trump's ego," said Sullivan, 62, who lives outside Charlottesville, Virginia. "If Trump truly cared about our service members, he would sit down with them quietly and say, 'What can we do with \$50 million or \$100 million to make your lives better?' He's not."

'We are a great nation'

McDonough, the veteran from Crofton, Maryland, disagrees that the parade is about Trump or too costly. He said the U.S. held a grand celebration in New York after World War II when the nation was deeply in debt.

"We certainly need to bring our debt down, and we certainly need to take care of our veterans," he said. "But it's a false dichotomy. It's like saying if we bought two less aircraft carriers, we could do so much better to take care of our poor."

And McDonough said soldiers' oath is to the Constitution, not to Trump.

The president "understands the importance of doing this, not only for the Army, but for the nation," McDonough said.

'A real dark turn'

Purdy, the veteran from Atlanta, said the parade's brazen flex of military strength is not an American tradition, particularly absent a recent victory.

"I'm not saying we shouldn't celebrate the country," he said. "But for us to be projecting this type of hard power, in such a real in-your-face way, that's just not who we are."

Trump is brushing aside old alliances and foreign aid that have helped maintain peace for decades, Purdy asserted.

"It signals a real dark turn if we're just going to roll out the tanks," Purdy said.

'People are the Army'

Michael Nardotti, an Army veteran who served in Vietnam, said military hardware has long been in American parades, which can help recruitment.

More important, he said, is the tremendous value in the public seeing soldiers' faces in a parade when active-duty troops make up less than 1% of the population.

"People are the Army," said Nardotti, 78, of Aldie, Virginia, quoting a former Army chief of staff.

Nardotti said he'll listen carefully to Trump's speech.

"I hope it sends the right message," he said.

## Brian Wilson, Beach Boys leader and summer's poet laureate, dies at 82

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Brian Wilson, the Beach Boys' visionary and fragile leader who helped compose and arrange "Good Vibrations," "California Girls" and dozens of other summertime anthems and became one of the world's most influential and admired musicians, has died at 82.

Wilson's family posted news of his death to his website Wednesday. Further details weren't immediately available. Since May 2024, Wilson had been under a court conservatorship to oversee his personal and medical affairs, with Wilson's longtime representatives in charge.

The eldest and last surviving of three musical brothers — Brian played bass, Carl lead guitar and Dennis drums — he and his fellow Beach Boys rose from local act to national hitmakers to international ambassadors of the American dream. Wilson himself was celebrated for his beautiful music and pitied for his

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demons. He was one of rock's great Romantics, a tortured soul who in his peak years embarked on an ever-steeper quest for aural perfection.

The Beach Boys rank among the most popular acts of the rock era, with more than 30 singles in the Top 40 and worldwide sales of more than 100 million. 1966's "Pet Sounds" was voted No. 2 in a 2003 Rolling Stone list of the best 500 albums, losing out, as Wilson did from the start, to the Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." The Beach Boys, who also featured Wilson cousin Mike Love and family friend Al Jardine, were voted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1988.

Fans ranged from Elton John and Bruce Springsteen to Katy Perry and Bob Dylan. The Who's drummer, Keith Moon, fantasized about joining the Beach Boys. Paul McCartney cited "Pet Sounds" as a direct inspiration on the Beatles and said the ballad "God Only Knows" often moved him to tears.

Their music was like an ongoing party, with Wilson as mastermind and wallflower. He was a tall, shy man, partially deaf (allegedly because of beatings by his father, Murry Wilson), with a sweet, crooked grin, and he rarely touched a surfboard unless for publicity. But out of the lifestyle that he observed and such musical influences as Chuck Berry and the Four Freshmen, he devised a magical and durable soundscape — easy melodies, bright harmonies, vignettes of beaches, cars and girls that resonated worldwide.

Decades after its first release, a Beach Boys song can still conjure up instant summer — the wake-up guitar riff that opens "Surfin' USA"; the melting harmonies of "Don't Worry Baby"; the chants of "fun, fun, fun" or "good, good, GOOD, good vibrations"; the behind-the-wheel chorus "Round, 'round, get around, I get around." Beach Boys songs have cheered on generations from iPods and boom boxes, radios and 8-track players, and any device that could be placed on a beach towel.

The Beach Boys' innocent appeal survived changing trends and times and the group's increasingly troubled backstory — Brian's many personal trials; allegations of their father's mismanagement and physical abuse; feuds and lawsuits; the alcoholism of Dennis Wilson, who drowned in 1983. Brian Wilson's ambition took the Beach Boys into territory far beyond the simple pleasures of their early hits — transcendent, eccentric and destructive. They seemed to live out every fantasy, and every nightmare, of the California myth.

Brian Wilson was born June 20, 1942, two days after McCartney. His musical gifts were obvious and as a boy he was playing piano and teaching his brothers to sing harmony. The Beach Boys started as a neighborhood act, rehearsing in Brian's bedroom and in the garage of their house in suburban Hawthorne, California. Surf music was catching on locally and Dennis, the group's only real surfer, suggested they cash in. Brian and Love hastily wrote up their first single, "Surfin'," a minor hit released in 1961.

They wanted to call themselves the Pendletones, in honor of a popular shirt. But when they first saw the pressings for "Surfin'," they discovered the record label had tagged them "The Beach Boys." Other decisions were handled by their father, a musician and apparent tyrant who hired himself as the manager and holy terror. By mid-decade, Murry Wilson had been displaced and Brian was in charge.

Their breakthrough came in early 1963 with "Surfin' USA," so closely modeled on Chuck Berry's "Sweet Little Sixteen" that Berry successfully sued to get a songwriting credit. It was their first Top 10 hit and a boast to the nation: "If everybody had an ocean / across the USA / then everybody'd be surfin', / like California-nye-ay." From 1963-66, they were rarely off the charts, hitting No. 1 with "I Get Around" and "Help Me, Rhonda" and narrowly missing with "California Girls" and "Fun, Fun, Fun." For their many television appearances, they wore candy-striped shirts and grinned as they mimed their latest hit, with a hot rod or surfboard nearby.

Wilson often contrasted his own bright falsetto with Love's nasal, deadpan tenor. The extroverted Love was out front on the fast songs, but when it was time for a slow one, Brian often took over. "The Warmth of the Sun" was a song of despair and consolation that Wilson alleged — to some skepticism — he wrote the morning after President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. "Don't Worry Baby," a ballad equally intoxicating and heartbreaking, was a leading man's confession of doubt and dependence, an early peek at Brian's crippling insecurities.

His first marriage, to singer Marilyn Rovell, ended in divorce and he became estranged from daughters Carnie and Wendy, who would help form the pop trio Wilson Phillips. His life stabilized in 1995 with his



marriage to Melinda Ledbetter, with whom he had daughters Daria and Delanie. He also reconciled with Carnie and Wendy and they sang together on the 1997 album "The Wilsons." Melinda Ledbetter died in 2024.

## Hegseth defends use of troops to protect immigration raids in Los Angeles

By LOLITA C. BALDOR and TARA COPP Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth defended his decision to order troops to provide security during federal immigration raids in Los Angeles, telling senators on Wednesday it's about "maintaining law and order."

Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., condemned the move as illegal, saying it erodes military readiness and questioning how it is being funded. It was the second day of harsh congressional questioning for Hegseth on the deployment of troops over the objections of California Gov. Gavin Newsom, continued military aid to Ukraine, a deal on a gifted Qatari jet and more.

"The mission in Los Angeles, as you know well, sir, is not about lethality," Hegseth said in response to questions. "It's about maintaining law and order on behalf of law enforcement agents who deserve to do their job without being attacked by mobs of people."

The exchange underscored confusion about the deployment of more than 4,000 National Guard troops and 700 Marines to provide security at the immigration protests and operations in Los Angeles. Photos have shown Guard troops setting a security perimeter around agents as they make arrests in the city, moving them closer to law enforcement functions, which by law they are not allowed to do.

About 2,000 of the Guard soldiers are in place in Los Angeles, initially sent to provide security. The Marines are at a nearby base and have not yet been used.

Democrats press Hegseth on use of troops in US cities

Speaking at a Senate defense appropriations subcommittee hearing, Reed said law and order is a civil function, not a job for the U.S. military. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., added that the California deployment, along with President Donald Trump's threat to use force against protesters at the Army's 250th anniversary parade on Saturday, "should stop every one of us cold."

She added that "threatening to use our own troops on our own citizens at such scale is unprecedented. It is unconstitutional. And it is downright un-American."

Asked later what constitutional authority the department is using to deploy active duty Marines to the protests, Hegseth said he didn't know the specific provision but would provide it.

Gen. Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who was testifying alongside Hegseth, was asked whether he sees evidence of "rebellion" in the U.S. That could be used to invoke the Insurrection Act to use the military for law enforcement functions.

"There are definitely some frustrated folks out there," Caine said in response.

Answering the same question, Hegseth repeated Trump's argument that "there has been an invasion" of migrants entering the country without legal permission, and he said the protests in Los Angeles could spread to other areas.

Caine, asked if he believes the U.S. is being invaded by a foreign power, said, "I don't see any foreign, state-sponsored folks invading, but I'll be mindful of the fact that there have been some border issues."

Lawmakers raise concerns about continuing US support for Ukraine

Hegseth also faced bipartisan criticism for failing to provide details about the administration's first proposed defense budget and over an array of other decisions he's made during his tenure.

The panel's chairman, Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and other senators expressed frustration that Congress has not yet gotten a full defense budget from the Trump administration and that the current level does not have the U.S. spending enough on defense.

McConnell also noted that the limited budget request that lawmakers have received has no funding for Ukraine security assistance, questioning whether that makes "lasting peace" more or less likely.

Hegseth, in his opening remarks, said the department needed more time to pull a spending plan together but that he has moved quickly to kill wasteful programs and redirect funding to Trump's priorities.

Hegseth said a negotiated peace in Ukraine makes America look strong, even though Russia is the aggressor. He said the budget includes hard choices and "reflects the reality that Europe needs to step up more for the defense of its own continent. And President Trump deserves the credit for that."

Hegseth said some U.S. security spending for Ukraine is still in the pipeline, but he provided no details.

Hegseth confirms no deal has been signed for the Qatari jet

Hegseth repeatedly refused to provide details on plans for the Defense Department to accept a 747 jet offered by Qatar for use as Air Force One. He said budgeting and schedules for security upgrades to turn the plane into the president's aircraft are classified.

Hegseth confirmed reports that the Qataris have not come to an agreement with the Trump administration over a memo that would allow the military to take possession of the aircraft.

That also means no contracts have been signed to move forward on overhauling the Qatari jet.

He refused to answer questions on the cost or potential timeframe of that upgrade — even though data on two other 747s being reconditioned by Boeing to serve as Air Force One is public.

"A memorandum of understanding remains to be signed," Hegseth said.

## **Netanyahu's government faces possible collapse as the opposition seeks to dissolve parliament**

By MELANIE LIDMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government faced a major test Wednesday after the opposition submitted a bill to dissolve parliament, with his ultra-Orthodox coalition partners threatening to support the measure and force early elections.

The ultra-Orthodox parties are furious that the government has failed to pass a law exempting their community from mandatory military service, an issue that has long divided the Jewish Israeli public, especially during the 20-monthlong war in the Gaza Strip.

While many expect a last-minute compromise, the vote is the most serious challenge to Netanyahu's government since Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack, the biggest security failure in Israel's history.

The opposition submitted a bill to dissolve the Knesset, Israel's parliament. In response, coalition members submitted numerous bills, packing Wednesday's schedule and buying time for last-minute negotiations.

The dissolution vote, if it is not pulled, is expected to take place late at night. Separately, Argentina's President Javier Milei will address the Knesset on Wednesday.

The bill must pass another three readings before parliament is dissolved, a process that could take days or weeks.

Even if the bill passes, it could take weeks or months for new elections to be called. If the bill fails, another vote for dissolution cannot be brought again by the opposition for at least six months. The opposition could still pull the bill if there isn't enough support and submit it again in the coming weeks.

Netanyahu's coalition includes two ultra-Orthodox parties, and both would need to support the dissolution bill for it to pass. On Tuesday, top ultra-Orthodox, or Haredi, rabbis issued a religious decree emphasizing their stand against military service, which complicates the Haredi politicians' ability to negotiate.

Military service is mandatory for most Jews in Israel, but the politically powerful ultra-Orthodox, who make up roughly 13% of Israeli society, have traditionally received exemptions if they are studying full-time in religious seminaries.

The ultra-Orthodox, also known as Haredim, or "God-fearing" in Hebrew, say that integrating into the army threatens their traditional way of life.

Israel is engaged in the longest active war in the country's history, which has stretched its military to the breaking point. The Haredim's widespread refusal to serve, and threats to topple the government during wartime, have enraged many Israelis, especially those who have served multiple rounds of reserve duty.

Since the start of the war, 866 Israeli soldiers have been killed.

## Should you let pets sleep next to you? (Does it even matter what the experts say?)

By ALBERT STUMM Associated Press

It turns out, our furry best friend might be our sleep enemy.

Lots of pet owners let their animals sleep on the bed with them, which usually disrupts sleep. But many would say it's worth it.

And researchers don't necessarily disagree.

Melissa Milanak, a professor at Medical University of South Carolina specializing in sleep health, said most people at her clinic say their pets disturb them often at night.

"You can't say that hands down, it's bad for every single person, but there is a lot out there saying it negatively impacts your sleep," she said.

Generally speaking, having a pet is good for many people's health. Pets have been shown to lower their humans' stress levels, get them to exercise and more. Many pet owners also say they feel an immeasurable amount of comfort by having their pets close as they sleep.

But dogs' and cats' natural sleep cycles aren't the same as those of humans.

Dogs tend to be light sleepers and wake up multiple times at night. Some display instinctual behavior like scratching at bedding, which can prevent deeper phases of sleep even if it doesn't wake you up.

As many cat owners know, "the zoomies" often happen before they are ready to get out of bed. Cats evolved to hunt in low light, meaning they are particularly active at dusk and dawn.

Milanak also said allergens such as pet dander and microbes brought into the house can affect owners' breathing, preventing them from getting enough deep sleep.

Brian Chin, a professor of social and health psychology at Trinity College in Connecticut, said his research has found sleeping with pets was associated with poor sleep, "particularly those dimensions of sleep quality and insomnia symptoms." That's even accounting for the fact that pet owners may be less inclined to report problems in a survey because they don't believe their beloved pets cause problems.

"I hate to even admit that my cat disrupts my sleep at all," said Chin, who has one cat that keeps him awake and another that leaves him alone.

Moreover, a higher number of pets was associated with higher sleep disruption, he said.

What should you do about it?

It's not as simple as telling pet owners that they shouldn't share the bed, Milanak said. For a lot of people, it becomes part of their sleep routine, which makes it difficult to sleep without it because they have come to associate pets with sleep.

Because the topic is sensitive, Milanak asks new patients several questions before getting to whether they sleep with a pet. If they're waking up multiple times a night, for example, they may not realize why. Once the association is made, she then asks whether they are open to not sleeping together.

"It's like if I said to somebody, you need to stop smoking," she said. "They're going to give me all the reasons why they want to continue smoking."

The first, most obvious solution is putting a dog bed on the floor in the bedroom, or locking the cat out of the room at night. For those who insist on having the pet in bed with them, she advises washing the sheets more frequently and perhaps adjusting their sleep schedule to match their pet's routine.

"Maybe you need to go to bed earlier so you can get up earlier to accommodate the pet," she said.

If it ain't broke, don't fix it

Despite any problems, many pet owners feel that the bonding and emotional benefits outweigh minor sleep disruption.

Angela Wilson, who lives in Cobb County, Georgia, said she has bought a series of ever-more plush beds for her golden retriever, Sadie. But Sadie jumps into her bed anyway.

Then they usually sleep peacefully back to back.

"People complain about their dogs waking them up, but she doesn't wake me up," Wilson said. "She's very gentle."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Albert Stumm writes about wellness, food and travel. Find his work at <https://www.albertstumm.com>

## **Indiana Jones' whip, Kane's Rosebud sled and Culkin's 'Home Alone' snow cap are going up for auction**

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP) — Many of movies' most sought-after props are going up for auction, including the Rosebud sled from "Citizen Kane," Macaulay Culkin's knit snow cap from "Home Alone" and a whip wielded by Harrison Ford during the Holy Grail trials of "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade."

The Summer Entertainment Auction being held July 15-19 by Heritage Auctions also includes sci-fi gems from the "Star Wars" galaxy, like a filming miniature of Luke Skywalker's X-wing starfighter used in Industrial Light & Magic's effects work for "The Empire Strikes Back," and the lightsabers brandished by Ewan McGregor's Obi-Wan Kenobi and Hayden Christensen's Anakin Skywalker in "Revenge of the Sith."

The Rosebud sled from the title character's childhood sits at the center of Orson Welles' 1941 "Citizen Kane." It's the last word tycoon Charles Foster Kane speaks before his death at the opening of the film that is regarded by many critics groups as the greatest ever made. Long thought lost, the sled is one of three of the prop known to have survived. It's owned by "Gremlins" director Joe Dante, who stumbled on it when he was filming on the former RKO Pictures lot in 1984. Dante wasn't a collector, but knew the value of the sled and quietly preserved it for decades, putting it as an Easter egg into four of his own films.

Ford gave the Indiana Jones whip going up for auction to then-Prince Charles at the 1989 U.K. premiere of "The Last Crusade." It was given as a gift to Princess Diana, who gave it to the current owner.

"These aren't just props. They're mythic objects," Joe Maddalena, Heritage's executive vice president, said in a statement. "They tell the story of Hollywood's greatest moments, one piece at a time."

Also going up for sale are a blue velvet suit that Mike Myers wore as Austin Powers in "Goldmember," and a Citroën 2CV driven by Roger Moore as James Bond in "For Your Eyes Only," one of the films Myers was parodying.

The auction also includes essential artifacts from the collection of legendary director Cecil B. DeMille, including a promotional pair of the titular tablets from DeMille's "The Ten Commandments," which the director had cut from stone from Mount Sinai.

## **Strong earthquake strikes Taiwan near east coast city of Hualien, agencies say**

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Taiwan was struck by an earthquake about 71 kilometers (44.1 miles) south of Hualien City, monitoring agencies said.

The quake hit seconds after cell phone alarms went off at 7:01 p.m. Wednesday.

The United States Geological Survey reported the quake had a magnitude of 5.9 and was detected at a depth of 31.1 kilometers (19.3 miles). Taiwan's Central Weather Administration gave the magnitude as 6.4. Such variations are common given differences in sensitivity and detector locations.

Buildings in Taipei shook for about a minute. There were no immediate reports of major damage.

Hualien, located 154 kilometers (95.6 miles) south of the capital Taipei, is relatively thinly populated compared to the highly congested western side of the island of 23 million people, which is frequently struck by quakes.

Taiwan lies along the Pacific "Ring of Fire," a line of seismic faults encircling the Pacific Ocean from Chile to New Zealand where most of the world's earthquakes occur.

Taiwan's worst modern quake, a magnitude 7.7 temblor that killed 2,415 people and damaged buildings in 1999, led to tightened building codes, better response times and coordination and widespread public



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education campaigns on earthquake safety. Schools and workplaces hold earthquake drills, while cellphones buzz whenever a strong earthquake is detected.

Earthquake damage since then has been significantly reduced.

## Today in History: June 12 49 people killed in Pulse nightclub shooting

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Thursday, June 12, the 163rd day of 2025. There are 202 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On June 12, 2016, a gunman opened fire at Pulse, a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, leaving 49 people dead and 53 wounded in what was then the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history; the gunman, Omar Mateen, pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group during a three-hour standoff before being killed in a shootout with police.

Also on this date:

In 1939, the Baseball Hall of Fame was dedicated in Cooperstown, New York.

In 1942, Anne Frank, a German-born Jewish girl living in Amsterdam, received a diary for her 13th birthday, less than a month before she and her family went into hiding from the Nazis.

In 1963, civil rights leader Medgar Evers, 37, was shot and killed outside his home in Jackson, Mississippi. (In 1994, Byron De La Beckwith was convicted of murdering Evers and sentenced to life in prison, where he died in 2001.)

In 1964, eight South African anti-apartheid activists, including Nelson Mandela, were sentenced to life in prison for committing acts of sabotage against South Africa's apartheid government.

In 1967, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Loving v. Virginia*, unanimously struck down state laws prohibiting interracial marriages, ruling that such laws violated the Fourteenth Amendment.

In 1978, David Berkowitz was sentenced to 25 years to life in prison for each of the six "Son of Sam" killings committed in New York City over the previous two years.

In 1987, President Ronald Reagan, during a visit to the divided German city of Berlin, exhorted Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to "tear down this wall."

In 1991, Russians went to the polls for their first-ever presidential election, which resulted in victory for Boris Yeltsin.

In 1994, Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman were killed outside Simpson's Los Angeles home. (O.J. Simpson, Nicole Brown Simpson's ex-husband, was later acquitted of the killings in a criminal trial but was eventually held liable in a civil action.)

Today's Birthdays: Actor Sonia Manzano is 75. Actor-director Timothy Busfield is 68. Olympic track gold medalist Gwen Torrence is 60. Actor Rick Hoffman is 55. Actor-comedian Finesse Mitchell is 53. Actor Jason Mewes is 51. Blues musician Kenny Wayne Shepherd is 48. Actor Timothy Simons is 47. Singer-songwriter Robyn is 46. Model Adriana Lima is 44. Actor Dave Franco is 40. Country musician Chris Young is 40.