

# Groton Daily Independent

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## **Sunday, June 29**

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.

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

**Groton Daily Independent**

**PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445**

**Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460**



Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.

Amateurs at Redfield, 4 p.m.

Groton U12 Tourney

## **Monday, June 30**

Senior Menu: Breaded pork cutlet, mashed potatoes with gravy, capri blend, tropical fruit, whole wheat bread.

Legion vs. W.I.N. at Northville, 5:30 p.m.

Jr. Legion vs. W.I.N. at Northville, 7:30 p.m.

U8 R&B hosts Frankfort, 6 p.m.

Softball: U10G hosts Frankfort, 7 p.m. (DH); U8G at Webster, 6 p.m.; U8B at Webster, 6 p.m.

T-Ball: Black hosts Frankfort, 5 p.m.

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

## **Tuesday, July 1**

Senior Menu: Ham rotini bake, mixed vegetables, fruit, whole wheat bread.

Jr. Teeners hosts Aberdeen 13/14, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

U12 R&B hosts Milbank, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

U8 hosts Aberdeen, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

Softball: U14 at Redfield, 5 p.m. (DH)

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Wage Memorial Library Meeting, 6 p.m.

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

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## We the People

The South Dakota Humanities Council is making available a weekly column -- "We the People" -- that focuses on the U.S. Constitution. It is written by David Adler, who is president of The Alturas Institute, a non-profit organization created to promote the Constitution, gender equality, and civic education.



By David Adler

### The Framers' Why: Rejecting Presidential Control of Warmaking and Foreign Affairs

The Trump Administration's inability to identify persuasive legal footing for Donald Trump's unilateral decision to bomb Iran, whether on the originalist premises that his camp prefers, or others that may be ginned up, reveals the depths of his unconstitutional action, another piece of his consistent pattern of usurping congressional powers. Presidential aggrandizement of the war power—the authority to initiate war and lesser military hostilities-- which the Framers granted solely and exclusively to Congress because they feared the possibility, as James Wilson explained, of "one man" taking the nation to war for arbitrary reasons, an offense at the very top of the hierarchy of impeachable offenses, however improbable the exercise of that power might be, represents a teaching moment, an opportunity for the citizenry to better understand the constitutional arrangement for war making and national security, before being plunged into a world of unforeseeable twists and turns that is the very essence of warfare. An overview of the conclusions of the Constitutional Convention will lay bare the "Framer's Why," their rationale for vesting in Congress the lion's share of the nation's foreign policy and national security powers.

Few issues rivaled in importance the maintenance of national security and foreign affairs. The search for an efficient foreign policy design was a primary goal and animating purpose of the Convention. The Framers might have adopted the English model which, like other nations at the time, concentrated virtually unlimited authority over foreign affairs, including the power of war and peace, in the hands of the executive, but they rejected that approach because, as Wilson explained, the prerogatives of the Crown were ill-suited to the aims and purposes of a republic.

The Framers' emphatic rejection of presidential control of warmaking and foreign relations was rooted in a deep aversion to an unrestrained, unilateral executive power and a commitment to the cardinal principle of republicanism: collective decision-making, grounded in the belief that the conjoined wisdom of the many is superior to that of one. The Framers perceived a broad equatorial divide between the hemispheres of monarchism and republicanism, between the values of the Old World and the New World. The Convention's deliberate fragmentation of powers relating to diplomacy, treaties and war and peace, and the allocation of the various foreign affairs powers to different departments of government, reflected the Framers' determination to apply the doctrines of separation of powers and checks and balances, the principle of the rule of law, and the elements of constitutionalism to the realm of foreign relations as rigorously as they had been applied to the domestic domain.

This critical decision represented a bold departure from the prevailing wisdom of the day, which urged the unification and centralization of foreign relations powers in the executive and warned that the separation of those powers would invite chaos, disorder and even disaster. However, the Framers brought a fresh outlook, a new vision that recognized that the conduct of foreign affairs includes some elements that are primarily legislative in nature, others that are essentially executive, and still others characteristically judicial. In Federalist No. 47, Madison observed that "treaties with foreign sovereigns" assume, once they are made, "the force of legislative acts." The Constitution characterizes the power to declare war as legislative and the power to conduct it as executive. The Supremacy Clause imposes upon judges the duty to enforce treaties as the law of the land. The Constitutional Convention discarded the British model—the



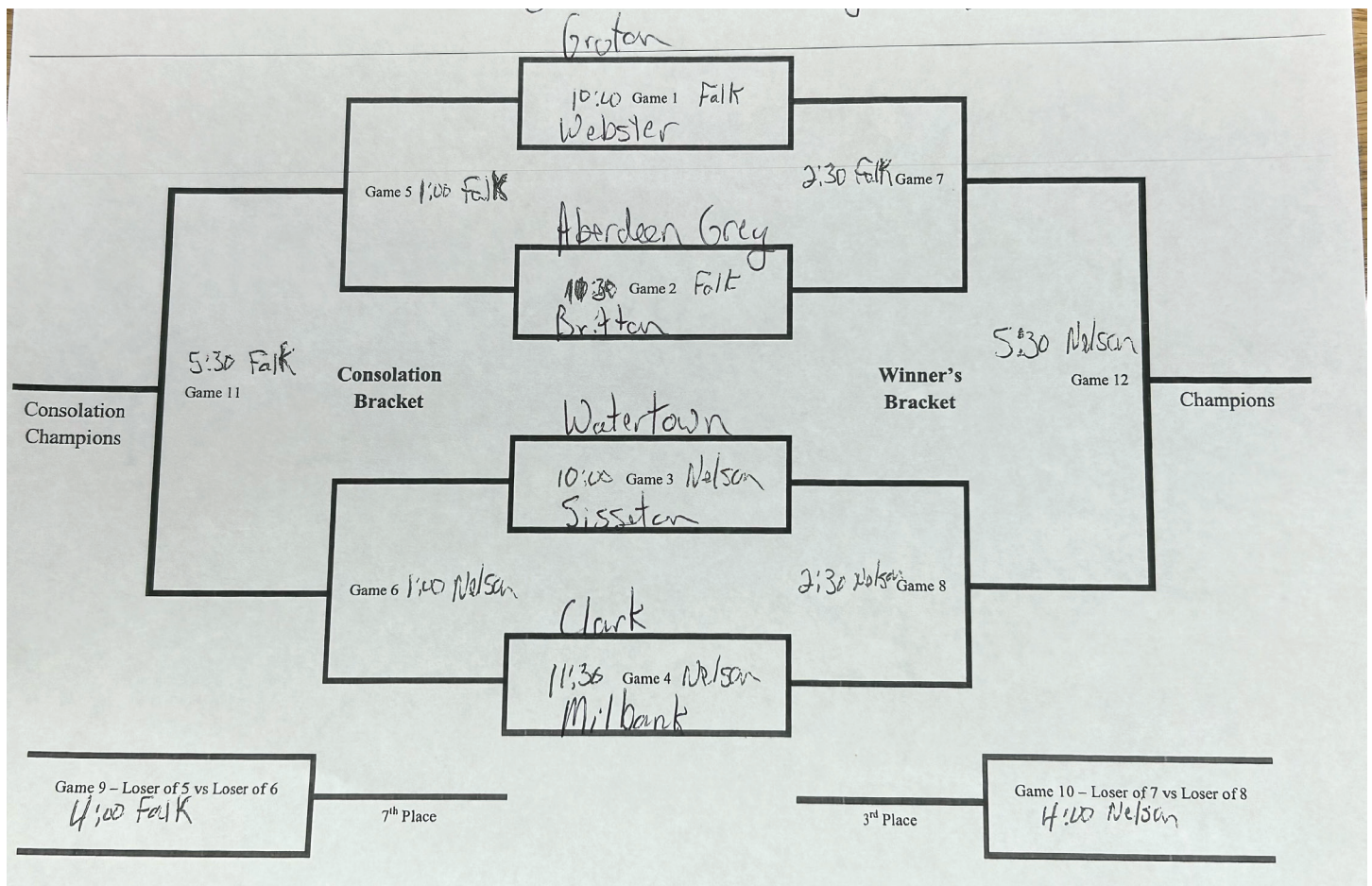
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executive model—as obsolete and inapplicable to the republican manners of the United States.

The purpose of this new constitutional arrangement for foreign affairs, a distinctively American contribution to politics and political science, was to require and implement collective decision-making—joint participation, consultation and concurrence—by the political branches in the formulation, conduct and management of the nation's foreign policy. The Framers supposed that the infusion into the foreign policy process of checks and balances would maintain the constitutional allocation of powers and, therefore, prevent unilateralism, aggrandizement and usurpation. They believed that the structure of shared powers in the conduct of international affairs, bottomed on the premise and promise of legislative deliberation, would produce wise policies and, in the words of Wilson, "a security to the people," for it would afford in Congress an airing of the various political, economic and military interests that were bound up in the nation's external relations.

## Groton U12 Tourney for Today



## T.C Schuster's Big Day Propels Groton Jr. Legion Past Clear Lake

By GameChanger Media

T.C Schuster collected three hits in three at bats, as Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion defeated Clear Lake 12-1 on Saturday. Schuster tripled in the third inning, singled in the fourth inning, and singled in the fifth inning.

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion were the first to get on the board in the first when Nick Groeblichhoff singled, scoring one run.

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion added to their early lead in the bottom of the third inning when Schuster tripled, scoring two runs, and Groeblichhoff singled, scoring one run.

Kason Oswald earned the win for Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion. The hurler surrendered three hits and one run over five innings, striking out two and walking two. Gabe took the loss for Clear Lake. The starting pitcher went four innings, surrendering 12 runs on 11 hits, striking out four and walking six.

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion accumulated 11 hits in the game. Schuster and Groeblichhoff were a force together in the lineup, as they each collected three hits for Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion. Groeblichhoff drove the middle of the lineup, leading Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion with four runs batted in. The left-handed hitter went 3-for-4 on the day. Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion had a strong eye at the plate, piling up six walks for the game. Lincoln Krause and Alex Abeln led the team with two walks each. Krause, Braeden Fliehs, and Schuster each stole multiple bases for Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion. Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion ran wild on the base paths, tallying 10 stolen bases for the game.

Brock led Clear Lake with one run batted in. Gabe, Asher, and Kyler each collected one hit for Clear Lake.

Next up for Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion is a game at W.I.N. On Monday.

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## Clear Lake 1 - 12 Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion

📍 Home 📅 Saturday June 28, 2025

	1	2	3	4	5	R	H	E
CLRL	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	1
GRTN	1	0	3	4	4	12	11	1

### BATTING

Clear Lake	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
Asher #5 (C)	3	0	1	0	0	0
Riley #11 (LF)	3	0	0	0	0	1
Gray #8 (SS)	2	0	0	0	0	0
Gabe #4 (P)	2	1	1	0	0	0
Jayden #1 (1B)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kyler #10 (CF)	2	0	1	0	0	0
Brock #18 (3B)	2	0	0	1	0	0
Kolton #27 (RF)	2	0	0	0	0	1
Clark #7 (2B)	1	0	0	0	1	0
Kenton #9	1	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

**TB:** Kyler, Asher, Gabe, **HBP:** Jayden 2, **SB:** Asher, **LOB:** 6

### PITCHING

Clear Lake	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
Gabe #4	4.0	11	12	12	6	4	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>

**L:** Gabe, **P-S:** Gabe 112-55, **HBP:** Gabe 2, **BF:** Gabe 31

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
A Abeln #5 (C)	2	2	0	0	2	0
L Krause #2 (CF)	2	3	1	1	2	1
T Schuster #3 (SS)	3	3	3	3	1	0
N Groeb... #13 (DH)	4	0	3	4	0	0
B Fliehs #19 (1B)	3	1	1	2	0	0
J Schwan #11 (2B)	2	0	1	0	1	0
X Ellene... #21 (RF)	2	0	0	0	0	2
I Scean... #20 (3B)	2	0	0	0	0	0
L Shilh... #22 (2B)	1	1	1	0	0	0
T McGan... #22 (LF)	2	2	1	0	0	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>

**2B:** B Fliehs, **3B:** T Schuster, **TB:** J Schwan, T McGannon, N Groeblichhoff 3, L Shilhanek, L Krause, B Fliehs 2, T Schuster 5, **CS:** N Groeblichhoff, **HBP:** T McGannon, X Ellenecker, **SB:** J Schwan, T McGannon, N Groeblichhoff, A Abeln, L Krause 2, B Fliehs 2, T Schuster 2, **LOB:** 5

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
K Oswald #12	5.0	3	1	1	2	2	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

**W:** K Oswald, **P-S:** K Oswald 64-40, **HBP:** K Oswald 2, **BF:** K Oswald 22

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## **Shilhanek With 3 Hits As Groton Jr. Teeners Beat Clear Lake**

**By GameChanger Media**

Lincoln Shilhanek collected three hits in four at bats, as Groton Jr. Teeners 14U defeated Clear Lake 14U 18-3 on Saturday. Shilhanek doubled in the second inning, singled in the first inning, and singled in the fourth inning.

Clear Lake 14U opened the scoring in the first after Asher Bauman doubled, scoring one run.

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U flipped the game on its head in the bottom of the first, scoring five runs on three hits to take the lead, 5-1. The biggest blow in the inning was a single by Kolton Antonsen that drove in two.

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U added three runs in the second. Shilhanek doubled down the left field line on an 0-2 count, making the score 8-1.

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U added to their early lead in the bottom of the third inning after Sam Crank stole home, and Noah Scepaniak grounded out, each scoring one run.

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U scored eight runs on five hits in the bottom of the fourth inning. Shilhanek singled, scoring one run, Zach Fliehs singled, scoring one run, Keegan Kucker drew a walk, scoring one run, an error scored one run, an error scored two runs, Trayce Schelle singled, scoring one run, and an error scored one run.

Antonsen earned the win for Groton Jr. Teeners 14U. The hurler gave up seven hits and three runs (one earned) over four innings, striking out three and walking none. Gray Holden took the loss for Clear Lake 14U. The starting pitcher went three and two-thirds innings, giving up 18 runs (eight earned) on 12 hits, striking out four and walking six.

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U collected 12 hits in the game. Jordan Schwan, Schelle, and Wesley Borg each collected multiple hits for Groton Jr. Teeners 14U. Schelle paced Groton Jr. Teeners 14U with two walks. Overall, the team had patience at the plate, piling up six walks for the game. Schwan and Schelle each stole multiple bases for Groton Jr. Teeners 14U. Groton Jr. Teeners 14U ran wild on the base paths, tallying six stolen bases for the game. Groton Jr. Teeners 14U turned one double play in the game.

Holden went 2-for-2 at the plate to lead Clear Lake 14U in hits. Bauman, Kenton Timmons, and Riley Sattler each drove in one run for Clear Lake 14U. Holden stole two bases.

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## **The Life of Duane Kurtz**

Funeral services for Duane Kurtz, 82, of Aberdeen and formerly of Groton will be 11 a.m., Wednesday, July 2, 2025, at Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton. The Rev. Jeremy Yeadon will officiate. Burial will follow in Sunset Memorial Gardens, Aberdeen under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel.



Visitation will be held at the funeral chapel on Tuesday from 5-7 p.m.

Duane passed away June 26, 2025 at Avantara Groton.

Duane D. was born on October 23, 1942 to Darrel and Cora (Jensen) Kurtz on the family farm near Groton. At the age of 6, he got polio and many doctor trips to Sioux Falls ensued. He was able to walk with his right leg and life went on for him. Duane went to Joan of Arc Country School through the 8th grade and graduated from Groton High School in 1962. Duane worked on the farm and helped neighbors. He moved to Grand Island, NE where he worked for his uncle. Duane came back in 1970 to help on the family farm. In 2001, he began working for Golden Living Center in Groton as a CNA. He later did home health care for several people. Duane retired in 2019 and spent his free time growing a little garden and taking care of his house plants.

Grateful for having shared his life are his sisters, Shirley Simon, Lois (Victor) Schwahn, Karon Kurtz, many cousins, nieces, nephews and great-nieces and great-nephews. He is also survived by his sister-in-law, Sue Kurtz and brother-in-law, John Blocker.

Preceding him in death were his parents, two sisters, Myrtle Blocker and Connie Olson, two brothers, Darwin (Joyce) Kurtz and Dennis Kurtz, his brother-in-law, Tom Simon and niece Stacie Olson.

The family would like to give heartfelt thanks to Avera Hospice and the Avantara Nursing Home Staff.



## **Charles Mix County Fatal Crash**

What: Single vehicle fatal crash  
Where: 394th Ave. and 299th Street, four miles south of Wagner, SD  
When: 1:45 a.m. Saturday, June 28, 2025

Driver 1: 44-year-old female from Yankton, SD, fatal injuries  
Vehicle 1: 2002 Ford F-150  
Seat belt Used: No  
Passenger 1a: 47-year-old male from Wagner, SD, minor injuries  
Seat belt Used: No

Charles Mix County, S.D.- A Yankton woman sustained fatal injuries in a single vehicle crash early Saturday morning, four miles south of Wagner, SD.

The names of the persons involved have not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates the driver of a 2002 Ford F-150 was traveling north on 394th Avenue, approaching 299th Street. The driver lost control of the vehicle and overcorrected, causing the vehicle to go into a yaw and overturn, coming to rest in the ditch.

The driver was taken to a nearby hospital where she died from her injuries. A passenger in the truck sustained minor injuries.

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

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



**Tornado near  
Clear Lake last  
night**

**ALEX BARTHOLOMEW/TSC**

## **Aurora County Fatal Crash**

What: Two vehicle fatal crash

Where: 252nd Street and 383rd Avenue, three miles northwest of Plankinton, SD

When: 12:57 p.m. Friday, June 27, 2025

Driver 1: 33-year-old male from Sioux Falls, SD, minor injuries

Vehicle 1: 2003 Chevrolet

Seat belt Used: Under investigation

Driver 2: 53-year-old male from Mount Vernon, SD, fatal injuries

Vehicle 2: 2012 Dodge Ram 3500

Seat belt Used: No

Passenger V2: 24-year-old male from Mount Vernon, SD, minor injuries

Seat belt Used: Under investigation

Aurora County, S.D.- A Mount Vernon man sustained fatal injuries in a two vehicle crash early Friday afternoon, three miles northwest of Plankinton, SD.

The names of the persons involved have not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates the driver of a 2003 Chevrolet was traveling eastbound on 252nd Street near Plankinton and failed to yield when entering the intersection at 383rd Avenue. The vehicle collided with a northbound Dodge Ram 3500 which caused it to roll, and both vehicles entered the northeast ditch.

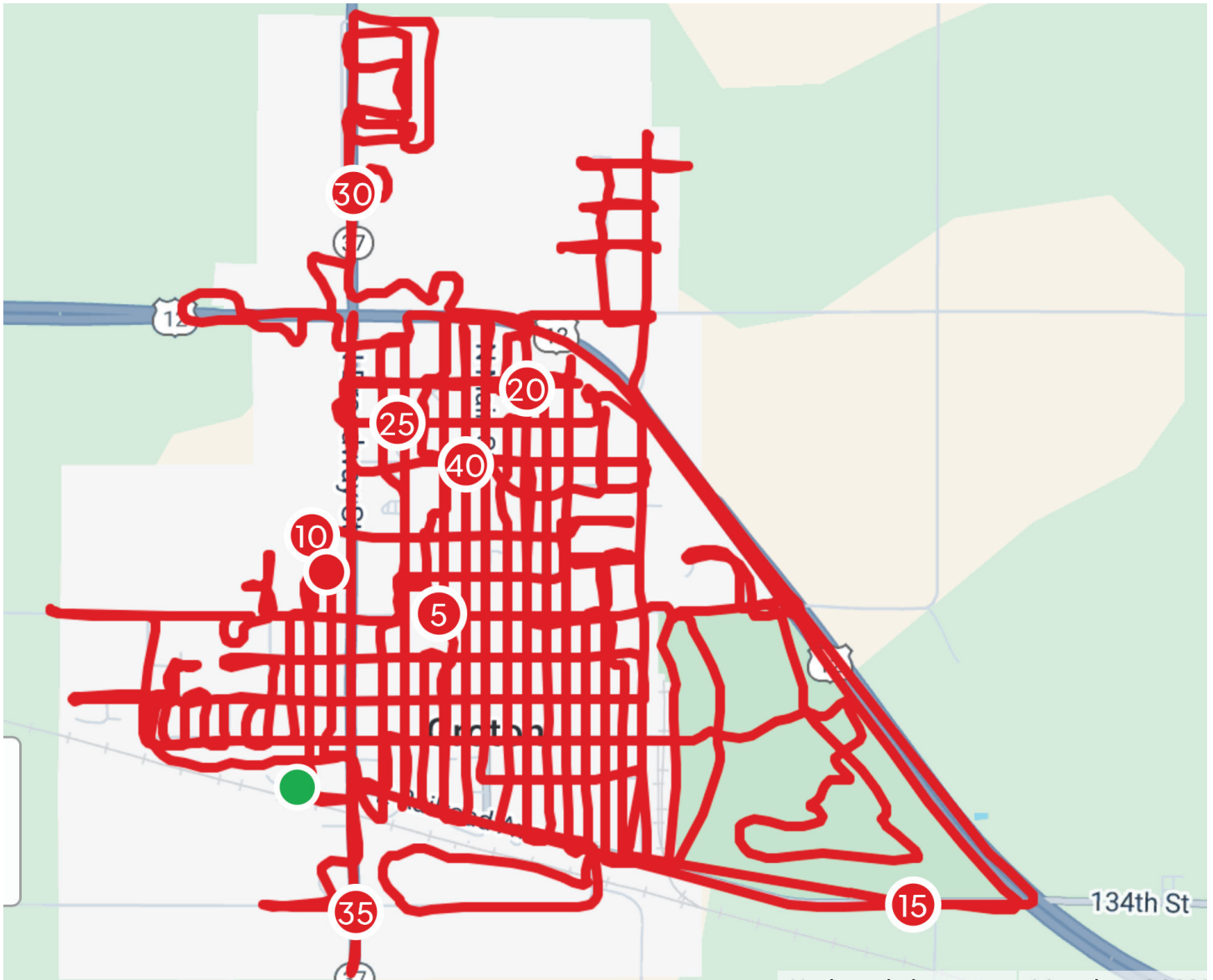
The driver of the Chevrolet sustained minor injuries. The driver of the Dodge died at the scene. A passenger in the Dodge sustained minor injuries.

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

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

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## Adult Mosquito Control

The City of Groton conducted adult mosquito control Saturday night. The temperature was 77-82 degrees with the wind out of the NE at 5-10 mph (up to 15 mph for about 20 minutes). 10.5 gallons of Perm-X UL 4-4 was used. Travel time was 2 hours and 43 minutes with a distance of 37.75 miles. During my travels I saw 9 rabbits, 2 horses and 1 deer. Total cost of the application was around \$510.





## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### US Senate Republican leaders rework details of mega-bill ahead of key vote

**BY: ASHLEY MURRAY AND SHAUNEEN MIRANDA - JUNE 28, 2025 4:17 PM**

WASHINGTON — Senate Republicans appeared to be poised to vote Saturday afternoon on moving ahead with the massive tax and spending cut bill that President Donald Trump wants on his desk in less than a week.

Senate GOP leaders released new bill text just before midnight Friday that satisfied rural state lawmakers' concerns over financial threats to rural hospitals posed by cuts in Medicaid. The bill also addresses concerns from Sens. Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan of Alaska on access to food assistance for their constituents despite new restrictions on a USDA program for low-income people.

As talks continued on Capitol Hill Saturday afternoon, a handful of Senate Republicans, including Missouri's Eric Schmitt and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, were on the golf course with Trump, according to the White House. Graham said on social media that Kentucky's Rand Paul also played.

Senate Democrats said a fresh financial analysis from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated the preliminary Senate text would result in \$930 billion in cuts over 10 years to Medicaid, the joint federal-state low-income health insurance and disability assistance program.

The CBO score was not yet publicly available but Sen. Ron Wyden, the top Democrat on the Senate Committee on Finance, pointed to it and slammed the Medicaid provisions as "cruel" in a statement Saturday afternoon.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, ranking Democrat on the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, also cited the preliminary analysis, pointing to the nearly \$1 trillion in Medicaid cuts. The House version was scored by CBO as making about \$800 billion in Medicaid cuts over 10 years.

#### Collins promises amendments

Senate Republicans planned to take their negotiations to the floor and push for amendments after a procedural vote that will trigger official debate on the bill, which in its current public version runs 940 pages.

GOP Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, who voiced concerns throughout negotiations about rural hospitals and health cuts that would harm low-income individuals, said her vote on what is called a motion to proceed "does not predict my vote on final passage."

"I will be filing a number of amendments," she told reporters as she headed into a closed-door working lunch before the Senate convened at 2 p.m. Eastern.

Republican Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina told reporters Wednesday afternoon that he will vote "no" on both the procedural vote and final passage.

While Sen. Tim Sheehy wrote on social media Saturday afternoon that he was a "no" on the motion to proceed because of a provision to sell off federal public lands, the Montana Republican changed his mind nearly an hour later and declared he would propose an amendment to strip provision.

The latest version of the measure, championed by GOP Sen. Mike Lee of Utah, sets up the Interior Department to sell at least 600,000 acres of public land and up to 1.2 million acres of public land within 10 years, advocates said.

Critics, including hunters, anglers and other Western state constituents, have ripped the measure as a "land grab," as put by Jennifer Rokala, executive director for the Center for Western Priorities.

A summary of the provisions by the Energy and Natural Resources Committee said the Bureau of Land

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Management “must sell a minimum of 0.25% and a maximum of 0.50% of their estate for housing and associated community needs. This will increase the supply of housing and decrease housing costs for millions of American families.”

GOP Sen. Markwayne Mullin of Oklahoma painted somewhat of a rosier picture of the mood in the Senate, telling reporters “we’re good.”

“We won’t bring it to the floor if we don’t have the votes,” said Mullin, who was the lead negotiator with House Republicans on state and local tax deductions, or SALT — a sticking point for Republicans who represent high-tax blue states like New York and California.

The lawmakers settled on a \$40,000 deduction through 2029 for taxpayers who earn up to \$500,000 annually. The level then reverts to \$10,000, the current limit under the 2017 tax law.

## Medicaid turmoil

Proposed changes to Medicaid have been strongly resisted by rural medical providers who say they are already financially strapped.

Missouri Republican Sen. Josh Hawley said he’s a “yes” on both the motion to proceed vote and the final bill based on the new rural hospital “transformation program” Senate leadership included in the bill overnight. The measure has yet to be finalized.

The bill’s new version includes \$25 billion in a stabilization fund for rural hospitals from 2028 through 2032. The amount is frontloaded to give more of the funds in the first two years.

Critics warn that amount will not fill the financial gaps that rural medical providers will face from losing a sizable portion of federal funding via Medicaid cuts.

While Hawley called the fund a “win” for Missouri over the next several years, he said his party needs to do some “soul searching” over the “unhappy episode” of wrangling over Medicaid cuts.

“If you want to be a working-class party, you’ve got to deliver for working-class people. You cannot take away health care for working people,” he said.

Senators had not yet agreed on other Medicaid provisions as of Saturday afternoon, including a phase-down of the provider tax rate from 6% to a possible 3.5% that’s become hugely controversial.

States use a combination of general revenues, provider tax revenues and in some cases local contributions to fund their Medicaid programs.

Advocates warn that it’s not a guarantee states would be able to backfill the lost revenue, and if they can’t, provider rate cuts and losses of benefits for patients could be on the horizon.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found that the House version’s provider tax changes — not as deep as the current Senate proposal — could lead to 400,000 people losing Medicaid benefits.

A full and final financial score for the Senate bill is not yet out as the several provisions remain up in the air.

Hawley also praised the inclusion of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act fund, or RECA, that revives payments for survivors and victims who suffered cancer as a result of U.S. atomic bomb testing and radioactive waste dumps.

## Clean energy tax credits

In what clean power advocates dubbed a “midnight dumping,” Senate GOP leadership added language to accelerate the phase out of clean energy tax credits that were enacted under Democrats’ own massive mega-bill in 2022 titled the “Inflation Reduction Act.”

The language, which wasn’t yet finalized by Senate GOP tax writers as of 6 p.m. Eastern Saturday, tightened restrictions on foreign components in wind and solar projects — and added a new tax on those that don’t comply.

Senators largely targeted wind and solar credits, ending them for projects not plugged into the electricity grid by 2028. Additionally credits for wind turbine manufacturers would terminate in 2028.

Other tax credits would be phased out at a faster pace, including those for the production of critical

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minerals, though a credit for metallurgical coal, used in steelmaking, was added in.

Clean energy industry manufacturers and small businesses had hoped Senate Republicans would ease up rollbacks in the House version.

Kurt Neutgens, president and chief technology officer of Orange EV, told States Newsroom in an interview Friday that any further rollbacks would amount to "cutting our legs out from underneath us."

Neutgens, whose Kansas City, Kansas-based company manufactures heavy duty electric trucks and chargers, was watching for changes to credits to the commercial clean vehicles credit. New Senate GOP text would terminate the credit in September of this year.

Jason Grumet, president of the Clean Power Association, said in a statement Saturday that imposing new taxes on the industry "will strand hundreds of billions of dollars in current investments, threaten energy security, and undermine growth in domestic manufacturing and land hardest on rural communities who would have been the greatest beneficiaries of clean energy investment."

## Alaska carve-outs

Proposed cuts to federal food assistance remained largely unchanged in the new text released Friday night except for a few carve-outs for Alaska.

If the bill were enacted as written, Alaska's state government could request a waiver for its citizens from stricter work reporting requirements that critics say will result in some SNAP recipients losing their food benefits.

GOP lawmakers also slightly shifted the timeline for when states will have to begin shouldering SNAP costs — the first time states will be on the hook for the federal food assistance outside of administrative costs.

States would be required to pick up a portion of the costs depending on their "payment error rate" — meaning how accurate states are at determining who needs SNAP, including both overpayments and underpayments.

States that have error rates at 6% or above would be responsible for up to 15% of the food program's cost. According to SNAP error rate data for 2023, the latest available, only seven states had an error rate below 6%.

The new text delays the cost-sharing for states until 2028 and allows states to choose the lesser of their two error rates in either 2025 or 2026.

Starting in 2029, states will be required to use their error rate from three years prior to the current year.

The new text includes the option for Alaska and Hawaii to waive their cost share burden for up to two years if their governments implement an improvement plan. In 2023, Alaska had the highest payment error rate of all states, reaching just above 60%.

Advocates for low-income families worry the cost, which will amount to billions for most state governments, will incentivize states to tighten eligibility requirements for the program, or even drop SNAP altogether.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates the cuts will affect up to 40 million people who receive basic SNAP assistance, including 16 million children and 8 million seniors.

The Senate bill would also increase a state's share of administrative costs for the program to 75%, up from the previous 50% cost-sharing responsibility with the federal government.

Despite inaccurate public statements from Republicans as recently as in a bill summary released overnight, the bill does nothing to limit food assistance to immigrants without documentation because SNAP was never available to them.

SNAP benefits will remain available to legal permanent residents, and Republicans loosened some language to allow certain immigrants from Cuba or Haiti to access the program.

But if the bill passes, federal food assistance will not be available to refugees and asylees who are already in the U.S. — for example, people from Afghanistan, Ukraine and other war-torn places.

## Education revisions

Republicans on the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions revised or scrapped



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several measures that the parliamentarian deemed to not comply with the "Byrd Bath," a Senate process named for the late Sen. Robert Byrd, according to a summary and new bill text out Friday.

Under the revised text, for any loans made starting July 1, 2026, borrowers will have only two repayment plan options: a standard repayment plan and an income-driven repayment plan. The original proposal would have applied these restrictions to existing borrowers, but the parliamentarian struck that down.

Republicans also nixed a proposal that opened up the Pell Grant — a government subsidy that helps low-income students pay for college — to institutions that are not accredited.

The new plan also scraps a restriction that barred payments made by students enrolled in a medical or dental internship or residency program from counting toward Public Service Loan Forgiveness.

## 'Even worse than any draft'

Senate Democrats remain united in opposition to the bill and are expected to slow down final passage by introducing numerous amendments on the floor during what is called the vote-a-rama.

The lawmakers also planned to force a reading of the entire 940-page legislation on the floor ahead of the vote.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer continued to rally against the package during remarks on the Senate floor Saturday afternoon, saying it's "hard to believe this bill is worse — even worse — than any draft we've seen this far."

The New York Democrat said "it's worse on health care, it's worse on SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), it's worse on the deficit."

Schumer added that "if Republicans proceed, Senate Democrats will hold them to account."

"We'll gear up for another night of vote-a-rama very soon. We'll expose this bill piece by piece. We will show how it cuts health care, raises costs, rewards the ultra rich."

The left-leaning Center on Budget and Policy Priorities condemned the cuts to safety net programs as "all in service to tax cuts that are heavily skewed toward the wealthy and corporations."

"None of this harm has anything to do with fiscal responsibility: our deficits and debts would soar under this bill," said Sharon Parrott, the think tank's president, in a statement Saturday.

The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, a nonpartisan watchdog, released a new analysis Saturday finding the Senate version will add roughly \$4 trillion to the national deficit over 10 years.

"If you thought the House bill borrowed too much — and it did — the Senate manages to make things even worse," CRFB's president Maya MacGuineas said in a statement.

## House action

Senate Republicans have spent more than a month rewriting the bills that make up the measure in order to meet the strict rules for moving a budget reconciliation package and to earn support from enough Republicans to actually pass the legislation.

The lawmakers have been struggling to maintain spending cuts passed by House Republicans that will pay for the nearly \$4 trillion price tag for extending and expanding the 2017 tax cuts.

The House voted 215-214 to approve its 11-bill version of the package in May. Many of that chamber's GOP lawmakers hoped the Senate wouldn't change much, though that hasn't been the case.

The Senate has modified numerous proposals, including those addressing tax law; Medicaid; and SNAP. The Senate bill also raises the country's debt limit by \$5 trillion, a full \$1 trillion more than the House version.

The revisions have led to concerns among both centrist House GOP lawmakers and far-right members of the party, muddying the waters around whether Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., can cobble together the votes needed to clear the package for Trump's signature.

Republicans hold a 220-212 majority in the House, so leaders there can only lose four members if all of the chamber's lawmakers are present and voting.

Trump has encouraged Congress to approve the legislation before the Fourth of July, but with time running short and some tempers rising over how the legislation will impact the country's deficits, that might

not be possible.

"The Great Republicans in the U.S. Senate are working all weekend to finish our 'ONE, BIG, BEAUTIFUL BILL,'" Trump posted on social media Friday.

"The House of Representatives must be ready to send it to my desk before July 4th — We can get it done," he added. "It will be a wonderful Celebration for our Country, which is right now, 'The Hottest Country anywhere in the World' — And to think, just last year, we were a laughingstock. Thank you for your attention to this matter!"

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

*Shauneen Miranda is a reporter for States Newsroom's Washington bureau. An alumna of the University of Maryland, she previously covered breaking news for Axios.*

## COMMENTARY

### 'Beautiful' bill is good for pipeline companies but ugly for the rest of us

by Betty Strom

I may be best-known for my battles with pipeline companies, both Summit Carbon's proposed carbon dioxide pipeline and the Dakota Access oil pipeline. I had the distinction of being named first in the land-owners' lawsuit against Summit's efforts to force their way onto our land, which wound its way to the state Supreme Court, where we prevailed last year.

It's well-established that many South Dakotans do not care for the carbon dioxide pipeline, but the U.S. House's budget reconciliation bill fails to repeal a massive handout to carbon companies with 45Q tax credits. This corporate welfare is why companies like Summit persist in pushing projects we don't want. Our lone representative, Congressman Dusty Johnson, voted yes on the bill. It's now under consideration in the Senate.

He touted all the reasons this "big, beautiful bill" will be good for South Dakota, but good for whom, exactly? He doesn't mention billions of dollars in 45Q tax credits at all, but cheerfully explains reductions to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Medicaid. He seems quite proud of the cuts and work requirements that will leave more South Dakotans hungry and lacking in health care. Not to mention the negative impacts on our grocery stores and small health care facilities.

As a pipeline fighter, folks may be surprised at my concern over cuts to food assistance and health care access, but I taught for over 30 years in our public schools, so I understand how budgets affect people's lives. I also have direct experience with helping disabled people acquire that designation, and let me tell you, that is a difficult and lengthy process. It may take years for people who are not able to work to be recognized as disabled by the government. These cuts will be devastating for them.

So when I hear that these budget cuts will help reduce waste and fraud, I call foul. Currently over 75,000 South Dakotans utilize SNAP, so these cuts will be felt everywhere. The work requirements may sound like common sense until you dig in. The cut-off age for a dependent child is 7 years; what this means is that if you are a parent on SNAP, you must work 20 hours per week if your youngest child is 7 or older, whether or not you have child care or how far you have to drive to get to that job. Or even if there is a job to be had.

We all know people's budgets are tight, and this is reflected by Feeding South Dakota, which has reported a 15% increase in usage over last year. They are already struggling to meet people's needs, so what will happen if these cuts are implemented? Hunger is what will happen.

Next, let's consider our state budget, which had to be trimmed this past legislative session. The U.S. House version of the budget reconciliation bill would make South Dakota absorb a reported \$9 million to \$18 million in costs shifted to the states as early as 2028 in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program,

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known as SNAP. Can we tighten our belts that much?

If all this weren't enough, let's look at how health care would be hurt by the Medicaid cuts. Nearly 150,000 South Dakotans are enrolled in Medicaid, and many of these folks are senior citizens and people with disabilities. If fewer people can be covered, our health care facilities will feel the pinch immediately because even though people may not have coverage, they still get sick and injured.

As for how this will impact hospitals and clinics, this quote from Shelley Ten Napel in South Dakota Searchlight on May 29 says it best: "The proposed cuts will be especially harmful to rural South Dakota. When coverage rates fall, rural health centers lose critical funding – putting access to primary care, maternal care, dental services and behavioral health at risk for everyone in those communities."

Thousands of South Dakotans already travel considerable distances for a doctor's visit, and these cuts will make a bad situation worse if closures start. Plus, those are jobs lost from communities, another blow.

I don't think this bill is as beautiful as Rep. Johnson makes it out to be. The pipeline companies got a rosy deal, but it looks pretty ugly for the rest of us.

*Betty Strom is a landowner and retired teacher from Sioux Falls. She has spent years defending her land against pipeline companies and is a member of Dakota Rural Action.*



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## THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

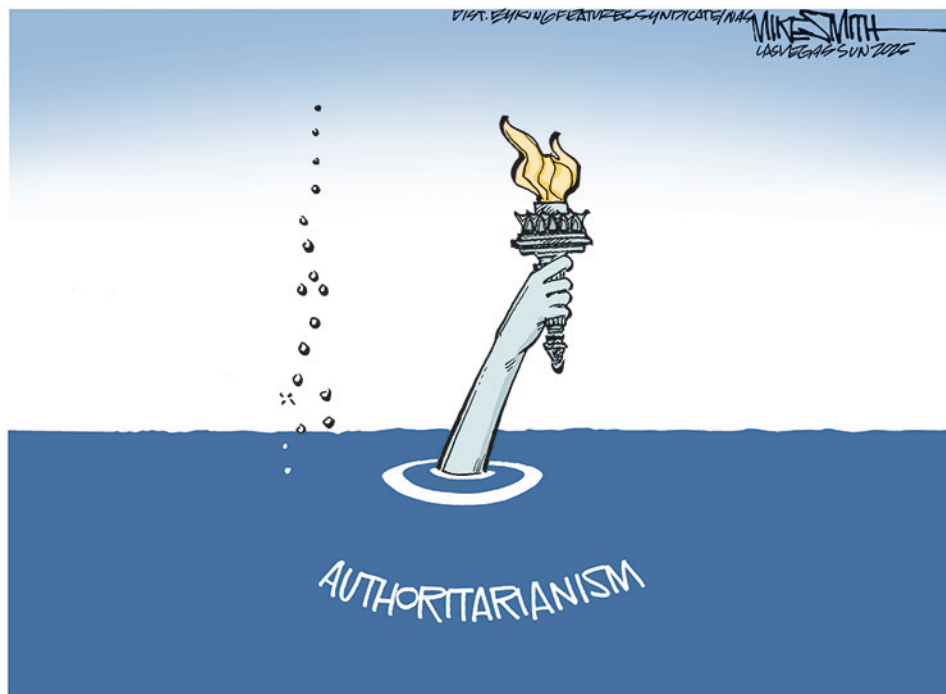
*Then Samuel said to the people,  
“Do not fear. You have done  
all this wickedness; yet do not  
turn aside from following  
the Lord, but serve the Lord  
with all your heart.”*

❧ 1 SAMUEL 12:20 ❧



Detail of “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” (1920)

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## BIBLE

## TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. In Galatians, "Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through \_\_\_\_\_ serve one another." *Friendship, Honesty, Love, Hope*

3. From 2 Corinthians, "Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is \_\_\_\_\_." *Hope, Freedom, Love, Liberty*

4. In John 8, "If the \_\_\_\_\_ therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." *Heart, Worship, Celebration, Son*

5. From what book's 6:7 does it say, "For he that is dead is freed from sin"? *Isaiah, Daniel, Mark, Romans*

6. How many times is the word "independence" mentioned in the Bible? *0, 2, 11, 17*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Love, 3) Liberty, 4) Son, 5) Romans, 6) Zero

*"Test Your Bible Knowledge," a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online.*

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**FLASH GORDON**  
Character Profile:  
*Dale Arden*



**AN AIRPLANE IS TORN ASUNDER BY A FREAK METEOR SHOWER!**

THAT FATEFUL FLIGHT BRINGS RAVEN-HAIRED BEAUTY DALE ARDEN INTO THE ARMS OF WORLD-RENOUNDED ATHLETE FLASH GORDON.

SINCE THEN THEIR LIVES HAVE BEEN BOUND TOGETHER... FACING ADVENTURES UNDREAMED OF IN THE HOPES OF SAVING A WORLD ON THE BRINK OF DESTRUCTION!

**FLASH GORDON**  
BY JIM KEEFE 6/15



WITH WARTOG'S ATTENTION DIVERTED, HIS CONTROL OVER PRINCE THUN FALTERS.

THUN'S HESITATING... UNCERTAIN...

MEANWHILE, ON THE BALCONY ABOVE THE ARENA...



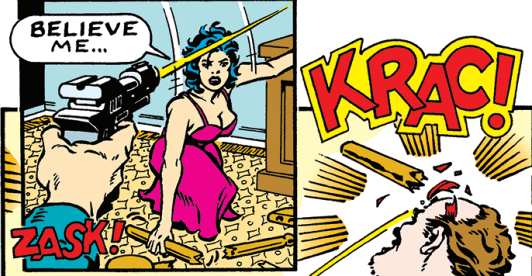
RELEASE PRINCE THUN FROM YOUR MIND CONTROL, WARTOG, OR ELSE...

YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME... OR ELSE WHAT?!



YOU FORGET... WITH MY HEADPIECE I CONTROL FAR MORE THAN JUST THE MIND OF YOUR FRIEND PRINCE THUN!

BELIEVE ME...



**KRAC!**

**ZASK!**



...I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN!


**NEXT: LOST MINDS!**

## Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



CROSSWINDS CAN BE A TOUGH CHALLENGE, BUT THEY CAN ALSO GIVE YOU AN EDGE — ESPECIALLY ON TEE SHOTS.

JM



YOU'LL GET MORE DISTANCE IN A LEFT-TO-RIGHT WIND BY TEEING UP LEFT AND HITTING DOWN THE LEFT SIDE, LETTING THE BREEZE BLOW THE BALL BACK TO THE CENTER OF THE FAIRWAY.

THE REVERSE, OF COURSE, APPLIES IN A RIGHT-TO-LEFT WIND — TEE UP RIGHT, THEN HIT DOWN THE RIGHT SIDE.

0626

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## Immunity to Rubella Does Not Equal Immunity to Measles

DEAR DR. ROACH: I read a recent column of yours in which you said that everyone my age can assume we've had measles. I remember having measles in the second grade but have a vague memory of my parents calling it German measles, which I believe is rubella.

If a person has had either, do they have immunity to both types of measles? -- S.F.

ANSWER: If you were born before 1957, you are likely but not 100% sure to be immune to measles (sometimes called red measles) and mumps. However, rubella (German measles) is a different disease, and immunity to one does not ensure immunity to the other.

The biggest health concern with rubella is when a woman of childbearing age contracts it as the potential damage to her developing fetus can be severe. So, every woman who could get pregnant is tested for immunity at the earliest opportunity. All health care workers should have documented immunity to measles, mumps and rubella.

The United States is in the middle of a large measles outbreak now, and those living in an area with transmission should be sure that they are immune to measles. This can be done by checking blood antibody levels or giving an extra dose to those who have already been immunized (or two doses to those who have never been immunized).

At the time that I write this, there is no rubella outbreak in the U.S., but if there is, the advice will be similar to demonstrating immunity to rubella as it is for measles.

\*\*\*

DEAR DR. ROACH: Would you say a 1/2 teaspoon of baking soda in my water every morning would give me a more alkaline system? -- L.M.

ANSWER: Baking soda is basic or alkali on the pH scale. If you put a 1/2 teaspoon in a large glass of water, the pH of the resulting solution will be around 8.3 or so. However, as soon as you drink it, the acid in your stomach will overwhelm the baking soda since stomach acid is a lot stronger an acid than baking soda is a base.

Furthermore, your body has robust systems to keep your body's pH regulated at just around 7.4. Your kidneys and lungs will quickly act to maintain your body's pH, whether you take in a lot of alkaline like baking soda or a whole lot of acid like lemon juice or lemonade.

These pH regulatory systems have evolved to keep the blood pH at a slightly alkaline level, and even small changes from this level usually represent serious illness. You don't want to change your blood pH.

\*\*\*

DR. ROACH WRITES: A recent column on Raynaud's phenomenon generated several comments from readers. One person was disappointed I didn't mention that Raynaud's can affect the feet, but they are right that it can.

Another person noted relief by taking fish oil twice daily. The medical literature suggests that this can be of benefit for those with primary Raynaud's -- meaning when it's not in combination with a rheumatologic disease.

Another suggestion was magnesium, which helped another reader out. Since fish oil and magnesium are low-risk interventions, I wanted to pass these on with thanks to the readers who wrote in with their experiences.

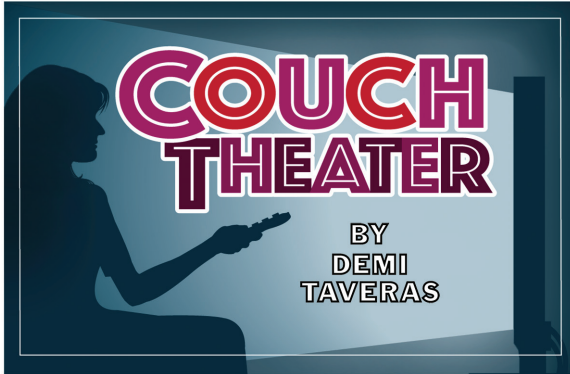
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to [ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu](mailto:ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu).

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"Thunderbolts" (PG-13) -- Although this latest Marvel film underperformed slightly at the box office, trailing behind its predecessor "Captain America: Brave New World," it still received positive reviews from critics and landed well with Marvel fans. Led by Florence Pugh, who reprises her role as Yelena from "Black Widow," "Thunderbolts" follows a group of ex-mercenaries who are baited into a trap by CIA director Valentina Allegra de Fontaine (Julia Louis-Dreyfus) to cover up her illegal misdoings. After being thrown together haphazardly and forced to escape, this group of antiheroes eventually evolves into a full-fledged team, rivaling the CIA director and her corrupt plans. Sebastian Stan ("The Apprentice"), Wyatt Russell ("Night Swim"), and David Harbour ("Stranger Things") co-star in the film, out on July 1 to rent. (Apple TV+)

"The Alto Knights" (R) -- Director Barry Levinson hasn't struck gold with critics or audiences since his 2001 film "Bandits," which received two Golden Globe nominations. But perhaps signing on Robert De Niro to play the dual roles of two mobsters was Levinson's way of trying to bring back the appeal! This biographical crime-drama film out now follows mob boss Frank Costello and underboss Vito Genovese during the 1950s, just as an unsightly war begins between the two of them. What they couldn't have expected was that this war would lead to the inner workings of the American Mafia getting brought up to the surface for all the public to finally see. (Max)

"Trainwreck: The Astroworld Tragedy" (TV-MA) -- On Nov. 5, 2021, the third annual Astroworld Festival was held in Houston under the management of rapper Travis Scott. Approximately 50,000 people attended the event. While Scott was performing, a crowd crush occurred that killed 10 people and injuring hundreds in total. Although the crowd crush was declared a mass casualty event around 9:40 p.m., Scott continued to perform to fans who were crying out for him to stop until about 10:15 p.m. Featuring firsthand accounts from survivors, event workers and medical staff, this documentary out now details this terrifying concert experience that absolutely should have been prevented. (Netflix)

"Heads of State" (PG-13) -- Out on July 2, this action-comedy film stars John Cena as U.S. President Will Derringer and Idris Elba as U.K. Prime Minister Sam Clarke. (With John Cena as the president, expect heavier comedy than action.) A meeting on Air Force One between the two world leaders goes awry, and after miraculously surviving a plane crash, the pair must lean on each other's skills to get themselves to safety. Luckily, they also have the help of MI6 agent Noel Bisset (Priyanka Chopra-Jonas), who will travel day and night to protect Will and Sam from their adversaries. Jack Quaid ("The Boys") and Paddy Considine ("House of the Dragon") co-star. (Amazon Prime Video)

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**Austin Butler, left, and Callum Turner star in "Masters of the Air."**  
(Courtesy of Amazon MGM Studios)

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1. Which group wrote and released "How Can You Mend a Broken Heart"?
2. How did the Scottish group Bay City Rollers get their name?
3. What was the name of Herb Alpert's band?
4. Which group had a hit with "Windy"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Who's gonna ride that chrome three wheeler, Who's gonna make that first mistake."

Answers

1. The Bee Gees, in 1971. It was penned by brothers Robin and Barry Gibb and held the top slot on the charts for two weeks.
2. Their manager threw a dart at a map of the U.S. and it landed on Bay City, Michigan. Their only U.S. No. 1 song was "Saturday Night," released in 1975.
3. The Tijuana Brass. In the beginning there was only one member -- Alpert himself using a tape deck to record multiple layers of music to record his first single, "The Lonely Bull."
4. The Association, in 1967.
5. "Fire Lake," by Bob Seger & the Silver Bullet Band, in 1980. Partially penned in 1971, Seger hoped to include the song on his 1975 album, but it wasn't finished by then. It eventually made it onto his 1980 album, "Against the Wind."

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## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



## GRIN and BEAR IT

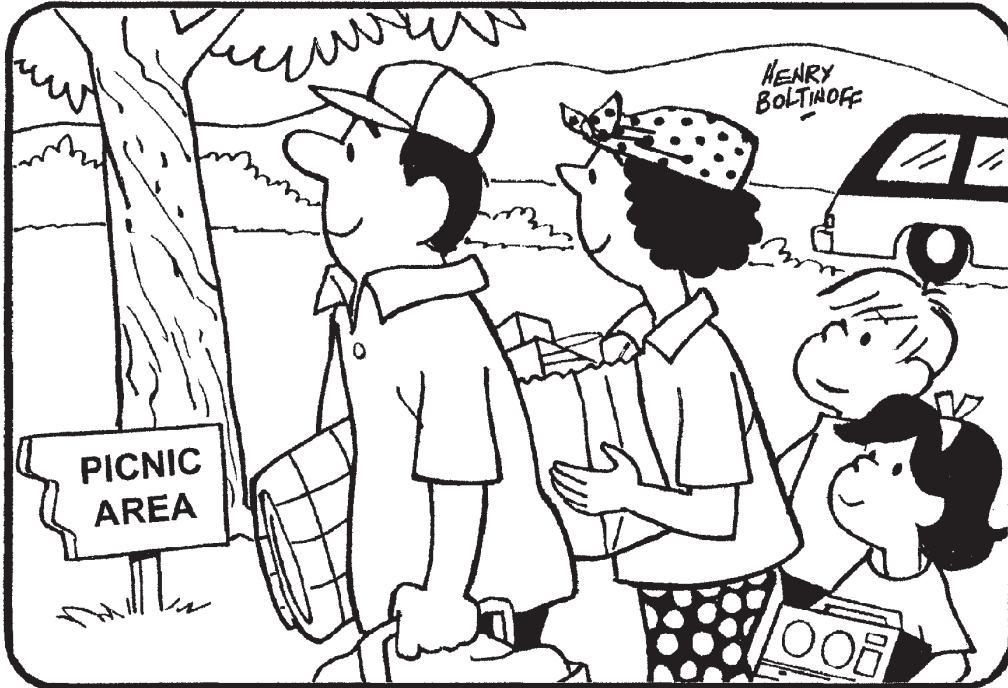


"And it's being offered with this alternative fuel option!"

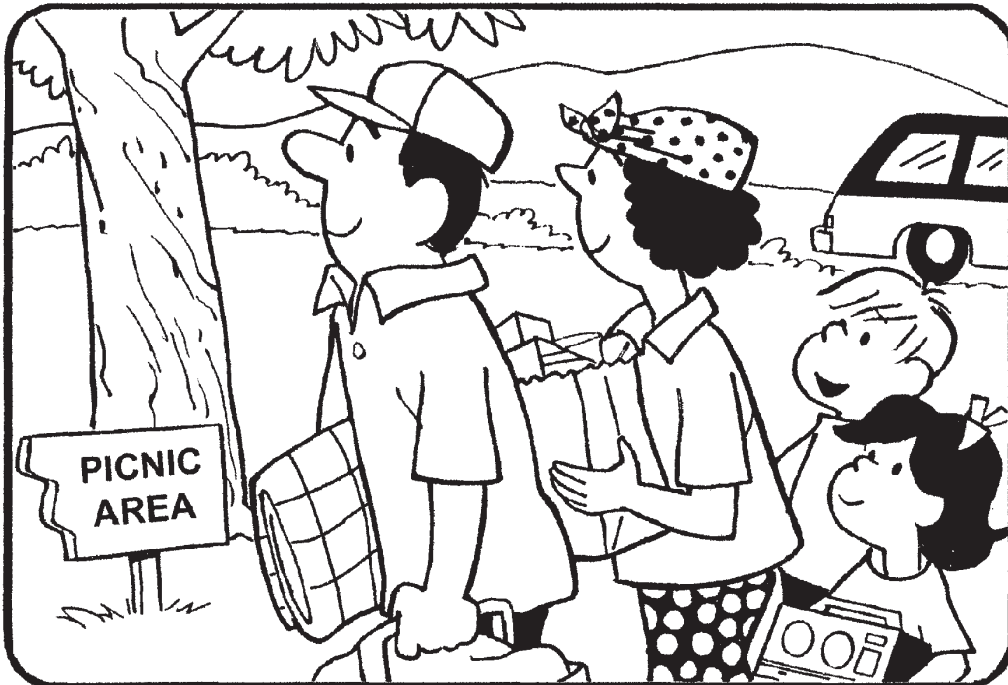


## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY  
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Cap is larger. 2. Hair ribbon is moved. 3. Thumb is moved. 4. Mouth is open. 5. Man is thinner. 6. Tree trunk is wider.



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\* "Check your mower to see if you are cutting your lawn to the optimum height. Generally, cutting grass to two and a half inches will allow it to retain more moisture, requiring less watering." -- O.F. in Alabama

\* Want to make that summer at-home pedicure last? Don't skip the base coat or a UV topcoat. The base coat will allow the color to adhere evenly and better. Then the topcoat will protect the color from the sun while giving it a little extra shine.

\* Did you know you can curl your hair with straws? Wind sections of damp hair around a plastic straw and secure the ends with a bobby pin. Allow to dry in the sun or use a hair dryer on low heat. Remove and spritz with hair spray.

\* Remove all of the air from a plastic storage bag with a drinking straw. Slip the straw into the bag and close as much as possible. Then suck any air out through the straw, and quickly pull out and close in a single motion. Your leftovers will stay fresh longer, and foods may stack better in the freezer.

\* "Necklaces can be stored together without tangling if you thread each one through a straw. You can cut the straw to a shorter length for bracelets or choker-length necklaces. No knots!" -- I.A. in Arizona

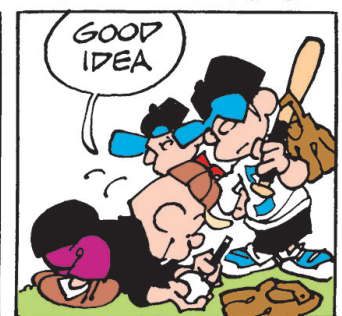
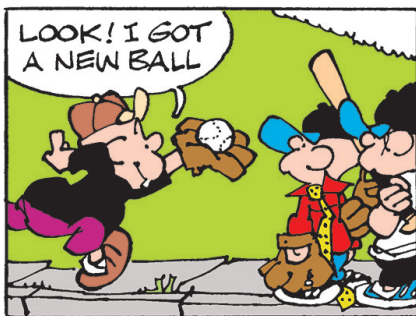
\* "If you need a long, straight line, never fear. Grab a ball of yarn or string, and cut what you need. Then rub the whole length over a piece of chalkboard chalk. With a partner, you can hold the string taut and snap it down, like a rubber band. It will leave a line of chalk behind!" -- L.S. in Minnesota

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

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**TIGER**

by BUD BLAKE



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BUD BLAKE

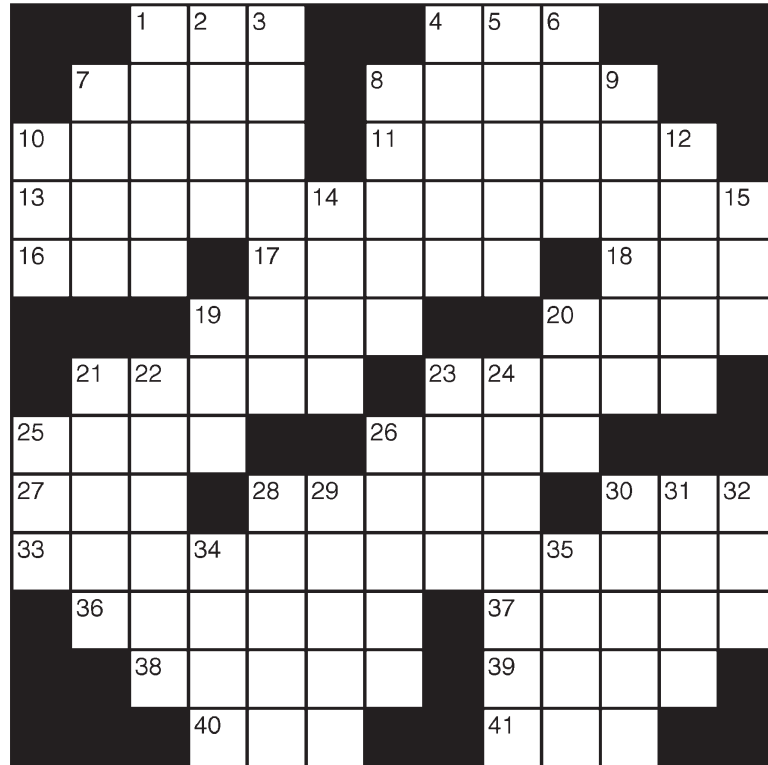
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## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Condo coolers  
4 Mornings, briefly  
7 Malaria symptom  
8 Daub  
10 Florida city  
11 Research  
13 Nocturnal birds  
16 Actor Cariou  
17 English horn cousins  
18 Actor McShane  
19 Stumble  
20 Part of A.D.  
21 Exams for future attys.  
23 Yearns  
25 Deception  
26 Cousin's mom  
27 — -ray Disc  
28 Soaks up the sun  
30 Prefix with gram or center  
33 Ancient  
36 "Hard as nails," for one  
37 More bizarre  
38 Auto style  
39 Clarinet insert



- 40 Ballot markings  
41 Corn serving

### DOWN

- 1 "Encore!"  
2 Robert of "I Spy"  
3 Stop on a cruise  
4 Love, to Luigi  
5 Cat calls?  
6 H.H. Munro's pen name  
7 Dull pain  
8 Sailing vessel  
9 Judge's decision  
10 Hooting bird  
12 Blueprints  
14 Kimono ties  
15 — -cone  
19 Levy  
20 Busy insect  
21 Lounges  
22 Mecca residents  
23 Sci-fi's Skywalker  
24 By the beach

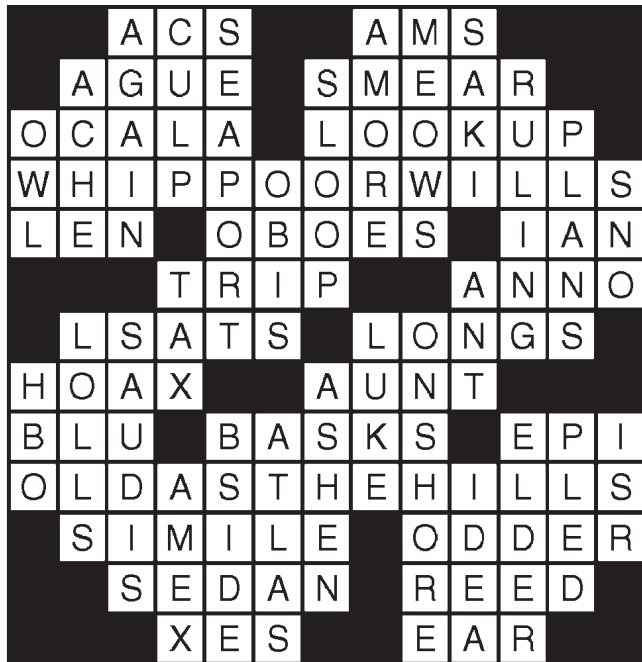
- 25 "Westworld" ailer  
26 Wan  
28 Back of a 45 record  
29 Book of maps  
30 Church leader  
31 Begged  
32 Leb. neighbor  
34 Visa rival, briefly  
35 Inventor's inspiration

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## — King Crossword — Answers

Solution time: 24 mins.

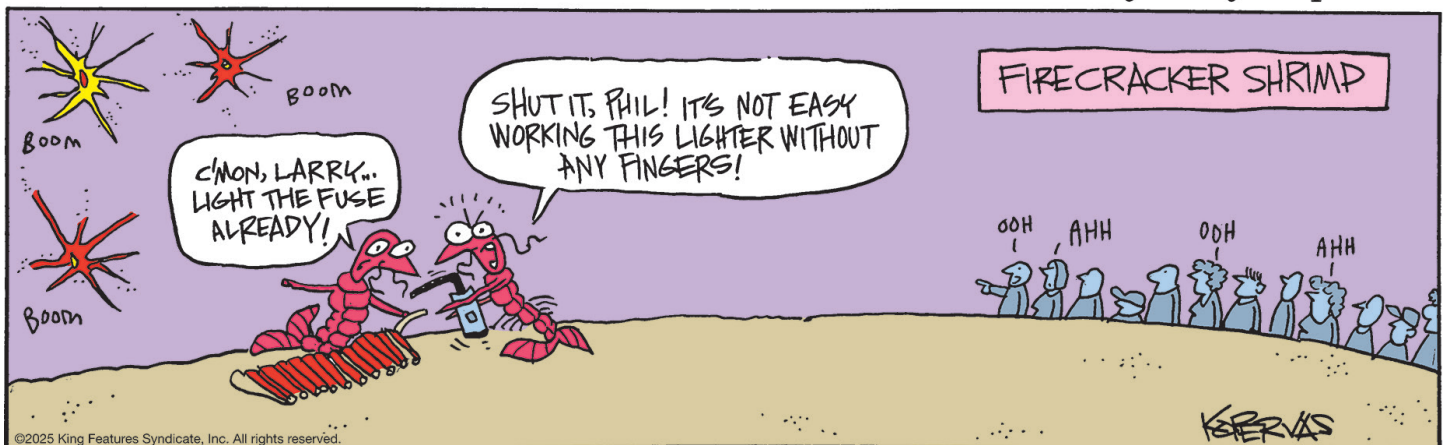


Olive



Out on a Limb

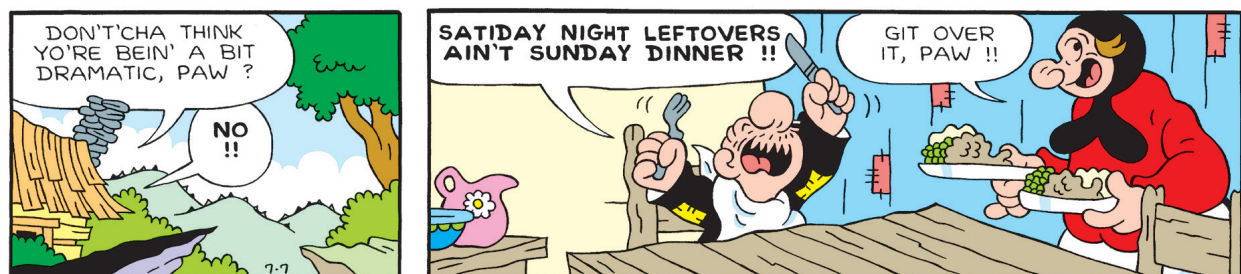
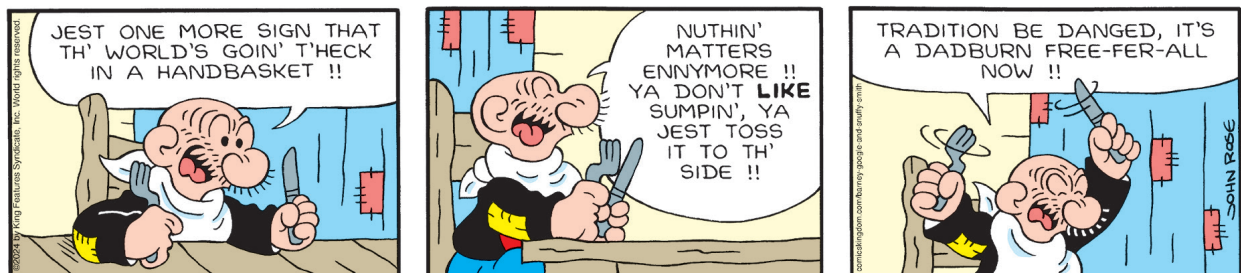
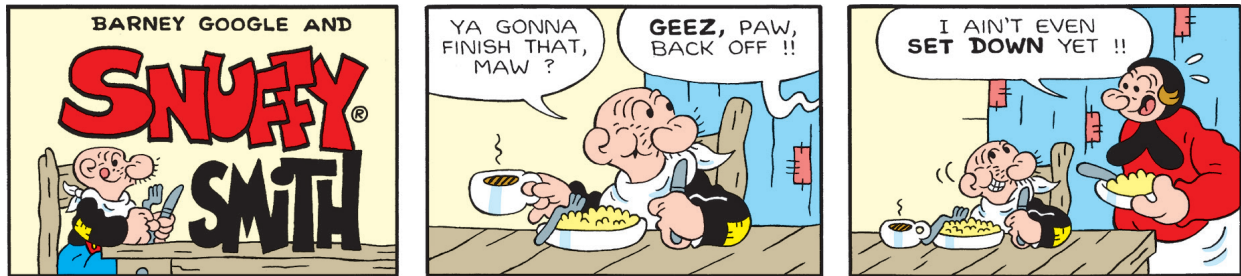
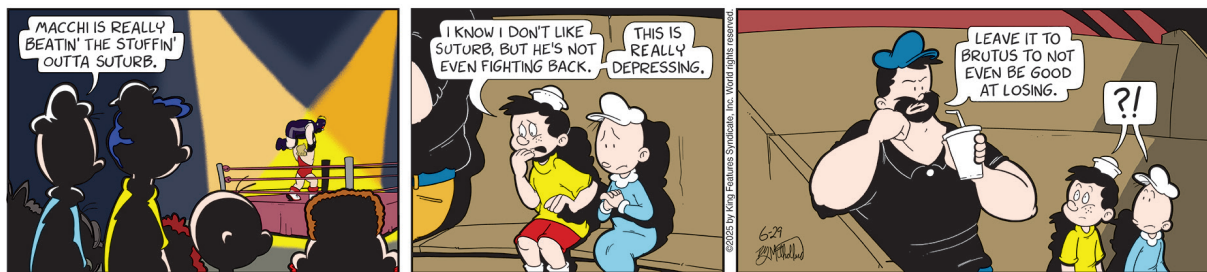
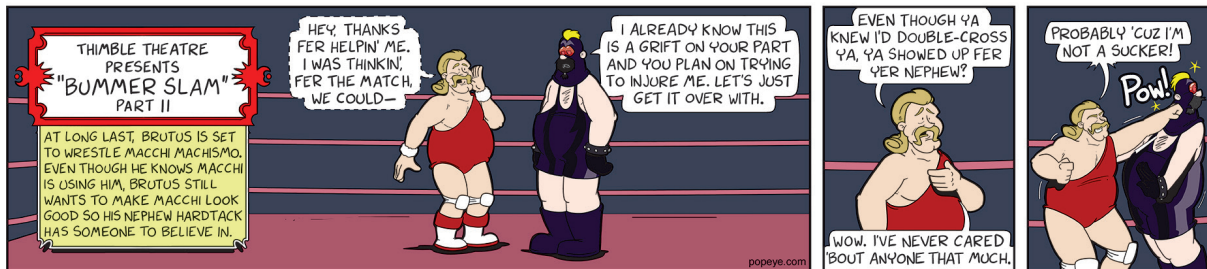
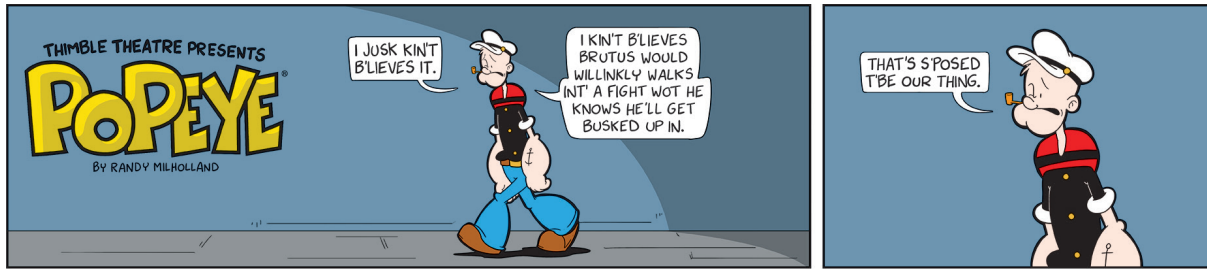
by Gary Kopervas





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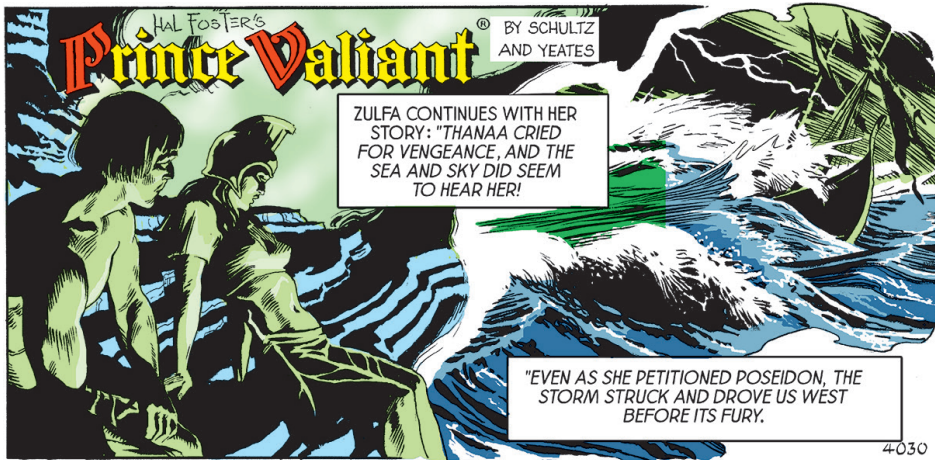
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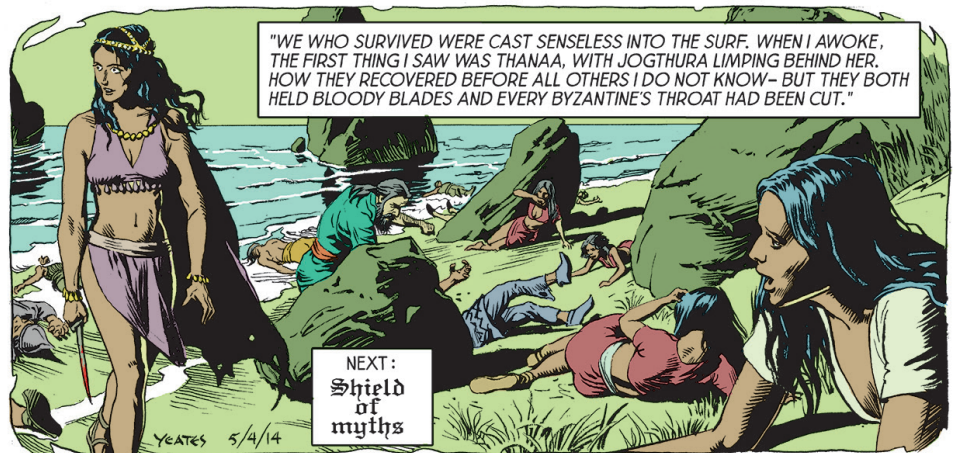
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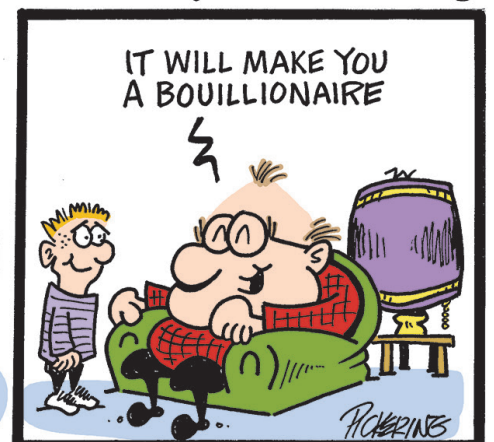
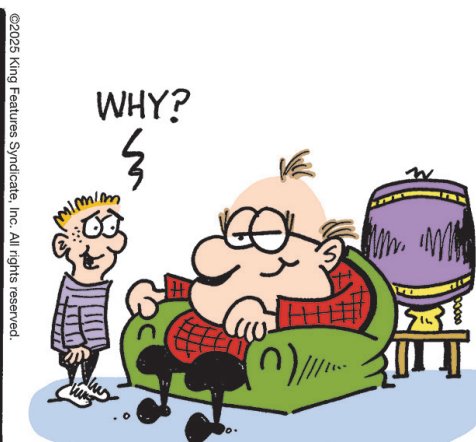
"AND SO WE WERE BLOWN UNCONTROLLED TO THIS GRIM ISLAND, AND SHATTERED ON ITS SPINES."

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## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



## SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

### The dangers of bagged salad greens

Sometimes we just want to take the easy path and quickly grab a few things for dinner. Bagged salad greens are often on our list -- but it's the last place we should be taking a shortcut in meal prep.

Between contaminated water in the fields and many people involved in the processing, handling and storage, food safety experts are pointing to bagged salads as the item near the top of the list for safety concerns and outbreaks of E. coli. And that makes it a real risk for seniors or anyone with a compromised immune system.

How to avoid the dangers of E. coli? Buy whole head lettuce instead of bagged and throw away the outer leaves. Rinse the lettuce under running cold water and dry it with paper towels. Besides the force of the water during rinsing, the drying with paper towels can also help remove the E. coli contamination. Do the same with other leafy greens such as spinach.

However, if you do want to buy packaged salad greens, the dilemma comes when the package claims that they have been pre-washed. "Triple washed! Ready to eat!" the package will proclaim. The question is: Should you believe it? Or should you go ahead and wash it? The experts, including the FDA and USDA, say not to wash it. The reason, they say, is that we at home are more likely to contaminate the greens ourselves with a dirty sink.

People on blogs across the internet are insulted, however, being told they would contaminate food in their own kitchens. They intend to wash all produce, even if the package says it's not needed and even if it's organic from a farmer's market.

It's difficult to know what to believe, but one thing is a fact: Seniors who develop an E. coli infection can become severely ill. Take care.

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1. Ohio State Buckeyes running back and 1950 Heisman Trophy winner Vic Janowicz played two seasons with what Major League Baseball team before starting his NFL career in 1954?

2. What is the nickname of Youngstown State University's athletic teams?

3. Following a 2009 loss to the Texas A&M Aggies, what Texas Tech Red Raiders head football coach told reporters that his players' "fat little girlfriends" were making them lose focus?

4. Scott Turner, who played cornerback for three different NFL teams from 1995-2003, assumed what position in the Cabinet of the United States in January 2025?

5. In 2019, pop star, actor, TV personality and competitive swimmer Alex Fong raised \$1 million for charity by swimming 28 miles around what island?

6. In 1990, right-handed pitcher Dave Stieb recorded the first (and as of 2024, only) no-hitter in the history of what Major League Baseball franchise?

7. What sport, popular in Afghanistan and Central Asia, involves horse-mounted players trying to drag a goat carcass into a scoring area called a taqt?



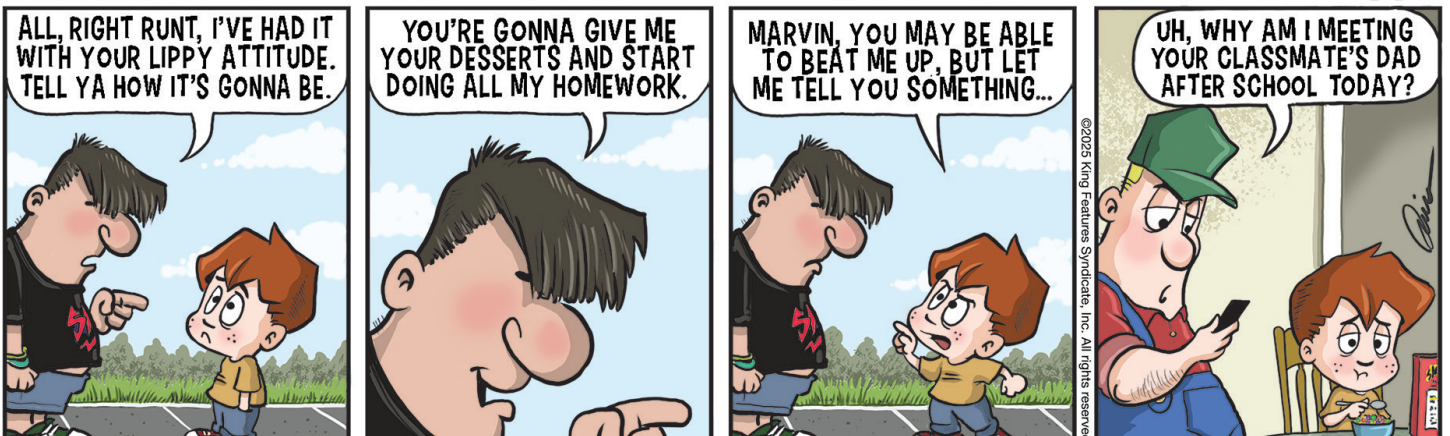
## Answers

1. The Pittsburgh Pirates.
2. The Penguins.
3. Mike Leach.
4. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.
5. Hong Kong Island.
6. The Toronto Blue Jays.
7. Buzkashi.

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## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





## Why vaccinate your pet?

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I don't see the point of vaccinating a pet, especially if they're kept inside for most of their lives. I've read that vaccines can cause more harm than good. It's not natural to vaccinate. A dog or cat's immune system should be able to handle most diseases. So why bother to vaccinate? -- Natural Pet Parent

DEAR NATURAL: You couldn't be more wrong. A pet's immune system is not an invulnerable shield against all attacks; it's a constantly adapting system that has to "learn" what microbes and viruses are threats and which are not. Unfortunately, some diseases cause serious illness or death before a pet's immune system can respond to them.

Part of what vaccines do is help a pet's immune system learn about specific threats without causing harm to your pet. Vaccines contain a safe, weakened or killed version of a pathogen; when injected, the immune system produces antibodies to specifically attack that pathogen -- and they remember that in the future.

A disease like rabies, which is always fatal, is best fought off by a vaccine, which helps your immune system mount a frontline defense if a pet is exposed to it. For example, if a vaccinated cat is attacked and bitten by a rabid fox or raccoon, a veterinarian will give the cat a booster shot and monitor the cat in quarantine for 30 to 60 days. An unvaccinated cat who is attacked by a rabid animal might be euthanized immediately, or quarantined for up to 4 months.

Because there is no such thing as 100% prevention from exposure to various diseases, even your indoor pets need to have their core vaccinations.

Send your tips, comments or questions to [ask@pawscorner.com](mailto:ask@pawscorner.com).

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## Strange BUT TRUE

\* Squirrels play a role in reforestation by forgetting some of the buried nuts and seeds they store, which then sprout into new trees.

\* In late 1800's Australia, some desperate sufferers of rheumatism climbed into a whale carcass in their search for relief, and were told to remain there for 20-30 hours, with occasional breaks. The heat and gases emitted by the decomposing animal were believed to create a sweat box of healing compounds.

\* Acrylic nails were invented in 1957 by a dentist experimenting with how to create an artificial fingernail to protect his thumb after he'd accidentally cut it.

\* The Inuit people used goggles made from bone, wood or other hard material to protect their eyes from UV rays more than 2,000 years ago, designed to cover the eye while leaving a small slit to see through. The slit narrowed and sharpened the wearer's field of vision while protecting their eyes from snow glare.

\* In 1980, Detroit gave Saddam Hussein a key to the city out of recognition of donations he had made to local churches.

\* School desks have 300 times more bacteria than a toilet seat.

\* Marion Donovan created the first practical disposable diaper in 1950 by using shower curtains for plastic covering and layers of tissue as the inner absorbent material.

\* Uranus rotates on its side, appearing to roll around the sun like a ball, according to NASA. The most likely explanation for this unusual orientation is that it experienced some type of massive collision in ancient times.

\* American Christians are more likely to take "morally neutral" risks when they think about God as a benevolent protector.

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day: "I'm all in favor of keeping dangerous weapons out of the hands of fools. Let's start with typewriters." -- Frank Lloyd Wright

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### The Garden Bug Firecracker bush

This Southern shrub matures quickly, often displaying several trunks and growing as wide as it gets tall – up to 9 feet. Tubular, orange-red blossoms appear in the spring and keep blooming into the heat of the summer, attracting hummingbirds. In the fall, small, blackish-purple fruit appear, which the birds love. Firecracker bushes drop their leaves when temps get chilly, but the roots are hardy to 20 degrees Fahrenheit. – Brenda Weaver

Sources: [tropicalplantsofflorida.com](http://tropicalplantsofflorida.com), [horticultureunlimited.com](http://horticultureunlimited.com)



by Freddy Groves

## Help for homeless veterans

Organizations across the country that help homeless veterans are set to share in grants that total \$42 million. Each grant, if approved, can be worth as much as \$500,000 and will fund them for two years, beginning in October.

The grants, through the VA's Legal Services for Veterans Grant Program, will help organizations that assist veterans with custody and child support problems, help veterans get their benefits, run interference with tenant-landlord issues and more. All of these services are for the purpose of helping homeless veterans or those who are in danger of becoming homeless.

Last year there were over 32,000 homeless veterans. Though that number is a bit smaller than the previous year, it's still too big. Once a veteran is homeless, because of substance abuse, mental health issues, eviction, job loss or any other reason, it's difficult to break the cycle without help.

If you're a homeless veteran or if you're in danger of becoming homeless, help is as near as your phone.

Call the VA medical center nearest you and ask for the homeless coordinator. To find the nearest VA facility to you, go to [www.va.gov/directory](http://www.va.gov/directory).

Call the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans at 1-800-VET-HELP (838-4357). They can help with substance abuse and mental health counseling, job training and placement, health care and permanent housing.

You might qualify for a voucher through the VA Supportive Housing (VASH), where they pay part of your rent directly to the landlord. The goal of the program is to get veterans into permanent housing and hooked up with support services so the housing remains stable, all with the help of a case manager.

Call the homeless veteran hotline at 877-424-3838 to talk to a trained counselor. They're open 24/7, and the call is free and confidential.

If you need help now or will in the near future, don't wait until the last minute. Reach out as soon as you suspect you're going to be homeless.

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## Wishing Well®

2	6	2	5	7	3	7	4	6	4	6	2	7
R	B	E	H	Y	G	O	Y	E	O	P	C	U
4	5	3	7	6	4	7	5	6	4	2	4	2
U	U	O	A	O	L	R	S	S	O	I	O	P
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5	2	3	2	3	2	3	8	3	8	3	8	8
S	O	G	V	M	E	E	T	N	I	T	O	N

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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1. TELEVISION: What is the name of the bar where Homer Simpson hangs out?

2. MUSIC: What are the first names of the Jackson 5?

3. MOVIES: What prop is found in almost every scene in "The Fight Club"?

4. ANATOMY: What does the term "hallux" refer to in human anatomy?

5. GEOMETRY: What is the perimeter of a circle called?

6. LITERATURE: What is Ron Weasley's patronus in the "Harry Potter" book series?

7. ANIMAL KINGDOM: How many tusks does a warthog have?

8. GEOGRAPHY: How many states does the Pacific Crest Trail cross?

9. SCIENCE: What is a common name for iron oxide?

10. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for bravery in WWII?

### Answers

1. Moe's Tavern.

2. Jackie, Tito, Jermaine, Marlon and Michael.

3. A Starbucks coffee cup.

4. The big toe.

5. Circumference.

6. Jack Russell Terrier.

7. Four.

8. Three (California, Oregon, and Washington).

9. Rust.

10. George H.W. Bush.

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South Dakota Governor



**Larry Rhoden**



**South Dakota:** *Under God, the People Rule*

## The Western States

I was born and raised in West River, and that part of the state reflects the great American West in a lot of ways. The hillcrests and valleys are a bit sharper, the prairies have more cows and grass than corn and soybeans, and the Black Hills are similar to the Rockies (though far more beautiful).

Many of the issues that impact West River are similar to other western states as well. For that reason, I was right at home just a few days ago when I attended the meeting of the Western Governors Association. Bipartisan governors from all over the western states joined together in New Mexico. I hadn't spent much time in New Mexico, so I was impressed by the natural beauty – very different from our own here in South Dakota.

The other governors shared advice and policy ideas. We also heard from several cabinet secretaries in the Trump Administration on policies that impact us in this part of the country.

I was impressed by the fact that, even though governors from both parties were present in strong numbers, there was very much a spirit of comradery among us to solve problems facing our people. For example, Sandy and I made friends with New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and her husband. If she ever decides to leave government and politics, she could make a career as a standup comedian!

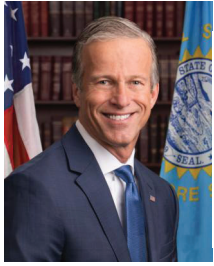
The conversations were very much policy oriented – not political at all. We heard from Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum, who is the former Governor of North Dakota and a longtime member of the Western Governors Association. He brought a lot of understanding of our various circumstances and how we can face those in our respective roles as governor.

I had the privilege to introduce Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins, who has been a major benefit to South Dakota in her role. We covered a lot of ground, including what she is doing to tackle looming challenges like the New World Screwworm, which would threaten cattle herds across western states if left unaddressed.

Most of all, I very much appreciated the counsel that I received from my fellow governors. I was the newest to my role at this event, but the other governors treated me as an equal. I'm glad to know that if I ever have need of advice or assistance, all I need to do is pick up the phone.

It's very humbling to serve as governor on behalf of our entire state – to have it as my responsibility to keep our people strong, safe, and free. Other governors have the same responsibility. Though they may approach their roles in different ways or support different policies, their perspective and advice is always beneficial. We can always learn something, even from our worst critic. It was a great opportunity to work with and learn from my fellow Western Governors.





**JOHN THUNE**  
U.S. SENATOR FOR SOUTH DAKOTA

## Worth Fighting For

On the Fourth of July, Americans across the country will gather with family, friends, and their communities to celebrate our nation's independence. After the parades and barbecues have ended, when I'm looking out at the wide South Dakota sky before the fireworks begin, it's impossible not to be grateful to be an American and for the freedoms that we enjoy in this country.

Those freedoms, of course, did not come automatically. We fought for them, and later generations have fought to preserve them. Next year, we will celebrate 250 years of independence – and what a celebration it will be. Although we can trace a lot of our history to the iconic spirit of 1776, it was the year 1775 that was a moment of decision for many in the colonies.

It was in March 1775 that Patrick Henry urged his fellow Virginians to fight with the immortal words, "Give me liberty, or give me death." Weeks later, at Lexington and Concord, the first Americans answered the call to arms, and some gave their lives for our country. And in June of that year, the Continental Congress officially established an army and appointed George Washington its commander in chief.

Ronald Reagan once said of our revolution, "We learned then that the God-given love of freedom that fills every human heart with strength is the greatest force the world has ever known." Indeed, it was the powerful force of freedom that compelled farmers and tradesmen to leave their homes and face down the most powerful army in the world. They left behind their families, their livelihoods, and risked their lives for a cause of great importance.

The cause of freedom has moved generations of Americans to follow in their footsteps to defend our nation. I'm grateful for the men and women who continue this proud tradition today and for their families who share in their sacrifice. As we mark 80 years since the end of World War II this year, I think especially of the Greatest Generation. They left home for faraway places to defend America and advance the cause of human freedom, and what they did continues to inspire.

Some might say that "freedom" is just an empty word. But no one would fight for a mere word. Freedom is an idea – a powerful idea – and it is worth fighting for. As we march toward 250 years of independence, I hope that this flame – this most powerful force – will continue to burn brightly in our country.

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## Protecting American Farmland

### BIG Update

China owns a concerning amount of farmland in the United States, and much of that land is near our military bases. For years, I have been sounding the alarm on how China's purchases of American farmland pose a risk to our food security and national security. Our foreign adversaries—especially China—should not be purchasing U.S. farmland. We can never assume their intentions are good or these purchases are random. Rather, each move from the Chinese Communist Party is a deliberate attempt to increase their global dominance and undermine America.

This week, I voted to pass the Agricultural Risk Review Act to make sure the U.S. Secretary of the Agriculture's voice is heard when it comes to ag land purchases that pose a risk to America. This bill will protect America's farmland, military bases, and food supply, but most importantly, national security.

### BIG Idea

Clean water is essential for economic growth, but the Clean Water Act imposes overly burdensome regulations and America's permitting process is slow and antiquated. States and the federal government have access to technology to get these projects done in a more timely manner, but it's not commonly used. This week, I secured a provision in the PERMIT Act to encourage states to use an online dashboard to improve permitting efficiency. The PERMIT Act passed the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and now heads to the full House.

I've been focused on permitting reform and this bill is another step toward increased transparency and quicker project timelines. Congress must cut red tape to unleash America's energy and building potential.

### BIG News

President Trump's decisive action to bomb Iran's nuclear sites quickly led to a ceasefire between Israel and Iran. I'm grateful for our brave men and women in uniform who safely and successfully completed this mission. The world is safer without a nuclear Iran and with an America that leads by peace through strength.

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**JUNE 9-22, 2025**

Welcome back to another Weekly Round[s] Up. As a United States Senator, each year I have the opportunity to nominate South Dakota students to attend our nation's service academies. I recently announced that nine students I've nominated will be attending service academies this fall. After receiving a

top-notch education, these South Dakotans will serve our country as active-duty military members. We're proud of these students and their desire to answer the call of duty to serve our nation. Read more about these nominees here, and read more about what I've been up to in my Weekly Round[s] Up:

South Dakota groups I met with: Members of the South Dakota Alzheimer's Association; members of the South Dakota Health Care Association; Bill Brown, CEO of 3M, which has operations in South Dakota; Children's Advocacy Center of South Dakota; Don Haggar, State Director of South Dakota's chapter of Americans for Prosperity; a group of leaders from South Dakota State University, including President Barry Dunn; the South Dakota Music Education Association; leaders from Solventum, which has a manufacturing plant in Brookings; South Dakota members of the National Association of Home Builders; leaders from Empirical Foods and Empirical Innovations; Anna Lent, a South Dakota student who is participating in the International 4-H Youth Exchange Program and will be studying in Taiwan this summer; Cash Martinez, a student from Bridgewater-Emery's Future Farmers of America chapter; South Dakota members of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition; Chloe Beltrand, co-host of WNAX's Drive Time radio show (which I go on with monthly!); Steve Elliott, President of Black Hills State University, and his daughter Ava; a group of students in town with the South Dakota Rural Electric Association; a group of South Dakota FFA members; and a group of South Dakota 4-H members.

I attended the dedication ceremony for the Veterans Honor Park in Madison. We were honored to have Medal of Honor Recipient Michael Fitzmaurice in attendance as well. I spoke at conference hosted by the Joint Commission, the nation's leading healthcare accrediting body, titled "Operationalizing a Responsible Use of AI in Healthcare." Leaders from two South Dakota health care systems, Monument Health and Sanford Health, were in attendance.

South Dakota towns represented: Bonesteel, Box Elder, Brandon, Brookings, Burke, Dakota Dunes, Estelline, Harrisburg, Hartford, Kimball, Marion, Mitchell, Parker, Pierre, Rapid City, Sioux Falls, Spearfish, Vermillion and Yankton.

Other meetings: Jerome Powell, Chairman of the Federal Reserve; Dave Limp, CEO of Blue Origin; Richard Haworth, CEO of Barclays America; the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America; leaders from the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates; Dennis Nixon, CEO of IBC Bank; and leaders from Starcloud.

I spoke at an AI policy dinner hosted by Amazon and a housing summit hosted by the Bipartisan Policy Center. I also attended our weekly Senate Bible Study twice, where our verses of the week were Proverbs 12:22 and Genesis 12:3, and Senate Prayer Breakfast, where Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia was our speaker.

Hearings: I attended eight different hearings. We had two hearings in the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC). In one hearing, we heard from leaders with the Navy and Marine Corps. In the other SASC hearing, we heard from Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth and other leaders within the Department of Defense.

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I discussed AI and China in a hearing of the Senate Banking Committee – specifically my legislation, the Stop Stealing Our Chips Act, which would establish a whistleblower incentive program within the Bureau of Industry Security aimed at increasing actionable intelligence on illegal exports. I also attended two closed hearings of the Select Committee on Intelligence.

We had three different Appropriations Subcommittee hearings. We heard from National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Jay Bhattacharya in a hearing of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education. We had a hearing in the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, where I asked about last year's disastrous flooding at McCook Lake. We also had a hearing in the Subcommittee on Interior and Environment where we discussed ways to U.S. Forest Service can mediate minor resource disputes between the federal government and producers.

Classified briefings: I attended two classified briefings. One was part of my work on the Select Committee on Intelligence. The other was our bi-weekly cyber education seminar, which I host as part of my work on SASC's Subcommittee on Cybersecurity.

Letter to Secretary Rollins: I sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins asking her to develop a framework for reinstating Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (MCOOL) for beef. A majority of American consumers support requiring country of origin labeling for fresh meat. It's past time that we reinstate this rule and deliver transparency to American consumers. [Read more about this letter here.](#)

Legislation Introduced: I reintroduced the USA Beef Act, legislation to limit the use of the "Product of USA" label only to beef products that are born, raised and slaughtered in the United States. The legislation would also codify the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) rule addressing the same issue. While the USDA rule is a win, our next priority is delivering Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (MCOOL) for American producers and consumers.

Votes taken: 25 – many of these votes were on more executive branch nominees, all of which I supported. We also voted to pass the Guiding and Establishing National Innovation for U.S. Stablecoins (GENIUS) Act of 2025. This legislation will establish a regulatory framework for stablecoins, which are a type of cryptocurrency backed by a sovereign like the U.S. dollar. I voted yes on this legislation.

My staff in South Dakota visited: Centerville, Eagle Butte, Hartford, Mobridge and Wall.

Steps taken: 60,775 steps or 28.93 miles in week one, 45,472 steps or 21.36 miles in week two.



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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries

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1-352-216-3025

## Heat Is Not Just a Number, It's an Attitude

Lately, the temperature in Florida has topped 100°. I saw on the news that the Northeast is also hitting 100°.

It's easy to see why everyone wants to come to Florida. If they can't, they wish for some of our heat. Well, good luck with that. We'll send you all you can handle.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I have lived in Florida for over thirty years. We've thoroughly enjoyed every single day, and we've no plans to leave. At first the heat was more than we expected, but within a short time we got used to it. Now we enjoy it.

Records show this is the hottest June our country has seen. This heat has serious consequences. The human body can't handle such heat for long.

Just the other day, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage complained about how hot it was. "Oh, my," she said, "where does all this heat come from?"

For a moment, I almost answered. But after 54 years of blissful marriage, I've learned when to speak and when to stay quiet. Of course, I'm still learning when to speak. That's one of my biggest challenges.

I could have said, "It's summer, the sun is out, and the heat comes from the sun." But I knew that wasn't the answer she wanted, so I held back.

I remember my father saying that life isn't about numbers but attitude. I'm starting to understand what he meant.

When I was young I had two female dogs at home, male dogs in the neighborhood would gather in our backyard when the females were "in heat." It was something beyond my control even though I tried.

But that's not the attitude I mean here.

At my stage in life, when I step out into the hot sun, I start sweating. That sweat drives me crazy. The sweat runs from the top of my head all the way to the bottom of my feet. Everything about me is soaked. Believe me, it's not my favorite attitude.

I walked into the house and The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked up and asked, "Did you take a shower with your clothes on?" Then she laughs. I did not respond.

My recliner is next to our big glass door. I can see the sun shining and feel the heat. I sigh deeply because I'm glad to be on the cool side. I enjoy the heat outside while I stay cool indoors.

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One thing about this heat season that I have learned is, I avoid driving when it's this hot—not because my A/C doesn't work, but because other drivers have attitudes I can't relate to. The other day, I was driving across town. I saw cars go by with drivers shaking their fists out the window. It's like they thought that would fix anything!

If I shook my fist, it would only create more problems. I don't think those drivers realized that shaking their fists out the window didn't make the heat go away.

I don't want to drive among those people. After all, I love living.

One great perk of being retired is that I can choose not to drive if I don't want to. I am increasingly appreciating that.

My body isn't as strong as it used to be, so I avoid the 100° heat whenever possible. I respect my body, even if I'm not sure it respects me. That's a different issue.

In the late afternoon, the sun had been blazing all day and showed no signs of letting up. I was in my recliner drinking some ice tea when The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage sat down in the rocking chair and asked, "When will this heat go away?"

I chuckled to myself, remembering about a month ago a cloudy day with rain. Back then, she looked out the window and asked, "Where in the world is the sun?"

I wanted to respond, "My dear, the sun is in the sky, just above the clouds."

You have no idea how much I wanted to say that, but being a seasoned and successful husband, I kept it to myself.

The heat is not about numbers; it's about attitude. Some people's attitudes make me uncomfortable. Shaking fists and yelling at the sky show an attitude not rooted in sanity.

One of the best things about a hot, sunny afternoon is, I can sit down and enjoy it in a cool atmosphere. I remember those days far, far away when I lived up north and had to look out the window and see white fluffy stuff fill up our yard and driveway. Maybe if I would've stood there and shook my fist at the snow it would have gone away. If only I knew that back then.

Now that I have experienced both of these weathers, the hot and the cold, I have chosen the hot weather. And I am unanimous in that decision.

While contemplating on this I thought of some scripture.

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (James 1:2-4).

My attitude should not be based on what's going on around me. The heat and the cold comes and goes, but my relationship with God is firmly rooted in God's Word.

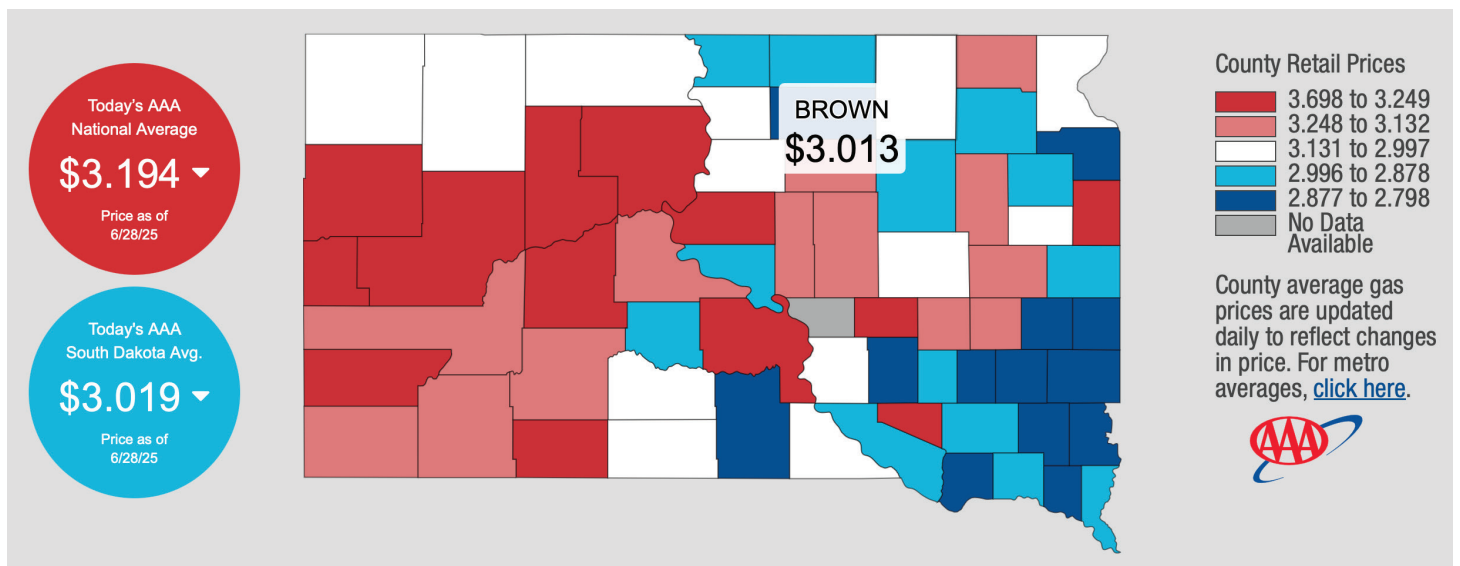
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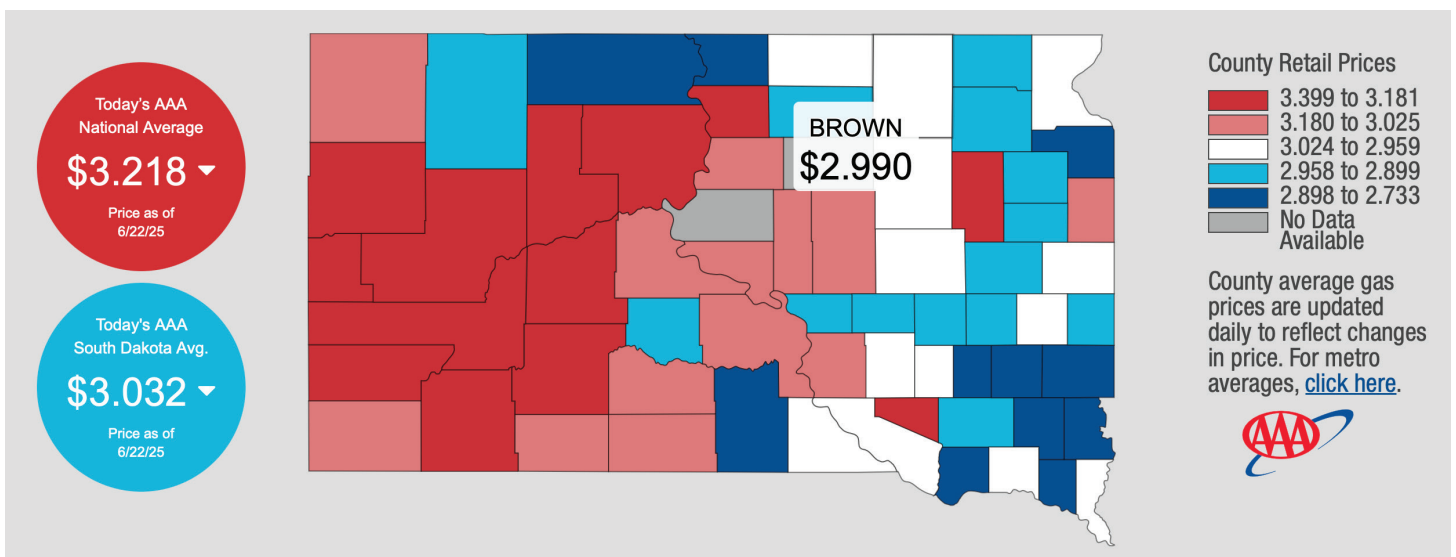
## South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$3.019	\$3.210	\$3.660	\$3.376
Yesterday Avg.	\$3.021	\$3.206	\$3.662	\$3.385
Week Ago Avg.	\$3.034	\$3.205	\$3.688	\$3.361
Month Ago Avg.	\$2.980	\$3.184	\$3.679	\$3.220
Year Ago Avg.	\$3.249	\$3.439	\$3.864	\$3.423

### This Week



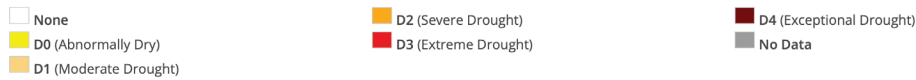
### Last Week



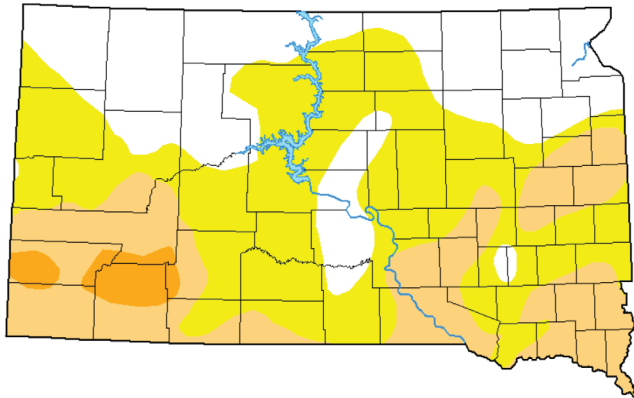
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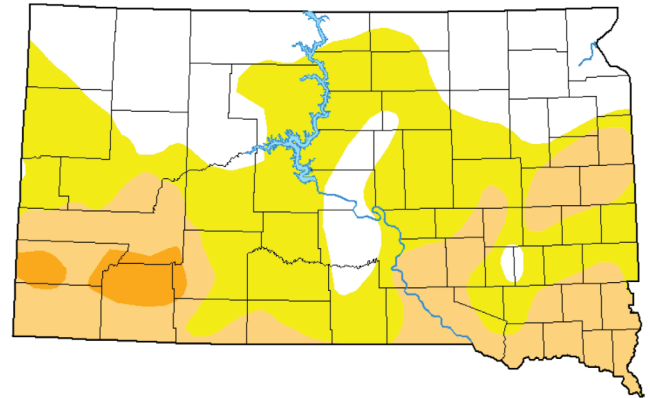
## Drought Classification



## Drought Monitor



June 24



June 17

In Nebraska and Kansas, scattered heavy rains fell in parts of both states, especially in central and eastern areas, leading to localized improvements to ongoing drought and abnormal dryness. In some areas that missed heavier rains this week, temperatures ranging from 4-8 degrees hotter than normal led to degrading conditions, as streamflow and soil moisture levels dropped. Long-term drought over the last few years has continued to take a toll on trees in eastern Nebraska, as the bur oak, elm, hackberry, ash and red oak populations saw increased mortality or significant loss in canopy. Short- and long-term precipitation deficits continued to grow in parts of northern Colorado, which along with drops in soil moisture and streamflow led to localized worsening of drought or abnormal dryness. Meanwhile, heavier rains in the last couple of weeks in southeast Wyoming led to improving conditions there. The western half of Wyoming, in contrast, has continued to see rapid drying, leading to poor vegetation health and locally decreasing streamflow and soil moisture. Moderate and severe drought grew in coverage in parts of southwest Wyoming, while abnormal dryness grew in coverage northeast of Yellowstone National Park.



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## EARTHTALK

Dear EarthTalk: What is Pollinator Month all about and how can I participate? -- E.T., via email

Every June, people around the world celebrate Pollinator Month. It's a time to recognize the huge role that bees, butterflies, birds, bats and others play in keeping our environment and food systems going. A big part of that is Pollinator Week, usually held during the third week of June. It kicked off back in 2007, when the U.S. Senate officially approved it. Since then, it's really taken off, thanks to groups like Pollinator Partnership and local conservation initiatives across the country.

Pollinators help around 75 percent of all flowering plants reproduce. That means everything from wildflowers to crops like apples, almonds, coffee and chocolate. In fact, more than a third of the food we eat depends on them in one way or another. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), pollinators contribute over \$20 billion annually to the U.S. agriculture industry.

However, there is a problem with pollinators. Their numbers are dropping. Some causes of the decline include habitat loss, heavy pesticide use, disease, invasive species and climate change. Pollinators are under stress. That's where Pollinator Month comes in. It's not just a celebration; it's a push to do better by these species and the systems they support.

There are several ways that one can join Pollinator Month. You don't need to be a scientist or farmer. One of the best ways to help is to plant a pollinator-friendly garden. Native plants that bloom across different seasons work best, like milkweed, lavender, wildflowers and mint. You can skip the harsh chemicals, too. Neonicotinoids, in particular, are known to harm bees and other helpful insects.

There are also plenty of local events to get involved with during June. Garden walks, library story times, seed swaps, even community cleanups and workshops. People are also adding bee hotels, bat boxes or simple water dishes in their yards to support pollinators where they live. Online toolkits from groups like Pollinator.org offer region-specific advice.

"We are determined to be part of the solution," said Josette Lewis, Chief Scientific Officer at the Almond Board of California. "Pollinators are crucial for our food production and for our entire ecosystem." Laurie Davies Adams, CEO of Pollinator Partnership, adds, "Each of us can take meaningful action and it starts in our own backyards."

Beyond just gardens and local events, Pollinator Month also gets schools, businesses and parks involved by encouraging them to plant native flowers and cut back on pesticides. Lots of groups are pushing for pollinator corridors too. These help connect habitats so pollinators can move safely through cities and countryside. By supporting things like this and sharing what you learn, everyone can chip in to help slow pollinator declines and protect the important work they do. Even small things like planting a few native flowers or skipping pesticides really do add up over time. Together these small efforts make a big difference for pollinators and honestly for all of us.

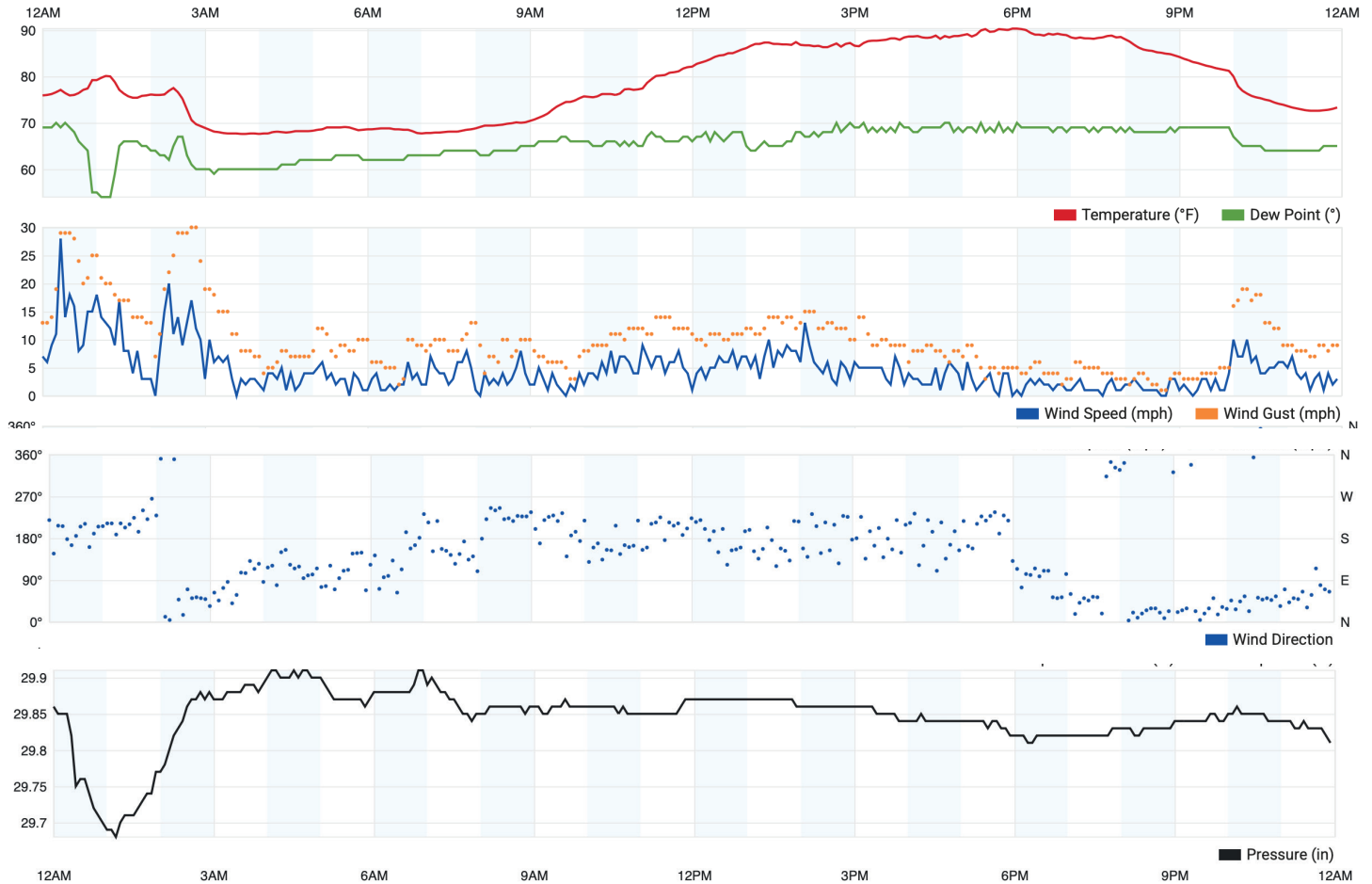


**Celebrating the huge role bees, butterflies, birds, bats & others play in keeping our environment going is something we should do all year long, not just during Pollinator Month.** Credit: Pexels.com.

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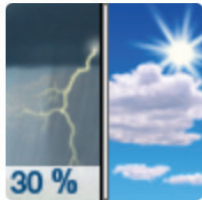
## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



High: 86 °F

Chance  
T-storms then  
Mostly Sunny

Tonight



Low: 58 °F

Slight Chance  
T-storms

Monday



High: 82 °F

Sunny then  
Sunny and  
Breezy

Monday Night



Low: 56 °F

Mostly Clear

Tuesday



High: 88 °F

Sunny



## Showers & Weak Thunderstorms Through The Day

June 29, 2025  
3:11 AM

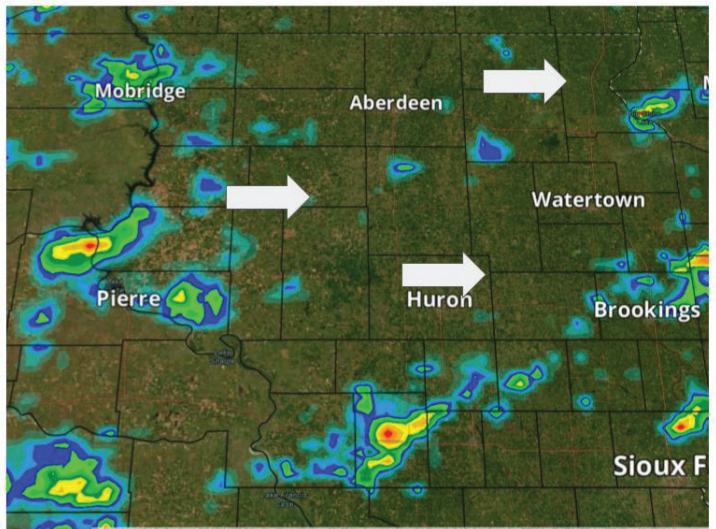
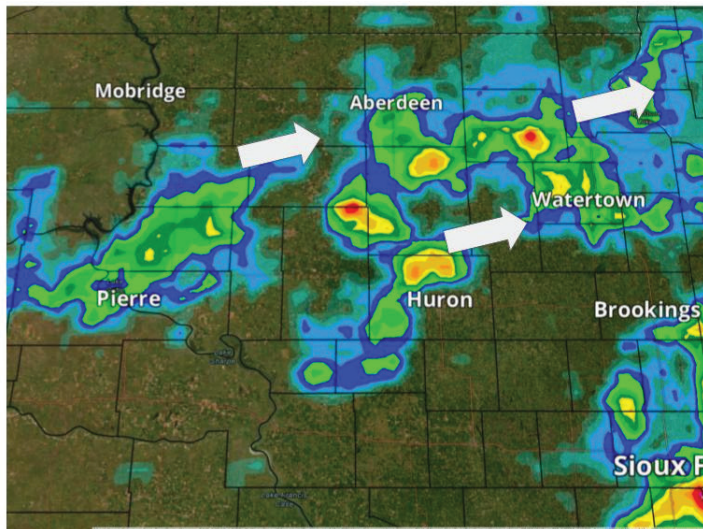
Model Estimated Timing and Locations of Thunderstorms (CDT)

6 - 10 AM

3 - 7 PM

Early Morning Cluster Moves Overhead & Lifts Northeast

Isolated Weak Storms Moving East



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

National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

Showers and weak thunderstorms are expected to pass through the region through the course of the day. Not anticipating any severe weather and probabilities for a 1/4" of moisture is only about 20-60%



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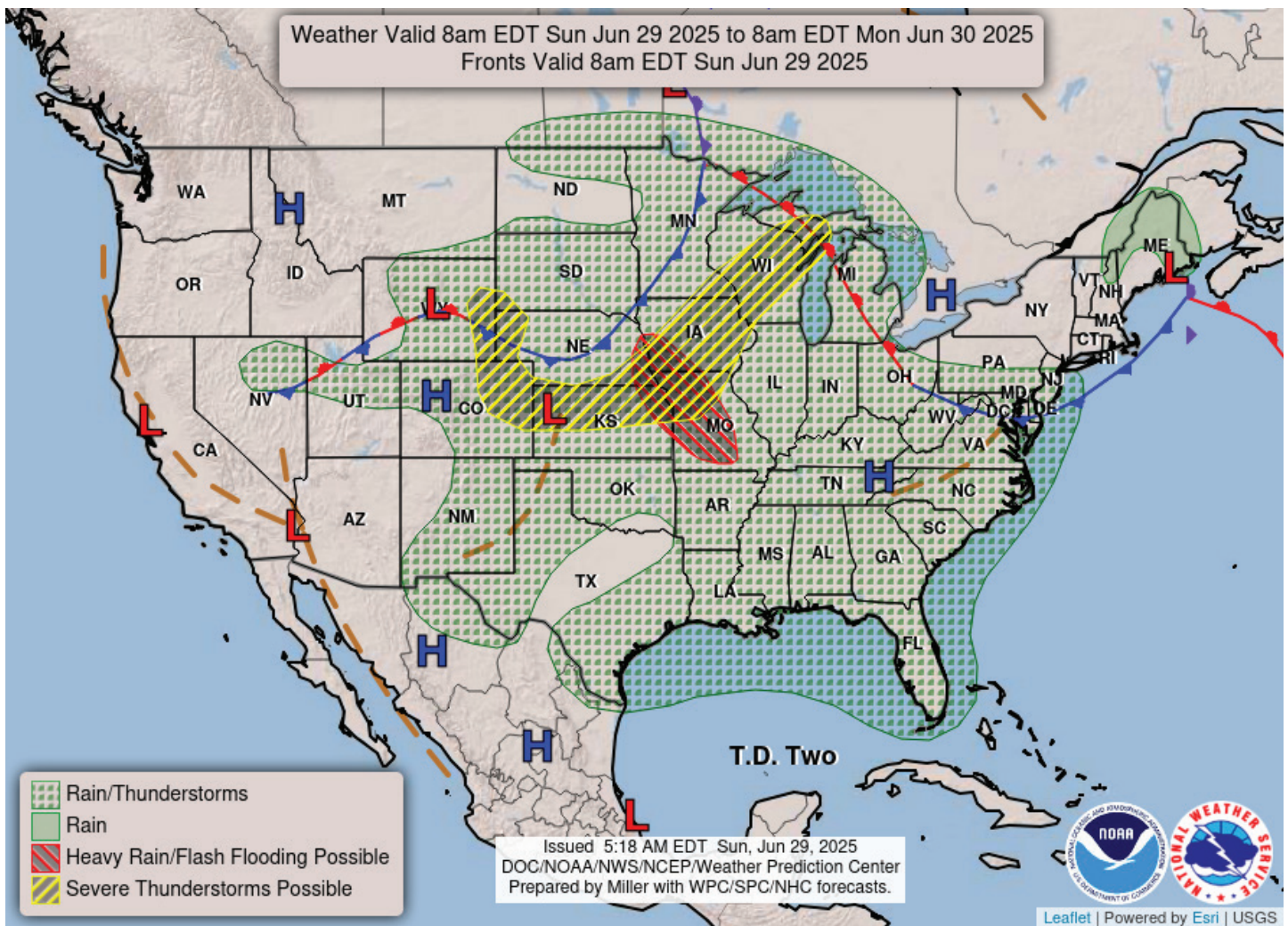
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp:** 91 °F at 5:45 PM  
**Heat Index:** 96 °F at 6:00 PM  
**Low Temp:** 68 °F at 3:15 AM  
**Wind:** 30 mph at 2:45 AM  
**Precip:** : 0.00

Day length: 15 hours, 41 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 107 in 1931  
Record Low: 42 in 1900  
Average High: 83  
Average Low: 58  
Average Precip in June.: 3.63  
Precip to date in June: 3.14  
Average Precip to date: 10.88  
Precip Year to Date: 9.19  
Sunset Tonight: 9:26:43 pm  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:45:49 am





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## **Today in Weather History**

June 29, 1927: This estimated F2 tornado moved northeast from near Claremont, passing along the northwestern edge of Britton. The Claremont area had a \$12,000 loss as a large silo was destroyed. A dozen homes had roof damage in Britton.

June 29, 2005: Torrential rains of three to seven inches fell across far eastern Brown, western and northern Day, and most of Marshall Counties in the early morning and again in the afternoon hours. One location measured five inches of rain in two hours. Many township roads and highways were flooded along with thousands of acres of cropland. Water surrounded several homes resulting in people being rescued. Some of the houses were flooded. Many bridges were damaged, and roads and culverts were washed out. In Day County, 30 roads were washed out, and 15 bridges needed repairs. Some rainfall amounts include 5.04 inches in Britton, 3.34 at 8N of Columbia, and 2.08 in Aberdeen. Total June rainfall for some locations in Marshall and Day Counties was between 11 and 12 inches. The flooding continued into early July before receding by July 10th.

1826: Thomas Jefferson made his last entry in his weather observation log on this date, just six days before he died. The weather held a fascination for Jefferson as he made regular weather observations. He bought his first thermometer while working on the Declaration of Independence and his first barometer shortly after that.

1904: Tornado hits Karacharov Village area of Moscow killing about 24 people.

1931 - The temperature at Monticello FL hit 109 degrees to establish an all-time record for the state. (The Weather Channel)

1954 - Hurricane Alice dumped as much as 27 inches of rain on the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. The Rio Grande River at Laredo reached a level 12.6 feet above its previous highest mark, and the roadway of the U.S. 90 bridge was thirty feet below the high water. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Ohio Valley and the Great Lakes Region, with reports of large hail and damaging winds most numerous in Ohio, Indiana and Michigan. Thunderstorms spawned four tornadoes in Michigan. A tornado near Clare MI was accompanied by softball size hail. In Colorado, an untimely winter-like storm blanketed Mount Evans with six inches of snow. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Alpena, MI, reported a record low of 39 degrees while Jackson, MS, equalled their record for the month of June with an afternoon high of 105 degrees. Thunderstorms in the central U.S. soaked Springfield MO with 3.62 inches of rain, a record for the date. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Southern and Central High Plains Region. Thunderstorms in Colorado produced softball size hail at Kit Carson, while pea to marble size hail caused ten million dollars damage to crops in Philips County, CO. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1998: "The Corn Belt Derecho of 1998" in the following states NE, IA, IL, IN, KY. A derecho which originated in far southeast South Dakota moved across Illinois during the afternoon and evening and continued as far east as Ohio the next morning. Every county in central Illinois sustained some damage, as these severe thunderstorms passed. Winds gusted in the 60 to 80 mph range, with some localized microbursts producing winds more than 100 mph. Significant damage occurred in the microburst areas, including the towns of Morton, McLean, LeRoy, and Tolono. In Tolono, 22 cars of a southbound 101-car Illinois Central freight train were blown off the tracks. It was unknown how many vehicles were picked up by the wind, but 16 cars were turned over, and another six derailed but remained upright. The train was en route to Centralia from Chicago with a load of mixed freight, including plastic pellets and meal. The freight cars empty weighed about 60,000 pounds, while a full one weighs about 260,000 pounds. Overall, 12 people were injured, and damage was estimated at around \$16 million.

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It's really rather obvious: the "righteous" will receive rewards while living. It's also clear that the sinner and the wicked will receive "much more repayment" for their lifestyle.

While not stated quite so obviously, it's clear that someone will pass judgment on both, and both will be compensated for what they have done or not done, and how they have lived. And the "judge" will "compensate" both of them.

While in court recently, I watched the judge's actions carefully. To some, he said, "Your behavior has surprised me, and I'm going to reduce your sentence as a reward."

To others, he said, "You have broken the law once again. Therefore, your parole is revoked, and you are going back to prison."

Judges have the power to sanction those under their jurisdiction. A sanction can be a reward for exceeding expectations or a punishment for breaking laws or rules.

Some think Proverbs is too simplistic or "too good to be true." For example, "If the righteous receive their due on earth, how much more the ungodly and the sinner."

Take note of "on earth." This boldly shows that God is active — here and now — in rewarding or punishing everyone, righteous or wicked. These sanctions are both positive and negative. Rewards from God are handled judiciously — today and in the future!

Prayer: Father, help us to realize that You, our Judge, are watching us constantly, continuously, and carefully. Help us to live godly lives and please You always! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Today's Scripture: "If the righteous receive their due on earth, how much more the ungodly and the sinner." Proverbs 11:31

*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: 06.27.25

18 21 29 42 50 2

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$50,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.28.25

6 25 26 37 45 1

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$2,450,000**

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.28.25

9 11 40 46 47 8

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 14 Hrs 28 Mins 52 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.28.25

17 20 27 29 30

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$42,000**

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.28.25

8 15 22 34 62 22

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.28.25

4 35 43 52 62 12

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$162,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

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

### Takeaways from interviews with families forever changed by diseases that vaccines can prevent

By LAURA UNGAR AP Science Writer

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — In the time before widespread vaccination, devastating infectious diseases ran rampant in America, killing millions of children and leaving others with lifelong health problems.

Over the next century, vaccines virtually wiped out long-feared scourges like polio and measles and drastically reduced the toll of many others. Today, however, some preventable, contagious diseases are making a comeback as vaccine hesitancy pushes immunization rates down. And well-established vaccines are facing suspicion even from public officials, with Robert F. Kennedy Jr., a longtime anti-vaccine activist, running the federal health department.

"This concern, this hesitancy, these questions about vaccines are a consequence of the great success of the vaccines — because they eliminated the diseases," said Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious disease expert at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. "If you're not familiar with the disease, you don't respect or even fear it. And therefore you don't value the vaccine."

Anti-vaccine activists even portray the shots as a threat, focusing on the rare risk of side effects while ignoring the far larger risks posed by the diseases themselves — and years of real-world data that experts say proves the vaccines are safe.

Some Americans know the reality of vaccine-preventable diseases all too well. Here are takeaways from interviews with a few of them by The Associated Press.

#### **Getting a disease while pregnant can change two lives.**

Janith Farnham has helped shepherd her daughter Jacque through life for decades. Jacque, 60, was born with congenital rubella syndrome, which resulted in hearing, eye and heart problems at birth. There was no vaccine against rubella back then, and Janith contracted it in early pregnancy.

Though Janith, 80, did all she could to help Jacque thrive, the condition took its toll. Jacque eventually developed diabetes, glaucoma, autistic behaviors and arthritis.

Today, Jacque lives in an adult residential home and gets together with Janith four or five days a week. Janith marvels at Jacque's sense of humor and affectionate nature despite all she's endured. Jacque is generous with kisses and often signs "double I love you," even to new people she meets.

Given what her family has been through, Janith finds it "more than frustrating" when people choose not to get children the MMR shot against measles, mumps and rubella.

"I know what can happen," she said. "I just don't want anybody else to go through this."

#### **Delaying a vaccine can be deadly.**

More than half a century has passed, but Patricia Tobin still vividly recalls seeing her little sister Karen unconscious on the bathroom floor.

It was 1970, Karen was 6, and she had measles. The vaccine against it wasn't required for school in Miami where they lived. Though Karen's doctor discussed immunizing the first grader, their mother didn't share his sense of urgency.

"It's not that she was against it," Tobin said. "She just thought there was time."

Then came a measles outbreak. After she collapsed in the bathroom, Karen never regained consciousness. She died of encephalitis.

"We never did get to speak to her again," Tobin said.

Today, all states require that children get certain vaccines to attend school. But a growing number of people are making use of exemptions. Vanderbilt's Schaffner said fading memories of measles outbreaks were exacerbated by a fraudulent, retracted study claiming a link between the MMR shot and autism.

The result? Most states are below the 95% vaccination threshold for kindergartners — the level needed

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to protect communities against measles outbreaks.

## **Preventable diseases can have long-term effects.**

One of Lora Duguay's earliest memories is lying in a hospital isolation ward with her feverish, paralyzed body packed in ice. She was three years old.

It was 1959 and Duguay, of Clearwater, Florida, had polio. It was one of the most feared diseases in the U.S., experts say, causing some terrified parents to keep children inside and avoid crowds during epidemics.

Given polio's visibility, the vaccine against it was widely and enthusiastically welcomed. Given polio's visibility, the vaccine against it was widely and enthusiastically welcomed. But the early vaccine that Duguay got was only about 80% to 90% effective. Not enough people were vaccinated or protected yet to stop the virus from spreading.

Though treatment helped her walk again, she eventually developed post-polio syndrome, a neuromuscular disorder that worsens over time. She now gets around in a wheelchair.

The disease that changed her life twice is no longer a problem in the U.S. So many children get the vaccine — which is far more effective than earlier versions — that it doesn't just protect individuals but it prevents occasional cases that arrive in the U.S. from spreading further and protects the vulnerable.

## **When people aren't vaccinated, the vulnerable remain at risk.**

Every night, Katie Van Tornhout rubs a plaster cast of a tiny foot, a vestige of the daughter she lost to whooping cough at just 37 days old.

Callie Grace was born on Christmas Eve 2009. When she turned a month old, she began having symptoms of pertussis, or whooping cough. She was too young for the Tdap vaccine against it and was exposed to someone who hadn't gotten their booster shot.

At the hospital, Van Tornhout recalled, the medical staff frantically tried to save her, but "within minutes, she was gone."

Today, Callie remains part of her family's life, and Van Tornhout shares the story with others as she advocates for vaccination.

"It's up to us as adults to protect our children — like, that's what a parent's job is," Van Tornhout said. "I watched my daughter die from something that was preventable ... You don't want to walk in my shoes."

## **Many forget the damage done by diseases like whooping cough, measles and rubella. Not these families**

By LAURA UNGAR AP Science Writer

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — In the time before widespread vaccination, death often came early.

Devastating infectious diseases ran rampant in America, killing millions of children and leaving others with lifelong health problems. These illnesses were the main reason why nearly one in five children in 1900 never made it to their fifth birthday.

Over the next century, vaccines virtually wiped out long-feared scourges like polio and measles and drastically reduced the toll of many others. Today, however, some preventable, contagious diseases are making a comeback as vaccine hesitancy pushes immunization rates down. And well-established vaccines are facing suspicion even from public officials, with Robert F. Kennedy Jr., a longtime anti-vaccine activist, running the federal health department.

"This concern, this hesitancy, these questions about vaccines are a consequence of the great success of the vaccines — because they eliminated the diseases," said Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious disease expert at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. "If you're not familiar with the disease, you don't respect or even fear it. And therefore you don't value the vaccine."

Anti-vaccine activists even portray the shots as a threat, focusing on the rare risk of side effects while ignoring the far larger risks posed by the diseases themselves — and years of real-world data that experts say proves the vaccines are safe.

Some Americans know the reality of these preventable diseases all too well. For them, news of measles

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outbreaks and rising whooping cough cases brings back terrible memories of lives forever changed – and a longing to spare others from similar pain.

## Getting rubella while pregnant shaped two lives

With a mother's practiced, guiding hand, 80-year-old Janith Farnham helped steer her 60-year-old daughter's walker through a Sioux Falls art center. They stopped at a painting of a cow wearing a hat.

Janith pointed to the hat, then to her daughter Jacque's Minnesota Twins cap. Jacque did the same.

"That's so funny!" Janith said, leaning in close to say the words in sign language too.

Jacque was born with congenital rubella syndrome, which can cause a host of issues including hearing impairment, eye problems, heart defects and intellectual disabilities. There was no vaccine against rubella back then, and Janith contracted the viral illness very early in the pregnancy, when she had up to a 90% chance of giving birth to a baby with the syndrome.

Janith recalled knowing "things weren't right" almost immediately. The baby wouldn't respond to sounds or look at anything but lights. She didn't like to be held close. Her tiny heart sounded like it purred – evidence of a problem that required surgery at four months old.

Janith did all she could to help Jacque thrive, sending her to the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind and using skills she honed as a special education teacher. She and other parents of children with the syndrome shared insights in a support group.

Meanwhile, the condition kept taking its toll. As a young adult, Jacque developed diabetes, glaucoma and autistic behaviors. Eventually, arthritis set in.

Today, Jacque lives in an adult residential home a short drive from Janith's place. Above her bed is a net overflowing with stuffed animals. On a headboard shelf are photo books Janith created, filled with memories like birthday parties and trips to Mount Rushmore.

Jacque's days typically begin with an insulin shot and breakfast before she heads off to a day program. She gets together with her mom four or five days a week. They often hang out at Janith's townhome, where Jacque has another bedroom decorated with her own artwork and quilts Janith sewed for her. Jacque loves playing with Janith's dog, watching sports on television and looking up things on her iPad.

Janith marvels at Jacque's sense of humor, gratefulness, curiosity and affectionate nature despite all she's endured. Jacque is generous with kisses and often signs "double I love yous" to family, friends and new people she meets.

"When you live through so much pain and so much difficulty and so much challenge, sometimes I think: Well, she doesn't know any different," Janith said.

Given what her family has been through, Janith believes younger people are being selfish if they choose not to get their children the MMR shot against measles, mumps and rubella.

"It's more than frustrating. I mean, I get angry inside," she said. "I know what can happen, and I just don't want anybody else to go through this."

## Delaying the measles vaccine can be deadly

More than half a century has passed, but Patricia Tobin still vividly recalls getting home from work, opening the car door and hearing her mother scream. Inside the house, her little sister Karen lay unconscious on the bathroom floor.

It was 1970, and Karen was 6. She'd contracted measles shortly after Easter. While an early vaccine was available, it wasn't required for school in Miami where they lived. Karen's doctor discussed immunizing the first grader, but their mother didn't share his sense of urgency.

"It's not that she was against it," Tobin said. "She just thought there was time."

Then came a measles outbreak. Karen – who Tobin described as a "very endearing, sweet child" who would walk around the house singing – quickly became very sick. The afternoon she collapsed in the bathroom, Tobin, then 19, called the ambulance. Karen never regained consciousness.

"She immediately went into a coma and she died of encephalitis," said Tobin, who stayed at her bedside in the hospital. "We never did get to speak to her again."

Today, all states require that children get certain vaccines to attend school. But a growing number of



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people are making use of exemptions allowed for medical, religious or philosophical reasons. Vanderbilt's Schaffner said fading memories of measles outbreaks were exacerbated by a fraudulent, retracted study claiming a link between the MMR shot and autism.

The result? Most states are below the 95% vaccination threshold for kindergartners — the level needed to protect communities against measles outbreaks.

"I'm very upset by how cavalier people are being about the measles," Tobin said. "I don't think that they realize how destructive this is."

## **Polio changed a life twice**

One of Lora Duguay's earliest memories is lying in a hospital isolation ward with her feverish, paralyzed body packed in ice. She was three years old.

"I could only see my parents through a glass window. They were crying and I was screaming my head off," said Duguay, 68. "They told my parents I would never walk or move again."

It was 1959 and Duguay, of Clearwater, Florida, had polio. It mostly preyed on children and was one of the most feared diseases in the U.S., experts say, causing some terrified parents to keep children inside and avoid crowds during epidemics.

Given polio's visibility, the vaccine against it was widely and enthusiastically welcomed. But the early vaccine that Duguay got was only about 80% to 90% effective. Not enough people were vaccinated or protected yet to stop the virus from spreading.

Duguay initially defied her doctors. After intensive treatment and physical therapy, she walked and even ran — albeit with a limp. She got married, raised a son and worked as a medical transcriptionist.

But in her early 40s, she noticed she couldn't walk as far as she used to. A doctor confirmed she was in the early stages of post-polio syndrome, a neuromuscular disorder that worsens over time.

One morning, she tried to stand up and couldn't move her left leg.

After two weeks in a rehab facility, she started painting to stay busy. Eventually, she joined arts organizations and began showing and selling her work. Art "gives me a sense of purpose," she said.

These days, she can't hold up her arms long enough to create big oil paintings at an easel. So she pulls her wheelchair up to an electric desk to paint on smaller surfaces like stones and petrified wood.

The disease that changed her life twice is no longer a problem in the U.S. So many children get the vaccine — which is far more effective than earlier versions — that it doesn't just protect individuals but it prevents occasional cases that arrive in the U.S. from spreading further. "Herd immunity" keeps everyone safe by preventing outbreaks that can sicken the vulnerable.

## **After whooping cough struck, 'she was gone'**

Every night, Katie Van Tornhout rubs a plaster cast of a tiny foot, a vestige of the daughter she lost to whooping cough at just 37 days old.

Callie Grace was born on Christmas Eve 2009 after Van Tornhout and her husband tried five years for a baby. She was six weeks early but healthy.

"She loved to have her feet rubbed," said the 40-year-old Lakeville, Indiana mom. "She was this perfect baby."

When Callie turned a month old, she began to cough, prompting a visit to the doctor, who didn't suspect anything serious. By the following night, Callie was doing worse. They went back.

In the waiting room, she became blue and limp in Van Tornhout's arms. The medical team whisked her away and beat lightly on her back. She took a deep breath and giggled.

Though the giggle was reassuring, the Van Tornhouts went to the ER, where Callie's skin turned blue again. For a while, medical treatment helped. But at one point she started squirming, and medical staff frantically tried to save her.

"Within minutes," Van Tornhout said, "she was gone."

Van Tornhout recalled sitting with her husband and their lifeless baby for four hours, "just talking to her, thinking about what could have been."

Callie's viewing was held on her original due date — the same day the Centers for Disease Control and

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Prevention called to confirm she had pertussis, or whooping cough. She was too young for the Tdap vaccine against it and was exposed to someone who hadn't gotten their booster shot.

Today, next to the cast of Callie's foot is an urn with her ashes and a glass curio cabinet filled with mementos like baby shoes.

"My kids to this day will still look up and say, 'Hey Callie, how are you?'" said Van Tornhout, who has four children and a stepson. "She's part of all of us every day."

Van Tornhout now advocates for childhood immunization through the nonprofit Vaccinate Your Family. She also shares her story with people she meets, like a pregnant customer who came into the restaurant her family ran saying she didn't want to immunize her baby. She later returned with her vaccinated four-month-old.

"It's up to us as adults to protect our children – like, that's what a parent's job is," Van Tornhout said. "I watched my daughter die from something that was preventable ... You don't want to walk in my shoes."

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## After centuries of isolation, ultra-Orthodox Jews engage with the world more than ever

By MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Frieda Vizel left an ultra-Orthodox Jewish sect in New York in a crisis of faith at 25. But instead of cutting ties, she became a successful online personality and guide to the tight-knit world she had been raised in.

She gives sold-out tours of Williamsburg, Brooklyn — home base of the Satmar dynasty — and runs a popular YouTube channel focused on the subculture engaging more with the outside world after centuries of separation.

In mid-June, Vizel took a group of Jewish, Christian and Muslim tourists to see synagogues and schools, and visit kosher delis and shops. Instead of Barbie dolls, there were little ultra-Orthodox Jewish figurines. The rabbinically approved products included cellphones without screens, and DVDs and MP3 players pre-loaded with approved music and films, so no internet connection is needed.

Yet ultra-Orthodox men on the street offered friendly greetings and praise for Vizel's recent postings even though rabbis advise them to avoid the internet unless needed for business, family or other essential needs.

"It's an interesting moment," Vizel said. "They're saying, 'What is the whole world saying about us?'"

### Growth and religious change

Williamsburg and a handful of other locations worldwide — from Monsey, New York, to Stamford Hill, London to Bnei Brak, Israel — host the strictest followers of Orthodox Judaism. In a minority religion it's a minority set apart by its dedication above all else to the Torah and its 613 commandments, from No. 1 — worshipping God — to less-followed measures like No. 568 — not cursing a head of state.

One in seven Jews worldwide are strictly Orthodox, or Haredi. It's a population of roughly 2 million out of 15 million Jews, according to Daniel Staetsky, a demographer with the London-based Institute for Jewish Policy Research.

In a 2022 report, he projects that the strictly Orthodox population could double in size in 15 years. Another study projects that a third of American Jews will be Orthodox by 2063.

Many in the community marry young and have large families.

"You're getting three generations of ultra-Orthodox for every two generations of Reform Jews in the U.S.," said Alan Cooperman, director of religion research at the Pew Research Center.

"They are becoming the face of Judaism," Vizel said.

### Reform and secular Jews

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It's happening while many Reform Jews in the U.S. are becoming less religious and intermarrying. That means that Jewish Americans as a whole are becoming either Orthodox or more secular, Cooperman said.

"There has been a major change, I think, that has taken place over the last generation or two and that is the polarization of American Jewry, much as we've seen the vast polarization of America as a whole," said Jonathan Sarna, a professor of American Jewish history at Brandeis University.

Among American Jews aged 18 to 29, 17% are Orthodox — a bigger share than in older generations, Pew found. And as a growing number of American Jews are Orthodox, a greater percent is Republican. Still, the majority of American Jews remain Democrats.

The Pew Research Center found in 2020 that 75% of Orthodox Jews voted or leaned Republican.

Walking out of Gottlieb's Restaurant with his salami sandwich, Samuel Sabel — a grocery store worker and journalist — said that "a lot of the policies Republicans have go together with our beliefs," citing school choice, and opposition to abortion and same-sex marriage as examples.

Orthodox political activism is "at the highest point it's ever been," said Rabbi Avi Shafran, the retired director of public affairs at the Orthodox group Agudath Israel. "No question about that."

"There is time and money and ability and savvy and education that allows for a much more, aggressive, much more positive and active effort on political things," he said.

But while cultural issues are important, "when push comes to shove, we'll vote our interests, our immediate interests, not the larger issues that are always on the table," Shafran said.

"We are practical," he said. "Put it that way."

## Politics — local, national and global

Vizel guided her group past "Get out the vote" signs in Yiddish, along with a campaign letter from Donald Trump in the window of Gottlieb's deli.

In New York City's Democratic primary for the mayoral election, former Gov. Andrew Cuomo intensely courted Orthodox communities, counting at least 36 sects and yeshivas — religious schools — among his supporters.

But Cuomo suffered a stunning upset at the hands of Zohran Mamdani in a demonstration of grassroots organizing over bloc voting.

In Florida, Orthodox Jews backed Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis before he signed an expansion of taxpayer-funded vouchers for private schools, a movement that has galvanized religious groups across denominations.

But the election this month for the World Zionist Congress — an international body predating Israel that controls more than 1,500 square miles (3885 square kilometers) of land there, along with about \$1 billion a year from land sales — showed dominance by the Reform bloc despite intense campaigning by Orthodox parties and strong results ahead of coalition building.

The 2020 Pew study found that Reform Jews are 37% of the American Jewish populace, followed by Jews that claim no particular branch — 32% —and then Conservatives at 17% .

The Orthodox make up 9%.

The president of the Union for Reform Judaism, the largest Jewish group in North America, said "it's a mistake to assume unaffiliated Jews don't care about being Jewish — many do, and Reform Judaism often reflects their spiritual and moral values.

"Reform Jews continue to hold overwhelmingly liberal worldviews and political values," Rabbi Rick Jacobs wrote. "In the aftermath of October 7th, many have deepened their connection to Jewish peoplehood while remaining firmly committed to justice, equity, and peace through the Reform Movement."

Rabbi Pesach Lerner founded the Orthodox party Eretz Hakodesh five years ago to compete in the election for the World Zionist Congress.

The main American party representing Reform Judaism in the Zionist Congress had a better individual showing than Lerner's in voting in the United States, but Orthodox parties did well and said they were optimistic that coalition-building would let them compete with traditional liberal Jewish interests.

Reform Jews and their allies "went so far to the left of traditional, of national, or family values, in 'wokeism,' that I'm glad the right finally decided that they can't sit back on the sidelines," Lerner said.

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## **Severe heat waves hit Southern Europe as local authorities warn against wildfire risks**

By GIADA ZAMPANO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Major heat waves across Southern Europe have pushed temperatures above 40 C (104 F) in countries including Italy, Spain and Greece, as local authorities issued fresh warnings against the risk of wildfires.

Experts link the rising frequency and intensity of these heatwaves to climate change, warning that such extreme weather events are becoming increasingly common across Europe's southern region.

Severe heat waves were recorded in Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal before the weekend, with locals and tourists alike taking shelter from the sweltering conditions.

Two-thirds of Portugal were on high alert on Sunday for extreme heat and wildfires, with temperatures expected to top 42 C (107 F) in Lisbon.

In Italy, a few regions — Lazio, Tuscany, Calabria, Puglia and Umbria — were planning to ban some outdoor work activities during the hottest hours of the day in response to the record-high temperatures. Italian trade unions pushed the government to expand such measures at a national level.

On Sunday, the Italian Health Ministry placed 21 out of 27 monitored cities under its highest heat alert, including top holiday destinations like Rome, Milan and Naples.

In Rome, tourists tried to seek shade near popular spots like the Colosseum and the Trevi Fountain, using umbrellas and drinking from public water fountains to stay cool.

Similar scenes were reported in Milan and Naples, where street vendors sold lemonade to tourists and residents to offer some refreshment from the heat.

Greece was again on high wildfire alert because of extreme weather, with the first summer heat wave expected to continue throughout the weekend.

A large wildfire broke out south of Athens on Thursday, forcing evacuations and road closures near the ancient Temple of Poseidon. Strong winds spread the flames, damaging homes and sending smoke across the sky.

Greek authorities deployed 130 firefighters, 12 planes and 12 helicopters to battle the blaze, while police evacuated 40 people, with five areas under evacuation orders.

In Spain, locals and tourists were desperately trying to keep cool this weekend, as the country sizzled in temperatures as high as 42 C (107 F) in the southern city of Seville along with other locations in southern and central parts of the country.

Southern regions of Spain recorded temperatures above seasonal averages, prompting health alerts and safety recommendations from authorities. The country's national meteorological service Aemet has said that June is set to break yet another record, becoming the hottest such month since records started.

Experts warned that intense heat can affect daily life, especially for vulnerable populations such as the elderly and children.

Local authorities advised against physical activity during the hottest hours of the day, and recommended drinking plenty of fluids.

A Lancet Public Health study published last year highlighted the increasing risk of heat-related deaths because of climate change. The study predicted that heat-related deaths could more than quadruple by mid-century under current climate policies.

While more people currently die from cold than heat, the study stressed that rising temperatures will offset the benefits of milder winters, leading to a significant net increase in heat-related mortality.



## Russia launches the biggest aerial attack since the start of the war, Ukraine says

By VOLODYMYR YURCHUK Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia launched its biggest aerial attack against Ukraine overnight, a Ukrainian official said Sunday, part of an escalating bombing campaign that has further dashed hopes for a breakthrough in efforts to end the 3-year-old war.

Russia fired a total of 537 aerial weapons at Ukraine, including 477 drones and decoys and 60 missiles, Ukraine's air force said. Of these, 249 were shot down and 226 were lost, likely having been electronically jammed.

The onslaught was "the most massive airstrike" on the country since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022, taking into account both drones and various types of missiles, Yuriy Ihnat, head of communications for Ukraine's air force, told The Associated Press. The attack targeted several regions, including western Ukraine, far from the front line.

Poland and allied countries scrambled aircraft to ensure the safety of Polish airspace, the country's air force said.

One person died in a drone strike in the Kherson region, Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin said, while another was killed when a drone hit a car in the Kharkiv region, according to its Gov. Oleh Syniehubov. Six people were wounded in Cherkasy, including a child, according to regional Gov. Ihor Taburets.

In the far-western Lviv region, a large fire broke out at an industrial facility in the city of Drohobych following a drone attack that also cut electricity to parts of the city.

Ukraine's air force said one of its F-16 warplanes supplied by its Western partners crashed after sustaining damage while shooting down air targets. The pilot died.

Attacks continued during the day. Dnipropetrovsk Gov. Serhii Lysak said a 72-year-old man was killed when a drone hit his car.

Russia's defense ministry said it had shot down three Ukrainian drones overnight.

Two people were wounded in another Ukrainian drone attack on the city of Bryansk in western Russia, regional Gov. Alexander Bogomaz said Sunday morning, adding that seven Ukrainian drones had been shot down over the region.

Meanwhile, Russia claimed Sunday that it had taken control of the village of Novoukrainka in the partially Russian-occupied Donetsk region.

Russian forces have been slowly grinding forward at some points on the roughly 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line, though their incremental gains have been costly in terms of troop casualties and damaged armor.

Long-range drone strikes have been a hallmark of the war. The race by both sides to develop increasingly sophisticated and deadlier drones has turned the conflict into a testing ground for new weaponry.

In other developments, Russia's foreign intelligence chief, Sergei Naryshkin, said he had spoken on the phone with his U.S. counterpart, CIA Director John Ratcliffe.

"I had a phone call with my American counterpart and we reserved for each other the possibility to call at any time and discuss issues of interest to us," Naryshkin said in remarks to state TV reporter Pavel Zarubin, who posted them on his Telegram channel on Sunday.

Sunday's attacks follow Russian President Vladimir Putin's comments two days ago that Moscow is ready for a fresh round of direct peace talks in Istanbul.

However, the war shows no signs of abating as U.S.-led international peace efforts have so far produced no breakthrough. Two recent rounds of talks between Russian and Ukrainian delegations in Istanbul were brief and yielded no progress on reaching a settlement.

## The last Hong Kong pro-democracy party that held street protests disbands

By KANIS LEUNG Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong pro-democracy political party League of Social Democrats announced on Sunday it had disbanded due to immense political pressure, the latest casualty in a years-long crack-down that has already quieted much of the city's once-vocal opposition.

Following massive anti-government protests in 2019, many leading activists were prosecuted or jailed under a 2020 national security law imposed by Beijing. Dozens of civil society groups dissolved. Media outlets critical of the government shuttered.

The League of Social Democrats was the only pro-democracy party that still staged small street protests from time to time and held street booth activities to carry on its advocacy despite the risks.

Its chairperson, Chan Po-ying, said the disbandment decision was made after careful deliberation, especially taking into account the consequences to its members and comrades. Chan refused to elaborate on the pressure but said she was proud to say that the party had still contributed to the city's pro-democracy movement in these few years.

"We have stayed true to our original aspirations and haven't let down to the trust placed in us by those who went to prison," she said. "While we are now forced to disband and feel an ache in our conscience, we have no other choice," she said.

### Protests became rare under Beijing's grip

Hong Kong, a former British colony, will mark the 28th anniversary of returning to Chinese rule on July 1. The city used to hold annual pro-democracy protests that day and other various demonstrations demanding better policies.

But those were ceased after most organizing groups were disbanded and the leading activists were jailed. Critics say the drastic political changes under the security law reflect that the freedoms Beijing promised to keep intact in 1997 are shrinking.

The Beijing and Hong Kong governments insist the law is necessary for the city's stability. A Chinese official overseeing Hong Kong affairs in 2023 said protests are not the only way for people to express their views, signaling Beijing's stance toward demonstrations in the city.

In April, Hong Kong's biggest pro-democracy party, the Democratic Party, also voted to give its leadership the mandate to move toward a potential disbandment. Party veterans told The Associated Press that some members were warned of consequences if the party didn't shut down. A final vote is expected at a later date.

Chan said she believed the "one country, two systems" principle, which Beijing uses to govern Hong Kong, has already ended, pointing to the Chinese government's imposition of the security law and introducing the idea of "soft resistance," a term officials use to refer to underlying security risks.

"One country, two systems has already (become) one country, one system," she said.

### A party known for confrontational tactics

Founded in 2006, the League of Social Democrats was a left-wing political party that opposed what it called collusion between government and business, upheld the principle that people have a say and was firmly committed to the interests of underprivileged residents.

It was widely known for its more aggressive tactics when fighting for change. Its members have thrown bananas, eggs and luncheon meat at officials or pro-Beijing lawmakers as a protest gesture. Its party platform said the group advocated non-violent resistance but would not avoid physical confrontations — a stance that set it apart from older, traditional pro-democracy groups.

It once had three lawmakers in office. Its longest-serving lawmaker, Leung Kwok-hung — Chan's husband — was disqualified from the legislature due to his manner of taking his oath in office in 2017.

### Members arrested and jailed over activism

On the streets, the group's activism led to the arrests and jailing of its members from time to time.

Last year, Leung and prominent LGBTQ+ activist Jimmy Sham, a former party leader, were sentenced to nearly seven years and more than four years over their roles in an unofficial primary election under the sweeping security law. Sham was freed from prison last month.

In recent years, the party has had limited political influence, no longer holding any seats in the legislature or local district councils. Even a bank ceased to provide bank account services to the group.

But it continued to stage small protests from time to time, despite sometimes those activities leading to arrests. On June 12, Chan and other members were fined after being found guilty over their street booth activities.

Undeterred by their convictions, they kept pressing on and protested against the ruling outside the court. Chan wiped away tears during Sunday's press conference and chanted slogans with other members at the end.

She said she doesn't believe that democracy will come in the near future.

"Moving forward is not at all easy," she said. "I hope everyone can become like an ember, a flying spark — still carrying light, keeping that light alive, no matter how small it may be."

## **Pope Leo XIV marks feast day as Vatican launches campaign to help erase its \$57-68 million deficit**

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pope Leo XIV on Sunday celebrated a special feast day traditionally used by the Catholic Church to drum up donations from the faithful, with the Vatican under the first American pope rolling out a new campaign to urge ordinary Catholics to help bail out the deficit-ridden Holy See.

Leo celebrated Mass in St. Peter's Basilica, marking the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul and thanked donors who have contributed, using the language of the publicity campaign to say their financial support was a sign of union with his young pontificate.

In churches around the world, Masses on the July 29 feast day often include a special collection for Peter's Pence, a fund which both underwrites the operations of the central government of the Catholic Church and pays for the pope's personal acts of charity.

With a promotional video, poster, QR code and website soliciting donations via credit card, PayPal, bank transfer and post office transfer, the Vatican is betting this year that an American-style fundraising pitch under the Chicago-born Leo will do more to help keep the Holy See bureaucracy afloat and erase its 50 million to 60 million euro (\$57-68 million) structural deficit.

The video features footage of Leo's emotional first moments as pope, when he stepped out onto the loggia of St. Peter's Basilica and later choked up as he received the fisherman's ring of the papacy. With an evocative soundtrack in the background, the video superimposes a message, available in several languages, urging donations to Leo via the Peter's Pence collection.

"With your donation to Peter's Pence, you support the steps of the Holy Father," it says. "Help him proclaim the Gospel to the world and extend a hand to our brothers and sisters in need. Support the steps of Pope Leo XIV. Donate to Peter's Pence."

At the end of his noon blessing Sunday, Leo used the same language about his first steps to say the Peter's Pence fund is "a sign of communion with the pope and participation with his Apostolic Ministry."

"From the heart, I thank those who with their gifts are supporting my first steps as the successor of St. Peter," he said.

The fund has been the source of scandal in recent years, amid revelations that the Vatican's secretariat of state mismanaged its holdings through bad investments, incompetent management and waste. The recent trial over the Vatican's bungled investment in a London property confirmed that the vast majority of Peter's Pence contributions had funded the Holy See's budgetary shortfalls, not papal charity initiatives as many parishioners had been led to believe.

Between the revelations and the COVID-19 pandemic, which closed churches and canceled out the tra-

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ditional pass-the-basket collection on June 29, Peter's Pence donations fell to 43.5 million euros in 2022 — a low not seen since 1986 — that was nevertheless offset the same year by other investment income and revenue to the fund.

Donations rose to 48.4 million euros (about \$56.7 million) in 2023 and hit 54.3 million euros (nearly \$63.6 million) last year, according to the Peter's Pence annual report issued last week. But the fund incurred expenses of 75.4 million euros (\$88.3 million) in 2024, continuing the trend in which the fund is exhausting itself as it covers the Holy See's budgetary shortfalls.

On top of the budget deficit, the Vatican is also facing a 1 billion euro (about \$1.17 billion) shortfall in its pension fund that Pope Francis, in the months before he died, warned was unable in the medium term to fulfill its obligations.

Unlike countries, the Holy See doesn't issue bonds or impose income tax on its residents to run its operations, relying instead on donations, investments and revenue generated by the Vatican Museums, and sales of stamps, coins, publications and other initiatives.

For years, the United States has been the greatest source of donations to Peter's Pence, with U.S. Catholics contributing around a quarter of the total each year.

Vatican officials are hoping that under Leo's pontificate, with new financial controls in place and an American math major running the Holy See, donors will be reassured that their money won't be misspent or mismanaged.

"This is a concrete way to support the Holy Father in his mission of service to the universal Church," the Vatican's economy ministry said in a press release last week announcing the annual collection and new promotional materials surrounding it. "Peter's Pence is a gesture of communion and participation in the Pope's mission to proclaim the Gospel, promote peace, and spread Christian charity."

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## Trump calls for a deal on the war in Gaza as signs of progress emerge

By TIA GOLDENBERG, SAMY MAGDY and WAFSA SHURFA Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump on Sunday pleaded for progress in ceasefire talks in the war in Gaza, calling for a deal that would halt the fighting in the 20-month-long conflict as Israel and Hamas appeared to be inching closer to an agreement.

An Israeli official said plans were being made for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to travel to Washington in the coming weeks, a sign there may be movement on a new deal. The official declined to discuss the focus of the visit and spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss plans that had not yet been finalized.

"MAKE THE DEAL IN GAZA. GET THE HOSTAGES BACK!!!" Trump wrote on his social media platform Truth Social early Sunday between posts about a Senate vote on his tax and spending cuts bill.

Trump raised expectations Friday for a deal, saying there could be a ceasefire agreement within the next week. Taking questions from reporters, he said, "We're working on Gaza and trying to get it taken care of."

Trump has repeatedly called for Israel and Hamas to end the war in Gaza. Despite an eight-week ceasefire reached just as Trump was taking office earlier this year, attempts since then to bring the sides toward a new agreement have failed.

A top adviser to Netanyahu, Israeli Minister for Strategic Affairs Ron Dermer, was set to travel to Washington this week for talks on a ceasefire.

### Trump post slams Netanyahu corruption trial

The Gaza message wasn't the only Middle East-related post by Trump. On Saturday evening, he doubled down on his criticism of the legal proceedings against Netanyahu, who is on trial for alleged corruption, calling it "a POLITICAL WITCH HUNT, very similar to the Witch Hunt that I was forced to endure."



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In the post on Truth Social, he said the trial interfered with talks on a Gaza ceasefire.

"(Netanyahu) is right now in the process of negotiating a Deal with Hamas, which will include getting the Hostages back. How is it possible that the Prime Minister of Israel can be forced to sit in a Courtroom all day long, over NOTHING," Trump wrote.

The post echoed similar remarks Trump made last week when he called for the trial to be canceled. It was a dramatic interference by an international ally in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state. And it unnerved many in Israel, despite Trump's popularity in the country.

## **A sticking point over how the war ends**

Talks between Israel and Hamas have repeatedly faltered over one major sticking point, whether the war should end as part of any ceasefire agreement.

Hamas official Mahmoud Merdawi accused Netanyahu of stalling progress on a deal, saying in remarks on the Telegram messaging app that the Israeli leader insists on a temporary agreement that would free just 10 of the hostages.

Netanyahu spokesperson Omer Dostri said "Hamas was the only obstacle to ending the war," without addressing Merdawi's claim.

Hamas says it is willing to free all the hostages in exchange for a full withdrawal of Israeli troops and an end to the war. Israel rejects that offer, saying it will agree to end the war if Hamas surrenders, disarms and goes into exile, something the group refuses.

The war in Gaza began with Oct. 7, 2023, attacks by Hamas in which militants killed 1,200 people and took roughly 250 hostage, about 50 of whom remain captive with less than half believed to be alive.

Israel's retaliatory response has killed more than 56,000 people, according to local health authorities, who do not distinguish between militants and civilians in their count but say more than half of the dead are women and children.

The war has set off a humanitarian catastrophe, displaced most of Gaza's population, often multiple times, and obliterated much of the territory's urban landscape.

## **Israeli military orders new evacuations in northern Gaza**

The Israeli military on Sunday ordered a mass evacuation of Palestinians in large swaths of northern Gaza, an early target of the war that has been severely damaged by multiple rounds of fighting.

Col. Avichay Adraee, a military spokesperson, posted the order on social media. It includes multiple neighborhoods in eastern and northern Gaza City, as well as the Jabaliya refugee camp.

The military will expand its escalating attacks to the city's northern section, calling for people to move southward to the Muwasi area in southern Gaza, Adraee said.

After being all but emptied earlier in the war, hundreds of thousands of people are in northern Gaza following their return during a ceasefire earlier this year.

An Israeli military offensive currently underway aims to move Palestinians to southern Gaza so forces can more freely operate to combat militants. Rights groups say their movement would amount to forcible displacement.

## **Carlos Alcaraz loves playing on grass and is trying to win a third Wimbledon title in a row**

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

LONDON (AP) — Carlos Alcaraz's first match on a grass court came just six years ago.

He's obviously a quick study.

When Wimbledon gets started Monday, the 22-year-old from Spain will play in the first Centre Court match of this fortnight, an honor reserved for the previous year's men's champion. The contest against Fabio Fognini will open Alcaraz's a bid for a third consecutive championship at the place.

That's something only four men have achieved in the Open era, which began in 1968: Bjorn Borg, Pete Sampras, Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic. Not bad company.

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Alcaraz already is 5-0 in Grand Slam finals, which includes going 2-0 at the French Open — which he won three weeks ago via a comeback from two sets down against No. 1 Jannik Sinner in the final — and 1-0 at the U.S. Open.

Last year, the No. 2-ranked Alcaraz became the youngest man to win a major trophy on each surface: grass, clay and hard courts.

But he's got a fondness for the green stuff.

"The most beautiful tennis that we can watch is on grass. The style that the people bring to the court when they play on grass. ... The sound of the ball," said Alcaraz, who will go into Monday on a career-best 18-match winning streak, including a title at the Queen's Club tournament last weekend. "The movement is really tough, but when you get it, it's kind of (as though) you're flying."

He loves that it allows him to show off the variety in his game and all of the skills he possesses.

Few players smile as much as Alcaraz does while in the thick of things, no matter what challenges might be presented by the foe across the net or the tension of the moment. He is as creative as it gets with a racket in hand, sometimes to his own detriment, and admits enjoying seeing replays on arena video screens after some of his best deliveries (that technology isn't used at the All England Club, but perhaps it should be).

"I really want to hit slices, drop shots, going to the net all the time, playing aggressively," said Alcaraz, who said he lost to two-time Wimbledon champion Andy Murray during a round of golf early in the week. "I think on grass it's the style that you have to play, so that's what I like the most."

It's instructive to hear what Djokovic had to say about Alcaraz after a straight-set loss in last year's final at the All England Club.

"He just was better than me in every aspect of the game," Djokovic said. "In movement, in the way he was just striking the ball beautifully, serving great. Everything."

Those words carry weight. Djokovic has won seven of his men's-record 24 Grand Slam trophies at Wimbledon but was the runner-up to Alcaraz in 2023 and 2024.

When it comes to the idea of joining an elite group by completing a three-peat in two weeks' time, Alcaraz insisted that isn't the sort of thing he really cares about or spends time considering.

He wants the title, yes. But where it would place him in history? Leave that to others.

"I really want to lift the trophy," Alcaraz said. "But right now, I'm not thinking about who I could join if I win three Wimbledons in a row."

## Sudan civil war overwhelms border town in neighbor Chad as refugees find little help

By CAITLIN KELLY Associated Press

ADRE, Chad (AP) — Fatima Omas Abdullah wakes up every morning with aches and pains from sleeping on bare ground for almost two years. She did not expect Sudan's civil war to displace her for so long into neighboring Chad.

"There is nothing here," she said, crying and shaking the straw door of her makeshift home. Since April 2023, she has been in the Adre transit camp a few hundred meters from the Sudanese border, along with almost a quarter-million others fleeing the fighting.

Now the U.S.- backed aid system that kept hundreds of thousands like Abdullah alive on the edge of one of the world's most devastating wars is fraying. Under the Trump administration, key foreign aid has been slashed and funding withdrawn from United Nations programs that feed, treat and shelter refugees.

In 2024, the U.S. contributed \$39.3 million to the emergency response in Chad. So far this year, it has contributed about \$6.8 million, the U.N. says. Overall, only 13% of the requested money to support refugees in Chad this year has come in from all donors, according to U.N. data.

In Adre, humanitarian services were already limited as refugees are meant to move to more established camps deeper inside Chad.

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Many Sudanese, however, choose to stay. Some are heartened by the military's recent successes against rival paramilitary forces in the capital, Khartoum. They have swelled the population of this remote, arid community that was never meant to hold so many. Prices have shot up. Competition over water is growing.

Adre isn't alone. As the fighting inside Sudan's remote Darfur region shifts, the stream of refugees has created a new, more isolated transit camp called Tine. Since late April, 46,000 people have arrived.

With the aid cuts, there is even less to offer them there.

## **235,000 Sudanese in a border town**

Adre has become a fragile frontline for an estimated 235,000 Sudanese. They are among the 1.2 million who have fled into eastern Chad.

Before the civil war, Adre was a town of about 40,000. As Sudanese began to arrive, sympathetic residents with longtime cross-border ties offered them land.

Now there is a sea of markets and shelters, along with signs of Sudanese intending to stay. Some refugees are constructing multi-story buildings.

Sudanese-run businesses form one of Adre's largest markets. Locals and refugees barter in Sudanese pounds for everything from produce to watches.

"There is respect between the communities," said resident Asadiq Hamid Abdullah, who runs a donkey cart. "But everyone is complaining that the food is more expensive."

Chad is one of the world's poorest countries, with almost 50% of the population living below the poverty line.

Locals say the price of water has quadrupled since the start of Sudan's civil war as demand rises. Sudanese women told The Associated Press that fights had broken out at the few water pumps for them, installed by the International Committee of the Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders.

Even food aid could run out shortly. The U.N. World Food Program says funding to support Sudanese refugees in Adre is guaranteed only until July, as the U.S. aid cuts force a 30% reduction in staff worldwide. The U.N. refugee agency has seen 30% of its funding cut for this area, eastern Chad.

Samia Ahmed, who cradled her 3-year-old and was pregnant with her second child, said she has found work cleaning and doing laundry because the WFP rations don't last the month.

"I see a gloomy future," she said.

## **Sudanese try to fill aid gaps**

Sudanese are trying to fill gaps in aid, running private schools and their own humanitarian area with a health clinic and women's center.

Local and U.N. authorities, however, are increasing the pressure on them to leave Adre. There are too many people here, they say.

"A vast city," said Hamit Hadjer Abdullai with Chad's National Commission for the Reception and Reintegration of Refugees.

He said crime was increasing. Police warn of the Colombians, a Sudanese gang. Locals said it operates with impunity, though Abdullai claimed that seven leaders have been jailed.

"People must move," said Benoit Kayembe Mukendi, the U.N. refugee agency's local representative. "For security reasons and for their protection."

As the Chadian population begins to demand their land back, Mukendi warned of a bigger security issue ahead.

But most Sudanese won't go. The AP spoke to dozens who said they had been relocated to camps and returned to Adre to be closer to their homeland and the transit camp's economic opportunities.

There are risks. Zohal Abdullah Hamad was relocated but returned to run a coffee stand. One day, a nearby argument escalated and gunfire broke out. Hamad was shot in the gut.

"I became cold. I was immobile," she said, crying as she recalled the pain. She said she has closed her business.

The latest Sudanese arrivals to Adre have no chance to establish themselves. On the order of local authorities, they are moved immediately to other camps. The U.N. said it is transporting 2,000 of them a day.

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## **In Tine, arriving Sudanese find nothing**

The new and rapidly growing camp of Tine, around 180 kilometers (111 miles) north of Adre, has seen 46,000 refugees arrive since late April from Northern Darfur.

Their sheer numbers caused a U.N. refugee representative to gasp.

Thousands jostle for meager portions of food distributed by community kitchens. They sleep on the ground in the open desert, shaded by branches and strips of fabric. They bring witness accounts of attacks in Zamzam and El-Fasher: rape, robbery, relatives shot before their eyes.

With the U.S. aid cuts, the U.N. and partners cannot respond as before, when people began to pour into Adre after the start of the war, U.N. representative Jean Paul Habamungu Samvura said.

"If we have another Adre here ... it will be a nightmare."

For more on Africa and development: <https://apnews.com/hub/africa-pulse>

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## **Iran's judiciary says at least 71 killed in Israel's attack on Tehran's notorious Evin prison**

By DAVID RISING Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — At least 71 people were killed in Israel's attack on Tehran's Evin prison, a notorious facility where many political prisoners and dissidents have been held, Iran's judiciary said on Sunday.

Judiciary spokesperson Asghar Jahangir posted on the office's official Mizan news agency website that those killed on Monday included staff, soldiers, prisoners and members of visiting families. It was not possible to independently verify the claim.

The June 23 attack, the day before the ceasefire between Israel and Iran took hold, hit several prison buildings and prompted concerns from rights groups about the safety of the inmates.

It remains unclear why Israel targeted the prison, but it came on a day when the Defense Ministry said it was attacking "regime targets and government repression bodies in the heart of Tehran."

The news of the prison attack was quickly overshadowed by an Iranian attack on a U.S. base in Qatar later that same day, which caused no casualties, and the announcement of the ceasefire.

Jahangir did not break down the casualty figures but said the attack had hit the prison's infirmary, engineering building, judicial affairs and visitation hall, where visiting family members were killed and injured.

On the day of the attack, New York-based Center for Human Rights in Iran criticized Israel for striking the prison, seen as a symbol of the Iranian regime's repression of any opposition, saying it violated the principle of distinction between civilian and military targets.

At the same time, the group said Iran was legally obligated to protect the prisoners held in Evin, and slammed authorities in Tehran for their "failure to evacuate, provide medical assistance or inform families" following the attack.

Jahangir said some of those injured were treated on site, while others were sent to hospitals.

Iran had not previously announced any death figures, though on Saturday confirmed that top prosecutor Ali Ghanaatkar — whose prosecution of dissidents, including Nobel Peace Prize winner Narges Mohammadi, led to widespread criticism by human rights groups — had been killed in the attack.

He was one of about 60 people for whom a massive public funeral procession was held on Saturday in Tehran, and he was to be buried at a shrine in Qom on Sunday.

Israel attacked Iran on June 13 in a bid to destroy the country's nuclear program.

Over 12 days before a ceasefire was declared, Israel claimed it killed around 30 Iranian commanders and 11 nuclear scientists, while hitting eight nuclear-related facilities and more than 720 military infrastructure sites. More than 1,000 people were killed, including at least 417 civilians, according to the Washington-



based Human Rights Activists group.

In retaliation, Iran fired more than 550 ballistic missiles at Israel, most of which were intercepted, but those that got through caused damage in many areas and killed 28 people.

## **3 killed and a dozen others hospitalized after crowd surge at eastern India Hindu festival**

By RAJESH ROY Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Three people were killed and more than a dozen hospitalized Sunday following a sudden crowd surge and stampede at a popular Hindu festival in eastern India, local authorities said.

"There was a sudden crowd surge of devotees for having a glimpse of the Hindu deities during which a few people either fainted, felt suffocated or complained of breathlessness," said Siddharth Shankar Swain, the top government official in Puri.

Swain told The Associated Press that 15 people were rushed to a local government hospital, where three people were pronounced dead. Autopsies are planned to determine the exact causes of death. The other 12 people have been discharged.

Tens of thousands of devotees gathered in the coastal town early Sunday at Shree Gundicha Temple, near the famous Jagannatha Temple, to catch a glimpse of the deities onboard three chariots, Swain said.

The coastal temple town of Puri comes alive each year with the grand "Rath Yatra," or chariot festival, in one of the world's oldest and largest religious processions. The centuries-old festival involves Hindu deities being taken out of the temple and driven in colorfully decorated chariots.

The festival is one of Hinduism's most revered events and draws hundreds of thousands of devotees annually from across India and the world.

Naveen Patnaik, a former top elected official of Odisha state where Puri is located, said in a social media post that "no government machinery (was) present to manage the surging crowds, highlighting a shocking lapse in duty."

"While I refrain from accusing the government of criminal negligence, their blatant callousness has undeniably contributed to this tragedy," he said.

Patnaik called the incident a "stampede" that "exposes the government's glaring incompetence in ensuring a peaceful festival for devotees."

In a social media post, Mohan Charan Majhi, the top elected official of Odisha, apologized for the incident, saying it occurred "due to stampede among devotees" amid excitement to have a glimpse of the deities.

Majhi said the security negligence will be investigated immediately.

"This negligence is inexcusable," he said, adding that concrete action will be taken against the persons involved.

## **China's humanoid robots generate more soccer excitement than their human counterparts**

BEIJING (AP) — While China's men's soccer team hasn't generated much excitement in recent years, humanoid robot teams have won over fans in Beijing based more on the AI technology involved than any athletic prowess shown.

Four teams of humanoid robots faced off in fully autonomous 3-on-3 soccer matches powered entirely by artificial intelligence on Saturday night in China's capital in what was touted as a first in China and a preview for the upcoming World Humanoid Robot Games, set to take place in Beijing.

According to the organizers, a key aspect of the match was that all the participating robots operated fully autonomously using AI-driven strategies without any human intervention or supervision.

Equipped with advanced visual sensors, the robots were able to identify the ball and navigate the field with agility.

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They were also designed to stand up on their own after falling. However, during the match several still had to be carried off the field on stretchers by staff, adding to the realism of the experience.

China is stepping up efforts to develop AI-powered humanoid robots, using sports competitions like marathons, boxing, and football as a real-world proving ground.

Cheng Hao, founder and CEO of Booster Robotics, the company that supplied the robot players, said sports competitions offer the ideal testing ground for humanoid robots, helping to accelerate the development of both algorithms and integrated hardware-software systems.

He also emphasized safety as a core concern in the application of humanoid robots.

"In the future, we may arrange for robots to play football with humans. That means we must ensure the robots are completely safe," Cheng said. "For example, a robot and a human could play a match where winning doesn't matter, but real offensive and defensive interactions take place. That would help audiences build trust and understand that robots are safe."

Booster Robotics provided the hardware for all four university teams, while each school's research team developed and embedded their own algorithms for perception, decision-making, player formations, and passing strategies—including variables such as speed, force, and direction, according to Cheng.

In the final match, Tsinghua University's THU Robotics defeated the China Agricultural University's Mountain Sea team with a score of 5–3 to win the championship.

Mr. Wu, a supporter of Tsinghua, celebrated their victory while also praising the competition.

"They (THU) did really well," he said. "But the Mountain Sea team (of Agricultural University) was also impressive. They brought a lot of surprises."

China's men have made only one World Cup appearance and have already been knocked out of next years' competition in Canada, Mexico and the United States.

## Dozens of anti-government protesters detained during clashes with riot police in Serbia

By JOVANA GEC Associated Press

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP) — Dozens of anti-government protesters were detained during clashes with riot police in Serbia's capital on Saturday during a massive rally against populist President Aleksandar Vucic demanding an early parliamentary election.

The protest by tens of thousands of demonstrators was held after nearly eight months of persistent dissent led by Serbia's university students that have rattled Vucic's firm grip on power in the Balkan country.

The huge crowd chanted: "We want elections!" as they filled the capital's central Slavija Square and several blocks around it, with many unable to reach the venue.

### Dozens of detained protesters handcuffed

Police handcuffed detained protesters, and an officer was seen injured on the ground during street battles in central Belgrade that lasted several hours. Six police officers and an unknown number of citizens were injured, police said.

"Serbia always wins in the end," President Vucic said in an Instagram post.

Vucic, a former extreme nationalist, has become increasingly authoritarian since coming to power more than a decade ago. Though he formally says he wants Serbia to join the European Union, critics say Vucic has stifled democratic freedoms as he strengthened ties with Russia and China.

As the protest formally ended, the demonstrators threw eggs, plastic bottles and other objects at riot police who were preventing the crowd from approaching a downtown park. At the park, hundreds of Vucic's loyalists have been camping for months to form a human shield in front of his headquarters in the capital.

Serbia's Interior Minister Ivica Dacic said participants in the protest attacked the police. He said police used their powers to restore public order and "arrest all those who attacked the police."

Police later said dozens of "hooligans" were detained but did not provide the exact number.

Some demonstrators wore scarfs and masks over their faces as they clashed with law enforcement,

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using garbage cans as protection against baton wielding police. Police used pepper spray before pushing protesters with their shields.

Tensions were high before and during the gathering as riot police deployed around government buildings. "Elections are a clear way out of the social crisis caused by the deeds of the government, which is undoubtedly against the interests of their own people," said a student who didn't give her name while addressing the crowd from a stage. "Today, on June 28, 2025, we declare the current authorities illegitimate."

## University students playing a key role

At the end of the official part of the rally, students told the crowd to "take freedom into your own hands." University students have been a key force behind nationwide anti-corruption demonstrations that started after a renovated rail station canopy collapsed, killing 16 people on Nov. 1.

Many blamed the concrete roof crash on rampant government corruption and negligence in state infrastructure projects, leading to recurring mass protests.

"We are here today because we cannot take it any more," student Darko Kovacevic said. "This has been going on for too long. We are mired in corruption."

Vucic and his right-wing Serbian Progressive Party have repeatedly refused the demand for an early vote and accused protesters of planning to spur violence on orders from abroad, which they didn't specify or provide evidence of.

Vucic's authorities have launched a crackdown on Serbia's striking universities and other opponents, while increasing pressure on independent media as they tried to curb the demonstrations.

While numbers have shrunk in recent weeks, the massive showing for Saturday's anti-Vucic rally suggested that the resolve persists, despite relentless pressure and after nearly eight months of almost daily protests.

Serbian police, who are firmly controlled by Vucic's government, said 36,000 people were present at the start of the protest Saturday. An independent monitoring group that records public gatherings said around 140,000 people attended the student-led rally.

Saturday marks St. Vitus Day, a religious holiday and the date when Serbs mark a 14th-century battle against Ottoman Turks in Kosovo that was the start of hundreds of years of Turkish rule, holding symbolic importance.

In their speeches, some of the speakers at the student rally Saturday evoked the theme, which was also used to fuel Serbian nationalism in the 1990s that later led to the incitement of ethnic wars following the breakup of the former Yugoslavia.

## Vucic supporters bused in to Belgrade

Hours before the student-led rally, Vucic's party bused in scores of its own supporters to Belgrade from other parts of the country, many wearing T-shirts reading: "We won't give up Serbia." They were joining a camp of Vucic's loyalists in central Belgrade where they have been staying in tents since mid-March.

In a show of business as usual, Vucic handed out presidential awards in the capital to people he deemed worthy, including artists and journalists. "People need not worry — the state will be defended and thugs brought to justice," he told reporters Saturday.

Serbian presidential and parliamentary elections are due in 2027.

Earlier this week, police arrested several people accused of allegedly plotting to overthrow the government and banned entry into the country, without explanation, to several people from Croatia and a theater director from Montenegro.

Serbia's railway company halted train service over an alleged bomb threat in what critics said was an apparent bid to prevent people from traveling to Belgrade for the rally.

Authorities made similar moves in March, before the biggest ever anti-government protest in the Balkan country, which drew hundreds of thousands of people.

## Jake Paul beats former middleweight champ Julio César Chávez Jr. by unanimous decision

By GREG BEACHAM AP Sports Writer

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Jake Paul appeared to be taking the biggest risk of his unique boxing career by stepping in the ring with Julio César Chávez Jr., a former middleweight champion and his most accomplished opponent by far.

At least it seemed like a risk — until a lifeless Chávez meekly waited until the ninth round to mount any offense, dismaying a crowd desperate for him to hurt the famous YouTuber-turned-pugilist.

Paul shrugged it all off and rolled to another victory. After all, he's the star of every show.

Paul beat Chávez by unanimous decision Saturday night, dominating the early rounds before weathering Chávez's late rally for his sixth consecutive win.

Paul (12-1, 7 KOs) had little trouble from the 39-year-old Chávez (54-7-2), controlling the majority of the bout in front of an ardently pro-Chávez crowd in Southern California.

"I love that he brought a good fight at the end, and I think the fans got a good fight to see him come out, put some punches on me," Paul said. "It makes me better. I had to elevate tonight and rise to a different level. I'm glad the fans got to see me get punched in the face a little bit."

Even with his famous father shouting furiously at ringside, Chávez fought tentatively and tepidly against Paul, who patiently controlled the ring and landed just enough to win rounds. Chávez looked lifeless at the start, barely throwing a punch until late in the fourth round of their cruiserweight bout at Honda Center.

Chávez first mounted a discernible attack in the sixth, and he delivered several exciting shots in the ninth, finally exhibiting the skills of a long boxing career.

But he couldn't seriously damage Paul, who jumped on the ropes in celebration after absorbing several flurries in the 10th and final round. The crowd booed Paul after the bell, and he cursed at them.

"All the boos are awards," Paul said. "It was flawless. I think I only got hit about 10 times."

The judges scored it 99-91, 98-92 and 97-93 for Paul. The Associated Press also favored Paul 97-93.

Chávez, who had fought just once since 2021, is best known for failing to maximize the potential in his father's genetics. He is still the most credible boxer to share the ring with Paul, who is now 5 1/2 years and 13 bouts into his lucrative fight career.

"I thought I lost the first five rounds, so I tried to win the last rounds," Chávez said. "He's strong, a good boxer (for) the first three, four rounds. After that, I felt he was tired. I don't think he's ready for the champions, but he's a good fighter."

Paul has successfully leveraged his Internet ubiquity and his own hard work to become a force in the business of boxing, if not in traditionally important bouts. He has founded a busy promotional company and flirted with mixed martial arts while becoming arguably the most prominent combat sports athlete in the world.

But Paul had mostly fought mixed martial artists and fellow online celebrities, and he took his only loss in February 2023 when he stepped in against actual boxer Tommy Fury, whose fame also exceeds his ring skills.

"I don't really care what people say at the end of the day, because every single time I just prove myself more and more," Paul said. "And that's slowly turning the tide."

Paul hadn't fought since last November, when he beat Mike Tyson in a much-hyped bout that couldn't live up to improbable expectations from fans who didn't understand the simple realities of Tyson being 58 years old.

Chávez was away from the ring for three years before his return late last year, but Paul's invitation brought him back again — along with the thousands of fans who eagerly bought tickets in perpetual support of their champion.

Chávez has fallen to innumerable lows during a lengthy boxing career conducted in the shadow of his father, one of the most beloved athletes in Mexican history. The son has failed drug tests, served suspensions and egregiously missed weight while being widely criticized for his intermittent dedication to the sport.



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He still rose to its heights, winning the WBC middleweight title in 2011 and defending it three times. Chávez shared the ring with generational greats Canelo Álvarez and Sergio Martínez, losing to both.

Chávez even lost in 2021 to Anderson Silva, the former UFC champion and rudimentary boxer who lost a one-sided ring decision to Paul one year later.

Paul's career as the world's most popular pugilistic sideshow could change soon: His financial potency makes it almost inevitable that he will be invited to fight under a sanctioning body's aegis, which means he could likely book a bout against an elite boxer whenever he chooses.

"We'll see," Paul said when asked to name his next opponent. "There's a long line, so they've got to wait in line. Take a ticket."

Paul then said he would have no problem beating Gilberto "Zurdo" Ramírez, who retained his two cruiserweight title belts with a close unanimous decision over Cuba's Yaniel Dorticos in the final undercard bout.

Earlier, 43-year-old former UFC star Holly Holm returned from a 12-year absence from the boxing ring to dominate previously unbeaten Yolanda Guadalupe Vega Ochoa.

New Jersey welterweight Julian Rodríguez earned a thrilling victory in the waning moments of the 10th and final round, staggering Avious Griffin with a sneaky left hand and eventually knocking the previously unbeaten Griffin sideways into the ropes for a stoppage with 5 seconds left.

## **Tourists are trickling into Afghanistan and the Taliban government is eager to welcome them**

By ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — By plane, motorbike, camper van and even on bicycles, tourists are beginning to discover Afghanistan, with solo travelers and tour groups gradually venturing into a country that until recently was wracked by war.

And the country's Taliban government, which seized power more than three years ago but has yet to be formally recognized by any other nation, is more than happy to welcome them.

"The Afghan people are warm and welcoming and wish to host tourists from other countries and engage with them," Deputy Minister of Tourism Qudratullah Jamal told The Associated Press in an early June interview. "Tourism brings many benefits to a country. We have considered those benefits and aim for our nation to take full advantage of them."

### **A potentially lucrative industry**

Tourism is a vital, multi-billion-dollar industry for many countries.

Afghanistan's isolation on the international stage, largely because of the Taliban's restrictions on women and girls, has left much of its 41 million people mired in poverty. As it struggles to attract foreign investment, the lucrative potential of tourism is far from lost on the government.

"We are currently earning a considerable amount of revenue from this industry, and we are hopeful it will grow even more in the future," Jamal said, noting money spent by visitors can reach more layers of society than revenue from other industries. "We are optimistic this sector will evolve into a large economy, bringing significant benefits. It plays an important role in strengthening our national economy."

### **Trickle rather than a flood**

Tourist visas are quick and easy to obtain and flights from major transit hubs such as Dubai and Istanbul operate several times a week. The government has even set up a training institute for men — and it is only for men — seeking jobs in the hospitality and tourism sector.

While visitor numbers are still very much a trickle rather than a flood, they are increasing. Nearly 9,000 foreign tourists visited Afghanistan last year, while nearly 3,000 people visited in the first three months of this year, Jamal said.

Four decades of near-continuous conflict kept nearly all vacationers away from this landlocked country of towering mountains, deep gorges and millennia of history.

The Taliban's takeover from a U.S.-backed government in August 2021 stunned the world and sent

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thousands of Afghans fleeing. But with the insurgency over, the bloodshed from frequent bombings and suicide attacks all but ended too.

Attacks still occur, however. An Islamic State affiliate in Afghanistan remains active and gunmen killed six people, including three Spanish tourists, in a May 2024 attack in Bamiyan, one of the country's main tourist attractions where centuries-old giant Buddhas carved into the cliffs were blown up by the Taliban in 2001.

While Western countries still advise against travel to Afghanistan, a drop in violence from the two decades of U.S.-led military presence is indisputable, as the government is keen to point out.

"Afghanistan has gone through many years of war and hardship. Now, we want tourists to come and see the true traditions and customs of Afghans, to understand Afghan life, creativity and resilience," Jamal said, noting there was "comprehensive security across Afghanistan."

## An ethical dilemma

Critics question the ethics of foreigners visiting Afghanistan for pleasure when its government discriminates so heavily against half the country's population.

Education beyond primary school level is banned for girls and women and few professions are open to them. Women cannot enter parks, gardens or gyms.

Beauty salons are forbidden. Authorities dictate how women dress and have demanded they cover their faces in public, a decree still flouted by many, particularly in Kabul.

Some visitors say they contemplated the ethics, but ultimately wanted to see the situation for themselves.

French-Peruvian Illary Gomez said she and her British partner, James Liddiard, debated for about a year whether to drive through Afghanistan as part of their U.K.-to-Japan camper van journey.

"Some things didn't feel morally right," she said.

But once here, they said they found a warm, hospitable and welcoming people and beautiful landscapes. They didn't feel their presence was any form of support for the Taliban.

By traveling, "you put money in the hands of the people, not the government," Liddiard said.

## Building bridges

The treatment of women is particularly sensitive for government officials. Jamal declined to comment on the subject beyond saying male and female visitors were welcome.

"Those who respect our laws and traditions have already come and can continue to come," he said.

While most restrictions are strictly enforced on Afghan women, they are far more relaxed for foreigners. Although they must still wear a headscarf in public, foreign women are more likely to gain entry into some restricted areas such as parks and are rarely asked to cover their faces in public.

Opening the country to foreign visitors was also a way of building bridges, Jamal said.

"It is a great way to promote interaction between the people of different countries. It helps build international relations and is also beneficial for trade," he told the AP. "When foreigners come here, Afghans also learn a lot from them. In addition to expanding commerce, tourism also helps foster mutual understanding, cultural exchange and strengthens talents as people learn from one another."

A foreign traveler seeing the country with his own eyes "creates closeness, builds connections and fosters trust among people," Jamal said. "They will respect each other's culture and the distance between peoples will diminish."

"So this is not just economic development; it also brings spiritual and political benefits," he said.

## Senate Republicans advance Trump's tax and spending cuts bill after dramatic late-night vote

By LISA MASCARO, KEVIN FREKING and JOEY CAPPELLETTI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Republicans voting in a dramatic late Saturday session narrowly cleared a key procedural step as they race to advance President Donald Trump's package of tax breaks, spending cuts and bolstered deportation funds by his July Fourth deadline.

The tally, 51-49, came after a tumultuous night with Vice President JD Vance at the Capitol to break a

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potential tie. Tense scenes played out in the chamber as voting came to a standstill, dragging for more than three hours as holdout senators huddled for negotiations, and took private meetings off the floor. In the end, two Republicans opposed the motion to proceed, joining all Democrats.

There's still a long weekend of work to come.

Republicans are using their majorities in Congress to push aside Democratic opposition, but they have run into a series of political and policy setbacks. Not all GOP lawmakers are on board with proposals to reduce spending on Medicaid, food stamps and other programs as a way to help cover the cost of extending some \$3.8 trillion in Trump tax breaks.

"It's time to get this legislation across the finish line," said Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D.

Ahead of roll call, the White House released a statement of administrative policy saying it "strongly supports passage" of the bill. Trump himself was at his golf course in Virginia on Saturday with GOP senators posting about the visit on social media.

But by nightfall, Trump was lashing out against holdouts, threatening to campaign against one Republican, Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina, who had announced he could not support the bill because of grave Medicaid cuts that he worried would leave many without health care in his state. Tillis and Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky voted against. The president was working the phones from the Oval Office late Saturday night, according to a person familiar with the discussions who was not authorized to speak publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Pressure was mounting from all sides — billionaire Elon Musk criticized the package as "utterly insane and destructive."

The 940-page "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" was released shortly before midnight Friday, and senators are expected to grind through all-night debate and amendments in the days ahead. If the Senate is able to pass it, the bill would go back to the House for a final round of votes before it could reach the White House.

With the narrow Republican majorities in the House and Senate, leaders need almost every lawmaker on board. A new analysis from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office said the Senate bill would increase by 11.8 million the number of people without health insurance in 2034.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York said Republicans unveiled the bill "in the dead of night" and are rushing to finish the bill before the public fully knows what's in it. He immediately forced a full reading of the text late Saturday in the Senate, which would take hours.

## Make-or-break moment for GOP

The weekend session could be a make-or-break moment for Trump's party, which has invested much of its political capital on his signature domestic policy plan. Trump is pushing Congress to wrap it up and has admonished the "grandstanders" among GOP holdouts to fall in line.

The legislation is an ambitious but complicated series of GOP priorities. At its core, it would make permanent many of the tax breaks from Trump's first term that would otherwise expire by year's end if Congress fails to act, resulting in a potential tax increase on Americans. The bill would add new breaks, including no taxes on tips, and commit \$350 billion to national security, including for Trump's mass deportation agenda.

But the cutbacks to Medicaid, food stamps and green energy investments, which a top Democrat, Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon said would be a "death sentence" for America's wind and solar industries, are also causing dissent within GOP ranks.

The Republicans are relying on the reductions to offset the lost tax revenues but some lawmakers say the cuts go too far, particularly for people receiving health care through Medicaid. Meanwhile, conservatives, worried about the nation's debt, are pushing for steeper cuts.

Tillis said he spoke with Trump late Friday explaining his concerns. Paul of Kentucky had been opposed to the bill's provision to raise the nation's debt limit by \$5 trillion.

And GOP Sen. Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, who initially voted no, switched hours later after private talks to agree to advance the bill.

As the roll call teetered, attention turned to Sen. Lisa Murkowski of Alaska who was surrounded by GOP leaders in intense conversation. She voted to proceed.

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A short time later, Thune drew conservative holdouts Sen. Rick Scott of Florida, Mike Lee of Utah and Cynthia Lummis of Wyoming to his office, with Vance and Johnson also joining. Talks dragged on.

Then swiftly, Vance led them all back in to vote.

Later, Scott said he had met with the president, adding, "We all want to get to yes."

Lee said the group "had an internal discussion about the strategy to achieve more savings and more deficit reduction, and I feel good about the direction where this is going, and more to come."

## **After setbacks, Republicans revise some proposals**

The release of the bill's draft had been delayed as the Senate parliamentarian reviewed the measure to ensure it complied with the chamber's strict "Byrd Rule," named for the late Sen. Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va. It largely bars policy matters from inclusion in budget bills unless a provision can get 60 votes to overcome objections. That would be a tall order in a Senate with a 53-47 GOP edge and Democrats unified against Trump's bill.

Republicans suffered a series of setbacks after several proposals, including shifting food stamp costs from the federal government to the states or gutting the funding structure of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, were deemed out of compliance with the rules.

But over the past days, Republicans have quickly revised those proposals and reinstated them.

The final text includes a proposal for cuts to the Medicaid provider tax that had run into parliamentary hurdles and objections from several senators worried about the fate of rural hospitals. The new version extends the start date for those cuts and establishes a \$25 billion fund to aid rural hospitals and providers.

The CBO had said that under the House-passed version of the bill, some 10.9 million more people would go without health care and at least 3 million fewer would qualify for food aid. The budget office has started releasing initial assessments of the Senate draft, which proposes steeper reductions.

Top income-earners would see about a \$12,000 tax cut under the House bill, while the package would cost the poorest Americans \$1,600, the CBO said.

## **SALT dispute shakes things up**

The Senate included a compromise over the so-called SALT provision, a deduction for state and local taxes that has been a top priority of lawmakers from New York and other high-tax states, but the issue remains unsettled.

The current SALT cap is \$10,000 a year, and a handful of Republicans wanted to boost it to \$40,000 a year. The final draft includes a \$40,000 cap, but limits it for five years. Many Republican senators say that is still too generous, but House Republicans are not fully satisfied either.

House Speaker Mike Johnson sent his colleagues home for the weekend with plans to be on call to return to Washington.

## **After decades in the US, Iranians arrested in Trump's deportation drive**

By KIM CHANDLER, CLAIRE RUSH and ELLIOT SPAGAT Associated Press

Mandonna "Donna" Kashanian lived in the United States for 47 years, married a U.S. citizen and raised their daughter. She was gardening in the yard of her New Orleans home when U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers handcuffed and took her away, her family said.

Kashanian arrived in 1978 on a student visa and applied for asylum, fearing retaliation for her father's support of the U.S.-backed shah. She lost her bid, but she was allowed to remain with her husband and child if she checked in regularly with immigration officials, her husband and daughter said. She complied, once checking in from South Carolina during Hurricane Katrina. She is now being held at an immigration detention center in Basile, Louisiana, while her family tries to get information.

Other Iranians are also getting arrested by immigration authorities after decades in the United States. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security won't say how many people they've arrested, but U.S. military strikes on Iran have fueled fears that there is more to come.



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"Some level of vigilance, of course, makes sense, but what it seems like ICE has done is basically give out an order to round up as many Iranians as you can, whether or not they're linked to any threat and then arrest them and deport them, which is very concerning," said Ryan Costello, policy director of the National Iranian American Council, an advocacy group.

Homeland Security did not immediately reply to an email seeking comment on Kashanian's case but have been touting arrests of Iranians. The department announced the arrests of at least 11 Iranians on immigration violations during the weekend of the U.S. missile strikes. U.S. Customs and Border Protection said, without elaborating, that it arrested seven Iranians at a Los Angeles-area address that "has been repeatedly used to harbor illegal entrants linked to terrorism."

The department "has been full throttle on identifying and arresting known or suspected terrorists and violent extremists that illegally entered this country, came in through Biden's fraudulent parole programs or otherwise," spokeswoman Tricia McLaughlin said of the 11 arrests. She didn't offer any evidence of terrorist or extremist ties. Her comment on parole programs referred to President Joe Biden's expanded legal pathways to entry, which his successor, Donald Trump, shut down.

Russell Milne, Kashanian's husband, said his wife is not a threat. Her appeal for asylum was complicated because of "events in her early life," he explained. A court found an earlier marriage of hers to be fraudulent.

But over four decades, Kashanian, 64, built a life in Louisiana. The couple met when she was bartending as a student in the late 1980s. They married and had a daughter. She volunteered with Habitat for Humanity, filmed Persian cooking tutorials on YouTube and was a grandmother figure to the children next door.

The fear of deportation always hung over the family, Milne said, but he said his wife did everything that was being asked of her.

"She's meeting her obligations," Milne said. "She's retirement age. She's not a threat. Who picks up a grandmother?"

While Iranians have been crossing the border illegally for years, especially since 2021, they have faced little risk of being deported to their home countries due to severed diplomatic relations with the U.S. That seems to no longer be the case.

The Trump administration has deported hundreds of people, including Iranians, to countries other than their own in an attempt to circumvent diplomatic hurdles with governments that won't take their people back. During Trump's second term, countries including El Salvador, Costa Rica and Panama have taken back noncitizens from the U.S.

The administration has asked the Supreme Court to clear the way for several deportations to South Sudan, a war-ravaged country with which it has no ties, after the justices allowed deportations to countries other than those noncitizens came from.

The U.S. Border Patrol arrested Iranians 1,700 times at the Mexican border from October 2021 through November 2024, according to the most recent public data available. The Homeland Security Department reported that about 600 Iranians overstayed visas as business or exchange visitors, tourists and students in the 12-month period through September 2023, the most recent data reports.

Iran was one of 12 countries subject to a U.S. travel ban that took effect this month. Some fear ICE's growing deportation arrests will be another blow.

In Oregon, an Iranian man was detained by immigration agents this past week while driving to the gym. He was picked up roughly two weeks before he was scheduled for a check-in at ICE offices in Portland, according to court documents filed by his attorney, Michael Purcell.

The man, identified in court filings as S.F., has lived in the U.S. for over 20 years, and his wife and two children are U.S. citizens.

S.F. applied for asylum in the U.S. in the early 2000s, but his application was denied in 2002. His appeal failed but the government did not deport him and he continued to live in the country for decades, according to court documents.

Due to "changed conditions" in Iran, S.F. would face "a vastly increased danger of persecution" if he were to be deported, Purcell wrote in his petition. "These circumstances relate to the recent bombing by

the United States of Iranian nuclear facilities, thus creating a de facto state of war between the United States and Iran."

S.F.'s long residency in the U.S., his conversion to Christianity and the fact that his wife and children are U.S. citizens "sharply increase the possibility of his imprisonment in Iran, or torture or execution," he said. Similarly, Kashanian's daughter said she is worried what will happen to her mother. "She tried to do everything right," Kaitlynn Milne said.

## **NYC, San Francisco and other US cities capping LGBTQ+ Pride month with a mix of party and protest**

By PHILIP MARCELO Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The monthlong celebration of LGBTQ+ Pride reaches its rainbow-laden crescendo as New York and other major cities around the world host major parades and marches on Sunday.

The festivities in Manhattan, home to the nation's oldest and largest Pride celebration, kick off with a march down Fifth Avenue featuring more than 700 participating groups and expected huge crowds.

Marchers will wind past the Stonewall Inn, a Greenwich Village gay bar where a 1969 police raid triggered protests and fired up the LGBTQ+ rights movement. The site is now a national monument.

In San Francisco, marchers in another of the world's largest Pride events will head down the city's central Market Street, reaching concert stages set up at the Civic Center Plaza. San Francisco's mammoth City Hall is also among the venues hosting a post-march party.

Chicago, Seattle, Minneapolis and Toronto, Canada are among the other major North American cities hosting Pride parades on Sunday.

Several global cities including Tokyo, Paris and Sao Paulo, held their events earlier this month while others come later in the year, including London in July and Rio de Janeiro in November.

The first pride march was held in New York City in 1970 to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall uprising.

Pride celebrations are typically a daylong mix of jubilant street parties and political protest, but organizers said this year's iterations will take a more defiant stance than recent years.

The festivities come days after the tenth anniversary of the Supreme Court's landmark June 26, 2015, ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that recognized same-sex marriage nationwide.

But Republicans, led by President Donald Trump, have sought to roll back LGBTQ+ friendly policies.

Since taking office in January, Trump has specifically targeted transgender people, removing them from the military, preventing federal insurance programs from paying for gender-affirmation surgeries for young people and attempting to keep transgender athletes out of girls and women's sports.

The theme for the Manhattan event is, appropriately, "Rise Up: Pride in Protest." San Francisco's Pride theme is "Queer Joy is Resistance" while Seattle's is simply "Louder."

"This is not a time to be quiet," Patti Hearn, Seattle Pride's executive director, said in a statement ahead of the event. "We will stand up. We will speak up. We will get loud."

Among the other headwinds faced by gay rights groups this year is the loss of corporate sponsorship.

American companies have pulled back support of Pride events, reflecting a broader walking back of diversity and inclusion efforts amid shifting public sentiment.

NYC Pride said earlier this month that about 20% of its corporate sponsors dropped or reduced support, including PepsiCo and Nissan. Organizers of San Francisco Pride said they lost the support of five major corporate donors, including Comcast and Anheuser-Busch.

## Elon Musk renews his criticism of Trump's big bill as Senate Republicans scramble to pass it

By ALI SWENSON Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Elon Musk on Saturday doubled down on his distaste for President Donald Trump's sprawling tax and spending cuts bill, arguing the legislation that Republican senators are scrambling to pass would kill jobs and bog down burgeoning industries.

"The latest Senate draft bill will destroy millions of jobs in America and cause immense strategic harm to our country," Musk wrote on X on Saturday ahead of a procedural Senate vote to open debate on the nearly 1,000-page bill. "It gives handouts to industries of the past while severely damaging industries of the future."

The Tesla and SpaceX CEO, whose birthday is also Saturday, later posted that the bill would be "political suicide for the Republican Party."

The criticisms reopen a recent fiery conflict between the former head of the Department of Government Efficiency and the administration he recently left. They also represent yet another headache for Republican Senate leaders who have spent the weekend working overtime to get the legislation through their chamber so it can pass by Trump's Fourth of July deadline.

Musk has previously made his opinions about Trump's "big, beautiful bill" clear. Days after he left the federal government last month with a laudatory celebration in the Oval Office, he blasted the bill as "pork-filled" and a "disgusting abomination."

"Shame on those who voted for it: you know you did wrong. You know it," he wrote on X earlier this month. In another post, the wealthy GOP donor who had recently forecasted that he'd step back from political donations threatened to fire lawmakers who "betrayed the American people."

When Trump clapped back to say he was disappointed with Musk, back-and-forth fighting erupted and quickly escalated. Musk suggested without evidence that Trump, who spent the first part of the year as one of his closest allies, was mentioned in files related to sex abuser Jeffrey Epstein.

Musk ultimately tried to make nice with the administration, saying he regretted some of his posts that "went too far." Trump responded in kind in an interview with The New York Post, saying, "Things like that happen. I don't blame him for anything."

It's unclear how Musk's latest broadsides will influence the fragile peace he and the president had enjoyed in recent weeks. The White House didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

Musk has spent recent weeks focused on his businesses, and his political influence has waned since he left the administration. Still, the wealthy businessman poured hundreds of millions of dollars into Trump's campaign in 2024, demonstrating the impact his money can have if he's passionate enough about an issue or candidate to restart his political spending.

Though he was silent on Musk, Trump laid on pressure and lashed out strongly at Republican holdouts in the Senate as lawmakers spent hours taking a procedural vote during a rare Saturday evening session. He accused Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina of seeking publicity with his no vote and threatened to campaign against the senator's reelection.

The legislation narrowly cleared its test vote in the Senate late Saturday evening, allowing senators to begin debate.

## What's in the latest version of Trump's big bill now before the Senate

By LISA MASCARO and KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — At some 940-pages, the legislation is a sprawling collection of tax breaks, spending cuts and other Republican priorities, including new money for national defense and deportations. Now it's up to Congress to decide whether President Donald Trump's signature's domestic policy package will become law.

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Trump told Republicans, who hold majority power in the House and Senate, to skip their holiday vacations and deliver the bill by the Fourth of July.

Senators were working through the weekend to pass the bill and send it back to the House for a final vote. Democrats are united against it.

Here's the latest on what's in the bill. There could be changes as lawmakers negotiate.

## **Tax cuts are the priority**

Republicans say the bill is crucial because there would be a massive tax increase after December when tax breaks from Trump's first term expire. The legislation contains roughly \$3.8 trillion in tax cuts.

The existing tax rates and brackets would become permanent under the bill. It temporarily would add new tax breaks that Trump campaigned on: no taxes on tips, overtime pay or some automotive loans, along with a bigger \$6,000 deduction in the Senate draft for older adults who earn no more than \$75,000 a year.

It would boost the \$2,000 child tax credit to \$2,200 under the Senate proposal. Families at lower income levels would not see the full amount.

A cap on state and local deductions, called SALT, would quadruple to \$40,000 for five years. It's a provision important to New York and other high tax states, though the House wanted it to last for 10 years.

There are scores of business-related tax cuts.

The wealthiest households would see a \$12,000 increase from the legislation, which would cost the poorest people \$1,600 a year, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office analysis of the House's version.

Middle-income taxpayers would see a tax break of \$500 to \$1,500, the CBO said.

## **Money for deportations, a border wall and the Golden Dome**

The bill would provide some \$350 billion for Trump's border and national security agenda, including \$46 billion for the U.S.-Mexico border wall and \$45 billion for 100,000 migrant detention facility beds, as he aims to fulfill his promise of the largest mass deportation operation in U.S. history.

Money would go for hiring 10,000 new Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers, with \$10,000 signing bonuses and a surge of Border Patrol officers, as well. The goal is to deport some 1 million people per year.

The homeland security secretary would have a new \$10 billion fund for grants for states that help with federal immigration enforcement and deportation actions. The attorney general would have \$3.5 billion for a similar fund, known as Bridging Immigration-related Deficits Experienced Nationwide, or BIDEN, referring to former Democratic President Joe Biden.

To help pay for it all, immigrants would face various new fees, including when seeking asylum protections.

For the Pentagon, the bill would provide billions for ship building, munitions systems, and quality of life measures for servicemen and women, as well as \$25 billion for the development of the Golden Dome missile defense system. The Defense Department would have \$1 billion for border security.

## **How to pay for it? Cuts to Medicaid and other programs**

To help partly offset the lost tax revenue and new spending, Republicans aim to cut back some long-running government programs: Medicaid, food stamps, green energy incentives and others. It's essentially unraveling the accomplishments of the past two Democratic presidents, Biden and Barack Obama.

Republicans argue they are trying to rightsize the safety net programs for the population they were initially designed to serve, mainly pregnant women, the disabled and children, and root out what they describe as waste, fraud and abuse.

The package includes new 80-hour-a-month work requirements for many adults receiving Medicaid and food stamps, including older people up to age 65. Parents of children 14 and older would have to meet the program's work requirements.

There's also a proposed new \$35 co-payment that can be charged to patients using Medicaid services.

Some 80 million people rely on Medicaid, which expanded under Obama's Affordable Care Act, and 40 million use the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program. Most already work, according to analysts.

All told, the CBO estimates that under the House-passed bill, at least 10.9 million more people would go



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without health coverage and 3 million more would not qualify for food stamps.

The Senate proposes a \$25 billion Rural Hospital Transformation Program to help offset reduced Medicaid dollars. It's a new addition, intended to win over holdout GOP senators and a coalition of House Republicans warning that the proposed Medicaid provider tax cuts would hurt rural hospitals.

Both the House and Senate bills propose a dramatic rollback of the Biden-era green energy tax breaks for electric vehicles. They also would phase out or terminate the various production and investment tax credits companies use to stand up wind, solar and other renewable energy projects.

In total, cuts to Medicaid, food stamps and green energy programs would be expected to produce at least \$1.5 trillion in savings.

## **Trump savings accounts and so, so much more**

A number of extra provisions reflect other GOP priorities.

The House and Senate both have a new children's savings program, called Trump Accounts, with a potential \$1,000 deposit from the Treasury.

The Senate provided \$40 million to establish Trump's long-sought "National Garden of American Heroes."

There's a new excise tax on university endowments. A \$200 tax on gun silencers and short-barreled rifles and shotguns was eliminated. One provision bars money to family planning providers, namely Planned Parenthood, while \$88 million is earmarked for a pandemic response accountability committee. Another section expands the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, a hard-fought provision from Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri, for those impacted by nuclear development and testing.

Billions would go for the Artemis moon mission and for exploration to Mars.

The bill would deter states from regulating artificial intelligence by linking certain federal AI infrastructure money to maintaining a freeze. Seventeen Republican governors asked GOP leaders to drop the provision.

Additionally, a provision would increase the nation's debt limit, by \$5 trillion, to allow continued borrowing to pay already accrued bills.

What's the final cost?

Altogether, keeping the existing tax breaks and adding the new ones is expected to cost \$3.8 trillion over the decade, the CBO says in its analysis of the House bill. An analysis of the Senate draft is pending.

The CBO estimates the House-passed package would add \$2.4 trillion to the nation's deficits over the decade.

Or not, depending on how one does the math.

Senate Republicans are proposing a unique strategy of not counting the existing tax breaks as a new cost because those breaks are already "current policy." Senators say the Senate Budget Committee chairman has the authority to set the baseline for the preferred approach.

Under the Senate GOP view, the tax provisions cost \$441 billion, according to the congressional Joint Committee on Taxation.

Democrats and others say this is "magic math" that obscures the true costs of the GOP tax breaks. The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget puts the Senate tally at \$4.2 trillion over the decade.

## **'Kisses yes, Bezos No,' protesters say, as Bezos wedding bonanza stirs controversy in Venice**

By ANTONIO CALANNI and GIADA ZAMPANO Associated Press

VENICE, Italy (AP) — Hundreds of protesters marched through Venice's central streets on Saturday to say "No" to billionaire Jeff Bezos, his bride and their much-awaited wedding extravaganza, which reached its third and final day amid celebrity-crowded parties and the outcries of tired residents.

On Friday, the world's fourth-richest man and his bride Lauren Sanchez Bezos tied the knot during a private ceremony with around 200 celebrity guests on the secluded island of San Giorgio.

The wedding, however, angered many Venetians, with some activists protesting it as an exploitation of the city by the billionaire Bezos, while ordinary residents suffer from overtourism, high housing costs and

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the constant threat of climate-induced flooding.

As the two newlyweds prepared for the final party Saturday evening, hundreds of Venetians and protesters from across Italy filled Venice's tiny streets with colorful banners reading "Kisses Yes, Bezos No" and "No Bezos, no War." Venice has around 50,000 residents.

The demonstration contrasted with the expensive wedding bonanza, seen by critics as an affront to the lagoon city's fragile environment and its citizens, overwhelmed by throngs of tourists.

"We are here to continue ruining the plans of these rich people, who accumulate money by exploiting many other people ... while the conditions of this city remain precarious," said Martina Vergnano, one of the demonstrators.

The protest organizers claimed that their planned protest had forced the relocation of Saturday's party from a supposed initial location to a former medieval shipyard, the Arsenale.

Bezos donated 1 million euros (\$1.17 million) each to three environmental research organizations working to preserve Venice, according to Corila, the Venetian environmental research association.

But many protesters blasted the move as a clear attempt to appease angry residents.

"We want a free Venice, which is finally dedicated to its citizens. ... Those donations are just a misery and only aimed at clearing Bezos' conscience," said Flavio Cogo, a Venetian activist who joined Saturday's protest.

Details of the exclusive wedding ceremony Friday night were a closely guarded secret, until Sánchez Bezos posted to Instagram a photo of herself beaming in a white gown as she stood alongside a tuxedo-clad Bezos.

Athletes, celebrities, influencers and business leaders converged to revel in extravagance that was as much a testament to the couple's love as to their extraordinary wealth.

The star-studded guest list included Oprah Winfrey and NFL great Tom Brady, along with Hollywood stars Leonardo Di Caprio and Orlando Bloom, tech entrepreneur and philanthropist Bill Gates and top socialites, including the Kardashian-Jenner clan.

Ivanka Trump, her husband Jared Kushner and their three children also joined the celebrations.

The bride and groom stayed at the Aman Venice hotel on the Grand Canal, where Bezos posed for photos and Sanchez Bezos blew kisses to the press.

"The planet is burning but don't worry, here's the list of the 27 dresses of Lauren Sánchez," read one protest slogan, a reference to the bride's reported wedding weekend wardrobe. It featured a mermaid-lined wedding gown by Dolce & Gabbana and other Dolce Vita-inspired looks by Italian designers, including Schiaparelli and Bottega Veneta.

The city administration has strongly defended the nuptials as in keeping with Venice's tradition as an open city that has welcomed popes, emperors and ordinary visitors alike for centuries.

## Biden, Harris and Walz attend funeral for former Minnesota House Speaker Melissa Hortman

By STEVE KARNOWSKI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Democratic former Minnesota House Speaker Melissa Hortman was honored for her legislative accomplishments and her humanity during a funeral Saturday where former President Joe Biden and former Vice President Kamala Harris joined over 1,000 mourners.

Hortman was fatally shot two weeks earlier by a man posing as a police officer in an attack that Minnesota's chief federal prosecutor has called an assassination. It and another shooting also left her husband, Mark, dead and a state senator and his wife seriously wounded.

"Melissa Hortman will be remembered as the most consequential speaker in Minnesota history. I get to remember her as a close friend, a mentor, and the most talented legislator I have ever known," Gov. Tim Walz said in his eulogy. "For seven years, I have had the privilege of signing her agenda into law. I know millions of Minnesotans get to live their lives better because she and Mark chose public service and politics."

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## The service

Neither Biden nor Harris spoke, but they sat in the front row with the governor, who was Harris' running mate in 2024. Biden and Harris held hands during the Lord's Prayer, a common practice, before embracing during the passing of the peace. Biden and then Harris then reached over to shake Walz's hand.

Biden was also one of more than 7,500 people who paid their respects Friday as Hortman, her husband, Mark, and their golden retriever, Gilbert, lay in state in the Minnesota Capitol rotunda in St. Paul. Gilbert was seriously wounded in the attack and had to be euthanized. Biden also visited the wounded senator in a hospital.

Dozens of current and former state legislators from both parties and other elected officials who worked with Hortman also attended.

Hortman, who was first elected in 2004, helped pass an expansive agenda of liberal initiatives like free lunches for public school students during the momentous 2023 session as the chamber's speaker, along with expanded protections for abortion and trans rights. With the House split 67-67 between Democrats and Republicans this year, she yielded the gavel to a Republican under a power-sharing deal, took the title speaker emerita, and helped break a budget impasse that threatened to shut down state government.

## The governor's eulogy

Walz said Hortman saw her mission as "to get as much good done for as many people as possible." And he said her focus on people was what made her so effective.

"She certainly knew how to get her way. No doubt about that," Walz said. "But she never made anyone feel that they'd gotten rolled at a negotiating table. That wasn't part of it for her, or a part of who she was. She didn't need somebody else to lose to win for her."

The governor said the best way to honor the Hortmans would be by following their example.

"Maybe it is this moment where each of us can examine the way we work together, the way we talk about each other, the way we fight for things we care about," Walz said. "A moment when each of us can recommit to engaging in politics and life the way Mark and Melissa did -- fiercely, enthusiastically, heartily, but without ever losing sight of our common humanity."

## The homily

The Rev. Daniel Griffith, pastor and rector of the Basilica, who led the service, said the country is in need of deep healing. He said it seems as if the U.S. is living in the "dystopian reality" described at the beginning of William Butler Yeats' poem, "The Second Coming."

"Here in Minnesota, we have been the ground zero place, sadly, for racial injustice," Griffith said. "The killing of George Floyd just miles from our church today. And now we are the ground zero place for political violence and extremism. Both of these must be decried in the strongest possible terms, as they are, respectively, a threat to human dignity and indeed, our democracy."

But the priest also said Minnesota could also be "a ground zero place for restoration and justice and healing." He added that the presence of so many people was a sign that that work can succeed.

Archbishop Bernard Hebda of the Saint Paul and Minneapolis Archdiocese offered his condolences to the Hortman family.

A private burial will be held at a later date.

## The Hortman family

The Hortmans were proud of their adult children, Sophie and Colin Hortman, and the lawmaker often spoke of them.

In a voice choked with emotion, Colin said his parents embodied the Golden Rule, and he read the Prayer of St. Francis, which his mother always kept in her wallet. He said it captures her essence. It starts, "Lord make me an instrument of your peace."

After the service, Walz presented the children with U.S. and Minnesota flags that flew over the Capitol on the day their parents were killed.

## The suspect

The man accused of killing the Hortmans at their home in the Minneapolis suburb of Brooklyn Park on

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June 14, and wounding Democratic state Sen. John Hoffman, and his wife, Yvette, at their home in nearby Champlin, made a brief court appearance Friday. He's due back in court Thursday.

Vance Boelter, 57, of Green Isle, surrendered near his home the night of June 15 after what authorities called the largest search in Minnesota history.

Boelter remains jailed and has not entered a plea. Prosecutors need to secure a grand jury indictment first. His lawyers have declined to comment on the charges, which could carry the federal death penalty.

Friends have described Boelter as an evangelical Christian with politically conservative views. But prosecutors have declined so far to speculate on a motive.

## **Red Wings acquire goalie John Gibson from the Ducks in a trade at the NHL draft**

By STEPHEN WHYNO AP Hockey Writer

The Detroit Red Wings acquired John Gibson from the Anaheim Ducks on Saturday, a trade of the veteran goaltender that could start the dominos falling around the NHL with several teams looking for help in net.

Detroit sent backup goalie Petr Mrazek, a 2027 second-round pick and a 2026 fourth-rounder to Anaheim for Gibson, whose name has been in trade rumors for several years. No salary was retained.

"John, throughout the course of his career, has been a proven starter and a good starter in the NHL," Red Wings general manager Steve Yzerman said on a video call with reporters.

"As Anaheim has gone through their rebuilding process, I think it probably affected his play a little bit, and as their team gets better and they have a good, young goaltender in (Lukas) Dostal. John (is) looking for more opportunity to play, and we're counting on him obviously to give us quality starts and upgrade our team in net."

Gibson, 31, has spent his first 12 years in the league with Anaheim. He started 28 games, compared to 49 for Dostal, last season, and he's signed for two more at a salary cap hit of \$6.4 million.

Ducks GM Pat Verbeek worked under Yzerman for a decade, and the two began speaking about Gibson before the trade deadline in March. Injuries derailed a move then but set the table for the western Pennsylvania native to go to Hockeytown.

"We want to thank John for his time with our organization and being an integral part of the Ducks for more than a decade," Verbeek said. "It became clear John wanted a new opportunity, and after many discussions with him we felt now was the right time to make this move."

### **Goalie market**

Back-to-back Western Conference champion Edmonton, rebuilding Philadelphia and others are expected to pursue a goaltender this offseason, and the list of unrestricted free agents with starting experience is not long. Jake Allen, Ilya Samsonov, Anton Forsberg and Ville Husso are among the top options available.

A restricted free agent is off the market after St. Louis re-signed goaltender Joel Hofer to a two-year deal worth \$6.8 million. GM Doug Armstrong had warned colleagues not to think about tendering an offer sheet for Hofer, saying earlier in the week, "You're not going to get him."

### **Other moves**

A few minor trades materialized on Day 2 of the draft. Los Angeles sent 24-year-old D-man Jordan Spence to Ottawa for the 67th pick and Colorado's sixth-rounder in 2026; Buffalo dealt Connor Clifton and a second-round pick to the Penguins for Conor Timmins and Isaac Beliveau and Washington acquired Declan Chisolm from Minnesota for a swap of picks and minor-leaguer Chase Priskie.

Spence scored 52 points in 150 games for Los Angeles over the past two seasons, but he was relegated to the Kings' third defensive pairing last year with the rapid growth of Brandt Clarke and the injury return of Drew Doughty — each a right-handed shooter like Spence. Kings GM Ken Holland said Spence's representatives told him Spence wanted to leave if he wouldn't have a bigger role next season.

The Capitals also signed 23-year-old forward Justin Sourdif for \$1.65 million over two years after sending a second-round pick to two-time Stanley Cup champion Florida for the minor leaguer with four games of



NHL experience. Sourdif scored a goal in his lone call-up this past season and had 10 points in 18 games on the Charlotte Checkers' run to the American Hockey League's Calder Cup Finals.

They are hoping Sourdif, making just over the league minimum at \$825,000 annually, fills a hole on their second or third line. There was no room for upward mobility for Sourdif, especially after the Panthers signed playoff MVP Sam Bennett to an eight-year, \$64 million contract and could bring back winger Brad Marchand.

"We see a guy that's competitive, smart, can play wing and center," Capitals GM Chris Patrick said. "In Florida it was a situation where he was getting boxed out a little bit, and they had a bunch of people calling on him, so it got to be a competitive situation. ... He's going to have a good chance here to prove that he's a good NHL player."

North of the border, the Calgary Flames extended 6-foot-6 Kevin Bahl to a six-year deal worth just over \$32 million, while the Winnipeg Jets shored up their blue line depth by giving Haydn Fleury \$1.9 million over the next two seasons. Bahl will count \$5.35 million against the salary cap through 2030-31.

## Israeli strikes kill at least 72 people in Gaza as ceasefire prospects move closer

By WAFAA SHURAF and SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli strikes killed at least 72 people across Gaza overnight and into Saturday, health workers said, as ceasefire prospects were said to be improving after 21 months of war.

Three children and their parents were killed in an Israeli strike on a tent camp in Muwasi near the southern city of Khan Younis. They were struck while sleeping, relatives said.

"What did these children do to them? What is their fault?" said the children's grandmother, Suad Abu Teima, as others knelt to kiss their bloodied faces and wept. Some placed red flowers into the body bags.

Also among the dead were 12 people near the Palestine Stadium in Gaza City, which was sheltering displaced people, and eight more in apartments, according to staff at Shifa Hospital. More than 20 bodies were taken to Nasser Hospital, according to health officials.

A midday strike killed 11 people on a street in eastern Gaza City, and their bodies were taken to Al-Ahli Hospital. Another strike on a gathering in eastern Gaza City killed eight including five children, the hospital said. A strike on a gathering at the entrance to the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza killed two, according to Al-Awda Hospital.

### Hopes for a ceasefire agreement in the coming week

U.S. President Donald Trump says there could be a ceasefire agreement within the next week. Taking questions from reporters on Friday, he said, "We're working on Gaza and trying to get it taken care of."

An official with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press that Israeli Minister for Strategic Affairs Ron Dermer will arrive in Washington next week for talks on a Gaza ceasefire, Iran and other subjects. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

Indirect talks between Israel and Hamas have been on again, off again since Israel broke the latest ceasefire in March, continuing its military campaign in Gaza and furthering the territory's dire humanitarian crisis. Some 50 hostages remain in Gaza, fewer than half believed to still be alive. They were among 251 hostages taken when Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, sparking the war.

"What more is left to do in Gaza that has not already been done? Who else is left to eliminate?" Yotam Cohen, brother of hostage Nimrod Cohen, said Saturday evening as weekly rallies by families and supporters resumed following Israel's ceasefire with Iran.

### Over 6,000 killed since latest ceasefire ended

The war has killed over 56,000 Palestinians, according to the Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between civilians and combatants. It says more than half of the dead were women and children. It said the dead include 6,089 killed since the end of the latest ceasefire.

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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.

There is hope among families of hostages that Trump's involvement in securing the recent ceasefire between Israel and Iran might lead to more pressure for a deal in Gaza. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is riding a wave of public support for the Iran war and its achievements, and he could feel he has more space to move toward ending the war in Gaza, something his far-right governing partners oppose.

Hamas has repeatedly said it is prepared to free all the hostages in exchange for an end to the war in Gaza. Netanyahu says he will end the war only once Hamas is disarmed and exiled, something the group has rejected.

## **Hundreds have been killed while seeking food**

Meanwhile, hungry Palestinians are enduring a catastrophic situation in Gaza. After blocking all food for 2 1/2 months, Israel has allowed only a trickle of supplies into the territory since mid-May.

More than 500 Palestinians have been killed and hundreds more wounded while seeking food since the newly formed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation began distributing aid in the territory about a month ago, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

Palestinian witnesses say Israeli troops have opened fire at crowds on roads heading toward the sites. The Israeli military says it has only fired warning shots and that it was investigating incidents in which civilians had been harmed while approaching the sites.

Thousands of Palestinians walk for hours to reach the sites, moving through Israeli military zones.

Separate efforts by the United Nations to distribute limited food have been plagued by armed gangs looting trucks and by crowds of desperate people offloading supplies from convoys.

Saturday's death toll included two people killed by Israeli gunfire while waiting to receive aid near the Netzarim corridor, a road that separates northern and southern Gaza, according to Al-Shifa and Al-Awda hospitals, which each received one body.

There was no immediate Israeli military comment.

## **Takeaways from interviews with families forever changed by diseases that vaccines can prevent**

By LAURA UNGAR AP Science Writer

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — In the time before widespread vaccination, devastating infectious diseases ran rampant in America, killing millions of children and leaving others with lifelong health problems.

Over the next century, vaccines virtually wiped out long-feared scourges like polio and measles and drastically reduced the toll of many others. Today, however, some preventable, contagious diseases are making a comeback as vaccine hesitancy pushes immunization rates down. And well-established vaccines are facing suspicion even from public officials, with Robert F. Kennedy Jr., a longtime anti-vaccine activist, running the federal health department.

"This concern, this hesitancy, these questions about vaccines are a consequence of the great success of the vaccines — because they eliminated the diseases," said Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious disease expert at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. "If you're not familiar with the disease, you don't respect or even fear it. And therefore you don't value the vaccine."

Anti-vaccine activists even portray the shots as a threat, focusing on the rare risk of side effects while ignoring the far larger risks posed by the diseases themselves — and years of real-world data that experts say proves the vaccines are safe.

Some Americans know the reality of vaccine-preventable diseases all too well. Here are takeaways from interviews with a few of them by The Associated Press.

## **Getting a disease while pregnant can change two lives.**

Janith Farnham has helped shepherd her daughter Jacque through life for decades. Jacque, 60, was born with congenital rubella syndrome, which resulted in hearing, eye and heart problems at birth. There

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was no vaccine against rubella back then, and Janith contracted it in early pregnancy.

Though Janith, 80, did all she could to help Jacque thrive, the condition took its toll. Jacque eventually developed diabetes, glaucoma, autistic behaviors and arthritis.

Today, Jacque lives in an adult residential home and gets together with Janith four or five days a week. Janith marvels at Jacque's sense of humor and affectionate nature despite all she's endured. Jacque is generous with kisses and often signs "double I love yous," even to new people she meets.

Given what her family has been through, Janith finds it "more than frustrating" when people choose not to get children the MMR shot against measles, mumps and rubella.

"I know what can happen," she said. "I just don't want anybody else to go through this."

## **Delaying a vaccine can be deadly.**

More than half a century has passed, but Patricia Tobin still vividly recalls seeing her little sister Karen unconscious on the bathroom floor.

It was 1970, Karen was 6, and she had measles. The vaccine against it wasn't required for school in Miami where they lived. Though Karen's doctor discussed immunizing the first grader, their mother didn't share his sense of urgency.

"It's not that she was against it," Tobin said. "She just thought there was time."

Then came a measles outbreak. After she collapsed in the bathroom, Karen never regained consciousness. She died of encephalitis.

"We never did get to speak to her again," Tobin said.

Today, all states require that children get certain vaccines to attend school. But a growing number of people are making use of exemptions. Vanderbilt's Schaffner said fading memories of measles outbreaks were exacerbated by a fraudulent, retracted study claiming a link between the MMR shot and autism.

The result? Most states are below the 95% vaccination threshold for kindergartners — the level needed to protect communities against measles outbreaks.

## **Preventable diseases can have long-term effects.**

One of Lora Duguay's earliest memories is lying in a hospital isolation ward with her feverish, paralyzed body packed in ice. She was three years old.

It was 1959 and Duguay, of Clearwater, Florida, had polio. It was one of the most feared diseases in the U.S., experts say, causing some terrified parents to keep children inside and avoid crowds during epidemics.

Given polio's visibility, the vaccine against it was widely and enthusiastically welcomed. Given polio's visibility, the vaccine against it was widely and enthusiastically welcomed. But the early vaccine that Duguay got was only about 80% to 90% effective. Not enough people were vaccinated or protected yet to stop the virus from spreading.

Though treatment helped her walk again, she eventually developed post-polio syndrome, a neuromuscular disorder that worsens over time. She now gets around in a wheelchair.

The disease that changed her life twice is no longer a problem in the U.S. So many children get the vaccine — which is far more effective than earlier versions — that it doesn't just protect individuals but it prevents occasional cases that arrive in the U.S. from spreading further and protects the vulnerable.

## **When people aren't vaccinated, the vulnerable remain at risk.**

Every night, Katie Van Tornhout rubs a plaster cast of a tiny foot, a vestige of the daughter she lost to whooping cough at just 37 days old.

Callie Grace was born on Christmas Eve 2009. When she turned a month old, she began having symptoms of pertussis, or whooping cough. She was too young for the Tdap vaccine against it and was exposed to someone who hadn't gotten their booster shot.

At the hospital, Van Tornhout recalled, the medical staff frantically tried to save her, but "within minutes, she was gone."

Today, Callie remains part of her family's life, and Van Tornhout shares the story with others as she advocates for vaccination.

"It's up to us as adults to protect our children — like, that's what a parent's job is," Van Tornhout said. "I

watched my daughter die from something that was preventable ... You don't want to walk in my shoes."

## **Hundreds of thousands mourn top Iranian military commanders and scientists killed in Israeli strikes**

By DAVID RISING Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of mourners lined the streets of downtown Tehran on Saturday for the funeral of the head of the Revolutionary Guard and other top commanders and nuclear scientists killed during a 12-day war with Israel.

The caskets of Guard chief Gen. Hossein Salami, the head of the Guard's ballistic missile program, Gen. Amir Ali Hajizadeh and others were driven on trucks along the capital's Azadi Street as people in the crowds chanted: "Death to America" and "Death to Israel."

Salami and Hajizadeh were both killed on the first day of the war, June 13, as Israel launched a war it said was meant to destroy Iran's nuclear program, specifically targeting military commanders, scientists and nuclear facilities.

State media reported more than 1 million people turned out for the funeral procession, which was impossible to independently confirm, but the dense crowd packed the main Tehran thoroughfare along the entire 4.5 kilometer (nearly 3 mile) route.

There was no immediate sign of Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in the state broadcast of the funeral. Khamenei, who has not made a public appearance since before the outbreak of the war, has in past funerals held prayers for fallen commanders over their caskets before the open ceremonies, later aired on state television.

### **Top officials are among the mourners**

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi was on hand, and state television reported that Gen. Esmail Qaani, who heads the foreign wing of the Revolutionary Guard, the Quds Force, and Gen. Ali Shamkhani were also among the mourners.

Shamkhani, an adviser to Khamenei who was wounded in the first round of Israel's attack and hospitalized, was shown in a civilian suit leaning on a cane in an image distributed on state television's Telegram channel.

Later on Saturday night, state TV showed Shamkhani saying he and other generals knew they would be targets before Israel initiated the war earlier this month. The morning of the strike on his residence, he said he woke up for dawn prayer when suddenly everything around him had become ruins. He initially thought that an earthquake had taken place, and it took search and rescue teams at least three hours to find him in the rubble.

Shamkhani said most of his injuries were internal, including a chest fracture.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard was created after its 1979 Islamic Revolution. Since it was established, it has evolved from a paramilitary, domestic security force to a transnational force that has come to the aid of Tehran's allies in the Middle East, from Syria and Lebanon to Iraq. It operates in parallel to the country's existing armed forces and controls Iran's arsenal of ballistic missiles, which it has used to attack Israel twice during the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

Over 12 days before a ceasefire was declared on Tuesday, Israel claimed it killed around 30 Iranian commanders and 11 nuclear scientists, while hitting eight nuclear-related facilities and more than 720 military infrastructure sites. More than 1,000 people were killed, including at least 417 civilians, according to the Washington-based Human Rights Activists group.

Iran fired more than 550 ballistic missiles at Israel, most of which were intercepted, but those that got through caused damage in many areas and killed 28 people.

Saturday's ceremonies were the first public funerals for top commanders since the ceasefire, and Iranian state television reported that they were for 60 people in total, including four women and four children.



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## Crowd expresses feelings of anger and defiance

Authorities closed government offices to allow public servants to attend the ceremonies.

Many in the crowd expressed feelings of anger and defiance.

"This is not a ceasefire, this is just a pause," said 43-year-old Ahmad Mousapoor, waving an Iranian flag. "Whatever they do, we will definitely give a crushing response."

State media published images of an open grave plot at Tehran's sprawling Behesht-e-Zahra cemetery where army chief of staff, Gen. Mohammad Bagheri, who was killed on the first day of the war, was to be buried beside his brother, a Guards commander killed during the 1980s Iran-Iraq war.

Many of the others were to be buried in their hometowns.

The Iranian judiciary's Mizan news agency confirmed that the top prosecutor at the notorious Evin prison had been killed in an Israeli strike on Monday.

It reported that Ali Ghanaatkar, whose prosecution of dissidents, including Nobel Peace Prize winner Narges Mohammadi, led to widespread criticism by human rights groups, would be buried at a shrine in Qom.

Iran has always insisted its nuclear program is only for peaceful purposes. But Israel views it as an existential threat and said its military campaign was necessary to prevent Iran from building an atomic weapon.

Khamenei's last public appearance was June 11, two days before hostilities with Israel broke out, when he met with Iranian parliamentarians.

On Thursday, however, he released a pre-recorded video, in his first message since the end of the war, filled with warnings and threats directed toward the United States and Israel, the Islamic Republic's long-time adversaries.

The 86-year-old downplayed U.S. strikes on three Iranian nuclear sites as having not achieved "anything significant" and claimed victory over Israel.

## Questions remain over possible talks

The head of the United Nations nuclear watchdog agency, Rafael Grossi, has characterized the damage done by American bunker-buster bombs to Iran's Fordo nuclear site, which was built into a mountain, as "very, very, very considerable."

U.S. President Donald Trump has said that he expects Iran to open itself to international inspection to verify it doesn't restart its nuclear program, and White House officials have said they expect to restart talks soon with Iran, though nothing has been scheduled.

Iran's parliament has voted to suspend collaboration with Grossi's International Atomic Energy Agency for the time being.

In a post on X on Saturday, Araghchi indicated that Iran might be open to talks, but criticized Trump's remarks from Friday in which the president scoffed at a warning from Khamenei against further U.S. attacks, saying Iran "got beat to hell."

"If President Trump is genuine about wanting a deal, he should put aside the disrespectful and unacceptable tone towards Iran's Supreme Leader, Grand Ayatollah Khamenei and stop hurting his millions of heartfelt followers," Araghchi wrote.

## Mamdani heads to Harlem after stunning New York City primary results

By MICHAEL HILL Associated Press

Zohran Mamdani spoke at a rally in Harlem on Saturday as he sought to build on momentum from New York City's Democratic primary, telling the crowd that people struggling to pay for housing, groceries and bus fare are hungry for change.

Mamdani appeared at a National Action Network rally days after declaring victory over former Gov. Andrew Cuomo, the presumed favorite in the primary. Results will be finalized after the city's ranked choice vote-counting resumes Tuesday.

"What our victory showed on election night was less a victory between one man and another, but a

victory for a city that New Yorkers can afford," Mamdani said at a rally attended by Black clergy and filmmaker Spike Lee

The Rev. Al Sharpton, the influential leader of the network, praised Mamdani for coming to the rally, despite reports that he lost some of the city's most solidly Black neighborhoods in the primary.

"He could have went the other way and said, 'It's me against them.' But he came this morning and he proclaimed something. And I gave him a lot of credit for that," Sharpton said.

The winner of the Democratic primary advances to November's election.

Mayor Eric Adams is running for reelection as an independent candidate. Curtis Sliwa, the founder of the crime-fighting Guardian Angels, is running as a Republican. Cuomo, who has conceded defeat in the primary, also could run as an independent candidate.

In Harlem, the 33-year-old state lawmaker stuck to a cost-of-living theme that skyrocketed him to political stardom, weaving in quotes from Martin Luther King Jr., the Bible and the city's first Black mayor, David Dinkins.

He said people question whether the city will become "a museum" of a place where working people could once thrive.

"What we have seen in the last two weeks is a hunger from New Yorkers to move beyond the days of museums and relics and make this city a living, breathing testament to what is possible."

## **Chief Justice Roberts warns against heated political words about judges**

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Chief Justice John Roberts, speaking at a moment when threats against judges are on the rise, warned on Saturday that elected officials' heated words about judges can lead to threats or acts of violence by others.

Without identifying anyone by name, Roberts clearly referenced Republican President Donald Trump and Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York when he said he has felt compelled to issue public rebukes of figures in both parties in recent years.

"It becomes wrapped up in the political dispute that a judge who's doing his or her job is part of the problem," Roberts said at a gathering of lawyers and judges in Charlotte, North Carolina. "And the danger, of course, is somebody might pick up on that. And we have had, of course, serious threats of violence and murder of judges just simply for doing their work. So I think the political people on both sides of the aisle need to keep that in mind."

Roberts appeared at the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals judicial conference on the day after the Supreme Court issued the final decisions of its term, including a major victory for Trump that limits judges' ability to use court orders with nationwide reach to block his agenda. C-Span carried Roberts' conversation with Judge Albert Diaz, the 4th Circuit's chief judge.

Roberts first took issue with Trump's comments in 2018, when Roberts responded to Trump's description of a judge who rejected his migrant asylum policy as an "Obama judge." In March, Roberts rejected calls for impeaching judges, shortly after Trump demanded the removal of one who ruled against his deportation plans.

In 2020, Roberts called out Schumer for remarks that Roberts termed inappropriate and threatening after the senator said Trump-nominated Justices Brett Kavanaugh and Neil Gorsuch "will pay the price" for votes in a then-pending Louisiana abortion case. Schumer later said he should not have used those words.

Two years later, with the court on the verge of overturning Roe v. Wade's constitutional protections for abortion, police arrested an armed man outside Kavanaugh's home in suburban Washington. In April, Nicholas John Roske pleaded guilty to trying to kill Kavanaugh.

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## At 100, this globetrotting Catholic priest still bakes pies, enjoys opera and celebrates daily Mass

By LUIS ANDRES HENAO Associated Press

BLUE BELL, Pa. (AP) — Throughout his remarkable lifetime, the Rev. James Kelly has baptized thousands of people, married thousands more, ministered to the sick in hospitals, and traveled the world extensively. He became friends with an opera superstar and, yes, even with a saint.

The longest-serving priest in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia recently celebrated the 75th anniversary of his ordination and his 100th birthday. He's grateful to have reached these milestones, but nearly didn't after experiencing a health challenge last year that required life-saving surgery.

He feels God gave him some extra time and tries to make each day count.

"The Lord was wonderful to me to give me the health and the strength and the energy to travel, to meet beautiful things — God was always giving me surprises," Kelly says.

Born on Jan. 7, 1925, in the Philadelphia neighborhood of Roxborough to a devoutly Catholic family, Kelly's path to the priesthood seems ordained from the start. He loved attending church. Other children dreamt of becoming athletes, doctors, firefighters. He wanted to be a priest.

"When I was 4 or 5 years old, I'd play Mass," he says, laughing, as he recalls that his parents were his first congregants. "I always had a little altar in my room, and I'd have a glass, and some flowers in there, and I'd make a vestment, put a scarf on, and have some candy, and give Communion to everybody."

Kelly wakes up at dawn to celebrate Mass at the retirement living community that he now calls home. He listens to opera. He bakes pies.

### Memories, parachute jumps and climbing a bridge to save a life

Sitting in his room, Kelly flips through a photo album detailing his journey. He smiles with every page turn, pointing to black-and-white photos of him as a toddler and milestones as a Catholic — his baptism, confirmation and ordination as a priest.

"I turned down Hollywood!" he says, laughing as he points to the portrait of a dapper, young priest, his hair slicked and flashing a wide smile.

He also points to the photo published by a Philadelphia newspaper of the time when he climbed in his Roman collar to the top of a bridge and dissuaded a man from jumping to his death.

"Nobody would climb there, so I climbed up — it was 400 feet high. It was a bitter cold day," he says. "I was able to talk to him and break him down emotionally, so he wouldn't jump. I told him, 'What's your grandchild going to say one day: Papa, why didn't you take me fishing?'"

He points to other photos of the many ceremonies he proudly led during his 19 years as pastor of Saint Pius X Parish in Broomall, Pennsylvania, about 10 miles (16 kilometers) west of Philadelphia.

There are images of him during a vacation in Mexico when he made a parachute jump. Or that one time, when he visited the majestic Iguazu Falls on the border between Argentina and Brazil, which he recalls as one of the most beautiful sights of his life.

"Everywhere you turned, there was a rainbow, there was a mist ... the water gushing forth and spray and the colors," he says. "It was, as the kids would say, awesome."

### Imagination, friends and being grateful for the simple pleasures

Imagination, he says, is one of his favorite words, recalling that he wrote his college thesis on it. "Jesus used his imagination to teach," he says, in what became an example when he prepared his own sermons.

He treasures other memories, such as traveling to more than 100 countries and meeting Saint Teresa of Kolkata, also known as Mother Theresa. Kelly says the two became friends over the years after meeting in Philadelphia and running into each other at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. The centenarian also shared the time when he took a group of blind children to a live performance of his friend, acclaimed soprano Joan Sutherland.

"I've been fortunate to meet some of the most magnificent, good people in this world, and they've been most generous and gracious to me," Kelly says.

These days, he enjoys simple pleasures: the taste of cherries, a beautiful song, or his favorite meal —

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roast chicken with mashed potatoes, fresh string beans, and corn on the cob.

He loves learning and often attends lectures on music, art history and Egyptology at the Normandy Farms Estates retirement community where he resides in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania.

His apartment is decorated with a painting of the Virgin Mary that he drew with chalk, a portrait of his mother, and a note signed by the late Pope Francis.

On his bedside table, he keeps an image of Carlo Acutis, the Catholic Church's first millennial-era saint. Kelly is inspired by Acutis, who died at 15 in 2006. Especially Acutis' devotion and how he used his computer skills to create an online exhibit about scores of eucharistic miracles recognized by the church over centuries.

## **The ritual of a humble daily Mass and the secret to a long life**

Every morning, he wakes up without the need of an alarm clock and says the same prayer: "Lord, what surprise do you have for me today?"

"I hope it'll be a nice one that I'll love and enjoy. I never know, but I want to thank you for whatever happens today."

After a cup of coffee, he celebrates Mass in his apartment for a few residents of his community.

"When I moved here, I never thought I was going to have a private chapel!" Kathleen Quigley, a retired nurse, quipped after a recent service. "I just love my faith, and he's such a stronghold of faith that it's wonderful for me to have. I just come right downstairs, have Mass, we talk, he shares his food."

Kelly once ministered to large congregations, but he feels the daily Mass in his living room is as important.

"It's not in a beautiful chapel or church. But it's here that I can offer my love and efforts to the Heavenly Father," he says. After the final prayer, he always remembers to be grateful.

"That's all I can say — two words: thank you. It's wonderful that I have another day, and I might be able to eat some delicious cherries today, and meet people, new friends," he says. "God knows what surprises I'll encounter today."

His secret to longevity?

"I drink lots of milk," he says, laughing. "And I say lots of prayers."

## **Democrats wrestle with how to conduct oversight as Trump officials crack down**

By MATT BROWN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Just hours after she pleaded not guilty to federal charges brought by the Trump administration, New Jersey Rep. LaMonica McIver was surrounded by dozens of supportive Democratic colleagues in the halls of the Capitol. The case, they argued, strikes at the heart of congressional power.

"If they can break LaMonica, they can break the House of Representatives," said New York Rep. Yvette Clarke, chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Federal prosecutors allege that McIver interfered with law enforcement during a visit with two other House Democrats to an Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility in Newark, New Jersey. She calls the charges "baseless."

It's far from the only clash between congressional Democrats and the Republican administration as officials ramp up deportations of immigrants around the country.

Sen. Alex Padilla of California was forcibly removed by federal agents while attempting to speak at a news conference for Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem. At least six groups of House Democrats have recently been denied entry to ICE detention centers. In early June, federal agents entered the district office of Rep. Jerry Nadler, D-N.Y., and briefly detained a staffer.

Congressional Republicans have largely dismissed Democrats' behavior as inflammatory and inappropriate, and some have publicly supported the prosecution of McIver.

Often in the dark about the Trump administration's moves, congressional Democrats are wrestling with how to perform their oversight duties at a time of roiling tensions with the White House and new restric-



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tions on lawmakers visiting federal facilities.

"We have the authority to conduct oversight business, and clearly, House Republicans are not doing that oversight here," said New Jersey Rep. Rob Menendez, one of the House Democrats who went with McIver to the Newark ICE facility.

"It's our obligation to continue to do it on site at these detention facilities. And even if they don't want us to, we are going to continue to exert our right."

## **Democrats confront a stark new reality**

The prospect of facing charges for once routine oversight activity has alarmed many congressional Democrats who never expected to face criminal prosecution as elected officials. Lawmakers in both parties were also unnerved by the recent targeted shootings of two Minnesota lawmakers and the nation's tense political atmosphere.

"It's a moment that calls for personal courage of members of Congress," said Rep. Summer Lee of Pennsylvania. "I wish that we had more physical protection. I think that's one of those harsh realities that members of Congress who are not in leadership recognize: that oftentimes, we do this job at our own peril, and we do it anyway."

The arrests and detentions of lawmakers have led some Democrats to take precautionary measures. Several have consulted with the House general counsel about their right to conduct oversight. Multiple lawmakers also sought personal legal counsel, while others have called for a review of congressional rules to provide greater protections.

"The Capitol Police are the security force for members of Congress. We need them to travel with us, to go to facilities and events that the president may have us arrested for," said Rep. Jonathan Jackson of Illinois.

## **'There's not a lot of transparency'**

As the minority party in the House, Democrats lack the subpoena power to force the White House to provide information. That's a problem, they say, because the Trump administration is unusually secretive about its actions.

"There's not a lot of transparency. From day to day, oftentimes, we're learning about what's happening at the same time as the rest of the nation," said Rep. Lucy McBath, D-Ga., who led a prayer for McIver at the Capitol rally.

Democrats, to amplify their concerns, have turned to public letters, confronted officials at congressional hearings and digital and media outreach to try to create public pressure.

"We've been very successful when they come in before committees," said Rep. Lauren Underwood of Illinois, who added that she believed the public inquiries have "one hundred percent" resonated with voters.

## **Tapping into the information pipeline**

Congressional Democrats say they often rely on local lawmakers, business leaders and advocates to be their eyes and ears on the ground.

A handful of Democrats say their best sources of information are across the political aisle, since Republicans typically have clearer lines of communication with the White House.

"I know who to call in Houston with the chamber. I think all of us do that," said Texas Rep. Sylvia Garcia of how business leaders are keeping her updated.

Garcia said Democrats "need to put more pressure" on leading figures in the agriculture, restaurant and hospitality sectors to take their concerns about the immigrant crackdown to Trump's White House.

"They're the ones he'll listen to. They're the ones who can add the pressure. He's not going to listen to me, a Democrat who was an impeachment manager, who is on the bottom of his list, if I'm on it at all," Garcia said.

Rep. Jason Crow of Colorado, for instance, had a working relationship with a for-profit ICE facility in his district until DHS in February ended reports as part of an agency-wide policy change. A member of Crow's staff now regularly goes to the facility and waits, at times for hours, until staff at the Aurora facility respond to detailed questions posed by the office.

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## Democrats say 'real oversight' requires winning elections

Still, many House Democrats concede that they can conduct little of their desired oversight until they are back in the majority.

Rep. Marc Veasey, D-Texas, said that "real oversight power and muscle" only comes "when you have a gavel."

"Nothing else matters. No rousing oratory, no tours, no speeches, no social media or entertainment, none of that stuff," Veasey said. "Because the thing that keeps Trump up at night more than anything else is the idea he's going to lose this House and there'll be real oversight pressure applied to him."

## How to protect yourself from ticks year-round

By CHRISTINA LARSON AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ticks can be active in any season and it's important to check for and remove the bloodsuckers as quickly as possible — especially after you've been outside hiking, gardening or enjoying nature.

"Humans are outside more in summer so we hear about more tick infections," said Sam Telford, an infectious diseases expert at Tufts University. But he urges caution year-round because "every season is tick season."

While tick populations vary a lot regionally, some Northeastern states including Maine, Massachusetts and Rhode Island are seeing "above average" numbers of American dog ticks this year, said Telford.

And New York state is seeing a higher number of reported deer tick bites this year than last year, said Saravanan Thangamani, who studies tick-borne diseases at SUNY Upstate Medical University.

### How ticks can spread disease

Ticks, like mosquitos, need to feed on blood. But instead of a quick prick, they are slow feeders – with hooked mouth parts that attach into the skin of deer, rabbits, dogs and people.

There are many different species of ticks found globally and only some spread germs that can make people sick. A main worry is blacklegged ticks, also called deer ticks, which can spread Lyme disease. Once found mainly in New England and pockets of the Midwest, the ticks are now present over a wider range.

A tick bite doesn't always lead to illness. "If you remove a tick within 24 hours of attachment, it's fairly unlikely that you will get infected," said Telford.

### How to check for ticks

Ticks are usually found low to the ground, in leaf litter or grassy areas.

Check your clothing for ticks and do a full-body check including under the arms and behind ears, knees and hair.

"If you're out all day long, try to do a quick check for ticks every few hours," said Bobbi Pritt at the Mayo Clinic. "When you go back inside, take a shower. That will wash off any unattached ticks, and you're also more likely to spot any other ticks."

Use tweezers to remove the tick and grasp it as close to the skin as possible to pull from the head. If you don't have them handy, you can also use your fingernails, the edge of a credit card or any semi-sharp object.

### How to keep ticks away

The best approach is to minimize tick exposure altogether.

Bug sprays containing ingredients such as DEET can be sprayed on exposed skin to ward off ticks and mosquitos, said Telford.

Wear long sleeves and pants, and you can also spray clothing with repellents containing permethrin, a chemical similar to a natural ingredient in chrysanthemums that makes ticks avoid the flowers.

### Protect your pets from ticks

Don't forget to pay attention to outdoor pets. Medications can prevent fleas and ticks from attaching to a dog's skin. But it's still a good idea to check the fur after being outside.

"Wherever pets can't easily groom themselves, that's where the ticks will be – on the ears, around the

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muzzle area, under the collar, between the toes," said Thangamani.

Dogs and cats roaming outdoors can also bring ticks into the house.

"If pets bring ticks in, a tick can live in the house for months until it finds its next blood meal," which could be another household member, he said.

### What to do after a tick bite

After removing the tick, keep an eye on the skin around the bite. If a rash or flu-like symptoms appear within several days or weeks, see a doctor.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention does not recommend tick testing because results may not be reliable.

## Russian drones kill 2 and injure 17 in Odesa as Ukraine destroys helicopters in Crimea

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian drones struck the southern Ukrainian port city of Odesa overnight, killing two people and injuring at least 17, Ukrainian authorities said on Saturday. Meanwhile, three attack helicopters and an anti-aircraft missile system were destroyed in the Russian-occupied Crimean Peninsula.

Ukraine's Security Service agency deployed special drones to attack the Kirovske military airfield, a Ukrainian security official said on Saturday.

"Available data indicate the destruction of multi-purpose and attack helicopters Mi-8, Mi-26 and Mi-28, as well as the self-propelled anti-aircraft missile and gun complex Pantsir-S1," according to the official, who spoke about the operation on condition of anonymity.

In Odesa, a drone slammed into a residential tower block in the city, causing damage to three floors and trapping residents, emergency services said. The two killed in the attack were a married couple, according to regional Gov. Oleh Kiper, who added that three children were among the injured.

There was no immediate comment from Moscow. According to Russia's Defense Ministry, over 40 Ukrainian drones were shot down overnight and on Saturday morning over western Russia and Kremlin-occupied Crimea.

Long-range drone strikes have been a hallmark of the war, now in its fourth year. The race by both sides to develop increasingly sophisticated and deadlier drones has turned the war into a testing ground for new weaponry.

Ukrainian drones have pulled off some stunning feats. At the start of June, nearly a third of Moscow's strategic bomber fleet was destroyed or damaged in a covert Ukrainian operation using cheaply made drones sneaked into Russian territory.

Smaller, short-range drones are used by both sides on the battlefield and in areas close to the roughly 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line.

The U.N. Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine said in a report published Thursday that short-range drone attacks killed at least 395 civilians and injured 2,635 between the start of the war in February 2022 and April 2025. Almost 90% of the attacks were by the Russian armed forces, it reported.

More than 13,300 civilians have died and over 34,700 have been injured in the war, the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights said a June 11 report.

## Today in History: June 29

### Apple releases the first iPhone to consumers

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, June 29, the 180th day of 2025. There are 185 days left in the year.

Today's highlight in history: On June 29, 2007, the first version of the iPhone went on sale to the public; over 2.3 billion iPhones have been sold to date.

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Also on this date:

In 1520, Montezuma II, the ninth and last emperor of the Aztecs, died in Tenochtitlan (tay-nohch-TEET'-lahn) under unclear circumstances (some say he was killed by his own subjects; others, by the Spanish).

In 1613, London's original Globe Theatre, where many of Shakespeare's plays were performed, was destroyed by a fire sparked by a cannon shot during a performance of "Henry VIII."

In 1767, Britain approved the Townshend Revenue Act, which imposed import duties on glass, paint, oil, lead, paper and tea shipped to the American colonies. (Colonists bitterly protested, prompting Parliament to repeal the duties on each of the products — except for tea.)

In 1776, the Virginia state constitution was adopted, and Patrick Henry was made the state's governor.

In 1967, Jerusalem was reunified as Israel removed barricades separating the Old City from the Israeli sector.

In 1970, the United States ended a two-month military offensive into Cambodia.

In 1995, the U.S. space shuttle Atlantis docked with Russia's Mir space station as they orbited the earth.

In 2006, the Supreme Court ruled, 5-3, that President George W. Bush's plan to try Guantanamo Bay detainees in military tribunals violated U.S. and international law.

In 2009, disgraced financier Bernard Madoff received a 150-year sentence for his multibillion-dollar fraud. (Madoff died in prison in April 2021.)

In 2022, R. Kelly was sentenced to 30 years in prison for using his R&B superstardom to subject young fans to sexual abuse. The singer and songwriter was convicted of racketeering and sex trafficking the previous year.

Today's Birthdays: Songwriter L. Russell Brown is 85. Singer-songwriter Garland Jeffreys is 82. Actor Gary Busey is 81. Former actor and politician Fred Grandy is 77. Rock musician Ian Paice (Deep Purple) is 77. Singer Don Dokken is 72. Rock singer Colin Hay (Men At Work) is 72. Actor Maria Conchita Alonso is 70. Actor Sharon Lawrence ("NYPD Blue") is 64. Actor Amanda Donohoe is 63. Actor Judith Hoag is 62. Violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter is 62. Producer-writer Matthew Weiner is 60. Actor Melora Hardin is 58. Actor Brian D'Arcy James is 57. Rap DJ and record producer DJ Shadow is 53. Actor Zuleikha Robinson is 48. Rock musician Sam Farrar (Maroon 5) is 47. Actor Luke Kirby is 47. Singer and TV personality Nicole Scherzinger is 47. Comedian-writer Colin Jost is 43. Actor Lily Rabe is 43. NBA forward Kawhi Leonard is 34. Actor Camila Mendes (TV: "Riverdale") is 31. Soccer player Jude Bellingham is 22.