

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 1 of 79

1- Upcoming Events

2- We the People Column: Trump's Takeover of Washington D.C. Police Force Unleashes New Legal and Constitutional Concerns

4- Groton Tigers Gear Up for Football Season with Strong Numbers and Fresh Faces

6- Adult Mosquito Control

7- Boys beat Hot Springs, Girls lose to Sioux Falls Christian

8- Sunday Extras

26- Gov. Rhoden's Weekly Column

27- Sen. Thune's Weekly Column

28- Rep. Dusty Johnson's Weekly Column

29- Rev. Snyder's Column

31- South Dakota Average Gas Prices

32- Drought Monitor

33- EarthTalk - Penguins

34- SD SearchLight: Rhoden was running a state-funded campaign before Operation Prairie Thunder

35- SD SearchLight: Capitol restoration looms as a major expense for South Dakota

37- Weather Pages

42- Daily Devotional

43- Subscription Form

44- Lottery Numbers

45- Upcoming Groton Events

46- News from the Associated Press

Sunday, August 17

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.

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

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

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



Monday, Aug. 18

Senior Menu: Tater tot hot dish, green beans, mixed fruit, whole wheat bread.

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

Senior Citizens meet at Groton Community Center, 1 p.m.

Groton Area Staff Development Day

Boys Golf at Meadow Creek Golf Course at Sioux Valley Invitational, 10 a.m.

Open House at Groton Area Elementary and MS/HS, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Sixth Graders meet at 4:30 p.m. in the Gym.

Tuesday, Aug. 19

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Senior Menu: Tuna casserole with peas, Antigua blend, Mandarin oranges, breadstick.

School Breakfast: Cereal.

School Lunch: Chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes.

St. John's Lutheran: Quilting, 9 a.m.

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Girls Soccer at Garretson, 6 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Groton Daily Independent
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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 2 of 79

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

Trump's Takeover of Washington D.C. Police Force Unleashes New Legal and Constitutional Concerns

To justify his deployment of the National Guard to the streets of Washington, D.C., in conjunction with FBI, Border Patrol, ICE and DEA agents, as well as Secret Service personnel, as part of his federal takeover of the city's police force, President Donald Trump has declared a "crime emergency" in the nation's capital, despite the fact that federal officials in his own administration recently announced that violent crime in the District of Columbia has hit a 30-year low. In a press conference on Monday, Trump announced that these forces "can do whatever the hell they want" to curb crime, an unprecedented presidential action, and another assertion of his belief that he enjoys absolute power under Article II of the Constitution.

Trump has invoked a provision of the 1973 Washington D.C. Home Rule Act, which permits the president to take control of the city's police force for a temporary period, up to 30 days. After that period, Trump must receive authorization from Congress, if he wishes to maintain control of law enforcement. Trump's false pretext for deploying the guardsmen, one exposed by his administration's report that violent crime in the nation's capital is down 35 percent from 2023, and has fallen to its lowest point since before the pandemic, is the latest in a string of troop deployments for domestic purposes, just two months after he sent 4,000 national guardsmen and 800 active duty Marines to quell protests in Los Angeles over his immigration policies, despite the fact that the protests, which were overwhelmingly peaceful and efficiently handled by local law enforcement, had largely ended. Trump's actions violated the Posse Comitatus Act, which sharply limits use of the military in domestic law enforcement, as well as the 10th Amendment, and are the subject of a federal trial underway this week.

Trump's executive takeover of law enforcement in the nation's capital-- long a goal of his-- is predicated on his baseless description of the city as an urban hellscape and reflects his authoritarian trajectory. Devoid of a factually based rationale, since there is no street crime epidemic in the District, the legality of Trump's action is specious and raises questions about his motives. Historically, autocrats have painted wildly exaggerated portraits of violent crime in cities before taking control of local law enforcement, pursuant to national expansion.

Indeed, Trump announced that he may also deploy the National Guard to other cities, naming New York, Chicago, Baltimore and Oakland, among others. Each city is governed by a Democratic mayor and located within a "Blue State." FBI statistics indicate that crime is down, for example, in New York and Baltimore, and the National Mayors Association has confirmed the reduction of crimes in cities across America. Historically speaking, authoritarian leaders have deployed the military into civilian populations as projections of power and presence, aiming to intimidate local populations and suppress dissent. The infliction of fear among the people has been a common technique among autocrats in other nations and across the decades, as a means of cowering opponents, silencing dissidents and preventing protests. Residents of Washington have already expressed fear at the sight of military boots on the ground, in their streets.

While it is likely that the deployment of forces in the nation's capital also represents an additional effort to divert the attention of Trump's MAGA base, outraged by the president's failure to deliver on his

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 3 of 79

promise to release the Epstein Files, a political and moral scandal that has engulfed his administration's time, resources and energies, and which seemingly defies resolution, the broader legal and constitutional concerns arising across our nation ask about state authority, in the event of forthcoming deployments, to respond to presidential acts that swallow up the 10th Amendment. Mindful of the fact that all governmental acts, including those of presidents, must be tethered to the Constitution, citizens are right to ask about measures to restrain the federal government and prevent, as Chief Justice Marshall wrote, transgression of legal boundaries.

As is often the case, history offers valuable insights for our time. In 1798, when Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Acts founders, including James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, wrote resolutions—the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions—that decried violations of the Constitution which they believed constituted a fundamental threat to the republic, federalism and American liberties. We turn next week to their response.

David Adler is president of The Alturas Institute, a non-profit organization created to promote the Constitution, gender equality and civic education. This column is made possible with the support of the South Dakota Humanities Council, South Dakota NewsMedia Association and this newspaper.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 4 of 79

Groton Tigers Gear Up for Football Season with Strong Numbers and Fresh Faces

GROTON – The start of football season brings renewed excitement in Groton, where the Tigers enter the fall with solid numbers, a mix of returning talent, and a new crop of underclassmen ready to step into key roles.

Head coach Shaun Wanner, beginning his 39th season at the helm, says the team is in good shape as they prepare for Friday's opener.

"We've got good numbers — 40 kids out this year," Wanner said in a preseason interview with GDI Live. "We lost a few from Langford and Groton, but anytime we can get into the 40s, that's a good number for us." The roster includes nine players from Langford and 31 from Groton, giving the program solid depth.



You can watch the interview on GDILIVE.COM. The link is the black bar.

A Shuffled Schedule

This year's schedule required some last-minute adjustments after Sisseton moved to a junior varsity-only slate. The result is an opener against longtime rival Webster, set for 7 p.m. Friday in Groton.

"They're always well-coached, and we've never had blowouts with them," Wanner said. "It's usually a one-score game, and I expect another competitive matchup."

Groton also added Winner, the defending state champions, to fill the gap. Despite Winner's reputation, Wanner welcomed the challenge.

"Win or lose, we're going to get a lot of points from them because they'll win eight or nine games," he said. "It's better than not playing somebody. If we only had seven games, it would have hurt us."

The Tigers are fortunate to have three of their first four games at home, giving fans an early look at the team.

Strength in the Trenches, Youth at the Helm

Groton's strength lies in its line play, where four of five offensive starters return. On defense, several experienced defensive backs — Ryder Johnson, Keegen Tracy, and Lincoln Johnson — bring stability.

The skill positions, however, will be filled by new faces. Freshman quarterback Asher Johnson takes over under center, with classmate Jordan Schwan at tight end and Anthony Tracy contributing on both sides of the ball. Sophomore Ryder Schelle steps in at running back to replace the graduated senior core.

"We're probably going to start two or three freshmen along with some sophomores," Wanner said. "They're good kids, they've had success in junior high, and now we'll see how they perform under the lights."

Coaching Continuity and New Blood

The Tigers' staff remains largely intact. Coach Kurth leads the defense, Coach Erickson handles line play, and Michael Alberts returns from Langford. New to the program is Quentin Bierman, a University of Sioux Falls alum who has been working with players in the weight room and now joins officially as a line and special teams assistant.

"It's good to have consistency year after year," Wanner said. "Now I'm starting to mentor some of the younger coaches too."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 5 of 79

Facilities and Health on the Rise

Fans will notice improvements at the field, including a new crow's nest, additional storage, and an upgraded scoreboard sound system. Wanner hinted he may call plays from the crow's nest this year.

Off the field, the veteran coach feels reinvigorated after undergoing heart surgery last November.

"I feel like I'm 30 years old again," he said with a smile. "My numbers are good, and I'm finally listening to my wife about diet and health. The key is I still enjoy coming out here every day."

Looking Ahead

With three home games early, a veteran offensive line, and a talented but young group of skill players, the Tigers are entering the season with cautious optimism.

"Our kids are excited," Wanner said. "We've been working hard in two-a-days, battling the humidity, and now it's time to get on the field and compete."

The Groton Area Tigers kick off their season Friday at 7 p.m. against Webster in Groton.

- Story compiled by ChatGPT from the video interview on GDLIVE.COM.



Webster at Groton
Football Action
Friday, Aug. 22, 7 p.m.
Justin Olson with the play by play

Groton
Area
Tigers
Groton, SD

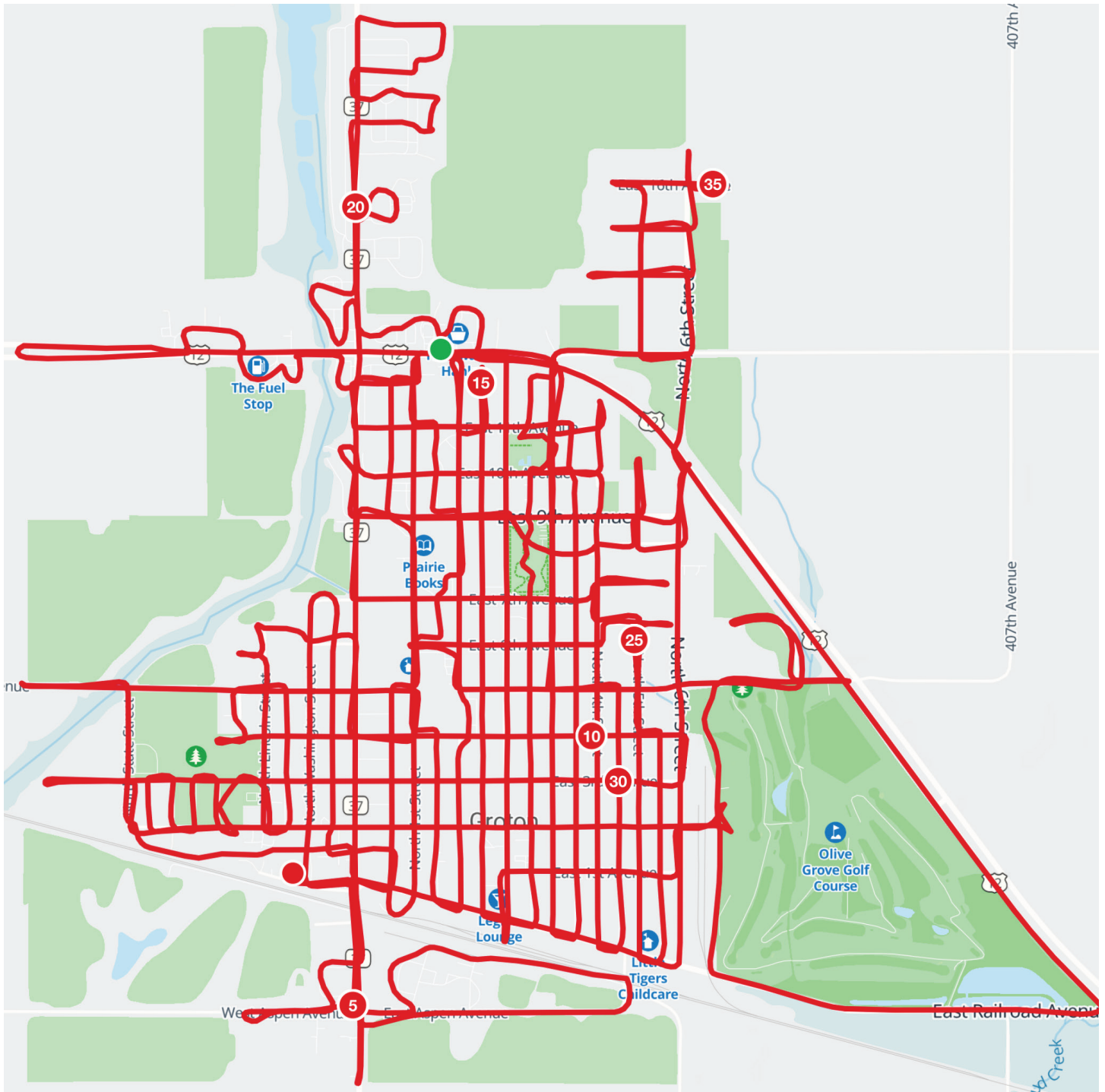
GDLIVE



A production of the
Groton Daily Independent
For more info: GDLIVE.COM

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 6 of 79



Adult Mosquito Control

The City of Groton conducted adult mosquito control last night. The temperature was 74-78 degrees with the wind out of the NE 4-6 mph. 10 gallons of MasterLine Kontrol 4-4 (with 4.6% Permethrin). Travel time was 2 hours and 55 minutes with a distance of 35.52 miles. Total cost of the application was around \$601.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 7 of 79

Boys beat Hot Springs, Girls lose to Sioux Falls Christian

The Groton Area soccer teams were in opposite sides of the state on the southern side on Saturday with the girls losing to Sioux Falls Christian, 2-0, and the boys going 2-0 on the season with a 5-1 win over Hot Springs.

In the boys game, Ethan Kroll had two goals and one assist and Karson Zak had three goals. Easton Weber and Axel Abeln each had an assist.

Sioux Falls Christian scored one goal in each of the halves to pull out the win.

Coach Matt Baumgartner said, "Girls soccer started the game aggressive and finished aggressive; the mid portion of the game wasn't in our favor today. Lots to work around with the departure of what I would say 7 super seniors that led the seniority for 2 years prior to this year's chapter.

We want to be a team that plays more aggressive this year and become somewhat of a nuisance to other teams on how we command the game, press to win the ball back with intensity and perform the type of soccer we know we're capable of.

This year's team is led by Senior captains Jerica Locke and Jaedyn Penning and we expect good energy and positive performances from them both!"

The soccer teams will be at home this weekend. Belle Fourche comes to town on Friday with the girls playing at 4 p.m. and the boys at 6 p.m. Then on Saturday the teams play at Northern State University with the girls playing at 11 a.m. and the boys at 1 p.m.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 8 of 79



THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

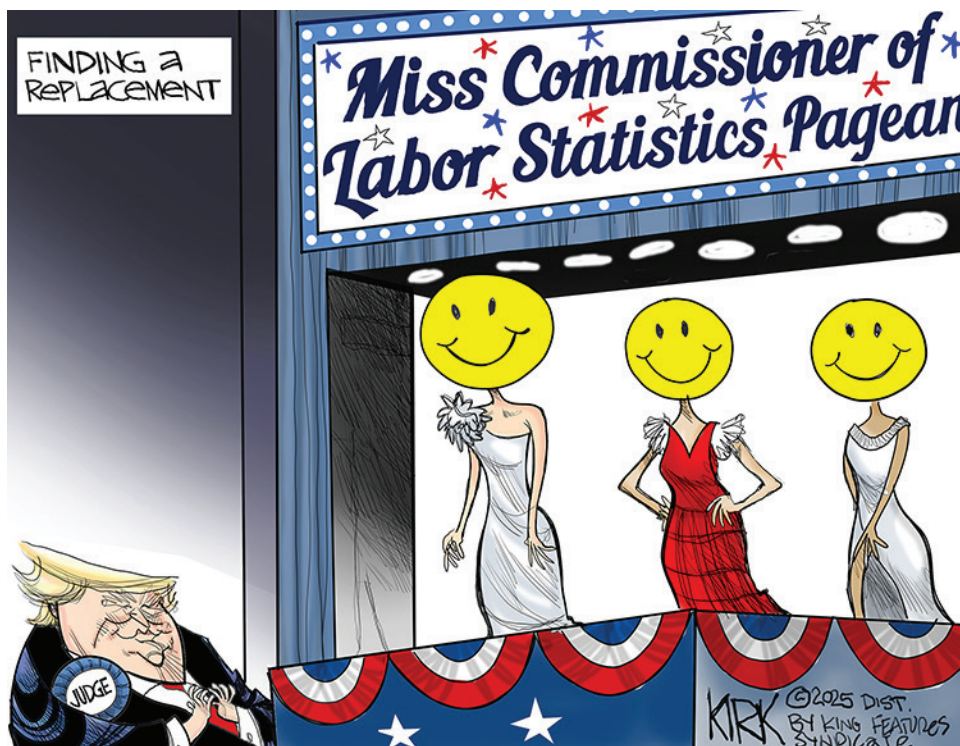


*For every species of beasts and birds,
of reptiles and creatures of the sea,
is tamed and has been tamed
by the human race.*

*But no one among mankind can
tame the tongue; it is a restless evil,
full of deadly poison.*

———— JAMES 3:7,8

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BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. From Acts 10, who had a vision of heaven opening up with a sheet knit of four corners being let down to earth?

Caleb, Peter, Paul, Samson

3. What are the laws of a church, the collection of writings considered to be God's word? *Canon, Covenant, Gilead, Gilgad*

4. Which prophet experienced an earthquake while standing on a mountaintop? *Elijah, Abraham, James, Thomas*

5. What Moabite woman became an ancestress of King David through her marriage to Boaz? *Sarah, Rachel, Ruth, Rebekah*

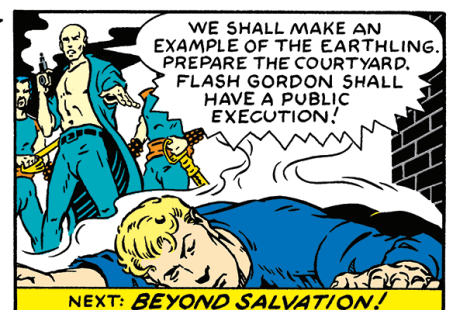
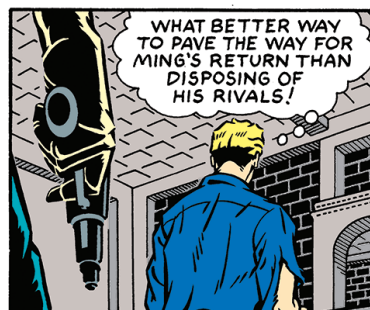
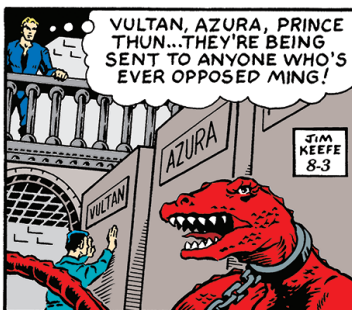
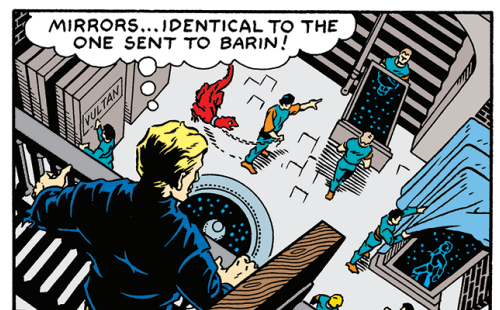
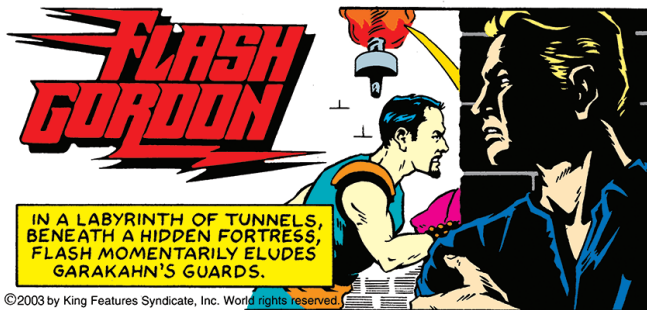
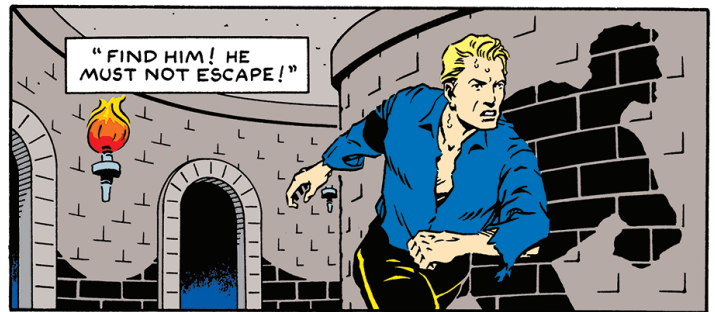
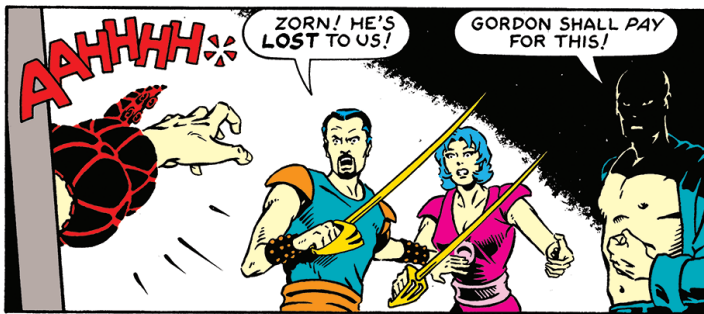
6. "The Lord is my strength and my shield" is found in which Psalm? *8, 18, 28, 38*

ANSWERS: 1) New, 2) Peter, 3) Canon, 4) Elijah, 5) Ruth, 6) 28

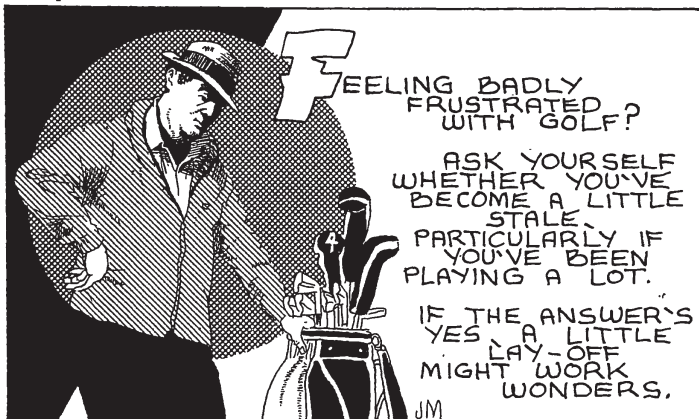
Find expanded trivia online with Wilson Casey at www.patreon.com/triviaguy. FREE TRIAL!

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 10 of 79



Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS





Understand How Systemic Lupus Affects a Person's Body

DEAR DR. ROACH: What is lupus, and what does it do to your body? I just had a friend who was diagnosed with it after many months of tests. -- T.S.B.

ANSWER: The term "lupus" generally means systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), which is a systemic disorder as its name suggests. So, by definition, it affects multiple systems of the body.

One of the most commonly affected systems is the skin, and one particular localized disease of the skin -- discoid lupus -- is a condition that helps make the diagnosis of SLE. I sometimes hear people with discoid lupus say that they have "lupus," but it is not the systemic disease unless other criteria are met. Other skin conditions seen with SLE include the classic

"butterfly" rash on the face, marked sun sensitivity, mouth ulcers, and hair loss.

People with SLE commonly have systemic or "constitutional" symptoms such as fatigue, fever and generalized aching. Weight loss is common with early SLE, but some people gain weight due to salt and water retention from the kidney manifestations of SLE or from treatment.

Joint problems (both pain and swelling) are present in over 90% of people with SLE. It always affects more than one joint. Kidney problems with protein in the urine are common and a diagnostic criterion. Neurological disorders are infrequent but may include seizures, peripheral neuropathy, and acute confusion or psychosis.

The lining of the heart and lungs are often affected, which can be heard by an examiner. An electrocardiogram shows typical changes. All of the blood cells -- red, white and "blue" (platelets) -- can be decreased.

Finally, there are blood proteins that are elevated in people with SLE. The ANA level is almost always high, but this is not a specific finding. I have seen more patients misdiagnosed with lupus because of a high ANA level and no other criteria for SLE than I have ever seen correctly diagnosed.

The anti-Smith antibody is much more specific but not commonly seen, while the anti-double-stranded DNA test is more common and specific than an ANA test. Blood tests alone do not diagnose SLE.

There are different scoring systems to make the diagnosis of definite and probable SLE using these criteria, but in clinical practice, the diagnosis is made using the judgment of an experienced clinician. In my practice, I refer all of my patients with suspected SLE to a rheumatologist.

The diagnosis of SLE isn't completely straightforward and requires expertise, while the management of SLE requires a clinician who is both experienced and currently up-to-date in the medical treatment. This, again, usually means a rheumatologist.

Seventy years ago, prior to the development of steroids, the diagnosis of SLE used to be extremely dangerous, with half of people who were newly diagnosed dying within five years. Since steroids have many side effects and aren't 100% effective, many new drugs have been developed, and most people who are diagnosed with SLE now can be well-managed.

However, it is still a serious, life-changing diagnosis that increases the risk of heart disease and cancer in addition to all the organ issues mentioned above. A general doctor working with the rheumatologist can recommend treatments to reduce your heart risk, as well as appropriate cancer screening tests.

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.

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 12 of 79



"Jurassic World: Rebirth" (PG-13) -- "Rebirthing" a series that was literally just respawned a decade ago (into three very similar and forgettable Chris Pratt movies, I might add) is a choice that the

"Jurassic Park" franchise has stood by proudly. And to their monetary pleasure, they raked in the dollars with a whopping \$800 million worldwide, making it the fourth highest-grossing film of the year. But to viewers' dismay, lead Scarlett Johansson's performance, as well as the plot itself, left a lot to be desired. Mahershala Ali ("Green Book") and Jonathan Bailey ("Wicked") co-star as others on Zora's (Johansson) team who attempt to retrieve samples from three of the biggest dinosaurs alive. Out now to rent. (Apple TV+)



Natalie Dormer stars as Dr. Audrey Evans in "Audrey's Children." (Courtesy of MovieStillsDB)

"Mission: Impossible -- The Final Reckoning" (PG-13) -- Although Tom Cruise has been wishy-washy with his claims that this is his final film in the "Mission: Impossible" franchise, it seems pretty set in stone that this is Ethan Hunt's last hurrah with the phrase "final reckoning." As the eighth installment in the franchise, this film made about \$600 million at the box office and became the sixth-highest-grossing film of 2025. Starring Cruise, Hayley Atwell ("Captain America: The First Avenger"), Ving Rhames ("Pulp Fiction"), and Angela Bassett ("Black Panther: Wakanda Forever"), it follows Ethan and his Impossible Missions Force team, who try to stop a rogue AI from taking over the world. Available to rent on Aug. 19. (Amazon Prime Video)

"Audrey's Children" (PG) -- Natalie Dormer ("Game of Thrones") leads this biographical drama as Dr. Audrey Evans, a British-American pediatric oncologist who was known as the "Mother of Neuroblastoma." By revolutionizing the treatment for neuroblastoma, which claimed 90% of people who were diagnosed with it at the time, she reduced its mortality rate to 50%. (Right now, the survival rate is 85%.) Her total-care approach of focusing on the physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs of her patients set her apart from other female doctors at the time, especially due to her unconventional nature as a doctor. In addition, Evans co-founded Ronald McDonald House Charities and the St. James School in Philadelphia. Learn more about her story in this biopic out now. (Peacock)

"My Oxford Year" (PG-13) -- Oh, Netflix, will you ever stop making rom-coms that make audiences cringe beyond belief?! (No, no, they won't.) This latest release, out now, starring Netflix queen Sofia Carson ("Carry Out") and Corey Mylchreest ("Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story") follows American student Anna De La Vega as she travels to the University of Oxford in England to study Victorian poetry. Once there, she builds a flirty rapport with one of her professors, Jamie (Mylchreest), and her "Oxford year" takes quite the romantic turn. ... That is, until Anna finds out that the same genetic cancer that afflicted Jamie's brother has now got its deadly hands around Jamie. If you've seen "The Fault in Our Stars," which was produced by the same team as this film, you'll know exactly where this is going! (Netflix)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 13 of 79



1. Which Beatle was wearing all white on the "Abbey Road" album cover?
2. Name the girl group that released "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?"
3. Which two songs ended up at the top of the 2024 revised Rolling Stone's 500 Greatest Songs of All Time list?
4. "Good Morning Starshine" is from which musical?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "If your heartaches seem to hang around too long, And your blues keep getting bluer with each song."

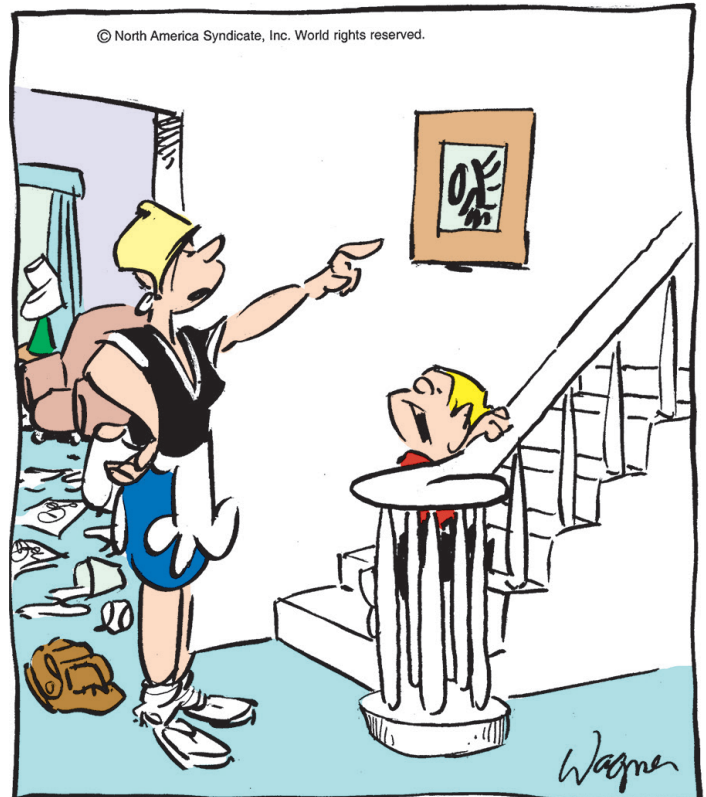
Answers

1. John Lennon. He was marching at the head of the group as they crossed the road -- a message perhaps? He'd already left the group but it hadn't been announced yet.
2. The Shirelles, in 1960. They almost didn't record the song, thinking it sounded too country. It ended up at the top of the Hot 100 chart and was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1999.
3. Aretha Franklin, "Respect" from 1967 and Public Enemy, "Fight the Power" from 1989.
4. "Hair," in 1967.
5. "Cry," by Johnnie Ray, in 1951. Ray, known for his overly dramatic singing style, managed to incite the crowds to hysteria like Elvis Presley and the Beatles would eventually do.

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GRIN and BEAR IT 

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"How could you, Mom? There are China-made toys in my room!"

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps

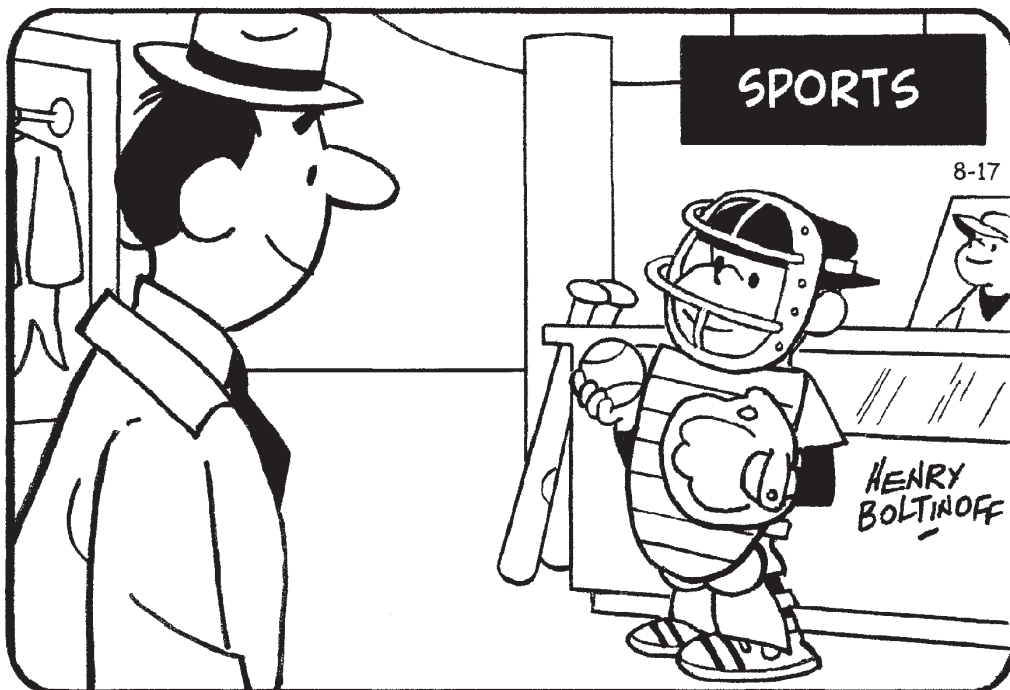


Groton Daily Independent

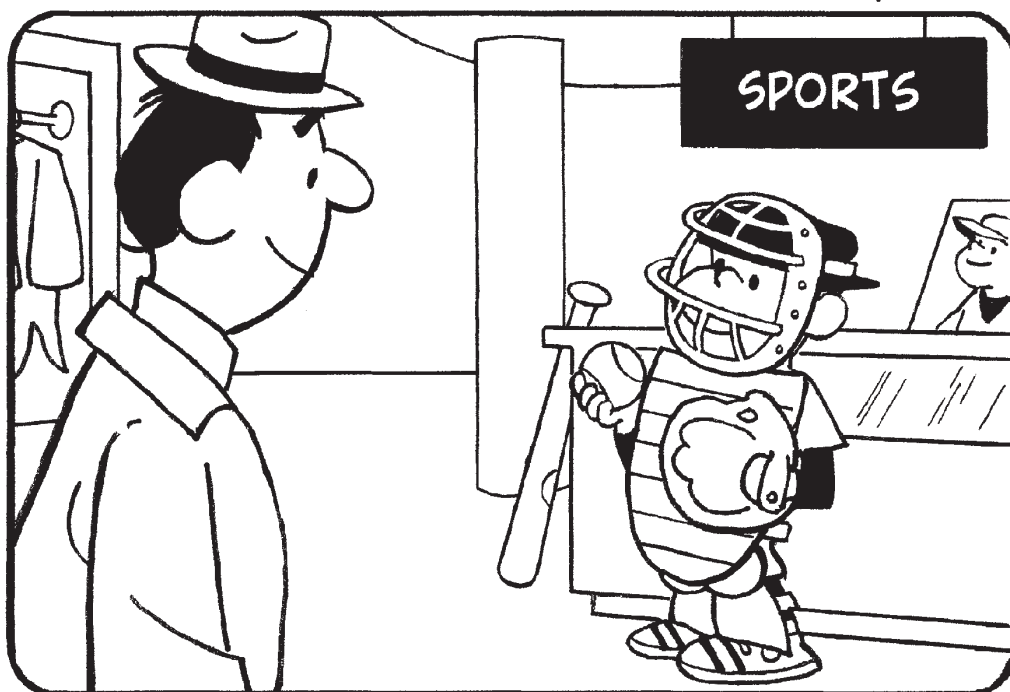
Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 14 of 79

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Bat is missing. 2. Tie is missing. 3. Nose is smaller. 4. Column is moved. 5. Ball is different. 6. Face mask is different.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 15 of 79



* "Beautiful umbrella stands don't have to be limited to umbrellas. We keep sports equipment (bats, a lacrosse stick, yoga mat) in ours and it works just as well." -- T.J. in Kansas

* Make your own camping lamp: Strap a head lamp to a full gallon jug of water. It fills the tent with a soft light, and you can still drink the water!

* Use rubbing alcohol to clean window frames and trays. It evaporates quickly with no residue left behind.

* "If you have a retractable cord on your vacuum, try this trick. Clip a clothespin at the optimum length, and the cord will not retract past that point. So, no more snapping right out of the outlet, which used to happen to me." -- P.L. in Tennessee

* Coffee filters make wonderful glass cleaners. They leave behind no streaks and no residual lint.

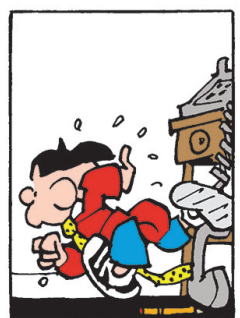
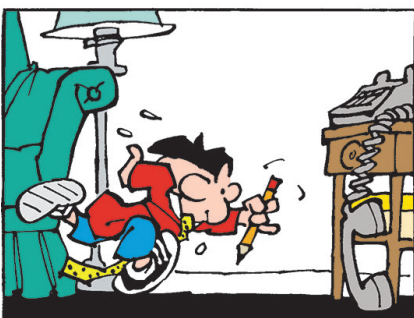
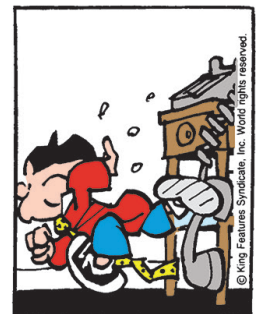
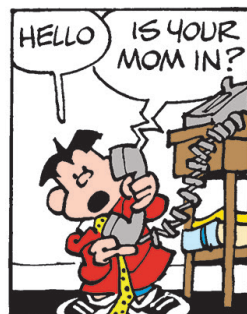
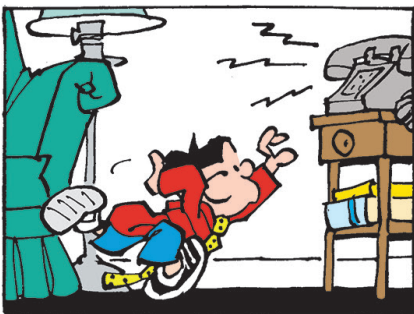
* Old socks can be fit around the head of an old mop or Swiffer base. Spray with cleaner and clean away. When you are done, remove the sock and launder.

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

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TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 16 of 79

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 "Lion" star
Patel
4 Obi
8 Banshee's
cry
12 Hot temper
13 Nick and
Nora's pet
14 Conceal
15 Pompeii vol-
cano
17 Altar vows
18 Three, in
Rome
19 Fairy tale
maidens
21 Protein-rich
grain
24 Nanny's
charge
25 Boot brand
26 Egg quaff
28 "Tiny Alice"
playwright
32 Mr. Guinness
34 Online guffaw
36 The Emerald
Isle
37 Name on a
vacuum
39 Conk on the
head
41 Kilmer of
"The Doors"
42 Highland hat
44 Goodies
46 Weapons
store
50 Entirely

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15				16					17			
		18				19		20				
21	22				23		24					
25				26		27		28		29	30	31
32				33		34		35		36		
37				38		39		40		41		
				42		43		44		45		
46	47	48				49		50				
51					52		53				54	55
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- count
5 "Do — say!"
6 Poker variety
7 Tears into
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9 Staffer
10 Pop star
11 Minus
16 Ornate vase
20 Extinct bird
21 Campus area
22 Unsightly
23 ISP giant
27 Sailor
29 Clams and
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30 Part of Q.E.D.
- 31 Congers
33 Exclusive
group
35 Parcel of land
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40 Seafood order
43 May honorees
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46 Cain's dad
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DOWN

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 17 of 79

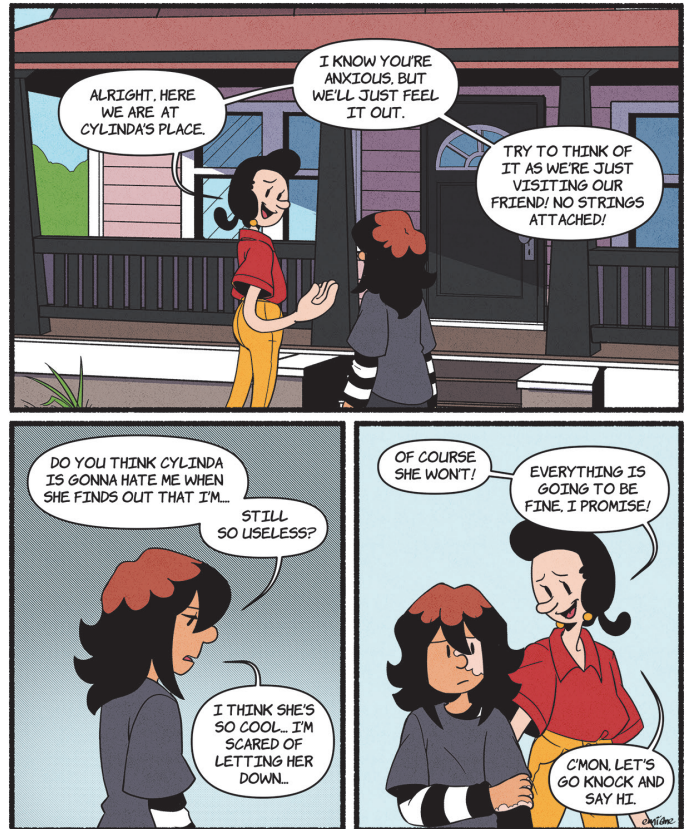
— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

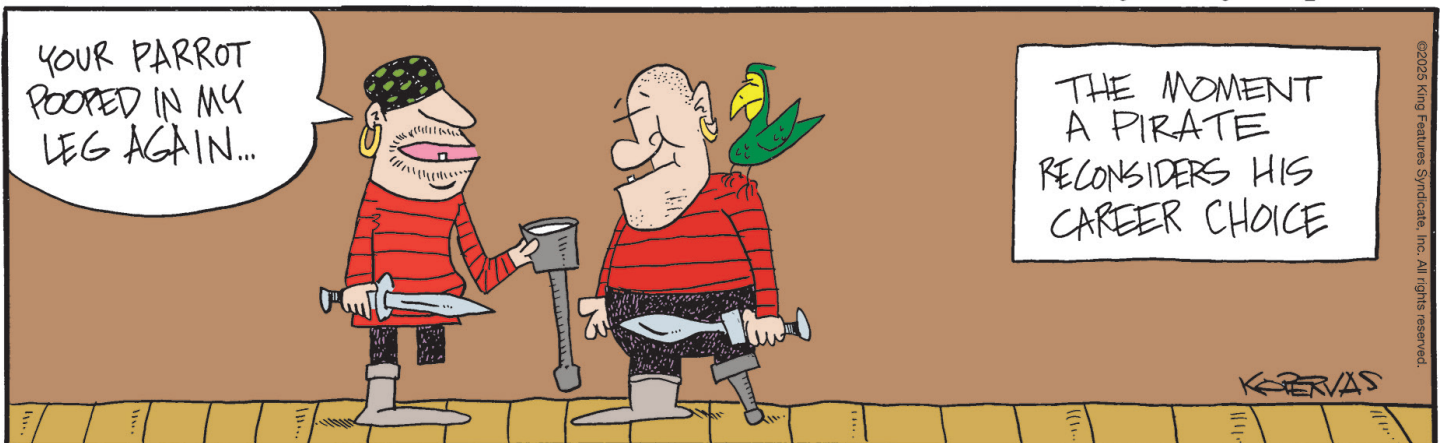
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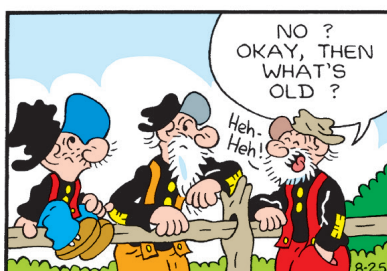
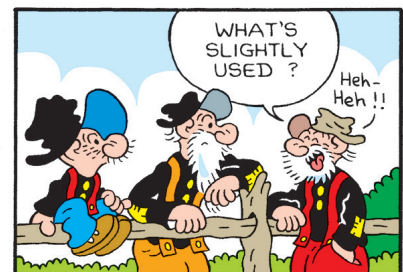
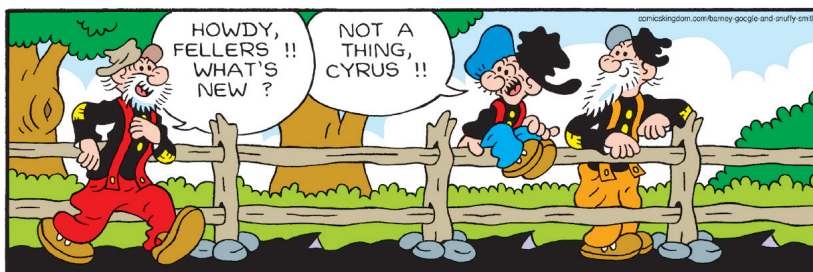
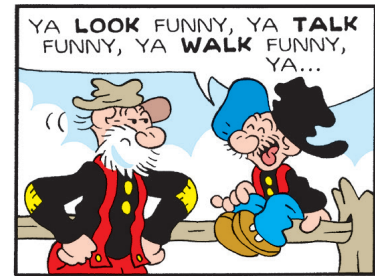
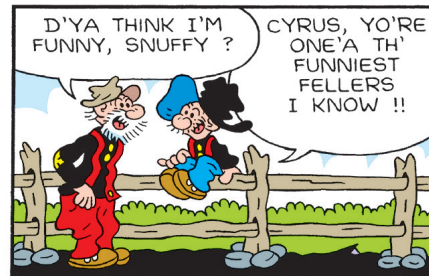
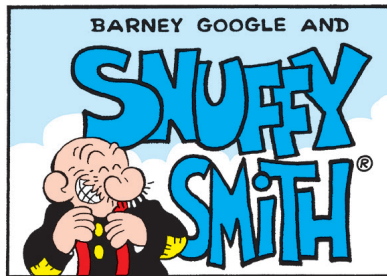
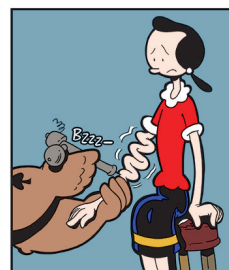
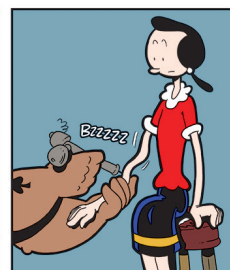
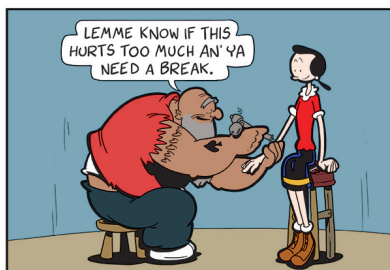
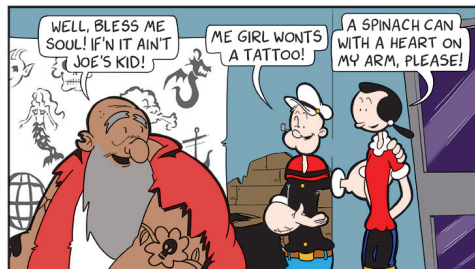
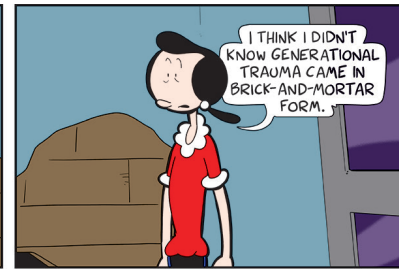
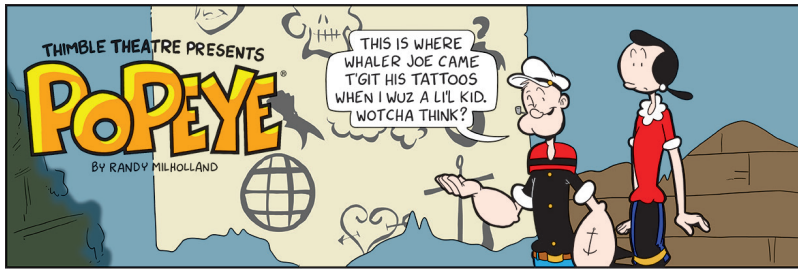
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



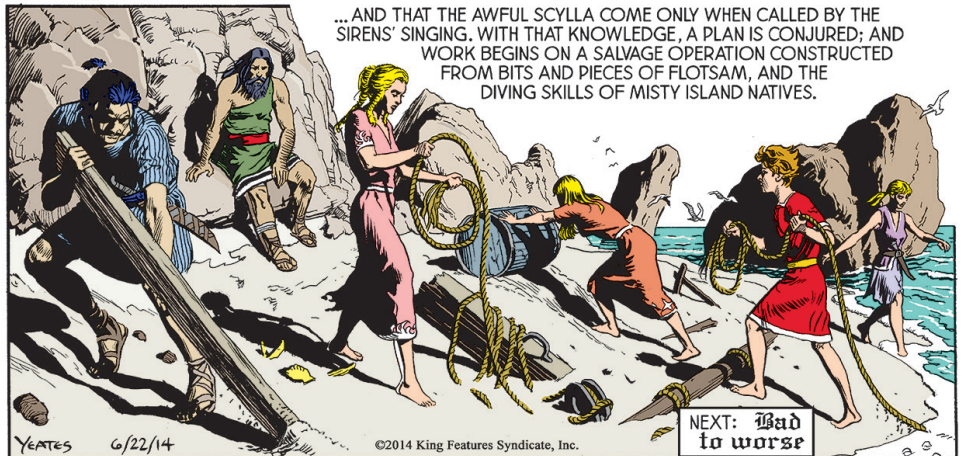
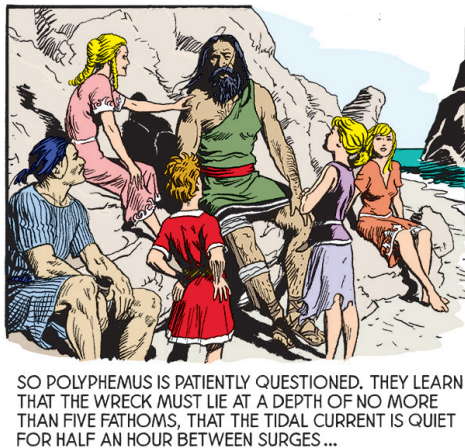
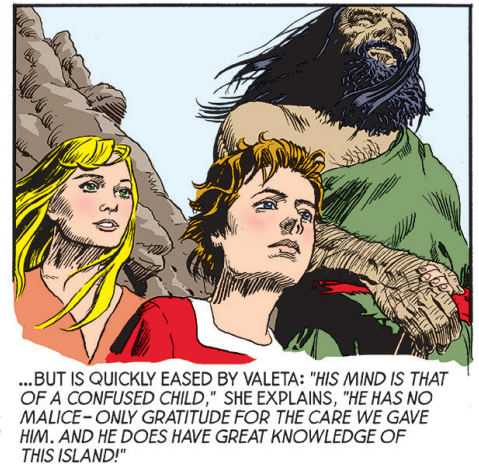
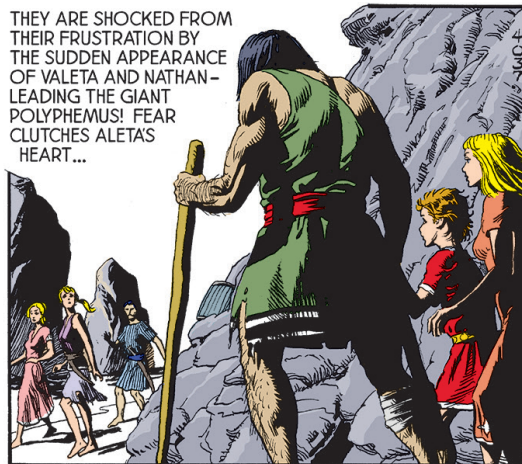
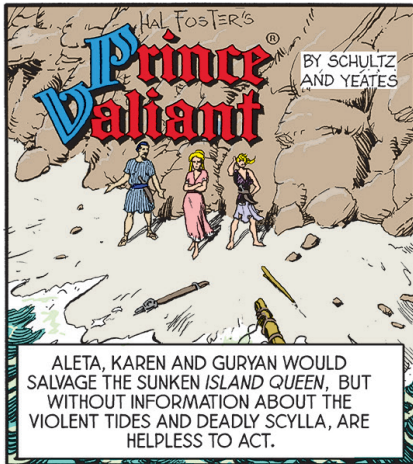
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 18 of 79



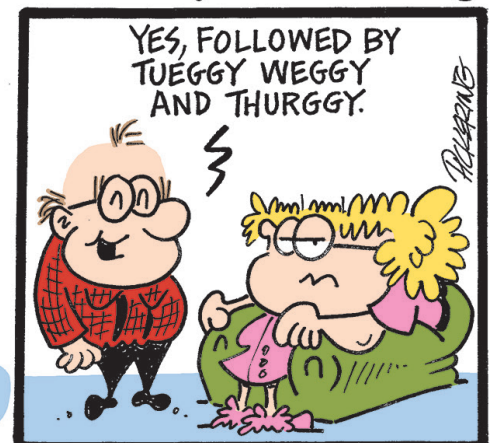
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 19 of 79



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 20 of 79

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Save money at the Habitat ReStore

It's that time of year again. Summer is fading and it's time to start thinking about what cold weather might bring. As well as revisiting the parts of the to-do list that didn't get completed during the summer.

In my house that incomplete portion of my list includes painting the stairs before management notices the peeling and issues a fine and having a new window installed in the living room.

The reasons for not having done those things yet are the price of a can of paint (\$42 for a gallon when I need less than a quart) and over \$500 for the window, installation not included.

Do you see a pattern here?

And yes, it's the price of nearly everything nowadays that keeps so many of us from taking care of things like we should.

However, I've just learned of a way to get at least a few things on my list: The Habitat for Humanity ReStore. They have 900 locations across the country, and one of those just happens to be near me.

Started in 1976, Habitat for Humanity is the group that will build homes around the world that are then sold for affordable amounts to low and moderate income families, improve and repair houses for seniors so they can stay in their homes, provide disaster response, and much more.

Their Habitat ReStores are loaded with good quality used merchandise that they take in with donations. It not only keeps household items out of the landfills, but it allows people to buy those items at very reduced prices. They carry used furniture, building materials, appliances, housewares and so much more, some of it donated by corporations.

To find locations near you, go online to www.habitat.org, click "Shop" and then click "Habitat ReStores." Put in your ZIP code.

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15 N Main St. - Ste. 101
Downtown Groton

Call/Text Paul: 605-397-7460
Call/Text Tina: 605-397-7285



Living Heart Fitness Center

Senior Citizens 65+

Physical Therapy.

\$20 a month

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 21 of 79

1. What did the NFL reduce to 18 feet, 6 inches from 23 feet, 4 inches in 1991?

2. Who did Se-rii Pak defeat in the 1998 U.S. Women's Open golf tournament after an 18-hole playoff and two-sudden death holes?

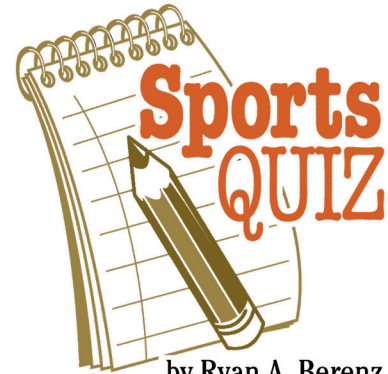
3. What two boxers battled for the world heavy-weight championship in the controversial "Long Count Fight" at Chicago's Soldier Field in 1927?

4. The headquarters of the Court of Arbitration for Sport, an international body to settle disputes related to sports, is located in what European country?

5. Name the monster truck driver who won 14 Monster Jam World Finals championships, most famously driving the "Maximum Destruction" truck.

6. What Ford C. Frick Award-winning sportscaster is credited with originating the play-by-play radio call in the 1920s?

7. Eusebio, the 1965 Ballon d'Or winner with Benfica and Golden Boot winner at the 1966 FIFA World Cup, played for what national soccer team from 1961-73?



by Ryan A. Berenz

Answers

1. Goalpost width.

2. Jenny Chuasiriporn.

3. Gene Tunney and Jack Dempsey.

4. Switzerland.

5. Tom Meents.

6. Graham McNamee.

7. Portugal.

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Amber Waves



by Dave T. Phipps

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 22 of 79



Handy travel tips from a well-traveled pet owner

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: As a seasoned traveler with hunting dogs, as well as puppies and family pets, going cross-state and cross-country, I find that you left out a few crucial items in your travel list important for dog safety/health when traveling.

First, an IIHS/NHTSA approved crate(s) for the dog(s) or, at minimum, safety belt harness(es) that will restrain the dog(s) in the event of a crash. I have personally seen where dogs have gotten loose from an accident scene, and run off in fear and gotten lost because they were not restrained! Small dogs sitting on laps are not "restrained."

Second, a basic animal first aid kit in case of emergency due to a cut, bite, ingestion of something, etc., before one can get to emergency vet care on a trip.

Third, water. It's always best to bring at least a couple quarts of water from home to have handy for rest areas or pull-offs with no services like running water.

Thank you for considering my input on this topic. -- Betsy M., via email

DEAR BETSY: Absolutely essential items! Thank you for adding to the list. A separate first aid kit for pets, included in their bag of supplies so that it's easy to find, is important. And using an Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) or National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) approved crate has been shown to reduce or prevent pet injuries in the event of a crash. For dogs in the back seat, rather than a crate, a pet safety belt and harness is a much safer option than a collar and leash, or worse, just letting your pet sit unbelted.

Make these investments for your pet before a trip -- and for everyday travel.

Send your tips, comments or questions to ask@pawscorner.com.

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 23 of 79

Strange BUT TRUE

* Steve Jobs would eat the same fruit or vegetable for weeks on end, and believed that binging nothing but apples or carrots reduced his body odor to the extent that he would need to shower just once a week.

* Earth is the only planet in the solar system with rainbows.

* In 2020, researchers at Ohio State University found that smokers with better math skills were more likely to quit smoking, as they retained more of the risk statistics associated with the habit.

* A heatwave can make train tracks bend.

* “Mamihlapinatapai,” from the Yaghan language of Tierra del Fuego and defined as “a look shared by two people, each wishing that the other would initiate something that they both desire but which neither wants to begin,” was recognized in the 1994 Guinness Book of World Records as the world’s most succinct word.

* Until 1911, the MLB had a rule stating that if an umpire was “unable to see whether a catch has been fairly made or not,” he was free to appeal to the game’s spectators for a judgment.

* Silk is stronger than steel.

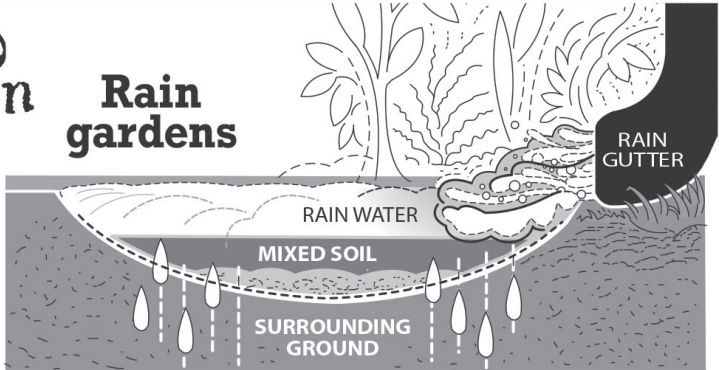
* If you want to listen to a song called “Chosen Priest and the Apostle of Infinite Space” by Bull of Heaven, you’ll need to reserve two months for the experience.

* Coconuts, in different forms, are antiviral, antifungal, antibacterial and antiparasitic.

* The eyes on Michelangelo’s statue of David look in different directions. Why is debatable, but some scholars believe the artist wanted to ensure the shepherd’s gaze was as impactful as possible from either side.

Thought for the Day: “There are three kinds of men. The one that learns by reading. The few who learn by observation. The rest of them have to pee on the electric fence for themselves.” -- Will Rogers

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The Garden Bug

Rain gardens

Rain gardens are shallow depressions in your property that give rainfall a chance to collect and filter through your landscape instead of being funneled quickly away from the property into local waterways via storm drains. By catching direct runoff from homes and buildings, rain gardens store and filter water, resulting in less flooding, water contamination, and strain on septic systems. - Brenda Weaver

Sources: guides.library.illinois.edu, www.mywatersheds.org, www.gba.org

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 24 of 79



by Freddy Groves

Avoiding foreclosure

Veterans who are in danger of losing their homes to foreclosure have just been given protection with the VA Home Loan Program Reform Act. Just passed, the act offers help just as the previous program, Veterans Affairs Servicing Purchase (VASP), expires.

The old VASP program helped veterans by purchasing their VA home loans and changing them to incorporate more manageable repayment terms. This typically meant stretching the repayment period out to 40 years and lowering the interest rate.

The new Partial Claim Program will involve the VA taking out a lien (a claim) on the home and paying off part of the overdue mortgage, thus canceling the foreclosure and bringing the loan current. The veteran doesn't have to pay back that money until either the home is refinanced or it's sold. In other words, the past due amount will be put at the end of the loan with no interest. The program will run for five years and any help given cannot exceed 25-30% of the unpaid principal, depending on when that default occurred. Victims of a declared disaster (and unable to make payments because of that) can qualify for assistance.

That's good stuff.

Not needing to pay the money back immediately, and not having it rolled into what they currently pay, will give veterans the breathing room they need to reduce their financial outgo over the long term -- and keep their homes.

If you're a veteran in a bad situation (and have missed three mortgage payments) that could end with the foreclosure on your home, there are steps you can take now: Call either the VA regional office nearest you, or the VA home loan guaranty department (877-827-3702) or your lender to see if you qualify under the new Partial Claims Program.

If you're struggling right now and have fallen behind in making your mortgage payment, don't delay in finding out if you qualify for help. You won't be alone; they're expecting to assist 70,000 veterans to keep their homes.

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 25 of 79

Wishing Well®

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7	8	5	6	2	6	2	5	6	2	7	2	2
G	E	L	V	E	E	M	Y	D	B	E	E	R

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. MOVIES: Which best original song from "Aladdin" won an Oscar?
2. TELEVISION: In what year did the animated TV comedy "South Park" debut?
3. HISTORY: Where did the Romans build Hadrian's Wall?
4. GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of Brazil?
5. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president was the first to be impeached?
6. MYTHOLOGY: What is the home of the Greek gods?
7. U.S. STATES: Which state is home to the U.S. Naval Academy?
8. MATH: What is the smallest prime number?
9. LITERATURE: What is the original name of the farm in George Orwell's "Animal Farm"?
10. ASTRONOMY: Which planet is known for its large red spot, which astronomers believe is an ongoing storm?

Answers

1. "A Whole New World."
2. 1997.
3. England.
4. Brasilia.
5. Andrew Johnson.
6. Mount Olympus.
7. Maryland.
8. 2.
9. Manor Farm.
10. Jupiter.

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 26 of 79

South Dakota Governor



Larry Rhoden



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Taking Action to Keep South Dakota Safe

I can't sit still for long. Maybe it's because I grew up on a ranch, where there was always something that needed doing. I'm at my most relaxed when I'm doing work with my hands, and it's helped me out in public service. Sometimes, you just need to be willing to take action.

Recently, a couple South Dakota Highway Patrol troopers took action to keep our people safe. They didn't wait to act – they saw what needed doing, then stepped up and did it.

One trooper took heroic action when she saw that a driver was driving on the wrong side of the Interstate near Sturgis. She sped off down the Interstate (on the right side of the road), got ahead of the vehicle, crossed the median, and pulled out in front of the vehicle. She was rear-ended, which was all part of the plan. Then, when the vehicle tried to pass her, she performed a tactical maneuver to force it onto the median where the driver was arrested for drunk driving.

Another trooper pulled over a speeding vehicle driving through Sturgis. What started as a routine traffic stop turned into the largest meth bust in the history of the Highway Patrol. The driver was a 42-year-old Mexican national driving cross-country with more than 200 pounds of meth in his vehicle – that's a street value of over \$12 million!

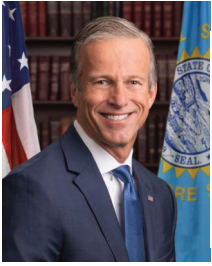
That criminal is already in immigration proceedings, and after due process, ICE will get him out of our country so that he won't continue to traffic meth to Americans. This instance really underscored the need for Operation: Prairie Thunder, my public safety initiative that includes increased collaboration with ICE to get illegal alien criminals out of our country. A couple days later, I called the trooper who caught the perp, and he was nothing but humble.

We recently took one other action to advance Operation: Prairie Thunder, as well. The Board of Pardons and Paroles decided to parole ten criminal illegal aliens to ICE custody, individuals that my office and the Department of Corrections had helped identify as criminals who it would be appropriate to send back to their home country. South Dakota taxpayers shouldn't be paying to house these criminals in our prisons – not when they shouldn't be in our country to begin with.

That's what you can count on from me and my administration: when necessary, we will take action to keep South Dakota strong, safe, and free.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 27 of 79



JOHN THUNE
U.S. SENATOR FOR SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota's Greatest Generation

Eighty years ago this month, Americans switched on their radios and heard the long-hoped-for news that Japan had surrendered. In towns across South Dakota, people celebrated, and families breathed a sigh of relief that their loved ones would be coming home.

Like all Americans, South Dakotans had made sacrifices during the war years. Food and fuel were rationed, and farms and ranches struggled through supply and labor shortages. More than 68,000 South Dakotans served in the armed forces, and 2,200 of them never returned.

I grew up with stories from my dad and uncles who had fought in the war. My dad was an accomplished pilot, recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross, but he didn't talk much about his own exploits. He talked about the men he served with, what they had done, and what they gave. He told us about the legendary Cecil Harris, the Navy ace from Cresbard, who led my dad's squadron on the U.S.S. Intrepid, and the tip Harris gave him that saved his life. My dad shared the qualities of so many in his generation: humility, patriotism, and quiet service.

They might not describe themselves as such, but World War II created a number of heroes from our state. There were Cecil Harris and Joe Foss, both flying aces in the Pacific. Arlo Olson, who earned the Congressional Medal of Honor, after he gave his life leading his men in Italy. John Waldron who lost his life leading his torpedo squadron in the first engagement in the Battle of Midway. And Marcella LeBeau, a member of the Two Kettle Band of the Cheyenne River Sioux who served in the Army Nurse Corps, including time on the front lines treating the wounded at the Battle of the Bulge.

On the home front, too, South Dakotans left their mark. The state was transformed. Airfields popped up around the state to train military pilots. The Army Technical Training School opened in Sioux Falls to train 50,000 radio operators and mechanics. Out west, work began on the Black Hills Ordnance Depot and the new community of Igloo that would house the families of those who came to work there. Even Mitchell's Corn Palace had a role to play, selling war bonds and enlisting new recruits.

South Dakota's farms and ranches were also critical to the war effort. Farmers ramped up production, and wool and sugar beets were in high demand. Faced with labor shortages, draft deferments were offered for harvest time, and South Dakota State University canceled Hobo Day so students could work the fields. And it was South Dakota farmers who provided the pheasants for the Aberdeen Canteen's famous pheasant sandwiches, which fed 500,000 troops on their way through the city.

Tom Brokaw, who spent part of his boyhood at the Black Hills Ordnance Depot, popularized the phrase, "the Greatest Generation." He said of this generation, "they love each other, love life and love their country, and they are not ashamed to say just that." We are fortunate to have had their example. And while the members of this generation are fewer with every passing day, what they did and how they lived will endure.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 28 of 79



Competing in a Global Market

BIG Update

I joined Rep. Adrian Smith of Nebraska on a panel at the Midwest Ag Export Summit in Sioux Falls to discuss how Midwest agricultural producers compete in a global market. I'm encouraged by the work the administration has done on securing trade deals with the European Union, United Kingdom, Indonesia, Japan and others to give a fair shake to South Dakota producers. I'm hopeful President Trump will continue to make strong deals with other trading partners that will support our ag industries.

The One Big Beautiful Bill also promotes United States agricultural products around the world. The Supplemental Agricultural Trade Promotion (SATP) program will aid in developing foreign markets for American products..

BIG Idea

Silencer Central is the leading manufacturer of firearm suppressors in the United States. I stopped by to discuss how the One Big Beautiful Bill eliminates the tax on suppressors, short-barreled rifles, and short-barreled shotguns.

I was honored to receive their Legislator of the Year award for my support of the Second Amendment in Congress.

BIG News

South Dakota reported their largest meth bust in history this week. South Dakota Highway Patrol seized 207 pounds of meth, worth \$12 million, that was being transported by an illegal immigrant across our state.

While border crossings are at an all-time low, South Dakota is not exempt from the lasting effects of Biden's border crisis. This arrest and drug seizure underscore the important work the Trump Administration is doing to keep the southern border secure and remove dangerous, illegal immigrants from our country. I'm grateful for the local law enforcement officers and federal agents who protect South Dakota and keep America safe.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 29 of 79



Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries

PO Box 831313 - Ocala, FL 34483

1-352-216-3025

Practice Doesn't Always Make Perfect

This month The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and her amazing husband will celebrate 54 years of marital bliss. I can't believe how fast the time has gone. It only seems like yesterday that we got married. Maybe that's the benefit of getting old.

I remember the beginning of our life together. I went to a Bible college to prepare for the pastoral ministry, and that's where I met her.

As a young person, I had no qualities when it came to dating. Up until I met this young lady, I had never dated in my life. My parents planted the seed in my mind that most girls had cooties. I didn't know what that meant, but I wasn't going to explore it. I just stayed away from girls.

In going to college, my one prayer was that God would lead me to the young lady who would be my wife in my pastoral ministry. I had no way of choosing who that would be. With no dating experience, I just let it in God's hands. I was still nervous.

The first day of Bible college is when I met her, but I tried to dismiss it because it was just the first day. In classes, we crossed paths almost every day. Then one of the men in the men's dorm invited me to go out with him and his girlfriend for dinner one night. He said his sister would be coming along if I didn't mind. Well, I didn't mind, so we went out together. Guess who it was?

That was the beginning. Slowly, we began seeing each other, and then one day it hit me like a pie in the face. I started thinking that maybe I was dating a girl for the very first time. It took me some time to get over that thought, and it made me wonder about certain things.

When I began to realize that we are actually dating, a thought came to my mind I had never thought before in all my life. What if, and I thought about this very seriously, but what if she expected me to kiss her?

I almost passed out when that thought run through my brain. I've never kissed anybody in the world, and nobody's ever kissed me. Well, except for my dog Sparky. But outside of that, I have been kiss-free all my life. I did not know how to handle it if it got to that point.

Maybe I should begin practicing kissing. I didn't know how to do it, and I sure wasn't going to ask anybody in the men's dorm about this subject.

One morning, I walked into the bathroom and looked in the mirror, and there I saw it. I saw how I could begin to practice kissing by using the mirror.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 30 of 79

In the morning, I would go in and practice kissing myself in the mirror over and over again. Then, in the evening before going to bed, I would go into the bathroom and stand in front of the mirror and kiss myself over and over again.

I'm not sure how long I was doing this, but I did not have confidence I was learning how to kiss anybody. I can hardly kiss myself in the mirror and get away with it.

I always heard that practice makes perfect, and so I practiced, and practiced, and practiced as much as I could. I had no confidence I had perfected any kissing.

Up until now, I have never told anybody about this aspect of my life. After all, who would I tell? And, who would believe me?

Keeping to my diligence, I practiced this kissing procedure day after day. I had to be very careful I didn't get caught in the dorm, because how would I explain what I was doing? Some things are better left secret.

As our dating got a little more serious, I got a little more nervous. There was going to come a time when she would expect me to give her a kiss good night. Oh boy. How do you fix such a situation in life?

Even now, I'm not exactly sure when it took place. But there was one date that I took her to the ladies' dorm and walked her to the door, and before I knew it, we kissed. I still don't know if I kissed her or if she kissed me. The only thing I remember was that woozy feeling I had following that kiss.

Not all my practice in the bathroom mirror prepared me for what I experienced.

After that experience, I guess we kissed a lot, but once I was over that first one, everything else seemed to fall in place.

I must say that all my practicing did not prepare me for what I expected to happen. The more I practiced, the less prepared I became.

A verse of Scripture came to mind along this line. The Apostle Paul writes in 2 Timothy 2:15, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

In my life I have learned that preparation and practice is important. I personally like the phrase, "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." I need to work at my life and not assume things will be OK.

I need to prepare my heart for what God has next for me.

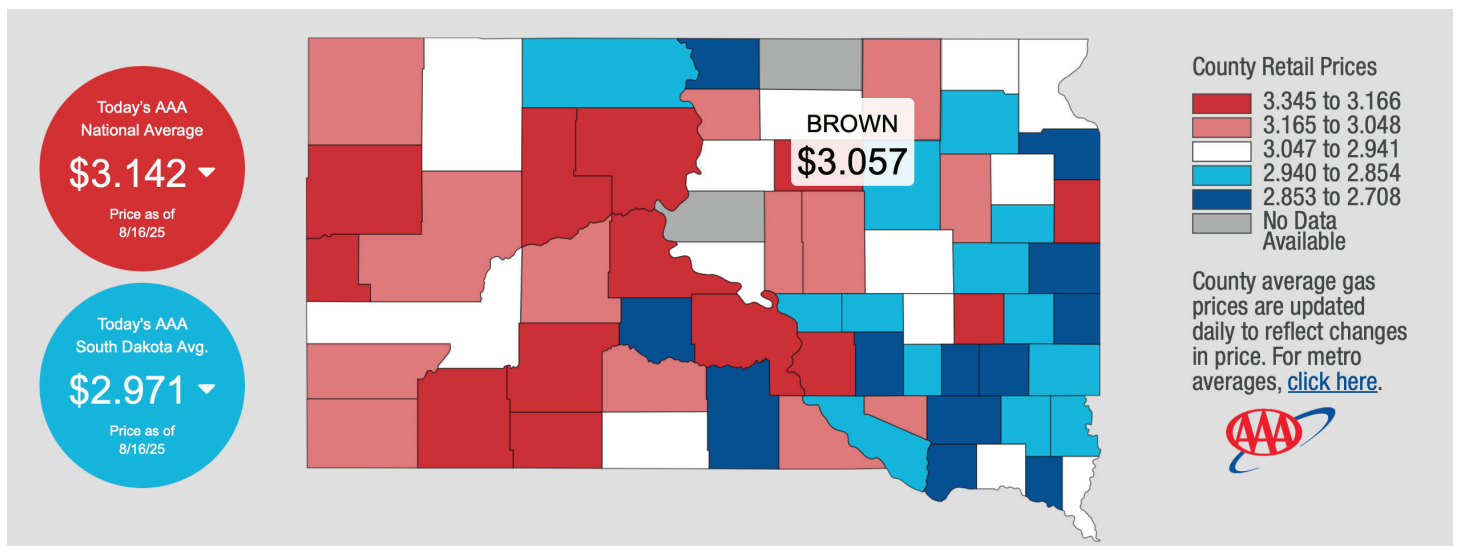
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 31 of 79

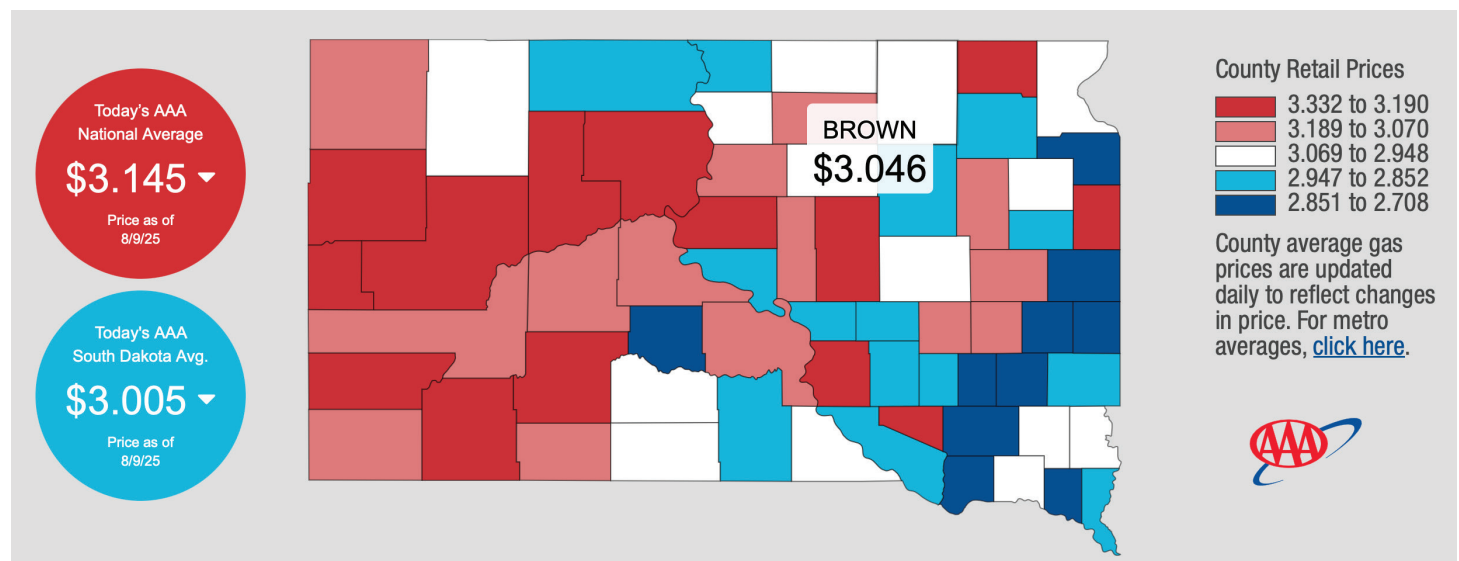
South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$2.971	\$3.157	\$3.600	\$3.388
Yesterday Avg.	\$2.982	\$3.175	\$3.619	\$3.391
Week Ago Avg.	\$3.005	\$3.195	\$3.650	\$3.391
Month Ago Avg.	\$3.003	\$3.180	\$3.643	\$3.361
Year Ago Avg.	\$3.293	\$3.481	\$3.916	\$3.438

This Week



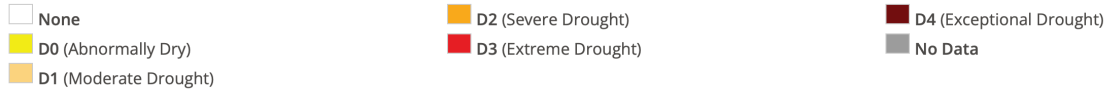
Last Week



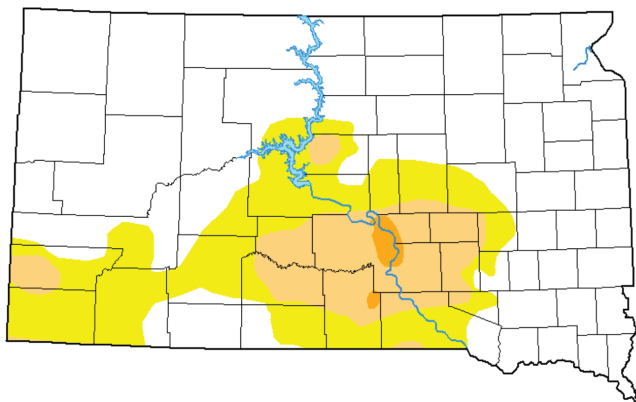
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 32 of 79

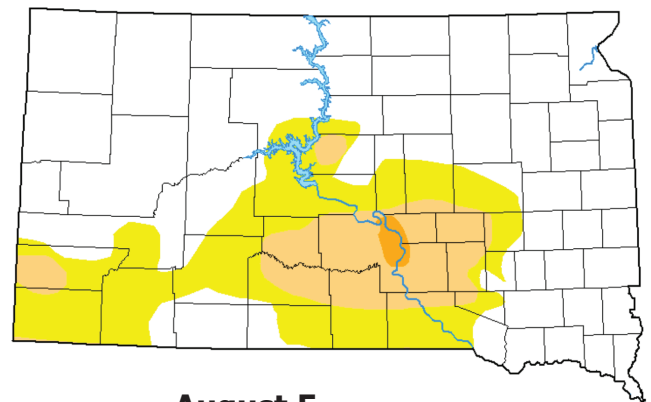
Drought Classification



Drought Monitor



August 12



August 5

Rainfall varied in intensity across the High Plains Region once again this week, with abundant rainfall amounts falling on much of North Dakota, southern Nebraska, and some spots in Kansas leading to improved conditions. Some improvement was also noted in part of the southeast Wyoming High Plains. Meanwhile, less precipitation kept dryness and drought approximately unchanged across South Dakota, and allowed for areas of intensification for the second consecutive week in central and western parts of Colorado and Wyoming. A sizeable swath of northwestern Colorado deteriorated into exceptional drought (D4), and D2 to D3 conditions expanded in other areas over and near the higher elevations in western parts of the High Plains Region. Since early July, USDA indicated that the proportion of topsoils short or very short of moisture increased from 20 to 32 percent in Colorado, and from 52 to 63 percent of Wyoming. In Colorado, 19 percent of the corn crop is in poor or very poor condition (up from just 1 percent in early July) while in Nebraska, one-third of the oat crop is in poor or very poor condition (up from 5 percent in early July).

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 33 of 79

EARTHTALK

Dear EarthTalk: How are the world's penguin species faring these days and what can we do to help them?

-- Brad Gordon, Methuen, MA

Penguins are some of the most recognizable and beloved birds in the world. Penguins are found across the Southern Hemisphere, with 18 different species adapted to a variety of environments, from the icy shores of Antarctica to the rocky islands of the Galapagos. Some penguin populations remain stable, but others are in steep decline, raising concerns about their future. Understanding the challenges penguins face and the efforts being made to protect them is crucial to ensuring their survival.

One of the biggest threats to penguins is climate change. Rising temperatures are melting sea ice in Antarctica, which is essential for Emperor Penguins. Emperor Penguins are the largest of all penguin species. A recent study warns that if current trends continue, over 90% of their colonies could be lost by the end of the century. Warmer ocean temperatures also reduce the availability of krill, which is a major key food source for many penguin species.

"We're seeing entire penguin populations struggling because their food sources are shifting due to climate change," says Heather Lynch, a penguin ecologist at Stony Brook University. Galapagos Penguins are one of the rarest penguin species. They are particularly vulnerable because their survival depends on cold ocean currents, which are becoming increasingly unpredictable.

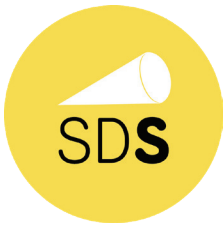
Aside from climate change, human activities such as overfishing and pollution are also putting penguins at risk. Many species rely on fish and krill to survive, but industrial fishing operations are depleting these resources, leaving penguins with less to eat. Pollution is another major issue. Oil spills, plastic waste, and other contaminants poison the waters where penguins live. In some regions, penguins also face threats from invasive predators like rats and cats that prey on their eggs and chicks.

Despite these challenges, conservation efforts are making a difference. Organizations like the Global Penguin Society and the World Wildlife Fund are working to establish marine protected areas, that safeguard penguin habitat. Some breeding programs and habitat restoration projects have helped stabilize certain populations. Scientists and conservationists continue to push for stronger protections, and better policies to ameliorate climate change and overfishing.

There are also ways for individuals to help. Supporting sustainable seafood choices can reduce pressure on fish populations that penguins depend on. Reducing plastic waste helps keep oceans clean, and prevents pollution from harming marine life. Moreover, advocating for stronger climate policies and supporting conservation organizations can contribute to long-term solutions. While penguins face significant challenges, ongoing efforts and public awareness can help ensure these remarkable birds continue to thrive in the wild.



Understanding the challenges penguins face and the efforts being made to protect them is crucial to ensuring their survival. Credit: Pexels.com



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

COMMENTARY

Rhoden was running a state-funded campaign before Operation Prairie Thunder

by Dana Hess

Election years call for politicians to do some tricky maneuvering. While an elected official will present a new initiative as a way to help constituents, opponents are likely to label it as a cynical attempt to curry favor with voters.

That's where Gov. Larry Rhoden finds himself right now after the announcement of Operation Prairie Thunder. It commits the National Guard, Highway Patrol and Corrections Department to support federal immigration enforcement, and commits state troopers to saturation patrols in Sioux Falls.

National Guard soldiers will help U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement with administrative tasks, Highway Patrol troopers will do immigration enforcement during the regular course of their work, and Corrections Department personnel will coordinate with ICE to deport inmates in state custody who entered the country illegally.

Critics of the program have complained that Rhoden is using state resources to further his own political ambitions, even though the governor has not revealed whether he will seek election to the office he gained when Kristi Noem joined President Donald Trump's Cabinet.

"While I agree that we need to hold criminals accountable and be tough on crime, this goes too far," said Sen. Liz Larson, a Democrat from Sioux Falls.

If Democrats think Prairie Thunder is Rhoden's first attempt to use his office for political gain, they're late with their criticism.

Since mid-March, the governor has been running a shadow reelection campaign through his Open for Opportunity Tour.

Rhoden introduced that initiative as a continuation of Noem's Open for Business program. According to a news release from the governor's office, "The Open for Opportunity Tour will feature Governor Rhoden visiting communities across South Dakota to highlight their economic development efforts, learn their



Gov. Larry Rhoden speaks to reporters from a podium on July 28, 2025, at the Public Safety Administration Building in Sioux Falls. Also visible are, from left, Dan Satterlee, director of the state Division of Criminal Investigation, and Sam Olson, Minneapolis field office director for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. (John Hult/South Dakota Searchlight)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 35 of 79

specific needs, and work together to chase down opportunities.”

In effect, Rhoden stepped into office and onto the campaign trail. The Open for Opportunity Tour is introducing business leaders to their new governor. It is also introducing the new governor to an ever-growing group of potential political donors.

An unscientific search of state news releases found that since March 17 Rhoden has made 17 Open for Opportunity trips to 25 communities. From Sioux Falls to the Standing Rock Reservation, from Mud Butte to Mitchell, from Box Elder to Huron, Rhoden is getting to know the business leaders in each community as well as fattening his Rolodex.

On one hand, it's refreshing to have a governor who is more interested in traveling in the state than out-of-state. Of course all of these trips are state funded, your tax dollars at work as Rhoden scores some political points.

The irony here is that for all Rhoden's work currying favor with business leaders, Prairie Thunder will likely alienate some of them. Pledging to round up illegal aliens will make it tougher to fill those jobs that only immigrants are willing to tackle.

While South Dakota is Open for Opportunity, one of those opportunities has been for Rhoden to run a political campaign using state funds. In essence, the governor is using an office he wasn't elected to as a means to jumpstart a campaign he hasn't announced yet. Now that's quite an opportunity.

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

Capitol restoration looms as a major expense for South Dakota

State official tells lawmakers the cost could be \$150 million or more

BY: SETH TUPPER

As South Dakota lawmakers consider spending \$650 million to build a prison, another major building expense is looming: the first full restoration of the state Capitol in nearly 40 years.

The state official in charge of planning the restoration is Darin Seeley, commissioner of the Bureau of Human Resources and Administration. When he briefed a committee of legislators during a public meeting Tuesday at the Capitol, one of them asked for a ballpark estimate of the cost.

Seeley stressed that he does not have an official number yet. "But," he said, "we're talking probably between \$150 million and \$200 million."

South Dakota is in a tight budget climate while the Trump administration and Congress reduce support for states. The governor's budget office says various state departments have already lost a combined \$24 million in federal funding since Trump's second term began.

That's a reversal from the latter part of Trump's first term and the Biden years, when South Dakota's budget benefited from pandemic aid and stimulus funding. Lawmakers set aside enough money during those years that they should be able to build a men's prison without taking on any debt, if they approve the plan during a Sept. 23 special legislative session. The new prison — which would be built on undeveloped land in northeast Sioux Falls — would replace the oldest parts of the pre-statehood penitentiary.

The lawmaker who asked Seeley for a ballpark estimate on the Capitol project is state Senate President



A January 2025 view of the South Dakota State Capitol in Pierre. (Makenzie Huber/South Dakota Searchlight)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 36 of 79

Pro Tempore Chris Karr, a Republican from Sioux Falls.

"That number itself is a tremendously huge number," Karr said afterward in an interview with South Dakota Searchlight. "I look forward to getting some more data and facts."

No savings have been set aside yet for a full Capitol restoration. But lawmakers have provided about \$12 million in the last six years to study problems afflicting the Capitol, along with its lake and its grounds, and to make temporary repairs while planning for a larger project.

Lake studied

So far, that work has included studying the condition of the 115-year-old, 1,300-foot-deep well feeding Capitol Lake. The well formerly produced natural gas in addition to water, and for many years the gas was lit to create a flaming fountain. The gas flow began to diminish about 20 years ago and can no longer sustain a flame.

A study in 2019 determined that the well could be compromised, and that a collapse could cause an uncontrolled flow of water to surface wherever it finds a pathway. A follow-up study that included sending a camera down the well determined it was in better shape than originally feared, and "a new water source for Capitol Lake is not the emergency that we had been led to believe," Seeley told lawmakers.

Discussion continues about a replacement water source, but it's been pushed down the priority list. Meanwhile, the lake has been dredged.

Roof repaired

The Capitol's roof was repaired recently, although not without problems. Lawmakers learned Tuesday that while the roof was undergoing work, heavy rains in May and June leaked into the technology equipment closets that serve the House of Representatives chamber.

About \$185,000 of damage was done, which will hopefully be covered by insurance. It's unlikely new equipment will be in place by next month's special session, meaning some House members' voting buttons might not work, and the electronic display for voting results might be inoperable. The Legislative Research Council is preparing workarounds.

Plaster repair, rotunda restoration

The next project targets numerous areas of damaged plaster for repair, which Seeley hopes to finish before the start of the annual legislative session in January.

"We're going to make it look right in the short run, in places where it's the worst today," he said.

After that, Seeley plans a rotunda restoration to begin after the 2026 legislative session and be completed by the 2027 session. A company specializing in historic restoration will try to recapture the rotunda's original beauty, which Seeley said is dimmed by aging paint and plaster, and poor lighting.

While all of that is happening, Seeley hopes to work with the Capitol Complex Restoration and Beautification Commission — a bipartisan group of seven people appointed by the governor — on a full restoration plan. The last full restoration was completed for the 1989 statehood centennial celebration, he said.

The needs are many. Nearly every communication system that's ever been installed in the Capitol is still in the building. The steam heating system needs a replacement. Some of the plumbing is more than 100 years old. Roof drains that run inside the walls need attention.

There was no discussion Tuesday about how to pay for it all. Karr said that discussion should start soon.

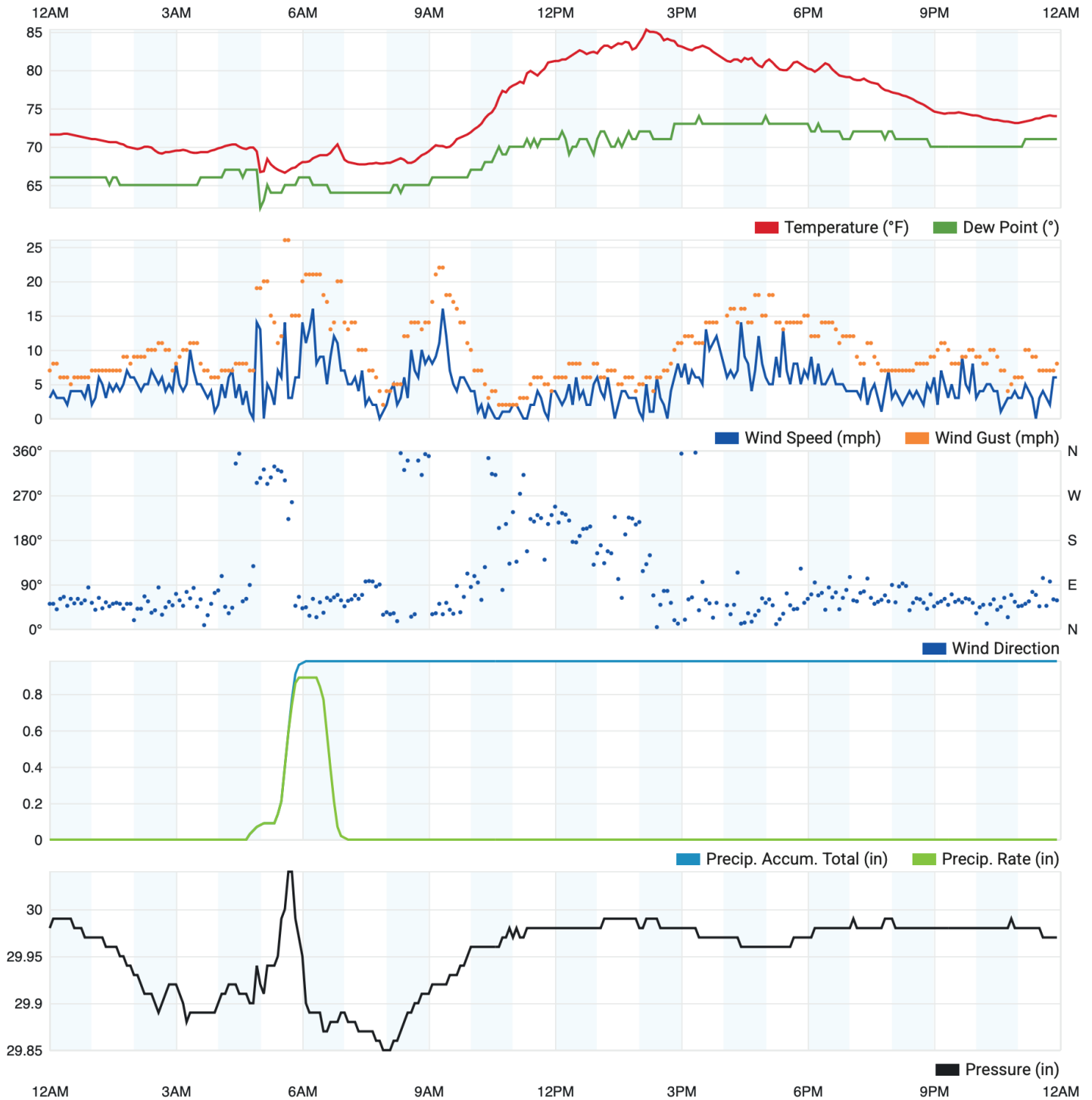
Seth is editor-in-chief of South Dakota Searchlight. He was previously a supervising senior producer for South Dakota Public Broadcasting and a newspaper journalist in Rapid City and Mitchell.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 37 of 79

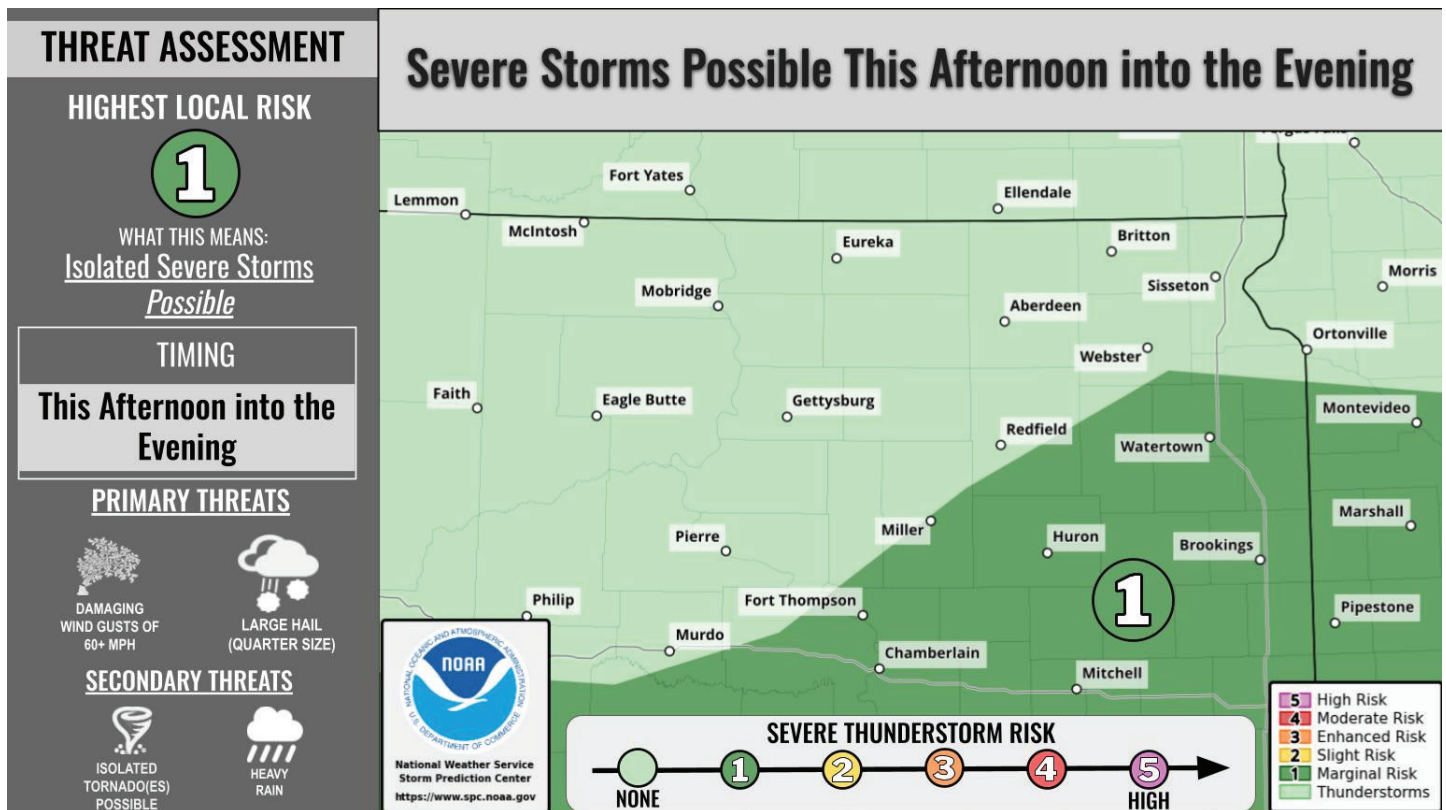
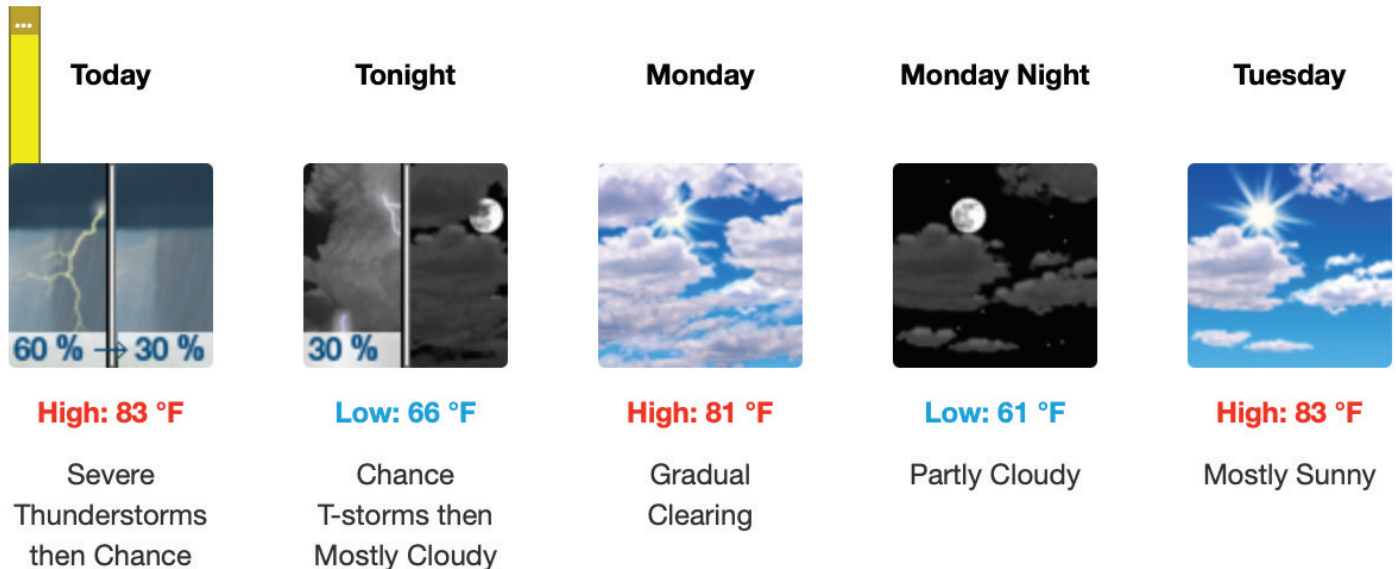
Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

August 16, 2025



Broton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 38 of 79



There is a Marginal Risk (level 1 out of 5) for isolated severe storms this afternoon into the evening over south central and northeastern SD. Damaging wind gusts of 60 mph and large hail around an inch in diameter are the primary threats, along with the additional threat for heavy rainfall. A isolated tornado or two can not be ruled out.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 39 of 79

THREAT ASSESSMENT

HIGHEST LOCAL RISK

1

WHAT THIS MEANS:

Isolated severe storms
possible.

TIMING

Monday afternoon into the Evening

PRIMARY THREATS

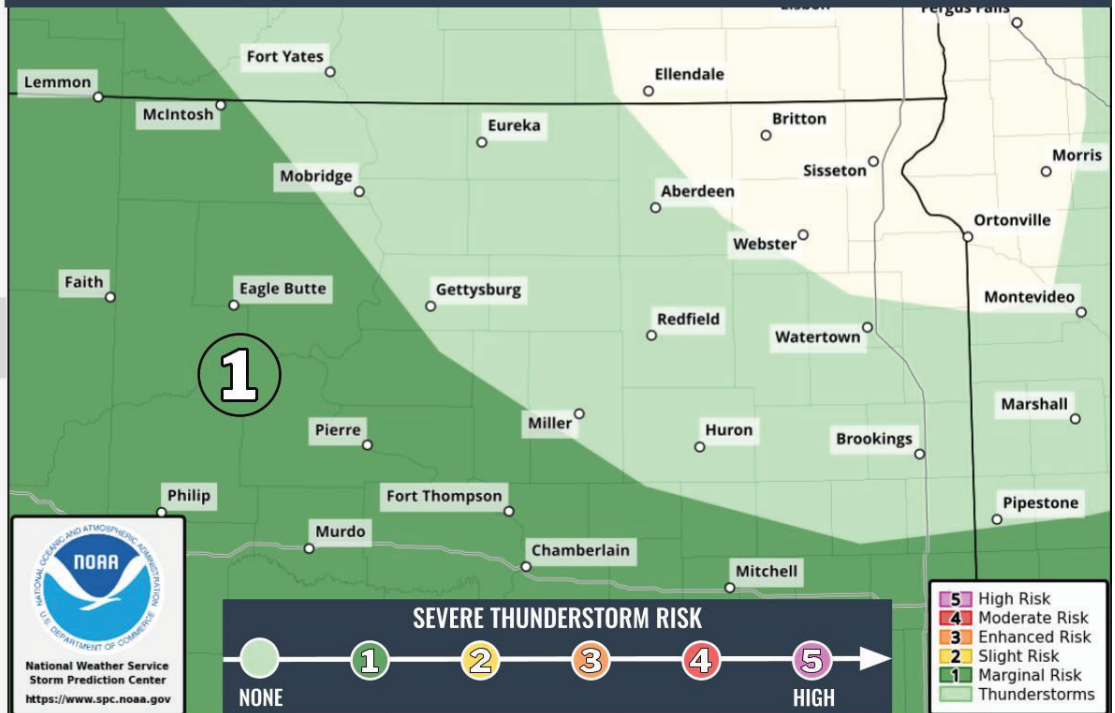

DAMAGING
WIND GUSTS OF
60 MPH


LARGE HAIL
(QUARTER SIZE)

SECONDARY THREATS


HEAVY RAINFALL

SEVERE STORMS POSSIBLE MONDAY



There is a Marginal Risk (level 1 out of 5) for isolated severe storms Monday afternoon into the evening over central SD. Damaging wind gusts of 60 mph and large hail around an inch in diameter are the primary threats, along with the threat for heavy rainfall.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 40 of 79

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 85 °F at 2:09 PM

Heat Index: 92 °F at 2:15 PM

Low Temp: 66 °F at 5:01 AM

Wind: 26 mph at 5:32 AM

Precip: : 0.98

Day length: 14 hours, 3 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 104 in 1976

Record Low: 39 in 2012

Average High: 83

Average Low: 57

Average Precip in August.: 1.22

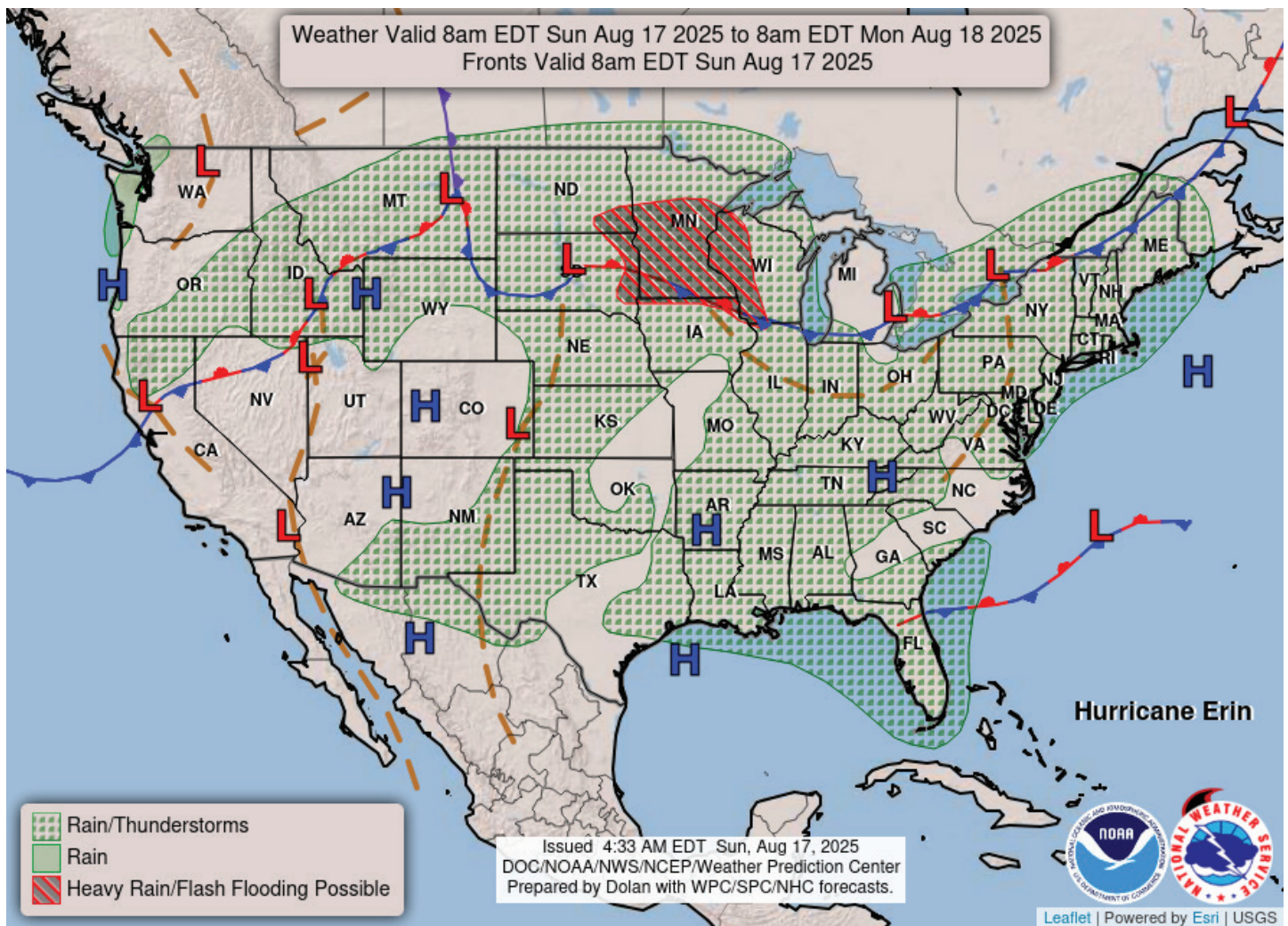
Precip to date in August: 3.02

Average Precip to date: 15.32

Precip Year to Date: 18.09

Sunset Tonight: 8:37:54 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:36:02 am



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 41 of 79

Today in Weather History

August 17, 1961: Intensive rainfall occurred during the overnight hours on the 17th through the early morning hours on the 18th. Some rainfall amounts include 4.13 inches in Clark, 2.52 inches 1 W of Summit, 2.50 in Andover, 2.20 in Waubay, 2.15 in Wilmot, 2.12 in Wheaton, and 2.10 in Clear Lake.

August 17, 2007: An estimated four to six inches of rain and hail to the size of baseballs caused localized flooding between Piedmont and Tilford in Meade County, especially near poor drainage areas and at a barricade along a frontage road. The water washed over several roads and was several inches deep on Interstate 90, forcing law enforcement officials to close it for a couple of hours. Torrential rains estimated at four to six inches fell west of Hermosa in Custer County between 6 pm and 8 pm MST. Battle and Grace Coolidge Creeks overflowed their banks and several dry canyons filled with water and drained into the creeks. State highways 40 and 36 were flooded in numerous spots. A river gauge on Battle Creek just east of Hermosa crested at 14.91 feet at 9 pm, rising from 2.63 ft at 7:30 pm and above the flood stage of 8.0 feet. About six inches of water covered Highway 79 at the Battle Creek bridge. A railroad bridge about 3/4 mile downstream became clogged with debris and water rose behind the embankment and flooded six homes. At about 8:30 pm MST, a section of the embankment failed, flooding a new subdivision on the other side. All of the approximately 20 houses were damaged; three homes were washed off their foundations, and one of those houses was carried a half a mile east of the subdivision by the flowing water. There were no injuries.

1899: Hurricane San Ciriaco set many records on its path. Killing nearly 3,500 people in Puerto Rico, it was the deadliest hurricane to hit the island and the strongest at the time, until 30 years later when the island was affected by the Hurricane San Felipe Segundo, a Category 5 hurricane, in 1928. It was also the tenth deadliest Atlantic hurricane ever recorded. San Ciriaco is also the longest lasting Atlantic hurricane in recorded history, continuing for 28 days. On August 17, the hurricane turned back to the northwest and made landfall near Hatteras, North Carolina on the following day. San Ciriaco remains the strongest hurricane to make landfall on the Outer Banks since 1899.

1969: The music festival, known as Woodstock, should have ended on this day. Jimi Hendrix, the last act to perform, was delayed due to rain on Sunday evening. Jimi Hendrix took the stage at 8:30 am Monday morning.

1915 - A hurricane hit Galveston, TX, with wind gusts to 120 mph and a twelve foot storm surge. The storm claimed 275 lives, including forty-two on Galveston Island, with most deaths due to drowning. Of 250 homes built outside the seawall (which was constructed after the catastrophic hurricane of 1900), just ten percent were left standing. (The Weather Channel)

1946 - An estimated F-4 tornado killed 11 people and injured 100 others in the Mankato, Minnesota area around 6:52 PM. The deaths and most of the injuries occurred in the complete destruction of the 26 cabins at the Green Gables tourist camp, 3 miles southwest of Mankato. A 27-ton road grader was reportedly hurled about 100 feet. Another tornado an hour later destroys downtown Wells, Minnesota.

1969 - Camille, the second worst hurricane in U.S. history, smashed into the Mississippi coast. Winds gusted to 172 mph at Main Pass Block LA, and to 190 mph near Bay Saint Louis MS. The hurricane claimed 256 lives, and caused 1.3 billion dollars damage. Several ocean going ships were carried over seven miles inland by the hurricane. The hurricane produced winds to 200 mph, and a storm surge of 24.6 feet. Complete destruction occurred in some coastal areas near the eye of the hurricane. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Evening thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Northern and Central Plains Region. One thunderstorm spawned a tornado near Fairbury NE, along with baseball size hail and wind gusts to 100 mph, causing severe crop damage west of town. Ten cities in the eastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Syracuse NY hit 97 degrees for the first time in twenty-two years. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 42 of 79



NEW BEGINNINGS

"There's nothing left for me. I've made such a mess out of my life that I have nothing to look forward to. And the tragedy of it all is that things looked great for so many years. Now, when I look into the future all I see is gloom and darkness. Where can I find anything to look forward to?" he asked.

"There is an answer - I can assure you of that," I said. Turning to Psalm 112:4, I read, "Even in darkness light dawns for the upright."

God will always provide His Light for those who seek it. No matter how far we have fallen or how little hope we may have, God can take the bitterness of defeat and despair and turn them into stepping-stones of success. When we willingly face and acknowledge our faults and shortcomings, ask for and accept His forgiveness and surrender our lives to Him, He will bring victory out of defeat.

Consider the story of Peter. When someone asked if He was a follower of Jesus, he lied, saying, "I am not!" A few moments before His denial he attempted to protect Jesus with his sword. And there was Mark - the author of the second book of the New Testament. He started as a strong believer completely trusting the message of Jesus. Suddenly, things grew boring, and the excitement evaporated. So, he gave up the "call" and quit.

But despite their failures, He did not give up on them. And neither will He give up on us. He forgave them, as He will us, and bring His light back into our lives.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to understand that "failure is not final" because Your grace provides a new beginning. Teach us to begin again and rise when we fall. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: – Even in darkness light dawns for the upright, for those who are gracious and compassionate and righteous. Psalm 112:4

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

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 43 of 79

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 44 of 79



WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.15.25

4 17 27 34 69 16

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$216,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.16.25

9 15 34 45 47 4

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$2,200,000

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.16.25

1 3 8 26 32 10

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 14 Hrs 31 Mins 32 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.16.25

4 5 18 20 26

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$20,000

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.16.25

31 34 43 44 55 2

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.16.25

23 40 49 65 69 23

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$605,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 45 of 79

Upcoming Groton Events

08/09/2025 Groton Legion 30th Anniversary Celebration
08/07/2025 Groton Firemen Summer Splash in the GHS Parking Lot 7:30-8:30pm
08/11/2025 Vitalant Blood Drive at the Community Center 3:30-6pm
08/23/2025 Glacial Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
09/05/2025 Homecoming Parade 1pm
09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
09/06-07/25 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
09/07/2025 Couples Sunflower Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am
09/07/2025 9th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3-5pm
10/10/2025 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
10/11/2025 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
10/31/2025 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
11/15/2025 Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm
11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving 11:30am-1:30pm Community Center (Thanksgiving)
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

Another gold rush could bring open pit mines to South Dakota's Black Hills

By SARAH RAZA Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A gold rush brought settlers to South Dakota's Black Hills roughly 150 years ago, chasing the dream of wealth and displacing Native Americans in the process.

Now, a new crop of miners driven by gold prices at more than \$3,000 an ounce are seeking to return to the treasured landscape, promising an economic boost while raising fears of how modern gold extraction could forever change the region.

"These impacts can be long term and make it so that tourism and outdoor recreation is negatively impacted," said Lilius Jarding, executive director of the Black Hills Clean Water Alliance. "Our enjoyment of the Black Hills as a peaceful place, a sacred place, is disturbed."

The Black Hills encompass over 1.2 million acres (485,622 hectares), rising up from the Great Plains in southwest South Dakota and extending into Wyoming. The jagged peaks are smaller than those of the Rocky Mountains, but the lush pine-covered hills are sacred to the Lakota Sioux people and serve as a destination for millions of tourists who visit Mount Rushmore and state parks.

Dramatic landscape changes come with modern mining

One gold mine now operates in the Black Hills, but companies have proposals before state and federal agencies for another one, plus exploratory drilling sites that they hope will lead to full-fledged mines. That has prompted opposition by Native American tribes and environmentalists who argue the projects are close to sacred sites, will contaminate waterways and permanently scar the landscape.

Gold extraction has changed dramatically in the decades since prospectors first began panning for gold in the Black Hills. The industry now typically relies on massive trucks and diggers that create deep, multi-tiered pits and use chemicals like cyanide to extract the gold.

The land can never return to its original state. The Homestake mine, once the largest and deepest gold mine in the Western Hemisphere, now sits barren in Lead, South Dakota, and is used for scientific research.

Interest in Black Hills gold mining has soared along with the price of the metal. When the Homestake mine closed in 2002, gold sold for about \$300 an ounce. Now it goes for about 10 times as much.

Joseph Cavatoni, senior market strategist at the World Gold Council, attributes the price spike to global economic uncertainty.

"Gold tends to be a stable asset," he said. "That actually performs well in inflationary times, and holds its value in recessionary times. That's why gold as an asset in investment."

President Donald Trump also boosted the industry by issuing an executive order in March to increase American mineral production, calling for expedited permitting and reviews.

Colin Paterson, professor emeritus of geological engineering at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, notes that Black Hills gold is encased in rock. To extract it, the rock is crushed and then a chemical like cyanide is used to dissolve the mineral and remove it.

Mining brings revenue, but renews Black Hills fight

Coeur Mining runs the single active mine in the Black Hills, but the company Dakota Gold has plans for an open pit mine to begin operating in 2029. The company is also targeting the area near the old Homestake site to build an underground mine where workers would descend hundreds or even thousands of feet into shafts.

Jack Henris, president and chief operating officer of Dakota Gold, estimated the open pit mine would create up to 250 jobs and result in the company paying the state up to \$400 million in taxes over the life of the mine. Dakota Gold will conduct an environmental study and surveys of soil and vegetation to ensure safe operation, Henris said.

"Most of the people that work here are from this area and just love to live here," he said. "So we're a

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 47 of 79

big part of the Hills and we love them just as much as other folks.”

To a great extent, gold mining helped create the modern Black Hills region.

The U.S. government signed a treaty in 1868 that recognized the Sioux Nation’s right to the Black Hills, but the government seized the land after the discovery of gold and allowed settlers into the region. The U.S. Supreme Court later ruled the Sioux were entitled to compensation, but they have not accepted any and maintain their claim to the land.

Tribes have largely opposed mining in the Black Hills.

“There’s a central truth about mining in the Black Hills in that it was never the most mineral rich place there ever was,” said Taylor Gunhammer, local organizer with the Indigenous advocacy group NDN Collective and an Oglala Sioux, one of the Lakota people. “It’s not even the actual mineral content of the Black Hills that is so attractive to mining companies. It’s the permissive nature of the officials who oversee mining.”

Some proposed projects, such as Dakota Gold’s mine, are on private land and only subject to state rules, not the U.S. Forest Service regulations required for projects on public acreage.

Environmentalists have focused their opposition on the possibility of chemicals leaks. They note that Coeur’s Wharf mine has had nearly 200 spills and that the former Homestake mine was closed because it contaminated a nearby creek.

Coeur’s environmental manager, Jasmine McCauley, said in a statement that each spill was “thoroughly investigated, mitigated, and corrective actions are put in place to prevent reoccurrence.” The company is always improving its processes, she added.

Jarding, of the Black Hills Clean Water Alliance, said she remains concerned about the number of projects in the works.

“It’s really important that people understand the exponential growth in mining activity that’s been happening in the Black Hills over the last five years or so,” Jarding said. “There are currently active mining claims on 271,000 acres in the Black Hills. That’s 20% of the whole Black Hills that is potentially going to be subject to mining.”

The last dance? Organizers of North America’s largest powwow say 2026 will be the event’s final year

By SUSAN MONTTOYA BRYAN Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — For decades, tens of thousands of people have descended upon Albuquerque for what is billed as North America’s largest powwow, a celebration showcasing Indigenous dancers, musicians and artisans from around the world.

Organizers announced Saturday that 2026 will be the last time the cultural event is held, saying via email and social media that it will end after 43 years without providing details on the decision.

“There comes a time,” Gathering of Nations Ltd. said in a statement.

The official poster for the 2026 event features the words “The Last Dance.”

Organizers did not immediately respond to phone and email messages seeking comment.

The New Mexico fairgrounds have hosted the powwow since 2017, but it’s unclear whether the venue would be available for future events given that the state is considering redeveloping the site.

There also has been criticism over the years by some Native Americans who said Gathering of Nations organizers were capitalizing on Indigenous culture. Organizers dismissed those claims, saying the money raised goes toward the expenses of putting on the event.

While offering spectators a glimpse into Indigenous cultures, large powwows like the one in Albuquerque have become more commercialized events with prize money for dancing and drumming competitions.

For some Native American leaders, it can be a struggle to keep traditional cultural practices and commercial powwows from being lumped into the same category. There have been efforts to focus on promoting smaller powwows that are held in tribal communities.

At Gathering of Nations, the signature event is the grand entry, in which a colorful procession of dancers spirals into the center of an arena. Participants wear elaborate regalia — some with jingling bells and

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 48 of 79

others with feathers — and dance to rhythmic drumming.

The event also features the crowning of Miss Indian World, as well as horse parades in which riders are judged on the craftsmanship of their intricately beaded adornments or feathered headdresses and how well they work with their steeds.

Top accessory this year at the Little League World Series? A bat that looks like sour gummy worms

By AMANDA VOGT Associated Press

SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT, Pa. (AP) — It's not an ice-cream cone. It's not an Italian rainbow cookie. It's the baseball bat being used at the Little League World Series.

Easton's 2026 Hype Fire USA Bat with the neon green grip and the pink-and-neon yellow barrel is hard to miss at the plate. And the players love them.

"I left it up to them which bats they wanted to use, most of them went with the bat they gave us," Pennsylvania manager Michael Shaw said. "You know, a great color for 12-year-old kids — sour gummy worms."

When Little League teams arrive in Williamsport, they get bright and colorful uniforms and hats at the Grove, the barracks where they live during the tournament. When they go to the batting cages for the first time, the rest of their gear is waiting for them. Bats, gloves, helmets, catching gear, you name it, the players are getting it.

"They were kids in a candy store, and as a coach, I got goose bumps walking in there and I'm 38 years old, so I can only imagine what the 12-year-olds are thinking about while walking through that door, seeing all the gear they got," said South Dakota's manager, Ryan Vavruska. "We're very fortunate to get here and to be blessed with all that gear."

Easton has partnered with Little League for more than 40 years and in 2023 the partnership was extended through 2028. Rawlings merged with Easton in 2021 and is the official glove used in the tournament.

"When they opened the roller door down to the batting cages, the stampede started," Australia manager Keith Land said. "These kids are going to be excited to go home and go, 'Look what I've got and look what you haven't got.' They'll rub it in, don't worry about that."

After aluminum bats were turning games into home run derbies, Little League in 2018 changed its bat rules to comply with the USABat Standard, which switched the material used to make the bats, so they now perform more like wooden bats. These bats, however, are lighter and easier to swing for 12-year-old players.

The standard was created to ensure the "long-term integrity of the game," according to USA Baseball. There are now fewer home runs each year at the LLWS, even if the ball sounds good off the bat.

But the players aren't talking about the home runs they may or not hit — they just love having the bat in their hands. Most of them couldn't believe what they were getting.

"It was pretty hype," South Dakota's Camden Tycz said. "When we saw the bat table it was just astonishing."

Preston Ware's mouth dropped when his team from South Carolina got to the batting cages. He initially thought his whole team would get only one bat to share.

"Coach Dave (Bogan) tried to trick me and said, 'Yes,'" Preston said.

But quick to jump in was Joe Giulietti, who hit a grand slam in South Carolina's first game. "Preston," he said, "this isn't like the 1960s. When Coach Dave grew up, they had one bat size."

Pakistan defends flood response after over 270 people killed in northwestern district

By MUHAMMAD SAJJAD and RIAZ KHAN Associated Press

BUNER, Pakistan (AP) — A Pakistani official says the death toll from flash floods in the country's northwest has risen to 274 after rescuers recovered dozens of bodies from the rubble of collapsed houses.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 49 of 79

Mohammad Suhail, a spokesman for the emergency service, said 54 bodies were found on Sunday in Buner, a mountainous district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where torrential rains and cloudbursts triggered massive flooding on Friday.

He said several villagers remain missing, and search efforts are focused on areas where homes were flattened by flood.

THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. AP's earlier story follows below.

BUNER, Pakistan (AP) — Torrential rains triggered more flash floods in two villages in the Kathua district of Indian-controlled Kashmir, killing at least seven people and injuring five others overnight, officials said Sunday.

As rescue and relief operations continued the search for survivors, Pakistani authorities defended their response to climate-induced flash floods in recent days that killed more than 200 people in a single north-western district.

Residents in Buner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, accused officials of failing to warn them to evacuate after torrential rain and cloudbursts triggered deadly flooding and landslides. There was no warning broadcast from mosque loudspeakers, a traditional method in remote areas.

The government said that while an early warning system was in place, the sudden downpour in Buner was so intense that the deluge struck before residents could be alerted.

Lt. Gen. Inam Haider, chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority, told a hastily convened news conference in Islamabad that Pakistan was experiencing shifting weather patterns because of climate change. Since the monsoon season began in June, Pakistan has already received 50% more rainfall than in the same period last year, he added.

He warned that more intense weather could follow, with heavy rains forecast to continue this month.

Asfandiyar Khan Khattak, director-general of the Provincial Disaster Management Authority, said there was "no forecasting system anywhere in the world" that could predict the exact time and location of a cloudburst.

Mohammad Iqbal, a schoolteacher in Pir Baba village, said the lack of a timely warning system caused casualties and forced many to flee their homes at the last moment.

"Survivors escaped with nothing," he said. "If people had been informed earlier, lives could have been saved and residents could have moved to safer places."

Idrees Mahsud, a disaster management official, said Pakistan's early warning system used satellite imagery and meteorological data to send alerts to local authorities. These were shared through the media and community leaders. He said monsoon rains that once only swelled rivers now also triggered urban flooding.

An emergency services spokesman in Buner, Mohammad Sohail, said more than half the damaged roads in the district had reopened by Sunday, allowing vehicles and heavy machinery to reach cut-off villages.

Crews were clearing piles of rocks and mud dumped by the floods. They were still using heavy machinery to remove the rubble of collapsed homes after families reported that some of their relatives were missing.

In one of the deadliest incidents, 24 people from one family died in the village of Qadar Nagar when floodwaters swept through their home on the eve of a wedding. The head of the family, Umar Khan, said he survived the floods because he was out of the house at the time. Four of his relatives have yet to be found, he added.

Authorities have warned of more deluges and possible landslides between now and Tuesday, urging local administrations to remain on alert. Higher-than-normal monsoon rains have lashed the country since June 26 and killed more than 600.

Pakistan is highly vulnerable to climate-induced disasters. In 2022, a record-breaking monsoon killed nearly 1,700 people and destroyed millions of homes.

The country also suffers regular flash floods and landslides during the monsoon season, which runs from June to September, particularly in the rugged northwest, where villages are often perched on steep slopes and riverbanks.

Experts say climate change is intensifying the frequency and severity of such extreme weather events

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 50 of 79

in South Asia.

Khalid Khan, a weather expert, said Pakistan produces less than 1% of planet-warming emissions but faces heatwaves, heavy rains, glacial outburst floods and now cloudbursts, underscoring how climate change is devastating communities within hours.

In Kishtwar district, teams are continuing their efforts in the remote village of Chositi, looking for dozens of missing people after the area was hit by flash floods last week. At least 60 were killed and some 150 injured, about 50 of them critically.

Thursday's floods struck during an annual Hindu pilgrimage. Authorities rescued over 300 people, while some 4,000 pilgrims were evacuated to safety.

Hurricane Erin downgraded to Category 3 as tropical storm warning issued for Turks and Caicos

Hurricane Erin was downgraded to a Category 3 hurricane early Sunday as a tropical storm warning was issued for the Turks and Caicos Islands and winds and heavy rains whipped the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

Erin, the first Atlantic hurricane of 2025, reached Category 5 status before weakening, with maximum sustained winds of 125 mph (205 kph), according to the National Hurricane Center in Miami.

The storm's center was about 155 miles (245 kilometers) north of San Juan, Puerto Rico and nearly 300 miles (500 kilometers) east of the Grand Turk Island, moving west-northwest at 14 mph (22 kph).

A tropical storm warning means tropical storm conditions are expected somewhere within the warning area, and in this case, within 24 hours, the NHC said. Heavy rain is still expected across the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, with rainfall of 3 to 6 inches (about 7.6 to 15 cms), with 8 inches (20 cms) in some isolated areas.

More than 159,000 customers were without power in Puerto Rico as a result of Hurricane Erin on Sunday morning, according to Luma Energy, a private company that oversees the transmission and distribution of power on the island.

Swells were also expected to affect portions of the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Hispaniola, and the Turks and Caicos Islands during the next couple of days, the NHC reported.

The government of the Bahamas also issued a tropical storm watch for the Southeast Bahamas.

Scientists have linked the rapid intensification of hurricanes in the Atlantic to climate change. Global warming is causing the atmosphere to hold more water vapor and is spiking ocean temperatures, and warmer waters give hurricanes fuel to unleash more rain and strengthen more quickly.

Pope Leo XIV celebrates Mass for local homeless people, invites them to lunch at summer villa

By MARIA SELENE CLEMENTE, ANDREA ROSA and NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

CASTEL GANDOLFO, Italy (AP) — Pope Leo XIV spent the last Sunday of his summer vacation with several dozen refugees, homeless and poor people and the church volunteers who help them, celebrating a special Mass for them and inviting them into the Vatican's lakeside estate for a lunch of lasagna and roast veal.

Leo celebrated Mass in the St. Mary sanctuary of Albano, near the papal summer retreat in Castel Gandolfo, where he is vacationing. The Mass was attended by around 110 people cared for by the local Caritas church charity, and the volunteers who run the diocese's shelters, clinics and social service offices.

In his homily, Leo celebrated the "fire of charity" that had brought them together.

"And I encourage you not to distinguish between those who assist and those who are assisted, between those who seem to give and those who seem to receive, between those who appear poor and those who feel they have something to offer in terms of time, skills, and help," he said.

In the church, he said, everyone is poor and precious, and all share the same dignity.

Leo, the former Robert Prevost, spent most of his adult life working with the poor people of Peru, first

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 51 of 79

as an Augustinian missionary and then as bishop. Former parishioners and church workers say he greatly reinforced the work of the local Caritas charity, opening soup kitchens and shelters for migrants and rallying funds to build oxygen plants during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Later Sunday, Leo presided over a luncheon with the guests, who included Rosabal Leon, a Peruvian refugee who has been in Italy for a few months, along with her husband and two children. Leo's other companion was an 85-year-old Roman, Gabriella Oliveiro, who lives on her own, organizers said.

The luncheon was held at the Borgo Laudato Si', the Vatican's environmental educational center in the gardens of the papal villa in Castel Gandolfo. The center is named for Pope Francis' 2015 landmark environmental encyclical, Laudato Si (Praised Be).

Local caterers provided a menu of lasagna, eggplant parmesan and roast veal. For dessert, the menu called for fruit salad and sweets named for the pope, "Dolce Leone."

Greeting the pope and his guests, who were seated along two long tables under a veranda, Albano Bishop Vincenzo Viva said their coming together to break bread followed the teaching of Christ.

Today's church, he said, should be "by the side of the most vulnerable, the weakest, the young and those who are wounded by the circumstances of life and history."

Republicans look to make a U-turn on federal commitment to electric vehicles for the Postal Service

By SUSAN HAIGH Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A year after being lauded for its plan to replace thousands of aging, gas-powered mail trucks with a mostly electric fleet, the U.S. Postal Service is facing congressional attempts to strip billions in federal EV funding.

In June, the Senate parliamentarian blocked a Republican proposal in a major tax-and-spending bill to sell off the agency's new electric vehicles and infrastructure and revoke remaining federal money. But efforts to halt the fleet's shift to clean energy continue in the name of cost savings.

Donald Maston, president of the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, said canceling the program now would have the opposite effect, squandering millions of dollars.

"I think it would be shortsighted for Congress to now suddenly decide they're going to try to go backwards and take the money away for the EVs or stop that process because that's just going to be a bunch of money on infrastructure that's been wasted," he said.

Beyond that, many in the scientific community fear the government could pass on an opportunity to reduce carbon emissions that contribute to global warming when urgent action is needed.

Electrified vehicles reduce emissions

A 2022 University of Michigan study found the new electric postal vehicles could cut total greenhouse gas emissions by up to 20 million tons over the predicted, cumulative 20-year lifetime of the trucks. That's a fraction of the more than 6,000 million metric tons emitted annually in the United States, said professor Gregory A. Keoleian, co-director of the university's Center for Sustainable Systems. But he said the push toward electric vehicles is critical and needs to accelerate, given the intensifying impacts of climate change.

"We're already falling short of goals for reducing emissions," Keoleian said. "We've been making progress, but the actions being taken or proposed will really reverse decarbonization progress that has been made to date."

Many GOP lawmakers share President Donald Trump's criticism of the Biden-era green energy push and say the Postal Service should stick to delivering mail.

Sen. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, said "it didn't make sense for the Postal Service to invest so heavily in an all-electric force." She said she will pursue legislation to rescind what is left of the \$3 billion from the Inflation Reduction Act allocated to help cover the \$10 billion cost of new postal vehicles.

Ernst has called the EV initiative a "boondoggle" and "a textbook example of waste," citing delays, high costs and concerns over cold-weather performance.

"You always evaluate the programs, see if they are working. But the rate at which the company that's

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 52 of 79

providing those vehicles is able to produce them, they are so far behind schedule, they will never be able to fulfill that contract," Ernst said during a recent appearance at the Iowa State Fair, referring to Wisconsin-based Oshkosh Defense.

"For now," she added, "gas-powered vehicles — use some ethanol in them — I think is wonderful."

Corn-based ethanol is a boon to Iowa's farmers, but the effort to reverse course has other Republican support.

Rep. Michael Cloud, R-Texas, a co-sponsor of the rollback effort, has said the EV order should be canceled because the project "has delivered nothing but delays, defective trucks, and skyrocketing costs."

The Postal Service maintains that the production delay of the Next Generation Delivery Vehicles, or NGDVs, was "very modest" and not unexpected.

"The production quantity ramp-up was planned for and intended to be very gradual in the early months to allow time for potential modest production or supplier issues to be successfully resolved," spokesperson Kim Frum said.

EVs help in modernization effort

The independent, self-funded federal agency, which is paid for mostly by postage and product sales, is in the middle of a \$40 billion, 10-year modernization and financial stabilization plan. The EV effort had the full backing of Democratic President Joe Biden, who pledged to move toward an all-electric federal fleet of car and trucks.

The "Deliver for America" plan calls for modernizing the ground fleet, notably the Grumman Long Life Vehicle, which dates back to 1987 and is fuel-inefficient at 9 mpg. The vehicles are well past their projected 24-year lifespan and are prone to breakdowns and even fires.

"Our mechanics are miracle workers," said Mark Dimondstein, president of the American Postal Workers Union. "The parts are not available. They fabricate them. They do the best they can."

The Postal Service announced in 2022 it would deploy at least 66,000 electric vehicles by 2028, including commercial off-the-shelf models, after years of deliberation and criticism it was moving too slowly to reduce emissions. By 2024, the agency was awarded a Presidential Sustainability Award for its efforts to electrify the largest fleet in the federal government.

Building new postal trucks

In 2021, Oshkosh Defense was awarded a contract for up to 165,000 battery electric and internal combustion engine Next Generation vehicles over 10 years.

The first of the odd-looking trucks, with hoods resembling a duck's bill, began service in Georgia last year. Designed for greater package capacity, the trucks are equipped with airbags, blind-spot monitoring, collision sensors, 360-degree cameras and antilock brakes.

There's also a new creature comfort: air conditioning.

Douglas Lape, special assistant to the president of the National Association of Letter Carriers and a former carrier, is among numerous postal employees who have had a say in the new design. He marvels at how Oshkosh designed and built a new vehicle, transforming an old North Carolina warehouse into a factory along the way.

"I was in that building when it was nothing but shelving," he said. "And now, being a completely functioning plant where everything is built in-house — they press the bodies in there, they do all of the assembly — it's really amazing in my opinion."

Where things stand now

The agency has so far ordered 51,500 NGDVs, including 35,000 battery-powered vehicles. To date, it has received 300 battery vehicles and 1,000 gas-powered ones.

Former Postmaster General Louis DeJoy said in 2022 the agency expected to purchase chiefly zero-emissions delivery vehicles by 2026. It still needs some internal combustion engine vehicles that travel longer distances.

Frum, the Postal Service spokesperson, said the planned NGDV purchases were "carefully considered from a business perspective" and are being deployed to routes and facilities where they will save money.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 53 of 79

The agency has also received more than 8,200 of 9,250 Ford E-Transit electric vehicles it has ordered, she said.

Ernst said it's fine for the Postal Service to use EVs already purchased.

"But you know what? We need to be smart about the way we are providing services through the federal government," she said. "And that was not a smart move."

Maxwell Woody, lead author of the University of Michigan study, made the opposite case.

Postal vehicles, he said, have low average speeds and a high number of stops and starts that enable regenerative braking. Routes average under 30 miles and are known in advance, making planning easier.

"It's the perfect application for an electric vehicle," he said, "and it's a particularly inefficient application for an internal combustion engine vehicle."

European leaders to join Ukraine's Zelenskyy for White House meeting with Trump

KYIV (AP) — European and NATO leaders announced Sunday that they'll be joining President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Washington for crucial talks with President Donald Trump, rallying around the Ukrainian leader after his exclusion from Trump's summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The remarkable move — with one European leader after another announcing that they'll be at Zelenskyy's side when he travels to the White House on Monday — was an apparent effort to ensure that the meeting goes better than the last one in February, when Trump berated the Ukrainian president in a heated Oval Office encounter.

"The Europeans are very afraid of the Oval Office scene being repeated and so they want to support Mr. Zelenskyy to the hilt," said retired French Gen. Dominique Trinquand, a former head of France's military mission at the United Nations.

"It's a power struggle and a position of strength that might work with Trump," he said in a phone interview.

The European leaders' presence at Zelenskyy's side, demonstrating Europe's support for Ukraine, could potentially help ease concerns in Kyiv and in other European capitals that Ukraine risks being railroaded into a peace deal that Trump says he wants to broker with Russia.

It wasn't immediately clear whether all or just some of them would be taking part in the actual meeting with Trump.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced on X that she will take part in the talks, "at the request of President Zelenskyy."

The secretary-general of the NATO military alliance, Mark Rutte, will also take part in the meeting, his press service said.

The office of President Emmanuel Macron announced that the French leader will travel on Monday to Washington "at the side of President Zelenskyy" although it didn't immediately specify that he'll be in the meeting.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz will also be part of the European group, but the statement from his office likewise didn't specify that he will be in the talks with Trump.

The grouped trip underscored European leaders' determination to ensure that Europe has a voice in Trump's attempted peace-making, after the U.S. president's summit on Friday with Putin — to which Zelenskyy wasn't invited.

Protesters go on strike in Israel demanding ceasefire and release of Gaza hostages

By SAM METZ, NATALIE MELZER and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Protesters in Israel demanding a hostage deal escalated their campaign Sunday with a one-day nationwide strike that blocked roads and closed businesses, as police blasted crowds with water cannons and made dozens of arrests.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 54 of 79

The “day of stoppage” was organized by two groups representing some of the families of hostages and bereaved families, weeks after militant groups released videos of hostages and Israel announced plans for a new offensive.

Protesters, who fear further fighting could endanger the 50 hostages believed to remain in Gaza, only about 20 of whom are thought to be alive, chanted: “We don’t win a war over the bodies of hostages.”

Protesters gathered at dozens of points throughout Israel, including outside politicians’ homes, military headquarters and on major highways, where they were sprayed with water cannons as they blocked lanes and lit bonfires that cloaked roads in smoke. Some restaurants and theaters were closed in solidarity.

Police said they had arrested 32 as part of the nationwide demonstration — one of the fiercest since the uproar over six hostages found dead in Gaza last September.

“Military pressure doesn’t bring hostages back — it only kills them,” former hostage Arbel Yehoud said at a demonstration in Tel Aviv’s hostage square. “The only way to bring them back is through a deal, all at once, without games.”

Netanyahu’s allies oppose any deal that leaves Hamas in power

“Today, we stop everything to save and bring back the hostages and soldiers. Today, we stop everything to remember the supreme value of the sanctity of life,” said Anat Angrest, mother of hostage Matan Angrest. “Today, we stop everything to join hands — right, left, center and everything in between.”

Protesters at highway intersections handed out yellow ribbons, the symbol that represents the hostages, the Hostages and Missing Families Forum, which organized the stoppage, said.

Even though Israel’s largest labor union, Histadrut, ultimately did not join Sunday’s action, strikes of this magnitude are relatively rare in Israel. Many businesses and municipalities decided independently to strike.

Still, an end to the conflict does not appear near. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has demanded the immediate release of the hostages but is balancing competing pressures, haunted by the potential for mutiny within his coalition.

Far-right members of his cabinet insist they won’t support any deal that allows Hamas to retain power. The last time Israel agreed to a ceasefire that released hostages, they threatened to topple Netanyahu’s government.

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich on Sunday called the stoppage “a bad and harmful campaign that plays into Hamas’ hands, buries the hostages in the tunnels and attempts to get Israel to surrender to its enemies and jeopardize its security and future.”

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir in a statement accused protesters of trying to “weaken Israel.” Like Smotrich he said the strike “strengthens Hamas and delays the return of the hostages.”

‘No other option’

Hospitals and eyewitnesses in Gaza reported at least 17 aid-seekers had been killed by Israeli forces on Sunday, including nine awaiting aid trucks close to the Morag corridor.

Hamza Asfour said he was just north of the corridor awaiting a convoy, when Israeli snipers fired, first to disperse the crowds, then from tanks hundreds of meters (yards) away.

He saw two people with gunshot wounds — one in the chest and other in the shoulder.

“It’s either to take this risk or wait and see my family die of starvation,” he said. “There is no other option.”

The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, which runs the distribution points, said there was no gunfire Sunday “at or near” its sites, which sit at the end of aid truck routes.

Israel’s military did not immediately respond to questions about strikes in the three areas.

Israel’s air and ground war has already killed tens of thousands of people in Gaza and displaced most of the population. The United Nations is warning that levels of starvation and malnutrition in Gaza are at their highest since the war began.

The Hamas-led attack in 2023 killed around 1,200 people in Israel. Israel’s retaliatory offensive has killed 61,897 people in Gaza, according to the Health Ministry, which does not specify how many were fighters or civilians but says around half were women and children.

On Sunday, two children died of malnutrition related causes in Gaza, bringing the total over the last

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 55 of 79

24 hours to seven, according to the ministry, which is part of the Hamas-run government and staffed by medical professionals. The U.N. and independent experts consider it the most reliable source on casualties. Israel disputes its figures but has not provided its own.

Aid flow far below what is needed

While demonstrators in Israel demanded a ceasefire, Israel began preparing for an invasion of Gaza City and other populated parts of the besieged strip, aimed at destroying Hamas.

The military body that coordinates its humanitarian aid to Gaza said Sunday that the supply of tents to the territory would resume. COGAT said it would allow the United Nations to resume importing tents and shelter equipment into Gaza ahead of plans to forcibly evacuate people from combat zones "for their protection."

The majority of assistance has been blocked from entering Gaza since Israel imposed a total blockade in March after a ceasefire collapsed when Israel restarted its offensive. Deliveries have since partially resumed, though aid organizations say the flow is far below what is needed. Some have accused Israel of "weaponizing aid" through blockades and rules they say turn humanitarian assistance into a tool of its political and military goals.

Airstrike on power plant in Yemen

Israeli airstrikes hit Yemen's capital Sunday, escalating strikes on Iran-backed Houthis, who since the war began have fired missiles at Israel and targeted ships in the Red Sea.

Both the IDF and a Houthi-run television station in Yemen announced the strikes. Al-Masirah Television said they targeted a power plant in the southern district of Sanhan, sparking a fire and knocking it out of service, the Yemeni station said. Israel's military said Sunday's strikes targeted energy infrastructure it claimed was being used by the Houthis, and were launched in response to missiles and drones aimed at Israel.

While some projectiles have breached its missile defenses — notably during its 12-day war with Iran in June — Israel has intercepted the vast majority of missiles launched from Yemen.

Air Canada says it is restarting flights Sunday

By ROB GILLIES Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Air Canada said it plans to resume flights on Sunday after the Canadian government intervened and forced the airline and its striking flight attendants back to work and into arbitration.

The strike stranded more than 100,000 travelers around the world during the peak summer travel season.

The country's largest airline said in a release that the first flights will resume Sunday evening but that it will take several days before its operations return to normal. It said some flights will be canceled over the next seven to 10 days until the schedule is stabilized.

Less than 12 hours after workers walked off the job, Federal Jobs Minister Patty Hajdu ordered the 10,000 flight attendants back to work, saying now is not the time to take risks with the economy and noting the unprecedented tariffs the U.S. has imposed on Canada. Hajdu referred the work stoppage to the Canada Industrial Relations Board.

The airline said Sunday the Canada Industrial Relations Board has extended the term of the existing collective agreement until a new one is determined by the arbitrator.

The shutdown of Canada's largest airline early Saturday was impacting about 130,000 people a day. Air Canada operates around 700 flights per day.

According to numbers from aviation analytics provider Cirium, Air Canada had canceled a total of 671 flights by Saturday afternoon — following 199 on Friday. And another 96 flights scheduled for Sunday were already suspended.

The bitter contract fight escalated Friday as the union turned down Air Canada's prior request to enter into government-directed arbitration, which allows a third-party mediator to decide the terms of a new contract.

Flight attendants walked off the job around 1 a.m. EDT on Saturday. Around the same time, Air Canada

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 56 of 79

said it would begin locking flight attendants out of airports.

Last year, the government forced the country's two major railroads into arbitration with their labor union during a work stoppage. The union for the rail workers is suing, arguing the government is removing a union's leverage in negotiations.

The Business Council of Canada had urged the government to impose binding arbitration in this case, too. And the Canadian Chamber of Commerce welcomed the intervention.

Hajdu maintained that her Liberal government is not anti-union, saying it is clear the two sides are at an impasse.

Passengers whose flights are impacted will be eligible to request a full refund on the airline's website or mobile app, according to Air Canada.

The airline said it would also offer alternative travel options through other Canadian and foreign airlines when possible. Still, it warned that it could not guarantee immediate rebooking because flights on other airlines are already full "due to the summer travel peak."

Air Canada and the Canadian Union of Public Employees have been in contract talks for about eight months, but they have yet to reach a tentative deal.

Both sides have said they remain far apart on the issue of pay and the unpaid work flight attendants do when planes aren't in the air.

The airline's latest offer included a 38% increase in total compensation, including benefits and pensions, over four years, that it said "would have made our flight attendants the best compensated in Canada."

But the union pushed back, saying the proposed 8% raise in the first year didn't go far enough because of inflation.

High-tech drones turn Ukraine's front line into a deadly kill zone, complicating evacuations

By HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

In eastern Ukraine, quiet nights in the dim corridors of a front-line medical post can shatter in an instant. Medics roused from sleep rush to meet another stretcher wheeled in from the Donetsk front.

They work with urgency — chest compressions and shouted commands — until it becomes clear that the soldier arrived too late. The room falls silent as his body is sealed in a white bag.

He could not be saved, the anesthesiologist said, because evacuation took too long. By the time he reached the stabilization point, he was already dead.

It was not an isolated case, but part of a broader shift in the war where medical evacuation has become increasingly difficult.

"Because of drones ... that can reach far, the danger is there for the wounded themselves and now for the crews working to get them out," said Daryna Boiko, the anesthesiologist from the "Ulf" medical service of the 108th Da Vinci Wolves Battalion. "That's why the main difficulty now is transport."

In the early months of Russia's full-scale invasion, evacuation vehicles could reach almost to the front line, giving the wounded a better chance of survival.

Now, the heavy use of first-person-view (FPV) drones, which let an operator see the target before striking, has turned areas up to 20 kilometers (12 miles) from the front line into kill zones. Medics say they have not treated gunshot wounds for months, and most injuries now come from FPVs.

The drones are the most feared weapon, both because of their precision and because they reduce survival chances for those already injured by complicating the evacuation.

For Ukraine's outnumbered army, that makes preserving crew even harder.

Evacuations in the kill zone

The growing use of FPVs has also made moving the wounded between points more difficult, said the commander of the 59th Brigade medical unit with call sign Buhor, who spoke on condition of anonymity for security reasons.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 57 of 79

"Everything is getting harder — the work has to be more mobile, the way we operate changes and the level of safety changes," he said.

Asked whether those conditions have increased mortality among the wounded, he replied: "Significantly. There's nothing you can do. Everything burns from those FPVs — everything, even tanks."

He explained that the munitions carry a charge from a rocket-propelled grenade — a shoulder-fired weapon that launches an explosive designed to pierce armored vehicles. When it blasts, a jet of molten metal and fragments penetrate the cabin at extreme temperatures. The impact can cause anything from minor cuts and burns to severe wounds, including amputations, depending on where the fragments hit and their size.

Buhor said self-aid and self-evacuation are now heavily emphasized during training, but the existence of the kill zone means soldiers can be stuck in position for days or weeks — especially if a wound is not immediately life-threatening.

On foot to safety

When Artem Fursov arrived at the stabilization post late one night with three other soldiers, Buhor inspected his wounds and praised the bandage on his arm, asking who had done it. It was the work of a fellow soldier — and an example of effective self-aid, Buhor said.

Fursov, 38, was wounded on Aug. 4 by an explosive dropped from a drone, but he didn't reach a medical post until five days later. To get to safety, he had to walk several kilometers. A small wooden cross he wore under his clothes the whole time now hangs against his chest.

"You can't even lift your head there. This is already a robot war," he said about the front line. "And the Russians are coming in like it's their own backyard."

Valentyn Pidvalnyi, a 25-year-old assault soldier wounded in the back by shrapnel, said that one month on the positions in 2022 was easier than trying to survive one day now as infantry.

"It's a very hard sector," he said, "but if you don't destroy them, they'll take the tree line, then the town, then the whole region."

Forced to keep moving

Buhor has worked in the Pokrovsk area since late 2022. When troops are forced to retreat, stabilization points must also move. In the past two and a half years, Buhor and his team have relocated 17 times.

They left their previous location to the sound of FPV drones.

Other stabilization points are facing the same situation.

Boiko from the "Ulf" medical service recalls that at the beginning of winter — when the stabilization point was still in Pokrovsk — there were still gunshot wounds. That meant there was more direct contact between the infantry, the first line of defense, on both sides.

Months later, the situation had changed dramatically.

They try to protect themselves as much as possible — limiting movement, using camouflage, equipping all vehicles with electronic warfare systems. Their evacuation crews go out only in body armor and helmets.

"We try to safeguard both ourselves and the wounded, doing everything we can to hold our position as long as possible. If we have to move farther back, the evacuation route for the wounded becomes longer — and for those in critical condition, that can be fatal," she said.

With the Bayeux Tapestry that tells of their long rivalry, France and Britain are making nice

By NICOLAS GARRIGA and JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

BAYEUX, France (AP) — For centuries, the storytelling masterpiece has been a source of wonder and fascination. In vivid and gruesome detail, the 70-meter (230-foot) embroidered cloth recounts how a fierce duke from France conquered England in 1066, reshaping British and European history.

The Bayeux Tapestry, with its scenes of sword-wielding knights in ferocious combat and King Harold of England's famous death, pierced by an arrow to an eye, has since the 11th century served as a sobering parable of military might, vengeance, betrayal and the complexity of Anglo-French relations, long seeped

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 58 of 79

with blood and rivalry but also affection and cooperation.

Now, the medieval forerunner of today's comic strips, commissioned as propaganda for the Normandy duke William known as "the Conqueror" after he took the English throne from Harold, is being readied for a new narrative mission.

A homecoming for the tapestry

Next year, the fragile artistic and historic treasure will be gingerly transported from its museum in Bayeux, Normandy, to star in a blockbuster exhibition in London's British Museum, from September 2026 to July 2027.

Its first U.K. outing in almost 1,000 years will testify to the warming latest chapter in ties across the English Channel that chilled with the U.K.'s acrimonious departure from the European Union in 2020. The loan was announced in July when French President Emmanuel Macron became the first EU head of state to pay a state visit to the U.K. since Brexit.

Bayeux Museum curator Antoine Verney says the cross-Channel trip will be a home-coming of sorts for the tapestry, because historians widely believe that it was embroidered in England, using woolen threads on linen canvas, and because William's victory at the Battle of Hastings was such a major juncture in English history, seared into the U.K.'s collective consciousness.

"For the British, the date — the only date — that all of them know is 1066," Verney said in an interview with The Associated Press.

A trip not without risks

Moving an artwork so unwieldy — made from nine pieces of linen fabric stitched together and showing 626 characters, 37 buildings, 41 ships and 202 horses and mules in a total of 58 scenes — is further complicated by its great age and the wear-and-tear of time.

"There is always a risk. The goal is for those risks to be as carefully calculated as possible," said Verney, the curator.

Believed to have been commissioned by Bishop Odo, William the Conqueror's half-brother, to decorate a new cathedral in Bayeux in 1077, the treasure is thought to have remained there, mostly stored in a wooden chest and almost unknown, for seven centuries, surviving the French Revolution, fires and other perils.

Since then, only twice is the embroidery known to have been exhibited outside of the Normandy city: Napoleon Bonaparte had it shown off in Paris' Louvre Museum from late 1803 to early 1804. During World War II, it was displayed again in the Louvre in late 1944, after Allied forces that had landed in Normandy on D-Day, June 6th, of that year had fought onward to Paris and liberated it.

The work, seen by more than 15 million visitors in its Bayeux museum since 1983, "has the unique characteristic of being both monumental and very fragile," Verney said. "The textile fibers are 900 years old. So they have naturally degraded simply due to age. But at the same time, this is a work that has already traveled extensively and been handled a great deal."

A renovated museum

During the treasure's stay in the U.K., its museum in Bayeux will be getting a major facelift costing tens of millions of euros (dollars). The doors will close to visitors from Sept. 1 this year, with reopening planned for October 2027, when the embroidery will be re-housed in a new building, encased on an inclined 70-meter long table that Verney said will totally transform the viewing experience.

How, exactly, the treasure will be transported to the U.K. isn't yet clear.

"The studies required to allow its transfer to London and its exhibition at the British Museum are not finished, are under discussion, and are being carried out between the two governments," Verney said.

But he expressed confidence that it will be in safe hands.

"How can one imagine, in my view, that the British Museum would risk damaging, through the exhibition, this work that is a major element of a shared heritage?" he asked. "I don't believe that the British could take risks that would endanger this major element of art history and of world heritage."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 59 of 79

Chimaev wins UFC middleweight belt by unanimous decision

By PATRICK ROSE Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Khamzat Chimaev continued his dominance in the UFC, capturing the middleweight belt on Saturday night by defeating Dricus Du Plessis by unanimous decision at UFC 319.

With a smile on his face, Chimaev (15-0) shot out of his corner in the first round with a takedown of Du Plessis (23-3) in the opening seconds and had Du Plessis on his back for almost the entire first round.

Despite the ground control by Chimaev, Du Plessis avoided significant damage in the first round.

Chimaev continued with takedowns in the second and third rounds, and Chimaev's grappling skills took their toll on Du Plessis in the third round, where Chimaev landed a series of blows while Du Plessis was on his back.

Chimaev continued the ground game on Du Plessis in the fourth round.

Chimaev, who has alluded a championship fight since joining the UFC in 2020, gave credit to Du Plessis for challenging him.

"That guy is tough to finish. Respect that guy. (Du Plessis) was the only champion to say 'I'm in.' This guy has a big heart," said Chimaev.

Du Plessis showed life late in the fifth round with a takedown and attempted a guillotine, but it was too little too late.

For most of the fight, it was a complete domination of the former champ.

"Nobody wants to be in a crucifix getting punched in the head like that. It's got to be the most frustrating, suck the heart and soul out of you. Just getting dominated on the ground like the way he did is no fun for everybody," UFC president Dana White said.

All three judges scored the fight 50-44.

"At the end, I went for it, had the back. I can almost taste the victory. He beat me fair and square tonight; he was the better man tonight. I'll be back," said Du Plessis.

The UFC returned to Chicago for the first time in six years, making it the highest-grossing event at the United Center.

The main card featured two spinning elbow first-round finishes by Carlos Prates and Lerone Murphy.

In the co-main event, Murphy (17-0-1), who took the fight on three weeks' notice, held off an early rush from Aaron Pico (13-5) with a right spinning elbow to end Pico's night with a loss in his UFC debut in the featherweight division. Murphy, with his brilliant finish, put himself in a position to face Alex Volkanovski for the featherweight belt.

Prates (22-7) won spectacularly in the first round with the ninth spinning elbow finish in UFC history by knocking out Geoff Neal (16-7), rebounding from his loss to Ian Machado Garry in April.

It was the first time Neal suffered a knockout loss. White promised Prates a fight in his home country on Oct. 11 in Rio de Janeiro.

Michael Page (24-3) dropped Jared Cannonier (19-10) by knocking him down with a right hand in the first round and sent him back to the ground in the second round with a combination to win by unanimous decision in the middleweight fight.

Timothy Elliott (22-13-1) opened the five-fight main card with a guillotine finish in the second round over Kai Askura (21-6). Askura had his way with Elliott most of the first round by outstriking the veteran, but a late takedown in the first round changed the momentum, leading to an upset win for Elliott in the flyweight division.

Senegal's 'schools for husbands' aim to shift gender roles and keep mothers from dying

By MARK BANCHEREAU Associated Press

DAKAR, Senegal (AP) — On a recent evening in Senegal's capital of Dakar, an imam named Ibrahima Diane explained to a group of men why they should be more involved in household chores.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 60 of 79

"The Prophet himself says a man who does not help support his wife and children is not a good Muslim," the 53-year-old said, as he described bathing his baby and helping his wife with other duties.

Some of the 14 men chuckled, not quite sold. Others applauded.

Diane was taking part in a "school for husbands," a United Nations-backed initiative where respected male community members learn about "positive masculinity" in health and social issues and promote them in their communities.

In Senegal, as in many other West African countries with large rural or conservative populations, men often have the final say in major household decisions, including ones related to health.

Women may need their permission for life-changing decisions on accessing family planning or other reproductive health services, along with hospital deliveries or prenatal care.

Following his sessions at the school for husbands, Diane regularly holds sermons during Friday prayers where he discusses issues around gender and reproductive health, from gender-based violence to fighting stigma around HIV.

"Many women appreciate my sermons," he said. "They say their husbands' behavior changed since they attended them." He said some men have told him the sermons inspired them to become more caring husbands and fathers.

Habib Diallo, a 60-year-old former army commando, said attending the sermons and discussions with the imam taught him about the risks of home births.

"When my son's wife was pregnant, I encouraged him to take her to the hospital for the delivery," Diallo said. "At first, he was hesitant. He worried about the cost and didn't trust the hospital. But when I explained how much safer it would be for both his wife and the baby, he agreed."

No more barking orders

The program launched in Senegal in 2011 but in recent years has caught the attention of the Ministry of Women, Family, Gender and Child Protection, which sees it an effective strategy to combat maternal and infant mortality.

"Without men's involvement, attitudes around maternal health won't change," said 54-year-old Aida Diouf, a female health worker who collaborates with the program. Many husbands prefer their wives not be treated by male health workers, she said.

The classes for husbands follow similar efforts in other African countries, particularly Niger, Togo, and Burkina Faso, where the United Nations Population Fund says it improved women's access to reproductive health services by increasing male involvement, growing the use of contraceptives by both men and women and expanding access to prenatal care and skilled birth attendants.

Discussions for men also have focused on girls' rights, equality and the harmful effects of female genital mutilation.

The program now operates over 20 schools in Senegal, and over 300 men have been trained.

In some communities, men who once enforced patriarchal norms now promote gender equality, which has led to a reduction in the number of forced marriages and more acceptance of family planning, according to Senegal's ministry of gender.

Men join the groups after being recruited based on trust, leadership and commitment. Candidates must be married, respected locally and supportive of women's health and rights.

After training, the men act as peer educators, visiting homes and hosting informal talks.

"My husband used to not do much around the house, just bark orders. Now he actually cooks and helps out with daily tasks," said Khary Ndeye, 52.

Still too many dying in childbirth

While maternal and infant deaths in Senegal have declined over the past decade, experts say it still has a long way to go. It recorded 237 maternal deaths for every 100,000 live births in 2023, while 21 newborns out of every 1,000 died within their first month. The U.N. globally wants to reduce maternal deaths to 70 deaths per 100,000 live births and newborn deaths to under 12 per 1,000 by 2030.

One key problem was that many women have been giving birth at home, said El Hadj Malick, one of the Senegal program's coordinators.

"By educating men about the importance of supporting their wives during pregnancy, taking them to the hospital and helping with domestic work at home, you're protecting people's health," Malick said.

He said he still experiences difficulty changing mindsets on some issues.

"When we just talk to them about gender, there is sometimes tension because it's seen as something abstract or even foreign," Malick said. Some men mistakenly believe such talk will promote LGBTQ+ issues, which remain largely taboo in much of West Africa.

"But when we focus on women's right to be healthy, it puts a human face on the concept and its becomes universal," Malick said.

Mistrust and fear: The complex story behind strained Syria-Lebanon relations

By BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — A lot has happened in just a year on both sides of the Lebanon-Syria border. A lightning offensive by Islamist insurgents in Syria toppled longtime autocrat Bashar Assad and brought a new government in place in Damascus.

In Lebanon, a bruising war with Israel dealt a serious blow to Hezbollah — the Iran-backed and Assad-allied Shiite Lebanese militant group that had until recently been a powerful force in the Middle East — and a U.S.-negotiated deal has brought a fragile ceasefire.

Still, even after the fall of the 54-year Assad family rule, relations between Beirut and Damascus remain tense — as they have been for decades past, with Syria long failing to treat its smaller neighbor as a sovereign nation.

Recent skirmishes along the border have killed and wounded several people, both fighters and civilians, including a four-year-old Lebanese girl. Beirut and Damascus have somewhat coordinated on border security, but attempts to reset political relations have been slow. Despite visits to Syria by two heads of Lebanon's government, no Syrian official has visited Lebanon.

Here is what's behind the complicated relations.

A coldness that goes way back

Many Syrians have resented Hezbollah for wading into Syria's civil war in defense of Assad's government. Assad's fall sent them home, but many Lebanese now fear cross-border attacks by Syria's Islamic militants.

There are new restrictions on Lebanese entering Syria, and Lebanon has maintained tough restrictions on Syrians entering Lebanon.

The Lebanese also fear that Damascus could try to bring Lebanon under a new Syrian tutelage.

Syrians have long seen Lebanon as a staging ground for anti-Syria activities, including hosting opposition figures before Hafez Assad — Bashar Assad's father — ascended to power in a bloodless 1970 coup.

In 1976, Assad senior sent his troops to Lebanon, allegedly to bring peace as Lebanon was hurtling into a civil war that lasted until 1990. Once that ended, Syrian forces — much like a colonial power — remained in Lebanon for another 15 years.

A signature of the Assad family rule, Syria's dreaded security agents disappeared and tortured dissidents to keep the country under their control. They did the same in Lebanon.

"Syrians feel that Lebanon is the main gateway for conspiracies against them," says Lebanese political analyst Ali Hamadeh.

Turbulent times

It took until 2008 for the two countries to agree to open diplomatic missions, marking Syria's first official recognition of Lebanon as an independent state since it gained independence from France in 1943.

The move came after the 2005 truck-bombing assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri that many blamed on Damascus. Two months later, Syria pulled its troops out of Lebanon under international pressure, ending 29 years of near-complete domination of its neighbor.

When Syria's own civil war erupted in 2011, hundreds of thousands of Syrians fled across the border, making crisis-hit Lebanon the host of the highest per capita population of refugees in the world. Once in

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 62 of 79

Lebanon, the refugees complained about discrimination, including curfews for Syrian citizens in some areas. Hezbollah, meanwhile, rushed thousands of its fighters into Syria in 2013 to shore up Assad, worried that its supply lines from Iran could dry up.

And as much as the Lebanese are divided over their country's internal politics, Syria's war divided them further into those supporting Assad's government and those opposing it.

Distrust and deadlock

A key obstacle to warming relations has been the fate of about 2,000 Syrians in Lebanese prisons, including some 800 held over attacks and shootings, many without trial. Damascus is asking Beirut to hand them over to continue their prison terms in Syria, but Lebanese judicial officials say Beirut won't release any attackers and that each must be studied and resolved separately.

In July, family members of the detainees rallied along a border crossing, demanding their relatives be freed. The protest came amid reports that Syrian troops could deploy foreign fighters in Lebanon, which Damascus officials denied.

Another obstacle is Lebanon's demand that Syrian refugees go back home now that Assad is gone. About 716,000 Syrian refugees are registered with the U.N. refugee agency, while hundreds of thousands more are unregistered in Lebanon, which has a population of about 5 million.

Syria is also demanding the return of billions of dollars worth of deposits of Syrians trapped in Lebanese banks since Lebanon's historic financial meltdown in 2019.

The worst post-Assad border skirmishes came in mid-March, when Syrian authorities said Hezbollah members crossed the border and kidnapped and killed three Syrian soldiers. The Lebanese government and army said the clash was between smugglers and that Hezbollah wasn't involved.

Days later, Lebanese and Syrian defense ministers flew to Saudi Arabia and signed an agreement on border demarcation and boosting their coordination.

In July, rumors spread in Lebanon, claiming the northern city of Tripoli would be given to Syria in return for Syria giving up the Golan Heights to Israel. And though officials dismissed the rumors, they illustrate the level of distrust between the neighbors.

Beirut was also angered by Syria's appointment this year of a Lebanese army officer — Abdullah Shehadeh, who defected in 2014 from Lebanon to join Syrian insurgents — as the head of security in Syria's central province of Homs that borders northeastern Lebanon.

In Syria, few were aware of Shehadeh's real name — he was simply known by his nom de guerre, Abu Youssef the Lebanese. Syrian security officials confirmed the appointment.

What's ahead

Analysts say an important step would be for the two neighbors to work jointly to boost security against cross-border smuggling. A U.S.-backed plan that was recently adopted by the Lebanese government calls for moving toward full demarcation of the border.

Radwan Ziadeh, a senior fellow at the Arab Center in Washington, says the best way forward would be for Syria and Lebanon to address each problem between them individually — not as a package deal.

That way, tensions would be reduced gradually, he said and downplayed recent comments by prominent Syrian anti-Assad figures who claimed Lebanon is part of Syria and should return to it.

"These are individual voices that do not represent the Syrian state," Ziadeh said.

Meet the actor with Down syndrome who wants to run for president of Chile

By NAYARA BATSCHE Associated Press

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — Sebastián Solorza is already a familiar face to many Chileans, having starred in a popular Netflix series and won national acting awards. Now, the 43-year-old actor with Down syndrome wants to enter the race for president in Chile's national election this year.

Solorza is racing against the clock to gather 35,000 signatures by Aug. 18, a requirement for him to run as an independent candidate. He positions himself as a "point of balance" between the far right and the

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 63 of 79

far left — a fierce ideological battle that dominates Chile's political scene.

"I listen with my heart," Solorza told The Associated Press, adding that his condition allows him to offer a softer communication style.

Should he enter the electoral race, his platform will focus on greater inclusion, improved healthcare and education, and enhanced security — a main concern of citizens who have been grappling with an unprecedented crisis of violence in recent years.

Chile will choose its new president on Nov. 16, with the campaign so far defined by the mutual attacks between the two main contestants: The far-right José Antonio Kast, who lost to current leftist president Gabriel Boric in 2021, and Jeannette Jara, the ruling coalition's communist nominee.

With three months remaining until the election, polls show Kast and Jara vying for the top two spots. This scenario suggests they would face each other in a second-round runoff on Dec. 14.

Solorza argues that his candidacy offers a middle ground between political extremes, while working toward a "more inclusive country."

"I've spent my entire life breaking down prejudices, as an actor, as a worker and as a citizen," he said last month when announcing his plans to run as an independent candidate. "We all deserve the same opportunities."

The actor hopes his candidacy will give greater visibility to people with Down syndrome and other disabilities. While it's unlikely he will secure the necessary support to run for president — he has collected a little over 600 of the 35,000 signatures required — he sees his political foray as a success.

Demystifying myths and prejudices

Solorza keeps a tight schedule, balancing an acting career with a day job at a construction company. In his limited free time, he spends time visiting Congress, talking with members of the Parliament and meeting with constituents to promote his campaign.

On the streets of Huechuraba, a quiet and green neighborhood in the northern part of Chile's capital, Solorza is often greeted by supporters, fans, and workers from restaurants and cafés where he is a regular. Always smiling, he walks slowly, making time for anyone who wants a photo or a brief chat.

In Valparaíso — a coastal town about 100 kilometers (62 miles) from Santiago — Chileans show up at the Parliament to express their support. "Good luck with the signatures," one supporter said last week. "Let it be the people who ultimately decide our future."

Solorza's political aspirations open the door to "raise the voices of people with Down syndrome" and help to "demystify myths and prejudices still present in society," said Carolina Gallardo, director of the Chilean nonprofit Down Up Foundation, which offers support and community for families raising children with Down syndrome.

Fueled by the arts

The attempt at a political debut is just the latest in a long line of barriers Solorza has overcome.

He was born and raised in the 1980s, a time with far less knowledge about Down syndrome than today. His mother, Jenny Solorza, recalls his early years as "very dark," because doctors never provided a clear diagnosis for their son, leading them to search for information on their own.

"We wanted to do our best and always encouraged him with music," she said. As a result, "Sebastián has a very broad musical culture, and that's what he grew up with."

Solorza attended special schools where he developed his passion for the arts, fueled by music, rather than focusing on traditional academics. At 18, he received a scholarship to join a theater school and began performing regularly on stage and appearing in popular TV talk shows.

He later rose to national fame for his leading role as Tomy in the Chilean thriller "Chromosome 21." The series, which follows a detective trying to determine if a young man found at a murder scene is a witness or a suspect, ranked second on Netflix in Chile just two days after its release in 2022.

The part earned Solorza the Best New Actor award at the 2023 Caleuche Awards, one of the most important ceremonies in the Chilean film industry.

Despite social media criticism that he lacks preparedness and political experience to run for office, he insists he will not be deterred.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 64 of 79

"I know my candidacy would be uncomfortable for many," he said. "But I am here to support minorities."

Category 4 Hurricane Erin buffets northern Caribbean islands but not forecast to hit land

By DÁNICA COTO and RUSS BYNUM Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Hurricane Erin exploded in strength and became a major storm in Atlantic waters just north of the Caribbean on Saturday, rapidly powering up from a tropical storm in a single day and bringing heavy rains and high winds to islands in the region.

The first Atlantic hurricane of 2025, Erin reached Category 5 status before weakening somewhat and becoming a Category 4 storm, with maximum sustained winds of 140 mph (220 kph), according to the National Hurricane Center in Miami.

Late Saturday night, the center reported that Erin was "undergoing structural changes" but was still "formidable" as its rain and winds buffeted Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

The storm's center was about 145 miles (230 kilometers) north-northeast of San Juan, Puerto Rico, and it was heading toward the west-northwest at 14 mph (22 kph). It was not forecast to make a direct hit on land.

Hurricane center director Mike Brennan said Erin grew into a "very powerful hurricane," with its winds gaining 60 mph (96 kph) in about nine hours.

Forecasters predicted it will remain a major hurricane into the coming week.

Erin close enough to land to trigger flooding, landslides

The storm's center was forecast pass north of Puerto Rico, according to the National Hurricane Center. Nevertheless, it said, heavy rain in some areas could trigger flash flooding, landslides and mudslides.

Tropical storm watches were issued for St. Martin, St. Barts and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The National Weather Service in San Juan issued an alert for Saturday night for nearly two thirds of Puerto Rico, warning of 50 mph (80 kph) winds and urging people to shelter in safe structures. Power was knocked out to about 130,000 customers in the territory.

Locals and tourists walked and shopped as usual earlier in the day in Puerto Rico's capital. Restaurants were busy, and despite warnings to avoid beaches, people could be seen in the water.

Sarahí Torres and Joanna Cornejo, who were visiting from California for a Bad Bunny concert, said they decided to go to the beach and wade in because the skies were calm.

"The weather looked fine, so we came out," Torres said.

The U.S. government deployed more than 200 employees from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other agencies as a precaution. Puerto Rico Housing Secretary Ciary Pérez Peña said 367 shelters were inspected and ready to open if needed.

Officials in the Bahamas also prepared shelters and urged people to monitor the storm's progress.

Powerful rip currents could affect the U.S. East Coast from Florida to the mid-Atlantic next week, despite the eye of the storm forecast to remain far offshore, Brennan said.

An 'incredible' race from tropical storm to Category 5

Hurricane specialist and storm surge expert Michael Lowry said Erin gained strength at a pace that was "incredible for any time of year, let alone Aug. 16."

Lowry said only four other Category 5 hurricanes have been recorded in the Atlantic on or before Aug. 16.

The most powerful storms tend to form later in the year, with the hurricane season typically peaking in mid-September.

In October 2005, Hurricane Wilma rocketed from a tropical storm to a Category 5 in less than 24 hours, according to National Hurricane Center advisories from that time. Wilma weakened to a Category 3 hurricane before striking Florida. And in October 2007, Hurricane Felix took just over a day to go from a tropical storm to Category 5.

Including Erin, there have been 43 hurricanes that have reached Category 5 status on record in the Atlantic, said Dan Pydynowski, senior meteorologist at AccuWeather, a private forecasting company.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 65 of 79

"They're certainly rare, although this would mark the fourth year in a row that we've had one in the Atlantic basin," Pydynowski said.

Warming climate linked to storms strengthening faster

Scientists have linked rapid intensification of hurricanes in the Atlantic to climate change. Global warming is causing the atmosphere to hold more water vapor and is spiking ocean temperatures, and warmer waters give hurricanes fuel to unleash more rain and strengthen more quickly.

Storms that ramp up so quickly complicate forecasting and make it harder for government agencies to plan for emergencies. Hurricane Erick, a Pacific storm that made landfall June 19 in Oaxaca, Mexico, also strengthened rapidly, doubling in intensity in less than a day.

Erin is the fifth named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season, which runs from June 1 to Nov. 30 and is expected to be unusually busy. Six to 10 hurricanes are predicted for the season, including three to five reaching major status with winds of more than 110 mph (177 kph).

Bolivia heads to the polls as its right-wing opposition eyes first victory in decades

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP) — Bolivians headed to the polls on Sunday to vote in presidential and congressional elections that could spell the end of the Andean nation's long-dominant leftist party and see a right-wing government elected for the first time in over two decades.

The election on Sunday is one of the most consequential for Bolivia in recent times — and one of the most unpredictable.

Even at this late stage, a remarkable 30% or so of voters remain undecided. Polls show the two leading right-wing candidates, multimillionaire business owner Samuel Doria Medina and former President Jorge Fernando "Tuto" Quiroga, locked in a virtual dead heat.

Many undecided voters

But a right-wing victory isn't assured. Many longtime voters for the governing Movement Toward Socialism, or MAS, party, now shattered by infighting, live in rural areas and tend to be undercounted in polling.

With the nation's worst economic crisis in four decades leaving Bolivians waiting for hours in fuel lines, struggling to find subsidized bread and squeezed by double-digit inflation, the opposition candidates are billing the race as a chance to alter the country's destiny.

"I have rarely, if ever, seen a situational tinderbox with as many sparks ready to ignite," Daniel Lansberg-Rodriguez, founding partner of Aurora Macro Strategies, a New York-based advisory firm, writes in a memo. Breaking the MAS party's monopoly on political power, he adds, pushes "the country into uncharted political waters amid rising polarization, severe economic fragility and a widening rural-urban divide."

Bolivia could follow rightward trend

The outcome will determine whether Bolivia — a nation of about 12 million people with the largest lithium reserves on Earth and crucial deposits of rare earth minerals — follows a growing trend in Latin America, where right-wing leaders like Argentina's libertarian Javier Milei, Ecuador's strongman Daniel Noboa and El Salvador's conservative populist Nayib Bukele have surged in popularity.

A right-wing government in Bolivia could trigger a major geopolitical realignment for a country now allied with Venezuela's socialist-inspired government and world powers such as China, Russia and Iran.

Conservative candidates vow to restore US relations

Doria Medina and Quiroga have praised the Trump administration and vowed to restore ties with the United States — ruptured in 2008 when charismatic, long-serving former President Evo Morales expelled the American ambassador.

The right-wing front-runners also have expressed interest in doing business with Israel, which has no diplomatic relations with Bolivia, and called for foreign private companies to invest in the country and develop its rich natural resources.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 66 of 79

After storming to office in 2006 at the start of the commodities boom, Morales, Bolivia's first Indigenous president, nationalized the nation's oil and gas industry, using the lush profits to reduce poverty, expand infrastructure and improve the lives of the rural poor.

After three consecutive presidential terms, as well as a contentious bid for an unprecedented fourth in 2019 that set off popular unrest and led to his ouster, Morales has been barred from this race by Bolivia's constitutional court.

His ally-turned-rival, President Luis Arce, withdrew his candidacy for the MAS on account of his plummeting popularity and nominated his senior minister, Eduardo del Castillo.

As the party splintered, Andrónico Rodríguez, the 36-year-old president of the senate who hails from the same union of coca farmers as Morales, launched his bid.

Ex-president Morales urges supporters to deface ballots

Rather than back the candidate widely considered his heir, Morales, holed up in his tropical stronghold and evading an arrest warrant on charges related to his relationship with a 15-year-old girl, has urged his supporters to deface their ballots or leave them blank.

Voting is mandatory in Bolivia, where some 7.9 million Bolivians are eligible to vote.

Doria Medina and Quiroga, familiar faces in Bolivian politics who both served in past neoliberal governments and have run for president three times before, have struggled to stir up interest as voter angst runs high.

"There's enthusiasm for change but no enthusiasm for the candidates," said Eddy Abasto, 44, a Tupperware vendor in Bolivia's capital of La Paz torn between voting for Doria Medina and Quiroga. "It's always the same, those in power live happily spending the country's money, and we suffer."

Conservative candidates say austerity needed

Doria Medina and Quiroga have warned of the need for a painful fiscal adjustment, including the elimination of Bolivia's generous food and fuel subsidies, to save the nation from insolvency. Some analysts caution this risks sparking social unrest.

"A victory for either right-wing candidate could have grave repercussions for Bolivia's Indigenous and impoverished communities," said Kathryn Ledebur, director of the Andean Information Network, a Bolivian research group. "Both candidates could bolster security forces and right-wing para-state groups, paving the way for violent crackdowns on protests expected to erupt over the foreign exploitation of lithium and drastic austerity measures."

All 130 seats in Bolivia's Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of Parliament, are up for grabs, along with 36 in the Senate, the upper house.

If, as is widely expected, no one receives more than 50% of the vote, or 40% of the vote with a lead of 10 percentage points, the top two candidates will compete in a runoff on Oct. 19 for the first time since Bolivia's 1982 return to democracy.

Three Republican-led states to send hundreds of National Guard troops to Washington

By MATT BROWN and MIKE PESOLI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Three Republican-led states said Saturday that they were deploying hundreds of National Guard members to the nation's capital to bolster the Trump administration's effort to overhaul policing in Washington through a federal crackdown on crime and homelessness.

West Virginia said it was deploying 300 to 400 Guard troops, while South Carolina pledged 200 and Ohio says it will send 150 in the coming days, marking a significant escalation of the federal intervention.

The moves came as protesters pushed back on federal law enforcement and National Guard troops fanning out in the heavily Democratic city following President Donald Trump's executive order federalizing local police forces and activating about 800 District of Columbia National Guard members.

By adding outside troops to the existing D.C. Guard deployment and federal law enforcement presence, Trump is exercising even tighter control over the city. It's a power play that the president has justified as

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 67 of 79

an emergency response to crime and homelessness, even though city officials have noted that violent crime is lower than it was during Trump's first term in office.

National Guard members have played a limited role in the federal intervention so far, and it's unclear why additional troops are needed. They have been patrolling at landmarks like the National Mall and Union Station and assisting law enforcement with tasks including crowd control.

National Guard members are coming from West Virginia, South Carolina and Ohio

The Republican governors of the three states said they were sending hundreds of troops at the request of the Trump administration.

West Virginia Gov. Patrick Morrisey said he directed 300 to 400 Guard troops to head to Washington, adding that the state "is proud to stand with President Trump in his effort to restore pride and beauty to our nation's capital."

South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster said he authorized the deployment of 200 of his state's National Guardsmen to help law enforcement in Washington at the Pentagon's request. He noted that if a hurricane or other natural disaster strikes, they would be recalled.

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine said he would send 150 military police from the Guard to "carry out presence patrols and serve as added security" and that they were expected to arrive in the coming days. His statement said Army Secretary Dan Driscoll requested the troops.

The activations suggest the Trump administration sees the need for additional manpower after the president personally played down the need for Washington to hire more police officers.

Protest pushes back on federal crackdown in Washington

A protest against Trump's intervention drew scores to Dupont Circle on Saturday before a march to the White House, about 1.5 miles away. Demonstrators assembled behind a banner that said, "No fascist takeover of D.C.," and some in the crowd held signs saying, "No military occupation."

Morgan Taylor, one of the protest organizers, said they were hoping to spark enough backlash to Trump's actions that the administration would be forced to pull back on its crime and immigration agenda.

"It's hot, but I'm glad to be here. It's good to see all these people out here," she said. "I can't believe that this is happening in this country at this time."

Fueling the protests were concerns about Trump overreaching and that he had used crime as a pretext to impose his will on Washington.

John Finnigan, 55, was taking a bike ride when he ran into the protest in downtown Washington. The real estate construction manager who has lived in the capital for 27 years said Trump's moves were "ridiculous" because crime is down.

"Hopefully, some of the mayors and some of the residents will get out in front of it and try and make it harder for it to happen in other cities," Finnigan said.

Jamie Dickstein, a 24-year-old teacher, said she was "very uncomfortable and worried" for the safety of her students given the "unmarked officers of all types" now roaming Washington and detaining people.

Dickstein said she turned out to the protest with friends and relatives to "prevent a continuous domino effect going forward with other cities."

Surge of federal law enforcement in Washington draws mixed reactions

Federal agents have appeared in some of the city's most highly trafficked neighborhoods, garnering a mix of praise, pushback and alarm from local residents and leaders across the country.

City leaders, who are obliged to cooperate with Trump's order under the federal laws that direct the district's local governance, have sought to work with the administration, though they have bristled at the scope of the president's takeover.

On Friday, the administration reversed course on an order that aimed to place the head of the Drug Enforcement Administration as an "emergency police commissioner" after the district's top lawyer sued.

After a court hearing, Trump's attorney general, Pam Bondi, issued a memo directing the Metropolitan Police Department to cooperate with federal immigration enforcement regardless of any city law.

City officials say they are evaluating how to best comply.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 68 of 79

In his order Monday, Trump declared an emergency due to the "city government's failure to maintain public order." He said that impeded the "federal government's ability to operate efficiently to address the nation's broader interests without fear of our workers being subjected to rampant violence."

In a letter to city residents, Mayor Muriel Bowser, a Democrat, wrote that "our limited self-government has never faced the type of test we are facing right now."

She added that if Washington residents stick together, "we will show the entire nation what it looks like to fight for American democracy — even when we don't have full access to it."

In Trump's redistricting push, Democrats find an aggressive identity and progressives are on board

By BILL BARROW Associated Press
ATLANTA (AP) — Fight! Fight! Fight!

It's not just Donald Trump's mantra anymore. As the Republican president pushes states to redraw their congressional districts to the GOP's advantage, Democrats have shown they are willing to go beyond words of outrage and use whatever power they do have to win.

Democrats in the Texas Legislature started it off by delaying, for now, Republican efforts to expand the GOP majority in the state's delegation and help preserve party control of the U.S. House through new districts in time for the 2026 midterm elections.

Then multiple Democratic governors promised new districts in their own states to neutralize potential Republican gains in Washington. Their counter has been buoyed by national fundraising, media blitzes and public demonstrations, including rallies Saturday around the country.

"For everyone that's been asking, 'Where are the Democrats?' -- well, here they are," said U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett of Texas, one of several Democrats who could be ousted under her state's new maps. "For everyone who's been asking, 'Where is the fight?' – well, here it is."

There is no guarantee Democrats can prevent the Republican-powered redistricting, just as Democrats on Capitol Hill have not been able to stop Trump's moves. But it's a notable turn for a party that, by its own leaders' admissions, has honored conventional rules and bypassed bare-knuckled tactics.

So far, progressive and establishment Democrats are aligned, uniting what has often been a fragmented opposition since Republicans led by Trump took control of the federal government with their election sweep in November. Leaders on the left say the approach gives them a more effective way to confront him. They can challenge his redistricting ploy with tangible moves as they also push back against the Republicans' tax and spending law and press the case that he is shredding American democracy.

"We've been imploring Democrats where they have power on the state and local level to flex that power," said Maurice Mitchell, who leads the Working Families Party at the left flank of mainstream U.S. politics. "There's been this overwrought talk about fighters and largely performative actions to suggest that they're in the fight."

This time, he said, Democrats are "taking real risks in protecting all of our rights" against "an authoritarian president who only understands the fight."

Pairing fiery talk with action

Texas made sense for Republicans as the place to start a redistricting scuffle. They dominate the Statehouse, and Gov. Greg Abbott is a Trump loyalist.

But when the president's allies announced a new political map intended to send five more Republicans to the U.S. House, state Democratic representatives fled Texas, denying the GOP the numbers to conduct business in the Legislature and approve the reworked districts.

Those legislators surfaced in Illinois, New York, California and elsewhere, joined by governors, senators, state party chairs, other states' legislators and activists. All promised action. The response was Trumpian.

Govs. Gavin Newsom of California, JB Pritzker of Illinois and Kathy Hochul of New York welcomed Texas Democrats and pledged retaliatory redistricting. Pritzker mocked Abbott as a lackey who says "yes, sir" to Trump orders. Hochul dismissed Texas Republicans as "lawbreaking cowboys." Newsom's press office

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 69 of 79

directed all-caps social media posts at Trump, mimicking his signature sign off: "THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS MATTER."

U.S. Rep. Al Green, another Texas Democrat who could lose his seat, called Trump "egomaniacal." Yet many Democrats also claimed moral high ground, comparing their cause to the Civil Rights Movement.

State Rep. Ramon Romero Jr., invoked another Texas Democrat, President Lyndon Johnson, who was "willing to stand up and fight" for civil rights laws in the 1960s. Then, with Texas bravado, Romero reached further into history: "We're asking for help, maybe just as they did back in the days of the Alamo."

'Whatever it takes'

A recent Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll found that about 15% of Democrats' own voters described the party using words like "weak" or "apathetic." An additional 10% called it "ineffective" or "disorganized."

Beto O'Rourke, a former Texas congressman who is raising money to support Texas Democrats, has encouraged Democratic-run statehouses to redraw districts now rather than wait for GOP states to act. On Friday, California Democrats released a plan that would give the party an additional five U.S. House seats. It would require voter approval in a November election.

"Maximize Democratic Party advantage," O'Rourke said at a recent rally. "You may say to yourself, 'Well, those aren't the rules.' There are no refs in this game. F--- the rules. ... Whatever it takes."

Democratic National Committee Chairman Ken Martin acknowledged the shift.

"This is not the Democratic Party of your grandfather, which would bring a pencil to a knife fight," he said.

Andrew O'Neill, an executive at the progressive group Indivisible, contrasted that response with the record-long speeches by U.S. Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J. and the Democratic leader of the U.S. House, New York Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, in eviscerating Trump and his package of tax breaks and spending cuts. The left "had its hair on fire" cheering those moments, O'Neill recalled, but were "left even more frustrated in the aftermath."

Trump still secured tax cuts for the wealthy, accelerated deportations and cut safety net programs, just as some of his controversial nominees were confirmed over vocal Democratic opposition.

"Now," O'Neill said, "there is some marriage of the rhetoric we've been seeing since Trump's inauguration with some actual action."

O'Neill looked back wistfully to the decision by Senate Democrats not to eliminate the filibuster "when our side had the trifecta," so a simple majority could pass major legislation. Democratic President Joe Biden's attorney general, Merrick Garland, he said, was too timid in prosecuting Trump and top associates over the Capitol riot.

In 2016, Democratic President Barack Obama opted against hardball as the Senate's Republican leader, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, refused to consider Obama's nomination of Garland to the Supreme Court.

"These unspoken rules of propriety, especially on the Democratic side, have created the conditions" that enabled Trump, Mitchell said.

Fighting on all fronts

Even on redistricting, Democrats would have to ignore their previous good-government efforts and bypass independent commissions that draw boundaries in several states, including California.

Party leaders and activists rationalize that the broader fights tie together piecemeal skirmishes that may not, by themselves, sway voters.

Arguing that Trump diminishes democracy stirs people who already support Democrats, O'Neill said. By contrast, he said, the GOP "power grab," can be connected to unpopular policies that affect voters' lives.

Green noted that Trump's big package bill cleared the Senate "by one vote" and the House by a few, demonstrating why redistricting matters.

U.S. Rep. Greg Casar of Texas said Democrats must make unseemly, short-term power plays so they can later pass legislation that "bans gerrymandering nationwide ... bans super PACs (political action committees) and gets rid of that kind of big money and special interest that helped get us to this place." U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas, added that a Democratic majority would wield subpoena power over Trump's

administration.

In the meantime, said U.S. Rep. Julie Johnson, D-Texas, voters are grasping a stark reality.

"They say, 'Well, I don't know. Politics doesn't affect me,'" she said of constituents she meets. "I say, 'Honey, it does' If you don't do politics, politics will do you."

Pakistan's monsoon flooding death toll rises to 220 as forecasters warn of more rain to come

By MUHAMMAD SAJJAD and RIAZ KHAN Associated Press

BUNER, Pakistan (AP) — Flooding in a northwest Pakistani district has killed at least 220 people, officials said Saturday, as rescuers pulled 63 more bodies overnight from homes flattened by flash floods and landslides, with forecasts of more rain in the coming days.

One eyewitness, who escaped the deluges in Buner, described seeing floodwaters carrying hundreds of boulders and "tons of rocks" crashing down.

Hundreds of rescue workers are still searching for survivors in Buner, one of several places in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province where torrential rains and cloudbursts caused massive flooding on Friday, said Mohammad Suhail, a spokesman for the emergency services. Dozens of homes were swept away.

First responders have been trying to recover bodies from the worst-hit villages of Pir Baba and Malik Pura, where most of the fatalities were, said Kashif Qayyum, a deputy commissioner in Buner.

Local police officer Imtiaz Khan, who narrowly escaped the deluges, said floodwaters carrying hundreds of boulders struck and flattened homes within minutes.

"A stream near Pir Baba village in Buner swelled without warning. At first, we thought it was a normal flash flood, but when tons of rocks came crashing down with the water, 60 to 70 houses were swept away in moments," Khan told The Associated Press, adding that many bodies were left mutilated.

"Our police station was washed away too and if we hadn't climbed to higher ground, we would not have survived," Khan said.

Pakistan's Meteorological Department predicted torrential rains in the coming days and warned that monsoon activity was likely to intensify from Sunday onwards, including in the north and northwest.

Higher-than-normal monsoon rainfall

Rescuers said they saw large swathes of Pir Baba village destroyed, wrecked homes, and giant rocks filling the streets as the water started to recede.

"It was not just the floodwater, it was a flood of boulders as well, which we saw for the first time in our lives," said Sultan Syed, 45, who suffered a broken arm.

Mohammad Khan, 53, said the floods "came so fast that many could not leave their homes."

Most victims died before reaching the hospital, said Mohammad Tariq, a doctor in Buner. "Many among the dead were children and men, while women were away in the hills collecting firewood and grazing cattle."

Pakistani leaders, including the prime minister and president, offered their condolences to the families of the dead and said they were praying for the speedy recovery of the injured.

The chief minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur, said efforts were underway to repair roads and other damaged infrastructure.

Pakistan has received higher-than-normal monsoon rainfall this year, which experts link to climate change, triggering floods and mudslides that have killed some 541 people since June 26, according to the National Disaster Management Authority.

'Grief and sorrow everywhere'

Mourners attended mass funerals on Saturday, while authorities supplied tents and food to people in Buner.

Local cleric Mufti Fazal had led funeral prayers at multiple locations since Friday morning. "Before yesterday's floods, the area was bustling with life. Now, there is grief and sorrow everywhere."

Schoolteacher Suleman Khan lost 25 members of his extended family. He and his brother survived only because they were away from home when the floods hit his village Qadar Nagar.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 71 of 79

In Pir Baba, mourners laid out the covered bodies of their loved ones on wooden bedframes or bore them aloft ahead of burials. In a hospital, paramedics placed blocks of ice next to the deceased or comforted the injured.

According to the provincial disaster management authority, at least 351 people have died in rain-related incidents this week across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the northern region of Gilgit-Baltistan.

Tourists trapped in flood-hit areas

In India-controlled Kashmir, rescuers scoured the remote village of Chositi in the district of Kishtwar on Saturday, looking for dozens of missing people after it was hit by flash floods two days earlier, killing 60 and injuring some 150, about 50 in critical condition.

Thursday's floods struck during an annual Hindu pilgrimage in the area. Authorities have rescued over 300 people, while some 4,000 pilgrims have been evacuated to safety.

Such cloudbursts are increasingly common in India's Himalayan regions and Pakistan's northern areas, and experts have said climate change is a contributing factor.

Pakistani officials said rescuers since Thursday have evacuated more than 3,500 tourists trapped in flood-hit areas across the country.

Many travelers have ignored government warnings about avoiding vulnerable regions in the north and northwest.

Pakistan witnessed its worst-ever monsoon season in 2022. It killed more than 1,700 people and caused an estimated \$40 billion in damage.

Government forces Air Canada and flight attendants back to work and into arbitration

By ROB GILLIES and WYATTE GRANTHAM-PHILIPS Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Canada's government forced Air Canada and its striking flight attendants back to work and into arbitration Saturday after a work stoppage stranded more than 100,000 travelers around the world during the peak summer travel season.

Federal Jobs Minister Patty Hajdu said now is not the time to take risks with the economy, noting the unprecedented tariffs the U.S. has imposed on Canada. The intervention means the 10,000 flight attendants will return to work soon.

The government's action came less than 12 hours after workers walked off the job.

"The talks broke down. It is clear that the parties are not any closer to resolving some of the key issues that remain and they will need help with the arbitrator," Hajdu said.

Hajdu said the full resumption of services could take days, noting it is up to the Canada Industrial Relations Board. Meanwhile, Wesley Lesosky, president of the Air Canada Component of the CUPE union, accused the government of violating the flight attendants' constitutional right to strike — and decried Hajdu for only waiting hours to intervene.

"The Liberal government is rewarding Air Canada's refusal to negotiate fairly by giving them exactly what they wanted," Lesosky said.

Air Canada did not immediately have additional comments when reached Saturday afternoon. But Air Canada Chief Operating Officer Mark Nasr previously said it could take up to a week to fully restart operations. It's likely that travelers will continue to see disruptions in the coming days.

Existing agreement will stay in place through arbitration

The shutdown of Canada's largest airline early Saturday is impacting about 130,000 people a day, and some 25,000 Canadians may be stranded. Air Canada operates around 700 flights per day.

According to numbers from aviation analytics provider Cirium, Air Canada had canceled a total of 671 flights by Saturday afternoon — following 199 on Friday. And another 96 flights scheduled for Sunday were already suspended.

Hajdu ordered the Canada Industrial Relations Board to extend the term of the existing collective agreement until a new one is determined by the arbitrator.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 72 of 79

"Canadians rely on air travel every day, and its importance cannot be understated," she said.

Union spokesman Hugh Pouliot didn't immediately know what day workers would return to work. "We're on the picket lines until further notice," he said.

The bitter contract fight escalated Friday as the union turned down Air Canada's prior request to enter into government-directed arbitration, which allows a third-party mediator to decide the terms of a new contract.

'Such little progress has been made'

Flight attendants walked off the job around 1 a.m. EDT on Saturday. Around the same time, Air Canada said it would begin locking flight attendants out of airports.

Ian Lee, an associate professor at Carleton University's Sprott School of Business, earlier noted the government repeatedly intervenes in transportation strikes.

"They will intervene to bring the strike to an end. Why? Because it has happened 45 times from 1950 until now," Lee said. "It is all because of the incredible dependency of Canadians."

Last year, the government forced the country's two major railroads into arbitration with their labor union during a work stoppage. The union for the rail workers is suing, arguing the government is removing a union's leverage in negotiations.

The Business Council of Canada had urged the government to impose binding arbitration in this case, too. And the Canadian Chamber of Commerce welcomed the intervention.

"With valuable cargo grounded and passengers stranded, the government made the right decision to refer the two sides to binding arbitration," said Matthew Holmes, the executive vice president for the Chamber of Commerce — adding that "close to a million Canadians and international visitors could be impacted" if it takes Air Canada a week to be fully operational again.

Hajdu maintained that her Liberal government is not anti-union, saying it is clear the two sides are at an impasse.

Travelers in limbo

Passengers whose flights are impacted will be eligible to request a full refund on the airline's website or mobile app, according to Air Canada.

The airline said it would also offer alternative travel options through other Canadian and foreign airlines when possible. Still, it warned that it could not guarantee immediate rebooking because flights on other airlines are already full "due to the summer travel peak."

Many travelers expressed frustration over Air Canada's response to the strike.

Jean-Nicolas Reyt, 42, said he had heard little from Air Canada just hours before his upcoming flight from France scheduled for Sunday.

"What's stressful is to not hear anything from Air Canada," said Reyt, who is trying to return to Montreal, where he is an associate professor of organizational behavior at McGill University. He said he only received one email from the airline on Thursday warning of potential strike disruptions, but had no further information as of Saturday evening in Cannes, where he was visiting family.

Reyt assumes his upcoming flight could be canceled — much like the scores of other lengthy disruptions this weekend. "I'm just very surprised that Air Canada let it go this far," he said. "It's really a bit disheartening that they fly you somewhere abroad and then they just don't fly you back."

Jennifer MacDonald, of Halifax, Nova Scotia, expressed similar frustration. She has been trying to help her brother and cousin get home to Edmonton, Alberta since the second leg of their Air Canada trip was canceled during what was supposed to be a 1-hour layover in Montreal on Friday night.

The two had to pay \$300 out of their own pocket for a hotel, MacDonald said. All Saturday morning, they tried to look for rebooking options, but everything was sold out, she added. Eventually, they opted to book a new flight for Aug. 22 out of Halifax, with another family member volunteering to make an eight-hour drive to pick them up in Montreal and bring them back east on Saturday.

"It will be a multiday ordeal and a multi thousand dollar trip," MacDonald said. But as stressful as the disruptions have been, she added that her family stands in solidarity with the flight attendants. "We hope

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 73 of 79

that Air Canada lifts the lockout and negotiates fairly."

Following the news of the Canadian government forcing arbitration on Saturday, Reyt also expressed concern for Air Canada's flight attendants. "I think the flight attendants are making some reasonable arguments," he said, adding that he hopes the intervention isn't "a way just to silence them."

Sides are far apart on pay

Air Canada and the Canadian Union of Public Employees have been in contract talks for about eight months, but they have yet to reach a tentative deal.

Both sides say they remain far apart on the issue of pay and the unpaid work flight attendants do when planes aren't in the air.

"We are heartbroken for our passengers. Nobody wants to see Canadians stranded or anxious about their travel plans but we cannot work for free," Natasha Stea, an Air Canada flight attendant and local union president, said before the government intervention was announced.

The attendants are about 70% women. Stea said Air Canada pilots, who are male dominated, received a significant raise last year and questioned whether they are getting fair treatment.

The airline's latest offer included a 38% increase in total compensation, including benefits and pensions over four years, that it said "would have made our flight attendants the best compensated in Canada."

But the union pushed back, saying the proposed 8% raise in the first year didn't go far enough because of inflation.

Trump reverses on the need for a ceasefire before a potential peace deal ending the war in Ukraine

By SAMYA KULLAB, JOHN LEICESTER and EMMA BURROWS Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump reversed course in the wake of his meeting with Russian leader Vladimir Putin to say an overall peace agreement — not the ceasefire that he has long championed — is the next step in ending the 3 1/2-year war in Ukraine.

In talks with European allies after Friday's summit in Alaska, Trump said Putin reiterated that he wants the key Donetsk and Luhansk regions that make up the Donbas. But Putin appeared open to the possibility of halting the stalemate in two other regions, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson, with a freeze along the front lines.

That is according to European officials familiar with the calls who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the talks at a U.S. military base between the American and Russian presidents. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has previously rejected giving up the territory in the Donbas.

The aftermath of the summit offered little clarity about the next steps, other than Trump's commitment for more meetings, including with Zelenskyy at the White House on Monday. It was unclear among those briefed on the exchanges whether Trump saw Putin's desire for the Donbas as acceptable, with Trump's blunt but elliptical way of speaking only adding to a sense of confusion.

The White House had yet to provide a public summary of the calls as Trump golfed on Saturday with his special envoy Steve Witkoff and Fox News anchor Bret Baier at his Virginia golf club. The most transparent takeaway was Trump's abrupt reversal on a ceasefire, raising questions of how peace talks can proceed if attacks continue.

Trump's abandoning a ceasefire as a requirement for further negotiations aligns him with a position held by Putin. The Russian leader has long said Moscow is not interested in a temporary truce and is seeking a long-term settlement that takes the Kremlin's interests into account.

Trump says he is focused on a peace accord, not a ceasefire

After the calls with Zelenskyy and European leaders, Trump said Saturday on social media that "it was determined by all that the best way to end the horrific war between Russia and Ukraine is to go directly to a Peace Agreement, which would end the war, and not a mere Ceasefire Agreement, which often times do not hold up."

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz told ZDF television that Trump said "Russia seems to be prepared to conduct the negotiations based on the so-called line of contact and not the administrative boundaries." It

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 74 of 79

was unclear from the comments how issues pertaining to the Donbas had been resolved.

Zelenskyy has previously refused to withdraw from the remaining 30% of the Donetsk region that Ukraine controls. He says that would be unconstitutional and the territory could be used as a staging ground for later Russian attacks.

In a statement after the Trump call, major European leaders did not address whether a peace deal was preferable to a ceasefire, saying they "welcomed President Trump's efforts to stop the killing in Ukraine, end Russia's war of aggression, and achieve just and lasting peace."

Putin's view on his summit with Trump

Putin on Saturday described his talks with Trump as "very frank."

"We, of course, respect the position of the American administration, which sees the need for a speedy end to military actions," he said at the follow-up meeting at the Kremlin, a clip of which was posted to the Kremlin's Telegram channel. "We would like to move to resolving all issues by peaceful means."

Putin has "broken out of international isolation" and "wasn't in the least challenged" by Trump, who also ignored an arrest warrant issued for Putin by the International Criminal Court, said Laurie Bristow, who was British ambassador to Russia from 2016 to 2020. But the U.S. isn't a member of the court and thus doesn't have an obligation to arrest him.

Zelenskyy gears up for a White House meeting

Zelenskyy, who was not invited to Alaska for the summit, said he had a "long and substantive" conversation with Trump early Saturday and that they would "discuss all of the details regarding ending the killing and the war" on Monday.

It will be Zelenskyy's first visit to the United States since Trump berated him publicly for being "disrespectful" during an extraordinary Oval Office meeting in February.

Trump confirmed the White House meeting and said that "if all works out, we will then schedule a meeting with President Putin."

Zelenskyy reiterated the importance of involving European leaders, who also were not at the summit, "to ensure reliable security guarantees together with America."

"We also discussed positive signals from the American side regarding participation in guaranteeing Ukraine's security," he said.

The Ukrainian leader did not elaborate, but he has previously said European partners put on hold a proposal to establish a foreign troop presence in Ukraine to deter Russian aggression because it lacked an American backstop.

In apparent effort to bolster Zelenskyy's hand before the White House meeting, France, the United Kingdom and Germany will co-host a video call Sunday of "coalition of the willing" nations that could help monitor and uphold any deal to end fighting, French President Emmanuel Macron's office said.

Europeans urge security guarantees for Ukraine

The French, German, Italian, British, Finnish, Polish and European Union leaders said "Ukraine must have ironclad security guarantees" and they welcomed U.S. readiness to provide them.

"It will be up to Ukraine to make decisions on its territory," their statement said. "International borders must not be changed by force."

During an interview with Fox News Channel before returning to Washington, Trump insisted the onus might be on Zelenskyy "to get it done," but that there also would be some involvement from European nations.

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said "the harsh reality is that Russia has no intention of ending this war anytime soon," noting that Moscow launched new attacks on Ukraine even as the delegations met.

"Putin continues to drag out negotiations and hopes he gets away with it. He left Anchorage without making any commitments to end the killing," she said.

Ukrainian and Russian forces are fighting along a 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line. Since spring, Russian troops have accelerated their gains, capturing the most territory since the opening stages of the war.

Questions on a trilateral meeting

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 75 of 79

Zelenskyy voiced support for Trump's proposal for a meeting with the U.S. and Russia. He said that "key issues can be discussed at the level of leaders, and a trilateral format is suitable for this."

But Putin's foreign affairs adviser, Yuri Ushakov, told Russian state television Saturday that a possible three-way meeting "has not been touched upon yet" in U.S.-Russia discussions.

Zelenskyy wrote on X that he told Trump "sanctions should be strengthened if there is no trilateral meeting or if Russia tries to evade an honest end to the war."

Fiona Hill, Trump's former senior adviser on Russia, told The Associated Press that the U.S. president has met his match because "Putin is a much bigger bully than Trump is."

"He's run out of his persuasive powers with Putin," said Hill, adding that Trump has "plenty" of coercive powers to use against the Russian leader but "he doesn't want to use them."

"Ukrainians want peace for sure, and Putin wants pieces of Ukraine," she said. "Very large pieces."

Summit puts Putin back on the global stage and Trump echoes a Kremlin position

By DASHA LITVINOVA and EMMA BURROWS Associated Press

In Alaska, President Vladimir Putin walked on a red carpet, shook hands and exchanged smiles with his American counterpart. Donald Trump ended the summit praising their relationship and calling Russia "a big power ... No. 2 in the world," albeit admitting they didn't reach a deal on ending the war in Ukraine.

By Saturday morning Moscow time, Trump appeared to have abandoned the idea of a ceasefire as a step toward peace — something he and Ukraine had pushed for months — in favor of pursuing a full-fledged "Peace Agreement" to end the war, echoing a long-held Kremlin position. The "severe consequences" he threatened against Moscow for continuing hostilities were nowhere in sight. On Ukraine's battlefields, Russian troops slowly grinded on, with time on their side.

The hastily arranged Alaska summit "produced nothing for Mr. Trump and gave Mr. Putin most of what he was looking for," said Laurie Bristow, a former British ambassador to Russia.

The summit spectacle

Putin's visit to Alaska was his first to the United States in 10 years and his first to a Western country since invading Ukraine in 2022 and plunging U.S.-Russia relations to the lowest point since the Cold War. Crippling sanctions followed, along with efforts to shun Russia on the global stage.

The International Criminal Court in 2023 issued an arrest warrant for Putin on accusations of war crimes, casting a shadow on his foreign trips and contacts with other world leaders.

Trump's return to the White House appeared to upend all that. He warmly greeted Putin, even clapping for him, on a red carpet as U.S. warplanes flew overhead as the world watched.

The overflight was both "a show of power" and a gesture of welcome from the U.S. president to the Kremlin leader, "shown off to a friend," said retired Col. Peer de Jong, a former aide to two French presidents and author of "Putin, Lord of War."

Russian officials and media revelled in the images of the pomp-filled reception Putin received in Alaska, which pro-Kremlin tabloid Komsomolskaya Pravda described as signalling "utmost respect." It called the meeting a "huge diplomatic victory" for Putin, whose forces will have time to make more territorial gains.

The reception contrasted starkly with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's March visit to the Oval Office, where Trump treated him like a "representative of a rogue state," said Roderich Kiesewetter, a member of the German parliament.

Putin has "broken out of international isolation," returning to the world stage as one of two global leaders and "wasn't in the least challenged" by Trump, who ignored the arrest warrant for Putin from the ICC, Bristow told The Associated Press.

For Putin, 'mission accomplished'

Putin "came to the Alaska summit with the principal goal of stalling any pressure on Russia to end the war," said Neil Melvin, director of international security at the London-based Royal United Services Institute. "He will consider the summit outcome as mission accomplished."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 76 of 79

In recent months, Trump has pressed for a ceasefire, something Ukraine and its allies supported and insisted was a prerequisite for any peace talks. The Kremlin has pushed back, however, arguing it's not interested in a temporary truce — only in a long-term peace agreement.

Moscow's official demands for peace so far have remained nonstarter for Kyiv: It wants Ukraine to cede four regions that Russia only partially occupies, along with the Crimean Peninsula, illegally annexed in 2014. Ukraine also must renounce its bid to join NATO and shrink its military, the Kremlin says.

After Alaska, Trump appeared to echo the Kremlin's position on a ceasefire, posting on social media that after he spoke to Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and European leaders, "it was determined by all that the best way to end the horrific war between Russia and Ukraine is to go directly to a Peace Agreement, which would end the war, and not a mere Ceasefire Agreement, which often times do not hold up."

In a statement after the Trump call, the European leaders did not address whether a peace deal was preferable to a ceasefire.

The summit took place a week after a deadline Trump gave the Kremlin to stop the war or face additional sanctions on its exports of oil in the form of secondary tariffs on countries buying it.

Trump already imposed those tariffs on India, and if applied to others, Russian revenues "would probably be impacted very badly and very quickly," said Chris Weafer, CEO of Macro-Advisory Ltd. consultancy.

In the days before Alaska, Trump also threatened unspecified "very severe consequences" if Putin does not agree to stop the war. But whether those consequences will materialize remains unclear. Asked about that in a post-summit interview with Fox News Channel, Trump said he doesn't need "to think about that right now," and suggested he might revisit the idea in "two weeks or three weeks or something."

More pressure on Ukraine

In a statement after the summit, Putin claimed the two leaders had hammered out an "understanding" on Ukraine and warned Europe not to "torpedo the nascent progress." But Trump said "there's no deal until there's a deal."

In his Fox interview, Trump insisted the onus going forward might be on Zelenskyy "to get it done," but said there would also be some involvement from European nations.

Zelenskyy will meet Trump at the White House on Monday. Both raised the possibility of a trilateral summit with Putin, but Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov said it wasn't discussed in Alaska. The Kremlin has long maintained that Putin would only meet Zelenskyy in the final stages of peace talks.

"Trump now appears to be shifting responsibility towards Kyiv and Europe, while still keeping a role for himself," Tatiana Stanovaya of the Carnegie Russia and Eurasia Center wrote on X.

Fiona Hill, a senior adviser on Russia to Trump during his first administration, told AP that he has met his match because "Putin is a much bigger bully."

Trump wants to be the negotiator of "a big real estate deal between Russia and Ukraine," she said, but in his mind he can "apply real pressure" only to one side — Kyiv.

Hill said she expects Trump to tell Zelenskyy that "you're really going to have to make a deal" with Putin because Trump wants the conflict off his plate and is not prepared to put pressure on the Russian president.

Far from the summit venue and its backdrop saying "Pursuing Peace," Russia continued to bombard Ukraine and make incremental advances on the over 600-mile (1,000-kilometer) front.

Russia fired a ballistic missile and 85 drones overnight. Ukraine shot down or intercepted 61 drones, its air force said. Front-line areas of Sumy, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk and Chernihiv were attacked.

Russia's Defense Ministry said it had taken control of the village of Kolodyazi in the Donetsk region, along with Vorone in the Dnipropetrovsk region. Ukraine did not comment on the claims. Russian forces are closing in on the strongholds of Pokrovsk and Kostiantynivka in the Donetsk region, which Moscow illegally annexed in 2022 but still only partially controls.

"Unless Mr. Putin is absolutely convinced that he cannot win militarily, the fighting is not going to stop," said Bristow, the former ambassador. "That's the big takeaway from the Anchorage summit."

100 days of Pope Leo XIV: A calm papacy that avoids polemics is coming into focus

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — When Pope Leo XIV surprised tens of thousands of young people at a recent Holy Year celebration with an impromptu popemobile romp around St. Peter's Square, it almost seemed as if some of the informal spontaneity that characterized Pope Francis' 12-year papacy had returned to the Vatican.

But the message Leo delivered that night was all his own: In seamless English, Spanish and Italian, Leo told the young people that they were the "salt of the Earth, the light of the world." He urged them to spread their hope, faith in Christ and their cries of peace wherever they go.

As Robert Prevost marks his 100th day as Pope Leo this weekend, the contours of his pontificate have begun to come into relief, primarily where he shows continuity with Francis and where he signals change. Perhaps the biggest takeaway is that after 12 sometimes turbulent years under Francis, a certain calm and reserve have returned to the papacy.

Leo seems eager above all to avoid polemics or making the papacy about himself, and wants instead to focus on Christ and peace.

That seems exactly what many Catholic faithful want, and may respond to what today's church needs.

"He's been very direct and forthright ... but he's not doing spontaneous press hits," said Kevin Hughes, chair of theology and religious studies at Leo's alma mater, Villanova University. Leo has a different style than Francis, and that has brought relief to many, Hughes said in a telephone interview.

"Even those who really loved Pope Francis always kind of held their breath a little bit: You didn't know what was going to come out next or what he was going to do," Hughes said.

An effort to avoid polemics

Leo has certainly gone out of his way in his first 100 days to try to heal divisions that deepened during Francis' pontificate, offering messages of unity and avoiding controversy at almost every turn. Even his signature issue — confronting the promise and peril posed by artificial intelligence — is something that conservatives and progressives alike agree is important. Francis' emphasis on caring for the environment and migrants often alienated conservatives.

Closer to home, Leo offered the Holy See bureaucracy a reassuring, conciliatory message after Francis' occasionally authoritarian style rubbed some in the Vatican the wrong way.

"Popes come and go, but the Curia remains," Leo told Vatican officials soon after his May 8 election.

Continuity with Francis is still undeniable

Leo, though, has cemented Francis' environmental legacy by celebrating the first-ever ecologically inspired Mass. He has furthered that legacy by giving the go-ahead for the Vatican to turn a 430-hectare (1,000-acre) field north of Rome into a vast solar farm that should generate enough electricity to meet Vatican City's needs and turn it into the world's first carbon-neutral state.

He has fine-tuned financial transparency regulations that Francis initiated, tweaked some other decrees to give them consistency and logic, and confirmed Francis in deciding to declare one of the 19th century's most influential saints, John Henry Newman, a "doctor" of the church.

But he hasn't granted any sit-down, tell-all interviews or made headline-grabbing, off-the-cuff comments like his predecessor did. He hasn't made any major appointments, including to fill his old job, or taken any big trips.

In marking the 80th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki last week, he had a chance to match Francis' novel declaration that the mere possession of nuclear weapons was "immoral." But he didn't.

Compared to President Donald Trump, the other American world leader who took office in 2025 with a flurry of Sharpie-penned executive decrees, Leo has eased into his new job slowly, deliberately and quietly, almost trying not to draw attention to himself.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 78 of 79

At 69, he seems to know that he has time on his side, and that after Francis' revolutionary papacy, the church might need a bit of a breather. One Vatican official who knows Leo said he expects his papacy will have the effect of a "calming rain" on the church.

Maria Isabel Ibarcena Cuarite, a Peruvian member of a Catholic charismatic group, said it was precisely Leo's quiet emphasis on church traditions, its sacraments and love of Christ, that drew her and upward of 1 million young people to Rome for a special Jubilee week this month.

Ibarcena said Francis had confused young people like herself with his outreach to LGBTQ+ Catholics and approval of blessings for same-sex couples. Such gestures went beyond what a pope was supposed to do and what the church taught, she thought.

Leo, she said, has emphasized that marriage is a sacrament between men and woman. "Francis was ambiguous, but he is firm," she said.

An Augustinian pope

From his very first appearance on the loggia of St. Peter's Basilica, Leo has insisted he is first and foremost a "son of St. Augustine." It was a reference to the fifth century theological and devotional giant of early Christianity, St. Augustine of Hippo, who inspired the 13th century religious Augustinian order as a community of "mendicant" friars.

Like the other big mendicant orders of the early church — the Franciscans, Dominicans and Carmelites — the Augustinians spread across Christian Europe over the centuries. Today, Augustinian spirituality is rooted in a deep interior life of prayer, living in community, and journeying together in search of truth in God.

In nearly every speech or homily since his May 8 election, Leo has cited Augustine in one way or another.

"I see a kind of Augustinian flavor in the way that he's presenting all these things," said Hughes, the theology professor who is an Augustine scholar.

Leo joined the Augustinians after graduating from Augustinian-run Villanova, outside Philadelphia, and was twice elected its prior general. He has visited the Augustinian headquarters outside St. Peter's a few times since his election, and some wonder if he will invite some brothers to live with him in the Apostolic Palace to recreate the spirit of Augustinian community life there.

A missionary pope in the image of Francis

Leo is also very much a product of the Francis papacy. Francis named Prevost bishop of Chiclayo, Peru, in 2014 and then moved him to head one of the most important Vatican jobs in 2023 — vetting bishop nominations. In retrospect, it seems Francis had his eye on Prevost as a possible successor.

Given Francis' stump speech before the 2013 conclave that elected him pope, the then-Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio essentially described Prevost in identifying the church's mission today: He said the church was "called to go outside of itself and go to the peripheries, not just geographic but also the existential peripheries."

Prevost, who hails from Chicago, spent his adult life as a missionary in Peru, eventually becoming bishop of Chiclayo.

"He is the incarnation of the 'unity of difference,' because he comes from the center, but he lives in the peripheries," said Emilce Cuda, secretary of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America.

Cuda said during a recent conference hosted by Georgetown University that Leo encapsulated in "word and gesture" the type of missionary church Francis promoted.

That said, for all Leo owes to Bergoglio, the two didn't necessarily get along.

Prevost has recounted that at one point when he was the Augustinian superior, the then-archbishop of Buenos Aires expressed interest in assigning an Augustinian priest to a specific job in his archdiocese.

"And I, as prior general, said 'I understand, Your Eminence, but he's got to do something else' and so I transferred him somewhere else," Prevost told parishioners in his home state of Illinois in 2024.

Prevost said he "naively" thought the Francis wouldn't remember him after his 2013 election, and that regardless "he'll never appoint me bishop" due to the disagreement.

Bergoglio not only made him bishop, he laid the groundwork for Prevost to succeed him as pope, the first North American pope following the first South American.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, August 17, 2025 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 074 ~ 79 of 79

Today in History: August 17, Clinton admits to Lewinsky affair

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Sunday, Aug. 17, the 229th day of 2025. There are 136 days left in the year.

Today in history: On August 17, 1998, President Bill Clinton gave grand jury testimony via closed-circuit television from the White House concerning his relationship with Monica Lewinsky; he then delivered a TV address in which he admitted his relationship with Lewinsky was "wrong" but denied previously committing perjury (Clinton was subsequently impeached by the House of Representatives, but acquitted in the Senate).

Also on this date:

In 1807, Robert Fulton's North River Steamboat made its first voyage, heading up the Hudson River on a successful round trip between New York City and Albany.

In 1863, federal batteries and ships began bombarding Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor during the Civil War, but the Confederates managed to hold on despite several days of shelling.

In 1915, a mob in Cobb County, Georgia, lynched Jewish businessman Leo Frank, 31, whose death sentence for the murder of 13-year-old Mary Phagan had been commuted to life imprisonment. (Frank, who had maintained his innocence, was pardoned by the state of Georgia in 1986.)

In 1945, Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta proclaimed independence for Indonesia, setting off the Indonesian National Revolution against Dutch rule.

In 1945, the George Orwell novel "Animal Farm," an allegorical satire of Soviet Communism, was first published in London by Martin Secker & Warburg.

In 1959, trumpeter Miles Davis released "Kind of Blue," regarded as one of the most influential jazz albums of all time.

In 1978, the first successful trans-Atlantic balloon flight ended as Maxie Anderson, Ben Abruzzo and Larry Newman landed their Double Eagle II outside Paris.

In 1988, Pakistani President Mohammad Zia ul-Haq and U.S. Ambassador Arnold Raphel (RAY'-fehl) were killed in a mysterious plane crash.

In 1999, more than 17,000 people were killed when a magnitude 7.4 earthquake struck the Kocaeli Province of Turkey.

Today's Birthdays: Computer scientist Margaret Hamilton is 89. Actor Robert DeNiro is 82. Businessman Larry Ellison is 81. Film director Martha Coolidge is 79. Filmmaker/author Julian Fellowes is 76. Tennis Hall of Famer Guillermo Vilas is 73. Singer Belinda Carlisle is 67. Author Jonathan Franzen is 66. Actor Sean Penn is 65. Singer/actor Donnie Wahlberg is 56. College Basketball Hall of Famer and retired NBA All-Star Christian Laettner is 56. Rapper Posdnuos (PAHS'-deh-noos) (De La Soul) is 56. Tennis Hall of Famer Jim Courier is 55. Soccer great Thierry Henry is 48. Rock climber Alex Honnold is 40. Actor Austin Butler is 34. Singer-songwriter Phoebe Bridgers is 31.