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Sunday, Aug. 24

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

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.

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

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

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

Monday, Aug. 25

Senior Menu: Lemon baked cod, au gratin, Italian blend, fruit cocktail, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.

School Lunch: Beef stroganoff, rice.

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

Senior Citizens meet with potluck dinner at noon, Groton Community Center

Tuesday, Aug. 26

Senior Menu: Chicken and rice casserole, peas and carrots, peaches, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Breakfast slider.

School Lunch: Chicken breast, tiny whole potatoes.

NEC Boys Golf at Lee Park, Aberdeen, 10 a.m.

Volleyball hosts Hamlin (Arena: C-5, JV-6, V-7:15)

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Groton Daily Independent
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We the People

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



By David Adler

Madison and Jefferson Look to States, Public Opinion to Resist Federal Oppression

When confronted with the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts on July 14, 1798, which Thomas Jefferson and James Madison viewed as an untrammelled attack on the fundamental rights of freedom of speech and freedom of the press, as well as the republican system itself, they turned to familiar constitutional guardrails—Americans' fierce defense of their rights, public opinion, and the powers of individual states—to preserve our foundational liberties.

The Federalists' hysteria about supposed French influence in American politics led to prosecution under the terms of the Sedition Act, despite First Amendment guarantees ratified just seven years earlier, for criticism "bringing either Congress or the President (John Adams) into contempt or disrepute." Federalist prosecutors took dead aim at newspaper editors of the Republican press—sympathetic to Vice-President Jefferson—and various public officials, including Rep. Matthew Lyon of Vermont. Lyon and others were sentenced by federal courts to nine months in prison. Vermont voters, however, were not deterred by Lyon's conviction and re-elected him to the House of Representatives while he was in prison.

Jefferson, who characterized the Federalists' tenure as "the reign of witches," met with Madison in Virginia to discuss responses and remedies to the repressive measures. Jefferson believed that "with a little patience" and "the spells dissolved," the people would recover "their true sight" and restore "their government to its true principles." Both men believed that it was necessary to let the Federalist hysteria run to the point of arousing popular disgust, but that both the people and the Republican press needed a rallying point, perhaps a statement of principles that could focus the public's sentiment against the administration.

In terms reflective of opposition strategies that resonate across time, Madison and Jefferson agreed that public opinion could be spiked through use of state legislatures, which they believed could be the most effective organs of protest. In their own time, from the run-up to the American Revolution and the Declaration of Independence, the use of assemblies to issue protests and resolutions was commonplace. In retirement, after serving as vice-president and president, Jefferson continued to believe in the strength and vitality of states as defenders of rights and liberties.

In 1811, Jefferson wrote to a European philosopher that "the true barriers of our liberty in this country are our State governments; and the wisest conservative power ever contrived by man, is that of which our Revolution and present government found us possessed. Seventeen distinct States can never be so fascinated by the arts of one man, as to submit voluntarily to his usurpation. Nor can they be constrained to it by any force he can possess."

While American history does not reveal the wholesome record that matches Jefferson's idealism about the virtues of states, his point is crucial: states have the potential and power to thwart federal repression of our civil liberties, human rights, and a host of actions that offend our constitutional democracy, including executive usurpation of power. Madison and Hamilton shared Jefferson's recognition of the capacity of states to preserve our Constitution.

Writing ten years earlier, Madison declared in 1788 that even in the absence of specific constitutional guarantees of the rights of individuals, these were secured by "the limited powers of the federal government and the jealousy of the subordinate governments." He said that "state legislatures were "sure guarantees of the people's liberty," and urged the right of states to "interpose" their opposition to unconstitutional federal measures.

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Alexander Hamilton, in Federalist Papers 26 and 28, had asserted similar, and even stronger, statements. "It may be safely received as an axiom of our political system that the State governments will, in all possible contingencies, afford complete security against the invasions of public liberty by the national authority." He emphasized that states can "communicate with other states" and "unite for the protection of their common liberty." This united front suggested possible courses of action in the face of federal menace.

Hamilton wrote, perhaps prophetically: "The State legislatures, who will always be not only vigilant but suspicious and jealous guardians of the rights of the citizens against encroachments from the federal government, will constantly have their attention awake to the conduct of the national government, and will be ready enough, if anything improper appears, to sound the alarm to the people, and not only to be the voice, but if necessary the ARM of discontent."



Groton
Area
Tigers
Groton, SD

GDILIVE



A production of the

Groton Daily Independent

For more info: GDILIVE.COM

Volleyball
Hamlin at Groton
Tues., Aug. 26th
Varsity around 7:15 p.m.



Groton Area has three new employees

by Dorene Nelson

The Groton School District has only three new employees this coming school year. They include first grade teacher Jessica Maurer, instrumental instructor Joshua Friez, and maintenance worker Boston Marlow.



Jessica Maurer, a Groton native, is the new first grade teacher. Her colorful classroom is very inviting to these excited students who are eager to learn and do new things.

"I'm a Groton graduate and feel very privileged to be back in my home school," Maurer admitted. "My students are also happy to be here and to learn the many new things that I plan to teach!"

"I graduated from Groton, followed by attending both SDSU and NSU," she said, "but I majored in education at Northern followed by receiving my Master's degree in Instructional Design in eLearning."

"I was a reading tutor at Mike Miller Elementary School in Aberdeen before I was employed at Webster where I taught first grade for four years," Maurer listed. "Now that I teach in Groton, I am especially grateful for being close to work without having to spend extra time driving."

"I find teaching first grade to be very exciting," she admitted. "First graders find almost everything exciting too because it is all so new to them. The favorite activity for this class of first graders is learning how to read!"

"I've spent a lot of time in my classroom, getting it ready and inviting to my students," Maurer smiled. "I use flexible seating in my room so that the students, not in the reading group I'm working with, will be able to find a comfortable cushion, chair, or other spot to enjoy their own reading selection."

"There are two sections of first grade here in Groton," she explained, "with sixteen in my group."

"My husband Evan and I bought our house here in Groton in 2020. He works at 3M in Aberdeen," she explained.



Boston Marlow is the newest member of the Groton Area School Maintenance Team. "I'm originally from Britton, but my wife and I now live here in Groton," he explained. "It's good for me since I work at the school, but my wife also appreciates it since she is close to her job as a nurse at Avera St. Luke's."

"I started working at the school this past spring," Boston said. "I find that the jobs I'm expected to do are not too difficult. When I need help, Ryan Scepaniak, the head of the Maintenance Department, will help me and explain what needs to be done."

"My main area of responsibility is the high school arena and gym," Boston explained. "I do substitute in other areas when needed. I start every morning at 6 A.M. and finish at 2:30 P.M.," he said.

"My job includes cleaning the varsity and junior varsity locker rooms," he listed. "I mop and sweep the floors in both the arena and in the gym."

"When there is an event in the arena, large waste baskets are placed on the steps for the customers to use," Boston stated. "These waste baskets have plastic bags inside that I have to remove and throw into the dumpsters outside the school building."

"There are five full time and two part-time janitors in the two schools," he said. "Even with seven members on the Maintenance Team, everyone is kept busy!"

"Sometimes we are asked to do a unique job that is not usually part of our daily routine," Boston explained. "For example, we recently painted the stripes needed on the football field for this coming Friday night's game."

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Joshua Friez, a native of Sioux Falls, is the new 5-12 instrumental band teacher.

"I attended Lincoln High School in Sioux Falls, a school that excels in music education for its students," Friez stated. "I was in All State Band in the eighth grade and again in the twelfth!"

"The education and training that I received there is a significant reason that I majored in music," he admitted. "I prefer to be only a band instructor, not vocal too."

"In 2016 I started my teaching career in Willow Lake where I taught for two years," Friez said. "I was the K-12 vocal and band instructor there, more than I really wanted to tackle in my first job!"

"A top priority for me in my next job was to find a position that 'fit' me, one that I was truly attracted to," he explained. "The size of the music program here in Groton is exactly what I want!"

"Before accepting this position, I took time to evaluate my options," Friez admitted. "I worked at Hy-Vee for a while as well as being a substitute in the Sioux Falls school system and a paraprofessional in Sioux Falls Roosevelt."

"Before accepting the job here, I contacted Desiree Yeigh, last year's band instructor, to get some ideas and tips about the workload and other responsibilities," he said.

"I am certified to teach both instrumental and vocal music," Friez explained, "but band is really my favorite area. If I have a fault, it's probably being overly organized! Checking out the filing system and the color coding that I use should prove that!"

"I decided to apply and was hired in 2025, a position that would be a good fit for me and for my students," Friez admitted. "I consider this job an excellent opportunity and look forward to getting to know my students better."

"I am looking forward to this coming year and getting to know my students better," he said. "There is excellent public support for this program as well as a chance for improving and adding to it each year!"

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Per-Pupil Expenditures Show Wide Range Across Area Districts

Special to the Groton Daily Independent via ChatGPT

Newly released figures for the 2023–24 school year show just how much South Dakota’s school districts vary when it comes to per-pupil expenditures. According to the South Dakota Department of Education’s Statistical Digest, compiled by South Dakota KIDS COUNT and other national data centers, area schools range from under \$10,000 per student to nearly \$15,000.

The statewide average expenditure per student is approximately \$14,200, but many local districts fall below that benchmark.

Local District Totals

Frederick Area School District (06-2) reported the highest per-pupil spending among nearby districts at \$14,988.

Doland School District (56-2) was close behind at \$14,753.

Langford Area (45-5) also spent well above the state line, averaging \$13,547 per student.

Other districts landed in the \$10,000–\$12,000 range, including Redfield (56-4) at \$11,876, Clark (12-2) at \$10,779, Groton Area (06-6) at \$10,788, Britton-Hecla (45-4) at \$10,386, and Webster Area (18-5) at \$10,313.

The lowest in the area was Warner (06-5), spending \$9,707 per student.

Why the Differences?

Expenditure differences are influenced by enrollment size, property tax valuations, federal and state funding shares, and local opt-out levies. Smaller districts with fewer students often report higher per-student costs because fixed expenses (such as facilities and staff) are spread across a smaller base.

For example, Frederick and Doland, both smaller systems, spend significantly more per student than larger districts such as Groton or Webster. On the other hand, Warner, with a growing enrollment and relatively stable tax base, comes in at the low end of the spectrum.

Statewide Context

Overall, South Dakota’s average per-student spending—around \$14,200—remains below the national average of roughly \$15,600, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). However, the spread among districts is substantial. Elk Mountain School District, one of the state’s smallest, recorded per-pupil spending above \$39,000 in 2021–22, while larger districts like Baltic reported closer to \$11,300.

Sources

South Dakota Department of Education, Office of Finance and Management (School Funding Snapshot 2023)

South Dakota KIDS COUNT Data Center (datacenter.aecf.org)

WalletHub: Most and Least Equitable School Districts in South Dakota

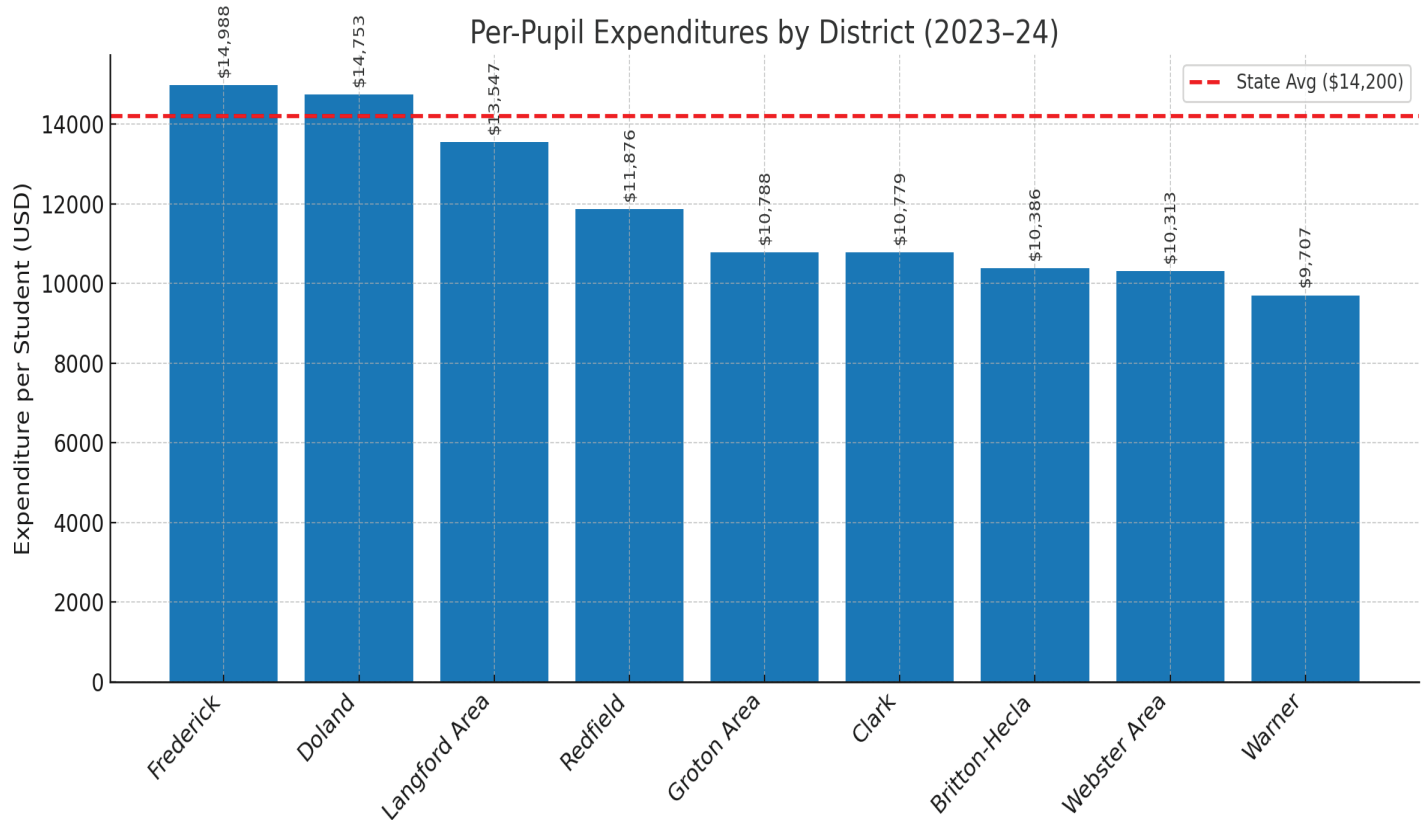
USAFacts / NCES Public Education Finance Data

Visual

A bar chart is on the next page, showing each local district’s expenditure per pupil compared against the statewide average.

Per-Pupil Expenditures by District (2023–24)

This chart shows the per-pupil expenditures for selected South Dakota school districts during the 2023–24 school year. The red dashed line represents the statewide average (~\$14,200).



Tigers Sweep Cavaliers at NSU Pavilion

Special to the Groton Daily Independent via ChatGPT

The Groton Area Tigers put on a strong showing Saturday, August 23rd, at the Northern State University Pavilion, defeating the St. Thomas More Cavaliers in both girls' and boys' soccer action.

Girls Game: Groton 2, St. Thomas More 0

The Tigers girls struck first midway through the opening half. With 36:57 on the clock, Jerica Locke found the back of the net on a perfect setup from McKenna Tietz, giving Groton a 1-0 advantage. Later in the half, a miscue by the Cavaliers helped the Tigers extend their lead. With 21:53 remaining, a St. Thomas More player attempted to control the ball with her chest, but it ricocheted into her own goal. Locke was credited with the score, and Groton took a 2-0 lead into halftime.

That proved to be all the Tigers needed. Behind a steady defense and sharp goalkeeping, Groton held St. Thomas More scoreless the rest of the way to secure the win. The Tigers improve to 3-1 on the season, while St. Thomas More drops to 2-2. Groton currently holds second place in the state girls' soccer ratings.

Boys Game: Groton 4, St. Thomas More 1

The boys' contest started with the Cavaliers on top after Carter Stamper converted a penalty kick at the 21:16 mark, putting St. Thomas More ahead 1-0. But the Tigers answered before halftime. With 9:24 left in the first half, Carson Zak buried a shot to tie the game, and it stayed knotted 1-1 at the break.

Groton took over in the second half. Logan Olson scored just minutes in, giving the Tigers their first lead at 2-1. Then came one of the plays of the game: with 30:52 left, Zak threw the ball in but hung back as the action moved downfield. When a St. Thomas More defender gained possession, Zak stole it back, turned, and blasted it into the net to extend the lead to 3-1.

The Tigers capped the victory late when Easton Weber scored with 4:58 remaining, sealing a 4-1 win. Groton remains unbeaten at 4-0 on the season, while the Cavaliers fell to 1-1. In the latest state ratings, the Tigers are tied for first place with Vermillion.

Looking Ahead

The Tigers return to action Thursday in Groton. The girls will host Garretson at 4 p.m., followed by the boys' matchup with Freeman Academy at 6 p.m.

The games were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Agtegra, Avantara, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, Groton Legion, Heartland Energy, John Sieh Agency, Jungle Lanes & Lounge and The MeatHouse.



Jerica Locke

(Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Easton Weber
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Ethan Kroll
(Photo by Paul Kosel)

Girls Class A		Season				Seed Pts
#	Name	W	L	T	PCT	<u>PTS</u>
1	 Sioux Falls Christian	2	1	0	.667	44.000
2	 Groton Area	3	1	0	.750	42.000
2	 West Central	2	0	0	1.000	42.000
4	 St. Thomas More	2	2	0	.500	40.750
5	 Vermillion	1	1	0	.500	40.000
6	 Belle Fourche	1	2	0	.333	39.333
7	 Garretson	0	3	0	.000	38.000
8	 Dakota Valley	0	0	0	.000	0.000

Boys Class A		Season				Seed Pts
#	Name	W	L	T	PCT	<u>PTS</u>
1	 Groton Area	4	0	0	1.000	44.000
1	 Vermillion	1	0	0	1.000	44.000
3	 James Valley Christian	3	0	0	1.000	43.000
4	 Freeman Academy	2	1	0	.667	41.333
5	 Belle Fourche	1	1	0	.500	40.000
5	 St. Thomas More	1	1	0	.500	40.000
7	 West Central	1	2	0	.333	39.333
8	 Custer	0	3	0	.000	38.000
8	 Hot Springs	0	3	0	.000	38.000
10	 Dakota Valley	0	1	0	.000	36.000

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Gage Sippel
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Jaedyn Penning
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



McKenna Tietz
(Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Mia Crank
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Tori Schuster
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



The girls (above) and boys (below) lineups.
(Photos by Paul Kosel)



The State of Local News in South Dakota: Challenges, Innovation, and Opportunities

Introduction



by Chase Moon
SDSU Extension Community
Vitality Field Specialist

In small towns throughout South Dakota, the local newspaper has long been a ubiquitous feature. In many towns, the local paper is a pillar of the community, often occupying one of its oldest and most historic buildings, and serving as a sign of community vibrancy, entrepreneurialism, and a recording of the ongoing life of the town and the histories of its residents. Years of research across various academic fields have extolled the importance of local newspapers and highlighted the positive impacts they have. Yet, local newspapers are in decline in many towns across the US. A growing body of literature has followed this trend occurring over the last couple decades. Researchers have examined the causes of this change, as well as the widespread consequences it has had. More recently, a growing collection of academics, entrepreneurs, and both long-tenured and newly-minted journalists have dedicated themselves not only to stemming this decline, but also to innovating new strategies and approaches to make local news viable further into the 21st century.

This article begins with a general overview of the causes and consequences of declining local newspapers in South Dakota and beyond. Subsequently, its goal is threefold: 1) To describe new spaces for local newspapers in a society seeing a shift away from one's zip code as a core facet of individual identity. 2) To present some of the new and innovative strategies being used by newspapers to keep local news viable. 3) To propose direct actions available to South Dakota citizens that can contribute to the success of local news. To help accomplish

these goals, a survey was sent to representatives of 16 thriving local newspapers in predominantly south-eastern and parts of eastern South Dakota. Responses were received from 9 of these newspapers, and their valuable insights form a key component of this article.

The Loss of Local Newspapers in the US: Causes and Consequences

Over the last 20 years, the US has witnessed the closure of thousands of newspapers, and has thousands of towns without newspapers now that had them at the turn of the century. While this trend has occurred nationwide, newspaper closure is especially prevalent in the Midwest and disproportionately affects small towns. Furthermore, many newspapers still in existence are "ghost newspapers" with a skeleton staff and minimal original content output. (Abernathy 2020, 2018; Lauck 2023).

The loss of local newspapers in South Dakota and the US has coincided with significant economic and technological changes. Local news has long been considered a "public good" by scholars because it contributes to better decision-making and provides government accountability. Yet, in much of the US, local news has seen a decrease in public funding. Much of the revenue from advertising and subscriptions that local newspapers rely on has declined as well. Advertisers have shifted significantly toward digital and social media, and much of the public relies more on those sites for information. (Abernathy 2020, 2014).

The respondents surveyed for this article report substantial challenges facing their own newspapers, and 7 out of 9 respondents report having worried about their newspaper's long-term ability to survive. The challenges they report include trouble finding new generations of journalists, loss of advertising, high printing costs, declining readership, competition from social and digital media, lack of content to report on, and increasing unreliability of the postal service.

The loss of local newspapers in the US has myriad consequences. Newspapers serve as a local government watchdog, and citizens rely on newspapers to inform them about public affairs. The loss of local

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newspapers weakens democracy: Newspaper decline is followed by lower voter turnout, lower responsiveness among public officials, lower civic engagement, higher polarization, and reduced political competition. (Hayes and Lawless 2021, Abernathy 2020, Sullivan 2020, Rubado and Jennings 2020, Harte, Howells, and Williams 2018, Nielsen 2015). Additionally, the loss of local newspapers weakens community identity and residents' senses of belonging. Local newspapers are important to building community social ties and social capital, and in facilitating community development. Their loss limits residents' opportunities to communicate and express feelings about things in their communities, and leads to significant events in local history not being recorded. (Lauck 2023, Muurlink and Marx 2023, Hayes and Lawless 2021, Givens 2012).

Local News in a New Era of Local Identity

Over the last several decades, society has changed in such a way that the town a person was born in, grew up in, and lives in does not always occupy the same core space in their individual identity that it once would have. While hometown attachments are still very strong for many people, this is not the case for everyone. People are also more likely to relocate, form close attachments in online communities, and build meaningful connections with others all around the world. With more people's lives becoming less locally-bounded, the role that local news has to play in people's lives is shifting, as are the strategies that newspapers use to resonate with their audiences. (Nielsen 2015).

Many newspapers have now fully embraced digital news and have developed a significant online presence, with many of their readers living away from the town. News sites are now increasingly designed to appeal to readers bound more by their shared interests, experiences, identities, and affiliations than by a shared zip code. There has also been a substantial rise in news that can be considered "hyper-local." Hyperlocal news organizations cater to local groups organized beyond mere place of residence. For instance, they may cater to specific demographics or interest groups in a town, or those with a shared ideological or project goal. These organizations may thus have a strong focus on political activism and may be temporary by design, or, alternatively, a focus on sharing stories of the everyday lived experiences of their audiences. (Abernathy 2020, Harte, Howells, and Williams 2018).

Some of the newspapers surveyed have strategies in line with those described above, along with a variety of other strategies they have implemented to remain thriving.

Facing Forward: New Strategies for the Success of Local News

Local newspapers in South Dakota have adopted innovative strategies to face significant challenges, and scholars have also proposed a variety of approaches. Some of these concern the structure of the newspapers themselves, while others concern the types of content offered and the role that the newspapers play in their communities.

Abernathy (2020, 2018, 2014) argues for the need for local newspapers to rethink their business models, including structures of ownership and funding. This includes investing in future journalists, tying their business models to the needs of communities, diversifying their revenue sources, building online audiences, and rethinking when to compete vs. collaborate with other news sources. Some of the successful newspapers surveyed for this article have implemented such changes. One respondent consolidated ownership with other small-town newspapers, while another shifted to a largely volunteer-run and community-led organization to avoid closure. Several of the newspapers described the importance of their digital news component. Several also described efforts to counter postal service unreliability, including by offering alternative distribution methods and pre-sorting newspapers.

Finneman, Matthews, and Ferrucci (2024) suggest an alternative model for local newspapers they term the "Press Club." This model moves away from reliance on advertising and cheap subscriptions and offers memberships, with access to events, newsletters, and tiered benefits to engage more community members. Similarly, one respondent described adding the option to sponsor sections of their newspaper to counter reduced advertising revenue.

Beyond structural changes, scholars have emphasized the importance of local newspapers being embedded in their communities. Local newspapers thrive more when their journalists are active members of the community, and when newspapers are perceived by audiences as community media. Target audiences

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value feeling like active partners in creating news, and appreciate when newspapers provide insight into journalistic processes and respond to community concerns. This hyperlocal journalism, which may act as a celebration of local life, and/or a forum where potential solutions to local problems are explored, results in more engaged and loyal audiences. (Stroud and Van Duyn 2023, Smith 2019, Harte, Howells, and Williams 2018, Nielsen 2015, Givens 2012).

Nearly all of the respondents highlighted the strong community support they have as a main reason their newspapers continue to thrive. Several of the newspapers exist specifically because local people stepped up to stop them from closing. Some of them emphasized serving as a "highlight reel" for their communities, with plenty of local stories, events, and pictures, especially those involving local youth. Some also emphasized their efforts to cover local politics.

Direct Actions for Concerned Citizens

There are some practical steps people can take to help their local news thrive. These steps begin with understanding the state of the local news where they live. Scholars at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill created a form for individuals to rate the quality of their local news which, along with instructions, can be found on the US News Deserts website.

For those who have a local newspaper, even if the quality of the paper is low it is still often the best source of local information available. Many papers continue to rely largely on individual subscriptions. Many also rely on local advertising. Local people are the main customers for many local businesses, and even smaller newspapers in South Dakota often continue to have circulations numbering in the thousands.

Many local papers need community participation. Even those that are not largely volunteer-run and community-led often need volunteers and more reader-submitted content, which has declined around the US (Givens 2012). Several of the respondents surveyed for this article specifically highlighted a desire for more locals to submit featured stories and profiles about local events, human interest, history, and other topics – even the seemingly mundane. Some of the respondents emphasized that these types of reader-submitted stories are the lifeblood of their papers.

For those without a local paper, it is worth recognizing the innovation occurring in how local news organizations are structured and the roles they may play. Whether one is interested in helping create, or transform and sustain, a local news organization, there are increasingly many forms that community journalism may take. Newspapers need not follow traditional models, and some organizations are designed to have relatively short but active lives. Journalism as both a field of study and a career path remains viable for many people despite the challenges it has faced. Some of the programs offered by the SDSU Extension Community Vitality team may be valuable for those involved in developing, transforming, or sustaining a local news organization, including Building Highly Effective Boards, Small Business Basics, and Core Strengths.

Lastly, local newspapers are increasingly in need of further public support, both financially and in recognizing the important role they continue to play in creating healthy, vibrant communities.

Acknowledgements

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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE



Christ the King statue in Swiebodzin, Poland

Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood, and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever.

REVELATION 1:4-6

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BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. In Acts 7, who recounts the story of Abraham along with the captivity and freedom of the children of Israel?

Paul, Peter, Stephen, Andrew

3. Who went to sleep and fell out of a window while Paul preached?

Esua, Enid, Eutychus, Eucyrus

4. From Matthew 8, whose mother-in-law did Jesus heal?

Elijah, Solomon, Daniel, Peter

5. In what Macedonian city were Paul and Silas imprisoned?

Philippi, Neapolis, Jericho, Jerusalem

6. Who was Priscilla married to?

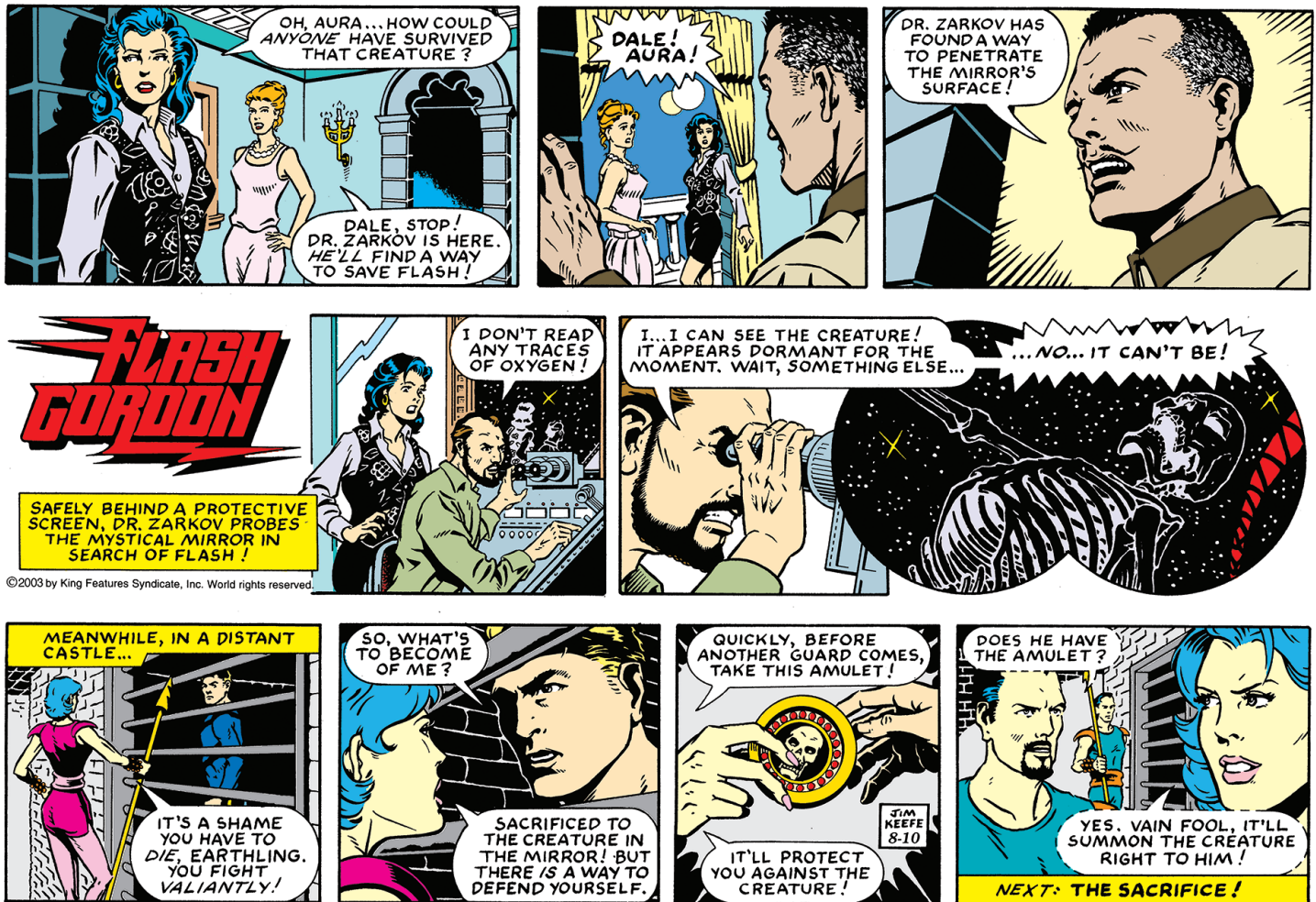
Atilla, Aquila, Andrew, Alpheus

ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) Stephen, 3) Eutychus, 4) Peter, 5) Philippi, 6) Aquila

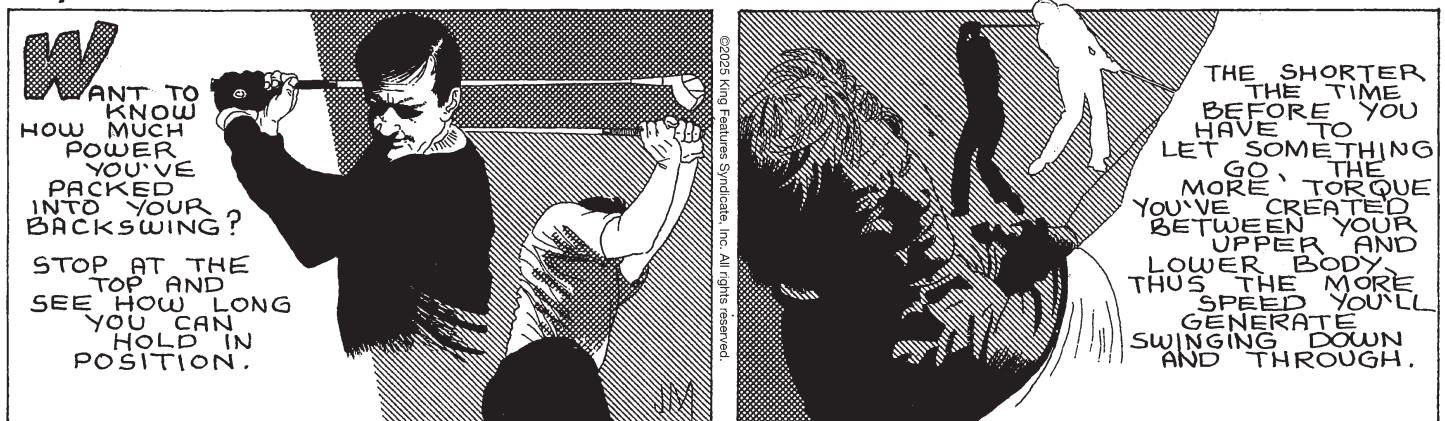
More than 1,200 brand-new trivia questions in Wilson Casey's latest book "Quest for Bible Knowledge" available in bookstores and online.

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Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



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Metformin Can Help All People, Not Just Diabetics, Lose Weight

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a 75-year-old woman who isn't prediabetic or diabetic. My BMI is 31.2. My doctor has prescribed a trial of metformin for weight loss as an alternative to starting Ozempic or one of the other weight-loss drugs. I have lost three pounds in a month, which is a start; exercise and healthier eating is also encouraged.

What are your thoughts on this new weight-loss tool and its possible long-term success? -- J.H.

ANSWER: Metformin, a treatment for diabetes that works mostly by preventing the liver from making sugar, isn't new and has been used to help people lose weight for at least 20 years. While it was first shown to

help people with prediabetes or diabetes, it is also effective at helping people with normal blood sugar lose weight. However, the effectiveness is modest, with most people losing around 2-3 kilograms (about 5 pounds), which is stable as long as people continue taking the medicine.

I certainly agree with the changes in lifestyle. In studies, people who adhere to a healthier diet and exercise are likely to lose more weight than people who take metformin without lifestyle changes.

I've had occasional patients who get motivated by the success of metformin, making it easier for them to comply with the diet and exercise changes. I've also had people say that the weight they lose with metformin makes it easier to exercise. Metformin is moderately successful in preventing diabetes, but it is not as effective for weight loss as approved weight-loss medicines such as semaglutide (Ozempic).

Some of my patients have read about metformin as an anti-aging drug based on animal data, and there are studies ongoing to see whether this is true in humans. I do not recommend its use for this purpose outside of a clinical trial.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm unable to find out from my health care provider's clinic whether they offer a vaccine for the specific variant of COVID that is now said to be spreading. Do you know if there is a vaccine for this, and who is making it? -- J.A.

ANSWER: The Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee at the Food and Drug Administration recommends against a new vaccine formulation this fall, so it appears that we will be using the same vaccine as last year. Fortunately the current vaccine appears to be effective against the new NB.1.8.1 variant, which is now present in all areas that are monitored by the World Health Organization.

The FDA has approved a new, more-effective Moderna vaccine, but at the time of this writing, it has not yet been approved by the Centers for Disease Control. The new vaccine gives high protection with less antigens. However, the specific variants of COVID used for the vaccine will not be updated this year.

DR. ROACH WRITES: Many readers were concerned about the advice given to a reader by his physician to use petrolatum (Vaseline) in his nose, because of a condition called exogenous lipid pneumonia. This is a very uncommon condition but can occur when large amounts of petroleum jelly are placed in the nose, especially when the person lays down to sleep and inhales it while asleep.

This condition can be avoided by only using a thin film in the nostrils and by not doing so immediately before bed so that any excess will come out of the nose. If a small amount is swallowed, this is not dangerous as it passes through the digestive system without being absorbed.

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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"Elio" (PG) -- Pixar's latest film released earlier this summer in theaters, and although it didn't turn much of a profit, "Elio" received positive reviews and gives us a break from Pixar's parent

company's constant remakes. Fifteen-year-old newcomer Yonas Kibreab plays the titular character, while notable names in the cast include Zoe Saldana ("Emilia Perez") and Jameela Jamil ("Star Trek: Prodigy"). The sci-fi adventure film follows orphan Elio, who doesn't seem to fit in with the world around him. He longs to be abducted by aliens after wandering into an exhibit on a Voyager 1 spacecraft, and after a brush with bullies, he finally gets his wish. Elio is welcomed into the Communiverse, where aliens from different worlds can speak to each other, and his entire world opens up in a way that he never thought possible. Out now to rent. (Amazon Prime Video)



Jenna Ortega, left and Thandiwe Newton star in "Wednesday: Season 2." (Courtesy of Netflix)

"Love Island USA: Season 7 Reunion" (TV-MA) -- After a record-breaking season that catapulted the series to the No. 1 original streaming title during its finale (according to Nielsen), the recent "Love Island USA" cast joins hosts Andy Cohen and Ariana Madix to break down everything that went down this season. Of course, there are a few exceptions to who will be joining, like Cierra Ortega, who was kicked off the show after a video resurfaced of her saying a racial slur. But this doesn't mean there won't be a large supply of drama coming our way in this reunion. Expect the self-pitiful Huda Mustafa, who's gathered a large social media following since her whiny antics in the villa, and the cutthroat runner-up Olandria Carthen to give us some of the juicy moments we've been missing! Premieres at 9 p.m. ET on Aug. 25. (Peacock)

In Case You Missed It

"Wednesday: Season 2" (TV-14) -- "Here We Woe Again," reads the first episode title of the follow-up season to the hit Netflix series "Wednesday," and it couldn't be a better teaser of what's to come. Split into two parts, with the second part premiering on Sept. 3, the second season picks up as Wednesday returns to Nevermore Academy as a celebrity after having saved the school. A new mystery awaits the reluctant Wednesday after private investigator Carl Bradbury is murdered by "crows." Stepping into bigger roles this season are Catherine Zeta-Jones as Morticia, who gets offered to run a fundraising committee for the school, and Wednesday's brother, Pugsley (Isaac Ordonez), who enrolls as a student at Nevermore. Special recurring guests this season include Steve Buscemi, Lady Gaga, Anthony Michael Hall, and Christopher Lloyd. Stream the first four episodes now! (Netflix)

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1. Name the artist who released "What Becomes of the Broken Hearted."
2. Which song has the phrase "I know" 26 times in the lyrics?
3. Levi Stubbs was lead singer for which Motown group?
4. Name the artist who penned and released "Thunder Island."
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "And then it happened, It took me by surprise, I knew that you felt it too by the look in your eyes."

Answers

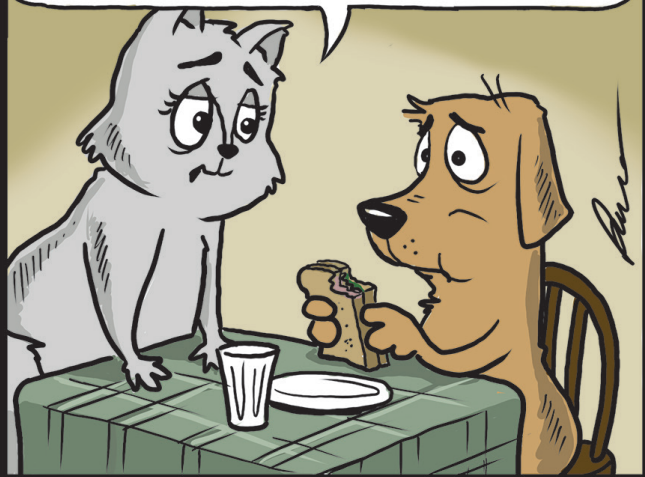
1. Jimmy Ruffin, in 1966. The song was written to give to the Spinners, but Ruffin's version did well reaching No. 6 on the R&B chart.
2. "Ain't No Sunshine," by Bill Withers in 1971 on his debut album. The repeating "I know" was a placeholder for lyrics Withers intended to write, but he was talked out of it.
3. The Four Tops. Stubbs sang lead on "Baby I Need Your Loving" and "It's the Same Old Song" and dozens of others. The group was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1990.
4. Jay Ferguson, in 1977.
5. "This Magic Moment," by the Drifters, in 1960. Jay and the Americans followed with a cover in 1968 that became their most successful single.

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Just Like Cats & Dogs

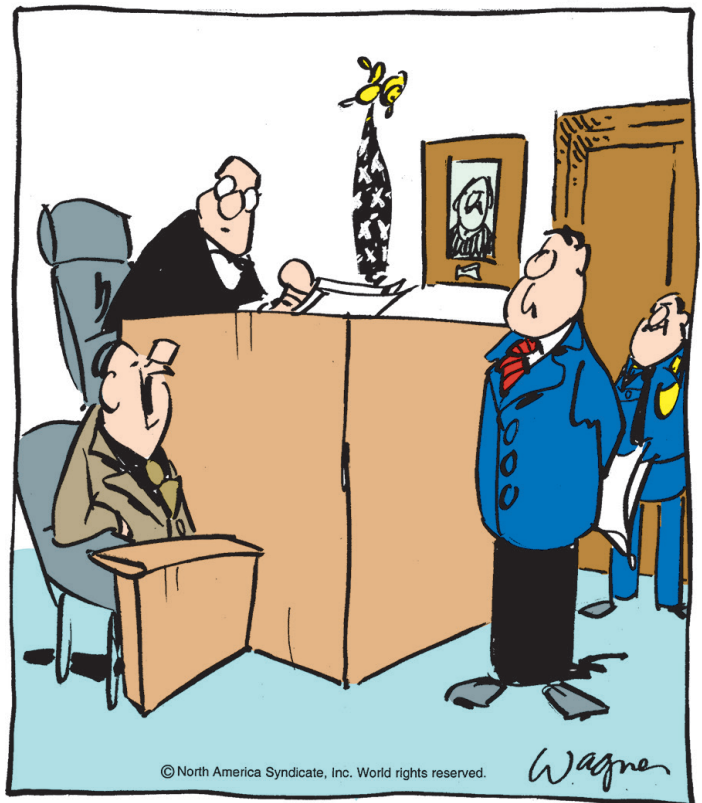
by Dave T. Phipps

PREPARE YOURSELF... THAT'S NOT SALAMI YOU'RE EATING. I WENT AND REPLACED IT WITH SOMETHING REALLY GOOD FOR YOU.



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GRIN and BEAR IT



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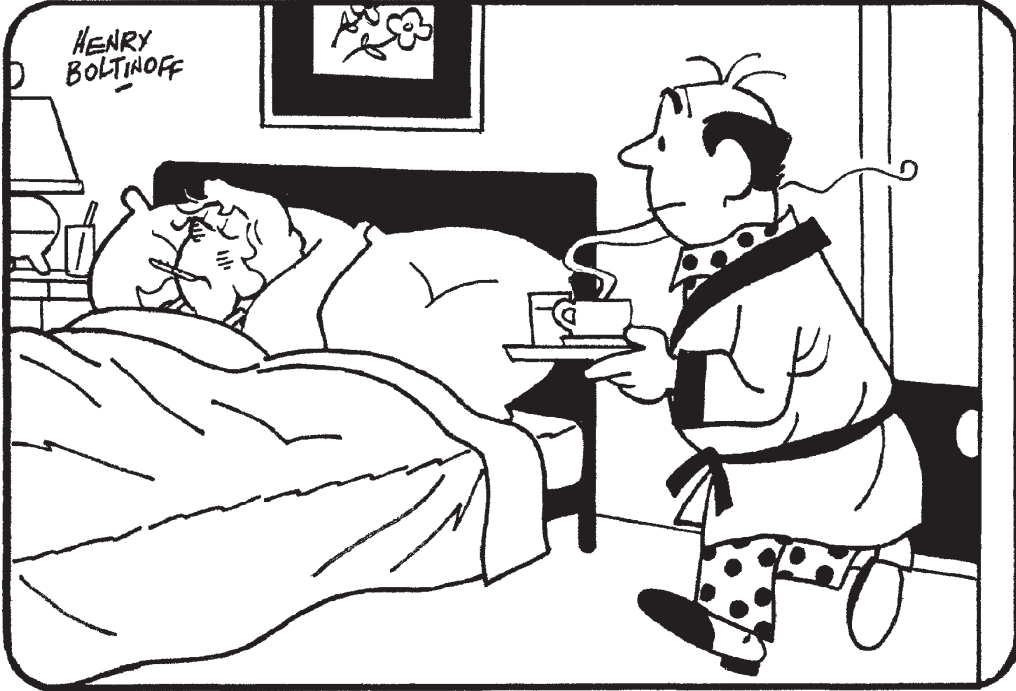
"I know it was 9 o'clock because I had just stolen a new watch!"

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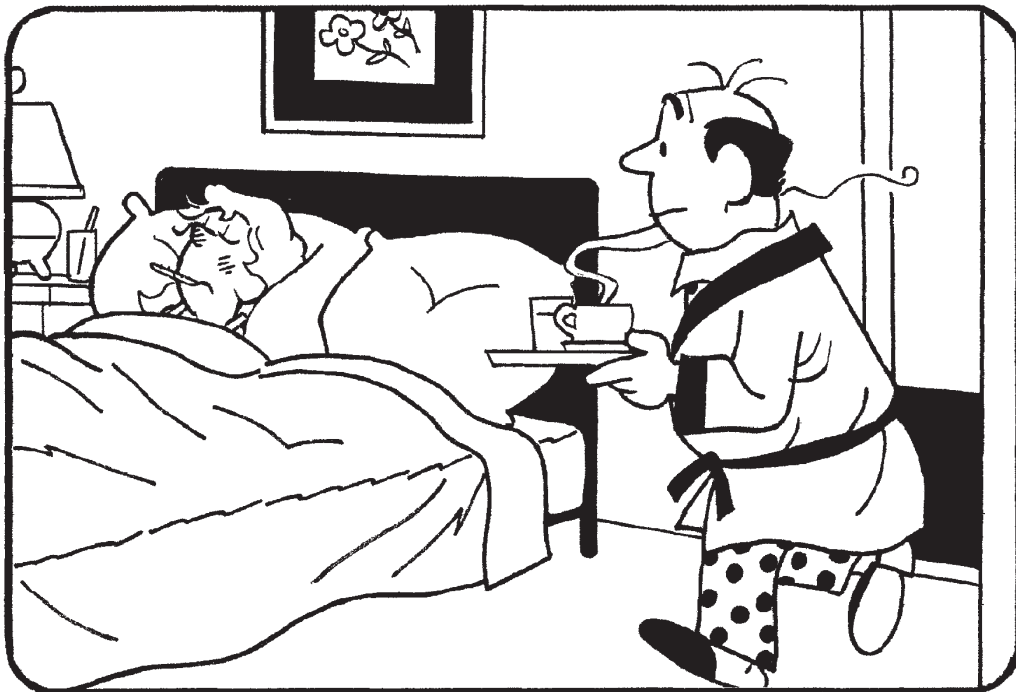
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Tray is longer. 2. Leg is longer. 3. Mattress is thicker. 4. Flowers are reversed. 5. Door knob is missing. 6. Shirt collar is different.

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* Line your pots and pans with plain paper coffee filters to reduce scratches. Replace as needed.

* To keep clothing on the hanger in your closet, try the thin, velvet-lined ones. If you can't find them, add strips of rubber shelf liner to the tops of your hangers, secured with a little duct tape or safety pins.

* If you have solar lights that stick in the ground, you're going to love this: Grab one right out of the ground and flip a flower pot over, stick it into the hole in the bottom of the pot, and you've got a nice little table lamp. It's great if the power goes out!

* Here's an easy and healthy way to add moisture and fiber to your burgers or meatballs: oatmeal. Add instead of package bread crumbs, which can include way too much unnecessary sugar or oils. The oats keep the meat nice and moist.

* Fruit salad can be frozen in small portions in the wells of a muffin tin. Press down and include juices. When frozen, it can be removed and the resulting frozen cups put in a freezer-safe bag for use in smoothies later.

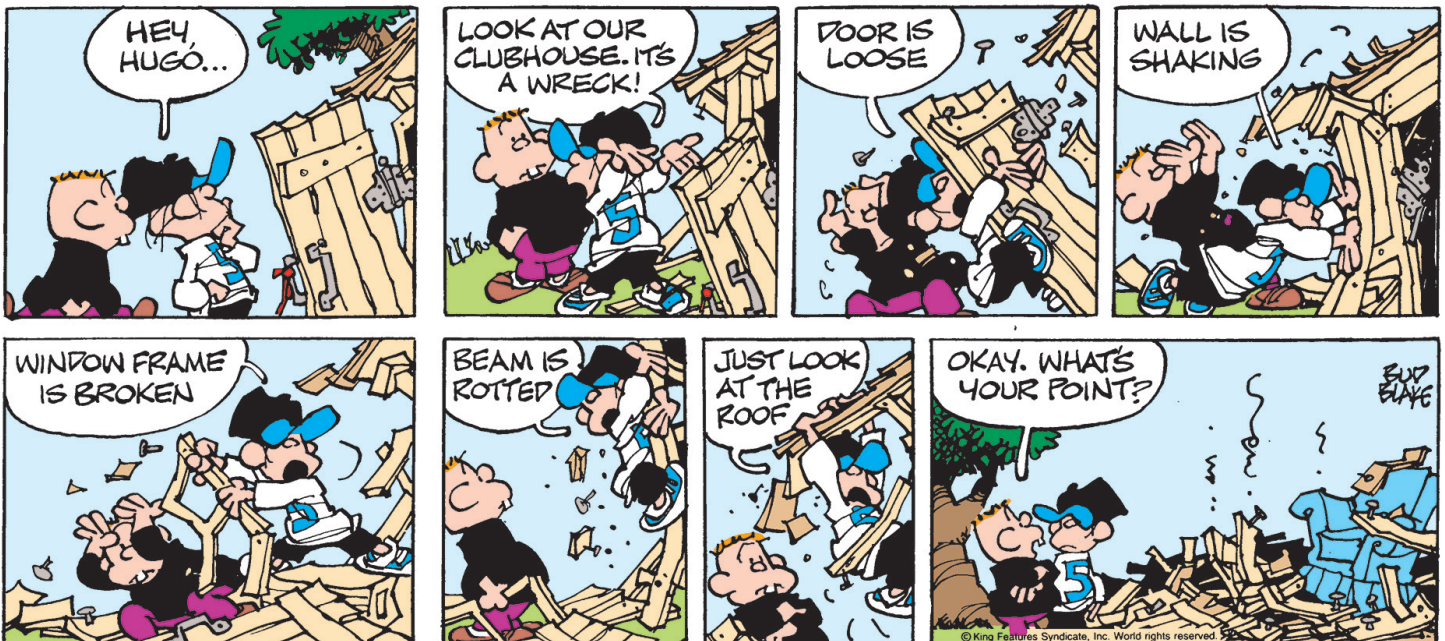
* Tank tops or scarves can be stored on a hanger to which you've attached plastic shower rings. Simply thread the scarf or the tank straps through the ring. They make a nice presentation, and you can fit many on the same hanger.

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

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 **TIGER**

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Poke
4 Sneaky chuckle
7 Niagara sight
12 Dos preceder
13 X-ray's cousin
14 "— Gold" (Fonda film)
15 Rx writers
16 Salad dressing order
18 7, on older phones
19 Capital of South Korea
20 Salty waters
22 Soon-to-be grads
23 Desist
27 Drench
29 "Constant Craving" singer
31 Places in the heart
34 Indian yogurt dish
35 Wards off
37 However
38 Corridor
39 Expert
41 Foundered
45 "Peachy!"
47 Cravat
48 Tangential topic
52 Eggs
53 Zodiac ram
54 Khan title

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11
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15				16			17					
18				19								
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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		
56						57				58		

- 55 Rent out
56 "Live at the Acropolis" performer
57 "Way cool!"
58 Vegas opener?
8 Gore and Green
9 Floral necklace
10 Guided
11 Compass dir.
17 Corn cover
21 Marble cake pattern
23 Bed boards
24 — chi
25 Toronto's prov.
26 Links org.
28 Have lunch
30 Actress Joanne
31 Sound of relief
32 FDR project
33 Seminary subj.
36 Tools with teeth
37 Whale variety
40 Activist Chavez
42 Coral island
43 Skin care brand
44 "Endymion" poet
45 Spanish ayes
46 Pencil filler
48 Utter
49 Glass of public radio
50 Cacophony
51 Still, in verse

DOWN

- 1 Checker moves
2 Tennis great Agassi
3 — nova
4 Med. plan options
5 Papa Hemingway
6 — -miss
7 Tank filler

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— King Crossword — Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

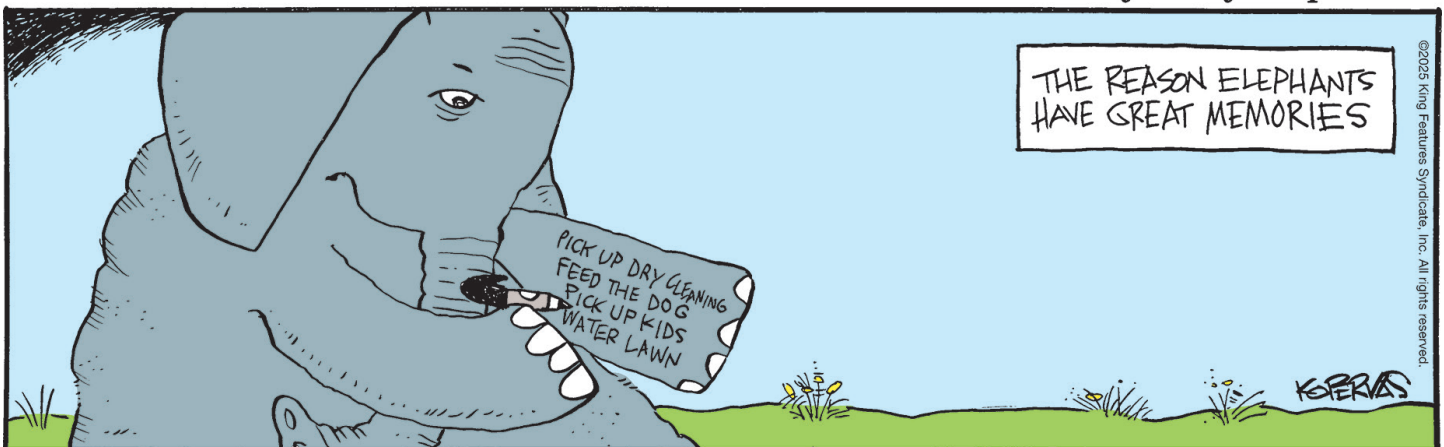
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U	N	O		M	R	I		U	L	E	E	S	
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P	R	S		S	E	O	U	L					
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			W	E	T			K	D	L	A	N	G
A	T	R	I	A				R	A	I	T	A	
A	V	E	R	T	S		B	U	T				
H	A	L	L		A	C	E		S	A	N	K	
				S	W	E	L	L		T	I	E	
S	I	D	E	I	S	S	U	E		O	V	A	
A	R	I	E	S		A	G	A		L	E	T	
Y	A	N	N	I		R	A	D		L	A	S	

Olive



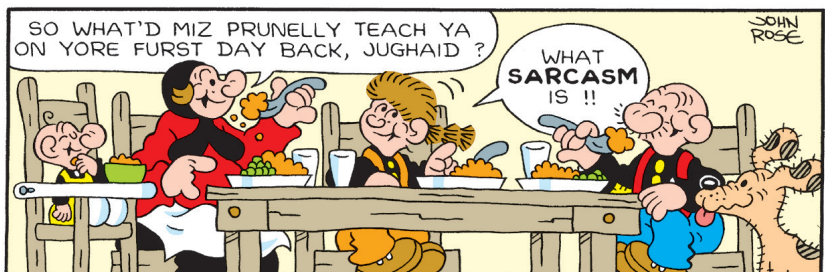
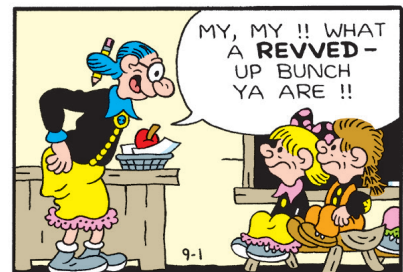
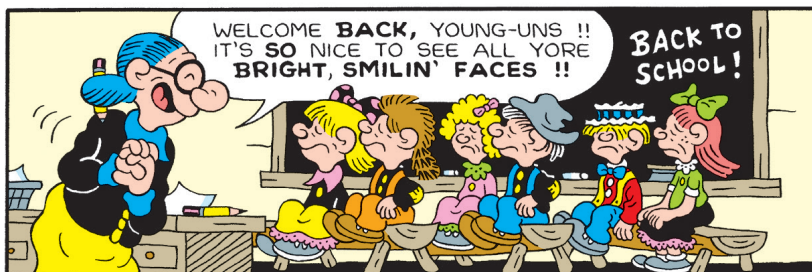
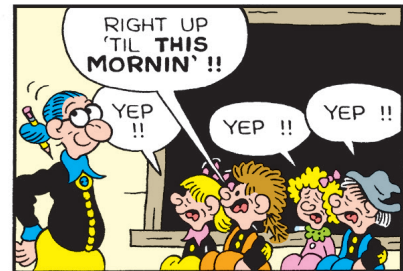
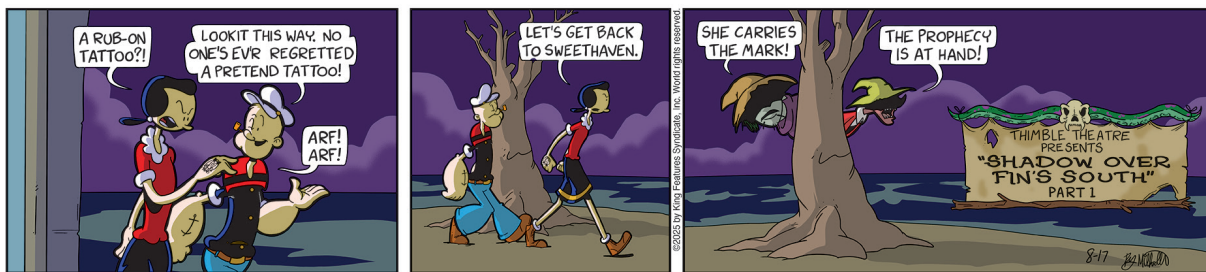
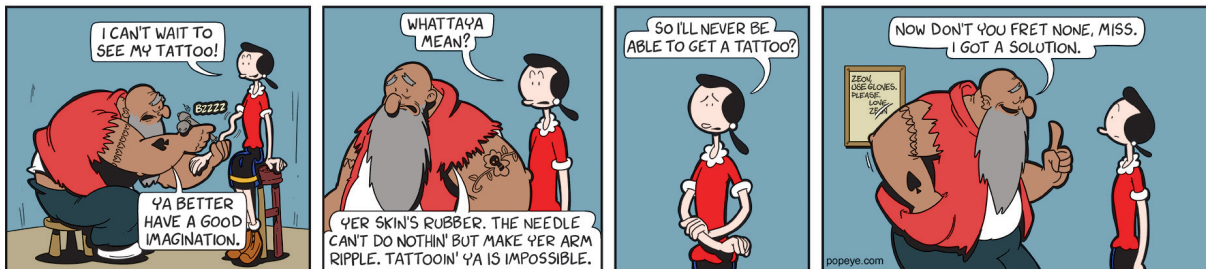
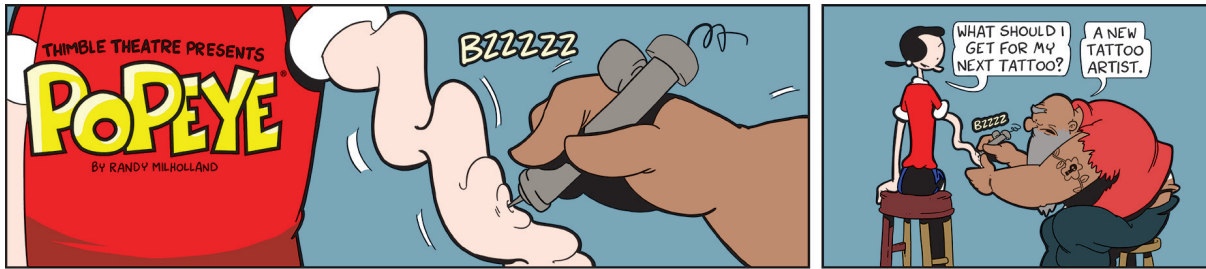
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



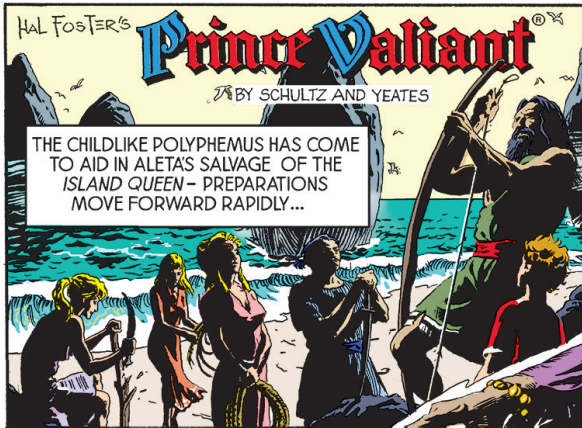
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YEATES 6/29/14 4038

... WHILE VAL AND BUKOTAS ATTEMPT TO GAIN THE CONFIDENCE OF CALYPSO DOES NOT GO SO WELL. THE SELF-STYLED GODDESS DOES NOT SEE REALITY AS DO OTHERS ...



... AND IS INCENSED BY VAL'S REJECTIONS. "IF YOU ARE NOT ULYSSES, THEN YOU MUST BE A FURY, SENT TO TORTURE ME! SO I SET MY LOYAL RETAINERS - WHOM I HAVE RAISED SINCE I FOUND THEM AS CUBS - TO DESTROY YOU!"



SUDDENLY, ZULFA LEAPS FORWARD: "ENOUGH! YOU HAVE BEEN A GOOD LEADER, THANAA - BUT ENOUGH OF THIS 'CALYPSO' MYTHOLOGY AND MADNESS! THESE PEOPLE WOULD BE OUR FRIENDS! LET US TAKE THEIR OFFER..."



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Stay updated on recalls

In the world of food recalls and alerts, just when you think you've seen it all, something even more scary and dangerous comes along.

We've had the "normal" stuff, of course. There was the cheese produced in a facility that had mice and rats. There was the cheese that was recalled for risk of listeria. We had undeclared wheat in chocolate cookies and boxes of cheese crackers that actually contained peanut butter crackers, a potential life-threatening problem for those who are allergic to peanuts. Then there was the undeclared soy and wheat in ice cream. An energy drink was found to contain alcohol because the alcoholic drink was mistakenly packaged in the energy drink cans. Just regular stuff, right?

But it was another one that gave me a chill: instant coffee was found to contain ground glass.

The coffee was sold in 48 states, with only Hawaii and Alaska being left out. It wasn't just one manufacturing lot that was affected, but three. The company was notified by a customer and immediately issued the recall. I hate to think of the possible injuries that could be caused by drinking that coffee.

At the same time, this last week saw consumer products recalls for the charger to smartwatches because they can overheat and ignite, kids' pajamas that don't meet flammability standards, jewelry with excess levels of cadmium (which can cause health effects due to skin exposure), heated socks that can cause burns and blisters, a multi-tool with a blade that can cause cuts and a set of kitchen steps with a safety bar that can collapse.

Whew. It's been busy in the recall department, and those are only from the consumer products section.

If you'd like to receive email alerts for all types of products (food, vehicles, medicine, consumer products, boats, environmental products, cosmetics), go online to www.recalls.gov and sign up. Other government websites with recalls include www.fda.gov and www.fsis.usda.gov.

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1. What San Francisco 49ers running back was the first to gain more than 1,000 yards rushing and 1,000 yards receiving in the same season when he did it in 1985?

2. What aggressive style of defense, named after a breed of dog, was developed by Chicago Bulls assistant coach Johnny Bach in the 1980s and played by the team during its 1990s dynasty?

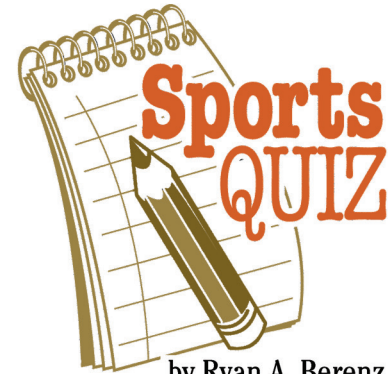
3. What country repeatedly denied American tennis great Arthur Ashe a visa to compete there in the 1960s and 1970s?

4. What member of a famous racing family was killed from injuries sustained in a NASCAR Busch Series practice session crash at New Hampshire Motor Speedway in May 2000?

5. Name the rookie golfer who famously holed a 7-iron shot from 176 yards to eagle the final hole and beat Greg Norman at the 1990 Nestle Invitational.

6. Who compiled a 2-11 record in his first year as head coach of the Jacksonville Jaguars and was fired midway through the 2021 NFL season?

7. What trophy is awarded to the winner of the college football rivalry game between the Fresno State Bulldogs and the Boise State Broncos?



by Ryan A. Berenz

Answers

1. Roger Craig.
2. The Doberman defense.
3. South Africa.
4. Adam Petty.
5. Robert Gamez.
6. Urban Meyer.
7. The Milk Can.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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Pets in history: Heroic dogs and cats

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: Thank you for discussing war dogs and their service with our armed forces. Can you highlight some non-military canine heroes, too? -- Jim F., San Diego

DEAR JIM: Absolutely! Dogs have been performing heroic feats for as long as they've been our companions. But only a few have made it into the history books. Here are a few that some readers may not have heard of:

dog team across the longest, most dangerous part of the relay. Balto, a young and inexperienced husky, sprinted through fierce winds to reach the town in record time. Today, their journey is commemorated each year with the Iditarod sled race.

Balto and Togo: In January 1925, a diphtheria outbreak threatened the population of Nome, Alaska. To deliver lifesaving serum, teams of sled dogs relayed 500 miles across ice and snow in treacherous weather. Togo led his

Riley: A Golden Retriever search-and-rescue (SAR) dog who became the face of SAR dogs in the wake of 9/11. At one point, Riley was sent alone in a basket over a 60-foot chasm to search the wreckage on the other side. He was one of many dogs who searched the World Trade Center rubble to recover those lost. Riley died in 2010, suffering various health problems, possibly from his time at Ground Zero.

Buddy: In 1928, this German Shepherd became the first Seeing Eye dog in the United States. Born in Switzerland, she (yes, Buddy was a she) was trained by Dorothy Harrison Eustis, who ran a kennel that trained military and police dogs. Eustis matched Buddy to Frank Morris, a sight-impaired man from the U.S. Morris championed the use of Seeing Eye dogs, demonstrating Buddy's skill at leading him across busy Manhattan streets.

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

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Strange BUT TRUE

* The average lipstick has 293 swipes.

* In Missouri, if you are under 21, you can be charged with illegal possession of alcohol without even taking a breathalyzer test if you happen to be found taking out empty alcohol cans and bottles in your trash.

* The first-ever Olympic Games was won by a chef.

* There is a fish (salema porgy) that when eaten causes severe hallucinations lasting up to 36 hours. Perhaps unsurprisingly, it served as a party drug during the Roman Empire.

* Warm and light colors appear closer, while cool and darker colors appear farther away.

* Chloroform was once touted as an asthma cure. Unfortunately, this would eventually result in the deaths of patients who had overdosed during an asthma attack.

* According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, at least 50% of ladder-related accidents involved individuals carrying items while they climbed. Additionally, each year, more than 900,000 people receive emergency room treatment from ladder-related injuries.

* Ninety-five percent of the average car's lifetime is spent being parked.

* Biologists have found that plants exhibit competitiveness among strangers of the same species, but are more accommodating toward their siblings.


* Left-handed people are more likely to use fountain pens.

* Tsutomu Yamaguchi was one lucky fellow. He was in Hiroshima for work when the first A-bomb hit, made it home to Nagasaki for the second, and lived to be 93.

* The eyes of the celestial eye goldfish are bigger than its stomach.

Thought for the Day: "It may be hard for an egg to turn into a bird: it would be a jolly sight harder for it to learn to fly while remaining an egg. We are like eggs at present. And you cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg. We must be hatched or go bad." -- C.S. Lewis

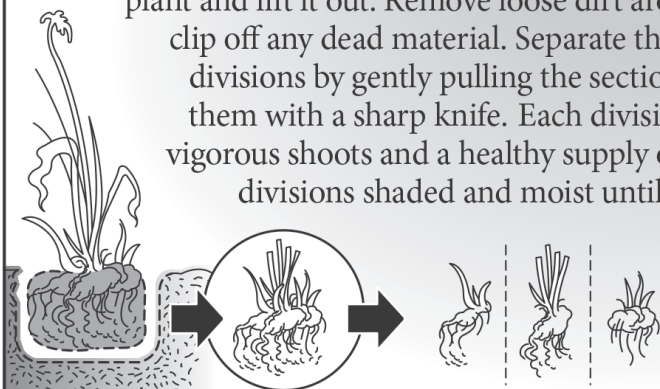
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Dividing perennials

Divide your fall-blooming perennials in the spring, and your spring- or summer-blooming perennials in the fall. Carefully dig up your parent plant and lift it out. Remove loose dirt around the roots, and clip off any dead material. Separate the plant into smaller divisions by gently pulling the sections apart, or cutting them with a sharp knife. Each division should have 3-5 vigorous shoots and a healthy supply of roots. Keep these divisions shaded and moist until they are replanted.

- Brenda Weaver



Source:
extension.umn.edu



by Freddy Groves

Community care extended

Veterans who receive community care for medical treatment have been required in the past to seek and receive new referrals every 90 to 180 days. Just getting that referral or authorization can cause delays in treatment. Now, with changes at the VA, those referrals won't be as frequent.

Starting now, in 30 different categories of medical care, referrals and new authorizations will only be required once a year.

Community care can literally be a lifesaver for veterans who live too far from a VA medical facility, whose closest facility doesn't provide the medical care that's required or if the VA's wait times are not acceptable.

Here are a few of the 30 medical categories that are now eligible for the longer authorization: cardiology, oncology, gastroenterology, pain management and pulmonary.

If you've been getting community medical care and are subject to the need for frequent reauthorizations, contact the Community Care office at your closest VA medical center to ask how the new rule impacts the schedule you'll be on going forward. Ask whether the new "year" began when your current authorization period did, or whether a new year begins right now. Get the answer in writing, if you can. Take the steps you need to, to guarantee that your authorization is indeed extended so you don't discover at the last minute that there's been a problem and that your file was overlooked.

If you'd like to take advantage of community care, you need to be enrolled in VA health care or be eligible for it.

If you're getting VA care, tell your VA physician that you'd like to get community care. If they think it's appropriate, they will start a referral.

Once you find a civilian community care provider that you like, be sure to verify that they're part of the VA's network before you get any treatment from them, otherwise VA won't pay for it.

To learn more about community care or to find a provider in your area, go online to www.va.gov/communitycare.

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Wishing Well®

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

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. GEOGRAPHY: What canal connects the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea?

2. MOVIES: Which of Disney's animated princess movies was the first to get a live-action version?

3. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a male duck called?

4. LITERATURE: In which famous museum does a murder take place in the novel "The Da Vinci Code"?

5. SCIENCE: What part of the plant is responsible for photosynthesis?

6. TELEVISION: When did the animated TV sitcom "The Flintstones" debut?

7. U.S. CITIES: Which city is known for the saying, "Where young people go to retire"?

8. FOOD & DRINK: Which South-east Asian fruit has such a strong smell that it's banned on public transportation?

9. ASTRONOMY: Which star is the brightest in the night sky?

10. MEASUREMENTS: How many meters are in a kilometer?

Answers

1. Suez Canal.
2. "Cinderella."
3. A drake.
4. The Louvre in Paris, France.
5. The leaves.
6. 1960.
7. Portland, Oregon.
8. Durian.
9. Sirius.
10. 1,000.

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South Dakota Governor



Larry Rhoden



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Gritty Infrastructure

The timing was coincidental, though certainly noteworthy. As members from my administration met with industry leaders to discuss how to strengthen our state's critical infrastructure, we were experiencing our own significant infrastructure challenges. The first meeting of my newly appointed GRIT task force was taking place at the same time as a major technology service disruption that impacted critical functions of all branches of state government.

The service disruption was the result of a power outage, not any kind of nefarious activity – but it still underscored the need for the Governor's Resilience and Infrastructure Task Force (GRIT). I established this GRIT task force to prepare South Dakota for the most challenging of situations. They exist as a strategic advisory body to assess risks and vulnerabilities and support long-term planning and investment in critical infrastructure. The untimely tech outage just underscored the need for their work.

While our team at the Bureau of Information & Technology (BIT) was working hard at all hours to restore connectivity and systems statewide, the GRIT task force was meeting. In fact, BIT Commissioner Mark Wixon actually had to miss the meeting to oversee the response. Through dedicated work, BIT got core networking and storage systems back online; restored internet access, wireless services, phone systems, and state radio; and restored the operability of all state government functions.

The particulars of the response were even noteworthy. At one point, the shipping company that was bringing us a crucial piece of equipment to restore services was of the belief that the shipment had missed the truck and was stuck in Sioux Falls. Thankfully, that ended up not being the case – but the whole of state government was ready to move heaven and earth to get that piece of equipment to Pierre as quickly as possible.

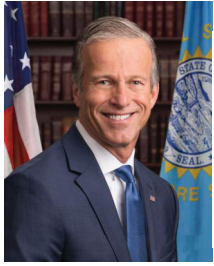
We never want situations like this to arise, but we must be prepared if they do. GRIT is all about preparing a more resilient South Dakota for the future. We have established working groups to strengthen particular systems across the state, including telecommunications, energy, water and wastewater, transportation, policies and framework, and even coordination with the federal government. I am encouraged that the GRIT task force has begun its work and look forward to reviewing any recommendations that they bring forward.

Infrastructure isn't always exciting – and when it is exciting, that's often a bad thing. But it takes careful planning and a willingness to learn both from what went well and what didn't. BIT will be conducting an after-action report on what went wrong with our state's tech systems, and I encourage them not to hold back. We should be as prepared as possible to address similar situations in the future.

I am grateful for all the hardworking state employees who were themselves gritty and resilient through these outages – they found ways to get the job done even when circumstances were far less than ideal. They continued to prioritize my mission to keep South Dakota strong, safe, and free.

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JOHN THUNE
U.S. SENATOR FOR SOUTH DAKOTA

Listen and Deliver

Last November, the American people gave President Trump and Republicans a mandate for change. We listened to the American people's stories of near-constant financial stress, of challenges facing farmers and ranchers, and concerns about the crisis at the southern border. Republicans promised to address these challenges, and I'm proud to report that we've delivered with the One Big Beautiful Bill.

Republicans want people to keep more of their hard-earned money. So, the centerpiece of this bill is permanent tax relief. Without action from Congress, South Dakotans would have faced a \$2,500 tax hike next year. So, Republicans got to work and made permanent the lower tax rates enacted during the first Trump administration, raised the child tax credit to \$2,200, increased the standard deduction, and created a bonus deduction for seniors. We also eliminated taxes on tips and overtime pay, and the permanent pro-growth tax policies in this bill will help get our economy moving again, creating jobs and growing paychecks.

Farmers and ranchers can also breathe a sigh of relief with this bill. The One Big Beautiful Bill raises reference prices and bolsters crop insurance. It improves livestock programs and invests in disease prevention and preparedness efforts. Tax relief in this bill also provides farmers and ranchers with more breathing room in their operating budgets and will help them to make investments in their operations. And a higher threshold for the death tax exemption will protect a lot more farms and ranches from this fundamentally flawed tax and the costly estate planning that comes with it.

This bill also made a generational investment in America's border security. After years of crisis, President Trump swiftly restored order to the southern border. Now with the resources in this bill, we'll be able to secure those gains for the long term. It includes funding to finish the border wall, hire more Border Patrol and ICE agents, and builds capacity to assist in deporting criminal illegal immigrants. Border security is an essential component of national security, and this bill makes permanent improvements to our immigration system and border enforcement that will help secure our nation for years to come.

The American people spoke with a clear voice in November: it was time to turn the page on the failures of the last four years. With the One Big Beautiful Bill, we're doing that. We're getting our economy moving again, strengthening American agriculture, and securing the border for the long term. There's still more work to do, but this is a big step toward delivering on our promise of a safer, stronger, and more prosperous America.

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Protect, Trust, and Honor

BIG Update

Dakotafest showcases the best of South Dakota agriculture. I joined our senators and the South Dakota Farm Bureau to discuss the Farm Bill, conservation programs, agricultural research, and the need to protect American farmland from being purchased by China and other adversaries. Farm security is national security, and it is vital that the U.S. works to secure our agricultural land from the Chinese Communist Party and affiliated groups.

I'm continuing to fight for policies that will protect and support South Dakota producers..

BIG Idea

Members of Congress should not be trading individual stocks. Let's be clear—insider trading is already illegal and there are former members of Congress sitting in prison today, including one following insider trading convictions. I still believe it looks lousy for a member to trade individual stocks as they cast votes that impact the market. My bill, the TRUST in Congress Act, would ban representatives from this practice and I am pushing Speaker Johnson to put this bill on the floor..

BIG News

As the Department of Defense winds down the Vietnam-era Veteran Commemorative Pinning program, I'm working to recognize as many veterans as possible. This week, I honored 41 veterans in Rapid City and 14 in Mitchell. These brave men and women answered their country's call to serve, and we owe them our gratitude. I'm planning more of these important events across South Dakota. If you or someone you know served in the Vietnam era, fill out my nomination form here so we can thank even more veterans for their service.

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries

PO Box 831313 - Ocala, FL 34483

1-352-216-3025

Is That My Grandfather's Hand

This past week, I thought of my maternal grandfather. I haven't thought of him for a long time because he died over 50 years ago. I'm not sure what inspired me to think about my old grandpa..

As a youngster, I used to spend summers with him on his farm. He owned a farm up in the mountains of Pennsylvania and had dairy cattle and hogs. So for many summers I spent with him on that amazing farm.

One thing I remember about my grandfather was his sense of humor. He was always telling jokes, and we all laughed, even though I had no idea what that joke was about.

For instance, "Why did the monkey not eat the banana? Because it was not appealing to him."

I knew there was a joke in there somewhere, but I could never figure it out, even though he told that joke probably 100 times. That was his favorite joke of all time.

I tried to think of all those jokes, and I still don't get the funny part of them. But, he was my grandpa, and therefore when he told a joke, I laughed. That's what a good grandson is supposed to do.

There was a time in the 60s when he had some health problems, and we needed to bring him down to Hershey, where his doctor was. I still remember that very clearly. We took him to the fast-food restaurant for lunch. This was the first time he had ever been at such a place. Up in the mountains where he lived, they did not have fast-food restaurants.

I remember we got him one of the big cheeseburgers, and we sat down to eat them. Grandpa looked at it for a few moments. Finally, he began to separate everything from each other. He laid the bun down and took out the lettuce and the tomato, and all that went with it. He separated them all from each other. Then he began to eat each element one at a time.

I never saw that before, and I'm not sure where he got that.

I then remembered something I did to my grandpa, which was to make fun of him, especially his hands. I looked at his hands and saw so many wrinkles I didn't know where they came from.

"Grandpa," I said, "how did you get all of those wrinkles on your hand?"

Looking at me, he replied, "Well, son, if you must know every wrinkle is the result of one year of hard labor." He looked at me and smiled, and then we both looked at his hand.

"Will I ever get hands like that?" Grandpa laughed and then said, "Only if you live as long as I do and work as hard as I do."

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I had forgotten that conversation until just recently.

The other morning, I got up and went to my easy chair for my morning coffee. As I began sipping that delicious coffee, I happened to look at my hand, and I was scared. Is that my grandfather's hand?

I almost had a heart attack as I was looking at my hand and seeing my grandpa's hand. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. It was as if my grandfather's hand was right there holding my coffee cup. How in the world could that be? After all, he's been gone for 52 years.

I looked at that old wrinkly hand and soon realized that it was not my grandpa's hand. In fact, it was my grandpa's grandson's hand. It was like he was right there in front of me.

Processing that was difficult because I did not know how in the world grandpa's hand got on my hand. It was as if he were in the room with me at the moment.

Looking at my hand for a few moments, I begin to count the wrinkles on my hand. If what grandpa said was true, that every wrinkle represents one year of hard work, I must be 150 by now.

Sitting there, I remembered how many times I made fun of grandpa's old wrinkly hand. I'm not sure what to do, but I might start wearing gloves when I go outside.

In a few moments, I began to smile. The thought came to me that this challenge to my smile was, How many other aspects of my grandpa do I have?

This is an area I do not want to visit. But is it that my grandchildren are seeing me as I saw my grandpa?

The other night, while watching TV, there was a commercial about getting rid of wrinkles. I watched that very carefully, and for a moment, I was tempted to get that cream to get rid of all my wrinkles.

When the commercial was over, I sat back and thought very deeply. What is wrong with being like my grandpa? After all, he was a good man. What I should do is to live my life in a way that he would be proud. So, my wrinkles are here to stay.

Recently, I read in the Bible a verse along this line. "Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers" (Proverbs 17:6).

I'm beginning to see that many things in my life lead back to my grandfather. I need to leave something to pass that on to my grandchildren so when I'm gone they're remember me.

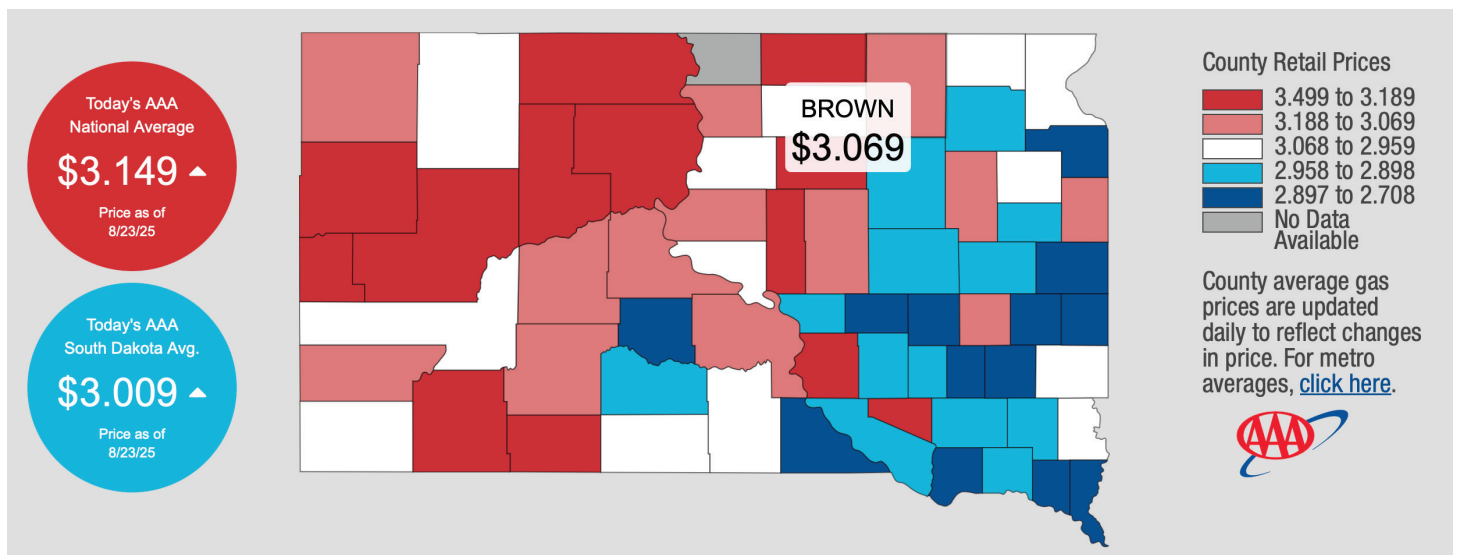
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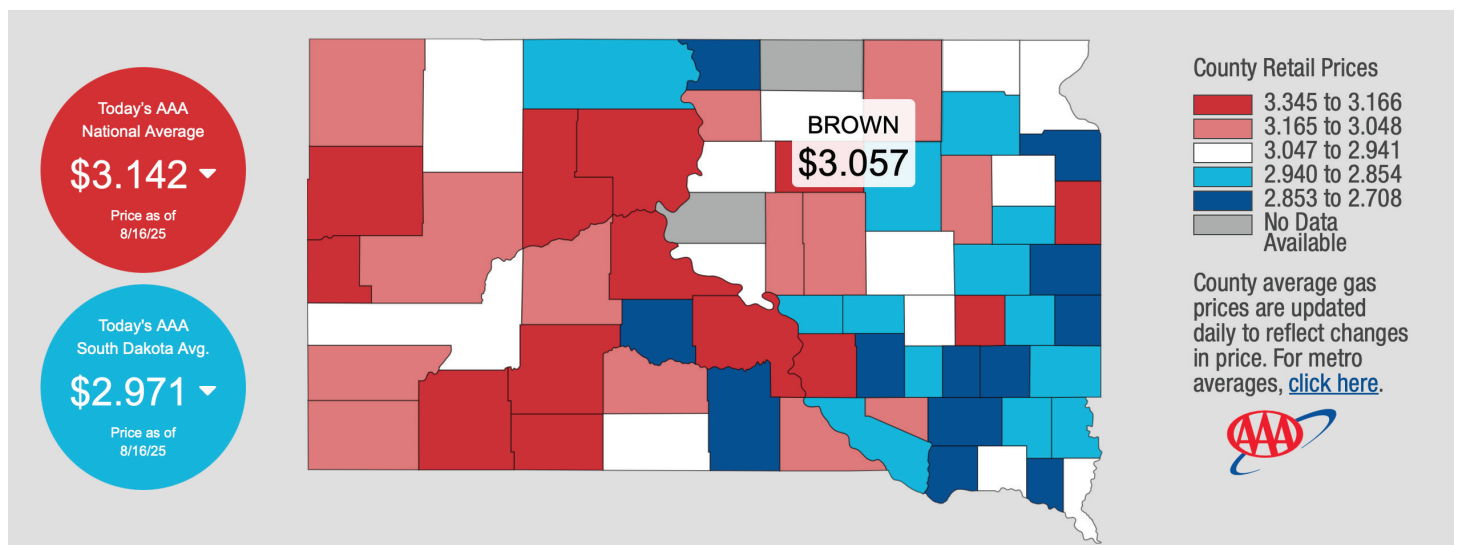
South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$3.009	\$3.177	\$3.648	\$3.365
Yesterday Avg.	\$3.007	\$3.170	\$3.653	\$3.365
Week Ago Avg.	\$2.971	\$3.157	\$3.600	\$3.388
Month Ago Avg.	\$3.010	\$3.173	\$3.649	\$3.390
Year Ago Avg.	\$3.256	\$3.450	\$3.885	\$3.420

This Week



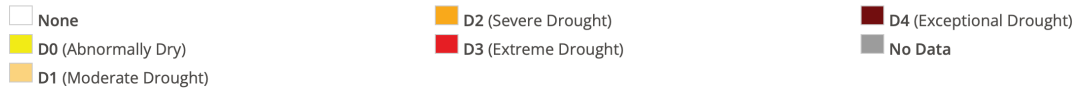
Last Week



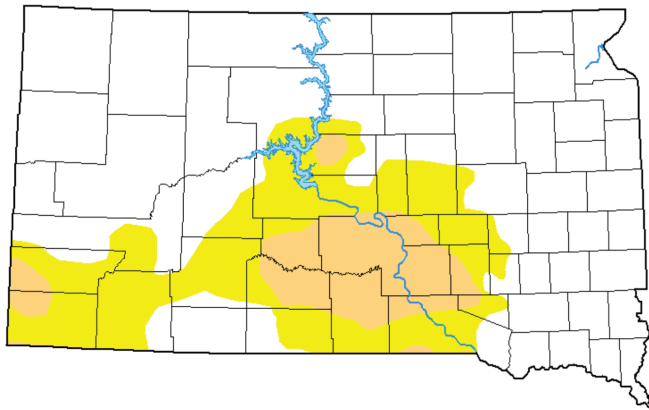
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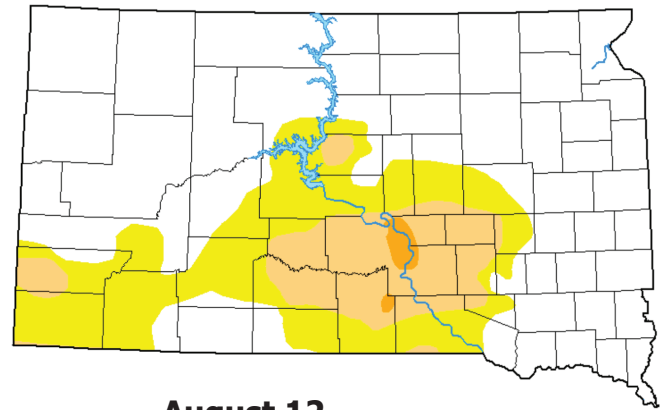
Drought Classification



Drought Monitor



August 19



August 12

The High Plains saw a mixed pattern of drought changes between Aug. 13–19. North Dakota improved the most, as widespread storms erased nearly all dryness, leaving only a small pocket in the northeast. South Dakota had patchy outcomes, with rainfall trimming drought in some central and southern counties while western areas remained dry. Nebraska also showed contrasts with severe dryness expanding in the Sandhills, especially in Cherry and nearby counties, while parts of the east improved after storms. Kansas slipped slightly drier, with abnormal dryness spreading into the southwest. Conditions were most concerning in Colorado and Wyoming, where persistent heat and limited rainfall drove drought deeper. In Colorado, drought expanded along the Front Range and southwest into northern New Mexico, while Wyoming saw new extreme drought in the northwest and broader expansion of abnormally dry conditions across central counties. These worsening conditions have fueled wildfire activity, most notably Colorado's Lee Fire, which has already burned more than 137,000 acres, ranking among the state's largest, while Wyoming has faced smaller but fast-moving rangeland fires.

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EARTHTALK

Dear EarthTalk: Can you set the record straight about whether artificial turf is actually bad for our health and/or the environment?

-- Beth R., Summitt, NJ

Artificial turf fields have been rising in popularity as a low-maintenance (no mowing or watering) alternative to natural grass; North America has over 18,000 synthetic fields, and 1,500 are added annually. Marketed as durable and green-looking year-round, it is also becoming known for its controversial health effects, with cities like Boston, Massachusetts, already enacting bans.

Artificial turf consists of layers: plastic blades at the surface, backing to hold the blades in place, and infill for cushioning and upright support. Carcinogenic chemicals such as heavy metals and volatile organic compounds have been found in the crumb rubber infill made from recycled car tires that is used. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) confirmed the presence of benzene, arsenic, lead and more in the fill. Mount Sinai identified similar chemicals in "safer" crumb rubber alternatives made from plastic, virgin rubber and plant-based materials. Exposure to these harmful chemicals may occur by ingestion, absorption or inhalation, with children at highest risk because of faster breathing and developing organs.

Many turf chemicals are soluble in water, allowing them to enter groundwater and soil when precipitation occurs. PFAS, often referred to as "forever chemicals," have been found in wetlands near synthetic fields, suggesting their ability to contaminate surrounding environments. The plastic components of synthetic fields also lead to microplastic pollution, with estimates of around two tons of it being released into the environment yearly and 20,000 fibers entering waterways daily.

Artificial turf can also have other negative effects: It retains more heat, creating hazardous surface temperatures that can reach 200°F and contribute to local heat islands. As a result, they often require water for irrigation to keep surface temperatures low. While natural grass has the ability to oxygenate the air around us, capture carbon and reduce runoff, synthetic blades are unable to reap these environmental benefits. Lasting only eight to 10 years, it must be disposed of, further contributing to pollution.

However, there is still a lack of research regarding this topic, with most focusing on crumb rubber. Many scientific questions remain to be answered, such as how children can be exposed to chemicals through oral and dermal routes. The evidence that we currently have is limited, with most studies unable to link synthetic turf use to actual health outcomes. Until these gaps in our understanding are filled, the chemical dangers of synthetic playing fields will remain uncertain.

Experts are divided, with Yale epidemiologist Vasilis Vasiliou stating, "I would not recommend parents let their children play on there. Period." For those who do use artificial turf, precautions include ventilating indoor fields, showering after play, and vacuuming infill that enters your house. Be cautious of labels like "organic," "green," or "eco" because they do not guarantee safety and aren't regulated for turf products. Instead, choose transparent companies and ask the manufacturer for a full list of components, as Safety Data Sheets don't disclose all chemicals.



Artificial turf is still controversial after decades in use all over the world. Credit: Pexels.com



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Ethanol boosters say E30 and marketing to youth point the way for corn fuel's future

Nebraska fleet study backs higher ethanol blends; SD advertising targets teens

BY:JOHN HULT

SIOUX FALLS — The ethanol industry won't tell you to fill your vehicle with illegal fuel, but thanks to a long-term study of fleet vehicles in Nebraska, it now says your vehicle would be fine if you did.

Most of the ethanol-blended gasoline sold in the U.S. is 90% petroleum and 10% ethanol. The Trump administration issued an executive order in April allowing nationwide, year-round sales of E15, despite concerns that it worsens air pollution in some areas during the summer. The next administration could rescind it, so some farm-state lawmakers are pushing to codify E15 availability.

The leader of the Nebraska Ethanol Board said Friday that a 30% ethanol blend — approved by the EPA for use in flex-fuel vehicles, but not in others — is “the fuel of the future.” Flex-fuel vehicles can run on gas, ethanol, or any blend of the two.

A representative for South Dakota Corn, meanwhile, said a marketing partnership with KwikStar shows that teens are more likely to start their driving careers buying E15 if they see it as a way to save money for snacks. Typically, the more ethanol a fuel has, the cheaper it is.

Both speakers at the the American Coalition for Ethanol's annual conference in downtown Sioux Falls pressed the idea that ethanol — and the corn markets that rely on it — can overcome consumer skittishness with the right message.

Nebraska study: Most cars do well with E30

Ben Rhodes, executive director of the Nebraska Ethanol Board, backed his claims on 30% ethanol's fuel efficiency with a presentation about a long-term study of its use in Nebraska state government fleet vehicles.

The first phase came in 2019, when 50 non-flex-fuel vehicles of various model years, all located in Lincoln or Omaha, filled up with either E30 or E15 for a year. The study required a waiver from the EPA, he said.

The results of the study's first phase were published in a peer-reviewed paper in 2021, and showed that the vehicles using E30 got similar gas mileage, suffered no engine damage and produced fewer carbon dioxide emissions.

Rhodes said the second phase of the study offers stronger proof still. Since 2023, 100 state fleet vehicles



Fuel options at a central Sioux Falls gas station, as seen on Aug. 22, 2025. (John Hult/South Dakota Searchlight)

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have used either E30 or E10 and the results have been similar. That phase used E10 because the fleet vehicles were used across the entire state, and E15 isn't available everywhere.

Newer vehicles lost about one mile per gallon with E30, Rhodes said.

"For the older vehicles, 2003 to 2013, E30 had a better fuel economy," Rhodes said.

After the presentation, Rhodes told Searchlight that "we shouldn't take our eyes off the prize" of E15 to start pushing for the adoption of E30. Even so, he said, the fleet study shows that there's a future for higher blends.

"This is a long term, forward thinking project, because we know that the data will have to lead," Rhodes said. "The horse has to pull the cart."

Ron Lamberty, the ethanol coalition's chief marketing officer, said the Nebraska results are "the best study we've seen" to confirm a claim he's heard for years from farmers: That they don't lose mileage with E30.

"Even then, I was skeptical," Lamberty said. "Are they saying that because they love ethanol, or is it true? Now we've shown it to be true."

Lamberty stressed that he can't recommend people use E30 in a non-flex-fuel vehicle, given its legal status. But he also said he'd be happy to see the EPA issue a fine to a driver for ignoring that advice, and for that driver to challenge the EPA, "because they would lose the case."

"Then we'd have a legal judgment," Lamberty said, to show that the fuel is safe to use.

Kwik Star partnership: Selling ethanol to young people

Ethanol's cultural stock as an antidote to climate change and reducer of carbon emissions has fallen since its mainstream adoption decades ago.

Some studies performed by researchers outside the industry have suggested that the carbon intensity and water demands of corn cultivation cancel out the environmental benefits of ethanol. It's been more than a decade since the Environmental Working Group lambasted the industry with a report called "Ethanol's Broken Promise," which accused it of causing the conversion of grassland to crops. Greenpeace opposes the U.S. biofuels mandate, which incentivizes the use of ethanol, citing similar reasoning.

Ethanol backers have pushed back on such assertions.

Amanda Bechen, director of marketing and communications for South Dakota Corn, said last year's marketing partnership with the convenience store chain Kwik Stop was part of a strategy to target the youngest generation of drivers, ideally before they develop opinions on ethanol.

"Fourteen-year-olds can drive," Bechen said. "We want to make sure that they see this message and before they develop the behavior of not using ethanol, so we get them to understand that this is a fuel that they can use for the rest of their life."

The "Fuel Up South Dakota" marketing campaign, which ran from last July through the end of June 2025, used splashy signs with taglines like "it's okay to go low" at the pump to push lower-priced E15. Video ads encouraging young people to save their money for snacks were aired across social media, as well as during televised Summit League collegiate basketball games and on streaming video platforms.

Bechen visits high schools as part of her regular duties, and said teens tend to know little about the kinds of fuel they've often just recently begun to put in their cars. Gas is labeled by octane, but she said kids don't usually know what the numbers mean. The number "87" corresponds to E10, "88" to E15. An "89" on the pump handle would signal a mid-grade fuel without ethanol.

Bechen told South Dakota Searchlight she's heard teens say they pick "87" because it's Kansas City Chiefs star Travis Kelce's jersey number, or "89" because it corresponds to the album "1989" from Kelce's girlfriend Taylor Swift.

The Kwik Star promotion's biggest day came on March 29. On that day, the campaign ran a promotion offering 88-octane E15 fuel for \$1.88 a gallon, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Bechen said it was "a landmark event, the largest single day of sales for unleaded 88 in South Dakota" for Kwik Star.

"Some stations did run out," she said.

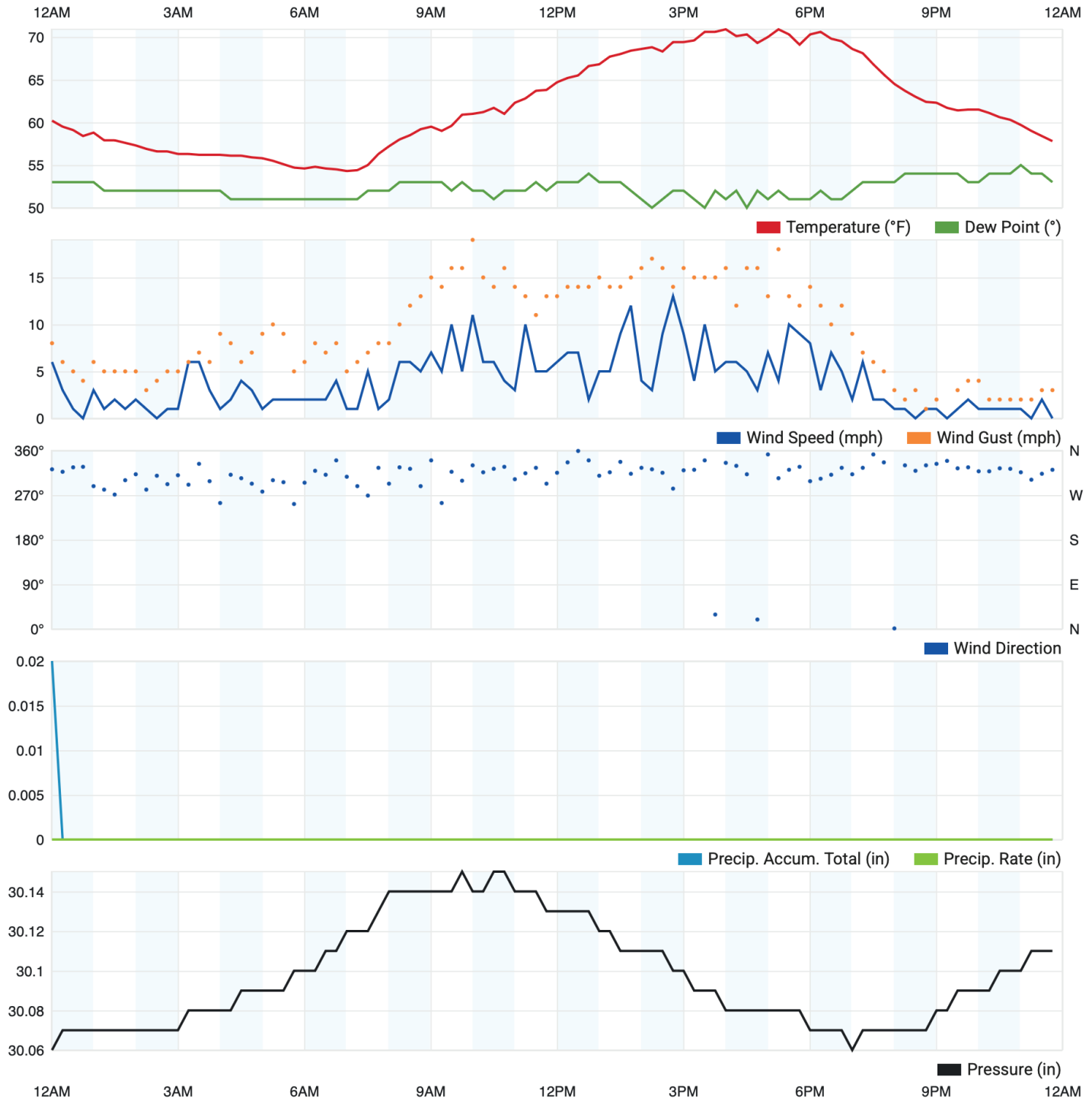
John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

August 23, 2025



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Today



High: 67 °F

Sunny

Tonight



Low: 43 °F

Mostly Clear

Monday



High: 70 °F

Sunny

Monday Night



Low: 45 °F

Mostly Clear

Tuesday



High: 75 °F

Sunny



Dry Today, Pleasant & Cool Temperatures

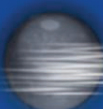
August 24, 2025
4:35 AM

Today



- Partly cloudy/mostly sunny, less wind
- Highs in the 60s east, 70s central
- Winds: North 10 to 20 mph

Tonight



- Clear to partly cloudy, cool
- Lows in the 40s
- Winds: Light and variable

Monday



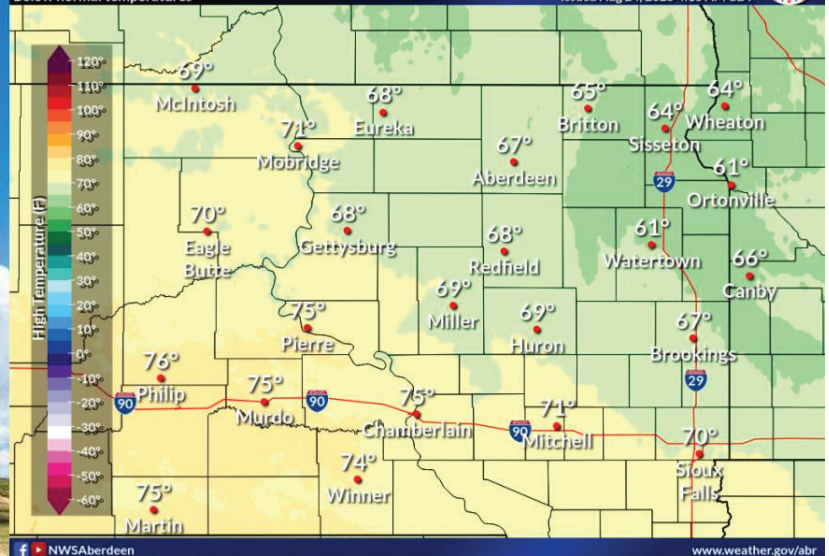
- Mostly sunny
- Highs in the 60s east, 70s central
- Winds: Eastern SD: Light/variable
Central SD: East 5 to 10 mph



Sunday's High Temperature Forecast

Below normal temperatures

Weather Forecast Office
Aberdeen, SD

Issued Aug 24, 2025 4:16 AM CDT



  **NWSAberdeen**

www.weather.gov/abr



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

**National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD**

We'll remain in a stable/dry weather pattern, with below normal temperatures for a couple more days as surface high pressure remains in place over the region. Winds will be lighter today compared to Saturday, with north breezes generally 10 to 20 mph. Below normal temperatures will continue into Monday, with highs remaining in the 60s and 70s under mostly sunny skies.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 71 °F at 3:54 PM

Low Temp: 54 °F at 7:01 AM

Wind: 20 mph at 3:36 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 103 in 1929

Record Low: 38 in 1934

Average High: 82

Average Low: 55

Average Precip in August.: 1.74

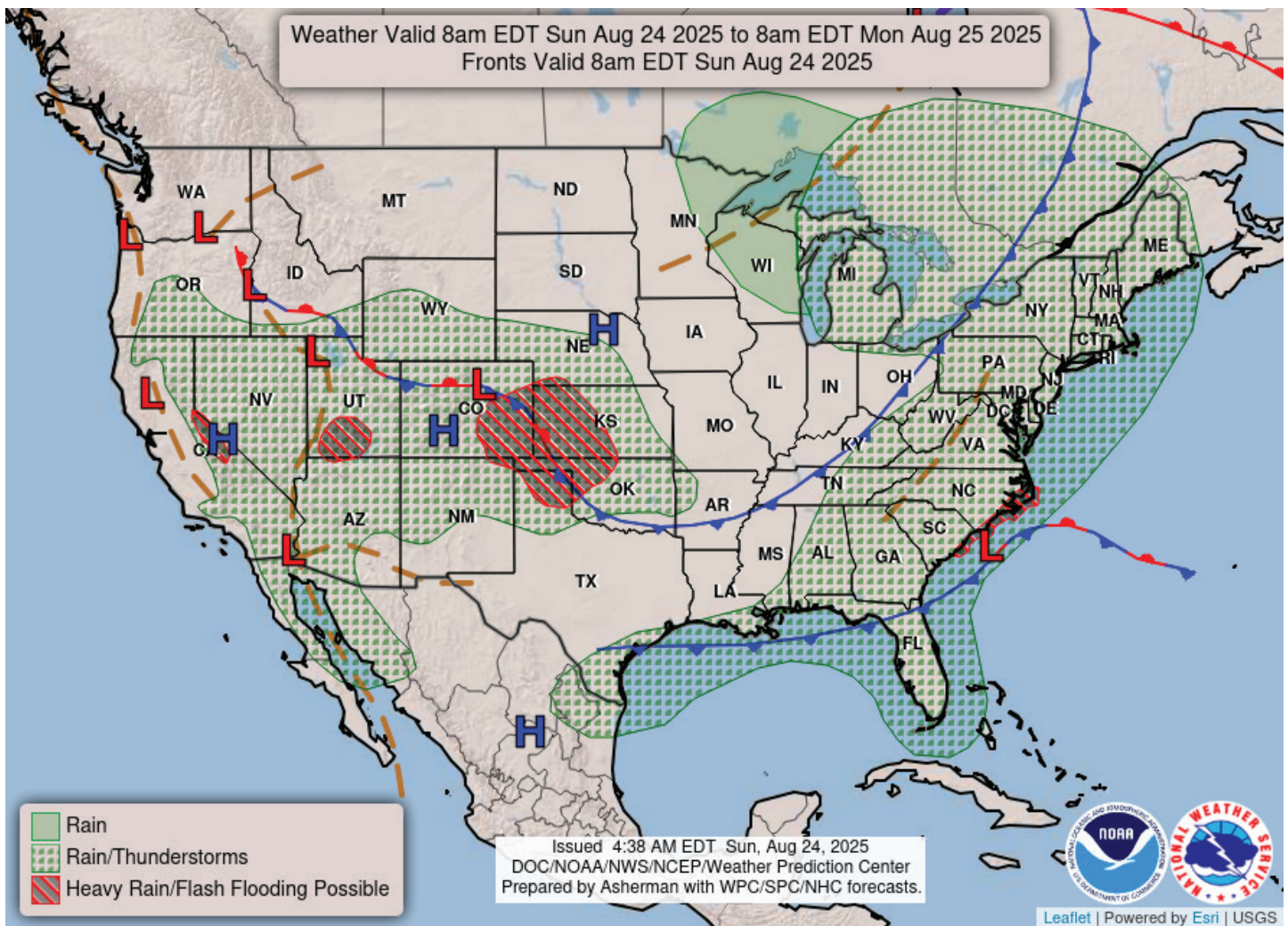
Precip to date in August: 4.42

Average Precip to date: 15.84

Precip Year to Date: 20.30

Sunset Tonight: 8:25 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:45 am



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Today in Weather History

August 24, 1960: A man was injured when a barn was blown over by an F2 tornado that touched down near Hayes, in Stanley County. Hail, up to golf ball size accompanied the storm as well as about three inches of rain, causing some damage to crops and a farmhouse. The sky color in a westerly direction shortly before the tornado hit was described as a distinct shade of green. Evidence suggests that the tornado may have touched down again in northeast Sully County, destroying a barn, a chicken coop, and haystacks on two farms. Also, precipitation more than 3 inches and locally 6 to 8 inches was accompanied by severe hail, causing damage to buildings and crops. Hail damage was most substantial in Stanly County. The wind carried away an estimated 400 tons of baled hay in Haakon County. A measured rainfall amount of 5.1 inches in less than six hours occurred in Onida, causing extensive flooding of basements, streets, and cropland. Additional rainfall amounts include 5.58 inches 4 NW of Onida, 4.50 inches 23 N of Highmore, 3.05 inches 2N of Onaka, 3.42 inches in Clear Lake, 3.11 inches in Miller, 3.02 inches in Eureka, 2.55 inches 1 NW of Faulkton, 2.40 inches in Gettysburg, 2.22 inches in Blunt, 2.20 inches at Oahe Dam, and 2.16 inches in Clark.

August 24, 1998: A line of severe thunderstorms raced southeast across Sully, Hyde, and Hand counties during the morning hours, producing destructive winds up to 100 mph and hail up to the size of baseballs. The winds and hail damaged or destroyed a wide swath of sunflowers and corn. Four power poles south of Highmore on Highway 47 were snapped off. The school in Highmore had twenty screens shredded by the hail and the winds. On a farm northeast of Onida, a grain bin was blown over a distance of 200 yards.

August 24, 2006: Up to 4.25" diameter hail and 9 tornadoes developed across central and northeastern South Dakota between 4:30 pm and 8:00 pm, two of which were rated as F3 intensity. The first of these F3 tornadoes developed in McPherson County west of Hillsview at 5:03 pm, and tracked 24.5 miles southeast to just north of Hosmer before lifting at 5:30 pm. Numerous livestock and deer were killed. Devastating damage was observed to farm equipment, homes, barns, grain bins, and vehicles. A well-anchored mobile home was completely destroyed. Debris from each site was observed up to 3 miles away. One person received minor scrapes and bruises. The second F3 tornado of the event was spawned by a long-track supercell, and this supercell produced the other 7 tornadoes of the day (two F2, an F1, and four F0 roughly from Onida to De Smet). It touched down just south of Wessington in Beadle County at 6:37 pm, and tracked 19.5 miles southeast to just southwest of Huron before lifting at 7:18 pm. This tornado destroyed 8 houses and numerous farm buildings and damaged at least 7 other houses. Five large high-voltage transmission towers were blown down about 3 miles southeast of Wessington. A woman was cut on the neck at a farm southwest of Wolsey where the house and all other buildings were destroyed (non-life threatening). One other injury occurred southeast of Wolsey.

79: Stratovolcano, Mount Vesuvius erupted on this day, burying the Roman cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

1456: Machiavelli wrote, "On the 24th of August, about an hour before day-break there arose from the Adriatic near Ancona, a whirlwind, which crossing Italy from east to west, again reached the sea near Pisa, accompanied by thick clouds, and the most intense and impenetrable darkness."

1906 - A cloudburst deluged Guinea, VA, with more than nine inches of rain in just forty minutes. (David Ludlum)

1968 - Lightning struck the Crawford County fairgrounds in northwest Pennsylvania killing two persons and injuring 72 others. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Autumn-like weather prevailed across the north central and northeastern U.S. Seven cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Saint Cloud MN with a low of 37 degrees. Temperatures in Florida soared to 98 degrees at Pensacola and 99 degrees at Jacksonville. Thunderstorms produced heavy rain in the Southern High Plains Region, with 5.40 inches at Union NM, and 7.25 inches reported west of Anthony NM. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms in the Delaware Valley of eastern Pennsylvania produced wind gusts to 95 mph around Philadelphia, and gusts to 100 mph at Warminster. A tropical depression drenched the Cabo Rojo area of southwestern Puerto Rico with up to ten inches of rain. San Juan received 5.35 inches of rain. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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Knowing who or what to trust
may be difficult.

**It may be the result of having
someone disappoint us or take
advantage of us.**

None the less, trust once lost, is
often costly and difficult to
regain...

Knowing who or what to trust may be difficult. It may be the result of having someone disappoint us or take advantage of us. Nonetheless, trust once lost is often costly and difficult to regain.

Years ago a mother and father sat in my office and asked, "Dr. Guido, in light of what our son has done, will we ever be able to trust him again? He has disappointed us time and time again. He has lied to us, and he has stolen from us, and he has betrayed us. How can we ever believe what he says is true?"

My heart ached as they looked at me. They loved their son dearly. They made many sacrifices on his behalf. They sent him to the best schools and took him to church when he was young. But a gradual change came over him, and they did not know what to do.

After thinking a few moments I replied, "Yes, once we lose trust in someone we love dearly, it causes problems that are difficult to overcome. But, there seems to be one principle that might help you. It begins with keeping our promises. If I say it and do it, that's me keeping my word, and you can begin to trust me. If I say it and don't do it, I've not honored my word, and old doubts will return. The past will invade our minds and hearts, and trust will become more difficult than ever. Keeping my word is the only reason you would have to trust me."

Blessed is he who trusts in the Lord. We know that we can trust the Lord because He has always honored His word. If He said it, He did it — time and time again.

Today's Prayer: How blest we are, Father, to know Your Word and place our trust in You. Your record of doing what You said You would do is revealed in Your Word. Thank You! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Today's Scripture: "Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers, and blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD." Proverbs 16:20

God's Word is meant to be shared. If this encouraged you, share it with someone else who could use a touch of His grace today.

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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.22.25

18 30 44 48 50 12

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$253,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.23.25

1 6 11 28 31 10

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$2,350,000

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.23.25

9 11 17 25 42 11

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 14 Hrs 48 Mins 41
Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.23.25

3 7 14 27 31

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$20,000

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.23.25

9 23 24 33 44 19

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.23.25

11 14 34 47 51 18

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$750,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

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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

Doctors in Gaza say patients' protruding ribs and bony limbs offer evidence of malnutrition

By WAFAA SHURAF and ADAM GELLER Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Not long after Texas surgeon Mohammed Adeel Khaleel arrived at a Gaza City hospital in early August, a 17-year-old was brought in with gunshot wounds to both legs and one hand, sustained when he went to collect food at an aid site.

In the emergency room, Khaleel said he noted the ribs protruding from the teen's emaciated torso, an indication of severe malnutrition. When doctors at Al-Ahli Hospital stabilized the patient, he raised his heavily bandaged hand and pointed to his empty mouth, Khaleel said.

"The level of hunger is really what's heartbreaking. You know, we saw malnutrition before, back in November, already starting to happen. But now the level is just, it's beyond imagination," Khaleel, a spinal surgeon on his third volunteer stint in Gaza, said in an interview.

On Friday, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, or IPC, the leading authority on global hunger crises, said for the first time that parts of Gaza are in famine and warned that it is spreading. For months, U.N. agencies, aid groups and experts had warned that Israel's blockade and ongoing offensive were pushing the territory to the brink.

In the 24 hours following the famine announcement, eight people in Gaza died of malnutrition-related causes, bringing the overall toll of such deaths during the war to 281, according Gaza's Health Ministry, which is part of the Hamas-run government and staffed by medical professionals. A U.S. medical nonprofit working in Gaza says one in six children under 5 is affected by acute malnutrition.

Israel rejected the famine announcement, calling it an "outright lie" and pointing to its recent efforts to allow in more food after it eased a complete 2½ month blockade in May. It has accused Hamas of siphoning off aid — allegations disputed by the United Nations, which says Israeli restrictions and a breakdown of law and order make it extremely difficult to deliver food to the most vulnerable.

Khaleel, who spoke to The Associated Press ahead of the announcement, said the evidence of deprivation was already clear.

"Just the degree of weight loss, post-operative complications and starvation that we're seeing. That wouldn't surprise me at all if it was called famine," said Khaleel, who traveled to Gaza as an independent volunteer via the World Health Organization.

At Gaza City's Shifa Hospital earlier in the week, nutrition director Dr. Mohammad Kuheil led an AP journalist to the bedside of a thin-limbed girl. Aya Sbeteh, 15, was wounded in an airstrike. But her recovery has been set back by weakness from lack of food that her family says has reduced her weight by more than a third.

"All we have are grains like lentils, sometimes," said her father, Yousef Sbeteh, 44. "Even flour is unaffordable."

The sick, wounded and young are most vulnerable

Another patient, Karam Akoumeh, lay with sunken cheeks, his thin skin stretched like plastic wrap across his rib cage. His intestines were seriously damaged when he was shot while going out to collect flour, his family said, compromising his digestive system.

Now he is one of 20 people at Shifa brought in for abdominal wounds and increasingly malnourished because of a shortage of intravenous nutritional supplements, the doctor said.

Akoumeh's father, Atef, said the lack of supplements compounded the hunger that reduced Karam's weight from 62 kilograms (136 pounds) to just 35 kilos (77 pounds).

"I checked throughout all Gaza's hospitals for it (the supplements), but I have not found any," he said.

Israeli officials have pointed out that some of those said to have died from malnutrition had preexisting conditions. But doctors and other experts say that is to be expected, as famine first preys on the most

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vulnerable, including babies and small children.

Doctors and others see signs of hunger everywhere

Outside the hospital, the shortage of nutrients is equally dire, doctors and civilians say.

"There are no protein sources, only plant-based protein from legumes. Meat and chicken are not available. Dairy products are not available, and fruits are also unavailable," said Kuheil, the doctor in charge of nutrition at Shifa.

In Gaza City on Friday, Palestinians displaced from elsewhere recounted a desperate search for food.

"We're starving. We eat once a day. Will we be more hungry than we are now? There's nothing left," said Dalia Shamali, whose family has been repeatedly displaced from their home in nearby Shijaiyah.

She said they spent most of their money over the last two years moving from one part of Gaza to another as the Israeli military issued evacuation orders. With Israel allowing more food in recently, the price of flour and other food items has been dropping, but the family still can't afford them, Shamali said.

Hunger agency says famine is expected to spread

In its announcement Friday, the IPC said famine in Gaza City is likely to spread across the territory without a ceasefire and a flood of humanitarian aid.

Some of the IPC's conclusions were echoed in a report by a group that organizes medical missions to Gaza, which described a "catastrophic rise in severe malnutrition" among children and pregnant women.

One of every 6 children in Gaza under 5 is now affected by acute malnutrition, said the report by U.S. nonprofit MedGlobal, based on observations by its staff in four of Gaza's five governorates. The group warned that all young children in Gaza are at risk of starving without intervention.

Khaleel, the Texas doctor, said he would leave it to others with more expertise to measure exactly what constitutes famine.

But he knows what he saw in three weeks of treating patients in Gaza, most of the time at the hospital in Gaza City. Again and again, medical workers cut open patients' clothing to treat injuries, revealing a loss of muscle and fat caused by hunger that left skin stretched tight over protruding bones.

"These patients, a number of them that we're seeing are just exposed ribs, severely skinny extremities," he said. "And you know that they're just not getting calories in."

Fed Chair Powell faces fresh challenges to Fed independence amid potential rate cuts

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Now that Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell has signaled that the central bank could soon cut its key interest rate, he faces a new challenge: how to do it without seeming to cave to the White House's demands.

For months, Powell has largely ignored President Donald Trump's constant hectoring that he reduce borrowing costs. Yet on Friday, in a highly-anticipated speech, Powell suggested that the Fed could take such a step as soon as its next meeting in September.

It will be a fraught decision for the Fed, which must weigh it against persistent inflation and an economy that could also improve in the second half of this year. Both trends, if they occur, could make a cut look premature.

Trump has urged Powell to slash rates, arguing there is "no inflation" and saying that a cut would lower the government's interest payments on its \$37 trillion in debt.

Powell, on the other hand, has suggested that a rate cut is likely for reasons quite different than Trump's: He is worried that the economy is weakening. His remarks on Friday at an economic symposium in Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming also indicated that the Fed will move carefully and cut rates at a much slower pace than Trump wants.

Powell pointed to economic growth that "has slowed notably in the first half of this year," to an annual rate of 1.2%, down from 2.5% last year. There has also been a "marked slowing" in the demand for workers, he added, which threatens to raise unemployment.

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Still, Powell said that tariffs have started to lift the price of goods and could continue to push inflation higher, a possibility Fed officials will closely monitor and that will make them cautious about additional rate cuts.

The Fed's key short-term interest rate, which influences other borrowing costs for things like mortgages and auto loans, is currently 4.3%. Trump has called for it to be cut as low as 1% — a level no Fed official supports.

However the Fed moves forward, it will likely do so while continuing to assert its longstanding independence. A politically independent central bank is considered by most economists as critical to preventing inflation, because it can take steps — such as raising interest rates to cool the economy and combat inflation — that are harder for elected officials to do.

There are 19 members of the Fed's interest-rate setting committee, 12 of whom vote on rate decisions. One of them, Beth Hammack, president of the Federal Reserve's Cleveland branch, said Friday in an interview with The Associated Press that she is committed to the Fed's independence.

"I'm laser focused ... on ensuring that I can deliver good outcomes for the for the public, and I try to tune out all the other noise," she said.

She remains concerned that the Fed still needs to fight stubborn inflation, a view shared by several colleagues.

"Inflation is too high and it's been trending in the wrong direction," Hammack said. "Right now I see us moving away from our goals on the inflation side."

Powell himself did not discuss the Fed's independence during his speech in Wyoming, where he received a standing ovation by the assembled academics, economists, and central bank officials from around the world. But Adam Posen, president of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, said that was likely a deliberate choice and intended, ironically, to demonstrate the Fed's independence.

"The not talking about independence was a way of trying as best they could to signal we're getting on with the business," Posen said. "We're still having a civilized internal discussion about the merits of the issue. And even if it pleases the president, we're going to make the right call."

It was against that backdrop that Trump intensified his own pressure campaign against another top Fed official.

Trump said he would fire Fed Governor Lisa Cook if she did not step down from her position. Bill Pulte, a Trump appointee to head the agency that regulates mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, alleged Wednesday that Cook committed mortgage fraud when she bought two properties in 2021. She has not been charged.

Cook has said she would not be "bullied" into giving up her position. She declined Friday to comment on Trump's threat.

If Cook is somehow removed, that would give Trump an opportunity to put a loyalist on the Fed's governing board. Members of the board vote on all interest rate decisions. He has already nominated a top White House economist, Stephen Miran, to replace former governor Adriana Kugler, who stepped down Aug. 1.

Trump had previously threatened to fire Powell, but hasn't done so. Trump appointed Powell in late 2017. His term as chair ends in about nine months.

Powell is no stranger to Trump's attacks. Michael Strain, director of economic policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute, noted that the president also went after him in 2018 for raising interest rates, but that didn't stop Powell.

"The president has a long history of applying pressure to Chairman Powell," Strain said. "And Chairman Powell has a long history of resisting that pressure. So it would be odd, I think, if on his way out the door, he caved for the first time."

Still, Strain thinks that Powell is overestimating the risk that the economy will weaken further and push unemployment higher. If inflation worsens while hiring continues, that could force the Fed to potentially reverse course and increase rates again next year.

"That would do further damage to the Fed's credibility around maintaining low and stable price inflation," he said.

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Israeli forces kill 4 more aid seekers as northern Gaza braces for looming offensive

By WAFAA SHURAF, SAMY MAGDY and SAM METZ Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli forces killed four aid seekers traveling on Sunday through a military zone south of Gaza City — an area regularly used by Palestinians trying to reach a food distribution point, a hospital and witnesses said.

The deaths add to the growing toll of Palestinians killed while seeking food, as parts of the Gaza Strip plunge into famine and Israel's military ramps up activity in northern Gaza ahead of a planned offensive to seize its largest city.

Al-Awda Hospital and two eyewitnesses told The Associated Press that the four Palestinians were killed when troops opened fire on a crowd heading to a site run by the Israeli-backed American contractor Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, or GHF, in the Netzarim corridor area. It occurred hundreds of meters (yards) away from the site, the eyewitnesses said.

"The gunfire was indiscriminate," Mohamed Abed, a father of two from the Bureij refugee camp, said, adding that while many fled some people fell to the ground after being shot.

Abed and Aymed Sayyad, another aid seeker among the crowd, said troops opened fire when a group near the front of the crowd pushed forward toward a distribution site before its scheduled opening.

Sayyad said he and others helped two people who were wounded by gunshots, one in his shoulder and the leg in his leg.

The Israeli military and GHF did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Malnutrition-related deaths

The four deaths are the latest in areas where U.N. convoys have been overwhelmed by looters and desperate crowds, and where people have been shot and killed while heading to sites run by the GHF.

More than 2,000 Palestinians have been killed and more than 13,500 wounded while seeking aid at distribution points or along convoy routes used by the United Nations and other aid groups, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

The ministry said on Sunday that at least 62,686 Palestinians have been killed in the war, including missing people now confirmed dead by a special ministry judicial committee.

It said the number of malnutrition-related deaths rose by eight to 289 on Sunday. The deaths include a child, bringing the death toll among children to 115 since the war between Israel and Hamas began in 2023.

The health ministry does not say how many of those killed have been fighters or civilians but says around half have been women and children. It 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 war casualties. Israel disputes its figures but has not provided its own.

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification — the world's leading authority on food crises — said Friday that famine is happening in Gaza City, home to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, and could spread south to Deir al-Balah and Khan Younis by the end of next month.

Aid groups have long warned that the war and months of Israeli restrictions on food and medical supplies entering Gaza are causing starvation. Israel has denied the existence of widespread hunger in Gaza, calling reports of starvation "lies" promoted by Hamas.

'Non-stop explosions'

In Jabaliya, the densely populated refugee camp just north of Gaza City, residents said they endured heavy explosions overnight. Days after Israel's military announced it was intensifying its operations in the area and mobilizing tens of thousands of reservists to take the city, they said they were living in constant fear.

In the part of Gaza City where he and his family have sheltered since being displaced from a neighborhood on the city's southern edge, Ossama Matter said he had seen houses reduced to rubble and neighborhoods razed beyond recognition.

"They want it like Rafah," he said, referring to a town in southern Gaza destroyed earlier in the war. "There have been non-stop explosions and strikes in the past days."

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While fleeing westward from Jabaliya, schoolteacher Salim Dhaher said he saw weaponized robots planting explosives as troops advanced from the opposite direction. As they set the stage for Israel's push to seize the city, Dhaher said he feared it was part of a larger effort to forcibly remove Palestinians from the north.

The aim is clear, he said: "To destroy everything above the ground, and force the transfer."

There has been little sign of the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians evacuating south ahead of Israel's invasion of Gaza City, which Israel says is still a Hamas stronghold. Many are exhausted by repeated displacements and unconvinced that any area—including so-called humanitarian zones—offers safety.

The military operation could begin within days in a region that threatens the lives of hundreds of thousands of civilians, who are sheltering above an area Israel has invaded multiple times but still believes harbors a network of militant tunnels underground.

Hamas-led militants abducted 251 people and killed around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, in the Oct. 7, 2023, attack that triggered the war. Most of the hostages have been released in ceasefires or other deals but 50 remain inside Gaza, around 20 of them believed by Israel to be alive.

Bus carrying junior high football team crashes near Pittsburgh. 21 people are taken to hospitals

ECONOMY BOROUGH, Pa. (AP) — A bus carrying a junior high football team to a game crashed Saturday north of Pittsburgh, sending 21 of the 28 people on board to the hospital, officials said.

Twenty-five Aliquippa Junior High students and three adults were headed to a game in nearby Gibsonia. The crash occurred in Economy Borough, about 20 miles north of Pittsburgh.

Economy Borough Police Chief Michael O'Brien said he didn't have information on the medical status of those taken to hospitals.

O'Brien said he understood the bus turned on its side during the crash but came back upright as the students were evacuating the vehicle.

The police chief said the crash occurred in a tough spot in the road. "It's on a bad bend," O'Brien said. "It's being investigated now to determine what happened."

A Facebook page for the Aliquippa Junior High football team said each player was being evaluated and asked for "a thought or prayer for each player or coach that was traveling this morning."

Trump ran on a promise of revenge. He's making good on it

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

Donald Trump ran on a promise to use the powers of the government for revenge against those he believed wronged him. He now appears to be fulfilling that campaign promise while threatening to expand his powers well beyond Washington.

On Friday, the FBI searched the home of John Bolton, Trump's first-term national security adviser-turned-critic, who last week in an interview called the administration "the retribution presidency."

Trump's team has opened investigations of Democrat Letitia James, the New York attorney general who sued Trump's company over alleged fraud for falsifying records, and Sen. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., who as a congressman led Trump's first impeachment. The Republican administration has charged Rep. LaMonica McIver, D-N.J., over her actions at an immigration protest in Newark, New Jersey, after arresting Mayor Ras Baraka, also a Democrat. Under investigation, too, is former New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a candidate for New York City mayor.

Trump has directed prosecutors to investigate two other members of his first administration: Miles Taylor, who wrote a book warning of what he said were Trump's authoritarian tendencies, and Chris Krebs, who earned the president's wrath for assuring voters that the 2020 election, which Trump lost to Democrat Joe Biden, was secure.

The actions look like the payback Trump said he would pursue after being hit with four separate sets of criminal charges during his four years out of office. Those included an indictment for his effort to overturn

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the 2020 election that was gutted by the U.S. Supreme Court, which said presidents have broad immunity from prosecution for official acts while in office.

"Joe Biden weaponized his administration to target political opponents – most famously, President Trump," Abigail Jackson, a White House spokeswoman, said Saturday. Trump, she said, "is restoring law and order."

In addition to making good on his promises of retribution, Trump has deployed the military into American cities to fight crime or help with immigration arrests. He has sent thousands of National Guard troops and federal law enforcement officers to patrol the streets in the nation's capital, after activating the Guard and Marines in Los Angeles earlier this year.

Taken together, the actions have alarmed Democrats and others who fear Trump is wielding the authority of his office to intimidate his political opponents and consolidate power in a way that is unprecedented in American history.

"You combine the threat of prosecution with armed troops in the streets," said Brendan Nyhan, a political scientist at Dartmouth College. "The picture is pretty clear for anyone who's read a history book what kind of administration we're dealing with."

Past election investigations are a Trump focus

Trump began his second term by pardoning more than 1,500 people who were convicted of crimes during the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol. His Justice Department, meanwhile, has fired some federal prosecutors who had pursued those cases. Attorney General Pam Bondi ordered a grand jury to look into the origins of the investigation of his 2016 campaign's ties with Russia, and Trump has called on her department to investigate former Democratic President Barack Obama.

The government's watchdog agency has opened an investigation into Jack Smith, the special prosecutor who investigated Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election results and the classified documents stashed at his Florida estate. Those cases were among several that dogged Trump in the years between his presidential terms, including the New York fraud case and charges for election interference in Georgia brought by the Democratic prosecutor in Fulton County.

All those investigations led him to claim that Democrats had weaponized the government against him.

"It is amazing to me the number of people the Trump administration has gone after, all of whom are identified by the fact that they investigated or criticized Trump in one way or another," said Stephen Saltzburg, a former Justice Department official who is a George Washington University law professor.

On Friday, Trump used governmental powers in other ways to further his goals. He announced that Chicago could be the next city subject to military deployments.

And after his housing director alleged that one of the governors of the independent Federal Reserve had committed mortgage fraud, Trump demanded she resign or be fired. He took to his social platform on Saturday to highlight the claims, as he tries to wrest control of the central bank.

Trump sees himself as the 'chief law enforcement officer'

Vice President JD Vance denied in a television interview that Bolton was being targeted because of his criticism of Trump.

"If there's no crime here, we're not going to prosecute it," Vance told NBC's "Meet the Press" on Friday.

Trump said he told his staff not to inform him about the Bolton search ahead of time, but he stressed that he has authority over all prosecutions.

"I could know about it. I could be the one starting it," the president told reporters. "I'm actually the chief law enforcement officer."

Bolton occupies a special place in the ranks of Trump critics. The longtime GOP foreign policy hawk wrote a book published in 2020, after Trump had fired him the year before. The first Trump administration sued to block the book's release and opened a grand jury investigation, both of which were halted by the Biden administration.

Bolton landed on a list of 60 former officials drawn up by now-FBI Director Kash Patel that he portrayed as a tally of the "Executive Branch Deep State." Critics warned it was an "enemies list." When Trump returned to office in January, his administration revoked the security detail that had been assigned to Bolton, who faced Iranian assassination threats.

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The FBI is now investigating Bolton for potentially mishandling classified information, according to a person familiar with the matter who was not authorized to discuss the investigation publicly. In contrast, Trump condemned the FBI's search of his own Mar-a-Lago resort in 2022.

Retribution is wide-ranging, from judges to the military

Trump has also targeted institutions that have defied him.

The president issued orders barring several law firms that were involved in litigation against him or his allies, or had hired his opponents, from doing business with the federal government. Trump cut deals with several other firms to do free legal work rather than face penalties. He has targeted universities for funding cuts if they do not follow his administration's directives.

His administration filed a judicial misconduct complaint against a judge who ruled that Trump officials likely committed criminal contempt by ignoring his directive to turn around planes carrying people being sent to a notorious prison in El Salvador.

The actions are among steps that seem to be intensifying. Trump's defense secretary, Pete Hegseth, has fired several military leaders perceived to be critics of the president or not sufficiently loyal, and earlier this week the administration revoked the security clearances of about three dozen current and former national security officials.

"It's what he promised," said Justin Levitt, a former Justice Department official and Biden White House staffer who is a law professor at Loyola Marymount University. "It's what bullies do when no one tells them 'No.'"

Kilmar Abrego Garcia, free for now from jail, could be deported to Uganda. Here's what to know

By BEN FINLEY and MIKE CATALINI Associated Press

The Trump administration plans to deport Kilmar Abrego Garcia to Uganda after he declined a plea deal involving deportation to Costa Rica, his defense attorneys told a court Saturday.

He was released from a Tennessee jail on Friday after his case attracted significant attention amid President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown when he was mistakenly deported in March.

Facing a court order, the Trump administration brought him back to the U.S. in June, only to detain him on human smuggling charges.

Abrego Garcia's attorney's court filings show the administration requested he appear at an immigration facility in Baltimore on Monday and could be deported again.

As his story takes yet another turn, here's what to know:

The Costa Rica-Uganda offer

The Costa Rica offer came late Thursday and included a requirement that he remain in jail, according to a brief filed in Tennessee, where the criminal case was brought.

After Abrego Garcia left jail Friday, Immigration and Customs Enforcement told his attorneys he would be deported to Uganda and should report to immigration authorities on Monday.

Later Friday, the government told Abrego Garcia he has until first thing Monday to accept a plea in exchange for deportation to Costa Rica, or else that offer will be off the table, his defense attorneys wrote.

They declined to say whether he is still considering the offer. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem said that the administration will not stop fighting until he's out of the U.S.

'Well-founded fear' of returning to El Salvador

Abrego Garcia, 30, grew up in El Salvador and fled at age 16 because a local gang extorted and terrorized his family, court records state. He traveled to Maryland, where his brother lives as a U.S. citizen, but was not authorized to stay.

Abrego Garcia found work in construction and met his future wife, Jennifer Vasquez Sura. In 2018, he moved in with her and her two children after she became pregnant with his child.

In March 2019, Abrego Garcia went to a Home Depot seeking work as a laborer when he was detained by local police, court records state. They were suspected of being in MS-13 based on tattoos and clothing.

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A criminal informant told police Abrego Garcia was in MS-13, court records state, but police did not charge him and turned him over to ICE.

A U.S. immigration judge denied Abrego Garcia's subsequent asylum claim because more than a year had passed since his arrival. But the judge granted him protection from being deported to El Salvador, determining he had a "well-founded fear" of gang persecution there, court records state.

Abrego Garcia was released and placed under federal supervision. He received a federal work permit and checked in with ICE each year, his lawyers said.

'Audacity to fight back'

In February, the Trump administration designated MS-13 as a foreign terrorist organization. In March, it deported Abrego Garcia to the prison in El Salvador, violating the U.S. immigration judge's 2019 order.

Abrego Garcia later claimed in court documents that he was beaten and psychologically tortured, while El Salvador President Nayib Bukele denied the allegations.

The Trump administration described its violation of the immigration judge's 2019 order as an administrative error. Trump and other officials doubled down on claims that Abrego Garcia was in MS-13.

Vasquez Sura filed a lawsuit to bring her husband back. The Trump administration returned Abrego Garcia to the U.S. in June after a Supreme Court order. But it brought human smuggling charges against him.

The smuggling case stems from a 2022 traffic stop for speeding, during which Abrego Garcia was driving with nine passengers. Tennessee police suspected human smuggling, but allowed him to drive on, didn't charge him.

Abrego Garcia pleaded not guilty.

His lawyers filed a motion to dismiss the case based on "vindictive and selective prosecution."

Deportation fears realized

U.S. Magistrate Barbara Holmes in Nashville ruled in June that Abrego Garcia has a right to be released from jail while he awaits trial.

But Abrego Garcia remained in a Tennessee jail at his attorneys' request for about 11 weeks over fears that ICE would immediately try to deport him.

Thomas Giles, an assistant director for ICE, testified in July that Abrego Garcia would be detained as soon as he's freed.

U.S. officials argued Abrego Garcia can be deported because he came to the U.S. illegally and because an immigration judge deemed him eligible for expulsion in 2019, just not to his native El Salvador.

Judge provides some protections

In response to concerns Abrego Garcia would be deported without due process, U.S. District Judge Paula Xinis prohibited ICE from immediately detaining him upon release in Tennessee.

Xinis, overseeing the lawsuit in Maryland, ordered restrictions on ICE in late July. She required any removal proceedings begin in Baltimore.

Xinis also ordered that ICE provide three business days' notice if it intends to initiate removal proceedings.

The Trump administration has "done little to assure the Court that, absent intervention, Abrego Garcia's due process rights will be protected," Xinis wrote.

Electronic monitoring and home detention

Soon after Xinis's order, Abrego Garcia's attorneys asked the federal judge in Tennessee to release him.

Holmes, the U.S. magistrate in Nashville, released him Friday, requiring Abrego Garcia to stay with his brother in Maryland and be subjected to electronic monitoring and home detention.

In a statement on Friday, he said he saw his family for the first time in over five months.

"We are steps closer to justice, but justice has not been fully served," he said.

US seeks to deport Kilmar Abrego Garcia to Uganda after he refused plea offer in his smuggling case

By TRAVIS LOLLER Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Immigration officials said they intend to deport Kilmar Abrego Garcia to Uganda after he declined an offer to be sent to Costa Rica in exchange for remaining in jail and pleading guilty to human smuggling charges, his defense attorneys told a court Saturday.

The Costa Rica offer came late Thursday and included a requirement that he remain in jail for the time being and then serve whatever sentence he would receive for pleading guilty, according to a brief filed in Tennessee, where the criminal case was brought. After Abrego Garcia left jail on Friday, Immigration and Customs Enforcement notified his attorneys that he would be deported to Uganda and should report to immigration authorities on Monday.

Later on Friday, “the government informed Mr. Abrego that he has until first thing Monday morning — precisely when he must report to ICE’s Baltimore Field Office — to accept a plea in exchange for deportation to Costa Rica, or else that offer will be off the table forever,” his defense attorneys wrote.

They declined to say whether he is still considering the offer.

Filed along with the brief was a letter from the Costa Rican government stating that Abrego Garcia would be welcomed to that country as a legal immigrant and wouldn’t face the possibility of detention.

Justice Department spokesperson Chad Gilmartin responded to the brief with a statement saying, “A federal grand jury has charged Abrego Garcia with serious federal crimes ... underscoring the clear danger this defendant presents to the community. This defendant can plead guilty and accept responsibility or stand trial before a jury. Either way, we will hold Abrego Garcia accountable and protect the American people.”

Abrego Garcia’s case became a flash point in President Donald Trump’s immigration agenda after he was mistakenly deported to El Salvador in March, despite a judge’s earlier determination that he faced a “well-founded fear” of violence there. Facing a court order, the Trump administration brought him back to the U.S. in June, only to detain him on human smuggling charges.

He pleaded not guilty and asked the judge to dismiss the case, claiming that it is an attempt to punish him for challenging his deportation to El Salvador. The Saturday filing came as a supplement to that motion to dismiss, stating that the threat to deport him to Uganda is more proof that the prosecution is vindictive.

“Despite having requested and received assurances from the government of Costa Rica that Mr. Abrego would be accepted there, within minutes of his release from pretrial custody, an ICE representative informed Mr. Abrego’s counsel that the government intended to deport Mr. Abrego to Uganda,” his attorneys wrote in their filing.

The smuggling charges stem from a 2022 traffic stop in Tennessee for speeding. There were nine passengers in the car, and officers discussed among themselves their suspicions of smuggling. However, Abrego Garcia was allowed to continue driving with only a warning.

Abrego Garcia has an American wife and children and has lived in Maryland for years. Although he was deemed eligible for pretrial release last month, he remained in jail at the request of his attorneys, who feared the Republican administration could try to immediately deport him again if he were freed. A recent ruling in a separate case in Maryland required ICE to provide 72 hours’ notice before initiating deportation proceedings — time to allow a prospective deportee to mount a defense. An email from ICE sent to attorneys at 4:01 p.m. on Friday refers to that decision.

“Please let this email serve as notice that DHS may remove your client, Kilmar Armando Abrego Garcia, to Uganda no earlier than 72 hours from now (absent weekends),” it states. Uganda recently agreed to take deportees from the U.S., provided they do not have criminal records and are not unaccompanied minors.

Federal officials have argued that Abrego Garcia can be deported because he came to the U.S. illegally and because a U.S. immigration judge deemed him eligible for expulsion in 2019, just not to his native El Salvador.

Simon Sandoval-Moshenberg, Abrego Garcia’s lead attorney in the Maryland lawsuit against the Trump

administration, said in a statement Saturday that the government is trying to use the immigration system to punish his client by "attempting to send him halfway across the world, to a country with documented human rights abuses and where he does not even speak the language."

Israeli strikes and gunfire kill 33 as Gaza City becomes focus of famine and a military offensive

By MARIAM DAGGA and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli strikes and gunfire killed at least 33 Palestinians in Gaza on Saturday, including people sheltering in tents or seeking scarce food, local hospitals said as a famine in Gaza's largest city puts new pressure on Israel over its 22-month offensive.

Israel's defense minister has warned that Gaza City could be destroyed in a new military operation perhaps just days away, even as famine spreads there.

Aid groups have long warned that the war, sparked by Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack, and months of Israeli restrictions on food and medical supplies entering Gaza are causing starvation.

Israel has rejected the data-based famine declaration as "an outright lie." Ceasefire efforts are on hold as mediators await Israel's next steps.

Women and children struck and killed in tents

Israeli strikes killed at least 17 people in southern Gaza, more than half of them women and children, according to morgue records and health officials at Nasser Hospital. The officials said the strikes targeted tents sheltering displaced people in Khan Yunis.

"Awad, why did you leave me?" a small boy asked his brother's plastic-wrapped body.

Another grieving relative, Hekmat Foujo, pleaded for a truce.

"We want to rest," Foujo said through her tears. "Have some mercy on us."

In northern Gaza, Israeli gunfire killed at least five aid-seekers near the Zikim crossing with Israel, where U.N. and other truck convoys enter the territory, health officials at Sheikh Radwan field hospital told the AP.

The Palestinian Journalists Syndicate said cameraman Khaled al-Madhoun was killed while covering events at the Zikim crossing, and asserted that he was targeted by Israeli troops. The local Palestine TV confirmed his death.

Eleven people were killed in attacks elsewhere, according to hospitals and the Palestinian Red Crescent.

Israel's military said it was not aware of a strike in Khan Yunis at that location and was looking into the other incidents.

AP journalists have seen chaos on roads leading to aid deliveries, and there have been almost daily reports of Israeli troops firing toward aid-seekers. Israel's military says it fires warning shots if people approach troops or pose a threat.

Braving gunfire and crowds for food

Mohamed Saada was among thousands seeking food in the Zikim area — and one of many who left empty-handed. He cited the "huge numbers of people," the shootings and "trucks running over people."

Some carried sacks of food like lentils and flour. Others carried the wounded, including on a wooden pallet. They navigated fetid puddles and the rubble of war as temperatures reached above 92 degrees Fahrenheit (33 Celsius).

Friday's famine report by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification said nearly half a million people — about one-fourth of Gaza's population — face catastrophic hunger.

The rare pronouncement came after Israel imposed a 2 1/2-month blockade on Gaza earlier this year, then resumed some access with a focus on a new U.S.-backed private aid supplier, the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation.

In response to global outrage over images of emaciated children, Israel has also allowed airdrops and new deliveries by land, but the U.N. and others say it's far from enough.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office asserts it has allowed enough aid to enter during the war, while accusing Hamas of starving the hostages it holds.

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An increase in Israeli airstrikes this month

With ground troops already active in Gaza City's outskirts, the military operation could start within days in an area with hundreds of thousands of civilians. Israel says Gaza City is still a Hamas stronghold, with a network of militant tunnels.

Aid group Doctors without Borders, or MSF, said its clinics around Gaza City see high numbers of patients as people flee. Caroline Willemen, MSF project coordinator there, noted a marked increase in airstrikes since early August.

"Those who have not moved are wondering what they should do," she told the AP. "People want to stay, they have been displaced endlessly before, but they also know that at some point it will become very dangerous to remain."

Ceasefire efforts await Israel's response

Many Israelis fear the assault on Gaza City could doom the 20 hostages who are believed to have survived since 2023. Another 30 are thought to be dead. Hundreds of thousands of Israelis protested a week ago for a deal to end the fighting and bring everyone home.

"Anyone who truly wants to bring the hostages home does not launch a ground invasion of Gaza," Yotam Cohen, brother of hostage Nimrod Cohen, said ahead of a weekly rally in Tel Aviv.

Netanyahu said Thursday he had instructed officials to begin immediate negotiations to release hostages and end the war on Israel's terms. It was unclear if Israel would return to talks mediated by the United States, Egypt and Qatar after Hamas said it accepted a new proposal from Arab mediators.

Hamas has said it will release hostages in exchange for ending the war, but rejects disarming without the creation of a Palestinian state.

U.S. President Donald Trump has expressed frustration with Hamas' stance, suggesting the militant group is less interested in making deals with few hostages left alive.

"I actually think (the hostages are) safer in many ways if you went in and you really went in fast and you did it," Trump told reporters Friday.

Gaza's Health Ministry said at least 62,622 Palestinians have been killed in the war, including missing people now confirmed dead by a special ministry judicial committee.

The number of malnutrition-related deaths rose by eight to 281, the ministry said.

Israeli protest against far-right security minister

A small group of Israelis protested against the far-right national security minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir, as he walked to a synagogue in Kfar Malal, north of Tel Aviv. Videos showed the minister arguing with the protesters.

"We don't want him in our village. Our message is to bring back the hostages," one of the protesters, Boaz Levinstein, told the AP.

Ben-Gvir is a key partner in Netanyahu's political coalition and a staunch opponent of reaching a deal with Hamas, which hostages' families see as the only way to secure the release of loved ones.

Texas Gov. Abbott says he'll swiftly sign new maps on his desk that will boost GOP in 2026

By JIM VERTUNO, JOEY CAPPELLETTI and HALLIE GOLDEN Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas Gov. Greg Abbott on Saturday promised to quickly sign off on a new, Republican-leaning congressional voting map gerrymandered to help the GOP maintain its slim majority in Congress.

"One Big Beautiful Map has passed the Senate and is on its way to my desk, where it will be swiftly signed into law," Abbott said in a statement.

Texas lawmakers approved the final plans just hours before, inflaming an already tense battle unfolding among states as governors from both parties pledge to redraw maps with the goal of giving their political candidates a leg up in the 2026 midterm elections.

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In California, Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom has approved a special election to take place in November for residents to vote on a redrawn congressional map designed to help Democrats win five more House seats next year.

Meanwhile, President Donald Trump has pushed other Republican-controlled states, including Indiana and Missouri, to also revise their maps to add more winnable GOP seats. Ohio Republicans were also already scheduled to revise their maps to make them more partisan.

In Texas, the map includes five new districts that would favor Republicans.

Democrats vow to challenge it in court

The effort by Trump and Texas' Republican-majority Legislature prompted state Democrats to hold a two-week walkout and kicked off a wave of redistricting efforts across the country.

Democrats had prepared for a final show of resistance, with plans to push the Senate vote into the early morning hours in a last-ditch attempt to delay passage. Yet Republicans blocked those efforts by citing a rule violation.

"What we have seen in this redistricting process has been maneuvers and mechanisms to shut down people's voices," said state Sen. Carol Alvarado, leader of the Senate Democratic caucus, on social media after the new map was finalized by the GOP-controlled Senate.

Democrats had already delayed the bill's passage during hours of debate, pressing Republican Sen. Phil King, the measure's sponsor, on the proposal's legality, with many alleging that the redrawn districts violate the Voting Rights Act by diluting voters' influence based on race.

King vehemently denied that accusation, saying, "I had two goals in mind: That all maps would be legal and would be better for Republican congressional candidates in Texas."

"There is extreme risk the Republican majority will be lost" in the House if the map does not pass, King said.

Battle for the House waged via redistricting

On a national level, the partisan makeup of existing districts puts Democrats within three seats of a majority. The incumbent president's party usually loses seats in the midterms.

The Texas redraw is already reshaping the 2026 race, with Democratic Rep. Lloyd Doggett, the dean of the state's congressional delegation, announcing Thursday that he will not seek reelection to his Austin-based seat if the new map takes effect. Under the proposed map, Doggett's district would overlap with that of another Democratic incumbent, Rep. Greg Casar.

Redistricting typically occurs once a decade, immediately after a census. While some states have their own limitations, there is no national impediment to a state trying to redraw districts in the middle of the decade.

The U.S. Supreme Court in 2019 ruled that the Constitution does not prohibit partisan gerrymandering to increase a party's clout, only gerrymandering that's explicitly done by race.

'Fight fire with fire'

More Democratic-run states have commission systems like California's or other redistricting limits than Republican ones do, leaving the GOP with a freer hand to swiftly redraw maps. New York, for example, cannot draw new maps until 2028, and even then only with voter approval.

Republicans and some Democrats championed a 2008 ballot measure that established California's nonpartisan redistricting commission, along with a 2010 one that extended its role to drawing congressional maps.

Both sides have shown concern over what the redistricting war could lead to.

California Assemblyman James Gallagher, the Republican minority leader, said Trump was "wrong" to push for new Republican seats elsewhere. But he warned that Newsom's approach, which the governor has dubbed "fight fire with fire," is dangerous.

"You move forward fighting fire with fire, and what happens?" Gallagher asked. "You burn it all down."

Pope affirms right of people to return home after unjust exile in meeting with Chagos refugees

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pope Leo XIV strongly affirmed the right of people to return to their homes after an unjust exile, issuing the message during an audience Saturday with refugees from Chagos, the Indian Ocean archipelago that is home to the strategic U.S.-U.K. military base.

"No one can force them into exile," history's first American pope said.

Leo met with a delegation of about 15 refugees from Chagos, some 2,000 of whom who were evicted from their homes by Britain in the 1960s and 1970s so the United States could build a naval and bomber base on the largest of the islands, Diego Garcia.

Displaced islanders fought for years in U.K. courts for the right to go home. In May, Britain and Mauritius signed a treaty to hand sovereignty over the islands to Mauritius that allows resettlement, while still ensuring the future of the base.

'A grave injustice'

Leo told the refugees he was "delighted" the treaty had been reached, saying it represented a "significant victory" in their long battle to "repair a grave injustice. He praised in particular the role of the Chagossian women in peacefully asserting their rights to go home.

"The renewed prospect of your return to your native archipelago is an encouraging sign and a powerful symbol on the international stage," Leo said in French. "All peoples, even the smallest and weakest, must be respected by the powerful in their identity and rights, in particular the right to live on their land; and no one can force them into exile."

Leo said he hoped that Mauritian authorities will commit to ensuring their return, and pledged the help of the local Catholic Church.

One of the last remnants of the British Empire, the Chagos Islands have been under U.K. control since 1814. Britain split the islands away from Mauritius, a former British colony, in 1965, three years before Mauritius gained independence.

Under the May agreement, the U.K. will pay Mauritius an average of 101 million pounds (\$136 million) a year to lease back the base for at least 99 years. It establishes a trust fund to benefit the Chagossians and says "Mauritius is free to implement a program of resettlement" on the islands other than Diego Garcia.

However, the deal does not require the residents to be resettled, and some displaced islanders fear it will be even harder to return to their place of birth after Mauritius takes control.

Plans to go home

Philippe Sands, the international lawyer who represented Mauritius in the dispute and long championed the Chagossians' right to go home, said the pope's words were enormously important. He noted the intimate private audience, originally expected to be part of a general audience, was apparently instigated by Leo himself.

"The words spoken by His Holiness offered clear support for the urgent return of Chagossians to the islands from which they were deported and sent the clearest possible signal to the governments of Britain, United States and Mauritius that the Vatican expects the Chagossians to be able to return and remake their lives," he told The Associated Press after the audience.

Louis Olivier Bancoult, the head of the Chagossian delegation who has fought for more than four decades for the right to go home, said the meeting had come together very much at the last minute thanks to the bishop in Port Louis, Mauritius.

Speaking to the AP at a cafe near the Vatican, he marveled that ever since the treaty had been signed, he had met for the first time with officials from the U.S. Embassy in Port Louis. He also received representatives of the British high commission in the capital.

"For me its a miracle," he said. "After the U.S., the U.K. and now the pope. Who will be next?"

Preparations, including the building of infrastructure on the islands, now must begin to allow the forcibly deported Chagossians, like himself, to go home.

Bancoult was four when his family was forcibly evicted from their home on the island of Peros Banhos, with the British designating him a "contract laborer" with no right of permanent residence, Sands said.

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"Now we have the blessing of God," Bancoult said, displaying a statute of the Madonna that he brought to Leo to be blessed and will be taken to Chagos.

Pope Francis visited Mauritius in 2019 and met briefly with a group of Chagossians during a general audience at the Vatican in 2023. Francis told reporters en route home from Mauritius in 2019 that Britain should obey the United Nations and return the islands to Mauritius.

Today in History: August 24, Hurricane Andrew strikes Florida

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Sunday, Aug. 24, the 236th day of 2025. There are 129 days left in the year.

Today in history: On August 24, 1992, Hurricane Andrew smashed into Florida; the storm resulted in 65 deaths and caused more than \$26 billion in damage across Florida, Louisiana and the Bahamas.

In 1814, during the War of 1812, British forces invaded Washington, D.C., setting fire to the still-under-construction Capitol and the White House, as well as other public buildings.

In 1912, Congress passed a measure creating the Alaska Territory.

In 1932, Amelia Earhart embarked on a 19-hour flight from Los Angeles to Newark, New Jersey, making her the first woman to fly solo, non-stop, from coast to coast.

In 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty came into force.

In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the Communist Control Act, outlawing the Communist Party in the United States.

In 1981, Mark David Chapman was sentenced in New York to 20 years to life in prison for murdering John Lennon.

In 1989, Baseball Commissioner A. Bartlett Giamatti (juh-MAH'-tee) banned Pete Rose from the game for betting on his own team, the Cincinnati Reds.

In 1991, in response to a coup attempt by hardline Communist leaders attempting to reassert control over the Soviet Union, Ukrainian parliamentarians voted to approve a Declaration of Independence for the state of Ukraine.

In 2006, the International Astronomical Union declared that Pluto was no longer a full-fledged planet, demoting it to the status of a "dwarf planet."

In 2012, a Norwegian court found Anders Behring Breivik guilty of terrorism and premeditated murder for twin attacks on July 22, 2011, that killed 77 people; he received a 21-year prison sentence that can be extended as long as he is considered dangerous to society.

In 2018, the family of Arizona Sen. John McCain announced that he had discontinued medical treatment for an aggressive form of brain cancer; McCain died the following day.

In 2019, police in Aurora, Colorado, responding to a report of a suspicious person, used a chokehold to subdue Elijah McClain, a 23-year-old Black man; he suffered cardiac arrest on the way to the hospital and was later declared brain dead and taken off life support.

In 2020, Republicans formally nominated President Donald Trump for a second term on the opening day of a scaled-down convention; during a visit to the convention city of Charlotte, North Carolina, Trump told delegates that "the only way they can take this election away from us is if this is a rigged election."

Today's Birthdays: Composer-musician Mason Williams is 87. R&B singer Marshall Thompson (The Chilites) is 83. WWE co-founder Vince McMahon is 80. Author Paulo Coelho is 78. Actor Anne Archer is 78. Author Alexander McCall Smith is 77. Composer Jean-Michel Jarre is 77. Author Orson Scott Card is 74. Poet Linton Kwesi Johnson is 73. Actor Kevin Dunn is 70. Former Arkansas governor and political commentator Mike Huckabee is 70. Actor-writer Stephen Fry is 68. Actor Steve Guttenberg is 67. Baseball Hall of Famer Cal Ripken Jr. is 65. Actor Jared Harris is 64. Talk show host Craig Kilborn is 63. Actor Marlee Matlin is 60. Basketball Hall of Famer Reggie Miller is 60. Film director Ava DuVernay is 53. Actor-comedian Dave Chappelle is 52. Actor James D'Arcy is 51. Actor Carmine Giovinazzo (jee-oh-vihn-AH'-zoh) is 52. Actor Alex O'Loughlin is 49. Author John Green is 48. Actor Chad Michael Murray is 44. Actor Rupert Grint is 37. Basketball player Kelsey Plum is 31.