

Groton Daily Independent

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Monday., Sept. 1

LABOR DAY

Soccer at Mitchell (Girls at 11 a.m., Boys at 1 p.m.)

Homecoming Coronation, 8 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 2

School Breakfast: Muffins.

School Lunch: Tater tot hot dish, corn.

St. John's Lutheran: Ladies LWML, 1 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Boys Golf at Hub City Invitational (Lee Park), 10 a.m.

Football hosts Ellendale/Edgeley/Kulm, JH at 4 p.m., JV at 5 p.m.

Volleyball at Ipswich: 7th at 5 p.m.; C at 5 p.m., 8th at 6 p.m., JV at 6 p.m., Varsity to follow.

Wednesday, Sept 3

School Breakfast: Oatmeal

School Lunch: Pasta Primavera, cooked broccoli.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Confirmation, 5:30 p.m.



Groton C&MA: Kid's Club, Youth Group, Adult Bible Study, 7 p.m.

Groton Chamber Meeting, noon City Hall

Thursday., Sept 4

School Breakfast: Maple French Toast Bake.

School Lunch: Sloppy Joe, potato wedges

Emmanuel Lutheran: Nigeria Circle, 2 p.m.

Volleyball: Sisseton at Groton: (Gym: 7th-5, 8th-6; Arena: C-5, JV-6, V-7:15)

Cross Country at Redfield, 10 a.m.

Friday, Sept. 5

School Breakfast: Breakfast boats.

School Lunch: Hot dogs, baked beans.

Homecoming Parade, 1 p.m.

Football hosts Winner, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Sept 6

Groton Fly-In/Drive-in at Groton Municipal Airport

Fall City Wide Rummage Sale, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Junior High Volleyball Tournament at Northwestern, 9 a.m.

Soccer hosts West Central (Girls at noon, Boys at 2 p.m.)

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

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An NFL roster is like a block of wood. The best way to shape it is to cut it down, whittle by whittle. That's exactly what the Vikings did this week, trimming the roster from 91 to 53. Let's take a look at the final roster, which included a trade for a familiar face and signing a guy off his couch to play one of the most important roles on the team.

Quarterback – J.J. McCarthy, Carson Wentz, Max Brosmer

Despite trading for Sam Howell this offseason to be the backup QB, the Vikings weren't thrilled with what they saw out of him this offseason, so they traded him to Philadelphia and signed former Eagle and NDSU star Carson Wentz to be the primary backup. In a twist of irony, in order to make room on their roster, the Eagles cut former Vikings first-round bust Lewis Cine. Undrafted rookie Max

Brosmer will be QB3 after impressing in the preseason.

Running back – Aaron Jones Sr., Jordan Mason, Ty Chandler, Xavier Scott

Jones and Mason will be the team's primary ball carriers this season. Ty Chandler will likely be cut once fullback C.J. Ham comes back from IR.

Wide receiver – Justin Jefferson, Adam Thielen(!), Jalen Nailor, Tai Felton, Myles Price

With Jordan Addison beginning the season on the suspended list and Jalen Nailor dealing with an injury, the Vikings made a trade to bring back Adam Thielen. It's unclear how much the 35-year-old has left in the tank, but he knows the offense and has worked out with McCarthy the past two offseasons, so there is already some chemistry there.

Tight end – T.J. Hockenson, Josh Oliver, Ben Yurosek

Rookie Gavin Bartholomew will begin the season on the Physically Unable to Perform list due to a back injury that may keep him out for the entire season.

Offensive line – Christian Darrisaw, Donovan Jackson, Ryan Kelly, Will Fries, Brian O'Neill, Blake Brandel, Joe Huber, Michael Jurgens, Walter Rouse, Justin Skule

The Vikings keeping 10 offensive linemen was a mild surprise, especially since they carried nine last year and only eight in 2023. With several players expected back from injury in the coming weeks, this feels like a position where a cut could still be made to open up a roster spot.

Defensive line – Jonathan Allen, Javon Hargrave, Jalen Redmond, Tyrion Ingram-Dawkins, Levi Drake Rodriguez, Elijah Williams

The Vikings traded Harrison Phillips to the New York Jets to make room for their younger, ascending talent. One of the best stories to come out of camp is Elijah Williams. The undrafted rookie earned a training camp invite after impressing at a regional tryout, then built on that momentum in the preseason to earn a spot on the active roster.

Edge rusher – Jonathan Greenard, Andrew Van Ginkel, Dallas Turner, Bo Richter, Chaz Chambliss

The Vikings elected to go with undrafted rookie Chaz Chambliss over 2nd-year player Gabriel Murphy. I expected Murphy to make the 53-man roster after an impressive preseason, but the team decided to stash him on the practice squad instead.

Linebacker – Blake Cashman, Ivan Pace Jr., Eric Wilson, Kobe King, Austin Keys

Austin Keys is one of seven undrafted rookies to make the 53-man roster, along with Max Brosmer, Myles Price, Ben Yurosek, Joe Huber, Elijah Williams, and Chaz Chambliss.

Cornerback – Byron Murphy Jr., Isaiah Rodgers, Jeff Okudah, Dwight McGlothern

The cornerback position was a question mark coming into training camp, and it remains so after the Vikings only kept four CBs on the 53-man roster. Frankly, I'm surprised they haven't made any moves (yet) to shore up this important position, whether through a trade or signing a free agent like Asante Samuel Jr. or Stephon Gilmore. Shaquill Griffin, who is currently on the Seahawks' practice squad, is another possibility.

Safety – Harrison Smith, Joshua Metellus, Theo Jackson, Jay Ward, Tavierre Thomas

No surprises here. With Cam Bynum now in Indianapolis, Metellus will be the starter next to Harrison Smith.

Special teams – Will Reichard (kicker), Ryan Wright (punter), Andrew DePaola (long snapper)

The only question here: can DePaola make it to four consecutive Pro Bowls?

Looking ahead, the Vikings will open the regular season against the Chicago Bears on Monday Night Football. All eyes will be on quarterback J.J. McCarthy, who has big shoes to fill replacing Sam Darnold, who won 14 games last season and led the Vikings to the playoffs. I expect the Vikings to lean heavily on the ground game and their defense as the young QB begins his NFL journey. Skol!

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Lucky For Life Second Prize Winner Purchased in Fort Pierre

PIERRE, S.D. – While a rising Powerball jackpot has generated excitement, Sunday's Lucky for Life drawing made a player's Labor Day weekend a winning one.

Sunday's Lucky for Life drawing resulted in a second prize winner. Lucky for Life's second prize gives the winning player the option of \$25,000 a year for life or a one-time payment of \$390,000.

The winning ticket was purchased at Dakotamart in Fort Pierre, and the winning numbers were 13, 14, 19, 25 and 28 with a Lucky Ball of 6.

The South Dakota Lottery advises the winner to sign the back of the ticket immediately and consult with a financial advisor before claiming the prize. The prize may be claimed by visiting any South Dakota Lottery redemption center.

The prize may be claimed at the South Dakota Lottery's Pierre validation center is located at 711 E. Wells Ave. Sunday's second prize winner marks the 10th Lucky for Life second prize winner since the game's South Dakota debut in 2017.

While the Lucky for Life game produced fireworks Sunday, Powerball's Monday drawing will feature a \$1.1 billion jackpot. This is the fifth largest Powerball jackpot of all time.

The state's General Fund, which supports K-12 schools, state universities and technical institutes, receives 70 percent of net revenue from lotto games such as Lucky for Life. The state's Capital Construction Fund receives the remaining 30 percent. This supports the Water and Environment Fund, the Ethanol Fuel Fund, and the State Highway Fund.

Gov. Rhoden Mobilizes SDNG to DC at the Request of President Trump

PIERRE, S.D. – Today, Governor Larry Rhoden announced the mobilization of 12 South Dakota National Guardsmen to support ongoing operations in Washington D.C. at the request of President Donald J. Trump.

"South Dakota stands in solidarity with President Trump and his efforts to Make America Safe Again," said Governor Larry Rhoden. "With the National Guard's help, President Trump has restored law and order to our nation's capital – and our guardsmen will help keep it that way. We will not sit on the sidelines while crime threatens the safety of our families."

The 12 public affairs guardsmen are from the 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment based out of Rapid City. They will serve in a public affairs capacity in the joint information command center.

This mobilization is under the command of the D.C. National Guard and is completely federally funded. The guardsmen will activate on a Title 32 status. The initial deployment is expected to last for 30 days.

For the safety of the guardsmen and their families, the announcement of this mobilization was held until the guardsmen were safely on site.

Names Released in Hand County Fatal Crash

What: Multi-vehicle fatal crash

Where: US Highway 14 and 346th Avenue, six miles east of Highmore, SD

When: 10:06 a.m., Wednesday, August 27, 2025

Driver 1: Marvyn Heaton, 78-year-old male from Redfield, SD, no injuries

Vehicle 1: Harley Davidson

Helmet Used: No

Driver 2: Dorothy Jean Heaton, 77-year-old female from Redfield, SD, fatal injuries

Vehicle 2: 2001 Harley Davidson

Helmet Used: No

Driver 3: Sherrie Johnson, 70-year-old female from Tulare, SD, non-life-threatening injuries

Vehicle 3: 2021 Can-Am Spyder

Helmet Used: Yes

Driver 4: Adam Russell Ray, 45-year-old male from Huron, SD, minor injuries

Vehicle 4: 2008 Chevrolet K1500

Seat belt Used: No

Hand County, S.D.- Three people were injured, one fatally, in a multi-vehicle crash six miles east of Highmore, SD Wednesday morning.

Preliminary crash information indicates three motorcycles were traveling westbound on US Highway 14 near 346th Avenue. Adam Russell Ray, the driver of a 2008 Chevrolet K1500, traveling eastbound, crossed the center line and began driving on the wrong side of the road. The first motorcyclist, Marvyn Heaton, was able to avoid the Chevrolet. The second motorcyclist, Dorothy Jean Heaton, collided head-on with the Chevrolet, and the third motorcyclist, Sherrie Johnson, avoided a collision by riding into the ditch where she lost control and became separated from her motorcycle.

Marvyn Heaton was uninjured. Dorothy Heaton sustained fatal injuries, and Johnson sustained non-life-threatening injuries. Ray sustained minor injuries.

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

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

Nurturing Active Childhoods in a High-Tech World

Long before children say their first words or pick up a pencil, they're learning through their bodies. They kick, reach, roll, crawl and explore - hardwired to interact with the world through movement. From the very beginning, motor and sensory experiences are how babies discover their environment and how their brains begin to grow and organize.

Simply put, our bodies in motion are the vehicles through which we learn. When children move, their brains light up. Their senses, muscles, emotions and attention systems all come online and begin working together. Through active exploration, children build the foundations of their sensory, perceptual and cognitive systems.

Movement and imaginative play stimulate both brain and body, supporting not only strength and coordination but also emotional regulation, adaptive behaviors and social connection. A child building a tower of blocks isn't just learning fine motor skills; they're developing attention, problem-solving and perseverance. Free play fosters communication, cooperation and confidence. Movement is how learning begins ... and how it continues to unfold.

Yet despite all we know about the power of movement, children today grow up in an environment where active play is often displaced by screen time. Screens are nearly unavoidable and are often used to entertain, educate or soothe. For many families, technology helps manage the demands of modern life. But when screen use regularly replaces hands-on, movement-rich experiences, opportunities for growth are lost.

A child passively watching a screen misses the sensory variety, trial-and-error learning and face-to-face interaction that come from real-world play. Over time, this shift can influence motor skills, attention, emotional regulation, sleep and readiness to learn, which are essential for thriving in school, relationships and everyday routines.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under 18 months avoid screen use altogether, and that children ages 2-5 be limited to no more than one hour of high-quality content per day. These guidelines aren't about restriction for its own sake; they reflect what we know about how children learn best - through movement, play and real-world interaction.

Movement is also one of the most reliable indicators of healthy development. Nearly 9 out of 10 young children in the U.S. meet national physical activity guidelines. This number drops sharply with age. By 6 to 17 years, only about a quarter of children meet these standards. As screen time increases and free time shrinks, children's need for movement can quietly go unmet.

This steady trend of rising screen use and declining physical activity doesn't mean we need to eliminate technology. Rather, we need to be more intentional about preserving time for play. Supporting active childhoods means prioritizing daily opportunities for whole-body movement, open-ended exploration and connection. That might look like a walk after dinner, dancing in the kitchen, building a blanket fort or inviting your child to help prepare a meal.

As pediatric physical therapists, educators and parents, we see the impact of movement every day. Children don't need expensive equipment or curated experiences. They need time, space and encouragement to move through their world and learn as they go. Fostering imagination, exploration and meaningful interactions with peers and caring adults helps children grow into strong, curious and resilient individuals.

For guidance on creating a balanced media plan, visit:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/hhh.aspx>

Patti Berg-Poppe is a physical therapist and professor and chair of USD's Department of Physical Therapy, where she also directs the Program for Advancing Early Childhood Intervention (PACE-i). She has extensive experience in pediatric physical therapy and early intervention, with a focus on preparing future professionals to support development through play, movement and family-centered care.

Hsin-yi "Tanya" Liu is a pediatric physical therapist and researcher with expertise in early childhood development, mobility and assistive technology. She has practiced in both Taiwan and the United States and currently serves as assistant professor within USD's Department of Physical Therapy. Her work focuses on how play, movement and adaptive tools support motor and social development in children.

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EARTHTALK

Dear EarthTalk: I heard that VW and Toyota were fined for cheating on emissions tests for new vehicles. Why did they do this and are all of the car companies likely cheating? – B.C., Boston, MA

Emissions testing plays an essential role in controlling vehicle pollution and conserving the environment. These evaluations confirm that vehicles comply with legal regulations for the release of harmful gases such as carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxides. Nonetheless, certain car producers have been discovered to be cheating in these evaluations.

The main motive for is monetary. Achieving emissions standards frequently necessitates costly technologies such as sophisticated catalytic converters or more environmentally friendly engine designs. For car manufacturers, these enhancements may reduce profits or increase vehicle prices for buyers, possibly leading to lower sales. By engaging in deceit, companies can evade these expenses while still seeming to adhere to regulations. Moreover, tougher emissions regulations in areas such as the European Union and the U.S. exert notable pressure on manufacturers to innovate quickly. When deadlines appear unattainable, certain automakers resort to shortcuts by altering test outcomes.

Cheating also helps preserve a company's reputation. For example, VW heavily marketed its "Clean Diesel" vehicles as Eco-friendly alternatives, but later investigations revealed the use of defeat devices—software designed to manipulate results during tests. These devices made cars appear cleaner while emitting up to 40 times the legal limit of pollutants in real-world driving. Toyota was recently fined for cheating, showing that even trusted industry leaders sometimes prioritize profits over compliance.

Other manufacturers have also faced accusations. Nissan falsified emissions data in Japan due to poorly managed testing systems. Opel was also found using defeat devices in Europe in 2015. And BMW was involved in an "emissions cartel" that sought to limit progress in AdBlue, a technology designed to decrease nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions. Even Mercedes-Benz faced allegations of using defeat devices, though the company refutes the claims. John Stoll explains, "The emissions information says what the test needs it to say so that it passes regulatory tests. And then in real-world conditions, it emits far more of the harmful emissions such as NOx into the air than is legally allowed."

While it's unlikely that every car company cheats, the problem appears widespread enough to warrant concern. Weak enforcement and the potential for profit make cheating an attractive option for unethical companies. Nonetheless, many manufacturers do focus on compliance and put resources into cleaner technologies, demonstrating that innovation can occur without resorting to fraud.

To tackle emissions fraud, authorities need to enhance enforcement and apply stricter penalties. Third-party organizations should handle emissions tests to ensure impartiality, and carmakers should be incentivized to develop sustainable technologies. As consumers, we can help by choosing vehicles that have confirmed eco-friendly certifications, and insisting on increased transparency from carmakers.



Volkswagen and Toyota aren't the only automakers trying to game the system to their advantage by falsifying data and other means... Credit: Roddy Scheer.

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Upcoming Events on GDILIVE.COM

GT on

Groton
Area
Tigers
Groton, SD



GDILIVE

YouTube

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For more info: [GDILIVE.COM](https://gdilive.com)

Homecoming Coronation
Mon., Sept. 1, 2026
8 p.m.



PAETZNIK-GARNES FUNERAL CHAPEL

Funeral Service
Joan Fahrenwald
10:30 a.m., Tues., Sept. 2
UMC, Conde



GDILIVE

YouTube

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Groton Daily Independent

For more info: [GDILIVE.COM](https://gdilive.com)



PAETZNIK-GARNES FUNERAL CHAPEL

Funeral Service
Arletta Peterson
3 p.m., Tues., Sept. 2
Emmanuel Lutheran, Groton



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Groton City Council Meeting
Tuesday, Sept. 2, 2025, 7 p.m.



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Groton, SD

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Volleyball C Match
Groton at Ipswich
Tues., Sept. 2, 5 p.m.



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Area
Tigers
Groton, SD

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Varsity Volleyball
7:15 p.m., Sept. 2, 2026
Groton at Ipswich



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Area
Tigers
Groton, SD

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Varsity Volleyball
7:15 p.m., Sept. 4, 2026
Sisseton at Groton



GT on

Groton
Area
Tigers
Groton, SD

GDILIVE

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For more info: [GDILIVE.COM](https://gdilive.com)

Homecoming Parade
Fri., Sept. 5, 2026
1 p.m.

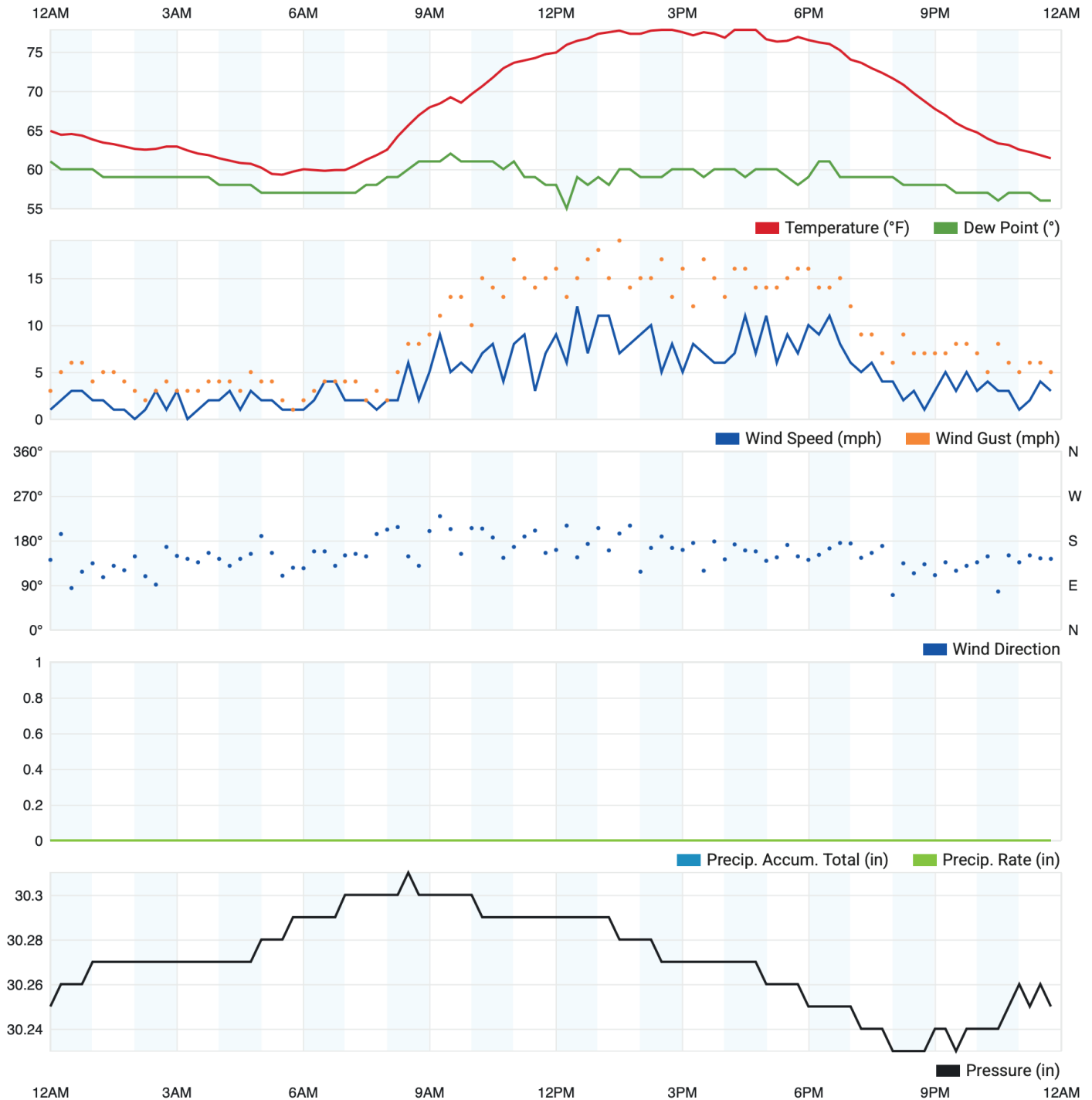


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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

August 1, 2025



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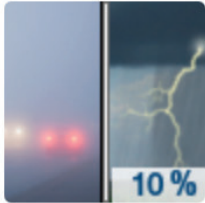
Labor Day

Tonight

Tuesday

Tuesday Night

Wednesday



High: 76 °F

Patchy Fog
then Slight
Chance
T-storms



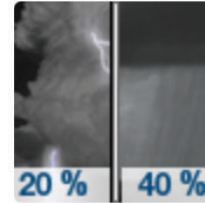
Low: 59 °F

Slight Chance
T-storms



High: 80 °F

Mostly Sunny
then Slight
Chance
T-storms



Low: 52 °F

Slight Chance
T-storms then
Chance
Showers



High: 63 °F

Mostly Sunny



Temperatures On Labor Day And Beyond

September 1, 2025
3:47 AM

→ Day-time highs will fluctuate quite a bit this week

→ Night-time lows could fall to 40 degrees or colder a couple of nights this week

Maximum Temperature Forecast (°F)

	9/1 Mon	9/2 Tue	9/3 Wed	9/4 Thu	9/5 Fri	9/6 Sat	9/7 Sun
Aberdeen	76	82	64	71	65	69	75
Miller	76	82	64	71	64	69	75
Mobridge	79	82	65	74	65	71	76
Murdo	77	84	66	78	68	75	82
Ortonville	75	77	60	64	60	64	68
Pierre	79	86	68	78	69	75	82
Sisseton	76	78	61	66	61	66	70
Watertown	74	78	61	67	61	67	71

Minimum Temperature Forecast (°F)

	9/1 Mon	9/2 Tue	9/3 Wed	9/4 Thu	9/5 Fri	9/6 Sat	9/7 Sun
Aberdeen	58	59	49	40	47	40	44
Miller	58	59	48	41	48	42	47
Mobridge	57	58	50	43	48	42	48
Murdo	55	55	52	43	48	44	50
Ortonville	56	60	48	42	47	43	44
Pierre	58	57	54	44	51	45	52
Sisseton	53	61	47	42	47	43	45
Watertown	58	59	49	41	47	42	45

A roller coaster best describes high and low temperatures this week. A couple of Canada-sourced cold frontal passages this week will knock high temperatures down well below normal for early September. Also worth keeping an eye on with these frontal passages, each airmass that spreads down out of Canada could be drawing some wildfire smoke down into the region.

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THREAT ASSESSMENT

HIGHEST LOCAL RISK

1

WHAT THIS MEANS:
Isolated Severe Storms
Possible

TIMING

5 PM - 11 PM CDT

PRIMARY THREAT



LARGE HAIL
(QUARTER SIZE)

SECONDARY THREATS

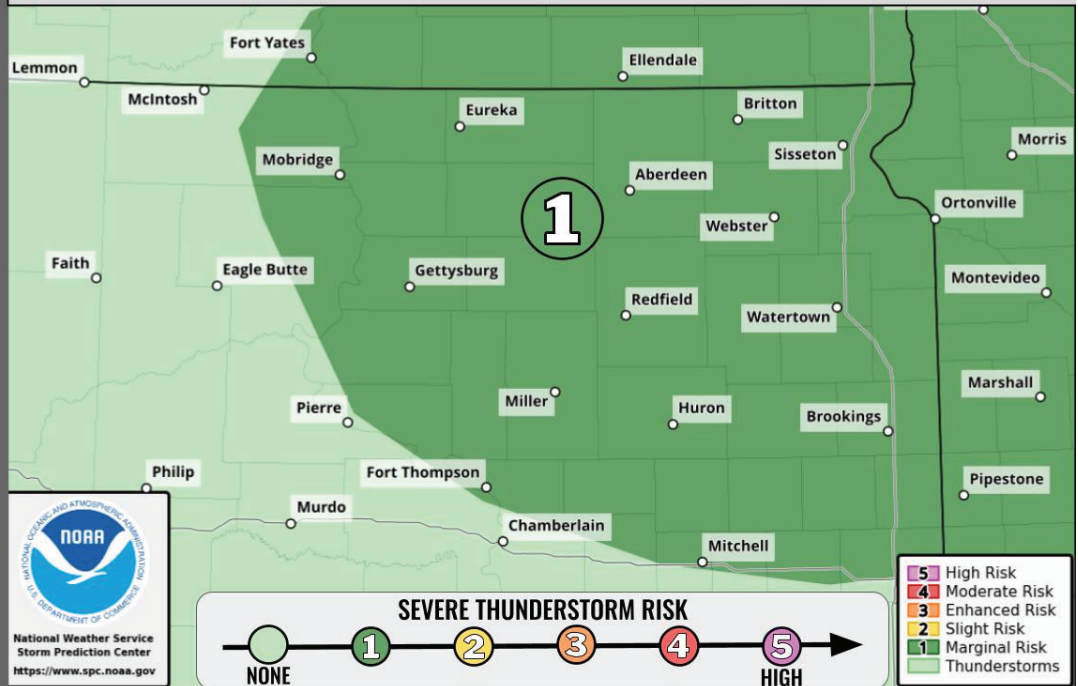


DAMAGING
WIND GUSTS OF
60+ MPH



HEAVY
RAIN

Severe Storms Possible Tuesday Afternoon And Evening



A few strong to severe thunderstorms may develop along a cold front passing through the region Tuesday afternoon and evening. A marginal risk (level 1 of 5) of severe weather covers all of northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota. Hail up to an inch in diameter is the main threat, but thunderstorm wind gusts up to 60 mph are also possible.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 80 °F at 3:38 PM

Low Temp: 63 °F at 3:43 AM

Wind: 12 mph at 12:29 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 102 in 1970

Record Low: 30 in 1893

Average High: 80

Average Low: 52

Average Precip in Sept.: 0.07

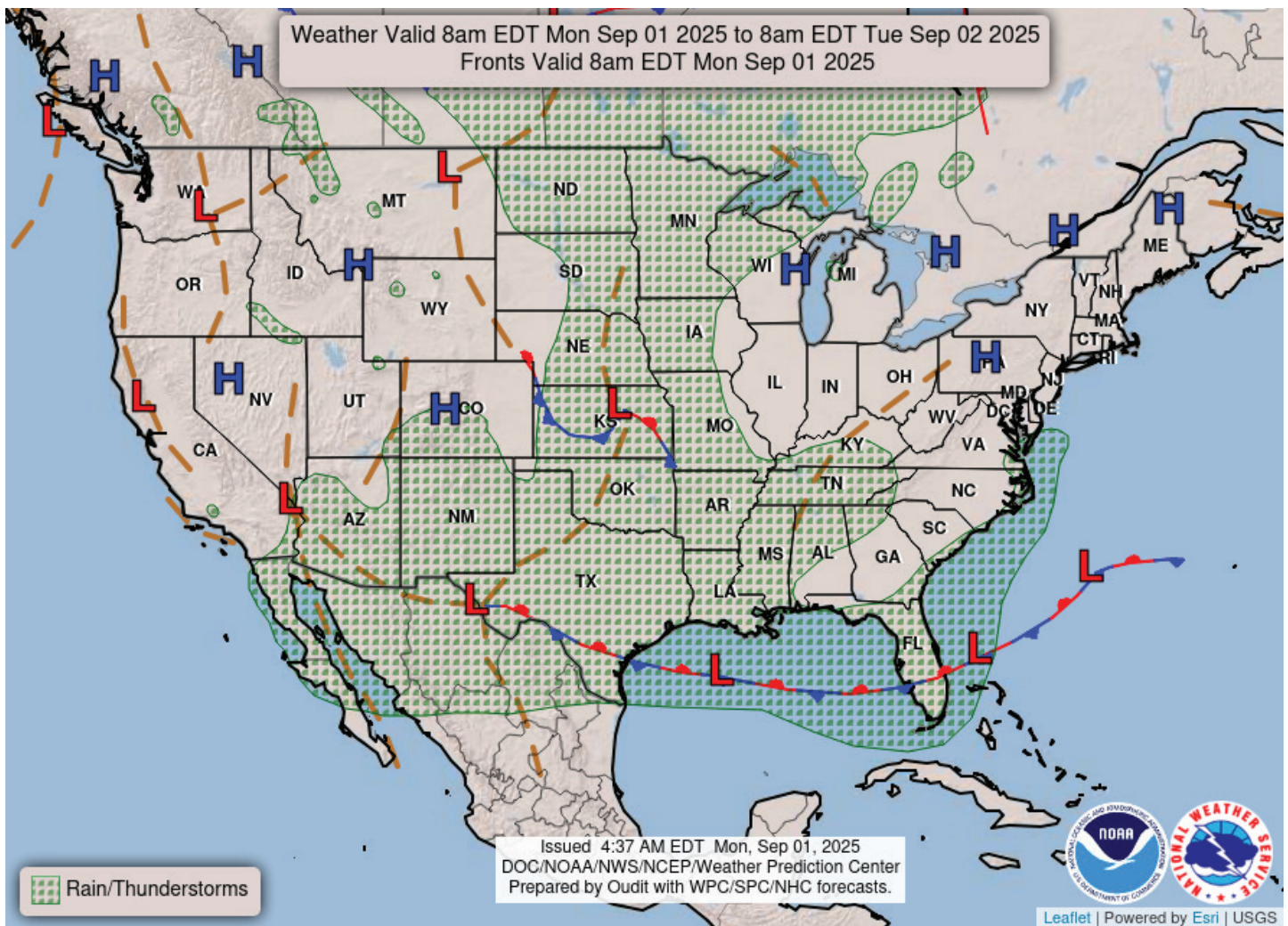
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 16.71

Precip Year to Date: 20.30

Sunset Tonight: 8:10 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:55 am



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Today in Weather History

September 1, 1990: Several severe thunderstorms in northwest South Dakota dropped from penny to softball size hail during the afternoon and early evening hours. The hail caused a good deal of structural damage to houses and farm buildings. The largest hailstone of 4 inches in diameter was reported at Sorum in Perkins County. There was also a wind gust to 86 mph measured at Buffalo during a severe thunderstorm.

September 1, 2010: A couple of weak tornadoes touched down briefly in the late evening west of Tulare with no damage occurring.

1859: One of the largest geomagnetic storms on record occurred on this day in 1859.

1862: The Battle of Ox Hill (or Chantilly) is also known as the only major Civil War battle to have been fought during a storm. "A severe thunderstorm erupted, resulting in limited visibility and an increased dependence on the bayonet, as the rain soaked the ammunition of the infantry and made it useless." From Taylor, Paul. He Hath Loosed the Fateful Lightning: The Battle of Ox Hill (Chantilly), September 1, 1862.

1869: Cleveland Abbe issued the first Weather Bulletin for the city of Cincinnati, Ohio. It contained a few observations telegraphed from distant observers and the "probabilities" for the next day. The bulletin was written by hand.

1894: The Great Hinckley Fire, which burned an area of at least 200,000 acres or perhaps more than 250,000 acres including the town of Hinckley, Minnesota occurred on this day. The official death count was 418 though the actual number of fatalities was likely higher.

1897 - Hailstone drifts six feet deep were reported in Washington County, IA. (The Weather Channel)

1914 - The town of Bloomington, MI, was deluged with 9.78 inches of rain in 24 hours to establish a state record. (31st-1st) (The Weather Channel)

1952: A cold front brought damaging winds to Fort Worth, Texas, including the Carswell Air Force Base where thirty-five B-36 planes received damage. The anemometer indicated 90 mph winds before being smashed by debris.

1955 - The temperature at Los Angeles, CA, soared to an all-time high of 110 degrees during an eight day string of 100 degree weather. (David Ludlum)

1961: An F4 tornado traveled through parts of Butler and Bremer Counties in Iowa. Unfortunately, there is limited information in the Storm Data entry about this event. Per Thomas Grazulis in Significant Tornadoes, the tornado began NW of Dumont and ended NE of Horton. Several farms along the path were "leveled". It was reported at one farm that fruit jars were "sucked out of the basement" after the house was swept away. There were 7 injuries reported with this event and zero fatalities.

1974: Lt. Judy Neuffer became the first female to fly a Hurricane Hunter aircraft through the eye of a hurricane.

1979 - A home in Centerville TN was hit by lightning and totally destroyed. It marked the third time that the house had been hit by lightning since being built in 1970. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Cool Canadian air invaded the Midwest. Six cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Indianapolis IN with a reading of 44 degrees. Hot weather continued in the northwestern U.S. Five cities reported record high temperatures for the date, including Hanover WA, where the mercury soared to 106 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced heavy rain in the Upper Mississippi Valley. Ely, MN, was drenched with three inches of rain in two hours, and pelted with one inch hail. The heavy rain flooded streets and basements, and the high water pressure which resulted blew the covers off manholes. (The National Weather Summary)(Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather in Oklahoma during the late afternoon and evening hours. Thunderstorms produced hail two inches in diameter west of Arapahoe, and wind gusts to 70 mph at Luther and south of Harrah. Early morning thunderstorms over Indiana drenched Kokomo with five to eight inches of rain, and spawned a tornado which injured three persons at Bruce Lake. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2017: The temperature at Downtown San Francisco reached 106° setting their all-time record high. The previous record was 103° on June 14th, 2000.



THE FLAW OF FLATTERY

An old English fable contains a truth well worth repeating.

A crow swooped low over the lunch of a peasant and stole a piece of cheese. A wise fox, watching the crow with jealousy, wanted the cheese for himself.

"O Crow," he said in his most flattering voice, "how beautiful are your wings. How brightly shine your searching eyes. How graceful is your strong, flexible neck. Your chest is the chest of a soaring eagle. Your talons are no match for all the beasts of the field. O that such a bird would lack only a voice."

The crow was thrilled and excited over the flattery. Chuckling to herself, she decided to surprise the fox with her voice. When she opened her mouth, the cheese fell to the ground, and the fox snapped it up and walked away.

A wise man once said, "Flattery is a trap; evil men are caught in it. But the good men stay away and sing for joy."

Flattery is different from encouragement. We give "courage" to those who are struggling with life's problems when we recognize their efforts. We give hope to one who has fallen when we offer a hand to pick them up. We give peace when we smile at one with sadness in their eyes.

Flattery is different. It praises someone for something that is not true or honest because we want to make them feel good about mediocrity - even failure. In the end, it destroys the one we want to help. The Psalmist said, "May the Lord cut off all flattering lips."

False praise, though well-intended, is destructive and deceitful.

Prayer: Lord, may we offer hope to the struggling, help to the weak, encouraging words to the faltering, and recognition to those who do good things! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: May the Lord cut off all flattering lips, And the tongue that speaks proud things, Psalm 12:3

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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.29.25

13 31 32 44 45 21

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$302,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 14 Hrs 57 Mins 6 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.30.25

10 16 19 21 45 2

All Star Bonus: 5x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$2,500,000

NEXT DRAW: 14 Hrs 12 Mins 6 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.31.25

13 14 19 25 28 6

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 14 Hrs 27 Mins 6 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.30.25

1 6 15 25 26

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$20,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 14 Hrs 27 Mins 6 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.30.25

7 15 36 42 65 14

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 14 Hrs 56 Mins 6 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.30.25

3 18 22 27 33 17

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$1,100,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 14 Hrs 56 Mins 6 Secs

[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

Rudy Giuliani injured in New Hampshire car crash, his spokesperson says

By JACK BROOK Associated Press

Rudy Giuliani is recovering from a fractured vertebra and other injuries following a car crash in New Hampshire in which he was a passenger, a spokesperson for the former New York City mayor said Sunday.

Giuliani was being driven in a rented Ford Bronco by his spokesperson Ted Goodman when their vehicle was struck from behind by a Honda HR-V driven by a 19-year-old woman late Saturday evening, New Hampshire State Police said in a statement.

Troopers witnessed the crash, which caused both vehicles to hit the highway median and left them "heavily damaged," state police said. Goodman and the 19-year-old suffered "non-life-threatening injuries" and were taken to hospitals for treatment, the agency added.

State police said they are investigating the crash and no charges have been filed.

Giuliani, 81, was taken to a nearby trauma center and was being treated for a fractured thoracic vertebra, multiple lacerations and contusions, as well as injuries to his left arm and lower leg, according to a statement posted on X by Michael Ragusa, Giuliani's head of security.

Giuliani "sustained injuries but is in good spirits and recovering tremendously," Ragusa said, adding: "This was not a targeted attack."

Prior to the accident, Giuliani had been "flagged down by a woman who was the victim of a domestic violence incident" and contacted police assistance on her behalf, Ragusa said. After police arrived, Giuliani continued on his way and his vehicle was hit shortly after pulling onto the highway in a crash that was "entirely unrelated" to the domestic violence incident, Ragusa told The Associated Press in an emailed statement.

State police said troopers were investigating a domestic violence report on the southbound Interstate 93 highway shortly before 10 p.m. and observed the crash, which occurred on the northbound lanes. Troopers and fire personnel quickly crossed to provide help.

New Hampshire State Police declined to comment on whether Giuliani had contacted the agency regarding the account of a domestic violence incident.

Goodman did not respond to requests for comment and Giuliani's team did not provide additional details about the circumstances surrounding the crash.

"Thank you to all the people that have reached out since learning the news about my Father," Andrew Giuliani, Rudy Giuliani's son, wrote in a post on X. "Your prayers mean the world."

The crash follows some rocky years for the onetime Republican presidential candidate, who was dubbed "America's mayor" in light of his leadership in New York after the Sept. 11 attacks in 2001.

Giuliani later became President Donald Trump's personal attorney for a time and a vocal proponent of Trump's allegations of fraud in the 2020 election, won by Democrat Joe Biden. Trump and his backers lost dozens of lawsuits claiming fraud, and numerous recounts, reviews and audits of the election results turned up no signs of significant wrongdoing or error.

Two former Georgia elections workers later won a \$148 million defamation judgment against Giuliani. As they sought to collect the judgment, the former federal prosecutor was found in contempt of court and faced a trial this winter over the ownership of some of his assets. He ultimately struck a deal that let him keep his homes and various belongings, including prized World Series rings, in exchange for unspecified compensation and a promise to stop speaking ill of the ex-election workers.

China's Xi seeks expanded role for Shanghai Cooperation Organization at Tianjin summit

By HUIZHONG WU Associated Press

TIANJIN, China (AP) — Chinese President Xi Jinping said that China plans to accelerate the creation of a development bank and to set up an international platform for energy cooperation, announcements he made Monday at a summit that represents an emerging challenge to U.S. global leadership.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi were among the leaders meeting in Tianjin, in northern China, for the latest annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The security forum was originally seen as a foil to U.S. influence in Central Asia. It has grown in size and influence over the years.

Xi is attempting to expand the scope of the organization, and on Monday announced the development of the SCO development bank and a cooperation platform for green and energy industries.

He pledged \$1.4 billion in loans over the next three years to the organization's members; these were separate from the plans for the development bank, for which no timeline was released.

He also said he was opening the way for the member states to use China's BeiDou satellite system, an alternative to GPS, which is controlled by the U.S.

China on message

In his remarks, Xi stressed that countries should reject Cold War thinking, rival power blocs, and bullying, and instead protect the UN-centered international system. He called for a world order with multiple centers of power and a more just and balanced system of global governance.

He argued that "the shadows of Cold War mentality, bullying are not dissipating, and there are new challenges that are increasing, not diminishing."

"The world has entered a new period of tumultuous change, and global governance has arrived at a new crossroads," Xi said.

Xi's has consistently spoken against what he calls a Cold War mentality, which is his way of referring to America's tough approach to China.

Alfred Wu, a professor at the National University of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, explained that Xi is seeking "to provide an alternate world order, because the U.S.-led world order is very much in decline."

Founded in 2001, the SCO now includes Russia, Belarus, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Afghanistan and Mongolia are observer states, and 14 other countries, including several from the Middle East, serve as "dialogue partners."

The summit comes days ahead of a military parade in Beijing marking the 80th anniversary of Japan's World War II surrender.

Regional relationships

On Sunday, Xi met with Modi and the two leaders vowed to resolve differences surrounding a border dispute, which led to a freeze in relations in 2020.

Putin arrived for the summit Sunday and will attend the parade Wednesday. Modi will not stay for the parade.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, who is not attending the SCO summit, will be present for the military parade, along with the leader of Myanmar's military government, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing.

Putin spoke to Xi on Sunday, ahead of the bilateral talks the two were scheduled to hold Tuesday. He updated the Chinese leader on the Russia-U.S. talks on the Ukraine war which were held in Alaska last month.

Development policy has been a large part of the messaging in recent days. Putin, in an interview released Saturday by China's news agency Xinhua, said that Russia and China were jointly "against discriminatory sanctions" that hurt the socioeconomic development of the world at large.

He said Russia, alongside its Chinese partners, supports the reform of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

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"It is essential to end the use of finance as an instrument of neocolonialism, which runs counter to the interests of the global majority," Putin said.

Security is still key

While China is eager for the SCO to take a larger role on the global stage, it remains to be seen how effective the organization can be. Its focus in the past has been on propping up the security initiatives of its member states. China said it is effective in combating terrorism, separatism and extremism.

Those threats are what Beijing cited after it swept more than 1 million Uyghurs, Kazakhs and members of other largely Muslim minorities into camps, prisons, and other detention facilities in 2018.

"Their anti-terrorism exercises are more about countering threats to authoritarian regimes rather than countering terrorism in its own right," said Derek Grossman, a professor of international relations at the University of Southern California.

Even if the SCO summit's reach and influence is ultimately limited, one thing is clear, he said: "China is on a diplomatic uptick and the U.S. is self destructing."

An earthquake destroys villages in eastern Afghanistan and kills 800 people, with 2,500 injured

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Desperate Afghans clawed through rubble in the dead of the night in search of missing loved ones after a strong earthquake killed some 800 people and injured more than 2,500 in eastern Afghanistan, according to figures provided Monday by the Taliban government.

The 6.0 magnitude quake late Sunday hit towns in the province of Kunar, near the city of Jalalabad in neighboring Nangarhar province, causing extensive damage.

The quake at 11:47 p.m. was centered 27 kilometers (17 miles) east-northeast of Jalalabad, the U.S. Geological Survey said. It was just 8 kilometers (5 miles) deep. Shallower quakes tend to cause more damage. Several aftershocks followed.

Footage showed rescuers taking injured people on stretchers from collapsed buildings and into helicopters as people frantically dug through rubble with their hands.

The Taliban government's chief spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said at a press conference Monday that the death toll had risen to at least 800 with more than 2,500 injured. He said most of the casualties were in Kunar.

Buildings in Afghanistan tend to be low-rise constructions, mostly of concrete and brick, with homes in rural and outlying areas made from mud bricks and wood. Many are poorly built.

One resident in Nurgal district, one of the worst-affected areas in Kunar, said nearly the entire village was destroyed.

"Children are under the rubble. The elderly are under the rubble. Young people are under the rubble," said the villager, who did not give his name.

"We need help here," he pleaded. "We need people to come here and join us. Let us pull out the people who are buried. There is no one who can come and remove dead bodies from under the rubble."

Homes collapsed and people screamed for help

Eastern Afghanistan is mountainous, with remote areas.

The quake has worsened communications. Blocked roads are forcing aid workers to walk four or five hours to reach survivors. Dozens of flights have operated in and out of Nangarhar Airport, transporting the injured to hospital.

One survivor described seeing homes collapse before his eyes and people screaming for help.

Sadiquallah, who lives in the Maza Dara area of Nurgal, said he was woken by a deep boom that sounded like a storm approaching. Like many Afghans, he uses only one name.

He ran to where his children were sleeping and rescued three of them. He was about to return to grab the rest of his family when the room fell on top of him.

"I was half-buried and unable to get out," he told The Associated Press by phone from Nangarhar Hospital. "My wife and two sons are dead, and my father is injured and in hospital with me. We were trapped

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for three to four hours until people from other areas arrived and pulled me out.”

It felt like the whole mountain was shaking, he said.

Rescue operations were underway and medical teams from Kunar, Nangarhar and the capital Kabul have arrived in the area, said Sharafat Zaman, a health ministry spokesman.

Zaman said many areas had not been able to report casualty figures and that “the numbers were expected to change” as deaths and injuries are reported. The chief spokesman, Mujahid, said helicopters had reached some areas but road travel was difficult.

“There are some villages where the injured and dead haven’t been recovered from the rubble, so that’s why the numbers may increase,” he told journalists.

The tremors were felt in neighboring Pakistan

Filippo Grandi, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, said the earthquake intensified existing humanitarian challenges in Afghanistan and urged international donors to support relief efforts.

“This adds death and destruction to other challenges including drought and the forced return of millions of Afghans from neighbouring countries,” Grandi wrote on the social media platform X. “Hopefully the donor community will not hesitate to support relief efforts.”

A magnitude 6.3 earthquake struck Afghanistan on Oct. 7, 2023, followed by strong aftershocks. The Taliban government estimated at least 4,000 people perished in that quake.

The U.N. gave a far lower death toll of about 1,500. It was the deadliest natural disaster to strike Afghanistan in recent memory.

The latest earthquake was likely to “dwarf the scale of the humanitarian needs” caused by the disaster of 2023, according to the International Rescue Committee.

Entire roads and communities have been cut off from accessing nearby towns or hospitals and 2,000 casualties were reported within the first 12 hours, said Sherine Ibrahim, the country director for the aid agency.

“Although we have been able to act fast, we are profoundly fearful for the additional strain this will have on the overall humanitarian response in Afghanistan,” said Ibrahim. “Global funding cuts have dramatically hampered our ability to respond to the ongoing humanitarian crisis.”

Sunday night’s quake was felt in parts of Pakistan, including the capital Islamabad. There were no reports of casualties or damage.

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he was deeply saddened by events in Afghanistan. “Our hearts go out to the victims and their families. We are ready to extend all possible support in this regard,” he said on the social platform X.

Pakistan has expelled tens of thousands of Afghans in the past year, many of them living in the country for decades as refugees.

At least 1.2 million Afghans have been forced to return from Iran and Pakistan so far this year, according to a June report by UNHCR.

A look at the world leaders attending China’s SCO summit and military parade

By SIMINA MISTREANU Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — China is rolling out the red carpet for more than two dozen world leaders at two major defense-related events this week. The guest lists, and some notable omissions, are a window into Beijing’s ambitions, alliances and attempts to expand its influence.

The annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), established in 2001 with a focus on security in Central Asia and the wider region, opened Monday in the port city of Tianjin. That will be followed by a massive military parade in Beijing on Wednesday commemorating the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II.

High-profile guests include the Russian and North Korean leaders, and heads of state and government from most Southeast Asian and Central Asian nations. But the guest lists for the SCO forum and the parade

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don't fully overlap, reflecting Beijing's interests, loyalties and limitations among its neighbors and beyond.

Russia, India and Iran headline the SCO summit

The guest list for Tianjin includes leaders of the organization's 10 member states and representatives from almost two dozen other countries.

SCO was established by China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and later expanded to include India, Iran, Pakistan and Belarus. Afghanistan and Mongolia are observer states, and 14 other countries are called "dialogue partners." The country hosting the annual summit rotates every year.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi top the list of dignitaries attending the summit. Also attending are Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly, both from dialogue partner countries.

Some non-SCO countries will also be represented, mostly from Southeast Asia. These include Laos, Malaysia and Vietnam, reflecting China's desire to shore up its ties within the region. The Indonesian president, Prabowo Subianto, has canceled because of protests at home.

Not everyone is staying for the parade — and North Korea will join

The parade is set to showcase some of China's most advanced homegrown weapons, including more than 100 aircraft, and numerous tanks and missiles.

Most of the high-level guests at the SCO forum and the military parade overlap, but there will be some notable departures — and additions.

The leaders of India, Egypt and Turkey are leaving China before the parade. Egypt will be represented by a lower-level official. Like most Western countries and their allies, India and Turkey generally refrain from posing alongside China's top leaders at military parades, which have taken place twice a decade since 2015.

Instead, joining Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Putin to observe Chinese troops marching in lockstep on Chang'an Avenue is North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, who is not attending the SCO summit. This will be Kim's first meeting with Xi in more than six years and his first occasion to come together with a group of world leaders since the reclusive North Korean leader took office in late 2011.

Xi, Putin and Kim potentially seated together in Tiananmen Square would make for a defiant show of unity at a time when the West is increasingly frustrated over Russia's war in Ukraine. Beijing, though on paper neutral in the conflict, has not condemned Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and is accused of selling weapon components to Russia. Meanwhile, North Korea has sent troops to aid the Russians in the war.

Myanmar's military leader, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, who led a takeover of an elected government in 2021, is also attending the military parade.

Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel and the leaders of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zimbabwe will also be there.

The only European heads of state attending the parade are the Russia-friendly Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic and Slovakian Prime Minister Robert Fico.

Jessica Pegula is back in the US Open quarterfinals and faces Krejckova. Djokovic to play Fritz

By BRIAN MAHONEY AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Jessica Pegula is back in the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam tournament, which used to be her roadblock.

The way Pegula is playing at this U.S. Open, it may be just another stop on the way back to the final.

The No. 4 seed rolled into the last eight by routing fellow American Ann Li 6-1, 6-2 in just 54 minutes on Sunday. She will face Barbora Krejckova on Tuesday after the two-time Grand Slam champion fought off eight match points in a second set that ended with a 25-minute tiebreaker and beat Taylor Townsend 1-6, 7-6 (13), 6-3.

Townsend was trying to reach her first quarterfinal in her 31st Grand Slam appearance.

Pegula hasn't dropped a set this year at Flushing Meadows, and only once was she even kept on court

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for more than 1 hour, 15 minutes.

"Probably the best match, honestly, I've played since, like, before Wimbledon I feel like from the start to finish. So that was encouraging," Pegula said of Sunday's victory. "I was just hitting the ball, doing everything well, executing my strategy very well and got through it pretty quick."

Pegula had been 0-6 in Grand Slam quarterfinals before upsetting Iga Swiatek in that round last year. She went on to reach the final, where she was defeated by Aryna Sabalenka. But she wasn't sure her tennis was ready for a follow-up when she returned to New York.

She had lost four of her previous six singles matches coming into the U.S. Open, and said she played so poorly while practicing with Sabalenka a few days before the tournament that she stopped early, opting instead for an escape room with some friends and a couple of drinks.

Things have certainly gotten better since.

"Like I said, I haven't been feeling my best on court, so to be able to come back and make another quarterfinal here is something I'm definitely proud of," Pegula said. "Of course, I want to go further and do more and win the tournament, but I feel like just on a personal kind of goal level, I'm happy with the way I've been able to kind of turn some of my tennis around the last few weeks."

The 58th-ranked Li was the highest-ranked player Pegula has faced in the tournament, but the 25-year-old was overpowered in her first appearance in the round of 16 in a major. Pegula broke her all four times she served in the 25-minute first set, and she had just five winners against 19 unforced errors in the match.

Pegula will certainly be the fresher player Tuesday. Krejčíková, who missed nearly five months to begin the season with a back injury, rallied late to knock off 10th-seeded American Emma Navarro in 2 1/2 hours in the third round, then went 3 hours, 4 minutes Sunday — 98 minutes alone for the second set.

"I don't worry. I'm not really thinking about it right now," Krejčíková said. "I'm just really happy that I won today, because, I mean, also, if one point didn't go my way, I would have been searching for flights."

What else happened at the US Open on Sunday?

Carlos Alcaraz hit a behind-the-back shot to win a point in a 7-6 (3), 6-3, 6-4 victory over Arthur Rinderknech that made the Spaniard the youngest man in the Open era to reach 13 Grand Slam quarterfinals. Novak Djokovic reached his record 64th career Grand Slam quarterfinal by defeating qualifier Jan-Lennard Struff 6-3, 6-3, 6-2 despite being bothered by his neck. Next for Djokovic is a meeting against Taylor Fritz, last year's runner-up and the only American man remaining. Djokovic is 10-0 against Fritz, who beat No. 21 Tomas Machac in straight sets. Sabalenka returned to the quarterfinals with a 6-1, 6-4 win over Cristina Bucsa. Sabalenka's next opponent will be 2023 Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondroušová, who defeated 2022 Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina 6-4, 5-7, 6-2 at night with the help of 13 aces, including three in the last game.

Who is on Monday's schedule at the US Open?

Coco Gauff and Naomi Osaka will meet in a fourth-round matchup, six years after Osaka beat a then-15-year-old Gauff in the same round. Wimbledon champions Jannik Sinner and Iga Swiatek also will be in action as the remaining quarterfinal matchups are set. Venus Williams and Leylah Fernandez will play their third-round women's doubles match against the No. 12-seeded team of Ekaterina Alexandrova and Zhang Shuai.

As Guatemalan kids sit in planes on tarmac, judge orders they stay in the US, for now

By VALERIE GONZALEZ, REBECCA SANTANA and JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

HARLINGEN, Texas (AP) — With migrant children waiting on tarmacs to be sent to their native Guatemala, a federal judge Sunday temporarily blocked the flights, siding with attorneys for the children who said the government was breaking laws and sending their clients to potential peril.

The extraordinary drama played out overnight on a holiday weekend and vaulted from tarmacs in Texas to a courtroom in Washington. It was the latest showdown over the Trump administration's crackdown on immigration — and the latest clash between the administration's enforcement efforts and legal safeguards

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that Congress created for vulnerable migrants.

Guatemalan children who arrived at the border without their parents or guardians will stay for at least two weeks while the legal fight unfolds, according to the ruling.

"I do not want there to be any ambiguity," said U.S. District Judge Sparkle L. Sooknanan.

Minutes after her hastily scheduled hearing, five charter buses pulled up to a plane at Valley International Airport in Harlingen, Texas, a hub for deportation flights. Hours earlier, authorities had walked dozens of passengers — perhaps 50 — toward the plane in an area restricted to government planes. Passengers wore colored clothing typically used in government-run shelters for migrant children.

All 76 children on the planes were expected to have been returned to shelters overseen by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services by the end of Sunday, the Justice Department said in a court filing.

"This idea that on a long weekend in the dead of night they would wake up these vulnerable children and put them on a plane irrespective of the constitutional protections that they had is something that should shock the conscience of all Americans," said Kica Matos, president of the National Immigration Law Center, which represents the children, following Sunday's hearing.

The Homeland Security Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the ruling.

The chaotic, rapid-fire developments resembled a March weekend showdown over the deportation of hundreds of Venezuelans to a maximum-security prison in El Salvador. Advocates implored a federal judge to halt deportations they believed were imminent, while the Trump administration was silent about its plans.

In that case, the judge appeared in civilian clothes for a Saturday night hearing and tried to block the flights, but they went ahead, with the government saying the court order came too late.

The administration insisted it was reuniting the Guatemalan children — at the Central American nation's request — with parents or guardians who sought their return. Lawyers for at least some of the children say that's untrue and argue that in any event, authorities still would have to follow a legal process that they did not.

One girl said her parents, in Guatemala, got a strange phone call a few weeks ago saying the U.S. was deporting her, said one of the plaintiff attorneys, Efrén C. Olivares.

The 16-year-old, who's been living in a New York shelter, said in a court filing that she's an honors student about to start 11th grade, loves living in the U.S. and is "deeply afraid of being deported."

Other children — identified only by their initials — said in court documents that they had been neglected, abandoned, physically threatened or abused in their home country.

"I do not have any family in Guatemala that can take good care of me," a 10-year-old said in a court filing. A 16-year-old recalled experiencing "threats against my life" in Guatemala.

"If I am sent back, I believe I will be in danger," the teen added.

Sunday's court hearing came in a case filed in federal court in Washington, but similar legal actions also were filed elsewhere.

In a lawsuit in Arizona, the Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project said one of its clients is a 12-year-old asylum-seeker who has chronic kidney disease, needs dialysis to stay alive and will need a kidney transplant. Two other plaintiffs, a 10-year-old boy and his 3-year-old sister, don't have family in Guatemala and don't want to return, according to the group.

As the developments played out in the U.S., families gathered at an air base in Guatemala's capital, Guatemala City, in anticipation of the flights. Gilberto López said he drove through the night from his remote town after his 17-year-old nephew called at midnight to say he was being deported from Texas.

The boy left Guatemala two years ago, at age 15, to work in the U.S. and was detained about a month ago, López said.

Alarm bells for immigrant advocates

Migrant children who arrive in the U.S. without their parents or guardians are routinely handed over to the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement. They often live in government-supervised shelters or with foster care families until they can be released to a sponsor — usually a relative — in the U.S.

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Many of those from Guatemala request asylum or pursue other legal avenues to get permission to stay. An attorney with the National Center for Youth Law said the organization starting hearing a few weeks ago from legal service providers that Homeland Security Investigations agents were interviewing children — particularly Guatemalans — in facilities of the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

The agents asked the children about their relatives in Guatemala, said the attorney, Becky Wolozin.

Then, on Friday, advocates began getting word that their young clients' immigration court hearings were being canceled, Wolozin said.

Shaina Aber of Acacia Center for Justice, an immigrant legal defense group, said it was notified Saturday evening that officials had drafted a list of children to return to Guatemala. Advocates learned that the flights would leave from the Texas cities of Harlingen and El Paso, Aber said.

The government had two planes on the ground in Harlingen and one in El Paso, Texas, Olivares said, based on witness accounts. Government lawyer Drew Ensign told the judge that one plane might have taken off but returned.

White House deputy chief of staff Stephen Miller said on X that the Guatemalan government formally requested the children's return and that the judge was "refusing to let them reunify with their parents."

Judge got a 2:30 a.m. call

The judge said she was awakened at 2:30 a.m. to address the emergency filing from the children's lawyers, who wrote in bold type that flights might be leaving within the ensuing two to four hours. Sooknanan spent hours trying to reach federal attorneys and get answers, she said.

"I have the government attempting to remove unaccompanied minors from the country in the wee hours of the morning on a holiday weekend, which is surprising," Sooknanan said at the midday hearing, later adding: "Absent action by the courts, all of those children would have been returned to Guatemala, potentially to very dangerous situations."

The Trump administration is planning to remove nearly 700 Guatemalan children who came to the U.S. unaccompanied, according to a letter sent Friday by Sen. Ron Wyden, an Oregon Democrat.

Late Sunday, Guatemala's government said in a statement that it had originally proposed the transfer of the minors to U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem during her visit to the country in July. Guatemala's concern was that hundreds of minors would soon age out of the juvenile facilities where they were held and be sent to adult detention centers. It stressed that it was ready to receive the minors when due process was completed in the U.S. following established protocols.

Flotilla leaves Barcelona in biggest attempt yet to break Israeli blockade of Gaza

By RENATA BRITO and TERESA MEDRANO Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — A flotilla of ships departed from Barcelona to the Gaza Strip Sunday with humanitarian aid and activists on board in the largest attempt yet to break the long Israeli blockade of the Palestinian territory by sea.

This comes as Israel has stepped up its offensive on Gaza City, limiting the deliveries of food and basic supplies in the north of the Palestinian territory. Food experts warned earlier this month that the city was in famine and that half a million people across the strip were facing catastrophic levels of hunger.

The Global Sumud Flotilla is carrying food, water and medicine. Activists on board demanded safe passage to deliver the much-needed aid and the opening of a humanitarian sea corridor, according to a statement. The almost 23-month war has killed more than 63,000 people, with at least 332 Palestinians dying of malnutrition, including 124 children, according to the Gaza Health Ministry.

The maritime convoy of about 20 boats and delegations from 44 countries is claimed to be the largest attempt to date to break the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip by sea, which has now lasted 18 years. They will be joined by more ships from ports in Italy and Tunisia in the coming days, on the route from the western end of the Mediterranean to the Gaza Strip, organizers said.

Thousands of supporters flocked to the Barcelona pier, some of them wearing kaffiyehs and chanting

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"Free Palestine!" and "Boycott Israel!" to send off a wide variety of boats, flying Palestinian flags, from rundown old luxury yachts to tiny wooden sailboats and industrial-looking vessels. One of them, the *Sirus*, is more than 100 years old.

Around 70 boats are expected to take part in the final leg of the journey, flotilla spokesperson Saif Abukeshek told Spanish public television after the departure. The fleet could reach Gaza around Sept. 14 or 15, he added.

"The story here is about Palestine. The story here is how people are being deliberately deprived of the very basic means to survive," said Swedish activist Greta Thunberg at a news conference. She is one of the most recognizable figures on the expedition, formed by hundreds of activists, politicians such as the former mayor of Barcelona, Ada Colau, and journalists.

Ships carrying tons of humanitarian aid departed from the Italian city of Genoa and will join the expedition in the coming days.

It is not the first time Thunberg has attempted to reach Gaza waters this year. She was deported by Israel in June when the ship she was traveling on with 11 other people, the *Madleen*, was stopped by the Israeli military.

"It has been very clear that Israel has been continuously violating international law by either attacking, unlawfully intercepting the boats in international waters, and continuously preventing the humanitarian aid from coming in," said Thunberg in an interview with The Associated Press on Saturday.

The Global Sumud Flotilla will be the fourth attempt to break the maritime blockade so far this year. The *Conscience* first tried in May, but was attacked by drones after setting sail from Malta. After the *Madleen*, the Israeli military stopped another aid ship, the *Handala*, in late July, detained 21 international activists and reporters and seized its cargo, including baby formula, food and medicine, according to the Freedom Flotilla Coalition.

In a news conference before the departure in Barcelona, actor Liam Cunningham played a video showing a girl singing while planning her own funeral. The girl, Fatima, died four days ago, he said.

"What sort of world have we slid into where children are making their own funeral arrangements?" Cunningham told reporters.

An Israeli official said Saturday that the country will soon halt or slow humanitarian aid into parts of northern Gaza, as it expands its military offensive against Hamas, a day after the city was declared a combat zone.

The war began on Oct. 7, 2023, when an attack by Hamas militants inside Israel claimed the lives of 1,200 people, most of them civilians, and took 251 people hostage.

This story has been corrected to reflect that actor Susan Sarandon was not part of the crew aboard the boats.

PBS, NPR stations struggle with Trump-fueled government funding cuts

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Coping with a sudden loss in federal funding, PBS affiliate KSPS in Spokane, Washington, faced a surprise extra hurdle. Many of its contributing members — at one point almost half — lived in Canada, and they were withdrawing support out of anger at President Donald Trump's desire to make the country the 51st member of the United States.

When Congress decided this summer to eliminate \$1.1 billion allocated to public broadcasting, it left some 330 PBS and 246 NPR stations, each with unique issues related to their communities and history, to figure out what that means.

Many launched emergency fund drives and are heartened by the response. The national NPR and PBS networks are reducing expected dues payments, and a philanthropic effort focused on the hardest-hit sta-

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tions is taking shape. No stations have shut down, but job and programming cuts are already beginning.

In Spokane, KSPS has always tried to keep its requests for member donations separate from appeals for public funding. Not anymore. Congress left the station with a \$1.2 million hole to fill, about 18% of its budget, and the station is using that as a pretext to seek help from listeners.

"We have definitely seen some attrition from our Canadian members," said Skyler Reep, the station's interim general manager.

Pleas for donations exceed expectations in many parts of country

Long suspicious of a liberal bent to public media news coverage, Republicans in Congress responded to President Donald Trump's wishes in July and eliminated funding for the systems. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which distributes the funding, has taken steps to shut down.

In some parts of the country, the answer to pleas for help have exceeded expectations. Public radio station WHQR in Wilmington, N.C. raised more than \$200,000 in three days, filling a \$174,000 hole and then some. It's a small community growing fast with an influx of retirees, many who depend on the station's news to learn about their new home, said general manager Kevin Crane.

With \$525,000 gone from its budget, Hawaii Public Radio has already raised \$650,000 in an emergency fund drive. "It's a validation that what you're doing is essential to the community and is appreciated by the community," said Meredith Artley, president and CEO. The 2023 wildfires in Maui and their aftermath were covered steadily by Hawaii Public Radio news reporters.

"The initial response in terms of support for both stations and the NPR network has been extraordinary," said Katherine Maher, NPR president. "People did a lot of work leading up to the vote, in actions and calls. When that did not prove convincing, they turned to direct support."

Stations across the country have stories that make them smile: the youngster from Florida who collected money for public stations in Alaska, sending a note written in crayon; the regular \$300 donor who came in to PBS SoCal with a \$100,000 check, one of three six-figure donations the station has received.

Most stations aren't in areas with so many wealthy donors. Most station managers are like Jeff Hanks of PBS' LPTV in Lakeland, Minnesota. He lies awake wondering where he will find \$1 million to pay for things like his station's nightly newscast, a primary news source for central and northern Minnesota.

"These are extremely, extremely challenging times," Hanks said. "We're fighting hard every way we can."

He knows membership donations won't make up for what is missing. Both PBS and NPR have taken steps to reduce the annual dues that stations pay for programming and other services. At PBS, it's an average 15% reduction, but needy stations get more — in one case, more than half of next year's dues will be forgiven, said PBS president Paula Kerger.

Adopting stations in poorer, more rural areas

NPR is encouraging donors in wealthier areas to adopt stations in poorer ones, perhaps in an area where a contributor has emotional ties.

Public media leaders are also working with a group of philanthropists led by the Knight and MacArthur foundations that is hoping to raise some \$50 million to support stations in areas hardest hit by the cuts. Ed Ulman, president and CEO of Alaska Public Media, which represents nearly two dozen radio and television stations in the largest state, said he'll be seeking money from this fund.

Ulman said he's been buoyed by the response from Alaskans in their effort to raise \$15 million through various sources by October. The services their stations provide is free, and citizens see its value.

"I've never been worried about the future of public television or radio because our community needs us," he said, "and what we've seen in Alaska is an outcry about that."

Still, Alaska Public Media has suspended the weekly public affairs television show "Alaska Insight," which isn't returning after a summer hiatus. The future of "Indie Alaska," a weekly video series highlighting the lives of Alaskans, is also in danger.

Some stations are already making the difficult decisions of cutting staff. In Spokane, for example, 12 of KSPS's 35 staff members have either been laid off, had their hours reduced or pay cut. Reep is also considering that future seasons of local shows like "Northwest Profiles" or the arts showcase "Inland Sessions" will have fewer episodes.

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Similar programming decisions are also being weighed on a national level. While several upcoming shows, like Ken Burns' six-part miniseries "The American Revolution" scheduled for November, are completed, PBS will have to consider making shorter seasons of its series, Kerger said.

"We're working very hard so that the public doesn't feel that there's a change," Kerger said.

Looking for ways to share services

Between an increase in donations and "rainy day" resources set aside, the initial impact of the government action may be minimized. But that brings its own worries: It's unlikely public media will be able to count on sympathy donors to the same extent in the future. And there's a risk that some politicians will feel the response proves that public support isn't necessary.

The bigger reckoning may come a year from now, Kerger said. "I am a realist," she said. "I have to believe that there are some vulnerable stations that are not going to make it."

The crisis is forcing some public stations to work together, searching for ways to share services in areas not before contemplated, in things like finances, management and programming, said Andy Russell, president and CEO of PBS SoCal. Public stations in Washington are meeting to see if they can get state financing.

In Los Angeles, PBS SoCal has shared some of its templates for fundraising appeals with other stations. Several celebrities — people like Kerry Washington, Jack Black, Ziggy Marley, John Lithgow and John Leguizamo — have volunteered to film pitches, and the station is making them available nationwide, too, said Maura Daly Phinney, senior vice president for membership engagement and strategy.

"We're going to make it," Phinney said. "The system is going to be different. But we're going to make it."

Israel kills Hamas spokesperson as security cabinet meets to discuss expanding offensive in Gaza

By WAFAA SHURAF, SAMY MAGDY and SAM METZ Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — The Israeli military announced Sunday that it killed the longtime spokesperson for Hamas' armed wing, as the country's security cabinet met to discuss the expanding offensive in some of Gaza's most populated areas.

There were no plans to discuss negotiations for a ceasefire at the meeting, according to an official who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak with the media.

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz identified the spokesperson as Abu Obeida, the nom de guerre for the person who represented Hamas' Qassam Brigades. He was killed over the weekend. Hamas has not commented on the claim.

Abu Obeida's last statement was issued Friday as Israel began the initial stages of the new offensive and declared Gaza City a combat zone. His statement said the militants would do their best to protect living hostages but warned that they would be in areas of fighting. He said the remains of dead hostages would "disappear forever."

Israel's military said the spokesperson, whom it identified as Hudahaifa Kahlout, had been behind the release of videos showing hostages as well as footage of the Hamas-led attack that sparked the war. The military also reiterated a threat against remaining Hamas leaders abroad.

Israel has killed many of Hamas' military and political leaders as it attempts to dismantle the group and prevent an attack like the one on Oct. 7, 2023, when militants abducted 251 people and killed around 1,200, mostly civilians, in southern Israel.

Fewer than 50 hostages remain in Gaza, and Israel believes about 20 are alive. Families protested outside the security cabinet meeting, angry that it was not discussing a ceasefire.

"It is our side that is unwilling to sign a comprehensive deal and is unwilling to end the war and is deciding to sacrifice my child while he is still alive," said Einav Zangauker, mother of hostage Matan Zangauker.

A 'death trap' while seeking food

At least 43 Palestinians were killed since Saturday, most of them in Gaza City, according to local hospitals. Shifa Hospital, the territory's largest, said 29 bodies were brought to its morgue, including 10 people

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killed while seeking aid.

"Where are the resistance fighters that (Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu claims he is bombing? Does he consider stones resistance fighters?" said a relative of one of the dead at Shifa Hospital, who did not give her name.

Hospital officials reported 11 other fatalities from strikes and gunfire. Al-Awda Hospital said seven were civilians trying to reach aid.

Witnesses said Israeli troops opened fire on crowds in the Netzarim Corridor, an Israeli military zone that bisects Gaza.

"We were trying to get food, but we were met with the occupation's bullets," said Ragheb Abu Lebda, who saw at least three people bleeding from gunshot wounds. "It's a death trap."

Civilians have been killed as United Nations humanitarian convoys are overwhelmed by looters and desperate crowds, or shot on their way to sites run by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, an Israeli-backed U.S. contractor.

The GHF told The Associated Press that there was "no incident at or near our site today." Israel's military did not respond to questions about Sunday's casualties.

Too exhausted to evacuate

Israel for weeks has been operating on the outskirts of Gaza City to prepare for the offensive. The military has intensified air attacks on coastal areas of the city, including Rimal. Smoke rose over the city on Sunday.

In Rimal, quiet Palestinians looked through the rubble after a strike, some venturing into the upper floors of shattered buildings that were still standing. A child tried to pull a shopping cart loaded with plastic jugs over the debris.

The military has urged the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in Gaza City to flee south, but many say they are exhausted after repeated displacements or unconvinced that any safe place in Gaza remains.

More than 90% of the over 2 million Palestinians in Gaza have been displaced at least once during the war, many of them multiple times, according to the U.N.

Israel has signaled that aid to Gaza City will be reduced, and it has announced new infrastructure projects in southern Gaza — steps that Palestinians say amount to forced displacement.

More deaths from hunger

Seven more Palestinian adults died of malnutrition-related causes over the last 24 hours, Gaza's Health Ministry said.

That brought the adult death toll from malnutrition-related causes to 215 since June, when the ministry started to count them, it said, and 124 children have died of malnutrition-related causes since the war began.

In the largest attempt yet to break the Israeli blockade of the territory by sea, a flotilla of ships departed Sunday from Barcelona for Gaza with humanitarian aid and activists on board. Similar attempts in the past have failed.

At least 63,371 Palestinians have died during the war, said the ministry, which does not say how many were fighters or civilians but that around half have been women and children.

The ministry 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 the figures but has not provided its own.

DHS Secretary Noem confirms more ICE resources are heading to Chicago for immigration crackdown

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem on Sunday said that the Trump administration will soon expand immigration operations in Chicago, confirming plans for a stepped up presence of federal agents in the nation's third-largest city as President Donald Trump continues to lash out at Illinois' Democratic leadership.

Noem's comments come after the DHS last week requested limited logistical support from officials at

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the Naval Station Great Lakes to support the agency's anticipated operations. The military installation is about 35 miles north of Chicago.

"We've already had ongoing operations with ICE in Chicago... but we do intend to add more resources to those operations," Noem said during an appearance CBS News' "Face the Nation."

Noem declined to provide further details about the planned surge of federal officers. It comes after the Trump administration deployed National Guard troops to Washington, D.C., to target crime, immigration and homelessness, and two months after it sent troops to Los Angeles.

Trump lashed out against Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker in a social media posting Saturday, warning him that he must straighten out Chicago's crime problems quickly "or we're coming." The Republican president has also been critical of Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson.

Johnson and Pritzker have pushed back against the expected federal mobilization, saying crime has fallen in Chicago. They are planning to sue if Trump moves forward with the plan.

Johnson has already signed an order barring the Chicago Police Department from helping federal authorities with civil immigration enforcement or any related patrols, traffic stops and checkpoints during the surge.

Chicago is home to a large immigrant population, and both the city and the state of Illinois have some of the country's strongest rules against cooperating with federal government immigration enforcement efforts. That has often put the city and the state at odds with Trump's administration as it tries to carry out his mass deportation agenda.

Pritzker in an interview aired Sunday on "Face the Nation" charged that Trump's expected plans to mobilize federal forces in the city may be part of a plan to "stop the elections in 2026 or, frankly, take control of those elections."

Noem said it was a Trump "prerogative" whether to deploy National Guard troops to Chicago as he did in Los Angeles in June in the midst of immigration protests in the California city.

"I do know that LA wouldn't be standing today if President Trump hadn't taken action," Noem said. "That city would have burned if left to devices of the mayor and governor of that state."

'Weapons' regains the top spot as the summer box office winds down

By ITZEL LUNA Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "Weapons" found its way back on top during the Labor Day weekend, culminating a summer box office that's likely to fall right below meeting last year's earnings.

Zach Cregger's horror proved its staying power as a late-summer viral success and regained the top spot after last weekend saw "Kpop Demon Hunters" give Netflix its first box-office win. "Weapons" generated \$10.2 million during its fourth weekend in theaters.

Universal's 50th rerelease of "Jaws" also made a splash in theaters, securing the second spot. Steven Spielberg's 1975 film took "a bite out of the box office," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for the data firm Comscore, earning \$8.1 million in 3,200 North American theaters.

"How appropriate that a movie that's celebrating its 50 years, an all-time classic, Jaws, should be as relevant today as it was when it opened," Dergarabedian said. "It's so great because we need every dollar to contribute to the bottom line for this summer."

The rerelease helped boost a summer with earnings likely coming in at \$3.7 billion, just under last summer. Still, this year will miss the typical pre-pandemic summer box office benchmark of \$4 billion, Dergarabedian said.

"There were casualties this summer. It's a very crowded summer, very competitive," Dergarabedian said. "At the end of the day, you can't get to that four billion mark unless every movie just clicked and is performing at or above expectations."

This summer's earnings were front-loaded, with May releases like "Thunderbolts" and "Lilo & Stitch" becoming box office wins. However, the latter half of the summer struggled despite the success of movies like "Weapons."

Dergarabedian said the summer succeeded in provided high-quality movies and marketing, but it's "kind

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of limping a bit to the finish line in terms of the summer movie season."

The crime caper "Caught Stealing," starring Austin Butler, generated \$7.8 million domestically and snatched third place its debut weekend. Set in 1998 and directed by Darren Aronofsky, the film follows Butler as a New York City bartender who is unexpectedly wrapped up in the city's crime world.

"Freakier Friday," which debuted alongside "Weapons" early this month for a successful humor/horror double feature, took fourth place, earning \$6.5 million domestically. "The Roses," another newcomer, came in fifth with \$6.4 million.

"The Fantastic Four: First Steps" landed in sixth place with \$4.8 million. The Marvel superhero film hit box office gold during its late July entry, debuting at \$118 million. The film, however, experienced a downward trend in earnings since its release.

"The Bad Guys 2" came in just below "First Steps," with \$4.7 million, followed by "Superman," an early July entry that generated \$2.6 million during the Labor Day weekend.

Top 10 movies by domestic box office

With final domestic figures being released Monday, this list factors in the estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore:

1. "Weapons," \$10.2 million.
2. "Jaws (1975)," \$8.1 million.
3. "Caught Stealing," \$7.8 million.
4. "Freakier Friday," \$6.5 million.
5. "The Roses," \$6.4 million.
6. "The Fantastic Four: First Steps," \$4.8 million.
7. "The Bad Guys 2," \$4.7 million.
8. "Superman," \$2.6 million.
9. "Nobody 2," \$1.8 million.
10. "The Naked Gun," \$1.8 million.

Jude Law debuts portrayal of Vladimir Putin in 'The Wizard of the Kremlin' at Venice Film Festival

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

VENICE, Italy (AP) — Jude Law transforms into Vladimir Putin for Olivier Assayas' "The Wizard of the Kremlin," which had its world premiere Sunday at the Venice Film Festival.

Law said earlier he didn't enter the project naively, and that he also does not fear repercussions for his portrayal.

"I felt safe in the hands of Olivier," Law said. "This is a story that was going to be told intelligently with nuance and consideration. We weren't looking for controversy for controversy's sake."

Law, who wore prosthetics for his transformation, said his Putin is "a character in a much larger story."

"We weren't trying to define anything about anyone," Law added.

The film is an adaptation of Giuliano da Empoli's bestselling book of the same name, an account of the Russian president's rise to power alongside a fictional adviser called Vadim Baranov, who is played by Paul Dano. It's partially set in the early 1990s amid post-Soviet chaos and continues through 2014.

Dano's character was inspired by the real political strategist Vladislav Surkov, who was considered the architect of the tightly controlled political system created under Putin. In 2013, he resigned his post of deputy prime minister.

Much of the story is centered on Dano's character, recounting his own rise in political maneuvering and the world he helped create.

"The wizard is the person who is in the background, so there's a casting of a spell that is happening," Dano said.

"The Wizard of the Kremlin" is sure to provoke conversations as Russia's three-year war in Ukraine con-

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tinues. Efforts to stop the fighting with a ceasefire and end Europe's biggest conflict since World War II through a comprehensive peace settlement have made no progress despite intense diplomatic maneuvering.

"The film is very much about how modern politics, 21st-century politics were invented," Assayas said. "What's going on right now is not only terrifying but it's even more terrifying by the fact that we have not found the answer."

The book was written before Russia's full scale invasion of Ukraine, but da Empoli said that even if it's about an earlier period, it was "right."

"It's still relevant today, three years later, under different circumstances," da Empoli said.

The film marks the English language debut for the French filmmaker best known for films like "Clouds of Sils Maria" and "Personal Shopper," as well as the miniseries "Carlos." Alicia Vikander, who he directed in "Irma Vep," also co-stars in "The Wizard of the Kremlin" as Vadim Baranov's on-again-off-again girlfriend. Her character, the filmmaker said, was supposed to embody "freedom."

"This is a story about a lot of men talking in rooms," Vikander said. "But Olivier told me that we need a world that shows the women who inhabit it also. A female counterpart but a very moral one as well."

Production took place in Latvia as they couldn't film in Russia.

Assayas wrote in his director's statement that it "is not a film about the rise of one man — nor is it about the force with which power is imposed, or the reinvention of a nation that is both modern and archaic, once again under the yoke of totalitarianism. Rooted in real, contemporary events, it is instead a reflection on modern politics — or rather, the smoke screens behind which it now hides: cynical, deceptive, and toxic."

He added: "The Wizard of the Kremlin' is not so much a political film as it is a film about politics — and the perversity of its methods, which now hold us all hostage."

The film is playing in the main competition, with titles like "Frankenstein," "Bugonia," "The Voice of Hind Rajab," "La Grazia" and "No Other Choice" also vying for the top prizes, including acting and directing awards. Winners will be announced on Sept. 6.

"The Wizard of the Kremlin" does not yet have a release date in North America. Actor Jeffrey Wright, who plays the journalist Vadim Baranov is telling his story to, made a plea for why the film needs to be seen, especially in America.

"Even within the time frame of the original sins of America...we had an idea that we could be better. This idea that we could aspire toward some sort of utopian perfectibility," Wright said. "If that is lost, as it is now, than we become what we see in this film."

How the Fed losing its independence could affect Americans' everyday lives

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's attempt to fire a member of the Federal Reserve's governing board has raised alarms among economists and legal experts who see it as the biggest threat to the central bank's independence in decades.

The consequences could impact most Americans' everyday lives: Economists worry that if Trump gets what he wants — a loyal Fed that sharply cuts short-term interest rates — the result would likely be higher inflation and, over time, higher borrowing costs for things like mortgages, car loans and business loans.

Trump on Monday sought to fire Lisa Cook, the first Black woman appointed to the Fed's seven-member governing board. It was the first time in the Fed's 112-year history that a president has tried to fire a governor.

Trump said he was doing so because of allegations raised by one of his appointees that she has committed mortgage fraud.

Cook has argued in a lawsuit seeking to block her firing that the claims are a pretext for Trump's true goal: Gaining more control over the Fed. A court may decide next week whether to temporarily block Cook's firing while the case makes its way through the legal process.

Cook is accused of claiming two homes as primary residences in July 2021, before she joined the board,

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which could have led to a lower mortgage rate than if one had been classified as a second home or an investment property. She has suggested in her lawsuit that it may have been a clerical error but hasn't directly responded to the accusations.

Fed independence 'hangs by a thread'

Trump and members of his administration have made no secret about their desire to exert more control over the Fed. Trump has repeatedly demanded that the central bank cut its key rate to as low as 1.3%, from its current level of 4.3%.

Before trying to fire Cook, Trump repeatedly attacked the Fed's chair, Jerome Powell, for not cutting the short-term interest rate and threatened to fire him as well.

"We'll have a majority very shortly, so that'll be good," Trump said Tuesday, a reference to the fact that if he is able to replace Cook, his appointees will control the Fed's board by a 4-3 vote.

"The particular case of Governor Cook is not as important as what this latest move shows about the escalation in the assaults on the Fed," said Jon Faust, an economist at Johns Hopkins and former adviser to Powell. "In my view, Fed independence really now hangs by a thread."

Some economists do think the Fed should cut more quickly, though virtually none agree with Trump that it should do so by 3 percentage points. Powell has signaled the Fed is likely to cut by a quarter point in September.

Why economists prefer independent central banks

The Fed wields extensive power over the U.S. economy. By cutting the short-term interest rate it controls — which it typically does when the economy falters — the Fed can make borrowing cheaper and encourage more spending, growth, and hiring. When it raises the rate to combat the higher prices that come with inflation, it can weaken the economy and cause job losses.

Most economists have long preferred independent central banks because they can take unpopular steps that elected officials are more likely to avoid. Economic research has shown that nations with independent central banks typically have lower inflation over time.

Elected officials like Trump, however, have much greater incentives to push for lower interest rates, which make it easier for Americans to buy homes and cars and would boost the economy in the short run.

A political Fed could boost inflation

Douglas Elmendorf, an economist at Harvard and former director of the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, said that Trump's demand for the Fed to cut its key rate by 3 percentage points would overstimulate the economy, lifting consumer demand above what the economy can produce and boosting inflation — similar to what happened during the pandemic.

"If the Federal Reserve falls under control of the president, then we'll end up with higher inflation in this country probably for years to come," Elmendorf said.

And while the Fed controls a short-term rate, financial markets determine longer-term borrowing costs for mortgages and other loans. And if investors worry that inflation will stay high, they will demand higher yields on government bonds, pushing up borrowing costs across the economy.

In Turkey, for example, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan forced the central bank to keep interest rates low in the early 2020s, even as inflation spiked to 85%. In 2023, Erdogan allowed the central bank more independence, which has helped bring down inflation, but short-term interest rates rose to 50% to fight inflation, and are still 46%.

Other U.S. presidents have badgered the Fed. President Lyndon Johnson harassed then-Fed Chair William McChesney Martin in the mid-1960s to keep rates low as Johnson ramped up government spending on the Vietnam War and antipoverty programs. And Richard Nixon pressured then-Chair Arthur Burns to avoid rate hikes in the run-up to the 1972 election. Both episodes are widely blamed for leading to the stubbornly high inflation of the 1960s and '70s.

Trump has also argued that the Fed should lower its rate to make it easier for the federal government to finance its tremendous \$37 trillion debt load. Yet that threatens to distract the Fed from its congressional mandates of keeping inflation and unemployment low.

Independence vs accountability

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Presidents do have some influence over the Fed through their ability to appoint members of the board, subject to Senate approval. But the Fed was created to be insulated from short-term political pressures. Fed governors are appointed to staggered, 14-year terms to ensure that no single president can appoint too many.

Jane Manners, a law professor at Fordham University, said there is a reason that Congress decided to create independent agencies like the Fed: They preferred "decisions that are made from a kind of objective, neutral vantage point grounded in expertise rather than decisions that are wholly subject to political pressure."

Yet some Trump administration officials say they want more democratic accountability at the Fed.

In an interview with USA Today Vice President JD Vance said, "What people who are saying the president has no authority here are effectively saying is that seven economists and lawyers should be able to make an incredibly critical decision for the American people with no democratic input."

And Stephen Miran, a top White House economic adviser, wrote a paper last year advocating for a restructuring of the Fed, including making it much easier for a president to fire governors.

The "overall goal of this design is delivering the economic benefits" of an independent central bank, Miran wrote, "while maintaining a level of accountability that a democratic society must demand." Trump has nominated Miran to the Fed's board to replace Adriana Kugler, who stepped down unexpectedly Aug. 1.

There could be more turmoil ahead

Trump has personally insulted Powell for months, but his administration now appears much more focused on the Fed's broader structure.

The Fed makes its interest rate decisions through a committee that consists of the seven governors, including Powell, as well as the 12 presidents of regional Fed banks in cities such as New York, Kansas City, and Atlanta. Five of those presidents vote on rates at each meeting. The New York Fed president has a permanent vote, while four others vote on a rotating basis.

While the reserve banks' boards choose their presidents, the Fed board in Washington can vote to reject them. All 12 presidents will need to be reappointed and approved by the board in February, which could become more contentious if the board votes down one or more of the 12 presidents.

"The nuclear scenario is ... the reappointment of the reserve bank presidents and interfering with that, (which) would be the signal that things are truly going off the rails," said Adam Posen, president of the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

Government shutdown looms as Congress returns after monthlong August recess

By MARY CLARE JALONICK, KEVIN FREKING and STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

Congressional Republicans scored a massive victory this summer when they passed President Donald Trump's "big beautiful bill" of tax and spending cuts without a single Democratic vote. But as they return to Washington this fall after a monthlong August recess, they will have to find a way to work with Democrats — or around them — as a government shutdown looms.

The annual spending battle will dominate the September agenda, along with a possible effort by Senate Republicans to change their chamber's rules to thwart Democratic stalling tactics on nominations. The Senate is also debating whether to move forward on legislation that would slap steep tariffs on some of Russia's trading partners as the U.S. pressures Russian President Vladimir Putin on Ukraine.

In the House, Republicans will continue their investigations of former President Joe Biden while Speaker Mike Johnson navigates a split in his conference over whether the Trump administration should release more files in the Jeffrey Epstein investigation.

A look at what Congress will be doing as lawmakers return from the August break:

Keeping the Government Open

The most urgent task for Congress is to avoid a government shutdown on Sept. 30, when federal funding runs out. And it's so far unclear if Republicans and Democrats will be able to agree on how to do that.

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Congress will have to pass a short-term spending measure to keep the government funded for a few weeks or months while they try to finish the full-year package. But Republicans will need Democratic votes to pass an extension, and Democrats will want significant concessions. Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer's vote with Republicans to avoid a shutdown in March prompted furious backlash within his party.

The Trump administration's efforts to claw back previously approved spending could also complicate the negotiations. Republicans passed legislation this summer that rescinded about \$9 billion in foreign aid and public broadcasting funds and Trump notified Congress again on Friday that he will block \$4.9 billion in congressionally approved foreign aid.

Democrats have warned that such efforts could tank the broader negotiations. "Trump is rooting for a shutdown," Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., posted on social media Friday.

Senate Nominations Fight

Senators are expected to return to Washington right where they left off in early August — fighting over Trump's nominees.

Exasperated Republicans fled Washington for the month after making little headway with Senate Democrats over their nominations blockade, which has forced delays in confirmations and angered Trump as many of his administration's positions remain unfilled. Republican leaders called it quits after a rare Saturday session that ended with a breakdown in bipartisan negotiations and Trump posting on social media that Chuck Schumer could "GO TO HELL!"

Republicans now say they're ready to try and change Senate rules to get around the Democratic delays, and they are expected to spend the next several weeks discussing how that might work.

Russian Sanctions

Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, one of Trump's closest congressional allies, has pushed the president for months to support his sweeping bipartisan sanctions bill that would impose steep tariffs on countries that are fueling Russia's invasion of Ukraine by buying its oil, gas, uranium, and other exports. The legislation has the backing of 85 senators, but Trump has yet to endorse it, and Republican leaders have so far said they won't move without him.

Graham has stepped up his calls after Trump met with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy last month in hopes of a peace deal. Since then, Russia has continued to step up attacks on Ukraine.

"If we don't have this thing moving in the right direction by the time we get back, then I think that plan B needs to kick in," Graham said of his bill in an interview with The Associated Press last month.

Oversight of the CDC

Health and Human Service Secretary Robert F. Kennedy will appear before the Senate Finance Committee to discuss his health care agenda on Thursday, less than a week after he ousted Susan Monarez as director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Several other top officials also resigned in protest.

Kennedy has tried to advance anti-vaccine policies that are contradicted by decades of scientific research. Monarez's lawyers said she refused "to rubber-stamp unscientific, reckless directives and fire dedicated health experts."

Louisiana Sen. Bill Cassidy, the Republican chairman of the HELP panel that oversees the CDC and a member of the Finance Committee, has called on the CDC to delay a meeting of outside experts who make recommendations on the use of vaccines until Congress can look into the issue.

Divisions over Epstein

The House left Washington in July amid disagreements among Republicans about whether they should force President Donald Trump's administration to release more information on the sex trafficking investigation into the late Jeffrey Epstein. The pressure for more disclosure could only get more intense when lawmakers return.

Democratic Rep. Ro Khanna of California and Republican Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky are pushing the House to take up their bill to force the Department of Justice to publicly release its investigation. They are planning a news conference this week joined by Epstein victims. The House Oversight Committee is also investigating the issue.

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Democrats are eager to keep pressing on the Epstein files, especially after the Trump administration renege on pledges for transparency. The case for years has been the subject of online conspiracy theories and speculation about who may have been involved or aware of the wealthy financier's abuse.

Investigating Biden

The House Oversight Committee will return from August recess with a slate of interviews lined up as part of its investigation into former President Joe Biden's mental state while in office. The committee has already conducted interviews and depositions with nearly a dozen former top Biden aides and members of the president's inner circle.

The Republican-led committee will hear from former top Biden staffers in September like Jeff Zients, Biden's final White House chief of staff, Karine Jean-Pierre, the former White House press secretary, and Andrew Bates, a top press aide.

Oversight Chair James Comer, R-Ky., has said public hearings and a full report can be expected sometime in the fall.

Stock Trading Ban

Congress has discussed proposals for years to keep lawmakers from engaging in trading individual stocks, nodding to the idea that there's a potential conflict of interest when they are often privy to information and decisions that can dramatically move markets.

That push is now gaining momentum. A Senate committee has approved legislation from GOP Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri that would also extend the prohibition on stock trading to future presidents and vice presidents — while notably exempting Trump. In the House, several members are putting forward proposals and even threatening to maneuver around GOP leadership to force a vote.

Still, there is plenty of resistance to the idea, including from many wealthy lawmakers who reap dividends from their portfolios.

Democrats see crime as a major problem. Their party is struggling to address it

By JILL COLVIN and LINLEY SANDERS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrat Eric McWilliams doesn't approve of Donald Trump sending National Guard troops to cities like Washington, D.C. And he's certainly not supportive of most of the president's policies.

But the 63-year old retired handyman and U.S. Navy veteran does praise Trump for one thing. "When it comes to crime," he said, "He's alright. He's doing pretty good. How he's doing it is another matter."

"Crime is a big problem," he went on. "At least he is doing something."

McWilliams' views reflect the thinking of a lot of Democrats, according to a recent poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. It finds that while most disapprove of how Trump is handling the issue, a large majority, 68%, see crime as a "major problem" in large cities. That's despite the fact that statistics show crime, overall, is down across the nation, with some cities reporting 30-year lows.

The findings underscore the challenge facing Democratic leaders. They must thread the needle between criticizing Trump's policies, which are deeply unpopular among their base, while at the same time not dismissing widespread concerns about safety, which are amplified in many news sources and in online forums like Facebook and the popular Nextdoor app.

That could create a vulnerability for the party heading into next year's midterm elections.

Trump pushes Democrats to engage on an issue where he has the upper hand

While Trump remains unpopular overall, the new poll finds his approach to crime has earned him high marks compared to other issues like the economy and immigration. About half of U.S. adults, 53%, say they approve of his handling of crime.

The vast majority of Americans, 81%, also see crime as a "major problem" in large cities. That includes nearly all Republicans, roughly three-quarters of independents and nearly 7 in 10 Democrats.

The issue is complex, though, even for those who are concerned. In interviews, participants who oppose Trump's unprecedented takeover of Washington, D.C.'s police department and threats to expand his

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efforts to other cities expressed alarm, calling his actions anti-American and part of what they see as an effort to distract the public from issues the White House would prefer they ignore.

They believe resources would be better spent investing in community policing, mental health services and passing meaningful laws to get guns off city streets.

But many also bemoaned the state of public safety in the country, even if they said they felt safe in their own neighborhoods and acknowledged that violent crime is down after a pandemic-era spike. Several noted that they or their neighbors had been the victims of serious crimes and complained about what they felt was a lackluster police response.

Brian Cornelia, 62, a retired foreman and lifelong Democrat who lives in Michigan, near Marquette, is displeased with the performance of both parties.

"Defund the police was nuts," he said. "Now with Trump what he's doing, that's nuts too."

He said that crime is "not at all" an issue where he lives and "down all over," but nonetheless appreciates that Trump is doing something.

"Something is happening. We'll see if it helps or not, but it's better than not doing anything," he said. Either way, he said Trump had backed Democrats into a corner.

"It's bad. How are you going to say you don't want crime to be dealt with?" he said. "If you argue with him, what, you're soft on crime? It's a Catch-22."

Criticism of Trump's tactics

Even those who give Trump credit question his tactics.

About 8 in 10 Democrats say it's "completely" or "somewhat" unacceptable for the president to seize control of local police departments, as he's done in Washington. And about 6 in 10 say it's unacceptable for the federal government to use the U.S. military and National Guard to assist local police.

"I don't approve of national troops having authority over fellow Americans," said McWilliams, the Navy veteran. "You shouldn't use our armed forces to patrol our own people. That turns it into an authoritarian state."

McWilliams, who lives in White Hall, Pennsylvania, said crime "is practically non-existent" in his neighborhood, where he doesn't even lock his door. But he worries about the situation in nearby Allentown and across the nation, noting the deadly mass shooting this week at a Minneapolis church.

"I'm glad he does want to fight crime because – well, nobody else is doing it, certainly not our mayors and governors and police department," he said, accusing them of being "too politically correct" to pursue controversial tactics like "stop and frisk," which he believes works.

Others are far more skeptical.

"I think he's just terrible," said Carolyn Perry, 79, a lifelong Democrat and retired nurse who lives in Philadelphia and sees Trump's actions as an excuse to target Democratic cities that voted against him.

"I think this National Guard thing he's doing is ridiculous," she said. "It's almost like martial law. And now they're walking around with guns."

Democrat Star Kaye, 59, who lives in Downey, California, near Los Angeles, agreed, slamming Trump for using the military against residents — something she said the Revolutionary War was fought, in part, against.

"Of course living in a big city, I understand concerns about crime," she said. "But I don't think an authoritarian playbook is the right way to fix them."

If the president really wanted to tackle the issue, she argued, he would be investing in local police departments instead of diverting resources to immigration enforcement. She sees the crackdown as part of a broader effort to bolster Republicans' chances in next year's midterm elections.

"I think he's going to want to have troops in the street to intimidate people not to vote," she said.

Democrats try to find their own message

Part of the challenge for Democrats is that, historically, crime has not been a top issue for their base.

Gallup polling from April found that only about one-third of Democrats said they worried "a great deal" about crime and violence and were more likely to be concerned about the economy, Social Security, the

environment, hunger and homelessness.

Crime has also traditionally been a stronger issue for Republicans, including in the 2024 election.

Democrats acknowledged the gap last week at a national party gathering in Minneapolis. In a presentation to Democratic National Committee members, party strategists noted Republicans spent about three times as much on crime-related ads as Democrats in recent presidential election years.

They urged Democrats not to mimic the "tough-on-crime" rhetoric Republicans have embraced for decades, but instead position themselves as being "serious about safety, not empty scare tactics."

"DON'T TAKE TRUMP'S CRIME BAIT—INSTEAD, LEAN INTO SOLUTIONS TO PREVENT CRIME, RESPOND TO CRISIS, AND STOP VIOLENCE," they urged in a slide presentation.

Some Democratic politicians have been trying to do just that.

They include Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker, who has been pushing back against Trump's threats to expand his efforts to Chicago. He defended Democrats' approach and said local efforts to tackle crime have been working.

"We also are tough on crime," Pritzker told The Associated Press in an interview on Wednesday. Trump, he said, "talks a good game."

"What the President has done, however, is to make it harder to crack down on crime," he said.

Chicago mayor defies Trump's immigration crackdown plan for the city

By MARGERY A. BECK Associated Press

The mayor of Chicago pushed back Saturday against what he called the "out-of-control" Trump administration's plan to surge federal officers into the nation's third-largest city, which could take place within days.

The Chicago Police Department will be barred from helping federal authorities with civil immigration enforcement or any related patrols, traffic stops and checkpoints during the surge, according to an executive order signed by Mayor Brandon Johnson.

The mayor directed all city departments to guard the constitutional rights of Chicago residents "amidst the possibility of imminent militarized immigration or National Guard deployment by the federal government."

When asked during a news conference about federal agents who are presumably "taking orders," Johnson replied: "Yeah, and I don't take orders from the federal government."

Johnson also blocked Chicago police from wearing face coverings to hide their identities, as most federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers have adopted since the Trump administration took charge this year.

The federal surge into Chicago could start as early as Sept. 5 and last about 30 days, according to two U.S. officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss plans that had not been made public.

The officials described the immigration crackdown as part of a larger effort to expand the federal law enforcement presence in major Democratic-run cities, as it did this summer in Los Angeles.

On Saturday, President Donald Trump commented about Chicago crime and Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker on his Truth Social site: "Six people were killed, and 24 people were shot, in Chicago last weekend, and JB Pritzker, the weak and pathetic Governor of Illinois, just said that he doesn't need help in preventing CRIME. He is CRAZY!!! He better straighten it out, FAST, or we're coming! MAGA. President DJT"

Unlike the recent federal takeover of policing in Washington, D.C., the Chicago operation is not expected to rely on the National Guard or military and is focused exclusively on immigration instead of being cast as part of a broad campaign against crime, the officials said.

Chicago is home to a large immigrant population, and both the city and the state of Illinois have some of the country's strongest rules against cooperating with federal immigration enforcement efforts. That has often put the city and state at odds with Trump's mass deportation agenda.

Johnson's order builds on the city's longtime stance, saying neither Chicago nor Illinois officials have sought or been consulted on the federal presence and demanding Trump stand down on those plans.

Johnson had harsh words for Trump during his news conference, accusing the president of "behaving

outside the bounds of the Constitution” and seeking a federal presence in blue cities as retribution against his political rivals.

“He is reckless and out of control,” Johnson said. “He’s the biggest threat to our democracy that we’ve experienced in the history of our country.”

In response, the White House insisted the potential flood of federal agents was about “cracking down on crime.”

“If these Democrats focused on fixing crime in their own cities instead of doing publicity stunts to criticize the President, their communities would be much safer,” White House spokeswoman Abigail Jackson said in an email Saturday.

Pope demands end to the ‘pandemic of arms’ as he prays for victims of Minnesota school shooting

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Leo XIV on Sunday called for an end to the “pandemic of arms, large and small,” as he prayed publicly for the victims of a shooting during a Catholic school Mass in the United States.

History’s first U.S. pope spoke in English as he denounced the attack and the “logic of weapons” fueling wars around the world, during his Sunday noon blessing from his studio overlooking St. Peter’s Square.

“Our prayers for the victims of the tragic shooting during a school Mass in the American state of Minnesota,” said the Chicago-born Leo. “We hold in our prayers the countless children killed and injured every day around the world. Let us plead God to stop the pandemic of arms, large and small, which infects our world.”

Two children were killed Wednesday and 20 people were injured during the shooting attack at the Church of Annunciation in Minneapolis, as hundreds of students from the nearby Annunciation Catholic School and others gathered for a Mass. The shooter fired 116 rifle rounds through the church’s stained-glass windows, and later died by suicide.

The attack once again reignited the debate over guns in America. Those who support stricter background checks on gun purchases and other laws, often Democrats, say that Republican politicians who appeal to “thoughts and prayers” after school shootings are trying to distract from their own inaction on gun restrictions.

In the immediate aftermath of the shooting, Leo had refrained from any political commentary about guns in America, sending a telegram of condolence that focused exclusively on the spiritual. He said he was saddened by the “terrible tragedy” and sent his “heartfelt condolences and the assurance of spiritual closeness to all those affected.”

Leo’s predecessor, Pope Francis, had long railed against the weapons industry and proliferation of arms fueling wars, denouncing gun manufacturers as “merchants of death.” During his historic 2015 speech to the U.S. Congress, the Argentine pope asked the lawmakers why weapons were being sold purely to kill.

“Sadly, the answer, as we all know, is simply for money: money that is drenched in blood, often innocent blood,” Francis said then. “In the face of this shameful and culpable silence, it is our duty to confront the problem and to stop the arms trade.”

Leo had opened his appeal Sunday by demanding an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine and a “serious commitment to dialogue” from the warring sides.

“It’s time that those responsible renounce the logic of weapons and take the path of negotiations and peace, with the support of the international community,” he said. “The voice of weapons must be silenced, while the voice of fraternity and justice must rise.”

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A lot has happened since Naomi Osaka and Coco Gauff last played each other at the US Open

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — So much has happened for Naomi Osaka — in tennis, away from tennis — since she first played Coco Gauff at the U.S. Open back in 2019.

Over that time, Osaka has won two Grand Slam trophies to raise her career total to four, helped spark a global conversation about mental health by revealing she felt anxiety and depression, taken a series of breaks from the tour and become a mother.

The Gauff vs. Osaka matchup in the fourth round at Flushing Meadows on Monday serves as both a reminder — to them, to others — of that night six years ago, as well as all that's transpired since.

"Just to be at this point of my life and to be playing her again," Osaka said, "is, honestly, for me ... kind of special."

Osaka was 21 and the reigning champion at the U.S. Open and Australian Open; Gauff was 15 and playing in only her second Grand Slam tournament and first in New York. Osaka won in straight sets in Arthur Ashe Stadium, but what was most memorable was what happened after the last point.

Gauff was crying, and Osaka walked over to console her and suggest that she address the crowd — highly unusual for the loser of a match. But Osaka knew the fans would want to hear from the young American who already was showing signs of becoming the star she is today.

"I remember it was a tough moment for me, because it was a hyped-up match. I remember looking back at it. I guess I put way too much pressure on myself thinking I maybe had a chance in that moment to actually do something, which I definitely did," Gauff said Saturday, "but I think it was just I felt more expectation that I should, than maybe belief."

Osaka recalls recognizing how much talent and poise Gauff possessed for such a young player.

"I thought she just handled herself really well," said Osaka, who is seeded 23rd at Flushing Meadows and recently began working with Iga Swiatek's former coach, Tomasz Wiktorowski, "and I knew she was going to be back there."

After winning the U.S. Open again in 2020, Osaka triumphed at the Australian Open in January 2021. At the next Grand Slam tournament, she pulled out before her second-round match and explained the off-court struggles she had been dealing with, then took the first of a handful of mental health breaks.

The Australian Open, 4 1/2 years ago, was the last major where Osaka made it to the fourth round until now. She was off the tour for part of that stretch while on maternity leave.

On Saturday, she spoke about "the journey getting back here."

"I just feel happy," said Osaka, 27, "because I feel like all of my hard work is amounting to something."

Gauff, now 21, won the U.S. Open in 2023 and the French Open this June and is seeded No. 3 in New York while working with a biomechanics expert to retool her problematic serve.

"Naomi and I, we aren't super close or anything, but we're definitely friendly with each other. I support her from afar in all the things that she's done on and off the court," Gauff said.

"It would be a cool kind of deja vu-type of situation," she said, guessing that this rematch will be in Ashe, too, "but hopefully it will be a different result."

Today in History: September 1, Titanic wreckage found

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, Sept. 1, the 244th day of 2025. There are 121 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Sept. 1, 1985, a U.S.-French expedition located the wreckage of the Titanic on the floor of the Atlantic Ocean roughly 400 miles off the coast of Newfoundland.

Also on this date:

In 1715, following a reign of 72 years, King Louis XIV of France died four days before his 77th birthday;

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he was succeeded by his five year-old great-grandson, Louis XV.

In 1897, the first section of Boston's new subway was opened, creating the first underground rapid transit system in North America.

In 1914, the passenger pigeon, once one of the most abundant bird species on earth, went extinct as the last known example, named Martha, died in captivity at the Cincinnati Zoo.

In 1923, the Japanese cities of Tokyo and Yokohama were devastated by an earthquake that claimed some 140,000 lives.

In 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland, an event regarded as the start of World War II.

In 1964, pitcher Masanori Murakami of the San Francisco Giants became the first Japanese baseball player to play in a Major League Baseball game.

In 1969, a coup in Libya brought Moammar Gadhafi to power.

In 1972, American Bobby Fischer won the international chess crown in Reykjavik, Iceland, as Boris Spassky of the Soviet Union resigned before the resumption of their 21st and final game.

In 1983, 269 people were killed when a Korean Air Lines Boeing 747 was shot down by a Soviet jet fighter after the airliner entered Soviet airspace.

In 2004, Islamic terrorists took more than a thousand people hostage in a school in Beslan, North Ossetia, Russia; the siege would end three days later in gunfire and explosions, leaving 334 people dead — more than half of them children.

In 2015, invoking "God's authority," Rowan County, Kentucky, Clerk Kim Davis denied marriage licenses to gay couples again in direct defiance of the federal courts and vowed not to resign, even under the pressure of steep fines or jail. (Davis would spend five days in jail as a result, and is currently appealing a ruling ordering her to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in related legal fees.)

Today's Birthdays: Attorney and law professor Alan Dershowitz is 87. Comedian-actor Lily Tomlin is 86. Singer Barry Gibb is 79. Talk show host Dr. Phil McGraw is 75. Singer Gloria Estefan is 68. TV host-author Padma Lakshmi is 55. Actor Ricardo Antonio Chavira is 54. Fashion designer Rachel Zoe is 54. Actor Scott Speedman is 50. Composer-producer Ludwig Göransson is 41. Actor-singer Zendaya is 29.