

Groton Daily Independent

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Monday, Nov. 24

Senior Menu: Stir fry beef with rice, oriental blend vegetables, fruit cocktail.
School Breakfast: Egg bake.
School Lunch: Ham patty, baked beans.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.
Groton Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, potluck at noon.
4th grade GBB practice, 4 p.m.
Fall Sports Awards Night, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 25

Senior Menu: Baked chicken, mashed potatoes, cauliflower, whole wheat bread.
School Breakfast: Muffins.
School Lunch: Pizza burger, tri tater.
United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.
5th grade GBB practice, 4:15 p.m.
Wrestling kick-off fundraiser, 5 p.m.
MS GBB hosts Aberdeen Roncalli (7th at 6 p.m., 8th at 7 p.m.)

Wednesday, Nov. 26

Senior Menu: Chili with beans, tossed salad, peaches, corn bread/muffin.
NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving break
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.

Thursday, Nov. 27

No Senior Meal
NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving break

Friday, Nov. 28

No senior meal.
NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving break

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1440

Why 1440? The printing press was invented around the year 1440, spreading knowledge to the masses and changing the course of history. More facts: In every day, there are 1,440 minutes. We're here to make each one count.

Ukraine's Decision Point

Ukrainian and Western officials began talks in Geneva yesterday, discussing a plan proposed by the Trump administration last week to end the nearly four-year war between the country and Russia. Russian officials were not in attendance.

President Donald Trump set a Thursday deadline for Ukraine to respond to the 28-point plan. Notably, the proposal requires Ukraine to cede all territory currently held by Russia—roughly 20% of the country's pre-2014 territory, including Crimea and much of the Donbas region—and freezes territorial control along current battle lines in neighboring areas. It also prohibits Ukraine from NATO membership (but allows it to join the European Union).

Since 2022, more than 53,000 civilian casualties have been reported, including more than 14,000 killed. More than 10 million people have been displaced. Ukraine has received more than \$400B in aid, including \$118B from the US. See an overview here.

Nigeria Kidnapping Attack

Fifty students escaped their captors after a mass kidnapping in Nigeria last week, a Christian organization revealed yesterday. The abduction is among the largest in the country's history; more than 250 people remain captive, including students as young as 10 years old.

The attack took place early Friday, when unidentified armed men stormed St. Mary's Private Catholic School in the country's central Niger state, abducting 303 students and 12 staff members. It followed a deadly gun attack on a church in neighboring Kwara state, and came days after gunmen kidnapped 25 schoolgirls in Kebbi state. No group has claimed responsibility for the recent attacks, which have forced widespread school closures. Authorities have largely characterized violence in the region, including kidnapping-for-ransom attacks, as a clash over strained resources.

President Donald Trump has threatened to end all aid to Nigeria over the issue, accusing the government of failing to protect Christians.

Puberty Blockers Trial

Researchers in the UK announced a pair of new clinical trials to assess the impacts of puberty blockers on children. The trial will clear 220 children to access the drugs on an experimental basis after the government barred their distribution to children last year following a study on the drugs' safety profile.

The Pathways trial will recruit children under age 16 who have been diagnosed with gender dysphoria and are undergoing puberty. Beginning in January, recruits will be assigned to one of two groups: one starting the drugs immediately and the other 12 months later. Researchers will assess the drugs' impacts on their mental, social, and physical well-being for two years, including evaluations of bone density and brain development. A separate observational study of 3,000 children will evaluate the impact of routine care on children with gender dysphoria.

In the US, an estimated 300,000 children ages 13 to 17 identify as transgender (42,000 kids received gender dysphoria diagnoses as of 2021, up nearly threefold from 2017). More than half of the states restrict or ban gender-related medical interventions in such cases

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Grammy- and Emmy Award-winning entertainer Donald Glover reveals he suffered a stroke last year while touring as his rapper alias, Childish Gambino.

Los Angeles Clippers guard Chris Paul, nicknamed "the Point God," announces he will retire after this season.

"Wicked: For Good" earns No. 1 spot at the domestic box office with \$150M opening weekend, beating predecessor "Wicked" part one.

Science & Technology

Robotaxi company Waymo gets approval from California to expand service across the Bay Area, in Sacramento, and between Los Angeles and San Diego.

COP30 climate summit ends without a new deal to expand prior commitments to curb fossil fuels, outcome criticized as underwhelming by attendees.

Archaeologists unveil 1,700-year-old Roman sarcophagus found near Budapest, Hungary; area was part of the ancient city of Aquincum.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close up Friday (S&P 500 +1.0%, Dow +1.1%, Nasdaq +0.9%) following signs the Federal Reserve may cut interest rates once more this year.

Hedge fund Pershing Square, headed by activist investor Bill Ackman, reportedly plans to go public in early 2026.

BHP Group, the world's largest mining company by market cap, abandons bid to acquire Anglo American, the largest producer of platinum after preliminary discussions.

Politics & World Affairs

Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R, GA-14) announces she will resign in January after President Donald Trump suggested he would back a primary challenger.

Israel claims to have killed Hezbollah chief of staff Haytham Tabtabai after first airstrikes in Lebanon since June kill five people, wound 25 others.

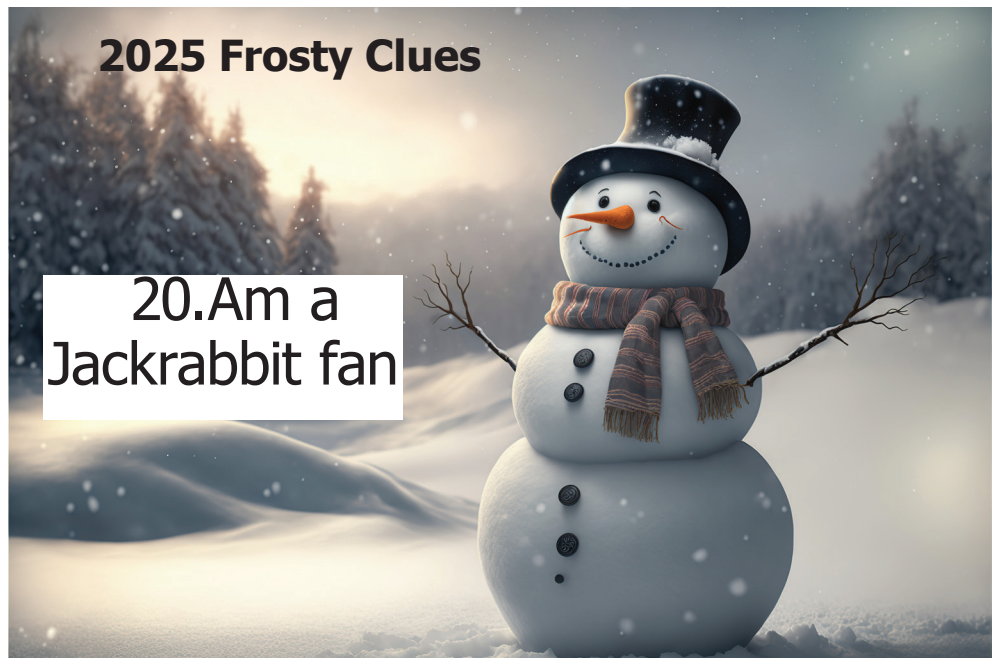
The US is reportedly planning to launch a new phase of operations in Venezuela, potentially beginning with covert activities.

Frosty is Back!!!

Please check the Groton Daily Independent for daily clues as to who the Groton Area Mystery Frosty is. The unveiling of Frosty will take place at the Groton Area Snow Queen Contest on Sunday, November 30th, at 4:00 pm.

2025 Frosty Clues

20.Am a
Jackrabbit fan



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The Minnesota Vikings traveled to Green Bay to face the Packers. The season was effectively on the line, and the Vikings needed to put together a solid game to have any hope of making the playoffs. Instead, they played perhaps the worst game of the season, losing 23-6. At 4-7, and considering how poorly the entire team has played, the best possible outcome would be losing the rest of the games to secure a high draft pick.

The Vikings got the ball to begin the game, and things were looking good. Two runs by Aaron Jones picked up a first down, then J.J. McCarthy threw a 15-yard fastball to Justin Jefferson. However, three straight incompletions forced the Vikings to kick a field goal to take a 3-0 lead. Green Bay

responded with a 7-play, 70-yard touchdown drive. The two teams traded punts to close out the first quarter, and Green Bay held on to its 7-3 lead.

The Vikings' next drive got all the way to the red zone, but a failed fourth-down gave the ball to the Packers, who put together a 14-play, 68-yard drive that ended in a field goal, extending their lead to 10-3. With just over two minutes left in the half, the Vikings drove down the field and got into position to kick a 59-yard field goal, and the Vikings went into halftime down four points.

Green Bay got the ball to begin the second half, but the Vikings' defense held strong and forced a punt. Unfortunately for Minnesota, sloppy special teams play gave the ball to Green Bay at the five-yard line. Two plays later, a Packers touchdown extended their lead to 17-6. The Vikings had two drives in the third quarter, both of which were three-and-outs for a grand total of negative 10 yards...

The Packers added a field goal early in the fourth quarter to make the score 20-6. The Vikings responded with a three-and-out that lost 17 yards. Green Bay got another field goal on its next drive, and on the first play of the ensuing drive, McCarthy threw an interception. The Vikings' defense forced a Packers punt, and five plays later McCarthy threw another interception, locking in the 23-6 loss.

J.J. McCarthy completed 12 of 19 passes for 87 yards, no touchdowns, two interceptions, and one fumble. If you were reading my article during the 2024 offseason, you know I was not a fan of J.J. McCarthy coming into the draft. However, I trusted Kevin O'Connell and was willing to give JJM a shot. Unfortunately, at this point, it's clear that McCarthy is not an NFL-caliber quarterback.

The Vikings ran the ball 20 times for 93 yards, which is a solid 4.7 yards per carry. But with the team losing as badly as they were, the ground game was useless. Justin Jefferson led the team with four catches for 48 yards, and although he's been supportive of McCarthy so far, you must wonder how long he'll be content to be on a team with such horrendous QB play.

Blake Cashman had 16 tackles. Dallas Turner had the defense's only sack, and also added a tackle for a loss and two QB hits. The defense once again failed to make the routine plays, giving the Packers tons of space in the pass game and constantly missing tackles in the ground game.

Since it's Thanksgiving, here's what I'm thankful for: I'm thankful that there are only seven games left this season. I'm thankful that McCarthy is playing so horribly because there is no doubt he's not our QB of the future, and the Vikings can address that this offseason. I'm thankful that, despite my best efforts, my son doesn't enjoy watching football – it'll save him a lifetime of disappointment.

Looking ahead, the Vikings travel to Seattle to battle the Seahawks. Sam Darnold has led the Seahawks to an 8-3 record and is likely salivating at the thought of showing Minnesota they made the wrong choice in choosing J.J. McCarthy.

“Strengthening Paths to Safety: Supporting Domestic Violence Survivors”

When someone escapes domestic violence, their journey to healing has only just begun. As physicians, you are often the first professionals to recognize signs of abuse and can play a pivotal role in connecting survivors to lifesaving resources.

This is especially crucial in rural communities where you may be the only health care provider for miles and where stigma around domestic violence can be particularly strong. Recent research conducted across South Dakota and Iowa shelters with 47 survivors—focusing primarily on rural and Native American survivors—reveals crucial insights about the supports needed to rebuild lives after abuse.

Research in health care settings suggests that many abuse victims may disclose their situation to a health care provider before seeking specialized services, making physicians crucial gatekeepers to support resources. Below we discuss several of the key needs identified by survivors that would help them on their pathway to healing.

Housing emerged as the most fundamental need. “I have a place to live. I’m not afraid that I don’t have a place to sleep at night,” explained one Native survivor. Rural survivors faced even greater housing challenges, with one Native participant sharing: “I got assistance for the deposit, but I’m kind of struggling with the utilities.” Without stable housing, survivors often face impossible choices between houselessness or returning to abusive relationships.

Transportation barriers create profound isolation, particularly for rural Native survivors. “If they had a bus or something to bring us here, then more people would be willing to come,” noted one rural Native survivor. Another rural Native participant explained: “I think we mostly just need help with gas cards” to get to services that may be located far away.

Mental health support is essential, with many survivors defining healing in terms of emotional well-being. “I guess being able to talk without breaking down emotionally,” explained one Native urban survivor.

Physical health needs intertwine with trauma recovery. “I was really in bad shape. I had to stay in bed for a while and then go back to the hospital,” shared a rural Native survivor.

As medical providers, being aware of how abuse manifests in medical complaints, chronic pain, unexplained injuries, anxiety, depression and missed appointments can help identify patients in need of intervention. Pediatric screening is equally important, as children’s health often reflects the safety of their home environment. Documenting findings thoroughly and creating a safe, private space for disclosure increases the likelihood that survivors will seek help when ready.

The consistent support of trauma-informed advocates proves transformative. “It’s been a lifesaver. You’re around people who know what you’re going through,” expressed a Native urban survivor. The role of physicians can be to support these survivors in connecting with local advocacy services. Reaching out to your local agency and requesting information on their services, brochures to share with patients, and a greater understanding of local support opportunities provides an essential way to support your patients’ health.

Prevention remains far more effective than intervention after trauma occurs. As trusted figures in rural communities, your advocacy can be particularly powerful in breaking cycles of violence where resources are scarce, but community connections run deep.

What can you do today to make a difference? Connect with your local domestic violence organization and invite them to come tell you about their services and leave fliers in your office. Have this as a resource to share with clients who you identify may be in need. If you do not know who your local provider is, you can find them at: <https://www.thehotline.org/get-help/directory-of-local-providers/>

Bridget Diamond-Welch, Ph.D., is an associate professor and the Director of the Office of Research & Innovation in the School of Health Sciences at the University of South Dakota. Her research specializes in improving system response to interpersonal violence, specifically domestic violence, sexual assault and sex trafficking. Her work examines what survivors need to heal and seek justice, and how systems can improve to meet these needs. Recent publications include Journal of Forensic Nursing, Public Health Reports, Child Abuse & Neglect, and Journal of Interpersonal Violence. Her work has been funded by NIJ and OVW. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Tik Tok. Prairie Doc Programming includes On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show (most Thursdays at 7pm on SDPB, YouTube and streaming on Facebook), 2 podcasts, and a Radio program (on SDPB, Sundays at 6am and 1pm).



EARTHTALK

What Is Biophilia And Can It Save Us?

by Grace Lee

Dear EarthTalk: What is “biophilia” and where does this concept come from? – D. Marin, via email

Coined by psychologist Erich Fromm and popularized and expanded on by biologist E.O. Wilson, the term “biophilia” is defined as the human tendency to interact or be closely associated with other life forms in nature. According to the biophilia hypothesis, humans inherently seek connections with all that is alive around us. Wilson used this term to emphasize the urgency of broader research and understanding of life on Earth to protect key species and ecosystems. “We must hurry to acquire the knowledge on which a wise policy of conservation and development can be based,” said Wilson, who died in 2021 at 92.

When Fromm first coined the term in the 1960s, he described it as “the passionate love of life and all that is alive,” framing it as a psychological orientation toward connecting with living things. He also emphasized its essential role in mental health and moral development, portraying it as an opposing force to necrophilia, which is a fascination with death and decay that Fromm linked to a love for machines. Wilson expanded on this concept in the 1980s by arguing that biophilia is rooted in our evolutionary past.

Wilson’s hypothesis tied biophilia directly to human survival, self-preservation and environmental awareness. He described biophilia as a trait instilled over thousands of years of evolution in the natural environment. Because of biophilia, humans have developed an unlearned predisposition to pay attention and respond positively to characteristics and patterns in nature that are favorable for survival.

Biophilia is more than a fondness for nature. Researchers have found that 90 percent of people imagine a natural setting when asked to think of something relaxing and calm. Cognitively, nature experiences help stimulate “a reflective learning cycle of introspection, sensemaking, and finally, habit readjustment,” according to a study conducted by Cynthia J. Way of The George Washington University.

The biophilia hypothesis has influenced the creation and popularization of biophilic design, which uses natural materials, patterns and phenomena to maintain a connection with nature even in an indoor, man-made environment. Design elements include natural light, nature-themed artwork and natural materials. Biophilic design has been found to improve productivity, lower stress levels and enhance learning. Upon studying the effects of drab working environments, Dr. Craig Knight of Exeter University concluded that workplaces with just a few houseplants had a 15 percent increase in productivity and improved memory.

Consider integrating biophilia into your career and everyday tasks. Adopt biophilic design into your home and workplace through simple adjustments like adding houseplants and using natural light, nature-themed art and natural materials.



Biophilia is defined as the human tendency to interact or be closely associated with other life forms in nature. Credit: Pexels.com.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Tribal radio funding flows, but future remains uncertain after clawback of public media money

BY: JOHN HULT

PORCUPINE — For the past few weeks, Oitancan “Oi” Zephier has labored among piles of vinyl records nearly 2 feet high.

KILI-FM, the Porcupine, South Dakota-based tribal public broadcasting station Zephier manages, has gone digital and no longer needs the records.

The station is selling the records, because what it needs is cash.

That’s despite a last-minute deal brokered by South Dakota Republican U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds to find funding for tribal stations when Congress voted in July to defund the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Like other public stations, KILI has typically been awarded money through the corporation.

“We were kind of planning for getting nothing, really, and that’s part of where the sale of the records came about,” Zephier said.

The July legislation, signed into law by President Donald Trump, rescinded \$1.1 billion in federal funding for the corporation and caused it to wind down operations. South Dakota Public Broadcasting, which received 20% of its budget from the corporation, laid off seven people, eliminated a locally produced show and reduced the output of two other local shows.

Rounds’ handshake deal with the White House included a promise to provide \$9.4 million for 38 tribal stations in highly rural areas, given the dearth of options for things like emergency alerts across remote swaths of tribal land.

According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Indigenous Connectivity and Technology, award notices have gone out to KILI, as well as to KOYA in St. Francis, which serves the Rosebud Reservation, and KDKO in Lake Andes, serving the Yankton Sioux Reservation. A funding award is expected for KLND in McLaughlin, which offers programming for the Standing Rock and Cheyenne River reservations, according to a statement from the BIA.

In an email, Rounds told South Dakota Searchlight that future money can be requested on an annual basis, through the appropriations process instead of through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

“Our team continues to work with the administration to make certain these radio stations stay open and operational so they can continue to serve their communities for years to come,” Rounds said.

New process, old concerns

Earlier this month, speaking less than 24 hours after President Trump signed a bill to reopen the federal government after the longest shutdown in history, Zephier said he’s concerned about the reliability of annual awards from Congress.

“It’s a little more difficult,” Zephier said of the appropriations process.

He took over at KILI after years working in administrative roles for the Oglala Sioux Tribe and area schools, which also rely on federal funding.

Consternation over inadequate federal funding is a regular throughline for tribal nations in South Dakota. The Oglala Sioux Tribe has thrice sued the Interior Department over law enforcement funding, most recently last month. The Rosebud Sioux Tribe won a case against the Indian Health Service after the agency closed the reservation’s only emergency room.

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Zephier said the station's BIA award funding could come as soon as this week. It matches the funding the station got through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for fiscal year 2025, which ended Sept. 30.

The \$235,000 won't solve the station's long-term funding problems, though. It covers about 70% of the station's \$350,000 annual budget, the rest of which the station raises by underwriting and collecting fees from tribal programs that lease time for programming.

It's enough to get by, as long as nothing goes wrong.

Zephier pointed to the station's wind turbine, a three-blade machine with two functional blades, and to its solar panels, some of which are cracked and in need of repair. Both systems help power the station, located on a stretch of highway outside the village of Porcupine.

One of the station's two computers is new, or at least new to Zephier. It's a 2017 system, which he bought because fixing the 12-year-old computer he'd been using would've cost more than the replacement.

"We need new equipment," Zephier said. "We need a new emergency alert system, and that's going to cost us about \$170,000 alone."

This year, future years

KILI was featured in a New York Times story that highlighted how important tribal stations are in their communities. Zephier grew up hearing Lakota speakers and powwow music on KILI, and it's one of the area's primary sources of information on tribal government, schools and community events.

KILI has raised \$80,000 in donations since the summer, and \$50,000 came from a single donor after the story ran in the Times.

John Miller, the longtime manager of KOYA in St. Francis, spoke to South Dakota Searchlight moments before a meeting about a middle school sports broadcast.

Miller got notice that KOYA would get federal funding for the current fiscal year a few months ago. He declined to say how much funding came through for the station, but did say "everything" it does is covered by federal dollars.

"We were one of the lucky ones," Miller said, in that KOYA got its funding assurances before the government shutdown, which lasted from Oct. 1 to Nov. 12.

Not all stations have gotten notice of federal funding, according to a BIA spokesperson. In an email to South Dakota Searchlight, the agency declined to offer the dollar amounts awarded to individual stations. Previously, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting made a list of its awards publicly available.

The BIA said it is "working to accelerate the implementation of one-time funding to support 38 radio stations and one television station that provide emergency public safety information to tribal communities."

The money for tribal public broadcasting came from "previously appropriated federal funds" to "support tribal communications infrastructure," the agency said.

The email did not address questions about funding beyond 2025.

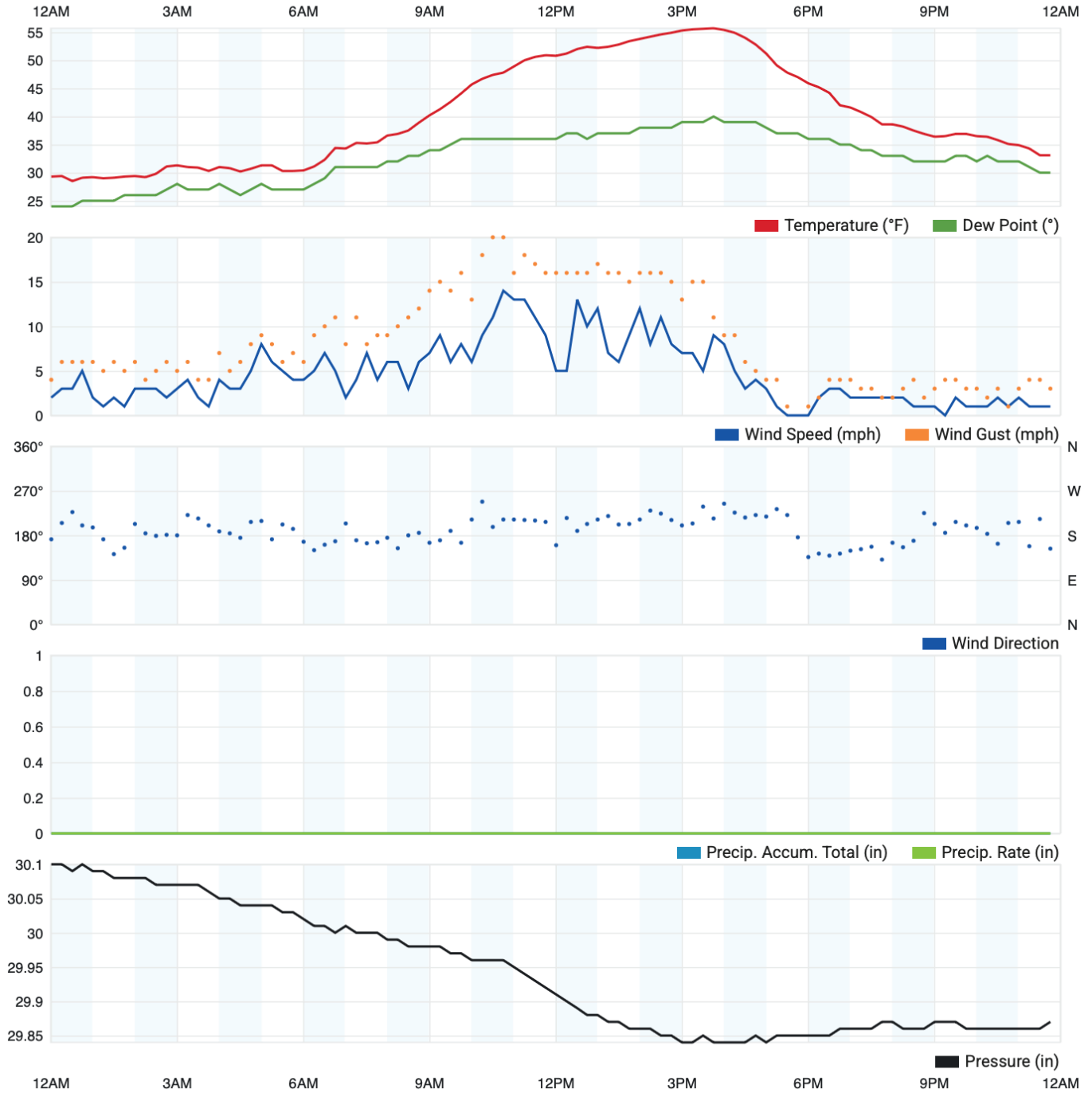
John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

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Today



High: 47 °F

Partly Sunny

Tonight



Low: 31 °F

Slight Chance
Rain then
Rain/Snow
Likely

Tuesday



High: 35 °F

Rain/Snow and
Patchy
Blowing Snow

Tuesday Night



Low: 17 °F

Patchy
Blowing Snow
and Blustery
then Mostly
Cloudy

Wednesday



High: 27 °F

Mostly Sunny



Rain Changing to Snow on Tuesday

November 23, 2025
5:26 PM

Precipitation will mainly be rain Monday night and transition to snow Tuesday morning.

Key Messages

- **Accumulating snow in northern SD and west-central MN**
 - 40-70% chance of 1" of snow northeast of a line from Eureka to Watertown
- **Northwest gusts of 35 to 50 mph**
 - Will combine with falling snow in northern SD to reduce visibilities
- **Below normal temperatures will remain for Thanksgiving and continue through the end of the month**

NEW What Has Changed

- A slight increase in snowfall accumulation probabilities.

Next Scheduled Update

- Monday Morning

	11/24 Mon		11/25 Tue							
	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm
Aberdeen	5%	5%	40%	40%	70%	70%	65%	65%	15%	15%
Britton	5%	5%	45%	45%	85%	85%	75%	75%	30%	30%
Clark	0%	0%	35%	35%	75%	75%	65%	65%	30%	30%
Eagle Butte	15%	15%	50%	50%	30%	30%	15%	15%	0%	0%
Ellendale	5%	5%	55%	55%	75%	75%	70%	70%	15%	15%
Eureka	15%	15%	70%	70%	70%	70%	55%	55%	5%	5%
Gettysburg	5%	5%	60%	60%	50%	50%	45%	45%	5%	5%
Kennebec	0%	0%	20%	20%	30%	30%	20%	20%	5%	5%
McIntosh	50%	50%	75%	75%	40%	40%	25%	25%	0%	0%
Milbank	0%	0%	20%	20%	80%	80%	70%	70%	40%	40%
Miller	0%	0%	35%	35%	55%	55%	50%	50%	10%	10%
Mobridge	15%	15%	70%	70%	50%	50%	35%	35%	5%	5%
Murdo	0%	0%	25%	25%	25%	25%	20%	20%	5%	5%
Pierre	5%	5%	40%	40%	35%	35%	25%	25%	5%	5%
Redfield	0%	0%	40%	40%	65%	65%	55%	55%	15%	15%
Sisseton	0%	0%	30%	30%	85%	85%	80%	80%	40%	40%
Watertown	0%	0%	20%	20%	75%	75%	65%	65%	35%	35%
Webster	0%	0%	35%	35%	80%	80%	70%	70%	35%	35%
Wheaton	0%	0%	20%	20%	90%	90%	80%	80%	45%	45%

- Rain + - Wintry Mix + - Snow +



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Rain will be moving into north central SD Monday evening and will transition to a rain/snow mix then snow Tuesday morning. Strong winds will be gusting Tuesday, which could cause blowing snow and lower visibilities in areas. Additionally, temperatures will start to drop Tuesday to below normal by Thanksgiving. If you are traveling, make sure to be prepared for winter is on its way.

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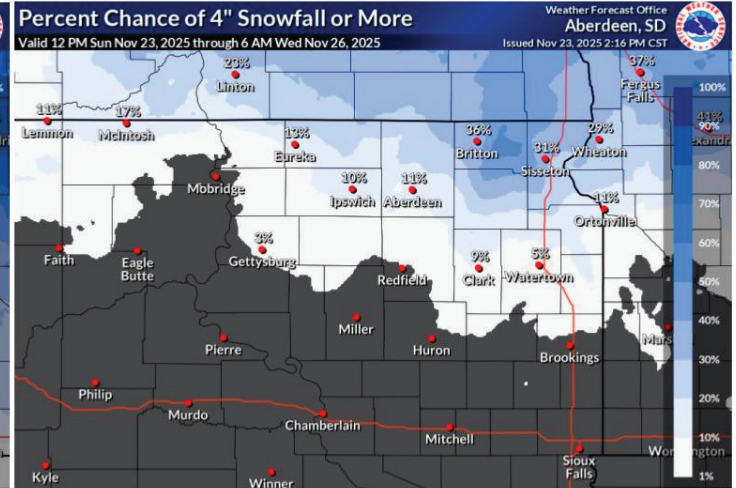
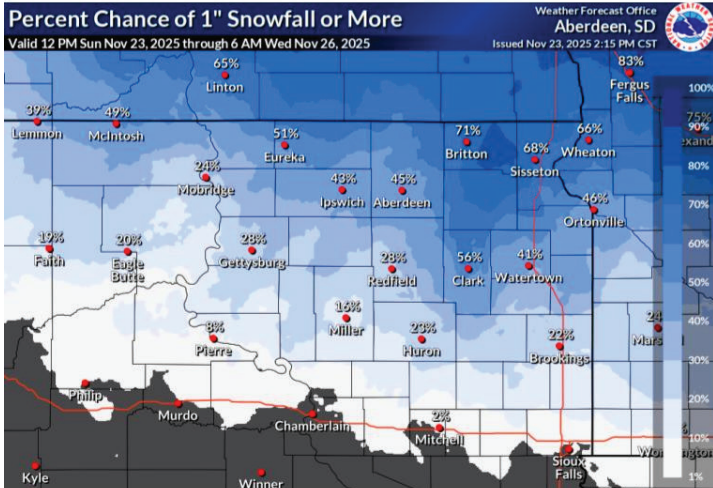


Probability of Upcoming Snow

November 23, 2025
5:46 PM

System Tuesday brings snow to South Dakota and west central Minnesota

- Precipitation will start Monday evening as rain and then transition to snow Tuesday morning. Patchy blowing snow possible over northern SD Tuesday.
- The heaviest snowfall is expected Tuesday afternoon and evening over northeastern South Dakota. There is a 30% chance of 4" or more snow over portions of Marshall, Day, Roberts and Traverse Counties.
- There is still a lot of uncertainty in the snowfall amounts, with amounts expected to change in future forecasts. Higher snow amounts will be to the north in ND and the northern half of MN, so take caution if traveling north. Be sure to stay up to date on the latest forecast.



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

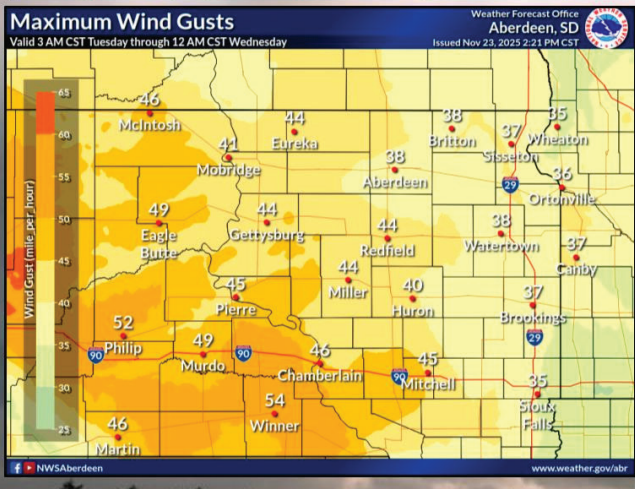
Once the snow starts to fall Tuesday, there are higher chances for one inch of snow over northern SD counties, with portions of Marshall, Day, Roberts and Traverse Counties having 30% chance for 4 inches or more of snow. There will be higher snowfall amounts to the north in ND and the northern half of MN. Be sure to stay up to date on the latest forecast, especially if you are traveling.



Gusty Winds Tuesday

November 23, 2025
5:51 PM

- **Increasing northwest winds on Tuesday** from west to east through the morning into the afternoon hour.
- These winds will combine with falling snow in northern SD and west-central MN to produce to blowing snow and reduced visibilities.
- **High to Very High Grassland Fire Danger values are possible in south central SD.**



Maximum Wind Gust Forecast (mph)

	11/25 Tue												11/26 Wed									
	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am
Aberdeen	10	12	11	16	18	21	24	28	31	33	36	38	38	37	36	33	32	31	30	29	26	25
Britton	8	9	10	13	15	18	22	25	28	31	35	37	38	38	38	37	37	36	35	33	31	30
Clark	10	12	11	16	17	21	24	28	30	33	37	39	40	40	39	38	38	38	37	35	32	31
Eagle Butte	30	33	37	40	43	45	46	48	49	49	49	47	45	41	37	33	32	31	31	30	28	26
Ellendale	10	12	11	16	18	22	25	29	32	35	37	39	40	39	38	36	35	33	32	31	29	28
Eureka	16	18	21	23	26	29	32	36	38	40	43	44	44	41	38	36	35	33	32	31	30	29
Gettysburg	20	22	25	28	31	33	37	39	43	44	45	44	41	38	35	33	32	31	30	28	26	25
Kennebec	28	28	32	36	39	43	45	48	51	52	54	54	53	49	45	40	37	35	32	30	29	28
McIntosh	26	30	33	36	39	41	44	45	46	46	46	46	45	41	37	33	32	31	30	29	28	25
Milbank	6	6	7	8	10	11	16	20	23	25	28	29	31	33	36	37	37	37	36	35	32	31
Miller	14	17	21	24	28	31	35	37	39	41	44	44	44	41	38	35	33	32	31	30	29	28
Mobridge	18	22	25	29	32	35	37	39	40	41	41	41	40	38	36	33	32	32	31	29	28	25
Murdo	30	35	38	40	43	44	45	47	48	49	49	49	47	44	39	36	33	31	30	28	25	24
Pierre	21	25	30	33	37	39	40	41	43	44	45	45	43	40	37	35	31	29	26	24	23	23
Redfield	10	13	15	17	21	24	28	31	35	37	40	43	44	43	39	36	33	32	31	29	28	26
Sisseton	7	8	9	10	13	15	17	21	23	26	30	32	35	36	37	37	37	36	35	33	32	31
Watertown	8	9	9	12	14	17	21	23	26	29	32	35	37	38	38	38	38	37	36	33	32	32
Webster	9	10	12	14	16	18	22	25	28	31	35	37	38	38	38	37	37	37	36	35	32	31
Wheaton	7	7	8	9	10	12	14	16	20	22	24	26	29	31	33	33	36	36	35	33	32	31

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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Groton Daily Independent

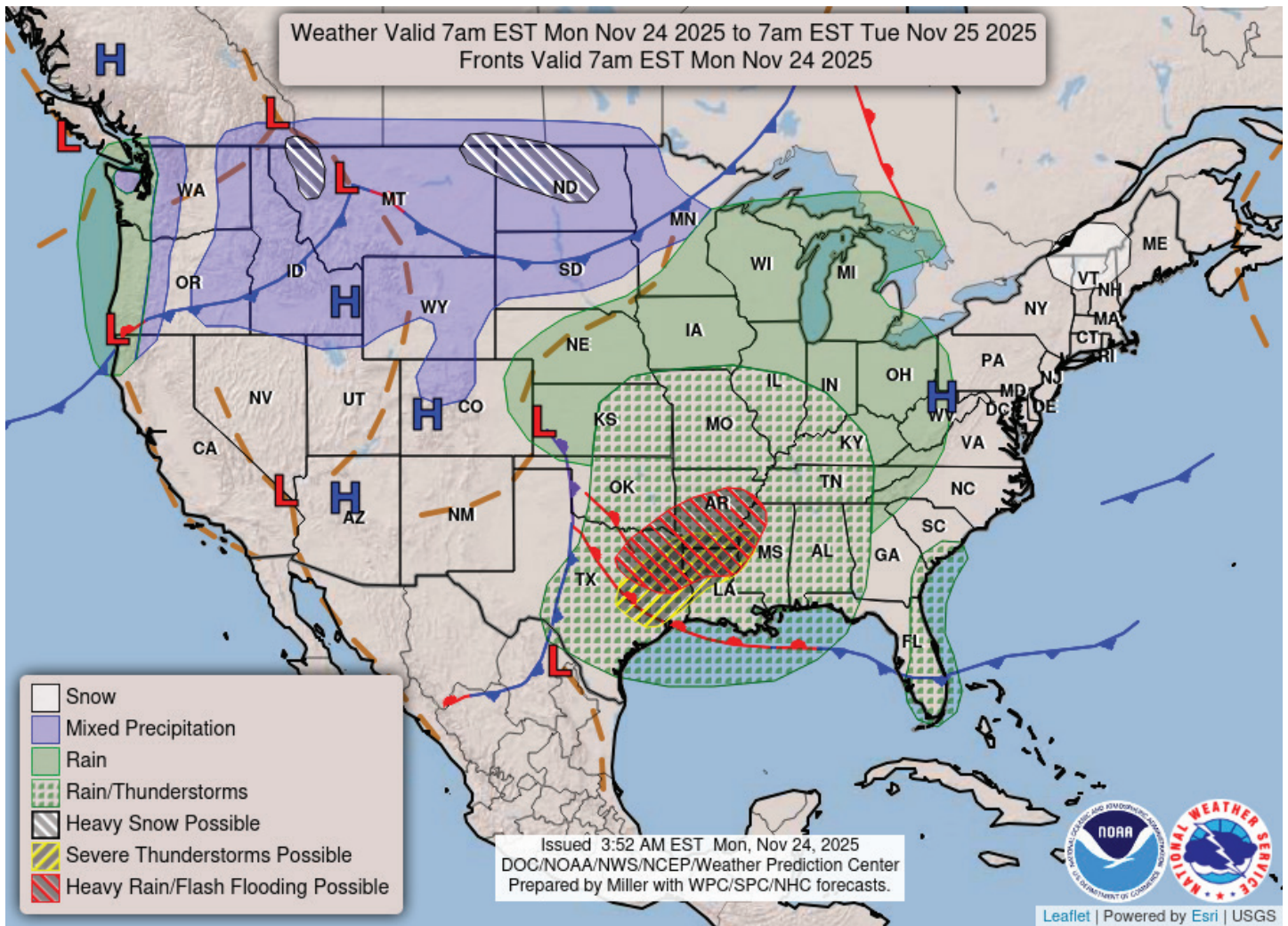
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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 56 °F at 3:42 PM
Low Temp: 28 °F at 12:27 AM
Wind: 21 mph at 10:23 AM
Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 65 in 1932
Record Low: -17 in 1996
Average High: 38
Average Low: 16
Average Precip in Nov.: 0.62
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 21.09
Precip Year to Date: 23.51
Sunset Tonight: 4:54 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:45 am



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Today in Weather History

November 24, 1993: A major slow-moving storm system traveled across the upper Midwest during the Thanksgiving holiday, dumping heavy snow across most of South Dakota and Minnesota from November 24 through the 27th. The highest snowfall amounts of two to three feet occurred in northeast South Dakota. Over a foot of snow accumulated in west central Minnesota, and needless to say, travel became tough across the entire area. Storm total snowfall amounts included 31.8 inches at Westport, 29.5 inches at Leola, 28 inches at Britton, 25.3 inches at Aberdeen, 24.3 inches at Mellette, 24.0 inches at McLaughlin, and 22.0 inches near Victor. The snowfall of 25.3 inches at Aberdeen was a single storm record (that still stands today), and it made November 1993 one of the snowiest months on record in Aberdeen with a total of 30.1 inches of snowfall. Only three months have recorded more snow: November 1898, February 1915, and November 2000. The storm closed numerous schools and offices on November 24th across the area, resulting in an early start to the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. Some freezing rain and freezing drizzle preceded the snowstorm in southeast South Dakota from late on the 23rd to the 24th, causing at least 60 vehicle accidents. The heavy snow also clogged roads, causing vehicles to become stuck and resulting in numerous accidents. As a consequence of the heavy snow, low wind chills, and low visibilities, a 23-year old man was stranded in his pickup truck in a snow bank north of Aberdeen for 18 hours on the 23rd and 24th. The weight of snow collapsed many structures in northeast South Dakota from the 25th to the 26th. The roof of a metal barn collapsed two miles northwest of Aberdeen, killing one dairy cow in the barn. In Castlewood, a 100-foot by 40-foot metal pole shed fell in, causing damage to a grain truck inside. A machine shed also caved in on a farm east of Bowdle. During the afternoon of the 26th, part of the roof and wall of the Roscoe Senior Center collapsed, causing a near-total loss to the building. Strong northwest winds followed the snowstorm in western and central South Dakota, causing considerable blowing and drifting snow and wind chills as low as 50 degrees below zero. In North Dakota, over two feet of snow fell over a large part of central and southeastern portions of the state. Most of North Dakota had over a foot of snow from this storm. The greatest snowfall amount was reported at Oakes, in Dickey County where 31 inches fell. At the National Weather Service office in Bismarck, 28.3 inches of snow were measured during the 108-hour snow event. This amount set a new single storm record for snow in Bismarck. The snow began the evening on the 22nd and did not end until the morning of the 27th. Except for about six hours during the day on the 26th, the snow was continuous through this period. Fortunately, the wind was only 10 to 25 mph during this storm, so it was well below blizzard conditions and blowing and drifting of snow was not a problem.

1812 - Southwesterly winds of hurricane force sank ships and unroofed buildings at Philadelphia and New York City. (David Ludlum)

1863: The "battle above the clouds" was fought on Lookout Mountain near Chattanooga. Pre-frontal clouds obscured the upper battlefield aiding a Union victory.

1950 - The temperature at Chicago, IL, dipped to 2 below zero to equal their record for the month established on the 29th in 1872. On the first of the month that year Chicago established a record high for November with a reading of 81 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1982: Hurricane Iwa, a Category 1 hurricane, impacted the Hawaii Islands of Ni'ihau, Kaua'i, and O'ahu with gusts exceeding 100 mph and a storm surge of 30 feet. The first significant hurricane to hit the Hawaiian Islands since statehood in 1959, Iwa severely damaged or destroyed 2,345 buildings, including 1,927 houses, leaving 500 people homeless. Damage throughout the state totaled \$312 (\$765 million 2015 USD). One person was killed from the high seas, and three deaths were indirectly related to the hurricane's aftermath.



Being Ready in the Tough Times **Difficult times come into every believer's life,** **but God's Word helps us respond with faith.**

1 Peter 1:13-14: Be Holy

13 Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. 14 As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.

The apostle Peter knew challenging days lay ahead for his fellow believers. So he reminded them about their security as children of God: They were chosen by Him, born into a living hope, given spiritual protection, and guaranteed eternity in heaven with their Father (1 Peter 1:1-5). Then, in verses 13-14, Peter gave them specific ways to prepare for the coming trials. His words, divinely inspired by the Lord, can guide us as well.

His first point, which relates to our mind, is that what we believe has a direct impact on our response to problems. So preparation for the future starts with developing right thinking. If we trust that God is looking out for us, then we will feel less threatened by hard circumstances.

A second lesson from Peter is to be "sober in spirit"—in other words, to maintain our balance in the midst of crises large and small. That requires resisting quick fixes to problems and refusing to embrace ungodly ideas or philosophies. With the Spirit's help, we can learn to stand firm and steadfastly follow the Lord, no matter what comes our way.

How can you prepare spiritually for whatever the future may bring? Today, spend some time meditating on Peter's words, and pray for God's guidance and help to stand firm.

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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Upcoming Groton Events

- 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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.21.25

3 4 19 31 63 9

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$70,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 17 Hrs 23

DRAW: Mins 40 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

11.22.25

4 12 19 20 50 4

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$7,730,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 38 Mins 40

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

11.23.25

3 4 13 28 41 9

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT 16 Hrs 53 Mins 41

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

11.22.25

3 6 16 22 24

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$97,000

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 53

DRAW: Mins 41 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

11.22.25

5 6 24 44 58 12

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT 17 Hrs 22 Mins 41

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

11.22.25

28 32 36 51 69 2

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$654,000,000

NEXT 17 Hrs 22 Mins 41

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the **AP** Associated Press

Jordan Crawford scores 25, hits winner as South Dakota edges South Carolina State 82-81

By The Associated Press undefined

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Jordan Crawford had a go-ahead layup with 24 seconds left and scored 25 to lead South Dakota over South Carolina State 82-81 on Sunday.

Crawford shot 9 of 14 from the field, including 3 for 7 from 3-point range, and went 4 for 5 from the line for the Coyotes (4-3). She Eberwein and Isaac Bruns both scored 14.

The Bulldogs (0-6) were led by Cameron Clark, who recorded 17 points, six rebounds and three blocks. Noah Treadwell added 15 points and Obie Bronston Jr. contributed 14 points and three steals.

The Associated Press created this story using technology provided by Data Skrive and data from Sportradar.

European officials welcome progress in talks on US proposals to end Russia-Ukraine war

By BARRY HATTON Associated Press

European officials welcomed Monday what they said were steps in the right direction at talks in Geneva on U.S. peace proposals seen as heavily favoring Russia after its invasion of Ukraine, but they offered few details and warned the discussions still have a long way to go.

"The negotiations were a step forward, but there are still major issues which remain to be resolved," Finnish President Alexander Stubb wrote on social platform X about Sunday's meeting in Switzerland.

The talks went over a 28-point peace proposal presented last week by the United States that triggered alarm in Kyiv and European capitals by heavily favoring Moscow's demands.

The plan pressed Ukraine to consent to handing over some of its territory to Moscow and slashing the size of its army, leaving it vulnerable. The proposal also sought Europe's agreement that Ukraine will never be admitted into the NATO military alliance, though the alliance has previously said Ukraine is on an "irreversible path" to membership.

The surprise emergence of the peace plan coincided with a bleak period for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, with the war less than three months shy of its fourth anniversary.

It is under severe strain on the front line against Russia's bigger army, it is short of money, and Zelenskyy is trying to defuse a major corruption scandal that has tainted his government.

The Geneva meeting offered some hope for Kyiv. "Diplomacy has been reinvigorated, and that's good. Very good," Zelenskyy said late Sunday.

It wasn't clear whether the talks would continue on Monday. Crucially, the Kremlin has not yet voiced its opinion on the latest developments.

German Foreign Minister Johannes Wadepuhl said U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who directed the talks in Switzerland, "made decisive positive contributions to ensuring that this plan can be accepted by both the European and Ukrainian sides."

"I would like to say that all issues concerning Europe or NATO have been removed from this plan, which is a decisive success that we achieved yesterday," he told public broadcaster Deutschlandradio.

Rubio said Sunday the talks were "very worthwhile" and constituted the most productive day in "a very long time."

"I feel very optimistic that we can get something done," Rubio said.

However, the grim reality of war still cast a pall over Ukraine as Russian forces kept up their deadly and devastating strikes on civilian areas.

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Russian drones hit residential areas of Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city overnight, killing four people and wounding 13, including two children, authorities said.

Eight residential buildings, an educational facility and power lines were damaged in the attack, according to the head of the regional military administration, Oleh Syniehubov.

Kharkiv Regional Prosecutor's Office published photos showing homes on fire, rubble scattered across backyards and firefighters and war crimes prosecutors working on site.

Ukraine's air force says Russia fired 162 strike and decoy drones over the country overnight.

Russia also resumed its nighttime drone attacks on Ukraine's civilian and port infrastructure close to Romania's border, the NATO member's defense ministry said Monday.

Romania scrambled two Eurofighter Typhoon jets and two F-16s in response to drones near its border, the ministry said.

The shutdown is over. Flights have resumed. Thanksgiving travelers might wonder: What now?

By RIO YAMAT AP Airlines and Travel Writer

The turbulence caused by the longest government shutdown on record may still be fresh on travelers' minds this Thanksgiving, but experts say preparing for the usual holiday crush of winter weather, heavy traffic and crowded airports can help ease those jitters.

"I think the shutdown at this point is history for air travel. The airlines understand this time of year so well. They know exactly what they need to do," said Sheldon H. Jacobson, an airport and airlines operations expert. "The real challenge is making sure travelers can help themselves."

Here's a guide to navigating the busiest travel week of the year:

How busy could it be?

Travel forecasts point to packed airports and roads.

A week after lifting the unprecedented flight restrictions it placed on commercial airlines during the shutdown, the Federal Aviation Administration is preparing for its busiest Thanksgiving week in 15 years, with more than 360,000 flights scheduled between Monday and next Tuesday. That's more than 17.8 million people who will be screened by the Transportation Security Administration.

AAA projects 1.3 million more travelers will be on the roads than last year, pushing the total number of people traveling by car to at least 73 million.

Winter weather

You can't control the weather, but you can control how prepared you are if a winter storm hits. If your flight is canceled or delayed, will you drive instead or postpone or cancel your trip? Knowing your options ahead of time can reduce stress if a storm leaves you stranded.

James Belanger, vice president of meteorology at the Weather Company, recommends checking the forecast frequently while planning your trip.

The Weather Channel offers a Thanksgiving weekly forecast highlighting major airports and highways that could be affected by bad weather — including snow, ice and rain — along with a free online tool that shows how the weather might impact your travel route.

On Tuesday, the FAA's busiest day with more than 52,000 flights scheduled, forecasters say rain could cause problems in the Pacific Northwest and for much of the eastern U.S. Airports in Atlanta, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Seattle and Washington, D.C., could be impacted, according to the Weather Channel.

What to pack (and what to skip)

Jacobson, whose research contributed to the design of TSA PreCheck, recommends starting your packing by unpacking.

Check every pocket in case TSA-restricted items, like full-sized bottles, were left behind from a previous trip. This simple scan can help you get through security faster, especially when airports are crowded.

If you're traveling with gifts, Jacobson suggests wrapping them at your destination because TSA agents may need to open them.

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When deciding which clothes and shoes to pack, Belanger says to check the “feels like” temperature for a better sense of the weather, especially if you’re not used to the cold.

And don’t forget a REAL ID is required to fly within the U.S., or you’ll need to bring another accepted form of ID, like a passport or military ID.

People with iPhones can now also add their U.S. passport details to Apple Wallet, which can be scanned at participating airports if travelers don’t have a REAL ID. More than a dozen states already accept some form of a mobile ID at airport checkpoints, and travelers can go to the TSA website for more details.

Road trip ready

Whether driving is your top choice or backup plan, AAA spokesperson Aixa Diaz suggests checking your tires, car battery and fluids, then hitting the road with a full tank of gas as early as possible to avoid traffic. Last year, AAA said, it responded to nearly 600,000 emergency roadside assistance calls during the Thanksgiving travel period to help drivers stranded by dead batteries, flat tires and empty tanks.

According to an analysis by Google Maps:

— Traffic on Wednesday is expected to be 14% heavier than usual between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., with peak traffic from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

— On Thanksgiving Day, the roads will be busiest between noon and 3 p.m.

— When it’s time to head home, avoid driving from 12 to 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, when traffic is heaviest.

The best passenger

“...is an informed passenger,” Jacobson likes to say.

Download your airline’s app to track your flight status, and check it regularly as your travel date approaches. That way, if your flight is canceled the day before, you can quickly look for alternatives.

Driving or flying, leave earlier than you think you need to. Knowing you won’t have to rush to your destination can help calm any nerves, whether it’s lingering anxiety from the shutdown or because you’re traveling with young kids or someone who needs extra help getting around.

“These are some very simple things to think about, but they’re important things to think about,” Jacobson said.

Why AP is standing for your right to speak freely

By JULIE PACE AP Executive Editor

NEW YORK (AP) — The Associated Press is back in a courtroom Monday defending itself and our principles against the White House, continuing to fight for the right of the press and public to speak freely without being targeted by their government based on its preferences.

This is not a controversial idea. Yet this foundational American freedom remains under threat.

It’s why AP took a stand nine months ago when the government blocked us from covering presidential events because of what we call a body of water. We strongly believe this case could have much wider implications, not only for other news organizations, but for anyone in America.

Those ripples are becoming more evident since we first took this case to court.

In the last few months, we have seen the White House take legal action against other news organizations; the Pentagon require reporters to agree to a new press policy incompatible with journalistic standards; and journalists from other outlets restricted from covering the White House over what they’ve written.

All this makes it as important as it has ever been to be clear about the role of the press in a democracy and what exactly is at stake.

When we talk about press freedom, we are really talking about your freedom. Reporters ask questions, photographers take pictures, and video journalists record history on your behalf to ensure that you are informed about the things you don’t have the time to unearth, watch or learn about for yourself.

Letting the government control which journalists can cover the highest office in the land and setting rules about what those journalists can say or write is a direct attempt to undercut the First Amendment. It should worry all of us. Because if a president of any party can use personal and political preference to

choose which journalists to allow in – and kick others out because of the words they use – it means you are not getting a full picture of what is happening. It results in a filtered look at whoever holds the highest office, not the rigorous coverage the public deserves.

Independent, accurate, factual journalism is essential to civil society. AP journalists contribute to this every day. We bear witness, ask hard questions and document history as it unfolds, on behalf of the public. We always strive to get it right – and to own up to mistakes when we make them. We don't advocate or take a side. Our mission is to report the facts, plain and simple, so you can decide. That's it.

When fundamental freedoms are at stake, however, it becomes our duty, as an independent, not-for-profit news organization, with no owner and no shareholders, to stand up. On behalf of all of us.

Because, after all, AP's freedom of speech is yours, too.

Wisconsin woman in 2014 Slender Man stabbing is missing after walking away from group home

Associated Press undefined

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — A Wisconsin woman who admitted to nearly stabbing a classmate to death at age 12 to please the online horror character Slender Man is missing after she cut off an electronic monitoring device and left a group home, authorities said Sunday.

Madison police issued an alert Sunday for Morgan Geyser, now 23, saying she was last seen around 8 p.m. Saturday with an adult acquaintance.

"If you see Geyser, please call 911," the alert said, adding that she had cut off a "Department of Corrections monitoring bracelet."

Geyser was placed in a group home this year after being granted conditional release from the Winnebago Mental Health Institute. She was sent to the psychiatric institute in 2018 after pleading guilty to attempted first-degree intentional homicide in a deal with prosecutors to avoid prison. The stabbing happened in 2014.

Geyser's attorney, Tony Cotton, said Sunday that he did not know what happened with his client and urged Geyser to turn herself in.

"It's in her best interest for her to turn herself in immediately and not continue with this course of action," Cotton said in an Instagram video post where he addressed Geyser directly at times. "We don't know any of the facts about what happened or who might have assisted her."

The Madison Police Department said Sunday that it was not made aware that Geyser was missing until nearly 12 hours after she left the group home. The state Department of Corrections received an alert Saturday night that Geyser's ankle monitor had malfunctioned. The department contacted the group home where she lived about two hours later and was told she was not there and had removed the bracelet, Madison police said.

The Department of Corrections issued an apprehension request just after midnight. The Madison Police Department said it did not learn Geyser was missing until someone from the group home called the next morning. The corrections department did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment.

Authorities say Geyser and her friend, Anissa Weier, also 12, lured their classmate, Payton Leutner, to a suburban Milwaukee park after a sleepover. Geyser stabbed Leutner more than a dozen times while Weier egged her on. Leutner barely survived.

The girls later told investigators that they attacked Leutner to earn the right to be Slender Man's servants and they feared he'd harm their families if they didn't follow through.

Slender Man was created online by Eric Knudson in 2009 as a mysterious figure photo-edited into everyday images of children at play. He grew into a popular boogeyman, appearing in video games, online stories and a 2018 movie.

Weier pleaded guilty to attempted second-degree intentional homicide. She was also sent to the psychiatric center and granted release in 2021.

Israel says it killed a senior Hezbollah official in its first strike on Beirut in months

By FADI TAWIL and KAREEM CHEHAYEB Associated Press

HARET HREIK, Lebanon (AP) — Israel on Sunday struck Lebanon's capital for the first time since June, saying it killed Hezbollah's chief of staff Haytham Tabtabai and warning the Iran-backed militant group not to rearm and rebuild a year after their latest war.

The strike in Beirut's southern suburbs killed five people and wounded 25 others, Lebanon's Health Ministry said.

Hezbollah confirmed Tabtabai's death. Earlier it said the strike, launched almost exactly a year after a ceasefire in the Israel-Hezbollah war, threatened an escalation of attacks — just days before Pope Leo XIV is scheduled to visit Lebanon on his first foreign trip.

"We will continue to act forcefully to prevent any threat to the residents of the north and the state of Israel," Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz said. The military instructed residents in northern Israel near the Lebanese border to continue with daily routines, indicating that it did not anticipate a military response from Hezbollah.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused Tabtabai of leading Hezbollah's efforts to rearm.

Israeli airstrikes over southern Lebanon have intensified in recent weeks while Israel and the United States have pressured Lebanon to disarm Hezbollah. Israel asserts that the group is trying to rebuild its military capabilities. The Lebanese government, which supports disarming Hezbollah, has denied those claims. It also says troops have deployed to the south but that its cash-strapped army needs more resources.

Hezbollah has not attacked Israel since the ceasefire began. In December, it fired a couple of rockets that landed on open territory near an Israeli military base and called it a "warning."

Tabtabai had been the apparent successor of Ibrahim Aqil, who was killed in September 2024 in Israeli attacks that wiped out much of Hezbollah's senior leadership, including longtime leader Hassan Nasrallah. Tabtabai also had led Hezbollah's elite Radwan Unit. In 2016, the U.S. designated him as a terrorist, calling him a military leader who led Hezbollah's special forces in Syria and Yemen, and it offered up to \$5 million for information about him.

'Escalation of assaults'

"Hezbollah's leadership is studying the matter of response and will take the appropriate decision," Mahmoud Qamati, deputy chair of Hezbollah's political council, told journalists at the scene. "The strike on the southern suburbs today opens the door to an escalation of assaults all over Lebanon."

Lebanon's President Joseph Aoun in a statement condemned the strike and accused Israel of refusing to implement its end of the ceasefire agreement. He called on the international community to "intervene with strength and seriousness to stop the attacks on Lebanon and its people."

Israel's military statement said Israel remains committed to the "understandings" agreed upon by Israel and Lebanon.

Smoke could be seen in the busy Haret Hreik neighborhood, where Israel did not issue an evacuation warning before the strike. The fourth floor of an apartment building was damaged. Gunshots were heard to disperse crowds as emergency workers arrived.

"This is definitely a civilian area and void of any military presence," Hezbollah parliamentarian Ali Ammar told reporters.

An Israeli drone was flying near the building targeted.

"They want to take our weapons. But our weapons will not be taken," said Maryam Assaf, who lives nearby and heard the strike. She said it "only gives us more determination, strength, and dignity."

Hezbollah severely weakened

Lebanon's president last week said the country is ready to enter negotiations with Israel to stop its airstrikes and to withdraw from five hilltop points it occupies on Lebanese territory. He also has said Lebanon is committed to disarming all non-state actors in the country, including Hezbollah.

Hezbollah has said that talk about its military arsenal should come through dialogue with the Lebanese

state once Israel stops its attacks.

The latest Israel-Hezbollah war began Oct. 8, 2023, a day after Hamas attacked southern Israel, as Hezbollah fired rockets into Israel in solidarity with Hamas. Israel launched a widespread bombardment of Lebanon last year that severely weakened Hezbollah, followed by a ground invasion.

That war was the most recent of several conflicts involving Hezbollah over the past four decades. It killed more than 4,000 people in Lebanon, including hundreds of civilians, and caused an estimated \$11 billion worth of destruction, according to the World Bank. In Israel, 127 people died, including 80 soldiers.

On Tuesday, an Israeli strike killed 13 people in the Palestinian refugee camp of Ein el-Hilweh near the southern city of Sidon in the deadliest attack since the ceasefire went into effect. The military said it targeted a military facility belonging to the Palestinian Hamas militant group. Hamas denied it has any military facilities in the crowded camp.

Oct. 7 attack

Meanwhile, the Israeli army's chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir, said he was sanctioning 13 army officials who were top commanders on Oct. 7, 2023. Some were censured and others forced into retirement.

Among those punished were the then-heads of military intelligence, the army's operation branch and the Southern Command, which is responsible for the Gaza Strip. All three men have already resigned. They were removed from reserve duty and told their military careers are over.

Zamir noted the "severe, resounding and systemic failure" to protect Israelis before and during the attack as well as the need to "set a clear standard of command responsibility."

Takeoff of China's flying taxis hits turbulence

By KANIS LEUNG Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — An unmanned, oval-shaped craft from flying taxi maker EHang hovers, whirring noisily like a mini-helicopter over a riverside innovation zone on the outskirts of the southern Chinese business hub of Guangzhou, part of a trial of a mini-flying taxi that once might have been found only in sci-fi films.

In nearby Shenzhen, food-delivery drones already are part of daily life and a novelty attraction for tourists, even if such services cost more. In the waterfront park surrounded by high-rises, Polish tourist Karolina Trzciańska and her friends ordered bubble tea and lemon tea by phone, just to give it a try. Their drinks arrived via a drone buzzing through the drizzle about 30 minutes later.

"This is the first time I'm seeing something like this, so it was super fun to see the food being delivered by the drone," she said.

Such businesses are growing quickly with support from the government, though the take off of the so-called "low-altitude economy" faces obstacles such as strict airspace controls and battery limitations.

Activities in airspace below 1,000 meters (about 3,280 feet) accounted for business turnover worth 506 billion yuan (\$70 billion) in 2023, about 0.4% of China's economy. By 2035, it's expected to hit 3.5 trillion yuan (about \$490 billion), said Zhang Xiaolan, a researcher at the State Information Center, a think tank affiliated with China's main planning agency.

Flying cars are in the making

Guangdong province, home to drone giant DJI with an estimated 70% of the global commercial drone market, leads in development of the low-altitude economy, followed by wealthy eastern coastal provinces Jiangsu and Zhejiang, near Shanghai, according to a report by a research unit of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Peking University, and other institutions.

Other big players in Guangdong include EHang, logistics company SF Express's drone arm Phoenix Wings, and automaker XPENG's flying car unit ARIDGE.

In October, Guangdong announced it plans to speed up construction of flight service stations and platforms to facilitate airspace operations and will support locally issued discount vouchers for low-altitude tourism.

Its technology and financial hub Shenzhen has launched a 15-million-yuan (\$2.1 million) award for companies that earn certifications required for passenger eVTOLs, short for "electric vertical take-off and landing" vehicles that lift off the ground like helicopters, among other incentives.

China's Civil Aviation Administration has granted certificates allowing EHang to offer commercial pas-

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senger services with its pilotless eVTOL, a low-altitude aircraft that can reach speeds of 130 kph (81 mph) with a maximum range of 30 kilometers (19 miles).

EHang hasn't launched commercial routes, but its vice president, He Tianxing, says it aims to start with aerial sightseeing services. The company has been building takeoff and landing sites in 20 Chinese cities over the past two years. He expects aircraft of various companies will be flying multiple routes, possibly after five years.

He envisions eventual citywide networks using the rooftops of malls, schools and parks as terminals.

"It can't just be a research product, nor an engineer's toy," he said.

Accidents, battery limitations and airspace controls

The biggest challenge for developing eVTOL aircraft is maintaining longer flights and overcoming battery capacity limitations, said Guo Liming, co-founder of Shenzhen-based Skyevtol, whose single-seat manned eVTOL aircraft, priced at around \$100,000, can only fly 20 to 30 minutes before it must be charged.

It also has not all been smooth skies.

In September, two XPENG's eVTOL aircraft collided after a rehearsal for an exhibition and one of them caught fire while landing. The company said no one was hurt, but another expo canceled flying demonstrations a week later.

Undeterred, XPENG has continued to showcase its flying cars, including a six-wheeled ground vehicle with a detachable eVTOL aircraft. Having invested over \$600 million, the company said it has more than 7,000 global orders for its "Land Aircraft Carrier" and has begun preparing for mass production.

A trial run of sightseeing flights in Dunhuang, a key ancient Silk Road destination famous for its Buddhist caves and dunes, is planned for next July.

It's unclear how quickly such aircraft might begin carrying paid passengers regularly. Some companies elsewhere have burned through their funding before reaching the commercial launch stage. In Germany, air taxi makers Lilium and Volocopter filed for bankruptcy, though the latter was later bought by Diamond Aircraft Group, a subsidiary of a Chinese firm.

After years of commercialization, drone applications are not that widespread in China.

Even though the country leads in drone technology and manufacturing, policy constraints including limited airspace access, may mean overseas markets are more promising, said Frank Zhou, managing director at GBA Low Altitude Technology Co., which provides technological software to clients.

"Perhaps for some Southeast Asian countries, if I introduce these applications to them, their demand could explode," he said.

Less than one-third of China's low-altitude airspace was accessible for general aviation use in 2023 and there were problems with uneven distribution and a lack of internet connectivity, Zhang, the State Information Center researcher, said in a report. The number of registered general aviation aerodromes in China, excluding private airports, was just about a tenth of those in the U.S., she said.

Officials are easing their grip, but there's turbulence ahead

Chinese policymakers are gradually working to close the gap. The military generally commands use of most Chinese airspace but has pledged to simplify approval procedures and shorten review times in Shenzhen and five other provinces.

Proposed revisions of the civil aviation law include a chapter on development and promotion of civilian activities, addressing low-altitude airspace allocation and supervision.

It's still early days, said Gary Ng, a senior economist at Natixis Corporate and Investment Banking.

He expects progress toward commercialization to materialize around 2030, with passenger-carrying eVTOLs for tourism or industrial purposes starting before flying taxi services. Some of the aerial products could become key exports, he said.

China is a latecomer to the industry but now leads in developing small drones and low-altitude airspace investments, said Chen Wen-hua, director at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University's Research Centre for Low Altitude Economy.

One advantage is the ruling Communist Party's ability to mobilize regulators, industry players and uni-

versities to work toward the same goal, he said. But development of the technologies involved and safety concerns and public acceptance will determine how quickly different applications of drones and low-flying vehicles are adopted.

The future for the low altitude economy is bright, Chen said, "however, the road leading to that bright future might be treacherous."

In Geneva, US and Ukraine officials report progress on ending Russia's war but offer few specifics

By MARK CARLSON, KATIE MARIE DAVIES and WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — Top U.S. and Ukrainian officials said Sunday they'd made progress toward ending the Russia-Ukraine war but provided scant details after discussing the American proposal to achieve peace that has sparked concerns among many of Washington's European allies that the plan is too conciliatory to Moscow.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said high-stakes talks in Geneva were "very worthwhile" and constituted the most productive day in "a very long time."

"I feel very optimistic that we can get something done," Rubio said.

But he offered very little information on what was discussed. He also downplayed a Thursday deadline set by President Donald Trump for Ukraine to respond to the plan, saying simply that officials want to see fighting stop as soon as possible and that officials could keep negotiating Monday and beyond. He said that higher-level officials may eventually have to get involved.

"This is a very delicate moment," Rubio said of what still needed to be worked out. "Some of it is semantics, or language. Others require higher-level decisions and consultations. Others, I think, just need more time to work through."

The 28-point blueprint drawn up by the U.S. to end the nearly four-year war has sparked alarm in Kyiv and European capitals. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said his country could face a stark choice between standing up for its sovereign rights and preserving the American support it needs.

The Ukrainian leader has vowed that his people "will always defend" their home.

The proposal acquiesces to many Russian demands that Zelenskyy has categorically rejected on dozens of occasions, including giving up large pieces of territory.

In a subsequent statement Sunday night, the White House said the Ukrainian delegation "affirmed that all of their principal concerns — security guarantees, long-term economic development, infrastructure protection, freedom of navigation, and political sovereignty — were thoroughly addressed during the meeting."

It added that the Ukrainians "expressed appreciation for the structured approach taken to incorporate their feedback into each component of the emerging settlement framework." The White House said changes made to the proposal now reflect "their national interests" and provide "credible and enforceable mechanisms to safeguard Ukraine's security in both the near and long term."

But language of such positive steps came only after concerns about the original, Trump-endorsed deal intensified. A bipartisan group of U.S. senators said Rubio told them Saturday that the plan had originated with Russia and was actually a "wish list" for Moscow, rather than a serious push for peace.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said that he'd spoken to Trump and made clear there were some parts of the plans key European nations could agree on but others where they could not.

"I told him that we are fully in line with Ukraine, that the sovereignty of this country must not be jeopardized," Merz said in an interview with DW.

Rubio touts progress on talks, saying efforts will continue

Rubio called the U.S. proposal a "living breathing document" that would continue changing. He also made, clear though, that any final product — once it's ready — will still have to be presented to Moscow: "obviously, the Russians get a vote here."

The head of the Ukrainian delegation, presidential chief of staff Andrii Yermak, said of the talks, "We have made very good progress and are moving forward to a just and lasting peace," he said.

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The rosy assessment of what was discussed defied Trump himself. Before talks began, the president blasted Ukraine for a lack of gratitude for U.S. military assistance while shying away from criticizing Russia.

Trump has set a Thursday deadline for Ukraine to respond to the plan but also suggested it could slide if there was proof of real progress. He also said that the plan was not his final offer — without offering further details on what that meant.

“UKRAINE ‘LEADERSHIP’ HAS EXPRESSED ZERO GRATITUDE FOR OUR EFFORTS, AND EUROPE CONTINUES TO BUY OIL FROM RUSSIA,” Trump posted on his social media site Sunday morning.

After Trump’s post, Zelenskyy cheered U.S.-led efforts on security while also stressing that “the crux of the entire diplomatic situation is that it was Russia, and only Russia, that started this war.”

“Ukraine is grateful to the United States, to every American heart, and personally to President Trump,” Zelenskyy wrote in a post on Telegram, adding, “We thank everyone in Europe.”

“It is important not to forget the main goal – to stop Russia’s war and prevent it from ever igniting again,” he added.

Ukraine and allies have ruled out territorial concessions

Before convening with U.S. officials, Yermak and his team also met with national security advisers from the U.K., France and Germany. The allies have rallied around Kyiv in a push to revise the plan.

Alice Rufo, France’s minister delegate at the Defense Ministry, told broadcaster France Info before the talks began that key points of discussion would include the plan’s restrictions on the Ukrainian army, which she described as “a limitation on its sovereignty.”

“Ukraine must be able to defend itself,” she said. “Russia wants war and waged war many times in fact over the past years.”

On Sunday, Zelenskyy said that there was an understanding the U.S. would take into account “a number of elements” in a peace deal that are important for Ukraine, but did not elaborate further.

“There have already been brief reports from the team about the results of the first meetings and conversations,” he said. “There is now an understanding that the American proposals may take into account a number of elements based on the Ukrainian vision and are critically important for Ukraine’s national interests.”

Rubio’s reported comments cause confusion

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said Sunday that Warsaw was ready to work on the plan with the leaders of Europe, Canada and Japan, but also said that it “would be good to know for sure who is the author of the plan and where was it created.”

Some U.S. lawmakers said Saturday that Rubio had described the plan as a Russian “wish list” rather than a Washington-led proposal. A U.S. State Department spokesperson said that account was “blatantly false.” On his way to Geneva, Rubio then took the extraordinary step of suggesting online that the senators were mistaken, even though they said he was their source for the information.

The issue was still causing a stir on Sunday.

The top Democrat on the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee, Sen. Mark Warner, told ABC’s “This Week” that the peace plan appeared to be “almost a series of Russian talking points,” had made Europeans “feel like they’ve been totally left high and dry” and had led to “ferocious pushback.”

Turkish leader plans talk with Putin

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced that he would hold a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday. He said he would talk to Putin about reviving a previous deal from July 2022 that allowed Ukraine to safely ship exports of grain via the Black Sea.

The agreement stayed in place until the following year, when Putin refused to extend it, saying that a parallel agreement promising to remove obstacles to Russian exports of food and fertilizer hadn’t been honored.

“We had a grain corridor endeavor to open the path to peace,” Erdogan said, “Unfortunately we were only partially able to succeed. Tomorrow I will be asking Putin to revisit the endeavor.”

Erdogan’s new diplomatic push comes just days after he met with Zelenskyy in Ankara.

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The Latest: AP Top 25 has Oregon back at No. 5 as Miami leads ACC rankings

By MAURA CAREY Associated Press

The latest AP Top 25 college football poll has Oregon back in the top five and No. 23 Georgia Tech taking the greatest hit in the rankings, falling eight spots.

Oregon jumped over an idle Mississippi to reach No. 5, thanks to a win over USC that also could boost the Ducks' College Football Playoff resume. This week marks Oregon's highest ranking since it was No. 3 in the Oct. 5 poll.

This week's rankings also feature five Atlantic Coast Conference teams for the second time this season. Miami moved up a spot to No. 13 and was the highest-ranked of five ACC teams.

Ohio State, Indiana, Texas A&M and Georgia remained the top four teams.

No. 6 Ole Miss was followed by Texas Tech, Oklahoma, Notre Dame and Alabama.

Find out more about what happened in this week's Top 25 poll, tell us what the rankings should've been and check out the AP's latest CFP bracket prediction. Here's the latest:

Rivalry week awaits

After a relatively calm Week 13, rivalry week awaits and offers the final opportunity for contenders to make a case for the CFP.

Texas A&M and Georgia look to punch their tickets to Atlanta for the SEC championship game with wins against in-state foes Texas and Georgia Tech.

In the Big Ten, Michigan hosts No. 1 Ohio State. A win by the Wolverines could be enough for them to earn an at-large bid, but it's a feat no team has accomplished this season.

Virginia aims to clinch an ACC Championship game appearance with a win against Virginia Tech, and SMU hopes for the same outcome against Cal. The door opens if either team loses, and eyes will turn to Miami vs. Pitt.

Michigan benefits from USC's loss and now faces Ohio State

Michigan beat Maryland 45-20 this week, while USC dropped 42-27 to Oregon.

The combination helped move the Wolverines up a notch to fourth in the Big Ten, behind Ohio State, Indiana and Oregon. USC fell to fifth.

Michigan also moved up three spots in the AP Top 25, coming in at No. 15. The Wolverines await rival Ohio State. A win against the reigning National Champions and playoff front-runners could carry an under-the-radar Michigan team to the College Football Playoff.

Michigan has won their past four against the Buckeyes.

Hear from a voter: Thoughts on North Carolina's first season under Bill Belichick?

By KATE ROGERSON

You're closer to this than most: How would you sum up the first season at North Carolina under Bill Belichick and what do you think is ahead for the Tar Heels?

AP sports editor Dave Zelio

Can I call it a circus act?

The buildup to the season was monumental. The amount of eyes on UNC football heading into their Labor Day game vs. TCU was unbelievable. Chapel Hill WAS the epicenter of college football.

Say what you want about the off-the-field headlines. On the field, it's been poor. It took them eight games to score more than 20 points vs. a P4 team AND win. The team did show some positive momentum in wins vs. Syracuse and Wake Forest.

North Carolina head coach Bill Belichick looks on from the sideline during an NCAA college football game in Chapel Hill, N.C., Saturday, Oct. 25, 2025. (AP Photo/Ben McKeown)

However, they're just undisciplined. In last night's loss to Duke, they had 12 penalties. Three of them were for unsportsmanlike conduct. One was a personal foul. That doesn't correlate with the idea of calling yourself the "33rd NFL team."

I think the Tar Heels are going through a rough patch, like any program, when you have a new coaching

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staff and major roster turnover.

But when your head coach has won six Super Bowls, it's not acceptable to miss a bowl game.

Kate Rogerson is a sports anchor and reporter for ABC 11 WTVD in North Carolina. She's been an AP Top 25 voter since 2023. You can follow her on X: @KateRogersonTV.

Utah drops to No. 14 after an unexpected close one

By MAURA CAREY

Utah fell one spot in the rankings to No. 14 after narrowly escaping an upset loss to Kansas State on Saturday night.

The Utes scored two touchdowns and notched an interception in the final three minutes of the game to overcome a 10-point deficit and win it 51-47.

Utah was the second team out of the 12-team CFP bracket in Tuesday's rankings. The committee ranked the Utes No. 12, but the projected fourth and fifth highest-ranked conference winners — Miami and Tulane — took over the No. 11 and 12 seeds.

Hear from a voter: Why is Bama not being punished for losing to FSU?

By KATE ROGERSON

It was the first game of the season. And a road contest. That was the only game of the season where they failed to score less than 20 points.

Since that loss, Bama has won three significant road games at Georgia, Mizzou and South Carolina.

If anything, the loss to Oklahoma hurt them because it makes their chances of getting to the SEC Title game MUCH harder.

Five ACC teams crack the rankings

By MAURA CAREY

Five ACC teams are featured in the AP Top 25 this week, which added SMU and Pitt to the rankings.

At No. 13, Miami holds the the ACC's top spot, while Virginia trails at No. 17. Georgia Tech fell to No. 23, Pitt ranks No. 24 and SMU rounds out the rankings at No. 25.

Wins by SMU and Pitt knocked Houston and Missouri out of the rankings. Missouri lost to Oklahoma and Houston dropped to TCU.

Hear from a voter: Where would Texas rank if it hadn't played Ohio State?

By KATE ROGERSON

I don't think Texas is being punished.

Playing on the road vs. the reigning natty champs didn't hurt the Longhorns. Losing to UF and then getting rocked by Georgia did.

If you were to "remove" the Ohio State loss, Texas would still be 5-2 in SEC play, probably with a similar ranking.

Top 25 temperature check

By MAURA CAREY

Heating up: Oregon (5), Miami (13), Michigan (15), Texas (16), Virginia (17), Tennessee (18), James Madison (20), North Texas (21), Tulane (22), Pittsburgh (24), SMU (25).

Cooling down: Ole Miss (6), Texas Tech (7), Utah (14), USC (19), Georgia Tech (23).

Steady: Ohio State (1), Indiana (2), Texas A&M (3), Georgia (4), Oklahoma (8), Notre Dame (9), Alabama (10), BYU (11), Vanderbilt (12).

Hear from a voter: Is there a clear-cut way to rank teams anymore?

By KATE ROGERSON

Great question.

I think the expansion of a 12-team playoff has challenged the way voters rank. Strength of schedule matters. Where you play matters. How you win or lose matters.

Are there injuries? Was the game defined by the last play? Were there any really big penalties or blown calls?

A question I ask myself when I fill out my ballot is, "If Team A and B were to play, who would win?"

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Here's an example. If Oregon and Ole Miss were to meet on the field, I think Oregon would win. I ranked Oregon at 5 for multiple statistical reasons, but that's a genuine thought when I'm in the process of ranking.

I think human subjectivity strengthens the poll because every single voter has a different perspective on the game.

Hear from a voter: Does BYU deserve the playoff?

By KATE ROGERSON

You're right! Your resume matters.

According to ESPN, BYU has the 6th strongest schedule. Does BYU deserve the playoff?

I think so. They've shown they win. They're 5-1 on the road.

The loss to Texas Tech wasn't pretty. I think it raised some eyebrows on the committee, but the win over Utah was HUGE.

Unfortunately, the Cougs are in a tough spot because whatever ACC team gets a bid could bump them out.

Hear from a voter: How do you keep up with so many games?

By KATE ROGERSON

Team no sleep!!!! Kidding, but not.

Usually my Saturdays begin with watching bits and pieces of College GameDay. Then I tune into as many games as possible.

Whether it's at home, in the newsroom, on my phone or scrolling through scores while I attend a game in-person, it's an all day long commitment.

Once I'm done with my own work assignment, I watch the late-night games. Work on my poll til about 3 a.m. Set my Sunday morning alarm 8:30 a.m. Snooze it once or twice. I work on my poll some more. Triple check everything.

Submit my ballot.

Feel a rush of anxiety.

Then do it all over again. Exciting, right?!

Oregon returns to the top five

Oregon returned to the top five for the first time since early October, coming in at No. 5 after a win against USC.

The Ducks tied with Texas Tech at No. 6 in last week's poll, but leapt over an idle Ole Miss this week. They overcame an early second quarter tie vs. USC, scoring consecutive touchdowns to take a 28-14 lead before the half.

The Ducks kept it rolling in the second half, matching USC's two scores with two of their own to solidify a 42-27 win.

Ole Miss was bumped down to No. 6 and Texas Tech fell to No. 7.

AP Top 25 poll rankings

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1. Ohio State
2. Indiana
3. Texas A&M
4. Georgia
5. Oregon
6. Ole Miss
7. Texas Tech
8. Oklahoma
9. Notre Dame
10. Alabama
11. BYU
12. Vanderbilt
13. Miami (Fla.)
14. Utah

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15. Michigan
16. Texas
17. Virginia
18. Tennessee
19. USC
20. James Madison
21. North Texas
22. Tulane
23. Georgia Tech
24. Pittsburgh
25. SMU

Hear from a voter: Breaking down Oregon and Ole Miss

By KATE ROGERSON

I had Oregon and Ole Miss at 5-6 last week, too! With Ole Miss being idle, I think Oregon made a statement in its win over USC. Oregon is 3-1 vs. ranked opponents. Ole Miss is 2-1.

Prior to yesterday, Oregon was one of two teams in the nation to have a TOP 12 offense and defense. The other being Indiana, which the Ducks' lone loss is to. Both programs have had strong seasons.

We'll see how they handle rivalry weekend!

Kate Rogerson is a sports anchor and reporter for ABC 11 WTVD in North Carolina. She's been an AP Top 25 voter since 2023. You can follow her on X: @KateRogersonTV.

What's new in the American Conference

By MAURA CAREY

Tulane earned the highest ranking of any non-power conference team in last week's CFP rankings, coming in at No. 24 overall and No. 12 seed in the playoff bracket.

Tulane kept its playoff hopes alive this week with a 37-13 win against Temple. The Green Wave is in position to clinch a spot in the American Conference championship game with a win next week.

North Texas and Navy are still in the running, too. Previously ranked Memphis and South Florida are out of the picture, with three losses apiece.

Georgia Tech's slip complicates the ACC playoff picture

Georgia Tech could've clinched its first ACC championship game appearance since 2014 with a win over Pitt on Saturday, but the Yellow Jackets' home finale went sour.

Pitt got off to a hot start with a 28-0 lead early in the second quarter. Georgia Tech climbed back and cut the deficit to 35-28 in the fourth, but Pitt answered back with a late touchdown to solidify its 42-28 win.

The results benefit SMU and Virginia's playoff chances. Either team could clinch a spot in the ACC championship game with a win next week.

Miami, Pitt and Georgia Tech still have a chance, but only SMU and Virginia control their own destiny.

Arch Manning puts up a career day vs. Arkansas

Arkansas defensive back Kani Walker (13) watches as Texas quarterback Arch Manning (16) throws under pressure during the first half of an NCAA college football game Saturday, Nov. 22, 2025, in Austin, Texas. (AP Photo/Stephen Spillman)

Arch Manning became the first quarterback in SEC history with a passing touchdown, rushing touchdown and receiving touchdown in the same game as the Longhorns defeated Arkansas 52-37.

Manning developed momentum early, catching a trick-play touchdown pass from Parker Livingstone late in the first quarter.

Who might rise and fall in this week's poll

Stock up: Oklahoma, Miami, Alabama, Oregon, Tulane, Michigan, Texas, Vanderbilt.

Stock down: Missouri, Georgia Tech, USC, Houston, Illinois.

Top 10 teams deliver strong showings

No. 1 Ohio State, No. 3 Texas A&M, No. 4 Georgia, No. 9 Notre Dame and No. 10 Alabama rolled past

opponents on Saturday.

Ohio State overwhelmed Rutgers with a 42-9 win, while Texas A&M shut out Samford 48-0, Georgia rolled past Charlotte 35-3, Alabama defeated Eastern Illinois 56-0 and Notre Dame beat Syracuse 70-7.

Oregon and Oklahoma had more daunting matchups against ranked conference opponents. Oregon, which is tied with Texas Tech at No. 6 in the AP Top 25, ended USC's playoff hopes with a 42-27 victory. The Sooners' dominant defense led to a 17-6 win against Missouri.

Indiana, Ole Miss and Texas Tech had the week off.

Who votes in the poll, and how does it work?

No organization has been ranking teams and naming a major college football national champion longer than The Associated Press, since 1936.

AP employees don't vote themselves, but they do choose the voters. AP Top 25 voters comprise around 60 writers and broadcasters who cover college football for AP members and other select outlets. The goal is to have every state with a Football Bowl Subdivision school represented by at least one voter.

There is a 1-to-25 point system, with a team voted No. 1 receiving 25 points down to 1 point for a 25th-place vote. After that, it's simple: The poll lists the teams with the most points from 1 to 25, and others receiving votes are also noted.

Voting is done online, and the tabulation is automated.

Mamdani stands by Trump criticism despite friendly White House meeting

WASHINGTON (AP) — New York City Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani didn't back down in an interview that aired Sunday from past criticism that President Donald Trump acted like a despot and a fascist after a surprisingly friendly White House meeting between the two men.

The newly elected democratic socialist and the Republican president have fiercely criticized each other in the past. Trump called Mamdani a "100% Communist Lunatic" in a social media post following the incoming mayor's election victory, and Mamdani has said Trump was attacking democracy. Yet the two political foils emerged smiling after the meeting Friday and spoke of shared goals.

Pressed about his past criticism during a "Meet the Press" interview conducted Saturday, Mamdani said his views remained unchanged.

"Everything that I've said in the past, I continue to believe," Mamdani said. "And that's the thing that I think is important in our politics, is that we don't shy away from where we have disagreements, but we understand what it is that brings us to that table, because I'm not coming into the Oval Office to make a point or make a stand. I'm coming in there to deliver for New Yorkers."

Trump had brushed aside Mamdani's criticisms Friday and even jumped in on his defense several times. When a reporter asked if Mamdani stood by his comments that Trump is a fascist, Trump interjected before Mamdani could fully answer the question.

"That's OK. You can just say yes. OK?" Trump said. "It's easier. It's easier than explaining it. I don't mind."

Asked about the fascist criticism on "Meet the Press," Mamdani said, "That's something that I've said in the past. I say it today."

Kevin Hassett, director of the National Economic Council, said on CNN's "State of the Union" talk show that Trump wants to work with everybody who cares about the future of the American people.

"We're at times disagreeing about policies," Hassett said, "but I think that the objective of making life better for everybody is something that a lot of people share on the Democratic and Republican side."

Though far apart politically, the White House meeting offered potential political benefits for both men. The incoming mayor was able to meet one-on-one with the president, and Trump got to talk about affordability, an issue that is increasingly important to voters.

A sheriff, a billionaire, a tinge of scandal.

California governor's race packs drama, uncertainty

By MICHAEL R. BLOOD AP Political Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The race for California governor features former presidential wannabes, a county sheriff, two women who could become the first female to hold the office, House members current and former, an ex-Cabinet secretary and at least one billionaire with another in the wings. The contest has been singed by scandal and witnessed one campaign nearly melt down.

And it hasn't officially started yet.

The pending exit of term-limited Gov. Gavin Newsom has created the most wide-open and crowded field for the state's highest office in memory. The job pays \$242,000 a year but provides an arguably more valuable national political platform and the ability to engage in trade, climate and other global affairs. By default the California governor, in a state of nearly 40 million people, is a national figure. Newsom is widely expected to launch a White House run after the Democrat's term ends in early January 2027.

The lure of the powerful job attracted its latest candidate Thursday — Democratic Rep. Eric Swalwell, who served as a House manager in President Donald Trump's 2021 impeachment trial and briefly sought his party's 2020 presidential nomination.

The eventual winner will also inherit a long list of problems, from an unchecked homeless crisis to multibillion-dollar projected future budget gaps.

The primary is June 2. Candidates can begin taking the first steps needed to qualify for the ballot next month. Newsom has not endorsed a successor.

How do Democrats stand out among Democrats?

Democrats are strongly favored to hold the seat in a liberal-leaning state where a Republican hasn't won a statewide race in nearly two decades. Democrats outnumber registered Republicans by nearly 2-to-1 statewide, a staggering advantage.

One challenge for the growing list of Democratic candidates will be trying to stand out when they largely agree on most issues — dealing with the state's affordability crisis and countering Trump will top the agenda. Former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa has positioned himself toward the center political lane and has been talking about his record of cutting taxes. He also boosted police force numbers and saw crime drop when he was LA's mayor.

Billionaire businessman Tom Steyer, a recent entrant into the contest who ran for president in 2020, says the state can "break up the monopolistic power of utilities" to reduce its second-highest-in-the-nation electricity rates.

How many is too many?

Even in a field of recognized names, there is no dominant candidate.

"It's a five-way, six-way jump ball and that ball could go in any direction," Democratic consultant Michael Trujillo said. "Any one of these Democrats running currently could be our next governor."

In California, the top two vote-getters advance to the November general election, regardless of party. With many candidates dividing up the electorate, that means the two candidates who advance could get to November with just over 20% of the vote — and maybe less. The winning advantage separating the top two finishers from the rest of the field could be a percentage point or two.

Along with Swalwell, Villaraigosa and Steyer, other Democrats in the contest include former U.S. Rep. Katie Porter, former Biden administration health secretary Xavier Becerra, former state controller Betty Yee, schools superintendent Tony Thurmond and real estate developer Stephen Cloobek. Attorney General Rob Bonta, who previously said he wasn't running, is now reconsidering a bid.

Unwelcome publicity sours Porter's start

Porter — who in the House became a social media celebrity by brandishing a whiteboard at congressional hearings while grilling CEOs — joined the unfolding race in March and moved quickly to establish herself as a leading contender.

But her momentum collapsed in early October, after a snippet of a recent TV interview went viral show-

ing her in an awkwardly tense back-and-forth with a reporter. At one point, she threatened to walk out. Shortly afterward, a video surfaced of a 2021 interview showing her loudly berating a staffer.

After a deluge of online mockery, rivals quickly questioned whether she was too unsteady for the job. But Porter's campaign lined up supporters to help her weather the fallout. It is unclear if the unflattering episode will influence voters.

Becerra's name pulled into Sacramento scandal

Prosecutors allege longtime Becerra aide Sean McCluskie was at the center of a plan to steal money from one of Becerra's dormant state campaign accounts to pad his salary after he accepted a job as Becerra's chief of staff in Washington.

Becerra is a former House member and state attorney general.

Villaraigosa launched a digital ad spotlighting Becerra's connection to the scandal. Becerra is not implicated in the indictment. But the ad attempts to raise doubts about his judgment and features clips from a TV interview in which Becerra said he knew payments were being made from his account but didn't know they were being improperly used.

A Republican surprise?

Even in a heavily Democratic state, Republicans can pull off surprises.

Last year, former baseball star Steve Garvey finished second in the U.S. Senate primary, besting Porter and then-Democratic Rep. Barbara Lee and advancing to the November election. He lost to now-Democratic Sen. Adam Schiff. The leading Republicans in the governor's race — Riverside County Sheriff Chad Bianco and conservative commentator Steve Hilton — are hoping to slip through into November, given the large Democratic field dividing the vote.

There are other unknowns. Billionaire shopping mall developer Rick Caruso hasn't ruled out a run, after losing his bid to become Los Angeles mayor.

Pope calls on kidnappers in Nigeria to free 265 students and teachers after some pupils escape

By CHINEDU ASADU Associated Press

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — Fifty of the 303 schoolchildren abducted from a Catholic school in north-central Nigeria's Niger state have escaped captivity and are now with their families, the school authority said Sunday, as the pope called for the immediate release of those still missing.

The schoolchildren, aged between 10 and 18, escaped individually between Friday and Saturday, according to the Most Rev. Bulus Dauwa Yohanna, chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria in Niger state and the proprietor of the school.

A total of 253 schoolchildren and 12 teachers are still being held by the kidnappers, Yohanna said in a statement. "We were able to ascertain this when we decided to contact and visit some parents," he added.

Meanwhile, 38 worshippers kidnapped during a deadly church attack in central Nigeria's Kwara state have regained their freedom, Kwara Gov. AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq said in a statement.

Gunmen had attacked the Christ Apostolic Church in Kwara's Eruku town on Tuesday, killing two people and taking others hostage. Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu, in a separate statement, attributed the freedom of the worshippers to "the efforts of security agencies" without giving further details.

Nigeria has been reeling from a spate of attacks in the past weeks, raising tension in the West African nation grappling with widespread insecurity.

Five officers were also killed in Nigeria's northeast region after gunmen ambushed a tactical team responding to a farmer-herder conflict, police said on Sunday. Two other police officers sustained injuries.

The ambush occurred on Saturday in Sabon Sara village located in the Darazo area of Bauchi state, police spokesperson Ahmed Muhammed Wakil said in a statement.

Pope 'deeply saddened'

The Niger state pupils and students were seized together with their teachers by gunmen who attacked the St. Mary's School, a Catholic institution in Niger state's remote Papiri community, on Friday.

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No group has yet claimed responsibility for the abductions and Nigerian authorities have not shared any update on rescue efforts. It was not immediately clear where the Niger state children were being held or how they managed to return home.

The Niger state school is located near a major road linking the towns of Yelwa and Mokwa, and is in a region of Nigeria where armed gangs often operate out of vast forests that connect different states and conflict hot spots.

"As much as we receive the return of these 50 children that escaped with some sigh of relief, I urge you all to continue in your prayers for the rescue and safe return of the remaining victims," Yohanna said.

Pope Leo XIV called for the immediate release of the schoolchildren and staff of the school, saying at the end of a mass in St. Peter's square on Sunday that he was "deeply saddened" by the incident.

"I feel great sorrow, especially for the many girls and boys who have been abducted and for their anguished families," the pontiff said. "I make a heartfelt appeal for the immediate release of the hostages and urge the competent authorities to take appropriate and timely decisions to ensure their release."

Kidnapping for ransom

School kidnappings have come to define insecurity in Africa's most populous nation, and armed gangs often see schools as "strategic" targets to draw more attention. At least 1,500 students have been seized in Nigeria since the famous kidnapping of the Chibok schoolgirls more than a decade ago, and many of the children were released only after ransoms were paid.

The Niger state attack happened four days after 25 schoolchildren were seized in similar circumstances in neighboring Kebbi state's Maga town, which is 170 kilometers (106 miles) away.

Both states are in a northern region of Nigeria where dozens of armed gangs have used kidnapping for ransom as one way of dominating remote communities with little government and security presence.

Niger state hurriedly closed down all schools after Friday's attack, while some federal colleges in conflict hot spots across the region were also closed by the Nigerian government.

'I will not relent'

The kidnappings are happening as U.S. President Donald Trump has made claims of "Christian persecution" in the West African country. Attacks in Nigeria affect both Christians and Muslims. The school attack earlier this week in Kebbi state was in a Muslim-majority town.

Arrests are rare and ransom payments are common in many of the hot spots in northern Nigeria.

Confidence McHarry, a security analyst at Lagos-based consultancy SBM Intelligence, said that while there's little evidence that Trump's comments might have inspired the gunmen to launch more attacks in the hope that more attention would bring higher ransoms, "the absence of consequences is what is fueling these attacks."

In a statement welcoming the freedom of some of those kidnapped in Niger state and Kebbi state, Tinubu said his government will not relent until every hostage is freed.

"Every Nigerian, in every state, has the right to safety," he said. "And under my watch, we will secure this nation and protect our people."

Aftermath of Chicago's intense immigration crackdown leaves lawsuits, investigations and anxiety

By SOPHIA TAREEN and CHRISTINE FERNANDO Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Chicago has entered what many consider a new uneasy phase of a Trump administration immigration crackdown that has already led to thousands of arrests.

While a U.S. Border Patrol commander known for leading intense and controversial surges moved on to North Carolina, federal agents are still arresting immigrants across the nation's third-largest city and suburbs.

A growing number of lawsuits stemming from the crackdown are winding through the courts. Authorities are investigating agents' actions, including a fatal shooting. Activists say they are not letting their guard down in case things ramp up again, while many residents in the Democratic stronghold where few welcomed the crackdown remain anxious.

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"I feel a sense of paranoia over when they might be back," said Santani Silva, an employee at a vintage store in the predominantly Mexican neighborhood of Pilsen. "People are still afraid."

Intensity slows, but arrests continue

For more than two months, the Chicago area was the focus of an aggressive operation led by Gregory Bovino, a Border Patrol commander behind similar efforts in Los Angeles and soon Louisiana.

Armed and masked agents used unmarked SUVs and helicopters throughout the city of 2.7 million and its suburbs to target suspected criminals and immigration violators. Arrests often led to intense standoffs with bystanders, from wealthy neighborhoods to working-class suburbs.

While the intensity has died down in the week since Bovino left, reports of arrests still pop up. Activists tracking immigration agents said they confirmed 142 daily sightings at the height of the operation last month. The number is now roughly six a day.

"It's not over," said Brandon Lee with the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. "I don't think it will be over."

Suburb under siege

Bearing the brunt of the operation has been Broadview, a Chicago suburb of roughly 8,000 people that has housed a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement processing center for years.

Protests outside the facility have grown increasingly tense as federal agents used chemical agents that area neighbors felt. Broadview police also launched three criminal investigations into federal agents' tactics.

Community leaders took the unusual step of declaring a civil emergency last week, after Bovino left the area, and moving public meetings online.

Broadview Mayor Katrina Thompson said the community has faced bomb threats, death threats and violent protests because of the crackdown.

"I will not allow threats of violence or intimidation to disrupt the essential functions of our government," Thompson said.

Questionable arrests and detentions

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has touted more than 3,000 arrests, but the agency has provided details on only a few cases where immigrants without legal permission to live in the country also had a criminal history.

The Trump administration takes to social media to post photos of supposed violent criminals apprehended in immigration operations, but the federal government's own data paints a different picture.

Of 614 immigrants arrested and detained in recent months around Chicago, only 16, less than 3%, had criminal records representing a "high public safety risk," according to federal government data submitted to the court as part of a 2022 consent decree about ICE arrests. Those records included domestic battery and drunken driving.

A judge in the cases said hundreds of immigrant detainees qualify to be released on bond, though an appeals court has paused their release. Attorneys say many more cases will follow as they get details from the government about arrests.

"None of this has quite added up," said Ed Yohnka with the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, which has been involved in several lawsuits. "What was this all about? What did this serve? What did any of this do?"

Investigations and lawsuits

The number of lawsuits triggered by the crackdown is growing, including on agents' use of force and conditions at the Broadview center. In recent days, clergy members filed a lawsuit against the Trump administration, alleging they were being blocked from ministering inside a facility.

Federal prosecutors have also repeatedly dropped charges against protesters and other bystanders, including dismissing charges against a woman who was shot several times by a Border Patrol agent last month.

Meanwhile, federal agents are also under investigation in connection with the death of a suburban man fatally shot by ICE agents during a traffic stop. Mexico's president has called for a thorough investigation, while ICE has said it did not use excessive force.

An autopsy report, obtained recently by The Associated Press, showed Silverio Villegas González died of a gunshot wound fired at “close range” to his neck. The death was declared a homicide.

In October, the body of the 38-year-old father who spent two decades in the U.S. was buried in the western Mexico state of Michoacan.

A chilling effect

Many of the once bustling business corridors in the Chicago area’s largely immigrant communities that had quieted down were seeing a buzz again with some street vendors slowly returning to their usual posts.

Andrea Melendez, the owner of Pink Flores Bakery and Cafe, said she has seen an increase in sales this week after struggling for months.

“As a new business, I was a bit scared when we saw sales drop,” she said. “But this week I’m feeling a bit more hope that things may get better.”

Eleanor Lara, 52, has spent months avoiding unnecessary trips outside her Chicago home, fearful that an encounter with immigration agents could have dire consequences.

Even as a U.S. citizen, she is afraid and carries her birth certificate. She is married to a Venezuelan man whose legal status is in limbo.

“We’re still sticking home,” she said.

The G20 summit in South Africa ends with the glaring absence of the US after Trump’s boycott

By GERALD IMRAY, MOGOMOTSI MAGOME and MICHELLE GUMEDE Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — The Group of 20 summit in South Africa ended Sunday with the glaring absence of the United States — the next country to lead the bloc — after the Trump administration boycotted the two days of talks involving leaders of the world’s richest and top developing economies.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa declared the summit in Johannesburg closed by banging a wooden gavel on a block like a judge would, in a G20 tradition. The gavel would normally be handed over to the leader of the next country to hold the rotating presidency, but no U.S. official was there to receive it.

The world’s biggest economy boycotted a summit meant to bring rich and developing nations together over President Donald Trump’s claims that South Africa is violently persecuting its Afrikaner white minority.

The White House said it intended in a last-minute decision for an official from its embassy in South Africa to attend the G20 handover. But South Africa refused that, saying it was an insult for Ramaphosa to hand over to a junior embassy official. In the end, no U.S. delegation was accredited for the summit, according to the South African Foreign Ministry.

South Africa said the handover would happen later, possibly at its foreign ministry. Trump has said the U.S. will hold next year’s summit at his golf club in Doral, Florida.

“This gavel of this G20 summit formally closes this summit and now moves on to the next president of the G20, which is the United States, where we shall see each other again next year,” Ramaphosa said as he closed the summit, making no reference to the U.S. absence in his speech.

Breaking with tradition

The first G20 summit in Africa also broke with tradition on Saturday by issuing a leaders’ declaration on the opening day of the talks, when declarations usually come at the end of the summit.

The declaration was significant in that it came in the face of opposition from the U.S., which has for months been critical of a South African agenda for the group that largely focused on climate change and global wealth inequality — focuses the Trump administration derided. Argentina said it also opposed the declaration after Argentine President Javier Milei — a Trump ally — also skipped the summit.

Other G20 nations, including China, Russia, France, Germany, the U.K., Japan and Canada, backed the declaration, which called for more global attention on issues that specifically affect poor countries, such as the need for financial help for their recovery efforts after climate-related disasters, finding ways to ease their debt levels and supporting their transition to climate-friendly green energy sources.

“South Africa has used this presidency to place the priorities of Africa and the Global South firmly at the

heart of the G20 agenda," Ramaphosa said.

After his speech, Ramaphosa was hugged and congratulated by other leaders for hosting a summit largely overshadowed by the U.S. boycott, and he was heard in a hot-mic moment that was not meant to be broadcast saying: "It was not easy."

The G20 is 'struggling'

South Africa championed its G20 declaration as a victory for the summit and for international cooperation in the face of the Trump administration's "America First" foreign policy. However, G20 declarations are general agreements by member countries that aren't binding, and their long-term impact has been questioned.

Also, while the declaration included many of South Africa's priorities, some concrete proposals didn't make the document. There was no mention of a new international panel on wealth inequality, similar to the United Nations-appointed Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which South Africa and others had called for.

The G20 was formed in 1999 in response to the Asian financial crisis and is made up of 19 rich and developing economies, the European Union and the African Union, but some have questioned its effectiveness in helping solve the most prominent global crises, like the Russia-Ukraine war and tensions in the Middle East.

The 122-point Johannesburg declaration made just one reference to Ukraine in a general call for an end to global conflicts and the summit appeared to have made no difference to the nearly four-year war, even as leaders or high-level delegations from all the major European nations, the EU and Russia sat in the same room for the G20 gathering.

"Meeting for the first time on the African continent marks an important milestone," French President Emmanuel Macron said, but added the bloc was "struggling to have a common standard on geopolitical crises."

A symbolic summit for poorer countries

Still, some praised the summit as a significant symbolic moment for the G20.

"This is the first ever meeting of world leaders in history where the inequality emergency was put at the center of the agenda," said Max Lawson of Oxfam, the international nonprofit that works to alleviate global poverty.

"The importance of addressing development priorities from the African perspective cannot be overemphasized," said Namibia President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, whose southern African country of 3 million people was one of more than 20 smaller nations invited as guests to attend the summit alongside the G20 members.

Oregon is back in the top five of the AP Top 25 poll, Miami leads pack of 5 ranked ACC teams

By ERIC OLSON AP College Football Writer

Oregon returned to the top five of The Associated Press Top 25 college football poll Sunday, five Atlantic Coast Conference teams were ranked for the second time this season and Georgia Tech took the biggest fall after its second loss in three games.

Ohio State, Indiana and Texas A&M remained the top three teams for a sixth straight week, and Georgia was No. 4 for the second week in a row.

Oregon jumped over idle Mississippi to No. 5, its highest ranking since it was No. 3 in the Oct. 5 poll. The Ducks strengthened their College Football Playoff resume with a 15-point victory over then-No. 16 Southern California, extending their winning streak to five games.

Mississippi was followed by Texas Tech, Oklahoma, Notre Dame and Alabama.

Ohio State is No. 1 for a 13th straight week going into its game at No. 15 Michigan. The Buckeyes received 58 first-place votes and were 53 points ahead of Indiana, which was listed first on seven voters'

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ballots. Texas A&M got the remaining first-place vote.

Miami, which beat Virginia Tech by 17 points on the road, moved up a spot to No. 13 and was the highest-ranked of five ACC teams. Virginia climbed two spots to No. 17. Georgia Tech, beaten 42-28 at home by Pittsburgh, dropped eight rungs to No. 23.

Pittsburgh, which has three losses, was one spot behind the two-loss Yellow Jackets. No. 25 SMU re-entered the poll for the first time since Sept. 2.

No. 20 James Madison of the Sun Belt Conference remained the highest-ranked Group of Five team in the AP poll. The Dukes, up one spot from a week ago, came from behind to beat Washington State 24-20.

No. 21 North Texas of the American Conference was one spot ahead of Tulane. The Green Wave were the only Group of Five team in the CFP selection committee's rankings last week, at No. 24.

In and out

— No. 24 Pittsburgh bounced back from its 22-point home loss to Notre Dame and returned after a one-week absence.

— No. 25 SMU beat Louisville by 32 points for its third straight win and can return to the ACC championship game with a win at California.

Missouri (No. 23) and Houston (No. 25) dropped out.

Poll points

— Five teams from the state of Texas are ranked for a second straight week. The Lone Star State hadn't had five teams in back-to-back polls since 2016.

— The ACC, in addition to this week, had five teams in the poll on Nov. 9. That makes this the fourth straight year the ACC has had five teams ranked in two or more polls.

Conference call

SEC (8 ranked teams): Nos. 3 Texas A&M, 4 Georgia, 6 Ole Miss, 8 Oklahoma, 10 Alabama, 12 Vanderbilt, 16 Texas, 18 Tennessee.

ACC (5): Nos. 13 Miami (Fla.), 17 Virginia, 23 Georgia Tech, 24 Pittsburgh, 25 SMU.

Big Ten (5): Nos. 1 Ohio State, 2 Indiana, 5 Oregon, 15 Michigan, 19 USC.

Big 12 (3): Nos. 7 Texas Tech, 11 BYU, 14 Utah.

American (2): Nos. 21 North Texas, 22 Tulane.

Independent (1): No. 9 Notre Dame.

Sun Belt (1): No. 20 James Madison.

Ranked vs. ranked

No. 1 Ohio State (11-0, 8-0 Big Ten, No. 1 CFP) at No. 15 Michigan (9-2, 7-1, No. 18), Saturday: Buckeyes have lost four straight to Michigan. They haven't dropped five in a row to their archrival since they lost six straight from 1922-27.

No. 3 Texas A&M (11-0, 7-0 SEC, No. 3 CFP) at No. 16 Texas (8-3, 5-2, No. 17), Friday: Aggies lock up spot in SEC title game with a win; they would need lots of help to get to Atlanta if they lose. Arch Manning's six-touchdown day against Arkansas gives the Longhorns mojo for this rivalry game.

No. 4 Georgia (10-1, No. 4 CFP) at No. 23 Georgia Tech (9-2, No. 16), Friday: Bulldogs have won seven straight in the series and haven't lost to Yellow Jackets in Atlanta since 1999.

No. 12 Vanderbilt (9-2, 5-2 SEC, No. 14 CFP) at No. 18 Tennessee (8-3, 4-3, No. 20), Saturday: Commodores are going for a 10th win for first time in program history. They're 12-41-2 all-time in Knoxville, and only four of those wins have come in the last 50 years.

No. 13 Miami (9-2, 5-2, No. 13 CFP) at No. 24 Pittsburgh (8-3, 6-1), Saturday: Both teams still have narrow paths to the ACC title game. Miami clinging to playoff hopes. Pitt trying to land best possible bowl.

Big changes to the agency charged with securing elections lead to midterm worries

By STEVE KARNOWSKI and JULIE CARR SMYTH Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Since it was created in 2018, the federal government's cybersecurity agency has

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helped warn state and local election officials about potential threats from foreign governments, showed officials how to protect polling places from attacks and gamed out how to respond to the unexpected, such as an Election Day bomb threat or sudden disinformation campaign

The agency was largely absent from that space for elections this month in several states, a potential preview for the 2026 midterms. Shifting priorities of the Trump administration, staffing reductions and budget cuts have many election officials concerned about how engaged the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency will be next year, when control of Congress will be at stake in those elections.

Some officials say they have begun scrambling to fill the anticipated gaps.

"We do not have a sense of whether we can rely on CISA for these services as we approach a big election year in 2026," said Minnesota Secretary of State Steve Simon, a Democrat who until recently led the bipartisan National Association of Secretaries of State.

The association's leaders sent a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem in February asking her to preserve the cybersecurity agency's core election functions. Noem, whose department oversees the agency, replied the following month that it was reviewing its "funding, products, services, and positions" related to election security and that its services would remain available to election officials.

Simon said secretaries of state are still waiting to hear about the agency's plans.

"I regret to say that months later, the letter remains very timely and relevant," he said.

An agency in transition

CISA, as the agency is known, was formed under the first Trump administration to help safeguard the nation's critical infrastructure, from dams and power plants to election systems. It has been undergoing a major transformation since President Donald Trump's second term began in January.

Public records suggest that roughly 1,000 CISA employees have lost their jobs over the past years. The Republican administration in March cut \$10 million from two cybersecurity initiatives, including one dedicated to helping state and local election officials.

That was a few weeks after CISA announced it was conducting a review of its election-related work, and more than a dozen staffers who have worked on elections were placed on administrative leave. The FBI also disbanded a task force on foreign influence operations, including those that target U.S. elections.

CISA is still without an official director. Trump's nomination of Sean Plankey, a cybersecurity expert in the first Trump administration, has stalled in the Senate.

CISA officials did not answer questions seeking specifics about the agency's role in the recently completed elections, its plans for the 2026 election cycle or staffing levels. They said the agency remains ready to help protect election infrastructure.

"Under the leadership of President Trump and Secretary Noem, CISA is laser-focused on securing America's critical infrastructure and strengthening cyber resilience across the government and industry," said Marci McCarthy, CISA's director of public affairs.

She said CISA would announce its future organizational plans "at the appropriate time."

Christine Serrano Glassner, CISA's chief external affairs officer, said the agency's experts are ready to provide election guidance if asked.

"In the event of disruptions or threats to critical infrastructure, whether Election Day-related or not, CISA swiftly coordinates with the Office of Emergency Management and the appropriate federal, state and local authorities," she said in a statement.

States left on their own

California's top election security agencies said CISA has played a "critical role" since 2018 but provided little, if any, help for the state's Nov. 4 special election, when voters approved a redrawn congressional redistricting map.

"Over the past year, CISA's capacity to support elections has been significantly diminished," the California secretary of state's office said in a statement to The Associated Press. "The agency has experienced major reductions in staffing, funding, and mission focus — including the elimination of personnel dedicated specifically to election security and foreign influence mitigation."

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"This shift has left election officials nationwide without the critical federal partnership they have relied on for several election cycles," according to the office.

CISA alerted California officials in September that it would no longer participate in a task force that brought together federal, state and local agencies to support county election offices. California election officials and the governor's Office of Emergency Services did what they could to fill the gaps and plan for various security scenarios.

In Orange County, California, the registrar of voters, Bob Page, said in an email that the state offices and other county departments "stepped up" to support his office "to fill the void left by CISA's absence."

Neighboring Los Angeles County had a different experience. The registrar's office, which oversees elections, said it continues to get a range of cybersecurity services from CISA, including threat intelligence, network monitoring and security testing of its equipment, although local jurisdictions now have to cover the costs of some services that had been federally funded.

Some other states that held elections this month also said they did not have coordination with CISA.

Mississippi's secretary of state, who heads the national association that sent the letter to Noem, did not directly respond to a request for comment, but his office confirmed that CISA was not involved in the state's recent elections.

In Pennsylvania, which held a nationally watched retention election for three state Supreme Court justices, the Department of State said it is also relied more on its own partners to ensure the elections were secure.

In an email, the department said it was "relying much less on CISA than it had in recent years." Instead, it has begun collaborating with the state police, the state's own homeland security department, local cybersecurity experts and other agencies.

Looking for alternatives

Simon, the former head of the secretary of state's association, said state and local election officials need answers about CISA's plans because officials will have to seek alternatives if the services it had been providing will not be available next year.

In some cases, such as classified intelligence briefings, there are no alternatives to the federal government, he said. But there might be ways to get other services, such as testing of election equipment to see if it can be penetrated from outside.

In past election years, CISA also would conduct tabletop exercises with local agencies and election offices to game out various scenarios that might affecting voting or ballot counting, and how they would react. Simon said that is something CISA was very good at.

"We are starting to assume that some of those services are not going to be available to us, and we are looking elsewhere to fill that void," Simon said.

'Wicked: For Good' is even more popular than the first, soaring to a \$226 million global debut

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Universal Pictures' two-part "Wicked" gamble continues to defy gravity at the box office. Just a year after part one brought droves of audiences to movie theaters around the country, even more people bought opening weekend tickets to see the epic conclusion, "Wicked: For Good." According to studio estimates on Sunday, "Wicked: For Good" earned \$150 million from North American theaters in its first days in theaters and \$226 million globally.

Not only is it the biggest opening ever for a Broadway musical adaptation, unseating the record set by the first film's \$112 million launch, it's also the second biggest debut of the year behind "A Minecraft Movie's" \$162 million.

"The results are just fantastic," said Jim Orr, who heads domestic distribution for Universal. "Some films can deliver a false positive when tickets go on sale early but these results speak for themselves."

Universal began rolling out "Wicked: For Good" in theaters earlier this week, with previews on Monday (\$6.1 million from 1,050 theaters) and Wednesday (\$6.5 million from 2,300 theaters). By Friday it was

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playing in 4,115 North American locations and had raked in \$68.6 million. IMAX showings accounted for \$15.5 million, or 11%, of its domestic haul — a November record for the company.

IMAX CEO Rich Gelfond said in a statement that the strong market share shows, "our momentum carries into demos and genres beyond our traditional core, including families."

As with the first film, women powered opening weekend, making up around 71% of ticket buyers according to PostTrak exit polls. Critics were somewhat mixed on the final chapter, but audiences weren't: An overwhelming 83% of audiences said it was one they would "definitely recommend" to friends. As far as foot traffic is concerned, the box office tracker EntTelligence estimates that about 2 million more people came out for "Wicked: For Good's" first weekend than for "Wicked's."

Jon M. Chu directed both "Wicked" films, starring Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande. The first film made over \$758.7 million worldwide and received 10 Oscar nominations (winning two, for costume and production design). The question is how high "Wicked: For Good" can soar. Combined, the two films cost around \$300 million to produce, not including marketing and promotion costs.

"The first film paved the way," Orr said. "It's really become a cultural event I think audiences are going to be flocking to theaters for quite some time to come."

Two other films also opened in wide release this weekend, but further down on the charts behind a buffet of holdovers. Searchlight Pictures opened its Brendan Fraser film "Rental Family" in 1,925 theaters where it earned \$3.3 million. The Finnish action film "Sisu: Road to Revenge," a Sony release, also played in 2,222 theaters. It earned an estimated \$2.6 million.

Second place went to "Now You See Me: Now You Don't" with \$9.1 million in its second weekend, followed by "Predator: Badlands" with \$6.3 million in weekend three. "The Running Man" followed in fourth place with \$5.8 million, down 65% from its debut last weekend.

Although this weekend the box office was more of a winner takes all scenario, "Wicked: For Good's" success is vitally important for the exhibition industry as a whole as it enters the final weeks of the year.

"It sets up a very strong final homestretch of the year," said Paul Dergarabedian, Comscore's head of marketplace trends.

After the slow fall season, the Thanksgiving blockbusters could not arrive soon enough. Early next week, "Zootopia 2" enters the mix and is also expected to drive big crowds to the cineplex over the holiday break.

Thanksgiving is often one of the biggest moviegoing frames of the year, Dergarabedian said, and both "Wicked 2" and "Zootopia 2" will benefit. Last year "Wicked," "Moana 2" and "Gladiator II" helped power a record five-day frame.

The running domestic box office is currently hovering around \$7.5 billion, according to Comscore. Before the pandemic, the annual box office would regularly hit \$11 billion, but the post-pandemic goal has lessened to \$9 billion. The big question now is whether titles like "Wicked: For Good," "Zootopia 2" and "Avatar: Fire and Ash" can push the industry over that threshold.

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. "Wicked: For Good," \$150 million.
2. "Now You See Me: Now You Don't," \$9.1 million.
3. "Predator: Badlands," \$6.3 million.
4. "The Running Man," \$5.8 million.
5. "Rental Family," \$3.3 million.
6. "Sisu: Road to Revenge," \$2.6 million.
7. "Regretting You," \$1.5 million.
8. "Nuremberg," \$1.2 million.
9. "Black Phone 2," \$1 million.
10. "Sarah's Oil," \$711,542.

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UAB football player accused of stabbing 2 teammates before game

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) — A University of Alabama at Birmingham football player stabbed two teammates Saturday morning hours before the team's game against the University of South Florida, the university said in a statement.

The two wounded players were in stable condition, interim head coach Alex Mortensen said at the post-game news conference. He said the team decided to play to honor graduating seniors in the last home game of the season, though several players opted to sit it out due to the incident.

The teammate suspected in the stabbing was in custody, the university said. The school did not release the names of the players involved.

Daniel Mincey, an offensive lineman who transferred to UAB in May, was arrested and booked on charges of aggravated assault and attempted murder in the afternoon, according to Jefferson County Jail records. He was in custody in Birmingham and appeared to be the only UAB player who was arrested Saturday.

It was not immediately clear if Mincey had legal representation. Attempts to reach family members for comment were not immediately successful.

UAB officials would not confirm that Mincey was involved in the stabbing.

The team's online roster lists Mincey as a 6-foot-4 redshirt freshman from Pompano Beach, Florida, who was previously at the University of Kentucky.

Mortensen said that once the team decided to play, it focused on its normal game-day routines. He also said counseling was being made available for players who want it.

The coach declined to share further details about the incident, citing the ongoing investigation.

The stabbing occurred on campus at the Football Operations Building.

The Blazers lost 48-18 to South Florida to fall to 3-8 on the season and 1-6 in the American Conference. Their last game is Nov. 29 at Tulsa.

Christmas tree retailers find lots to like at a Pennsylvania wholesale auction

By MARK SCOLFORO Associated Press

MIFFLINBURG, Pa. (AP) — Christmas went on the auction block this week in Pennsylvania farm country, and there was no shortage of bidders.

About 50,000 Christmas trees and enough wreaths, crafts and other seasonal items to fill an airplane hangar were bought and sold by lots and on consignment at the annual two-day event put on at the Buffalo Valley Produce Auction in Mifflinburg.

Buyers from across the Northeast and mid-Atlantic were there to supply garden stores, corner lots and other retail outlets for the coming rush of customers eager to bring home a tree — most commonly a Fraser fir — or to deck the halls with miles of greenery.

Bundled-up buyers were out in chilly temperatures to hear auctioneers hawk boxes of ornaments, bunches of winterberry, cotton branches, icicle lights, grave blankets, red bows and tree stands. It was nearly everything you would need for Christmas except the food and the presents.

Americans' Christmas tree buying habits have been evolving for many years. These days homes are less likely than in years past to have a tree at all, and those that do have trees are more likely to opt for an artificial tree over the natural type, said Marsha Gray with the Howell, Michigan-based Real Christmas Tree Board, a national trade group of Christmas tree farmers.

Cory Stephens was back for a second year at the auction after his customers raved about the holiday decor he purchased there last year for A.A. Co. Farm, Lawn & Garden, his store a three-hour drive away in Pasadena, Maryland. He spent nearly \$5,000 on Thursday.

"It's incredible, it's changed our whole world," Stephens said. "If you know what you're looking for, it's very hard to beat the quality."

Ryan Marshall spent about \$8,000 on various decorations for resale at Ward's Berry Farm in Sharon,

Massachusetts. Among his purchases were three skids of wreaths at \$29 per wreath — and he expected to double his money.

"The quality's good, and it's a place that you can pick it out yourself," he said.

Gray said her group's research shows the main reason people pick a real tree over an artificial tree "is the scent. They want the fresh scent of a real Christmas tree in their home." Having children in the house also tends to correlate with picking a farm-grown tree, she said.

An August survey by the Real Christmas Tree Board found that 84% of growers did not expect wholesale prices to increase this season.

Buffalo Valley auction manager Neil Courtney said farm-grown tree prices seem to have stabilized, and he sees hope that the trend toward artificial trees can be reversed.

"Long story short — we'll be back on top of the game shortly," Courtney said. "The live tree puts the real Christmas in your house."

A survey by a trade group, the National Christmas Tree Association, found that more than 21 million farm-grown Christmas trees were sold in 2023, with median price of \$75. About a quarter of them were purchased at a "choose-and-cut" farm, one in five from a chain store, and most of the rest from nurseries, retail lots, nonprofit sales and online.

US ski star Shiffrin wins 2nd straight World Cup slalom of Olympic season

GURGL, Austria (AP) — American ski star Mikaela Shiffrin is heading into her home races in Colorado next weekend as the overall World Cup leader on a two-event winning streak.

Shiffrin dominated another slalom Sunday as she made it two convincing wins from two races in the discipline to start the Olympic season.

Racing in sunny but cold conditions in the Austrian Alps, Shiffrin posted the fastest time in both runs to finish 1.23 seconds ahead of second-placed Lara Colturi, an Italian prodigy competing for Albania.

The pair also went 1-2 in the first slalom of the season a week ago in Finland, where Shiffrin also led both runs and won by 1.66.

"I think it's some of the best slalom skiing I ever did," said Shiffrin, who got her 66th World Cup win in slalom and 103rd overall, both are records.

Slalom world champion Camille Rast trailed by 1.41 in third, as the podium resembled the one from last year's race in Gurgl. Her Swiss teammate Wendy Holdener dropped to fourth.

Shiffrin's next races are a giant slalom on Saturday and a slalom the following day in Copper Mountain, the regular training base of the U.S. ski team.

The women's races follow two men's events in Copper Mountain on Thursday and Friday.

"I am really excited to go to Copper. I mean, I stay in my own bed for the first time during the season since we used to go to Aspen," Shiffrin said.

On Sunday, Shiffrin led Colturi by 0.31 after a tight opening run, but used an all-attacking final leg to make the gap four times as big.

"I had to push so hard, but it was really nice with the sun on the second run," Shiffrin said. "It was pretty much how I expected it, not easy, but I knew the others were pushing, so I had no choice. You have to go."

Shiffrin and Colturi now rank 1-2 in both the slalom and overall standings after three events. Shiffrin's teammate Paula Moltzan stood third after she finished Sunday's race in fifth place.

Moltzan was second and Shiffrin fourth in the season-opening giant slalom in October, which was won by Austrian skier Julia Scheib.

Shiffrin also won the season's first two slaloms in Levi and Gurgl last year, but then had a frightening crash in a GS when chasing career win 100 in Killington, Vermont in November.

She returned two months later and won two more slaloms, but announced before the current season she planned to reduce her schedule to slalom and GS, and maybe super-G, heading into the Milan Cortina Winter Olympics in February.

"I was so focused on giant slalom over the prep period, trying to get my level back to something worthy in GS races. So, I didn't get a lot of slalom training, but I got good slalom training," said Shiffrin, who won Olympic gold in slalom in 2014 and in GS four years later.

With 2022 Olympic champion Petra Vlhova still recovering from the lingering knee injury she sustained in January 2024, Colturi has developed into Shiffrin's main rival in slalom.

"It's just amazing to come back here to the podium," Colturi said. "I was feeling not that good during my runs because this kind of conditions for me are not the best things."

Born in Italy, Colturi was 16 when she made her World Cup debut for Albania three years ago. She won the junior world title in super-G in January 2023, but had her rise halted after tearing the ACL in her right knee in a training crash the following month.

Colturi got her first career podium in Gurgl last year and went on to earn three more top-three results to finish eighth in the overall standings, before adding two second places this month.

"She is just amazing," Colturi said about Shiffrin. "Our goals, from me and all the others, is just to ski like her, to be perfect like her. But it's really difficult."

More and more Ugandan men seek DNA paternity tests, often with heartbreaking results

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA Associated Press

NABUMALI, Uganda (AP) — Among the most sensitive family disputes Moses Kutoi mediates are those involving upset men questioning why some of their children don't resemble them.

For the Ugandan clan leader attuned to the wisdom of his ancestors, the matter is taboo, never to be discussed with others. Yet Kutoi feels compelled to intervene in the hope of saving marriages that sometimes turn violent and are on the verge of breaking.

"Even me, I don't resemble my father," the clan leader recently told one disbelieving man he was helping.

Paternity has become a key test of faith in this east African country as DNA testing becomes more widely available, fueled in part by published reports of well-known Ugandans who eventually discovered they were not the biological fathers of some of their children.

The matter has become so heated that clerics and traditional leaders now urge tolerance and a return to the kind of African teachings that village elders like Kutoi say they stand for.

At last year's Christmas Day service, the Anglican archbishop of Uganda, Stephen Kaziimba, cited the example of the virgin birth of Jesus — the bedrock of Christian belief — in a sermon that sought to discourage DNA testing among the faithful.

"You take DNA and you find out that out of the four children, only two are yours," he warned. "So just take care of the children the way they are, like Joseph did."

Paternity disputes are proliferating

The Ministry of Internal Affairs runs a government-accredited lab that conducts court-ordered investigations. It says the number of men seeking voluntary DNA testing has soared recently, with often "heartbreaking" outcomes.

"About 95% of those coming for DNA tests are men, but more than 98% of the results show these men are not the biological fathers," Simon Peter Mundeji, a spokesman for the Ministry of Internal Affairs, told reporters in July.

His advice for men was not to seek DNA proof of paternity "unless you have a strong heart," he said.

DNA testing centers have sprouted all over Uganda, with aggressive advertising by clinical labs on radio and in public spaces. Some passenger taxis in Kampala, the Ugandan capital, have had their back windows plastered with ads for facilities offering DNA testing.

In Nabumali, a small town where Kutoi is the mayor, most families can't afford DNA testing fees, which exceed \$200 at the only private laboratory equipped to do such work in nearby Mbale city.

The couples who seek Kutoi's assistance can barely tolerate each other by the time they approach him. He tries to ease the tension with self-deprecating jokes and by sharing his own experience with the taboo

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topic. Kutoi likes to point out that although he doesn't resemble his father, he was picked as the family heir anyway, allowing him to become a clan leader among the Bagisu people.

In the past, if a man spoke publicly about paternity concerns, community elders would pay him a visit. He could be punished, including being forced to pay a fine, Kutoi said.

"You are not supposed to pronounce that I am suspecting that this child is not mine," said Kutoi, adding that being drunk was no excuse for such an utterance.

Disputes are tied to property and divorce proceedings

These days many paternity disputes in Uganda revolve around the distribution of property after the family patriarch has died, but also during divorce proceedings when spousal support is contested.

In the most prominent recent case, court-ordered DNA testing showed a wealthy academic in Kampala was not the father of one of his three children. That case has been widely covered by the local press, underscoring paternity as an issue affecting a wide range of families.

The Rev. Robert Wantsala, vicar of a small Anglican parish in the eastern district of Mbale, spoke about the array of paternity disagreements he has encountered. He recalled a woman who had her late husband's son DNA tested before he could be considered an estate beneficiary, two men who tussled over a child each believed to be his and a man who told his grown son he wanted a DNA test for not behaving like a family member.

"The man said to his son, 'This character is not in my family,'" Wantsala said, recalling an incident from 2023.

The son responded forcefully, winning the approval of his community by telling his father that he would agree to a test "on condition that you invite my (dead) mother."

Wantsala echoed the advice of Kaziimba, the Anglican primate, saying he always tells doubting men to leave the matter to God.

"When they come, in whichever way they come, children are children," he said. "A child that is born in the home, that is your child. Even in African tradition that is how it was."

The men who seek DNA testing without thinking of the consequences are wasting their time, Kutoi said.

"For us, they knew the child belonged to you regardless," he said, speaking of African traditional society.

Disowning children was unheard of, although some men were known to discreetly take measures like offering the disputed son a land inheritance far removed from the ancestral compound in which the heir would be installed, Kutoi said.

Faith leaders counsel families

Other religious leaders have organized counseling sessions.

Andrew Mutengu, pastor of Word of Faith Ministries in Mbale, said paternity is a recurring subject in many disputes he mediates among his 800 congregation members.

Last month he helped the wife of a rich businessman whose young daughter was claimed by a former boyfriend, a local barber. After the woman confessed she had been unfaithful, Mutengu summoned the barber, who agreed to stop publicizing his claim in the child's interest.

"He goes around bragging that 'I am the father,'" he said of the barber. "It was actually causing issues because this woman is in a home with another man who is actually the known husband."

Mutengu said he believes more men in his community would seek DNA testing if it were cheaper, no matter faith leaders' appeals.

Even Kutoi sounded doubtful when his 29-year-old son crossed the compound one recent afternoon at their home in Nabumali. The son is of light skin and taller than his father, who used the opportunity to tell a joke.

"You saw this tall boy. That is my son," he said. "When you looked at him, did he look like me?"

Tea tariffs once sparked a revolution. Now they are creating angst

By MATT SEDENSKY AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A tax on tea once sparked rebellion. This time, it's just causing headaches.

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Importers of the prized leaves have watched costs climb, orders stall and margins shrink under the weight of President Donald Trump's tariffs. Now, even after Trump has given them a reprieve, tea traders say it won't immediately undo the damage.

"It took a while to work its way through the system, these tariffs, and it will take a while for it to work its way out of the system," says Bruce Richardson, a celebrated tea master, tea historian and purveyor of teas at his shop, Elmwood Inn Fine Teas, in Danville, Kentucky. "That tariffed tea is still working its way out of our warehouses."

While a handful of bigger firms are behind the biggest supermarket brands, the premium tea market is largely the work of smaller businesses, from family farms to specialty importers to a web of little tea shops, tea rooms and tea cafes across the U.S. Amid an onslaught of tariffs, they have become showcases for the levies' effects.

On their shelves, selection has narrowed, with some teas now missing because they're no longer viable products to stock with steep levies on top. In their warehouses, managers are consumed with uncertainty and operational headaches, including calculating what a blend really costs, with ingredients from multiple countries on a roller coaster of tariffs. And in backrooms where the wafting scent of fresh tea permeates, owners have been forced to put off job postings, raises, advertising and other investments so they can have cash available to pay duties when their containers arrive at U.S. ports.

"If I were to add up all the money I've spent on tariffs that weren't there a year ago, it could equal a new employee," says Hartley Johnson, who owns the Mark T. Wendell Tea Company in Acton, Massachusetts.

Johnson's prices used to stay static for a year or longer. He ate the tariff costs before being forced to respond. His most popular tea, a smoky Taiwanese one called Hu-Kwa, has steadily risen from \$26 to \$46 a pound.

He knows some customers are reconsidering.

"Where is that tipping point?" Johnson asks. "I'm kind of finding that tipping point is happening now."

Though Trump backed off some tariffs on agricultural products last week, many in the tea trade are wary of celebrating too soon and caution tea drinkers shouldn't either. Much of next year's supply has already been imported and tariffed and the full impact of those duties may not have fully spilled downhill.

Meantime, other tariff-driven price hikes persist. All sorts of other products tea businesses import, from teapots to infusers, remain subject to levies, and costs for some American-made items, like tins for packaging, have spiked because they rely on foreign materials.

"The canisters, the bamboo boxes, the matcha whisks, everything that we import, everything that we sell has been affected by tariffs," says Gilbert Tsang, owner of MEM Tea Imports in Wakefield, Massachusetts.

Though globally, tea reigns supreme, imbibed more than anything but water, it has long been overshadowed by coffee in the U.S. Still, tea is entwined in American history from the very beginning, even before colonists angry with tariffs dumped tons of it in Boston Harbor.

Boston may run on Dunkin' today, but it was born on tea.

The 1773 revolt that became known as the Boston Tea Party rose out of the British Parliament's implementation of tea tariffs on colonists, who rejected taxation without representation in government. After an independent United States was born, one of the new government's first major acts, the Tariff Act of 1789, ironically set in law import taxes on a range of products including tea. In time, though, trade policy came to include carve-outs for many products Americans rely on but don't produce.

For more than 150 years, most tea has passed through U.S. ports with little to no duties.

That began to change in Trump's first term with his hardline approach to China. But nothing compared to what came with his return to the White House.

In July, the most recent month for which the U.S. International Trade Commission has tallied tariff numbers, tea was taxed at an average rate of over 12%, a huge increase from a year earlier when it was just under one-tenth of a percent. In that single month, American businesses and consumers paid more than \$6 million in tea import taxes, amassing in just 31 days more tariffs than any previous full year on record.

"All over again, taxation without representation," says Richardson, an adviser to the Boston Tea Party

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Ships & Museum. "Our wants and needs and our voices are not being represented because Congress is avoiding the issue by simply allowing the president to act like George III."

All told, tea importers paid about \$19.6 million in tariffs in the first seven months of 2025, nearly seven times as much as the same period last year.

It's all been confounding to those steeped in the world of tea, on which the U.S. depends on foreign countries for nearly all of the billions of pounds Americans brew each year. Though a number of small tea farms exist in the U.S., they can't fill Americans' cups for more than a few hours of the year.

"We don't have an industry and we can't produce one overnight," says Angela McDonald, president of the United States League of Tea Growers.

Trump's suspension of tea tariffs came too late for some businesses, including Los Angeles-based International Tea Importers Inc., for which tariffs created an untenable cash-flow crunch.

"We just became over-leveraged financing not just the inventory, but also the tariffs," says the company's CEO, Brendan Shah.

Tariffs weren't the only thing the 35-year-old business was facing, but without them, Shah says it may have survived.

"Unpredictable tariff policies," he wrote to customers in announcing the company's closure, "have created the final, insurmountable barrier."

Verstappen has 5th F1 title in reach after Norris, Piastri disqualified in Las Vegas

By JENNA FRYER AP Auto Racing Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — A fifth consecutive Formula 1 championship is within Max Verstappen's reach following the disqualifications of contenders Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri after Saturday night's Las Vegas Grand Prix.

Verstappen won the event for the second time in three years to close the gap on Norris to just 42 points with two races remaining. But three hours after the race concluded, the FIA summoned McLaren to see the stewards for failing inspection.

The measured thickness on the skid wear on the McLarens failed to meet the minimum thickness requirements. Skid wear is the wear on the protective plank on the underside of the cars, and Lewis Hamilton was disqualified for the same infraction earlier this year.

McLaren team principal Andrea Stella said the infraction stemmed from the cars bottoming out during the race at levels they did not do during practice — leading to excessive contact with the ground. Stella said the damage to both cars was "accidental" and that "the FIA noted the breach was unintentional, there was no deliberate attempt to circumvent the regulations, and mitigating circumstances also existed."

He also apologized to Norris and Piastri.

"We apologize to Lando and Oscar for the loss of points today, at a critical time in their championship campaigns after two strong performances from them all weekend," Stella said. "While this outcome is extremely disappointing, we remain fully focused on the last two races of the season."

The DQ's made for a wild swing in the standings as both Norris and Piastri were stripped of all points earned in Las Vegas. Norris went from 30 points up on Piastri and 42 points up on Verstappen to just 24 points up on Verstappen and Piastri, who holds the tie-breaker for second in the standings based on his win total.

Verstappen has won the last two races in Qatar, where F1 races next week, and four of the last five at Abu Dhabi, where the season will end Dec. 7.

It's an incredible comeback for the Dutchman, who seemed out of contention over the summer. Even after winning Las Vegas for the second time in three years, Verstappen wasn't thinking about the championship.

"I mean, it's still a big gap. But, you know, we always try to just maximize everything that we've got," he said three hours before the McLarens were called to see the FIA. "This weekend, that was first. The upcoming weekends we'll again try to win the race. And at the end of Abu Dhabi, we'll see where we end

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up.”

Verstappen was by far the biggest winner in Las Vegas, an event he hated before he'd ever turned in a lap. He won for the second time in four races, second time in three years of the Las Vegas Grand Prix as the four-time reigning Formula 1 champion continued to claw his way back into the title picture with a Saturday night victory on the streets of Las Vegas.

His displeasure with the event has stemmed from the bright spotlight promoters place on celebrities and parties instead of the actual competition. But when it comes time to get in the car, no matter how Verstappen feels about the event, he seems to excel.

“Some people like more show added. Some people like different kinds of tracks as a fan also,” he said. “I also have my opinions about what I like. Some weekends I like more than others. I still like to be in Vegas, but I'm personally less of a showman. I'm not really into that probably. But I get it, you know, it's part of the calendar. If you're in Vegas, it needs to be like this.”

Las Vegas was the 69th victory of Verstappen's career. It was his eighth consecutive podium, F1-record eighth win in the United States, and he beat points leader Norris by more than 20 seconds.

Verstappen started second but took control of the race in the very first turn when Norris made an aggressive move to cut in front of him at the start but wound up sliding wide of the turn in his McLaren.

“I let Max have a win,” Norris lamented. “Let him go. Let him have a nice race. I just braked too late. It was my (mess) up.”

Verstappen moved to the lead and George Russell darted past Norris into second.

“I made the mistake in Turn 1, that cost me,” Norris said. “Sometimes a good result is second and scoring some points. I've had a good run and I think the pace was still good. Max just drove a good race and they were quick. I made the mistake in Turn 1, you know, you've got to be punchy into Turn 1.

“I was just a bit too punchy, you know, and that cost me.”

It was the 150th career start for Norris, which tied the McLaren record with David Coulthard. He will become McLaren's most tenured driver next week in Qatar with his 151th start.

But after his slip in the first turn, Norris found himself stuck back in third, and teammate Piastri fared no better as the Australian lost two spots on the start to drop from fifth to seventh. The two McLaren drivers have swapped the lead in the driver standings all season.

Norris finished second before the disqualification and Russell was third. Russell moved to second.

Kimi Antonelli of Mercedes crossed the finish line in fourth but a penalty dropped him a spot to fifth, which moved Piastri to fourth before the disqualification. Antonelli is now third.

Piastri has not won since the final day of August at the Dutch Grand Prix and has just one podium finish in the seven races since. He seemed to accept that his title chances are slipping away.

“I don't really know what to think, to be honest. The first lap was eventful, to say the least,” Piastri said. “It is what it is. I think I'm going to try my best, obviously, for the next two races and try to put myself in the best position possible. There's still a lot of laps left to go, a lot can still happen, but I need to make sure that I'm in the best position to capitalize if that happens.

“That's all I can do now, so I'll set my sights on that and see how we go.”

The biggest mover of the race was seven-time world champion Hamilton, who qualified 20th in Ferrari's first last-place qualifying result since 2009. He actually started 19th and immediately gained six spots. Hamilton steadily picked his way through the field and finished eighth, once the disqualifications took effect.

Charles Leclerc was credited with fourth for Ferrari as he and Hamilton both finished in the points one race after both failed to finish in Brazil, which drew criticism from Ferrari executive chairman John Elkann.

Today in History: November 24 Jack Ruby shoots Lee Harvey Oswald

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Monday, Nov. 24, the 328th day of 2025. There are 37 days left in the year.

Today in history:

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On Nov. 24, 1963, Jack Ruby shot and mortally wounded Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy, in a scene captured on live television.

Also on this date:

In 1859, British naturalist Charles Darwin published "On the Origin of Species," which explained his theory of evolution by means of natural selection.

In 1865, Mississippi became the first Southern state to enact laws that came to be known as "Black Codes" aimed at limiting the rights of newly freed Blacks; other states of the former Confederacy soon followed.

In 1947, a group of writers, producers and directors, who would become known as the "Hollywood Ten," was cited for contempt of Congress for refusing to answer questions about alleged communist influence in the movie industry.

In 1971, a hijacker calling himself "Dan Cooper" (but who became popularly known as "D.B. Cooper") parachuted from a Northwest Orient Airlines 727 over the Pacific Northwest after receiving \$200,000 in ransom; his fate remains unknown.

In 1974, the bone fragments of a 3.2 million-year-old hominid were discovered by scientists in Ethiopia; the skeletal remains were nicknamed "Lucy."

In 1991, Queen singer Freddie Mercury died in London at age 45 of AIDS-related pneumonia.

In 2012, fire raced through a garment factory in Bangladesh that supplied major retailers in the West, killing 112 people; an official said many of the victims were trapped because the eight-story building lacked emergency exits.

In 2014, it was announced that a grand jury in St. Louis County, Missouri, had decided against indicting Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson in the death of Michael Brown; the decision enraged protesters who set fire to buildings and cars and looted businesses in the area where Brown had been fatally shot.

In 2017, a terrorist attack on a mosque in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula killed at least 235 people. The attack was ascribed by authorities to a local Islamic State affiliate.

In 2021, three white men were convicted of murder in the killing of Ahmaud Arbery, the Black man who was running through a Georgia subdivision in February 2020 when they chased and shot him.

In 2023, Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis police officer convicted of murdering Black man George Floyd, was stabbed by another inmate and seriously injured at a federal prison in Arizona. He was subsequently transferred to another prison.

Today's Birthdays: Basketball Hall of Famer Oscar Robertson is 87. Former NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue (TAG'-lee-uh-boo) is 85. Rock drummer Pete Best is 84. Actor-comedian Billy Connolly is 83. Basketball Hall of Famer and former Detroit mayor Dave Bing is 82. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Rudy Tomjanovich is 77. Filmmaker Emir Kusturica is 71. Actor Conleth Hill is 61. Actor Danielle Nicolet is 52. Author Arundhati Roy is 64. Actor Colin Hanks is 48. Actor Katherine Heigl (HY'-guh'l) is 47. Actor Sarah Hyland is 35.