

Groton Daily Independent

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Sunday, Nov. 30

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion and baptism, 9 a.m.; Sunday School, 10:15 a.m.; Choir 6 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship at St. John's, 9 a.m., and Zion, 11 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.

United Methodist: Worship at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 10:30 a.m.; No Sunday School.

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

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

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

Snow Queen Contest, 4 p.m.

4th grade GBB practice, 2 p.m.

1st grade GBB practice, 3:30 p.m.

2nd grade GBB practice, 4 p.m.

Dance Team practice, 5 p.m.



Mon., Dec. 1

Senior Menu: Hot beef combination, mashed potatoes, carrots, fruit

School Breakfast: Eggs.

School Lunch: Hot dogs, chips.

4th Grade GBB, 4 p.m.

JV/MS Boys BB at Faulkton Invite, 5:30 p.m.

5th Grade BBB, 6 p.m.

MS GBB hosts Clark/Willow Lake, 6:15 p.m.

Wrestling Kick-off Fundraiser, 6:30 p.m.

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Global News Roundup

United States News

Americans headed into the final weekend of November navigating a blend of holiday travel momentum and early-winter weather complications. The Transportation Security Administration reported one of its busiest Fridays on record, estimating more than 2.6 million travelers passed through airport checkpoints—slightly above last year's pace. Airlines said operations remained generally smooth, though scattered delays were reported in Chicago, Denver, and Atlanta due to a fast-moving cold front.

In the Midwest, officials continued cleanup after severe winds toppled power lines in parts of Wisconsin and Michigan. Utility companies said full restoration could take until late Saturday in rural areas. Meanwhile, the National Weather Service warned that colder-than-normal air will settle across the Northern Plains early next week, potentially bringing the season's first widespread snow to states from Montana to Minnesota.

On the health front, the CDC noted an uptick in respiratory illnesses—including RSV, COVID-19, and influenza—particularly in the South and Southwest. While still far below peak pandemic levels, public-health officials urged families to take precautions ahead of December gatherings.

Politics & World Affairs

In Washington, lawmakers returned to negotiations over border policy and Ukraine aid after Senate leaders signaled progress but acknowledged that a final deal remains elusive. Republican senators continued pressing for tighter asylum rules and expanded migrant detention capacity, while Democratic leaders insisted any agreement must preserve humanitarian protections. White House officials said President Joe Biden is prepared to support "balanced reforms" but will not accept sweeping rollbacks to existing asylum law.

Overseas, the humanitarian pause between Israel and Hamas held for another day as mediators worked to extend the halt in fighting. Israel confirmed it received another group of hostages on Friday, while Hamas said additional Palestinian detainees were released from Israeli custody as part of the reciprocal exchange. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken reaffirmed Washington's support for extending the pause, saying the arrangement is "saving lives" and creating space for additional humanitarian aid into Gaza.

In Europe, NATO foreign ministers met in Brussels to discuss continued support for Ukraine as winter sets in. Several member states announced new air-defense contributions, while the alliance urged unity amid growing concerns about long-term funding fatigue. Ukrainian officials continued reporting Russian strikes on energy infrastructure in the country's east, though the intensity remained lower than last winter's attacks.

China and the Philippines traded accusations over an incident in the South China Sea, with Manila alleging that a Chinese coast guard vessel engaged in "dangerous blocking maneuvers" near the disputed Second Thomas Shoal. Beijing denied wrongdoing. U.S. officials reiterated the American defense commitment to the Philippines, calling the situation "concerning."

Business & Markets

Wall Street closed the week with a cautiously optimistic tone after Federal Reserve officials signaled they are comfortable holding interest rates steady for the remainder of the year. The Dow and S&P 500 both posted slight gains Friday, while the Nasdaq dipped modestly as investors rotated out of a few major tech names.

Oil prices fell for the fourth consecutive day despite OPEC+ leaders signaling deeper production cuts beginning in early 2026. Analysts said markets remain skeptical due to inconsistent compliance among member nations and sluggish demand signals from Europe and China. Gasoline prices in the U.S. continued their downward trend, now averaging \$3.23 per gallon nationally, according to AAA.

On the corporate front, Amazon announced that its post-Thanksgiving shopping volume is tracking ahead of last year, with "record levels" of early holiday purchases in categories like electronics, toys, and home goods. Meanwhile, several major retailers—including Target and Lowe's—reported improved inventory levels compared to 2023, reducing the need for heavy markdowns.

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Science & Technology

NASA engineers reported progress on preparations for the upcoming Artemis II mission, noting that environmental control testing on the Orion capsule is nearly complete. The agency remains on track for a late-2025 launch window, which would send American astronauts around the Moon for the first time in more than 50 years.

In the private sector, SpaceX successfully launched another batch of Starlink satellites Friday night from Florida's Cape Canaveral, marking the company's 89th orbital mission of 2025. The reusable Falcon 9 booster completed its 17th flight, continuing the company's record-setting reuse program.

Tech companies also faced renewed scrutiny over artificial intelligence safety after EU officials advanced discussions on binding AI regulations. U.S. companies—including Meta, Microsoft, and Google—watched closely as negotiators debated model transparency rules and training-data disclosures. American industry groups warned that overly strict regulations could hinder innovation and competitiveness.

Sports

In the NFL, preparations ramped up for this weekend's slate as several key matchups gained national attention. The Kansas City Chiefs received encouraging news after tight end Travis Kelce returned to full practice following a minor ankle tweak. Meanwhile, the San Francisco 49ers listed running back Christian McCaffrey as questionable with a rib contusion suffered last week.

College football fans braced for a pivotal Saturday with conference title races hanging in the balance. Michigan, Alabama, Georgia, Texas, and Oregon all face must-win scenarios to remain firmly in the College Football Playoff conversation.

In the NBA, the Minnesota Timberwolves extended their strong early-season form with a win over Memphis, fueled by another 30-point night from Anthony Edwards. The Lakers, still navigating injuries, fell to Dallas despite a 28-point performance from LeBron James.

Entertainment & Culture

Hollywood delivered a fresh wave of trailers and film announcements this week, keeping moviegoers buzzing ahead of the winter release calendar. Warner Bros. unveiled the latest trailer for *Dune: Part Two*, featuring returning stars Timothée Chalamet and Zendaya. The studio also dropped a teaser for *Joker: Folie à Deux*, starring Joaquin Phoenix and Lady Gaga, ahead of its anticipated 2026 release.

Meanwhile, Disney released new footage from *Moana 2*, with Auli'i Cravalho reprising her role, sparking strong early reactions on social media. In streaming news, Netflix officially greenlit a second season of the hit series *3 Body Problem*, created by David Benioff, D.B. Weiss, and Alexander Woo.

In the music world, Taylor Swift's latest re-recording, *Reputation (Taylor's Version)*, continued its rapid climb on digital charts. Beyoncé's concert film *Renaissance: A Film by Beyoncé* expanded to additional theaters nationwide, drawing sizable crowds ahead of the holiday season.



GT on **Snow Queen Contest**
Sun., Nov. 30, 4 p.m.
GHS Gym

Groton Area Tigers Groton, SD

GDILIVE
YouTube

A production of the **Groton Daily Independent**

For more info: GDILIVE.COM



We the People

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



By David Adler

Trump Threatens Lawmakers with Execution for Defending the Law

President Donald Trump's blatant disrespect for the law was on full display, November 20 when, in a post on Truth Social, he called for the execution of Democratic lawmakers who, in a video that is on line and available to the public for review, reminded members of the military and the intelligence community that, under American law, they "can refuse illegal orders; you must refuse illegal orders. No one has to carry out orders that violate the law or the Constitution."

This video message from military veterans, at a time when Trump has been ordering the military to perform illegal acts, is firmly grounded in law and history, as we recently discussed in this space. In 1804, in *Little v. Barreme*, the Supreme Court, in an opinion written by Chief Justice John Marshall, held that a president is bound by statutory commands and may not order a soldier or sailor to violate the laws. Trump's outrageous outburst, unbecoming of a U.S. President who, like members of the military, swears an oath to defend the Constitution, and also bears the solemn responsibility as the nation's chief executive to "take care" to "faithfully" execute the laws, reflects the character of a man who has repeatedly demonstrated his disdain for governing in accordance with the law. In a Truth Social post, Trump demanded that the lawmakers "should be ARRESTED AND PUT ON TRIAL" because they are "traitors" for engaging in "SEDITIONARY BEHAVIOR, punishable by DEATH!"

In public statements, White House aides have lied about the content of the video. Lawmakers did not, contrary to Stephen Miller, call "for insurrection." They did not, contrary to Karoline Levitt, White House press secretary, urge members of the military to disobey "lawful orders." To be crystal clear, lawmakers reminded service members that they "can refuse illegal orders; you must refuse illegal orders." This essential message, as Andrew McCarthy, a legal analyst for Fox News, and a columnist for the conservative magazine, *National Review*, rightly stated: "Disobeying an unlawful order is required."

This legal principle is clear, as the Court stated in *Barreme*. In 1806, just two years later, a Federal Circuit Court, in an opinion written by Justice William Paterson, a leading delegate to the Constitutional Convention, reaffirmed the reasoning of Chief Justice Marshall in *Barreme*. In *United States v. Smith*, the court reviewed the indictment of Col. William S. Smith for engaging in actions against Spain. Smith claimed that his military expedition "was begun, prepared and set on foot with the knowledge and approbation of the executive department of our government." Justice Paterson rejected Smith's claim that President Thomas Jefferson had authorized the expedition and, even if he had authorized it, the order would have violated the Neutrality Act of 1794, which prohibited assistance of a military expedition--by any person--against a nation with which the United States is at peace. Paterson wrote: "Supposing then, that every syllable of Smith's affidavit is true, of what avail can it be on the present occasion? Does it speak by way of justification?"

In language that echoed *Barreme*, and speaks directly to President Trump, Paterson declared that the president "cannot control the statute, nor dispense with its execution, and still less can he authorize a person to do what the law forbids. If he could, it would render the execution of the laws dependent on his will and pleasure, which is a doctrine that has not been set up, and will not meet with any supporters

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in our government." Paterson added, "the law is paramount. Who has dominion over it? None but the legislature." The president, he declared, has no authority to grant a "license" to violate the law.

The precedents in Barre and Smith, as old as Marbury v. Madison (1803), the greybeard of all precedents, reflect the fact that the framers did not clothe the president with either a monarchical power to dispense with the execution of the law or authority to revise it.

Trump's invidious outburst toward lawmakers who reminded members of the military what their oath and the law require, reflects the character of a president who has no interest in either mechanism for defending the Constitution. The first step in restoring a constitutional presidency lies in fulfillment of the executive's Article II duty to "faithfully" execute the laws, the framers' principal rationale for inventing the presidency, to which we turn next week.

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

9th Annual Holiday Party Live and Silent Auctions Olive Grove Golf Clubhouse

Groton, SD

Sat., Dec. 6

Holiday Party:
6 p.m. to close
A variety of snacks
served

**Come on out for a fun
evening and support
your local golf course**



**Silent
Auction
Basket Items**

Bidding closes
at 9 p.m.
Live Auction
begins at
9 p.m.

Proceeds raised for maintenance
of course and clubhouse!

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

26. Like
strawberries
but dislike
anything
strawberry-
flavored



Wolves Men Fall in 1-Point Battle at Chadron State

Chadron, Neb. – Northern State's final game of the holiday weekend came down to the final seconds Saturday night, but a late Eagles bucket with two seconds remaining sent the Wolves home with a heart-breaking 74-73 road loss to Chadron State.

Northern appeared poised to steal the win after taking a 73-72 lead with nine seconds left. But Chadron State answered on its final trip down the floor, converting the go-ahead shot to complete a second-half rally and hand NSU its fifth loss of the season.

First-Half Edge Slips Away

The Wolves carried a 40-35 lead into halftime, but the Eagles outscored Northern 39-33 after the break behind efficient shooting and a massive performance from their bench. Chadron State's reserves poured in 44 points and shot 50 percent from the field in the second half, flipping the momentum in a game that featured 10 ties and 13 lead changes.

Despite the loss, Northern State posted solid metrics across the board. The Wolves shot 40.6 percent overall and knocked down 10 threes at a 31.3 percent clip. They were strong at the line (77.8 percent), shared the ball well with 14 assists, and committed just two turnovers while collecting 34 rebounds.

Northern also controlled the interior with 34 points in the paint and added six points off turnovers.

Glenn, Smith Deliver Big Nights

James Glenn delivered his best outing of the season, scoring a game-high 26 points on 9-of-14 shooting, including five makes from beyond the arc. He added seven rebounds, an assist, and a steal.

Marshawn Smith followed with a season-best 21 points and completed his first double-double of the year with 12 rebounds. Smith went 10-of-21 from the floor and added a steal.

Joshua Book rounded out the Wolves' double-figure scorers with 10 points. He also handed out a team-high six assists and tallied three rebounds and two steals. Benjamin Bowen chipped in eight points on 3-of-6 shooting.

Northern State Statistical Standouts

James Glenn: 26 points, 64.3 FG%, 7 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal

Marshawn Smith: 21 points, 47.6 FG%, 12 rebounds, 1 steal

Joshua Book: 10 points, 6 assists, 3 rebounds, 2 steals

Up Next

Northern State returns to NSIC play next week, opening a Thursday–Saturday road/home split. The Wolves travel to UMary for a 5:30 p.m. matchup on Dec. 4 before hosting Minot State at 4 p.m. on Dec. 6 at Wachs Arena.

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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

*The righteous shall inherit the land,
and dwell in it forever.
The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom,
and his tongue talks of justice.
The law of his God is in his heart;
none of his steps shall slide...*

PSALM 37:29-31

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UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS



MARGULIES
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"First it's robots at Santa's Workshop, then it's gifts sent by drones and a driverless sleigh..."

BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. What was the innkeeper's name who turned away the pregnant Mary as there was not room? *Eliada, Jesimiel, Phlegon, Bible does not say*

3. According to the Gospel of Matthew, the wise men saw the star in the ...? *North, East, South, West*

4. Jesus was born in Bethlehem of _____ in the days of Herod the king. *Nazarene, Jerusalem, Judaea, Capernaum*

5. In what type of clothes did Mary wrap the newborn Jesus? *Admonishing, Resurrecting, Swaddling, Castling*

6. How many times is "swaddling clothes" mentioned in the Bible? *1, 2, 3, 4*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Bible does not say, 3) East, 4) Judaea, 5) Swaddling, 6) 2

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

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Character Profile:

THORNE

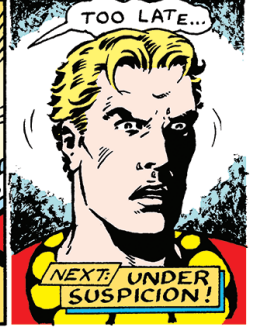
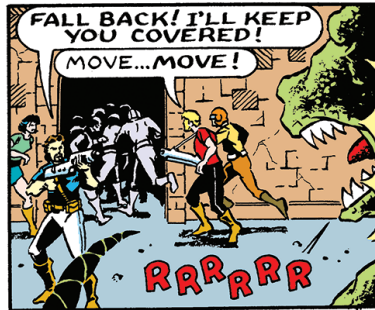


FLASH GORDON

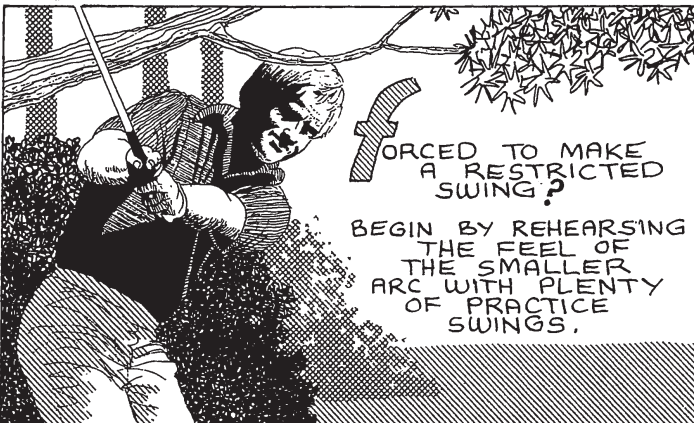
BY JIM KEEFE 11-16-03

FLASH'S TASK FORCE ENGAGES THE CREATURE IN BATTLE...

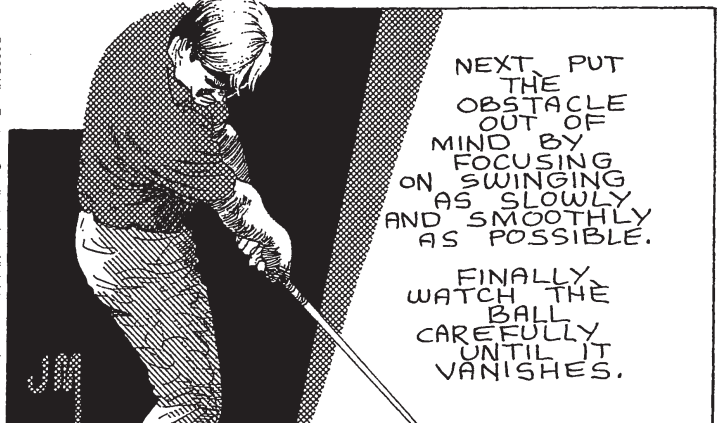
...UNAWARE THAT THEIR WEAPONS HAVE BEEN TAMPERED WITH!



Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



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Breaking Down the Difference Between a Cold and Influenza

DEAR DR. ROACH: What is the difference between a cold and the flu?
-- A.T.R.

ANSWER: Both colds and influenza (the "flu") are respiratory illnesses that are caused by viruses. Influenza is caused specifically by the influenza viruses, which come in two main types (A and B). Influenza A is further broken down into different subtypes based on hemagglutinin (H) and neuraminidase (N).

H1N1 and H3N2 are currently the most-common circulating influenza A viruses. Even within these subclasses, there is strong variability among flu viruses, which is one reason why we need a new flu vaccine each year.

Many viruses cause colds. Rhinoviruses ("rhino-" is the Greek word for nose) are the most common, but corona-, parainfluenza- and enteroviruses, as well as respiratory syncytial viruses, are all well-known causes of respiratory illnesses, which can be difficult or impossible to tell apart from any other type of cold.

Unfortunately, there are so many of these viruses, some of which change quickly and others that escape our immune system, so it is (so far) impossible to get immunity by an infection or a vaccine to all the cold viruses. Viruses are generally less severe than influenza.

It isn't always easy to tell flu from a cold, especially in young people. Both can cause a fever, cough, runny nose and sore throat. However, the flu often causes muscle aches, which can be severe. The flu tends to cause higher fevers, more cough and worse headaches, and it often comes along suddenly. ("I got hit by the flu truck.") Runny nose and nasal congestion tends to be worse with a cold.

Since there is specific antiviral treatments for influenza, clinicians will sometimes make decisions on whether to treat a person based on their symptoms, or they may get a lab test to look for the flu specifically. (Some tests will also check for COVID-19, a special type of coronavirus, at the same time.)

People who are at a high risk for severe flu may be recommended antiviral treatment, whereas there is not a specific antiviral treatment for colds. It's particularly important for people over 65 and those with any heart, lung or immune system issues to get the influenza vaccine. The optimum time to get it was from October through the end of November.

DEAR DR. ROACH: What do we now call what was once referred to as a "nervous breakdown" in the 20th century? -- A.M.

ANSWER: I asked this question to my psychiatry professor way back in the late 20th century when I was a first-year medical student. My professor replied that the term didn't have a meaning anymore. There is no formal medical or psychiatric diagnosis of a "nervous breakdown." The term is used by laypeople to describe when a person has severe impairment of their day-to-day function as a result of a psychiatric diagnosis, especially mood disorders like generalized anxiety disorder or major depressive disorder.

An adjustment disorder may resemble a major depressive disorder, but it occurs within a few months of a traumatic life event. A severe case might also be termed a "nervous breakdown." It is not usually used to describe a person with acute psychosis (a term meaning a grossly distorted sense of reality), such as a person with schizophrenia or bipolar affective disorder in their acute and uncontrolled state.

All these conditions have effective treatments. Treatment starts by talking to someone, who might be your own regular doctor or a mental health professional. For people who are in acute distress with thoughts of hurting themselves, the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is an option in the United States and Canada.

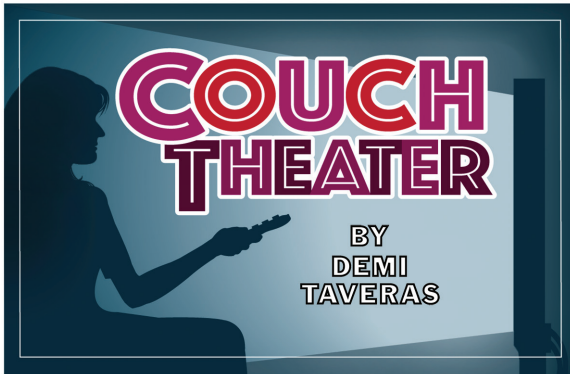
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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Danielle Galligan is Lady Olivia Hedges in Netflix's "House of Guinness." (Courtesy of Ben Blackall/Netflix)

"The Wonderful World of Disney: Holiday Spectacular" (TV-PG) -- Disney's annual TV holiday special is back right in time for the Christmas season to officially kick off. Premiering Dec. 2, the special will feature performances from several artists, some of Disney's most popular locations across the nation, and iconic Disney characters who are ready to spread Christmas cheer. You can expect to hear your favorite Christmas songs from celebrities like Gwen Stefani, Coco Jones, Trisha Yearwood and more. "Dancing With the Stars" judge Derek Hough will be hosting, so don't be surprised if you see him busting out his signature sharp moves throughout the special. (Disney+)

"The Family McMullen" (R) -- This comedy-drama film premiering Dec. 5 is the sequel to the 1995 Edward Burns film "The Brothers McMullen." This continuation builds on the same relationship themes of the original film but tells the characters' stories in a more modern way. Burns, Connie Britton ("The Life List"), and Michael McGlone ("The Bachelors") reprise their roles from the original film, while Pico Alexander ("The Honeymoon") and Halston Sage ("Neighbors") join the cast as Burns' children, who move back home with their father after a series of trials and tribulations. As their bonds get tested in ways that only family members know how to do, the McMullens learn important lessons about love and loyalty, leaving them stronger and more solid than ever. (HBO Max)

"House of Guinness" (TV-MA) -- From the creator of Netflix's hit series "Peaky Blinders" comes this historical-drama series about the family behind the Guinness Brewing Company, which premiered all eight of its episodes a few months back. After the patriarch of the family, Benjamin Guinness, passes away, his four adult children are left to deal with the impact of the legacy he left behind. Add into the mix the Irish Republican Brotherhood, who riot against the Guinness' ties to the English, and you get pure action scenes that elevate the historical drama into something more exciting. Anthony Boyle ("Masters of the Air"), Louis Partridge ("Disclaimer"), Jack Gleeson ("Game of Thrones"), and James Norton ("King & Conqueror") star in the series, which might eventually premiere another season if creator Steven Knight's dreams go according to plan. (Netflix)

"Inheritance" (R) -- This spy thriller film premiering Dec. 5 is led by two actors who have recently completed stellar performances in their own respective series. Phoebe Dynevor ("Bridgerton") and Rhys Ifans ("House of the Dragon") play a father-daughter duo who reconnect after Maya's (Dynevor) mother passes away. Sam (Ifans) is determined to have a relationship with his daughter and persuades her to travel with him so that they can run his "information gathering" business together. After her father suddenly disappears, and Interpol claims that Maya is in possession of stolen government property, Maya realizes she was suckered into some shady business. Now it's up to her to figure out whether she wants to inherit the role her father originated or give herself up to Interpol. (Hulu)

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1. Which Beatles song was partly sung in French?
2. Name Pat Boone's first No. 1 chart topper.
3. Who released "Mashed Potato Time"?
4. Who was Jeanne-Paule Marie Deckers?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "You've given me a true love and every day I thank you love, For a feeling that's so new, So inviting, so exciting."

Answers

1. "Michelle," in 1965. It won the Grammy for Song of the Year in 1967. The song has been widely covered in various ways around the world, including as a cappella, a string

quartet, Muzak and rap.

2. "Ain't That a Shame," in 1955. The Four Seasons followed with a cover in 1963, as did Hank Williams Jr. in 1971.

3. Dee Dee Sharp, in 1962. The song referred to the dance fad of the time, the Mashed Potato. It was used in soup advertising in 1996, with Sharp doing the recording.

4. Deckers was the Belgian singing nun who released "Dominique" in 1963. Her religious name was Sister Luc Gabriel, and she was with the Missionary Dominican Sisters of Our Lady of Fichermont.

5. "I Hear a Symphony," by the Supremes, in 1965. The song was their sixth to top the charts.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{Wagner}



"All the good jobs are being outsourced, but yours are safe."

Just Like Cats & Dogs

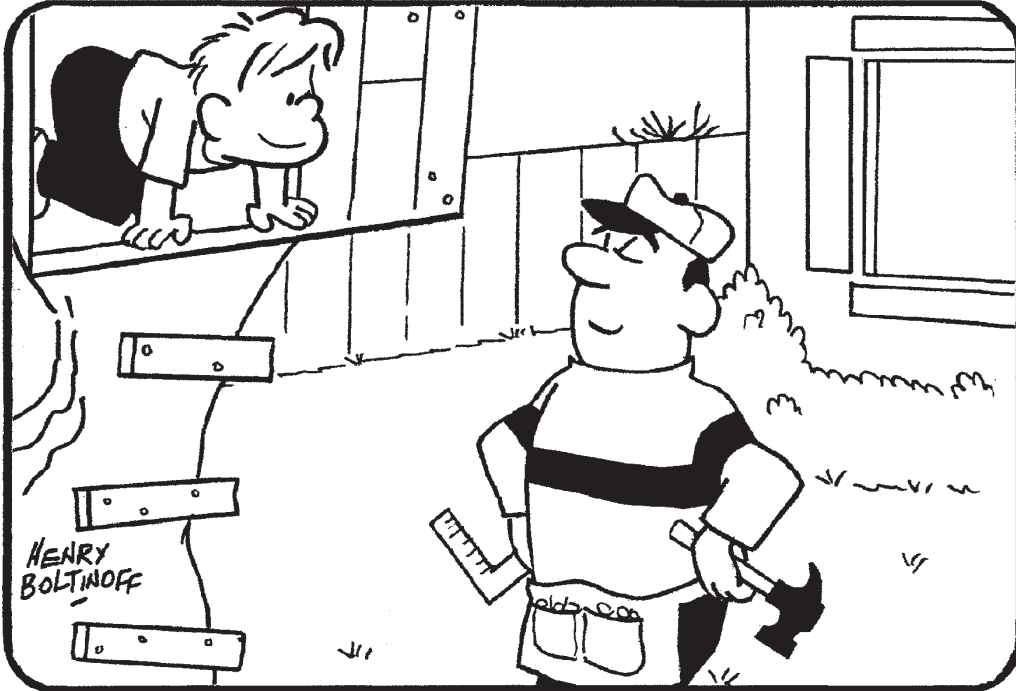
by Dave T. Phipps



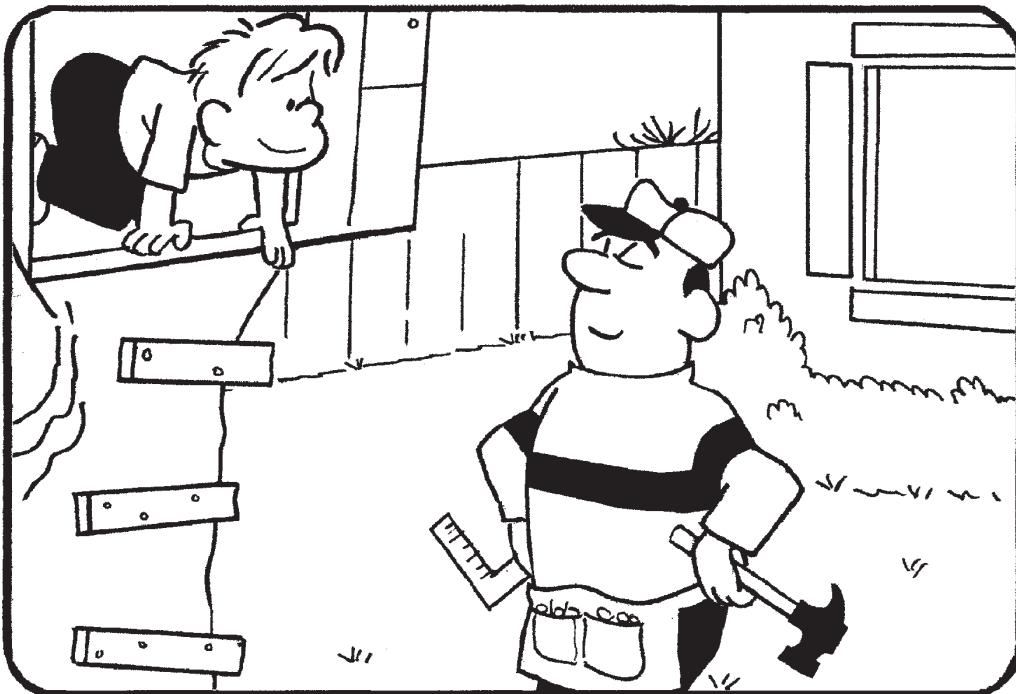
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Hammer is longer. 2. Treehouse is not as wide.
3. Tree trunk is different. 4. House is wider. 5. Cap is different.
6. Hand is moved.

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* If you are having trouble with your car's battery, follow this tip from B.D. of Virginia: "Disconnect battery terminals and clean with a wire brush. Reconnect and smear with petroleum jelly. The jelly will prevent corrosion and help keep the battery cranking all winter."

* Here's a reminder from J.E. of Colorado: "Just because it's winter doesn't mean you can skip the sunscreen -- especially if you live in a snowy climate. Remember that sunlight reflects off white snow and it intensifies the effect. Lather up, people. If you get one that is moisturizing, it'll soothe dry skin as well."

* "When doing my holiday shopping, I carry a quart-size zip-lock baggie in my purse. I put all receipts in it, and I ask for multiple gift receipts to be put in the bag with the merchandise.

I can keep it all together until after the holidays, so I always have a receipt handy if something needs to be returned or exchanged." -- C.L. in Missouri

* "I keep a cookie sheet by the door to hold muddy shoes and boots. No more moose tracks through the house!" -- R.S. in New York

* "If you have extra tasks to do for visiting company or holiday parties, marshal the family. I have three school-age kids, and I write out chores on slips of paper for them to stick in their pockets. If I don't have to remind them to get chores done, there's an extra allowance in it for them." -- H.A. in California

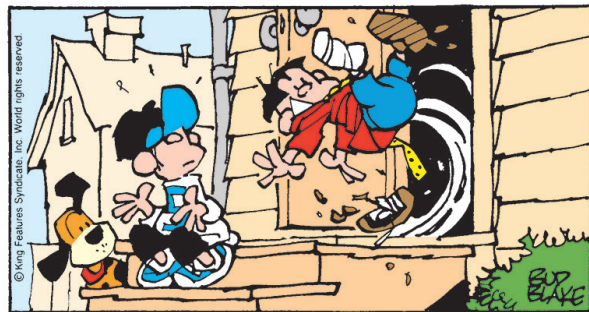
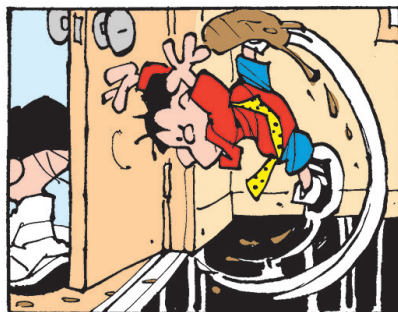
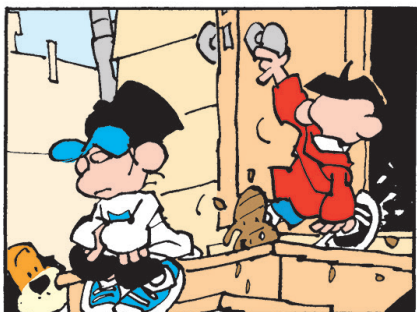
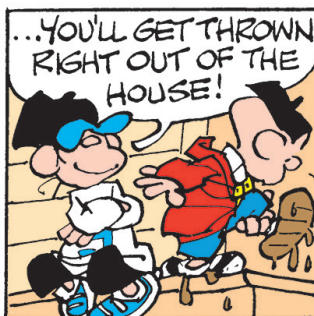
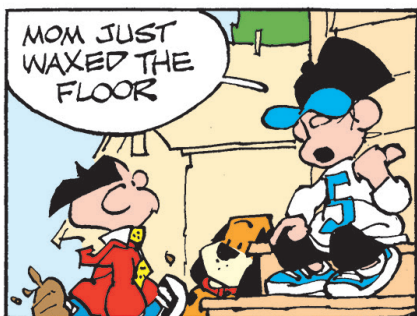
* When unpacking decorations, make note of items that will need to be replaced after this season. When everything goes on sale, you can buy for next year at great prices!

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

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TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Roughly
- 5 Texter's "Wow!"
- 8 Nero's 1300
- 12 Stead
- 13 Museum-funding org.
- 14 Vicinity
- 15 In — (miffed)
- 16 Deception
- 18 Fawcett of '70s TV
- 20 Goodies
- 21 Skater's leap
- 23 "Delicious!"
- 24 Tobago's island neighbor
- 28 Salon request
- 31 A billion years
- 32 Whiskey drinks

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16			17				
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		39		40		41						
42	43				44		45			46	47	48
49						50			51			
52					53				54			
55					56				57			

- 34 Fish eggs
- 35 Privation
- 37 Three-paneled artwork
- 39 "Friendly skies" co.
- 41 Chevy sub-compact
- 42 Pulpit delivery
- 45 Painter Hopper
- 49 Homages
- 51 Always
- 52 Forearm bone
- 53 Depot (Abbr.)
- 54 Sultry Horne

- 55 Pleads
- 56 Wager
- 57 Highlander

DOWN

- 1 "Frozen" snowman
- 2 TV host Kelly
- 3 Crystal gazer
- 4 Defeated in a footrace
- 5 Promptly
- 6 Mal de —
- 7 Pace
- 8 Cosmetics
- 9 Butter producer
- 10 Birth doc.
- 11 Low isles
- 17 Sob
- 19 Pivot line
- 22 "Kinsey" actress Linney
- 24 — Aviv
- 25 Aussie hopper
- 26 Making certain
- 27 Tries to convey
- 29 Sinbad's bird
- 30 "Whatever"
- 33 Raced

- 36 Brazilian dances
- 38 Hair dryers
- 40 Baseball's Gehrig
- 42 Ticket half
- 43 — Stanley Gardner
- 44 Fed. accident investigator
- 46 Opposite of "sans"
- 47 Gambling mecca
- 48 "Phooey!"
- 50 Summer in Paris

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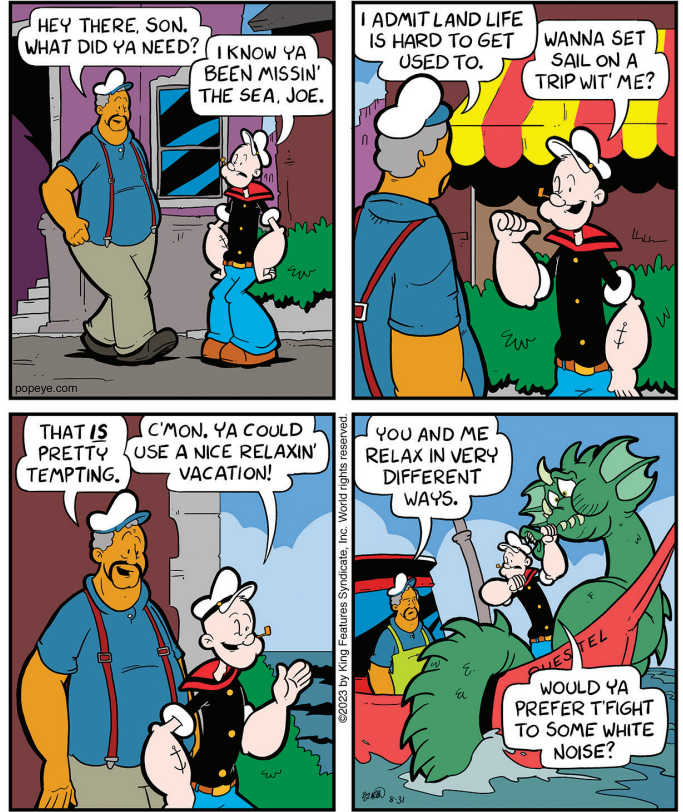
King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 22 mins.

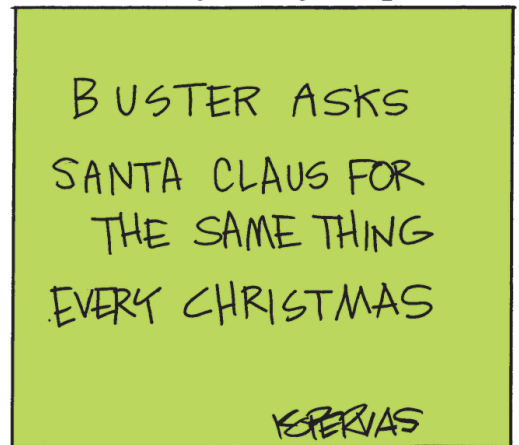
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T	R	I	N	I	D	A	D		P	E	R	M
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Olive



Out on a Limb

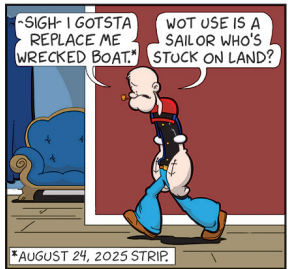
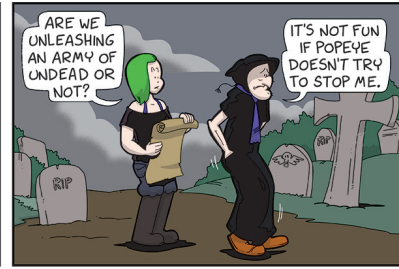
by Gary Kopervas



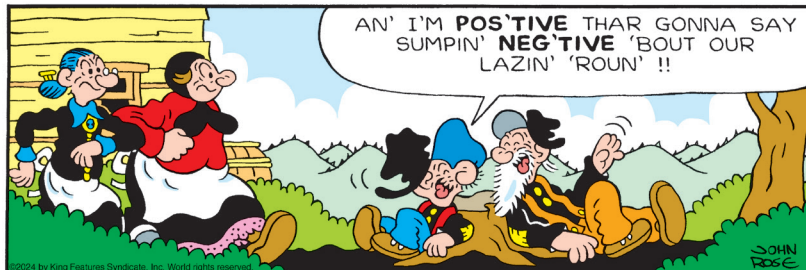
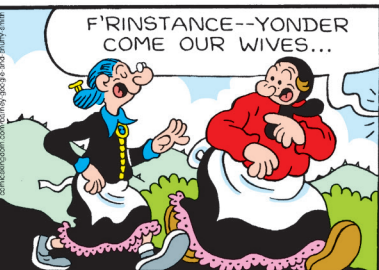
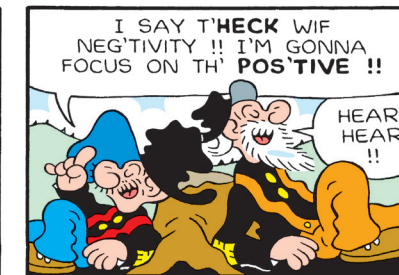
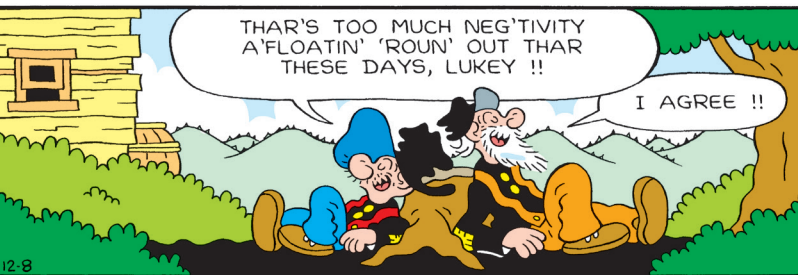
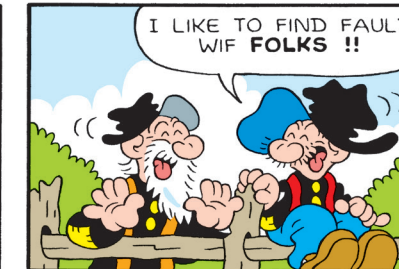
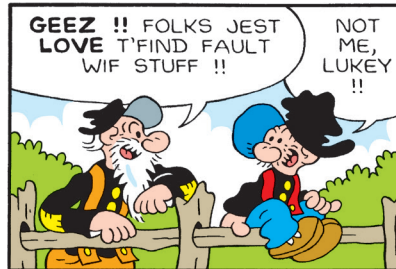
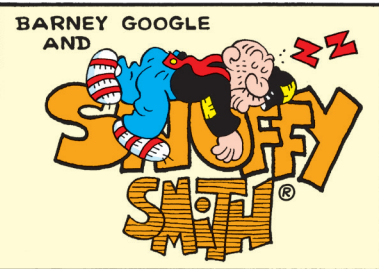
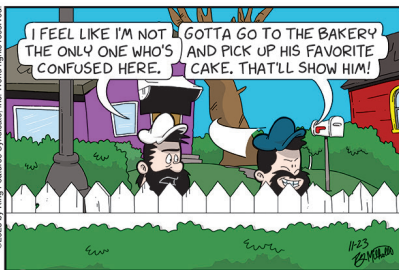
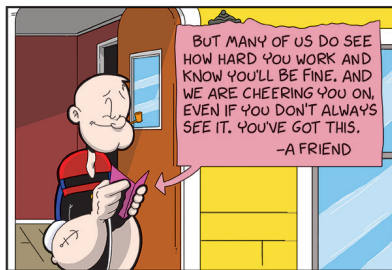
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*AUGUST 24, 2025 STRIP.



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HAL FOSTER'S Prince Valiant® BY SCHULTZ AND YEATES

STRAKONUS THE PIRATE CALLS FOR A PALAVER. HE HAS SEEN THAT HIS OPPONENT IS A KNIGHT, HELD TO A CODE OF CONDUCT. HE FIGURES HE CAN EXPLOIT THIS WEAKNESS.



"I WILL APPROACH HIM ALONE," SAYS VAL. "NOT ALONE," COUNTERS ZULFA. "THEY COME FOR US IMAZIGHEN. WE WILL NOT BE COWED."

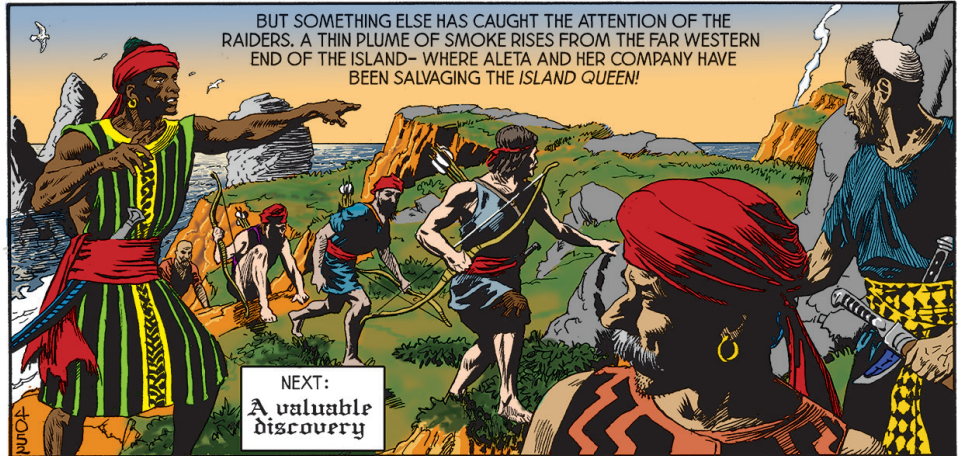


STRAKONUS SEES THE KNIGHT AND THE STRANGE WOMEN APPROACHING. "SO," HE THINKS, "MY BROTHER'S FEMALE CARGO DOES LIE HERE." NOW HE MUST STALL ACTION AS LONG AS HE CAN, BECAUSE...



... A SMALL BAND OF HIS MEN HAS MANAGED TO WORK ITS WAY DOWN THE NARROW SHORE, BEYOND VALS CORDON! IF THIS BAND HAS TIME TO GET ABOVE THE ENEMY LINES, STRAKONUS GAINS THE ADVANTAGE.

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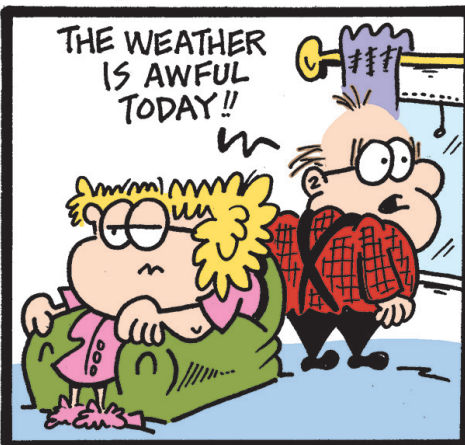


BUT SOMETHING ELSE HAS CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF THE RAIDERS. A THIN PLUME OF SMOKE RISES FROM THE FAR WESTERN END OF THE ISLAND- WHERE ALETA AND HER COMPANY HAVE BEEN SALVAGING THE ISLAND QUEEN!

NEXT:
A valuable discovery

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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PICKERING

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Social Security increase ... not much

An informal poll of friends and neighbors got me a range of responses, from grimaces to laughs to snarls. My question was about how they were going to spend the approximate extra \$56 that Social Security beneficiaries will be receiving as of January when the new COLA kicks in.

That 2.8% increase in the average Social Security benefit (\$2,071 for individuals, \$3,208 for couples) won't get us much when compared to what is happening in the grocery stores -- and everywhere else.

We have been complaining about this for years: the Cost of Living Adjustment price index (CPI-W) that's used to calculate Social Security increases doesn't apply to us. Instead, we keep saying, they should use the Research Consumer Price Index (R-CPI-E), which is more in line with how seniors over the age of 62 actually spend money.

And then there's the wee problem of Medicare Part B also going up -- again -- from \$185 this year to \$202 for 2026. That amount has to be subtracted from the \$56 increase, which means an actual \$38 increase in Social Security.

There is, however, a movement afoot in Congress to give us a temporary (six months) increase of \$200 per month from January to July 2026. Called the Social Security Emergency Inflation Relief Act, the proposal is being batted around in Congress at this point. The bill (S.3078) text says it would provide payments to "recipients of social security, supplemental security income, railroad retirement benefits, and veterans disability compensation or pension benefits."

I asked, in my informal poll, what they would do with that extra \$200 per month should the proposal pass: stick it in savings for an emergency ... pay off a medical bill ... turn up the thermostat ... buy a good winter coat. The responses ran the gamut of possibilities, which says one thing: We need that money.

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1. Soviet gymnast Larisa Latynina, who competed from 1956-64, is tied for the second-most career Olympic gold medals with how many?

2. What did federal agents discover hidden underneath a ticket booth at Middle Georgia Raceway in 1967?

3. Name the singer, actor and philanthropist who was the owner of the 1969 American Basketball Association champion Oakland Oaks team.

4. He's a Pro Football Hall of Fame wide receiver who won Super Bowl XLI with the Indianapolis Colts. His son was selected by the Arizona Cardinals in the first round of the 2024 NFL Draft. Who are they?

5. What mountaineer completed the first-ever ski descent of Mount Everest's Hornbein Couloir on the north face in October 2025? (Hint: He shares a name with a "Light My Fire" singer.)

6. Dancer/actress Janet Jones married what NHL hockey star in 1988?

7. The Baku City Circuit, which first hosted a Formula 1 Grand Prix race in 2016, is located in what country?



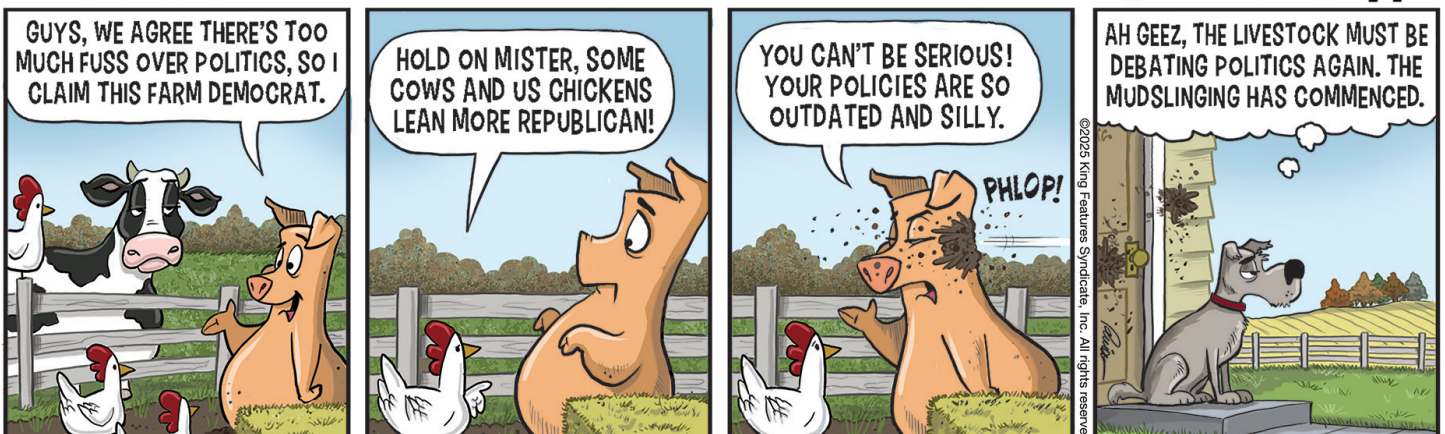
Answers

1. Nine.
2. A moonshine distillery.
3. Pat Boone.
4. Marvin Harrison and Marvin Harrison Jr.
5. Jim Morrison.
6. Wayne Gretzky.
7. Azerbaijan.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Why are cats such finicky eaters?

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I find it weird that my two dogs, "Shep" and "Bull," can eat just about anything (I have to hide all the pet food), while my cat "Trudy" will turn up her nose at most food. And although she's perfectly healthy, sometimes she gets sick after eating wet or fresh food. Why? -- Sarah in Madison, Wisconsin

DEAR SARAH: Cats' eating behaviors have long been a source of curiosity for both pet owners and the scientific community. Why do they turn their nose up at certain foods and chow down on others? Why do they sometimes throw up after eating? Why do they gnaw on grass when they're meat-eaters?

The answer is: It's complicated, and no one is entirely sure. A 2015 study, for example, found that cats have some genes that are more commonly possessed by herbivores (animals that eat only plants, like cows). These particular genes help them detect bitter flavors, alerting them to potentially poisonous plants.

This research opens a new avenue into understanding why cats are more picky about their food than dogs -- also meat-eaters -- tend to be. If cats are detecting a bitter taste in their food then they may be less inclined to eat it. And, a bitter taste also may trigger a vomiting response to safeguard against ingesting what is perceived to be poison.

The study's results could lead to changes in how commercial producers formulate their cat food. Whether that is a good thing remains to be seen.

In the meantime, feeding a finicky cat remains a trial-and-error process. Try small amounts of different foods -- dry, wet and fresh -- and note Trudy's likes and dislikes.

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

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Strange BUT TRUE

* America's first dentist, John Baker, trained Paul Revere to be a dentist.

* A German word for nightmare is "alptraum," or "elf dream." In German folklore, elves were dangerous figures who could control dreams and create nightmares.

* Canadians eat more macaroni and cheese than any other nation in the world.

* No matter how badly fingerprints are damaged, they will still grow back in their original pattern.

* Eggnog originated from the medieval hot, milky ale-like drink known as a posset.

* The band name Imagine Dragons is an anagram. Lead singer Dan Reynolds described it as a "phrase that meant something to all of us," but the group has yet to confirm what that is.

* Though dragonflies have six legs, they cannot walk.

* Ancient pagan cultures such as the Celts believed that benevolent, helpful spirits lived in trees. Knocking on tree trunks roused a spirit for protection, which led to the saying "knock on wood."

* Sea otters have the thickest fur of any mammal, at 1 million hairs per square inch.

* The Muppet vampire Count von Count, from "Sesame Street," was based on actual vampire myth. One way to supposedly deter the bloodsucking creatures is to throw seeds outside a door. Vampires are compelled to count the seeds, delaying them until morning.

* In 1951, Sir Hugh Beaver, the managing director of Guinness Brewery, got into a spat with someone over the world's fastest game bird. When the pair couldn't locate an answer in a book, Beaver had the idea of writing one that would solve pub arguments.

* The sun weighs 2,000 million million million million tons.

Thought for the Day: "The difference between stupidity and genius is that genius has its limits." -- Albert Einstein

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The Garden Bug

Planting dill and parsley

Dill plants do not transplant easily due to their long taproot; create a permanent bed by allowing dill to mature and self-seed over the long-term. To help establish, plant new seeds every few weeks to ensure an ample supply all summer and to prepare for pickling season. Parsley is rich in vitamins and minerals and adds beauty to both the vegetable and flower garden. There are several varieties, including Italian Flat Leaf and Curly. They can be grown in pots if you have limited space. Dill and parsley will attract and feed the beautiful Eastern Black Swallowtail, and can feed its caterpillars as well. - Brenda Weaver

Source: extension.psu.edu



by Freddy Groves

Involuntary discharge for vax refusal?

If you stood your ground and did what you thought was right in refusing the COVID vaccine, you might have thought your veterans benefits were lost forever when you were involuntarily discharged. There's been a change.

It's been a long five years. If you were bounced out of the service for your refusal, you weren't alone. Over 8,000 service members were in that group, and half were saddled with a less

than honorable discharge label.

There went the benefits -- and there were legal challenges, of course; one being that the Defense Secretary didn't have the authority to make the demand for vaccination, that the mandate hadn't come from an executive order.

In 2023 that mandate was rescinded. Too late for many already separated from the service. The rescinded mandate didn't have much to offer -- it didn't include back pay or a restoration of benefits. In January of this year an executive order called for reinstatement in the service, along with back pay and benefits to be paid.

In April there was a change in policy (courtesy of another executive order) that saw the DoD having to send out apologies to all those discharged under that mandate, as well as giving information on how to get the back pay and possibly return to service. Their "welcome back" campaign included phone calls, emails and notes on social media that all indicated that they would be delighted to have you back -- as well as give you the money you would have received had you not been involuntarily discharged.

If you were discharged for refusing the COVID vaccine and if your file still shows a less than honorable discharge because of it, you can ask for a review from a Discharge Review Board or Board for Correction of Military or Naval Records. You have until April 2026 to get that done.

If you need more information, go online to www.milreviewbds.mil.

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Wishing Well®

7	2	7	6	2	3	7	6	3	4	5	8	2
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E	V	E	A	O	E	Y	R	D	D	S	E	M

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

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1. TELEVISION: Which TV sitcom features a French bulldog named Stella?
2. GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of Algeria?
3. MUSIC: Which famous song starts with the line, "I read the news today, oh boy ..."?
4. MOVIES: Who wrote "Hedwig's Theme," the main music in the Harry Potter movies?
5. FOOD & DRINK: What is the origin of popcorn?
6. HISTORY: Where was Napoleon Bonaparte exiled to after his defeat in 1815?
7. LITERATURE: Who wrote the novel "The Sound and the Fury"?
8. ANATOMY: What are the smallest blood vessels called?
9. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: In what year did the international version of TikTok launch?
10. SCIENCE: What substance makes plants green?

Answers

1. "Modern Family."
2. Algiers.
3. "A Day in the Life," The Beatles.
4. Composer John Williams.
5. Indigenous people in the Americas mastered the art of popping corn.
6. The remote island of St. Helena.
7. William Faulkner.
8. Capillaries.
9. 2017.
10. The pigment chlorophyll.

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South Dakota Governor



Larry Rhoden



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Budget Principles

I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving full of time with family and friends, great food, and gratitude for our abundance of blessings. As Thanksgiving turns to Christmas and gratitude turns to generosity, I'm preparing to present a balanced budget to the South Dakota Legislature.

We do a lot of things right in South Dakota. Our people are some of the most generous in the nation. A big reason for that is our government doesn't tax them to death, so they have the flexibility to give more of their own hard-earned income in support of their neighbors.

I've served in the Capitol for over 20 years, including 16 years in both chambers of the Legislature and six years as Lieutenant Governor under Governor Noem. For all of those years, I was engaged in the budget process – but this will be the first budget with my name on it, so I'd like to set the table with some core budget principles for how I approached this budget.

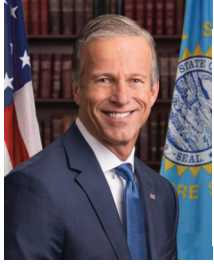
First and foremost, this money is the people's money – not ours. So we spend it wisely and return it to the people when we can. We balance our budget. Every year. For 136 years in a row – and this budget will make the 137th. And we don't use any gimmicks to do it – we structurally balance our budget. To achieve that, we don't spend money we don't have.

More specifically, we don't spend one-time money on ongoing expenses. We use one-time dollars to pay debt, invest in projects that will have a long-term benefit, or endow an ongoing cost to save taxpayer money over the long haul. We don't engage in wishful thinking – we conservatively project revenue and expenses. We maintain at least 10% of our budget in reserves to save for true emergencies. And we fully fund our pension and protect our AAA credit rating.

These are principles we have followed in the past, and I am strongly committed to following them as well. If we do, we'll be in good shape, no matter how tough it gets.

My budget invests in our people. It keeps South Dakota strong, safe, and free by making targeted investments where we should, saving extra money for the future, and still paving the way for property tax relief. We recognize these dollars aren't ours. They belong to the good people of South Dakota. As our state motto says: "Under God, the People Rule."

I look forward to sharing my budget with the Legislature and the people of South Dakota, then working through it in the upcoming legislative session. In the meantime, may God continue to bless the great state of South Dakota.



JOHN THUNE
U.S. SENATOR FOR SOUTH DAKOTA

Permanent Tax Relief Under the Tree

With the end of the year approaching, there are a lot of demands on working families' budgets: holiday expenses, end-of-year giving, and putting something away for your retirement and the kids' education. It's not easy, but the Working Families Tax Cuts that Republicans passed this year will provide some help, enabling you to keep more of your hard-earned money to save, invest, and spend how you see fit.

The cornerstone of the Working Families Tax Cuts is permanently lower tax rates. In 2017, Republicans passed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which lowered taxes across the board. But those cuts were set to expire at the end of this year without action from Congress, which would have meant a \$2,500 tax hike for a typical family in South Dakota. Republicans were determined not to let that happen. So we passed a bill this year that makes those lower tax rates and the higher standard deduction permanent, meaning lower tax bills and more money in working families' pockets.

With this bill, we also secured additional tax relief for South Dakotans raising families. In 2017, Republicans doubled the child tax credit. This year we raised it again, to \$2,200 per child, and linked it to inflation so it will never lose its value. We also created new investment accounts for newborns with an initial \$1,000 investment from the government. Families will be able to contribute to these accounts as their children grow, and the money can be used later for education, to start a business, and to buy a first home – in short, to get a head start on the American Dream.

This bill also eliminated taxes on overtime and on tips. Police officers, paramedics, firefighters, nurses, and others who have to be on the job during Thanksgiving and Christmas will be able to keep what they earn for those overtime shifts. And waiters, bartenders, and busboys working through the busy holiday season won't have to pay taxes on their tips when they file their taxes in April.

Small businesses also stand to benefit from permanent tax relief. In 2017, Republicans created a 20 percent small business deduction, which freed up cash for small businesses to invest in their operations and employees. That provision is now a permanent feature of our tax code. Full expensing for new equipment, which makes it more affordable for small businesses, farmers, and ranchers to invest in their operations, is also now permanent. And these permanent pro-growth tax policies will help small businesses remain competitive and strong in the years to come.

For the last few years, working families, farmers and ranchers, and small businesses have struggled through serious economic headwinds. Republicans' top priority this year was delivering tax relief for these hardworking Americans to give them more breathing room in their budgets. Without action by Congress, 2026 would have brought a massive tax hike. Thanks to the Working Families Tax Cuts, that tax hike isn't coming next year, or the year after that, or ever. And that's great news as we head into the new year.



What I am Thankful For

It's the time of year when long-distance family and friends come home and gather together again. Being together can help us remember all there is to be grateful for. I've taken some time to reflect on some of the things that I am thankful for this season.

I'm thankful for my wife and my sons, and for the opportunity to spend a little extra time with them throughout the holiday season. Max will be home from college and with Ben and Owen on Thanksgiving break, it will be a joy to have everyone around the table again. As my boys grow up and start to move out, I cherish these moments together even more.

I'm grateful to those who serve our country and our communities in South Dakota. From deployed service members to firefighters, police officers, and first responders, I'm heartened by their sacrifice to serve and protect. Many of these service members miss out on celebrating with their family on Thanksgiving Day because they are working to keep us safe. Take a moment to remember and be grateful for their sacrifice.

Our farmers and ranchers work day in and day out to feed the world. I'm grateful for their dedication to get up and put in long hours of physical work, no matter the weather or the holiday. Their resilience is the backbone of our nation. When you're sitting down at a table filled with food, remember to thank a farmer.

The grit and determination of South Dakotans is unique. I'm grateful to those who work hard to improve their communities, serve their neighbors, and make South Dakota a place we are all proud to call home.

As we officially enter the holiday season, I hope we can all take some time to reflect on what really matters. I wish you and your families a blessed Thanksgiving!

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November 17 - 23, 2025

Welcome back to another Weekly Round[s] Up. We are now back on a regular, in-session schedule after finally getting out of the longest government shutdown in US history. It was a busy week filled with meetings, briefings, events, votes and interviews, but we got a lot done!

Additionally, I attended the Halifax International Security Forum in Nova Scotia this past weekend. I spent this time in meetings with our partners and allies from around the world. I also spoke on a panel titled "Democracies Design Doodads" discussing innovation in democratic countries, specifically regarding artificial intelligence.

More on the rest of my week in my Weekly Round[s] Up:

South Dakota groups I visited with: South Dakota representatives with John Deere; South Dakota Family Career and Community Leaders of America; South Dakota members of the Clean Fuels Alliance; Dr. Ashlea Semmens with the American Society of Breast Surgeons; Mike Salem with McDonald's; Shirley Hauge and Emily Parish with the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association; South Dakota Telecommunications Association; Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and SAGE Development Authority.

Met with South Dakotans from: Aberdeen, Belle Fourche, Bison, Blackhawk, Clear Lake, Colman, Deadwood, Harrisburg, Herreid, Kimball, Rapid City, Salem, Sioux Falls, Volga and Wall.

Other meetings: Mackenzie Eaglen, Defense Analyst at the American Enterprise Institute; James Bracken, John Diaz and Anne Chai with Zurich North America; Secretary of State Marco Rubio; Secretary of Education Linda McMahon; Summer Mersinger, CEO of Blockchain Association; John Collison with Stripe; and the Hon. Stephan Mayer, MP, Member of Foreign Affairs Committee, German Bundestag; and Christian Forstner, Director of Hanns Seidel Foundation USA.

Briefings: I attended two Senate Select Committee on Intelligence closed briefings this past week.

Senate Prayer Breakfast: I attended our Senate Prayer Breakfast Wednesday morning, where Senator Roger Marshall from Kansas was the speaker.

H-2B Letter: This week Senator Angus King (I-Maine) and I sent a letter to the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Labor requesting that they release the maximum allowable number of additional H-2B visas for Fiscal Year 2026, consistent with the previous three years. Thirty-one other Senators signed the letter with us and now we wait for their response. These visas are crucial to South Dakota because our seasonal tourism and hospitality industries rely on H-2B workers to fill jobs that simply can't be staffed locally during peak months.

Votes taken: 5 – This week I voted on nominee Ho Nieh, of Alabama, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (Yea). I also voted on the Lummis Buffalo Resource Management Plan Amendment CRA (Yea) and on the Schiff Oil and Gas CRA (Nay).

My staff in South Dakota visited: Milbank, Revillo, Sturgis, Webster and Wall.

Steps taken: 72,973 steps or 34.18 miles.

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries

PO Box 831313 - Ocala, FL 34483

1-352-216-3025

The Turkey Is My Gobble, Gobble Wish List

What I enjoy the most about holidays is the "eating frenzy." It gives me opportunity to get away with a lot behind The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage's back, which is a great challenge. I'm not always successful, but I try and I have my family to thank for that.

In the last few years, I have had some health issues, beginning with a heart attack, which was not that bad because I survived without any issues. Other issues concerning my health have developed over the years, requiring me to be on health pills.

Nobody knows more about that than The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. She oversees my medical pills daily. When I wake up in the morning, my medications are ready for me to take. Maybe I've become a drug addict!

I can handle all of these pills as long as they keep me healthy. What I have a hard time handling is my diet. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has me on a very strict diet that eliminates sugar in every category. I'm not allowed to have sugar or any foods that contain it. I really didn't know how many foods had sugar.

She is quite overseeing in this regard for me. I have no idea what pills I am taking, but I leave that in the very qualified hands of The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. She knows medicine better than the doctors I know. She goes with me on every doctor's visit and communicates with the doctor regarding my medicines.

Although my diet is very strict in this regard, the holiday season enables me to compromise it just a little behind the back of you know who.. When we have a family gathering around the dinner table with that big Turkey in the middle, there are all kinds of sugar-saturated foods there, much to the chagrin of The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Being a family holiday gathering there is little she can do about it. They all bring their favorite food and much of it has sugar in it.

Usually, we have around 12 family members at these dinners, including several infants full of energy, which is a distraction and makes my sneaky plan more possible and easier to pull off.

If I eat something with sugar in it, and The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage doesn't see me eat it, I'm off free and that sugar is at my most gracious disposal. During the last 10 years following my heart attack, I have worked on this to perfect it. I'm not there yet but I'm working on it..

Throughout this family Thanksgiving celebration, I keep boasting about the turkey and how delicious it is, and I get others around the table to talk about it in order to divert attention from my plan. Now, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is actively involved in the serving of this meal.

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My plan is to sneak a sugar-laden cookie or two from the table when she is distracted. With doughnuts, cookies, and pies all around, I couldn't be in a better place.

When I want to pick up a cookie, I will cause a little distraction and talk about how delicious that turkey was, and whoever made that turkey is a genius. Everybody will laugh and point to the person who baked that turkey, none other than The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Everybody will be laughing while behind the laughing I sneak a few cookies and slide them onto my plate.

After all, how can I get caught eating something somebody in our family baked? It would be very rude for me not to eat something that someone in our family brought to the meal. That is, everything but broccoli.

Those Thanksgiving dinners are some of the most wonderful times of the year. Yes, I love and enjoy the turkey. But if I can use the turkey to create a shield to sneak several cookies, it is that much more delicious.

After the meal when everybody has gone, I usually go and sit down in my easy chair and relax a bit and reflect on our time around the Thanksgiving table.

It is then that The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage will come and say, "I know you didn't eat any cookies during the meal so I thought I would bring you one in appreciation of your faithful abstinence."

Nothing feels more wonderful than when a plan comes together. I'm not sure who is tricking whom here. Did I tricked her, or is she tricking me into believing that she didn't see me take some cookies off the table?

I look at her and say very cheerfully, "You know those pies on the table today looked so delicious and I was so tempted when looking at them."

"Well," she said, "maybe I will let you have a small piece of pumpkin pie tonight for supper."

Refusing her offer would be stupid; I munched her cookie, dreaming of the pumpkin pie I'd enjoy later-life's perfect moment.

As I was thinking of our family celebration I was reminded of a Bible verse, Psalm 127:3, "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward."

Thinking about my family at our Thanksgiving celebration caused me to remember how blessed I am. My goal is not to take this blessing for granted but thank God each day for it.

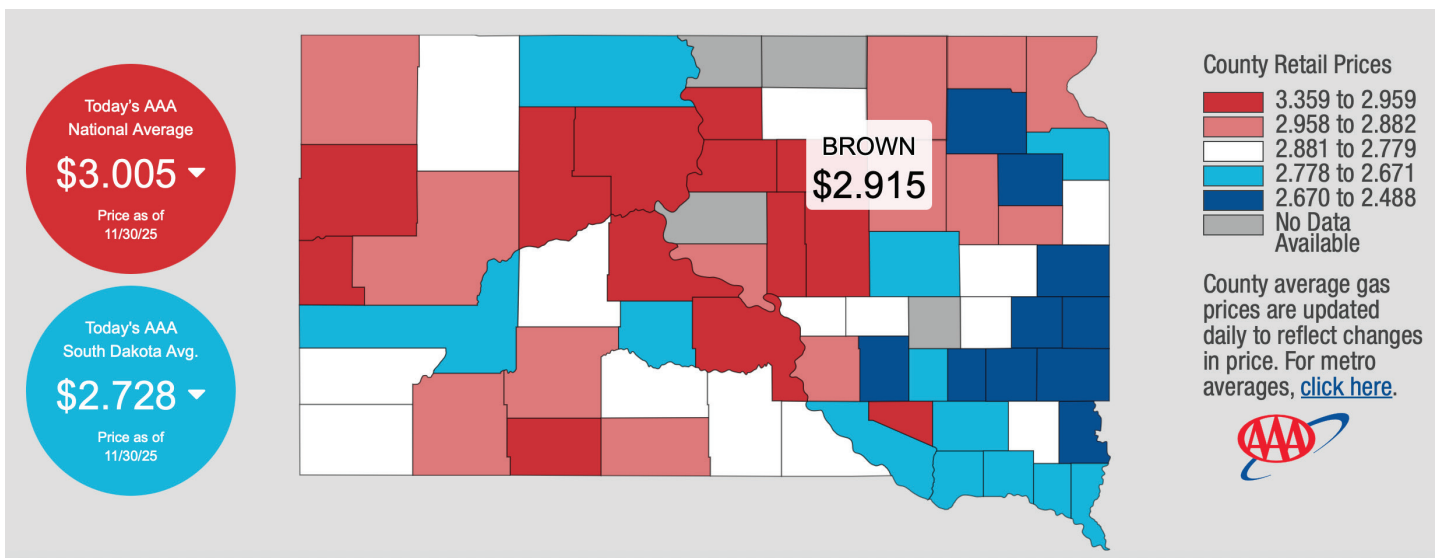
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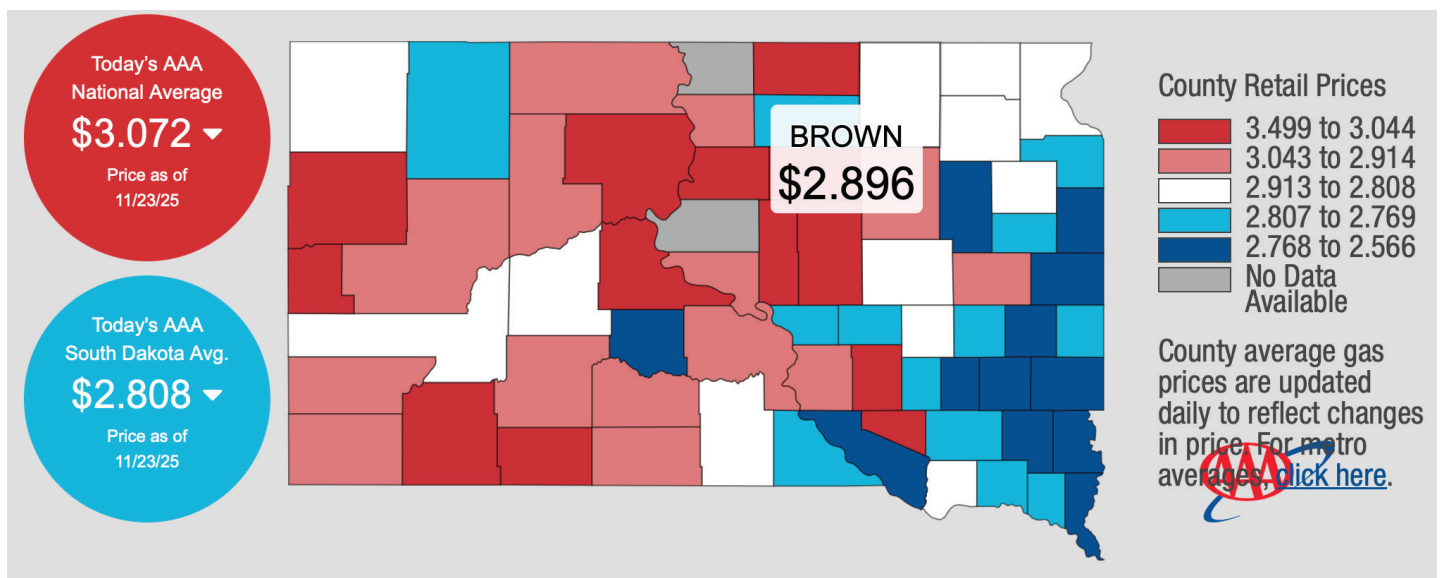
South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$2.728	\$2.955	\$3.403	\$3.511
Yesterday Avg.	\$2.731	\$2.942	\$3.401	\$3.502
Week Ago Avg.	\$2.808	\$2.985	\$3.473	\$3.509
Month Ago Avg.	\$2.856	\$3.040	\$3.482	\$3.351
Year Ago Avg.	\$2.832	\$3.070	\$3.518	\$3.270

This Week



Last Week



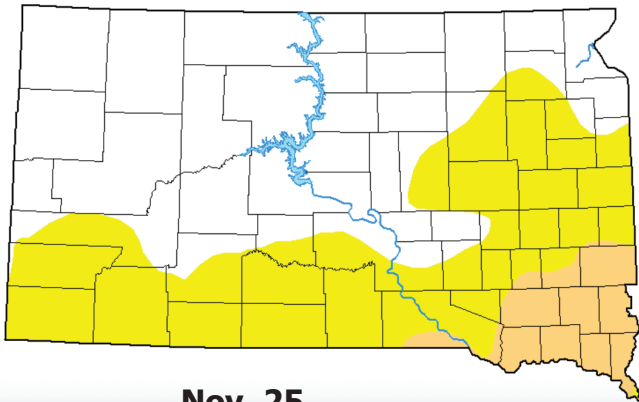
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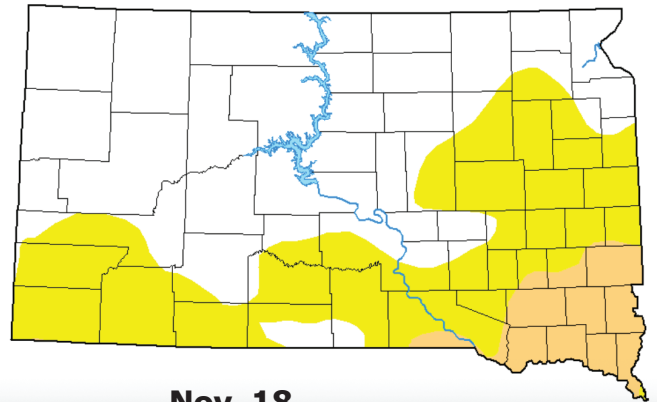
Drought Classification

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data

Drought Monitor



Nov. 25



Nov. 18

On this week's map, only minor changes were made in the region, including changes in eastern Kansas, Nebraska, and southwestern South Dakota. For the week, precipitation across the region was generally light and primarily restricted to eastern and central portions of Kansas as well as in eastern and central South Dakota. In terms of average temperatures, warmer-than-normal temperatures (5 to 15+ degrees F above normal) were observed across the region with the greatest anomalies observed in the Dakotas. According to NWS NOHRSC, the current regional snowpack spatial extent is limited to areas of central and northern North Dakota.

EARTHTALK

Which Colleges Prioritize Sustainability & Climate Change?

Tim Weighart

Dear EarthTalk: Do any colleges require students to take classes on sustainability or climate change in order to graduate?

-- D.F.P. Norwalk, CT

Teaching young people about climate change is essential if future generations are understand and be prepared for the extreme weather and environmental disruptions that are accelerating. Integrating climate literacy into higher education can ensure that students, no matter their major, gain the tools to address environmental challenges in their careers and communities. While most American colleges still don't require such coursework, several institutions have made notable progress recently.

One big development is at the University of California San Diego, which in Fall 2024 launched the Jane Teranes Climate Change Education Requirement. All first-time, first-year students entering that term—the Class of 2028—must now take an approved climate-related course before graduating. UC San Diego

created a menu of over 50 classes across some 20 disciplines, allowing students to fulfill the requirement without adding time to their degrees. To qualify, each course must devote at least 30 percent of its content to climate change and address multiple aspects of the issue, such as climate science, societal impacts, and solution-focused learning. Roughly 7,000 students are part of the first cohort subject to the new rule.

Arizona State University introduced a similar plan for Fall 2024. As part of its redesigned General Studies Gold curriculum, all incoming undergraduates must complete a three-credit sustainability course. The plan is broader than climate change alone, focusing heavily on climate systems, human–environment interactions, and global environmental challenges.

Another major step is at San Francisco State University, which will require every incoming student to complete a course on climate justice. The revised Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action requirement expands the university's focus from general sustainability to the unequal impacts of climate change on historically marginalized communities. Over 100 existing courses are being updated so they align with the new climate justice standards.

A few smaller institutions adopted climate or sustainability requirements years ago. Dickinson College implemented one in 2015, and Goucher College has required environmental sustainability coursework since 2007. Unity Environmental University in Maine has long built environmental literacy into its core curriculum. Even at schools without graduation mandates, many are expanding climate-related offerings, opening new sustainability schools, or weaving climate themes throughout the curriculum. Still, most U.S. colleges have yet to adopt institution-wide requirements, slowed by bureaucratic processes, staffing limitations, and regional political sensitivities.



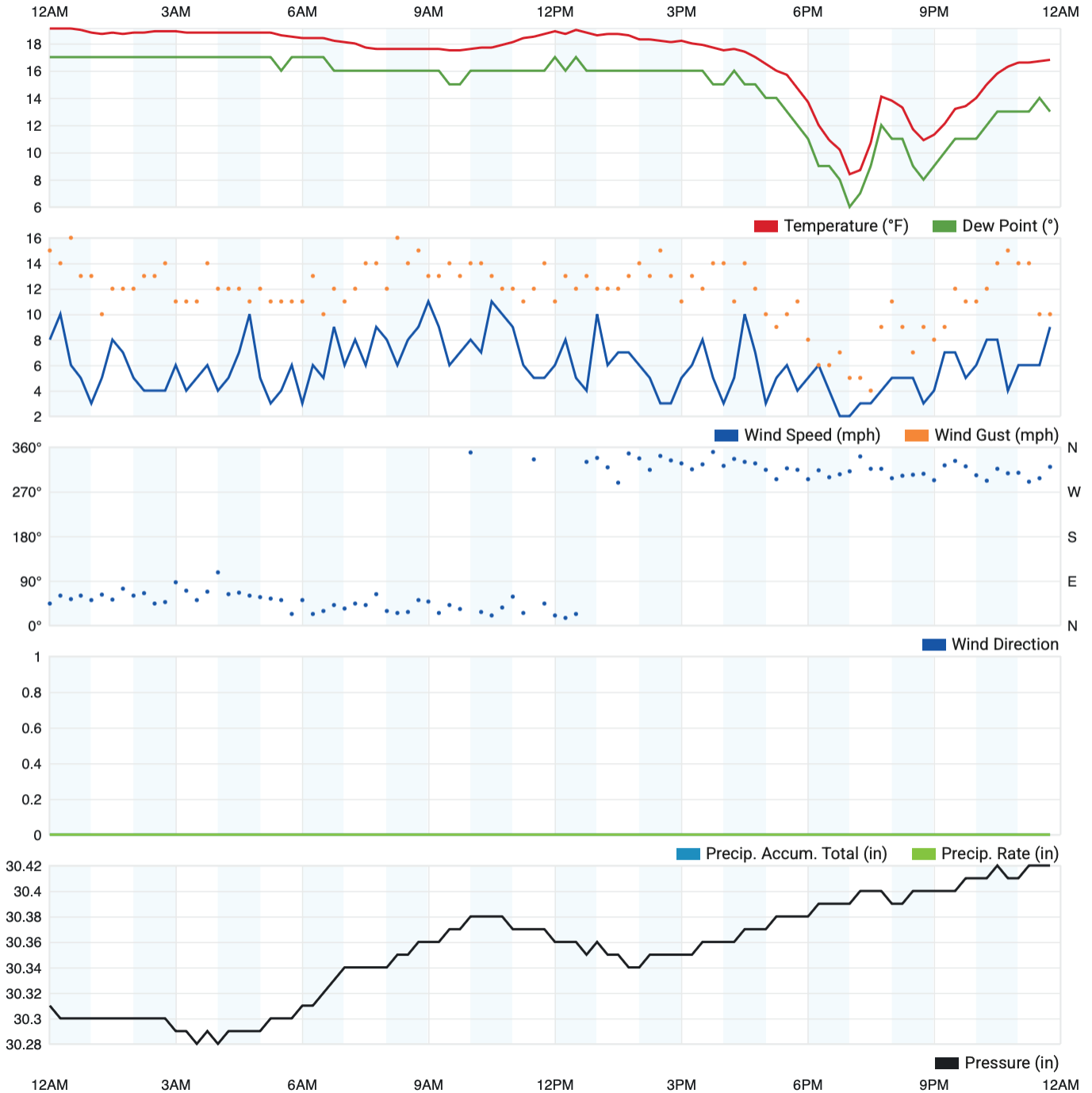
University of California San Diego, Arizona State University, San Francisco State University, Dickinson College, Goucher College, and Maine's Unity Environmental University are among the colleges requiring students to take coursework related to climate/sustainability. Credit: Roddy Scheer

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

November 29, 2025



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Today

Tonight

Monday

Monday Night

Tuesday



High: 12 °F

Low: -6 °F

High: 17 °F

Low: -5 °F

High: 27 °F

Partly Sunny

Mostly Cloudy

Partly Sunny

Partly Cloudy

Mostly Cloudy



Cold Air Arrives

November 30, 2025
3:09 AM

- Wind chills in the **single digits to teens below zero** are expected this morning and Monday morning.
- **Frostbite can occur in as little as 30 minutes.** Bundle up, pack your winter survival kit if traveling, and bring your pets inside!

Minimum Wind Chill Forecast (°F)

	11/30 Sun				12/1 Mon				12/2 Tue	
	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am	12pm	6pm	12am	6am
Aberdeen	-1	-11	0	-16	-18	-11	2	-11	-13	-10
Britton	2	-8	-3	-14	-17	-12	1	-12	-13	-11
Brookings	-5	-7	2	-2	-7	-5	3	-3	-6	-3
Chamberlain	-5	-7	3	-1	-3	1	13	2	0	2
Clark	-5	-11	-3	-12	-14	-7	0	-6	-10	-7
Eagle Butte	-16	-19	-3	-14	-15	-12	4	-3	-1	1
Ellendale	-3	-15	-4	-19	-23	-16	-1	-12	-14	-12
Eureka	-7	-19	-7	-17	-19	-15	-4	-13	-13	-7
Gettysburg	-8	-14	-2	-14	-15	-11	2	-9	-9	-6
Huron	-6	-9	1	-5	-7	-5	8	-4	-6	-4
Kennebec	-10	-10	3	-8	-10	-3	10	-1	-3	-2
McIntosh	-13	-20	-8	-20	-21	-19	-1	-8	-7	-4
Milbank	-4	-4	4	-7	-10	-5	7	-3	-7	-3
Miller	-5	-12	0	-8	-12	-5	7	-5	-7	-5
Mobridge	-7	-13	0	-13	-15	-9	3	-3	-6	-1
Murdo	-19	-15	-2	-8	-10	-4	11	1	0	1
Pierre	-2	-6	4	-4	-6	2	12	5	4	5
Redfield	-6	-12	-1	-13	-15	-7	6	-10	-14	-12
Sisseton	0	-5	-2	-10	-12	-8	5	-5	-9	-7
Watertown	-3	-5	0	-9	-10	-5	2	-4	-8	-5
Webster	0	-9	-4	-12	-13	-7	1	-6	-9	-7
Wheaton	0	-4	-1	-9	-12	-7	5	-7	-9	-6



Cold air moves in for today and Monday. Wind chills in the single digits to teens below zero are expected both this morning and Monday morning. Make sure to bundle up, pack a winter survival kit if traveling, and bring your pets inside!

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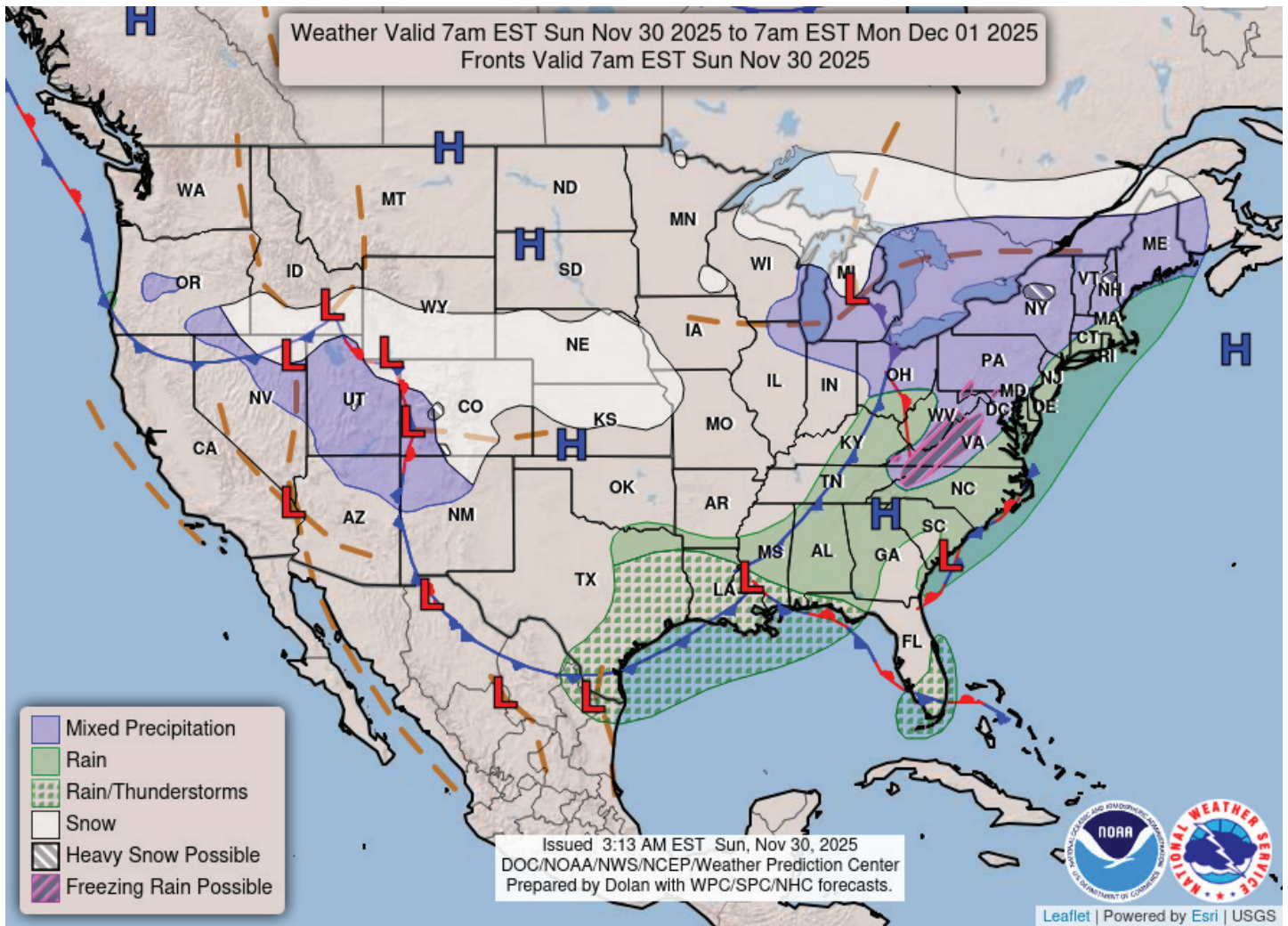
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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 19 °F at 12:00 AM
Low Temp: 8 °F at 7:04 PM
Wind: 17 mph at 8:09 AM
Precip: : 5 inches of snow, .30 of moisture.

Today's Info

Record High: 66 in 1995
Record Low: -27 in 1964
Average High: 35
Average Low: 13
Average Precip in Nov.: 0.74
Precip to date in Oct.: 1.30
Average Precip to date: 21.21
Precip Year to Date: 24.81
Sunset Tonight: 4:51 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:52 am



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Today in Weather History

November 30, 1981: A two-day winter storm, beginning as rain, changing to freezing rain and then to snow, completely paralyzed the eastern half of South Dakota, as well as west central Minnesota Monday, November 30 through Tuesday, December 1, 1981. Snow accumulations of between eight and twelve inches were common in South Dakota. Wind with gusts to near 50 mph whipped the snow into blizzard conditions. The Governor of South Dakota closed east-west Interstate 90 to all traffic. Hundreds of motorists were stranded. One person died during snow removal after the storm. Some storm total snowfall amounts included 8 inches at Kennebec, 7 inches at Pierre and Faulkton, 4 inches at Aberdeen, and 2 inches at Watertown. The winter precipitation was caused by a storm center that moved from Kansas Monday through Iowa Monday night and into Wisconsin Tuesday morning, December 1st. The same storm produced heavy snow and blizzard conditions over a large area of the central Plains. Travel was especially difficult because of the snow. Many roads were impassible and motorists were forced to find shelter.

November 30, 1991: The third major winter storm of the season moved from the central plains to eastern South Dakota. The storm generally dropped between 4 and 8 inches of snow over the eastern third of South Dakota from the 28th to the 30th. New snow accumulations of 2 to 5 inches occurred over most of the rest of the state. Some specific snow reports across the area included Aberdeen with 2 inches and Watertown with 3 inches. Five inches fell at Clear Lake and 3 inches fell near Summit. Strong winds developed after the snow fell, producing widespread blowing and drifting snow, especially across the northeast corner of South Dakota.

November 30, 2000: Heavy snow of 6 to 12 inches fell across a large part of northern South Dakota and into western Big Stone County in Minnesota, causing travel problems and school closings. Several accidents also occurred due to the slippery roads. Some snowfall amounts included 6 inches at Milbank and Ortonville; 8 inches at McLaughlin, Ipswich, Summit, and Mellette; 9 inches northwest of Britton, Clear Lake, and Pollock; 10 inches at Leola and Faulkton; 11 inches at Aberdeen and Webster; and 12 inches at Houghton.

1875 - A severe early season cold wave set November records in the northeastern U.S. The temperature dipped to 5 above zero at New York City, 2 below at Boston MA, and 13 below at Eastport ME. (David Ludlum)

1925 - An extremely rare late November hurricane began to affect the west coast of Florida as it strengthened during the day. The storm made landfall very early on December 1st south of Tampa Bay, weakened to a tropical storm as it crossed central Florida, and exited around St. Augustine. The storm regained Hurricane strength off Jacksonville late on the 1st. Heavy rain continued over northeast Florida on the 2nd. Gale force winds were reported from the Keys to Jacksonville and over 50 people lost their lives, mostly on ships at sea. Damage along the coast south of Jacksonville was heavy and excessive rain and wind seriously damaged citrus and truck crops.

1957 - Lee slope winds enhanced by Hurricane Nina gusted to 82 mph at Honolulu, Hawaii, a record wind gust for that location. Wainiha, on the island of Kauai, was deluged with 20.42 inches of rain, and 35 foot waves pounded some Kauai beaches, even though the eye of the hurricane was never within 120 miles of the islands. (30th-1st) (The Weather Channel)

1967 - A record November snowstorm struck the Washington D.C. area. It produced up to a foot of snow in a 12 hour period. (David Ludlum)

1976 - MacLeod Harbor, AK, reported a precipitation total for November of 70.99 inches, which established a state record for any month of the year. (The National Weather Summary)

1987 - Showers produced heavy rain in the northeastern U.S. Up to three inches of rain drenched the Brandywine Creek Basin of Pennsylvania, and rainfall totals in Vermont ranged up to two inches at Dorsett. Snow fell heavily across Upper Michigan as gale force winds prevailed over Lake Superior. A storm moving into the northwestern U.S. produced gale force winds along the northern and central Pacific coast. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Snow in the Upper Great Lakes Region pushed the precipitation total for the month at Marquette, MI, past their previous November record of 7.67 inches. Santa Anna winds in southern California gusted to 75 mph at Laguna Peak. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

Why Christ Came

Jesus came to reveal the true nature of the Father.

John 17:5-8: 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

6 "I have revealed you[a] to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. 8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

Ask a church goer why Jesus came, and you will probably hear something based on Luke 19:10—namely, "to seek and to save that which was lost." And this is true. The Savior came to offer us hope, making new the relationship between God and believer. But Jesus' time on earth was meant to do even more: He came to reveal the true nature of the Father.

In the garden of Eden, knowledge of the Lord was like a little trickle. Later Moses explained the Law so that the Israelites would know what was expected of them, and the trickle became a stream. When the prophets revealed more about God, the stream widened into a river. Then came Jesus, the very embodiment of His Father, and it was as if a dam broke on the sea of knowledge.

Scripture has given us a detailed picture of Jesus' character so we can build a relationship with God based on His unwavering love and commitment. We do this by growing in our faith and sharing the hope of Jesus, who is the only way to know the Father (John 14:6). As we begin the period known as Advent—a season in which we look forward to celebrating Christ's coming—let's make it a time to seek the Lord more intentionally. May we, through prayer and study, draw ever closer to the One who loves us beyond all measure.

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:
11.28.25

6 7 13 39 48 4

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$90,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
11.29.25

1 15 18 21 46 6

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$8,200,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
11.29.25

4 8 9 34 39 13

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 14 Hrs 56 Mins 53
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
11.29.25

11 13 20 21 28

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$105,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
11.29.25

16 18 20 23 61 22

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
11.29.25

19 22 30 32 59 1

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$740,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the **AP** Associated Press

South Dakota wins 80-63 against Air Force

By The Associated Press undefined

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Isaac Bruns had 22 points in South Dakota's 80-63 win against Air Force on Saturday.

Bruns had six rebounds for the Coyotes (5-3). Uzziah Buntyn scored 12 points and added six rebounds. Cameron Fens finished 5 of 6 from the floor to finish with 11 points, while adding eight rebounds.

Caleb Walker finished with 21 points for the Falcons (3-6). Kam Sanders added 15 points and three steals for Air Force. Lucas Hobin also put up 12 points.

South Dakota took the lead for good less than two minutes into the game and it was 37-21 at halftime, with Bruns racking up seven points. South Dakota extended its lead to 62-51 during the second half, fueled by an 8-0 scoring run. Bruns scored a team-high 15 points in the second half.

The game was played at The Monument, formerly known as the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center.

Mason leads South Dakota State to 41-3 win over New Hampshire in FCS playoffs

BROOKINGS, S. D. (AP) — Chase Mason threw three touchdown passes, Julius Loughridge ran for 100 yards and a touchdown and 14th-seeded South Dakota State strolled to a 41-3 win over New Hampshire in the first round of the FCS playoffs on Saturday.

The Jackrabbits (9-4) scored on every possession except for a third-quarter interception by Mason, who was 16-of-20 passing for 230 yards and had 13 straight completions on the cold, snowy day.

South Dakota State, which had lost 4 of 5 before the playoffs, goes to third-seeded Montana next Saturday. The Coyotes beat the Grizzlies in the playoffs the last two years, including the championship game two seasons ago.

Loughridge and Josiah Johnson scored on 1-yard plunges in the first quarter and Mason threw touchdown passes to Alex Bullock and Jack Smith. The Jackrabbits then picked off a New Hampshire pass in the closing seconds of the second quarter for a 27-3 lead at the break.

With drives of 75, 88, 68 and 63 yards, the Jackrabbits had a 288-127 advantage in offense. The Wildcats' most successful drive, 15 plays for 63 yards, stalled out on the SDSU 12, leading to a field goal.

New Hampshire (8-5) finished with 192 yards. Denzell Gibson had 101 yards on 19 carries.

Bouman's 4 TD passes push South Dakota past Drake 38-17

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Aidan Bouman threw four touchdown passes, three to Lorenzo Fenner, and South Dakota rolled to a 38-17 win over Drake on Saturday in the first round of the FCS playoffs.

South Dakota (9-4), the 11th seed, plays at sixth-seeded Mercer in the second round on Dec. 6.

Bouman connected with Fenner for a 23-yard touchdown in the second quarter to put the Coyotes ahead 10-3. Drake answered with a 2-yard rushing touchdown from Logan Inagawa to tie the game at 10, but L.J. Phillips' short run later in the quarter gave South Dakota a 17-10 halftime lead.

Fenner caught touchdown passes of 27 and 18 yards from Bouman to extend the Coyotes' lead to 31-10 in the third quarter. Jack Martens added a 3-yard touchdown reception in the fourth quarter to cap the scoring.

Bouman finished 15 of 20 for 261 yards, Fenner had five catches for 115 yards and Phillips rushed 14 times for 132 yards.

Drake (8-4) managed 143 passing yards and a touchdown from Inagawa.

4 dead and 10 wounded in shooting at banquet hall in Stockton, California

By ETHAN SWOPE Associated Press

STOCKTON, Calif. (AP) — Four people were killed and 10 wounded in a shooting during a family gathering at a banquet hall in Stockton, sheriff's officials said Saturday.

The victims included both children and adults, said Heather Brent, a spokesperson for the San Joaquin County sheriff's office. Early indications "suggest this may have been a targeted incident," Brent said during a news conference at the scene.

Local officials said the suspected shooter has not been caught and pleaded with the public for help. Detectives were still working to identify a possible motive.

"If you have any information as to this individual, reach out immediately. If you are this individual, turn yourself in immediately," San Joaquin County District Attorney Ron Freitas said during a news conference.

The shooting occurred just before 6 p.m. inside the banquet hall, which shares a parking lot with other businesses. Stockton is a city of 320,000 about 40 miles (64 kilometers) south of Sacramento.

"Families should be together instead of at the hospital, standing next to their loved one, praying that they survive," Mayor Christina Fugazi said.

Authorities did not immediately provide additional information about the conditions of the victims. Officials said earlier that several were taken to hospitals.

Suspect in National Guard attack struggled with 'dark isolation' as community raised concerns

By FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

The Afghan man accused of gunning down two National Guard members blocks from the White House last week had been unraveling for years, unable to hold a job and flipping between long, lightless stretches of isolation and taking sudden weeks-long cross-country drives. His behavior deteriorated so sharply that a community advocate reached out to a refugee organization for help, fearing he was becoming suicidal.

Emails obtained by The Associated Press reveal mounting warnings about the suspect, Rahmanullah Lakanwal, an asylum seeker whose erratic conduct raised alarms long before the attack that jolted the nation's capital on the eve of Thanksgiving. The previously unreported concerns offer the clearest picture yet of how he was struggling in his new life in the United States.

Even so, when the community member who works with Afghan families in Washington state saw on the news that Lakanwal was named as the suspect in the National Guard shooting, they said they were stunned, unable to square the violence with the memory of seeing Lakanwal play with his young sons. The person spoke on the condition of anonymity to share undisclosed details while cooperating with the FBI in its investigation.

West Virginia National Guard Specialist Sarah Beckstrom, 20, and Staff Sgt. Andrew Wolfe, 24, were critically wounded in what officials described as an ambush attack on Wednesday afternoon, and Beckstrom died from her injuries the next day. Investigators are still working to establish a motive for the attack.

Lakanwal, 29, has been charged with first-degree murder.

In Afghanistan, Lakanwal worked in a special Afghan Army unit known as a Zero Unit. The units were backed by the CIA. He entered the U.S. in 2021 through Operation Allies Welcome, a program that evacuated and resettled tens of thousands of Afghans after the U.S. withdrawal from the country, many of whom had worked alongside U.S. troops and diplomats.

He resettled with his wife and their five sons, all under the age of 12, in Bellingham, Washington — but struggled, according to the community member, who shared emails that had been sent to the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, a nonprofit group that provides services to refugees.

"Rahmanullah has not been functional as a person, father and provider since March of last year, 03/2023. He quit his job that month, and his behavior has changed greatly," the person wrote in a January 2024 email.

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The emails described a man who was struggling to assimilate, unable to hold a steady job or commit to his English courses while he alternated between "periods of dark isolation and reckless travel." Sometimes, he spent weeks in his "darkened room, not speaking to anyone, not even his wife or older kids." At one point in 2023, the family faced eviction after months of not paying rent.

The community member said in an interview that they became worried that Lakanwal was so depressed that he would end up harming himself, but they did not see any indication that he would commit violence against another person.

Lakanwal's family members often resorted to sending his toddler sons into his room to bring him the phone or messages because he would not respond to anyone else, one email stated. A couple of times, when his wife left him with the kids for a week to travel to visit relatives, the children would not be bathed, their clothes would not be changed, and they would not eat well. Their school raised concerns about the situation.

But then, there were "interim" weeks where Lakanwal would try to make amends and "do the right things," according to the email, re-engaging with the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services as was mandated by the terms of his entry into the U.S.

"But that has quickly evolved into 'manic' episodes for one or two weeks at a time, where he will take off in the family car, and drive nonstop," the email outlined. Once, he went to Chicago, and another time, to Arizona.

Jeanine Pirro, the U.S. attorney in Washington, D.C., said this past week that Lakanwal drove across the country from Bellingham, about 80 miles (130 kilometers) north of Seattle, to the nation's capital to execute his attack.

In response to the two emails, the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants or USCRI, visited Bellingham a few weeks later in March 2024 and attempted to make contact with Lakanwal and his family, according to the community member, who, after not receiving any updates, was left with the impression that he refused their assistance.

A request for comment and clarification from USCRI was not immediately returned.

Winter storms bring snow, freezing rain and cold as Thanksgiving travelers journey home

By The Associated Press undefined

A major snowstorm in the Midwest and Great Lakes brought winter to some Thanksgiving travelers, and forecasters said the northeast U.S. could get its own early winter storm next week.

Winter storm warnings and advisories extended from Montana to Ohio, the National Weather Service said. Forecasters warned there could be airport delays and slowed traffic with snow falling at more than an inch (2.5 centimeters) per hour in some areas.

The storm dumped more than 8 inches (20 centimeters) of snow on northern Iowa by Saturday morning, and at least that much was expected in Chicago, elsewhere in Illinois, and in Wisconsin, Indiana and Michigan.

Airports in Chicago and St. Louis reported delays of about an hour in the morning, according to FlightAware.com, as one of the busiest travel days cranked up after Thanksgiving.

Icicles formed at a slant on a Chicago pier thanks to the wind, and Lake Michigan's waters were choppy with whitecaps. Motorists drove cautiously along snowy and slushy roads.

Snow-covered roads and slow travel were reported across Iowa and northern Illinois and Indiana.

Westbound Interstate 70 near Terre Haute, Indiana, was closed around noon after at least 45 vehicles crashed, Indiana State Police said on social media.

No one was seriously injured, and officials estimated that it would take six hours to reopen the highway. Troopers were also helping people in the eastbound lanes who were sliding off the road, Sgt. Matt Ames said.

The sheriff of Grant County, about 65 miles (105 kilometers) northeast of Indianapolis, urged people to

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stay off the roads.

"Stay home, have a nice cup of hot chocolate, watch some TV, play some games," Sheriff Del Garcia said in a video.

Snow fell in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where No. 1 Ohio State played 15th ranked Michigan in their traditional season-ending rivalry game. Wintry weather was also in the cards for other games in the region, including another Big 10 matchup, Northwestern at Illinois.

Meteorologists said that so far, forecast conditions did not meet blizzard warning criteria — winds of at least 35 mph (56 kph), visibilities of less than a quarter mile (400 meters) and lasting more than three hours.

The same storm and cold front was also expected to bring thunderstorms and a chance of heavy rain Saturday from southern Missouri down to Louisiana and Texas.

Forecasters said another winter storm was becoming more likely Monday and Tuesday, with freezing rain and ice in the Appalachians and moderate to heavy snow possible in the interior Northeast.

US halts all asylum decisions after shooting of National Guard members

By CEDAR ATTANASIO, COLLIN BINKLEY, and BEN FINLEY Associated Press

BELLINGHAM, Wash. (AP) — The Trump administration has halted all asylum decisions and paused issuing visas for people traveling on Afghan passports, seizing on the National Guard shooting in the nation's capital to intensify efforts to rein in legal immigration.

The suspect in Wednesday's shooting near the White House that killed Specialist Sarah Beckstrom, 20, and critically wounded Staff Sgt. Andrew Wolfe, 24, both of the West Virginia National Guard, is facing charges including first-degree murder. Investigators are seeking to find a motive for the attack.

Rahmanullah Lakanwal is a 29-year-old Afghan national who had been living in Bellingham, Washington, about 80 miles (130 kilometers) north of Seattle. He worked with the CIA during the Afghanistan War. He applied for asylum during the Biden administration and was granted it this year under President Donald Trump, according to a group that assists with resettlement of Afghans who helped U.S. forces in their country.

The Republican administration is promising to pause entry to the United States from some poor nations and review Afghans and other legal migrants already in the country.

The two service members were deployed as part of Trump's crime-fighting mission in the District of Columbia. Trump has sent or tried to deploy National Guard members to other cities to assist with his mass deportation efforts but has faced court challenges.

The office of U.S. Attorney Jeanine Pirro, the top federal prosecutor in Washington, D.C., said the charges against Lakanwal also include two counts of assault with intent to kill while armed. There were "many changes to come," she told Fox News.

Asylum decisions halted

Trump said the shooting was a "terrorist attack" and he criticized the Biden administration for enabling entry to the U.S. by Afghans who had worked with American forces.

The director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Joseph Edlow, said in a post on the social platform X that asylum decisions will be paused "until we can ensure that every alien is vetted and screened to the maximum degree possible."

Experts say the U.S. has rigorous systems to conduct background checks of asylum-seekers. Asylum claims made from inside the country through USCIS have long faced backlogs. Critics say the slowdown has been exacerbated under the Republican administration.

Meanwhile, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said his department has paused "visa issuance for ALL individuals traveling on Afghan passports."

Shawn VanDiver, president of the San Diego-based group #AfghanEvac, said in response: "They are using a single violent individual as cover for a policy they have long planned, turning their own intelligence failures into an excuse to punish an entire community and the veterans who served alongside them."

The suspect

Lakanwal lived in Bellingham with his wife and five children, former landlord Kristina Widman said.

Neighbor Mohammad Sherzad said Lakanwal was polite and quiet and spoke little English. Sherzad said he attended the same mosque as Lakanwal and heard from other members that he was struggling to find work. He said Lakanwal "disappeared" about two weeks ago.

The mosque condemned the shootings. "The Islamic Society of Whatcom County is deeply saddened and shaken by the heinous attack in Washington, D.C. Our hearts go out to the victims, their families, and all those impacted. We condemn this act unequivocally," the mosque said in a statement Saturday afternoon.

The statement went on to say that the mosque is cooperating with the FBI, but that members didn't know the suspect very well, saying he was "not an integrated part of our community. Like any house of worship, our doors were open to those who wished to pray alongside us," the statement said, adding that the shootings "do not represent our faith," and that "no community should be judged by the conduct of a single person."

Lakanwal worked briefly this summer as an independent contractor for Amazon Flex, which lets people use their own cars to deliver packages, according to a company spokesperson.

Investigators were executing warrants in Washington state and other parts of the country.

Lakanwal entered the U.S. in 2021 through Operation Allies Welcome, a Biden administration program that resettled Afghans after the U.S. withdrawal, officials said. Lakanwal applied for asylum during that administration, but his asylum was approved this year under the Trump administration, #AfghanEvac said in a statement.

Lakanwal served in a CIA-backed Afghan Army unit, known as one of the special Zero Units, in the southern province of Kandahar, according to a resident of the eastern province of Khost who identified himself as Lakanwal's cousin and spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals.

The man said Lakanwal started out working for the unit as a security guard in 2012 and was later promoted to become a team leader and a GPS specialist.

Beckstrom 'exemplified leadership, dedication'

Beckstrom enlisted in 2023 after graduating high school and served with distinction as a military police officer with the 863rd Military Police Company, the West Virginia National Guard said.

"She exemplified leadership, dedication, and professionalism," the guard said in a statement, adding that Beckstrom volunteered for the deployment in Washington.

There was a moment of silence Saturday for Beckstrom and Wolfe before West Virginia University's football game against Texas Tech in Morgantown.

More troops headed to the nation's capital

The administration has ordered 500 more National Guard members to the nation's capital. An Army spokesperson said several governors were planning to support the operation and that specific troop announcements would come from their offices. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said the president had asked him to send the troops.

Nearly 2,200 troops are currently assigned to the joint task force that has operated in the city since August, according to the government's latest update.

Authorities probe corruption and negligence in Hong Kong's deadliest fire in decades

By CHAN HO-HIM and HUIZHONG WU Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong's deadliest fire in decades has raised questions about corruption and negligence in the renovations of the apartment complex where at least 128 people died.

An intense fire broke out at Wang Fuk Court complex in Hong Kong's northern suburbs Wednesday afternoon, with flames covering seven of the eight towers. The complex was home to some 4,800 residents, some of whom had raised safety concerns about the renovations more than year before the fire.

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Police on Wednesday arrested three men from a construction company on suspicion of manslaughter and gross negligence. They were released on bail but then arrested by the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the authority said Saturday night, pointing to their leadership role in the renovations. ICAC had also previously arrested seven men and one woman associated with the project.

Police have not identified the company where the suspects worked, but documents posted to the homeowners association's website showed that the Prestige Construction & Engineering Company was in charge of renovations. Police have seized boxes of documents from the company, where phones rang unanswered Thursday.

Officials also said they were investigating the materials used, both the netting on the scaffolding and the foam panels covering windows, and their role in the blaze.

Residents found safety issues a year before fire

For almost a year, some residents at the Wang Fuk Court complex had been raising safety concerns to Hong Kong authorities about the scaffolding materials being used in the renovation project, according to documents reviewed by the AP, specifically about the netting that covered the scaffolding.

Hong Kong's labor department in a statement on Saturday confirmed it had received such complaints, adding that officials had carried out 16 inspections of Wang Fuk Court's renovation project since July 2024, and had warned contractors multiple times in writing that they must ensure they met fire safety requirements. The city even carried out an inspection as late as one week before the fire.

The labor department said it had reviewed the product quality certificate of the netting and that it was in line with standards, but that the safety netting had not been the previous target of inspections.

Preliminary investigations showed the fire started on a lower-level scaffolding net of one of the buildings. It then spread rapidly as the foam panels caught fire, said Chris Tang, the city's secretary for security. Police also said they had been looking at the highly flammable foam panels.

"The blaze ignited the foam panels, causing the glass to shatter and leading to a swift intensification of the fire and its spread into the interior spaces," Tang said.

The labor department said later on Saturday that three prosecutions were brought against the company over breaches of safety regulations for working at height in the construction and convictions in two of the cases resulted in fines of totaling 30,000 Hong Kong dollars (\$3,850). The company also was fined three times in 2023 for separate violations unrelated to the Tai Po project.

First responders also found that some fire alarms in the complex, which housed many older people, did not sound when tested, said Andy Yeung, the director of Hong Kong Fire Services. He did not specify how many were not working or if any of the others were.

Intense blaze took days to put out

It took firefighters a day to bring the fire under control, and it was not fully extinguished until Friday morning — some 40 hours after it started.

Crews prioritized apartments from which they had received emergency calls during the blaze but were unable to reach in the hours that the fire burned out of control, Derek Armstrong Chan, a deputy director of Hong Kong Fire Services, told reporters.

Twelve firefighters were among the 79 people injured in the blaze, and one firefighter was killed.

Even two days after the fire began, smoke continued to drift out of the charred skeletons of the buildings from the occasional flare-up.

More bodies may be found

While more bodies might be recovered, authorities said, crews have finished their search for anyone living trapped inside.

Authorities said Saturday they need to identify 44 more bodies out of the 128 recovered. About 150 people remain unaccounted for.

The dead included two Indonesian migrant workers, the Indonesian foreign ministry said Thursday. About 11 other migrants from the country who were working as domestic helpers in the apartment complex remain missing, Indonesian Consul General Yul Edison said Friday.

Near the site of the fire, Sara Yu held the hand of her 2-year-old son, Dominic, as they each placed a

single white rose into a growing cluster of the flowers in a small children's playground.

"I brought the kids here because I want them to understand that living in this world is something to be cherished," she said, holding back tears.

Outside a building close to the scene of the fire where family members came to identify loved ones from photographs, people placed bouquets of white roses, lilies and carnations. "More than 128 innocent lives, what did they do wrong?" asked a sign placed among the flowers.

The city lowered flags to half staff in mourning, and Chief Executive John Lee, led a three-minute silence Saturday from the government headquarters with officials all dressed in black.

The fire was the deadliest in Hong Kong in decades. A 1996 fire in a commercial building in Kowloon killed 41 people. A warehouse fire in 1948 killed 176 people, according to the South China Morning Post.

Pope visits Istanbul's Blue Mosque without praying as he focuses on unifying Christians

By NICOLE WINFIELD, ANDREW WILKS and SUZAN FRASER Associated Press

ISTANBUL, Turkey (AP) — Pope Leo XIV visited Istanbul's iconic Blue Mosque on Saturday but didn't stop to pray, as he focused more on bolstering ties with Orthodox patriarchs and promoting courageous steps for Eastern and Western churches to be united.

Leo took his shoes off and, in his white socks, toured the 17th-century mosque, looking up at its soaring tiled domes and the Arabic inscriptions on its columns as an imam pointed them out to him.

The Vatican had said Leo would observe a "brief moment of silent prayer" in the mosque, but he didn't. An imam of the mosque, Asgin Tunca, said he had invited Leo to pray, since the mosque was "Allah's house," but the pope declined.

Later, Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said: "The pope experienced his visit to the mosque in silence, in a spirit of contemplation and listening, with deep respect for the place and the faith of those who gather there in prayer."

Leo, history's first American pope, was following in the footsteps of his recent predecessors, who all made high-profile visits to the Sultan Ahmed Mosque, as it is officially known, in a gesture of respect to Turkey's Muslim majority.

Papal visits to Blue Mosque often raise questions

But the visits have always raised questions about whether the pope would pray in the Muslim house of worship, or at the very least pause to gather thoughts in a meditative silence.

When Pope Benedict XVI visited Turkey in 2006, tensions were high because Benedict had offended many in the Muslim world a few months earlier with a speech in Regensburg, Germany that was widely interpreted as linking Islam and violence.

The Vatican added a visit to the Blue Mosque at the last minute in a bid to reach out to Muslims. He observed a moment of silent prayer, head bowed, as the imam prayed next to him, facing east.

Benedict later thanked him "for this moment of prayer" for what was only the second time a pope had visited a mosque, after St. John Paul II visited one briefly in Syria in 2001.

There were no doubts in 2014 when Pope Francis visited the Blue Mosque: He stood for two minutes of silent prayer facing east, his head bowed, eyes closed and hands clasped in front of him. The Grand Mufti of Istanbul, Rahmi Yaran, told the pope afterwards, "May God accept it."

With Leo, though, even the Vatican seemed caught off guard by his decision not to pray. The Holy See had to correct the official record of the visit after it originally kept the planned reference to him pausing for prayer.

Speaking to reporters after the visit, the imam Tunca said he had told the pope: "It's not my house, not your house, (it's the) house of Allah." He said he invited Leo to worship "But he said, 'That's OK.'"

"He wanted to see the mosque, wanted to feel (the) atmosphere of the mosque, I think. And was very pleased," he said.

A joint declaration on Easter talks

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In the afternoon, Leo prayed with the spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians, Patriarch Bartholomew, at the patriarchal church of Saint George.

There, they prayed the doxology, a hymn of praise and glory to God, and signed a joint declaration vowing to take courageous steps on the path to unity including to find a common date for Easter.

Eastern and Western churches split in the Great Schism of 1054, a divide precipitated largely by disagreements over the primacy of the pope. While ties have warmed, they remain divided and other schisms have formed.

"It is our shared desire to continue the process of exploring a possible solution for celebrating together the Feast of Feasts every year," the joint statement said, referring to Easter.

The Vatican said in his remarks to the patriarchs gathered, Leo pointed to the next Holy Year to be celebrated by Christians, in 2033 on the anniversary of Christ's crucifixion, and invited them to go to Jerusalem on "a journey that leads to full unity."

Leo's final event was a Catholic Mass in Istanbul's Volkswagen Arena for the country's Catholic community, who number 33,000 in a country of more than 85 million people, most of whom are Sunni Muslim.

Renato Marai was among a group of 26 visitors from Florence, Italy, who traveled to Istanbul to see the pope. "It's wonderful to see him on his first foreign trip, a really important moment for our group," he said.

Tarcin Unlu, meanwhile, was among many Turkish attendees, a recent convert to Christianity from Islam. "I became Christian because I thought it was the best religion for me but my family is definitely not happy," Unlu said.

Her friend, Rodrick Nuel, originally from Nigeria's Biafra region but now living in northern Cyprus, said the papal visit sent a "a powerful message for the global Christian community."

"Also, as Turkey is 99.9% Muslim and just 0.1% Christian, it shows the pope is reaching out to other religions as well," he added.

The Airbus software update doesn't spare pope

While Leo was focusing on bolstering relations with Catholics, Orthodox Christians and Muslims, trip organizers were dealing with more mundane issues.

Leo's ITA Airways Airbus A320neo charter was among those caught up in the worldwide Airbus software update, ordered by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency. The order came after an analysis found the computer code may have contributed to a sudden drop in the altitude of a JetBlue plane last month.

The Vatican spokesman, Bruni, said the necessary monitor to update the aircraft was on its way to Istanbul from Rome along with the technician who would install it.

Leo is scheduled to fly from Istanbul to Beirut, Lebanon, on Sunday afternoon for the second leg of his inaugural trip as pope.

Shoppers spend billions on Black Friday to snag holiday deals, despite wider economic uncertainty

By WYATTE GRANTHAM-PHILIPS AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Despite wider economic uncertainty hovering above this year's holiday season, shoppers turned out in big numbers for Black Friday — spending billions of dollars both in stores and online.

Adobe Analytics, which tracks e-commerce, said U.S. consumers spent a record \$11.8 billion online Friday, marking a 9.1% jump from last year. Traffic particularly piled up between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. local time nationwide, when \$12.5 million passed through online shopping carts every minute.

Consumers also spent a record \$6.4 billion online on Thanksgiving Day, per Adobe. Top categories that saw an uptick in sales across both days included video game consoles, electronics and home appliances. Shopping services powered by artificial intelligence and social media advertising have also particularly influenced what consumers choose to buy, the firm said.

Meanwhile, software company Salesforce — which tracks digital spending from a range of retailers, including grocers — estimated that Black Friday online sales totaled \$18 billion in the U.S. and \$79 billion globally. And e-commerce platform Shopify said its merchants raked in a record \$6.2 billion in sales world-

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wide on Black Friday. At its peak, sales reached \$5.1 million per minute — with top categories including cosmetics and clothing, according to the Canadian company.

Mastercard SpendingPulse, which tracks in-person and online spending, reported that overall Black Friday sales excluding automotive rose 4.1% from a year ago. The retail sales indicator, which is not adjusted for inflation, showed online sales jumped by double digits (10.4%), while in-store purchases inched up 1.7%.

Michelle Meyer, chief economist at the Mastercard Economics Institute, said consumers are “navigating an uncertain environment” this holiday season “by shopping early, leveraging promotions, and investing in wish-list items.”

Black Friday is far from the sales event that created midnight mall crowds or doorbuster mayhem just decades ago. More and more consumers have instead turned to online deals to make post-Thanksgiving purchases from the comfort of their own homes — or opt to stretch out spending across longer promotions now offered by retailers.

In-store traffic has dwindled over the years. Initial data from RetailNext, which measures real-time foot traffic in physical stores, found that U.S. Black Friday traffic fell 3.6% compared to 2024. Still, the firm noted that was “notably better” than a sharper 6.2% decline it saw in the days leading up to Thanksgiving.

Sensormatic Solutions, which also tracks store traffic, found that in-store retail visits dipped 2.1% — but said that was in line with expectations and trends already seen this year. Traffic over the week of Black Friday was up nearly 57% compared to the week prior, per Sensormatic.

“Black Friday has really turned into like a full week event, or even further,” said Grant Gustafson, head of retail consulting and analytics at Sensormatic Solutions. And “Black Friday is really the start of just a really and critical stretch for retailers,” he added — noting that the weekend following Thanksgiving, as well as the days leading up to Christmas next month, will also be some of the busiest in terms of in-store traffic.

Meanwhile, in terms of e-commerce, Adobe expects U.S. shoppers to spend another \$5.5 billion Saturday and \$5.9 billion on Sunday — before reaching an estimated \$14.2 billion peak on Cyber Monday, which would mark yet another record.

Still, rising prices could be contributing to some of those numbers. U.S. President Donald Trump’s barrage of tariffs on foreign imports have strained businesses and households alike over the last year. And despite spending more overall, Salesforce found U.S. shoppers purchased fewer items at checkout on Black Friday (down 2% from last year). Order volumes also slipped 1%, the firm noted, as average selling prices climbed 7%.

This year’s holiday spending rush arrives amid heightened economic uncertainty for consumers. Beyond tariffs, workers across public and private sectors are also struggling with anxieties over job security — amid both corporate layoffs and the after-effects of the 43-day government shutdown.

An uptick in budget-conscious behavior can also be seen in store traffic. While Sensormatic doesn’t track spending, “we do track consumer footsteps,” Gustafson notes — and “consumers are thinking a little bit harder about their purchases” this year, he explains, “to make sure that they’re getting their very best deals.”

For the November-December holiday season overall, the National Retail Federation estimates U.S. shoppers will spend more than \$1 trillion for the first time this year. But the rate of growth is slowing — with an anticipated increase of 3.7% to 4.2% year over year, compared to 4.3% in 2024’s holiday season.

At the same time, credit card debt and delinquencies on other short-term loans have been rising. And more and more shoppers are turning to “buy now, pay later” plans, which allows them to delay payments on holiday decor, gifts and other items.

Tom Stoppard, sparkling playwright who won an Oscar for ‘Shakespeare In Love,’ dies at 88

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British playwright Tom Stoppard, a playful, probing dramatist who won an Academy Award for the screenplay for 1998’s “Shakespeare In Love,” has died. He was 88.

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In a statement Saturday, United Agents said the Czech-born Stoppard — often hailed as the greatest British playwright of his generation — died “peacefully” at his home in Dorset in southwest England, surrounded by his family.

“He will be remembered for his works, for their brilliance and humanity, and for his wit, his irreverence, his generosity of spirit and his profound love of the English language,” they said. “It was an honor to work with Tom and to know him.”

Rolling Stones front man Mick Jagger was among those paying tribute, calling Stoppard “a giant of the English theater, both highly intellectual and very funny in all his plays and scripts.

“He had a dazzling wit and loved classical and popular music alike which often featured in his huge body of work,” said Jagger, who produced the 2001 film “Enigma,” with a screenplay by Stoppard. “He was amusing and quietly sardonic. A friend and companion and I will always miss him.”

King Charles III said Stoppard was “a dear friend who wore his genius lightly.”

Theaters in London’s West End will dim their lights for two minutes on Tuesday in tribute.

Brain-teasing plays

Over a six-decade career, Stoppard’s brain-teasing plays for theater, radio and screen ranged from Shakespeare and science to philosophy and the historic tragedies of the 20th century.

Five of them won Tony Awards for best play: “Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead” in 1968; “Travesties” in 1976; “The Real Thing” in 1984; “The Coast of Utopia” in 2007; and “Leopoldstadt” in 2023.

Stoppard biographer Hermione Lee said the secret of his plays was their “mixture of language, knowledge and feeling. ... It’s those three things in gear together which make him so remarkable.”

The writer was born Tomáš Stráussler in 1937 to a Jewish family in Zlín in what was then Czechoslovakia, now the Czech Republic. His father was a doctor for the Bata shoe company, and when Nazi Germany invaded in 1939 the family fled to Singapore, where Bata had a factory.

In late 1941, as Japanese forces closed in on the city state, Tomas, his brother and their mother fled again, this time to India. His father stayed behind and later died when his ship was attacked as he tried to leave Singapore.

In 1946 his mother married an English officer, Kenneth Stoppard, and the family moved to threadbare postwar Britain. The 8-year-old Tom “put on Englishness like a coat,” he later said, growing up to be a quintessential Englishman who loved cricket and Shakespeare.

He did not go to university but began his career, aged 17, as a journalist on newspapers in Bristol, southwest England, and then as a theater critic for Scene magazine in London.

Tragedy and humor

He wrote plays for radio and television including “A Walk on the Water,” televised in 1963, and made his stage breakthrough with “Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead,” which reimagined Shakespeare’s “Hamlet” from the viewpoint of two hapless minor characters. A mix of tragedy and absurdist humor, it premiered at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 1966 and was staged at Britain’s National Theatre, then run by Laurence Olivier, before moving to Broadway.

A stream of exuberant, innovative plays followed, including meta-whodunnit “The Real Inspector Hound” (first staged in 1968); “Jumpers” (1972), a blend of physical and philosophical gymnastics, and “Travesties” (1974), which set intellectuals including James Joyce and Vladimir Lenin colliding in Zurich during World War I.

Musical drama “Every Good Boy Deserves Favor” (1977) was a collaboration with composer Andre Previn about a Soviet dissident confined to a mental institution — part of Stoppard’s long involvement with groups advocating for human rights groups in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

He often played with time and structure. “The Real Thing” (1982) was a poignant romantic comedy about love and deception that featured plays within a play, while “Arcadia” (1993) moved between the modern era and the early 19th century, where characters at an English country house debated poetry, gardening and chaos theory as fate had its way with them.

“The Invention of Love” (1997) explored classical literature and the mysteries of the human heart through the life of the English poet A.E. Housman.

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Stoppard began the 21st century with "The Coast of Utopia" (2002), an epic trilogy about pre-revolutionary Russian intellectuals, and drew on his own background for "Rock 'n' Roll" (2006), which contrasted the fates of the 1960s counterculture in Britain and in Communist Czechoslovakia.

"The Hard Problem" (2015) explored the mysteries of consciousness through the lenses of science and religion.

Free-speech champion

Stoppard was a strong champion of free speech who worked with organizations including PEN and Index on Censorship. He claimed not to have strong political views otherwise, writing in 1968: "I burn with no causes. I cannot say that I write with any social objective. One writes because one loves writing, really."

Some critics found his plays more clever than emotionally engaging. But biographer Lee said his "very funny, witty plays" contained a "sense of underlying grief."

"People in his plays ... history comes at them," Lee said at a British Library event in 2021. "They turn up, they don't know why they're there, they don't know whether they can get home again."

That was especially true of his late play "Leopoldstadt," which drew on his own family's story for the tale of a Jewish Viennese family over the first half of the 20th century. Stoppard said he began thinking of his personal link to the Holocaust quite late in life, only discovering after his mother's death in 1996 that many members of his family, including all four grandparents, had died in concentration camps.

"It would be misleading to see me as somebody who blithely and innocently, at the age of 40-something, thought, 'Oh, my goodness, I had no idea I was a member of a Jewish family,'" he told The New Yorker in 2022. "Of course I knew, but I didn't know who they were. And I didn't feel I had to find out in order to live my own life. But that wasn't really true."

"Leopoldstadt" premiered in London at the start of 2020 to rave reviews; weeks later all theaters were shut by the COVID-19 pandemic. It eventually opened in Broadway in late 2022, going on to win four Tonys.

Dizzily prolific, Stoppard also wrote many radio plays, a novel, television series including "Parade's End" (2013) and many film screenplays. These included dystopian Terry Gilliam comedy "Brazil" (1985), Steven Spielberg-directed war drama "Empire of the Sun" (1987), Elizabethan romcom "Shakespeare in Love" (1998) — for which he and Marc Norman shared a best adapted screenplay Oscar — code breaking thriller "Enigma" and Russian epic "Anna Karenina" (2012).

He also wrote and directed a 1990 film adaptation of "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead," and translated numerous works into English, including plays by dissident Czech writer Václav Havel, who became the country's first post-Communist president.

Stoppard also had a sideline as a Hollywood script doctor, lending sparkle to the dialogue of movies including "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" and the Star Wars film "Revenge of the Sith."

He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1997 for his services to literature.

He was married three times: to Jose Ingle, Miriam Stern — better known as the health journalist Dr. Miriam Stoppard — and TV producer Sabrina Guinness. The first two marriages ended in divorce. He is survived by four children, including the actor Ed Stoppard, and several grandchildren.

Trump says Venezuelan airspace should be viewed as closed. Maduro government slams 'colonial threat'

By JOSH BOAK and GABRIELA MOLINA Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump on Saturday said that the airspace "above and surrounding" Venezuela should be considered as "closed in its entirety," an assertion that raised more questions about the U.S. pressure on Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro. His government accused Trump of making a "colonial threat" and seeking to undermine the South American country's sovereignty.

The White House did not respond to questions about what Trump posted on his Truth Social platform, and it was unclear whether he was announcing a new policy or simply reinforcing the messaging around his campaign against Maduro, which has involved multiple strikes in the Caribbean Sea and eastern Pacific

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Ocean on small boats accused of ferrying drugs as well as a buildup of naval forces in the region. More than 80 people have been killed in such strikes since early September.

The Republican president addressed his call for an aerial blockade to "Airlines, Pilots, Drug Dealers, and Human Traffickers," rather than to Maduro.

Venezuela's government said it "forcefully rejects" Trump's claim about closing the airspace and that it was a "colonial threat" intended to undermine the country's "territorial integrity, aeronautical security and full sovereignty."

The Foreign Ministry said "such declarations constitute a hostile, unilateral and arbitrary act."

The statement also said that U.S. immigration authorities had unilaterally suspended biweekly deportation flights of Venezuelan migrants. Following negotiations between the two governments, more than 13,000 Venezuelans have been deported to Venezuela this year on dozens of chartered flights, the latest of which arrived late Friday in Caracas, the capital, according to flight-tracking data.

International airlines last week began to cancel flights to Venezuela after the Federal Aviation Administration told pilots to be cautious flying around the country because of heightened military activity.

The FAA's jurisdiction is generally limited to the United States and its territories. The agency does routinely warn pilots about the dangers of flying over areas with ongoing conflicts or military activity around the globe, as it did earlier this month with Venezuela. The FAA works with other countries and the International Civil Aviation Organization on international issues. The FAA and ICAO did not immediately respond to requests for comment Saturday.

Trump's administration has sought to ratchet up pressure on Maduro. The U.S. government does not view Maduro as the legitimate leader of the oil-rich but increasingly impoverished South American nation and he faces charges of narcoterrorism in the U.S.

U.S. forces have conducted bomber flights near Venezuela and the USS Gerald R. Ford, America's most advanced aircraft carrier, was sent to the area. The Ford rounds off the largest buildup of U.S. firepower in the region in generations. With its arrival, the "Operation Southern Spear" mission includes nearly a dozen Navy ships and about 12,000 sailors and Marines.

There are bipartisan calls for greater oversight of the U.S. military strikes against vessels in the region after The Washington Post reported that Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth issued a verbal order for all crew members to be killed as part of the Sept. 2 attack on suspected drug smugglers.

Republican Sen. Roger Wicker of Mississippi, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and its top Democrat, Rhode Island Sen. Jack Reed, said in a joint statement late Friday that the committee "will be conducting vigorous oversight to determine the facts related to these circumstances."

Trump's team has weighed both military and nonmilitary options with Venezuela, including covert action by the CIA.

Trump has publicly floated the idea of talking to Maduro. The New York Times reported Friday that Trump and Maduro had spoken. The White House declined to answer questions about the conversation.

Northwestern to pay \$75 million in deal with Trump administration to restore federal funding

By The Associated Press undefined

Northwestern University has agreed to pay \$75 million to the U.S. government in a deal with the Trump administration to end a series of investigations and restore hundreds of millions of dollars in federal research funding.

President Donald Trump's administration had cut off \$790 million in grants in a standoff that contributed to university layoffs and the resignation in September of Northwestern president Michael Schill. The administration argued the school had not done enough to fight antisemitism.

Under the agreement announced Friday night, Northwestern will make the payment to the U.S. Treasury over the next three years. Among other commitments it also requires the university to revoke the so-called Deering Meadow agreement, which it signed in April 2024 in exchange for pro-Palestinian protesters end-

ing their tent encampment on campus.

During negotiations, interim university president Henry Bienen said Northwestern refused to cede control over hiring, admissions, or its curriculum. "I would not have signed this agreement without provisions ensuring that is the case," he said.

The agreement also calls for Northwestern to continue compliance with federal anti-discrimination laws, develop training materials to "socialize international students" with the norms of a campus dedicated to open debate, and uphold a commitment to Title IX by "providing safe and fair opportunities for women, including single-sex housing for any woman, defined on the basis of sex, who requests such accommodations and all-female sports, locker rooms, and showering facilities."

Education Secretary Linda McMahon said the deal cements policy changes that will protect people on campus from harassment and discrimination.

"The reforms reflect bold leadership at Northwestern and they are a roadmap for institutional leaders around the country that will help rebuild public trust in our colleges and universities," McMahon said.

Trump has leveraged government control of federal research money to push for reforms at elite colleges he has decried as overrun by "woke" ideology.

The fine agreed to by Northwestern is the second-largest behind Columbia, which agreed in July to pay the government \$200 million to resolve a series of investigations and restore its funding. Brown and Cornell also reached agreements with the government to restore funding following antisemitism investigations.

Harvard, the administration's primary target, remains in negotiations with the federal government over its demands for changes to campus policies and governance. The Ivy League school sued over the administration's cuts to its grant money and won a court victory in September when a federal judge ordered the government to restore federal funding, saying the Trump administration "used antisemitism as a smokescreen."

This fall, the White House tried a different approach on higher education, offering preferential treatment for federal funds to several institutions in exchange for adopting policies in line with Trump's agenda. The administration received a wave of initial rejections from some universities' leadership, citing concerns that Trump's higher education compact might supplant academic freedom.

The Latest: Pope Leo XIV visits Blue Mosque and holds Mass in Istanbul

By The Associated Press undefined

Pope Leo XIV visited Istanbul's Blue Mosque and celebrated Mass on Saturday on the second day of his trip to Turkey as he stressed the need for Christian unity.

Leo was following in the footsteps of his recent predecessors, who all made high-profile visits to the mosque in a gesture of respect to Turkey's Muslim majority. Leo did not pray at the mosque despite an invitation by an imam.

After the mosque visit, Leo met with Turkey's Christian leaders at the Syriac Orthodox Church of Mor Ephrem. Later Saturday, he celebrated Mass before 4,000 faithful at Istanbul's VW Arena, where he appeared alongside Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew and appealed for unity among Christians and other faiths.

This is the pope's first foreign trip. He will also visit Lebanon.

Leo, history's first American pope, is expected to speak in broader terms about peace in the Middle East. Here is the latest:

Some waited in line for hours to see Leo

Michelle and Josue Alvarez, both 32 and from Virginia, stood in line for four hours without a ticket in the hope of seeing the pope.

"We only found out the pope was coming here on Wednesday and our whole itinerary changed," Michelle said. "We had to wait until everyone else went in and only got in more than an hour after the service started.

"Twice one of the sisters dealing with the people arriving told us to go home because she said we

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wouldn't get in. We were watching the start of the service on our phones, not knowing if we would get in and finally we did.

"The pope passed really close to us on the way out because we were at the back. It was amazing to be so close to him."

Croatians Marija Mikulic, 47, and Jalana Micic, 40, were two others who got into the congregation at the last minute.

"We came late because we didn't have a card to get in and were not on the list," Jalana, from Bosnia-Herzegovina, said. "We waited 2½ hours and are so lucky and blessed to get inside."

Leo makes an appeal for unity with other Christians and religions

Pope Leo XIV has urged Turkey's Catholics to forge "bonds of unity" with other Christians and people of other faiths as an invitation to become peacemakers.

Leo made the appeal during a Mass on Saturday in Istanbul for Turkey's tiny Catholic community, which numbers around 33,000 in a country of 85 million, mostly Sunny Muslims.

Leo recalled that three bridges span the Bosphorus Strait in Istanbul linking East and West. He said Turkish Catholics, too, should form "bonds of unity" on three levels: with other Catholics, other Christians, and people of other faiths.

The Mass was being celebrated in the Volkswagen Arena, which can seat more than 4,500 people. It came on the penultimate day of Leo's maiden trip. On Sunday he leaves for Beirut.

Crowds gather ahead of Mass in Istanbul

Crowds continued to gather outside Istanbul's VW Arena on Saturday, where Pope Leo XIV is scheduled to lead Mass despite the rain.

Among them was Safak Volkan, 62, who said she was moved by the occasion even though she is not Christian herself. "This is very interesting to me as this is his first visit, his first international visit. We are happy," she remarked, standing next to her husband and children who are Christians.

Others traveled from abroad to witness the historic moment.

Alex Salton, 69, a Turkish-French national living in France, came to Turkey specifically for the pope's appearance. "It's a nice visit. But this is rainy today unfortunately. It would have been better if there is sun," he said.

Christians from all over the world traveled to see Pope Leo in Istanbul

Renato Marai was among a group of 26 visitors from Florence, Italy, who traveled to Istanbul to see the pope.

"We are all from the same parish and we wanted to come because we follow the pope," he said. "It's wonderful to see him on his first foreign trip, a really important moment for our group."

Felix Ehrenbrandtner, an Austrian studying Turkish history at Istanbul University, said Leo's visit was "significant as the roots of Christianity are in Turkey."

Tarcin Unlu, meanwhile, was among many Turkish attendees. A recent convert to Christianity from Islam, she said she was looking forward to Mass scheduled for later Saturday. "I am still going through the conversion process. I became Christian because I thought it was the best religion for me, but my family is definitely not happy."

Her friend, Rodrick Nuel, originally from Nigeria's Biafra region but now living in northern Cyprus, said the papal visit sent a powerful message for the global Christian community. "Also, as Turkey is 99.9% Muslim and just 0.1% Christian, it shows the pope is reaching out to other religions as well."

Ansu Aksoy, who was raised as an Armenian Catholic in Istanbul, said she was "not religious" but secured an invite to Mass through a local priest. "I usually find Mass to be a bit of a show and I'm interested to see the pope on stage. It's not like he comes to Turkey every day."

Leo and Orthodox spiritual leader Bartholomew vow to work for common Easter date

Pope Leo XIV and the spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians have vowed to work courageously to find a way for Catholic and Orthodox churches to set a common date for Easter.

Leo and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew made the pledge in a joint statement signed in Istanbul at

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the patriarchal palace.

The statement didn't commit to a decision for a common date. But it said: "It is our shared desire to continue the process of exploring a possible solution for celebrating together the Feast of Feasts every year."

Eastern and Western churches split in the Great Schism of 1054 and remain divided over a host of issues, not least among them different dates to celebrate feasts that are common to them.

The occasion of the declaration was the commemoration of the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, the meeting of bishops that produced the creed, or profession of faith, that is recited today.

"We are convinced that the commemoration of this significant anniversary can inspire new and courageous steps on the path towards unity," the statement said.

Pope Leo prays at the church of the leader of Orthodox Christians

Pope Leo XIV has prayed in the patriarchal church in Istanbul of the spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians in another gesture of unity.

In the elaborate Church of St. George, Leo attended the doxology alongside Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. The doxology is a short hymn of praise and glory to God that is sung by Christians.

Leo said he was certain the "encounter will also help to strengthen the bonds of our friendship."

Eastern and Western churches split in the Great Schism of 1054, a divide precipitated largely by disagreements over the primacy of the pope. Leo and popes before him have vowed to work to unite Christians again.

Bartholomew, for his part, noted the significance that Leo chose to open his pontificate with his visit to Turkey.

The main reason of the visit was to mark the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, the unprecedented gathering of bishops that produced a creed, or proclamation of faith, that is still recited by millions of Christians today.

Leo's charter gets a needed software fix

Not even Pope Leo XIV was spared from the Airbus software fix that has forced short-term disruptions in commercial flights around the world.

Leo is flying along with the papal delegation and press corps aboard an ITA Airways Airbus A320neo charter.

The European Union Aviation Safety Agency on Friday ordered airlines to install a new software update on all Airbus A320 family of aircraft. The order came after an analysis found the computer code may have contributed to a sudden drop in the altitude of a JetBlue plane last month.

The Vatican spokesman, Matteo Bruni, said Saturday that ITA was working on the issue. He said the necessary component to update the aircraft was on its way to Istanbul along with the technician who would install it.

Leo is scheduled to fly from Istanbul, Turkey, to Beirut, Lebanon, on Sunday afternoon.

Vatican corrects record of pope's visit to Blue Mosque

The Vatican has corrected the official record of Pope Leo XIV's visit to Istanbul's Blue Mosque to remove a reference to him stopping for a "brief moment of silent prayer."

The pope's planned itinerary and the Vatican spokesman had said in advance of the trip that Leo would pause for a prayer as his predecessors had done in the towering 17th-century mosque. But Leo merely toured the mosque.

The Vatican had initially reported the visit went ahead as foreseen. But it subsequently revised the record to say he visited "in a spirit of contemplation and listening, with deep respect for the place and the faith of those who gather there in prayer."

There were other changes to the mosque visit, as well.

The Vatican had initially said the head of the Diyanet religious affairs directorate would welcome Leo at the mosque. But the director, Safi Arpagus, wasn't there, and a spokesman for the Diyanet said Arpagus hadn't been expected, noting that he met with Leo upon his arrival Thursday in Ankara.

The Vatican didn't explain the discrepancy. Leo was welcomed instead by the Turkish culture and tourism minister and several imams.

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Hezbollah calls on Leo to "reject injustice"

Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group called on Pope Leo XIV to "reject injustice and aggression," in reference to the near-daily Israeli strikes despite a ceasefire that ended the 14-month war between the two sides a year ago.

In a statement Saturday, Hezbollah welcomed the pontiff's trip to the crisis-hit nation, saying the group is committed to the country's religious coexistence, democratic accord and preserving its security.

"We rely on Your Holiness's stance in rejecting the injustice and aggression our homeland, Lebanon, is subjected to at the hands of the Zionist invaders and their supporters," Hezbollah said, referring to Israel and the U.S.

Hezbollah is allied with several Christian groups in the country, including the Free Patriotic Movement and Marada Movement.

Devout Catholics brave the weather to attend Istanbul Mass led by pope

Crowds of devout Catholics have braved the pouring rain and tight security measures to reach the Volkswagen Arena in Istanbul, where Pope Leo XIV is set to lead Mass.

Maria Banasik waited for her friends at a cafe near the arena, four hours ahead of the scheduled Mass, saying they were excited to be part of Leo's first overseas visit.

"In the global situation now, his visit is of great importance," said Banasik, a Polish national who lives in Ankara.

"The expectations for this visit are high, especially when it comes to the issue of Israel and Palestine... And of course, the Ukrainian war is also very important for us in Poland," she said.

Banasik added that she hoped Leo would signal a return to "more traditional" values than his predecessor.

Boosted security measures in Lebanon ahead of pope's visit

Lebanon increased security measures ahead of Pope Leo XIV's visit to the Mediterranean nation, with a ban on the movement of some trucks and a freeze on all licenses to carry weapons.

The Interior Ministry said in a statement Saturday that trucks will be banned from entering the capital, Beirut, and the governorate of Mount Lebanon as of Sunday morning until Tuesday night. Trucks delivering food, water and fuel tankers as well as garbage trucks, will be excluded from the ban.

Meanwhile, Defense Minister Michel Menassa issued an order banning anyone from carrying weapons in the same areas as of midnight Saturday for three days.

Vatican spokesman says Leo's Blue Mosque visit was to contemplate

Spokesman Matteo Bruni issued a statement after questions arose about whether Leo prayed in the mosque or not, describing the mosque visit as a silent one to contemplate.

Bruni said: "The pope experienced his visit to the mosque in silence, in a spirit of contemplation and listening, with deep respect for the place and the faith of those who gather there in prayer."

Past papal visits to the mosque have always raised questions about whether the popes would pray in the Muslim house of worship or merely visit as a sign of respect to Muslims.

Blue Mosque Imam invites Leo to pray

Asgin Tunca said he had invited Leo to pray, but the pope declined.

Speaking to reporters after the visit, Tunca said he had told the pope that the mosque was "Allah's house."

"It's not my house, not your house, (it's the) house of Allah," he said. He said he told Leo: "If you want, you can worship here," I said. But he said, 'That's OK.'"

"He wanted to see the mosque, wanted to feel (the) atmosphere of the mosque, I think. And was very pleased," he said.

Pope visits Blue Mosque

Leo visited the iconic mosque in Istanbul, where the head of Turkey's Diyanet religious affairs directorate showed him the structure's soaring blue-tiled dome.

The Vatican said Leo would observe a "brief minute of silent prayer."

Leo was following in the footsteps of his recent predecessors, who all made high-profile visits to the mosque in a gesture of respect to Turkey's Muslim majority.

Ukraine's naval drones strike Russian oil tankers in the Black Sea off the Turkish coast

By ANDREW WILKS, SUZAN FRASER and ISOBEL KOSHIW Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — Ukraine used domestically produced Sea Baby naval drones to strike two Russian oil tankers in the Black Sea, an official from Ukraine's security services told The Associated Press on Saturday.

The two oil tankers, Kairos and Virat — said to be part of Russia's "shadow fleet" that evade sanctions — were struck in quick succession off Turkey's Black Sea coast late Friday afternoon.

The strikes prompted rescue operations by the Turkish coast guard and other teams. Crew members on board both vessels were reported to be safe.

The SBU official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the operations, provided a video of the alleged attack, purporting to show the destruction of two tankers at sea.

The official said the two tankers were vessels that were sanctioned by the West, adding that Ukrainian intelligence continued "to take active steps to curtail Russia's financial capabilities to wage war against Ukraine."

Sea Baby naval drones had disabled vessels capable of transporting oil worth almost \$70 million, hindering Russia's efforts to circumvent international sanctions, the official said.

Earlier, Turkey's Transport and Infrastructure Minister Abdulkadir Uraloglu said the tankers were possibly struck by mines, missiles, a marine vessel, or a drone.

The incidents took place within Turkey's exclusive economic zone, he said, noting that Turkish authorities were in contact with their counterparts to prevent a recurrence and to ensure navigational safety. He did not provide further details.

Uraloglu said the Gambian-flagged Kairos had caught fire, which was continuing in the vessel's enclosed areas on Saturday. All 25 crews were safely evacuated.

The Virat, however, was not ablaze and no evacuation request was made, he added. Authorities had earlier reported a fire in the Virat's engine room.

He minister the captain of the Virat tanker had issued a distress call over "a drone attack."

Ukraine has previously targeted Russian shipping

The OpenSanctions database, which tracks people or organizations involved in sanctions evasion, describes the vessels as part of a shadow fleet of ships used to evade sanctions imposed on Russia following its 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Ukraine has carried out successful naval strikes against Russian shipping during the war, particularly using explosives-packed marine drones. However, Ukrainian missions have largely been limited to the waters of the northern Black Sea.

Officials said the Gambian-flagged Kairos caught fire in the Black Sea approximately 28 nautical miles (52 kilometers) off the coast of Turkey's Kocaeli province. It was sailing empty from Egypt toward Russia's Novorossiysk port.

Shortly after, the maritime authority reported that a second tanker, Virat, was "struck" while sailing in the Black Sea about 35 nautical miles (64 kilometers) off the Turkish coast.

Both tankers were under sanctions

The VesselFinder website showed the Virat was anchored north of the Bosphorus, not far from its current position, on Nov. 4. The Kairos' last position was on Nov. 26 south of the Dardanelles Strait connecting the Aegean Sea and the Sea of Marmara.

The United States sanctioned the Virat in January this year, followed by the European Union, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Canada, according to the OpenSanctions website. Similarly, the EU sanctioned the Kairos in July this year, followed by the U.K. and Switzerland.

"The shadow tanker fleet continues to provide multibillion-dollar revenues for the Kremlin bypassing sanctions, disguising its activities under the flags of third countries, using complex schemes to conceal owners and poses significant environmental threats," OpenSanctions says in its website entry on the Kairos.

The Virat, built in 2018, uses "irregular and high-risk shipping practices" and has previously sailed under

the flags of Barbados, Comoros, Liberia and Panama, OpenSanctions says.

The Kairos, formerly flagged as Panamanian, Greek and Liberian, was built in 2002.

Airlines work to fix software glitch on A320 aircraft and some flights are disrupted

By AUDREY McAVOY Associated Press

Airlines around the world reported short-term disruptions heading into the weekend as they fixed software on a widely used commercial aircraft, after an analysis found the computer code may have contributed to a sudden drop in the altitude of a JetBlue plane last month.

Airbus said Friday that an examination of the JetBlue incident revealed that intense solar radiation may corrupt data critical to the functioning of flight controls on the A320 family of aircraft.

The FAA joined the European Union Aviation Safety Agency in requiring airlines to address the issue with a new software update. More than 500 U.S.-registered aircraft will be impacted.

The EU safety agency said it may cause "short-term disruption" to flight schedules. The problem was introduced by a software update to the plane's onboard computers, according to the agency.

Airbus CEO Guillaume Faury apologized to customers after the required fix led to "significant logistical challenges and delays."

"Our teams are working around the clock to support our operators and ensure these updates are deployed as swiftly as possible to get planes back in the sky and resume normal operations, with the safety assurance you expect from Airbus," he wrote in a message posted on LinkedIn on Saturday.

Thanksgiving disruptions in US

In Japan, All Nippon Airways, which operates more than 30 planes, canceled 65 domestic flights for Saturday. Additional cancellations on Sunday were possible, it said.

The software change comes as U.S. passengers were beginning to head home from the Thanksgiving holiday, which is the busiest travel time in the country.

American Airlines has about 480 planes from the A320 family, of which 209 are affected. The fix should take about two hours for many aircraft and updates should be completed for the overwhelming majority on Friday, the airline said.

On Saturday, the airline said in a statement that only four planes still needed to be updated and that it "expects no further operational impact."

Air India said on X that its engineers were working on the fix and completed the reset on more 40% of aircraft that need it. There were no cancellations, it said.

Delta said it expected the issue to affect less than 50 of its A321neo aircraft. United said six planes in its fleet are affected and it expects minor disruptions to a few flights. Hawaiian Airlines said it was unaffected.

Pope's plane also needs a software fix

Pope Leo XIV is on his inaugural foreign trip, to Turkey and Lebanon, and is flying along with the papal delegation and press corps aboard an ITA Airways Airbus A320neo charter.

The Vatican spokesman, Matteo Bruni, said Saturday that ITA was working on the issue. He said the necessary component to update the aircraft was on its way to Istanbul along with the technician to install it. Leo was scheduled to fly from Istanbul, Turkey to Beirut, Lebanon on Sunday afternoon.

European flights return to normal

In France, Transport Minister Philippe Tabarot said the situation has stabilized as several software updates had already been installed. He told BFM-TV that the impact was limited in the country with an "almost complete return to normal in French airports."

In the U.K., disruption also was minimal. British Airways, for example, said only three of its aircraft required the update, while EasyJet indicated there may be changes to its flying schedule as a result of the update, in which case passengers will be informed.

Germany's Lufthansa said most software updates were completed during the night and on Saturday morning. No Lufthansa Group Airlines flights are expected to be canceled due to the current situation, but

there may be minor delays over the weekend, it said.

Scandinavia's SAS said its flights were operating as normal Saturday, after teams worked overnight to install the required software.

Mike Stengel, a partner with the aerospace industry management consulting firm AeroDynamic Advisory, said the fix could be addressed between flights or on overnight plane checks.

"Definitely not ideal for this to be happening on a very ubiquitous aircraft on a busy holiday weekend," Stengel said from Ann Arbor, Michigan. "Although again the silver lining being that it only should take a few hours to update the software."

At least 15 JetBlue passengers were injured and taken to the hospital after the Oct. 30 incident on board the flight from Cancun, Mexico, to Newark, New Jersey. The plane was diverted to Tampa, Florida.

Airbus, which is registered in the Netherlands but has its main headquarters in France, is one of the world's biggest airplane manufacturers, alongside Boeing.

The A320 is the primary competitor to Boeing's 737, Stengel said. Airbus updated its engine in the mid-2010s, and planes in this category are called A320neo, he said.

The A320 is the world's bestselling single-aisle aircraft family, according to Airbus' website.

Grateful to be alive, residents who escaped the Hong Kong apartment blaze wonder what comes next

By CHAN HO-HIM Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — It was just after 3 p.m. when William Li received the unusual call from his wife, who was at work, saying she'd heard from a friend that their building was on fire.

There were no alarms, no signs of smoke in his 2nd floor apartment, and no burning smell to give a sense of urgency, so the 40-year-old office worker who was home on a day off decided to change from his pajamas before heading outside.

But when he opened his door eight minutes after his wife called, it was already too late to escape as he was immediately engulfed by thick, black smoke.

"Everything went black before my eyes," he told The Associated Press. "I thought to myself: I'm in serious trouble."

That was just the beginning of Wednesday's blaze at the Wang Fuk Court complex on the outskirts of Hong Kong. It would burn for more than 40 hours and engulf seven of the complex's eight buildings before being finally extinguished Friday morning, claiming the lives of at least 128 people with dozens unaccounted for, making it Hong Kong's deadliest fire since 1948.

Fire spread through scaffolding

From Li's apartment near ground zero where the fire broke out, the flames shot up bamboo scaffolding covered with nylon netting that had been erected for construction work. It ignited polystyrene panels that had been placed over windows and blew out the glass, allowing the blaze to spread inside. Winds helped the fire jump from building to building.

Authorities are investigating whether the netting covering the bamboo scaffolding, commonly used in Hong Kong and elsewhere in Asia, met fire-safety requirements; why windows were covered with foam panels; and why fire alarms did not sound.

Already police have arrested three people — the directors of a construction company and an engineering consultant — and Hong Kong's anti-corruption authorities have arrested a further eight including scaffolding subcontractors, directors of an engineering consulting company and the renovation project managers.

The complex is in Tai Po, a market town that in the late 1970s was designated as a "new town," with many high-rise apartments built. The district is now home to about 300,000 of the city's 7.5 million population, a mix of affluent, middle-class and lower-income groups.

A quiet neighborhood amid Hong Kong's bustle

Li grew up in the Wang Fuk Court complex, while resident Ding Chan and her husband moved there as adults as soon as it was built in the early 1980s, lured by the appeal of the quiet suburban neighborhood

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north of Hong Kong, far away from the city's commercial center.

Chan had left her apartment a half-hour before the fire broke out and was at work as a cleaner when she started receiving frantic calls from friends about the blaze.

"I did not believe it at first," the 70-year-old told the AP.

By the time she got back to the housing estate shortly after 3 p.m. — around the same time Li's wife was calling him with her warning — she could see the flames already spreading quickly and it wasn't long before it reached her own building, and there was nothing she could do but watch.

"I had never seen such a massive fire in my entire lifetime," she said.

Her husband, I.N. Kong, who is also 70, was also fortunately not at home when the fire broke out.

But Chan, who juggles two jobs and often works six days a week, and her husband who works as an electrician, are now faced with having to rebuild their lives from scratch.

Their unit, which they spent more than a decade paying off, is likely uninhabitable now and Chan said they did not know how they were going to survive for the next months, let alone the longer term future.

They have been put up temporarily in a local hotel, but don't know what comes next.

"I haven't slept for two nights," she said. "Where am I going to stay?"

The government has made emergency assistance available to residents, and donations have also been pouring in, but it was not yet clear what long-term financial aid those in need will receive.

Of the more than 4,600 residents in Wang Fuk Court, more than one-third are over 65, like Chan and her husband, according to Midland Realty data based on the 2021 census.

Some 900 people were taken to emergency shelters in the immediate aftermath of the fire, and hundreds of volunteers, including off-duty nurses, social workers and psychological counselors, flocked to the district to offer help.

Sharing his story to help the community heal

Li took to social media to share his ordeal, posting details Friday on a Tai Po Facebook group, writing he hoped to help the community "heal and rebuild together." By Saturday morning it has generated more than 1,000 comments and had been shared nearly 10,000 times.

After being blasted by smoke when he first tried to venture into the hallway, Li, quickly retreated back into his apartment.

He described hearing explosions, and a photo he snapped shows his room illuminated by the glow of flames outside the window. He told the AP he thought of jumping, but instead decided to wait for rescue.

He called police to report the predicament, put wet towels down to block smoke coming in from under his door and called his wife to tell her he couldn't get out.

"Everyone told me to wait," he said.

Hearing voices from the hall, he decided to brave the smoke and went into the corridor where he found two bewildered neighbors who were trying to escape, and led them back to shelter in his apartment.

"I asked them why they had left their own home instead of waiting inside," he said. "They told me it was because their window had overheated and shattered from the fire and the fire rushed into their home."

Seeing flames closing in, he began to worry his apartment would soon suffer the same fate.

"That was the moment I began to feel death was very close to me," he said. "I was terrified, helpless, because I knew my escape route, the doorway, was no longer safe. In that instant I felt powerless, as if there was nothing I could do except wait."

Not sure what else to do, the father of two reached out to friends for comfort.

"I started telling my friends to help take care of my family," he said. "I felt like I was facing the end of my life."

His mother, who lives in Britain, called in panic. "I could only tell her not to worry," he said.

In the end, help arrived before the flames.

At around 5 p.m., about two hours after his wife called to warn him, firefighters got a ladder to the scaffolding outside his window.

Li told the firefighters to take his older neighbors first, helping them out the small window onto the

scaffolding, which they crawled along until they reached the ladder.

"Once my two neighbors had been rescued, I was left alone in the flat," he recalled.

"At that moment my feelings were very heavy, because I knew I had to leave this home, and that it might be swallowed by the fire — I felt reluctant, but I had no choice. I had to escape."

As he climbed down the ladder, firefighters yelled at him to cover his head due to falling debris, while hosing him down with water to protect him from the flames.

"The cold water drenched my whole body and the emotions were overwhelming, hard to describe," he said. "But I felt very lucky."

Dozens of residents on higher floors of the 32-story buildings were trapped even longer, as firefighters battled extreme heat to conduct door-to-door searches. Li said he had only moved down to the second floor in September, and said he had heard that his former neighbors on the 29th floor had all perished in the blaze.

Emotional family reunion

About two hours after getting rescued, Li finally got to see his wife, son and daughter, who had been watching the blaze from outside, in an emotional reunion.

"My wife cried until her tears were completely dry, unable to cry anymore," he said. "My daughter immediately rushed over to hug me saying 'daddy didn't die, daddy didn't die.' My son sat quietly to the side, very calm, but tears kept streaming down his face."

Like Chan and her husband, and most other residents of the apartment complex, Li is now left wondering what will come next for him and his family even with the outpouring of support now being offered.

"No matter how many supplies are given, they are of little use — we can only carry what our two hands can hold, even if more is given we have no place to put it," he said Saturday.

"Still, I am very grateful, Hong Kong people are full of compassion, constantly helping, donating generously," he said. "At this moment, we haven't yet seen all the stuff, but I will look around and see what can help us."

Experts doubt the Pentagon can punish Kelly over the 'illegal orders' video

By BEN FINLEY and GARY FIELDS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon's investigation of Sen. Mark Kelly over a video that urges American troops to defy "illegal orders" has raised a slew of questions, and some criticism, from legal experts.

Some say the Pentagon is misreading military law to go after Kelly as a retired Navy fighter pilot. Others say the Arizona Democrat cannot be prosecuted as a member of Congress. A group of former military prosecutors insists he did nothing wrong.

The Pentagon announced the investigation last week after President Donald Trump's social media post accusing Kelly — and the five other Democratic lawmakers in the video — of sedition "punishable by DEATH."

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Kelly was facing investigation because he is the only one in that group who formally retired from the military and is still under the Pentagon's jurisdiction.

Kelly dismissed the inquiry as the work of "bullies" and said it would not deter him and other members of Congress "from doing our jobs and holding this administration accountable."

'It's not totally unheard of'

Stephen Vladeck, a Georgetown University law professor, said there has been a "significant uptick" in courts-martial of retired service members in the past decade. While courts have debated the constitutionality, the practice is currently allowed. He said there have been roughly a dozen such prosecutions across the service branches.

There are roughly 2 million people who formally retired from the military and receive retirement pay, according to a report from the Congressional Research Service. Service members are generally entitled to retirement pay after completing 20 years of active duty.

Todd Huntley, a retired Navy captain and judge advocate general, or JAG, said it is rare to prosecute

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retirees for something that happened after they retired.

"It's not totally unheard of," said Huntley, who now directs Georgetown's national security law program. "I actually prosecuted a enlisted guy who had been retired for 16 years. He was essentially assaulting his adopted daughter. Basically no one else had jurisdiction so we prosecuted him."

A 'ridiculous conclusion'

Colby Vokey, a prominent civilian military lawyer and former military prosecutor, said Hegseth appears to be misreading the Uniform Code of Military Justice to justify the Kelly investigation.

Vokey said Hegseth has personal jurisdiction over Kelly because Kelly is entitled to retirement pay. But Vokey said Hegseth lacks subject matter jurisdiction because Kelly made his statements as a senator.

Vokey said case law has evolved to where the military can prosecute an active-duty service member for a crime committed off base, such as robbing a convenience store. But applying military law to a retired service member and "assuming that means every offense ever is kind of a ridiculous conclusion."

"Let's say you have a 100-year-old World War II veteran who is retired with pay and he steals a candy bar," Vokey said. "Hegseth could bring him back and court-martial him. And that in effect is what is happening with Kelly."

Patrick McLain, a retired Marine Corps judge and former federal prosecutor, said the cases he has seen of retirees being called back "are more like extreme examples of fraud or some of these child pornography cases."

"I've not seen anything like the kind of the wackadoodle thing they're trying to do to Sen. Kelly for essentially exercising his First Amendment right to free speech, which they don't like," McLain said.

'He did it as a civilian'

Charles Dunlap, a Duke University law professor and retired Air Force lawyer, said in an email that military law can restrict speech for service members that is protected for civilians under the First Amendment.

But even if the video was found to have violated military law, a key issue may be whether the law can be applied to someone who is retired, Dunlap said.

A group of former military lawyers, the Former JAGs Working Group, said in a statement that Kelly did not violate the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

"The video simply described the law as it pertains to lawful versus unlawful orders," the group said. "It did not suborn mutiny or otherwise encourage military members to disregard or disobey lawful orders issued to them."

Troops, especially uniformed commanders, have specific obligations to reject orders that are unlawful. Broad legal precedence also holds that just following orders — colloquially known as the "Nuremberg defense," as it was used unsuccessfully by senior Nazi officials to justify their actions under Adolf Hitler — does not absolve troops.

Kelly and the other lawmakers did not mention specific circumstances in the video. Some Democratic lawmakers have questioned the legality of the Trump administration's attempts to send National Guard troops into U.S. cities. Kelly has pointedly questioned the use of the military to attack alleged drug boats off South America's coast, saying he was worried about the military officers involved with the mission and whether they were following orders that may have been illegal.

Michael O'Hanlon, director of research in the foreign policy program at the Brookings Institution, said any case brought against Kelly likely would be thrown out or end in an acquittal.

O'Hanlon said it might not have been politically smart to "wave a red flag in front of the bull" but he does not see the legal grounds for a court martial.

"Saying that you shouldn't break the law cannot be a crime," O'Hanlon said. "But in addition, he did not do it as a military officer. He did it as a civilian."

Separation of powers

Kelly's status as a senator could block the Pentagon's investigation because of constitutional protections for the separation of powers in the U.S government.

The Constitution explicitly shields members of Congress from White House overreach, said Anthony

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Michael Kreis, a constitutional law professor at Georgia State University.

"Having a United States senator subject to discipline at the behest of the secretary of defense and the president — that violates a core principle of legislative independence," Kreis said in a telephone interview.

Kreis said such protections were a reaction to the British monarchy, which arbitrarily punished members of Parliament.

"Any way you cut it, the Constitution is fundamentally structurally designed to prevent this kind of abuse," Kreis said.

Today in History: November 30 WTO protesters and police clash in Seattle

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Sunday, Nov. 30, the 334th day of 2025. There are 31 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Nov. 30, 1999, an estimated 40,000 demonstrators clashed with police as they protested against the World Trade Organization as the WTO convened in Seattle.

Also on this date:

In 1782, the United States and Britain signed preliminary peace articles in Paris for ending the Revolutionary War; the Treaty of Paris was signed in September 1783.

In 1936, London's Crystal Palace exhibition hall was destroyed by a massive fire.

In 1993, President Bill Clinton signed the Brady Bill, which required a five-day waiting period for handgun purchases and background checks of prospective buyers.

In 2004, "Jeopardy!" fans saw Ken Jennings end his 74-game winning streak as he lost to real estate agent Nancy Zerg. Years later, Jennings became the host of "Jeopardy!"

In 2012, Israel approved the construction of 3,000 homes in Jewish settlements on occupied lands, drawing swift condemnation from Palestinians a day after their successful bid for recognition by the United Nations.

In 2013, actor Paul Walker, star of the "Fast & Furious" movie series, was killed in a single-car accident north of Los Angeles; Walker's friend Roger Rodas, who was driving the car, also died. Walker was 40 years old.

In 2018, former President George H.W. Bush, a World War II hero who rose through the political ranks to the nation's highest office, died at his Houston home at the age of 94; his wife of more than 70 years, Barbara Bush, had died in April.

In 2024, Syrian insurgents took over most of Aleppo, the country's largest city, facing little or no resistance from government troops. The insurgents would capture the capital of Damascus days later in December as President Bashar al-Assad fled the country, ending his family's decades-long rule of Syria.

Today's Birthdays: Filmmaker Woody Allen is 90. Filmmaker Ridley Scott is 88. Historian and screenwriter Geoffrey C. Ward is 85. Filmmaker Terrence Malick is 82. Playwright David Mamet (MA'-meht) is 78. Actor Mandy Patinkin is 73. Singer Billy Idol is 70. Historian Michael Beschloss is 70. Comedian Colin Mochrie is 68. Actor-filmmaker Ben Stiller is 60. U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem is 54. Singer Clay Aiken is 47. Actor-filmmaker Gael García Bernal is 47. Actor Elisha Cuthbert is 43. Actor Kaley Cuoco (KWOH'-koh) is 40. Model Chrissy Teigen is 40. Chess grandmaster Magnus Carlsen is 35.