

Groton Daily Independent

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Tuesday, Dec. 16

Senior Menu: Roast beef, mashed potatoes with gravy, peas and carrots, fruit, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Muffins.

School Lunch: Pasta with meat sauce, corn.

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

Basketball at Sisseton (GBB: 7th grade @ 4pm, 8th grade @ 5pm (in aux gym); GJV, BJV, G Varsity, B Varsity).

5th Grade Girls Basketball, 4:15 p.m.

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 17

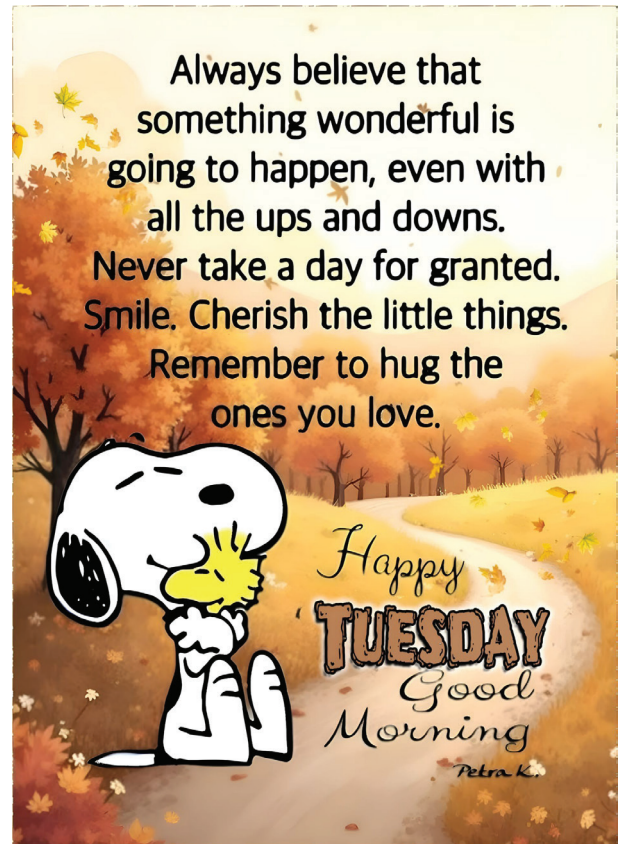
Senior Menu: Baked hot ham and cheese, broccolo potato soup, fruit, poke cake.

School Breakfast: Oatmeal.

School Lunch: Soup, sandwich.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.; DFC Supper, 6 p.m.; Advent Service, 7 p.m.



United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton Ad Council, 7 p.m.

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

6th Grade GBB Practice, 6 p.m.

5th Grade BBB, 6 p.m.

6th Grade Boys Basketball, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 18

Senior Menu: Beef and potatoes, antigua blend, fruit, breadstick.

School Breakfast: Maple baked French toast.

School Lunch: Turkey gravy over mashed potatoes, stuffing, cranberries.

Northeast Conference Wrestling Tournament at Clark, 4 p.m.

1st Grade Boys Basketball Practice, 4:30 p.m.

Middle School Girls Basketball hosts Waubay-Summit: (7th grade @ 6pm, 8th grade @ 7pm)

4th Grade BB, 6 p.m.

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

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1440

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

Hollywood Homicide Probe

The son of Hollywood director Rob Reiner and photographer Michele Singer Reiner was booked into a Los Angeles jail yesterday on suspicion of murdering his parents.

The LA Fire Department reportedly found the couple, 78 and 70, stabbed to death in their home while responding to a medical aid call Sunday afternoon. Their youngest son, Nick, is currently being held without bail, and prosecutors are expected to file charges by the end of the day tomorrow. The 32-year-old has previously spoken publicly about his struggles with drug addiction and homelessness. He collaborated with his father on the 2015 film "Being Charlie," which is loosely based on his teenage years.

Rob Reiner met his wife, Michele, in the late 1980s while directing "When Harry Met Sally..." and their relationship inspired him to change the ending of the romantic comedy. Reiner's other notable directing credits include "This Is Spinal Tap," "The Princess Bride," and "A Few Good Men."

NYE Bomb Plot Foiled

Federal authorities yesterday announced four people have been arrested on charges of plotting New Year's Eve bombings at multiple sites of two US companies in Southern California.

Court records identified the suspects as members of an antigovernment group known as the Turtle Island Liberation Front. The individuals were arrested last week in the Mojave Desert while preparing to test explosives. One member allegedly provided a confidential FBI source with an eight-page plan of their attack, dubbed "Operation Midnight Sun," which detailed simultaneous bombings at five locations of Amazon-type logistics centers; company names were not disclosed. The plan included instructions for building pipe bombs, avoiding DNA evidence, using burner phones, and exploiting fireworks to mask explosions.

The suspects—all from the Los Angeles area and aged 24, 30, 32, and 41—face charges of conspiracy and possession of an unregistered destructive device, with additional charges expected.

Jimmy Lai Convicted

A Hong Kong court convicted 78-year-old former media mogul Jimmy Lai yesterday in a landmark national security trial. The pro-democracy activist faces up to life in prison; his sentencing hearing begins Jan. 12.

Lai founded Apple Daily, a since-shuttered newspaper that reached more than 3.8 million registered web users, about half of Hong Kong's population. At its height, Lai had a reported net worth of \$1.2B. In 2020, however, local authorities arrested him under a national security law following antigovernment protests the previous year. Lai was accused of conspiring with foreign governments to sanction China and Hong Kong and to print and distribute seditious articles. He has spent the past five years in jail, including stretches in solitary confinement.

A deal between China and the UK had guaranteed Hong Kong a degree of autonomy until 2047. Critics argue that recent national security laws are designed to restrict free speech.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Scottie Scheffler named PGA Tour Player of the Year, becoming the first golfer to receive the honor at least four consecutive years since Tiger Woods, who holds a record five-year streak.

Mariah Carey to sing at the Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics opening ceremony (Feb. 6); she is the first international star named to perform.

Anthony Geary, best known for playing Luke Spencer in the daytime drama "General Hospital," dies at age 78.

Science & Technology

Trump administration seeks roughly 1,000 early career technology specialists to modernize government systems and accelerate AI adoption—an initiative called the "US Tech Force".

Researchers build robots the size of single-celled organisms that can make decisions and act independently; devices could facilitate advances in biological research and medical diagnostics.

Medical researchers discover how the human gut produces antibodies that kill pathogens; the approach could inspire new vaccines against intestinal and respiratory pathogens, such as norovirus and the flu.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close lower (S&P 500 -0.2%, Dow -0.1%, Nasdaq -0.6%) as investors wait for today's release of November jobs report.

Roomba maker iRobot files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, with Chinese supplier taking the 35-year-old company private; iRobot shares closed down nearly 73%.

Ford to record more than \$19B hit to profits as it scales back EV plans; figure is one of the largest impairments taken by a company.

Spain fines Airbnb \$75M for advertising unlicensed tourist rentals as the country grapples with a housing affordability issue.

Politics & World Affairs

Search continues for Brown University shooter who killed two people, wounded nine others Saturday; police release video of the alleged suspect, identify shooting victims as freshman Mukhammad Aziz Umurzokov, sophomore Ella Cook.

The US agrees to provide Ukraine with security guarantees in exchange for reaching a peace deal to end the war with Russia.

President Donald Trump sues BBC for total of \$10B in damages, accusing the broadcaster of defamation.

Three Seattle suburbs forced to evacuate after a levee fails following a week of heavy rain.

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Telkamp graduates from NSU

Life is marked by the milestones we reach, achieving one's degree from college is one of the major markers. Tara Telkamp Kupcho reached that milestone recently with the Winter Commencement at Northern State university on Saturday, December 13, 2025. She was one of 101 graduates earning degrees. Her degrees include Bachelors' Degree of Arts and Science in Biology, with pre-Vet emphasis, Minors in Chemistry, Fine Art and Studio Art. Certificates in Allied Health and Quantitative Analytics of science.

Future plans are undecided as she considers Vet School or entering the work force. Telkamp is 2012 Graduate of Groton Area and the daughter of Charlene and Bruce Telkamp and the Granddaughter of Charles and Betty Strom.



Coming up on GDILIVE.COM

GT on **Girls JV**
Groton at Sisseton
Tues. Nov. 16, 4:00
Sponsored by
Grandparents

Groton Area Tigers Groton, SD

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

GT on **Boys JV**
Groton at Sisseton
Tues. Nov. 16, 5:00
Sponsored by
Jerry & Becky Johnson

Groton Area Tigers Groton, SD

GDILIVE
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GT on **Girls Varsity Basketball**
Groton at Sisseton
Tues. Nov. 16, 6:30 p.m.

Groton Area Tigers Groton, SD

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For more info: GDILIVE.COM

GT on **Boys Varsity Basketball**
Groton at Sisseton
Tues. Nov. 16, 8:00 p.m.

Groton Area Tigers Groton, SD

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Groton Legion

Wings

Nite



Groton American Legion

Soon to be a Classic monthly "Legion Wings Nite"

Friday and Saturday

Dec. 19 & 20

6-10pm

What can \$20 get you?



for
Senior Citizens

or anyone using physical therapy
a gym membership at

15 N Main - Ste. 101

Open 24/7

GDI Living Fitness

Call/Text Paul at 605/397-7460

Call/Text Tina at 605/397-7285

for details



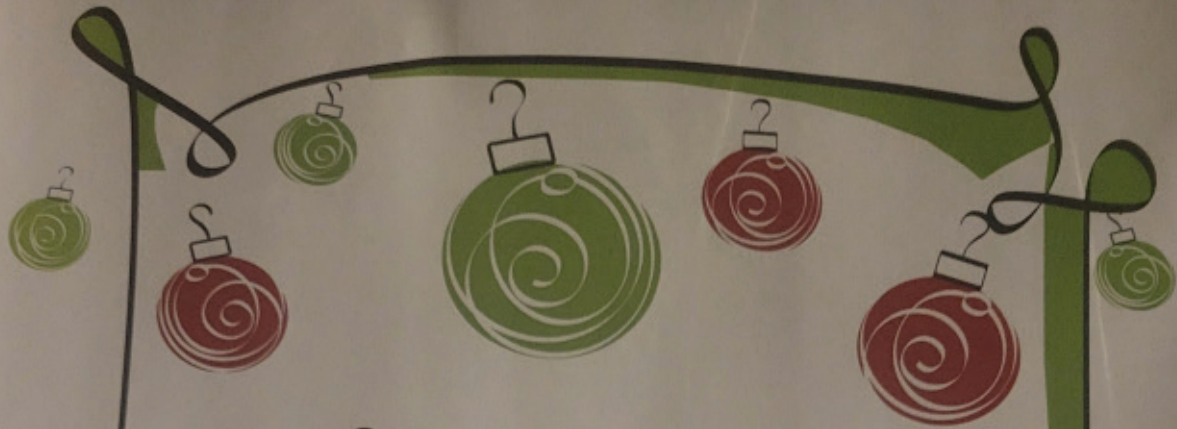
Annual Membership Rates

Student is \$29.82 per month or \$255.60 per year
Single is \$35.15 per month or \$319.50 per year
2-Person is \$55.45 per month or \$575.10 per year
Family is \$67.10 per month or \$702.26 per year

Month-to-Month Rates

Student is \$35.15 per month
Single is \$40.48 per month
2-Person is \$59.78 per month
Family is \$72.43 per month

**While many other rates have gone up, ours has not.
Same rates for several years!**



Groton Community Transit
Invites you to their

Holiday Bake Sale
Thursday, Dec. 18th,
2025

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**Coffee, cider and Christmas
goodies will be served!**

If you would like to donate baked goods, please contact Groton Community Transit
office at 605-397-8661. Any and all donations are welcome!! We are looking
forward to seeing you!!

Our address is 205 East 2nd Ave-Downtown Groton

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Groton City Council Meeting Agenda

December 16, 2025 – 7:00pm

City Hall – 120 N Main Street

(IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CALL IN TO THIS MEETING, PLEASE MAKE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS TO DO SO BY CALLING CITY HALL 605-397-8422)

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Public Comments - pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1
(Public Comments will offer the opportunity for anyone not listed on the agenda to speak to the council. Speaking time will be limited to 3 minutes. No action will be taken on questions or items not on the agenda.)
3. Second Reading of Ordinance No. 793 – 2026 Salaries
4. Second Reading of Ordinance No. 794 – Supplemental Appropriations
5. November Finance Report
6. Authorization for Cash Fund Transfer
7. Notice of Vacancy and Establishment of 2026 Election Date
 - 2-Year Terms Ending:
 - Jon Cutler – Ward 1
 - Brian Bahr – Ward 2
 - Jason Wambach – Ward 3
 - 1-Year Appointment Ending
 - Kevin Nehls – Ward 1
8. Approval of 2026 Fee Schedule
9. Minutes
10. Bills
11. Announcement: City Offices Closed on January 1st, 2026, for New Year's Day
12. Reminder: Holiday Lighting Contest – December 18th, 2025 - \$100, \$75, & \$50 Utility Bill Credits to Be Given Away
13. Reminder: 2026 Dog Licenses are Due by December 31st, 2025
14. Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)
15. Adjournment

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BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA
GENERAL MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025, 8:45 A.M.
COMMISSIONER'S CHAMBERS
COURTHOUSE ANNEX - 25 MARKET STREET, ABERDEEN SD

1. Call To Order - Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Opportunity for Public Comment
 - ❖ *Public comment will be limited to 10 minutes or at Boards Discretion. Presentations will be limited to 3 minutes.*
4. Brian Koens, Coroner
 - a. Yearly Update
5. Rachel Kippley, Fair/Fairgrounds/Parks Manager
 - a. Approve & Authorize Chairman Sign the following Fair Contracts:
 - i. WOW Talent and Entertainment LLC
 - ii. Radiance Works Entertainment
 - iii. Home Clean Home
 - iv. Ro Sham Bo Creative
 - v. Winterset Concert Events LLC
 - b. Fair Update
6. Approve & Authorize Chairman to Sign Memorandum of Understanding Between Dakota State University and Brown County
7. Consent Calendar
 - a. Approval of General Meeting Minutes for December 9, 2025
 - b. Claims/Payroll
 - c. HR Report
 - d. Travel Requests
 - e. Claim Assignments
8. Other Business
9. Executive Session (if requested per SDCL 1-25-2)
10. Adjourn

You can join the Brown County Commission Meeting via **your computer, tablet, or smartphone** at <https://meet.goto.com/BrCoCommission>
You can also dial in using your phone. United States: [+1 \(872\) 240-3311](tel:+18722403311) - Access Code: **601-168-909 #**
Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://meet.goto.com/install>

Official Recordings of Commission Meetings along with the Minutes can be found at [Commission Meetings | Brown County](#)

AGENDA

BROWN COUNTY PLANNING/ZONING COMMISSION REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETINGS

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025 – 7:00 PM
BROWN COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX in the BASEMENT
(STAIRWAY AND ELEVATOR ACCESS TO BASEMENT)

- I. **Call to Order:** for Brown County Planning/Zoning Commission
- II. **Roll Call:** Stan Beckler - Chairman, David North - Vice Chair, Dale Kurth, James Meyers, Carrie Weisenburger, County Commissioner Mike Gage, Alternate Paul Johnson.
- III. **Appointment SDCL 11-2-2,** The County Planning Commission is appointed and approved by the Board of Brown County Commissioners. The County Planning Commission is known as the County Planning/Zoning Commission. The County Zoning Commission also serves as the County Zoning Board of Adjustment.
- IV. **Contracts with municipalities SDCL 11-2-7.** Contracts to provide planning and zoning services to municipalities--Municipal powers exercised by County Board. The governing body of any municipality may contract with the Board for Planning and Zoning services to be provided by the county, and the contract may provide that the municipality shall pay such fees as are agreed for the services performed. Under the provisions of the contract the municipal governing body may authorize the County Planning and Zoning Commission, on behalf of the municipality, to exercise any of the powers otherwise granted to municipal planning and zoning commissions under chapters [11-4](#) and [11-6](#).
Source: SL 1967, ch 20, § 9; SL 1975, ch 113, § 2; SL 1992, ch 60, § 2; SL 1998, ch 76, § 2
 1. Columbia: May 5, 1981, by Resolution.
 2. Verdon Village: April 17, 1981, by Resolution.
 3. Town of Claremont: April 6, 1981, by Resolution.
 4. Town of Stratford: April 6, 1981, by Resolution.
- V. **Opportunity for Public Comment if any.**
- VI. **Approval of December 16, 2025, Agenda:** Motion: 1st _____ 2nd _____
- VII. **Approval of November 18, 2025, Minutes:** Motion: 1st _____ 2nd _____
- VIII. **Plaque Presentation** to Donna Keatts in memory of Pat Keatts' 17 years of service on the Brown County Planning & Zoning Board.

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

IX. Old Business:

1. **Sign-up sheet:** On the table by the door entrance, there is a Sign-up Sheet. Please legibly sign in and mark YES or NO if you want to speak to the Board on any Agenda Item.
2. **Permits:** Anyone that has submitted a *Variance Petition* (VP) or a *Conditional Use Petition* (CUP) to the Zoning Board of Adjustment (BOA) is still required to get their required PERMITS from the Zoning Office before starting their project if their Petition gets approved. Penalties may be assessed per Ordinance when starting projects without proper permits in place.
3. **Conditional Use Petition (CUP)** in a Heavy Industrial District (H-I) described as Lot 1, "NWE Generation Addition" in Section 25-T123N-R64W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (440 135th Street; Aberdeen Twp.). Submitted by Northwestern Energy. Postponed from the November 18, 2025 meeting. Northwestern Energy has rescinded this Conditional Use Petition.

X. New Business: *Brown County Planning/Zoning Commission as Zoning Board of Adjustment (BOA).*

1. **Conditional Use Petition (CUP)** in an Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) described as the NW1/4 of Section 3-T121N-R62W, except Tract A1, of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (approx. 14236 397th Avenue; East Rondell Twp.).
2. **Variance for Lot Size** in an Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) described as proposed Lot 1, "Schile Second Subdivision" in the SE1/4 of Section 19-T125N-R65W of the 5th P.M, Brown County, South Dakota (37388 122nd Street; Carlisle Twp.).

XI. Other Business:

Completed as Zoning Board of Adjustment (BOA) & going to Planning Commission

AGENDA

BROWN COUNTY PLANNING/ZONING COMMISSION REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETINGS

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025 – 7:00 PM
BROWN COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX in the BASEMENT
(STAIRWAY AND ELEVATOR ACCESS TO BASEMENT)

PLANNING COMMISSION

- I. **Old Business: Discussion on Amendments to Brown County Ordinance Title 4 for Chapters 4.22 through Chapter 4.29 on Administrative Rules and Enforcement are still postponed until further notice, by Ross Aldentaler, Deputy States Attorney. We are not continuing to put this on the Agenda or Minutes until something is presented to the Planning/Zoning Commission for proposed changes.**

- II. **New Business: Brown County Planning/Zoning Commission as [Planning Commission](#).**
 10. **Rezone Petition** for a property described as proposed Lot 1, “Hitchcock First Addition” in the NW1/4NE1/4 and the NE1/4NW1/4 of Section 17-T121N-R60W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (40751 144th Street; Bates Twp.) to be rezoned from Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Mini-Agriculture District (M-AG).

 11. **Rezone Petition** for a property described as proposed Lot 3, “Larson-Wockenfuss Addition” in the S1/2 of Section 29 and the N1/2 of Section 32-T125N-R62W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (approx. 39518 123rd Street; Columbia Twp.) to be rezoned from Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Mini-Agriculture District (M-AG) .

 12. **Rezone Petition** for a property described as proposed Lot 1, “MB Bellikka Addition” in the SE1/4 of Section 30-T124N-R63W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (approx. 12851 389th Avenue; Ordway Twp.) to be rezoned from Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Mini-Agriculture District (M-AG).

 13. **Preliminary & Final Plat** for conveyance purposes on a property described as “Hitchcock First Addition” in the NW1/4NE1/4 and the NE1/4NW1/4 of Section 17-T121N-R60W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (40751 144th Street; Bates Twp.).

 14. **Preliminary & Final Plat** for financial purposes on a property described as “D. Munger Estate Addition” in the N1/2 and E1/2 of the SW1/4 of Section 5-T121N-R63W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (approx. 38975 142nd Street & approx. 38928 143rd Street; West Rondell Twp.).

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15. **Preliminary & Final Plat** for conveyance purposes on a property described as “Larson-Wockenfuss Addition” in the S1/2 of Section 29 and the N1/2 of Section 32-T125N-R62W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (approx. 39518 & 39552 123rd Street; Columbia Twp.).
16. **Preliminary & Final Plat** for financial purposes on a property described as “Schile Second Subdivision” in the SE1/4 of Section 19-T125N-R65W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (approx. 37388 122nd Street; Carlisle Twp.).
17. **Corrective Plat** for conveyance purposes on a property described as “Corrective Plat of West Hanson-Mud Creek Addition” in the SW1/4 of Section 11-T122N-R61W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (13760 & 13780 404th Avenue; West Hanson Twp.).
18. **Preliminary & Final Plat** for conveyance purposes on a property described as “MB Bellikka Addition” in the SE1/4 of Section 30-T123N-R63W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (approx. 12851 389th Avenue; Ordway Twp.).

III. Other Business:

1. Executive Session if requested.

IV. Motion to Adjourn: 1st _____ 2nd _____



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Standoff continues as school accountability board rejects lawmakers' penalty suggestions

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER

A school accountability board on Monday rejected a legislative committee's earlier decision to waive penalties for schools that had too much cash saved up, prolonging a standoff that board members don't yet know how to resolve.

In November, the South Dakota School Finance Accountability Board recommended partial waivers for the Frederick Area and Miller school districts, both with fiscal penalties of 10% of the districts' excess cash balances. The balances are limited by state law.

But lawmakers on the Legislature's budget committee rejected the recommendations earlier this month. Instead, the committee suggested the board issue a full waiver to the school districts.

The 10% fiscal penalty for Frederick would be a \$9,265 reduction in general state aid for the 2026 fiscal year. Miller's penalty would be a \$7,474 reduction.

Board member and Bureau of Finance and Management Commissioner Jim Terwilliger said he understands where the legislative committee "is coming from," but he's "sticking to my principles."

"We as a board recommended these," Terwilliger said, adding that the board could have implemented the full penalty but chose a more "lenient" penalty.

Terwilliger and other board members were unsure how to resolve their disagreement with the legislative committee, because an applicable administrative rule and law aren't "super clear," Terwilliger said. A representative with the state Department of Education said its legal department will review the situation.

Terwilliger, at the board's November meeting, urged a closer look at cash balances in some school districts as the state considers property tax relief. Schools are the leading recipients of property tax revenue.

Board members approved lawmakers' suggestion to conduct a financial review of the Agar-Blunt-Onida School District. The district does not receive any state funding, because it has enough local and other funding. That means a financial penalty cannot be imposed.

Lawmakers suggested the review partly because the school district has appeared before the accountability board four times in five years.

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan who regularly reports on the intersection of politics and policy with health, education, social services and Indigenous affairs. Her work with South Dakota Searchlight earned her the title of South Dakota's Outstanding Young Journalist in 2024, and she was a 2024 finalist for the national Livingston Awards.

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Whole milk back on school lunch menus, under bill on its way to Trump

BY: SHAUNEEN MIRANDA

WASHINGTON — School cafeterias got a step closer to seeing whole milk again after the U.S. House passed a measure Monday to restore the dairy staple to school lunches.

The bill unanimously passed the Senate back in November, and now heads to President Donald Trump's desk.

The bipartisan effort — which passed the House by voice vote — came after whole milk was barred from school meal programs for more than a decade amid a broader push to curb childhood obesity.

Under the bill, schools that participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program would be allowed to offer "flavored and unflavored organic or nonorganic whole, reduced-fat, low-fat, and fat-free fluid milk and lactose free fluid milk" as well as "nondairy beverages that are nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk and meet the nutritional standards established by the Secretary."

The bill also would exempt milk fat from being considered saturated fat as it applies to schools' "allowable average saturated fat content of a meal."

The measure allows parents and guardians, on top of physicians, to offer a written statement for their student to receive a nondairy milk substitute.

GOP Sens. Roger Marshall of Kansas and Dave McCormick of Pennsylvania, along with Democratic Sens. Peter Welch of Vermont and John Fetterman of Pennsylvania, introduced the measure in the Senate in January.

Republican Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson of Pennsylvania and Democratic Rep. Kim Schrier of Washington state brought corresponding legislation in the House.

'An essential building block'

During floor debate Monday, Thompson, who chairs the House Agriculture Committee, said the bill's purpose is to "restore students' access to a wide variety of milk options, ensuring students have the necessary nutrients to learn and to grow."

Thompson said "milk is an essential building block for a well-rounded and balanced diet, offering 13 essential nutrients and numerous health benefits," but that "unfortunately, out-of-touch and outdated federal regulations have imposed restrictions on the types of milk students have access to in school meals."

Thompson pointed out that the bill "does not require any student to drink or any school to serve whole milk" and instead "simply gives schools the flexibility to serve a broader variety of milk in the school lunchroom."

But Rep. Bobby Scott, ranking member of the House Committee on Education and Workforce, voiced his opposition, saying that while the bill "does make some improvements to the whole milk debate with its inclusion of better options for students seeking non-dairy alternatives," he remains "disappointed that the bill overall would make school meals less healthy."

The Virginia Democrat said the bill "goes against the dairy industry's stated commitment to ensure that students have access to the healthiest dairy options" consistent with USDA's and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Milk industry praise

The top five milk-producing states in 2023 were California, Wisconsin, Idaho, Texas and New York, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service.

Michael Dykes, president and CEO of the International Dairy Foods Association, celebrated House passage of the bill, which he dubbed a "defining victory for children's health and for the dairy community that has fought for more than a decade to restore whole and 2% milk for our nation's students."

Dykes urged Trump to sign the bill into law so that USDA "can begin working with state governments and school districts across the country to make this law a reality."

Shauneen Miranda is a reporter for States Newsroom's Washington bureau. An alumna of the University of Maryland, she previously covered breaking news for Axios.

Paraprofessional-to-teacher apprenticeship now has 70 graduates, department reports

BY MAKENZIE HUBER

Fifteen more teachers graduated from South Dakota's teacher apprenticeship program this month, the state Department of Education announced Monday.

THE PROGRAM, STARTED IN 2023, ALLOWS FULL-TIME PARAPROFESSIONALS — SOMETIMES CALLED TEACHER'S AIDES — TO PURSUE A TEACHING DEGREE ONLINE THROUGH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY IN ELEMENTARY OR SPECIAL EDUCATION, OR THROUGH NORTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY IN SECONDARY EDUCATION, AT A STEEP DISCOUNT WHILE RETAINING THEIR POSITION.

The latest group to graduate pushes the program's total graduate number to more than 70. Two hundred and forty paraprofessionals have participated so far in the program.

The majority of graduates have signed teaching contracts and are filling vacancies across South Dakota public and private schools.

The goal of the program is reducing the teacher shortage in the state. Statewide, 144 teaching positions were unfilled as of July, weeks before the school year started, according to the Associated School Boards of South Dakota. That's the lowest number in recent years: There were 202 unfilled positions in July 2024, 256 in 2023, 225 in 2022 and 174 in 2021.

Recent graduates were sponsored by school districts ranging from rural Bison in western South Dakota to Tea in the Sioux Falls metro area.

"The TAP program has opened doors and new possibilities for paraprofessionals to fulfill their dreams, for school districts to fill positions, and for kids to have that constant, well-trained professional leading their classrooms," said Dakota State University Professional Academic Advisor Addie Borah in a news release.

Kathryn Blaha, state Education Department director for accreditation and certification, said support and continued interest in the program is "astounding."

"It is exciting to see these new teachers who have demonstrated their commitment to our communities and schools entering their own classrooms to continue their service to our students as certified educators," Blaha said in the news release.

Eighty candidates from 50 school districts and private schools were selected for the program's third cohort, the department announced this summer. The second cohort included 70 participants, five of which dropped out, and 90 participants were in the first cohort, 18 of which dropped out.

The Department of Education started the program, but it's currently funded through the state Department of Labor and Regulation with a combination of state and federal grants to reimburse universities for the discounted portion of tuition and other programming.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS PAY \$1,000 A YEAR PER APPRENTICE. APPRENTICES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR UP TO \$1,000 A YEAR IN TUITION, BOOKS AND STATE ASSESSMENTS

New teaching graduates

Fifteen apprentices representing 13 school districts recently graduated from Dakota State University with their teaching degrees. Most graduates stay and take on a teaching position in their sponsored district, according to the state Department of Education.

The department did not immediately respond to South Dakota Searchlight questions about where the new graduates are contracted to teach.

The sponsoring school districts for the recent graduates were:

Andes Central, Bison, Chamberlain, Dell Rapids, Lennox, Rapid City, Sioux Valley, Smee/Wakpala, Spearfish, Tea, Warner, Wolsey-Wessington, Yankton

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan who regularly reports on the intersection of politics and policy with health, education, social services and Indigenous affairs. Her work with South Dakota Searchlight earned her the title of South Dakota's Outstanding Young Journalist in 2024, and she was a 2024 finalist for the national Livingston Awards.

Trump 'very strongly' considering loosening federal marijuana regulations

BY: JACOB FISCHLER

President Donald Trump's administration is looking "very strongly" at reclassifying cannabis from the strictest category of controlled substances, Trump said Monday.

In a brief affirmative response to a reporter's question in the Oval Office, the president confirmed he is considering a reclassification of marijuana to unlock research funding.

"A lot of people want to see it — the reclassification — because it leads to tremendous amounts of research that can't be done unless you reclassify," Trump said. "So we are looking at that very strongly."

Marijuana is considered a Schedule I drug under the Food and Drug Administration's classification of controlled substances. The FDA defines drugs on the list, such as heroin and cocaine, as lacking any medicinal value and carrying a high likelihood of abuse.

The designation carries a host of consequences, including a virtual ban on funding research for medicinal or other uses of the drug.

While marijuana use, both medicinal and recreational, is legal in many states, it remains illegal to possess or use in any amount for any reason under federal law.

Advocates have sought for decades to legalize or decriminalize the drug, which many see as less harmful than other Schedule I substances.

The growing split in recent years among many states and federal law has ramped up pressure on federal policymakers to alter the drug's legal status.

Marijuana businesses in states where it is legal lack access to financial institutions, which cannot lend to businesses considered illegal by federal authorities.

States, meanwhile, have had difficulty regulating the environmental and health aspects of their industries.

And lawmakers, especially Democrats, have increasingly highlighted the frequent injustice of marijuana prosecutions that disproportionately affect communities of color and poor communities, though the drug is widely used across race and economic status.

Jacob covers federal policy and helps direct national coverage as deputy Washington bureau chief for States Newsroom. Based in Oregon, he focuses on Western issues. His coverage areas include climate, energy development, public lands and infrastructure.

DNA drive aims to help bring the remains of 273 unidentified Indigenous people home

The Bureau of Indian Affairs and South Dakota attorney general are partnering to bring free DNA testing services to victims' families

BY: AMELIA SCHAFER, ICT

RAPID CITY — There are 273 unidentified deceased Indigenous people across the country. In an effort to return them to their families, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and South Dakota are offering a free DNA drive this week.

"It's important to get your DNA in there just to be able to potentially identify some of those Jane and John Does across the U.S.," said Allison Morissette, Oglala Lakota and the South Dakota MMIP liaison through the state attorney general's office.

Typically DNA testing to identify a deceased individual can cost law enforcement on average \$1,000-\$1,500 per sample, according to the U.S. Department of Justice. This creates a barrier for small law enforcement departments or tribal law enforcement who don't have the resources to process the tests and sequence DNA on their own.

Funding from the missing and unidentified human remains grant allowed the BIA and South Dakota Attorney General's Office to provide a two-day DNA drive on Dec. 18 and 19 at the Monument Arena.

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The December drive is free to participants and made possible through a partnership with the University of North Texas where DNA will be cataloged, sequenced and uploaded.

The drive is a first for the South Dakota MMIP program and Morisette said she's hopeful that hosting it during the annual Lakota Nation Invitational will allow for as many participants as possible to come. The invitational is an annual multi-sport tournament that attracts Native people from all over the country.

The tournament is "a general area where we know a lot of our relatives will be for training, for basketball games, for vendor booths," Morisette said. "I'm sure there's a lot of people who have missing relatives and haven't had access to or haven't been swabbed for DNA yet. I wanted to be able to bring that to them completely free of cost, and be potentially able to bring them some closure."

Participants need to have a loved one who is missing and preferably are direct relatives of that individual (not distant cousins or distant relatives).

DNA gathered from a direct relative like a parent or sibling has a much higher chance of providing a clean, high match with remains cataloged by law enforcement. Data taken at the event will be only used for cross-referencing in the FBI's Combined DNA Index System, also known as CODIS, according to Morisette. It's the agency's national DNA database.

Genetic material and DNA results will not be used in any other manner or for any other case. Its use is solely for comparison to unidentified remains.

DNA will be stored until a match is made or until the participant requests its removal. Families can request the removal of their data sample at any time.

"This is completely voluntary," Morisette said. "If they thought about it, and they don't want to have their DNA in the system, they can then shoot us an email or a text, we'll send them a form, and then we'll completely destroy that profile."

MMIP advocates have identified four of the 273 unidentified Indigenous individuals believed to be Oceti Sakowin — Lakota, Dakota and Nakota — specifically from South Dakota.

Those individuals are an adult man found on Medicine Mountain outside of Rapid City in 1978, a young woman found in southcentral rural Colorado in 1999 believed to be Sicangu Lakota, a man using the nickname "Albert Crazy Buffalo" who died in 1992 in Scranton, Pennsylvania also believed to be Sicangu Lakota and an adult woman found in Gordon, Nebraska in 1970 believed to be Oglala Lakota from Pine Ridge and Mexican.

DNA taken from participants during the drive will be sent to the University of North Texas where researchers will enter data from DNA swabs into the FBI's DNA database while simultaneously cross referencing DNA with all the Jane or John Does in the system.

Obtaining a sample from a family member is easy, Morisette said. A team member will take a long cotton swab and gently swipe the inside of a participant's cheeks several times on each side. Two separate swab samples will be taken to ensure at least one sample is viable.

After the DNA collection, swabs are placed into a secure kit ready to be shipped to Texas for processing.

While the event is held in South Dakota it's not exclusively open to South Dakota residents or even members of just the nine tribes in South Dakota. Any Indigenous person who is a direct relative of a missing individual can participate in the DNA drive, Morisette said.

"Let's say that you had a loved one who got on a bus down to Arizona, and then you never heard from them again, or they went missing down there [it would be open to you]," Morisette said.

This article first appeared on ICT and is republished here under a Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.cropped-Favicon-Larger-Icon-.pngmedia.png

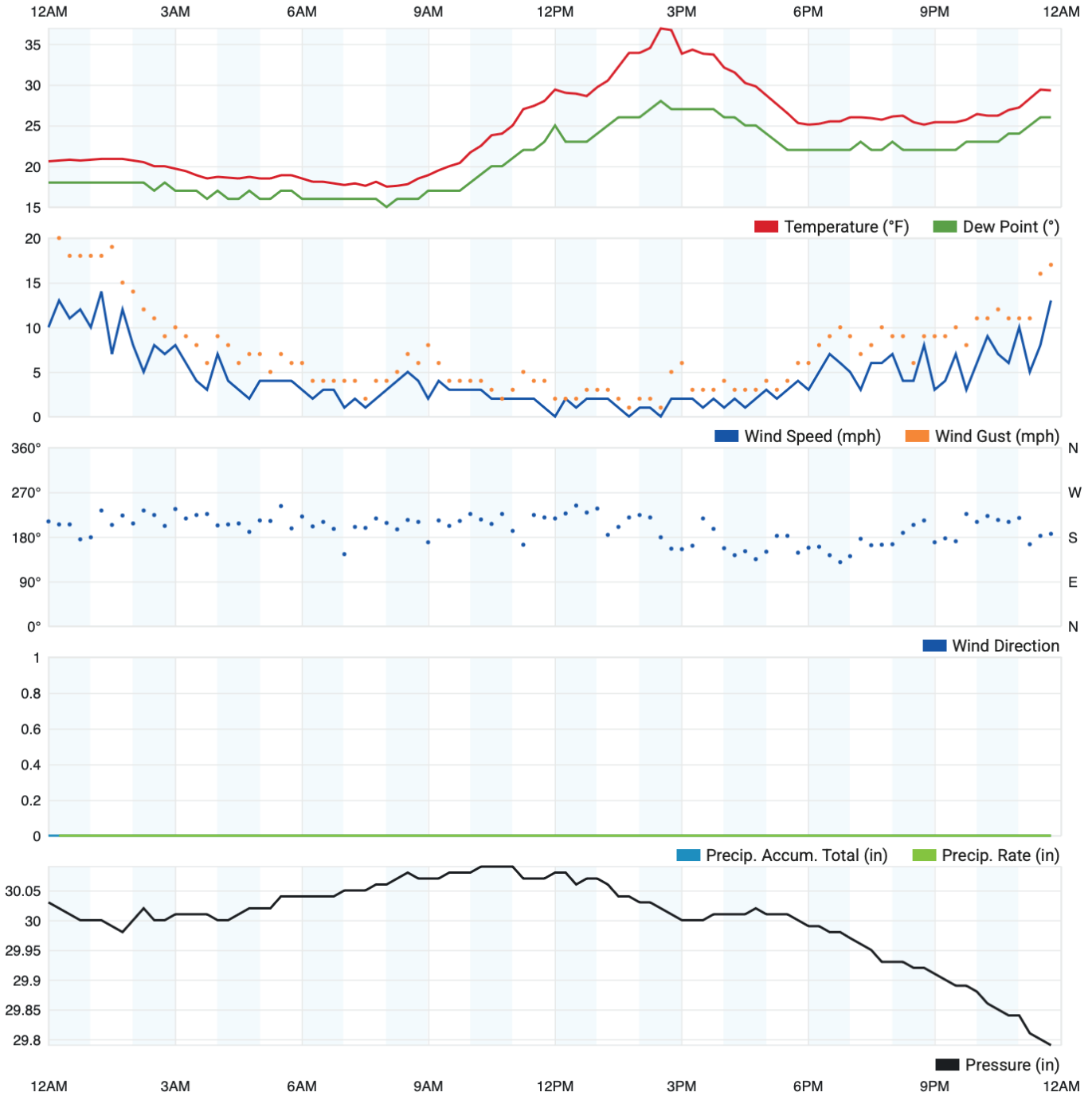
Amelia Schafer is the Indigenous Affairs reporter for ICT and is based in Rapid City. She is of Wampanoag and Montauk-Brothertown Indian Nation descent.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

December 15, 2025



Broton Daily Independent

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Today



High: 42 °F

Mostly Sunny
then Mostly
Sunny and
Breezy

Tonight



Low: 20 °F

Increasing
Clouds

Wednesday



High: 40 °F

Mostly Cloudy
and Breezy

Wednesday
Night



Low: 8 °F

Rain/Snow
Likely and
Breezy then
Chance Snow
and Windy

Thursday



High: 16 °F

Slight Chance
Snow and
Windy then
Sunny and
Blustery



Strong Winds Expected Thursday

December 16, 2025
4:22 AM

Wind gusts up to 60 mph over north central SD

Key Messages:

- Northwest winds increase late Wednesday evening, peaking **Thursday morning through midday**
- Sustained winds 30 to 40 mph with **gusts of 50 to 60 mph**
 - Highest over north central SD
- Impacts:** High winds may move loose debris, damage property, and cause power outages. High winds and snow showers could limit visibility. **Travel could be difficult, especially for high profiles vehicles**



Next Scheduled Update

- This afternoon



	Maximum Wind Gust Forecast (mph)												Maximum
	12/17 Wed		12/18 Thu										
	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm			
Aberdeen	26	38	46	52	53	49	36	29	14	12			53
Britton	31	39	47	54	55	53	40	32	17	12			55
Brookings	39	32	41	48	52	52	46	41	24	15			52
Chamberlain	32	36	46	52	52	47	38	29	15	16			52
Clark	33	37	49	53	53	51	43	36	20	15			53
Eagle Butte	44	53	58	62	61	54	33	22	16	22			62
Ellendale	31	41	49	55	55	52	37	29	13	12			55
Eureka	38	49	55	60	58	51	36	25	13	16			60
Gettysburg	37	47	53	56	54	49	35	26	15	20			56
Huron	28	31	41	49	51	49	39	31	17	14			51
Kennebec	38	44	52	58	56	52	39	30	16	20			58
McIntosh	51	59	61	60	58	46	31	22	18	24			61
Milbank	37	36	37	43	45	47	41	38	24	16			47
Miller	32	41	51	56	56	51	39	30	16	16			56
Mobridge	39	49	54	55	54	45	30	21	14	18			55
Murdo	39	47	52	56	54	46	33	23	16	22			56
Pierre	36	46	52	56	54	47	31	23	14	17			56
Redfield	29	37	46	53	53	52	41	32	16	14			53
Sisseton	35	38	44	49	51	49	40	33	22	14			51
Watertown	39	39	44	51	53	53	44	38	23	15			53
Webster	36	38	44	49	52	51	43	35	20	14			52
Wheaton	29	32	37	45	48	48	43	35	24	16			48

Northwest winds increase late Wednesday evening, peaking Thursday morning through the midday. Sustained winds 30 to 40 mph with gusts of 50 to 60 mph, highest over north central SD. High winds may move loose debris, damage property, and cause power outages. High winds and snow showers could limit visibility. Travel could be difficult, especially for high profiles vehicles.

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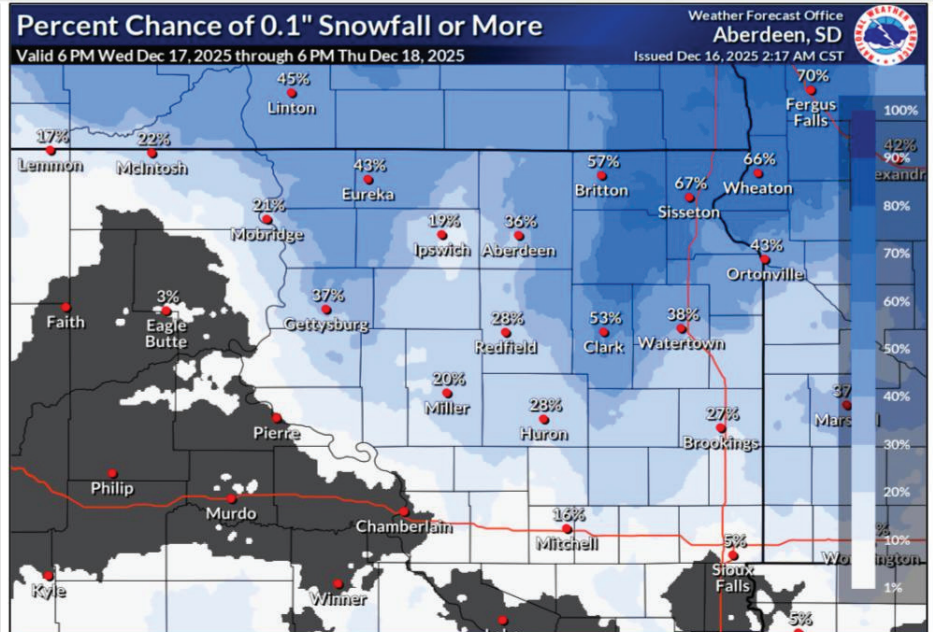


Probability of 0.1 Inch of Snow Thursday

December 16, 2025
4:25 AM

Rain transitioning to snow Thursday morning

- **Rain** will be the main precipitation type Wednesday evening
- **Rain** will transition to light **snow** early Thursday morning
- Probability of 0.10" of snowfall is highest (50-70%) over the Sisseton Hills into west central MN
 - Chance of an inch of snow or more is 25% for this area
- Falling snow and gusty winds will lead to reduced visibility



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

SNOW SQUALLS

- Intense bursts of snow and wind
- Short duration
- Whiteout visibility
- Rapidly deteriorating road conditions

National Weather Service **SNOW SQUALL WARNINGS**

- Issued when a snow squall is occurring or imminent
- Typically in effect for 30-60 minutes in a small, targeted area
- Can trigger a Wireless Emergency Alert to your phone
- When issued, slow down or delay travel

weather.gov



Probably the most impactful part of this system will be the potential for snow squalls. There may be at least a band or two of intense snow along with the high winds, resulting in rapid reductions to visibility (even if there isn't much accumulation) and a significant travel hazard. Current timing on squalls is early Thursday morning.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 38 °F at 2:42 PM

Low Temp: 17 °F at 8:06 AM

Wind: 22 mph at 12:17 AM

Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 62 in 1962

Record Low: -28 in 1951

Average High: 28

Average Low: 8

Average Precip in Dec.: 0.31

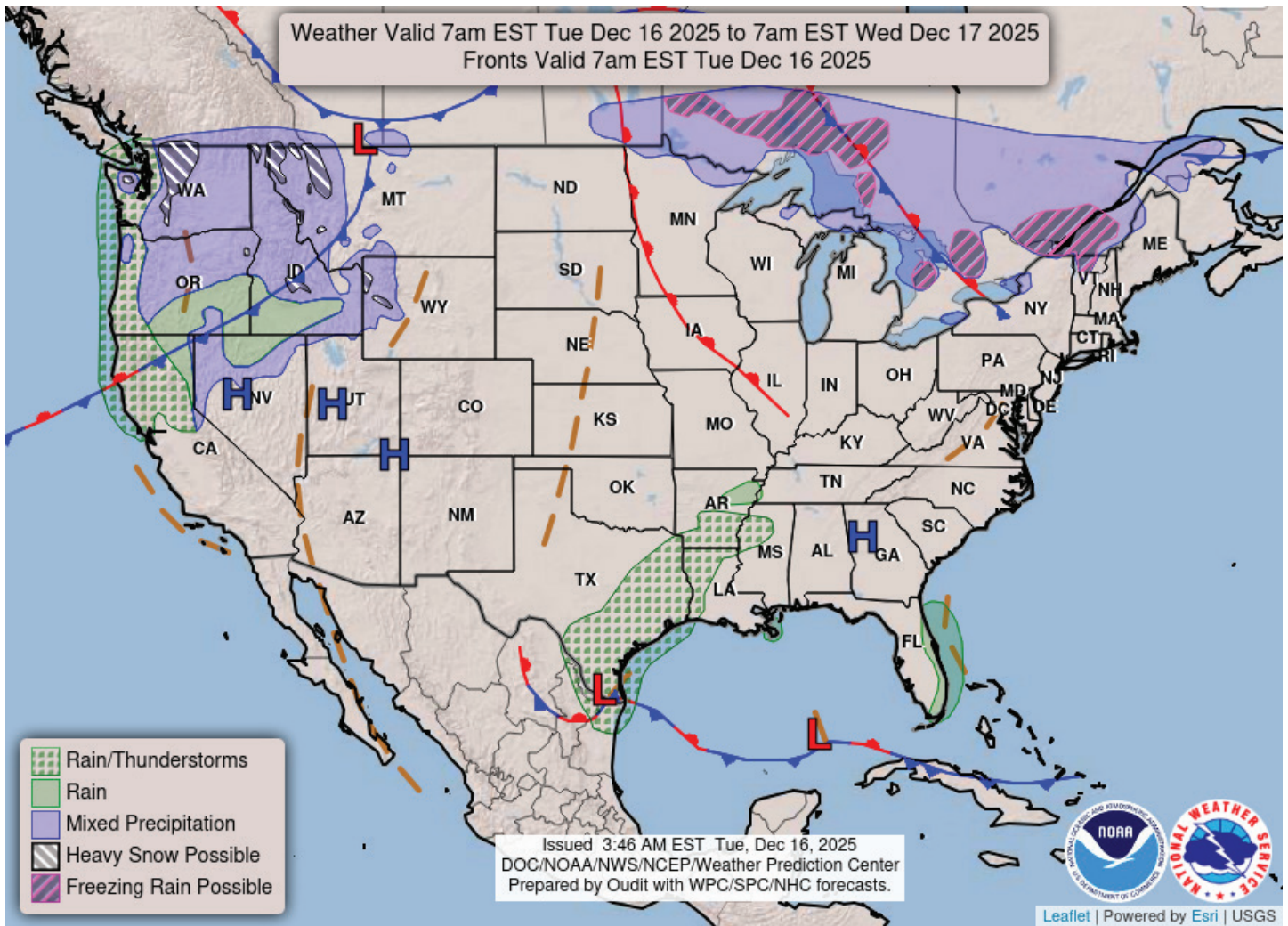
Precip to date in Dec.: 0.60

Average Precip to date: 21.52

Precip Year to Date: 25.41

Sunset Tonight: 4:49 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:07 am



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Today in Weather History

December 16, 1967: With temperatures in the upper 20s, heavy freezing rain fell in west central and southwest Minnesota at night on the 16th, causing widespread ice accumulations on all exposed surfaces, and power and telephone poles and lines went down over a vast region. Some places were without power and phone service for three to four days. This storm was classified as the most severe ice storm in the past 20 years in some areas. Reports were received of turkeys and other poultry dying due to the cold in the countryside. 20 to 30 cars were in the ditch on one slick stretch of road in Rock County. Further west, throughout eastern South Dakota, freezing rain for most of the day formed ice from 3/8 to 3/4 inch on exposed surfaces. Extensive damage was caused to utility lines. All roads became dangerous for traveling, and one death was directly linked to the ice storm. The ice cut off a regular water supply, causing one person to attempt to get water from a cistern. She slipped on the ice into the cistern. Three deaths were indirectly related to the ice storm; two due to automobile accidents, and one due to a heart attack.

December 16, 2000: Northwest winds of 30 to 50 mph, with gusts to 60 mph, combined with newly fallen snow and arctic air to bring widespread blizzard conditions and extreme wind chills as low as 70 below zero to west central Minnesota and much of South Dakota from late on the 15th through the 16th. Events were canceled, travel was shut down, and some motorists were stranded. Both US Highway 12 and Interstate 29 in South Dakota were closed throughout the day. As an indirect result of the low visibility, a semi-truck hit and totaled a pickup truck in the snow just west of Clark.

December 16, 1811: An estimated Magnitude 7.5 earthquake struck the Mississippi Valley near the town of New Madrid in Missouri at 2:15 am local time. People were awakened by the shaking in New York City, Washington D.C., and Charleston, South Carolina. The ground motions were described as most alarming and frightening in places like Nashville, Tennessee, and Louisville, Kentucky. In the epicentral area, the ground surface was described as in great convulsion with sand and water ejected tens of feet into the air.

1835 — New England experienced one of their coldest days of record. At noon on that bitterly cold Wednesday the mercury stood at four degrees below at Boston, 15 degrees below at Norfolk CT, and 17 degrees below at Hanover NH. The temperature at Boston was 12 degrees below zero by sunset. Gale force winds accompanied the severe cold, and that night a great New York City fire destroyed much of the financial district. (David Ludlum)

1917 — An ice jam closed the Ohio River between Warsaw, KY, and Rising Sun, IN. The thirty foot high ice jam held for 58 days, and backed up the river a distance of 100 miles. (David Ludlum)

December 16, 1941: In 1941, only two women were employed by the Weather Bureau. By 1945, more than 900 women are employed by the Weather Bureau as observers and forecasters, as a result of filling positions of men during World War II. Eleven days after Pearl Harbor, the Army requested that all weather broadcasts be discontinued. The fear was that the enemy would use this information to plan an attack on the United States.

1987 — A Pacific storm battered the coast of California with rain and high winds, and dumped heavy snow on the mountains of California. Winds along the coast gusted to 70 mph at Point Arguello, and winds in the Tehachapi Mountains of southern California gusted to 100 mph at Wheeler Ridge. Snowfall totals ranged up to 24 inches at Mammoth Mountain. Snow fell for two minutes at Malibu Beach, and Disneyland was closed due to the weather for only the second time in twenty-four years. A winter storm which began in the Southern Rockies four days earlier finished its course producing snow and high winds in New England. Snowfall totals ranged up to 19 inches at Blanchard ME. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 — Fairbanks, AK, reported freezing rain and record warm temperatures. The afternoon high of 41 degrees was 43 degrees above normal. Snow and high winds continued to plague the mountains of southern California. Mount Wilson CA reported two inches of rain in six hours during the early morning, and a storm total of more than 3.50 inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary)

2000 — An F4 tornado hits communities near Tuscaloosa, AL, killing 11 people and injuring 125 others. It was the strongest December tornado in Alabama since 1950.

When God Closes a Door

God often uses closed doors to redirect us into His perfect will and timing.

Acts 16:1-12: 16 Paul came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was Jewish and a believer but whose father was a Greek. 2 The believers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. 3 Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. 4 As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

6 Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. 7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. 8 So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. 9 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

11 From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis. 12 From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district[a] of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

Have you ever prayed about a situation and felt confident of God's will, only to discover that what you thought would happen didn't come to pass?

On Paul's second missionary journey, he and Silas had an experience like that. After originally intending to visit previous church plants, they instead decided to move into new territory with the gospel. But the Holy Spirit stopped them from going into Asia. So they went to Mysia with the intention of heading east to Bithynia. Yet once again the Holy Spirit closed the door.

At that point, they may have wondered why God would prevent them from preaching the gospel. After all, hadn't Jesus commissioned all believers to share their faith (Matthew 28:19-20)? The answer came to Paul in a dream as the Lord redirected them to Greece—a nation with great metropolitan cities. From there, the gospel could spread rapidly, and eventually Paul circled around to Ephesus, bringing the gospel to Asia. By the time John wrote Revelation, there were at least seven churches on that continent.

God often uses closed doors to redirect us into His perfect will and timing. Therefore, the wisest response is to rely on His infinite wisdom, wait for His clear direction, and follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit. We simply need to trust and obey.

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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
12.12.25

10 50 55 58 59 5

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$80,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 12 Mins 13 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
12.15.25

8 11 29 36 50 7

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$9,750,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 27 Mins 13 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
12.15.25

12 16 27 34 41 12

TOP PRIZE:
\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 42 Mins 12 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
12.13.25

2 11 20 23 25

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$127,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 42 Mins 12 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
12.15.25

20 23 38 42 65 19

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 11 Mins 13 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
12.15.25

23 35 59 63 68 2

Power Play: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$1,250,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 11 Mins 13 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the **AP** Associated Press

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL

Alcester-Hudson 47, Akron-Westfield, Iowa 44
Arlington 56, Iroquois-Lake Preston 40
Faulkton 28, Redfield 25
Great Plains Lutheran 53, Tri-State, N.D. 13
Milbank 68, Ortonville, Minn. 9
Northwestern 48, Britton-Hecla 25
Waubay/Summit 52, Florence-Henry 47

Some high school basketball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL

Alcester-Hudson 51, Akron-Westfield, Iowa 34
Baltic 76, Dell Rapids 63
Herreid-Selby 77, Bison 44
Waubay/Summit 63, Florence-Henry 35
Wilmot 58, Wyndmere-Lidgerwood, N.D. 40

Some high school basketball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

Nasir Meyer scores 25 to lead Wyoming to 87-72 victory over South Dakota State

By The Associated Press undefined

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Nasir Meyer had 25 points in Wyoming's 87-72 win against South Dakota State on Monday night.

Meyer also had seven rebounds for the Cowboys (9-2). Leland Walker added 13 points and five assists. Khaden Bennett made all six of his free throws and scored 11.

The Jackrabbits (7-6) were led by Kalen Garry, who recorded 15 points. Jaden Jackson added 13 points and Joe Sayler added 12 points and four assists.

Wyoming took the lead for good with 17:22 remaining in the first half. The score was 40-29 at halftime, with Meyer racking up 10 points.

Police video in South Dakota:

Public pays for costs but cannot see footage

By BART PFANKUCH/South Dakota News Watch South Dakota News Watch

Attorney Jeffrey Montpetit knew that obtaining a video of a South Dakota Highway Patrol trooper's actions after a 2015 DUI arrest in Clay County would be critical to his client's civil case alleging excessive use of force by the officer.

As a lawyer, Montpetit was able to view the video that showed Trooper Cody Jansen restrain Troy Rokusek in the Clay County Jail by pulling both his arms behind his back in a disabling move called a "double chicken wing." According to court documents, Jansen then threw Rokusek face first into the ground, breaking off two of his teeth.

In his official report, Trooper Jansen — who was named the 2017 South Dakota State Trooper of the Year — said Rokusek resisted arrest, which would have justified the violent takedown maneuver. But after

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Rokusek sued Jansen, a judge ruled that the video did not corroborate Jansen's claims. In September 2018, the state of South Dakota made a \$100,000 payment to settle Rokusek's civil case.

The Rokusek lawsuit wasn't the only time Montpetit has tried to obtain videos to support civil cases filed against authorities in South Dakota. And in each instance, it was challenging to get videos that show what really happened during interactions between law enforcement and the public.

"A lot of times in South Dakota, it's just damn near impossible to get any of these videos because of the way that their statutes are written," said Montpetit, who is based in Minneapolis but represents plaintiffs across the Great Plains. "In a lot of cases, the circuit court judges in South Dakota will write into their orders that the files should remain locked and sealed."

While it can be difficult for lawyers to obtain copies of videos from police dashboard, body or facility cameras, it is nearly impossible for the public or media to see video evidence in South Dakota.

State laws give police wide discretion

State statutes in South Dakota provide law enforcement agencies and prosecutors with near-complete discretion on whether to release a wide variety of police records — including videos — for public review.

The state's open-records law is commonly used by state, county and local law enforcement agencies to deny the release of information and thereby avoid public scrutiny of their actions and interactions with the public.

David Bordewyk, executive director of the South Dakota NewsMedia Association, said South Dakota public records laws are among the weakest in the nation, giving law enforcement agencies in particular the right to deny public or media access to records in almost all cases.

"It's a very weak law in regard to law enforcement," Bordewyk said. "It's extremely broad and it allows law enforcement to legally keep just about anything and everything from the public."

While neighboring states allow public access to common police records such as incident reports and probable cause affidavits, and police videos in some cases, South Dakota laws give law enforcement agencies wide discretion on what is released or not.

Almost all police agencies in South Dakota use cameras in cars and on uniforms to record activities in the field.

"They say, 'Well, the law allows us to keep these videos confidential, so we can and we will,'" Bordewyk said. "That's opposed to saying, 'We do have discretion but we want to lean toward full accountability and transparency, and by golly we're going to show the public what this investigation has concluded.' But that just doesn't happen in South Dakota."

South Dakota is increasingly an outlier when it comes to lack of public access to police videos, even as public pressure to release them has increased after numerous high-profile national cases in which videos showed officers taking questionable or illegal actions.

Some states, like Colorado, have passed laws to make all police videos a public record, while other states allow release once privacy and other prosecutorial concerns are met. The federal government also routinely releases law enforcement videos upon request if privacy concerns can be alleviated.

Open-government advocates say releasing videos to the public and media improves transparency, increases accountability of officers and can ultimately lead to increased public trust in law enforcement.

South Dakota is one of 13 states that has not passed some form of legislation to regulate the maintenance and public release of police body camera videos, according to the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

AG: Video releases could impede justice

The lack of public disclosure comes despite the fact that taxpayer dollars, either in local taxes or from federal grants, are used to pay for law enforcement cameras and the videos they generate. Many agencies pay tens of thousands of dollars a year to generate, process and store videos from dashboard and body cameras.

South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley said he supports government openness but added the release of law enforcement records could have negative effects on both police agencies and the public.

In an interview with News Watch, Jackley said that as the state's top law enforcement officer he under-

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stands that there is a desire for government openness but also a duty by law enforcement to protect the rights of both victims and defendants while upholding the fairness of the legal system.

"I've tried to be as transparent as I can without affecting public safety, privacy and the sanctity of the courtroom," he said.

Jackley said he would not support release of law enforcement records, including videos, that could prevent prosecutors from making a case or inhibit a defendant's right to a fair trial. The improper release of records or video could make it also harder for someone to file a civil case against a law enforcement officer, he said.

"I pride myself in never losing a case because of an inappropriate disclosure of evidence," Jackley said.

News Watch requests for videos denied

South Dakota News Watch tested the state's open records law by filing formal public records requests in an effort to obtain videos from eight law enforcement agencies.

To determine which records to request, News Watch reviewed numerous state investigative reports regarding officer-involved shootings to locate cases in which dashboard or body camera video evidence was specifically mentioned as part of the material reviewed by investigators.

In early November, News Watch made requests to the state Department of Public Safety, police departments in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Huron and Yankton, and sheriff's offices in Minnehaha, Pennington and Corson counties. All eight police-involved shootings — ranging from 2016 to 2025 — were declared justified by state investigators.

None of the agencies agreed to provide the video evidence to News Watch, including from a closed 2016 case in Pennington County in which the defendant, Abraham Fryer of Sturgis, was shot and killed by a deputy.

In denying News Watch's request for access to videos, most of the agencies cited state statute SDCL 1-27-1.5(5), which declares that "records developed or received by law enforcement agencies and other public bodies charged with duties of investigation" are not open records.

Not a single agency asked questions about the requests by News Watch or tried to determine if there was a way to provide access without harming a criminal case or violating someone's privacy.

Local agencies have custody over videos

In a letter denying the News Watch request, management analyst Arin Diedrich of the Department of Public Safety provided a basic explanation for the denial that was similar to those given by other agencies.

"Your request for dash-cam footage is denied pursuant to SDCL 1-27-1.5(5), which provides that records developed or received by law enforcement agencies and other public bodies charged with duties of investigation or examination of persons are not subject to disclosure," Diedrich wrote.

Jackley pointed out that the police agency that recorded the video — and not the attorney general's office — holds the custodial right on whether to publicly release material. A member of the public or media could seek a court order to obtain access to evidence in a criminal or civil case, including videos, he said.

Jackley said there are three avenues for videos in high-profile cases to become public — either in a criminal or civil trial or through an open examination by the state Law Enforcement Training Commission, which reviews some police actions in South Dakota.

"If it's a video that has a level of controversy, it's either going to be disclosed or likely disclosed in a criminal trial," he said.

However, in numerous internet searches related to police videos in South Dakota, News Watch found only a few instances where footage was released and almost never in a case where the actions of law enforcement officers were in question.

This story was originally published by South Dakota News Watch and distributed through a partnership with The Associated Press.

Australian police say Bondi Beach mass shooting was inspired by Islamic State group

By CHARLOTTE GRAHAM-McLAY and ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — A mass shooting in which 15 people were killed during a Hanukkah celebration at Sydney's Bondi Beach was "a terrorist attack inspired by Islamic State," Australia's federal police commissioner Krissy Barrett said Tuesday.

The suspects were a father and son, aged 50 and 24, authorities have said. The older man, whom state officials named as Sajid Akram, was shot dead. His son was being treated at a hospital.

A news conference by political and law enforcement leaders on Tuesday was the first time officials confirmed their beliefs about the suspects' ideologies. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the remarks were based on evidence obtained, including "the presence of Islamic State flags in the vehicle that has been seized."

There are 25 people still being treated in hospitals after Sunday's massacre, 10 of them in critical condition. Three of them are patients in a children's hospital.

Also among them is Ahmed al Ahmed, who was captured on video tackling and disarming one assailant, before pointing the man's weapon at him and then setting it on the ground.

Those killed ranged in age from 10 to 87 years old. They were attending a Hanukkah event at Australia's most famous beach Sunday when the gunshots rang out.

Calls for stricter gun laws

Albanese and the leaders of some of Australia's states have pledged to tighten the country's already strict gun laws in what would be the most sweeping reforms since a shooter killed 35 people in Port Arthur, Tasmania in 1996. Mass shootings in Australia have since been rare.

Officials divulged more information as public questions and anger grew on the third day following the attack about how the suspects were able to plan and enact it and whether Australian Jews had been sufficiently protected from rising antisemitism.

Albanese announced plans to further restrict access to guns, in part because it emerged the older suspect had amassed his cache of six weapons legally.

"The suspected murderers, callous in how they allegedly coordinated their attack, appeared to have no regard for the age or ability of their victims," said Barrett. "It appears the alleged killers were interested only in a quest for a death tally."

Authorities probe suspects' trip to Philippines

The suspects traveled to the Philippines last month, said Mal Lanyon, the Police Commissioner for New South Wales state. Their reasons for the trip and where in the Philippines they went would be probed by investigators, Lanyon said.

He also confirmed that a vehicle removed from the scene, registered to the younger suspect, contained improvised explosive devices.

"I also confirm that it contained two homemade ISIS flags," Lanyon said.

The Philippines Bureau of Immigration confirmed Tuesday that Sajid Akram traveled to the country from Nov. 1 to Nov. 28 along with Naveed Akram, 24, giving the city of Davao as their final destination. Australian authorities have not named the younger suspect.

Groups of Muslim separatist militants, including Abu Sayyaf in the southern Philippines, once expressed support for the Islamic State group and have hosted small numbers of foreign militant combatants from Asia, the Middle East and Europe in the past.

Decades of military offensives, however, have considerably weakened Abu Sayyaf and other such armed groups, and Philippine military and police officials say there has been no recent indication of any foreign militants in the country's south.

Albanese visits man who tackled shooter

Earlier, Albanese visited al Ahmed in hospital. Albanese said the 42-year-old Syrian-born fruit shop owner had further surgery scheduled on Wednesday for shotgun wounds to his left shoulder and upper body.

"It was a great honor to met Ahmed al Ahmed. He is a true Australian hero," Albanese told reporters after a 30-minute meeting with him and his parents.

"We are a brave country. Ahmed al Ahmed represents the best of our country. We will not allow this country to be divided. That is what the terrorists seek. We will unite. We will embrace each other, and we'll get through this," Albanese added.

Lifeguards praised for actions during massacre

The famous blue-shirted lifeguards of Bondi Beach attracted praise as more stories of their actions during the shooting emerged.

One duty lifeguard, identified by the organization's Instagram account as Rory Davey, performed an ocean rescue during the shooting after people fled, fully clothed, into the sea.

Another lifeguard, Jackson Doolan, posted to his social media a photo taken as he sprinted, barefoot and clutching a first aid kit, from Tamarama beach a mile away towards Bondi as the massacre continued.

"These guys are community members and it's not about the surf," Anthony Carroll, one of the stars of a popular reality television show called "Bondi Rescue," told Sky News on Tuesday. "They heard the gunshots and they left the beach and came right up the back here into the scene of the crime, into harm's way while those bullets were being shot."

Record numbers sign up to donate blood as Australians mourn at scene of shooting

Israel's Ambassador to Australia Amir Maimon visited the scene of the carnage on Tuesday and was welcomed by Jewish leaders.

"I'm not sure that my vocabulary is rich enough to express how I feel. My heart is torn apart because the Jewish community, the Australians of Jewish faith, the Jewish community is also my community," Maimon said.

Thousands have visited Bondi from all walks of life since the tragedy to pay their respects and lay flowers on a mounting pile at an impromptu memorial site.

One of the visitors on Tuesday was former Prime Minister John Howard, who was responsible the the 1996 overhaul of gun laws and an associated buy-back of newly outlawed weapons.

In the aftermath of the shooting, a record number of Australians signed up to donate blood. On Monday alone close to 50,000 appointments were booked, more than double the previous record, the national donation organization Lifeblood told The Associated Press.

Almost 1,300 people signed up to donate for the first time. Such was the enthusiasm at Lifeblood's Bondi location that appointments to give blood were unavailable before Dec. 31, according to the organization's website.

A total of 7,810 donations of blood, plasma and platelets were made across the country on Monday, spokesperson Cath Stone said. Australian news outlets reported queues of up to four hours at some Sydney donation sites.

Holocaust survivor and 10-year-old with gentle soul among those killed in Bondi Beach shooting

By KRISTEN GELINEAU Associated Press

SYDNEY (AP) — Before the bloodshed and broken hearts, there was a little girl with a gentle soul, a loving grandmother who delivered meals to the needy and a young man dubbed a "golden person" for his kindness. And there was an 87-year-old grandfather who sought solace in Australia after surviving the Holocaust, only to die in what officials have called antisemitic terrorism.

They are among the 15 people killed Sunday evening by two gunmen during a Hanukkah celebration at Sydney's famous Bondi Beach. Australia's federal police commissioner said it was a terrorist attack inspired by the Islamic State group.

Here is a closer look at some of the victims:

The youngest victim who 'saw beauty in everyone'

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Matilda, a 10-year-old whose last name has been withheld at the request of her family, was the youngest person killed in the massacre.

Matilda's language teacher, Irina Goodhew, who launched a GoFundMe for the girl's grieving family, described her in a Facebook post as a gentle girl who saw beauty in everyone.

"Matilda was a bright and loving soul who taught us that true goodness is found in the love and compassion we share," Goodhew wrote. "Her memory reminds us to carry kindness in our hearts and spread it to the world. May the light of her eyes live on through us — in our actions, our words, and our love for one another."

The assistant rabbi who showed a kind heart

Eli Schlanger, assistant rabbi at Chabad-Lubavitch of Bondi, organized Sunday's Chanukah by the Sea event. He was a father of five, the youngest of whom was born just two months ago, according to Chabad, an Orthodox Jewish movement that runs outreach worldwide.

The 41-year-old, London-born Schlanger also served as chaplain to the state's corrective services department and as a chaplain at a Sydney hospital, where he ministered to patients and families.

Schlanger would go wherever he was needed to help people including prisons, said his friend, Ben Wright. "Eli was a very special person," Wright told The Associated Press while standing near a cordoned-off section of Bondi the morning after the attack, a black box containing Torah verses strapped to his arm. "He spent a lot of his time trying to get Jews to do one good deed."

Wright, who saw friends and strangers gunned down during the attack while cradling his 6-month-old baby, said he hopes to emulate Schlanger's goodness.

A pillar of the Jewish community known for kindness

Yaakov Levitan, a rabbi and father of four, was known for his kindness and dedication to helping others, according to the Chabad movement, which described him as a "vital, behind-the-scenes pillar" of Sydney's Jewish community.

Originally from Johannesburg, the 39-year-old served as the general manager of Chabad of Bondi and worked with the Sydney Beth Din, or religious court.

Thoughtful volunteer who delivered meals

Marika Pogany, an 82-year-old grandmother and community volunteer, delivered thousands of kosher meals to those in need, the Federation of Jewish Communities in Hungary said in a statement.

COA, a Sydney volunteer service for Jewish seniors, said in an Instagram post that Pogany was part of the "beating heart of COA and a source of warmth for thousands of people."

"For 29 years she arrived at COA with her quiet smile and her steady kindness," COA wrote. "She lifted the room simply by being in it. She asked for nothing and gave everything."

Zuzana Čaputová, the former president of Slovakia, called her "Marika" and described Pogany as her "long-term close friend" who had visited Slovakia every year since 1989.

A 'golden person' with a talent for soccer

Dan Elkayam, a 27-year-old French national described by his brother as "a golden person," was a talented soccer player who lived with his girlfriend in Sydney's eastern suburbs.

Elkayam's brother, Jérémie Elkayam, told broadcaster France Info that his brother was "someone extraordinary ... who profited from life, wasn't at all materialistic, who understood the value of things and who loved to travel."

"We are four brothers and, of the four, for me he was the kindest of us," Jérémie Elkayam said.

Sydney soccer club Rockdale Ilinden FC said in a statement that Elkayam was an extremely talented and popular player with the club's Premier League team who "will be sorely missed by his teammates and everyone that knew him."

"Those who were closest to him described him as a down to earth, happy go lucky individual who was warmly embraced by those he met," club President Dennis Loether said.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot wrote in a post on X that Elkayam's death was "yet another tragic manifestation of a revolting surge in antisemitic hatred that we must defeat."

Retired police officer considered a rugby club 'legend'

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Peter Meagher, known to friends as "Marzo," was a retired police officer and a team manager and beloved volunteer at Randwick rugby club, which condemned the "abhorrent targeted attack on our Jewish community" in a statement Monday and called Meagher an "absolute legend in our club."

Meagher was working as a freelance photographer at the Bondi Hanukkah event, the club said, noting his presence was "simply a catastrophic case of being in the wrong place and at the wrong time."

A photograph with the statement showed "Marzo" written in chalk on a rugby field, along with a team jersey.

Heroic bystander who tried to stop the violence

Reuven Morrison, 62, was killed while trying to stop one of the shooters, according to his daughter, Sheina Gutnick.

Gutnick told CBS News that her father is the person seen in widely circulated video footage throwing objects at the gunman, which Gutnick said were bricks, after another passerby, Ahmed al Ahmed, wrestled the gun away from the shooter.

"I believe after Ahmed managed to get the gun off the terrorist, my father had then gone to try and unjam the gun, to try and attempt shooting. He was screaming at the terrorist," she said.

Morrison migrated to Australia from the Soviet Union five decades ago to escape antisemitic persecution. He thought Australia would be safe, Gutnick said.

"This is where he was going to have a family, where he is going to live a life away from persecution," she said. "And for many years, he did do that; he lived a wonderful, free life. Until Australia turned on him."

The Holocaust survivor who protected his wife

Alex Kleytman was an 87-year-old Holocaust survivor who had moved to Australia from Ukraine.

"I have no husband. I don't know where is his body," his wife Larisa Kleytman told reporters outside a Sydney hospital Sunday. "Nobody can give me any answer."

Larisa told The Australian newspaper that her husband died while protecting her.

"We were standing and suddenly came the 'boom boom', and everybody fell down," she said. "At this moment, he was behind me and at one moment he decided to go close to me. He pushed his body up because he wanted to stay near me."

The couple survived "the unspeakable terror of the Holocaust" as children before moving to Australia, according to a 2023 report by JewishCare, a service provider for Australia's Jewish community.

A grandfather filled with family pride

Tibor Weitzen, a 78-year-old grandfather who saw the best in people, migrated to Australia from Israel in 1988, his granddaughter said.

"My grandfather was truly the best you could ask for," Leor Amzalak told the Australian Broadcasting Corp., the country's public broadcaster. "He was so proud of us ... and loved us more than life itself."

What are the 10 largest US lottery jackpots ever won?

By The Associated Press undefined

The Powerball jackpot has grown to an estimated \$1.25 billion for Wednesday night's drawing after lottery officials said no ticket matched all six numbers drawn Monday night.

The U.S. has seen more than a dozen lottery jackpot prizes exceed \$1 billion since 2016. Here is a look at the largest U.S. jackpots won and the places where the winning tickets were sold:

1. \$2.04 billion, Powerball, Nov. 7, 2022. The winning ticket was sold at a Los Angeles-area gas station.
2. \$1.787 billion, Powerball, Sept. 6, 2025. The winning tickets were sold in Missouri and Texas.
3. \$1.765 billion, Powerball, Oct. 11, 2023. The winning ticket was sold at a liquor store in a tiny California mountain town.
4. \$1.602 billion, Mega Millions, Aug. 8, 2023. The winning ticket was sold at a supermarket in Neptune Beach, Florida.
5. \$1.586 billion, Powerball, Jan. 13, 2016. The winning tickets were sold at a Los Angeles-area convenience store, a Florida supermarket and a Tennessee grocery store.

6. \$1.537 billion, Mega Millions, Oct. 23, 2018. The winning ticket was sold at a South Carolina convenience store.

7. \$1.348 billion, Mega Millions, Jan. 13, 2023. The winning ticket was sold at a Maine gas station.

8. \$1.337 billion, Mega Millions, July 29, 2022. The winning ticket was sold at a Chicago-area gas station.

9. \$1.326 billion, Powerball, April 7, 2024. The winning ticket was sold at an Oregon convenience store.

10. \$1.269 billion, Mega Millions, Dec. 27, 2024. The winning ticket was sold at a gas station in Northern California.

Brown University shooting leaves students, community frustrated with official response

By HELEN WIEFFERING, BYRON TAU, JENNIFER McDERMOTT and BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — The ongoing effort to find a man who walked onto Brown University's campus during a busy exam season and shot nearly a dozen students in a crowded lecture hall has raised questions about the school's security systems and the urgency of the investigation itself.

A day after Saturday's mass shooting, officials said a person of interest taken into custody would be released without charges, leaving investigators with little actionable insight from the limited security video they had recovered and scrambling to develop new leads.

Law enforcement officials were still doing the most basic investigative work two days after the shooting that killed two students and wounded nine, canvassing local residences and businesses for security camera footage and looking for physical evidence. That's left students and some Providence residents frustrated at gaps in the university's security and camera systems that helped allow the shooter to disappear.

"The fact that we're in such a surveillance state but that wasn't used correctly at all is just so deeply frustrating," said Li Ding, a student at the nearby Rhode Island School of Design who dances on a Brown University team.

A petition for increased security

Ding is among hundreds of students who have signed a petition to increase security at school buildings, saying that officials need to do a better job keeping the campus secure against threats like active shooters.

"I think honestly, the students are doing a more effective job at taking care of each other than the police," Ding said.

Kristy dosReis, chief public information officer for the Providence Police Department, said that at no point did the investigation stand down even after officials appeared to have a breakthrough in the case, detaining a Wisconsin man who they now believe was not involved.

"The investigation continued as the scenes were still active. Nothing was cleared," said dosReis.

Police and the FBI on Monday released new video and photographs of a man they believe carried out the attack. The man wore a mask in the footage captured before and after the attack.

Investigation is 'painstaking work'

FBI Boston Special Agent in Charge Ted Docks said a \$50,000 reward was being offered for information that would lead to the identification, arrest and conviction of the shooter.

Docks described the investigation, including documenting the trajectory of bullets at the shooting scene, as "painstaking work."

"We are asking the public to be patient as we continue to run down every lead so we can give victims, survivors, their families and all of you the answers you deserve," Docks told reporters.

A lack of campus security footage

While Brown University is dotted with cameras, there were few in the Barus and Holley building, home of the engineering school that was targeted.

"Reality is, it's an old building attached to a new one," Rhode Island Attorney General Peter Neronha told reporters about the lack of cameras nearby.

The lack of campus footage left police seeking tips from the public.

Katherine Baima said U.S. marshals came to her door on Monday, seeking footage from a security cam-

era pointing toward the street.

"This is the first time any of us in my building, as far as I know, had heard from anyone," Baima said.

Students said the school's emergency alert system kept them relatively well-informed about the presence of an active shooter. But they were uncertain what to do during a prolonged campus lockdown.

Chiang-Heng Chien, a 32-year-old doctoral student in engineering, hid under desks and turned off the lights after receiving an alert about the shooting at 4:22 p.m. Saturday in a campus lab.

"While I was hiding in the lab, I heard the police yelling outside but my friends and I were debating whether we should open the door, since at that moment the shooter was believed to be (nearby)," he said in a text.

Experts say colleges can be at disadvantage when it comes to security

Law enforcement experts say colleges are often at a disadvantage when responding to threats like an active shooter. Their security officers are typically less trained and paid less than in other law enforcement departments. They also don't always have close partnerships with better-resourced agencies.

Often, funding for campus police departments is not a top priority, even for schools with ample resources, said Terrance Gainer, a former Illinois law enforcement official who later served as the U.S. Senate's sergeant-at-arms.

"They just aren't as flush in law enforcement as you would think. They don't like a lot of uniformed presence, they don't like a lot of guns around," said Gainer, who is now a consultant. "Whether it's Brown or someone else, a key question is, what type of relationship do they have with the local police department?"

At Utah Valley University, where conservative leader Charlie Kirk was assassinated by a shooter on a school building roof last summer, the undersized campus police department never asked neighboring agencies to assist with security at the outdoor Kirk event that attracted thousands, an Associated Press review found.

Changes in Providence's alert system

Providence has an emergency alert system, but it switched from a mobile app to a web-based system in March. The new system requires someone to register online to receive alerts — something not all residents knew.

Emely Vallee, 35, lives about a mile (1.6 kilometers) from Brown with her two young children. She said she received "absolutely nothing" in alerts. She relied instead on texts from friends and the news.

Vallee had expected to be notified through the city's 311 app, but hadn't realized that Mayor Brett Smiley phased out the app in March. Smiley said his administration sent out multiple alerts the day of the shooting using the new 311 system and has continued to send them.

Hailey Souza, 23, finished her shift at a smoothie shop just off-campus minutes before the shooting. Everything seemed normal and quiet, Souza said.

But driving home, she saw a boy bleeding on the sidewalk. "Then everyone started running and screaming," she said. Souza said she saw a bystander rip off his T-shirt to help.

The shop Souza manages, In The Pink, is a block from the engineering building. One of the shooting victims, Ella Cook, was a regular at the store, Souza said. Cook had come in a few days earlier and said her last final was Saturday.

Souza later learned that police came by the store to tell her co-workers about an active shooter. But Souza never received an emergency alert. "Nothing," she said.

Killings of Rob Reiner and his wife stun Hollywood as decision on charges for their son looms

By CHRISTOPHER WEBER and MIKE BALSAMO Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Los Angeles police are set to present a case to prosecutors Tuesday following Nick Reiner's arrest in the killings of his parents, Rob Reiner and Michele Singer Reiner, which stunned their communities in Hollywood and Democratic politics, where both were widely beloved.

Prosecutors are set to decide whether and how to charge 32-year-old Nick Reiner, who is being held in

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jail without bail. He was arrested several hours after his parents were found dead in their home in the upscale Brentwood neighborhood of Los Angeles on Sunday, police said.

Rob Reiner was the Emmy-winning star of the sitcom "All in the Family" who went on to direct films including "When Harry Met Sally..." and "The Princess Bride" He was an outspoken liberal activist for decades. Michele Singer Reiner was a photographer, movie producer and advocate for LGBTQ+ rights. They had been married for 36 years.

Representatives for the Reiner family did not respond to requests for comment, and it wasn't clear if Nick Reiner had an attorney who could speak on his behalf. Police haven't said anything about a motive for the killings.

Investigators believe Rob and Michelle Singer Reiner died from stab wounds, a law enforcement official told The Associated Press. The official, who was briefed on the investigation, could not publicly discuss the details and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

The killings were especially shocking given the warm comic legacy of the family. Rob Reiner was the son of comedy legend Carl Reiner, who died in 2020 at age 98.

Kathy Bates, who won an Oscar as the star of Rob Reiner's 1990 film "Misery," was among those paying tribute to the couple.

"I loved Rob," Bates said in a statement. "He was brilliant and kind, a man who made films of every genre to challenge himself as an artist. He also fought courageously for his political beliefs. He changed the course of my life. Michele was a gifted photographer."

Bill Clinton called the couple "good, generous people who made everyone who knew them better."

"Hillary and I are heartbroken by the tragic deaths of our friends Rob and Michele Reiner," he said in a statement. "They inspired and uplifted millions through their work in film and television."

Three months ago, Nick Reiner was photographed with his parents and siblings at the premiere of his father's film "Spinal Tap 2: The End Continues."

He had spoken publicly of his struggles with addiction, cycling in and out of treatment facilities with bouts of homelessness in between through his teen years. Rob and Nick Reiner explored — and seemed to improve — their relationship through the making of the 2016 film, "Being Charlie."

Nick Reiner co-wrote and Rob Reiner directed the film about the struggles of an addicted son and a famous father. It was not autobiographical but included several elements of their lives.

"It forced us to understand ourselves better than we had," Rob Reiner told the AP in 2016. "I told Nick while we were making it, I said, 'You know it doesn't matter, whatever happens to this thing, we won already.'"

Rob Reiner was long one of the most prolific directors in Hollywood, and his work included some of the most memorable and endlessly watchable movies of the 1980s and '90s, including "This is Spinal Tap" and "A Few Good Men."

He met Michele Singer Reiner on the set of "When Harry Met Sally..." and their meeting would inspire the film's shift to a happy ending, with stars Billy Crystal — one of Reiner's closest friends for decades — and Meg Ryan ending up together on New Year's Eve.

The Reiners were outspoken advocates for liberal causes and major Democratic donors.

President Donald Trump on Monday blamed Rob Reiner's outspoken opposition to the president for the actor-director's killing, delivering the unsubstantiated claim in a social media post that seemed intent on decrying his opponents even in the face of a tragedy.

US Army names 2 Iowa National Guard members killed in attack in Syria

By BEN FINLEY and HANNAH FINGERHUT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The two Iowa National Guard members killed in a weekend attack in Syria that the U.S. military blamed on the Islamic State group were identified Monday and remembered as dedicated soldiers.

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The U.S. Army named them as Sgt. Edgar Brian Torres-Tovar, 25, of Des Moines, and Sgt. William Nathaniel Howard, 29, of Marshalltown.

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds ordered all flags in Iowa to fly at half-staff in their honor, saying, "We are grateful for their service and deeply mourn their loss."

The Pentagon's chief spokesman, Sean Parnell, has said a U.S. civilian working as an interpreter also was killed. Three other Guard members were wounded in the attack, the Iowa National Guard said Monday, with two of them in stable condition and the other in good condition.

The attack was a major test for the rapprochement between the United States and Syria since the ouster of autocratic leader Bashar Assad a year ago, coming as the U.S. military is expanding its cooperation with Syrian security forces. Hundreds of American troops are deployed in eastern Syria as part of a coalition fighting IS.

How the attack happened

The shooting Saturday in the Syrian desert near the historic city of Palmyra also wounded members of the country's security forces, and the gunman was killed. The assailant had joined Syria's internal security forces as a base security guard two months ago and recently was reassigned amid suspicions that he might be affiliated with IS, a Syrian official said.

The man stormed a meeting between U.S. and Syrian security officials who were having lunch together and opened fire after clashing with Syrian guards, Interior Ministry spokesperson Nour al-Din al-Baba said Sunday.

Al-Baba acknowledged that it was "a major security breach" but said that in the year since Assad's fall, "there have been many more successes than failures" by security forces.

The Army said Monday that the incident is under investigation. Military officials and President Donald Trump have blamed the attack on an IS member.

Trump administration vows retaliation

"Our hearts go out to their families, and we lift them up in prayer for strength and comfort during this time of grief," Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Monday on social media. "The United States of America will avenge these fallen Americans with overwhelming force."

Trump reiterated his promise of retaliation from over the weekend, telling reporters at the White House on Monday that IS will "be hit hard."

He also reaffirmed his support for Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa, saying the Syrian government is not to blame for the deadly attack.

"This had nothing to do with him," Trump said of al-Sharaa. "This is a part of Syria that they really don't have much control over. And it was a surprise. He feels very badly about it. He's working on it. He's a strong man."

Trump welcomed al-Sharaa, who led the lightning insurgency that toppled Assad's rule, to the White House for a historic meeting last month.

Iowa National Guard members remembered as heroes

Meanwhile, Torres-Tovar and Howard were remembered as "cherished members" of the Iowa National Guard family, Stephen Osborn, adjutant general, said in a statement.

"Our focus now is providing unwavering support to their families through this unimaginable time and ensuring the legacy of these two heroes is never forgotten," Osborn said.

Luis Corona has known Torres-Tovar since middle school, when they played soccer together during recess. They drifted apart while attending different high schools but reconnected after Corona enlisted and saw a familiar face upon joining his Iowa unit after bootcamp.

"I was very nervous, very new to the Army. I didn't know what to expect. And just to see Edgar there, it was a big relief, a huge weight off my shoulders, like, OK, I won't be alone in this," Corona told The Associated Press.

From then on, he said, their bond grew into a brotherhood.

Torres-Tovar's defining trait was his selflessness, Corona said. He was remembered as a role model to

his younger siblings and all the newly enlisted soldiers in the unit.

Corona learned of his friend's death while reading the news. "No!" he shouted at the top of his lungs in what he later described as an expression of "disbelief, shock, sadness, anger, just every form of distraught you can think of."

Howard had wanted to be a soldier since he was a young boy, according to Jeffrey Bunn, Howard's step-father and chief of the Meskwaki Nation Police Department in Tama, Iowa, about 60 miles (97 kilometers) northeast of Des Moines.

Howard "loved what he was doing and would be the first in and last out," Bunn wrote Saturday on the department's Facebook page.

Howard also was a loving husband and an "amazing man of faith," Bunn said, adding that Howard's younger brother, a staff sergeant in the Iowa National Guard, would escort "Nate" back to Iowa.

Howard was inspired by his grandfather's service and wanted to serve for 20 years, according to an April post on a Facebook page dedicated to sharing stories of the unit. He had served for over 11 years.

Australia's leaders promise to tighten gun laws after Bondi Beach massacre on Hanukkah

By CHARLOTTE GRAHAM-McLAY, ROD MCGUIRK and KRISTEN GELINEAU Associated Press

SYDNEY (AP) — Australian leaders promised on Monday to immediately overhaul already-tough gun control laws after a mass shooting targeted a Hanukkah celebration on Sydney's Bondi Beach. At least 15 people died in the attack, which has fueled criticism that authorities are not doing enough to combat a surge in antisemitic crimes.

Among the new measures proposed would be a limit on the number of guns someone can own and a review of licenses held over time. Those and other actions would represent a significant update to the landmark national firearms agreement, which virtually banned rapid-fire rifles after a gunman killed 35 people in Tasmania in 1996, galvanizing the country into action.

"The government is prepared to take whatever action is necessary. Included in that is the need for tougher gun laws," Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said.

The violence erupted at the end of a summer day when thousands had flocked to Bondi Beach, an icon of Australia's cultural life. They included hundreds gathered for the Chanukah by the Sea event celebrating the start of the Jewish festival with food, face painting and a petting zoo. Albanese called the massacre an act of antisemitic terrorism that struck at the heart of the nation.

Police shot the two suspected gunmen, a father and son. The 50-year-old father died at the scene. His 24-year-old son remained in a coma in hospital on Monday, Albanese said. Police won't reveal their names.

Health officials said Tuesday that 25 people were still being treated in hospitals, 10 of them in critical condition. Those receiving care include children.

Also among them is a man who was captured on video appearing to tackle and disarm one apparent assailant, before pointing the man's weapon at him, then setting the gun on the ground.

The man was identified by Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke as Ahmed al Ahmed. The 42-year-old fruit shop owner and father of two was shot in the shoulder.

Al Ahmed, an Australian citizen who migrated from Syria in 2006, underwent surgery on Monday, his family said. Al Ahmed's parents, who moved to Australia in recent months, said their son had a background in the Syrian security forces.

"My son has always been brave. He helps people. He's like that," his mother, Malakeh Hasan al Ahmed, told Australian Broadcasting Corp. through an interpreter.

Authorities had investigated one of the suspected gunman

Albanese confirmed that Australia's main domestic spy agency, the Australian Security Intelligence Organization, had investigated the younger suspected gunman for six months in 2019.

The ABC reported that the agency had examined the son's ties to a Sydney-based Islamic State group cell. Albanese did not describe the associates, but said the agency was interested in them rather than the son.

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"He was examined on the basis of being associated with others and the assessment was made that there was no indication of any ongoing threat or threat of him engaging in violence," Albanese said.

Australia has gun laws meant to prevent mass attacks

The horror at Australia's most popular beach was the deadliest shooting in almost three decades since the 1996 Port Arthur massacre. The removal of rapid-fire rifles has markedly reduced the death tolls from such acts of violence since then.

Albanese's proposals to limit the number of guns someone can own and review licenses were announced after the authorities revealed that the older suspected gunman had held a gun license for a decade and amassed his six guns legally.

Leaders of the federal and state governments on Monday also proposed restricting gun ownership to Australian citizens, a measure that would have excluded the older suspect, who came to Australia in 1998 on a student visa and became a permanent resident after marrying a local woman. Officials wouldn't confirm what country he had migrated from.

His son, who doesn't have a gun license, is an Australian-born citizen.

The government leaders also proposed the "additional use of criminal intelligence" in deciding who was eligible for a gun license. That could mean the son's suspicious associates could disqualify the father from owning a gun.

Chris Minns, premier of New South Wales where Sydney is the state capital, said his state's gun laws would change, but he could not yet detail how.

"If you're not a farmer, you're not involved in agriculture, why do you need these massive weapons that put the public in danger and make life dangerous and difficult for New South Wales Police?" Minns asked.

Dozens being treated in hospitals

Among those hospitalized are two police officers. Those killed included a 10-year-old girl, a rabbi and a Holocaust survivor.

While none of the dead or wounded have been formally named by the authorities, the identities of those killed, who ranged in age from 10 to 87, began to emerge in news reports Monday.

Among them was Rabbi Eli Schlanger, assistant rabbi at Chabad of Bondi and an organizer of the family Hanukkah event that was targeted, according to Chabad, an Orthodox Jewish movement that runs outreach worldwide.

Israel's Foreign Ministry confirmed the death of an Israeli citizen, but gave no further details. French President Emmanuel Macron said a French citizen, identified as Dan Elkayam, was among those killed.

Larisa Kleytman told reporters outside St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney that her husband, Alexander Kleytman, was among the dead. The couple were both Holocaust survivors, according to The Australian newspaper.

Jewish leaders criticize government's response to antisemitism

Over the past year, Australia has been rocked by antisemitic attacks in Sydney and Melbourne. Synagogues and cars were torched, businesses and homes graffitied and Jews attacked in those cities, where the vast majority of the nation's Jewish population lives. Of Australia's 28 million people, about 117,000 are Jewish, according to official figures.

The massacre provoked questions about whether Albanese and his government had done enough to curb rising antisemitism. Jewish leaders and the massacre's survivors expressed fear and fury as they questioned why the men hadn't been detected before they opened fire.

"There's been a heap of inaction," said Lawrence Stand, a Sydney man who raced to a bar mitzvah celebration in Bondi when the violence erupted to find his 12-year-old daughter.

"I think the federal government has made a number of missteps on antisemitism," Alex Ryvchin, spokesperson for the Australian Council of Executive Jewry, told reporters gathered on Monday near the site of the shooting. "I think when an attack such as what we saw yesterday takes place, the paramount and fundamental duty of government is the protection of its citizens, so there's been an immense failure."

The Australian government has enacted various measures — including appointing a special envoy to

combat antisemitism, toughening laws and investing in enhanced security for Jewish schools and synagogues — to counter a surge in antisemitism since Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, and Israel responded with an offensive in Gaza.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday that he warned Australia's leaders months ago about the dangers of failing to take action against antisemitism. He claimed Australia's decision, in line with scores of other countries, to recognize a Palestinian state "pours fuel on the antisemitic fire."

Albanese in August blamed Iran for two of the previous attacks and cut diplomatic ties to Tehran. Authorities have not suggested Iran was linked to Sunday's massacre.

4 charged with plotting New Year's Eve attacks in Southern California, prosecutors say

By JULIE WATSON and CHRISTOPHER WEBER Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Federal authorities said Monday that they foiled a plot to bomb multiple sites of two U.S. companies on New Year's Eve in Southern California after arresting members of an extremist anti-capitalist and anti-government group.

The four suspects were arrested Friday in the Mojave Desert east of Los Angeles as they were rehearsing their plot, First Assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Essayli said during a news conference. Officials showed reporters surveillance aerial footage of the suspects moving a large black object in the desert to a table. Officials said they were able to make the arrests before the suspects assembled a functional explosive device.

In the criminal complaint, the four suspects named are Audrey Illeene Carroll, 30; Zachary Aaron Page, 32; Dante Gaffield, 24; and Tina Lai, 41. They are all from the Los Angeles area, Essayli said.

Officials did not describe a motive but said they are members of an offshoot of a group dubbed the Turtle Island Liberation Front. The group calls for decolonization, tribal sovereignty and "the working class to rise up and fight back against capitalism," according to the criminal complaint.

The term "Turtle Island" is used by some Indigenous peoples to describe North America in a way that reflects its existence outside of the colonial boundaries put in place by the U.S. and Canada. It comes from Indigenous creation stories where the continent was formed on the back of a giant turtle.

Officials also found "Free Palestine" flyers at the desert campsite where the suspects were working with the bomb-making materials.

The charges against each suspect include conspiracy and possession of a destructive device. Essayli said additional charges were expected in coming weeks.

The four suspects' attorneys did not immediately return requests for comment, and The Associated Press was unable to reach family members. AP also sent Turtle Island Liberation Front's social media accounts messages asking for comment but did not get a response.

Alleged plot had multiple targets

Essayli said Carroll last month created a detailed plan to bomb five or more business locations across Southern California on New Year's Eve. He declined to name the companies but described them as "Amazon-type" logistical centers.

"Carroll's bomb plot was explicit," Essayli said. "It included step-by-step instructions to build IEDs... and listed multiple targets across Orange County and Los Angeles."

The plan included planting backpacks filled with complex pipe bombs that were set to be detonated simultaneously at midnight on New Year's Eve at five locations, according to officials and the criminal complaint. New Year's Eve was identified as an opportune time in the plan that stated "fireworks will be going off at this time so explosions will be less likely to be noticed," according to the investigation.

The eight-page handwritten plan titled "OPERATION MIDNIGHT SUN" stated more locations could be added. The locations were identified as property and facilities operated by two separate companies tied to activities affecting interstate and foreign commerce, according to the complaint.

Two of the group's members also had discussed plans for future attacks targeting Immigration and

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Customs Enforcement agents and vehicles with pipe bombs in 2026, according to the criminal complaint.

Carroll noted "that would take some of them out and scare the rest of them," according to the complaint.

The plans were discussed both at an in-person meeting with members in Los Angeles and through an encrypted messaging app, Essayli said.

'Bomb-making components' found at campsite

Photos included in the court documents show a desert campsite with what investigators said were bomb-making materials strewn across plastic folding tables.

The suspects "all brought bomb-making components to the campsite, including various sizes of PVC pipes, suspected potassium nitrate, charcoal, charcoal powder, sulfur powder, and material to be used as fuses, among others," the complaint states.

The plan included instructions on how to manufacture the bombs and also how to avoid leaving evidence behind that could be traced back to the group, officials said. The suspects recently had acquired precursor chemicals and other items, including purchases from Amazon, according to the complaint.

The FBI moved in last week as they rehearsed the attack in the desert near Twentynine Palms, California, officials said.

"They had everything they needed to make an operational bomb at that location," Essayli said.

Authorities issued search warrants and found posters for the Turtle Island Liberation Front at Carroll's home that called for "Death to America," and "Death to ICE," Essayli said. In Page's residence, police found a copy of the detailed bomb plan, he added.

Los Angeles Police Chief Jim McDonnell said while federal and local officials disagree on the Trump administration's immigration raids, they come together still to protect residents. The LAPD does not stop people or take action for any reason related to immigration status, and it doesn't enforce immigration laws, a practice that has been in place for 45 years.

"The successful disruption of this plot is a powerful testament to the strength of our unified response," McDonnell said.

The suspects were taken into custody without incident. They were scheduled to appear in court in Los Angeles Monday afternoon.

Brian Walshe found guilty of murdering his wife, who disappeared nearly 3 years ago

By MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Brian Walshe was found guilty Monday of first-degree murder in the grisly death of his wife, whom he was accused of killing and dismembering nearly three years ago while he awaited sentencing in an art fraud case relating to the sale of two fake Andy Warhol paintings.

Ana Walshe, a real estate agent who immigrated from Serbia, was last seen early Jan. 1, 2023, after a New Year's Eve dinner at the couple's home.

There was no reaction in the courtroom or from Walshe as the verdict was read. Walshe, who faces life in state prison without parole, is scheduled to be sentenced Wednesday. He was handcuffed and shackled before being led out of the courtroom. Last month, Walshe plead guilty to lesser charges of misleading police and illegally disposing of her body.

"It's not about winning or losing. It's about getting the right answer and this was the right answer," Norfolk County District Attorney Michael Morrissey told reporters outside court. "We don't look at cases as wins or losses. We look at getting justice for someone, so let's not lose sight of that fact."

Morrissey said his office had heard from Ana Walshe's sister, who told them "justice had been served."

A digital trail of evidence

Prosecutors leaned heavily on digital evidence in presenting their case against Brian Walshe, including online searches such as "dismemberment and best ways to dispose of a body," "how long before a body starts to smell" and "hacksaw best tool to dismember" that were found on devices connected to him.

Investigators also found searches on a Macbook that included "how long for someone missing to inherit,"

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"how long missing to be dead," and "can you throw away body parts," prosecutors told the jury.

An article titled "is it possible to clean DNA off a knife," a search for "best way to dispose of body parts after murder" as well as websites and searches about "cleaning blood with ammonia, bleach and hydrogen peroxide" were also highlighted during trial.

Surveillance video also showed a man resembling Walshe throwing what appeared to be heavy trash bags into a dumpster not far from their home. A subsequent search of a trash processing facility near his mother's home uncovered bags containing a hatchet, hammer, sheers, hacksaw, towels and a protective Tyvek suit, cleaning agents, a Prada purse, boots like the ones Ana Walshe was last seen wearing and a COVID-19 vaccination card with her name.

Prosecutors told the jury that the Massachusetts State Crime Laboratory examined some of the items for DNA and found Ana and Brian Walshe's DNA on the Tyvek suit and Ana Walshe's DNA on the hatchet, hacksaw and other items.

There were several possible motives for the killing that were floated by prosecutors.

It could have been financial. An insurance executive testified that Brian Walshe was the sole beneficiary of Ana Walshe's \$1 million life insurance policy.

But prosecutors also portrayed a marriage that was falling apart, with Brian Walshe confined at home in Massachusetts awaiting sentencing on the art fraud case while Ana Walshe worked in Washington, D.C., and commuted back home.

Also the year before she died, his wife had started an affair, details of which were shared in court by her boyfriend William Fastow. Brian Walshe's attorney denied that his client knew about the affair.

Defense: Walshe's death was 'sudden' and 'unexplained'

In his opening, Walshe's attorney, Larry Tipton, argued this was not a case of murder but what he called the "sudden unexplained death" of Ana Walshe. He portrayed a couple who loved each other and were planning for the future before Ana Walshe died after celebrating New Year's Eve with her husband and a friend.

The couple, who have three young children now in state custody, lived in the affluent coastal community of Cohasset, about 15 miles (24 kilometers) southeast of Boston.

The expectation was that the defense would put up a case proving that theory and raising doubts about the investigation.

The defense considered calling several forensic DNA experts as well as Michael Proctor, who was fired from the Massachusetts State Police after he came under fire for his role in investigating the Karen Read case. There was also speculation that Walshe would take the stand.

But in the end, Walshe's defense team rested without calling any witnesses.

When initially questioned by investigators, Walshe said his wife had been called to Washington, D.C., on New Year's Day for a work emergency. But witnesses testified there was no evidence Ana Walshe took a ride service to the airport or boarded a flight. Walshe didn't contact her employer until Jan. 4.

Walshe later admitted that he dismembered her body and disposed of it in dumpster, saying he did so only after panicking when he found his wife had died in bed.

"Here, the evidence about dismemberment and improper disposal of a body was overwhelming, so I suspect the defense goal was to concede that through the guilty pleas, and make the case all about the murder and the absence of direct evidence about intent and cause of death," said Daniel Medwed, a law professor at Northeastern University.

"But the prosecution did an excellent job of introducing circumstantial evidence and providing the bread-crumbs that led the jury down the path toward finding premeditation."

Search for the Brown University shooter continues as questions swirl about campus security

By KIMBERLEE KRUESI and LEAH WILLINGHAM Associated Press

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — Authorities knocked on doors and scoured yards Monday in search of any video or other evidence that might lead them to the Brown University gunman, whose face was covered or not visible in footage captured before and after the weekend attack that killed two students and wounded nine others.

Officials released three new videos of the man they believe carried out Saturday's attack that show him wearing a mask and a dark two-tone jacket. Although his face wasn't visible, the footage from about two hours before the shooting provided the clearest images yet of the suspect.

The FBI said the man is about 5 feet, 8 inches (173 centimeters) tall, with a stocky build. The agency offered a \$50,000 reward for information leading to the identification, arrest and conviction of the person responsible.

"We're asking for the public's assistance," Providence's police chief, Col. Oscar Perez, said at a news conference, urging people who might recognize the suspect to call a tip line.

Police renewed their search after releasing a person of interest Sunday once they determined the evidence pointed elsewhere. Meanwhile, details began to emerge about the students who were shot.

The lockdown order for the Ivy League school was lifted Sunday after authorities said they had detained the person of interest. But hopes for a quick resolution were dashed when they announced hours later that they had released him.

The abrupt change of direction marked a setback in the investigation as questions swirl about campus security, the apparent lack of school video evidence and whether the focus on the person of interest gave the attacker more time to escape.

Colin Moussette, who has friends at Brown and is considering enrolling next fall, said while visiting the campus Monday that he felt uneasy knowing the suspect hadn't been caught.

"How someone got away, like in the middle of the day is, to me, not only heartbreaking but very concerning," he said. "How they got access to the building is concerning."

New video emerges

Before Monday's news conference, police released a second video showing someone dressed in black walking along a city street minutes after the shooting. The video — like one released the day of the shooting — didn't show the suspect's face.

In a neighborhood near the university, a line of officers scraped their feet through a snow-covered yard looking for evidence. Meanwhile, agents identifying themselves as U.S. marshals asked locals if they had security cameras.

Attorney General Peter Neronha, who said Sunday that there weren't many cameras where the attack happened, said Monday that investigators were "making steady progress."

Law enforcement on Monday appeared to still be performing basic of investigative tasks, including tracing the suspect's movements in the minutes after the attack and searching for evidence near the crime scene.

"I was really glad to see that they were doing something," said Katherine Baima, who lives in the area. "This is the first time any of us in my building, as far as I know, had heard from anyone. We hadn't gotten alerts and we were really surprised that there hadn't been anyone searching, let alone knocking on doors, on the first night."

One of the dead was active in church. The other overcame health concerns

The shooting happened in an auditorium-style classroom where students in a study group were preparing for an upcoming exam.

Ella Cook, a 19-year-old sophomore who was vice president of the Brown College Republicans and beloved in her church in Birmingham, Alabama, was one of the students killed, according to her pastor at home.

In announcing her death Sunday, the Rev. R. Craig Smalley described Cook as "an incredible grounded, faithful, bright light" who encouraged and "lifted up those around her."

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"Ella was known for her bold, brave, and kind heart as she served her chapter and her fellow classmates," Martin Bertao, the president of the club, said in a message posted on X.

The other student who was killed was MukhammadAziz Umurzokov, an 18-year-old freshman majoring in biochemistry and neuroscience. He was helping a friend at a review session for an economics final when he was shot, his sister said.

As a child, Umurzokov suffered a neurological condition that required surgery, and he later wore a back brace because of scoliosis, said Samira Umurzokova, noting that the family immigrated to the U.S. from Uzbekistan when she, her brother and sister were young.

"He had so many hardships in his life, and he got into this amazing school and tried so hard to follow through with the promise he made when was 7 years old," she told the AP by phone Monday.

Only one of the nine people wounded had been released as of Sunday, Brown President Christina Paxson said. One was in critical condition and the other seven were in critical but stable condition. Mayor Brett Smiley said Monday evening that none of their conditions had worsened, but that he didn't have further information.

Durham Academy, a private K-12 school in Durham, North Carolina, confirmed that a recent graduate, Kendall Turner, was critically wounded and that her parents were with her. "Our school community is rallying around Kendall, her classmates, and her loved ones," the school said in a statement.

Another wounded student, 18-year-old freshman Spencer Yang of New York City, told the New York Times and the Brown Daily Herald from a hospital bed that there was a mad scramble after the gunman entered the room where he and the other students were studying for finals. Many students ran toward the front of the room, but Yang said he wound up on the ground between some seats and was shot in the leg.

Yang, who expects to be discharged in the coming days, said he tried to keep some of the more seriously wounded students conscious until police arrived.

Questions are raised about campus security

Brown was no longer on lockdown and the city's schools were open Monday. But some colleges and universities, including in Rhode Island and some Ivy League schools, were increasing security in light of the attack. Yale said extra security would be in place for Hanukkah celebrations.

The shooting occurred as final exams were underway at Brown, one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious schools.

Investigators were not immediately sure how the shooter got inside the first-floor classroom.

The attack set off hours of chaos on campus and in the surrounding neighborhoods, as hundreds of officers searched for the shooter.

Li Ding, a Rhode Island School of Design student who is on a dance team at Brown, was upset that there wasn't better security on campus.

"The fact that we're in such a surveillance state but that wasn't used correctly at all is just so deeply frustrating," Ding said.

Abrego Garcia is still hoping to find justice after his wrongful deportation, his lawyer says

By REBECCA SANTANA and TRAVIS LOLLER Associated Press

FAIRFAX, Virginia (AP) — Kilmar Abrego Garcia wasn't an activist and he didn't choose to become locked in to what has become one of the most contentious immigration issues of the Trump administration, his lawyer told The Associated Press on Monday.

But as he experiences some of the few days he's had with his family since being sent erroneously to an El Salvador prison in March, his lawyer said he's still hoping for a just resolution to his case.

"He's been through a lot, and he's still fighting," said his lawyer Simon Sandoval-Moshenberg during an interview with AP following Abrego Garcia's court-ordered release from detention last week. "What it is he can fight for is circumscribed by the law and by the great power of the United States government, but he's still fighting."

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Abrego Garcia's mistaken deportation to El Salvador helped galvanize opposition to President Donald Trump's immigration policies. He was held in a notoriously brutal prison there despite having no criminal record.

U.S. officials claimed Abrego Garcia was an MS-13 gang member, an allegation he denies and which he wasn't charged for. He was later charged with human smuggling, accusations his lawyers have called preposterous and vindictive.

The Trump administration fought efforts to return him to the U.S. but eventually complied. Since then, his case has been a twisted turn of legal filings and wranglings that has seen Abrego Garcia, a Salvadoran national, released from detention once since March — and that time just for a weekend — while the government has pursued smuggling charges against him and announced plans to deport him to a series of African countries.

Then last week, a federal district court judge in Maryland ordered him to be released and barred the government for now from detaining him again until a hearing can be held in his case, possibly as early as this week, said Sandoval-Moshenberg.

The Department of Homeland Security criticized the judge's decision to release him last week and vowed to appeal, calling the ruling "naked judicial activism" by a judge appointed during the Obama administration. On Monday, Homeland Security declined to comment for this story, citing restrictions on public comments put in place by a judge in Tennessee.

Asylum, green card or Costa Rica

Sandoval-Moshenberg said Abrego Garcia has a number of paths forward. He said he thought that his client had a strong case for asylum. His original asylum claim in 2019 was rejected because he applied after the one-year deadline. But Sandoval-Moshenberg argued the government essentially reset the clock by removing him to El Salvador and then bringing him back.

And after the alleged abuse Sandoval-Moshenberg said Abrego Garcia suffered in El Salvador this year, he thought he would have a "rock solid" asylum case. But, citing the twists and turns of his case and how he's become a symbol for the administration's pursuit of immigrants, he's concerned about his chances of getting a fair trial in immigration court.

"I think they've already shown that they're willing to stack the deck," said Sandoval-Moshenberg.

Abrego Garcia could also apply for a green card since he's married to an American citizen. But that would require getting a waiver from the government, said Sandoval-Moshenberg, and the lawyer is doubtful one would be granted.

Or he could continue to seek removal to Costa Rica, said Sandoval-Moshenberg, a country that has offered to allow him to enter as a refugee and live and work legally. And he wouldn't be returned to El Salvador, the attorney said.

But he also believes the government would continue to fight that option.

"They're focused on beating him. They're focused on punishing him. They're focusing on making him miserable. I guess Costa Rica isn't miserable enough," he said.

Figuring out what the government will do

Sandoval-Moshenberg said he spent some time with Abrego Garcia and his family over the weekend talking through the government's next steps and what Abrego Garcia might want for his future.

"There's so many different ways it could go. And so much of it depends on just how dirty the government's willing to play," he said.

Sandoval-Moshenberg said that he thought that if the government was willing to remove him to Costa Rica, his client would accept it although he stressed that the decision was up to him.

He said that Abrego Garcia and his legal team wouldn't consider that justice — that to him would mean staying with his family in the U.S. But Sandoval-Moshenberg said that given everything he's faced and the "fact that they're apparently willing to use infinite prosecutorial resources against him, deportation to Costa Rica is an acceptable outcome for him."

Sandoval-Moshenberg also stressed that there is one place that Abrego Garcia does not want to go.

"His number one priority is not to end up back in CECOT," said Sandoval-Moshenberg, referring to the

prison in El Salvador where his client was held. Sandoval-Moshenberg said Abrego Garcia had been tortured there, claims authorities in El Salvador have denied and that the AP could not independently verify.

"His number one priority is avoiding getting sent back to that prison."

'He's a random guy'

Sandoval-Moshenberg said he has no idea why the government seems to have chosen Abrego Garcia's case to fight tooth and nail.

"This isn't a case where he's an activist, like an immigrants rights activist, or he's been, you know, persecuted by the government for his pro-Palestinian speech or something like that," the attorney said. "He's a random guy."

The whole process of deportation, imprisonment and return has "just been this really sort of bizarre, out of world experience for him," Sandoval-Moshenberg said.

The judge temporarily barred the Trump administration from detaining Abrego Garcia last Friday until the next court hearing.

While no date has been set for that, it could happen as early as later this week, Sandoval-Moshenberg said, noting the whiplash of the case has been a struggle for Abrego Garcia and his family.

"The ground underneath his feet, it's just earthquake after earthquake," he said.

Rob Reiner's son Nick arrested after the director and his wife were found dead at their home

By CHRISTOPHER WEBER and MIKE BALSAMO Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The 32-year-old son of Hollywood icon Rob Reiner was arrested on suspicion of murder and held without bail Monday in the stabbing deaths of his parents in their Los Angeles home, authorities said.

The case will be given to prosecutors on Tuesday as they consider formal charges against Nick Reiner, who was taken into custody hours after Rob Reiner and Michele Singer Reiner were found dead. Police haven't said anything about a motive for the killings.

Representatives for the Reiner family did not immediately respond to a request for comment, and it wasn't immediately clear if Nick Reiner had an attorney who could speak on his behalf.

Rob and Nick Reiner had explored their difficult relationship and Nick Reiner's struggles with drugs in a semi-autobiographical 2016 film, "Being Charlie." Nick Reiner has spoken publicly of his struggles with addiction. By 18, he had cycled in and out of treatment facilities with bouts of homelessness and relapses in between.

The bodies were discovered Sunday afternoon at the home in the upscale Brentwood neighborhood, and investigators believe they were stabbed, a law enforcement official told The Associated Press. The official, who was briefed on the investigation, could not publicly discuss the details and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

Reiner was long one of the most prolific directors in Hollywood, and his work included some of the most memorable movies of the 1980s and '90s, including "This is Spinal Tap," "A Few Good Men," "When Harry Met Sally" and "The Princess Bride."

His role as Michael "Meathead" Stivic in Norman Lear's 1970s TV classic "All in the Family" as a liberal foil to Carroll O'Connor's Archie Bunker catapulted him to fame and won him two Emmy Awards.

The son of comedy legend Carl Reiner, Rob Reiner married photographer Michele Singer Reiner in 1989. The two met while he was directing "When Harry Met Sally." They had three children together: Nick, Jake and Romy.

Reiner told The New York Times in 1989 that the cinematographer on "When Harry Met Sally," Barry Sonnenfeld, predicted he would marry her. "I look over and I see this girl, and whoo! I was attracted immediately," Reiner said.

Michele Singer Reiner was a producer for "Spinal Tap II: The End Continues," "God & Country," "Albert

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Brooks: Defending My Life" and "Shock and Awe," according to IMDB. Earlier in her career, she photographed the cover image of President Donald Trump's 1987 bestseller "The Art of the Deal."

Trump on Monday blamed Rob Reiner's outspoken opposition to the president for the actor-director's killing, delivering the unsubstantiated claim in a social media post that seemed intent on decrying his opponents even in the face of a tragedy.

Relatives of Lear, the legendary producer who died in 2023, said the Reiners' deaths left them bereft.

"Norman often referred to Rob as a son, and their close relationship was extraordinary, to us and the world," a Lear family statement said. "Norman would have wanted to remind us that Rob and Michele spent every breath trying to make this country a better place, and they pursued that through their art, their activism, their philanthropy, and their love for family and friends."

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass called the deaths a devastating loss for the city.

"Rob Reiner's contributions reverberate throughout American culture and society, and he has improved countless lives through his creative work and advocacy fighting for social and economic justice," Bass said in a statement. "An acclaimed actor, director, producer, writer, and engaged political activist, he always used his gifts in service of others."

Reiner was previously married to actor-director Penny Marshall from 1971 to 1981. He adopted her daughter, Tracy Reiner. Carl Reiner died in 2020 at age 98 and Marshall died in 2018.

Killings are rare in the Brentwood neighborhood. The scene is about a mile from the home where O.J. Simpson's wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ron Goldman were killed in 1994.

Crews use sandbags to shore up levee breach near Seattle after failure prompts flood warning

By MANUEL VALDES and CLAIRE RUSH Associated Press

TUKWILA, Wash. (AP) — Crews used sandbags to shore up an earthen levee south of Seattle on Monday after a small section of it failed following a week of heavy rains, prompting an evacuation order covering parts of three suburbs, officials said.

The evacuation order from King County in Washington state was sent to about 1,100 homes and businesses east of the Green River in parts of Kent, Renton and Tukwila, said Brendan McCluskey, the county's emergency management director. The National Weather Service issued a flash flood warning that initially covered nearly 47,000 people, but was reduced within a few hours to an area covering 7,000 people.

No one was injured, McCluskey said.

Authorities in Renton and Tukwila said Monday afternoon that the flooding was confined to small, industrial areas and that no residents were being evacuated.

The levee breach followed days of heavy rain and flooding that inundated communities, forced the evacuations of tens of thousands of people and prompted scores of rescues throughout western Washington state.

The failure occurred on the Desimone levee beside the Green River, in an area where officials had been concerned about a possible breach, John Taylor, director of the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, said at a news conference Monday.

With high water levels in the past week, workers began installing a "seepage blanket" — a permeable material that can remove water from a cut slope — in an effort to reduce the flood risk, and crews were present Monday when the breach occurred.

"We were there because we are monitoring these levees closely," Taylor said. "It's just not typical to have these levees have this much water behind them for this long. They're getting saturated and they're starting to show the effects of that."

The spokesperson for the city of Renton, Laura Pettitt, said the breach was minimal and was being filled with sandbags, including large ones about 3 feet (1 meter) tall and holding about a ton of sand.

"What we understand is that the area is being managed and the breach has been controlled," she said. "However, that's not to say that there wouldn't be future impact with any changing situation."

A section of paved bike path along the top of the levee in Tukwila cratered and broke where the levee

washed away beneath it.

Reid Wolcott, warning coordination meteorologist with the National Weather Service, said the flash flood warning was initially issued for a "rather large area because we didn't know specifically which areas would flood."

"We have since refined the initial alerting area to a much smaller area, and we will continue to refine that alert as we learn more information on the potential impacts," he said.

The levee was badly damaged during flooding in 2020. Long-term repairs were not expected to be completed until 2031, according to a blog post from the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks.

In August 2015, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began repairs to a 775-foot-long (235-meter) segment of the levee, as the result of flooding in March 2014, according to the federal agency. The damage significantly impacted the levee's ability to protect an area of about 7.5 square miles (19 square kilometers). The repairs were to be completed by the end of 2015, though it wasn't immediately clear when work concluded.

Big Ten puts 10 on AP All-America first team, led by 4 from Ohio State and Hoosier star Mendoza

By ERIC OLSON AP College Football Writer

Four players from Ohio State are among 10 first-team picks from the Big Ten Conference on The Associated Press All-America team released Monday, a group headed by repeat selection Caleb Downs of the Buckeyes and AP Player of the Year Fernando Mendoza of Indiana.

The AP has named an All-America team every year since 1925, and Notre Dame's two first-team picks this season increased its all-time lead to 87.

Downs, the Big Ten defensive player of the year, has made the first team each of his two seasons at Ohio State after landing on the second team as a freshman at Alabama in 2023. He is one of 12 players on the 27-man first team who did not start their careers at their current school. Downs is joined on the first team by fellow Buckeyes players Jeremiah Smith, Kayden McDonald and Arvell Reese.

Mendoza, who won the Heisman Trophy over the weekend, led the top-ranked Hoosiers to a 13-0 record and the No. 1 seed in the College Football Playoff after transferring from California. He has thrown a nation-leading 33 touchdown passes and is the catalyst of one of the most productive offenses in the country.

A total of 18 schools are represented on the first team, including seven of the 12 in the CFP.

Iowa has had at least one first-team player for seven straight years and in 10 of the last 12. This is the fourth year in a row Miami, Notre Dame and Ohio State have had at least one.

Punter Cole Maynard gave Western Kentucky its first-ever first-team pick. Defensive lineman Landon Robinson is Navy's first since 1975 and kicker Kansei Matsuzawa is Hawaii's first since 1986.

First-team All-Americans (by conference)

Big Ten — 10

SEC — 6

Big 12 — 3

ACC — 1

Independent — 3

Conference USA — 2

American — 1

Mountain West — 1

The AP All-America team was selected by a panel of 52 college Top 25 poll voters.

First-team offense

Wide receiver — Makai Lemon, Southern California, junior, 5-11, 195, Los Angeles.

Wide receiver — Jeremiah Smith, Ohio State, sophomore, 6-3, 223, Miami Gardens, Florida.

Wide receiver — Skyler Bell, UConn, senior, 6-0, 185, New York, N.Y.

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Tackle — Francis Mauigoa, Miami, junior, 6-6, 335, Ili'ili, American Samoa.
Tackle — Spencer Fano, Utah, junior, 6-6, 308, Spanish Fork, Utah.
Guard — Emmanuel Pregon, Oregon, senior, 6-5, 318, Denver.
Guard — Beau Stephens, Iowa, senior, 6-5, 315, Blue Springs, Missouri.
Center — Logan Jones, Iowa, graduate, 6-3, 202, Council Bluffs, Iowa.
Tight end — Eli Stowers, Vanderbilt, graduate, 6-4, 235, Denton, Texas.
Quarterback — Fernando Mendoza, Indiana, junior, 6-5, 225, Miami.
Running back — Jeremiyah Love, Notre Dame, junior, 6-0, 214, St. Louis.
Running back — Ahmad Hardy, Missouri, sophomore, 5-10, 210, Oma, Mississippi.
Kicker — Kansei Matsuzawa, Hawaii, senior, 6-2, 200, Tokyo.
All-purpose — KC Concepcion, Texas A&M, junior, 5-11, 190, Charlotte, North Carolina.
First-team defense
Edge rusher — David Bailey, Texas Tech, senior, 6-3, 250, Irvine, California.
Edge rusher — Cashius Howell, Texas A&M, senior, 6-2, 248, Kansas City, Missouri.
Interior lineman — Kayden McDonald, Ohio State, junior, 6-3, 326, Suwanee, Georgia.
Interior lineman — Landon Robinson, Navy, senior, 6-0, 287, Fairlawn, Ohio.
Linebacker — Jacob Rodriguez, Texas Tech, senior, 6-1, 235, Wichita Falls, Texas.
Linebacker — Arvell Reese, Ohio State, junior, 6-4, 243, Cleveland.
Linebacker — CJ Allen, Georgia, junior, 6-1, 235, Barnesville, Georgia.
Cornerback — Leonard Moore, Notre Dame, sophomore, 6-2, 195, Round Rock, Texas.
Cornerback — Mansoor Delane, LSU, senior, 6-0, 190, Silver Spring, Maryland.
Safety — Caleb Downs, Ohio State, junior, 6-0, 205, Hoschton, Georgia.
Safety — Bishop Fitzgerald, Southern California, senior, 5-11, 205, Woodbridge, Virginia.
Defensive back — Jakari Foster, Louisiana Tech, senior, 6-0, 211, Piedmont, Alabama.
Punter — Cole Maynard, Western Kentucky, senior, 6-1, 180, Mooresville, North Carolina.
Second-team offense
Wide receiver — Carnell Tate, Ohio State, junior, 6-3, 195, Chicago.
Wide receiver — Malachi Toney, Miami, freshman, 5-11, 188, Liberty City, Florida.
Wide receiver — Danny Scudero, San Jose State, sophomore, 5-9, 174, San Jose, California.
Tackle — Kady Proctor, Alabama, junior, 6-7, 366, Des Moines, Iowa.
Tackle — Carter Smith, Indiana, junior, 6-5, 313, Powell, Ohio.
Guard — Olaivavega Ioane, Penn State, junior, 6-4, 323, Graham, Washington.
Guard — Ar'maj Reed-Adams, Texas A&M, graduate, 6-5, 325, Dallas.
Center — Jake Slaughter, Florida, senior, 6-4, 303, Sparr, Florida.
Tight end — Kenyon Sadiq, Oregon, junior, 6-3, 245, Idaho Falls, Idaho.
Quarterback — Diego Pavia, Vanderbilt, graduate, 6-0, 207, Albuquerque, New Mexico.
Running back — Emmett Johnson, Nebraska, junior, 5-11, 200, Minneapolis.
Running back — Kewan Lacy, Mississippi, sophomore, 5-11, 210, Dallas.
Kicker — Tate Sandell, Oklahoma, junior, 5-9, 182, Port Neches, Texas.
All-purpose — Wayne Knight, James Madison, junior, 5-7, 190, Smyrna, Delaware.
Second-team defense
Edge rusher — Rueben Bain Jr., Miami, junior, 6-3, 270, Miami.
Edge rusher — John Henry Daley, Utah, sophomore, 6-4, 255, Alpine, Utah.
Interior lineman — A.J. Holmes Jr., Texas Tech, junior, 6-3, 300, Houston.
Interior lineman — Peter Woods, Clemson, junior, 6-3, 310, Alabaster, Alabama.
Linebacker — Sonny Styles, Ohio State, senior, 6-5, 243, Pickerington, Ohio.
Linebacker — Anthony Hill Jr., Texas, junior, 6-3, 238, Denton, Texas.
Linebacker — Red Murdock, Buffalo, graduate, 6-1, 240, Petersburg, Virginia.
Cornerback — D'Angelo Ponds, Indiana, junior, 5-9, 173, Miami.
Cornerback — Chris Johnson, San Diego State, senior, 6-0, 195, Eastvale, California.

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Safety — Dillon Thieneman, Oregon, junior, 6-0, 205, Westfield, Indiana.
Safety — Louis Moore, Indiana, senior, 5-11, 200, Mesquite, Texas.
Defensive back — Hezekiah Masses, California, senior, 6-1, 185, Deerfield Beach, Florida.
Punter — Brett Thorson, Georgia, senior, 6-2, 235, Melbourne, Australia.
Third-team offense
Wide receiver — Eric McAlister, TCU, senior, 6-3, 205, Azle, Texas.
Wide receiver — Chris Brazzell II, Tennessee, junior, 6-5, 200, Midland, Texas.
Wide receiver — Jordyn Tyson, Arizona State, junior, 6-2, 200, Allen, Texas.
Tackle — Keagen Trost, Missouri, graduate, 6-4, 316, Kankakee, Illinois.
Tackle — Brian Parker II, Duke, junior, 6-5, 305, Cincinnati.
Guard — Keylan Rutledge, Georgia Tech, senior, 6-4, 330, Royston, Georgia.
Guard — Evan Tengesdahl, Cincinnati, sophomore, 6-3, 320, Dayton, Ohio.
Center — Iapani Laloulu, Oregon, junior, 6-2, 329, Honolulu.
Tight end — Michael Trigg, Baylor, senior, 6-4, 240, Tampa, Florida.
Quarterback — Julian Sayin, Ohio State, redshirt freshman, 6-1, 208, Carlsbad, California.
Running back — Cam Cook, Jacksonville State, junior, 5-11, 200, Round Rock, Texas.
Running back — Kaytron Allen, Penn State, senior, 5-11, 219, Norfolk, Virginia.
Kicker — Aidan Birr, Georgia Tech, junior, 6-1, 205, Kennedale, Texas.
All-purpose — Jadarian Price, Notre Dame, junior, 5-11, 210, Denison, Texas.
Third-team defense
Edge rusher — Caden Curry, Ohio State, senior, 6-3, 260, Greenwood, Indiana.
Edge rusher — Nadame Tucker, Western Michigan, senior, 6-3, 250, New York.
Interior lineman — Tyrique Tucker, Indiana, junior, 6-0, 302, Norfolk, Virginia.
Interior lineman — Lee Hunter, Texas Tech, senior, 6-4, 330, Mobile, Alabama.
Linebacker — Aiden Fisher, Indiana, senior, 6-1, 231, Fredericksburg, Virginia.
Linebacker — Caden Fordham, North Carolina State, graduate, 6-1, 230, Ponte Vedra, Florida.
Linebacker — Owen Long, Colorado State, sophomore, 6-2, 230, Whittier, California.
Cornerback — Avieon Terrell, Clemson, junior, 5-11, 180, Atlanta.
Cornerback — Treydan Stukes, Arizona, senior, 6-2, 200, Litchfield Park, Arizona.
Safety — Michael Taaffe, Texas, senior, 6-0, 189, Austin, Texas.
Safety — Emmanuel McNeil-Warren, Toledo, senior, 6-2, 202, Tampa, Florida.
Defensive back — Bray Hubbard, Alabama, junior, 6-2, 213, Ocean Springs, Mississippi.
Punter — Ryan Eckley, Michigan State, junior, 6-2, 207, Lithia, Florida.

Court battle begins over California's new congressional map designed to favor Democrats

By MICHAEL R. BLOOD and TRẦN NGUYỄN Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The fight over California's new congressional map designed to help Democrats flip a string of U.S. House seats kicked off in court Monday, where a panel of federal judges is considering whether the rejiggered districts approved by voters last month can be used in elections.

The hearing in Los Angeles sets the stage for a high-stakes legal and political fight between the Trump administration and Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom, who's been eyeing a 2028 presidential run. The lawsuit asks a three-judge panel to grant a temporary restraining order blocking the new map by Dec. 19 — the date candidates can take the first official steps to run in the 2026 elections when GOP control of the House will be in play.

Voters approved California's new House map in November in so-called Proposition 50. It's designed to help Democrats flip as many as five seats in the midterm elections. It was Newsom's response to a Republican-led effort in Texas backed by President Donald Trump.

The showdown between the nation's two most populous states has spread nationally, with efforts aiming

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to determine which party controls Congress for the second half of Trump's term. Missouri, North Carolina and Ohio have adopted new district lines that could provide a partisan advantage.

Some plans are facing legal challenges, but the Supreme Court ruled earlier this month to allow Texas to use its new map for the 2026 election. The Justice Department has only sued California.

The Justice Department, joining a case brought by the California Republican Party, has accused California of gerrymandering its map in violation of the Constitution by using race as a factor to favor Hispanic voters. Republicans want the court to prohibit California from using the new map. Voters approved the map for the 2026, 2028 and 2030 elections. State Democrats said they're confident the lawsuit will fail.

"In letting Texas use its gerrymandered maps, the Supreme Court noted that California's maps, like Texas', were drawn for lawful reasons," Newsom's spokesperson Brandon Richards said in a statement. "That should be the beginning and the end of this Republican effort to silence the voters of California."

The lawsuit cites a news release from state Democrats that says the new map "retains and expands Voting Rights Act districts that empower Latino voters" while making no changes to Black majority districts in the Oakland and Los Angeles areas. The federal Voting Rights Act, passed in the 1960s, sets rules for drawing districts to ensure minority groups have adequate political power. The lawsuit also cites a Cal Poly Pomona and Caltech study that concludes the new map would increase Latino voting power.

"Race cannot be used as a proxy to advance political interests, but that is precisely what the California General Assembly did with Proposition 50 — the recent ballot initiative that junked California's pre-existing electoral map in favor of a rush-job rejiggering of California's congressional district lines," the lawsuit said.

The Justice Department alleges that Paul Mitchell, a redistricting consultant who drew the map for Democrats, and state leaders admitted that they redrew some districts to have a Latino majority.

The hearing began with a dense, technical discussion spotlighting how one of the districts — the 13th, in the state's Central Valley — was designed, touching on issues like the Hispanic voting age population, census population blocks and different software used manage and massage the data.

"Race was the predominant interest in drawing the district," elections analyst Sean Trende, called by the plaintiffs, told the judges. He pointed to a thumb-like appendage jutting out of the northern end of the new district, which he characterized as a precise knife cut to capture certain voters.

Defense attorneys picked away at his analysis, questioning in part whether political shifts in the region could have dictated how lines were drawn rather than racial considerations. At one point Trende acknowledged that the thumb-like bump in the district boundary was not as extreme as congressional maps seen in other states.

New U.S. House maps are drawn across the country after the Census every 10 years. Some states like California rely on an independent commission to draw maps, while others like Texas let politicians draw them. The effort to create new maps in the middle of the decade is highly unusual.

House Democrats need to gain just a handful of seats next year to take control of the chamber, which would imperil Trump's agenda for the remainder of his term and open the way for congressional investigations into his administration. Republicans hold 219 seats, to Democrats' 214.

'General Hospital' star Anthony Geary of Luke and Laura fame dies at 78

By The Associated Press undefined

Anthony Geary, who rose to fame in the 1970s and '80s as half the daytime TV super couple Luke and Laura on "General Hospital," has died. He was 78.

"We are deeply saddened by the passing of Anthony Geary, whose portrayal of Luke Spencer helped define General Hospital and daytime television," ABC said in a statement confirming his death.

Geary died Sunday in Amsterdam of complications from a surgical procedure three days prior.

"The entire 'General Hospital' family is heartbroken over the news of Tony Geary's passing," Frank Valentini, executive producer of the ABC show, said in a statement Monday. "Tony was a brilliant actor and set the bar that we continue to strive for."

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In a career spanning more than 40 years, Geary earned eight Daytime Emmy awards as Luke Spencer after joining the soap in 1978. Luke's pairing with Genie Francis' Laura Webber Baldwin (as she was known at the time) propelled the two onto magazine covers and into the cultural mainstream.

The 1981 wedding of Luke and Laura was a pop culture phenom done in two parts, drawing guest appearances that included Elizabeth Taylor. A record 30 million viewers watched.

"He was a powerhouse as an actor. Shoulder to shoulder with the greats. No star burned brighter than Tony Geary. He was one of a kind. As an artist, he was filled with a passion for the truth, no matter how blunt, or even a little rude it might be, but always hilariously funny," Francis said in a statement.

In addition to his role as Luke, Geary had numerous TV and stage credits, including stints on other soaps: "The Young and the Restless" and "Bright Promise." Geary played Luke on and off until 2015, though he returned for a cameo in 2017.

He lived a quiet life with husband Claudio Gama in Amsterdam.

In a 1993 interview, Geary spoke of the many highs and lows of playing Luke.

"I felt like I had to be Luke 24 hours a day or people would be disappointed," he said. "As far as I'm concerned, they are mythic creatures. They come from two sides of the universe together and have a mutual connection, which is basically lust and appreciation for individuality. They love the eccentricity in each other."

Geary's Luke began as a small-time hitman recruited to dismantle the relationship of Laura and her first husband, Scotty Baldwin. Their story arc turned darker when Luke sexually assaulted Laura. The assault led to a redemption trail for Luke, who evolved into a hero and even served as mayor of the show's small town, Port Charles.

"He was not created to be a heroic character," Geary told ABC's "Nightline" in 2015. "He was created to be an anti-hero, and I have treasured the anti-side of the hero and pushed it for a long time. ... He's not a white hat or a black hat, he's all shades of grey. And that has been the saving grace of playing him all these years."

Geary was born to Mormon parents in Coalville, Utah. He was discovered while attending the University of Utah and performing on stage. He joined a touring company of "The Subject was Roses," which brought him to Los Angeles.

Over the years, he appeared frequently in stage productions alongside his screen work.

Geary's first appearance on TV was as Tom Whalom on an episode of "Room 222." He went on to appear in "All in the Family," "The Partridge Family," "The Mod Squad," "Marcus Welby, M.D.," "The Streets of San Francisco" and "Barnaby Jones."

US officials say Washington has agreed to give Ukraine security guarantees in peace talks

By STEFANIE DAZIO and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — The U.S. has agreed to provide unspecified security guarantees to Ukraine as part of a peace deal to end Russia's nearly four-year war, and more talks are likely this weekend, U.S. officials said Monday following the latest discussions with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Berlin.

The officials said talks with President Donald Trump's envoys, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, led to narrowing differences on security guarantees that Kyiv said must be provided, as well as on Moscow's demand that Ukraine concede land in the Donbas region in the country's east.

Trump dialed into a dinner Monday evening with negotiators and European leaders, and more talks are expected this weekend in Miami or elsewhere in the United States, according to the U.S. officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly by the White House.

"I think we're closer now than we have been, ever," Trump told reporters at an unrelated White House event. He added, "We're having tremendous support from European leaders. They want to get it ended, also."

The U.S. officials said the offer of security guarantees won't be on the table "forever." They said the

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Trump administration plans to put forward the agreement on guarantees for Senate approval, although they didn't specify whether it would be ratified like a treaty, which needs the chamber's two-thirds approval.

In a statement, European leaders in Berlin said they and the U.S. committed to work together to provide "robust security guarantees," including a European-led "multinational force Ukraine" supported by the U.S.

They said the force's work would include "operating inside Ukraine" as well as assisting in rebuilding Ukraine's forces, securing its skies and supporting safer seas. They said Ukrainian forces should remain at a peacetime level of 800,000.

Witkoff and Kushner were accompanied by U.S. Air Force Gen. Alexis Grynkewich, who heads NATO's military operations and the U.S. European Command, as talks honed in on the particulars of what the U.S. officials described as an "Article 5-like" security agreement. Article Five in the NATO treaty is the collective defense clause stating that an attack on one member is an attack on all.

The U.S. side presented the Ukrainians a document that spelled out in greater specificity aspects of the proposed U.S. security guarantees — something that Ukrainian officials said was missing from earlier iterations of the U.S. peace proposal, according to U.S. officials.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz called it a "truly far-reaching, substantial agreement that we did not have before, namely that both Europe and the U.S. are jointly prepared to do this."

Questions over Ukraine's postwar security and the fate of occupied territories have been the main obstacles in talks. Zelenskyy has emphasized that any Western security assurances would need to be legally binding and supported by the U.S. Congress. Meanwhile, Russia has said it will not accept any troops from NATO countries being based on Ukrainian soil.

Zelenskyy on Monday called the talks "substantial" and noted that differences remain on the issue of territory.

Zelenskyy has expressed readiness to drop Ukraine's bid to join NATO if the U.S. and other Western nations give Kyiv security guarantees similar to those offered to NATO members. But Ukraine's preference remains NATO membership as the best security guarantee to prevent further Russian aggression.

Ukraine has continued to reject the U.S. push for ceding territory to Russia. Russian President Vladimir Putin wants Ukraine to withdraw its forces from the part of the Donetsk region still under its control as a key condition for peace.

The U.S. officials on Monday said there is consensus on about 90% of the U.S.-authored peace plan, and that Russia has indicated it is open to Ukraine joining the European Union, something it previously said it did not object to.

The Russian president has cast Ukraine's bid to join NATO, however, as a major threat to Moscow's security and a reason for launching the full-scale invasion in February 2022. The Kremlin has demanded that Ukraine renounce the bid for alliance membership as part of any prospective peace settlement.

Asked whether the negotiations could be over by Christmas, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said trying to predict a potential time frame for a peace deal was a "thankless task."

"I can only speak for the Russian side, for President Putin," Peskov said. "He is open to peace, to a serious peace and serious decisions. He is absolutely not open to any tricks aimed at stalling for time."

Putin has denied plans to attack any European allies.

Drone strikes continue

Russia fired 153 drones of various types at Ukraine overnight Sunday into Monday, according to Ukraine's Air Force, which said 133 drones were neutralized, while 17 more hit their targets.

In Russia, the Defense Ministry on Monday said forces destroyed 130 Ukrainian drones overnight. An additional 16 drones were destroyed between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. local time.

Eighteen drones were shot down over Moscow itself, the defense ministry said. Flights were temporarily halted at the city's Domodedovo and Zhukovsky airports as part of safety measures, officials said.

Damage details and casualty figures were not immediately available.

Big retailers didn't pull ByHeart baby formula fast enough after botulism recall, FDA says

By JONEL ALECCIA AP Health Writer

Four of the nation's top retail stores failed to promptly pull contaminated infant formula tied to a dangerous botulism outbreak from their shelves, federal health officials said in warning letters posted Monday.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration sent letters to leaders at Walmart, Target, Kroger and Albertsons, saying the companies continued to sell ByHeart infant formula for days or weeks, despite a Nov. 11 recall of all products in the outbreak that has sickened more than 50 babies in 19 states.

"As a participant in the supply chain, your firm should take prompt and effective action when notified of a product recall," FDA officials said in warning letters sent to the companies on Dec. 12 and posted online Monday.

The formula was found at Target stores in 20 states "well after the recall was initiated," one letter said. In addition, it was sold at a Target store in New Hampshire on Nov. 16, despite an electronic block on the product's sales code, the FDA noted. And at a Target store in Arkansas, single-serve packs of ByHeart formula were promoted with a "Sale!" sign and a \$2 discount from Nov. 16 to Nov. 22.

Information from state and local health officials said ByHeart formula was found at Walmart stores in 21 states from Nov. 12 to Nov. 26. The formula was found in Albertsons stores in 11 states from Nov. 12 to Nov. 19, and at Kroger stores in 10 states from Nov. 12 to Nov. 19.

In addition, the companies failed to provide FDA with evidence that corrective actions have been put in place, despite multiple requests, the agency said. The companies have 15 working days to respond to the letters.

Walmart officials said in a statement that no ByHeart formula was sold after cash registers were blocked from selling the formula following the recall.

"We moved swiftly to issue a sales restriction and removed this product from our impacted stores and clubs and online," a company spokesperson said in an email. "We take all reports of inaction seriously and will respond to the letter."

Albertsons officials said the company worked closely with suppliers and regulators to identify and remove the products and communicate to customers.

"ByHeart infant formula products have been removed from our store shelves," the company said in a statement.

All of the babies in the outbreak have been hospitalized and treated with an IV medication to stop the progress of the disease. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention expanded the outbreak to include all babies treated for botulism after consuming ByHeart formula since it was first produced in 2023.

Steven Mandernach, executive director at the Association of Food and Drug Officials, said the FDA itself was slow to distribute information about the recall with state and local food safety officials. The agency didn't fully share product lists until Nov. 14 — nearly a week after the initial recall of two lots of ByHeart formula on Nov. 8.

He said it was "disappointing" in an outbreak involving the sole source of nutrition for vulnerable infants.

"There probably wasn't the sense of urgency to ensure the product was off the market that I would expect," Mandernach said.

Arizona, Michigan stay 1-2 in AP Top 25 men's poll; No. 15 Nebraska hits highest mark since 1991

By AARON BEARD AP Basketball Writer

No. 1 Arizona and No. 2 Michigan remained locked in place atop The Associated Press men's college basketball poll released Monday while No. 15 Nebraska jumped to its highest Top 25 ranking in nearly 35 years.

The Wildcats had 42 of 61 first-place votes to hold the top spot while the Wolverines received 15 to keep

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the teams at 1-2 for a second consecutive week.

The Wildcats (9-0) rallied from a halftime deficit Saturday to claim a 21-point win against then-No. 12 Alabama in the Crimson Tide's home state, adding to a list of victories against ranked opponents that includes reigning national champion Florida, at UConn and Auburn.

The Wolverines (10-0) have won their last seven games by at least 18 points, a run that includes romps against Auburn (102-72) and Gonzaga (101-61). And Michigan sits atop analytics rankings by KenPom, Evan Miyakawa and Bart Torvik.

The top tier

The top 10 was largely unchanged, with No. 7 Gonzaga and No. 8 Houston swapping spots from last week the only new wrinkle. No. 3 Duke (three) and No. 4 Iowa State (one) were the only other teams to earn first-place votes.

UConn and Purdue were next after the Cyclones, and Michigan State and BYU rounded out the top 10.

Rising

The Cornhuskers (11-0) had the week's biggest jump of eight spots after Saturday's win at then-No. 13 Illinois on a buzzer-beating 3-pointer. Nebraska has not been ranked this high since it was No. 11 in March 1991 for the final poll of that season.

Nebraska had been ranked just 15 times in the more than three decades since, then jumped in at No. 23 last week.

No. 14 Arkansas climbed three spots after beating then-No. 16 Texas Tech over the weekend, while No. 12 North Carolina, No. 13 Vanderbilt and No. 17 Kansas each rose two spots.

In all, seven teams moved up from last week.

Sliding

The now-No. 18 Illini and 23rd-ranked Florida had the week's biggest slides, with each falling five spots. Alabama fell four spots after losing to Arizona and Texas Tech slid three, joining Houston as the week's five teams to drop.

Nearly half of the poll (12 teams) held their positions from the previous week.

Comings and goings

Georgia was the lone new addition to the poll, moving in at No. 25 to replace UCLA. This marks only the third time the Bulldogs have been ranked since the 2002-03 season, the others coming in January 2011 (No. 24) and last January (No. 23).

Conference watch

The Southeastern Conference has the most ranked teams with seven, though none higher than Vanderbilt at No. 13.

The Big 12 was next with six ranked teams, including four in the top 10 and two in the top five, followed by the Big Ten with five and the Atlantic Coast Conference with four. Each of those three leagues have at least three teams ranked higher than anyone in the SEC.

The Big East (two) and West Coast Conference (one) rounded out the roll call.

What to know about the attack on the Hanukkah festival in Australia that killed 15 people

SYDNEY (AP) — A father and son are suspected by officials to have killed 15 people on a popular Australian beach, shocking a country where gun violence is rare. The government on Monday, a day after the shootings, proposed tougher new gun laws amid criticism that officials didn't take seriously enough a string of antisemitic attacks.

Here's a look at what to know from the attack at Bondi Beach:

The suspects attacked a Jewish beachside gathering

Little is known about the suspects in the attack on Sydney's famous Bondi Beach, but there was widespread shock when officials said that the two men pictured firing weapons in social media videos were related.

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The 50-year-old father, who was killed, arrived in Australia in 1998 on a student visa, authorities said, and was an Australian resident when he died. Officials wouldn't confirm what country he had migrated from.

His 24-year-old Australian-born son, who was shot and wounded, is being treated at a hospital

The target was a Hanukkah celebration where hundreds had gathered to celebrate the first day of the eight-day Jewish holiday. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese called it an act of antisemitic terrorism.

Albanese said that Australia's main domestic spy agency, the Australian Security Intelligence Agency, had investigated the son for six months in 2019. The Australian Broadcasting Corp. reported that the agency had examined the son's ties to a Sydney-based Islamic State group cell. Albanese did not describe the associates, but said the spy agency was interested in them rather than the son.

The dead included a 10-year-old girl, a rabbi and a Holocaust survivor. Dozens of others were injured, some seriously.

Police said the father held a firearms license and that he was a member of a gun club, which suggests he was a target shooter.

Praise for a man who tried to help

One dramatic clip broadcast on Australian television showed a man appearing to tackle and disarm one of the gunmen, before pointing the man's weapon at him, then setting the gun on the ground.

The man was identified by Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke as Ahmed al Ahmed. The 42-year-old fruit shop owner and father of two was shot in the shoulder by the other gunman and survived.

Hate crimes targeting Jews in Australia are on the rise

A wave of antisemitic attacks have shocked and angered many in Australia over the last year.

Australia has 28 million people and about 117,000 Jews.

Antisemitic incidents, including assaults, vandalism, threats and intimidation, surged more than threefold in the country during the year after Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, and Israel launched a war on Hamas in Gaza in response, the government's Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism Jillian Segal reported in July.

Last year, there were antisemitic attacks in Sydney and Melbourne. Synagogues and cars have been torched, businesses and homes vandalized with graffiti, and Jews attacked in cities where 85% of the nation's Jewish population lives.

Albanese in August blamed Iran for two of the attacks and cut diplomatic ties to Tehran.

Israel urged Australia's government to address crimes targeting Jews. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he warned Australia's leaders months ago about the dangers of failing to take action against antisemitism. He claimed Australia's decision — in line with scores of other countries — to recognize a Palestinian state "pours fuel on the antisemitic fire."

This is the deadliest shooting in Australia in three decades

Australia has strict gun control laws.

Mass shootings are extremely rare. A 1996 massacre in the Tasmanian town of Port Arthur, where a lone gunman killed 35 people, prompted the government to drastically tighten gun laws, making it much more difficult to acquire firearms.

Significant mass shootings this century included two murder-suicides with death tolls of five people in 2014 and seven in 2018, in which gunmen killed their own families and themselves.

In 2022, six people were killed in a shootout between police and Christian extremists at a rural property in Queensland state.

The prime minister said he was pushing for tougher gun laws.

Rob Reiner, son of a comedy giant who became one in turn, dies at 78

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

Rob Reiner, the son of a comedy giant who became one himself as one of the preeminent filmmakers of his generation with movies such as "The Princess Bride," "When Harry Met Sally ..." and "This Is Spinal Tap," has died. He was 78.

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Reiner and his wife, Michele Singer Reiner, were found fatally stabbed Sunday at their home in the Brentwood neighborhood of Los Angeles. The Los Angeles Police Department on Monday arrested the Reiners' 32-year-old son, Nick Reiner, and booked him on suspicion of killing his parents.

It was a tragic, shocking end to a life and career that began with a complicated father-son relationship. Reiner grew up thinking his father, the legendary funnyman Carl Reiner, didn't understand him or find him funny. But the younger Reiner would in many ways follow in his father's footsteps, working both in front and behind the camera, in comedies that stretched from broad sketch work to accomplished dramedies.

"My father thought, 'Oh, my God, this poor kid is worried about being in the shadow of a famous father,'" Reiner told "60 Minutes" in October, recalling the temptation to change his name. "And he says, 'What do you want to change your name to?' And I said, 'Carl.' I just wanted to be like him."

After starting out as a writer for "The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour," Reiner's breakthrough came when he was, at age 23, cast in Norman Lear's "All in the Family" as Archie Bunker's liberal son-in-law, Michael "Meathead" Stivic. But by the 1980s, Reiner began as a feature film director, churning out some of the most beloved films of that, or any, era. His first film, the largely improvised 1984 cult classic "This Is Spinal Tap," remains the quintessential mockumentary.

After the 1985 John Cusack summer comedy, "The Sure Thing," Reiner made "Stand By Me" (1986), "The Princess Bride" (1987) and "When Harry Met Sally ..." (1989), a four-year stretch that resulted in a trio of American classics, all of them among the most often quoted movies of the 20th century.

A legacy on and off screen

For the next four decades, Reiner, a warm and gregarious presence on screen and an outspoken liberal advocate off it, remained a constant fixture in Hollywood. The production company he co-founded, Castle Rock Entertainment, launched an enviable string of hits, including "Seinfeld" and "The Shawshank Redemption." By the turn of the century, its success rate had fallen considerably, but Reiner revived it, and this fall released the long-in-coming sequel "Spinal Tap II: The End Continues."

All the while, Reiner was one of the film industry's most passionate Democrat activists, regularly hosting fundraisers and campaigning for liberal issues. He was co-founder of the American Foundation for Equal Rights, which challenged in court California's ban on same-sex marriage, Proposition 8. He also chaired the campaign for Prop 10, a California initiative to fund early childhood development services with a tax on tobacco products. And Reiner was an outspoken critic of President Donald Trump.

"Beneath all of the stories he produced was a deep belief in the goodness of people — and a lifelong commitment to putting that belief into action," former President Barack Obama said in a statement.

Political engagement ran in the family, too. Reiner's father opposed the Communist hunt of McCarthyism in the 1950s and his mother, Estelle Reiner, a singer and actor, protested the Vietnam War.

"If you're a nepo baby, doors will open," Reiner told the Guardian in 2024. "But you have to deliver. If you don't deliver, the door will close just as fast as it opened."

'All in the Family' to 'Stand By Me'

Robert Reiner was born in the Bronx on March 6, 1947. As a young man, he quickly set out to follow his father into entertainment. He studied at the University of California, Los Angeles film school and, in the 1960s, began appearing in small parts in various television shows.

But when Lear saw Reiner as a key cast member in "All in the Family," it came as a surprise to the elder Reiner.

"Norman says to my dad, 'You know, this kid is really funny.' And I think my dad said, 'What? That kid? That kid? He's sullen. He sits quiet. He doesn't, you know, he's not funny.' He didn't think I was anyway," Reiner told "60 Minutes."

On "All in the Family," Reiner served as a pivotal foil to Carroll O'Connor's bigoted, conservative Archie Bunker. Reiner was seven times nominated for an Emmy for his performance on the show, winning in 1974 and 1978. In Lear, Reiner also found a mentor. He called him "a second father."

"It wasn't just that he hired me for 'All in the Family,'" Reiner told "American Masters" in 2005. "It was that I saw, in how he conducted his life, that there was room to be an activist as well. That you could use your celebrity, your good fortune, to help make some change."

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Lear also helped launch Reiner as a filmmaker. He put \$7.5 million of his own money to help finance "Stand By Me," Reiner's adaptation of the Stephen King novella "The Body." The movie, about four boys who go looking for the dead body of a missing boy, became a coming-of-age classic, made breakthroughs of its young cast (particularly River Phoenix) and even earned the praise of King.

"Rest in peace, Rob," King said Monday on X. "You always stood by me."

With his stock rising, Reiner devoted himself to adapting William Goldman's 1973's "The Princess Bride," a book Reiner had loved since his father gave him a copy as a gift. Everyone from François Truffaut to Robert Redford had considered adapting Goldman's book. It ultimately fell to Reiner (from Goldman's own script) to capture the unique comic tone of "The Princess Bride." But only once he had Goldman's blessing.

"At the door he greeted me and he said, 'This is my baby. I want this on my tombstone. This is my favorite thing I've ever written in my life. What are you going to do with it?'" Reiner recalled in a Television Academy interview. "And we sat down with him and started going through what I thought should be done with the film."

Though only a modest success in theaters, the movie — starring Cary Elwes, Mandy Patinkin, Wallace Shawn, André the Giant and Robin Wright — would grow in stature over the years, leading to countless impressions of Inigo Montoya's vow of revenge and the risky nature of land wars in Asia.

"When Harry Met Sally ..."

Reiner was married to Penny Marshall, the actor and filmmaker, for 10 years beginning in 1971. Like Reiner, Marshall experienced sitcom fame, with "Laverne & Shirley," but found a more lasting legacy behind the camera.

After their divorce, Reiner, at a lunch with Nora Ephron, suggested a comedy about dating. In writing what became "When Harry Met Sally ..." Ephron and Reiner charted a relationship between a man and a woman (played in the film by Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan) over the course of 12 years.

Along the way, the movie's ending changed, as did some of the film's indelible moments. The famous line, "I'll have what she's having," said after witnessing Ryan's fake orgasm at Katz's Delicatessen, was a suggestion by Crystal — delivered by none other than Reiner's mother, Estelle.

The movie's happy ending also had some real-life basis. Reiner met Michele Singer, a photographer, on the set of "When Harry Met Sally ..." In 1989, they were wed. They had three children together: Nick, Jake and Romy.

Reiner's subsequent films included another King adaptation, "Misery" (1990) and a pair of Aaron Sorkin-penned dramas: the military courtroom tale "A Few Good Men" (1992) and 1995's "The American President."

By the late '90s, Reiner's films (1996's "Ghosts of Mississippi," 2007's "The Bucket List") no longer had the same success rate. But he remained a frequent actor, often memorably enlivening films like "Sleepless in Seattle" (1993) and "The Wolf of Wall Street" (2013). In 2023, he directed the documentary "Albert Brooks: Defending My Life."

In an interview earlier this year with Seth Rogen, Reiner suggested everything in his career boiled down to one thing.

"All I've ever done is say, 'Is this something that is an extension of me?' For 'Stand by Me,' I didn't know if it was going to be successful or not. All I thought was, 'I like this because I know what it feels like.'"

US tariffs are having an uneven effect on holiday prices and purchases

By MAE ANDERSON AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Ah Louis Store in San Luis Obispo, California, turns into a winter wonderland every holiday season.

Green garlands, giant nutcrackers, baubles and bows go up in early November on the historic downtown building that houses the gift shop. Inside, customers can choose from over 500 different types of ornaments and a variety of holiday gift baskets.

"We really just make it a magical spot," co-owner Emily Butler said. "Whether you come in or not, we want to make sure that we're spreading that holiday joy."

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But Butler says she and her twin sister-business partner had to work harder this year to turn browsers into buyers and to make a profit. Many of the decorations and stocking stuffers they sell are made overseas and either did not arrive or got more expensive when President Donald Trump imposed unusually high taxes on imported goods, she said.

In response, the sisters focused their selection on more profitable items like nutcrackers and gift baskets. They've also noticed customers cutting back, selecting a \$100 gift basket over the \$150 version, or buying one ornament instead of several, Butler said..

"We're definitely seeing more cautious spending this year," she said.

Along with the unpredictable tariffs, stubborn inflation and weak hiring have shaken consumer confidence in the U.S. economy. The vast majority of U.S. adults say they've noticed higher than usual prices for groceries, electricity and holiday gifts in recent months, according to a December poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

A Gallup index that summarizes Americans' assessments of current economic conditions fell to a 17-month low in November. Consumers also indicated less enthusiasm for spending money on holiday gifts; their estimated gift budgets decreased \$229 between October and November, the largest drop Gallup has recorded at that point of the holiday shopping season. The survey was conducted in November, partially during the government shutdown, which might have tempered spending plans.

However, the worst-case impact on consumer prices that many economists foresaw from the Trump administration's tariff policies hasn't materialized. Some products have been affected more than others. Here's a look at what has happened with supplies and prices in popular gifting categories.

Games and toys

Game and toys were particularly susceptible to tariff-related price increases since the majority of the ones sold in the U.S. are made in China, according to industry trade group The Toy Association. The tariff rate the Trump administration imposed on Chinese goods became a rollercoaster that started at an additional 10%, peaked at 145% and ended up at 47%.

The uncertainty made it hard for toy shops to decide what to order for the holidays. Dean Smith, who co-owns independent toy stores JaZams in Princeton, New Jersey, and Lahaska, Pennsylvania, said the manufacturers in China that he buys toys from did not pass on their tariff costs all at once but he has seen their prices inch higher with every reorder.

Smith estimated that wholesale prices for 80% of his inventory went up anywhere from 5% to 20%. Some shoppers who don't buy toys regularly might be surprised by price increases he adopted in turn, Smith said. A doll that sold for \$20 to \$25 last year now costs \$30 to \$35 at JaZams, he said.

"For folks with marginal incomes, this is going to be a very difficult holiday," Smith said.

Electronics

Consumer electronics are mostly made in China and other Asian countries. In 2023, China accounted for 78% of U.S. smartphone imports, and 79% of laptop and tablet imports, according to the Consumer Technology Association trade group.

Best Buy said in May that it was raising prices due to tariffs. But CEO Corie Barry said late last month that the consumer electronics chain made sure to stock computers, phones and other products at different price levels, a decision she credited with helping Best Buy attract more lower-income shoppers.

"The consumer is not a monolith," Barry told reporters.

Game consoles are always a popular holiday item, and console makers made news earlier this year when they announced price increases. Sony raised the price of the PlayStation 5 by \$50 to \$550 in August, following Microsoft and Nintendo raising prices for their game consoles.

Jewelry

Jewelry shoppers will likely see higher prices, but that has more to do with the soaring price of gold than tariffs so far, according to David Bonaparte, president & CEO of trade group Jewelers of America.

The varying tax rates Trump set for countries that import American goods with a total value less than their exports to the U.S. affected jewelry in various ways. Watches from Switzerland, for example, were

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subject to a 39% tariff from July 31 until the country struck a deal with the Trump administration last month to lower the import tax rate on its products to 15%.

India, which refines many of the diamonds sold in the U.S., rushed in shipments of the gemstones before a 50% tariff on the country's products took effect on Aug. 27. Higher prices for jewelry made with diamonds shipped from India will likely start to be felt in 2026, Bonaparte said.

"It's really a matter of what happens after Jan. 1," he said. "If these tariffs are still in place, then prices will probably increase."

Holiday decor

Holiday decorations are yet another category that mostly comes from overseas, particularly China.

Jeremy Rice co-owns House, a home-décor shop in Lexington, Kentucky, that specializes in artificial flowers, wreaths and table decorations. He said the tariffs slowed down production of much of his fall stock and seasonal merchandise like ribbon. Some larger and more expensive items he didn't order at all because they would have been too expensive to retail.

Rice raised prices on the products he did get. The popular red berry stems that House long has carried increased from \$8.95 last year to \$10.95 due to higher import costs, he said.

"We sell thousands of these berry stems, and every time we sold one, I flinched from knowing what it should have been, knowing that our supplier paid more for them, which made us pay more for them, which made our customer pay more for them," Rice said.

Shopping strategically

For those looking to avoid tariff-related price increases, John Harmon, managing director of technology research at technology consulting company Coresight Research, recommends checking out secondhand stores and discount retailers like T.J. Maxx, Marshall's and HomeGoods. The off-price chains buy much of their inventory from leftover stock that would have entered the U.S. before new tariffs kicked in.

Joe Adamski, senior director at procurement services company ProcureAbility, said books, food and beverages are some of the domestically produced goods that make good gifts.

Trump administration says it needs to fight SNAP fraud, but the extent of the problem is unclear

By GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

President Donald Trump's administration is talking tough about SNAP, saying the government's biggest food aid program is riddled with fraud that must be stopped.

His appointees are looking at Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program from an enforcement perspective, seeing fraud as a major and expensive problem, perpetrated by organized criminal organizations, individual recipients and retailers willing to break the laws for profit.

"We know there are instances of fraud committed by our friends and neighbors, but also transnational crime rings," Jennifer Tiller, a senior advisor to U.S. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins, said in an interview.

Some experts agree that SNAP fraud is a major problem. But there is little publicly available data showing the extent of it, and others who study the program are skeptical about the scale.

"It you're spending \$100 billion on anything, you're going to have some leakage," said Christopher Bosso, a professor of public policy and politics at Northeastern University who published a book on SNAP.

The administration leans into fraud allegations

Of the \$100 billion spent on SNAP a year, about \$94 billion goes to benefits and the rest to administrative costs.

About 42 million people — or 1 in 8 Americans — receive SNAP benefits averaging about \$190 per person per month. The number of recipients is in the same ballpark as the number of people in poverty — 36 million by the traditional measure and 43 million under a more nuanced one also used by the federal government.

Under federal law, most households must report their income and basic information every four to six months and be fully recertified for SNAP at least every 12 months.

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The Trump administration has demanded that states turn over data on individual SNAP recipients including Social Security numbers, dates of birth and immigration status as part of its effort to root out fraud.

States with Republican governors, plus North Carolina, have complied. Most led by Democrats are pushing back in court, arguing that providing the data would violate recipients' privacy.

The USDA says that from the records that have been shared, it found 186,000 deceased people — about 1% of participants in those states — receiving benefits and about 500,000 people — about 2.7% — receiving benefits in more than one jurisdiction.

The USDA has not made public detailed reports on the data and has not broken down the estimates by type of alleged fraud. The department also hasn't answered questions about what portion of any improperly awarded benefits was actually spent and how much sat unclaimed on EBT cards after recipients moved or died.

The department estimated in a letter to the states that have refused to turn over data that the nationwide total combining fraud and undetected errors could be \$9 billion a year or more. Democratic-led states responded in a letter last week that states already have systems to catch wrongdoing and that USDA isn't explaining how it's crunching the numbers.

Program participants can be perpetrators or victims of fraud

There are a lot of forms of wrongdoing.

SNAP benefits are put on EBT cards that recipients swipe in stores like debit cards. Organized crime groups put skimmers on EBT readers to get information used to make copies of the benefit cards and steal the allotments of recipients — or to use stolen identity information to apply for benefits for fictitious people. A Romanian man who was in the U.S. illegally pleaded guilty last year to skimming cards in California. Authorities say he took more than 36,000 numbers over three years.

A USDA employee pleaded guilty this year to accepting bribes in exchange for providing registration numbers for EBT card readers placed illegally in several New York delis. Authorities said more than \$30 million passed through those terminals.

And three people were charged this year in Franklin County, Ohio, accused of using stolen benefits to order big quantities of energy drinks and candy — apparently to resell it.

Mark Haskins, who worked on USDA investigations from 2013 until leaving the department in August as branch chief of a special investigations unit, said there have been cases of retailers running similar operations. Several states are barring using SNAP for some junk food products with policies that kick in as soon as Jan. 1.

Haskins also says some legitimate recipients buy non-grocery items with SNAP benefits by persuading a store employee to ring up the wrong item — generally one that costs more than what's being bought — or to sell benefit cards. He said he thinks those forms of fraud are more costly than the ones run by organized criminal groups.

Haskins and Haywood Talcove, CEO of LexisNexis Risk Solutions Government, which helps create fraud prevention strategies, both believe fraud costs significantly more than the USDA's \$9 billion estimate.

"The system is corrupt. It doesn't need a fix here and there, it needs a complete overhaul," said Haskins, who would like to see fewer retailers in the network and participants having to reapply, even if that makes it harder for qualified people to access benefits.

Advocates and researchers see a different system

The USDA last published a report on SNAP fraud in 2021. It covered what happened in from 2015 through 2017 and found that about 1.6% of benefits were stolen from recipients' accounts.

The government replaced benefits that were stolen between Oct. 1, 2022 and Dec. 20, 2024. The value of replaced benefits over that time was \$323 million — or about 24 cents for every \$100 in SNAP benefits, though that's believed to be an undercount.

It's reports like those that lead advocates and academics who research SNAP to see fraud, while troublesome, as less than the massive problem the USDA makes it out to be.

Dartmouth College economist Patricia Anderson, who studies food insecurity, said in an email that the

maximum benefits for a family of four are about \$1,000 a month. "It really takes organized crime that is either stealing from the EBT cards or creating a lot of fake recipients out of whole cloth before the gain for the fraudster really starts to be worth it," she said.

Jamal Brown, a 41-year-old food stamp participant who lives in Camden, New Jersey, said he's witnessed people selling benefits to bodegas to get cash. And he's had his benefits stolen by a skimmer.

He also said he had to deal with benefits being cut off after being told he missed an interview to recertify his need when a county welfare worker didn't call him as planned.

"It's always something that goes wrong," Brown said, "unfortunately."

Mahomes tears ACL as Chargers eliminate Chiefs from playoff contention with 16-13 victory

By DAVE SKRETTA AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — The final images of the Kansas City Chiefs' postseason pursuit were Patrick Mahomes getting helped to the locker room with what turned out to be a torn ACL in his left knee, a white towel draped over his head, and backup quarterback Gardner Minshew throwing an interception to Derwin James that gave the Los Angeles Chargers a win over one of their biggest rivals.

It all happened in the final two minutes of their 16-13 victory Sunday.

Justin Herbert, playing through a broken left hand, had helped the Chargers take the lead with a second-half rally, but Kansas City got the ball back with one more chance. Mahomes was sprinting toward the sideline and throwing the ball away when he was spun to the ground by defensive lineman Da'Shawn Hand, leaving the two-time MVP grabbing at his left knee.

"It didn't look good," Chiefs coach Andy Reid acknowledged afterward.

Later, the Chiefs released an update, saying: "An MRI has confirmed that Chiefs QB Patrick Mahomes sustained a torn ACL in his left knee in today's game. Patrick and the club are currently exploring surgical options."

On social media, Mahomes said: "Don't know why this had to happen. And not going to lie it's hurts. But all we can do now is Trust in God and attack every single day over and over again."

Minshew took over and completed three straight passes, giving Chiefs fans hope on a day that began with wind chills near zero and their playoff chances about the same. But with 20 seconds to go, Minshew unloaded a pass for Travis Kelce, and James — his longtime divisional foil — leaped up to pick it off, allowing Los Angeles (10-4) to begin celebrating a second straight 10-win season.

Perhaps soon, a second straight postseason appearance.

"It's a ball team. This is a ball team," Chargers coach Jim Harbaugh said. "Starting to think this is my favorite ball team that I've ever been on. I've been on a lot of teams, none better than this team. It's a ball team. A real ball team. Love these guys."

"We know what that team has done the last eight, nine years," James added. "Coming into Arrowhead Stadium and getting a win, it means a lot for our team, because we're 5-0 in our division."

Minshew will quarterback the Chiefs through the final three games of the season. One of them is a primetime showdown with the Denver Broncos on Christmas night.

"I'll do whatever the coaches ask of me," Minshew said, "and we'll go try to win some games."

The Chiefs (6-8) already are guaranteed to be watching the playoffs on TV for the first time since 2014, and Kelce was in no mood to talk about it. Just as he's done after several losses this season, the star tight end refused to answer questions from reporters.

"Sorry guys, it's not the time," Kelce said.

The Chargers had beaten the Chiefs in their opener in Brazil, ultimately setting each club on its season-long trajectory.

Los Angeles arrived for the rematch Sunday trying to extend the momentum built in last week's win over the Super Bowl champion Eagles. The Chiefs showed up knowing a loss, coupled with the wrong results elsewhere, would eliminate them completely.

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The Chiefs played appropriately inspired for most of the first half.

They moved swiftly downfield with Mahomes darting in from 12 yards out for a touchdown on their opening drive. They added a field goal later in the first half, and another by Harrison Butker gave them a 13-3 lead with 38 seconds left before the break.

That's when the Chargers started playing like a playoff-bound team. And the Chiefs like one that should be sitting at home.

Herbert completed three passes in five plays to cover 60 yards, and KeAndre Lambert-Smith's first career TD catch got the Chargers within a field goal. Cameron Dicker knotted the game on their opening possession of the second half, then he gave them the lead when he drilled a 49-yarder on a cold, windy day at Arrowhead Stadium with 2:40 to go in the third quarter.

The Chiefs tried to answer down the stretch, despite a rash of injuries that had left them with a patchwork offensive line. But just like so often this season, a promising drive went haywire in the red zone. Tyquan Thornton's spectacular catch was immediately forgotten when Mahomes' pass was picked off by Daiyan Henley on a jump ball thrown to Kareem Hunt at the goal line.

Mahomes, who had just 189 yards passing, would ultimately end the game in the Kansas City locker room.

The Chargers would end the Chiefs' postseason hopes with one more interception.

"I thought it was really cool that we were able to close out a one-score game like that, how many times we've played them and had one-score games," Herbert said. "For the defense to come out there with the turnovers and stops, it was awesome to see."

Sent packing

Thornton landed in the concussion protocol after his late 20-yard reception following a vicious hit by cornerback Tony Jefferson, who helped to trigger a mild midfield scuffle. Jefferson was ejected, and Henley and James had to push him toward the tunnel.

Injuries

Chargers: WR Quentin Johnson (groin) was inactive. S R.J. Mickens left with a shoulder injury.

Chiefs: CB Trent McDuffie (knee) was inactive. Thornton (concussion protocol) and RT Jaylon Moore (knee) left and did not return.

Up next

Chargers: At Dallas next Sunday.

Chiefs: At Tennessee next Sunday.

Older adults may struggle to learn a new language but classes are a worthwhile exercise

By STEPHEN WADE Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — I speak decent Spanish, picked up working several decades ago as a news and sports reporter in Spain, Mexico and Argentina.

Now I report from Tokyo. After seven years, I still can't grasp Japanese. My weekly language classes have taught me humility more than anything else.

Ayaka Ono, my current Japanese teacher, estimates she's tutored about 600 students over 15 years. They've been mostly between 20 and 50. I'm more than a decade beyond her eldest.

"I find older students take tiny, tiny steps and then they fall back," Ono-san — "san" is an honorific in Japanese to show respect — tells me. "They can't focus as long. I teach something one minute and they forget the next."

It's well established that children have an easier time learning second languages. In recent years, scientists have studied whether being bilingual may help ward off the memory lapses and reduced mental sharpness that come with an aging brain. Much of the research on the potential benefit involved people who spoke two or more languages for most of their lives, not older adult learners.

"The science shows that managing two languages in your brain — over a lifetime — makes your brain more efficient, more resilient and more protected against cognitive decline," said Ellen Bialystok, a dis-

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tinguished research professor emeritus at York University in Toronto who is credited with advancing the idea of a possible "bilingual advantage" in the late 1980s.

There's good news for older adults like me: Attempting to acquire a new language is worthwhile, and not just because it makes reading a menu easier while traveling abroad. Bialystok, a cognitive neuroscientist, recommends studying a new language at any age, comparing the challenge to word puzzles and brain-training games that are promoted to slow the onset of dementia.

"Trying to learn a language late in life is a great idea, but understand it won't make you bilingual and is probably too late to provide the protective effects of cognitive aging that come from early bilingualism," she told The Associated Press. "However, learning a new language is a stimulating and engaging activity that uses all of your brain, so it is like a whole-body exercise."

The latest research

A large study published by the science journal *Nature Aging* in November suggests that speaking multiple languages protects against more rapid brain aging, and that the effect increases with the number of languages.

The findings, based on research involving 87,149 healthy people ages 51 to 90, "underscore the key role of multilingualism in fostering healthier aging trajectories," the authors wrote.

Researchers acknowledged the study's limitations, including a sample population drawn only from 27 European countries with "diverse linguistic and sociopolitical contexts."

Bialystok was not involved in the project but has researched second-language acquisition in children and adults, including whether being bilingual delays the progression of Alzheimer's disease or aids in multitasking and problem-solving. She said the new study "ties all the pieces together."

"Over the lifespan, people who have managed and used two languages end up with brains that are in better shape and more resilient," she said.

Judith Kroll, a cognitive psychologist who heads the Bilingualism, Mind and Brain Lab at the University of California, Irvine, used the expressions "mental athletics" and "mental somersaults" to describe how the brain juggles more than one language.

She said there have been several efforts to examine language learning in older adults and the ramifications.

"I would say there are probably not enough studies to date to be absolutely definitive about this," she told The AP. "But the evidence we have is very promising, suggesting both that older adults are certainly able to learn new languages and benefit from that learning."

More studies are needed on whether language lessons help people in midlife and beyond maintain some cognitive abilities. Kroll compared the state of the field to the late 20th century, when the dominant thinking was that exposing infants and young children to two or more languages put them at a educational disadvantage.

"What we know now is the opposite," she said.

Learning a language later in life

I visited Spain's Mediterranean coast in the 1990s when I worked in Madrid. I was shocked by how many non-Spaniards there had lived in the country for years and could say only a few words in Spanish.

Now I get it. When I attempt Japanese, the reaction is often an incredulous, "And you've been here how long?"

I have workarounds to navigate my hostile linguistic environment. One is saying "itsumono." It means "the same as always," or "the usual." It's enough to order morning coffee at a neighborhood cafe or lunch at several regular stops.

As an aside, Japanese is one of the most difficult languages for English speakers to master, along with Arabic, Cantonese, Korean and Mandarin. Romance languages such as French, Italian or Spanish are easier.

My once-a-week class is grueling, and one hour is my limit. I use this analogy: my brain is a closet without enough empty hangers, and Japanese doesn't go with anything in my wardrobe. The writing system is intimidating for an English speaker, the word order is flipped, and politeness is valued more than clarity.

During the 4 1/2 years I spent reporting from Rio de Janeiro, I got by with Portuguese — an improvised

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blend of Spanish and Portuguese — and the patience of Brazilians. There is no such halfway house for Japanese. You either speak it or you don't.

I'll never progress beyond preschool level in Japanese, but overloading my brain with lessons might work in the same way that my regular weight-training sessions help maintain physical strength.

Ono-san, my Japanese teacher, called language-learning apps "better than nothing." Bialystok said technology can be a useful learning tool, "but progress of course requires using the language in real situations with other people."

"If old folks try to learn a new language, you are not going to be very successful. You are not going to become bilingual," Bialystok said. "But the experience of trying to learn the language is good for your brain. So what I say is this. What's hard for your brain is good for your brain. And learning a language, especially in later life, is hard but good for your brain."

How an AM radio station in California weathered the Trump administration's assault on media

By BYRON TAU Associated Press

Before Jimmy Kimmel, there was KCBS.

Just six days into President Donald Trump's new administration, the San Francisco Bay-area radio station KCBS-AM reported that immigration agents were in the area — driving "unmarked vehicles including a black Dodge Durango, a gray Nissan Maxima and white Nissan truck."

The brief story — also reported by other outlets — quickly drew the ire of conservative influencers who attacked KCBS' report as endangering agents' lives, sparking a deluge of complaints from listeners and callers.

That was just the start of KCBS' troubles. The Trump administration's top broadcast regulator, Brendan Carr, soon accused KCBS of failing to operate in the public interest and said he was opening an investigation.

By targeting KCBS, Carr revealed his willingness to expand the Republican administration's offensive on perceived media foes beyond major broadcasters like ABC, CBS and NPR. In KCBS' case, the radio station took steps to mitigate the potential of drawing further attention from conservative influencers or Carr, the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, according to eight current and former station employees who insisted on anonymity out of fear of reprisal.

KCBS demoted a well-liked anchor and dialed back on political programming, people said. For months, reporters were dissuaded from pursuing political or controversial topics and instead encouraged to focus on human interest stories, according to the current and former staffers.

When journalists were given permission to pursue politics or Trump administration policies, some of the staffers said, the tone of the stories was heavily scrutinized.

Doug Sovern, a veteran political journalist at the station, said he was sidelined after Carr announced his investigation.

"Chilling effect' does not begin to describe the neutering of our political coverage," said Sovern, who retired in April. He said his retirement was not related to the controversy.

FCC scrutiny has eased in recent months, and the station has been increasingly willing to tackle more topics that might draw attention from the administration and conservative critics, the staffers said. The station, for example, assigned a reporter in October to cover the No Kings Day protests of the Trump administration, which the staffers described as a welcome change.

In a statement, KCBS said it would not "comment on internal personnel matters."

"There has been no change in policy or editorial direction at KCBS," the station added. "We remain committed to providing our Bay Area listeners with trusted news, including our political coverage, that is balanced and objective."

The FCC did not respond to a request for comment.

Trump's enforcer

In Trump's second term, Carr has emerged as a top enforcer of Trump's agenda, using his perch to take

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on one of the president's favorite targets: media outlets.

His threat to ABC in September that "we can do this the easy way or the hard way" led to Kimmel, a late-night host and comedian, being briefly pulled off the air by parent company Disney over statements in one of his monologues about the political reaction to the slaying of Charlie Kirk, a conservative activist. ABC and CBS settled what some experts said were long-shot libel lawsuits by Trump at the same time their parent companies had significant interests before the FCC. NPR and PBS affiliates came under scrutiny over whether they were crossing the line into commercial advertising.

When the FCC later approved a merger involving CBS' parent company, the network's new owners committed to making "significant changes" at the broadcast network — a move the FCC chairman praised in his statement approving the deal. And in November, Carr reshared a Trump social media post that called for comedian Seth Meyers to be fired from NBC.

Al Sikes, a Republican former FCC chairman who served under President George H.W. Bush, said Carr was using "mobster" tactics.

"What we're seeing right now is new boundaries that are being set on the exercise of authority: punishing those that you don't like and ensconcing those that you do," Sikes said in an interview.

ABC, NBC, CBS, PBS and NPR did not respond to requests for comment.

Since February, the White House has blocked The Associated Press' access to events after the wire service said it would continue referring to the Gulf of Mexico in some of its copy. Trump had signed an executive order renaming the body of water the Gulf of America. The AP filed suit over the restrictions, and a federal judge ordered the White House in April to restore the AP's full access to cover presidential events as part of the press pool. The judge's order was put on hold while the White House appeals it.

KCBS in the crosshairs

KCBS has a storied history. It was one of the earliest radio stations ever licensed. Owned by CBS for nearly 70 years, it helped pioneer the 24-hour news radio format. CBS sold its radio properties in 2017 to Entercom, which later renamed itself Audacy. KCBS remains a broadcast affiliate of CBS News Radio.

The proliferation of digital content has hit the radio industry hard. Audacy recently survived Chapter 11 bankruptcy and had only been saved by a major investment from a firm owned by George Soros, a liberal donor and frequent Republican target. That investment was approved by the FCC under President Joe Biden's Democratic administration. Some conservatives, including Carr, had criticized the previous FCC leadership for failing to scrutinize the deal more closely.

In going after KCBS, Carr relied on a letter of inquiry, the first formal step in opening an FCC investigation. Broadcasters are regulated by the agency, and it has the authority to issue admonitions, or fines. In rare cases, it can revoke broadcast licenses.

After Carr's threat, staffers involved in the story were summoned to meetings with lawyers hired by Audacy. The attorneys scoured employee social media posts and grilled some on whether they had any political bias, current and former staff said.

The station's news director, Jennifer Seelig, sits on the board of the Radio Television Digital News Association, which gives out a prominent First Amendment award. She told people that business considerations required the station to avoid angering the FCC, current and former staffers said.

Seelig did not respond to requests for an interview.

Veteran reporter demoted

Bret Burkhart, who first read the report on the immigration action over the air, was demoted from his anchor position to a less prestigious reporting gig. After a few months, he left the station for a new job, according to current and former staffers. Burkhart was a well-regarded Bay Area radio personality, with more than a dozen top journalism awards over the course of his long career.

Burkhart's colleagues were perplexed that the station would discipline anyone for reporting on the raids, especially because the federal agents were not operating undercover and the information they based the report on came from several local politicians.

The description of immigration agents in unmarked cars "is newsworthy, particularly since Trump's administration has a history of sending in federal agents while disguising what agencies they're with," said

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Mark Feldstein, a journalism professor at the University of Maryland and former on-air correspondent at CNN and ABC.

Sovern, an award-winning political reporter who worked for The New York Times and the AP, said he struggled to get stories published.

In the weeks after the immigration story, Seelig asked Sovern to cancel an interview he had set up with California gubernatorial candidate Katie Porter out of fear she would say something negative about Trump, he said.

"I'm disappointed that a news organization once renowned and acclaimed for its diligent pursuit of the truth, no matter where it led and no matter whose feathers it ruffled, backed away from its core mission out of fear and economic insecurity," Sovern said. "That's not the KCBS I knew, and gave 35 years of my professional life to, and it's a shame the last months had to end in such ignoble fashion."

Today in History: December 16, the Boston Tea Party

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Tuesday, Dec. 16, the 350th day of 2025. There are 15 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Dec. 16, 1773, the Boston Tea Party took place as American colonists boarded British ships in Boston Harbor and dumped more than 300 chests of tea overboard to protest tea taxes.

Also on this date:

In 1907, 16 U.S. Navy battleships, which came to be known as the "Great White Fleet," set sail from Hampton Roads, Virginia, on a 14-month, round-the-world voyage to demonstrate American sea power.

In 1944, the World War II Battle of the Bulge began as German forces launched a surprise attack against Allied forces through the Ardennes Forest in Belgium and Luxembourg.

In 1960, 134 people were killed when a United Air Lines DC-8 and a TWA Super Constellation collided over New York City.

In 2000, President-elect George W. Bush nominated Colin Powell to become secretary of state; Powell was confirmed by the Senate and became the first African-American to hold the position.

In 2020, a French court convicted 14 people accused of being accomplices in the 2015 Islamic State terror attacks in Paris against the satirical Charlie Hebdo newspaper and a kosher supermarket. The attacks, claimed jointly by the Islamic State group and al-Qaida, left 17 people dead along with three gunmen.

In 2024, a 15-year-old student opened fire at Abundant Life Christian School in Madison, Wisconsin, killing a fellow student and a teacher. The shooter also died.

Today's Birthdays: Artist Edward Ruscha is 88. Actor Liv Ullmann is 87. CBS news correspondent Lesley Stahl is 84. Pop singer Benny Andersson (ABBA) is 79. Rock singer-musician Billy Gibbons (ZZ Top) is 76. Actor Benjamin Bratt is 62. Filmmaker James Mangold is 62. Actor-comedian JB Smoove is 60. Actor Miranda Otto is 58. Astrophysicist Adam Reiss is 56. Actor Krysten Ritter is 44. Singer-songwriter Gaby Moreno is 44. Actor Theo James is 41. Actor Anna Popplewell is 37. Actor Stephan James is 32. Pop singer Zara Larsson is 28.