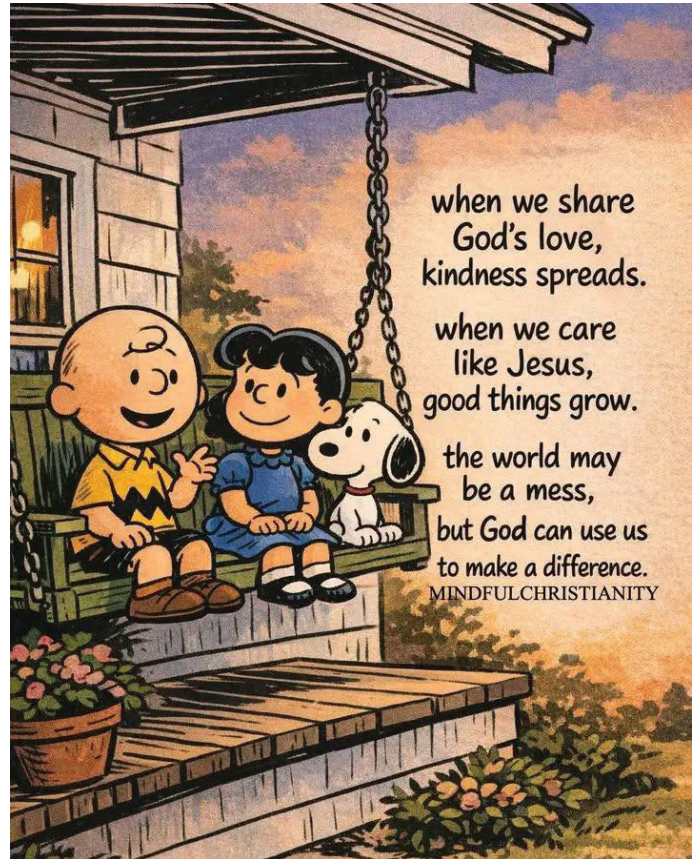


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## Sunday, Feb. 15

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

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

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

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

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

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

Groton Soccer Association Clinics, 11:30 a.m., Arena.

Soccer Open Gym, 2:30 - 4 p.m. elementary gym.

4th grade BB Practice, 2 p.m., Gym

6th grade BB Practice, 6 pm., Arena

Dance Team, 5 p.m., Arena

## Monday, Feb. 16

PRESIDENT'S Day - NO SCHOOL

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

St. John's Lutheran: Christian Literature Circle, 7:30 p.m.

Senior Citizens meet at 1 p.m. at the Groton Community Center

Boys Basketball at Florence: 8th at 4 p.m., 7th at 5 p.m., C at 5 p.m., JV at 6 p.m, varsity to follow.

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

5th/6th Volleyball Practice, Arena and gym, 5:30 p.m.

Kindergarten Boys Basketball, elementary gym, 6 p.m.

5th Grade BBB, HS Gym, 6 p.m.

## We the People

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



By David Adler

### Heeding Lincoln on His Birthday: Let Us Re-Adopt the Declaration of Independence and Its Principles

Celebrations this week of Abraham Lincoln's birthday should include his advice in an October 16, 1854, speech in Peoria, Illinois, at a juncture not dissimilar from the circumstances that torment our nation today. Polarization and division, violence, voter intimidation and murder, and the spreading racism, exacerbated by enactment of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which permitted the extension of slavery, set the stage for Lincoln to emerge from retirement in politics to condemn the new law and declare slavery immoral. He characterized it as "monstrous injustice" that betrayed the foundational principles of the United States. Lincoln's "Peoria Speech," marked his historic ascension as a national leader and, ultimately, as a giant whose voice speaks to us across the ages.

Lincoln, perhaps the most gifted of America's rhetoricians and a literary artist whose style strikes the "mystic cords of memory," unlike any other president, or politician, for that matter, appealed to his audience in terms that resonate in our time. He said, "Let us re-adopt the Declaration of Independence, and --with it--the practices and policy which harmonize with it." He appealed to all regions of the nation and added, "let all lovers of liberty everywhere, join in the great and good work. If we do this, we shall not only have saved the Union, but shall have so saved it, as to make and to keep it forever worthy of the saving." As readers know, Lincoln's presidency was devoted to saving the Union, in a form "worthy of the saving." His words in Peoria were but prologue to his epilogue.

For Lincoln, the majesty of the Declaration of Independence, which he called the "sheet iron of the republic," lay in the self-evident proposition that "all men are created equal." This was, for him, the foundation stone of America and the bedrock of his own moral and political philosophy. He saw in this first principle a pledge of future actions, a statement of aspirations beyond achievement in the Constitutional Convention, to be fulfilled upon the occasion of America's political maturity. Lincoln's conviction on this score, influenced by his embrace of the Golden Rule, was manifested in his own declaration: "as I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy." His opposition to slavery, preeminently a function of his moral code, was illuminated by the calculus of logic and his commitment to the principles and values of democracy.

Lincoln's plea for re-contracting American society in accordance with the Declaration of Independence as the fundamental charter of the nation, invoked a high standard for the salvation of the nation. If "lovers of liberty" pledge to restore the principles of the Declaration, beginning with remembrance and renewal of the self-evident principle that "all men are created equal," then America will have saved the "Union" in a manner "forever worthy of the saving." Such a union could not be worthy of the saving if it remained "half slave and half free." Lincoln's moral compass, which taught him to identify and pursue what he discerned to be right required, consistent with the Golden Rule, respect for the rights of others, which was a necessary predicate to protect our own rights. This distillation represented a commitment to democratic governance--"government of the people, by the people, for the people."

Lincoln's system of thought, built upon the pillars of the Golden Rule and the principle that "all men are created equal," shunned Machiavellian values that embraced the philosophy of might makes right, the

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ends justify the means and other facets of autocratic rule. A nation "worthy of saving," he believed, should be grounded in the principles of the Declaration, not one governed by acts of brute force that ignored equal justice. Born and raised in an antislavery ethos in Kentucky and Indiana and influenced by the transcendentalism of American writers such as Emerson and Thoreau, Lincoln believed in the convictions of conscience. His conscience taught him that all men "are created equal," and throughout his career, guided by principles of pragmatism that, occasionally, for reasons of war, tempered his conscience, he sought to make that self-evident principle a living reality for the nation. Though Lincoln was unsuccessful in making it the conscience of the nation in his lifetime, his words, wisdom and efforts speak to us today and inspire Americans to seek it in ours.

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## Tigers Sweep Mobridge-Pollock on Senior Night



**Keegen Tracy had a season high 32 points, powering in six three-pointers and eight two-pointers.** (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

The Groton Area boys basketball teams celebrated Senior Night in impressive fashion Saturday, sweeping all three games from Mobridge-Pollock in non-conference action. The varsity Tigers rolled to a 78-49 win to improve to 13-4 on the season.

### **Varsity: Groton 78, Mobridge-Pollock 49**

Groton used multiple scoring runs to create separation, including a 10-point burst, an eight-point stretch, two seven-point runs and a six-point run.

Keegen Tracy poured in a season-high 32 points, knocking down six of 10 three-pointers and seven of eight two-point attempts. He added one rebound, two assists and five steals.

Karson Zak was perfect at the free-throw line (7-for-7) and finished with 15 points, three rebounds, six assists and two steals. Ryder Johnson added 10 points, three rebounds and two assists. Gage Sippel scored nine points and grabbed eight rebounds.

Logan Warrington contributed four points and three rebounds. Becker Bosma finished with two points, five rebounds and two assists. Easton Weber had two points, six rebounds, two assists and one steal. Jayden Schwan added two points, two rebounds and one assist.

Asher Johnson had two points and one steal. Ethan Kroll pulled down four rebounds, while Jace Johnson and Anthony Tracy each recorded one rebound.

Groton shot 58% from two-point range (22-of-38), 30% from three-point range (7-of-23) and 93% from the free-throw line (13-of-14). The Tigers totaled 37 rebounds, just seven turnovers, 17 assists, nine steals and 11 team fouls.

Shooter Frederick led Mobridge-Pollock with 21 points, including five three-pointers. Trueth Kroll and Easton Eisemann each scored 11 points. Jesse Schneider added four and Kale Knudson had two. The visitors shot 39% (18-of-46), went 5-of-10 from the free-throw line and committed 11 turnovers.

### **Coach Kjellsen on Senior Night**

Head Coach Greg Kjellsen said the strong start set the tone.

"That was the key to our whole game," Kjellsen said. "We got off to a good start. Logan and JD came and did a good job and we got baskets where we wanted. I was just so proud of how the kids played."

He also highlighted the unselfish leadership of his seniors.

"I was really proud of Becker and Keegen for offering to give up their starting positions to kids that don't get to start and don't always get to play a lot," Kjellsen said. "That's a tribute to the character of those kids. Just very proud of them."

Kjellsen was especially pleased with Tracy's shooting performance.



**Karson Zak gets tangled up with Mobridge-Pollock's Shooter Fredrick as he goes high in the air for the shot.** (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

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**Jayden Schwan scores on this shot in the first quarter.**

(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

"It was so nice to see Keegen shoot the basketball like he did," he said. "We've struggled shooting the three at times this year. It wasn't our intention to just go out and fire them up, but he was hitting. We ran a couple sets for him in our zone."

Mobridge-Pollock's perimeter shooting also drew respect.

"They've improved since early in the year," Kjellsen said. "Frederick has a quick release, good shooter. The only way they were going to beat us was if we didn't contest the three and didn't rebound. I thought for the most part we did a pretty good job. He hit some tough shots."

Kjellsen emphasized the importance of the opening minutes of the second half.

"When you've got a 15- or 17-point lead at halftime, the next two or three minutes are

the most important," he said. "We can bury them or we can give them life. To our credit, we came out and scored right away."

## **Junior Varsity: Groton 49, Mobridge-Pollock 14**

The JV Tigers led 17-5 after one quarter, 33-11 at halftime and 46-12 after three quarters.

Anthony Tracy led Groton with 20 points. Jace Johnson added eight, Asher Johnson had seven, Jordan Schwan scored six, Ethan Kroll had five and J.J. Muller finished with three.

Bryson Andrews led Mobridge-Pollock with six. Kadin Kuehl, Dylan Fjeldheim, Trayden Stambach and Gavin Hollenbeck each scored two.

## **C Game: Groton 53, Mobridge-Pollock 26**

After four lead changes in the opening quarter, Groton settled in and led 14-10 after one. A 13-point run helped build a 25-12 halftime advantage, and a 16-point run in the second half extended the margin to 40-17 after three quarters.

Trayce Schelle led Groton with 23 points. Trey Tietz added 16, Major Dolan scored nine and Ryder Schwan had five.

Michael Neiss led Mobridge-Pollock with nine. Stryker Mauck had seven, Jesse-James Schmidt added five, Dacian Anderson scored three and Tyler Roebuck had two.

Groton travels to Florence on Monday to take on Florence-Henry as the Tigers continue their late-season push.

**The game broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Avantara - Groton, Agtegra, Bierman Farm Service, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Heartland Energy and The MeatHouse in Andover. Jeslyn Kosel ran the camera, Rich Bosma did the commentary and Paul Kosel did the stats and technology. The JV game was sponsored by Bill Bosma and the C game by grandparents.**



**Logan Warrington got in front of these Mobridge-Pollock defenders to score this basket late in the game.** (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

## Mobridge-Pollock Survives Groton Area Rally in Battle of the Tigers

The Groton Area Tigers hosted the Mobridge-Pollock Tigers on Saturday night in a battle of the Tigers, and after a furious second-half comeback attempt, Mobridge-Pollock held on for a 51-47 victory.

Mobridge-Pollock wasted no time setting the tone, opening the game on an 8-0 run and building a 17-3 lead. They led 22-9 after the first quarter and stretched the margin to 22 points midway through the second quarter.

Groton closed the half with a 7-0 run but still trailed 36-21 at intermission.

"We just got down too big right away," said Groton head coach Matt Locke. "Didn't show up right away."

Mobridge-Pollock was red hot in the first half, connecting on seven three-pointers before the break. Blake Thompson scored 14 of her game-high 20 points in the opening half. Faith Heil added 11 points, all in the first half, and Brooke Bain knocked down three three-pointers on her way to 11 points. Teagan Konold finished with five points, while Jeyda Thomp-



**Rylee Dunker goes over this Mobridge-Pollock defender to make this shot.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Jayden Penning gets ready to pass off the ball to a teammate.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

son and Pacey Konold each added two.

Groton regrouped in the third quarter behind Jerica Locke, who scored eight points in the period, including two three-pointers. The Tigers trimmed the deficit to 45-38 heading into the fourth quarter.

"We challenged them at halftime," Locke said. "I didn't really have to challenge them. I knew we weren't going to quit."

After Mobridge-Pollock scored first in the fourth, Groton responded with a 7-0 run to pull within 47-45 with 5:13 remaining.

"I didn't know if we were going to be able to come back from 22," Locke said. "But we wanted to get it to seven at quarter break, and we did exactly that. That was a win for us."

Groton had its chances late, but Mobridge-Pollock made enough plays down the stretch to secure the 51-47 win. The visitors finished 18-of-56 shooting (32 percent), went 7-of-9 from the free-throw line and committed just five turnovers.

Jayden Penning led Groton with 14 points, going a perfect 4-of-4 from the free-throw line while adding eight rebounds and five assists. Rylee Dunker added nine points and five rebounds. Kella Tracy also scored nine points. Jerica Locke finished with eight points,

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four rebounds, one assist and two steals. Taryn Traphagen had seven points, five rebounds, two assists and one block. McKenna Tietz added four rebounds and one assist, while Mia Crank grabbed one rebound and Sydney Locke contributed one rebound and three assists.

Groton shot 11-of-23 from two-point range (48 percent), 6-of-16 from three-point range (38 percent) and 7-of-14 from the free-throw line (50 percent). The Tigers totaled 30 rebounds, 14 assists, 15 turnovers, two steals, 16 team fouls and one blocked shot.

With the loss, Groton Area moves to 13-6 and will close out the regular season Friday, Feb. 20, when Britton-Hecla comes to town. Mobridge-Pollock improves to 14-3.

Following the game, Locke reflected on his seniors.

"Those kids have basically become part of my family," he said. "Jerica, Rylee, Jayden — the character they showed tonight, that's who they are. This is just a game, but not quitting when things aren't going your way — that'll come into play more in life than you think it will."

## Junior Varsity

Groton earned a 38-30 win in the junior varsity game.

The Tigers used a 10-point run in the first half to take control, leading 12-6 after the first quarter and 20-11 at halftime. Groton extended the lead to 32-19 after three quarters.

Kella Tracy and Tevan Hanson each scored 11 points to lead Groton. Ashlynn Warrington added six points. Makenna Krause scored five. Taylynn Traphagen had four, and Kinsley Rowen added one.

For Mobridge-Pollock, Cheyenne Roth scored nine, Shayla Roth had eight, Jersey Frederick added six, Pacey Konold had three, and Ava Wolff and Layna Lebeaux each chipped in two.

## C Game

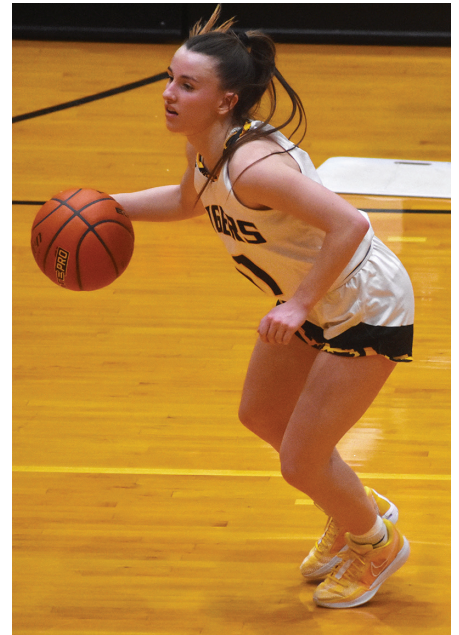
Mobridge-Pollock won the C game 42-19.

Mobridge-Pollock led 10-4 after the first quarter and 18-8 at halftime. A 12-point run in the third quarter pushed the lead to 30-10 entering the final period.

Kinsley Rowen led Groton Area with seven points. Avery Crank added four. Andi Iverson, Brynlee Dunker, Teagan Hanten and Taylynn Traphagen each scored two.

For Mobridge-Pollock, Bentley Bauer led the way with 11 points. Lila Vetsech and Hayleigh Schlomer each scored seven. Avarie Wientjes and Peyton Schneider had five apiece. Lindy Binger added four, and Sophie Keller and Sophie Madison chipped in two and one point respectively.

**The game broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Avantara - Groton, Agtegra, Bierman Farm Service, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Heartland Energy and The MeatHouse in Andover. Jeslyn Kosel ran the camera, Rich Bosma did the commentary and Paul Kosel did the stats and technology for the JV and varsity games. Paul Kosel did the C game. The JV and C games were sponsored by grandparents.**



**Jerica Locke looks for an opening in the Mobridge-Pollock defense.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

## **Wolves Split with Minnesota Duluth; Moore Erupts for 41 in Historic Upset Win**

The Northern State University basketball teams split their matchups with Minnesota Duluth over the weekend, as the Wolves men fell on the road while the women delivered a statement victory behind a historic performance from senior Izzy Moore.

In Duluth, Minn., the NSU men dropped an 81-65 decision to the Bulldogs. Minnesota Duluth controlled much of the contest, outscoring the Wolves 43-31 in the first half and 38-34 in the second.

Northern shot 41.7 percent from the floor, 35.5 percent from 3-point range and 50 percent from the foul line. The Wolves connected on 11 3-pointers and recorded 31 rebounds, 13 assists, four steals and two blocks. NSU scored 26 points off the bench, 24 in the paint and eight second-chance points.

Minnesota Duluth finished with 36 points in the paint, 27 bench points and 13 second-chance points, adding 34 rebounds, 11 assists, five steals and four blocks to secure the win.

James Glenn led Northern with 16 points, including four 3-pointers, along with two rebounds, one assist and one block. Nelson Reynolds added 14 points off the bench and five rebounds, while Joshua Book finished with 13 points, five rebounds and a team-high five assists. Ty Rogers and Marshawn Smith each scored six points, with Rogers pulling down a team-best six rebounds.

With the loss, the Wolves moved to 10-16 overall and 10-10 in NSIC play.

Meanwhile, in Aberdeen, the Northern State women stunned the North Division-leading Bulldogs 74-58.

The Wolves raced out to a 10-2 lead in the opening four minutes, sparked by eight early points from senior Izzy Moore, who went on to deliver one of the most remarkable performances in program history.

Moore poured in 41 points — the second-highest single-game total in NSU women's basketball history and the highest since 1987. She shot 14-of-19 from the field (73.7 percent), 1-of-2 from 3-point range and 12-of-13 from the free-throw line. She also added eight rebounds, one assist and one steal.

Freshman Reagan Rus turned in a career performance as well, scoring 19 points while shooting 6-of-10 from the floor and 7-of-8 from the line. Rus also grabbed four rebounds.

Lily Klein led the Wolves on the glass with nine rebounds and added two assists and two steals, while Megan Counts contributed five boards.

Northern shot 56.8 percent from the field and 78.6 percent from the free-throw line. Defensively, the Wolves held Minnesota Duluth to 35 percent shooting and just 1-of-16 (6.3 percent) from beyond the arc, while forcing 14 turnovers.

Claire Bjorge led the Bulldogs with 14 points, while Lexi Karge added 12.

The win improved the NSU women to 15-11 overall and 10-10 in conference play.

Both Northern State teams return home Thursday for their final regular season home games against the University of Mary. The women tip off at 5:30 p.m. for Senior Night, with the men to follow.

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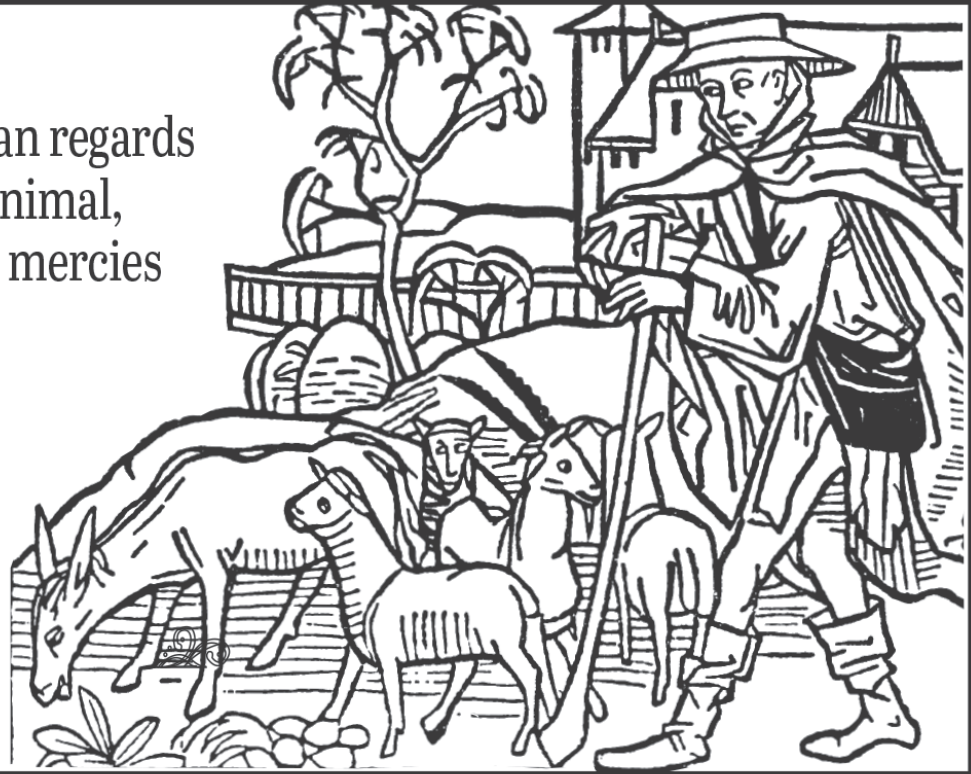
## THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

A righteous man regards  
the life of his animal,  
but the tender mercies  
of the wicked  
are cruel.

Proverbs 12:10



Detail of  
15th-century woodcut



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## BIBLE

## TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. Whose first chapter begins, "Then Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab"? *Exodus, II Kings, Job, Proverbs*

3. From Luke 1, what was the name of Elisabeth and Zacharias' child? *Elisabeth, Zacharias, Thomas, John*

4. In Genesis 4, who's considered the father of all musicians? *Jeremiah, Joash, Jubal, Job*

5. From Luke 7, where did Jesus raise a widow's son from the dead? *Amos, Nain, Lystra, Philippi*

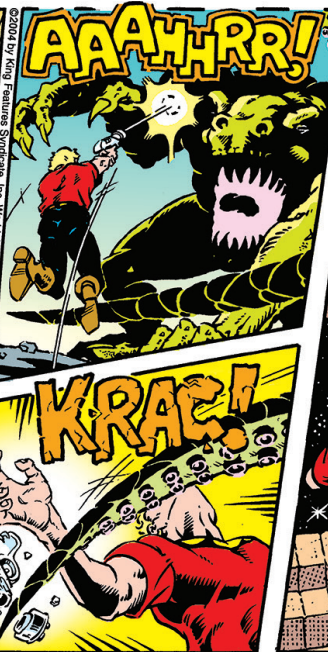
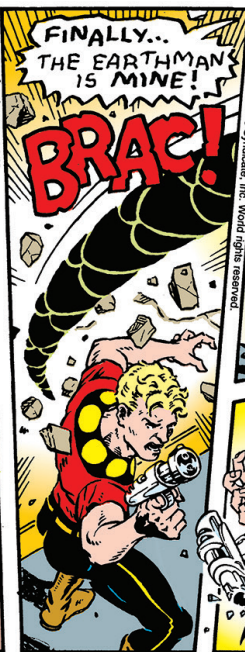
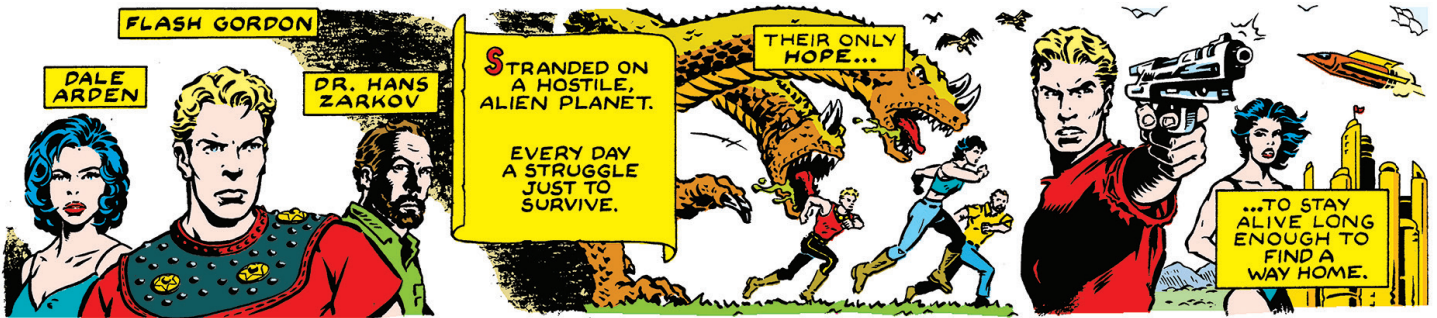
6. In Genesis 12, where did Abram go after leaving Ur? *Iconium, Nineveh, Haran, Salem*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) II Kings, 3) John (the Baptist), 4) Jubal, 5) Nain, 6) Haran

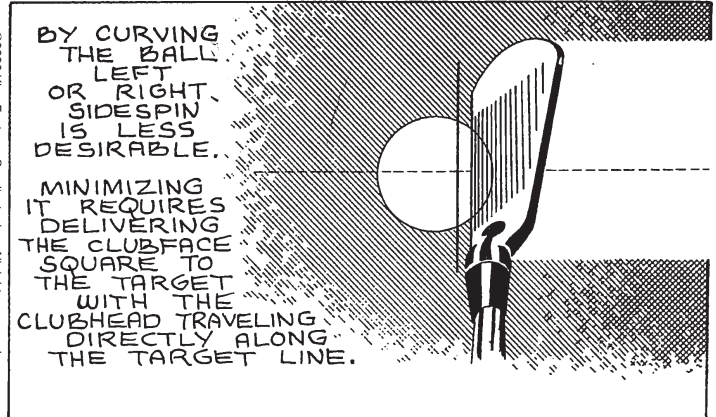
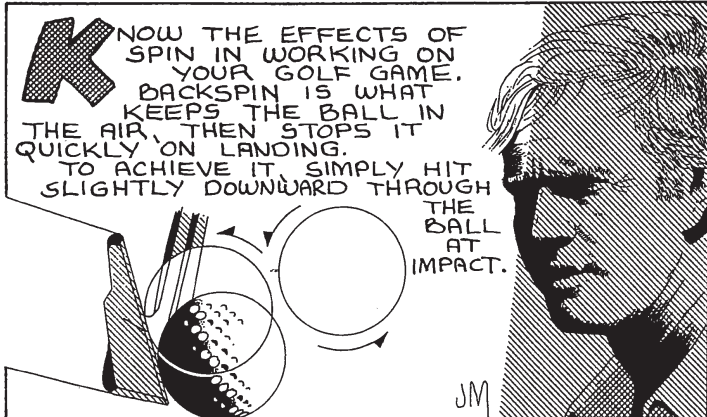
*More than 1,200 brand-new trivia questions in Wilson Casey's latest book "Quest for Bible Knowledge" available in bookstores and online.*

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## Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS





## The Cost of Medicine for IBS Is \$811 Even With Insurance

DEAR DR. ROACH: After a month of testing from my gastrointestinal doctor, I have been diagnosed with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). I have been sick for several months and have lost 12 pounds. (I'm now down to 100 pounds.)

I have been prescribed Xifaxan. The cost from my pharmacy is \$811. Normally, I never have a co-pay. I checked around, and there are no discounts with any other pharmacies. I read many chats about the medicine, and 50% of people in these chats believe that it does not work well and is very hard to digest for the two weeks that you have to take it.

I am meeting with a nutritionist to increase my weight, but every couple of days, I get so sick due to the IBS and can't gain weight. What are your thoughts on taking this medication? -- V.H.

ANSWER: IBS is a functional disease of the intestine. The cause is not certain, and there are several factors involved in IBS, including abnormal movement of the intestine; changes in pain sensitivity; unhealthy bacteria in the gut; and often sensitivities to certain foods. The hallmarks of IBS are changes in bowel habits (diarrhea, constipation or both) and abdominal pain, which is often but not always improved after a bowel movement.

Xifaxan (rifaximin) is an antibiotic that is not well-absorbed in the body, so it only kills the bacteria in the gut. It is intended to preferentially kill harmful bacteria in the gut, improving the microbiome and decreasing bacterial products that cause symptoms of bloating and diarrhea. I have several patients who take it occasionally when other therapies aren't working, and their experience has been favorable.

When used wisely, it can help people with their symptoms. Of course, patients in whom it doesn't work aren't going to use it again, but it does work well for some people. The \$811 cost with insurance is much better than the \$2,500 to \$3,200 cost for a course of treatment without insurance.

People do not take it for a long time; my patients typically take a course one to four times per year. If it helps you, I hope you find it worth the expense, but I don't know whether you are fortunate to have this much money to spend on prescriptions that are over and above your insurance costs.

Severe weight loss with IBS is not common and should be considered an alarming symptom. I have seen many patients who were diagnosed with IBS, sometimes for years, before another comprehensive evaluation is performed. This sometimes lead to the diagnosis of inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis). If you have not had a recent evaluation, including an endoscopy and/or a colonoscopy as well as stool studies, it may be time to repeat these.

\*\*\*

DEAR DR. ROACH: What are the benefits of washing your hands? -- W.L.A.

ANSWER: Not getting sick is the main one. Regular handwashing reduces respiratory illnesses (colds, flu and pneumonia) by about 20%. Handwashing reduces foodborne gastrointestinal illnesses by about 30%.

You also reduce the likelihood of passing on germs to others. People are the most contagious right before symptoms start for most respiratory diseases. Health care professionals wash their hands (or use hand sanitizer) before and after every patient. It only takes 20 seconds for it to be effective.

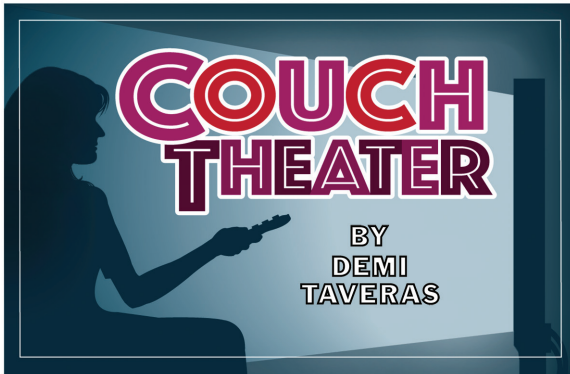
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to [ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu](mailto:ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu).

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**Dove Cameron, left, and Avan Jogia star in "56 Days."** (Courtesy of MovieStillsDB)

"56 Days" (TV-MA) -- Between the thrills and the steaminess that this new series brings, binge-watchers might not be able to resist it! An adaptation of Catherine Ryan Howard's 2021 novel of the same name, "56 Days" stars two actors who got their start on Disney and Nickelodeon, respectively -- Dove Cameron ("Liv and Maddie") and Avan Jogia ("Victorious"). The steamy duo play couple Oliver and Ciara, who commenced their passionate love affair after a chance meeting at a supermarket. (What a dream!) Fifty-six days after the chance meeting, a body is found in Oliver's apartment, which leads detectives to probe deeper into Oliver's life and his relationship with Ciara. All eight episodes premiere on Feb. 18. (Amazon Prime Video)

"The 'Burbs" (TV-MA) -- You might remember a 1989 film called "The 'Burbs" starring Tom Hanks, Bruce Dern and Carrie Fisher. Well, this new television series is a reimagining of that very film, with Keke Palmer ("Nope") and Jack Whitehall ("Malice") as the main stars. Palmer plays Samira, who takes a chance on moving to a quiet cul-de-sac that used to be her husband Rob's (Whitehall) childhood neighborhood. As the couple settles into suburban life, Samira notices oddities surrounding an old home, which lead her to think that it's haunted. With the help of bored neighbors who have nothing else to do, Samira decides to probe deeper into the old house, but she might not like where the road takes her. All eight episodes are out now to stream. (Peacock)

"Urchin" (R) -- Harris Dickinson ("Babygirl"), who will be playing John Lennon in the 2028 biopic film about the Beatles, decided to make his directorial debut before donning Lennon's signature glasses. This drama film premiered at the most recent Cannes Film Festival and stars Frank Dillane ("Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince") as a homeless young man named Mike. Struggling with addiction and poverty, Mike attempts to get off the streets and find a reliable way to make a living. But with life continuing to put obstacles in the road, the immense pressure that Mike feels is enough to make even an urchin like him lose his mind. Premieres Feb. 17. (Hulu)

"Can You Keep a Secret?" (TV-14) -- This sitcom features a handful of movie and television stars from across the pond, including Dawn French ("French and Saunders"), Mark Heap ("Piglets"), and Craig Roberts ("22 Jump Street"). Loosely based on the real-life disappearance of John Darwin, the six-episode series follows retired couple Debbie (French) and William (Heap), who capitalize on an opportunity to claim life insurance after William is mistakenly pronounced dead. Although their son, Harry (Roberts), tries to persuade them to give the money back because this is, indeed, a criminal activity, he somehow gets sucked into the charade as well. The first episode is out now, with subsequent episodes premiering every Thursday. (Paramount+)

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1. Name the artist who wrote and released "Jump into the Fire."
2. Who wrote and released "Games People Play"?
3. Name Aerosmith's first song to reach the charts.
4. Which singer wrote and released "I Go Crazy"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "All the leaves have gone green and the clouds are so low, You can touch them and so, Come out to the meadow."

Answers

1. Harry Nilsson, in 1972. The song has been used in several films, including "Goodfellas" (1990) and "A Bigger Splash"

(2015).

2. Joe South, in 1968. Even though the only place the song topped the charts was in South Africa, it won both the Grammy Award for Song of the Year (1970) and the Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Song (1970).

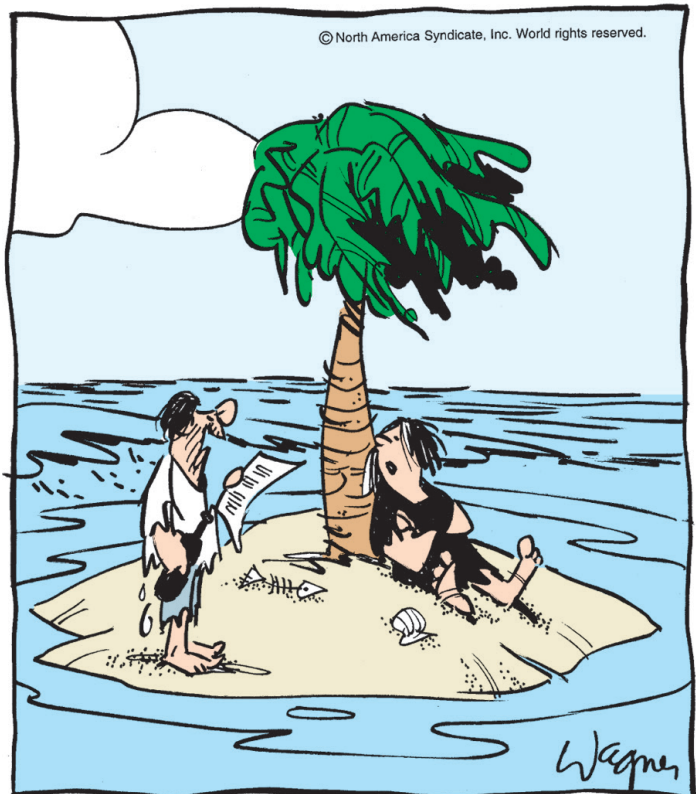
3. "Dream On," in 1973.

4. Paul Davis, in 1977. The song went to No. 7 on the Hot 100 chart and has been covered by several others, including Lee Greenwood and Barry Manilow.

5. "Jean," by Oliver in 1969. The song was used in the film "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie" starring Maggie Smith as a teacher at a school in Scotland. The film was nominated for Best Original Song.

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## GRIN *and* BEAR IT <sup>Wagner</sup>



"Hey, this is a great deal on refinancing!"

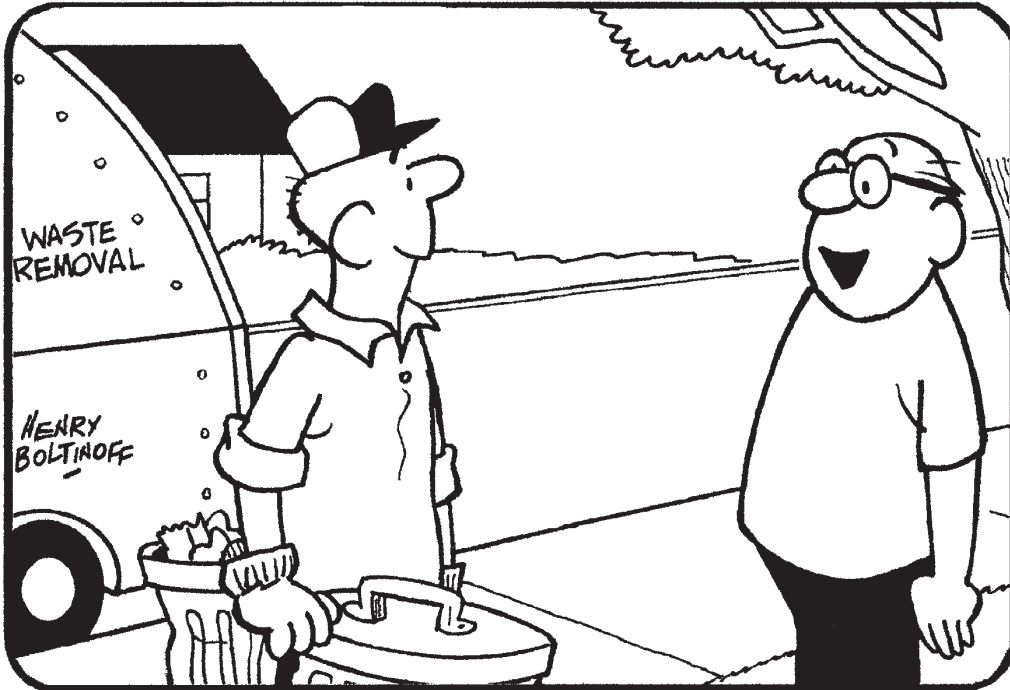
## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps

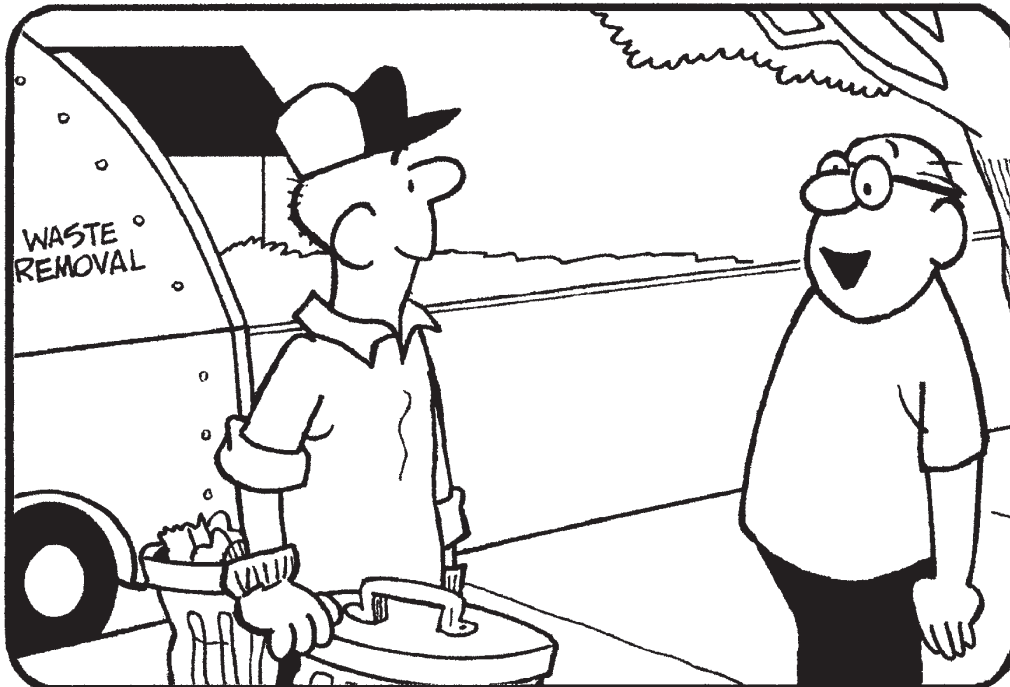


## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY  
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Wheel is larger. 2. Hat is larger. 3. Window is wider. 4. Button is missing. 5. Sleeve is longer. 6. Sidewalk is wider.

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\* "I purchased a roll of reflective tape to mark our basement stairs. It reflects the light from the open doorway at the top of the stairs, and I can turn the downstairs lights off before heading up. I had some leftover, so I put a strip on my dog's collar. When I let him out at night, I can shine a flashlight and spot him instantly, since the tape is more visible in the night."  
-- V.R. in Pennsylvania

\* Tongs lost their clip? Use the rubber band from a bunch of broccoli to hold the ends together in storage.

\* "I am an avid craft sewer. One trick I have used that was passed down from my mother is to save the bar soap when it gets to a sliver. Then I use it to trace patterns on cloth. I like it better than chalk. It makes a clear mark that 'sticks.' But it

will wash right out when you are done." -- I.W. in Kansas

\* Use an old vegetable peeler in the shop to sharpen pencils.

\* "Diaper rash hurts. The best medicine, in my opinion, is a little diaper-free time for baby. But there are times when it's not practical to let the little one go about pants-free. When you just can't air-dry an angry baby bottom, you can help dry the skin up with a couple minutes of warm air from a hair dryer." -- P.M.

\* Wrap the metal end of your paintbrush with masking tape before painting. Then you can peel it off and there's no stuck-on paint.

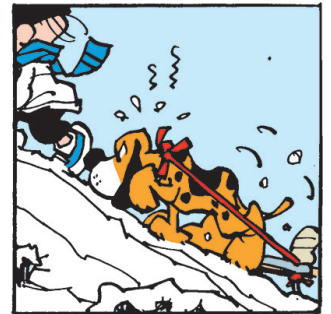
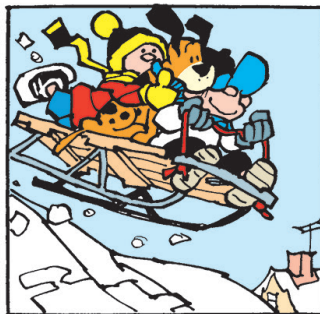
\* Store plastic wrap in the refrigerator or even freezer to keep it from sticking to itself.

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 1800 Pembroke Dr., Suite 300, Orlando, FL 32810.

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**TIGER**

by **BUD BLAKE**



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## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Lawyers' gp.
- 4 Radiator sound
- 7 Explosion
- 12 Bottom line
- 13 Ref
- 14 — Ababa
- 15 Hindu honorific
- 16 Obstruction
- 18 Work unit
- 19 Incursion
- 20 Frog's relative
- 22 — Aviv
- 23 Chumps
- 27 Fan's shout
- 29 Owing money
- 31 Choir member
- 34 Like anchovies
- 35 Hour follower
- 37 Dog's foot
- 38 Yuletide tune
- 39 GPS suggestion
- 41 Lounge about
- 45 Toe woes
- 47 Nev. neighbor
- 48 "Psycho" director Alfred
- 52 Chemical suffix
- 53 Petrify
- 54 "QB —" (Uris novel)
- 55 Cacophony
- 56 "One L" author Scott
- 57 Right angle

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14				
15				16			17					
18				19								
20			21		22				23	24	25	26
			27	28			29	30				
31	32	33						34				
35					36		37					
38					39	40			41	42	43	44
				45				46		47		
48	49	50	51							52		
53						54				55		
56						57				58		

- 58 Mermaid's home
- 10 Bracketed word
- 11 Chiding sound
- 17 Painter Salvador
- 21 Slobber
- 23 Shoulder wrap
- 24 "You've got mail" co.
- 25 Agt.'s cut
- 26 Cloud setting
- 28 Rainbow
- 30 Code-breaking gp.
- 31 Great weight
- 32 Green prefix
- 33 Mets' div.
- 36 Ray of McDonald's
- 37 Writing instrument
- 40 Treasure stash
- 42 Lab liquids
- 43 "The Fraud" author — Smith
- 44 Justice Kagan
- 45 Enjoy gum
- 46 Power tool brand
- 48 FDR follower
- 49 Post-op area
- 50 Sailor
- 51 — -Magnon

### DOWN

- 1 Plus
- 2 Small pack animal
- 3 Spanish girl-friend
- 4 Ride the waves
- 5 Suave
- 6 Memoir by Prince Harry
- 7 Infant
- 8 "Bad" cholesterol
- 9 Commotion

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## King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

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

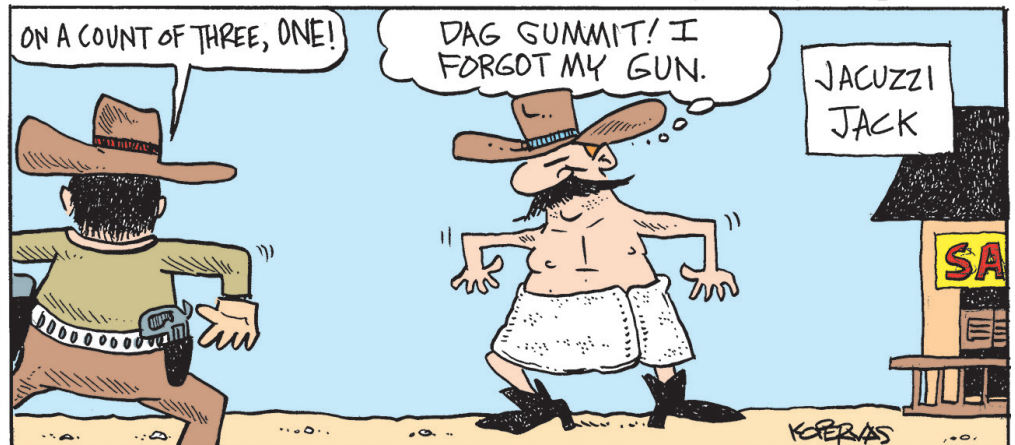
## Olive



## Out on a Limb

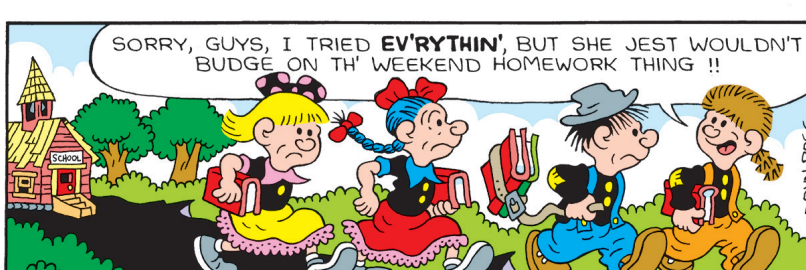
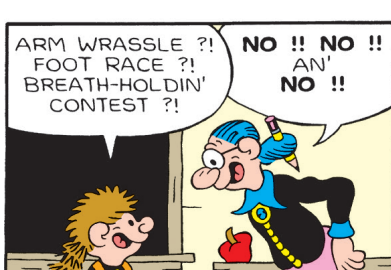
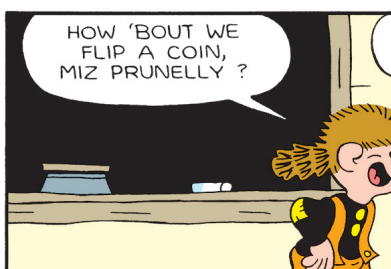
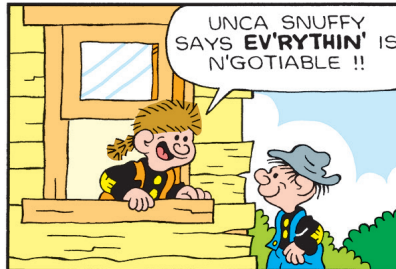
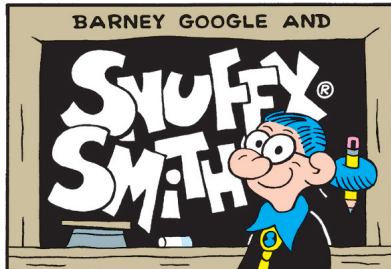
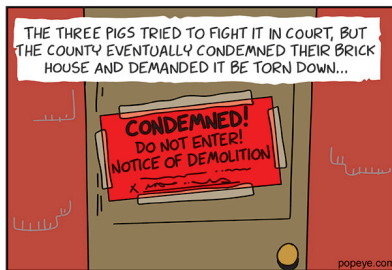
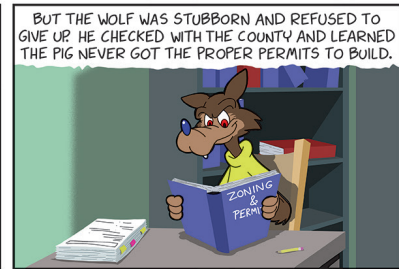
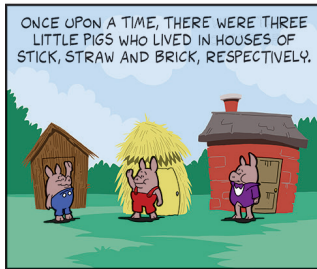
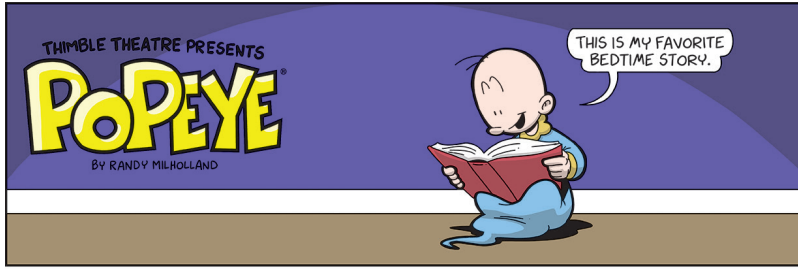
by Gary Kopervas

AWARD FOR SHORTEST TIME ANYONE WAS EVER A GUNSLINGER IN THE OLD WEST...



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HAL FOSTER'S **Prince Valiant**  
BY SCHULTZ AND YEATES

PIRATE BLADES WOULD CUT DOWN JOGTHURA, LOST IN A BERSERKER FURY, HAD NOT ALETA PLACED HERSELF IN HARM'S WAY...

...BUT JUST AS SHE IS ABOUT TO BE RUN THROUGH, A DEADLY MISSILE PINS HER ATTACKER!

GUNDAR THANKS ODIN THAT HIS ONE GOOD ARM REMAINS STRONG, AS HE AND HIS MEN SCRAMBLE DOWN THE TREACHEROUS CAVERN ROCKS, SCREAMING LIKE BANSHEES.

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AND THAT BRINGS THE CONFUSED PIRATES TO THEIR BREAKING POINT. BETWEEN THE CRAZED GIANT, THE CRAB-INFESTED PITS BELOW, AND NOW THIS AMBUSH, THEIR DISCIPLINE IS SHATTERED.

MOST ARE CUT DOWN IN A POORLY LIT SKIRMISH. ONE MANAGES TO BREAK AWAY, STUMBLING BLINDLY IN A WILD PANIC...

YEATES 12/21/14 4063

...UNTIL LOW, RUMBLING GROWLS—BEFORE AND BEHIND—FREEZE HIM IN TERROR. "WHAT DID I DO TO DESERVE THIS?" HE SOBS.

NEXT: *The lady vanishes*

## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

I ONCE CROSSED A LAWN MOWER WITH A CANARY

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AND WHAT HAPPENED?

I GOT SHREDDED TWEET!!

Pickering

## SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

### Keep track of food recalls

If you've been keeping an eye on recent food recalls you know that salmonella has been in the news, because salmonella has been in our food.

We have Moringa superfood capsules, the powder of which comes from the leaves of plants in India and Africa, an organic food known for containing healthful antioxidants, protein and minerals ... except it can make us very ill if we get the wrong capsule and salmonella is present in the powder.

Then there are the organic chia seeds with salmonella. And the pouches of super greens supplements that promote health via kale, barley grass and parsley -- with salmonella. And the chocolate candy bars -- with salmonella. And the dog biscuits -- with salmonella.

But salmonella isn't all that's been discovered in our food recently. We have plastic in baby biscuits, specifically in the flour used to make those biscuits for toddlers. We have significant levels of lead in cookware that can cause lead toxicity. We have mold in nasal spray. And there are defective lids on cans of tuna that allowed the food to be contaminated, potentially leading to food poisoning in those who eat the tuna. The current recall on these cans of tuna is a re-do: The cans were in storage because they were already recalled once, a year ago, and the quarantined product was accidentally released to stores.

Several cheese products sold at a number of major locations have tested positive for listeria, as have tamales, burritos and chicken fillets.

Part of taking care of ourselves is to stay on top of these food recalls to be sure we don't have those items in our home. Make it a point to start your week on Mondays by going to the government's food safety website. Go to [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov) and click on "Recalls & Outbreaks." Or see the food safety website at [www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls).

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Call/Text Tina: 605-397-7285



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Physical Therapy. **\$20 a month**

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1. What controversial baseball diary, first published in 1970, is pitcher Jim Bouton's account of his 1969 season with the Seattle Pilots and the Houston Astros?

2. In 2017, UCLA basketball players LiAngelo Ball, Jalen Hill and Cody Riley were arrested and detained after they were accused of shoplifting sunglasses from a Louis Vuitton store in what country?

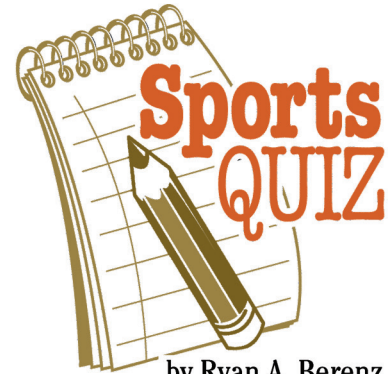
3. What former NFL wide receiver served as host of the CBS revival of the game show "Hollywood Squares" beginning in 2025?

4. For which team did U.S. Olympic speed skater Brittany Bowe play college basketball from 2006 to 2010?

5. Before earning Super Bowl XXII MVP honors with Washington, Doug Williams played quarterback for what NFL team from 1978 to 1982?

6. What term rose from British folklore to describe a sports tournament format in which every participant plays against every other participant?

7. What style of skiing, named after the region of Norway where it originated, uses toe-only bindings on downhill skis to perform turns with one ski forward and the other ski trailing?



by Ryan A. Berenz

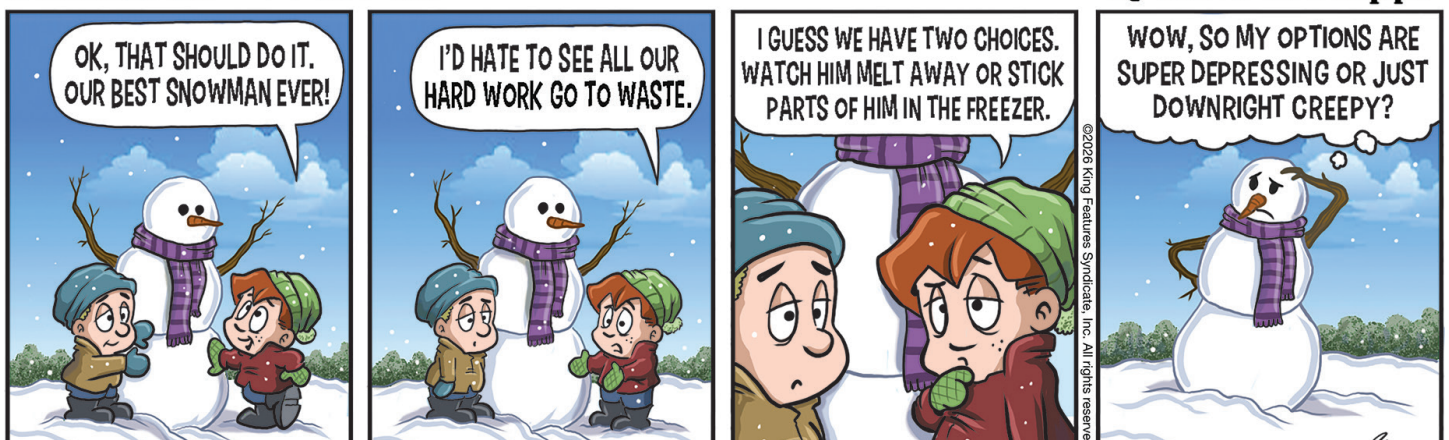
## Answers

1. "Ball Four: My Life and Hard Times Throwing the Knuckleball in the Big Leagues."
2. China.
3. Nate Burleson.
4. The Florida Atlantic Owls.
5. The Tampa Bay Buccaneers.
6. Round robin.
7. Telemark skiing.

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## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





## Why spay/neuter programs work

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: You often write about feral cat control programs like TNR (trap, neuter, return) and advocate for spaying and neutering. But, do these programs actually work? Because I still see feral cats near my neighborhood every day. -- Janine in Spring Hill, Florida

DEAR JANINE: Thank you for spotlighting feral cat programs! Yes, TNR and TNVR (trap, neuter, vaccinate, return) programs have been going on long enough that the organizations running them have collected plenty of data showing that "community cat" populations have declined and stabilized. In fact, there's an organization in your area, Paw Warriors Inc. ([pawwarriorsinc.com](http://pawwarriorsinc.com)), that supports these efforts and maintains a no-kill shelter

for abandoned cats and feral cats who can no longer fend for themselves outside.

For decades, the University of Florida and the University of Central Florida have had TNR/TNVR programs. Both reported a significant reduction in feral cat populations after the first one to two years -- over 66%. Kittens were put up for adoption, and the remaining adult cats were returned to their colonies. The feral cat population remained small but stable afterward. In Washington, D.C., Alley Cat Allies, an advocacy organization formed in 1990, started a TNR program with a feral cat colony. Within seven years, the colony dropped from 54 to just six adult cats; these remaining cats lived longer, healthier lives with the last cat passing away at age 17!

The studies found that TNR/TNVR programs were highly effective even if just over half of a colony was treated. Fewer kittens were born, fewer diseases were transmitted between cats, and fewer fights took place.

When you next see a feral cat near your neighborhood, look closely to see if they have a "tipped" ear (a chunk cut out of the top). This shows that the cat was trapped and neutered or spayed, and that the colony is being monitored.

Send your tips, comments or questions to [ask@pawscorner.com](mailto:ask@pawscorner.com).

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## Strange BUT TRUE

\* Ever wonder where the term “jaywalker” originated? Back in the day, “jay” was slang for a foolish person. So when pedestrians ignored street signs, to their own peril, they were labeled jaywalkers.

\* Relative to their body size, barnacles have the largest sex organs in the animal kingdom.

\* During World War II, Charles Richard Drew, a Black physician, developed blood banks for military personnel. However, when he discovered that the military was separating blood

donations according to race, he quit working for the Red Cross.

\* Some beaches in the Maldives glow in the dark.

\* If you have a daily routine, some scientists believe that your dog can tell when you’re coming home by the amount of your scent that’s left in the house.

\* As astronauts spend months traveling to Mars, their eyeballs may change shape. Some scientists believe this is due to pressure from fluids that won’t drain from their heads, thanks to low gravity.

\* Ackwards is an old English dialect word for a creature lying on its back that can’t get up.

\* In the popular Roadrunner/Wile E. Coyote cartoons, the latter character shouldn’t have been outwitted by his desperately hunted prey, since coyotes typically outpace roadrunners by a good 23 mph.

\* According to a poll of 11,000 Americans, 84% of vegetarians and vegans return to eating meat.

\* When Angelfire launched in the mid-1990s, it offered medical transcription services as well as web-building tools.

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day: “I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.”

-- Isaac Newton

\*\*\*

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### Planning your growing space

- Consider a **container garden** if you have a small space or a patio. Compact veggies like peppers like to grow in pots.
- For smaller properties, a **raised garden bed** gives more space and control than containers, but less permanent than in-ground beds. They’re great for root crops, onions, garlic, cabbage, zucchini and squash.
- An **in-ground garden** works if there is full sun, good soil and space for what you’ll grow. This requires the most time and effort. Corn, tomatoes, winter squash and perennial herbs like more space to grow. – *Brenda Weaver*

Source: [thehomesteadchallenge.com](http://thehomesteadchallenge.com)



by Freddy Groves

## Rate increase for Veteran Directed Care

Veterans with very serious and complex medical conditions will see a hefty increase in the amount of money paid for their home care.

Specifically, those veterans will now have their community and home care costs covered at a rate that is 100% of what would be charged at a VA Community Living Center -- a nursing home.

The benefit here is that veterans will then be able to stay home and take advantage of adult day care, skilled home health, a home health aide and Veteran Directed Care (VDC). This last is the most valuable for veterans as it targets veterans who need help with daily tasks (eating, bathing, grocery shopping, anything for daily living) and keeps them out of nursing homes.

Instead of being given staff and helpers by the VA, veterans and their families can choose who they want as care providers, including family members or friends chosen by the veteran (and respite services for the primary care provider), even interviewing and selecting the desired staff. And those helpers are paid.

Eligibility for VDC status requires that the veteran be enrolled for health care with the VA, have a VA primary care provider, meet eligibility criteria and need nursing home level services. Eligibility is not determined by specific medical conditions, but rather by the actual help and services that a veteran requires.

Veterans, if you're in danger of needing placement in a nursing home and would rather stay home, your first step is to talk to your primary care provider at the VA.

You should be directed to the Veteran Directed Care Coordinator, who will act as liaison to assist with analyzing goals and developing a plan, working out a budget, hiring helpers and monitoring the situation.

If you haven't signed up to receive Veteran Directed Care benefits because of the low payments (65% of what would be charged at a VA Community Living Center), this increase to 100% should help significantly. Work with the Coordinator on a budget to be sure it's manageable for you.

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## Wishing Well®

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

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

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1. FOOD & DRINK: What is a bunch of bananas called?
2. MOVIES: Who is Neo's nemesis in "The Matrix"?
3. MUSIC: The Broadway show "Jersey Boys" is about which music group?
4. TELEVISION: In which U.S. city is the sitcom "New Girl" set?
5. U.S. PRESIDENTS: What is the name of the helicopter that transports U.S. presidents?
6. GEOGRAPHY: The Lake of the Ozarks is in which U.S. state?
7. HISTORY: When did construction begin on the Berlin Wall?
8. PSYCHOLOGY: What fear is represented in the condition called mageirocophobia?
9. ASTRONOMY: Which planet in our solar system has the Great Red Spot?
10. LITERATURE: Which country is the setting for the novel "The French Lieutenant's Woman"?

### Answers

1. A hand, and each banana is a finger.
2. Agent Smith.
3. The Four Seasons.
4. Los Angeles.
5. Marine One.
6. Missouri.
7. 1961.
8. A fear of cooking.
9. Jupiter.
10. England.

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South Dakota Governor



**Larry Rhoden**



**South Dakota:** *Under God, the People Rule*

## Unsuppressed Suppressors

I just signed Senate Bill 2 (or as some are calling it, SB 2A), which fittingly protects our 2nd Amendment. South Dakota is the most pro-2nd Amendment state in America, and we take protecting this right seriously. SB 2A sends a clear message: South Dakota will not suppress the rights of law-abiding citizens.

This straightforward legislation removes suppressors from our state's list of "controlled weapons." It eliminates unnecessary state-level restrictions in the hope that suppressors will soon be similarly deregulated federally. We shouldn't treat a simple piece of hearing protection like it belongs in the same category as machine guns. For hunters, firearms enthusiasts, and families who value safety and responsibility, this is common-sense conservatism at its finest.

Here in South Dakota, we understand firearms better than most. We have the highest number of hunters per-capita in the nation. Many of us grew up on ranches and farms where a rifle or shotgun is a tool of the trade, not a political statement.

I carried pro-Second Amendment bills myself during my years in the Legislature, including a half-dozen that became law. And I'm proud to continue that work as governor. Suppressors aren't weapons – they're about protecting your hearing, reducing noise for those around you, and making shooting sports safer and more accessible.

We held the signing ceremony at Silencer Central in Sioux Falls. Silencer Central is a company that has built a national reputation by making quality suppressors right here in South Dakota. Last year, I started my "Open for Opportunity" tour at their facility, and that wasn't an accident. It highlighted both our support for the Second Amendment and what can be possible when government gets out of the way: innovation, jobs, and proud South Dakota businesses that don't have to hide what they do. In too many states, companies like this operate quietly. Here, we celebrate them.

South Dakota has earned its reputation as the most Second Amendment-friendly state in the nation. We led with constitutional carry – the first bill that Former Governor Noem signed under the Noem-Rhoden Administration. We became the first state to offer free concealed carry permits. Now, with SB 2A, we're once again showing the rest of the country how to respect the rights of responsible citizens without unnecessary red tape.

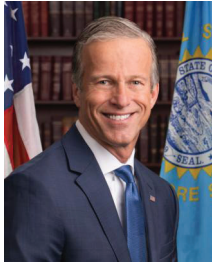
Critics will claim this somehow makes us less safe. That's the same tired argument we hear every time we expand freedom. The facts say otherwise. Law-abiding South Dakotans who pass federal background checks aren't the problem. Over-regulating everyday tools only burdens the people who follow the rules. Real safety comes from strong enforcement of existing laws and from a culture that teaches responsibility – not from piling on more restrictions that criminals ignore anyway.

This bill is about more than suppressors. It's about rejecting the idea that government knows better than free citizens how to exercise their constitutional rights. It's about keeping South Dakota strong, safe, and free for the next generation of hunters, ranchers, and families who call this state home.

I'm betting other states will follow our lead, just as they have on constitutional carry. South Dakota isn't waiting for permission from Washington. We're leading by example, the way we always have. Our rights are now a little more unsuppressed – and that's exactly how it should be.

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**JOHN THUNE**  
U.S. SENATOR FOR SOUTH DAKOTA

## More Opportunities to Get Ahead

Education can open a lot of doors. The right knowledge and skills can create opportunities and open up paths to success. It's why parents work so hard to ensure their children get a good education that sets them up for a better life. When Republicans wrote our landmark bill, the Working Families Tax Cuts, we wanted to support parents and empower them to help open doors for their children, and I'm proud this landmark law will help set the next generation up to attain their American Dream.

For decades, the 529 savings plan has been a powerful tool for parents to save for their kids' education. At first, 529s could only be used for college, but in 2017, Republicans expanded eligible uses of 529 funds to include K-12 expenses as well. In the Working Families Tax Cuts, Republicans expanded 529s again to provide even greater freedom for parents to support their children's education. Thanks to this new law, parents can put that money toward tutoring, vocational and continuing education, and homeschool materials. And we also doubled the amount folks can spend from a 529 plan to \$20,000 per year.

The Working Families Tax Cuts supports Americans pursuing an education whatever their ultimate goal may be. For those interested in the trades, this bill created the new Workforce Pell program, which will help students pursuing shorter-term job training programs that prepare them for in-demand, skilled jobs. For those who are looking at a college degree, this bill implements accountability measures designed to put downward pressure on tuition, and it streamlines the student loan repayment process to make it simpler for Americans repaying their loans. Additionally, it ensures that graduates won't have to pay taxes on tuition assistance from their employer – a measure that I introduced and that this bill makes permanent.

In addition to supporting Americans in their educational pursuits, the Working Families Tax Cuts also provides families with another option to save for their children's future: Trump accounts. These new investment accounts allow families to contribute and invest money for children as they grow up. When a child turns 18, that money – thousands or even tens of thousands of dollars – is tax-advantaged, and it can be put toward education, starting a business, or buying a home – to get a head start on the American Dream. For children born between 2025 and 2028, the government is offering an initial \$1,000 investment in Trump accounts. I hope parents will consider opening an account for their children, which you can do when you file your taxes or at any time online.

I often say that the Working Families Tax Cuts includes a decades-worth of accomplishments in a single bill, but perhaps its greatest impact is the opportunities it unlocks for an entire generation of Americans. Thanks to this bill, the next generation will have greater educational freedom and be able to seize even more opportunities. I'm proud that Republicans' landmark bill will help the next generation as they pursue the American Dream.

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February 2 - 8, 2026

Welcome back to another Weekly Round[s] Up. This week, my DC office was especially full with South Dakotans who are in DC for meetings! It was good to see so many friendly and familiar faces in the office. One highlight from this week was hearing that President Trump called South Dakota native, Royce Williams to inform him that he will



be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroic actions during the Cold War. Another exciting part of my week was joining members of Congress for the 74th annual National Prayer Breakfast hosted on Capitol Hill. More on this and the rest of my week in the Weekly Round[s] Up:

South Dakota groups I visited with: Dakota Mainstem Regional Water System; Troy Wellman, Moody County Sheriff and Andy Howe, Clay County Sheriff; Associated School Boards of South Dakota; South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems; Paul TenHaken, Mayor of Sioux Falls who was in town representing the MENTOR program; National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance; American Indian Higher Education Consortium; and South Dakota representatives from Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America.

Met with South Dakotans from: Aberdeen, Arlington, Beresford, Britton, Brookings, Bruce, Chancellor, De Smet, Egan, Flandreau, Howard, Huron, Kyle, Lake Andes, Madison, Miller, Mission, Mobridge, Murdo, Rapid City, Sioux Falls, Tea, Vermillion, Viborg, Volga, Waverly, White Lake and Woonsocket.

Other meetings: Christian Klein, CEO of SAP America, Inc.; Leena-Kaisa Mikkola, Finland's Ambassador to the United States; Charles Murigande, Senator from Rwanda; Congolese Delegation; Ethiopian Leadership; Jonathan Gould, Comptroller of the Currency; Oana Toiu, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Bete Demeke, President and CEO of Project Mercy.

I also had the opportunity to speak at Information Technology Industry Council (ITI) Intersect Summit with Julie Sweet, CEO of Accenture. We talked about artificial intelligence (AI) and its key role in advancing healthcare and shaping our future.

Hearings: I attended four hearings this past week. I gave remarks at Senate Committee on Indian Affairs hearing, where two of my bills to address issues within the Indian Health Service were heard, which you can watch here. I also questioned Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent in a hearing of the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee. You can watch that clip here. I attended a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing where I questioned Admiral (ret.) Charles A. Richard, USN; the Honorable Rose E. Gottemoeller; and Mr. Timothy A. Morrison. Click here to watch. Lastly, I went to a closed hearing in the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

Briefings: I received two classified briefings.

Senate Prayer Breakfast: This week was a unique prayer breakfast. On Thursday, we held the 74th National Prayer Breakfast. This is an annual event that is an opportunity for Members of Congress and people of all faiths to pray collectively for our nation. It's always a powerful event that brings people together with a shared purpose.

Votes taken: 12 - This week I voted on many federal judges including: Brian Charles Lea, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Tennessee; Justin R. Olson, of Indiana, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Indiana; Aaron Christian Peterson, of Alaska, to be United States District Judge for the District of Alaska; Megan Blair Benton, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Missouri; David Clay Fowlkes, of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Arkansas; and Nicholas Jon Ganjei, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas.

Steps taken: 58,748 steps or 27.79 miles.

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries

PO Box 831313 - Ocala, FL 34483

1-352-216-3025

## Valentine's Day, Just Another Day on the Calendar?

The older I get, the more I have to forget, and believe me, I don't forget to forget. I can't keep up with dates, holidays, or even my birthday. I believe a day is a day, and that should be the end of it.

As I was drinking my morning coffee, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage entered and said, "Do you know what day Saturday is?"

I didn't know what kind of question this was because she always throws questions at me that confuse me, just to see if I can get confused. Looking at her, I said very seriously, "I believe that it will be Saturday." Then I looked at her and smiled.

"Oh, you silly boy. This Saturday is February 14. You do know what day that is."

I had to admit to her that I had no idea what she was talking about. I thought about it and then said to her, "Is it one of our granddaughter's birthday?" We always like to celebrate these birthdays, and I had no idea which of our granddaughters had a birthday this week.

"You sure don't keep up with the times, do you?" She said rather snickerly. Looking at me with one of her serious looks, she said, "This Saturday is February 14 and that is Valentine's Day. Remember what Valentine's Day is?"

I had to think for a moment, and then it came to me, another holiday that I can't keep up with.

"Don't you remember we became engaged on Valentine's Day 55 years ago?"

Looking at her, I said, "No way it's that long!"

I had to give this a lot of thought, and I began to remember that 55 years ago, on Valentine's Day, we became engaged. Then six months later, we got married. My, oh my, how time flies when you're getting old.

That sure was a long time ago, and it has gone by rather quickly. I never thought I would live to be this old. But here I am, celebrating 55 years of being engaged.

I remember meeting The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage six months before our engagement. And then six months later, we were married.

We were at Bible school together, where we met. One Sunday, a bunch of us went to a church to sing. We did that often during our school time. I lip-synched while the others actually sang.

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On our way home, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I were sitting towards the back of the van. We were talking about this and that and everything. Then she asked me a question, which I assume was rhetorical.

She said, "Wouldn't it be wonderful to be married?"

Not knowing that it was not rhetorical, I smiled and said, "Yes, it would be wonderful to be married someday."

That was the end of that conversation. She was smiling all the way back to the dorms.

The next day, as I was walking down the school hallway, everybody looked at me, smiled, and said, "Congratulations." I smiled back and thanked them. I thought I had finally passed one of my tests, and they were congratulating me. But everybody I passed congratulated me.

Not knowing what was going on, I stopped one of them and said, "What are you congratulating me for?"

"Oh, you know. You're getting married."

I was getting what? I had no idea where that was coming from. But the rhetorical question was actually a real question. I was the last one at school to find out I was getting married.

At first, I thought it was some prank that people were playing on me. I went along with it, not wanting to look stupid.

I met with the former Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and wanted to get things straightened out. I didn't want to take anything for granted; what I really wanted to know, was this the truth?

We went to a little restaurant down the street, and as we were sitting there, I looked at her and said, "Did you hear the rumor that you and I are getting married?" I then laughed quite hilariously.

She smiled and said very enthusiastically, "That's not a rumor it's true. You and I are going to get married."

Well, there wasn't anything more I could do about that.

55 years later, as I was thinking about Valentine's Day, I remembered that incident so many years ago. Looking back over the years, I couldn't help but think what a wonderful time that has been.

Now that I'm old, I can say that Valentine's Day 55 years ago was probably the best day of my life, and it was all because of The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

I looked back at The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and said, "Valentine's Day is one of the best days of the year. Don't you agree?"

In pondering this I was reminded of what King Solomon said, "Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 9:9).

This August we will celebrate our 55th wedding anniversary and I intend to follow King Solomon's advice to "Live joyfully with the wife." Why change when it's working just fine so far?

## EARTHTALK

### Beware If You Live Near A Golf Course by Rachel Berliner

Dear EarthTalk: Should I be concerned for my health if my property is right near a golf course?  
-- Wilma Forrest, via email

Golf courses make up about 2.3 million acres of land in the U.S., according to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Despite many Americans' affinity for golfing, some are becoming increasingly concerned about living near golf courses. Many are worried that living on or near one can create health issues, and others are anxious about golf courses' environmental impact.

Their concerns are legitimate: The grass on a golf course is not natural. Maintaining the large area of uniform, vibrant green grass requires a significant number of pesticides, herbicides and other chemicals, many that are released into the air and seep into local water supplies. This constant exposure can indeed lead to health issues.

Medical experts believe that there is a link to Parkinson's disease, changes in endocrine functioning, and even certain forms of cancer. Dr. Brittany Krzyzanowski, an assistant professor at Barrow Neurological Institute conducted studies about the link between golf courses and Parkinson's disease; findings suggested that "pesticides applied to golf courses may play a role in the incidence of Parkinson's disease for nearby residents," says Krzyzanowski.

Beyond human health, golf courses pose other threats. Obtaining a plot of land large enough for a golf course often requires clearing land and subsequently removing an existing ecosystem. Because of this, golf courses lead to local deforestation and destruction of natural habitats. The maintenance of golf courses also pays a heavy environmental price. Aside from chemicals, they also use large amounts of water, some 312,000 gallons a day, according to Audubon International.

Some golf courses are taking steps to lessen their ecological impact. The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses encourages responsible and sustainable practices on golf courses across America, providing guidance on how to protect the wildlife around the golf course. An organization called Monarchs in the Rough focuses on planting milkweed on golf courses in order to restore the naturally abundant monarch butterfly populations. Additionally, some golf courses have implemented birdhouses that attract insect-eating birds instead of using pesticides.

If you are interested in helping to ensure healthy decisions and responsible environmental practices on golf courses, you can support organizations such as the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses and Monarchs in the Rough, which work to improve natural habitats and lessen the use of dangerous chemicals, helping to reduce both the impact on human health and the environment.



**Many are worried that living on or near one can create health issues, and others are anxious about golf courses' environmental impact.** Credit:

Pexels.com.

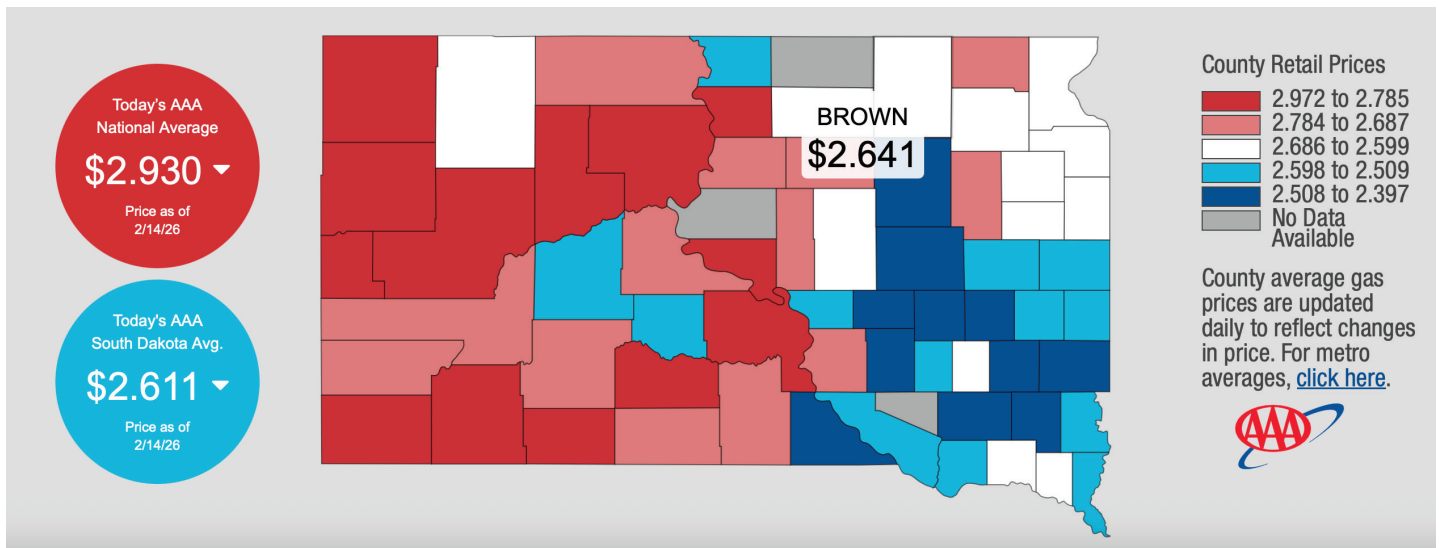
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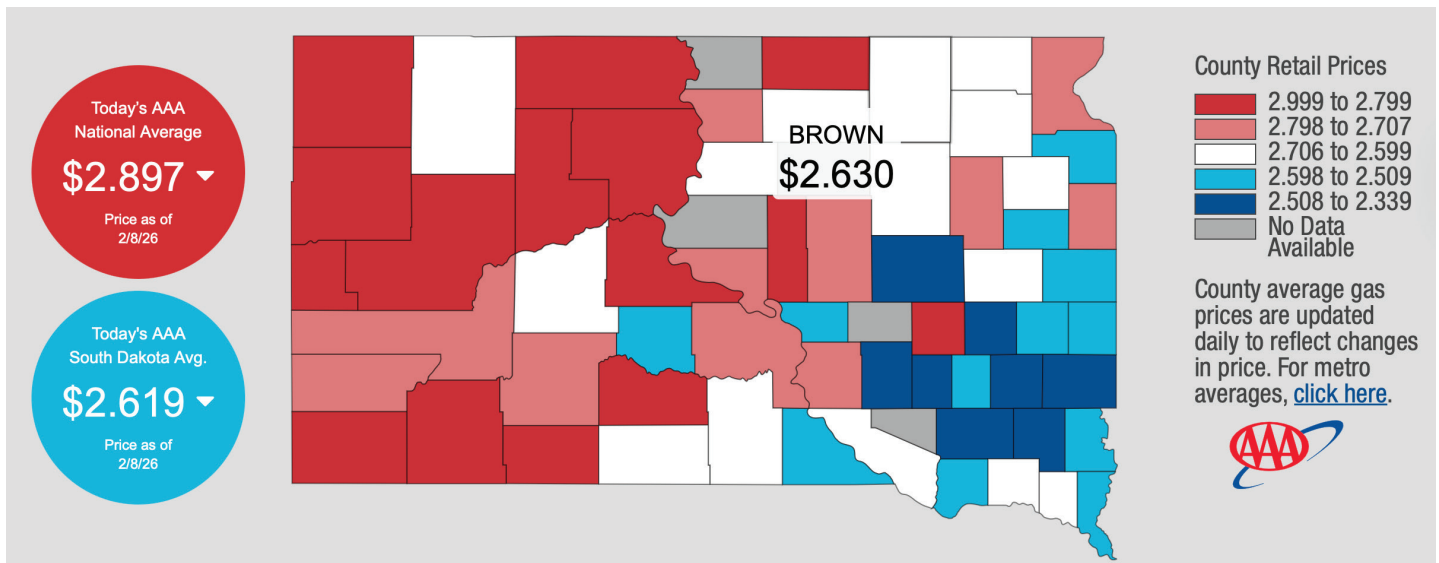
## South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$2.611	\$2.788	\$3.248	\$3.362
Yesterday Avg.	\$2.613	\$2.766	\$3.268	\$3.358
Week Ago Avg.	\$2.631	\$2.812	\$3.268	\$3.346
Month Ago Avg.	\$2.581	\$2.728	\$3.221	\$3.153
Year Ago Avg.	\$3.034	\$3.194	\$3.634	\$3.426

### This Week



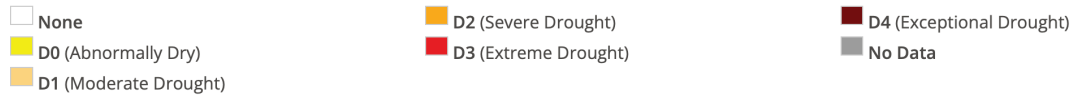
### Last Week



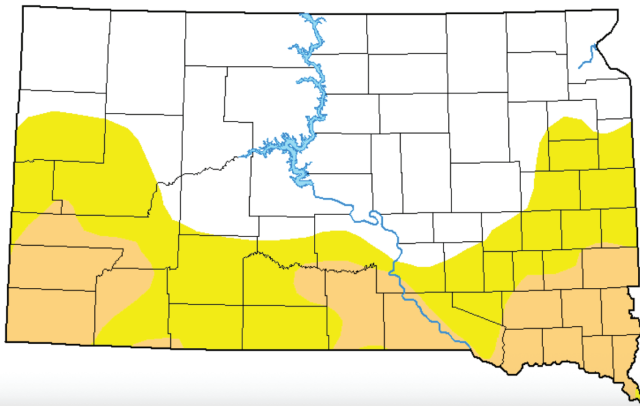
# Groton Daily Independent

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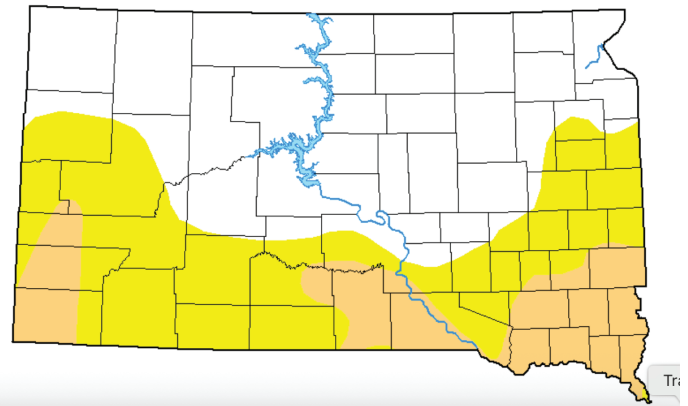
## Drought Classification



## Drought Monitor



Feb. 10



Feb. 3

The High Plains saw little to no meaningful precipitation this week, with most of the region receiving less than 25 percent of normal and many locations at or below 5 percent of normal precipitation. Any snowfall was light and offered minimal liquid-equivalent benefit. In eastern Wyoming and eastern Colorado, precipitation deficits continue to deepen with soil moisture percentiles declining, and recent above-normal temperatures led to drying where snow cover is limited. This led to expansion of moderate (D1) and severe drought (D2) across parts of eastern Wyoming and Colorado into the southwest South Dakota, the Nebraska Panhandle and the western Nebraska Sandhills. Similarly, growing short- to medium-term precipitation deficits, below-normal soil moisture percentiles and elevated evaporative demand led to the introduction of extreme drought (D3) to Nebraska's Panhandle. Eastern Nebraska also saw the expansion of abnormal dryness (D0) as the lack of precipitation has led to drying conditions. Across Kansas, degradations occurred primarily in the northwest, south and along the Missouri border in eastern Kansas following another dry week which, like the rest of the region, added to the growing precipitation deficits and drying soil moisture.



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### Self-serving bills abound in a legislative election year

by Dana Hess

There is plenty to keep legislators busy in the current session in Pierre. They must find a way to overhaul the property tax system without bankrupting schools and counties. Some lawmakers have pledged to try to find money to boost funding for education, health care and state employee salaries. And, of course, there's always a budget to balance.

In amongst the bills that might actually do South Dakotans some good, there are others that serve a more selfish purpose. They are not meant to govern but to goad. These bills are attempts to cast the prime sponsor and those who have signed on to the legislation as more conservative than their colleagues. They are determined to "Make America Great Again" no matter how silly or symbolic the cause.

Among those are bills intent on re-litigating the COVID-19 pandemic. They seek to put a stamp of legality on the use of drugs backed by the kind of science that could only generously be described as sketchy.

Since state-sanctioned prayer is not allowed in schools, some lawmakers are again attempting to splash God all over the classroom walls. It's not enough that in 2019 lawmakers mandated putting "In God We Trust" on a prominent wall in each school. This year, House Bill 1243 unsuccessfully sought to put the South Dakota motto, "Under God the People Rule," on school walls as well. If this keeps up, there won't be room for schools to display maps or the periodic tables.

Then there's Senate Concurrent Resolution 604, which does its best to erase the line between church and state. It does this by telling South Dakotans to pray and fast. "Seek the Lord Most High" the legislation advises. Like most legislative attempts to drag religion into schools or other public places, this one doesn't take into account that some religious South Dakotans aren't Christians and others don't believe in a God at all.

The resolution admonishes South Dakotans to take the month of July to fast. It's notable that the bill's sponsors didn't choose January or February for the fast, but that would have meant missing all those free meals from interest groups during the legislative session. If nothing else, the Legislature's endorsement of the resolution proves the spineless nature of the restaurant lobby as it allows a legislative seal of approval on a monthlong fast during barbecue season.

In an election year, it's easy to see how these bills garner sponsors and support. No one wants their failure to vote the right way splattered all over an opponent's political advertising. So they go along to get reelected.

Slogans on school walls? We'll get God back into the schoolhouse somehow.

Prayer and fasting? We cancelled our Fourth of July picnic.

There's a through line of bills this session that carry greater weight than just the topic in the title. What they basically say is "My conservatism is bigger than yours. Vote against this bill and see what happens in the primary."

This isn't legislation or leadership. It amounts to political bullying. None of it will make South Dakota a better place to live, and that should be the standard for everything coming out of Pierre.

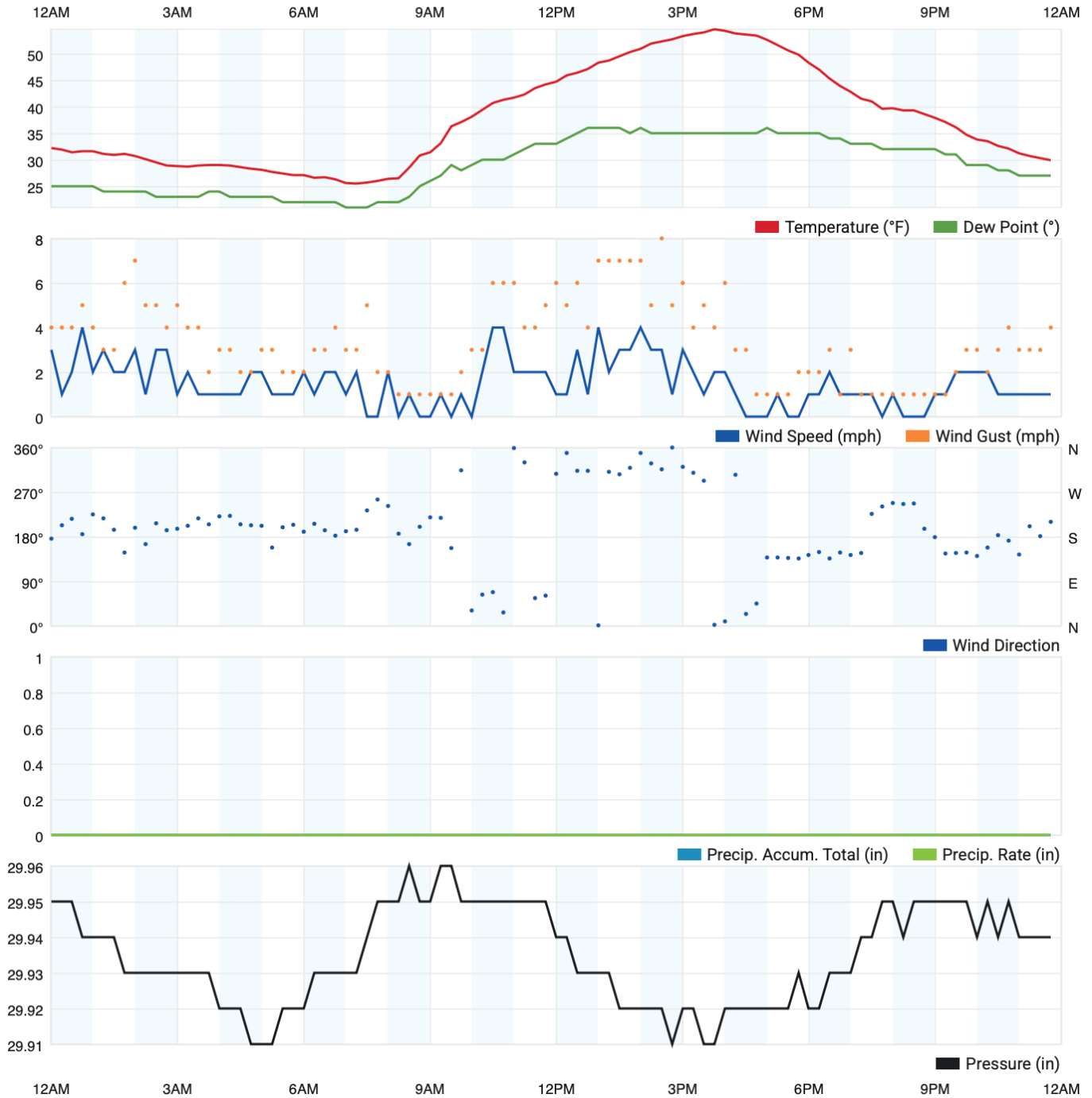
*Dana Hess spent more than 25 years in South Dakota journalism, editing newspapers in Redfield, Milbank and Pierre. He's retired and lives in Brookings, working occasionally as a freelance writer.*

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

February 14, 2026



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Today



High: 58 °F

Mostly Sunny

Tonight



Low: 28 °F

Partly Cloudy

Washington's  
Birthday



High: 51 °F

Sunny

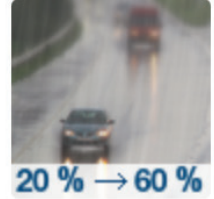
Monday Night



Low: 34 °F

Increasing  
Clouds

Tuesday



High: 54 °F

Slight Chance  
Rain then  
Rain Likely  
and Breezy



## Red Flag Warning Today

February 15, 2026  
3:26 AM

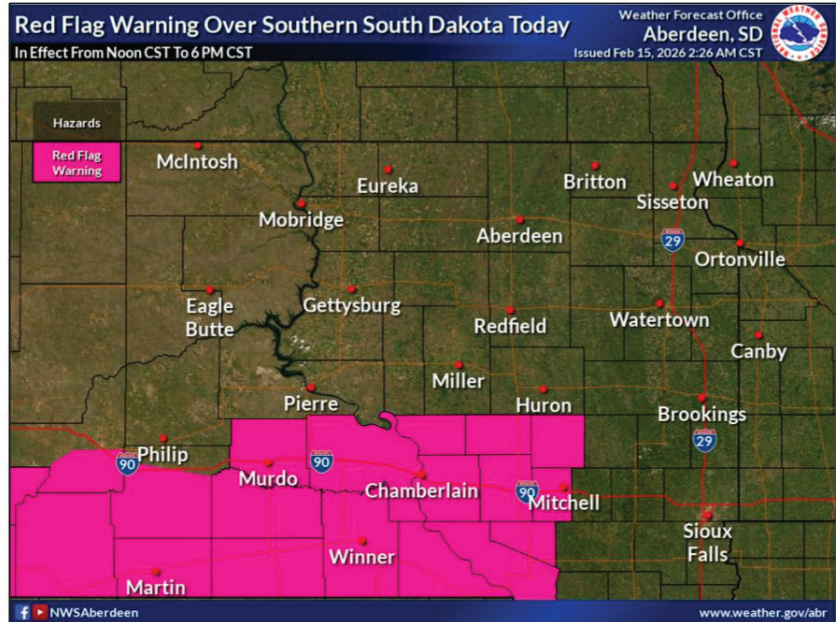
Over Southern South Dakota

### Key Messages

- Relative humidity values dropping as low as 15 to 20 percent combining with gusty winds and dry fuels will **create conditions that make controlling or suppressing wildfires difficult today over portions of south central South Dakota.**
- Southwest winds sustained between 10 to 20 mph, with gusts 20 to 30 mph this afternoon.
  - ◆ Diminishing this evening.

### Important Updates

- NEW** Red Flag Warning has been issued for Jones, Lyman and Buffalo Counties, valid 12 PM to 6 PM CST Sunday.



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

Relative humidity values dropping as low as 15 to 20 percent combining with breezy winds (gusts 20 to 30 mph) and dry fuels will create critical or near critical fire weather concerns today over portions of south central South Dakota. A Red Flag Warning has been issued for Jones, Lyman and Buffalo Counties, valid noon to 6pm CST today. Any fires that ignite will spread rapidly and become difficult to control or suppress.

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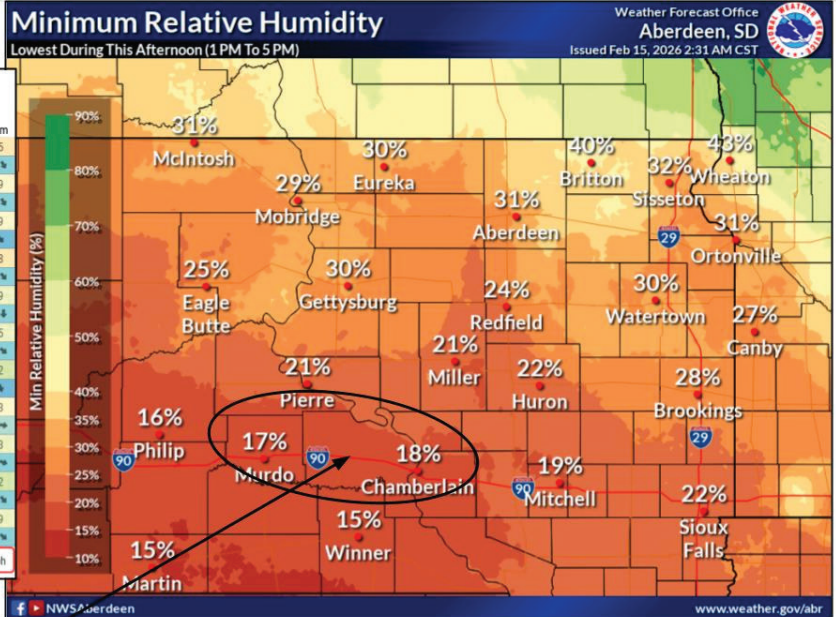


## Winds and Lowest Humidity Sunday

February 15, 2026  
3:31 AM

Humidity values dropping to 15 to 20% will create critical or near critical fire weather conditions over south central SD

	RH (%) & Maximum Wind Gust (mph) Forecast												
	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	
Murdo	RH	43	33	26	22	18	17	17	18	21	29	34	35
	WindGust	20#	22#	24#	25#	25#	25#	21#	17#	13#	13#	12#	12#
Eagle Butte	RH	50	43	39	31	30	25	26	28	33	40	43	49
	WindGust	13#	15#	17#	17#	17#	16#	16#	14#	10#	10#	10#	10#
Pierre	RH	48	39	32	27	22	20	21	24	31	37	42	49
	WindGust	1#	13#	16#	18#	18#	20#	16#	14#	10#	1#	7#	1#
Kennebec	RH	45	36	28	23	19	17	17	19	25	31	33	38
	WindGust	13#	18#	22#	24#	25#	25#	24#	18#	14#	13#	12#	10#
McIntosh	RH	55	43	39	38	33	31	31	34	41	49	53	59
	WindGust	12#	14#	17#	17#	16#	17#	16#	14#	13#	13#	12#	10#
Gettysburg	RH	57	45	40	37	32	30	30	32	40	47	51	55
	WindGust	14#	17#	20#	22#	21#	21#	18#	15#	13#	13#	12#	10#
Mobridge	RH	57	49	42	36	31	29	31	35	42	51	55	62
	WindGust	1#	12#	14#	15#	14#	14#	13#	10#	1#	1#	1#	1#
Miller	RH	43	34	29	26	23	21	21	23	29	36	39	43
	WindGust	15#	18#	22#	24#	24#	25#	22#	16#	13#	14#	14#	15#
Faulkton	RH	51	40	35	33	29	27	26	29	37	42	47	53
	WindGust	15#	16#	20#	21#	22#	23#	21#	16#	14#	14#	14#	13#
Eureka	RH	59	49	39	38	31	30	33	34	44	51	59	62
	WindGust	14#	15#	15#	16#	15#	15#	14#	12#	10#	10#	10#	10#
Leola	RH	57	47	41	35	34	29	32	35	46	51	55	59
	WindGust	14#	16#	17#	17#	16#	14#	12#	1#	10#	12#	13#	13#



→ Sustained southwesterly winds between 10 to 20 mph, with gusts 20 to 30 mph this afternoon.

→ Humidity values dropping below 20 percent over portions of south central SD.

Sustained southwesterly winds between 10 to 20 mph, with gusts 20 to 30 mph this afternoon with humidity values dropping to as low as 15 to 20 percent are expected over portions of south central SD.



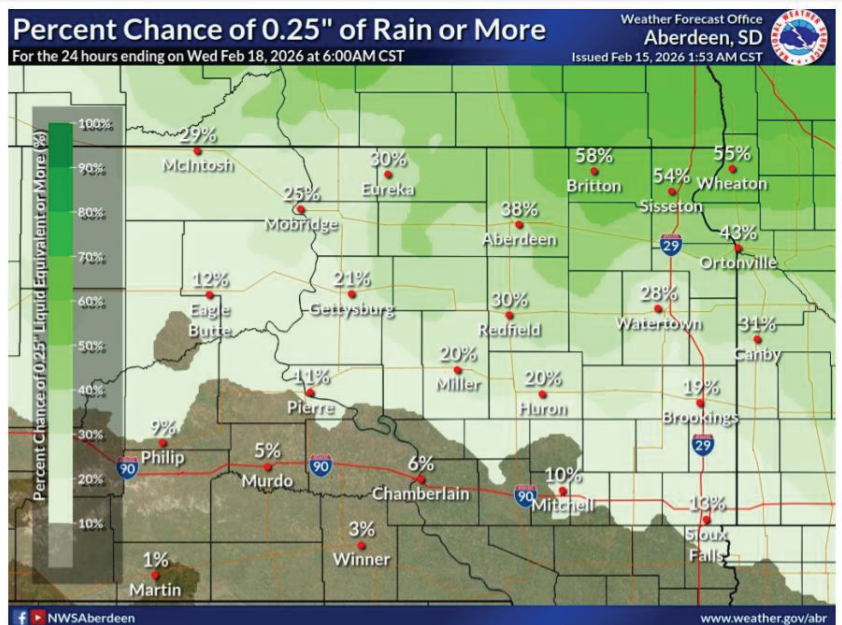
## Precipitation Chances Pick Up By Tuesday Night

February 15, 2026  
3:38 AM

Highest Chances For Quarter Inch of Precipitation Across Northeastern South Dakota

### Key Messages

- Rain precipitation type currently anticipated Tuesday afternoon through Tuesday night
- 50+% chances for 0.25in of precipitation along and north of a line from Hecla to Pierpont to Graceville



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 55 °F at 3:53 PM

Low Temp: 25 °F at 7:19 AM

Wind: 9 mph at 2:23 PM

Precip: : 0.00

## Today's Info

Record High: 65 in 1921

Record Low: -35 in 1939

Average High: 28

Average Low: 6

Average Precip in Feb.: 0.31

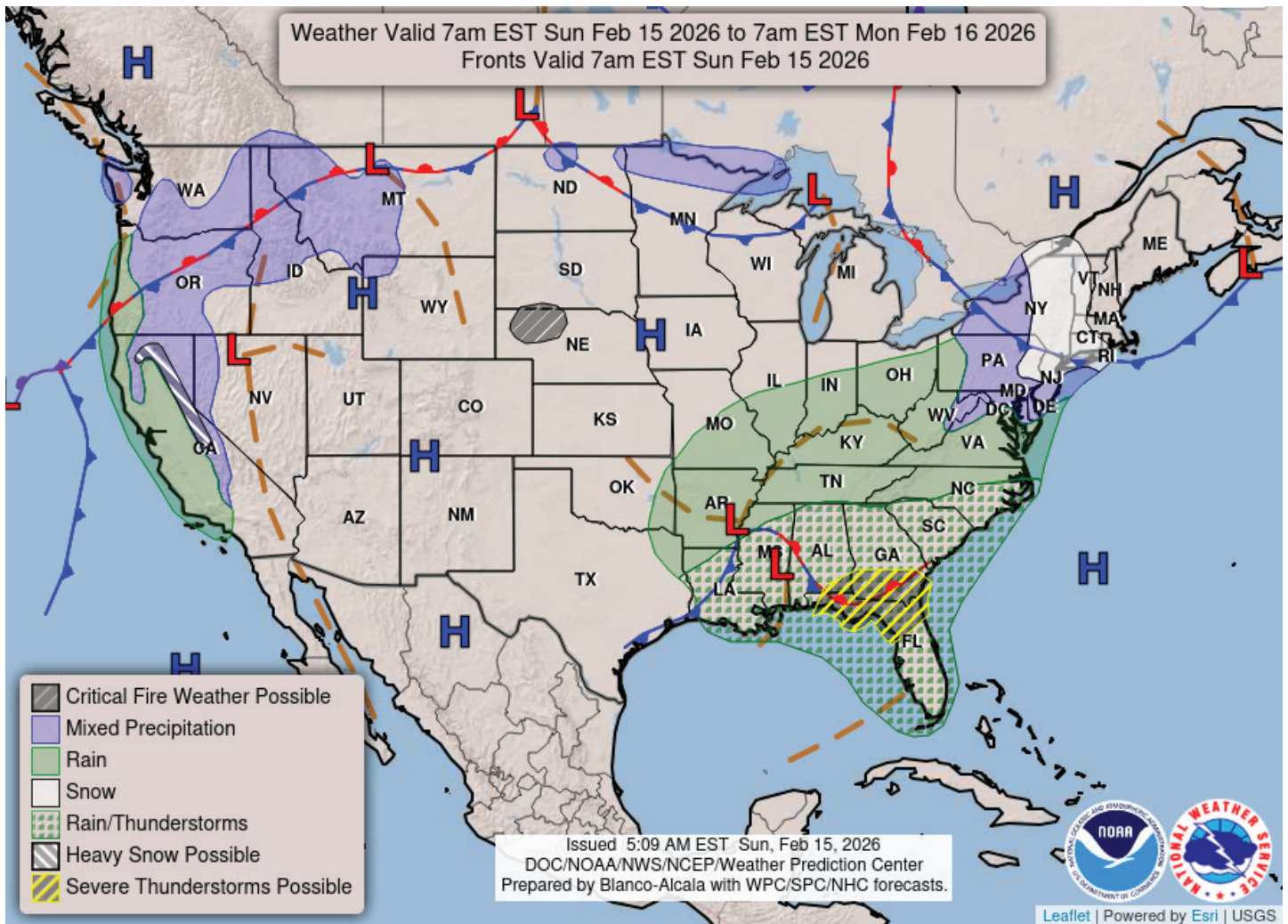
Precip to date in Feb.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.86

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 5:59 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:32 am



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## Today in Weather History

February 15th, 1969: Heavy snow and winds of 15 to 25 mph caused blowing and drifting snow, which closed many roads. The heaviest snow fell in the southeast part of the state, where a foot of snow was reported.

February 15th, 1990: Heavy snow developed across southwest South Dakota early on the 15th and moved slowly across the state before ending early on the 16th. A narrow band of 10 to 12 inches accumulated in Central South Dakota from Pierre to near Huron. Lesser amounts of 3 to 6 inches fell north and south of the heavy snow band. Some heavier snowfall amounts included 6 inches at Aberdeen and Sioux Falls, 10 inches Pierre, and 12 inches at Huron.

1564: Galileo Galilei, who invented the telescope, the compass, and the thermometer, was born on February 15th, 1564.

1895 — A big Gulf snowstorm produced six inches at Brownsville TX and Mobile AL, 15 inches at Galveston TX, and 24 inches of snow at Rayne LA in 24 hours. Snow fell at the very mouth of the Mississippi River. Houston TX received 22 inches of snow, and nine inches blanketed New Orleans LA. (David Ludlum)

1936 — The temperature at Parshall ND plunged to 60 degrees below zero to establish a state record. On the 6th of July that same year the temperature at Steele ND hit 121 degrees, also a state record. (David Ludlum)

1982 — An intense cyclone off the Atlantic coast capsized a drilling rig killing 84 persons, and sank a Soviet freighter resulting in 33 more deaths. The cyclone produced 80 mph winds which whipped the water into waves fifty feet high. (David Ludlum)

1987 — A storm crossing the central U.S. produced severe thunderstorms which spawned tornadoes in Louisiana and Mississippi. Tornadoes injured four persons at Pierre Pass LA, three persons at Tangipahoa LA, two persons at Lexie MS and two persons at Nicholson MS. Thunderstorm winds gusting to 100 mph killed one person south of Sulphur LA. Jackson MS was drenched with 1.5 inches of rain in ten minutes. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 — Low pressure brought heavy snow to parts of Michigan, with eleven inches reported at Rogers City. A cold front crossing the Northern Rockies produced wind gusts to 74 mph at Livingston MT, and created blizzard conditions in Idaho. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 — Thirty-seven cities in the southeastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. The afternoon high of 80 degrees at Atlanta GA was a February record. Highs of 79 degrees at Chattanooga TN, 84 degrees at Columbia SC and 85 degrees at New Orleans LA equalled February records. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 — Snow, sleet and freezing rain along an arctic cold front prevailed from the north central U.S. to the Northern Atlantic Coast Region. High winds created near blizzard conditions in southern Wyoming, closing Interstate 80, while up to eleven inches of snow fell across central Minnesota.

1990 — Heavy snow also blanketed the Northern Atlantic Coast States, with ten inches reported at Buffalo NY and Mount Washington NH. Freezing rain over southern New England knocked out electricity to more than 10,000 homes in the western suburbs of Boston MA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2000: Amarillo, Texas, set unusual temperature records today. The high of 82 degrees smashed the old daily high of 76 degrees set in 1921. Likewise, the morning low of 41 degrees broke the old high-low record of 40 degrees, established in 1921.

2004 — Up to 11 inches of snow fell in areas south of Nashville, TN, causing power outages and producing hazardous driving conditions. (The Weather Doctor)

2013: A meteor entered the Earth's atmosphere and exploded over the Russian town of Chelyabinsk.



## How We Respond to a Storm

**Our view of God impacts our reactions to adversity.**

2 Chronicles 20:12 : 12 "O our God, will You not judge them? For we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on You."

Picture a backyard party where all the guests are having fun, but then the wind picks up. The sky darkens, and the scent of rain is in the air. Everyone scrambles indoors. Just as the last person rushes in, the skies let go. Inside, people gather into clusters. One group stands at the window, oohing and aahing at the thunder and lightning outside. Others hug each other or cover their ears; a few jump and shudder with every boom. Another group, chatting away, seems completely oblivious to the weather. Isn't this a picture of how people react differently to the storms of life?

When it comes to the upheavals we face, our varied responses can have a significant impact down the road. Some people respond in a healthy way and emerge stronger, while others are overwhelmed by the challenge.

What accounts for the difference in our response is our view of God. If we see Him as our loving Father, we'll understand He has the best possible plan for our life. But if we consider Him an obstruction to the goals we've set for ourselves or think He's only looking to punish us, we could miss out on blessings.

Storms are unavoidable in life (John 16:33). When one comes our way, the wisest thing we can do is to cry out to Jesus and trust Him to see us through whatever comes.

*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:

02.13.26

34 40 49 59 68 1

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$395,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.14.26

2 4 7 49 51 9

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$15,500,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.14.26

14 17 30 43 48 10

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 58 Mins 23 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.14.26

4 14 15 17 23

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$20,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.14.26

13 18 21 27 45 6

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.14.26

23 43 58 60 64 24

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$154,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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## News from the **AP** Associated Press

### **GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL**

Aberdeen Roncalli 59, Highmore-Harrold 34  
Andes Central/Dakota Christian 56, Sioux Falls Lutheran 27  
Brandon Valley 59, Sioux Falls Lincoln 12  
Burke 47, Scotland/Menno 37  
Canton 68, Madison 34  
Castlewood 33, Deubrook 20  
Centerville 68, Marty 24  
Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 90, Wakpala 43  
Flandreau Indian 74, Takini 16  
Gayville-Volin High School 48, Corsica/Stickney 34  
Hitchcock-Tulare 51, Wilmot 23  
Irene-Wakonda 47, Avon 42  
Iroquois-Lake Preston 43, Sunshine Bible Academy 17  
Jones County 42, Waverly-South Shore 29  
Kadoka 47, Bison 32  
Lakota Tech 71, Hill City 52  
Mahpiya Lúta Red Cloud 77, Douglas 23  
McIntosh High School 44, Lead-Deadwood 16  
Milbank 32, Tri-Valley 29  
Mobridge-Pollock 51, Groton 47  
North Central 37, Northwestern 29  
Parkston 55, Philip 20  
Rapid City Central 50, Yankton 38  
Rapid City Stevens 42, Harrisburg 40  
Sioux Valley 72, Parker/Marion 24  
Sully Buttes 38, James Valley Christian School 36  
Todd County 52, St. Francis Indian 46  
Tripp-Delmont-Armour 59, Alcester-Hudson 36  
Warner 48, Herried-Selby 45  
Webster 46, Leola-Frederick High School 33

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

### **BOYS PREP BASKETBALL**

Aberdeen Christian 65, Dell Rapids St Mary's 42  
Belle Fourche 85, Oelrichs 14  
Bennett County 78, Cody-Kilgore, Neb. 64  
Bridgewater-Emery 56, White River 45  
Castlewood 56, Deubrook 45  
Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 79, Wakpala 46  
Flandreau Indian 92, Takini 31  
Freeman 72, Wall 48  
Groton 78, Mobridge-Pollock 49  
Hamlin 64, Pine Ridge 51  
Harrisburg 69, Rapid City Stevens 41

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Hill City 69, Lakota Tech 21  
Hitchcock-Tulare 63, Wilmot 53  
Howard 64, Philip 43  
Ipswich 63, Redfield 55  
Iroquois-Lake Preston 59, Sunshine Bible Academy 35  
James Valley Christian School 65, Jones County 33  
Kadoka 69, Upton, Wyo. 49  
Little Wound 114, Tiospaye Topa 34  
Madison 71, Canton 60  
Mahpiya Luta Red Cloud 69, Douglas 60  
McCook Central-Montrose 45, Gregory 35  
New Underwood 66, Lemmon High School 43  
Northwestern 45, North Central 40  
Parker/Marion 77, Sioux Valley 71, OT  
Sioux Falls Christian 66, St Thomas More 38  
Stanley County 62, Gettysburg 23  
Sully Buttes 63, Aberdeen Roncalli 47  
Timber Lake 65, Lead-Deadwood 54  
Todd County 82, St. Francis Indian 53  
Tri-Valley 53, Milbank 41  
Warner 58, Herried-Selby 34  
Waverly-South Shore 48, Highmore-Harrold 37  
Webster 75, Leola-Frederick High School 64  
Wessington Springs 55, Viborg-Hurley 47  
Yankton 69, Rapid City Central 57

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

## South Dakota State wins 87-69 against Oral Roberts

By The Associated Press undefined

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — Kalen Garry scored 18 points as South Dakota State beat Oral Roberts 87-69 on Saturday.

Garry shot 6 for 15 (3 for 9 from 3-point range) and 3 of 3 from the free-throw line for the Jackrabbits (12-15, 5-7 Summit League). Damon Wilkinson scored 15 points while shooting 5 of 11 from the field and 5 for 5 from the line. Jaden Jackson had 15 points and shot 5 for 9, including 5 for 8 from beyond the arc.

Ty Harper led the Golden Eagles (6-21, 1-11) in scoring, finishing with 25 points and five assists. Oral Roberts also got 12 points and three blocks from Luke Gray. Connor Dow finished with 12 points.

The teams entered the break with South Dakota State ahead 36-29, while Garry led their club in scoring with eight points. A 14-3 run in the second half turned a two-point deficit into a nine-point lead for South Dakota State.

They outscored Oral Roberts by 11 points in the final half, as Jackson led the way with a team-high 12 second-half points.

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

## Crown prince urges the world to stand with the people of Iran as 250,000 rally in Munich

By STANISLAV HODINA Associated Press

MUNICH (AP) — About 250,000 people demonstrated on Saturday against Iran's government on the sidelines of a gathering of world leaders in Germany, police said, answering a call from Iran's exiled Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi for cranked-up international pressure on Tehran.

Banging drums and chanting for regime change, the giant and boisterous rally in Munich was part of what Pahlavi described as a "global day of action" to support Iranians in the wake of deadly nationwide protests. He also called for demonstrations in Los Angeles and Toronto. Police said in a post on X that the number of protesters reached some 250,000, more than the organizers had expected.

"Change, change, regime change" the huge crowd chanted, waving green-white-and-red flags with lion and sun emblems. Iran used that flag before its 1979 Islamic Revolution that toppled the Pahlavi dynasty.

At a news conference, Pahlavi warned of more deaths in Iran if "democracies stand by and watch" following Iran's deadly crackdown on protesters last month.

"We gather at an hour of profound peril to ask: Will the world stand with the people of Iran?" he asked. He added that the survival of Iran's government "sends a clear signal to every bully: kill enough people and you stay in power."

An estimated 350,000 people marched on the streets of Toronto as part of the Global Day of Action Rally, Toronto Police spokesperson Laura Brabant said.

At the Munich rally, demonstrators sported "Make Iran Great Again" red caps, mimicking the MAGA caps worn by U.S. President Donald Trump's supporters. Among those sporting the caps was U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Republican from South Carolina who gave a speech to the crowd during which he was photographed holding up the headwear.

Many at the rally waved placards showing Pahlavi, some that called him a king. The son of Iran's deposed shah has been in exile for nearly 50 years but is trying to position himself as a player in Iran's future.

The crowd chanted "Pahlavi for Iran," and "democracy for Iran" as drums and cymbals sounded.

"We have huge hopes and (are) looking forward that the regime is going to change hopefully," said Daniyal Mohtashamian, a demonstrator who traveled from Zurich, in Switzerland, to speak for protesters inside Iran who faced repression.

"There is an internet blackout, and their voices are not going outside of Iran," he said.

About 500 protesters also rallied outside the presidential palace in Nicosia, Cyprus, with many holding up banners with slogans against Iran's government and in favor of Pahlavi.

The U.S.-based Human Rights Activists News Agency says at least 7,005 people were killed in last month's protests, including 214 government forces. It has been accurate in counting deaths during previous rounds of unrest in Iran and relies on a network of activists inside Iran to verify deaths.

Iran's government offered its only death toll on Jan. 21, saying 3,117 people were killed. Iran's theocracy in the past has undercounted or not reported fatalities from past unrest.

The Associated Press has been unable to independently assess the death toll, given authorities have disrupted internet access and international calls in Iran.

Iranian leaders are facing renewed pressure from Trump, who has threatened U.S. military action. Trump wants Iran to further scale back its nuclear program. He suggested Friday that regime change in Iran "would be the best thing that could happen."

Iran was also the focus of protests in Munich on Friday, the opening day of an annual security conference in the city gathering European leaders and global security figures. Supporters of the Iranian opposition group People's Mujahedeen Organization of Iran, also known as the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, demonstrated.

## Four new astronauts arrive at the International Space Station to replace NASA's evacuated crew

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — The International Space Station returned to full strength with Saturday's arrival of four new astronauts to replace colleagues who bailed early because of health concerns.

SpaceX delivered the U.S., French and Russian astronauts a day after launching them from Cape Canaveral. Last month's medical evacuation was NASA's first in 65 years of human spaceflight. One of four astronauts launched by SpaceX last summer suffered what officials described as a serious health issue, prompting their hasty return. That left only three crew members to keep the place running — one American and two Russians — prompting NASA to pause spacewalks and trim research.

Moving in for eight to nine months are NASA's Jessica Meir and Jack Hathaway, France's Sophie Adenot and Russia's Andrei Fedyaev. Meir, a marine biologist, and Fedyaev, a former military pilot, have lived up there before. During her first station visit in 2019, Meir took part in the first all-female spacewalk.

Adenot, a military helicopter pilot, is only the second French woman to fly in space. Hathaway is a captain in the U.S. Navy.

"Bonjour!" Adenot called out once the capsule docked to the space station 277 miles (446 kilometers) up.

A couple of hours later, the hatches swung open and the seven space travelers hugged and exchanged exuberant high-fives. "Let's get rolling," Meir said.

NASA has refused to divulge the identity of the astronaut who fell ill in orbit on Jan. 7 or explain what happened, citing medical privacy. The ailing astronaut and three others returned to Earth more than a month sooner than planned. They spent their first night back on Earth at the hospital before returning to Houston.

The space agency said it did not alter its preflight medical checks for their replacements.

## TSA agents are working without pay at US airports due to another shutdown

By RIO YAMAT AP Airlines and Travel Writer

A shutdown of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that took effect early Saturday impacts the agency responsible for screening passengers and bags at airports across the country. Travelers with airline reservations may be nervously recalling a 43-day government shutdown that led to historic flight cancellations and long delays last year.

Transportation Security Administration officers are expected to work without pay while lawmakers remain without an agreement on DHS' annual funding. TSA officers also worked through the record shutdown that ended Nov. 12, but aviation experts say this one may play out differently.

Trade groups for the U.S. travel industry and major airlines nonetheless warned that the longer DHS appropriations are lapsed, the longer security lines at the nation's commercial airports could get.

Here's what to know about the latest shutdown and how to plan ahead.

What's different about this shutdown?

Funding for Homeland Security expired at midnight. But the rest of the federal government is funded through Sept. 30. That means air traffic controllers employed by the Federal Aviation Administration will receive paychecks as usual, reducing the risk of widespread flight cancellations.

According to the department's contingency plan, about 95% of TSA workers are deemed essential personnel and required to keep working. Democrats in the House and Senate say DHS won't get funded until new restrictions are placed on federal immigration operations.

During past shutdowns, disruptions to air travel tended to build over time, not overnight. About a month into last year's shutdown, for example, TSA temporarily closed two checkpoints at Philadelphia International Airport. That same day, the government took the extraordinary step of ordering all commercial airlines to reduce their domestic flight schedules.

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John Clark, arriving at Detroit Metropolitan Airport from a business trip in Mississippi, said he was impacted by that earlier shutdown and is worried.

"You might not be able to get home if you're already out, or it might delay if you worked all week and you're trying to get home," said Clark, who frequently travels for his job balancing machines. "It's really bad."

John Rose, chief risk officer for global travel management company Altour, said strains could surface at airports more quickly this time because the TSA workforce also will be remembering the last shutdown.

"It's still fresh in their minds and potentially their pocketbooks," Rose said.

What is the impact on travelers?

It's hard to predict whether, when or where security screening snags might pop up. Even a handful of unscheduled TSA absences could quickly lead to longer wait times at smaller airports, for example, if there's just a single security checkpoint.

That's why travelers should plan to arrive early and allow extra time to get through security.

"I tell people to do this even in good times," Rose said.

Experts say flight delays also are a possibility even though air traffic controllers are not affected by the DHS shutdown.

Airlines might decide to delay departures in some cases to wait for passengers to clear screening, said Rich Davis, senior security adviser at risk mitigation company International SOS. Shortages of TSA officers also could slow the screening of checked luggage behind the scenes.

Burnest R. Green, who flew to Detroit from Phoenix for his sister's 70th birthday, says he wants the shutdown ended before he flies back in over a week's time.

"I just hope that things start to get better before they get any worse," he said.

What travelers can do to prepare

Most airports display security line wait times on their websites, but don't wait until the day of a flight to check them, Rose advised.

"You may look online and it says two-and-a-half hours," he said. "Now it's two-and-a-half hours before your flight and you haven't left for the airport yet."

Passengers should also pay close attention while packing since prohibited items are likely to prolong the screening process. For carry-on bags, avoid bringing full-size shampoo or other liquids, large gels or aerosols and items like pocketknives in carry-on bags.

TSA has a full list on its website of what is and isn't allowed in carry-on and checked luggage.

At the airport, Rose said, remember to "practice patience and empathy."

"Not only are they not getting paid," he said of TSA agents, "they're probably working with reduced staff and dealing with angry travelers."

Will the shutdown drag on?

The White House has been negotiating with Democratic lawmakers, but the two sides failed to reach a deal by the end of the week before senators and members of Congress were set to leave Washington for a 10-day break.

Lawmakers in both chambers were on notice, however, to return if a deal to end the shutdown is struck.

Democrats have said they won't help approve more DHS funding until new restrictions are placed on federal immigration operations after the fatal shooting of Alex Pretti and Renee Good in Minneapolis last month.

In a joint statement, U.S. Travel, Airlines for America and the American Hotel & Lodging Association warned that the shutdown threatens to disrupt air travel as the busy spring break travel season approaches.

"Travelers and the U.S. economy cannot afford to have essential TSA personnel working without pay, which increases the risk of unscheduled absences and call outs, and ultimately can lead to higher wait times and missed or delayed flights," the statement said.

## MSF suspends some work at Gaza's Nasser Hospital due to presence of armed men

By SAM MEDNICK and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Doctors Without Borders has announced the suspension of some operations at one of Gaza's largest functioning hospitals after patients and staff reported seeing armed, masked men roaming parts of the building.

Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis is one of the territory's few functioning hospitals. Hundreds of patients and war-wounded have been treated there daily, and the facility was a hub for Palestinian prisoners released by Israel in exchange for Israeli hostages as part of the current ceasefire deal.

It was a rare announcement by an international organization about the presence of armed men in a medical facility in Gaza since the war began over two years ago.

The aid group also known by its acronym MSF said in a statement all its noncritical medical operations at Nasser Hospital were suspended due to security breaches that posed "serious" threats to its teams and patients. MSF said there had been an increase in patients and staff seeing armed men in parts of the compound since the U.S.-brokered October ceasefire was reached.

"MSF teams have reported a pattern of unacceptable acts including the presence of armed men, intimidation, arbitrary arrests of patients and a recent situation of suspicion of movement of weapons," it said.

While the suspension occurred in January, it was first disclosed in MSF's "frequently asked questions" section on its website. It's unclear when the post was made, but the site said it was updated Feb. 11.

Attacks on health facilities

MSF said it wasn't able to indicate the armed men's affiliation. It said it had expressed concern to the "relevant" authorities, without elaborating, stressing that hospitals must remain neutral, civilian spaces. It said its concerns were heightened by previous, deliberate Israeli attacks on health facilities.

Throughout the war, which began with the Hamas-led attack on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, Israel has repeatedly struck hospitals, including Nasser, accusing the militant group of operating in or around them. Hamas security men often have been seen inside hospitals, blocking access to some areas.

Some hostages released from Gaza have said they spent time during captivity in a hospital.

While Hamas remains the dominant force in areas not under Israeli control, including Nasser Hospital, other armed groups have mushroomed across Gaza as a result of the war, including groups backed by Israel's army in the Israeli-controlled part of the strip.

Nasser Hospital staff say that in recent months it has been repeatedly attacked by masked, armed men and militias, despite police presence there.

Police to be deployed

The Hamas-run Interior Ministry, which oversees police in Gaza, said officers would be deployed to secure hospitals and rid them of armed presence. It said it was implementing stricter measures to ensure patients' safety.

While international law gives hospitals special protections during war, they can lose this immunity if combatants use them to hide fighters or store weapons, according to the International Committee of the Red Cross. Still, there must be plenty of warning to allow the evacuation of staff and patients before any operations take place. If harm to civilians from an attack is disproportionate to the military objective, it is illegal under international law.

Aid groups and rights organizations say Israel has decimated Gaza's health system, forcing most hospitals to shut down while heavily damaging others. During the war, Israeli forces raided a number of hospitals, detaining hundreds of staff.

Israel also has targeted the police in Gaza.

A weakened medical system

MSF said it will continue supporting critical services at Nasser Hospital, including inpatient and surgical departments for patients with traumatic or burn injuries. However, it is ending support to the pediatrics and maternity wards, including the neonatal intensive care unit. It has also indefinitely suspended its out-

patient consultations for 3D burn screening and mental health, as well as other services.

Zaher al-Waheidi, head of the records department at Gaza's Health Ministry, said MSF's suspension would have a significant impact as hundreds of patients are admitted to the maternity and burn wards daily. He said the ministry would take over maternity patient care, but said burn victims won't have many options.

Israel has been cracking down on aid groups operating in Gaza and the occupied West Bank, including MSF. The group is one of more than three dozen that Israel has banned from operating in the strip for failing to comply with new registration rules.

MSF says Israel's decision will have a catastrophic impact on its work in Gaza, where it provides funding and international staff for six hospitals and operates two field hospitals and eight primary health centers, clinics and medical points. It also runs two of Gaza's five stabilization centers, helping children with severe malnutrition.

The toll of war

While the heaviest fighting has subsided, the fragile ceasefire has been seen almost daily Israeli fire. Israeli forces have carried out repeated airstrikes and frequently fire on Palestinians near military-held zones, killing 591 Palestinians since the ceasefire took effect, according to Gaza health officials.

Israel's military on Saturday said its troops "eliminated" a person in northern Gaza who crossed the line dividing the territory and approached them. Later in the day, the military said its troops "eliminated" two armed people in northern Gaza who had taken cover under debris on the Israeli-controlled side of the line near soldiers.

Gaza's Health Ministry said the overall Palestinian death toll from the war is at least 72,051.

The ministry, part of the Hamas-led government, maintains detailed casualty records that are seen as generally reliable by U.N. agencies and independent experts. It does not give a breakdown of civilians and militants. Militants have carried out shooting attacks on troops, and Israel says its strikes are in response to that and other violations. Four Israeli soldiers have been killed.

## **Zelenskyy says questions remain for allies over security guarantees for Ukraine**

By SAMYA KULLAB, EMMA BURROWS and ELISE MORTON Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy thanked his international allies for their support but suggested there was still questions remaining over the future security guarantees for his country.

Speaking at the Munich Security Conference in Germany, Zelenskyy repeatedly thanked American and European allies for helping Ukraine by providing air defense systems that protect infrastructure like power plants and "save lives."

Previous U.S.-led efforts to find consensus on ending the war, most recently two rounds of talks in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, have failed to resolve difficult issues, such as the future of Ukraine's Donbas industrial heartland that is largely occupied by Russian forces.

Later with reporters, Zelenskyy questioned how the concept of a free trade zone — proposed by the U.S. — would work in the Donbas region which Russia insists Kyiv must give up in order to get peace.

He also said the Americans want peace as quickly as possible and that U.S. team wants to sign all the agreements on Ukraine at the same time whereas Ukraine wants guarantees over the country's future security signed first.

European nations, including the U.K. and France, have already said they will commit troops to Ukraine to guarantee its future security. The U.S. is also expected to be involved and discussions are currently ongoing about the nature of America's support.

Russian officials are opposed to any foreign troop presence in Ukraine, Zelenskyy suggested, because Russian President Vladimir Putin wants to have the opportunity to attack Ukraine again.

Zelenskyy also said he was surprised that Moscow had replaced the head of its negotiating team before another round of U.S.-brokered talks and suggested the move was deliberately aimed at delaying negotiations.

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The talks take place against a backdrop of continued fighting along the roughly 1,250-kilometer (750-mile) front line, relentless Russian bombardment of civilian areas of Ukraine and the country's power grid, and Kyiv's almost daily long-range drone attacks on war-related assets on Russian soil.

During negotiations, Russian officials have insisted Ukraine give up more territory in the east of the country to end the war. But Zelenskyy told The Associated Press that it was "a little bit crazy" to suggest Ukraine withdraw from its own territory or exchange it.

Thousands of Ukrainians have been killed defending the country's Donbas region, he said, pointing out that 200,000 people also live there and it would not be acceptable to effectively hand them over to Russia.

Zelenskyy also questioned how the concept of a free economic zone would work.

"Imagine," he said, if foreign soldiers patrolled the zone and Putin provoked them and they left. In that case, he said, there could be a "big occupation" of Ukraine and a lot of losses.

If Putin is given any opportunity for victory "we don't know what he will do next," Zelenskyy said.

Such a model, Zelenskyy told the AP, would have "big risks" for Ukraine and for any country which committed to guaranteeing Ukraine's security. But he said he was ready to discuss it as it could be important as a compromise in exchange for securing support to reconstruct Ukraine.

During negotiations, Moscow has to accept monitoring of a ceasefire and return some 7,000 Ukrainian prisoners of war in exchange for more than 4,000 Russian prisoners held by Ukraine, Zelenskyy said.

Earlier on Saturday, drone strikes killed one person in Ukraine and another in Russia, Ukrainian officials said, ahead of fresh talks next week in Geneva aimed at ending the war.

An elderly woman died when a Russian drone hit a residential building in the Black Sea port city of Odesa, Ukraine's State Emergency Service said.

In Russia, a civilian was killed in a Ukrainian drone strike on a car in the border region of Bryansk, regional Gov. Alexander Bogomaz said.

Russia-installed authorities said a Ukrainian airstrike on a village Saturday wounded 15 people in Ukraine's partially occupied Luhansk region.

The attacks came a day after a Ukrainian missile strike on the Russian border city of Belgorod killed two people and wounded five, according to regional Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov.

## **US, Iran to hold new round of nuclear talks in Geneva this week, Swiss government says**

GENEVA (AP) — Iran and the United States will hold a second round of talks over Tehran's nuclear program next week, the Swiss Foreign Ministry said Saturday.

Oman, which welcomed the first round of indirect talks on Feb. 6, will host the talks in Geneva, the Swiss ministry said, without specifying which days.

After the first discussions, U.S. President Donald Trump warned Tehran that failure to reach an agreement with his administration would be "very traumatic."

Similar talks last year broke down in June as Israel launched what became a 12-day war on Iran that included the U.S. bombing Iranian nuclear sites.

Trump has repeatedly threatened to use force to compel Iran to agree to constrain its nuclear program. Iran has said it would respond with an attack of its own. Trump also has threatened Iran over its deadly crackdown on recent nationwide protests there.

Gulf Arab nations have warned any attack could spiral into another regional conflict.

Trump said Friday the USS Gerald R. Ford, the world's largest aircraft carrier, was being sent from the Caribbean to the Mideast to join other military assets the U.S. has built up in the region. He also said a change in power in Iran "would be the best thing that could happen."

The indirect talks on Feb. 6 were between Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and U.S. Mideast envoy Steve Witkoff. The top military commander in the Middle East was also present for the first time.

The Trump administration has maintained that Iran can have no uranium enrichment under any deal. Tehran says it won't agree to that.

Iran has insisted its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes. However, its officials increasingly threaten to pursue a nuclear weapon. Before the June war, Iran had been enriching uranium up to 60% purity, a short, technical step away from weapons-grade levels.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has said his nation is "ready for any kind of verification." However, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, has been unable for months to inspect and verify Iran's nuclear stockpile.

Trump has suggested in recent weeks that his top priority is for Iran to scale back its nuclear program. Iran has said it wants talks to focus solely on the nuclear program.

But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who met with Trump in Washington this week, has pressed for any deal to include steps to neutralize Iran's ballistic missile program and end its funding for proxy groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah.

## Rubio's speech to European allies takes a softer tone but sticks to Trump's firm stance

By MATTHEW LEE, EMMA BURROWS and GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

MUNICH (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio offered a reassuring message to America's allies on Saturday, striking a less aggressive but still firm tone about the administration's intent to reshape the trans-Atlantic alliance and push its priorities after more than a year of President Donald Trump's often-hostile rhetoric toward traditional allies.

Reminding his audience at the annual Munich Security Conference about America's centuries-long roots in Europe, Rubio said the United States would remain forever tied to the continent even as it pushes for changes in the relationship and the institutions that have been the bulwark of the post-World War II world order.

Rubio addressed the conference a year after Vice President JD Vance stunned the same audience with a harsh critique of European values. A series of Trump administration statements and moves targeting allies followed, including Trump's short-lived threat last month to impose new tariffs on several European countries in a bid to secure U.S. control of Greenland, a semiautonomous territory of NATO ally Denmark.

On Friday, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz had opened this year's gathering by calling for the U.S. and Europe to "repair and revive trans-Atlantic trust together," saying that even the U.S. isn't powerful enough to go it alone in a world whose old order no longer exists. But he and other European officials made clear that they will stand by their values, including their approach to free speech, climate change and free trade.

'A child of Europe'

While offering a calmer and more reassuring tone, Rubio made clear that the Trump administration is sticking to its guns on policy. He denounced "a climate cult" and "an unprecedented wave of mass migration that threatens the cohesion of our societies."

Rubio argued that the "euphoria" of the Western victory in the Cold War led to a "dangerous delusion that we had entered 'the end of history,' that every nation would now be a liberal democracy, that the ties formed by trade and by commerce alone would now replace nationhood ... and that we would now live in a world without borders where everyone became a citizen of the world."

"We made these mistakes together and now together we owe it to our people to face those facts and to move forward to rebuild," Rubio said.

"This is why we Americans may sometimes come off as a little direct and urgent in our counsel," he said. "This is why President Trump demands seriousness and reciprocity from our friends here in Europe."

Rubio said that an end of the trans-Atlantic era "is neither our goal nor our wish," adding that "our home may be in the Western hemisphere, but we will always be a child of Europe."

He acknowledged that "we have bled and died side-by-side on battlefields from Kapyong to Kandahar," a contrast with disparaging remarks by Trump about NATO allies' troops in Afghanistan that drew an outcry. "And I'm here today to make it clear that America is charting the path for a new century of prosperity. and

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that once again, we want to do it together with you, our cherished allies and our oldest friends.”

U.S. officials accompanying Rubio said his message was much the same as Vance’s last year but was intended to have a softer landing on the audience, which they acknowledged had recoiled at much of Trump’s rhetoric over the past year.

Europeans reassured but not complacent

The president of the European Union’s executive commission, Ursula von der Leyen, said Rubio’s speech was “very reassuring” but noted that “in the administration, some have a harsher tone on these topics.”

In her speech to the conference, she stressed that “Europe must become more independent,” including on defense. She insisted on Europe’s “digital sovereignty” — its approach to hate speech on social media.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said that “we shouldn’t get in the warm bath of complacency. He said the U.K. must reforge closer ties with Europe to help the continent “stand on our own two feet” in its own defense, and said there needs to be investment that “moves us from overdependence to interdependence.”

Hanno Pevkur, the defense minister of EU and NATO member Estonia, said it was “quite a bold statement to say that America is ‘a child of Europe.’”

“It was a good speech, needed here today, but that doesn’t mean that we can rest on pillows now,” he told The Associated Press. “So still a lot of work has to be done.”

Rubio didn’t mention Greenland. After last month’s escalation over Trump’s designs on the Arctic island, the U.S., Denmark and Greenland started technical talks on an Arctic security deal.

The Secretary of State met briefly in Munich on Friday with the Danish and Greenlandic leaders, a meeting Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen described as constructive.

But Frederiksen suggested Saturday that although the dispute has cooled, she remains wary. Asked whether the crisis has passed, she replied: “No, unfortunately not. I think the desire from the U.S. president is exactly the same. He is very serious about this theme.”

Asked whether she can put a price on Greenland, she responded “of course not,” adding that “we have to respect sovereign states ... and we have to respect people’s right for self-determination. And the Greenlandic people have been very clear, they don’t want to become Americans.”

## Russia poisoned Alexei Navalny with dart frog toxin, European nations say

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny was poisoned by the Kremlin with a rare and lethal toxin found in the skin of poison dart frogs, five European countries said Saturday.

The foreign ministries of the U.K., France, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands said analysis in European labs of samples taken from Navalny’s body “conclusively confirmed the presence of epibatidine.” The neurotoxin secreted by dart frogs in South America is not found naturally in Russia, they said.

A joint statement said: “Russia had the means, motive and opportunity to administer this poison.”

The five countries said they were reporting Russia to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons for a breach of the Chemical Weapons Convention. There was no immediate comment from the organization.

Navalny, who crusaded against official corruption and staged massive anti-Kremlin protests as President Vladimir Putin’s fiercest foe, died in an Arctic penal colony on Feb. 16, 2024, while serving a 19-year sentence that he believed to be politically motivated.

“Russia saw Navalny as a threat,” British Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper said. “By using this form of poison the Russian state demonstrated the despicable tools it has at its disposal and the overwhelming fear it has of political opposition.”

French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot wrote on X that the poisoning of Navalny shows “that Vladimir Putin is prepared to use biological weapons against his own people in order to remain in power.”

The European nations’ assessment came as Navalny’s widow, Yulia Navalnaya, attended the Munich Security Conference in Germany, and just before the second anniversary of Navalny’s death.

She said last year that two independent labs had found that her husband was poisoned shortly before he died. She has repeatedly blamed Putin for her husband's death. Russian officials have vehemently denied the accusation.

Navalnaya said Saturday that she had been "certain from the first day" that her husband had been poisoned, "but now there is proof."

"Putin killed Alexei with chemical weapon," she wrote on She said Putin was "a murderer" who "must be held accountable."

Russian authorities said that the politician became ill after a walk and died from natural causes.

Epibatidine is found naturally in dart frogs in the wild, and can also be manufactured in a lab, which European scientists suspect was the case with the substance used on Navalny. It works on the body in a similar way to nerve agents, causing shortness of breath, convulsions, seizures, a slowed heart rate and ultimately death.

European officials said they had a high degree of confidence in the assessment that Navalny died from epibatidine poisoning. Asked why the results had taken so long, German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepful said that it had been "a complicated process."

Wadepful said "no one but Putin's henchmen will be able to say in detail what happened on Feb. 16, 2024, in the Russian penal colony. But it is clear that Russian authorities had the possibility, the motive and the means to administer the poison to Navalny."

Navalny was the target of an earlier poisoning in 2020, with a nerve agent in an attack he blamed on the Kremlin, which always denied involvement. His family and allies fought to have him flown to Germany for treatment and recovery. Five months later, he returned to Russia, where he was immediately arrested and imprisoned for the last three years of his life.

The U.K. has accused Russia of repeatedly flouting international bans on chemical and biological weapons. It accuses the Kremlin of carrying out a 2018 attack in the English city of Salisbury that targeted a former Russian intelligence officer, Sergei Skripal, with the nerve agent Novichok. Skripal and his daughter became seriously ill, and a British woman, Dawn Sturgess, died after she came across a discarded bottle with traces of the nerve agent.

A British inquiry concluded that the attack "must have been authorized at the highest level, by President Putin."

The Kremlin has denied involvement. Russia also denied poisoning Alexander Litvinenko, a former Russian agent turned Kremlin critic who died in London in 2006, after ingesting the radioactive isotope polonium-210. A British inquiry concluded that two Russian agents killed Litvinenko, and Putin had "probably approved" the operation.

## **How Jeffrey Epstein used the glamour of the Nobel Peace Prize to entice his global network of elites**

By MARK LEWIS Associated Press

STAVANGER, Norway (AP) — Jeffrey Epstein repeatedly played up his ties to the former head of the Nobel Peace Prize committee in invitations to and chats with elites like Richard Branson, Larry Summers, Bill Gates and Steve Bannon, a top ally of President Donald Trump, the Epstein files show.

Thorbjørn Jagland, who headed the Norwegian Nobel Committee from 2009 to 2015, turns up hundreds of times in the millions of documents about the former U.S. financier and convicted sex offender that were released by the U.S. Justice Department last month.

Since the release, Jagland, 75, has been charged in Norway for "aggravated corruption" in connection with an investigation prompted by information in the files, the economic crime unit of Norwegian police Økokrim said.

Økokrim has said it would investigate whether gifts, travel and loans were received in connection with Jagland's position. Its teams searched his Oslo residence on Thursday, plus two other properties in Risør,

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a coastal town to the south, and in Rauland to the west.

His attorneys at Elden law firm in Norway said Jagland denies the charges, and was questioned by the police unit on Thursday.

While there is no evidence in the documents seen so far of any outright lobbying for the Nobel Peace Prize, Epstein repeatedly played up hosting Jagland at his properties in New York and Paris in the 2010s.

From an 'interesting' guest to subject of banter with Bannon

In September 2018, during Trump's first term and in an apparent allusion to his interest in the peace prize, Epstein had a varied text-message exchange with Bannon, at one point writing — in one of many messages with untidy grammar: "donalds head would explode if he knew you were now buds with the guy who on monday will decide the nobel peace prize."

"I told him next year it should be you when we settle china," he added, without elaborating.

In one email from 2013, mixing in investment tips and praise for PR tips, Epstein told British entrepreneur and magnate Richard Branson that Jagland would be staying with Epstein in September that year, adding: "if you are there, you might find him interesting."

A year after she left a job as White House counsel to President Barack Obama, in 2015, Kathy Ruemmler got an email from Epstein saying: "head of nobel peace prize coming to visit, want to join?"

In 2012, Epstein wrote former Treasury Secretary and Harvard University president Larry Summers about Jagland, saying "head of the nobel peace prize staying with me, if you have any interest."

In that exchange, Epstein referred to Jagland — also a former Norwegian prime minister and former head of the Council of Europe, a human rights body — as "not bright" but someone who offered a "unique perspective."

The financier wrote Bill Gates in 2014, saying that Jagland had been reelected as head of the Council of Europe.

"That is good," the Microsoft co-founder and formerly the world's richest man, wrote. "I guess his peace prize committee job is also up in the air?"

During Jagland's tenure as chair of the committee, it gave the peace prize to Obama, in 2009, and the European Union in 2012.

Jagland was brought into Epstein's orbit by Terje Rød Larsen, a Norwegian diplomat who helped broker the Oslo Peace Accords between Israel and Palestinians.

Larsen and his wife are also facing corruption charges in Norway due to their association with Epstein.

## What to know about the Homeland Security shutdown

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

Another shutdown for parts of the federal government has begun as a fight over proposed restrictions on President Donald Trump's immigration enforcement agenda drags on.

Funding for the Department of Homeland Security expired on Saturday. Democrats say they will not help approve more money until the new limits are placed on federal immigration operations after the fatal shooting of Alex Pretti and Renee Good in Minneapolis last month.

The White House has been negotiating with the Democrats, but the two sides failed to reach a deal by the end of the week. That meant a lapse in funding for the department.

Unlike the record 43-day shutdown last fall, the closures will be narrowly confined.

Only agencies under the DHS umbrella, such as U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Transportation Security Administration, are affected. Depending on how long the shutdown lasts, some federal workers could begin to miss paychecks.

But the work of ICE and CBP will mostly continue unabated, despite Democrats' demands for changes at those agencies. President Donald Trump's tax and spending cut law from 2025 provided ICE with about \$75 billion and CBP with about \$65 billion — money they can keep tapping for the Republican's deportation operations.

Services like airport screening could suffer if the shutdown drags on for weeks.

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At TSA, about 95% of employees are deemed essential. They will continue to scan passengers and their bags at the nation's commercial airports. But they will work without pay until the funding lapse is resolved, raising the possibility that workers will be calling out or taking unscheduled leave. Many TSA workers already faced financial stress last year.

"Some are just now recovering from the financial impact of the 43-day shutdown" said Ha Nguyen McNeill, a senior official performing the duties of TSA administrator. "Many are still reeling from it."

Why is a Homeland Security shutdown happening?

Essentially, it's because Trump acquiesced to Democrats' request that homeland security funding be stripped from a broader spending package to allow more time for negotiation over demands for changes to immigration enforcement such as a code of conduct for federal agents and a requirement that officers show identification. DHS was temporarily funded only through Friday.

The rest of the federal government is funded through Sept. 30. That means most federal programs are unaffected by the latest shutdown, including food assistance, and pay for most federal workers and for service members will continue uninterrupted.

What agencies are impacted?

Other agencies affected are the Secret Service and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The vast majority of employees at the Secret Service and U.S. Coast Guard will continue their work, though they could also miss a paycheck depending upon the shutdown's length.

At FEMA, the shutdown will disrupt the agency's ability to reimburse states for disaster relief costs. Some workers will be furloughed, limiting the agency's ability to coordinate with state and local partners. Training for first responders at the National Disaster and Emergency Management University in Maryland will be disrupted.

What is the impact on workers?

It's up to each federal agency to designate which of its employees are "essential" or "excepted," both of which mean the same thing in this case. They keep working during a shutdown, typically without getting paid until government funding is back in place.

Some examples of "essential" employees are military personnel, security screeners at airports and law enforcement officers. There can be a wide range, from positions deemed critical for public safety to those authorized by law to continue even without new funding.

Most of the more than 270,000 people employed by DHS are deemed essential, meaning that they stay on the job even during a shutdown. For the fall 2025 shutdown, more than 258,000 DHS employees were in that category, and about 22,000 — or 5% of the agency's total employee base — were furloughed.

Lawmakers have been particularly concerned about the potential impact on the TSA and airports.

Senate Republican leader John Thune of South Dakota warned that "there's a very good chance we could see more travel problems" similar to last year's shutdown. As staffing shortages grow, airports may reduce the number of open security lanes or close checkpoints altogether to relieve pressure on an already strained workforce.

During last year's lapse in funding, unpaid TSA workers increasingly called in sick or stayed home as missed paychecks made it harder for workers to cover basic expenses. The strain was visible on the ground: About a month into the shutdown, TSA closed two checkpoints at Philadelphia International Airport.

"The longer the shutdown goes on, the more severe the impact on our TSA workforce," the agency said at the time.

## Iranian security use dragnet spanning the entire country to arrest protesters

By AMIR-HUSSEIN RADJY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — The Iranian security agents came at 2 a.m., pulling up in a half-dozen cars outside the home of the Nakhii family. They woke up the sleeping sisters, Nyusha and Mona, and forced them to give

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the passwords for their phones. Then they took the two away.

The women were accused of participating in the nationwide protests that shook Iran a week earlier, a friend of the pair told The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity for her security as she described the Jan. 16 arrests.

Such arrests have been happening for weeks following the government crackdown last month that crushed the protests calling for the end of the country's theocratic rule. Reports of raids on homes and workplaces have come from major cities and rural towns alike, revealing a dragnet that has touched large swaths of Iranian society. University students, doctors, lawyers, teachers, actors, business owners, athletes and filmmakers have been swept up, as well as reformist figures close to President Masoud Pezeshkian.

They are often held incommunicado for days or weeks and prevented from contacting family members or lawyers, according to activists monitoring the arrests. That has left desperate relatives searching for their loved ones.

The U.S.-based Human Rights Activists News Agency has put the number of arrests at more than 50,000. The AP has been unable to verify the figure. Tracking the detainees has been difficult since Iranian authorities imposed an internet blackout, and reports leak out only with difficulty.

Other activist groups outside Iran have also been working to document the sweeps.

"Authorities continue to identify people and detain them," said Shiva Nazarahari, an organizer with one of those groups, the Committee for Monitoring the Status of Detained Protesters.

So far, the committee has verified the names of more than 2,200 people who were arrested, using direct reports from families and a network of contacts on the ground. The arrestees include 107 university students, 82 children as young as 13, as well as 19 lawyers and 106 doctors.

Nazarahari said authorities have been reviewing municipal street cameras, store surveillance cameras and drone footage to track people who participated in the protests to their homes or places of work, where they are arrested.

Held for weeks with no contact

The protests began in late December, triggered by anger over spiraling prices, and quickly spread across the country. They peaked on Jan. 8 and 9, when hundreds of thousands of people in more than 190 cities and towns across the country took to the streets.

Security forces responded by unleashing unprecedented violence. The Human Rights Activists News Agency has so far counted more than 7,000 dead and says the true number is far higher. Iran's government offered its only death toll on Jan. 21, saying 3,117 people were killed. The theocracy has undercounted or not reported fatalities from past unrest.

Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejeji, a hard-line cleric who heads Iran's judiciary, became the face of the crackdown, labeling protesters "terrorists" and calling for fast-tracked punishments.

Since then, "detentions have been very widespread because it's like a whole suffocation of society," said one protester, reached by the AP in Gohardasht, a middle-class area outside the Iranian capital. He said two of his relatives and three of his brother's friends were killed in the first days of the crackdown, as well as several neighbors. The protester spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of being targeted by authorities.

The Nakhii sisters, 25-year-old Nyusha and 37-year-old Mona, were first taken to Tehran's notorious Evin prison, where they were allowed to contact their parents, their friend said. Later, she said, they were moved to Qarchak, a women's prison on the outskirts of Tehran where rights groups reported conditions that included overcrowding and lack of hygiene even before the crackdown.

Other people whose arrests were documented by the detainees committee have disappeared into the prisons. The family of Abolfazl Jazbi has not heard from him since his Jan. 15 arrest at a factory in the southern city of Isfahan. Jazbi suffers from a severe blood disorder that requires medication, according to the committee.

Atila Sultanpour, 45, has not been heard from since he was taken from his home in Tehran on Jan. 29 by security agents who beat him severely, according to Dadban, a group of Iranian lawyers based abroad

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who are also documenting detentions.

Authorities have also moved to suspend bank accounts, block SIM cards and confiscate the property of protesters' relatives or people who publicly express support for them, said Musa Barzin, an attorney with Dadban, citing reports from families.

In past crackdowns on protests, authorities sometimes adhered to a veneer of due process and rule of law, but not this time, Barzin said. Authorities are increasingly denying detainees access to legal counsel and often holding them for days or weeks before allowing any phone calls to family. Lawyers representing arrested protesters also have faced court summons and detention, according to Dadban.

"The following of the law is in the worst situation it has ever been," Barzin said.

Signs of defiance continue

Despite the crackdown, many civic groups continue to issue defiant statements.

The Writers' Association of Iran, an independent group with a long tradition of dissent, issued a statement describing the protests as an uprising against "47 years of systemic corruption and discrimination."

It also announced that two of its members had been detained, including a member of its secretariat.

A national council representing schoolteachers urged families to speak out about detained children and students. "Do not fear the threats of security forces. Refer to independent counsel. Make your children's names public," it said in a statement.

A spokesman for the council said Sunday that it has documented the deaths of at least 200 minors who were killed in the crackdown. That figure is up several dozen from the count just days before.

"Every day we tell ourselves this is the last list," Mohammad Habibi wrote on X. "But the next morning, new names arrive again."

Bar associations and medical groups have also spoken out, including Iran's state-sanctioned doctors council, which called on authorities to stop harassing medical staff.

Anger over the bloodshed now adds to the bitterness over the economy, which has been hollowed out by decades of sanctions, corruption and mismanagement. The value of the currency has plunged, and inflation has climbed to record levels.

The Iranian government has announced gestures such as launching a new coupon program for essential goods. Labor and trade groups, including a national retirees syndicate, have issued statements condemning the economic and political crisis.

Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump has moved an aircraft carrier and other military assets to the Persian Gulf and suggested the U.S. could attack Iran over the killing of peaceful demonstrators or if Tehran launches mass executions over the protests. A second American aircraft carrier is on its way to the Mideast.

Iran's theocracy has faced down protests and U.S. threats in the past, and the crackdown showed the iron grip it holds over the country. This week, authorities organized pro-government rallies with hundreds of thousands of people to mark the anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Still, Barzin said, he sees the ferocity of the crackdown as a sign that Iran's leadership "for the first time is afraid of being overthrown."

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## Today in History

### February 15, USS Maine explodes in Havana Harbor

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Sunday, Feb. 15, the 46th day of 2026. There are 319 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Feb. 15, 1898, the battleship USS Maine mysteriously exploded in Havana Harbor, killing more than 260 crew members and bringing the United States closer to war with Spain.

Also on this date:

In 1879, President Rutherford B. Hayes signed a law allowing female attorneys to argue cases before the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1933, President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt escaped an assassination attempt in Miami that mortally wounded Chicago Mayor Anton J. Cermak; gunman Giuseppe Zangara was executed by electric chair the following month.

In 1950, Walt Disney's animated film "Cinderella" premiered in Boston.

In 1961, 73 people, including all 18 members of the U.S. figure skating team en route to the World Championships in Czechoslovakia, were killed in the crash of a Sabena Airlines Boeing 707 in Belgium.

In 1978, boxer Leon Spinks scored a massive upset as he defeated Muhammad Ali by split decision to become the world heavyweight champion.

In 1989, the Soviet Union announced that the last of its troops had left Afghanistan, after more than nine years of military intervention.

In 2001, the first draft sequence of the complete human genome was published in the scientific journal Nature.

In 2013, with a blinding flash and a booming shock wave, a meteor blazed across Russia's western Siberian sky and exploded, injuring nearly 1,500 people as it blasted out windows.

In 2022, the families of nine victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting agreed to a \$73 million settlement of a lawsuit against Remington Arms, the maker of the rifle used by a gunman to kill 20 first graders and six educators in 2012.

In 2023, Payton Gendron, the white gunman who massacred 10 Black shoppers and workers at a Buffalo, New York, supermarket in May of the previous year, was sentenced to life in prison without parole after pleading guilty to murder and hate-motivated terrorism charges.

Today's birthdays: Actor Claire Bloom is 95. Songwriter Brian Holland is 85. Jazz musician Henry Threadgill is 82. Composer John Adams is 79. Cartoonist Art Spiegelman is 78. Actor Jane Seymour is 75. Singer Melissa Manchester is 75. Actor Lynn Whitfield is 73. "The Simpsons" creator Matt Groening is 72. Actor Christopher McDonald is 71. Football Hall of Famer Darrell Green is 66. Actor Alex Borstein is 55. Hockey great Jaromir Jagr is 54. Olympic swimming gold medalist Amy Van Dyken-Rouen is 53. Actor-singer Amber Riley is 40. Rapper Megan Thee Stallion is 31. Race car driver George Russell is 28. Actor Zachary Gordon is 28.