

Groton Daily Independent

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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.

Tuesday, Feb. 17

Senior Menu: Scalloped potatoes with ham, carrots, fruit, dinner roll.
School Breakfast: Muffins.
School Lunch: Chicken breast, baby bakers.
St. John's Lutheran: Quilting, 9 a.m.
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.
Pickleball, elementary gym, 5:30 p.m.
3/4VB, HS Gym, 6 p.m.
6th Grade BBB hosts Warner, Arena, 6:15 p.m.

Where there is love,
there is life.

Where there is life,
there is hope.

Where there is faith,
miracles happen.

Where there is
peace, there
is God.

And when
you have
God, you
have
everything.



Amen
Ron Hawkins
2d • 21

Wednesday, Feb. 18

ASH WEDNESDAY
Senior Menu: Chicken noodle soup, cold cut sandwich, fruit.
School Breakfast: Oatmeal.
School Lunch: Cheese quesadilla, refried beans.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.; soup supper, 6 p.m. (Host executive board); League, 6:30 p.m.; Lenten Service, 7 p.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.; Ash Wednesday Service at St. John's, 7 p.m.
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton Service, 6 p.m.; Groton Ad Council, 7 p.m.
Groton C&MA: Kid's Club, Youth Group, Adult Bible Study, 7 p.m.
HOSA Teddy Bear Clinic, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., HS Gym
Pickleball, Elementary Gym, 5:30 p.m.
6th Grade Boys Basketball, HS gym, 6 p.m.
3rd/4th Volleyball Practice, 6 p.m., Arena
5th Grade BBB, HS gym, 6 p.m.

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1440

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

Death by Frog Toxin?

New forensic testing shows Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny was likely killed with epibatidine, a powerful neurotoxin found in South American poison dart frogs, according to five European governments. The claim reignites scrutiny over the circumstances of Navalny's 2024 death.

The UK, France, Germany, Sweden, and the Netherlands said that independent lab analysis detected the rare toxin in preserved tissue samples from Navalny's body. They argue there is no credible natural explanation for its presence and have reported the findings to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons as a potential violation of international law. Scientists note epibatidine is not known to occur naturally in Russia, though lab-synthesis is possible; even tiny amounts can disrupt the nervous system, causing paralysis, respiratory failure, and death.

Navalny died Feb. 16, 2024, while serving a lengthy prison sentence in a remote Arctic penal colony. Russia denies any involvement, maintaining he died of natural causes.

Canada Curling Controversy

Canada's men's curling team was accused of cheating Friday night, with Sweden claiming Canadian player Marc Kennedy touched the curling stone after its release. Kennedy—who responded with expletives—accused the Swedes of intentionally filming and premeditating the conflict; however, the team did not bring a formal complaint.

Less than 24 hours later, the Canadian women's team was accused of the same violation, with officials removing the rock during an 8-7 loss to Switzerland. On Sunday, Britain's men's team faced a similar ruling when Scottish curler Bobby Lammie was judged to double-touch his stone in a round-robin win over Germany. Observers compared the controversy to the 2014-16 "Broomgate" scandal, in which engineered brush heads gave precise control over the stone's trajectory.

Separately, the US delegation secured five gold medals (17 total) through the first half of the Olympics. One highlight has been the women's hockey team, which routed host Italy 6-0 and faces Sweden in the semifinals today. Competition concludes Sunday.

Year of the Fire Horse

Lunar New Year celebrations kick off tomorrow, ushering in the Year of the Fire Horse in the Chinese zodiac. The 15-day festivities, observed by billions worldwide, start with the new moon and end with the Lantern Festival. China anticipates a record 9.5 billion trips during the 40-day travel rush around the holiday, the world's largest annual human migration.

The horse is the seventh animal in the 12-year zodiac cycle and symbolizes energy, independence, and ambition. Those born in horse years are seen as dynamic, courageous, and charismatic. Many see the Year of the Fire Horse as a time to take bold steps, embrace change, and pursue new opportunities. The last Fire Horse year occurred in 1966; notable births include Adam Sandler, Gordon Ramsay, Halle Berry, and Helena Bonham Carter.

Traditions focus on family and fortune, including gifting lai see or hóngbāo to children—red envelopes filled with "lucky money."

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

"Wuthering Heights" tops Valentine's Day weekend box office with \$34.8M in domestic ticket sales, marking the year's biggest opening so far.

Casey Wasserman to sell talent agency after emails linking him to Jeffrey Epstein.

FBI says glove with DNA evidence found near home of Nancy Guthrie, mother of "Today" coanchor Savannah Guthrie, appears to match glove worn by suspect.

Former CNN anchor Don Lemon pleads not guilty to federal criminal charges over coverage of immigration-related protests inside a Minnesota church.

Tyler Reddick wins 2026 Daytona 500; Reddick drives for 23XI Racing, the team co-owned by Michael Jordan.

Science & Technology

Rental marketplace Airbnb to roll out customer service AI agents globally; company says one-third of customer support in the US and Canada is now handled by a custom-built agent.

New spinal organoids—lab-grown structures that mimic real organs—allow researchers to test therapies aimed at reversing paralysis without requiring human patients.

Researchers use nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy to map more than 70 chemical compounds in a bottle of wine; approach could help identify high-profile cases of wine fraud.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close mixed Friday (S&P 500 +0.1%, Dow +0.1%, Nasdaq -0.2%) after cooler-than-expected inflation data.

Amazon-owned smart doorbell maker Ring ends partnership with police surveillance tech firm Flock Safety—a separate initiative from its dog-finding Super Bowl ad, which sparked privacy concerns over camera monitoring.

Wendy's to close between 5% and 6% of its US restaurants, or roughly 298 to 358 locations, in first half of the year; reports worse-than-expected global same-store sales in Q4.

Politics & World Affairs

US military says it struck more than 30 Islamic State targets in Syria this month in retaliation for December ambush that killed two American soldiers and a US civilian interpreter.

Israel to start land registration in the West Bank for first time since 1967, a move critics say deepens control; Israel says the move is meant to create legal certainty.

President Donald Trump's Board of Peace to provide \$5B to rebuild Gaza; board to meet in Washington, DC, Thursday.

Seven US states miss federal deadline for second time to agree on sharing Colorado River water amid ongoing drought and shrinking water supplies.

Need a **Babysitter** or **House Cleaner?**

♥ **Babysitting Available!**

House Cleaning Offered!

Text Jeslyn Kosel at (605)-290-7821

I'm in Groton but am willing to drive to nearby towns!

The advertisement features a colorful illustration of a teddy bear, a baby bottle, and a stack of colorful blocks on the left, and a yellow bucket filled with cleaning supplies like a spray bottle, a broom, and gloves on the right. Below the text are three banners: a red one with a heart icon, a teal one with a broom icon, and an orange one with a torn paper effect. At the bottom, there's a small illustration of a red car driving on a road towards a yellow house with a red roof, set against a backdrop of green hills and a blue sky with clouds.

“The Bones of the Matter”

When I was in medical school, I learned that a shocking number of people would die or be admitted to a nursing home after a hip fracture.

Even today, a hip fracture can be a devastating event for an older American. Up to 30% will die within the next year. Many more will lose independence and require admission to assisted living or a nursing home. Estimates vary, but it may approach 50%. As hard as it is to believe, these statistics are improved from my long ago medical school days.

As a doctor in training, the solution seemed obvious. If osteoporosis caused hip fractures, and hip fractures caused premature death and disability, then my mission as a primary care physician would be to prevent osteoporosis. I’ve been nagging my patients about their calcium and vitamin D intake and their weight bearing exercise ever since.

To be fair, the reality is a bit more nuanced. It’s true that osteoporosis is a major factor in hip fractures, but it is often accompanied by other issues: poor nutrition, poor balance, low muscle mass, and more obvious serious health conditions like dementia, heart disease, kidney disease, and diabetes.

Similarly, preventing osteoporosis isn’t as simple as urging everyone to drink enough milk. Generally we can build stronger bones up until about age 30. After that, the goal is to maintain bone mass. Those critical years are often decades before a person starts thinking about their bones, and sometimes well before they start thinking about their health at all!

Other habits also influence how strong your bones are at their best. Smoking and alcohol reduce bone mass. Weight bearing exercise increases it; while being sedentary has the opposite effect. Your body needs vitamin D to make bone, too, and deficiencies are surprisingly common.

Other health conditions, and their treatments, can have significant influences on your bone health. The list is long: eating disorders, premature menopause, inflammatory bowel disease, seizure disorders, asthma, rheumatoid arthritis, chronic kidney disease, thyroid disease, cancer.

While preventing osteoporosis starts in childhood, hope is not lost just because you are well into middle age, or older. Talk with your doctor about what you should be doing to keep your bones healthy. Do you need help getting rid of nicotine, or cutting back on alcohol? Are you having trouble getting enough calcium or vitamin D? Are there medications you are taking that could be changed? Is it time to start screening?

While many people think about osteoporosis as a woman’s disease, it affects men too, albeit at lower rates. In fact, men may have a higher risk of death after a hip fracture. We all need to be thinking about our bones. It’s never too early. Or too late.



Debra Johnston, MD

Dr. Debra Johnston is a Family Medicine Physician at Avera Medical Group Brookings in Brookings, SD. She serves as one of the Prairie Doc Volunteer Hosts during its 24th Season providing Health Education Based on Science, Built on Trust. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok. Prairie Doc Programming includes On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show (most Thursdays at 7pm on SDPB, YouTube and streaming on Facebook), 2 podcasts, and a Radio program (on SDPB, Sundays at 6am and 1pm).

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With the 2025 NFL season officially over, all 32 teams will begin laying the foundation for 2026 and beyond. Some teams have championship aspirations, some teams are hoping to ascend out of the proverbial basement, and some teams will be somewhere between the two. For the Minnesota Vikings, the quest for that ever-elusive Lombardi Trophy begins as it always does, by looking in the rearview mirror.

Today marks the first of four articles that will examine the 2025 roster to reveal which positions and players can be built around, and which need to be upgraded. We start with the offensive skill positions.

Quarterback

J.J. McCarthy started 10 games (6-4), completing 57.6% of his passes for 1632 yards, 11 touchdowns, and 12 interceptions.

Carson Wentz, a late addition to the team, started 5 games (2-3), completing 65.1% of his passes for 1216 yards, six touchdowns, and five interceptions.

Max Brosmer, an undrafted rookie, started two games (1-1), completed 66.2% of his passes for 328 yards, zero touchdowns, and four interceptions.

As a team, the Vikings ranked 29th in passing yards and touchdowns while leading the league in interceptions.

The Vikings' QB play was undoubtedly the biggest reason why the team finished 9-8 and missed the playoffs. The plan was to play McCarthy, who had to sit out his rookie season because of injury, hoping to see improvement throughout the season. Instead, what we got was more missed time because of injury and spotty play (at best) when he was actually on the field. The Vikings still don't know if he's capable of becoming a franchise QB, which is a problem for a top-10 pick entering his third season.

Running Back

Jordan Mason played in 16 games, starting five, and ran for 758 yards and six touchdowns on 159 carries. He also had 14 catches for 51 yards.

Aaron Jones played and started in 12 games, rushing for 548 yards and two touchdowns on 132 carries. He also had 28 catches for 199 yards.

Zavier Scott (32 carries for 114 yards), Ty Chandler (17 carries for 47 yards), Cam Akers (5 carries for 19 yards), and C.J. Ham (3 carries for 5 yards) rounded out the RB room.

As a team, the Vikings ranked 23rd in rushing yards, 18th in rushing touchdowns, and 12th in yards per carry.

The plan at running back was to have Mason and Jones split the carries, keeping them both fresh throughout the season. For the most part, the plan worked. However, Aaron Jones missed five games last season due to injury and will turn 32 next season. The Vikings will need to decide if they're going to keep the veteran RB or replace him with a younger free agent or rookie.

Wide Receiver

Justin Jefferson had 84 catches for 1,048 yards and two touchdowns.

Jordan Addison had 42 catches for 610 yards and three touchdowns.

Jalen Nailor had 29 catches for 444 yards and four touchdowns.

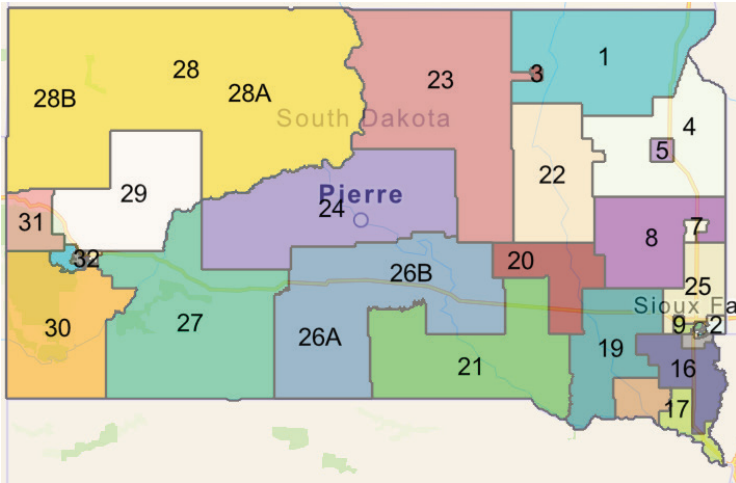
Adam Thielen had 8 catches for 69 yards.

Tai Felton had 3 catches for 25 yards.

With the roller coaster at QB, it's no surprise that the Vikings' receivers had a down year. Justin Jefferson was able to keep his streak of 1,000 yards season going, however, even though they needed to force-feed him the ball in week 18 to make it happen. The Vikings' WR room is still one of the best in the NFL, but some decisions will need to be made regarding Addison and Nailor. Addison is entering the fourth year of his five-year rookie contract, has had multiple run-ins with the law, and will likely command a large contract in a year or two. Nailor, on the other hand, is a very good WR3 but is an unrestricted free agent this offseason.

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Logan Manhart
Party: Republican
Term: New Member
District: 01
Counties: Brown, Day, Marshall, Roberts
Occupation: Construction/Real Estate
House Education Member
House Health and Human Services

Hello District one!

The first half of the 101st Legislative Session is in the books. This session has hundreds and hundreds of bills and resolutions across both chambers. With so many bills, it can be hard to stay up to date. As one of your Representatives, transparency is important and I want to help keep those of District 1 as informed of the happenings in Pierre as possible.

First, I was proud to kick off this session by sponsoring House Concurrent Resolution 6002, a resolution to honor the life of Charlie Kirk. Charlie had a real finger on the pulse of the next generation and changed how young people interact with politics. As the youngest member of the South Dakota Legislature, I thought it was important I bring this resolution to remember his legacy. I am happy to say that every Republican present voted to pass the resolution.

Another bill I am happily sponsoring is Senate Bill 137. This bill is common-sense legislation to protect the exercise of a person's freedom of speech. More than thirty states have already adopted similar legislation to protect citizens from being forced into silence by frivolous lawsuits and expensive legal fees. I am proud to bring legislation that protects our constitutional rights.

One significant item that the legislature is attempting to address this session is Data Centers and their role in our state, if they have one. Many ideas are still being debated in both chambers so I want to be clear on my stance. I am staunchly against the state giving any one industry a leg up with massive tax subsidies, especially an already wealthy out-of-state company. South Dakota needs to support our homegrown small businesses first and foremost. Out-of-state mega-corporations do not need us to create economic incentives that prioritize their interests over that of our existing residents and businesses.

I hope to represent South Dakota and District 1 to the best of my ability. If you have any questions or just want to talk about upcoming legislation, please reach out.

Thank you,
Representative Logan Manhart, District 1
Logan.Manhart@sdlegislature.gov

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2-Person: \$55.45 per month or \$575.10 per year
Family: \$67.10 per month or \$702.26 per year

MONTH-TO-MONTH

Student: \$35.15 per month
Single: \$40.48 per month
2-Person: \$59.78 per month
Family: \$72.43 per month
Senior/PT: **\$20** per month



Call or Text Paul at 605/397-7460
Call or Text Tina at 605/397-7285

Same rates for several years!



Worsening Shrimp Fraud Drives Overfishing by Shriya Surti

Dear EarthTalk: What is "shrimp fraud?" Why is it bad for the environment and local economies and how are we combating it?

-- Michelle G., Seattle, WA

Shrimp is one of the most popular seafood choices worldwide. "We eat over one billion pounds of shrimp [annually in the U.S.]," Kimberly Warner, senior scientist of Oceana, tells The Guardian. Producers mislabel or misrepresent shrimp products to deceive buyers about their species, origin or sustainability. This deceptive practice misleads consumers and harms the environment, the economy and public health.

Shrimp fraud takes various forms, including species substitution, where lower-quality or cheaper shrimp species are sold as expensive varieties. Some producers mislabel shrimp origins to disguise unsustainably harvested shrimp. Some misrepresent sustainability claims to appeal to eco-conscious consumers.

When producers misrepresent shrimp harvesting, they drive overfishing, depleting wild shrimp populations and disrupting marine ecosystems. Shrimp farmers clear mangroves for unsustainable shrimp farming, destroying coastal habitats and reducing biodiversity. Shrimp farmers also pollute local water systems by releasing excess nutrients and chemicals, harming aquatic life. Fraudulent shrimp sourcing supports unreported and unregulated fishing, weakening efforts to manage global fisheries responsibility.

Honest shrimp fishers suffer financial losses when their legally harvested shrimp must compete with fraudulent alternatives. Mis-labelers deceive consumers, charging them premium prices for falsely advertised products. This results in financial losses and raises health concerns because some mislabeled shrimp are contaminated, exposing customers to potential allergens or harmful chemicals.

Organizations and consumers have increased efforts to combat shrimp fraud in recent years. Governments have implemented seafood labeling laws and regulations requiring accurate product descriptions. "An immediate fix would be traceability and better labeling, allowing people to choose their seafood confidently and responsibly," Kimberly Warner says. Regulators and advocacy groups have developed DNA testing and traceability initiatives to verify shrimp species and origins more effectively. Consumer awareness campaigns have exposed fraudulent practices and pushed for industry-wide reform.

Consumers can fight shrimp fraud by making informed purchases and choosing trusted sources like certified sustainable fisheries. Support stronger labeling laws and traceability programs. Stay informed and advocate for ethical sourcing to foster a more sustainable shrimp industry.



Shrimp fraud takes various forms, including species substitution, where lower-quality or cheaper shrimp species are sold as expensive varieties.

Credit: Pexels.com.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Winners, losers begin to emerge from South Dakota's property tax scrum

Relief for veterans earns easy support, other ideas spur debate or die on the vine

BY: JOHN HULT

South Dakota lawmakers in Pierre have property tax proposals aplenty to discuss, built upon 19 ideas from a tax relief task force and others from the governor and individual legislators.

On Thursday, they tore through a flurry of the bills, leaving some in the conversation and dropping others out.

The activity came a day after Gov. Larry Rhoden signed a property tax bill into law for the first time this legislative session.

Senate Bill 12 adds to an existing law that exempts from property taxes the homes of veterans who've lost both legs or the use of both legs. The new law lets those veterans or their surviving, unmarried spouses apply for four years' worth of refunds if they missed prior application deadlines for the program, or missed deadlines to have their home classified as owner-occupied.

Also on Wednesday, the state Senate voted 23-10 to back a resolution that would ask voters to legalize statewide mobile sports betting — on smartphone apps and websites — and put 90% of the gambling tax revenue toward property tax reduction. Currently, sports betting is only allowed at casinos in Deadwood, and the resolution says the computer servers for mobile betting would still have to be located there. Tribal casinos would get the same opportunity. If the House of Representatives also says yes, the question will be on the Nov. 3 ballot.

Here's a rundown of some other bills that advanced or failed on the last day of the lawmaking week, and where the survivors are headed next. The legislative session began in January and continues until mid-March.

Advanced

House Bill 1241: This bill would raise the amount of home value exempted from property taxation from \$200,000 to \$225,000 for veterans rated as permanently and totally disabled from a service-connected disability, and for their surviving spouses. In the other chamber, Senate Bill 126 would raise the value to \$300,000.

The House Taxation Committee voted 11-0 to send HB 1241 to the House floor. The Senate Taxation Committee voted 5-0 on Wednesday to send SB 126 to the Senate floor.

House Bill 1193: This bill tweaks the same exemption for completely disabled veterans adjusted by HB 1241. It would require local boards of equalization to give up to four years' worth of refunds to otherwise qualifying vets and their spouses who failed to qualify for the partial exemption while they were awaiting a decision on a permanent and total disability claim from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The House of Representatives voted 62-0 in favor. Next up: A Senate committee.

House Bill 1253: This one would change the way owner-occupied and commercial property values are calculated. Instead of looking at the annual increase in property values, HB 1253 would require counties to use an eight-year market average to set taxable values for individual properties (after lopping off a county's highest and lowest property values). The idea would be to blunt the impact of spiking valuations. The bill also would bar a tax shift to ag land to cover any losses and put the onus on school boards to

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adjust budgets if necessary.

The bill moved from House Taxation to the House floor on a 7-5 vote.

House Bill 1258: If this bill becomes law, property tax bills sent from counties to homeowners would have to include a QR code that could be scanned by smartphones to view a state Department of Revenue website with information on property taxes and tax relief programs.

The House passed the bill on a 60-2 vote, sending it to a Senate committee for consideration.

Defeated

House Bill 1218: This bill sought to help small businesses and family owned "owner-operator" businesses by requiring that tax levies on their commercial properties be 25% lower than they are for "investor-owned" commercial properties. It fell under the weight of worries over the administrative burden on counties, shifting tax burdens onto other classes of property owners, and questions about who might qualify as a small business for tax purposes.

The bill was defeated 7-5 by the House Taxation Committee.

Senate Bill 200: The more the state pays for education, the less schools theoretically need to get from local property taxpayers. This bill deals with the first part of that equation. By law, the state has to increase education funding every year by 3% or the rate of inflation, whichever is less. But lawmakers can and do reset the baseline, and the state's missed the mark on multiple occasions in the past three decades as a result. Gov. Rhoden wrote no increase for school funding into his proposed budget, but an unexpected boost in revenue may change that.

Senate Bill 200 would do away with the statutory requirement for increased funding, which its sponsor called "an illusion" akin to a "lucky pair of socks." Opponents said the law's target is important guidance.

The Senate Education Committee voted 5-1 to table the bill. That's where it will stay unless the full Senate opts to bring it up for debate.

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

GT on

Boys Varsity
Groton Area
vs Florence-Henry
at Florence

Mon., Feb. 16, 2026, 7:30

Groton
Area
Tigers
Groton, SD

GDILIVE

YouTube

A production of the
Groton Daily Independent

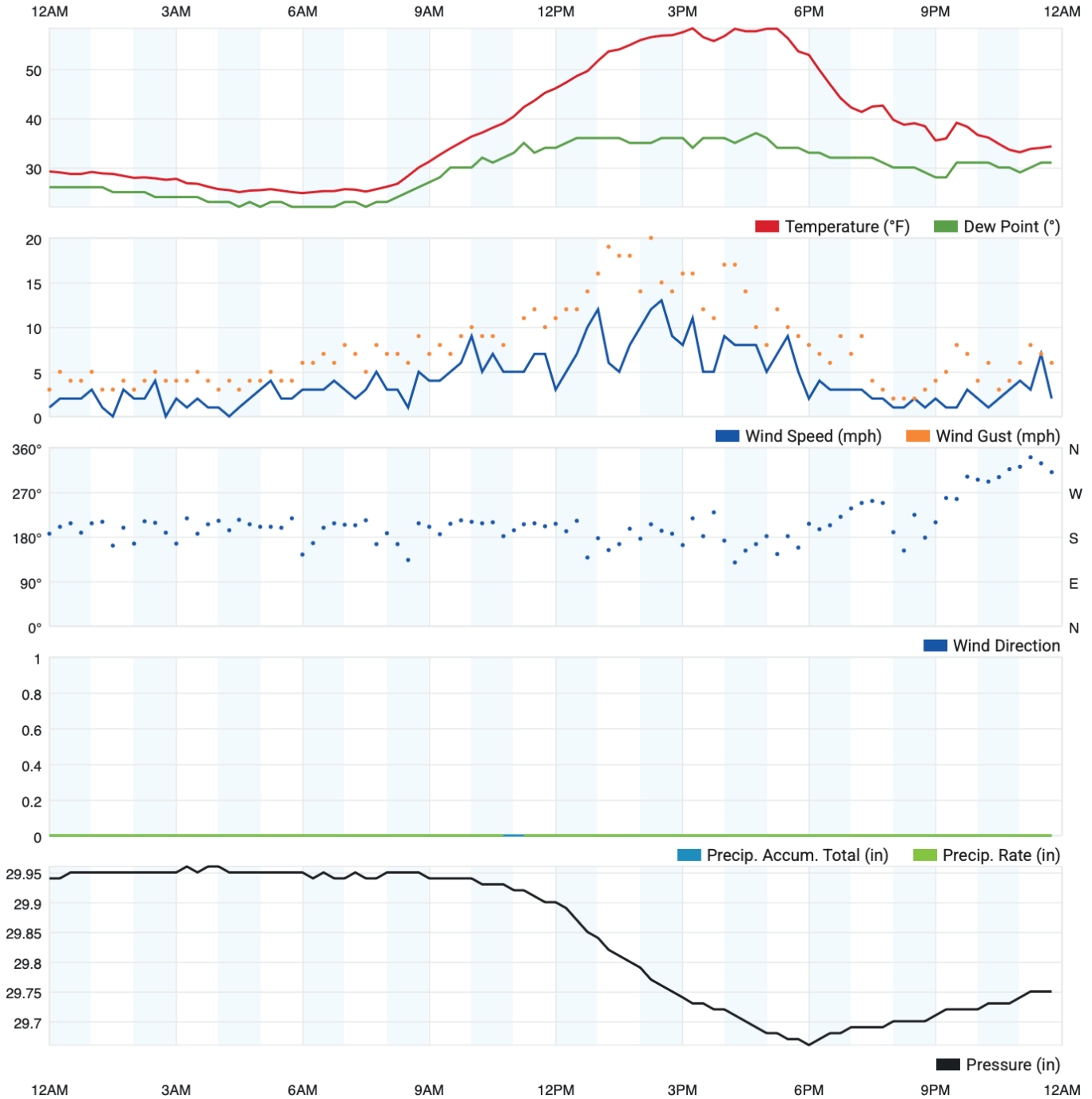
For more info: GDILIVE.COM

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

February 15, 2026



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Washington's
Birthday



High: 55 °F

Sunny

Tonight



Low: 35 °F

Increasing
Clouds

Tuesday



High: 51 °F

Chance Rain
then Rain
Likely and
Breezy

Tuesday Night



Low: 32 °F

Rain Likely
and Breezy

Wednesday



High: 39 °F

Breezy.
Chance
Rain/Snow
then Chance
Snow

Warmth Continues ...Colder Mid Week

Today

Feb 16th, 2026



50 to 65°

Tuesday

Feb 17th, 2026



47 to 62°

Wednesday

Feb 18th, 2026



34 to 45°

Another warm day today, with high temperatures nearing record highs in some locations.

Rain will develop through the day on Tuesday, with the highest chances (50-70%) over northern SD and into west central MN. Precipitation transitions to light snow Wed.

Elevated fire weather concerns Tuesday over south central SD

February 16, 2026 2:23 AM



The April-like temperatures will continue today, before we see temperatures returning to more February like values for the second half of the work week. While rain is expected for most on Tuesday afternoon and night, the lack of rain will lead to a High Grassland Fire Danger on Tuesday in south central SD. As the colder air moves in Tuesday night into Wednesday, the rain will transition to snow, but only a light dusting of snow is expected on Wednesday over northern SD and west central MN.

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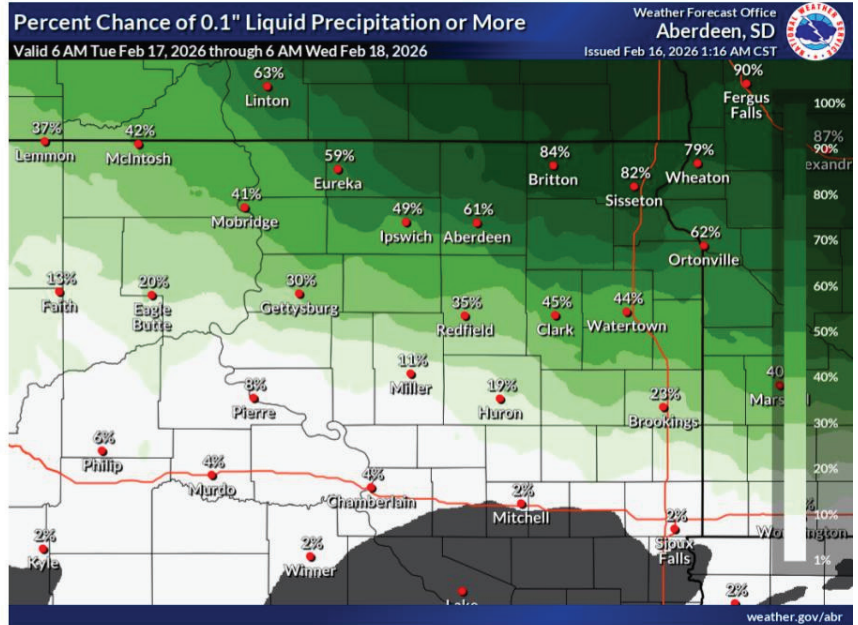
Rain Tuesday and Tuesday Night

February 16, 2026
2:28 AM

Highest Chances For A Tenth of an Inch of Precipitation Across Northeastern South Dakota

Key Messages

- **Rain** expected Tuesday afternoon through late Tuesday night over northern SD and west central MN.
- A 50-80% chance of a tenth of an inch of rain in that area (image to right), with a 30-50% chance of a quarter of an inch near the ND/SD/MN border area through Tuesday night.
- **Rain** will transition to **light snow** from west to east Tuesday night into Wednesday morning.
 - ◆ Generally a light dusting of snow is expected in northern SD and west central MN, with a 10-30% chance of 1" of snow or more.



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD



Winds Increase Tuesday into Tuesday Night

February 16, 2026
2:34 AM CST

Strongest winds expected Tuesday night into Wednesday Morning

Key Messages

- **Tuesday:** southeast winds increase and gust between 20-35 mph
 - **High Grassland Fire Danger in South Central SD:** Due to the combination of dry grasses, limited expected rainfall, low relative humidity values, and gusty winds
- **Tuesday night:** winds will shift to the west-northwest and gust from 35 to 45 mph.
 - There may be a brief period of higher gusts as winds initially shift around to the west-northwest.
- **Wednesday:** Northwest winds will continue to gust to 35 to 45 mph in the morning, before gradually diminishing into the evening

Maximum Wind Gust (mph) Forecast

	2/16 Mon		2/17 Tue					2/18 Wed					2/19 Thu									
	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am								
McIntosh	16	20	20	20	24	28	31	32	32	32	29	26	32	40	41	41	43	41	39	29	28	30
Eagle Butte	18	20	17	20	24	26	28	29	29	28	25	29	36	43	43	40	40	38	37	26	29	31
Mobridge	14	17	17	17	21	23	26	29	29	28	24	22	26	33	36	36	36	35	33	23	25	26
Eureka	16	20	20	20	24	26	30	33	35	33	29	22	25	32	36	38	38	39	37	25	26	28
Gettysburg	18	22	21	20	24	26	29	31	31	29	24	21	28	35	38	38	38	38	36	24	26	28
Pierre	13	16	16	14	16	18	20	21	22	21	21	23	29	35	36	35	35	32	31	21	20	22
Murdo	15	17	17	17	22	23	23	23	22	25	26	30	36	39	39	38	37	36	33	23	24	26
Chamberlain	12	16	16	14	16	17	20	22	22	22	21	21	28	33	33	33	36	36	32	20	21	22
Miller	14	18	18	16	20	21	24	28	30	29	24	21	29	38	40	40	41	41	36	23	23	24
Redfield	13	16	17	17	20	22	24	28	32	32	25	18	26	33	37	39	40	40	37	24	23	25
Aberdeen	10	14	15	15	17	17	20	23	28	29	25	18	22	29	32	35	37	38	36	24	23	23
Britton	10	14	16	18	22	24	28	32	36	36	32	26	23	26	28	31	35	36	33	24	23	23
Webster	14	16	17	20	24	24	28	32	35	35	32	24	24	29	30	33	35	36	35	25	24	24
Clark	15	18	18	21	24	25	29	33	36	36	30	21	24	30	32	35	37	38	36	24	24	25
Watertown	13	16	17	18	20	21	23	29	33	33	30	22	23	30	33	37	38	38	36	24	23	23
Sisseton	9	12	13	14	16	20	21	24	31	32	31	24	24	29	30	32	35	35	33	24	23	23
Milbank	8	12	13	14	15	16	20	23	29	30	29	22	21	25	29	30	32	33	32	22	21	21
Wheaton	8	10	12	15	18	21	23	26	31	33	33	30	26	26	26	29	30	30	29	21	22	22



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 59 °F at 5:06 PM

Low Temp: 25 °F at 5:56 AM

Wind: 20 mph at 2:10 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 56 in 1981

Record Low: -40 in 1936

Average High: 29

Average Low: 7

Average Precip in Feb.: 0.3.

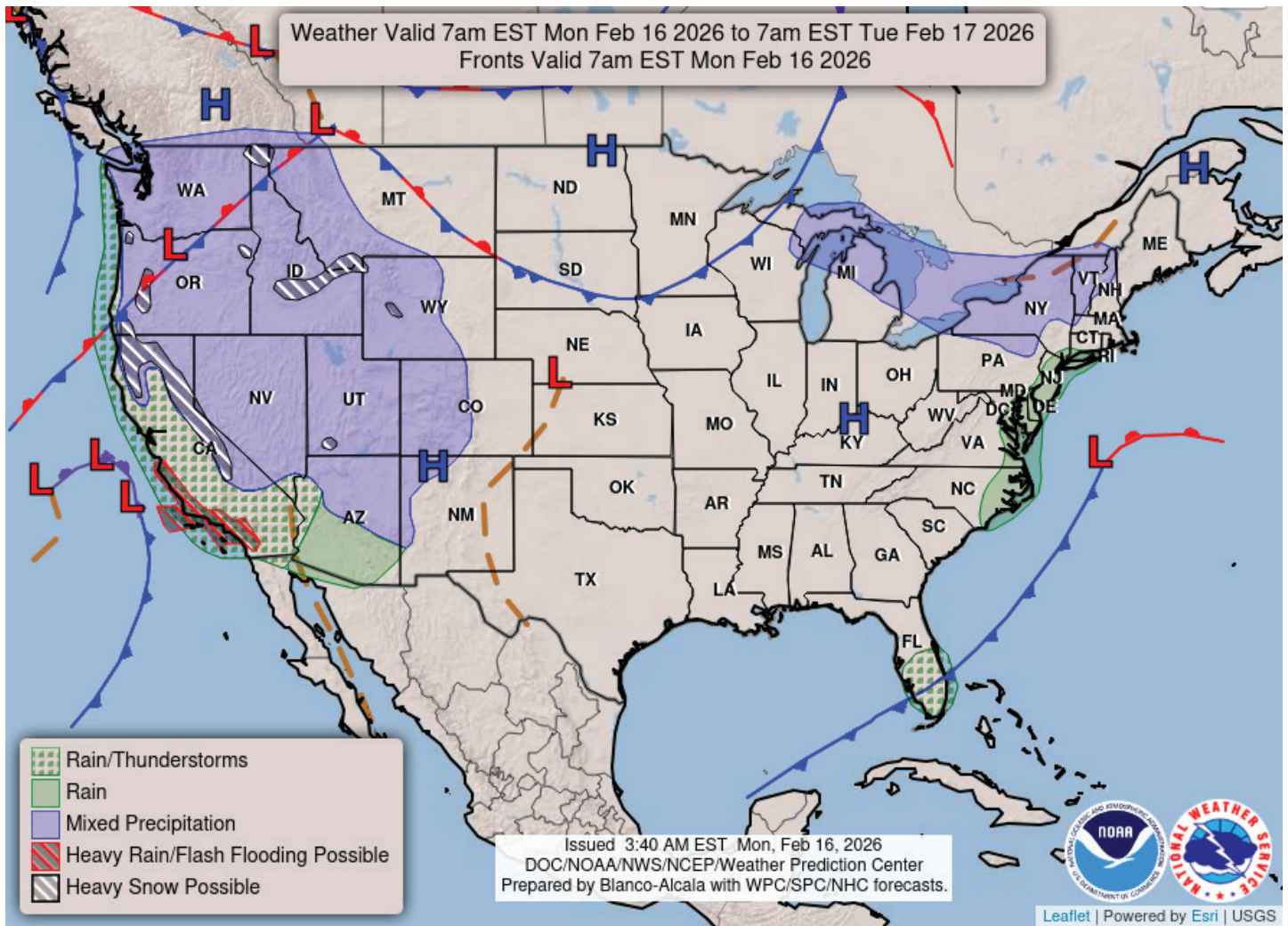
Precip to date in Feb.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.88

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 6:00 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:31 am



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Today in Weather History

February 16th, 1969: Freezing drizzle and thick fog formed a heavy glaze on utility lines resulting in several broken power and telephone lines across northern South Dakota.

1898: A series of wildfires swept through South Carolina on February 16-17, 1898. Unconfirmed reports indicate that 14 people were killed, numerous homes and sawmills burned, and up to 3,000,000 acres of forest land were charred from Aiken County, S.C. to Chatham County, N.C., and east to Marlboro County, S.C. There were probably a dozen wildfires raging at the same time driven by a 40 mph wind.

1899 — Washington D.C. received 1.26 inches of rain in six hours atop a snow cover more than 30 inches deep making it the soggiest day of record. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1903: Pokegama Dam, Minnesota saw three straight days with low temperatures 50° below zero or colder, including 59° below zero on the 15th. The minus 59° established a state record for the lowest measured temperature in Minnesota. Pokegama Dam held the record until February 2nd, 1996 when the temperature fell to 60° below zero at Tower.

1943: Record cold prevailed in the northeastern United States. The mercury plunged to 37°F below zero at Concord, New Hampshire, and to -39 degrees at Portland, Maine. The morning low of -32°F at Falls Village, Connecticut, established a state record. The Connecticut record low was tied on January 22nd, 1961, when Coventry fell to -32°F.

1987 — A winter storm produced snow and ice in the Ohio Valley and the Appalachian Region. Snowfall totals in Virginia ranged up to 14 inches around Farmville, while Granville NC reported eight inches of sleet and ice. Freezing rain in eastern North Carolina caused extensive damage to power lines. Gales lashed the coast of Virginia and North Carolina. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 — Santa Ana winds in southern California gusted to 50 mph in the Rancho Cucamonga area. Quiet weather prevailed across the rest of the nation. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 — A surge of arctic air produced all-time record high barometric pressure readings of 31.08 inches at Duluth MN, 30.97 inches at Chicago IL and 30.94 inches at South Bend IN. Readings of 31.00 inches at Milwaukee WI and 30.98 inches at Rockford IL tied their all-time records. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed across the southeastern U.S. Highs of 81 degrees at Athens GA, 87 degrees at Charleston SC, 85 degrees at Macon GA, and 86 degrees at Savannah GA were records for February. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 — Strong thunderstorms developing ahead of an arctic cold front produced severe weather across the southeastern U.S. between mid morning on the 15th and early evening on the 16th. Thunderstorms spawned thirteen tornadoes, including one which, prior to dawn on the 16th, injured eleven persons near Carrollton GA. There were also 121 reports of large hail or damaging winds. A late afternoon thunderstorm on the 15th produced baseball size hail at Jackson MS, and prior to dawn on the 16th, a thunderstorm produced high winds which injured four persons at Goodwater AL. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)



Daily Devotion

How to Have an Abundant Life

True fulfillment comes when we seek God above everything else.

Psalm 16:11: 11 You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

In public, most people seem happy. But beneath the surface, some likely feel empty. In fact, it's possible to be in a large crowd and yet feel alone.

There's a reason why this can occur: Man was created with a yearning that only God is able to satisfy. Individuals cannot be fulfilled until they experience His transforming and unconditional love. Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). In other words, the Lord wants us to feel complete, which can happen only through a relationship with Him.

However, even a person who is saved can feel empty. At times this results from disobedience: A detour in one's walk with the Lord can become a way of life, depriving a believer of deep satisfaction. It's also possible for Christians to live according to God's Word without fully surrendering to the Father. For example, many believers still try to fill their own void with achievements, wealth, or relationships. When such aspirations are given higher priority than the Lord, they can lead to a sense of dissatisfaction. An abundant life is possible only when we seek God above all else. Pray for His guidance as you search your heart. Confess any sin and ask God to fill your life as only He can do.

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 1 Days 17 Hrs 29

DRAW: Mins 42 Secs

[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 16 Hrs 44 Mins 42

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.15.26

18 25 30 33 35 6

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT 16 Hrs 59 Mins 41

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.14.26

4 14 15 17 23

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$20,000

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 59

DRAW: Mins 41 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.14.26

13 18 21 27 45 6

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT 17 Hrs 28 Mins 41

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

02.14.26

23 43 58 60 64 24

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$154,000,000

NEXT 17 Hrs 28 Mins 41

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the **AP** Associated Press

Indian Health Service to phase out use of dental fillings containing mercury by 2027

By GRAHAM LEE BREWER and SAVANNAH PETERS Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — The federal agency that provides health care to Native Americans and Alaska Natives has announced it will phase out the use of dental fillings containing mercury.

The Indian Health Service has used fillings, known as dental amalgams, that contain elemental mercury to treat decayed and otherwise damaged teeth for decades. Native American rights and industry advocates have called for an end to the practice, arguing it exposes patients who may not have access to private dentistry to a harmful neurotoxin.

The use of mercury-containing amalgams, also known as “silver fillings” due to their appearance, has declined sharply since 2009 when the U.S. Food and Drug Administration reclassified the devices from low to moderate risk. The industry has largely abandoned them in favor of plastic resin alternatives, which are also preferred for aesthetic reasons.

The Indian Health Service says it will fully implement the move to mercury-free alternatives by 2027. Already, the percentage of the Indian Health Service’s roughly 2.8 million patient user population receiving them has declined from 12% in 2005 to 2% in 2023, the latest year of available data, agency documents show.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees IHS, said growing environmental and health concerns about mercury exposure, and global efforts to reduce materials containing the hazardous heavy metal prompted the change announced this month.

“This is a commonsense step that protects patients and prevents harm before it starts,” Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., said in a statement.

The agency’s switch to mercury-free alternatives also upholds legal responsibilities the U.S. government has to the 575 federally recognized tribes, he said.

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, dental amalgam fillings can release small amounts of mercury vapor during placement, removal, teeth grinding and gum chewing. It recommends that certain people at high risk for adverse effects of mercury exposure, including pregnant women, children under 6, and those with existing neurological conditions avoid the fillings. But the administration, along with the American Dental Association, says available evidence does not link mercury-containing fillings to long-term negative health outcomes.

The World Health Organization has created a plan to encourage countries around the world to phase out the use of dental amalgams, citing potential for mercury exposure. In 2013 several countries, including the U.S., signed onto the Minamata Convention, a global agreement targeting the adverse health and the environment effects of mercury. In November, signatories to the convention agreed to phase out the use of mercury-containing dental amalgams by the year 2034.

While Kennedy’s decision to stop its use within the IHS by 2027 puts the U.S. ahead of the global schedule, the country is still behind many other developed nations that have already banned the practice.

“The rest of the world is light years ahead of us,” said Rochelle Diver, the U.N. environmental treaties coordinator for the International Indian Treaty Council, adding that IHS patients should not receive treatment that is considered antiquated by many dentists.

In a statement, the American Dental Association acknowledged declining use of mercury-containing fillings, but said they remain a “safe, durable and affordable material.”

The use of mercury in other medical devices, including thermometers and blood pressure devices, has also declined sharply in recent decades. While mercury-containing amalgams have fallen out of favor in the U.S. private dental sector, patients relying on government services may not have a say, according to Charles G. Brown, president of the World Alliance for Mercury-Free Dentistry.

Many state-administered Medicaid programs continue to cover mercury-containing fillings as a treatment for tooth decay, Brown said.

"If you're on Medicaid, if you are stuck in the Indian Health Service, if you were stuck in a prison or other institution, you just don't have any choice," Brown said.

Rubio meets Orbán in Budapest as US and Hungary are to sign a civilian nuclear pact

By MATTHEW LEE and JUSTIN SPIKE Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio was in the Hungarian capital on Monday for meetings with Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his government during which they plan to sign a civilian nuclear cooperation agreement heralded by U.S. President Donald Trump.

Trump has been outspoken in his support for the nationalist Orbán in the Hungarian leader's bid for reelection in two months. Orbán and his Fidesz party are facing their most serious challenge in the April 12 vote since he retook power in 2010.

The stop in Hungary's capital follows Rubio's visit to Slovakia on Sunday, after he previously attended the Munich Security Conference in Germany.

Led by euroskeptic populists who oppose support for Ukraine and vocally back Trump, Slovakia and Hungary represent friendly territory for Rubio as he pushes to shore up energy agreements with both Central European countries.

Widely considered Russian President Vladimir Putin's most reliable advocate in the European Union, Orbán has maintained warm relations with the Kremlin despite its war against Ukraine while currying favor with Trump and his MAGA — short for the 2016 Trump campaign slogan "Make America Great Again" — movement.

Many in MAGA and the broader conservative world view Hungary as a shining example of successful conservative nationalism, despite the erosion of its democratic institutions and its status as one of the EU's poorest countries.

In a post on his Truth Social site earlier this month, Trump endorsed Orbán for the coming elections and called him a "truly strong and powerful Leader" and "a true friend, fighter, and WINNER."

Trump has praised Orbán's firm opposition to immigration, exemplified by a fence his government erected on Hungary's southern border in 2015 as hundreds of thousands of refugees fled Syria and other countries in the Middle East and Africa.

Other U.S. conservatives admire Orbán's hostility to LGBTQ+ rights. His government last year banned the popular Budapest Pride celebration and allowed facial recognition technology to be used to identify anyone participating despite the ban. It has also effectively banned same-sex adoption and same-sex marriage, and disallowed transgender individuals from changing their sex in official documents.

Orbán has remained firmly committed to purchasing Russian energy despite efforts by the EU to wean off such supplies, and received an exemption from U.S. sanctions on Russian energy after a November meeting in the White House with Trump.

Apparently trusting that his political and personal affinity with the U.S. leader could pay even greater dividends, Orbán and his government have sought to woo Trump to Hungary before the pivotal April 12 elections — hoping such a high-profile visit and endorsement would push Orbán, who is trailing in most polls, over the finish line.

Budapest has hosted several annual iterations of the Conservative Political Action Conference, or CPAC, and another was hastily rescheduled this year to fall in March, just before Hungary's elections.

Details of the civilian nuclear deal were not known ahead of Monday's signing in Budapest.

During his White House visit in November, Orbán had agreed to U.S.-Hungary cooperation in the civil nuclear industry, including the purchase of compact nuclear reactors — known as small modular reactors or SMRs — and spent fuel storage.

Hungary signaled it was ready to support construction of up to 10 SMRs with a potential value of up

to \$20 billion. Orbán also said Hungary would enter a nuclear fuel deal with U.S.-based Westinghouse to supply nuclear fuel for Hungary's Russian-built Paks I nuclear plant.

World shares mostly advance and Japan falls ahead of Lunar New Year holidays

By CHAN HO-HIM AP Business Writer

HONG KONG (AP) — World shares mostly advanced on Monday and gold declined. Japanese stocks dipped and several stock markets in Asia were closed or trading for a half-day ahead of Lunar New Year celebrations.

In early European trading, Germany's DAX was up 0.2% to 24,958.01. Britain's FTSE gained 0.3% to 10,479.47, while the CAC 40 in Paris also rose 0.3% to 8,333.81.

In Asia, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 was down 0.2% to 56,806.41, after the government reported that Japan's economy grew more slowly than economists had expected in the latest October-December quarter, at an annualized 0.2%.

The sluggish rate of growth increases the likelihood that Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi will press ahead with plans to revive the economy by raising government spending and cutting taxes, Marcel Thieliant, head of Asia Pacific at Capital Economics, wrote in a note.

Trading was thin as stock markets in China, South Korea and Taiwan were closed. The first day of the Lunar New Year this year falls on Tuesday.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng gained 0.5% in its half-day session, closing at 26,705.94.

In Australia, the S&P/ASX 200 picked up 0.2% to 8,937.10. India's Sensex was up 0.4%.

U.S. futures edged higher. The future for the S&P 500 rose 0.4%, while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average was also up 0.4%. U.S. stock markets are also closed on Presidents Day, a holiday.

On Friday, U.S. stocks calmed after a sharp drop earlier driven by worries about artificial intelligence disruptions across various industries which particularly hit software companies hard.

A report showing inflation cooled last month also helped steady the markets. The data suggesting U.S. price pressures may be easing offered more room for another Federal Reserve interest rate cut.

The S&P 500 edged up less than 0.1% to 6,836.17. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 0.1% to 49,500.93. The Nasdaq composite edged down 0.2% to 22,546.67.

Computer chipmaker Nvidia, the heaviest weight company on the S&P 500, was down 2.2% Friday. Technology company AppLovin rose 6.4% after losing almost a fifth of its value on Thursday, as investors focused on how AI could disrupt businesses of software and technology-related firms.

In other dealings early Monday, gold and silver prices fell. The price of gold was down 0.3% to \$5,030.30 per ounce and the price of silver fell 1.2% to \$77.05 an ounce.

Oil prices fell. U.S. benchmark crude oil lost 34 cents to \$62.55 per barrel, while Brent crude, the international standard, was also 34 cents lower at \$67.41 per barrel.

The U.S. dollar was at 153.33 Japanese yen, up from 152.64 yen. The euro was trading at \$1.1867, down from \$1.1872.

Suspect in mass shooting at Bondi Beach Jewish festival appears in court

SYDNEY (AP) — A man accused of killing 15 people in a mass shooting at a Jewish festival on Sydney's Bondi Beach appeared in court Monday for the first time since his release from the hospital.

Naveed Akram appeared in Sydney's Downing Center Local Court via a video link from the maximum security Goulburn Correctional Center 200 kilometers (120 miles) away.

He did not enter pleas to the charges against him, including murder and committing a terrorist act. The brief court appearance focused on extending a gag order that suppresses the identities of victims and survivors of the attack who have not chosen to identify themselves publicly.

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Defense lawyer Ben Archbold told reporters outside court that Akram was doing as well as could be expected and it was too early to indicate any intention of pleas.

Akram, 24, was wounded and his father Sajid Akram, 50, was killed in a gunbattle with police after the attack on a Hanukkah celebration at the beach Dec. 14.

The younger Akram is next scheduled to appear in court April 9.

The police investigation is one of three official inquiries examining Australia's worst alleged terrorist attack and the nation's worst mass shooting in 29 years.

One involves the interactions between law enforcement and intelligence agencies before the attack that was allegedly inspired by the Islamic State group.

A royal commission, the highest form of public inquiry, will investigate the nature, prevalence and drivers of antisemitism generally as well as the circumstances of the Bondi shooting.

'Adolescence' and 'Train Dreams' win top prizes at Film Independent Spirit Awards

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Clint Bentley's lyrical Denis Johnson adaptation "Train Dreams" won the top film award at the Film Independent Spirit Awards on Sunday in Los Angeles, while "Adolescence" dominated the television categories. Both were released on Netflix.

Bentley also won best director for the film starring Joel Edgerton, whom he thanked profusely for "being the heartbeat of our film."

"We're so grateful to Netflix," Bentley said. "It's very, very hard these days to film in the United States, but it's worth it and we're proud to be able to pull it off."

Edgerton missed out on the top acting prize, however, which went to Rose Byrne for "If I Had Legs I'd Kick You." The organization switched to gender-neutral acting categories in 2022.

Byrne was one of the few actors nominated for both a Spirit Award and an Oscar, for her performance as a mother on the edge.

"I share this with Mary Bronstein, my writer-director who fought for eight years to get this movie made," Byrne said.

She added that this was a film that could have only been made independently. Her character, she said, is "fierce and ferocious and a middle-aged woman."

"Adolescence" won new scripted series, best actor for Stephen Graham, best supporting actor for Erin Doherty, and the breakthrough prize for Owen Cooper.

The show, which serves as a fundraiser for Film Independent's year-round programs, was held at the Hollywood Palladium for the first time since 1994, as its longtime beachside perch in Santa Monica undergoes renovations. Comedian and "Saturday Night Live" veteran Ego Nwodim hosted the celebration of independent film and television, which was livestreamed on YouTube.

"In the spirit of independent filmmaking, we don't have a permit," Nwodim said in her opening. "If I shout 'cameras down,' you know what to do."

"The Secret Agent" won the international feature prize. The film is also nominated for best picture and best international film at the Oscars.

"I really believe that programming films in the cinemas is more and more a political act," said director Kleber Mendonça Filho.

He dedicated the award to the late actor Udo Kier, who was part of the ensemble of "The Secret Agent."

"The Perfect Neighbor," about a deadly shooting incident in Florida constructed primarily from police bodycam footage, won best documentary. Filmmaker and producer Geeta Gandbhir thanked Netflix for "giving us a global platform." It's also up for the best documentary Oscar.

Eva Victor won the screenplay prize for "Sorry, Baby." Naomi Ackie also won the supporting award for Victor's film, over fellow nominees like Zoey Deutch ("Nouvelle Vague"), Kirsten Dunst ("Roofman"), Nina Hoss ("Hedda") and Archie Madekwe ("Lurker").

The awards sometimes overlap significantly with major Oscar contenders and winners, as it did with "Anora," and "Everything Everywhere All At Once," and sometimes not. Organizers limit eligibility to productions with budgets less than \$30 million, meaning more expensive films like "One Battle After Another" are not in the running.

FBI: DNA recovered from glove found near Guthrie home that appears to match glove worn by suspect

By JACQUES BILLEAUD Associated Press

A glove containing DNA found about two miles from the house of "Today" show host Savannah Guthrie's mother appears to match those worn by a masked person outside her front door in Tucson the night she vanished, the FBI said Sunday.

The glove, discovered in a field beside a road, was sent for DNA testing. The FBI said in a statement that it received preliminary results Saturday and was awaiting official confirmation. The development comes as law enforcement gathers more potential evidence as the search for Guthrie's mother heads into its third week. Authorities had previously said they had not identified a suspect.

On Sunday night, Savannah Guthrie posted an Instagram video in which she issued an appeal to whoever abducted her mother or anyone who knows where she is being kept. "It is never too late to do the right thing," Guthrie said. "And we are here. And we believe in the essential goodness of every human being, that it's never too late."

Nancy Guthrie, 84, was last seen at her Arizona home on Jan. 31 and was reported missing the following day. Authorities say her blood was found on the front porch. Purported ransom notes were sent to news outlets, but two deadlines for paying have passed.

The discovery was revealed days after investigators had released surveillance videos of the masked person outside Guthrie's front door. A porch camera recorded video of a person with a backpack who was wearing a ski mask, long pants, jacket and gloves.

On Thursday, the FBI called the person a suspect. It described him as a man about 5 feet, 9 inches tall with a medium build. The agency said he was carrying a 25-liter "Ozark Trail Hiker Pack" backpack.

Late Friday night, law enforcement agents sealed off a road about two miles (3.2 kilometers) from Guthrie's home as part of their investigation. A series of sheriff's and FBI vehicles, including forensics vehicles, passed through the roadblock.

The investigators also tagged and towed a Range Rover SUV from a nearby restaurant parking lot late Friday. The sheriff's department later said the activity was part of the Guthrie investigation but no arrests were made.

On Tuesday, sheriff deputies detained a person for questioning during a traffic stop south of Tucson. Authorities didn't say what led them to stop the man but confirmed he was released. The same day, deputies and FBI agents conducted a court-authorized search in Rio Rico, about an hour's drive south of the city.

Authorities have expressed concern about Nancy Guthrie's health because she needs vital daily medicine. She is said to have a pacemaker and have dealt with high blood pressure and heart issues, according to sheriff's dispatcher audio on broadcastify.com.

Earlier in the investigation, authorities had said they had collected DNA from Nancy Guthrie's property which doesn't belong to Guthrie or those in close contact with her. Investigators were working to identify who it belongs to.

The FBI also has said approximately 16 gloves were found in various spots near the house, most of which were searchers' gloves that had been discarded.

Michael Jordan's Daytona 500 ring: Tyler Reddick's 1-lap lead delivers NASCAR's biggest win

By JENNA FRYER AP Auto Racing Writer

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Michael Jordan, six-time NBA champion, is now a Daytona 500 winner, too. Tyler Reddick won "The Great American Race" on Sunday with a last-lap pass at Daytona International Speedway that sent Jordan into a frantic celebration. The NBA Hall of Famer bear-hugged Reddick in victory lane and then jointly hoisted the Harley J. Earl trophy with the 23XI Racing driver.

Jordan, who turns 63 on Tuesday, will get a Daytona 500 ring for his birthday and made it known in victory lane he wears a size 13.

"It feels like I won a championship, but until I get my ring, I won't even know," Jordan said.

The moment captured the message team co-owner Denny Hamlin — who finished 31st in Sunday's bid to become the third driver in history to win four Daytona 500s — delivered to 23XI employees in a team meeting ahead of NASCAR's season opener.

"He loves his race team," Hamlin said, adding he reminded the team of the fulfillment they saw in Jordan when Reddick won at Talladega in 2024. "I was like 'You know, you guys understand the responsibilities you have, that you have the power to bring joy to Michael Jordan. You have that power and nobody else can do it.'

"There's nothing else that can bring him the joy that seeing what his team can do and they took it to heart."

Reddick, in a Toyota, led only one lap Sunday: the one to the checkered flag. He was the 25th different driver to lead a lap for a new Daytona 500 record.

"Just incredible how it all played out. Just true Daytona madness," Reddick said. "I've already lost my voice from screaming. Never thought I'd be Daytona 500 champion."

Reddick, a 30-year-old from Corning, California, won for the ninth time in the Cup Series and first time since late in the 2024 season. Winless last year, Reddick was primarily focused on his infant son, who was found to have a tumor in his chest that affected his heart. Reddick opened last year with a runner-up finish in the Daytona 500.

He snapped the 38-race losing streak by finishing one place higher Sunday and winning to start a celebration that included multiple stars of NASCAR. It included Jordan, a global icon, and Hamlin, at 45 the oldest full-time driver in the Cup Series.

Reddick is teammates with Bubba Wallace, who went to victory lane in tears after leading a race-high 40 laps before finishing 10th. Jordan wrapped his arms around Wallace from behind and spoke closely into Wallace's ear in a brief speech of encouragement.

"I don't want my emotions to take away from the monumental day they just accomplished. Happy birthday, MJ. That's a massive birthday present," Wallace said. "I thought this was our week, the best 500 I've ever had, and come up short, sucks.

"Led a lot of laps, lap leader, I believe. It was a good day for us, but damn. Try again next year."

Hamlin, who drives for Joe Gibbs Racing, was involved in the final caution when he and teammate Christopher Bell collided with nine laps remaining. It set up the final push to the finish over the final four laps.

Elliott grabbed the lead at the start of the final lap when Carson Hocevar was spun off the track. Reddick made a huge surge with an assist from teammate Riley Herbst, made contact with Elliott that caused Elliott to crash, then sailed past to give Jordan a victory in NASCAR's biggest event of the year.

"It's stuff you dream of as a kid," said Reddick. "Now, I definitely didn't look into the future and know that I would drive for Michael Jordan. But to be able to have someone like Michael Jordan believe in me enough, someone like Denny Hamlin.

"I'm just trying to do my best to live on the promises that I made to them and vice versa."

Jordan was the face of the December federal antitrust lawsuit that NASCAR settled on the ninth day of trial. The settlement changed the revenue-sharing model in the United States' top motorsports series.

Jordan watched the win from a suite overlooking the superspeedway built by the France family — NAS-

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CAR founders and private owners — that he just beat in federal court. NASCAR chairman Jim France, who was personally a defendant in the suit, went to victory lane to congratulate the winners.

"I can't even believe it. It was so gratifying," Jordan said of the victory. "You never know how these races are going to end. You just try to survive. We hung in there all day. Great strategy by the team, and we gave ourselves a chance at the end. Look, I'm ecstatic."

The victory marked a Daytona sweep for three team owners heavily involved in the trial. Bob Jenkins, who joined 23XI in suing NASCAR, opened the weekend with a victory when Chandler Smith won the Truck Series opener on Friday night for Front Row Motorsports.

Richard Childress, who testified on behalf of 23XI and Front Row and was the subject of disparaging text messages by since-departed NASCAR chairman Steve Phelps, was the winning team owner Saturday when Austin Hill won.

Then it was time for Jordan and Hamlin, the two front-facing litigants, as they got their first Daytona 500 victory together.

"All we do is win," shrugged Hamlin, who called the trio of weekend winners "coincidence."

Former race winners Ricky Stenhouse Jr. and Joey Logano finished second and third as Toyota, Chevrolet and Ford each placed a driver on the podium. Elliott wound up fourth and sat dejected and in disbelief on the outside wall of the track after climbing from his car.

"We ended up kind of getting gifted the lead ... and then at that point in time, you're just on defense. Man, that's a really, really tough place to be, truthfully," Elliott said. "Obviously looking back, you can run it through your mind 1,000 times, do you do something different?"

A storm system sweeps across the Southeast triggering tornado watches and damaging winds

ATLANTA (AP) — A weekend storm system sweeping across the Southeast brought tornado warnings to Mississippi and Louisiana, and then took aim at parts of Georgia and Florida, as people in the Northeast were finally getting a reprieve from weeks of bitterly cold temperatures.

Some of the fiercest weather in the South was reported near Lake Charles, Louisiana, where high winds from a thunderstorm overturned a horse trailer and a Mardi Gras float, damaged an airport jet bridge and flung the metal awning from a house into power lines. The damage was documented by National Weather Service employees who surveyed the area.

Power poles were snapped and toppled near the Louisiana towns of Jena, Cheneyville and Donaldsonville, the weather service reported.

No deaths or serious injuries were reported, but the damage reports came as the storm system continued into parts of south Georgia and the Florida Panhandle, which were under tornado watches on Sunday.

The storms led to some power outages across southern states, but nowhere near the massive number of outages caused by ice storms late last month in northern Mississippi and Nashville, Tennessee. By Sunday evening, a few thousand customers were still without electricity in Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky and Virginia, according to PowerOutage.us, which tracks outages nationwide.

Meanwhile, the Northeast was beginning to thaw after a weeklong stretch of uncommonly cold weather.

Boston was running nearly 7 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 14 Celsius) below average for February last week, and the city was on pace for its coldest winter in more than a decade. Boston remained cold on Sunday, but this week's forecast called for temperatures climbing into the high 30s and low 40s, which is closer to the seasonal average.

On the West Coast, much of California braced for a powerful winter storm that was expected to bring drenching thunderstorms, damaging winds and heavy snow in mountain areas. Jacob Spender, a weather service meteorologist in Sacramento, urged people to take precautions in the coming days.

"So if they are traveling, packing winter safety kits. Anything to be prepared. This is a bigger system, and a major system," Spender said.

Rain that began Sunday in the San Francisco Bay Area was forecast to intensify throughout the day and

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overnight, bringing the risk of flooding. Forecasters said the Sierra Nevada, including ski resorts around Lake Tahoe, could see up to seven feet (two meters) of snow before the storm moves through late Wednesday.

To the south, Los Angeles area residents in some neighborhoods scarred by last year's devastating wildfires were under an evacuation warning through Tuesday because of the potential for mud and debris flows. Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass said she's ordered emergency crews and city departments to prepare to respond to any problems.

Winter Olympics recap: Brignone's double gold after broken leg, Klaebo sets a medal record

By JAMES ELLINGWORTH AP Sports Writer

MILAN (AP) — Federica Brignone and Johannes Hoesflot Klaebo glided into history at the Milan Cortina Olympics on Sunday in very different ways.

Host nation Italy was delighted as Brignone's sensational comeback continued with a second gold medal of these Games. She's still in pain after a badly broken leg last year.

Klaebo has the most gold medals of any Winter Olympian in history with nine after taking gold with Norway's cross-country men's relay team.

Brignone does it again

Winning one gold medal in super-G made Brignone feel like she was living in a movie.

What do great movies get? A sequel.

The Italian skier known as "the Tiger" was unbeatable in the giant slalom for her second gold of the Olympics and fifth career medal, breaking her own record as the oldest women's Alpine skiing Olympic champion.

There were two silver medalists as Sara Hector and Thea Louise Stjernesund finished in exactly the same time and bowed to Brignone to mark her victory.

After breaking multiple bones in March, Brignone needed two surgeries and 42 stitches to put her leg back together. She only returned to skiing in January.

Mikaela Shiffrin of the United States was 11th and has now failed to win a medal in eight straight Olympic races since Pyeongchang in 2018.

Record ninth gold medal for Norwegian skier

Klaebo stands alone as the most successful Winter Olympian in history after winning his ninth career gold medal in cross-country skiing.

Norway's prime minister was watching as Klaebo anchored his team's relay gold Sunday. That broke a tie at eight gold medals with three other Norwegians: cross-country skiers Marit Bjoergen and Bjoern Daehlie and biathlete Ole Einar Bjoerndalen.

Klaebo could get into double figures by the end of the Milan Cortina Games. His next chances for a 10th gold are in the team sprint on Wednesday or the 50-kilometer race on Saturday. Also, he's only 29 years old.

Norway ended Sunday with a Games-leading 26 medals, 12 gold. Host nation Italy reached 22 on Sunday, its best-ever Winter Olympic medal haul. The U.S. and Japan have 17 apiece.

More controversy rocks curling

The typically calm world of curling has been rocked by a controversy over double-touching, and it broadened Sunday as the British men's team had a stone removed for the violation.

Until Sunday, the Canadian men's and women's teams had been in the focus of scrutiny. An expletive-laden outburst by Canada's Marc Kennedy after an accusation of a double touch against Sweden on Friday highlighted the problem. A double touch is when a player touches a stone again after releasing it.

U.S. and Canada win again in men's hockey

In men's hockey, the U.S. and Canada both made sure of quarterfinal spots with convincing wins in the final game of group play. Canada routed France 10-2 and took the top seed on goal differential. Canada will play either Czechia or Denmark in the quarterfinals.

The U.S. beat Germany 5-1 and is set to face the winner of the qualification round game Tuesday be-

tween Sweden and Latvia.

Another win for the moguls king

Mikael Kingsbury of Canada has won almost everything there is to win in moguls skiing. When a new Olympic event was added, he won that, too.

Kingsbury took gold, his fifth career Olympic medal, in the inaugural dual moguls event Sunday, three days after settling for silver in the traditional moguls event, won by Australian Cooper Woods.

Dutch speedskater Jutta Leerdam won another medal but it was silver, not gold, as her teammate Femke Kok won the women's 1,000 meters. Miho Takagi of Japan was third and defending champion Erin Jackson of the U.S. fifth.

Britain won its first snow-sport Olympic gold in history, a victory for Charlotte Bankes and Huw Nightingale in team snowboardcross. There was another British gold in team skeleton hours later.

Biathlon saw a first Olympic gold for Italy as Lisa Vittozzi won the women's pursuit, hours after Sweden's Martin Ponsiluoma took a surprise gold in the men's event.

Norwegian ski jumper Anna Odine Stroem won the first-ever Olympic women's large hill event to finish the Games with two gold medals and a silver.

German figure skaters Minerva Fabienne Hase and Nikita Volodin lead the pairs event after the short program after other gold-medal contenders made mistakes. The free skate is Monday.

US military boards another oil tanker in Indian Ocean after tracking it from the Caribbean

By BEN FINLEY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. military forces boarded another sanctioned tanker in the Indian Ocean after tracking the vessel from the Caribbean Sea in an effort to target illicit oil connected to Venezuela, the Pentagon said Sunday.

Venezuela had faced U.S. sanctions on its oil for several years, relying on a shadow fleet of falsely flagged tankers to smuggle crude into global supply chains. President Donald Trump ordered a quarantine of sanctioned tankers in December to pressure then-President Nicolás Maduro before Maduro was apprehended in January during an American military operation.

Several tankers fled the Venezuelan coast in the wake of the raid, including the ship that was boarded in the Indian Ocean overnight. The Defense Department said in a post on X that U.S. forces boarded the Veronica III, conducting "a right-of-visit, maritime interdiction and boarding."

"The vessel tried to defy President Trump's quarantine — hoping to slip away," the Pentagon said. "We tracked it from the Caribbean to the Indian Ocean, closed the distance, and shut it down."

Video posted by the Pentagon shows U.S. troops boarding the tanker.

The Veronica III is a Panamanian-flagged vessel under U.S. sanctions related to Iran, according to the website of the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control. The Panama Maritime Authority said Sunday in a brief statement that the ship was no longer registered there and had been canceled in December 2024.

The Veronica III left Venezuela on Jan. 3, the same day as Maduro's capture, with nearly 2 million barrels of crude and fuel oil, TankerTrackers.com posted Sunday on X.

"Since 2023, she's been involved with Russian, Iranian and Venezuelan oil," the organization said.

Samir Madani, co-founder of TankerTrackers.com, told The Associated Press in January that his organization used satellite imagery and surface-level photos to document that at least 16 tankers left the Venezuelan coast in contravention of the quarantine.

The Trump administration has been seizing tankers as part of its broader efforts to take control of the Venezuela's oil. The Pentagon did not say in the post whether the Veronica III was formally seized and placed under U.S. control, and later told the AP in an email that it had no additional information to provide beyond that post.

Last week, the U.S. military boarded a different tanker in the Indian Ocean, the Aquila II. The ship was being held while its ultimate fate was decided by the United States, according to a defense official who spoke last week on condition of anonymity to discuss ongoing decision-making.

Teen daughter of a Chicago man detained in an immigration case dies from a rare cancer

CHICAGO (AP) — A Chicago teen who spoke out for her father's release after he was detained last fall by immigration officials in a deportation case has died after battling a rare form of cancer.

Ofelia Giselle Torres Hidalgo, 16, died Friday from stage 4 alveolar rhabdomyosarcoma, the family said in a statement. Funeral arrangements are private.

The teenager had been diagnosed in December 2024 with the aggressive form of soft tissue cancer and had been undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatment.

An immigration judge in Chicago ruled three days before Ofelia's death that her father, Ruben Torres Maldonado, was conditionally entitled to receive "cancellation of removal" due to the hardships his deportation would cause his children who were born in the United States and are U.S. citizens, according to the statement sent by an attorney representing Torres Maldonado.

The ruling provides Torres Maldonado with a path to becoming a lawful permanent resident and eventual U.S. citizenship, the statement said.

Ofelia was present via Zoom at last week's hearing.

"Ofelia was heroic and brave in the face of ICE's detention and threatened deportation of her father," said Kalman Resnick, Torres Maldonado's attorney. "We mourn Ofelia's passing, and we hope that she will serve as a model for us all for how to be courageous and to fight for what's right to our last breaths."

Torres Maldonado, a painter and home renovator, was detained Oct. 18 at a Home Depot store in suburban Chicago as the area was at the center of a major immigration crackdown dubbed "Operation Midway Blitz," which began in early September.

Ofelia was undergoing treatment when she appeared in October in a video posted on a GoFundMe page set up for the family.

"My dad, like many other fathers, is a hard-working person who wakes up early in the morning and goes to work without complaining, thinking about his family," she said in the video. "I find it so unfair that hardworking immigrant families are being targeted just because they were not born here."

In a wheelchair, she attended a hearing for her father in October. The family's attorneys told a judge at that time that she was released from the hospital just a day before her father's arrest so that she could see family and friends. They added that Ofelia had been unable to continue treatment "because of the stress and disruption."

Torres Maldonado's attorneys petitioned for his release as his deportation case went through the system. A judge ordered a bond hearing after ruling in October that his detention was illegal and violated Torres Maldonado's due process rights.

A judge later cited Torres Maldonado's lack of criminal history while allowing his release on a \$2,000 bond.

Lawyers said Torres Maldonado entered the U.S. in 2003. He and his partner, Sandibell Hidalgo, also have a younger son.

The Department of Homeland Security had alleged he had been living illegally in the U.S. for years and has a history of driving offenses, including driving without a valid license, without insurance and speeding.

No clear path to ending the partial government shutdown as lawmakers dig in over DHS oversight

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Lawmakers and the White House offered no signs of compromise Sunday in their battle over oversight of federal immigration officers that has led to a pause in funding for the

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Department of Homeland Security.

A partial government shutdown began Saturday after congressional Democrats and President Donald Trump's team failed to reach a deal on legislation to fund the department through September. Democrats are demanding changes to how immigration operations are conducted after the fatal shootings of U.S. citizens Alex Pretti and Renee Good by federal officers in Minneapolis last month.

Congress is on recess until Feb. 23, and both sides appear dug into their positions. The impasse affects agencies such as the Transportation Security Administration, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Coast Guard, the Secret Service, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

The work at ICE and CBP goes on unabated because Trump's tax and spending cut law from 2025 provided billions more to those agencies that can be tapped for deportation operations. About 90% of DHS employees were to continue working during the shutdown, but do so without pay — and missed paychecks could mean financial hardships. Last year there was a record 43-day government shutdown.

White House border czar Tom Homan said the administration was unwilling to agree to Democrats' demands that federal officers clearly identify themselves, remove masks during operations and display unique ID numbers.

"I don't like the masks, either," Homan said. But, he said, "These men and women have to protect themselves."

Democrats also want to require immigration agents to wear body cameras and mandate judicial warrants for arrests on private property.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said Democrats are only asking for federal agents to abide by rules followed by law enforcement agencies around the country.

"And the question that Americans are asking is, 'Why aren't Republicans going along with these commonsense proposals?'" Schumer said. "They're not crazy. They're not way out. They're what every police department in America does."

Sen. Markwayne Mullin, R-Okla., said he could back Democrats calls to equip immigration officers with body cameras and would support efforts to bolster training. But he balked at their demands that federal officers remove masks and clearly identify themselves, noting some officers taking part in immigration enforcement operations have faced doxing and other harassment.

"What are you going to do, expose their faces so you can intimidate their families?" Mullins said. "What we want is ICE to be able to do their job. And we would love for local law enforcement and for states to cooperate with us."

Republican Sen. Katie Britt of Alabama, a Trump ally who had pushed for a two-week extension of DHS funding while negotiations continued, said it was "shortsighted of Democrats to walk away" from talks.

Trump made enforcement of the nation's immigration laws a centerpiece of his 2024 campaign for the White House and he promised to be aggressive in detaining and deporting people living in the United States without legal permission.

DHS reports it has deported more than 675,000 migrants since Trump's return to office last year and claims some 2.2 million others have "self-deported" as the Republican president has made his immigration crackdown a priority.

"President Trump is not going to back away from the mission, the mission that American people said they wanted him to complete, and that is securing our border and making sure that we actually do interior enforcement," Britt said.

Homan was on CBS' "Face the Nation," Schumer and Mullin appeared on CNN's "State of the Union" and Britt was interviewed on "Fox News Sunday."

Trump's border czar says 'small' security force will remain in Minnesota after enforcement drawdown

By BEN FINLEY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House border czar Tom Homan said Sunday that more than 1,000 immigration agents have left Minnesota's Twin Cities area and hundreds more will depart in the days ahead as part of the Trump administration's drawdown of its immigration enforcement surge.

A "small" security force will stay for a short period to protect remaining immigration agents and will respond "when our agents are out and they get surrounded by agitators and things got out of control," Homan told CBS' "Face the Nation." He did not define "small."

He also said agents will keep investigating fraud allegations as well as the anti-immigration enforcement protest that disrupted a service at a church service.

"We already removed well over 1,000 people, and as of Monday, Tuesday, we'll remove several hundred more," Homan said. "We'll get back to the original footprint."

Thousands of officers were sent to the Minneapolis and St. Paul area for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's "Operation Metro Surge." The Department of Homeland Security said it was its largest immigration enforcement operation ever and proved successful. But the crackdown came under increasing criticism as the situation grew more volatile and two U.S. citizens were killed.

Protests became common. A network of residents worked to help immigrants, warn of approaching agents or film immigration officers' actions. The shooting deaths of Renee Good and Alex Pretti by federal officers drew condemnation and raised questions over officers' conduct, prompting changes to the operation.

Homan announced last week that 700 federal officers would leave Minnesota immediately, but that still left more than 2,000 in the state. He said Thursday that a "significant drawdown" was already underway and would continue through this week.

Homan said enforcement would not stop in the Twin Cities and that mass deportations will continue across the country. Officers leaving Minnesota will report back to their stations or be assigned elsewhere.

When asked if future deployments could match the scale of the Twin Cities operation, Homan said "it depends on the situation."

Gaza's Nasser Hospital condemns MSF decision to suspend most services

By SAMY MAGDY and MELANIE LIDMAN Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — One of Gaza's last functioning large hospitals condemned the decision by Doctors Without Borders to pull out of operations over concerns about armed men, claiming on Sunday that the facility had installed civilian police for security.

The rare public friction between two well-known health care providers in Gaza came as the Palestinian death toll since the current ceasefire surpassed 600. At least 11 Palestinians were killed by Israeli fire in the last 24 hours, hospitals said.

Doctors Without Borders, also known by its acronym MSF, said in a statement Saturday that 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.

Nasser Hospital said Sunday the increase in armed men was due to a civilian police presence aimed at protecting patients and staff and said MSF's "allegations are factually incorrect, irresponsible and pose a serious risk to a protected civilian medical facility."

One of Gaza's few functioning hospitals

Hundreds of patients and war-wounded have been treated daily at Nasser Hospital in the southern city of Khan Younis, and the facility was a hub for Palestinian prisoners released by Israel in exchange for Israeli hostages as part of the current ceasefire deal.

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MSF said its teams had 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." The suspension occurred in January but was only recently announced.

Nasser Hospital staff say that in recent months it has been repeatedly attacked by masked, armed men and militias, which is why the presence of an armed civilian police force is crucial.

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

Israel's military said it had intelligence that Nasser Hospital is being used as a headquarters and military post for senior Hamas officials, without providing evidence. It called MSF's move "an important decision, but one that comes too late."

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, including Nasser Hospital.

11 Palestinians killed in strikes across Gaza

At least 11 Palestinians were killed Sunday by Israeli fire in Gaza, hospital authorities said.

The dead include five men in their 20s who were killed in the eastern part of Khan Younis, according to Nasser Hospital, which received the bodies. The strike hit a group of people close to the Yellow Line that separates Israeli-controlled areas from the rest of Gaza, it said.

Rami Shaqra said his son, al-Baraa, was among the militants securing the area from potential attacks by Israeli forces or Israeli-backed armed groups when they were hit. He said they were killed by an airstrike.

"They were in the area they say is safe," Shaqra said.

Associated Press footage from the morgue showed at least two of the men had headbands denoting membership in the Qassam Brigades, the militant arm of Hamas.

In northern Gaza, a drone strike hit a group of people in the Falluja area of Jabaliya refugee camp, killing five people, according to Shifa Hospital. A separate drone strike killed a man in Gaza City, according to the hospital.

Israel's military said it had carried out multiple strikes in response to several ceasefire violations near the Yellow Line, including militants attempting to hide in debris and others who attempted to cross the line while armed.

The U.S.-brokered ceasefire deal that took effect Oct. 10 attempted to halt more than two years of war between Israel and Hamas. While the heaviest fighting has subsided, the ceasefire has seen almost daily Israeli fire.

Israeli forces have carried out repeated airstrikes and frequently fire on Palestinians near military-held zones, killing 602 Palestinians, according to Gaza health officials. The ministry, which is 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.

Two Israeli soldiers attacked by ultra-Orthodox Jews

In Israel, two female Israeli soldiers were rescued from riots in the ultra-Orthodox city of Bnei Brak. Footage shows two soldiers being hurried away by police from thousands of ultra-Orthodox men running after them and yelling.

Many in Israel's ultra-Orthodox community are furious over laws that may force them to serve in the Israeli military, holding frequent protests.

Israeli police said the soldiers were performing a welfare visit but had not coordinated it with police. At least 22 people were arrested as protesters set police motorcycles on fire, attacked officers, threw trash

and overturned a police car, police said.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu strongly condemned the attack on the soldiers but blamed an "extremist minority" for the violence.

Roughly 1.3 million ultra-Orthodox Jews make up about 13% of Israel's population and oppose enlistment because they believe studying full time in religious seminaries is their most important duty. The broad exemptions from mandatory military service have reopened a deep divide in the country and infuriated much of the general public, especially during the war in Gaza.

Ukrainian drone strike sparks fires at Russian Black Sea port ahead of US-brokered peace talks

By The Associated Press undefined

A Ukrainian drone strike ignited fires at one of Russia's Black Sea ports, officials said Sunday, ahead of fresh talks aimed at ending the nearly 4-year-old war.

Two people were wounded in the attack on the port of Taman in the Krasnodar region, which damaged an oil storage tank, warehouse and terminals, according to regional Gov. Veniamin Kondratyev.

Meanwhile, falling debris from Russian drones damaged civilian and transport infrastructure in Ukraine's Odesa region, officials said, causing disruption to the power and water supply.

Ukraine's long-range drone strikes on Russian energy sites aim to deprive Moscow of the oil export revenue it needs to pursue its full-scale invasion. Russia wants to cripple the Ukrainian power grid, seeking to deny civilians access to heat, light and running water in what Kyiv officials say is an attempt to "weaponize winter."

The attacks came ahead of another round of U.S.-brokered talks between envoys from Russia and Ukraine on Tuesday and Wednesday in Geneva, just before the fourth anniversary of the all-out Russian invasion of its neighbor on Feb. 24.

Speaking at the Munich Security Conference in Germany on Saturday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy suggested there were still questions remaining over future security guarantees for his country. Zelenskyy also 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 for peace.

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

Zelenskyy's concerns were echoed by Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, a ranking member of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

"Unless we have real security guarantees on whatever peace agreement is ultimately determined, we are going to be here again, because one of the things we know is that Russia has geared up not just for Ukraine, but to go beyond Ukraine," she told reporters in Munich on Sunday.

European Union foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said Russia was hoping to win diplomatically what it had failed to achieve on the battlefield, and was banking on the U.S. to deliver concessions at the negotiating table. But Kallas told the Munich conference Sunday that key Russian demands — including the lifting of sanctions and unfreezing of assets — were decisions for Europe.

"If we want a sustainable peace then we need concessions also from the Russian side," she said.

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.

Trump says Board of Peace will unveil \$5 billion in Gaza reconstruction pledges at inaugural meeting

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump said Sunday that members of his newly created Board of Peace have pledged \$5 billion toward rebuilding war-ravaged Gaza and will commit thousands of personnel to international stabilization and police forces for the territory.

The pledges will be formally announced when board members gather in Washington on Thursday for their first meeting, he said.

“The Board of Peace will prove to be the most consequential International Body in History, and it is my honor to serve as its Chairman,” Trump said in a social media posting announcing the pledges.

He did not detail which member nations were making the pledges for reconstruction or would contribute personnel to the stabilization force. But Indonesia’s military said Sunday that up to 8,000 of its troops are expected to be ready by the end of June for a potential deployment to Gaza as part of a humanitarian and peace mission. It’s the first firm commitment that the Republican president has received.

Rebuilding the Palestinian territory will be a daunting endeavor. The United Nations, World Bank and European Union estimate that reconstruction of the territory will cost \$70 billion. Few places in the Gaza Strip were left unscathed by more than two years of Israeli bombardment.

The ceasefire deal calls for an armed international stabilization force to keep security and ensure the disarming of the militant Hamas group, a key demand of Israel. Thus far, few countries have expressed interest in taking part in the proposed force.

The Oct. 10 U.S.-brokered ceasefire deal attempted to halt a more than 2-year war between Israel and Hamas. While the heaviest fighting has subsided, Israeli forces have carried out repeated airstrikes and frequently fire on Palestinians near military-held zones.

It is not clear how many of the more than 20 members of the Board of Peace will attend the first meeting. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who held White House talks with Trump last week, is not expected to be there.

Trump’s new board was first seen as a mechanism focused on ending the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza. But it has taken shape with his ambition for a far broader mandate of resolving global crises and appears to be the latest U.S. effort to sidestep the United Nations as Trump aims to reset the post-World War II international order.

Many of America’s top allies in Europe and elsewhere have declined to join what they suspect may be an attempt to rival the Security Council.

Trump also confirmed that Thursday’s meeting will take place at the U.S. Institute of Peace, which the State Department announced in December it was remaining the Donald J. Trump U.S. Institute of Peace.

The building is the subject of litigation brought by former employees and executives of the nonprofit think tank after the Republican administration seized the facility last year and fired almost all the institute’s staff.

Iran’s top diplomat to attend ‘indirect’ talks with US in Geneva, state-run IRNA news agency says

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran’s top diplomat was traveling Sunday from Tehran to Geneva, where the second round of nuclear negotiations with the U.S. will take place, Iranian state media reported.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and his delegation left for the Swiss city after the first round of indirect talks took place in Oman last week. Oman will mediate the talks in Geneva, the IRNA state-run news agency reported on its Telegram channel.

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

U.S. President Donald 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 has also threatened

Iran over its deadly crackdown on recent nationwide protests.

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

The Trump administration has maintained that Iran can have no uranium enrichment under any detail, which Tehran says it will not agree to.

Iran continues to insist that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, but officials however have increasingly threatened to pursue a nuclear weapon. Before the war in June, Iran has been enriching uranium up to 60% purity, just a short technical step away from weapons-grade levels.

Araghchi is also expected to meet with his Swiss and Omani counterparts, as well as the director general of the U.N.'s atomic watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Earlier on Sunday, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Washington remains interested in a diplomatic solution to ending its differences with Tehran, and that President Trump's envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner were currently traveling for the new round of talks.

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."

Rubio said recent military deployments in the Middle East were a protective measure aimed at shoring up the defenses of U.S. facilities and interests. Iran has threatened to attack U.S. bases in the region if Washington decides to strike. Tehran in June attacked the Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, though no American or Qatari personnel were harmed.

"No one's been able to do a successful deal with Iran, but we're gonna try," said Rubio at a news conference after meeting with Slovakian Prime Minister Robert Fico in Bratislava. "We are focused on negotiations." Trump in recent weeks has suggested that his priority is for Iran to scale back its nuclear program, while Iran has said it wants talks to solely focus on the nuclear program. But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who earlier this week met with Trump in Washington, has been pressing for a deal that would neutralize Iran's ballistic missile program and end its funding for proxy groups such as Hamas in the Gaza Strip and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The Israeli prime minister said in a speech Sunday that any deal between the U.S. and Iran must make sure that "all enriched material has to leave Iran."

It remains unclear how much influence Netanyahu will have over Trump's policy on Iran. Trump initially threatened to take military action over Iran's bloody crackdown on nationwide protests last month, but then shifted to a pressure campaign in recent weeks to try to get Tehran to make a deal over its nuclear program. ___ Associated Press writers Kareem Chehayeb in Beirut and Areej Hazboun in Jerusalem contributed to this report.

As some people push to make profound autism its own diagnosis, this family is raising twins with it

By LAURA UNGAR AP Medical Writer

AYER, Mass. (AP) — Connor Murphy walked in circles around his dad, then flopped down on the kitchen floor, got up and walked in circles again.

His dad turned the 9-year-old's repetitive behavior into a chance to connect. "Want me to pick you up?" Matthew Murphy asked, lifting, tickling and spinning with his son.

Such spontaneous moments are common in the Murphy household, which revolves around the needs of Connor and his twin brother Ronan, who both have profound autism.

"They're going to need 24-7 care for the rest of their lives," their father said. "Life will be a challenge for them, and we have to prepare them as best we can."

Autism rates have been rising for decades, and two of the main reasons for the increase have, in a strange twist, taken some of the focus off helping people with round-the-clock needs. The diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, adopted in 2013, is now very broad, including many people with low support needs. Also, better awareness of the condition has helped many more children get diagnosed than in the

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past — and most of those cases are relatively mild.

At the same time, the Trump Administration is promoting unproven and debunked claims about what causes autism, which experts say muddles efforts to understand the condition and fuels misinformation that threatens public health, even as officials funnel more money into research.

There's now a growing push to separate profound autism — in which people need constant care for life, have a certain level of intellectual disability and are nonspeaking or minimally verbal — into its own diagnosis. The hope is that it would help ensure that people like Connor and Ronan get the support and services they need and that research includes them.

In the United States, an estimated 1 in 31 children have autism spectrum disorder. Researchers estimate around a quarter have "profound autism," a term introduced in 2021 by a group of experts, the Lancet Commission, to describe people most disabled by the developmental condition.

But some in the autism community worry that creating a separate diagnosis would reduce attention on the broader spectrum and the individual needs of everyone on it.

Andy Shih, chief science officer for Autism Speaks, said no matter where people fall on the debate, "there's absolutely no doubt that we need to elevate awareness about the needs of this group."

With profound autism, safety is a challenge

The Murphys knew early on that their children had a greater-than-average chance of having neurodevelopmental disabilities. Twin births are associated with a higher risk. Some studies suggest the type of in vitro fertilization they used is too.

The boys arrived nearly a month early. At first, the couple wasn't too concerned that the babies missed developmental milestones; twins born prematurely tend to run a bit behind. But when the boys weren't walking at around 1 ½ years old, the Murphys sought an evaluation and began speech and occupational therapy. At age 4, the boys were officially diagnosed with level 3 autism, representing the highest level of need, like profound autism.

Now, at 9, they often speak in one- to three-word sentences. They need reminders and intense guidance with daily activities like showering and brushing their teeth. They perform academically at the level of 3½-year-olds and like Sesame Street and preschool toys. And they require the same vigilance as preschoolers because they're vulnerable to dangers like darting into busy streets.

Last summer, Connor briefly left the house in his pajamas, without shoes, and walked half a mile.

"Our number one concern is their safety," said their mom, Andrea Murphy, 47.

The Murphys have taken creative steps to protect the twins, including putting GPS locators in their shoes, sensors with alarms on all the windows and doors to the outside and locks requiring thumbprints on doors to the basement and a food cabinet. They worked to get the boys' schoolyard fenced in and raised money for their local police to have Project Lifesaver, a search-and-rescue program.

Still, they are hypervigilant whenever their children are with them and awake. "If that's at three in the morning, it's at three in the morning," their dad said.

Managing struggles, delighting in joys

But safety concerns don't stop them from taking the boys out into the community.

One snowy Saturday, the family headed to Target. On the ride over, Ronan rocked back and forth in his seat. Inside the store, Andrea Murphy put her hand on Connor's back to make him feel secure as he walked behind the shopping cart.

Meanwhile, her husband made his way down a toy aisle with Ronan, who spotted Bluey figurines. The toys went in the cart, but then back on the shelf because the family already has the same ones at home. This upset Ronan, and he collapsed on the floor. As other shoppers walked by, his dad quietly calmed him, holding his hands to help him up.

Despite such challenges, the Murphys view these outings as beneficial -- for them, the boys and the community that sees them.

"We can't live our lives in a bubble," said Matthew Murphy, 48. "We want them to experience life."

Wherever they are, the Murphys focus on the joy amid the struggles. They nurture Ronan's artistic,

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outdoorsy, boisterous personality and Connor's quiet and reserved nature. And they savor the affection both boys shower on them -- like when Connor nuzzled into his mom as they sang "You Are My Sunshine" together.

"They bring a light to you no matter how bad of a day you're having," their dad said. "It's all unconditional love."

Profound autism diagnosis debated

In the past, the boys may have been diagnosed with autistic disorder -- one of five subtypes, along with Asperger's, of a diagnosis called pervasive developmental disorders. But in 2013, the American Psychiatric Association removed that diagnosis and created autism spectrum disorder.

Judith Ursitti, president of the Profound Autism Alliance, is among those who now want profound autism separated out. People in this category lack appropriate treatments, supports and enough providers trained to handle their level of care, she said. And the vast majority of clinical research doesn't include them.

"If you don't have research, you won't have treatments. You won't have achievable services and supports," said Ursitti, whose adult son has profound autism. "There are people across the spectrum who have high support needs that are intermittent. The difference with our population is they're constant."

But Dena Gassner of Drexel University's autism institute -- an autistic senior research scientist and mother of an autistic adult with moderate support needs -- said she struggles with the idea of assigning someone the label of profound autism. She said it could be stigmatizing.

She said there's nothing wrong with being autistic; the problem lies in "the massive lack of supports and services" in our society. "We need to come together in a unified voice to talk about services for the entirety of the spectrum."

As children with profound autism grow, so do concerns about their future

Matthew Murphy doesn't see the harm in a new label to identify a separate level of need.

In the meantime, he and his wife do all they can to help their children thrive.

That includes arranging for professionals from The Autism Community Therapists in Acton to come to the house for three hours of applied behavior analysis every weekday after school.

One evening, Ronan sat with Julia Orareo at the kitchen table, practicing his language skills by giving her instructions on how to draw an elephant.

"Draw a body," he said, and she did.

"How about an eye?" she prompted.

He thought for a second, then replied: "Draw an eye."

"Good sentence!" she said.

Minutes later, he implored, "Do a hug?" And they did.

Connor, who was practicing language and matching skills in the living room, soon joined his brother at the kitchen table. They began a long process of trying new foods designed to expand their limited diets -- cherry tomatoes for Connor and broccoli for Ronan.

"Seeing that on the plate is kind of step one. Step two is actually touching it. Step three would be kind of either smelling it or putting it to their lips," Andrea Murphy said, explaining that there are even more steps after that.

The long-term goal of such lessons is to help the boys become more independent.

A deadline of sorts looms: age 22, when public educational support for children ends in Massachusetts. The Murphys both work full-time -- Matthew at a nonprofit that helps injured veterans and Andrea in health care -- but they don't know how they can possibly earn enough to provide for their children throughout adulthood.

And they fear what will happen when they're gone.

"You never know when God is gonna take you off this green earth," Matthew Murphy said. "The thing that keeps me awake at night is what their future looks like ... That's the great unknown."

Powered by women, 'Wuthering Heights' digs up \$34.8 million at the box office for a No. 1 debut

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Emerald Fennell's bold reimaging of "Wuthering Heights" brought crowds of women to movie theaters this weekend. The Warner Bros. release topped the box office charts and nabbed the title for the year's biggest opening with \$34.8 million in ticket sales in its first three days in North American theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday. According to PostTrak polling, an estimated 76% of those ticket buyers were women. By the end of Monday's Presidents Day holiday, the total could rise to \$40 million from its 3,682 locations.

The romantic drama starring Margot Robbie and Jacob Elordi as the star-crossed Catherine and Heathcliff, won out over the weekend's other newcomers, including the animated "GOAT" and the heist thriller "Crime 101." Its biggest day was Saturday's Valentine's Day holiday, where it earned \$14 million. "Wuthering Heights" is also performing even better internationally, where it's expecting to rake in an additional \$42 million from 76 territories.

The Warner Bros./MRC production cost a reported \$80 million to produce, not accounting for the millions spent on marketing and promotion. If the four-day totals match the estimates, that makes for a strong \$82 million global debut. And the film still has several big openings on the horizon, in Japan and Vietnam on Feb. 27, and in China on March 13.

The success comes while the future of Warner Bros. hangs in the balance, as Paramount continues to sweeten its hostile takeover bid in hopes of winning out over Netflix. "Wuthering Heights" is the studio's ninth No. 1 opening in a row.

Fennell's version of "Wuthering Heights," which takes many liberties with Emily Brontë's novel, largely divided critics. It's currently sitting at a mixed 63% on Rotten Tomatoes. While that didn't dissuade audiences from buying tickets, only 51% of the opening weekend audience said that they would "definitely recommend" the film to friends. Moviegoers also gave it a less-than-stellar B CinemaScore.

The mid-February weekend has hosted big superhero movies on occasion, including "Black Panther" and "Deadpool," but a more relevant comparison is "Fifty Shades of Grey" and its two sequels. The first movie opened to over \$85 million, the third to \$38.6 million.

"This was a solid if not record-breaking Presidents Day/Valentines weekend," said Paul Dergarabedian, who heads marketplace trends for Comscore. "But that was to be expected without an MCU (Marvel Cinematic Universe) film."

"GOAT," an animated Sony release produced by basketball star Stephen Curry, landed in second place with an estimated \$26 million from 3,863 locations. It's projected to bring in another \$6 million on Monday, which would bring its four day total to \$32 million — the biggest animated debut since "Elemental" in 2023. It also pulled in \$15.6 million internationally, bringing its global total to \$47.6 million.

The family-friendly film was the only new opener of the weekend to get an A CinemaScore. Sony Pictures Animation was also behind "KPop Demon Hunters."

In third place, "Crime 101" made an estimated \$15.1 million in its first three days. Amazon MGM Studios opened the Chris Hemsworth and Mark Ruffalo led Los Angeles-set thriller in 3,161 theaters. It's expected to pull in about \$17.8 million by the end of Monday, but the movie has a long way to go to even hit its production budget, which reportedly exceeded \$90 million. Audiences, who were 56% men, also gave "Crime 101" a B CinemaScore.

"Send Help" and "Solo Mio" rounded out the top five with \$9 million and \$6.4 million, respectively. Further down the charts, at No. 7, was Briarcliff Entertainment's sci-fi comedy "Good Luck, Have Fun, Don't Die," starring Sam Rockwell and Haley Lu Richardson. It made an estimated \$3.6 million from 1,610 locations.

The Walt Disney Studios also celebrated a milestone this weekend, becoming the first studio to cross \$1 billion at the global box office in 2026, driven almost entirely by "Avatar: Fire and Ash," but also helped by the continued success of "Zootopia 2," which remains in the top 10 after twelve weekends in theaters.

The weekend is down significantly from the same weekend last year, when "Captain America: Brave

New World" opened, but the pace is starting to pick up and theaters have "Scream 7" and "Project Hail Mary" on the horizon.

"It's been a rather slow first quarter," Dergarabedian said. "But this could ignite a spark at the box office."

Top 10 movies by domestic box office

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

1. "Wuthering Heights," \$34.8 million.
2. "GOAT," \$26 million.
3. "Crime 101," \$15.1 million.
4. "Send Help," \$9 million.
5. "Solo Mio," \$6.4 million.
6. "Zootopia 2," \$3.8 million.
7. "Good Luck, Have Fun, Don't Die," \$3.6 million.
8. "Avatar: Fire and Ash," \$3.3 million.
9. "Iron Lung," \$3.1 million.
10. "Dracula," \$3 million.

What to know about the investigation into Nancy Guthrie's disappearance and the search for clues

By The Associated Press undefined

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — Law enforcement agents have been gathering more potential evidence as the search for "Today" show host Savannah Guthrie's mother heads into its third week.

Nancy Guthrie, 84, was last seen at her Arizona home on Jan. 31 and was reported missing the following day. Authorities say her blood was found on the front porch. Purported ransom notes were sent to news outlets, but two deadlines for paying have passed.

Authorities have expressed concern about Nancy Guthrie's health because she needs vital daily medicine. She is said to have a pacemaker and have dealt with high blood pressure and heart issues, according to sheriff's dispatcher audio on broadcastify.com.

Here's what to know about her disappearance and the intense search to find her:

Video of masked man

The Federal Bureau of Investigation released surveillance videos of a masked person wearing a handgun holster outside Guthrie's front door in Tucson the night she vanished. A porch camera recorded video of a person with a backpack who was wearing a ski mask, long pants, jacket and gloves.

On Thursday, the FBI called the person a suspect. It described him as a man about 5 feet, 9 inches tall with a medium build. The agency said he was carrying a 25-liter "Ozark Trail Hiker Pack" backpack.

Investigators initially said there was no surveillance video available since Guthrie didn't have an active subscription to the doorbell camera company. But digital forensics experts kept working to find images in back-end software that might have been lost, corrupted or inaccessible.

Studying DNA

Investigators collected DNA from Guthrie's property which doesn't belong to Guthrie or those in close contact with her, the Pima County Sheriff's Department said. Investigators are working to identify who it belongs to.

Evidence requiring forensic analysis is being sent to the same out-of-state lab that has been used since the beginning of the case, the department said.

Investigators found several gloves, the nearest about 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) from Guthrie's home, and submitted them for lab analysis, the sheriff's department said. It did not specify what type of gloves.

The sheriff stressed his department is working closely with the FBI.

Sorting through tips

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The Pima County sheriff and the FBI announced phone numbers and a website to offer tips. Several hundred detectives and agents have been assigned to the case, the sheriff's department said.

The FBI said it has collected more than 13,000 tips since Feb. 1, the day Guthrie was reported missing. The sheriff's department, meanwhile, said it has taken at least 18,000 calls.

The sheriff's department has not said whether any tips have advanced the investigation.

Intensive searches

Late Friday night, law enforcement sealed off a road about 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) from Guthrie's home as part of their investigation. A parade of sheriff's and FBI vehicles, including forensics vehicles, passed through the roadblock.

The investigators also tagged and towed a Range Rover SUV from a nearby Culver's restaurant parking lot late Friday.

The sheriff's department said Saturday the activity was part of the Guthrie investigation but no arrests were made.

On Tuesday, sheriff deputies detained a person for questioning during a traffic stop south of Tucson. Authorities didn't say what led them to stop the man but confirmed he was released.

The same day, deputies and FBI agents conducted a court-authorized search in Rio Rico, about an hour's drive south of the city.

Family pleas

Savannah Guthrie, her sister and her brother have shared on social media multiple video messages to their mother's purported captor.

The family's Instagram videos have shifted in tone from impassioned pleas to whoever may have their mom, saying they want to talk and are even willing to pay a ransom, to bleaker and more desperate requests for the public's help.

The latest video on Thursday was simply a home video of their mother and a promise to "never give up on her."

A quiet neighborhood

Nancy Guthrie lived alone in the upscale Catalina Foothills neighborhood, where houses are spaced far apart and set back from the street by long driveways, gates and dense desert vegetation.

Savannah Guthrie grew up in Tucson, graduated from the University of Arizona and once worked at a television station in the city, where her parents settled in the 1970s. She joined "Today" in 2011.

In a video, she described her mother as a "loving woman of goodness and light."

Europeans push back at US over claim they face 'civilizational erasure'

By EMMA BURROWS and GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

MUNICH (AP) — A top European Union official on Sunday rejected the notion that Europe faces "civilizational erasure," pushing back at criticism of the continent by the Trump administration.

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas addressed the Munich Security Conference a day after U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio offered a somewhat reassuring message to European allies. He struck a less aggressive tone than Vice President JD Vance did in lecturing them at the same gathering last year but maintained a firm tone on Washington's intent to reshape the trans-Atlantic alliance and push its policy priorities.

Kallas alluded to criticism in the U.S. national security strategy released in December, which asserted that economic stagnation in Europe "is eclipsed by the real and more stark prospect of civilizational erasure." It suggested that Europe is being enfeebled by its immigration policies, declining birth rates, "censorship of free speech and suppression of political opposition" and a "loss of national identities and self-confidence."

"Contrary to what some may say, woke, decadent Europe is not facing civilizational erasure," Kallas told the conference. "In fact, people still want to join our club and not just fellow Europeans," she added, saying she was told when visiting Canada last year that many people there have an interest in joining the EU.

Kallas rejected what she called "European-bashing."

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"We are, you know, pushing humanity forward, trying to defend human rights and all this, which is actually bringing also prosperity for people. So that's why it's very hard for me to believe these accusations."

In his conference speech, Rubio said that an end to 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 made clear that the Trump administration is sticking to its guns on issues such as migration, trade and climate. And European officials who addressed the gathering made clear that they in turn will stand by their values, including their approach to free speech, climate change and free trade.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said Saturday that Europe must defend "the vibrant, free and diverse societies that we represent, showing that people who look different to each other can live peacefully together, that this isn't against the tenor of our times."

"Rather, it is what makes us strong," he said.

Kallas said Rubio's speech sent an important message that America and Europe are and will remain intertwined.

"It is also clear that we don't see eye to eye on all the issues and this will remain the case as well, but I think we can work from there," she said.

Today in History: February 16, Castro sworn in as Cuban leader

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Monday, Feb. 16, the 47th day of 2026. There are 318 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Feb. 16, 1959, Fidel Castro was sworn in as premier of Cuba, six weeks after dictator Fulgencio Batista was overthrown and fled the country into exile. Castro's rise to power marked the start of Cuba's transformation into a communist nation.

Also on this date:

In 1862, the Civil War Battle of Fort Donelson in Tennessee ended with the surrender of some 12,000 Confederate soldiers; Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's victory earned him the moniker "Unconditional Surrender Grant."

In 1923, the burial chamber of King Tutankhamen's recently unearthed tomb was unsealed in Egypt by English archaeologist Howard Carter.

In 1960, the nuclear submarine USS Triton departed New London, Connecticut, on the first submerged circumnavigation of the globe by a vessel.

In 1996, 11 people were killed in a fiery collision between an Amtrak passenger train and a Maryland commuter train in Silver Spring, Maryland.

In 2018, special counsel Robert Mueller indicted 13 Russians and three Russian companies on charges of staging an elaborate plot to disrupt the 2016 U.S. presidential election via a social media trolling campaign, aimed in part at helping Donald Trump win the presidency.

In 2024, Russia's prison agency announced that Alexei Navalny, activist and Russian opposition leader, had died in the Arctic penal colony where he was serving a 19-year sentence on charges of extremism; Navalny's death brought outrage and criticism from world leaders toward Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Today's birthdays: Businessman Carl Icahn is 90. Author Eckhart Tolle is 78. Actor William Katt is 75. Actor LeVar Burton is 69. Actor-rapper Ice-T is 68. Tennis Hall of Famer John McEnroe is 67. Football Hall of Famer Jerome Bettis is 54. Olympic track and field gold medalist Cathy Freeman is 53. Actor Mahershala Ali is 52. Rapper Lupe Fiasco is 44. Democratic Sen. John Ossoff of Georgia is 39. Actor Elizabeth Olsen is 37. Singer-actor The Weeknd is 36. Actor Chloe East is 25.