

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 1 of 84

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- We the People Column: Trump's Intemperate Criticisms Threaten Judicial Independence](#)
- [3- Baby-sitter Ad](#)
- [4- Graduation Cards Ad](#)
- [5- State Wrestling Results](#)
- [6- GDI Fitness Center Ad](#)
- [7- Sunday Extras](#)
- [25- Sen. Thune's Weekly Column](#)
- [26- Rev. Snyder's Column](#)
- [28- EarthTalk: COP30 Climate Talks](#)
- [29- South Dakota Average Gas Prices](#)
- [30- Drought Monitor](#)
- [31- SD SearchLight: US, Israel strike Iran; Democrats call for immediate vote on Trump war powers](#)
- [34- Weather Pages](#)
- [38- Daily Devotional](#)
- [39- Subscription Form](#)
- [40- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [41- News from the Associated Press](#)

Sunday, March 1

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m. (7th/8th Milestones); Sunday School, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 6 p.m.

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

United Methodist: Worship with communion at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 10:30 a.m.

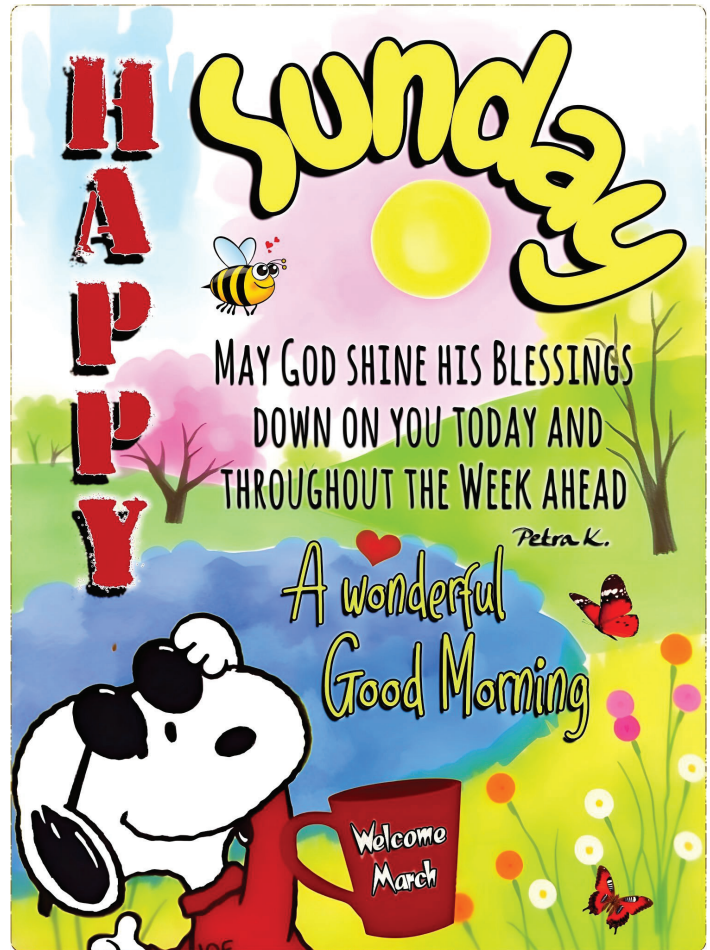
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

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

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

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

4th grade BB Practice, 2 p.m., Gym
6th grade BB Practice, 6 pm., Arena
Dance Team, 5 p.m., Arena



Monday, March 2

Senior Menu: Sloopy joes, roasted potatoes, winter blend, fruit.

School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.

School Lunch: Pasta bake, corn.

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

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

HS Baseball Practice, 6 p.m., HS Gym

Math and Reading Family Game Night, 5 p.m., elementary school.

2nd Grade BB vs. Webster, 6 p.m., Arena

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

We the People

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



By David Adler

Trump's Intemperate Criticisms Threaten Judicial Independence

Last week, in *International Resources v. Trump*, the Supreme Court, in a 6-3 majority opinion written by Chief Justice John Roberts, declared that President Trump had exceeded his statutory authority by using an emergency statute, the "International Economic Emergency Powers Act," to impose sweeping tariffs without congressional approval. In the days since the decision, Trump has responded with an ongoing, vicious stream of personal attacks against the justices who ruled against him, in a manner that defies historical practice, norms of discourse and expectations of decorum. Trump's assault on the Court presents grave threats to judicial independence, the separation of powers, the rule of law and safety of the justices.

The Court's ruling should not have been a surprise. Legal scholars had identified the principal vice of Trump's tariffs, and Chief Justice Roberts nailed it in his opinion. The statute granted to the president authority to "regulate" imports, but the word regulate does not include the power to tax. A tariff is "simply a tax on imported goods," and the taxing power is granted solely and exclusively to Congress. In a civic lesson, the Chief Justice reminded the nation that Congress possesses the unique, constitutional power to access "the pockets of the people."

President Trump's immediate reaction to the decision was filled with personal invectives. Justices in the majority were "unpatriotic and disloyal to our Constitution," a "disgrace to our nation," and "slimeballs," "fools and lapdogs" in service of foreign interests. "He reserved special venom for his two nominees, Justices Amy Coney Barrett and Neil Gorsuch, describing them as an "embarrassment to their families."

Trump's unrelenting tantrums defy any definition of presidential decorum. By comparison, his stinging defeat could not match the pain that Vice President Al Gore felt when the Court's decision in *Bush v. Gore* (2000) to stop the vote recount in Florida may well have cost him the election. Gore did not resort to personal attacks on the 5-4 majority but publicly declared that it was necessary to respect the Court's ruling, even though he disagreed with it.

Across a vista of two hundred years, American presidents have seen fit, and rightly so, to criticize Supreme Court opinions when they differ with the rulings, legal reasoning, constitutional interpretation and statutory construction employed by the Court. The High Bench, after all, has delivered rulings that seem utterly indefensible. As Justice Robert H. Jackson famously wrote in 1953: "We are not final because we are infallible, but we are infallible only because we are final." The ruling was "ridiculous and dumb,"

Presidential criticisms of the Court's opinions have come in various shapes and sizes. Some, for example, reflect "lawyerly" arguments, nuanced reasoning and doctrinal differences. Thomas Jefferson invoked jurisdictional grounds for criticizing Chief Justice John Marshall's opinion in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803). In his first inaugural address, Abraham Lincoln took aim at the Court's infamous decision in *Dred Scott*, while Chief Justice Roger, sitting before him, "trembled with rage." Lincoln said, "The candid citizen must confess, that if the policy of the government, upon vital questions, affecting the whole people, is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, the instant they are made, in ordinary litigation between parties, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having practically resigned their government

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 3 of 84

into the hands of that eminent tribunal." Barack Obama offered a candid and correct criticism of the Court for its ruling in 2010 in Citizens United. "It will open the floodgates for special interests, including foreign corporations, to spend without limit in our elections."

Some criticisms are apocryphal. Andrew Jackson reportedly declared, in reaction to the Court's ruling in Worcester v. Georgia, "Well, John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it!" Others contain a measure of humor and creativity. Franklin D. Roosevelt, frustrated by the Court's anti-New Deal rulings, campaigned against it in 1936 for its "horse and buggy jurisprudence." A deeply disappointed Theodore Roosevelt said of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, "I could carve out of a banana a judge with more backbone than Holmes."

As with most things in life, there are right ways and wrong ways to proceed. Historically, presidents have criticized judicial opinions, usually in tempered terms, cognizant of the importance of judicial independence. Trump's harsh, bullying, tactics effectively place a target on the backs of the justices and will require increased security for them and their families. Those tactics betray the rule of law.

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!*

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 4 of 84



GRADUATION CARDS DESIGNED & PRINTED WHILE YOU WAIT!

Have your graduation cards created at the
**Groton
Independent Office**

No ordering online.
No waiting weeks.
No shipping delays.

- ✓ Sit down.
- ✓ Help design it.
- ✓ Approve it on the spot.
- ✓ And walk out with your cards in your hands!

★ ONLY \$50 FOR 100 CARDS ★



Text Paul at 605-397-7460
to set up your appointment today!

Celebrate your senior. Shop local. Get it done the easy way.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 5 of 84

Englund Claims Heavyweight Title; Krueger Finishes Runner-Up at State

The Groton Area Tigers were highlighted by a state championship performance from Gavin Englund and a runner-up finish from Liza Krueger in state wrestling action.

Englund Dominates 285-Pound Bracket

At 285 pounds, Gavin Englund capped off a stellar 40-3 season with a state championship, scoring 24 team points in the process.

Englund opened the tournament with a 9-0 major decision over Levi Trask of Philip/Kadoka Area/Wall. He followed that with a 10-1 major decision against Wyatt Zeigler of Mobridge-Pollock in the quarterfinals.

In the semifinals, Englund controlled his match with a 5-0 decision over Gunnar Swenson of Canton to advance to the title bout.

In the championship match, Englund squared off against Legend Benedict of Winner in a tightly contested battle. After regulation ended deadlocked, Englund prevailed in a tie-breaker, earning a 2-1 TB-1 victory to secure the state title.

Krueger Earns Runner-Up Honors at 105

On the girls side, Liza Krueger delivered an impressive run to the finals at 105 pounds, finishing second and scoring 22 team points.

Krueger opened with a fall in 1:54 over Maddie Lachman of Marion/Freeman. She followed that with another pin, defeating Shaylee Arredondo of Brandon Valley in 4:41 in the quarterfinals.

In the semifinals, Krueger earned a hard-fought 3-0 decision over Kadee Frankfurth of Clark/Willow Lake to advance to the championship match.

In the title bout, Krueger faced Jewel Vardsveen of Madison. Vardsveen secured a 12-3 major decision, placing Krueger as the state runner-up to cap a 45-3 season.

Other Tiger Results

At 113 pounds, Keegan Kucker (11-6) scored 1.0 team point. He dropped his opening match by technical fall to Kayden Tchida of Sisseton, 19-3 in 3:08. Kucker battled back in the consolation round with a 9-6 sudden victory win over Summyt Larson of Bon Homme/Avon before falling by 10-1 major decision to Maddon Odland of Redfield.

Wyatt Hagan (36-11) competed at 120 pounds. After falling by 21-11 major decision to Connor Glassford of Tri-Valley, Hagan responded with a 17-0 technical fall over Channing Bartlett of McCook Central/Montrose. His tournament concluded with an 8-3 decision loss to Gatlin Cordes of Philip/Kadoka Area/Wall.

At 126 pounds, Kyson Kucker (35-11) scored 3.0 team points. He was pinned in his opening match by Shay Weber of Philip/Kadoka Area/Wall but rebounded with a fall over Levi Tuntland of Canton in 4:11. Kucker's run ended with a 6-2 decision loss to Hayes Holter of Kimball/White Lake/Platte-Geddes.

Donavan Block (23-16) wrestled at 157 pounds, falling by 14-2 major decision to Carson Finn of Wessington Springs/Woonsocket/Wolsey-Wessington and later by 11-3 major decision to Caleb Christiansen of Parker.

At 190 pounds, Walker Zoellner (27-13) was pinned by Isaiah Crownover of Bon Homme/Avon and later by Mason Janek of Burke/Gregory in consolation action.

Layne Johnson (23-11) competed at 215 pounds, falling by pin to Gabriel Martian of Howard and later by fall to Quentin White Mountain of McLaughlin.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 6 of 84

What can **\$20**
get you?



for
**SENIOR
CITIZENS**

Open 24/7

GDI Living



Fitness

or anyone using physical therapy

15 N Main • Ste. 101

**BEST
RATES
AROUND!**

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Student: \$29.82 per month or \$255.60 per year
Single: \$35.15 per month or \$319.50 per year
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!

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 7 of 84



THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE



When he was in distress, he entreated the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. When he prayed to Him, He was moved by his entreaty and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord was God.

2 Chronicles 33:12,13

Detail of "The Prayer of Manasseh" (1929) by Hester Sainsbury

© 2026 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.



BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. Whose first chapter begins, “Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month”? *Ezra, Ezekiel, Micah, Malachi*

3. From Exodus 10, what was blown out of Egypt by a strong west wind? *Rivers, Locusts, Sinners, Nightness*

4. In 1 Chronicles, who killed a seven and a half foot tall Egyptian giant? *Benaiah, Gideon, Jannes, Baruch*

5. From Genesis 28, what city was the site of Jacob’s famous dream? *Lachish, Perga, Haran, Bethel*

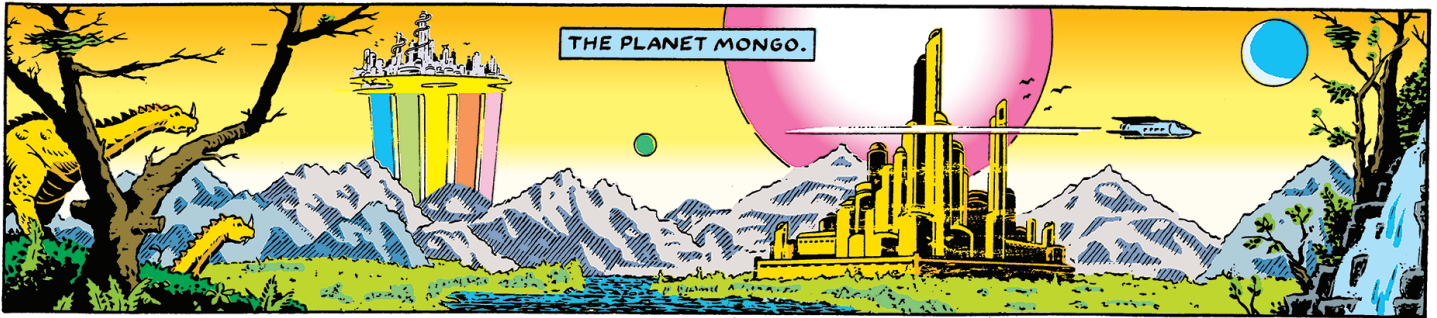
6. In Colossians 4, what city was home to Philemon? *Berea, Shechem, Beersheba, Colossae*

ANSWERS: 1) New, 2) Ezekiel, 3) Locusts, 4) Benaiah, 5) Bethel, 6) Colossae

“*Test Your Bible Knowledge,*” a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 9 of 84



FLASH GORDON

2-15 BY JIM KEEFE

GARAKAHN IS HELD AT BAY AS FLASH CLINGS TO THE DEVICE THAT KEEPS OPEN THE DOORWAY TO THE DARK DIMENSION.

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?!

www.kingfeatures.com

GORDON'S DEFENSELESS!
KILL HIM, MY MASTER...
KILL HIM!

IN HIS SYCOPHANTIC ZEAL, RENSHAW'S GUARD IS MOMENTARILY LOWERED...

...PROVIDING DR. HANS ZARKOV THE OPENING HE HAS BEEN WAITING FOR!

BAF!

SPLASH!

AS RENSHAW SINKS BENEATH THE WATER'S DARK SURFACE, ZARKOV GRABS THE FALLEN BLASTER!

FLASH, JUMP CLEAR!

BLAM!

NEXT: TRANSFORMATION!

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

JM

MOST "TOPPED" SHOTS ARE CAUSED BY SWINGING DOWN SO STEEPLY THAT THE CLUBHEAD NEVER GETS LOW ENOUGH TO CONTACT THE BACK OF THE BALL.

IMPROVING THE OVERALL SWING MECHANICS IS THE ONLY SURE CURE.

BETTER GOLFERS' "TOPS" ARE USUALLY THE RESULT OF THE LEGS AND BODY GETTING TOO FAR AHEAD AT IMPACT, RELATIVE TO THE HANDS AND CLUBHEAD. SIMPLY SWINGING LESS AGGRESSIVELY, PARTICULARLY WITH THE LOWER BODY, USUALLY FIXES THE PROBLEM.

©2026 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.



Understanding Why People Still Die of Pneumonia

DEAR DR. ROACH: Why do people still die of pneumonia? With all the advances that we've seen in modern medicine, losing anyone to this ailment seems like such a waste. Is it a question of pneumonia being difficult to pin down because of the root cause, whether it's bacterial, viral or fungal? Is it due to a delayed diagnosis and/or delayed treatment? Is it the development of drug-resistant pneumonia strains?

I just don't get why people still die from pneumonia or from "complications" of pneumonia. I'm a 73-year-old stroke and cancer survivor who is in relatively good health. How can I best avoid getting pneumonia myself? -- D.K.

ANSWER: Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs that is sometimes called a "lower respiratory tract" infection to distinguish it from an "upper respiratory infection," like bronchitis. The majority of pneumonias are bacterial or viral, but fungal pneumonia is a rare cause that is usually seen in hospitalized patients.

You did a very good job of identifying some of the reasons why people still get very sick (and even die) of pneumonia. But an important additional reason is that there are some bacteria that grow very fast and are able to overwhelm the body's immune system within days. It is often true that late medical attention allows the infection to progress to the point where we still lose patients from pneumonia, even with all that modern medicine can offer.

Another reason is that when people are very frail, either because they are very old or have other underlying health conditions, the body's defenses are weak. Antibiotics can only do so much; doctors still rely on the body to do most of the work by getting rid of the infection.

Drug resistance is a big problem, especially inside hospitals. I have seen cases where the bacteria are resistant to all the available antibiotics. There has been a race between the ingenuity of drug developers and bacterial evolution, and our ingenuity has been slowing down lately, with fewer types of antibiotics being discovered and released. Avoiding the unnecessary use of antibiotics helps reduce resistance.

The easiest thing a person over 50 can do to avoid pneumonia is to get the available vaccines, especially the pneumococcal vaccine (PCV20 or PCV21, called Prevnar). But for a person with health issues in their 70s, you should get the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and COVID-19 vaccines. Because influenza damages the lung's ability to fight off infections, getting pneumonia after the flu is particularly dangerous, so the annual flu vaccine remains important.

Smoking also damages the lung's ability to fight off infections, so quitting smoking reduces pneumonia risk. Excess alcohol consumption also predisposes people to pneumonia, so men shouldn't exceed two drinks at a time (one drink for women).

Proper nutrition and good dental health are important for everyone. Diabetics should have their diabetes under good control. Chronic liver, lung, kidney and heart disease all predispose people to infections, so making sure that these are optimally managed reduces the risk further. Both cancer and its treatments can affect the immune system.

People who are at risk for pneumonia should know the signs and seek medical care quickly if pneumonia is suspected. Although the classic symptoms of fever, cough, and shortness of breath can occur at any age, older people often experience confusion and a low fever. Their heart rates are often raised.

Some symptoms can be subtle -- new falls, incontinence, and loss of energy. A significant, unexplained change in overall functioning might signify a serious infection like pneumonia and deserves an evaluation.

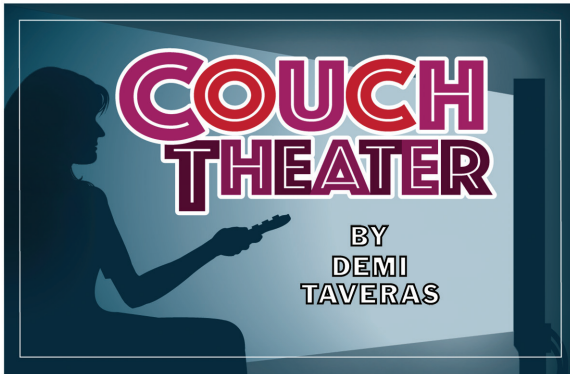
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

(c) 2026 North America Synd., Inc.

All Rights Reserved

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 11 of 84



"No Other Choice" (R) -- From Park Chan-wook, director of the twisty erotic thriller "The Handmaiden" (2016), this South Korean thriller received three nominations at the Golden Globes but was unfortunately overlooked by the Oscars. Fortunately, however, it is impossible to overlook lead actor Lee Byung-hun, whom you might recognize as the Front Man from Netflix's hit series "Squid Game." Lee, once again, shows off his excellence in playing a complete psychopath; he portrays a veteran employee who gets laid off from his papermaking job and becomes desperate to land another high-paying job. This desperation propels him into dangerous action as he decides to literally take out the rest of the competing candidates. Out now to rent. (Amazon Prime Video)

Jason Bateman, left, and David Harbour star in "DTF St. Louis." (Courtesy of MovieStillsDB)

"Sentimental Value" (R) -- The film distributor Neon has had great success with its foreign-language films this year. In addition to the previous film being one of Neon's successes for 2025, this Norwegian drama received a whopping nine nominations for the Oscars, including Best Picture. Its second-billed actor, Stellan Skarsgard ("Dune: Part Two"), also received the Golden Globe for Best Supporting Actor this year. Also starring Elle Fanning ("A Complete Unknown") and Renate Reinsve ("The Worst Person in the World"), "Sentimental Value" is an emotional storytelling of a fractured relationship between two daughters, an actress and a historian, and their filmmaking father. As he attempts to get his latest project off the ground, he and his daughters are pushed to find common ground after years of estrangement. Out now to rent. (Apple TV+)

"The 32nd Annual Actor Awards" (TV-PG) -- Formerly known as the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards, the newly named Actor Awards ceremony is available to stream now. Like other popular award shows that refuse to provide fresh faces for the crowd, the ceremony was hosted by actress Kristen Bell ("Nobody Wants This") for the third time. "One Battle After Another" led the film category, while Seth Rogen's "The Studio" led the TV noms. The supporting role categories are the most surprising ones to watch since the Critics Choice Awards, Golden Globes and BAFTAs all selected different actors for this award so far. Meanwhile, Harrison Ford ("Star Wars," "Indiana Jones") received the Life Achievement Award for his legendary feats in Hollywood. (Netflix)

"DTF St. Louis" (TV-MA) -- This new HBO series is led by David Harbour ("Stranger Things"), Jason Bateman ("Black Rabbit"), and Linda Cardellini ("Nonnas"). Described as a dark comedy miniseries, the show follows co-workers Floyd (Harbour) and Clark (Bateman), who are best buds minus the fact that Clark is secretly having an affair with Floyd's wife. After Clark successfully convinces Floyd to download a dating app called DTF St. Louis, Floyd shockingly ends up dead. With investigators now probing into his life, Clark must supply them with as much information as possible without giving up the fact that he was double-crossing his friend. The first episode is available now, with the subsequent six premiering on Sundays. (HBO Max)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 12 of 84



1. Which singer-songwriter released "Bring It on Home to Me"?
2. Name the artist who released "Bop."
3. Which group released "Down on the Corner"?
4. "We Built This City" was the debut single for which band?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Saving nickels, saving dimes, Working til the sun don't shine, Looking forward to happier times."

Answers:

1. Sam Cooke, in 1962. The song didn't top the charts until The Animals released their cover in 1965 and it went to No.

1 in Sweden.

2. Dan Seals, formerly of England Dan & John Ford Coley, in 1985. After leaving the duo, Seals had 11 chart-toppers, including "Meet Me in Montana" with Marie Osmond.

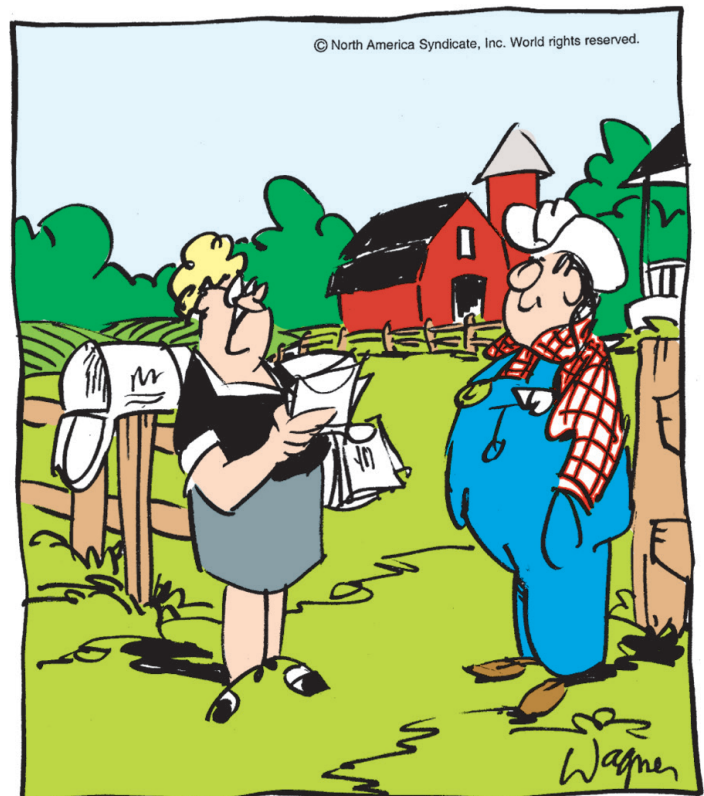
3. Creedence Clearwater Revival, in 1969. Penned by band member John Fogerty, the song was first released on their "Willy and the Poor Boys" album.

4. Starship, in 1985. Co-written by Bernie Taupin (writing pal of Elton John), the song climbed charts around the globe. However, Rolling Stone pegged it as one of the worst songs of the '80s.

5. "Blue Bayou," by Roy Orbison in 1961. Linda Ronstadt followed with a cover in 1977, and the song has been used in several films, including "American Made" starring Tom Cruise in 2017.

(c) 2026 King Features Syndicate

GRIN and BEAR IT ^{Wagner}

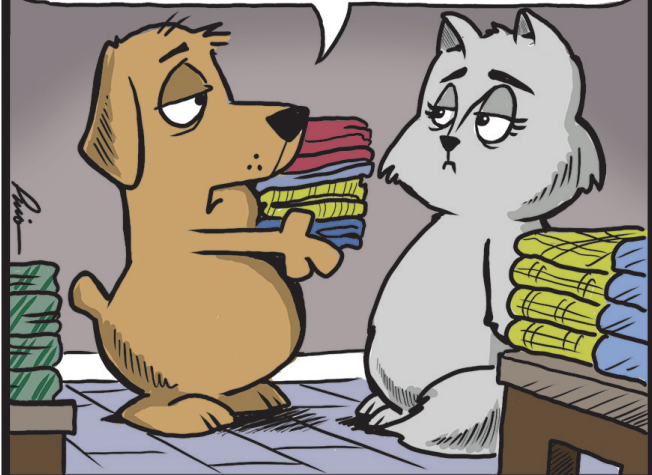


"We have a bumper crop of subsidy checks!"

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps

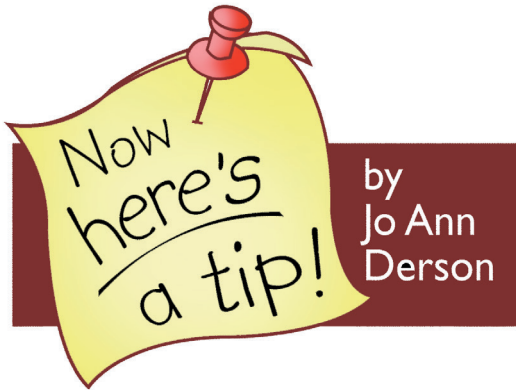
MY FASHION SENSE IS SO BAD, JUST TO KNOW I WAS SHOPPING IN THE CORRECT AREA I GRABBED THE CLOTHES OFF THE BOY MANNEQUIN.



©2026 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 14 of 84



* Peas, spinach, sweet potato, squash and carrots can be pureed and added to baked goods to increase fiber and nutrients. They are especially useful in soups to thicken a broth without adding fat. You can sneak some veggies into unexpected places, too -- like cookies, pancake batter and pasta dishes, or make a flavorful sandwich spread.

* "Juice ice cubes in water is good for you. It hydrates without a lot of sugar, while still tasting a little bit sweet." -- F.R. in Alabama

* It's easy to sort hardware using a muffin pan. If you get a pan that has 12 depressions, you can line nails and screws and such in a line according to size, making it even more convenient.

* "When you get a new pair of running shoes, spray the insides with spray starch. We have always done this and it keeps them fresher longer." -- S.M. in Indiana

* Lettuce will last longer if you store it in the crisper drawer in a clean paper bag.

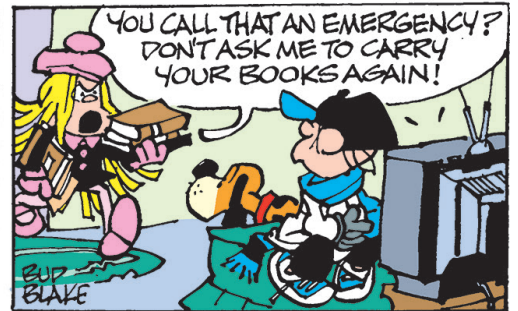
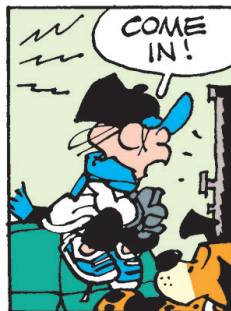
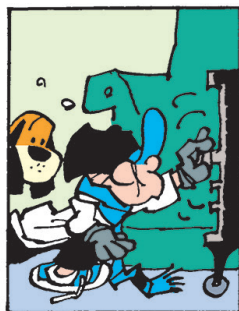
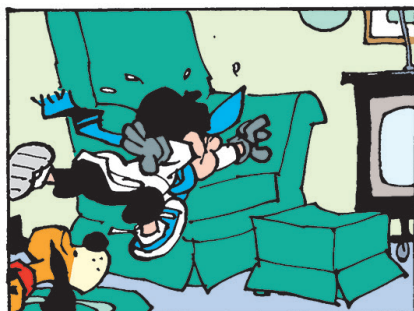
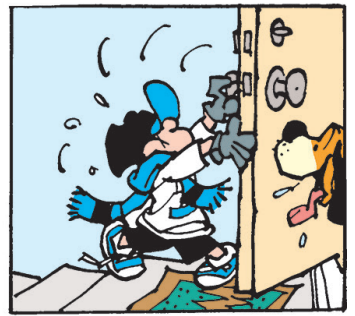
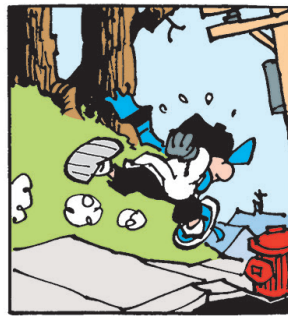
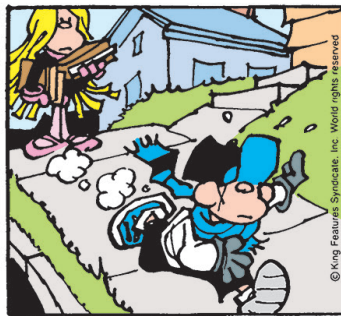
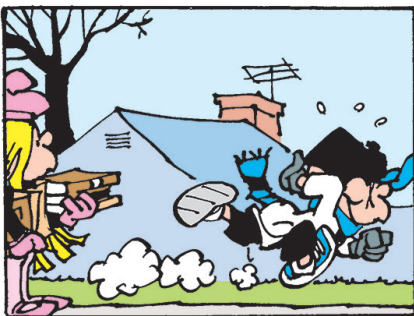
* Tubes make it easy to access toothpaste when they are full, but it's sometimes hard to get that last bit out. Here's a tip from C.W. in Oregon: "To get the last part of the tube of toothpaste to come out, run the tube under warm water for a few seconds. There's more in the tube than you think!"

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

(c) 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 15 of 84

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Lawn coating
- 4 Daring deeds
- 9 Droid
- 12 "That feels so good!"
- 13 Host
- 14 Ruckus
- 15 Type of cable
- 17 Sine qua —
- 18 Feathery wrap
- 19 Garish
- 21 Mellow yellows
- 24 Winter blanket
- 25 Mauna —
- 26 Fire sign?
- 28 Emulate Scott Hamilton
- 31 Grecian vessels

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11
12				13						14		
15			16							17		
			18				19		20			
21	22	23					24					
25				26		27		28			29	30
31			32		33		34		35			
36				37		38		39		40		
		41			42		43		44			
45	46						47					
48				49		50				51	52	53
54				55						56		
57				58						59		

- 43 Crude dwelling
- 45 Brit's word of surprise
- 47 Where Ger. is
- 48 Help
- 49 Timepiece attachment

- 54 Blasting stick
- 55 Follow
- 56 Luau dish
- 57 Sneaky chuckle
- 58 Reading lights
- 59 Bradley and Asner
- 6 Fed. health law
- 7 Camping shelters
- 8 Family cars
- 9 Something to jump on
- 10 Skunk's defense
- 11 Theater award
- 16 Jurist Fortas
- 20 Stirred
- 21 Grad
- 22 "Encore!"
- 23 Range of radio frequencies
- 27 Skirt edge
- 29 Like lemons
- 30 Jittery
- 32 Thailand, once
- 34 Gets smart
- 37 Embroidery yarn
- 39 Waterpark slides
- 42 Actress Loy
- 44 Wall St. whiz
- 45 Tub session
- 46 Queue
- 50 Doctrine
- 51 Mimic
- 52 Silent assent
- 53 Insult

DOWN

- 1 Apply cream
- 2 Listener
- 3 "— goes there?"
- 4 Soft felt hat
- 5 Diplomat's post

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 16 of 84

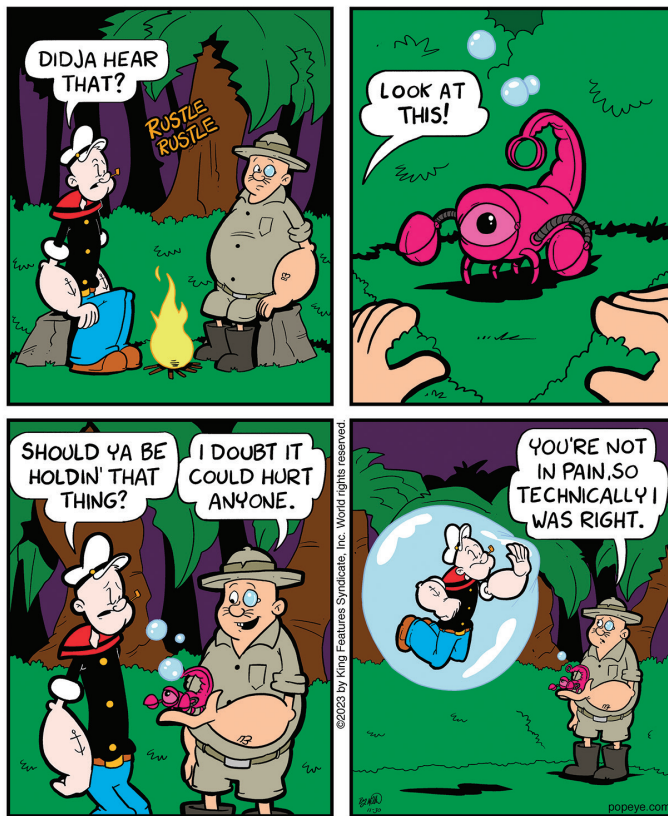
King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 22 mins.

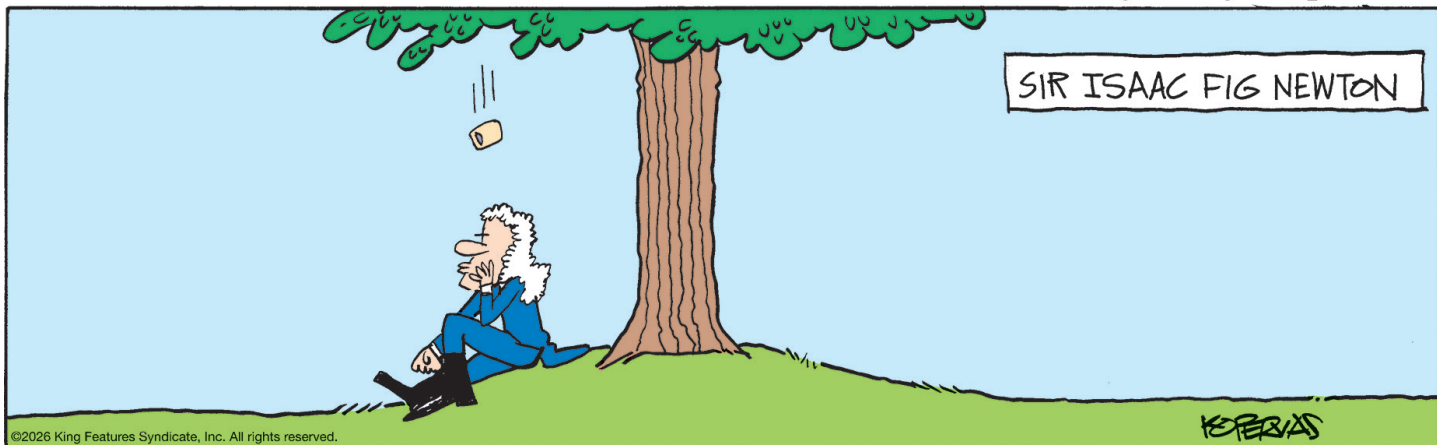
D	E	W		F	E	A	T	S		B	O	T	
A	A	H		E	M	C	E	E		A	D	O	
B	R	O	A	D	B	A	N	D		N	O	N	
			B	O	A		T	A	W	D	R	Y	
A	M	B	E	R	S		S	N	O	W			
L	O	A		A	S	H		S	K	A	T	E	
U	R	N	S		Y	E	W		E	G	A	D	
M	E	D	I	C		M	I	C		O	R	G	
			W	A	R	M		S	H	A	N	T	Y
B	L	I	M	E	Y		E	U	R				
A	I	D		W	R	I	S	T	B	A	N	D	
T	N	T		E	N	S	U	E		P	O	I	
H	E	H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

Olive



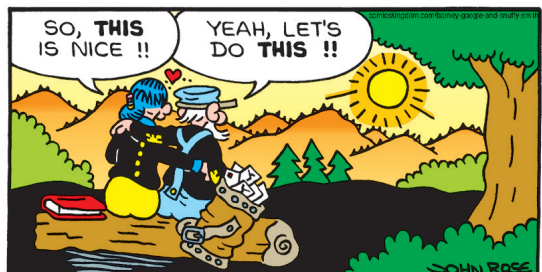
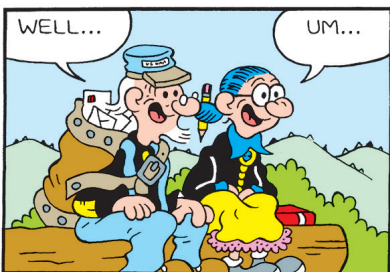
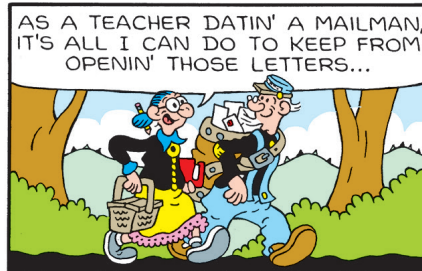
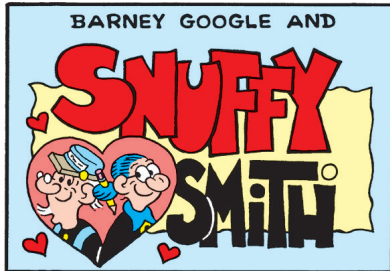
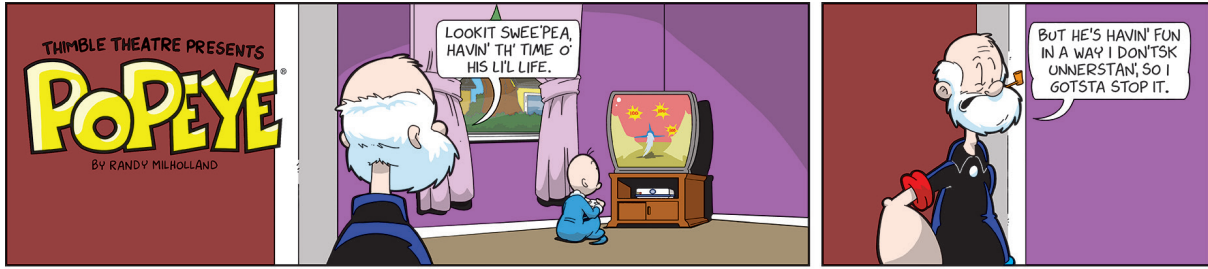
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 17 of 84



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 18 of 84

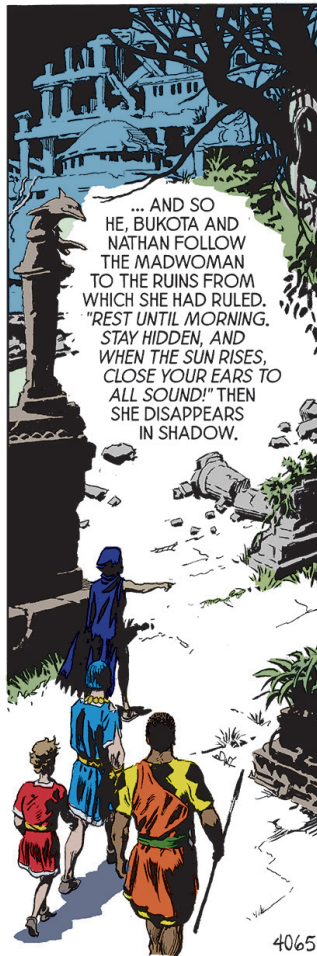
THANAA APPEARS BEFORE THE SURPRISED VALIANT: "YOUR FAMILY IS SAFE. COME WITH ME IF YOU WOULD SEE THESE VILE SLAVERS DESTROYED."

Hal Foster's Prince Valiant

BY SCHULTZ AND YEATES



THANAA WOULD NOT LIE ABOUT WOMEN AND CHILDREN, VAL BELIEVES, AND IN HER EYES HE SEES A DEADLY PURPOSE REGARDING THE PIRATES...

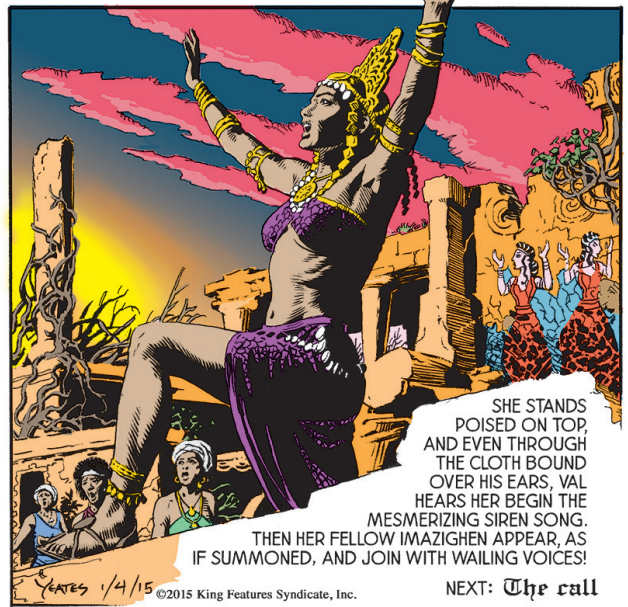


... AND SO HE, BUKOTA AND NATHAN FOLLOW THE MADWOMAN TO THE RUINS FROM WHICH SHE HAD RULED. "REST UNTIL MORNING. STAY HIDDEN, AND WHEN THE SUN RISES, CLOSE YOUR EARS TO ALL SOUND!" THEN SHE DISAPPEARS IN SHADOW.

4065



BUT THERE IS NO REST FOR THE COMPANIONS; AND AT DAWN'S FIRST LIGHT THEY SEE THANAA, NOW IN THE TRAPPINGS OF A PRIESTESS, CLIMBING A HIGH STAIRCASE BEFORE A GREAT COURTYARD.

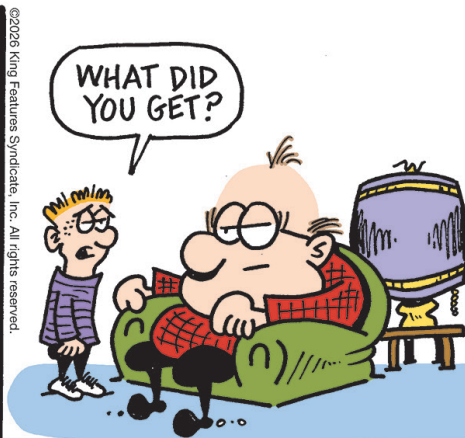


SHE STANDS POISED ON TOP AND EVEN THROUGH THE CLOTH BOUND OVER HIS EARS, VAL HEARS HER BEGIN THE MESMERIZING SIREN SONG. THEN HER FELLOW IMAZIGHEN APPEAR, AS IF SUMMONED, AND JOIN WITH WAILING VOICES!

NEXT: The call

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



©2026 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

PICKERING

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 19 of 84

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Are you paying for subscriptions you don't use?

Remember when you signed up on a trial basis for a subscription, app or streaming service, then decided you didn't like it and never used it? Are you still paying for that?

They say that many of us have nearly \$20 per month in unused products, coming to hundreds per year, that we've forgotten about -- but we're still paying for.

With spring cleaning coming up in a few months, it's a good time to also clean up our expenses. The way to get started on identifying services you aren't using is with your monthly checking and credit card statements. Ideally you're also saving at least a year of both, because some subscriptions and services only bill annually and won't show up on your monthly statements.

Go through those statements and be sure you can identify each and every item. The annual ones might be hard to spot, but it's worth finding them as most are on automatic renewal.

With some items such as a weekly newsletter, it might be going to a temporary email address you created and then forgot about.

Next to the deduction or expense on your credit card or bank statement should be a company name and phone number. Call them! Ask for the service or subscription to stop immediately, and ask for a partial refund. You might get some money back!

Another clue is to go back through your junk email. It's possible your subscription was waylaid and you never saw it.

For the future, it's not that you should never again sign up on a trial for a service or product, but that you need to beware of when it will expire and you'll start being charged. Make a note on your calendar to decide whether you want to keep going (and be charged) or contact them in advance to have it stopped.

Remember, it's your money!

(c) 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

15 N Main St. - Ste. 101
Downtown Groton

Call/Text Paul: 605-397-7460
Call/Text Tina: 605-397-7285



Open 24/7

Living Heart Fitness Center

Senior Citizens 65+
Physical Therapy. **\$20 a month**

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 20 of 84

1. Four members of the "Miracle on Ice" 1980 U.S. Olympic Hockey Team -- Mike Eruzione, Jack O'Callahan, Jim Craig and Dave Silk -- played hockey for what college team?

2. What women's professional indoor volleyball league had its inaugural season in 2025, with the team from Austin, Texas, winning the first championship?

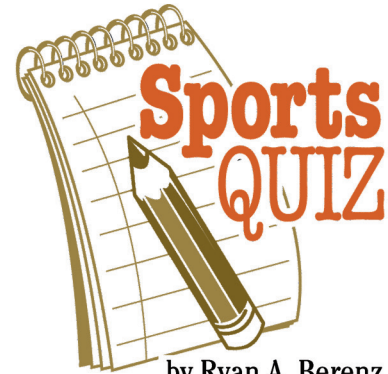
3. In the 1990-1991 season, which NBA team finished with a historically bad 1-40 road-game record?

4. Which Philadelphia college's athletic teams are nicknamed the Dragons?

5. Brothers Vince, Joe and Dom DiMaggio all played baseball in the minors for what Pacific Coast League team?

6. Rock climber Adam Ondra, winner of both the lead climbing and bouldering titles at the 2014 Climbing World Championships, hails from what country?

7. What team selected Eric Lindros with the first pick of the 1991 NHL entry draft but was forced to trade him to the Philadelphia Flyers a year later because he refused to play?



by Ryan A. Berenz

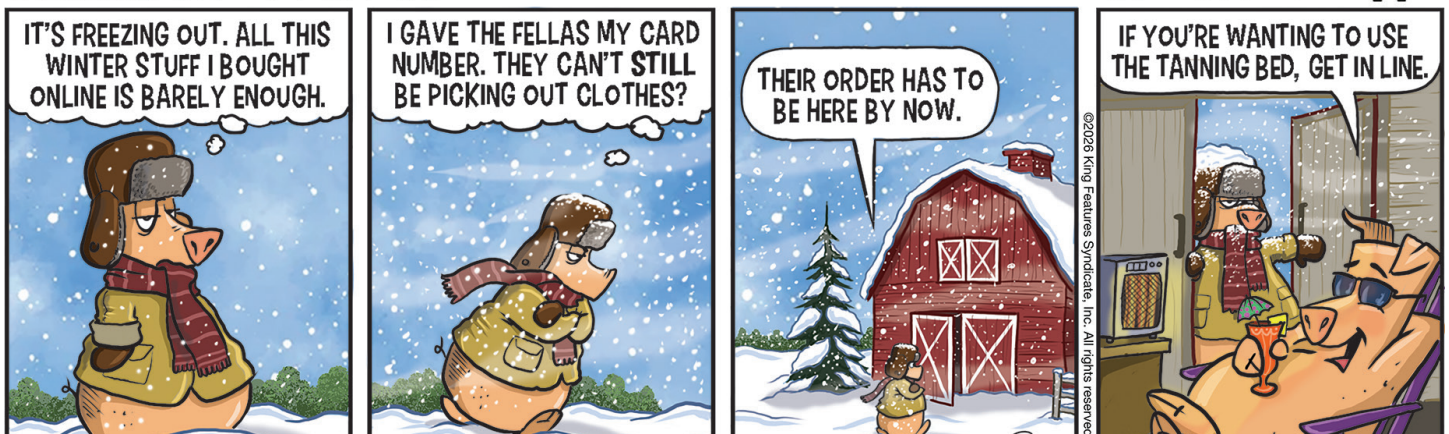
Answers

1. The Boston University Terriers.
2. League One Volleyball (LOVB Pro).
3. The Sacramento Kings.
4. Drexel University.
5. The San Francisco Seals.
6. The Czech Republic.
7. The Quebec Nordiques.

(c) 2026 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Toy Poodle Barks Almost Nonstop

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My 6-month-old toy poodle, "Jenks," is incredibly cute, but he has a sharp, loud bark for such a little guy -- and he barks almost nonstop when we're home. I know anxiety is an issue with many small breeds, and I'm wondering how I can best address this. -- John, via email

DEAR JOHN: It's worth looking into. Contact Jenks' veterinarian to discuss the issue, as I'm sure you'll get a number of different suggestions ranging from behavior training to antianxiety medication.

Jenks is still pretty young. How much time does he spend alone at home? If you have to be out for eight hours or more, you may want to have someone -- a

friend or a pet sitter -- come in to check on him, take him out to pee and play a little bit.

You also should establish a routine that he can count on, one that includes plenty of time spent with him either playing or training. Both of these are times when he's getting your full attention and positive reinforcement, as well as a way to work off some of that puppy energy that's also behind the barking.

As your puppy matures into an adult, he may mellow out somewhat. But in the meantime, it's up to you to provide structure and training to reinforce the behavior you want in Jenks. If these efforts don't seem to improve the constant barking, talk with your vet about addressing his anxiety with medication.

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

(c) 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 22 of 84

Strange BUT TRUE

* Eastern Russia serves breakfast when western Russia serves dinner.

* If you are born blind due to lesions in the brain (congenital cortical blindness), rather than lesions in the eye (congenital peripheral blindness), you apparently can't become schizophrenic.

* Words have a lifespan of anywhere between 1,000 and 20,000 years.

* While inducting Bob Dylan into the Rock & Roll Hall of

Fame, Bruce Springsteen noted that he first heard Dylan's song "Like a Rolling Stone" in the car with his mother, who liked the music but after a minute looked at her son and said, "That boy can't sing."

* The Oscar statue must always appear in an upright, vertical position and cannot be dressed, altered, rotated, stretched or embellished in any way.

* Oak trees are more prone to being struck by lightning than any other tree.

* A wildlife photographer documented an unlikely duo in northern Finland: a young female gray wolf and a male brown bear that met every night for 10 days. They weren't observed fighting, but roaming, playing and even eating from the same plate.

* Broccoli contains more protein per calorie than steak.

* On July 26, 2025, Thaddeus Daniel Pierce was born from an embryo that had been frozen since May 1994.


* North Dakota has the most golf courses per capita out of any state in America.

* After the beloved TV series "I Love Lucy" ended, Desi Arnaz offered Vivian Vance (Ethel) and William Frawley (Fred) their own spin-off called "The Mertzes," but Vance declined, primarily because she didn't want to work one-on-one with Frawley. The pair's onscreen chemistry notably didn't mirror their offscreen relationship.

* Lint can be used as a highly efficient fire starter.

Thought for the Day: "What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have never been discovered." -- Ralph Waldo Emerson

(c) 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.



The Garden Bug **First day of spring**

This year, the vernal (or spring) equinox happens on March 20 at 10:46 a.m., Eastern Daylight Time. It is the astronomical **beginning of the spring season** in the Northern Hemisphere and of the autumn season in the Southern Hemisphere. In the Northern Hemisphere, the spring equinox occurs when the Sun crosses the "celestial equator" going south to north. - Brenda Weaver

Source: www.almanac.com

"The Goldfinch" by Albert Flamen (1655-60)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 23 of 84



by Freddy Groves

Second amendment no longer trampled

For the first time in three decades, the VA will no longer assist the FBI in depriving veterans of their right to own firearms.

This is a very big deal.

For too long, any veteran who needed fiduciary help to manage his finances was reported to the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) and was deemed a "prohibited

person." There went the veteran's right to own a firearm -- all because he needed help writing a check for his electric bill.

Yes, a fiduciary does more than just make payments. Their job is to protect the veteran who can't manage financial affairs because of age, injury or disease. A fiduciary is appointed only after medical determination that the veteran is in need of help. The fiduciary then undergoes a background check, credit report check and more to be certain who is going to be managing the veteran's affairs.

The fiduciary then (apparently) spends a lot of time filling out forms, submitting information, verifying school attendance for any dependents, reporting on illnesses and medical conditions, and so much more.

Needing help managing finances shouldn't mean that a veteran cannot own a firearm -- but it has, for decades.

Being denied approval to own a firearm, courtesy of the FBI's NICS, can be for any number of serious reasons, such as having domestic violence convictions, being put in a mental institution and being addicted to controlled substances. Nowhere on the list is needing assistance with writing monthly checks or doing paperwork.

And now, finally, the VA is going to right this wrong.

Additionally, the VA is going to be sure the FBI goes back and removes any of the info that saw past veterans deprived of their right to own a firearm after being reported to NICS. Plus the ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives) is going to review its own rules to be certain veterans' rights aren't being trampled this way.

It's about time.

(c) 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 24 of 84

Wishing Well®

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

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

©2026 King Features Syndicate



1. U.S. STATES: Which state is home to the Acadia National Park?
2. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president was an avid dog breeder who gave his hunting hounds funny names like "Sweet Lips" and "Madam Moose"?
3. MOVIES: Who is the antagonist of "Shrek" in the first animated movie?
4. LITERATURE: What is the pseudonym of the 20th-century author who was born Adeline Virginia Stephen?
5. TELEVISION: What's the family's last name in the TV sitcom "The Middle"?
6. HISTORY: Which famous nurse was known as the Lady with the Lamp?
7. GEOGRAPHY: Ringgit is the common currency in which Southeast Asian country?
8. ANATOMY: Which human organ stores bile?
9. LANGUAGE: What does the Latin phrase "Cogito, ergo sum" mean in English?
10. MATH: What is the next prime number after 7?

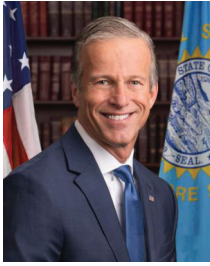
Answers

1. Maine.
2. George Washington.
3. Lord Maximus Farquaad.
4. Virginia Woolf.
5. Heck.
6. Florence Nightingale.
7. Malaysia
8. The gallbladder.
9. "I think, therefore I am."
10. Eleven (11).

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 25 of 84



JOHN THUNE
U.S. SENATOR FOR SOUTH DAKOTA

More Money in Your Pocket

On February 24, President Trump delivered his State of the Union address before a joint session of Congress. The president laid out a bright vision for the future, made possible in no small part by what he and Republicans in Congress accomplished this past year. In just one year, we've made progress toward a safer, stronger, and more prosperous America. And as the American people heard from the president, we're just getting started.

Our work began with putting more money in Americans' pockets, which we did with the Working Families Tax Cuts. Thanks to Republicans' landmark bill, hardworking South Dakotans can benefit from permanently lower tax rates, a bigger standard deduction, and a bigger child tax credit – all of which are permanent. Then there's no tax on tips, no tax on overtime, and a bonus deduction for senior citizens living on a fixed income. All told, this tax relief means bigger refunds this tax season and lower tax bills in the years ahead.

Republicans didn't stop with tax relief though. This landmark legislation also repealed the Biden-era natural gas tax and took steps to unleash American energy production and ensure that Americans have a reliable energy supply. And we included measures to modernize the farm safety net for farmers and ranchers in South Dakota and around the country.

In another piece of legislation, we prioritized measures that make prescriptions less expensive by increasing the transparency of pharmacy benefit managers and ensuring they pass savings on to patients at the pharmacy counter. And in the coming days, the Senate will act on another bill to make the dream of homeownership more affordable and accessible for everyday Americans.

In addition to addressing affordability, Republicans have also made significant strides toward strengthening American security. That started with securing the southern border, and the Working Families Tax Cuts included funding to ensure those gains can be maintained for the long term. It also made a major investment in rebuilding our military, ensuring America's men and women in uniform have what they need to counter today's threats and tomorrow's.

Americans went through a lot under President Biden: from a historic inflation crisis to the worst border crisis on record. On top of that, hardworking people were facing the prospect of a massive tax hike in 2026 – a tax hike that never came because Republicans acted to prevent it.

When it comes to tackling affordability and making America safer and stronger, Republicans don't just talk, we act. We're putting more money in Americans' pockets and working hard to make life affordable for American families.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 26 of 84



Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries

PO Box 831313 - Ocala, FL 34483

1-352-216-3025

Hocus-Pocus, My Sanity Has Disappeared

For over 70 years, I believed sanity was a very important part of a person's identity. Being sane enables one to be successful in life. Who doesn't want to be successful?

I've made it my business to focus on my sanity and make sure it's working just fine. Of course, I'm not sure how to build my sanity.

Actually, it wasn't until I met and married The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage that I understood what sanity was all about. All my sanity brought me to that wonderful place in my life. If anybody has more sanity than The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, I have yet to meet them.

For over 50 years, she has been the most sane aspect of my life. Without her, I don't know where I would be today. At least I wouldn't recognize where I'm at.

It wasn't until I hit my 70s that I realized my sanity had disappeared. I have no idea where it went, and believe me, I have searched for it for a long time. I even watched a Three Stooges movie and still did not find it. Where else would it be?

All of this came together this past week.

I was working on a project that needed to be finished by the end of the month. Sometimes those projects stress me out. But finishing a project is a wonderful experience. I enjoy it very much.

Then my phone rang, interrupting my moment at the time. Sometimes I don't turn my phone on until the end of the day, but I had it on this morning.

When I answered it, I was rather surprised. According to the person on the other end of the phone, I had made a marvelous victory. According to the person on the phone, I had won over \$5 million plus a brand-new Mercedes. I can't tell you how happy I was.

I couldn't thank the person on the phone enough for this marvelous win. I didn't know if I had regained my sanity or if I had dropped to a lower level of sanity.

Do you know what I could do with that kind of money? Neither do I.

When he told me about my winnings, I laughed hysterically and couldn't thank him enough over the phone.

"When can I expect my winnings?" I asked the guy on the phone.

"We can send it to you today," he said very happily. "Just give us your address and it'll be on its way."

Then I had an unusual sane moment. Thinking about it, I asked, "How much is this going to cost me?"

"Oh, my lucky friend. All you have to do is pay a \$1500 processing fee and the package will be yours."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 27 of 84

Sanity started knocking on my door, and I began thinking, "It'll only cost me \$1500 to get \$5 million. That shouldn't be too much to ask for."

Sanity began whispering in my ear, suggesting a question. So, I responded to the person on the phone and said, "That sounds great. Just deduct that \$1500 from my \$5 million winnings, and we got a plan."

If you think about it, that makes a lot of sense. He gets his fee, and I get my winnings. What's wrong with that?

From the other end of the phone, I heard, "That's not possible. I've already wrapped your cash money in a box and I am not able to unwrap it and take money out. You will have to send me the \$1500 through some gift card that you can get at the store."

Yeah, right, a gift card. I may have lost a lot of sanity along the way, but I have now experienced a revival of my sanity.

It seems feasible to send him the money so I can receive my reward.

I continued my phone conversation and asked an important question: "Sir, how do I know I can trust you to send me the money?"

He chuckled on the phone and then said most bravely, "You can trust me with anything. I'm not here to scam anybody I'm just here to get you your winnings to you as fast as possible. Believe me, you can trust me. Everybody trusts me."

He then sent me photographs of other people who had won millions of dollars. As if I'm going to believe that.

Responding to those pictures, I said, "How can you prove to me that those are real people with winnings and not some AI production?"

"Oh my friend," he said most enthusiastically, "you can trust me I would never lie to someone like you."

If this wasn't a scam, I've never heard of one. I responded by saying, "When you send me my winnings, I will pay you the processing fee plus a \$500 tip. How does that sound?"

The only sound I heard was "click," and he was no more. I love it when my sanity shows up with a smile every once in a while.

As I was thinking about this, a verse of scripture came to mind. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).

True sanity comes from God. He gives me everything I need to be all He wants me to be. He is the only one I can truly trust, and that's my daily discipline.

Dr. James L. Snyder lives in Ocala, FL with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone 1-352-216-3025, e-mail jamesnyder51@gmail.com, website www.jamesnyderministries.com.

EARTHTALK

COP30 Climate Talks In The Books, Without Much To Show by Ava Baranowski

Dear EarthTalk: What happened at the most recent climate summit (COP30)? – P.F., via email

In November 2025, the 30th annual Conference of Parties—the supreme decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change—was held in Brazil. It has been 10 years since the Paris Agreement was signed by 194 countries. It had hoped to limit global warming to well below two degrees Celsius. But current emission reductions fell alarmingly short of this goal; research showed that an over 43 percent reduction was needed by 2030.

International negotiators dubbed COP30 “COP of implementation,” with the goal to accelerate climate action and implement programs instead of making promises. One of the major successes of the 2025 meeting was the “Belém Package.” Adopted by nearly all parties, it includes agreements that aim to triple adaptation finance by 2035 and help vulnerable third world countries cope with climate impacts. Despite this, the nearly 150-page document has no legally binding commitments.

With the U.S. absent for the first time at this year’s talks, China stepped up as a leader in clean tech, facilitating discussion on trade. For the first time, negotiators from several nations agreed to analyze how trade policies can affect climate action, as well as how to generate investment in green energy.

Fossil fuels are the main driver of global warming, however, the hosts of COP30 initially refrained from writing this topic onto the official agenda. Irene Vélez Torres, Minister in Charge of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia, said, “We must leave this COP with a global roadmap that guides us, not symbolically, but concretely...to phase out fossil fuels.” Many expressed disappointment that by the end of the conference, little planning took place for both fossil fuels and deforestation, which was a priority for Brazil. During the conference, indigenous and activist groups stormed the venue and blocked entrances to demand protection of indigenous territories. This year saw record high participation from these groups, especially in favor of more ambitious agreements around fossil fuels.

The next COP meeting will be held in Turkey in 2026. Its focus will likely be how to mitigate the predicted overshoot of 1.5 degrees Celsius in global temperatures. Additionally, 24 countries formed a coalition to transition away from fossil fuels, planning a conference in Colombia later in 2026 to create a real roadmap for a just energy transition.



UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and William, the Prince of Wales visit the Emilio Goeldi Museum where he met young leaders on climate action during the 2025 United Nations Climate Change Conference COP30 summit. Pihoto: Simon Dawson / No 10 Downing Street, CC.

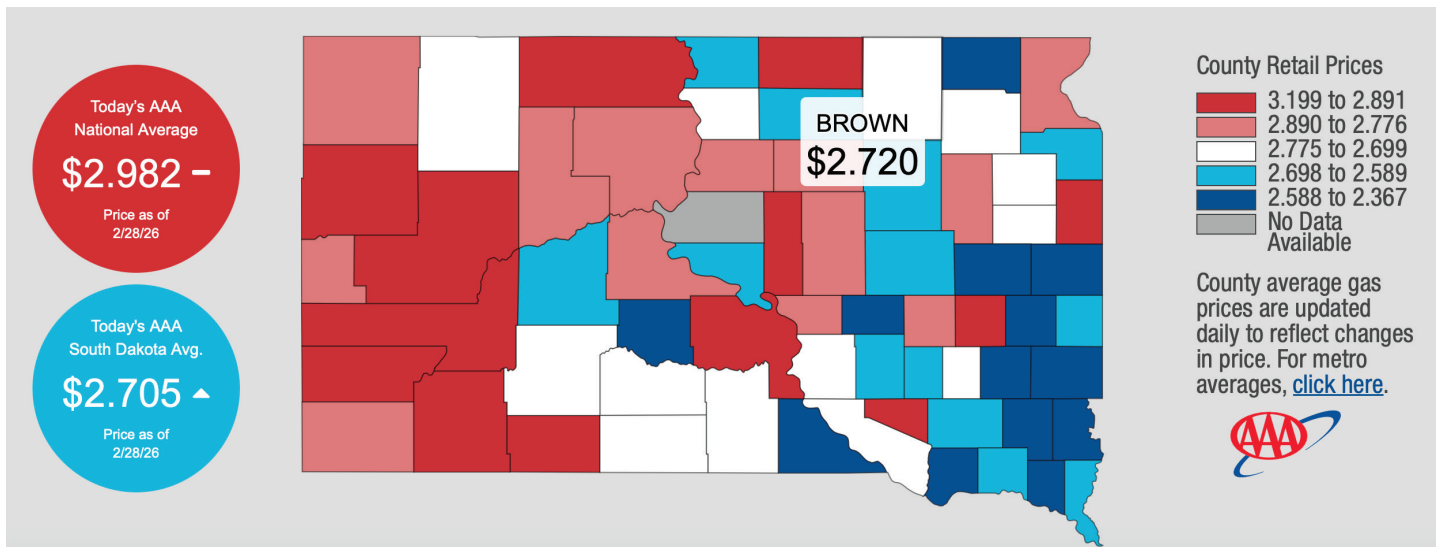
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 29 of 84

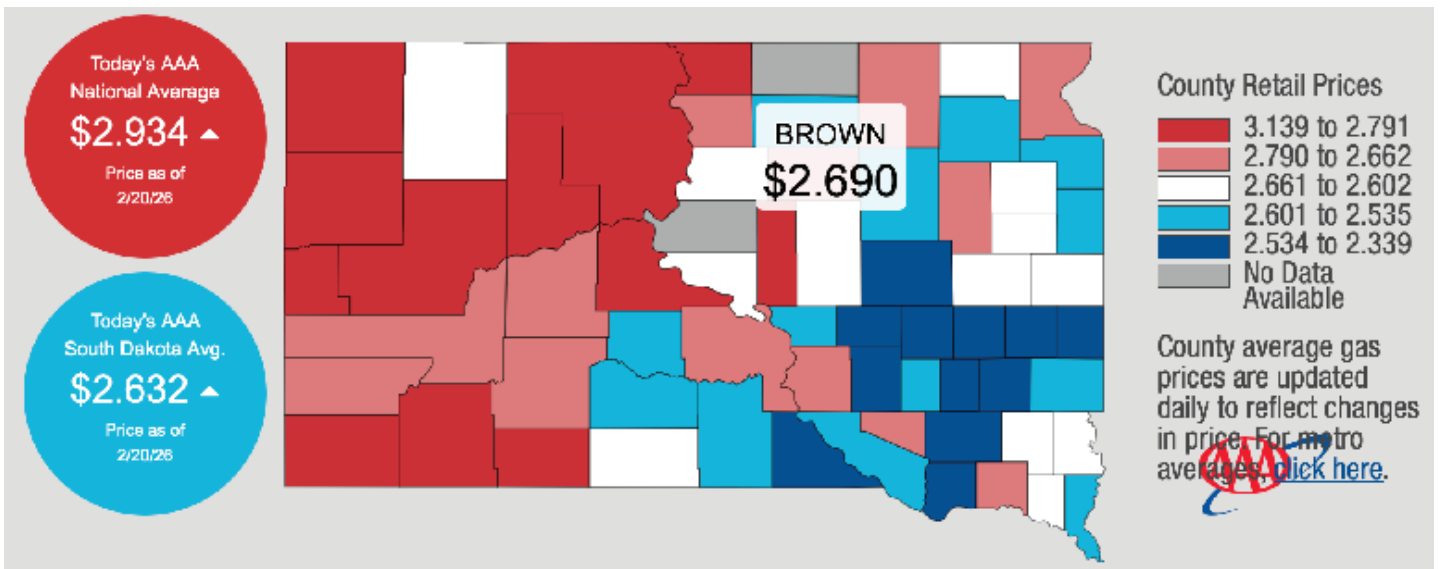
South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$2.705	\$2.875	\$3.355	\$3.464
Yesterday Avg.	\$2.700	\$2.868	\$3.342	\$3.451
Week Ago Avg.	\$2.639	\$2.801	\$3.271	\$3.418
Month Ago Avg.	\$2.615	\$2.786	\$3.256	\$3.369
Year Ago Avg.	\$3.012	\$3.194	\$3.630	\$3.339

This Week



Last Week

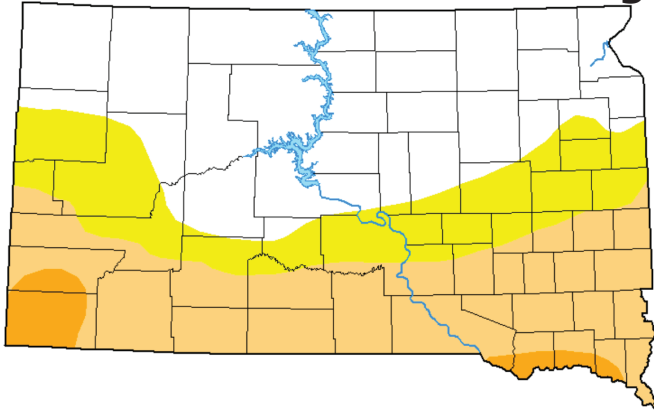


Groton Daily Independent

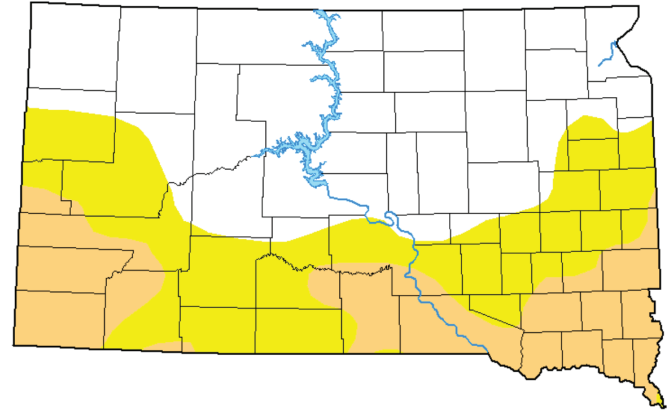
Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 30 of 84



Drought Monitor



Feb. 24



Feb. 17

Gradual drought deterioration was noted in several areas, except North Dakota, which remains free of drought. In Nebraska, a mostly dry, windy winter has adversely affected winter wheat, which at the end of January was rated just 24 percent in good to excellent condition—down from 54 percent in late-November 2025. Snowfall that blanketed parts of Nebraska on February 19 provided only temporary relief from overall dryness. Farther south, parts of Kansas and Colorado contended with high winds, grassfires, and blowing dust, especially on February 17. On that date, wind gusts in Colorado were clocked to 79 mph in Colorado Springs, 72 mph in Burlington, and 71 mph in Pueblo. South of Pueblo, on I-25, chain reaction collisions due to low visibility in blowing dust resulted in five fatalities and involved approximately three dozen vehicles.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

US, Israel strike Iran; Democrats call for immediate vote on Trump war powers

BY: JACOB FISCHLER AND JANE NORMAN

WASHINGTON — Democratic lawmakers called Saturday for Congress to weigh in on President Donald Trump's order launching "major combat operations" in Iran, while Republicans largely provided cautious support of the attacks.

Trump said in a video posted to social media at 2:30 a.m. Eastern that U.S. forces struck targets in the Islamic republic. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the attacks were conducted in conjunction with Israel.

Trump said, "Our objective is to defend the American people by eliminating imminent threats from the Iranian regime, a vicious group of very hard, terrible people. Its menacing activities directly endanger the United States, our troops, our bases overseas, and our allies throughout the world."

U.S. Senate leaders react

By later Saturday morning, as word of the attack spread, numerous Democratic members of Congress were urging a vote on Virginia Sen. Tim Kaine's War Powers Resolution.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said he had "implored" Secretary of State Marco Rubio during a briefing this week to make a straightforward public case for any military operation in the Middle East.

The New York Democrat criticized the administration's strategy, though he also had tough words about the Iranian regime. He called for an "immediate all-senators classified briefing" ahead of a vote on a War Powers Act resolution.

"The administration has not provided Congress and the American people with critical details about the scope and immediacy of the threat," Schumer said in a statement. "Confronting Iran's malign regional activities, nuclear ambitions, and harsh oppression of the Iranian people demands American strength, resolve, regional coordination, and strategic clarity. Unfortunately, President Trump's fitful cycles of lashing out and risking wider conflict are not a viable strategy."

Senate Majority Leader John Thune praised Trump for taking action to deter Iran from expanding its nuclear program and supporting terrorist groups in the region.

The country poses "a clear and unacceptable threat to U.S. servicemembers, citizens in the region, and many of our allies," the South Dakota Republican wrote in a statement. "Despite the dogged efforts of the president and his administration, the Iranian regime has refused the diplomatic off-ramps that would peacefully resolve these national security concerns."

Thune added that administration officials would brief senators as the operation continued.

Nuclear weapon ambitions

Trump said in the early-morning video that the U.S. aims to prevent the Islamic Republic of Iran from ever obtaining nuclear weapons. "This regime will soon learn no one should challenge the strength and might of the United States armed forces," said Trump.

He acknowledged that "we may have casualties. That often happens in war. But we're doing this not for now, we're doing it for the future."

Trump also encouraged the Iranian people to rise up against their government. "Finally, to the great, proud people of Iran, I say tonight that the hour of your freedom is at hand. Stay sheltered. Don't leave

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 32 of 84

your home. It's very dangerous outside. Bombs will be dropping everywhere. When we are finished, take over your government. It will be yours to take," Trump said. "It will be probably your only chance for generations."

Trump spoke from his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida, where he flew Friday night following an appearance in Corpus Christi, Texas. Press secretary Karoline Leavitt said in a statement on social media Trump monitored the situation overnight with members of his national security team, and he spoke with Netanyahu by phone.

Prior to the attacks, dubbed "Operation Epic Fury," Leavitt said Rubio notified both Democratic and Republican leaders in Congress.

Netanyahu in a statement on social media thanked Trump and echoed the U.S. president's comments about nuclear arms.

"This murderous terrorist regime must not be allowed to arm itself with nuclear weapons that would enable it to threaten all of humanity," Netanyahu said. "Our joint operation will create the conditions for the brave Iranian people to take their fate into their own hands."

Iranians say they tried to prevent war

Iran Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi early Saturday afternoon wrote a letter to the secretary-general of the United Nations and the president of the U.N. Security Council that "strongly condemned the coordinated and extensive armed aggression by the United States and the Israeli regime against Iran's national sovereignty and territorial integrity," according to a statement on social media by the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran also said that the attack came while the United States and Iran were in the midst of diplomatic talks, and vowed a response.

"Now the Iranian people are proud that they did everything necessary to prevent war," the ministry said. "Now is the time to defend the homeland and confront the enemy's military aggression. Just as we were ready for negotiations, we have been more prepared than ever for defense. The armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran will respond to the aggressors with authority."

The Associated Press said the first strikes appeared to target the compound of Iran Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in Tehran. The Reuters news service said the skies above Tehran were filled with smoke.

The strikes were not specifically authorized by Congress. Trump also ordered airstrikes in Venezuela and the capture of the country's president earlier this year.

Some members of Congress expressed skepticism about that operation, saying it should have been brought to the legislative branch that is supposed to have war-making powers under the Constitution.

The United States and its allies have long debated how to approach Iran's nuclear program. The country's regime is strongly anti-American and the U.S. has imposed economic sanctions for the nearly half-century since a revolution installed a theocratic supreme leader.

Republicans echo Trump

Republicans largely laid responsibility for the attacks on the Iranian regime, saying its aggressive posture invited action.

Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina praised the move on social media early Saturday. "I echo President Trump's call to the Iranian military, IRGC and security forces to lay down their arms. I echo his call to the Iranian people to take back their government," said Graham.

"President Trump was right when he said he's the first president in 47 years to stand with the people of Iran and give them the backing they need."

House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Brian Mast, a Florida Republican, said the strikes were "the inescapable response to 47 years of continuous and calculated aggression by the Ayatollah of Iran and all his generals against the United States, our allies, and the Iranian people."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 33 of 84

"Every day under this regime, the United States and our allies have been under imminent threat of attack by Iran and its terrorist arms across the globe," Mast said. "They chanted 'Death to America' while seeking nuclear weapons and the missile technology to strike our homeland. The days of America waiting to be attacked by Iran are over."

Democrats warn of long-term commitment

Democrats, though, called out the administration for going around Congress. Many said Trump should be more focused on domestic issues.

"Though there is bipartisan support for stopping the development of nuclear weapons in Iran, there is no consensus for another interminable war in the Middle East," Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin of Illinois said.

"A war in Iran with the goal of regime change could be another long-term military commitment with deadly consequences for thousands of American troops. The rash and unpredictable conduct of President Trump is a well-established worry in many ways but an impulsive commander in chief is a deadly combination."

House Democratic Whip Katherine Clark of Massachusetts blasted Trump for violating a campaign pledge of "no new wars" by launching the attack "under cloak of night, without congressional approval of even a clear rationale."

"Families do not want another war," she said. "They want a reasonable cost of living. They want health care they can afford. They want an end to (Immigration and Customs Enforcement)'s terror in their neighborhoods. And they do not want their sons and daughters placed in harm's way by a reckless President. The people of this country deserve better."

Democratic Sen. Andy Kim of New Jersey called for an immediate vote on a war powers resolution.

"Americans don't want to go to war with Iran," Kim said on social media.

"By launching strikes, President Trump has made the same dangerous and foolish decision President Bush did a generation ago. He put Americans in harm's way without clearly showing there's an imminent threat to our national security. He put the Iranian people in harm's way by calling on them to rise up without a broad coalition of partners to assist in their protection. And Trump once again started a cycle of violence that has already escalated and could spiral out of control. This is unacceptable."

Democratic Sen. Ed Markey of Massachusetts said diplomatic talks should be continued. "Trump's military attack on Iran is illegal and unconstitutional. It was not approved by Congress and holds dangers for all Americans. Trump's illegal actions raise the threat of escalation into a wider regional war with grave risks for U.S. troops and civilians in the region," Markey said in a statement.

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

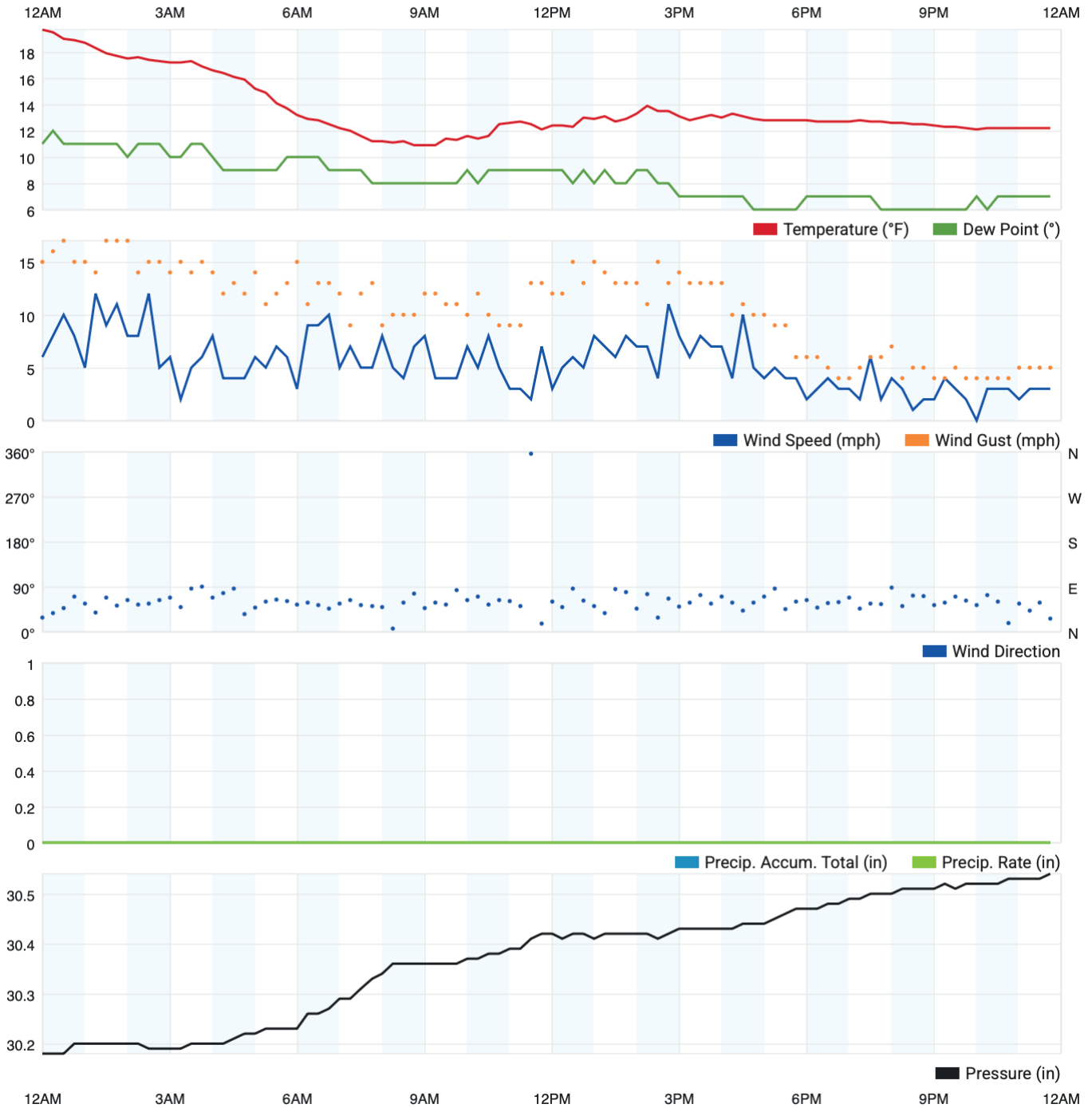
As the Washington Bureau Chief of States Newsroom, Jane directs national coverage, managing staff and freelance reporters in the nation's capital and assigning and editing state-specific daily and enterprise stories. Jane is a veteran of more than three decades in journalism.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 34 of 84

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

February 28, 2026



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 35 of 84

Today



High: 24 °F

Decreasing
Clouds

Tonight



Low: 16 °F

Mostly Clear

Monday



High: 40 °F

Partly Sunny

Monday Night



Low: 24 °F

Mostly Cloudy

Tuesday



High: 43 °F

Partly Sunny

Today

March 1st, 2026



Highs 22 to 43°

Coldest ne SD & wc MN, warmest south central SD.

Monday

Tuesday



38 to 56°

42 to 54°

15 - 30% chance for light rain or rain/snow south of Hwy 212 Mon night



March 1, 2026

2:15 AM



The first half of the week looks mostly dry other than a 15-30% chance for light precipitation south of Hwy 212 Monday night. Temperatures will climb above average for the start of the work week though areas with a fresh snowpack will remain on the cooler side of that warm up.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 36 of 84

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 20 °F at 12:00 AM

Low Temp: 11 °F at 9:05 AM

Wind: 18 mph at 1:20 AM

Precip: : 7" snow. .37 Precip

Today's Info

Record High: 73 in 1992

Record Low: -29 in 1962

Average High: 34

Average Low: 12

Average Precip in Feb.: 0.62

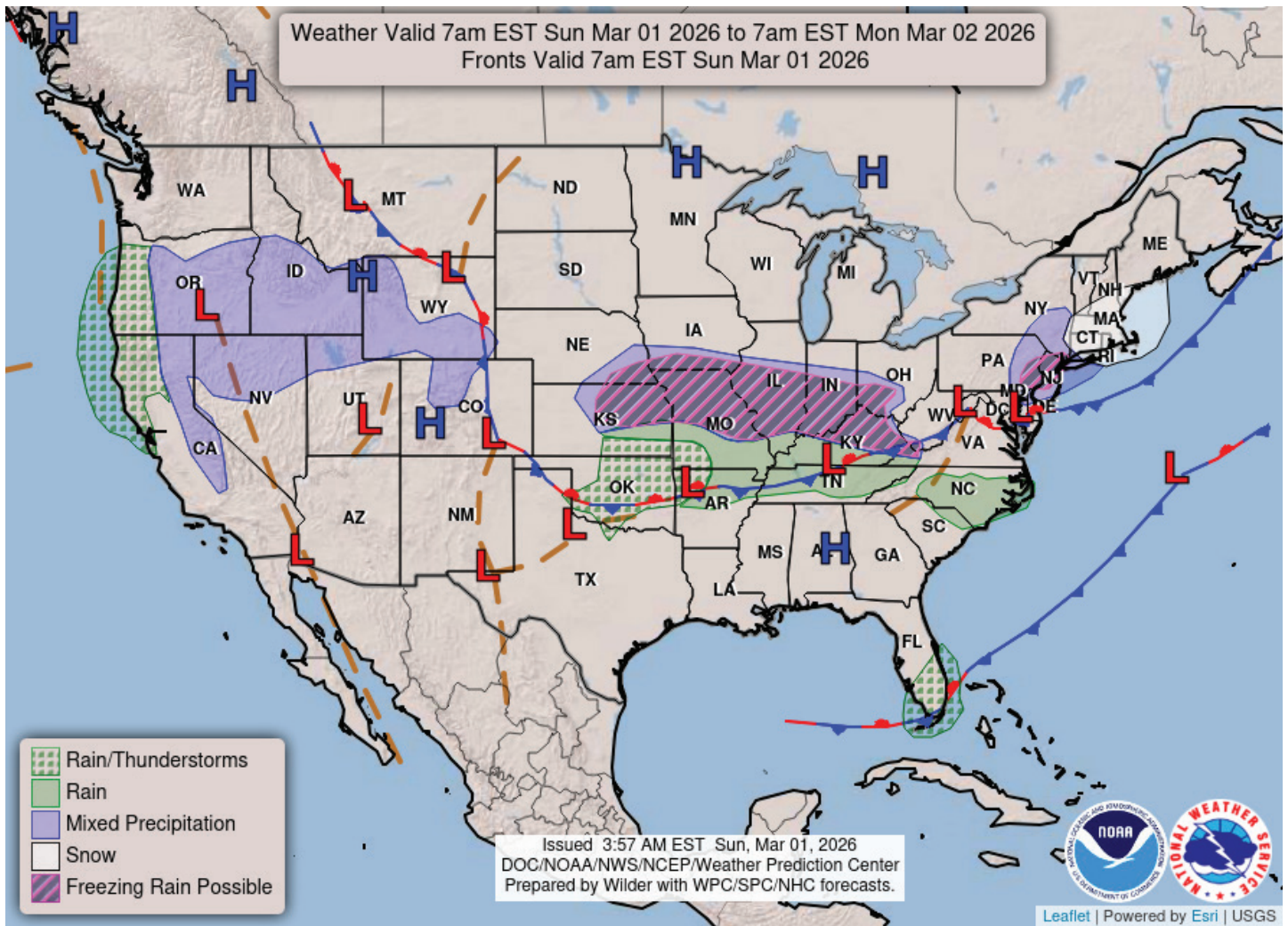
Precip to date in Feb.: 1.33

Average Precip to date: 1.19

Precip Year to Date: 1.33

Sunset Tonight: 6.18 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:09 am



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 37 of 84

Today in Weather History

March 1st, 1970: Freezing rain and drizzle impacted much of South Dakota on March 1st, 1970. Ice accumulation up to 1/8 of an inch thick was reported in Rapid City, with heavier amounts in the northwestern part of the state. Some utility lines were broken, but there was no extensive line damage. Also, some schools were closed due to icy roads.

March 1st, 1998: An incredible amount of snow falls on Lead, South Dakota, from February 25th through March 1st. The official storm total was 103 inches for five days.

March 1st, 2014: Arctic air and strong northwest winds brought bitter cold wind chills to central and north-east South Dakota east of the Missouri River. Bitter wind chills of 35 below to around 40 below occurred. Some of the coldest wind chills include 39 degrees below zero west of Long Lake, 40 degrees below zero at Highmore, 41 degrees below zero near Roy Lake, and 42 degrees below zero at Summit.

1910 — The deadliest avalanche of record in the U.S. thundered down the mountains near Wellington Station WA sweeping three huge locomotive train engines and some passenger cars, snowbound on the grade leading to Stevens Pass, over the side and into a canyon, and burying them under tons of snow. The avalanche claimed the lives of more than 100 people. The station house at Wellington was also swept away. (The Weather Channel)

1914 — High winds and heavy snow crippled New Jersey and New York State. Two feet of snow were reported at Ashbury Park, and at New York City the barometric pressure dropped to a record 28.38 inches. The storm caused complete disruption of electric power in New Jersey. (David Ludlum)

1980 — Norfolk, VA, received 13.7 inches of snow to push their season total to a record 41.9 inches exceeding their previous record by more than four inches. (David Ludlum)

1980 — An unusually large Florida tornado, 500 yards in width at times, killed one person and caused six million dollars damage near Fort Lauderdale. (The Weather Channel)

1983 — A ferocious storm battered the Pacific coast. The storm produced heavy rain and gale force winds resulting in flooding and beach erosion, and in the mountains produced up to seven feet of snow in five days. (The Weather Channel)

1987 — A storm crossing the Great Lakes Region produced heavy snow and gale force winds from Wisconsin to northern New England, with eight inches of snow reported at Ironwood MI. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 — Thunderstorms produced large hail and damaging winds in north central Texas. Baseball size hail was reported at Lake Kickapoo. Hail fell continuously for thirty minutes in the Iowa Park area of Wichita Falls. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 — March came in like a lion, with snow and high winds, in the northwestern U.S. Winds gusted to 86 mph in the Rosario Strait of western Washington State. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 — A series of low pressure systems moving out of the Gulf of Alaska spread high winds and heavy snow across western Alaska. Winds in the Anchorage area gusted to 69 mph at Glen Alps, and Talkeetna was buried under three feet of snow in two days. Valdez received 21.4 inches of snow, raising their total for the winter season to 482.4 inches. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2006 — Dallas/Forth Worth Airport breaks a 107-year-old North Texas temperature record after reaching 93 degrees. Mineral Wells reached 97, Wichita Falls 96 and Fort Worth Meacham Airport 90.

2011 — Snowfall across Idaho broke numerous accumulation records. Pierce received 15 inches, Powell 14.5 inches, Potlatch 12 inches and Kellogg and Plummer 7 inches. The same storm created high winds across the Pacific Northwest. A weather station at 10,000 feet on Mount Ranier measures a wind gust of 137 MPH with a sustained 1-minute wind reading of 112 MPH.



Daily Devotion

God's Word to Us

God reveals Himself through His Word—and changes us forever.

2 Timothy 4:1-5:

1 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:

2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,

4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Most everyone can access a Bible today, yet this book often sits unopened on a shelf or coffee table. If we truly grasped its worth, however, we would prize God's Word above everything else. All of Scripture was inspired by the Holy Spirit. Every thought and word in the Bible originated with God Himself (2 Peter 1:20-21).

Consider how we treasure letters from people we love. Our response to Scripture should be even stronger. The Creator of the universe—the God who holds eternity in His hand—recorded truths that are necessary for His children to live abundantly and joyfully. What's more, God reveals Himself through His Word, which is so powerful that it can transform our life (Hebrews 4:12).

Our love for the Bible is rooted in its essential purpose. Romans 10:17 tells us that "faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." Scripture, then, is key to our understanding of saving faith. How could such a book ever become commonplace in our heart and taken for granted?

Think about the last time you saw a Bible. What was your reaction? Did you read it with excitement or a sense of reverence? Next time you open this precious book, read the words, savor their meaning, and ask God to help you apply His lessons to your life.

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

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 39 of 84

The Groton Independent

Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.2% Sales Tax

- Black & White \$52.00/year
- Colored \$80.00/year
- Colored \$49.00/6 months
- E-Weekly* \$35.00/year

* The E-Weekly is a PDF file emailed to you each week. It does not grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Groton Daily Independent

www.397news.com

Subscription Form

This option will grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

- 1 Month \$16.00
- 3 Months..... \$28.00
- 6 Months..... \$38.00
- 9 Months..... \$52.00
- 12 Months..... \$60.00

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

The following will be used for your log-in information.

E-mail _____

Password _____

Pay with Paypal. Type the following into your browser window:

paypal.me/paperpaul

Pay with Venmo: @paperpaul Phone Number to Confirm: 7460



WINNING NUMBERS

MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
02.28.26

13 20 28 44 48 4

TOP PRIZE:
\$1,000,000/year

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 5 Mins 52 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
02.27.26

11 18 39 43 67 23

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$473,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
02.28.26

3 5 18 43 51 4

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$16,580,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
02.28.26

10 12 27 31 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
02.28.26

10 15 23 28 38 3

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
02.28.26

6 20 35 54 65 10

Power Play: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$249,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 41 of 84

News from the **AP** Associated Press

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL

Rapid City Stevens 63, Sioux Falls Jefferson 56
Sioux Falls Washington 53, Rapid City Central 37
Spearfish 59, Brookings 27
Watertown 56, T F Riggs High School 31
Yankton 52, Douglas 18

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

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL

Sioux Falls Jefferson 87, Rapid City Stevens 70
Sioux Falls Washington 55, Rapid City Central 46
Spearfish 68, Brookings 58
Watertown 74, T F Riggs High School 45
Yankton 59, Douglas 35

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

Fens' 17 lead South Dakota past South Dakota State 75-70

By The Associated Press undefined

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Cameron Fens scored 17 points as South Dakota beat South Dakota State 75-70 on Saturday.

Fens also added seven rebounds for the Coyotes (16-15, 8-8 Summit League). Jordan Crawford scored 17 points while shooting 4 for 10 from the floor and 8 of 9 from the free-throw line. Uzziah Buntyn shot 4 of 14 from the field and went 7 for 7 from the line to finish with 15 points.

Joe Saylor led the Jackrabbits (14-17, 7-9) in scoring, finishing with 24 points and six assists. South Dakota State also got 15 points and seven rebounds from Damon Wilkinson.

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

At least 9 killed as Shiites storm US Consulate in Pakistan over killing of Iran's supreme leader

By ADIL JAWAD AND MUNIR AHMED Associated Press

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP) — At least nine people were killed and about two dozen were wounded in violent clashes with police and paramilitary forces Sunday after hundreds of protesters stormed the U.S. Consulate in the Pakistani port city of Karachi, authorities said.

The violence came hours after the United States and Israel attacked Iran and killed the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Police and officials at a hospital in Karachi said at least 25 people were also wounded in the clashes and some of them were in critical condition.

Summaiya Syed Tariq, a police surgeon at the city's main government hospital, confirmed that initially six bodies and multiple injured people were brought to the facility. However, she said the death toll rose to nine after three critically wounded died.

The U.S. Embassy in Pakistan wrote on X that it was monitoring reports of ongoing demonstrations at

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 42 of 84

the U.S. Consulates General in Karachi and Lahore, as well as calls for additional protests at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad and the Consulate General in Peshawar. It advised U.S. citizens in Pakistan to monitor local news, stay aware of their surroundings, avoid large crowds and keep their travel registration with the U.S. government up to date.

Karachi is the capital of southern Sindh province and Pakistan's largest city.

Senior police official Irfan Baloch said protesters briefly attacked the perimeter of the U.S. Consulate but were later dispersed. He dismissed as baseless reports that any part of the consulate building was set on fire. However, he said protesters torched a nearby police post and smashed windows of the consulate before security forces arrived and regained control.

Witnesses said dozens of Shiite protesters remained gathered about a kilometer (half a mile) from the consulate, urging others to join them. They said one of the protesters had tried to burn a window of the consulate before security forces arrived there and dispersed the demonstrators.

It prompted Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi to issue an appeal for calm.

In a statement, he said, "Following the martyrdom of Ayatollah Khamenei, every citizen of Pakistan shares in the grief of the people of Iran." He described it as "a day of mourning for the Muslim Ummah and for the people of both Iran and Pakistan," but urged people not to take the law into their own hands and to express their protests peacefully.

The provincial government of Sindh in a statement also urged citizens to express their views peacefully and warned against engaging in violence. The area surrounding the U.S. Consulate in Karachi resembled a conflict zone as protests continued for hours, with dozens of Shiite youth, some covering their faces, throwing stones at law enforcement officials and vowing to reach the consulate, where hundreds of police and paramilitary Rangers have been deployed.

Shiites also held a peaceful rally in Multan, a city in Punjab province, chanting slogans against Israel and the United States. Mamoonah Sherazi, who attended the rally, said she was protesting the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader. She described Khamenei as a fatherly figure and a strong voice for Shiites, adding that he also supported Sunni Muslims facing oppression. "God willing, we will never bow before America and Israel," she said.

Shiites also held a rally near the U.S. Consulate in Lahore, the capital of eastern Punjab province, police said. A rally was also planned in the capital, Islamabad, and elsewhere in the country. Authorities said the government has stepped up security around the U.S. Embassy in the capital, and consulates across the country to avoid any further violence.

Shiites make up roughly 15% of Pakistan's population of about 250 million and represent one of the largest Shiite communities in the world. They have frequently staged anti-Israel and anti-U.S. rallies in the past, though clashes of this scale are rare.

Afghanistan says it thwarted a Pakistani airstrike attempt on Bagram Air Base

By ABDUL QAHAH AFGHAN and ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Afghanistan said Sunday it had thwarted attempted airstrikes on Bagram Air Base, the former U.S. military base north of Kabul, while cross-border fighting between Pakistan and Afghanistan stretched into a fourth day.

The fighting has been the most severe between the neighbors for years, with Pakistan declaring it is in "open war" with Afghanistan. The conflict has alarmed the international community, particularly as the area is one where other militant groups, including al-Qaida and the Islamic State group, still have a presence and have been trying to resurface.

Pakistan accuses Afghanistan's Taliban government of harboring militant groups that stage attacks against it and also of allying with its archrival India. Border clashes in October killed dozens of soldiers, civilians and suspected militants until a Qatari-mediated ceasefire ended the intense fighting. But several rounds of peace talks in Turkey in November failed to produce a lasting agreement, and the two sides have oc-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 43 of 84

asionally traded fire since then.

On Sunday, the police headquarters of Parwan province, where Bagram is located, said in a statement that several Pakistani military jets had entered Afghan airspace "and attempted to bomb Bagram Air Base" at around 5 a.m. The statement said Afghan forces responded with "anti-aircraft and missile defense systems" and had managed to thwart the attack.

There was no immediate response to the claim from Pakistan.

Bagram was the United States' largest military base in Afghanistan. It was taken over by the Taliban as they swept across the country and took control in the wake of the chaotic U.S. withdrawal from the country in 2021. Last year, U.S. President Donald Trump suggested he wanted to reestablish a U.S. presence at the base.

The current fighting began when Afghanistan launched a broad cross-border attack Thursday night, saying it was in retaliation for Pakistani airstrikes the previous Sunday.

Pakistan had said its airstrike had targeted the outlawed Pakistani Taliban, or TTP. Afghanistan had said only civilians were killed.

The TTP militant group, which is separate but closely allied with Afghanistan's ruling Taliban, operates inside Pakistan, where it has been blamed for hundreds of deaths in bombings and other attacks over the years. Pakistan accuses Afghanistan's Taliban government of providing a safe haven within Afghanistan for the TTP, an accusation Afghanistan denies.

After Thursday's Afghan attack, Pakistani Defense Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif declared that "our patience has now run out. Now it is open war between us."

In the ongoing fighting, each side claims to have killed hundreds of the other side's forces — and each side puts its own casualties at drastically lower numbers.

Afghan officials said fighting had continued overnight and into Sunday in the border areas.

The police command spokesman for Nangarhar province, Said Tayyeb Hammad, said anti-aircraft missiles were used from the provincial capital of Jalalabad and surrounding areas on Pakistani fighter jets flying overhead Sunday morning.

Defense Ministry spokesman Enayatullah Khowarazmi said Afghan forces had launched counterattacks with snipers across the border from Nangarhar, Paktia, Khost and Kandahar provinces overnight. He claimed two Pakistani drones had been shot down and dozens of Pakistani soldiers had been killed.

Deputy government spokesman Hamdullah Fitrat said Pakistani drone attacks hit civilian homes in Nangarhar province late Saturday night, killing a woman and a child, while a mortar killed another civilian when it hit a home in Paktia province.

There was no immediate response to the claims from Pakistani officials.

World leaders urge return to talks after U.S. and Israeli strikes kill Iran leader Ali Khamenei

By CLAUDIA CIOBANU, SAM McNEIL and SAM METZ Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — World leaders urged peace and a return to talks as the military strikes by the United States and Israel on Iran raised concerns about whether the violence could spread across the region and tensions rose with Iran vowing devastating blows after the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

A massive explosion rocked the Iranian capital on Sunday morning as the Israeli military said it was targeting the "heart" of the city after stating it cleared the path to Tehran the day before. Meanwhile, Iran pressed on with its retaliation campaign: Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain said they intercepted a barrage of missiles.

Oman, which served as an interlocutor between Tehran and Washington in recent nuclear talks, said an oil tanker in the strategic Strait of Hormuz came under attack and its port at Duqm, used by the U.S. Navy as a logistical hub and capable of hosting aircraft carriers, was targeted in a drone attack.

The demise of Khamenei, who had no designated successor, will likely throw Iran's future into uncertainty

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 44 of 84

and exacerbate already growing concerns of a broader conflict.

Top diplomats from the 27 European Union nations are holding an emergency meeting Sunday to discuss the situation around Iran and the next steps for the bloc. The United Nations Security Council met late Saturday.

Perhaps cautious about upsetting already strained relations with Trump, many nations, including several in the Middle East, refrained from commenting directly or pointedly on the joint strikes but condemned Tehran's retaliation.

Other countries were more explicit: Australia and Canada expressed open support for the U.S. strikes, while Russia and China responded with direct criticism.

The United States and Israel launched a major attack against Iran on Saturday, and Trump called on the Iranian public to "seize control of your destiny" by rising against the Islamic theocracy that has ruled the nation since 1979.

World leaders urge resumption of talks

During the U.N. Security Council on Saturday, the U.N. chief and many countries urged a halt to attacks and a return to negotiations to prevent the conflict from expanding further into the region and beyond.

Secretary-General António Guterres told the council that everything must be done to prevent an escalation. "The alternative," he warned, "is a potential wider conflict with grave consequences for civilians and regional stability."

Guterres said the U.S. and Israeli airstrikes violated international law, including the U.N. Charter. He also condemned Iran's retaliatory attacks for violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The Security Council meeting was tense as the U.S. and Iranian ambassadors traded warnings and direct rebuffs.

De-escalation calls

Further calls for de-escalation came from across the Middle East and Europe.

"Return to your senses ... and deal with your neighbors with reason and responsibility before the circle of isolation and escalation widens," Anwar Gargash, an adviser to the United Arab Emirates' president, told the Iranian theocracy on Sunday.

In recent years, the UAE sought to de-escalate tensions with Iran despite its longtime suspicions of its northern neighbor.

The 22-nation Arab League called the Iranian attacks "a blatant violation of the sovereignty of countries that advocate for peace and strive for stability." That coalition of nations has historically condemned both Israel and Iran for actions it says risk destabilizing the region.

"The Iranian regime's indiscriminate attacks against its neighbours carry the risk of dragging the region into a broader war and we condemn this," said EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas as she announced the bloc's meeting on Sunday. "It is essential that the war does not spread any further. The Iranian regime has choices to make."

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz called on the U.S. and Iran to resume talks in a statement on Saturday, saying they favored a negotiated settlement. The three countries have led efforts to reach a negotiated solution over Iran's nuclear program.

"We condemn Iranian attacks on countries in the region in the strongest terms. Iran must refrain from indiscriminate military strikes," they said. "Ultimately, the Iranian people must be allowed to determine their future," they said.

Protests and celebrations

At least six people were killed in clashes with police Sunday after hundreds of protesters stormed the U.S. Consulate in the Pakistani port city of Karachi, authorities said.

In Indian-controlled Kashmir, tens of thousands of people on Sunday staged massive demonstrations to denounce Khamenei's killing by the U.S. and Israel.

Demonstrations were also held from New York to Berlin and beyond by members of the Iranian diaspora and their supporters, celebrating the end of Khamenei's rule.

Iranians in Berlin were seen cheering and dancing to loud music on Saturday afternoon in celebration. Some of the demonstrators waved flags of the Iranian monarchy, with German, Israeli, and U.S. flags also on display. Hopeful Iranians also took to the streets in multiple U.S. cities.

Middle East airports closed and thousands of travelers stranded after attack on Iran

By CARA RUBINSKY, MARC LEVY and JOSH FUNK Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The attack on Iran by the United States and Israel disrupted flights across the Middle East and beyond as countries around the region closed their airspace and key airports that connect Europe, Africa and the West to Asia were directly hit by strikes.

More than 3,400 flights were canceled Sunday across seven airports in the Mideast, according to flight tracker Flightradar24. Airports in Dubai and Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar's capital, Doha, and Manama in Bahrain were among those closed.

Emirates Airlines suspended all flights to and from Dubai until at least Sunday afternoon. The Qatar airport was closed until at least Monday morning, according to Qatar Airways. Israeli airspace also remained closed Sunday. Israeli airline El Al said it was preparing a recovery effort to bring home Israelis stranded abroad once the airspace reopened.

Travelers were either stranded or diverted to other airports Saturday after Israel, Qatar, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait and Bahrain closed their airspace. There also was no flight activity over the United Arab Emirates, FlightRadar24 said, after the government there announced a "temporary and partial closure" of its airspace.

That led to the closure of key hub airports in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Doha. The three major airlines that operate at those airports — Emirates, Qatar Airways and Etihad — typically have about 90,000 passengers per day crossing through those hubs and even more travelers headed to destinations in the Middle East, according to aviation analytics firm Cirium.

Airports hit by attacks

Two airports in the United Arab Emirates reported incidents as the government there condemned what it called a "blatant attack involving Iranian ballistic missiles" on Saturday.

Officials at Dubai International Airport — the largest in the United Arab Emirates and one of the busiest in the world — said four people were injured, while Zayed International Airport in Abu Dhabi said that one person was killed and seven others were injured in a drone strike. Strikes were also reported at Kuwait International Airport.

Though Iran did not publicly claim responsibility, the scope of retaliatory strikes that Gulf nations attributed to Iran extended beyond the American bases that it previously said it would target.

Flight delays and cancellations are likely to continue

"For travelers, there's no way to sugarcoat this," said Henry Harteveltdt, an airline industry analyst and president of Atmosphere Research Group. "You should prepare for delays or cancellations for the next few days as these attacks evolve and hopefully end."

Airlines that are crossing the Middle East will have to reroute flights around the conflict with many flights headed south over Saudi Arabia. That will add hours to those flights and consume additional fuel, adding to the costs airlines will have to absorb. So ticket prices could quickly start to increase if the conflict lingers.

The added flights will also put pressure on air traffic controllers in Saudi Arabia who might have to slow traffic to make sure they can handle it safely. And the countries that closed their airspace will miss out on the overflight fees airlines pay for crossing overhead.

But Mike McCormick, who used to oversee air traffic control for the Federal Aviation Administration before he retired and is now a professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, said over the next few days these countries might be able to reopen parts of their airspace once American and Israeli officials

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 46 of 84

share with the airlines where military flights are operating and how capable Iran remains at firing missiles.

"Those countries then will be able to go through and say, ok, we can reopen this portion of our space but we'll keep this portion of our airspace closed," McCormick said. "So I think what we'll see in the next 24 to 36 hours how the use of airspace evolves as the kinetic activity gets more well-defined and as the capability of Iran to actually shoot missiles and create additional risk is diminished due to the attacks."

But it is unclear how long the disruption to flight operations could last. For comparison, the Israeli and U.S. attack on Iran in June 2025 lasted 12 days.

Check your flight status before you travel

The situation was changing quickly and airlines urged passengers to check their flight status online before heading to the airport.

The reverberations echoed far outside the Middle East — for example, airport authorities in the resort island of Bali in Indonesia said more than 1,600 tourists were stranded at I Gusti Ngurah Rai International Airport on Sunday after five flights to the Middle East were canceled or postponed.

Some airlines issued waivers to affected travelers that will allow them to rebook their flight plans without paying extra fees or higher fares.

Jonathan Escott and his partner had arrived at the airport in Newcastle, England, on Saturday only to find out that his direct flight to Dubai on Emirates airline was canceled, leaving everyone on the flight stuck there.

Escott left to go back to where he was staying with family, about an hour from the airport, but has no idea when he may be able to travel.

"No one knows," Escott said. "No one really knows what's going on with the conflict, really. Not Emirates, Emirates don't have a clue. No one has a clue."

Harteveldt said travelers should anticipate a lot of disruptions.

"To be honest, if you haven't left home, chances are you won't be leaving home if you're supposed to travel to or through these destinations for at least several days, if not longer," he said. "And if you are returning home, you will have to be very creative about how you get home."

Israeli strikes rock Tehran as Iran's counterattacks widen after the killing of the supreme leader

By JON GAMBRELL, MELANIE LIDMAN, JOSH BOAK and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — An enormous explosion rocked Iran's capital Sunday as the Israeli military said it was targeting the heart of the city. Earlier, Iran fired missiles at an ever-widening list of targets in Israel and Gulf Arab states in retaliation for the killing of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei by the United States and Israel.

The blast in Tehran — whose target was not immediately clear — sent a huge plume of smoke into the sky and shook the ground. It appeared centered in neighborhoods home to the country's police headquarters and Iranian state television, as well as Tehran's Revolutionary Court and a Defense Ministry building.

Saturday's joint U.S.-Israel strikes on Iran opened a stunning new chapter in U.S. intervention, and carried the potential for retaliatory violence and a wider war, representing a startling flexing of military might for an American president who swept into office on an "America First" platform and vowed to keep out of "forever wars." It was the second time in eight months that the Trump administration has used military force against the Islamic Republic.

In a 12-day war in June, Israeli and American strikes greatly weakened Iran's air defenses, military leadership and nuclear program. But the killing of Khamenei and a call by U.S. President Donald Trump for the Iranian people to overthrow their government significantly raises the stakes — creating a leadership vacuum in the Islamic Republic and increasing the risk of regional instability.

Iran's Cabinet vowed that this "great crime will never go unanswered" and the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard threatened to target Israeli and American bases.

"You have crossed our red line and must pay the price," Iran's parliamentary speaker, Mohammad Bagher

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 47 of 84

Qalibaf, said in a televised address Sunday. "We will deliver such devastating blows that you yourselves will be driven to beg."

Trump warned that any retaliation would only lead to further escalation.

"THEY BETTER NOT DO THAT," Trump fired back in a social media post. "IF THEY DO, WE WILL HIT THEM WITH A FORCE THAT HAS NEVER BEEN SEEN BEFORE!"

In a sign of how the attack could spread instability throughout the region, hundreds of people stormed the U.S. Consulate in Pakistan's port city of Karachi on Sunday. Police and paramilitary forces used batons and fired tear gas to disperse the crowd, and at least six people were killed in the clashes, authorities said.

Iran retaliates

After the initial strikes, Iran immediately launched missiles and drones toward Israel and into Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar.

The strikes could rattle global markets, particularly if Iran makes the Strait of Hormuz unsafe for commercial traffic. A third of worldwide oil exports transported by sea passed through the strait in 2025.

In repeated barrages at targets across Israel, one person was killed and more than 120 injured, according to authorities. Many missiles were intercepted, the military said.

Flights across the Middle East were disrupted, and air defense fire thudded over Dubai, the United Arab Emirates' commercial capital, which has long drawn business and expatriates by billing itself as a safe haven in a volatile region. Explosions continued into Sunday morning in Dubai.

Shrapnel from Iranian attacks on the United Arab Emirates' capital of Abu Dhabi killed two people, state media said, and debris from aerial interceptions caused fires at the city's main port and on the facade of the iconic Burj Al Arab hotel.

Attacks also extended into Oman — Iran's longtime interlocutor with the West that hadn't been drawn into the fray previously.

Saudi Arabia said Iran targeted its capital and eastern region in an attack that was repelled, and Jordan said it "dealt with" 49 drones and ballistic missiles. Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar's military also said they had intercepted projectiles Sunday morning.

In Iraq, a militant group claimed responsibility for a drone attack targeting American bases in Irbil, according to the Rudaw media outlet. Smoke could be seen from an area where the U.S. has an air base there, but it was not immediately clear whether it had been hit.

Iran forms council to govern until a new supreme leader is chosen

As supreme leader, Khamenei had final say on all major policies during his decades in power. He led Iran's clerical establishment and the Revolutionary Guard, the two main centers of power in the governing theocracy.

Though Trump called on Saturday for the Iranian people to "take over" their government, there was no sign in Tehran or elsewhere of unrest.

Iran quickly formed a council to govern the country until a new supreme leader is chosen.

The strikes also killed several senior officials, including: Iran's army chief of staff, Gen. Abdol Rahim Mousavi; Defense Minister Gen. Aziz Nasirzadeh; Maj. Gen. Mohammad Pakpour, who took over as the Revolutionary Guard's top commander after Israel killed its past commander in the June war; and Ali Shamkhani, a top security adviser to Khamenei.

An Iranian diplomat told the United Nations Security Council that hundreds of civilians were killed and wounded in the strikes.

In southern Iran, at least 115 people were reported killed when a girls' school was struck, and dozens more were wounded, the local governor told Iranian state TV. U.S. Central Command spokesperson Capt. Tim Hawkins said he was aware of those reports and that officials were looking into them.

Iran's state news agency IRNA said at least 15 people were killed in the southwest, quoting the governor of the Lamerd region, Ali Alizadeh, as saying a sports hall, two residential areas and a hall near a school were hit.

As reports trickled out about Khamenei's death, eyewitnesses in Tehran told The Associated Press that

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 48 of 84

some residents were rejoicing, cheering from rooftops, blowing whistles and letting out ululations.

Mourners raised a black flag over the Imam Reza shrine in Mashhad and the Iranian government declared 40 days of public mourning and a seven-day nationwide public holiday to commemorate Khamenei's death.

Citing unidentified sources, the semiofficial Fars news agency reported that several relatives of Khamenei were also killed, including a daughter, son-in-law, daughter-in-law and grandchild.

Strikes were planned for months and feared for weeks

Tensions have soared in recent weeks as the Trump administration built up the largest force of American warships and aircraft in the Middle East in decades. The president insisted he wanted a deal to constrain Iran's nuclear program while the country struggled with growing dissent following nationwide protests.

Democrats decried that Trump had taken action without congressional authorization. White House spokesperson Karoline Leavitt said the administration had briefed several Republican and Democratic leaders in Congress in advance.

Though Trump had pronounced the Iranian nuclear program obliterated in strikes last year, the country was rebuilding infrastructure that it had lost, according to a senior U.S. official who spoke to reporters on condition of anonymity to discuss Trump's decision-making process. The official said intelligence showed that Iran had developed the capability to produce its own high-quality centrifuges, an important step in developing the highly enriched uranium needed for weapons.

Iran has said it has not enriched since June — though it has maintained its right to do so. It has also blocked international inspectors from visiting the sites the U.S. bombed. Satellite photos analyzed by AP have shown new activity at two of those sites, suggesting Iran is trying to assess and potentially recover material.

What to know about the new US-Israel attacks on Iran

By BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

The U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on Saturday in a massive operation, and Tehran hours later said Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was dead. In announcing the attack, President Donald Trump urged Iranians to seize the moment and "take over."

Iranian state television and state-run IRNA news agency reported Khamenei's death without details.

In counterattacks, Iran fired drones and missiles at Israel and aimed strikes at U.S. military installations in Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar. Exchanges of fire continued into early Sunday.

Iranian state media, citing the Red Crescent, on Saturday evening said at least 201 people had been killed and more than 700 injured. Ali Larijani, the secretary of Iran's National Security Council, said Israel and America will "regret their actions."

The strikes came two days after the latest U.S.-Iran talks as Trump pressured Tehran for a deal to constrain its nuclear program, building up a fleet of warships in the region. Iran's theocracy also has struggled with growing dissent following nationwide protests that began over the economy but turned into anti-government ones.

The U.S. military said it was looking into reports of civilians killed in Iran in Saturday's strikes. At least 115 people were reported killed and dozens wounded at a girls' school in the south, the local governor told Iranian state TV.

World leaders reacted with caution, and the U.N. Security Council met in an urgent session.

Supreme leader's compound was one of the first targets

Israel said it had worked with the U.S. for months to plan the attacks. The U.S. military said targets in Iran included Revolutionary Guard command facilities, air defense capabilities, missile and drone launch sites, and military airfields.

One of the first strikes hit near the offices of the 86-year-old Khamenei, who had ruled since 1989 and held ultimate power.

Israel said it killed the commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guard and the defense minister.

The U.S. and Israel also struck Iran last June during earlier nuclear talks, greatly weakening Iran's air

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 49 of 84

defenses, military leadership and nuclear program.

The Trump administration has asserted that Iran had been rebuilding its nuclear program, which Tehran has insisted is for peaceful purposes.

Iran strikes back at Israel and U.S. bases

Iran launched missiles and drones targeting Israel and strikes targeting U.S. military installations in Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar.

The U.S. military reported no U.S. casualties and minimal damage at U.S. bases despite "hundreds of Iranian missile and drone attacks."

Israel's military said Iran fired "dozens" of missiles at Israel, with many intercepted. Emergency responder Magen David Adom said a woman in the Tel Aviv area died after being wounded in an Iranian missile attack.

Saudi Arabia said Iran had targeted its capital and eastern region in an attack that was repelled. Zayed International Airport in Abu Dhabi said one person was killed and seven others were injured in a drone strike. Bahrain said a missile attack targeted the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet headquarters, and three buildings were damaged in the capital, Manama, and Muharraq city.

Kuwait's civil aviation authority said a drone targeted the main international airport, injuring several employees. Kuwait's state-run news agency said three troops were injured by shrapnel from strikes that hit Ali Al-Salem air base. Explosions could be heard in Qatar. Jordan said it "dealt with" 49 drones and ballistic missiles.

Iranian-backed Houthis in Yemen have vowed to resume attacks on Red Sea shipping routes and on Israel, according to two senior Houthi officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because there was no official announcement from leadership.

Trump tells Iranians it's time to topple their government

In announcing the "major combat operations," Trump indicated the U.S. was striking for reasons beyond Iran's nuclear program. On Friday, he voiced frustration over lack of progress in negotiations to stop Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons.

He listed grievances stretching back to the beginning of the Islamic Republic following a revolution in 1979 that turned Iran from one of America's closest allies in the Middle East into a foe. Iran's ballistic missile program and support for armed proxies in the region were others.

Trump on Saturday told Iranians to take cover but urged them to later rise up and topple the Islamic leadership.

"When we are finished, take over your government," Trump said. "It will be yours to take. This will be probably your only chance for generations."

U.S. military has been building up in the region

Trump later said "heavy and pinpoint bombing" in Iran would continue through the week or longer.

The U.S. had assembled a vast fleet of fighter jets and warships in the region as it negotiated with Iran about a deal over its nuclear program.

The aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln and three guided-missile destroyers arrived in January to bolster the number of warships. The world's largest aircraft carrier, the USS Gerald R. Ford, and four accompanying destroyers later were dispatched from the Caribbean to head to the Middle East and are now in the Mediterranean.

The fleet has added more than 10,000 U.S. troops to the region.

Fighting disrupts commercial air travel

The fighting disrupted air travel in the region. Tens of thousands of travelers around the globe were stranded.

Hundreds of thousands of travelers were stranded or diverted to other airports after Israel, Qatar, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait and Bahrain closed their airspace. There was no flight activity over the United Arab Emirates, flight tracking website FlightRadar24 said, after the government announced a "temporary and partial closure" of its airspace.

The strikes also could rattle global markets, particularly if Iran makes the Strait of Hormuz unsafe for

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 50 of 84

commercial traffic. A third of worldwide oil exports transported by sea passed through the strait in 2025.

Iran's supreme leader killed in major attack by US and Israel

By JON GAMBRELL, MELANIE LIDMAN, JOSH BOAK and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed in a major attack by Israel and the United States, Iranian state media confirmed early Sunday, throwing the future of the Islamic Republic into doubt and raising the risk of regional instability.

President Donald Trump announced the death hours earlier, saying it gave Iranians their "greatest chance" to "take back" their country.

State media reported that the 86-year-old was killed in an airstrike targeting his compound in downtown Tehran. Satellite photos from Airbus showed that the site was heavily bombed.

His death at his office "showed that he consistently stood among the people and at the forefront of his responsibilities, confronting what officials call global arrogance," state TV said.

"Khamenei, one of the most evil people in History, is dead," Trump wrote in a social media post. He warned of "heavy and pinpoint bombing" that he said would continue throughout the week and even beyond, part of a lethal assault the U.S. has justified as necessary to disable the country's nuclear capabilities.

Iran, which responded to the strikes with its own counterassault, warned of retribution, with the Cabinet saying that this "great crime will never go unanswered." The paramilitary Revolutionary Guard threatened to launch its "most intense offensive operation" ever targeting Israeli and American bases.

The attack opened a stunning new chapter in U.S. intervention in Iran, carried the potential for retaliatory violence and a wider war, and represented a startling flex of military might for an American president who swept into office on an "America First" platform and vowed to keep out of "forever wars."

The killing of Khamenei in the second Trump administration assault on Iran in eight months appeared certain to create a leadership vacuum given the absence of a known successor and because the 86-year-old supreme leader had final say on all major policies during his decades in power. He led Iran's clerical establishment and the Revolutionary Guard, the two main centers of power in the governing theocracy.

Iran quickly formed a council to govern the country until a new supreme leader is chosen.

State media also reported the deaths of the head of Iran's Revolutionary Guard and a top security adviser to Khamenei in airstrikes. Maj. Gen. Mohammad Pakpour took over as the Guard's top commander after Israel killed its past commander in the 12-day war last June. The adviser, Ali Shamkhani, had long been a figurehead within Iran's security establishment, IRNA said.

As reports trickled out about Khamenei's death, eyewitnesses in Tehran told The Associated Press that some residents were rejoicing, cheering from rooftops, blowing whistles and letting out ululations.

Mourners raised a black mourning flag over the Imam Reza shrine in Mashhad, Iran's second-largest city and a major pilgrimage site for Shiite Muslims. The Iranian government declared 40 days of public mourning and a seven-day nationwide public holiday to commemorate Khamenei's death.

Citing unidentified sources, the semiofficial Fars news agency, believed to be close to the Revolutionary Guard, reported that several relatives of Khamenei were also killed, including a daughter, son-in-law, daughter-in-law and grandchild.

Strikes were planned for months

The joint U.S.-Israel operation, which officials say was planned for months, took place Saturday during the Muslim holy fasting month of Ramadan and at the start of the Iranian workweek. It followed stilted negotiations and warnings from Trump, who last year trumpeted his administration's success in incapacitating the country's nuclear program but nonetheless cast the latest round as necessary to head off its potential resurgence.

About 12 hours after the attacks began, the U.S. military reported no U.S. casualties and minimal damage at U.S. bases despite "hundreds of Iranian missile and drone attacks." It said targets in Iran included Revolutionary Guard command facilities, air defense systems, missile and drone launch sites, and military airfields.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 51 of 84

Israel, for its part, said it had killed the commander of the Revolutionary Guard Corps and the country's defense minister, as well as the secretary of the Iranian Security Council, a close adviser to Khamenei.

Khamenei "was unable to avoid our Intelligence and Highly Sophisticated Tracking Systems and, working closely with Israel, there was not a thing he, or the other leaders that have been killed along with him, could do," Trump said. "This is the single greatest chance for the Iranian people to take back their Country."

An Iranian diplomat told the United Nations Security Council that hundreds of civilians were killed and wounded in the strikes. Iran retaliated by firing missiles and drones toward Israel and at U.S. military bases in the region, and exchanges of fire continued into the night.

Some of the first strikes on Iran appeared to hit near the offices of Khamenei, the second leader of the Islamic Republic who succeeded Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Israeli officials confirmed the death, followed by Trump.

Democrats decried that Trump had taken action without congressional authorization. White House spokesperson Karoline Leavitt said the administration had briefed several Republican and Democratic leaders in Congress in advance.

Tensions soared as US built up military forces

Tensions have soared in recent weeks as the Trump administration built up the largest force of American warships and aircraft in the Middle East in decades. The president insisted he wanted a deal to constrain Iran's nuclear program while the country struggled with growing dissent following nationwide protests.

Though Trump had pronounced the Iranian nuclear program obliterated in strikes last year, the country was rebuilding infrastructure that it had lost, according to a senior U.S. official who spoke to reporters on condition of anonymity to discuss Trump's decision-making process. The official said intelligence showed that Iran had developed the capability to produce its own high-quality centrifuges, an important step in developing the highly enriched uranium needed for weapons.

Iran responded to the latest strikes by launching missiles and drones toward Israel and targeting U.S. military installations in Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar. The Israeli military said Iran fired dozens of missiles at Israel, with many intercepted. The Magen David Adom rescue service said Saturday night that a woman in the Tel Aviv area died after being wounded in an Iranian missile attack.

At least three explosions were heard Saturday evening near the Intelligence Ministry building in northern Tehran, witnesses said, adding that air defense systems had begun operating there. Israel's military said it had begun new strikes against missile launchers and aerial defense systems in central Iran.

In southern Iran, at least 115 people were reported killed when a girls' school was struck, and dozens more were wounded, the local governor told Iranian state TV. U.S. Central Command spokesperson Capt. Tim Hawkins said he was "aware of reports" that a girls' school was struck and that officials were looking into them.

Iran's state news agency IRNA said at least 15 people were killed in the southwest, quoting the governor of the Lamerd region, Ali Alizadeh, as saying a sports hall, two residential areas and a hall near a school were hit.

Flights across the Middle East were disrupted, and air defense fire thudded over Dubai, the United Arab Emirates' commercial capital. Shrapnel from an Iranian missile attack on the UAE capital killed one person, state media said.

Attack was coordinated between Israel and US

Israel said the operation had been planned for months with the United States. Air Force pilots struck "hundreds of targets across Iran," Israeli military chief of staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir said in a statement.

Targets in the Israeli campaign included Iran's military, symbols of government and intelligence targets, according to an official briefed on the operation, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss nonpublic information on the attack.

Trump acknowledged Saturday that there could be American casualties, saying "that often happens in war." He said he was aiming to "annihilate" the Iranian navy and destroy regional proxies supported by Tehran. He called on the paramilitary Iranian Revolutionary Guard to lay down arms, saying members

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 52 of 84

would be given immunity or face "certain death" if they did not.

Iran had said it hoped to avert a war, but it maintained its right to enrich uranium.

Iran has said it has not enriched since June, but it has blocked international inspectors from visiting the sites the U.S. bombed. Satellite photos analyzed by AP have shown new activity at two of those sites, suggesting Iran is trying to assess and potentially recover material.

Trump had threatened military action but held off following Iran's recent crackdown on protests spurred by economic grievances that evolved into a nationwide push against the ruling clerics.

The Human Rights Activists News Agency says it confirmed more than 7,000 deaths in the crackdown and is investigating thousands more. The government has acknowledged more than 3,000 killed.

Effects could extend to markets and other countries

The strikes could rattle global markets, particularly if Iran makes the Strait of Hormuz unsafe for commercial traffic. A third of worldwide oil exports transported by sea passed through the strait in 2025.

Saudi Arabia said Iran targeted its capital and eastern region in an attack that was repelled. Bahrain said a missile attack targeted the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet headquarters in the island kingdom, and three buildings were damaged in the capital, Manama, and Muharraq city by drone strikes and debris from an intercepted missile.

Kuwait's civil aviation authority said a drone targeted the main international airport, injuring several employees. Kuwait's state-run news agency said three troops were injured by shrapnel from strikes that hit Ali Al-Salem air base. Explosions could also be heard in Qatar. Jordan said it "dealt with" 49 drones and ballistic missiles.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who led the Islamic Republic since 1989, is dead at 86

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who assembled theocratic power in Iran over the decades as its supreme leader and sought to turn it into a regional powerhouse, bringing it into confrontation with Israel and the United States over its nuclear program while crushing democracy protesters at home, has died. He was 86.

Iranian state media reported the death early Sunday, after a major attack launched by Israel and the United States. U.S. President Donald Trump said hours earlier that Khamenei had been killed in the joint operation.

Khamenei dramatically remolded the Islamic Republic since he took the reins after the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1989. Khomeini was the fiery, charismatic ideologue who led the overthrow of the shah and installed rule by Shiite Muslim clerics tasked with spreading religious purity. It fell to Khamenei, a stodgier figure with weaker religious credentials and a leaden demeanor, to turn that revolutionary vision into a state establishment.

He ended up ruling far longer than Khomeini. He greatly expanded the Shiite clerical class and built the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard into the most important body underpinning his rule. The Guard became a military and business behemoth, the country's most elite force and head of its ballistic missile arsenal, with hands across Iran's economic sectors.

But the strains became harder to contain. Political repression and the faltering economy fueled successively bigger waves of mass protests. Anger over the 2022 death of Mahsa Amini, detained for not wearing her mandatory headscarf properly, escalated into demonstrations against social restrictions. In early January, hundreds of thousands marched in cities across the country, many chanting, "Death to Khamenei."

Khamenei responded with the deadliest crackdown seen in nearly 50 years of clerical rule as security forces opened fire on crowds, killing thousands.

At the same time, the Mideast wars sparked by Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack on Israel set in motion the collapse of the regionwide "Axis of Resistance" built by Khamenei. Israel and Iran attacked each other directly for the first time in 2024. Israel struck Iran again in June 2025, as it and the United States tar-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 53 of 84

ged the country's nuclear program and killed top military officers and nuclear scientists. Iran retaliated by sending missiles and drones at Israel.

Khamenei's death raises questions about the future of the Islamic Republic.

The 88-seat Assembly of Experts, a group of mostly hard-line clerics, will choose Khamenei's replacement. But no clear successor is in place.

As he launched the bombing Saturday, U.S. President Donald Trump called on Iranians to "take over your government. It will be yours to take. This will be probably your only chance for generations." What happens next may depend greatly on bodies like the Revolutionary Guard, which has repeatedly shown its willingness to use overwhelming force to keep power even as many of Iran's 90 million people grow disenchanted.

"Culturally, the government is bankrupt," said Mehdi Khalaji, an analyst at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, said in 2017. "The ideology of the Islamic Republic did not work at all."

Khamenei's daughter and son-in-law, a grandchild and a daughter-in-law also were killed in Saturday's attack, according to the semiofficial Fars news agency, citing unidentified sources.

Iran's government declared 40 days of public mourning and a seven-day nationwide public holiday to commemorate Khamenei's death.

From a questioned start to a hard-line grip on Iran

Ali Khamenei was born into a religious family in the northeastern holy city of Mashhad, a hotbed of revolutionary fervor during the struggle against the Western-allied shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

Like many other Iranian leaders, he studied under Khomeini at the seminary in the holy city of Qom, south of Tehran, in the early 1960s, before Khomeini's exile to Iraq and France.

Khamenei joined the anti-shah movement, facing time in both prison and in hiding. When Khomeini returned to Iran in triumph in February 1979 and proclaimed the Islamic Republic, Khamenei was appointed to the secretive Revolutionary Council. In 1981, he was elected Iran's third president; that same year, a bombing by opponents left him with one hand paralyzed.

With his thick, heavy-framed glasses, Khamenei lacked the steely gaze and fiery aura of Khomeini, the father of the Islamic Revolution. He fell far short of Khomeini's religious scholarship, holding the relatively low rank of "hojatolislam" in the Shiite clerical hierarchy.

After being named supreme leader after Khomeini's death, he bounded overnight to the level of grand ayatollah, at the top of the hierarchy, and for years had to deal with skepticism over his credentials.

Khamenei acknowledged the doubts with humility. "I am an individual with many faults and shortcomings and truly a minor seminarian," he said in his first speech in his new post.

Despite his lack of charisma, Khamenei stabilized Iran after the 1980s war with Iraq and governed for over three decades — far longer than Khomeini.

Hard-liners considered him second only to God in his authority. Khamenei created an ever-growing bureaucracy of Shiite clerics and governmental agencies that blurred responsibilities and left him as the ultimate arbiter. As Iran questioned whether to keep the Revolutionary Guard after the war with Iraq, Khamenei came to its rescue and allowed the paramilitary force to gain a powerful grip on Iran's economy. He also used a system of appointees to undercut the civilian government elected by its people.

The rise and fall of Iran's proxy forces

Under Khamenei's reign, Iran shifted fully from conventional warfare to support for proxies, building the so-called Axis of Resistance to advance its interests in the region. The Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, established with Iran's help in the 1980s, drove Israel from southern Lebanon in 2000 and battled it to a stalemate in the monthlong 2006 war.

Through Hezbollah, Iran perfected a strategy of making local militant groups its allies to project power — often through violence. Iran followed that model when backing Yemen's Houthi rebels, who in 2014 seized the country's capital, Sanaa, and held on for over a decade in a stalemated war in the Arab world's poorest nation — despite facing a Saudi-led coalition and later, U.S.-led airstrikes over their attacks in the Red Sea corridor.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 54 of 84

Elsewhere, suspected Iranian-backed militants bombed a Jewish center in Buenos Aires in 1994, killing 85 people. Iran also was allegedly linked to the 1996 bombing of the Khobar Towers housing complex in Saudi Arabia, which killed 19 members of the U.S. military. Iran denied responsibility for both attacks.

Iran emerged as a prime beneficiary of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, which replaced its main regional threat, Saddam Hussein, with a friendly Shiite-led government. Iranian-backed militias waged a brutal insurgency against U.S. forces and embedded themselves within the country's political landscape.

Khamenei used the Guard's expeditionary Quds Force most successfully after the Sunni extremists of the Islamic State group seized large swaths of Iraq and Syria in 2014. Guard troops advised Shiite militias, the best fighters in Iraq, and gave crucial support to President Bashar al-Assad in Syria's civil war.

That secured Assad for a decade, until the chaos sparked by Hamas' attack on Israel in 2023. Israel devastated the Gaza Strip and launched airstrikes and ground operations pulverizing Hamas, which Iran had armed and funded for years. Israel is widely believed to have killed Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in an operation in Tehran in 2024, further embarrassing the Islamic Republic.

Hezbollah found its ranks targeted by exploding pagers and an Israeli campaign killed its longtime leader Hassan Nasrallah. Then, in December 2024, rebel fighters toppled Assad in an offensive in Syria, ending a half-century of his family's autocratic rule.

Nuclear program advances to near-weapons-grade levels

The supreme leader remained deeply suspicious of the U.S., referring to it as the "Great Satan" even after President Barack Obama came into office in 2009, offering dialogue and a fresh start.

He shrugged off U.N. sanctions and pushed ahead with Iran's nuclear program, which the U.S. and its allies say hid a secret project to build a nuclear weapon up until 2003. Khamenei issued a verbal fatwa, or religious ruling, that nuclear weapons are un-Islamic, but vowed the country would never give up its right to develop what he called a peaceful nuclear energy program.

Under Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, Tehran agreed to drastically reduce its stockpile and enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. But only three years later, Trump in his first term unilaterally withdrew Washington from the accord, arguing it didn't go far enough.

Iran has since broken all the limits of the nuclear deal and accumulated a stockpile of uranium enriched to nearly weapons-grade levels, now large enough to pursue several nuclear weapons if it chose to do so. Diplomatic efforts to restore the deal under President Joe Biden stalled.

In a March 2011 speech, Khamenei used toppled Libyan dictator Moammar Gadhafi, who had given up his own nuclear program years earlier, as an example of why Iran's nuclear program remained so important in the wake of the Arab Spring upheavals in the Middle East.

"Just the way you give a lollipop to a child, Westerners gave 'incentives' to them and they gave up everything," Khamenei said.

Protests and demands for change intensified

Khamenei's first major challenge came in 1997, when pro-reform politicians gained control of parliament and cleric Mohammad Khatami was elected president by a landslide, riding a large youth vote. The reformists demanded a loosening of the strict social rules imposed by the revolution and called for improved ties with the outside world, including the U.S.

Khamenei-backed hard-liners moved to contain the liberal movement, fearing it would eventually call for an end to clerical rule. Khamenei stopped parliament from loosening restrictions on the media in an unusually overt intervention. Clerical bodies blocked other key liberal legislation and banned many reformist lawmakers from running for reelection, ensuring a return of hard-liner control in the 2004 elections.

That set the stage for the election of hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2005 and his disputed reelection in 2009 amid charges of vote-rigging. Mass protests broke out, posing the greatest threat in decades to Iran's clerical leadership. The Revolutionary Guard, Basij militia and police unleashed a crack-down in which dozens were killed and hundreds arrested.

The turmoil, and reports of protesters being tortured to death or raped in prison, dealt a severe blow to Khamenei's prestige.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 55 of 84

As sanctions bit further, popular unrest rose. Economic protests broke out in 2017 and demonstrations escalated in 2019 over a rise in government-set gasoline prices. A bloody crackdown that followed killed over 300 people, according to activists.

Although Khamenei struggled to preserve the ideological purity of the Islamic Revolution, Iran's government has largely failed to rid the country of Western influence. Satellite dishes, banned in theory, crowd Tehran's rooftops. Banned social media sites are widely used, even by some prominent politicians, despite being blocked.

Protests erupted again in 2022 over the death of Amini, a young woman detained for not wearing her hijab, or headscarf, to the liking of authorities. More than 500 people were killed and tens of thousands arrested when security forces crushed the demonstrations again.

In late December 2025, new economic protests erupted and would grow into what appeared to be the biggest protest movement ever. Hundreds of thousands across the country took to the streets, overtly demanding an end to the Islamic Republic. Some even chanted for the return of the shah's son, living in exile since 1979. The ferocity of the crackdown stunned Iranians.

Confrontation with US

With U.S. President Donald Trump, Khamenei faced a more aggressive and unpredictable American drive to stop Iran's nuclear program. Trump unilaterally withdrew America from Iran's nuclear deal with world powers in 2018, bringing a return of sanctions.

The two sides came close to war with the United States after an American drone strike killed Revolutionary Guard Gen. Qassem Soleimani in January 2020. At Soleimani's mass funeral that drew millions to the streets, Khamenei wept over the casket of the man he once called a "living martyr." Two days later, the Guard mistakenly shot down a Ukrainian airliner after its takeoff from Tehran, killing all 176 people aboard.

Iran ramped uranium enrichment back up, reaching 60% purity — a short, technical step away from weapons-grade levels of 90%. Still, when Trump returned to the White House in January 2025, Khamenei resumed talks, underscoring the deep toll the sanctions had taken. Iran's long-ailing economy entered a freefall, worsening domestic unrest.

But a deal remained elusive. In June, Israel and the U.S. bombed Iranian nuclear facilities, inflicting heavy damage. How far back it set the program remained unclear.

During the crackdown on nationwide protests in January, Trump renewed threats to strike, demanding Iran make major concessions at the negotiating table. Then came three rounds of indirect talks. Then came Saturday.

What to know about

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

By LEE KEATH and CARA ANNA Associated Press

In one of his final public displays of power, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei unleashed the bloodiest crackdown of his nearly four-decade rule to crush nationwide protests in which people dared to shout "Death to Khamenei."

Now a U.S. or Israeli military strike has sent Iran spinning into the unknown. The 86-year-old supreme leader is dead, with no designated successor.

Iranian state media confirmed his death without giving details early Sunday, hours after President Donald Trump said Khamenei was killed in a major new attack by U.S. and Israeli forces. Trump also urged Iranians to topple the theocracy. As rumors of the death spread, some cheered from rooftops in Tehran.

Long before the supreme leader's compound was among the first targets on Saturday, Khamenei was under growing pressure.

In the past year he was effectively put on warning, with Trump saying he could have killed him if he wanted to and rejecting an Israeli plan to do just that in last year's 12-day war.

In recent weeks the supreme leader tried to avert strikes as the U.S. built up its military presence in the region to pressure Tehran over its nuclear program. He warned that if the U.S. struck, a regional war would

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 56 of 84

ensue. At the same time, he allowed Iran to enter negotiations with the U.S. over its nuclear program.

Khamenei's suppression of the protests, with thousands of people killed, was a sign of the threat that popular anger represented. Years of sanctions, economic mismanagement and corruption have gutted Iran's economy.

Israeli and U.S. bombardment during last summer's 12-day war had heavily damaged Iran's nuclear program, missile systems and military capabilities. Iran's network of regional proxies, including Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen, has been weakened by Israeli and U.S. attacks since the war in Gaza began, along with Tehran's influence across the Middle East.

Here's what to know about Khamenei:

Transforming the Islamic Republic

When he rose to power in 1989, Khamenei had to overcome deep doubts about his authority. A low-level cleric at the time, Khamenei lacked the religious credentials of his predecessor, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the Islamic Revolution.

But Khamenei ruled three times longer than the late Khomeini and shaped Iran perhaps even more dramatically.

He entrenched the system of rule by the mullahs, or Shiite Muslim clerics. Under the Islamic Republic, clerics stand atop the hierarchy, drawing the lines to which the civilian government, the military and the intelligence and security establishment must submit.

In the eyes of hard-liners, Khamenei stood as the unquestionable authority — below only that of God.

At the same time, Khamenei built the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard into the dominant player in military and internal politics. It boasts Iran's most elite military and oversees its ballistic missile program. Khamenei also gave the Guard a free hand to build a network of businesses and dominate the economy.

In return, the Guard became his loyal shock force.

Domestic challenges

The first major threat to Khamenei's grip was the reform movement that swept into a parliamentary majority and the presidency soon after he became supreme leader. It advocated for giving greater power to elected officials, which Khamenei's hard-line supporters feared would lead to dismantling the Islamic Republic system.

Khamenei rallied the clerical establishment, and unelected bodies run by mullahs shut down major reforms and barred reform candidates from elections.

Since then, waves of popular protests have been crushed.

Huge nationwide demonstrations erupted in 2009 over allegations of vote-rigging. Under the weight of sanctions, economic protests broke out in 2017 and 2019. More came in 2022 over the death of Mahsa Amini, who was detained by police for not wearing her mandatory headscarf properly.

Crackdowns against the protesters killed hundreds, and hundreds more were arrested amid reports of detainees tortured to death or raped in prison.

The deadliest crackdown yet

The latest demonstrations touched off in late December in Tehran's traditional bazaar after the country's currency, the rial, currency plunged to a record low of 1.42 million to the U.S. dollar. Protests quickly spread across the country.

"Rioters must be put in their place," Khamenei declared. When hundreds of thousands took to the streets Jan. 8 and 9, security forces fired on crowds, and veterans of past demonstrations said they were stunned by the firepower unleashed.

Activists said they documented more than 7,000 killed and were working to verify more. The government has acknowledged more than 3,000 dead, which is still higher than the toll from past crackdowns.

Nuclear negotiations

By agreeing to nuclear negotiations, Khamenei likely sought to buy time to avert U.S. strikes. But Iran opposed Washington's main demands that it halt all nuclear enrichment and surrender its uranium stocks.

Trump initially threatened strikes to stop Khamenei and Iran's other leaders from killing peaceful protesters. He then wielded the threat to push Tehran to engage seriously in nuclear negotiations.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 57 of 84

Some in Iran and the large Iranian diaspora expressed hope that the U.S. would use military force to bring down Khamenei. But there were also strong voices even among Khamenei opponents who were against foreign intervention to topple the theocracy.

No successor

Officially a panel of Shiite clerics is tasked with choosing one of their own to succeed Khamenei, and multiple names have been touted among including his son.

Danny Citrinowicz, an Iran expert at Israel's Institute for National Security Studies, told The Associated Press this week that a key lesson Tehran drew from last year's war was the need to ensure regime continuity in case of Khamenei's death. He added that power could shift to a small committee of top officials until hostilities subside.

"It is possible that Khamenei has indicated a preferred successor behind closed doors," Citrinowicz said. "However automatic implementation of a preselected successor will increase internal friction during war."

But the Revolutionary Guard has grown to become Iran's most powerful body. Khamenei's death could prompt Guard commanders or its regular military to seize power more overtly. And that could set off a bloody conflict over control of the oil-rich country of 85 million people.

World leaders react cautiously to US and Israeli strikes, death of Iran Ali Khamenei

By CLAUDIA CIOBANU, SAM McNEIL and SAM METZ Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — How long will it last? Will it grow? What will the conflict and the reported death of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei mean to us, and to global security overall? Those questions echoed across the Middle East and the planet Saturday as world leaders reacted warily to U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iran.

U.S. President Donald Trump said on social media that Khamenei was dead, calling it "the single greatest chance for the Iranian people to take back their Country." Iranian state media said early Sunday the 86-year-old leader had died without elaborating on a cause.

Israeli officials previously told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity that Khamenei was dead. And Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in a televised address, said there were "growing signs" that Khamenei had been killed when Israel struck his compound early Saturday.

The apparent demise of the second leader of the Islamic Republic, who had no designated successor, would likely throw its future into uncertainty — and exacerbate already growing concerns of a broader conflict. The U.N. Security Council scheduled an emergency meeting.

Perhaps cautious about upsetting already strained relations with Trump, many nations abstained from commenting directly or pointedly on the joint strikes but condemned Tehran's retaliation. Similarly to Europeans, governments across the Middle East condemned Iran's strikes on Arab neighbors while staying silent on the U.S. and Israeli military action.

Other countries were more explicit: Australia and Canada expressed open support for the U.S. strikes, while Russia and China responded with direct criticism.

The U.S. and Israel launched a major attack on Iran on Saturday, and Trump called on the Iranian public to "seize control of your destiny" by rising up against the Islamic theocracy that has ruled the nation since 1979. Iran retaliated by firing missiles and drones toward Israel and U.S. military bases in the Middle East.

Some leaders urge resumption of talks

In a statement, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz called on the U.S. and Iran to resume talks and said they favored a negotiated settlement. They said their countries didn't take part in the strikes on Iran but are in close contact with the U.S., Israel and partners in the region.

The three countries have led efforts to reach a negotiated solution over Iran's nuclear program.

"We condemn Iranian attacks on countries in the region in the strongest terms. Iran must refrain from indiscriminate military strikes," they said. "Ultimately, the Iranian people must be allowed to determine

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 58 of 84

their future," they said.

Later, at an emergency security meeting, Macron said France was "neither warned nor involved" in the strikes. He called for intensified efforts for a negotiated solution, saying "no one can think that the questions of Iran's nuclear program, ballistic activity, regional destabilization will be settled by strikes alone."

The 22-nation Arab League called the Iranian attacks "a blatant violation of the sovereignty of countries that advocate for peace and strive for stability." That coalition of nations has historically condemned both Israel and Iran for actions it says risk destabilizing the region.

Morocco, Jordan, Syria and the United Arab Emirates denounced Iranian strikes targeting U.S. military bases in the region including in Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the Emirates.

Under former President Bashar Assad, Syria was among Iran's closest regional allies and a staunch critic of Israel, yet a statement from its foreign ministry singularly condemned Iran, reflecting the new government's efforts to rebuild ties with regional economic heavyweights and the United States.

Saudi Arabia said it "condemns and denounces in the strongest terms the treacherous Iranian aggression and the blatant violation of sovereignty." Oman, which has been mediating the talks between Iran and the U.S., said in a statement that the U.S. action "constitutes a violation of the rules of international law and the principle of settling disputes through peaceful means, rather than through hostility and the shedding of blood."

Careful wording is (mostly) the order of the day

New Zealand refrained from full-throated support but acknowledged Saturday that the U.S. and Israeli attacks were keeping the Iranian regime from remaining an ongoing threat. "The legitimacy of a government rests on the support of its people," New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon and Foreign Minister Winston Peters said in a joint statement. "The Iranian regime has long since lost that support."

Countries in Europe and the Middle East used careful wording, avoiding perceptions that they either support unilateral American action or are directly condemning the United States.

Others were more blunt. Russia's Foreign Ministry called the strikes "a pre-planned and unprovoked act of armed aggression against a sovereign and independent U.N. member state." The ministry accused Washington and Tel Aviv of "hiding behind" concerns about Iran's nuclear program while actually pursuing regime change.

Similarly, China's government said it was "highly concerned" about the U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iran and called for an immediate halt to the military action and a return to negotiations. "Iran's sovereignty, security and territorial integrity should be respected," a Chinese Foreign Ministry statement said.

Despite recent tensions with the U.S., Canada too expressed its support for the military action. "The Islamic Republic of Iran is the principal source of instability and terror throughout the Middle East," Prime Minister Mark Carney said.

And the U.N. Security Council scheduled an emergency meeting on the U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iran, at the request of Bahrain and France.

Concerns expressed of 'new, extensive' war

Palestinians in the occupied West Bank said they were largely unfazed as war erupted Saturday, barely pausing as booms echoed across the sky from Israel's Iron Dome intercepting missiles overhead.

Unlike Israel, Palestinian cities have no warning sirens or bomb shelters, despite the risk of falling debris or errant missiles. As people sheltered less than 10 miles (16 kilometers) away in Jerusalem, streets in Ramallah swarmed with shoppers browsing meat counters, vegetable stalls and Ramadan sweets, some stopping to record the sounds of distant sirens and missile interceptions.

But as Israel closed checkpoints to the movement of people and goods on Saturday, gas stations saw longer-than-usual lines as residents filled spare canisters in case of supply disruptions.

The Palestinian Authority, in a statement, condemned the Iranian attacks on Arab nations, many which have historically helped underwrite its finances. It made no mention of the Israeli or U.S. strikes.

Nervousness is perceptible across multiple countries. Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide told Norwegian broadcaster NRK that he was concerned the failure of negotiations between the U.S. and Iran meant a "new, extensive war in the Middle East."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 59 of 84

The Nobel Peace Prize-winning International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons condemned the U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iran in harsher words. "These attacks are totally irresponsible and risk provoking further escalation as well as increasing the danger of nuclear proliferation and the use of nuclear weapons," said its executive director, Melissa Parke.

EU leaders issued a joint statement Saturday calling for restraint and engaging in regional diplomacy in hopes of "ensuring nuclear safety." The Arab League, too, appealed to all international parties "to work towards de-escalation as soon as possible, to spare the region the scourge of instability and violence, and to return to dialogue."

US and Israel clash with Iran at emergency Security Council meeting. UN chief condemns attacks

By EDITH M. LEDERER and FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United States and Israel clashed with Iran at an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council on Saturday where the U.N. chief and many countries urged a halt to their attacks and a return to negotiations to prevent the conflict from spreading further into the region and beyond.

Secretary-General António Guterres told the council that everything must be done to prevent an escalation. "The alternative," he warned, "is a potential wider conflict with grave consequences for civilians and regional stability."

Guterres said the U.S. and Israeli airstrikes violated international law, including the U.N. Charter. He also condemned Iran's retaliatory attacks for violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Mike Waltz, insisted the U.S. military action was lawful.

"Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon," he told the council. "That principle is not a matter of politics. It's a matter of global security. And to that end, the United States is taking lawful actions."

Israel's U.N. Ambassador Danny Danon defended the airstrikes as necessary to stop an existential threat.

"We are stopping extremism before it becomes unstoppable," he said. "We will ensure that no radical regime armed with nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles can threaten our people or the entire world."

Amir Saeid Iravani, Iran's ambassador to the U.N., told the council that the airstrikes have killed and injured hundreds of Iranian civilians, which he called a war crime and a crime against humanity.

He blasted the U.N. and the Security Council, its most powerful body, for not heeding Tehran's warnings about the "warmongering statements" by the U.S. in recent weeks and urged the council to act now.

"The issue before the council is straightforward: whether any member state may, including a permanent member of this council, through the use of force, coercion or aggression, determine the political future or system of another state or impose control over its affairs," Iravani said.

During his speech, the Iranian diplomat did not mention or comment on President Donald Trump's statement that Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed in the strikes, although Iranian state media later confirmed his death. The assassination of the second leader of the Islamic Republic, who had no designated successor, raised the prospects of a protracted conflict given Iranian threats of retaliation.

Iranian and US ambassadors have tense back-and-forth

In a rare exchange, the U.S. and Iranian ambassadors traded warnings and direct rebuffs toward the end of the emergency session as military aggression between their countries risked spilling into a regional war.

After Waltz responded to Iranian claims that the U.S. had violated international law, Iravani asked to speak again to issue a warning: "I advise to the representative of the United States to be polite. It will be better for yourself and the country you represent."

Waltz responded immediately, saying, "This representative sits here, in this body, representing a regime that has killed tens of thousands of its own people, and imprisoned many more, simply for wanting freedom from your entire tyranny."

Other Security Council members speak up

Russia's ambassador condemned the U.S.-Israeli airstrikes, while China's ambassador was more mea-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 60 of 84

sured in his criticism.

"We demand that the United States and Israel immediately cease their aggressive actions," Russian U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said. "We insist on the immediate resumption of political and diplomatic settlement efforts ... based on international law, mutual respect and a balance of interests."

China's U.N. Ambassador Fu Cong said China was very concerned by "the sudden escalation of regional tensions" and supported Russia's call for a return to diplomatic negotiations.

The permanent observer of the 22-nation Arab League, Maged Abdelaziz, suggested Israel was being hypocritical in justifying its military attack by saying it was intended to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Abdelaziz, a former Egyptian ambassador to the U.N., noted that Israel has refused to subject its own nuclear facilities to inspection by the U.N. nuclear watchdog.

The emergency meeting was called by five council members: Bahrain, which is the Arab representative on the council, France, Russia, China and Colombia,.

In a joint statement, the leaders of Britain and France — both veto-wielding members of the council — along with Germany's chancellor called for a resumption of U.S.-Iranian talks on Tehran's nuclear program. The three countries, part of the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran, have led efforts to reach a negotiated solution. Trump pulled the U.S. out of the deal in 2018.

The three European leaders strongly condemned Iranian airstrikes in the region — not the U.S.-Israeli airstrikes — and urged Iran's leaders to seek a negotiated solution, saying: "Ultimately, the Iranian people must be allowed to determine their future."

The Security Council meeting is taking place on the last day of the United Kingdom's presidency and a day before the United States takes over the rotating presidency for the month of March.

Trump was once wary of ordering regime change in Iran. Here's what made him change his mind

By AAMER MADHANI and JOSH BOAK Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — With Saturday's military operation against Iran, President Donald Trump demonstrated a dramatic evolution in risk tolerance, adjusting in just a matter of months how far he was willing to go in using American military might to confront Tehran's clerical rule.

Guardrails were tossed aside, as Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered up a battle plan that included targeted strikes on Iran's leadership, including the 86-year-old Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei whose death Trump triumphantly announced in a social media post hours after launching the military operation.

For Trump, it was a far cry from where he stood just eight months ago. At Israel's urging during its 12-day war with Iran last June, he agreed to deploy B-2 bombers to pummel three key Iranian nuclear sites — but drew a bright red line when Israelis presented his administration with a plan for killing Khamenei.

The president peppered the supreme leader with thinly veiled threats back in June that he could have killed him if he wanted to. But he rejected the Israeli plan out of concern that it would destabilize the region.

That caution was set aside on Saturday with Trump announcing Khamenei had been killed, while the Israeli military announced it had taken out Iran's defense minister and the commander of its Revolutionary Guard. Iranian state media early Sunday reported the 86-year-old Supreme Leader's death, without elaborating on a cause.

Khamenei "was unable to avoid our Intelligence and Highly Sophisticated Tracking Systems and, working closely with Israel, there was not a thing he, or the other leaders that have been killed along with him, could do," Trump said. "This is the single greatest chance for the Iranian people to take back their Country."

Trump loses patience

Trump had pursued talks with Iran for months. Administration officials told reporters that they offered Iran many ways to have a peaceful nuclear program that could be used for civilian purposes, including an offer of free nuclear fuel in perpetuity.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 61 of 84

But the officials, who were not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity, said it was clear to them that Iran wanted enriched uranium for a nuclear weapon. One of them said that Iran has met their offers with "games, tricks, stall tactics."

The order to launch strikes came just two days after Trump dispatched his special envoys, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, for another round of talks with Iranian officials. Middle East and European allies were urging the U.S. administration to give negotiations more time as Trump signaled he was running out of patience.

"The consequences are likely to be as far-reaching as they are uncertain: Within the system that has held power for nearly five decades, between the government and a dissatisfied populace, and between Iran and its adversaries," said Ali Vaez, Iran project director at the International Crisis Group. "And although the regime is weakened, a sense that this showdown is an all-or-nothing struggle for its very survival could lead it to respond with every tool still at its disposal."

Revised risk calculation

Saturday's strikes came after a series of past provocative actions against Iran that resulted in limited blowback, which seemed to inform Trump's risk calculation, said Aaron David Miller, who served as an adviser on Middle East issues to Democratic and Republican administrations over two decades.

Trump in 2018 pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal negotiated by Democratic President Barack Obama's administration. In 2020, Trump ordered a drone strike killing top Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani.

At the time, the killing of Soleimani, the head of Iran's elite Quds Force, was arguably the most provocative U.S. military action in the Middle East since President George W. Bush launched the 2003 Iraq War to topple Saddam Hussein.

And then Trump this past June ordered the strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities, which he claimed had "obliterated" their program.

"He did all of these things without cost or consequence to him," said Miller, who is now a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "He's been risk-ready. That's the nature of his personality."

Trump administration officials had publicly urged Tehran to give up its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs and end its backing of regional armed proxies. But administration officials said that Tehran would not engage on the missile and proxy concerns.

Iran's rigidity, at a moment when its economy is in shambles weighed by decades of sanctions and its military battered by last year's war, astounded Trump.

Even before the latest round of talks ended on Thursday, there were signs Trump was leaning toward military action.

On Tuesday, Trump in his State of the Union speech claimed that Iran has been building ballistic missiles that could reach the U.S. homeland — a justification that he repeated again on Saturday as he announced the bombardment of Iran was underway.

Iran hasn't acknowledged it is building or seeking to build intercontinental ballistic missiles. The U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, however, said in an unclassified report last year that Iran could develop a militarily viable intercontinental ballistic missile by 2035 "should Tehran decide to pursue the capability."

Secretary of State Marco Rubio told reporters on Wednesday that Iran's refusal to speak to its ballistic missile program was a "big problem." Rubio declined to address the DIA finding that Iran was still years away from developing a missile that could reach the United States.

And Vice President JD Vance, a former U.S. Marine who served in Iraq and has been skeptical of U.S. interventions, on Thursday told The Washington Post that Trump hadn't decided whether to strike Iran. But he offered assurances that military action would not result in the United States becoming involved in a drawn-out conflict.

"The idea that we're going to be in a Middle Eastern war for years with no end in sight — there is no chance that will happen," Vance said.

By Friday, Trump was venting anew about Iran's approach.

"I'm not happy with the fact that they're not willing to give us what we have to have," Trump said. "I'm

not thrilled with that. We'll see what happens."

Senior U.S. lawmakers were told early Saturday that the strikes were coming. Trump monitored the operation from his Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida, with members of his national security team.

Trump may have been emboldened by his Venezuela experience

Trump's success with the U.S. military operation earlier this year to capture Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro and whisk him and his wife to New York City to face federal drug conspiracy charges also may have emboldened the president, said Jonathan Schanzer, a former Treasury Department official who is now executive director of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a hawkish Washington think tank.

Trump had threatened military action last month, but held off, as Iran carried out a deadly crackdown on protests. The demonstrations were spurred by economic grievances but morphed into a nationwide, anti-government push against the ruling clerics.

As human rights groups reported that thousands were killed in the Iranian crackdown, Trump told protesters that help was on its way, but it did not immediately come and the protests petered out.

Schanzer said that Trump's decision not to follow through last month gave his team more time to assemble the now massive presence of fighter jets and warships in the region — as he had done in the Caribbean ahead of the Venezuela operation.

It was leverage, Trump hoped, that would get Khamenei to blink. But the Supreme Leader would not capitulate.

"The way this unfolded was inevitable, because there was no way that the Ayatollah was going to show flexibility," Schanzer said.

Worms in food, poor medical care, lights on 24/7: Families tell of life in Texas detention center

By GARANCE BURKE, ADAM GELLER and VALERIE GONZALEZ Associated Press

LAREDO, Texas (AP) — A month after ICE agents sent the young Ecuadorian mother and her 7-year-old daughter to a sprawling detention center 1,300 miles from their Minnesota home, they were finally free.

But when the bus pulled up to a migrant shelter in the border city of Laredo, dropping off a half-dozen families lugging bags stuffed with belongings, the stress of recent weeks tracked mother and daughter like the long shadows on that mid-February afternoon.

Night after night inside south Texas' Dilley Immigration Processing Center with hundreds of other families, the grade-schooler wept and pleaded to know why they were being held.

"She would tell me, 'Mom, what crime did I commit to be a prisoner?' I didn't know what to tell her," said the 29-year-old, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear being identified could negatively affect their immigration case. Her husband was deported to Ecuador soon after they were taken into custody.

Many Americans were alarmed last month when photos circulated showing U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents in Minneapolis detaining a 5-year-old boy wearing a bunny hat and carrying a Spiderman backpack. The concern followed Liam Conejo Ramos and his father when they were sent to Dilley, surrounded by chain-link fences on a dusty plain about 75 miles south of San Antonio.

But Liam was hardly an outlier. ICE has been holding hundreds of children at Dilley — many for months.

"We are all Liam," Christian Hinojosa, an immigrant from Mexico, said by phone from Dilley, where she and her 13-year-old son were held for more than four months. They were released this month and allowed to return home to San Antonio where she works as a health aide.

She noted that Liam and his father were released from Dilley after 10 days, when members of Congress and a judge intervened.

"My son says, 'That's unfair, Mama. What's the difference between him and us?'"

Ramping up family detentions

When the Obama administration opened Dilley in 2014, nearly all families detained there had recently crossed the border from Mexico. Detentions at the facility were scaled back by the Biden administration in 2021, before it was closed three years later.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 63 of 84

EDITOR'S NOTE — This story includes discussion of suicide. If you or someone you know needs help, the national suicide and crisis lifeline in the U.S. is available by calling or texting 988.

Since being reopened by President Donald Trump's administration last spring, life inside Dilley — a compound of trailers and other prefabricated buildings — has been shaped by three decisive changes.

The number of detained families has risen sharply since last fall. The government is holding many children well beyond the 20-day limit set by longstanding court order. And many detainees have lived in the U.S. for several years, with roots in neighborhoods, workplaces and schools, according to lawyers and other observers.

"Just imagine that you're a child and you're taken out of your surroundings," said Philip Schrag, a Georgetown University law professor and author of "Baby Jails: The Fight to End the Incarceration of Refugee Children in America."

Suddenly you're in "a completely strange environment with the doors locked and guards in uniform roaming around," said Schrag, who counseled Dilley detainees as a volunteer lawyer during the Obama administration.

ICE booked more than 3,800 children into detention during the first nine months of the new Trump administration, according to an Associated Press analysis of data from the University of California, Berkeley's Deportation Data Project. On an average day more than 220 children were held, with most of those detained longer than 24 hours sent to Dilley. More than half of Dilley detainees during that period were children.

Nearly two-thirds of children detained by ICE were eventually deported and almost 1 in 10 left the country when their parents accepted voluntary departure, according to an AP analysis of the latest comprehensive data. About a quarter were released in the U.S., requiring their parents to check in regularly with ICE as their legal cases proceed.

The number of detainees at Dilley has risen sharply since the period covered by the data, nearly tripling between last fall and late January to more than 1,300, according to Relevant Research, which analyzes immigration enforcement data.

"We've started to use 100 days as a benchmark for prioritizing cases because so many children are exceeding 20 days," said Leecia Welch, the chief legal director at Children's Rights, who visits Dilley regularly to ensure compliance. In a visit this month, Welch said she counted more than 30 children who had been held for over 100 days.

The increased detention of children comes as the Trump administration has gutted a Department of Homeland Security office responsible for oversight of conditions inside Dilley and other facilities.

"It's a particular concern that family detention is being increased," said Dr. Pamela McPherson, a child and adolescent psychiatrist contracted by DHS from 2014 until last year to inspect and investigate conditions at Dilley and other ICE facilities holding children.

"Just who's providing that check-and-balance now?"

Rep. Tony Gonzales, who represents the congressional district where Dilley is located, said multiple visits have convinced him criticism of the center is unfair.

He said he'd been impressed by Dilley's facilities and the professionalism and dedication of staff. "They're not doing policy. They're just fulfilling a duty," said Gonzales, a Republican.

DHS did not respond to detailed questions about Dilley submitted by the AP. But both DHS and ICE sharply refuted allegations of poor care and conditions there.

"The Dilley facility is a family residential center designed specifically to house family units in a safe, structured and appropriate environment," ICE Director Todd M. Lyons said in a statement this week. Services include medical screenings, infant care packages as well as classrooms and recreational spaces, ICE said.

But concerns about Dilley are personal for Kheilin Valero Marcano, a Venezuelan immigrant detained with her husband and 1-year-old daughter, Amalia, in December and held for nearly two months.

When the child got a high fever, Valero Marcano said Dilley staff told her it was just a virus. Two weeks later, Amalia started vomiting, then losing weight. Valero Marcano said she took her to the Dilley doctor's

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 64 of 84

office at least eight times but was offered Tylenol and ibuprofen.

The baby was eventually sent to two hospitals, where doctors diagnosed COVID, bronchitis, pneumonia and stomach virus, she said.

ICE disputed Valero Marcano's account, saying in a statement the baby "immediately received proper medical care" at Dilley before being sent to the hospital. Back in Dilley, "she was in the medical unit and received proper treatment and prescribed medicines," it said.

The family's return to Dilley coincided with a measles outbreak there. They were released earlier this month after their lawyers petitioned the court.

"I'm so worried for all the families who are still inside," Valero Marcano said.

A teen in distress

After nearly two months in a cramped room at Dilley with three other families, the 13-year-old girl's depression turned increasingly dark.

The eighth grader stopped eating after finding a worm in her food, family members said. Staff sometimes withheld medications she'd long been prescribed to keep her anxiety in check and help her sleep.

When a total lockdown was imposed, a guard blocked the teen from leaving the crowded room to join her mother and sister in the bathroom. She spiraled into crisis, and used a plastic knife from the cafeteria to cut her wrist.

"She said she didn't want to live anymore because she preferred to die rather than having to keep living in confinement," her mother, Andrea Armero, told the AP in a video call from Colombia, where the family was deported this month. The AP generally avoids identifying people who attempt or die by suicide.

The girl's struggles began before she arrived at Dilley. Soon after starting middle school in Colombia, she learned a family member had sexually abused her younger sister. Armero said she saw no option but to leave and in early 2024 she and her daughters traveled to the U.S. border with Mexico, applying for asylum.

Living with family in Florida, the 13-year-old was doing well in school but sometimes experienced panic attacks about being sent back to Colombia. Under a psychiatrist's care, she was prescribed anti-anxiety and anti-depression medications and regularly saw a therapist. Then, in December, ICE agents detained Armero and her daughters during a routine check-in.

At Dilley, the 13-year-old calmed herself by drawing, producing haunting pictures of a girl locked inside gates. But when she and other detainees took part in a protest after 5-year-old Liam and his father got to Dilley, guards took away drawing materials and ordered everyone to stay inside.

The teen's mental health collapsed. She tried to harm herself with the plastic knife, Armero said, and repeatedly hit her head. The family was put into isolation without seeing a doctor, then deported to Colombia on Feb. 11 after a judge ordered them removed, she said.

Dilley discharge documents described "active problems," including a "suicide attempt by cutting of wrist" and "self-harm," in addition to a "history of post-traumatic stress disorder" and "history of anxiety." AP also spoke with detainees and attorneys who independently described the girl's suicide attempt.

Responding to questions from AP, a DHS official acknowledged there had been "a case of self-harm" inside the facility, but did not specify what had happened, or how staff handled the incident. When AP asked for details, DHS did not respond to follow-up questions.

"No child at Dilley ... has been denied medical treatment or experienced a delayed medical assessment," said Ryan Gustin, a spokesman for CoreCivic, the for-profit prison company that operates the facility under contract with ICE. Gustin declined to answer specific question about the 13-year-old girl, citing privacy rules.

Detention weighs on children

On a phone call from inside Dilley, 13-year-old Gustavo Santino-Josa introduced himself to a reporter by name and the 9-digit identification number ICE assigned him when he was taken into custody with his mother.

"Until today I don't know what we did wrong to get detained," Gustavo said. "I've seen my mom cry almost daily and I ask God that we can go out and go home soon."

He worried they might never be released.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 65 of 84

"My mom says that as long as there is hope it is worth fighting for," Gustavo said before handing the phone to his mother, Christian Hinojosa, the health care aide originally from Mexico.

"All his friends have left already," his mother said. "Some were deported. Some got released recently. And it hurts. It hurts to see people leaving and you're staying here."

Dilley was built to hold 2,400 people, housed in clusters ICE calls "neighborhoods." Bunk beds are arranged side-by-side for up to four families, frequently putting parents with young children in close quarters.

Once in full operation, Dilley is expected to generate about \$180 million in annual revenue for CoreCivic, according to the company's recent filing with securities regulators.

In a video on its website, CoreCivic says Dilley's "open campus layout allows residents to move freely and unescorted throughout the day."

It does not mention that parents and their children are locked inside.

In response to questions from the AP, CoreCivic's Gustin said the staff at Dilley includes a pediatrician, pediatric nurse practitioner, other trained medical professionals, as well as mental health services to "meet the needs of children and families in our care."

In talks with parents of children held at Dilley, however, the same problems come up repeatedly, said Welch, the children's rights lawyer.

Kids cry often and don't get enough sleep, in part because lights are on around the clock, she said. The water tastes terrible and causes stomachaches and rashes, so some families stick to what they can buy in the commissary.

Their children don't eat enough and have lost weight, Welch said. There are classrooms, but instruction is limited to an hour daily, mostly filling out worksheets.

A 14-year-old girl, identified in court papers by the initials NVSM, reported there were tensions with up to 12 people sharing their room. At night when she and her mother tried to sleep, others insisted on turning up the TV.

"I feel very sad and stressed to be here," the teen said in an account filed with the court that oversees a binding settlement governing detention and release of children. "My nerves are so high. I don't know what is happening. My muscles will twitch because I'm so nervous and on edge."

Concerns about oversight

As the government's detention of parents and their children came under scrutiny in 2014, an ICE official insisted that family detention centers, equipped with basketball courts and medical clinics, were "more like a summer camp."

The characterization irritated McPherson, the child psychiatrist who, along with another physician, was retained in 2014 by DHS to inspect family detention centers. Their contracts were not renewed by the Trump administration last year after DHS announced sweeping staff reductions.

"Having a clean place to sleep, having food, that's not the same thing as having family and community," McPherson said.

The doctors' investigations of family detention centers exposed consistently inadequate staffing and disregard by administrators for the trauma caused by detention, concerns they reported in 2018 to a Senate caucus set up to hear from whistleblowers.

At Dilley, the doctors noted a persistent shortage of pediatricians and the inability to hire a child psychiatrist from the time they began their inspections until they alerted senators.

Employees unsure how to deal with 2-year-olds biting and hitting each other placed the children and their parents in medical isolation for days, McPherson and her colleague told senators. Without supervision, a nurse at Dilley gave adult-strength hepatitis A shots to about 250 children in 2015, the American Immigration Lawyers Association reported.

DHS responded to many of the findings by making changes before a special committee recommended in late 2016 that the government discontinue family detention except in rare cases. The first Trump administration increased family detention before the Biden administration began phasing it out in 2021.

That the Trump administration is again holding families at Dilley after so many warnings feels "dystopian,"

McPherson said.

"The decision to knowingly traumatize children and subject them to chronic stress, I just have no words for it," she said.

Worries even after release

Huddled around picnic tables at the Laredo migrant shelter, parents released from Dilley searched anxiously for flights back to the homes they left behind. They called relatives, friends, teachers, anyone who might help with money to get there.

The young Ecuadorian mom talked of returning to Minneapolis, where her 2-year-old daughter, born in the U.S., was staying with a friend. With her husband deported, parenting will be entirely her responsibility.

That means getting her 7-year-old back in school. Then the woman, who had a work permit and a job in a Minneapolis restaurant before being detained, needs to keep her children fed.

"Let's go home, Mom, but don't go back to work because ICE is going to pick you up again," the little girl said. Her mother tried to reassure her.

That won't happen, she said, because now they have a special paper telling ICE to leave them alone.

She hopes that's a promise she can keep.

Actor Shia LaBeouf arrested again on battery charge in New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Actor Shia LaBeouf, who was arrested and charged with battery after police say he punched several people outside a New Orleans bar earlier this month, was arrested again on Saturday and charged with one additional misdemeanor count of simple battery, court records show.

LaBeouf's attorney said in a statement that his arrest is connected to a Feb. 17 brawl outside the Royal Street Inn & R Bar near the French Quarter for which LaBeouf had previously been arrested. In that case, LaBeouf is accused of repeatedly using homophobic slurs while hitting multiple people during Mardi Gras celebrations.

LaBeouf's attorney Sarah Chervinsky said when they learned New Orleans police issued a new arrest warrant Friday, LaBeouf voluntarily turned himself in to the Orleans Parish jail.

"No regular person would be required to post over \$100,000 in bonds, and be jailed two separate times for one misdemeanor incident," Chervinsky said. "Just as he does not deserve preferential treatment, Mr. LaBeouf also does not deserve to be treated more harshly by the police and courts just because he is a public figure."

Telephone and email messages left Saturday with New Orleans police were not immediately returned.

In the Feb. 17 incident, a video shows a shirtless LaBeouf shoving one person to the ground and hitting another person in the face, "causing his nose to possibly dislocate," according to a New Orleans police report.

Jeffrey Damnit, a well-known local entertainer who police identified as Jeffrey Klein in the incident report, said he was one of the people attacked by LaBeouf.

"He hit me, he connected a few times with punches, he pushed me a few times," Damnit told The Associated Press.

LaBeouf "just got nuts" trying to start fights and telling the entertainer and others that he would beat them up, Damnit said. He added that LaBeouf had pushed him from behind at the bar earlier in the night, shouting homophobic slurs and threatening his life.

Damnit and others subdued LaBeouf and tried to get him to leave the area, but he would not leave and became more aggressive, according to Damnit and the police report.

Police arrived at the bar around 12:45 a.m. on the morning of the city's famous Fat Tuesday revelry and arrested LaBeouf.

LaBeouf has not entered a plea and declined to talk to reporters on Thursday after a New Orleans judge ordered him to return to drug and alcohol rehabilitation. During that hearing, Chervinsky told the judge: "Frankly, being drunk on Mardi Gras is not a crime."

Trump's 'America First' campaign battle cry gives way to military strikes abroad

By STEVEN SLOAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump, whose fierce denunciation of military adventurism abroad fueled his unlikely rise to the top of the Republican Party, risks becoming ensnared by that very type of conflict.

The U.S. and Israeli attack on Iran Saturday cemented Trump's decade-long transformation from a candidate who in 2016 called the Iraq War a "big, fat mistake" to a president warning Americans to prepare for potential casualties overseas and encouraging Iranians to "seize control of your destiny." The strikes were also at odds with Trump's warnings during the 2024 campaign that his Democratic rival, Kamala Harris, was surrounded by "war hawks" eager to send troops overseas.

Trump justified the action as necessary to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons or developing missiles capable of reaching the US, less than a year after he said airstrikes "obliterated" their capability. US intelligence has also said Iran's weapons capability was substantially degraded.

For Trump, memories of the false pretenses underlying the Iraq War could lead to pressure to prove his assertion that Iran's weapons production posed an imminent threat to Americans. And for Republicans already facing a challenging election year weighed down by economic anxiety, the shift could force a reassessment of how the attacks fit into the "America First," isolationist-leaning movement the party has embraced during the Trump era.

While Trump might benefit from an early rally-around-the-flag effect, that could be hard to sustain for weeks and months, if not longer, a far different scenario from the swift effort to remove Nicolás Maduro from power earlier this year in Venezuela.

Success on day one is one thing. The days after are inherently unpredictable.

"The question is whether Iran's goal is simply to outlast America and whether Trump has strategic attention deficit disorder, which will allow the Iranians to rise from the ashes and claim victory," said Michael Rubin, a historian at the American Enterprise Institute who worked as a staff adviser on Iran and Iraq at the Pentagon from 2002 to 2004.

Many Republicans get behind Trump

Many Republicans were quick to line up behind the president, including Texas Sen. John Cornyn and state attorney general Ken Paxton, who are fighting a competitive Senate primary election on Tuesday.

"Hopefully lives will not be lost needlessly, but this always entails risk," Cornyn said Saturday at a campaign stop near Houston. "But we know that Iran will not stop unless the United States and our allies stop them."

Others, like Sen. Todd Young of Indiana, praised the military and were critical of Iran while noting that Americans will have questions that "must be answered."

And there was outright opposition from some who have long criticized overseas entanglements, including Sen. Rand Paul, the Republican of Kentucky, who lamented the start of "another preemptive war." Former Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, the Georgia Republican who was once a close Trump ally, rejected the president's warning of Iran's nuclear capabilities.

"It's always a lie and it's always America Last," she wrote online. "But it feels like the worst betrayal this time because it comes from the very man and the admin who we all believed was different."

Little advance preparation for Americans

The administration did little in advance to prepare Americans for such a dramatic action.

Vice President JD Vance told The Washington Post this week there was "no chance" that the U.S. would become involved in a drawn-out war as it did in Iraq. During his State of the Union speech on Tuesday, Trump dedicated just a few lines to Iran, arguing the country and its proxies have "spread nothing but terrorism, death and hate."

That stands in stark contrast to the lengthy runup to the Iraq War.

President George W. Bush, for example, named Iraq as a member of the so-called axis of evil in Janu-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 68 of 84

ary 2002. Then-Secretary of State Colin Powell delivered a now-infamous speech to the United Nations in February 2003, making the case for war based on the inaccurate assertion that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. The invasion, which ultimately dominated Bush's second term, didn't begin until March 2003.

"We just have to be honest that there is a sense that this was not sold to the American public sufficiently," Andrew Kolvet said Saturday on "The Charlie Kirk Show," an online program founded by the late conservative activist who was close to Trump. "Perhaps there will be an opportunity on the backend of this."

Kolvet was willing, however, to give Trump leeway, noting these are the types of challenging decisions presidents are entrusted with.

"President Trump has earned a big, long leash," he said. "Not an unlimited one. But a very long one to make tough decisions."

Polling suggests that many Americans share Trump's concerns about Iran's nuclear capabilities, even if they're less confident in the president's response. About half of U.S. adults were "extremely" or "very" concerned that Iran's nuclear program poses a direct threat to the U.S., according to a poll this month from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Most Americans, 61%, said Iran is an "enemy" of the U.S., which is up slightly from a Pearson Institute/AP-NORC poll conducted in September 2023. But their confidence in the president's judgment when it comes to relationships with adversaries and the use of military force abroad is low, the new poll shows, with only about 3 in 10 Americans saying they have "a great deal" or "quite a bit" of trust in Trump.

Democrats sense an opening

Democrats sense a political opening on the issue. In Maine, Gov. Janet Mills and Graham Platner are competing for the Democratic nomination to challenge incumbent Sen. Susan Collins in the fall. They both issued statements on Saturday pressing Collins, the only Republican on the ballot this year in a state won by Harris, to step up her oversight of the administration.

Collins was one of three Senate Republicans who backed an unsuccessful push last month for a war powers resolution that would have limited Trump's ability to conduct further attacks on Venezuela. Democrats said Saturday they would quickly seek a vote on a similar proposal for Iran.

"If we've started a war where we begin to lose American lives, that starts changing the political calculus," said Republican strategist Ron Bonjean.

But he noted that Democrats have vulnerabilities of their own, particularly if there's a domestic terror attack while the Department of Homeland Security is closed as they demand changes to how immigration operations are conducted.

For now, Trump isn't offering much of a detailed strategy on what comes next. In a social media post Saturday evening, he said bombings could continue "as long as necessary."

War powers debate intensifies after Trump orders attack on Iran without approval by Congress

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Key members of Congress are demanding a swift vote on a war powers resolution that would restrain President Donald Trump's military attack on Iran unless the administration wins their approval for what they warn is a potentially illegal campaign that risks pulling the United States into a deeper Middle East conflict.

Both the House and Senate, where the president's Republican Party has a slim majority, had already drafted such resolutions long before the strikes Saturday. Now they are ready to plunge into a rare war powers debate next week that will serve as a referendum on Trump's decision to go it alone on military action without formal authorization from Congress.

"Has President Trump learned nothing from decades of U.S. meddling in Iran and forever wars in the Middle East?" said Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., a leader in the bipartisan effort. He said the strikes on Iran were "a colossal mistake."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 69 of 84

In the House, Reps. Ro Khanna, D-Calif., and Thomas Massie, R-Ky., are demanding Congress go on record with a public vote on their own bipartisan measure. "Congress must convene on Monday to vote," Khanna said, "to stop this."

Massie blasted Trump's own presidential campaign slogan and said: "This is not 'America First.'"

But most Republicans, particularly their leaders, welcomed Trump's move against Iran. Many cited the longtime U.S. adversary's nuclear programs and missile capabilities as requiring a military response.

"Well done, Mr. President," said Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C. "As I watch and monitor this historic operation, I'm in awe of President Trump's determination to be a man of peace but at the end of the day, evil's worst nightmare."

War powers debate tests Congress

The administration's decision to launch, with Israel, what appears to be an open-ended joint military operation aimed at changing the government in Tehran is testing the Constitution's separation of powers in deep and dramatic ways. Nearly two months earlier, Trump ordered U.S. strikes that toppled Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro.

While presidents have the authority as the commander in chief to conduct certain strategic military operations on their own, the Constitution vests Congress with the power to wage war. Before the Iraq War began in March 2003, Republican President George W. Bush made a monthslong push to secure congressional authorization. No such vote was attempted on Iran, and an earlier Senate effort to halt Trump's actions after last summer's strike on Iran failed.

The congressional debate over war powers would mostly be symbolic. Even if a resolution were to pass the narrowly split Congress, Trump likely would veto it and Congress would not have the two-thirds majority needed to overturn that rejection. Congress has often failed to block other U.S. military actions, including in a Senate vote on Venezuela, but the roll calls stand as a public record.

Republican leaders back Trump's action

The response by House Speaker Mike Johnson reflected the party's long-standing views. Iran, he said, is facing "the severe consequences of its evil actions."

Johnson, R-La., said the leaders of the House and Senate and the respective intelligence committees had been briefed in detail earlier in the week that military action "may become necessary" to protect U.S. troops and citizens in Iran. He said he received updates from Secretary of State Marco Rubio and will stay in "close contact" with Trump and the Defense Department "as this operation proceeds."

Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., commended Trump "for taking action to thwart these threats."

Thune said he looked forward to administration officials briefing all senators — a signal that lawmakers are seeking more answers to their questions about Trump's plans ahead.

Democrats warn strikes are illegal

Many Democrats are calling the operation illegal, saying the Constitution gives Congress alone the power to declare war. To them, the administration has failed to lay out its rationale or plan for the military strikes, and the aftermath.

Sen. Chris Van Hollen, who serves on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said the president has undertaken "illegal, regime-change war against Iran."

"This is not making us safer & only damages the US & our interests," Van Hollen, D-Md., said in a social media post. "The Senate must immediately vote on the War Powers Resolution to stop it."

House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries of New York said while Iran is a "bad actor and must be aggressively confronted" for its human rights abuses and the threat it poses to the U.S. and allies, the administration "must seek authorization for the preemptive use of military force that constitutes an act of war."

New York Sen. Chuck Schumer, the Democratic leader, demanded that Congress be briefed immediately on the administration's plans.

"Iran must never be allowed to attain a nuclear weapon but the American people do not want another endless and costly war in the Middle East when there are so many problems at home," he said.

Greg Abel praises Warren Buffett and promises Berkshire Hathaway won't retreat from investing

By JOSH FUNK AP Business Writer

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Greg Abel paid tribute to his predecessor Warren Buffett while promising in his first shareholder letter that Berkshire Hathaway won't retreat from investing or make significant changes in the way it operates.

Abel said he will always maintain Berkshire's financial strength but investors shouldn't look at the company's \$373.3 billion cash as a sign that it's not interested in new investments. The number is actually down slightly from the third quarter's \$382 billion. Abel said that cash acts as "dry powder" to ensure Berkshire is ready to act at a moment's notice.

"Our balance sheet is a strategic asset to be deployed at the right time. It allows us to act decisively, invest when others are tentative or fearful, and stand firm when financial storms roll through," Abel wrote.

But Abel did say Berkshire will avoid buying any businesses "that undermine the fabric of society or could jeopardize Berkshire's reputation" without explaining which companies that standard might exclude. CFRA Research analyst Cathy Seifert said she wonders whether Abel would consider AI companies as undermining society.

An extremely tough act to follow

Abel acknowledged up front that "Warren is obviously a very hard act to follow," and he didn't try to match Buffett's wit. Yet investor Adam Mead said he thinks Abel struck the right tone in his letter that seemed crafted to provide the details Berkshire's largest shareholder would want to know.

"I have no doubt in my mind that he had Warren in his mind the entire time he was writing this letter," said Mead, who wrote "The Complete Financial History of Berkshire Hathaway."

Abel did discuss some of Berkshire's biggest investments in Apple and American Express stock as well as detailing how it had more than doubled its money on paper with its investments in five Japanese trading houses. But Berkshire did take a \$4.5 billion write-down on the value of its Kraft Heinz and Occidental Petroleum stakes. He also said that Berkshire's other investment manager, Ted Weschler, handles only about 6% of the portfolio. The rest will be Abel's responsibility, which raises some questions because he's never made a living as a stock picker.

The bottom line numbers

A paper gain on Berkshire's investments kept the company's bottom-line net income of \$19.199 billion in the fourth quarter close to the previous year's \$19.69 billion even with the write-downs.

But Buffett and Berkshire have long said that operating earnings are a better measure of performance because they exclude investment gains and losses, which can skew the numbers significantly even when Berkshire isn't selling most of its stocks. By that measure, Berkshire's operating earnings fell nearly 30% to \$10.2 billion, or \$7,092.09 per Class A share. The four analysts surveyed by FactSet Research predicted operating earnings of \$8,259.23 per A share.

Abel praised several of Berkshire's companies like Geico and Precision Castparts, but said that BNSF needs to improve significantly because its profits lag behind other railroads and its utilities need to deal with the risks associated with wildfire liabilities. He said PacifiCorp will pay damages when it is responsible, but it will continue to fight lawsuits in fires that its equipment didn't start.

Berkshire again did not repurchase any of its shares in the fourth quarter. Abel told shareholders not to expect him to start giving quarterly commentary because Berkshire takes a long-term approach. Seifert said she appreciated his factual approach to the letter.

"He's coming into this role from a much different perspective. He wasn't the person who built it up. He's got to run this thing," Seifert said.

Big changes aren't likely

Investors are watching closely for any changes he might make, but Abel and Buffett have said there won't be significant changes in the way Berkshire operates. because it has worked so well over the past six decades.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 71 of 84

And Buffett remains chairman and the largest shareholder, so he's still helping guide the Omaha, Nebraska-based conglomerate he built. But Abel is now writing the annual letters that were always known as one of the most-read business reports out there because so many investors admired and followed Buffett because of his remarkable track record and homespun wit and advice.

Abel announced a few changes to the lineup for the shareholder meeting in May. The first question-and-answer period will feature Abel alongside Berkshire's Vice Chairman for insurance, Ajit Jain. Then a second panel will have Abel answering questions with BNSF CEO Katie Farmer and NetJets CEO Adam Johnson, who now helps oversee all of Berkshire's consumer, service and retail businesses.

The only initial changes so far are some administrative moves Abel made as he took over, and a filing in January suggesting Berkshire is considering sell off some or all of its 325 million Kraft Heinz shares. But Buffett may have supported that move because he had made comments about how Berkshire overpaid when it helped Heinz merge with Kraft, and he had been critical of packaged food giant's plan to split into two companies. Many investors have tried to copy the moves Buffett made in Berkshire's massive portfolio of stocks.

But Berkshire is powered by the dozens of companies it owns. In addition to insurance, utility and manufacturing firms, Berkshire owns well-known brands like Dairy Queen and See's Candy along with some of the companies that supply what other industries need like Precision Castparts, Lubrizol and Iscar Metalworking.

Abel already knows many of Berkshire's companies well because he has been managing all of the non-insurance companies since 2018, and the executives who report to him have praised his insights into their different businesses.

Read President Trump's statement on Iran in full

By The Associated Press undefined

U.S. President Donald Trump said in an 8-minute video posted on his Truth Social platform that the U.S. has begun "major combat operations in Iran." He claimed Iran has continued to develop its nuclear program and plans to develop missiles to reach the U.S. and appealed to the Iranian people to "take over your government."

Here's Trump's address in full:

A short time ago, the United States military began major combat operations in Iran. Our objective is to defend the American people by eliminating imminent threats from the Iranian regime. A vicious group of very hard, terrible people. Its menacing activities directly endanger the United States, our troops, our bases overseas, and our allies throughout the world.

For 47 years, the Iranian regime has chanted "Death to America" and waged an unending campaign of bloodshed and mass murder, targeting the United States, our troops and the innocent people in many, many countries. Among the regime's very first acts was to back a violent takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, holding dozens of American hostages for 444 days. In 1983, Iran's proxies carried out the marine barracks bombing in Beirut that killed 241 American military personnel.

In 2000, they knew and were probably involved with the attack on the USS Cole. Many died. Iranian forces killed and maimed hundreds of American service members in Iraq. The regime's proxies have continued to launch countless attacks against American forces stationed in the Middle East in recent years, as well as U.S. naval and commercial vessels and international shipping lines. It's been mass terror, and we're not going to put up with it any longer.

From Lebanon to Yemen and Syria to Iraq, the regime has armed, trained and funded terrorist militias that have soaked the earth with blood and guts. And it was Iran's proxy, Hamas, that launched the monstrous Oct. 7 attacks on Israel, slaughtering more than 1,000 innocent people, including 46 Americans, while taking 12 of our citizens hostage. It was brutal, something like the world has never seen before.

Iran is the world's number one state sponsor of terror, and just recently killed tens of thousands of its own citizens on the street as they protested. It has always been the policy of the United States, in particular my administration, that this terrorist regime can never have a nuclear weapon. I'll say it again, they

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 72 of 84

can never have a nuclear weapon. That is why in Operation Midnight Hammer last June, we obliterated the regime's nuclear program at Fordo, Natanz and Isfahan. After that attack, we warned them never to resume their malicious pursuit of nuclear weapons, and we sought repeatedly to make a deal. We tried. They wanted to do it. They didn't want to do it. Again they wanted to do it. They didn't want to do it. They didn't know what was happening. They just wanted to practice evil. But Iran refused, just as it has for decades and decades.

They've rejected every opportunity to renounce their nuclear ambitions, and we can't take it anymore. Instead, they attempted to rebuild their nuclear program and to continue developing long-range missiles that can now threaten our very good friends and allies in Europe, our troops stationed overseas, and could soon reach the American homeland. Just imagine how emboldened this regime would be if they ever had, and actually were armed with nuclear weapons as a means to deliver their message.

For these reasons, the United States military is undertaking a massive and ongoing operation to prevent this very wicked, radical dictatorship from threatening America and our core national security interests. We're going to destroy their missiles and raze their missile industry to the ground. It will be totally again obliterated. We're going to annihilate their navy. We're going to ensure that the region's terrorist proxies can no longer destabilize the region or the world and attack our forces, and no longer use their IEDs, or roadside bombs as they are sometimes called, to so gravely wound and kill thousands and thousands of people, including many Americans. And we will ensure that Iran does not obtain a nuclear weapon. It's a very simple message. They will never have a nuclear weapon.

This regime will soon learn that no one should challenge the strength and might of the United States armed forces. I built and rebuilt our military in my first administration and there is no military on earth even close to its power, strength or sophistication. My administration is taking every possible step to minimize the risk to U.S. personnel in the region. Even so, and I do not make this statement lightly, the Iranian regime seeks to kill. The lives of courageous American heroes may be lost, and we may have casualties. That often happens in war. But we're doing this not for now. We're doing this for the future. And it is a noble mission. We pray for every service member as they selflessly risk their lives to ensure that Americans and our children will never be threatened by a nuclear-armed Iran. We ask God to protect all of our heroes in harm's way. And we trust that with his help, the men and women of the armed forces will prevail. We have the greatest in the world, and they will prevail.

To the members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard, the armed forces and all of the police, I say tonight that you must lay down your weapons and have complete immunity. Or in the alternative, face certain death. So, lay down your arms. You will be treated fairly with total immunity, or you will face certain death. Finally, to the great proud people of Iran, I say tonight that the hour of your freedom is at hand. Stay sheltered. Don't leave your home. It's very dangerous outside. Bombs will be dropping everywhere. When we are finished, take over your government. It will be yours to take. This will be probably your only chance for generations.

For many years, you have asked for America's help. But you never got it. No president was willing to do what I am willing to do tonight. Now you have a president who is giving you what you want. So let's see how you respond. America is backing you with overwhelming strength and devastating force. Now is the time to seize control of your destiny, and to unleash the prosperous and glorious future that is close within your reach. This is the moment for action. Do not let it pass.

May God bless the brave men and women of America's armed forces. May God bless the United States of America. May God bless you all. Thank you.

Pakistan carries out airstrikes inside Afghanistan as 'open war' on border continues

By MUNIR AHMED and ABDUL QAHAR AFGHAN Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistan's military, backed by artillery and air power, struck more military installations deep inside Afghanistan overnight after Pakistan said it was in "open war" with its eastern neighbor.

Pakistan on Saturday claimed more than 330 Afghan forces had been killed since fighting erupted Thursday night during a broad Afghan cross-border attack into Pakistan. Afghanistan rejected the figures as false.

The casualty figures provided by either side could not be independently confirmed.

The fighting was in response to Pakistani airstrikes in Afghanistan last Sunday. Pakistan said it was targeting the outlawed Pakistani Taliban, or TTP. The group is separate but closely allied with Afghanistan's ruling Taliban. Afghanistan, however, said only civilians were killed in Sunday's airstrike.

After the Afghan attack, Pakistani Defense Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif declared Friday: "Our patience has now run out. Now it is open war between us."

Continued fighting

Pakistani Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said Saturday that more than 331 Afghan forces had been killed and over 500 others wounded during the ongoing military strikes in Afghanistan. Pakistan destroyed 102 Afghan posts, captured 22 others and destroyed 163 tanks and armored vehicles at 37 locations, he said.

Kabul has dismissed the casualty claim as inaccurate.

On Saturday, the Afghan Defense Ministry claimed that Afghan forces killed 110 Pakistani soldiers during ongoing fighting. Enayatullah Khawarazmi, a ministry spokesman, wrote on X that Afghan forces also captured 27 Pakistani posts.

There was no immediate response from Islamabad.

Pakistan's army spokesperson Lt. Gen. Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said on Friday that 12 Pakistani soldiers were killed in the fighting.

The Afghan government's deputy spokesman, Hamdullah Fitrat, on Saturday accused Pakistan of targeting civilian areas in the provinces of Paktika, Khost, Kunar, Nangarhar and Kandahar, as well as refugee camps in Torkham and Kandahar. Fitrat said 52 people had been killed, most of them women and children, and 66 others wounded.

Meanwhile, the United Nations wrote on X that major cities in Afghanistan were reportedly bombed by the Pakistani military on Friday, marking a new escalation and raising fears for civilians already struggling under the harsh rule of the Taliban authorities.

On Friday, Afghan government spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said 13 Afghan forces were killed and 22 wounded. He also said 55 Pakistani soldiers were killed. Pakistan put its own military figures at 12 killed, 27 wounded and one soldier missing in action.

Pakistan's state-run media reported the country's air force carried out strikes targeting key military installations in various areas of eastern Afghanistan.

According to Pakistani authorities, hundreds of residents living near the northwestern Torkham border crossing had fled. In recent days, Pakistan has also deported dozens of Afghan refugees to Torkham.

Ejaz Ul Haq, an Afghan refugee stranded near the Torkham border with his family, said he could not return to Afghanistan because of the fighting. Many others were struggling to obtain food during the fasting month of Ramadan, he said.

Afghanistan's Defense Ministry on Saturday said Afghanistan attacked Pakistani military bases in Miran-shah and Spin Wam overnight, destroying military installations and causing heavy casualties in response to the ongoing airstrikes by Pakistan.

Afghanistan says Pakistan targeting civilian areas

In eastern Afghanistan, the Department of Information and Culture accused Pakistan of targeting civilian areas, destroying homes and killing at least 11 people. There was no immediate response from Pakistan, which has said it is targeting only military installations.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 74 of 84

Mullah Taj Mohammad Naqshbandi, a commissioner on the Afghan side of the Torkham border, said in a statement Saturday that the "brave forces of the Islamic Emirate destroyed the Pakistani military regime's commissariat, military units, and three important security towers."

On Friday, the Afghan government said 55 Pakistani soldiers were killed during its strikes and Afghan losses were far lower than Pakistan claimed.

Mujahid, the Afghan government spokesman, said Friday that the country's attacks on Pakistani military targets were meant as "a message that our hands can reach their throats and that we will respond to every evil act of Pakistan." He added that "Pakistan has never sought to resolve problems through dialogue."

Pakistan has frequently accused Kabul of sheltering the TTP, allegations the group and Afghanistan's Taliban government deny.

Pakistan's army spokesman Chaudhry said Friday the Afghan government had to choose "TTP or Pakistan."

Tension high for months

Tensions have been high since October, when dozens of soldiers, civilians and suspected militants were killed in border clashes. A Qatari-mediated ceasefire ended the intense fighting that month, but several rounds of peace talks in Turkey in November failed to produce a lasting agreement. The two sides have occasionally traded fire since then, though the ceasefire had largely held until last week, when Pakistan struck what it described as TTP hideouts.

Since then, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, China and several other countries are again attempting to defuse tensions by offering mediation.

Qatar's minister of state, Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Al-Khulaifi, spoke Friday with the foreign ministers of Afghanistan and Pakistan in an effort to de-escalate tensions, Qatar's Foreign Ministry said in a post on X.

Takeaways from AP's report on the ICE detention center holding children and parents

By GARANCE BURKE, ADAM GELLER and VALERIE GONZALEZ Associated Press

Many Americans were alarmed recently when immigration officers in Minneapolis took custody of a 5-year-old boy and sent him and his father to a Texas detention center. But he was no outlier.

The government has been holding hundreds of children and their parents at the Dilley Immigration Processing Center, about 75 miles south of San Antonio. Some have been detained for months.

The Department of Homeland Security has strongly defended the quality of care and conditions there.

Here are key findings from an Associated Press report on how the Trump administration's aggressive immigration enforcement is shaping life inside the facility.

Detention of children has been rising

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement booked more than 3,800 children into detention during the first nine months of the new Trump administration, according to an AP analysis of data from the University of California, Berkeley's Deportation Data Project.

On an average day, more than 220 children were being held, with most of those detained longer than 24 hours sent to Dilley. More than half of Dilley detainees during the early part of the Trump administration were children, the AP analysis found.

Since being reopened last spring, the number of people detained at Dilley has risen sharply and reached more than 1,300 in late January, according to researchers. Nearly two-thirds of children detained by ICE in the early months of the Trump administration were eventually deported.

ICE holds many children longer than 20-day limit

The government is holding many children at Dilley well beyond the 20-day limit set by a longstanding court order.

"We've started to use 100 days as a benchmark because so many children are exceeding 20 days," said Leecia Welch, the chief legal director at Children's Rights, who visits Dilley regularly to ensure compliance. In a visit this month, Welch said she counted more than 30 children who had been held for over 100 days.

Many settled families among those currently detained

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 75 of 84

When the Obama administration opened Dilley in 2014, nearly all the families detained there had recently crossed the border from Mexico.

But many of those now sent to the facility have lived in the U.S. several years, according to lawyers and other observers, meaning children are being uprooted from the familiarity of schools, neighborhoods and many of the people who care for them.

Parents Allege Deficient Care

Parents and children recounted stressful conditions inside Dilley, including experiences that raise questions about the quality of care being provided.

A 13-year-old girl cut herself with a plastic knife after staff withheld prescribed antidepressants and denied her request to join her mother down the hall, the mother told the AP.

Another mother said when her 1-year-old daughter developed a high fever and vomited, medical staff repeatedly offered only acetaminophen and ibuprofen before she was eventually admitted to hospitals with bronchitis, pneumonia and stomach viruses. ICE disputed her account, saying the baby "immediately received proper care."

Other families described more routine problems, like the difficulty of getting children to sleep in quarters where lights are kept on all night and of stomach aches caused by foul drinking water.

Both adults and children described the often overwhelming stress of being detained that has caused many to despair.

ICE, DHS defend Dilley

DHS did not respond to detailed questions about Dilley submitted by the AP. But both DHS and ICE sharply refuted allegations of poor care and conditions in statements issued this week.

"The Dilley facility is a family residential center designed specifically to house family units in a safe, structured and appropriate environment," ICE Director Todd M. Lyons said in a statement.

Dilley provides medical screenings and infant care packages as well as classrooms and recreational spaces, ICE said.

Once in full operation, Dilley is expected to generate about \$180 million in annual revenue for CoreCivic, the for-profit prison company that operates it under contract with ICE, according to the company's recent filing with securities regulators.

In response to questions from the AP, a CoreCivic spokesman said no child at Dilley "has been denied medical treatment or experienced a delayed medical assessment." The company said detainees receive comprehensive care from medical and mental health professionals.

Questions about oversight

The increased detention of families comes as the Trump administration has gutted an office responsible for oversight of conditions inside Dilley and other facilities.

In years past, investigators found problems at Dilley, including consistently inadequate staffing and disregard for the trauma caused by the detention.

A special committee recommended that family detention be discontinued except in rare cases, and the Biden administration began phasing it out in 2021. Dilley was closed in 2024. But in reopening it, the Trump administration has completely reversed course.

Russia condemns US-Israel strikes on Iran as 'unprovoked act of armed aggression'

By The Associated Press undefined

Russia on Saturday condemned the U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran as "a preplanned and unprovoked act of armed aggression against a sovereign and independent U.N. member state," demanding an immediate halt to the military campaign and a return to diplomacy.

In a statement posted to Telegram, the Foreign Ministry accused Washington and Tel Aviv of "hiding behind" concerns about Iran's nuclear program while actually pursuing regime change.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 76 of 84

It warned the attacks risked triggering a "humanitarian, economic and possibly radiological catastrophe" in the region and accused the U.S. and Israel of "plunging the Middle East into an abyss of uncontrolled escalation."

Russia has emerged as a key trade partner and supplier of weapons and technologies for Iran, which has faced bruising international sanctions. Though Russia's Foreign Ministry was quick to condemn the U.S.-Israeli attacks, the Kremlin will likely carefully assess its response following a recent warming of ties between Moscow and Washington.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has praised U.S. President Donald Trump's efforts to mediate an end to the conflict in Ukraine, and Moscow and Washington have discussed ways to revive their economic ties.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov spoke by phone with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, Russia's Foreign Ministry said. Araghchi briefed Lavrov on Iran's attempts to repel the attacks and said Iran would seek to convene an urgent U.N. Security Council session, it said. Lavrov reiterated Russia's condemnation of the U.S.-Israeli strikes and Moscow's readiness to help broker peace.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Putin discussed the situation in Iran with Russia's Security Council via videoconference, but did not give details.

In the Foreign Ministry statement, Moscow called the bombing of nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards "unacceptable" and said it stood ready to help broker a peaceful resolution, while placing full responsibility for the escalation on the United States and Israel.

"Responsibility for the negative consequences of this manmade crisis, including an unpredictable chain reaction and spiraling violence, lies entirely with them," the statement said.

Russia's Foreign Ministry also condemned what it called "the serial nature of destabilizing attacks carried out by the U.S. administration," accusing the U.S. of attacking "the international legal pillars of the world order."

Russia has maintained a delicate balancing act in the Middle East for decades, trying to navigate its warm relations with Israel even as it has developed strong economic and military ties with Iran.

Iranian forces and Russian sailors conducted annual drills in the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean last week aimed at "upgrading operational coordination as well as exchange of military experiences," Iran's state-run IRNA news agency reported.

Putin and his Iranian counterpart, Masoud Pezeshkian, signed a broad cooperation pact in January last year as their countries deepened their partnership in the face of stinging Western sanctions.

The West alleges that in 2022, Russia and Iran signed a \$1.7 billion deal for Shahed drones after Putin sent troops into Ukraine, and the U.S. also believes Iran has transferred short-range ballistic missiles, but neither Moscow nor Tehran ever acknowledged the actions.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy voiced support for the strikes on Iran, calling it "an accomplice of Putin" for supplying Moscow with Shahed drones and the technology to produce them and other weapons during its four-year war against Ukraine.

Russia and Iran also pooled their efforts to shore up Bashar Assad's government during Syria's civil war, but failed to prevent his downfall after a lightning offensive by the opposition. Assad and his family fled to Russia.

Some observers in Moscow argue that the focus on the confrontation between Israel and Iran could distract global attention from the war in Ukraine and play into Russia's hands by potentially weakening Western support for Kyiv.

Democrats look to Tejano music star Bobby Pulido in a high-stakes South Texas congressional race

By JONATHAN J. COOPER Associated Press

PHARR, Texas (AP) — Latin Grammy winner Bobby Pulido's music fills the air well before he walks into an adult day care center to round up support for his congressional campaign, his voice crooning in Spanish from a speaker in the corner.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 77 of 84

A few of the people playing cards and bantering playfully at the South Texas center ask about the man in cowboy boots, dark jeans, leather jacket and an ivory cowboy hat as the Democrat makes his entrance, but most barely notice. Then the music fades, and Pulido takes a microphone.

It is important to vote and ensure your children do, too, he says in Spanish, "because the truth is that we are living in difficult times right now and it is important to make a change."

Pulido has had a three-decade career in Tejano music, a style that evolved in the fields and barrios of South Texas. A world away in Washington, Democrats are betting that his celebrity can reverse the party's deteriorating standing among Hispanics, whose political support has shifted to Republicans in the Trump era. They also see him as the party's best hope to win a district that was engineered to protect U.S. Rep. Monica De La Cruz, the only House Republican from Texas' Rio Grande Valley.

With three competitive races this fall, the region is at the center of the battle to control the House after Texas Republicans, at President Donald Trump's request, redrew congressional district boundaries to give their party an edge. The party primaries are Tuesday.

Pulido is a newcomer to politics who still has two stops left on a farewell music tour, including one this weekend in Mexico. In the Democratic primary, he faces Ada Cuellar, a doctor and law school graduate who is running to his left, with the race reflecting broader party dynamics. Cuellar argues that Pulido is out of touch with voters and that he and the party establishment are putting too much stock in his music-star status.

Both Democrats in the closely contested U.S. Senate primary have waded into the congressional race, with state Rep. James Talarico campaigning with Pulido and U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett with Cuellar.

The Democratic nominee in the 15th Congressional District will face an even tougher general election landscape. De La Cruz won the seat by 14 percentage points in 2024, even before Republicans tweaked the boundaries to solidify her position.

Pulido runs from the center in a changing district

The area Pulido hopes to represent stretches from the Mexican border 300 miles north through ranches and small towns. It is 81% Hispanic, poorer than the state and nation as a whole, and overwhelmingly Catholic. It encapsulates the shift of working-class voters Hispanics to the Republican Party, one of the defining political trends of the Trump era.

In the newly constituted district, Democrats saw their support in recent presidential elections fall from 55% for Hillary Clinton in 2016 to 41% for Kamala Harris in 2024.

Pulido has staked out moderate positions that nod to the region's cultural conservatism, sometimes drawing the ire of the left. He says, for example, that he opposes abortion but supports letting women decide for themselves.

"Even if I personally would not be OK with it, I still respect that other people might make their own decisions and that we have to be OK with that," he said.

Pulido has faced scrutiny for years of bawdy social media posts, including crude and sexist jokes and links to pornographic websites. He once posted a video purporting to show him urinating on Trump's star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame. The singer later said it was a prank with a water bottle.

"My sense of humor on social media — and it's very much in Spanish, I have a lot of fans in Mexico — sometimes that humor doesn't translate," Pulido said. He said he was embarrassed by some of his old posts.

Tough opposition in primary and general elections

Cuellar, Pulido's chief opponent in the Democratic primary, is emphasizing her experience in the trenches of the health care system. She contrasts her expertise in public policy with Pulido's as a performer.

"He doesn't really understand the issues or have the solutions that I have," she said.

Cuellar is running a more progressive campaign, saying Pulido is out of touch with Democratic voters on abortion in particular.

Pulido is not so much a threat because he is famous, she said, but because he aggressively has backed by "the establishment" in Washington and locally in Hidalgo County, the district's largest population center. Cuellar said officials, whom she did not name, have pushed her to drop out of the race.

"I am like a scrappy underdog, and I've been one my whole life," Cuellar said. "So I really am not con-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 78 of 84

cerned about the celebrity itself, but I'm fighting this establishment pressure, and that's really the biggest challenge I'm faced with."

She has largely self-funded her campaign to keep pace with Pulido's spending and has aired television ads, while he has not.

National Democratic leaders believe Pulido's more moderate positions make him the best general election candidate against De La Cruz. Though largely aligned with Trump and the House leadership, she was one of only 17 House Republicans to vote with Democrats on a bill extending Affordable Care Act subsidies.

Speaking before Trump at a rally in Corpus Christi on Friday, De La Cruz said she has worked with him to pressure Mexico to release water it owes from the countries' shared Rio Grande basin.

"We have together delivered for Texas and delivered for our nation by turning all of South Texas red, and we will continue to keep Texas red," De La Cruz said.

Celebrity 'opens the door'

Inside My Morning Star Adult Day Care, where Pulido spoke on a recent day, his music returned as he made rounds from table to table, shaking hands and making small talk in English or Spanish, depending on how he was greeted.

"I'll ask the sky to not make me suffer anymore," Pulido's voice is heard over an accordion and rhythmic percussion, narrating a story of heartbreak and longing. The 1997 song, "Le Pediré," is among the hits of his three-decade career.

Pulido won Latin Grammy Awards for Best Tejano Album in 2022 and 2025 and was nominated this year for an American Grammy.

He is steeped in the culture of Tejano music, which blends Mexican folk styles with European dance music brought here by Czech, German and Polish settlers. It is deeply rooted in this narrow region of Central and South Texas, where many can trace their lineage to the Republic of Texas before it joined the United States.

Pulido's father, Roberto Pulido, was a pioneer of the genre, which has receded in popularity since its heyday in the 1990s, when Selena broke through as a mainstream pop artist.

More than just celebrity, Bobby Pulido's deep history in the genre gives him credibility with people in the area, said Cathy Ragland, an ethnomusicology professor at University of North Texas, who studies U.S.-Mexico border music.

"He is a homegrown guy in the border, and that gets you a lot of mileage," she said.

Celebrity is an asset when running for office, Pulido said later, sitting on a bench outside the adult day care center. But it is no guarantee of success.

"I'm not going to lie, it opens the door. It doesn't seal the deal," Pulido said.

"I don't think people vote for you because you're famous. They'll listen to you because you're famous, and then they're going to decide if they want to vote for you or not."

Racial slur at BAFTA awards stirs complex feelings for Black people with Tourette syndrome

By TERRY TANG Associated Press

For Black people living with Tourette syndrome, the British Academy Film and Television Arts Awards incident earlier this week where a vocal tic manifested as a racial slur while two Black stars of the movie "Sinners" were onstage has left them with complicated feelings.

"It's been pretty difficult because I feel like there's such a clash between both sides," said Chloe Winston, 24, who experiences coprolalia, the same verbal tic as John Davidson, the BAFTA nominee and Tourette syndrome advocate who yelled the slur. "A tic is not intentional, but it still causes harm. And I think that does require accountability."

Davidson's utterance just as Michael B. Jordan and Delroy Lindo were presenting the first award of that night's ceremony ignited a firestorm that overshadowed Sunday's BAFTAs. There was immediate outrage that the actors and other Black attendees were subjected to the slur. Then there was frustration from

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 79 of 84

the disability community at a lack of understanding about Tourette syndrome. But anger has been loud and widespread for broadcaster BBC because of its decision to allow the racial slur to air uncensored two hours after the live event. Most live awards shows like the Oscars operate on a seconds-long tape delay.

The BAFTA and BBC apologies also were criticized as insufficient. The BBC plans to edit it out of its iPlayer streaming service.

The ordeal has compelled Black people with Tourette syndrome, from politicians to content creators, to speak out. They assert that showing empathy for those dealing with the disorder doesn't minimize the pain felt by the Black community. There needs to be acknowledgment of the harm, some have said. Others also worry that misinformation or stereotypes about Tourette syndrome could exacerbate racial profiling or discrimination for Black people who live with it.

Now, advocacy groups are using the BAFTA moment to try to grow existing support networks focused on Black people who feel isolated by Tourette syndrome.

What is Tourette syndrome and coprolalia?

Tourette syndrome is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by sudden, involuntary movements and/or sounds called tics, according to the Tourette Association of America. These can be motor and vocal tics. Tics can range from mild and inconsequential to moderate and severe and can even be disabling in some cases.

"We know that there's this sort of sensory and motor loop happening. And again, similarly in the vocalizations, they typically start with things like coughing, sniffing, or other just non-specific sounds, said Dr. Jeremiah Scharf, a tic disorder specialist at Massachusetts General Hospital.

In a majority of people, the symptoms begin to emerge during elementary school age and peak between ages 10 and 14, according to Scharf. Roughly 1.4 million people in the U.S. live with Tourette syndrome or a persistent tic disorder, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Coprolalia is "the involuntary utterance of obscene and socially unacceptable words and phrases." The Tourette Association of America estimates between 10%-15% of people with Tourette syndrome live with it. The organization has cautioned against making assumptions about the person based on the content of the tic.

These vocal outbursts — typically vulgarities and insults — are a biological condition that can sometimes be triggered by stress such as not enough sleep or being upset, Scharf said. The tics are hard to stop and involuntary — almost like a sneeze.

"Unfortunately, for this subset of people, it is incredibly disabling because they don't want to say those things. It's very distressing to them," said Scharf, who was talking in general terms and not about the BAFTA awards incident specifically. "They feel significant remorse about it."

Treatment for severe tic disorders can range from medication to behavioral therapies. Retraining the brain to handle tics is "takes an enormous amount of practice in terms of recognizing when the tics are coming," Scharf said. But, there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

Incident stirs up struggles against racism and ableism

Jhónelle Bean, an American Sign Language interpreter who is Black and has Tourette syndrome, took to TikTok after seeing so much "all-or-nothing" discourse around the BAFTA awards. Her video about the "complexity and duality of the situation" has garnered over 3 million views.

"Two things can be true at the same time," Bean said. "Just because he ticced that does not mean it was intentional. But then also that still caused hurt or harm for people that heard it, which again is why I'm mad at the BAFTAs and the BBC for keeping it in the broadcast in the first place because they had the power to take it out."

The incident also brought up "ableism" comments that were flat-out discriminatory. They included that Davidson, the man who shouted the racial slur, "should have been locked away, he should've had a muzzle, things like that," Bean said.

At the same time, Bean disagreed with some engaged in the social media discourse who said those who took offense over the N-word needed to "get over it."

Jumaane Williams, New York City's public advocate who is Black and has Tourette syndrome, said it can

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 80 of 84

be "painful both physically and mentally" to hold in a tic. As someone who has coprolalia too, Williams gives Davidson some credit for removing himself from the situation though "maybe he could have moved a little sooner."

"For me, it was all about making sure we're practicing care. And I don't think that happened for the two actors that were there or the Black folks who were there or people who didn't want to hear the word," Williams said.

A demand for support groups for Black people with Tourette syndrome

There's always going to be inherent concern if you are Black with Tourette syndrome or any tic disorder, said Reice Griffin, 20, who is a Tourette Association of America rising leader and ambassador. She has had people witness her tics and assume she uses drugs or is typically belligerent. And interacting with police can be even more stressful.

"Law enforcement is not well equipped to deal with Tourette syndrome, but also historically, as a Black person, you never really want to be around law enforcement," Griffin said.

The association, which offers printable "I Have TS" cards, is actively trying to offer more support for people of color.

Griffin recently attended a virtual support group meeting for Black young adults, and she has been speaking at schools and to groups to become more comfortable with herself.

"I thought that because I had Tourette syndrome that, like, public speaking was out the window," Griffin said. "If I could help another young Black girl with Tourette syndrome not feel as alone or help people get diagnosed — that's the dream."

Williams, the New York City public advocate, agrees there is not enough support for Black people with Tourette syndrome. He tries to help by speaking about his own life. That has led to him hearing directly from New Yorkers.

"Sometimes in the street or an event people will bring their family member up which is always a pretty emotional space for me because when I see the kid, I know what they're going through," Williams said.

From box office bomb to media powerhouse:

Skydance's 20-year rise to overtake Paramount, Warner Bros

By MATT SEDENSKY AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — In its debut film, Skydance Productions released a special effects-laden World War I drama about fighter pilots with a starring role for an unknown actor, the company's founder, David Ellison. It was a box office bomb.

Twenty years later, in a twist fit for Hollywood itself, the tiny studio once brushed off as a billionaire scion's vanity project is poised to be an entertainment behemoth. With that once-unknown actor at its helm and a merger with Paramount already under its belt, Skydance is now on the cusp of another takeover that once seemed unthinkable, this time of storied giant Warner Bros. Discovery.

"It's only a surprise to those who haven't been paying attention to the long game," says Walter Nicoletti, founder of the film production company Voce Spettacolo, noting Skydance's focus on financing hit movies and accumulating assets while partnering with some of the biggest companies in the business. "This is a sort of a silent takeover. Skydance didn't start as a predator. It started as an essential partner."

When Ellison, the son of tech giant Oracle Corp. co-founder Larry Ellison, launched Skydance as a 23-year-old in 2006, the company registered little more than a blip in an industry where he was just another rich newcomer trying to gain a foothold in the warmth of Hollywood's bright lights.

"Flyboys," the war story it chose as its inaugural feature, did little to raise its profile.

"Cloyingly formulaic," jeered The Seattle Times. An "inflated wannabe epic," chimed in The Washington Post. "It's hard not to giggle," concluded The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

The celebrated critic Richard Roeper echoed the panning reviews of his brethren and the lackluster response of audiences in questioning what the movie's makers were thinking.

"Why make such a corny and incredibly predictable film?" he wrote.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 81 of 84

But Ellison plodded on. As the years ticked by, more flops came but he slowly notched successes too. He partnered with some of the biggest names in the business, including Paramount, Netflix and Apple, and unleashed a string of hits that brought in hundreds of millions at the box office. He lured both talent and streams of financing. He even released the rare film to surpass the \$1 billion mark, the 2022 blockbuster "Top Gun: Maverick," with his studio's most reliable star, Tom Cruise.

Jason Squire, a former studio executive, emeritus professor at the University of Southern California, and host of "The Movie Business Podcast," is no fan of the deal that has Skydance poised to take over Warner Bros., seeing the consolidation as reducing competition and hurting the industry. But he nonetheless marvels at how Ellison went from being "not high on the radar" in Hollywood to entertainment's pinnacle.

"One of the traditions of entering the movie business is serious wealth, or access to serious wealth. But once you get a foothold, you have to demonstrate that wealth — by buying things, acquiring projects," Squire says. "They became a player."

Money alone didn't assure Ellison's success, Squire says, but it sure helped.

"He became a member at the table when these partnerships and the infusion of dollars really set him up on a really strong trajectory," he says. "It's quite amazing."

In time, the failure of "Flyboys" was not what anyone thought of about Skydance. While there have been a few disappointments, including its reboot of the "Terminator" franchise, a string of "Mission: Impossible" flicks continually put Cruise in the limelight and audiences in theater seats. Hits like "Grace and Frankie" on Netflix gave it an entry to streaming television.

A run-up of successes had rumors swirling what giant might gobble Skydance up.

But in the end, Skydance did the gobbling.

After years of partnering with Paramount, the two companies merged last year, and in the months since, Ellison went on a relentless spending spree, announcing agreements on everything from streaming rights for Ultimate Fighting Championship to a deal with the creators of "Stranger Things," who were lured from Netflix.

Meantime, while the much larger Netflix once seemed a shoo-in to acquire Warner Bros., Ellison's Skydance was unrelenting in its counterproposal. On Thursday, it emerged the winner. Netflix walked away from its offer, leaving regulators as Skydance's only potential foil.

"This was absolutely a meteoric rise. Two decades from its formation to its current position to become one of the most powerful media companies in the world is nothing less than incredible," says Tre Lovell, a Los Angeles media law and entertainment attorney. "What Skydance has done over the past two decades has not been accomplished by any other media company in history."

Skydance's merger with Paramount delivered MTV, Comedy Central, Nickelodeon and a host of other channels, including its flagship CBS, where the change in power has brought turmoil to its news division. If the Warner deal is finalized, Ellison will preside over a sprawling empire that would include HBO, HGTV, the Food Network, and another vast expansion into news with CNN, a move that has some of its employees worried about interference from a family seen as an ally of President Donald Trump.

It also delivers to Paramount, which has sputtered recently at the box office, a studio coming off a banner year. Warner Bros. collected 30 Oscar nominations compared with Paramount's zero, and accounted for 21% of the domestic box office in 2025. Paramount's market share was just 6%.

All of it now could be Ellison's. What a difference 20 years makes.

The failure of "Flyboys" had Ellison so depressed, he once said, that he suffered atrial fibrillation that required hospitalization. But for someone from a family so rich that his father owns most of a Hawaiian island, and with a look that GQ described as "the golden glow of the genetically sparkling," his reversal of fortunes may be unsurprising. In this redemption story, Ellison may be straight out of central casting.

Ellison has scored his biggest big-screen wins with familiar stories from popular franchises like "Transformers," "Scream," "Sonic the Hedgehog," and "Paw Patrol." His own narrative, emerging the unlikely victor, may strike an equally familiar tone.

"Hollywood has seen David-versus-Goliath moments before," says Vikrant Mathur, co-founder of the streaming company Future Today.

A Supreme Court case over whether marijuana users can own guns is creating unusual alliances

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Gun rights and cannabis legalization are usually on opposite ends of the political spectrum, but both movements have brought about seismic shifts in the United States in recent decades.

Now those forces are lining up for a rare overlap in a case coming before the Supreme Court on Monday, and it is not the only unusual alliance.

The Republican Trump administration will be defending a firearm restriction, with backing from gun-control groups typically more aligned with Democrats.

On the other side is a pairing of the National Rifle Association and the American Civil Liberties Union.

At stake is a federal law that bars people who regularly use marijuana from legally owning guns. It is an issue that has divided lower courts since a landmark 2022 Supreme Court decision expanded gun rights.

Cecillia Wang, legal director at the ACLU, said the law violates the Second Amendment and is unconstitutionally vague about what it means to be a drug user.

"We're deeply concerned with the potential of this statute to basically give federal prosecutors a blank check," she said. "Millions of Americans use marijuana and there is no way for them to know based on words of this statute whether they could be charged or convicted of this crime because they own a firearm."

Cannabis is legal for medicinal use in most states and for recreational use in about half the country.

But the law also applies more widely against all illegal substances, meaning the case could allow broader legal gun use by other drug users. The group Everytown for Gun Safety said the law meets the Supreme Court's requirement that gun laws must have a strong grounding in the nation's history and tradition.

"Restricting firearm use by illegal drug users is 'as old as legislative recognition of the drug problem itself,'" attorneys wrote.

Cannabis remains illegal on a federal level, though President Donald Trump has signed an order to fast-track its reclassification as a less dangerous drug.

His Justice Department is also asking the justices to revive a criminal case against Ali Danial Hemani, a Texas man who was charged with a felony because he had a gun in his house and acknowledged smoking marijuana every other day. FBI agents also found a small amount of cocaine when they searched his home as part of a broader investigation, but the gun charge was the only one filed against him.

The conservative-leaning 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected the case, finding that only people who are intoxicated while armed can be charged with a crime.

The administration has argued in favor of gun rights in other cases, but government lawyers say this law is a justifiable restriction. "Habitual illegal drug users with firearms present unique dangers to society — especially because they pose a grave risk of armed, hostile encounters with police officers while impaired," they wrote in court documents. The law fits within the nation's history of restrictions on people who were frequently drunk, they argued.

While the conservative-majority Supreme Court has expanded gun rights, it also has upheld a federal law disarming people who are subject to domestic violence restraining orders. The Department of Justice argues that drug users are similarly risky. The law it is asking the court to uphold was also used in the case of Hunter Biden, who was convicted of buying a gun when he was addicted to cocaine.

But the NRA and other gun-rights groups, typically aligned with the GOP, are arrayed against the administration in Hemani's case.

"Americans have traditionally chosen which substances are acceptable for responsible recreational use, and the fundamental right to keep and bear arms was never denied to people who occasionally partook in such drugs — unless they were carrying arms while actively intoxicated," lawyers for the Second Amendment Foundation wrote in court documents.

The cannabis group NORML agrees, saying one of the fastest-growing groups of users are baby boomers trying products such as marijuana gummies to relieve arthritis and sleep problems.

"It's laughable to think that by outlawing cannabis users possessing firearms you'll minimize the problem

with gun violence," said Joe A. Bondy, chair of the board of directors for NORML, one of the country's oldest and largest groups advocating for the legalization of marijuana.

Vatican removes salty white film coating Michelangelo's 'The Last Judgment'

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Michelangelo's "The Last Judgement" is getting a facial, with restorers removing a chalky white film of salt that has accumulated over the Renaissance masterpiece since its last major renovation three decades ago.

The Vatican on Saturday gave the media a sneak peak to the cleaning operation, which is taking place on a floor-to-ceiling scaffolding that has obscured the imposing fresco of heaven and hell that dominates the front of the chapel.

The cleaning operation is expected to be completed by Easter, in the first week of April. The public can continue to visit in the meantime, but will have to settle for a reproduction of "The Last Judgment" superimposed on a screen that covers the scaffolding.

Vatican Museum officials on Saturday described a simple but important cleaning operation to remove the white film of salt that has accumulated on the fresco thanks to the nearly 25,000 people who pass through the Vatican Museums each day.

"This salt is created because, above all, when we sweat, we emit lactic acid, and unfortunately lactic acid reacts with the calcium carbonate present on the wall," said Fabio Moresi, in charge of the scientific research team at the Vatican Museums that is overseeing the cleaning.

Climate change also has a role to play, since the visitors who do come tend to sweat more, creating even more humidity that reacts with the fresco, he said.

Vatican Museums chief Barbara Jatta described the film as a "cataract" that is easy enough to remove: Restorers dip sheets of Japanese rice paper into distilled water and apply them to the fresco, and carefully wipe away the salt film.

Viewed up close on Saturday on the scaffolding, the difference between before and after is remarkable: Sections of the fresco that haven't been cleaned look as if they are coated in a chalky dust; the cleaned sections show the vibrant colors and detail of the original. On the figure of Jesus, for example, at the center of the fresco, a privileged visitor can see how Michelangelo painted his hair and the wounds of his crucifixion.

The Sistine Chapel is named after Pope Sixtus IV, an art patron who oversaw the construction of the main papal chapel in the 15th century.

But it was a later pontiff, Pope Julius II, who commissioned Michelangelo to paint the famous ceiling, the "Creation of Adam" showing God's outstretched hand, between 1508 and 1512. A later pontiff, Pope Clement VII, commissioned Michelangelo in 1533 to return to paint "The Last Judgment."

The other frescos of the Sistine Chapel, where Pope Leo XIV was elected in May, undergo yearly cleaning with restorers working at night on cherry-pickers that can be removed each morning before the public arrives.

But such machines can't access all of "The Last Judgement," since the fresco is located behind the altar, which is itself raised up marble steps. That logistical impediment required the mounting of a fixed scaffolding to access the full fresco to clean it.

The Sistine Chapel underwent a complete restoration between 1979 and 1999, when centuries of smoke, grime and wax buildup was removed. The Vatican has left small patches of the pre-restored fresco intact to show the difference, which are now visible on the upper floors of the scaffolding and show a nearly blackened wall.

Rather than radically reduce the number of visitors who can access the Sistine Chapel, the Vatican is studying ways to address humidity levels, through filtration systems and other technologies, so that the salty film doesn't form again.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 269 ~ 84 of 84

Today in History: March 1, Peace Corps established

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Sunday, March 1, the 60th day of 2026. There are 305 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On March 1, 1961, President John F. Kennedy signed an executive order establishing the Peace Corps; since its establishment, over 240,000 Americans have served as Peace Corps volunteers.

Also on this date:

In 1872, President Ulysses S. Grant signed the Yellowstone National Park Protection Act, making Yellowstone the nation's first national park.

In 1932, Charles A. Lindbergh Jr., the 20-month-old son of Charles and Anne Lindbergh, was kidnapped from the family home in New Jersey. (Remains identified as those of the child were found two months later; Bruno Richard Hauptmann was convicted of murder in the case in 1935 and executed in 1936.)

In 1954, four Puerto Rican nationalists opened fire from the spectators gallery of the U.S. House of Representatives, wounding five members of Congress.

In 1966, the Soviet space probe Venera 3 crash-landed on the surface of Venus, becoming the first spacecraft to reach another planet. However, Venera was unable to transmit any data back to Earth because its communications system had failed.

In 1971, a bomb went off inside a men's room at the U.S. Capitol. The radical group Weather Underground claimed responsibility for the pre-dawn blast, which damaged the building but caused no injuries.

In 1974, seven people, including former Nixon White House aides H.R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman; former Attorney General John Mitchell; and former assistant Attorney General Robert Mardian, were indicted by a grand jury on charges of conspiring to obstruct justice in connection with the Watergate break-in. (These four defendants were convicted in January 1975, though Mardian's conviction was later reversed.)

In 2005, Dennis Rader, the churchgoing family man accused of leading a double life as the BTK serial killer, was charged in Wichita, Kansas, with 10 counts of first-degree murder. (Rader later pleaded guilty and received multiple life sentences.)

In 2007, a tornado outbreak in the Southeast U.S. killed at least 19 people across Alabama and Georgia. One of the tornadoes toppled a concrete wall at a high school in Enterprise, Alabama, killing eight students.

In 2014, a mass stabbing by men wielding knives and machetes at a railway station in Kunming, in southwest China, left at least 29 people dead and 130 others wounded. Authorities blamed a militant separatist group for the attack and said four of the suspects were shot dead.

In 2024, thousands of mourners bid farewell to Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny at a public funeral in Moscow, two weeks after his unexplained death in an Arctic penal colony. Navalny had been jailed since January 2021, when he returned to Moscow to face certain arrest after recuperating in Germany from nerve agent poisoning he blamed on the Kremlin.

Today's birthdays: Rock singer Roger Daltrey is 82. Actor Dirk Benedict is 81. Republican Sen. Deb Fischer of Nebraska is 75. Filmmaker Ron Howard is 72. Actor Tim Daly is 70. Hockey Hall of Famer Ron Francis is 63. Filmmaker Zack Snyder is 60. Actor Javier Bardem is 57. Basketball Hall of Famer Yolanda Griffith is 56. Basketball Hall of Famer Chris Webber is 53. Actor Mark-Paul Gosselaar is 52. Actor Jensen Ackles is 48. Actor Lupita Nyong'o is 43. Pop singer Kesha is 39. Pop singer Justin Bieber is 32. NFL wide receiver Ja'Marr Chase is 26. Actor Izabella Alvarez is 22. Actor Sawyer Sharbino is 20.