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Sunday, March 29

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

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

United Methodist: Worship at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; 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.

6th grade BB Practice, 6 pm., Arena



Monday, March 30

Senior Menu: Soft tacos, Spanish rice with beans, lettuce and cheese, corn, fruit.

School Breakfast: Egg bake.

School Lunch: Oriental chicken, rice.

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

Pickleball, 5:30 a.m., Elementary Gym

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

Tuesday, March 31

Senior Menu: Scalloped potatoes, carrots, fruit, dinner roll.

School Breakfast: Muffins.

School Lunch: Tater tot hot dish, mixed vegetables.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Indoor Track Meet at NSU, 3:30 p.m.

Biogirls, 3:45 p.m., elementary gym

Softball: Sisseton at Groton Area, Varsity at 4 p.m., JV at 5 p.m.

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

The High Price We Pay When the President Violates the War Clause

The framers' wisdom in vesting constitutional control over the war power—its "commencement, continuation and conclusion"—in Congress, as James Madison said, not in the hands of the president, has struck Americans squarely in the face in light of President Donald Trump's fly-by-the-seat-of-his-pants conduct of his war in Iran, one characterized by tactics without strategy and occasional public pronouncements that, like the mercurial summertime weather, can change from minute to minute. Trump's arbitrary Truth Social Posts, designed to manipulate the financial markets, are a reflection of what his former aide, Steve Bannon, once called his approach to governance—"just win the next five minutes." They leave Americans to guess at this president's strategy, goals and end game—if Trump even has any—in his initiation of a war of choice, which currently costs the United States over \$ 1 billion per day, in addition to his request to Congress for an additional \$200 billion dollars. All this for something he absurdly calls an "excursion."

Trump's war of choice has sent energy prices soaring, disrupted the world's oil supply and threatens global economic disruption. He has lifted the sanctions on Iranian oil, which has increased the enemy's revenue and thus its capacity to fight Americans, and removed the sanctions on Russian oil, which has lined Putin's pockets so he can increase his war of choice in Ukraine.

There were eminently sound reasons—as compelling today as they were in 1787-- behind the framers' historic decision to grant to Congress, as Madison declared, the entire control over the decision to go to war, to move the nation, as Alexander Hamilton said, from a "state of peace to a state of war." In breaking with the historical pattern of executive warmaking, the framers sought to avoid the arbitrary executive decisions that kings, despots and tyrants had made to initiate and continue wars to serve their own political, personal and pecuniary purposes. The framers preferred to entrust in Congress the responsibility to make the awesome decision to go war, as well as the commencement of military hostilities short of war. The system was designed, as James Wilson said, to "prevent one man" from taking the nation to war because, as George Mason declared, the "executive was not to be trusted with it."

Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, like others with wartime experience then, and now, agreed that it is easier to start a war than to end one. The framers were not naïve; they were not convinced that members of Congress would possess unassailable wisdom on the question of going to war and whether to risk the blood and treasure of the nation. Hardly. They embraced, rather, the wisdom reflected in the process of congressional deliberation, the crossfire of discussion and debate that distinguishes a republican form of government. While Congress might make a mistake in declaring war on another nation, there was, the framers reckoned, the prospect of greater wisdom in the collective judgment of the people's representatives, rather the unilateral judgment, temperament and character of the president, whose decisions might involve America in a degree of distress from which the nation might not recover. At all events, congressional debate would inform the public about the solemn decision made by their legislative representatives, hold the elected officials accountable and, perhaps, rally citizens to a cause that might cost them their lives.

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In a “constitutional world,” Congress would own the war that it has, to invoke Hamilton, “authorized or begun.” It would hold hearings on the status of the hostilities, require the administration to articulate and explain military objectives, acknowledge challenges and identify achievements. Based on these hearings, Congress might decide to terminate the hostilities or perhaps increase funding, or possibly instruct the president to change course, as it has throughout American history, all in the exercise of its constitutional authority over the commander in chief in the conduct of the war.

Trump’s unilateral War in Iran, however, bears none of these constitutional characteristics. Once again, the Republican controlled Congress, which has unconstitutionally ceded some of the legislature’s fundamental powers—appropriations and lawmaking, among others—has elected to facilitate Trump’s authoritarian presidency, rather than honoring its constitutional responsibilities.

There is, across the vista of two centuries, the echo of Patrick Henry’s plaintive plea in the Virginia Ratifying Convention: “If you depend on your President’s and Senator’s patriotism, you are gone.”

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

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Lady Tigers Open New Era of Softball at Clark

CLARK — A brand-new chapter in Groton Area athletics officially began Saturday as the Lady Tigers took the field for the first time in program history, traveling to face Clark/Willow Lake.

The Cyclones spoiled the debut with a 15-0 victory, but the day marked a significant milestone for a Groton Area team that had yet to practice on an actual softball field prior to game day.

Clark/Willow Lake took control early, scoring 12 runs in the opening inning against two Groton Area pitchers. The Cyclones added three more runs in the second inning to build a 15-0 lead.

Despite the early deficit, the Tigers began to settle in during the second inning. Talli Wright recorded the first out with a catch in left field, followed by another defensive play from Hannah Sandness in right. Kinsley Rowan then closed the inning with a strikeout, leaving two runners stranded.

Offensively, Rowan reached base in the first inning, but Groton Area was unable to generate further momentum against the Cyclone pitching.

While the scoreboard was lopsided, head coach Amanda Bisbee emphasized the bigger picture following the game.



Coaches Amanda Bisbee and Sue Fjeldheim give the starters high fives during the introduction. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Neely Althoff winds up for the first pitch for Groton Area. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Kosel)

"We actually have not stepped foot on a softball field yet," Bisbee said. "We've been in the gym the whole time and on the soccer field. This was our go-and-grow game. First game ever — there were some jitters — but we got them out of the way and we're ready to roll for the rest of the season."

Bisbee credited the team for continuing to compete after the difficult opening inning.

"After that first inning, it wasn't bad," she said. "I'm so proud of them for their first game. We had hits, we stole bases, we even turned a double play. There's a lot for them to learn, but we're going to grow from here."

The junior varsity contest provided more opportunities for development, with Clark/Willow Lake earning a 10-1 win.

Groton Area showed signs of progress in the JV game. Arianna Dinger made a catch in the field for an out, while pitcher Rylie Rose recorded a strikeout to end the inning. In the third inning, Abby Fjeldheim reached base on a walk and later scored on Cyclone errors for the Tigers' first run in program history.

The Tigers also turned a double play defensively, highlighting continued improvement as the game progressed.

Bisbee noted the strong community support that helped bring softball to Groton.

"Jackie Iverson was a big leader in getting this going," Bisbee said. "The community has been super supportive. The dads even came in and hung a batting cage in the old gym, so that's going to help us grow even faster."

Groton Area is scheduled to host Sisseton on Tuesday, with the varsity game beginning at 4 p.m., followed by the junior varsity contest.

Both the varsity and junior varsity games were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Locke Electric.

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BURGER NIGHT



Groton American Legion

Tuesday, March 31
6:00 - 9:00 PM

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Class AA Tops Class A 127-110 in Salem Shootout

SALEM — A high-powered offensive showing highlighted Saturday's 3-Class Shootout in Salem, as the Class AA Boys pulled away for a 127-110 victory over the Class A squad in Game 1.

The Class AA team used balanced scoring and strong guard play to build separation, while the Class A squad countered with several standout individual performances.

Vermillion's Trey Hansen led all scorers with a game-high 32 points for Class A, adding eight rebounds and four assists in an all-around effort. His performance earned him Class A Most Valuable Player honors. Lennox standout Tate Gerdes followed with 20 points and eight rebounds, while Groton's Keegen Tracy turned in a strong performance with 16 points and a team-high nine rebounds.

Teegan Musser of Lennox contributed 13 points and five assists, and West Central's Will Kuhl added 11 points. Isaak Hunter of Miller also finished with 11 points, while Groton's Ryder Johnson chipped in two points but made his presence felt on the glass with seven rebounds.

On the Class AA side, scoring depth proved to be the difference. San Ericsson of Sioux Falls Lincoln poured in 24 points, while Justin Bilal of Sioux Falls Roosevelt added 22 points and three rebounds. Kameron Davis of Spearfish contributed 14 points, and both Colton Smith of Mitchell and Sam DeGroot of Sioux Falls Lincoln added 15 points apiece.

Ayuel Deng of Brandon Valley finished with nine points and seven rebounds and also electrified the crowd by winning the event's dunk contest. Crayton Jibben of Harrisburg added nine points and five assists, while Memphis Bylander of Sioux Falls Roosevelt chipped in eight points and Blake Ellwein of Huron added seven.

The Class AA squad's ability to spread the scoring across multiple players ultimately proved too much, overcoming the big individual outings from the Class A side.

The shootout format brought together top players from across South Dakota, showcasing talent from all three classes in a fast-paced, high-scoring setting.

Lawrence County Fatal Crash

What: Multi-vehicle fatal crash

Where: US Highway 14A, mile marker 43, one miles east of Deadwood, SD

When: 8:04 p.m., Friday, March 27, 2026

Vehicle 1: 2019 Chevrolet Suburban

Driver 1: 92-year-old male from Piedmont, SD, fatal injuries

Seat belt Used: No

Vehicle 2: 2010 Ford Flex

Driver 2: 41-year-old female from Lead, SD, no injuries

Seat belt Used: Yes

Passenger 2a: 2-year-old male from Lead, SD, no injuries

Seat belt Used: Yes

Vehicle 3: 2020 Ford F-150

Driver 3: 44-year-old male from Rapid City, SD, serious, non-life-threatening injuries

Seat belt Used: Yes

Passenger 3a: 41-year-old female from Rapid City, SD, life-threatening injuries

Seat belt Used: Under investigation

Vehicle 4: 2005 GMC Sierra

Driver 4: 42-year-old male from Deadwood, SD, no injuries

Seat belt Used: Yes

Lawrence County, S.D. – A Piedmont man died Friday evening in a four-vehicle crash one mile east of Deadwood, SD.

The names of the persons involved have not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates that a 2019 Chevrolet Suburban was traveling east on US Highway 14A and crossed the centerline, sideswiping an oncoming 2010 Ford Flex, causing the Ford to spin and come to rest on the centerline. The Suburban then struck an oncoming Ford F-150 head-on, which went off the road and into the ditch. The Suburban then struck a GMC Sierra. The Suburban came to rest in the westbound passing lane.

The driver of the Suburban was pronounced deceased at the scene. The driver and a passenger in the F-150 were transported to Monument Health in Rapid City with life-threatening injuries. The driver and a passenger in the Ford Flex, and the driver of the GMC Sierra were not injured.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol is investigating the crash. All information released so far is preliminary.

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

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The Groton Baseball Foundation was a hit again this year. In its eleventh year at the American Legion Hall. It was reported that "A good time was had by all!" (Photos by Bruce Babcock)

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There are days when the wind is strong. You hear it before you even see it. It rattles the windows. It bends the trees. It pushes against you when you walk outside. You can't ignore it—it's powerful, noticeable, undeniable. At the softball game yesterday in Clark, the noise of the wind was broken up when we heard a crack as one of the trees behind the field broke and fell over.

And Scripture reminds us just how powerful that wind can be. In Psalm 107, it says:

"For He spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves."

And then... there are days when the wind fades.

The air becomes still. Quiet. Almost motionless. You step outside and nothing moves. No sound. No force. Just calm. And it's on a hot, humid day when that happens and you wish there was a breeze, but only very uncomfortable conditions.

That's a lot like our spiritual life.

There are moments when we feel God's presence so strongly. We're motivated. We're passionate. Prayer feels natural. Scripture speaks clearly. We feel like we're growing, like we're alive in our faith.

It's like the wind is blowing hard.

Jesus said in John 3:

"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going."

God's Spirit moves like that wind—powerful and real.

You even see that power on display in Acts 2:

"Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house."

But then there are other times.

The wind fades.

We don't feel as close to God. Prayer feels dry. Motivation drops. We wonder if anything is happening at all. And here's where we have to be careful—because we often think that when we don't feel the wind, God must not be working.

But that's not true.

Because God is not only in the powerful wind.

In 1 Kings 19, Elijah experienced this firsthand:

"The Lord was not in the wind... and after the fire came a gentle whisper."

The wind still exists, even when it's calm. The air is still there, still sustaining life, still present—even when it's quiet.

And God is the same.

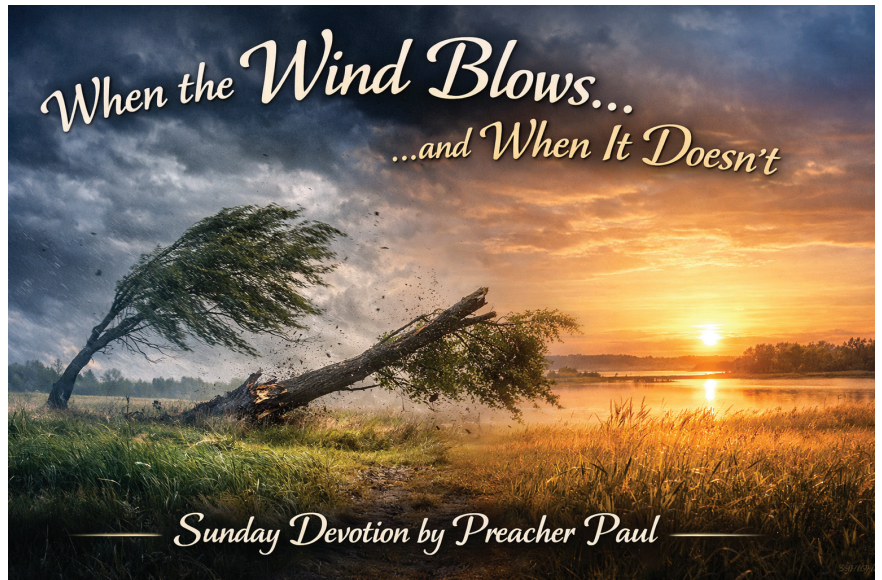
Hebrews 13:5 says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

And Isaiah 40:31 gives us this promise: "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength."

Not when the wind is strong...and not when it is still.

Faith is not built only in the moments when the wind is blowing hard. Faith is proven in the stillness.

2 Corinthians 5:7 says, "For we walk by faith, not by sight."



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Anyone can praise when they feel it.
Anyone can be excited when everything is moving.

But real, rooted faith says:
"I will trust God... even when it feels quiet."
"I will pray... even when I don't feel anything."
"I will walk forward... even when the wind has faded."

Because the same God who moves in the powerful gusts...is present in the silence.
So today, wherever you are—
If the wind is blowing strong in your life, praise Him.
If the wind feels still, trust Him.
Because whether loud or quiet...
whether powerful or calm...

God is still there.

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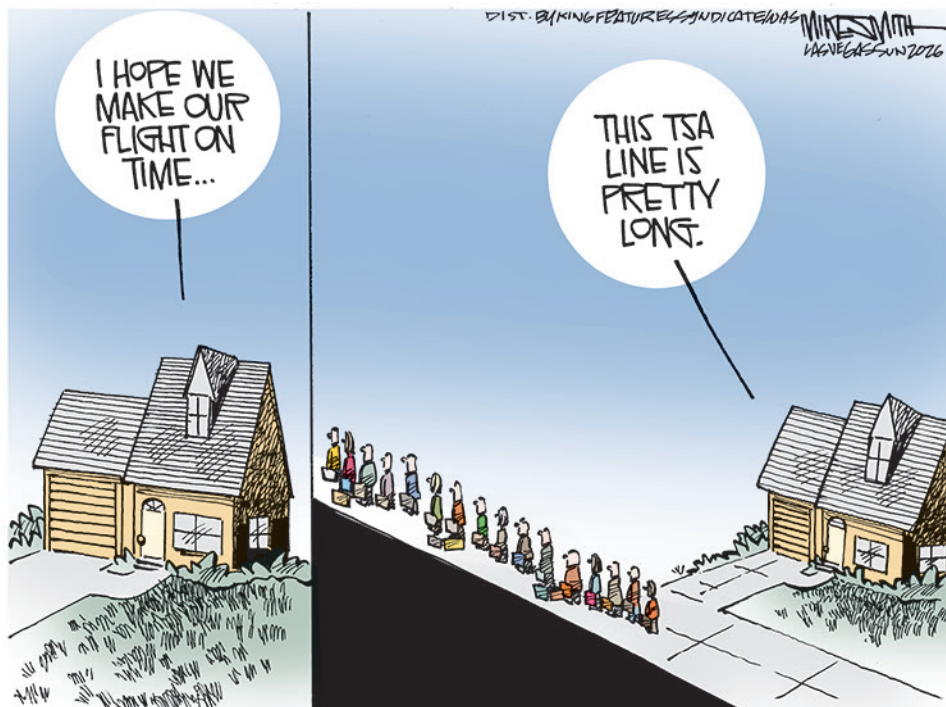
THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE



In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:10

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BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. What's the only book of the Bible that mentions Christ's tomb being sealed? *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*

3. From Matthew 28:2, who rolled back the stone from the door of Jesus' tomb and sat upon it? *Simon, An angel, Villagers, Disciples*

4. When Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" came upon the risen Jesus, who did He ask them to inform? *Priests, Disciples, No one, Villagers*

5. From John 20, which disciple doubted Jesus had risen unless he could see the wounds? *Peter, Andrew, Thomas, Thaddeus*

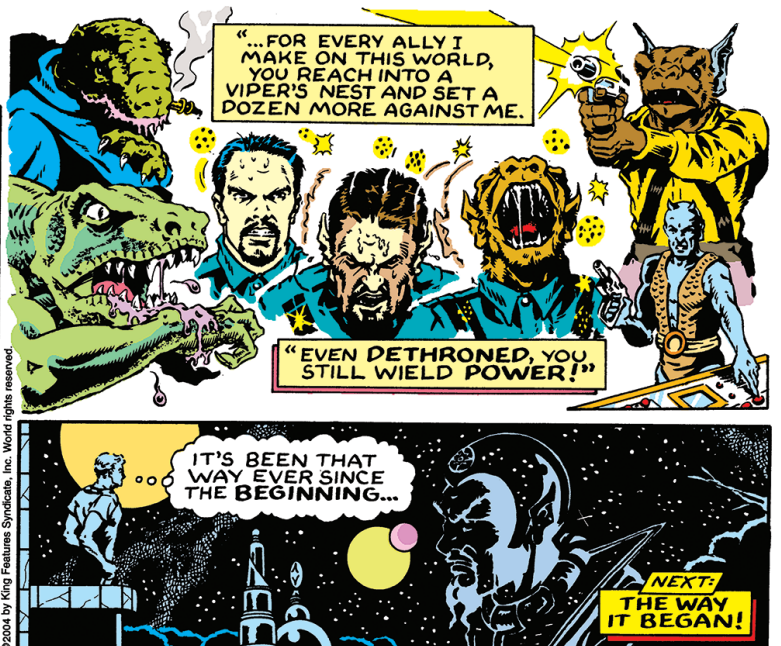
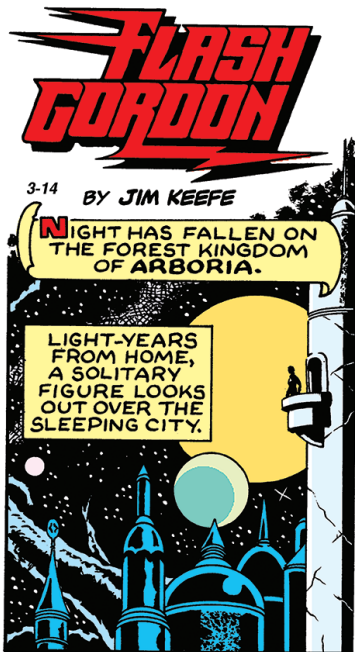
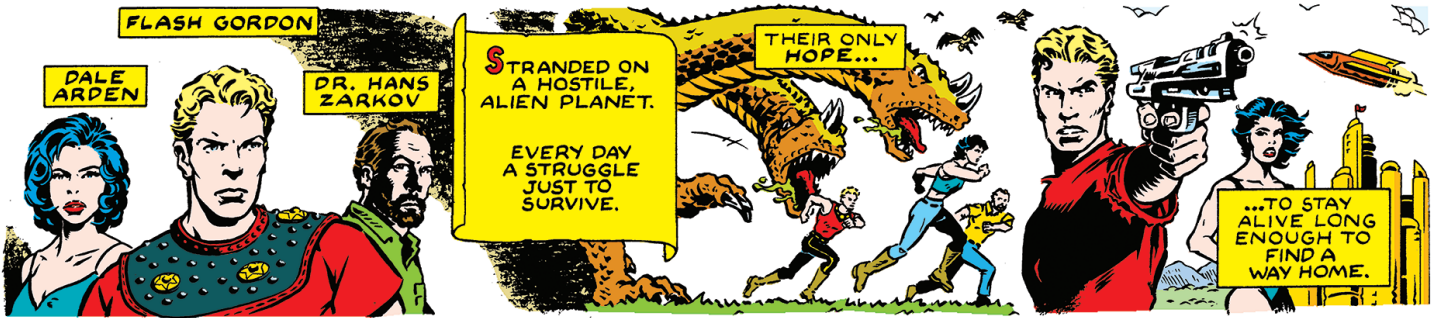
6. How long did Jesus remain after His resurrection before He ascended into heaven? *Instantaneously, 1 hour, 7 days, 40 days*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Matthew (27:65-66), 3) An angel, 4) Disciples, 5) Thomas (called Didymus), 6) 40 days

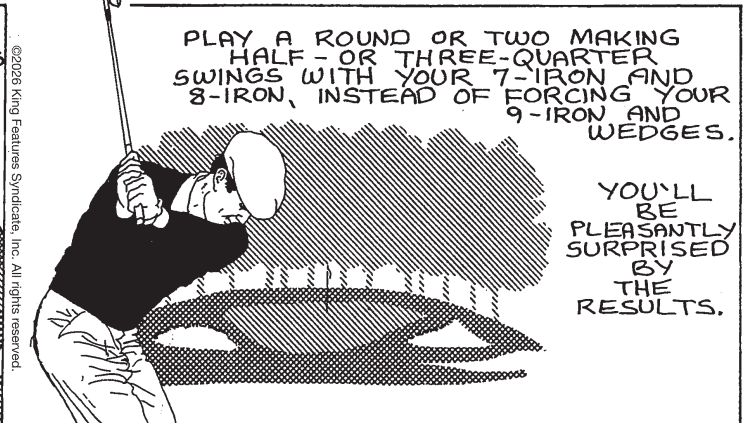
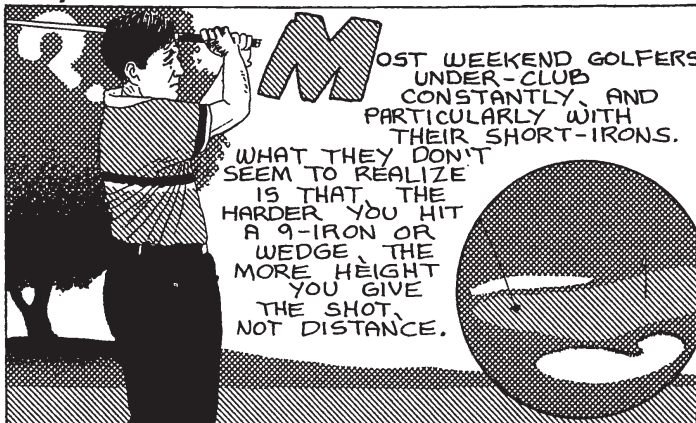
Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online.

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Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS





Diabetic Ulcer Still Hasn't Healed Properly After a Month

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have a diabetic nonhealing ulcer on my right heel. I was told that the blood circulation in my foot isn't very good, which is why the ulcer isn't healing.

Five years ago, I had a nonhealing ulcer in my left heel. It got infected, and the infection went into my heel bone. After several months, I agreed to an amputation. But this time, I was prescribed antibiotics with bandage changes that happen every two or three days. The ulcer hasn't healed now for over a month. Is it still possible that healing could take place? -- L.H.

ANSWER: I hope so. Most diabetic ulcers can be healed if they are treated the right way early enough. We really want to avoid amputations as they

are bad for your function and cause worse outcomes later on.

One major issue is poor blood flow to the area. People with diabetes may develop poor blood flow due to large arteries being blocked, or when the small vessels aren't working well. If there are blockages in the large vessels, such as the femoral artery or one of its branches, then a vascular surgeon may be able to bypass the blockage. Newer techniques of angioplasty and stents may also be used and are less invasive and risky. An angiogram is usually necessary to determine whether this approach would be useful.

If the poor blood flow is due to the small vessels, then surgical approaches aren't as important as medication and proper wound care. Diabetes needs to be meticulously managed with blood sugar levels kept in the normal range as much as possible; a continuous glucose monitor can help determine if your regimen is adequate.

I cannot recommend highly enough an experienced wound care nurse, who is the expert in managing nonsurgical wounds (and postsurgical wounds, too). The pressure must come off of the heel.

Nonhealing diabetic foot ulcers are one of the clearest indications for hyperbaric oxygen therapy. This therapy isn't available to everyone, but it can be very useful in addition to standard therapy. Finally, antibiotics are guided by the results of wound cultures. These cultures need to be done by an expert to get the correct results.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm a 78-year-old white male who is a nonsmoker; I am 5 feet, 6 inches tall, weigh 135 pounds, and consider myself to be in excellent health. A diagnosis from a recent bone density scan showed that my FRAX 10-year probability of a major osteoporotic fracture was 11.6%, and my probability of a hip fracture was 7.3%. I exercise seven days a week and believe that my diet is excellent. My standard blood panel results are always normal in all categories. Would it be advisable for me to take Fosamax at a 70-mg dosage? -- C.Y.

ANSWER: The FRAX score is the easiest way of understanding the results of a bone density scan. Even though the odds are that in 10 years, you won't have had a fracture, your risk of a hip fracture is high enough that most experts recommend treatment to lower your risk.

Generally speaking, treatment is recommended with a FRAX score above 20% for any major osteoporotic fracture or a score that is more than 3% for a hip fracture. Your risk for a hip fracture is significantly above the recommended threshold, even though your overall risk isn't, which leads me to suspect that your hips are preferentially affected by osteoporosis.

If medication is recommended, a bisphosphonate such as alendronate (Fosamax) would be the first-line treatment for men, and 70 mg weekly is a common dosage.

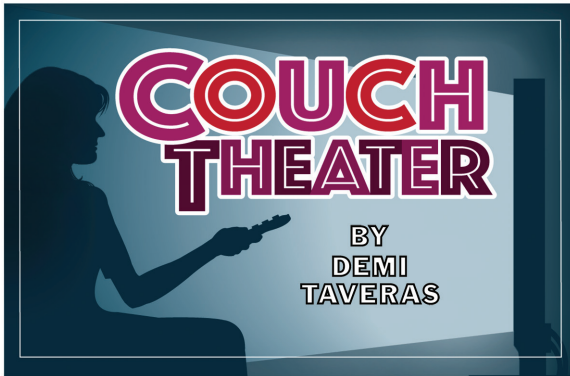
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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Guz Khan, left, and Riz Ahmed star in "Bait."

(Courtesy of Amazon Prime Video)

"Send Help" (R) -- Director Sam Raimi, who has quite the range with films like the "Spider-Man" and "Evil Dead" trilogies, went back to horror for this new survival thriller starring Rachel McAdams ("Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.") and Dylan O'Brien ("Anniversary"). McAdams plays a corporate strategist named Linda, who gets passed over for a promotion by her boss Bradley (O'Brien) for his fraternity brother. After attempting to get him to change his mind, Linda is offered a seat on his plane to Bangkok for a business trip. However, their plane crashes in the Gulf of Thailand during a storm, and the only survivors are her and Bradley. With their dynamic now turned on its head, Bradley is forced to rely on Linda's insane survival skills to get them off the island. Out now to rent! (Apple TV+)

"The Moment" (R) -- This mockumentary film is a satire of British pop artist Charli XCX's life. The version of Charli XCX in this film is very similar to the one we know, who smashed the charts during summer 2024 with her "Brat" album, but viewers get a behind-the-scenes look at the chaotic tail end of her album cycle. After getting hit with shady brand deals and being forced to work with an objectifying and pretentious filmmaker named Johannes (Alexander Skarsgard), Charli is at her wit's end with a project that she now considers "cringe" but must continue to promote. Other celebrities that make cameos in the mockumentary include Kylie Jenner ("The Kardashians"), Julia Fox ("Him") and Rachel Sennott ("I Love LA"). Out now to rent. (YouTube)

"Bait" (TV-MA) -- This thriller/drama/comedy series not only stars Riz Ahmed ("The Phoenician Scheme"), but it was written by him as well. Ahmed plays Shah Latif, an up-and-coming actor in London who lands his big break as the new James Bond. Now thrust immediately into the spotlight, Shah struggles with the difficult disadvantages of fame, like paparazzi and internet comments, which send him into a bit of an existential crisis. The series feels like a character study on what it's like to suddenly wake up as a celebrity in modern times. All six episodes are out now to stream. (Amazon Prime Video)

"Pizza Movie" (PG-13) -- Gaten Matarazzo, known for his portrayal of Dustin in "Stranger Things," leads this comedy film alongside Sean Giambrone ("The Secret Life of Pets 2"). The film follows two college roommates Jack and Montgomery, who find a mysterious box of "mints" in their dorm on a tragically lame night. They discover that these mints are actually hallucinogenic drugs, and with the burden of higher education weighing on them, Jack and Montgomery have no choice as college students but to indulge! But when the high proves to be too intense for them, they learn that the only solution to properly come down is to eat pizza, so viewers watch along as the boys attempt to overcome their trip. (Clearly the writers of this film were high, too.) Look out for appearances from Sarah Sherman ("Saturday Night Live") and Daniel Radcliffe (of the "Harry Potter" franchise) as the Butterfly. Premieres April 3. (Hulu)

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1. Name the singer who released "Total Eclipse of the Heart." (Bonus for knowing where the artist is from.)
2. Who wrote and released "Margaritaville"?
3. Which group released "Have You Ever Seen the Rain"?
4. Which duo was the first to release "Making Love Out of Nothing at All"? (Bonus for knowing where the duo is from.)
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "People see us everywhere, They think you really care, But myself I can't deceive."

Answers

1. Bonnie Tyler, in 1983. Tyler was born in Wales. The song has been her biggest hit and received a Grammy nomination for Best Female Pop Vocal Performance. With an original length of over seven minutes, the song had to be cut down to be suitable for airplay.

2. Jimmy Buffett, in 1977.

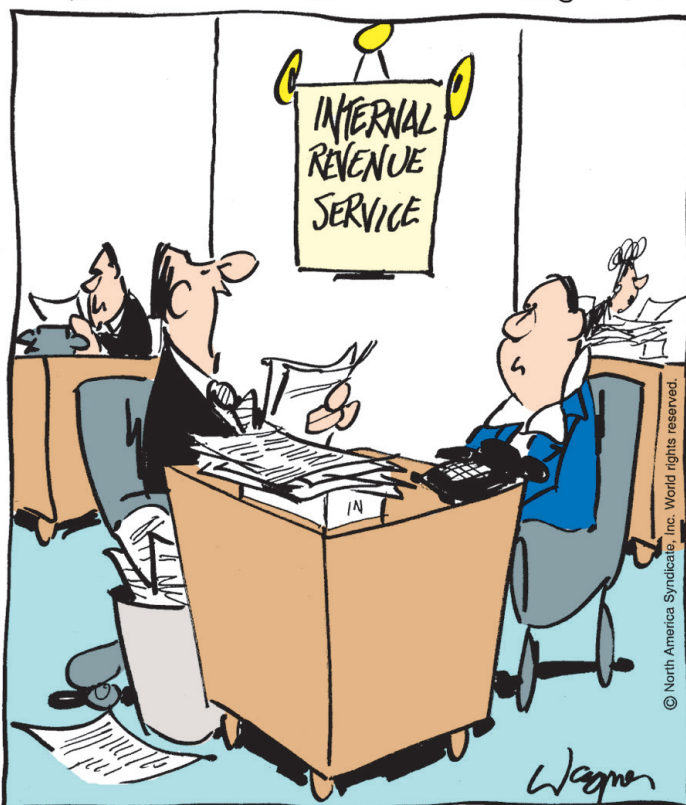
3. Creedence Clearwater Revival, in 1971.

4. Air Supply, in 1983. The duo, from Australia, have seen global success with most of their songs, including "Even the Nights Are Better."

5. "It's Only Make Believe," by Conway Twitty, in 1958. Penned by Twitty and his band's drummer, the song has been widely covered over the years. Ronnie McDowell and the Hollies all saw varying degrees of success with the song.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{Wagner}



"We're here to assist you, Mr. Figby, but we can't be your accomplices!"

Just Like Cats & Dogs

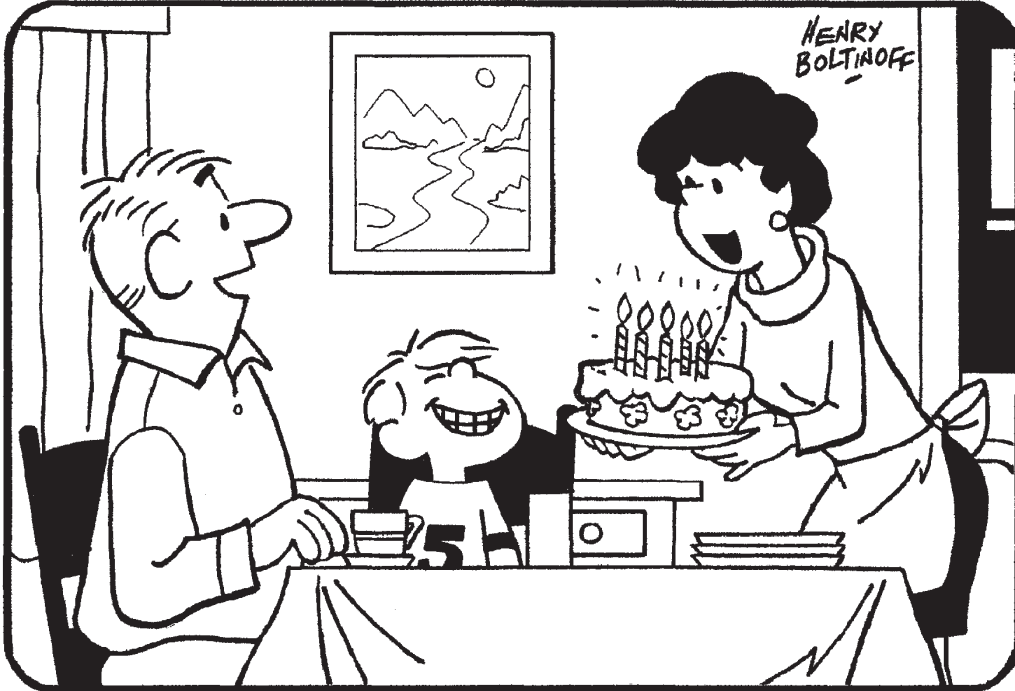
by Dave T. Phipps



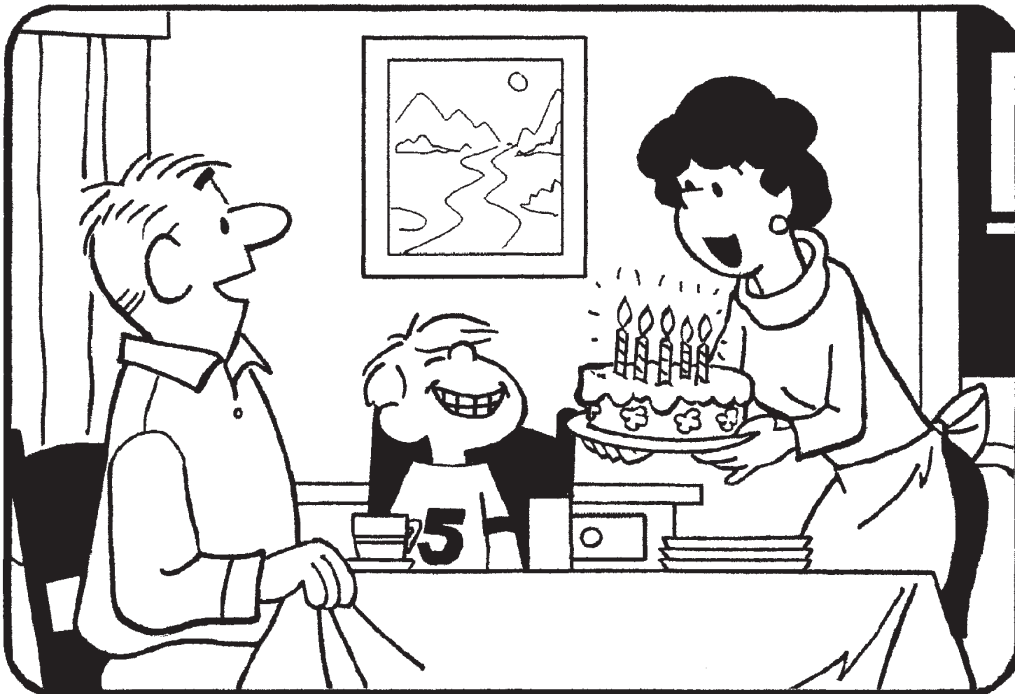
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Picture is moved. 2. Arm is lower. 3. Plates are moved. 4. Chair is taller. 5. Table is wider. 6. Boy is taller.

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* Quinoa is a popular grain alternative. It's very small and requires rinsing before cooking to remove potentially bitter residue. Here's a great trick to rinse your quinoa without losing half of it to the holes in your colander: Use a French press coffeemaker. The fine mesh and pouring spout make rinsing a breeze.

* To halve a lot of cherry tomatoes, try sandwiching them between two plastic lids. Press down lightly and slice through the opening to make short work of them.

* Keep your crisper drawer clean by lining with fresh newspaper. It will absorb smells and liquid, and can be replaced easily.

* "Candle nubs -- the little bit left when the candle has burned down all the way -- can be easily removed from a candleholder

by setting the whole thing in the freezer for 10-15 minutes. The wax surface hardens and shrinks, making it easier to chip out. Same goes for linens that have wax drips: freeze and chip away, then use a degreasing spot cleaner." -- Y.G. in Arkansas

* Easily thread a needle with hairspray. Spritz the end of your thread with a little high-hold hairspray and pull taut. It will be much easier to thread this way.

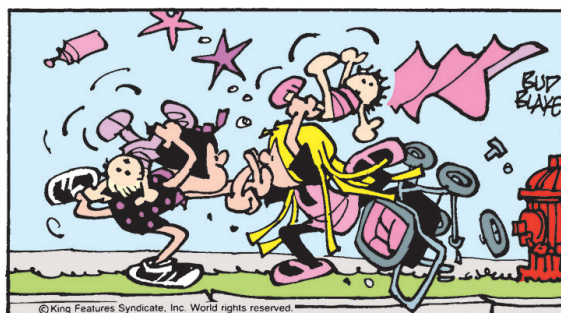
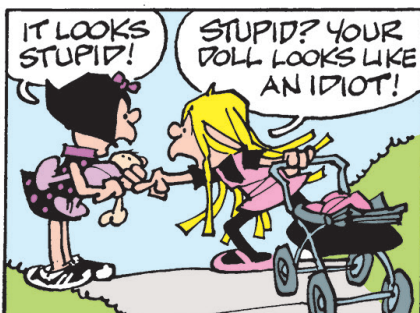
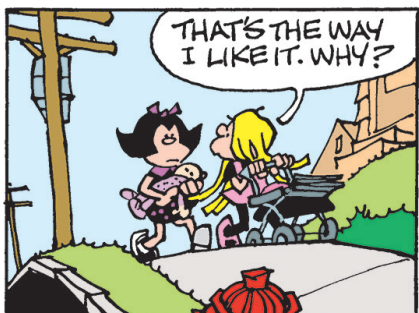
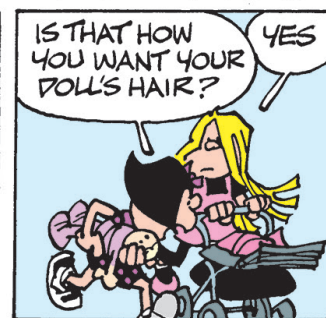
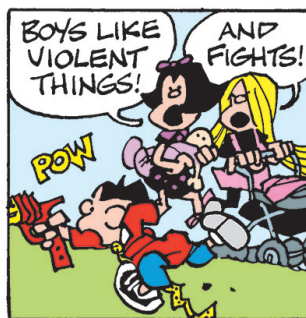
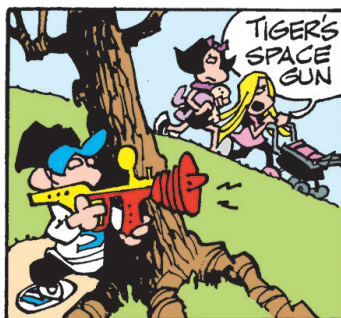
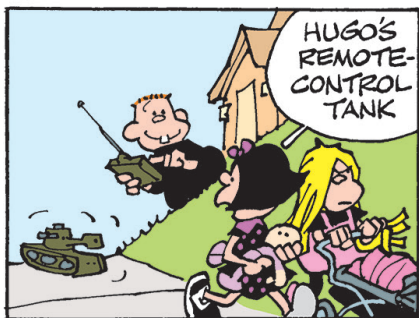
* "Fun get-together project for kids: Have everyone doodle on a large poster board. At the end of the night, you can trace a puzzle pattern and cut it up, making a large floor puzzle. You can bring these out at the next play date. The smaller the children, the larger the pieces!" -- A.L. in Florida

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

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TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Purse part
- 6 Tatter
- 9 Fr. holy woman
- 12 Borders on
- 13 In the past
- 14 Allow
- 15 Trattoria offering
- 16 Wild hurry, as on Black Friday
- 18 Divides in two
- 20 Greek mountain
- 21 Rule in India
- 23 Goat's plaint
- 24 City on the Yangtze River
- 25 Broadway failure
- 27 Zaps in a microwave
- 29 Argue
- 31 Portugal's place
- 35 Fix a lawn
- 37 Bath bubbles
- 38 Long-legged shorebird
- 41 Hwys.
- 43 Scale note
- 44 Spanish "but"
- 45 Rob Roy spirit
- 47 Pressed for time
- 49 Garlicky mayo
- 52 Dijon denial

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11
12						13				14		
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44					45				46			
47				48				49			50	51
52				53				54				
55				56				57				

- 53 Blackbird
- 54 "What's in — me?"
- 55 — Lanka
- 56 "Acid"
- 57 Crusoe's creator
- DOWN**
- 1 Enervate
- 2 TV schedule abbr.
- 3 Work that's done ASAP
- 4 "— boy!"
- 5 Sacred song
- 6 French Baroque composer
- 7 Turkish officials
- 8 Deity
- 9 Melting snow
- 10 "Selma" actress Thompson
- 11 Patriot Allen
- 17 Awakens
- 19 Wind indicators
- 21 "Mayberry —"
- 22 Hearty brew
- 24 Spider's home
- 26 Sitting room
- 28 Youngster
- 30 Hanoi holiday
- 32 Exit in haste
- 33 Altar promise
- 34 Visual communication syst.
- 36 Corsage flower
- 38 Whirls
- 39 Choir member
- 40 Resident of Tabriz
- 42 Composed
- 45 Taxpayer IDs
- 46 Refer to
- 48 "Friendly skies" co.
- 50 Brit's restroom
- 51 Fury

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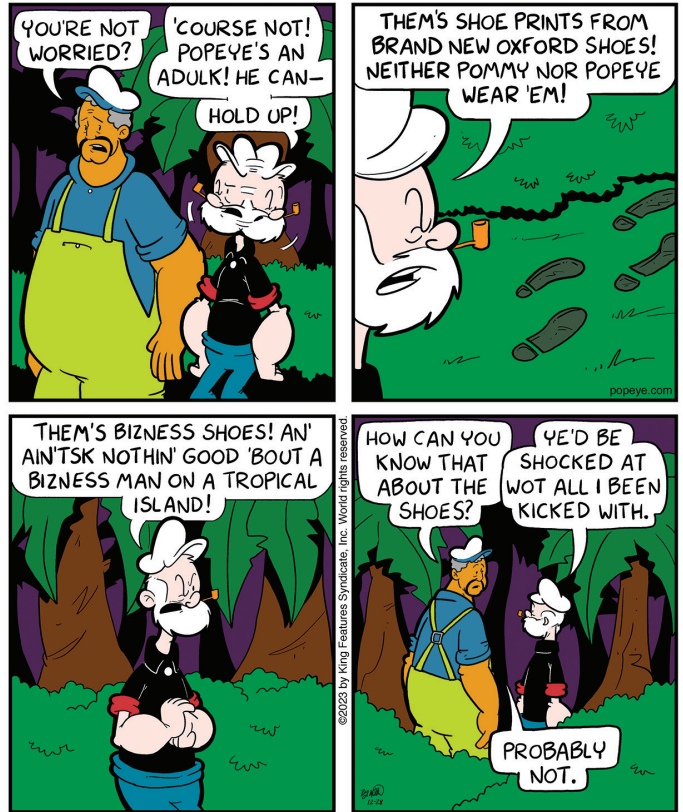
King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

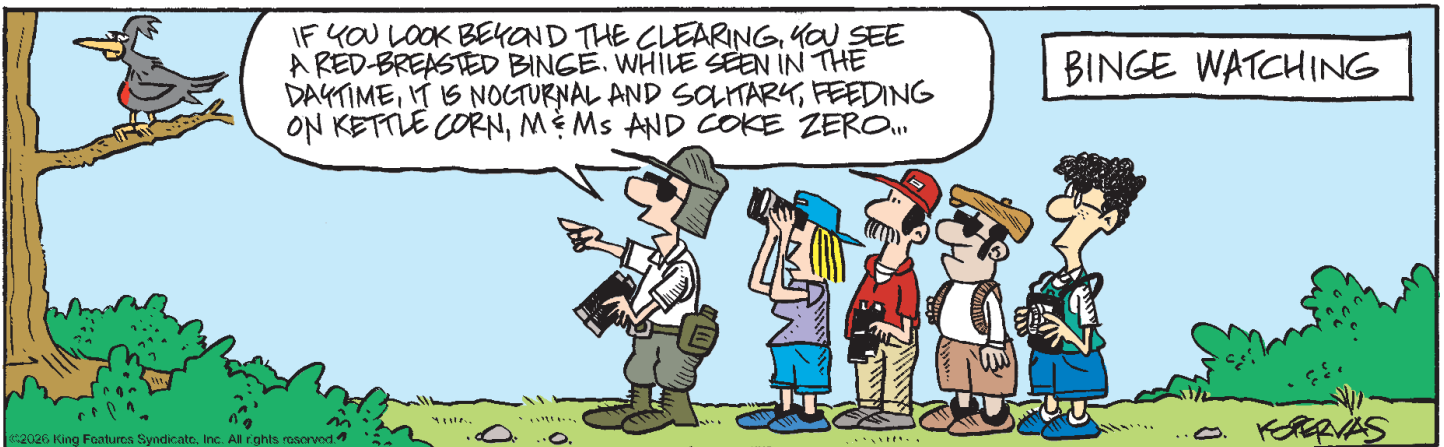
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Olive



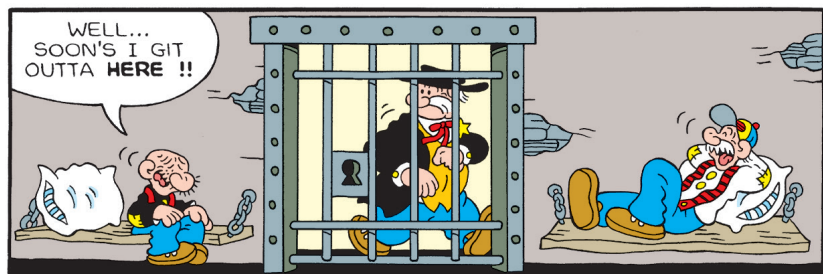
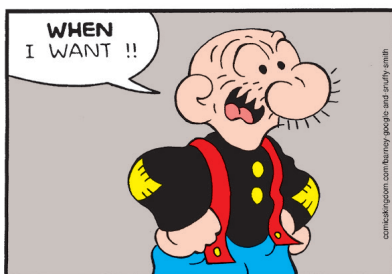
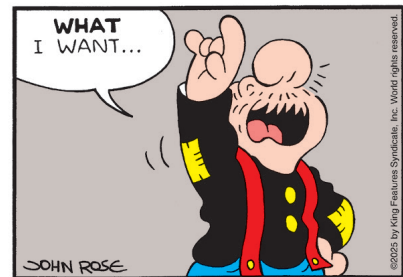
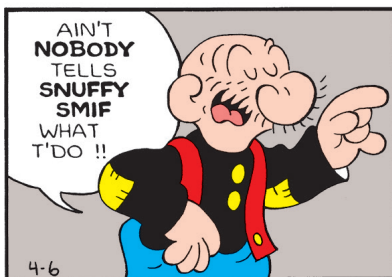
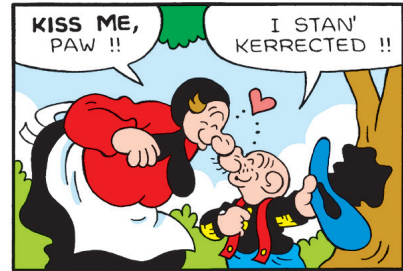
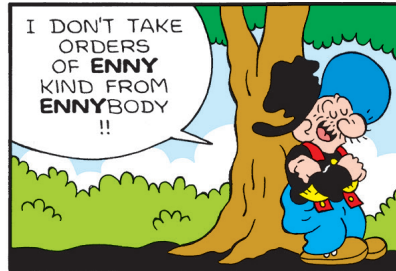
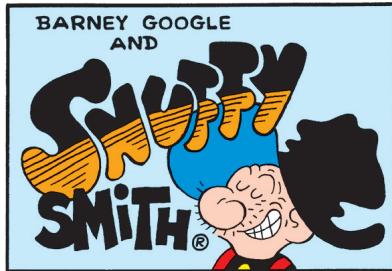
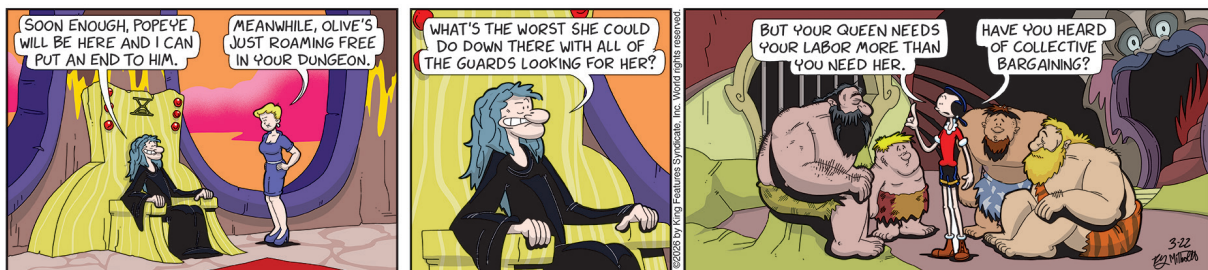
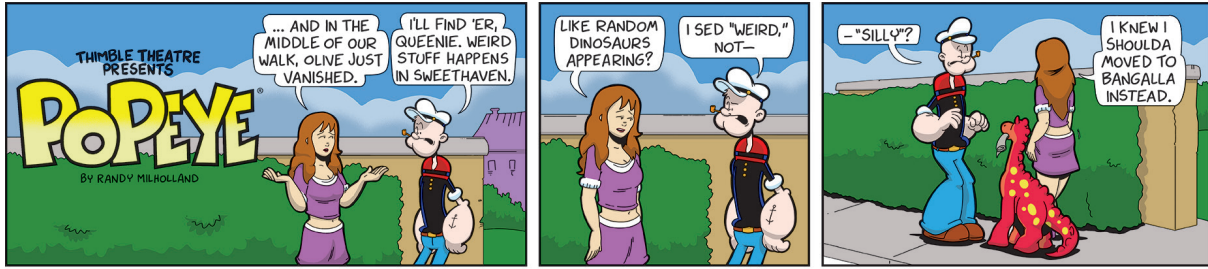
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



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

WITH VAL'S MUSCLE AIDING HER, THANAA ACTIVATES THE ANCIENT DEATH TRAP UNDERLYING THE COURTYARD IN WHICH THE ENTRANCED PIRATES CROWD. THE PAVING STONES SEPARATE AND FALL BENEATH THE SLAVERS...

... SENDING THEM TO HORRID DOOMS IN THE CLAWS OF THE DENIZENS OF THE SEA CAVES THAT HONEYCOMB THE ISLAND'S FOUNDATION!

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SAFE IN THE SURROUNDING RUINS, BUKOTA AND NATHAN ARE TRANSFIXED BY THE AWFUL SCENE. THE SIRENS, THEIR FINAL SONG COMPLETE, JOIN THEM.

4069
YEATES
2/1/13

AND VAL, IN THE CHAMBER OF THE WHEEL, STANDS STUNNED BY THE ENORMITY OF THE VENGEANCE HE HAS HELPED RELEASE. "IT IS DONE," WHISPERS THANAA.

NEXT: **Ambushed**

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

I FILLED OUR BIRDBATH WITH MARGARITAS

WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT?

TEQUILA MOCKINGBIRD!!

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PICKERING

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SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Don't fall for scam emails

I received an email from a company that I use for computer repair and malware protection. No surprise there; they've sent me annual emails over the years when it was time to renew the service. I opened the email and it was an invoice indicating they would be charging my credit card several hundred dollars today!

But I took a closer look. The area code of the phone number at the bottom of the invoice was not for the state where the real company is located. The address at the bottom of the invoice was for yet another state. The amount was wrong. The name of my service plan was wrong. And I knew that my subscription wasn't due to renew for several months. The email asked me to click a link to contact them to verify the information.

In other words, a typical scam involving a large amount of money and an urgency (today!) designed to get me to act quickly before I could think it through. To be sure, though, I called the real company using a number I knew, not the one in the email. Yes, they said, it was a scam, and yes, my account was fine. They were able to check my account and quoted to me information that I knew was accurate -- the upcoming renewal date and the amount. They thanked me for letting them know and had me forward that email to their fraud department.

The question, of course, is whether the scammers really know I have a service plan with that company. Probably not. Chances are they send millions of those emails hoping someone will respond.

Bottom line with emails: Know your business transactions and subscriptions. Know when they are due to renew. Beware even if it's a company you know. Don't click anything. And call the company if you aren't sure it came from them.

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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**

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1. Fred Lynn, the first player to win American League Rookie of the Year and MVP in the same season, accomplished the feat in 1975 as a member of what team?

2. At the 1956 Melbourne Summer Olympics, which rower from the Soviet Union dropped his silver medal in Lake Wendouree? (It was later recovered by a local teenager.)

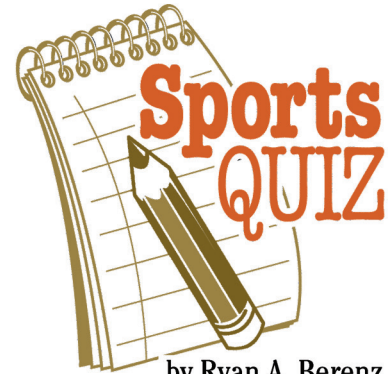
3. Which NFL team holds the single-game record for the most penalty yards with 212 in a 1999 game versus the Baltimore Ravens?

4. Hilary Knight, a five-time Olympian on the U.S. Women's Hockey Team, played for what college team from 2007-2012?

5. Which organization, established in 1976, promotes a version of baseball for blind and low-vision players?

6. What two legendary sportscasters were first paired in the CBS booth for an NFL game on Nov. 25, 1979?

7. In the 1946 "Looney Tunes" cartoon "Baseball Bugs," what team was losing to the Gas-House Gorillas 42-0 before Bugs Bunny entered the lineup?



by Ryan A. Berenz

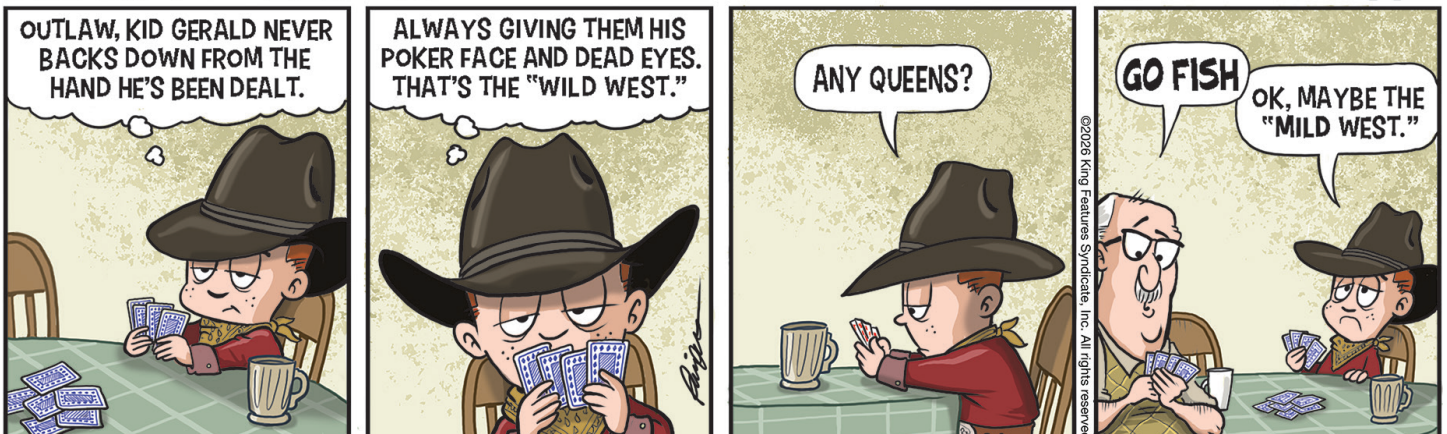
Answers

1. The Boston Red Sox.
2. Viktor Ivanov.
3. The Tennessee Titans.
4. The University of Wisconsin Badgers.
5. The National Beep Baseball Association (NBBA).
6. Pat Summerall and John Madden.
7. The Tea Totalers.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Getting ahead of flea & tick season

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: Last summer, the flea infestation on my pets was the worst I've ever seen. I don't use topical flea and tick treatments because I'm worried about their toxicity in pets. I don't want to get bit up by fleas again this year. What do you recommend? -- Judith L. in Hiram, Georgia

DEAR JUDITH: The battle against fleas and ticks can seem never-ending. Ticks pose an even deeper threat, as many of them carry serious diseases like Lyme and babesiosis. As the weather warms up, flea activity heats up as well.

To reduce the problem, attack it from multiple angles and do so before the summer sets in.

Bathe and comb out your pets to remove any dormant fleas or their eggs. Check them for attached ticks, especially if they spend any time outdoors.

Clean your home thoroughly. Pick up everything off the floor so you reach every spot. Vacuum as far into crevices as possible and along the wall where the carpet or flooring meet. Empty the vacuum outside the house immediately afterward.

Next, move your pets to a separate room and sprinkle a flea powder that contains diatomaceous earth over your carpet and along the edges of vinyl or laminate floors. Use a broom to brush the powder deep into carpet and crevices. Vacuum. Repeat this in every room of your home. (Pets can come back into a treated room after vacuuming.)

I recommend treating your furniture, especially sofas, the same way. Wash all curtains, rugs and bedding.

Clean your home weekly and reapply flea powder at least once a month. Check your pets for ticks every time they come inside the house, and brush their coats daily to remove fleas and their eggs.

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

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Strange BUT TRUE

* The chess-playing supercomputer Deep Blue could calculate 100 to 200 billion different positions in less than three minutes.

* One study found that people who drank sugary soda daily had shorter telomeres -- linked to aging -- equivalent to about 4-5 additional years.

* Each spacecraft headed for Mars gets a thorough cleaning beforehand as a precaution against contamination from Earth.

* TV's classic "Jeopardy" theme was composed by Merv

Griffin as a lullaby for his son.

* Forget about naming your new baby IKEA in Sweden, thanks to the country's 1982 naming law prohibiting monikers that "can be supposed to cause discomfort" for the ones saddled with them.

* "Star Wars" sage Yoda was partially modeled from a photo of Albert Einstein.

* During the Cold War, Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev agreed to lay aside their differences in the event aliens ever invaded Earth.

* Waste fat from bacon was turned into glycerin and used to make explosives during World War II.

* In 1674, the Women's Petition Against Coffee declared that the popular beverage was turning British blokes into "useless corpses" and proposed that anyone under the age of 60 should be banned from consuming it.

* Chihuahuas have one of the largest brain-to-body size ratios of any dog breed

* Astronauts can grow up to three inches taller in space due to spinal expansion caused by weightlessness.

* Lint in your belly button is caused by abdominal hairs funneling fibers into it.

* Pablo Picasso became a suspect in the 1911 Mona Lisa theft after it was discovered he had kept sculptures stolen from the Louvre by a friend.

* In the United States, lawyers are the third-least trusted professionals, ranking higher only than lobbyists and business executives.

Thought for the Day: "Until you value yourself, you won't value your time. Until you value your time, you will not do anything with it." -- M. Scott Peck

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Easter flowers

Tulips signify the rebirth after winter and feelings of love. Cheerful **daisies** are available in red, yellow, pink and purple.

Hyacinths have incredible fragrance and delicate blossoms. - Brenda Weaver

Source: www.easternfloral.com

Lilies represents hope, love, divinity, purity, gratitude and friendship.

Daffodils are one of the first signs of spring and have a romantic connotation.

In Germany they are known as "Easter bells."



Hyacinths



by Freddy Groves

Is there no way to uncover fraud?

How is it a scammer can impersonate a veteran for over 30 years and not get caught?

Not only did this thief collect Social Security under the veteran's name, but he got medical care from the VA. And he didn't exactly behave during all those years -- he was convicted of multiple serious crimes along the way.

When he was finally nabbed, he was living in VA-provided homeless/transitional housing and getting food, clothing, services and transportation. His impersonation was discovered when he was trying to get health care at a VA medical center.

At this point he's in the pen awaiting sentencing, charged only with making false statements, which can get him as little as five years in prison (after committing fraud for 30 years?) and be fined a quarter of a million dollars.

Consider all the possible points where the thief's identity could have been revealed: the Social Security data base, VA records being compared with the real veteran, criminal records ...

Then there was another thief, this time a woman, who not only stole over \$1 million from the VA, but also pulled her sister and son into the scam.

This scammer managed to get disability benefits by claiming she couldn't walk, was partially paralyzed and bedridden, and needed care around the clock.

The truth? She was able to buy a second home and go on fancy international trips. The son and sister said they were caring for her around the clock, while they were actually working at real jobs and she was traveling alone. This fraud went on for 12 years.

The penalties? The scammer is only getting 17 months in prison. The sister was sentenced to only time served and the son to 14 months.

Is there no way to check, no way to uncover this level of fraud before the hit to the American taxpayers reaches a million dollars? It would only take one photo of her trotting off to catch a plane, right?

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Wishing Well®

2	4	8	5	2	7	5	2	5	2	4	5	6
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HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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1. TELEVISION: What is Ron Swanson's favorite food group in the sitcom "Parks and Recreation"?
2. GAMES: In Scrabble, how many tiles does each player get to start?
3. GEOGRAPHY: Dubai is in which Middle Eastern country?
4. MOVIES: What is Neo's real name in "The Matrix"?
5. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president was born with the name Leslie Lynch King Jr.?
6. LITERATURE: Which 19th-century English novel introduces the character Mr. Rochester?
7. FOOD & DRINK: Cornelius Rooster is the mascot of which cereal brand?
8. SCIENCE: What is the process called when water evaporates from plants?
9. CHEMISTRY: What is the most abundant metal in Earth's crust?
10. ANATOMY: How many vertebrae are in the human spine?

Answers

1. Meat.
2. Seven.
3. United Arab Emirates.
4. Thomas Anderson.
5. Gerald Ford
6. "Jane Eyre" by Charlotte Bronte.
7. Kellogg's Corn Flakes.
8. Transpiration.
9. Aluminum.
10. 33.

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South Dakota Governor



Larry Rhoden



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Strengthening South Dakota

From rural healthcare to property tax relief, apprenticeships to airport investments, I have focused on strengthening our economy and supporting communities across the state. These are real investments that make a difference in the lives of our hardworking South Dakotans.

Access to quality healthcare is a priority, especially in our rural communities. Families should be able to stay in the town they grew up in without having to travel hours to see a doctor or receive critical care. This past session, we made historic investments in rural healthcare. The first bill that I signed was to support the Rural Health Transformation Fund. This investment will expand resources for rural hospitals and clinics, ensuring that South Dakotans can get the care they need close to home. Strong communities start with strong healthcare, and these resources will help keep families healthy and thriving.

Infrastructure plays an important role in our economic growth. This session, we invested in the Sioux Falls and Rapid City airports in the form of low-interest loans. Folks from across South Dakota use these airports to travel, and visitors from across the country and around the world land at those airports to take advantage of our travel industry. This investment will create more opportunities for local businesses, tourism, and economic development. This will ensure South Dakota remains competitive, connected, and Open for Opportunity.

I'm also focusing on workforce development. This session, we set up a new State Apprenticeship Agency at the Department of Labor and Regulation. Apprenticeships and hands-on learning programs allow South Dakotans to earn while they learn, gaining valuable skills that meet the needs of local industries.

We also supported the growth of Southeast Tech in Sioux Falls. By investing in education and training right here in our communities, we're keeping talent in our state and preparing workers for the high-demand careers of today and tomorrow. These programs make a difference, not just for participants, but for the businesses and communities that rely on a skilled workforce to grow and succeed. And they give our next generation more opportunities to get into the career of their dreams right here at home.

When we focus on practical, common-sense policy, South Dakota thrives. This legislative session was about keeping our economy strong, supporting our communities, giving families what they need to succeed, and keeping South Dakota the freest state in a nation founded on the principle of freedom. I'm proud of what we accomplished, and I'll keep working every single day to deliver results for you.

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March 16-22, 2026



Welcome back to another Weekly Round[s] Up.

We had a long week here in DC. During this past week, I met with several South Dakotans, attended multiple briefings, voted eight times, introduced two pieces of legislation and participated in several

interviews.

Normally on the weekends I travel back to South Dakota to visit with folks from around the state. However, votes on the SAVE America Act and Senator Mullin's confirmation kept us in D.C. this weekend. On Saturday, I spoke on the Senate floor in support of the SAVE America Act which I have cosponsored. During my remarks, I discussed the double standards when it comes to showing identification in everyday life in America. For example, you need a photo ID when you open a bank account, rent a car or board a plane. This winter you even had to show two forms of identification to shovel snow in New York. American elections should be for American citizens only and the SAVE America Act takes steps to secure our elections. You can watch my full floor speech [here](#).

Additionally, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) remains unfunded. Despite Democrats having 14 opportunities to fund the department, they continue to play politics with the safety and security of the American people. Now more than ever we need a fully funded DHS; airports are in chaos, families are going without pay and the potential for terrorist attacks goes up each day the department is unfunded. Funding DHS is not optional.

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

South Dakota groups I visited with: South Dakotans with Breakthrough T1D; Impact Schools of South Dakota; Rapid City Youth City Council; Carrie Heberlee, National Association of Postal Supervisors; South Dakotans with American Coalition for Ethanol; Dr. Brian Tande, President and Ralph Davis, Vice President for Research at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology; American Council of Engineering Companies of South Dakota; Sheila Gestring, President of University of South Dakota and Chris Kassin, Senior Executive University of South Dakota Foundation; and Lee Strubinger, Research & Reporting Director, John T. Vucurevich Foundation.

Met with South Dakotans from: Baltic, Brookings, Dell Rapids, Garretson, Pierre, Rapid City, Sioux Falls, Vermillion and Wentworth.

Other meetings: Rwanda DNSC; Patrick Collison, CEO of Stripe; Darren Guccione, CEO and Co-Founder of Keeper Security; Steve Vintz, CEO of Tenable; General Frank Donovan, Commander, U.S. Southern Command; Kristen Davies, Chief Information Officer, Department of War; and General Anderson, Commander, U.S. Africa Command.

I also attended our weekly Senate Bible Study on Tuesday. On Wednesday, Senator Mullin (soon to be Secretary Mullin) spoke at our weekly Senate Prayer Breakfast.

Legislation Introduced: This past week, I introduced the Investments in Rural Transit Act, legislation that would help rural transit providers improve their services. You can read the press release on this piece [here](#). I also introduced the Small Business Investor Capital Access Act which would increase access to capital for small businesses and entrepreneurs by modernizing outdated securities regulations. You can read about that [here](#).

Hearings: This past week, I attended a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing and a Senate Select Committee on Intelligence hearing titled Worldwide Threats. This one one of our only Intelligence hearings that is not classified! You can watch my questions to CIA Director Ratcliffe [here](#).

Briefings: I attended one classified briefing with the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Airland.

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Votes taken: 8 – As noted earlier, we spent much of this past week debating and voting on the SAVE America Act. As a cosponsor of this legislation, I fully support this bill. Additionally, I voted in support of an amendment to this legislation that protects women and girls in athletics by banning biological men from women's sports.

I also voted on a procedural motion related to Senator Mullin's nomination to serve as Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. We hope to confirm him this week.

This past week, I voted to fund DHS once again, and once again it failed due to opposition from Senate Democrats. There have now been 14 opportunities to fully fund DHS, but Senate Democrats continue to block fully funding this department.

There was also a vote to remove United States Armed Forces from Iran via a War Powers Resolution, which I voted against. Iran has been rebuilding their offensive capabilities in order to harm the United States and our allies. We take any military actions seriously, especially boots on the ground in the Middle East. However, this threat from Iran is not going away and we must make certain that we're in a position to defend our nation from those who wish us harm.

Lastly, I voted to confirm Anna St. John as United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana. Steps taken: 61,438 steps or 29.61 miles.

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries

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A really short history of broccoli

Have you ever had serious second thoughts about something? Of course, I usually have severe trouble with establishing first thoughts. But once I have finished a serious thought I like put it behind me and go on with life.

For example. For years, people have been telling me how harmful drinking coffee is. Something to do, so they tell me, with being addicted to caffeine. Then, if I cannot give up coffee, I am to limit the number of cups of coffee I drink per day.

This has always caused me great concern because I can never remember how many cups of coffee I have had in any given day. I suppose I could keep a tally and mark down every cup I drink. This in itself poses a serious problem for me.

When I am in a restaurant and drinking coffee and my cup is half-empty and the waitress tops off my coffee, is that considered one or two cups of coffee?

What about my coffee mug at home? Does it hold one or two cups of coffee?

By the time I have had my thoughts thoroughly stirred about the consumption of caffeine I read a health report informing us that caffeine helps prevent heart attack.

If that is true, and I have no reason not to believe it, there will be no heart attacks in my family for the next ten generations.

All that guilt I felt for years about drinking too much coffee has really been for nothing. Therefore, in a show of good faith, I plan to drink as much coffee as I jolly well please.

Then there was the episode about chocolate. According to those people who hate other people enjoying themselves, chocolate is supposed to be bad for you. Or so they opined.

For years, I have been secretly eating chocolate behind the back of the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. She is one who takes these warnings rather seriously. Rather, I should say, she takes them out on me. For years chocolate was a forbidden substance in our otherwise merry domicile.

Then I read a report revealing the health benefits associated with eating chocolate. No wonder I am such a healthy rascal these days. The only exercise I have had for years is exercising caution in smuggling chocolate into our house.

The good news is, chocolate is good for your health along with a steaming hot cup of coffee. I do not know what I enjoy more in life.

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With these two things in mind, I have had some cause to re-think my position on broccoli.

My reasoning goes something like this. For years, people have been telling us that coffee and chocolate is bad for your health. Then, somebody discovers that these two things benefit our health.

Now, for years, starting with my dear old mother, people have been extolling the virtues of broccoli. I cannot tell how many lectures I have heard explaining to me how wonderful and beneficial broccoli is for human consumption. I cannot remember the number of vitamins and minerals allegedly associated with this vegetable.

When I was a young lad in short pants, I took one look at broccoli and determined it was not for me at all. Even I, at that point, understood the maliciousness of what some people called a vegetable.

"Eat all your vegetables and then you can have your dessert." Which, to my mind, was second only to waterboarding. In fact, I think there was a period in my life when I would have preferred the waterboarding.

"It's good for you," people kept telling me.

What I want to know is how can something that looks like a miniature tree-wanna-be be good for a person?

The first and last broccoli I have ever eaten took me three days to chew. Then, I had to brush my teeth for a week to get it all out from between my teeth.

Now that I have become older, I have begun to rethink certain things in life. One has to do with the functional aspect of wearing suspenders. One unfortunate episode in the public mall was enough for me.

And the other has to do with broccoli. Maybe, just maybe, I have been too harsh concerning what some people call a wonderful vegetable. Maybe, if I give it some further thought, I might discover that broccoli is not half as bad as I thought it was.

It just could be that all these years those people bragging on the marvelous benefits of broccoli were right.

Just as I was polishing up this second thought about broccoli to present it to my wife, I saw a newspaper article that said, "Tainted broccoli spurs big recall in West."

I knew it. I knew that broccoli; in whatever form you want to cook it, is tainted.

Second thoughts can certainly be dangerous. I took this second thought about broccoli, threw it away and enthusiastically embraced my first thought and now broccoli is history with me.

The Bible warns us to be careful about what we think. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8 KJV).

I have more important things to think about than broccoli.

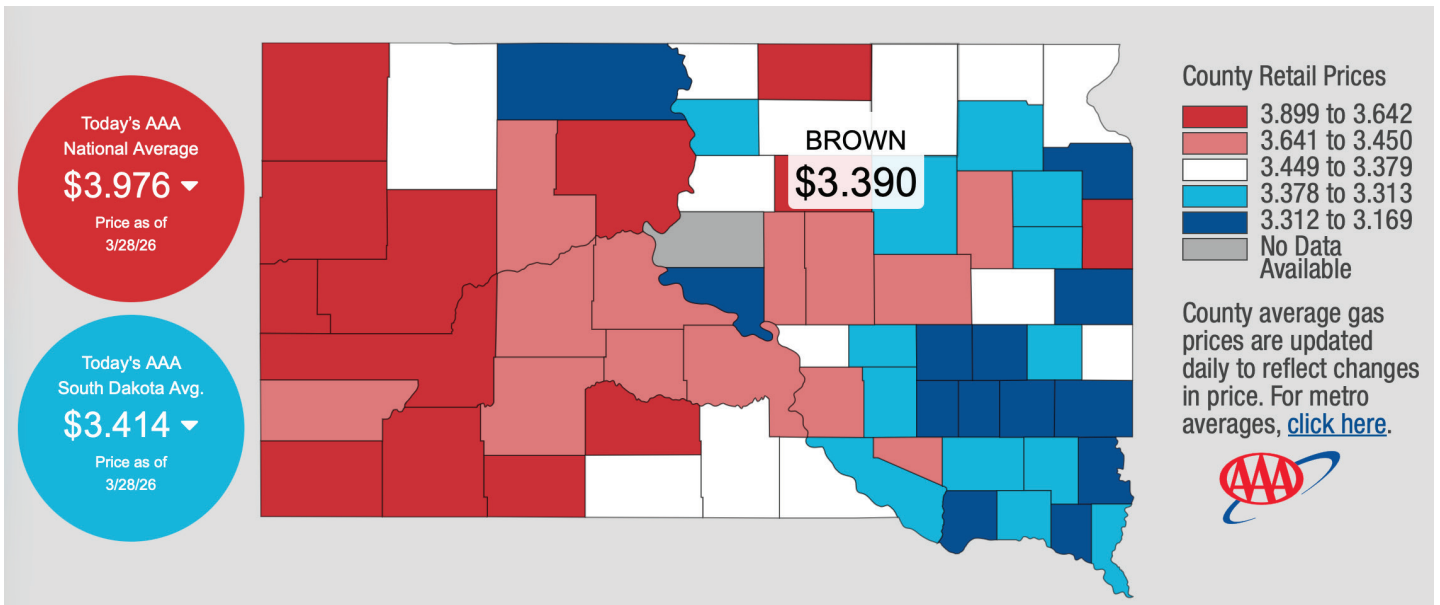
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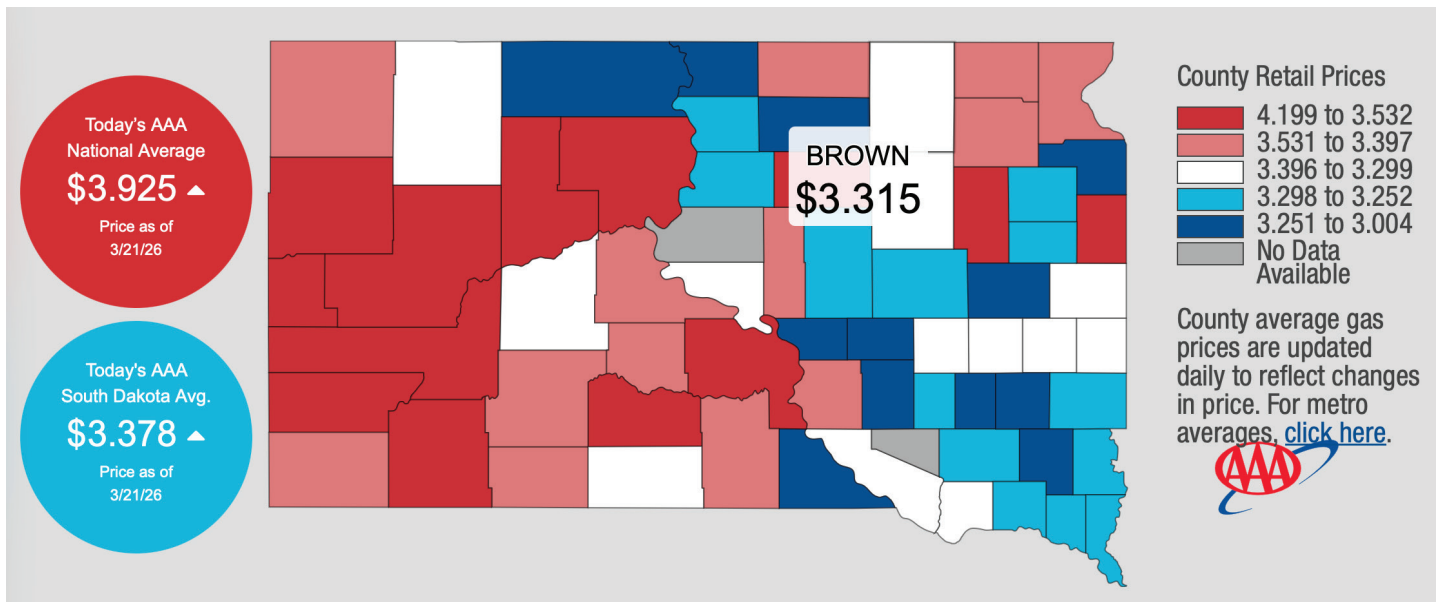
South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$3.414	\$3.598	\$4.066	\$4.601
Yesterday Avg.	\$3.422	\$3.597	\$4.084	\$4.624
Week Ago Avg.	\$3.378	\$3.546	\$4.040	\$4.511
Month Ago Avg.	\$2.705	\$2.875	\$3.355	\$3.464
Year Ago Avg.	\$3.119	\$3.287	\$3.741	\$3.329

This Week



Last Week



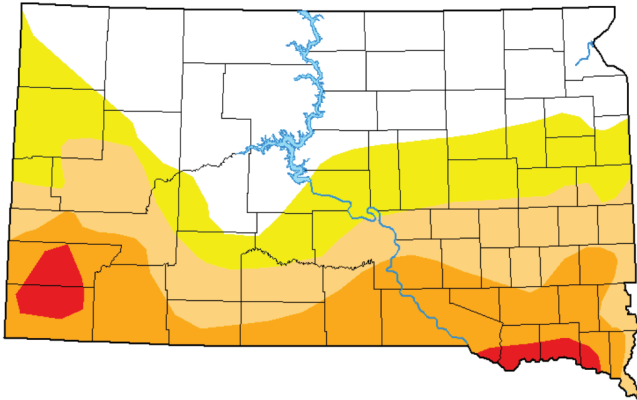
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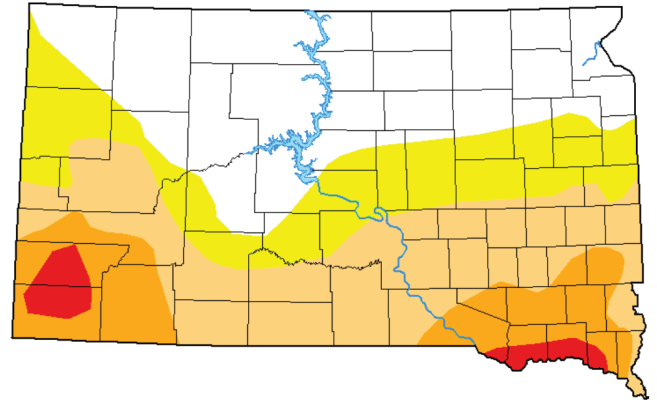
Drought Classification

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

Drought Monitor



March 24



March 17

Intense, unseasonable warmth gripped the High Plains, with temperatures soaring up to 25 degrees F above normal, peaking in parts of Wyoming and Colorado. Precipitation was nearly non-existent, particularly across the southern half of the region. This severe, persistent dryness, coupled with rapidly deteriorating drought indicators, forced widespread expansion and intensification of drought categories. Exceptional drought (D4) expanded in northwest Colorado, while extreme drought (D3) grew across Colorado, southern Wyoming, and southern Nebraska. Severe drought (D2) pushed further into central and northern Wyoming, western and southern Colorado, and advanced from Nebraska into South Dakota. Moderate drought (D1) and abnormal dryness (D0) also expanded broadly across Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska, and Kansas. No drought improvements were made in the High Plains this week.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

'Enough of the tyranny':

No Kings protesters take to the streets in South Dakota

BY: MEGHAN O'BRIEN

PIERRE — Nearly 200 demonstrators showed up Saturday outside the post office in South Dakota's capital city to protest the Trump administration as part of the No Kings movement.

The Pierre protest was one of a dozen in South Dakota, and one of thousands across the country. The state's largest cities — Sioux Falls and Rapid City — each had demonstrations, according to the No Kings website, as well as places such as Aberdeen, Vermillion and even White River, a town of just over 500 people.

"Democracy has cost this country too much" to relinquish now, said Brian Doherty, a U.S. Army veteran from Fort Pierre who attended the Pierre demonstration. "I pray the people of this country go out and vote."

Throughout the protest, he reminded people to check if they were registered to vote.

This was the third round of No Kings protests across the country. Previous protests in June and October drew crowds of thousands.

This was the largest crowd for a No Kings demonstration in Pierre, according to Dawson Lewis, Hughes County Democrats chairperson and organizer. About 20 people RSVP'd for the demonstration, he said, but nearly 200 showed up at its peak.

"Policies are at the whim of one man," Lewis said. "Gas prices going up, food prices going up, fertilizer prices going up for the farmers. I think people are just getting tired of the chaos."

The Rev. Mercy Hobbs, of Trinity Episcopal Church in Pierre, donned an inflatable frog costume and carried a sign that read "Riberty Resist." She was inspired by previous demonstrators in Portland, Oregon, who wore inflatable suits.

"There wasn't any interaction besides just standing there and being present," she said. "Enough of the tyranny and the injustice."

No Kings day rallies roll out across the US, with millions said to attend anti-Trump protests

BY: ASHLEY MURRAY

WASHINGTON — Large crowds took to the streets Saturday in the nation's capital for the third No Kings protest, rallying with others across the United States against what organizers say is an unprecedented expansion of power by President Donald Trump.

Thousands of people carrying signs and playing music began the day at Memorial Circle below Arlington National Cemetery. Crowds exiting the cemetery Metro stop clogged exit gates as they flowed toward Arlington Memorial Bridge into the district.

A dense crowd already was packed around the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool by late Saturday morning. Hundreds moved to the National Mall near the U.S. Capitol by late afternoon for a separate Remove the Regime rally, where numerous speakers, including former U.S. Capitol Police Officer Harry Dunn, urged Congress to impeach the president. Dunn, who is running for Congress in Maryland in 2026, was on duty during the Jan. 6, 2021 riot.

No Kings day national organizers anticipated more than 3,000 demonstrations across the United States,

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in every congressional district, and worldwide marches were organized on six continents, according to Logan Keith, a No Kings day organizer and national communications coordinator for the advocacy group 50501. Organizers said Saturday night at least 8 million people participated

No notable instances of violence or conflict with counter-protesters were reported by late Saturday afternoon, though a bomb threat at the Hawaii Capitol disrupted the Honolulu rally, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported.

The previous national No Kings demonstration in October drew millions of Americans to the streets, and Saturday's protests were expected to do as well. States Newsroom's live blog from Saturday includes reports and photos from across the nation.

In St. Paul, Minnesota, site of the nation's flagship event, tens of thousands were gathering around the state Capitol, the Minnesota Reformer reported. Streets were clogged, buses packed and parking scarce well more than a mile away as throngs — dressed in layers and carrying homemade signs with messages like "No War" and "1776" — streamed toward the Capitol.

Headliners and speakers were expected, such as Bruce Springsteen — who will sing his new song "Streets of Minneapolis" — as well as U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont, Joan Baez, Maggie Rogers, Jane Fonda, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota and more.

In the months since the previous No Kings rallies, the Trump administration sent thousands of federal agents into Minneapolis, where an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer fatally shot Renee Good, a 37-year-old mother and U.S. citizen, on Jan. 7.

Just over two weeks later, Customs and Border Patrol agents killed Alex Pretti, also 37 and a U.S. citizen.

Robin Eller, who is from Minneapolis but was protesting in New York City, said it was necessary for her to be part of the demonstration.

"We've seen two of our neighbors shot and killed for no reason other than trying to do what's right for other humans in our community," she said. "So we just feel like whenever we have the chance to be part of, numbers that help bring accountability, that's what we want to do."

In recent months, many high-profile violent encounters between federal law enforcement and the public circulated widely on social media and in news reports. One notable video captured ICE agents violently pulling Bangladeshi American Aliyah Rahman from her vehicle as she told the officers she was disabled, according to her testimony before lawmakers on Capitol Hill in February.

Other high-profile arrests have occurred across the country, including in Nashville, Tennessee, where ICE agents arrested the 35-year-old journalist, Estefany Rodriguez Florez, despite her pending asylum application. Florez and her husband, a U.S. citizen, had just dropped their 7-year-old child at school before the arrest.

Bigger crowds

Crowds at the Washington, D.C., No Kings march noticeably were larger compared to October's march. Rallygoers carried signs protesting Trump's mass deportation campaign, increases in health care costs and the administration's heavy redactions of the Epstein files.

A speaker rallying the crowd at the Virginia side of the Arlington Memorial Bridge urged participants to vote in the upcoming 2026 midterm elections that will determine control of Congress.

"Let's get our march on, let's fight," he said.

Across the country, messages against Trump's monthlong war in Iran also featured prominently. The president launched joint operations with Israel on Feb. 28 that has since spread across the Middle East and caused an oil shortage crisis worldwide.

So far 13 American service members have died, and more than 300 have been injured, including 15 wounded Friday after an attack on a U.S. base in Saudi Arabia.

In the Washington, D.C. march, Robyn Abshire Sims, 52, of Virginia, carried a sign reading "Impeach. Remove. Convict. 25th Amendment Now."

"I am here to be in solidarity with the masses. They have no idea how many of us there are," she said.

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"Donald Trump needs to be removed, right now."

Ezra Bermudaz, who is in his 40s and lives in northern Virginia, said the administration is "unprofessional" and that it is alienating Americans from their government.

"A real good politician, make us feel like we're part of it. Right now, it feels like we're not part of it," he said. "... I don't activate, I'm not a protester, but it really does suck."

David Landolfi attended the D.C. march dressed in his U.S. Marine fatigues bearing his name. The retired veteran of 26 years deployed with the 2nd Marine Division to Vietnam at the end of the war, and later to Lebanon.

"I wanted all the other people here to know that I was in the military, and the military do support a lot of things that I'm supporting today," said Landolfi, 72, of Annapolis, Maryland.

"Most military men and women are not in support of war. And that was a promise that (Trump) made, that we wouldn't be in any more wars. And, well, that's not happening," he said.

IN THE CITIES

Beyond the district, protests in other big cities drew large crowds Saturday.

In Chicago, Saturday's demonstration was larger than previous rounds, which were responses to the Trump administration's immigration enforcement in Chicago and other Democratic-led cities. Some first-time protesters Saturday said they were motivated by the war in Iran, rising prices and persistent unaffordability, and the current government shutdown that hamstrung airline employees and travelers.

Many people blamed Trump for their feelings of anxiety and a sense of the country backsliding.

"Never in my 70 years did I think I would still be out here fighting for basic human rights. Or that I'd be fighting to not be ruled by a king," said Valerie Butler-Newbern, 70.

In New York City, crowds packed Times Square.

Giuseppe Palazzolo said he is a former MAGA supporter who became disillusioned with the Trump administration because of the war with Iran. He said he thinks that it's a waste of taxpayer dollars and not what the American public wants. The Staten Island man said Trump broke campaign promises that he would not start wars and would bring peace to the Middle East.

The White House released a statement ahead of Saturday's rally criticizing the event and the media. President Donald Trump was at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Florida, on Saturday. According to the traveling press, he visited his golf club nearby but made no public statements.

"The only people who care about these Trump Derangement Therapy Sessions are the reporters who are paid to cover them," White House spokesperson Abigail Jackson said in the written statement to media Friday.

IN THE STATES

Minnesota

The Twin Cities rally that included A-list performers was expected to draw 100,000, the Minnesota Reformer reported.

The Minnesota event was a nationwide focus after the Trump administration's Operation Metro Surge, which the U.S. Department of Homeland Security called its largest immigration enforcement operation ever. Minnesota was the site of a plethora of documented violations of civil and constitutional rights, including the deaths of Good and Pretti.

Arkansas

In more rural, Republican-leaning areas, the demonstrations gave some protesters a sense of community.

"It feels almost unreal when you live in a community that is so red, and then you see everyone come together like this," first-time protester Nadia Washburn of Stuttgart, Arkansas, told the Arkansas Advocate. "It makes you feel like your feelings are valid."

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Michigan

Democratic elected officials took part in several events, including U.S. Rep. Rashida Tlaib in Detroit. Her emotionally charged speech criticized not only the actions of Trump and ICE but also Democrats who have not done enough to protect the community, the Michigan Advance reported.

Indiana

A rally at the Indiana Capitol attracted lifelong Democrats, former Republicans and independent voters who are disaffected with the two-party system in general and Trump in particular, the Indiana Capital Chronicle reported.

Tennessee

In Nashville, which was the center of an ICE operation last year, several organizers spoke and mostly delivered strong messages against the immigration enforcement agency, the Tennessee Lookout reported.

Kansas

A demonstration in the Kansas City suburbs of Johnson County stretched 6 miles down a thoroughfare, the Kansas Reflector reported.

Pennsylvania

In addition to massive rallies in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, dozens of smaller demonstrations took place across the commonwealth, the Pennsylvania Capital-Star reported.

Several hundred Pennsylvanians gathered in Reading, where ICE is planning to establish a 1,500-bed detention facility.

Nebraska

Many protesters in Omaha and Lincoln, Nebraska, held anti-Trump signs or American flags, while others wore costumes, the Nebraska Examiner reported. Volunteers from different groups gathered signatures for ballot initiatives and at least one candidate.

New Hampshire

Crowds across the Granite State protested the administration and the war in Iran, the New Hampshire Bulletin reported.

Janet Adams, a former middle school science teacher from Woodstock, New Hampshire, said she attended her first rally Saturday because of concern for the young people in her life. At 74, she was frustrated with what she saw as a lack of progress, and cited the Iran war and "hate" in national politics as part of what made her concerned for the futures of her 10 grandchildren.

Iowa

Thousands of Iowans gathered at the state Capitol, protesting against Trump and Iowa Republicans for issues like the war in Iran, ICE action and discrimination against transgender Americans, the Iowa Capital Dispatch reported.

Maine

Many attendees at the Portland, Maine, protest expressed anger at Trump's ongoing war on Iran, and his deportation efforts — which became much more real for many in Maine during a weeks-long surge in January — as well as the lack of action from Congress to deter him, the Maine Morning Star reported.

South Dakota

About 200 people showed up in South Dakota's capital city of Pierre, one of a dozen rallies in the small, Republican-led state, including places such as Aberdeen, Vermillion and even White River, a town of just over 500 people, South Dakota Searchlight reported.

Idaho

Many speakers at the protest in Boise localized their frustrations with the Republican-dominated state Legislature over the latest in a wave of anti-LGBTQ+ bills and years of not changing the state's strict abortion ban, even as doctors have left the state, the Idaho Capital Sun reported.

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North Carolina

Opposition to the Trump administration's use of military force in Iran and Venezuela and threats against Cuba and Greenland dominated the protest, which lasted around three hours and blocked off traffic in downtown Durham, North Carolina, for much of the morning, NC Newsline reported.

West Virginia

A sea of protesters holding signs and American flags filled the space in front of the state Capitol in Charleston. They lined both sides of the street and chanted, "This is what democracy looks like." Some drivers honked their support as they passed by, West Virginia Watch reported.

Illinois

A month after the death of prominent Chicagoan and civil right leader Rev. Jesse Jackson, a rainbow coalition of protesters — angered by the Trump administration's policies and actions — flooded into Chicago's Grant Park.

Kathy Tholin, chair of Indivisible Chicago, a progressive group that has been one of the chief organizers of the Chicago events, said the energy at the demonstrations needs to translate to votes at the midterms.

"The midterms are not just critically important to sending a message to those in power. But it's one of the ways that we can actually get something done," Tholin said. "We're all building to that and voters are seeing that. There's an election going on almost every month, and those elections show that people are coming out and tuning in."

But not everyone who was in Grant Park Saturday is at odds with the Trump administration. Paul Chavez of Albuquerque, New Mexico, said he is a proud lifelong Democrat who "no matter what" he supports the president.

Chavez, a 57-year-old TSA employee, said people should unite around the unpaid airport workers at jam-packed hubs across the country. Funding TSA is the most nonpartisan thing that people can advocate for at the rallies, he said.

South Carolina

At the top of protesters' minds in Columbia, South Carolina, were the war in Iran, the files released detailing the activities of Jeffrey Epstein, who died in jail while awaiting trial for sex trafficking charges, and voting rights, especially with the proposal of the SAVE Act, which would create photo ID requirements nationwide for voters to prove they're citizens, the South Carolina Daily Gazette reported.

Rhode Island

Rhode Island Secretary of State Gregg Amore, who is being sued by the Trump administration for refusing to turn over the state's voter rolls, defended that move to a crowd of about 20,000 in Providence, the Rhode Island Current reported.

Oregon

An estimated 30,000 people — down from the 40,000 who turned out in Portland for the second No Kings protest in October — were in downtown Portland on Saturday. More protests, not affiliated with No Kings, were expected later in the evening near the ICE facility south of downtown, the Oregon Capital Chronicle reported.

Florida

No Kings marches attracted crowds even in conservative areas of the Sunshine State, the Florida Phoenix reported. The crowds appeared in cities with strong military presences like Pensacola and Jacksonville, and even deep-red Polk County, where Trump won by 21 points in the 2024 presidential election, saw an enthusiastic crowd of at least 2,000 people at Freedom Park in downtown Lakeland.

Montana

Following weeks of uncertainty as to whether the state would allow another large No Kings rally on the Montana Capitol steps, more than 1,000 people stood on the lawn as they protested what they said is creeping authoritarianism in the United States, the Daily Montanan reported. Event organizers scrambled as the state Department of Administration went back-and-forth on a blanket ban of weekend events at the Capitol that was eventually nixed after pressure from legislators and the public.

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Alabama

Many protesters in cities and towns throughout Alabama cited Trump's immigration policies and ICE's detaining and deporting large numbers of people, the Alabama Reflector reported. Others expressed concerns about cuts to social safety net programs that were codified under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which Trump signed last year. The legislation imposed about \$186 billion in funding cuts over the next decade to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program meant to aid people by providing food.

Washington

Many of the thousands gathered in Olympia, Washington, waved signs touting a number of criticisms against the Trump administration: unlawful immigration enforcement, the war with Iran, the president's appearance in the Epstein files, the death of Renee Good and Alex Pretti at the hands of immigration agents and anti-trans legislation, the Washington State Standard reported.

Fewer than 100 gathered at a counterprotest against Democratic Gov. Bob Ferguson and a new income tax on those who earn more than \$1 million.

New York

Smokey Sims of the Bronx said the protest "proves that America is tired of Trump's stuff."

Palazzolo, the former MAGA supporter from Staten Island, who became disillusioned with the Trump administration because of the war with Iran, said Trump had had gotten the country "knee-deep in this illegal war."

He hasn't found the congressional approval," he said. "We're further from peace and closer to catastrophe than ever before. I feel so betrayed."

New Jersey

Democratic Gov. Mikie Sherrill appeared briefly at a rally in Princeton, N.J., the New Jersey Monitor reported. Trump's immigration crackdown was top of mind for many protesters, with Saturday's demonstrations coming just three days after Sherrill signed three new laws to strengthen protections for immigrants in the state and six weeks after she limited immigration enforcement operations on state property.

Kentucky

Jefferson County, Kentucky, Clerk David Yates, a Democrat who in March intervened in a federal lawsuit in hopes of blocking the U.S. Department of Justice from gaining access to Kentuckians' sensitive voter data, told a Louisville crowd: "I will not be bullied; I will not be intimidated," the Kentucky Lantern reported.

Stateline reporters Robbie Sequeira and Shalina Chatlani contributed to this report.

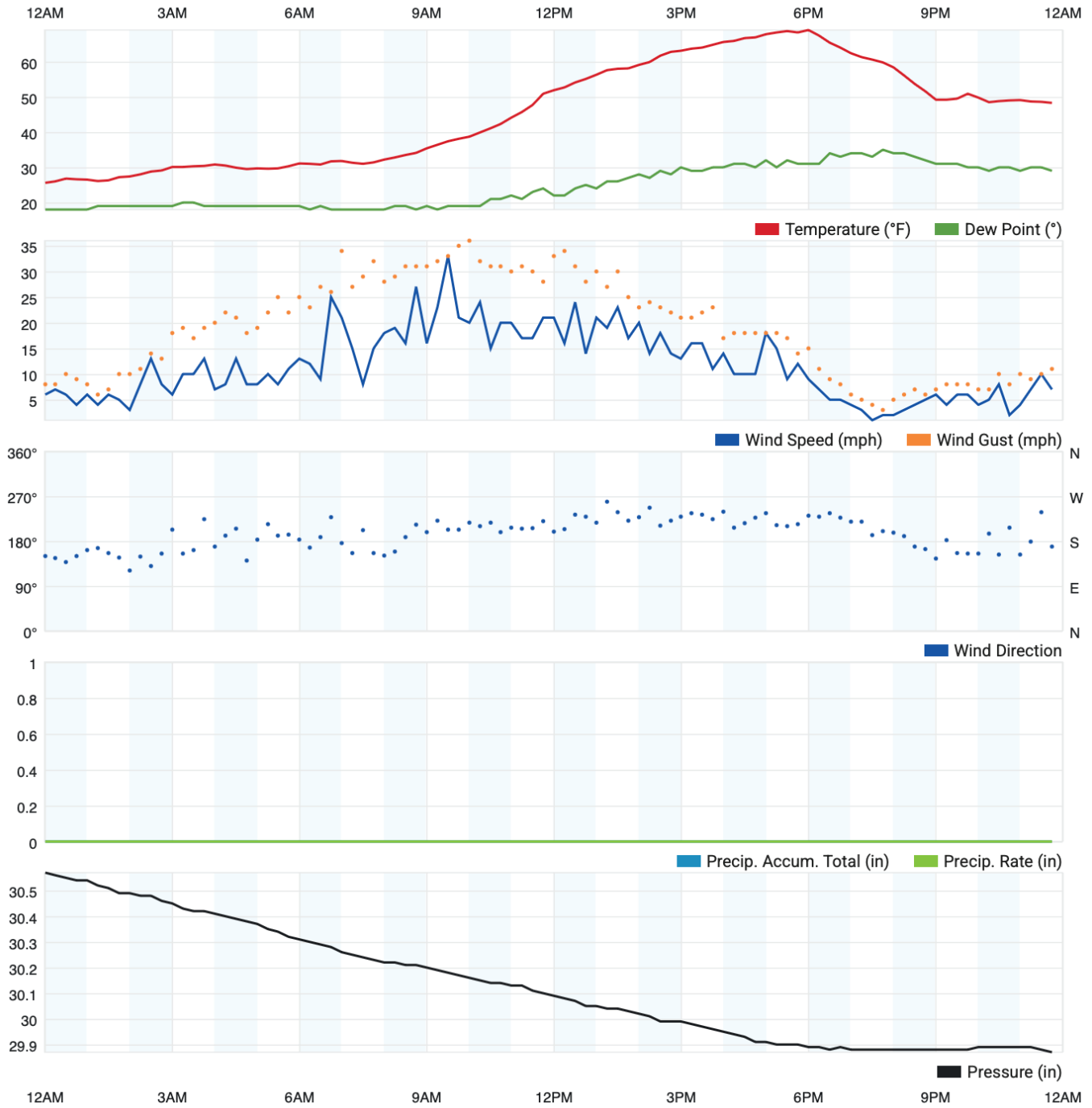
Ashley Murray covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include domestic policy and appropriations.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

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Today



High: 68 °F

Becoming Sunny

Tonight



Low: 33 °F

Partly Cloudy

Monday



High: 64 °F

Mostly Sunny

Monday Night



Low: 32 °F

Slight Chance Rain then Chance Rain/Snow

Tuesday



High: 43 °F

Breezy. Chance Snow then Mostly Sunny



Staying Mild Through Monday

March 29, 2026
4:07 AM

High Temperatures 15 to 25 degrees above average next couple days

Today



Highs:
65-74°

Wind:
NE->NW 5-15 mph



Monday



Highs:
61-74°

Wind:
E/NE 10-20 mph



Tuesday



Highs:
41-50°

Wind:
NW 15-30 mph



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Dry and mild conditions with above normal temperatures will stick around today into Monday. Winds will be much lighter today compared to Saturday. Still, with the warm temps expected, relative humidity values will fall into a 20-25 percent range this afternoon across central SD leading to high grassland fire danger. A similar trend is expected on Monday, except all of central and northeast SD and west central MN will see high grassland fire danger. A weak disturbance will provide light rain/snow late Monday into early Tuesday with limited moisture expected. It will turn more windy and much cooler starting Tuesday.

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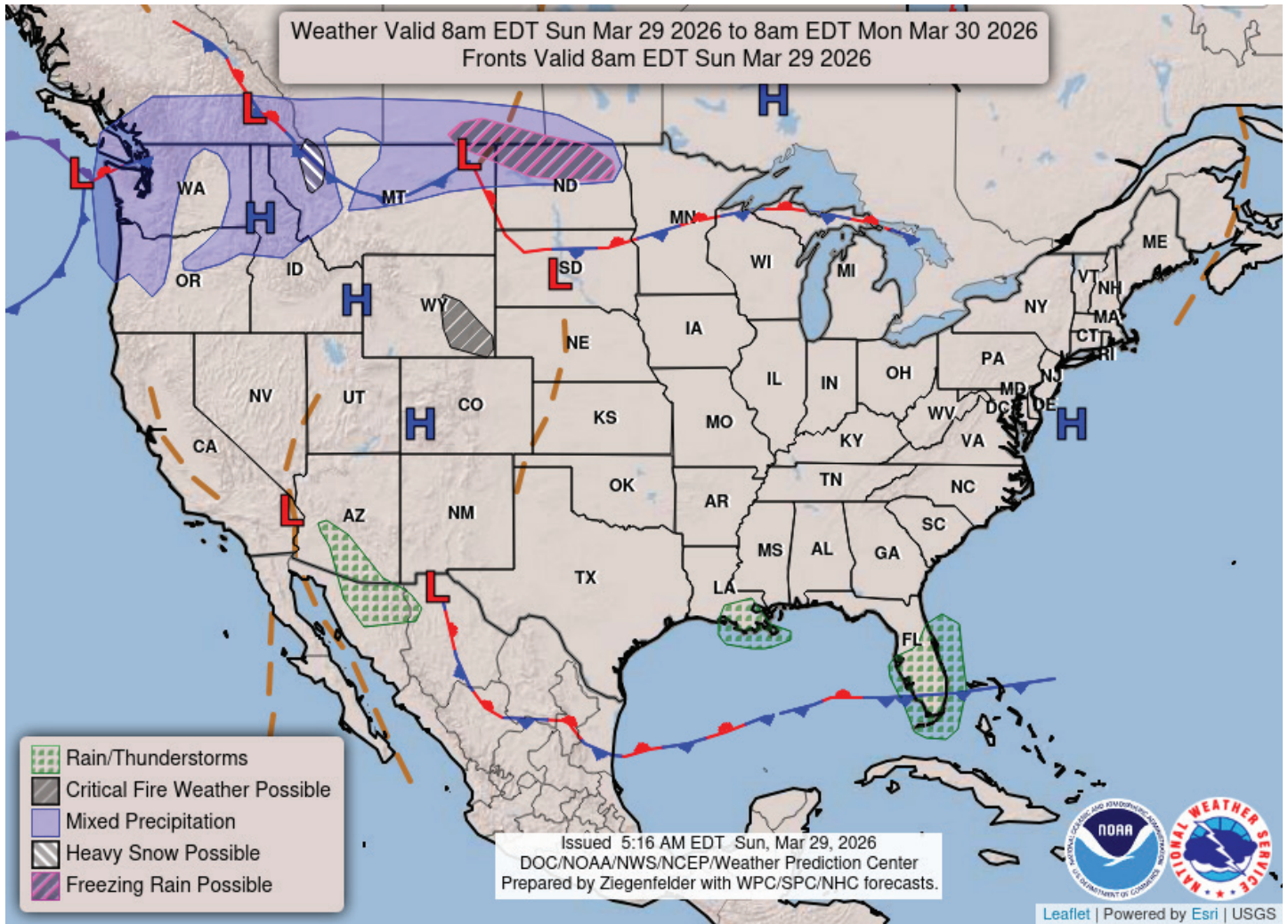
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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 69 °F at 5:56 PM
Low Temp: 26 °F at 12:00 AM
Wind: 36 mph at 9:02 AM
Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 81 in 2021
Record Low: -14 in 2023
Average High: 49
Average Low: 25
Average Precip in Mar.: 0.81
Precip to date in Mar.: 0.29
Average Precip to date: 1.98
Precip Year to Date: 1.62
Sunset Tonight: 7.55 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:16 am



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Today in Weather History

March 29th, 1982: An early season Tornado briefly touched down at Swett, South Dakota (11 miles west of Martin). The tornado overturned and heavily damaged a mobile home. One person was slightly injured, and another barely escaped injury, as he left the trailer just seconds before the storm struck.

March 29th, 1998: A supercell thunderstorm produced 13 tornadoes across southern Minnesota. The strongest tornado was an F4. Two people died during this tornado event.

1886 — Atlanta, GA, was drenched with a record 7.36 inches of rain in 24 hours. (The Weather Channel)

1920 — Clear Spring, MD, received 31 inches of snow in 24 hours to establish a state record. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1921 — The temperature in Washington D.C. dropped from 82 degrees to 26 degrees thus ending an early spring. (David Ludlum)

1935 — A severe duststorm blanketed Amarillo, TX, for 84 hours. During one six hour period the visibility was near zero. (28th-31st) (The Weather Channel)

1945 — Providence, RI, hit 90 degrees to establish a March record for the New England area. (The Weather Channel)

1987 — Thunderstorms spawned tornadoes in Mississippi, and produced high winds and heavy rain in Louisiana. Thunderstorm winds gusted to 92 mph at Houma LA, and caused a million dollars damage in Terrebonne Parish. Avondale LA was deluged with 4.52 inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 — Severe thunderstorms in the Lower Mississippi Valley spawned a tornado which injured two persons at Bunkie LA, and produced high winds which down a large tree onto a trailer at Bastrop LA claiming the life of one child and injuring another. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 — Thunderstorms produced torrential rains in northeastern Texas and southwestern Arkansas. Longview TX reported 14.16 inches of rain. More than eleven inches of rain at Henderson TX caused a dam to give way, and people left stranded in trees had to be rescued by boat. Total damage in northeastern Texas was estimated at 10 to 16 million dollars. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 — Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather in southeastern Texas and southern Louisiana. Thunderstorms spawned seven tornadoes, including one which injured seven persons at Gray LA. Thunderstorms also produced golf ball size hail and wind gusts to 70 mph at Port O'Conner TX, and produced up to six inches of rain in Beauregard Parish LA. (Storm Data)

2007 — Eighteen year old Corey Williams is killed by a lightning bolt in Carbondale, IL, at the Community High School's first home track meet of the season.

2011 — A record 766 inches of snowfall at Boreal Ski Resort and nearly 59 feet at Squaw Valley in California's Sierra Nevadas are just two areas where snowfall records have been broke.

The Triumphal Entry

God sometimes acts in ways we don't expect.

Luke 19:28-44: 28 After He had said these things, He was going on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

29 When He approached Bethphage and Bethany, near the mount that is called Olivet, He sent two of the disciples,

30 saying, "Go into the village ahead of you; there, as you enter, you will find a colt tied on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here.

31 "If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say, 'The Lord has need of it.'"

32 So those who were sent went away and found it just as He had told them.

33 As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

34 They said, "The Lord has need of it."

35 They brought it to Jesus, and they threw their coats on the colt and put Jesus on it.

36 As He was going, they were spreading their coats on the road.

37 As soon as He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen,

38 shouting: "BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."

40 But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!"

41 When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it,

42 saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes.

43 "For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side,

44 and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

We say, "Hindsight is 20/20," meaning, "If only I had known then what I know now!" Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem must have been one of those moments for the disciples. It had appeared to be such a wonderful day for them—and it was, but for different reasons than they realized.

The disciples weren't the only ones who had misconceptions about the Messiah. Many Jews expected Him to be an earthly king. When the crowds heard Jesus was coming, they cheered, "Hosanna!" which means, "Save now!" (Mark 11:9). They saw Him as their new ruler, come to bring salvation from political oppression. He raised the dead, so there was no doubt he could also restore David's kingdom and free them from Roman rule.

Seated upon a donkey, Jesus resembled a ruler returning to his city in peacetime—one whose subjects would have lined his path with coats and palm fronds in celebration (Mark 11:8). Even the Pharisees were there, watching in indignation and saying, "Look, the world has gone after Him" (John 12:19).

This week, think back to times when circumstances turned out to be something you didn't expect or when you realized God was different than you'd imagined. And look for an opportunity to share your insight with a friend or loved one.

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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

03.28.26

12 14 17 22 55 4

TOP PRIZE:

\$1,000,000/year

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 39 Mins 58 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

03.27.26

13 27 28 41 62 16

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$80,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

03.28.26

15 29 30 32 35 9

All Star Bonus: 5x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$20,450,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

03.28.26

4 8 13 31 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$37,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

03.28.26

8 37 56 57 68 21

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

03.28.26

11 42 43 59 61 25

Power Play: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$180,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the **AP** Associated Press

'No Kings' rallies draw crowds across US, in Europe. Springsteen headlines Minnesota demonstration

By MARK VANCELEAVE, STEVE KARNOWSKI, TODD RICHMOND and JOHN HANNA Associated Press
ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Large crowds protested Saturday against the war in Iran and President Donald Trump's actions in "No Kings" rallies across the U.S. and in Europe. Minnesota took center stage, with thousands of people standing shoulder-to-shoulder to celebrate resistance to Trump's aggressive immigration enforcement.

Minnesota's flagship event on the Capitol lawn in St. Paul drew Bruce Springsteen as its headliner. He and other speakers praised the state's people for taking to the streets over the winter in opposition to a surge of U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement agents.

Springsteen performed "Streets of Minneapolis," the song he wrote in response to the fatal shootings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti by federal agents. Springsteen lamented Good and Pretti's deaths but said the state's pushback against ICE gave the rest of the country hope.

"Your strength and your commitment told us that this was still America," he said. "And this reactionary nightmare, and these invasions of American cities, will not stand."

People rallied from New York City, with almost 8.5 million residents in a solidly blue state, to Driggs, a town of fewer than 2,000 people in eastern Idaho, a state Trump carried with 66% of the vote in 2024.

Big but mostly peaceful crowds

U.S. organizers have estimated that the first two rounds of No Kings rallies drew more than 5 million people in June and 7 million in October. They expected 9 million participants Saturday, though it was not clear whether those expectations were met.

Organizers said more than 3,100 events — 500 more than in October — were registered, in all 50 states.

Protests were mostly peaceful, but some arrests were reported.

In Los Angeles, authorities deployed tear gas near a federal detention center downtown. One man had a leaf blower, attempting to clear the air. The Los Angeles Police Department later arrested people for failing to disperse. Earlier in the day, a band was playing and people were dancing to Spanish-language music.

The Denver Police Department said on the social platform X that it declared an unlawful assembly and deployed smoke canisters after a small group of protesters blocked a road and did not leave as asked. Some threw the canisters back at officers, police said. At least eight people were arrested, as was a ninth person later on who police said was throwing objects.

GOP officials dismissive of protests

White House spokesperson Abigail Jackson called them the product of "leftist funding networks" with little real public support.

The "only people who care about these Trump Derangement Therapy Sessions are the reporters who are paid to cover them," Jackson said in a statement.

The National Republican Congressional Committee was also sharply critical.

"These Hate America Rallies are where the far-left's most violent, deranged fantasies get a microphone," spokesperson Maureen O'Toole said.

Protesters have a long list of causes

Trump's immigration enforcement push, particularly in Minnesota, was just one item on a long list of grievances that also included the war in Iran and the rollback of transgender rights. Speakers at the Minnesota rally decried billionaires' economic power.

In Washington, hundreds marched past the Lincoln Memorial and into the National Mall, holding signs that read "Put down the crown, clown" and "Regime change begins at home." "

Bill Jarcho was there from Seattle, joined by six people dressed as insects wearing tactical vests that said, "LICE" — spoofing ICE — as part of what he called a "mock and awe" tour.

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"What we provide is mockery to the king," Jarcho said. "It's about taking authoritarianism and making fun of it, which they hate."

About 40,000 people marched in San Diego, police there said.

In New York, Donna Lieberman, executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union, said during a news conference that Trump and his supporters want people to be afraid to protest.

"They want us to be afraid that there's nothing we can do to stop them," she said. "But you know what? They are wrong — dead wrong."

In Topeka, Kansas, a protesters dressed up in an inflatable frog costume and a baby version of Trump. Wendy Wyatt showed up with a "Cats Against Trump" sign. Many things upset her about the administration, she said, but the rallies are "very hopeful to me."

Organizers said two-thirds of RSVPs for the rallies came from outside of major urban centers. That included communities in conservative-leaning states like Idaho, Wyoming, Montana, Utah, South Dakota and Louisiana, as well as suburbs in electorally competitive Pennsylvania, Georgia and Arizona.

Main event at the Minnesota Capitol

Organizers designated the rally there as the national flagship event.

Before Springsteen took the stage, organizers played a video in which actor Robert DeNiro said he wakes up every morning depressed because of Trump but was happier Saturday because millions of people were protesting. He also congratulated Minnesotans for running ICE out of town.

The bill also included singer Joan Baez, actor Jane Fonda, Vermont U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders and a long list of activists, labor leaders and elected officials.

Protesters held up a massive sign on the Capitol steps that read, "We had whistles, they had guns. The revolution starts in Minneapolis."

"Donald Trump may pretend that he's not listening, but he can't ignore the millions in the streets today," said Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers.

Rallies overseas

Demonstrations were also held in more than a dozen other countries, according to co-executive director Ezra Levin of Indivisible, which spearheaded the events.

In Rome, thousands marched with chants aimed at Premier Giorgia Meloni, whose conservative government saw its referendum for streamlining Italy's judiciary fail badly this week. Protesters also waved banners protesting Israeli and US attacks on Iran.

In London, demonstrators held banners with slogans such as "Stop the far right" and "Stand up to Racism."

And in Paris, several hundred people, mostly Americans living in France, along with labor unions and human rights organizations, gathered at the Bastille.

"I protest all of Trump's illegal, immoral, reckless and feckless, endless wars," organizer Ada Shen said.

Iran-backed Houthis enter the monthlong war and could further threaten global shipping

By SAMY MAGDY, AAMER MADHANI and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iranian-backed Houthi rebels entered the monthlong war in the Middle East on Saturday, claiming two missile launches at Israel. About 2,500 U.S. Marines arrived in the region. And Pakistan's government said regional powers plan to meet Sunday to discuss how to end the fighting.

The war has threatened global supplies of oil and natural gas, sparked fertilizer shortages and disrupted air travel. Iran's grip on the strategic Strait of Hormuz has shaken markets and prices. The United States and Israel continue to strike Iran, whose retaliatory attacks have targeted Israel and neighboring Gulf Arab states. More than 3,000 people have been killed.

The Houthis' entry could further hurt global shipping if they again target vessels in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait off the Red Sea, through which about 12% of the world's trade typically passes.

There could be limited relief after Iran on Friday agreed to allow humanitarian aid and agricultural ship-

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ments through the strait following a United Nations request. U.S. President Donald Trump, meanwhile, has given Iran until April 6 to reopen the strait.

Witnesses in Tehran reported heavy strikes late Saturday. Israel's military earlier said it targeted Iran's naval weapons production facilities that it would finish attacking essential weapons production sites within "a few days." The U.S. said it has struck more than 11,000 Iranian targets in the war.

Iran fired missiles toward Israel, while air defenses early Sunday intercepted missiles and drones across Gulf countries.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited Gulf nations Saturday as his country offers defense help with drones.

Houthi involvement sparks concerns

Houthi Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree said on the rebels' Al-Masirah satellite television station that they launched missiles toward "sensitive Israeli military sites" in the south.

If the Houthis increase attacks on commercial shipping, as they have in the past, it would further push up oil prices and destabilize "all of maritime security," said Ahmed Nagi, a senior Yemen analyst at the International Crisis Group. "The impact would not be limited to the energy market."

The Bab el-Mandeb, at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, is crucial for vessels heading to the Suez Canal through the Red Sea. Saudi Arabia has been sending millions of barrels of crude oil a day through it because the Strait of Hormuz is effectively closed.

Houthi rebels attacked more than 100 merchant vessels with missiles and drones, sinking two vessels, between November 2023 and January 2025. The group said it acted in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza during the Israel-Hamas war.

The Houthis' latest involvement would complicate the deployment of the USS Gerald R. Ford, the aircraft carrier that arrived in Croatia on Saturday for maintenance. Sending the ship to the Red Sea could draw attacks similar to those on the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower in 2024 and the USS Harry S. Truman in 2025.

The Houthis have held Yemen's capital, Sanaa, since 2014. Saudi Arabia launched a war against the Houthis on behalf of Yemen's exiled government in 2015 and they now have an uneasy ceasefire.

Diplomacy attempted as US beefs up troop numbers

Pakistan said Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Egypt will send top diplomats to Islamabad for talks aimed at ending the war, arriving Sunday for a two-day visit. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian held "extensive discussions" on regional hostilities.

But Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told his Turkish counterpart by phone that Tehran was skeptical about recent diplomatic efforts. Iranian state-run media said Araghchi accused the U.S. of making "unreasonable demands" and exhibiting "contradictory actions."

Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar later spoke with Araghchi and urged "an end to all attacks and hostilities."

Trump envoy Steve Witkoff said Washington delivered a 15-point "action list" to Iran for a possible ceasefire, with a proposal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz and restrict Iran's nuclear program, which is the issue at the heart of tensions with the U.S. and Israel.

Tehran rejected the list and presented a five-point proposal that included reparations and recognition of its sovereignty over the waterway.

U.S. ships with around 2,500 Marines trained in amphibious landings have arrived, adding to the largest American force in the region in more than two decades. At least 1,000 paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division, trained to land in hostile territory to secure key positions and airfields, have been ordered to the Middle East.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Washington "can achieve all of our objectives without ground troops."

US troops wounded at Saudi base

More than two dozen U.S. troops have been wounded in Iranian attacks on Saudi Arabia's Prince Sultan Air Base in the past week, according to two people briefed on the matter who spoke on condition of

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anonymity because they weren't authorized to comment publicly.

Iran fired six ballistic missiles and 29 drones at the base Friday, injuring at least 15 troops, five of them seriously. The base, about 96 kilometers (60 miles) from the Saudi capital Riyadh, was attacked twice earlier in the week, including a strike that wounded 14 U.S. troops, according to the people briefed on the matter.

More than 300 U.S. service members have been wounded in the war. At least 13 have been reported killed.

Death toll climbs

Iranian authorities say more than 1,900 people have been killed in the Islamic Republic, while 19 have been reported dead in Israel.

In Lebanon, where Israel has started an invasion in the south while targeting the Hezbollah militant group, officials said more than 1,100 people have been killed in the country since the start of the war.

In Iraq, where Iranian-supported militia groups have entered the conflict, 80 members of the security forces have died.

In Gulf states, 20 people have been killed. Four have been killed in the occupied West Bank.

What to know about Trump's order to pay TSA officers and its impact on airport security lines

By JOHN RABY and MATT SEDENSKY Associated Press

With spring break in full swing, airline passengers continued to wait it out at major U.S. airports after President Donald Trump signed an executive order to pay Transportation Security Administration officers aimed at alleviating long security lines.

Trump's executive order on Friday instructed the Department of Homeland Security to pay TSA officers immediately, although it's unclear when the impact of that move will start to be felt at airports.

The signing came at a busy travel time of the year, with spring breaks at school districts and colleges and the upcoming Passover and Easter holidays.

Betty Mitchell arrived at Philadelphia International Airport at 12:30 a.m. Saturday for a 5 a.m. flight to visit family, but she said the airline desk did not open until 3 a.m. Once it did, there was a sudden influx of passengers to squeeze into the TSA screening lines.

"All at once it became a mad house," Mitchell said.

She waited nearly three hours to get through TSA but missed her flight. She was able to board the next available one.

"It was crazy long lines," she said. "Never have I seen it that long. If the airlines work with TSA in these trouble(d) times, maybe it would help the public."

What's the current situation on the ground?

Some passengers with very early flights on Saturday reported having little problem getting through airport security lines. But that may have been an anomaly. Others at some of the busiest airports wrote on social media that security lines were growing exponentially longer by the hour.

"We have not previously experienced checkpoint wait times similar to what we are seeing this morning," Baltimore-Washington International Airport said in a post Saturday on the social platform X. BWI officials recommended travelers arrive four hours before their scheduled departure time.

Maryland Gov. Wes Moore also said in a post on X that more Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents were being deployed to BWI. According to the post, the Maryland Aviation Administration was alerted to the move on Saturday.

"We have been told by ICE their personnel will provide operational support and assist at TSA security checkpoints to speed up the clearance process for passengers — not immigration enforcement."

When will TSA employees be paid?

Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin said TSA personnel could get paid as soon as Monday, a relief for workers who have gone without pay since Feb. 14.

While that is welcome news to many, it remains to be seen whether that promise materializes on schedule

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and if it brings an immediate end to snaking lines at airports.

Caleb Harmon-Marshall, a former TSA officer who runs a travel newsletter called Gate Access, said the staffing crisis won't improve significantly until officers are confident that they won't be subjected to more skipped paychecks.

"If it's only for a pay period, that's not enough to bring them back," Harmon-Marshall said. "It has to be an extended pay for them to come back or want to stay there."

He estimates longer lines could linger for another week or two.

How soon will this help with airport delays?

It's hard to tell. Airports that had passengers standing in screening lines that clogged check-in areas or showing up far too early for their flights will need to decide whether to reopen checkpoints or expedite service lanes they closed or consolidated due to inadequate staffing.

A handful of airports experienced daily TSA officer call-out rates of 40%. Nationwide on Thursday, more than 11.8% of the TSA employees on the schedule missed work, the most so far, DHS said Friday.

Nearly 500 of the agency's nearly 50,000 officers have quit since the shutdown started, according to DHS.

Holly Reynolds Lee was supposed to be someplace tropical on Saturday night for her family's spring break. By late afternoon, they were still trying to figure out how to get there.

Lee got to Baltimore-Washington International Airport three hours early for her morning flight but spent five hours alone sifting through a single TSA checkpoint. Her family missed their flight and were still sorting through their next options.

"The airport employees are doing the best they can and I know the airlines are doing the best they can," Lee said. "We certainly have great sympathy for the TSA agents. They deserve to be paid. This is a failure of government, quite frankly. It's just an absolute failure to get things solved for the American people."

Lee said she was given the option to return to the airport Sunday for another flight.

"We're concerned about another five-hour wait with TSA," she said. "We would much prefer to go home, sleep in our own beds, come back tomorrow and try again. But I don't think we can endure another five-hour wait. We asked the airline 'get us out tonight, we don't want to come back.'"

She said she felt sympathy for older adults and families who were waiting with small children. For them, "this is just an absolute nightmare," she said.

How do I monitor wait times before my flight?

Check airport conditions early and often, including official websites and social media accounts where airports share timely updates and guidance, according to experts.

Many airports on Saturday urged passengers to allow at least four hours for both domestic and international screenings.

"Wait times can change quickly based on passenger volume and TSA staffing," according to an advisory posted Saturday morning on the website of John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York.

Wait times listed on the MyTSA mobile app may not be accurate because TSA isn't actively managing its sites during the shutdown. On third-party websites that track TSA lines, estimated wait times could be outdated during the shutdown if they rely on publicly available data, experts say.

Navy shipyard workers approve a contract deal with Bath Iron Works, ending weeklong strike

By PATRICK WHITTLE Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — Hundreds of employees at one of the U.S. Navy's biggest shipbuilding contractors voted Saturday to approve a contract deal with Bath Iron Works, ending a weeklong strike.

Members of the Bath Marine Draftsmen's Association ratified a new four-year collective bargaining agreement that goes into effect immediately, the shipyard said. That followed an hourslong union meeting at a high school.

"We look forward to working together once again to deliver the Navy's ships on time to protect our na-

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tion and our families," Bath Iron Works, known for the slogan "Bath built is best built," said in a statement.

The shipyard and the union negotiated for three weeks without resolving differences before the strike began last Monday, Bath Iron Works spokesperson David Hench said.

He said previously that the shipyard, which has built ships for the Navy for more than a century, "proposed a number of historic wage and benefit options" to bring the union and the company closer together.

The Bath Marine Draftsmen's Association is affiliated with the United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, which is commonly known as the UAW and is one of the country's largest unions. The BMDA members at Bath Iron Works are employed as designers, nondestructive test technicians, technical clerks, laboratory technicians and associate engineers, the union said.

Representatives of the Maine AFL-CIO confirmed the ratification vote via text messages to The Associated Press.

The union local said that while not all of its goals were reached, the deal includes improvements that are a win for workers. It did not give specifics of the agreement.

"Establishing not only a better contract foundation for the next negotiation but also developing an engaged and motivated membership; that now has this experience to bring to bear in any future negotiation or organizing activity," it said in a statement.

The strike began several weeks after a morale-boosting appearance in which U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth touted the need to boost defense manufacturing. It also took place during the U.S. war effort in Iran.

Bath Iron Works is a major shipbuilder for the Navy and was awarded a multiyear contract to make several Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyers in 2023. Navy officials call the Arleigh Burke the "backbone of the Navy's surface fleet" and last year exercised an option last year to add an additional destroyer to the contract.

The company did not respond to questions about whether the strike slowed production.

The Navy accepted delivery of the future Arleigh Burke-class USS Harvey C. Barnum, Jr., last year, and it is due to be commissioned next month, Hench said.

The shipyard had said on its website that salaried personnel, subcontractors and other employees who elected to come to work could be used to continue business operations during the strike. The shipyard's total workforce is about 6,800 people, Hench said.

Missing sailboats carrying aid land in Cuba after being located by Mexican navy

By ANDREA RODRÍGUEZ Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Two sailboats that went missing carrying humanitarian aid from southern Mexico to Cuba landed in Havana on Saturday afternoon hours after Mexico's navy said it had located the boats days after they went incommunicado because of bad weather.

The vessels carrying at least eight people departed from Isla Mujeres in southern Mexico on March 20 and then lost contact, fueling concern in Mexico, Cuba and beyond.

In a post on X on Saturday morning, the navy said an aircraft spotted the boats 80 nautical miles (148 kilometers) northwest of Havana, Cuba. Upon arriving to the island, Adnaan Stumo, the coordinator of the sailing convoy, said bad weather was responsible for the delay because the boats had to take a longer route and the sailors were "never in any serious danger."

He thanked Mexico's navy, which escorted one of the boats into Havana Bay, for its support and making sure they were OK, and said they were "delighted" to start delivering aid to Cubans on the island.

"We arrive with a simple but powerful message: solidarity with the Cuban people doesn't stop at borders. It crosses oceans," Stumo, a U.S. citizen, said. "Over the past week, our sailboats encountered difficult conditions at sea, during which we lost contact with convoy coordinators and maritime authorities alike."

The organization Nuestra América Convoy said Friday that based on the speed of the vessels reported to the Cuban maritime authorities, the window of arrival for the boats in Havana should be between Friday

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and Saturday and that the boats were led by experienced sailors.

James Schneider, communications director for Progressive International who helped coordinate the Nuestra America convoy to Cuba, thanked Mexican and Cuban authorities for their help on Saturday and said he was "relieved" to hear they were safe.

"The crews are safe, and the vessels are continuing their journey to Havana," he said Saturday morning. "The convoy remains on track to complete its mission — delivering urgently needed humanitarian aid to the Cuban people."

The boat's arrival comes as an increasing number of countries and aid organizations have sent shipments of aid to Cuba while a U.S. fuel blockade has caused crippling blackouts and pushed the Caribbean nation to the brink of collapse. President Donald Trump in a speech Friday said "Cuba is next" after speaking about military actions in Venezuela and Iran.

The fuel blockade has prompted United Nations leaders to warn of a potential "humanitarian crisis" in the island's future amid mounting concerns by human rights and religious leaders as hospitals, schools and many residents go without power for long stretches.

The same day the boat was located, a delegation of religious leaders also arrived in Cuba. They visited hospitals and a nursing home, and met with other religious leaders on the island.

"Immense suffering is being caused to the people," said the Rev. Philip Vinod Peacock, general secretary of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

CPAC activists embrace Paxton as MAGA's choice for Senate over Cornyn

By THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press

GRAPEVINE, Texas (AP) — Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's was the unofficial guest of honor at the Conservative Political Action Conference, where hundreds of right-wing activists from around the country hailed him as Republicans' clear choice for U.S. Senate.

He met with supporters behind closed doors, gave the keynote address at the Ronald Reagan dinner and held court during a private reception where people lined up for handshakes and photos. Audiences cheered for Paxton and booed any mention of Sen. John Cornyn, Paxton's opponent in the May 26 runoff.

If Paxton wins the nomination, it will be because of support from his party's fervent grassroots base. That rock-solid foundation rescued Paxton's political career after he was impeached — but acquitted — for corruption charges by the Texas Legislature three years ago.

"I want you to know, there's only one reason I got through all that, and it's by the grace of God," he said in his Friday night speech as a wave of applause rolled through the hall. "He absolutely delivered me, and he used to people of Texas to deliver me."

Neither Paxton nor Cornyn won enough votes in the March 3 primary to clinch the nomination outright. Although Cornyn has raised far more money and is backed by the party establishment in Washington, Paxton's well-honed survival skills could lead him to victory.

The winner will face Democrat James Talarico, a state lawmaker, in what will be one of the most closely watched Senate races as Republicans try to retain their grip of Congress.

Cornyn did not attend CPAC, which was held at a resort and convention center near Dallas. Paxton was the overwhelming favorite in CPAC's straw poll, beating Cornyn by more than three to one, and he won the organization's endorsement.

'There's got to be a change'

President Donald Trump promised that he would endorse either Paxton or Cornyn weeks ago, but no announcement ever came. Paxton, however, has had no trouble proving his bona fides with the party's right wing.

"The real benefit of Paxton is that he is more an ally of Trump," said Luke Brown, a 21-year-old college student from Amarillo, Texas. "There's got to be a change for newer conservatives.

He added that, "I have respect for Cornyn. I just think it's time for someone more conservative."

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Although Cornyn finished first in the primary, which also included Rep. Wesley Hunt, Paxton swiftly appealed to Trump by embracing legislation known as the SAVE Act, which would mean new, strict proof-of-citizenship requirements for voting. The proposal is a priority for the president, but it has stalled in the Senate because Republican leaders do not want to lift the filibuster.

Paxton said he would consider stepping aside if the legislation passed and accused Cornyn of being a "coward." About a week later, Cornyn reversed his position on the filibuster and wrote in an op-ed that "I support whatever changes to Senate rules that may prove necessary."

'Too little too late'

Paxton crowed about the shift during his reception on Saturday.

"Unfortunately, John Cornyn has never been focused on this issue until right now, when I called him out on it," he told supporters.

Cornyn's campaign noted that the senator is an original co-sponsor of the voting legislation.

"Ken Paxton has lied to his staff, to taxpayers, to his colleagues and to his own family, so it should be not a surprise he's lying here too," said Matt Mackowiak, a senior adviser to Cornyn's campaign.

Joe Ropar, a 72-year-old defense contractor who attended CPAC, described Paxton's maneuvering as "brilliant."

"Cornyn's trying to change his stripes now," Ropar said. "It's too little too late."

While Cornyn did not attend CPAC, which was held at a resort and convention center near Dallas, Paxton was extolled by speakers throughout the event.

"Ken Paxton is emblematic of the grassroots of the MAGA movement across the nation," said Steve Bannon, a former Trump adviser who hosts the "War Room" podcast, referring to Trump's "Make America Great Again" slogan.

Earlier Friday, CPAC senior fellow Mercedes Schlapp polled the crowd. Asking for a show of support for Paxton, there was a roar of cheers. When she asked about Cornyn, there was a light ripple of boos.

'Time for a change'

Paxton reminded conservatives here of another connection with Trump: They both have portrayed themselves as the victims of political persecution. While Paxton was impeached and acquitted once, Trump went through the process twice during his first term.

Some conservative Republicans hold other grudges against Cornyn. They remember his early criticism of Trump's proposal for a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border in 2016, his co-sponsoring of gun control legislation after the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, in 2022, and his dismissive remarks about Trump's comeback campaign in 2024.

Retired music teacher Valerie Burge, 58, said she voted for Cornyn in the primary because of his long service.

"But I'm not sure about the runoff," she said. "It might be time for something new."

Barbara Palmer, a 65-year-old lawyer, said Cornyn had simply been in office for too long. He has been a judge, state supreme court justice and state attorney general, and now he wants a fifth term as senator.

"It's just time for a change," Palmer said.

Bills to pay FAA and TSA workers during shutdowns get introduced but keep stalling in Congress

By RIO YAMAT AP Airlines and Travel Writer

The Aviation Funding Solvency Act. The Keep America Flying Act. The Keep Air Travel Safe Act. The Aviation Funding Stability Act.

Again and again, members of Congress have dusted off the same idea: ensuring the federal employees who control air traffic and screen passengers and bags at U.S. airports get paid during government shutdowns.

Bills to make it happen keep getting introduced in one form or another, sometimes with Democrats and Republicans as co-sponsors. Yet session after session, the result has been the same — agencies receive

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their annual appropriations, public outrage over long security lines and flight delays fades, legislation languishes and workers have no guarantees their paychecks won't stop coming again.

"Once the crisis is over, people assume that the good times are back," said Eric Chaffee, a Case Western Reserve law professor whose research includes risk management in the aviation industry. "It's easy to pass the next big bill when you're still in the throes of the financial crisis, but once the shutdown is done, people have a relatively short memory of the problems that it created."

Since 2019, after a partial shutdown that spanned the holiday travel season, lawmakers have drafted, revised and reintroduced multiple proposals to pay aviation workers who would have to keep reporting for duty in the event of another budget impasse.

The Aviation Funding Stability Act of 2019 — and 2021 and 2025 — and the bipartisan Aviation Funding Solvency Act introduced after a government shutdown last fall would protect the pay of air traffic controllers. The Keep Air Travel Safe Act, filed in October, extended the protection to Transportation Security Administration agents. The Keep America Flying Act, also from October, would cover both TSA personnel and certain Federal Aviation Administration employees.

Broader proposals, like the Shutdown Fairness Act introduced in January, would maintain the pay of essential federal workers across the U.S. government. Those bills have stalled as well.

"Congress cares about headlines, and as a result of that, it means they don't always make changes that would be really beneficial," Chaffee said.

Political gridlock

Shutdowns that disrupt air travel have continued along with the push for aviation-specific pay protections. The 35-day shutdown that arose over funding for a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border during President Donald Trump's first term resulted in delays at East Coast airports and prolonged wait times at some airports as air traffic controllers and TSA agents went unpaid.

Last fall's 43-day shutdown broke the record for the longest funding lapse and revived concerns over the consequences of requiring air traffic controllers to work without pay. The FAA, citing risks to aviation safety, took the extraordinary step of ordering U.S. airlines to cut flights at 40 of the nation's busiest airports as unscheduled absences deepened existing staffing shortages at air traffic control facilities.

TSA officers who worked through that shutdown also found themselves working through a short one that started on Jan. 31 and yet another when funding for only the Department of Homeland Security lapsed on Feb. 14. Thousands began missing shifts each day as the stalemate entered its second month.

Carlos Rodriguez, a TSA agent and local union leader in New York, said many workers had not recovered financially from last year's shutdown when this one hit.

"Part of the American dream that I was sold was that working for the government was honorable and stable," Rodriguez, a second generation Dominican American, said. "But this is not honorable or stable."

On Friday, the 42nd day of the DHS shutdown, Trump signed an emergency order instructing Homeland Security to pay TSA agents immediately. The action came after House Republicans defeated a Senate deal that would have funded the TSA, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Federal Emergency Management Agency but not Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Border Patrol. The House later in the night passed its own bill to fund the entire Homeland Security department through May 22, but senators had already left town.

Johnny Jones, secretary-treasurer of the TSA division of the American Federation of Government Employees, said union members resent having their livelihoods used as tools and talking points in a game of political brinkmanship.

To them, the machinations of Congress feel like "let's checkmate the queen with the TSA pawn here, and then we'll smash them over whenever we feel like it," Jones said. "We're on the chess board."

Public pressure builds

Labor unions, airline leaders and airport executives have issued open letters, taken out newspaper ads and made direct appeals to urge lawmakers to act on at least one of the existing bipartisan proposals.

"Congress has the power to end this dysfunction once and for all, and must use any legislative vehicle to

accomplish this goal," the Modern Skies Coalition said in a joint statement this week. The broad coalition of more than 60 organizations pointed to the Aviation Funding Solvency Act, Aviation Funding Stability Act and Keep America Flying Act as potential options.

The president and CEO of Airlines for America, a trade group representing major U.S. airlines, made a similar case in a Washington Times op-ed this week, writing that Congress "must get to the table immediately" and pass legislation that would prevent more scenes of frustrated passengers, overflowing airport terminals and donation drives for public servants.

"Right now, lawmakers are sitting on their hands doing nothing with three viable, bipartisan bills that could prevent this mess," wrote Chris Sununu, a former New Hampshire governor hired to lead the trade group last year.

The American Federation of Government Employees joined more than 30 unions this week in urging Congress to pass the Shutdown Fairness Act, warning that funding lapses undermined employee morale, recruitment and retention.

Breaking the cycle

Some TSA workers have reported sleeping in their cars or thinking about selling them to make rent. Union leaders have described workers not being able to fill their refrigerators or gas tanks.

Caleb Harmon-Marshall, a former TSA officer who runs a travel newsletter called Gate Access, said the officers he's spoken with are eager to receive all of their back pay quickly because they are struggling to pay their bills and accumulating debt. But without greater certainty, more officers may miss shifts or decide to quit, he said.

If the president's emergency order only funds a single pay period, "that's not enough to bring them back," Harmon-Marshall said. "It has to be an extended pay for them to come back or want to stay there."

Previous legislation with bipartisan backing struggled to make it across the finish line. The Aviation Funding Act of 2019 that was introduced by Sen. Jerry Moran, a Kansas Republican, had 13 co-sponsors, eight of them Democrats. It never made it out of committee. A House version introduced by Oregon Democrat Peter DeFazio eventually had 303 co-sponsors and cleared the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee but never received a floor vote.

The current political environment in the U.S. may consign the legislation in Congress now to the same fate, Chaffee said.

"We live in a society currently where things are very polarized," he said. "Whether or not any of these bills get passed, it will need to have political momentum behind it, meaning it will need to be something that the public really wants to see happen."

Iranian attack on Saudi base injures US troops. More American forces arrive in the Middle East

By AAMER MADHANI, SAMY MAGDY and BEN FINLEY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of American service members wounded in the Iran war has grown beyond 300, with more than two dozen troops injured this week from attacks on a Saudi air base.

Iran fired six ballistic missiles and 29 drones at Saudi Arabia's Prince Sultan air base in an attack Friday that injured at least 15 troops, including five seriously, according to two people briefed on the matter. U.S. officials initially reported that at least 10 U.S. troops were injured, including two who were seriously wounded.

More American forces are reaching the Middle East, with a Navy ship carrying about 2,500 Marines having now arrived in the region, U.S. Central Command announced Saturday. The USS Tripoli, an amphibious assault ship, as well as the elements from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit that are aboard, are based in Japan. They were conducting exercises in the area around Taiwan when the order came to deploy to the Middle East almost two weeks ago.

Central Command said that in addition to the Marines, the Tripoli also brings transport and strike fighter aircraft, as well as amphibious assault assets to the region. The USS Boxer and two other ships, along

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with another Marine Expeditionary Unit, have also been ordered to the region from San Diego.

Before the arrival of the Marines, the U.S. military had already built up the largest American force in the region in more than 20 years, including two aircraft carriers, several other warships and some 50,000 troops. The USS Gerald R Ford, the nation's newest aircraft carrier, recently left the Middle East for repairs and supplies in Europe after a fire in a laundry room that affected some of the ship's sleeping quarters.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Friday the United States can meet its objectives "without any ground troops." But he also said Trump "has to be prepared for multiple contingencies" and that American forces are available "to give the president maximum optionality and maximum, opportunity to adjust to contingencies should they emerge."

The Saudi base had come under attack twice earlier in week, including an incident that injured 14 U.S. troops, according to the people, who were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity. In the other attack, no one was injured but a U.S. aircraft was damaged.

The base, which is about 96 kilometers (60 miles) from the Saudi capital of Riyadh, is run by the Royal Saudi Air Force, but also used by U.S. troops. The installation has been targeted almost since the beginning of the war, which on Saturday reached the one-month mark.

Army Sgt. Benjamin N. Pennington, 26, was wounded during a March 1 attack on the base and died days later. He is one of the 13 service members who have been killed in the war. Six of the fallen were killed when an Iranian drone struck an operations center at a civilian port in Kuwait. Another six died when their refueling plane crashed in Iraq following an incident with another aircraft that the U.S. military said was "not due to hostile or friendly fire."

The Pentagon did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment Saturday regarding the American casualties at the Saudi base.

Central Command said Friday that more than 300 service members have been wounded in the war. Most have returned to duty, while 30 remained out of action and 10 were considered seriously wounded.

Iran has responded to attacks by the United States and Israel with strikes against Israel and neighboring Gulf Arab states. The war has upended global air travel, disrupted oil exports and caused fuel prices to soar. Iran's stranglehold on the Strait of Hormuz, a strategic waterway, has exacerbated the economic fallout.

With the economic repercussions extending far beyond the Middle East, President Donald Trump is under growing pressure to end Iran's chokehold on the strait. The latest attacks on the Saudi air base happened after Trump claimed talks on ending the war were going "very well."

Trump said he had given Tehran until April 6 to reopen the strait. Iran says it has not engaged in any negotiations.

James Jeffrey, who served as a deputy national security adviser to President George W. Bush, said the relatively small number of American deaths and injuries "says great things about our operational and tactical-level use of the military."

"It's amazing how low the casualties have been, given the amount of stuff that the Iranians have fired," said Jeffrey, who is now a scholar at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

But Jeffrey said the Islamic Republic's overall goal is not killing American service members. It's inflicting economic pain on U.S. allies and the world.

"We have not stopped Iran from its campaign against the Gulf," said Jeffrey, who was U.S. ambassador to Iraq under Bush and a special envoy for Syria in the first Trump administration. "We have not eliminated all of their missiles. And of course, they still have the 400-plus kilograms of highly enriched uranium. It's buried, but still it's there."

Tiger Woods is facing an uncertain future off the golf course after his DUI arrest in Florida

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

Tiger Woods got out of jail and into the passenger seat of a dark SUV, his face as vacant as his mug shot as he was driven away to a future again filled with so much uncertainty.

The next step legally is facing charges of driving while intoxicated, damage to property and refusal to submit to a urine test, which led to him spending eight hours Friday in the Martin County jail some 15 miles from his home on Jupiter Island, Florida.

His manager at Excel Sports, Mark Steinberg, did not respond to a request for comment Saturday on Woods' arrest.

As for golf, this comes at a bad time for the sport's most influential player.

Woods had said earlier in the week he was trying to get in shape for the Masters on April 9-12, though that was looking unlikely. He turned 50 at the end of last year. "This body, it doesn't recover like it did when it was 24, 25," Woods said earlier this week.

He also was days away from a decision on whether to be the next U.S. Ryder Cup captain for the 2027 matches in Ireland. Two officials from the PGA of America did not immediately return phone calls from The Associated Press seeking comment.

And on April 5, he is scheduled to be in Augusta, Georgia, with Masters chairman Fred Ridley to celebrate a project at "The Patch," the nickname of a municipal golf course where Woods' design team created a short course to go along with a major upgrade to the public course.

Woods also is the central figure as chairman of the Future Competition Committee that is reshaping the PGA Tour model of tournaments. Tour CEO Brian Rolapp predicted meaningful progress this summer.

The PGA Tour declined to comment on Woods' arrest.

Now everything is on hold while Woods sorts through his second arrest in the last nine years, and his fourth car crash dating to 2009.

Woods waited until the summer of 2024 before deciding against being Ryder Cup captain for the 2025 matches in New York. The Associated Press reported in February the PGA of America had a soft deadline of the end of March for him to decide this time.

The PGA of America already is under scrutiny because of the unruly fan behavior at Bethpage Park last September, and this is not a time for another misstep. One person with knowledge of the process said the PGA of America has a backup plan of four potential candidates for the Ryder Cup committee to review if Woods declines — or if the PGA of America moves on.

Martin County Sheriff John Budensiek said Woods' Land Rover was going at a "high speed" when it clipped the trailer of a pressure cleaning truck and flipped on its side. Woods was not hurt and climbed out through the passenger window. The driver of the truck was not injured, either.

"Had there been somebody moving in the opposite direction, we would not be having a conversation saying there were no injuries," Budensiek said. "This could've been a lot worse."

Budensiek said investigators on the scene believe Woods had taken some kind of medication or drug. He described Woods as lethargic and said the golfer agreed to a breath test that showed "triple zeroes" — no sign of alcohol. By declining the urine test, the sheriff said, officials will never get "definitive results" about what caused the impairment.

That was consistent with his 2017 arrest on a DUI charge in Florida, when Woods was found asleep behind the wheel of a car with the engine running, the right blinker on, two flat tires and light damage to the driver's side.

Woods said it was a bad mix of medication. Toxicology reports later revealed the active ingredient for marijuana, two painkillers, a sleep drug and an anti-anxiety drug. There was no alcohol.

The pain medication has been standard fare for golf's most celebrated — and wounded — player.

After four knee surgeries — the last one a week after he won the U.S. Open with shredded knee ligaments and two stress fractures — Woods had four back surgeries in four years (2014 through 2017) only

to return to win the Masters in 2019 in one of golf's most astonishing comebacks.

And then came the most serious crash of all, in February 2021. His SUV was going 84 to 87 mph (135 to 140 kph) in an area with a speed limit of 45 mph (72 kph) when it veered off a coastal road in the Los Angeles suburbs, rolled down a hill and smacked into a tree.

He was not cited and Los Angeles authorities did not seek a warrant for blood samples. The injuries to his right leg and ankle were extensive — Woods later said amputation was considered — and it was remarkable he even returned to playing.

Woods has never been the same as a golfer since that accident. He has played 11 tournaments in the five years since that crash. Of the four times he finished 72 holes, he hasn't been closer than 16 shots of the winner. He shares the PGA Tour's all-time record with 82 wins.

But he remains a huge draw. Woods decided to compete Tuesday night in the finals of his indoor TGL league, and viewership spiked to nearly 1 million, the second-highest rating behind Woods making his TGL debut.

He made his public debut at age 2 on "The Mike Douglas Show" and has been in the spotlight ever since, setting records that are likely never to be broken. He remains a central figure in golf to this day, and the scrutiny is as great as ever with so much on his plate.

How the Homeland Security deal unraveled and split Republican leaders in Congress

By STEPHEN GROVES, MARY CLARE JALONICK and JOEY CAPPELLETTI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — For several hours Friday, in the stillness before dawn, the Senate appeared to have finally figured out how to fund most of the Department of Homeland Security before it faced the longest partial shutdown in U.S. history.

Senators handed House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., their deal and headed for the airports, seemingly confident of success.

Then it collapsed. Spectacularly.

An incensed Johnson marched out of his office Friday afternoon. He angrily rebuked the plan that the Senate had unanimously agreed to as a "joke."

"I have to protect the House, and I have to protect the American people," Johnson told reporters.

It was a dramatic denunciation of a deal that his counterpart, Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., had negotiated after weeks of effort, and was the latest abrupt turn in a funding saga that has bedeviled top Republicans for much of the year.

The collapse of the deal leaves Congress, now on a two-week spring break, with no easy way out of the impasse that has put DHS into a shutdown since mid-February. It also has exposed a rare rupture between the two Republican leaders in Congress, testing their alliances as they labor to move another set of President Donald Trump's priorities into law before the November elections.

Nothing ahead is likely to be easy.

How the deal collapsed

Thune had negotiated for weeks with Democratic senators on their demands for new restrictions on the department's immigration enforcement work. Offers were traded several times. The talks moved along at a stop-start pace. Votes failed again and again.

But as Trump made it clear Thursday that he would sign an executive action to pay Transportation Security Administration workers, Thune and Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York settled on a deal: It would not include funding for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and for U.S. Border Patrol, and would set aside Democratic demands for new limits on the agencies.

Thune pointed out that Congress had allotted money for immigration enforcement and he told reporters that "we can get at least a lot of the government opened up again and then we'll go from there."

Asked if he had cleared the compromise with Johnson, Thune said the two had texted.

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"I don't know what the House will do," the senator said early Friday as the deal came together.

But as House Republicans woke up to the news, their outrage was swift.

Rep. Nick LaLota, R-N.Y., said that on a GOP conference call that morning to discuss their path forward, a few dozen members ranging from moderates to hard-line conservatives spoke in opposition to what the Senate had done.

"The Senate chickened out," he said. "The cowards there, only a few of them in the middle of the night with I think only three to five senators present on the floor, chickened out because they wanted to go home for two weeks. We need to raise the bar."

What's next for Republicans?

The bitter split threatens to make the job for Republican leaders more difficult as they try to advance their priorities while they still have guaranteed control of both chambers. Trump has said that legislation to impose strict new proof of citizenship requirements on voting is his top priority, but there is no real path for that plan in the Senate with its 60-vote threshold for advancing legislation.

Some Republicans have pushed instead for a budget package that could potentially put some parts of the voter ID law in place. Republicans are also contemplating how to pass an expected request from the White House to fund the war with Iran that could total more than \$200 billion, among other priorities.

Meanwhile, the flop of the funding deal has given Democrats another chance to pin the partial shutdown on House Republicans.

"They know this is a continuation of the shutdown because the Senate is gone," said Massachusetts Rep. Katherine Clark, the No. 2 Democratic leader. "So they know fully well what they're doing."

It is not clear what the Senate will do next. A quick resumption of talks is unlikely. Negotiations ended acrimoniously on both sides, with each blaming the other for moving the goalposts along the way.

Schumer said he was proud of his caucus for "holding the line." But Republican Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, who leads the Senate Appropriations Committee, said Democrats were "intransigent and unreasonable."

Thune said he believed that Democrats never wanted a deal and would not vote for ICE funding under any circumstances.

"I felt like from the beginning, they just didn't want to get to 'yes,'" Thune said after the vote.

The dynamic left senators convinced that the deal was the only way to move past their disagreements and reopen DHS.

But House Republicans on Friday night seemed to revel in the fact they had defied the wishes of the Senate. GOP members said that they work from a perspective that is closer to the will of their constituents.

To Rep. Virginia Foxx, R-N.C., the Senate's proposal was "nothing more than unconditional surrender masquerading as a solution." She said the House "will not bend itself into submission by acquiescing."

Those searching for a way out of the shutdown seemed discouraged.

"This takes two chambers to get the job done," said Pennsylvania Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, a moderate Republican. "Apparently, there's not enough communication between those chambers."

A Houthi missile attack on Israel stokes fears of renewed Red Sea shipping strikes

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — A missile attack on Israel by Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen on Saturday raises concern that Tehran's proxies may again try to block Red Sea shipping routes, as Iran's chokehold on the Strait of Hormuz keeps another key global trade passage virtually closed.

The Houthis said they fired a barrage of missiles at "sensitive Israeli military sites" in southern Israel, their first since the start of the war in the Middle East a month ago. The Israeli military said it intercepted a missile fired from Yemen.

When asked about the Houthis, Israeli military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin replied: "We are preparing for a multifront war."

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The Houthis are a key Iranian ally

The Houthis are a crucial part of Iran's so-called "Axis of Resistance," which includes militant groups in Lebanon, Iraq and the Palestinian territories. They control the Yemeni capital of Sanaa and much of the country's north, and since 2014 have fought a civil war against the internationally recognized government that is backed by a Saudi-led coalition.

Unlike Lebanon's Hezbollah and militant groups in Iraq, the Houthis in Yemen had held back for a month since the U.S. and Israel launched attacks on Iran on Feb. 28.

Red Sea shipping attacks would further disrupt the global economy

Now that they have entered the war with a missile attack on Israel, there are growing concerns that they could start attacking shipping in the Red Sea. Such a move would further disrupt the maritime industry and the global economy since the closure of the Strait of Hormuz has shaken markets and energy prices. The rebels also have the capability of striking oil facilities in the Persian Gulf as they did previously during the Yemen civil war.

The Houthis said they won't allow the U.S. and Israel to use the Red Sea for attacks on Iran. "Our fingers are on the trigger," Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree, a military spokesman for the Houthis, said in a statement Friday.

The Houthi attacks on vessels would not only further push up oil prices but destabilize "all of maritime security," said Ahmed Nagi, a senior Yemen analyst at the International Crisis Group. "The impact would not be limited to the energy market."

Since the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, Saudi Arabia has been sending millions of barrels of crude oil a day through Bab el-Mandeb, at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula.

The 32-kilometer (20-mile)-wide strait is one of the busiest for global oil trade. A fourth of global container trade also transits through the strait on its way to and from the Suez Canal. Disrupting transit through Bab al-Madab forces shipping firms to route their vessels around the Cape of Good Hope, as they did in 2024 and 2025, significantly increasing costs.

About 12% of the world's trade typically passes through Suez, including oil, natural gas, grain and everything from toys to electronics.

"It would be devastating for so many countries," Nagi said. "If we see more pressure on the Iranians, or there's any escalation, the Houthis will jump in harshly."

Red Sea is a critical corridor for Europe's natural gas

Such attacks will add more pressure on energy supplies for the 27-nation European Union, which relies on imported natural gas to power factories, generate electricity and heat homes. Tankers carrying liquefied natural gas — which is supercooled to travel by ship instead of pipeline — routinely pass through the Red Sea.

The Houthis attacked over 100 merchant vessels with missiles and drones, sinking two vessels and killing four sailors, from November 2023 until January 2025, and also launched projectiles at Israel. They said their attacks were in support of Hamas during the war in Gaza.

The U.S. and Israel responded with a punishing air campaign across the Houthi-held areas in Yemen, which killed many people, including most of the Houthi-allied Cabinet in Sanaa. President Donald Trump halted U.S. strikes on the Houthis after a deal that saw the rebels stopping their attacks on ships in the Red Sea.

Pope visits Monaco to urge its people to reject idolatry of power and wealth fueling wars

By PAOLO SANTALUCIA and NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

MONACO (AP) — Pope Leo XIV urged residents of the principality of Monaco on Saturday to use their wealth and influence for good and reject the "idolatry of power and money" that is fueling wars around the world.

Leo made a one-day trip to the glitzy Mediterranean enclave, becoming the first pope to visit since Pope Paul III came in 1538.

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Prince Albert and Princess Charlene met Leo at the Monaco heliport, just down the coast from the marina that is home to the megayachts of the rich and famous. To celebrate his arrival, a cannon boomed in a ceremonial salute and boats in the marina sounded foghorns that at one point interrupted Leo's remarks.

At the palace, members of the royal family stood in the courtyard to greet Leo, the women dressed in black and with lace head coverings. Charlene wore white — a protocol privilege granted by the Vatican to Catholic royal sovereigns when meeting popes, known in diplomatic terms as "le privilège du blanc."

In his opening greeting from the palace balcony, Leo urged Monaco to use its wealth, influence and "gift of smallness" to do good in the world.

It was important, he said in French, "especially at a historical moment when the display of power and the logic of oppression are harming the world and jeopardizing peace."

A reference to abortion in Monaco

Speaking later in the cathedral, Leo urged Monaco's Catholics to spread their faith "so that the life of every man and woman may be defended and promoted from conception until natural death," he said.

Such terms are used by the Vatican to refer to Catholic teaching opposing abortion and euthanasia.

Monaco is one of the few European countries where Catholicism is the official state religion. Prince Albert recently refused a proposal to legalize abortion, citing the important role Catholicism plays in Monaco's society.

The decision was largely symbolic because abortion is a constitutional right in France, which surrounds the coastal principality of 2.2 square kilometers (about 1 square mile).

But in refusing to allow it in Monaco, Albert joined other European Catholic royals who have taken a similar stand over the years to uphold Catholic doctrine on an increasingly secular continent. When Pope Francis visited Belgium in 2024, he announced he was putting the late King Baudouin on the path to possible sainthood because he abdicated for a day in 1990 rather than approve legislation to legalize abortion.

Pope urges Monaco to reject idolatry of war

A coastal playground for the rich and famous, Monaco is renowned as much for its tax-friendly incentives and Formula 1 Grand Prix as its glamorous royal family. The son of the late American actress Grace Kelly, Albert spoke in perfect, unaccented English when he greeted Leo at the heliport. Leo was heard noting that he landed three minutes late.

Leo's visit was designed to highlight how small states such as Monaco and the Holy See can punch above their weight on the global stage. Leo used his homily at Mass in the Monaco stadium to do just that, urging the faithful to reject the type of idolatry that has enslaved people in cycles of war and injustice.

Today's wars, "stained with blood, are the fruit of the idolatry of power and money," he said. "Let us not grow accustomed to the clamor of weapons and images of war! Peace is not merely a balance of power; it is the work of purified hearts, of those who see others as brothers and sisters to be protected, not enemies to be defeated."

Though small, Monaco has made its mark as a strong campaigner for environmental protection as well as a supporter of initiatives to help Christians in the Middle East. It is a partner in the Aliph Foundation, which works in particular to rebuild and restore churches and other sites of cultural importance that get damaged or destroyed by conflict.

The government has also been a longtime supporter of church projects in Lebanon organized by l'Œuvre d'Orient, a French-based group that supports bishops, priests and religious orders working in 23 countries.

Monaco's population of 38,000 is heavily Catholic and multinational, with only a fifth of the population actually citizens of the principality. On a sunny spring day, many people flocked to the palace grounds to greet Leo, and some lined the streets to wave Vatican and Monaco flags as his open-sided popemobile passed by.

Claudine Fiori, Monaco resident, said it was a privilege and an emotional boost to welcome a pope.

"His Highness invited him and he came and it was a beautiful surprise," Fiori said. "Thanks to the pope for coming here."

Enrico Doja, a Monaco resident of Italian origin, said he appreciated that Leo spoke in French throughout the day.

"This means that he is close to the people," he said. "And nowadays the world is unfortunately run mainly by people who are 'one man show,' and his role is to say 'we have to do things together.'"

UFC brings cage-match bout to the White House, home of a president who favors cage-match politics

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Cage-match fighting is coming to the White House to fete President Donald Trump, a proud proponent of cage-match politics.

In the coming weeks, crews will erect a 6-foot (1.83 meter) wire-mesh fence shaped into an octagon on the lawn, where UFC fighters will use a combination of kickboxing, jiu-jitsu, wrestling and other martial arts in a June 14 mixed martial arts show timed for Trump's 80th birthday and as part of the nation's 250th anniversary.

The celebration of bloody, brute force dovetails with Trump's gleefully combative charisma and extreme ideological masculinity — a brawling, no-holds-barred approach to the highest office in the land.

"I have respect for fighters, you know, when you can take 200 shots to the face and then look forward to the second round," Trump told podcaster Logan Paul as he campaigned for his second term.

Trump was the first sitting president to attend a UFC show, taking in a 2019 fight that was stopped because of a cut over the loser's eye that left blood pouring down the fighter's face.

To the uninitiated, the sport celebrates violence. It is wildly popular with young men.

"A lot of people don't understand fighting and they think fighting is about anger. It's not. If you're angry when you fight, you'll lose," said veteran MMA referee and commentator "Big John" McCarthy.

"Fighting is about technique and style, and understanding how to make your opponent make mistakes while you don't," McCarthy said.

"I totally understand why he likes it," he added of Trump. "Because I do."

Friends with UFC and broadcast executives

It is hard to find a phrase more Trumpian than Ultimate Fighting Championship.

A committed devotee of hyperbole, Trump relishes grand descriptors that can elevate anything to its "ultimate" version. He also proudly fancies himself a fighter: "Fight! Fight! Fight!" became his 2024 campaign mantra, one crystalized after an assassination attempt that summer.

Then there is "championship," another thing close to the heart of a president who constantly professes love for winning and those who do it frequently.

All of that means Trump giving UFC its largest-ever platform "is calculated. He knows what he's doing," said Kyle Kusz, a University of Rhode Island professor who studies the connection between sports and the far right.

Trump "uses UFC to portray himself as a manly sportsman," said Kusz, who said he sees parallels between the sport's style of masculinity and Trump's approach to policy and politics.

The league is planning to issue 85,000 free tickets for the event. Trump said UFC boss Dana White, a longtime friend, will build "a 5,000-seat arena right outside the front door of the White House" and eight large screens in a nearby park for ticket-holders to watch from afar.

The show falls on a Sunday, deviating from UFC's usual Saturday night time slot, and will be carried live on Paramount+, which is controlled by the Ellison family, also close allies of Trump. France even pushed back the Group of Seven summit it is hosting so as not to conflict with Trump's birthday festivities.

Criticism of White House fight card

Trump has boasted that the event will feature "all top guys." But fans online have panned the card for lacking top talent such as former two-division champion Jon Jones, who requested his release from the UFC immediately after being excluded from the White House show. Also absent is MMA icon Conor McGregor, whose first bout since 2021 would have been a seismic moment for the sport. The UFC's White "knows the White House card sucks," said former champion Ronda Rousey, who is mounting her own MMA comeback outside the UFC because she says the promotion would not meet her financial expectations.

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Rousey, who is close to White, says the White House show "fell extremely short of expectations."

While still being finalized, the card features two championship fights. Brazil's Alex Pereira will meet France's Cyril Gane for the interim UFC heavyweight title. Then Spanish-Georgian lightweight champion Ilia Topuria takes on interim champ Justin Gaethje, one of just two Americans who currently hold even a share of the UFC's 11 championship belts.

The White House did not answer questions about criticism of the card or the event's aggressive politics. Instead, communications director Steven Cheung, said, "This will be one of the greatest and most historic sports events in history."

Cheung, a UFC spokesman before joining Trump's 2016 campaign, called Trump's event "a testament to his vision to celebrate America's monumental 250th anniversary."

A UFC spokesperson did not respond to a request for comment.

Trump helped reinforce UFC's mass appeal

Once famously derided as "human cockfighting" by late Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., UFC has been a major sports league in the United States since signing a media-rights deal with ESPN in 2018, said Patrick Wyman, a historian and host of popular podcasts on the subject who is also a former longtime MMA journalist.

Trump, a fixture at heavyweight boxing matches in the 1980s, gave UFC a boost a generation ago by hosting early bouts, including 2001's "Battle on the Boardwalk," at his casino in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Wyman said that even as Trump and White have remained close, UFC has deliberately prioritized building the league's brand over that of its individual fighters. That has kept most stars from achieving crossover appeal.

As a result, Wyman said UFC remains most popular with men in their mid-40s to early 60s — a demographic already inclined to be Trump supporters.

"I think it's a pretty perfect encapsulation of the way that Donald Trump thinks about politics," Wyman said of the White House event, citing its "transactional nature" and "how impossible it is to draw firm lines between business and politics."

In 2014, Trump invested in his own, short-lived MMA league. A decade later, his reelection campaign enhanced his UFC ties, seeking to reach voters who do not usually engage in traditional politics.

Two days after he was convicted on 34 felony counts in a hush money case in June 2024, Trump went to a UFC bout in New Jersey, strolling out into the crowd with White while Kid Rock's "American Bad Ass" blared. Trump's campaign used footage of the raucous ovation to help launch its TikTok account.

Then, after his election victory, Trump triumphantly appeared with House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., and a large political entourage at a UFC fight in New York. He also attended UFC bouts in Newark and Miami last year.

Trump, who has built a large portion of his domestic travel around sporting events, is not unique among presidents using sports to appeal to voters.

Republican George W. Bush zinging a pitch in from Yankee Stadium's mound during the 2001 World Series is remembered as a moment of resilience after the Sept. 11 attacks. Republican Richard Nixon so publicly embraced his football fandom that aides worried it might alienate some voters, said Chris Cillizza, author of "Power Players: Sports, Politics, and the American Presidency."

Such worries are gone today, though, since sports "now tends to self-select by political affiliation," he said.

"In an era where people feel like politicians are mostly weirdo aliens," Cillizza said "sports — playing them, having knowledge about them — represents one of the best ways to prove to voters you are actually a human being."

Zelenskyy visits Gulf Arab states to talk drone defense and seek strategic ties

By VOLODYMYR YURCHUK Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Saturday made unannounced visits to the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, as Ukraine seeks to use its drone expertise to help Gulf Arab states

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blunt Iran's attacks during the war in the Middle East.

Zelenskyy said that Ukraine has already signed 10-year security agreements with Saudi Arabia and Qatar, and expects to shortly finalize a similar agreement with the UAE.

Ukraine has quickly grown into one of the world's leading producers of cutting-edge, battle-tested drone interceptors that are cheap and effective. They are playing a key part in its defense against Russia's full-scale invasion, which began on Feb. 24, 2022.

In return for its aid to Gulf countries, Ukraine is seeking more high-end air-defense missiles that they possess and that Kyiv needs to counter Russia's attacks. On Thursday, Zelenskyy visited Saudi Arabia,, and last week he said that Ukraine is looking into whether it can play a role in restoring security in the Strait of Hormuz.

Zelenskyy tours Gulf Arab states

On Saturday, Zelenskyy and Emirati state media reported on a meeting between the Ukrainian president and his Emirati counterpart, Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, to discuss regional security amid the Iran war.

Zelenskyy later posted on X to say that he had moved on to Doha and met with Qatari leaders, including with the ruling emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, and Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani.

The Ukrainian and Qatari ministers of defense signed cooperation agreements in the defense sector and defense investments, according to the Qatar Ministry of Defense.

"Real security is built on partnership — we value everyone and remain open to supporting all those who are ready to work together for this goal," Zelenskyy wrote alongside a video of himself disembarking a plane in Qatar.

The war in the Middle East erupted on Feb. 28 when the United States and Israel launched joint attacks on Iran. The Islamic Republic retaliated with strikes against Israel and the Gulf Arab States and the blockading of the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial waterway. The war has upended global travel and sent oil prices soaring as its economic fallout extended well beyond the region.

Last week, Zelenskyy revealed that Kyiv is helping five countries — the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and Jordan — counter Tehran's drone strikes on their territory.

"For Ukraine, this is also a matter of principle: terror must not prevail anywhere in the world. Protection must be sufficient everywhere," he said on X following his meeting with the Emirati leader.

He added they had discussed "the security situation in the Emirates, Iranian strikes, and the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, which directly affects the global oil market".

Ukraine's Mideast alliances

Zelenskyy told reporters that his government is seeking to build long-term strategic ties with Middle Eastern countries, including joint production, investment, energy cooperation and the sharing of battlefield experience.

"Simple sales do not interest us," he said at a live briefing held on Zoom on Saturday.

While Ukraine remains short of high-end air defense systems, such as Patriot missiles, Zelenskyy said that Kyiv has developed an "integrated" defense model that effectively protects against Iranian-made Shahed drones.

Tehran sent large numbers of the attack drones to Russia early in the war. Since then, Moscow has modified them to improve their effectiveness, begun domestic production, and repeatedly launched the drones in waves at Ukrainian cities.

Zelenskyy said that Ukraine is offering Gulf Arab partners "combat-tested" expertise, and has already signed 10-year security deals with Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

The agreement with Qatar involves "joint defense industry projects, the establishment of coproduction facilities, and technological partnerships between companies," Zelenskyy said in an X post.

At a media briefing, the Ukrainian leader said that he expects a similar agreement with the UAE to follow shortly.

He also told reporters that Ukraine had received "no signals" from the U.S. about potential diversions of weapons, including those funded by Kyiv's European partners, from Ukraine to the Middle East.

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His comments followed weeks of speculation that the Iran war could detract attention from Ukraine, deplete Western arsenals and force NATO allies to reduce military support for Kyiv.

Russia is already profiting from a surge in global energy prices, brought on by damage to oil and gas infrastructure in the Gulf and Iran's blocking of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital oil choke point.

Zelenskyy on Rubio: 'I have not lied to anyone'

Zelenskyy also pushed back on recent remarks by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who on Friday dismissed as "a lie" the Ukrainian leader's claim that Washington wants Kyiv to hand over territory to Russia before giving it security guarantees.

Zelenskyy said his earlier statements, made in an interview with Reuters, reflected the "general direction" of talks.

"I have not lied to anyone," he said, adding that Rubio may have misconstrued his comments.

Zelenskyy stressed that the U.S. has not directly pressured Kyiv to withdraw troops from the Donbas, Ukraine's industrial heartland long coveted by Moscow.

Russian forces occupy the bulk of the region, but they have not seized a strip of land that is among the most heavily fortified parts of the front line. Kyiv fears that Moscow could use that territory as a launchpad for further aggression.

But Zelenskyy said he was worried by Washington's insistence that Ukraine would only receive guarantees following a comprehensive peace agreement, not a ceasefire deal. Kyiv claims that Russia has refused to end the war unless it can take over all of the Donbas.

Drone attacks in Ukraine and Russia

Russia launched more than 270 drones at Ukraine overnight, killing at least five people, Ukrainian authorities reported on Saturday.

Two people were killed and at least 11 more were wounded in a nighttime Russian drone strike on Odesa, according to the head of the region, Serhii Lysak. Zelenskyy said that the "massive" strike on Odesa involved more than 60 drones.

Russia's overnight strikes also killed two men and wounded two other people in Kryvyi Rih, Zelenskyy's hometown in central Ukraine, after a drone hit an industrial facility, regional head Oleksandr Gandzha said in a Telegram update. He didn't specify what the industrial building was.

One person was killed overnight in the Poltava region, also in central Ukraine, as Russia struck industrial sites there, regional authorities reported on Saturday. Ukrainian state gas company Naftogaz said that a production facility was hit.

In Russia, a child died after a Ukrainian drone hit a private house in Russia's western Yaroslavl region, local Gov. Mikhail Evraev reported early Saturday. According to Evraev's Telegram post, the child's parents were hospitalized with serious injuries after the attack.

Russia's Defense Ministry said on Saturday that 155 Ukrainian drones were shot down during the night over Russia and the annexed Crimean Peninsula.

US lawmakers say they'll visit Taiwan before Trump's summit with China's Xi

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A bipartisan group of four senators has plans to visit Taiwan, Japan and South Korea in the coming days on a trip meant to bolster U.S. alliances seen as important to countering China's dominance in Asia.

Sen. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, announced the trip Saturday. She will be joined by Sens. John Curtis, R-Utah, Thom Tillis, R-N.C., and Jacky Rosen, D-Nev. Their visits to Taipei, Tokyo and Seoul are coming before President Donald Trump's trip to Beijing in May for a rescheduled summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

The lawmakers' stop in Taiwan could draw scrutiny from China, which opposes such relations and sees

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them as a challenge to its claim of sovereignty over the self-governing island. Taiwan relies on American backing for its democracy, but recent moves by Trump, such as discussing a potential weapons sales to Taiwan with Xi, have raised questions about the future direction of U.S. policy.

Analysts in both China and the United States believe Xi, through the leader-level summit, will try to influence Trump to soften the U.S. stance on Taiwan.

"This bipartisan delegation demonstrates Congress' commitment to these alliances and partnerships is unwavering and will endure well beyond any one administration," Shaheen said in a statement.

In a show of reassurance to the Asian allies, the lawmakers plan to meet with political leaders and defense officials on their trip.

"Our alliance with Taiwan is one of the most strategically and morally significant partnerships America has in the Indo-Pacific," Curtis said.

It remains to be seen how Trump's intervention in Venezuela, Iran and elsewhere could influence other powers such as China and Russia. But there is some concern among lawmakers that the Republican president's actions could be seen as giving those countries an opening for their own foreign moves.

The economic relationship with Taiwan has also come under scrutiny from the Trump administration. The U.S. is reliant on Taiwan for its production of computer chips, which contributed to a trade imbalance of nearly \$127 billion during the first 11 months of 2025.

The Trump administration reached a deal with Taiwan in February that removed 99% of its trade barriers.

During another visit by a bipartisan group of U.S. lawmakers last year, they emphasized that the U.S. would continue to partner closely with Taiwan.

Meet the Artemis crew in NASA's first astronaut mission to the moon in more than a half-century

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — The four astronauts making NASA's next lunar leap bear little resemblance to the Apollo era.

The Americans who blazed the trail to the moon more than half a century ago were white men chosen for their military test pilot experience. This first Artemis crew includes a woman, a person of color and a Canadian, products of a more diversified astronaut corps.

None of them were alive during NASA's storied Apollo program that sent 24 astronauts to the moon including 12 moonwalkers. They won't land on the moon this time or even orbit it, but the out-and-back journey will take them thousands of miles deeper into space than even the Apollo astronauts ventured, promising unprecedented views of the lunar far side.

Here's a look at the Artemis astronauts whose mission aims to pave the path for future moon landings: Commander Reid Wiseman

Leading the nearly 10-day mission is a widower who considers solo parenting — not rocketing to the moon — his biggest and most rewarding challenge.

Wiseman, 50, a retired Navy captain from Baltimore, was serving as NASA's chief astronaut when asked three years ago to lead humanity's first lunar trip since 1972. His wife Carroll's death from cancer in 2020 gave him pause.

He'd spent more than five months at the International Space Station in 2014, and his two teenage daughters, especially the older one, had "zero interest" in him launching again.

"We talked about it and I said, 'Look, of all the people on planet Earth right now, there are four people that are in a position to go fly around the moon,'" he said. "I cannot say no to that opportunity."

The next day, homemade moon cupcakes awaited him, along with his daughters' support. The toughest part isn't leaving them — "it's the stress that I'm putting on them," he said.

Open with his daughters about everything, he recently told them where he keeps his will.

Pilot Victor Glover

As one of NASA's few Black astronauts, Glover sees his presence on the mission as "a force for good."

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The 49-year-old Navy captain and former combat pilot from Pomona, California, makes it a habit to listen to Gil Scott-Heron's "Whitey on the Moon" and Marvin Gaye's "Make Me Wanna Holler" from the white-dominated Apollo era.

"I listen to those for perspective," he said. "It captures what we did well, what we did poorly."

The ability for him now to offer hope to others is "an amazing blessing and a privilege." Despite having one spaceflight behind him — an early SpaceX crew run to the International Space Station — he finds himself in new personal territory. His four daughters are in their late teens and early 20s, "and I spend as much time and thought preparing them as NASA does preparing me."

He's hyper-focused on running "our best race so that we can hand the baton off to the next leg" — a 2027 practice docking mission in orbit around Earth between an Orion crew capsule and one or two lunar landers. The all-important moon landing would follow in 2028 with yet another set of astronauts.

Mission specialist Christina Koch

The last time Koch blasted into space, she was gone almost a year, so she's not sweating a quick trip to the moon and back.

The 47-year-old electrical engineer from Jacksonville, North Carolina, holds the record for the longest single spaceflight by a woman — 328 days. She took part in the first all-female spacewalk during her lengthy stay at the space station in 2019.

More than any one individual, "it's about celebrating the fact that we've arrived to this place in history" where women can fly to the moon, she said.

Before she got called up by NASA, Koch spent a year at a South Pole research station. Between that and her space stint, she feels she's "inoculated" most of her family and friends.

"So far, I haven't gotten too many nerves from folks. Maybe my dog, but I've reassured her that it's only 10 days. It's not going to be as long as last time."

Her and her husband's rescue pooch is named Sadie Lou.

Canadian Space Agency's Jeremy Hansen

The Canadian fighter pilot and physicist is making his space debut, stressful enough, but also serving as his country's first emissary to the moon.

"Maybe I'm naive, but I don't feel a lot of personal pressure."

Hansen, 50, grew up on a farm near London, Ontario, before moving to Ingersoll and pursuing a flying career. The Canadian Space Agency selected him as an astronaut in 2009, and he was named to the Artemis crew in 2023.

He realizes only now how much effort it took to send men to the moon during Apollo.

"When I walk out and I look at the moon now, it looks and feels a little bit farther than it used to be," he said. "I just understand in the details how much harder it is than I thought it was watching videos of it."

Dangers still loom — something he's shared with his college-aged son and twin daughters. "The most likely outcome is that we will come back safe. There's a chance we won't, and you will be able to move through life even if that happens," he assured them.

Trump's conflicting messages sow confusion over the Iran war

By STEVEN SLOAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump says the United States is winning the war with Iran even as thousands of additional American troops deploy to the Middle East.

He has pilloried other countries for not helping the U.S., only to say later he does not need their assistance. He has twice delayed deadlines for Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. He has both threatened to "obliterate" Iran's energy plants if the vital waterway remains largely shuttered and said the U.S. was "not affected" by the closure.

At one point this month, Trump said one of his predecessors — who, he strongly suggested, was a Democrat — privately told him he wished he had taken similar action against Iran. Representatives for every living former president quickly denied that such a conversation happened.

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As the war entered its second month on Saturday, Trump's penchant for embellishments, exaggerations and falsehoods is being tested in an environment where the stakes are much higher than an isolated political fight.

A president who has long embraced bluster and salesmanship to shape narratives and focus attention is confronting the unpredictability of war.

Leon Panetta, who served Democratic presidents as defense secretary, CIA director and White House chief of staff, said he has "seen enough wars where truth becomes the first casualty."

"It's not the first administration that has not told the truth about war," he said. "But the president has made it kind of a very standard approach to almost any question to in one way or another kind of lie about what's really happening and basically describe everything as fine and that we're winning the war."

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, said Trump is "the first president of any party in recent history that hasn't self-constrained to live within rhetorical boundaries."

"So of course it creates a great deal of confusion," he said.

The zigs and zags are the point

To his critics, Trump's style is a sign that doesn't have a coherent long-term strategy. But for Trump, the zigs and zags seem like the point, a method that keeps his opponents — and pretty much everyone else — always on their heels.

The approach was clear this week in the hours before he announced the second delay of the deadline for Iran to reopen the strait. Asked what he would do about the deadline, Trump said he did not know and that he had a day before he had to decide.

"In Trump time, a day, you know what it is, that's an eternity," the Republican president said to laughter from members of his Cabinet.

But investors are unimpressed, with U.S. stocks closing out their worst week since the war began. To some on Capitol Hill, the freewheeling is more frustrating than amusing.

Rep. Gregory Meeks of New York, the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, lamented that Trump is "going back and forth and constantly contradicting himself."

"The administration is winging it," he said. "So how can you trust what the president says?"

Republicans were not willing to go that far, but their concern was apparent heading into a two-week break from Washington. Sen. John Kennedy of Louisiana said his constituents "support what the president has done."

"But most of my people are also equally or even more so concerned about cost of living," he said.

Republican Rep. Chip Roy of Texas, who sits on the House Budget Committee and is a member of the conservative House Freedom Caucus, said his constituents were on board with "blowing some crap up." Nonetheless, he expressed reservations about the prospect of ground troops and said the administration has not provided enough details in briefings for lawmakers. Such sessions, he said, only reveal information you "read in the papers."

"Taking out bad guys, taking out conventional (weapons), taking out or at least working to take out nuclear capability, pressing to keep the straits open, all those are good things and I've been supportive and will continue to be supportive," Roy said. "But we've got to have a serious conversation about how long this is going to go, boots on the ground, all those things, press for further briefings and understanding of where it's all headed."

Republicans back Trump but there are risks

While Trump has maintained deep support among Republicans, a poll this week from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research indicates that the president risks frustrating his voters if the U.S. gets involved in the kind of prolonged war in the Middle East that he promised to avoid.

Although 63% of Republicans back airstrikes against Iranian military targets, the survey found, only 20% back deploying American ground troops.

That reflects the political challenges ahead for Trump, who did not prepare the country for such an extensive overseas conflict. If the war drags on or escalates, pressure on Republicans could build before the

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November elections, when their majorities in Congress are at risk. Some in the party have said sending in ground troops would be a red line that Trump should not cross.

The administration also will likely need congressional support for an additional \$200 billion to support the war. That amount of money, which Trump has said would be “nice to have,” even as he said the war was “winding down,” would be a tough vote at any time. But it poses particular risks for budget-conscious Republicans in an election year.

White House spokesperson Anna Kelly said in a statement that Trump is “right to highlight the vast success of Operation Epic Fury.”

“Iran desperately wants to make a deal because of how badly they are being decimated, but the President reserves all options, military or not, at all times,” she said.

There could be some ‘logic’ to Trump’s approach

Rubin, the former Iran and Iraq adviser at the Pentagon, said there could be some “logic” to the president’s ever-evolving rhetorical approach to the war. He said Trump’s initial comments about ongoing negotiations, which Iran denied, could “spread suspicion and fear within the regime circles.”

“Perhaps Donald Trump or those advising him simply want the Iranians to grow so paranoid they refuse to cooperate with each other or perhaps they even turn on each other,” he said. “But then again, there’s always a danger with Donald Trump of assuming that his rhetoric is anything more than shooting from the hip.”

Rep. Adam Smith of Washington state, the top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, said Trump is not going to be able to fully achieve his objectives, including the complete elimination of Iran’s nuclear program, “in the current trajectory.”

And if that is the case, Smith said, the president has the option to rely on his rhetorical skills to simply say the U.S. won — and end the war.

“As I’ve jokingly said, nobody I have ever met or heard of in human history is better at exaggerating his own accomplishments than Donald Trump,” Smith said. “So go knock yourself out and claim this was some great success.”

Once a luxury for moms, doula care is going mainstream

By LAURA UNGAR AP Medical Writer

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Shaquoiya Stewart held one of her 6-month-old twins on her lap while Shanille Bowens held the other. As the women caught up and the babies stared at each other quietly, Bowens came around to the key question she asks all the mothers she works for: “Do you think there’s anything you need more support with?”

Bowens is a doula, a provider of physical and emotional support before, during and after birth — care that used to be seen as a luxury and was available only to those who could afford it. But doulas are becoming mainstream.

The country’s once-reluctant medical establishment is increasingly welcoming the way doulas complement doctors and nurses, and with insurance coverage growing fast, parents from across the economic spectrum can now take advantage.

More than 30 states reimburse doulas through Medicaid or are in the process of implementing such coverage, up from 14 in late 2022, according to the nonprofit National Health Law Program. Private insurers are starting to do the same, with industry giant UnitedHealthcare launching a new benefit this year. Without insurance, costs vary widely but can exceed \$2,000.

The changes are being driven by mounting research that shows these trained, non-medical professionals can significantly improve the health of moms and babies. Expanding doula care, experts say, is a relatively inexpensive way to help reduce maternal mortality, which kills Black mothers like Stewart at a rate more than three times higher than white women.

“Doulas can benefit everybody,” said Sierra Hill, maternal care access coordinator for Minnesota’s health department. “And that’s especially true for our communities that are facing a lot of inequities and health

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disparities.”

Stewart, who has Tennessee Medicaid, said Bowens shepherded her through the jitters of early pregnancy with her twin sons, blood pressure issues during delivery, a C-section and baby blues after birth.

“I felt safe. It didn’t feel like I was just by myself,” said Stewart, a 35-year-old single mother of four. “She was like my homegirl.”

Awareness of doulas has grown

In 2006, 3% of women in the U.S. got care from a doula during labor, according to a survey conducted for the nonprofit Childbirth Connection, now a program of the National Partnership for Women & Families. That figure has doubled or tripled since then, researchers estimate.

When Bowens was pregnant with the first of her six children more than two decades ago, a counselor recommended a doula.

“I’m like, ‘A doula, what is that?’” Bowens recalled.

Bowens was so inspired by the care she received that she ultimately became one herself. In addition to answering moms’ questions and connecting them to community services, Bowens helps her clients navigate the health system and advocates for them.

“Oftentimes, we become friends with our clients – lifelong friends. We help connect them with resources in the community,” said Bowens, founder of Naturally Nurtured Birth Services. “We cater to them ... so it looks different for each client.”

That help pays off, especially for moms from underserved communities.

Research comparing two groups of socially disadvantaged mothers found that those who used doulas were four times less likely to have a baby with low birth weight, two times less likely to have a birth complication and much more likely to start breastfeeding. Another study published last year found that Medicaid recipients with doulas had a 47% lower risk of C-sections and a 29% lower risk of preterm birth and were 46% more likely to go to a postpartum checkup.

That postpartum finding is key, said April Falconi, a scientist at Carelon Research who co-authored the recent study. More than half of maternal deaths occur during the postpartum period, she said. Causes include infection and excessive bleeding.

These sorts of results led Minnesota to become one of the first states to cover doulas through Medicaid in 2014. A decade later, the state expanded coverage, allowing Medicaid recipients 18 sessions with a doula without prior authorization, more than double what was allowed before.

“The return on investment is huge,” the health department’s Hill said.

Rising acceptance of doulas by doctors and nurses

There are no mandatory licenses for doulas, but there are state qualification standards to receive Medicaid payments and many doulas seek certification from private entities.

Naturally Nurtured is involved in a pilot project in Memphis in which doula services are paid for under a Tennessee Medicaid program run by UnitedHealthcare. Services are free to members.

UnitedHealthcare commercial clients with a doula benefit, on the other hand, get reimbursed for the care. Doulas are also included in a limited but growing number of other private plans.

“I see doulas becoming more and more integrated and accepted by all within the health care system,” said Dr. Margaret-Mary Wilson, chief medical officer at UnitedHealth Group.

That extends to doctors and nurses in hospitals.

Dana Morrison, principal director of Doulas of Duluth in Minnesota, said there “was definitely” resistance to doulas by birth teams when she began her work 10 years ago. That was also true nationally. One point of friction was when doulas advocated for something different from what the medical professionals wanted. And since doulas weren’t as integrated into care, they didn’t have the time to build trust with doctors and nurses.

Today, Aspirus St. Luke’s hospital contracts with Doulas of Duluth on a grant-funded program, and patients can receive a scholarship to hire a doula through the organization.

Nurse Mallory Cummings, doula coordinator at Aspirus St. Luke’s, said people on the birth team accept

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and appreciate doulas. "What it really comes down to is everyone's knowledge of what a doula is," she said.

Doulas support moms through trying times

On a recent afternoon, Mary Bey settled into a chair in a homey room at the Memphis doula center, cradling her sleeping infant, Ca'Mya. Bowens sat beside her, taking notes on her laptop.

After discussing breastfeeding and sleep, they talked about how Bey, 39, has been crying a lot since the delivery.

"What brings it on?" Bowens asked.

"I'll be scared and I'll just be so protective and treat her like she's just glass," Bey replied.

Bey is haunted by a past loss. Before giving birth to her daughter last December, she suffered a stillbirth. Bowens helped her through.

"She was there when I had to push him out. She was there after, when I was healing. She came to the house. She brought groceries," said Bey, a single mother of four who was connected with Bowens through the same pilot program as Stewart.

When Bey got pregnant again, she texted Bowens: "Hey, can you still be my doula?"

As the pregnancy progressed, Bowens answered all of Bey's questions and kept her calm. She was there for Bey's scheduled C-section and supported her when doctors monitored Ca'Mya for jaundice and what they briefly thought was a heart problem.

Later, Bey worried her C-section scar might be infected. Bowens advised her to get it checked out. It was.

Without her doula, Bey said she would never have gotten through either pregnancy as well as she did, physically or emotionally.

"She makes you feel like she's family," Bey said. "She was a friend — my best friend — a cousin, an auntie, a sister. All of the above."

Today in History: March 29, 'Terra-cotta Army' discovered in China

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Sunday, March 29, the 88th day of 2026. There are 277 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On March 29, 1974, a group of Chinese farmers digging a well struck fragments of terra-cotta buried underground; archaeologists would ultimately discover terra-cotta sculptures of more than 8,000 soldiers and other figures. The "Terra-cotta Army" would become one of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20th century.

Also on this date:

In 1943, World War II rationing of meat, fats and cheese began, limiting American consumers to store purchases of an average of about two pounds a week for beef, pork, lamb and mutton using a coupon system.

In 1951, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were convicted in New York of conspiracy to commit espionage for the Soviet Union. (They were executed in June 1953.)

In 1961, the 23rd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, allowing residents of Washington, D.C., to vote in presidential elections.

In 1971, Army Lt. William L. Calley Jr. was convicted of murdering 22 Vietnamese civilians in the 1968 My Lai massacre. (Initially sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labor, Calley's sentence would be commuted by President Richard Nixon to three years of house arrest.)

In 1971, a jury in Los Angeles recommended the death penalty for Charles Manson and three female followers for the 1969 Tate-La Bianca murders. (The sentences were commuted to life in prison when the California state Supreme Court struck down the death penalty in 1972.)

In 1973, the last United States combat troops left South Vietnam, ending America's direct military involvement in the Vietnam War.

In 1984, under the cover of early morning darkness, the Baltimore Colts football team left its home city of three decades, sending the team's equipment to Indianapolis in moving trucks without informing

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Baltimore city or Maryland state officials.

In 2004, President George W. Bush welcomed seven former Soviet-bloc nations (Romania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia) into NATO during a White House ceremony.

In 2021, salvage teams using powerful tugboats set free an enormous container ship that was wedged across Egypt's Suez Canal for nearly a week, blocking all ship traffic on the vital waterway and disrupting the global shipping system.

Today's Birthdays: Comedian Eric Idle is 83. Former British Prime Minister John Major is 83. Basketball Hall of Famer Walt Frazier is 81. Football Hall of Famer Earl Campbell is 71. Actor Brendan Gleeson is 71. Actor Christopher Lambert is 69. Actor Annabella Sciorra is 66. Comedian-actor Amy Sedaris is 65. Model Elle Macpherson is 62. Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, a Democrat from Nevada, is 62. Actor Lucy Lawless is 58. Tennis Hall of Famer Jennifer Capriati is 50. Musician-author Michelle Zauner is 37. Actor Alex Neustaedter is 28.