

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 1 of 27

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- 1440 News Headlines](#)
- [3- Balloon Ad](#)
- [4- Weekly Vikings Roundup](#)
- [5- Name Released in Pennington County Fatal Crash](#)
- [6- Secretary of state validates fifth gubernatorial petition and third US Senate petition](#)
- [6- Election staff log long hours to complete petition review without overtime pay](#)
- [7- Gun winners at Airport Fundraiser](#)
- [8- EarthTalk: Polar Bears](#)
- [9- Prairie Doc: There's No Place Like Home – Home Safety Evaluations](#)
- [10- SD SearchLight: Second Black Hills mining proposal selected for federal fast-track permitting](#)
- [11- Weather Pages](#)
- [15- Daily Devotional](#)
- [16- Subscription Form](#)
- [17- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [18- News from the Associated Press](#)

Monday, April 6

NO SCHOOL - Easter break
Senior Menu: Spanish rice with hamburger, broccoli, fruit, Vanilla pudding, whole wheat bread.

Tuesday, April 7

Senior Menu: Bratwurst on bun, tri tater, sauerkraut, fruit.
Track at Ipswich, 2 p.m.
SD Honor Choir Auditions in Huron, 3:30 p.m.
Biogirls, 3:45 p.m., Elementary School
Pickleball, 6 p.m., Elementary Gym
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m., City Hall
United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Ladies Aid LWML, 1:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 8

Senior Menu: Chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes with gravy, catalina blend, fruit, whole wheat bread.
Pickleball, 5:30 p.m., Elementary gym.
Youth Spring Baseball, 6 p.m., GHS Gym
4th Grade Soccer, 6 p.m., Arena.
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; UMYF Eggtravagant Egg Hunt and Brunch, 6 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.



Thursday, April 9

Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, green beans, fruit, garlic bread.
Track at Mobridge, noon
5th Grade Girls Basketball, Elementary Gym, 4 p.m.
Girls Softball at Deuel, Varsity at 4 p.m., JV to follow.
Pickleball, 6 p.m., Elementary Gym.
Groton Lions Club Meeting at 104 N Main, 6 .m.

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

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 2 of 27

1440

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

Second Crew Member Rescued

The US rescued the second of two crew members from a downed F-15E aircraft in Iran, officials revealed yesterday. Both were evacuated with non-life-threatening injuries.

The mission to rescue the second airman involved subterfuge, US officials say. The crewman was in Iran for an estimated 36 hours before he was rescued, with the CIA launching a deception campaign to distract Iranian forces. The US reportedly misled Iranians by suggesting the crew member was found and was being evacuated by ground. Meanwhile, US forces searched for and extracted the airman from a mountain crevice. The campaign evaded what could have been a hostage situation; Tehran had reportedly offered the equivalent of \$60K for the aviators' capture.

The mission comes ahead of today's deadline set by President Donald Trump for Iranians to make a deal or the US would target civilian infrastructure. Trump will hold a news conference today at 1 pm ET.

Lady Bruins Dominate

No. 1 UCLA won the women's college basketball championship last night, entering the finals as underdogs but dominating No. 1 South Carolina, 79-51. The victory caps a 37-1 season for the Lady Bruins, whose only loss came against Texas in late November.

UCLA never trailed in either of its Final Four games, and the win comes a year after it entered the 2025 tournament as the title favorites but lost by 34 points in the semifinals. It's the first NCAA title for the program and comes 15 years into the tenure of coach Cori Close, who was mentored by legendary UCLA men's coach John Wooden for more than a decade.

The men's side wraps up tonight (8:50 pm ET, CBS), with No. 1 Michigan taking on No. 2 Connecticut. The Wolverines enter as 6.5-point favorites.

Landmine Rat Honored

Cambodia unveiled the world's first statue honoring a landmine-detecting rat Friday. Magawa the rat lived to 8 years old and identified more than 100 landmines and other explosives from 2016 to 2021.

There are more than 100 African pouched rats deployed in landmine detection operations across the world. To identify mines, the rats are trained to sniff out explosive compounds like trinitrotoluene, or TNT. (The rats are not heavy enough to trigger detonation.) In Cambodia, up to 6 million landmines remain undiscovered, most planted during three decades of conflict, from the Vietnam War era through Cambodia's civil war. Since 1979, roughly 20,000 people have been killed in Cambodia, and roughly 40,000 wounded as a result of the mines.

Magawa cleared more than 1.5 million square feet of land and was capable of searching a tennis court-sized area within 20 minutes (compared to four days by a human).

Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

"Super Mario Galaxy Movie" earns \$370.7M at the global box office in its opening weekend, best debut since the third installment of "Avatar" in December.

First women's professional hockey game at Madison Square Garden draws 18,006 attendees, setting attendance record for a US women's hockey game.

So Happy wins Santa Anita Derby, prep race for the Kentucky Derby on May 2.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 3 of 27

Science & Technology

Artemis II crew to set record for farthest distance from Earth traveled by humans; will exceed 252,000 miles from the planet as the spacecraft hooks around the far side of the moon today.

White House FY27 budget request includes topline cuts to National Science Foundation (-55%), NASA (-23%), National Institutes of Health (-12%), among others.

Congress sets spending levels, White House request is viewed as a recommendation; see how the process works.

Uranus and Neptune may contain quasi-one-dimensional carbon hydride, study suggests; results shed light on how heat and electricity may flow through the interior of icy planets.

Business & Markets

Average US gas price rises above \$4.10 per gallon as oil markets wait on reported cease fire talks between the US and Iran; see state-by-state breakdown at the pump.

Famed incubator Y Combinator drops AI-powered compliance startup Delve amid accusations it created false security and privacy reports.

Prediction platform Polymarket takes down wagers over the timing of the rescue of downed US airmen in Iran following political pressure.

Politics & World Affairs

White House FY27 budget request includes \$1.5T ask for defense, up roughly 44% from current year. Also includes \$152M to turn Alcatraz Island near San Francisco back into maximum-security prison.

The history of Alcatraz.

Pope Leo XIV delivers first Easter sermon of his pontificate, calls for peace in a message seen as critical of the Iran war.

Serbia and Hungary discover explosives on Russian gas pipeline in Serbia en route to Hungary.



**Mylar & Latex
Balloons**

Perfect for Every Occasion!

-  Birthdays
-  Graduations
-  Baby Showers
-  Anniversaries
-  School Events

Huge Selection • Bright Colors • Custom Styles

Stop in or order online today!

Contact **Tina** at **605-397-7285** or **Paul** at **605-397-7460**.

Delivery available in Groton.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 4 of 27



Last week, we put on our GM hats and broke down the safety position, which stood out as the biggest need on the Vikings' roster. This week, we move to the defensive line, another area that needs serious attention. While safety may be the top priority, everything on defense still starts up front. If the Vikings can't generate pressure or control the line of scrimmage, it won't matter who's playing on the back end. The good news is that there are a few pieces already in place. The bad news is there's still plenty of work to be done.

First, we'll look at the remaining free agents. And I'll warn you now, the free agent cupboard is BARE. Teams understand how valuable defensive linemen are and were quick to sign any potential difference maker (which makes the Vikings' decision to release Jonathan Allen and Javon Hargrave even more baffling).

DJ Reader – The 2016 5th round pick by the Texans will turn 32 before the season starts, so he likely has a year or two of productivity left in the tank. After four years with the Texans, Reader played in Cincinnati for four years, then played the last two seasons in Detroit. He's a true nose tackle, tipping the scales at 330 pounds, which the Vikings could use, considering the only NT they have on the roster is Taki Taimani.

David Onyemata – Another defensive tackle taken in the 2016 draft, this time by the Saints in the 4th round. Onyemata is from Nigeria and didn't begin playing football until he was older, so he was an older rookie and therefore will turn 34 midway through the upcoming season. At 310 pounds, he's not a nose tackle like Reader, but he's stout enough to hold up against the run. He excels in pass rushing from the DT position, averaging 4.6 sacks every 17 games.

Calais Campbell – One of the oldest players in the NFL, Campbell was a 2nd round pick by the Arizona Cardinals way back in 2008 and will turn 40 at the beginning of the upcoming season. Slightly larger than Onyemata at 315 pounds, he can hold his own in the run game, but his calling card is getting after the QB. His 117 career sacks are the 25th most in NFL history, and he averages 7.7 sacks every 17 games. There's a reason his nickname is Mayor of Sacksonville.

Luckily for Minnesota, there are plenty of defensive tackles available in the upcoming draft. Jalen Redmond (305 pounds) will fill one of the DT spots, and there are several similarly sized players vying for another spot, headlined by 2nd-year player Tyron Ingram-Dawkins (290 pounds) and third-year player Levi Drake Rodriguez (307 pounds). So instead of evaluating every single DT prospect in the 2026 draft, we'll focus on three players who could step in right away at nose tackle.

Kayden McDonald – Ohio State

Likely the first defensive tackle taken, the 326-pound behemoth anchored an Ohio State defense that was one of the best in the nation. He was a unanimous All-American and the Big Ten's defensive lineman of the year.

Caleb Banks – Florida

Despite tipping the scales at 327 pounds, Banks is a versatile defensive lineman who played every position for the Gators. He can anchor against double teams, shut down the run, and his explosive first step allows him to generate pressure up the middle. The biggest question surrounding Banks is his health. He dealt with injuries throughout college and then broke his foot at the NFL Combine.

Lee Hunter – Texas Tech

The smallest of the top three nose tackles at 318 pounds, Hunter doesn't have the versatility that McDonald and Banks have. He's a run-stuffing DT. He's not going to apply consistent pressure on the QB. He's not going to line up at every spot on the defensive line. But he will stop the run at a very high level.

Name Released in Pennington County Fatal Crash

What: Single vehicle fatal crash

Where: SD Highway 44, mile marker 92, five miles east of Scenic, SD

When: 6:57 a.m., Thursday, April 2, 2026

Vehicle 1: 2007 Toyota 4Runner

Driver 1: John Waylon Miller, 46-year-old male from Rapid City, SD, fatal injuries

Seat belt Used: No

Pennington County, S.D. – A Rapid City man died Thursday morning in a single-vehicle crash five miles east of Scenic, SD.

Preliminary crash information indicates that John Waylon Miller, the driver of a 2007 Toyota 4Runner, was traveling eastbound on Highway 44 near mile marker 92 when he failed to negotiate a curve and went off the roadway into the north ditch, over corrected across the highway, and entered the south ditch where the vehicle rolled before coming to rest.

Miller sustained fatal injuries from the crash.

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.

Secretary of state validates fifth gubernatorial petition and third US Senate petition

PIERRE, S.D. — Secretary of State Monae L. Johnson has announced that Toby Doeden will be placed on the ballot as a Republican candidate for governor in the June 2, 2026, primary election.

A Republican candidate for governor is required to submit 2,171 valid petition signatures to qualify for the ballot. According to the Secretary of State's Office, a random sample of Doeden's petition signatures found 79.4 percent to be valid. Based on that sample, a total of 3,722 signatures were deemed valid, exceeding the required threshold.

Secretary of State Monae L. Johnson has announced that Justin McNeal will be placed on the ballot as a Republican candidate for U.S. Senate at the Primary Election held on June 2, 2026.

A Republican candidate for U.S. Senate requires 2,171 valid signatures to appear on the ballot. As outlined in SDCL § 12-1-36, the Secretary of State's office conducted a random sample of the petition signatures and found 85.06 percent to be valid. Based on the results of the random sample, 3,017 signatures were deemed valid.

State law allows for challenges to petition validations. Any interested party must file an original, signed affidavit outlining specific deficiencies within five business days of validation. The deadline to file a challenge for Doeden or Johnson is April 10, 2026, at 5 p.m. (CT).

Doeden joins an already growing field of gubernatorial candidates. On the Republican side, Dusty Johnson, Jon Hansen and incumbent Larry Rhoden have also filed for governor. Dan Ahlers is the lone Democratic candidate currently validated for the race.

Other statewide and federal races are also taking shape. For U.S. Senate, Republicans Mike Rounds (incumbent) and Justin McNeal and Democrat Julian Beaudion have qualified for the ballot. In the U.S. House race, Republican Marty Jackley and Democrat Nicole "Nikki" Gronli are listed as candidates.

At the legislative level, filings continue across the state. In District 1, incumbent Republican Michael H. Rohl has filed for State Senate. In District 3, Republicans Carl Perry (incumbent) and Katherine "Katie" Washnok have also submitted candidacy filings.

The 2026 primary election is scheduled for June 2.

Election staff log long hours to complete petition review without overtime pay

Christine Lehrkamp, director of the Division of Elections in the Office of the Secretary of State, said eight staff members — including the Secretary of State — have been working on and off since Friday, logging more than 95 hours combined.

Lehrkamp noted that the time has been volunteered, as salaried state employees do not receive overtime pay. She added that in her 10 years with the office, election staff have never been paid overtime for the additional hours worked each year.

"However, we do it because the job must be done," Lehrkamp said. "We are committed to the election process and to supporting the Secretary's commitment to providing great customer service to the citizens of South Dakota."

She added that several staff members plan to continue working today to complete the final set of petitions.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 7 of 27

Groton Airport

★ 25 GUN RAFFLE WINNERS ★

Ruger LCP Max .380 Auto — Brent Olson
Ruger 10/22 Wood .22LR — Jeff Koenig
Henry H001 Lever Action .22LR — Mark Abeln
Benelli Nova 3 Synthetic 12ga — Isaac Hoelt
Winchester SXP Synthetic 3" 12ga — Chris Erdmann
Ruger American G2 Ranch 5.56 — Brian Bahr
Smith & Wesson M&P15-22 Sport .22LR — Kris Taylor
Glock 43X MOS 9mm — April Abeln
Winchester SXP Waterfowl 3.5" 12ga — Tomelyn Taylor
Ruger American G2 6.5 Creedmoor — Greg Bonn
Henry H004 Golden Boy .22LR — Levi VanderVorst
Tikka T1x Roughtech .17HMR — Brady Schilder
Smith & Wesson M&P FPC 10mm — Barry Marcuson
Ruger Harrier 5.56 — Phil Holcomb
Ruger 10/22 Carbon Fiber .22LR — Troy Zoellner
Glock 19 Gen6 9mm — Frank Gould
Benelli Nova 3 Camo 12ga — Justin Randall
Tikka T3x Lite 7mm PRC — Logan Grubb
Sig Sauer P365X Macro 9mm — Jennifer Koenig
Ruger Security-9 9mm — Wally Albrecht
Ruger American G2 Predator .204 — Shelly Fredrickson
Winchester SXP Upland 3" 20ga — Grant Rix
Taurus Judge Stainless 3" Magnum — Eric Odenbach
Ruger Precision Rimfire .17HMR — Jed Bertsch
Ruger 57 Pistol 5.7x28 — Jon Cutler
Single Raffle Gun Winner: Jennifer Bender
Proof Elevation 6.5 PRC Leupold VX-6HD Gen2 3-18x50



Thank You for Your Support of the Groton Airport!

EARTHTALK

Polar Bears Still Under Water In The Thawing Arctic by Saanvi Doshi

Dear EarthTalk: Are polar bears still in decline due to global warming? – Patty Finch, Bowie, MD

Polar bears are a big part of the Arctic ecosystem. However, they are grappling with huge changes to their homes due to the effects of climate change. The bears are now listed as “vulnerable” by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). This puts them at a high risk of being endangered, which means they are at significant risk of extinction. The global polar bear population is estimated to be around 26,000. Some subpopulations are stable, while others are declining as a result of habitat fragmentation.

Greenhouse gas emissions have driven worldwide temperatures to an all-time high, causing Arctic Sea ice to melt. This is a crisis as polar bears rely on ice for all parts of their routine. Thus, polar bears are losing their habitats. Melting ice also affects the bears’ ability to hunt, since ice serves as a hunting platform. This affects not only adult bears and their survival, but also the cubs. According to Dr. Steven Amstrup, Chief Scientist Emeritus at Polar Bears International, “the longer the sea ice is gone from the productive zone, the tougher it is on the bears.”

Different polar bear populations have been affected in different ways. To wit, the populations in the Western Hudson Bay and Southern Beaufort Sea have faced the greatest decline. However, populations in the Barents Sea and Gulf of Boothia are likely to be stable at the moment. It’s important to note that many other regions are data deficient, causing a gap in statistics and information availability. In the late Dr. Ian Sterling’s book, *Polar Bears: The Natural History of a Threatened Species*, he asserts that “it is vital that all humans and their respective governments...help reduce greenhouse gas emissions...to ensure that both sea ice and polar bears persist for our children...”

Challenges in addressing these issues persist. International policy responses are slow, and industrial development continues to encroach on polar bears’ habitat and territory. Also, since the polar bear population is dispersed across 19 subregions, it’s hard to effectively coordinate actions between regions.

That being said, progress has still been made. The 1973 Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears brought together the five nations with the highest polar bear populations (Canada, Greenland, Norway, Russia and the U.S.), all who recognize that polar bears need effective protection. Furthermore, organizations like Polar Bears International and the World Wildlife Fund promote conservation, research, and advocacy. Individuals can support polar bear populations by supporting organizations, educating themselves, and being involved in advocacy. By saving these animals, we commit to taking action on climate change, both for humanity and the world.



Polar bears are struggling more than ever as the sea ice they depend on melts away all around them as the world warms. Credit: Pexels.com.

There's No Place Like Home – Home Safety Evaluations

In my role as a hospitalist, I am always happy when a patient is healthy enough to be discharged. A resounding majority of people want to go back to their home after they leave the hospital. What we do not want is an unsafe environment leading to repeat injuries resulting in a hospital readmission.

At discharge we can have members of the Home Health team perform a "Home Safety Evaluation". Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists and sometimes Speech Therapists will evaluate a person's home for safety concerns and ensure it is set up optimally for best function. The team looks at areas where injuries typically occur. This could include the instillation of grab bars in the bathroom or having a shower chair. Paying attention to slipping or falling hazards – such as throw rugs or loose stair railings. Good lighting, especially on stairs and in hallways, can help prevent tripping and falling.

Before hospital discharge Physical Therapists will evaluate how well a person can walk including their balance. If there are steps in the home, they will ensure the ability to navigate stairs is evaluated. They perform tests which can help predict who is at a higher risk for falling. The proverb may be, pride goeth before a fall, but a walker or cane could help prevent that. Unfortunately, too often pride is the reason that the walker or cane is not used in the first place. Using someone else's old walker may be a bargain, but proper walker and cane height is important. A used device may be more dangerous if not adjusted properly and therapists can help confirm they are at the correct height.

Occupational Therapists evaluate a person's ability to perform "Activities of Daily Living". These include being able to feed, dress or bathe themselves, and using the bathroom. They have lots of assistive devices, tricks and tips to assist people if arthritis, injuries, or recent surgery prevents the person from moving like normal.

Speech Therapists are asked at times to assess a person's cognition and "safety awareness". They evaluate and determine if this person can the person recognize an emergency and get to safety or call for help. With dementia, the part of the brain responsible for logic and good decision making is no longer working. Dementia patients often make impulsive mistakes such as walking into traffic or forgetting to turn the stove off after cooking.

There is no place like home, but it needs to be a safe home. With a few tips and modifications, your home can be a safer place to live thereby keeping you there longer. We want you to "Stay healthy in there."

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



Jill Kruse, DO



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Second Black Hills mining proposal selected for federal fast-track permitting **BY: MAKENZIE HUBER**

Federal officials have selected a second Black Hills mining proposal for an expedited permitting process. The Bear Lodge Rare Earth Mining Project is on the Wyoming side of the Black Hills, and it's expected to produce rare earth elements critical to alloy and magnet production.

It will be included in FAST-41, a federal process meant to improve coordination among permitting agencies and hold them accountable to deadlines. The 25-person federal Permitting Council says it can shave 18 months off a project's review time.

The project has been stalled for several years by permitting, market saturation from China and challenges raising capital, according to reporting from the Cowboy State Daily. China processes a majority of the world's rare earth elements.

Wyoming Republican U.S. Sen. Cynthia Lummis said the proposed mine will encourage American mineral independence.

"The Bear Lodge Project in northeastern Wyoming is on track to become an important domestic source of critical elements like neodymium and praseodymium, which our defense systems and high-tech manufacturers depend on," Lummis said in a news release.

Rare earth elements have multiple uses, ranging from batteries and lasers to radiation shielding for nuclear reactions. A specific element identified for the Bear Lodge project would be used to make magnets for electric vehicle motors, wind turbines and other applications.

The first fast-tracked Black Hills project — the long-lingering Dewey-Burdock uranium mining proposal in southwestern South Dakota — remains in progress on multiple permitting items, according to the federal infrastructure permitting dashboard.

The Dewey-Burdock project is named for rural locations near Edgemont along the southwestern edge of the Black Hills. It has been in the works for nearly two decades. It requires numerous federal, state and local permits, and has been mired in administrative and court appeals for years. The Black Hills Clean Water Alliance, NDN Collective and Oglala Sioux Tribe are among the project's opponents.

If the Dewey-Burdock permits are approved at the federal level, the state can begin its own permitting process. A spokeswoman with the company leading the project said she hopes it will begin development within the next couple of years.

The Bear Lodge Rare Earth project is proposed by Rare Element Resources, which would operate the mining and processing arms of the project. The company completed construction of a \$60 million rare earth processing and demonstration plant in Upton, Wyoming, late last year.

Rare Element Resources did not respond to requests for comment from South Dakota Searchlight.

The FAST-41 process was created by Title 41 of the "Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act," signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2015. It originally focused on transportation infrastructure. It was expanded to mining projects during the final days of Donald Trump's first presidential administration in 2021.

Trump signed an executive order last year directing federal officials to accelerate domestic critical mineral production, including copper, zinc, titanium and uranium. His administration is increasingly using FAST-41 to carry out the order.

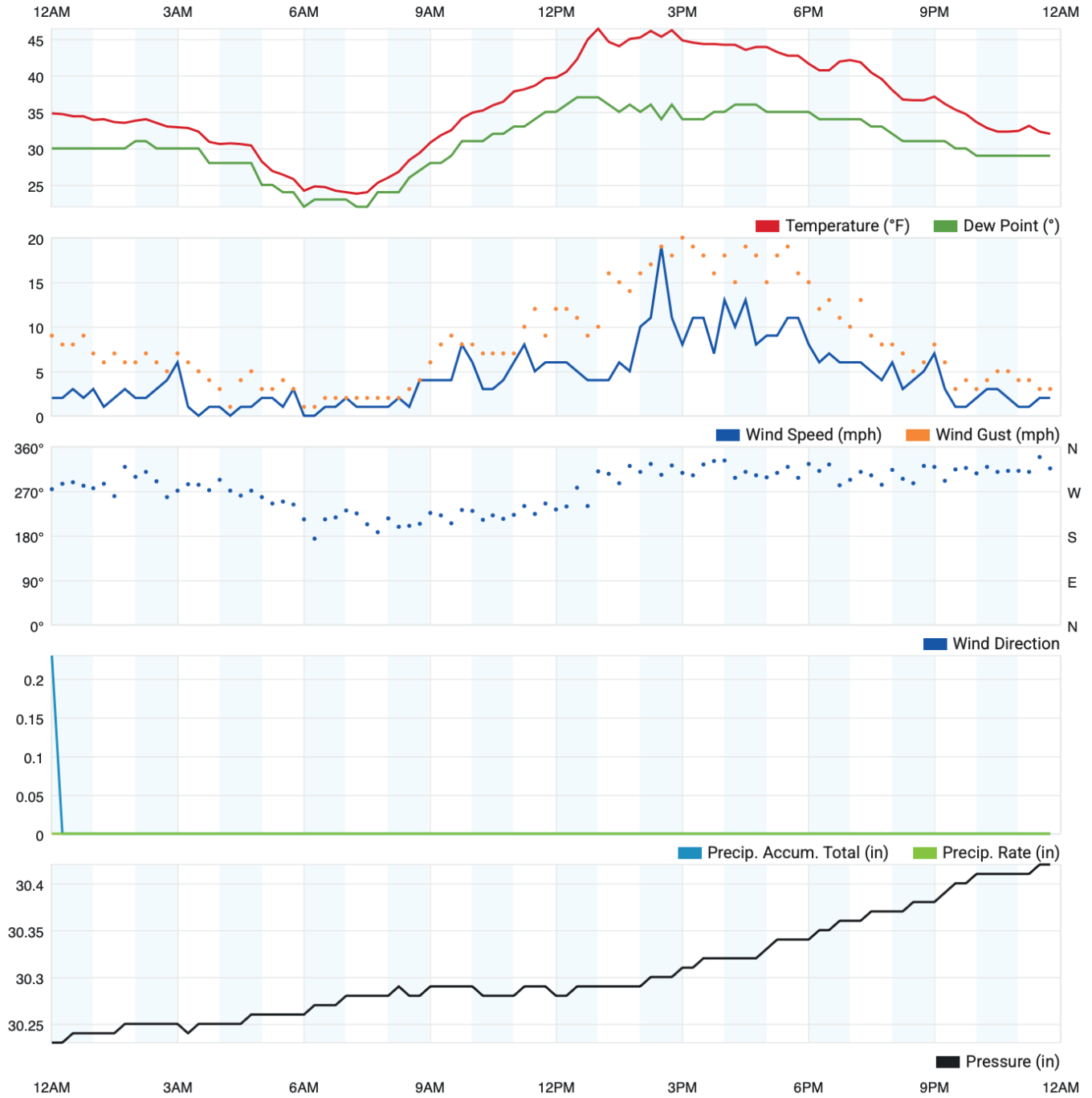
Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan who regularly reports on the intersection of politics and policy with health, education, social services and Indigenous affairs. Her work with South Dakota Searchlight earned her the title of South Dakota's Outstanding Young Journalist in 2024, and she was a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

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 11 of 27

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

April 5, 2026



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 12 of 27

Today



High: 31 °F

Mostly Sunny

Tonight



Low: 17 °F

Partly Cloudy

Tuesday



High: 39 °F

Partly Sunny
then Mostly
Cloudy and
Breezy

Tuesday Night



Low: 32 °F

Breezy.
Mostly Cloudy
then Chance
Rain

Wednesday



High: 51 °F

Chance Rain
and Breezy



Work Week Outlook

Precipitation Chances Through the Week

Monday



Highs: 26-39
Lows: 14-23

30-40% chance
light snow in
central SD

Tuesday



Highs: 35-50
Lows: 30-37

30-60% chance
Tuesday night

Wednesday



Highs: 44-56
Lows: 24-31

30-45% chance
morning rain

Thursday



Highs: 40-51
Lows: 24-30

Friday



Highs: 48-58
Lows: 36-40

15-30% chance
light rain/snow
mix south of
Hwy 12



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

There are chances for precipitation almost every day of the week. Except for this morning, most of it will fall as rain, though some snow may mix in early Friday. Wind gusts of 25 to 40 mph are expected Tuesday and Wednesday. Temperatures will remain near to below normal through the week with highs today 20 degrees below average.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 13 of 27

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 46 °F at 12:57 PM

Low Temp: 24 °F at 7:17 AM

Wind: 21 mph at 3:04 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 85 in 1991

Record Low: 0 in 2023

Average High: 53

Average Low: 28

Average Precip in April.: 0.26

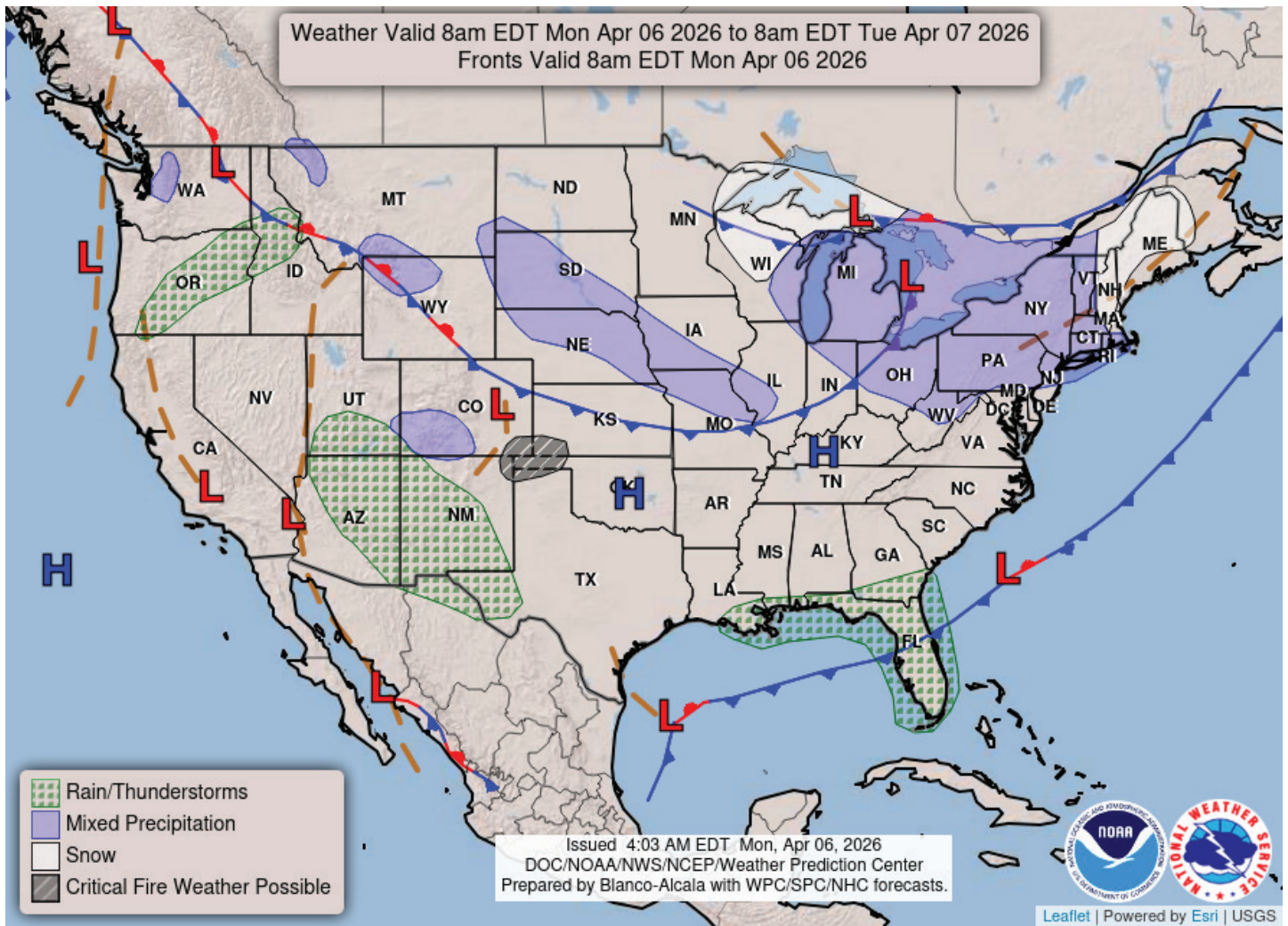
Precip to date in April.: 0.75

Average Precip to date: 2.32

Precip Year to Date: 2.37

Sunset Tonight: 8:06 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:01 am



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 14 of 27

Today in Weather History

April 6-7th, 1959: Beginning on the 6th and continuing into the 7th, dust storms impacted much of the state of South Dakota. The preceding drought period had left little moisture in the soil, so the fall-plowed fields in exposed locations eroded severely. Strong winds on the 6th and 7th lifted the loose soil, creating areas of blowing dust. In the localities, visibility was less than a quarter mile for short periods. Some observers stated that it was the worst dust event since the 1930s.

April 6th, 2006: Severe thunderstorms the morning of the 6th produced large hail up to 1.75 inches in diameter near Miller in Hand County. Later, heavy rains of 3 to 6 inches fell, causing flash flooding across Spink, Clark, and Day counties. Many county and township roads were flooded with several damaged or thoroughly washed out. Areas around Frankfort, Doland, Turton, Conde, Crandall, Raymond, Butler, and Bristol were most affected. Many roads were closed. Also, several basements were flooded, and sewers were backed up.

April 6th, 2008: An area of low pressure moving across South Dakota spread 6 to 15 inches of heavy snow across much of central, northcentral, and northeast South Dakota. Also, strong winds gusting to 25 to 40 mph caused some blowing and drifting snow. Many activities were canceled, and roads became treacherous. Many vehicles went into the ditch, and several accidents also occurred. Snowfall amounts included 6 inches at Mission Ridge, Isabel, Mellette, and Britton, 7 inches at Faulkton, Andover, Columbia, Timber Lake, and Eureka, 8 inches at Bath, Selby, Mobridge, and Leola, 9 inches at Hosmer, 10 inches at Ipswich, 11 inches at Mound City, and 6 miles east of Hayes. Locations with a foot or more of snow included 12 inches at Roscoe and Elm Lake, 13 inches at Eagle Butte, Onaka, 23 miles north of Highmore, and 15 inches at Bowdle.

1936 — A tornado outbreak in the Deep South resulted in a total of 446 deaths and eighteen million dollars damage. It was a "Tale of Two Cities". During the evening of the 5th a tornado hit Tupelo MS killing 216 persons, injuring 700 others, and causing three million dollars damage. The next morning the paths of two tornadoes met about 8:30 AM and cut a swath four blocks wide through Gainesville GA killing 203 persons, injuring 934, and causing thirteen million dollars damage. Eight to ten feet of debris filled the streets following the storm. At least 70 persons died in the Cooper Pants Factory, the greatest tornado toll of record for a single building. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1983 — The temperature at Denver, CO, dipped to a record cold seven degrees above zero. (The Weather Channel)

1987 — Rain and melting snow caused flooding from New England to Ohio. Flooding in the Merrimack Valley of Massachusetts was the worst in fifty years, causing forty-two million dollars damage. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 — A powerful storm produced wind gusts to 75 mph around Chicago, IL, and wind gusts to 92 mph at Goshen IN. The high winds created twenty-five foot waves on Lake Michigan. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 — Unseasonably hot weather prevailed in California. Afternoon highs of 91 degrees in Downtown San Francisco, 93 degrees at San Jose, 98 degrees at San Diego, 103 degrees at Santa Maria, 104 degrees at Riverside, and 106 degrees in Downtown Los Angeles established records for the month of April. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 — Snow developed in the northeastern U.S. for the second time in the month. In Virginia, a heavy wet snow blanketed northern and central sections of the Shenandoah Valley, and eastern foothills, with up to 12 inches reported around Harrisonburg. Heavy snow also blanketed the high elevations of West Virginia, with 10 inches reported at Snowshoe. An inch of snow at Syracuse NY raised their total for the winter season to a record-tying 161.3 inches. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2005 — Thunderstorms erupted and produced severe weather including 32 reports of tornadoes, most of which touched down in Mississippi and Louisiana. Between 20 and 25 homes were destroyed and 7 people were injured. Mississippi governor Haley Barbour declared a state of emergency (CNN).

How to Handle Pride

Pride finds ways to serve self, but humility chooses to trust God and wait for His timing.

1 Samuel 24:8-12: 8 Now afterward David arose and went out of the cave and called after Saul, saying, "My lord the king!" And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground and prostrated himself.

9 David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of men, saying, 'Behold, David seeks to harm you'?"

10 "Behold, this day your eyes have seen that the LORD had given you today into my hand in the cave, and some said to kill you, but my eye had pity on you; and I said, 'I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD'S anointed.'

11 "Now, my father, see! Indeed, see the edge of your robe in my hand! For in that I cut off the edge of your robe and did not kill you, know and perceive that there is no evil or rebellion in my hands, and I have not sinned against you, though you are lying in wait for my life to take it.

12 "May the LORD judge between you and me, and may the LORD avenge me on you; but my hand shall not be against you.

Pride causes us to believe that we can manage life on our own. The first two kings of Israel—Saul and David—illustrate different approaches to handling pride.

Saul's high opinion of himself resulted in decisions contrary to God's commands. For example, having defeated the Amalekites, the king reasoned that he should take some spoils of war, even though God had said to destroy all the enemy's belongings—including animals (1 Samuel 15:3). When confronted by Samuel, Saul replied that he'd spared the animals so he could "sacrifice [them] to the Lord" (1 Samuel 15:15). God saw through his words to a heart of pride. When self-centeredness controls our thinking, we'll seek ways around divine commands in order to serve ourselves. If caught, we may try to justify our disobedience, just as Saul did.

David—Israel's second king, chosen while Saul was still on the throne—didn't try to initiate his own reign. Instead, he waited for God's timing. That meant enduring Saul's jealous rages and murder attempts without retaliating. In fact, even when he had the opportunity, David refused to seize the throne; he didn't allow pride to dominate his thinking.

Is there any self-exaltation in your life? If so, spend some time with the Lord today and ask Him to help you grow in humility.

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

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 16 of 27

The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition Subscription Form

- All prices listed include 6.2% Sales Tax
- Black & White \$52.00/year
 - Colored \$80.00/year
 - Colored \$49.00/6 months
 - E-Weekly* \$35.00/year

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

Name: _____
Mailing Address: _____
City _____
State, Zip Code _____
E-mail _____
Phone Number _____

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent
P.O. Box 34
Groton, SD 57445-0034
or scan and email to paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Groton Daily Independent www.397news.com Subscription Form

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

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

Name: _____
Mailing Address: _____
City _____
State, Zip Code _____
Phone Number _____

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

E-mail _____
Password _____

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

paypal.me/paperpaul

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

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 17 of 27



WINNING NUMBERS

MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.04.26

20 30 31 38 49 5

TOP PRIZE:

\$1,000,000/year

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 44 Mins 30 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.03.26

31 45 62 63 68 15

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$100,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.04.26

6 31 35 36 40 10

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$21,100,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.04.26

6 15 23 25 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$43,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.04.26

20 38 45 58 63 5

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.04.26

3 6 13 41 65 1

Power Play: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$231,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the **AP** Associated Press

A Russian attack kills 3 in Odesa while Ukraine targets Russian oil infrastructure, officials say

By DEREK GATOPOULOS Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — A Russian drone attack on Ukraine's southern port city of Odesa killed two women and a toddler, authorities said Monday, while Ukrainian long-range drones targeted Russia's key Black Sea port for oil exports.

The nighttime attack on Odesa heavily damaged an apartment block, killing the women and a 2-year-old child, officials said. Rescuers working under floodlights pulled four people from the rubble.

Eleven people were hospitalized, including a pregnant woman and two children — the youngest less than a year old, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a post on X.

Russia has pounded civilian areas of Ukraine since it invaded its neighbor just over four years ago, killing more than 15,000 people, according to the United Nations.

It has also taken aim at Ukraine's power grid, and the Russia overnight barrages also hit energy infrastructure in the Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv and Dnipro regions, Zelenskyy said.

More than 300,000 households were without electricity in the northern Chernihiv region after distribution facilities were damaged in attacks, according to the regional power utility.

Over the past week, Russia has launched at Ukraine more than 2,800 attack drones, nearly 1,350 powerful glide bombs and more than 40 missiles of various types, according to Zelenskyy.

Zelenskyy expressed concern in a weekend interview with The Associated Press that the Iran war is draining stockpiles of weapons that Ukraine needs to defend itself, especially American-made Patriot air defense systems that can stop missiles.

Zelenskyy said Monday that the country's partners "need to strengthen air defense together so that the interception rate of drones and missiles continues to increase."

With U.S.-led peace efforts stalled, Zelenskyy added: "Russia has no intention of stopping" its invasion.

Ukraine has fought back by developing its own long-range drones, which now reach targets some 1,500 kilometers (900 miles) inside Russia.

Ukraine has used them recently to hammer Russian oil facilities as Moscow looks to boost its exports after the Trump administration gave it a temporary waiver from sanctions to ease supply constraints. Kyiv officials complain that Russia will use the additional revenue on new weapons to hit Ukraine harder.

Russia's Defense Ministry said that air defenses downed 50 Ukrainian drones overnight.

Krasnodar Gov. Veniamin Kondratyev said that eight people, including two children, were injured in a series of Ukrainian drone attacks on Novorossiisk, one of Russia's largest Black Sea ports. The attack damaged six apartment buildings and two private houses, he said.

Unconfirmed media reports said the drones targeted the Sheskhari oil terminal at the Black Sea port.

Last week, Ukraine's drones struck oil facilities in the Gulf of Finland, in northwest Russia.

Trump issues an expletive-filled threat against Iran as details of US aviator's rescue emerge

By MATTHEW LEE, BASSEM MROUE, KONSTANTIN TOROPIN and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump on Sunday made expletive-filled threats against Iran and its infrastructure if it doesn't open the Strait of Hormuz by his Tuesday deadline, after American forces rescued a wounded aviator whose Iran-downed plane fell behind enemy lines.

A defiant Iran struck infrastructure targets in neighboring Gulf Arab countries and threatened to restrict another heavily used waterway, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait off the Arabian Peninsula.

Trump on social media vowed to hit Iran's power plants and bridges and said the country would be "living

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 19 of 27

in Hell" if the Strait of Hormuz, crucial for global trade, isn't opened. He ended with "Praise be to Allah."

Trump has issued such deadlines before but extended them when mediators have claimed progress toward ending the war, which has killed thousands, shaken global markets and spiked fuel prices in just over five weeks.

"It seems Trump has become a phenomenon that neither Iranians nor Americans are able to fully analyze," Iranian Culture Minister Sayed Reza Salihi-Amiri told visiting Associated Press journalists in an interview in Tehran, adding that the U.S. president "constantly shifts between contradictory positions."

Both sides have threatened and hit civilian targets like oil fields and desalination plants that provide drinking water. Iran's U.N. mission called Trump's threat "clear evidence of intent to commit war crime."

Iran's joint military command warned of stepped-up attacks on regional oil and civilian infrastructure if the U.S. and Israel attack such targets there, according to state television.

The laws of armed conflict allow attacks on civilian infrastructure only if the military advantage outweighs the civilian harm, legal scholars say. It's considered a high bar to clear, and causing excessive suffering to civilians can constitute a war crime.

The US describes a dramatic rescue

An intense search followed Friday's crash of the F-15E Strike Eagle, while Iran promised a reward for the "enemy pilot." It was the first known American aircraft to crash in Iranian territory since the U.S. and Israel launched the war on Feb. 28.

Trump said that the service member was "seriously wounded and really brave" and rescued from "deep inside the mountains" in an operation involving dozens of armed aircraft. He said a second crew member was rescued in "broad daylight" within hours of the crash.

A senior U.S. administration official said that before locating the second aviator, the CIA spread word inside Iran that U.S. forces had found him and were moving him out, creating confusion for Iranians. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss details not yet made public.

Iran also shot down another U.S. military plane Friday, demonstrating the perils of the bombing campaign and the ability of Iran's degraded military to hit back. Neither the status of the A-10 attack aircraft's crew nor where it crashed is known.

On Sunday, Iran's state television aired a video showing what it claimed were parts of U.S. aircraft — a transport plane and two helicopters — shot down by Iranian forces during the rescue operation.

However, a regional intelligence official briefed on the mission told the AP that the U.S. military blew up two transport planes because of a technical malfunction and brought in additional aircraft to complete the rescue. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the covert mission.

Iran's joint military command later said the U.S. bombarded its own aircraft to "prevent embarrassment for President Trump."

Two Black Hawk helicopters were hit but navigated to safe airspace, according to a person familiar with the situation who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive information.

Diplomatic efforts continue

Trump's deadline centers on alarm over Iran's grip on the Strait of Hormuz, critical for global shipments of oil and gas from the Persian Gulf as well as humanitarian supplies. Some ships have paid Iran for passage.

An Iranian presidential spokesperson, Seyyed Mohammad Mehdi Tabatabaei, said on social media that the strait can reopen only if some transit revenues compensate Iran for war damages.

A top Iranian adviser, Ali Akbar Velayati, warned on social media that Tehran also could disrupt trade on the Bab el-Mandeb, a key chokepoint to and from the Red Sea.

Diplomatic efforts continued. Oman's Foreign Ministry said that deputy foreign ministers and experts from Iran and Oman met to discuss proposals to ensure "smooth transit" through the strait.

Egypt said that Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty had spoken with U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, and with Turkish and Pakistani counterparts. Russia said that Araghchi also spoke with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Bahrain urged the U.N. Security Council to act on its draft proposal with language authorizing defensive action to ensure safe passage through the strait.

Airstrikes hit Iran

An airstrike early Monday struck a residential building near Eslamshar, southwest of Tehran, killing at least 13 people, the semiofficial Fars news agency and Nour News reported.

Airstrikes also damaged buildings at the Sharif University of Technology in Tehran as well as a natural gas distribution site next to the campus, Iranian media reported. It wasn't immediately clear what was targeted at the university campus, which has switched to online classes because of the war.

Elsewhere in Iran, an airstrike killed at least five people in a residential area of Qom, the state-run IRAN daily newspaper said in an online message. Qom is a Shiite seminary city just south of Tehran.

It wasn't clear why the buildings were struck. Neither Israel nor the United States claimed the strikes early Monday

In the United Arab Emirates, authorities said one Nepali and three Pakistanis were hurt in fires caused by debris from the interception of an Iranian projectile at Khor Fakkan port, and interception debris caused fires at a petrochemical plant in Ruwais, halting operations.

In Kuwait, Iranian drone attacks caused significant damage to power plants and a petrochemical plant. They also put a water desalination station out of service, according to the Ministry of Electricity.

In Bahrain, a drone attack caused a fire at a national oil company storage facility and a state-run petrochemical plant, the kingdom's official news agency said.

In Israel, rescue authorities searched for three people in the northern city of Haifa after an apartment building was hit. It wasn't immediately clear what struck it.

More than 1,900 people have been killed in Iran since the war began, but its government has not updated the toll for days.

In Lebanon, whose health ministry said an Israeli strike without warning killed four people in Beirut, more than 1,400 people have been killed and more than 1 million people have been displaced. Eleven Israeli soldiers have died there while targeting Iranian-backed Hezbollah militants.

In Gulf Arab states and the occupied West Bank, more than two dozen people have died, while 19 have been reported dead in Israel and 13 U.S. service members have been killed.

A mountain hideout and aircraft under fire: US carries out daring rescue of service member in Iran

By SEUNG MIN KIM, MATTHEW LEE and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

The United States pulled off a daring rescue of two aviators whose fighter jet was shot down by Iran, plucking the pilot from behind enemy lines before setting off a complicated extraction of the second service member who hid deep in the mountains as Tehran called for Iranians to help capture him.

The CIA looked to throw off Iran's government before the crew member was found, launching a deception campaign to spread word inside the Islamic Republic that the U.S. had already located him.

Even as President Donald Trump and other U.S. officials described an almost cinematic mission, rescuers faced major obstacles, including two Black Hawk helicopters coming under fire and problems with two transport planes that forced the U.S. military to blow them up.

"This is the first time in military memory that two U.S. Pilots have been rescued, separately, deep in Enemy Territory," Trump wrote early Sunday on his Truth Social platform. "WE WILL NEVER LEAVE AN AMERICAN WARFIGHTER BEHIND!"

US officials stayed silent as the operation played out

In a pair of social media posts, Trump said the operation over the weekend required the U.S. to remain completely silent to avoid jeopardizing the effort, even as the president and top members of his administration continuously monitored the airman's location.

The White House and the Pentagon refused to publicly discuss details about the downed fighter jet for well over 24 hours after the initial crash, particularly about the first crew member rescued from the F-15E Strike Eagle — an effort that Trump later said took seven hours in broad daylight over Iran.

The United States and Iran's government then were both racing to find the second crew member, a

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 21 of 27

weapons systems officer, whose location neither side knew.

The CIA spread word in Iran that the U.S. had found him and were moving him by ground to get him out of the country, according to a senior Trump administration official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details not yet made public.

The confusion allowed the CIA time to uncover the location of the service member, who was hiding in a mountain crevice, the official said.

He had climbed 7,000 feet (2,133 meters) despite being injured, said Sen. Dave McCormick, a Pennsylvania Republican who told "Fox News Sunday" that he was briefed by a senior administration official involved in the operation.

The intelligence agency sent the aviator's coordinates to the Pentagon and the White House, where Trump ordered a rescue operation.

Iran urged the public to look for the 'enemy pilot'

Meanwhile, an anchor on a channel affiliated with Iranian state television had been urging residents in the mountainous region of southwest Iran where the fighter jet went down to hand over any "enemy pilot" to police and promised a reward for anyone who did.

Trump said the American aviator was being "hunted down" by enemies who were "getting closer and closer by the hour." The United States was monitoring his location continuously, he said.

At the right moment, Trump said, he directed the military to send dozens of heavily armed aircraft to rescue the crew member, who the president said is "seriously wounded" but will recover.

Iranian state media reported that airstrikes in southwestern Iran on Saturday killed at least three people and wounded others, in the same area where the missing American crew member was believed to be.

US rescuers face obstacles with aircraft during the operation

The American rescue mission ran into major challenges behind enemy lines. Iran's joint military command claimed it struck two U.S. Black Hawk helicopters taking part in the operation.

A person familiar with the situation said the two helicopters were able to navigate to safe airspace, although it's unclear if they landed or if crew members were injured. The person spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive information.

Then, the U.S. military was forced to bring in additional aircraft to complete the rescue of the second service member due to a technical malfunction, according to a regional intelligence official briefed on the mission. The U.S. blew up two transport planes it was forced to leave behind because of the mishap, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the covert mission.

Iran's state television on Sunday aired a video showing what it claimed were parts of a U.S. aircraft shot down by Iranian forces, along with a photo of thick, black smoke rising. The broadcaster said Iran had shot down a transport plane and two helicopters that were part of the rescue operation.

Iran's joint military command said the destroyed aircraft included two C-130 military transport aircraft and two Black Hawk helicopters in the province of Isfahan, where the rescue took place.

"The fact that we were able to pull off both of these operations, without a SINGLE American killed, or even wounded, just proves once again, that we have achieved overwhelming Air Dominance and Superiority over the Iranian skies," Trump said on social media.

A second US military jet also was downed

Trump, however, did not mention that a second military jet also went down the same day as the F-15E.

Iranian state media said Friday that a U.S. A-10 attack aircraft crashed after being struck by Iran's defense forces.

A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive military situation, confirmed a second Air Force combat aircraft went down in the Middle East on Friday.

An additional U.S. pilot was rescued but details were not available given the security concerns, another person familiar with the situation said.

Neither provided more information, including whether it was the A-10.

Pope Leo urges peace in first Easter Mass as Christians celebrate in Jerusalem, Gaza and Tehran

By COLLEEN BARRY and PAOLO SANTALUCIA Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Leo XIV celebrated his first Easter Mass as pontiff with a call Sunday to lay down arms and seek peace to global conflicts through dialogue, but he departed from a tradition of listing the world's woes by name in the Urbi et Orbi blessing from the loggia of St. Peter's Basilica.

Leo, the first U.S.-born pope, emphasized Easter's message of hope as a celebration of Jesus' resurrection after being crucified.

"Let us allow our hearts to be transformed by his immense love for us! Let those who have weapons lay them down! Let those who have the power to unleash wars choose peace! Not a peace imposed by force, but through dialogue! Not with the desire to dominate others, but to encounter them!" the pope implored.

With the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran in its second month and Russia's ongoing campaign in Ukraine, Leo acknowledged a sense of indifference "to the deaths of thousands of people ... to the repercussions of hatred and division that conflicts sow ... to the economic and social consequences they produce."

Without mentioning the wars by name, Leo quoted his predecessor, Pope Francis, who during his last public appearance from the same loggia last Easter reminded the faithful of the "great thirst for death, for killing, we witness each day."

Francis, weakened by a long illness, died the next day on Easter Monday.

The Urbi et Orbi blessing, Latin for "to the city and the world," has traditionally included a litany of the world's woes. Leo followed that formula during his Christmas blessing. There was no immediate explanation for the shift.

Earlier, Leo addressed some 50,000 faithful from an open-air altar in St. Peter's Square flanked with white roses, while the steps leading down to the piazza where the faithful gathered were filled with spring perennials, symbolically resonating with the pope's words.

He implored the faithful in his homily to keep their hope in the face of death, which lurks "in the abuses that crush the weakest among us, because of the idolatry of profit that plunders the earth's resources, because of the violence of war that kills and destroys."

Speaking from the loggia, the pope announced a prayer vigil for peace April 11 in the basilica.

Small shifts in traditions

Leo greeted the global faithful in 10 languages, including Arabic, Chinese and Latin, reviving a practice that his predecessor Pope Francis had let lapse.

Before retreating into the basilica, Leo stepped forward out of the loggia's shadow and waved to the cheering crowd below. He later greeted people in the piazza from the popemobile that took him all the way down Via della Conciliazione toward the Tiber River and back.

During the marathon that is Holy Week, Leo also reclaimed the tradition of washing priests' feet on Holy Thursday, a gesture of encouragement toward clergy, after Francis had chosen a more inclusive path, traveling to prisons and homes for the disabled to wash the feet of women, non-Christians and prisoners.

The 70-year-old pontiff also became the first pope in decades to carry the light wooden cross for the entire 14 stations during the Way of the Cross on Good Friday.

Christians in the Holy Land mark a subdued Easter

Traditional ceremonies at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, revered by Christians as the traditional site of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, were scaled back under an agreement with Israeli police. Authorities have put limits on the sizes of public gatherings due to ongoing missile attacks.

The restrictions also dampened the recent Muslim holy month of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr holiday, as well as the current weeklong Jewish festival of Passover. On Sunday, the Jewish priestly blessing at the Western Wall — normally attended by tens of thousands — was limited to just 50 people.

The restrictions have strained relations between Israeli authorities and Christian leaders. Police last week prevented two of the church's top religious leaders, including Latin Patriarch Pierbattista Pizzaballa, from celebrating Palm Sunday at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 23 of 27

Gaza's tiny Palestinian Christian community celebrates first Easter since ceasefire

At the Holy Family church in Gaza City, Catholics young and old gathered for a traditional Easter Mass. Singing, they formed a queue in the aisle, waiting for their chance to kiss a sketch of Jesus held by a member of the clergy who wiped the glass frame between turns.

"There is great joy, especially after the ceasefire and after nearly three years of suffering and being unable to celebrate all the holy holidays," said George Anton from Gaza City. "People are somewhat relieved and more stable."

Armenian Christians try to show normalcy by celebrating in Iran

Armenian Christians observed Easter at a church in Iran's capital on Sunday, striving to maintain a sense of normalcy five weeks into the war.

Families embraced and children exchanged painted eggs at the St. Sarkis Cathedral in central Tehran. Iran's capital has been targeted by daily airstrikes since the United States and Israel launched the war on Feb. 28.

"Whether we like it or not, we have young children who do not understand what's going on," said Juanita Arakel, 40, an English language teacher. "They just need to feel normal."

The Islamic Republic, with a population of around 90 million, is home to some 300,000 Christians, mostly Armenians, and three seats in parliament are reserved for Christians.

"Our calls and prayers are that we will be able to end this war," said Sepuh Sargsyan, the archbishop of the Armenian Diocese of Tehran. "Our calls and prayers are that we will be able to end this war."

A long Mideast war could take away from support for Ukraine, Zelenskyy tells the AP

By SERRA YEDIKARDES and SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy expressed concern that a prolonged U.S.-Israeli war on Iran could further erode America's support for Ukraine as Washington's global priorities shift and Kyiv braces for reduced deliveries of critically needed Patriot air defense missiles.

Ukraine desperately needs more U.S.-made Patriot air defense systems to help it counter Russia's daily barrages, Zelenskyy said, speaking to The Associated Press in an exclusive interview late Saturday in Istanbul.

Russia's relentless pounding of urban areas behind the front line following its full-scale invasion of Ukraine more than four years ago has killed thousands of civilians. It has also targeted Ukraine's energy supply to disrupt industrial production of Ukraine's newly developed drones and missiles, while also denying civilians heat and running water in winter.

"We have to recognize that we are not the priority for today," Zelenskyy said. "That's why I am afraid a long (Iran) war will give us less support."

A loss of focus on Ukraine

The latest U.S.-brokered talks between envoys from Moscow and Kyiv ended in February with no sign of a breakthrough. Zelenskyy, who has accused Russia of "trying to drag out negotiations" while it presses on with its invasion, said Ukraine remains in contact with U.S. negotiators about a potential deal to end the war and has continued to press for stronger security guarantees.

But, he said, even those discussions reflect a broader loss of focus from Ukraine.

His most immediate concern, Zelenskyy said, are the Patriots — essential for intercepting Russian ballistic missiles — as Ukraine still lacks an effective alternative.

These U.S. systems were never delivered in sufficient quantities to begin with, Zelenskyy said, and if the Iran war doesn't end soon, "the package — which is not very big for us — I think will be smaller and smaller day by day."

"That's why, of course, we are afraid," he said.

Interlinked wars

Zelenskyy had been counting on European partners to help make the Patriot purchases despite tight

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 24 of 27

supply and limited U.S. production capacity.

But the Iran war, now in its sixth week, has sent shock waves through the global economy and pulled in much of the wider Middle East region, further straining these already limited resources, diverting stockpiles and leaving Ukrainian cities more exposed to ballistic strikes.

For Kyiv, a key objective is to weaken Moscow's economy and make the war prohibitively costly. Surging oil prices driven by Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz are undermining that strategy by boosting the Kremlin's oil revenues and strengthening Moscow's capacity to sustain its war effort.

In his interview with the AP, Zelenskyy said Russia draws economic benefits from the Mideast war, citing the limited easing of American sanctions on Russian oil.

"Russia gets additional money because of this, so yes, they have benefits," he said.

Russian officials said Sunday a fire broke out at a major oil refinery in the Nizhny Novgorod region after a drone attack, while another drone damaged a pipeline at the Russian Baltic Sea port of Primorsk, home to a major oil export terminal. No casualties were reported.

Russia could reap a windfall from a surge in oil prices and the U.S. temporary waiver on Russian oil sanctions designed to ease supply shortages as the Iran war continues. Russia is one of the world's main oil exporters, and Asian nations are increasingly competing for Russian crude oil as an energy crisis mounts.

In response, Ukraine has intensified its long-range drone attacks on Russian oil facilities, which have rattled Moscow.

A renewed diplomatic push

To keep Ukraine on the international agenda, Zelenskyy has offered to share Ukraine's hard-earned battlefield expertise with the United States and allies to develop effective countermeasures against Iranian attacks.

Ukraine has met Russia's evolving use of Iranian-made Shahed drones with growing sophistication, technological ingenuity and low cost.

Moscow significantly modified the original Shahed-136, rebranded as the Geran-2, enhancing its ability to evade air defenses and be mass produced. Ukraine responded with quick innovation of its own, including low-cost interceptor drones designed to track and destroy incoming drones.

Zelenskyy said Ukraine is ready to share with Gulf Arab countries targeted by Iran its experience and technology, including interceptor drones and sea drones, which Ukraine produces — more than are used up — with funding from Americans and its European partners.

In return, these countries could help Ukraine "with anti-ballistic missiles," Zelenskyy said.

In late March, as the Iran war escalated, Zelenskyy visited Gulf Arab states to promote Ukraine's singular experience in countering Iranian-made Shahed drones, leading to new defense cooperation agreements.

Zelenskyy has also positioned Ukraine as a potential partner in safeguarding global trade routes, offering assistance in reopening the Strait of Hormuz by sharing Ukraine's experiences securing maritime corridors in the Black Sea.

Zelenskyy was in Istanbul for talks with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a day after the Turkish leader spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Zelenskyy said they discussed peace talks and a possible meeting of leaders in Istanbul. He also said there could be new defense deals signed between the two countries soon.

Following the talks in Istanbul, Zelenskyy and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan arrived in Syria on an official visit Sunday, Syrian state news agency SANA reported.

Writing on X, Zelenskyy said he discussed the wars in the Middle East and Ukraine with Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa, and that there is "strong interest in exchanging military and security experience" between Ukraine and Syria.

Russia steps up its spring offensive

Each year as the weather improves, Russia moves its grinding war of attrition up a notch. However, it has been unable to capture Ukrainian cities and has made only incremental gains across rural areas. Russia occupies about 20% of Ukraine, including the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia seized in 2014.

On the roughly 1,250-kilometer (750-mile) front line stretching across eastern and southern parts of Ukraine, short-handed Ukrainian defenders are getting ready for a new offensive by Russia's larger army.

The commander-in-chief of Ukraine's armed forces, Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, said Russian troops have in recent days made simultaneous attempts to break through defense lines in several strategic areas.

One thing Zelenskyy says he has insisted on and will continue to do so — a territorial compromise and giving up land will not be on Ukraine's agenda.

In Ukraine, meanwhile, drone attacks overnight into Sunday killed at least one person and seriously wounded another in the city of Nikopol, authorities said. Three people were wounded in the Ukrainian port city of Odesa in a separate drone attack.

It's-a-hit: 'The Super Mario Galaxy Movie' box office blasts off with \$372.5 million globally

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Mixed reviews didn't dissuade mass audiences from buying tickets to the "The Super Mario Galaxy Movie," which scored the biggest opening of the year for a Hollywood movie. The Illumination and Nintendo co-production earned \$130.9 million over the weekend and a massive \$190.1 million in its first five days in North American theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Universal Pictures released the sequel globally on Wednesday, capitalizing on kids' spring break vacations in the week leading up to the Easter holiday. With an estimated \$182.4 million from 80 overseas markets, the film is looking at an astronomical \$372.5 million debut — the latest hit for the PG rating. Mexico is leading the international bunch with \$29.1 million from 5,136 screens, followed by the U.K. and Ireland with \$19.7 million.

The animated sequel, Illumination CEO Christopher Meledandri's 16th movie in 16 years, is the industry's biggest debut since "Avatar: Fire and Ash" launched over Christmas. The Chinese movie "Pegasus 3," which was not a Motion Picture Association release, has the slight edge for the 2026 global record, however.

It's also a dip from the first film, which opened to \$204 million domestically during the same five-day time frame in 2023 (\$147 of that was from Friday, Saturday and Sunday). "The Super Mario Bros. Movie" went on to be the second biggest movie of 2023, with over \$1.3 billion in box office receipts.

"The Super Mario Galaxy Movie," which features returning voice actors Chris Pratt, Jack Black, Anya Taylor-Joy and Charlie Day, had a massive footprint in the U.S. and Canada, where it played in 4,252 theaters, including 421 IMAX and 1,345 premium large format screens. It made \$15 million from the IMAX screens alone.

"It's exactly the kind of broad, crowd-pleasing release that brings people into theatres," AMC Chairman and CEO Adam Aron said in a statement.

It also cost around \$110 million to make, not including marketing and promotion expenses. But it arrived on a wave of less-than-stellar reviews. Its Rotten Tomatoes score is currently sitting at a lousy 40%. Ticket buyers were more enthusiastic, however.

The family audience gave the movie five out of five stars according to PostTrak exit polls, while general audiences gave it four stars and an A- on CinemsScore. Audiences skewed male (61%) overall, although when it came to families attending there were slightly more moms (52%) than dads.

"These kind of audience reaction scores just point to a ridiculously strong run, not only throughout the spring, but likely into the summer as well," said Jim Orr, Universal's president of domestic distribution.

"The Super Mario Galaxy Movie" will open in Japan later this month.

Last year, the first weekend in April hosted the launch of another video game blockbuster, "A Minecraft Movie," which had a bigger three-day debut (\$162.8 million) but didn't have a "Project Hail Mary" in a strong second place, meaning the weekend overall is still up around 5%.

As expected, "The Super Mario Galaxy Movie" ended the two-week reign of the Ryan Gosling-led sci-fi hit "Project Hail Mary," which landed in second its third weekend in theaters where it added \$30.7 million, bringing its running domestic total to \$217.2 million. Worldwide, it's made \$420.7 million to date.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 26 of 27

Third place went to A24's provocative new movie "The Drama," starring Zendaya and Robert Pattinson, which made an estimated \$14.4 million from 3,087 theaters. The film's stars have been on a massive and charming press blitz to promote their R-rated movie about a engaged couple grappling with an unnerving revelation, which cost a reported \$28 million to produce. The reveal has drummed up a fair amount of cultural discourse. While reviews have been more positive than not (82% on Rotten Tomatoes), it got a less promising B CinemaScore.

"Hoppers" and "Reminders of Him" rounded out the top five. And the box office outlook looks bright overall, up around 30% from last year.

"There's no better opening act for a great summer than a huge month of April powered by a mega blockbuster like the 'The Super Mario Galaxy Movie,'" said Paul Dergarabedian, comscore's head of marketplace trends.

Top 10 movies by domestic box office

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

- 1."The Super Mario Galaxy Movie," \$130.9 million.
- 2."Project Hail Mary," \$30.7 million.
- 3."The Drama," \$14.4 million.
- 4."Hoppers," \$5.8 million.
- 5."Reminders of Him," \$2.2 million.
- 6."A Great Awakening," \$2.1 million.
- 7."They Will Kill You," \$1.9 million.
- 8."Dhurandhar The Revenge," \$1.9 million.
- 9."Ready or Not 2: Here I Come," \$1.8 million.
- 10."Scream 7," 915,000.

Today in History: April 6, United States enters World War I

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Monday, April 6, the 96th day of 2026. There are 269 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On April 6, 1917, the United States entered World War I as the House joined the Senate in approving a declaration of war against Germany that was then signed by President Woodrow Wilson.

Also on this date:

In 1830, Joseph Smith and others met in Fayette, New York, to form the Church of Christ — now known as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

In 1862, the Civil War Battle of Shiloh began in Tennessee as Confederate forces launched a surprise attack against Union troops, who beat back the Confederates the following day.

In 1896, the first modern Olympic Games formally opened in Athens, Greece.

In 1954, Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, R-Wis., responding to CBS newsman Edward R. Murrow's broadside against him on "See It Now," claimed in remarks filmed for the program that Murrow had, in the past, "engaged in propaganda for Communist causes."

In 1968, 41 people were killed by a pair of explosions spurred by a natural gas leak at a sporting goods store in downtown Richmond, Indiana.

In 1994, Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira were killed when the jet they were riding in was shot down by surface-to-air missiles as it attempted to land in Kigali, Rwanda.

In 2009, a powerful predawn earthquake rocked central Italy, leaving more than 300 people dead, more than 1,500 injured and thousands of buildings heavily damaged in the historic city of L'Aquila and surrounding villages.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, April 06, 2026 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 305 ~ 27 of 27

In 2012, five Black people were shot, three fatally, in Tulsa, Oklahoma; Jake England and Alvin Watts, who admitted to targeting the victims because of their race, pleaded guilty to murder and were sentenced to life in prison without parole.

In 2018, a semitrailer truck collided with a bus carrying a youth hockey team to a playoff game in western Canada, killing 16 people and injuring several others.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Billy Dee Williams is 89. Film director Barry Levinson is 84. Actor John Ratzenberger is 79. Baseball Hall of Famer Bert Blyleven is 75. Actor Marilu Henner is 74. Actor Michael Rooker is 71. Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz is 62. Football Hall of Famer Sterling Sharpe is 61. Actor Paul Rudd is 57. Actor Zach Braff is 51. Actor Candace Cameron Bure is 50. Musician Robert Glasper is 48. Musician Jack Stauber is 30. Actor Peyton List is 28. Formula 1 driver Oscar Piastri is 25. Actor Casey Simpson is 22.