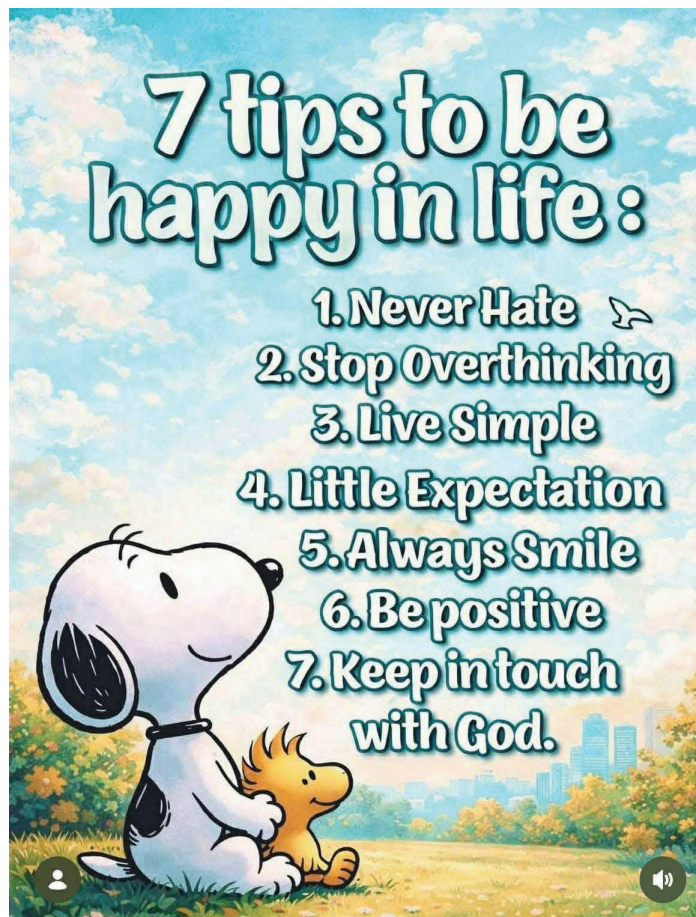


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## Tuesday, April 7

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.

## Friday, April 10

Senior Menu: Breaded chicken on bun, oven roasted potatoes, California blend, fruit.

Girls Softball hosts Mobridge-Pollock, Nelson Field, Varsity at 4:30 p.m., JV to follow.

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

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# 1440

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

## Swinging by the Moon

Artemis II astronauts flew around the far side of the moon yesterday, setting a new record for the farthest humans have traveled from Earth.

The four-person crew surpassed Apollo 13's 1970 record of 248,655 miles just before 2 pm ET and reached a peak distance of 252,760 miles around 7 pm. The lighting in the Orion capsule was dimmed to encourage the astronauts' pupils to dilate, letting them perceive subtle details of the previously unseen region. Along the way, the crew named a crater after Commander Reid Wiseman's late wife, Carroll. They came within roughly 4,070 miles of the lunar surface and, as expected, lost contact with Earth for about 40 minutes. The crew is now heading back to Earth, with a planned splashdown off San Diego's coast Friday evening.

Astronauts were awakened for yesterday's historic feat by Mandisa and TobyMac's "Good Morning."

## Michigan Wins Title

No. 1 Michigan won the men's college basketball championship last night, beating No. 2 UConn, 69-63. It marks the Wolverines' second title and the first since 1989, and puts a bow on the program's best season in school history, with a 37-3 record.

Led by first-year transfer Yaxel Lendeborg—a first-team All-American and Big Ten player of the year—Michigan held off a late rush by the Huskies, who were down by double digits within five minutes. Lendeborg, playing on a leg injured against No. 1 Arizona, added 13 points and 2 rebounds. The championship comes in just the second season of coach Dusty May's tenure at Michigan, and three years after he led an underdog Florida Atlantic team to the Final Four.

## Let Me Hear Your Brain Talk

Researchers have discovered the so-called "neural fingerprint" of psychedelics' impact on the brain, finding the drugs temporarily increase connectivity between various brain regions. The study is believed to be the largest of its kind to date.

Scientists reviewed more than 500 brain scans from 267 people who took five mind-altering drugs: psilocybin, LSD, mescaline, DMT, and ayahuasca. They discovered that a few minutes after taking the drugs, connectivity increased between subjects' transmodal networks (tied to thinking) and unimodal networks (involved in visual and sensory perception). Also impacted were brain regions linked to habits and movement. The research may begin to explain why some people on psychedelics report hallucinations, among other experiences; more long-term research is needed.

More than a dozen clinical trials have found psychedelic drugs reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety, and addiction.

## Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Savannah Guthrie returns to the "Today" show 65 days after her mother's disappearance (More, w/ video) | CBS will replace Stephen Colbert's "The Late Show" slot with Byron Allen's "Comics Unleashed" beginning May 22.

UK government is reviewing Ye's permission to enter the country after backlash over the rapper—formerly known as Kanye West—headlining London's Wireless Festival; PepsiCo, Anheuser-Busch InBev, and Diageo pull sponsorships.

Chicago Sky trade two-time WNBA All-Star Angel Reese to the Atlanta Dream in exchange for 2027 and 2028 first-round draft picks.

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## Science & Technology

OpenAI publishes policy proposals to address artificial intelligence's impact on the economy; ideas include a four-day workweek, public wealth fund, and increased taxes on capital gains and corporate income.

Cost-effective blood test shows potential to detect various cancers, liver conditions, and organ abnormalities simultaneously by analyzing DNA fragments in the bloodstream.

Solar-powered reactor turns hard-to-recycle plastic waste into clean hydrogen fuel and industrial chemicals using old car battery acid.

## Business & Markets

US stock markets close up (S&P 500 +0.5%, Dow +0.4%, Nasdaq +0.5%) and oil prices rise slightly as investors hope for Iran war ceasefire.

The Associated Press offers buyouts to an unspecified number of US-based journalists as it shifts focus from newspaper journalism to visual journalism and artificial intelligence.

JPMorgan CEO Jamie Dimon publishes annual letter to shareholders, warns Iran war could fuel inflation and raise interest rates.

## Politics & World Affairs

President Donald Trump shares details of rescue mission for second airman from fallen F-15E plane in Iran; threatens journalist who revealed a US crew member was in Iran with prison unless they reveal their source.

Trump extends deadline for deal to end Iran war to 8 pm ET today.

Supreme Court clears the way for dismissal of Steve Bannon's contempt of Congress conviction.

Measles outbreak in Bangladesh kills at least 100 people, most of them children, potentially the country's most lethal wave of measles in decades.



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## Secretary of State announces validation of third U.S. house Petition

(Pierre, S.D.) – Secretary of State Monae L. Johnson has announced that James Bialota will be placed on the ballot as a Republican candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives at the Primary Election held on June 2, 2026.

A Republican candidate for the U.S. House 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 84.23 percent to be valid. Based on the results of the random sample, 2,576 signatures were deemed valid.

Upon the filing of a candidate petition, any interested person may challenge the Secretary of State's validation of the petition under SDCL § 12-1-13. A person challenging the validation must submit an original, signed affidavit listing out each specific deficiency to the Secretary of State's office no more than five business days after validation. For this candidate petition, the deadline to file a challenge is Monday, April 13, 2026, at 5:00 PM (CT).

For more information on candidates who will be on the ballot at the Primary Election, please see the candidate list on the Secretary of State's website: <https://vip.sdsos.gov/candidatelist.aspx?eid=773>.



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### **Governor candidates differ in evaluating \$15 million of state aid for Brookings project**

**Varying responses reflect individual philosophies on economic development**

**BY: JOSHUA HAIAR**

BROOKINGS — Workers waving pompoms greeted South Dakota Republican Gov. Larry Rhoden during a recent celebration for a business expansion that benefited from \$15 million in state tax rebates, two days after Republican primary candidates for governor debated the state's role in economic development.

The event for Solventum, a Minnesota-based, publicly traded company that was formerly part of 3M, marked the completion of a \$220 million expansion at Solventum's Brookings facility. The plant employs about 1,200 people who produce health care supplies, including bandaging, dressings, wraps and tapes.

State economic development officials helped the project with \$15 million from the Reinvestment Payment Program. The program rebated Solventum for sales and use taxes the company paid for equipment or construction costs associated with the expansion.

The city of Brookings also helped the project with \$3.5 million in financing from a tax increment financing district. A TIF district provides upfront financing to help with project costs, and captures the new and higher property taxes generated by the development to pay off the financing.

#### **CEO, Rhoden offer praise**

Solventum CEO Bryan Hanson attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony and praised the partnership his company has with the state and local governments. He said the company weighed other locations before choosing to expand in Brookings.

"You don't spend hundreds of millions of dollars in a state that doesn't embrace business," Hanson said.

During the debate among the four Republican candidates for governor two days prior, Rhoden said such ribbon cuttings are evidence that South Dakota's economy is doing well.

"Every week I'm going to ribbon cuttings and groundbreakings, and a lot of them were expansions or businesses that are moving here," Rhoden said at the time.

Questions of economic development have been a balancing act for the Rhoden administration. Last year, he signed a bill into law that bans the use of eminent domain to gain land access for carbon sequestration pipelines, which stalled a proposed multi-billion-dollar pipeline that would pass through the state.

This year, Rhoden and his economic development team spent much of the recently concluded legislative session defending business incentives, such as the ones that benefited Solventum, as tools for growth. Several bills failed that would have restricted those tools.

The bills came from lawmakers who believe the state has gotten too involved with helping private businesses, or shouldn't be involved at all.

#### **Hansen: Current economic development model 'unfair'**

State House Speaker Jon Hansen, who is running for the Republican nomination for governor, has called the state's economic development grants and loans "corporate welfare."

Hansen said this week in a statement issued in response to South Dakota Searchlight questions that the difference between him and the other Republican candidates is that he opposes the state's current economic development model. He said the model is run by state officials who use taxes collected from South Dakota businesses to "hand out the money to any big corporation of their choosing, including many

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who then donate back to future political campaigns.”

“I think this is unfair to our South Dakota businesses and entrepreneurs and, as we’ve seen, is a breeding ground for corruption and backroom deals,” he said.

Hansen has singled out state aid for the CJ Schwan’s company, which has benefited from \$69 million in state grants and loans. One of the state officials who was involved in initial discussions with the company about its construction of a food production plant in Sioux Falls now works for the company as a vice president. Meanwhile, the chairman of the state Board of Economic Development, who abstained from matters related to CJ Schwan’s, is a member of the company’s corporate board and is involved with a corporation that rents office space to CJ Schwan’s.

Hansen, while not specifically saying whether he approved or disapproved of the Solventum aid, said he wants to focus on lower taxes, lighter regulation and a freer market to help South Dakota businesses grow on their own.

“If there are any programs that are salvageable, it will be those that are fairly available to every South Dakotan — not those massive tax giveaways where politicians and bureaucrats in Pierre pick their favored corporation to sometimes attract future political contributions,” Hansen said.

## **Johnson: State can do more to encourage prosperity**

U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson, another Republican candidate for governor, spoke favorably of state economic development tools in an interview with Searchlight.

“I believe South Dakota can be a great place to do business, and I’m glad these companies choose to invest in our state and our people,” he said of Solventum.

He said what’s at issue in the race for governor is not one specific economic development project, but “whether or not we’re doing everything we can to make the state more prosperous.” In conversations he’s had with businesspeople, he said, they’ve told him “we can do better.”

As evidence, Johnson cited CNBC’s 2025 ranking of the state as 35th in the nation for business.

Johnson said the state should do more for homegrown entrepreneurs, and his “Launch South Dakota” plan calls for a \$2 million investment to support local business startups. The money would come from the governor-controlled Future Fund for economic development.

## **Doeden: State spending is ‘reckless’**

Another Republican candidate for governor, Toby Doeden, issued a statement in response to Searchlight questions. While not saying whether he approved or disapproved of the Solventum aid, he criticized what he called “reckless spending” by the state, including on economic development.

“Instead of handing out massive taxpayer-funded subsidies to out-of-state corporations,” Doeden said, “we will use those funds to build out our rural health care and finally make meaningful improvements in our infrastructure.”

“We will support our homegrown small businesses and they will invest in their people and their communities,” Doeden added.

The primary election to determine the Republican nominee for governor is June 2. Announced candidates for the Democratic nomination for governor include Dan Ahlers, a former state legislator and executive director of the state Democratic Party, and Robert Arnold, a Dakota State University student who served as a legislative intern.

*Joshua Haiar is a reporter based in Sioux Falls. Born and raised in Mitchell, he joined the Navy as a public affairs specialist after high school and then earned a degree from the University of South Dakota. Prior to joining South Dakota Searchlight, Joshua worked for five years as a multimedia specialist and journalist with South Dakota Public Broadcasting.*

## Family demands justice, accountability for Lakota woman allegedly killed by airman

**'This should not have happened,' advocate says during demonstration on victim's birthday**

**BY: AMELIA SCHAFER, ICT**

RAPID CITY — Sahela "Toka Win" Sangrait would have turned 23 on March 26. Instead, more than 50 people gathered on her birthday to demand justice and systemic change.

Federal prosecutors have charged United States Airman Quinterius Chappelle with first-degree murder in connection to Sangrait's homicide, which authorities say took place on Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota in August 2024.

But those gathered say the crime could have been prevented.

Chappelle was court-martialed for aggravated assault following a February 2024 domestic incident not involving Sangrait, according to Jesse Fagerland, a sergeant with the Pennington County Sheriff's Office. Fagerland testified during Chappelle's November 2024 arraignment in the Sangrait case. The February 2024 incident was handled by Air Force authorities.

Additionally, local Box Elder law enforcement officials responded to a report of domestic violence at Chappelle's residence on the night of Sangrait's death but did not contact anyone inside the residence, Fagerland testified. Because the 2024 assault case was handled internally by the Air Force, it's unclear if Box Elder police were aware of Chappelle's history.

"This should not have happened to her, there were signs, there were things that could have prevented her from facing this tragedy," said Lorna Cuny, Oglala Lakota and the executive director of the Medicine Wheel Ride, a group of motorcyclists who raise awareness for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women epidemic.

Sangrait's grandmother agreed.

"I don't have a hard heart," said Vonda High Hawk, Mnicoujou Lakota. "But this girl should have lived. I think they (the Air Force) should at some point be held accountable for the wrongful death (of Sangrait). There's a chain of command ... These senseless crimes need to be handled appropriately by their chain of command. There has to be some type of example made of that."

Chappelle and Sangrait were in a romantic relationship, family members said.

"We want her story to get out," said Hillary Dubray, Sangrait's mother. "She was just (about to turn) 21, just getting her life started, but her life was cut short."

Dubray, Mnicoujou Lakota, stood firmly, wearing a bright red hooded sweatshirt with her daughter's face on it. Dubray gathered with family members, friends and community in chilly below-zero temperatures and drizzling rain on March 26 to demand justice for her daughter.

"We want people to know she mattered," said Sangrait's other grandmother, Phyllis Bald Eagle, who is Mnicoujou Lakota and Mdewakanton Dakota.

Community members are organizing a mid-April demonstration outside of the Ellsworth Air Force Base. Organizers from local MMIW advocacy groups, the Medicine Wheel Ride and the Red Ribbon Skirt Society said the demonstration will bring awareness to Sangrait's murder as they await the accused's trial in Rapid City.

"It's for justice," said Frances Dupris, Sicangu Lakota/Northern Arapaho and an organizer with the Red Ribbon Skirt Society. Dupris spent 24 years as a United States airman before retiring. "The individuals that should be held accountable for Sahela's murder are airmen ... I was an airman, I retired, so this is not to say that all airmen are bad. But the people who do bad things need to be held accountable."

Nationwide, Indigenous women are reported missing at a disproportionately high rate. Further, homicide is one of the leading causes of death among American Indians and Alaska Natives, a significant proportion of which are the result of domestic violence.

Sixty-one American Indian/Alaska Native people were reported missing in South Dakota as of March 26, compared to 95 total missing individuals, meaning roughly 65% of all missing people in the state are

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American Indian/Alaska Native. Natives make up only 11% of the statewide population. This percentage of missing Native people statewide has remained steady for over two years.

## Charges filed, trial pending

Two individuals are federally charged in connection with Sangrait's murder: Chappelle and Drew Durand, both 25 and both residents of Box Elder where the Ellsworth Air Force Base is located. Chappelle is charged with first-degree murder and Durand with accessory after the fact and misprision of a felony.

Sangrait's remains were found by a hiker in a wooded area near Hill City on March 4, 2025.

Police charged Chappelle days later with Sangrait's murder.

Due to the homicide having allegedly taken place on the Air Force base and the body being found on federal land, Chappelle and Durand are charged in federal court.

Authorities believe Chappelle killed Sangrait at his residence on the Ellsworth Air Force Base. Local law enforcement responded to a report of a domestic dispute at his residence on Aug. 10, 2024, but left without making contact with Chappelle or anyone inside the residence, according to police testimony at Chappelle's March 28, 2025, arraignment.

Due to Chappelle's alleged assault history, his commanding officer required him to go to local law enforcement when he arrived at work on Aug. 12 with fingernail scratches across his face. Chappelle reported to Rapid City law enforcement officers that the scratches were the result of an Aug. 10 break-in at his residence. Chappelle declined to follow up with officers regarding an investigation, his federal judge noted in court at his March 2025 hearing.

Crimes committed on an Air Force base are often prosecuted internally by the base's court, meaning records of the incident are not available to the public or civilians. Due to this, no court records regarding Chappelle's assault court martial are available to the public. Information regarding the incident was only made available to the public through law enforcement testimony at Chappelle's arraignment.

In February 2024, Chappelle was court-martialed for aggravated assault via strangulation. He was disciplined in November, two months after the alleged murder, Fagerland said. Chappelle also broke no-contact orders two separate times, according to Fagerland.

## Sahela's story

Sangrait comes from a strong lineage of Lakota and Dakota warriors – a legacy that lived on through her, her family said.

Her great-great-grandfather was Mdewakanton Dakota Chief Little Crow, also known as Ta-Oyate-Duta, who led the six-week 1862 Dakota Uprising in Minnesota. Little Crow is remembered as one of the Dakota 38+2, a group of Dakota men killed by the United States Government in retaliation for the uprising.

Sangrait was also a descendant of Chief Dave Bald Eagle, a World War II veteran who parachuted into the D-Day invasion of Normandy. Bald Eagle was awarded a Silver Star and a Purple Heart for his service. Bald Eagle was also the grandson of Hunkpapa Lakota Chief White Bull, who was Sitting Bull's nephew. White Bull fought in the Battle of Little Big Horn.

"There's a beautiful history this lady comes from," High Hawk said. "She comes from a very strong lineage, and she will never be forgotten."

Sahela was given her Lakota name, Toka Win, which roughly translates to Different Cheyenne Woman, by her great-grandmother Clenda Little Crow, who was Chief Little Crow's Daughter.

"Everyone needs to know who she was and who she came from," Bald Eagle said.

High Hawk said it's paramount to remember Sangrait's ancestor's battles and what they went through while fighting for justice for her.

"These injustices and these atrocities go way back," High Hawk said. "There needs to be more awareness, more events like what we just did. ... We will continue to say her name."

Sahela grew up in the Black Hills area and moved to Rapid City at 18 years old, her mother said. In Rapid City she worked to fundraise for youth programming and was a vocal advocate for Indigenous youth.

"She was beautiful, just so pretty," said Sangrait's other grandmother Vonda High Hawk, who traveled

over two hours from the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota, to attend the vigil. "Regardless of the odds that were against her in this life she still radiated with beauty."

At such a young age, Sangrait hadn't quite figured out what she was going to do yet as an adult, her family said. She was passionate about helping others and volunteered at Ateyapi, a local nonprofit youth program for Indigenous students in the Black Hills area. She also wanted to raise awareness for domestic violence victims, her mother said.

*Amelia Schafer is the Indigenous Affairs reporter for ICT and is based in Rapid City. She is of Wampanoag and Montauk-Brothertown Indian Nation descent.*

## Trump repeats threat to bomb Iranian power plants, bridges

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Monday declined to rule out bombing certain types of civilian infrastructure in Iran, including schools and hospitals, and said that any agreement to end the war must include free navigation through the Strait of Hormuz.

"We have to have a deal that's acceptable to me," he said during a 90-minute press conference. "And part of that deal is going to be, we want free traffic of oil and everything else."

Trump said he hopes he doesn't need to bomb non-military targets, like power plants and bridges, but that even if he did, he doesn't believe it would constitute a war crime. International law, including the Geneva Conventions ban on destroying "objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population," generally considers the targeting of civilian infrastructure a war crime.

Trump also reiterated a Tuesday evening deadline for Iranian leaders to make a deal to end the war.

"We're giving them until tomorrow, eight o'clock Eastern time," he said. "And after that, they're going to have no bridges. They're going to have no power plants. Stone ages, yeah. Stone ages."

Negotiations to end the war that Trump and the Israeli government began in late February, have been slow going, in part, due to the destruction of Iran's communications infrastructure.

"We're communicating like they used to communicate 2,000 years ago with children bringing a note back and forth," Trump said. "They have no communication."

Trump contended during the press conference that many Iranians have welcomed their country being bombed and that they get upset when the destruction halts.

"They would be willing to suffer that in order to have freedom," he said. "We've had numerous intercepts. 'Please keep bombing.' Bombs that are dropping near their homes. 'Please keep bombing. Do it.' And these are people that are living where the bombs are exploding. And when we leave and we're not hitting those areas, they're saying, 'Please come back. Come back. Come back.'"

Trump said that after the war ends, his administration "may even get involved with helping them rebuild their nation."

"Right now, if we left today, it would take them 20 years to rebuild their country, and it would never be as good as it was," he said. "And the only way they're going to be able to rebuild their country is to utilize the genius of the United States of America."

### Prosecuting leak

Trump said a search had begun for whichever official or officials released information last week about a U.S. aircraft being shot down over Iran, leading to rescue operations for two servicemen.

"So whoever that was, we think we'll be able to find it out, because we're going to go to the media company that released it, and we're going to say, 'National security, give it up or go to jail,' he said. "And we know who, and you know who we're talking about."

Numerous news organizations published the information on Friday and it wasn't immediately clear which one Trump planned to pursue.

*Jennifer covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include congressional policy, politics and legal challenges with a focus on health care, unemployment, housing and aid to families.*

## Makeover in store for Congress with flood of lawmakers headed for the exits

**Members leaving House include South Dakota's Dusty Johnson, who's running for governor**

**BY: JENNIFER SHUTT**

WASHINGTON — Congress will look considerably different next year, after dozens of its members move on to other political offices or retire, a number that's likely to grow as some of those hoping to stay lose their reelection bids.

A turnover of at least 13% will be the highest in more than three decades, bringing in a wave of new lawmakers, who will be looked to as a source of solutions for some of the country's biggest problems.

But the loss of institutional knowledge and negotiating expertise held by committee chairmen and seasoned lawmakers will not be easily replaced.

Experts interviewed by States Newsroom said a surge of freshmen could lead to a further concentration of power in congressional leaders and heighten the influence of lobbyists, though they added there are benefits as well.

"Serving in Congress is like any other job. It takes you some time to figure out how to be good at it," said Molly Reynolds, vice president and director of Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution. "Even members who come in with state legislative experience, they will know some things about legislating, but they won't know all the things about Congress."

New lawmakers don't often understand the more complicated procedures and practices, like budget reconciliation, which Republicans used last year to enact their "big, beautiful" law.

"We ran the reconciliation process last year with lots of members who had never experienced a reconciliation bill before," Reynolds said. "And one consequence of this kind of lack of experience is that that can stand to empower party leaders even more."

But, she added, there can be value in "having younger members, who have a different time horizon for thinking about some of the problems facing the country."

### Generational change ahead

So far 57 House lawmakers, 21 Democrats and 36 Republicans, have opted to run for another political position or retire. In the Senate, four Democrats and seven Republicans are choosing to leave for one reason or another, according to data compiled by Ballotpedia.

Jonathan K. Hanson, lecturer in public policy at the University of Michigan, said it can take a while for newer members to learn the policy landscape well enough to understand when to listen to outside influence and when not to.

"A person doesn't walk into Congress knowing how things work," he said. "And the more that you have people who are fresh, kind of green, don't know how to navigate the institution, the more power that special interests, lobbyists, so forth might have to influence the political process."

Hanson also said that "some generational change is a good thing."

### Longing to be the chief executive

North Dakota Republican Sen. John Hoeven said many of his colleagues are opting to run for governor, which he believes is a superior role to the one he holds now.

"I was governor for 10 years before I came here. It's the best job you can have. It's a better job than Senate," Hoeven said. "I mean, it's an honor to serve in the Senate, for sure. But you just can't find a better job than being governor. So that's totally understandable."

More than a dozen lawmakers are running for governor, including Alabama Republican Sen. Tommy Tuberville, Colorado Democratic Sen. Michael Bennet, Florida Republican Rep. Byron Donalds, Minnesota Democratic Sen. Amy Klobuchar and Tennessee Republican Sen. Marsha Blackburn.

Virginia Democratic Sen. Tim Kaine said being a member of Congress can be difficult, leading some

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lawmakers to head for the exits and other opportunities.

"This is not an easy job and people, you know, decide that they've had a good chapter and want to do something else," Kaine said. "I can understand why people might make that call."

South Dakota Republican Rep. Dusty Johnson, who is campaigning to be governor of his home state, said that every two years, the institution changes when more experienced members leave and newer ones are voted into Congress.

"Every cycle, we always have plenty of retirements, certainly enough retirements to change the nature of the body," Johnson said. "The bigger factor is, who replaces those who have left? And of course, we're not going to know that until after the primaries and generals are wrapped up."

Primary elections began in early March and will take place on different dates in each state through mid-September.

Michigan Democratic Sen. Gary Peters, who is set to leave at the end of this year, said the impact of retirements will depend on which candidates Americans elect during November's midterm elections.

"If you have people who are getting elected who are practical, common-sense problem solvers, that'll be good," Peters said. "If people are hyper-partisan, either left or right, that's not going to be good."

Oklahoma Republican Rep. Tom Cole said the retirements from members of his own party could have an impact on the elections.

"Obviously, we're losing some very good members. And it's easier, as a rule, to defend an incumbent than it is to win an open seat, particularly in a challenging year," Cole said. "But look, these things run in cycles. You just have to work your way through it."

## Travel, long hours, little satisfaction

Hanson from the University of Michigan said more Republicans have decided to retire or seek another office because their party is likely to lose at least one chamber of Congress.

"They're expecting to lose control of the House of Representatives, and it's not very enticing for them to stay in the fight under those circumstances," he said.

The mounting challenges that come with being a member of Congress are part of the reason some lawmakers are planning to step aside from their current roles, Hanson said.

"I do think that the job, while seeming glamorous from the outside, is not that glamorous from the inside," he said. "There's lots of travel. Even when you go home, you're traveling around your district. It's hard on family life. The hours can be very long in those late-night voting sessions.

"And then that would be one thing if what you're getting out of it is a positive sense of contributing to the broader good, to, you know, the idea of public service."

But, Hanson added, there aren't that many opportunities these days for lawmakers to pass legislation they believe is meaningful.

"So I think it's fair to say that while there are certain people who are attracted to being in the thick of this kind of scene, a lot of people find that it's just not a very satisfying occupation," he said.

Zachary Peskowitz, a political science professor at Emory University in Georgia, said there are both pros and cons to more than 65 lawmakers leaving Congress at one time.

"On the one hand, there are a lot of members who have a lot of seniority and have served for a long time and a lot of expertise but are in their 70s and 80s in some cases," he said. "And there have been concerns about how engaged some of them are."

Younger members, Peskowitz said, may "approach the job with more energy than you might get from somebody who's been in Congress for decades." Newer lawmakers will also likely come with different viewpoints and priorities, he said.

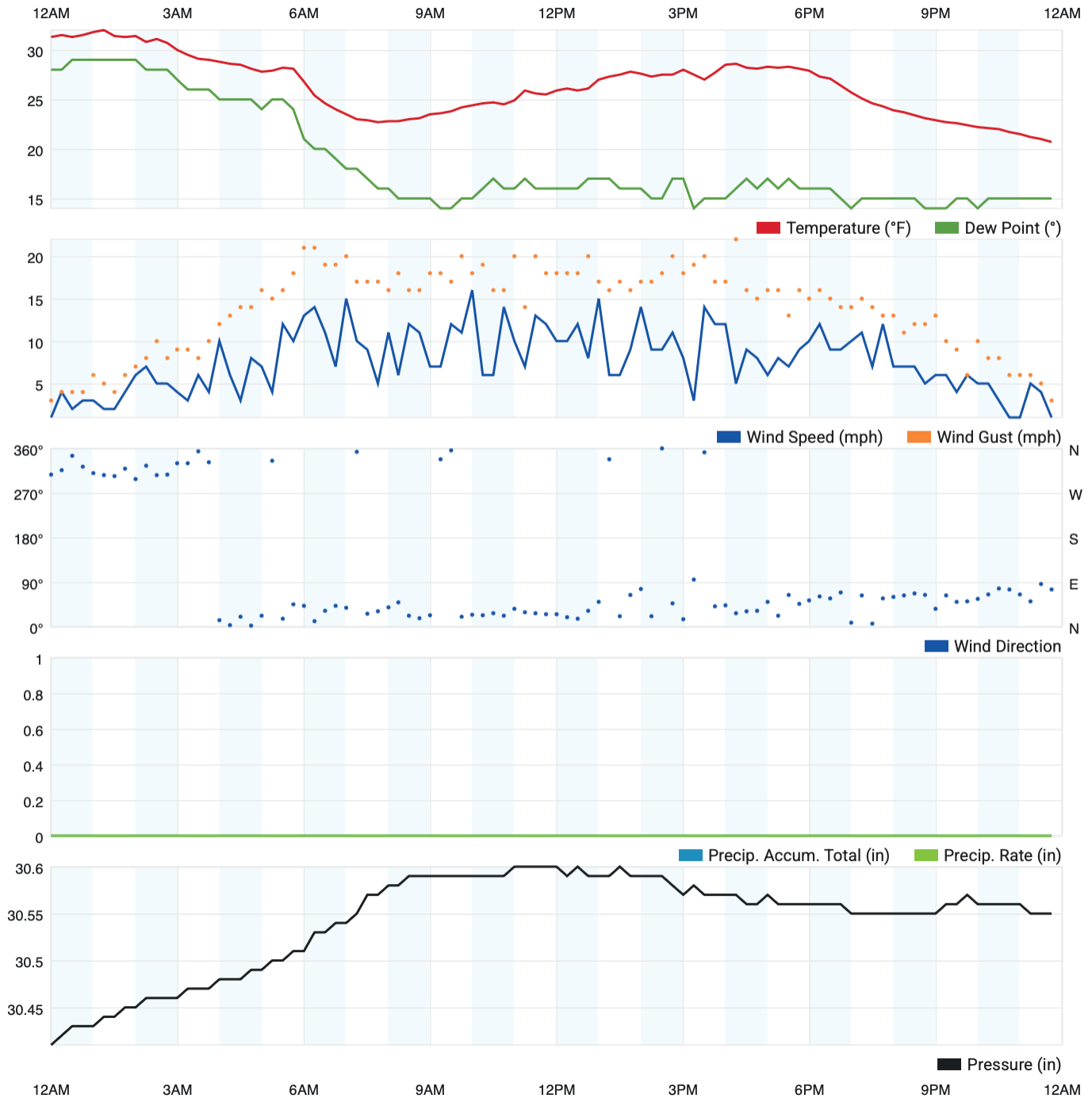
*Jennifer covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include congressional policy, politics and legal challenges with a focus on health care, unemployment, housing and aid to families.*

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

April 6, 2026



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Today



**High: 42 °F**

Mostly Sunny  
then Partly  
Sunny and  
Breezy

Tonight



**Low: 32 °F**

Breezy.  
Mostly Cloudy  
then Chance  
Rain

Wednesday



**High: 49 °F**

Breezy.  
Slight Chance  
Rain then  
Mostly Sunny

Wednesday  
Night



**Low: 24 °F**

Partly Cloudy  
and Blustery  
then Mostly  
Clear

Thursday



**High: 42 °F**

Mostly Sunny  
then Chance  
Snow



## Windy Mid Week

April 7, 2026  
4:10 AM CDT

Today



**Highs: 38 - 53**  
**Winds: SE 30-40**

Tonight



**Lows: 31 - 37**

Wednesday



**Highs: 46 - 56**  
**Winds: NW 35-50**  
**AM rain Coteau east**

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

National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

Southeast winds gusting 30 to 40 mph today will shift to the northwest behind a clipper system tonight. Light rain is expected with the system tonight. More seasonable highs are in store for Wednesday, but with increased grassland fire danger as northwest winds gust 35 to 50 mph.

# Groton Daily Independent

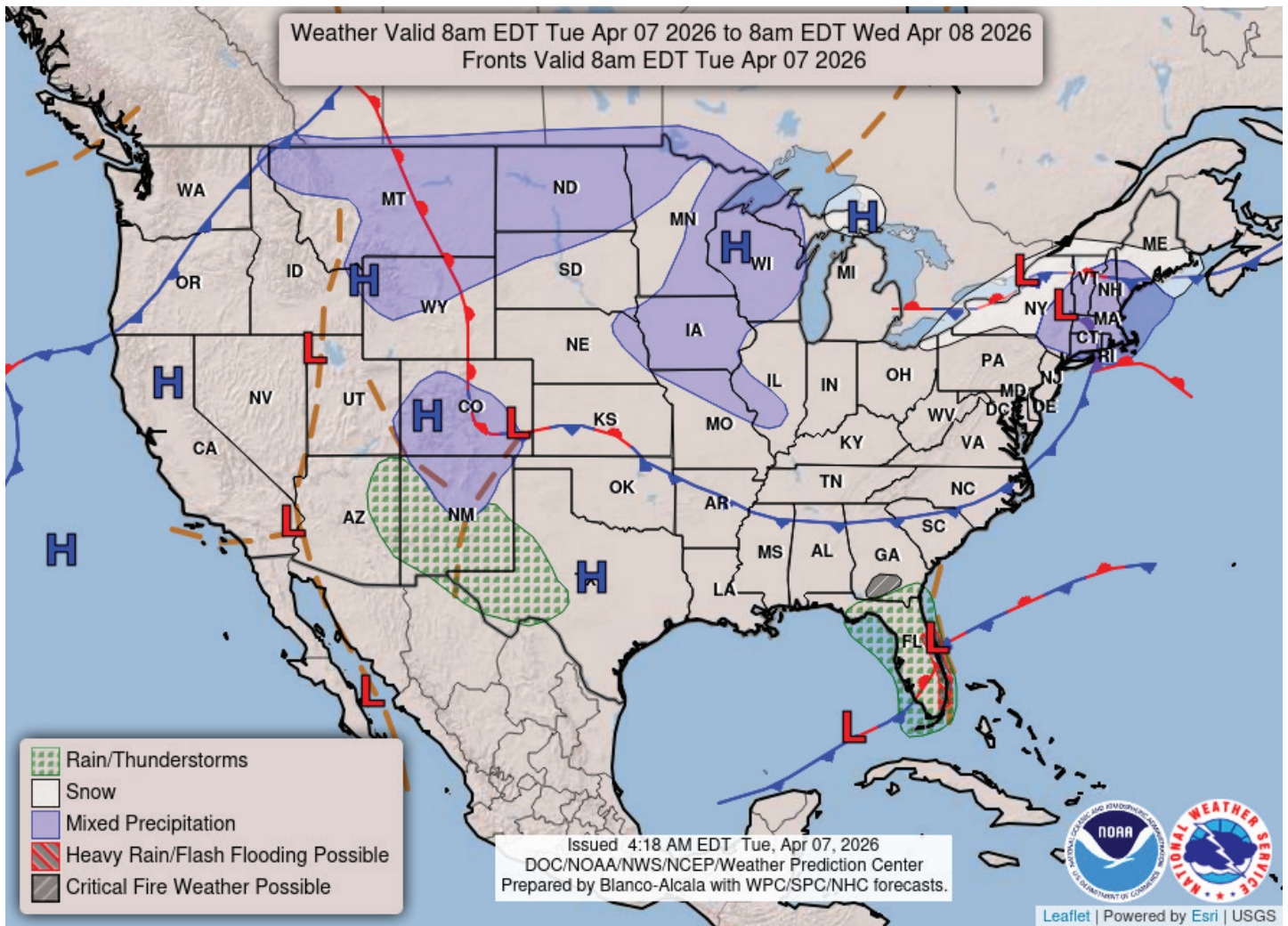
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 32 °F at 1:10 AM**  
**Low Temp: 21 °F at 11:25 PM**  
**Wind: 23 mph at 7:01 AM**  
**Precip: : 0.00**

## Today's Info

Record High: 90 in 1895  
Record Low: 2 in 2018  
Average High: 54  
Average Low: 28  
Average Precip in April.: 0.31  
Precip to date in April.: 0.75  
Average Precip to date: 2.37  
Precip Year to Date: 2.37  
Sunset Tonight: 8:07 pm  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:59 am



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## Today in Weather History

April 7-8th, 2001: Ten inches to two feet of snow fell in central South Dakota in a five-day period, beginning April 8th. Many roads became impassable. Several businesses, government offices, and schools closed on the 11th. Twenty-four inches fell at Ree Heights and Gettysburg, 20.0 inches at Faulkton, 18.0 inches at Kennebec, 16.0 inches at Pierre, and 10.0 inches at Doland.

1857 — A late season freeze brought snow to every state in the Union. Even as far south as Houston TX the mercury plunged to 21 degrees. (David Ludlum)

1929 — Record heat prevailed across New England. Hartford CT reported an afternoon high of 90 degrees. (David Ludlum)

1935 — Amarillo, TX, reported dust obscuring visibility for twenty hours. Blowing dust was reported twenty-seven of thirty days in the month. On several days the visibility was reduced to near zero by the dust. (The Weather Channel)

1980 — Severe thunderstorms spawned tornadoes which ripped through central Arkansas. The severe thunderstorms also produce high winds and baseball size hail. Five counties were declared disaster areas by President Carter. (The Weather Channel)

1987 — International Falls, MN, with record warm afternoon high of 71 degrees, was warmer than Miami FL, where the high was a record cool 66 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 — High winds in the Middle Atlantic Coast Region gusted to 172 mph atop Grandfather Mountain NC. Twenty-nine cities in the southwest and north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Yankton SD with a reading of 91 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 — Twenty-seven cities in the southwestern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Afternoon highs of 92 degrees in Downtown San Francisco and 104 degrees at Phoenix AZ established records for April. Highs of 78 degrees at Ely NV and 93 degrees at San Jose CA equalled April records. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 — Low pressure brought strong winds to the Alaska peninsula and the Aleutian Islands. Winds gusted to 68 mph at Port Heiden two days in a row. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed across central Alaska. Yakutat reported a record high of 54 degrees. Unseasonably cold weather prevailed over central sections of the Lower Forty-eight states. A dozen cities from Kansas to Indiana and Alabama reported record low temperatures for the date. Evansville IN equalled their record for April with a morning low of 23 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2010 — A temperature of 80 degrees is measured on Grandfather Mountain, NC, the warmest ever measured in April and three degrees short of the all-time record high for any month.

## The Greatness of God

**God is infinite, eternal, and unchanging—you can trust Him.**

Psalm 139:7-12

7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?

8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.

9 If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,

10 Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me.

11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, And the light around me will be night,"

12 Even the darkness is not dark to You, And the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You.

God is infinite. It's hard for us, with our limited human minds, to imagine exactly what that means, but pondering God's greatness is important. His love is immeasurable. And He is boundless in righteousness, mercy, and justice. Time and space cannot contain Him.

There's nowhere we can go that is out of His reach. As believers, we are forever connected to the Father because He is eternal. He calls Himself the Alpha and Omega, which means the beginning and the end. When time and space began, He was the one who created it. And when it ends, He will still be there. He is the one "who is and who was and who is to come" (Revelation 1:8). This was a revolutionary concept for the crowd of Jews to whom Christ announced, "Before Abraham was born, I am" (John 8:58). They understood that Jesus, in saying He was one with Yahweh (the name of God, which means "I Am"), claimed to be eternal—and they attempted to kill Him for saying something they considered blasphemous (John 8:59).

Not only is God infinite and eternal; He is also unchanging (James 1:17). So much of what we believe is based upon this characteristic of God. We can trust in His promises because they never change and in His love because it never ends.

*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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## The Groton Independent

Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:  
04.06.26

15 26 27 51 56 1

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

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 41 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:  
04.03.26

31 45 62 63 68 15

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$100,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 26 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:  
04.06.26

22 33 38 44 50 7

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$21,220,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 41 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:  
04.04.26

6 15 23 25 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$43,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 56 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:  
04.06.26

3 17 48 56 64 20

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 25 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:  
04.06.26

7 24 37 42 57 5

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$20,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 25 Mins 18 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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

### Reversing downtown decline in Centerville, South Dakota

By BART PFANKUCH/South Dakota News Watch South Dakota News Watch

This small eastern South Dakota town is well known for its deep agricultural roots, its popular Fourth of July celebration and its regionally famous bakery specializing in bi-colored "zebra donuts."

But now, Centerville has a new claim to fame: The town of about 900 people located 40 miles southwest of Sioux Falls has become known as a statewide leader in downtown redevelopment.

The successful effort to buck the trend of declining Main Street districts in small South Dakota towns has been fueled in part by a progressive approach to development by local leaders and a sense of entrepreneurship by local business owners.

But the redevelopment of Centerville has largely been driven by implementation of a strong vacant building ordinance that has become a model for other municipalities across the state.

"Vacancies in the central business district are a detriment to your city," said Jared Hybertson, economic development coordinator in Centerville. "I hear from a lot of other communities looking for guidance because this is a prevalent problem across the state."

Not a good look for downtowns

A decade ago, Centerville had 14 vacant storefronts in a downtown that encompasses only a few square blocks.

Some properties were occasionally used as rentals, a few served as storage for junk or remnants of former business and others were simply withering toward condemnation. The look was one of decline that was not enticing to potential new visitors, residents or business owners.

"I was frustrated at the number of vacant buildings we had," Hybertson told News Watch. "Perception-wise, as a small town, you're either growing or you're dying, and there isn't much in between."

In 2017, the Centerville City Council passed the vacant buildings ordinance that uses a registration system, building inspections, warning letters, threats of fines and eventual fines to prompt property owners to shape up or sell their buildings to make way for new opportunities.

With the power of the ordinance in hand, Hybertson and a team of committed local officials and business people have ushered a major turnaround in the downtown.

Over roughly the past decade, the Centerville Development Corporation has undertaken efforts to either buy and rehabilitate or buy and tear down nearly a dozen dilapidated or deserted buildings, many of which are now occupied by new businesses.

Centerville has new additions downtown that include a women's clothing boutique, a salon, a tattoo parlor, a discount retail store, two restaurant locations and a historic building converted into a combination museum/art gallery/visitors center. Plans are in place for further redevelopment projects that include loft housing and an event center.

The new businesses have made Centerville more of a destination for visitors, strengthened the overall economy and led to increases in sales tax revenues.

"It's really been a joint citywide effort," Hybertson said. "The ordinance definitely allows us to give property owners a little push to get something done with those properties."

Building a model for downtown rebirth

Many rural communities in South Dakota have suffered population and economic downturns over the past few decades.

Cities with numerous vacant downtown buildings can suffer from a sense of general decline that can turn away visitors, new residents and potential businesses, said Paula Jensen, a vice president of the community development group Dakota Resources.

"We see what the end game is if we don't pay attention to this," she said.

Jensen said it is unlikely that downtown districts in small towns will return to the days decades ago when

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people gathered frequently to sell agricultural goods, buy all the things they need and make personal connections.

But attracting new commercial, retail and service businesses to a downtown can spur overall community growth, Jensen said.

"This isn't going to take us back to the 1950s when everybody came to town on Wednesday and Saturdays to sell their eggs and their cream," she said. "But the very purpose of maintaining Main Streets is getting business owners into those buildings to rejuvenate downtowns and make them lively places again."

Jensen said downtown revitalization is a long-range project that requires a big and constant commitment and that replacing vacant storefronts with new businesses is just one part of the effort.

"This isn't just putting flowers on Main Street to beautify it," she said. "It's making a decision to incrementally improve their Main Street and show that they're in it for the long haul, so people will want to establish a business there."

Jensen said Dakota Resources works to share and promote successful ideas that are replicable in other communities across the state. To that end, the Dakota Resources welcomed Hybertson to a community meeting it hosted in Murdo last fall where he gave a slide presentation on the vacant building ordinance to community leaders from around the state.

## Building relationships to revive buildings

While the ordinance gives Centerville a mechanism to address vacancies, it still takes a great deal of patience and negotiation to get properties sold or redeveloped. Hybertson said.

He and city officials use the ordinance as a cudgel tempered by genuine kindness and a willingness to communicate with and compromise with owners of vacant properties. The approach is somewhat of an iron fist in a velvet glove.

"It's really about fostering a relationship and building trust because a lot of times these owners just don't know what to do with their buildings," Hybertson said.

The effort to convert an aging historic building into the museum/community center provides a good example. The Sioux Falls owner of the building had tried but failed to start businesses there and was hesitant to give up the property.

After numerous discussions with Hybertson, she agreed to sell for \$6,000. With about \$100,000 in grants and another \$100,000 from the development corporation, the renovated building that is now a central gathering place and tourist destination.

"It creates a good vibe because a vibrant downtown makes everyone feel better about their community," Hybertson said.

## A good idea, but tough to implement

Other towns are following Centerville's lead, but implementing policies that impose on private property owners can be a tough go in South Dakota.

"It can get tricky and controversial when it comes to property rights," Hybertson said.

He acknowledged that it takes patience, resilience and sometimes a bit of luck and good timing to make the ordinance effective. Even after improvements are made, maintaining a profitable business is a challenge in small towns, as evidenced by the recent closure of a Mexican restaurant and a coffee shop in Centerville.

"Sometimes it feels like one step forward and two steps back," he said.

Officials from the city of Hurley contacted Hybertson and ultimately enacted a vacant building ordinance in October 2024, but the policy has not been implemented yet, said city finance officer Marcy Hillman.

Hurley is a town of 385 people located 30 miles southeast of Sioux Falls, and it has struggled to maintain a vibrant downtown, Hillman said. The city has no grocery store and lost a salon that operated downtown but celebrated the recent reopening of the Hurley Bar & Grill, she said.

The town has a handful of vacant buildings downtown, but it has been difficult to enforce its ordinance because Hurley has only four city employees and relies solely on Hillman to perform many of the municipal tasks.

"There's a lot of towns in South Dakota in the same position as us," Hillman said. "Our council wants to get something going downtown, but it's challenging when you don't have someone who can focus just

on that.”

A passion for clothes and community

Christen Cunningham is a benefactor of the effort to find the best use of existing buildings in downtown Centerville.

A few years ago, Cunningham and her husband left Colorado to move back to the town where her parents and grandparents lived, and she bought a building she has converted into a thriving women’s clothing store.

Christen & Company boutique is located in a building formerly used by the late beloved town historian Sherree Dee Schmiedt to store artifacts and collectibles from Centerville’s history. Many of those remnants of local history were moved into the museum/community center a few doors down the block after the renovation was complete.

While the boutique is not operating in a storefront directly influenced by the city’s vacant building policy, Cunningham said her business is an example of the benefits of a community-wide effort to inject energy into its downtown.

“It’s creating room for opportunity,” she said. “To this day, people tell me they can’t believe this boutique is operating in Centerville.”

The spirit of re-use may continue, as Cunningham has plans to renovate the second floor of the clothing store into short-term rental units, and she has purchased the former bowling alley next door and hopes to convert it into additional space for the boutique or possibly an event hall. Meanwhile, her daughter has moved to Centerville and is operating a beauty salon down the block.

“I like that you can actually talk to people here and realize how connected you are to one another,” she said.

By focusing on downtown redevelopment, and finding new uses for existing structures, Centerville has become a place that is embracing its roots and celebrating its past while also fostering a bright future, Cunningham said.

“The biggest blessing is the relationships we’re making here, because we’re not just selling clothes,” she said. “My mission is to make women feel important and valued and that they’re seen so they feel better when they leave than they did when they came in.”

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This story was originally published by South Dakota News Watch and distributed through a partnership with The Associated Press.

## Global shares mostly higher ahead of Trump’s deadline for Iran to reopen oil route

By YURI KAGEYAMA AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Global shares mostly rose in cautious trading Tuesday, as oil prices continued to surge ahead of a deadline that U.S. President Donald Trump set for Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz to all shipping traffic or risk its power plants and bridges being bombed.

France’s CAC 40 jumped 1.3% to 8,066.18 in early trading, while the German DAX added 0.8% to 23,360.26. Britain’s FTSE 100 added 0.2% to 10,460.13.

U.S. shares were set to drift slightly higher with Dow futures up 0.1% at 46,963.00. S&P 500 futures inched up less than 0.1% to 6,652.50.

Japan’s benchmark Nikkei 225 gained less than 0.1% to close at 53,429.56. Australia’s S&P/ASX 200 rose 1.7% to 8,728.80. South Korea’s Kospi advanced 0.8% to 5,494.78. The Shanghai Composite edged up 0.3% to 3,890.16. Trading was closed in Hong Kong for a holiday.

In energy trading, benchmark U.S. crude rose 38 cents to \$112.79 a barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, added 23 cents to \$110.00 a barrel. That remains well above its roughly \$70 price from before the war.

Oil prices have been seesawing amid uncertainty over the war in the Middle East and how long it will slow the global flow of oil and natural gas. Iran on Monday rejected the latest ceasefire proposal and instead

said it wants a permanent end to the war.

The Mizuho Daily by the research team in Singapore at Mizuho Bank noted Trump's latest actions mark "an escalation cycle that has now been extended several times since his first ultimatum in late March."

"Given the differing perspectives, hopes of a complete resolution to the conflict remains elusive while countries continue to work on bilateral solutions," it said.

As talks continued, Iranian and Omani officials also were working on a mechanism for administrating the strait through which a fifth of the world's oil is shipped in peacetime. Iran's grip on it has shaken the world economy.

In currency trading, the U.S. dollar edged down to 159.56 Japanese yen from 159.62 yen. The euro cost \$1.1566, up from \$1.1543.

## **Former Australian soldier charged with committing 5 war crime murders in Afghanistan**

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Australia's most decorated living veteran, Ben Roberts-Smith, faces war crime charges on allegations that he killed five unarmed Afghans while serving in Afghanistan from 2009 and 2012, police and media reported on Tuesday.

Police have not confirmed the name of the 47-year-old former soldier who was arrested Tuesday. But he has been widely reported in the media to be Roberts-Smith, a former Special Air Service Regiment corporal who was awarded both the Victoria Cross and Medal of Gallantry for his service in Afghanistan.

Police charged him Tuesday with five counts of war crime murder. He will remain in custody overnight and make his first court appearance on Wednesday, a police statement said.

He will potentially apply for release on bail Wednesday.

Roberts-Smith is only the second Australian veteran of the Afghanistan campaign to be charged with a war crime.

Former SAS soldier Oliver Schulz, 44, has pleaded not guilty to a charge of war crime murder. He is accused of shooting Afghan man Dad Mohammad three times in the head in an Uruzgan province wheat field in May 2012.

War crime murder carries a potential sentence of life in prison. It's a federal crime in Australia, defined as the intentional killing in the context of armed conflict of a person who is not taking an active part in hostilities, such as civilians, prisoners of war or wounded soldiers.

Police arrested Roberts-Smith at Sydney Airport on Tuesday after he arrived on a flight from Brisbane, Australian Federal Police Commissioner Krissy Barrett said.

"It will be alleged that the victims were not taking part in hostilities at the time of their alleged murder in Afghanistan. It will be alleged the victims were detained, unarmed and were under the control of ADF members when they were killed," Barrett told reporters, referring to the Australian Defense Force.

"It will be alleged the victims were shot by the accused or shot by subordinate members of the ADF in the presence of and acting on the orders of the accused," Barrett added.

A civil court has already found similar allegations against Roberts-Smith credible in a defamation suit he brought after several newspapers published articles in 2018 accusing him of a range of war crimes. In 2023, a federal judge rejected Roberts-Smith's claims and ruled that he likely killed four noncombatants unlawfully in 2009 and 2012. But while the civil court found the war crimes allegations were mostly proved on a balance of probabilities, the new charges would have to be proved in a criminal court to a higher standard of beyond reasonable doubt. In September, Australia's High Court said it would not hear an appeal, ending his chances of overturning the ruling.

The charges follow a military report released in 2020 that found evidence that elite Australian SAS and commando regiment troops unlawfully killed 39 Afghan prisoners, farmers and other noncombatants.

Barrett said few soldiers were involved in the new allegations.

"The alleged conduct related to these charges is confined to a very small section of our trusted and

respected ADF which helps keep this country safe," Barrett said.

"The overwhelming majority of our ADF do our country proud. Today's charges are not reflective of the majority of members who serve under our Australian flag with honor, with distinction and with the values of a democratic nation," she added.

The Office of the Special Investigator was established to work with police on the war crime allegations. The office's director of investigations Ross Barnett said allegations of 53 war crimes had been investigated and 39 of those investigations had concluded without charges. Around 40,000 Australian military personnel served in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2021, of whom 41 were killed.

## Michigan muscles its way to program's 2nd national title, beating stubborn UConn 69-63

By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Michigan's new Fab Five threw style points out the door and brought home a prize not even the school's most famous team could capture.

The five fabulous transfers who make up coach Dusty May's starting lineup got down and dirty with the rest of the Wolverines — coming out with the national title trophy Monday night after muscling their way to a 69-63 victory over stingy, stubborn UConn.

Michigan only made two 3-pointers all night.

The Final Four's most outstanding player, Elliot Cadeau, led the Wolverines with 19 points, including the team's first 3, which came 7:04 into the second half. The second 3, from freshman Trey McKenney, came with 1:50 left and felt like a dagger, giving May's team — which had scored 90 points in five straight March Madness games leading to the final — a nine-point lead.

To no one's surprise, UConn fought to the finish. Solo Ball banked in a 3 to cut the deficit to four with 37 seconds left — and after two missed free throws, UConn's Alex Karaban (17 points) barely grazed the rim on a 3 that would've cut the deficit to one with 17 seconds left.

Not until McKenney sank two free throws to bring Michigan's shooting from the line to 25 for 28 for the night could the Wolverines (37-3) kick off the celebration for the program's second title — the other coming in 1989, a few years before the Fab Five arrived and made two trips to the championship game, but never won a title.

"HAIL TO VICTORS!!!!" Jalen Rose, one of the Fab Five stars, posted on social media. "NATIONAL CHAMPIONS!!!!"

It was the first men's hoops title for the Big Ten since Michigan State in 2000. Including UCLA's win in the women's NCAA Tournament Sunday, the conference swept the football (Indiana) and basketball titles this year.

Michigan won this one with defense, holding UConn to 30.9% shooting — the fourth straight game the Wolverines held their opponent to a season-low field-goal percentage.

"These guys have done it all year," May said. "When one side of the ball has let us down, the other side has picked it up. Our togetherness defensively ultimately got us over the hump."

Michigan had to fight for everything. The Wolverines missed their first 11 shots from 3, finished 2 for 15 beyond the arc and won despite the struggles of their best player, Yaxel Lendeborg. Ailing with a hurt knee and foot that kept him from elevating, the graduate transfer from UAB finished with 13 points on 4-of-13 shooting.

"If you'd told me we would shoot it this poorly and (be) dominated on the glass and still find a way to win, I don't know if I would have believed you," May said. "This team just found a way all season."

The two 3-pointers were tied for second fewest by a winning team in the title game, according to Sportradar. Michigan also got outrebounded 22-12 on the offensive glass by a UConn team that would not go away.

"How are you disappointed at all in your group?" UConn coach Dan Hurley said. "These guys have 22

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offensive rebounds versus that group of 'mon-stars' out there. So, proud of the guys."

Truth be told, it wasn't anyone's prettiest night.

UConn's hopes of becoming the first team since John Wooden's UCLA dynasty to win three titles in four seasons came up short, done in by massive foul trouble and its own terrible shooting.

Hurley's team missed its first 11 shots from 3 in the second half.

Braylon Mullins, the hero of the Duke win that put UConn in the Final Four, finished 4 of 17, though he made a pair of late 3s that kept the game in reach. Tarris Reed Jr., the transfer from Michigan, finished with 13 points and 14 rebounds but never took control.

UConn (34-6) covered the 6 1/2-point spread, and Hurley kept his players out on the court to watch the podium get set up for the victors.

About the only consolation: The Huskies clogged things up, slowed things down and made Michigan beat them at their game.

"It's complicated, because everyone's crushed," Hurley said. "We came here to be out there, doing what those guys are doing right now."

Nobody did it quite like the Wolverines this year. They came into the title game shooting freely and winning big. In each of their five tournament games, they broke 90 and won by 13 or more.

In this one, they didn't hit 70 and had to battle to the buzzer. It was ugly — the opposite of an instant classic. And yet, in almost every way, it was the prettiest of them all for Michigan — the one that gives the school what the Fab Five couldn't manage — namely, a natty.

"Nobody cared about stats the whole season," Cadeau said. "Nobody cared about nothing but winning. I'm just glad to be part of that."

Style points aside, this was a championship built from outside — the best team money could buy.

All five Wolverines starters played college ball elsewhere, and all but Nimari Burnett came to Ann Arbor this season. That's a product of the transfer portal that May has shown no reluctance to use since he arrived from Florida Atlantic two seasons ago.

His ability to form a makeshift group into a winner shows the value of a coach and a culture.

"They might be still calling us mercenaries but we're the hardest-working team," Lendenborg said. "We're the best in college basketball and we'll be one of the greatest ever."

Pretty much everyone in the maize and blue would second that.

"Go BLUE. ...champions!!! Respect- Love!" was the social media post from another Fab Five icon, Chris Webber.

## As Trump threatens Iran's infrastructure, a Tehran couple wonders how to prepare

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Zahra Arghavan and Mehdi Alishir stood on their balcony, watching the sun set over Tehran and bracing for the sound of airstrikes.

As time ticks down on U.S. President Donald Trump's latest ultimatum, their thoughts were clouded by new fears: How long will the power be out if plants are bombed? How would they leave the city if the bridges are taken out?

Five weeks on, they have grown used to the roar of American and Israeli fighter jets, the sound of explosions and sleepless nights. Like many, they've left the capital and returned in search of elusive safety. Married for over a decade, they made it through the COVID pandemic and the 12-day war last June.

They've used clear packing tape to line the edges of their windows, a precaution against blasts. Mirrors and fragile objects have been moved or secured. A packed bag holds documents, medications and essentials, ready in case they need to leave quickly.

In an expletive-laden threat over the weekend, Trump vowed that "Tuesday will be Power Plant Day, and Bridge Day," and that Iran's leaders will be "living in Hell" if they don't open the Strait of Hormuz.

"Honestly, the situation is really unclear," Arghavan said. "We don't really understand things like how long the power might go out if it does, or what life without electricity would even look like."

Alishir said he and his wife could handle life without power — and potentially without running water — for a week at most. “If it goes on longer, we’ll definitely run into problems,” he said.

Their struggles began even before the first American and Israeli bombs slammed into Iran on Feb. 28. The Iranian government’s crackdown on nationwide protests in January severely limited internet access. The internet monitoring organization NetBlocks says it’s the longest nationwide shutdown ever recorded. Arghavan runs a small language school that teaches French to Iranians who want to live in the Canadian province of Quebec.

“We were basically an online school, and our students had classes with kids abroad,” she said. “Around 50% of our learners were outside the country. But now, with all these internet outages, it’s really disrupting our work.”

Iranians are divided over the war: Some take part in daily pro-government rallies; others quietly cheer the strikes against their leaders while condemning the deaths of civilians and damage to infrastructure.

The couple blames Israel and the U.S. for starting the war and hope for a diplomatic solution.

“I really hope an agreement is reached soon and that whatever happens, it ends up helping people, because right now people are the ones paying a heavy price,” Arghavan said.

## Democrats hope to increase liberal control of battleground Wisconsin’s Supreme Court

By SCOTT BAUER Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Democrats hoped to increase liberal control of the state Supreme Court in Wisconsin on Tuesday in an election that has focused largely on abortion rights as cases affecting congressional redistricting, union rights and other hot button issues also await in the perennial battleground state.

This year’s Supreme Court election stands in stark contrast to the swing state’s previous two, where national spending records were set in battles over majority control. Spending and national attention is down dramatically this year without control of the court at stake.

Democrats are looking to tighten their control of the court just months before a November election in which they seek to keep the governor’s office and flip the state Legislature, where Republicans have held the majority since 2011. Democrats aspire to undo a host of Republican-enacted laws that made Wisconsin a focal point for the nation’s conservative movement in the 2010s.

In Tuesday’s Supreme Court race, Democratic-backed Chris Taylor, a former state lawmaker who also worked for Planned Parenthood, faces Republican-supported Maria Lazar. Both Taylor and Lazar are state Appeals Court judges.

Liberals would increase their majority on the court to 5-2 from 4-3 with a Taylor win. That would lock in the liberal majority until at least 2030.

Liberals took control of the state’s top court in 2023, ending 15 years under a conservative majority. They held onto their majority with last year’s victory in a race that drew involvement from President Donald Trump and billionaires George Soros and Elon Musk, who personally handed out \$1 million checks to voters in the state.

Liberals argued that democracy was at stake in the 2025 election, noting that when the court was controlled by conservative justices in 2020 it came just one vote shy of siding with Trump in his attempt to invalidate enough votes to overturn his loss in that year’s presidential election.

Since liberals took control, the court has reversed several election-related rulings, including one that overturned a ban on absentee ballot drop boxes, and it is poised to once again be in the spotlight around the 2028 presidential election.

Races for the court are officially nonpartisan, but support for candidates breaks down mostly along partisan lines.

Taylor has focused much of her campaign on abortion rights, with one TV ad saying that “abortion is on the ballot.” In another ad, she criticized Lazar for calling the U.S. Supreme Court’s overturning of *Roe v. Wade* in 2022 “very wise.”

Lazar, who was supported by anti-abortion groups in her run for the appeals court, tried to brand Taylor as nothing more than a politician who will push a partisan agenda on the court.

They sparred over each other's partisanship during the campaign's sole debate last week.

Lazar accused Taylor of being a "radical, extreme legislator" and a "judicial activist." Taylor said that Lazar would bring "an extreme, right-wing political agenda to the bench."

Lazar has had a much harder time getting her message out. Taylor had a large fundraising advantage and spent about nine times as much as Lazar on television ads, based on a tally by the Brennan Center for Justice.

The liberal-controlled court has already struck down a state law banning abortion and ordered new legislative maps, fueling Democrats' hopes of capturing a majority this November.

Taylor has been a judge since 2020 and before that she spent 10 years as a Democrat representing the liberal capital city of Madison in the state Assembly.

Lazar, a judge since 2015, previously worked four years under a Republican attorney general in the state Department of Justice. In that role, she defended a law enacted under former Republican Gov. Scott Walker that effectively ended collective bargaining for most public workers.

A circuit court judge ruled in December that the law is unconstitutional, a decision expected to ultimately land before the state Supreme Court.

Lazar also defended laws passed by Republicans and signed by Walker implementing a voter ID requirement and restricting abortion access.

Democrats are optimistic given the past two Supreme Court elections, which saw candidates they backed winning by double digits.

The seat is open due to the retirement of a conservative justice. Another conservative justice is retiring next year, giving liberals a chance to take 6-1 control of the court if they win on Tuesday.

## **Taylor Frankie Paul faces protective order hearing in Utah after 'Bachelorette' cancellation**

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM and ANDREW DALTON Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A Utah judge is set to hear arguments Tuesday on a protective order sought by a former partner against Taylor Frankie Paul, the star of "The Secret Lives of Mormon Wives" and a recently filmed season of "The Bachelorette" that was canceled over abuse allegations in the relationship.

Dakota Mortensen, who has temporary custody of his and Paul's 2-year-old son, is asking the court to turn a short-term protective order against her into a long-term one as authorities investigate domestic violence reports from earlier this year.

Paul and Mortensen are expected to participate in the hearing remotely while their lawyers appear in person at the Salt Lake City courthouse. Details of the temporary protective order have been kept sealed.

Attorneys are expected to address reports under investigation from February, not a 2023 fight that led to Paul's arrest and resurfaced just before her "Bachelorette" season was supposed to premiere, though the older issues may be discussed.

ABC last month announced the unprecedented move of shelving an entire, already-filmed new season of "The Bachelorette" with Paul in the title role. The network and its parent company Disney blamed the cancellation on a leaked video, shot in 2023 and posted by TMZ on March 19, in which Paul appears to punch, kick and throw chairs at Mortensen while her young daughter watches and cries.

Police body camera footage of Paul's arrest in that case was featured in the series premiere of "The Secret Lives of Mormon Wives," which first aired in 2024. Paul is shown calling it "the worst night of my life." Video of the fight itself, which appears to be from Mortensen's point of view, was not made public until last month's leak.

Paul was charged with aggravated assault and other offenses, including domestic violence in the presence of a child. She pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor assault charge, and the other counts were dismissed.

Paul has two children with her ex-husband, Tate Paul, along with the son she had with Mortensen after

their 2023 dispute.

A Paul representative said after the cancellation that she had been "silently suffering extensive mental and physical abuse as well as threats of retaliation" and was "finally gaining the strength to face her accuser."

Mortensen said in a statement that he was "used to these baseless claims about me and our relationship, which I categorically deny."

Production has also been paused on the fifth season of "The Secret Lives of Mormon Wives," the Hulu series that made Paul a reality star. Her casting on "The Bachelorette" offered synergy between the shows for Disney, which owns both Hulu and ABC.

She became known as an influencer in the #MomTok community, a group of women from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sharing their lives on TikTok. The group, and Paul's admissions of polyamory within it, helped spawn the hit reality show.

On Sunday, Paul announced she was leaving what is widely known as the Mormon church. She said on Instagram that she will always have love and respect for the Utah-based religious institution but, "It's time to detach myself."

## Rapper Offset shot in Florida, spokesperson says he is stable

HOLLYWOOD, Florida (AP) — The rapper Offset was shot Monday and is stable, according to a spokesperson for the Migos rapper, but his exact condition is unknown.

He is being treated at a hospital and being closely monitored, the spokesperson said in a statement.

Offset was formerly married to Cardi B, with whom he has three children.

The Seminole Police Department said a person sustained injuries that were not life-threatening Monday evening at a valet area outside of the Seminole Hard Rock in Hollywood, Florida. The police department did not identify the victim.

Two people were detained by police and officials are investigating the incident, according to a statement from the police department.

"The site is secure and there is no threat to the public," according to the police department. "Operations continue as normal."

Offset's cousin Takeoff, another member of Migos, was shot dead in 2022.

The trio, with its rapid-fire triplet flow, became known as one of the most popular hip-hop groups of all time. It broke out with the 2013 hit "Versace" and later earned Grammy nominations for best rap album with 2018's "Culture," while a track off it nabbed a nod for best rap performance.

Offset and Cardi B were secretly wed in September 2017 in Atlanta. In 2024, Cardi B announced that she filed for divorce.

## Trump has repeatedly delayed deadlines for Iran, but suggests Tuesday's is final

By JESSE BEDAYN and MICHELLE PRICE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has pushed back a deadline for Iran to cut a deal or open the Strait of Hormuz from Monday to Tuesday, the latest of several deadline delays, and threatened that without a deal "Hell will reign down on them."

Trump's previous deadline was for March 23, but that shifted several times over the ensuing weeks as Trump oscillated between heated threats, announced delays and proclamations that the negotiations were going well, sometimes in the same statement.

Iran rejected the latest ceasefire proposal, the country's state-run IRNA news agency reported Monday. Shortly after, Trump gave an ominous warning to Iran if it didn't capitulate, and suggested Tuesday's 8 p.m. deadline was final.

"They'll have no bridges. They'll have no power plants. They'll have no anything," he said.

U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres warned the U.S. that attacks on civilian infrastructure is banned

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under international law, according to his spokesperson. Trump, speaking with reporters, said he's "not at all" concerned about committing war crimes with such attacks.

Here are some of Trump's deadlines and threats, and what happened next.

An ultimatum about reopening the Strait of Hormuz

On March 21, Trump posted on Truth Social that if Iran doesn't "FULLY OPEN, WITHOUT THREAT, the Strait of Hormuz, within 48 HOURS from this exact point in time, the United States of America will hit and obliterate their various POWER PLANTS."

Iran had until the evening of March 23.

Then 12 hours before the deadline, Trump took to Truth Social to share the good news: that both countries had productive conversations toward concluding the conflict.

"I HAVE INSTRUCTED THE DEPARTMENT OF WAR TO POSTPONE ANY AND ALL MILITARY STRIKES AGAINST IRANIAN POWER PLANTS AND ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR A FIVE DAY PERIOD," he wrote, adding that was subject to the success of the discussions.

That pushed the deadline out to the end of that week.

A threat to target desalinization plants

Before the deadline, on March 26, Trump doubled down on his threats on Truth Social: "They better get serious soon, before it is too late, because once that happens, there is NO TURNING BACK, and it won't be pretty!"

But later that day, he extended the deadline for another 10 days, to April 6 at 8 p.m., and said on Truth Social that negotiations were "going very well."

On March 30, Trump put out a mixed statement: celebrating progress in the talks with Iran while also expanding his threatened bombing if a deal wasn't "shortly reached," adding that "it probably will be."

"We will conclude our lovely 'stay' in Iran by blowing up and completely obliterating all of their Electric Generating Plants, Oil Wells and Kharg Island (and possibly all desalinization plants!)," he wrote.

It's unclear how soon "shortly reached" meant for Trump, but a deal was not made as the deadline loomed.

An expletive-filled threat to attack power plants and bridges

"Remember when I gave Iran ten days to MAKE A DEAL or OPEN UP THE HORMUZ STRAIT," Trump said in a Truth Social post on Saturday, "Time is running out - 48 hours before all Hell will reign down on them."

As the deadline approached, his posts had doubled down on his threats until Sunday, when Trump pushed the deadline again in an expletive-filled post.

"Tuesday will be Power Plant Day, and Bridge Day, all wrapped up in one, in Iran. There will be nothing like it!!! Open the F——in' Strait, you crazy bastards, or you'll be living in Hell," Trump said on Truth Social, followed by another post that specified 8 p.m. as the deadline.

Trump then suggested on Monday that Tuesday's deadline would be final, saying he'd already given Iran enough extensions.

"The entire country can be taken out in one night, and that night might be tomorrow night," Trump said. "We have a plan, because of the power of our military, where every bridge in Iran will be decimated by 12 o'clock tomorrow night."

What's next for diplomacy with Iran?

Mojtaba Ferdousi Pour, head of Iran's diplomatic mission in Cairo, said Iran no longer trusts the Trump administration after the U.S. bombed the Islamic Republic twice during previous rounds of talks.

"We only accept an end of the war with guarantees that we won't be attacked again," he told The Associated Press.

A regional official involved in the talks said efforts had not collapsed. "We are still talking to both sides," he said, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss closed-door diplomacy.

On an Israeli TV station, Channel 13, the evening newscast showed a large digital clock counting down the hours and minutes to Tuesday's deadline.

## Trump widens threat to all of Iran's power plants and bridges as his deadline for a deal approaches

By JON GAMBRELL, SAMY MAGDY, BASSEM MROUE and WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump expanded his threat against Iran to include all power plants and bridges Monday as his ultimatum to make a deal ticked closer, after Tehran rejected a 45-day ceasefire proposal and said it wants a permanent end to the war.

"The entire country can be taken out in one night, and that night might be tomorrow night," Trump said. He suggested that his Tuesday 8 p.m. EDT deadline was final, saying he'd already given Iran enough extensions.

The U.S. has told Iran to open the crucial Strait of Hormuz to all shipping traffic or see power plants and bridges wiped out, sparking warnings about possible war crimes.

Israel piled on pressure by attacking a major petrochemical plant and killing the intelligence chief for the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard.

Tehran with its rejection conveyed its own, 10-point plan to end the fighting through Pakistan, a key mediator, Iran's state-run IRNA news agency said.

"We only accept an end of the war with guarantees that we won't be attacked again," Mojtaba Ferdousi Pour, head of Iran's diplomatic mission in Cairo, told The Associated Press. He said Iran no longer trusts the Trump administration after the U.S. bombed the Islamic Republic twice during previous rounds of talks.

A regional official involved in talks said efforts had not collapsed. "We are still talking to both sides," he said, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss closed-door diplomacy.

And even Trump said negotiations with Iran continued.

Activists reported a new wave of strikes on Tehran early Tuesday. Israel claimed credit but offered no immediate details on what had been targeted.

Meanwhile, Japan said Tuesday a Japanese national who had been detained in Iran since January has been released on bail.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Minoru Kihara told reporters in Tokyo that his release was confirmed Monday and that Japan is demanding a full release from Iranian authorities. He said the Japanese ambassador to Iran met the person released and that he was in good health without providing further details.

The person released is believed to be a journalist at Japan's NHK public television. Another Japanese national, who was detained in Iran last June, was released and returned to Japan in March.

Trump says Iranians 'willing to suffer' for freedom

Trump has issued ultimatums to Iran before, only to find ways to back off. But he was more explicit this time on plans to follow through.

"Every bridge in Iran will be decimated by 12 o'clock tomorrow night," he said, and all power plants will be "burning, exploding and never to be used again."

Asked if he was concerned about accusations of war crimes, Trump responded, "No, not at all." He suggested that Iranians want the U.S. to carry out its threats because it could lead to the end of their current leadership.

Iranian citizens are "willing to suffer," he said, "in order to have freedom." But there has been no sign of an uprising in Iran as residents shelter from bombardment.

International warnings piled up against expanded strikes. "Any attack on civilian infrastructure is a violation of international law and a very clear one," United Nations spokesperson Stephane Dujarric later told journalists.

Egyptian, Pakistani and Turkish mediators had sent Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and U.S. Mideast envoy Steve Witkoff a proposal calling for the ceasefire and the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, two Mideast officials told the AP. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the private negotiations.

Iranian and Omani officials also were working on a mechanism for administrating the strait, through

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which a fifth of the world's oil is shipped in peacetime. Iran's grip on it has shaken the world economy.

Tehran has refused to let U.S. and Israeli vessels through after they started the war on Feb. 28.

Iran's new supreme leader makes rare statement

Israel struck a key petrochemical plant in the South Pars natural gas field, saying it was aimed at eliminating a major source of revenue for Iran. The field, the world's largest, is shared with Qatar and is Iran's biggest source of domestic energy for its 93 million people.

The strike appeared to be separate from Trump's threats. An earlier Israeli attack there in March prompted Iran to target energy infrastructure in other Middle East countries, a major escalation.

Israel also killed the head of intelligence for Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, Maj. Gen. Majid Khademi, according to Iranian state media. And Israel said it killed the leader of the Revolutionary Guard's undercover unit in its expeditionary Quds Force, Asghar Bakeri.

"We will continue to hunt them down one by one," Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz said of top Iranian officials.

New Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei, who still has not been seen or heard in public, issued a rare statement expressing condolences over Khademi. Israeli strikes have killed dozens of top Iranian leaders, including Khamenei's father.

Israel's military also said it struck three Tehran airports overnight — Bahram, Mehrabad and Azmayesh — hitting dozens of helicopters and aircraft it said belonged to the Iranian Air Force.

A Tehran resident said "constantly there is the sound of bombs, air defenses, drones," speaking on condition of anonymity for her safety. Another detailed taking sleeping pills to get through nightly bombardments, and said people worry about power, gas and water cuts.

Airstrikes kill at least 29 across Iran

Smoke rose near Tehran's Azadi Square after an airstrike hit the grounds of the Sharif University of Technology. Multiple countries have sanctioned the university for its work with the military, particularly on Iran's ballistic missile program.

Authorities and Iranian state media reported at least 29 people killed across the country by strikes.

In Lebanon, where Israel has launched air attacks and a ground invasion that it says target the Iran-linked Hezbollah militia, an airstrike hit an apartment in Ain Saadeh, a predominately Christian town east of Beirut. It killed an official in the Lebanese Forces, a Christian political party strongly opposed to Hezbollah, his wife and another woman.

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

More than 1,400 people have been killed in Lebanon and more than 1 million people have been displaced. Eleven Israeli soldiers have died there.

In Gulf Arab states and the occupied West Bank, more than two dozen people have died, while 23 have been reported dead in Israel and 13 U.S. service members have been killed.

## **Bangladesh conducts emergency measles vaccinations as outbreak kills more than 100 children**

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — Bangladesh is conducting emergency measles-rubella vaccinations while trying to contain an ongoing outbreak that has killed more than 100 children in less than a month.

The government in partnership with the World Health Organization, the U.N. children's agency and the Gavi vaccine alliance began working to vaccinate children age 6 months to 5 years old in 18 high-risk districts Sunday and will expand nationwide in phases from next month, a joint statement said.

A UNICEF official said the agency was deeply concerned about the sharp rise in cases, which was putting the youngest and most vulnerable children at serious risk. "This resurgence highlights critical immunity gaps, particularly among zero-dose and under-vaccinated children, while infections among infants under nine months, who are not yet eligible for routine vaccination, are especially alarming," said Rana Flowers, the agency's representative in Bangladesh.

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More than 900 cases of measles have been confirmed among 7,500 suspected cases reported since March 15, according to the official data in the South Asian nation of more than 170 million people.

Measles is a highly contagious airborne disease causing fever, respiratory symptoms and a characteristic rash and can sometimes have severe or fatal complications, especially in young children, according to WHO.

Vaccination is crucial to preventing the spread of measles, but the WHO says 95% of the population has to be vaccinated in order to stop the disease from spreading.

Bangladesh's Health Minister Sardar Mohammed Sakhawat Husain responding to questions in Parliament said Monday that the new outbreak was caused by the mismanagement and failures of past governments.

He said the previous government of ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and an interim government headed by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus failed to make proper decisions regarding vaccine stockpiles, causing shortages affecting vaccines for measles and six other diseases.

The vaccination campaign for measles was disrupted during Bangladesh's recent political upheavals. Hasina was ousted in a mass uprising in 2024, and Yunus led an interim administration that transferred power to an elected government after an election in February.

Authorities are advising parents to go to hospitals whenever someone is suspected to have measles.

"They should avoid taking medicine from shopkeepers unnecessarily. If a child has a fever, especially high fever — 101, 102, 3, 4 (Fahrenheit, or higher than 38.3 Celsius) — they should not rely on medicine from local shops," said F. A. Asma Khan, deputy director of the Infectious Diseases Hospital in Dhaka.

"Instead, they must take the child to a hospital as soon as possible, because our medical officers are capable of providing proper basic treatment," she said.

Since the launch of a massive immunization campaign in 1979, Bangladesh has made remarkable progress — raising the coverage of fully immunized children from just 2% to 81.6%.

But UNICEF warned last year that while Bangladesh has made strong strides to increase immunization coverage, stark disparities persist.

## Artemis II breaks Apollo 13's distance record with daring moon flyby that included a solar eclipse

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — After traveling deeper into space than any other humans, the Artemis II astronauts pointed their moonship toward home Monday night, wrapping up a lunar cruise that revealed views of the far side never beheld by eyes until now.

Their flyby of the moon — NASA's first return since the Apollo era — even included some celestial sight-seeing besides yielding rich science. It was a significant step toward landing boot prints near the moon's south pole in just two years.

A total solar eclipse greeted the three Americans and one Canadian as the moon temporarily blocked the sun from their perspective. Mercury, Venus, Mars and Saturn nodded at them from the black void. The landing sites of Apollo 12 and 14 also were visible, poignant reminders of NASA's first age of exploration more than half a century ago.

In an especially riveting retro throwback, Artemis II shattered the distance record set by Apollo 13 in 1970. NASA's Orion capsule reached a maximum distance of 252,756 miles (406,771 kilometers) from Earth before hanging a U-turn behind the moon, 4,101 miles (6,600 kilometers) farther than Apollo 13.

"It is blowing my mind what you can see with the naked eye from the moon right now. It is just unbelievable," Canadian astronaut Jeremy Hansen radioed. He challenged "this generation and the next to make sure this record is not long-lived."

Artemis II astronauts get an Apollo wake-up message

Apollo 13 commander Jim Lovell wished the crew well in a recording made two months before his death last August. Mission Control beamed up his message to commander Reid Wiseman, pilot Victor Glover, Christina Koch and Hansen, before their fly-around began.

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"Welcome to my old neighborhood," said Lovell, who also flew on Apollo 8, humanity's first lunar visit. "It's a historic day and I know how busy you'll be, but don't forget to enjoy the view."

The Artemis II astronauts carried up with them the Apollo 8 silk patch that accompanied Lovell to the moon. "It's just a real honor to have that on board with us," Wiseman said.

Artemis II is using the same maneuver that Apollo 13 did after its "Houston, we've had a problem" oxygen tank explosion wiped out any hope of a moon landing.

Known as a free-return lunar trajectory, this no-stopping-to-land route takes advantage of Earth and the moon's gravity, reducing the need for fuel. It's a celestial figure-eight that put the astronauts on course for home once they emerged from behind the moon Monday evening.

Astronauts lock in on lunar observations

Artemis II's lunar fly-around and intense observation period lasted seven hours, by far the highlight of the nearly 10-day test flight that will end with a splashdown in the Pacific on Friday.

Venturing as close as 4,067 miles (6,545 kilometers) to the gray dusty surface, the astronauts zipped through a list of more than two dozen targets, using powerful Nikon cameras as well as their iPhones to zoom in on impact craters and other intriguing lunar features.

Before getting started, they requested permission to name two bright, freshly carved craters. They suggested Integrity, the name of their capsule, and Carroll, commander Wiseman's wife, who died of cancer in 2020.

Wiseman wept as Hansen put in the request to Mission Control, and all four astronauts embraced in tears.

"Such a majestic view out here," Wiseman radioed once he regained his composure and started picture-taking. The astronauts called down that they managed to capture the moon and Earth in the same shot, and they provided a running commentary to scientists back in Houston on what they were seeing.

At one point, Koch reported an overwhelming sensation of emotion for a second or two while zooming in on the moon. "Something just drew me in suddenly to the lunar landscape and it became real," she said.

The Artemis II astronauts made their closest approach to the moon and reached their maximum distance from Earth while they were out of contact. Their speed at closest approach: 3,139 mph (5,052 kph). The spacecraft accelerated as it appeared from behind the moon and the planned communications blackout and made tracks for Earth.

An Earthrise came into view showing Asia, Africa and Oceania as Mission Control called out: "We are Earthbound and ready to bring you home." Flight controllers in Houston flipped their mission patches over to signify the return leg.

President Donald Trump phoned the astronauts following the flyby, calling them "modern-day pioneers."

"Today you've made history and made all America really proud, incredibly proud," the president said, adding that more lunar traveling is coming and ultimately "the whole big trip to Mars."

Wiseman and his crew spent years studying lunar geography to prepare for the big event, adding solar eclipses to their repertoire during the past few weeks. By launching last Wednesday, they ensured themselves of a total solar eclipse from their vantage point behind the moon, courtesy of the cosmos.

Topping their science target list: Orientale Basin, a sprawling impact basin with three concentric rings, the outermost of which stretches nearly 600 miles (950 kilometers) across.

Their moon mentor, NASA geologist Kelsey Young, expects thousands of pictures.

Artemis II is NASA's first astronaut moonshot since Apollo 17 in 1972. It sets the stage for next year's Artemis III, which will see another Orion crew practice docking with lunar landers in orbit around Earth. The culminating moon landing by two astronauts near the moon's south pole will follow on Artemis IV in 2028.

While Artemis II may be taking Apollo 13's path, it's most reminiscent of Apollo 8 and humanity's first lunar visitors who orbited the moon on Christmas Eve 1968 and read from the Book of Genesis.

Glover said flying to the moon during Christianity's Holy Week brought home for him "the beauty of creation." Earth is an oasis amid "a whole bunch of nothing, this thing we call the universe" where humanity exists as one, he observed over the weekend.

"This is an opportunity for us to remember where we are, who we are, and that we are the same thing and that we've got to get through this together," Glover said, clasping hands with his crewmates.

## US soldier trying to halt wife's deportation after she was detained on Louisiana military base

By JACK BROOK Associated Press/Report for America

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A U.S. Army staff sergeant is trying to halt his wife's deportation after she was detained inside a Louisiana military base where the couple was planning to live together just days after their wedding.

The effort to remove the soldier's wife, who was born in Honduras and remained in a federal immigration detention center Monday, has drawn backlash from military family advocates who called the detention demoralizing in a time of war and warned that deporting spouses could undermine recruitment.

Staff Sgt. Matthew Blank said he brought his wife, Annie Ramos, 22, to his base in Fort Polk, Louisiana, last Thursday so that she could begin the process to receive military benefits and take steps toward a green card. The couple married in March.

Federal immigration agents detained Ramos as part of the Trump administration's mass deportation agenda, which legal experts say has dispensed with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's practice of leniency toward families of military members.

"I never imagined that trying to do the right thing would lead to her being taken away from me," said Blank, 23, in a statement to The Associated Press. "What was supposed to be the happiest week of our lives has turned into one of the hardest."

Ramos' detention was first reported by The New York Times.

Ramos entered the U.S. in 2005, when she was younger than 2 years old. That same year, her family failed to appear for an immigration hearing, leading a judge to issue a final order of removal, according to DHS.

"She has no legal status to be in this country," DHS said in an emailed statement. "This administration is not going to ignore the rule of law."

In 2020, Ramos applied to receive Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, also known as DACA, but her husband says her application has remained "in limbo" amid legal fights to end the Obama-era program.

Last April, DHS eliminated a 2022 policy that considered military service of an immediate family member to be a "significant mitigating factor" in deciding whether or not to pursue immigration enforcement. The administration's new policy states that "military service alone does not exempt aliens from the consequences of violating U.S. immigration laws."

Prior to the Trump administration's mass deportation push, DHS generally allowed the spouses of active-duty military members to gain legal status through policies like parole in place and deferred action that military recruiters promote, according to Margaret Stock, a military immigration law expert.

Ramos' case would have been easy to resolve in the past, Stock said, but instead DHS now appears to be focusing on detaining members of military families whenever the opportunity arises — including when, like Ramos, they are attempting to apply for legal status.

"It doesn't make any sense — they're going to get arrested for following the law? That's stupid," Stock said. "It's bad for morale, it disrupts the soldiers' readiness."

In September, more than 60 members of Congress wrote to DHS and the U.S. Department of Defense warning that arrests of military personnel and veteran's family members was "betraying its promises to service members who play a key role in protecting U.S. national security."

The Pentagon declined to comment.

Lydia Owiti-Otienoh, who runs an advocacy group called the Foreign-Born Military Spouse Network, said she's anecdotally seen an increase in cases where the lives of military families have been upended by tightening immigration restrictions. She believes the federal government is undermining its own interests by attempting to deport military spouses.

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"It just sends a really bad message — we don't care about you, about your spouses, anything you are doing," Owiti-Otienoh said. "If military families are not stable, national security is not stable."

Blank's mother, Jen Rickling, told the AP in a statement that her daughter-in-law, a Sunday school teacher and biochemistry major, had been everything she hoped for — someone who "loves my son with her whole heart."

"We absolutely adore her," Rickling said. "I believe in this country. And I believe we can do better than this — for Annie, for other military families, and for the values we hold dear."

Blank says he had been eager to start building a life and with Ramos on the base while he served his country.

"I want my wife home," Blank said. "And I will not stop fighting until she is back where she belongs, by my side."

## US stocks drift higher ahead of Trump's deadline to bomb Iranian power plants

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. stocks drifted higher in hesitant trading on Monday, ahead of a deadline that President Donald Trump has set to bomb Iranian power plants.

The S&P 500 rose 0.4%, coming off its first winning week in the last six. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 165 points, or 0.4%, and the Nasdaq composite climbed 0.5%.

Oil prices likewise rose after seesawing through the day amid uncertainty about what will happen in the war with Iran and how long it will slow the global flow of oil and natural gas. Iran on Monday rejected the latest ceasefire proposal and instead said it wants a permanent end to the war.

"We won't merely accept a ceasefire," Mojtaba Ferdousi Pour, head of the Iranian diplomatic mission in Cairo, told The Associated Press. "We only accept an end of the war with guarantees that we won't be attacked again."

Fighting continued in the war, meanwhile, including an Israeli attack on an Iranian petrochemical plant. And in the background was the clock ticking toward a deadline, one that Trump has moved multiple times, where he has threatened to attack Iranian power plants if it does not open the Strait of Hormuz. A fifth of the world's oil typically sails through the strait during peacetime.

Trump on Monday suggested that his latest deadline of Tuesday at 8 p.m. Eastern time will be the final one, saying he'd already given enough extensions. "The entire country can be taken out in one night, and that night might be tomorrow night," Trump said.

Monday also offered the first chance for U.S. stock prices to react to a report from Friday that said U.S. employers hired more workers last month than economists expected. The unemployment rate unexpectedly improved.

They're encouraging signals for an economy that's had to absorb painful leaps in costs for gasoline since the war's beginning. The average price for a gallon of regular gasoline is nearly \$4.12 across the country, according to AAA. It was below \$3 a couple days before the United States and Israel launched attacks to begin the war in late February.

For countries that don't produce as much oil as the United States, the pain has been even worse. That's because they are more reliant on oil coming from the Middle East, and the war has blocked in much of the crude produced in the Persian Gulf area. That oil typically gets to customers around the world by exiting the Strait of Hormuz.

The price for a barrel of benchmark U.S. crude rose 0.8% to settle at \$112.41 after erasing an earlier modest dip. Brent crude, the international standard, added 0.8% to \$109.77 per barrel and remains well above its roughly \$70 price from before the war.

On Wall Street, a split performance for the Big Tech stocks that dominate the U.S. market kept things in check. Apple rose 1.1%, and Amazon added 1.4%. Tesla slid 2.2%, and Microsoft fell 0.2%.

Bank stocks were strong, including a 1.3% rise for JPMorgan Chase.

CEO Jamie Dimon said in his annual letter to shareholders released on Monday that the U.S. economy continues to be resilient, and businesses still look healthy. He, though, also acknowledged that prices for stocks and other assets are high, which could imply “anything less than positive outcomes could have a dramatic impact on global markets.”

All told, the S&P 500 rose 29.14 points to 6,611.83. The Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 165.21 to 46,669.88, and the Nasdaq composite climbed 117.16 to 21,996.34.

In the bond market, Treasury yields held relatively steady. The 10-year Treasury yield was sitting at 4.33%. That’s still well above its 3.97% level from before the war. The rise has pushed up rates for mortgages and other loans going to U.S. households and businesses, which slows the economy.

A report on Monday said that finance, transportation and other U.S. businesses in services sectors grew in March for a 21st straight month of expansion. But the growth was slightly slower than economists expected, and a measure of prices accelerated at its fastest pace since 2022 in a potentially discouraging signal for inflation.

In stock markets abroad, Japan’s Nikkei 225 added 0.5%, and South Korea’s Kospi jumped 1.4%. Many other markets in Europe and Asia were closed for holidays.

## **AP says it will offer buyouts as part of pivot away from newspaper-focused history**

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

The Associated Press, one of the world’s oldest and most influential news organizations, said Monday it is offering buyouts to an unspecified number of its U.S.-based journalists as part of an acceleration away from the focus on newspapers and their print journalism that sustained the company since the mid-1800s.

The News Media Guild, the union that represents AP journalists, said more than 120 of the staff members it represents received buyout offers on Monday.

The news organization is becoming more focused on visual journalism and developing new revenue sources, particularly through companies investing in artificial intelligence, to cope with the economic collapse of many legacy news outlets. Once the lion’s share of AP’s revenue, big newspaper companies now account for 10% of its income.

“We’re not a newspaper company and we haven’t been for quite some time,” Julie Pace, executive editor and senior vice president of the AP, said in an interview.

Despite changes – the company has doubled the number of video journalists it employs in the United States since 2022 – remnants of a staffing structure built largely to provide stories to newspapers and broadcasters in individual states have remained.

That has its roots well back in American history; the AP was started in the mid-19th century by New York newspapers looking to share the costs of reporting outside their immediate territory.

Exact numbers of staff reduction unclear

The number of AP journalists who will lose jobs is murky, in part intentionally. The AP does not say how many journalists it employs, though it has a large international presence as well as its U.S. staff. Pace said the AP’s goal is to reduce its global staff by less than 5%.

Since buyouts are being offered now to only U.S. journalists, it stands to reason that the cut among that workforce will be more than 5%. Whether there are layoffs depends on how many people take the offer, Pace said.

“The AP employs hundreds of talented journalists who are willing and able to adjust to the changing media landscape,” the union said in a statement. “However, the company refuses to offer them appropriate training and tools. Instead, AP continues to get rid of experienced staff and flirt with artificial intelligence — ignoring the opportunity to differentiate AP news stories as ones that are and always will be created by human journalists.”

The union said AP ignored a request last week to bargain over artificial intelligence. The news outlet had no immediate comment on that claim, or the union’s estimate of how many people were offered buyouts.

It's not clear whether the buyout offers were concluded by Monday afternoon.

Over the past four years, the AP's revenue from newspapers has declined by 25%. Gannett and McClatchy, two of the largest traditional newspaper publishers, dropped AP in 2024.

In recent days, the company learned that Lee Enterprises — publishers of newspapers like The Buffalo News, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and the Richmond Times-Dispatch — is seeking an early exit from a contract due to expire at the end of 2026.

Pace said the buyout plan was in the works before learning about Lee Enterprises. "We made a decision earlier this year that we needed to be bolder in this transformation," she said.

An even higher focus on the day's biggest stories

Besides the transition to more video capabilities, the AP is deploying rapid-response teams where staff members, no matter their geographic base, contribute to the day's big stories, she said. The AP is putting more journalists on beats to break news on topics of known customer interest. But it is committed to maintaining a presence in all 50 states.

"The AP is not in trouble," Pace said. "We're making these changes from a position of strength but we're doing so now to recognize our changing customer base."

Those customers now are dominated by broadcast, digital and technology companies, an illustration of where people are getting news. The AP has seen 200% growth in revenue from technology companies over the last four years, said Kristin Heitmann, senior vice president and chief revenue officer.

The AP was among the first news outlets to make a deal with an AI company, agreeing in 2023 to lease part of its text archive to OpenAI as it built out its capabilities. The AP launched on Snowflake Marketplace last year to license data directly to enterprises building their own system. It has launched AP Intelligence, a division designed to sell data to financial and advertising sectors, for example.

Google contracted with AP last year to deliver news through the Gemini chatbot, the tech giant's first deal with a news publisher.

"If you can think of a large technology company," Heitmann said, "they are a customer of ours."

Predictions markets now part of the picture for AP

Last month, the AP agreed to sell U.S. elections data to Kalshi, the world's largest predictions market.

AP's long tradition in counting and analyzing elections data is another growth area; the company saw a 30% increase in customers between the 2020 and 2024 cycles. It got an additional boost last year when ABC, CBS, NBC and CNN signed on to the service.

The company, traditionally a wholesaler of news to other companies, has also seen growing interest in its direct-to-consumer product, [apnews.com](https://www.apnews.com), which provides revenue through advertising and donations.

The new business frontiers do not indicate a weakening in the AP's standards of providing fast, accurate, non-biased news, leaders said. "If anything, it makes it more important that we retain these values as we make the transition," Pace said.

The AP is trying new forms of fact-checking, including use of video, and more often putting its journalists in public to explain how they got particular stories, she said.

"I think that authenticity, and the fact that you can associate a real person who is often quite experienced and quite deep on their beats ... it builds more credibility," she said. "We're really trying to embrace that because I do think it's vital when there is so much misinformation out there."

## **Savannah Guthrie returns to 'Today' anchor desk for first time since mother's disappearance**

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Savannah Guthrie was back and almost all business at NBC's "Today" show anchor desk on Monday, marking a return for the first time in more than two months since her mother's disappearance. "Here we go, ready or not," Guthrie said as the show opened. "Let's do the news."

After running through a series of news headlines, Guthrie said that "we are so glad that you started our week with us and it's good to be home." Her co-host, Craig Melvin said that "it's good to have you back

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at home.”

She greeted longtime co-worker Al Roker with “Good morning, Sunshine,” when he noted that it was good to see her on the set. At the end of the first 25-minute portion of the show, she offered Melvin a high-five.

Emotions got the better of her before the last half hour, when she joined her colleagues in front of fans gathered at the show’s Rockefeller Center studio. She fought back tears when one fan was seen with a “Welcome home Savannah” shirt, and clutched colleague Jenna Bush Hager’s arm and thanked people for their support.

Guthrie says it’s hard to go forward not knowing what happened

Guthrie, one of morning television’s most recognizable faces, has been a “Today” host since 2012. She has acknowledged that she’s a changed person and that it’s hard to go forward not knowing what happened to Nancy Guthrie, who authorities believe was taken against her will from her Arizona home.

Despite an intense search involving thousands of federal and local officers and volunteers, there has been no sign of the 84-year-old mother of three since she was reported missing Feb. 1.

The “Today” show has followed the story closely for the past two months, but it wasn’t mentioned during the first hour of her return on Monday. Bringing things back to normal was clearly intentional: Her return wasn’t referenced during interviews with NBC’s Gabe Gutierrez at the White House and military analyst Steve Warren on the show’s set.

Hoda Kotb, the former anchor who had filled in for Guthrie for much of the past two months and interviewed her former colleague, wasn’t on set Monday.

“Today” has seen a ratings boost over the past two months and has even eclipsed ABC’s “Good Morning America” as the leader in the morning show ratings. The shows aren’t the profit generators they once were for the networks, but the rivalry is still intense.

“Today” averaged 3.1 million viewers for the first three months of the year, up nearly 9% in an era most broadcast programs lose viewers. It’s hard to tell how much the Guthrie story had to do with that: NBC also aired the Super Bowl and the Winter Olympics in February, and both events tend to help a morning show’s ratings.

“Good Morning America” averaged 2.93 million viewers, up 2% over 2025 while “CBS Mornings” plunged 17% to 1.76 million, according to the Nielsen company.

As part of a video message released by her New York church on Easter Sunday, Guthrie spoke about feeling “moments of deep disappointment with God, the feeling of utter abandonment.” But she said the resurrection is not fully celebrated “if we do not acknowledge the feelings of loss, pain, and yes, death.”

In announcing her return to NBC’s flagship morning show, Guthrie said she was uncertain whether she’ll feel like she still belongs.

“It’s hard to imagine doing it because it’s such a place of joy and lightness,” she said just over a week ago on “Today” during her first interview since the disappearance. “I can’t come back and try to be something that I’m not. But I can’t not come back because it’s my family.”

She didn’t anticipate faking her way through the show, which is normally light-hearted with a mix of serious, breaking news.

Guthrie’s mom had made occasional visits to show’s set

There had been a great deal of speculation about whether she would return.

“I want to smile, and when I do it will be real,” she told Hoda Kotb, who came back to “Today” to fill in while Guthrie focused on the search. “Being there is joyful, and when it’s not I’ll say so.”

Nancy Guthrie made occasional appearances on “Today” over the years, once taking part in a cooking demonstration and surprising her daughter on the set. When Savannah Guthrie returned to her hometown of Tucson in 2025 for a segment recorded for the show, the two visited one of their favorite restaurants and talked about their love of Arizona.

The Guthrie family has offered a \$1 million reward for information leading to the recovery of their mother.

Authorities believe Nancy Guthrie was kidnapped, abducted or otherwise taken against her will after finding blood near the doorstep of her home in the foothills outside Tucson. The FBI later released surveillance videos showing a masked man on the porch that night. Volunteers and search teams scoured

the nearby desert terrain filled with cactuses, bushes and boulders in the first weeks after she vanished.

But attention has faded from an investigation that was declared to be a top priority for the FBI and local authorities. Investigators have not released new evidence in weeks and say the number of tips has slowed. The FBI and the Pima County Sheriff's Department both said late last week that they had no updates.

Early on, some media outlets reported receiving ransom messages tied to the case. Guthrie said she and her siblings responded to two that they believed were real and offered to pay.

Guthrie said her celebrity status might be the reason her mother was taken, but said that possibility was "too much to bear."

## **Steve Bannon wins Supreme Court order likely to lead to dismissal of contempt of Congress conviction**

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Steve Bannon, a longtime ally of President Donald Trump, on Monday won a Supreme Court order that is expected to lead to the dismissal of his criminal conviction for refusing to testify to Congress.

Prodded by the Trump administration, the justices threw out an appellate ruling upholding Bannon's conviction for defying a subpoena from the House committee that investigated the Jan. 6, 2021, attack by a mob of Trump supporters on the U.S. Capitol.

The move frees a trial judge to act on the Republican administration's pending request to dismiss Bannon's conviction and indictment "in the interests of justice."

The dismissal would be largely symbolic. Bannon served a four-month prison term after a jury convicted him of contempt of Congress in 2022. A federal appeals court in Washington had upheld the conviction.

The justices also issued a similar order in the case of former Cincinnati Councilman P.G. Sittenfeld, who was pardoned by Trump last year.

Sittenfeld had served 16 months in federal prison after a jury convicted him of bribery and attempted extortion in 2022. The high court order allows a lower court to consider dismissing his indictment.

The Justice Department brought the case against Bannon during Democrat Joe Biden's presidency, but it changed course after Trump took office again last year.

Bannon had initially argued that his testimony was protected by Trump's claim of executive privilege. But the House panel and the Justice Department contended such a claim was dubious because Trump had fired Bannon from the White House in 2017 and Bannon was thus a private citizen when he was consulting with the then-president in the run-up to the Capitol riot.

Bannon separately has pleaded guilty in a New York state court to defrauding donors to a private effort to build a wall on the U.S. southern border, as part of a plea deal that allowed him to avoid jail time. That conviction is unaffected by the Supreme Court action.

## **The South Pars natural gas complex is an energy lifeline for Iran**

By DAVID McHUGH AP Business Writer

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — For the second time, Israel has attacked Iran's South Pars natural gas and its associated petrochemical complex - an energy lifeline for Iran that both helps keep the lights on for civilians and provides a key source of export earnings.

Israel's Defense Minister Israel Katz said Monday that Israel attacked a key petrochemical plant at Asaluyeh, the onshore industrial aspect of the gas field, which lies under the Persian Gulf.

Katz said the "powerful strike" hit what he called "the largest petrochemical facility in Iran ... responsible for about 50% of the country's petrochemical production." Combined with an earlier attack, two facilities responsible for 85% of Iran's petrochemical exports have been taken out of service, he said.

Attacks on South Pars are sufficiently provocative to Iran that an earlier Israeli attack on March 18 prompted Iran to target energy infrastructure in other Middle East countries in response, an escalation of

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the war that sent new shockwaves across the region and beyond.

After the March attack, U.S. President Donald Trump said that Israel would not attack South Pars again, but warned on social media that if Iran continued attacking key energy infrastructure in Qatar, the United States would retaliate and "massively blow up the entirety" of the field.

Here are things to know about the South Pars natural gas field and its associated industries making chemicals using gas as a raw material:

Iran's share of the world's largest gas field provides both domestic energy and export earnings.

South Pars is Iran's biggest source of domestic energy in a country that sometimes struggles to produce enough electricity. The gas field under the Persian Gulf — the world's largest — is shared by Iran and Qatar. It's called South Pars on the Iranian side and the North Field on the Qatari side.

Iran relies heavily on gas to produce electricity and heat homes. It is the fourth-largest consumer of natural gas in the world, behind the U.S., China and Russia, according to the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University, even though its economy is much smaller. In contrast to other Middle East countries, it uses gas for heating due to its cold climate and much of that use is subsidized, which discourages efficient use.

Abundant, affordable gas from South Pars fuels industries making chemicals for export

While the South Pars gas is important at home, the petrochemical plant is a source of export earnings. The gas is used to make basic chemical building blocks like ethylene, propylene, methanol, ammonia and urea used to make other products such as plastic pipe, packaging, clothing, household products or fertilizer. Among the largest importers are Turkey, China, India and Southeast Asian countries, according to Iranian mining and petrochemical export company Irminex. Iran's petrochemical industry gets a competitive advantage from low raw material costs due to its access to South Pars gas.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says those earnings benefitted Iran's paramilitary Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps. "Today we destroyed the largest petrochemical plant in Iran," Netanyahu said. "In other words, we are systematically destroying the money machine of the Revolutionary Guards."

Iran has struggled with rickety energy infrastructure and shortages

Iran has suffered power shortages because of interruptions to gas supplies, even though on paper it has huge energy reserves. In July, public buildings had to shut down when a heat wave strained the power grid.

So an attack on South Pars could potentially target both civilian welfare and export earnings.

Qatar and Iran have made starkly different uses of the same underground reserves

Qatar, with only 3 million people, has invested billions in developing the field as a source of liquefied natural gas, which before the war it exported from its Ras Laffan facility. It's a lucrative business and made Qatar the supplier of about a fifth of the world's LNG before the war forced it to shut down Ras Laffan.

Iran, with 93 million people, is another story. Sanctions and lack of investment have blocked the development of LNG export terminals. Instead, Iran feeds its gas into its own pipeline system and uses it domestically for cooking, heating homes, generating electricity, and as a raw material for industry. Iran exports relatively little, about 9 billion cubic meters, compared to Qatar's more than 120 billion cubic meters.

So the South Pars petrochemical industries are one way Iran can get export earnings from its massive gas reserves.

Iran tried to develop LNG for export, but was blocked by sanctions

Iran once planned three LNG export projects on its Persian Gulf coastline, one with Total Energies and another with Shell. But sanctions over its nuclear program have blocked the projects by barring the import of the needed technology and investment. A third site at Asulayeh is reportedly near completion after starting construction almost 20 years ago.

## A 12-hour drive through Iran offers glimpses of destruction, defiance and daily life

By BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

ZANJAN, Iran (AP) — A black banner hangs over the border crossing and portraits of Iran's slain Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei stare down, promising vengeance against the United States and Israel.

But on the 12-hour drive south to the capital, Tehran, daily life continued, with only occasional signs of the ongoing war, including a Shiite religious center that officials say was damaged by a recent airstrike.

Associated Press reporters made the journey on Saturday after crossing into Iran from Turkey. They gained a glimpse of the country at the center of a regional war that has jolted the world economy and shows no sign of ending five weeks after Khamenei was killed in the opening U.S. and Israeli salvo.

The Associated Press has been granted permission by the Iranian government to send an additional team into the country for a brief reporting trip. AP already operates in Iran. The visiting team must be accompanied by a media assistant from a government-affiliated company. AP retains full editorial control of its content.

A religious center damaged by an airstrike

The first major sign of the war's destruction came in the northwestern city of Zanjan, about six hours' drive from the border.

Iranian officials say an airstrike hit a religious community center, known as a husseiniyah, killing two people and destroying a clinic and a library. Other parts of the compound, some of which is centuries old, suffered damage, including its golden dome.

When asked about the strike, the Israeli military said it had hit "a military headquarters," and that it tries to avoid harming civilian facilities, without elaborating.

"It has hurt me a lot and distressed me a lot," said Somayeh Shojaei, a local resident who has attended religious and cultural events at the center. "With these airstrikes, (the U.S. and Israel) are showing their malicious intent to the whole world," she said.

The strike killed the library's caretaker and a volunteer with the Iranian Red Crescent first responders, according to Jaafar Mohammadi, the provincial director of cultural and Islamic guidance.

He said poor people had received free treatment at the clinic and students had made use of the library that housed more than 35,000 books, including antique manuscripts.

He said he did not know why the complex was targeted.

"Iran wanted to negotiate for peace with (U.S. President Donald) Trump, but Trump responded with war," Mohammadi said. "He started the war, but we will definitely be the victorious side."

Life goes on in much of Iran despite fear and uncertainty

The U.S. and Israel have carried out thousands of strikes across the country, and Trump has threatened to bomb Iran "back to the Stone Ages, where they belong." Over the weekend, he reiterated a Monday deadline for Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, a vital waterway for oil and gas.

Iran's surviving leaders have remained defiant and in control, rejecting what they say are unreasonable U.S. peace proposals. Israel has given no indication it plans to let up on its strikes, and has called on Iranians to overthrow their leaders.

Even as the war generates global turmoil — and fear and anxiety within Iran — daily life goes on.

In city after city on the road to Tehran, AP reporters saw normal traffic, businesses open and people walking the streets. A restaurant served Iranian delicacies like grilled lamb and rice, barley soup and saffron drinks as R.E.M.'s "Losing my religion" played on loudspeakers.

Many women could be seen going about their day without wearing the theocracy's mandatory head covering, the enforcement of which has eased in recent years.

The team passed through two checkpoints on the approach to Tehran without being stopped.

Destroyed government buildings and police stations in Tehran

The city was eerily quiet after midnight. There had been heavy airstrikes on the mountains overlooking the capital the previous night.

Tehran is on the front lines, having seen wave after wave of strikes that the U.S. and Israel say are aimed at the military and internal security forces. Authorities in Iran say over 1,900 people have been killed. It's unclear how many were soldiers or civilians.

The AP reporters saw several government buildings and police stations that had been destroyed. They passed a number of checkpoints operated by plainclothes Basij, an internal security force, and uniformed members of the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard.

They were stopped once and asked to open the car and show press cards before being waved onward.

Fuel is heavily subsidized, such that a gallon (4 liters) of gasoline costs around 15 U.S. cents. But people are only allowed to purchase around 5 gallons (20 liters) at a time. There were no signs of gas lines.

Back in Zanjan, Mohamoud Maasoumi, a retired soldier, said the conflict with the U.S. — “the world’s arrogance” — goes back to a 1953 CIA-backed coup that is seared into the minds of many Iranians. He expressed hope that Iran’s leaders would defend the country.

“The enemy sees that we are not ever succumbing,” he said.

## Outspoken Iranians overseas say their loved ones are being detained back home

By AMIR-HUSSEIN RADJY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Iran’s government is detaining family members and threatening to seize property of Iranian opposition figures in exile, some tell The Associated Press, in the latest crackdown on dissenting voices as the war rages on.

Activists overseas play a key role in tracking the crackdown, which is complicated by the internet shutdown imposed earlier this year during massive nationwide protests against the Islamic theocracy. Watchdogs say security forces shot and killed thousands of people.

The war with the United States and Israel has intensified authorities’ threats against anyone speaking to outside media or activists. Now that pressure appears to be expanding to intimidate activists in exile.

Iran “took my mother away to make me be quiet”

Intelligence agents in Tehran on March 15 detained the brother of Hossein Razzagh, a former political prisoner who fled last year to Europe, Razzagh told the AP.

“My own brother isn’t at all political and doesn’t do any kind of political activity. It’s to put me under pressure,” he said.

His brother, Ali, was taken from his home in Tehran and was able to phone his wife that night “for a few seconds” from a detention center run by Iran’s Intelligence Ministry, Razzagh said.

Since then, the family and his lawyer have been unable to contact him. But the intelligence ministry told them it was reviewing his contact with his brother, Razzagh said.

Another activist who fled, Behnam Chegini, said his 20-year-old niece was detained on March 10 for a week. The niece was taken from her parents’ house in the city of Arak soon after she returned from Tehran, where her university had closed because of the war.

She was later released on bail and put under a travel ban.

Chegini, who is now based in France, said the detention was at least in part “because she is my niece and they know that.”

Sareh Sedighi, an activist who fled after her 2021 death sentence was overturned, said her mother was detained from her home last month in the western town of Urmia.

“The Islamic Republic took my mother away to make me be quiet,” she said. Her mother suffers from health problems and requires daily insulin doses, she added.

And Mahshid Nazemi, a former political prisoner and activist who now lives in France, said at least one friend was detained and questioned about contact with her.

Authorities target the property of outspoken exiles

Iran’s judiciary has begun seizing the property of public figures critical of the country’s rulers, under an anti-espionage law approved during last year’s 12-day war with Israel that punishes media and cultural

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activities deemed to support Iran's enemies.

A judiciary spokesman on March 31 said on state TV that more than 200 indictments for confiscations have been or are being issued.

Borzou Arjmand, an Iranian actor living in California, found out from news reports that his assets in Iran had been confiscated. After his outspoken support for protests in 2022, Arjmand was unable to return to Iran. Since then, authorities have blocked his bank accounts.

Arjmand has expressed support on social media for Reza Pahlavi, the son of Iran's last shah who has organized an opposition movement abroad and supported U.S.-Israeli strikes.

Pressuring exiled figures is meant "so the Iranian people's voice doesn't reach the world," Arjmand said.

At least three other figures living outside Iran — star soccer player Sardar Azmoun, musician Mohsen Yeghaneh and university professor Ali Sharifi Zarchi — have been on lists of confiscations, according to two semiofficial news agencies in Iran. Yeghaneh and Zarchi have expressed support for anti-government protesters on social media.

Rights groups say conditions are worsening

Iranian security and judicial officials have warned that any new anti-government protests will be met with lethal force.

State media regularly report arrests around the country, describing people as "mercenaries" or "agents" of Israel and the United States, "royalist thugs" or "traitorous elements."

Reports have alleged that some sent information to "hostile networks."

Iran Human Rights, a Norway-based group, has tracked several hundred detentions since the war began on Feb. 28, using its networks in the country and state media reports, said its director, Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam. He said the full number is likely far higher.

Among those detained is human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh, taken by intelligence agents from her house in Tehran, said her daughter Mehraveh Khandan, who lives in Amsterdam. The 64-year-old Sotoudeh had been out on bail for health reasons following an earlier detention.

Little is known about how trials are functioning, as Israeli airstrikes have targeted buildings connected to the judicial system. "It's like they are half-closed. A lot of judges are staying home," said Musa Barzin, a lawyer with Dadban, a group of rights lawyers based abroad.

Some report deteriorating conditions inside crowded prisons. Speaking from Tehran, the wife of a political prisoner held at Iran's Evin Prison worried it could be struck as it was during last year's war.

"Explosions and smoke can be heard and seen from everywhere in the city. Every time we hear a sound, we get scared," she said, speaking on condition of anonymity for her family's safety.

Iranian opposition tries to organize overseas

The situation has led to new attempts to organize the highly fragmented Iranian opposition abroad.

Shortly before the war, Razzagh and others began planning an opposition conference in London, the Iran Freedom Congress, to bring together pro-democracy groups. Razzagh represented a group of Iran-based opposition figures including Sotoudeh and imprisoned Nobel laureate Narges Mohammadi.

He called the conference a first step toward forming a coalition to push for a "political transition" in Iran.

For decades, Iran's rulers have quashed organized political opposition. Some activists in the diaspora say the war is worsening that pressure.

"Israel and America are saying, well, if the Islamic Republic doesn't kill you, let us bomb you. They've been taken hostage from both sides," Nazemi said of Iranians back home.

## Russian attacks kill 4 as Ukraine drones target oil infrastructure

By DEREK GATOPOULOS and VOLODYMR YURCHUK 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

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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.

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.

In the southern city of Kherson, Russian shelling killed an elderly woman and three other women, 86, 79 and 44, were hospitalized, according to Oleksandr Prokudin, head of the regional military administration. The injured women sustained shrapnel wounds, concussion, blast injuries and head trauma, he said.

Seven people were injured by Russian drones and shelling in the southern city of Nikopol, leaving a 62-year-old in critical condition as the strikes damaged a multistory building and a pharmacy.

Drones also hit Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, injuring three people, according to regional military administration head Oleh Sinehubov.

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

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

Zelenskyy expressed concern in a weekend interview with The Associated Press that the war in the Middle East 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.

The Russian Defense Ministry said that Ukrainian drones struck the Novorossiysk oil terminal, one of Russia's largest Black Sea ports, overnight. The attack damaged a pipeline, loading and unloading berths, and set fire to four tanks holding petroleum products.

The strike damaged assets belonging to the Caspian Pipeline Consortium run by U.S. and Kazakhstani companies, it said.

Eight people, including two children, were injured in the Novorossiysk attack that damaged six apartment buildings and two private houses, according to Krasnodar Gov. Veniamin Kondratyev.

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

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

Ukraine's armed forces claimed they hit a Russian Black Sea frigate, the Admiral Makarov, and a drilling rig.

Russian officials did not immediately comment on the claim.

## Today in History: April 7, Rwandan genocide begins

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Tuesday, April 7, the 97th day of 2026. There are 268 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On April 7, 1994, a day after the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi died in a missile attack on their aircraft, the moderate Hutu prime minister of Rwanda, Agathe Uwilingiyimana, and her husband were killed by Rwandan soldiers; in the 100 days that followed, Hutu extremists slaughtered hundreds of thousands of minority Tutsi and Hutu moderates.

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Also on this date:

In 1862, Union forces led by Gen. Ulysses S. Grant and Maj. Gen. Don Carlos Buell defeated Confederate forces at the Battle of Shiloh in Tennessee.

In 1922, Interior Secretary Albert B. Fall signed a secret deal to lease U.S. Navy petroleum reserves in Wyoming and California to his friends, oilmen Harry F. Sinclair and Edward L. Doheny, in exchange for cash gifts; Fall would eventually be sentenced to prison on bribery and conspiracy charges in what became known as the Teapot Dome Scandal.

In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower held a news conference in which he outlined the concept of the "domino theory" as he spoke of the importance of containing the spread of communism in Indochina, saying, "You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly."

In 1966, the U.S. Navy recovered a hydrogen bomb that the U.S. Air Force had lost in the Mediterranean Sea off Spain following a B-52 crash.

In 1984, the Census Bureau reported that Los Angeles had overtaken Chicago as the nation's "second city" in terms of population.

In 1990, fire engulfed the Scandinavian Star as the ferry was making an overnight run from the Norwegian capital of Oslo to Frederikshavn in northern Denmark, killing 159 people in one of Scandinavia's worst peacetime maritime disasters.

In 2017, Rakmat Akilov, an Uzbek man who said he wanted to punish Sweden for joining a coalition against the Islamic State group, drove a stolen truck into a crowd in Stockholm, killing five people and wounding 14 others. (He was convicted of terror-related murder and given a life sentence.)

In 2022, the Senate confirmed Ketanji Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court, securing her place as the court's first Black female justice.

Today's Birthdays: Country musician Bobby Bare is 91. Former California Gov. Jerry Brown is 88. Film director Francis Ford Coppola is 87. Musician John Oates is 78. Singer-songwriter Janis Ian is 75. Actor Jackie Chan is 72. Football Hall of Famer Tony Dorsett is 72. Former boxer James "Buster" Douglas is 66. Actor Russell Crowe is 62. Actor-comedian Bill Bellamy is 61. Football Hall of Famer Ronde Barber is 51. Baseball Hall of Famer Adrián Beltré is 47. Actor Ismael Cruz Córdova is 39. Pop singer Anne-Marie is 35. Actor Cristine Prospero is 33.