

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Saturday, May 9

Pickleball, 9:30 a.m., Elementary Gym  
High School Baseball at Milroy, Minn., vs. Madison/  
Chester DH at noon.

## Sunday, May 10

Mother's Day  
Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.  
St. John's Lutheran: Worship at St. John's, 9 a.m.; at Zion, 11 a.m. (Grad recognition at St. John's).  
United Methodist: Worship at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Groton Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 10:30 a.m.  
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.  
First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

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

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

## Monday, May 11

Girls Golf @ Groton Invitational, 10 a.m., Olive Grove Golf Course  
NEC Middle School Track Meet at Groton, Noon  
Girls Softball hosts Sioux Valley, Varsity at 4 p.m. followed by JV  
Pickleball, 5:30 p.m., Elementary Gym  
JVT Practice, 7 p.m., Arena  
Senior citizens meet, 1 p.m., Groton Community Center  
Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.  
High School Baseball: WIN at Groton, Varsity at 6 p.m. followed by JV

## We the People

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



By David Adler

### Supreme Court Usurps Congressional Power, Destroys Voting Rights Act, Ignores 15th Amendment

The Supreme Court last week delivered in *Callais v. Louisiana* a ruling that demolished the landmark 1965 Voting Rights Act, widely characterized as the crown jewel of the civil rights movement for its essential role as the statutory enforcement mechanism for breathing life into the 15th Amendment guarantee of Black voting rights, and its pursuit of racially equal electoral opportunity, a fair chance for representation and democracy. The 15th Amendment declares that a citizen's right to vote "shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." The Amendment vests in Congress sweeping authority to pass "appropriate legislation" to enforce it, which it exercised in enacting the historic Voting Rights Act. The Court's ruling gutted a core part of the statute and will have the effect of excluding people of color from the political process.

Justice Samuel Alito's 6-3 opinion for the Court in *Callais*, striking down Louisiana's congressional map on grounds that the creation of a majority-minority district--designed to provide representation for Black voters--represents an unconstitutional racial gerrymander, and is a striking exercise in judicial usurpation of the lawmaking power of Congress for its rewriting of the text of the Voting Rights Act. Section 2 of the VRA prohibited states from passing laws to "deny or abridge" the right to vote, "on account of race or color." In 1982, Congress, with the support of President Ronald Reagan, amended the statute, and strengthened its anti-discrimination purpose, after the Supreme Court upheld in a 1980 case that involved the City of Mobile, Alabama's at-large election system for choosing members of a commission, when it articulated a narrow holding that section 2 of the VRA is not violated unless governmental action is "motivated by a discriminatory purpose." Unhappy with the judicial creation of proof of discrimination as a standard that would facilitate circumvention of Section 2, Congress overruled the decision by changing the statutory language so that states may not impose any electoral rule that "results in a denial or abridgement" of voting rights on account of race. By replacing "intent" with "results," Congress provided a standard that could be readily recognized and remedied.

In *Callais*, however, Justice Alito wholly ignored the fact that Congress had amended the Act as a direct repudiation of the Court's test and defiantly resurrected the standard that Congress had rejected. In a blistering dissent, Justice Elena Kagan wrote that the ruling leaves the Voting rights Act as "all but a dead letter," and called out Alito's offense with a reminder of constitutional fundamentals: Congress writes the laws and the Court's job is to interpret the law, not rewrite a statute that the Justices do not like. In a nutshell, the Court's ruling represents a grave blow to racial equality, particularly in the South. Elections scholar, Rick Hasen, has warned: "This decision will bleach the halls of Congress, state legislatures, and local bodies like city councils." Scholars rightly fear the fastest, and largest, rollback in congressional representation since the end of Reconstruction.

The "intentionality" test will prove nearly impossible to satisfy. Justice Alito seems to have been unable to resist a rather smug prescription for defeating efforts that challenge district drawings on grounds of racial discrimination. Since partisan gerrymandering was upheld by the Court in *Rucho v. Common Cause*, in 2019, Alito declared in *Callais* that states are free to gerrymander for partisan advantage. He said, "litigants cannot circumvent *Rucho* by dressing their political gerrymandering claims in racial garb." Alito's cynical advice to legislators eager to maximize their power at the expense of political participation for Black voters, does not easily fit the portrait of Supreme Court Justices who simply call balls and strikes.



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The denial of representation to Black voters, for that is what racial gerrymandering amounts to, is an offense to the goals of racial equality and democracy. To be clear, the VRA has never required racial proportionality in drawing voting districts, but just the chance to participate in the shaping of laws and the selection of our representatives. Voting is a right, after all, but racial gerrymandering, engineered to dilute the voting power of people of color, hollows out the right of political citizenship, a right that most Americans believe is central to representative government.

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## Bulldogs Sweep Tigers in Saturday Baseball Action

The Groton Area Tigers dropped a pair of games to the Madison Bulldogs on Saturday at Milroy, falling 9-3 in the opener before suffering a 4-0 setback in the second contest.

Madison used a big third inning to pull away in the first game, scoring five runs to build control of the contest. The Bulldogs had already taken a 2-0 lead in the second inning when Casyn Crabtree walked and Braylon Oftedal singled to center field, each driving in a run.

The Bulldogs then broke things open in the third. Crabtree and Ryland Johnson each drew bases-loaded walks to force in runs before Tregg McGillivray delivered the big blow with a three-run double.

Groton managed to battle back offensively behind TC Schuster, who drove in two runs while going 1-for-4 at the plate. Lincoln Krause, Karsten Fliehs, Braeden Fliehs, Schuster, Gavin Englund and Nick Groebelinghoff each recorded hits for the Tigers, who also turned a double play defensively.

Alex Abeln took the loss for Groton, allowing seven runs on four hits over two and two-thirds innings while striking out six. Madison pitcher JD Prorok earned the win after striking out 15 batters over six innings.

McGillivray led Madison with three RBIs, while Quincy Kurtz collected two hits. The Bulldogs also showed patience at the plate, drawing 10 walks in the game.

The second game featured a strong pitching duel early before Madison broke through with four runs in the fourth inning. McGillivray started the rally with an RBI double, followed by run-scoring doubles and singles from Cohen Hahn, Casyn Crabtree and Ethan Sims.

Despite the loss, Groton received an impressive effort on the mound from Jarrett Erdmann. The Tigers senior struck out 11 batters over six and two-thirds innings while allowing seven hits and four runs.

Lincoln Krause paced the Groton offense with three hits in four at-bats, but the Tigers were unable to capitalize against Madison pitcher Braylon Oftedal, who tossed a complete-game shutout with nine strikeouts and no walks.

Quincy Kurtz and Sims each had two hits for Madison in the second game, while Sims, Hahn and Crabtree each drove in runs.

Groton Area returns to action Monday when the Tigers host W.I.N. Baseball.

HELP  
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BIRTHDAY

ON MAY 13.

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## Good News Instead.

### US Alcohol Use Hits 85-Year Low As People Prioritize Healthier Lifestyles

In a heartwarming development, recent surveys reveal a significant shift in the drinking habits of Americans, showcasing a growing awareness of health and wellness. According to Gallup's findings from August, 2025 marks a historic low in alcohol consumption, with only 54% of Americans reporting they drink alcohol. This figure highlights a remarkable trend of three consecutive years of decline, demonstrating a collective movement toward healthier lifestyles.

The changes appear to be particularly pronounced among women and younger adults. The drinking rate for women has decreased to 51%, reflecting an 11% drop since 2023, while young adults

have seen their drinking rates fall to 50%, down 9% during the same period. This positive shift suggests a newfound commitment to making health-conscious choices.

Interestingly, among those earning less than \$40,000 a year and registered Republicans, the decline is even more notable, with a 19% reduction in alcohol consumption since 2023. This indicates that many individuals, regardless of their background, are recognizing the benefits of abstaining from alcohol.

A growing consensus around the health impacts of alcohol has emerged, with 53% of Americans now believing that moderate drinking can be detrimental to one's health. This is a significant increase from just 28% in 2018, showing a remarkable transformation in public perception, especially among youth, where 66% now view drinking as harmful.

Even among those who still enjoy a drink, the amount consumed is decreasing. Gallup reports that the average number of drinks consumed over the past week is now 2.8, the lowest since 1996, down from 3.8 just a year ago. This reflects a broader cultural shift toward prioritizing health and well-being.

The implications of these trends are positive and far-reaching. As Americans become more health-conscious, the potential for reducing chronic diseases associated with alcohol consumption grows. With organizations like the Commonwealth Fund highlighting the need for improved public health, this change could be a crucial step in enhancing the overall well-being of the nation.

As we celebrate this encouraging trend, it's essential to share this uplifting news with friends and family. Together, we can foster a culture of health and positivity, supporting one another in making choices that lead to brighter, healthier futures.



## Hearing held in Mitchell baseball defamation lawsuit

**A judge did not rule on three motions Tuesday related to a former Mitchell baseball player's civil lawsuit against the American Legion and two local news organizations.**

**By Molly Wetsch**

**South Dakota News Watch**

MITCHELL, S.D. – A judge heard arguments Tuesday for three motions in the civil lawsuit filed by a former Mitchell baseball player against two local news organizations and the American Legion Baseball league.

Circuit Judge David Knoff said he will rule later on the motions, one of which could put an end to the case or send it to trial.

The case revolves around a sentence in a letter by a representative from the American Legion sent to members of the Mitchell Baseball Association.

Peyton Mandel, who is now 20, was a player for the Mitchell baseball team and one of six involved in a hazing incident that took place in 2023 at a Rapid City hotel room. The event, in which another player said the boys held him down and performed forcible digital anal penetration on him, was later characterized as a rape case. He pleaded guilty in 2024 to one count of accessory to a felony as part of a plea deal.

In November 2024, American Legion adjutant C.P. Van Delist sent a letter to members of the Mitchell Baseball Association saying that the organization had decided that Mitchell Baseball would be immediately barred from participating in the American Legion and provided a set of conditions that must be met in order for the association to be reestablished in the future.

In the letter, after naming the six former players involved in the case, Van Delist said, "All of these individuals are guilty of accessory to a felony, acknowledging by affirmation of their guilty pleas, that the felonies they were charged with, rape and aiding and abetting, did take place."

In July of last year, Mandel filed a civil lawsuit saying that Van Delist made "false, malicious, and defamatory" statements about him. Nexstar Media Group, the owner of KELO-TV, and Forum Communications, owner of the Mitchell Republic, were also named in the lawsuit. Both organizations published stories containing Van Delist's letter.

### **Case sees multiple First Amendment considerations**

The lawsuit states that Van Delist's statements and the subsequent news articles "falsely (represented) and (characterized) Plaintiff as an admitted rapist." The lawsuit also says that Mandel was "denied reapplication for an employment or experiential opportunity in the medical field" as a result of news articles published by KELO and the Mitchell Republic.

Mandel's lawyer, Tucker Volesky, said during the hearing that the contested sentence in the letter indicated Mandel was a rapist when that was not the charge that Mandel pled guilty to. Volesky said that because Mandel pleaded guilty to accessory to a felony, it was wrong to name him in the letter next to the statement of rape taking place.

The hearing spanned several First Amendment complexities, including what qualifies as "privileged" communication, whether Mandel can be considered a limited public figure in relation to the case and consideration about what constitutes the "truth" of the case.

Attorneys for the defendants said that even if Mandel's record does not indicate rape, a rape still took place. One sentiment was that because Mandel pleaded guilty to accessory to a felony, he therefore acknowledged that the rape happened. Volesky said that Mandel should not be associated with rape and said that the intention of the lawsuit was to say that a rape did not happen.



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## Hearing ends without decisions

All three motions considered Tuesday afternoon were taken under advisement by Knoff.

One was a motion for a judgment on pleadings filed by Volesky, which asked the judge to solely consider what Mandel affirmed by pleading guilty. Volesky also asked Knoff to consider the "narrow falsity issue" provided by the lawsuit and said that prior context was not relevant to the issue of whether Van Delist's letter falsely accused Mandel of rape.

A motion to quash a subpoena was presented by Jessica LaMie, a South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation deputy attorney. That was in response to attorney Pete Heidepriem, on behalf of Nexstar, submitting a subpoena to the DCI requesting documents in the criminal investigation of the 2023 hazing case.

The final motion considered was a motion for summary judgment – which would have required the judge to rule on the case immediately without sending it to trial.

Attorney Sarah Collins, who represents Forum Communications and Mitchell Republic editor Luke Hagen, brought forward the motion. She said that there was no factual basis for the continuation of the case and that the plaintiff was "trying to prove malice when malice is not there."

Volesky said in response that the articles written were single-sourced and failed to verify the facts in the court record, violating traditional journalistic ethics standards.

Knoff said during discussion of that third motion that he felt he was "being asked to close (his) eyes on the act that took place" by Volesky and was struggling to find a factual basis for the decision to consider the letter in a vacuum.

Knoff did not indicate when he would rule on the motions but said it would be as soon as he could. There is no specific limitation on how soon a judge must rule after taking a case under advisement, and it can range anywhere from a few days after a hearing to several months.

*South Dakota News Watch is an independent nonprofit. Read, donate and subscribe for free at [sdnewswatch.org](https://sdnewswatch.org).*

## EARTHTALK

### Bring The Noise: How Soundscape Ecology Helps Conservationists by Alexander Birk

Dear EarthTalk: How does "soundscape ecology" help the environment?  
—L.M., via email

A vast web of species, including humans, connect ecosystems across the globe. Understanding the interactions animals have with their environments reveals that sound is key to that connection. Soundscapes are the combination of all natural and man-made sounds within an environment. Three major sound types contribute to a soundscape: sounds generated by organisms, non-living natural sounds (like from sunlight, water, soil, air and temperature), and sounds from humans or human-made technology. They are referred to as biophony, geophony, and anthropophony respectively.



The study of bioacoustics has shown how vital soundscapes are for inter- and intra-species interactions. Maia Persche, a field biologist and bioacoustics researcher at Baraboo Hills Research Collective, explains the complexity of a soundscape: "...species that evolve together in an ecosystem all call at a different time or pitch, so their calls don't overlap, and they can be heard above the background... Like, if two frog species call at the same time, maybe one will have a high pitch, and one will have a low pitch. Or if they have the same pitch, they might call at different times of the day."

The primary disruptor of natural soundscapes is anthropophony, or noise pollution. Noise pollution impacts species behaviors and can cause habitat fragmentation. Due to different levels of tolerance for acoustic disturbance, a habitat may be inaccessible to animals even if it appears intact, due to noise infiltration. Noise pollution also affects humans. According to UCLA Health, chronic exposure to high decibels is linked to an increase in stress hormones, risk of heart disease, and cognitive impairment.

Silence is not the solution, but instead we must embrace and recapture natural soundscapes. Landscape architects, like Ohio State University's Dorothée Imbert and her students, are incorporating soundscape ecology into new designs. Their novel proposals at Floyd Bennett Field in Brooklyn, New York, include raised bluffs and an "acoustic planting matrix." This strategy uses native plants to dampen noise in some areas and attract noise-tolerant animals to others. The pursuit of natural soundscapes is not limited to land. Coral reefs, teeming with life, are also being researched. A study by Timothy Gordon with the University of Exeter found that introducing healthy reef soundscapes to dead reefs improved fish presence.

Whether improving the environment for sensitive species or human wellbeing, natural soundscapes achieve meaningful goals. You can start by actively engaging with local planning processes, like attending annual master plan meetings. This is a great way to advocate for a step toward soundscape harmony and away from noise pollution..



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## THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

He gathers the waters of the sea into jars;  
He puts the deep into storehouses.

Psalm 33:7

*Detail of "Ault-Onival" by T. F. Simon (1903)*

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## BIBLE

## TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. From Judges 11, what judge of Israel was a prostitute's son? *Hosea, Jephthah, Samson, Lot*

3. Which prophet saw a valley full of dry bones come to life? *Isaiah, Ezekiel, Elisha, Jeremiah*

4. From Esther 1, what king did Esther marry? *Jehu, Omri, Ahasuerus, Zedekiah*

5. Who asked, "If a man die, shall he live again"? *Samuel, Judas, Job, Stephen*

6. From 2 Kings 23, where was King Josiah killed? *Megiddo, Anathoth, Philadelphia, Jericho*

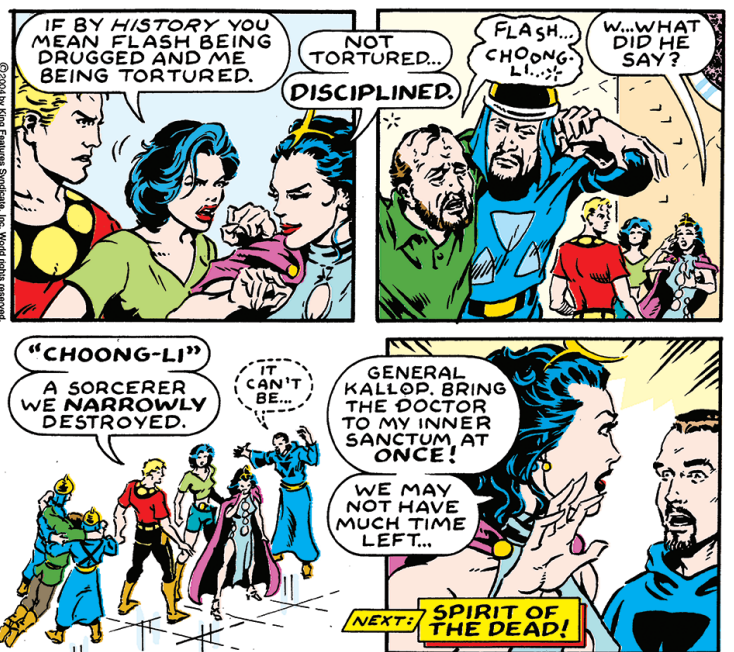
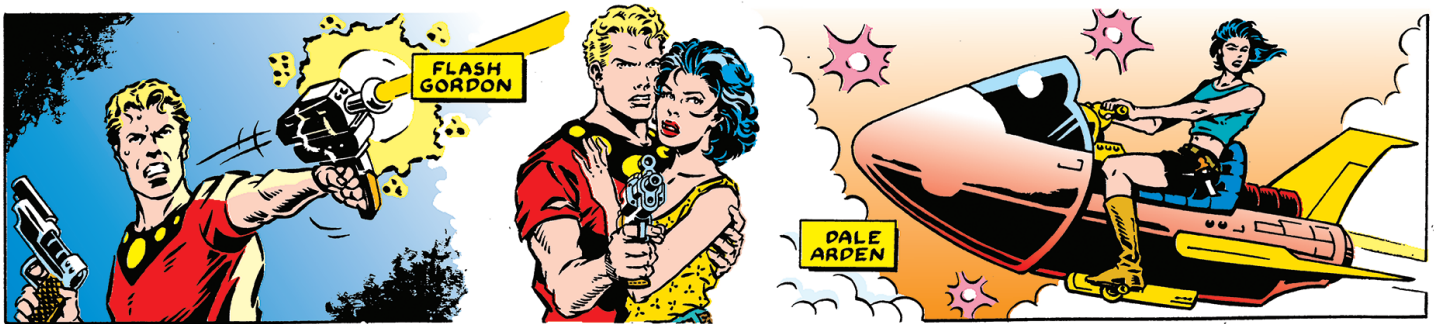
ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Jephthah, 3) Ezekiel, 4) Ahasuerus, 5) Job, 6) Megiddo

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

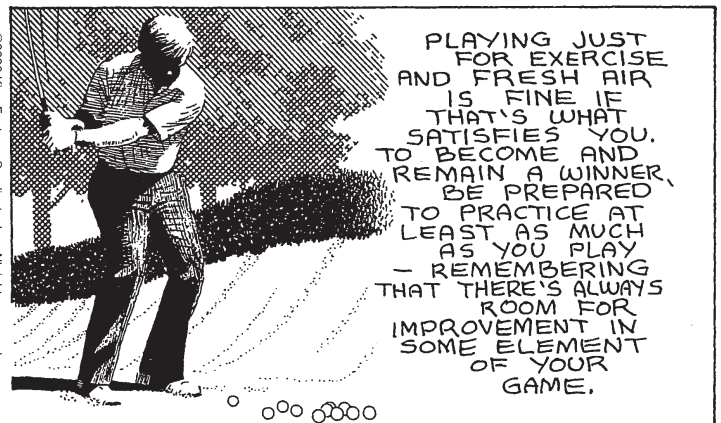
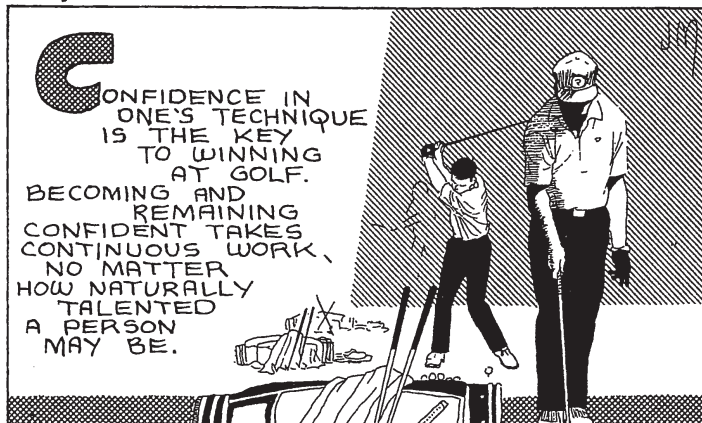


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## Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS





## Sixty-Year-Old Woman Is Mysteriously Unable To Gain Weight

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have a sister who is in her mid 60s and has a very low weight. She cooks a lot but doesn't eat much. Is there something to suggest to make her gain some weight? She weighs 80 pounds and is 5 feet, 2 inches tall. By contrast, I'm 5 feet, 4 inches tall, and weigh 150 pounds. I'm worried that if she gets sick, she won't have anything to live off of. -- P.L.W.

ANSWER: With all the recent press about GLP-1 medicines helping people to lose weight, there's been much discussion about the health risks of being obese. However, there are health risks of being underweight as well. In fact, the health risk of being as underweight as your sister (a BMI level of

14) is about the same as the overall health risk of a person with a BMI of 50. (For her, this would equate to being about 300 pounds.)

I don't know why she isn't gaining weight, but there are many possibilities. Weight loss due to psychiatric diseases like major depression and anorexia nervosa is common and underdiagnosed. Some diseases keep people from absorbing nutrients, especially celiac or Crohn's disease. People can lose calories through their urine (diabetics), while others use up their calories too fast (due to high thyroid levels, advanced cancer, etc.). There are many other less-common possibilities.

One critically important issue is to be sure of how much your sister is eating. It sounds like she isn't eating much, which makes some issues more likely than others. While there are appetite stimulants, I don't use these unless I understand what is causing the problem. A careful evaluation by a general physician is called for.

\*\*\*

DEAR DR. ROACH: Can you say more about potassium and chronic kidney disease (CKD)? I have stage 3 CKD with a glomerular filtration rate (GFR) in the mid-40s. I like to have a banana for breakfast; is it bad for me? -- S.B.

ANSWER: CKD is separated into different stages depending on the estimated GFR, which signifies the overall function of the kidney. A normal GFR is considered to be 90 or higher, and people who have kidney disease and a normal GFR are considered to be in stage 1. Stage 2 CKD is having a GFR between 60-89; stage 3a is between 45-59; stage 3b is between 30-44; stage 4 is between 15-29; and stage 5 is considered to be 15 or less.

Most people with stage 3a CKD don't have trouble with the modest potassium load from a banana, but high levels of blood potassium become much more problematic when a person has a GFR that is below 45. Your regular doctor or kidney specialist (you should have one if you don't already) should be periodically testing your blood.

If your potassium level is already high, you may be recommended to reduce your intake of high-potassium foods. However, a plant-based diet that is rich in these foods helps to protect you against the progression of kidney disease, so I wouldn't limit these foods unless your specialist tells you that it's time.

Even with early-stage CKD, I wouldn't use a potassium-based salt substitute without talking to your doctor first, who will likely want to look at a recent blood test.

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

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"Ready or Not 2" (R) -- The sequel to "Ready or Not" (2019), a comedy-horror film that catapulted Samara Weaving ("Borderline") into "scream queen" territory, is out now to rent after pulling in three times its budget in theaters. (Not bad!)

**Lewis Pullman, left, and Sally Field star in "Remarkably Bright Creatures."** (Courtesy of Netflix)

Weaving reprises her role as Grace MacCaullay, and the sequel picks up moments after the events of the last film. Grace has just survived the ritual where she was supposed to meet her end and reunites with her younger sister, Faith (Kathryn Newton), while she recovers in the hospital. However, a council including six elite families hears wind of Grace's successful escape and manages to kidnap both Grace and her sister for another round of games. Sarah Michelle Gellar ("I Know What You Did Last Summer") and Elijah Wood ("Yellowjackets") joined the cast this time around. (Apple TV+)

"Remarkably Bright Creatures" (PG-13) -- This film, led by Sally Field ("80 for Brady") and Lewis Pullman ("Wishful Thinking"), is based on the novel of the same name by Shelby Van Pelt. Although it's dubbed a "mystery drama," there's a heartwarming human element to the film due to Field's and Pullman's endearing performances, as well as the subject matter at hand. Field plays Tova, an elderly widow who works the night shift at her local aquarium. When a young man named Cameron (Pullman) begins working alongside her, they form an unlikely bond as she helps him to find his father. Colm Meaney ("The Panic") and Alfred Molina ("Harold and the Purple Crayon") co-star in the film, which is out now to stream. (Netflix)

"Lurker" (R) -- We have a bit of horror this week, we have a tearjerker, and now we have this arthouse film starring Theodore Pellerin ("Beau Is Afraid") and Archie Madekwe ("Saltburn"). "Lurker" follows retail worker Matthew (Pellerin), who's working at a clothing store in Los Angeles when a popular musician named Oliver (Madekwe) wanders in. The two hit it off and become fast friends (not unlike the beginning of "A Star Is Born"), to the point that Oliver offers a spot to Matthew in his entourage as a documentarian. Infatuated with the idea of being adjacent to a celebrity, Matthew accepts, only to begin spiraling as Oliver's infatuation with him loses steam just as quickly as it started. Premieres May 15. (HBO Max)

"Tucci in Italy: Season 2" (PG) -- Back for another season is this National Geographic series hosted by Stanley Tucci, which is perfect timing considering that Tucci is currently on a roll with a bunch of press for "The Devil Wears Prada 2." In this season, the 65-year-old actor explores five new regions in the country that his family has descended from, including Naples and Campania, Sicily, Le Marche, Sardinia, and Veneto. Tucci also visits the world's smallest kingdom on Tavolara Island, whose king owns a seafood restaurant called Da Tonino. Tucci told People magazine, "In Italy, food is never just food. It's memory, identity and, sometimes, a full-blown argument." All episodes are available to stream on May 12. (Disney+)

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1. Which artist wrote and released "Running on Empty"?
2. Who wrote and released "Little Red Corvette"?
3. Which group released "Won't Get Fooled Again"?
4. "The Winner Takes It All" was a hit for which group?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Sometimes late at night, When there's nothing here except my old piano, I'd almost give my hands to make you see my way."

Answers

1. Jackson Browne, in 1977. Browne sued a political candidate in 2008 for unauthorized use of his song. He won.
2. Prince, in 1983. The song was ranked No. 108 on the list

of the 500 Greatest Songs of All Time.

3. The Who, in 1971. One of the group's albums ("Who's Next") features an 8-minute version of the song.
4. ABBA, in 1980. The song climbed charts around the globe, including in Switzerland, Norway and Zimbabwe.
5. "Stand Tall," by Burton Cummings, in 1976. The song was his first solo after leaving The Guess Who. Written after the breakup of a long-term relationship, the song climbed charts around the globe and spent 21 weeks on the Hot 100. Cummings is still touring, along with his Guess Who band mate Randy Bachman. Their next tour starts now, May 2026.

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**GRIN and BEAR IT** *Wagner*

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"Thanks a lot for telling me all that stuff, Dad!  
Now I'm going to need counseling!"

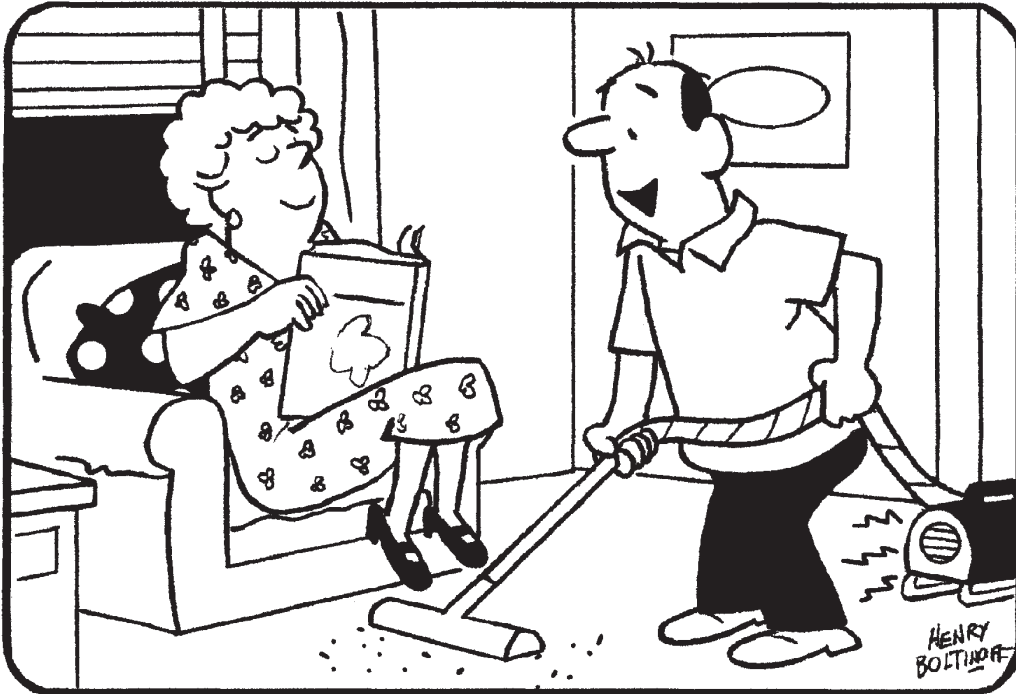
## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY  
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Leg is moved. 2. Vacuum is moved. 3. Blinds are higher. 4. Drawer is larger. 5. Back of chair is higher. 6. Bottom of chair is different.

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\* "Planning a new roof? Go light on the color for cooling benefits. Check with your home insurance company to see what discounts it might offer for different styles or options, like upgraded hurricane clips or fire retardant materials." -- R.E.W. in Tennessee

\* Cut a cord of firewood in the spring and cure it yourself. Store it away from the house and properly care for the wood by stacking it where it will have access to the sun and wind to dry it. Let it season for six months or longer, and you'll have firewood ready when the temperatures drop again.

\* "If you are melting chocolate in your microwave, do yourself a favor: Line the bowl with wax paper or parchment paper. The chocolate is still easily stirrable, but when you take it out, you

can lift and scrape all the chocolate off the paper so that none is wasted!" -- A.A. in Florida

\* Check bagged frozen vegetables with the squeeze test: If it is hard and solid, it has thawed and re-frozen, so you should choose another bag.

\* Keep musty smells out of your linen closet by stashing a box of baking soda on one of the shelves, just as you would in the kitchen.

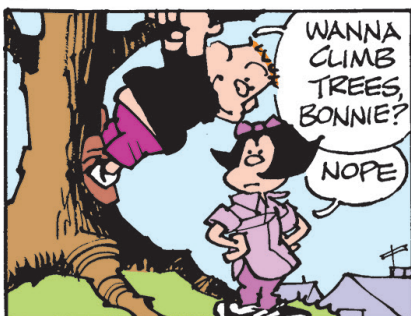
\* "Place a bit of clear tape over the place where you are going to drive in a nail to prevent the nail from cracking drywall. The nail goes right in. Also, if you are nailing into wood, you can drag your nail through some soap (a bar soap is fine) before striking and it does the same thing -- it'll keep the wood from splitting. You can even keep a travel size bar of soap in your nail apron just for this." -- P.K. in New Jersey

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

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**TIGER**

by BUD BLAKE



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## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Cry  
4 Vault  
8 Daly and Allen  
12 Common title start  
13 Killer whale  
14 Web addresses  
15 Pithy joke  
17 Legume  
18 Suggests  
19 TV guide abbr.  
21 Wager  
22 Expulsion  
26 Errand runner  
29 Whatever number  
30 Hwy.  
31 Caspian Sea feeder  
32 Keats creation  
33 Go caroling  
34 Capitol VIP  
35 Year in Madrid  
36 Epic narratives  
37 On/off switch  
39 "You've got mail" co.  
40 Documentarian Burns  
41 Obligations  
45 Beige  
48 The whole crowd

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

- 50 Ache  
51 Aswan's river  
52 Victory  
53 Abbr. on a schedule  
54 Ticked (off)  
55 Annex  
9 Rage  
10 Org. with a style manual  
11 Nine-digit ID  
16 Slander in print  
20 Purchase  
23 Advanced math  
24 Sicilian peak  
25 Bylaws, briefly  
26 Sudden wind  
27 Disc-shaped cookie  
28 Sharp tooth  
29 Commotion  
32 Penny  
33 Like seawater  
35 Boxing legend  
36 Turned bad  
38 Hog's "hello"  
39 "Hello" singer  
42 Illinois neighbor  
43 Wife of Geraint  
44 Fax  
45 Clean air org.  
46 Baseball fan's headwear  
47 Tear  
49 Compete

### DOWN

- 1 Halt  
2 "It can't be!"  
3 Hive population  
4 Hang around  
5 Painter Max  
6 Expert  
7 Series opener  
8 Big brass

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## King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

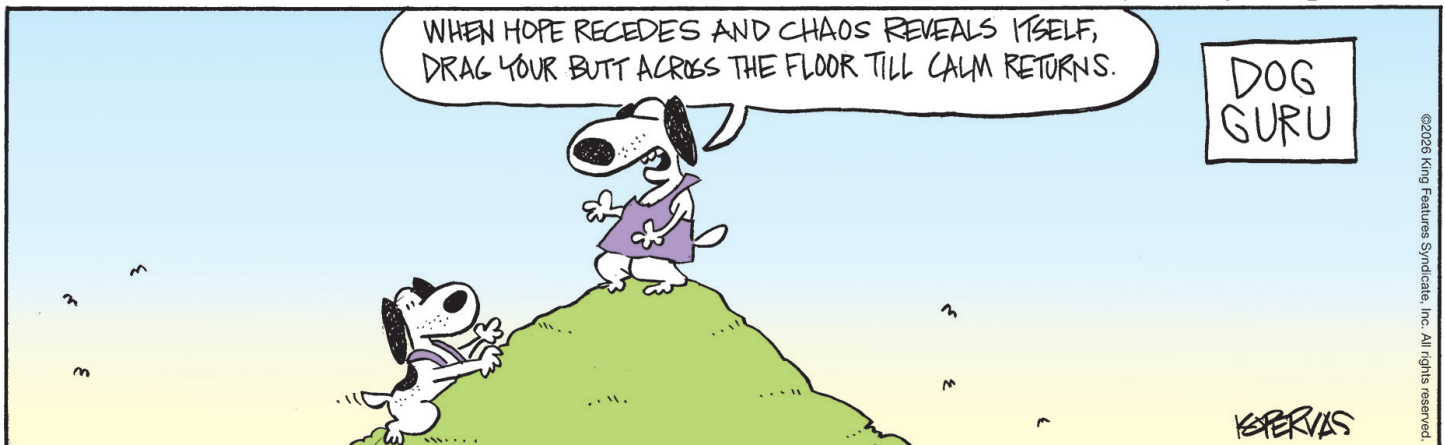
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P	O	S	I	T	S		T	B	A			
			B	E	T		O	U	S	T	E	R
G	O	F	E	R		A	N	Y		R	T	E
U	R	A	L		O	D	E		S	I	N	G
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T	O	G	G	L	E		A	O	L			
			R	I	C		D	U	T	I	E	S
E	C	R	U		E	V	E	R	Y	O	N	E
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A	P	P	T		T	E	E	D		A	D	D

Olive



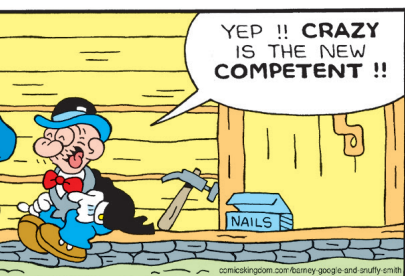
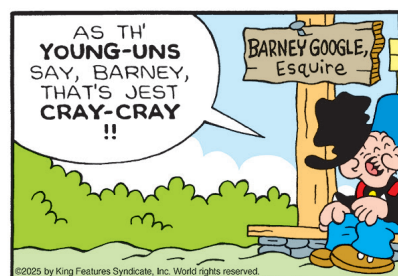
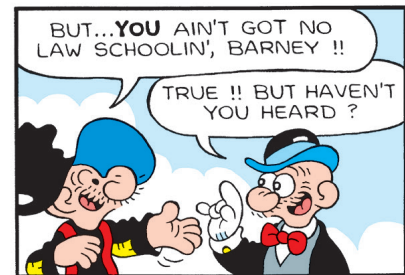
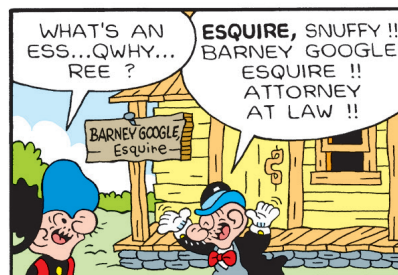
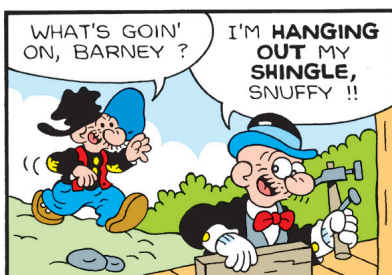
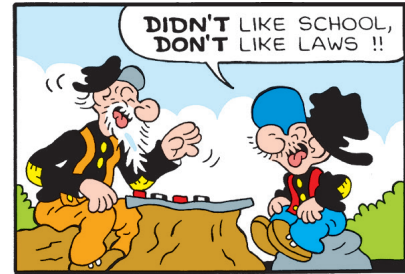
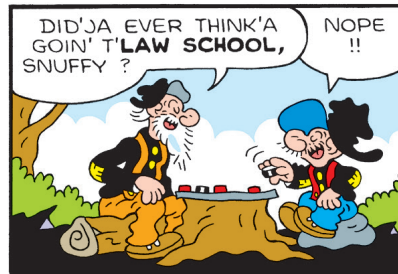
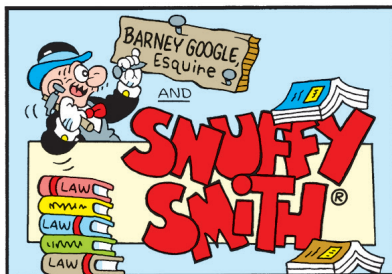
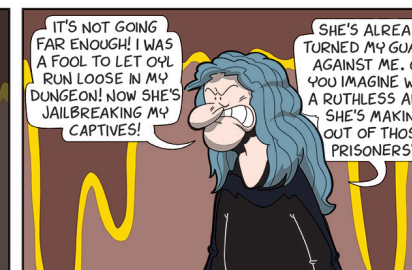
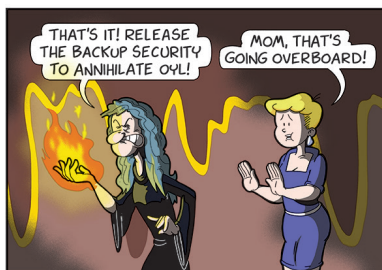
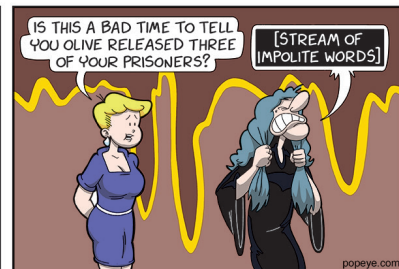
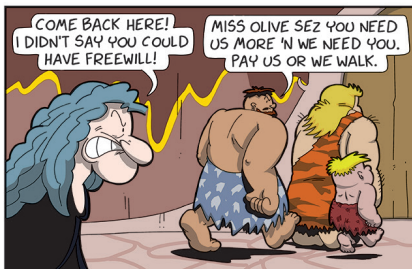
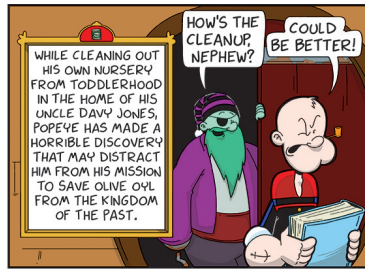
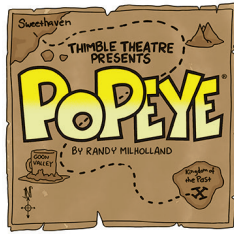
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



# Groton Daily Independent

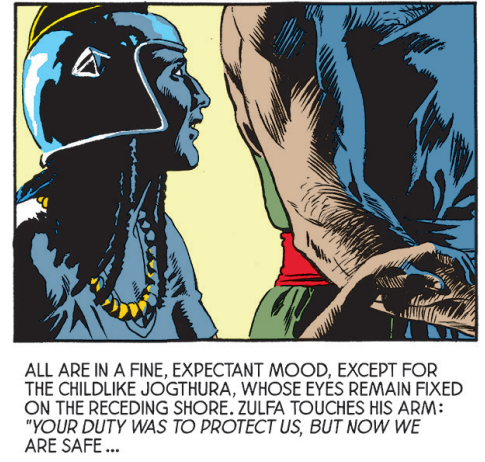
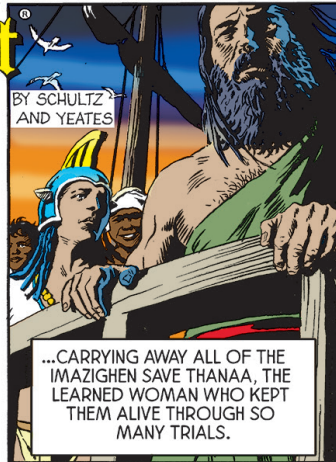
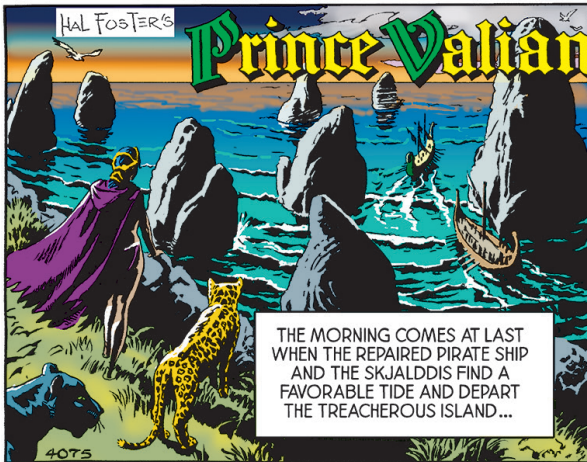
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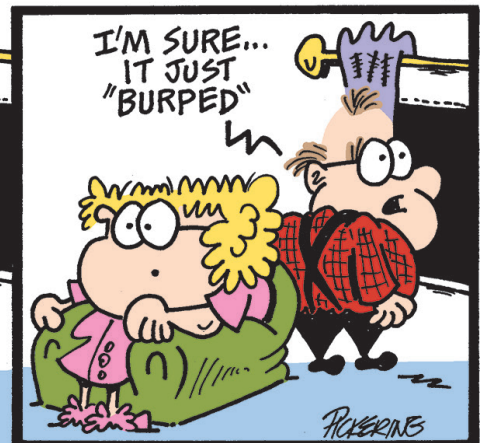
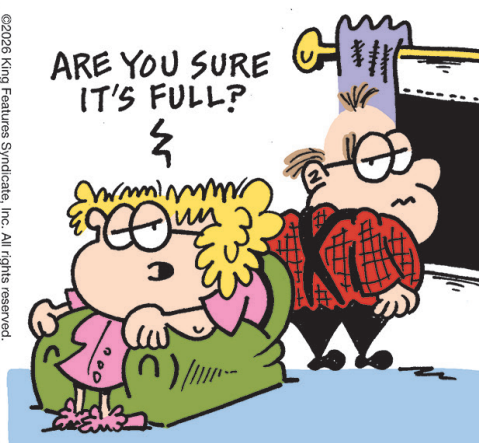
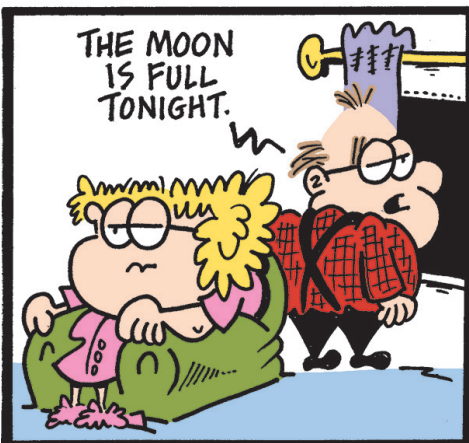
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## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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## SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

### Protect yourself from scams

The Federal Trade Commission has some great consumer advice about keeping your online information safe from scammers. With new breaches and thefts being reported all the time, we need to know as much as we can.

See [consumer.ftc.gov/node/77479](https://consumer.ftc.gov/node/77479) for a detailed list of suggestions and help.

Keeping your software up to date is at the top of the list, and it makes sense. After all, your devices could include cellphones, computers, smart TVs and more. Turn on "automatic updates" so those are installed without you needing to remember.

At the same time, your home's Wi-Fi network needs monitoring. At that FTC link, click on the information to secure your network.

One of the suggestions is "Choose an automatically generated password" and it gives links to the various browsers for more detailed information, such as Chrome, Mac and Firefox.

My personal opinion: You don't need a third party or anything automatically generated to help you come up with a strong password.

To create a password, don't use any known information such as your mother's maiden name or somebody's date of birth. Use information that is likely only known to you, or better yet, use a short phrase (but be sure it's at least 15 characters long). Then intersperse that phrase with numbers, capital letters and symbols.

Example of your phrase: I really hate scammers

Then insert numbers and symbols:

I\*really693#HATE@@scammers##

And yes, it's a pain to remember all that just to sign into an account online. And perhaps you'll need to write it down ... but that's OK as long as you keep the information nearby but not next to the computer where someone else can find it.

The link at the FTC page has much more information, including what to do if you somehow do get scammed.

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15 N Main St. - Ste. 101  
Downtown Groton

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Call/Text Tina: 605-397-7285



Living Heart Fitness Center

Senior Citizens 65+  
Physical Therapy.

\$20 a month



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1. On Jan. 22, 1987, how many fans braved a blizzard and became part of an elite club by attending a New Jersey Devils' NHL game?

2. Name the actor who played baseball legend Ty Cobb in director Ron Shelton's 1994 sports biography film "Cobb."

3. What two NFL teams merged for the 1944 season due to a shortage of players during World War II?

4. Anton Geesink became the first non-Japanese judoka to win a gold medal at the World Judo Championships (1961) and won gold at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. Geesink represented what country?

5. Name the Brazilian tennis player who won French Open men's singles titles in 1997, 2000 and 2001.

6. Which Cincinnati Reds player won the Tip O'Neill Award for best Canadian baseball player seven times from 2010 to 2017?

7. What South Asian island nation's men's cricket team, nicknamed the Lions, won the 1996 ICC Cricket World Cup?



## Answers

1. 334.

2. Tommy Lee Jones.

3. The Pittsburgh Steelers and Chicago Cardinals.

4. Netherlands.

5. Gustavo Kuerten.

6. Joey Votto.

7. Sri Lanka.

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## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps







## CANCER in pets: Early signs every owner should know

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: When my cat developed cancer, the only symptom he had was weird. "Manny" started jumping up on the kitchen table and staring at me while I made dinner! He never jumped up on the table or kitchen counters before. I thought it was cute and would just scold him and put him down, but he would jump right back up. We were very lucky that his annual checkup took place soon after he started doing that. I told the vet about the behavior, and she ordered an additional blood test, which showed there was a problem. My cat is being treated for lymphoma and is doing very well. So I don't think a sudden change in behavior is just "cute," pay attention! -- Linda R., Saratoga Springs, New York

DEAR LINDA: I'm so glad to hear that Manny is doing well! Lymphoma is usually very responsive to chemotherapy, and cats experience few side effects in most cases.

Cats are especially good at hiding illness -- it's instinctively built in. Plus, some illnesses mimic other diseases, or just present as quirky behavior changes.

Symptoms of possible cancer in pets can be subtle, so contact your pet's veterinarian if you notice any of the following: changes in behavior or eating habits; loss of interest in favorite activities; lameness or indications of pain; unexplained weight loss; abdominal swelling; lumps or bumps on their skin that change over time; persistent vomiting or diarrhea; bleeding; difficulty eating, breathing or swallowing; or sores that won't heal.

Many of these symptoms show up in diseases other than cancer, which is why it's important to have your pet evaluated by a vet to determine the cause and get the correct treatment.

Send your tips, comments or questions to [ask@pawscorner.com](mailto:ask@pawscorner.com).

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## Strange BUT TRUE

\* "Octlantis" is an underwater city off the coast of Australia where octopuses have built homes and formed communities.

\* Skin cancer is the world's most common cancer.

\* When a 1994 power outage in Los Angeles knocked out city lights, many residents were able to see the Milky Way for the first time and were so confused by the sight that they called 911.

\* Theophilus Van Kannel was inspired to invent the revolving door because he disliked opening doors for women.

\* Cocoa powder was once used as a makeup foundation.

\* Prior to 1949, the grass on tennis courts was kept at 2 inches long, until a player was bitten by a snake. Now it's a safer 5/16 of an inch.

\* The tension of the 230-odd strings on a grand piano exerts a combined force of 20 tons on the instrument's cast-iron frame.

\* Chickpeas and almonds contain nearly as much protein as steak.

\* Hiroshima and Nagasaki are no longer radioactive, largely because the bombs that struck them never touched the ground but detonated in the air.

\* Steven Blumberg stole 23,000 rare books from 268 libraries across the U.S., at a value of \$5.3 million, earning him the nickname "Book Bandit" and the distinctive title of America's most successful book thief.

\* According to French heritage law, the "Mona Lisa" belongs to the public.

\* Ice cream was invented in 7th-century China when King Tang commissioned a group of "ice men" to create a cold dessert from buffalo milk, flour and camphor.

\* People belonging to a specific clique in high school, such as "athlete," "cheerleader," "geek" or "teacher's pet," were more likely to be in an office clique.

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day: "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge." -- Albert Einstein

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The caterpillars of fritillary butterflies hatch in autumn, go dormant right away without feeding, and sleep through the winter. They awaken in the spring at the same time as violet plants – their only food – begin to grow.

It is feared that global warming may disrupt this delicate and important synchronization and cause extinction of fritillary butterflies.

– Brenda Weaver

Source: [www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us)

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by Freddy Groves

## The Star Act

The Major Richard Star Act seeks to allow 55,000 combat-injured veterans (who have less than 20 years of service) to receive their full pay at the same time they get disability benefits. The explanation on the website for the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs on the history of the act reads like a tennis match, and you could get whiplash watching the ball being volleyed back and forth. We have the vote in the Senate going from the Committee to a vote that was blocked by the Republicans

as something we can't afford ... to the Democrats who offered a compromise motion about floor time for the vote ... back to the Republicans ... back to the Democrats ...

Currently, for those who don't have their 20 years, there's a reduction in pay in exchange for disability benefits, and that's what the Star Act can fix.

It's mind-boggling to consider: You serve your country and end up so combat-injured you can't continue and you are medically retired. Then, the rules say, you have to decide between DoD retirement benefits and VA disability benefits. And for every VA dollar, they take away a DoD dollar.

Needing to calculate having VA-disability dollars deducted from DoD pay benefits doesn't help veterans decide their financial future, but passage of the Star Act would.

The Star Act says injured veterans should at least be given a choice of getting Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) or their regular retirement pay plus the Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP) service-connected disability compensation. There are financial considerations of all types between the two. One example is that CRSC is not subject to division with a former spouse and CRDP is. CRSC is not taxable; CRDP is. One requires 20 years of service, and one requires 50% disability instead of 10% and being at least 60 years old. There's a lot that goes into the decision.

If you're in a position of needing to decide which financial route to go, see the info at [www.dfas.mil/RetiredMilitary/disability/comparison](http://www.dfas.mil/RetiredMilitary/disability/comparison).

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## Wishing Well®

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

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

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1. GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of Belarus?
2. LITERATURE: Which Ken Kesey novel is set in an Oregon psychiatric hospital?
3. MYTHOLOGY: Who is the Greek goddess of discord?
4. ANATOMY: What is the longest bone in the human body?
5. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president was a commanding general in World War II?
6. MATH: What kind of polygon has three sides?
7. BIBLE: What is the last book in the Bible called?
8. ASTRONOMY: Which planet in our solar system is closest in size to Earth?
9. CHEMISTRY: What is the newest element on the Periodic Table?
10. MOVIES: Which Canadian actor/comedian starred in the movie "Uncle Buck" and died of a heart attack at 43?

### Answers

1. Minsk.
2. "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest."
3. Eris.
4. Femur.
5. Dwight Eisenhower.
6. Triangle.
7. The Book of Revelation.
8. Venus.
9. Oganesson (Og).
10. John Candy.

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South Dakota Governor



**Larry Rhoden**



**South Dakota:** *Under God, the People Rule*

## Our People

When visitors arrive in our state, they are greeted with warm smiles and friendly faces. South Dakota is known for our world class hospitality – and all the credit goes to our people and our way of life. Tourism is not just about where people go; it's about the connections they make, the memories they create, and the communities they support along the way.

These connections are important because tourism is more than a seasonal activity in South Dakota. It's a year-round economic engine that supports communities in every corner of our state. In 2025 alone, nearly 15 million visitors traveled to South Dakota, generating a record \$5.16 billion in visitor spending. These aren't just numbers. They represent livelihoods, small businesses, and families that thrive because visitors choose to invest their time and dollars in our state.

During National Travel and Tourism Week, it is important to remember that travelers also play a critical role in easing the tax burden on our citizens. By generating more than \$400 million in state and local tax revenue, this industry helps fund essential services while saving each South Dakota household over \$1,100 annually. That is the power of welcoming the world to experience our Great Faces and Great Places. And next year when the record-breaking property tax cut takes effect, tourists will help decrease the tax burden on South Dakotans to an even greater degree!

From our biggest monuments to our smallest communities, South Dakota has one thing at every stop: our people. They work hard, live by common sense, and they understand how to approach situations with civility. Everywhere I visit across the state, I am met with the same thing: friendly and strong-willed South Dakotans.

Along with the travel industry, we've been setting aside time to celebrate professional groups like nurses, correctional professionals, state employees, and teachers. They all share a common heart of service. I find the same factor of friendliness and grit when I visit with those working in our healthcare facilities, prisons, state agencies, and schools.

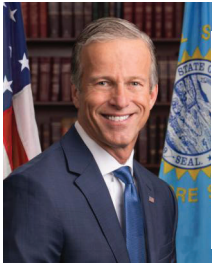
A couple weeks ago, I toured Harrisburg High School and Brandon Valley High School. The focus of these visits was to understand their youth apprenticeship programs. I was amazed at the opportunities for students. As I see it, South Dakota is open for opportunity even in our K-12 schools, combining curriculum, work experience, and college credit to give our students purpose and direction when they graduate. I can think of few greater gifts to give to serve each other than to give the gift of purpose.

This month, many of our students across the state will celebrate graduations. I want them to stay in South Dakota. They are product of our people and our way of life. In order to make this expansion of youth apprenticeships possible, we are opening a statewide apprenticeship coordinator. This will multiply what these schools have created and open more doors for students to find work and opportunities right here in South Dakota – all while continuing their education.

Creating opportunities for our next generation keeps me motivated when the sledding gets tough. And just like travelers that come back every year to experience the connection with our folks, I enjoy being your governor most when I'm out meeting our citizens, seeing what they are proud of and what gives them purpose. It is a reminder of two truths I already know: that our people are world class, and our way of life is special. Thank you for being a part of it.

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**JOHN THUNE**  
U.S. SENATOR FOR SOUTH DAKOTA

## Police Officers: A Noble Calling

Take a look at a police officer's belt, and you get a sense of their job. They carry handcuffs for criminals, a flashlight to see in the dark places they have to go, and a first aid kit to help a person who's hurt. And in a single shift, an officer may very well use all of these things. That's the type of job police officers have, and these items tell us something about the type of individuals who serve their community in this way. During National Police Week, we salute these brave men and women.

Police officers represent some of the best of our country. If someone needs help, they're the first on the scene. When there's danger, they put themselves in harm's way. And they – and their families – make considerable sacrifices for their communities. The recent shooting of a Sioux Falls police officer is a timely reminder of the dangers police officers face in the course of doing their jobs. And it's a reminder for all of us to be grateful for the men and women in our community who are willing to face these dangers in order to keep us safe.

Growing up in the small town of Murdo, the officers who served our town and county and the highway patrol officers who worked I-90 were all fixtures of daily life. And my dad, a World War II veteran who knew something about the sacrifice of those serving in uniform, instilled in us a deep respect for law enforcement – something I've carried throughout my life.

Unfortunately, respect for law enforcement isn't always a given these days, but it should be. Kimberley and I now have six grandchildren, which makes us even more acutely aware of the importance of having safe communities for them and other children to grow up in. But safety doesn't happen by chance. It takes people with character and courage to stand up to protect our communities and to support the people who live in them. That's exactly what police officers do, from arresting criminals to helping stranded motorists to mentoring young people.

As a U.S. senator, I have an additional responsibility to support law enforcement. Last year, congressional Republicans' Working Families Tax Cuts bill made a significant investment in state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. That same bill also provided tax relief for police officers, especially by allowing them to deduct overtime pay they earn when they spend long hours and holidays on the job away from their loved ones.

We ask a lot of police officers. Their job requires them to face dangerous places, people, and situations. When others run away, police officers run toward the danger. It takes a special type of person to be willing to risk their own safety to keep the rest of us safe, but that's what a police officer does. And I'm grateful for those who have stepped up to answer this noble calling.



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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries

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## Sometimes I Feel Like A Rabbit

A lot of things in life, I am not very good at. That list could go on and on and on. Not only am I not good at some things, but I'm terrible at most things.

However, I am actually excellent at a few things. I think the top of that list is eating, which I do with a passion that might make you smile.

I've never met a cheeseburger that I didn't like. I could have a cheeseburger every day and be very happy. Along with my cheeseburger would be some very delicious French fries. Nobody can eat a cheeseburger and fries like me. I never know when I've had enough.

Along with that, I've never met a serving of Mac & Cheese I didn't like. I enjoy those buffets where I can eat as much as I want. I'm not sure who came up with this idea of Mac & Cheese, but they certainly deserve a Nobel Peace Prize.

When it comes to dessert, I have never met a dessert I did not love.

At one restaurant, when I order my dessert, I tell the waitress, "You surprised me and pick out a dessert you think I would enjoy."

Never once did any waitress bring me a dessert I didn't like.

Then, I have never had an Apple Fritter I did not enjoy. I can't remember when I first started eating Apple Fritters, but it's certainly been a wonderful experience for me.

I try to convince The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage that an Apple Fritter is actually a fruit. Everybody knows that an Apple is a fruit. Whenever I say that to her, she looks at me and says, "The only fruit I know is you, and you're a fruitcake."

When it comes to breakfast, I've never had a waffle I didn't like. There is nothing like a plate filled to the top with waffles floating in syrup. I love waffles, and I could eat them all day.

Recently, some health challenges developed, and my doctor said I was slightly overweight. I asked what that meant, and he just smiled, probably knowing I'd find some humor in it.

I then had a slight heart attack, along with an episode of shingles and even a case of acute bronchitis. All of that together redefined my health condition.

When I say redefine I'm referring to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. She's usually with me when I see my doctor and knows everything the doctor says about me and my health condition. She remembers even more than I hear. I'm not sure she is remembering everything that actually occurred.

Because of that, she has now taken over the culinary aspect of my health. I did not see that coming. All of a sudden, my eating habits are being supervised by The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

I must confess that she is a wonderful cook. I don't think there's anything she can't cook or bake that doesn't taste delicious.

But now, because of my health conditions, she has developed a vegetable diet for me. Also, some fruits are involved. The main part of my meals every day is lettuce. Personally, I only love lettuce on my cheeseburger. After a while, I have come to the point where I want to say, "Let us alone." But I can't speak that out loud in case of reciprocation. Believe me, nobody wants to experience anything like reciprocation from The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Still, I understand it's for my health, even if I joke about it.

I did not know there were so many vegetables in the world until recently. It seems she has a vegetable for everything.

There is one strict restriction along this line, and that is broccoli. No matter what anybody else thinks,

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especially The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, I do not consider broccoli to be a vegetable. Disagree with me if you want, but I am unanimous in that.

I do confess that the lettuce salads she makes are rather delicious. No question about that for me. But as long as I've been alive, I have never considered a lettuce salad to be the mainstay of lunch and dinner.

For the past year, she has been very diligent about the "vegetable diet" she developed for me. As a result, I have lost around 15 pounds. When the doctor told me that, I spent a whole week looking for those lost pounds. It's funny, but I know it's a positive change for my health.

Evidently, her "vegetable diet" is working for me. I'm losing weight, and my blood pressure is under control. I never knew it was out of control before, but doctors are always right, so says The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

After a week of eating lettuce salads, I began to feel like a rabbit. Now I know what rabbits feel like when they're running around looking for lettuce. The only difference with a rabbit is the ears. They have big ears and can hear everything, whereas I have small ears and can hardly hear anything.

I remembered what the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 10:31, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Whatever my diet is, whether I like it or not, I'm going to do it to glorify God, after all, God deserves my praise.

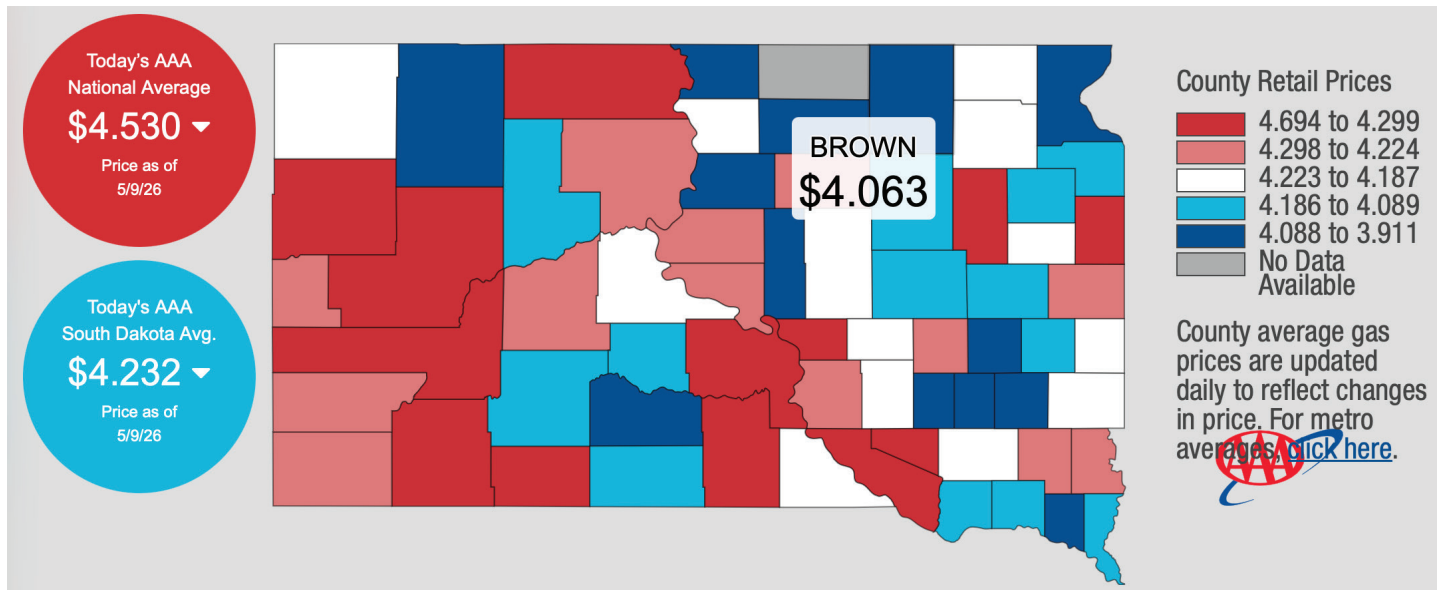
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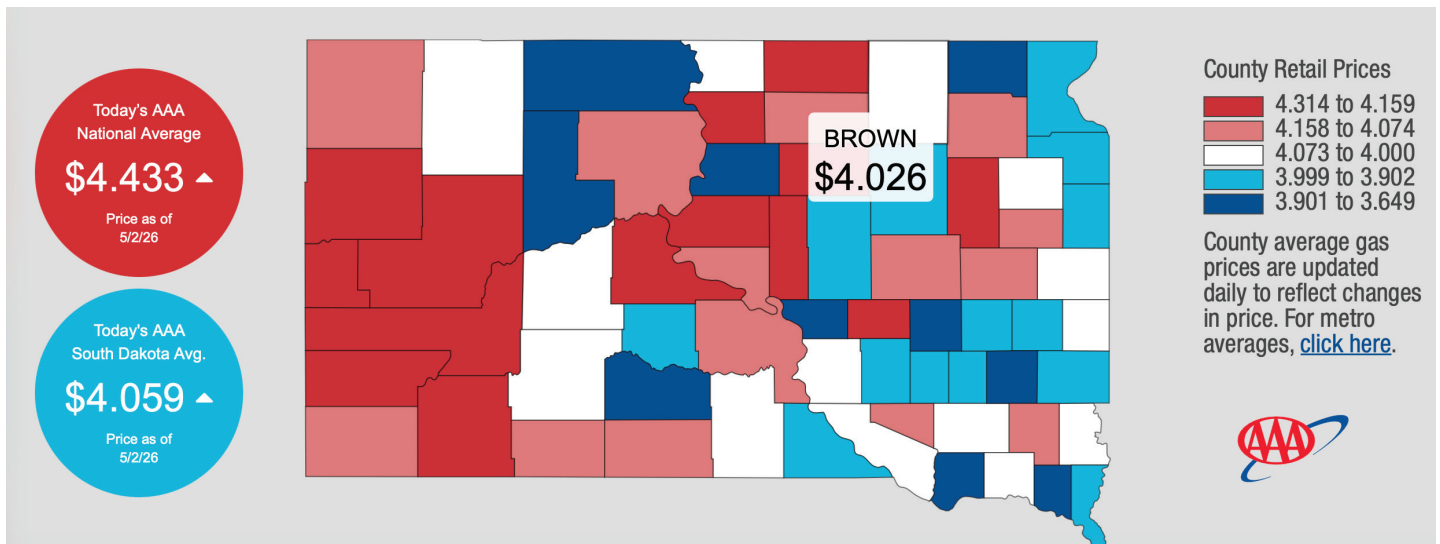
## South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$4.232	\$4.436	\$4.888	\$5.180
Yesterday Avg.	\$4.241	\$4.430	\$4.873	\$5.218
Week Ago Avg.	\$4.059	\$4.225	\$4.692	\$5.099
Month Ago Avg.	\$3.691	\$3.835	\$4.326	\$4.850
Year Ago Avg.	\$3.061	\$3.253	\$3.714	\$3.237

### This Week



### Last Week





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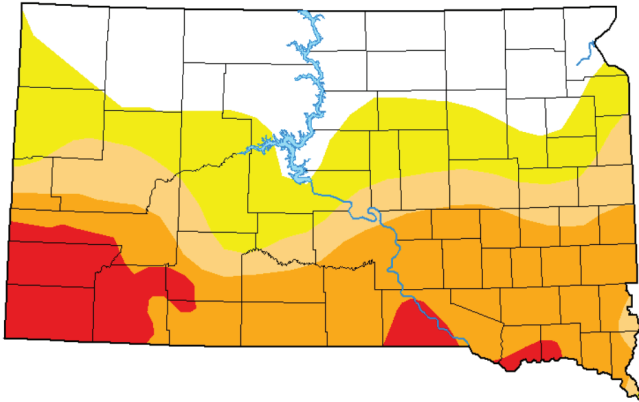
## Drought Classification

None  
D0 (Abnormally Dry)  
D1 (Moderate Drought)

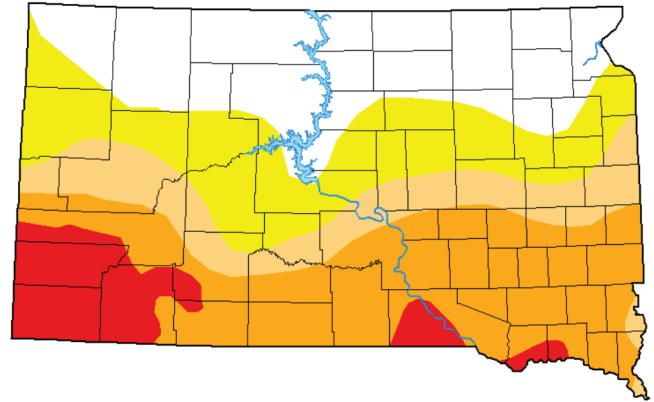
D2 (Severe Drought)  
D3 (Extreme Drought)

D4 (Exceptional Drought)  
No Data

## Drought Monitor



April 28



April 21

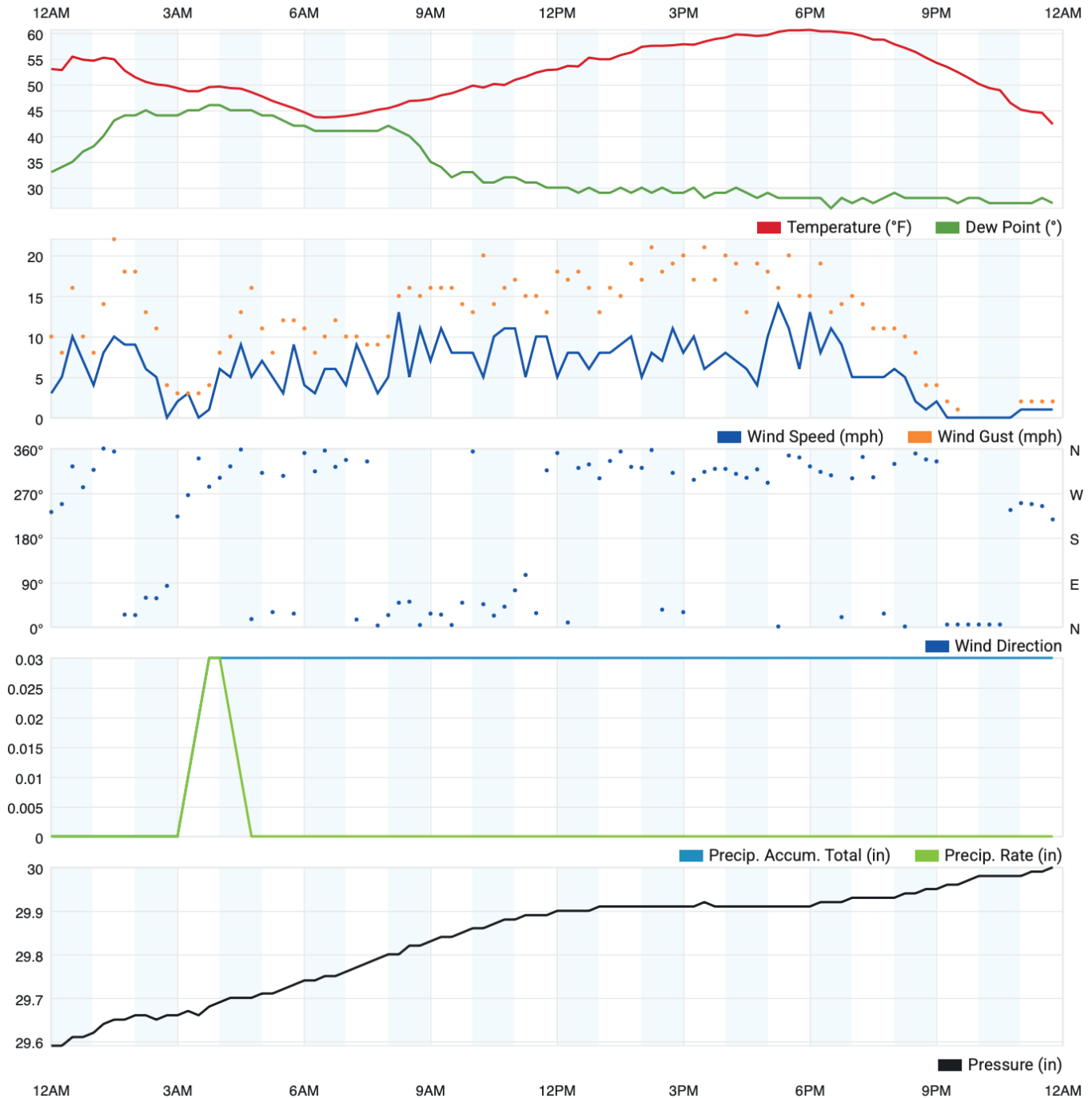
Light to moderate precipitation overspread much of the High Plains, with the heaviest accumulations (0.5 - 1.5 inch) falling across central Colorado, including late season snow across the higher elevations. This precipitation resulted in some drought reduction across central Colorado. Across the rest of the Plains, however, the moisture was not sufficient to engender substantive improvements. Despite cooler temperatures lowering evapotranspiration rates, some degradation occurred across Kansas and Nebraska, and far western North Dakota.

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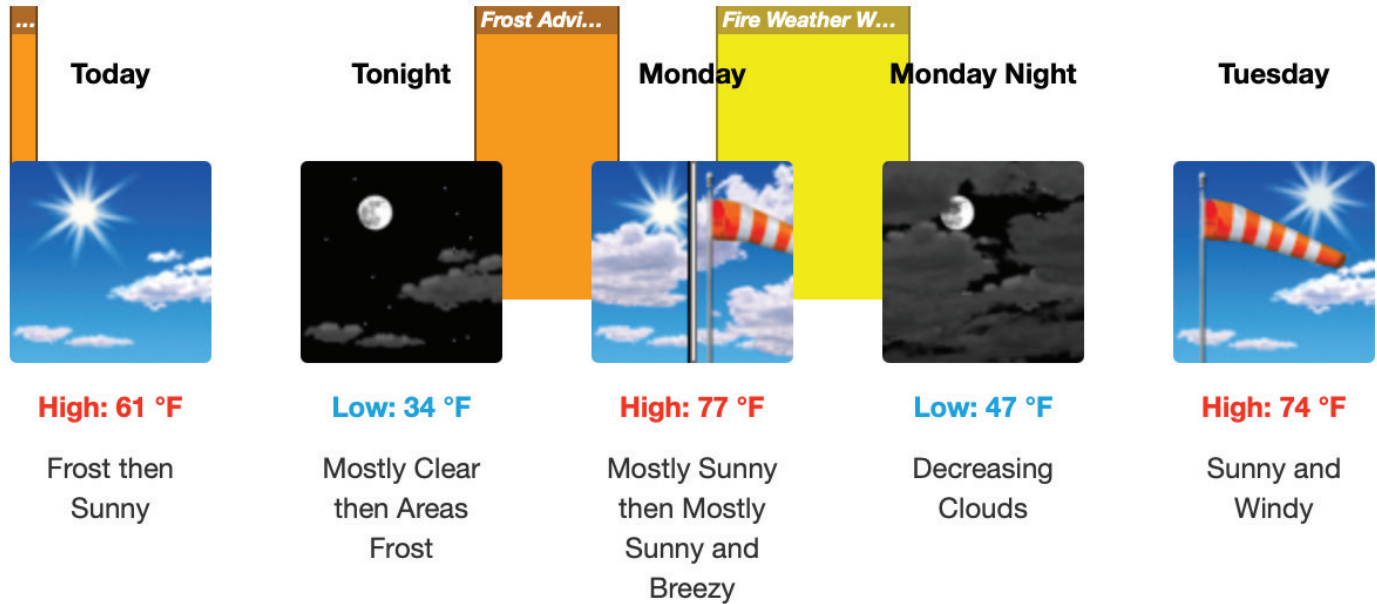
## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

May 9, 2026



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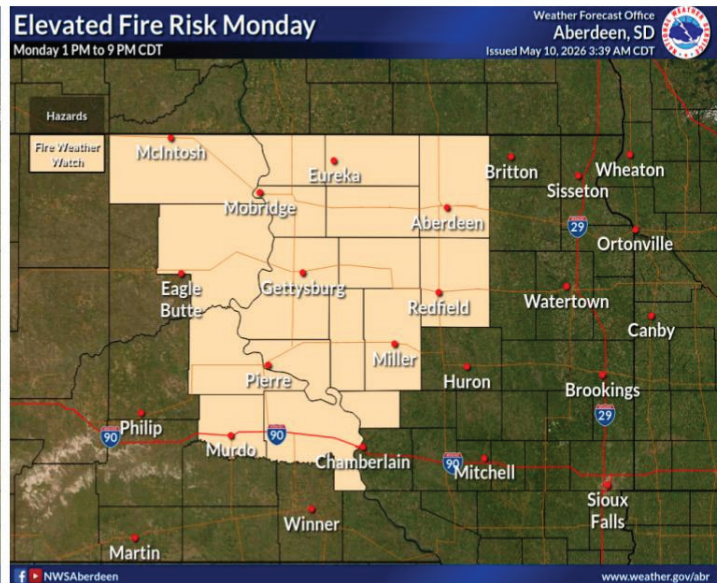
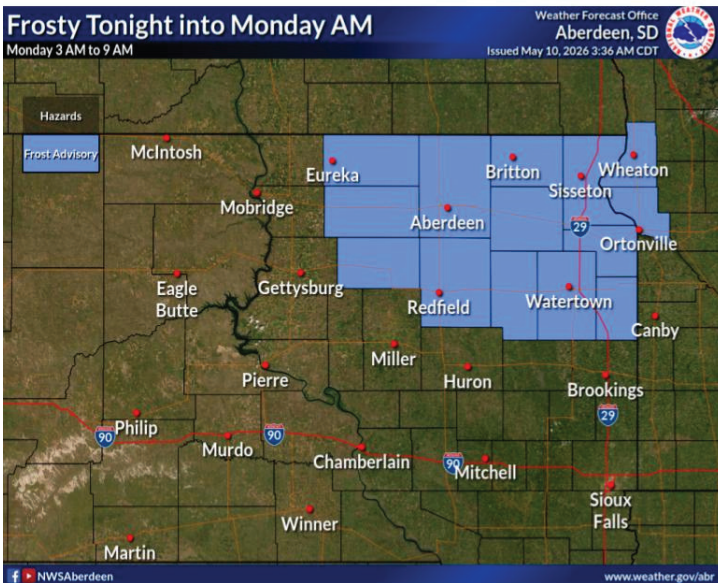




## Frost Advisory Early Monday

Fire Weather Watch Monday Afternoon

May 10, 2026  
4:12 AM CDT



Frosty temperatures between 33 and 36 degrees expected tonight through early Monday morning from Eureka east. On Monday, southerly winds gust 30 to 40 mph by afternoon. Combined with dry conditions and warming temperatures, elevated fire risk is anticipated from the James Valley west.



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 61 °F at 5:51 PM**

**Low Temp: 43 °F at 6:21 AM**

**Wind: 22 mph at 1:29 AM**

**Precip: : 0.03**

## Today's Info

Record High: 95 in 1911

Record Low: 20 in 1981

Average High: 68

Average Low: 42

Average Precip in May.: 1.10

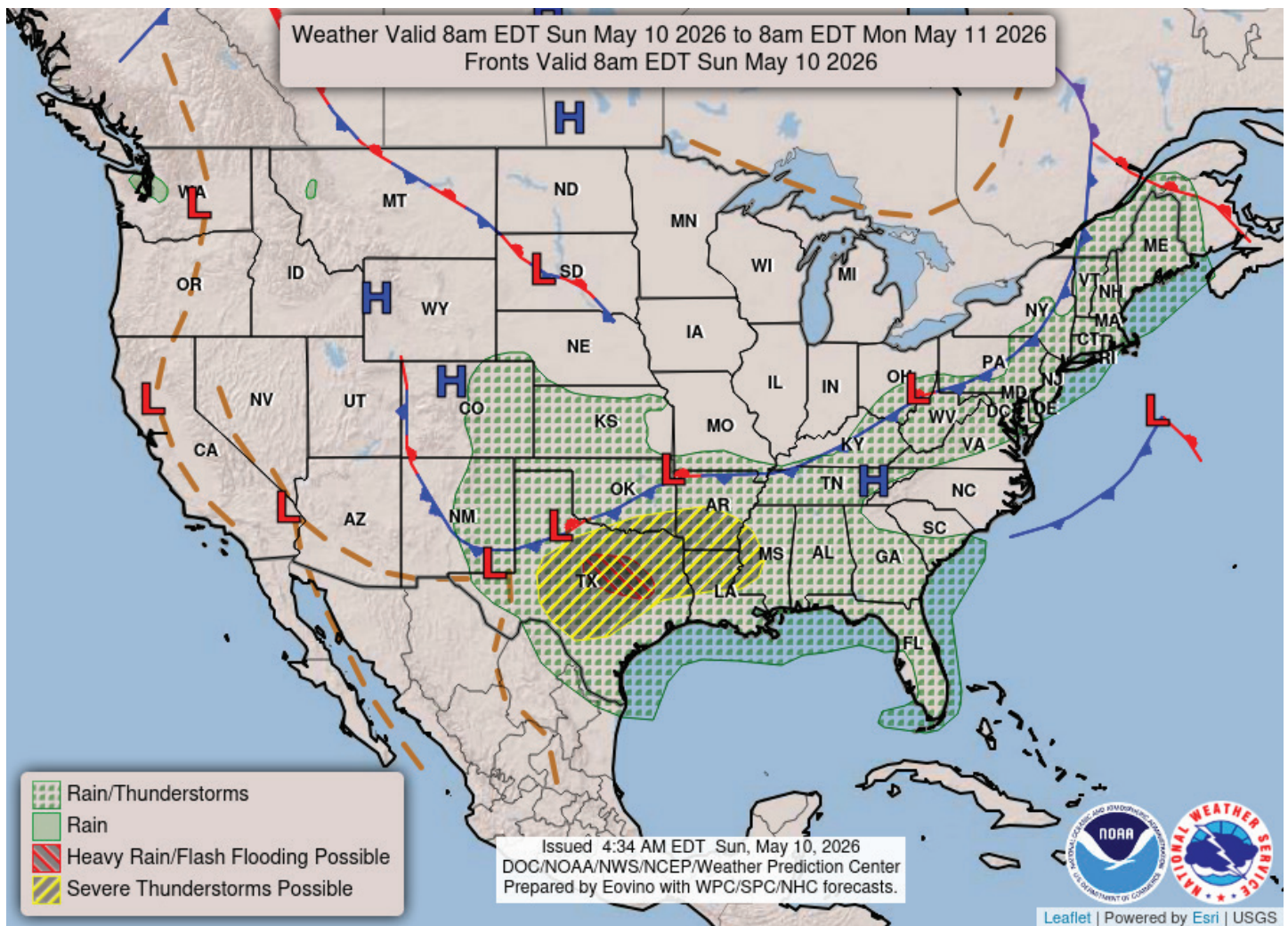
Precip to date in May.: 0.03

Average Precip to date: 5.07

Precip Year to Date: 3.15

Sunset Tonight: 8:49 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:06 am



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## **Today in Weather History**

May 10th, 1982: An F3 tornado was first sighted six miles west of Tintah, Minnesota. The storm moved into the town of Tintah and then northeastward, dissipating north of Wendell. Two farmsteads were damaged west of Tintah. Nearly one dozen farm buildings were destroyed, and 50 cows were killed. Hail as large as softballs preceded the tornado into Tintah, with extensive damage. A school and church received heavy damage, two railroad cars were overturned, homes and grain buildings were damaged, and utility poles and trees were uprooted.

1905 — A deadly tornado hit the town of Snyder, OK, killing 87 persons. The tornado leveled 100 homes in Snyder, and destroyed many others. The large and violent tornado killed a total of 97 persons along its 40 miles path across southwestern Oklahoma. Its roar could reportedly be heard up to twelve miles away. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1966 — Morning lows of 21 degrees at Bloomington-Normal and Aurora, IL, established a state record for the month of May. (The Weather Channel)

1987 — Summer-like "Father's Day" type weather prevailed in the north central and western U.S. for "Mother's Day", as seventeen cities reported record high temperatures for the date. Jamestown ND soared to a record high of 96 degrees. Thunderstorms along the Central Gulf Coast deluged Lillian AL with 14.5 inches of rain, and nearby Perdido Key FL with 12.8 inches of rain. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 — Thunderstorms produced hail and high winds over the Atlantic Coast Region and the Gulf Coast States marking the end of a five day episode of severe weather associated with a cyclone tracking out of the Great Basin into southeastern Canada. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 — Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front crossing the Plateau Region produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Butte MT, and gusts to 77 mph at Choteau MT. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 — A spring storm produced heavy snow in Upper Michigan and eastern Wisconsin. Totals ranged up to 12 inches at Marquette MI, with eight inches reported at Muskego WI and Hartford WI. The heavy wet snow, and winds gusting to 35 mph, damaged or destroyed thousands of trees, and downed numerous power lines. Total damage from the storm was more than four million dollars. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)



## A Mother's Influence

**Pray that God would help you see opportunities to invest  
in young hearts and point them toward Christ.**

Proverbs 22:6: 6 Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.

If someone asked us to name the greatest and most influential people, we'd probably think of presidents or leaders of industry because their decisions shape the world. But who shaped them? It's likely their mothers played a key role in their success.

When a woman is in the process of changing diapers, wiping noses, and settling squabbles, raising children may not seem like important work. However, God has given mothers the responsibility of shaping those young lives and teaching the importance of knowing and loving Him. Timothy is an example of how women can impact the faith of the next generation (2 Timothy 1:5).

If you're a mom, you have tremendous influence in the lives of your children. There's no way to know how God will use them in the future. But whatever His plans may be, you can equip your sons and daughters by determining to spend time with them each day, reading and teaching them God's Word.

Perhaps you don't have children or your children are grown. You can still have an impact! Look for those to whom you can be a spiritual parent, teaching and loving them as Christ did. When they see you modeling godly character or trusting the Lord in the midst of trials, they will want to know and love God as you do. That's a wonderful way to support the next generation.

*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:

05.09.26

8 11 17 29 49 2

TOP PRIZE:

**\$1,000,000/year**

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 51 Mins 54 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

05.08.26

37 47 49 51 58 16

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$232,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

05.09.26

8 12 13 27 42 4

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$25,170,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

05.09.26

1 2 4 8 18

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$86,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

05.09.26

6 27 58 61 65 14

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

05.09.26

15 41 46 47 56 22

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$57,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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

### **Plane carrying Spanish passengers from hantavirus-stricken MV Hondius cruise ship leaves for Madrid**

By IAIN SULLIVAN and SUMAN NAISHADHAM Associated Press

TENERIFE, Canary Islands (AP) — The first plane carrying passengers evacuated from the hantavirus-hit cruise ship departed from Tenerife in Spain's Canary Islands on Sunday for Madrid, where they will go to a military hospital.

Spanish nationals were the first to leave the MV Hondius, which remains anchored off Tenerife after arriving hours earlier, and they will be under quarantine after they reach Madrid, Spanish health authorities say. Only Spanish nationals will quarantine in the country.

The cruise operator Oceanwide Expeditions listed 13 Spanish passengers and one Spanish crew member on board.

Nobody among the more than 140 people on the Hondius is showing symptoms of the virus, Spain's health ministry, the World Health Organization and cruise company Oceanwide Expeditions said.

Passengers and some crew members of other nationalities will be evacuated throughout Sunday into Monday. There were people of more than 20 different nationalities on board.

Those disembarking and personnel working at the port of Granadilla in Tenerife were wearing protective gear during the evacuation process, including face masks, hazmat suits and respirators.

The cruise ship reached Tenerife early Sunday morning, after leaving Cape Verde on May 6.

Three people have died since the outbreak, and five passengers who left the ship are infected with hantavirus, which can cause life-threatening illness.

Everyone disembarking will be checked for symptoms, and are being taken off the ship only once evacuation flights are ready to fly them to their destinations.

"The entire operation is proceeding normally," Spanish Health Minister Mónica García said.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, along with Spain's health and interior ministers, are supervising the operation in Tenerife, the largest of Spain's Canary Islands off the coast of West Africa.

Authorities have said the passengers and crew members who will disembark will have no contact with the local population.

Hantavirus usually spreads when people inhale contaminated residue of rodent droppings and isn't easily transmitted between people. But the Andes virus detected in the cruise ship outbreak may be able to spread between people in rare cases. Symptoms usually show between one and eight weeks after exposure.

Passengers and crew members disembarking are leaving behind their luggage, and are allowed to take only a small bag with essential items, a cellphone, charger and documentation.

Some crew, as well as the body of a passenger who died on board, will remain on the ship, which will sail on to Rotterdam, Netherlands where it will undergo disinfection, Spanish authorities said.

The expected sailing time to Rotterdam is around five days, the cruise company said.

Evacuation and quarantine plans

The U.S., the U.K. and the Netherlands are sending planes to evacuate their citizens. Americans on board will be quarantined at a medical center in Nebraska.

Twenty-nine people will be on board the Dutch charter flight, including Dutch nationals and people of other nationalities, the Dutch Foreign Ministry said.

Five French passengers will be repatriated Sunday, and will be hospitalized for 72 hours for monitoring, after which they will quarantine at home for 45 days, France's Foreign Ministry said.

U.K. passengers and crew will be hospitalized for observation once they are flown home, British authorities say.

Australia is sending a plane expected to arrive Monday to evacuate its nationals and those from nearby countries like New Zealand, García said. Its plane will be the last to leave Tenerife, she said.



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Norway has sent an ambulance plane to Tenerife with personnel trained for the transport of patients with high-risk infections, its Directorate for Civil Protection told public broadcaster NRK.

The ambulance plane is owned by the European Union, but operated by Norway.

Countries monitor suspected cases

British Army medics have parachuted onto the remote south Atlantic territory of Tristan da Cunha, where one of the 221 residents has a suspected case of hantavirus.

The patient was a passenger on the MV Hondius and disembarked last month.

The U.K. defense ministry says a team of six paratroopers and two medical clinicians jumped Saturday from an Royal Air Force transport plane, which also dropped oxygen and medical equipment.

Tristan da Cunha is Britain's most remote inhabited overseas territory, about 1,500 miles (2,400 kilometers) from the nearest inhabited island, St. Helena. The group of volcanic islands has no airstrip and is usually accessible only by boat on a six-day voyage from Cape Town, South Africa.

Meanwhile, a Spanish woman in the southeastern province of Alicante suspected of being infected tested negative for hantavirus, Spanish health authorities said Saturday.

The woman was a passenger on the same flight as the Dutch woman who died in Johannesburg after traveling on the cruise ship.

## **United Arab Emirates says it has intercepted 2 Iranian drones in a test of shaky Iran war ceasefire**

By JON GAMBRELL and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The United Arab Emirates said Sunday it intercepted two Iranian drones in its airspace in the latest test of a shaky ceasefire.

The Defense Ministry in the oil-rich nation said there were no reports of casualties.

It comes the same day a drone strike started a small blaze aboard a commercial ship off the coast of Qatar and Kuwait said it fended off a drone attack.

THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. AP's earlier story follows below.

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The shaky ceasefire in the Iran war was tested again on Sunday when drones of unclear origin set fire to a cargo ship off Qatar's coast and entered Kuwaiti airspace before dawn, authorities said.

Qatar and Kuwait said that no casualties were reported from either attack. The events marked the latest threats to a month-old ceasefire, which the Trump administration says remains in effect.

The pause in fighting has faced difficulties, with Iran restricting traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, a strategic waterway key to the global flow of oil, and the U.S. imposing a blockade of Iranian ports.

Washington has been awaiting Iran's response to a new proposal for a deal to end the war, reopen the strait to shipping and roll back Iran's nuclear program. U.S. President Donald Trump has reiterated threats to resume full-scale bombing, if Iran doesn't accept an agreement to reopen the strait and roll back its nuclear program. Iran has mostly blocked the waterway since joint strikes on Feb. 28 by the U.S. and Israel launched the war, which has caused a global spike in fuel prices and rattled world markets.

One of the main sticking points in the negotiations is the fate of Iran's stockpile of highly enriched uranium. The U.N. nuclear agency says Iran has more than 440 kilograms (970 pounds) of uranium that is enriched up to 60% purity, a short, technical step from weapons-grade levels.

In an interview with Iranian state media, a spokesman for the Iranian military said that forces were on "full readiness" to protect nuclear sites where the uranium is stored.

"We considered it possible that they might intend to steal it through infiltration operations or heliborne operations," Brig. Gen. Akrami Nia told the IRNA news agency late Saturday. He didn't offer further details.

The majority of Iran's highly enriched uranium is likely still at its Isfahan nuclear complex, International Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi told The Associated Press last month.

The Isfahan facility was bombarded by U.S.-Israeli airstrikes in the 12-day war last year, and faced less intense attacks in this year's war.

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In Sunday's naval attack, Qatar's ministry of defense said that a drone targeted a commercial ship coming from Abu Dhabi into a southern port, setting a small fire that was extinguished. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations Centre said that the attack happened 23 nautical miles (43 kilometers) northeast of Qatar's capital, Doha. It gave no details on the owner or origin of the ship, and there was no claim of responsibility.

There have been several attacks against ships in the Persian Gulf over the past week. On Friday, the U.S. struck two Iranian oil tankers after it said that the vessels were trying to breach its blockade of Iran's ports.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard navy on Sunday reiterated its warning that any attack on Iranian oil tankers or commercial vessels would be met with a "heavy assault" on one of the U.S. bases in the region and enemy ships.

In Kuwait, Defense Ministry spokesman Brig. Gen. Saud Abdulaziz Al Otaibi said that hostile drones entered Kuwait's airspace early Sunday, and that forces responded "in accordance with established procedures." There were no immediate reports of casualties and the ministry didn't say where the drones had come from.

Pakistan is continuing to mediate during the ceasefire. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said Sunday that he received a call from his Qatari counterpart, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, during which the two leaders discussed the evolving regional situation and reviewed ongoing peace efforts.

Sharif wrote on X that the countries shared "brotherly bonds" and said that he looked forward to an upcoming Qatari visit to Pakistan.

## **Iran war disruptions spark higher costs and lost income in Bangladesh**

By JULHAS ALAM Associated Press

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — Tariqul Islam lost his savings after setbacks in his clothing business about a year and a half ago and turned to ride-sharing on his motorbike to make ends meet. Until recently, he spent hours in fuel lines as supply disruptions linked to the war in Iran ripple into Bangladesh.

The 53-year-old father of four fears the strain will worsen if the war drags on, saying long hours waiting for fuel have sharply cut his income and made it increasingly difficult to support his family in Dhaka, the nation's capital, including a daughter at university and a son in college.

"My family was managing fairly well through ride-sharing," he said. "But after the fuel shortage began, I would buy fuel one day and run the bike for two days. As a result, I had to sit idle for one day, which reduced my income."

The strain in Islam's household reflects a broader squeeze in Bangladesh, heavily dependent on imported fuel, where energy shortages have disrupted daily life, slowed industrial output and raised concerns about economic growth as global tensions push up costs and strain supplies.

Conditions have eased slightly in recent days, with shorter queues at fuel stations after the government increased supplies, but concerns persist across sectors.

Across Asia, governments are facing similar strains as the war-driven surge in energy prices rattles economies dependent on imported oil and gas.

The continent is exposed because it relies on imported fuel, much of it passing through the Strait of Hormuz — a chokepoint for about a fifth of global oil and natural gas trade.

Higher fuel costs are leading to inflation and squeezing household budgets, while industries from manufacturing to transport are facing rising operating costs and supply disruptions.

The Asian Development Bank in late April cut growth forecasts for developing Asia and the Pacific, warning that war-driven energy disruptions would slow economies and fuel inflation. It now expects growth of 4.7% in 2026, with inflation rising to 5.2% as oil prices climb and financial conditions tighten.

Many are hoping for a quick end to the conflict and a return to normal.

"If this situation continues, we will have to move back to our village and find some other way to earn a living," Islam, the struggling father said. It is not possible to survive in Dhaka by doing ride-sharing under these conditions."

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Energy crunch weighs on Bangladesh's economy

Rising energy prices are also expected to strain Bangladesh's finances, with the government likely to spend an additional \$1.07 billion on LNG subsidies in the April-June quarter alone if global prices remain high.

Bangladesh has sought supplies from its big neighbor India, which has responded positively as it has diversified sources, including Russia, of fuel.

Already, authorities have imposed austerity measures to manage the crisis as global lenders warn of slower growth in the nation of more than 170 million people. Gas and diesel shortages have triggered more frequent power cuts in industrial zones.

The government has also shut fertilizer factories to divert gas to power plants, restricted evening hours for shopping malls and introduced fuel rationing.

The World Bank said in April it expects growth in Bangladesh to slow to 3.9% in the fiscal year ending in June 2026, warning that a prolonged Middle East conflict could fuel inflation, widen the current account deficit and strain public finances through higher energy subsidies.

Jean Pesme, the World Bank's division director for Bangladesh and Bhutan, said the economy already faced "pre-existing vulnerabilities and challenges, in particular on the economic and employment front."

The rising costs now are "obviously making the fiscal situation more difficult."

He also warned that authorities should be cautious in raising fuel prices, saying higher costs could hurt farmers and agriculture.

Bangladesh garment industry is hit as exports slow

The energy crunch is also driving up costs and threatening Bangladesh's garment exports, the backbone of its economy, business leaders say.

Anwar-ul Alam Chowdhury, president of the Bangladesh Chamber of Industries, said exports to Europe and the U.S. could face a significant setback. Shipments have fallen between 5% and 13% in recent months, he said. He worries that customers could lose confidence in Bangladesh's ability to deliver and that competitor nations such as India, Vietnam and Cambodia could gain market share if the crisis persists.

Chowdhury said factory output has dropped by 30% to 40% for various reasons and that the situation has worsened since the U.S. and Israel launched their war against Iran, while business costs have risen by about 35% to 40%.

Bangladesh, the world's second-largest garment exporter after China, earns about \$39 billion annually from the sector, which employs around 4 million workers, mostly women from rural areas.

Alvi Islam, director of Arrival Fashion Limited, said manufacturers are facing higher costs for petroleum-based materials such as sewing threads, poly bags — plastic bags used in packaging — and cartons, while spending more on diesel generators to cope with frequent power cuts.

His company, which exports products worth about \$40 million annually, now runs generators at least four hours a day during production.

"For that reason, the cost of doing business for exporting garments has increased quite significantly in past one month," he said.

Workers worry about livelihoods

Garment worker Mosammet Runa, 35, said she fears for her family's future if the war continues.

"Millions of people like us depend on this industry. It is how we survive," said Runa, who, along with her husband, earns about \$400 a month to support their family of six.

She said a prolonged conflict could wipe out jobs and called for an end to the fighting.

"We are innocent people. The world should not make us victims," she said.

## **WHO head seeks to reassure residents of Spanish island where hantavirus-stricken ship is headed**

By IAIN SULLIVAN and ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

TENERIFE, Spain (AP) — The head of the World Health Organization sought Saturday to reassure residents of the Spanish island where passengers of a hantavirus-stricken cruise ship are expected to be evacuated,



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issuing them a direct message that the virus was "not another COVID."

The Dutch-flagged MV Hondius, with more than 140 passengers and crew on board, is headed to Spain's Canary Islands, off the coast of West Africa, and is expected to arrive at the island of Tenerife early Sunday.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, along with Spain's Health Minister Monica Garcia and Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska, arrived on the island Saturday to coordinate the disembarkation of passengers and some crew.

"I know you are worried. I know that when you hear the word 'outbreak' and watch a ship sail toward your shores, memories surface that none of us have fully put to rest. The pain of 2020 is still real, and I do not dismiss it for a single moment," Tedros said in a statement to the people of Tenerife.

"But I need you to hear me clearly: This is not another COVID. The current public health risk from hantavirus remains low. My colleagues and I have said this unequivocally, and I will say it again to you now," Tedros added.

The WHO, Spanish authorities and cruise company Oceanwide Expeditions said nobody on the Hondius is currently showing symptoms of the virus.

Hantavirus can cause life-threatening illness. It usually spreads when people inhale contaminated residue of rodent droppings and isn't easily transmitted between people. But the Andes virus detected in the cruise ship outbreak may be able to spread between people in rare cases. Symptoms usually show between one and eight weeks after exposure.

Three people have died since the outbreak, and five passengers who left the ship are infected with hantavirus.

Some Tenerife residents say they don't want the ship there

Some on Tenerife say they are worried. On board the cruise ship, some Spanish passengers have voiced concern about being stigmatized.

"I tell you, I don't like this very much," said 69-year-old resident Simon Vidal. "Anyone can say what they want. Why did they have to bring a boat from another country here? Why not anywhere else, why bring it to the Canary Islands?"

Others said they empathized with the boat's passengers, but were still concerned.

"The truth is that it is very worrying," said 27-year-old Venezuelan immigrant Samantha Aguero. She added: "We feel a bit unsafe, we don't feel as there are 100% security measures in place to welcome it. This is a virus after all and we have lived this during the pandemic. But we also need to have empathy."

Passengers can take only limited belongings and will be isolated

Garcia said passengers and some crew would disembark in Tenerife "under maximum safety conditions."

The ship will not dock but will remain at anchor, with people ferried off in small boats. Everyone disembarking will be checked for symptoms and won't be taken off the ship until a flight is already in Tenerife waiting for them, Garcia said during a news conference in Madrid. There are currently people of more than 20 different nationalities on board.

Authorities are aiming to complete the evacuation flights on Sunday and Monday, the director of the WHO's Department of Epidemic and Pandemic Management, Maria Van Kerkhove, said in a briefing Saturday.

Both the U.S. and the U.K. have agreed to send planes to evacuate their citizens. Americans are to be quarantined at a medical center in Nebraska.

All Spanish passengers will be transferred to a medical facility and quarantined, Garcia said. Oceanwide has listed 13 Spanish passengers and one Spanish crew member on board.

Those disembarking will leave behind their luggage, Garcia said, and will be allowed to take only a small bag with essential items, a cellphone, charger and documentation.

Some crew, as well as the body of a passenger who died on board, will remain on the ship, which will sail on to the Netherlands where it will undergo disinfection, the minister added.

A medical evacuation plane will be on standby

According to a letter sent by the Dutch foreign and health ministers to parliament late Friday, Spain has activated the EU civil protection mechanism for a medical evacuation plane equipped for infectious dis-

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eases to be on standby in case anyone on the ship becomes ill. That person would then be transported by air to the European mainland.

The Dutch government will work with Spanish authorities and the ship company to arrange repatriation of Dutch passengers and crew as soon as possible after arrival in Tenerife, subject to medical conditions and advice from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, the letter said. Those without symptoms will go into home quarantine for six weeks and be monitored by local health services.

As the ship is Dutch-flagged, the Netherlands may also temporarily accommodate people of other nationalities and monitor them in quarantine, it said.

Countries scramble to track passengers who disembarked

Health authorities across four continents were tracking down and monitoring more than two dozen passengers who disembarked before the deadly outbreak was detected. They were also scrambling to trace others who may have come into contact with them.

On April 24, nearly two weeks after the first passenger had died on board, more than two dozen people from at least 12 different countries left the ship without contact tracing, Dutch officials and the ship's operator have said.

It wasn't until May 2 that health authorities first confirmed hantavirus in a passenger.

Dutch public health authorities have been monitoring people who were on a flight that was briefly boarded by a Dutch ship passenger who later died and was confirmed to have hantavirus. Three people who were on the flight and had symptoms have all tested negative for hantavirus, Dutch National Institute for Public Health spokesperson Harald Wychgel told The Associated Press on Saturday.

## **Bobby Cox, manager of Braves' teams that ruled National League and won 1995 World Series, dies at 84**

By CHARLES ODUM AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Bobby Cox, the folksy manager of the Atlanta Braves whose teams ruled the National League during the 1990s and gave the city its first major title as well as World Series trips that fell short, died Saturday. He was 84.

Cox died in Marietta, Georgia, according to the Atlanta Braves. He had a stroke in 2019 and heart issues that complicated his recovery.

"Bobby was the best manager to ever wear a Braves uniform. He led our team to 14 straight division titles, five National League pennants, and the unforgettable World Series title in 1995. His Braves managerial legacy will never be matched," the Braves said in a statement.

Cox took over a last-place team in June 1990 and led the Braves to a worst-to-first finish in 1991, losing the World Series to the Minnesota Twins in seven games. That was the start of what was to become a record 14 consecutive division titles, a feat no professional team in any sport had accomplished.

He managed the Braves for 25 years and led Atlanta to its first World Series title in 1995, retired after the 2010 season and was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2014.

Cox ranks fourth all-time with 2,504 wins, fifth with 4,508 games, first with 15 division titles including a record 14 in a row, first with 16 playoff appearances and fourth with 67 playoff victories. Only Connie Mack, John McGraw and Tony La Russa had more regular-season wins than Cox.

"He was the first one to the park every day," Atlanta manager Walt Weiss said of Cox. "He'd have his spikes on at 12 o'clock. I never saw a manager wear spikes, but that was one of Bobby's trademarks. He just loved the game. He loved the game, and he loved leading a group of men trying to win a championship."

Cox also was first in being ejected from 158 regular-season games. Weiss, who called Cox instrumental in bringing him back to the Braves as a bench coach, was asked if he might get tossed in Cox's honor.

"It's a different game now, you know, a very different era," Weiss said. "Nobody can do it like Bobby, believe me."

Cox's death came four days after that of fellow Atlanta icon Ted Turner, who as owner of Braves lured Cox back to the team in 1990.

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The Braves retired Cox's No. 6 jersey in 2011, when he joined the team's Hall of Fame.

"RIP my second father," Andruw Jones wrote on social media. The 10-time Gold Glove winner with Atlanta in July will become the sixth who played for Cox with the Braves to be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Cox spent 29 seasons as a major league manager, including four with Toronto. He managed 16 postseason teams. He brought an old-school approach to the dugout. He always wore spikes and stirrups, and his fatherly demeanor inspired loyalty from his players.

Hall of Fame pitcher Greg Maddux said players around the league always wanted to know what it was like playing for Bobby Cox: "The first word that comes to mind is respect. He had that from players. When Bobby talked, we listened. We wanted to play for him."

Cox was the first NL manager to win at least 100 games in a season five times. He was Manager of the Year four times and the only one to win in consecutive years (2004, 2005). He also had close ties with his successors, Fredi González and Brian Snitker.

He regularly attended games and spring training before a stroke in 2019 that affected his speech and movement. Cox recovered enough to visit the Braves later that season, watching a game from the press box level. His wife, Pam, said in 2020 that heart trouble slowed his recovery from the stroke.

His long marriage survived a 1995 confrontation in which he was accused of hitting his wife in the face. He was charged with simple battery and in custody for an hour. The following day, Bobby and Pam appeared at a news conference and each denied he hit her in the face.

Cox said the couple would seek counseling. The charge was eventually dropped.

Despite all his regular-season success, Cox won only the one World Series title in five tries. He led the Braves to Atlanta's first major professional sports championship in 1995, beating the Cleveland Indians in six games to win the World Series. Cox said critics usually focused on the World Series losses instead.

The Braves lost in 1992 to Toronto in six games and in 1996 in six to the New York Yankees before being swept by the Yankees in 1999.

"It's a game of breaks when you get down to a four-game, must-win series," Cox said. "We've played well. We're proud of what we've done. They always ask that, though. It is irritating, to be honest with you."

Born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on May 21, 1941, Cox graduated from Selma High School in California in 1959 and attended nearby Reedley Junior College before signing with the Dodgers for a \$40,000 bonus.

He spent seven years in the Dodgers' farm system before being traded to the Braves' organization, playing one year at Richmond (1967). He was traded to the Yankees for Bob Tillman and Dale Roberts and played third base for his only two seasons in the majors (1968-69) before bad knees forced him to retire at age 30.

Cox began the first of six years as a minor league manager in 1971. He returned to the majors in 1977 as a first base coach for the Yankees, who went on to win the World Series.

His first major league managerial job came with the Braves in 1978. The best season of his first stint in Atlanta was an 81-80 finish in 1980, and he went 266-323 in four seasons.

The Toronto Blue Jays hired Cox in 1982, and he led them to their first American League East championship in 1985, in his fourth and final year there. He was lured back to the Braves as general manager by Turner, their outrageous owner and visionary media mogul, in 1986.

As GM, his Atlanta teams never had a winning season. Cox did develop players key to the Braves' success in the '90s: Tom Glavine, John Smoltz, Jeff Blauser, Mark Lemke, Dave Justice, Javy Lopez and Ron Gant. He also had two No. 1 draft picks who excelled, Steve Avery and Chipper Jones.

Cox returned as field manager on June 22, 1990, after Russ Nixon was fired.

Dodgers first baseman Freddie Freeman played the first 12 seasons of his career with the Braves. He recalled Cox giving him 80 plate appearances in spring training when he was 19. Freeman has a jersey signed from Cox saying, "To Freddie, keep on hitting."

"He lived a great life," Freeman said. "Everyone loved him in baseball. Braves country loved him."

Cox usually shied away from the limelight and was uncomfortable when talking about himself.

"Honestly, I'm just doing my job. I let everything else fall where it may," he said.



## Moscow marks Victory Day with a scaled down Red Square parade under tight security

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin said Saturday that the conflict in Ukraine is nearing its end after he oversaw a military parade on Red Square commemorating the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II — a show that didn't include heavy weapons for the first time in nearly two decades.

Security was tight in Moscow as Putin and several foreign leaders attended the parade, which was scaled down even as a U.S.-brokered three-day ceasefire eased concerns about possible Ukrainian attempts to disrupt the festivities.

Putin, in power for more than a quarter-century, has used Victory Day, Russia's most important secular holiday, to showcase the country's military might and rally support for his military action in Ukraine, now in its fifth year.

Speaking at the parade, Putin hailed Russian troops fighting in Ukraine, declaring that they "face an aggressive force that is armed and supported by the entire bloc of NATO," and are fighting for a "just cause."

"Victory has always been and will be ours," Putin said, as columns of troops lined up on Red Square.

Talking to reporters later, he accused Western "globalist elites" of arming Ukraine to defeat and break up Russia and declared that "I think the matter is coming to an end."

But in a notable shift this year, the parade took place without tanks, missiles and other equipment put on display every year since 2008, aside from a traditional flyover of combat jets.

Officials explained the change of format by the "current operational situation" and the threat of Ukrainian attacks. The authorities also ordered restrictions on all mobile internet access and text messaging services in the Russian capital on Saturday. Putin told reporters after the parade that it didn't feature heavy weaponry because the military needs it on the battlefield in Ukraine.

For the first time, Saturday's parade featured troops from North Korea, a tribute to Pyongyang that sent its soldiers to fight alongside Moscow forces to repel a Ukrainian incursion into Russia's Kursk region.

Earlier ceasefires failed to hold until Trump stepped in

Russia declared a unilateral ceasefire for Friday and Saturday, while Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced a truce that was supposed to begin on May 6, but neither held as the parties traded blame for continuing attacks.

Fears about the festivities' security eased Friday, when U.S. President Donald Trump announced that Russia and Ukraine have bowed to his request for a ceasefire running Saturday through Monday and an exchange of prisoners, declaring that the break in fighting could be the "beginning of the end" of the war.

Zelenskyy, who said earlier this week that the Russian authorities "fear drones may buzz over Red Square" on May 9, followed up on Trump's statement by declaring Red Square temporarily off-limits for Ukrainian strikes and mockingly permitting Russia to hold its Victory Day celebrations on Saturday, a move that the Kremlin shrugged off as a "silly joke."

Putin told reporters after the parade that Trump offered to broker a ceasefire after Russia informed the U.S. and others that it would launch a massive missile strike on the center of Kyiv fraught with collateral damage if Ukraine attempts to disrupt Saturday's festivities.

"We just described the situation to our friends, colleagues and partners: We don't have any intention to exacerbate or worsen relations with anyone, but it could happen because all control and decision-making centers in Kyiv are located close to diplomatic missions," Putin said. "When we started such a dialogue with the U.S. administration, we warned them about this, pointed out the possible consequences and asked them to do everything necessary to ensure the security of their diplomatic mission."

He noted that Russia immediately welcomed Trump's offer that was driven by humanitarian motives and "respect to our common victory over Nazism."

Putin has used Victory Day celebrations to encourage national pride and underline Russia's position as a global power. The Soviet Union lost 27 million people in 1941-45 in what it calls the Great Patriotic War, an enormous sacrifice that left a deep scar in the national psyche and remains a rare point of consensus

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in the nation's divisive history under Communist rule.

Putin says he could meet Zelenskyy when a peace deal is ready for signing

Russia's bigger and better-equipped military has been making slow but steady gains along the more than 1,000-kilometer (over 600-mile) front line. Ukraine has hit back with increasingly efficient long-range attacks, striking Russian energy facilities, manufacturing plants and military depots. It has developed drones capable of reaching targets over 1,000 kilometers (more than 600 miles) deep into Russia, far beyond its capabilities before 2022.

Zelenskyy has proposed to meet with Putin to negotiate a peace deal, but dismissed the Russian leader's suggestion that he come to Moscow. On Saturday, Putin said he could meet with Zelenskyy in another country, but only to endorse a comprehensive accord.

"A meeting in a third country is also possible, but only after a peace treaty aimed at a long-term historic perspective is finalized," Putin told reporters. "This should be a final deal, not the negotiations."

Putin praises foreign guests, Merz criticizes Fico

Malaysia's King Sultan Ibrahim Iskandar, Laos President Thongloun Sisoulith, Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Belarus' authoritarian leader Alexander Lukashenko attended the festivities in the Russian capital.

Putin hailed the foreign guests who attended the parade for "personal courage," noting that they had decided to come to Moscow before the ceasefire brokered by Trump defused security concerns.

Prime Minister Robert Fico of Slovakia, a European Union member, laid flowers at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier memorial just outside the Kremlin walls but stayed away from the Red Square parade. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz criticized Fico's trip, saying, "I deeply regret this, and we will discuss his visit to Moscow with him."

Speaking at a meeting with Putin in the Kremlin, Fico bemoaned what he called a new "Iron Curtain" in Europe that hampered trade, and emphasized the importance of Russia's energy supplies to Slovakia. Putin hailed the Slovak leader for conducting a "sovereign" foreign policy and honoring the memory of fallen Red Army soldiers.

## **Person dies after being hit by Frontier Airlines plane that was taking off at Denver airport**

By MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

A person who jumped a fence and was on a runway at Denver International Airport was struck and killed by a Frontier Airlines plane during takeoff, airport authorities said. The collision sparked an engine fire and forced passengers to evacuate.

The plane, on route from Denver to Los Angeles International Airport, "reported striking a pedestrian during takeoff at DEN at approximately 11:19 p.m. on Friday," according to a post on the airport's official X account.

A spokesperson for the airport said the person, who jumped a perimeter fence, has died. They said the unidentified person was hit two minutes after entering the airport. The person is not believed to be an airport employee.

"We're stopping on the runway," the pilot tells the control tower according to the site ATC.com. "We just hit somebody. We have an engine fire."

The pilot tells the air traffic controller they have "231 souls" on board and that an "individual was walking across the runway."

The air traffic controller responds that they are "rolling the trucks now" before the pilot tells the tower they "have smoke in the aircraft. We are going to evacuate on the runway."

Frontier Airlines said in a statement that flight 4345 was the one involved in the collision and that "smoke was reported in the cabin and the pilots aborted takeoff." It was not clear whether the smoke was linked to the collision.

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The airline said the plane was carrying 224 passengers and seven crew members.

"We are investigating this incident and gathering more information in coordination with the airport and other safety authorities," the airline said.

Passengers were evacuated via slides and the emergency crew bused them to the terminal. The airport spokesperson said 12 passengers suffered minor injuries and five were taken to hospitals.

One passenger, Jacob Athens, posted video showing people sliding down with their backpacks. He also posted photos of what looked like a damaged engine.

"As we were lifting off the engine of the plane exploded. There was so much smoke we couldn't even see 1 ft in front of us," Athens said on his Facebook page, adding that passengers had to wait for over an hour on the runway and "still no transport or help with the cold."

Other video shows passengers calmly walking down the aisle of the plane and using the slide to evacuate. They were told to step away from the plane.

Denver Airport said the National Transportation Safety Board had been notified and that runway 17L, where the incident took place, was closed amid an investigation. It reopened Saturday around 11 a.m.

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said in a post on X that the person "breached airport security at Denver Int'l Airport, deliberately scaled a perimeter fence, and ran out onto a runway."

He added: "No one should EVER trespass on an airport."

The incident came a day after a Delta Air Lines employee was killed while on the job at the Orlando International Airport. In a statement, the airline said the employee was killed Thursday night without providing details of the incident or the name of the employee.

"We are focused on extending our full support to family and taking care of our Orlando team during this difficult time," the airline said. "We are working with local authorities as a full investigation gets underway to determine what occurred."

## **Caitlin Clark-Paige Bueckers matchup highlights WNBA's big opening weekend**

By MICHAEL MAROT AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — When Indiana Fever fans returned to Gainbridge Fieldhouse for Saturday's season opener, it seemed everything was back in place.

The street banners dotted the downtown landscape, the handmade signs were visible from any vantage point inside the sold out arena and, of course, Caitlin Clark jerseys and T-shirts remained a trendy favorite. And why not live it up as Clark's 10-month wait to play a meaningful game on her home court finally ended with the weekend's featured matchup between Clark and the Fever and Paige Bueckers and the Dallas Wings.

Yet even with the anticipation of seeing two of the league's most popular players and the last four No. 1 draft picks squaring off in Game 1, nobody was more excited to get started than Clark.

"I think there's a different juice inside your body when you're putting on your uniform and you're mentally locked in to go and play a basketball game," she said before tipoff. "Like I was excited for my teammates last year, 100% I was their biggest fan. But it's not the same, it just isn't. I missed having the butterflies in my stomach before a game. Like I love that, and that means you're ready."

The WNBA schedule makers certainly gave fans what they wanted following an offseason filled with collective bargaining agreement negotiations and uncertainty about this year's action.

By Friday night, it was all in the past. Two old rivals, the New York Liberty and Connecticut Sun, played the first game of the league's 30th season with two potentially budding rivals, the Seattle Storm and Golden State Valkyries, capping the night in the third and final game. In between, fans got their first glimpse of the expansion Toronto Tempo against Washington.

That set up Saturday's nationally televised matinee between Clark and Bueckers, and it didn't disappoint.

Clark scored 10 of her 20 points in the third quarter to help the Fever rally from a 60-51 halftime deficit, but she missed a logo 3-pointer that would have tied the score at 107 with 4.5 seconds left in the game.



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The former Iowa star finished 2 of 9 on 3s as the Wings held on for a 107-104 victory.

She also had seven assists, five rebounds and joined the 1,000-point club while Bueckers finished with 20 points despite missing two free throws with 1.6 seconds left. Azzi Fudd, this year's No. 1 draft pick, took only two shots in 18 minutes, making a 3 for the only points in her regular-season debut.

Clark also gave fans another injury scare. She briefly left the bench twice in the second half to have her back worked on but managed to finish the game, something she did not do in last week's preseason game against Dallas after banging her kneecap hard on a fall.

"I feel good, started off a little slow I think just the anxiety of the first game," she said. "Felt like I was literally just a couple of buckets away from putting together a really, really good game and getting a win."

The result didn't temper the fanfare surrounding this game, though.

Clark and her teammates walked down the stairs and through the crowd to the court for player introductions with the loudest roar, naturally, reserved for Clark.

"I'm getting chills right now just thinking about where we are as a league," Fever coach Stephanie White said. "I mean this is what we dreamed about, right? From the time I was a rookie in this league to the time we won a championship in 2012 (with the Fever) when we were seeing sold out arenas only in championship games or in Finals games to becoming mainstream."

While Clark played a big role in making sellouts the norm — in college and the WNBA — it's not just about Clark anymore.

Saturday's crowd included a small group in UConn jerseys, a nod to both Bueckers and Fudd, while another had a cutout of Bueckers on a sign saying she'd skipped her prom to attend the game. And there was a smattering of Bueckers fans dressed in Dallas jerseys, too.

"It's huge. I watched a lot of the games on YouTube TV last night so to be able to play on national television where a lot more people have access to it," Bueckers said. "There's way more accessibility to it than when I was growing up watching the Minnesota Lynx. There wasn't as much national television coverage, you didn't see shows about it, you didn't so much on social media."

But the addition of Bueckers, last year's WNBA Rookie of the Year, and the return of Clark, the 2024 WNBA Rookie of the Year, from a season-ending groin injury have the league poised for potentially its biggest season yet.

And the opening weekend fanfare had a little bit of everything — David Letterman and NBA All-Star Tyrese Haliburton sitting courtside, a moment to honor some of the pioneers from the Women's Professional Basketball League and Fever players walking through the crowd to the court during player introductions with the two biggest roars reserved for Clark and Bueckers.

"I think it's great for women's basketball more than anything," Clark said referring to the four No. 1 picks — Fever center Aliyah Boston in 2023, herself in 2024, Bueckers last year and now Fudd. "And you know this might be the first time this has ever really happened in sports — having two No. 1 picks on both sides. I think it speaks to the young talent in this league, how excited fans are about them and how excited they are about these two teams having us match up in the first game of the season."

## Iran warns the US against attacks on its oil tankers and other ships but ceasefire appears to hold

By ADAM SCHRECK and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran's Revolutionary Guard navy on Saturday warned that any attack on Iranian oil tankers or commercial vessels would be met with a "heavy assault" on one of the U.S. bases in the region and enemy ships, even as a tenuous ceasefire appeared to be holding.

Iranian state TV reported the warning a day after the United States struck two Iranian oil tankers, casting doubt on the month-old ceasefire that the U.S. has insisted is still in effect. The U.S. military said the tankers were trying to breach its blockade of Iran's ports.

Meanwhile Bahrain, which hosts the U.S. Navy's regional headquarters, said it arrested dozens of people

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it alleged had links to Iran's Revolutionary Guard.

Washington awaits Iran's response to its latest proposal for a deal to end the war, reopen the Strait of Hormuz to shipping and roll back Tehran's disputed nuclear program. And Russian President Vladimir Putin said Moscow's proposal to take enriched uranium from Iran to help negotiate a settlement remains on the table.

Bahrain says arrests were linked to Guard funding attempt

Bahrain said it had arrested 41 people it said are part of a group affiliated with the Revolutionary Guard. The interior ministry said investigations confirmed they were in contact with the Guard and collected funds "with the aim of sending them to Iran" to support its "terrorist operations."

The small Persian Gulf island is led by a Sunni Muslim monarchy but, like Iran, has a majority Shiite population. Rights groups have said the kingdom has used the war between Iran and the U.S., which bases its Fifth Fleet in Bahrain, as an excuse to crack down on dissent.

Iran issued a warning to Bahrain: "Siding with the U.S.-backed resolution will bring severe consequences. The Strait of Hormuz is a vital lifeline; do not risk closing it on yourselves FOREVER," Ebrahim Azizi, head of the national security commission of Iran's parliament, said on social media.

Iran has mostly blocked the critical waterway for global energy since the U.S. and Israel launched the war on Feb. 28, causing a global spike in fuel prices and rattling world markets.

The U.S. has imposed its own blockade of Iran's ports. U.S. Central Command said on Saturday its forces had turned back 58 commercial ships and "disabled" four since the blockade began April 13.

Britain deploys warship to the Middle East

Britain's defense ministry said it was deploying a warship to the Middle East to join a potential mission to protect commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz once hostilities end.

The ministry said the HMS Dragon will "preposition" in the region, ready to join a U.K.- and French-led security plan. France announced this week it was moving its aircraft carrier strike group into the Red Sea in preparation.

Britain and France have led meetings involving several dozen countries on a coalition to reestablish freedom of navigation in the strait. But they stress it won't start until there is a sustainable ceasefire and the maritime industry is reassured ships can go through the strait safely.

Diplomacy continues 'day and night'

U.S. President Donald Trump has reiterated threats to resume full-scale bombing if Iran doesn't accept an agreement to reopen the strait and roll back its nuclear program. On Friday, Iranian foreign ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said the country was not paying attention to "deadlines," according to state-run IRNA.

Diplomacy continues. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said his country has been in contact with the U.S. and Iran "day and night" in an effort to extend the ceasefire and reach a peace deal.

Russia's foreign ministry said that it, as well as Saudi Arabia, was calling for diplomatic efforts to reach a "sustainable, long-term agreement" to end the war.

Separately, Putin told reporters in Moscow that taking enriched uranium from Iran to help negotiate a settlement would allow everyone to see "how much of it there is, and where it is located," and "all of this would be placed under the control of the IAEA," the U.N. nuclear watchdog.

Egyptian and Qatari top diplomats reiterated that diplomacy is the sole path to a solution, according to a readout of a phone call between the two foreign ministers.

Still publicly unseen and unheard since the war began is Iran's new Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei, fueling speculation about his status.

On Friday, a top Iranian official said Khamenei was in "complete health" and eventually would appear in public. Mazaher Hosseini, affiliated with the office of Iran's late supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was killed at the start of the war, made the comment at a pro-government gathering. Hosseini said Mojtaba, Khamenei's son, had knee and back injuries in the war's opening attacks but they've largely healed.

## Israeli drone strikes near Beirut kill 4 and southern airstrikes kill at least 13

By BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Three Israeli drone strikes on vehicles just south of Beirut on Saturday killed four people while a series of airstrikes on southern Lebanon killed at least 13, including a man and his 12-year-old daughter, state media and the Health Ministry said.

The three drone strikes south of Beirut marked another escalation since a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah went into effect on April 17. Both Israel and Hezbollah have continued their daily attacks despite the truce.

On Wednesday night, Israel's air force carried out an airstrike on a southern suburb in which Israel said it killed a senior Hezbollah military official. It was the first strike near the capital since the ceasefire was reached.

Two of the strikes on Saturday took place on the highway linking Beirut with the southern port city of Sidon in which several people were wounded, while the third happened on a road leading to Lebanon's Chouf region killing three, the state-run National News Agency said.

An Associated Press journalist at the scene saw a dead body on the highway in the town of Saadiyat.

The Health Ministry said an Israeli airstrike on the southern village of Saksakiyeh killed at least seven, including a child, and wounded 15. The ministry said this was an initial count.

The agency reported strikes in southern Lebanon, including one on the village of Bourj Rahhal that killed three and another in Maifadoun that killed one.

The Health Ministry, meanwhile, said three Israeli drone strikes killed a Syrian man who was riding a motorcycle with his 12-year-old daughter in the city of Nabatiyeh.

The ministry said that after the initial strike, the man and his daughter managed to move away from the site only to be attacked again by the drone instantly killing the man. The girl then moved about 100 meters (yards) away and was hit again by the drone after she had been already wounded. The girl later died in a hospital, NNA said.

"The Ministry of Public Health denounces this barbaric targeting and the deliberate violence against civilians and children in Lebanon," the ministry said in its statement added that the strike marks an ongoing series "of grave violations of International Humanitarian Law."

The Israeli military said Hezbollah fired explosive drones into Israel near the border with Lebanon adding that three soldiers were wounded, one of them seriously, in one of the attacks. It added that Hezbollah fired drones inside Lebanon as well in which one hit an Israeli vehicle without inflicting casualties.

Hezbollah claimed several attacks inside Lebanon as well as firing a drone at an Israeli military post in the northern town of Misgav Am.

The latest war between Israel and Hezbollah began on March 2, when Hezbollah fired rockets into northern Israel, two days after the United States and Israel launched a war on Hezbollah's main backer, Iran. Israel has since carried out hundreds of airstrikes and launched a ground invasion of southern Lebanon, capturing dozens of towns and villages along the border.

Later, Lebanon and Israel held their first direct talks in more than three decades. The two countries have formally been in a state of war since the founding of the state of Israel in 1948.

A new round of talks is scheduled to take place in Washington over two days starting Thursday.

A 10-day ceasefire declared in Washington went into effect on April 17. The ceasefire was later extended by three weeks.

In the Syrian capital of Damascus, Lebanon's Prime Minister Nawaf Salam held talks Saturday with Syria's interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa in which they discussed strengthening relations between the two neighbors and boosting security cooperation amid regional wars.

Speaking to reporters before heading back home, Salam said that Lebanon will not be used again to harm "our Arab brothers, on top of them Syria." Salam was indirectly referring to Hezbollah's involvement in Syria's civil that broke out in 2011 by backing the five-decade Assad family rule that ended in December



2024.

## Hungary's Péter Magyar sworn in as prime minister, ending Viktor Orbán's 16-year rule

By JUSTIN SPIKE Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — Hungary's Péter Magyar took his oath of office on Saturday to become the country's new prime minister, kicking off a fresh political era after 16 years of Viktor Orbán's autocratic rule.

Magyar's center-right Tisza party defeated Orbán's nationalist-populist Fidesz in a stunning blow last month, gaining more votes and seats in parliament than any other party in Hungary's post-Communist history.

The win, which gave Tisza a two-thirds parliamentary majority, will allow it to roll back many of the policies that gave Orbán a reputation among his critics as a far-right authoritarian.

In a speech to tens of thousands of supporters in a square outside the parliament building after being sworn in, the new prime minister told the crowd: "Today, every freedom-loving person in the world would like to be Hungarian a little."

"You have taught the country and the world that it is the most ordinary, flesh-and-blood people that can defeat the most vicious tyranny," Magyar said to roaring applause.

As Hungary's new leader, Magyar has vowed to restore democratic institutions and governmental checks and balances that were heavily eroded during Orbán's rule, and to clamp down on alleged corruption.

His administration is expected to transform political dynamics within the European Union, where the former prime minister had upended the bloc by frequently vetoing key decisions, most recently concerning support for neighboring Ukraine.

A parliament without Orbán

On Saturday, Magyar, a 45-year-old lawyer who founded Tisza in 2024, entered the sprawling neo-Gothic parliament building alongside 140 of his party representatives.

Tisza now controls 141 seats in Hungary's 199-seat parliament. Orbán's Fidesz-KDNP coalition controls 52 seats, down from 135, while the far-right Mi Hazánk (Our Homeland) party holds six seats.

The 199 representatives took their oaths of office at around 11 a.m. Orbán was not among them for the first time since Hungary's first post-Communist parliament was formed in 1990.

Magyar earlier called on Hungarians to attend an all-day "regime-change" celebration on Kossuth Square outside parliament to mark his inauguration and the end of the Orbán era. Many of those gathered waved Hungarian and EU flags and wore Tisza T-shirts.

In his speech, Magyar delivered a message of unity, and promised to help heal the deep social divisions he said Orbán's government had sown.

"Today is the fulfillment of the long journey that we have made together in recent years, the fulfillment of the common belief that Hungary is able to get back on its feet, is able to believe in itself and to once again be a common homeland for all Hungarians," he said.

Hungary's new National Assembly has 54 women lawmakers, most from the Tisza party — more than a quarter of the total and the most in Hungary's history.

One of them, Andrea Szepesi, an economist from Budapest, said it was "about time" that more women held seats in parliament. Under Orbán's rule, there were fewer women in government than in nearly all of the EU's other 26 nations.

"Finally, women are able to participate in this new, beautiful democratic system and the flourishing of the country," Szepesi told The Associated Press.

Repairing relations with the EU

Magyar has promised to repair his country's ties with the EU, which Orbán had pushed to a breaking point, and to restore Hungary's place among Western democracies, whose standing had been called into question as Orbán drifted ever closer to Russia.

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The EU flag was raised on the parliament building's facade Saturday afternoon for the first time since Orbán's government removed it in 2014.

Unlocking about 17 billion euros (\$20 billion) of EU funds for Hungary frozen during Orbán's time in office over rule-of-law and corruption concerns is also among the new prime minister's top priorities. The money is sorely needed to help jump-start Hungary's struggling economy, which has stagnated for the past four years.

Another attendee of the celebration, 27-year-old web designer Áron Farsang, said he expects the new Tisza government to restore Hungary's democratic institutions and to "lead us back toward the European Union."

"I would also really like it if we could get rid of the Russian influence as soon as possible," he said. "I'm thinking about energy dependency and their general political style."

Accounting for the past

Many of the nearly 3.4 million Hungarians that voted for Tisza expect Magyar to hold Fidesz officials and their business allies accountable for the perceived misconduct of the outgoing administration.

In his speech to the National Assembly, he called on Fidesz-appointed heads of government institutions, including President Tamás Sulyok, to resign no later than May 31.

Magyar plans to form a National Asset Recovery and Protection Office, an authority tasked with investigating and seeking to recover public funds misused during Orbán's tenure. He's also vowed to suspend the news services of Hungary's public broadcaster — widely seen as a mouthpiece of Orbán's party — until objectivity can be restored.

In his speech to lawmakers, Magyar referenced his intentions to hold former officials accountable for past abuses, saying voters had "given us a mandate to open a new chapter in Hungary's history."

## **Tennessee redistricting plan splits Memphis neighbors and reshapes midterms as other states follow**

By MATT BROWN Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — For 21 years, Steve Fowler and Sam Wilson have performed together in a band on Memphis' renowned Beale Street. And for the past decade, the men have been neighbors on a quiet, leafy avenue.

But as of Thursday, they will no longer cast the same ballot despite living across the street from each other.

That's because Tennessee's Republican-controlled legislature redrew the congressional district of Memphis, which has long enjoyed its own Democratic-leaning U.S. House seat. Now, the city is split into three Republican-leaning districts, its majority-Black population sliced up and bound to mostly white, rural and conservative communities along lines that branch away from Fowler and Wilson's East Memphis neighborhood.

A line runs down the middle of the street, placing Fowler in the 8th Congressional District, which runs hundreds of miles to central Tennessee across a dozen counties. Wilson is zoned for the 9th District, which extends across most of the state's southern border before curving up to encompass the largely white and affluent Nashville suburbs.

"I think it's horrible," said Fowler, who is white. "This isn't just going to be bad for Black folks in Memphis, but poor whites in these new districts also aren't going to get services. How are any of these congressmen going to serve all these different counties?"

Part of a national redistricting competition

The redraw was sparked by a ruling from the conservative majority of the U.S. Supreme Court that may be a death knell for congressional representation of majority-Black Southern communities such as Memphis.

For 60 years, a provision of the landmark Voting Rights Act required mapmakers to prove they were not discriminating against racial minorities in how they drew districts, often leading to political boundaries that allowed some minority communities to vote for their preferred representative rather than having their vote

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diluted by white majorities surrounding them.

The rule had the greatest effect in Southern states, where neighboring Black and white communities remain highly polarized in partisan politics.

On April 29, the justices severely weakened that requirement, ruling that the way courts had handled it improperly injected racial matters into redistricting in violation of the U.S. Constitution. Republicans across the South immediately leaped at the chance to redraw their maps before the November elections to eliminate as many Democratic-held, majority-minority congressional seats as possible.

Tennessee's legislature was the first in a GOP-controlled state to finalize a new map. But it is one of several Southern states — Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina among them — engaged in a broader partisan redistricting competition sweeping the country.

Republicans have long complained that the Voting Rights Act prevented them from doing to Democratic, majority-Black districts what Democrats in states they control do to conservative-leaning, white and rural areas — scatter their voters for partisan gain. That is what Tennessee Republicans did in their initial congressional map in 2021 to the state's other large reservoir of Democrats in Nashville, where they did not have to step gingerly because that city is majority white.

"Tennessee is a conservative state and our congressional delegation should reflect that," said Republican state Sen. John Stevens, who shepherded the bill for a new map that made all nine congressional districts solidly Republican.

A 'central place' in pursuit of racial justice

Wilson, the Memphis musician who is Black, was less distraught by the carving up of his neighborhood for partisan purposes. He saw the move as just another trial facing the city after a surge of federal agents sent by President Donald Trump to combat crime and amid narratives about Memphis' safety from neighboring suburbs and Republican state lawmakers.

"It's a hustling community. We're going to make ends meet for our families," Wilson said. "The legacy of Memphis is music and our civil rights history," he said, adding the two were intertwined. "Hard times mean you're going to try and find your gift. That's what we do here; music in Memphis is a way of life."

The Memphis district predates the Voting Rights Act. For at least a century, well before Congress acted to protect minority voting rights, Tennessee has believed it made sense for its metropolis on the Mississippi River to have its own U.S. House district. But since that law was passed in 1965, anyone who tried to split up the district for partisan gain could be sued and have the maps thrown out. Now, legal experts say that is not much of a risk.

Nonetheless, Democrats and civil rights groups are suing to block the map. The symbolism is especially sharp as the city is home to the National Civil Rights Museum, built around the motel where the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968. When the legislature passed the new maps, Democrats and protesters shouted "hands off Memphis!" and waved signs accusing Republicans of bringing back Jim Crow.

"Memphis is not just any city; it holds a central place in the national story of our quest for racial justice in this country and how, over time, we have increasingly achieved civil, voting, and economic rights for all Americans," said Eric Holder, a former U.S. attorney general who chairs the National Democratic Redistricting Committee. "Black citizens protested, marched and died there for the right to vote."

Contentious relations with the rest of Tennessee

Memphis has faced dual stories in recent years. Billions of dollars in private investment and federal dollars have flooded into the area in recent years, but many local businesses still express concerns about a lagging regional economy.

Residents who spoke with The Associated Press expressed concerns about safety and public services but bristled at stereotypes about rampant crime. The twin stories are often on display in the river city, where pothole-filled streets run from empty storefronts to ornate mansion-filled neighborhoods and leafy college campuses only blocks away.

The city has long had a contentious relationship with the rest of the state, which voted for Trump in 2024 by a roughly 2-1 margin.

The conservative legislature in Nashville has clashed repeatedly with Memphis and accused its leaders



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of broad mismanagement. The legislature passed a law blocking many police overhaul efforts in Memphis that were put in place after the death of Tyre Nichols, an unarmed Black man, at the hands of city officers in 2023. It passed another measure seizing control of Memphis' airport board and those of other cities across the state, and gave the state attorney general, also a Republican, the power to remove Memphis' elected district attorney.

"The state legislature is trying to take it over," said U.S. Rep. Steve Cohen, the white Democrat who still represents the city in Congress until the new lines kick in after the midterms. "And that's absurd. It was all partially because it's a majority Black city."

Black Tennesseans deprived of fair representation, expert says

Thomas Goodman, a politics and law professor at Rhodes College in Memphis, notes that the new congressional districts may lead to greater friction over who receives attention — and funding — from lawmakers. Memphis residents will soon share districts with Republican towns with starkly different economies, geographies and demographics. Whoever holds those congressional seats will have an incentive to pay attention to those voters and not to Memphis' population.

"It would not only deprive Black Tennesseans of proper representation," Goodman said. "These changes also break up the city of Memphis as an entity into multiple districts, thereby removing a dedicated agent in government who knows the people, who understands their concerns and can speak for them and deliver on behalf of their interests and desires."

Chris Wiley's house sits in what was, before this week, a quiet street in Midtown Memphis dotted with duplexes, tidy lawns and sports fields. Now his neighborhood is carved apart at the intersection of three congressional districts. That is not surprising, he said, because "Tennessee is all about the dollar" rather than residents.

"Memphis is majority Black, so if you mess with that, what's the point of even voting in Tennessee?" said Wiley, a 29-year-old sports stadium worker who is Black. "Whatever the congressional numbers, whatever that is, we don't count on the scale as high, anyway."

## **Experts wonder 'Where is the CDC?' as a hantavirus outbreak unfolds on a cruise ship**

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — No quick dispatching of disease investigators. No televised news conference to inform the public. No timely health alerts to doctors.

In the midst of a hantavirus outbreak that involves Americans and is making headlines around the world, the U.S. government's top public health agency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has been uncharacteristically missing in action, according to a number of experts.

To President Donald Trump, "We seem to have things under very good control," as he told reporters Friday evening.

To experts, the situation aboard a cruise ship has not spiraled because, unlike COVID-19 or measles or the flu, hantavirus does not spread easily. It has been health experts in other countries, not the United States, who have been dealing primarily with the outbreak in the past week.

"The CDC is not even a player," said Lawrence Gostin, an international public health expert at Georgetown University. "I've never seen that before."

Not until late Friday did CDC actions accelerate.

Health officials confirmed the deployment of a team to Spain's Canary Islands, where the ship was expected to arrive early Sunday local time, to meet the Americans onboard. They said a second team will go to Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska as part of a plan to evacuate American passengers from the ship to a University of Nebraska quarantine center for evaluation and monitoring. Also, the CDC issued its first health alert to U.S. doctors, advising them of the possibility of imported cases.

At their first briefing, held Saturday by telephone only for invited reporters, officials pledged to be transparent in updating the public but said the media could not cite the speakers by name under rules set by

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aides to Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. They did not directly answer a question about whether the American passengers could leave the university medical facility when they wanted.

The CDC's diminished role in this outbreak is an indicator the agency is no longer the force in international health or the protector of domestic health that it once was, some experts said.

The hantavirus outbreak is "a sentinel event" that speaks to "how well the country is prepared for a disease threat. And right now, I'm very sorry to say that we are not prepared," said Dr. Jeanne Marrazzo, chief executive officer of the Infectious Diseases Society of America.

How the outbreak unfolded

Early last month, a 70-year-old Dutch man developed a feverish illness on a cruise ship traveling from Argentina to Antarctica and some islands in the South Atlantic. He died less than a week later. More people became sick, including the man's wife and a German woman, who both died.

Hantavirus was first identified as a cause of sickness of one of the cases on May 2. The World Health Organization swung into action and by Monday was calling it an outbreak. About two dozen Americans were on the ship, including about seven who disembarked last month and 17 who remained on board.

It's WHO taking center stage

For decades, the CDC partnered with the WHO in such situations. The CDC acted as a mainstay of any international investigation, providing staff and expertise to help unravel any outbreak mystery, develop ways to control it and communicate to the public what they should know and how they should worry.

Such actions were a large reason why the CDC developed a reputation as the world's premier public health agency.

But this time, the WHO has been center stage. It made the risk assessment that has told people the outbreak is not a pandemic threat.

"I don't think this is a giant threat to the United States," said Jennifer Nuzzo, director of Brown University's Pandemic Center. But how this situation has played out "just shows how empty and vapid the CDC is right now," she said.

Tumult under Trump

The current situation comes after 16 tumultuous months during which the Trump administration withdrew from the WHO, has restricted CDC scientists from talking to international counterparts at times and embarked on a plan to build its own international public health network through one-on-one agreements with individual countries.

The administration has laid off thousands of CDC scientists and public health professionals, including members of the agency's ship sanitation program.

As this was playing out, Kennedy said he was working to "restore the CDC's focus on infectious disease, invest in innovation, and rebuild trust through integrity and transparency."

Waiting to hear from the CDC

The CDC has not been completely silent on hantavirus.

The agency on Wednesday issued a short statement that said the risk to the American public is "extremely low," and described the U.S. government as "the world's leader in global health security."

Said Nuzzo: "Not only was that not helpful, it actually does damage because a core principle of public health communications is humility."

The CDC's acting director, Dr. Jay Bhattacharya, posted a message on social media that the agency was lending its expertise in coordinating with other federal agencies and international authorities. Arizona officials this week said they learned from the CDC that one of the Americans who left the ship — a person with no symptoms and not considered contagious — had already returned to the state. WHO officials said the CDC has been sharing technical information.

The CDC also is "monitoring the health status and preparing medical support for all of the American passengers on the cruise," Bhattacharya wrote.

But federal health officials have mostly been tight-lipped, declining interview requests. The first on-camera appearance by a CDC official came Saturday morning, when Bhattacharya appeared on a Fox News program and said, "My message to the American people is please don't worry." But he got some

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details wrong and overstated what was known about the outbreak.

He incorrectly said two passengers in their 80s had died after they had contracted the virus while bird-watching in Argentina. The travelers were a 70-year-old Dutch man and his 69-year-old wife and while Argentine health officials think it is possible they were infected during a bird-watching outing, it has not been established.

## COVID-19 comparison

In interviews this week, some experts made a comparison with a 2020 incident involving the Diamond Princess, a cruise ship docked in Japan that became the setting of one of the first large COVID-19 outbreaks outside of China.

The CDC sent personnel to the port, helped evacuate American passengers, ran quarantines, shared genetic data on the virus, coordinated with the WHO and Japan, held public briefings and rapidly published reports "that became the world's reference data on cruise ship COVID transmission," said Dr. Tom Frieden, a former CDC director.

Some aspects of the international response to the Diamond Princess were criticized, and it did not halt the outbreak or stop COVID-19's spread across the world. But some experts say it was not for the CDC's lack of trying.

"The CDC was right on top of it, very visible, very active in trying to manage and contain it," Gostin said, while the agency's work now is delayed and subdued.

Instead of working with nearly all of the world's nations through the WHO, the Trump administration has pursued bilateral health agreements with individual nations for information sharing, public health support, and what it describes as "the introduction of innovative American technologies." Roughly 30 agreements are currently in place.

That's not sufficient, Gostin said. "You can't possibly cover a global health crisis by doing one-on-one deals with countries here and there," he said.

## What to know about the latest wave of changes to congressional districts

By GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

The remaking of the U.S. political map accelerated this week in courts and legislatures, all of it in this round expected to boost Republicans in their attempt to keep control of Congress in November's elections.

This week's major action came in Southern states, with a significant state court ruling in Virginia and continued fallout from a U.S. Supreme Court decision last month.

Here's a look at where things stand.

Virginia court undoes new map drawn to help Democrats

In a 4-3 decision Friday, the Virginia Supreme Court struck down a Democratic congressional redistricting plan that was approved by voters in April.

The new map was intended to give Democrats an inside track for 10 of the state's 11 seats in the U.S. House — a jump from the six they currently hold. The new lines were drawn as part of a push by both parties to redistrict for their advantage in time for the 2026 midterm elections.

The court majority cited procedural reasons for rejecting the amendment to the state constitution that paved the way for new maps. To send a constitutional amendment to voters, lawmakers are supposed to approve the measure twice — once before and once after a legislative election. The court found that they didn't comply because the initial approval came in October after early voting had begun for the general election.

The result is that the state's previous maps will remain in place for this year's elections.

Fallout from US Supreme Court ruling leads to quick redistricting

Multiple GOP-controlled Southern states pushed this week to redraw their congressional maps in the aftermath of an April 29 U.S. Supreme Court decision that struck down a Louisiana congressional district drawn to have a Black majority of constituents.



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The ruling was seen as a blow to a provision of the Voting Rights Act that requires political maps to include districts where minority populations' preferred candidates can win elections.

Louisiana quickly suspended primaries scheduled for May 16 so lawmakers could create new districts. Voting rights activists there packed the statehouse to oppose proposals for new maps that could eliminate at least one of the two current majority-Black districts.

Republicans in Alabama enacted a law Friday that would ignore the results of its May 19 congressional primaries and instead hold a new election — if a federal court agrees to lift an order for the state to have a second congressional district where a majority or near-majority of residents are Black. Republicans currently hold four of the state's six seats in the House and want to instead use a map that could allow them to win an additional seat.

South Carolina's GOP-dominated legislature met Friday to discuss a proposal to create a new map that gives the party a shot at winning all seven of the state's House seats. But some worried that breaking up the one Democratic-controlled district could make some other districts vulnerable to Democratic election wins.

Tennessee enacted a law Thursday creating a new U.S. House map that carves up a majority-Black House district in Memphis, the only one now held by a Democrat. That would give Republicans a strong chance of winning all nine of the state's seats.

The balance of power could be tipping more to Republicans

Normally, House districts are reworked only after results from the once-a-decade U.S. Census are tallied. This time it's different.

President Donald Trump urged Texas officials to draw new districts to help his chance of keeping Congress in GOP control after the 2026 midterm elections. Texas officials complied with a plan designed to bring them as many as five new seats.

Democratic-dominated California responded with a map intended to bring them five new states. Other states have followed. And in the aftermath of the Supreme Court ruling, the pace has picked up, though it's been mostly in states where Republicans have nearly all the seats already and thus not much room for gains.

Without counting the pending possible map changes in Alabama, Louisiana and South Carolina, the mid-decade redistricting has created 14 more House seats that Republicans believe they could win and six that could give Democrats an edge. Overall, that would mean a potential eight-seat advantage for the GOP ahead of a midterm election, when the president's party normally loses seats.

But as changes and court challenges play out — along with voters having their say — the results aren't certain.

Currently, Republicans have 217 seats in the House to Democrats' 212. There's one independent member. Five seats are vacant.

## **Rejecting church and state separation is on the wish list for Trump's religious liberty commission**

By PETER SMITH Associated Press

One member calls for a Presidential Medal of Freedom for a baker who refused to create a wedding cake for a same-sex couple.

Another calls for court interventions by the Department of Justice on behalf of Amish parents fighting New York vaccine requirements and Catholic nuns challenging that state's requirement that they accommodate hospice patients' gender identities.

And the chair of the Religious Liberty Commission is calling for a federal hotline with this automated recording: "There is no separation of church and state."

These are just some of the recommendations that members of the advisory panel formed by President Donald Trump last year want to see included in the commission's final report.

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That report is still in the works, but commissioners had an opportunity to describe their wish lists during their most recent meeting in April. There was little dissent as the commissioners, most drawn from Trump's base of conservative Christian supporters, covered the items they want in the report.

Their ideas reflect the prevailing perspectives on the definition of religious liberty among many conservative Catholic and evangelical activists: increasing avenues for religious expression in public schools; expanding opportunities for faith-based organizations to receive public money; and allowing for religious-based exemptions in areas ranging from labor law to classroom lessons to healthcare mandates.

Such views have also been reflected in Supreme Court decisions issued in recent years by its conservative majority.

Commission criticized for narrow views

Critics of the commission say it embodies a one-sided perspective of Trump's supporters and is threatening a well-established constitutional separation of church and state, despite the chair's claims.

A lawsuit by a progressive interreligious coalition argues that the commission fails to comply with federal law requiring advisory panels to feature diverse members and viewpoints.

The lawsuit echoes criticism that most commissioners are conservative Christian clerics and commentators; one is an Orthodox Jewish rabbi. The coalition says members have asserted that America is specifically a Judeo-Christian or Christian nation and notes that most commission meetings took place at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, an institution with Christian leadership.

The Republican administration is asking a federal court to dismiss the lawsuit. The government is citing legal technicalities and contending the law does not define how a commission should be fairly balanced or whose viewpoints should be represented.

Another entity created by Trump — the Task Force to Eradicate Anti-Christian Bias — issued a report saying Christians faced discrimination under the administration of Democratic President Joe Biden in areas such as education, tax law and prosecution of anti-abortion protesters. Progressive groups said that report failed to document systemic discrimination, focused on causes favored by conservative Christians and amounted to advocacy rather than an investigation.

In a further interlocking of Trump-related initiatives, several members of the Religious Liberty Commission are scheduled to take part in a May 17 prayer event marking the country's upcoming 250th birthday. Several also participated in a recent Bible-reading marathon staged largely at the Museum of the Bible.

Harmony and tension within the commission

The commission has mostly featured agreement among members, with one dramatic exception. One commissioner, Carrie Prejean Boller, was ousted in February after a contentious hearing on antisemitism.

Commission Chair Dan Patrick said Prejean Boller sought to "hijack" the hearing, in which she had sharp exchanges with witnesses about the definition of antisemitism and defended commentator Candace Owens, denying her record of antisemitic statements. Prejean Boller, a Catholic, contended she was wrongly ousted for expressing her beliefs.

In other hearings, witnesses described how they defied workplace regulations that they said conflicted with their conservative religious values on gender, abortion, COVID-19 vaccines and more. Some said they were prevented, at least temporarily, from displaying a religious symbol at work or trying to sing a Christian song at a school talent show.

At the hearing devoted to antisemitism, Jewish witnesses spoke of being harassed and threatened at campus pro-Palestinian protests against Israel. The commission has also heard from some Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and other witnesses.

Even so, critics said the commission mostly focused on conservative Christian and right-leaning political grievances.

The Rev. Paul Brandeis Raushenbush, president of the progressive Interfaith Alliance, one of the groups suing over the commission's composition, said the panel's omissions are as significant as what it focuses on.

He said the commission has failed adequately to address such issues as anti-Muslim efforts in Texas and elsewhere, and also the rise of antisemitism on the right, not just the left.

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Separation of church and state debate

Raushenbush said he is especially worried about the commission chair's challenging the very notion of church-state separation.

Patrick, a Republican who is the Texas lieutenant governor, repeatedly denounced a concept that is embedded in Supreme Court precedent.

"We need to say there is no separation of church and state," Patrick said at the April meeting. "That's a lie." He suggested printing "a million bumper stickers" to that effect.

No one at the commission meeting disagreed.

Trump made similar comments at a prayer event at the White House in 2025. "They say separation between church and state," Trump said. "I said, all right, let's forget about that for one time."

While the phrase "separation of church and state" does not appear in the Constitution, 20th-century decisions by the Supreme Court cited Thomas Jefferson's description of the First Amendment as creating "a wall of separation between church and state." The court applied the First Amendment's prohibition of any church "establishment" to the states in addition to the federal government, citing the 14th Amendment's ban on states denying citizens' rights.

Courts have since wrestled with how to balance freedom of religion and freedom from government-sponsored religion.

Concerns touch on schools, vaccines, workplaces and more

Patrick has advocated for prayer and Ten Commandments postings in public schools.

"I don't have any malice towards anyone that doesn't believe in any type of faith," Patrick told fellow commissioners. "That's fine. That's what America is about. But these organizations that are pushed by some ideology and pushed by someone's bank account who wants to remove God from our country? We need to push back."

On other issues, various commissioners called for requiring schools and workplaces to post notices of the rights of religious expression and exemptions.

Some called for restoring full pay and pension benefits for military service members who were discharged for refusing COVID-19 vaccines.

Bishop Robert Barron of the Catholic Diocese of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota, called for enabling religious groups such as Catholic Charities to receive federal money without compromising on traditional church teachings about the family.

He also said Catholic immigrants in detention should have humane treatment and access to sacraments and that immigration agents should not disrupt worship services in enforcement actions. The administration last year eliminated a policy against immigration enforcement in sanctuaries, which other religious leaders said should not occur at any time.

Kelly Shackelford, president and chief executive officer of the legal organization First Liberty Institute, called for new requirements that governments pay all legal bills if they lose a religious liberty case. He said many individuals lack the money to challenge the government in court.

"That would be a huge shifting of power in favor of citizens," he said.

## Indonesian rescuers find 1 body after volcano eruption as search continues for 2 more

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Rescuers on Saturday recovered the body of an Indonesian woman who was caught in a volcanic eruption at Mount Dukono on Indonesia's remote island of Halmahera a day earlier, as search operations continued to find the bodies of two Singaporeans, officials said.

The slain hikers were among 20 who set out to ascend the 1,355-meter (4,445-foot) volcano in defiance of safety restrictions and became stranded when Dukono erupted early Friday, spewing a thick ash column that rose about 10 kilometers (6 miles) into the air.

The woman, identified by authorities only as Enjel and known as a local hiker, was located Saturday afternoon, about 50 meters (165 feet) from the rim of the main crater, said Iwan Ramdani, who heads lo-



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cal Search and Rescue Office. The location of the bodies of two Singaporean climbers remains unknown, and rescue teams are continuing operations amid high volcanic activity, he said.

"The rescue efforts went through a situation that required careful calculation and a well-planned evacuation strategy," Ramdani said, "We took into account the potential escalation of volcanic activity as well as the safety of all personnel."

Hours after the eruption, 17 climbers had been safely evacuated, including seven Singaporean nationals and two Indonesians who eventually joined the rescue operation and provided information on climbing routes of the victims before the eruption. Ten of those evacuated suffered minor burn injuries.

The search operation that involved more than 100 personnel supported by drones resumed early Saturday, focusing on a 700 square-meter (7,500 square-foot) area where clues were found during earlier searches, despite hazardous terrain and continuing eruptions, according to Ramdani.

He said rescuers were prioritizing safety because Dukono's volcanic activity remains elevated.

"The main challenge in this search effort is that we are racing against ongoing eruptions," Ramdani said in a video statement, "When the authorities declare conditions safe, we move closer to the crater area, but when an eruption occurs, we must immediately secure all search personnel from potential danger."

Indonesia's volcanology agency reported multiple eruptions from early Saturday through late morning, including ash columns rising as high as 3,000 meters (nearly 10,000 feet) above the crater. Lava bursts were also observed overnight from a monitoring post near the volcano.

Mount Dukono has been on the second-highest alert level status since 2008. Authorities enforced a four-kilometer (2.5-mile) exclusion zone around the active crater in December 2024.

Local authorities formally closed all hiking routes to Mount Dukono in April and reinforced the ban following Friday's incident. The National Disaster Management Agency warned that entering restricted zones could result in legal sanctions.

The agency urged climbers and tour operators to comply with safety recommendations, noting that similar restrictions apply to dozens of other active volcanoes across the country currently at elevated alert levels.

Indonesia, an archipelago nation of more than 270 million people, sits along the Pacific "Ring of Fire" and is home to more than 120 active volcanoes.

## **Health advice is all over social media. Here's how to vet claims**

By DEVI SHASTRI AP Health Writer

Health and wellness advice is available in abundance on social media — from trendy to informative to straight-up disinformation — and you're far from alone in seeing it.

A new survey by the Pew Research Center finds that about 4 in 10 U.S. adults — and around half of those under 50 — get health information from social media or podcasts.

Researchers also looked at the social media profiles of 6,828 health and wellness influencers with at least 100,000 followers. Only about 4 in 10 list a background as a health professional. About one-third called themselves coaches, about 3 in 10 described themselves as entrepreneurs and about 1 in 10 cited their own life experience, like being a parent.

Despite the wide range of expertise, about half of people who get health and wellness information from influencers said the influencers help them better understand their own health, while about one-third said it hasn't made much difference. About 1 in 10 said it made them more confused.

Experts say a bit of skepticism is key to interacting with posts about fitness, mental health and personal health. Here are their tips on how to be a smarter consumer.

**How to vet a health influencer's credentials**

Experts said the biggest green flag is when an influencer's credentials are easy to find on their profile. Beware the fill-in-the-blank "coach" who can't prove their training.

Courtney Babilya, a certified medical exercise specialist and personal trainer who has more than 430,000 followers on Instagram, has seen this with maternity content: "Someone has a baby and suddenly they're a pregnancy coach."

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"We have to be careful with people who have an experience in one thing and suddenly become a 'coach' on that," she said.

Coach is a business model, not a sign of training. Babilya shares her own experience dealing with chronic illness online, but keeps it separate from her professional advice.

"You do have an obligation to make sure that you are not giving someone a false idea or spreading a message that isn't going to be applicable to everyone," she said.

Don't fall for viral shock factor

If it brings up big emotions, pause. For people who can't access care or feel unheard by their doctors, an offbeat opinion could feel like a long-sought answer. The Pew survey found 53% of uninsured people got health information from social media, compared to 38% of those who were insured.

But people who are trying to share good medical information online are not trying to incite fear or surprise, said Dr. Fatima Daoud Yilmaz, an OB-GYN at Stony Brook Medicine in New York, whose popular "Feminine Aisle" video series rates drug store products.

Even if the person has expertise, ask yourself: Are they speaking outside the scope of their knowledge? Is what they're saying in line with scientific consensus?

"All opinions are not created equal when it comes to something such as health or medicine or science," said Daoud.

Look out for exaggerated or definitive claims, especially in the first few seconds of the video when influencers are trying hard to grab your attention, added Babilya.

Ambivalent wording is a good sign, said Nedra Glover Tawwab, a practicing therapist and author. In her videos on boundaries and mental health, she couches with "maybe," "sometimes," "perhaps," rather than diagnosing her 1.8 million followers on Instagram.

If you feel like you've found a diagnosis online, that is your sign to seek out a professional, Tawwab said.

Follow the influencer money

People on social media are making money — for some, it is their livelihood.

"It doesn't mean that all of the information that they put out is biased, but it should tell consumers of that information to take it with a grain of salt because they do have financial incentive to be pushing information like this," Daoud said.

Babilya's platform is now a full-time job, and the way she helps support her family. Taking partnerships and brand deals was not an easy decision, but one that makes her work sustainable.

Babilya said she prioritizes being upfront with her audience and making sure her ads are transparently labeled.

Stop being a passive scroller

Experts also recommend pausing to check the video's sources. Look for gold standard science. Some posts are not well fact-checked, Babilya warned, citing studies that have nothing to do with what the influencer says it does.

Use the same standard as when you're vetting a purchase online. Look at the larger conversation around the advice as you would reading product reviews, Tawwab said.

Two-thirds of users said they just happen to come across the content rather than seeking it out, according to the Pew survey.

If you want to control your feed, it will take time and ongoing effort, said Ash Milton of the University of Minnesota, who studies how users navigate online mental health information.

"You have to work for it because the algorithm is designed to be passive consumption," Milton said.

You can use "Hidden Words" on Instagram or "Not Interested" on TikTok to filter out certain content, though Milton notes TikTok might not know exactly what in the video you're not interested in. Use your own reaction as a barometer to limit content by asking yourself: Is the health information actually applicable and helpful to your life, or just relatable?

Find a doctor you trust

Confirm with a trusted health professional before acting on anything you see online.

Influencers can say anything while medical professionals are ethically and legally liable for your care, and "may face professional and personal consequences for the advice that they give you," Daoud said. "Ultimately, talk to the medical provider who knows you," she said.

## Trump's deal making with Xi next week may determine Hong Kong jailed activist Jimmy Lai's fate

By KANIS LEUNG Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Pro-democracy activist Jimmy Lai once hoped U.S. President Donald Trump could help stop the imposition of a controversial national security law. The law not only took effect but was also used to sentence him to 20 years in prison.

Ahead of an anticipated trip by Trump to Beijing to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping next week, Lai's son said his family is now hoping that Trump can help secure his father's release.

Lai, a prominent critic of Beijing, founded a pro-democracy newspaper that was shut down during a crackdown following the city's massive anti-government protests in 2019.

Observers say the former media mogul's plight symbolizes a decline in freedoms Beijing promised when the former British colony returned to Chinese rule in 1997. In an interview with The Associated Press, Sebastien Lai said he fears the clock is ticking for his 78-year-old father.

Trump is expected to discuss trade, the Iran war and Taiwan with Xi. But he said he is also planning to bring up Lai, telling conservative radio host Hugh Hewitt, "there's a little bitterness, I would say, with him and Jimmy Lai."

The younger Lai, 31, said his family is hopeful that Trump could help his father, adding that it's easier to resolve than many of the other complex geopolitical issues the leaders will discuss.

He fears his father will die in prison, which would devastate the family and make him a martyr, he said. "It's a lose-lose scenario for every single person," he said.

The US diplomatic efforts

Trump has expressed sympathy for Jimmy Lai.

"I feel so badly," he told reporters in December after Lai was found guilty of conspiracy to collude with foreign forces and conspiring with others to publish seditious articles. He had raised Lai's case during his October meeting with Xi.

Mark Clifford, president of the Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation, which advocates for Lai's release, said people briefed on the October meeting told him that Xi and his staff "noted" Trump's remarks without pushing back aggressively. Clifford said that suggested they're willing to talk.

Clifford added that Trump had instructed U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent to raise Lai's release in last June's trade talks with China, according to his source. Bessent again mentioned Trump's desire to free Lai in a recent meeting with Chinese representatives, who acknowledged it without much comment, Clifford said, citing someone with direct knowledge.

"It is positive that senior Chinese officials have stopped pushing back on the issue," he said. The Treasury Department did not respond to a request for comment.

In public, though, Beijing has remained tough on Lai. In March, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun called him the mastermind behind the riots that shook the city in 2019.

On Thursday, the spokesperson's office of the ministry didn't directly answer a question about whether China would consider releasing Lai, saying that Hong Kong issues are internal affairs and foreign interference is not allowed.

The Hong Kong government earlier said Lai's case had nothing to do with press freedom. In a reply to the AP, it said Lai was convicted after an open and fair trial, and the government will ensure laws are observed and strictly enforced.

The White House did not respond to questions about how vigorously Trump would press for Lai's release.

Over 100 U.S. lawmakers in a bipartisan group sent a letter to the White House Thursday urging Trump to seek Lai's release at the upcoming summit with Xi.

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Getting prisoners out has become harder

Even as U.S.-China tensions have risen, diplomacy has managed to win the release of some prisoners. In 2024, U.S. pastor David Lin was freed after nearly 20 years in Chinese prison, and Washington and Beijing traded several other prisoners under a diplomatic agreement the same year.

But activists say Beijing is becoming less willing to release prisoners who have confronted it over human rights. The Chinese Nobel laureate Liu Xiaobo died at a hospital in northeast China in 2017 after foreign governments urged China to release him for cancer treatment abroad.

Human rights lawyer Jared Genser, who previously represented Liu, said a White House official told him that Trump had called Xi and urged Liu's medical release.

Under Xi's predecessor, Hu Jintao, China was more focused on economic integration and more sensitive to its international reputation, said Genser, who helped win another activist's freedom in 2007. Xi's China emphasizes sovereignty and resisting foreign interference, he said.

"China knows that by taking a very tough and unrelenting position that most countries in the world are not going to be willing to do more than privately raise a case," he said. "That self-censorship to me is the biggest factor ... in our inability to secure the release of political prisoners under Xi Jinping, as compared to Hu Jintao."

It's not clear how hard the US will push for Lai

John Kamm, founder of the Dui Hua Foundation, which advocates for political prisoners, said China previously made concessions when it wanted something, like hosting the Olympics.

But he said U.S. inattention also made it harder to win the release of jailed activists.

"I don't know of anyone in this administration," he said, "who cares about political prisoners in China." An exception might be Secretary of State Marco Rubio, he said, but Rubio's focus is on other issues.

Kamm said Trump is prioritizing trade, investment and the Iran war. But he said China could agree to release Lai if the U.S. makes concessions on Beijing's other priorities.

But Thomas Kellogg, executive director of Georgetown Center for Asian Law, said both Beijing and Washington have incentives to make a deal.

Releasing Lai would allow China to signal that it's ready to move on after almost six years since Beijing imposed the security law in Hong Kong, while Trump's administration could use a diplomatic win after "a difficult couple of months," he said.

Kellogg said winning Lai's release would help the administration earn praise even from its critics.

"If the Trump administration is pushing very hard for Jimmy Lai's release, then we could get a positive outcome," he said.

But Wilson Chan, co-founder of the think tank Pagoda Institute, believes the chance for a diplomatic solution is slim as Beijing has a message to send through Lai's case.

Chan said if the international community keeps raising Lai's case, Beijing may see him as an influential figure who still poses national security threats. But if they don't, then Beijing won't face pressure to act.

Lai's family fears he will die in prison

Lai, a British citizen, has decided not to appeal his conviction and sentence. The government, which insists Lai is Chinese, is seeking to confiscate his assets on national security grounds.

Sebastien Lai called the move another example of his father "still being attacked."

The older Lai suffered from health issues including heart palpitations and diabetes, his Hong Kong legal team said in January. The prosecution said a medical report noted his general health condition remained stable. The government insists he was placed in solitary confinement at his own request.

The younger Lai, based in London, has maintained contact with his father through letters during the latter's over five years in custody. He believes his father will want to live a quiet life if released early.

"My father will die in prison if he's not freed," he said. "The Chinese government would be complicit in killing him."



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## Today in History: May 10, golden spike completes transcontinental railway

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Sunday, May 10, the 130th day of 2026. There are 235 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On May 10, 1869, a golden spike was driven in a ceremony in Promontory, Utah, marking the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in the United States.

Also on this date:

In 1775, Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys, along with Col. Benedict Arnold, captured the British-held fortress at Ticonderoga, New York.

In 1865, Confederate President Jefferson Davis was captured by Union forces near Irwinville, Georgia.

In 1924, J. Edgar Hoover was named acting director of the Bureau of Investigation (later known as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or FBI) by President Calvin Coolidge; Hoover would serve as FBI director until 1972.

In 1933, book burnings were held in 34 cities across Germany, targeting authors whose ideologies were in conflict with Nazism.

In 1940, during World War II, German forces began invading the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Belgium and France. On the same day, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain resigned, and Winston Churchill formed a new government.

In 1960, the nuclear-powered submarine USS Triton completed the first submerged circumnavigation of the Earth.

In 1994, Nelson Mandela was inaugurated, becoming the first Black president of South Africa.

In 1994, the state of Illinois executed serial killer John Wayne Gacy, 52, for the murders of 33 young men and boys.

In 2014, Michael Sam was selected by the St. Louis Rams in the seventh round of the NFL draft, becoming the first openly gay player drafted by a National Football League team.

In 2023, Rep. George Santos, the New York Republican infamous for fabricating his life story, was indicted on charges that he duped donors, stole from his campaign and lied to Congress. (Santos pleaded guilty in August 2024 and was sentenced to more than 7 years in prison; President Donald Trump commuted his sentence in October 2025.)

Today's Birthdays: Basketball Hall of Fame coach Jim Calhoun is 84. Musician-songwriter Donovan is 80. Fashion designer Miuccia Prada is 77. Olympic skiing medalists Phil and Steve Mahre are 69. Republican Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith of Mississippi is 67. Singer-activist Bono (U2) is 66. Playwright Suzan-Lori Parks is 63. Model Linda Evangelista is 61. Rapper Young MC is 59. Racing driver Helio Castroneves is 51. Actor Kenan Thompson is 48. Olympic swimming gold medalist Missy Franklin is 31.