

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 1 of 50

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- 1440 News Headlines](#)
- [3- Transit Fundraiser Ad](#)
- [4- Weekly Vikings Roundup](#)
- [5- Prairie Doc: "Every Story Is an Act of Power: Why Direct Service Providers Must Practice Dignified Storytelling"](#)
- [6- Aberdeen Smitty's Sweeps Groton Post 39 14U in Doubleheader](#)
- [7- EarthTalk: White Roof](#)
- [8- SD SearchLight: Game, Fish and Parks doesn't disclose employee's landowner status in lake refuge repeal](#)
- [10- Weather Pages](#)
- [15- Daily Devotional](#)
- [16- Subscription Form](#)
- [17- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [18- News from the Associated Press](#)

Monday, June 8

Senior Menu: Turkey wraps, lettuce/tomato/cheese, potato salad, fruit.

School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m.

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

BBB Open Gym, 6-8 p.m., Arena

Groton VB GMS Camp, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Arena/Gym

U14 Legion hosts Watertown, 5:30 p.m.

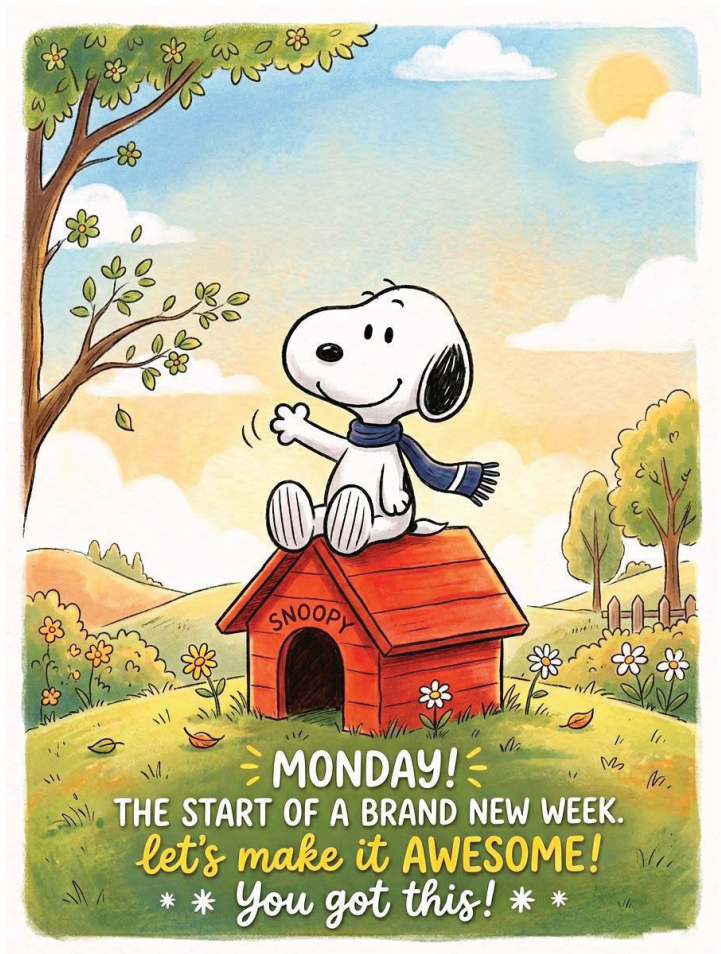
Jr. Legion at Watertown, 5 p.m.

U8 Baseball host Clark, DH, 5:30 p.m., Falk and Nelson Field, (Red and Blue)

U12 Softball at Mobridge, DH, 5:30 p.m. (B&G)

U8 Softball at Webster, DH, 6 p.m. (B&G)

T-Ball at Warner, 6 p.m., Football Field



Tuesday, June 9

Senior Menu: Chicken alfredo, broccoli, fruit, breadstick.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Council, 6 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Groton VB GMS Camp, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Arena/Gym

U14 Legion at Aberdeen Smitty's, 5:30 p.m.

Sr. Legion at Webster, 5:30 p.m.

Jr. Legion at Selby, 6 p.m.

U12 Baseball hosts Britton, DH, 5:30 p.m.

U8 Baseball host Aberdeen, DH, 5:30 p.m. (Red)

U14 Softball at Hub City, 6 p.m.

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

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 2 of 50

1440

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

79th Tony Awards

"Schmigadoon!" won best musical at the 79th Tony Awards yesterday, while "Liberation" won best new play.

The awards come as Broadway's 2025-26 season grossed a record \$1.9B in ticket sales, up 3.5% from last year, with attendance up 1.8%. Plays drove higher attendance, surging nearly 14%, while attendance at musicals dropped 4.7%. Live entertainment has proved robust since the COVID-19 pandemic, even as consumers pull back from other forms of discretionary spending in recent years. Live Nation says concert ticket sales are projected to rise 11% this year.

The effect of a Tony Award can bump ticket prices up 17% the month after the awards and may extend a show's run by months.

Box-and-Banana for Bees

Bumblebees have demonstrated the ability to carry out spontaneous problem-solving, a study published last week reveals. The animal is the first nonvertebrate to pass a test compared to the box-and-banana experiment for chimpanzees.

In the 1910s, German psychologist Wolfgang Köhler placed a banana outside the reach of a chimpanzee. In one experiment, he placed several boxes nearby, with the chimpanzee realizing he could stack the objects to reach the treat. Other large-brained animals—including elephants and birds—have since shown a similar capacity for what Köhler called insight learning.

In the latest experiment, researchers trained bumblebees to associate a blue flower with a treat and to recognize that a Styrofoam ball was harmless. In several experiments, the bumblebee showed the capacity to manipulate the ball to reach the treat. The bee is now the smallest-brained animal to have passed Köhler's test.

Tennis' Young Star

Nineteen-year-old Mirra Andreeva routed Maja Chwalińska to win the women's singles title at the French Open Saturday, becoming the youngest to do so since Monica Seles in 1992. Andreeva, who won in straight sets, has been widely acclaimed since joining the tour at age 15. For Chwalińska, the loss ends a fairy-tale run after entering ranked 114th in the world.

On the men's side, Alexander Zverev beat Flavio Cobolli in five sets. It marked Zverev's first Grand Slam title, despite his being ranked third in the world and having notched 24 prior singles tournament wins since turning pro in 2013.

In related news, Serena Williams returns to the court tomorrow, playing doubles with Canada's Victoria Mboko in the HSBC Championships. Considered one of the best tennis players of all time, Williams stepped away from tennis in 2022 but said she wanted to have her two young children watch her play (among other reasons).

Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

New York Knicks and San Antonio Spurs face off for Game 3 of the NBA championships tonight at 8:30 pm ET, with President Donald Trump slated to be in attendance.

"The Super Mario Galaxy Movie" becomes the first 2026 film to cross \$1B in revenue.

Golden Tempó wins 158th Belmont Stakes, weeks after winning the Kentucky Derby.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 3 of 50

Science & Technology

Pharma giant Eli Lilly says its "triple agonist" drug—a GLP-1 drug with added appetite-suppression mechanisms—showed weight reductions of 25%-30%, with reductions in sleep apnea, knee osteoarthritis, and more.

Oil and gas land auction in Alaska's National Wildlife Refuge closes with only about 72,000 of almost 700,000 acres leased; no major oil companies submitted bids.

Researchers demonstrate plants can be used to produce pharmaceutical compounds in conditions simulating long-distance space travel.

Business & Markets

Stocks drop sharply Friday (S&P 500 -2.6%, Dow -1.4%, Nasdaq -4.2%) as investors get anxious over AI chip companies; tech-heavy Nasdaq sees worst day since last April.

Google to pay SpaceX, which now owns xAI, roughly \$920M per month for access to its compute infrastructure; \$30B deal runs through June 2029.

OPEC+ agrees to raise target oil production by 188,000 barrels per day, its fourth such increase since the Strait of Hormuz closed.

Politics & World Affairs

Los Angeles councilwoman Nithya Raman (D) overtakes Spencer Pratt (R) as vote counting continues; Mayor Karen Bass (D) refers to Raman as her "general election opponent".

Israel says it struck Iranian military targets yesterday after intercepting 10 missiles from Iran; yesterday marked the first direct strikes between the two countries since April.

Nigerian army says it freed 360 people held by Boko Haram on a mountain in northeastern Borno state.

★ GROTON ★

TRANSIT

FUNDRAISER



Join us for an evening of great food,
good company, and community support!

 WHEN: Thursday, June 11, 2026	 TIME: 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	 WHERE: Groton Community Center
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 Groton Community Center— 109 N 3rd Street
One block East of Groton Transit

★ LET US DO THE COOKING FOR YOU! ★

 BURGERS	 BRATS	 BEANS	 WATERMELON	 CHIPS
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AND THE FAMOUS MINI DONUTS!

★ FOOD ★ FUN ★ DOOR PRIZES ★

FREE WILL DONATION

Please join us & Help support Groton Transit!



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 4 of 50



Every NFL offseason brings optimism. Every fanbase convinces itself the rookies will hit, the free agents will work out, and this is finally the year everything comes together. But before the season starts and hope takes over, it's worth taking a hard look at the roster as it actually exists today.

Over the next ten weeks, we'll break down every position group on the Vikings' roster and rank them from the group I have the most confidence in to the one I trust the least entering the 2026 season. We'll look at the projected starters, depth pieces, offseason additions, and biggest questions each group faces.

Coming in at number 10 is the wide receiver position.

Confidence level: 99%

Current projected starters: Justin Jefferson, Jordan Addison, Jauan Jennings, Tai Felton

Competing for a roster or practice squad spot: Myles Price, Dontae Fleming, Jashaun Jones, Dillon Bell

Why I'm confident: The Minnesota Vikings have the best WR in the NFL (Justin Jefferson). They also have one of the best WR2s in the NFL (Jordan Addison). Not resting on their laurels, the Vikings went out and signed Jauan Jennings to fill the WR3 void created when Jalen Nailor signed with the Raiders. This gives the Vikings an elite receiving corps they can deploy to create mismatches all over the field.

In addition to the phenomenal starters, the Vikings also have a group of talented youngsters waiting in the wings. Tai Felton is entering his sophomore season, Myles Price is an electric kick returner, Dontae Fleming and Jashaun Jones are already showing promise early in offseason workouts, and Dillon Bell might be another great undrafted rookie the Vikings uncovered.

Cause for concern: This is the NFL, and injuries happen, but because of the depth, the Vikings are equipped to handle that just fine. The biggest concern is who is throwing them the ball. Justin Jefferson played in all 17 games last season, and the team had to make a concerted effort to get him over 1,000 yards in the season finale. With the addition of Jennings, and Addison looking to boost his stock as we near the end of his rookie contract, everyone will be looking to feast. Will there be enough to go around?

Potential upgrades: It's unlikely the Vikings will look to bring in more help at wide receiver, but if an injury occurs and they need depth, there are still plenty of talented WRs available. Tyreek Hill, Stefon Diggs, DeAndre Hopkins, and Deebo Samuel are household names that remain unsigned as of June 7.

If you're looking for reasons to be optimistic about the Vikings entering 2026, wide receiver is near the top of the list. Between elite top-end talent and promising depth, Minnesota should feel good about this room.

But we're only getting started.

Next week, we continue the countdown and move to the position group that came in at number nine. The confidence is still high, but the question marks are starting to show.

"Every Story Is an Act of Power: Why Direct Service Providers Must Practice Dignified Storytelling"

Stories are at the heart of direct service and clinical work. Whether written in case notes, shared in supervision, included in grant reports, or told at community meetings, stories help others understand the impact of our work. They build emotional connection in ways data alone cannot. But storytelling is also an act of power, and when we're not careful, that power can unintentionally cause harm.

For many families, their stories are told about them, not with them. Direct service providers often hold the microphone through professional language, reports, and presentations. Even with good intentions, stories can strip dignity, reinforce stereotypes, or expose families to stigma, especially in small or close-knit communities where anonymized details are often still identifying.

Dignified storytelling asks us to slow down and be intentional. At its core is a simple truth: it's not our story. The direct service provider's role is not to extract compelling narratives for program promotion, but to honor people's humanity, safety, and agency while still communicating the value of direct service work.

One of the most common pitfalls is what some call "hardship" or "bootstrap" storytelling. This is the idea that success comes only from individual effort and that suffering must be emphasized to prove impact. These stories often rely on pity-inducing language, exaggerate trauma, or cast providers as heroes while families appear passive or broken. Not only does this framing erase strengths and resilience, it ignores the real systems that shape people's lives, such as access to housing, healthcare, childcare, and economic opportunity.

A more ethical approach focuses on balanced, multidimensional stories. Dignified storytelling acknowledges challenges while also highlighting strengths, goals, decision-making, and progress. It shows people as parents, workers, community members, and partners and not just as clients or problems to be solved. It shifts the narrative from rescue to relationship.

Consent is another critical piece of ethical and dignified storytelling. Consent is not just a form signed once and filed away. True informed consent requires that people understand why their story is being shared, what will be created, where and how it will be shared, and for how long. It must happen in accessible language, in settings where it's genuinely safe to say no, and with the clear understanding that consent can be withdrawn at any time. What felt acceptable at intake may not feel safe months or years later.

Sometimes, the most ethical storytelling choice is not to share a story at all. If there is any risk of harm, retraumatization, stigma, or identification, especially in situations involving young children or families facing substance use, violence, or child welfare involvement. The answer may need to be no. Saying no to sharing a client's story isn't a failure; it's ethical leadership.

Fortunately, there are always alternatives. Aggregated data, composite stories, systems-level insights, and reflective narratives can demonstrate impact without putting individuals at risk. And when individual stories are shared. Co-creation, with families reviewing and approving how they're represented, offers one of the strongest safeguards.

A useful litmus test is this: If you wouldn't want the family to read what you wrote about them in an article or report, don't write it. People are always more important than program promotion.

Every story is an opportunity to honor or to harm. The choices that clinicians and other direct service providers make every day shape not only individual experiences, but organizational culture and public understanding. Practicing dignified storytelling helps ensure that the stories we tell today build trust, respect, and dignity for years to come.



By Darla Biel, Ed.D.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 6 of 50

Darla Biel, Ed.D. is Assistant Director of the Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment (CPCM) within USD's School of Health Sciences. Her research interests include community-engaged scholarship, social determinants and health, and cross-sector collaboration efforts in primary prevention of childhood adversity. Biel leads the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) grant funded by HRSA and is a member of the SD Childcare Task Force's executive committee. She lives in Brookings with her husband, Marc. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Tik Tok. Prairie Doc Programming includes On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show (most Thursdays at 7pm on SDPB, YouTube and streaming on Facebook), 2 podcasts, and a Radio program (on SDPB, Sundays at 6am and 1pm).

Aberdeen Smitty's Sweeps Groton Post 39 14U in Doubleheader

Aberdeen Smitty's earned a doubleheader sweep over Groton Post 39's 14U squad on Sunday in Aberdeen, claiming victories of 6-2 and 11-1.

In the opener, Groton grabbed an early lead in the third inning. Trayce Schelle delivered an RBI single to put Post 39 on the board, and Mason Locke later drove in a run as Groton built a 2-0 advantage.

Aberdeen answered in the bottom half of the inning, taking advantage of a pair of doubles to score four runs and move in front 4-2. The hosts added two more runs later and held Groton scoreless the rest of the way for the 6-2 victory.

Tucker Leicht started on the mound for Groton and worked five innings, allowing six hits and six runs, three of them earned, while striking out five and walking three.

Asher Zimmerman led the Groton offense with two hits in three at-bats. Schelle and Locke each collected an RBI, while Schelle also swiped two bases.

In the second game, Groton struck first when Leicht singled home a run in the opening inning. Aberdeen quickly responded with three runs in the bottom of the first and never looked back.

The Smitty's offense added five more runs in the second inning and three in the third to build a commanding lead on the way to an 11-1 win.

Zimmerman got the start for Post 39 and allowed eight runs, four earned, over two innings. Leicht and Zimmerman accounted for Groton's two hits in the contest. Leicht drove in the lone run, while Zimmerman stole two bases.

Groton's lineup featured contributions throughout the weekend from Zimmerman, Leicht, Schelle, Mason Locke, Knox Mulder, Kyson Kucker, Keegan Kucker, Carter Boerger, Easton Larson, Gavin Hanten, Graham Rose, Hank Hill, Hudson Eichler, Bentley Ehresmann, Owen Tewksbury, Rylan Blackwood and Asher Zimmerman.

Post 39 returned home Monday to face Watertown as the team continued its busy early-season schedule.

EARTHTALK

Mitigating Climate Change One White Roof At A Time

by Ava Baranowski

Dear EarthTalk: What is the "white roofs" movement all about and could this really be an effective way to combat climate change?

-- K.M., via email

The "white roofs" movement is a clever way to combat sweltering summers and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. White roofs have been a long-standing solution to the heat in many countries with intense climates, with even the ancient Greeks and Egyptians building white roofs to keep out the heat. U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu declared that white roofs "are one of the quickest and lowest cost ways we can reduce our global carbon emissions and begin the hard work of slowing climate change."

With a coat of fresh white paint, the interior temperature of a house can be cooled by up to 41 degrees Fahrenheit, making air conditioners less needed and therefore fighting carbon emissions. But what is the science behind this? Well, have you ever been told not to wear black clothing on a hot day? The opposite is true for white. White does not absorb any visible wavelengths; All light is reflected. On the other hand, darker colors absorb light, which contributes to hotter surface temperatures in an urban setting.

Taking steps like this to conserve energy is crucial, and white roofs are part of the overall fight. A benefit of white roofs is the low cost and immediate effect. On a large scale, white roofs can reduce city wide temperatures and mitigate hot climates where the heat is typically trapped in darker buildings.

Critics call the "white roof" movement greenwashing, because by encouraging it as the solution to global warming, some people don't understand its real limits. In colder climates, reflecting light may actually increase the demand for heat. It has even been suggested that white roofs could potentially cause increased global temperatures, since light is reflected into the atmosphere. Using white roofs is still a valuable tactic, especially in hot climates, and if it ever got to a worldwide scale, it would be as if we had stopped using 300 million cars for 20 years. Scientist at the Berkeley Lab Surabi Menon notes that "These offsets help delay warming that would otherwise take place if actual CO2 emissions are not reduced."

To skillfully create a white, reflective barrier to the sun, it is important to identify existing issues with your roof, a budget, and the right products and suppliers. Painting your roof white can be a great way to reduce both your carbon footprint and the amount of money you spend on electricity. As a community, it is important to spread awareness about this potential solution. Through social media, family and friends, encourage others to educate themselves about white roofs to understand whether it would be most beneficial to them and the environment.



If we all painted our roofs white, we might just be able to beat climate change. Credit: Pexels.com.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Game, Fish and Parks doesn't disclose employee's landowner status in lake refuge repeal

BY: MEGHAN O'BRIEN

When officials with South Dakota's Game, Fish and Parks Department sought to repeal a lake's waterfowl refuge status, they said it was what the surrounding landowners wanted.

They didn't say one of the landowners works for their agency.

Kraig Haase is a Watertown regional supervisor of conservation officers for Game, Fish and Parks. He co-owns 15 acres of land at the northwest end of Lake Albert, according to records maintained by the Grant County Equalization Office.

In April, a committee of state lawmakers finalized a decision to repeal the lake's status as a waterfowl refuge. The decision will allow hunting of ducks, geese and other waterfowl at the lake just east of Milbank, which is one of multiple lakes with the same name in the state.

"Every single landowner around" Lake Albert wanted to remove the refuge status, Director of Wildlife Tom Kirschenmann, of Game, Fish and Parks, told the legislative committee. The department had previously brought the request on the landowners' behalf to the Game, Fish and Parks Commission, a group of eight governor-appointed members.

The commission endorsed the request unanimously in March.

"In particular," Kirschenmann told the legislative committee, "because it was the landowners themselves coming forward to bring that particular change."

Searchlight later learned that Haase is one of the landowners. That was not disclosed to the commission, according to Chairwoman Stephanie Rissler.

"Should we have had any red flags brought to us by other landowners or other users, that would have been an opportunity for the commission to potentially take a deeper dive at the issue, but that didn't happen," she said in a Searchlight interview. "I don't have any concerns with it at this time."

Haase wasn't the conservation officer who worked with the landowners through the process, according to Jacquie Ermer, a regional wildlife supervisor with Game, Fish and Parks.

"I guess we were looking at that he was a landowner like anybody else, and so he was part of the process with the landowners," she told Searchlight. "I guess nobody asked us, to my knowledge, 'Who are each of the landowners? What do they all do?' Nobody asked that to my knowledge."

Haase made similar comments to Searchlight.

"I'm just another landowner in the process," Haase said. "It wasn't significant who I worked for."

He doesn't remember anyone asking to come on his land to hunt geese or ducks, and doesn't think neighboring landowners would monetize waterfowl hunting.

All of Haase's land is enrolled in the state's Controlled Hunting Access Program. That means Game, Fish and Parks leases the land and allows the public to hunt there. Landowners are paid based on the number of hunters that use the land. Haase's land is only enrolled in the program for turkey hunting.

Refuge was 46 years old

The Lake Albert Waterfowl Refuge site is about 840 acres, including the lake itself and the land surrounding it.

In 1980, the property owners surrounding the lake agreed to have it designated as a waterfowl refuge, according to Ermer. That meant hunters could not shoot geese, ducks and other waterfowl on the lake or

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 9 of 50

surrounding land, although they could still shoot deer, pheasants and other game.

"We were trying to establish Canada geese. It seems weird to even be thinking about that, with the goose population nowadays," Ermer told commissioners. "This was started as a trial to see if we can get geese to use it to rest there, and then also to create a better hunting opportunity."

Nick Harrington, the communications director for the Game, Fish and Parks agency, emailed a statement: "Kraig Haase received the same communication and discussion as all the surrounding landowners, which all of them were in favor of this change."

Haase was treated as a private citizen during the process, Harrington said, and the commission didn't disclose any of the landowners' names, nor did any landowner attend meetings to speak in favor of the change.

Haase's status as a conservation officer for the department "was kind of a non-issue," Harrington said. After the commission endorsed the repeal of the refuge designation, the legislative Rules Review Committee voted 3-2 for a rules package that included the status change.

Sen. Jim Mehlhaff, R-Pierre, who voted in favor of the rules package, told Searchlight that he wasn't aware of Haase's land ownership.

"But that would not have had an impact on how I voted," Mehlhaff said. "If you're going to argue that removing it is a conflict, having it there in the first place could be viewed as a conflict as well, which I don't view as a conflict at all. It's a landowner who happens to be a state employee."

Rep. Erik Muckey, D-Sioux Falls, voted no on the package. He told Searchlight that he voted no because "there are much bigger concerns here in terms of process as to how we balance property rights, as well as conservation efforts in the state, that is not an easy thing for us to make decisions on just on one singular rules package."

He said the situation doesn't constitute a conflict of interest.

"Whether or not that information was presented to me, I still have the same comments," Muckey said. "I think that there's broader conversation to be had about how this fits into a broader system of property ownership and conservation conversations that still need to happen."

Landowner reflects on original purpose

Joyce Hartsoch has lived on the lake's west shore for 50 years, and the land has been in the family for generations. Her great grandfather homesteaded there, she said.

One of her neighbors is Haase. He's listed on a deed for 15 acres along with his brother, Kent Haase.

She said a desire to restrict hunting motivated landowners to seek the refuge status decades ago, because hunters were recklessly driving through her family's 200-plus acres at the time.

"People just thought they could come up our driveway and go out along the lake and hunt," Hartsoch said. "It was kind of risky to have people running through here all the time without even asking permission. So, when the opportunity came, we did enroll it."

But over the years, the state's Canada goose population began to rise, and Hartsoch noticed depredation from the birds that she didn't in years past.

"They were getting to be kind of a problem sometimes," she said, "so we had thought to open it up for hunting and reduce the population."

Hartsoch called her local conservation officer, Jamie Pekelder in Milbank, to ask about removing the refuge status and once again allow geese to be hunted in the area.

"He kind of took the reins from there, and chatted with the other neighbors," Hartsoch said. "Mostly, I was surprised to learn that the surrounding area was still in the waterfowl refuge."

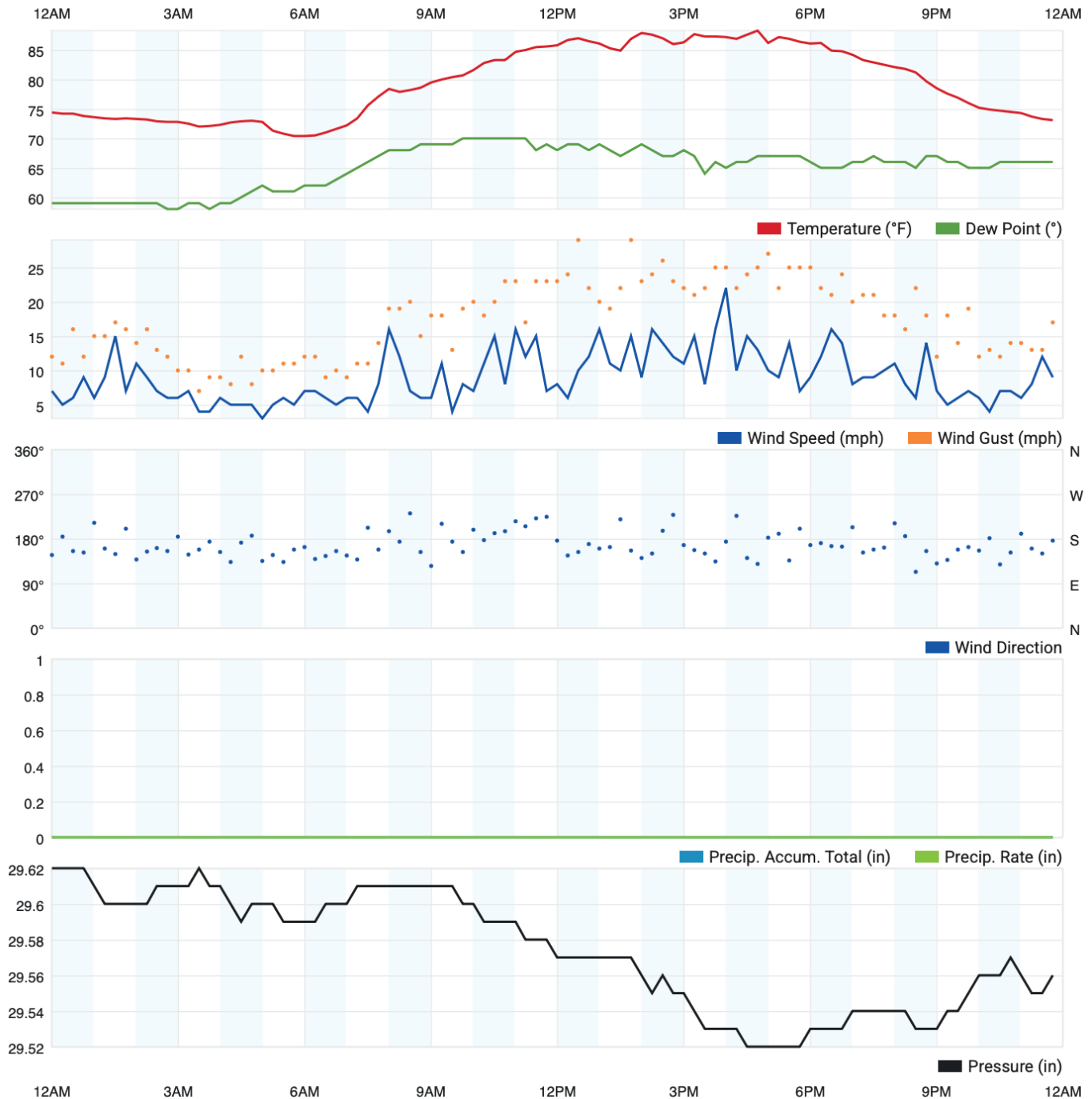
Meghan O'Brien is the audio reporter for South Dakota Searchlight where she covers the state government and its impact on South Dakotans. She's previously reported in Nebraska with a focus on health care and rural communities across the state.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 10 of 50

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

June 7, 2026



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 11 of 50

Monday



High: 84 °F

Chance
Showers then
Partly Sunny

Monday Night



Low: 60 °F

Mostly Cloudy

Tuesday



High: 97 °F

Mostly Sunny
then Sunny
and Breezy

Tuesday Night



Low: 63 °F

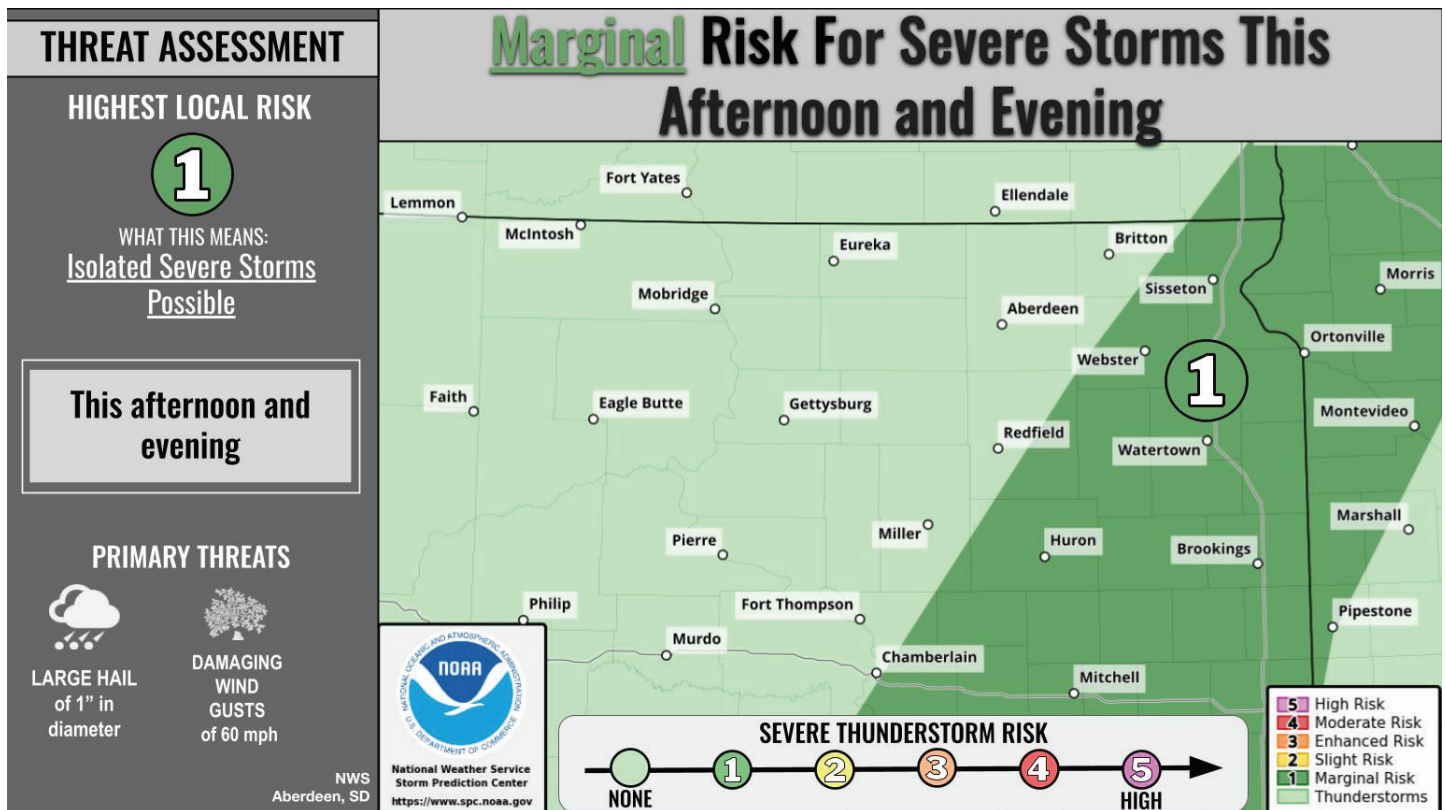
Severe
Thunderstorms
and Breezy

Wednesday



High: 82 °F

Mostly Sunny
then Chance
Showers and
Breezy



Showers and thunderstorms are possible again this afternoon and evening along and ahead of a cold front mainly along and east of the Sisseton Hills. Some of these storms could become severe. The main threats would be large hail up to an inch in diameter and wind gusts up to 60 mph.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 12 of 50

THREAT ASSESSMENT

HIGHEST LOCAL RISK

3

WHAT THIS MEANS:
Numerous-Scattered Severe
Storms Possible

**Tuesday Afternoon
Through Tuesday Night**

PRIMARY THREATS



LARGE HAIL
of 2+'' in
diameter



DAMAGING
WIND GUSTS
of 70+ mph



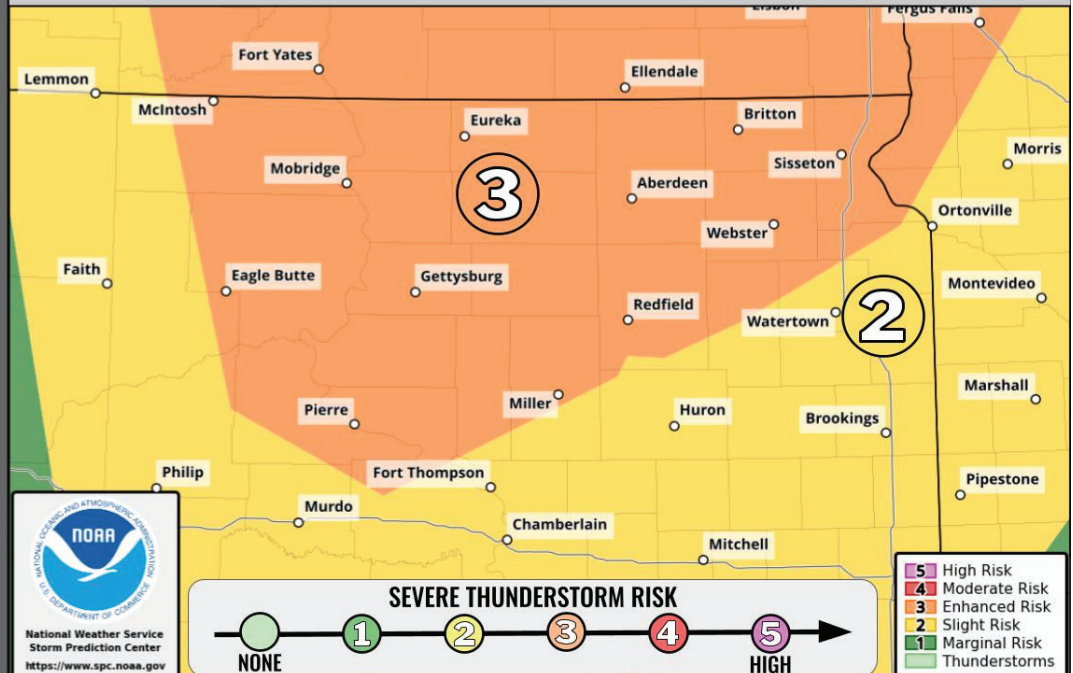
TORNADO(ES)
POSSIBLE

NWS
Aberdeen, SD



National Weather Service
Storm Prediction Center
<https://www.spc.noaa.gov>

Enhanced Risk For Severe Storms Tuesday



Another storm system will move across the region bringing an Enhanced Risk (Level 3/5) for numerous to scattered severe storms over much of central and northeastern SD into west central MN Tuesday afternoon through Tuesday night. Main threat would be large hail, potentially 2'' in diameter or larger, wind gusts of 70+ mph, and the threat of tornadoes. Heavy rain is also possible that could lead to flooding. Make sure you have a way to receive warnings and stay up-to-date with the latest watches and warnings.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 13 of 50

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 88 °F at 4:47 PM

Low Temp: 70 °F at 5:51 AM

Wind: 30 mph at 12:23 PM

Precip: Total Rain: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 98 in 2000

Record Low: 32 in 1938

Average High: 78

Average Low: 53

Average Precip in June.: 0.90

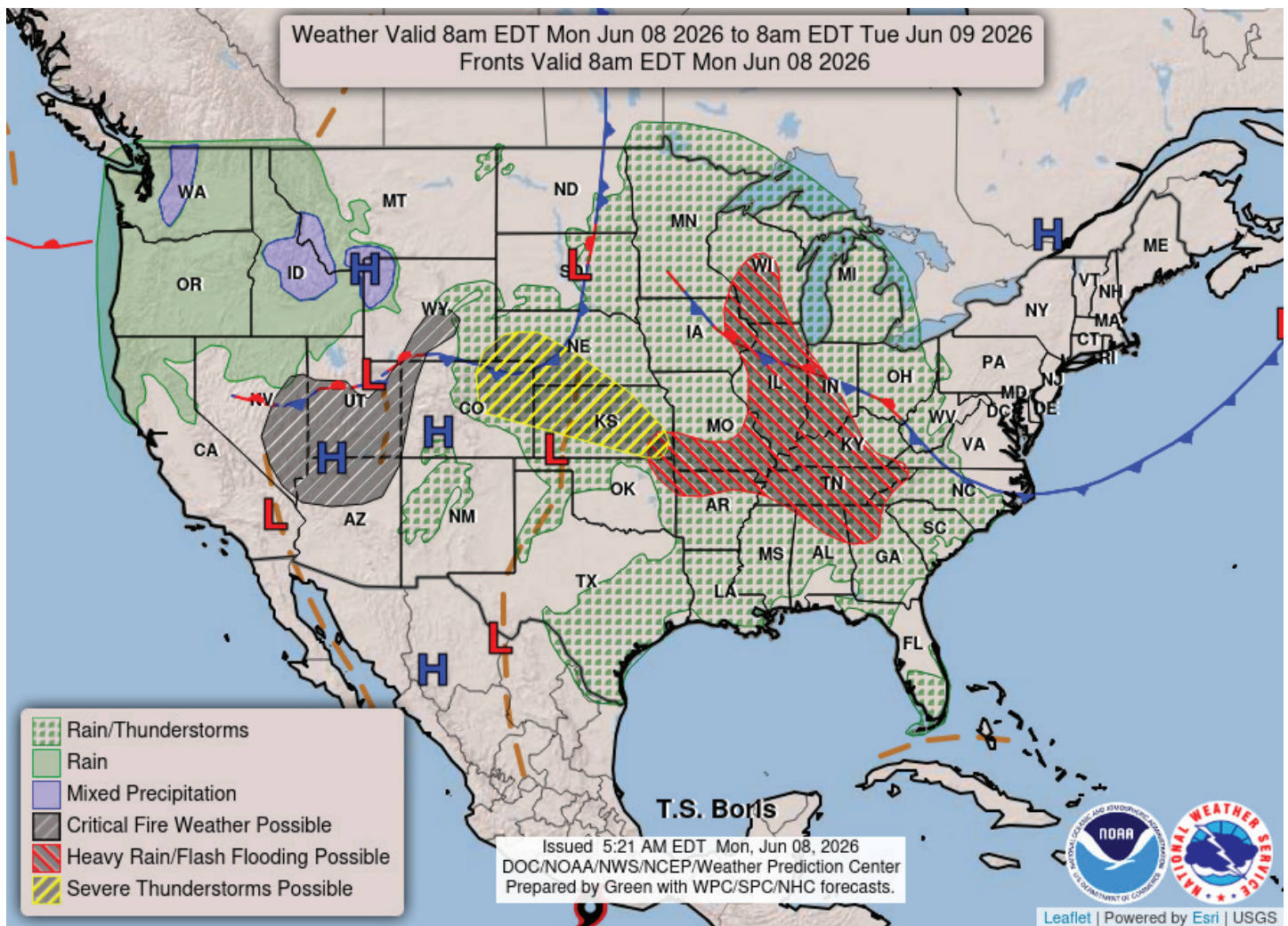
Precip to date in June.: 0.56

Average Precip to date: 8.15

Precip Year to Date: 6.92

Sunset Tonight: 9:18 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:44 am



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 14 of 50

Today in Weather History

June 8th, 2004: Over eight inches of rain fell near Okreek in rural Todd County, causing nearly \$200,000 in damage to local roads. Lightning destroyed the Okreek Community Center.

1953 — The worst tornado of record for the state of Michigan killed 116 persons. Flint MI was hardest hit. The tornado, half a mile in width, destroyed 200 homes on Coldwater Road killing entire families. (The Weather Channel)

1966 — A tornado ripped right through the heart of the capitol city of Topeka KS killing sixteen persons and causing 100 million dollars damage. The tornado, which struck during the evening, cut a swath of near total destruction eight miles long and four blocks wide. It was the most destructive tornado of record up until that time. (David Ludlum)

1974 — Severe thunderstorms spawned at least twenty-three tornadoes in Oklahoma during the afternoon and evening hours. One of the tornadoes struck the town Drumright killing sixteen persons and injuring 150 others. A tornado struck the National Weather Service office in Oklahoma City, and two tornadoes hit the city of Tulsa. Thunderstorms in Tulsa also produced as much as ten inches of rain. Total damage from the storms was around thirty million dollars. It was the worst natural disaster of record for Tulsa. (Storm Data)

1987 — Thunderstorms in the northeastern U.S. produced large hail and damaging winds in Vermont injuring two persons. Thunderstorms in Ohio produced wind gusts to 75 mph near Akron, and deluged Pittsfield with two inches of rain in thirty minutes. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 — Overnight thunderstorms in Iowa produced 5.20 inches of rain at Coon Rapids. Thunderstorms in the Florida Keys drenched Tavernier with 7.16 inches of rain in 24 hours. Eleven cities in the central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 — Thunderstorms produced severe weather over the Central Gulf Coast Region during the day and evening. Severe thunderstorms spawned 17 tornadoes, including one which injured ten persons and caused a million dollars damage at Orange Beach, AL. Thunderstorm winds gusting to 90 mph killed three persons and injured four others at Mobile AL. Thunderstorms also deluged Walnut Hill and Avalon Beach, FL, with eight inches of rain. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 15 of 50



Daily Devotion

How to Pass Down Our Faith

Do you know someone who needs the hope your testimony could bring?

Deuteronomy 4:9-10: 9 ``Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons.

10 ``Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, 'Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.'

Being a role model of faith in Jesus Christ is one of the most valuable gifts we can offer our family and friends. Placing trust in the Savior is something each person must decide for himself, but we can share the biblical truths that have shaped our own walk with God. Consider these foundational truths that have sustained you.

Salvation is found only in Jesus (Acts 4:12). The most important relationship we'll ever have is with the Lord. As you continually experience His grace, your example will reflect Him to others.

Everything that exists was created by the Lord, and He owns it all (Psalm 24:1). Understanding ourselves as stewards rather than owners has freed many believers to invest in God's kingdom.

God has a purpose for each of us (Philippians 2:13). When opportunities arise, share what you're learning about God's plan for your life. Your story may encourage someone who feels directionless.

God provides what we need in order to carry out His plan (Philippians 4:11-13). Our heavenly Father equips us with talents and spiritual gifts to achieve His purposes—and often uses our testimonies to strengthen others.

Each day presents opportunities to speak about our Savior. Who might benefit from hearing how He's worked in your life?

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

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 16 of 50

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WINNING NUMBERS

MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.07.26

2 18 29 32 51 2

TOP PRIZE:

\$1,000,000/year

NEXT

17 Hrs 17 Mins 22

DRAW:

Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.05.26

13 30 50 52 66 2

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$392,000,000

NEXT

1 Days 17 Hrs 2

DRAW:

Mins 22 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.06.26

8 22 24 37 47 5

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$28,920,000

NEXT

16 Hrs 17 Mins 22

DRAW:

Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.06.26

5 9 13 14 23

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$124,000

NEXT

2 Days 16 Hrs 32

DRAW:

Mins 22 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.06.26

3 18 26 52 54 8

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT

17 Hrs 1 Mins 22

DRAW:

Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.06.26

16 32 55 59 64 3

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$225,000,000

NEXT

17 Hrs 1 Mins 22

DRAW:

Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the **AP** Associated Press

China's Xi given lavish welcome in North Korea ahead of closely watched talks with Kim

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Chinese President Xi Jinping received a lavish welcome as he arrived in North Korea on Monday for a rare visit expected to focus on reasserting China's unique influence over the North in return for providing economic and political benefits.

China's Xinhua News Agency reported that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his wife Ri Sol Ju welcomed Xi and his wife Peng Liyuan upon their arrival at Pyongyang's international airport. Xinhua said the two leaders shook hands.

Xi later arrived at Pyongyang's main square, where a military honor guard and thousands of people, including children carrying balloons and hopping, staged a welcoming ceremony. Buildings surrounding the plaza were draped in the two countries' flags, giant portraits of Kim and Xi and red-and-yellow banners welcoming the Chinese leader and celebrating the nations' "friendship and unity."

Xi and Kim later sat down for a summit at Pyongyang's Kumsusan State Guesthouse, according to China's state broadcaster CCTV. It's Xi's first visit to North Korea in seven years. Xi and Kim last met in Beijing in September, after viewing a military parade alongside Russian President Vladimir Putin and other foreign leaders.

No specific agenda has been mentioned. Foreign experts predict the meeting will have big ramifications on bilateral ties and beyond, as they both seek to fully restore their traditional alliance in the face of separate confrontations with the U.S.

"A Chinese leader doesn't just visit North Korea because a visit is due. Xi's trip will have real implications for China-DPRK relations," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha Womans University in Seoul, using the abbreviation for North Korea's full name.

Sway over North Korea could help Xi's dealings with US

Xi's trip comes after his back-to-back summits with U.S. President Donald Trump and Putin in Beijing last month. Xi is expected to meet Trump again on a planned U.S. visit in September.

Xi will try to demonstrate China's "sway over the Korean Peninsula" and "a leadership role in entire Northeast Asia in the ages of strategic competitions with the U.S.," said Kwak Gil Sup, the head of One Korea Center, a website specializing in North Korea affairs.

China has long been North Korea's economic lifeline and main diplomatic backer. Experts say China has avoided fully enforcing U.N. sanctions on North Korea and sent clandestine aid to help its impoverished neighbor stay afloat. This year marks 65 years since the two countries signed a mutual defense treaty.

But there have been questions about their ties in recent years, with North Korea prioritizing cooperation with Russia by supplying troops and weapons to support its war against Ukraine. In return, North Korea has received economic and military assistance from Russia.

Restoring an exclusive influence over North Korea would give Xi a leverage in dealings with Trump, who has repeatedly expressed his desire to restart diplomacy with Kim, experts say.

"Implementing U.N. Security Council resolutions and enforcing sanctions do not appear to be priorities for China," Easley said.

In an article published on the North's main Rodong Sinmun newspaper Monday, Xi said China and North Korea must boost strategic cooperation and work together to oppose "hegemonism and coercive politics" and pursue an orderly multipolar world.

Kim needs Xi's support for his push for nuclear state

Xi would likely offer Kim economic aid packages such as shipments of rice and fertilizers, a resumption of Chinese group tourism to North Korea. and joint economic projects, analysts said.

"North Korea can't solely rely on Russia. It needs to align with China," Kwak said.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 19 of 50

In a Monday editorial, the Rodong Sinmun newspaper called Xi “the most honored state guest,” saying Pyongyang’s streets “are filled with an atmosphere of friendship.”

Xi could also refrain from pressing Kim on the issue of denuclearization of North Korea, and vaguely speak about peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. That would be essential for Kim, who is desperate to win international recognition as a nuclear weapons state as a way to call for lifting of U.N. sanctions on North Korea.

“Chinese officials have taken the position of not speaking publicly about denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula while still maintaining it as a long-term goal. Kim appears to want Xi to accept North Korea as a nuclear neighbor,” Easley said.

After last month’s summit between Trump and Xi, the White House said the two leaders confirmed their shared goal to denuclearize North Korea. But China only said the leaders discussed the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula. On Sunday, Kim’s sister and senior official, Kim Yo Jong, dismissed as “false information” the U.S. readout of the Xi-Trump meeting.

Last week, Kim unveiled a new plant to produce nuclear ingredients and vowed to bolster the country’s nuclear forces “at an exponential rate.” He also observed sea trials of a new naval destroyer and called for speeding up efforts to build a nuclear-armed navy.

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung told reporters Monday that North Korea is producing enough nuclear ingredients annually for about 10-20 bombs and is close to perfecting intercontinental ballistic missile technology. Lee said the world must first focus on convincing North Korea to freeze its nuclear materials production and ICBM program as a short-term goal.

On Sunday, Kim’s sister and senior official, Kim Yo Jong, echoed her brother, calling a U.S. push for the denuclearization of North Korea an “escapist and anachronistic dream.”

Kim Jong Un has rebuffed U.S. and South Korean offers for talks and focused on enlarging and modernizing his nuclear arsenal since his high-stakes diplomacy with Trump collapsed in 2019. The North Korean leader said in September that he still had “good personal memories” of Trump but urged the U.S. to withdraw its demand for North Korea to denuclearize as a precondition for resuming diplomacy.

Experts say Kim would eventually want arms reductions talks with the U.S. to win concessions in return for partially surrendering his nuclear weapons.

Tropical Storm Boris forms off Mexico’s southern Pacific coast, the National Hurricane Center says

MIAMI (AP) — Tropical Storm Boris formed Monday and is expected to bring heavy rain and possible flooding and mudslides to parts of southern Mexico, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said.

Boris was located about 85 miles (135 kilometers) southeast of Acapulco or 50 miles (80 kilometers) southwest of Punta Maldonado, according to the Miami-based weather center. The storm had maximum sustained winds of 40 mph (65 kph) and was moving northeast at 5 mph (7 kph).

A tropical storm warning was in effect for Laguna de Chacahua to Tecpan de Galeana, with tropical storm conditions expected in that area within 24 hours.

“This rainfall may produce life-threatening flooding and mudslides, especially in areas of steep terrain,” the center said.

Boris is the second named storm of the Pacific hurricane season that started May 15. Tropical Storm Amanda formed June 3 far out to sea, posing no threat to land.

The Atlantic hurricane season began June 1, and no cyclones have formed in that basin yet this year.

A 7.8 magnitude quake in the Philippines kills at least 19, fells buildings and sets off a tsunami

By JIM GOMEZ Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — An offshore magnitude 7.8 earthquake rocked the southern Philippines Monday, killing at least 19 people, injuring more than 200 others mostly in damaged buildings and sending a 1-meter (3-foot) tsunami into nearby coasts.

A few buildings collapsed and key infrastructure sustained quake damage in the city of General Santos, and tsunami damage was reported in at least one coastal village. Smaller waves were measured in Indonesia and Palau and as far away as southern Japan.

"It's a major earthquake," Teresito Bacolcol, the director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said, warning people to seek advise before returning to damaged buildings and houses which could collapse due to aftershocks.

"Our pickup truck suddenly jerked and I thought we had a flat tire," said Rod Sosmeña, regional director of the Office of Civil Defense, told The Associated Press from the hard-hit port city of General Santos, where he was traveling when the quake struck at 7:37 a.m.

"The shaking was very strong and people dashed out of houses into the streets," Sosmeña said.

Another regional disaster-response official, Ednar Dayanghirang, told The AP that he was able to "hardly stand and keep my balance when the ground shook as I was leaving my house" in the southern port city of Davao.

General Santos is a port city of more than 700,000 people that is a regional hub for the tuna export industry and other commerce.

It was the strongest quake to strike the Philippines this year, and was centered at sea off Mindanao, the second most populous island in the Philippines. According to Bacolcol, the quake occurred at a depth of 33 kilometers (20 miles), about 32 kilometers (20 miles) southwest of Maasim town in Sarangani province.

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ordered the cancellation of classes and directed disaster-response agencies to immediately get to work in quake-hit provinces, saying "the national government is moving and we will not leave Mindanao behind."

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center said the threat of a tsunami largely passed about five hours after the quake. Philippine officials also lifted a tsunami warning by mid-afternoon. Six shanties on stilts were damaged in a coastal village in Zamboanga del Sur due to the quake and taller waves, officials said.

Assessing damage and casualties

At least 19 people were killed, mostly in collapsed buildings and landslides, while thousands of villagers were displaced, Office of Civil Defense spokesperson Junie Castillo said without providing specific details.

Among the dead were seven people in General Santos, where a few small buildings, including a popular hamburger joint, collapsed or were severely damaged, Sosmeña said.

The other deaths were caused by falling debris, a damaged mosque and a landslide in the southern provinces of Sarangani, South Cotabato and Davao Occidental and on Balut Island, Sosmeña and another regional disaster-response official, Ednar Dayanghirang, said.

Sosmeña said authorities were checking reports of some students being trapped in a two-story school that collapsed in General Santos. He could not immediately provide details but the national police said at least 12 people were missing in General Santos.

The Bureau of Fire said without elaborating that it was involved in search and rescue efforts in a damaged building and a warehouse in General Santos.

Public schools had reopened nationwide Monday after the summer vacation from April to May. Dayanghirang said more than 100 students attending morning flag-raising ceremonies in his southern region sustained bruises and some fainted in panic.

The international airport in General Santos was temporarily shut, and 17 domestic flights were canceled, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines said.

The DZRH radio network in Manila reported that a small commercial building where its provincial station

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 21 of 50

was located partly collapsed and staffers dashed to the ground floor without injuries. It wasn't clear if other people were trapped in the rubble of the four-story office building. Debris also fell from other buildings, hitting tricycle taxis parked below.

Tsunami waves near 3 feet measured

Waves of 1 meter (3 feet) were generally monitored in the provinces of Sultan Kudarat and Sarangani. A 1.4-meter (4.6-foot) wave was monitored at one time in the coastal area of Kiamba town in Sarangani, Bacolcol said.

The quake was also felt in Malaysia's Sabah state on Borneo island. Sabah is just a boat ride away from southern Philippines. An 83-centimeter (2.7-foot) tsunami was measured by a gauge off Indonesia's Sulawesi island, and the PTWC said 30-centimeter (1-foot) waves were measured in Palau.

Waves up to 20 centimeters (7.8 inches) were detected on the remote Japanese island of Chichijima and the central Japanese town of Kushimoto, the Japan Meteorological Agency said.

The U.S. Geological Survey reported the depth of the original quake at 55 kilometers (34 miles). Variations in measurements by different agencies are common in the immediate aftermath of an earthquake. Aftershocks as strong as 6.5 magnitude were recorded.

The Philippines, one of the world's most disaster-prone countries, is often hit by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions due to its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of seismic faults around the ocean. The archipelago is also lashed by about 20 typhoons and tropical storms each year.

Oil prices surge as Iran conflict flares, while global stocks skid on selling of tech shares

By YURI KAGEYAMA AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Global shares sank on Monday after Wall Street ended last week with its worst day since October, while oil prices jumped more than \$4 as fighting flared between Israel and Iran.

South Korea's Kospi led the global retreat, plunging 8.3% on heavy selling of technology shares and extending losses that on Friday gave the S&P 500 its biggest single day drop in months.

The future for the S&P 500 was up 0.2%, while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 0.3%.

Oil prices surged as Israel launched airstrikes early Monday, targeting central and western Iran in response to missile fire. Iranian state television reported the sound of explosions being heard in Isfahan, Tabriz and Tehran, without immediately elaborating.

American and Iranian negotiators reached a tentative deal last week to extend their ceasefire, but the agreement has not been finalized and the latest attacks further strain efforts to end the conflict. The U.S. war with Iran has essentially blocked crude oil shipments from moving through the Strait of Hormuz.

Brent crude, the international standard, jumped \$4.60 to \$97.69 a barrel. Benchmark U.S. crude surged \$4.13 to \$94.67 a barrel.

In early European share trading, France's CAC 40 fell 0.7% to 8,161.42, while the German DAX dipped 0.8% to 24,552.77. Britain's FTSE 100 shed 0.4% to 10,331.24.

During Asia's day, the Kospi in Seoul slipped 8.3% to 7,484.41 as Samsung Electronics, the country's biggest company, dropped 10.2%. SK Hynix declined 7.7%.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 dropped 3.9% to finish at 64,024.60. The Japanese government revised the annualized economic growth rate to 1.8% for the first quarter this year, down from an earlier estimate of 2.1%.

Elsewhere in Asia, Taiwan's Taiex lost 3.5% and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong lost 1.3% to 24,642.33. The Shanghai Composite shed 1.7% to 3,959.34.

Markets were closed in Australia for the King's Birthday, a holiday.

Friday marked the biggest one-day drop for Wall Street since Oct. 10, when the Trump administration threatened to impose a 100% tariff on imported goods from China.

The S&P 500 sank 2.6% after a strong jobs report boosted expectations about the Federal Reserve raising interest rates this year, further darkening sentiment already dimmed by worries over a possible end

to the rally in tech shares driven by the boom in investment in artificial intelligence.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 1.4%, while the Nasdaq composite slumped 4.2%.

In currency trading early Monday, the U.S. dollar inched down to 160.23 Japanese yen from 160.25 yen. The euro cost \$1.1521, up from \$1.1515.

Israel and Iran trade strikes, threatening to drag the region back into full-scale war

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Israel and Iran traded fire early Monday in their first attacks since the U.S. struck a ceasefire two months ago, threatening to drag the Middle East back into a full-scale war.

The war, launched by the U.S. and Israel on Feb. 29 with strikes on Iran, has shaken the global economy, driven energy prices up around the world and made many basics, including food, more expensive. Officials have been unable to turn the ceasefire, agreed April 8, into a deal to permanently end the conflict.

During the truce, Iran has maintained its stranglehold on the Strait of Hormuz — a crucial passage for the world's oil and natural gas and the primary reason global fuel prices skyrocketed. Israel has continued to strike Hezbollah, Iran's ally in Lebanon, and pushed deeper into that country. And on Monday, Yemen's Houthi rebels, another Iranian ally, fired at Israel and warned they would target Israel-affiliated ships in the Red Sea.

With little apparent progress in the peace talks, Israel and Iran firing at each other again, and the Houthis joining the fight, the risk of the war fully erupting again appeared higher than at any point since the ceasefire.

In his first comments since the exchange of fire, U.S. President Donald Trump wrote online: "Israel and Iran must immediately stop 'shooting.'"

Diplomats are racing to save the ceasefire

Two regional officials said concerted diplomatic efforts were underway Monday to salvage the ceasefire between Iran and the United States.

Officials from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan and Qatar have urged the Trump administration to pressure Israel to rein in its strikes on Iran and Beirut. They have also urged Iranian officials to stop attacks on Israel, they said. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to reporters.

One of the officials, who is involved in mediation efforts between Iran and the U.S., said the Pakistan-led mediators were furious about the Israeli strike Sunday on Beirut's southern suburbs, which came while Pakistan's interior minister was in Tehran in a fresh bid to push U.S.-Iranian negotiations forward.

Israel and Iran traded strikes

Iran launched waves of attacks on Israel on Monday, and Israel launched strikes on central and western Iran. It was their first exchange of fire since the ceasefire.

Iranian state television reported the sound of explosions being heard in Isfahan, Karaj, Tabriz and Tehran, without immediately elaborating. Iran closed the airspace around Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport after the Israeli attack.

The semiofficial Fars and Mehr news agencies said Israeli strikes hit a petrochemical factory in the city of Mahshahr in Khuzestan province. They did not elaborate on any damage. The Israeli military later confirmed the strike on the petrochemical plant and also said it targeted truck-based missile launchers.

Israel said its strikes were in response to an Iranian missile attack. Tehran had warned on Sunday it would retaliate after Israel struck Beirut's southern suburbs without warning. When Israel struck back, Iran fired again.

Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard said it had targeted two military bases in Israel, describing the attacks as being part of Operation Nasr, or "Victory." The Guard said it launched the missiles after Israel targeted radar sites in three areas of Iran.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 23 of 50

Explosions could be heard in central Israel as air defenses sought to intercept incoming Iranian fire. Sirens also sounded across neighboring Jordan.

Iran blamed the United States for the escalation.

"No one believes that the Israeli regime would take any action without coordination with the United States," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said during a briefing with journalists in Tehran. "The United States bears responsibility for the Israeli regime's aggression."

Tensions appear to be growing between Trump and Netanyahu

Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu launched the war in a closely coordinated attack, with Israeli officials proudly boasting of unprecedented "shoulder to shoulder" cooperation throughout the conflict, which reached 100 days on Monday.

But since the first strikes, the two men have moved in opposite directions, with tensions sometimes spilling out into the open. Netanyahu appears to have openly defied Trump with his strike Sunday in Beirut and subsequent attacks in Iran, while Trump has voiced his displeasure with Israel, occasionally cursing or belittling Netanyahu by declaring to the Financial Times that "I call all the shots."

The White House did not respond to messages about Monday's Israeli strikes and whether they were done in coordination with the U.S.

The differences between the leaders appear to be rooted in the domestic considerations of each. Netanyahu faces elections this fall and is under heavy public pressure to strike back against ongoing Hezbollah attacks on northern Israel. He also is wary of appearing too subservient to Trump.

The U.S. president, meanwhile, also faces elections — for Congress in November — and is eager to wrap up a war that has jolted the global economy and raised prices for consumers.

The Houthis claimed an attack on Israel

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels claimed an attack on Israel on Monday and said Israel-affiliated vessels would again be a target in the Red Sea, putting the waterway, as well as the Gulf of Aden and the narrow Bab el-Mandeb Strait connecting them, in danger. The statement from Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree was broadcast on the Houthis' al-Masirah satellite news channel.

The threat might serve to further drive up oil prices since Saudi Arabia is using its East-West Pipeline to export oil through the Red Sea as an alternative to the Strait of Hormuz.

The Houthis made a similar threat during the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip and killed at least nine mariners and sank four ships in over 100 attacks, often targeting vessels with tangential or no ties to Israel.

The assaults upended shipping in the Red Sea, through which about \$1 trillion of goods passed each year before the war.

As Ukraine fights off Russia's invasion, some regions see a rise in premature births

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

ZAPORIZHZHIA, Ukraine (AP) — When Marharyta Nekhoroshyva first saw her newborn son, she was gripped by fear. Born after just 26 weeks of pregnancy, he weighed only 940 grams (2 pounds) and wore diapers no larger than the palm of an adult hand.

"The doctors told me that if he survived the first three days, everything would be OK," she said, tears filling her eyes. "I don't believe in God, but I was praying."

Now 9 months old, Mark is energetic and lively, but he has chronic breathing problems and requires frequent hospital stays.

Nekhoroshyva must navigate her son's illness while living under the constant threat of attack in the Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia, where hospitals board up their windows because blast waves from Russian strikes routinely shatter glass. She is doing it alone while her husband fights in the war.

A rising number of babies are being born prematurely — before 37 weeks of pregnancy — in Ukraine, particularly in regions near the front lines, where some areas have seen rates nearly double since the conflict started with Russia's invasion in 2022.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 24 of 50

Experts say the reasons for premature births are complex, but the profound psychological and physical stress the war is inflicting on pregnant mothers is contributing. The delicate work of keeping the fragile newborns alive is made only more difficult by the conflict.

When their babies are at the main children's hospital in Zaporizhzhia, Nekhoroshyva and other mothers descend with their children into the shelter each night. In the narrow, dimly lit hallways, they rock and soothe their infants to sleep.

Ukraine is seeing a rise in premature births

While fewer women in Ukraine are giving birth overall due to displacement, emigration and other factors during the war, a growing share of births are premature, according to data from the United Nations and recent scientific studies.

In the southern region of Kherson, the preterm birth rate nearly doubled from 5.4% in 2019 to 9.8% in 2025, according to the U.N. In the Zaporizhzhia region, also in the south, it rose from 5.7% in 2019 to 7.6% in 2025. In Poltava, a region in northeastern Ukraine, the rate rose from 7.7% to 9.8% over the same period.

The front line cuts through both the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, which frequently see attacks on residential areas. Poltava is some distance away from the front but is frequently hit by aerial strikes.

The link between maternal stress and premature birth is complex, but a growing body of research suggests that prolonged psychological strain increases the risk of babies being born early, experts say. It may be tied to an increased risk of infection, a known trigger for preterm labor, said Dr. Andrew Weeks, a professor of international maternal healthcare at the University of Liverpool.

"Premature birth is very affected by infection," he said. "And if you can't get to a place where you can get appropriate diagnosis and treatment early, then actually the chance of you going into premature labor is higher."

It's not just premature births that are rising in Ukraine; emergency cesarean sections and other complications are, too, said Isaac Hurskin, spokesperson for the U.N. Population Fund.

"We're seeing this real link between acute stress and birthing and pregnancy-related complications," he said.

Those complications could compound a demographic crisis. Ukraine's fertility rate has fallen to among the lowest in the world, dropping to roughly one child per woman over the past three years — far below the 2.1 replacement rate, Hurskin said.

Premature babies need extensive care — and that's difficult during a war

Inside an incubator in the intensive care unit at the maternity hospital in the city of Zaporizhzhia lies a baby born at 30 weeks and weighing only 700 grams (1 pound, 9 ounces) — well below the threshold of 2,500 grams (5 pounds, 8 ounces) that the World Health Organization classifies as low birth weight.

Her tiny body is kept alive inside the temperature-controlled incubator. IV lines deliver nutrients and medication, while a ventilator helps her breathe. The incubator is draped with a blanket to protect her fragile, developing eyes from the harsh fluorescent lights of the ward.

Treatment focuses on helping premature babies gain weight and eventually breathe on their own, but complications can be extensive, said Dr. Andrii Lobanov, head of the neonatal intensive care at Zaporizhzhia's children's hospital. Oxygen levels, for instance, must be managed precisely because of the risk of abnormal blood vessel growth in the eyes, leading to blindness in severe cases.

Even after they leave intensive care, children born prematurely often require long-term care — possibly for life — for respiratory, neurological, developmental or immune-related conditions.

That is a burden on cash-strapped countries like Ukraine.

"It is very expensive and of course a country in a war situation has to decide what it's going to spend on, so hospital services invariably get hit. Both literally and metaphorically," Weeks said.

Mothers must navigate caring for babies during the war and often on their own

Air raid sirens have become part of daily life inside neonatal intensive care units. When they sound, doctors stay beside the babies rather than rushing them to shelters, knowing that moving the fragile newborns

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 25 of 50

could be even more dangerous. The sirens go off too frequently to stop work each time anyway.

Dr. Nataliia Bohuslavska, head of the neonatal unit at the maternity hospital in Zaporizhzhia, began one day last month with air raid alerts warning of incoming missile attacks. By the afternoon, a Russian glide bomb had struck a commercial area of the city, killing at least 12 people.

Care continued all along: Doctors performed two cesarean sections and delivered a baby while also treating a 42-year-old woman who miscarried after witnessing an airstrike.

The next day, a black flag fluttered by the hospital entrance to mourn those killed.

Bohuslavska knows every mother on her ward by first name — their complicated cases, their fears, and their tiny babies fighting for survival. Bohuslavska has worked at the hospital for 26 years and was born there herself.

The war compounds the difficulties experienced by every pregnant woman she cares for, she said.

"She wonders what kind of world her child will be born into, under what conditions the birth will happen, and whether it will be a moment of joy or one gripped by fear with shells exploding nearby," she said.

Many mothers endure the ordeal alone while their husbands are fighting.

"When a patient calls to say her husband has been killed in the war, the only thing I can tell her is: 'Come to us. We will take care of you,'" Bohuslavska said.

"We have to support her constantly, so that even in the midst of this terrible loss, she can find the strength to give new life a chance and save her baby."

One baby goes home

For Mariia Skladan, it was finally time to go home.

Her daughter, Elina, was born in January at just 26 weeks, weighing 740 grams (1 pound, 10 ounces). Five months later, after growing to a healthy 3 1/2 kilograms (nearly 8 pounds), doctors said she was strong enough to be discharged.

Skladan has a rare liver disease that doctors warned would make it nearly impossible for her to conceive. Her pregnancy was considered a miracle, Bohuslavska said.

"If there's a war, what does it mean? Not to live?" Skladan asked. "You want to keep going."

When she and Elina emerged from the maternity hospital, her family was waiting with flowers. Skladan broke down in tears of joy.

But the relief was short-lived.

The very next day, Elina was back in intensive care after contracting a virus overnight.

Apple expected to unveil new AI features at last developers conference with CEO Tim Cook

By BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writer

Apple is expected to unveil new artificial intelligence features at its annual developers conference beginning Monday, which will be the last one featuring CEO Tim Cook before he turns his post over to John Ternus in September.

The World Wide Developers Conference, which attracts thousands of developers from some 60 countries to Apple's Silicon Valley headquarters, usually focuses on software, in contrast to the fall unveiling of the latest iPhones.

Analysts expect the iPhone maker to give updates on new AI features and capabilities, including developments with its Siri voice assistant.

"While hardware products are rarely launched at a developer show, we could see hints of Apple's expansion into foldables, wearables, and smart home products by way of developer and ecosystem updates," said Emarketer senior analyst Gadjó Sevilla, who called 2026 a "transition year" for the conference.

Apple has been playing catch-up with on AI with its Big Tech peers. It uses Google's Gemini AI model to help power its AI features.

Sevilla said he anticipates Siri will be reimaged as an AI chatbot and will be more conversational, have memory to pick up previous conversations, and will be able to complete multiple tasks with single requests.

There is optimism around the potential for an enhanced Siri, he said.

"An upgraded, agentic version of Siri — capable of managing conversations and tasks across iPhones, Macs, and iPads — could become as ubiquitous as features like AirDrop and Handoff, which already unify Apple's ecosystem," Sevilla said.

Cook announced his retirement in April, ending a 15-year run that saw the company's market value soar by more than \$4 trillion during an iPhone-fueled era of prosperity. Ternus has been with Apple for the past quarter century, including the past five years overseeing the engineering underlying the iPhone, iPad and Mac — a role that made him a prime candidate to succeed Cook.

The transition to a new CEO comes at a pivotal time for Apple. Artificial intelligence has unleashed the most upheaval within the industry since Jobs unveiled the first iPhone in 2007. Apple has gotten off to a rough start in AI after stumbling in its efforts to deliver new features built on the technology, as promised nearly two years ago.

Health workers at the epicenter of Congo's Ebola outbreak labor with little pay or rest

By JUSTIN KABUMBA and OPE ADETAYO Associated Press

MONGBWALU, Congo (AP) — Dr. Richard Lokudu, the medical director of Mongbwalu General Referral Hospital, has received barely any compensation for his work on the front line of one of Congo's deadliest Ebola virus outbreaks.

Lokudu and several of his colleagues work all day at the hospital treating an influx of patients. Notifications of suspected cases come even late at night.

"I have not received my allowance (and) what happened to others could happen to me as well," Lokudu told The Associated Press. "Despite all the infection prevention and control measures we are implementing, we do not know what may happen."

Health authorities believe the outbreak, which took the eastern region of Congo by surprise after spreading silently for weeks without detection, started in the bustling mining area of Mongbwalu in Ituri province.

Mining conditions conducive to virus spread

Mongbwalu has emerged as the epicenter of the rare Bundibugyo type. The town attracts large numbers of laborers who work in large gold mines with muddy pools of gold deposits, narrow pits and caves. They live in low-income areas including crowded camps and have little access to proper health protocols.

The conditions increase the possibility of transmitting the disease, which spreads through close contact with bodily fluids of the sick and deceased such as sweat, blood, feces and vomit.

There also has been widespread skepticism regarding the disease, making the job of medical treatment more difficult for Lokudu and his colleagues, while some of the health workers and first responders have died from the disease.

"It is one thing to be far away and hear statistics being reported, but what is happening on the ground is enormous," Lokudu said. "People are sacrificing their rest and comfort for this cause. There should be recognition that they deserve compensation. These workers should receive their salaries regularly."

The Congolese government didn't respond to a request for comment from the AP.

Minimal resources available

Congolese authorities released new statistics on Sunday, saying there have been 488 confirmed cases, including 86 deaths, as of Friday. On Thursday, the Central African nation recorded 71 new cases in a day, which authorities said is a sign of "active community transmission."

In neighboring Uganda, there have been 19 confirmed cases and two deaths.

Bundibugyo has no approved vaccines or treatment, so Congolese health workers have been targeting symptoms of the species. The government said at least five people have recovered from Ebola since the outbreak was officially confirmed by Congo's health ministry on May 15.

The disease "had a big head start," according to World Health Organization Director-General Tedros

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 27 of 50

Adhanom Ghebreyesus. Hospitals in the region couldn't test for the right type of Ebola that had begun spreading several weeks before confirmation.

Health workers are handling the disease with minimal resources, because agencies have been scrambling to bring aid into the region. Masks, gloves, boots and medications were initially all in short supply.

"There has been an erosion of the health system," said Heather Kerr, country director for the International Rescue Committee in Congo. "There has not been investment in the health system, and this has been going on for years."

Tough conditions for health workers

"During the first week, we did not even have time to go home and eat. The second week was the same. We only eat once a day, what amounts to breakfast in the evening," said Alice Bamuhinga, a nurse at the Mongbwalu hospital.

Even with widespread skepticism and disregard for health protocols, many in the town are becoming aware of the outbreak's grave reality.

Asero Jeanne, 52, had five children. Two died from the disease within two weeks. When her daughter became ill, the family thought it was malaria and neighbors advised them to avoid the hospital, saying "anyone who went there would die immediately," Jeanne said.

The daughter died after three weeks of moving between hospitals and home, followed by a son who died days after. Then Jeanne became sick.

"I saw about 20 people die," Jeanne said. "I watched them being taken to the morgue, yet God is allowing me to leave here alive. I thank the doctors."

UN health agency offers a plan

Tedros on Friday launched a \$518 million plan to combat the outbreak, saying "containing Ebola depends on political commitment, sustained financing, and the trust and engagement of communities."

Efforts to contain the disease also have been hindered by the conflict between the government and Rwanda-backed M23 rebel group, in addition to attacks by Islamist militants.

For health workers on the front line of Congo's Ebola outbreak, the work has become harder as the disease spreads faster than their current treatment capacity.

"Despite the alerts we receive and the teams we have on site, we lack the means to travel into the field," Lokudu said. "As a result, there are alerts we are unable to investigate."

Broadway revivals and 'Liberation' win big at the Tony Awards, hosted by Pink

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — "Schmigadoon!," an adaptation of an Apple TV series that gently mocks big, brassy Broadway shows, won the best new musical Tony Award on a night when actor John Lithgow and playwright Bess Wohl made history.

The musical parodies golden-age Broadway classics like "The Music Man" and "Oklahoma!" centered on a modern-day couple finding themselves in a "Brigadoon"-like fantasyland where the wholesome townspeople keep breaking into song. The win is a redemption for creator Cinco Paul, whose TV series was canceled after two seasons. He won Tonys for the score and the book Sunday.

"Sometimes singing, dancing, jokes and a happy ending are all you need," said producer Lorne Michaels, the creator of "Saturday Night Live," after the win.

The win for "Schmigadoon!" also completes what some unofficially call a "studio EGOT," giving the producing company credits for winning awards at all four major ceremonies. Apple already has Emmys for comedies "Ted Lasso" and "The Studio," the Oscar for best picture for "CODA" and a Grammy via Chris Stapleton's contribution to the "F1" soundtrack.

Who took home the Tony Awards

The prize for the best new play went to Wohl's "Liberation," about a consciousness-raising women's group in 1970s Ohio, which earlier this year also won the Pulitzer Prize for drama.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 28 of 50

Wohl's play collects stories from second-wave feminists from all walks of life as they tackle misogyny, racism and traditional gender roles. Wohl is only the fourth woman to win a best play Tony, joining Wendy Wasserstein, Yasmina Reza and Frances Goodrich.

"I want to honor women everywhere who have the courage to use their voice," said Wohl, who thanked her mom, daughters and female producers. "And to all the girls out there: May you speak your truth, and may the world be wise enough to listen."

"Liberation" joins a list of 18 plays that have won the Pulitzer Prize for drama and the Tony Award in the same year.

The Tony for best play revival went to "Death of a Salesman," Arthur Miller's masterpiece that looks at the unraveling of the American Dream. It won the 1949 Tony for best new play and best revival crowns in 1984, 1999 and 2012.

It earned a leading six Tonys: "Roseanne" star Laurie Metcalf won her third Tony for playing Willy Loman's wife opposite Nathan Lane in the revival, which also won for lighting, scenic design and sound design. Joe Mantello won best director for a play.

'Ragtime,' 'Giant,' and other stand-out plays

"Ragtime" — a big, soaring musical that depicts an America being remade by immigration, racial violence, industrial wealth and political unrest — won the best musical revival.

Caissie Levy, who was Broadway's first Elsa in "Frozen," won her first Tony for playing the matriarch of a wealthy suburban family in "Ragtime." She thanks all the babysitters who let her become both a mother and a Broadway performer.

Moments later, Joshua Henry, a four-time nominee, won his first Tony as Coalhouse Walker Jr. in "Ragtime." "Even in the face of pain and tragedy, he found a way to be heard," Henry said of his character. "Every artist in this room, every artist at home, fight — fight to be heard."

Lithgow won his third Tony for best lead actor in a play for "Giant" playing children's writer Roald Dahl in Mark Rosenblatt's production set in 1983, when the author is facing intense backlash for his antisemitic comments. At 80, he is the oldest man ever to win a competitive acting Tony.

"Two Tony bookends with 53 years between them," he said. "In those years, I have worked with hundreds of just fantastic theater artists. I've had dozens and dozens of ecstatic moments on the stage, but I have to tell you right now, this moment has got to be one of the best."

Shoshana Bean, who won best featured actress in a musical for playing a single mom in "The Lost Boys," echoed the themes of "Liberation" in her speech.

"This is for the mamas. This is for the single mamas. This is for my single mama. You are the wild heroes. This is for the incredible army of women that surround and uplift me," she said.

"Cats: The Jellicle Ball," which reimagines the 1980s classic feline musical as a celebration of queer ballroom culture, won for best direction of a musical by Zhailon Levingston and Bill Rauch.

"We honor the Black and brown trans women and gay men who were ballroom's pioneers, as well as today's icons, and our cast of astonishing triple-threats, including people from their 20s to their 80s, and every decade in between," Levingston said.

Lesley Manville, an Oscar nominee for "Phantom Thread," won best lead actress in a play, making her Broadway debut in a modern retelling of Sophocles' classic tragedy "Oedipus."

Pink's performance as the host

Pink, the Tony's host, started the show spinning and then dangling uncomfortably from a harness over the stage, dressed like Peter Pan. Former host Neil Patrick Harris stepped in to suggest the first-time host just be herself.

"You're Pink, Pink. You can do anything," he told her.

After lifting Harris off the stage with her legs, Pink relented to his suggestion, added a top hat and belted out "Lady Marmalade" with contributions from dozens of performers including Lea Michele and Megan Thee Stallion — and some 170 performers.

In her opening remarks, Pink, who has not yet gotten a Broadway credit, called herself theater's second-

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 29 of 50

biggest fan after her teenage daughter, Willow. "I'm not here just to steal peoples' wigs, although I will be doing that. I'm here to celebrate the hardest-working people in show business," she said.

"Schmigadoon!" and "Death of a Salesman" each went into the main telecast with a lead of three Tonys after a pre-show on Pluto TV hosted by Laura Benanti and Tituss Burgess that announced the more technical awards. Queen Jean became the first openly trans Tony winner ever for making the costumes for "Cats: The Jellicle Ball."

Plenty of medleys and dance sequences

After the big opening number, Pink was generally a genial, exuberant figure, popping up in new outfits for a few self-deprecating bits, but then roaring to life when leading a very convincing "All That Jazz" as "Chicago" celebrated its 30th anniversary, with the pop singer nailing the Bob Fosse-inspired choreography.

The In Memoriam section was led by Leslie Odom Jr. singing a powerful "Without You" from "Rent," honoring such lost figures as actors Robert Duvall, Robert Redford and Diane Keaton, as well as playwright Tom Stoppard. Rachel Zegler then stunned with a version of "What I Did For Love" from "A Chorus Line," which last year celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Other performances included the original lead cast members of "The Book of Mormon" — Josh Gad, Andrew Rannells, Rory O'Malley and Nikki M. James — reuniting to celebrate its 15th anniversary.

A select list of winners at the 2026 Tony Awards

By The Associated Press undefined

NEW YORK (AP) — Here are a selection of the winners at the 2026 Tony Awards.

Best Musical

"Schmigadoon!"

Best play

"Liberation," by Bess Wohl

Actress in a leading role in a play

Lesley Manville, "Oedipus"

Actor in a leading role in a play

John Lithgow, "Giant"

Musical revival

"Ragtime"

Play revival

"Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman"

Actress in a leading role in a musical

Caissie Levy, "Ragtime"

Actor in a leading role in a musical

Joshua Henry, "Ragtime"

Actor in a featured role in a play

Alden Ehrenreich, "Becky Shaw"

Actress in a featured role in a play

Laurie Metcalf, "Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman"

Actress in a featured role in a musical

Shoshana Bean, "The Lost Boys"

Actor in a featured role in a musical

Ali Louis Bourzgui, "The Lost Boys"

Direction of a musical

Zhailon Levingston and Bill Rauch, "Cats: The Jellicle Ball"

Direction of a play

Joe Mantello, "Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman"

Original score

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 30 of 50

"Schmigadoon!" (Music & Lyrics: Cinco Paul)

Book of a musical

"Schmigadoon!" Cinco Paul

Choreography

"Cats: The Jellicle Ball," Omari Wiles and Arturo Lyons

Play

"Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman" Joe Mantello

Pope Leo XIV draws 1.2 million to Mass and challenges Europe to acknowledge its Christian roots

By NICOLE WINFIELD and SUMAN NAISHADHAM Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Pope Leo XIV challenged Europe to acknowledge Christianity's contributions to its cultural identity Sunday, as he presided over a Mass in Madrid attended by more than a million people and honored Spain's centuries-old traditions of religious devotion and culture.

Leo celebrated Spain's Christian roots and culture with the huge morning Mass in downtown Madrid and an evening spectacle that featured flamenco dancers, classical guitar and a moving meditation by Spanish actor Antonio Banderas on art, faith and beauty.

In his remarks, Leo challenged Europe to consider what the continent's identity would be without the influence of Christianity. He cited its art, culture and the role played by Christians — "motivated by their faith" — to build its schools, hospitals and other institutions.

"Is it seriously possible to believe that Europe — which we deeply love — would be the same without the influence of faith?" Leo asked, in demanding that religious expression be allowed to keep its place in the public sphere.

A morning Mass and procession on floral carpets

Leo, who arrived in Spain on Saturday at the start of his weeklong visit, has been keen to highlight the long tradition of Christian culture and devotion here to encourage especially young generations to find their faith. It's a tall order in a once-staunchly Catholic country where religious observance has largely been on the wane.

Sunday fell on the Catholic Corpus Domini feast day, which often features processions of faithful through towns and cities led by a priest carrying the Eucharist. In Spain, as in other predominantly Catholic countries, the processions often feature elaborate floral carpets arranged along the route.

During Sunday's Mass, Leo said that the floral carpets express the "spiritual sentiments of this country" through "altars erected in the streets."

"This is not an exhibition, a remnant of folklore or a simple display of beauty," he said. "It is a profession of faith in the presence of the risen Lord, who is alive and continues to walk among us."

He said that the continued observance of such devotional practices points to what Spain can and should be for the world.

"Herein lies the task of Spain today and in the future: to ensure that the religiosity which has shaped and defined this country for centuries is not a museum of the past to be visited, but a school of faith from which to draw even today," he said.

At the end of the Mass, Leo carried a gilded monstrance, or container, holding a Eucharistic host and walked over some of the 16 floral carpets that decorated the half-kilometer (less than half-mile) procession route, as children dropped additional petals before him and the crowd tossed petals from behind the barricades.

Huge crowds greet the American pope

Leo's visit to the country of 50 million has drawn huge crowds, with a vigil service Saturday night drawing an estimated 600,000 young Spaniards. They knelt for several minutes in silent prayer alongside Leo, suggesting that there is indeed interest in the faith among young people, despite Spain's heavily secular-

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 31 of 50

ized society.

On Sunday, their numbers doubled: Organizers said that 1.2 million people had turned out on a brilliant spring morning for Leo's Mass at Madrid's iconic Plaza de Cibeles and surrounding streets, with more trying to get in.

"It's spectacular," said Julián Tapiador, a consultant who came to the Mass. "I'm so proud that the pope is in Spain after 15 years. Hopefully he comes again and we can all see him again."

Octavio Puche, a retiree, thanked Leo for making the trip.

"Apparently society is not as secularized as it seems, because there are a million people here in Madrid, and I think he has shown a very human face of Christ, very close to the people, to their suffering," he said.

Sex abuse scandal hangs over visit

Despite the warm welcome, the clergy sexual abuse scandal, which has erupted belatedly in Spain in recent years, has loomed over Leo's trip. The Catholic hierarchy has begun to reckon with its legacy after reporting in the local media.

Leo is expected to meet survivors while in Spain, but several victims groups have complained that they have been left in the dark about when the meeting is taking place and whether they are invited.

Miguel Hurtado, a prominent survivor who accused a monk at Montserrat Abbey outside Barcelona of sexually assaulting him more than two decades ago, protested outside the Vatican's embassy in Madrid on Sunday. He said that he wrote to the Vatican requesting a meeting with Leo and for the pope to cancel his planned Wednesday visit to the 1,000-year old Benedictine monastery.

"I understand you can't meet with all of us victims, because we are more than 400,000," Hurtado said, speaking to a cardboard photo of Leo.

As he spoke, a crowd of nuns and others lined the street outside the Vatican embassy, waving Spanish flags and chanting slogans in favor of former dictator Gen. Francisco Franco, who ruled Spain with an iron grip for nearly four decades after the 1936-39 civil war.

The Catholic Church was a pillar of Franco's dictatorship, and at least until the 1960s, the church enjoyed broad control and influence over Spanish society that waned after democracy took root.

"Spain is Christian and not Muslim!" the crowd yelled.

A form of popular piety dating back centuries

The tradition of laying flower carpets — and destroying them when the procession tramples them — dates back two centuries and is popular also in Latin America, where elaborate sand designs are also made. The painstaking displays are considered an offering to the Eucharist.

According to Spanish organizers, the 16 flower carpets decorating Sunday's procession route off Plaza de Cibeles were prepared by a Spanish florists association from the northern region of Galicia. Florists used more than 30,000 flowers, most the yellow and white colors of the Holy See flag, for the carpets that feature decorations such as the Holy See keys.

Poland has already had its tradition of Corpus Domini flower carpets recognized by UNESCO, and Galicia is trying to have its tradition listed along with other countries as part of the world's intangible cultural heritage.

Wildly popular religious processions, pilgrimages and feasts continue to be held in most Spanish regions. The most recognizable are Semana Santa, or Holy Week, processions during the final week of Lent where brotherhoods and robed penitents parade ornate statues of Christ and the Virgin Mary through cities, towns and villages alongside marching bands. Such processions draw the faithful as well as droves of nonbelievers and tourists.

Graham Platner gets a lift from friendly Maine crowd after week of damage control in Senate campaign

By PATRICK WHITTLE and KIMBERLEE KRUESI Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — Graham Platner was met by an enthusiastic and supportive crowd Sunday at a town hall-style event in Maine as the Democrat looks to advance his Senate campaign after reports about his past treatment of women just days before the state's crucial primary.

The Democratic primary is still seen as Platner's to win, but he is facing questions about his past that could make it difficult to defeat longtime incumbent Republican Sen. Susan Collins.

"We're going to win on Tuesday and we're going to win in November and we're going to take power back for the people in this country," Platner said to about 400 people clapping and cheering him on in Portland.

The New York Times on Thursday reported an ex-girlfriend's allegations that Platner repeatedly grabbed her by the shoulders during arguments and once twisted her arm behind her back and locked her in a room. Platner has repeatedly called those allegations of violence untrue.

Other Platner ex-girlfriends interviewed by the Times described positive experiences, while some said he was volatile and insulting. That story came days after news reports revealing that Platner had exchanged sexually explicit messages with several women while married.

Despite the allegations, no major Democrats who had previously endorsed Platner have rescinded their support.

And at Sunday's event, attendees avoided asking about Platner's past and instead asked him about the U.S. Supreme Court, what committees he would want to work on once in the Senate, and whether he supports a federal wealth tax.

"What has blown my mind is that everybody knows what's going on," Platner said in response to a question about what outsiders watching the Maine Senate race are getting wrong about the state's voters.

Platner said he hoped eventually to join the Senate Appropriations Committee, as well as the committees overseeing agriculture and health care, while mentioning he would like to work with Kentucky's Republican Sen. Rand Paul because of his foreign policy positions.

Platner took a swipe at Sen. John Fetterman, who has criticized the Senate candidate recently, calling him a "creep" and likening him to a "Nazi sympathizer." Some have questioned whether Platner would be similar to Fetterman, who has a reputation for speaking and voting against his party.

Platner said as a senator it's important to build relationships and that "you can't just go down there and be John Fetterman," while also calling the Pennsylvania Democrat an expletive. He added that Fetterman "said mean things" about him recently.

Platner held a rally with California Rep. Ro Khanna in Bar Harbor on Friday, where he received a standing ovation and declared that Mainers "have my back."

A combat veteran, Platner has repeatedly said that he struggled with alcohol and post traumatic stress disorder after his military service, but says he is a changed man.

The latest news has deepened some Democrats' nervousness about Platner, who already faced scrutiny over online posts that were dismissive of sexual assault and a skull tattoo recognized as a Nazi symbol. Platner has apologized for the posts and covered up the tattoo, saying he didn't realize its significance when he got it.

Rahm Emanuel, a potential 2028 Democratic presidential candidate who spent the weekend in neighboring New Hampshire, said the "jury is still out" on whether Platner can beat Collins.

"Everybody is holding their breath whether this is the start of something or the end of something," he said. "If it's the end, that's one thing. If it's the beginning of something and we're not done, that's another thing."

Kurt Fedora, 62, a mental health worker from Buxton, said he attended Sunday's event to hear Platner talk about working-class issues and fighting corruption. He said he's unmoved by recent revelations about Platner's history, and considers them a smear campaign by conservative opponents.

"Maybe there will be something to it, but they're really reaching far to try to pin something on him. And

it's politics as usual," Fedora said.

Others worried that Platner at times reminded them of President Donald Trump.

Debbi Conley, a 69-year-old retiree from Gorham, said she wanted to learn more about Platner even as she's almost certain he'll win on Tuesday, but she's skeptical of him at the moment.

"I think people have been frustrated with Susan Collins, so they're looking for alternatives," Conley said. "My concerns with Graham Platner are that he's talking about change, but sometimes it reminds me of the same talk that Trump had like 'drain the swamp'."

Israel says Iran launched missiles at it in first such bombardment since fragile ceasefire

By KAREEM CHEHAYEB, SAMY MAGDY, MELANIE LIDMAN and CARA ANNA Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Iran launched missiles at Israel in the first such bombardment since a fragile ceasefire took effect in early April, raising the possibility of a return to heavy fighting and complicating mediation efforts to end the war.

Iran's state broadcaster confirmed the launches, and Iran closed its western airspace to brace for a possible response. Tehran had warned of retaliation after Israel struck Beirut's southern suburbs without warning earlier Sunday in defiance of Washington's request days ago to stand down. Israel said the Iranian-backed Hezbollah fired at northern Israel earlier in the day.

"Should these acts of aggression be repeated, the responses will be broader in scope and will encompass all American and Zionist targets throughout the region," Iran's Revolutionary Guard said in a statement that referenced attacks in Lebanon and on Iran's coast and vessels around the Strait of Hormuz.

Sirens sounded in several areas of Israel, sending millions running for shelter. Israel's military said it intercepted the missiles, and multiple explosions were heard in the north. Less than an hour later, the military said people could leave areas reinforced against missile attacks.

"Iran has made a grave mistake," Israel military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin said. The military's chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir, said it will "strike the enemy with determination as soon as the order is given."

But Israel's public broadcaster, Kan, said U.S. President Donald Trump told it that he doesn't think Israel needs to respond further. And Trump told the Financial Times: "I call all the shots. He (Netanyahu) doesn't call the shots."

U.S. official: Netanyahu to hold off attack 'for the time being'

A senior U.S. official said Trump had called Netanyahu to urge him not to retaliate immediately for the Iranian missile attack. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to describe a private phone call, said that Trump believed he had convinced Netanyahu to wait.

Trump "got Bibi to hold off for the time being," the official said. The official would not offer any other details of the call, and there was no immediate comment from Netanyahu's office.

Iran had warned that an attack on Beirut would renew full-scale war across the Mideast, even as Pakistan and other mediators try to restart talks between Tehran and Washington.

"U.S. forces across the Middle East remain vigilant and ready," the U.S. Central Command posted on X shortly before the missile launches. The U.S. Embassy in Israel later directed employees and family members to shelter in place.

Israel's attack on Beirut came a few days after the Lebanese and Israeli governments agreed to a ceasefire in U.S.-hosted talks, though Hezbollah rejected the deal. The strike on a residential building killed two people and wounded 20, Lebanon's health ministry said.

"The army will continue to act in all of Lebanon," the Israel military spokesperson said.

Israel's strikes and ground invasion in Lebanon in pursuit of Hezbollah, and the militant group's resistance to disarming, have complicated an overall deal to end the war in the Middle East.

Iran says any deal must include an end to fighting in Lebanon.

Trump told a Fox News Channel reporter that he wanted the Iranians to stop firing missiles and return

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 34 of 50

to the negotiating table. He also said that Israel's strikes earlier Sunday were not coordinated with the U.S. and "I'm not happy about it."

Israel last week had announced it would strike the southern suburbs of Lebanon's capital, but urgent talks via Washington halted that on the condition that Hezbollah stop targeting Israeli border towns.

Hezbollah, which claimed responsibility for firing at Israel earlier Sunday, wants the direct talks between Lebanon and Israel to end. Instead, it supports Iran's stance that an overall ceasefire deal between Tehran and Washington include the situation in Lebanon.

Netanyahu, who seeks reelection later this year, is under heavy domestic pressure to respond to both Iran and the Hezbollah threat, which has paralyzed life for thousands of residents along Israel's northern border.

But Trump has made clear he does not want to see the war resume.

Trump said earlier Sunday in an interview with NBC's "Meet the Press" that he would like to see a "more surgical attack on Hezbollah." He also said he was "not demanding" that Lebanon be part of an overall ceasefire deal in the Iran war.

Iran continues to assert its grip on the Strait of Hormuz and the U.S. continues its blockade of Iranian ports, with shipments of oil, natural gas and fertilizer affected and the global economy in pain.

Iran since the ceasefire took effect has launched missiles and drones at Gulf nations and said it was targeting the U.S. military presence. After its launches against Israel, Iraq's Civil Aviation Authority announced that the country's airspace would close for 72 hours and Syria's aviation authority announced a 12-hour airspace closure.

All flights from Tehran's main international airport were suspended, the civil aviation authority said, according to the official Mizan news agency.

Diplomacy continues before and after missile launches

Pakistan's interior minister, Mohsin Naqvi, was in Tehran on Sunday delivering a message to Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei from Pakistan's army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, according to Iran's state-run IRNA news agency. There were no details on the message's contents.

Khamenei has not been seen in public since he was named the Islamic Republic's ruler after his father was killed on Feb. 28 as Israeli and U.S. strikes sparked the war.

Pakistani authorities have said Islamabad, with support from regional countries including Qatar, Turkey and Egypt, is working to help bridge differences.

In Cairo, the Egyptian and Qatari foreign ministers discussed "proposed elements" of a potential agreement between the U.S. and Iran, the Egyptian foreign ministry said, without details.

And after Iran's missile launches at Israel, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi spoke with counterparts in France, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Britain, Egypt and Turkey as well as Pakistan's army chief, Iran's state TV said.

Police search for suspects in Ohio shooting that wounded 12 near a street festival

By JAIMIE DING and THOMAS PEIPERT Associated Press

A search for suspects in Ohio who opened fire near a busy street festival stretched into Sunday after 12 people were wounded in the weekend shooting that sent crowds scrambling for cover in a historic Toledo neighborhood.

Each of the dozen victims — ranging from teenagers to people in their 60s — were in stable condition, the Toledo Police Department said Sunday. No arrests have been made and authorities have not identified any potential suspects.

The gunfire erupted Saturday near the Old West End Festival, a popular annual summer gathering along streets dotted with Victorian homes. Videos posted to social media showed people running at the sound of gunfire and medics tending to the wounded in a park filled with event tents and food trucks.

Toledo Deputy Police Chief Joe Heffernan has said it appeared that at least two people fired weapons

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 35 of 50

and were “probably shooting at each other.”

As the search for the shooters wore on, Lucas County Prosecutor Julia Bates vowed “justice will be swift and strong.”

“Those who were frightened, traumatized or harmed by this violence will remain at the forefront of our efforts. I’ve felt outrage before, but this is personal,” Bates said in a statement. “This is my home. These are my friends and neighbors. It is not OK.”

In a brief update posted to social media Sunday, Toledo police said investigators were continuing to make progress and were following multiple leads. Authorities have urged festivalgoers to come forward with any photos or videos that might have caught a glimpse of the suspects.

Hundreds of people were at the festival, an annual two-day celebration in Toledo’s historic district featuring live music, food vendors, home tours and shopping. Located in northwest Ohio near the western edge of Lake Erie, Toledo is about 55 miles (90 kilometers) southwest of Detroit.

“As far as violence, this is over the top, right?” Toledo police Lt. Dan Gerken said Saturday. “Twelve people being shot, that’s the most I’ve been to a scene. I’ve been to a lot of scenes, but this is way over the top.”

The remainder of the festival was canceled Sunday. Organizers said “it would not be compassionate, responsible or possible” to continue through the weekend.

“We are heartbroken about those that were injured at the Old West End Festival,” the festival said in a statement.

The victims ranged in age from 14 to 61, with most of them in their early 20s. Fire Chief Allison Armstrong said it was difficult for emergency responders to get the injured to the hospital due to closed roads and traffic leaving the festival, but all were transported within an hour.

Kevin Berry was sitting in the neighborhood arboretum listening to live music with friends when he heard gunshots ring out.

“Everybody hit the deck,” he said.

When Berry looked back up, he saw a gun being tossed to the ground less than 50 feet (15 meters) away from him. Officers who were already on site for the festival responded immediately.

Berry, who has medical training and served in the Navy, walked around looking for anyone who might need help and saw at least five people with gunshot wounds.

George Kral, the city’s safety director, said the Old West End Festival is one of the most iconic festivals in Toledo.

“And it’s a shame that something like this had to ruin it,” Kral said.

The Ohio shooting was one of at least two episodes of mass gun violence in the U.S. over the weekend.

In Kansas City, Missouri, nine adults were injured in a shooting early Saturday, police said. Officers dispatched to the area about 10 miles (16 kilometers) south of downtown found a large crowd dispersing. Police said none of the victims had life-threatening injuries and that no suspects were in custody.

European leaders voice ‘urgent need’ to bolster Ukraine’s defenses against ballistic missiles

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The leaders of the U.K., Ukraine, France and Germany discussed the “urgent need” to ramp up production of weapons to combat Russia’s powerful hypersonic Oreshnik ballistic missiles in a meeting in London on Sunday.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer hosted Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy, French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz at 10 Downing Street.

In a statement released by Starmer’s office following their evening meeting, the leaders condemned Russia’s “large-scale missile and drone attacks — including the repeated use of the Oreshnik missiles — on Ukrainian cities with a tragic toll on civilians.” They also condemned Russia’s “irresponsible and dangerous Russian drone incursions” into NATO territory, including last month’s in Romania.

Russia has stepped up its aerial campaign against Ukraine recently, most notably with the launch of the

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 36 of 50

Oreshnik missiles.

"The leaders underlined the urgent need to scale up the production of interceptors and co-develop anti-ballistic missile and deep strike capabilities," the leaders said.

No details, financial or otherwise, on how this would be done were provided.

Ukraine's shortage of air defense systems, in part because of the depletion of U.S. stocks during the Iran war, has left civilians especially vulnerable to ballistic missiles, even as Kyiv's defenses stop most of Moscow's drones and its forces have made advances elsewhere on the battlefield.

The worry for Ukrainians is that the Iran war, which has been in abeyance for weeks, may now reignite after Iran launched missiles on Sunday at Israel in the first such bombardment since a fragile ceasefire took effect in early April, complicating mediation efforts for a deal to end the war.

Following their meeting in London, the European leaders called on Russian President Vladimir Putin to agree "an immediate and complete ceasefire" with the current line of contact as a starting point for any negotiations.

The U.K., France and Germany, the so-called E3 group of European nations, have been prominent backers of Ukraine following Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022. The U.K. and France lead the "coalition of the willing" initiative to provide security guarantees for Ukraine as part of a peace process.

The meeting comes in the wake of a Russian drone strike that killed three people waiting at a bus stop in southeastern Ukraine. A separate drone strike damaged a storage center for spent nuclear fuel in the Kyiv region, just 15 kilometers (9 miles) from the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, Ukraine's General Staff said. The attack sparked a fire that was extinguished within an hour. Radiation remains within safe levels, officials said.

The International Atomic Energy Agency chief Rafael Grossi said the incident was "deeply concerning" due to the large amounts of nuclear material held at the facility. He said in a statement that the agency would visit the site of the attack soon.

The Russian attacks follow a large-scale Ukrainian drone attack on Saturday that targeted Saint Petersburg, Russia's second-largest city, underscoring Kyiv's growing ability to hit deep inside Russia.

With the front line barely moving as swarms of drones hinder advances, both sides have sought an edge by launching long-range strikes.

Arab attacker opens fire in central Israel, killing 1 and wounding 5

By MELANIE LIDMAN Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — A Palestinian man with Israeli citizenship went on a shooting rampage in several towns in central Israel on Sunday, killing a reservist and wounding five other people, according to Israeli police and the military. The attacker was killed by police.

The attack came at a time of heightened tensions following a spate of Israeli settler attacks, and the deadly shooting of a Palestinian baby over the weekend, in the nearby West Bank. Police identified the attacker as a resident of the Arab town of Taybeh in his 20s, but his precise motives weren't immediately known.

The attack began with a shooting Sunday morning at a gas station near the town of Kokhav Yair, located on the Israeli side of the boundary with the occupied West Bank. Several other shootings were reported in two nearby Israeli towns and close to the Israeli settlement of Salit, inside the West Bank.

Police initially feared a series of coordinated attacks, but eventually determined that a gunman and an accomplice who may have served as his driver were involved. The suspected accomplice was arrested later after he tried to stab police with a glass bottle.

Israel's military said that a 55-year-old reservist was killed near Tzur Natan. The Magen David Adom rescue service said that five other people were wounded, two severely.

Fears of a widespread attack prompted authorities to order residents to stay at home, and children in the area were kept in lockdown at school for at least three hours.

"Since Oct. 7, the scenario we were expecting was terrorists crossing into our towns from over the boundary. I don't think that anyone imagined that we would discover the attackers were Israeli citizens," Oshrit

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 37 of 50

Gani Gonen, the regional council head, told Israeli media, referring to the Hamas-led attack on southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, that sparked the war in Gaza.

Security minister posts video reportedly with dead gunman

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised the security forces who killed the attacker, while Israel's hard-line public security minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir, who oversees the police force, released a video of himself standing next to what appeared to be a blurred image of the dead gunman.

"This is the end of every terrorist, this is how it should look," said Ben-Gvir, who recently led an effort to pass a new law that seeks to impose the death penalty on Palestinian attackers. That law faces legal challenges.

Ben-Gvir has come under sharp condemnation from other Israeli leaders for making contentious videos, such as his treatment of flotilla activists who were detained after attempting to break the maritime blockade to Gaza.

The West Bank has experienced a surge in deadly violence since the war in Gaza began. Israel has stepped up military operations across the territory, killing hundreds of people. It says raids are aimed at militants, but scores of civilians have also been killed.

The Oct. 7 attack killed around 1,200 people and took 251 as hostages. Israel's ensuing offensive in Gaza has killed more than 72,000 Palestinians, including combatants and civilians, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. The ministry, part of the Hamas-led government, maintains detailed casualty records that are seen as generally reliable by U.N. agencies and independent experts. It doesn't give a breakdown of civilians and militants.

Israeli strikes kill 9 in Gaza

Also on Sunday, at least five Palestinians were killed in an Israeli airstrike that hit a police point in Gaza's southern city of Khan Younis, according to the Palestinian Red Crescent. The dead were taken to a field hospital run by the Red Crescent. At least 10 others were wounded, the charity said.

An Israeli strike later in the day killed at least four Palestinians when it hit a vehicle in the western part of Gaza City, according to Shifa hospital, which received the casualties.

The Israeli military didn't immediately comment on either strike, but has said in the past that it would target militants that pose a threat to its troops. While the heaviest fighting has subsided since the U.S.-brokered ceasefire deal last October, the ceasefire has seen almost daily Israeli fire.

Israel later closed the crossings with Gaza until further notice due to the deteriorating security situation, according to the defense body that oversees humanitarian aid in Gaza, which issued the statement after Iran launched missiles at Israel.

Netanyahu, in a Cabinet meeting, repeated his pledge to take 70% of Gaza: "We are presently holding more than 60% of the territory, and soon we will reach 70%." He said that Israel isn't allowing Hamas to "rearm or harm us," in comments released to the media.

The head of the U.S.-created Board of Peace that oversees the ceasefire acknowledged last month that next steps in the truce have stalled over the key issue of disarming Hamas.

Years of pent-up emotions came flooding out of Alexander Zverev when he finally won the French Open

By ANDREW DAMPF AP Sports Writer

PARIS (AP) — It all came rushing back to Alexander Zverev when he was lying on his back on the French Open's center court, his hands covering his face, and sobbing on Sunday as he realized that he had — finally — become a Grand Slam champion.

It was the same court where he twisted his right ankle and crumpled to the ground, wailing in agony before being pushed off on a wheelchair during a semifinal match against Rafael Nadal in 2022.

The same court where he wasted a lead of two sets to one against Carlos Alcaraz in the 2024 championship match.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 38 of 50

"All the emotions came out, because this court is very, very special to me. It's special in a very positive way, but also special on the negative way, because I had some of the toughest moments of my life here," Zverev said.

"I was laying on this court with an injury that I didn't know if I would ever come back from. I lost a Grand Slam final here, so all of those memories for me, they're not wiped out. They're still with me, but this one will beat all of them."

After so many missed opportunities, Zverev is no longer one of the best players never to win a major title. In his fourth major final, Zverev beat Flavio Cobolli 6-1, 4-6, 6-4, 6-7 (5), 6-1 for the French Open title. It was a unique opportunity for Zverev without Jannik Sinner or Alcaraz across the net and the third-ranked German took full advantage on the red clay of Roland Garros.

When Cobolli missed an overhead on the second championship point after more than four hours of the five-set encounter, Zverev joined an elite group of players that captured their first major in their fourth final: Eight-time major champion Andre Agassi, 2001 Wimbledon winner Goran Ivanisevic and 2020 U.S. Open champion Dominic Thiem.

Then when Zverev finally got his hands on the Coupe des Mousquetaires trophy, he turned it upside down, held it between his legs and then hoisted it above his head with both arms as he let out a loud roar.

"This trophy for me is very important because if I would have lost this one, this self-belief would have gone down a lot," Zverev said. "But now that I've won it, I feel like I can do it again."

No Sinner or Alcaraz

Zverev had been an overwhelming favorite for the title ever since the top-ranked Sinner struggled in the first week's heat wave and wasted a two set and 5-1 lead against Juan Manuel Cerundolo in the second round. A day later, 24-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic was also eliminated.

Alcaraz, the two-time reigning champion, withdrew before the tournament with an injured right wrist.

Zverev also lost a lead of two sets to none in the 2020 U.S. Open final to Thiem and was beaten in straight sets by Sinner in the 2025 Australian Open final.

It was the 25th title of Zverev's career.

Cobolli's 1st Slam final

The 14th-ranked Cobolli had never been past a Grand Slam quarterfinal until this week. He was attempting to become the first Italian man to raise the singles trophy at Roland Garros since Adriano Panatta 50 years ago.

Cobolli comes from the same tennis club in Rome as Panatta did and Panatta was asked by tournament organizers to present the trophy to celebrate the anniversary of his 1976 triumph.

The honors, however, went to Zverev.

Russian teenager Mirra Andreeva won the women's singles trophy on Saturday.

Zverev took control early on

The match was played in perfect conditions and Zverev's game was almost flawless at the start as Cobolli appeared nervous.

A group of women in the stands held up letters to form Zverev's nickname: "Sascha."

Cobolli likes to stand way over near the corner of the court and hit big kick serves out wide into the ad court. Zverev knew what was coming and returned one such kick serve early in the first set with a backhand that he wrapped around the outside of the net post. Cobolli ended up winning the point, but it was a message from Zverev that he knew how to handle his opponent's tactics.

The next time Zverev hit a wrap-around-the-net-post return, Cobolli couldn't handle it and Zverev won the point.

Cobolli's supporters in his box were all dressed in blue, the color of Italy's national teams, and as Cobolli worked his way back into the match, there were chants of "Ole, Ole, Ole; Flavio, Flavio."

Both players were treated by a trainer as the match wore on and Cobolli appeared to run out of energy in the fifth.

"He deserved it more than me at the end of the match," Cobolli said, adding that he was slowed by

cramps.

Zverev said his cramps "were more mental.

"I actually think that the cramp helped me in a way, that I let go, I kind of hit my shots a bit more and just let go," he added.

Abuse allegations

Moments after Zverev's previous Grand Slam final in Australia in 2025, a person in the stadium yelled out the names of two of his ex-girlfriends who accused him of physical abuse.

One case was resolved following an agreement between German prosecutors, lawyers for Zverev and his former partner. The ATP Tour investigated another case and concluded there was insufficient evidence.

Kimi Antonelli wins delayed Monaco Grand Prix to extend his victory streak and F1 lead

MONACO (AP) — Kimi Antonelli is writing his place in Formula 1 history at record speed.

"You're catching me up," Lewis Hamilton, who has the most wins in history with 105, told Antonelli after the 19-year-old Italian beat him in a bizarre and much-delayed Monaco Grand Prix on Sunday.

Antonelli replaced Hamilton at Mercedes last year, and only won his first race in March. He now has five wins in a row and a vast lead of 66 points over Hamilton, who was second Sunday.

"He's only 19, so just imagine what the future holds for him, but I'm going to do my best to try and chase him down for the rest of the year," Hamilton said. "It's a real privilege to witness it."

Antonelli said he needed to find his focus again but stayed cool when the race was stopped and briefly seemed set to be abandoned before a restart. All that on a tight, twisty circuit threaded between metal barriers where any slip brings a crash.

An uncertain restart

Antonelli was on course for victory with 10 laps remaining when the race was red-flagged after parts of the asphalt broke away and two cars crashed in quick succession, one of them Charles Leclerc in third place.

After a long delay, officials said the race would be resumed from a standing start. When that happened, Antonelli took control again to become the youngest F1 winner in Monaco, and was never in real danger of being overtaken.

"Thank you so much guys, the car was a beast today," he told the Mercedes team.

Isack Hadjar was confirmed third for Red Bull after battling engine problems and seeing off an investigation.

Antonelli's Mercedes teammate George Russell missed the points for the second race running, dropping out of the top 10 with a penalty. That followed an engine failure while battling Antonelli for the lead of last month's Canadian Grand Prix.

Russell said Thursday the title was Antonelli's "to lose." Now it certainly seems that way.

Max Verstappen started second for Red Bull but lost power at the start and dropped to the back before retiring the car at the end of the first lap. Like many F1 drivers, the four-time champion lives in Monaco and suggested he'd watch the rest of the race from home.

Hamilton's turnaround

Hamilton was in jubilant mood after placing second, with Kim Kardashian watching. The seven-time champion paid tribute to Ferrari team principal Fred Vasseur for his role in turning around Hamilton and the team's fortunes.

"Fred has been awesome in supporting me. I think last year was really tough for both of us," said Hamilton, adding that he was "seeing the fruits" of changes which Vasseur implemented. Hamilton wasn't on the podium in any Grand Prix in all of 2025 in his first year with the team.

Vasseur was back at the track with Ferrari on Sunday after he missed Saturday's qualifying session. The team said he had been under observation at a medical facility, without giving any further details of his condition.

Confusion continues after the finish

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 40 of 50

The track damage put a decidedly un-glamorous twist on one of F1's most prestigious races as drivers waited in the pit lane, officials gazed at the damaged asphalt and a road-sweeping machine inched along the circuit clearing away loose stones. Antonelli admitted he'd been hoping the race wouldn't be restarted at all.

There was more confusion as numerous drivers received time penalties or were under investigation, meaning the final standings remained uncertain.

Hadjar was facing an investigation after the race for a potential breach of red-flag rules after the FIA's technical delegate said Red Bull had tried to replace engine parts, against the rules, but stopped when challenged.

Hadjar kept the place, his first podium finish since joining Red Bull, after a hearing decided no penalty was needed because no changes were actually made.

Russell had been second in the standings before the race — the position is Hamilton's now. Russell crossed the line 13th, later upgraded to 12th, after a hefty penalty for failing to serve an earlier penalty properly. He said he didn't understand what happened.

New team Cadillac could have had its first F1 point when Sergio Perez crossed the line 10th, but lost it for a false start at the restart. That put Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso up to 10th for his team's first point of a year which it started with severe reliability problems.

More disputes were to come Sunday evening as Alpine said it was challenging the spate of penalties issued for pit lane speeding, one of which cost Gasly third. That is under the "right of review" system under which decisions typically take days.

Trump dismisses idea that Iran betrays his 'no new wars' campaign message

By MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

BRIDGEWATER, N.J. (AP) — President Donald Trump is dismissing the idea that launching the war with Iran this year betrayed his refrain of "No new wars" that he made repeatedly as he campaigned again for the White House.

Trump, in an interview that aired Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press," said he "didn't guarantee" there would be no wars if he were back in office.

"First of all, I didn't guarantee no war. Why would I have built the strongest military in the world?" Trump said.

Trump also defended plans for a now-scrapped \$1.8 billion fund that would have compensated allies of the Republican president and he repeated his baseless claims of mass fraud in California's drawn-out vote count from Tuesday's primary. He ended the interview abruptly when he became frustrated with pushback from NBC's Kristen Welker.

Iran 'is not an endless war'

In his 2024 campaign, Trump repeatedly cast his Democratic opponents as warmongers and said he was a president who started "no new wars" and would bring an era of peace.

But Trump said in the NBC interview, taped Friday in Wisconsin, that as a candidate, "I didn't promise anything."

"I don't like these endless wars. This is not an endless war. We've been doing this for three months," he said of the war with Iran, which began Feb. 28.

Trump said he was "doing the world a service" and "doing our country a service" because he had to stop Iran from having a nuclear weapon. But elsewhere in the interview, Trump repeated a contradictory message where he said U.S. strikes last year "obliterated" Iranian nuclear sites.

He also defended his decision in his first term to withdraw from Democratic President Barack Obama's nuclear deal with Iran, an agreement he has heavily criticized, without negotiating the "better deal" he has promised to reach.

"It takes years to do these things," Trump said.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 41 of 50

Trump without evidence claims fraud in California vote

California's notoriously prolonged vote count has been a magnet for election conspiracy theories, and Trump since Tuesday's election has claimed without evidence that Democrats are rigging the election. The Trump-appointed top federal prosecutor in Los Angeles said Friday that his office had opened "multiple election fraud investigations."

Late-tallied Democratic-leaning mail ballots have eaten into the vote totals for Trump's preferred candidates for governor and Los Angeles mayor. While Trump has often said that changes to vote totals as late ballots are counted are a sign of fraud, they are merely a reflection of a slow vote-counting process.

Trump in the interview kept claiming that it was a sign of "cheating" and "a rigged election," and grew increasingly frustrated as Welker pressed him for evidence to support that.

"All I have to do is look. All I have to do is look," Trump said.

"But that's not evidence," Welker responded.

"And I listen. And I listen to people. And let's see what happens," Trump replied.

'Anti-weaponization' fund

Trump defended plans that his Department of Justice said it has now abandoned to create a \$1.776 billion "Anti-Weaponization Fund" as part of a settlement to resolve Trump's lawsuit against the IRS over the leak of his tax returns.

Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche said Wednesday that the department was scrapping the plan. That announcement came after the plan was paused by a judge and after both Democrats and some Republicans said they were concerned about the fund's lack of oversight and the possibility of payouts being made to participants in the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the Capitol.

Trump told NBC he thought the fund was "a great idea" and that he would be "disappointed" if it were not approved.

When asked if he thought people who attacked police officers on Jan. 6 should get a payout, Trump said, "I wouldn't be inclined to say so, but I have to see it." He then began making unfounded and false claims about the riot and those who stormed the Capitol. Trump granted a sweeping pardon on his first day back in office in January 2025 to the more than 1,500 people prosecuted over Jan. 6.

Rain interruptions and an abrupt end

The NBC interview was conducted in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, before Trump was set to speak at a roundtable event with farmers. The interview was repeatedly interrupted as waves of heavy rain fell on the metal roof of the barn where the taping took place, making it difficult at times to hear.

At the end, Welker pressed Trump on the settlement fund and his claims about the California election. Trump raised his voice and began calling Welker and the media "crooked," attacking her credibility and complaining about what he called "the fake, dirty press."

As Welker tried to switch subjects, Trump continued on and there was cross talk between the two. Trump ended the interview, saying said, "Let's call it quits." He took off his microphone, telling Welker, "Thank you, darling. Have a good time." He said he had given the interview enough time, stood up and walked away.

Welker said during the broadcast that she spoke to Trump on Saturday and he agreed the rain had caused complications and said he would do another interview in the future.

Maverick Republican Sen. Bob Packwood of Oregon, who resigned after sexual harassment scandal, dies

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Former Sen. Bob Packwood, a moderate Oregon Republican whose reputation as a champion of abortion and women's rights was spoiled at the end of his career by allegations of sexual harassment, has died. He was 93.

Packwood's death on Saturday was announced in an obituary sent to media outlets by his family. The release didn't include additional details.

Packwood was a political scrapper who first refused to quit the chamber in which he had served for 27 years, saying he didn't want to be remembered only for that controversy.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 42 of 50

Before the #MeToo era, Packwood stood out as an example of private behavior undermining a man's public image. He had been praised by Planned Parenthood and others.

The great-grandson of a member of the 1857 Oregon Constitutional Convention, Packwood established himself as a social moderate and fiscal conservative who often voted across party lines. He considered running for president in 1980.

Elected to the Senate in 1968, Packwood was best known as the leading Republican advocate of abortion rights and was widely admired by women's groups throughout the country until the Senate Ethics Committee launched an investigation into the allegations of sexual and official misconduct in 1993.

More than two dozen women, former employees and acquaintances, accused him of making unwanted or uninvited sexual advances.

The allegations remained the target of an ethics probe that widened to include other alleged acts of official misconduct. He resigned in September 1995, then went to start a lucrative lobbying business in Washington.

Democratic U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, who replaced Packwood in 1996, said while he should be praised for his record on abortion rights and tax reform, how he treated women overshadows it all.

"His horrible history as documented in his own diaries will forever overshadow that public record. Simply put, historians' first line about Bob Packwood must include those women who he abused and assaulted for years and years," Wyden said in a statement.

As chairman and then ranking Republican on the Senate Finance Committee, Packwood was a master of cutting deals and forging compromises needed to pass tax legislation through Congress. He was most proud of the lead role he played in a sweeping tax reform of 1986 that lowered the top income tax bracket and eliminated many itemized deductions.

Over his career, he was described as a blunt, independent, outspoken politician who was a maverick, boat-rocker, loose cannon, skilled partisan, and, above all, political survivor.

"I think they probably all ring true," Packwood told The Associated Press in December 1992.

"I would like to think that I am nobody's lackey. I try to reach conclusions independently and then I'm willing to fight for those conclusions; if necessary, having to fight against my party or my party's president," he said.

Packwood won his first Senate election at age 36, narrowly defeating Democratic Sen. Wayne L. Morse, an Oregon legend who had held the seat for 23 years. He quickly grabbed attention as a rising star in the GOP. By 1980, he was elected chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee.

But he lost the seat when the White House backed a competitor after Packwood publicly accused President Ronald Reagan of alienating women, African Americans and Jews.

Just two weeks after Packwood's reelection in 1992, The Washington Post printed allegations from former female employees and acquaintances that the senator had subjected them to uninvited sexual advances.

The Senate Ethics Committee also investigated allegations that Packwood solicited jobs from lobbyists for his ex-wife, used his staff to try to threaten the female accusers into keeping quiet and obstructed the investigation by altering his personal diaries.

The Senate held two days of extraordinary debate in 1993 over whether Packwood should have to comply with an ethics committee subpoena for his diaries, in which he reportedly made entries relevant to the investigation. The Senate voted 94-6 to enforce the subpoena.

Packwood took the case to federal courts and lost, ending when Chief Justice William Rehnquist refused Packwood's request for the U.S. Supreme Court to intercede.

Packwood launched his lobbying business, Sunrise Research Corp., in 1997. By 1999, the firm was grossing \$1.5 million a year. His business slowed in later years, but he told a City Club of Portland audience in 2010 that he was still spending about half his time in Washington lobbying for a number of clients.

It was interesting work, Packwood told the audience, according to The Oregonian, but "it is not as much fun as being in the Senate."

As Congress became increasingly partisan following his departure, Packwood continued to advocate a

centrist tact and called for Oregon to create nonpartisan elections in his 2010 City Club speech.

Packwood's wife, Elaine Franklin, was his former chief of staff who became a political consultant in Portland. The couple had homes in the Portland area and Washington.

In a November 2002 interview with the Salem Statesman Journal, Packwood said he had gotten past the scandal that forced him out of office.

"People have told me it must have been tough on me, or it seems unfair," he said. "But you cannot go through the rest of life and say look what happened. Pretty soon you become a bore to your friends.

"I told myself I was not old enough to retire," Packwood said, "so I have got to get at life and not complain about it."

Lawsuit seeks to stop the UFC fight on the White House South Lawn for Trump's birthday

By MELISSA GOLDIN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A federal lawsuit seeks to halt the upcoming UFC fight card on the White House South Lawn in a mixed martial arts show timed for President Donald Trump's 80th birthday and part of the celebration of the nation's 250th anniversary.

The filing Saturday by the Public Integrity Project on behalf of two Virginia residents contends the Trump administration's authorization of the June 14 event was unlawful. The lawsuit says such approval violated National Park Service regulations prohibiting sporting events on federal parklands, Congress did not consent to the towering arch overlooking the event space and no environmental review was conducted before the construction.

"This is fundamentally a private, commercial, corrupt use of our most sacred national monuments for private gain," said Brendan Ballou, a lawyer for the plaintiffs. "And that is what is motivating this lawsuit."

The White House said in a statement that the legal challenge was "an obstructionist, baseless, and dilatory" attempt to prevent Trump from hosting the fight and that the event was "no different than the various other White House-hosted events on the South Lawn and properly permitted events on the Ellipse and National Mall throughout the year."

UFC did not immediately respond to a request for comment Sunday.

Crews are erecting an octagon-shaped cage on the South Lawn. Trump has said the finished UFC project will feature "a 5,000-seat arena right outside the front door of the White House." Additional large screens broadcasting the fights will be set up in a park at the nearby Ellipse, and the UFC has said it plans to issue as many as 85,000 free tickets to accommodate spectators at both locations.

The octagon and surrounding structures are the latest project in the White House building boom Trump is leading.

The Nigerian army frees 360 abducted people in northeastern Borno state

By DYEPAZAH SHIBAYAN Associated Press

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — The Nigerian army said Sunday it freed 360 people abducted by Boko Haram in southern Borno, in the northeastern part of the country.

The operation, according to the army's statement, was conducted in the Mandara mountains which form a part of the militant group's stronghold. It resulted in the release of several people, including children, who had been abducted across different communities in Borno.

Two infants "succumbed to exhaustion" due to the challenging mountainous terrain and the hardship they endured during their prolonged captivity, an army spokesperson, Haruna Sani, said.

"The remaining rescued abductees were successfully evacuated to safe locations for medical care and humanitarian support, marking a major operational success and a significant setback for the terrorist group," Sani said.

Nigeria faces a complex security crisis, especially in the north where a more than decade-long insurgency and the activities of armed groups that carry out kidnappings for ransom and illegal mining have heightened the country's security challenges.

Among the most prominent Islamic militant groups are Boko Haram and its breakaway faction, which is affiliated with the Islamic State group and known as Islamic State West Africa Province.

Last month, the West African country said its joint operation with the United States had killed 175 ISWAP fighters.

The insurgency in Nigeria's northeast has killed thousands of people and displaced millions, according to the United Nations. Analysts say not enough is being done by the government to protect its citizens, despite repeated promises by President Bola Tinubu to curb the crisis.

Armenians vote in general election under Russian pressure aimed at preventing a drift toward West

By AVET DEMOURIAN and KOSTYA MANENKOV Associated Press

YEREVAN, Armenia (AP) — Armenians voted in a parliamentary election Sunday as the incumbent government, under mounting Russian pressure, sought to loosen ties with Moscow and deepen cooperation with the West.

Polling closed at 8 p.m. local time, with preliminary results expected Monday.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and his governing Civil Contract party are looking for a strong mandate for a new geopolitical course for Armenia. The opposition they face includes some parties that are vocally pro-Russia.

Casting his vote on Sunday, Pashinyan said that the country would continue strengthening its independence, statehood, democracy and rule of law.

"The European Union is our main partner in democratic reform implementation, and we will continue that path," he said.

He also stressed that there were no tensions between Armenia and Moscow, saying "our relations with Russia are institutional and based on mutual respect," the Armenpress news agency reported.

Russian officials have hit Armenian exports with a barrage of restrictions in recent weeks. President Vladimir Putin and other Russian officials have made thinly veiled threats comparing Armenia's path to that already taken by Ukraine, which was invaded by Russia.

Meanwhile, Armenian investigators said that they issued six arrest warrants for members of the opposition Strong Armenia party the day before the election, accusing them of buying votes. The nation's Central Election Committee confirmed Saturday that the party could run after a member of another opposition party, Republic, appealed for Strong Armenia to be barred over corruption allegations.

Commenting on the arrests on Sunday, the head of the Strong Armenia party, Russian Armenian business owner Samvel Karapetyan, said that they "would not change the minds of Armenian voters."

Karapetyan is under house arrest for allegedly advocating for the government's overthrow, a charge that the billionaire has rejected as politically motivated. He was escorted to a polling station where he spoke briefly to the media before returning home.

"The Armenian people will make the right choice and Armenia will finally have a legitimate government," he said.

Trump offers support as Putin urges caution

Armenia's National Assembly must consist of at least 101 members who are elected for five-year terms. Parties must win at least 4% of the vote to take a seat, while blocs made up of three or more parties must hit 8%.

Two political blocs and 17 parties are taking part in Sunday's election. Most pollsters and experts have predicted Pashinyan, who came to power in 2018 following sweeping street protests, will come out ahead.

"I think Armenians expect, first of all, a peaceful, independent and prosperous Armenia from this election, as we have today," said Hripsime Grigoryan, a Civil Contract member of the outgoing parliament.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 45 of 50

Pashinyan has spoken on several occasions about the need for a balanced foreign policy to ensure that Armenia maintains good relations with the United States, Europe and Russia, as well as regional powers such as Turkey and Iran — both of which border Armenia.

Despite this, Pashinyan has attracted far more enthusiasm in the West than in Moscow. He has been endorsed by several European leaders, and U.S. President Donald Trump.

"Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, of Armenia, a great friend and Leader, is making his Country strong, wealthy, and very secure," Trump wrote on social media, urging Armenians to "Make (Armenia) Great Again."

This has displeased the Kremlin. Speaking to journalists after Russia's Victory Day parade on May 9, Putin said if the Armenian people saw benefits in joining the European Union, then "we will certainly have nothing to say against it."

Yet he also reminded reporters, "We are currently living through everything that is happening in respect of Ukraine. And how did it start? It started with Ukraine's joining or attempting to join the EU."

Opposition wants closer ties with Russia

Unlike the Civil Contract party, most of Armenia's opposition supports building stronger relations with Moscow.

The Strong Armenia party seeks to develop business ties with Russia and has accused Pashinyan of attempting to start a war with Moscow.

Other potential contenders include former President Robert Kocharyan, who leads the Hayastan bloc and also has accused Pashinyan of undermining relations with Russia, and the Prosperous Armenia Party, led by pro-Russia business owner Gagik Tsarukyan.

These parties also have strongly criticized Pashinyan for attempting to normalize relations with neighboring Azerbaijan. The Armenian leader and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev initialed a document on moving toward a peace deal at the White House alongside Trump in August.

Armenia and Azerbaijan were locked in a decades-long conflict over the fate of Karabakh, a breakaway region that had been controlled for decades by ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia. Azerbaijan took control of the entire Karabakh region during a rapid offensive in 2023.

"I want this government to change, because the condition of our country is getting worse," Sahakyan Elina, a supporter of the Prosperous Armenia Party, told The Associated Press at a rally Thursday. "I don't want to live with my enemies in unity."

EU criticizes Moscow's pressure

Russian officials have imposed new restrictions on Armenian produce in the lead-up to the parliamentary vote, banning the import of Armenian flowers, certain types of cognac and wine, eggplant, potatoes, dried fruits, fish and more.

Russia says the bans are related to violations of agricultural import rules.

The European Commission on Thursday described the move as "nothing short of economic coercion."

"By extending export restrictions on Armenian products, Moscow is weaponizing economic relations for political pressure. We know this playbook all too well," the commission said in a statement.

Moscow also controls a significant portion of Armenia's energy and infrastructure, and supplies it with cheap gas, which is a point that Putin has been quick to drive home in his meetings with Pashinyan.

Putin also has stressed that Armenia can't join the EU and remain within the Eurasian Economic Union, a Russia-led customs bloc.

"Being in a customs union with the European Union and the Eurasian Economic Union is impossible," Putin said. "It's simply impossible by definition."

British deputy prime minister tells JD Vance he was wrong to blame immigration for teen's murder

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain's deputy prime minister said Sunday that he told U.S. Vice President JD Vance he was wrong to blame immigration for the death of a university student who was handcuffed as he lay

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 46 of 50

dying from a stab wound.

David Lammy, who is also the justice minister, said he challenged Vance in what he described as a "robust" phone call on Saturday. Lammy and Vance have struck up a friendship, based on their religious beliefs and family backgrounds, even though they come from different sides of the political spectrum.

"We had an agreeable conversation because we have got a relationship, but I wanted to make him clear that I disagree with some of the facts that he was asserting and to present the facts to him," Lammy told Sky News.

The call came a day after Vance said in a post on social platform X that there should be "righteous anger" in response to the murder of Henry Nowak, 18, who died in December after being stabbed by Vickrum Digwa in the English city of Southampton.

Digwa, who is Sikh, falsely claimed to police he was the victim of a racist assault by Nowak, who was white. When police officers arrived, they initially treated the wounded man as a suspect before noticing his injury and trying to resuscitate him.

Vance appeared to blame the murder in part on "the mass invasion of migrants, many of whom despise the West and the people who love it."

Lammy said he wanted to "emphasize a number of things" to Vance, including that the killer was British and is now behind bars.

"This has got nothing to do with mass migration," Lammy said.

Digwa, 23, was convicted of murder for stabbing Nowak with an 8-inch (21 centimeter) Sikh dagger and sentenced this week to life in prison with a minimum 21-year term.

The case has been seized on by anti-immigration activists and politicians in the U.K. On Tuesday, police in Southampton were pelted with chairs, cans, rocks and flares after a demonstration over Nowak's death attended by far-right figures and others.

In a statement issued Friday in response to Vance's comments, Prime Minister Keir Starmer's office criticized people "trying to interfere in our democracy and seeking to stir up division on our streets."

The Independent Office for Police Conduct, which investigates allegations of police wrongdoing, is probing the actions of police officers on the scene.

The victim's father, Mark Nowak, has said the case was not about racism or religion, and that he wanted his son's death to lead to safer streets and not to be used to create "further division, hatred or tension."

Lammy also said he told Vance "it's not helpful to tweet in this way, partly because of what the Nowak family have asked for, and reminded him about their desire not to make this an issue of division and hatred, but to make this an issue of common sense."

Donald Trump, Knicks fan, heads back to New York to root on his team

By MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — There was a time when Donald Trump was just another celebrity sitting courtside at New York Knicks games. He was famous, but not yet flanked by Secret Service agents or defined by the politics that have left him deeply unpopular in his hometown.

Now, more than a decade after attending his last Knicks game at Madison Square Garden, Trump is making a rare trip back to New York City as president to cheer for them in Game 3 of the NBA Finals against the San Antonio Spurs on Monday night. Invited by Knicks owner James Dolan, he will be the first sitting president to attend an NBA Finals game.

The Knicks are seeking their first championship since 1973, when Trump was 26 and a relative newcomer to the family real estate business that vaulted him to wealth and fame. Two years after that triumph, the team's owners at the time hired him as a consultant as they looked to sell the arena.

Trump has been to more major sporting events than any of his predecessors, including the Super Bowl and Daytona 500, golf's Ryder Cup in the New York City suburbs, where he was cheered, and last year's U.S. Open men's tennis championship in Queens, where he was booed and blamed for long security lines.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 47 of 50

On June 14, when he turns 80 while wrestling with myriad crises including the war with Iran, economic unease and court rulings blunting his agenda, he will host a UFC fight on White House grounds. Trump also has expressed interest in attending soccer's World Cup, which kicks off this week across the United States, Mexico and Canada.

New Yorkers love the Knicks more than they love Trump

Trump is an avid sports fan, but the affinity he professes for the Knicks is different.

It speaks to the Republican president's identity as a New Yorker and harkens to a bygone era where a front-row seat at a Knicks game was a chance for him and other boldface names to see and be seen.

In a city whose wealthy gatekeepers largely turned their noses at Trump's brash personality and playboy image in the 1990s and 2000s, the Garden's Celebrity Row was one club where he felt at home.

"I've been a Knick fan for a long time," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office last week, a day after New York rallied to win Game 1. "I watched that end of the game and they were dominant — really amazing."

After another win Friday in San Antonio, the Knicks head home with a 2-0 lead in the best-of-seven series. They have won a remarkable 13 straight playoff games and last lost on April 23, uniting the city in a way unseen since the Knicks went to the NBA Finals twice in the 1990s.

Enter Trump. He returns to the Knicks zeitgeist not as the tabloid curiosity who once sat shoulder to shoulder with the late John F. Kennedy Jr. at a game in 1999, but as a president who is disliked by a majority of the city's Democratic voters.

Trump, who gave up his lifelong New York residency for Florida in 2019, is making his first trip to New York City since he spoke at the United Nations in September. In 2024, he went on trial in the city and was convicted of 34 felony counts related to hush money paid on his behalf during his 2016 campaign.

Knicks fans, though, do not seem to be concerned so much with his politics, but that his attendance — and the hoopla accompanying it — could mess up the team's momentum. The Knicks said people going to the game should arrive at least two hours before tipoff for airport-style security screening.

"Why does Donald Trump always have to ruin a good thing?" U.S. Rep. Hakeem Jeffries of New York, an avid Knicks fan and the House Democratic leader, told CNN. "Like, literally, the Knicks haven't been in the NBA finals for 27 years. The city is trying to celebrate this. We've embraced this team, and this guy has to inject himself."

Mayor Zohran Mamdani, a Democrat who struck up a cordial relationship with Trump after the two met in November, was more inviting.

"We're excited to welcome anyone and everyone who's rooting for the Knicks in this moment," said Mamdani, who will also be at the game — albeit, not with Trump.

Last week, as Trump began floating the idea of attending a game, New York magazine published an article, "Is Trump Really a Knicks Fan? An Investigation." The story, filled with pictures of Trump at Knicks games from 1991 to 2014, described him as a "textbook example of a celebrity bandwagon fan."

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver disagrees.

"Before he ever ran for office, he was a big Knicks fan," Silver told reporters last week. "I've been with the league for a long time. I was there at many Knicks games with him in the old days."

A courtside regular in the 1990s

Trump and the Knicks came into existence the same year, 1946.

His affiliation with the team — at least in the public record — dates to 1975 when he acted as a real estate adviser to the then-owners of the Knicks and Madison Square Garden, who were looking to sell the building known in a bit of Trump-style branding as "The World's Most Famous Arena."

Trump claimed to reporters at the time that two groups of "Arab oil interests" were interested in paying \$50 million to \$75 million. But the arena's leadership passed on the idea, saying it was "not conceivable" to make such a deal during the Middle East oil crisis raging at the time.

Trump was not much of a known entity when the Knicks won their only championships in 1970 and 1973.

By the time they rebounded in the 1990s, Trump was front and center, taking his then-wife Marla Maples to Game 3 of the NBA Finals in 1994 and his current wife, first lady Melania Trump, to Game 2 of the Eastern Conference Finals in 1999. In between, he added to his Knicks fan bona fides with a cameo in the

Knicks-themed Whoopi Goldberg film "Eddie" in 1996.

Back then, Trump was a more of a mythic figure than a consequential one, known as much for the women he dated and married as the buildings he built.

But just as those Knicks came up short in the NBA Finals against Hakeem Olajuwon and the Houston Rockets and David Robinson and the Spurs, Trump was running into problems of his own. His business empire was in disarray after his casinos fell into financial trouble and his airline, Trump Shuttle, went out of business.

Like the Knicks, Trump went into rebuilding mode and charted a new course: reality TV with NBC's "The Apprentice" and "Celebrity Apprentice," and then, politics. On a Knicks TV broadcast in 2010, he hinted at a possible presidential run.

That same year, as the Knicks struggled to recapture the magic of the 1990s, Trump recorded a video trying to persuade LeBron James to join the team.

"The real winners of the world want to be here," Trump told him.

From unfilled gas tanks to fewer frills, retailers see US consumers rethink their spending

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. consumers haven't stopped spending money since the Iran war drove up fuel prices, but many shoppers are reassessing what they buy and where, according to company executives and retail analysts.

The behavior changes observed so far are subtle, such as altered routines for buying gasoline and fewer visits to clothing and furniture stores. They also are uneven across the population. During recent earnings calls with analysts, executives from American mainstays like Walmart, McDonald's and Dollar General cited overall shopper resilience as well as noticeable cutbacks by lower-income customers.

But the new signs of strain cited by major retailers as generous income tax refunds helped shore up their sales make some economists and analysts think they will see a wider retrenchment when the refunds are gone and consumers face the cumulative impact of more expensive gas and higher prices for food, clothing, insurance and other goods and services.

Trevor Chapman, a communications executive in West Hills, California, said that instead of going to a local independent gas station, he and his wife now plan their fuel stops around Costco stores with filling stations. The couple also is doing more online food shopping to avoid impulse buys, he said.

"Gas is a kind of catalyst," Chapman said. "It trickles down into the entire budget. We're trying to keep everything as normal as possible. But it's starting to feel like it's adding up more and more."

Well before the U.S. and Israel launched the war, many consumers already were being more choosy with their discretionary purchases, fatigued by several years of stubborn inflation and tariffs on imported goods imposed last year.

The U.S. Commerce Department reported last week that higher prices, not more purchases, accounted for most of the growth in Americans' spending in April, when a key inflation gauge reached the highest level since October 2023.

Topping up instead of filling up

Members-only warehouse stores like Costco, Walmart's Sam's Club and BJ's Wholesale Club have seen more traffic at their fuel pumps since the war began in late February, according to the companies. Fuel typically costs less at the wholesale clubs.

But many drivers are not filling their tanks up, Walmart Chief Financial Officer John David Rainey told analysts late last month. For the first time since 2022, Walmart customers and Sam's Club members are buying an average of less than 10 gallons per trip, he said.

"That's an indication of stress," Rainey said.

Costco members also are making changes. They are visiting store gas stations more frequently to "top up in between what would have normally been a gap between getting the tank to empty because of the

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 49 of 50

concern about what might the gas price be tomorrow," Chief Financial Officer Gary Millerchip said in late May.

Meanwhile, the gas price surge has hurt convenience stores, where 80% of all fuel is sold in the U.S., according to Jeff Lenard, a vice president at the National Association of Convenience Stores.

A sales analysis by the trade group found that the number of pump transactions at the properties of 130 convenience store companies fell by nearly 10% across March and April compared to the same two months last year. The number of sales inside the companies' stores dropped by 10.4%, according to the analysis.

"When you lose gallons to the big box, you also lose in-store sales," Lenard said.

Changing eating habits

Higher gas prices did not stop many Americans from dining out in the first two months of the war with Iran. Tax refunds helped, the National Restaurant Association said. Customer traffic at U.S. restaurants in April was unchanged from the same month last year, although a 2.6% increase in restaurant spending resulted largely from higher menu prices, according to market research firm Circana.

But cracks are starting to form as budget-conscious U.S. residents shoulder the combined weight of paying more for gas and other consumer goods on top of increasing costs in other areas from inflation past and present.

The price of gas won't help bring customers with household incomes of \$45,000 or less back to U.S. fast-food restaurants, McDonald's Chairman and CEO Chris Kempczinski said last month. People in that income group began scaling back their fast-food purchases after the period of inflation that accompanied the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the trend picked up speed last year.

U.S.-based restaurant consulting firm Revenue Management Solutions analyzed 14.6 billion restaurant transactions from the last four years and found that as gasoline gets more expensive, restaurant visits gradually decline, according to Chief Research Officer Sebastián Fernandez. The analysis indicated the impact doubles when gas hits the \$4 mark, which it did as a nationwide average on March 31.

Consumers also are making concessions when they shop for groceries, according to Stew Leonard, president of an eight-store supermarket chain his father founded, Stew Leonard's. He's noticed customers buying meat in bulk to freeze and being less tempted to buy the products showcased during live food demonstrations or offered for sampling.

"It's telling me that people are sticking more to their shopping list," Leonard said.

Dollar General CEO Todd Vasos also cited \$4 a gallon gas as a tipping point that had more consumers with household incomes above \$100,000 frequenting the discount chain. Vasos told analysts Tuesday that many of Dollar General's core shoppers, who have mid-to-low incomes and live in rural areas, were paring back their food spending.

Sophie Tolsdorf, 29, of La Grange, Kentucky, said she is one of the consumers stocking up on meat when the price is reasonable. She also switched to buying whole fruit instead pre-cut fruit in containers and cut back on the rawhide bones for her dog that cost \$40 a pack.

"He might have noticed," Tolsdorf said. "He's definitely a little bit bored during the workday now."

Needs versus wants

Before the war, retailers had spent multiple earnings seasons highlighting consumer caution and selectivity as factors that could weigh on sales of nonessential products. Shoppers appear to have curbed their discretionary spending even more as the cost of buying gas went up, said Marshal Cohen, chief retail advisor at Circana.

Between April 25 and May 23, U.S. retailers sold 6% fewer non-grocery products than they did during the comparable four-week period of 2025, Cohen said. Housewares, clothing, footwear and sports equipment had the biggest declines, anywhere from 5% to 7%. Circana reported that toys and beauty items remained bright spots, registering at least an 8% increase in the number of units sold.

Location intelligence company Placer.ai, which tracks people's movements based on cellphone usage, saw visits to the gas stations of BJ's, Costco and Sam's Club stores start to accelerate in early March, aligning with a sharp rise in fuel prices, according to R.J. Hottovy, the company's head of analytical research.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, June 08, 2026 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 003 ~ 50 of 50

By early May, Placer.ai's data showed four consecutive weeks of reduced foot traffic at clothing, electronics and home furnishing stores, and more trips to grocery stores and dollar stores.

"Consumers are prioritizing value-oriented retailers like warehouse clubs, superstores, and off-price chains," Hottovy said.

Today in History: June 8

Trump indicted on classified document charges

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Monday, June 8, the 159th day of 2026. There are 206 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On June 8, 2023, Donald Trump was indicted by a grand jury in Miami on 37 felony counts related to the alleged mishandling of classified documents that had been moved to Mar-a-Lago, Trump's Florida home. (The case was abandoned following Trump's November 2024 presidential election victory.)

Also on this date:

In 1789, in an address to the U.S. House of Representatives, James Madison proposed amending the Constitution to include a Bill of Rights.

In 1949, George Orwell's novel "1984" was first published.

In 1966, a merger was announced between the National Football League and the American Football League, to take effect in 1970.

In 1967, during the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War, 34 American crew members were killed and 170 were wounded when Israel attacked the USS Liberty, an intelligence-gathering ship, in the Mediterranean Sea. (Israel later said the Liberty had been mistaken for an Egyptian vessel.)

In 1968, U.S. authorities announced the capture in London of James Earl Ray, the suspected assassin of civil rights leader the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

In 1978, a jury in Clark County, Nevada, ruled the so-called "Mormon Will," purportedly written by the late billionaire Howard Hughes, was a forgery.

In 1995, U.S. Marines rescued Air Force Capt. Scott O'Grady, whose F-16C fighter jet had been shot down by Bosnian Serbs on June 2.

In 2009, North Korea's highest court sentenced American journalists Laura Ling and Euna Lee to 12 years' hard labor for trespassing and "hostile acts." (The women were pardoned in early August 2009 after a trip to Pyongyang by former President Bill Clinton.)

In 2017, former FBI Director James Comey, testifying before Congress, asserted that President Donald Trump fired him to interfere with Comey's investigation of Russia's ties to the Trump campaign.

In 2021, Ratko Mladić, the military chief known as the "Butcher of Bosnia" who was convicted of war crimes committed during the Balkan nation's 1992-95 war, lost his final legal battle when U.N. judges rejected his appeal and affirmed his life sentence.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Nancy Sinatra is 86. Musician Boz Scaggs is 82. Pianist Emanuel Ax is 77. Actor Sonia Braga is 76. Actor Kathy Baker is 76. Computer scientist Tim Berners-Lee is 71. Actor Griffin Dunne is 71. Actor-director Keenen Ivory Wayans is 68. Singer Mick Hucknall (Simply Red) is 66. Musician Nick Rhodes (Duran Duran) is 64. Actor Julianna Margulies is 60. Former U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, a Democrat from Arizona, is 56. Tennis Hall of Famer Lindsay Davenport is 50. TV personality-host Maria Menounos is 48. Country singer-songwriter Sturgill Simpson is 48. Tennis Hall of Famer Kim Clijsters is 43. U.S. Olympic track gold medalist Athing Mu-Nikolayev is 24.