

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 1 of 47

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- 1440 News Headlines](#)
- [4- School Board Agenda](#)
- [5- Deuel shuts out Groton Area, 41-0](#)
- [8- SD SearchLight: Money begins to flow in fight over threshold for South Dakota constitutional changes](#)
- [10- SD SearchLight: Appeals court denies South Dakota's defense of ban on abortion pill advertising](#)
- [11- SD SearchLight: Hiring slows in September with job growth of 29K](#)
- [12- SD SearchLight: Judge blocks federal prosecutors from refiling charges in Reflecting Pool case](#)
- [12- SD SearchLight: Federal funds for local police enforcement accelerated Trump immigration crackdown](#)
- [15- SD SearchLight: Podcast: Governor candidates debate data centers, education, economic development](#)
- [19- Weather Pages](#)
- [23- Daily Devotional](#)
- [24- Subscription Form](#)
- [25- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [26- News from the Associated Press](#)

Community Calendar

Saturday, Oct. 3

Volleyball at Redfield Tournament, 9 a.m.

Sunday, Oct. 4

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

St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion at St. John's, 9 a.m. and at Zion, 11 a.m.

Third Grade Basketball practice in the GHS Gym, 4 p.m.

United Methodist: Worship with communion at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

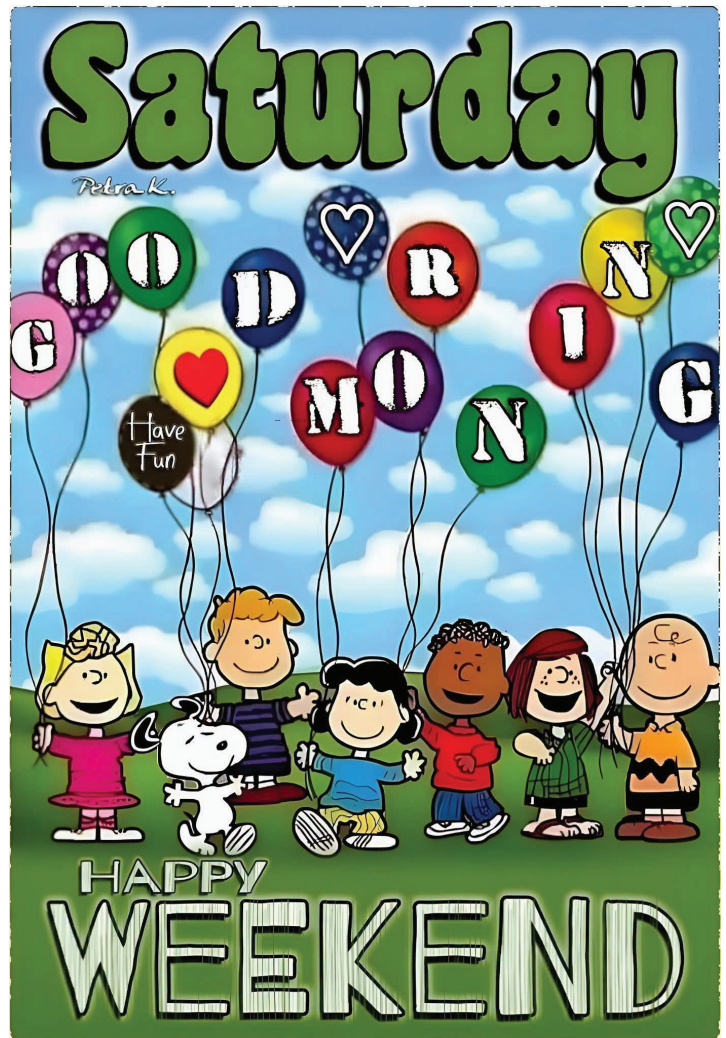
First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

Groton Daily Independent

PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445

Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460

© 2026 Groton Daily Independent



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

Third Grade Girls Basketball, 4 p.m., GHS Old Gym

Sixth Grade Girls Basketball Practice, 4 p.m., Arena

Dance Team Practice, 5:30 p.m., Arena

Monday, Oct. 5

Senior Menu: Chili with beans, mixed vegetables, fruit, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Egg bake.

School Lunch: Corn dogs, baked beans.

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

State A Boys Golf, 9 a.m.

Second Grade Girls Basketball, 3:30 p.m., Elementary Gym

JH Football vs. Deuel at Langford, 4 p.m.

Volleyball hosts Tiospa Zina (JH/C at 5 p.m., JV at 6 p.m., Varsity at 7:15 p.m.)

JV Football vs. Deuel at Langford, 5:30 p.m.

Winter Gear Drive at Dacotah Bank, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 2 of 47

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.

Athletics Spending Spree

Northwestern University debuted its roughly \$875M football stadium—the most expensive college stadium ever built—in a primetime matchup against Penn State last night. The debut is part of a broader influx of money into college athletics.

The College Sports Commission this week announced that athletes received nearly \$1.8B in revenue-sharing payments during the 2025-26 academic year. The system was established last year to settle lawsuits alleging that schools were denying college athletes a share of the commercial value they generated. A bill that passed the Senate this week would more than double the revenue-sharing cap, from roughly \$20M per school to nearly \$50M, with specific funds earmarked for player retention and women's and Olympic sports. It would also increase federal oversight over name, image, and likeness deals, which have generated over \$582M in revenue for college athletes since June 2025.

The top 75 college athletic programs in the US were worth a combined \$51.2B last year, up 13% from the previous year.

G7 leaders agree to release up to 100 million barrels of diesel and crude oil.

The Group of Seven, a forum of leading industrialized democracies, has agreed to release stockpiled fuel to counter soaring energy prices. The release will occur over the next four months, starting with a substantial amount of diesel, which is crucial for long-haul trucking and farming. The average price of US diesel has surged 70%, to \$6.37 per gallon, since the Iran war began in late February.

US hiring slows and unemployment rises ahead of November midterms.

US employers added 29,000 jobs in September, below expectations of 84,000 and down sharply from the 133,000 added in August. The unemployment rate also ticked up 10 basis points to 4.2%, according to the final jobs report before the Nov. 3 midterm elections. A poll published Thursday found that 61% of adults say the national economy is worse off since President Trump took office in 2025.

Congo's Ebola outbreak death toll surpasses 4,000 as unrest mounts.

The latest figures come as soldiers burned down an Ebola transit and treatment center in the Democratic Republic of the Congo this week while searching for weapons and people suspected of belonging to non-state armed groups. The fire forced 19,000 people to flee the camp. Meanwhile, healthcare workers gathered in a nearby city to protest unpaid wages.

Student protests in France close over 400 schools, lead to around 2,000 arrests.

The nationwide protests were spurred by overcrowded classrooms, poor facilities, and teacher shortages. Several have grown violent, with fires started in at least two schools and dozens reportedly injured. The demonstrations come as the French government this week proposed a below-inflation 1.7% increase to the education budget, amid wider austerity measures to rein in the nation's budget deficit.

Tony Romo leaves CBS Sports as NFL analyst following OWI arrest.

The former Dallas Cowboys quarterback is parting ways with CBS Sports after nine years as a lead NFL game analyst. The 46-year-old was arrested during a July traffic stop in Milwaukee after performing poorly on a field sobriety test. He pleaded no contest last month and said he had developed an overreliance on alcohol to cope with pain from injuries sustained during his playing career.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 3 of 47

Feathered dinosaur fossil sheds light on the evolution of flight.

Researchers discovered a new feathered dinosaur species in northeastern China that could likely fly. However, certain bone features hint that it may have belonged to a distinct lineage from that of modern birds, indicating that flight may have evolved separately in different groups of dinosaurs.

Humankind(ness)

Today, we're sharing a story from reader Beth P. in Sealy, Texas.

"I was on a Southwest flight, connecting in Baltimore. I went to wash my hands after we landed and noticed my diamond wedding ring was missing. I was really upset. I went back to the gate I deplaned from, knowing I couldn't go back on the plane. After a frantic minute or so, a nice airline employee was coming up the gangway. I told him what I lost and he asked where I had been sitting. I gave him my row and seat. Five minutes later he came out with my ring. He had gotten down on hands and knees to look under my seat and found it. I was so grateful for his help. I wish I would have gotten his name."

GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

Special School Board Meeting

October 7, 2026 – 7:00 PM

Columbia American Legion – Columbia, SD

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Open Forum for Public Participation...in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.
2. Public Discussion Regarding Middle/High School Building Project and Bond Issue.

ADJOURN

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 5 of 47

Deuel shuts out Groton Area, 41-0

Groton Area ran into an experienced Deuel football team Friday night in Clear Lake as the Cardinals scored on all but two of their possessions in a 41-0 victory over the Tigers.

The only Deuel possessions that did not produce points ended with turnovers, as Asher Johnson intercepted a pass for Groton Area and Layne Johnson recovered a fumble.

Deuel improved to 6-1 with the victory, while Groton Area fell to 2-4.

The Cardinals controlled the game on the ground, rushing for 268 yards on 35 carries while piling up 35 first downs. Deuel quarterback Aidan Sievers rushed 16 times for 182 yards and three touchdowns and completed six of 11 passes for 143 yards.

Groton Area statistician Tom Woods said during the halftime interview that the Tigers knew they were facing an experienced opponent.

"We knew it was going to be a tough game," Woods said. "They're a very experienced team and a very mature team, and it shows."

Woods also offered some historical background on the series and on the Deuel program. Friday's game was Groton's 855th varsity football game dating back to 1914 and the 29th meeting between Groton and the Clear Lake-Deuel program.

The series began in 1985, when Groton won the first meeting 16-0. Entering Friday's game, Groton held a 15-13 advantage in the series. Deuel won last year's meeting 20-0.

Woods noted that the program was originally known as Clear Lake before the school district reorganized and became the Deuel School District in 1989. The district includes Clear Lake, Gary, Goodwin, Brandt, Altamont and Bemis.

Deuel also spent several seasons playing nine-man football, from 2013 through 2020, before returning to Class 11B in 2021.

The Cardinals have never appeared in a state championship game, but they came close last season, advancing to the semifinals before losing to Elk Point-Jefferson. Deuel had also lost to top-ranked Elk Point-Jefferson earlier this season, 33-6, in a game played in heavy rain.

Deuel opened the scoring with just 41 seconds remaining in the first quarter when Gavin Kloos scored on a five-yard run. The extra-point kick was no good, leaving the Cardinals with a 6-0 lead.

Sievers added a 26-yard touchdown run with 9:06 remaining in the second quarter. Deuel's two-point pass attempt failed, making it 12-0.

The Cardinals struck again with 4:31 left before halftime when Sievers scored from 10 yards out. Cole Stangeland kicked the extra point to send Deuel into the locker room with a 19-0 advantage.

Groton Area was limited to three first downs and 12 rushing yards during the first half, but Woods said the Tigers continued working despite the deficit.

"The biggest thing they preach all the time is that every play matters," Woods said of the Groton coaching staff. "Don't quit. Even though we're down 19 to nothing, don't quit and keep working."

Deuel continued its offensive success after halftime.

Kloos connected with Sievers for a 67-yard touchdown pass with 11:11 remaining in the third quarter. Stangeland's kick made it 26-0.

Sievers then broke loose for a 77-yard touchdown run with 3:09 left in the quarter, stretching the Cardinals' lead to 33-0 after another successful kick.

Jaxton Winter added a safety with 1:35 remaining in the third quarter to make it 35-0.

Kloos finished the scoring with 10:10 remaining in the fourth quarter on a 13-yard touchdown run. Hunter Aiden blocked the extra-point attempt, leaving the final margin at 41-0.

Groton Area finished with seven first downs and 59 rushing yards on 35 carries. Johnson led the Tigers with 30 yards on 13 attempts. Anthony Tracy carried seven times for 16 yards, Ryder Schwan had 11 yards on four carries and Alex Abeln added seven yards on one attempt.

Johnson completed six of 16 passes for 86 yards. Tracy caught four passes for 55 yards, while Ryder Schelle had one reception for 31 yards. Keegan Kucker had one reception.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 6 of 47

Deuel added 143 yards through the air. Kloos had three receptions for 95 yards and a touchdown, Braxtin Winter caught one pass for 33 yards, Gavin Maaland had one reception for nine yards and Sutton Benck had one for six yards.

Defensively, Ryder Schwan and Ryder Schelle led Groton Area with five tackles apiece. TC Schuster and Asher Johnson each recorded four tackles, with Johnson also making an interception. Layne Johnson had four tackles and recovered a fumble.

Woods noted at halftime that Groton Area is a young team with only five seniors, two of whom were sidelined by injuries, and said he has been impressed with the commitment shown by the players.

"Playing football is hard," Woods said. "It's not meant for everybody. I told all the boys how proud I am of them and just to keep working hard."

The loss left Groton Area at 2-4 on the season. The Tigers will return to action Oct. 11 against Mobridge-Pollock.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 7 of 47

Groton Area

First Downs 7
Rushing: 35-59
Rushers:
Asher Johnson 13-30
Anthony Tracy 7-16
Case Reints 2-4
Jordan Schwan 4-8
Ryder Schwan 4-11
Ryder Schelle 1-4
Kyson Kucker 1-2
Alex Abeln 1-9
Keegan Kucker 1-(-5)
Passing: 6-17, 86 yards
Asher Johnson 6-16, 86 yards
Alex Abeln 0-1

Receivers:

Anthony Tracy 4-55
Ryder Schelle 1-31
Keegan Kucker 1-0

Fumbles: had 0, lost 0

Penalties: 7-50

Defensive Leaders:

Ryder Schwan 5 tackles
Ryder Schelle 5 tackles
TC Schuster 4 tackles
Asher Johnson 4 tackles, 1 interception
Layne Johnson 4 tackles, 1 fumble recovery

Record: 2-4

Next game: Oct. 11 Mobridge-Pollock

Scoring:

First Quarter: 0:41: Deuel: Gavin Kloos, 5 yard run (PAT kick no good) 0-6
Second Quarter: 9:06: Deuel: Aiden Sievers, 26 yard run (PAT: Sievers to Kloos failed) 0-12
Second Quarter: 4:31: Deuel: Aiden Sievers, 10 yard run (PAT: Cole Stangeland kick good) 0-19
Third Quarter: 11:11: Deuel: Gavin Kloos 67 yard pass to Aiden Sievers (PAT: Stangeland kick good) 0-26
Third Quarter: 3:09: Deuel: Aiden Sievers 77 yard run. (PAT: Stangeland kick good) 0-33
Third Quarter: 1:35: Deuel: Jaxton Winter Safety 0-35
Fourth Quarter: 10:10: Deuel: Gavin Kloos, 13 yard run. (PAT: Stangeland kick blocked by Hunter Aiden) 0-41

Deuel

First Downs: 35
Rushing: 35-268
Rushers:
Aidan Sievers 16-182, 3 TD
Gavin Kloos 9-59, 2 TD
Gavin Maaland 6-23
Asher Bauman 4-4
Passing: 6-11, 143 yards
Aidan Sievers 6-11, 143 yards

Receivers:

Gavin Kloos 3-95, 1 TD
Braxtin Winter 1-33
Gavin Maaland 1-9
Sutton Benck 1-6

Fumbles: had 2, lost 1

Penalties: 1-5

Defensive Leaders:

Jaxton Winter 8 tackles
Carsen Wiesner 9 tackles
Alex Gallardo 6 tackles
Aiden Tvedt 1 interception

Record: 6-1

Next game: bye week



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Money begins to flow in fight over threshold for South Dakota constitutional changes

Opponent group, accused of false advertising, calls allegations 'comical'

BY JOHN HULT

The backers of a South Dakota ballot measure that would make it harder to change the state constitution accused their opponents this week of misleading voters with campaign ads tying the measure to "out-of-state billionaires."

The spokesperson for the opposition called the allegations "comical." The ads are a nod to how much more expensive campaigns for ballot measures would become if it took more votes to pass them, he said.

The dust-up highlights the role out-of-state funders and interest groups have had in recent debates about direct democracy in South Dakota, which was the first state in the U.S. to allow citizens to change laws through initiatives and referendums.

If a majority of voters support it during the general election, Amendment L would change the constitution to require 60% of voters to back any future attempt to change it at the ballot box. The amendment would not change the threshold for passage of citizen-initiated measures or referendums, which deal with laws rather than the constitution.

This is the third attempt to increase the threshold for ballot question passage in South Dakota. Similar measures failed in the 2018 general election and the 2022 primary.

This year's election is Nov. 3, advance voting is underway, and the voter registration deadline is Oct. 19.

Backers: Grassroots effort to protect constitution

Things like the expansion of Medicaid or the legalization of recreational marijuana — both of which have appeared as constitutional amendments on general election ballots in South Dakota — don't belong in the state constitution, said state Rep. John Hughes, R-Sioux Falls, who sponsored the 2025 resolution that lawmakers passed to put Amendment L on the 2026 ballot. He argues changing the state's foundational document ought to be more difficult than changing its laws.

Hughes, a Sioux Falls attorney, is a member of a ballot question committee called Save Our South Dakota Constitution that was launched to support Amendment L. On Tuesday, he sent a cease-and-desist letter to four media organizations that had been airing an advertisement opposing Amendment L.

"Out-of-state billionaires and their lobbyists are coming to South Dakota, pushing Amendment L," the ads say. "They're trying to change the South Dakota Constitution again."

The letter asks station managers to pull the ads for being misleading.

The ads "contain multiple false and materially misleading statements that are defamatory" to the ballot question committee and "associated individuals," Hughes' letter said.

Hughes told South Dakota Searchlight his committee doesn't get its money from out-of-state donors but is supported by a "grassroots coalition" that includes the groups Protecting South Dakota Kids, South Dakota Family Voice, the South Dakota Retailers Association and South Dakota Right to Life.

Hughes said he's upset about the ads in part because he believes out-of-state money is backing the ads calling out his side for having the support of wealthy out-of-staters.

"We hardly have two nickels to rub together," Hughes said.

He did so as a lobbyist for the Foundation for Government Accountability, a think tank whose website says it supports work requirements for the beneficiaries of social welfare programs, annual recertification

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 9 of 47

for unions and the securing or elimination of ballot drop boxes to protect what it calls election integrity, among other issues. It opposes "far-left" efforts to promote diversity, equity and inclusion.

As a 501(c)(3) organization, the Foundation for Government Accountability is not required to disclose its donors by name, but The Washington Post reported that its largest donors in 2022 included a foundation led by billionaire Richard Uihlein.

Nelson sent a press release about the cease-and-desist letter from Save Our South Dakota Constitution on Wednesday.

Campaign finance disclosures for ballot question committees are not due until Oct. 19, but Nelson told South Dakota Searchlight that Foundation for Government Accountability has contributed nothing financially to the Amendment L campaign.

"They have not made any financial commitments," said Nelson, who said the Foundation for Government Accountability is "one of many clients" served by the Redstone law firm in Sioux Falls, where he works.

All the funding for Save Our South Dakota Constitution comes from within the state, Nelson and Hughes said.

L-No: Ads make a broader point

Zach Nistler is a spokesperson for L-No, the ballot question committee formed to oppose Amendment L. The ads, which Nistler said had already been scheduled for replacement with newer materials by the time the cease-and-desist letter was delivered, were not meant to call out Save Our South Dakota Constitution as a group supported financially by out-of-state billionaires, Nistler said.

They couldn't have been, he said. The ad contracts were signed and initial broadcasts aired before the pro-Amendment L group had filed its statement of organization with the South Dakota Secretary of State's Office.

"We find it comical," Nistler said, that the committee members or Hughes would believe the ads were about them specifically.

T.J. Nelson, a Sioux Falls lawyer, testified on behalf of the 2025 resolution to put the amendment on the ballot.

"I don't mean to be rude, but we weren't even thinking about them," he said.

The idea behind the broadcast ads and mailed opposition materials that reference "out-of-state billionaires," Nistler said, is that making it more difficult to pass a constitutional amendment would inevitably push up the price of campaigns to do so.

The costlier the campaign, Nistler said, the more likely campaigners are to need backing from wealthy non-South Dakotans.

The reference to billionaires is meant to highlight "how much further out of reach it is for regular South Dakotans to make changes to their constitution" at a 60% vote threshold, Nistler said, "and how it doesn't make a dent for the people who have unlimited resources."

Nistler also pointed out that a group called Americans for Prosperity supported the campaign for Amendment C, the 2022 measure to raise the threshold for passing ballot questions.

Americans for Prosperity, founded by billionaire businessman David Koch, bills itself as a group whose political operations support limited government and personal freedom.

Outside funding for L-No

The news release on the cease-and-desist letters says that Amendment L's opponents have spent "at least \$400,000" on advertising. Nelson said he calculated the figures based on invoices for the L-No broadcast ads filed with the Federal Communications Commission.

When asked if the \$400,000 figure was roughly representative of L-No's spending thus far, Nistler did not address the figure. He sent a statement via text that read, in part, "the L-No campaign will continue to highlight that South Dakotans have overwhelmingly voted no twice" on amendments similar to Amendment L, "and will do so again."

Meanwhile, the secretary of state's website lists \$260,000 in campaigning against Amendment L paid for by the nonprofit group The Fairness Project, listed under the category of "communication expenditures."

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 10 of 47

The Fairness Project is a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit that says it is “dedicated to advancing social and economic justice via ballot measures.”

In Missouri, the group has donated millions to support abortion rights ballot measures, according to the Southeast Missourian. In South Dakota, it backed the successful 2022 campaign to expand Medicaid, a joint federal-state health insurance program for people with disabilities, children and those with low incomes, with a constitutional amendment.

In South Dakota, nonprofit organizations can spend money on political advertising and file reports for their spending as communication expenditures. The only such reports associated with Amendment L so far in 2026 have come from The Fairness Project.

Funding for L-No comes from what Nistler called a coalition of South Dakota groups, including Dakota Rural Action, the League of Women Voters of South Dakota and South Dakota Farmers Union, among others.

Nistler did not volunteer The Fairness Project as a backer but said the group is part of “the coalition” working against Amendment L.

Both The Fairness Project and the Foundation for Government Accountability — the organization that paid Nelson to lobby on behalf of the Amendment L bill in Pierre in 2025 — are nonprofit organizations required to file 990 forms with the Internal Revenue Service that disclose their funds but not their individual donors. The Fairness Project’s most recent 990, for tax year 2024, lists \$33.1 million in contributions.

John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.

Appeals court denies South Dakota’s defense of ban on abortion pill advertising **BY MEGHAN O’BRIEN**

An appeals court shut down an attempt from South Dakota’s attorney general and governor to overturn a decision that blocks enforcement of a law that criminalizes abortion pill advertising in the state.

Gov. Larry Rhoden and Attorney General Marty Jackley, both Republicans, filed the appeal in August after a lower court blocked enforcement of the law while a lawsuit over the law’s constitutionality played out.

Nancy Turbak Berry, a Democratic former state legislator from Watertown, and New York-based nonprofit Mayday Health filed a lawsuit in May against Rhoden and Jackley. Rhoden signed the legislation into law in March after lawmakers approved it, but it wasn’t scheduled to take effect until July 1.

South Dakota already has a near-total ban on abortion, except when it’s necessary “to preserve the life of the pregnant female.”

The new law prohibits the dispensing, distribution and advertising of abortion pills and other abortion-related items, and makes violations punishable by prison time and fines.

In mid-July, a federal judge in Rapid City ruled the state could not enforce the new law while the lawsuit played out. Rhoden and Jackley sought to overturn that decision.

“Mayday’s activities are an irreparable threat to unborn life and maternal health,” Jackley wrote in his appeal.

The 8th Circuit Court denied that bid, which means the state cannot enforce the law while a case of whether or not the law is constitutional plays out.

Mayday Health and Turbak Berry say the law illegally restricts Turbak Berry’s free speech. As an example, the lawsuit says the prohibition on advertising would prevent her from wearing a sweatshirt sold by Mayday. The sweatshirt says abortion pills can be obtained in all 50 states and encourages people to learn more on Mayday’s website.

“Unless this court grants relief, Turbak will be deterred from wearing the sweatshirt,” and thereby deterred from engaging in First Amendment-protected speech, the lawsuit says.

U.S. District Judge Camela Theeler wrote in her July ruling that the state’s lawyers have “not shown that Mayday advertises with the specific intent that another person engage in specific criminal conduct and

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 11 of 47

thus have not shown that Mayday's advertising is integral to criminal conduct."

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.

Hiring slows in September with job growth of 29K

BY TIM HENDERSON

Jobs across the United States rose by 29,000 in September, a disappointing result as recent growth was also revised down in Friday's monthly jobs report, the last one before midterm elections.

September growth was a large dip from a strong August number that was revised down from 162,000 to 133,000 in the new report. July jobs were also revised from an increase of 21,000 to a decrease of 10,000, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics monthly report.

"This is a textbook weak jobs report," economist Kathryn Anne Edwards said on a live chat on Substack after the release.

The fact that earnings, up 3%, are not keeping up with 3.4% inflation, means "We can say pretty categorically that things got worse for workers this month," Edwards said.

Average hourly earnings increased slightly to \$37.81, up 3% from a year ago. The unemployment rate ticked up to 4.2% from 4.1% in August, but still a decrease from 4.4% in September 2025.

Speaking on Fox News, Kevin Hassett, director of the National Economic Council, tried to frame the joblessness increase as a result of a labor market that more potential workers have returned to since August.

"People are seeing the strong labor market and they're saying, 'Oh I need to get back in the labor force because I'm going to make so much money.' That's one reason why the unemployment rate just ticked in a different direction," Hassett said.

The labor force increased by 485,000 people in September, according to the report, but that's still a decrease of a million from September 2025. .

Black unemployment jumped 1 point to 7% for the month, though it also is down from 7.6% in September 2025.

Health care jobs led September job growth at 16,700. That's still a slowdown from an average of 33,000 per month over the past year as hospitals continue to seek financial stability. Some health systems had layoffs last month in Vermont and New Hampshire. Government jobs dropped by 17,000, mostly in local governments.

The freight economy has been reeling from the impact of high diesel prices, and job losses have been announced in that industry. Nonetheless the federal statistics show a monthly job increase of 2,600 in September for truck transportation jobs, but a drop of 4,100 in warehousing and storage jobs.

An alternative jobs report from payroll processor ADP found a 90,000-job gain in September, with more than half of those coming gains in the Mid-Atlantic region of New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania.

Stateline reporter Tim Henderson can be reached at thenderson@stateline.org.

This story was originally produced by Stateline, which is part of States Newsroom, a nonprofit news network which includes South Dakota Searchlight, and is supported by grants and a coalition of donors as a 501c(3) public charity.

Tim Henderson covers demographics for Stateline. He has been a reporter at the Miami Herald, the Cincinnati Enquirer and the Journal News.

Judge blocks federal prosecutors from refileing charges in Reflecting Pool case

BY JENNIFER SHUTT

WASHINGTON — A D.C. Superior Court judge ruled Thursday that prosecutors cannot, for a second time, charge former Olympic canoeist David Hearn with damaging the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool.

Judge Todd E. Edelman wrote in his ruling that “the observed damage to the Reflecting Pool was due to a contractor’s ‘rushed and botched’ installation of the lining while conducting renovations, and Mr. Hearn’s actions had no effect on the value of the Pool.”

U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia Jeanine Pirro sought to drop the charges against Hearn, of Maryland, in August, writing in a brief to the court that she wouldn’t have filed a case against him had she had more information from the Interior Department, which manages the Reflecting Pool.

“Specifically, the newly released documents reveal that work on installing the lining almost immediately fell behind, due to a combination of very rainy and windy weather, repeated failures of testing on the sealing of the expansion joints, and delays in obtaining sealing product at the worksite,” Pirro wrote. “The rush to complete the project led to hasty and botched work that was not remediated before the project was finished and the fencing removed.”

But Edelman had to hold a hearing on the future of the case in early September after federal prosecutors signaled they may try to refile the charges.

The judge’s 26-page ruling blocks that from happening.

“The Court respects the authority of the Office of the United States Attorney to decide which cases to prosecute and which to dismiss,” Edelman wrote. “However, in the exceptional circumstances posed by this case, the government has no right to retain the ability to compound the errors it has already made, or even to threaten to do so, at Mr. Hearn’s expense.”

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

Federal funds for local police enforcement accelerated Trump immigration crackdown

BY ARIANA FIGUEROA

WASHINGTON — This summer, arrests of immigrants in the United States soared to the highest levels since President Donald Trump returned to office.

An unprecedented increase in cooperation between local and state law enforcement and federal immigration officers through collaborations known as 287(g) agreements helped drive numbers up.

The agreements allow state and local law enforcement agencies to enforce parts of federal immigration law and have become an arm of Trump’s mass deportation campaign. Republicans in Congress have provided billions in federal funding for local departments that accept the agreements, creating a deluge of new partners.

Theresa Cardinal Brown, a senior Department of Homeland Security official during the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations, said the billions in new funding has helped the program grow.

“Mostly, 287(g) agreements were voluntary, and the costs were borne by the state and local government to train their own people,” she said. “Now, the federal government has money to pay them, and so that’s encouraging more states and localities to do it because it’s a budget plus-up.”

In June, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement recorded roughly 43,000 immigration arrests, followed by 49,000 in July and nearly 51,000 in August. ICE does not distinguish between arrests initially made by local law enforcement or federal officials.

Those three months also saw the most new 287(g) agreements signed since Trump took office, according to a States Newsroom analysis of government data.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 13 of 47

"ICE has increased efforts with state and local law enforcement to assist federal immigration officers in our efforts to make America safe again," a Department of Homeland Security spokesperson said in a statement to States Newsroom.

But those efforts have generated protests in some of the communities where they've appeared.

Democrats in Maryland and Maine passed laws restricting cooperation between local police and ICE. The Maryland measure's supporters said it would reduce distrust of police.

Skyrocketing growth

The president's signature 2025 domestic policy bill, the "One, Big Beautiful" Act, set aside about \$4 billion for state and local governments to conduct immigration enforcement, including 287(g) programs. The Secure America Act passed in June allocated more than \$31 billion to implement those agreements as well.

Both packages were passed by Republicans through a legislative maneuver known as reconciliation that did not need Democratic votes.

The funds incentivized massive growth.

Before Trump took office in January 2025, the federal government had agreements with 135 state and local police departments. As of Oct. 1, those agreements skyrocketed to 2,608, according to DHS data.

Local departments or state agencies in 38 states have 287(g) agreements, with the highest numbers in Texas and Florida, where there are state laws requiring local law enforcement to partake in the program.

The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday the Florida Highway Patrol was eligible for \$26 million in reimbursements from the federal government for arrests from April through June.

"My educated guess would be that a large number of the arrests and detentions that we've seen increasing in recent months in the summer were because there was an increase in 287(g) agreements in Texas and Florida, but other parts of the country as well," said Ariel G. Ruiz Soto, a senior policy analyst at the Migration Policy Institute, a think tank that studies global migration.

ICE does not always specify when an immigration arrest is made through the partnership program, but the Deportation Data Project, a project of the University of California schools in Berkeley and Los Angeles that analyzes government immigration enforcement data, has attributed at least 6,150 arrests in July, about 12.5% of all arrests for that month.

Only 12 states have no such agreements. They are California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington state.

Three models

The partnership program was created in a 1996 law, but not actively used until the 9/11 terrorist attacks. It first received federal appropriations in 2006.

Three types of partnerships operate within the program.

The loosest type of agreement is the jail enforcement model, where deputized officers can inquire about the immigration status of people arrested on state or local charges, as well as hold a noncitizen for ICE to pick up for up to 48 hours.

In another model, the warrants service officer model, ICE trains, certifies and allows state and local law enforcement to issue administrative warrants, which are not signed by a judge, but by an ICE official requesting the arrest of a noncitizen. Local law enforcement officers under this model do not inquire about immigration status.

The task force model, which involves the greatest immigration enforcement by local officers, allows for immigration officials to deputize local officers to partake in immigration duties such as asking about immigration status or even detaining people and transferring them to ICE.

As part of its immigration crackdown, the second Trump administration revived the task force model after the Obama administration discontinued it in 2012 over concerns of racial profiling.

It has seen the largest increase under Trump, Ruiz Soto said.

More than 71% of 287(g) agreements now use the task force model, according to Titus Consulting, a firm that tracks the agreements. About 7% use the jail enforcement model and more than 21% use the warrant model.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 14 of 47

The task force model is "hands down," the most effective method in arresting noncitizens, said Todd Bensmen, a senior research fellow for the Border Security and Immigration Center at The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank.

"If they're not deputized under that, they just come into contact with people that are fully ... deportable, and then just leave them be," he said of local law enforcement. "They can just arrest them on the spot and call ICE, and that way you have a really dramatic force multiplier and ICE doesn't have to do anything but come and pick them up."

Program changes

In 2006, the Bush administration took an interest in exploring 287(g) programs, specifically the jail enforcement model because it was easy for ICE to identify people who are subject to an immigration arrest, said Brown.

"If your job is to find people, wow, that's the easiest thing to do," she said of the jail model.

Brown said that spurred the idea for the Secure Communities program. Under the program, the FBI automatically sent fingerprints of a person booked in custody to DHS to check against its immigration database. If the person was a noncitizen who was unauthorized in the U.S., then ICE was notified.

The program was voluntary, but there was pushback from immigration advocates during the Obama administration, Brown said.

"There was a concern that this was mixing criminal enforcement and immigration enforcement in ways they weren't meant to, (and) it was creating fear among immigration communities of reporting crimes for fear that they would be arrested," she said.

The Obama administration pulled back and redirected the Secure Communities program to a federal government model.

"They turned it from like a community-by-community rollout to just a federal-to-federal information sharing agreement that remains in place today," she said.

Brown said the difference now is that some communities have decided when ICE is notified, if at all, and whether or not to honor detainers, which are requests from ICE to hold an immigrant until federal immigration officers arrive.

Local governments that have not wanted to participate in federal immigration enforcement have been dubbed sanctuary cities.

The Trump administration has threatened to pull federal funding from those cities that don't want to aid in immigration enforcement and has offered an influx of cash to states and local governments that have agreed to participate.

The Republican Congress has funded the program for the next three years, Ruiz Soto noted.

"It would then come to ... what a future administration or a future Congress would do to continue expanding this or not fulfill them anymore," he said. "But clearly right now ICE has significant funding to last for 287(g) and much more other enforcement in the near future."

Ariana covers the nation's capital for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include immigration, congressional policy and legal challenges with a focus on how those policies impact the lives of immigrants and migrants coming to the U.S.

Podcast: Governor candidates debate data centers, education, economic development

BY MEGHAN O'BRIEN

O'BRIEN: Welcome back to Searchlight Report, the podcast from South Dakota Searchlight that brings you up to date on policy and politics in the Mount Rushmore State. I'm your host, Meghan O'Brien.

Earlier this week, the two candidates battling for the governor's seat met for a second and final debate before the November 3rd general election.

Current governor, Republican Larry Rhoden, was previously lieutenant governor to Kristi Noem, who resigned early last year. That elevated Rhoden to the governorship. Rhoden is hoping to maintain his office.

RHODEN: When I first started, in my first address to the public, I pledged that the pillars of my administration would be openness, responsiveness, civility and integrity. And I've lived up to those promises. But leadership is a lot more than a title. I've been a leader long before I was in the Legislature. I served in the National Guard. I was a church deacon, volunteer firefighter, a coach. I served on the school board for five and a half years. I was in the Legislature for 16 years, including a number of leadership positions, and then I was lieutenant governor for six years after that, and then I was governor. We've seen some incredible things happen in South Dakota in the last couple years. And I pledge that if I have the opportunity to serve another four years, we're just getting started.

O'BRIEN: Challenger Dan Ahlers is a Democrat from Dell Rapids. He has served as executive director of the state's Democratic Party and previously served six years in the Legislature.

AHLERS: I'm a husband, a father, a small business owner, and a former legislator who spent his entire career trying to build stronger communities and a better state. For nearly 40 years, Amy and I have called Dell Rapids our home. It's where I owned my small business. It's where I serve my community in a variety of ways, from president of our chamber of commerce to leading our before and after school program, and working as a substitute teacher. I also had the privilege of serving six years in the South Dakota Legislature. What I learned from this experience is that leadership isn't about having all the answers. It's about being a good listener. It's about bringing people together and doing the hard work to solve problems. That's the type of leadership you deserve, and that's why I'm running for governor.

O'BRIEN: The debate — hosted by South Dakota Public Broadcasting and South Dakota News Watch — asked candidates about the state's education policies, taxes, tribal relations and other issues.

As the national conversation on data centers continues, Rhoden said his administration has already addressed the issue in South Dakota.

Rhoden signed legislation this year which requires data centers that use at least 10 megawatts of energy to cover the cost of their power demands and any costs a community might incur if that data center leaves unexpectedly. It also stops the state from preempting local laws to limit, ban or regulate data centers.

The bill also directs companies that want to build data centers to tell local water providers how much water they'd need and get confirmation from local providers that a project is compatible with the local water supply.

If data centers are going to be built, though, Rhoden said he'd want them in the United States.

RHODEN: I say, how much more important is it that we keep evil foreign governments like China from owning our data than it is land in South Dakota? We should and need to be in charge and have control of data that's produced in America.

O'BRIEN: Ahlers said South Dakotans should have control of what that infrastructure looks like at the

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 16 of 47

local level.

AHLERS: I think more importantly, we should be asking with the people of South Dakota what they want, and what they've been telling us is they don't want these data centers in their communities. They want to know that there's safeguards on their resources, and they don't feel like the state has done enough to do that.

O'BRIEN: Candidates also responded to questions about affordability in the state. Ahlers wants more state funding for public education.

AHLERS: If we just followed our state statute and fully funded education, which we don't always do, and there was a record of it even when I was in the Legislature of not doing it. We haven't the last couple of years. If we do that, and we fund education at the state level the way we're supposed to, your property taxes will go down. When we don't fund it at the state level, it's made up in the local effort. We could also be funding school lunches. If we did that, we would save each family in South Dakota \$800 per child.

O'BRIEN: He also suggested tax credits or rebates for child care, but didn't provide specifics on that plan. In response to affordability concerns, Rhoden pointed out other key legislation he'd signed during this year's legislative session.

RHODEN: By far, what I hear as far as affordability is property taxes. This year, we passed the largest property tax cut in the history of the state, and with Senate Bill 245, the combination Senate Bill 245 and 96, that represents statewide, on average, a 34% cut in your property taxes for your home. That's significant.

O'BRIEN: Rhoden was referencing a legislative package he signed into law earlier this year. One new law diverts an estimated \$110 million or more in sales tax revenue into a fund to offset property taxes for education. That revenue will come when a 2023 sales tax reduction expires next year, raising the state sales tax from 4.2% to 4.5%.

RHODEN: The legislators, including both sides of the aisle, were already talking about how they were going to invest that extra \$114 million that was going to come back online. I thought if they're if they're already looking for ways to spend it to increase the size of government, why not use those dollars to provide property tax relief for all the citizens of South Dakota?

O'BRIEN: Another \$56 million in general budget funds is being used to lower property taxes immediately. A second law lets counties add an additional 0.5% sales tax to decrease property taxes for homeowners in those counties.

Ahlers said that legislation is a tax shift, from property tax to sales tax.

AHLERS: And those that are renting are not only paying a higher rate in a commercial building for a higher mill levy rate. They're also now paying that sales tax with no relief. So those that can afford it the least are now paying the most.

O'BRIEN: This year's property tax legislation could help renters buy their first home, Rhoden responded, as well as shift the tax burden to tourists who spend money in the state.

Both candidates also shared what they think is the biggest challenge facing South Dakota's public education.

In previous years the state funded state education at a rate higher than what's required by the state funding formula, Rhoden said.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 17 of 47

RHODEN: We've moved the needle a great deal, I believe. In the last few years, teacher salaries have increased by 10,000, \$10,000 a teacher.

Ahlers said teacher pay is still a major concern.

AHLERS: I think it's retaining teachers and paying for our teachers. We're losing teachers from, not just through retirement or out of state anymore, we're losing teachers entirely from the profession.

O'BRIEN: Candidates also debated the state's approach to economic development and how South Dakota leaders can work with the nine tribal nations within the state's borders. We'll be back with that after this short break.

O'BRIEN: As Republican Governor Larry Rhoden and Democratic challenger Dan Ahlers participated in their last debate, they responded to questions about the state's role in economic development.

Rhoden relied on his record as governor during recent legislative sessions. Earlier this year, he signed legislation that puts restrictions on the Future Fund, which was created in 1987 at the request of then-Gov. George Mickelson, a Republican.

South Dakota employers pay fees to the fund through unemployment payroll taxes. The fund was placed under the governor's exclusive control to spend from when economic opportunities in the state arise.

Rhoden said his economic development efforts helped bring three major projects to the state. That includes a soybean crushing plant outside Mitchell, the relocation of Smithfield Foods' pork processing plant outside of downtown Sioux Falls, and the recruitment of CJ Schwan's new food packing plant to Sioux Falls.

RHODEN: Well, I think we've done a significant amount, and the Future Fund is a big part of that.

O'BRIEN: A new law, signed by Rhoden, defines acceptable uses for the fund and requires more reporting to lawmakers about applications for funds. It also directs the Governor's Office of Economic Development to set rules on the fund's use and recommend potential awards to the governor.

RHODEN I brought that to the table, and I did an executive order that spelled out exactly what we thought was the appropriate use of future funds. The legislators thought it was a huge step in the right direction. So much so that some of them came to me and said, "Well, are you willing to put it in an executive order, are you willing to put it in statute?"

But Ahlers said economic development programs should focus on South Dakota-owned businesses, instead of large companies headquartered outside of the state.

AHLERS: I think it is, the Future Fund is a good economic tool for drawing in new business, for also working with current businesses and allowing them to expand. I think that flexibility is good. I think there needs to be more transparency. I think there needs to be more accountability to that fund. I think that we need to spend more time focusing on South Dakota businesses and investing in those people locally.

O'BRIEN: South Dakota is home to nine tribal nations. Former Governor Kristi Noem — Rhoden's predecessor — was at one point banned from all nine reservations during her administration after she accused tribal leaders of benefiting from drug cartel activity and said Native American children quote "don't have any hope."

Rhoden said his administration is working on strengthening the relationship between state and tribal leaders.

RHODEN COMMENT: Well, we've seen it from this administration. In fact, I was the one that said, and

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 18 of 47

it was two years ago at my first State of the State address that we were going to reset with the tribes, and the results have been tremendous in the last 20 months, two years.

He specifically pointed out state initiatives that support tribal law enforcement.

O'BRIEN: Ahlers said he wants a tribal commission that involves representatives from all nine tribes.

AHLERS: They need to have a seat at the table. They need to have a say in the matter. I think that we need to spend more time collaborating with our tribes. There are opportunities in public safety where we could be providing more services, collaborating.

O'BRIEN: For more coverage on the debate, check out reporting by Joshua Haiar at SouthDakotaSearchlight.com

Ahlers and Rhoden will be on the November 3rd general election ballot. Early voting is underway. The voter registration deadline is October 19th.

For more information on Ahlers and Rhoden, check out our voter guide, which is accessible on our website's homepage.

That's all we have for this week on Searchlight Report. The podcast is based on reporting by South Dakota Searchlight's staff — editor Seth Tupper, senior reporter John Hult, and reporters Joshua Haiar, Makenzie Huber and me. I write the scripts and produce the audio, with editing by Seth Tupper.

Audio this week came from recordings by South Dakota Public Broadcasting.

South Dakota Searchlight is part of States Newsroom, the nation's largest nonprofit news organization.

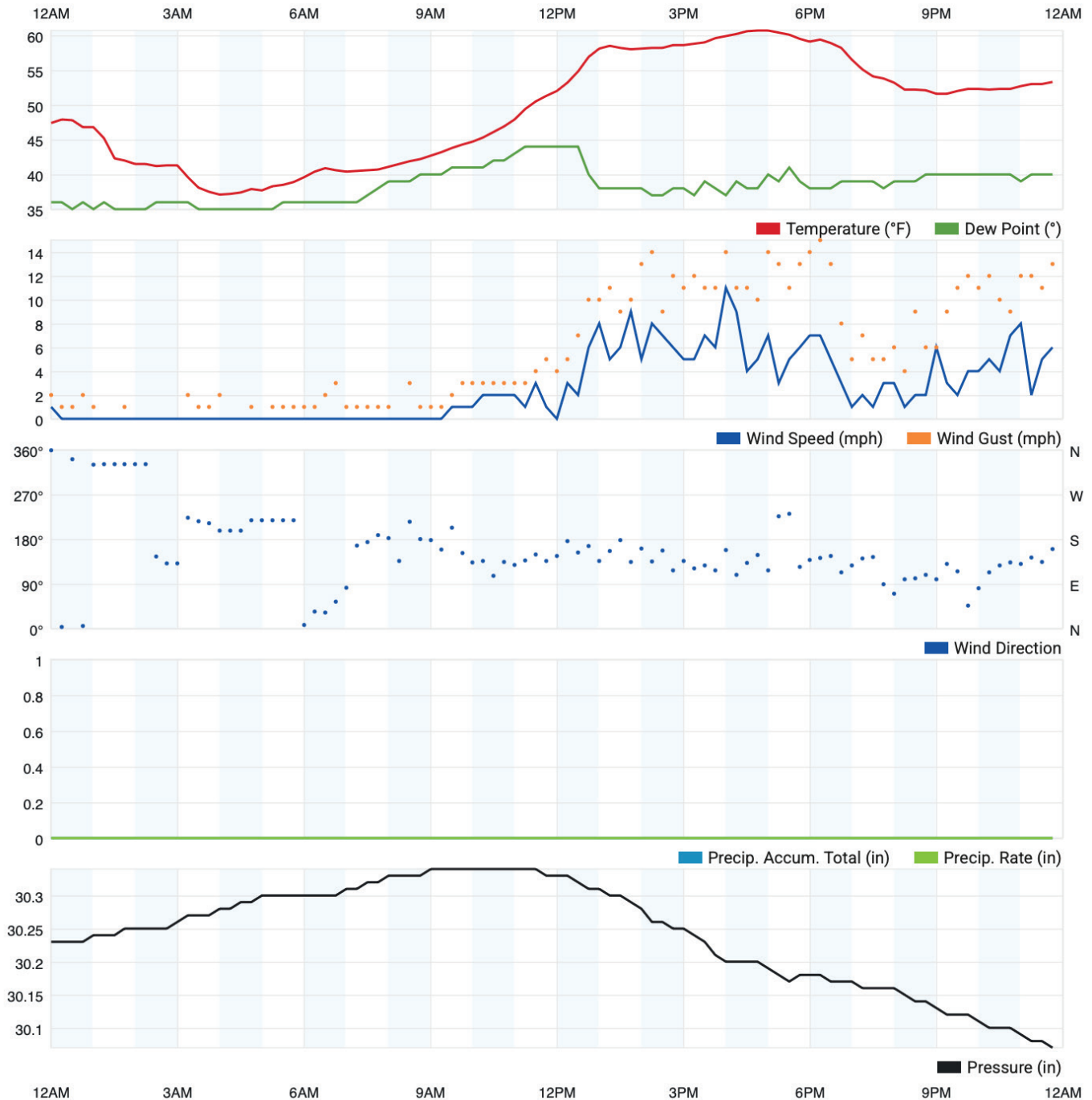
Until next time, I'm South Dakota Searchlight's Meghan O'Brien with the Searchlight Report.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 19 of 47

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

October 2, 2026



Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 20 of 47

Today



High: 73 °F

Slight Chance
Showers

Tonight



Low: 43 °F

Mostly Clear

Sunday



High: 68 °F

Sunny

Sunday Night



Low: 42 °F

Mostly Clear

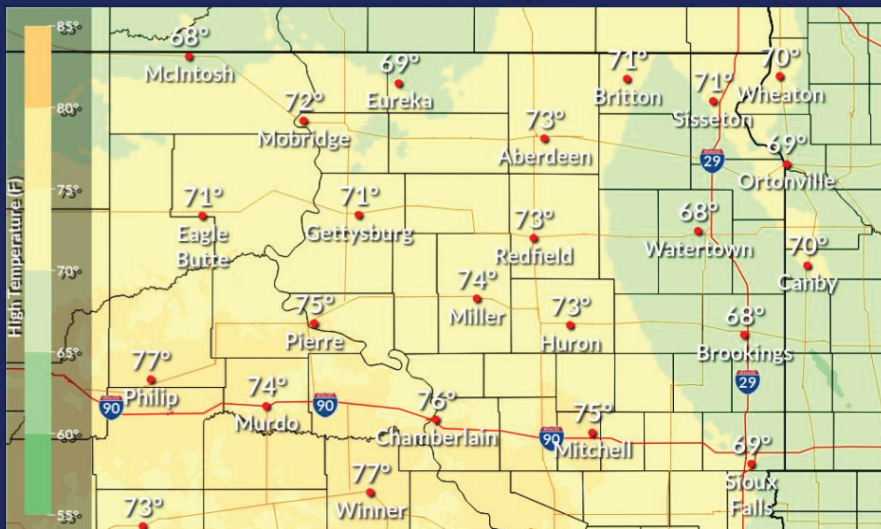
Monday



High: 71 °F

Sunny

High Temperatures Today upper 60s to mid 70s



20-40% chance of
very light showers
over northeastern
SD & west central
MN

Sunday Weather
Outlook:



Dry with Highs
mainly in the 60s



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Highs will be in the upper 60s to mid 70s today, under a partly cloudy sky. There is a 20 to 40% chance of very light rain showers over portions of northeastern South Dakota and west central Minnesota. Sunday will be dry and sunny with highs mainly in the 60s.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 21 of 47

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 61 °F at 4:29 PM

Low Temp: 37 °F at 4:05 AM

Wind: 15 mph at 6:14 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 95 in 1922

Record Low: 20 in 1894

Average High: 67

Average Low: 39

Average Precip in Oct.: 0.24

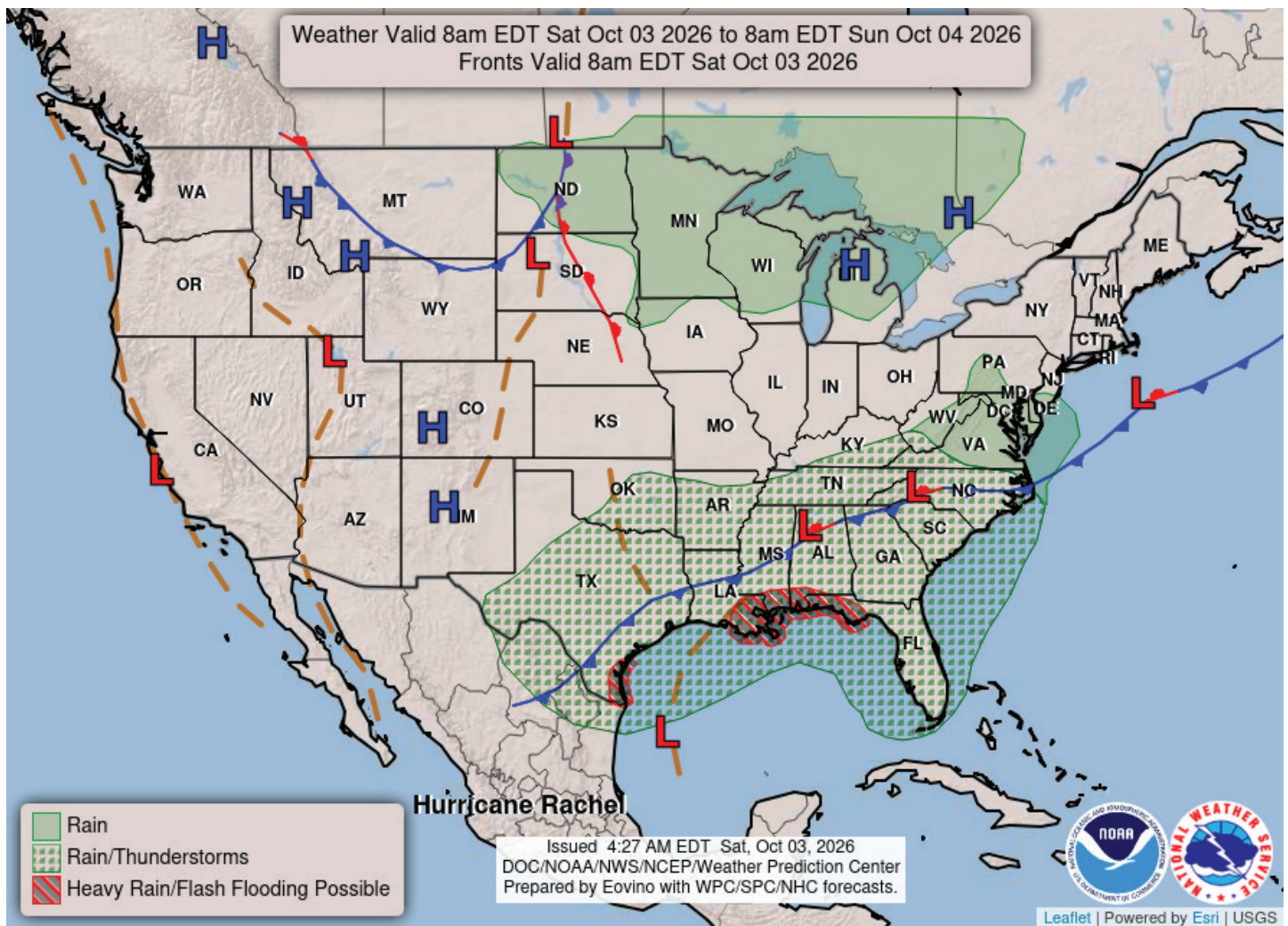
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 18.57

Precip Year to Date: 22.08

Sunset Tonight: 7:09 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:34 am



Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 22 of 47

Today in Weather History

October 3, 1985: High winds of 60 to 75 mph occurred across much of western South Dakota from the late afternoon of the 3rd into the early morning hours of the 4th. The winds blew down power lines and caused power outages for many locations in the Black Hills. The strong winds uprooted trees in Rapid City and blew the roof off of a barn near Newell in Butte County.

1780: A hurricane, which formed on October 1st, destroyed the port city of Savanna-la-Mar on the island of Jamaica on this day. By some estimates, this storm caused 3,000 deaths. This storm is documented in the Jamaica Archives and Record Department.

1841 — An October gale, the worst of record for Nantucket, MA, caught the Cap Cod fishing fleet at sea. Forty ships were driven ashore on Cape Cod, and 57 men perished from the town of Truro alone. Heavy snow fell inland, with 18 inches near Middletown, CT. (David Ludlum)

1903: An unusual late-season tornado moved northeast from west of Chatfield, Minnesota, passing through and devastating St. Charles, Minnesota. Seven people were killed, and 30 injured as 50 homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed.

1912 — The longest dry spell of record in the U.S. commenced as Bagdad, CA, went 767 days without rain. (David Ludlum)

1964 — Hurricane Hilda struck Louisiana spawning many tornadoes, and claimed twenty-two lives. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders)

1979: An F4 tornado struck the towns of Windsor, Windsor Locks, and Suffield in Connecticut, causing an estimated \$400 million in property damage, on this day. The New England Air Museum, which housed more than 20 vintage aircraft, was destroyed. This tornado also caused a United Airlines flight to abort a landing at the Bradley International Airport because the pilot saw the tornado.

1979 — The first killer tornado of record in October in Connecticut destroyed sixteen vintage aircraft at the Bradley Air Museum in Windsor Locks. The tornado damaged more than one hundred homes causing 200 million dollars damage. Three persons were killed, and 500 others were injured. (The Weather Channel)

1986 — Remnants of Hurricane Paine deluged Oklahoma and southeastern Kansas with 6 to 10 inch overnight rains. Hardy, OK, was drenched with 21.79 inches. Heavy rain between September 26th and October 4th caused 350 million dollars damage in Oklahoma. (The Weather Channel)

1987 — Twenty-five cities in the Upper Midwest, including ten in Iowa, reported record low temperatures for the date. Duluth MN, Eau Claire, WI, and Spencer, IA, dipped to 24 degrees. Temperatures warmed into the 80s in the Northern and Central High Plains Region. At Chadron, NE, the mercury soared from a morning low of 29 degrees to an afternoon high of 88 degrees. Temperatures soared above 100 degrees in southern California. The high of 108 degrees at Downtown Los Angeles was a record for October. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 — Cold Canadian air invaded the north central U.S. bringing an end to the growing season across those states. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed in the southwestern U.S. Phoenix, AZ, reported a record high of 105 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 — Unseasonably cold weather prevailed from the Pacific Northwest to the Upper Mississippi Valley. A dozen cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Bismarck, ND, and Williston, ND, with readings of 16 degrees above zero. An upper level weather disturbance brought snow to parts of Idaho, Wyoming and Montana, with five inches reported at West Yellowstone, MT. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2002: Hurricane Lili made landfall between White Lake and Vermilion Bay, Louisiana as a Category 1 storm.

2015: Unprecedented rainfall fell throughout South Carolina from October 1st — 5th, 2015. Storm total amounts greater than 20" were observed in Columbia and Sumter.

2017: The City of Houston had the wettest year on record with 73.51 inches. The previous wettest year was in 1900 when 72.86 inches were measured.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 23 of 47



Daily Devotion

Spiritual Maturity

Facing hardship allows us to deepen our reliance on God.

Isaiah 48:10-11: 10 "Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.

11 "For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; For how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another.

The world's way is to choose the strongest and smartest individuals to accomplish tasks. In contrast, the Lord works through those whose greatest qualification is their dependence on Him. Reliance on God is what characterizes the mature in faith.

This kind of maturity isn't automatic. Our Father patiently meets people where they are but lovingly refuses to let them stay there. He helps us to grow more and more like His Son (2 Corinthians 3:18). The Holy Spirit illuminates our understanding, and then, over time, the Lord builds in us a deeper dependence on Himself and a submission to His Spirit. This transformation is often gradual—but God sometimes allows difficulty to deepen our reliance on Him.

Let's consider some biblical models of faith. Sarah and Abraham dealt with infertility before receiving the promised child (Genesis 21:1-2). Joseph was sold into slavery and imprisoned before he helped his nation survive famine (Genesis 45:5). These people faced hardships and brokenness, which allowed them to recognize both their own inability and God's ability.

Whatever is holding us back from fully trusting the Lord, His invitation remains the same: Lean into Him. In our weakness, He is strong.

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

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 24 of 47

The Groton Independent

Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.2% Sales Tax

- ☐ Black & White.....\$52.00/year
- ☐ Colored\$80.00/year
- ☐ Colored\$49.00/6 months
- ☐ E-Weekly*\$35.00/year

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

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Groton Daily Independent

www.397news.com

Subscription Form

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

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

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

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

E-mail _____

Password _____

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

paypal.me/paperpaul

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

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 25 of 47



WINNING NUMBERS

MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.02.26

12 13 23 29 41 2

TOP PRIZE:

\$1,000,000/year

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 55 Mins 47 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.02.26

6 37 40 41 55 10

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$345,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.30.26

16 23 38 39 48 2

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$6,050,000

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 55 Mins 47 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.30.26

8 11 19 21 33

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$74,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 10 Mins 47 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.30.26

10 16 27 42 57 14

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 39 Mins 47 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.30.26

4 6 23 33 44 13

Power Play: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$440,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 39 Mins 47 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 26 of 47

News from the  Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL

Avon 46, Colman-Egan 6
Belle Fourche 46, Douglas 0
Bennett County 42, Kadoka 22
Brandon Valley 38, Harrisburg 12
Canton 42, Tri-Valley 8
Castlewood 35, Elkton-Lake Benton 12
Centerville 56, Gayville-Volin High School 6
Clark-Willow Lake 26, Mobridge-Pollock 24
Corsica/Stickney 48, TDAACDC 12
Dakota Valley 57, Milbank 20
Dell Rapids St Mary's 50, Irene-Wakonda 0
Deubrook 38, Chester 22
Deuel 41, Groton 0
Elk Point-Jefferson 38, Sioux Valley 20
Freeman 51, Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan 0
Garretson 35, Viborg-Hurley 34
Gettysburg 52, Leola-Frederick High School 18
Great Plains Lutheran 42, Florence-Henry 6
Hamlin 54, Webster 0
Hanson 22, Baltic 14
Harding County 42, Hill City 32
Hitchcock-Tulare 34, Faulkton 30
Hot Springs 27, Chamberlain 16
Howard 40, Alcester-Hudson 12
Ipswich 44, Northwestern 8
Iroquois-Lake Preston 28, Arlington 16
Jones County 26, Sunshine Bible Academy 0
Lakota Tech 46, Little Wound 34
Lead-Deadwood 42, Lemmon High School 26
Lower Brule 34, Pine Ridge 6
McCook Central-Montrose 33, Beresford 21
Mitchell 23, Watertown 22, 2OT
Oldham-Ramona-Rutland 49, Wolsey-Wessington 6
Parker/Marion 26, Flandreau 7
Parkston 50, Bon Homme 20
Philip 19, Lyman 18
Platte-Geddes 25, Kimball-White Lake 8
Rapid City Christian 61, Miller 6
Riggs 45, Huron 14
Scotland/Menno 46, Burke 22
Sioux Falls Christian 27, Madison 7
Sioux Falls Jefferson 62, Omaha Westview, Neb. 25
Sioux Falls Lincoln 55, Rapid City Stevens 0
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 35, Sioux Falls Washington 13
Sioux Falls Roosevelt 40, Rapid City Central 0

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 27 of 47

St Thomas More 54, Custer 0
Stanley County 24, Gregory 8
Sturgis Brown High School 40, Aberdeen Central 0
Sully Buttes 34, Herreid-Selby 14
Tea 42, Brookings 25
Timber Lake 12, North Central 6
Vermillion 17, Dell Rapids 7
Wagner 22, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 12
Wall 50, New Underwood 0
Waubay/Summit 60, Waverly-South Shore 0
West Central 24, Lennox 12
White River 58, Crow Creek Tribal School 0
Winnebago, Neb. 54, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte/Tiospaye Topa 24
Winner 21, Sanborn Central-Woonsocket 0
Yankton 42, Spearfish 21

Some high school football scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Lakota Nation Invitational=

Pool A=

Cheyenne-Eagle Butte def. Crow Creek Tribal School, 16-25, 25-18, 25-23

Hot Springs def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-9, 25-7

Hot Springs def. Crow Creek Tribal School, 25-11, 25-12

Hot Springs def. Pine Ridge, 25-13, 25-9

Lakota Tech def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-3, 25-7

Lakota Tech def. Crow Creek Tribal School, 25-3, 25-8

Lakota Tech def. Pine Ridge, 25-22, 25-6

Pine Ridge def. Crow Creek Tribal School, 25-14, 12-25, 25-18

Rapid City Central def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-12, 25-13

Rapid City Central def. Hot Springs, 25-18, 25-22

Rapid City Central def. Lakota Tech, 25-20, 28-26

Rapid City Central def. Pine Ridge, 25-19, 25-13

Pool B=

Custer def. Little Wound, 25-11, 25-15

Custer def. Mahpiya Luta, 25-18, 25-16

Custer def. St. Francis Indian, 25-15, 23-25, 25-10

Custer def. Wyoming Indian, Wyo., 25-18, 25-19

Little Wound def. St. Francis Indian, 21-25, 25-17, 25-20

Mahpiya Luta def. Little Wound, 20-25, 25-16, 25-12

Mahpiya Luta def. Wyoming Indian, Wyo., 25-17, 23-25, 25-23

St. Francis Indian def. Wyoming Indian, Wyo., 25-18, 21-25, 25-23

Todd County def. Little Wound, 25-19, 25-19

Todd County def. Mahpiya Luta, 25-13, 25-14

Todd County def. St. Francis Indian, 25-13, 25-14

Todd County def. Wyoming Indian, Wyo., 25-16, 25-27, 25-9

Pool C=

Oelrichs def. Wakpala, 16-25, 25-22

Santee, Neb. def. Tiospa Zina, 18-25, 25-18, 25-9

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 28 of 47

Santee, Neb. def. Tiospaye Topa, 25-22, 11-25, 27-25
Santee, Neb. def. Wakpala, 25-16, 25-14
Tiospa Zina def. Oelrichs, 25-23, 25-14
Tiospa Zina def. Tiospaye Topa, 19-25, 26-24, 26-24
Tiospa Zina def. Wakpala, 22-25, 25-22, 25-22
Tiospaye Topa def. Oelrichs, 25-22, 25-11
White River def. Oelrichs, 25-4, 25-12
White River def. Santee, Neb., 25-15, 29-27
White River def. Tiospaye Topa, 25-12, 25-11
White River def. Wakpala, 25-17, 25-9
Pool D=
Dupree def. Lower Brule, 25-17
Dupree def. Marty, 25-20, 14-25, 25-13
Dupree def. Takini, 21-25, 25-14, 25-18
Lower Brule def. Crazy Horse, 25-19, 25-9
Marty def. Crazy Horse, 25-10, 25-6
Marty def. Lower Brule, 25-17, 25-23
Marty def. Takini, 25-15, 25-21
McLaughlin def. Crazy Horse, 25-7, 25-7
McLaughlin def. Dupree, 23-25, 25-16, 25-18
McLaughlin def. Lower Brule, 25-10, 25-13
McLaughlin def. Takini, 25-16, 25-7
Takini def. Crazy Horse, 25-20, 25-20
Twin City Invitational=
Gold Pool=
Gretna, Neb. def. Rapid City Stevens, 25-17, 25-21
Ogallala, Neb. def. Rapid City Stevens, 25-22, 25-19
Rapid City Stevens def. Alliance, Neb., 25-23, 25-10
Monument Pool=
Adams Central, Neb. def. Hill City, 25-12, 25-18
Sidney, Neb. def. Hill City, 25-9, 25-15
Red Pool=
Grand Island Northwest, Neb. def. Rapid City Christian, 25-14, 25-12
Holdrege, Neb. def. Rapid City Christian, 25-15, 25-21
Rapid City Christian def. Scottsbluff, Neb., 25-21, 25-20
White Pool=
Seward, Neb. def. St Thomas More, 25-21, 25-20
St Thomas More def. McCook, Neb., 25-19, 25-13
St Thomas More def. Mitchell, Neb., 25-14, 25-11
North Platte, Neb. def. Hill City, 25-19, 25-11

Some high school volleyball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

Trump stumps for candidates in deep red Alabama and says he'll be back again next week

By SOPHIE BATES and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

MOBILE, Ala. (AP) — President Donald Trump rallied supporters in deep red Alabama Friday, returning to the place where he drew his first mega crowd, but a state that is hardly considered a top midterm battleground.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 29 of 47

With just weeks to go before elections that will determine control of Congress, Trump urged his supporters to back Republicans including Sen. Tommy Tuberville, who is running for Alabama governor, and state Rep. Rhett Marques, who is seeking to flip Alabama's newly redrawn 2nd Congressional District.

Trump's decision to spend so much time in deep red states that have garnered relatively little attention during the critical final stretch underscores his party's uphill climb and the electorate's broad disapproval of his performance as president. The event at the University of South Alabama gave Trump the chance to be surrounded by some of his most loyal supporters as he confronts dismal poll numbers and growing pessimism from his party about their chances of holding onto the House and Senate in November.

"I'm here really because, you know, sometimes, even though you don't have to come here, you gotta pay respect to the people that have loved you right from the beginning," he told the crowd a day after visiting another red state, Oklahoma.

And he announced that he would be returning to Alabama again next Saturday for the college football game between the Georgia Bulldogs and Alabama Crimson Tide.

A nostalgic venue for Trump

Trump held his first mega-rally in Mobile more than a decade ago, drawing what some estimated to be 30,000 people to a college football stadium. The huge crowd made clear that Trump was more than a celebrity candidate and had the potential to make waves in the 2016 primary.

"I don't know if you know, it sort of all began here," Trump said after taking the stage. "We packed the stadium, and the rest is history."

On Friday, supporters began lining up early on a hot, humid day for the chance to hear the president speak.

They included Patrick Burch, 27, who drove from Huntsville, Alabama, and said concerns about the rising cost of living didn't bother him.

"The way I see it, at the end of the day, if I gotta pay a little more, a couple dollars extra here and there in order for my kids to be safe in the future and to make sure Iran isn't nuclear or anything like that, then I'm ok with that," he said.

Scott Carpenter, 64, from nearby Citronelle, said he wasn't affected by rising fuel prices because he doesn't drive much these days, but record-high diesel prices were hitting some friends hard.

"They don't like it," he said. "They're very upset. They love Donald Trump. They just want the diesel price to come down." As for Trump's visit to the state Friday, he said: "For him to come here, he had to be a little nervous. Or some of the other places really didn't want him to come."

The rally also drew protesters, including Elijah Splitt, 22, a graduate student at the school who said he was a member of the Revolutionary Party for Socialism and Liberation.

"We have a bunch of students who are very upset, who are very agitated, who are angry that the university administration would allow the Republicans to hold their midterm rally here and to also invite the president of the United States," he said, calling the rally "a last-ditch effort" by Trump to "boost morale amongst Republican voters."

Federal court records show that three university students were arrested for making threats against the president in social media posts.

Alabama is friendly turf as voters have soured on Trump

Trump has repeatedly asked his supporters to pretend that he is on the ballot this year — and he did so again Friday.

But while Trump maintains a loyal base of supporters, he has become increasingly toxic. A new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research this week found that only about 3 in 10 U.S. adults approve of how Trump is handling his job as president. And when it comes to the economy, most blame him for rising prices.

Trump has repeatedly dismissed concerns about high costs and gas prices as his unpopular war in Iran drags on. On Friday, he insisted his was "the most successful presidency in history." He again promised that Washington would send everyone \$5,000 checks if Republicans retain control of Congress — despite

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 30 of 47

significant GOP opposition to the idea — and later as he flew home on Air Force One, announced that his administration was sending checks of nearly \$100 to more than 20 million seniors for Medicare Part B premiums.

The rally gave Republicans the optics of a large, cheering crowd as they try to build enthusiasm. Speakers included Tuberville, who is running against former Democratic Sen. Doug Jones, and Republican Rep. Barry Moore, who is running for Tuberville's seat.

Moore polled the crowd on how many attendees had been at Trump's 2015 rally in Mobile.

"Do you still stand with him today?" he asked. "When he gets here tonight, y'all stand with him. Let him know we love him. Let him know we need him. And let him know we're not going to let him down."

While Republicans remain the heavy favorites in Alabama's statewide campaigns, they face a more challenging political landscape this year, despite redistricting efforts.

Mobile is near Alabama's 2nd Congressional District, where Democratic Rep. Shomari Figures is trying to fend off a challenge from Trump-backed Marques after the district's boundaries were redrawn as part of a larger effort to help Republicans keep control of the U.S. House.

"You're the only one a little close because it's new, it's fresh, it's brand new," Trump said to Marques.

The district is one of several Democratic-leaning districts across the South that were reshaped to Republican advantage after a U.S. Supreme Court ruling this year that severely weakened the Voting Rights Act, a Civil Rights-era law that has increased minority representation in Congress and elsewhere. Figures was first elected to the House in 2024, giving Alabama two Black representatives for the first time in its history.

Trump's rally also aimed to reach Florida voters

Mobile is also next to Florida's panhandle, a Republican stronghold. Party officials hoped the rally would help to bolster Trump-backed candidates in Florida, including Republican Rep. Byron Donalds, who is running for governor.

In a meeting on Capitol Hill this week, White House chief of staff Susie Wiles told GOP senators that Trump would be campaigning aggressively until the Nov. 3 midterms, with events almost every day. His schedule includes trips to the most competitive battlegrounds, including Ohio and Texas.

Friday's rally also highlighted the recent approval of the \$3.2 billion Mobile River Bridge and Bayway project, which Trump called the largest transportation project in Alabama history.

Speaking before Trump's arrival, Moore proposed naming it the Donald J. Trump Bridge.

Trump said if that happened, he'd be happy to let builders go over budget.

FBI has commissioned a classified and internal 'Patel Report' about times when it 'fell short'

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The FBI is issuing a classified report to its workforce examining what it says are chapters from the bureau's history "where this institution fell short," according to an internal message obtained Friday by The Associated Press.

It was unclear what episodes from the FBI's past are chronicled in the new "Patel Report." But the document's existence is in keeping with Director Kash Patel's vocal criticism of the leaders who preceded him and with his determination to rid the FBI of agents he contends have politicized the bureau in the past. Patel's critics say he is the one who has weaponized the FBI and that his scrutiny of his predecessors and their decision-making is part of an effort to rewrite history in favor of President Donald Trump.

Patel pledged at his confirmation hearing last year that he would not look "backward," but as director, he has encouraged investigations of former senior officials and presided over sweeping terminations, including of employees who participated in years-old investigations of Trump, were photographed taking a knee during a 2020 racial justice protest and contributed to a disputed analytical memo about Catholic extremism.

"The Patel Report looks backward because accountability demands it," says a message to the workforce signed by the FBI's co-deputy directors, Christopher Raia and Andrew Bailey. The message describes the

report as marking the "closing of one chapter in our history and the beginning of another complete with a brighter future ahead."

Bailey announced his resignation earlier this week, and his last day is Friday. The FBI declined to comment on the report.

The message also says: "We cannot change what happened before we arrived. But we can confront it honestly. We can recognize failures instead of protecting them. We can hold people accountable. We can fix what was broken. And we can build safeguards strong enough to ensure the mistakes of the past are never allowed to define this institution again. These steps are consistent with any institution of excellence that is constantly striving for improvement."

It was unclear if the report made recommendations or demanded any action to address what the FBI now regards as past shortcomings.

The FBI message says the report is meant to "promote fierce organizational accountability" and rebuild "public trust." But Patel's critics say the politically charged investigations into perceived adversaries of Trump that the FBI has embarked on under his watch, as well as the punishment of agents who participated in investigations into the Republican president to which they were assigned, have eroded faith in the nation's premier federal law enforcement agency.

FlyDubai co-pilot who nearly crashed plane was barred from flying by Oman over extremism concerns

By SAM MEDNICK and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — The FlyDubai co-pilot who officials said nearly crashed a Tel Aviv-bound flight with 182 people aboard was barred from flying by his native Oman over concerns he had adopted extremist views, a person familiar with the matter said Saturday.

The co-pilot was subsequently hired by the United Arab Emirates-based airline, the person said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss the ongoing investigation. It was not immediately clear to what extent he was vetted when he was hired in the Emirates. Oman's move to bar the co-pilot from flying was first reported by the Wall Street Journal.

The attack left the region's travel industry in crisis, raising questions about aviation security and further unsettling a Middle East already shaken by the U.S.-Iran war. A regional investigation is underway.

The United Arab Emirates has canceled all flights to Israel, complicating travel for hundreds of passengers who fly between the countries on a typical day. Israel and the UAE agreed on repatriation flights, beginning Friday, to bring back passengers stranded in the UAE after commercial travel between the two countries was suspended, according to an Israeli official who was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The first repatriation flight left the UAE shortly before 11 p.m. and landed in Tel Aviv just after 1 a.m., according to the Ben Gurion International Airport website.

The airport listed carriers Arkia and Israir with flights scheduled to arrive from Dubai early Saturday. El Al was expected to fly passengers from Dubai to Israel on Sunday.

Dubai has been a popular destination for Israelis since Israel and the UAE established ties in 2020 as part of the Trump administration's Abraham Accords to normalize ties between Israel and Arab countries.

Attacks raises questions about extremism

U.S. President Donald Trump told reporters that early information he's received suggests links between the attack and Tehran but did not elaborate. Trump also said that if it is determined that Iranian agents were behind the attack, the United States will "hit them very hard."

Israeli investigators are involved in the probe but the Emiratis are in the lead, according to an official who wasn't authorized to speak to the media and spoke on condition of anonymity. It's unclear if the attacker was part of a group, said the official, adding that there is currently no evidence of a link with Iran.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said that the co-pilot had undergone "Islamist radicalization," but has provided no evidence to back the assertion.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 32 of 47

"We are now investigating whether he was sent, and whoever sent him will pay a very heavy price," Netanyahu said in a video message on Friday.

UAE senior diplomatic adviser Anwar Gargash on Friday called the FlyDubai attack a "dangerous terrorist act" in a post on X. He credited the flight captain for preventing a catastrophe.

The moment is a test for the UAE government, which has burnished a reputation for building effective measures against extremist activities but has also bristled in the past over criticism of security lapses.

"The Emiratis are going to be interested in protecting their reputation," said Jon Alterman, chair of Global Security and Geostrategy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. "They believe people should see them as a place that's very secure, not a place that has serious lapses."

The FlyDubai flight plummeted to 15,000 feet

Details of the harrowing flight, which other crew members on board landed safely in Tabuk, Saudi Arabia, on Wednesday continue to emerge.

Smit Machchhar, the wounded captain who has been hailed as one of the heroes of the flight, and the co-pilot were transferred on Thursday from Saudi Arabia to the UAE, the kingdom said.

Machchhar is recovering in an Abu Dhabi hospital. He spoke with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a televised video call Friday, describing the terror he faced after being attacked in the closed cockpit.

"I had so many wounds. I had fallen down," he said, his head bandaged, as he broke into sobs. "I was fighting for my life. At one point, I realized that if I didn't get up ... then passengers would lose their lives."

The first signs of trouble came more than two hours into the flight when the aircraft suddenly dropped to 16,600 feet — the sharpest altitude drop recorded by data tracking platforms. But moments before the nosedive, passengers seated near the front of the plane heard sounds of a fight inside the cockpit, said passenger Daniel Schlichter, who was seated in the second row.

Seconds later, it ascended to 21,725 feet before soon dropping back to 15,000 feet, which it maintained until safely landing more than an hour later.

"The plane started going down very quickly and we all went back backwards, like the gravity took us backwards," Schlichter said. The shouting of the children as the plane plummeted, he added, was "horrific."

"One of the things that I will never forget is the shouting of the children," Schlichter said. "I could hear the children shouting, 'We don't want to die! We don't want to die!'"

The captain managed to open the cockpit door, allowing passengers to enter and restrain the attacker as the Boeing 737 — with 174 passengers and eight crew members, most of them Israelis — descended sharply.

The passengers wrestled the co-pilot from the cockpit and onto the floor of the main cabin where they bound his hands with headphones. They laid the wounded pilot inches from him, and a dentist attended to his wounds. Schlichter and the dentist, Dr. Shota Musayev, both said there was no visible knife or other weapon at the front of the aircraft.

"I could see all the blood on the floor, and I couldn't believe he would still be alive because he had so many injuries," Schlichter said of the captain.

Woman told Cornell investigators she 'felt like bait' during alleged gang rape

By KIMBERLEE KRUESI, MICHAEL R. SISAK and LEAH WILLINGHAM Associated Press

A woman who says she was gang-raped at a Cornell University fraternity told the school's investigators last year that she "felt like bait" as the attackers were "like lions around me," according to records from the school's disciplinary investigation.

The documents, reviewed Friday by The Associated Press, include excerpts of interviews Cornell's investigators did with the woman and the men she accused and shed more light on the university's handling of the case.

While heavily redacted, the records offer a fuller but sometimes conflicting timeline of events and a glimpse at how the men responded to the allegations. Some disputed the woman's account and said they

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 33 of 47

weren't involved in any assault.

The woman, identified in court papers only as Jane Doe, sued Cornell and seven former students last month, alleging she was given ketamine and repeatedly assaulted at a fraternity house in October 2024.

She went to campus police three weeks after the encounter and gave a detailed account of what happened, but the local district attorney decided not to file criminal charges or push for more investigation after reviewing a police summary of her interview.

Only the school's investigation, under the federal Title IX law, persisted, with a goal of deciding discipline for the students involved.

Lawsuit by one of the accused men reveals details on investigation

This week, a lawyer for one of the accused men filed documents from the school's investigation in a lawsuit that seeks to overturn the university's punishment and remove it from his academic record. They include a 99-page report on a campus hearing panel's disciplinary findings and a summary of events submitted by the university's lawyers.

Though only a fraction of the thousands of pages amassed in the investigation, the records show the breadth of the university's inquiry — including 50 interviews with 32 witnesses and 12 days of hearings.

Late Thursday, Gov. Kathy Hochul appointed Attorney General Letitia James as a special prosecutor to lead a renewed criminal investigation, saying she had lost faith in Tompkins County District Attorney Matthew Van Houten.

According to the Title IX documents filed in court, which are only a portion of the entire investigation, the woman and several of the men gave investigators similar accounts of drug use and sexual activity that took place at the Chi Phi fraternity house — but differed sharply in how much of it was consensual.

Snapchat messages drew other men

The woman had been invited there by a fraternity member for whom she had long held strong romantic feelings and sexual interest, according to the disciplinary panel's findings. The panel found that she initially consented to sex with that man and one of his friends, though she later alleged in her lawsuit that she had been pressured into taking ketamine, marijuana and alcohol and was too intoxicated to consent.

Then other men began showing up in the room, some drawn by a message one of the fraternity brothers sent to a Snapchat group at 1:42 a.m. using a vulgar term to advertise that a woman's body was freely available. Later, another person in the chat asked if the "shop" was still open.

The woman told investigators that her intoxication had rendered her partly defenseless. She said she remembered smoking marijuana and said she knew she took ketamine, her first time doing so, but didn't have an independent memory of it. The drug, she said, left her in a state of "vague consciousness."

"You look like an operating human being," she told school investigators at a hearing in May of 2025. "You don't look dead or asleep necessarily. So, lights are on, but nobody's home. Your brain is not functioning at its proper level."

She said some of the men inhaled drugs off her unclothed body.

"I felt like bait. I felt like lions around me. It just was a totally debilitating place to be in," she told investigators.

Accused student says he only entered room for a wellness check

One of the men the woman accused of snorting drugs off her body — but not participating in other elements of the assault — denied her account.

He told investigators he was in the room for no more than five minutes, and didn't go there for sex.

"That was not our intentions at all. We were just checking out to see if everything" was OK, he said.

He insisted that he did not see the woman naked at any time — she was under bed coverings, he said — and did not partake in drug use. He said he sat on a couch and chatted for a few minutes, then left after the woman and another man there both indicated they were all right.

A Cornell disciplinary panel later cleared him of sexual assault or exploitation allegations, but found him responsible for attempted sexual exploitation because it didn't believe his claim to have gone to the room for altruistic reasons.

The fraternity member, who is challenging Cornell's disciplinary process in court, also posted in the

Snapchat conversation, saying what was happening in the room was not a joke, adding: "Firsthand pov not a bit." The student later told investigators he did not remember sending the message, according to Cornell's account.

Woman's lawsuit seeks tougher penalties

In her lawsuit, Jane Doe accused two of the other men who entered the room of performing sex acts on her without her consent, while she was partially incapacitated. She accused another man of kissing her without her consent. According to the Title IX documents, Jane Doe told investigators two other men stood at the foot of the bed acting "more like voyeurs than anything."

The lawsuit seeks to hold all seven men liable for rape. She is asking for unspecified damages.

Cornell hasn't detailed the results of its investigation, but said it resulted in some students being expelled.

The man who filed the lawsuit challenging his punishment was allowed to stay at Cornell, but he was ordered to stay away from the woman, take a class on sexual harassment and bystander intervention, and write a paper reflecting on the circumstances for which he was found responsible and include a proposal to train other students on preventing sexual harassment.

Former GOP Rep. David Rivera sentenced to 10 years for secret Venezuela lobbying

By JOSHUA GOODMAN Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — A former Miami congressman and longtime friend of U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio was sentenced Friday to 10 years in prison in connection with a secret \$50 million lobbying campaign on Venezuela's behalf during the first Trump administration.

Republican David Rivera has been jailed since jurors found him guilty in May on all counts, including failing to register as a foreign agent and conspiracy to commit money laundering as part of his work for former Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro's government.

Rivera, 61, appeared stone-faced as Judge Melissa Damian denounced him for betraying his life's mission, saying he would surely have been judged harshly his many friends had the millions of dollars come from the Cuban regime instead of its allies in Caracas.

"Nobody would accept that's ok and I don't think this is different," the judge said. "There's no dispute this money came from the Maduro regime."

The seven-week trial offered a rare glimpse into Miami's role as a crossroads for foreign influence campaigns aimed at shaping U.S. policy toward Latin America, highlighting the city's reputation as a magnet for both anti-communist crusaders and corruption among its sizable exile population.

It included testimony from President Donald Trump's secretary of state, Rep. Pete Sessions of Texas and a top Washington lobbyist — all of whom testified they felt betrayed when learning of Rivera's mammoth consulting contract with a U.S.-based affiliate of Venezuela's state oil company, PDVSA.

Attorneys for Rivera plan to appeal and in June applied for a presidential pardon. Rivera faces additional federal charges in Washington, D.C., in a related foreign lobbying case.

Prosecutors said betrayal featured coded figures — 'Sombrero' and 'Miss Clairol'

In an indictment unsealed in 2022, prosecutors alleged that Rivera was tapped by then Foreign Minister Delcy Rodríguez — now Venezuela's acting president — to work Republican connections to get the first Trump administration to abandon its hard line and crippling sanctions on Venezuela.

As part of the charm offensive, Rivera and a co-defendant, political consultant Esther Nuhfer, sought to manipulate influential friends, including Rubio and Sessions. Their goal was to normalize relations with the new Trump administration even as the Maduro government faced sanctions over serious accusations of human rights violations.

But Rivera and Nuhfer didn't disclose their lobbying work as required, for fear it would have ended Rivera's political career as an anti-communist stalwart, prosecutors argued at trial.

"The United States and the public were the true victims of this fraud," Assistant U.S. Attorney Roger Cruz

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 35 of 47

said in urging a stiff sentence. "He used his position of trust — and betrayed it consistently and repeatedly."

To hide his work, prosecutors allege, Rivera also set up an encrypted chat group called MIA — for Miami — with his main conduit to the Maduro government: Venezuelan media tycoon Raúl Gorrín, who was subsequently charged in the U.S. with bribing top Venezuelan officials.

Members of the group used playful code words to discuss their activities: Maduro was the "bus driver," Sessions "Sombrero," Rodríguez "The Lady in Red," and their windfall payments "La Luz," Spanish for "The Light," according to copies of text messages presented to the jury. Rubio was known as "Miss Clairol," because rubio means blond in Spanish.

Defense said only missing paperwork made the \$50 million contract illegal

At Friday's sentencing, attorneys for Rivera repeated their trial argument that the former congressman believed he was under no requirement to disclose the work. The three-month, \$50 million contract with Rivera's one-man consulting firm, they said, was focused on luring oil giant ExxonMobil back to Venezuela — commercial work that is generally exempt from the Foreign Agents Registration Act.

"David Rivera does not deserve to die in prison because he failed to file a FARA registration," defense attorney Ed Shohat said at Friday's hearing. "If he had filed that paper, that form, everything he did, including the \$50 million contract, which totally distorted this case, is perfectly legal."

Wholly distinct from that consulting work, they say, were Rivera's meetings with Rubio and Sessions, which were focused on ushering in leadership in Venezuela that would be less hostile to the U.S. — not supporting Maduro in normalizing relations with the U.S.

"There's not one word in any chat, not one document, not one thing he did to help Nicolás Maduro," said Shohat.

Prosecutors said Rivera used the contract with the affiliate, New York-based PDV USA, as cover for illegal lobbying.

"This is a classic money laundering case," the judge said Friday in rejecting Rivera's motion to lower the federal guidelines range.

Where did the money go? A luxury yacht, among other things

The partners tried to hide the work — backdating documents and coming up with sham agreements, like one to justify a wire transfer of \$3.75 million to a South Florida company that maintained Gorrín's luxury yacht, prosecutors said.

The political activity included setting up meetings for Rodríguez in New York, Caracas, Washington and Dallas. As part of the effort, Rivera roped in Sessions, who later tried to broker a meeting for Rodríguez with the ExxonMobil executive who took over as CEO when Rex Tillerson became Trump's first-term secretary of state. After a secret meeting in Caracas with Maduro, Sessions also agreed to deliver a letter from the Venezuelan president to Trump.

The outreach quickly unraveled, however. Within six months of taking office, Trump sanctioned Maduro and labeled him a "dictator," launching a "maximum pressure" campaign to unseat the president.

And now, nearly a decade later, Rodríguez has emerged as the second Trump administration's trusted partner after the U.S. military's ousting of Maduro.

Rubio's former housemate faced scandal before, but Cuban Americans support him

Before being elected to Congress in 2010, Rivera was a high-ranking Florida legislator and shared a Tallahassee home with Rubio, who eventually became the Florida House speaker.

Rivera faced earlier controversy, including allegations that he secretly funded a Democratic spoiler candidate in a 2012 congressional race. Last year, federal prosecutors dropped that case after an appeals court threw out a sizable fine imposed by a lower court. Rivera was also investigated — but never charged — for alleged campaign finance violations and a \$1 million contract with a gambling company while serving in the Florida Legislature.

Despite all that, Rivera remains popular among Miami's Cuban American establishment.

Friends of the former congressman, including the former president of Florida International University and Miami-Dade County's supervisor of elections, packed the courtroom to show their support.

Sessions, in a letter seeking leniency that was read into the record by his chief of staff, said his former

congressional colleague devoted decades to public service, much of it focused on defending liberty and democracy.

"I don't think it's productive for society by sending David away for a long, long time," testified Liliana Ros, a longtime Miami GOP committee member.

Christa Pike on a ventilator and unconscious after failed Tennessee execution, attorneys say

By KIM CHANDLER and JAMIE STENGLE Associated Press

Christa Pike was placed on a ventilator and remained unconscious in a hospital in the hours after her failed execution in Tennessee, her attorneys said in a court filing Friday.

Hospital staff, her lawyers said, were working to save Pike's life and as of late Thursday were trying to clear the two doses of the drug that the state uses to execute prisoners.

The stunning failure in Tennessee's execution chamber on Wednesday has left both sides of the death penalty debate demanding answers. Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee has ordered an independent review.

The court filing offered the first detailed account of Pike's condition after an ambulance carried her away from Riverbend Maximum Security Institution in Nashville on Wednesday night. Her attorneys said a day earlier that she was in critical condition.

Christa Pike's attorneys point to problems with the IV

Pike's attorneys said they believed problems with the IV lines caused the pentobarbital to flow into her body instead of her bloodstream.

"Apparently at no point did any member of the execution team realize that the IV lines were not correctly placed or that the veins had blown and that the pentobarbital was, in whole or in part, entering Ms. Pike's body," they wrote in the court filing.

Instead of "remediating this failure," they prepared and administered a second dose of pentobarbital, her lawyers said.

State officials have not offered any explanations about what went wrong.

Tennessee leaders want a review of execution methods

Lee demanded a review of the execution procedures and indefinitely postponed Pike's execution and another that had been scheduled for this year. Republican Tennessee lawmakers said the state should review whether to stop single-drug lethal injections and consider other options to carry out death sentences.

The execution team worked for an hour to administer the lethal drugs, said Pike's defense lawyer Randy Spivey, who counted at least seven needles in her left arm.

Neither the initial nor the backup dose of pentobarbital worked. Pike was still snoring when the execution chamber's microphone was cut off more than an hour into the attempt.

Pike's attorneys asked a state court to order the Tennessee Department of Correction to preserve all evidence from the failed execution.

"Preserving this evidence is essential to understanding what happened, ensuring accountability and protecting Christa's legal rights," two of her attorneys said in a statement.

She was 18 when she and her boyfriend tortured and killed a classmate, Colleen Slemmer, in a jealous rage. She later became one of the youngest women to be sent to death row.

Following the killing, Pike was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder, her attorneys said.

"It took me numerous years to even realize the gravity of what I'd done. Even more to accept how many lives I affected. I took the life of someone's child, sister, friend. It sickens me now to think I had the ability to commit such a crime," Pike said in an earlier clemency petition.

The mother of the 19-year-old woman Pike killed expressed frustration over the failed execution. "I didn't get justice for my daughter," May Martinez said Thursday.

Problems found with executions four years ago

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 37 of 47

Four years ago, Tennessee's governor ordered another independent review into capital punishment after abruptly stopping the April 2022 execution of Oscar Smith. Lee then paused all executions after acknowledging the state had failed to ensure its lethal injection drugs were properly tested.

Months later, a report found the state hadn't complied with its own lethal injection process since its revision in 2018, resulting in executions being conducted without proper testing of the drugs.

At the time, the state used a three-drug execution protocol of midazolam, vecuronium bromide and potassium chloride. The state later switched to using just pentobarbital.

Pentobarbital has been used to carry out death sentences in multiple states and by the federal government.

The review, led by former U.S. Attorney Ed Stanton, also found that the state's unidentified executioner had no formal healthcare training and learned the role mainly through on-the-job experience.

After the release of the report, the Tennessee Department of Correction fired its longtime top attorney and another employee.

Police bodycam footage of Luigi Mangione's arrest released

By PHILIP MARCELO Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Police bodycam footage released Friday shows the moment officers located and arrested Luigi Mangione at a Pennsylvania McDonald's in connection with the shooting death of United Healthcare CEO Brian Thompson in Manhattan.

In one video, officers ask Mangione to lower the face mask he was wearing to hide his identity.

"That's 100% him," one officer says eagerly as they step outside to speak out of Mangione's earshot.

"I told you, man," another responds off camera.

Later, an officer searches Mangione's belongings and smiles widely as she pulls out a gun cartridge, seemingly confirming they'd found their suspect.

The trove of videos comes from Mangione's Dec. 9, 2024, arrest in Altoona, five days after Thompson, a 50-year-old Minnesota executive, was gunned down as he walked to a midtown Manhattan hotel for his company's annual investor conference.

A Manhattan judge unsealed the recordings Friday after CNN petitioned for their release. Parts of the videos were shown during a December court hearing as Mangione's lawyers unsuccessfully sought to get key evidence thrown out, including his initial statements to police and items seized at the time of his arrest.

Mangione pleaded guilty in August to federal stalking charges and faces life in prison when he's sentenced in December. He also faces murder charges in New York state court, though those proceedings have been postponed indefinitely as his lawyers seek to have the case thrown out.

The videos released Friday begin as officers descend on the McDonald's in central Pennsylvania, nearly 300 miles (483 kilometers) from Manhattan.

They find Mangione, the Ivy League-educated scion of a wealthy Maryland family, seated at a table wearing a ski hat, surgical face mask and winter coat. The officers say they're responding to a call about a suspicious person and ask for his name and identification.

"You're a little nervous right now. Why are you nervous?" an officer asks at one point.

They order him to put his hands on his head and ask him if he's been in New York recently. They confront him about a phony New Jersey driver's license he offers up bearing the name Mark Rosario.

"You're under official police investigation right now," one officer warns. "You give a false name to us again, you're gonna be arrested for false ID."

When Mangione finally comes clean, they ask why he had lied.

"I clearly shouldn't have," he responds as he's asked to write his real name and spell it aloud.

Other videos show officers patting Mangione down, reading him his rights, placing him in cuffs and taking him to the police station.

As an officer searches him more thoroughly at the station, another officer goes through his backpack.

The officer finds the 9 mm handgun authorities would later confirm was used in the killing, as well as

a silencer and another ammo magazine. They also recover the journal that prosecutors would later say revealed Mangione's intent to "wack" a health insurance executive, as well as his other handwritten notes.

"He has a checklist for today," another officer says, ticking off the seized items to someone on the phone. "Tomorrow he's supposed to do an intel check-in and get a survival kit."

Prosecutors probing deaths of 2 Ole Miss students charge shop clerk, son with selling illegal kratom

By SUDHIN THANAWALA Associated Press

Federal authorities investigating the deaths of two University of Mississippi students have charged a store clerk and his son with selling an illegal kratom product, prosecutors announced Friday.

A drug task force in Mississippi had previously urged people to avoid kratom, an herbal substance that acts as a stimulant at low doses and a sedative at high doses, after authorities found packages of kratom derivatives while investigating the deaths on Sept. 21.

It is still not clear whether those substances contributed to either death, but federal prosecutors said both appear consistent with drug overdoses. Two state agencies were working to expedite toxicology reports for the students, Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves said in a statement last week. Lafayette County Metro Narcotics said Thursday the investigation remained active and additional charges were possible.

Bank records show one of the students, Aidan Hamilton, made multiple purchases in September from a vape, tobacco and beer store in Oxford, Mississippi, where the university is located, according to a federal court filing.

On Sept. 24, an informant sent to the store by investigators purchased kratom-based pills from the clerk, Yahya Mohamed Mosleh, 51, who warned the informant to "be careful taking the pills because people were dying from them," U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration Special Agent Michael Dassance said in an affidavit.

Authorities later detained Mosleh and his son, Islam Yahya Mosleh, 18, who was working behind the counter, and charged them each with one count of possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance.

Scott Davis, an attorney for the elder Mosleh, and A.E. Harlow, Jr., an attorney for Islam Mosleh, said in emails that they had no comment. The defendants appeared Thursday before a magistrate judge, who ruled there was sufficient evidence to charge them.

Kratom, which comes from a tree native to Southeast Asia, is legal at the federal level. But some state and local governments have banned it, and federal authorities have issued warnings about its risks.

Proponents say that in its pure, ground-leaf form, kratom is a safe, natural herbal supplement that can help manage pain, anxiety and depression and ease the effects of opioid withdrawal. They say the danger is from kratom derivatives, which are often synthetic and can be highly potent. In August, the DEA banned three kratom-related compounds.

In his Sept. 25 affidavit, the DEA agent said one of the banned compounds was listed as an ingredient in products seized from the Oxford store and Hamilton's room.

Hamilton, a freshman from Englewood, Colorado, and the other student who died, Robert Strang, a junior from Atlanta, were found in different locations, one on campus and the other off campus.

Investigators found opened packages of kratom, or synthetic kratom, labeled "Smax" in Hamilton's room with some pills missing, according to the DEA agent's affidavit. A package of Smax was also found in Strang's room, though the affidavit says he was buying it from a different store.

Yahya Mosleh told the informant who went to the store on Sept. 24 to be quiet when other customers came in and pushed the kratom pills out of sight. When the customers left, he completed the sale, according to the affidavit, again telling the informant to be careful.

Eleven states have banned kratom. Others, including Mississippi, have regulated it, in part by requiring people to be 21 or older to buy it. The city of Oxford, additionally, has implemented its own kratom ban.

An Ebola treatment center was burned down as the death toll in Congo passes 4,000

By DIEUDONNE DIROLE and OPE ADETAYO Associated Press

BUNIA, Congo (AP) — Congo's Ebola outbreak has killed more than 4,000 people, authorities said, as they struggle to contain what has become the fastest-growing Ebola outbreak in history.

The latest figures released by the Health Ministry on Thursday showed that 4,018 people have died among 8,300 cases recorded since the outbreak was declared in eastern Congo on May 15.

The aid group Médecins Sans Frontières, known in English as Doctors Without Borders, said Friday the outbreak has particularly worsened in the North Kivu province, accounting for 40% of new confirmed cases since the end of August.

"It is like fighting a wildfire," Stephanie Hoffman, MSF coordinator in Butembo, said. "Multiple outbreaks are developing at the same time, with varying intensity and in different locations."

Some health workers, meanwhile, gathered at the epicenter in Ituri Province to demand payment for wages owed to them. The protesters, who included surveillance team members, waved placards saying, "No money, no data!" and "No payment for months."

Some of the workers haven't been paid for August and September, said Biongi Beiza, one of the protesters in Bunia, Ituri's capital. "There is no explanation from the administration," he said.

Congolese authorities did not immediately address the issue. Front-line workers have gone on strike several times since the outbreak began, further hampering efforts to contain the disease.

A senior U.N. official said an Ebola-hit displacement camp housing a transit center for infected patients was burned by soldiers earlier this week as they were looking for weapons in Kigonze, on the outskirts of Bunia, forcing 19,000 people in the camp to flee.

Creating such transit and treatment centers has been a struggle, requiring money and staff, all of which are in short supply, said Julien Harneis, the U.N. senior Ebola coordinator. "When we lose a center, that means we lose capacity, we lose investment, and we have to start again. And above all, it means that people do not get access to the care that they really need," Harneis said.

Infected aid worker evacuated to the Netherlands

An aid worker with MSF was infected with Ebola while working in Congo, the group said in a statement. The worker arrived in the Netherlands late Thursday on a special medical flight and was transferred to a high-level isolation unit, the Leiden University Medical Center said in a statement.

"The human cost of this crisis is unprecedented in the DRC, with communities facing the largest Ebola disease outbreak ever recorded in the country," MSF said.

At least 50 health workers have died after contracting the virus.

Mobile labs are helping detect cases quickly

One way local authorities have tried to contain the outbreak is through mobile laboratories. In Butembo, an Associated Press journalist watched a medical team operating one such lab near an Ebola treatment center on Thursday.

Test results that used to take 72 hours can now be obtained in six hours with the mobile labs, said Lota Kalubi, a doctor at the treatment center.

The labs have also made it easier to get to locations usually difficult to reach, said Michel Ngimba with the National Institute of Biomedical Research in Butembo. "So we can go, if today we have an emergency, for example, in Katwa, we can start up the vehicle, and we can move the lab to Katwa," said Ngimba.

Insecurity and community resistance are hampering containment efforts

The World Health Organization has recently raised the alarm about the virus' rapid spread into new health zones, stretching limited resources. The current outbreak is on track to exceed the deadliest on record, West Africa's regional outbreak between 2014 and 2016, which killed 11,000 people, WHO has said.

The number of newly confirmed cases is falling, but that could be attributed to insecurity and challenges in getting communities to cooperate in some of the hot spots, Africa CDC said on Thursday. While the

spread of the disease has slowed in some areas, it has accelerated in others.

Confirmed cases fell from around 850 cases and 470 deaths a week in mid-July to an average of 490 cases and 230 deaths in September.

A Congolese politician was beaten to death earlier this week in one of the emerging hot spots after defending government measures to deal with the outbreak, highlighting tensions and mistrust in communities.

Authorities last month launched a village-centered approach that involved working with local leaders to educate people about the virus, but those efforts face resistance from residents who dismiss Ebola as a hoax. There is also deep distrust in the country's government for reasons including how it's managed past Ebola outbreaks and chronic corruption.

CBS announces Tony Romo's permanent exit following arrest for operating a vehicle while intoxicated

By The Associated Press undefined

CBS Sports and Tony Romo have officially parted ways, one month after the former Dallas Cowboys quarterback pleaded no contest to charges of operating a vehicle while intoxicated.

Romo had been on leave since his July 23 arrest in Wisconsin. He had been the lead game analyst for CBS' NFL coverage since 2017.

"CBS Sports and Tony Romo have mutually agreed to part ways," CBS Sports said Friday in a statement. "We thank Tony for his contributions over the past nine years and wish him the best moving forward."

Analyst JJ Watt had joined play-by-play announcer Jim Nantz and sideline reporter Tracy Wolfson on CBS Sports' lead NFL team during Romo's absence. Watt will continue in that role now and all other CBS teams will remain the same.

"I'm proud of what I accomplished at CBS Sports over the last nine years," Romo said in a statement. "I approached my role as a game analyst the way I've approached everything in my life — with a desire to win and be the best that I can be. I'm going to use this time to take a break, something I've never done before, and focus on my health and my family before moving on to my next opportunity. I am grateful for my time with CBS Sports and for the continued support of my family and friends, as well as the NFL community and fans."

Romo was arrested following a traffic stop as he was driving south on Interstate 43 in Wisconsin. He pleaded no contest to a charge of operating while intoxicated on Sept. 1 and issued a statement apologizing for the actions that led to his arrest.

According to Milwaukee County court records, Romo lost his driving privileges for six months and was ordered to complete an alcohol assessment program.

"The past month has been difficult, but it has also been personally significant," Romo said Sept. 1 in a statement on Instagram. "It has required me to confront and own my mistakes fully — to the Lord, to myself, to my family and now to the public."

Romo said the multiple back surgeries that led to his retirement as a player "left me with constant, debilitating pain." He noted that the pain "led to a dependence on pain medication, and my efforts to get off those medications led to an over-reliance on alcohol."

"None of this is an excuse," Romo said. "These are my failures and I take responsibility for them."

Romo said he is working with a team of doctors to address his health and "make the necessary changes."

The 46-year-old Romo made four Pro Bowl appearances during a playing career that ran from 2004-16 and was spent entirely with Dallas.

Kennedy Center Honors to be held at Capital One Arena amid fight over adding Trump's name

By MIKE CATALINI Associated Press

This year's Kennedy Center Honors will be held at Washington's Capital One Arena, not the riverfront building that's been at the center of a legal fight over adding President Donald Trump's name to the building.

The 49th annual awards are set to take place at Washington's downtown arena, a Kennedy Center spokesperson said Friday. Few other details were immediately available, and an explanation for the change wasn't given.

The center's board voted last month to close the iconic performing arts venue along the Potomac River waterfront after a federal judge blocked the institution from returning Trump's name to the building.

Trump has said in social media posts that the center needed to close for safety repairs. But he said the repairs would only happen if the board was allowed to move forward with plans to add his name to the building.

A federal judge has twice said that can't happen without the approval of Congress, which has allocated \$257 million for repairs.

The president hosted the 2025 awards, whose honorees included Sylvester Stallone and George Strait. He said at the time that he would rename the facility the "Trump Kennedy Center," and not long after workers began adding his name to the building.

The board of trustees, named by Trump, voted unanimously for the change, which has been challenged in court since.

Congress named the performing arts center as a living memorial to John F. Kennedy in 1964, the year after he was assassinated.

The law explicitly prohibits the board of trustees from making the center into a memorial to anyone else, and from putting another person's name on the building's exterior.

The Kennedy Center Honors, which recognize people for lifetime contributions to American culture through the performing arts, was established in 1978. The 2026 honorees are set to be named at a later day, the center's spokesperson said. The event will take place on Dec. 7.

Many states have backup execution plans, but failures still happen

By REBECCA BOONE Associated Press

Long before Christa Pike was brought into Tennessee's execution chamber, prison leaders reviewed and approved a backup plan detailing exactly what to do if the first attempt at lethal injection failed.

But the backup plan also failed, and Thursday — 24 hours later — Pike was still alive but in critical condition at a Tennessee hospital, though her prognosis remained uncertain. It's not yet clear what went wrong.

Twenty-seven states have capital punishment, and they vary widely in how they administer the death penalty and just how much of that lethal process they keep hidden from public view, according to the nonprofit Death Penalty Information Center, a clearinghouse for information on U.S. executions.

Some states have extensive backup plans. Others don't.

Tennessee falls somewhere in the middle of the pack when it comes to contingency plans, with two redundancies built into its execution process.

First, inmates are supposed to have two intravenous lines placed. Thus, if the first IV site fails, the execution team can switch to the second one. A physician on the execution team can even insert a central line — which typically involves making an incision in a major blood vessel in the groin, neck or armpit in order to thread a catheter into the body to a spot near the heart — if needed.

Intravenous lines can fail for several reasons, like a needle and catheter not being properly placed in a vein or wiggling out of place — or a vein rupturing and letting blood and IV fluid leak into tissue surrounding the IV site.

Tennessee also allows for a second 100 mg dose of pentobarbital to be administered if the condemned person is still alive five minutes after the first dose was given.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 42 of 47

Tennessee prison officials gave Pike a second dose, but it's not clear if they used the primary IV site or the backup site to do so.

Little backup in Alabama, a lot in Idaho

Alabama has a three-drug lethal injection protocol. It allows for a backup dose of the first drug, the sedative midazolam, to be given if the inmate isn't unconscious from the first dose. But the protocol doesn't include additional instructions for what to do if the condemned person is still alive after the first dose of the next two drugs, rocuronium bromide and potassium chloride.

Idaho, meanwhile, has contingency plans for nearly every step of the execution process, with backup IV sites, allowances for administering a central IV line, and up to three full doses of any of the state's four approved lethal injection drug cocktails.

Idaho recently made firing squad its primary execution method, though it has yet to kill someone by that method. Still, the state's firing squad protocol also has a backup plan, with the prison director able to order a second volley of shots within a two-minute time span if she determines it is necessary to complete the execution.

Despite contingency plans, executions are still botched at times

Idaho called off the execution of Thomas Eugene Creech in 2024 after execution team members could not place a viable IV after eight attempts.

Tennessee also called off an execution earlier this year after failing to find a suitable vein for a secondary IV line.

In 2014, Arizona executioners injected Joseph Rudolph Wood with a lethal combination of drugs 15 times during the nearly two hours it took him to die. He gasped more than 600 times while he lay on the table.

Witnesses keep the public informed when executions succeed or fail

In many ways, executions are shrouded in secrecy. The identity of execution team members, the details about where and how lethal drugs are procured, and in some states even what happens in the death chamber is hidden from public view.

But executions, like all criminal sentences, are conducted by the state on behalf of its citizens, so it's critical that members of the public understand exactly how that ultimate punishment is carried out.

Most death penalty states allow a few members of the media to witness executions on behalf of the public. Once the execution is over, those news representatives typically take part in a news conference, sharing exactly what they saw and heard with the rest of the world.

Access to executions varies by state, and limitations often lead to court battles

Only two states, Indiana and Wyoming, explicitly ban members of the press from witnessing executions. Wyoming, with no one currently on death row, hasn't carried out an execution since 1992, according to the Death Penalty Information Center.

A coalition of news organizations including The Associated Press sued Indiana last year for a seat in the witness room, but in June a federal appellate court upheld the state's law barring media access.

In Idaho, media witnesses are allowed to watch as a condemned person is placed on a gurney, has IVs inserted and is put to death. Yet AP and other news organizations have sued for increased access. The news organizations asked a judge to allow them to watch via closed-circuit monitors as the drugs are pushed into the IV lines, which is currently shielded from public view in a private room beside the death chamber.

A federal judge ordered the state to provide that access, citing a 9th U.S. Circuit Court ruling that said the public should be able to view all critical parts of an execution via the press. But the state appealed, and the appellate court hasn't yet ruled on the matter.

Media witnesses provided crucial details about Pike's failed execution

When Pike's first lethal injection dose failed to end her life, officials closed the curtains and administered a second dose of pentobarbital.

When the curtains reopened, Pike was making snoring sounds and was clearly alive, according to AP reporter Kim Chandler, who was one of the witnesses. Eventually the curtain was closed again and the microphone in the room was turned off, but Pike could still be heard making gasping or snoring sounds.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 43 of 47

Nearly two hours after the execution began, media witnesses were escorted out, and Pike was taken to a hospital for treatment.

Many states, including Tennessee, keep the IV insertion hidden from public view, but allow witnesses to watch through a viewing window as the condemned person dies.

AP was part of a media coalition that previously sued Tennessee to see the IV insertion and to keep the viewing room curtains open until the pronouncement of death. But in April the Tennessee Supreme Court blocked a lower court's order that would have allowed for increased access.

One of Pike's attorneys, Steve Ferrell, said Pike feared that there could be complications because of a lifelong blood disorder that made it tough to get needles into her veins. Ferrell said it was possible that the IV did not enter Pike's vein properly, and the drug may have filled her arm instead of entering her bloodstream.

US hiring slows and unemployment ticks higher with a month remaining before Americans head to polls

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. employers added a disappointing 29,000 jobs and the unemployment rate ticked up last month, the government reported Friday, a month before voters go to the polls in pivotal midterm elections at a time of discontent over the high cost of living and the state of the economy.

Hiring dropped from a revised 133,000 in August, the Labor Department said. The unemployment rate rose to a still-low 4.2% from 4.1% in August.

Economists had expected September payrolls to come in around 90,000.

Labor Department revisions also shaved 60,000 jobs off combined July and August payrolls.

The new hiring data could draw the Federal Reserve's attention back to hiring and jobs, given that one of the central bank's two mandates is to seek maximum employment. Many Fed officials have said in recent weeks that they are primarily focused on their other mission, which is combating inflation. With the job market looking a bit weaker, the Fed may be more inclined to keep its key rate unchanged when it meets next month, rather than raise it.

Average hourly wages were up just 3% last month from a year earlier, the smallest year-over-year gain since May 2021. "In this data, there is no sign that the labor market is stoking inflation," said Luke Tilley, chief economist at Wilmington Trust.

Still, the unemployment rate remains low and inflation has been above the central bank's 2% target for more than five years, so the Fed's concern about elevated prices is still front and center.

Federal, state and local governments cut 17,000 jobs last month. Professional and business services companies, which provide administrative and technical expertise, trimmed 9,000 jobs.

Healthcare companies created 17,000 jobs in September, but that was barely half the 33,000 they've added, on average, each month for the past year. Bradley Saunders, an economist at Capital Economics, wrote that the slowdown in healthcare hiring might reflect the Trump administration's revocation of work authorizations for 350,000 Haitians.

Construction companies added 11,000 jobs and manufacturers 9,000.

Unemployment rose partly because 485,000 people entered the workforce and not all of them found jobs right away.

The U.S. job market has proven resilient in the face of a series of shocks — trade wars, persistent inflation, high interest rates and a conflict with Iran that has driven energy prices higher. Friday's jobs report is the last one that will come out before the Nov. 3 elections that will determine whether President Donald Trump's Republicans maintain full control of Congress.

Futures for the S&P 500 and Nasdaq composite added to their gains after the data was released on growing hopes that the Fed will hold off on a rate hike. Treasury yields moved lower.

Yet what makes Wall Street happy differs starkly with what brings joy on Main Street.

The U.S. job market has recovered from a dismal 2025, but most Americans are still unsettled about the

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 44 of 47

state of the economy and the high cost of living.

A Thursday poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds that only 17% of U.S. adults approve of Trump's handling of the cost of living. Just 26% approve of his handling of the economy overall, marking a new low.

U.S. consumer confidence dropped this month to the lowest level in more than a decade, according to an index published by the Conference Board. One reason: More than 28% of respondents told the business think tank that they expect fewer jobs to be available in six months, double the 14% who expect more.

The online jobs site Glassdoor reports that its employee confidence index, based on how workers view prospects for their own companies, dropped last month to the lowest level in records going back to the beginning of 2016, a period that includes a global pandemic. It was the index's third record low this year.

"Employee confidence has been continuously grinding downward over the last year as workers grow increasingly anxious about everything from layoffs to AI," said Glassdoor chief economist Daniel Zhao.

The public's misgivings about jobs partly reflect an odd feature of the current labor market: Employers aren't laying off many workers, but they aren't hiring many either. A Labor Department measure of gross hiring – before subtracting those who quit or lose their jobs – has been stuck in a rut for more than two years.

So economists describe a "low-hire, low-fire" job market in which those who have jobs are mostly secure, but jobseekers struggle to find work.

"People know that being laid off is unusually costly right now," said Glassdoor's Zhao. "They hear from their friends how long they've been out of work and had such a difficult time finding a job. That does make layoffs even more scary than usual."

In that chilly environment, fewer workers are willing to quit their jobs. "They often feel stuck," Zhao said. "Workers aren't finding there's opportunity on the open market to find a better job – one that pays more or offers better work-life balance."

Employers – businesses, government agencies and nonprofits – have added an average 68,000 jobs a month so far this year. That's a big improvement on the 9,700 average new jobs created every month in 2025, the weakest hiring outside a recession since 2002.

Sky Castle Toys in Seattle is still hiring – even though higher transportation costs, driven by the rocketing price of diesel, has eaten into profit margins. Co-founder Joshua Loerzel said the company's staff has more than doubled to 50 from last year.

He says toys priced under \$10 are what retailers want as shoppers cut back on higher-priced playthings. Sky Castle's sales increased 60% between January and August, compared with the same period last year.

At one time, 68,000 jobs a month would have been mediocre at best. But the United States doesn't need as many jobs as it once did to keep unemployment from rising. Because of baby boomer retirements and Trump's immigration crackdown, there are fewer people competing for work, and the break-even point could now be as low as zero jobs a month, down from 150,000 a year or two ago.

"I think this is roughly where we're going to stay," said Tilley at Wilmington Trust. "I expect job growth to remain in this 25,000 to 75,000 band as we go along."

Russian aerial strikes snarl traffic on 3 Kyiv bridges in a new disruption tactic

By HANNA ARHIROVA and BARRY HATTON Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian aerial attacks forced the partial closure Friday of three bridges over the Dnipro River in Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital's mayor said, in Moscow's latest effort to disrupt life in the city.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's top diplomat said officials have received separate proposals for a partial truce with Russia from the United States, India, Turkey and Egypt. The proposals envision halting attacks on energy infrastructure, which have caused fuel shortages in Russia and power outages in Ukraine, and on Black Sea shipping needed to get vital grain exports to world markets.

The Russian strikes forcing the full or partial closure of three of Kyiv's six road bridges caused traffic

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 45 of 47

logjams and appeared to be a new tactic in its campaign to torment the city's residents. Previously, Russia has hit apartment blocks, supermarket warehouses, gas stations and data centers, among other targets, in an escalation of attacks.

Oleksandr Pihalo, a Kyiv resident, said traffic was "jammed solid" and it took him 45 minutes to cover 4 kilometers (2 ½ miles). "It's a total mess on the road today," he told The Associated Press.

One of the three bridges was hit again on Friday afternoon, Mayor Vitalii Klitschko said.

Civilians "are bearing the brunt of this war," the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, said in Geneva on Friday.

"The war in Ukraine is a human rights catastrophe that is growing and intensifying by the week, causing unfathomable pain to civilians," he said. "Across Ukraine, people are living in constant dread."

While the aerial war has intensified in recent months, fighting along the roughly 1,250-kilometer front line snaking through northern, eastern and southern Ukraine has been virtually deadlocked. Russia invaded its neighbor more than 4 ½ years ago, and there are no concrete signs that a peace settlement might be possible.

However, Ukraine has this year made some progress against Russia's bigger army, according to the Institute for the Study of War.

Russian forces lost control over almost 300 square kilometers (116 square miles) of Ukraine between March and September, the Washington-based think tank said in a report late Thursday. Also, it said that the Russian military suffered over 46,000 casualties in September, the highest monthly number this year. It did not say how many Ukrainian troops were killed or wounded.

Zelenskyy says sanctions can stop Russian drones and missiles

Russia fired more than 100 drones at Ukraine overnight, striking Kyiv and eight other regions, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said. Almost half of the drones were the jet-powered type that are especially hard to stop, he said.

A drone hit a high-rise apartment block in Kyiv, killing one person, he said. At least four people were reported wounded elsewhere.

Zelenskyy repeated his appeal for foreign countries to close loopholes in international sanctions on Russia and to add more restrictions on its trade. He said Russia's drones and missiles are "critically dependent" on foreign components.

"Every Russian drone can actually be stopped right at the production line," Zelenskyy said in a post on X.

Ukraine has also bombarded Russia with the long-range drones and missiles it now produces, aiming at military manufacturing plants and oil refineries.

The Russian Defense Ministry said Friday that its air defenses overnight downed 646 Ukrainian drones over Russian regions, occupied Crimea, the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea.

One person was wounded in Russia's southwestern Volgograd region, Gov. Andrei Bocharov said. The attack targeted "industrial infrastructure," he said, without providing details.

Ukraine is ready for a truce on energy strikes and the Black Sea

Ukraine's Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said the partial truce proposals presented to Kyiv by four countries were the first time India has offered to play a role.

India is trying to balance its ties with Russia against its growing partnerships with the United States and other Western powers. A new U.S. sanctions package on Russia could impose up to 100% tariffs on New Delhi as a major importer of Russian oil.

Sybiha said Kyiv is ready to accept a ceasefire if it stops Russian attacks on Ukraine's power grid — as well as Ukrainian strikes on Russian oil refineries — and on cargo vessels exporting grain and other farm products through the Black Sea.

"We are ready for an energy and Black Sea ceasefire, but only in that combination. Energy and a ceasefire in the Black Sea," Sybiha told reporters Thursday, in comments embargoed until Friday.

He repeated Ukraine's offer of an unconditional ceasefire on the front line. But Moscow has rejected a ceasefire, saying a comprehensive peace deal must be agreed rather than a temporary truce.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 46 of 47

Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said Friday that Ukraine attacked four Russian oil refineries overnight, but air defenses fended off the attacks and key equipment wasn't damaged.

The government and companies have worked hard to improve protection of refineries, he said. Russian President Vladimir Putin decreed in August that the state can temporarily seize control of critical infrastructure facilities if private owners fail to protect them or rebuild them after Ukrainian strikes.

It wasn't possible to verify either side's claims.

Russia is stockpiling ballistic missiles, Ukraine says

Sybiha said Ukraine is requesting some 300 Patriot missiles from partner countries because intelligence services estimate that Russia is holding 600 ballistic missiles in reserve and can produce up to 140 ballistic missiles per month.

The U.S.-made Patriot air defense systems can effectively defend against ballistic missiles, which fly fast and drop steeply, but they are in short supply due to the Iran war.

Ukraine needs more funding and quickly, foreign minister says

Ukraine urgently needs funding in order to contract future drone production, so there are no gaps in supply at the beginning of next year, Sybiha said.

Kyiv faces a projected budget deficit of roughly \$27 billion this year, although the European Union has promised to help meet its financial requirements.

The European Commission announced Friday it had disbursed €2.9 billion (\$3.3 billion) to Ukraine in its latest batch of financing. Zelenskyy said the amount would help Ukraine's financial stability and strengthen its defense.

Russia is also facing economic and financial challenges due to high military spending and debt.

Today in History: October 3, Germany reunifies after 45 years

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Saturday, Oct. 3, the 276th day of 2026. There are 89 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Oct. 3, 1990, West Germany and East Germany ended 45 years of postwar division, declaring the creation of a reunified country.

Also on this date:

In 1873, Modoc leader Kintpuash was hanged at Fort Klamath, Oregon, after being convicted of his role in the deaths of U.S. negotiators during the Modoc War, a conflict in which his people resisted relocation. Kintpuash was the only Native American leader charged and convicted of a war crime by the U.S..

In 1944, during World War II, U.S. Army troops cracked the Siegfried Line north of Aachen, Germany.

In 1951, the New York Giants captured the National League pennant by a score of 5-4 as Bobby Thomson hit a three-run homer off Ralph Branca of the Brooklyn Dodgers, which became known as the "Shot Heard 'Round the World."

In 1974, Frank Robinson became the American League's first Black manager after he was hired by the Cleveland Indians.

In 1993, 18 U.S. service members and hundreds of Somalis were killed in the Battle of Mogadishu — the deadliest battle for U.S. troops since the Vietnam War. The battle inspired the film "Black Hawk Down."

In 1995, the jury in the O.J. Simpson murder trial in Los Angeles found the former football star not guilty of the 1994 killings of his former wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and her friend Ronald Goldman.

In 2008, O.J. Simpson was found guilty of robbing two sports-memorabilia dealers at gunpoint in a Las Vegas hotel room. (Simpson was later sentenced to nine to 33 years in prison; he was granted parole in July 2017 and released in October of that year. He died at age 76 on April 10, 2024, after battling prostate cancer.)

In 2011, an Italian appeals court freed Amanda Knox of Seattle after four years in prison, tossing murder convictions against Knox and an ex-boyfriend in the stabbing of their British roommate, Meredith Kercher. An Italian high court definitively vindicated Knox in 2015, throwing out the convictions once and for all.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Oct. 03, 2026 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 119 ~ 47 of 47

In 2013, a smugglers' ship packed with African migrants sank off the coast of a southern Italian island, killing more than 365 people.

In 2023, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to remove House Speaker Kevin McCarthy — the first time in U.S. history a speaker had been ousted from the position. Though McCarthy had the support of many fellow Republicans, several hard-right detractors from his party essentially forced him out.

In 2025, Sean "Diddy" Combs was sentenced to four years and two months in prison for transporting people across state lines for sexual encounters, capping a federal case marked by harrowing testimony and a forceful reckoning over one of hip-hop's most influential figures.

Today's Birthdays: Composer Steve Reich is 90. Rock 'n' roll star Chubby Checker is 85. Musician Lindsey Buckingham (Fleetwood Mac) is 77. Blues musician Keb' Mo' is 75. Baseball Hall of Famer Dave Winfield is 75. Baseball Hall of Famer Dennis Eckersley is 72. Rock drummer Tommy Lee is 64. Actor Clive Owen is 62. Film director Denis Villeneuve is 59. Singer-TV personality Gwen Stefani is 57. Pop singer Kevin Richardson (Backstreet Boys) is 55. Actor Neve Campbell is 53. Actor Lena Headey is 53. Rapper Talib Kweli is 51. Actor Seann William Scott is 50. Actor Tessa Thompson is 43. Actor-singer Ashlee Simpson is 42. Actor Alicia Vikander is 38. Rapper A\$AP Rocky is 38. Actor Ayo Edebiri is 31. Actor Noah Schnapp (TV: "Stranger Things") is 22.