

Groton Daily Independent

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Community Calendar

Friday, Oct. 9

Senior Menu: Baked fish, rice pilaf, carrots, fruit, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: No school.

School Lunch: No school.

NO SCHOOL — Staff Development Day

Lake Region Marching Band Festival, 9 a.m., Groton

Football hosts Mobridge-Pollock, 7 p.m., Doney Field

Saturday, Oct. 10

JH Volleyball at Warner Jamboree, 9 a.m.

SDHSAA Second Round Boys Soccer Playoffs, noon

SDHSAA Second Round Girls Soccer Playoffs, 1 p.m.

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Sunday, Oct. 11

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; No Sunday School; WELCA Women meet.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship 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 at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 10:30 a.m.

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

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

Groton 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

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PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445

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

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1440

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

Hurricane Isaias

Hurricane Isaias is expected to make landfall along the US Gulf Coast late tonight or early tomorrow as a Category 2 or higher storm.

The storm, packing sustained winds of 100 mph as of this writing, is expected to strike between Mississippi and the Florida Panhandle, bringing storm surges of up to 7 feet, heavy rainfall, and damaging winds (why the storm's so-called "dirty side" faces the greatest surge risk). Officials have issued evacuation orders, closed schools, and declared states of emergency in Florida and Alabama. Heavy rainfall is expected to spread inland across the eastern US this weekend. Isaias is the first Atlantic hurricane of the 2026 season, forming more than four months after the season began. Its late arrival is attributed partly to El Niño, a weather pattern that increases wind shear and disrupts hurricane formation.

The storm formed just one day shy of tying a 121-year-old record for the latest first Atlantic hurricane, set Oct. 8, 1905.

Protests Sweep Spain

Thousands of people marched through Madrid yesterday in memory of an 87-year-old tenant who died the day before. Protesters had rallied around her as a symbol of the country's housing affordability crisis.

María del Carmen Abasca had lived in her apartment since 1956 and inherited the rent-controlled lease from her mother in 2005. She paid around \$570 per month until a real estate company purchased the property in 2018 and sought to increase her rent by 230%. Abasca could not cover the new rate, and the company made four attempts to evict her. On Sept. 23, police broke down Abasca's door, removed her on a stretcher, and took her to a hospital.

The eviction resonated with Spaniards who now spend 50% of their salaries on rent as nationwide rates have nearly doubled over the last decade. Lawmakers rejected emergency renter protection proposals last week, prompting Spain's socialist prime minister to call a Nov. 29 snap election.

Slow and Steady Aging

Scientists identified unique genetic traits that may explain how Jonathan, a roughly 194-year-old giant tortoise and the world's oldest land animal, has lived so long. The study results, published this week, could offer insights into human longevity.

Jonathan is believed to have hatched in 1832, the same year author Lewis Carroll and architect Gustave Eiffel were born. The 400-pound tortoise lives on a remote island off Africa's west coast, where researchers traveled to swab his saliva. The sample revealed 287 genetic variants unique to Jonathan, including some linked to cancer suppression and inflammation reduction. Researchers also found that his molecular "on-off" switches regulating DNA repair, energy production, and other processes were resistant to wear and tear, resembling those of much younger tortoises. Changes in these switches—called the epigenome—are one of the nine hallmarks of aging.

Experts say Jonathan's longevity is likely due in part to his vegetable-heavy diet, favorable tropical climate, and attentive veterinary care.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Canadian author Anne Carson wins Nobel Prize in literature for her work blending ancient Greek and Roman works with contemporary influences.

Cleveland Guardians force Game 5 against Chicago White Sox in American League Division Series tomorrow at 8 pm ET.

Podcaster Joe Rogan renews multiyear partnership with Spotify that carries a reported earnout of \$250M; "The Joe Rogan Experience" has topped Edison Research's list of the most listened-to podcasts in the US since 2019.

Science & Technology

Computer scientist Margaret Hamilton, who led the development of the flight software for NASA's Apollo program, dies at age 90.

SpaceX's Crew-12 astronauts return to Earth after nearly eight months in space.

Underwater acoustics from healthy coral reefs help restore degraded reefs and rebuild their fish communities.

Collagen-eating enzymes that emerged roughly 550 million years ago may explain why later soft-bodied animals are largely absent from the fossil record, while earlier ones are more commonly preserved.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close mixed (S&P 500 -0.5%, Dow +0.1%, Nasdaq -1.3%) after Brent crude oil prices rise 4.1% to \$104.3 per barrel.

Trump administration suspends Microsoft, Adobe, and at least six other tech companies from program that allows skilled foreign workers to apply for green cards, accusing them of abusing the visa system.

Nvidia and Oracle shares fall 3% and 5.5%, respectively, on reports that OpenAI's annualized revenue is \$20B short of a prior \$70B estimate due to investor miscalculations.

Politics & World Affairs

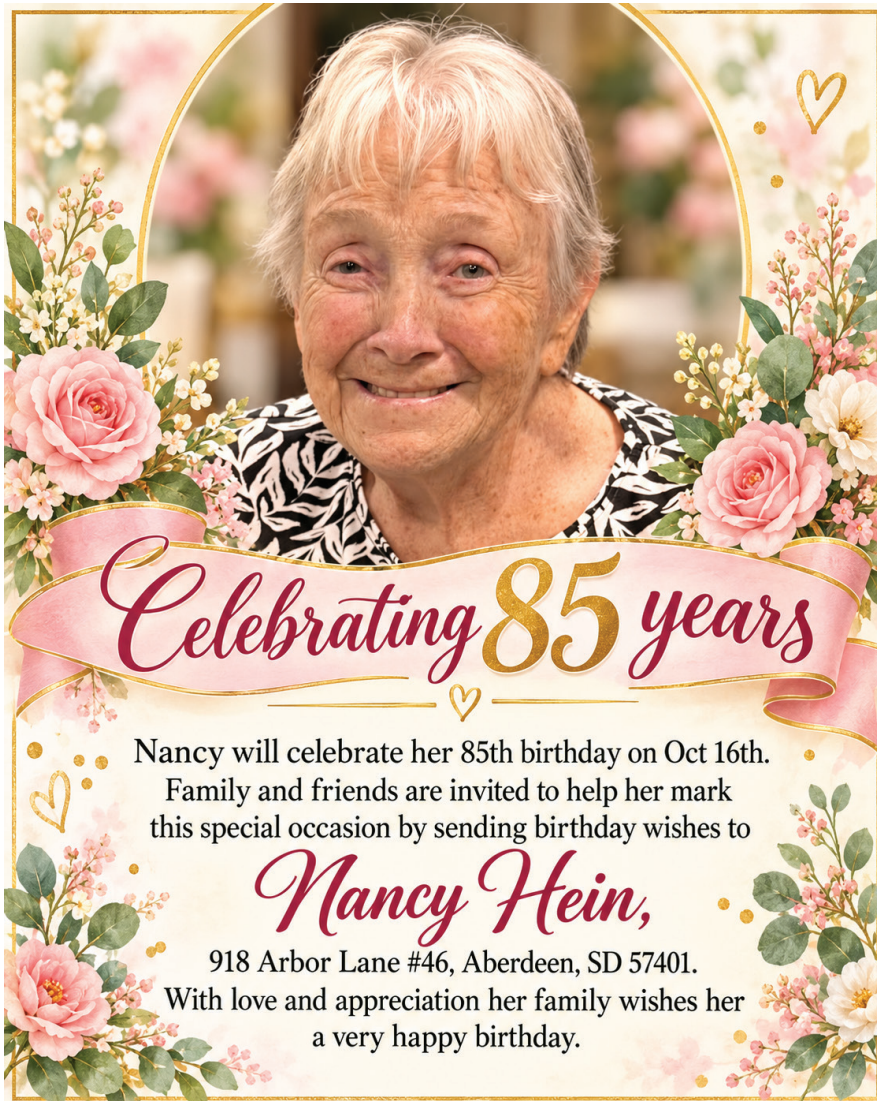
Nobel Peace Prize winner is due to be announced this morning at 5 am ET; watch live broadcast.

... and did you know Adolf Hitler was once nominated?

President Donald Trump says the US will not attack Iran before next month's midterm elections.

USS Abraham Lincoln returns to San Diego Bay after deployment that included 265 uninterrupted days at sea.

Russian glide bomb kills at least 30 people on buses in eastern Ukraine.



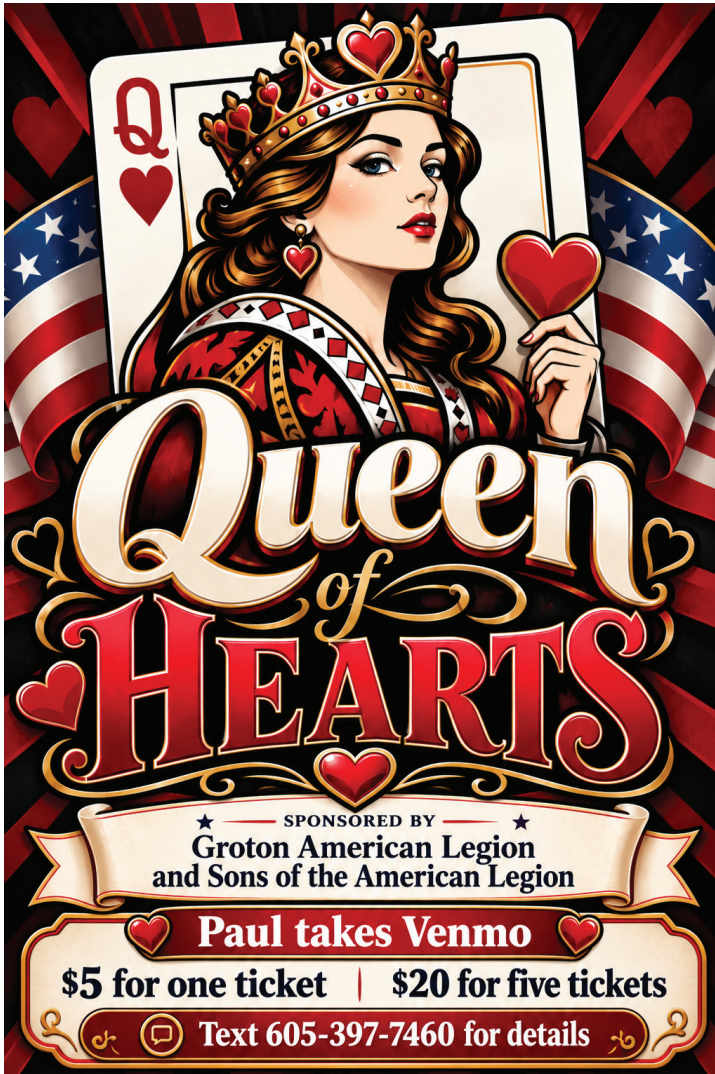
Celebrating 85 years

Nancy will celebrate her 85th birthday on Oct 16th.
Family and friends are invited to help her mark
this special occasion by sending birthday wishes to

Nancy Hein,
918 Arbor Lane #46, Aberdeen, SD 57401.
With love and appreciation her family wishes her
a very happy birthday.

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A stylized illustration of the Queen of Hearts, a woman with long brown hair, wearing a crown and a red and white patterned dress, holding a red heart. The background features a large playing card 'Q of Hearts' and an American flag motif. The text 'Queen of HEARTS' is prominently displayed in a large, ornate font. Below the title, a banner reads 'SPONSORED BY Groton American Legion and Sons of the American Legion'. At the bottom, it says 'Paul takes Venmo' and provides ticket prices and contact information.

Queen of HEARTS

★ — SPONSORED BY — ★
Groton American Legion
and Sons of the American Legion

♥ **Paul takes Venmo** ♥

\$5 for one ticket | \$20 for five tickets

☎ **Text 605-397-7460 for details** ☎

Queen of Hearts

The Queen of Hearts drawing was held Thursday night. This cycle is sponsored by the Groton American Legion and the Sons of the American Legion. Ticket sales for this past week were \$450. The jackpot was \$1,480. The name of Jerry Brown was drawn and he had card 26 which was the 8 of clubs. He received \$45. Next drawing is next Thursday at 6 p.m.

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

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Groton
Area
Tigers
Groton, SD

on

GDILIVE



YouTube



Friday, Oct. 9, 2026
10 a.m. - Downtown Groton

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For more info: GDILIVE.COM



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Football
Mobridge-Pollock
at Groton Area
Fri., Oct. 9, 2026, 7 pm



Groton
Area
Tigers
Groton, SD

GDILIVE



YouTube

A production of the

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For more info: GDILIVE.COM



**with the Voice of the Tigers: Justin Olson
along with Paper Paul and Savannah Bible**

**Sponsors on GDILIVE.COM are: Agtegra, Avantara-Groton,
Bierman Farm Service, BK Custom Ts, Blocker Construction,
Dacotah Bank, Farmers Union Insurance,
Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, Heartland Energy,
Jacobson Electric, John Sieh Agency,
Jungle Lanes & Cafe, Rix Farms / R&M Farms, S & S Lumber,
and The Meat House of Andover.**

Codington County Fatal Crash

What: Single-vehicle fatal crash

Where: 173rd Street and 448th Avenue, 4 miles southwest of Watertown, South Dakota

When: 12:10 a.m., Thursday, October 8, 2026

Driver 1: 46-year-old male from Watertown, South Dakota, fatal injuries

Vehicle 1: 2007 Pontiac Grand Prix

Seat Belt Used: No

Codington County, S.D.- A Watertown man died Thursday in a single-vehicle crash near Watertown, South Dakota.

The name of the person involved has not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates the driver of a 2007 Pontiac Grand Prix was traveling westbound on 173rd Street near 448th Avenue. The Pontiac left the road, entered the north ditch, and rolled. The driver was ejected from the vehicle. He sustained fatal injuries.

The investigation is ongoing. All information released is preliminary.

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

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The Groton Chamber of Commerce members welcomed the new owners of the Red Horse and manager Kira Cady at their meeting held Wednesday. Pictured are Carol Kutter, Katelyn Nehlich, Doug Heinrich, Kira Cady, Ashley Bentz and April Abeln. (Courtesy Photo)

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Groton Chamber of Commerce

October 7, 2026

12pm Red Horse

- Members present: Katelyn Nehlich, Ashley Bentz, Carol Kutter, Becca Johnson, April Abeln, and Doug Heinrich
 - Chamber members had Hot Stuff pizza and garlic cheese bread and welcomed the new owners and manager of the Red Horse.
 - The minutes from the previous meeting were approved by Heinrich and seconded by Kutter. All members present voted aye.
 - The treasurer's report was given. Dacotah Bank checking account balance is \$17,522.41 in addition to the \$10,365.94 CD that expires October 14th. The bucks account balance is \$3,239.80. The report was approved by Abeln and seconded by Kutter, along with the renewal of our CD for 13 months at 3.9%, which was changed from last month's motion. All members present voted aye.
 - A thank-you note was received for advertising with Groton Transit, along with a new lease from NVC for the Highway 12 sign correcting the location listed on the original lease.
 - Mrs. Harry's GHS art classes will be submitting window cling designs for 2027.
 - City Hall was the winner of the Homecoming storefront decorating contest.
 - The Chamber was approved for another year of donated internet service from NVC for the Highway 12 sign.
 - Motion by Abeln and seconded by Heinrich to put together a giveaway basket for Downtown Trick or Treat. All members present voted aye. Basket will include \$25 in Bucks along with \$25 in items purchased from Dollar General.
 - A tree will be set up for Tour of Trees again this year. A date to set up will be emailed later.
 - Motion by Kutter and seconded by Heinrich to donate \$275 plus \$100 in Bucks to Groton Snow Queen. All members present voted aye. Snow Queen will be held November 15th at 4pm.
 - Motion by Heinrich and seconded by Nehlich to donate \$20 in Bucks to the Wage Memorial Library for their coloring contest and \$50 in Bucks to their Tour of Trees winner. All members present voted aye.
 - Motion by Abeln and seconded Heinrich to donate a gift basket to GDC's Kids Halloween Party. All members present voted aye. Basket will include \$25 in Bucks along with \$25 in items purchased from Dollar General.
 - Donating to the Groton Legion façade renovation was discussed.
 - Abeln was asked to reach out to Charity Hinman to welcome her new business, GiftedBaskets and more.
 - Next Meeting: November 4th at 12pm at City Hall
- Upcoming events:
- 10/09/2026 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
 - 10/30/2026 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
 - 10/30/2026 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5-6:30pm
 - 10/31/2026 Avantara Groton Trick or Treating 1-3pm
 - 10/31/2026 Halloween Kids Party 1-4pm Community Center
 - 10/31/2026 The Jungle Halloween Bash 9pm



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

South Dakota Farmers Union asks governor and lawmakers to approve a state fuel tax holiday

Request, which would require a special legislative session, is in response to high gas and diesel prices and complications surrounding relief attempts

BY MEGHAN O'BRIEN

As further complications arose Thursday around actions meant to ease the burden of high diesel prices, the South Dakota Farmers Union asked the governor and state lawmakers to call a special legislative session to approve a state fuel tax holiday.

"The governor says this all the time, that agriculture is king, and you hear it from legislators as well," said South Dakota Farmers Union President Doug Sombke. "So, then let's treat it as such, and let's make sure that we take care of it as such."

The organization is asking the governor and lawmakers to approve legislation that would temporarily reduce the state tax on gasoline and diesel from 28 cents to 1 cent per gallon. Requiring at least 1 cent of tax would allow for tracking of the amount of highway funding lost to the tax holiday so lawmakers could replace it later, the Farmers Union said, possibly with reserve funds.

The Farmers Union said legislation should also temporarily allow the use of federally tax-exempt, offroad, red-dyed diesel in highway vehicles, while shielding people from state fuel tax penalties, retroactive audits or enforcement actions, and providing clear direction for law enforcement agencies to suspend enforcement.

The Governor's Office, in a response to South Dakota Searchlight questions, said in a written statement that "all options are on the table, and we will continue to do what we can to support farmers and taxpayers during this turbulent time."

Sombke's request comes after the state Department of Revenue on Thursday clarified the state's response to President Donald Trump's Monday executive order. Trump's order is intended to allow broader use of dyed diesel, which is only legal for offroad use in machinery such as farm equipment.

Red-dyed diesel is the same as regular diesel apart from the dye added to help with enforcement. Trump's order suspends penalties for unauthorized uses through the end of the year.

South Dakota Gov. Larry Rhoden responded Tuesday by directing the state Department of Public Safety to "prioritize commercial motor vehicle inspections that present a threat to public safety and not attempt to identify the use of dyed diesel fuel on highways and public roads" while the federal order is in effect.

"By taking this action, we will provide meaningful relief to South Dakota farmers," Rhoden said in a news



South Dakota Farmers Union President Doug Sombke participates in a press conference Oct. 12, 2023, at the Denny Sanford Premier Center in Sioux Falls. Sombke and the Farmers Union are calling for a fuel tax holiday in the state. (Photo

by Joshua Haiar/South Dakota Searchlight)

release Tuesday, and “allow all taxpayers to realize meaningful savings from using dyed diesel.”

But dyed diesel is delivered in bulk to permitted users such as farmers and is not readily available to the general public. Additionally, some farmers are concerned about being fined for trace amounts of the dye left in their vehicle fuel tanks after Trump’s order expires.

The state’s Department of Revenue said Thursday that although dyed diesel is federally tax exempt, which saves approved users 24.4 cents per gallon, it’s only exempt from state and local taxes when it’s used for approved agricultural purposes. Thus, anybody else who buys dyed diesel should be paying state and local taxes on it, and those taxes could “reduce or eliminate any tax benefits” from federal tax relief.

Based on that legal reality, the department said in a news release, “only agricultural producers with a valid agricultural exemption certificate should fuel with red dyed diesel for on-road use at this time.”

Rhoden cannot suspend state taxes himself, because they’re established in state law. That’s why Sombeke’s organization is calling for a special session of the Legislature. A special session can be called by the governor, or lawmakers can petition for it with two-thirds support from both the House and Senate.

In a letter to Rhoden and legislative leaders, the Farmers Union said that because of all the complications surrounding the actions with dyed diesel in South Dakota, “citizens, commercial operators, and agricultural producers are placed in an unfair and precarious situation.”

Gas and diesel prices have risen sharply since the beginning of Trump’s war in Iran, which has disrupted global fuel supply chains. In at least four other states — Georgia, Indiana, Ohio and Utah — leaders have moved to temporarily suspend or reduce the state tax on gasoline.

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.

Another South Dakota Republican lawmaker is facing a criminal charge

Drunken driving citation for Leola state senator marks third case involving a legislator since June

BY JOHN HULT

A South Dakota state senator was cited for driving under the influence this week, marking the third time criminal charges for a state lawmaker have come to light in the space of four months.

Leola Republican Mark Lapka, 45, was cited for driving under the influence between Tuesday night and early Wednesday morning, McPherson County State’s Attorney Austin Hoffman confirmed to South Dakota Searchlight. Lapka was cited, not arrested, Hoffman said, “due to the circumstances of the situation.”

He declined to offer further details, citing the ongoing investigation. No charges have been filed yet, Hoffman said, because the clerk of courts for McPherson County was not immediately available to file them.

Sheriff David Ackerman said the incident occurred near the edge of town in Leola, but also declined to elaborate due to the ongoing investigation.

A first offense of driving under the influence is punishable by up to a year in jail and a \$2,000 fine. Lapka has no criminal record in South Dakota beyond the pending charge and a speeding ticket, according to a search of the



Sen. Mark Lapka, R-Leola, speaks in the South Dakota Senate on March 4, 2025, at the Capitol in Pierre. (Photo by Makenzie

Huber/South Dakota Searchlight)

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state's court record database.

Lapka is running uncontested for reelection to his seat in District 23, where he represents all of McPherson and Edmunds counties and parts of Brown, Campbell, Faulk, Hand, Potter and Walworth counties. He did not return a call or text from Searchlight.

Sioux Falls Republican Sen. Chris Karr, one of the chamber's top leaders as president pro tempore, did not immediately respond to a call and a text seeking comment.

Two other Republican lawmakers were charged criminally in June. Newell Rep. Travis Ismay was charged with felony damage to a road, but the charge was reduced when he agreed to plead no contest to a misdemeanor version of the same crime. Ismay agreed to pay back the county for the cost of re-grading the gravel road he'd graded himself.

Ismay is running unopposed for reelection to his seat in District 28B. That district includes Butte and Harding counties and parts of Perkins County.

Sen. Tom Pischke, R-Dell Rapids, awaits trial on two felony counts of attempting to file a false or forged instrument. That case accuses Pischke of signing and submitting nominating petitions for county party precinct positions without those candidates' knowledge. The Minnehaha County Republican Party chairman has alleged that Pischke was motivated by a dispute within the party, and wanted to add committee members to make it more difficult for county party meetings to achieve a quorum.

A December trial date has been set for Pischke, who dropped out of his reelection race in July after saying he'd be unable to be "transparent" during the campaign while his criminal case is pending.

Pischke serves in District 25, which includes northern Minnehaha and all of Moody County.

Former Republican lawmaker Bryan Breitling is running for Pischke's seat as an independent. The Minnehaha County Republican Party chose Bart Sample, of Flandreau, to replace Pischke on the Republican ticket. Sample finished third in a three-way primary race on June 2 for two Republican nominations for the district's state House seats.

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.

Feds unlikely to change abortion pill policy before next year

The Trump administration has used the ongoing study to delay several lawsuits

BY SOFIA RESNICK

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration said late Wednesday that it expects to complete its long-awaited safety review of abortion pills by mid-December and issue a report evaluating the results by March 2027.

The agency disclosed the information in a court-mandated status report it submitted in the federal lawsuit Louisiana v. FDA. The timeline aligns with recent reporting that the Trump administration intends to delay controversial decisions around abortion until after the midterm elections.

U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. announced the review last spring, following an anti-abortion pressure campaign urging the FDA to overturn a Biden-era rule allowing abortion pills to be prescribed via telemedicine. More than a year later, national anti-abortion leaders are criticizing the administration for delaying action, and have signaled they would reject a review that finds medication abortion safe if they don't find it to be thorough enough.

"The FDA's court-ordered update on its abortion-drug study is alarming," said Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America President Marjorie Dannenfelser in a written statement released late Wednesday night. "Instead of the promised gold-standard study, the FDA is trying to peddle fool's gold."

The Trump administration has used the ongoing study to delay several federal lawsuits related to medication abortion regulation. Louisiana, as well as Missouri and Texas, sued the federal government, arguing that federal policies allowing mifepristone to be prescribed via telehealth and distributed by mail undermine state abortion bans. Six months ago, a federal district court in Louisiana granted the FDA's motion to stay

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U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. announced a safety review of abortion medication last spring, following an anti-abortion pressure campaign urging the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to overturn a Biden-era rule allowing abortion pills to be prescribed via telemedicine. (Photo by Max Nesterak/

Minnesota Reformer)

proceedings in the case until the government completed its review of the current mifepristone-misoprostol regimen.

The FDA says it is comparing the safety profile of medication abortion to the safety profile of surgical abortion and analyzing a variety of data sources within, and outside of, the FDA's Sentinel system, a distributed database related to medical product safety.

The agency says it is also reviewing mifepristone's Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS), a drug-safety program the FDA uses for certain drugs. That includes reconsidering the agency's 2023 decision allowing for telehealth abortion.

"Following completion of its study and review, FDA will decide whether changes to the Mifepristone REMS Program are necessary and, if applicable, initiate any such changes in accordance with established processes," reads the status report submitted by the U.S. Department of Justice.

University of California, Davis, expects the FDA's review to be guided by politics rather than science.

"I think the fact that the Trump administration has not yet issued new restrictions on mifepristone is primarily because Republicans think it's dangerous to do that politically," Ziegler said. "I think if they do impose new restrictions, it'll be to cater to the base."

Anti-abortion groups have urged the administration not to wait until the study is complete to take action on abortion drugs, and warned they would not accept inaction even after the study is complete. They've also said they will continue to pursue abortion-pill restrictions in the states.

"The Pro-Life Movement is prepared to reject a methodologically flawed review where the agency has simply gone through the motions to rubber stamp the current REMS, or lack thereof," said John Mize, CEO of Americans United for Life, in a written statement.

His group was involved in a movement-wide effort to produce and promote research on medication abortion, analyzing commercially available Medicaid insurance claims data. White papers produced by the Ethics and Public Policy Center and the Foundation for the Restoration of America found that about 11% of patients who took mifepristone experienced serious adverse events, which is 22 times higher than what's on the current drug label for mifepristone. The papers, which were not published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, used a broader definition of serious adverse event than what the FDA uses.

Anti-abortion leaders told Stateline they have been expecting the FDA to conduct its own analysis of Medicaid insurance claims data as part of its review. They say the agency should not only use its internal systems, calling them insufficient.

"I'm certainly hopeful that the FDA is using more robust data sources like an insurance claims database," said Dr. Christina Francis, CEO of the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists, which was a plaintiff group in a previous lawsuit challenging the FDA's regulation of abortion pills, which the U.S. Supreme Court dismissed over standing issues.

The Indiana OB-GYN said the FDA's review is "long overdue" and said her practice has seen complica-

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tions from abortion pills “at least on a monthly basis.”

Ushma Upadhyay, a professor at the University of California, San Francisco, who has co-authored several studies showing low rates of serious adverse health risks for medication and telehealth abortion, said it would be difficult to draw conclusions about telehealth abortion just from insurance claims data.

“Insurance claims are an excellent way to understand safety of many medications, and I also think it is useful in understanding the safety of medication abortion, but not specifically telehealth, because most of the telehealth abortion providers do not accept insurance,” Upadhyay said.

Ziegler said the results of the safety review are unlikely to change the debate over abortion pills.

“Mifepristone is one of the most studied, most politicized drugs in the country,” she said. “Obviously it’s not being studied because it hasn’t been studied.”

Stateline reporter Sofia Resnick can be reached at sresnick@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.

Sofia Resnick covers reproductive rights for Stateline. She has been a journalist for 20 years, covering reproductive health policy and politics for more than a decade, specializing in stories about how the religious right has manipulated science to change policy and tracking the long tail of the fall of Roe v. Wade.

Judge extends temporary access to White House for news organizations Trump banned

BY JENNIFER SHUTT

WASHINGTON — A federal judge will rule in the coming days on whether the Trump administration can legally rescind White House press passes for journalists at three news organizations, or if those reporters will be able to continue accessing the grounds while the case continues.

U.S. District Judge for the District of Columbia Timothy J. Kelly said at the end of a Thursday hearing he intends to issue his decision on a preliminary injunction in the press freedom case before Tuesday.

Kelly, appointed by President Donald Trump during his first term, granted the news organizations — CNN, MS Now and Politico — a temporary restraining order in late September, forcing the White House to return press passes it had confiscated and permit the reporters back into the complex.

A preliminary injunction, which the administration could appeal, would replace the short-term temporary restraining order that generally cannot be appealed to a higher court. The TRO was set to expire Thursday, but Kelly extended it through Tuesday.



The White House pictured on June 11, 2026. (Photo

by Ashley Murray/States Newsroom)

Viewpoint discrimination alleged

Theodore J. Boutrous, Jr., a partner at Gibson Dunn who represents the three news organizations in the case, argued during the hearing the president’s decision to ban the reporters was a clear example of

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viewpoint discrimination and violated the First Amendment.

"The president got up on the wrong side of the bed and declared a ban on these news organizations," he said.

Trump posted on social media in mid-September he intended to block journalists at the news organizations from using their White House press passes to enter the grounds.

"Media Outlets shouldn't be able to constantly write or report FICTION and LIES when they're covering the President of the United States, the Trump Administration, or the United States of America," he wrote at the time. "Other Fake News Media Outlets to follow."

Trump and administration officials later said they had concerns about the types of national security articles published by the news organizations.

But Boutrous said during the hearing the ban was clearly about the president's belief he should receive more positive news coverage.

"He has been clear that the reason for this ban is he doesn't want scrutiny of his policies," Boutrous said. Administration questions journalistic standards

Michael Velchik, senior counsel in the civil division of the Justice Department, argued the decision to ban the news organizations was not solely based on national security but grievances with their journalistic standards.

"He set out both of those independent concerns," Velchik said, referring to the president.

Velchik said he believed that "publishing national security information and not running it by the government clearly violates journalistic standards."

Velchik also said the letters administration officials sent to the news organizations after the ban took effect gave them the opportunity to rebut the administration's claims about their reporters. He said that none of the three chose "to respond to any of the substantive concerns."

"We did provide a process and they chose not to participate," he said.

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

Voters in midterm elections identify a culprit for rising cost of living: Trump's tariffs

BY ASHLEY MURRAY

WASHINGTON — Rebecca Myers lives in one of the nation's most hotly contested congressional districts, and tariffs were on her mind as she voted early and in-person in Suffolk, Virginia in late September.

The 44-year-old trained social worker said she and her husband, who recently retired after 25 years in the U.S. Navy, are raising two children, ages 7 and 9, and forgoing a family vacation to save money.

"I'm an educated person, but I'm not going to pretend to be an expert in the economy. All I can say is I know my family's finances very well and I know everything we spend money on has gone up in price.

"I understand some of it is due to the tariffs, some of it is due to the war in Iran," Myers told States Newsroom in an Oct. 1 interview.

Myers is among a growing number of voters found to be taking their anger about affordability to the polls this midterm election and blaming President Donald Trump's tariffs as a culprit for rising expenses. Public opinion surveys bear out Myers is far from alone in making the connection.

"The real top line is that for maybe the first time ever, tariffs are a salient issue at the ballot box," said Scott Lincicome of the libertarian Cato Institute. "You know, normally trade is a boring issue that nobody really thinks about or cares about."

Myers, who lives in Virginia's 2nd Congressional District, voted for Elaine Luria, the Democratic candidate and former U.S. representative who is challenging the incumbent Republican, Rep. Jen Kiggans.

Kiggans, Myers said, has supported Trump's "MAGA agenda," including tariffs.

Kiggans' campaign did not respond to a request for comment.

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Trump opponents seize on issue

Organizers are targeting districts like Myers', where Democrats could flip seats.

"We talk to families every day who are struggling with the things that they need to take care of themselves and their families," said Sondra Goldschein, executive director of the Campaign for a Family Friendly Economy.

Her organization, which also has a political action committee that endorses Democrats, recently hosted a "tariff-proof" cooking class in Chesapeake, Virginia, to drive attention to the issue. Attendees received tips like substituting chicken for beef, buying domestic produce, and choosing frozen over canned goods — all which have been affected by Trump's ever-changing taxes on imports.

Goldschein and national organizers are targeting voters not only in Virginia, but in Florida, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

"This Republican-backed Congress and all of the members that come from states like this have really turned their backs on working families," Goldschein told States Newsroom during an interview ahead of the cooking class.

In a state-by-state breakdown of tariffs, the conservative National Taxpayers Union Foundation and Trade Partnership Worldwide found the top 10 states most affected by Trump's tariffs — in the tens of billions of dollars — are California, Texas, Michigan, Georgia, Illinois, New York, New Jersey, Florida, Ohio and Tennessee.

Virginia, where business owners have paid a collective \$6.2 billion in tariffs ordered by Trump since January 2025, ranked 18th.

Nearly all are in the midst of fierce battles for U.S. Senate or House seats as tariffs emerge as what critics predict will be a major factor in the midterm elections that will determine control of Congress.

Ever-changing tariffs

New research shows Trump's on-again, off-again tariffs on imported goods have cost business owners and consumers billions of dollars.

"The typical estimate has it being in the neighborhood of \$1,000-plus per year of additional (consumer) costs, and maybe accounting for somewhere between one-half and 1 percentage point of the inflation rate. That doesn't sound like a lot, but if someone came along and gave you a tax increase of \$1,100, which is about what this is, you'd feel it," said Kimberly Clausing, economist and senior fellow at the Peterson Institute of International Economics.

Clausing and fellow economist Maurice Obstfeld at the nonpartisan think tank reviewed 13 academic papers from 2025 and 2026 on Trump's tariffs and the pass-through costs to consumers and businesses.

"What makes it a little confusing and hard to measure is that there's been a lot of uncertainty about the trade policy, and so it's come in spurts and reversals and restarts," Clausing said, adding that some businesses may absorb the new taxes on imports at first but then eventually raise prices later.

"It's not like you raise the tariff on day one and (on) day two all the prices have fully adjusted. It's a little



Voters angry over the rising cost of groceries and other items due to tariffs could be expressing their dissatisfaction in the midterm elections. (Photo by Ming Tang Tung/Getty Images)

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slower than that, but you do see absolutely evidence that with time the tariffs are being passed through to consumers, and very little evidence that foreigners are bearing a significant burden," she said.

Trump's tariff policy has changed more than 50 times since he began his second term in January 2025, according to the Tax Foundation, a think tank that advocates for a slimmed-down tax code and "policies that lead to greater economic growth."

As of Sept. 10, the foundation estimated that Trump's tariffs will cost each household an average \$820 in 2026.

While Trump campaigned on the promise that other countries would pay for his tariffs, and vowed the same once he took office again, the statement has always been false, economists have documented. Tariffs are taxes that American businesses and individuals pay upon retrieving their shipments of items they've purchased from other countries. The tariffed goods fall into hundreds of categories — anything from machine parts to food.

The president's early round of "emergency" and "reciprocal" tariffs imposed on worldwide goods in April 2025 were struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court in February. Since then, Trump has used three other statutes to justify charging import taxes on goods.

Impact spreads across states

The breakdown produced by the National Taxpayers Union found the biggest effects in states and industries scattered throughout America.

Sectors hit hardest by tariffs in the top 10 states include automobiles and auto parts; steel, aluminum and other metals; clothes and shoes; and food and beverages.

For example, businesses in Michigan have paid an extra \$23 billion on imports, largely cars and trucks. Meanwhile, the food and beverage sector was hit hardest in Florida, where importers have paid an extra \$11 billion since Trump began implementing new tariffs in 2025 through Aug. 4, 2026, according to the conservative organization's analysis that drew from Census Bureau import data.

Bryan Riley, director of the National Taxpayers Union's free trade initiative, described Trump's tariffs during his second term as "a very costly policy."

"If you're in a state like Georgia, big tariff costs are mainly because there's a lot of auto manufacturing in Georgia, surprisingly to many people. And then that's not going to be the case in New Mexico, which doesn't have a lot of auto manufacturing, so (there are) less tariff costs and different categories hit in each state," Riley said.

The analysis did not account for any court-mandated refunds the Trump administration must pay back after the Supreme Court deemed the president's initial emergency tariffs illegal. Those refunds to businesses are not necessarily passed on to consumers.

Trump and the cost of living

Polls show voters are growing increasingly frustrated with Trump's handling of the economy, as his approval ratings plunge, and many of those surveyed are blaming the administration's trade policy for the rising cost of living.

Overall, 69% of American adults, and 52% of Republicans, say Trump is not meeting his promise to fix the cost of living, according to an Associated Press/NORC nationwide poll of just over 2,100 voters from Sept. 24-28.

Specifically on trade and tariffs, the survey found that overall 68% of respondents disapprove of Trump's trade negotiations with other countries, and 64% think the tariffs have gone too far.

Lincicome of the Cato Institute said it's a "shocker" that tariffs are becoming a mainstream concern among voters.

When surveying just over 4,100 voters in mid-August, Cato and Morning Consult found 3 in 4 participants said they will consider tariffs when casting their midterm election ballot.

Additionally, the survey revealed 74% of respondents — 66% percent of Republicans and 84% of Democrats — blamed Trump's tariffs for increased prices on items they buy at the store.

Lincicome, vice president of general economics for Cato, pointed to his home state of North Carolina,

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where Roy Cooper, the former Democratic governor now vying for an open U.S. Senate seat, is making opposition to tariffs a centerpiece of his affordability agenda.

"It's pretty clear from both the polling and Democrats in not just North Carolina but Georgia and Iowa and other places (candidates) are really chomping at the bit to run on cost of living, and to say they're going to nix all these tariffs. ... Even in places like Ohio, where Sherrod Brown is trying to win," Lincicome said.

Brown, a Democrat who served in the U.S. Senate from 2007-2025, was "one of the most consistent protectionists" of domestic manufacturing in the upper chamber, Lincicome said.

"Now all of a sudden he's running on nixing the tariffs," Lincicome said. "Now he's not nearly as vocal as somebody like Cooper or (James) Talarico in Texas or Jon Ossoff in Georgia. He's still saying he's going to get rid of these tariffs, and that's a pretty shocking change."

Trump 'skillfully used tariffs,' White House says

The White House defended Trump's record on the economy and said he has "skillfully" imposed tariffs.

"President Trump signed the largest working-class tax cuts in history, lowered the cost of prescription drugs, sealed the border, drove violent crime to the lowest level in nearly a century, unleashed an energy revolution, added more than a million private-sector jobs, and sent Americans' 401(k)s climbing to record highs.

"The President skillfully used tariffs to renegotiate almost 20 trade deals and level the playing field for American workers and businesses. The Trump administration has consistently maintained that the cost of tariffs will ultimately be borne by foreign exporters who rely on access to the American economy, the world's biggest and best consumer market," said White House spokesperson Taylor Rogers.

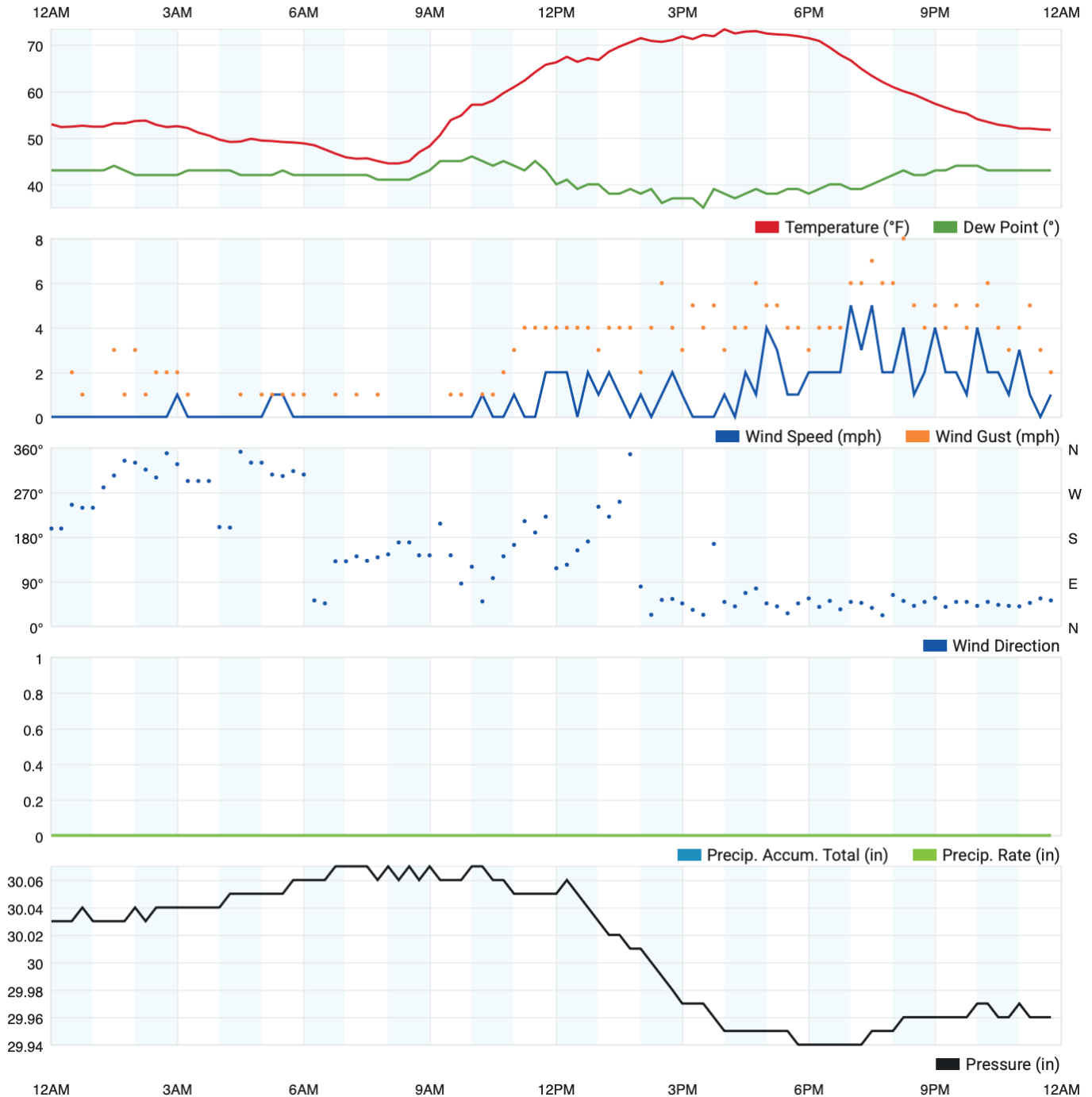
Ashley Murray covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include domestic policy and appropriations.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

October 8, 2026



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Today

Tonight

Saturday

Saturday Night

Sunday



High: 82 °F

Sunny



Low: 64 °F

Mostly Clear



High: 89 °F

Sunny and Breezy



Low: 57 °F

Mostly Clear



High: 71 °F

Partly Sunny

Today



Highs: 77-88°

Southerly winds
gusting 25-35 mph



Saturday

Highs: 83 to 93°

South to southwesterly winds gusting 20-45 mph

*highest across the Sisseton Hills

**Elevated Fire Danger over portions of
south central and northeastern SD

ELEVATED
FIRE
WEATHER
CONDITIONS



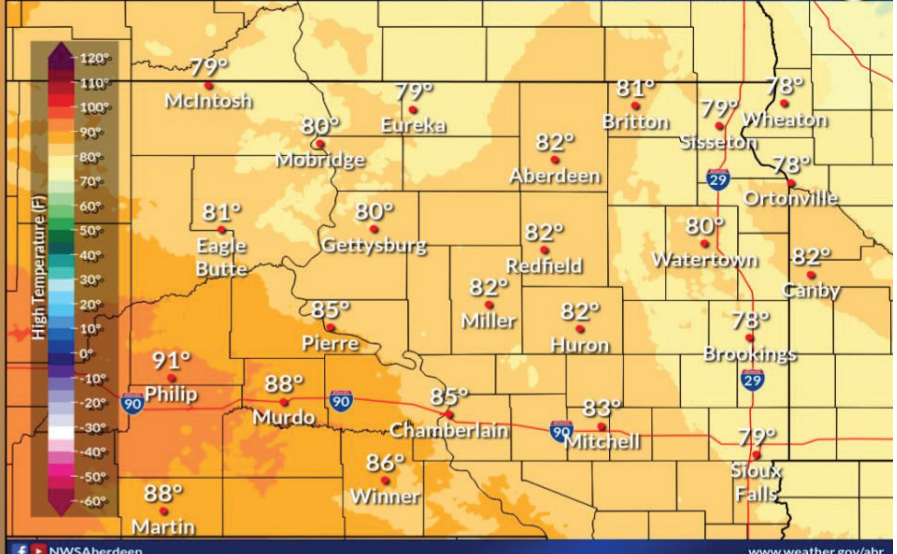
Warm and Dry

Friday High Temperature Forecast

Above normal temps continue

Weather Forecast Office
Aberdeen, SD

Issued Oct 09, 2026 2:50 AM CDT



weather.gov/abrn

Increasing southerly winds today gusting from 25 to 35 mph will usher in warmer air and much above normal temperatures through Saturday. Highs today will rise into the upper 70s to upper 80s for most areas, while even warmer temperatures in the mid 80s to mid 90s will be felt on Saturday. Northeast SD will see stronger south to southwest wind gusts from 30 to 45 mph on Saturday. Fire danger will be elevated across the region both today and Saturday.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 74 °F at 3:57 PM

Low Temp: 44 °F at 8:05 AM

Wind: 8 mph at 8:10 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 87 in 2024

Record Low: 14 in 1964

Average High: 63

Average Low: 37

Average Precip in Oct.: 0.68

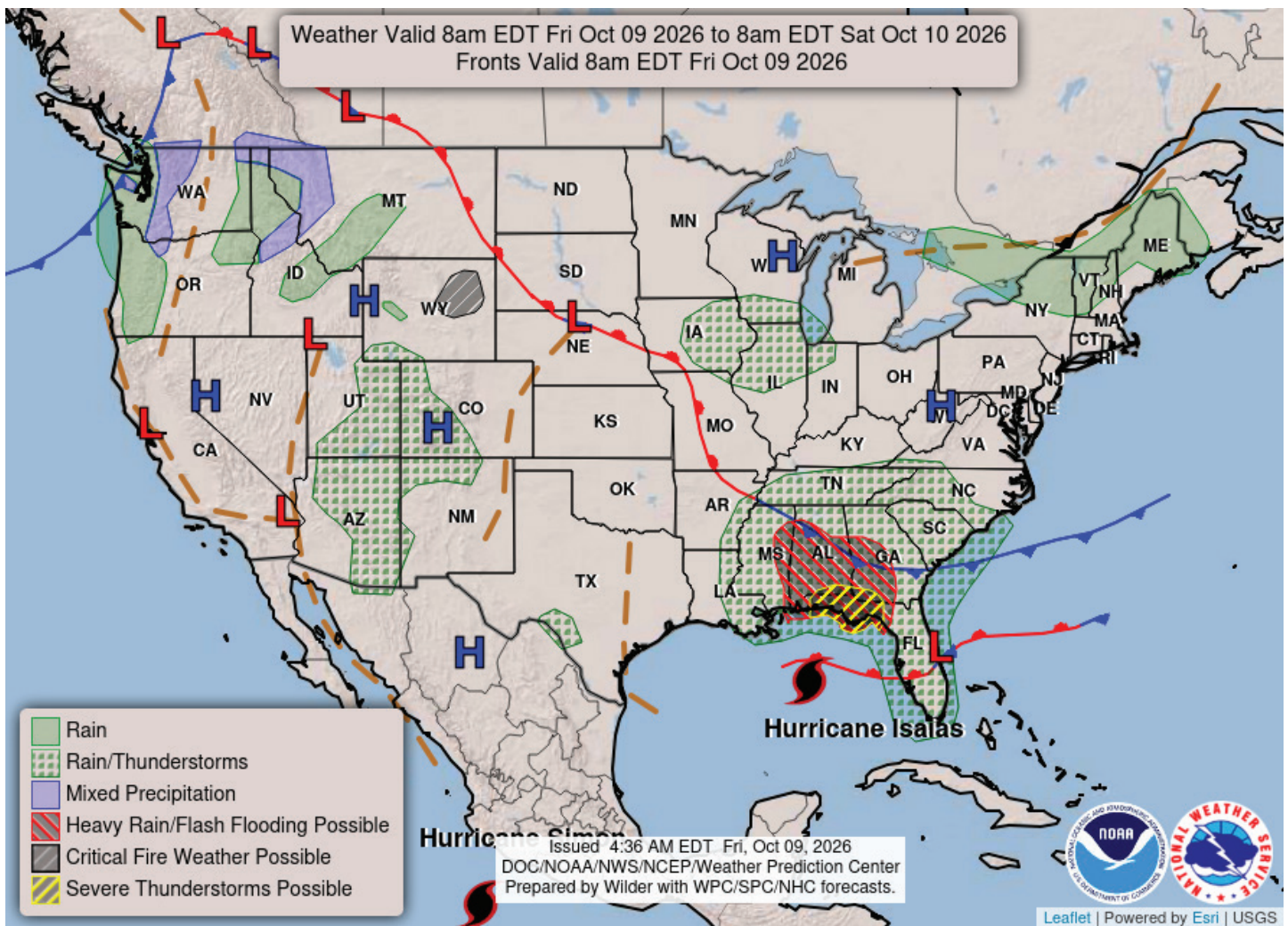
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 19.01

Precip Year to Date: 22.08

Sunset Tonight: 6:58 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:41 am



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Today in Weather History

October 9, 1964: Record cold occurred on this day in 1964 across parts of central and northeast South Dakota with temperatures falling into the mid-teens to around 20 degrees at many locations. Sisseton had a record low of 20 degrees; Watertown had a record low of 16 degrees, with Kennebec recording the lowest temperature of 13 degrees on this day in 1964. Although not a record low, Aberdeen fell to 14 degrees.

October 9, 1980: On this day in 1980, hot air streamed across central and northeast South Dakota as well as west-central Minnesota with highs mostly in the 80s. Record highs were established at Watertown with 86 degrees and both Wheaton and Sisseton with 87 degrees. One of the warmest temperatures across the area was 89 degrees at Kennebec.

1804: The famous Snow Hurricane moved ashore near Atlantic City on this day. After briefly passing through Connecticut and into Massachusetts, cold air was entrained in the circulation with heavy snow falling between New York to southern Canada. Berkshires Massachusetts and Concord New Hampshire record two feet of snow with this hurricane. This storm produced the first observation of snow from a hurricane, but not the last. Hurricane Ginny of 1963 brought up to 18 inches (400 mm) of snow to portions of Maine.

1903 — New York City was deluged with 11.17 inches of rain 24 hours to establish a state record. Severe flooding occurred in the Passaic Valley of New Jersey where more than fifteen inches of rain was reported. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1981 — The temperature at San Juan, Puerto Rico, soared to 98 degrees to establish an all-time record for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1987 — Eighteen cities in the southeastern U.S. and the Middle Atlantic Coast Region reported record low temperatures for the date. Asheville NC dipped to 29 degrees, and the record low of 47 degrees at Jacksonville FL marked their fourth of the month. A second surge of cold air brought light snow to the Northern Plains, particularly the Black Hills of South Dakota. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 — Ten cities in the northeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Hartford CT with a reading of 28 degrees. Snow continued in northern New England through the morning hours. Mount Washington NH reported five inches of snow. Warm weather continued in the western U.S. Los Angeles CA reported a record high of 102 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 — Unseasonably cold weather continued in the Upper Midwest. Thirteen cities in Ohio, Michigan and Indiana reported record low temperatures for the date, including Marquette MI with a reading of 20 degrees. Unseasonably warm weather continued in the western U.S. as the San Francisco Giants won the National League pennant. San Jose CA reported a record high of 91 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

2001: An unusually strong fall outbreak of tornadoes spawned at least 23 twisters across parts of Nebraska and Oklahoma. Hardest hit was the town of Cordell, OK, but a 22 minute lead time led to an amazingly low casualty count: only nine injuries and no fatalities.

2013: The Puglia region of southern Italy saw tornadoes on this day.

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Daily Devotion

Life-Changing Prayer

As you bring your requests to God, don't just seek a change in circumstances; ask Him to transform your heart..

Colossians 1:9-10: 9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Philippians 4:6 says that it's good to bring requests to God, and we often ask Him for certain blessings or outcomes. But there are times when, in God's omniscience, He determines that a "no" would result in greater good. So what can we pray, knowing that it aligns with His will? In today's passage, Paul recorded specific petitions he made on behalf of the Colossians:

Request to "be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding" (Col. 1:9). This is a prayer for direction and the ability to see life from God's viewpoint.

Ask to "walk in a manner worthy of the Lord" (v. 10). The only way to grow in this is through the Spirit's work. He fills our heart with a deep longing for God and the desire to please Him.

Pray that our life will be pleasing to Him (v. 10). It's easy to assume that making an impact for God requires something dramatic, but effectiveness in His work depends on faithfully following whatever He calls each of us to do.

Paul continually lifted up the believers in Colossae to the Father (v. 9). As we mention others by name to the Lord, we can follow the apostle's example—praying not just for circumstances to change, but for hearts to grow.

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

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The Groton Independent

Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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WINNING NUMBERS

MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.08.26

13 33 46 55 58 3

TOP PRIZE:

\$1,000,000/year

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 20 Mins 40 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.06.26

26 32 42 51 54 22

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$364,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 5 Mins 40 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.07.26

7 10 19 20 43 3

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$2,100,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 20 Mins 40 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.07.26

8 16 21 25 30

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$82,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 35 Mins 40 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.07.26

17 18 23 66 69 1

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 4 Mins 40 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.07.26

11 13 14 21 65 19

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$516,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 4 Mins 40 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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News from the Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Aberdeen Christian def. James Valley Christian School, 25-10, 25-23, 25-15
Aberdeen Roncalli def. Britton-Hecla, 25-20, 25-14, 25-16
Avon def. Bridgewater-Emery, 25-12, 25-22, 21-25, 25-8
Belle Fourche def. Douglas, 25-19, 25-23, 25-21
Bennett County def. Hot Springs, 25-11, 25-20, 27-29, 19-25, 15-12
Brandon Valley def. Sioux Falls Jefferson, 26-24, 25-16, 25-20
Canton def. Garretson, 15-25, 25-15, 25-15, 25-20
Centerville def. Scotland, 25-11, 25-10, 25-10
Clark-Willow Lake def. Redfield, 25-12, 25-12, 25-16
DeSmet def. Oldham-Ramona-Rutland, 23-25, 25-13, 25-20, 25-18
Deubrook def. Elkton-Lake Benton, 25-17, 25-21, 22-25, 25-18
Deuel def. Tiospa Zina, 25-7, 25-9, 25-19
Edgemont def. Oelrichs, 25-4, 25-4, 25-6
Freeman def. Corsica/Stickney, 18-25, 25-22, 26-24, 25-27, 16-14
Gayville-Volin High School def. Menno, 25-12, 25-8, 25-6
Hamlin def. Sisseton, 25-6, 25-2, 25-6
Hanson def. Ethan, 25-20, 25-22, 26-24
Harding County def. Newell, 25-13, 25-10, 25-13
Highmore-Harrold def. Wessington Springs, 25-19, 25-18, 25-8
Irene-Wakonda def. Parker/Marion, 25-21, 25-16, 19-25, 25-23
Iroquois-Lake Preston def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 30-28, 25-8, 25-12
Jones County def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-20, 25-19, 25-13
Lemmon High School def. New Underwood, 25-17, 25-23, 25-10
Leola-Frederick High School def. Strasburg, N.D., 29-27, 25-22, 14-25, 25-19
Lyman def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-19, 25-7, 25-10
Mahpíya Lúta def. Crow Creek Tribal School, 25-12, 20-25, 25-17, 25-7
Marty def. Tiospaye Topa, 25-11, 25-19, 25-23
Miller def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-9, 21-25, 25-17, 25-20
Mitchell Christian def. Andes Central/Dakota Christian, 25-16, 25-21, 20-25, 25-23
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Bon Homme, 25-13, 25-16, 25-16
North Central def. Herried-Selby, 25-22, 25-10, 25-19
Northwestern def. Faulkton, 25-18, 25-14, 25-18
Parkston def. Kimball-White Lake, 25-22, 25-17, 25-23
Platte-Geddes def. Gregory, 25-15, 25-19, 25-18
Sanborn Central-Woonsocket def. Tripp-Delmont-Armour, 25-19, 25-20, 29-27
Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Tea, 25-9, 25-15, 25-14
Sioux Falls Washington def. Sioux Falls O'Gorman, 25-17, 25-21, 12-25, 22-25, 15-12
St Thomas More def. Kadoka, 25-20, 25-11, 25-15
Waverly-South Shore def. Florence-Henry, 25-23, 25-22, 23-25, 25-18
West Central def. McCook Central-Montrose, 25-17, 21-25, 26-24, 25-19

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

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PREP FOOTBALL

Crazy Horse 44, Flandreau Indian 30
Little Wound 38, Pine Ridge 24

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

Former Prince Andrew awarded \$400,000 in compensation after surrendering his lease in Windsor

LONDON (AP) — Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor has been awarded 302,000 pounds (\$400,000) in compensation after surrendering his lease on Royal Lodge, the Crown Estate said Friday.

King Charles III stripped his younger brother of his royal titles and evicted him from his longtime home, the 30-room Royal Lodge mansion near Windsor Castle, earlier this year because of the fallout from the scandal regarding his friendship with the late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

The Crown Estate is the entity that manages lands nominally owned by the king for the benefit of taxpayers.

The eviction followed mounting public outcry and U.S. Department of Justice documents tied to the Epstein investigation.

The former Prince Andrew left the property earlier than expected in February and was moved to a residence on the king's private Sandringham estate.

Saudi authorities say 3 killed in Houthi-claimed attacks on Riyadh airport

By SALLY ABOU ALJOUD and CARA ANNA Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — An airline pilot was among three Saudi citizens killed in attacks targeting Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport and a Saudia aircraft, the kingdom's civil aviation authority said on Friday. Several people "of different nationalities" were wounded.

The attacks on Thursday were the deadliest in Saudi Arabia since the kingdom and allied forces in neighboring Yemen launched a major military offensive against Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels last weekend.

They also marked a significant escalation on the latest front in the Iran war, which has kept oil prices and financial markets volatile.

Hundreds of flights to and from Riyadh were canceled on Thursday, according to flight-tracking site FlightAware.

The Indian Embassy later said Air India had suspended operations through to Saturday, while the Lufthansa Group said its airlines would suspend flights to Riyadh through to Oct. 16. Pakistan International Airlines has also suspended flights to Riyadh because of the evolving situation in the Middle East, an airline spokesman said.

The U.S. Embassy warned citizens on Wednesday of potential airspace closures.

Yemen's Houthis claim the attack

The first attack on Thursday targeted airport facilities, while the second struck the aircraft, the Saudi statement said. It did not identify those responsible, though the Houthis claimed to have targeted the airport with a ballistic missile.

Among the dead was Capt. Hamoud Ali Alkalthami, the Saudia Group said in a statement. It appeared to be the first confirmed attack on the Saudi national carrier since the new offensive began. A separate Saudia Group statement said one of its aircraft was damaged while it was on the ground, with no passengers on board.

The aviation statement also said the injuries to citizens and people of other nationalities "ranged from minor to serious." The Saudia Group statement later said operational activities at the airport had returned to normal.

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Meanwhile, the Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis said it had destroyed three rocket launch platforms used by the rebels to threaten regional security.

Riyadh airport has been repeatedly targeted

The airport in the Saudi capital has come under repeated attack in recent days. This week, the Houthis warned global airlines "for the last time" about the potential consequences of operating in Saudi airspace, which they described as a theater for their military operations.

On Wednesday, Saudi officials said Houthi-claimed attacks on airports in Riyadh and Abha had killed three people.

Saudi Arabia faces mounting attacks from the Houthis, who declared a blockade of the kingdom earlier this year in response to one imposed on them.

The kingdom has sought support from allies, including the United States. Officials said U.S. assistance has included intelligence sharing, target identification and planning for the latest offensive.

But President Donald Trump has shown reluctance to expand U.S. military involvement in the Middle East and, for now, has not ordered American forces to resume strikes against the rebels.

The offensive aims to retake territory the Houthis seized a month ago along Yemen's western Red Sea coast and the strategic Bab el-Mandeb Strait. Their presence there threatens a crucial alternative shipping route to the Strait of Hormuz, where Iranian attacks on ships have curtailed traffic.

How Texas landowners are fighting back against Trump's border wall

By REBECCA SANTANA Associated Press

RUIDOSA, Texas (AP) — The message from the Trump administration has been clear: It is moving ahead with a \$46 billion border wall project stretching from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico.

But in Texas' Big Bend region, the administration has run up against intense opposition from landowners, many of whom are unwilling to cede parts of their property for what they see as a waste of taxpayer dollars.

That resistance is complicating President Donald Trump's signature infrastructure project in a fight that has become a test of just how far the administration will go to fulfill its vision of a fortified southern border.

The administration has committed billions of dollars and waived environmental and other protections to plow ahead with the project despite the region's historically low illegal crossings, its formidable natural barriers and a surge of bipartisan opposition that has scrambled traditional border politics.

The federal government has sweeping authority to force the project through. But a judge has now paused construction across the region, giving a major boost to landowners who have sought to impede the wall by refusing to cooperate with government surveyors, protesting at county meetings and gearing up for court battles.

"Landowner resistance has slowed this project to a crawl," said David Keller, a landowner suing to stop the Big Bend border plans. The administration, he added, was "woefully unprepared for the hornet's nest they stirred up."

Trump has long pledged to build the border wall

Building a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border has long been a key campaign promise for Trump. And the administration pushed ahead with it after Republicans last year approved \$46 billion for the border wall as part of a sweeping immigration enforcement package.

Although illegal crossings have plummeted under Trump, the administration says walls, vehicle barriers, surveillance technology and patrol roads are needed to keep them low.

Customs and Border Protection says it's building an average of about 12 miles or 20 kilometers of barrier a week and had recently hit a milestone of more than 200 miles (320 km) of new walls built under the second Trump administration.

In Big Bend, where construction began in September, the administration plans to spend \$7.5 billion to fortify the border along a region stretching more than 500 miles (800 km).

In August, the Border Patrol arrested 8,870 people along the southern border. In Big Bend, which makes

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up roughly one quarter of the entire U.S.-Mexico border, it arrested 161.

"The American people have already seen the consequences of an unprotected border," said CBP Commissioner Rodney Scott after a lawsuit filed by landowners against the Big Bend project. "We cannot allow any region — including Big Bend — to be exploited again."

Landowners gird for court battles

Unlike in other border areas, much of the land in Texas is privately or state owned.

The government must acquire authorization from owners to survey and build and if they refuse, can take them to court. The process by which the government takes someone's property for public use in exchange for compensation is known as eminent domain and courts generally defer to the government in these cases.

That hasn't stopped Dianna and Dan Burbach.

The Burbachs began receiving paperwork in July seeking permission to survey their property, along with a map showing where the project would run behind their house. An August letter said the government had an "immediate need" to enter and warned that it could go to court within 90 days.

Dianna, 63, and her husband, 79, arrived 25 years ago and raised four children in their orange adobe house on property stretching to the Rio Grande. Now retired, they worry construction could worsen flooding and leave 15 acres (6 hectares) of their land behind the wall.

"We're going to let them take us to court, do eminent domain," Dianna said. "We'll fight it that way."

A Justice Department official said CBP has reached agreements with dozens of Big Bend landowners but that the administration has hired eminent domain attorneys in Texas in anticipation of the disputes. Across the southern border, about 70 such cases have been referred to the department during Trump's second term, and 50 have already been resolved — none required going to trial, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity under ground rules set by the government.

The No Big Bend Wall Coalition, which says its network includes more than 200 landowners, recently sued to block construction. The plaintiffs argue that Homeland Security is misusing its authority in a region with little illegal cross-border activity.

Lawsuits aiming to stop or slow the border wall projects have largely been unsuccessful. But in a major win for opponents, a federal judge temporarily barred wall construction in the Big Bend area. Plaintiffs argued the administration had overstepped its congressional authority by issuing sweeping waivers to bypass environmental and other regulations.

Keller said the judge's ruling was "unqualified good news" but uncertainty over its future meant the landowners would continue their fight.

It's not immediately clear how long the judge's order will slow the government, which late Thursday asked the judge to put aside her order while they appeal.

The administration also argued in the court filing that leaving segments along the border without adequate border security infrastructure could lead to a funnel effect where illegal immigration or smuggling would flow to the area that was least fortified — specifically the Big Bend region.

Protesting contractors and lobbying local officials

Other opponents are pressing local governments not to assist contractors. Charlie Angell, a tourism operator notified that the government wanted access to his land for the border project, and his partner, Bibiana Gutierrez, attend county meetings throughout the region.

They and other land and business owners have staged protests, patrolled areas where contractors are working to look for possible violations, and hung signs telling contractors they're not welcome at local hotels or restaurants.

In Terrell County, residents unsuccessfully urged officials not to lease airport land to a barrier contractor. In Jeff Davis County, a proposed agreement allowing another contractor to use a county road has so far not been approved.

The financial incentives for some of these cash-starved counties are clear and some local officials have argued they have little leverage on a federal plan.

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"We're not in control of the border wall. We're not," Terrell County Judge Dale Lynn Carruthers told a room crowded with people who had come to speak out against the airport lease. She said if they didn't lease the land, the contractor would just buy it elsewhere. "We're just a little old Terrell County."

But Angell and Gutierrez argue that the local opposition has more strength than some might realize.

"If we had rolled over, the wall would be up," Gutierrez said.

CBP said it continues seeking voluntary access agreements while completing the project's design but will refer disputes to the Justice Department when necessary. Landowners will be compensated regardless of how access is obtained, the agency said.

The opposition has bipartisan support

After a yearslong surge in crossings at the southern frontier, border security and immigration were key reasons Republicans voted for Trump and his approval ratings on those issues are among his strongest.

But with illegal crossings plummeting, even some Republicans who voted for Trump on the issue of border security have questioned the need for the multi-billion dollar infrastructure through Big Bend.

Local sheriffs opposed the project early, and bulldozing in Big Bend National Park prompted Republican Sen. John Cornyn to press Homeland Security about Texans' concerns.

Laura Allen, a Republican rancher who voted for Trump twice, is now receiving notices that a vehicle barrier will cross the property where her family raises sheep and goats. She credits Trump with shutting down the border but says spending billions on barriers in Big Bend is unnecessary.

"I didn't vote for a wall," she said. "I wanted our border secured. He accomplished that."

Terrell County's Republican sheriff, Thad Cleveland, who spent 26 years in the Border Patrol, is among those speaking out against the project in Big Bend. He said that in the rugged county he polices, drones and surveillance towers make more sense than a wall to find and stop illegal border crossers.

"We have the advantage of time and distance out here," he said.

The land itself is a natural deterrent, critics say

In some areas, the river is flanked on both sides by steep limestone cliffs, and up and down the region, people have to trek through inhospitable desert terrain to get to the nearest paved road or pass through Border Patrol checkpoints.

Reaching Gary Grabowske's land requires grinding along rocky mountain trails and through gullies carved by flash floods. From the top of a 450-foot cliff (137 meters), the Rio Grande is visible far below. There is no electricity, running water or internet and, Grabowske argues, no plausible route for a vehicle entering from Mexico.

"You can't take a dirt bike to the bottom," said Grabowske, gesturing to the canyon below. "You can't take a mule to the bottom. You're scrambling down there, hand over fist." He added: "There's no vehicle in the world that could cross any of this."

Opponents say the fight reaches beyond whether a wall makes sense in Big Bend. They see it as a test of how far the federal government can go when landowners stand in the way of one of its priorities.

"We're a pretty tough bunch," said Allen. "But if we're going to be run over and have our land taken by our own government, what makes anybody else in this United States think that they're exempt?"

Ranchers try to resist

The Zuberbueler ranch in Val Verde County was founded in 1898. Brothers Bill and Patrick own and lease thousands of acres of the craggy land stretching to the river. Their Angora goats and Rambouillet sheep roam over the land, stopping at a network of water troughs.

Bill remembers when, back in February, he first got the letter giving him five days to respond to a request to access his property for construction and raising the possibility of the government using eminent domain. He worries about how the construction will affect his livestock, especially their water supply. And while his animals could pass through the vehicle barriers, the cowboys herding them could not.

"There's not a lot of grass out here, but every square foot is important to my bottom line," said Bill.

They have so far refused to allow anyone onto their land to survey or build. They feel the weight of their family's legacy and the sacrifices previous generations made to build the ranch up.

"Regardless of what happens, we have to say we tried," said Patrick.

Navi Pillay wins the Nobel Peace Prize for her work in international justice

By KOSTYA MANENKOV, MARK LEWIS and STEFANIE DAZIO Associated Press

OSLO, Norway (AP) — The South African-born jurist and former U.N. human rights chief Navi Pillay, who is currently an ad hoc judge at the International Court of Justice, won the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday for her efforts to promote peace and international law.

Pillay's work "is a source of hope and inspiration to all those who seek to bring about a more peaceful world," said Jørgen Watne Frydnes, Chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, in announcing her win in Oslo, Norway.

Her win is sure to be seen as a high-profile rebuke to U.S. President Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who have both rejected the findings of a U.N. commission she led that Israel committed genocide in Gaza. Both leaders also have been highly critical of the institutions where Pillay has worked.

While her work has been global in scope, criticism often has been fiercely local, notably in places like Israel and in apartheid-era South Africa as she and peers took on some of the world's most painful and sensitive legal issues and most vulnerable populations.

Pillay, 85, received the news while attending the Nuremberg Forum, a gathering to discuss international law in Nuremberg, Germany, the location of the trials of Nazi war criminals that helped lay the foundations of international law.

"Firstly, at this venue, your applause means a great deal to me," she said to a standing ovation. "You know, you don't want to receive an award, prize or anything unless the public agrees that you deserve this." And joking, she added: "But being a lawyer and a judge, I still want to verify this information."

She chaired an investigation that determined Israel committed genocide in Gaza

Pillay chaired the Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel, which was created by the U.N.-backed Human Rights Council. The commission a year ago concluded Israel was responsible for genocide in Gaza with a specific intent to destroy Palestinians in Gaza.

The commission also found that the Israeli president, prime minister and former defense minister "have incited the commission of genocide." Israel, which has refused to cooperate with the commission since it was established in 2021, has strenuously denied the charges.

Pillay has repeatedly rejected accusations from critics who accused her of antisemitism or allegedly turning a blind eye to the Hamas attacks in Israel.

In an interview with the AP last year, she recalled how she worked closely with some Jewish lawyers in the fight against apartheid in her native South Africa and was invited to Israel as the U.N. rights chief from 2008 to 2014.

Her win puts the focus on a court under pressure from Trump

Pillay's win brings renewed attention to U.S. President Donald Trump's ongoing feud with the International Criminal Court. The Trump administration already has sanctioned 13 of the ICC's staff members, among them key prosecutors and nine judges including the court's Japanese President Tomoko Akane.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has launched what he called a "sweeping campaign to dismantle the threat posed by the International Criminal Court."

In his speech to the United Nations General Assembly last month, Trump called the court an "out of control institution" and an "anti-American tribunal with no jurisdiction" over the U.S. as he urged member states to quit the "rogue institution immediately."

There are fears the court as a whole could be sanctioned, a move that could seriously hamper its ability to mete out justice.

The Norwegian committee said it sought to strengthen international law at a time of conflict.

Watne Frydnes said the award was a message to those seeking to undermine "the international rules based system and the institutions."

"At a time when the number of wars and conflicts is rising, and when judges and institutions of international law are under political attack, the Nobel Committee wishes to issue a reminder that the ability to

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resolve conflicts without force or violence is dependent on the international rule of law," the committee wrote in a news release.

"An international legal system in which war criminals are held to account and the victims of abuse see justice served is a precondition for a peaceful world."

Pillay is currently serving as an ad hoc judge at the International Court of Justice, the highest court of the United Nations, in the ongoing genocide case against Myanmar.

When countries do not have a national on the court's permanent, 15-judge panel, they can appoint an expert of their choice. Gambia, which launched the proceedings in 2019, selected Pillay when the country accused Myanmar of committing genocide against the Rohingya minority group.

There were nearly 300 nominations for this year's prize

The Norwegian Nobel Committee in Oslo received nominations for 287 candidates for this year's prize, with just over a quarter of them organizations. Experts say the committee typically focuses on the durability of peace, the promotion of international fraternity and the quiet work of institutions that strengthen those goals.

Last year, Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado won the Nobel Peace Prize for her struggle to achieve a democratic transition in the South American nation, winning recognition as a woman "who keeps the flame of democracy burning amid a growing darkness."

Machado gave Trump her Nobel medal shortly after the United States ousted then-President Nicolás Maduro. But it was largely a symbolic gesture: the Nobel Committee has said the honor itself cannot be transferred.

Nominations can be made by a select group of people and organizations, including heads of state or politicians serving at a national level, university professors, directors of foreign policy institutes, past Nobel Prize recipients and members of the Norwegian Nobel Committee itself.

The Peace prize follows a week of Nobel announcements

Four of this year's Nobels were announced earlier this week. The Nobel for medicine went to three scientists whose work led to a tool that uses light to help unravel how the brain works. The physics award recognized a scientist's efforts to demystify a rare group of neutrinos. The chemistry prize recognized two scientists for untangling mysterious mirror images in molecules, a discovery that has been used to develop countless drugs.

Canadian poet, essayist and translator Anne Carson won the literature prize Thursday for "bold and inventive" works that fuse the classical and the modern and blur the boundaries of poetry and prose.

The Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences will be announced Monday.

The prize money this year is 12 million Swedish kronor (about \$1.2 million), whether for an individual, small group of laureates or organization.

World shares are mostly higher and crude prices fall after an unsettled day on Wall St

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

Shares were mostly higher Friday in Europe and Asia, while oil prices fell back from recent gains. U.S. futures edged higher.

In early European trading, the German DAX rose 0.7% to 24,975.62, while the CAC 40 in Paris surged 0.8% to 7,789.91. Britain's FTSE 100 picked up 0.7% to 10,515.43.

The future for the S&P 500 was up 0.4%, while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 0.1%.

In Asian trading, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 closed nearly unchanged at 69,030.92.

The Shanghai Composite index edged 0.1% higher, while Hong Kong's Hang Seng rallied 1.6% to 24,152.44. China is due to release its latest economic growth figures next week.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 rose 0.6% to 8,716.60, while the Sensex in India added 1.2%.

Markets were closed in South Korea and Taiwan.

U.S. stocks were unsteady Thursday, as oil prices rose and bond yields jumped before receding later in

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the day.

"Equities remain within striking distance of record highs, but the backdrop has turned considerably less hospitable," Steven Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary.

The S&P 500 fell 0.5% for a second straight loss after setting an all-time high the day before. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 0.1%, and the Nasdaq composite fell 1.3% as technology stocks took particularly hard hits.

Stocks felt pressure from a 4.1% rise in the price for a barrel of Brent crude oil, the international standard, to \$104.28. It's been pinballing between \$96 and nearly \$110 over the last month on uncertainty about when the war with Iran will allow the global energy industry to return to normal.

Brent got to nearly \$106 in the morning before President Donald Trump sent its price veering after saying "productive discussions" are happening with Iran and that the U.S. military would not attack it before the upcoming U.S. elections in November.

Early Friday, Brent was down 1% at \$103.28 a barrel, while U.S. benchmark crude oil was 0.8% lower, at \$90.75 a barrel.

In the bond market, yields have been trading at their highest levels in years or even decades, threatening to slow the economy.

The 10-year Treasury yield initially rose to 5.35% early Thursday before falling back to 5.23%.

It dropped after the U.S. government said that it sold \$22 billion in 30-year Treasury bonds at an auction with a high yield of less than 5.62%. That helped bring the 30-year Treasury yield down to 5.60% from 5.73% in the morning, which is a notable move for the bond market.

High debt loads have loomed over the market as the U.S. federal deficit climbed to nearly \$2 trillion in the fiscal year that ended on Sept. 30.

In share trading, PepsiCo climbed 3.7% after it reported stronger profit and revenue for the latest quarter than analysts expected. But drops for several influential technology stocks overshadowed those gains.

Nvidia, the chip company that's ridden the tidal wave of demand created by artificial-intelligence technology, fell 2.9%. Because it's the largest stock by value on Wall Street, it was the heaviest weight on the S&P 500 even though other stocks had larger losses.

That included drops for other AI-related stocks. Broadcom lost 4.3% and Micron Technology slumped 4.8%.

AI stocks are under heavy pressure to report big growth to justify how expensive their shares have gotten due to the AI frenzy.

"What was once a broad, buy-anything-with-an-AI-label momentum trade is becoming a much tougher contest between balance-sheet strength and ambition," Innes said.

In other dealings early Friday, the U.S. dollar rose to 158.37 Japanese yen from 157.89 yen. The euro was trading at \$1.1228, up from \$1.1211.

A US charity plans to use AI to monitor its Gaza classrooms for 'hateful' speech

By SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

A U.S. charity in Gaza is worried that teachers at its schools might stray from a curriculum it says promotes peace and tolerance, so it plans to record classroom conversations and use artificial intelligence to flag speech deemed "hateful" or "inciting."

The plans laid out by the founder of the Gaza Children Village in a webinar last month have elicited ethical, safety and privacy concerns from some Palestinian and advocacy groups and at least one of the charity's partners.

There is no indication the charity intends to share its classrooms' recordings with anybody else, but fears about the potential misuse of surveillance technology are heightened in Gaza after three years of war. The Israeli military has used AI to sift through intercepted communications and find suspicious speech, including to identify targets for strikes.

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Palestinian rights groups have been critical of the charity's education agenda more broadly, saying it is unaccountable to local and U.N. agencies that have long managed Gaza's schools. Who controls education in Gaza is one of many unresolved questions about its postwar governance.

It is unclear when the classroom monitoring is supposed to begin, what specific language will be flagged, and whether teachers, students and their families have been told about the plans.

The charity's founder says he seeks the 'de-radicalization' of Gaza

The charity's founder and CEO is Dr. David Hasan, a neurosurgeon born in Kuwait to Palestinian parents who now teaches at Duke University medical school in Durham, North Carolina.

He conceived the idea for the charity after volunteering at hospitals in Gaza during the war and wanting to end generations of violence between Palestinians and Israelis. Hasan says he was taught at an early age to look unfavorably upon Jews and Israelis, and that it wasn't until he attended college in the U.S. that he learned other perspectives; he wants kids in Gaza to gain these perspectives early in life.

The charity has raised money largely from individual donors, including American Jews, and says it's partnering with North American, Israeli and European aid organizations and hospitals. Its schools, called Academies of Hope, provide meals and medical and psychological care. The first school opened last summer.

The schools' lessons are mostly built around the Palestinian Authority curriculum, but language that he says glorified violence or encouraged anti-Israel or antisemitic beliefs was removed, Hasan has said.

Hasan declined to comment for this story or provide examples of curriculum changes. But a 2026 report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office that examined "problematic textbook content" flagged by the U.N. in Gaza identified the kinds of issues that Israel has long complained about: the use of "the number of martyrs" to teach a mathematical concept, a reference to "Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine," and a description of a boy shot while demonstrating in support of Palestinians held in Israeli prisons.

On a webinar last month with humanitarian groups, Hasan said the reason to monitor classrooms is to help train teachers in how to uphold a curriculum that he had previously said was aimed at "de-radicalization."

"I know it's controversial, but trust me, it's the only way we feel for us to survive and deliver this curriculum," Hasan said.

Monitoring classrooms opens 'Pandora's box'

This isn't the first organization to face such difficulties. The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, has attempted to modify the PA curriculum to remove content that didn't align with values of neutrality, nonviolence and nondiscrimination; but it, too, was met with teacher and community resistance, according to the GAO report.

A Gaza Children Village staffer said some teachers and other employees are afraid of being questioned by Hamas about the curriculum or uncomfortable working for an organization supported by Israeli aid groups. The staffer spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

Two people affiliated with the charity expressed concerns when notified about the possibility of classroom monitoring.

"Cameras to monitor the performance of students and teachers is acceptable. But cameras to silence students and teachers from being able to have a free exchange in a classroom are not acceptable," said Bishara Bahbah, a Palestinian American political activist on the charity's board. He said he wasn't aware of the monitoring plans and that they haven't been raised with the board.

Bahbah said that with so few functioning schools in Gaza, the charity's top priority is getting more kids in classrooms.

An official at an aid group that partners with the Gaza Children Village said the use of cameras could prompt it to reconsider working with them. Using AI to monitor people's words opens a "Pandora's box," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of jeopardizing the group's work in Gaza.

Six current and former teachers at Academies of Hope declined to comment.

The system will flag language deemed 'hateful'

UNICEF estimates that hundreds of thousands of children in Gaza are not in school, and that most schools were destroyed or damaged during the war. The Gaza Children Village says its schools in central and

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southern Gaza serve thousands of children, many of whom lost parents or other relatives during the war.

Under the plans outlined by Hasan in various communications, recordings of classroom conversations will be analyzed by an AI-powered system to detect "antisemitic," "inciting" or "hateful" language.

If problematic language is detected, a warning will be sent to Hasan, who can then contact the teacher to understand the context and provide feedback, Hasan said in the September webinar. He said recordings are stored for 72 hours.

The monitoring technology has been tested and the plan is to deploy it in dozens of classrooms, according to a text message Hasan sent sometime before August that was seen by The Associated Press.

In the text, Hasan said the system was created in collaboration with PollyLabs, a New York-based non-profit that promotes the use of technology to solve problems in crises. PollyLabs says it has had no role in developing or deploying such technology.

Palestinians in Gaza are especially fearful of surveillance technology

Fears about surveillance technology are strong in Gaza after three years of war with Israel's high-tech army.

"Israel has weaponized information to such a dystopian degree that many Palestinians feel they cannot utter a word, type a thought, or twitch an eye without fearing it could be seized upon," said Amjad Iraqi, senior Israel and Palestinian Territories analyst for the International Crisis Group.

Groups opposed to the charity's curriculum say Palestinians are being stripped of their autonomy in deciding what to teach their children.

"It is very concerning, they're trying to control the minds of new generations," said Ines Abdel Razek, co-director of the Palestine Institute for Public Diplomacy, an advocacy group.

The Palestinian Authority, which has limited autonomy in parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank, and UNRWA should be supported in rebuilding schools in Gaza, she said. Israel has accused UNRWA of being infiltrated by Hamas, a charge the agency denies.

A Palestinian government spokesperson, Mohammad AbuAlrob, says the PA curriculum focuses on tolerance and justice. He said he doesn't have enough information about the charity's curriculum to comment on it. But he said using surveillance in classrooms would cross "an important line."

El Niño's storm-killer winds and climate's warming waters in fight over future of Hurricane Isaias

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

A supersized El Niño's decapitating winds and the Gulf of Mexico's toasty, storm-fueling waters are battling over the future strength of Hurricane Isaias. And the storm's tilt and eye show who's winning.

All Atlantic hurricane season there has been "this battle between shear and just the overall conducive conditions," said Colorado State University hurricane researcher Phil Klotzbach.

El Niño — the natural temporary warming of parts of the Pacific that warps weather worldwide — dominated. Its wind patterns smothered almost any wisp of a storm from strengthening in the Atlantic, while boosting what will soon be record high levels in the Pacific, Klotzbach said.

Wind shear versus warm waters

It's called wind shear and it pushes the tops and middle of storms around, making them lopsided and keeping them from making a complete circular eyewall, which is when storms can really power up, Klotzbach and University at Albany's Kristen Corbosiero said.

The other ingredients for a storm to turbocharge a storm are pushing back. There is plenty of fuel in warm water and moisture. The Gulf of Mexico is about 2.7 degrees (1.5 degrees Celsius) warmer than normal. The 86 degree waters (30 degrees Celsius) are 100 to 500 times more likely to be that extra hot because of climate change from the burning of coal, oil and gas, said climate scientist Kristina Dahl, vice president of the nonprofit Climate Central, which calculates the boost global warming causes to extreme weather.

"But there's a certain point where it's like, I don't care how hot the waters are and how much moisture you have, if shear gets to a certain point, the shear is gonna win," Klotzbach said.

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The thunderstorm seeds of something bigger earlier in the week grew from circular winds over Central America but often were lopsided and couldn't quite form a crucial eyewall, all because of El Niño's high-level strong winds that pushed a would-be storm's top sideways, experts said.

Then a window of moderation opened for just a couple of days, but it was enough, Corbosiero said. It makes sense it was in the Gulf of Mexico and in October, because El Niño has less of an effect in the Gulf than it does in the main Atlantic, she said. And storms often pop up in that region in October because of more northerly storm systems that help foster the right conditions.

Wind shear wasn't exactly low, but it was a moderate level, when other factors like unusually warm waters and heavy moisture can kick in. Isaias rapidly intensified from 40 mph to 80 mph (64 kph to 129 kph) in a day and by late Wednesday, Isaias became the latest-in-the-season first Atlantic hurricane to form since 1914, Klotzbach said.

"The warm waters and high moisture won," Klotzbach said. Isaias is likely losing its tilt and straightening and flying right and strong.

For a few hours, the storm is forecast on Friday to flirt with 111 mph (178 kph) winds that could possibly give it major hurricane status, according to Klotzbach and the National Hurricane Center's forecast. But it'll likely be temporary.

What to expect before landfall

Before Isaias comes ashore — forecast for probably somewhere from the Mississippi and Alabama coast to the Florida Panhandle late Friday night or early Saturday — the wind shear will strengthen from moderate levels of around 20 mph (32 kph) to 52 mph (84 kph) and then Isaias will start to struggle, which is good news for coastal residents, Klotzbach said.

It will probably come ashore as a strong Category 1 or weak Category 2 storm, but not a major storm, Klotzbach said. It can still do plenty of damage.

"Once it gets to the coast, we know that the storm surge is going to be deeper and farther reaching because of sea level rise caused by climate change," Dahl said. "So in this part of the world, there's been about six and a half inches of sea level rise over the past 100 years or so that's attributable directly to climate change."

The National Hurricane Center is calling the surge "life-threatening."

A warmer atmosphere means storms hold and then dump more rain, worsening flooding, Dahl said. The hurricane center is warning about urban, river and flash flooding in the Southeast this weekend.

"There's a little bit of a battle here going on, but I think the really important thing to remember is that climate change is like this long-term big kahuna warming everywhere, and El Niño's like a little icing on the cake," Dahl said.

Man with a gun and knife is fatally shot by security at Nashville federal courthouse, police say

By KRISTIN M. HALL and ED WHITE Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — A man armed with a pistol and knife was fatally shot by a security officer Thursday just inside the busy entrance of a federal courthouse in Tennessee's largest city, authorities said.

The 42-year-old man tried to fire his gun but failed and then pulled out a knife around 9:30 a.m., said Don Aaron, spokesperson for Metro Nashville Police.

"The security individual fired on the armed individual," Aaron said, adding that the man was taken to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

He was later identified by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation as Jack Henson II. No hometown was released, though police earlier said he was from out of state.

Investigators didn't immediately know why he was at the courthouse, and a search of his car found "nothing threatening," Aaron said.

Courthouse visitors must go through a security checkpoint, which is common at all federal courts. The

entrances are typically staffed by armed former police officers contracted by the U.S. Marshals Service. "That's the entrance that most people in this courthouse use," First Assistant U.S. Attorney Rob McGuire told reporters outside.

The library next door was closed as a result, and officers with dogs were circling the perimeter while workers in nearby buildings gathered to watch.

McGuire noted that the local U.S. Attorney's Office is inside the courthouse, as are the offices of Tennessee's U.S. senators.

There have been "security instances where a person acts up or acts inappropriately and has to be removed from the premises, but nothing even approaching this kind of situation," he said.

Reports of the shooting immediately stirred anxiety and concern.

"People are calling their families to let them know they're OK," McGuire said. "I called my wife, called my son, called people that I knew were wanting to know if I was OK. We're all doing that."

Christa Pike is walking with help and eating after failed execution attempt, her attorneys say

By KRISTIN M. HALL and KIM CHANDLER undefined

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Christa Pike has begun walking and eating again at a hospital a week after surviving Tennessee's attempt to execute her with lethal drugs, her attorneys said Thursday.

Pike, 50, survived two doses of pentobarbital as the state sought to give her a lethal injection eight days ago for the 1995 beating and stabbing death of classmate Colleen Slemmer. The drug didn't kill her, and her arms were left burned and blistered, according to her lawyers. For the first few days of her hospitalization, Pike was unconscious and on a ventilator.

Her first steps on Wednesday were "limited" and she required some assistance as she walked on Thursday, her lawyers said in a statement. She is also regaining mobility in her arms, and she was able to eat for the first time.

But the lawyers warned uncertainty remains about her physical recovery and her legal standing after the attempt to carry out her death sentence.

Questions remain about Pike's recovery and legal case

The failed execution on Sept. 30 has renewed scrutiny of how states carry out the death penalty. Texas on Wednesday carried out the first execution in the U.S. since the Tennessee attempt.

"While her physical recovery has been remarkable, significant questions remain about the long-term effects of what she endured," her attorneys said in Thursday's statement. "Christa is dealing with the profound psychological trauma of having survived a failed execution, including the terror, pain and uncertainty of believing she was about to die."

Pike regained consciousness Tuesday and was able to speak after awakening, they said.

They initially described her as "confused" soon after regaining consciousness, and said Thursday that she continued to struggle with concentration and memory. Doctors say it is too early to assess the long-term impacts, the attorneys added.

It also remains unclear whether Tennessee will try to execute her again. Her attorneys have said that they will urge Republican Gov. Bill Lee to commute her death sentence to life in prison without parole.

"She should never be subjected to another execution attempt," they said in the statement.

What went wrong with the execution remains unclear

Lee has since postponed the state's only other scheduled execution this year and ordered a review of why the execution failed. The state's prison chief resigned after the execution attempt.

Medical and lethal injection experts have focused on whether a problem with the IV line caused the drug to pool in her tissue instead of entering her bloodstream.

Pike's attorneys wrote in a court filing that "apparently at no point did any member of the execution team realize that the IV lines were not correctly placed."

State officials have offered no explanation of what occurred.

As the process got underway Pike was asked if she had a final statement and she spoke of being at peace. About five minutes later, she raised her head and said her arm hurt. Later, she appeared to lose consciousness but could be heard breathing heavily until media witnesses were escorted from the witness room nearly 90 minutes into the execution. An ambulance took her to a hospital.

Pentagon says the firing squad execution of Fort Hood shooter Nidal Malik Hasan will be livestreamed

By KONSTANTIN TOROPIN, ERIC TUCKER and CLAUDIA LAUER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The firing squad execution of Fort Hood shooter Nidal Malik Hasan will be livestreamed, the Pentagon said Thursday, a stunning revelation about plans for the first military execution in more than 65 years after Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth had described it as being “public.”

The Army announced this week that the execution would take place at Fort Hood on Dec. 3 after Hasan was convicted of killing 13 people and injuring 32 others in a shooting at the military base in 2009.

Hegseth, speaking to the conservative TV outlet Real America’s Voice on Wednesday, said, “We’ll make sure that people are able to watch it, that it’s public.” Officials in the Pentagon clarified Thursday that the execution would be livestreamed and that more details would follow.

The revelation from Hegseth about the public nature of the execution — let alone one as violent as a firing squad — has raised further questions about how the death penalty is carried out in the U.S., especially after the botched lethal injection of Christa Pike in Tennessee.

Experts offer mixed reactions on the plan

Hasan could choose to resist execution and file a habeas petition — a legal request to review the legality of a detention — in civilian court, which could significantly delay the execution, experts said.

“It frankly might outlast the current administration, and who knows if the next one will have the same penchant for executions,” said Eugene R. Fidell, a visiting lecturer at Yale Law School specializing in military law.

Deborah Denno, a death penalty expert and law professor at Fordham University, said livestreaming an execution could make the process “much more transparent” and inform the public about all that capital punishment entails. Those are benefits that she said would be useful at a time when Pike’s botched execution has raised fresh questions about the manner by which criminal defendants are put to death for their crimes.

“I think it could possibly be a good idea because it would be transparent and the public would be fully aware that it’s happening,” she said.

When many states have had difficulty carrying out lethal injections due to difficulty accessing drugs or finding medical professionals willing to participate in executions, firing squads are coming to be seen as a less inhumane alternative, said Brenner Fissell, a professor at Villanova Law and vice president of the National Institute of Military Justice.

“Firing squads can be a quicker, cleaner, more precise way to execute a prisoner,” he said. “I don’t think that’s what’s motivating this. There’s a perceived masculinity and military-ness to firing squads that is part of the aura Hegseth is trying to emphasize — the ‘lethality culture.’”

Elisabeth Semel, co-director of the Death Penalty Clinic at UC Berkeley Law, said Hegseth’s announcement raises a host of legal and public policy questions, including concerns for the dignity of the defendant, who will be eligible to view the execution and what the Trump administration has in mind in opting for an unusual spectacle.

Though there has been long-running discussion about the idea of televising an execution, “I don’t recall a situation in which it was instigated by the government. I think that also raises serious questions about what is the motivation of the government,” she said.

“This is a president who’s about spectacle and that’s, I think, precisely the message that he intends to deliver,” Semel said, adding that she was skeptical that the administration had given a second thought to

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the legal and social questions being presented by the decision.

Trump has spoken out against public executions in Iran

Trump, who approved Hasan's execution, has previously been critical of public executions in Iran, at times using the possibility of protesters being killed by the Iranian government as a possible rationale for military action that preceded his ultimate choice to attack Iran on Feb. 28.

"We've been told that the killing in Iran is stopping," Trump told reporters on Jan. 14. "It's stopping, and there's no plan for executions."

In his State of the Union address just days before launching the Iran war, Trump reiterated, "We stopped them from hanging a lot of them with the threat of serious violence."

The White House on Thursday referred questions about the plans for the livestreamed execution to the Pentagon.

Hegseth was asked Wednesday if Hasan had made any final requests or reached out to the Trump administration. The Pentagon chief replied: "Don't care. We'll see him on Dec. 3."

It's not clear if Hasan will try to appeal

Hasan, an Army psychiatrist who held the rank of major, walked into a medical building on Nov. 5, 2009, where soldiers were waiting in long lines to receive immunizations and medical clearance for deployment. He shouted "Allahu akbar" — Arabic for "God is great!" — and opened fire with a laser-sighted handgun. He also shot at the backs of soldiers fleeing toward the parking lot.

Hasan said it was an effort to stop them from going to Afghanistan and killing his fellow Muslims. A military judge barred him from presenting that as a defense during his 2013 trial. Hasan was left paralyzed from the waist down after being shot in the back by law enforcement, and he now uses a wheelchair.

Hasan could seek a lengthy delay of his execution, though given his behavior at trial, he may not want to.

After firing his lawyers and representing himself, Hasan began his portion of the trial by telling jurors he was the gunman. He said little else over the next three weeks, which convinced his court-appointed standby lawyers that Hasan's only goal was to get a death sentence.

The military called nearly 90 witnesses, but Hasan rested his case without calling a single person to testify in his defense and made no closing argument. Yet he leaked documents during the trial to journalists that revealed him telling military mental health workers that he could "still be a martyr" if executed.

Attorney John Galligan, a former military judge who had represented Hasan in several civil matters following his criminal trial, spoke with Hasan on Wednesday but is barred from offering much detail about that conversation. He is not representing Hasan in his criminal case but said he's worried about his physical health under the plan laid out by officials, and that Hasan has not yet had access to legal counsel.

Galligan said that according to Hasan, the commandant of the facility brought a chaplain but no attorney from either the Trial Defense Service or from his civilian defense when he was notified that Trump had signed off on his execution. Galligan called that a breach of Army regulations.

A spokeswoman for the Army said Thursday that multiple attempts were made to contact Trial Defense Service attorneys, saying they made every reasonable effort and adhered to policy.

"The civilian counsel was not reasonably available to be physically present for the notification on the 5th," the spokeswoman said, adding that counsel was located in Virginia but did not provide a name.

The spokeswoman also said Hasan has not been kept from contacting and communicating with his counsel.

Hegseth said the military hasn't executed a service member by firing squad since World War II. The last military execution took place on April 13, 1961, when Army Pvt. John Bennett was executed by hanging.

Amnesty International said in its report on executions in 2025 that it knew of at least 17 public executions — 11 in Iran and 6 in Afghanistan.

Hayden Panettiere's ex Wladimir Klitschko gets legal status to protect their daughter's inheritance

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Actor Hayden Panettiere's ex-fiancé, former boxer Wladimir Klitschko, was granted legal authority by a California court Thursday to protect Panettiere's property for their 11-year-old daughter after the television star's accidental overdose death left the girl as her sole heir.

Klitschko had filed the urgent petition last week, saying that pieces of Panettiere's property were being taken by federal law enforcement agents investigating her death and by an unnamed nonfamily member looking to sell them, with no one in a position to try to recover them for her daughter.

Klitschko, a Ukrainian former world champion boxer, has had full custody of the girl, Kaya, for most of her life, and she has lived with him in Ukraine. The father and daughter appeared in Los Angeles County court remotely via videoconference. They spoke only to introduce themselves at the brief hearing with only Kaya visible on camera, sitting at a table in front of curtains.

Judge Stephanie Santoro granted Klitschko the status of temporary guardian of Kaya's estate until a long-term administrator can be appointed.

Santoro asked Klitschko's lawyer, Diane Park, why the matter was urgent. Park said they believed a person described only as a nonrelative had taken items after Panettiere's death and had tried to sell some of her jewelry at a pawn shop. And she said assets were in danger of going unaccounted for during the death investigation. Court documents said authority was needed to deal with both the pawnshop owner and police agencies. Panettiere's taxes also need to be filed this month, the lawyer said. Santoro, satisfied with the explanation, approved the move.

Panettiere, the former star of the TV series "Heroes" and "Nashville," was pronounced dead in an apartment in Greenville, South Carolina, on Aug. 16 at age 36 after paramedics found her unresponsive. A coroner's report obtained by The Associated Press said her death was from an accidental overdose of several drugs, including fentanyl. She had been in rehab just weeks before. Her on-and-off boyfriend Brian Hickerson and his brother Zach Hickerson were at the home.

Park told Santoro that the property, the pawnshop and the nonfamily member were in Los Angeles County, where the judge's ruling held authority. Park declined to comment outside the courtroom.

Klitschko's Sept. 24 petition emphasized that his intention is solely to protect his daughter's future assets until a permanent administrator can be put in place.

"There is a high probability that property belonging to Hayden's Estate may be lost, damaged or dissipated," the document said.

The filing said that before her death, Panettiere and Klitschko hired security to protect her home because an unnamed person had gained unauthorized access, and it's expected the same person would continue to try to "misappropriate" her property.

Panettiere's mother, Lesley Vogel, filed a document saying she consented to Klitschko being appointed.

Klitschko, 50, an Olympic gold medalist, held several heavyweight titles between 2000 and 2015. He and Panettiere began dating in 2009 and got engaged in 2013.

His older brother Vitali, also a former champion boxer, is mayor of Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital. The two brothers, sons of a Soviet major general, have been prominent public figures in Ukraine during its war with Russia.

In her memoir released earlier this year, Panettiere acknowledged being addicted to alcohol and having postpartum depression after her daughter's birth in 2014. Kaya went to live with Klitschko full-time when she was 2. Panettiere's father told investigators that when she died she had plans to visit her daughter in Ukraine days later.

Army finds systemic failures behind DC midair collision and calls for safety fixes

By JOSH FUNK AP Transportation Writer

The U.S. Army found systemic safety breakdowns behind last year's midair collision between an American Airlines jet and a Black Hawk helicopter near Washington, D.C., and recommended changes to prevent future tragedies.

The Army report — completed in May and released publicly Thursday after months of pressure from the victims' families — identified failures involving air traffic control, helicopter routes, training and safety practices. The Associated Press obtained a copy of the report hours before it was released.

The deadliest plane crash on U.S. soil in over two decades happened when the helicopter collided with the descending airliner as it approached the runway, sending both plummeting into the icy Potomac River and killing 67.

The Army report highlighted how the air traffic controller at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport could have prevented the crash, but it also acknowledged the military's own failings and other contributing factors.

Families demand answers from the Army

Tim Lilley, a former Army Black Hawk pilot whose son Sam Lilley was the airliner's first officer, said the report leaves important questions unanswered. Parts were redacted, and responsibility for the Army's failures was assigned broadly rather than to individuals.

"The Army owes the families and the American public a full accounting of how these risks were allowed to persist, who was responsible for the decisions that allowed them to persist and what will be done to make sure this never happens again," said Lilley, now a commercial jet captain.

The Army acknowledged that in a statement Thursday.

"We recognize the families' need for answers and remain committed to transparency regarding the Army's review," it said.

Report identifies key factors in the crash

While the report largely reinforces the National Transportation Safety Board's conclusions, the civilian investigation was broader and emphasized years of missed warnings by the Federal Aviation Administration along with a weak military safety culture.

The Army faulted the air traffic controller for not giving the helicopter crew more precise information about the approaching jet and for not warning the jet's pilot about the helicopter. After the crash, the FAA prohibited controllers from relying on pilots to maintain visual separation in busy airspace.

The report recommended looking beyond Washington to examine military helicopter operations in other major cities for similar risks. An Army official said the review of helicopter flights in other cities, including Los Angeles and the Seattle-Tacoma region, is ongoing. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the situation publicly.

The lieutenant general who authored the report cited "breakdowns across all layers of conflict management" but singled out two failed radio transmissions that contributed to the helicopter crew not identifying the jet. The military pilots' night-vision goggles also restricted their view and made it hard to spot the plane amid the city lights.

The poorly designed helicopter route allowed a scant 75 feet (23 meters) of vertical separation between a helicopter and a plane landing on the airport's secondary runway, assuming helicopters stayed near the riverbank, which the route didn't require. This did not allow enough separation to account for the accepted level of error in a Black Hawk's altimeter, and the NTSB found the helicopter was flying nearly 100 feet (30 meters) higher than its instruments read.

NTSB says the Army is making safety changes

The NTSB said in a letter to the Army last week that it was pleased with the Army's progress on seven of its eight safety recommendations. That contrasts with the FAA's failure to implement roughly a third of the recommendations aimed at the agency.

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The Army said it has strengthened helicopter crew training, and has inspected and reconfigured 3,585 helicopters after discovering the crashed Black Hawk's ADS-B Out system, which broadcasts its location, hadn't been working for some time.

The military is also improving its monitoring of safety risks and working with the FAA to share information about close calls.

Victims' families push Congress for safety reforms

Families of the crash victims said the Army's findings strengthen their case for legislation requiring aircraft to have technology that helps pilots detect nearby traffic.

"It's a simple concept anyone can understand: aircraft should be able to see each other in the sky. The technology is proven. All that's required is the political will to do the right thing," the Families of Flight 5342 group said in a statement Thursday.

"We have waited long enough. We waited for the NTSB. We waited for the Army. Both investigations are complete, and both make clear that collision avoidance technology must be part of the solution. There is nothing left for Congress to wait for," they said.

The House and Senate have passed separate aviation safety bills but have yet to agree on a final version.

What to know about Trump Accounts and automatic enrollment

By ADRIANA MORGA and WYATTE GRANTHAM-PHILIPS AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Whether you realize it or not, your child may be enrolled in a "Trump Account."

Rolling out earlier this year, the Trump Accounts program allows parents to claim special investment accounts for children who are 18 years old or younger. And some babies are eligible to receive a one-time \$1,000 contribution from the government.

Now, because of automatic enrollment highlighted Wednesday by President Donald Trump, the Treasury Department says every eligible child with a valid Social Security number has a Trump Account. But parents and legal guardians would still need to formally activate the accounts if they haven't already.

Here's what we know.

How Trump Accounts work

The accounts are a savings tool that invests money in the stock market on a child's behalf. The child can't access the money until they turn 18 and can use it only for specific purposes, such as paying tuition, starting a business or making a down payment on a home. Families can activate an account through the program's trumpaccounts.gov website or its mobile phone app.

The government will make a \$1,000 contribution for some babies after the account is claimed. To qualify for the \$1,000 seed money, a baby must be a U.S. citizen, have a Social Security number and be born between Jan. 1, 2025, and Dec. 31, 2028 — covering Trump's current term.

Any parent — regardless of their immigration status — can open an account for a qualifying child. Parents of older children also are encouraged to open accounts. Even though they aren't eligible for the government's \$1,000 contribution, some older children are eligible for seed money of \$250 drawn from separate investments from wealthy donors.

Otherwise, family contributions will need to come out of pocket. Parents can contribute up to \$2,500 annually in pretax income, much like retirement accounts. Employers, relatives, friends, local governments and philanthropic groups can also pitch in. Yearly contributions are capped at \$5,000, although contributions from governments and charities don't count toward that total.

Private banks and brokerages will manage the money. When the accounts were originally conceived, investments were restricted to broader index funds. But with updated rules from the Treasury Department late last month, eligible wealthy investors can now also donate stock from individual companies.

Automatic enrollments — but not activation of accounts

With automatic enrollment, Trump said 70 million children will now have the accounts, up from 8 million created since their launch in July.

Researchers from the Brown School's Center for Social Development at Washington University in St.

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Louis advocated for the automatic enrollment. And Jin Huang, co-director of the center, called the administration's move "a big step."

"Automatic enrollment is the most important policy design feature for early wealth building programs, in order to ensure full inclusion of all eligible children," said Huang, citing research from his team.

Still, he says, more work needs to be done. Parents and legal guardians need to formally claim the accounts to activate them — as well as elect the \$1,000 seed money if they're eligible — and Huang says "each of these steps will lower the participation," with particular barriers facing low-income families who may not already have access to similar investments.

Wealthy investors can now donate individual stocks

When Trump Accounts were first rolled out, investments were initially restricted to broad index funds — in theory to decrease risk while still yielding incremental growth. But among additional updates to the program, eligible wealthy investors can now also donate stock from individual companies.

"It's a way to encourage participation in the program," explained Nathan C. Goldman, a professor of accounting at North Carolina State University. He said many of the world's wealthiest people don't have "a whole lot of liquid cash sitting around" and might instead turn to shares.

Still, he notes, individual stocks are more volatile than indexes. And families wouldn't get a say about which companies might donate to their children's portfolios.

Once a child turns 18, they can access the money

It's important to note that the child won't be able to access the money until they turn 18, except in rare circumstances. So the money can't help with immediate expenses.

But once a beneficiary of a Trump Account turns 18, they can choose to use the money from it however they want. Trump account beneficiaries can also choose to roll the investment over to a Roth IRA account.

"You're extending the life of this thing beyond the 18 years; you're going all the way out into the child's potential retirement," said Myranda Fabian, a certified financial planner with Plante Moran Financial Advisors.

Moving the earnings from a Trump Account to a Roth IRA will be subject to taxation. Roth IRA accounts allow earnings to grow and to be withdrawn free of taxation when an adult reaches retirement age.

Comparing Trump Accounts with 529s and custodial brokerages

The 529 accounts are meant to invest for qualified educational expenses, such as college tuition, trade school and student loans, among other expenses. They grow tax-free, while investment earnings from Trump accounts will be taxed when withdrawn, and 529 account funds can be transferred to eligible family members.

Still, they're specifically limited to spending on education. In contrast, there are more options to park money from Trump Accounts after a child turns 18.

Custodial brokerage accounts, on the other hand, are taxable investments with no contribution or withdrawal limits, unlike Trump Accounts. But similar to Trump Accounts, beneficiaries of custodial brokerage accounts have full control of the account once the child turns 18, and there are no rules on how they can spend the money.

Choosing an investment account that is better suited for a child's future depends on each parent's goals, said Kate Ashford, lead wealth writer at NerdWallet.

"The account that you're using for savings is really going to depend on why you're saving money," Ashford said.

If parents are looking to focus on funding the education of their children, she added, 529 accounts continue to be the most beneficial.

Lingering concerns about inequity

Backers of Trump Accounts say they want to introduce more people to the stock market and give even children born into poverty a chance to benefit from it.

But critics say the accounts also fail to offset the cuts the Trump administration and congressional Republicans have made to other programs that benefit young people and the adults in their lives, including food assistance and Medicaid. And even with government contributions, some warn that the Trump Accounts could widen the wealth gap.

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Goldman sees Trump Accounts as a tool to diversify — and notes that at the end of the day, they're another option families can consider when making investments for their children, with solid tax advantages.

Still, affluent families will be more likely to afford the full scope of additional, out-of-pocket investments, Goldman said. A total contribution of \$5,000 each year, for instance, would add up to \$90,000 for one child over 18 years — and even with starting seed money for some children, or options to make smaller investments, inequities remain.

"It's designed — especially with this \$1,000 seed money — to be 'an account for everybody,'" Goldman said. "But only some people are gonna be able to take advantage of this. Only some people are going to have that ability to do that."

Four astronauts return to Earth after eight months in space

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Four astronauts returned to Earth from the International Space Station on Thursday after hurrying there eight months ago to replace an ailing colleague and his crew.

SpaceX brought the U.S., French and Russian flyers back with a splashdown in the Pacific off the coast of Los Angeles.

NASA's Jessica Meir and Jack Hathaway, France's Sophie Adenot and Russia's Andrey Fedyaev departed the orbiting lab on Wednesday, eager to reunite with their families after a lengthy separation. Their replacements arrived three weeks late because of capsule repairs, stalling this crew's homecoming.

They couldn't wait to feel the breeze on their faces, hit the shower and, for Adenot at least, plunge back into water sports. Her 237 days in orbit set an endurance record for the European Space Agency.

"We are so excited to be back on Planet Earth after an incredible mission on the International Space Station," Meir radioed moments after splashing down. While still in orbit, she said the crew had "a lot of mixed, swirling emotions" and would miss the "extraordinary views of our home planet."

All four were out of their capsule within an hour, waving and pumping their fists in the air aboard SpaceX's recovery ship. After a helicopter ride to shore, they were going to head for Houston.

Meir and her crew left the planet in February to replace four station occupants who were sent home early after one of them — NASA's Mike Fincke, now retired — fell ill. It was NASA's first medical evacuation in 65 years of human spaceflight.

The new foursome watched with pride two months later as the Artemis II astronauts flew around the moon. They also celebrated the United States' 250th birthday up there, with Meir joining the Boston Pops with her piccolo for a Fourth of July concert.

Meir took part in four spacewalks, while Adenot ventured outside three times for maintenance and upgrades to the 28-year-old outpost.

In the middle of all the work, the astronauts found time for fun, throwing a dance party last month and holding regular cooking demonstrations complete with aprons and a chef's toque.

Meir presented a how-to video for curly-haired spacemen like herself, while Hathaway kept his bushy mustache — a space rarity — groomed to perfection. He grew the naval aviator-style mustache before rocketing into orbit as a way to honor his Navy ties, and found it no harder to maintain in weightlessness than on Earth. Some ground controllers grew mustaches in solidarity.

Will his mustache disappear now that his mission is over?

"It's kind of become a little bit of my brand up here," Hathaway said in August, "so I don't know if it'll go away right away or I'll end up keeping it for a while."

Seven astronauts remain aboard the space station, representing the U.S., Russia and Canada. The outpost has welcomed 298 visitors from 26 countries since the doors swung open in 2000, by NASA's count.

SpaceX is now gearing up for a space station supply run next week. Elon Musk's company will launch more than 6,000 pounds (2,700 kilograms) of cargo, including the last of a series of solar panel additions, toilet pump, spacewalking suit, and fresh fruit and other goodies.

Failed executions troubled other states before Christa Pike. Here's what happened

By JOSH KELETY and ANNA WILDER Associated Press

Tennessee's bungled attempt to execute Christa Pike was not the first time a state has failed to carry out a lethal injection over problems in the death chamber.

Pike, 50, has regained consciousness and is speaking a week after Tennessee gave her two lethal doses of pentobarbital. Outgoing Republican Gov. Bill Lee has ordered a review into what went wrong and the state has not said whether they will again try executing her, which experts say could wade into uncharted legal waters.

Pike, who was sentenced to die for torturing and killing 19-year-old Colleen Slemmer in 1995, is one of at least eight condemned inmates in the U.S. who left their state's execution chamber still alive because of problems carrying out the punishment, according to the Death Penalty Information Center. Pike is the only one who was actually administered lethal drugs before the process was halted, according to the organization.

Not all have faced execution a second time. Three of the inmates would die years later in prison, two remain alive and two were executed after another attempt.

Lethal injection failures in Ohio

Ohio unsuccessfully tried to put Romell Broom to death by lethal injection in September 2009. The execution was called off after two hours when technicians could not find a suitable vein, and Broom cried in pain while receiving 18 needle sticks.

Broom died in December 2020 of possible complications of COVID-19 while on Ohio's death row.

Ohio also failed to execute another inmate, Alva Campbell, in November 2017 by lethal injection. The execution was halted after executioners couldn't find a usable vein.

Campbell was found unresponsive in his death row cell in March 2018. It was determined that he died from natural causes.

Alabama executed inmates a second time after failed attempts

Alabama called off the execution of Doyle Lee Hamm in February 2018 because of problems getting the intravenous line connected. A doctor hired by Hamm's legal team later wrote in a report, filed in court, that Hamm had to be carried back to his cell by correctional officers after the execution was called off because he was in so much pain.

Hamm died of natural causes on death row in November 2021.

In September 2022, Alabama unsuccessfully executed Alan Eugene Miller by lethal injection when executioners spent more than an hour trying and failing to properly insert the catheter, repeatedly puncturing Miller with needles trying to find a vein. At one point, they left him hanging vertically on a gurney before state officials made the decision to call off the execution, according to news coverage at the time.

Miller had originally asked for nitrogen gas, but the Alabama Department of Corrections told a federal district court that they could not complete the execution that way.

The state successfully executed him two years later in September 2024 with nitrogen gas.

Almost two months after failing to execute Miller, Alabama had a second failed execution, when executioners did not have enough time to get a second IV line in before the death warrant expired at midnight for Kenneth Eugene Smith.

Smith was the first person to die by nitrogen gas as an execution method in January 2024.

Idaho prisoner remains alive

Idaho halted the execution of Thomas Eugene Creech in February 2024 after medical team members repeatedly failed to find a vein to carry out the lethal injection. In some cases, they couldn't access the vein, and in others they could but had concerns about vein quality. They attempted sites in his arms, legs, hands and feet. At one point, a medical team member left to gather more supplies.

After eight attempts, the prison warden told them to give up. Creech remains alive and on death row.

Pike was the 2nd failed execution in Tennessee this year

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Four months before Pike's execution went awry, Tennessee officials called off the lethal injection of Tony Carruthers in May after his executioners tried and failed for over an hour to establish an intravenous line.

Lee announced soon afterward that the state would not try to execute Carruthers again for at least a year. Tennessee prison officials have said medical personnel had quickly established a primary IV line but were unable to find a suitable vein for a backup line as required by the state's execution protocol. Efforts to insert a central line also failed.

Carruthers remains alive and on death row.

MLB proposes shortening regular season to 154 games in 2029, expanding Division Series to best-of-7

By RONALD BLUM AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Baseball proposed to shorten the regular season to 154 games from 162 starting in 2029 and to expand the Division Series to best-of-seven in a plan given to players during collective bargaining Thursday.

Owners also proposed adding nine additional days off to the current postseason format, extending it to a maximum 42 days in a move that would give top starting pitchers potential to appear more often.

MLB would allow higher-seeded teams in the first two rounds of the postseason to pick their opponents beginning next year and would make most regular-season Mondays a day off for the vast majority of teams starting in 2029 except for those in up to two nationally broadcast games.

Cutting regular-season games would reduce the opportunity for players to set season and career records.

"Returning to a 154-game schedule would allow us to introduce a weekly off day, which is good for player health, while also creating a new national broadcast window to showcase our most exciting teams and players," MLB spokesman Glen Caplin said in a statement.

The players' association said it will review the plan and will respond at the bargaining table.

Baseball's five-year labor contract expires Dec. 1, and management is expected to lock out players in a confrontation that could delay or wipe out the 2027 season. MLB proposed a salary cap, which the union has vowed to never accept, along with limits on contract values and length.

"Unfortunately, the league once again made clear that all of its proposals are contingent on players' agreement to a salary cap, a system that guts player rights and compensation, as well as its other anti-player proposals," the union said in a statement.

MLB's regular season currently schedules 162 games over 187 days, and the new format would play the 154 games over 180 in most years.

MLB would keep the Wild Card Series at best-of-three at the ballpark of the higher-seeded team, add an extra day off between Games 1 and 2 and stagger series starts. There would be only two games scheduled on each of the first three days rather than the current format of up to four games per day.

No. 3 seeds could select after the regular season whether to host No. 5 or No. 6 in the Wild Card Series, and the No. 1 seeds could pick which wild-card winner to play in the Division Series.

Each best-of-seven series would be played over 11 days instead of nine, adding off days before Games 5 and 7 in addition to the travel days before Games 3 and 6. MLB would stop scheduling early round postseason games in afternoons after some teams have struggled to fill stadiums in those slots.

Management made a "pick your opponent" proposal in 2022 bargaining as part of a 14-team playoff plan players didn't agree to.

"A shorter regular season unlocks making October even better for our fans — with fewer weekday afternoon games, a longer Division Series and more opportunities to see the game's best pitchers on the biggest stage," Caplin said. "And allowing the top seeds to select their opponents in the first two rounds would create compelling storylines, intensify existing rivalries and create new ones."

As part of the proposal, each team would be scheduled for four day-night doubleheaders, one against each division rival.

Minor league schedules have included days off on Mondays since 2021.

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Big league clubs would be scheduled for Monday games on national holidays, when many typically draw large crowds. Teams that play Mondays would be scheduled to have Thursday off.

MLB said player salaries would not be adjusted to reflect fewer games and bonus provision thresholds — like those that pay players for games played — would be adjusted to reflect the shortened schedule.

The National and American Leagues adopted 154-game schedules in 1904 that had every team in each eight-team circuit playing all opponents 22 times.

The AL switched to a 162-game schedule when it expanded to 10 teams for 1961 and the National League followed suit the next year.

The LCS started in 1969 and were best-of-five through 1984, then expanded to best-of-seven.

Division Series have been best-of-five since their inception for annual use in 1995. Wild card games started with the expansion of the playoffs from eight to 10 teams in 2012 and became best-of-three Wild Card Series when the postseason increased to 12 clubs in 2022.

Media attorneys ask court for help in preventing White House ban until legal case is resolved

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN, JOCELYN NOVECK and REBECCA BOONE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — An attorney for three news organizations told a federal judge Thursday that the Trump administration must be prevented from barring their reporters from the White House, saying the ban is a classic example of “viewpoint discrimination” that is punishing people for what they say — and violating the media outlets’ First Amendment rights.

The hearing was the latest development in the escalating drama between the Trump administration and the news media, which has raged in various arenas during his second term as president. At its core, though, are multiple free-speech questions. The dispute has produced sanctions and restrictions on White House and Pentagon reporters and led to several lawsuits that are progressing through the federal court system.

U.S. District Judge Timothy Kelly said he intended to rule by Tuesday, possibly sooner, on whether to extend his earlier order restoring White House access for journalists from MS NOW, CNN and Politico. Granting the news outlets’ request for a preliminary injunction would preserve the status quo — access — until the litigation is resolved.

Kelly, nominated to the bench by Republican President Donald Trump, didn’t say how he intends to rule but described key government arguments as an “uphill climb” and a “tough lift.” The judge also challenged a government attorney to specify the national security concerns that the administration claims are at stake.

“We’ve always been clear that it’s not just national security,” Justice Department attorney Michael Velchik said, arguing that false reporting can impact policy and adversely affect national security.

“He doesn’t mind negative press stories if he deserves them. He has problems with trafficking verifiable falsehoods,” Velchik said of Trump.

Theodore J. Boutrous, an attorney for the media plaintiffs, said the government was continuing to discriminate against viewpoints and reporting it doesn’t like.

“He doesn’t like scrutiny of his policies, he doesn’t like the reporting, he wants more good press,” Boutrous said in court. That’s a content-based restriction on speech and a clear violation of the First Amendment, he said.

Velchik said some of the issues the White House has with the banned news organizations’ reporting include “quotations that are not actually said,” the use of anonymous sources and splicing interviews to insert different questions than what the interviewee was actually asked. “I do think that we’ve identified specific allegations for each individual outlet,” he said.

The hearing was made available to media and the public via a public access number, but the audio was often so faint as to be unintelligible.

Three-week saga continues

The case has been going on since last month, shortly after Trump banned the outlets from the White House grounds, saying he objected to their reporting.

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The news organizations want longer-term relief until the entire case is resolved, and a temporary restraining order was due to expire on Thursday. But the judge extended it until Tuesday and said he intends to rule by then on whether to issue the preliminary injunction.

The hearing before Kelly came nearly three weeks after CNN, MS NOW and Politico were abruptly banished from White House grounds, with the president decrying their "fake news." A spokesperson for CNN said the network had been allowed to fulfill its pool duties on Tuesday, and is next scheduled for Sunday.

Although the journalists were allowed back in by Kelly's order, the administration continued to selectively exclude CNN from its duties in the White House broadcast pool. A spokesperson for CNN said the network had been allowed to fulfill its pool duties on Tuesday, and is next scheduled for Sunday.

Kelly had granted a two-week temporary restraining order against the ban, but it expires Thursday. The outlets have asked the court to halt the ban until the case is resolved, saying the administration has "persisted in unpredictably and inconsistently implementing its ban" despite the restraining order — including selectively keeping CNN from participating in White House pool duties.

"The White House's words and actions leave little doubt that it will immediately reinstitute a complete ban of CNN, MS NOW, and POLITICO if allowed the opportunity," lawyers for the networks wrote in a filing on Sept. 28.

At issue is whether the president, or anyone, can punish news outlets for the content of their reports. The news organizations say that doing so is "viewpoint discrimination" forbidden by the First Amendment's free-speech protections.

Trump insists that he doesn't have to let news outlets whose reports he dislikes onto White House grounds. "When it comes to the White House, it is the people's house," Attorney General Todd Blanche said on ABC recently, invoking an argument the administration has made since the beginning. "It is a privilege, and not a right, to be there."

The news organizations say that approach violates the Constitution's amendments protecting free speech and due process.

Trump says US will not resume military strikes on Iran before the Nov. 3 midterm elections

By JOSH BOAK and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump said Thursday that he will not order a resumption of military strikes on Iran before the Nov. 3 midterm elections in the United States.

Trump, while stumping for Republicans this week, has hinted that he was confident that an endgame to the war could come in the days before or after the election, while also hinting that he remained open to resuming full-scale military operations against Iran.

For weeks, Trump has been threatening that a post-midterm election escalation in the seven-month-old war remains a viable option, despite his initial promises to Americans of a military campaign that would last a matter of weeks.

But Trump in a social media post on Thursday said the U.S. "will not be attacking Iran at any time prior to the Midterm Elections to be held in the United States on November 3rd."

Trump added that his team has been "having productive discussions with the Islamic Republic of Iran."

The U.S. and Iran signed a short-lived interim agreement in June, intended to establish a 60-day ceasefire and framework for a permanent peace deal.

The deal signed by Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian collapsed within weeks amid renewed military actions and disputes over control of the Strait of Hormuz, the critical water which one-fifth world's oil flowed through before the war.

Negotiations had appeared at a standstill since Trump late last month publicly rejected Iran's proposal to reopen the strait within seven days if the U.S. met certain conditions.

Iran, however, said last week they had received a U.S. counterproposal. And Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi earlier on Thursday said he expected Tehran would offer a formal reply within days.

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Trump on Wednesday during a campaign rally in San Antonio, Texas, said that his special envoy, Steve Witkoff, has continued indirect negotiations with Iranian officials.

But at the same time, Trump suggested he had mixed feelings about ending the war at this point.

"I think the deal isn't really something that I want to do, but they're willing to offer us anything to stop," Trump said.

Trump believes that the U.S. is gaining leverage as the U.S. military is having greater success in helping oil tankers traverse the Strait of Hormuz and get Gulf allies' oil to market, while a Navy blockade is shutting down Iran's own oil exports.

Iran has lost its near chokehold over oil flows through the vital waterway with U.S. Central Command shepherding oil tankers through the strait at night with their location systems turned off.

That with the help of Gulf pipelines that skirt the strait, has allowed Gulf countries to export oil at nearly prewar levels.

But Iran has ramped up attacks on tankers passing through the strait in recent days. And overall, ship traffic remains well below prewar levels, as are shipments of liquid natural gas and fuel products.

Tanker operators willing to risk running the gauntlet under Central Command's protection are in some cases charging rates of \$1 million a day or more, shipping analysts say.

The situation has become further complicated as Saudi Arabia and Yemen's government have launched a military campaign aimed at driving Iran-backed Houthi rebels from the Bab el-Mandeb strait, another critical Mideast trade route for oil and other goods. The Houthis, in turn, are targeting Saudi airports and key infrastructure in the kingdom with drone and missile strikes.

Trump's post comes as the military has dispatched more resources to the region. U.S. officials have said a third aircraft carrier, the USS Theodore Roosevelt, and thousands of troops aboard it and accompanying ships could arrive as early as the end of October.

Trump's announcement was made the same day the USS Abraham Lincoln was due to arrive to its home port in San Diego after a record-long deployment in support of the Iran war. There have been reports of crew stress and poor mental health, as well as supply shortages, including food and hygiene products.

The USS George Washington, which is usually based in Asia, relieved the Lincoln in August. The other aircraft carrier in the Middle East, the USS George H.W. Bush, has been deployed for about six months, but it pulled into Phuket, Thailand, for a port visit several days ago.

Houthis claim new attack against airport in Saudi capital as witness reports evacuation

By TOQA EZZIDIN and CARA ANNA Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Several explosions were heard in Saudi Arabia's capital on Thursday, including a large blast at Riyadh's international airport, a witness told The Associated Press, a day after the kingdom said an attack on the airport killed one person and wounded others.

The blasts had an immediate effect on markets, as the price of crude oil jumped and Saudi Arabia slid further into the latest front in the Iran war. Hundreds of flights to and from Riyadh were cancelled, according to flight-tracking site FlightAware.

Iran-backed Houthi rebels in neighboring Yemen claimed responsibility for the new attack on Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport, saying the ballistic missile caused damage but giving no evidence. The Saudis had no immediate comment about the claim.

The spokesperson for the Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis, Maj. Gen. Turki al-Malki, said they intercepted and destroyed two ballistic missiles launched by the Houthis toward Riyadh, along with a ballistic missile fired toward Khamis Mushait, in the southwest near the Yemen border.

Saudi civil defense authorities said debris from an interception damaged a kindergarten and a medical complex, with no mention of any casualties.

Houthis warn airlines about using Saudi airspace

The Houthis have repeatedly claimed attacks against Saudi airports, military and oil facilities in recent

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days.

Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree, the Houthis' military spokesman, said in a statement late Thursday that the rebels fired more ballistic and cruise missiles at the airports in Riyadh and the southwestern city of Najran, near the border with Yemen, disrupting flights. The AP could not independently verify the claims.

Earlier, the rebels had warned global airlines "for the last time" about the potential consequences of operating in Saudi airspace, which they called a theater for its military operations.

In their new statement, the Houthis also warned people in Saudi Arabia to stay away from oil facilities that "represent targets for our forces" as the rebels press a declared blockade against the world's top oil exporter.

King Khalid International Airport "closed again," the Flightradar24 monitor said Thursday afternoon on X not long after the blasts. "Last landing 80+ minutes ago. Last take off 90+ minutes ago."

Fire and ambulance crews deployed and smoke was visible, the witness said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity around discussing security issues in the kingdom.

The witness said outgoing flights were halted and passengers were instructed to leave checked-in luggage behind and evacuate.

The Indian Embassy in Riyadh said on X that Air India has suspended operations through Saturday, while Lufthansa Group said in a statement that its airlines will suspend their flights to Riyadh through Oct. 16.

A U.S. Embassy security alert issued Wednesday said citizens should be aware of potential airspace closures and told U.S. government employees not to travel within 20 miles (32 kilometers) of the Yemen border.

Wednesday's deaths were the first since major military offensive

On Wednesday, Saudi officials said attacks on the Riyadh and Abha airports claimed by the Houthis had killed three people — the first deaths since Saudi Arabia and allied Yemeni forces launched a major ground and air offensive against the rebels.

The offensive is aimed at retaking territory that the Houthis seized a month ago along Yemen's western Red Sea coast and on the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. The rebels' presence on the Bab el-Mandeb poses a threat to the crucial shipping alternative to the Strait of Hormuz, where traffic has been curtailed due to Iran's attacks on ships.

Rebel leader Abdul Malik al-Houthi on Thursday accused Saudi Arabia of turning the area around the Bab el-Mandeb into a war zone.

The deadly attacks in Saudi Arabia brought condemnation from countries including Britain, India, the United Arab Emirates and others.

Also Wednesday, the spokesperson for the Saudi-led coalition said forces destroyed a platform in Yemen's rebel-held capital of Sanaa that had been used to launch attacks on the Saudi capital. The AP could not independently verify that claim.

Pakistan and Turkey consider assistance for the Saudis

Saudi Arabia has sought support from allies, including the United States, in the face of the Houthi attacks. Officials have said U.S. support has included intelligence sharing, target identification and planning for the latest offensive.

Turkey and Pakistan are assessing possible air defense, electronic warfare and technical assistance for Saudi Arabia under a trilateral agreement, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said, while stressing that the deal is defensive, not offensive.

"Turkey will not be sending troops into another country's territory to carry out an attack," he said, adding that Ankara was trying to resolve the issue through diplomacy.

Pakistan's Information Ministry on Thursday said relevant authorities would provide details of any military involvement if necessary.

The Waffle House Index helps Southerners — and FEMA — gauge a storm's severity

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM Associated Press

Golden hash browns, gravy-smothered biscuits and crispy waffles with a hearty helping of syrup are among the classic Southern comfort foods. But when hurricanes tear through Southeastern towns, the hot meals and bold yellow signs of the local Waffle House provide another kind of comfort.

If a Waffle House stays open in town, even in a limited capacity, neighbors are reassured that the coming storm is unlikely to cause devastation. A closed location of the dependable diner chain has come to indicate impending disaster. The metric is known as the Waffle House Index.

What might sound like silly logic has become one of the most reliable ways for Southerners — and even federal officials — to gauge a storm's severity and identify communities most in need of immediate aid.

What is the Waffle House Index?

The South's favorite disaster authority provides an informal measure of how significantly a storm will affect or has affected a community.

A map of the chain's over 1,900 locations, concentrated in the Southeast and mid-Atlantic, helps residents of storm-prone states assess whether they're likely to lose power, experience severe flooding or endure other extreme conditions that might cause a resilient restaurant to close its doors. For some, it's a telltale sign of whether they need to evacuate.

Waffle House is known not just for serving breakfast 24/7, 365 days a year, but also for its disaster preparedness. For decades, people across the South have noticed that the local Waffle House seemed to be the only business still open during a storm or the first to reopen after it passed.

The restaurant chain's reputation for remaining open when people desperately needed a place to warm up, charge devices and grab a hot meal became a fairly reliable — albeit amusing — resource to help track recovery efforts. The company even operates its own storm center.

How does the index work?

Waffle House's social media shares color-coded maps of its restaurant locations in certain regions that will soon be hit or are recovering from storm damage. The Federal Emergency Management Agency also offers some live tracking.

Green means the location is serving a full menu, indicating minimal damage in the surrounding area. The lights are on and the syrup is flowing.

Yellow means the restaurant is serving a limited menu, a signal that it's pulling power from a generator and might have a low food supply. The area might not have running water or electricity, but there's enough gas to fry up bacon for hungry customers.

Red means the location is closed, a sign of unsafe operating conditions and severe destruction to the restaurant or nearby communities.

How did the index start?

Former FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate has said he thought up the Waffle House Index while leading Florida's emergency management efforts in 2004. He had been searching for something to eat while surveying the devastation left by Hurricane Charley and was only able to find a Waffle House serving a limited menu.

His team began to notice other open Waffle Houses in communities without power or running water. The restaurants eventually became a key feature on a color-coded map that his team provided to help the public and local officials identify where storm damage was most severe.

Fugate continued to use his color-coded map when he joined FEMA under President Barack Obama. He was the agency's administrator in 2011 when a deadly tornado tore through the town of Joplin, Missouri. Both of the town's Waffle Houses reportedly stayed open.

The restaurant chain's disaster readiness is no coincidence. Seven locations were destroyed and 100 more shut down in 2005 during Hurricane Katrina, but company executives saw business skyrocket at restaurants that reopened quickly.

They soon embraced a business strategy centered around keeping their restaurants operable during and after a disaster, according to the company's website. The chain said it has invested in portable generators, bought a mobile command center and trained employees on what they can still serve if they lose electricity.

Judge says search warrants used to seize property from former Prince Andrew were unlawful

By DANICA KIRKA and BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Police investigating former Prince Andrew's links to the late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein unlawfully searched his homes, a London judge said Thursday.

Justice Nicholas Hilliard said significant errors were made by Thames Valley Police in applying for search warrants and by a judge in granting them in the investigation into the disgraced former prince now known as Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor.

Mountbatten-Windsor was not in court, but he was already aware of the partial legal victory because police had previously conceded in July that the warrants were improper.

Police, however, had tried to keep the matter out of the public eye while the investigation continued, leading to a delay in its revelation.

Mountbatten-Windsor was arrested Feb. 19 on suspicion of misconduct in public office and police searched two of his homes.

His lawyers had asked the High Court judge to invalidate the warrants that allowed those searches.

Attorney Mark Stephens, who wasn't involved in the case, said the development "opens a door to Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor's lawyers to start to chisel away at some of the fruits of that unlawful warrant."

The judge, however, said "the fact that the search warrants were quashed does not bring an investigation to an end, or mean that the whole of the investigation was unlawful."

Hilliard said he still needs to rule on whether to return Mountbatten-Windsor's property because there's a provision by which police can retain unlawfully seized property for evidence.

Stephens said that under English law, there will be further hearings to determine exactly what, if any, evidence would be thrown out.

"The judge will make that decision based on whether or not it's likely to be probative," Stephens said. "But, of course, it's very different in other countries. For example, in America, if you have the fruits of an unlawful warrant, then all that evidence is out. But that's not the case in the U.K., so we've got a few more rounds to go here."

The judge said the warrants were unlawful because the judge who issued them had not considered whether items being seized were subject to legal privilege or another protection known as "special procedure material."

Thames Valley Police said in a statement that it accepted that the warrants must be quashed, but said the investigation was continuing.

The former prince's ties with Epstein have long troubled the royals

King Charles III stripped his younger brother of his princely title last year as he sought to shield the rest of the royal family from the continuing fallout from Mountbatten-Windsor's links to Epstein.

While Mountbatten-Windsor, 66, continues to receive a stipend from the king's private funds, Buckingham Palace has made it clear that those funds may not be used to fund his effort to challenge the search warrants.

The police investigation initially focused on allegations that Mountbatten-Windsor shared sensitive information with Epstein when the former prince was a U.K. trade envoy, but police later said they could also consider other matters.

Police questioned Mountbatten-Windsor for 11 hours before releasing him under investigation, meaning he was neither charged nor exonerated.

It was the first time in nearly four centuries that a senior British royal was placed under arrest.

The allegations against Mountbatten-Windsor came to light when the U.S. Justice Department released

millions of pages of documents from its investigation into sex trafficking by Epstein and his connections to a network of wealthy, powerful men around the world.

Mountbatten-Windsor's ties to Epstein have been a source of embarrassment to the royal family for more than a decade.

Lawmakers questioned the relationship as far back as 2011, when the then-prince was forced to give up his globetrotting role as the U.K.'s special trade envoy. Eight years later, he failed to explain his continuing ties to Epstein in a disastrous interview with the BBC, ending his career as a working member of the royal family.

International Criminal Court judges say Philippine ex-President Rodrigo Duterte fit to stand trial

By MIKE CORDER Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — Judges at the International Criminal Court have ruled that former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte is fit to stand trial on charges of crimes against humanity linked to the so-called war on drugs he waged while in office, the court announced Thursday.

Duterte, 81, denies the charges. His trial is scheduled to open on Nov. 30. The ex-leader is accused of murder and attempted murder for his alleged involvement in dozens of killings as part of the war on drugs. He faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment if convicted.

The court's Sept. 28 ruling that he is fit to face justice came after an independent panel of experts said that Duterte "has the capacity to understand the charges" and follow the proceedings including the implications of entering a plea — which he will be asked to do when the trial opens, the court said in a statement.

He also is mentally fit to understand evidence and discuss his defense with his lawyers, the panel of experts said. His legal team had previously attempted to get the case thrown out on medical grounds, but judges rejected it and denied a request for him to be released from custody.

Duterte was arrested in the Philippines in March 2025 and sent to the ICC's headquarters in The Hague following a lengthy ICC investigation into mass killings in crackdowns overseen by Duterte, first when he served as mayor of the southern Philippine city of Davao and later as president.

Duterte, who was among the most feared leaders in Asia while in power, became the first ex-leader from the region to be arrested by the global court.

Estimates of the death toll in the crackdown on drugs during Duterte's presidential term vary, from the more than 6,000 reported by the national police to up to 30,000 claimed by human rights groups.

Prosecutors say that police and government hit squads carried out dozens of killings at Duterte's orders, motivated by the promise of money or to avoid becoming targets themselves.

At the time of Duterte's arrest, relatives of victims hailed the move.

"We hope that top police officials and the hundreds of police officers who were involved in the illegal killings should also be placed in custody and punished," said Randy delos Santos, whose teenage nephew was gunned down by police in a dark riverside alley during an anti-drug operation in suburban Caloocan city in August 2017.

PVC pipes swept away by Hurricane Helene flooding still dominate cleanup of North Carolina river

By TAMMY WEBBER and ALLISON JOYCE Associated Press

WOODFIN, N.C. (AP) — They're piled on river banks, lodged in uprooted trees, embedded in sediment and jammed under logs. Many are tangled in mounds of debris up to two stories high.

Two years after Hurricane Helene leveled forests, bulldozed houses and filled western North Carolina rivers with everything from cars to refrigerators, the work of cleaning up the debris goes on. Along the iconic French Broad River, known for its whitewater rapids, one item stands out from the rest: massive

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numbers of PVC pipes that washed away from a factory north of Asheville. As Hurricane Isaias, the first hurricane of the Atlantic season, intensifies, the PVC pipes are a reminder that damage can disrupt lives for years after a storm passes.

"Just the amount of time and energy that we put into removing all this pipe is exhausting," said Jon Stamper, operations director at MountainTrue, the nonprofit conducting cleanup on several rivers affected by Helene. "We still have stretches of river that haven't been touched."

MountainTrue estimates its crews have pulled hundreds of thousands of pipes from the river — most of which went to landfills — with an untold number still littering the river for 70 miles (113 kilometers) to a large lake at the Tennessee border.

Canada-based IPEX would not say how many pipes were stored at its Woodfin, North Carolina, site before the storm or share results of a company-funded study of how much remains in the river, calling the information "commercially sensitive." Officials said 60% of pipes stored outdoors at the site, sandwiched between railroad tracks and the river, were swept away by the 2024 flood, but most were recovered fairly quickly.

The company acknowledged that the remaining debris is significant and has agreed to pay MountainTrue \$500,000 toward continued cleanup on the French Broad, allowing the organization to continue working into next year.

A \$10 million state grant awarded to MountainTrue in 2025 to clean up debris in several western North Carolina rivers that was set to expire in December has been extended to February. The organization said there's still a long way to go and estimates it has spent 50,000 work-hours and over \$1.5 million on pipe removal, which is only in the French Broad.

PVC pipe comprises 80% of the debris in some areas, according to MountainTrue, posing risks to rafters and kayakers, changing water flow and altering the ecosystem.

"We understand the ongoing challenge," IPEX CEO Colleen Pritchett said. "We recognize that ... recovery efforts are complex, they're resource-intensive, and it's constantly shaped by the river conditions."

The epic flood took everyone by surprise

Hurricane Helene hit western North Carolina in late September 2024, dumping more than 30 inches (76 centimeters) of rain in some areas, triggering landslides, toppling trees, pushing buildings off their foundations and choking waterways.

At IPEX, an earthen berm was the only thing separating tall stacks of pipes from the French Broad River. Company officials said they expected a so-called 100-year flood — meaning it has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year — and moved pipes out of that flood zone.

But the flooding from Helene was 10 times worse.

"We secured the site as best we could, and we sent people home a day before the flooding was expected," said Johnny Drummond, vice president of manufacturing. He said the company did not anticipate a 1,000-year flood, which has a 1-in-1,000 chance of occurring.

The company closed the factory for a couple of months afterward, with losses "well over \$100 million," Pritchett said. It has since invested over \$100 million to repair and strengthen the buildings, and now is studying ways to contain the pipes in future floods — something MountainTrue publicly urged for months.

Though there's much more than IPEX debris still in the waterways, the pipes are so ubiquitous that "there are places where you go that it makes up almost everything that we remove," said Stamper, who formerly worked for a whitewater river outfitter and now oversees 10 cleanup crews totaling about 100 people — many of them former river or fishing guides who lost their livelihoods after the hurricane.

Removing the pipe is especially vexing because it binds with other debris and has become embedded in the river bottom, with fish and other creatures taking up residence inside. Stamper said he also worries about long-term environmental and health effects from the pipe, which can degrade and become brittle, leaving microplastics in the river.

"We want to avoid that stuff sitting there forever and just slowly deteriorating and breaking into smaller and smaller pieces," Stamper said. "Some of the pipe that's been sitting out since Hurricane Helene that

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has been exposed to the sun all the time is getting to the point where you could crack it when you grab it.”

Removing pipes is tedious, sometimes dangerous

Some of the pipes — both straight, rigid plastic and flexible coils that have unraveled — are under huge piles of tangled logs topped by other debris, often in mounds 20 feet (6 meters) high. Cleanup crews “just sort of picture it as a jungle gym” that they must climb and balance on as they clear the pile, said Jemima Filiss-Cook, who leads the cleanup in Madison County, where most of the pipe is concentrated.

She said many crew members were already cleaning up the river before MountainTrue hired them, as a way of “trauma bonding” over what had happened.

They include avid outdoorspeople, including rock climbers, because the cleanup is “quite a tedious and technical process” that requires comfort with the job’s rigors, said Anna Alsobrook, MountainTrue’s French Broad Riverkeeper.

Crews saw longer pipes into smaller chunks and load them on a boat, which is taken downstream to a landing spot and loaded onto a truck. Almost all of the pipes go to a landfill, though some in good condition are given to community members because there are no good recycling options, MountainTrue said.

“I truly don’t think anybody else could do this work except for our debris team members,” Alsobrook said, noting they must be able to navigate whitewater rapids with a boat full of pipes and saws.

The first priority was removing pipes that could pose an immediate danger or entrapment hazard to tubers or kayakers, and much of the remaining debris stranded in flood plains and on banks, especially around riverbends and corners, and vulnerable to being washed away in another flood, Stamper said.

It becomes apparent many pipes are still in the river whenever water levels change, he said.

MountainTrue is applying for other grants to help extend its program after state and IPEX funding run out, Stamper said, because it could take years to remove all the debris.

“We’re going to do our best as long as the funding allows,” he said. “But there’s going to be pipe out there that we can’t get ever.”

Moscow’s secrecy about a suspected plague case follows a pattern from the Soviet era

By The Associated Press undefined

The Kremlin has long maintained a culture of secrecy when it comes to controlling public information, especially involving accidents -- from industrial disasters to health emergencies.

The suspicious death last week of a worker at a research lab in Siberia that has fueled global concerns about suspected pneumonic plague is just the latest example of how leaders in Moscow manage the official narrative that often covers up the truth for years.

Russia’s public health watchdog, Rospotrebnadzor, has told the World Health Organization that no case of plague has been registered in the Irkutsk region of southeastern Siberia. In tersely worded statements, the Russian agency said the lab worker contracted pneumonia of “unknown” origin and that tests found no evidence her illness was caused by any of the pathogens she worked with at the Irkutsk Anti-Plague Research Institute of Siberia and the Far East.

The WHO urged Russia to share more information to clarify the cause of the severe pneumonia, the pathogen that prompted the public health measures and media reports that a second employee had pneumonia of undetermined cause.

Scarce official information about the worker’s death, which unconfirmed reports in Russia blamed on pneumonic plague, follows the Soviet-era patterns of secrecy in dealing with outbreaks of infectious diseases, accidents and other emergencies.

Here are other examples of Moscow censoring public health information:

The 1959-60 smallpox outbreak

In the final days of December 1959, leading Soviet graphic artist Alexei Kokorekin fell ill and died shortly after returning from a trip to India.

Doctors initially struggled to identify the cause of death as smallpox, which was considered eradicated

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decades earlier. Once it became clear, authorities launched a massive effort to contain the outbreak.

The KGB meticulously tracked down Kokorekin's contacts, and thousands of people were put in isolation. An Aeroflot flight carrying one of his contacts was contacted before it landed in Paris and ordered to return to Moscow.

Authorities halted all travel to and from Moscow and launched an unprecedented effort in which thousands of vaccination teams distributed shots to millions of residents of the capital and the surrounding region. International news outlets reported the massive campaign, but Soviet state media kept silent about it.

The outbreak led to 46 confirmed cases and three deaths in Moscow before it was contained in 44 days. A novel and movie based on the outbreak appeared later, but the true details of what happened were hidden from the public until the waning years of the Soviet Union.

The 1971 Aral Sea smallpox outbreak

During tests of a smallpox bioweapon on a tightly guarded range on Vozrozhdeniya Island in the Aral Sea in August 1971, a research ship accidentally sailed too close to the aerosolized plume of microbes.

A marine biologist on the ship contracted smallpox and spread it to several others in the town of Aralsk in what is now part of Kazakhstan, resulting in 10 infections and three deaths. The town was quarantined and more than 40,000 people were vaccinated against smallpox within days, but the public remained unaware of what happened.

The incident only became widely known in 2002 when U.S. researchers publicized old Soviet archives.

The 1979 anthrax leak

On April 2, 1979, anthrax spores were accidentally released from a secret biological weapons lab in Sverdlovsk, the Ural Mountains city that is now called Yekaterinburg.

The accident was caused by a worker failing to replace a faulty ventilation filter, resulting in the release of the deadly spores into the air. At least 68 people died in the resulting anthrax outbreak.

Soviet authorities officially blamed the deaths on contaminated meat from a street market and the KGB made sure to keep details of the accident under wraps, confiscating medical records.

It wasn't until after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union that the truth about the outbreak became known under Russian President Boris Yeltsin, a former Communist Party boss in Sverdlovsk.

The 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster

When the reactor No. 4 exploded at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the then-Soviet republic of Ukraine on April 26, 1986, it spewed a radioactive cloud across Europe.

Authorities were slow to report the incident and warn the public about the radioactive threat. When Sweden detected the radiation, Moscow initially denied that any accident had occurred.

Soviet officials waited for 36 hours before ordering the evacuation of the town of Pripyat near the plant. Five days later, tens of thousands of people were exposed to radioactive fallout as they marched through the streets of Kyiv during the May Day parade.

Despite Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of "glasnost," or greater openness, authorities heavily censored medical data and casualty figures as part of their efforts to conceal the true scale of the disaster. Immediately after the accident, 30 plant workers and firefighters died from acute radiation sickness, and thousands of people later died from radiation-related illnesses.

The COVID-19 pandemic

During the COVID-19 pandemic, some independent Russian news outlets and international media reports claimed the country's coronavirus death toll could be much higher than government officials said. The reports cited a spike in total mortality rates.

Russian authorities angrily rejected the claims as part of a Western disinformation campaign against Moscow.

Officials in Moscow explained the relatively low death toll by crediting a swift ban on travel from China early in the pandemic, a speedy introduction of restrictions and a broad testing effort that allowed authorities to spot infections quickly and prevent patients from developing life-threatening complications.

Authorities denied claims of widespread shortages of personal protective equipment and questionable infection control procedures at dozens of hospitals. Some medical workers said they were threatened with

dismissal or even prosecution for complaining about the situation.

In 2020, Russia criminalized “false information” about threats to public safety, and human rights groups documented that dozens of people were prosecuted for making purportedly fake claims. But at the end of that year, officials effectively conceded the death toll was several times higher than previously reported.

In early 2022, Russian authorities reported a total of over 13.5 million confirmed COVID-19 and 338,091 deaths — by far the highest death toll in Europe at the time. Russia’s state statistics agency Rosstat, which uses broader counting criteria, said there were 681,100 virus-linked deaths between April 2020 and December 2021.

“The system can silence, but it’s not competent enough to coordinate, so it produces contradiction instead of a unified false account,” Judy Twigg, professor of political science at Virginia Commonwealth University, said in written comments this week.

Sandwiches to socialism: How a DSA chapter in Austin is building political power

By JESSE BEDAYN Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — When the socialists filed into the pews of a church sanctuary in Texas, there were far more than would have attended just two years ago.

But that was before members of the Democratic Socialists of America were winning congressional primaries, and the acronym “DSA” became a fixture on television news chyrons. And before Democrats began arguing about whether to court or rebuke this movement, and President Donald Trump started to complain about the threat of “godless communists.”

For many across the country, it all seemed to happen rather quickly, a political movement fresh off the bench that would, depending on who was asked, either uplift the working class or usher in Stalinism.

But for some in that church, none of this was quite so surprising. The Austin DSA, like many of the 250 chapters spanning the country, has spent years marshaling its members’ earnestness, and their willingness to volunteer dozens or hundreds of hours, into a local movement with an eye toward national power.

They say that achieving their more distant goals — like abolishing prisons and achieving universal health care — starts with street protests and electing city council members. Although the progressive city of Austin was already fertile soil for a socialist chapter, the group’s recent growth has mirrored a broader expansion as nationwide DSA membership more than doubled to 126,000 in the past two years.

“We put in our sweat equity, we’ve put in time, we have put in dollars,” said Nathan Fernandes, speaking to the group gathered in the cavernous church. “We make the DSA difference ourselves because special interests can buy elections, but people can’t buy what we have.”

A Starbucks boycott was on the menu

The evening meeting started with detailed training on how to observe and take video of immigration enforcement — “film horizontally” — and a presentation on getting the word out about a boycott of Starbucks to support the baristas’ contract negotiations.

Then spoke Misael Ramos, a DSA member and candidate for Austin City Council, who was followed by an announcement that the chapter had knocked on roughly 7,000 doors for his campaign. Another canvass was around the corner.

When that day arrived, two newer DSA members, Mark Ramirez and Clarisse Manuel, showed up to learn that their candidate, Ramos, had been arrested that morning for participating in a protest over the shooting of a Venezuelan man by a federal immigration agent. Ramos is fighting the misdemeanor charge.

In recent years, Ramirez, a 28-year-old software engineer, had felt frustrated by the ills of the world, particularly immigration crackdowns but also homelessness, the war in Gaza, medical debt in America, and the list went on. Doomscrolling into a depression felt inadequate.

The Democratic Party was “captured by corporate interests,” said Ramirez, sitting at a picnic table, but the DSA offered something beyond handwringing. It tracked ICE raids, mounted a campaign to remove

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automated license plate readers in Austin, organized with labor unions and its members routinely donated their time and money to make hundreds of sandwiches for people in need.

"Healthcare, food and housing are things that everybody needs, and we have millions of times the productive force to meet all of those people's needs," Ramirez said. But as a society, "we choose not to."

The DSA chapter's gumption offered an antidote for Ramirez, who was one of roughly 700 people who signed on in the last year, growing their ranks by more than half.

"It is on me, and I think it's on everybody, to resist," he said. Manuel, 25, said members are showing what "can be achieved if we have a mass movement."

Socialism finds significant support among Democrats

Back in the church sanctuary, Ramos revved up the audience.

"If you believe housing is a human right, say 'Yeah!'" he shouted. "If you believe in a free Palestine and abolishing ICE, say 'Hell yeah!'"

An AP-NORC poll conducted in September found that about one-quarter of U.S. adults consider themselves a supporter of democratic socialism, which is similar to how many say they back President Donald Trump's MAGA movement.

Democrats have warmed to the concept of socialism over the past 15 years, according to polling from Gallup. About two-thirds of them had a positive view of socialism in an August poll, up from 50% in 2010. Over the same period, Democrats have soured on capitalism. Only about one-third of them had a positive view of capitalism this year, down from about half in 2010.

Although Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders has long identified as a democratic socialist, the DSA movement shifted up a gear after the election of Zohran Mamdani as New York City mayor a year ago. Months later, more such candidates won Democratic congressional primaries in New York, Pennsylvania and Colorado.

Sitting at a folding table in a nearby communal room after his speech, Ramos said he tries to bring lofty and longer-term goals — housing for everyone, defunding the police — down to earth while running for office. For example, he talks about using city land for affordable housing or diverting police funding to mental health responders.

It's one way that Ramos tries to cut through the tumult over DSA's national platform, which includes doing away with the Senate, drafting a new constitution, taking steps toward abolishing police and prisons and, in the long run, "building a new society from the ground up" to create a "real democracy."

Republicans are quick to brand the movement as communism

Such goals have caused consternation in both parties. Republicans are dubbing the midterms as a choice between "common sense and communism," while Democrats fret over voters recoiling from more radical ideas.

Meira "Gumbo" Vedros, co-chair of the Austin DSA chapter, tempered the idealism in an interview.

"Abolish is not 'get rid of this and start from scratch,'" said Vedros, 29. And it's "not saying that we have the answers, but saying, 'Hey, we know this is in the way of the working class having a better life, and we can find the answers together.'"

Not all DSA candidates subscribe to the entirety of the platform. And the contours of a socialist future are fuzzy, changing depending on who is asked. Debate continues among the members, facilitated by DSA chapters' own form of direct democracy, where everyone has a vote.

"Myself and most of the people I organize with don't often think that we will live to see the fruits of our labor," Vedros said, "and we don't have a perfect idea of what an ideal society looks like. But we can 'rehearse' what we think would be better right now, and rehearse a better world by being better to each other."

As the church meeting ended, those gathered stood and sang together over a twangy rendition of "Solidarity Forever."

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Today in History: October 8, the Great Chicago Fire breaks out

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Thursday, Oct. 8, the 281st day of 2026. There are 84 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Oct. 8, 1871, the Great Chicago Fire began; more than 300 people died and more than 17,000 structures were destroyed during the three-day blaze.

Also on this date:

In 1862, Union forces beat back a Confederate offensive in the Battle of Perryville, Kentucky's biggest and bloodiest engagement of the Civil War, leading to hundreds of casualties but ensuring the state would remain under Northern control.

In 1956, Don Larsen pitched the only perfect game in a World Series as the New York Yankees beat the Brooklyn Dodgers in Game 5, 2-0.

In 1967, Bolivian forces wounded and captured guerrilla leader Ernesto "Che" Guevara, who was attempting to spark a revolution in the South American country. He was executed the next day.

In 1997, scientists reported that NASA's Mars Pathfinder had yielded what could be the strongest evidence yet that Mars might once have been hospitable to life.

In 2002, a federal judge approved President George W. Bush's request to reopen West Coast ports, ending a 10-day labor lockout that was costing the U.S. economy an estimated \$1 billion to \$2 billion a day.

In 2005, a magnitude 7.6 earthquake on the Pakistan-India border killed an estimated 86,000 people.

In 2016, Hurricane Matthew made landfall on the South Carolina coast, triggering heavy flooding and several deaths in the Carolinas only days after a devastating rampage through the Caribbean where it killed more than 500 people in Haiti alone and others elsewhere.

In 2022, an explosion caused the partial collapse of a bridge linking the Crimean Peninsula with Russia, damaging an important supply artery for the Kremlin's war effort in southern Ukraine.

In 2024, two pioneers of artificial intelligence — Canadian John Hopfield and American Geoffrey Hinton — won the Nobel Prize in physics for helping create the building blocks of machine learning that is revolutionizing the way people work and live.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Paul Hogan is 87. Comedian Chevy Chase is 83. Author R.L. Stine is 83. Actor Sigourney Weaver is 77. Musician Robert "Kool" Bell (Kool & the Gang) is 76. Producer-director Edward Zwick is 74. NASCAR Hall of Famer Bill Elliott is 71. Comedian Darrell Hammond is 71. Actor Kim Wayans is 65. Gospel singer CeCe Winans is 62. Olympic gold medal swimmer Matt Biondi is 61. Actor Karyn Parsons is 60. Singer-producer Teddy Riley is 59. Actor Matt Damon is 56. Actor-TV host Nick Cannon is 46. Singer-songwriter Bruno Mars is 41. Actor Angus T. Jones is 33. Actor-singer Bella Thorne is 29. Actor Gordon Cormier is 17.